

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, October 15th, 2014 at 7:48 PM

Title: Re: claim about Fifth Dalai Lama

Content:

drodul said:

Nicholas Kristof writes in a recent column that the Fifth Dalai Lama ordered children to be massacred in 1660 (<http://mobile.nytimes.com/2014/10/09/opinion/nicholas-kristof-the-diversity-of-islam.html?referrer=> " onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;" onclick="window.open(this.href);return false; .) What, if anything, is he talking about?

Malcolm wrote:

It's purely rhetorical.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, October 15th, 2014 at 7:53 PM

Title: Re: Taking and giving/Tonglen/Chöd/New Age

Content:

Concordiadiscordi said:

Perhaps it isn't possible to gauge the value, significance, purpose, or reach of tonglen.

Malcolm wrote:

The supreme training of bodhicitta,
the bodhicitta of exchanging oneself with others,
is said to be the essence of the teachings.

-- Sakya Pandita

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, October 16th, 2014 at 12:32 AM

Title: Re: Mindfulness is powerful, But keep religion out of it

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

So he's an expert on Dzogchen too? Anything else?

Malcolm wrote:

He was a student of Tulku Orgyen's. His affection for Dzogchen has been consistent, despite the fact that his materialism is utterly at odds with Dzogchen view.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, October 16th, 2014 at 4:18 AM

Title: Re: claim about Fifth Dalai Lama

Content:

Greg said:

According to Sperling it is 5DL's report of the instructions that he sent to a military force directing them to attack Tsang. Hard to see how that is purely rhetorical.

Malcolm wrote:

It is not such a letter. It is a letter of petition to Tsi'u dmar po to quell disturbances in Tsang.

It states:

"Pleased to composed a letter of vajra words of the Yakṣa Tsi'u dmar po, the general of the arrogant ones appointed by the great master of Glorious Oddiyāna, the union of all the buddhas, as the protector of the doctrine and the profound treasures in the valleys surrounded by the Himalayas, headed by the temple of Zab Yangs Migyur Lhundrup (Samye)..."

It ends with:

"Please pacify all the negativities of this time such as the illness, wars and famines of Pur rgyal and Tibet, and increase happiness, fully increase the doctrine of scripture and realization, effortlessly accomplish the wishes of me, the Vidyādhara..."

etc.

As I said, these lines are rhetorical.

This kind of scholarship is very irresponsible on Sperling's part.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, October 16th, 2014 at 5:01 AM

Title: Re: claim about Fifth Dalai Lama

Content:

Greg said:

According to Sperling it is 5DL's report of the instructions that he sent to a military force directing them to attack Tsang. Hard to see how that is purely rhetorical.

Malcolm wrote:

It is not such a letter. It is a letter of petition to Tsi'u dmar po to quell disturbances in Tsang.

It states:

"Pleased to composed a letter of vajra words of the Yakṣa Tsi'u dmar po, the general of the arrogant ones appointed by the great master of Glorious Oddiyāna, the union of all the buddhas, as the protector of the doctrine and the profound treasures in the valleys surrounded by the Himalayas, headed by the temple of Zab Yangs Migyur Lhundrup (Samye)..."

It ends with:

"Please pacify all the negativities of this time such as the illness, wars and famines of Pur rgyal and Tibet, and increase happiness, fully increase the doctrine of scripture and realization, effortlessly accomplish the wishes of me, the Vidyādhara..."

etc.

As I said, these lines are rhetorical.

This kind of scholarship is very irresponsible on Sperling's part.

Greg said:

It certainly looks less bad if it is in fact a supplication to a dharmapāla and not an actual directive to smash babies off of rocks. And that is certainly extremely sneaky and misleading of Sperling to phrase things the way he did. But the fact that he actually did orchestrate a military campaign is probably enough for Kristof's point to stand.

Malcolm wrote:

By 1660 (the date of the above cited letter), the Fifth was firmly in control of Tibet.

Sperling conflates two distinct epochs in the Fifth's life, disturbances in Tsang that also tally with disturbances caused by Dogyal, and the events of Tsang war in 1640.

Moreover, Sperling does not state to whom he sent these instructions, but it is clear when the letter is read in full it was sent to Tsi'u dmar. Now of course it is too late, because this misinformation now shows up on many web sites.

In 1640, he was only 23 and fully controlled by the regent, Sonam Chophel, who waged war against the King of Tsang in the Fifth's name.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, October 16th, 2014 at 5:57 AM

Title: Re: claim about Fifth Dalai Lama

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Sperling conflates two distinct epochs in the Fifth's life, disturbances in Tsang that also

tally with disturbances caused by Dogyal, and the events of Tsang war in 1640.

Moreover, Sperling does not state to whom he sent these instructions, but it is clear when the letter is read in full it was sent to Tsi'u dmar. Now of course it is too late, because this misinformation now shows up on many web sites.

kirtu said:

But since your fingers are not broken you can inform Kristof and Sperling (and in the later case in an academic forum) of the errant reading.

Kirt

Malcolm wrote:

Not my job.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, October 16th, 2014 at 5:57 AM

Title: Re: claim about Fifth Dalai Lama

Content:

Jikan said:

We're talking about an article in a book from 1996, right?

1996?

Surely this has been corrected in the scholarship already.

Malcolm wrote:

Nope.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, October 16th, 2014 at 8:13 AM

Title: Re: claim about Fifth Dalai Lama

Content:

Jikan said:

We're talking about an article in a book from 1996, right?

1996?

Surely this has been corrected in the scholarship already.

Malcolm wrote:

Nope.

Jikan said:

If so, then Buddhist Studies is an anemic discipline indeed.

Malcolm wrote:

Just spread very thin...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, October 16th, 2014 at 8:27 AM

Title: Re: Re Tsen God

Content:

pemachophel said:

Anyone know anything about a Protector named Tsen God (not God)?

Malcolm wrote:

Btsan rgod just means wild brtsan.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, October 16th, 2014 at 6:27 PM

Title: Re: Mahakala Practice Mahayoga

Content:

cck123 said:

Hi,

i got a jenang for an Six armed Mahakala from Rinchen Terdzo (ThukChen Pema GyuTrul Drawa Cycle, not Shangpa Chagdrupa) and thought this should be an Mahayoga/Anuttarayoga empowerment.

On Himalayanart.com there is mentioned that Six armed Mahakala is a Kriyayogatantra practice, which would mean that there a very different commitments for practicing/reciting the Mantra.

Can you help me with some info? Do i need to be vegetarian for reciting the Mantra? Or are there no commitments with jenang?

Best wishes

Chris

Malcolm wrote:

It is highest yoga tantra. Himalayan art has many errors.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, October 16th, 2014 at 8:16 PM

Title: Re: claim about Fifth Dalai Lama

Content:

kirtu said:

Yes it is. If the academics get something egregiously wrong it is in fact the job of translators and Dharma teachers to correct the issue. You could publish a paper in something like the Journal of Buddhist Ethics along with a few other translators/Western Dharma teachers. Or you could write an article concerning the misinterpretation and publish it in a magazine like Tricycle. But this kind of misinterpretation needs to be addressed.

Kirt

Malcolm wrote:

Sorry Kirt, but no. Here is why -- I spent years correcting Dogyal advocates and so no — did I convince anyone of anything? No.

Further, in order to correct someone like the writer of the op-ed, I would have to explain too many details, many of which are bound by samaya (for example, how to explain to an outsider the ritual language of extreme violence found in so many protector petitions?).

And as far as correcting Sperling goes, that also is just a waste of time since he won't listen.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, October 16th, 2014 at 11:00 PM

Title: Re: claim about Fifth Dalai Lama

Content:

Greg said:

I don't think the point is particularly to change Nichols' or Sperling's mind, I think the point is to have a published correction in a reputable source that is accessible to everyone. Plenty of people would be persuaded by this.

Malcolm wrote:

I am not a reputable source. You would need someone like Thurman for that.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, October 16th, 2014 at 11:20 PM

Title: Re: claim about Fifth Dalai Lama

Content:

Greg said:

I don't think the point is particularly to change Nichols' or Sperling's mind, I think the point is to have a published correction in a reputable source that is accessible to everyone. Plenty of people would be persuaded by this.

Malcolm wrote:

I am not a reputable source. You would need someone like Thurman for that.

M

Greg said:

Thurman has his own credibility problems, but yes an academic would probably be ideal. However, if the Times published your letter to the editor, that would be worthwhile.

Malcolm wrote:

Seriously, I am not the right person for the job.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, October 16th, 2014 at 11:36 PM

Title: Re: Mahakala Practice Mahayoga

Content:

lorem said:

I would give them the benefit of the doubt but hard for me to check accuracy when I can't read the sources but thought they were holding to a Sakya/academic view.

Malcolm wrote:

I give them the benefit of the doubt, but in a project as large, and given that it is only one person, it is not surprising that there are errors here and there, and some of them are rather large especially when writing about non-Sakyapa art.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, October 17th, 2014 at 4:04 AM

Title: Re: claim about Fifth Dalai Lama

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

I would have to explain too many details, many of which are bound by samaya (for example, how to explain to an outsider the ritual language of extreme violence found in so many protector petitions?).

cloudburst said:

How would one explain this? People seem relieved that it is just a prayer to a protector, but the fifth Dalai Lama would have believed this to be a real entity who could be influenced by his prayers, just like a warlord. Given this, isn't it just as disturbing that

this religious man is calling for children to be slaughtered? How can we understand his intention?

Malcolm wrote:

No he is not calling for the slaughter of actual children, this is not his intention. All protector cycles have prayers with imagery just as violent. It is part and parcel of the rhetoric of violence that permeates the religious imagery of protector practices and smad las rites in general. I could cite (and won't) innumerable gore-filled examples where samaya breakers and their off-spring are subject to just as fierce imprecations.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, October 17th, 2014 at 5:33 AM

Title: Re: claim about Fifth Dalai Lama

Content:

kirtu said:

It would be less difficult in an academic paper because it can be treated from a religious studies perspective. You are a smart man. You can figure it out.

Malcolm wrote:

I have other more pressing things to do, and I don't write academic papers.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, October 18th, 2014 at 12:40 AM

Title: Re: So what is the Tathagatagarbha?

Content:

Astus said:

[Practically speaking, since the buddha qualities are inherent, it becomes possible to skip aeons of accumulating merit, so we have all the "enlightenment in this body" teachings as the mainstream of Mahayana.

Malcolm wrote:

Buddhaqualities may be inherent in the dharmakāya, but only buddhas can see the dharmakāya, just as only buddhas can see tathagātagarbha. Thus one cannot evade the two accumulations, whether it takes three incalculable eons as in common Mahayāna, or on one lifetime, as in Secret Mantra.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, October 18th, 2014 at 1:46 AM

Title: Re: So what is the Tathagatagarbha?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Buddhaqualities may be inherent in the dharmakāya, but only buddhas can see the dharmakāya, just as only buddhas can see tathagātagarbha. Thus one cannot evade the

two accumulations, whether it takes three incalculable eons as in common Mahayāna, or on one lifetime, as in Secret Mantra.

Astus said:

That may be so. But it would be hard to find any existing Mahayana school of the common type. Tiantai, Huayan and especially Chan teaches a sudden path, while Pure Land teaches liberation in the next life. Only those who deny buddha-nature, i.e. the followers of Xuanzang, talk about a minimal three aeons.

Malcolm wrote:

They can teach whatever they like, but all the schools you mention are sutrayāna schools and are thus common Mahāyāna, teaching no methods not found in sūtra.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, October 18th, 2014 at 2:26 AM

Title: Re: So what is the Tathagatagarbha?

Content:

Son of Buddha said:

Brahmans held that self was the 5 aggregate body and that 5 aggregate body was permanent.

Malcolm wrote:

No, this is a completely incorrect misrepresentation of what "brahmins" held.

Son of Buddha said:

In the Buddhist Sutras the Tathagatagarbha is said to be the ground/foundation for all phenomenon, not ever non existent, uncreated, unconditioned, permanent, bliss, eternal, pure, True Self, beyond dependent arising, what is truly real and not illusion and permanent Wisdom.

Malcolm wrote:

There is no difference between this view and the view of Advaita, which holds that Brahman, not ever non existent, uncreated, unconditioned, permanent, bliss, eternal, pure, True Self, etc. is the ground for phenomena.

In reality created, conditioned, impermanent, non-eternal and so on phenomena cannot have an uncreated, unconditioned, permanent ground (because a series is impossible, etc., all the faults which belong to positing a permanent creator, etc.) Those Buddhists who hold such a view have erred into eternalism.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, October 18th, 2014 at 4:12 AM

Title: Re: So what is the Tathagatagarbha?

Content:

Son of Buddha said:

Brahmans held that self was the 5 aggregate body and that 5 aggregate body was permanent.

Malcolm wrote:

No, this is a completely incorrect misrepresentation of what "brahmins" held.

Son of Buddha said:

No its not, it was common teachings back in the Buddhas day which is why the Buddha spent so much time teaching that the 5 aggregates were not self.

Malcolm wrote:

People in general tend to believe that the body is the self -- however, at this times, brahmins held many beliefs, traditionally numbered 62.

Son of Buddha said:

Malcolm

There is no difference between this view and the view of Advaita, which holds that Brahman, not ever non existent, uncreated, unconditioned, permanent, bliss, eternal, pure, True Self, etc. is the ground for phenomena.

So.... and the View of Advaita is considered to be copied straight from Buddhism (even hindu rivals at that time pointed that out)

Malcolm wrote:

This does not address the problem that I pointed out. Also, Gaudapada did not copy Buddhist views so much as borrow Buddhist arguments to refute the dualist views of other nonbuddhists. Shankara of course hotly rejected the idea that he was borrowing Mahāyāna and there is little resemblance between what is actually taught in Mahāyāna and Advaita.

Son of Buddha said:

In reality created, conditioned, impermanent, non-eternal and so on phenomena cannot have an uncreated, unconditioned, permanent ground (because a series is impossible, etc., all the faults which belong to positing a permanent creator, etc.) Those Buddhists who hold such a view have erred into eternalism.

So maitreya was an eternalist?

Maitreyas Differentiation of the Middle and the Extremes say:***

"Not existent, and not non-existent,"

Malcolm wrote:

This is not a citation affirming any sort of a ground at all.

Son of Buddha said:

and moreover the thought of all the statements in a great many stainless texts of the middle way of being devoid of the extremes of existence and non existence is that:

*Since all dependently arisen conventionalities do not really exist, when one realizes this, one does not fall to an extreme of existence and is released from the extreme of superimposition.

* Since the ultimate noumenon that is beyond dependent arising is never non-existent, when one realizes this, one does not fall to an extreme of non-existence and is released from the extreme of deprecation.

Malcolm wrote:

These are not citations asserting some existent, permanent ground.

Son of Buddha said:

There is no problem, Samsara is beginningless As is Enlightenment. I stated Enlightenment is the ground and foundation for Samsara not that Enlightenment created samsara, For as long as Enlightenment has been the illusion of Samsara that mirrors Enlightenment has been. (the unconditioned/conditioned aspects of samsara is taught in the Queen Srimala Sutra)

Malcolm wrote:

The "ground" of samsara is ignorance, not enlightenment. It may be the case that there is no suchness to discover outside of samsara, but in that case, this does not make suchness a "ground" per se out of which phenomena arise. The root and basis of samsara is just the non-recognition of how things are. But this does not mean that there is some unconditioned enlightened plenitude out of which the phenomena of samsara and nirvana are produced.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, October 18th, 2014 at 4:41 AM

Title: Re: So what is the Tathagatagarbha?

Content:

conebeckham said:

"Beyond dualistic experience, reality's original nature

Is free from all formulation, the innate character of luminosity."

Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo

Malcolm wrote:

Right the innate characteristic of gsal ba is spros bral, but that does not make gsal ba a "source".

The term "ground" (gzhi, sthana) is much misunderstood.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, October 18th, 2014 at 5:33 AM

Title: Re: So what is the Tathagatagarbha?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The term "ground" (gzhi, sthana) is much misunderstood.

dzogchungpa said:

Could you clarify its meaning for us?

Malcolm wrote:

From a version of introduction to my forthcoming book:

...the generic basis [spyi gzhi], which is initially defined by Vimalamitra in the section on the nidānas as “one’s own unfabricated mind” [rang sems ma bcos pa]. This crucial point made in the text should not be ignored, for it would appear that Vimala’s stance contradicts the modern tendency to interpret the generic basis as a transpersonal entity of some kind, leading to the proposition that “the universe is an intelligent entity” and so on.

And:

...what is intended by the term “original basis” [ye gzhi] is a pristine empty cognizance or nous. By the use of the term ye shes as a key descriptor for the basis, Dzogchen texts are referring to a noetic potentiality of consciousness which is innate even when defined as “originally pure” or empty, for otherwise it would become very difficult to account for the arising of buddhas and sentient beings in the second topic, the arising of delusion.

And:

The third hard question is the issue of the temporality of the basis. Since time does not apply to the original basis, we must regard the use of terms such as “original,” “primordial” and so on as indicating a state in which time is irrelevant, rather than an actual conventional historical epoch or starting point existing countless infinities of eons ago. From such a perspective the placing of the original basis on a temporal spectrum is therefore a didactic myth. The net effect of this understanding is that the basis is the state of phenomena as they appear, in that all phenomena, both external and internal, appear out of an empty noetic potential.

And

dzogchungpa said:

Having defined the basis, what is being described is a description of reality just as it is. Buddhas are those who unerringly recognize this, and specifically, the idealized buddha known as Samantabhadra recognizes this not only in absence of a teacher, but without ever becoming a sentient being.

Malcolm wrote:

And:

The third topic defines sugatagarbha as no other than the basis present in sentient

beings. In other words, the sugatagarbha defines how the basis is instantiated in sentient beings, and how vidyā exists in the body.

And:

Only the seventh position is considered to be flawless, in that the basis is defined as “great originally purity” (ka dag chen po):

Dharmatā, original purity, is free from all proliferation. Since it is unaffected by ignorance, it is free from all obscurations.

In reality, the basis really just refers to the union of the two truths:

The Mahāyānapathakrama by Subhagavajra states: So called “tantras” are tantras because of connection, and further, because they connected the basis, the method and the result. When divided, there are two kinds— tantras of words and tantras of meaning. Words are sounds. There are three in meaning— the tantra of the basis, the tantra of method and the tantra of the result. Now then, the tantra of the basis is the nature of the two truths; the method is the two stages; and the result is the two kaṃyas, the dharmakāya and rūpakāya. Therefore, since the result is obtained when the method is cultivated in dependence on the basis, a tantra is so called because it connects.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, October 18th, 2014 at 10:23 PM

Title: Re: So what is the Tathagatagarbha?

Content:

Son of Buddha said:

Oh your right my bad I posted the wrong thing.....

Queen Srimala Sutra

13. Intrinsic Purity of the Mind

"Lord, saṃsāra is based on the Tathāgata-garbha. It was with reference to the Tathāgata-garbha that the Lord pointed out and explained, '[It is] without limit in the past.' Since there is the Tathāgata-garbha, there is reason for speaking of 'cyclical flow' (saṃsāra).

Therefore the Tathāgata-garbha is the support, the holder, the base of constructed [Buddha natures] that are non-discrete, not dissociated, and knowing as liberated from the stores [of defilement]; and furthermore is the support, the holder, the base of external constructed natures that are discrete, dissociated, and knowing as not liberated.

Malcolm wrote:

Samsara does not equal conditioned phenomena. Why? Because if it did, there could be no pure conditioned phenomena such as path dharmas. People frequently confuse these two things much to their detriment. In other words, all conditioned phenomena are impermanent, but not all conditioned phenomena are impure.

Furthermore, indeed all conditioned phenomena are intrinsically pure, and it is just this intrinsic purity of the mind that sutras refer to as tathagātagarbha. It is this purity which is the basis for all buddhaqualities. Translating "atma" as "self" in this context is a misfortunate error when in fact the term simply means "nature" in this context as numerous usages prove. Tagathāgarbha is indeed pure, permanent, blissful, and a nature, but it is not a thing per se., it is also not a "self" and using that term and applying too tathāgarbha is just confusing. Further, claiming it is source of impure conditioned phenomena is also a category error. On the other hand, rhetorically samsara can be "based" on tathāgarbha since the non-recognition of one's real state does result on wandering in samsara.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, October 18th, 2014 at 10:57 PM

Title: Re: So what is the Tathagatagarbha?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Translating "atma" as "self" in this context is a misfortunate error when in fact the term simply means "nature" in this context as numerous usages prove.

dzogchungpa said:

So, what would you say the difference between "self" and "nature" is in this context?

Malcolm wrote:

"A self" is a bearer of identity, a nature is something like heat for fire.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, October 19th, 2014 at 9:55 AM

Title: Re: So what is the Tathagatagarbha?

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

Honestly, I don't see what 'atmaparamita' could mean then. Here is Mipham's description of it, from "Gateway To Knowledge" Vol 4: Transcendent sublime identity is the attainment of the transformation into the very wisdom that encompasses all of existence and peace, the nature of all phenomena. This transcends the extreme of provisional insubstantiality-differentiated from the substantial existence of self in terms of the mere non-existence of self-and in so doing, utterly quells all such conceptual complexities.

This great identity is the wisdom body of space-like equality, which exercises mastery over all phenomena. It is the transformed locus of the entire unfathomable and matchless ocean of undefiled qualities such as the ten powers and the ten masteries. It is the sublime basis for spontaneously accomplishing the two benefits.
('atmaparamita' = "transcendent sublime identity")

Malcolm wrote:

The transcendent sublime nature is the attainment of the transformation into the very wisdom that encompasses all of existence and peace, the nature of all phenomena. This transcends the extreme of provisional insubstantiality-differentiated from the substantial existence of self in terms of the mere non-existence of self-and in so doing, utterly quells all such conceptual complexities.

This great nature is the wisdom body of space-like equality, which exercises mastery over all phenomena. It is the transformed locus of the entire unfathomable and matchless ocean of undefiled qualities such as the ten powers and the ten masteries. It is the sublime basis for spontaneously accomplishing the two benefits.[/quote]
('atmaparamita'= "transcendent sublime nature")

"Identity" is a little different than a "self", even so.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, October 19th, 2014 at 9:28 PM

Title: Re: So what is the Tathagatagarbha?

Content:

Sherab said:

In short you are merely saying that the conditioned and the unconditioned being mere conventional designations are in the end illusions or unreal. And so, sentient beings, the tathagatagarbha and even the trikaya are all illusions or all unreal. That is rather extreme don't you think?

Malcolm wrote:

It is less extreme than the converse, i.e., that sentient beings, tathāgatagarbha and the three kāyas are true existents or real.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, October 24th, 2014 at 6:15 AM

Title: Re: claim about Fifth Dalai Lama

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

No he is not calling for the slaughter of actual children, this is not his intention. All protector cycles have prayers with imagery just as violent. It is part and parcel of the rhetoric of violence that permeates the religious imagery of protector practices and smad las rites in general. I could cite (and won't) innumerable gore-filled examples where samaya breakers and their off-spring are subject to just as fierce imprecations.

Vajrasvapna said:

A prayer to harm the persons who break their vows is something other than a prayer to cause harm to innocent children and servants. The children were a threat to Buddhism or just to the power of the Dalai Lama and his order?

Malcolm wrote:

The prayer was directed not at people, but spirits causing people to act against there samaya, hence the reason it was addressed to Tsi'u mar.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, October 29th, 2014 at 3:23 AM

Title: Re: Practice of Setrap

Content:

qwerty13 said:

I give you more background. Once I started to seriously think about dropping this pratice I felt pain around my heart area and various other locations in my body. Nothing very serious, but I really felt for a moment that everything is not right. Its not like little painfull tingling, but worse, more like something turning painfully couple of times inside my heart area. I had to stop for a moment to let the feeling go away. After the pain went away, I felt myself little weak for a couple of minutes. But after that i started to feel that I am returning to "normal" state. This may not be entirely related, but Alexander Brezin says in his web archive that if one disparages ones teacher or breaks up with him/her in a negative way (negative way: not keeping polite distance, but just running away with remorse) then it can cause autoimmuneological diseases, mental and physical suffering. So that came to my mind when I was feeling these symptoms.

.

Malcolm wrote:

Setrap is a gyalpo. People who do Gyalpo practices often suffer from anxiety, paranoia and in particular, snying rlung.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, October 29th, 2014 at 4:35 AM

Title: Re: Practice of Setrap

Content:

Konchog1 said:

Worldly or not is an interesting issue.

Some say Kalarupa is worldly, others say otherwise.

Malcolm wrote:

Kalarupa is a worldly manifestation of Yamantaka.

Konchog1 said:

Some say Palden Lhamo is worldly, others say otherwise.

Malcolm wrote:
Śrī Devi is a wisdom protector.

Konchog1 said:
As for oracles, I have heard the same. I have also heard that worldly protectors like Pehar don't have oracles because they are too powerful, and entering a medium's body would kill the person.

Malcolm wrote:
Pehar has oracles.

Very confusing.

Konchog1 said:
As for Setrap,

Malcolm wrote:
Setrap has an oracle, therefore, worldly. Setrap was introduced by Nyan Lotsawa, it is a new school protector, no relationship nor samaya with Guru Rinpoche.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Wednesday, October 29th, 2014 at 4:37 AM
Title: Re: Practice of Setrap
Content:

Konchog1 said:
Some say Kalarupa is worldly, others say otherwise.

Some say Palden Lhamo is worldly, others say otherwise.

As for oracles, I have heard the same. I have also heard that worldly protectors like Pehar don't have oracles because they are too powerful, and entering a medium's body would kill the person.

lorem said:
Damchen is Manjushri.
Palden Lhamo is 10th level bodhisattva
Nechung Oracle is Pehar.

Konchog1 said:
I had heard Nechung was Dorje Drakden, a minister of Pehar.

Similar to how Palden Lhamo has no oracle, but there is an oracle for the Tenma goddesses in her retinue.

Malcolm wrote:

The Tenma are worldly.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, October 29th, 2014 at 4:43 AM

Title: Re: Practice of Setrap

Content:

Konchog1 said:

Some say Palden Lhamo is worldly, others say otherwise.

Malcolm wrote:

Śrī Devi is a wisdom protector.

Konchog1 said:

While on the topic, is there a difference between all the Sri Devis? For example, the Sri Devi popular among the Gelug, and the Sri Devi of Marpa? Are they the same deity or different?

Malcolm wrote:

Same devi, different manifestations. All wisdom devatās have the same continuum, i.e., the dharmakāya.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, October 29th, 2014 at 8:57 PM

Title: Re: Yeti-Bigfoot

Content:

reddust said:

I know this a silly question. I was wondering what the Tibetans think of their Bigfoot called Yeti?

Malcolm wrote:

"Yeti" is the Tibetan name for the very rare Himalayan brown bear, and that is all.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, October 30th, 2014 at 11:24 PM

Title: Re: The tantric vow not to disparage women

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

We are not really supposed to talk about tantric vows.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, October 31st, 2014 at 12:03 AM

Title: Re: The tantric vow not to disparage women

Content:

lorem said:

They are totally set out in detail on the Berzin site. Not secret.

EDIT: you visit someone and they have thangkha uncovered or see shrine basically know pretty much everything about their practice (to some extent just making a point)

Malcolm wrote:

Right, nevertheless, they are actually secret and should not be discussed, just as pictures of yidams and so on should not be exposed to those without empowerment and so on.

Some people actually care about samaya, though these days, most seem to think it is optional.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, October 31st, 2014 at 12:26 AM

Title: Samaya in Vajrayāna

Content:

lorem said:

Okay. Makes sense. Berzin's samaya is to clarify. Our's is not. I dig that.

EDIT: But as Buddhism comes to the West it may change. Internet society very open about things and the whole social justice aspect very strong in psyche/culture(?)

EDIT 2: Yes. Four-faced Mahakala could not be shown, only in Brahmin form, but Geluk changed that.

Malcolm wrote:

As for the second point, no, the Gelugp's didn't change that. One still should never display the form of Caturmukha Mahākala.

Samayas don't change just because the teachings are brought from one culture to another — for example, the samayas did not change their character because Tibetans imported Vajrayāna from India. Therefore, we should not expect them to be mutable just because we live in the West.

Samayas are something taught in the tantras. Regardless of what others may do, I encourage people to follow them according to how they have been understood.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, October 31st, 2014 at 12:44 AM

Title: Re: Practice of Setrap

Content:

lorem said:

EDIT:

about Shri Devi. 2 armed Queen of War Sickle Is Sarasvati and Marpa 4 armed Vetali is Lakshmi.

I guess in dharmakaya all the same but that would be saying 6-arm, 4-arm, and Bernagchen are all the same. (Chenrezi, Samantabhadra, Vajrapani)

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, they are. Their aspect only differs in terms of their appearance to us based on our own deluded perceptions and needs.

But in reality the wisdom continuum of buddhas are all the same.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, October 31st, 2014 at 1:21 AM

Title: Re: Samaya in Vajrayāna

Content:

Fortyeightvows said:

how far do you take that?

I strive to keep samaya, especially since many people have their own feeling about tibetan buddhism and vajrayana it is better to do so. but what about things like images of one's yidam on the home shrine? or books on the bookshelf?

Malcolm wrote:

I do not allow people without empowerment in my shineroom.

I keep my images covered when common people are around as much as possible.

HE Ratnavajra gave me an image once with explicit instructions never to show it to someone who had not had the empowerment itself. So I largely try to observe this principle myself.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, October 31st, 2014 at 2:47 AM

Title: Re: Residing in the ground of being

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

There is no "ground of being" described in any Buddhist text. The term is not appropriate in Buddhist discourse, and was imported into Dharma by mistake.

The term is a Christian theological term coined by Paul Tillich.

I wrote elsewhere on this site:

In terms of the origins of the term, it was indeed coined by Tillich to show that "God must be called the infinite power of being which resists the threat of nonbeing."

[Systematic Theology, Vol. pg. 64] You can see why such borrowing is tempting, "The ground of being has the character of self-manifestation; it has logos character"

[Systematic Theology, Vol.1 pg. 158]

A large problem for people who are approaching Dzogchen is that they fall back into classical western philosophical categories. Indeed, Günther wrote once that Dzogchen essentially is not different than Parmenides's theory that whatever was contingent as non-being and whatever is permanent is being. Tillich writes:

"The Orphics, the Pythagoreans, Anaximander, Heraclitus, and Parmenides were driven to their philosophy by the awareness that the world they encountered lack ultimate reality. But only in Plato does the contrast between existential and the essential being become an ontological and ethical problem. Existence for Plato is the realm of mere opinion, error, and evil. It lacks true reality. True being is essential being and is present in the realm of eternal ideas, i.e., in essences. In order to reach essential being, man must rise above existence. He must return to the essential realm from which he fell into existence, In this way man's existence, is standing out of potentiality, is judged as a fall from what he essentially is. The potential is the essential, and to exist, i.e., to stand out of potentiality, is the lost of true essentiality...In God there is no difference between essential and existential being. This implies the split is not ultimately valid and that is has no relevance for the ground of being itself. God is eternally what he is. [Systematic Theology, Vol.2 ppg. 21-22]

Examining this kind of presentation that the term "ground of being" arose out of, it is easy to see why those who are not trained in Indo-Tibetan scholastics as well as Western Philosophy will be very attracted to terms like "ground of being" in relationship to the term "basis" or gzhi.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, October 31st, 2014 at 3:41 AM

Title: Re: Residing in the ground of being

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

Btw, I have heard Anam Thubten use the word "brahman" in this context.

Malcolm wrote:

Tibetans are also not immune to misconceptions. Sad, considering how carefully Dzogchen texts dismantle Advaita, etc.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, October 31st, 2014 at 3:50 AM

Title: Re: Residing in the ground of being

Content:

smcj said:

From Jamgon Kongtrul "Treasury of Knowledge: Book 1 'Myriad Worlds'" p.205:

The primordial purity of the original ground is the domain of a practitioner of the path (of Great Perfection) who is free from the erroneous biases of conceiving (the ground) in various artificial ways and who has the correct (understanding) of the ground a primordial purity.

Malcolm wrote:

Ka dag is simply defined as emptiness free from extremes as he says here:
(The primordial purity of the ground) wholly transcends words, concepts, and formulations, and surpasses the limitations of existing or not existing.

smcj said:

The nature of the ground is primordially pure.

Malcolm wrote:

I.e. it is emptiness free from extremes.

Existing neither as cyclic life nor perfect peace, it remains primordially empty.

smcj said:

Personally I like the english word "premise" better than "base" or "ground", but that's just me.

Malcolm wrote:

The word is sthana (basis, support) in Sanskrit, not pratijñā (premise)

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, October 31st, 2014 at 3:51 AM

Title: Re: Residing in the ground of being

Content:

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, October 31st, 2014 at 3:57 AM

Title: Re: Residing in the ground of being

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

So is this referring to Dharmadhatu or Dharmakaya?

Malcolm wrote:
ka dag = dharmakāya of the basis.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Friday, October 31st, 2014 at 4:18 AM
Title: Re: Residing in the ground of being
Content:
Jikan said:
Malcolm, going back to the OP here for context:

When this teacher is using the phrase "ground of being," is he simply using an inappropriate term to translate something (ka dag, say)? Or do are you saying this is a symptom of a misunderstanding on this teacher's part--that he's slipped over into eternalism?

Malcolm wrote:
As for the first part, definitely yes; as for the second, possibly — it rather depends on what he understands about Vedanta in general.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Friday, October 31st, 2014 at 5:08 AM
Title: Re: Residing in the ground of being
Content:
smcj said:
Kongtrul was famous for being a Shentongpa. I think what he said should be assumed to be from the "empty of other" perspective.

Malcolm wrote:
No, what he says should be understood from the Dzogchen perspective, since it is about Dzogchen. Kongtrul did not subordinate his understanding of Dzogchen to gzhan stong. If anything, it is the opposite.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Friday, October 31st, 2014 at 5:55 AM
Title: Re: Residing in the ground of being
Content:
smcj said:
Kongtrul was famous for being a Shentongpa. I think what he said should be assumed to be from the "empty of other" perspective.

Malcolm wrote:
No, what he says should be understood from the Dzogchen perspective, since it is about Dzogchen. Kongtrul did not subordinate his understanding of Dzogchen to gzhan

stong. If anything, it is the opposite.

smcj said:

As I posted earlier in this thread: Jamgon Kongtrul "Treasury of Knowledge: Book 1 'Myriad Worlds'" p.204:

What is the fundamental nature of the original, primordial ground of being, before buddhas appear by realizing it and before sentient beings appear by not realizing it? To answer this, the tradition of Great Perfection states that...

For those reading this that are not familiar with that particular book, it is Kongtrul's dissertation on the different cosmologies for the universe. He starts with Mt. Meru and the like, and ends up with a description of "how the universe is" from the Dzogchen perspective. The above quote would be hard to characterize as anything other than Great Madhyamaka/Shentong, and it is specifically predicated on Dzogchen. So I don't buy that he saw Dzogchen as being anything other than an "empty of other"/Great Madhyamaka/Shentong perspective.

Kongtrul is one authority. He is not the only authority. Other equally prestigious authorities disagree. That's 100% ok. The only "correct way to see it" is whatever way a qualified teacher decides a specific student needs to hear about it. I know of teachers that tell one student one thing and another student something else entirely. You're not going to get that kind of customized presentation here on the internet. But in any case, like it or not, the "empty of other" school of thought does exist within Tibetan philosophical tradition.

Malcolm wrote:

The term "ground of being" appears nowhere in the text.

The text uses the term "ye thog gzhi", i.e. "primordial, original basis."

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, October 31st, 2014 at 8:00 AM

Title: Re: Residing in the ground of being

Content:

rachmiel said:

A quick zoom over to Wikipedia revealed this:

Some Mahayana and Dzogchen traditions of Buddhism, however, do assert an underlying monistic 'ground of being' or tathagatagarbha, which is stated to be indestructibly present in all beings and phenomena.

Malcolm wrote:

No. Dzogchen does not assert an underlying monistic 'ground of being'. This is why Dzogchen spends so much time refuting such a ground.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, October 31st, 2014 at 7:26 PM

Title: Re: Residing in the ground of being

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

No. Dzogchen does not assert an underlying monistic 'ground of being'.

smcj said:

You may be right. But you've got to admit that a lot of the time it looks like a duck, walks like a duck, and quacks like a duck.

Malcolm wrote:

No, but it is true that a lot of westerners spend a lot of time surgically altering swans into ducks.

As a marginalia in the rig pa rang shar tantra states:

"The original basis" is undetermined and can appear in any way. It is not impeded in anyway, has no fixed nature, it's essence is unchanging, it is unperturbed by nature, the luminosity of wisdom. Also that light is able to appear as everything and is capable of performing functions. It is empty of a self and what belongs to a self, the dharmin of unchanging emptiness is not determined in clarity. Further, the ultimate essence that does not change in a defined instant is beyond words.

This is a perfect definition.

The problem with most of these conversations about the Dharma on the internet, is that we are looking at these teachings, especially a teaching like Dzogchen, through an incredibly narrow aperture, assuming that the one glint we see of the teachings represents the whole.

We are also in a time where foreign teachers try to communicate with students using terms in English without an educated background in Western Philosophy, and Theology and so imply things they have no intention of implying.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, October 31st, 2014 at 7:44 PM

Title: Re: About the demon Mara

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

From Replies to Nyang Tingzin Zangpo:

Again Guru Rinpoche said:

"There are as many Dharma practitioners as stars in the sky, but few are without the obstacles of māra, like the sun and moon. If one is without the obstacles of māra, it would be easy to attain liberation in a single year. Therefore, necessary to recognize māra and overthrow him.

In the beginning, when one is staying in the city of samsara's suffering, also one's faith in

Dharma is slight; carried away by the “māra of laziness”, one is angry at enemies, loving to friends, one thinks of mutual satisfaction, one is distracted by mundane activities, one is not mindful of death. Because of the activities of deluded appearances one remains in procrastination. That is called “māra”.

The method of overpowering that māra is to seek out a qualified Guru, the cause of unimpaired faith. Meditate on death and impermanence, the cause of unimpaired diligence. Having established one’s priorities, flee towards the Dharma.

At that time, māras turning one’s thinking in the wrong direction will arise. Some will manifest as one’s kin and companions, “Don’t practice Dharma” they will say and will cause obstacles by various means. Some will manifest as terrifying enemies or manifest as competitors and property. Since the human life of deceptions is exposed, slipping away day after day, and in the end one sinks deeper into the mire of samsara. To subdue it, having entrusted one’s mind to the jewel of the Guru, it is necessary to have the resolve not to seek advice from secular counselors. [8/a]

When one arrives in the presence of the Guru, the māra who accompanies doubts arises. The sign of his entry is to not perceive the qualities of the Guru. Even subtle faults are perceived. Incorrect views regarding his practice of interpretable deeds arise.

Thinking it is necessary to go to hell after giving whatever donations were received to the Dharma is a māra. To subdue it, develop the thought of the Guru as a Buddha.

At that time, the māra of turning away from Dharma arises. One will think of women, wealth, business, be deceitful and hoard. The sign of the entry of that māra is one will give up one’s Dharma clothes, companions, and Dharma practice. One will not wish to listen to Dharma. One’s behavior will be mundane and one will have attachments and aversions. One will be greatly attached to evil alcohol. One will turn one’s back on the teachings of the Buddha. To subdue it, develop perseverance towards the Dharma, sublime of the sublime. One should be diligent whatever profound Dharma to which one is inclined. Remain very far away from women and irreligious activities. It is important to think about the liberation accounts of one’s predecessors.

At that time, the māra of being jaded about hearing different Dharmas will arise necessarily. The sign of his entry is one speaks proudly “I made this request for this Dharma.” There isn’t an intellectual understanding because one has not understood the meaning. Because one understands empty words alone, one explains secret words in public. Despite whatever profound meaning is explained, one thinks “I have heard it before” and certain knowledge does not arise. One does not reach perfection in Dharma, that is called a māra. To subdue it, one must engage in hearing and contemplation as before again and again, and truly integrate the meaning of Dharma.

At that time, māra of seeking many qualities enters. Since one understands qualities, māra is disguised as benefactors and students. On their arrival, one doesn’t engage in practice. One becomes conceited about one’s learning, and one sees oneself as important. One becomes attached to wealth. Obstacles preventing one from traveling the path of Dharma are created. The method of subduing it is, stay in mountain retreat

for a long time, and change all other activities which will not realize the Dharma.

At that time, the māra of tenets will arrive. Having arrived as a Dharma of five poisons with the biases of oneself and others, give up the jealousies of tenets, train in unbiased pure vision.

At that time, when meditating on the deity, the māra of having doubts about the deity enters. Concepts about taking and putting down the deity, and is it good or bad arise. [9/a] Wishing to subdue demons with power, with completing the approach, hurrying the activities, practicing subjugation and evil mantras, to tame the māra of animosity with the wisdom deity, whatever deity one meditates, do not meditate with or without characteristics, but develop only the inner radiance of awareness and be steady in one's commitments of the three doors.

If one is freed from that māra, once again when one is meditating the channels and winds, the māra of introducing obstacles to practice arises, creating obstacles to spiritual practice, even slight suffering is unbearable. One stops that practice and later one is apprehensive of doing it. For that, meditate on the faults of samsara and one will be free from obstacles.

If one is free from that, again, enhancing great bliss, the dākinī māra arrives. Having accepted mantra, the woman bears children. Since one cannot care for them, various non-virtues occur. Cut the snares of attachment to her, what one does not have one needn't protect.

If one is free from that, when meditating emptiness, the māra of emptiness arising as an enemy occurs. "Nothing is accomplished" and one confuses good deeds and misdeeds. One will have not faith in the Three Jewels. One will not arouse compassion for sentient beings. For that, one should increase virtue and purify misdeeds. One should train in pure vision, devoted faith, dependent origination and inseparable emptiness and compassion.

Further, the māra of compassion arising as an enemy is that without oneself being liberated one rushes to help migrating beings, and delay in accomplishment, etc., occurs. So to avoid that, develop aspirational bodhicitta and be relaxed about engaged bodhicitta.

If one is free from that, the māra of predictions arising as an enemy occurs. Impersonating one's deity or Guru, when such predictions occur in one's experience or in dreams as "Help migrating beings!" and "One will become accomplished if one has helped migrating beings", etc., for that dissolve the wisdom being, if it remains clearly, it is the deity or Guru. But if it does not remain clearly, it is a māra and an obstacle. One should determine that with certainty.

If free from that, because the māra of ascetic conduct arises as an enemy, one wanders continually in towns, some are drunks, others show crazy behavior, others are lewd, behavior which is not correspond with the sublime Dharma occurs. To counter act that,

[10/a] stay in one place, meditate on candali, be impartial towards the eight dharmas.

Otherwise, the obstacles of māra while one has not obtained perfect Buddhahood are endless, and also the explanations which follow. Having given up material things, if one practices one pointedly, no kind of obstacle or māra will affect one.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, October 31st, 2014 at 11:00 PM

Title: Re: Residing in the ground of being

Content:

rachmiel said:

I'm glad to hear that you have been able to maintain a strong relationship with your Guru all these years while seeing him so infrequently. Knowing that this is possible for another person makes me think it could work for me.

Malcolm wrote:

It is not really necessary to have a close personal relationship with one's teacher. It is useful however to travel now and again to serve him or her. As the Mahāsiddha Virupa states "The guru is the profound path."

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, October 31st, 2014 at 11:24 PM

Title: Re: Residing in the ground of being

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

As a marginalia in the rig pa rang shar tantra states:

"The original basis" is undetermined and can appear in any way. It is not impeded in anyway, has no fixed nature, it's essence is unchanging, it is unperturbed by nature, the luminosity of wisdom. Also that light is able to appear as everything and is capable of performing functions. It is empty of a self and what belongs to a self, the dharmin of unchanging emptiness is not determined in clarity. Further, the ultimate essence that does not change in a defined instant is beyond words.

This is a perfect definition.

dzogchungpa said:

It might be perfect, but I don't understand it.

Malcolm wrote:

It is referring to your own unfabricated mind.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, October 31st, 2014 at 11:27 PM

Title: Re: About the demon Mara

Content:

pemachophel said:
Thanks Malcolm for posting this.

Malcolm wrote:
Sure, this is an excellent little text, I mean to publish it some day.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Friday, October 31st, 2014 at 11:51 PM
Title: Re: Residing in the ground of being
Content:
Malcolm wrote:

As a marginalia in the rig pa rang shar tantra states:
“The original basis” is undetermined and can appear in any way. It is not impeded in anyway, has no fixed nature, it’s essence is unchanging, it is unperturbed by nature, the luminosity of wisdom. Also that light is able to appear as everything and is capable of performing functions. It is empty of a self and what belongs to a self, the dharmin of unchanging emptiness is not determined in clarity. Further, the ultimate essence that does not change in a defined instant is beyond words.
This is a perfect definition.

dzogchungpa said:
It might be perfect, but I don't understand it. What do the phrases "the dharmin of unchanging emptiness is not determined in clarity" and "the ultimate essence that does not change in a defined instant" mean?

Malcolm wrote:
"Dharmin" means the subject of a reasoned discussion. A "defined instant" means an instant predicated on having arising, ceasing and abiding (and such instants are rejected even in Yogacara).

So it means here that the basis, ones own unfabricated mind, has no fixed form or nature and is essentially timeless since time is also not established.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Saturday, November 1st, 2014 at 12:17 AM
Title: Re: Residing in the ground of being
Content:
Malcolm wrote:

As a marginalia in the rig pa rang shar tantra states:
“The original basis” is undetermined and can appear in any way. It is not impeded in anyway, has no fixed nature, it’s essence is unchanging, it is unperturbed by nature, the luminosity of wisdom. Also that light is able to appear as everything and is capable of performing functions. It is empty of a self and what belongs to a self, the dharmin of

unchanging emptiness is not determined in clarity. Further, the ultimate essence that does not change in a defined instant is beyond words.

This is a perfect definition.

"Dharmin" means the subject of a reasoned discussion. A "defined instant" means an instant predicated on having arising, ceasing and abiding (and such instants are rejected even in Yogacara).

So it means here that the basis, one's own unfabricated mind, has no fixed form or nature and is essentially timeless since time is also not established.

dzogchungpa said:

I still don't understand what "not determined in clarity" means. Also, it doesn't say the basis, which I assume = the ultimate essence, is timeless but rather that it is "beyond words". Also, while we're at it, there's one of these bases for each sentient being, right?

Malcolm wrote:

It means that the emptiness of the mind is not fixed in the clarity of the mind.

The whole passage concerns a definition of the original basis, *thog ma gzhi*.

If there is a mind for every sentient being, there is a basis for every sentient being. This is why the basis is defined as being beyond one or many. It is beyond being one, since there is a diversity of sentient beings; it is beyond being many, since the basis is generic, and exists the same way in each sentient being.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, November 1st, 2014 at 12:29 AM

Title: Re: Residing in the ground of being

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

If there is a mind for every sentient being, there is a basis for every sentient being. This is why the basis is defined as being beyond one or many. It is beyond being one, since there is a diversity of sentient beings; it is beyond being many, since the basis is generic, and exists the same way in each sentient being.

dzogchungpa said:

So, basically, you're saying that "the basis" is just a way of referring to the fact that sentient beings are sentient?

Malcolm wrote:

The basis [primordial state] is a way of describing how we become buddhas by recognizing our real state or sentient beings by not recognizing that state, as well as describing how our real nature is whether we recognize it or not.

As described above, the term "ground of being" was coined by Tillich as a term for God. Hence it is not a proper term to be used in Buddhist dharma at all.

Put another way, all fires are similarly hot, but there is no "ground of fire" from which all fires arise.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, November 1st, 2014 at 12:51 AM

Title: Re: Residing in the ground of being

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Put another way, all fires are similarly hot, but there is no "ground of fire" from which all fires arise.

dzogchungpa said:

It is kind of interesting how they're all so similar though, don't you think?

Malcolm wrote:

Similar causes and conditions result in similar effects. If you see your real nature, the six realms are the six dhatus of Samantabhadra, if you don't, the six dhātus of Samantabhadra are the six realms. As Nāgārjuna states in the MMK:

Samsara is not a little bit different than nirvana,
nirvana is not a little bit different than samsara;

whatever is the limit of nirvana,

that is the limit of samsara.

A little difference between those two

does not even have the slightest existence.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, November 1st, 2014 at 1:09 AM

Title: Re: Shang Rinpoche dharma transmission and lecture in Melbou

Content:

Ayu said:

In the Lamrim teaching from Che Tsongkhapa (11th century)

Malcolm wrote:

Late 14th, early fifteenth, actually.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, November 1st, 2014 at 1:24 AM

Title: Re: Residing in the ground of being

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

I understand that you have a kind of nominalist, anti-"mystical" bent but, honestly, when

I read this passage, from "On The Nature Of Samantabhadra: A Conversation with Chögyal Namkhai Norbu", the epilogue to "The Supreme Source": Question: But if all beings are Samantabhadra, can we say that there are infinite Samantabhadras? Answer: We could also think that there are infinite Samantabhadras, but when we are in the state of Samantabhadra, what does "infinite" mean? This is already a limited viewpoint. The true condition is beyond numbers. If we think in terms of an "individual being" this means that we are limiting, and consequently everything becomes complicated. If we want to understand, then we must not limit.

Question: In every tantra there is a dialogue, such as the dialogue between dharmakaya and sambhogakaya in the Kunjed Gyalpo tantra. What is the real meaning of this? Answer: It is a way of communicating knowledge. The transmission of knowledge comes from the state of rigpa that has never been stained and has never been hindered. This is the Adibuddha, or "primordial Buddha," Kunjed Gyalpo.

Question: Is the state of Adibuddha, or Kunjed Gyalpo, something universal, present in all beings? Answer: The state of Kunjed Gyalpo is knowledge, and in knowledge there is not even the concept of "one and two," otherwise we have already entered into dualism. Also the concept of "individual" presupposes dualistic vision. But Samantabhadra is beyond all this, isn't he? it just doesn't seem to be the same view.

Malcolm wrote:

Your primordial state [basis] is yours. Your rigpa is yours. It does not belong to someone else, was not created by Samantabhadra, God, Chance, or anything else. As long as one persists in reifying the basis, for that long one will never understand Dzogchen teachings.

BTW:

The view established intellectually we need to establish consciously in dependence upon one's capacity of knowledge and on convention. The way of establishing that is the system of Prasanga Madhyamaka commented upon by the great being Nāgārjuna and his followers. There is no system of view better than that.

--ChNN, Questions and Answers on the Great Perfection

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, November 1st, 2014 at 2:21 AM

Title: Re: Residing in the ground of being

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Your primordial state [basis] is yours.

alpha said:

If the primordial base is individual to each sentient being how is it possible that methods like hum sgrub of dorje drollo work and why do they work ?

Or why do we come across so many expressions in the dzogchen tantras like the essence of all the sugatas is none other than the essence of your own primordial state? If it is none other is shared which is heresy. Is there a way of thinking about individual bases without falling into the error of thinking about it as a separate entity ? I know it is empty but if it is empty then it can only be shared and empty.

Malcolm wrote:

The essence of all fires is heat. That does not mean all fires are the same.

The basis is not an entity at all, which is the point.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, November 1st, 2014 at 3:09 AM

Title: Re: Residing in the ground of being

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The view established intellectually we need to establish consciously in dependence upon one's capacity of knowledge and on convention. The way of establishing that is the system of Prasanga Madhyamaka commented upon by the great being Nāgārjuna and his followers. There is no system of view better than that.

--ChNN, Questions and Answers on the Great Perfection

treehuggingoctopus said:

Malcolm, is the text you are quoting from available anywhere? Has it been published?

Malcolm wrote:

In French only.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, November 1st, 2014 at 3:18 AM

Title: Re: Residing in the ground of being

Content:

treehuggingoctopus said:

Good enough for me. Is it Seize questions à un maître dzogchen?

Malcolm wrote:

no clue, i read it in Tibetan

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, November 1st, 2014 at 3:30 AM

Title: Re: Residing in the ground of being

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

What is the name of the Tibetan text, and is it available online somewhere?

Malcolm wrote:

This is from the section on the view I cited. Enjoy.

The passage is on the third page at the very end of the section on view, right before he quotes Sakya Pandita.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, November 1st, 2014 at 3:54 AM

Title: Re: Residing in the ground of being

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

Appears to be this:

[http://www.tbrc.org/#!rid=O2MS813%7CO2MS813C2O0183\\$W2MS813](http://www.tbrc.org/#!rid=O2MS813%7CO2MS813C2O0183$W2MS813)

Malcolm wrote:

Correct, but not everyone has access to TBRC.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, November 1st, 2014 at 9:30 PM

Title: Re: Trungpa, Tathagatagarbha, and "True Self"

Content:

Son of Buddha said:

Chapter 11 Nirvana Sutra

Malcolm wrote:

States the following:

Child of a good family, "buddhanature" is ultimate emptiness. Ultimate emptiness is "wisdom." In that respect, "empty" is not perceived to be either empty or not empty. Through discerning wisdom [prajñā] all that is empty, not empty, permanent, impermanent, suffering, bliss, self and non-self is seen. "Empty" is all samsara. "Not-empty" is parinirvana. Samsara is in the range of the selfless, "self" is parinirvana. To see everything as empty; but not see what is not empty is not "the middle path." To not

see everything as in the range of the selfless, but not see the self is not "the middle path". "The middle path" is buddhanature.

Of course, now we need to understand what wisdom, jñāna, is according to this text. After giving a description of various samadhis, the Buddha then earlier in the text:

"Wisdom" is to be understood as the buddhanature that exists in all sentient beings".

Further, when we consider the four categories of permanence, bliss, self and purity, the Buddha states:

For the worldly there is permanence, bliss, self and purity. Also for the transcendent there is permanence, bliss, self and purity. Worldly Dharmas are expressible, but meaningless. Transcendent Dharmas are expressible and also meaningful.

If it is asked why that is so, since Worldly Dharmas possessing four distortions, the meaning cannot be realized. If it is asked how so? Their perception is distorted, their mind is distorted and their view is distorted, and because of these three distortions, the worldly see bliss as suffering, see the permanent as impermanent, see the self as not a self, and see the pure and impure, thus these are distortions. Because of distortions the worldly speak the words [permanence, bliss, self and purity] but do not understand the meaning.

In that respect, if it is asked what the meaning is, the selfless is "samsara"; self is the "Tathāgata"; impermanent is the śravakas and pratyekabuddhas; permanent is the dharmakāya of the Tathāgata. Suffering is all tīrthikas; bliss is parinirvana; impurity is conditioned phenomena; purity is the pure dharmas of the buddhas and bodhisattvas. Therefore, this is undistorted.

As we can see, we do not need to take the Buddha literally on the point of the self, because if we did, we would be left with the negative consequence that we should all have all the perfect qualities of buddhas and bodhisattvas present fully formed in our mind streams. Anyone can see this is not so.

So Trungpa is perfectly in accord with the Buddha because the way some people these days present the teachings of the Buddha in the Nirvana sutra is quite distorted, presenting the teaching of the Nirvana Sutra in the manner of the worldly interpretation of permanence, bliss, self and purity and leading others astray.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, November 1st, 2014 at 10:13 PM

Title: Re: Sapan and Gampopa

Content:

lorem said:

Why do he and others hold the view that pointing out instructions are valid only if one has abhisheka?

Malcolm wrote:

That is not what he is saying. He is saying that pointing out instructions do not have the ability to ripen one to practice mahāmudra in absence of a proper Abhisheka.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, November 1st, 2014 at 10:33 PM

Title: Re: Residing in the ground of being

Content:

rachmiel said:

How does one "leave mind alone?"

Mind is all we see, know, experience ... right?

Malcolm wrote:

You don't try to correct your thoughts.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, November 1st, 2014 at 11:29 PM

Title: Re: Residing in the ground of being

Content:

rachmiel said:

Please elaborate.

Malcolm wrote:

For example, when sitting in meditation, you hear someone mowing the lawn, you don't try to block out the sound, you do not try to focus on your breath for example, to lessen the distraction, you don't follow the distraction of the lawn mower, you just sit there without trying to change your thoughts or block your thoughts. In other words, you leave your mind unmodified. When you do so the distraction of the sound of the lawn mower will disappear.

For example, you smell nice incense in the shrine room, you do not you don't try to block out the smell, you do not try to focus on your breath for example, to lessen the distraction, you don't follow the distraction of the scent, you just sit there without trying to change your thoughts or block your thoughts. In other words, you leave your mind unmodified. When you do so the distraction of the scent will disappear.

etc.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, November 1st, 2014 at 11:30 PM

Title: Re: Residing in the ground of being

Content:

rachmiel said:

Good one!

What I meant was: I didn't understand Malcolm's pointer. "Don't correct thoughts" doesn't do anything for me, it just sits there.

Malcolm wrote:

That is what it is supposed to do (the mind), it just sits there without being altered or corrected in anyway.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, November 2nd, 2014 at 1:23 AM

Title: Re: Residing in the ground of being

Content:

rachmiel said:

What I meant was: I didn't understand Malcolm's pointer. "Don't correct thoughts" doesn't do anything for me, it just sits there.

Malcolm wrote:

That is what it is supposed to do (the mind), it just sits there without being altered or corrected in anyway.

rachmiel said:

A pointer needs to signify on some level for the pointee, or it is of no use. If you point at the moon, I need to have a clue that you are pointing to ... the moon, rather than pointing arbitrarily, to nothing that I can see/feel.

Malcolm wrote:

Then for you it is useless to discuss this on the internet. You need to find this out directly from your teacher. If it is important to you, then you will make the effort, otherwise, you are wasting people's valuable time.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, November 2nd, 2014 at 1:51 AM

Title: Re: Residing in the ground of being

Content:

rachmiel said:

A pointer needs to signify on some level for the pointee, or it is of no use. If you point at the moon, I need to have a clue that you are pointing to ... the moon, rather than pointing arbitrarily, to nothing that I can see/feel.

Malcolm wrote:

Then for you it is useless to discuss this on the internet. You need to find this out directly from your teacher. If it is important to you, then you will make the effort, otherwise, you are wasting people's valuable time.

rachmiel said:

Woah! Your pointer doesn't happen to speak to me. Plenty of others do. If I'm wasting your valuable time, please feel free to not invest any more in this thread.

Malcolm wrote:

There is no need to point to a moon that is right in front of your face. In other words, your approach is too intellectual. It is not grounded in experience. Animals have choiceless awareness, that is not what we are trying to discover.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, November 2nd, 2014 at 2:16 AM

Title: Re: Polygamy / Polyandry & Buddhism

Content:

Zhen Li said:

So what's the conclusion? Is Polygamy and Polyandry acceptable in Buddhism?

Malcolm wrote:

Completely acceptable. Buddha had many wives, and in some parts of Central Tibet, several brothers will marry one woman.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, November 2nd, 2014 at 8:19 PM

Title: Re: Trungpa, Tathagatagarbha, and "True Self"

Content:

Son of Buddha said:

As we can see, we do not need to take the Buddha literally on the point of the self, because if we did, we would be left with the negative consequence that we should all have all the perfect qualities of buddhas and bodhisattvas present fully formed in our mind streams. Anyone can see this is not so.

This naturally pure basic constituent of a one-gone-thus, ultimate truth, thusness, has no previously existent flaws of afflictions to be removed because freedom from all adventitious defilements. from. the start is its nature,
And similarly it does not have the least factor of qualities of purification to be set up because the status of the ultimate qualities

of the powers and so forth being spontaneously established from the start and being indivisible is its nature.

The Buddha Nature is the very nature of all living beings, for the Buddha this nature is Fully realized(Pure Enlightenment with no flaws nor marks of the 3 poisons, greed anger or ignorance)

For Samsaric beings This very nature(Buddha Nature) resides in all of us in its pure "form" naturally perfect(our true nature our true self), yet it is obscured by adventitious defilements that make up and constitute a living samsaric being.

So what it comes down to is (1) Enlightenment in its perfect state with no defilements obscuring it.(BuddhaHood)
and (2) Enlightenment in its perfect state with defilements obscuring it(Samsaric beings)

The thusness that itself abides as the fruit of purification in a buddha abides as the basis of purification in sentient beings, and the thusness that itself abides as the basis of purification in sentient beings abides as the fruit of purification in a buddha because with respect to the thusness of sentient beings and of buddhas there is not the slightest difference of entity, just as there is not the slightest difference in entity in the space pervading all of where there are and are not clouds. Hence, the naturally pure thusness is, due to the person, together with defilement and also without defilement and is, due to the person, the basis of purification and also the fruit of purification. Consequently, it is necessary to become skilled in the profound essentials of flawless non-contradiction.(Dolpopa)

Malcolm wrote:

What sense does it make to establish suchness as a "self", someone's identity?

Nāgārjuna:

Whatever is the nature of the Tathāgāta,
that is the nature of the world;

Since the Tathāgata has no nature,
the world too has no nature.

You can say, as Candrakīrti does, that this naturelessness is a nature, you can say that tathāta, śūnyatā, dharmatā, etc., are all pure, free of affliction from the beginning, etc. But since they are not substantially established, calling them a "self" is merely a Buddhist rhetorical device to frame the substantially established self of the non-Buddhists as a falsity.

Son of Buddha said:

So Trungpa is perfectly in accord with the Buddha because the way some people these days present the teachings of the Buddha in the Nirvana sutra is quite distorted, presenting the teaching of the Nirvana Sutra in the manner of the worldly interpretation of permanence, bliss, self and purity and leading others astray.

M

Define what the worldly interpretation of this view is?

Malcolm wrote:

[/quote]

As above, that the self taught in the Nirvana sūtra is a substantially established self, rather than a mere rhetorical device.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, November 2nd, 2014 at 8:25 PM

Title: Re: A closer look into empowerments

Content:

Jikan said:

We thought it appropriate that Khenpo's email should basically have the last word.

Malcolm wrote:

In this case it was an evasion, and I can understand why, since the correct answer is actually no, one cannot receive an empowerment from a recording.

Privileging someone's answer because of their title, in absence of any clear scriptural precedent or reasoning is pretty lame.

T. Chokyi said:

It would follow then that you can't give or receive a transmission in the dream state either, yet Nyala Rinpoche Rigdzin Changchub Dorje told CHNN when CHNN asked for transmission that he had been given the transmission already by dream, it was given in a dream before they met, only thing is CHNN had his own doubts about receiving it that way why? because it was not "his dream". CHNN gives this true story many times during Open Webcast as you know.

Malcolm wrote:

The key difference, of course, is that a recording is an inert pattern stored on a hard disk somewhere, and Chanchub Dorje was a fully realized person. The Buddhas see sentient beings as Buddhas, but we still need to do our own work and wake up to our own nature. The Buddhas cannot "give" us empowerments that we are not aware of. Empowerments are not given, they are received. That means active participation by two people at the same time. And as you know, ChNN himself has stated numerous that empowerments and introductions and even lungs cannot be received from recordings.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, November 2nd, 2014 at 8:27 PM

Title: Re: A closer look into empowerments

Content:

lorem said:

I would kneel down before His Holiness the Dalai Lama and Karmapa and swear that I received transmission of the Golden Light Sutra from Ven Kirti Tsenshab Rinpoche in the awake and dreaming states from MP3 audio.

Malcolm wrote:

It's a sūtra, it does not have a formal transmission as in Vajrayāna.

lorem said:

I just remember H E Garchen Rinpoche saying that no matter what anyone thought on this subject to please leave his students alone or something similar.

Malcolm wrote:

No one is hassling Garchen Rinpoche's students and I personally have nothing but the highest respect for Garchen Rinpoche, having received empowerments from him in person.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, November 2nd, 2014 at 8:36 PM

Title: Re: Residing in the ground of being

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

There is no need to point to a moon that is right in front of your face. In other words, your approach is too intellectual. It is not grounded in experience. Animals have choiceless awareness, that is not what we are trying to discover.

rachmiel said:

What **are** we trying to discover?

Malcolm wrote:

The nature of our minds.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, November 2nd, 2014 at 8:52 PM

Title: Re: Trungpa, Tathagatagarbha, and "True Self"

Content:

Anders said:

So basically, no good reason other than "The Buddha said it."

Malcolm wrote:

But the Buddha did not say it, because the Buddha, as Trungpa correctly observes, never taught any self that could be substantially established and merely used the term "self" as a rhetorical device.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, November 2nd, 2014 at 9:14 PM

Title: Re: Residing in the ground of being

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

And the nature of that which is not our minds ... is Buddhism interested in that?
Not sure what you mean.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, November 2nd, 2014 at 10:10 PM

Title: Re: Residing in the ground of being

Content:

rachmiel said:

Does Buddhism discuss -- or even acknowledge -- that which is not of mind? Does it have a cosmology, an explanation for the nature of all that is?

Malcolm wrote:

Depends on what you mean. Buddhism maintains that the universe comes about again and again because the collective karma of all sentient beings.

In terms of the actual nature of things, Mahāyāna Buddhism explains that everything is empty, without self.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, November 2nd, 2014 at 10:29 PM

Title: Re: A closer look into empowerments

Content:

lorem said:

The MP3 recording I feel is up for debate. Was Sutra yes. Was a lung. I was participating.

Malcolm wrote:

One cannot received a lung from a recording. Any way, sutras do not require lungs.

A lung is an authorization to read; no one needs permission to read a sūtra or even to recite the dharanis found therein.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, November 2nd, 2014 at 10:51 PM

Title: Re: A closer look into empowerments

Content:

Malcolm's said:

Any way, sutras do not require lungs.

lorem said:

Yes I agree but seen several instances of Gelukpa giving them.

Recording is still up for debate IMHO.

Malcolm wrote:

As to the first point, there is a lung for the whole of the bka' 'gyur and the bstan 'gyur, even so, sūtras do not require a lung to be read. Tantras, on the other hand, generally do, or at least one has to have had a major empowerment otherwise you are not supposed to even look at them, much less things like vajras and bells.

As to the second point, one cannot receive a lung from a recording. Why? Because mantras and so on cannot be transmitted this way. Believing that you can receive a lung from a recording is similar with believing that you can get light from a lamp without plugging it into a wall. There is no direct living connection with the source. This is why lungs and empowerments from recorded media are not valid means of transmission.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, November 2nd, 2014 at 10:56 PM

Title: Re: Residing in the ground of being

Content:

rachmiel said:

Something existed before sentient beings and mind entered the scene.

Malcolm wrote:

Short answer, no.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, November 2nd, 2014 at 11:04 PM

Title: Re: Interview with Khenchen Rigdzin Dorje

Content:

lorem said:

Even Dolpopa and Tsongkhapa. Does it really matter from the side of a practitioner? I actually like Dolpopa's view but Tsongkhapa's rings true also. I've never thought it nihilistic as such. Just not conceptually available and who can describe the undescrivable. Can't be put into words.

asunthatneversets said:

Tsongkhapa and Dolbupa represent both the main gsar ma views; (i) gelug, and (ii) gzhan stong. The rnying ma view that Khenchen Rigdzin Dorje is discussing is (iii) spros bral, which is different from Tsongkhapa's Gelug and Dolbupa's gzhan stong.

Malcolm wrote:

Huh?

Most Madhyamakas before Tsongkhapa's time were spros bral pas, and the Sakya school still is representative of that view, as is Mipham and Khenpo Shengga (who both studied Madhyamaka with Sakyapas).

I would not say that the main gsar ma view is represented by Gelug and Jonang approaches, since the Kagyus in general (Karma, Drugpa, Drikung, etc.) are all over the place when it comes to how they understand Madhyamaka.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, November 2nd, 2014 at 11:51 PM

Title: Re: Residing in the ground of being

Content:

smcj said:

...

Malcolm wrote:

SMCJ, you simply do not understand what you are reading,

I will leave you this statement by one of the most important masters of the Dzogchen tradition, Nyima Bum (12th century):

As such, because the basis, one's unfabricated mind, arose as the essence of the sole reality, there is no need to search elsewhere for the place etc., i.e. it is called self-originated pristine consciousness [ye shes].

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, November 3rd, 2014 at 12:06 AM

Title: Re: Residing in the ground of being

Content:

smcj said:

As I have already written, there are many Dzogchen masters that have a different presentation/interpretation.

Malcolm wrote:

Actually, they don't. But you really do not understand what you are reading because you are not very familiar with this tradition.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, November 3rd, 2014 at 12:42 AM

Title: Re: Residing in the ground of being

Content:

smcj said:

As I have already written, there are many Dzogchen masters that have a different presentation/intepretation.

Malcolm wrote:

Actually, they don't. But you really do not understand what you are reading because you are not very familiar with this tradition.

smcj said:

Well, be that as it may, you do. And elsewhere here at DW you've admitted that Dudjom R. held a Great Madhyamaka/empty of other view of Dzogchen.

Malcolm wrote:

I did no such thing. Dudjom Rinpoche, like Jigme Lingpa (an adherent of Tsongkhapa's interpretation of Madhyamaka) before him, did not conflate his preferred interpretation of Madhyamaka with Dzogchen and there are very important reasons for this.

Dudjom Rinpoche, like Jigme Lingpa, Longchenpa and so on before him, states very clearly that tenets like Madhyamaka and so on obscure the meaning of Atiyoga when he introduces the superiority of Atiyoga in the big red book.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, November 3rd, 2014 at 12:51 AM

Title: Re: Residing in the ground of being

Content:

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, November 3rd, 2014 at 1:33 AM

Title: Re: Residing in the ground of being

Content:

smcj said:

At the risk of being a bore and reposting the same quotes over and over:

Malcolm wrote:

You are just repeating over and over again your misconstrual of teachings you have

never received and never practiced.

Over and out.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, November 3rd, 2014 at 3:54 AM

Title: Re: Residing in the ground of being

Content:

alpha said:

Does this mean that Elio has erroneous views ?

Malcolm wrote:

I didn't say that.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, November 3rd, 2014 at 4:22 AM

Title: Re: Residing in the ground of being

Content:

alpha said:

Does this mean that Elio has erroneous views ?

Malcolm wrote:

I didn't say that.

alpha said:

Ok.You didnt ...

But do you agree with his views from the paragraph above ?

Malcolm wrote:

Not %100, mainly because it is a somewhat incomplete explanation and lacks important nuances, such as the fact that all the appearances of Mt. Meru, houses, trees, etc., arise from ignorance, from NOT recognizing one's basis.

In any case, getting at such nuances is really impossible here since a) a lot of people are just invested in their own trips and do not want to really understand Dzogchen b) they should really be understood from a qualified teacher.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, November 3rd, 2014 at 5:19 AM

Title: Re: Residing in the ground of being

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

—Thig-le kun-gsal chen-po'i rgyud

Malcolm wrote:

<http://greatmiddleway.wordpress.com/2014/11/02/the-ground-of-all/> [/quote]

There is a reason why sems sde is considered inferior to man ngag sde.

Some Dzogchen tantras assert that the youthful vase body exist in the human body with tiny little eyes and so on. As I said, it is not easy to understand Dzogchen (not least of all because there are three main traditions, and each tradition has its own tantras and lineage, etc.) and differentiate veiled rhetorical statements like the one cited here from the actual core of the teachings. Then of course, you have to ferret out why Longchenpa cites this text in his ngal gso skor gsum and so on. It is not sufficient to cherry pick a citation from a book loaded onto the web without attribution.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, November 3rd, 2014 at 5:24 AM

Title: Re: Residing in the ground of being

Content:

lorem said:

Just real quick what are the metaphysical thoughts Buddha said not to try to ponder?

Mkoll said:

Since no one's answered you, I'll give it a go from my more Theravada-inclined perspective. I'm aware this is the Nyingma forum, and I'm not sure if the Nyingma tradition also upholds these teachings.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, it does. A total of three hundred and sixty incorrect positions are listed in such text as the Rigpa Rangshar, but only sixty of them are presented explicitly.

Mkoll said:

Further, samasara is as follows: [53/b]

false view and eternalist view.

The false vehicle is as follows:

held to be three hundred and sixty beliefs in a self.

Three hundred are explained to be in the dhātu:

sixty are explained in the following way:

1) the Samkhya who speak falsely

2) the Vaiśeṣikas who advocate intrinsic causation

Kumārila the great and the advocates of deviation

holders of the treatises of Aviddhakarṇa

the Guhyas who rely on five fires

6) those who burn their bodies with sesame oil soaked ignited cotton

7) (and of) trident asceticism.

8) (There is) the asceticism of offering and gatherings

9) The asceticism of removing the flesh from the body

10) the conduct of appearing like a dog

Likewise, through a slight clairvoyance,

of how the blessings of the buddhas appear,

there is the practice of false asceticism.

The partial views are like so:

the view of a creator

taking the creator as the path

13) those who show the meaning of eternalism

14) those advocate unchanging permanence

15) those who advocate conditional permanence

16) those who advocate the cause as permanent

17) those who advocate the result as permanent

18) those who assert the path depends on permanence

19) those who assert conduct as eternal [54/a]

20) those who assert annihilation in which there is no ultimate eternity

21) those who have the aspect of eternalists

22) those who place importance on inauthentic evil mantras

23) those who place importance on fortune-telling and divination

24) those who place importance on insignificant magic

those who rush into debate

those who practice asceticism

27) those who are attached to this world

28) those who are attached to their own activities

29) those who wear wool

30) those who wear cotton robes of invincibility

31) those who make insignia important

32) those who advocate depending on actions

33) those who refute others with their knowledge

34) those who advocate annihilation without a cause

35) those who advocate total voidness

36) those who advocate the view of the interrupted cause and interrupted result

37) those who advocate the interrupted path and interrupted wisdom

38) those who advocate great permanent annihilation

39) those who advocate the annihilationism of path, the permanent annihilation of the result

40) those who advocate the annihilationist view of false thinking

those who advocate the great void of annihilation.

42) There are the Vedantins advocating secrecy

- 43) the tīrthikās who deviate in equal ways
- 44) the tīrthikās of mental appearances
- 45) the tīrthikās who grasp deluded vision
- 46) tīrthikās who generate hatred
- 47) tīrthikās whose claim mind has shape [54/b]
- 48) tīrthikās who say grasping is meaningless
- 49) tīrthikās of deviant claims,
- 50) tīrthikās who say permanence is meaningless,
- 51) Kani and 52) Mātsarya
- 53) Bhasira and 54) Kaśiśa
- 55) Saṃbhira and 56) Dhasiṅg
- 57) Kati and 58) Sangha
- Śaṅkari and 60) Dheśaka.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, November 3rd, 2014 at 8:42 PM

Title: Re: Residing in the ground of being

Content:

smcj said:

From p.8 of the "Early Buddhism and Mahayana" thread:

dzogchungpa said:

Was Dudjom Rinpoche a gzhan stong pa?

Malcolm wrote:

He was a gzhan stong pa, yes. But not really in the same way that Dolbupa was.

Yes, of course Dudjom R. promoted the Kongtrul version of the gzhan stong view, but that has nothing to do with Dzogchen. There is no "gzhan stong" Dzogchen. There is only Dzogchen, and it has its own view.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, November 3rd, 2014 at 9:45 PM

Title: Re: Trungpa, Tathagatagarbha, and "True Self"

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

What sense does it make to establish suchness as a "self", someone's identity?

Son of Buddha said:

I didn't establish the True Self as someones Identity, nor do the Sutras.

Malcolm wrote:

First of all, the term "true self" as opposed to the "false self" does not occur in any Buddhist text. It is a pop Hindu terminology.

Son of Buddha said:

So if Substantial means that which is truly real, Truly existent, not illusory, Then yes Enlightenment/True Self is Substantial.

Malcolm wrote:

Substantial in this case means self held by non-Buddhists immediately preceding the passage you cite:

"...The self maintained by vulgar children is held to be the size of a thumb, the size a white mustard seed or the size of an atom. Since such a self was not mentioned by the Tathāgata, even though he explains that there is no self in phenomena, it is not that there is truly no self. The "self" is any dharma that is true, pure, permanently existing, independent, unchanging and undying, that is what is called "self", just as that great physician is skilled in using milk as medicine."

So, here the Buddha is not teaching a substantial self like the some other nonbuddhists do, as I said before.

The other important point is that Buddha taught selflessness in order to tame nonbuddhists. If you run around saying that Buddha taught a self, then how will nonbuddhists be able to distinguish the self they taught from the suchness as the real nature of phenomena? This is why even still, despite what provisional texts like the Nirvana sutra say, the central teaching of the Buddha is selfless of persons and phenomena.

People who run around saying that Buddha taught "enlightenment" as the "true self" really do a disservice to sentient beings who have not been cured of wrong views of the self. In fact the Buddha did not teach self or selflessness as a definitive teaching.

The Nirvana sutra's use of the term "self" is a play on words, where the meaning of atman as a transmigrating self (rejected by the Buddha) is contra posed with the meaning of atman as "nature" (emptiness, suchness, etc.). If however, one suggests that the meaning of this is all the qualities of Buddhahood fully exist from the beginning with the continuums of sentient beings, rather than as an inherent potential, then your position is no different than non-buddhists who assert a substantial self.

And anyway, we have already seen that the the Buddha defined self as jñāna, meaning the nature of consciousness itself.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, November 3rd, 2014 at 10:47 PM

Title: Re: Trungpa, Tathagatagarbha, and "True Self"

Content:

dzogchungpa said:
Provisional, according to you.

Malcolm wrote:
Provisional according to the the Buddha in the Akṣayamati-nirdeśa sutra.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Monday, November 3rd, 2014 at 11:48 PM
Title: Re: Residing in the ground of being
Content:
Lotus_Bitch said:
Dudjom Rinpoche had a preference for shengtong, but clearly, as was quoted in my post:
he distinguishes the view of Dzogchen from sutra.

smcj said:
Of course.
He was an adherent of shengtong on the level of sutra only.
So you're saying that he backtracked to Yogacara with his Dzogchen view? Care to cite?

Malcolm wrote:
What I am saying is that there are different interpretations of sutra level Madhyamaka.
His preference is gzhan stong, just as Jigme Lingpa's was Tsongkhapa's view. However,
in terms of their ultimate view, both Dudjom Rinpoche and Jigme Lingpa were
Dzogchenpas.

You are suffering from an idea promulgated amongst many non-Nyingmapas that there
is no difference in view between sutra and tantra, and that the view of sutra that you
have is the same view that you apply in tantra. But this is not true in the Nyingma school,
where each of the nine yanas has its own view.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Tuesday, November 4th, 2014 at 12:04 AM
Title: Re: Residing in the ground of being
Content:
lorem said:
Sky-gazing. Yell PHAT really loud and forceful then rest

alpha said:
No,... dont do that.

Malcolm wrote:
Seriously. This place is becoming like a sandbox for children.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, November 4th, 2014 at 12:04 AM

Title: Re: Residing in the ground of being

Content:

smcj said:

Of course. But his Great Madhyamaka/Shentong view was his presentation/interpretation for discussing meditational experiences. He said that self=emptiness was for intellectual applications. He did not limit his Great Madhyamaka interpretations to Mahayoga and Anuyoga meditational experiences. It is his Atiyoga positions too.

Malcolm wrote:

It was his presentation for sutra level meditational experience only. The funny of course is that the meditation experience under discussion is actually identical to the so called rang stong experience. It is only is post-equipose intellectual discussion that one differentiates these two approaches (which actually have no validity outside the gzhan stong presentation).

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, November 4th, 2014 at 12:36 AM

Title: Re: Residing in the ground of being

Content:

smcj said:

From "The Big Red Book", the chapter on "Superiority of Atiyoga" (a.k.a. Dzogchen), p.300:

Now concerning this natural expression of the Great Perfection: The Sugata, during the intermediate promulgation of the transmitted precepts (a.k.a self-emptiness) did not reveal the structure of the fundamental reality, though he did extensively teach the inconceivable, abiding nature without referring to symbols of elaborate conception. And, during the final promulgation (a.k.a other-emptiness), though he did reveal the structure of the fundamental reality, he did not teach the characteristic path through which it is actualized.

(formatting mine)

So yes, Dudjom R. did not claim that his Great Madhyamaka/Shentong view was a path. It was just a view.

Malcolm wrote:

That is not what this passage means. It is not a reference to so called rang stong and gzhan stong.

It is a reference to the fact that tathagātagarbha teachings (a vital part of Dzogchen), according to Longchenpa, are part of the so called third turning of the wheel (a turning so important that it garners virtually no comments at all from the Indian authors

preserved in the bstan 'gyur).

However, as I have pointed out, when the sole source (Samdhinirmocana sutra) for the notion of three turnings is actually examined, it is merely a restatement of the doctrine of the second turning in unequivocal terms.

However, Longchenpa never explains the tathagatagarbha according to the gzhan stong system, and he clearly explains the three own natures as belong to cittamatra which he considers inferior to Madhyamaka.

When he treats the issues of Madhyamaka and the tathāgatagarbha, he clearly states in the sgrub mtha' mdzod that Prasanga Madhyamaka is the definitive view of Mahāyāna and that the Tathāgatagarbha sūtras are the definitive sutras.

Of course, Dudjom Rinpoche followed his own teachers in this respect, and he embraced the Karma Kagyu presentation of gzhan stong when it comes to the view of Madhyamaka.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, November 4th, 2014 at 12:49 AM

Title: Re: Residing in the ground of being

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Of course, Dudjom Rinpoche followed his own teachers in this respect, and he embraced the Karma Kagyu presentation of gzhan stong when it comes to the view of Madhyamaka.

smcj said:

Exactly. Like I said before; it is a more modern development.

Malcolm wrote:

What you are conflating however is Dudjom R.'s sutrayāna views with his Vajrayāna views. As I pointed out to you, when it comes to the nine yānas, each yāna has it's own view. In the Bodhisattvayāna Madhyamaka is considered the highest view. Then of course we can disagree about what Madhyamaka means, but it is very plainly stated in all Dzogchen texts that the view of Dzogchen surpasses the views of the eight lower yanas.

So while Dzogchen masters can argue about the various merits of this or that interpretation of Madhyamaka, in the end their view will be Dzogchen and not Madhyamaka, no matter whether they prefer gzhan stong Madhyamaka (Dudjom R, Kongtrul), Gelug Prasanga (Jigme Lingpa) or Pre-Gelug Prasanga (Longchenpa, etc.) Gorampa (Khenpo Shenga, etc.) and the views of the eight lower yanas will always be subordinate to the view of Dzogchen in their eyes.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, November 4th, 2014 at 1:05 AM

Title: Re: Residing in the ground of being

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

As I pointed out to you, when it comes to the nine yānas, each yāna has it's own view.

smcj said:

Yes! On pages 294-300 he goes through the lower 8 yanas and their views. What I just quoted on p. 300 is his view of Dzogchen specifically as juxtaposed with--and superior to--the lower 8 yanks. That view is what makes Dzogchen superior! (Hence the title of the chapter: Superiority of Atiyoga.)

Malcolm wrote:

I already explained this to you as well. He is not saying that the gzhan stong presentation of Madhyamaka is equivalent to Dzogchen. He is actually saying it is deficient and inferior.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, November 4th, 2014 at 1:56 AM

Title: Re: Residing in the ground of being

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

I already explained this to you as well. He is not saying that the gzhan stong presentation of Madhyamaka is equivalent to Dzogchen. He is actually saying it is deficient and inferior.

smcj said:

Well, he does continue, and it is a little more nuanced. p.300 continues...:

Therefore, the conclusive intention of the the Two Promulgators actually abides without contradiction in the nature of the Great Perfection. This intention comprises the unaltered intention of the "Collection of Madhyamaka Reasoning", which consist of the commentaries on the intermediate promulgation by the sublime and supreme Nagarjuna; and his [Collection of Eulogies} including the "Eulogy to the Expanse of Reality", and the commentaries by the regent Maitreya, the sublime and supreme Asanga, and his brother [Vasubandhu] and so forth, which together form the intention of the final [promulgation]. If one were to ask why this is the case, it is because these masters did not claim anything other than the profound abiding nature of natural reality, and because the Great Perfection itself is none other than that.
(underlining mine)

In the footnotes it says the "Two Promulgators" are Nagarjuna and Asanga. Also I believe "Eulogy to the Expanse of Reality" has been translated into English as "In Praise of

Dharmadhatu", which is a Shentong book.

As a Karma Kagyu I interpret what he just said to be akin to Kongtrul's position that any understanding of Shentong has to be predicated on an understanding of Madhyamaka, meaning that phenomena need to be seen as self-empty before you can see them as "images on the magic mirror".

Malcolm wrote:

1) It is not so simple to say that Dharmadhātustava is a 'gzhan stong' book, just like one cannot declare the Uttaratantra a "gzhan stong" book. For example:

Having abandoned concepts and investigation,
the absence of the inherent existence of phenomena itself
is meditated as the dharmadhātu.

2) It is also not erroneous to state that the reality the Buddha describes in the sutra is the same reality presented in Dzogchen.

3) Therefore, your attempt to prove that Dudjom R's presentation subsumes his understanding of Dzogchen under gzhan stong is not proven, far from it.

What is at stake here is how that "natural reality" is to be experienced and realized. All approaches to the middle way in sutra, no matter whether you take Nāgārjuna or Maitryanatha's approach are analytical and intellectual, that is the problem with sprosbral, gzhan stong, dge lug madhyamaka and so on — they are all analytical, philosophical approaches to reality. This is ultimately the difference between sutra and tantra, as the great translator Drogmi pointed, the view of sutra is intellectual, the view of mantra is experiential. Even if gzhan stong were the most refined, most detailed, highest, most sublime approach to sūtra, it would be still be intellectual and analytical and therefore quite coarse and inferior compared to the experiential view of mantra.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, November 4th, 2014 at 4:28 AM

Title: Re: Residing in the ground of being

Content:

smcj said:

As you know, since we have already discussed it elsewhere, Dudjom R. said that Madhyamaka was great for an intellectual approach to emptiness, and Great Madhyamaka/Shentong was good for discussing emptiness from a meditational/experiential perspective.

Malcolm wrote:

But it is still sutra.

smcj said:

According to D.R., Great Madhyamaka is not subject to intellectual analysis the way

Prasangika Madhyamaka is, and is approached through faith. If you wish I will find the quote. It is a Google search away. But since you know about it already I don't see the reason to make the effort.

Malcolm wrote:

Have you actually examined the presentation of the two truths through the three natures advanced by gzhan stong pas? It is utterly absurd to claim that gzhan stong is immune from the charge of being an intellectual tenet system. If faith in gzhan stong is required, it is because very few people actually understand it, despite the legions of people who claim allegiance to it.

smcj said:

here is no "direct introduction" in Shentong.

Malcolm wrote:

That makes it intellectual and analytical.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, November 4th, 2014 at 6:05 AM

Title: Re: Residing in the ground of being

Content:

smcj said:

I understand Malcolm's resistance to all this. He sees it as a classic heresy.

Malcolm wrote:

I don't think it as a heresy at all. I just think that you really don't understand Dudjom Rinpoche's perspective at all because you have an emotional adherence to a philosophical view common these days among Karma Kagyus.

For example, the doctrine of tathāgatagarbha is found in both sūtra and Dzogchen. However, if you compared the actual doctrine of tathāgatagarbha in Dzogchen compared to that of sūtra you would scratch your head in astonishment.

Even though the teaching of tathāgatagarbha in Dzogchen radically goes beyond how it is presented in sūtra, nevertheless, the tathāgatagarbha sutra citations are used (especially by Longchenpa) as a preliminary step for preparing (intellectual) people to understand tathāgatagarbha in Dzogchen.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, November 4th, 2014 at 6:32 AM

Title: Re: Residing in the ground of being

Content:

smcj said:

My dilettante's understanding is that this is a fairly modern interpretation/presentation of Dzogchen. If you want to stick with a more classical presentation that's ok too.

asunthatneversets said:

What is the basis for this theory of Atiyoga modernity leaning towards gzhan stong?

smcj said:

Well for one thing the whole "empty of other" view, regardless of sect, seems to have been a Tibetan development. It seems to have gained traction in the last few hundred years. Guy Newland has some YouTube videos that go over all that.

Malcolm wrote:

gZhan stong became popular in Karma Kagyu in the 18th century in eastern Tibet because Situ Panchen was disciple of the abbot of Kathog, Rlgin Tsewang Norbu, who advised the former to adopt gzhan stong because it was more positive and therefore it would extend Situ Panchens' life. Because it was adopted by this powerful Karma Kagyu lama, gzhan tong was revived at Palpung near Dege, where Kongtrul studied. But of course this was not the gzhan stong of the Jonangpas, but was a rather modified version largely influenced by the Sakya master Serdog Panchen.

gzhan stong is not a heresy per se. It is regarded by many people as a mistaken way of presenting the two truths of Madhyamaka via the three natures of Yogacara.

Personally, I don't care what sutrayāna view people hold (Yogacara or Madhyamaka), because that is not the view with which Vajrayāna practitioners attain realization. The view Vajrayāna practitioners attain realization with is the experiential view inculcated during empowerment. It really does not matter much what one's intellectual predilections are (unless you are a Gelug, then it matters very much, as far as they are concerned) when it comes to Mahāyāna tenets (Yogacara or Madhyamaka) since they are somewhat irrelevant to the actual practice of Vajrayāna.

The real point in all of this is that there are some people who follow gzhan stong views who reify jñāna as something which truly exists, and this deeply contradicts Dzogchen view, as indicated by the opening passages of the Unwritten Tantra states:

Hey, hey, apparent yet non existent retinue: listen well! There is no object to distinguish in me, the view of self-originated pure consciousness; it did not exist before, it will not arise later, and also does not appear in anyway in the present. The path does not exist, action does not exist, traces do not exist, ignorance does not exist, thoughts do not exist, mind does not exist, wisdom does not exist, samsara does not exist, nirvana does not exist, vidyā itself does not even exist, totally not appearing in anyway.

But you really cannot understand this without studying and practicing under a real master.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, November 4th, 2014 at 6:34 AM

Title: Re: About the demon Mara

Content:
pemachophel said:
Thanks Malcolm for posting this.

Malcolm wrote:
Sure, this is an excellent little text, I mean to publish it some day.

Sherab Dorje said:
Do you mind if I steal it and translate it into Greek?

Malcolm wrote:
Yes, since it is not complete. It is just a fragment.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Tuesday, November 4th, 2014 at 9:21 AM
Title: Re: Residing in the ground of being
Content:
asunthatneversets said:
So what then differentiates your view from Advaita Vedanta or Samkhya yoga?

smcj said:
Little.

Malcolm wrote:
That's why I think you really do not understand Dzogchen, nor gzhan stong for that matter, much less Yogacara, Madhyamaka and so on.

But it is ok to be an eternalist, it's better than being a nihilist.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Tuesday, November 4th, 2014 at 9:24 AM
Title: Re: Residing in the ground of being
Content:
smcj said:
But that doesn't mean that contemporary Nyingma orthodoxy (as per the Big Red Book) doesn't embrace it.

Malcolm wrote:
It doesn't. Since you don't read Tibetan texts, you really don't have any idea what "Nyingma" orthodoxy is. And it would be Rongzom, Longchenpa and Mipham, in that descending order.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, November 4th, 2014 at 7:27 PM

Title: Re: Trungpa, Tathagatagarbha, and "True Self"

Content:

Son of Buddha said:

The False Self is the imputation of various false concepts to the True Self(saying the True self is an object, or personality)SO if one believes the True Self to be an object the size of the thumb....ect then This is called the false self/unholy self.

Malcolm wrote:

This terminology simple does not exist in this sutra and is of your own invention.

Son of Buddha said:

Glorious Great Seal Drop Tantra

Malcolm wrote:

This passage, from chapter seven of the Mahāmudratilaka tantra, concerns the completion stage and is not to be taken literally.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, November 4th, 2014 at 7:29 PM

Title: Re: Trungpa, Tathagatagarbha, and "True Self"

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

full glass.jpg

I really don't know why people are wasting their time and energy.

Malcolm wrote:

Agreed, I'm out.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, November 4th, 2014 at 7:31 PM

Title: Re: Residing in the ground of being

Content:

smcj said:

This is a monistic presentation of reality. In some quarters this is heresy to the hilt.
Q.E.D.

Malcolm wrote:

It really isn't.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, November 4th, 2014 at 10:14 PM

Title: Re: Residing in the ground of being

Content:

Sherlock said:

Monism is eternalism, one of the mundane views Padmasambhava warned against in Garland of Views.

Malcolm wrote:

Pshaaaw, that is that old-fashioned Dzogchen, who would want anything to do with that? We like this new-fangled Dzogchen even if it is just warmed-over Hinduism.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, November 4th, 2014 at 11:27 PM

Title: Re: Residing in the ground of being

Content:

lorem said:

For anyone who ever stumbles on this thread we do love others and their religious beliefs.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, we have a soft spot in our hearts especially for those who engage in animal sacrifice (we do actually, but not for the practices themselves, but because such practices are filled with ignorance and lead people to lower realms).

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, November 5th, 2014 at 11:34 PM

Title: Re: Help identifying prayer, Garchen Rinpoche Vajrakilaya 20

Content:

kng said:

Hi dharma friends

I would like to ask for your help in identifying prayer that is being sung from 02:25:25

Code: #

<http://www.ustream.tv/recorded/27098978>

I would be very happy to have text of that prayer but I will be also very thankful for only identifying it.

Thank you

heart said:

Melody sounds like the dewachen prayer

(http://www.tibetanlanguage.org/images/Free_Study_Aids/dewachen_prayer.pdf " onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;" onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;), but it is translated to english and probably longer.

/magnus

Malcolm wrote:

The Drikung in the US seem to use that melody all over the place.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, November 6th, 2014 at 12:09 AM

Title: Re: Interview with Khenchen Rigdzin Dorje

Content:

lorem said:

Okay from Golden Letters looks like Dzogchen showed up in Tibet 3,600 years ago.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, this is what Bonpos believe, but since there are no Bonpo historical texts that can be dated earlier than early 11th century, (which make claims about things which happened four millennia ago) Bon claims about this are highly problematical.

In any case, this kind of thing comes down to a question of belief and religious authority.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, November 6th, 2014 at 2:01 AM

Title: The Truth of the First Noble Truth

Content:

Queequeg said:

So here is the problem I have with the First Noble Truth -it must be taken as an irreducible claim, along with a number of further assumptions, none of which I'm not entirely convinced about. "birth is suffering, aging is suffering, illness is suffering, death is suffering; union with what is displeasing is suffering; separation from what is pleasing is suffering; not to get what one wants is suffering; in brief, the five aggregates subject to clinging are suffering"

Malcolm wrote:

Then you may not have taken the Buddha's teachings entirely to heart.

Queequeg said:

For one, suffering here is a qualitative, subjective characterization, which while a compelling one to an extent, is not necessarily true for everyone. There are many people who, though not enlightened by Buddhist standards, have reflected on their life, settled in equanimity, and come to a conclusion about all this - "Its life." Neither good, nor bad.

It just is what it is. With that conclusion, they go on living in many different ways, taking the joys and sorrows, triumphs and tragedies, in stride. With the First Noble Truth undermined, the rest of it falls apart.

Malcolm wrote:

This is all just a mass of suffering.

Queequeg said:

We can add a footnote and say that suffering is a technical description of the unpleasant experience of perpetually changing circumstances, but that's still undermined by, "Its life." This is not even to mention people who have come to understand their own consciousness through the discoveries of neuroscience which is presenting a pretty compelling case that consciousness and everything that we think we are is a meta phenomena of brain circuitry. In this kind of context, "Life is Suffering", seems like an arbitrary assertion.

Malcolm wrote:

Buddha did not say "life is suffering", he said "sarva dukkham", everything is suffering.

Queequeg said:

Some thinkers have posited that you can't have Buddhism without belief in this model of samsaric existence. I don't agree. Notwithstanding, a teaching that falls apart when certain unprovable assumptions are set aside is at a severe disadvantage in a claim to Truth. I don't think all Buddhist schools of thought are susceptible to this problem.

Malcolm wrote:

A so called "Buddhist" school that abandons the core tenets the Buddha taught is no longer Buddhist.

Queequeg said:

I previously referred to Nagarjuna and how he opened questions about the Four Noble Truths. He does a delicate dance in the Madhyamikakarika concerning people who use sunyata to undermine the Four Noble Truths. Maybe some people better versed in Madhyamika thought can correct me, but his response is appeal to the middle which is a dialectic tension settling on what amounts to the four noble truths as an expedient means (upaya). Are upaya Truths with a capital T? There's a whole body of discourse on this, and as best I can tell, there is no categorical answer Yes or no. Its "Yes, but..." or "No, but..."

Malcolm wrote:

He addressing the idea of inherency, not suggesting that it is all "upaya".

Queequeg said:

And then without even going deep into all the vertiginous logic of Madhyamika, we have pithy doctrines like "Samsara and Nirvana are coextensive." or "There are not two worlds, pure and impure." What does that mean for the Four Noble Truths?

Malcolm wrote:

Nāgārjuna address this as well "Samsara and nirvana, these two do not exist, instead, Nirvana is thorough knowledge of samsara."

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, November 6th, 2014 at 3:58 AM

Title: Re: Residing in the ground of being

Content:

treehuggingoctopus said:

And for those who lack that fundamental trust but need to obtain, or discover, or even experience, *Something* that comes with emphasis and a capital S, the disappointment will probably not be ecstatic, alas.

Thanks for the quote - which also shows that as far as Anam Thubten's notion of Urgrund goes, he is far from having fallen prey to an eternalist heresy, doesn't it?

Malcolm wrote:

You will note that I never supposed that AT held such a view, merely that he naively uses a term from Christian theology which should not be used in Dzogchen specifically, and Buddhism in general.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, November 6th, 2014 at 4:18 AM

Title: Re: Residing in the ground of being

Content:

treehuggingoctopus said:

And for those who lack that fundamental trust but need to obtain, or discover, or even experience, *Something* that comes with emphasis and a capital S, the disappointment will probably not be ecstatic, alas.

Thanks for the quote - which also shows that as far as Anam Thubten's notion of Urgrund goes, he is far from having fallen prey to an eternalist heresy, doesn't it?

Malcolm wrote:

You will note that I never supposed that AT held such a view, merely that he naively uses a term from Christian theology which should not be used in Dzogchen specifically, and Buddhism in general.

treehuggingoctopus said:

I wasn't accusing you - or anybody else, for that matter - of claiming that AT holds eternalist views. Just happy to know he does not.

(Btw, while I am generally inclined to believe that it is much better to leave the core Dzogchen terms untranslated, it may be worth recalling here that Tillich took Urgrund

from Boehme who had taken it from Eckhart and other Rheine mystics. And if you read Eckhart closely, his Urgrund is not quite the Absolute of an eternalist. Nor is his 'being' necessarily 'real' in the sense Prasangikas find offensive. Just saying.)

Malcolm wrote:

Oh, it is not the GERMAN that has the negative connotations, it is the ENGLISH that does.

"Urgrund" in German, as I understand it, does not necessarily have the same connotation as "ground of being" does in English. I am making a comment about English usage. The term "ground of being" really is not attested to before the translation of Tillich into English.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, November 6th, 2014 at 4:20 AM

Title: Re: Residing in the ground of being

Content:

treehuggingoctopus said:

(Btw, while I am generally inclined to believe that it is much better to leave the core Dzogchen terms untranslated, it may be worth recalling here that Tillich took Urgrund from Boehme who had taken it from Eckhart and other Rheine mystics. And if you read Eckhart closely, his Urgrund is not quite the Absolute of an eternalist. Nor is his 'being' necessarily 'real' in the sense Prasangikas find offensive. Just saying.)

dzogchungpa said:

From http://www.chronicleproject.com/shenpen_hookham.html: I remember telling Trungpa Rinpoche at Samye Ling, at a personal interview, that I didnt know anything about Buddhism, so what should I read. He suggested I read Krishnamurti and Meister Eckhart.

Malcolm wrote:

Funny, considering his opinion of Krishnamurti...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, November 6th, 2014 at 4:58 AM

Title: Re: Residing in the ground of being

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

This was before he actually met K, I think.

Malcolm wrote:

Considering how he reacted to Krishnamurti, we can only imagine how he would have reacted to Eckhart, but I doubt it would have been good.

The point of course is that the one person's opinion of another person's the former does not know is rather hollow and not really indicative of anything about the latter.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, November 6th, 2014 at 5:25 AM

Title: Re: Residing in the ground of being

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

This was before he actually met K, I think.

Malcolm wrote:

Considering how he reacted to Krishnamurti, we can only imagine how he would have reacted to Eckhart, but I doubt it would have been good.

dzogchungpa said:

Nice.

I do believe a certain Gemini once said that Eckhart was clearly a spiritual genius.

Malcolm wrote:

That was not me. I have never read him.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, November 6th, 2014 at 6:16 AM

Title: Re: Residing in the ground of being

Content:

monktastic said:

What was this about? Eckhart Tolle?

"[Candice O'Denver] is not an Eckhart, or a Hafiz, or a Maharshi."

"I have no idea, but these three are clearly spiritual geniuses."

(Links redacted in advance to That Forum That Shall Not Be Named)

Malcolm wrote:

Oh, yes, sure, in their respective traditions, of course. I did not mean that I personally derive any spiritual sustenance from these people.

Once again, context is everything.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, November 6th, 2014 at 9:08 PM

Title: Re: The Truth of the First Noble Truth

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Then you may not have taken the Buddha's teachings entirely to heart.

Queequeg said:

How is something like that constructive?

Malcolm wrote:

It is a question we should be constantly asking ourselves.

Queequeg said:

...The whole world is marked by suffering/suckiness. What does that mean precisely, except that one is proposing a universal framework in which to subjectively view everything. Dukkha, Dukkha, Dukkha... Take everything and see it as this single flavor of suck. Problematize everything. Why? Because you can't have a solution without a problem.

Malcolm wrote:

Three kinds of suffering were identified by the Buddha: the suffering of suffering, the suffering of change and the suffering of the conditioned. The first refers to the actual experience of pain and misery, etc. The second refers to the impermanence of all positive circumstances. The third refers to the very impermanence of condition phenomena itself. Do you see anything left out?

Queequeg said:

...what he was selling only really is effective if you agree to see things the way he wants you to see them.

Malcolm wrote:

Hence my comment about whether or not you have really taken the Buddha's teachings to heart, no excuses, no ifs, ands or buts.

Queequeg said:

I'm not an expert on Pali or Sanskrit, so I have no idea if dukkha actually refers to a quality of subjective experience, but the term "suffering" certainly does.

Malcolm wrote:

Dukha has its roots in the notion of a wheel that does not turn properly on its axle.

Queequeg said:

If everything is suffering, then photosynthesis is suffering.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, it is — it is part of the suffering of the conditioned and the suffering of change.

Queequeg said:

We're considerably expanding the meaning of suffering when we characterize a process in a plant as suffering. How about convection currents in the ocean? That's suffering,

too? How about atomic fusion?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, all conditioned phenomena apart from path dharma are suffering or conducive to suffering — this is why the Buddha says "all contaminated phenomena are suffering".

Queequeg said:

Bringing all this under the category of "Suffering" is then redefining this term that is commonly understood to refer to a particular mode of experience into a reference to the perpetual motion of everything. But that's not really what the Buddha was talking about - he was addressing people's experience of the perpetual motion, and specifically addressing the dissatisfaction in having to deal with all this change.

Malcolm wrote:

However you want to translate dukkha is fine, but generally, it is translated as "suffering", which means "to bear from below", with the obvious allusion. When you look at the Monier-Williams, it has a range of meaning of uneasy, uncomfortable, unpleasant, difficult, pain, sorrow, trouble, etc. Whether you call it suffering, pain, etc., it has the same meaning — there is no happiness anywhere in the three realms. The only way to be truly happy is to be free from afflictions that cause rebirth in samsara.

Queequeg said:

If you don't start out thinking this is suffering, though, there is no suffering to neutralize.

Malcolm wrote:

And so worldly people continue to take rebirth in samsara because they do not recognize suffering as suffering.

Queequeg said:

There are plenty of people who never expected anything of life and wouldn't call it suffering.

Malcolm wrote:

"Ignorance is bliss".

A so called "Buddhist" school that abandons the core tenets the Buddha taught is no longer Buddhist.

Where did the Buddha demand faith in rebirth? I don't recall it.

A number of places, do your research.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, November 6th, 2014 at 9:20 PM

Title: Re: The Truth of the First Noble Truth

Content:

Queequeg said:

You might even find compelling resolutions to problems that have persistently surfaced over the centuries in Buddhist discourse.

Malcolm wrote:
Such as?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, November 6th, 2014 at 10:31 PM

Title: Re: Residing in the ground of being

Content:

rachmiel said:

From having attended his retreats, read his books, watched his videos I can say that the only kinda sorta problem I have with Anam Thubten's approach is that he tends to use carrots to inspire his students. Enlightenment is the biggest and juiciest. Ground of being could be another.

Malcolm wrote:

The basis is our actual state. Buddhahood is the full realization of that state. The path is the slow integration of that state into our experience until we are done.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, November 6th, 2014 at 11:35 PM

Title: Re: can buddhist smoke american spirit organic cigarettes

Content:

LastLegend said:

I will not argue, I will smoke and I will quit one day. I don't care what you say or what anybody says. Can you be more Zen than that?

Malcolm wrote:

Well, if you like inhaling Lead and Polonium 210 and spreading it around for other people to inhale, go for it —, but it hardly seems like bodhisattva activity to me to knowingly spread radioactive contaminants where other people can inhale them.

LastLegend said:

How many people are exposed to radioactivity in cigarettes?

According to the American Lung Association, there are about 48 million adult smokers in the U.S., and 4.8 million adolescent smokers. This means that the U.S., population, directly exposed to radioactivity in cigarette smoke, is approximately 53 million.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 80 percent of adult tobacco users started smoking as teens; 35 percent had become daily smokers by age 18. Thirty nine percent of adult smokers smoke one pack of cigarettes per day, and 20% smoke more than a pack a day.

Smoking is the number one cause of preventable death in the U.S., with 443,000 deaths, or 1 of every 5 deaths, in the United States each year. And, there are 123,000 lung cancer deaths annually attributed to smoking cigarettes. Nearly 1 of every 5 deaths is related to smoking, more than alcohol, car accidents, suicide, AIDS, homicide, and illegal drugs combined.

In addition to smokers, those exposed to secondhand or side-stream smoke have been shown to risk disease as well. In some studies, it has been found that side-stream or secondhand smoke is two to five times more concentrated in some carcinogens than the mainstream smoke inhaled by a smoker. Each year, approximately 3,400 nonsmoking adults die of lung cancer as a result of breathing the smoke of others' cigarettes. Environmental tobacco smoke also causes an estimated 46,000 deaths from heart disease in people who are not current smokers. Secondhand smoke contains over 4,000 chemical compounds, including 69 known carcinogens such as formaldehyde, lead, arsenic, benzene, and radioactive polonium 210.

How does radioactive material get into a cigarette?

The tobacco leaves used in making cigarettes contain radioactive material, particularly lead-210 and polonium-210. The radionuclide content of tobacco leaves depends heavily on soil conditions and fertilizer use.

Soils that contain elevated radium lead to high radon gas emanations rising into the growing tobacco crop. Radon rapidly decays into a series of solid, highly radioactive metals (radon decay products). These metals cling to dust particles which in turn are collected by the sticky tobacco leaves. The sticky compound that seeps from the trichomes is not water soluble, so the particles do not wash off in the rain. There they stay, through curing process, cutting, and manufacture into cigarettes. Lead-210 and Polonium-210 can be absorbed into tobacco leaves directly from the soil. But more importantly, fine, sticky hairs (called trichomes) on both sides of tobacco leaves grab airborne radioactive particles.

For example, phosphate fertilizers, favored by the tobacco industry, contain radium and its decay products (including lead-210 and polonium-210). When phosphate fertilizer is spread on tobacco fields year after year, the concentration of lead-210 and polonium-210 in the soil rises.

Malcolm wrote:

<http://www.epa.gov/radiation/sources/tobacco.html>

So I guess it really depends on how much you care about yourself and how much you care about others.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, November 7th, 2014 at 2:48 AM

Title: Re: Different Kinds of Shentong

Content:

Bakmoon said:

Besides the Jonang school, the Kagyu school also has Shentong teachings, and also some Nyingmapas follow some form of Shentong (I've heard in some places that Ju Mipham was a Shentongpa for example, but I don't know how true that is). Could someone give a summary of how Shentong is presented and what the major differences between them of Shentong are in these different traditions?

Malcolm wrote:

The origins of gzhan stong lie in the master Tsan Kawoche. He received teachings on the six limb yoga of Kalacakra from Somanatha (though apparently the translator was not good, and he did not understand Sanskrit). The lineage of instructions of this view eventually came down to Dolbupa, who gave the first formal voice to gzhan stong teachings. They were very popular for roughly 150 years and stimulated a lot of controversy because of Dolbupa's very literal reading of many passages in sutra and tantra and unique approach to Buddhist history.

His views were hotly contested by many scholars in Sakya especially, and also in Gelug.

This is phase one.

Phase two begins with Shakya Chogden, a Sakya scholar (15th century) who took a revolutionary (for Tibet) approach to Madhyamaka and tried to reconcile the views of the Yogacara and Madhyamaka, in some of his writings declaring them both definitive.

This is phase two.

Phase three consists of Jonang Taranatha's reply to various formulations of gzhan stong view, as well as rejecting arguments against Dolbupa in particular.

This is phase three.

Phase four comes about when Rigzin Tsewang Norbu a Nyingma abbot, tertön and scholar who lived in the 18th century sought to revive Kalacakra and received Kalacakra from the Jonangpas surviving in central Tibet. He passed them onto Situ Panchen, who established both the gzhan stong view as well as the Dro system of Kalacakra at Palpung.

The basis difference among these different species of gzhan stong has to do with how whether one follows in the footsteps of Jonang, or Shakya Chogden.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, November 7th, 2014 at 3:32 AM

Title: Re: Different Kinds of Shentong

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Phase four comes about when Rigzin Tsewang Dorje, a Nyingma abbot, tertön and scholar

mutsum said:

You mean Kah thog Rig 'dzin Tshe dbang nor bu (1698-1755), right ?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, that was a typo...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, November 7th, 2014 at 4:12 AM

Title: Re: The Truth of the First Noble Truth

Content:

Queequeg said:

As for the three aspects of dukkha - it doesn't alter my point - all three aspects have to do with subjective experience.

Malcolm wrote:

No, the third form of suffering has nothing to do with personal experience, it has to do with fundamental nature of conditioned phenomena that are phenomena which belong to the path. In other words, only dharmas that belong to the path are conditioned-undefiled. All other conditioned phenomena are defiled by definition, hence they are dukkha.

Queequeg said:

Calling everything Dukkha is not an attempt to describe the world in the manner of scientific inquiry.

Malcolm wrote:

When you are sick, you go to a doctor, he finds the cause. Since there is a cause, the illness can be pacified. There is a treatment for it.

The four truths of nobles are precisely such a heuristic. When you are a sentient being, you are suffering. The Dharma explains why, and how to remove it, promising that one can transcend the causes of that state.

However if you don't take your medicine nor listen to the Buddha, your illness will not be cured nor will you ever be free of suffering.

Queequeg said:

As such, its not that the True Aspect of Reality (Paramartha Satya) is essentially dukkha, but because of a fundamental nescience, our experience of the True Aspect of Reality is dukkha. Maybe I'm missing something, but I don't think any of you fine pious folk would disagree.

Malcolm wrote:

There is no way an experience of ultimate truth causes suffering. But ordinary people never have that experience, that is why they suffer. When they do have that experience, as bodhisattvas in the first bhumi, their suffering still exists, but for them it is now like a dream or an illusion. Further, they can then eradicate the obscurations to full buddhahood.

Queequeg said:

My understanding is that this is accounted for in the acknowledgment of Pratyekabuddhas who come to right view without Dharma taught by the Buddha.

Malcolm wrote:

Pratyekabuddhas always have come into contact with a buddha's teaching, but they aspire to achieve nirvana in a place where a buddha has not taught.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, November 7th, 2014 at 4:46 AM

Title: Re: The Truth of the First Noble Truth

Content:

Bakmoon said:

There's another point I'd like to make as well. You say:

As for the three aspects of dukkha - it doesn't alter my point - all three aspects have to do with subjective experience.

Just because something is subjective in the sense of being experienced doesn't mean that it is subjective in the sense of being purely a matter of personal opinion. If this weren't the case that would mean that one couldn't say anything objective whatsoever about anything involving the mind. If someone were to claim that it is not objectively true that emotions exist because they are part of personal experience, would anyone take them seriously? It can be objectively true that something is a part of experience, and that doesn't make it any less objective.

Malcolm wrote:

Another additional point is that they are the truths of nobles, not noble truths, because this is the truth that all awakened people see regardless of where they are on the path and regardless of which bodhicitta aspiration they have formed.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, November 7th, 2014 at 6:33 AM

Title: Re: The Truth of the First Noble Truth

Content:

Queequeg said:

On the dukkha of fabrication - If there is no one around when a tree falls in the forest, does it make a noise?

Malcolm wrote:

Whether there is someone around or not, the impermanence of trees, rocks, houses, planets, suns, galaxies and universe is all suffering of the conditioned.

As to your other point, that idea that all one's activities while a common sentient being are buddhaactivities leads to such corruptions as the Japanese Buddhist involvement in WWII.

While it is certainly true that Buddhas only see other Buddhas, we can't even perceive most sentient beings, let alone any Buddhas. Why? We have impure vision because we are contaminated with afflictions.

Queequeg said:

existence is purity, bliss, self, and eternal.

Malcolm wrote:

Good luck with that.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, November 7th, 2014 at 7:01 AM

Title: Re: The Truth of the First Noble Truth

Content:

Queequeg said:

existence is purity, bliss, self, and eternal.

Good luck with that.

What do you mean?

Malcolm wrote:

What I mean is that existence [bhāva] impure, suffering, nonself and impermanent. Seeing the impure as pure and so on is a large part of the fact that sentient beings are caught in samsara.

So good luck with the conceptual proliferation that existence is purity, bliss, self, and eternal.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, November 7th, 2014 at 7:24 AM

Title: Re: The Truth of the First Noble Truth

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

existence is purity, bliss, self, and eternal.

Queequeg said:

Have you encountered this doctrine before?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, in nonbuddhist schools who suffer from wrong views.

There are many eternalist positions in Chinese Buddhism that would never have come to pass if the Chinese understood the range of nonbuddhist views in India. But because they did not, many of these eternalist doctrines developed with Chinese Buddhism, especially with regards to the tathāgatagarbha teachings.

Whether you are accurately reflecting Chih I's views is another matter altogether but claiming that existence is pure, etc., is laughable and shows that a bit of study of Abhidharma might be in order here.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, November 7th, 2014 at 7:06 PM

Title: Re: The Truth of the First Noble Truth

Content:

Queequeg said:

Is it a false assumption that the Buddha's spiritual struggle took place at a particular historical time and place in which there was, more or less, this idea of the cycle of samsara? I have a very hard time imagining that his teachings would have arisen without the particular circumstances of his lifetime. Certainly possible.

Bakmoon said:

Just because something is developed within a particular context doesn't automatically mean that it is limited to that context.

Malcolm wrote:

This would have to suppose that this thing that is developed can be distinguished from its causes and conditions... and that's not possible, right? That's basic madhyamika.[/quote]

Buddha notes that he did not invent the Dharma, but that he merely rediscovered it. Causes and conditions were favorable for a Buddha to arise to teach that Dharma, but principles like the 4NT are universal.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, November 7th, 2014 at 7:14 PM

Title: Re: The Truth of the First Noble Truth

Content:

Queequeg said:

What is the view of the Mahayana Mahaparinirvana Sutra in Indo-Tibetan circles?

Malcolm wrote:

It depends. Those who follow classical Madhyamaka tend to regard it as a secondary text. The main interpretation of it found in the Uttaratantra is what is followed by most Tibetans. There is a lot of debate about how that former text is to be understood.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, November 7th, 2014 at 11:01 PM

Title: Re: Different Kinds of Shentong

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Phase four comes about when Rigzin Tsewang Norbu a Nyingma abbot, tertön and scholar who lived in the 18th century sought to revive Kalacakra and received Kalacakra from the Jonangpas surviving in central Tibet. He passed them onto Situ Panchen, who established both the gzhan stong view as well as the Dro system of Kalacakra at Palpung.

The basis difference among these different species of gzhan stong has to do with how whether one follows in the footsteps of Jonang, or Shakya Chogden.

M

conebeckham said:

Well, The current interest in Shentong is almost entirely due to the writings of Kongtrul, so I'd say that is Phase Five--in some sense, the phase we are currently in. Of course, he was disciple of Situ Panchen at Palpung. When it's taught these days, Kongtrul's texts and commentaries are the ones that are most often used in the Kagyu lineage, at least. But I believe, also, Khyentse Wangpo was a Shentongpa, was he not?

Also, Kongtrul is considered to be the Tulku of Jetsun Taranatha (amongst others, of course).

It would be interesting to explore further any relationship between the presentation of Shentong and the Tantric view espoused in Kalacakra, too.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, but Kongtrul largely follows Shakya Chogden, and not Dolbupa and Taranatha, even though he gives lip service to both of the former, what he actually presents is more consistent with Chogden.

Some people might say that Khyentse was a gzhan stong pa, but I wouldn't. His take on the treatises of Maitreya is that they concerned luminosity and the treatises of

Nāgārjuna concerned emptiness. Since these two are actually synonymous from a Sakya point of view, I don't think you can call Khyentse a gzhan stong pa. He instead presents the Sakya position in a text called The Madhyamaka Instructional Manual that Harmonizes the Two Traditions, "meaning Nāgārjuna and Maitreya.

When considering the point of view of Maitreya, he states that in this system, the wisdom at the time of the basis, the luminous original nature of the mind, is the basis of samsara and nirvana. He says:

"The non-recognition of that, which manifests the appearances of dualistic delusions along with their latent traces, is this connate ignorance that is the root of the samsara. Therefore, it is very important to cut the root of this and and dissolve it into the dharmadhātu."

He identifies this wisdom or pure consciousness, the luminous nature of the mind, as the dharmadhātu. In reference to the much discussed moon metaphor, he states:

"The luminous original nature of the mind free from free from dualism is clear like a moon disc, is non-conceptual and exists in one's heart."

He never discusses this in terms of the three natures and so on, which is characteristic of gzhan stong in general, and the basis for most criticism of gzhan stong, incidentally.

When he does talk about gzhan stong, he discusses it in a series of texts I call "Three Madhyamaka views." he says:

The is the position of the great omniscient Jonang pa is discussed briefly, ultimate truth is without arising or perishing, unconditioned and beyond dependent origination. Relative truth has the character of arising and perishing, depends on cause and conditions and is conditioned.

When he presents the Sakya view, it is identical to his presentation in The Madhyamaka Instructional Manual that Harmonizes the Two Traditions.

So while Khyentse was broadminded, and so on, his own views are in line with the Sakya Gongma.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, November 8th, 2014 at 12:06 AM

Title: Re: The Truth of the First Noble Truth

Content:

Jikan said:

I agree with Queequeg that there's a lot more going on in Zhiyi's discussion of the Four Truths than just emptiness--and that the "lot more" is the most interesting part. I just wanted to highlight that it was there and not negated in the perfect teaching.

A few questions follow from that. First: Are beings who have completely realized the perfect teaching identical to those who have not realized it--who don't "get it"?

If not, what differentiates beings who have fully integrated the view of the perfect teaching from ordinary sentient beings who are stuck to the wheel--reproducing it in themselves and through their actions?

If they are already identical, then what?

{I'm not calling Queequeg out with these questions--I mean them for everyone to discuss or not.}

Malcolm wrote:

Response: it very much depends on what you mean by identical. Fire and water are identical in so far as they are both conditioned, they are not identical in so far as their properties are concerned.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, November 8th, 2014 at 12:40 AM

Title: Re: The Truth of the First Noble Truth

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Response: it very much depends on what you mean by identical. Fire and water are identical in so far as they are both conditioned, they are not identical in so far as their properties are concerned.

Jikan said:

OK. Let's assume we have a dozen ordinary sentient beings, then. What do they have in common? Their afflictions--they are all equally afflicted (equal in kind), but unequally afflicted (unequal in quality).

But let's assume that one out of those dozen is not ordinary at all, but is a realized being. What differentiates that being from the other eleven, if anything? If different, what is the nature of that difference? If the same, are all twelve equally realized or equally samsaric or...?

I'm putting it this way because I think the divergences in view we see in this thread go back to these questions, and a little more clarity wouldn't hurt.

Malcolm wrote:

This is elementary, this is why the Uttarantra states:

Wayward common people

see the opposite of the truth;

while tathāgatas are without proliferation,

unmistaken about how things are.

Respectively, the impure, the pure and impure,

and the very pure,

are called sentient beings, bodhisattvas
and tathāgatas.

Thus the difference between sentient beings, bodhisattvas and buddhas is their
respective insight in the nature of reality, and that is all.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, November 8th, 2014 at 1:40 AM

Title: Re: The Truth of the First Noble Truth

Content:

gad rgyangs said:

"conditioned existence" is not reducible to 'suffering', despite what some buddhist
traditions may say.

Malcolm wrote:

You mean, "...despite what the Buddha said."

Good luck with that.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, November 8th, 2014 at 1:43 AM

Title: Re: Tilopa's Six Advices

Content:

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, November 8th, 2014 at 4:51 AM

Title: Re: Tilopa's Six Advices

Content:

rachmiel said:

Thanks for clarifying that.

lorem said:

It's empowerments that Lama Zhang didn't think you needed. He would watch an
empowerment and then imitate it with results.

Malcolm wrote:

You will note that Lama Zhang does not have a lineage, nor a surviving school. Yes, his
texts survive, but mainly as a curiosity.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, November 8th, 2014 at 5:06 AM

Title: Re: The Truth of the First Noble Truth

Content:

Queequeg said:

Is it possible for a dharma to simultaneously be defiled and undefiled? What I mean by that is, and I don't mean to offend by this example, a shramana and an deeply deluded person encounter a beautiful deity who is teaching Buddhadharma. The Shramana sees the deity as a teacher and benefits from the teachings; the deluded person is overcome by lust for the deity compounding their delusions.

Or is that example flawed? Can you point out how.

Malcolm wrote:

Let me ask you, do you know what a path dharma is? If you don't, please review the 37 bodhipakṣa dharmas.

Queequeg said:

Is it possible to be a sentient being and not suffer, or is that an inherent quality of a sentient being?

Malcolm wrote:

As long as sentient beings have afflictions which motivate actions, they will suffer. However, when a sentient being is free of those afflictions, they are not really called sentient beings anymore. They are called āryas. Freedom, mokṣa, means being free of afflictions that cause rebirth in saṃsāra, that is all it is. For as long as one takes afflictive rebirth in saṃsāra, for that long one will experience suffering.

Queequeg said:

Am I correct to understand that the ordinary person's experience is wholly exclusive of the ultimate truth? Is the obscuration something that blocks experience of ultimate truth, or is it something in the constitution that precludes the capacity?

Malcolm wrote:

Ordinary people never experience ultimate truth, if they do, they are not longer ordinary, having become āryas. Ultimate truth can be reasoned out, and inferred, and this is why it can be realized. However, ultimate truth is just the object of a correct cognition, just as relative truth is likewise the object of a false cognition. Since ordinary sentient beings never have direct correct cognitions, they never experienced ultimate truth, ever, even though all things possess two natures, one relative, the other ultimate. But if someone does have a direct intuition of ultimate truth, that person has become a first stage bodhisattva [in the original Indian ten stage system, not the later Chinese 52 stage system].

Author: Malcolm
Date: Saturday, November 8th, 2014 at 6:01 AM
Title: Re: The Truth of the First Noble Truth
Content:

Queequeg said:
Is it correct to understand that "sentient being" is a technical term? If yes, what is the Sanskrit/Pali term?

Malcolm wrote:
Sattva/satta

Queequeg said:
Can you explain how things possess the two natures? My understanding is that dharmas are empty, and so whether they are seen as they truly are or not is really located in the mind. Is there a sense in which the perception of thing is really the subject and object "meeting" half way?

Malcolm wrote:
Things have relative nature, how they appear as objects of [deluded] perceptions of an ordinary person; they have an ultimate nature, which is what an ārya perceives in equipoise, and what a buddha perceives at all times.

Candrakirti's explanation in the Madhyamakāvatāra, Introduction to Madhyamaka, can be perused with great profit.

No offense, but I find the writings of the Chinese masters too obtuse and round about in general.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Saturday, November 8th, 2014 at 8:57 PM
Title: Re: The Truth of the First Noble Truth
Content:

gad rgyangs said:
all anyone ever experiences is ultimate truth, they just don't recognize it.

Malcolm wrote:
Just that nonrecognition is relative truth because it is by definition a false cognition grounded in ignorance. Thus, while pretending to disagree, you actually agree.

M

Author: Malcolm
Date: Saturday, November 8th, 2014 at 9:20 PM

Title: Re: The Truth of the First Noble Truth

Content:

treehuggingoctopus said:

What about the Dzogchen tawa?

Malcolm wrote:

Here is your "Dzogchen tawa"

The generic basis is called "the basis of delusion" [28b] because of ignorance and contamination.

Further, the object of knowledge itself appears tainted because memory and thought arise in the mind.

The essence itself is contaminated by concepts because the grasping aspect of the six minds is unceasing.

Further, dharmakāya is bound by apprehension due to being associated with subtle atoms.

Further, luminosity forms traces due to the impure perception of the four conditions

And:

Having been joined with the ripening of karma,
one takes bodies good and bad,
one after another like a water wheel,
born into each individual class.

Having crossed at the ford of self-grasping,
one sinks into the ocean of suffering
and one is caught by the heart on the hook of the three lower realms.
One is bound by oneself; the afflictions are the enemy.

— String of Pearls Tantra

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, November 8th, 2014 at 10:05 PM

Title: Re: The Truth of the First Noble Truth

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Here is your "Dzogchen tawa"

treehuggingoctopus said:

What about the nonconceptual one?

Malcolm wrote:

It's no different than sūtra, in this respect. Only the path is different, but not the basic principles, as the Self-Arisen Vidyā Tantra indicates:

If someone does not dwell in words and does not dwell in names,
that is Prajñāpāramitā,
the transcendent state of buddhahood.

And:

Migrating beings are led with the noose of the method

to prajñā through concrete objects.
Therefore, it is the Prajñāpāramitā.
The vast dhatū of Samantabhadra
arises in the dharmatā of unceasing play.
The dhātu of prajñā, the transcendent state,
lacks attachment, the nature of grasping.
Since it is nonconceptual, it is beyond speech and thought.
For example, like a magical apparition in the sky,
it is said to be free from the Dharma of expression.
Also the Mind Mirror of Samantabhadra:
Therefore, prajñāpāramitā cannot be spoken of, thought of, or expressed; not arising,
unceasing, beyond thought, clearly knowing pure beneficial conduct.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, November 8th, 2014 at 10:34 PM

Title: Re: The Truth of the First Noble Truth

Content:

treehuggingoctopus said:

Malcolm, the question I was trying to ask is: When we are resting in rigpa, there is no dukkha, right? Mahasukkha and dukkha cannot co-exist, can they?

Malcolm wrote:

Maybe for as long as it takes for an ant to crawl up the bridge of our nose.

Otherwise, who are we kidding? Well, ourselves for one, and definitely others.

The reality is that as long as we have impure vision, we are witnessing and experiencing suffering, both of ourselves and others. What is the basis for compassion in every Buddhist practice? The suffering or dukha of sentient beings. Does having pure vision mean having a fantasy about everything being pure? No, even if we have pure vision 24/7 we still must keep in mind that sentient beings including ourselves are under the power of affliction and karma.

Will we live forever? No. Will we get sick, die, etc. Yes. Will we be suffering? By definition, yes. Even if we are able to go beyond it through meditation, the very fact of conditioned existence is that it is suffering from top to bottom. Dzogchen is not a get out of jail free card. Dzogchen is the path of seeing how ignorance creates this state we live in, and then how to escape it. This is one of the reasons why in Dzogchen the prison metaphor is used so often.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, November 8th, 2014 at 10:44 PM

Title: Re: Tilopa's Six Advices

Content:

lorem said:

But I still think he was right. If you have a genuine need for it the dakinis and dharmapalas will help.

Malcolm wrote:

No, they will not. If you are not a Vajrayāna practitioner (meaning that you maintained your samaya), they will not even heed you, let alone help you.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, November 8th, 2014 at 10:59 PM

Title: Re: The Truth of the First Noble Truth

Content:

treehuggingoctopus said:

My question (not a rhetorical one!) was: is the suffering that we experience as we are resting in rigpa dukkha?

Malcolm wrote:

Dukkha is dukkha, it does not go away with awakening. Even if our dukha vanishes (and it can), there is still the dukha of others — and this the basis of Mahāyāna, the reason why in Mahāyāna there is the notion of a non-abiding nirvana where awakened people do not simply check out in a nirvanic cessation.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, November 8th, 2014 at 11:16 PM

Title: Re: Tilopa's Six Advices

Content:

lorem said:

But I still think he was right. If you have a genuine need for it the dakinis and dharmapalas will help.

Malcolm wrote:

No, they will not. If you are not a Vajrayāna practitioner (meaning that you maintained your samaya), they will not even heed you, let alone help you.

M

lorem said:

I think samaya though may be a little more complicated than just a definition. Case by case. I think that's why an exception was allowed for H H Trijang Rinpoche.

Malcolm wrote:

Without empowerment, you cannot receive samayas. You need to read Sapan's Three Vows and Tsongkhapa's commentary on the Vajrayānamūlapatti. If you have no samaya, no wisdom protector from the tantras will give you aid, though of course, worldly protectors found in sūtra, etc., will.

I don't know what exception you are referring to regarding Trijang Rinpoche.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, November 8th, 2014 at 11:20 PM

Title: Re: Tilopa's Six Advices

Content:

lorem said:

But I still think he was right. If you have a genuine need for it the dakinis and dharmapalas will help.

Malcolm wrote:

No, they will not. If you are not a Vajrayāna practitioner (meaning that you maintained your samaya), they will not even heed you, let alone help you.

M

lorem said:

I think samaya though may be a little more complicated than just a definition. Case by case. I think that's why exceptions are was allowed.

There is a online teaching by HH Holiness that might clarify a little but I know you hold your view on samaya.

EDIT Not everything is at it appears

Malcolm wrote:

They are not my views. In any case, you can also read Kongtrul's Buddhist Ethics, where different approaches to samaya are evaluated and harmonized, but not one claims that one can hold samaya without an HYT empowerment of some kind. Empowerment is the sole entryway to Vajrayāna, this has been proclaimed in one voice by all the scholars of India and Tibet.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, November 8th, 2014 at 11:26 PM

Title: Re: The Truth of the First Noble Truth

Content:

treehuggingoctopus said:

If happiness is interspersed with dukkha, another level of dukkha will be our gut feeling that the happiness we are enjoying is bound to end, that it is not consummate and perfect, that simultaneously there are endless beings who lack that happiness, etc.

gad rgyangs said:

If dukkha is interspersed with happiness, another level of happiness will be our gut feeling that the suffering we are undergoing is bound to end, that it is not consummate and horrible, that simultaneously there are endless beings who lack that suffering, etc.

Malcolm wrote:

Any being who possesses afflictions which causes rebirth in samsara is suffering by definition even if they are experiencing the most intense possible mundane bliss. Why? Because they will inevitably exhaust their merit and take rebirth in lower realms.

The secret name of the suffering of change is sukha.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, November 8th, 2014 at 11:29 PM

Title: Re: The Truth of the First Noble Truth

Content:

gad rgyangs said:

all anyone ever experiences is ultimate truth, they just don't recognize it.

Malcolm wrote:

Just that nonrecognition is relative truth because it is by definition a false cognition grounded in ignorance.

gad rgyangs said:

...which is itself already ultimate truth.

Malcolm wrote:

Well, not really, not according to the definition. But you know this, and you have your problems accepting Buddhist teachings and have for years, as anyone who follows your posts knows.

The idea that our sense cognition are automatically perceptions of "suchness" has been refuted many times by the Buddha in many sutras, so no need to repeat them here.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, November 9th, 2014 at 12:19 AM

Title: Re: The Truth of the First Noble Truth

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The idea that our sense cognition are automatically perceptions of "suchness" has been refuted many times by the Buddha in many sutras, so no need to repeat them here.

gad rgyangs said:

suchness is not dependent on one's cognitions or one's recognition in any way. That's the beauty of it. true and false cognitions are just clouds passing in the sky.

Malcolm wrote:

Ultimate truth however is just the object of a correct cognition, that is how it is defined, that is all it is. When sentient beings do not have that, they suffer; when they do they don't.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, November 9th, 2014 at 12:20 AM

Title: Re: The Truth of the First Noble Truth

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The secret name of the suffering of change is sukha.

gad rgyangs said:

then it's a truly delicious masochism.

Malcolm wrote:

Only if you are attached to happiness.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, November 9th, 2014 at 4:22 AM

Title: Re: The Truth of the First Noble Truth

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Ultimate truth however is just the object of a correct cognition, that is how it is defined, that is all it is. When sentient beings do not have that, they suffer; when they do they don't.

gad rgyangs said:

I have never seen a sentient being that didn't suffer at least some of the time, regardless of what kind of cognitions they have or don't have. It is part of the job description.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, being a sentient being involves suffering. The question before is whether suffering [duḥkha] can be considered pervasive, extending even to conditioned phenomena. The Buddha thought so, and labeled this the suffering [duḥkha] that pervades the

conditioned [saṃskāraduḥkhatā]. He identified the suffering of change [vipariṇāmaduḥkhatā] as any pleasant condition such as health, happiness, and so on that was impermanent. Why? So that people could understand what duḥkha was. As Maitreya says, there isn't even a pinprick of happiness in the three realms.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, November 9th, 2014 at 4:26 AM

Title: Re: Tilopa's Six Advices

Content:

rachmiel said:

This is well-suited for my style of learning, though I wish I could have a bit more direct contact with him.

Sherab Dorje said:

I can only begin to imagine what Tilopa would have done to you if you went and said this to him. It would probably make Naropa's beating with a sandal look like child's play!

rachmiel said:

What issue do you think Tilopa would have had with what I said?

Malcolm wrote:

Nothing, he just would not have you as a student. But this does not mean other teachers won't. And they will even cater to your expectations and neurosis out of their compassion. Whether that will benefit you of course, depends on the teacher, and how well they can help you see through the very neurosis that prevents you from making deep bond with a guru.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, November 9th, 2014 at 4:49 AM

Title: Re: The Truth of the First Noble Truth

Content:

Queequeg said:

Does a Buddha experience happiness?

Malcolm wrote:

From the point of view of Mahāyāna, buddhas experience only pleasurable mental sensations, i.e., bliss, and no painful physical sensations. A Buddha is also totally free of clinging. All painful feelings of the body are the ripened result of negative karma. Buddhas have no obscuration of karma. All pleasurable feelings of the mind are the ripened result of positive actions.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, November 9th, 2014 at 5:16 AM

Title: Re: The Truth of the First Noble Truth

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

As Maitreya says, there isn't even a pinprick of happiness in the three realms.

M

gad rgyangs said:

wow, must be gloomy at your house.

Malcolm wrote:

Nope. I am just as deluded that there is happiness in samsara as the next guy.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, November 9th, 2014 at 6:17 AM

Title: Re: The Truth of the First Noble Truth

Content:

gad rgyangs said:

it may seem a small thing, but when you use a locative construction like "in samsara" it cannot help but bring a whiff of reification. You know very well samsara is not a place that a sentient being finds itself in, its a state of mind. So wouldn't it be better to say "I am just as deluded that there is happiness in my samsaric mind"? Thats harder to say perhaps because its owning your state of mind rather than projecting, but it has far more potential for change. Its much easier to imagine a state of mind changing than a universe.

Malcolm wrote:

Pointless quibble.

It is a state, thus locative is perfectly appropriate.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, November 9th, 2014 at 8:04 PM

Title: Re: Tilopa's Six Advices

Content:

Johnny Dangerous said:

Malcolm, If Samaya only truly comes with HYT empowerment, what are the "commitments" often attached to (presumably non-hyt) jenangs..are those not the same thing functionally as samaya?

Malcolm wrote:

There are samayas associated with the yoga tantra, but you do not receive them from a jenang, but only an abhisheka associated with that class. A person without a full HYT or YT empowerment does not possess them. A Jenang in general only comes with bodhisattva vows and a commitment to practice a mantra.

Johnny Dangerous said:

I have to admit at this point in my early Vajrayana "career" I do not get how relationships with the guru works exactly...

Malcolm wrote:

You received empowerment from a Guru. You then work with the transmission you received. If you have questions, you go and ask. Guruyoga is a special practice of highest yoga tantra, like mandala offerings. It is a way of summoning the blessings of the guru and integrating them with your mindstream. It exists in an indirect way as the master of the family in deity yoga.

Johnny Dangerous said:

I think you guys are being too hard on Rachmiel. As a newer practitioner I found some of the more hard-nosed "it must be like X or it's useless" advice I got on here was really counter productive..no offense, I know you guys know what you are talking about, and I appreciate the sentiment.. but your bedside manner really leaves something to be desired for someone new to the path, or someone having doubts about this or that etc.

Malcolm wrote:

Simple texts like the one that is the subject of this thread would never be bandied about in such a reckless manner. Doing so ruins the potential impact of the text, and its blessings, not to mention that fact that it is something that someone should hear in a proper way from a guru. Such behavior really contradicts the principles of Secret Mantra in general, to which this text belongs, since it comes from the Secret Mantra portion of the bstan 'gyur.

Johnny Dangerous said:

I've also been under the impression that plenty of people, including historical dudes, have more than one guru...so not sure how/why it would matter that Rachmiel has more than one teacher, is it just his reluctance that you're jumping on?

Malcolm wrote:

This does not apply to me. I have more than one guru, many more.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, November 10th, 2014 at 4:17 AM

Title: Re: The Truth of the First Noble Truth

Content:

Jikan said:

What about people who haven't been taught, or who have studied a bit on their own but have become convinced they don't need to be taught--or worse, that becoming a student would hinder their progress? These are people who have serious aspirations and must be approached with respect, even though their expectations have created some obstacles for learning.

Malcolm wrote:

Their arrogance outweighs their "serious" aspiration.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, November 10th, 2014 at 10:52 PM

Title: Re: The Truth of the First Noble Truth

Content:

treehuggingoctopus said:

I am actually fairly convinced we all have our little moments of heresy. I do, for sure. The ego is a tricky bastard. No wonder newcomers reject, and vehemently so, such dogmas as rebirth. Please note that the fact they keep talking about it means there may be some space for realignment. If they kept their mouths shut there would be none.

[snip]

Hence we really should be careful when we post, and be particularly attentive to the way we post. If arrogance is a shortcoming of those heretical newcomers, it is at the very least as often our shortcoming as well. And if we want to help, we must do it properly, otherwise the whole thing will tragically backfire.

Jikan said:

I'd like to underscore the importance of these two points. Really, this is the rationale for keeping an online Buddhist discussion board going (first point), and a caution with regard to being helpful about it (second point).

Malcolm wrote:

The Dharma is relatively straight forward. If you study properly, you can easily understand it. If you don't well, we often see the results of that here online.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, November 11th, 2014 at 8:55 AM

Title: Re: The Truth of the First Noble Truth

Content:

Jikan said:

I think this is relevant for a Buddhist board because people come here for Buddhism, whether they're interested in learning on the Dharma's terms or on their own (for now).

Malcolm wrote:

You can't learn Dharma on your own terms. It just doesn't work.

The point of the Dharma is to a) overcome the ignorance that is rooted in self-grasping so that b) one can help sentient beings achieve buddhahood.

If a doesn't happen, b never will. Therefore, it is best to be clear what Dharma is and what it is not.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, November 11th, 2014 at 9:11 AM

Title: The Truth of the First Noble Truth

Content:

Jikan said:

I think this is relevant for a Buddhist board because people come here for Buddhism, whether they're interested in learning on the Dharma's terms or on their own (for now).

Malcolm wrote:

You can't learn Dharma on your own terms. It just doesn't work.

The point of the Dharma is to a) overcome the ignorance that is rooted in self-grasping so that b) one can help sentient beings achieve buddhahood.

If a doesn't happen, b never will. Therefore, it is best to be clear what Dharma is and what it is not.

Jikan said:

I agree on all these points. I can confirm that trying to learn Dharma on my own terms was a disaster for me, and I'm thankful to the people who skillfully set me right.

The question remains: how to best engage with people who have enough interest in Buddhism to show up on a discussion board with the word "Buddhist" in the banner, but are either just starting out or are heavily laden with--shall we say--unrealistic expectations?

Malcolm wrote:

Quite frankly, people either have the merit to see the truth of the Dharma, or they don't. All attempts at proselytizing Dharma are doomed to failure. Therefore, the best way to be with people about the Dharma is to be straight up.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, November 11th, 2014 at 9:39 AM

Title: Re: The Truth of the First Noble Truth

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Quite frankly, people either have the merit to see the truth of the Dharma, or they don't. All attempts at proselytizing Dharma are doomed to failure. Therefore, the best way to be with people about the Dharma is to be straight up.

Johnny Dangerous said:

Do you teach in person, as in group Dharma talks, etc. or just online Malcolm?

If so, i'm curious how people react to your "straight up" style in person. Sorry if the question is invasive, just trying to be "straight up" myself.

I also find the above a strange statement, in that most folks I know, and myself have seen our views transform as time goes on..in fact, I think i've seen yours change even in the time i've been here, or at least you changed your views on things like whether you call yourself a "Buddhist" or not.

Malcolm wrote:

I don't call myself a Buddhist, but for the convenience of others I am a "Buddhist". I practice Buddhadharma.

I have taught both online as well as in person settings. As far as I know, people like listening to me blather on about the teachings because they continue to ask me to teach. Believe it or not, people find me not only informative, but also extremely entertaining. I don't promote myself very much because there are many people out there with much more merit than I who are much better teachers because of it. I also don't often accept such invitations mainly because I am busy trying to make a living as text translator (oral translators get all the glory, but we do all the work) and as a doctor of Tibetan Medicine so I don't have so much time.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, November 11th, 2014 at 9:41 AM

Title: Re: The Truth of the First Noble Truth

Content:

Jikan said:

I

Following up on Johnny D's question: do you think the idea of being "straight up" works internationally?

Malcolm wrote:

One just has to be honest and transparent, warts and all.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, November 11th, 2014 at 10:00 AM

Title: Re: The Truth of the First Noble Truth

Content:

Johnny Dangerous said:

Thanks for the response, I don't doubt people find you entertaining or informative, i've certainly learned a lot from your postings and answers myself.

I still wonder though, if you are truly as blunt in person re:Dharma as you are online, or is the context too different to even say?

Malcolm wrote:

Actually, yes.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, November 11th, 2014 at 8:22 PM

Title: Re: The Truth of the First Noble Truth

Content:

brendan said:

How can anyone claim they have achieved the 3rd Noble Truth?.....There is still suffering....so claiming that suffering has ended seems silly.

Also space is limitless so how can suffering end?

Malcolm wrote:

It is not a claim that all suffering ceases, merely that one's suffering can cease.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, November 11th, 2014 at 8:46 PM

Title: Re: Half Of Brits Say...

Content:

Kim O'Hara said:

Siddhartha Gautama, surely?

Malcolm wrote:

Strictly speaking, from a Mahāyāna point of view, they start with the Dharmakāya, which transcends time and space. Nevertheless, from a relative point of view Śākyamuni began our present dispensation and he is the teacher of all who follow Buddhadharma in whatever form it may be.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, November 12th, 2014 at 12:45 AM

Title: Re: Dalai Lama Quotation: No Crazy Wisdom Masters

Content:

Jikan said:

In the mid-1990s, someone referenced the current Dalai Lama as saying that he knew of no contemporary crazy wisdom masters. I've never been able to track this reference

down or verify it. Here's as close as I've come.

<http://www.tricycle.com/letters/letters-editor-winter-1993?page=0,1> "
onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;" onclick="window.open(this.href);return
false;

Does anyone have anything that might clarify what HHDL had to say on this issue, when he said it, and what the context was? Many thanks.

Malcolm wrote:

http://info-buddhism.com/Questioning_Advice_of_Guru_Dalai_Lama.html "
onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, November 12th, 2014 at 6:28 AM

Title: Re: The Truth of the First Noble Truth

Content:

brendan said:

How can anyone claim they have achieved the 3rd Noble Truth?.....There is still suffering....so claiming that suffering has ended seems silly.

Also space is limitless so how can suffering end?

Malcolm wrote:

It is not a claim that all suffering ceases, merely that one's suffering can cease.

brendan said:

I understand that...and there is still suffering.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, of course. As long as sentient beings are afflicted, they will continue to suffer. Who could expect anything else. It is not the Buddha's fault that sentient beings continue to cultivate afflictions. No one ever claimed the Buddha was able to remove the suffering of sentient beings through fiat.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, November 12th, 2014 at 8:12 PM

Title: Re: The Truth of the First Noble Truth

Content:

brendan said:

The claims are that Buddha/Dharma does eliminate all suffering (or course via Dependent Origination)....but considering the claims..moving the goal posts (lack of a better term) seems a very appropriate term.

Malcolm wrote:

Can you present such claims, something found in a sūtra, for example?

brendan said:

Considering the claims of Vajradhara, Garab Dorje, Buddhas etc..at what point is their view of Dependent Origination and their claims of accomplishment not poetic licence and machism.

Malcolm wrote:

Which claims? Can you bring them forward?

BTW, you have seemed awfully disappointed in Buddhadharma now for many years, and for some strange reason, you seem to only comment on my posts.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, November 12th, 2014 at 8:18 PM

Title: Re: The Truth of the First Noble Truth

Content:

brendan said:

Yes, of course. As long as sentient beings are afflicted, they will continue to suffer. Who could expect anything else. It is not the Buddha's fault that sentient beings continue to cultivate afflictions. No one ever claimed the Buddha was able to remove the suffering of sentient beings through fiat.

It's just Dependent Origination to suit ones point of view. What's the point of being omniscient having achieved limitless compassion, kindness etc.

Malcolm wrote:

Buddhas are omniscient, not omnipotent. The criteria for even being able to meet Buddhadharma are rather slim, themselves requiring long stores of merit.

brendan said:

So what is Vajradhara or Garab Dorje or the Mahayana Buddhas doing this very instant!

Malcolm wrote:

Helping some sentient being somewhere. Does this mean they are surgically removing that being's suffering? No, of course not. Are they teaching Dharma? Yes, since that is primary way Buddhas help sentient beings in samsara.

brendan said:

They claim they have perfect omniscience (so they know exactly what is happening this very instant), they claim they have perfect compassion, kindness, generosity etc (so they have the tools to help any sentient being). They claim they can remember every one

of their past lives (so they clearly know all the problems).....so what more to practitioners have to do.

Malcolm wrote:

They have to practice the path, just as the buddhas before them did.

brendan said:

Next you will be suggesting I pray to Tara lol.

Malcolm wrote:

It would probably be more beneficial for you than making disappointed complaints about Buddhadharma on the internet.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, November 13th, 2014 at 8:45 AM

Title: Re: The Truth of the First Noble Truth

Content:

brendan said:

The claims are that Buddha/Dharma does eliminate all suffering (or course via Dependent Origination)....but considering the claims..moving the goal posts (lack of a better term) seems a very appropriate term.

Malcolm wrote:

Can you present such claims, something found in a sūtra, for example?

brendan said:

Considering the claims of Vajradhara, Garab Dorje, Buddhas etc..at what point is their view of Dependent Origination and their claims of accomplishment not poetic licence and machism.

Malcolm wrote:

Which claims? Can you bring them forward?

BTW, you have seemed awfully disappointed in Buddhadharma now for many years, and for some strange reason, you seem to only comment on my posts.

brendan said:

They clearly claim they can eliminate suffering albeit via dependent origination...so if they can do it why not just do it....why all the torture? It seems more like poetic license and machoism. Not disappointed just find the hypocrisy a bit funny..sorry for replying to some of your posts.

Malcolm wrote:

No, this is not correct. Buddha taught that one can eliminate one's own suffering through understanding dependent origination. He never claimed to be able to remove the suffering of others. In fact, he stated in many places in both Hinayāna and Mahāyāna sutras that he had no ability to remove the suffering of others. So, you are perceiving a hypocrisy where none exists.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, November 14th, 2014 at 12:53 AM

Title: Re: The Truth of the First Noble Truth

Content:

brendan said:

So why did you suggest I pray to Tara.

Malcolm wrote:

Very simply put, taking refuge in sublime beings such as Buddhas and tenth stage bodhisattvas is meritorious because they are pure, uncontaminated and free of all afflictions. This alone eliminates traces of obscuration.

brendan said:

Mahayana Buddhas apparently have accomplished the 10 Bhumis the 6 Perfections etc...im sure you know the stages of accomplishments in 10 Bhumis as you are a translator.

Malcolm wrote:

Do you suppose that perfecting dānapāramitā, the perfection generosity means that you have removed all the poverty there is in the three realms? Of course it does not mean that. Śāntideva addresses this qualm in the Bodhicaryāvatāra where he points out that the Bodhisattva perfected the perfection of generosity through his wish to give all virtuous things to everyone, not because he was actually able to do so. Mahāyāna is based on one's intention.

Since you are someone who has entered Mahāyāna already, it is really better if you go back to the beginning and study the teachings under a qualified teacher in a proper way. This cynicism, doubt and lack of faith is harmful to you.

brendan said:

Not to mention what the other Bhumis of Vajrayana and Dzogchen...their accomplishments are said to be for more advanced.

Malcolm wrote:

The bhumis in Vajrayāna are merely subtle refinements in omniscience, that is all, there are no special powers that Vajradhara as that a buddha on the eleventh bhumi lacks.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, November 14th, 2014 at 12:55 AM

Title: Re: The Truth of the First Noble Truth

Content:

brendan said:

Read the accomplishments. Anyway you are a moderator so I'm sure you are aware of the claims of what Buddhas have accomplished.

Malcolm wrote:

Maybe you should read them more carefully.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, November 14th, 2014 at 4:05 AM

Title: Re: Useful Events Website: dharmalist.org

Content:

Punya said:

Congratulations to all involved. May the dharma flourish!

(No reason why Dharma Wheel and Dhamma Wheel couldn't be listed there as well.)

Malcolm wrote:

They will be.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, November 14th, 2014 at 4:39 AM

Title: Re: The Truth of the First Noble Truth

Content:

brendan said:

Read the accomplishments. Anyway you are a moderator so I'm sure you are aware of the claims of what Buddhas have accomplished.

Malcolm wrote:

Maybe you should read them more carefully.

brendan said:

Malcolm, Buddhas are said to be able to manifest as _anything...or as many atoms in the universe.

There is still suffering...and thanks for all your hard work and time in translating.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, and nevertheless because of our own afflictive and karmic obscurations not only are we unable to see them, but we still continue to suffer.

For example, a person with jaundice cannot see white things as white, only as yellow and so on. Buddhas offer us the medicine to cure this condition, but if we do not take it, then like the sick person who does not follow their doctor's instructions, then we have only ourselves to blame for not getting well.

In the end, brendan, we are responsible for our own liberation, there are no Buddhas to lift us out of samsara like mewling kittens being moved to a safe place by mother cat. This does not mean however that Buddhas are not all around us, benefitting us all the time in ways we cannot or will not perceive.

All harm that comes to us is a result of our afflicted vision. All benefit that comes to us is the blessings of the Buddhas — if we train with this attitude, then our attitude will improve remarkably.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, November 14th, 2014 at 4:53 AM

Title: Re: The Truth of the First Noble Truth

Content:

brendan said:

Malcolm, Buddhas are beyond doctors.

Malcolm wrote:

Buddhas are called "great physicians" for the very reason I state. And like doctors who can only treat patients who do what they say, Buddha can only help sentient beings who follow the path that they teach. As it is said:

The munis do not wash sins away,
nor remove suffering with their hands.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, November 14th, 2014 at 6:04 AM

Title: Re: The Truth of the First Noble Truth

Content:

brendan said:

Malcolm, Buddhas are beyond doctors.

Malcolm wrote:

Buddhas are called "great physicians" for the very reason I state. And like doctors who can only treat patients who do what they say, Buddha can only help sentient beings who follow the path that they teach. As it is said:

The munis do not wash sins away,
nor remove suffering with their hands.

brendan said:

Malcolm, not doing what they say and not following the path is also a illness.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, and there is nothing Buddhas can do about that.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, November 14th, 2014 at 6:56 AM

Title: Re: The Truth of the First Noble Truth

Content:

brendan said:

Malcolm, this is your quote "All benefit that comes to us is the blessings of the Buddhas".

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, because the buddhas only wish the best for sentient beings, it is therefore any benefit that befalls them is a blessing of the buddhas.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, November 14th, 2014 at 10:29 AM

Title: Re: The Truth of the First Noble Truth

Content:

brendan said:

Malcolm, this is your quote "All benefit that comes to us is the blessings of the Buddhas".

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, because the buddhas only wish the best for sentient beings, it is therefore any benefit that befalls them is a blessing of the buddhas.

brendan said:

This is also a quote, "Yes, and there is nothing Buddhas can do about that"...So how can there even be a cognition of a wish?

Malcolm wrote:

There may be nothing Buddhas can do to intervene when sentient beings are blindly acting out of affliction and cause themselves needless injury, nevertheless, even though samsara is a terrible place, it is still possible to generate roots of virtue. All positive things that sentient beings do generate such roots, and the Buddhas teach only virtue, therefore, all positive things that happen to sentient beings are a blessing of the Buddhas because the Buddhas bless all roots of virtue as such. Every teaching, every word, which encourages sentient beings to generate virtue is the word of the Buddha, and it does not matter in which religion or secular philosophy it is found — all of them are the teaching of the Buddha, the ultimate root of such teachings come out of the very

basis which gives rise to Buddhahood itself, cultivating the root of virtue and generating compassion for sentient beings. Buddhas have limitless compassion so of course they automatically "wish" the benefit of sentient beings.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, November 14th, 2014 at 10:37 PM

Title: Re: The Truth of the First Noble Truth

Content:

brendan said:

@Malcolm

The claim is that Buddha's are omniscient....so there for they are aware of _any illness_ for _any_ sentient being (Buddhist or non- Buddhist).....and they have the medication for any of these illnesses....?

Malcolm wrote:

Right. What is your question?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, November 14th, 2014 at 11:08 PM

Title: Re: The Truth of the First Noble Truth

Content:

Pringle said:

So just to clarify my own thinking with regards to the three types of Dukkha

1) Dukkha Dukkha - This would be the suffering caused by pain, such as 'ouch i just stubbed my toe'

2) Viparinama Dukkha - This is the suffering of change due to all things being impermanent, as such even if something is giving us pleasure now, such as being in a relationship, then this will ultimately end up as suffering like when the relationship ends

3) Sankhara Dukkha - The suffering all condition phenomena. This is due to the very nature of 'things' as being part of conditioned phenomena. So even though this really tasty food gives me pleasure now, because of the impermanence inherent in the food, it is not a lasting pleasure, and as such will only result in suffering once the taste goes due to my craving the food.

so how far of the mark am I? I get the feeling im possibly getting Viparinama and Sankhara dukkha slightly confused, but not sure where the confusion lies. They both seem very similar to me, in the sense that its due to the impermanence of things that cause the suffering (due to the attachment/craving to things).

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, you are getting these two confused. The third is the fact that things just fall apart and so therefore cannot be considered a source of happiness.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, November 18th, 2014 at 12:32 AM

Title: Re: Machig Lapdron: Shakyamuni Bodhisattva?

Content:

lorem said:

Yeah sambhogakaya beings can appear to samsaric beings just not in their sambhogakaya form.

Malcolm wrote:

That means sambhogakāyas cannot appear to ordinary beings, hence nirmanakāyas.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, November 18th, 2014 at 5:52 AM

Title: Re: Four reminders in the Mahayana?

Content:

Johnny Dangerous said:

Reading Indestructible Truth by Reginald Ray, I came across this, and found it intriguing:

Reginald Ray in Indestructible Truth said:

...[in the Mahayana]the four reminders evolve into 1) a view of the sacredness of being 2) the immanence of death in the midst of life as a blessing 3) Karma as a vehicle for compassion, and 4) Suffering as ego's response to the energy of awareness.

Johnny Dangerous said:

Is this Ray's own extrapolation of the notion of the evolution of the Four Reminders into the Mahayana path, or is this a traditional teaching on them I have missed? It jives with me for sure, but I have never seen these notions specifically presented as coming from the Four Reminders.

Malcolm wrote:

This is Ray's own trip.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, November 18th, 2014 at 11:02 PM

Title: Rebirth (Collection thread)

Content:

Leo Rivers said:

I kind of think of myself as An Old Testament Mahayanist.

Malcolm wrote:

Pretty strange self-perspective coming from someone who rejects rebirth.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, November 20th, 2014 at 1:05 AM

Title: Re: Ornament of the Great Vehicle Sutras

Content:

Leo Rivers said:

All pre-Modern Buddhisms likely accept re-incarnation. For me the Bodhisattva Vow to practice to benefit all beings makes personal reincarnation irrelevant - who caused my pre-birth circumstances or inherits my consequences is beside the point. The point is to transform the basis of my character and the mutually experience world of karmas.

Malcolm wrote:

The bodhisattva vow is predicated on the principle of person rebirth or reincarnation.

Without rebirth, there is no karmic world, so to speak, because there is no karma-vipaka.

Further, without rebirth, there is no way to accumulate the two accumulations necessary to achieve buddhahood, nor is there any point in making such an aspiration.

There may be so-called "Buddhists" who have doubts about or even reject rebirth, but there is no valid Buddhадharma that does. So called "Buddhists" are those who at least nominally follow Buddhадharma, but when people reject the very basic principles upon which Buddhадharma is founded, what is the point of calling them Buddhists, much less followers of Buddhадharma?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, November 20th, 2014 at 5:16 AM

Title: Re: Ornament of the Great Vehicle Sutras

Content:

Leo Rivers said:

There may be so-called "Buddhists" who have doubts about or even reject rebirth, but there is no valid Buddhадharma that does.

Transfer of Merit accomplished by social transactions plants the seeds of wholesome transformation in the aggregate basis - this means every new being picks up discursive awareness within a global field in which everyone who has ever lived life's karma is spoken for.

Malcolm wrote:

This is just annihilationism. "Every new being" means that in your view there are beings that pass out of existence, this is just a view of self, albeit, an annihilationist/physicalist view.

It is definitely not what the Buddha taught.

Leo Rivers said:

In fact, in that there is no self, it is only the illusion of a self that admits a choice of conduct for ill or good will.

Malcolm wrote:

The view you espoused above is just a view of self, an annihilationist/physicalist view.

Leo Rivers said:

It is working as a finite being, not going into quiescence, that is the sacrifice of self [the self benefit of enjoying complete peace] for others. Remember - a secular Buddhist treats Buddhist models as provisional, man made things amenable to re-working, identical in process to natural sciences.

Malcolm wrote:

There is no such things as "secular Buddhism" — merely false views and correct ones. In this respect, the view espoused above is an annihilationist/physicalist view. Therefore, false.

Leo Rivers said:

It is not rejecting principles that you are really objecting to, I suspect. It is rejecting the divine [unquestionable and final] basis of those principles. I do not deify the man Gautama any more than I deify Einstein.

Malcolm wrote:

No, actually it is your rejection of these basic principles which I find objectionable — not in so far as you are not entitled to them, but in so far as that you amazingly think your rejection of these principles can be included within the meaning sphere called "Buddhadharma" as something other than delusions.

Specifically, in the context of the text under discussion, its authors would find your claim that your views are found within Buddhadharma a very curious claim, since they are clearly actually Lokayati/Carvaka.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, November 20th, 2014 at 6:15 AM

Title: Re: Ornament of the Great Vehicle Sutras

Content:

Will said:

At last, a clear translation of the Mahayana-sutra-lamkara! Dr. Doctor and the Dharmachakra Trans. Committee have done a wondrous thing.

Paul said:

Which of the Doctor brothers did this?

Will said:

Still have not read too deeply into it, so the only quibble I have is the use of 'wakefulness' for jnana. The conventional use of wisdom or knowledge or understanding conveys the flavor better. Yes, they are probably trying to point out how the 'awareness' of this type of jnana is so very different from conceptional notions, but being 'awake' hardly conveys anything to non-buddhas.

Paul said:

I think 'wakefulness' is used because it is used in the Rangjung Yeshe Books texts as a term for mind essence, ie Chokyi Nyima Rinpoche's ' Present Fresh Wakefulness '.

Malcolm wrote:

Wakefulness (bodhatā) for jñāna is a huge stretch.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, November 21st, 2014 at 4:48 AM

Title: Re: what makes Buddhist deathlessness not eternalism?

Content:

frank123 said:

I have heard various teachers of Buddhadharma use terms like deathlessness and indestructible etc to talk about our nature.What makes this not eternalism?what is between eternalism and nihilism?

Malcolm wrote:

Our nature, suchness, does not arise; therefore, it does not cease. This is what it means to be deathless, that which is beyond arising and ceasing, suchness is indestructible.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, November 21st, 2014 at 5:35 AM

Title: Re: Rebirth (split topic: "Ornament o.t. Great Vehicle Sutra

Content:

Leo Rivers said:

It is important to recognize that every traditional form of Buddhism carries with it a distinct and in many areas mutually exclusive presentation of the relationship of all the others. Buddhisms are not the same. Yet Dzog Chen and the Forest Monk Tradition are very different yet surprisingly on the same track.

Malcolm wrote:

Both Dzogchen as well as Thai Buddhism (apart from Buddhadasa) accept rebirth as integral to Buddhadharma.

Leo Rivers said:

Doesn't Samsara recognition, the Bodhisattva Vow, the practice of the path of calming and insight and a recognition of the empty nature of self and phenomena comprise sufficient credentials?

Malcolm wrote:

The Buddha in numerous places considers rejection of rebirth (punarbhava) to be a wrong view. It is considered a wrong view in all Buddhist traditions worthy of the name.

Leo Rivers said:

Egads, the Perfection of Wisdom insight as presented nuked the Abhidharma.

Malcolm wrote:

No. The Prajñāpāramitā, and the school that developed around it, merely clarified the notion of emptiness on top of the basis of Buddha's Abhidharmapitika.

Leo Rivers said:

And explanations of turnings of the wheel really don't much please or invite everyone to gather under one tent.

Malcolm wrote:

First, the three turnings teaching was not important in India, judging from the lack of discussion about it by Indian masters. If you carefully read the Saṃdhinirmocana, the first turning is for śravakas, the second turning for Mahāyanis, and the third turning, which is merely a recapitulation of the second, is for everyone. In reality, the third turning teaching is actually an Ekayāna teaching, which is why it garners so little attention from Indian commentators.

Leo Rivers said:

Finding a "core Buddhism" which all agree certifies a Buddhist as a Buddhist is an idea that holds water only if you don't run the numbers. But I will avidly give an open ear and mind to any efforts in this regard.

Malcolm wrote:

There are certain tenets of Buddhadharma that are constant in all streams of Buddhadharma. Rebirth, dependent origination, karma and so on are such tenets, whether we are talking about Theravada or Sarvastivada or Dzogchen and Mahamudra, as well as everything in between.

Leo Rivers said:

On "MATERIALISM"

Many people bring the word "materialism" unwittingly with the Marxist or AntiMarxist emotional baggage to spiritual discussions.

Malcolm wrote:

When I use the term materialism, I am referring the followers of the rishi Brihaspati, the Carvaka school, specifically, and generally, to all those who imagine that upon their physical death their mind stream utterly ceases having no further causes and conditions which can support it.

Leo Rivers said:

The 5th Century Greek physical theory of Democritus of atomos "indivisible", and re-contexted in India means and seems to mean one thing.

Materialism as (politically and rhetorically) depicted in the Pali suttas as being a sub-set of annihilationism/ucchedavada

and later Marxist anti-religionist "materialism means and seems to mean another.

Malcolm wrote:

One who denies rebirth is an ucchedavadin and a materialist. Marxists also reject rebirth, etc. They are also ucchedavadins. There are many stripes ucchedavadins. Also, the ancient Carvakas wrote much of the political literature of ancient India (Kautilya, for example).

Leo Rivers said:

I am not a Marxist. Their "materialism" isn't truly scientific. It is politics. As an atheist I am not anti-religion. My "atheism" is a secondary issue to someone who believes all the phenomena witnessed in the cosmos are the outcome of natural processes, cause and effect. Sound familiar?

Malcolm wrote:

The rejection of rebirth amounts to a rejection of karma, among other things, such as the serial ripening of actions performed now on a serial, albeit impermanent, mind stream in the future. There is really no way to reconcile rejection of rebirth with the Buddha's Dharma. Further, the rejection of rebirth entails that consciousness newly arise, as indicated by your term "new beings", etc., again, completely inconsistent with the Dharma the Buddha taught in all vehicles, not merely one.

It is fine if someone does not believe in rebirth, but I question whether they can truly call themselves followers of the Buddha. You ask, "Doesn't Samsara recognition, the Bodhisattva Vow, the practice of the path of calming and insight and a recognition of the empty nature of self and phenomena comprise sufficient credentials?"

Without rebirth, there is no samsara worthy of the name, there is no cyclic existence, no 'khor ba, there no possibility that one, having been born a human being, can take rebirth in a higher realm or a lower realm, at death one simply ceases. One's birth as a human being is merely random and not connected with any accumulation of merit and so on.

Without rebirth, the bodhisattva vow is just empty verbiage, "From now until I reach the bodhimaṇḍa, the seat of awakening...", etc. Moreover, secular altruistic ethics are just fine, and are certainly more appropriate for people who do not have a deep felt faith commitment to the Dharma. There is thus no need to flatter oneself that one is a "secular" bodhisattva. Certain kinds of beliefs, such as the belief that one's consciousness is extinguished either at nirvana, in the case of śrāvakas, or at death, in the case of materialists are deeply incompatible with the bodhisattva aspiration.

Without rebirth, there is no transcendent insight to speak of because the purpose of insight in Buddhadharma is to burn away the traces of affliction which cause one to be reborn in samsara again and again and to cultivate omniscience in order to benefit other

sentient beings from now until we reach the bodhimaṇḍa. This is the only reason we are cultivating insight into emptiness. David Hume recognized the empty nature of self and phenomena. But his insight is mundane and not transcendent, it neither eradicates obscurations nor does it lead to gathering the accumulation of wisdom, pristine consciousness (jñāna). His thought is not Buddhadharma, because Hume, at the end of the day, was a materialist. There is no point in even mentioning śamatha, because śamatha is simply one-pointedness of mind, and even animals have it.

My point is simple, physicalism, materialism, etc., whatever one wants to call it, is not compatible with Buddhadharma.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, November 21st, 2014 at 10:43 PM

Title: Re: Rebirth (split topic: "Ornament o.t. Great Vehicle Sutra

Content:

Jesse said:

i I think rebirth is hard for people to accept mainly because;

1. it's extraordinarily hard to grasp it intellectually, if it's possible at all.
2. If you meditate on it and view it through a detached viewpoint -- "Who is there to be reborn?" Will likely be most peoples response.

All thing's are inter-dependently arisen, yet all those arisen thing's are still empty, not one thing has a self, so this delusion that we are independent beings of some permanent nature is why rebirth is hard to grasp.

All sentient beings are just made up of empty non-self stuff, yet we still exist. So essentially I think you could say we are that empty non-self stuff, and at the same time nothing at all, we are phantoms. Phantoms will continue to arise, and cease thinking they were something other than empty inter-dependent stuff.

ps. I think my brain melted writing that.

Malcolm wrote:

Sentient beings are cognitive errors propelled through birth after birth by the root obscuration of I-making.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, November 21st, 2014 at 11:51 PM

Title: Re: Rebirth (split topic: "Ornament o.t. Great Vehicle Sutra

Content:

lorem said:

EDIT I believe in rebirth but don't think you totally need to to practice the path.

Malcolm wrote:

You totally need to [accept rebirth] to practice the path. Otherwise, there is no point at all to the Buddhist path, none.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, November 22nd, 2014 at 12:08 AM

Title: Re: Hairs

Content:

???? said:

How Tibetans cope with the problem of hair loss?

What traditional possibilities exist? Proper diet, or special herbs?

How to do to hair stopped falling out?
and what to do to appeared more of them?

Malcolm wrote:

reduce salt intake, oil the scalp, etc.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, November 22nd, 2014 at 2:14 AM

Title: Re: Rebirth (split topic: "Ornament o.t. Great Vehicle Sutra

Content:

lorem said:

Wouldn't that be giving up on yourself and other sentient beings? (Who want's to get to the top? The only place is down)

Sherab Dorje said:

If there is no life (for me) after this one, then why would I give a damn?

Malcolm wrote:

In terms of secular ethics it is well established that enlightened self-interest the best approach, i.e., in securing the needs of others, one secures one's own needs. The old, "I'll scratch your back, then you scratch mine."

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, November 22nd, 2014 at 4:11 AM

Title: Re: Rebirth (split topic: "Ornament o.t. Great Vehicle Sutra

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

In terms of secular ethics it is well established that enlightened self-interest the best approach, i.e., in securing the needs of others, one secures one's own needs. The old, "I'll scratch your back, then you scratch mine."

Sherab Dorje said:

Okay, so according to this theory criminal fraternities are ethically sound.

Malcolm wrote:

No, not at all. Mutually helping each other secure needs and wants is what enlightened self-interest means. As one expands one's sphere more people and beings are included, until in this model, every beings needs and wants are met since it is recognized we inhabit the same sphere and all of our wellbeing depends on everyone else's.

In practice, it does not work out that way, because people are not so enlightened that working in their own self-interest actually functions this way — this the great weakness in the secular ethical model. Sooner or later selfishness trumps insight. Nevertheless, this is a working theory in secular ethics.

There are other secular ethical models, such as Kant's moral imperative and so on, which do not require belief in rebirth or religious authority of any kind. Western ethical philosophy is quite rich, and can't be reduced to the catechistic moralism of Christianity.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, November 22nd, 2014 at 4:33 AM

Title: Re: what makes Buddhist deathlessness not eternalism?

Content:

Matt J said:

One might argue this is saguna Brahman (with gunas, or characteristics), not nirguna Brahman (without qualities, or characteristics).

Malcolm wrote:

Suchness is emptiness. Brahmin is not empty.

As the Buddha states in the Śatasāhasrika-prajñāpāramitā:

Suchness empty of suchness is the emptiness of suchness. Whatever is emptiness, that is suchness. There is no emptiness apart from suchness. Suchness is emptiness, emptiness is suchness.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, November 22nd, 2014 at 9:54 PM

Title: Re: what makes Buddhist deathlessness not eternalism?

Content:

Sherab said:

Did the Buddha said anywhere that suchness is dependent arising? Or emptiness is dependent arising?

Malcolm wrote:

Āryāṣṭadaśasahasrika-prajñāpāramitā-nāma-mahāyāna-sūtra:

Dependent origination should be known as emptiness.

Ārya-mahāvajrameruśikharakūṭāgāra-dhāraṇī

Due to being imputed, imputation is also empty. Due to arising from causes and conditions, dependent origination is also empty. Due to being generated by adventitious causes and conditions, production is empty of self. In that respect, dependent origination is empty of intrinsic characteristics. Whatever is empty of intrinsic characteristics is characteristicless. Whatever is characteristicless, that is suchness. Whatever is suchness, that is unmistaken suchness. Whatever is unmistaken suchness, that is isn't anything other than suchness. Whatever isn't anything other than suchness, that is samadhi. Whatever is samadhi, that is realization. Whatever is realization, that is emptiness. Whatever is emptiness, that is sublime insight. Whatever is sublime insight, that is calm-abiding. Whatever is calm-abiding, that is complete freedom [vimokṣa]. Whatever is complete freedom, that is the middle way. Whatever is the middle way, that is without a first limit and without a second limit, cannot be apprehended, is not an apprehender, is not annihilated, is not permanent, does not arise, does not cease, is without thought, is without concept, is not independent, is not dependent, does not come, does not go, is without total affliction, without purification, does not cohere, does not separate, that is sublime insight. Whatever is sublime insight, that is without aggregates, without elements [dhātus], without sense organs, without sense gates [āyatanas], without objects, is not designated as an object, is without karma, without the result of karma — whatever is without karma and without the result of karma, that is unsurpassed perfect awakening.

Here we can clearly see the Buddha stating that since dependent origination is empty, it is without characteristics, and whatever is without characteristics is suchness.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, November 23rd, 2014 at 1:05 AM

Title: Re: Rebirth (split topic: "Ornament o.t. Great Vehicle Sutra

Content:

gad rgyangs said:

The only thing that surprises me is that so many people have convinced themselves that they actually know exactly what everything is and how it stands.

Malcolm wrote:

I just know what the Buddha and my gurus have taught. YMMV.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, November 23rd, 2014 at 4:17 AM

Title: Re: Did the historical Buddha taught Vajrayana Tantra?

Content:

Samanthabhadra said:

Why do Theravada and Zen Buddhists do not recognize the existence of Yidams?

Malcolm wrote:

Lack of merit and pure vision.

Faith in Buddhadharma is rare.

Faith in Mahāyāna is rarer still.

Faith in Vajrayāna is even more rare than that.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, November 23rd, 2014 at 6:48 AM

Title: Re: Did the historical Buddha taught Vajrayana Tantra?

Content:

Mkoll said:

Malcolm's answer is coming from someone partial to Vajrayana.

An answer from someone partial to Theravada, like me, is that Vajrayana Tantra teachings are not part of Theravada teachings: it's not mentioned in Theravada texts, AFAIK. Simple as that.

Malcolm wrote:

And neither is Mahāyāna, hence my answer.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, November 23rd, 2014 at 6:54 AM

Title: Re: Renouncing Theravada

Content:

Jata Bharadvaja said:

Hello everybody, I've recently been at what I can only describe as a cross road really. I've slowly lost faith in the Theravada tradition, I've been seeing and reading about things such as monks owning pubs selling alcohol, doing fortune telling, magic tricks, barely meditating (if at all), getting into fist fights, doing sing song chanting etc.

Sherab Dorje said:

Damn dude, if that's the reason you want to leave the Theravada tradition I predict that your stay with Vajrayana will be even briefer! Everything you just listed is part of our daily practice!

Malcolm wrote:

Everything but the fist fights, this is Mahāyāna after all...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, November 23rd, 2014 at 7:08 AM

Title: Re: Did the historical Buddha taught Vajrayana Tantra?

Content:

Mkoll said:

Malcolm's answer is coming from someone partial to Vajrayana.

An answer from someone partial to Theravada, like me, is that Vajrayana Tantra teachings are not part of Theravada teachings: it's not mentioned in Theravada texts, AFAIK. Simple as that.

Malcolm wrote:

And neither is Mahāyāna, hence my answer.

Mkoll said:

Right, your answer could only come from someone more partial to Vajrayana than Theravada or Mahayana (edit) in that it's part of the Vajrayana "party line," if you will.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, but it is also true, from our perspective.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, November 23rd, 2014 at 8:24 AM

Title: Re: Did the historical Buddha taught Vajrayana Tantra?

Content:

Samanthabhadra said:

Why do Theravada and Zen Buddhists do not recognize the existence of Yidams?

Meido said:

Just to point out that this is not so when it comes to Ch'an/Zen.

~ Meido

Malcolm wrote:

Chan/Zen schools don't really use iṣṭa-devatās, as they do in Shingon or Tendai, or Vajrayāna in general, it is not part of your path.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, November 23rd, 2014 at 8:29 AM

Title: Re: Rebirth (split topic: "Ornament o.t. Great Vehicle Sutra

Content:

Ambrosius80 said:

The consciousness of living things in basically electrons rushing through axons in the brains...

Malcolm wrote:

This is not really compatible with Buddhadharma.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, November 23rd, 2014 at 9:07 AM

Title: Re: Rebirth (split topic: "Ornament o.t. Great Vehicle Sutra

Content:

Ambrosius80 said:

The consciousness of living things is basically electrons rushing through axons in the brains...

Malcolm wrote:

This is not really compatible with Buddhadharma.

Ambrosius80 said:

I don't see why, as the two are not conflicting each other in any way. I am just giving a theory how buddha-nature comes to be.

Malcolm wrote:

Buddha nature does not "come to be", it is innate.

Ambrosius80 said:

The way I see it, when religion begins to compete with science or the other way around, things tend to crash and burn. As His Holiness has stated many times, Buddhism and science are so similar they can work together just fine.

Malcolm wrote:

Up to a point, yes. But there are many things science cannot explain, rebirth, karma, rainbow body, etc.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, November 23rd, 2014 at 9:12 AM

Title: Re: what makes Buddhist deathlessness not eternalism?

Content:

anjali said:

It's not possible to know Nirguna Brahman as a separate entity.

Sherab said:

If by this, Nirguna Brahman is a some all encompassing consciousness, then I have a problem with it.

Malcolm wrote:

Well, that is what Nirguna Brahman is. Not only is it all-encompassing, nothing but it exists.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, November 23rd, 2014 at 12:25 PM

Title: Re: what makes Buddhist deathlessness not eternalism?

Content:

Jikan said:

Yes, but Brahman is said to have the characteristics of sat-chit-ananda. (being-consciousness-bliss)

Does suchness have those same characteristics?

Karma Dorje said:

Empty essence, cognizant self-nature, compassionate responsiveness.

Of course, we can continue to play comparative religion here, but what's the point. Isn't it against the ToS?

Malcolm wrote:

Sat cit ananda really are not equivalents to essence, nature and compassion.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, November 23rd, 2014 at 1:42 PM

Title: Re: Did the historical Buddha taught Vajrayana Tantra?

Content:

Kim O'Hara said:

The OP's questions are only being partially and indirectly addressed so far. Here they are again, numbered for ease of reference:

Samanthabhadra said:

(1) Why do Theravada and Zen Buddhists do not recognize the existence of Yidams? (2) Are these Yidams symbolic creations of the human mind or do they literally exist? (3) Did the historical Buddha taught the Vajrayana Tantra? (4) If not then is Vajrayana really Buddhistic?

Kim O'Hara said:

(1) seems to have been answered by Meido, saying that Zen schools do in fact recognize the existence of Yidams. No response on Theravada, though.

(2) hasn't been answered at all.

(3) has been answered in the negative by Mkoll, with some dissenting responses.

(4) hasn't been answered at all.

Kim

Malcolm wrote:

The answer to two is no and no. The answer to four is yes. Meido's answer is problematic, and I am not sure what he imagines a "yidam" is, blessing protection amulets is not a path. A yidam is a path. 3 was answered in the following way "not in the Pali canon"; but Pali canon is not inclusive of all that the historical Buddha taught (whose history is the salient question here).

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, November 23rd, 2014 at 8:54 PM

Title: Re: Did the historical Buddha taught Vajrayana Tantra?

Content:

Mkoll said:

I'm not an scholar or certified expert of Theravada, but from my somewhat extensive study there is no recognition of the existence of Yidams because that concept is foreign to Theravada. Similarly, it's like asking why Theravada doesn't recognize the existence of something like guru yoga. They simply aren't present.

BrianG said:

Certain sects of Theravada Buddhism in Thailand practice guru yoga. This may have even been common before the reforms of King Mongkut, in an attempt to make Thai Buddhism seem "modern" to avoid colonization by the west.

Malcolm wrote:

Guru yoga is a very specific practice which comes from anuttarayoga tantra, it does not even exist in Yoga tantra. That said, since anuttarayoga tantra did exist at one time in Thailand, etc., it is possible some kind of degenerate guru yoga tradition persisted in Thailand.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, November 23rd, 2014 at 8:57 PM

Title: Re: Did the historical Buddha taught Vajrayana Tantra?

Content:

mikenz66 said:

Here are some references to Tantric practices in Thailand, etc.

<http://www.dhammadownload.com/viewtopic.php?f=13&t=10503> "

onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;" onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;

<http://www.dhammadownload.com/viewtopic.php?f=13&t=6599> "

onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;" onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;

Mike

Malcolm wrote:

None of this is "tantric". To be a "tantric" practitioner, one must be introduced the path by empowerment (abhiśeka).

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, November 23rd, 2014 at 9:00 PM

Title: Re: what makes Buddhist deathlessness not eternalism?

Content:

Karma Dorje said:

That depends entirely on who is teaching, but of course they are not equivalents. They each derive from their own particular context. However, the terms point to the same basis.

Malcolm wrote:

No, they do not. The basis in Dzogchen and Mahāmudra teachings is not transpersonal, it is personal.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, November 23rd, 2014 at 9:04 PM

Title: Re: Rebirth (split topic: "Ornament o.t. Great Vehicle Sutra

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Buddha nature does not "come to be", it is innate.

Ambrosius80 said:

In other words born at the same time with consciousness, which is upheld by the brain.

Malcolm wrote:

There is no brain at the time of conception, but in order for there to be conception, a consciousness seeking rebirth must be present. Further, consciousness is not "born", one can find no origin for it at all., like all conditioned things, each stream of consciousness is beginningless.

Ambrosius80 said:

Up to a point, yes. But there are many things science cannot explain, rebirth, karma, rainbow body, etc.

Karma as a word means a causal event chain.

Malcolm wrote:

Karma means intention and what follows from intentions.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, November 23rd, 2014 at 9:25 PM

Title: Re: Did the historical Buddha taught Vajrayana Tantra?

Content:

mikenz66 said:

Here are some references to Tantric practices in Thailand, etc.

<http://www.dhammadownload.com/viewtopic.php?f=13&t=10503> "

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<http://www.dhammadownload.com/viewtopic.php?f=13&t=6599> "

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Mike

Malcolm wrote:

None of this is "tantric". To be a "tantric" practitioner, one must be introduced the path by empowerment (abhiśeka).

BrianG said:

There are empowerments -

<http://www.lersi.net/lersi-mask-initiation/>

Malcolm wrote:

This is not a qualified Vajrayāna abhiśeka, this is a blessing. It is not a path.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, November 23rd, 2014 at 9:31 PM

Title: Re: Rebirth (split topic: "Ornament o.t. Great Vehicle Sutra

Content:

Jikan said:

Does it follow that the brain, the central nervous system and the rest of the body are epiphenomenal to consciousness, and not the reverse?

Malcolm wrote:

Even if a zygote is formed, without consciousness and its attendant praṇā-vāyu, the zygote will not quicken and develop.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, November 23rd, 2014 at 10:10 PM

Title: Re: Rebirth (split topic: "Ornament o.t. Great Vehicle Sutra

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

There is no brain at the time of conception, but in order for there to be conception, a consciousness seeking rebirth must be present. Further, consciousness is not "born", one can find no origin for it at all., like all conditioned things, each stream of consciousness is beginningless.

Ambrosius80 said:

But this just supports my theory about the quantum teleportation of electrons. When one being dies, the electrons in its brain could well end up in the brain of a few weeks old fetus in the womb. There is no beginning or end to this cycle, just one candle lighting another on its last light. I am not saying that its is the brain which "creates" consciousness, I am saying that brain is the vessel that holds it in our bodies as it travels around. And there may be other ways than brains to "store" consiousness.

Malcolm wrote:

This is not how the Buddha taught it. Consciousness is a serially arising monadic entity. It appropriates a physical basis. Its seat is the in center of the body, not the brain.

Ambrosius80 said:

Karma means intention and what follows from intentions.

In other words, a causal event chain. I think we both have the same idea about karma, but just use different words to express it.

Malcolm wrote:

In Buddhadharma, cause and condition is distinct teaching from karma. The way it is taught is as follows: first cause and condition is taught, then dependent origination, then karma, and finally affliction. They should be understood in this order. If you want to understand this all properly, you need to read the Abhidharmakośabhaṣyam by Vasubandhu.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, November 23rd, 2014 at 10:13 PM

Title: Re: Did the historical Buddha taught Vajrayana Tantra?

Content:

BrianG said:

... which certainly has Tantric elements -

Malcolm wrote:

This has more to do with Ayurveda and Yoga than Vajrayāna. It is more accurate to say that certain kinds of Thai Buddhism have yogic elements, rather than "tantric" elements.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, November 23rd, 2014 at 10:48 PM

Title: Re: The state of Buddhism in the world

Content:

Indrajala said:

They're also even paying for monasteries to be renovated in Tibet (a Tibetan Sakya monk in Nepal told me this)..

Malcolm wrote:

\

For tourism in historic regions.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, November 23rd, 2014 at 11:04 PM

Title: Re: The state of Buddhism in the world

Content:

Indrajala said:

They're also even paying for monasteries to be renovated in Tibet (a Tibetan Sakya monk in Nepal told me this)..

Malcolm wrote:

\

For tourism in historic regions.

Indrajala said:

He also mentioned pensions and healthcare support for monastics.

He was pretty honest. He said Sakya monks and monasteries don't get any heat from the authorities, and in fact are getting a lot of material support from the government, especially in recent years.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes and lots of "political education" too, more of that than Dharma education, that is for sure.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, November 23rd, 2014 at 11:16 PM

Title: Re: The state of Buddhism in the world

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Yes and lots of "political education" too, more of that than Dharma education, that is for sure.

Indrajala said:

In any case, the PRC is a lot more easy on Buddhist institutions in general than ever before. That's my point. There's no religious freedom of course.

Malcolm wrote:

That very much depends on where you are and of what value your monastery is to tourism. It is business, it is not support for Tibetan Buddhism in Tibet for Tibetans. It is for the bourgeois entertainment of curious Chinese tourists. And this phenomena happens in cycles, as it has since the early '80's. A period of relative relaxation, then a crack down, etc. People still flee Tibet to study in India because frankly, they can get a better education in Dharma, though arguably, if they are fortunate to come from a wealthy family, they can get a better secular education in China at this point.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, November 23rd, 2014 at 11:31 PM

Title: Re: Did the historical Buddha taught Vajrayana Tantra?

Content:

BrianG said:

My guess is that you are probably resistant to this being called "tantric", due to the lack of an empowerment. Fair enough. Perhaps "derived from tantra, but not tantra" is more accurate.

Malcolm wrote:

I don't think so. Calling these things "tantric" comes from an ignorant and anachronistic use the term from the early 20th century. In other words, the term really has no meaning. There was never any tradition in India that called itself "tantric". There are many traditions in India that followed manuals (tantras), from Ayurveda (in whose texts is found the the earliest use of the term) to Yoga, Kauala, so on and so forth.

Secret Mantra is something very specific. None of these Thai practices bear any relationship to Secret Mantra.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, November 24th, 2014 at 12:44 AM

Title: Re: Did the historical Buddha taught Vajrayana Tantra?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Secret Mantra is something very specific. None of these Thai practices bear any relationship to Secret Mantra.

BrianG said:

The protection chakra/body mandala I posted above has a Sri Lankan version as well.

So what you're saying is that these practices weren't derived from previous Vajrayana practice. Which is what I thought was likely due to the region's long history of Vajrayana practice(archaeological evidence supports Hevajra practice reaching it's historical peak during the Khmer empire).

That means there must have been a separate esoteric transmission just for SE Asia, which doesn't make much sense to me.

Malcolm wrote:

Correct, what I am saying is that these practices have no clear cut path to the presence of Vajrayāna SE Asia. They are not Vajrayāna practices, whatever else they may be.

The exoteric practice of protection amulets, protective visualizations and so on are wide spread in the Indian culture sphere. That does not make them related to Vajrayāna or even lower Secret Mantra.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, November 24th, 2014 at 12:45 AM

Title: Re: what makes Buddhist deathlessness not eternalism?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The basis in Dzogchen and Mahāmudra teachings is not transpersonal, it is personal.

smcj said:

Since you are authorized to teach about Dzogchen you are 100% entitled to put forward that position. There is plenty of commentary to support it and anyone that wants to see it that way is not in error to do so. However as has been discussed in another thread there is no consensus to that effect, specifically among later tibetan authors.

Malcolm wrote:

You don't understand the later Tibetan authors, sorry to say. The only lack of consensus is among westerners who really do not have a grasp of difficult tantric subjects, written in intentional language (i.e. coded), who are also unfamiliar with the broad range of the textual tradition and rely on tiny slices of translations of varying qualities and differing terminologies with which to form their views.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, November 24th, 2014 at 1:25 AM

Title: Re: Did the historical Buddha taught Vajrayana Tantra?

Content:

BrianG said:

You left out guru yoga.

Malcolm wrote:

Which requires an HYT empowerment.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, November 24th, 2014 at 1:30 AM

Title: Re: what makes Buddhist deathlessness not eternalism?

Content:

Karma Dorje said:

That depends entirely on who is teaching, but of course they are not equivalents. They each derive from their own particular context. However, the terms point to the same basis.

Malcolm wrote:

No, they do not. The basis in Dzogchen and Mahāmudra teachings is not transpersonal, it is personal.

Karma Dorje said:

What is the Sanskrit term you are taking as "transpersonal"? The basis of tantric and vedantic path is always personal.

Malcolm wrote:

Brahmin is transpersonal. In others words, all jivātmans (personal selves) are just subsets, if you will, of parātman (ultimate or transpersonal self). The distinction between the two is merely apparent in other words.

This is not compatible with Dzogchen or Mahāmudra, let alone Buddhadharma, on any level.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, November 24th, 2014 at 1:40 AM

Title: Re: what makes Buddhist deathlessness not eternalism?

Content:

smcj said:

So evidently Kongtrul disagrees with you, as do others.

Malcolm wrote:

No, actually he does not, you just do not understand what he is saying.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, November 24th, 2014 at 1:42 AM

Title: Re: what makes Buddhist deathlessness not eternalism?

Content:

smcj said:

This is the gist of the matter. You reject any Tibetan author that suggests anything of the sort. You have a right to do that. However since this is a public forum it is appropriate to voice dissenting opinions backed by authoritative quotations.

Malcolm wrote:

There aren't any Tibetan authors that do say anything of the kind. They all take great pains to distinguish their views from tīrthika views like Advaita. There are many westerners however who do not understand what they are reading and thus jump to incorrect conclusions, and therefore conflate tīrthika views like Advaita with Buddhadharma, such as yourself. Even the gzhan stong pas (especially the gzhan stong pas) go through great lengths to distinguish their view from the views of non-Buddhists such as Shankara. You do a disservice to them everytime you assert the contrary (based on no evidence whatsoever). Even the Bonpos spend a great deal of time differentiating their views from Advaita and so forth.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, November 24th, 2014 at 1:52 AM

Title: Re: Did the historical Buddha taught Vajrayana Tantra?

Content:

BrianG said:

You left out guru yoga.

Malcolm wrote:

Which requires an HYT empowerment.

BrianG said:

HYT is a Tibetan classification, and has no meaning outside of Tibetan Buddhism.

Malcolm wrote:

Guru yoga is only taught in the Guhyasamaja tantra on up.

It is not actually a Tibetan classification, the classification into four tantras comes from the Vajramāla tantra, etc.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, November 24th, 2014 at 2:17 AM

Title: Re: Rebirth (split topic: "Ornament o.t. Great Vehicle Sutra

Content:

Ambrosius80 said:

Nowadays we know as a fact that consciousness is linked to the brain, as is evident when scientists have studied the effects of psychedelic drugs on humans, for example. The visions and hallucinations are caused because the drugs affect certain areas of the brain. That's why they are also called consciousness-altering drugs.

Malcolm wrote:

You are mistaken sense perceptions for consciousness. They are not the same thing.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, November 24th, 2014 at 3:39 AM

Title: Re: Did the historical Buddha taught Vajrayana Tantra?

Content:

BrianG said:

Since we've established that Theravadian esoteric practices don't come from Vajrayana sources, I don't see why that would matter.

Malcolm wrote:

Guru Yoga is a very specific practice, with a very specific theory, with a very specific source. Calling some kind of guru veneration "guru yoga" indicates a lack of understanding of what the yoga in "guru yoga" means.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, November 24th, 2014 at 3:58 AM

Title: Re: Did the historical Buddha taught Vajrayana Tantra?

Content:

lorem said:

Okay so you are saying the guru practice at the beginning of Jamgon Kongtrul's The Great Path of Awakening is actually a veneration because it is lacking some elements of the full guru sadhanas?

Malcolm wrote:

Kongtrul indicates that at the beginning of practicing mind training, one should do guru yoga as a preliminary. However, he does not detail how that is to be done.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, November 24th, 2014 at 4:44 AM

Title: Re: Rebirth (split topic: "Ornament o.t. Great Vehicle Sutra

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

You are mistaken sense perceptions for consciousness. They are not the same thing.

Ambrosius80 said:

But according to Buddhist belief, there are six forms of vijnanas; eye consciousness, ear

consciousness, nose consciousness, tongue consciousness, body consciousness and mind consciousness. Psychedelics distort most of them, if not all. "Consciousness" is formed by all of them together.

Malcolm wrote:

No, actually there is one consciousness that acts through them serially. When you study the dhātu chapter of the kośa carefully you will observe that this is case. These six are just names for one consciousness when it acts through a given sense.

In any case, the formless realm beings have no brain, so according to you, they cannot be conscious, much less exist.

Of course, if you just want to make up your own Dharma that's fine, but we won't have anything left to discuss since I am a follower of Buddha's Dharma.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, November 24th, 2014 at 4:49 AM

Title: Re: what makes Buddhist deathlessness not eternalism?

Content:

Karma Dorje said:

[qsubset of anything. Paramatman is jiva freed from confusion.

Malcolm wrote:

Is there one parātman or many? If there is one, it is transpersonal, if it is many, then what is the difference between Saṃkhya and Advaita?

In reality, Shankara argues there is in reality only one purusha, not many, as in the Saṃkhya system. He makes this abundantly clear in his Yogasutra commentary, as did Ramaswami when he taught us the Yoga sutras, confirming everything I thought about Advaita. Also his teacher of Advaita was the Sankaracarya of Kanchi, the old one, Chandrashekarendra Saraswati, not the new one.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, November 24th, 2014 at 4:55 AM

Title: Re: Did the historical Buddha taught Vajrayana Tantra?

Content:

Johnny Dangerous said:

For sure the Therveda that is popular in the west seems to have been scrubbed of syncretic and esoteric elements. A lot of times when I see people reference Therveda, it almost seems like what they are talking about is actually (usually western) Pali Canon text criticism version of it, rather than as it's practiced anywhere else.

Bakmoon said:

As a practicing Theravadin myself I find this tendency to be rather annoying. It reeks of protestant Christianity in its mindset and methodology simply being transplanted into Buddhism which to me just seems like a disaster. I think textual criticism can help shed light into certain circumstances, but as the saying goes "when all you have is a hammer, the whole world looks like nails."

Plus, all of the Anuttara Yoga Tantra lineages I've ever heard of trace themselves back to the Buddha Vajradhara or to Samantabhadra Buddha, not to Shakyamuni Buddha, so I don't see what the big deal is.

Malcolm wrote:

Guhyasamaja traces its line to Śakyāmuni Buddha. Kalacakra was taught by the Buddha in the Dhanyakataka Stupa at Amaravati at the same time he taught Prajñāpāramitā at Rajagriha.

Vajradhara is the sambhogakāya, all nirmanakāyas are emanations of the sambhogakāya.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, November 24th, 2014 at 4:56 AM

Title: Re: Did the historical Buddha taught Vajrayana Tantra?

Content:

Fortyeightvows said:

Malcolm, is it possible to explain a bit of what distinguishes guru veneration from guru yoga? While observing samaya of course. I feel your explanation may help help my practice. You can't have the second without the first I suppose. I think it would be fair to say that veneration is one part of guru yoga.

Malcolm wrote:

Guru yoga is a practice connected with the vajra body.

Of course there are other kinds of gurus, but for this reason and that devotion to them will not constitute a rapid path for realizing mahāmudra or dzogchen in one lifetime.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, November 24th, 2014 at 5:12 AM

Title: Re: what makes Buddhist deathlessness not eternalism?

Content:

Karma Dorje said:

The same as saying one dharmakaya for all Buddhas.

Malcolm wrote:

It's really not the same thing at all.

Why? Because when it is said there is only one dharmakāya it means that realization of all Buddhas is the same, not that the continuum of all sentient beings is the same; just like saying that the nature of all fires is heat; nevertheless, every buddha's continuum is distinct and separate. This is not the case with Advaita which insists there is only one purusha for everyone, i.e. that the continuum of all sentient beings is the same.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, November 24th, 2014 at 5:37 AM

Title: Re: Did the historical Buddha taught Vajrayana Tantra?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Guhyasamaja traces its line to Śakyāmuni Buddha. Kalacakra was taught by the Buddha in the Dhanyakataka Stupa at Amaravati at the same time he taught Prajñāpāramitā at Rajagriha.

Vajradhara is the sambhogakāya, all nirmanakāyas are emanations of the sambhogakāya.

Bakmoon said:

Thank you for your correction Malcom. I think I remember something about the Kalacakra lineage now that you mention it.

I've heard in other places that the Guhyasamaja Tantra was received by the Mahasiddha Indrabhuti from Vajradhara. Is this referring to a different lineage of the Guhyasamaja Tantra or something?

Malcolm wrote:

No, the story runs that Buddha intuited that Indrabhuti was interested in the Dharma, so he flew there. Indrabhuti said "I am very interested in practicing Dharma but I need a method of awakening that will not require me to give up my duties as a king and husband (he had 500 wives)." Legend then has it that the Buddha bestowed upon him the Guhyasamaja empowerment during which Indrabhuti fully awakened.

Most people do not understand that abhiśeka is a method of awakening. It is only if someone does not awaken fully or at all during the empowerment that it is necessary to practice sadhana.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, November 24th, 2014 at 5:51 AM

Title: Re: Rebirth (split topic: "Ornament o.t. Great Vehicle Sutra

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

No, actually there is one consciousness that acts through them serially. When you study the dhātu chapter of the kośa carefully you will observe that this is case. These six are just names for one consciousness when it acts through a given sense.

Ambrosius80 said:

But still, without our senses, we would not be conscious.

Malcolm wrote:

Hence, unconsciousness devas as well as the four kinds of formless beings have no sensory experience at all.

Ambrosius80 said:

As for my theory, I have never denied the possibility of a network of electrons forming outside a brain, anchoring to something other than brains, or even forming to another dimensions.

Malcolm wrote:

There are so many problems with this theory...but I don't have time to address them.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, November 24th, 2014 at 5:53 AM

Title: Re: Translation Award for Ven. Bhikkhu Bodhi

Content:

Zhen Li said:

There also just aren't as many western Mahayana monks as compared to Theravadan ones. The Zen folks translate their Zen writings sometimes, and Tibetan folks translate what matters to them (i.e. not usually non-Vajrayana Mahayana texts like Sutras in Tibetan).

Malcolm wrote:

Ahem....

<http://84000.co> " onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;

You will find many Mahāyāna sutras here, more "every" day.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, November 24th, 2014 at 9:03 PM

Title: Re: Rebirth (split topic: "Ornament o.t. Great Vehicle Sutra

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Hence, unconsciousness devas as well as the four kinds of formless beings have no sensory experience at all.

We really have no way of examining the consciousness of beings in other realms than

animal realm and human realm.

Ambrosius80 said:

Sure we do, abhijñās.

There are so many problems with this theory...but I don't have time to address them.

I have justified each of my claims with reasoning, quotes from Buddhist texts, and using science as help. Lets turn the tables: prove to me that you have formed your own point of view after observation and analysis, instead of just reading from books and blindly believing what you have been told. I can guarantee that whatever reasoning you provide, I in turn will find a flaw in it. Why is that? Because there is no correct or wrong point of view, just different outlooks on the same issue. I see no reason to continue arguing like this, considering so far we have had almost exactly the same beliefs, but have used different methods to approach them.

Malcolm wrote:

We do not have anything like the same beliefs. You assert that consciousness is a form of matter, asserting that is composed of electrons (how many, — one, two, three, etc.?). The Buddha asserts that consciousness is a dhātu separate from the four elements and space. The Buddha asserts that matter such as it is, is a mental reification, you assert matter is real, and forms the basis of consciousness and so on, thus your view does not even reach Yogacara, let alone Madhyamaka.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, November 24th, 2014 at 9:09 PM

Title: Re: what makes Buddhist deathlessness not eternalism?

Content:

Karma Dorje said:

Oh look, another thread on Hinduism vs. Buddhism on Dharmawheel! How positively scintillating.

Malcolm wrote:

This turn in the conversation is not about Buddhism vs. "Hinduism", it is about the fact that the tīrthikas are not talking about the same thing we are, do not have the same understanding of the basis we do and do not share the same result we achieve, not to mention their path and ours is completely different.

I understand that you have a different point of view, but I do not agree with your point of view on this score in anyway.

Quite frankly, all of my studies, with Tibetan lamas fluent in Sanskrit educated by Indian Paṇḍitas in the six darshans at Varanasi and with Hindu teachers, have done nothing but reinforce my conviction that the mountain Hindus are climbing is a complete different mountain than the one the Buddha pointed out that we should ascend.

When there are discussions about things like the basis, suchness and so on, some people who are incapable of seeing the ultimate distinctions between Buddhist and

tīrthika views keep on introducing their confusion into these conversations necessitating again and again a rehash of the same points. Not for them, of course, because they are clearly incorrigible, but for the benefit of those who are beginners or who have not had the benefit of a solid education in Dharma yet.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, November 24th, 2014 at 9:16 PM

Title: Re: Did the historical Buddha taught Vajrayana Tantra?

Content:

Astus said:

From the perspective of East Asian Mahayana - to what Zen belongs to - the validity of Vajrayana is rarely if ever questioned. There is even a "Secret Teaching Division" (volumes 18-21) in the

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Taish%C5%8D_Tripitaka that includes all kinds of Tantric texts. In China many Vajrayana works were translated, especially during the Yuan (Mongolian) dynasty, as the court favoured Tibetan Buddhism. In Japan the Shingon school has existed since the 9th century. So, Tantric teachings and methods are recognised as valid in Mahayana beyond Tibet.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes of course, Astus, this was never disputed.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, November 24th, 2014 at 9:21 PM

Title: Re: Beginning a Ngöndro

Content:

Dharmaswede said:

Dear Malcolm,

Is this translation finished? If so, is it available?

Thank you.

Best Regards,

Jens

Malcolm wrote:

I am in the process of translating the Sakya Ngondro commentary. It has a very extensive section on the four common preliminaries.

I am very nearly done with the translation, and it should be ready for publication sometime next year. Not sure who is going to publish it but since it is being sponsored

directly by HH Sakya Trizin, I am sure there will be no problem finding a publisher. When it is published, it will likely be about 350 pages long.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, November 24th, 2014 at 10:23 PM

Title: Re: Did the historical Buddha taught Vajrayana Tantra?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Yes of course, Astus, this was never disputed.

Astus said:

Just meant as an extension of Meido's response.

Malcolm wrote:

As above, one cannot consider blessing protective amulets as falling under the heading of Vajrayāna practice, much less Yidam deity practice.

Actually, the term *yi dam lha* (*iṣṭadevatā*) is comparatively rare in Indian tantras, is more common in Indian commentaries, while of course it is ubiquitous in Tibetan writing. Nevertheless, my point was that a yidam is a path. That path is not common to common Mahāyāna such as Zen, while of course there is nothing barring anyone from practicing any of the divisions of tantra.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, November 24th, 2014 at 11:53 PM

Title: Re: Did the historical Buddha taught Vajrayana Tantra?

Content:

Astus said:

I did not mean yidams are used in practice by followers of Zen or other schools, it's just that I did not see people questioning the validity of it (except for some I have only heard of who despise Tantric/Tibetan Buddhism for some reason, but they are hardly if ever known among Western Buddhists).

Meido said:

Exactly. Again, my only statement was that Zen does not negate the existence of *iṣṭa-devata* (meaning, that it does not negate the validity of such practices...which is what I took the OP's assertion to be). *Shumon Mujintoron* is one text that devotes some discussion to a Japanese Zen (Rinzai) view of Tendai and Shingon practices in particular, and it clearly asserts their validity as Buddhadharma (though naturally within its own hierarchy of traditions).

I am not completely unfamiliar with yidam practice. I mentioned the Marici blessing amulets only as an example of everyday Zen engagement with deities that figure in such practices (and mostly because I was literally working on their prep at that moment). The ceremony for empowering these involves mantra, mudra and embodiment as the deity.

But I do not call this yidam practice, and since Zen generally doesn't use kanjo but rather takes seeing nature to be the necessary entry into practice, I do not call such things "Vajrayana", whatever their origins.

Sorry for Zen distraction in the Tibetan forum. Had meant to express support, actually.

~ Meido

Malcolm wrote:

If there is visualization of oneself as a deity, or you invite a deity in front of you, than this is exactly what yidam practice is. However, the difficulty lies in how this transmission is communicated from one generation to another. If there is no need for empowerment, i.e., if the idea is that one can simply pick up a text, recite mantras, perform mudras, and so on, this really does not qualify.

I appreciate your expression of support, and understood it as such, but in order to prevent confusion these distinctions must be made.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, November 25th, 2014 at 12:21 AM

Title: Re: Did the historical Buddha taught Vajrayana Tantra?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

If there is visualization of oneself as a deity, or you invite a deity in front of you, than this is exactly what yidam practice is.

Astus said:

Do you mean that visualisation practices like those found in the Pratyutpannasamadhi Sutra and the Amitayurdhyana Sutra count as yidam practice?

Malcolm wrote:

I clarified this — and no.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, November 25th, 2014 at 12:35 AM

Title: Re: what makes Buddhist deathlessness not eternalism?

Content:

Jikan said:

Hi Malcolm,

It might also be helpful for beginners to clarify just what is meant by the term "tirthika" in Buddhist discourse, because it's easy for an outsider looking over my shoulder (like the one looking over my shoulder a few minutes ago) to suspect that this is a straw-man term without historical basis. How would you rebut such a comment?

I'd always been thought that "tirthika" indicates a category in which certain kinds of positions may be lumped, not necessarily a specific school of thought or social institution or tradition

many thanks

edit:

for context, I think this issue is more extensive than one might expect... here's an example of a newly-relevant-again thread

<http://dharmawheel.net/viewtopic.php?f=40&t=16819> "
onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;" onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;

Malcolm wrote:

It means literally "ford-crosser" and is a term applied to non-Buddhists who maintain a tenet system.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, November 25th, 2014 at 12:46 AM

Title: Re: what makes Buddhist deathlessness not eternalism?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Quite frankly, all of my studies, with Tibetan lamas fluent in Sanskrit educated by Indian Paṇḍitas in the six darshans at Varanasi and with Hindu teachers, have done nothing but reinforce my conviction that the mountain Hindus are climbing is a complete different mountain than the one the Buddha pointed out that we should ascend.

When there are discussions about things like the basis, suchness and so on, some people who are incapable of seeing the ultimate distinctions between Buddhist and tīrthika views keep on introducing their confusion into these conversations necessitating again and again a rehash of the same points. Not for them, of course, because they are clearly incorrigible, but for the benefit of those who are beginners or who have not had the benefit of a solid education in Dharma yet.

smcj said:

You seem passionately insistent that they are different, yet you never articulate what that difference is. You'd do yourself and everyone else a favor by explaining your understanding of the situation.

Malcolm wrote:

You yourself can carefully study Yoga, Samkhya, Advaita, Nyāyā, Vaiśeṣika and Mimamsa and compare them with Vaibhaṣika, Sautrantika, Yogacara and Madhyamaka as I have done.

I have done the heavy lifting, why should I do it for you?

But in reality it boils down to this. There are basically two kinds of views among tīrthikas: eternalist and annihilationist. Among those who follow Buddhadharma there are the three realist tenets, Vaibhaśika, Sautrantika (one can include the views of the other Nikaya schools here) and Yogacara (a species of nondual realism), and then there is Madhyamaka, the sublime Middle Way, the crown jewel of the Buddha's teaching.

The real problem is that people who come to Buddhadharma do not properly study these non-buddhist tenets, and in doing so, often unwittingly import these views into their practice, for example, imagining the basis (gzhi) is something Brahmin and so on, and concluding the Dzogchen, for example, has the same meaning as Advaita.

As far as rebutting these incorrect views, I have in fact done so for years, at length, in many places.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, November 25th, 2014 at 12:47 AM

Title: Re: what makes Buddhist deathlessness not eternalism?

Content:

lorem said:

Please define "maintain a tenet system". Thx.

Malcolm wrote:

Those who have an organized set of views and doctrines about liberation and so on, as opposed to those who are without a tenet system, i.e, the uneducated.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, November 25th, 2014 at 1:16 AM

Title: Re: what makes Buddhist deathlessness not eternalism?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The real problem is that people who come to Buddhadharma do not properly study these non-buddhist tenets, and in doing so, often unwittingly import these views into their practice, for example, imagining the basis (gzhi) is something Brahmin and so on, and concluding the Dzogchen, for example, has the same meaning as Advaita.

lorem said:

Might be clearer to say Nondualism schools are not Dzogchen. There are of course other schools also but I feel a lot of what you're saying is referring to the modern nondualism/neo-buddhist. (??)

Malcolm wrote:

Dzogchen is a part of Buddhadharma. Its basic theory is the same as the rest of Buddhadharma, i.e., suffering arises because of the false grasping to a self.

For example, the Tantra of Self-Arisen Vidyā states:

Further, samasara is as follows:

false view and eternalist view.

The false vehicle is as follows:

held to be three hundred and sixty beliefs in a self.

And:

Likewise, the countless views of a self are included in two. Those are included in both the eternalist view and annihilationist view. Countless views of self come from those two. Likewise, son of a good family, because you have avoided entering a false path, I have summarized the views of a self and demonstrated them.

And:

The true Dharma is free from a self,
free from the extremes of the taints
of afflicted minds and so on.

And:

...since there is no appropriation, a self does not exist.

And:

All the objects and conditions of the six consciousness
depend on grasping something;

if there is no one-sided grasping, there is bliss

free from objects grasped as “mine”,

empty of phenomena grasped as a self,

and liberated from objects grasped as permanent.

The Tantra of Self-Liberated Vidyā states:

If one conceives of a self, it is a delusion of Māra.

And:

The one great root māra

is the concept that grasps a self.

The Union of the Sun and the Moon Tantra states:

“Beyond extremes” is not apprehending a self in things.

And:

Those of incorrect understanding are the tirthikas i.e. all views grasping to extremes and grasping to a self.

Etc., I could go on and on....but I won't.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, November 25th, 2014 at 1:24 AM

Title: Re: what makes Buddhist deathlessness not eternalism?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Those of incorrect understanding are the tirthikas i.e. all views grasping to extremes and

grasping to a self.

lorem said:

Okay so you mainly are referring to Hinduism and Jainism.

I was referring to the idea of a collective unconsciousness, which I guess is more new-age then nondual.

Malcolm wrote:

From a Buddhist perspective, there is no such thing as a collective unconscious. This is just more transpersonal bullshit.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, November 25th, 2014 at 4:09 AM

Title: Re: Did the historical Buddha taught Vajrayana Tantra?

Content:

lorem said:

1) If you were a higher-level bodhisattva you could just enter the mandala of a deity, i.e. Tilopa and most likely Lama Shang.

Malcolm wrote:

Nope.

lorem said:

2) You do the practice with the permission of the lama to habitualize yourself until you get the empowerment and then it will ripen--hopefully into full bloom because of the prior "heavy lifting".

Malcolm wrote:

Nope. You and the lama in question just go to lower realms, as is clearly taught by the Buddha in the Mahāmudratilaka tantra among others.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, November 25th, 2014 at 4:51 AM

Title: Re: what makes Buddhist deathlessness not eternalism?

Content:

Karma Dorje said:

For me, the choice of heeding decades of personal instruction from my guru

There are clearly distinctions between one contemplative discipline and another. They are not anywhere nearly as yawning a chasm as intellectuals make them out to be.

Malcolm wrote:

Asserting that one's guru is/was awakened is of course a desiderata for any disciple, but

you can understand our reluctance to accept this merely on your word, having never met the fellow in question, and given that your reportage is completely at odds with centuries of discourse and polemics on both sides by masters also supposedly realized in each of their respective traditions. The choice one faces is do we believe what you assert, or do we believe our own tradition?

The other thing which comes to mind is exactly why pursue another path, if one has reached the culmination of the first, unless the second path is more profound?

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, November 25th, 2014 at 5:18 AM

Title: Re: what makes Buddhist deathlessness not eternalism?

Content:

Karma Dorje said:

For me, the choice of heeding decades of personal instruction from my guru

There are clearly distinctions between one contemplative discipline and another. They are not anywhere nearly as yawning a chasm as intellectuals make them out to be.

Malcolm wrote:

Asserting that one's guru is/was awakened is of course a desiderata for any disciple, but you can understand our reluctance to accept this merely on your word, having never met the fellow in question, and given that your reportage is completely at odds with centuries of discourse and polemics on both sides by masters also supposedly realized in each of their respective traditions. The choice one faces is do we believe what you assert, or do we believe our own tradition?

M

Karma Dorje said:

I am not suggesting that you should accept anything at all on my say so. I am merely stating what my incorrigibility stems from. You can believe whatever you like this week. I think you overstate the usefulness of polemics against other contemplative disciplines to beginners on the path, who by and large don't want to hear what they view as mere dogmatism, particularly when there is quite obviously so much in common with other paths.

Malcolm wrote:

First, I was not suggesting you were incorrigible, that was pointed at someone else.

It is not polemics that are the point, but freeing ourselves of conceptual constructs and their pitfalls, clearly identified. The point is not to criticize others, though this point is often lost, the point is to clearly set out the view to be realized in relief, by examining the views to be discarded one by one, step by step, lower to higher, beginning with

annihilationism then all views of self and all realist views, until we discover the true meaning of freedom from proliferation ourselves.

Most of us have neither sufficient faith that devotion to a guru can be our sole remedy, no matter how realized they are, nor are we sufficiently intelligent that we can avoid erroneous views without study. Therefore, for the plodders amongst us, like myself, a careful program of study in what are incorrect paths and correct paths, lower paths and higher paths, slower paths and faster paths is a necessity, not just a desiderata. In the meantime, we cultivate the best we can, devotion to gurus we do have, since this indeed is the fastest way to liberation.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, November 25th, 2014 at 7:44 AM

Title: Re: what makes Buddhist deathlessness not eternalism?

Content:

conebeckham said:

Well, is the "Nature of Consciousness" itself dependently arisen? Or not? Does it belong to the subset, even if it is not?

Sherab said:

I understand it, ye she is not dependently arisen.

Malcolm wrote:

that depends on which ye shes...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, November 25th, 2014 at 8:43 AM

Title: Re: Did the historical Buddha taught Vajrayana Tantra?

Content:

Matylda said:

I am very reluctant to write about it, but yes indeed there is such thing within zen tradition. However it is reserved for "graduate" priests, so to say... And there is clear vision of dharmakaya, sambhogakaya and nirmanakaya as well, what is done mostly in 100day retreat which is a requirement to perform certain rituals later. Rereat may or may not be strict, however the room of the retreat person by no means could be entered by anyone else. Due to certain visual set up of special altar etc. As for the lineage... its origin is mostly tendai, some lineages come from shingon and for example in soto zen it is reserved for people who did receive dharma transmission and have sizeable training already.

Dharma transmission includes things like abhisheka and proper procedure including the use of abhisheka water, empowering the water, mantras mudras etc. etc. and taking the proper form at that time... I mean non-human form..

Malcolm wrote:

This is Mantrayāna.

Matylida said:

Well, still I guess it is not vajrayana practice...

Malcolm wrote:

As I said, then these are proper Mantrayāna practices.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, November 25th, 2014 at 8:46 AM

Title: Re: what makes Buddhist deathlessness not eternalism?

Content:

Son of Buddha said:

Isn't this the same Idea as the Hindu notion that everyone has an individual soul or personality that will attain Moshka?

Malcolm wrote:

Hindus don't really have that idea.

Son of Buddha said:

also doesn't this create a duality between Buddha's? Do Buddha now all have different individual personalities? I was always taught that there is no difference between Buddha's and the only reason they have individual names is because we gave them different names to distinguish one Buddha manifestation from another, but to view them as different "Buddha's" is to create a duality in Enlightenment.

Malcolm wrote:

There are no differences between one Buddha and another in terms of realization; there are differences in terms of aspirations, and so on., which give rise to differences in sentient beings karmic connections with this buddhafiield and that, and so on. In short, everyone who becomes a Buddha starts out as a sentient being, and there is a unique rosary of clarity that continues from the time of being a sentient being through the attainment of Vajradhara which forms the relative basis for Buddhahood.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, November 25th, 2014 at 8:10 PM

Title: Re: what makes Buddhist deathlessness not eternalism?

Content:

Son of Buddha said:

The concept of Moksha in the Hindu Religion is mainly of two types. These are personal and impersonal. Moksha is defined as the loving, eternal union with God and

considered the highest perfection of existence. In Advaita philosophy Moksha is union with the oneness which Advaita advocates.

Malcolm wrote:

First, Advaita is not union with oneness. The Advaita model is that oneself is Brahmin, and always has been, described through the four Mahāvakyas:

Consciousness is Brahman

I am Brahman

That thou art

This Atman is Brahman

Son of Buddha said:

Ramanuja, an 11th century hindu philosopher, believed in the principle of vishishta dvaita (qualified non-dualism). According to Ramanuja, the individual soul is not identical with god. So, a devotee may worship god even after liberation or moksha. Moksha can be attained through bhakti (devotion), which involves the constant remembering of god or the surrender of the individual self to god.

Malcolm wrote:

Not exactly — in this philosophy, everything is part of Brahman and Brahman in the form of Ishvara is part of everything. Thus they refer to three principles which are all part of Brahman: *Īśvara* (Parabrahman), the sentient beings (*chit-brahman*) and the insentient Universe (*achit-brahman*). *Īśvara* and the personal self are identical. While not the best source, it tallies with my personal studies, thus Wiki states:

Rāmānujā chooses to take the position of universal identity. He interprets this passage to mean the subsistence of all attributes in a common underlying substratum. This is referred to as *samānādhikaranyā*. Thus *Rāmānujā* says the purport of the passage is to show the unity of all beings in a common base. *Ishvara* (Parabrahman) who is the Cosmic Spirit for the pan-organistic body consisting of the Universe and sentient beings, is also simultaneously the innermost self (*Ātmān*) for each individual sentient being (*Jīvā*). All the bodies, the Cosmic and the individual, are held in an adjectival relationship (*aprthak-siddhi*) in the one *Īśvara*.

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vishishtadvaita> " onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;

So the idea that each individual can attain a personal "Enlightenment" is something that can be found in Hinduism

Again, it is not exactly like that. Irregardless of the beliefs of the masses, the dominant philosophy of the six darshanas is Vedanta, and among the forms of Vedanta, Advaita is the dominant form.

Son of Buddha said:

There are no differences between one Buddha and another in terms of realization; there are differences in terms of aspirations, and so on., which give rise to differences in sentient beings karmic connections with this buddhfield and that, and so on. In short, everyone who becomes a Buddha starts out as a sentient being, and there is a unique

rosary of clarity that continues from the time of being a sentient being through the attainment of Vajradhara which forms the relative basis for Buddhahood.

But doesn't this type of view impute a individual self upon Buddhahood? essentially the individual self(person) is actually the one who is attaining Buddhahood, wouldn't this make the individual person/self the "attainer" and Enlightenment just a "object" that is attained by the person/self?

Malcolm wrote:

[/quote]

Relatively speaking, the Buddha states many times "When I attained awakening...", "Before I attained awakening" and "After I attained awakening" and so on. Ultimately of course there is no one who attains buddhahood, etc., and as Haribhadra points out in the Aloka Prajñāpāramitā commentary, the entire path, from beginning to end, is illusory. So this is why we must understand this through the two truths. For this reason it is said that the basis is the two truths, the path is the two accumulations, and the result is the two kāyas.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, November 25th, 2014 at 8:12 PM

Title: Re: what makes Buddhist deathlessness not eternalism?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The other thing which comes to mind is exactly why pursue another path, if one has reached the culmination of the first, unless the second path is more profound?

M

Karma Dorje said:

Sorry, missed this earlier. We have discussed this on other threads and in person: my view is that there is much that is explicit in Buddhadharma that is either implicit or missing in other paths. As such it is the most complete and direct approach to realization. Because emptiness is discussed explicitly and at length, it avoids many of the pitfalls of other paths that emphasize the awareness aspect.

For someone who has reached the goal of any of these paths, I think we can agree that all that remains is working for the welfare of others. Some bodhisattvas have renovated their own tradition, others developed new religions in places where there were none. Still others bring the view of realization to paths that either lack it completely or where it has become obscured.

Why continue to practice another path alongside one that is already complete?

Pretty much any symbol system can be used to convey the path by a mahasiddha (and many may have been the projects of prior bodhisattvas in the first place).

One can form connections to countless beings that may not have the karma to practice Buddhadharma directly and thereby hook them into eventual practice of a liberating path.

Certain practices (for example bhakti) can aid in character development.

The associated beings propitiated may bring particular temporal benefits.

Incorrigibility is entertaining.

I am sure that's not an exhaustive list, but this is the gist of why I continue to practice more than one path at the same time.

Malcolm wrote:

Well, your comments are rather self-defeating then.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, November 26th, 2014 at 8:01 AM

Title: Re: Did the historical Buddha taught Vajrayana Tantra?

Content:

odysseus said:

Nice schematic. But to me it looks like another way of putting everything into analytical order, like a mathematical equation.

To add it up, it's another misinterpretation of the Dhyani Buddhas.

Come up with something better before anyone can convince me that there's an obvious logical relationship between the five heaps and the five transcendent buddhas.

BTW, who said there's now 5 poisons? There's the notion of 3 poisons only (wanting, anger and unknowing). And what is Padma- and Karma-buddha-family really?

jmlee369 said:

From the Gelug Lama Chopa:

དོན་རྒྱལ་གྱུང་ཚུལ་གྱིས་བཞུགས་པའི་ཕུང་པོ་རྣམ་དག་བདེ་གཤེགས་ལྔ།

dor je kyil trung tshül gyi zhug päi phung po nam dag de sheg nga

Sitting in the vajra-position, enhaloed by a five-colored rainbow.

Totally pure, your skandhas are the five sugatas

Is Panchen Losang Chokyi Gyaltsen authoritative enough of a source, or do we need to pull up the text of the Guhyasamaja Tantra for you?

Malcolm wrote:

This person obviously has no knowledge of Vajrayāna, so why are you risking your samayas by trying to inform someone who has not been ripened?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, November 26th, 2014 at 8:08 AM

Title: Re: Did the historical Buddha taught Vajrayana Tantra?

Content:

odysseus said:

OK, just please leave my scepticism aside for now, untill I find a teacher to properly clarify this. But for now, this direct comparison seems to me an impossibility right now. Yes, I see the connotations, but I won't take these assertions for granted just like that.

Malcolm wrote:

Look, if you want to understand these things, you need to find a teacher, receive empowerment, take it seriously.

You clearly don't have any knowledge of Vajrayāna, which is fine, but your objections are coming from a place of complete ignorance about it. There are many teachings in Vajrayāna which are not shared with common Mahāyāna. Rather than flatly saying that well informed people are wrong, use a little humility and understand that you don't know everything.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, November 26th, 2014 at 8:12 AM

Title: Re: Did the historical Buddha taught Vajrayana Tantra?

Content:

odysseus said:

Otherwise, no comment about Malcolm's elite club aspirations. lol

Malcolm wrote:

Vajrayāna is not an elite club, anyone can join, but it once having joined, there are many things that ought to be kept secret and for very good reason. Things like the arrangement of the five aggregates into the five families and so on are not principles that are for common consumption. As I said, if you are really interested, take it seriously, find a qualified master such as HH Dalai Lama, HH Sakya Trizin, HH Karmapa, etc., or someone whom they have appointed as a person qualified to lead students on the Vajrayāna path and begin your studies in the proper way.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, November 26th, 2014 at 8:23 AM

Title: Re: Did the historical Buddha taught Vajrayana Tantra?

Content:

Johnny Dangerous said:

It may not be "for common consumption" as a teaching, but it isn't hidden info either, at least not the basic presentation..it exists in a number of non-restricted books and teachings AFAIK.

Malcolm wrote:

In reality, it is something connected with empowerments. So it really should not be discussed so much in a public place, regardless of how many books it may be published in. As Sachen states:

In general, Secret Mantra makes dependent origination into the path. Since all dependent originations are arranged at the time of the empowerment, in the beginning it is very important to obtain completely the four empowerment from the guru. That empowerment is not merely a symbol, not merely an introduction and not merely a blessing.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, November 26th, 2014 at 8:26 AM

Title: Re: Did the historical Buddha taught Vajrayana Tantra?

Content:

Johnny Dangerous said:

It may not be "for common consumption" as a teaching, but it isn't hidden info either, at least not the basic presentation..it exists in a number of non-restricted books and teachings AFAIK.

Malcolm wrote:

In reality, it is something connected with empowerments. So it really should not be discussed so much in a public place, regardless of how many books it may be published in.

Johnny Dangerous said:

I'd say the cats out of the bag on that one, since we could immediately find available teachings on Google, i've heard podcasts that discuss it, etc. Are you suggesting we just stop talking about it?

Malcolm wrote:

Yeah, pretty much.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, November 27th, 2014 at 12:39 AM

Title: Re: Ancient continents, a topic for meditation

Content:

lorem said:

I could be wrong but with him the knowledge just arose, the transcendental wisdom as such, the seeing was there.

Malcolm wrote:

Yeah, you are wrong. When the Buddha was engaged in recalling his past lives, he had not yet woken up. Through remembering his past lives, he understood karma and dependent origination. Through applying the view of dependent origination he attained

buddhahood.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, November 27th, 2014 at 12:45 AM

Title: Re: Book recommendations about rebirth, reincarnation

Content:

Greg said:

I never felt like I encountered a persuasive explanation of karma & rebirth from a Prasaṅgika perspective. At the level of saṃvṛti, karmic seed and ripening separated by lifetimes does not appear. At the level of paramārtha it does not exist. Therefore, like the horns of a rabbit, it must be completely wrong.

Malcolm wrote:

The prasangika perspective on karma is that it is like a debt.

In terms of rebirth, what takes rebirth is the habit of imputing an unreal "I". This habit not only can create karma but can receive its ripening, just as by using the imputation car we can both drive it and crash it.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, November 27th, 2014 at 1:01 AM

Title: Re: Book recommendations about rebirth, reincarnation

Content:

Greg said:

I never felt like I encountered a persuasive explanation of karma & rebirth from a Prasaṅgika perspective. At the level of saṃvṛti, karmic seed and ripening separated by lifetimes does not appear. At the level of paramārtha it does not exist. Therefore, like the horns of a rabbit, it must be completely wrong.

Malcolm wrote:

The prasangika perspective on karma is that it is like a debt.

In terms of rebirth, what takes rebirth is the habit of imputing an unreal "I". This habit not only can create karma but can receive its ripening, just as by using the imputation car we can both drive it and crash it.

lorem said:

Isn't potential?

Malcolm wrote:

Karma is likened to a debt. This is Nagārjuna's preferred relative truth version of karma. Also Candrakīrti accepts this.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, November 27th, 2014 at 2:06 AM

Title: Re: Book recommendations about rebirth, reincarnation

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The prasāṅgika perspective on karma is that it is like a debt.

In terms of rebirth, what takes rebirth is the habit of imputing an unreal "I". This habit not only can create karma but can receive its ripening, just as by using the imputation car we can both drive it and crash it.

Karma is likened to a debt. This is Nagārjuna's preferred relative truth version of karma. Also Candrakīrti accepts this.

Greg said:

Still, that is just another, alternate metaphor, not an explanation. When it comes to saṃvṛti, my understanding is that prasaṅgikas simply accept the conventions of deluded beings as dependently arisen mere appearances. But an action performed by a sentient being in one lifetime, which comes to fruition three lifetimes later, is not something that appears to anyone. So how can it be differentiated from an utter nonexistent like the son of a barren woman?

Malcolm wrote:

But such karma does appear to someone, i.e, buddha or someone with similar capacity of wisdom. It may not appear to you, but relatively speaking, many things do not appear to you which appear to others of higher or more refined faculties.

The actual dharma in question is called an avipraśā, an "indestructable".

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, November 27th, 2014 at 3:20 AM

Title: Re: Book recommendations about rebirth, reincarnation

Content:

Greg said:

How can you have saṃvṛti that only appears to aryas? Isn't the definition of saṃvṛti that it is the false perception of the deluded?

Malcolm wrote:

Nothing is outside the omniscience of a buddha, including relative truth. They have the capacity to know the karma of others. They have all six abhijñās, so of course they know the karma of sentient beings.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, November 27th, 2014 at 3:21 AM

Title: Re: Ancient continents, a topic for meditation

Content:

lorem said:

I could be wrong but with him the knowledge just arose, the transcendental wisdom as such, the seeing was there.

Malcolm wrote:

Yeah, you are wrong. When the Buddha was engaged in recalling his past lives, he had not yet woken up. Through remembering his past lives, he understood karma and dependent origination. Through applying the view of dependent origination he attained buddhahood.

lorem said:

Okay go halvesies. To recall past lives means he was already bodhisattva (first bhumi?). Different than us pondering.

Malcolm wrote:

No, even Hindu meditators can recall many past lives without being realized people.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, November 27th, 2014 at 10:19 AM

Title: Re: Book recommendations about rebirth, reincarnation

Content:

Greg said:

How can you have saṃvṛti that only appears to aryaś? Isn't the definition of saṃvṛti that it is the false perception of the deluded?

Malcolm wrote:

Nothing is outside the omniscience of a buddha, including relative truth. They have the capacity to know the karma of others. They have all six abhijñās, so of course they know the karma of sentient beings.

Greg said:

Saṃvṛti is by definition the false perception of the deluded, and nothing else. The omniscience of a buddha includes the saṃvṛti that sentient beings perceive--because that is the only thing saṃvṛti is. Sentient beings are not having false perceptions of the workings of karma across lifetimes, so there is nothing for the omniscience of a buddha to know. The fact that karmic action at a distance can't be accounted for in prasaṅgika is clearly a weak point in the system.

Malcolm wrote:

As for the first point, well, this obviously not the case despite the definition of samvṛiti — for example, when the Buddha says "When so on so live in such and such time, his clan name was x, the king's name was Y...", such information is not available to ordinary people. If we accept what you are claiming, someone at some time must have this idea in their minds in order for it to be known by the Buddha, thus you are placing firm restrictions on what a Buddha may know. A Buddha knows all things both in terms of their nature and their characteristics.

Secondly, karma has no intrinsic nature which prevents its ripening at a time in the future. Therefor, this is not weak link you suppose.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, November 27th, 2014 at 9:44 PM

Title: Re: Book recommendations about rebirth, reincarnation

Content:

Greg said:

Nonetheless, the names of the Kings and so forth did appear to beings at one time.

Malcolm wrote:

The idea that Buddhas cannot know conventional things independently of the sense cognitions of sentient beings must be false because those cognitions themselves are relative.

Greg said:

But Buddhas do not know the hair color of the son of a barren woman because there is nothing to know. The thing in question is utterly nonexistent, having never even appeared. How is karma across lifetimes any different?

Malcolm wrote:

It is clearly different in so far as a) the Buddha clearly taught such ripening was unerring and b) your analogy is clearly false. Intentions (karmas) are obviously not like barren women.

Greg said:

As for your second point, that is like saying sky flowers have no intrinsic nature that prevents them from blooming in the sky. It is an essentially meaningless assertion that explains nothing.

Malcolm wrote:

The problem is that you are looking for a medium of transference, and Madhyamakas in general reject that there is one, apart from a dharma called a nondissipation (avipraṇāśa, chud mi za ba, which Nāgārjuna states as an opinion he prefers and defends), which functions like a debt. For example, when you borrow money or incur a debt, there is no actual medium that conveys that debt from one moment to the next.

But when you owe a debt, everyone agrees that you must pay up when it is demanded of you. When it is paid, the note still exists, even though it can no longer be enforced. Likewise, when one engages in a karma, even though the act itself has ceased, a dharma called a nondissipation is created. This is why the Buddha says:

"The action of corporal beings does not dissipate even in hundreds of eons."

Nāgārjuna himself states:

Emptiness and non-annihilation,
samsara and impermanence,
the Buddha explained
the phenomena [chos] of nondissipation of karmas.

Even though karmas cease upon acting, their effect does not dissipate unless this nondissipation is removed by the path, or by moving into a dhātu where a given nondissipation is left behind because it can function in that sphere.

And this all comes about because karmas, like everything else, have no inherent nature. For which reason Candrakīrti simply says that karmas ripen because there is no nature which prevents their ripening due to fact of nondissipation.

Thus karmas are not like barren women, and do engender progeny called nondissipation.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, November 27th, 2014 at 10:56 PM

Title: Re: Before teaching to somebody...

Content:

lorem said:

I listen to Malcolm. Although I did allude to the fact that if he has concerns about the Gandenpas seeing Dorje Setrap as a wisdom protector he should talk to someone authoritative in the Geluk tradition and have it clarified.

Malcolm wrote:

There is nothing to clarify on this score, HHDL even states that Setrap is a mundane protector of the gyal po class, like Pehar, to whom he is subordinate, or Ta'og.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, November 29th, 2014 at 5:54 AM

Title: Re: Rebirth (split topic: "Ornament o.t. Great Vehicle Sutra

Content:

Punya said:

Malcolm said: Sentient beings are cognitive errors propelled through birth after birth by the root obscuration of I-making.

The Gelugpas (and maybe others) say it is the "mere I" that continues from life to life and that this "mere I" is not the "I" in this life eg John who lives in Britain and is a university professor etc etc or the "I" of the previous life eg Maria who lived in Spain and is a catholic nun etc etc. What does this "mere I" (or whatever other label is appropriate) consist of (the term cognitive errors doesn't make any sense to me), what is the "I" in the "mere I" that needs to be abandoned (its obviously much more subtle than the "I" of this life) and how is it explained that the "mere I" takes its specific karmic propensities from life to life and not some other "mere I"s propensities.

Malcolm wrote:

Sentient beings are a cognitive error in the sense that the "mere I" is the mistaken habit of "I making", i.e. a sentient being is nothing more nor less than this cognitive error.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, November 29th, 2014 at 10:08 PM

Title: Re: Retreat: English or Tibetan?

Content:

Losang Rabjor said:

Hello,

I am about to enter into my first retreat and although I can read Tibetan and do my short sadhana in Tibetan, the long version is a bit difficult to follow.

Would it be smart to do the long sadhana in English or try to push through with the Tibetan version?

I was told by a friend that doing the long practice in Tibetan would be of better use because doing the sadhana four times a day would greatly speed up my familiarity with the long practice. Any ideas? What about starting the retreat in English and slowly transitioning to the Tibetan version?

Thanks ahead of time for your input.

Malcolm wrote:

If you understand the visualizations, then do it in Tibetan. Even better, before your retreat, translate it into English, then do it in Tibetan.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, November 29th, 2014 at 10:44 PM

Title: Re: Retreat: English or Tibetan?

Content:

gad rgyangs said:

didn't the tibetans translate the sadhanas in the sadhanamala and other sources from sanskrit into tibetan? why would it be better for a native english speaker to do them in tibetan?

Malcolm wrote:

If one is interested to improve one's Tibetan, recite it in Tibetan. If you don't care about improving your Tibetan, recite it in English.

Aesthetics are a secondary concern.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, November 29th, 2014 at 11:30 PM

Title: Re: Teachers and credentials (OT: Before teaching...)

Content:

lorem said:

I listen to Malcolm. Although I did allude to the fact that if he has concerns about the Gandenpas seeing Dorje Setrap as a wisdom protector he should talk to someone authoritative in the Geluk tradition and have it clarified.

Malcolm wrote:

There is nothing to clarify on this score, HHDL even states that Setrap is a mundane protector of the gyal po class, like Pehar, to whom he is subordinate, or Ta'og.

lorem said:

Okay then I will need to search for where he states this. And if so it is interesting that it has not been clarified.

Malcolm wrote:

It has been clarified — Setrab is the wrathful emanation of Brahma, so it is not possible for him to be a wisdom protector. The Dalai Lama spoke about this in several lectures concerning protectors, clarifying that even if it is held that Setrab is an emanation of Amitabha, it is no more appropriate to regard him as a wisdom protector than it is to regard the Gyalpo Ku-nga as wisdom protectors, who are held to be emanations of the five Buddha families.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, November 30th, 2014 at 1:54 AM

Title: Re: Rebirth (split topic: "Ornament o.t. Great Vehicle Sutra

Content:

Punya said:

By what mechanism can a cognitive error continue or manifest? And as far as I can tell,

you haven't answered my last question. (Sorry I have to go out now but I'll be back later to read your answer.)

Malcolm wrote:

Through the mechanism of grasping at a self.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, November 30th, 2014 at 1:55 AM

Title: Re: Benefits of anthropomorphizing elements and aggregates?

Content:

Astus said:

Buddhas are perfectly enlightened beings. Ordinary beings are made of elements and aggregates. That all beings are made of buddhas is a statement connecting the beginning (samsara) with the end (nirvana). It is not that one should see a toenail as a buddha with arms, legs and a golden aura.

Malcolm wrote:

Not in sūtra...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, November 30th, 2014 at 3:11 AM

Title: Re: Benefits of anthropomorphizing elements and aggregates?

Content:

lorem said:

The victors, the peaceful and wrathful deities.

<https://www.amazon.com/Magic-Dance-Thinley-Norbu/dp/0877738858>

Is the OP question why don't we just work with the elements directly?

Malcolm wrote:

It is because they are the impure vision. Even in Dzogchen it is necessary to work with pure vision.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, November 30th, 2014 at 3:24 AM

Title: Re: Benefits of anthropomorphizing elements and aggregates?

Content:

lorem said:

The victors, the peaceful and wrathful deities.

<https://www.amazon.com/Magic-Dance-Thinley-Norbu/dp/0877738858>

Is the OP question why don't we just work with the elements directly?

Malcolm wrote:

It is because they are the impure vision. Even in Dzogchen it is necessary to work with pure vision.

lorem said:

tag nang? What Tibetan word for pure vision are you using here?

Malcolm wrote:

dag snang.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, November 30th, 2014 at 4:09 AM

Title: Re: Benefits of anthropomorphizing elements and aggregates?

Content:

lorem said:

Okay sacred outlook. The Vidyahara, The Heart of the Buddha

Reflection.

EDIT

Some books to read for people who are interested. Thanks guys!

Malcolm wrote:

Something like that, but I more had in mind a text by the great Dzogchen master, Shabkar Tshogdrug Rangdrol that definitely should be translated, The Emanational Volume of Pure Vision, part of his Cycle of Nine Emanational Books that exists in four volumes in his collected works.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, November 30th, 2014 at 4:59 AM

Title: Re: Independent Research on Chogyam Trungpa

Content:

Jikan said:

I'm looking for recommendations for history or biography assessing Trungpa Rinpoche's impact on Buddhism in North America, North American culture overall, or Buddhism overall. It's not hard to find observations like this one:

Sam Bercholz said:

To see Trungpa Rinpoche is a very difficult thing because we only see this person who walked this land and taught, gave hundreds of talks, and so on. In terms of a wider perspective of history, Trungpa Rinpoche's arrival into North America in 1970 is equivalent to Padmasambhava's arrival into Tibet hundreds of years before that ... Trungpa Rinpoche's arrival in America, and what he did in those seventeen years is one

of the most incredible things in Buddhist history.

Jikan said:

http://www.chronicleproject.com/stories_131.html "

onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;" onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;

I don't doubt it. I'd just like to see an assessment coming from an outsider looking in, with more of a birds-eye perspective. Preferably something that has survived peer-review.

Thank you in advance for any recommendations.

Malcolm wrote:

Total hyperbole. HHDL is far more influential and important in the spread of Dharma in the US than Trungpa will ever be.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, November 30th, 2014 at 6:15 AM

Title: Re: i can't stop whinging and backstabbing

Content:

straightpunk said:

So i finally went to a community Buddhist teaching, it was very Tibetan but modernized i think. The teaching started off with this Buddha prayer meditation where the lady turned on a tape and sung, this was very uncomfortable and almost had me running out of the room, but i managed to keep an open mind and not be so judgy. After that we moved on to the teaching of some old monk (i can't remember his name) and the teaching of how anger solves nothing and patience is the antidote. It was all very relevant to me, also all about how it leads to talking about people to other people (backstabbing).

It was reassuring and good to talk to other people about these things, i threw some questions out there which i got some nice answers. The actual talking with real life people about Buddhism and these situations was great and don't regret it at all, but i don't think i got much more out of it than i have out of books and probably this forum as well...probably less

I will look out for other classes and attend them if i can, and i would love a teacher, but when asking about finding a teacher at the end of the class it doesn't sound like i would have much luck.

Malcolm wrote:

What center was this?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, November 30th, 2014 at 7:31 AM

Title: Re: i can't stop whinging and backstabbing

Content:

straightpunk said:

What center was this?

It wasn't at a center, there are no centers here, it was just a class that has been coming to town for the last four months or something. It is called "Modern Buddhism & Meditation for a Happier Life". It's the best thing I could find without having to drive forever.

Malcolm wrote:

This an NKT sponsored course. Run a search on New Kadampa Tradition.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, November 30th, 2014 at 9:52 PM

Title: Re: Benefits of anthropomorphizing elements and aggregates?

Content:

anjali said:

Is it really necessary to anthropomorphize the elements (or aggregates, or afflictions) as deities to learn to recognize the elements as not separate from our buddha-nature?

Take, for example, the affliction anger and it's Buddha, Akshobhya. (Sangye Chenma is Akshobhya's consort.) How does visualizing Akshobhya and doing self-generation/completion practice benefit the practitioner more than just directly arousing a sense of anger and investigating it's emptiness, and learning to experience it as an expression of the mind's nature--without the deity yoga?

Malcolm wrote:

Deity yoga cuts our afflictive relationship with the five aggregates and so on. That is why it is necessary, even for Dzogchen practitioners. This is because we cannot remain in a state of instant presence 24/7. Therefore, we use the path of transformation until we can.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, December 1st, 2014 at 9:06 AM

Title: Re: Independent Research on Chogyam Trungpa

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Total hyperbole. HHDL is far more influential and important in the spread of Dharma in the US than Trungpa will ever be.

Jikan said:

He surely is now.

Malcolm wrote:
He always was.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Monday, December 1st, 2014 at 9:08 AM
Title: Re: Benefits of anthropomorphizing elements and aggregates?
Content:

anjali said:
It seems that the same realizations are necessary in both approaches. If this is a correct assessment, is there any reason to believe that one method is particularly more efficacious than the other?

Malcolm wrote:
The sūtra approach never works with pure vision. Hence the efficacy of the Vajrayāna approach.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Monday, December 1st, 2014 at 9:06 PM
Title: Re: i can't stop whinging and backstabbing
Content:

Punya said:
My apologies for whatever part I played in your decision to attend this group's session straightpunk. We can't talk about nkt here but I did have this to say in relation to another group recently.

straightpunk said:
Thanks for the quote, no need to apologize, you didn't know what class i was attending and i still felt good getting out there and doing it with all my anxiety issues and so forth, which i actually overcome with (among a few other things) the help of your encouragement to do something that might help with my progress.

Malcolm wrote:
Where do you live?

Author: Malcolm
Date: Monday, December 1st, 2014 at 9:22 PM
Title: Re: Benefits of anthropomorphizing elements and aggregates?
Content:

anjali said:
Two seemingly different approaches (deity yoga vs direct looking), both involve transformation/training in pure vision, and both are effective if properly practiced. Am I

missing something? KTR mentions the path of means. Is this distinction I'm exploring in the two different approaches really about the difference between path of means and path of knowledge?

Malcolm wrote:

This is the path of self-liberation. Great if you can do it...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, December 1st, 2014 at 9:34 PM

Title: Re: Independent Research on Chogyam Trungpa

Content:

Jikan said:

I think Trungpa was more influential to the institutionalization of Buddha Dharma in the US than HHDL was until the early 1980s, and made a deeper impression into US culture at that time than HHDL did at that time.

.

Malcolm wrote:

CTR certainly made an big impression in pop culture, but his arrival in the US was nothing like Padmasambhava's arrival to Tibet. And I still think over all HHDL has had a more lasting impact, and even arguably an earlier one through Thurman, Hopkins, etc.

In the end, CTR produced Shambhala, which is a silo, like most Dharma centers.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, December 1st, 2014 at 10:20 PM

Title: Re: mala broke

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The best thing for mālās is fifteen pound braided fishing line. It will not break even after many years of use. For example, one mala I have was restrung with this kind of line in 1994. It is still fine.

Do not use monofilament line. etc.

Also it is easy to find this kind of line in yellow, red and so on.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, December 1st, 2014 at 10:57 PM

Title: Re: Independent Research on Chogyam Trungpa

Content:

Jikan said:

I'd like to know if there's a sober assessment out there someplace.

Malcolm wrote:

I haven't seen one. He is either lionized or demonized.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, December 1st, 2014 at 11:16 PM

Title: Re: mala broke

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The best thing for mālās is fifteen pound braided fishing line. It will not break even after many years of use. For example, one mala I have was restrung with this kind of line in 1994. It is still fine.

Do not use monofilament line. etc.

Also it is easy to find this kind of line in yellow, red and so on.

M

lorem said:

Cool. I restrung my wrist mala with monofilament and yeah much stronger but no longer works as wrist mala--but good for counting when i was at work.

Why the braided line?

Malcolm wrote:

It is more flexible and it is stronger.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, December 2nd, 2014 at 1:18 AM

Title: Re: what makes Buddhist deathlessness not eternalism?

Content:

smcj said:

You won't hear that from the sects that accept the 3rd Turning of the Wheel as being definitive over the 2nd Turning.

.

Malcolm wrote:

There is basically a single mention of three turnings of the wheel in the sūtras, found in the Samdhinirmocana sutra. All it says there is that the wheel turned for Mahāyānis is the meaning to be understood by all yānas, nothing more and nothing less. Why does it say this? Because Mahāyāna was disputed by the Śravakas, so the Buddha turned the Mahāyāna wheel a second time so there would be no mistakes or ambiguity. It really is just an Ekayāna teaching.

I really don't know where some Tibetans got the idea that it referred to Yogacara literature, but there is absolutely no justification for that interpretation that can be derived from Indian commentaries in the bstan 'gyur. I know this because I have looked for this doctrine there extensively. There is virtually nothing about the three turnings of the wheel to be found in the bstan 'gyur.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, December 2nd, 2014 at 2:19 AM

Title: Re: what makes Buddhist deathlessness not eternalism?

Content:

smcj said:

Madhyamaka has jurisdiction over the phenomenal universe. Shentong jurisdiction is that which cannot be taken as a subject by consciousness, the unborn, etc.

That is a patent fallacy. Gzhan stong simply says the three kāyas are innate, however this is the implication of traditional Madhyamaka as well. When it comes down to it, gzhan stong really does not offer anything that cannot be found in traditional Madhyamaka.

Khenpo Tsultrim, the go-to guy for Shentong in modern day Karma Kagyu, has this to say:

Progressive Stages of Meditation on Emptiness, p.66: This non-conceptual Wisdom Mind is not the object of the conceptualizing process and so is not negated by Madyamaka reasoning. Therefore, it can be said to be the only thing that has absolute and true existence.

It is important to understand that this true existence does not mean that it can be conceptualized. If it were even the most subtle object of the conceptual process, it could be refuted by Prasangika reasoning. The non-conceptual Wisdom Mind is not something that even supreme wisdom (Skt. prajna) can take as its object. Anything that can be an object of consciousness, however pure and refined, is dependently arising and has no true existence.

Malcolm wrote:

True existence itself is an object of conceptuality, so this reasoning is very unsound.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, December 2nd, 2014 at 2:51 AM

Title: Re: what makes Buddhist deathlessness not eternalism?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

True existence itself is an object of conceptuality, so this reasoning is very unsound.

smcj said:

Could be a little awkward. I like this take on it better:

Malcolm wrote:

Our nature, suchness, does not arise; therefore, it does not cease. This is what it means to be deathless, that which is beyond arising and ceasing, suchness is indestructible. The problem really is what does not mean to be omniscient? To have realized the dharmakāya? If the dharmakāya is some truly existent wisdom mind that cannot be cognized by anyone, then it should always arise at all times in everyone without error.

If not, then it suggests that omniscience, like everything, else, arises from causes. The difficult question is this: If omniscience arises from causes, why does it not cease? Various answers to this problem have been tendered.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, December 2nd, 2014 at 3:20 AM

Title: Re: what makes Buddhist deathlessness not eternalism?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The problem really is what does not (sic) mean to be omniscient? To have realized the dharmakāya? If the dharmakāya is some truly existent wisdom mind that cannot be cognized by anyone...

smcj said:

I think the idea is that it cannot be cognized in a dualistic way, meaning taken as an object by a subject.

Malcolm wrote:

There is no such thing as a cognition in absence of a subject and an object.

smcj said:

...then it should always arise at all times in everyone without error.

I've heard that idea put forward before. In fact, isn't it standard Dzogchen perspective?

My personal spin is that enlightenment, when achieved, is retroactive. Once you become enlightened you can see that it was there all along. The story of Asanga and Maitreya comes to mind, where after 12 years of meditation Maitreya finally appears to Asanga. Asanga asked him where he'd been all that time, to which Maitreya replies, "I've been here the whole time. You just couldn't see me." Nice parable.

Malcolm wrote:

[/quote]

Dzogchen teaching make a clear distinction between the basis (the time of non-realization) and the result.

The real issue which causes argument is whether tathagatāgābha, a.k.a., the dharmakāya at the time of the basis, is something that is naturally perfected or something which requires development. In general, the Sakyapas for example argue that the natural perfection of the qualities of awakening in the person does not conflict

with transformation in the same way the natural presence of the quality in milk which produces butter does not mitigate or render unnecessary the process of transformation which produces butter (churning). Longchenpa for example argues that while the two accumulations have always been perfected, they need to be reaccumulated in the same sense that a gem that has been lost in a swamp needs to be polished in order to restore its former luster.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, December 2nd, 2014 at 3:39 AM

Title: Re: what makes Buddhist deathlessness not eternalism?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

There is no such thing as a cognition in absence of a subject and an object.

smcj said:

So you're saying non-dual awareness is a fiction?

Malcolm wrote:

Depends on what one means by nondual.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, December 2nd, 2014 at 3:48 AM

Title: Re: Bye.wa

Content:

pemachophel said:

In the Nithartha on-line Tib-Eng dictionary, it gives "11 million" (JV) for bye.wa.sa.ya. When I just look up sa.ya, it says "million." If I just look up bye.wa, I don't get anything. My question is, what does bye.wa.gsum mean? 33 million?

Thanks.

Malcolm wrote:

30 million.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, December 2nd, 2014 at 5:22 AM

Title: Re: i can't stop whinging and backstabbing

Content:

straightpunk said:

taranaki, new zealand

Malcolm wrote:

<http://fpmt.org/centers/new-zealand/> " onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;

Check out google, there are several dharma centers. You may have to take a drive to Auckland from time to time for teachings, but in general FPMT has many online offerings as well.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, December 2nd, 2014 at 6:33 AM

Title: Re: what makes Buddhist deathlessness not eternalism?

Content:

smcj said:

So Dudjom R. had no problem utilizing the 3 Turning paradigm to explain and define how Dzogchen is superior to the other yanas. Since he saw it as appropriate, so do I.

Malcolm wrote:

Ironically, following the interpretation of the three turnings as explained by a Korean master, but never by any Indian master, including Maitreya, Asanga, and so on and so forth.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, December 2nd, 2014 at 8:23 AM

Title: Re: what makes Buddhist deathlessness not eternalism?

Content:

smcj said:

So Dudjom R. had no problem utilizing the 3 Turning paradigm to explain and define how Dzogchen is superior to the other yanas. Since he saw it as appropriate, so do I.

Malcolm wrote:

Ironically, following the interpretation of the three turnings as explained by a Korean master, but never by any Indian master, including Maitreya, Asanga, and so on and so forth.

smcj said:

I thought you said earlier that he followed the explanation of Kongtrul R.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, when it comes to gzhan stong. However, the notion of the three turnings of the wheel and the way the sutras are divided up appear to come from the Chinese tradition via this commentary I mentioned.

smcj said:

In any case I am of the understanding that this presentation is not of Indian origin, but of a later Tibetan development, which is good enough for me. They need not have studied it at Nalanda for me to accept it.

Malcolm wrote:

This presentation, as above, is apparently a Chinese idea.

smcj said:

BTW, for anybody that doesn't know, when Tibetans come up with some way of looking at this stuff they are obliged to go back and re-interpret the major authors as if to say, "See, this is what they meant all along." So you'll have completely divergent interpretations of what should be standard texts. Nagarjuna and Asanga will be quoted and interpreted completely differently depending on who is grinding the ax at the time. That's just the way Tibet was.

Malcolm wrote:

The point is to understand who influenced whom, when and why. For example, Longchenpa states that Prasangika is the definitive view (as did Jigme Lingpa), but the third turnings sutras, by which he understood the ten tathāgatāgarbha sūtras, were the definitive sūtras. The ironic or interesting thing, is that the way Dzogchen texts treat the tathāgatagarbha is totally at odds with how it is treated in these ten sutras. So it becomes clear that Longchenpa used the sūtra tathāgatagarbha doctrine in order to defend the validity of the Dzogchen tantras. Also of interest is that tathāgatagarbha does not really get mentioned much in the so called sems sde or klong sde, as far as I can determine. There is an interesting passage in the srog 'khor lo (wheel of life): If one becomes stuck in limitations, it is the sugatagarbha.

On the other hand the Mind Mirror of Samantbhadra states:

The diverse miraculous display arises from state of inseparability, the ultimate sugatagarbha.

This in fact has a secret meaning. If you have received complete Dzogchen teachings, you will understand it, if not then I am sorry.

But reconcile this passage with the way sugatagarbha is taught in sūtra — The Mind Mirror of Vajrasattva states:

The sugatagarbha exists intrinsically in all sentient beings. That exists just as sesame seeds are permeated with oil. Its basis — it is based on the material aggregate. It's location — it is located in the center of the heart.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, December 2nd, 2014 at 8:27 AM

Title: Re: what makes Buddhist deathlessness not eternalism?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

True existence itself is an object of conceptuality, so this reasoning is very unsound.

Sherab said:

As I understand it, all nouns refer to two possibilities, the entity itself (ngo bo) and the conceptuality of the entity itself (snang ba). [The words within () are what I think are the equivalent in Tibetan.] To say then that true existence itself is an object of conceptuality is to pre-conclude that true existence only exists as a conceptuality. I don't think this is valid.

Also just because true existence as understood by a conceptuality appears as an impossibility, does not mean that true existence cannot exist in a way different from what is understood by a conceptuality. One gets a sense of this when one enters into the world governed by the laws of quantum physics.

Malcolm wrote:

Such a true existence is cognitively closed to us and exists as a mere speculation.

There is no such thing as a cognition in absence of a subject and an object.

When the Buddha taught that "not seeing" is the real seeing, I thought that there are two possible ways of understanding this. One is that he was talking about not seeing an object. The other is that he was talking about a seeing that is not the usual seeing, i.e., he was talking about a seeing that does not require a separation into a subject and an object that some people labelled as "non-dual" cognition.

He was talking about being in a state free from extremes.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, December 2nd, 2014 at 9:54 AM

Title: Re: what makes Buddhist deathlessness not eternalism?

Content:

smcj said:

Dudjom R. did not simply make stuff up that was not part of the tradition.

Malcolm wrote:

Did it ever occur to you that Dudjom Rinpoche is an outlier? Because in point of fact, his book is not part of the main curriculum of Nyingmapa Khenpos — it is more influential among westerners.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, December 2nd, 2014 at 8:24 PM

Title: Re: what makes Buddhist deathlessness not eternalism?

Content:

smcj said:

Dudjom R. did not simply make stuff up that was not part of the tradition.

Malcolm wrote:

Did it ever occur to you that Dudjom Rinpoche is an outlier?

smcj said:

Nope. I saw how well regarded he was during his life. Plus, usually people that are called "head of the lineage" are pretty mainstream. The thought never crossed my mind that he was anything other than a standard bearer for the tradition. (At least you didn't call him a tirthika!)

Malcolm wrote:

By outlier, I mean someone whose views are not actually standard. In fact, the Nyingmapa curriculums are either developed around Mipham or around Khen Shenga's 13 treatises.

smcj said:

As everyone here can see, Malcolm has issues with Dudjom's presentation.

Malcolm wrote:

Not really. Dudjom Rinpoche is the guru of several of my gurus.

smcj said:

In fact my impression that Dudjom R is out of step with Longchenpa comes from Malcolm, not my own reading. (Malcolm is more conservative than Dudjom.)

Malcolm wrote:

Again, this is an error of interpretation on your part.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, December 2nd, 2014 at 8:25 PM

Title: Re: what makes Buddhist deathlessness not eternalism?

Content:

smcj said:

Dudjom R. did not simply make stuff up that was not part of the tradition.

Malcolm wrote:

Did it ever occur to you that Dudjom Rinpoche is an outlier? Because in point of fact, his book is not part of the main curriculum of Nyingmapa Khenpos — it is more influential among westerners.

Lotus_Bitch said:

What texts and who's commentaries are studied in Nyingma shedras?

Malcolm wrote:

Primarily Khenpo Shenga and Mipham.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, December 2nd, 2014 at 8:27 PM

Title: Re: what makes Buddhist deathlessness not eternalism?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

... The Mind Mirror of Vajrasattva states:

The sugatagarbha exists intrinsically in all sentient beings. That exists just as sesame seeds are permeated with oil. Its basis — it is based on the material aggregate. It's location — it is located in the center of the heart.

Sherab said:

Since the sugatagarbha exists intrinsically in all sentient beings, and since it is based on the material aggregate, and since there exists the formless realm, therefore beings in the formless realms in reality have some kind of material or form?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, in the Dzogchen tradition formless realm beings are considered to have subtle material bodies.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, December 3rd, 2014 at 12:15 AM

Title: Re: what makes Buddhist deathlessness not eternalism?

Content:

smcj said:

That is not what I understand to be the normal presentation among Nyingma lamas.

Malcolm wrote:

Um, how many Nyingma lamas have you actually studied with?

The fact is that Nyingma monasteries tend to follow whatever Madhyamaka view is dominant in their region. Nyingmapas from Amdo like Shabkar and Jigme Lingpa in general follow Tsongkhapa's presentation, as is still the case today. Nyingmapas from Central Tibet (Mindroling and Dorje Drak) also tend to follow the Gelug presentation since these monasteries are very close to Gelug spheres of influence. Dzogchen Monastery follows Sakyapa approach since they are follow Khenpo Shenga and his famous 13 treatises presentation. Phalyul tries to follow Mipham, but Mipham is very similar to Sakya. Nyingmas from Kongpo like Dudjom R, and Khatok monastery tend to follow Shentong, because a) Rigzin Tsewang Norbu was from Khatok and it was from here that he spread Shentong spread into Kagyu anyway.

SMCJ, you are merely demonstrating your lack of knowledge and history.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, December 3rd, 2014 at 12:32 AM

Title: Re: what makes Buddhist deathlessness not eternalism?

Content:

Sherlock said:

Smcj, have you actually received any Dzogchen teachings before and practised them? If not why do you keep wanting to talk about Dzogchen?

smcj said:

No, I do not have a Dzogchen practice. However I am a Shentongpa, as was Dudjom R., and that perspective is regularly dismissed in these discussions, mostly due to Malcolm's conservatism. That is not what I understand to be the normal presentation among Nyingma lamas. It is his own pet project to roll back Buddhist tenets to what was accepted in ancient India. I believe people are being misled by this overly conservative agenda.

As everyone here can see, Malcolm has issues with Dudjom's presentation.

Not really. Dudjom Rinpoche is the guru of several of my gurus.

So therefore your own gurus should be outliers too, right?

Malcolm wrote:

Well, people tend to make up their own minds about what Madhyamaka view they are going to follow, but in general, Ngapa Yeshe Dorje was a yogi and did not care about intellectual topics like Shentong, same with KDL. Otherwise, not one of the many other Nyingma Lamas I have studied with are shentongpas.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, December 3rd, 2014 at 12:35 AM

Title: Re: what makes Buddhist deathlessness not eternalism?

Content:

smcj said:

SMCJ, you are merely demonstrating your lack of knowledge and history.

Maybe I don't know my ancient history so well. But in the more recent history, like the last 24 hours, you've called the guru to several of your gurus an outlier. How's that work? Were they mistaken when they took him to be their guru? When you do your lineage prayers, isn't he someone you pray to?

Malcolm wrote:

The term "outlier" is not an insult. I think you are getting a little hysterical about all of this. The agenda is all yours, i.e, you have for several years pushed this idea that the gzhan stong is the official view of the Nyingma school. Well, it is among one of several Madhyamaka interpretations current among Nyingmapas, but it is by no means the main one.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, December 3rd, 2014 at 12:39 AM

Title: Re: what makes Buddhist deathlessness not eternalism?

Content:

smcj said:

Ngapa Yeshe Dorje was a yogi and did not care about intellectual topics like Shentong, same with KDL.

So it is possible to be a yogi and not care about Madhyamaka or Shentong, right?

Malcolm wrote:

Of course. I have made that clear for many years. When someone practices Vajrayāna, intellectual constructs like Madhyamaka are of little use. As Drogmi Lotsawa says, sūtra relies intellectual analysis, whereas Vajrayāna relies on direct perception.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, December 3rd, 2014 at 12:49 AM

Title: Re: what makes Buddhist deathlessness not eternalism?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Of course. I have made that clear for many years. When someone practices Vajrayāna, intellectual constructs like Madhyamaka are of little use. As Drogmi Lotsawa says, sūtra relies intellectual analysis, whereas Vajrayāna relies on direct perception.

smcj said:

I am a regular poster here, and I have never heard you say that before. It is my understanding as well. The internet lends itself to discussion of Madhyamaka and such, not so much to Vajrayana perception, and so I think that there is an over emphasis on these discussions. It is a flaw of the medium.

Malcolm wrote:

Then you have not been paying attention.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, December 3rd, 2014 at 12:49 AM

Title: Re: what makes Buddhist deathlessness not eternalism?

Content:

Unknown said:

The term "outlier" is not an insult. I think you are getting a little hysterical about all of this.

It is a pejorative.

Malcolm wrote:

It certainly is not.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, December 3rd, 2014 at 1:26 AM

Title: Re: what makes Buddhist deathlessness not eternalism?

Content:

smcj said:

It was meant to impugn his presentation of Dharma.

Malcolm wrote:

First, you have no idea what I "meant" since you are not in my mind. So it is pretty damn rude for you to make this comment.

The term was meant to point out that his presentation not part of the main trunk of the presentation of Nyingma view (i.e. Rongzom, Longchenpa, Mipham).

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, December 3rd, 2014 at 1:30 AM

Title: Re: what makes Buddhist deathlessness not eternalism?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

you have for several years pushed this idea that the gzhan stong is the official view of the Nyingma school.

smcj said:

True. That has been, and as of this posting still is, my understanding. That could change in a couple of months when I have a chance to check in with my teachers.

Malcolm wrote:

As I have pointed out to you, that understanding is false. For example, in the largest Nyingma Monastery in the world, Lharung Gar in Golok Sertha, Mipham's presentation is considered to be the modern representative of Nyingma view. In modern day Dzogchen monastery, both in and out of Tibet, as well as Namdrol Ling in South India, whose curriculum is studied? Khenpo Shenga's, who was totally opposed to gzhan stong and who preferred Gorampa. So your perspective is skewed and uninformed.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, December 3rd, 2014 at 8:11 AM

Title: Re: what makes Buddhist deathlessness not eternalism?

Content:

Sherlock said:

I think Dudjom Tersar actually has limited popularity in the culturally Tibetan areas. Longchen Nyingthig is still the most popular terma cycle across Kham, Dudjom lamas are not especially famous there.

Malcolm wrote:

Dudjom Tersar is wide spread in southern Tibet like Konpo, Po, Pemakod as well as Bhutan and in the exile community.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, December 4th, 2014 at 12:00 AM

Title: Re: Enthogens: Intoxicants?

Content:

seeker242 said:

However, Buddhism is not like that.

Sherab Dorje said:

Or more to the point: Buddhism is not Shamanism.

lorem said:

Monday night (Dec 1) His Holiness did say that Tibetan Buddhism kept some of Bon and vice-versa. So there may be an argument for shamanistic traditions present in "Tibetan Buddhism"

Malcolm wrote:

HHDL meant things like smoke offerings, rituals like thread crosses, prayer flags, ransom rites, and so on, mundane rites for health and prosperity and harmonizing the environment. Also some Bonpo gods were converted into protectors like Dorje Legpa and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, December 4th, 2014 at 8:16 AM

Title: Re: what makes Buddhist deathlessness not eternalism?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

As Drogmi Lotsawa says, sūtra relies intellectual analysis, whereas Vajrayāna relies on direct perception.

Sherab said:

Can one has direct perception before reaching the path of seeing?

Malcolm wrote:

Below the path of seeing, example wisdom; above the path of seeing, actual wisdom. Both can be directly experienced. But an intellectual analysis is never an example wisdom.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, December 4th, 2014 at 10:08 AM

Title: Re: what makes Buddhist deathlessness not eternalism?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, when it comes to gzhan stong. However, the notion of the three turnings of the wheel and the way the sutras are divided up appear to come from the Chinese tradition via this commentary I mentioned.

In any case I am of the understanding that this presentation is not of Indian origin, but of a later Tibetan development, which is good enough for me. They need not have studied it at Nalanda for me to accept it.

This presentation, as above, is apparently a Chinese idea.

conebeckham said:

From the མདོ་སྨད་དགོངས་པ་ངས་པར་འགྲེལ་བའི་མདོ་

"First, the four truths,

In the middle, the absence of characteristics,

Finally, the turning that excellently and thoroughly distinguishes [the provisional from the definitive. And the completely false from the actual and genuine.]"

Is that not an Indian text?

Malcolm wrote:

This is not an assignation of sutras, nor does it belie my general point, which is that this sutra, the Samdhinirmocana merely clarifies that the second tuning because it was a subject dispute.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, December 4th, 2014 at 11:24 PM

Title: Re: what makes Buddhist deathlessness not eternalism?

Content:

Sherab said:

Is example wisdom from rnal 'byor mngom sum while actual wisdom is from rang rig mngom sum?

Malcolm wrote:

No, an example wisdom is not a yogapratyakṣa, that exists in the path of seeing on up, but it is nonconceptual.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, December 5th, 2014 at 12:01 AM

Title: Re: Enthogens: Intoxicants?

Content:

Concordiadiscordi said:

Indeed, I feel that it may be largely due to our deep entrenchment in the materialistic worldview that such ordeals as are entailed by entheogens are typically conceived of as

exotic by most.

Malcolm wrote:

Having taken everything, you name it, I have ingested a lot of it (Acid, Mushrooms, buttons, DMT, Ecstasy,,etc.) entheogens only offer one insight, the mind is not an immutable entity. Once this is understood, then they are nothing more than recreational drugs, intoxicants.

If one is a Buddhist practitioner, they are a dead end. YMMV.

Shouldn't there be a great drug thread, like the rebirth and vegetarian thread?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, December 5th, 2014 at 12:56 AM

Title: Re: Enthogens: Intoxicants?

Content:

Kunzang Tobgyal said:

Hey Malcolm,

What do you think about the idea of one ayahuasca trip being the equivalent of twenty years of therapy? Do you think from a therapeutic point of view it could be helpful?

Malcolm wrote:

Not a big fan of either.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, December 5th, 2014 at 12:57 AM

Title: Re: Enthogens: Intoxicants?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Once this is understood, then they are nothing more than recreational drugs, intoxicants.

lorem said:

For Buddhists I would say the majority yes. Other religions use them as "tools". Of course this is a Buddhist forum but to straight label something is kind of rude. My father-in-law was in Native American Church and consumed peyote pretty regularly and it was not recreational.

malcolm actually said:

Once this is understood, then they are nothing more than recreational drugs, intoxicants.

If one is a Buddhist practitioner, they are a dead end. YMMV.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, December 5th, 2014 at 2:43 AM

Title: Re: what makes Buddhist deathlessness not eternalism?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

This is not an assignation of sutras, nor does it belie my general point, which is that this sutra, the Saṃdhinirmocana merely clarifies that the second turning because it was a subject dispute.

conebeckham said:

Fair enough, but the "Three Turnings" notion is supported in several original Indian source texts.

Malcolm wrote:

Frankly, this is just not true. It is found only in one, the Saṃdhinirmocana sūtra.

conebeckham said:

Including Nagarjuna, if I recall.

Malcolm wrote:

Nope. Nāgārjuna wrote nothing about it.

conebeckham said:

But it seemed you questioned the entire "Three Turnings" Scheme....

Malcolm wrote:

I do, because there is nothing substantive about it at all in Indian texts. It is only mentioned once in the entire Yogacarabhūmi. Other than that, the Yogacarins totally ignore it.

The Indians really did not discuss the issue of the three turnings at all, especially not the Indians you would most expect, namely the Yogacara authors, Maitreya, Asanga, Vasubandhu, etc. Not even the later Yogacara authors bring it up.

The only sustained discussion of the issue is the massive commentary on the Saṃdhinirmocana sutra preserved in the bstan 'gyur by the Korean master Wen Tshegs (Wönch'ūk, 613-696). He starts his text saying:

The sovereign of Dharma taught the wheel of Dharma in three aspects. The first of those was turned in the Deer Park in Varanasi for those who were devoted to the śrāvakayāna, and the causes and results of nirvana were fully taught. This is the Dharmawheel of the four noble truths.

The second was the teaching of the Ārya Prajñāpāramita in sixteen gatherings such as Vulture Peak and so on to those who were devoted to the Bodhisattvayāna.

The third, the teachings of the Saṃdhinirmocana sutras and so on in pure buddhafiels such as Padmagarbha and so on and impure buddhafiels, to those devoted to all yānas, is the Dharmawheel of the Mahāyāna of the definitive meaning. This is to be known as the intention of the teaching of the doctrine of the Tathāgata.

Since there is nothing like this statement by any Indian scholar in any extant text, I must conclude that certain Tibetan scholars (whether they know it or not) rely solely on a 7th century Korean Buddhist discussion of this issue in order to justify their classification of this and that class of sutras as definitive or provisional. But in reality these justifications cannot be made the basis of the extant Indian source texts in both sūtra and śāstra. Of course, not having studied this 1000 folio, three volume text in detail, I cannot say whether it presents Indian sources for this idea or not. But I didn't see any citations of Indian masters when during the several times I have done close words searches on the text when he discusses the three turnings.

Interestingly this text defines the Avatamsaka and the Prajñāpāramita [under the influence of the Avatamsaka] both as part of the third turning, but it defines the Nirvana Sutra as the second turning. He further states that the second vehicle only removes imputation [vikalpana], whereas the third turning clarifies the three svabhāvas, and so on.

Given that he defines the Nirvana as second turning and provisional and given that he devotes only a single sentence to a discussion of tathāgatagarbha, I think it is safe to conclude that for Wen Tshegs, tathāgatagarbha is part of the provisional second turning. It would be interesting to understand how it is that the ten Tathāgatagarbha sūtras came to be regarded by some Tibetans as the essence of the third turning given this fact, because there is surely no evidence from Indian sources that they are to be treated as such.

See this link about Wen Tsheg's text and how it came to be translated into Tibetan:

<https://journals.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/index.php/jiabs/article/download/8793/2700>.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, December 5th, 2014 at 3:41 AM

Title: Re: what makes Buddhist deathlessness not eternalism?

Content:

lorem said:

Seems like something to ask someone like Karma Thinley Rinpoche or another Tibetan. I bet you could have an interesting talk with them about it.

Malcolm wrote:

Tibetans rarely study these things.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, December 5th, 2014 at 4:21 AM

Title: Re: Enthogens: Intoxicants?

Content:

Concordiadiscordi said:

I don't agree with your assessment, Malcolm.

All paths are equally boundless and inexhaustible, but one can only see so far as the eye of one's practice will permit. Hence, it is not necessarily the case that entheogens promise little more than a dead end for Buddhist practitioners; rather, you have merely ceased to recognise their potential relevance for your practice.

Malcolm wrote:

You can disagree if you like, but I have met a lot of drug addled people who are just kidding themselves into believing they are practitioners of anything that resembles the path of the Buddhas.

The belief that taking drugs is part of the path of awakening is deeply rooted in ignorance. People who persist in this belief are most ignorant of the ignorant and are truly likely to take rebirth in the animal realm, at best.

Now, if you are a practitioner who occasionally trips for fun, but understands this as merely a distraction, well, then there is no real problem as long as you don't hurt anyone.

Of course, habitually taking drugs is definitely a violation of the vow against being intoxicated — there is simply no way around it.

Whatever is meditated with confusion
causes the attainment of confusion by the confused.

— Jñānasiddhi by Indrabhūti

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, December 5th, 2014 at 4:36 AM

Title: Re: Enthogens: Intoxicants?

Content:

Concordiadiscordi said:

Well, we might all be kidding ourselves into believing all sorts of things. For instance, who is to say that you have not merely been deluded into believing your own opinion? This polemic could be rallied against anybody without getting us anywhere. I still do not agree with you.

Malcolm wrote:

The difference is that I am following the opinion of the Buddha, while you are merely following your own intellectual fabrications.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, December 5th, 2014 at 4:56 AM

Title: Re: Enthogens: Intoxicants?

Content:

Concordiadiscordi said:

Well, we might all be kidding ourselves into believing all sorts of things. For instance, who is to say that you have not merely been deluded into believing your own opinion? This polemic could be rallied against anybody without getting us anywhere. I still do not agree with you.

Malcolm wrote:

The difference is that I am following the opinion of the Buddha, while you are merely following your own intellectual fabrications.

Concordiadiscordi said:

Hmmm... whatever puts you to sleep at night...

Malcolm wrote:

Of course you know very well you cannot produce even a single statement by the Buddha where he extols the value of any kind of drug for the path. However, he uses people who use datura frequently as examples of delusion.

Now, given that this is a Buddhist website, it should be obvious to you that even people who have a lot of experience with various kinds of drugs are most likely to flat out disagree with you about the usefulness of drugs on a Buddhist path.

As far as the broad majority of people here are concerned your point of view about this topic is confusion steeped in ignorance wrapped in conceit.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, December 5th, 2014 at 5:09 AM

Title: Re: what makes Buddhist deathlessness not eternalism?

Content:

lorem said:

Just the whole idea of the three turnings is pretty central to everything I've ever been taught.

Malcolm wrote:

It is important to the Nyingmapas and the Kagyus. It is not important at all to the Sakyapas since early on the Sakyapas have found the whole idea of the interpretation of the three turnings as being applicable to different phases of the Buddha's teaching career in clear contradiction with statements by Maitreya and so on as well as with reason. I am not sure whether the Gelugpas pay it much mind.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, December 5th, 2014 at 7:21 AM

Title: Re: what makes Buddhist deathlessness not eternalism?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Frankly, this is just not true. It is found only in one, the Saṃdhinirmocana sūtra.

Including Nagarjuna, if I recall.

Nope. Nagārjuna wrote nothing ...

conebeckham said:

Kongtrul cites Nagarjuna's བསྟན་ཚུགས་. Which I know you'll find problematic. He also cites

Aryadeva's རྣམ་འབྱུང་སྟོན་པ་བཞི་བརྒྱ་པའི་བསྟན་བཅོས།

Malcolm wrote:

Cites it how? It is well known that some consider the dharmadhatustava to be a "third turning" text but there is no internal evidence in the text itself to presume that this is so.

The 400 only has one mention of the word 'khor lo, and it refers to a fire wheel. I would really need to see the citations in question.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, December 5th, 2014 at 8:27 AM

Title: Re: what makes Buddhist deathlessness not eternalism?

Content:

conebeckham said:

I am just using Kongtrul's text, as cited a few posts back, but he doesn't provide specific references to the original sources for those quotes.

In any case, I have no problem, personally, with a Three Turnings schema, even if it does not originate with the Indian texts. I rely on Rangjung Dorje, mainly, for such explications. I know there's some polemic content in Kongtrul, as well, but I have no problem with that either.

Malcolm wrote:

I don't have a problem with it either, per se, but I do think it makes for some very sloppy and groundless hermeneutics.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, December 5th, 2014 at 10:29 PM

Title: Re: Lama and trust

Content:

quince said:

Hi, i was wondering how much you seek the advise of your Lama? I mean do you ask him for advice for your personal life not related to dharma practice?

Also, did somebody here doubted their Lama judging by the condition of sangha members around you?

Do you think faith is possible without trust? Can one change Lama in the middle of ngondro? Anyway i dont see him anymore he would hardly remember me. He closed our center here. Wouldnt be a big deal to change, would it?

I would really appreciate your input. I dont trust my Lama anymore and i cant continue with ngondro and i still have mandala offering and Guru yoga to do. Stopping practice feels very bad, but i just cant force myself to continue. Cant stop neither. Please advice.

Ayu said:

In my point of view my ngöndro is not only connected with the lama but also especially with the Buddhas. It is possible to "change" the teacher and also to have more than one lama.

And it is quite good to continue a practice when hindrances occur - if it is really dharma practice.

(Edit:) And however it is possible. On the other hand dharma practice should not be a stress.

Malcolm wrote:

One's gurus is the only connection with the Buddhas one has, therefore they are even more kind the Buddhas.

However, there is an instruction by the founder of the Jonang monastery, Chöje Kunpang: "Sometimes, one meditates on a Guru in whom one has no faith, dissolve all gurus in whom one has faith into him. Sometimes, one meditates on a Guru in whom one has faith, dissolve all Guru in whom one has no faith into him. One should have the faith that all of one's Gurus are the same."

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, December 6th, 2014 at 12:52 AM

Title: Re: Lama and trust

Content:

Ayu said:

@Malcolm: I wrote "in my point of view". There are not only good teachers out there in this world and a little bit scepticism seems to be healthy, sometimes. I'm sorry to say that.

Malcolm wrote:

Since it is very difficult to find a perfect teacher these days, the instruction is to find one whose qualities outweigh their faults by a large margin. This is not hard.

As long as one chooses one's teachers with reasonable care, then the fault of lack of devotion can only come from one's own side.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, December 6th, 2014 at 1:10 AM

Title: Re: Lama and trust

Content:

quince said:

If i lack devotion what could i do... I did everything that Lama told me. Do i have to struggle for lacking devotion?

Malcolm wrote:

If one lacks devotion, but there is no real fault in the teacher, then you must examine your own mind. In any event, the best thing to do is continue with your practice. You have not finished gathering accumulations.

It is also fine if you take teachings from other qualified teachers, either in your lineage or from some other lineage.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, December 6th, 2014 at 1:11 AM

Title: Re: Lama and trust

Content:

quince said:

It's all too complicated. And sad. Just want it all gone.

Malcolm wrote:

It is not at all complicated. Do you wish to be free of samsara and save sentient beings or not?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, December 6th, 2014 at 1:50 AM

Title: Re: Lama and trust

Content:

quince said:

I just can't do it. I can't help anyone. i don't have the strenght to even continue my own simple practice. i cant apparently purify my bad karma. my life, work is too intense busy.

Malcolm wrote:

Well, start from the beginning, four thoughts, etc.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, December 6th, 2014 at 4:49 AM

Title: Re: Lama and trust

Content:

quince said:

Ngondro is turning me upside down and no support.

But i will try taking small parts of Parting from the 4 attachments to work. Thanks for the idea.

Malcolm wrote:

Are you practicing under a Sakyapa teacher?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, December 6th, 2014 at 4:51 AM

Title: Re: Summary of Tendai esotericism/Taimitsu

Content:

Queequeg said:

Nothing much here except a comment from the peanut gallery...

I think its possible that there's merit to both Indrajala's and Jake's views...

My reading of Kukai - in translation by Hakeda coincides with Jake's arguments. That said, based on my knowledge of medieval sectarian rhetoric, at least from the Tendai side, Kukai's 10 Stages was certainly interpreted as a judgment of the relative merit of the various sutras, with an unmistakable bias attributed in favor of the esoteric books. I'll add, though, Kukai seems to have been walking a very fine line...

I suspect that modern scholarship on Kukai may not coincide with the manner in which he was interpreted by Shingon sectarians in the past. Japanese medieval sectarianism in general, especially when aristocratic patronage was on the line, drew out the worst in everybody. The almighty ¥ has a way of causing us to degrade ourselves... Is that better or worse than pride and attachment to one's creed? I haven't been able to parse that one out yet. (trying to lighten the mood, boys.)

Malcolm wrote:

I don't agree. Kobo Daishi was clearly an advocate of the superiority of Mantrayāna.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, December 6th, 2014 at 5:28 AM

Title: Re: Summary of Tendai esotericism/Taimitsu

Content:

Queequeg said:

Nothing much here except a comment from the peanut gallery...

I think its possible that there's merit to both Indrajala's and Jake's views...

My reading of Kukai - in translation by Hakeda coincides with Jake's arguments. That said, based on my knowledge of medieval sectarian rhetoric, at least from the Tendai side, Kukai's 10 Stages was certainly interpreted as a judgment of the relative merit of the various sutras, with an unmistakable bias attributed in favor of the esoteric books. I'll add, though, Kukai seems to have been walking a very fine line...

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Malcolm wrote:

I don't agree. Kobo Daishi was clearly an advocate of the superiority of Mantrayāna.

Queequeg said:

LOL. You mind elaborating on exactly what you disagree with? So, you're saying Jake's wrong? Or that Tendai did not interpret Kukai as passing judgment. Or that you disagree with my suspicion...?

Malcolm wrote:

I don't agree with Jake's arguments.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, December 6th, 2014 at 5:31 AM

Title: Re: Lama and trust

Content:

quince said:

Yes, why?

Malcolm wrote:

Today I just finished the rough draft of the very long commentary on the Ngondro according to the Sakya school.

I also did a Sakya ngondro. You should finish your ngondro. However, perhaps you have

no tdone enough Vajrasattva. This commentary states that if you recite 400,000 then you really purify everything. Why? Because in the Kali Yuga, you have to do four times as many mantras.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, December 6th, 2014 at 6:00 AM

Title: Re: Summary of Tendai esotericism/Taimitsu

Content:

Queequeg said:

Ah.

I'm curious - my reading of this is that there isn't any disagreement about Kukai's views on esoteric v. exoteric paths. However, there is a question about the relative merit of the various teachings of the Buddha themselves ie. are we to read Kukai's 10 stages as asserting relative merit of the texts associated with the various states of Mind? Or does Kukai's judgment stop short of that?

Malcolm wrote:

As I understand his texts, he basically argues that only Mantrayāna leads to Buddhahood in this very body, a position also maintained in Tibetan Buddhism.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, December 6th, 2014 at 9:26 PM

Title: Re: Lama and trust

Content:

Ayu said:

How does spiritual practice disturb a nice & calm life? One can do it all nicely and calmly

quince said:

Well as i said ever since i started the ngondro all i have is this obstacles and this is meaningless.

Malcolm wrote:

Samsara is a bigger obstacle than Ngondro. Let me ask you as question, have you received any major empowerments such as Hevajra and the like, and if so from whom?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, December 6th, 2014 at 10:22 PM

Title: Re: Powa hole in the skull and Guru Yoga

Content:

frank123 said:

Is it possible to develop Powa signs like the hole in the posterior fontanelle from

practicing Dzogchen Guru yoga?

Malcolm wrote:

No.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, December 6th, 2014 at 11:36 PM

Title: Re: Lama and trust

Content:

quince said:

I haven't received any major empowerment, which is good, because I would have broken the vows many times.

Malcolm wrote:

Then you are not really qualified to do the Sakya Ngondro anyway — no wonder you are having obstacles in your practice. The Sakya Ngondro practice depends on having received the cause Hevajra Empowerment. You cannot even practice the refuge practice without this empowerment.

However, you should not feel you are not qualified to receive major empowerments. It is not hard to maintain one's vows, one does so by reciting Vajrasattva 21 times every day. There is tremendous blessing from the vows. It is better to receive them and break them, then to have never received them at all.

You can however meditate on the topics of the Three Visions, and you can do any of the other kinds of the Dharma practice such as making offering, reciting sutras like the Heart Sutra and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, December 6th, 2014 at 11:37 PM

Title: Re: Lama and trust

Content:

quince said:

You are absolutely right. I love dharma, but somehow it is very difficult to accept that i might never have a family and become a mother, i am really sorry to bring that up.

Malcolm wrote:

Why would you never have a family or be a mother? One can be a householder and a Dharma practitioner.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, December 6th, 2014 at 11:42 PM

Title: Re: Prayer to the Dzogchen Masters

Content:

Punya said:

The asian practice of sponsoring the teachings so they are really cheap to attend is also worrisome for the same reason although I know others disagree.

Malcolm wrote:

It is very excellent if someone sponsors a teaching. This creates a lot of merit for everyone. Since this generally is not our custom in the west, however, the system of fee for service was invented. But it is not the best way.

Also the sponsorship system is loaded with potential abuse, since sponsors always get preferential treatment of one kind or another. This is true everywhere, even in Dzogchen Community.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, December 7th, 2014 at 12:10 AM

Title: Re: Lama and trust

Content:

quince said:

You are absolutely right. I love dharma, but somehow it is very difficult to accept that i might never have a family and become a mother, i am really sorry to bring that up.

Malcolm wrote:

Why would you never have a family or be a mother? One can be a householder and a Dharma practitioner.

quince said:

I didn't find a partner. I know one can practice and have a family, otherwise all practitioners would be monks and nuns, right?

Malcolm wrote:

I see. Well, I cannot help you with that. But if you are interested in the Dharma, it provides everything you need.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, December 7th, 2014 at 6:35 AM

Title: Re: Lama and trust

Content:

quince said:
He knew I hadn't.

Malcolm wrote:
Where is this Sakya Lama?

Author: Malcolm
Date: Sunday, December 7th, 2014 at 9:33 PM
Title: Re: Is Dzogchen only accidentally Buddhist?
Content:

gad rgyangs said:
there was an interesting post here for a few minutes that then got erased that was saying that it was not accidental, because of all the religions of this planet, only Buddhism had a basic perspective that was a fertile ground for Dzogchen to appear in. It is a very interesting question if that is the case or if other religions or philosophies could have birthed the Dzogchen view, or did in fact give rise to similar understanding? For example, is Heidegger's *Seinsfrage* a step towards Dzogchen in a western tradition? Are some of Meister Eckhart's late sermons expressing what amounts to a Dzogchen view? I don't think these are easy "yes" or "no" questions (although I expect an avalanche of "no"s any minute...)

In any case, the quotes from Namkahi Norbu are pretty clearly saying that one does not even have to be a "Buddhist" to practice Dzogchen, in which case the cultural phenomena called "Buddhism" becomes a kind of chrysalis from which Dzogchen emerges but is perhaps not needed once it does so. That is not to say that those still attached to the cultural forms have not fought, and do not fight, tooth and nail to stop the butterfly from emerging and leaving behind the casing...

Malcolm wrote:
The Dzogchen teachings are not something found outside of Buddhadharma for the simple reason that they are a Dharma that was taught by the Buddhas no amount of intellectual posturing can change this fact. Does this mean that someone has to sign up with a card that says "Registered Buddhist" like it is a political party? No, of course not.

These days a sort of intellectual "Dzogchen" is very fashionable — but it generally arises from a misconstrual of the Dzogchen tradition divorced from the matrix in which it emerged, the religious culture of Tibet from the 9th to the 12th century. During this four centuries, Dzogchen teachings were gradually promulgated in the context of Secret Mantra. One thing that ChNN also says is that there is no such a thing as "pure Dzogchen." What he means by this is that there is no practice of Dzogchen divorced from the rest of the Buddhist path (Bonpos are just Buddhists with a differing historical narrative regarding the origins of their teachings). He also states in very plain language that the result of Sūtra, Tantra and Dzogchen are the same — the same buddhahood. He never makes this claim with regard to Christianity, Hinduism, Taoism and so on. Of course another intellectual fashion of the current day is that imagine that somehow there are teachings equivalent to Dzogchen in schools outside of Buddhadharma. This

assertion is laughable. Beyond this, Dzogchen texts themselves take great pains to site their own teachings within the horizon of Buddhadharma, and outside the horizon of the teachings of this and that tīrthika school.

The only thing radical about Dzogchen in the end is that a few people might have the capacity recognize their own stated and live in that knowledge 24/7 obviating the need for any further path — but those of us who did not recognize that state and entered into delusion must labor away at our two obscurations, even though, as it is clearly stated in the Prajñāpāramita that when we reach the final result we will realize that there was nothing to accomplish and nothing to remove all along. In the meantime however, we soldier on because while we are under the the power of karma and afflictions there is a basis of purification and a reason for purification. This is recognized also in Dzogchen teachings, thus the reason there are so many purifications practices, purification practices for body, speech, mind and so on. The entire first chapter of the Dimension of Sound (sgra thaḥ 'gyur) tantra consists of nothing but purification practices, including creation stage and completion stage practices, and the entire first volume of Vimalamitra's commentary to this text consists of nothing more than elaborating all these practices in detail.

As to the notion that direct introduction is sufficient, this is a gross error of understanding. As the famed Semde master Zhigpo Dudtse points out, the only chigcharwas (instantaneous realizers) he knew of were Saraha and Lingje Repa (neither of them even Dzogchen practitioners), but that while he had sought out some other examples, he did not know of any while not ruling out the possibility that they existed. But it seems these days everyone is a chigcharwas. Further, if you are not practicing the profound teaching of thögal, one has no way of working with pure vision apart from the two stages. It is for this reason then that Tregchö is always combined with deity yoga in Dzogchen practice. As such, the practice of most so called Dzogchen practice is no different than what the Sakyapas, Gelugpas and Kagyus do, even though Nyingma sadhanas are gussied up with many fancy high sounding words. The plain reality is that most people do not have the capacity or time to practice Dzogchen in a serious way. This being the case, for example, ChNN strongly advises everyone to practice the short thun, which is a anuyoga sadhana combined with ati guruyoga. He explicitly says no one can remain in samadhi (contemplation) all the time, and so therefore, in order to do something useful, we have all these secondary practices which support samadhi, which create a container for it.

As to the the importance of tradition. There is no Dzogchen without lineage. A Dzogchen book without a live transmission is like a cellphone without a battery, it won't receive any calls. Dzogchen, as ChNN says again and again, does not live in a book, it lives in the transmission between teacher and student. That transmission is oral, symbolic and experiential. All of the different methods of empowerment, elaborate and so, are all methods of communicating that knowledge orally, symbolically and experientially. That knowledge is no different than what is communicated through the four empowerments of the Sarma schools. While the four Dzogchen empowerments may be more detailed, and in some sense they may be a bit more profound in details, a beginner cannot comprehend this. Without a great deal of understanding of Vajrayāna, the teaching of

Dzogchen is completely opaque.

The teaching of Dzogchen is not confined to paeans of praise about our natural state. It consists of detailed instructions about the human body, its channels, functions and so on, all of which require ripening through empowerment. If Dzogchen were only about our natural state, it would not go beyond the Prajñāpāramita sūtras.

As one of the Dzogchen tantras puts it — Mahāyoga is the ground, Anuyoga is the sky, and Atiyoga is the sun and moon which illuminates both. Dzogchen is called the pinnacle not because Mahāyoga and Anuyoga are unnecessary, but because, as Rongzom points out, it is needed for making other practices fruitful. This is not different than the Lamdre contention that the experiential view of the inseparability of samsara and nirvana that comes from empowerment must be meditated prior to engaging in the two stages.

In the end, I am afraid that the Sakya master, Dezhung Ajam (a disciple of Adzom Drugpa) was right, many people who claim to be Dzogchen practitioners are like people whose bodies are separated from their heads — in other words, their "Dzogchen" is just intellectual theory. Sadly, we see many such discussions in the internet in various forums by various people that are completely ungrounded. These people, sadly, merely block their own realization. What a pity.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, December 7th, 2014 at 9:38 PM

Title: Re: Summary of Tendai esotericism/Taimitsu

Content:

Malcolm/Claim 7 said:

As I understand his texts, he basically argues that only Mantrayāna leads to Buddhahood in this very body, a position also maintained in Tibetan Buddhism.

jake said:

Yes, Kukai does make the claim that those with sufficient capacity can be students of the Mantra vehicle and achieve Buddhahood in this very body. I assume this is your proposed definition for what makes a teaching “superior.”-see claim 2. (Though I suggest it is a problematic definition though remain open to the point it may be my [lack of] understanding that is problematic).

Malcolm wrote:

The point is that other teachings do not have this capacity, that is what Kobo Daishi is claiming, consistent with a long tradition.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, December 7th, 2014 at 11:48 PM

Title: Re: Is Dzogchen only accidentally Buddhist?

Content:

Astus said:

1. If Dzogchen necessarily includes teachings on the channels and such, does it mean that (a) public books on Dzogchen are actually sutra level teachings on emptiness and mindfulness, (b) whoever teaches/practises Dzogchen without deity yoga and/or togal only uses the name Great Perfection but not the real transmission, and (c) semde and longde, since they don't have togal as far as I'm aware, are not really Dzogchen or just preliminaries?

Malcolm wrote:

Some public books with the name Dzogchen in the title are just sutra level teachings on emptiness and mindfulness, but politeness restrains me from naming which ones.

Sems sde at minimum requires introduction through the so called empowerment of the potentiality of vidyā (of which there are 18 connected with the dohas of 18 ancient masters), and is part of the completion stage of Mahāyoga and Anuyoga — the bodhicitta texts do not actually give much detail on the method of practice, being mainly concerned with theory and view. So called sems sde is primarily about the basis. Because the basic texts of sems sde provide little information on how it is to be practiced, there are three different systems of Sems sde practice in Tibet, each with its own preliminaries. For example, the Nyan lugs systems of Sems sde requires the regular four uncommon foundations and so on.

Longde requires initiation into the system of Ngondzog Gyalpo, and is connected with that yidam.

Astus said:

3. If the teaching on the natural state is no different from the Prajnaparamita sutras - that is, you seem to agree to the unity of Dzogchen, Mahamudra and Madhyamaka in terms of the ultimate view - is it your understanding that Dzogchen is a unique way because of its togal instructions and nothing else?

Malcolm wrote:

There are a number of things which make Dzogchen distinct, thögal is one, but there are others, the explanation of the generic basis is another, the specific preliminary practices related to thögal such as 'khor 'das ru shan and so on are others, and the general requirement for some kind of introduction either through the fourth empowerment of Mahāyoga, the ati yoga empowerment found in Anuyoga or the empowerment of the potentiality of vidyā.

As far as tregchö goes, there is really no difference between tregchö, Kagyu Mahāmudra and the meditation the view of the inseparability of samsara and nirvana — all three have the same point and all three depend on the experiential view imparted during empowerment.

I also want to point out that like the rest of Vajrayāna, Dzogchen practice, path and realization completely depends on the Guru. Guru Yoga is absolutely central to Dzogchen. Without guru yoga and devotion to a realized master, no progress at all is possible in Dzogchen, none whatsoever.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, December 7th, 2014 at 11:51 PM

Title: Re: Is Dzogchen only accidentally Buddhist?

Content:

gad rgyangs said:

I don't see ChNNR denying in those quotes, or anywhere else, that Dzogchen first appeared within Buddhism, so I'm not sure why you are arguing as if he did?

Malcolm wrote:

I am not arguing with CHNN. I am pointing out that people often use ChNN citations to reinforce their own intellectual trips, taking them out of context, removing them from the thousands of other things he has said over the years.

Also ChNN's own views have changed over the years, he was much less conservative when those books were edited out of talks he gave in Italian.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, December 7th, 2014 at 11:53 PM

Title: Re: Is Dzogchen only accidentally Buddhist?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

In the end, I am afraid that the Sakya master, Dezhung Ajam (a disciple of Adzom Drugpa) was right, many people who claim to be Dzogchen practitioners are like people whose bodies are separated from their heads — in other words, their "Dzogchen" is just intellectual theory. Sadly, we see many such discussions in the internet in various forums by various people that are completely ungrounded. These people, sadly, merely block their own realization. What a pity.

Clarence said:

Apologies for ignoring the rest of your excellent post at the moment but I would like to focus on this for now. Based on the above, what would you recommend people do then? Of course, do what their Lamas tell them to do but besides that? Focus on Tantric practice and forget about Dzogchen?

I am genuinely curious as your opinion holds a lot of weight to a lot of people here. As usual, many thanks,

Malcolm wrote:

If you are a person in the DC, you should go through the precious vase, step by step and practice everything in it, even if you have no intention of pursuing SMS — then you will have a solid basis for understanding the rest of the teachings.

If you are someone following another master, do your ngondro and whatever else he or she tells you to do.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, December 8th, 2014 at 2:25 AM

Title: Re: Is Dzogchen only accidentally Buddhist?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

As far as tregchö goes, there is really no difference between tregchö, Kagyu Mahāmudra and the meditation the view of the inseparability of samsara and nirvana — all three have the same point and all three depend on the experiential view imparted during empowerment.

Astus said:

Thank you for your answers. You did not mention anything about the view reached in Madhyamaka, as I take the unity of samsara and nirvana here means Lamdre. Is that because you take it to be a purely intellectual thing, or for some other reasons?

Malcolm wrote:

Madhyamaka is philosophically the same as the view of Mahāmudra and Dzogchen, but because it is an intellectual based on analysis, it is not experientially equivalent with Mahāmudra and Dzogchen.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, December 8th, 2014 at 3:11 AM

Title: Re: Bye.wa

Content:

pemachophel said:

So is bye.wa.chu.sum, 13 times 10 million, i.e., 130 million?

Malcolm wrote:

yes.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, December 8th, 2014 at 3:14 AM

Title: Re: Is Dzogchen only accidentally Buddhist?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

because it is an intellectual based on analysis, it is not experientially equivalent with Mahāmudra and Dzogchen.

Astus said:

I think I don't fully understand what you mean here. Is it that Madhyamaka does not include experiencing emptiness, or is it that their practice results in something different than what they actually teach?

Malcolm wrote:

it means that there is no method of experiential introduction in sutra.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, December 8th, 2014 at 3:16 AM

Title: Re: Is Dzogchen only accidentally Buddhist?

Content:

gad rgyangs said:

Dzogchen consists of one thing essentially: recognition of the natural state/our real condition/rigpa.

Malcolm wrote:

All of Buddhadharma consists of this. Dzogchen is no different.

You are making a tempest in a teapot with this whole business of "culture", focusing on the wrong thing.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, December 8th, 2014 at 4:03 AM

Title: Re: Is Dzogchen only accidentally Buddhist?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Also ChNN's own views have changed over the years, he was much less conservative when those books were edited out of talks he gave in Italian.

dzogchungpa said:

Can you be more specific about how his views have changed?

bump

Malcolm wrote:

It's too long to discuss.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, December 8th, 2014 at 4:04 AM

Title: Re: Is Dzogchen only accidentally Buddhist?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

it means that there is no method of experiential introduction in sutra.

Astus said:

You mean the lack of empowerment outside Vajrayana? So it's not that you disregard insight meditation, elements of what is used in Dzogchen, Mahamudra and Lamdre, is it?

Malcolm wrote:

The key difference between sutra and tantra is empowerment.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, December 8th, 2014 at 6:42 AM

Title: Re: Is Dzogchen only accidentally Buddhist?

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

I've got time.

Malcolm wrote:

For example, he used to give old Tibetan Lamas a hard time for not giving serious teachings to Tibetan Lay people, then he discovered that a lot of Tibetan lay people are not interested in Dharma, just blessings. He once speculated that Garab Dorje might be the same person as Zhangzhung Garab, but now, he has abandoned that idea, etc. He used to insist that people only call him Norbu, now he pretty much insists that people use his proper title, and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, December 8th, 2014 at 8:03 AM

Title: Re: Is Dzogchen only accidentally Buddhist?

Content:

gad rgyangs said:

What ChNNR is saying is that we, as westerners, need to find ways to express with our own metaphors the essential thing that is called "dzogchen" (not the cultural tradition, but the meaning of the word "dzogchen", the natural state). We can either mine the western tradition for metaphors that are either pointing to the same thing or are at least amenable to appropriation, or invent new ones. Probably both.

Malcolm wrote:

No, he is not saying that, and I have heard him explain many times when doing deity yoga, for example, we need to use the images that come to us because they are connected with transmission.

but maybe you want a yidam that looks like this:

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, December 8th, 2014 at 8:45 PM

Title: Re: Mahayana opinions of Theravada?

Content:

Bakmoon said:

I would like to add a bit to what Dan74 said in terms of the Pali texts teaching the emptiness of phenomenon in addition to the emptiness of persons. One of the clearest Suttas on this subject in my opinion would be the Phenasa Sutta, in which the Buddha talks about the emptiness of the five aggregates:

Malcolm wrote:

The emptiness of the five aggregates is just the emptiness of the person. The emptiness of phenomena is more than that, and includes the emptiness of unconditioned dharmas and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, December 8th, 2014 at 8:57 PM

Title: Re: Which Buddhist tradition has treated women the best?

Content:

Astus said:

As far as I'm aware, there is not one school or tradition that has a female lineage, nor is there any outstanding (or even not so outstanding) treatise by a woman author.

Malcolm wrote:

Nonsense — Yeshe Tsogyal was prolific. There are many, many texts attributed to her.

Astus said:

All the founders, thinkers and leaders are men. Some may cite here Machig Labdron, however, she is not much more than the legendary transmitter in Tibet of a practice that was only later canonised by male teachers (we are talking about women's social status here, not "religious stories of the past").

Malcolm wrote:

This is also not so: Niguma, Sukhasiddhi, Siddhirajni, Laxminkara, etc., are just a few of the women authors whose works are prominent in Vajrayāna, who are also considered founders of lineages.

Machig is a historical person, and there is no reason to believe she did not author much of what has been attributed to her.

More recently there is Sera Khandro, Tara Lhamo and so on, twentieth century female authors.

They may be rare, but you are overstating the case by a considerable margin.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Monday, December 8th, 2014 at 9:58 PM
Title: Re: Is Dzogchen only accidentally Buddhist?
Content:
MalaBeads said:
(who btw, I disagree with).

.

Malcolm wrote:
With what are you disagreeing?

Author: Malcolm
Date: Monday, December 8th, 2014 at 10:41 PM
Title: Re: Is Dzogchen only accidentally Buddhist?
Content:
treehuggingoctopus said:
It is interesting to note that this is so much a red flag topic that few people in the thread actually respond to the issues gad rgyangs pointed out in his second post...

Malcolm wrote:
It was addressed by kyle with an avalanche of nos.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Monday, December 8th, 2014 at 10:57 PM
Title: Re: Is Dzogchen only accidentally Buddhist?
Content:
mutsuk said:
This is not enough, you are mixing recognizing rigpa and realization.

gad rgyangs said:
define "realization"

Malcolm wrote:
She is saying you are confusing a shes pa, an understanding (jñatā), with a rtogs pa, an awakening (avabodha).

M

Author: Malcolm
Date: Monday, December 8th, 2014 at 10:59 PM
Title: Re: Is Dzogchen only accidentally Buddhist?
Content:

gad rgyangs said:

although i started this thread with very clear quotes of Namkhai Norbu, people are arguing with me as if they were my opinions. Go figure.

Malcolm wrote:

Perhaps that is because there are some people who think that you have not presented to the totality of Rinpoche's view with this citation edited from a talk translated into another language (from Italian to English) a quarter of a century ago.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, December 8th, 2014 at 11:02 PM

Title: Re: Is Dzogchen only accidentally Buddhist?

Content:

treehuggingoctopus said:

And it seems there is no easy way out: can we honestly understand the world of the Tibetan metaphor without any 'fusion of horizons'?

Malcolm wrote:

Please be precise, which metaphors are you talking about? At this point people are complaining about putative unspecified abstractions. For example, I don't what metaphors you are referring to as "Tibetan metaphors".

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, December 8th, 2014 at 11:09 PM

Title: Re: Is Dzogchen only accidentally Buddhist?

Content:

gad rgyangs said:

rigpa is not an understanding, it is precisely an awakening.

Malcolm wrote:

No, the progression is introduction --> recognition --> realization, not recognition --> realization.

You are missing a step. These three steps is very precisely detailed in many Dzogchen tantras and treatises.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, December 8th, 2014 at 11:12 PM

Title: Re: Is Dzogchen only accidentally Buddhist?

Content:

gad rgyangs said:

that (non-regressive knowledge of Buddhahood (Bodies and Wisdoms)) is precisely an example of cultural metaphor, found in India, Tibet and points east. It is also, for virtually (or actually) everyone who believes it, just a theory. If you can produce someone who fits this description, please do, I'd be most interested to speak with them.

Malcolm wrote:

So buddhahood is a cultural metaphor? Then so is rigpa and your argument then becomes entirely self-defeating.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, December 8th, 2014 at 11:17 PM

Title: Re: Which Buddhist tradition has treated women the best?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Nonsense — Yeshe Tsogyal was prolific. There are many, many texts attributed to her.

Astus said:

Attributed to her as a terma? I don't consider that the same as being the actual author, although it is not negligible that she stands as an example of a female master.

This is also not so: Niguma, Sukhasiddhi, Siddhirajni, Laxminkara, etc., are just a few of the women authors whose works are prominent in Vajrayāna, who are also considered founders of lineages.

Machig is a historical person, and there is no reason to believe she did not author much of what has been attributed to her.

More recently there is Sera Khandro, Tara Lhamo and so on, twentieth century female authors.

They may be rare, but you are overstating the case by a considerable margin.

What level of use/importance do the writings (not the transmissions) of those four Indian female authors carry? What I could gather with a brief search is that the actual founder of the Shangpa Kagyu was Khyungpo Naljor, a male monk, who studied with two of the four yoginis. Don't get me wrong, I'm not saying that this is all irrelevant, but it seems to me that women had no better situation in Tibet than anywhere else. And even if there were some Indian woman siddhas, in their society they were not recognised as anyone important.

Malcolm wrote:

You are confusing institutions with lineages.

The founder of a Vajrayāna lineage is not the Tibetan who collected some Indian teachings and started an institution, but the awakened master who had the capacity to directly communicate with Vajradhara and pass that transmission along. These four women had that capacity which is why they all stand at the heads of lineages of

Vajrayāna transmission.

These four women, five when including Macig, were recognized as important in their own milieu, which is why we have their teachings and texts with us today, which are regularly cited and commented upon to the present day.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, December 8th, 2014 at 11:21 PM

Title: Re: Is Dzogchen only accidentally Buddhist?

Content:

gad rgyangs said:

that is precisely an example of cultural metaphor, found in India, Tibet and points east.

mutsum said:

No it precisely is not. Bodies and Wisdoms are the way the Fruit manifests itself.

It is also, for virtually (or actually) everyone who believes it, just a theory.

It is a theory for people who do not practice. During the practice of the path, you have signs indicating that one experiences Bodies and Wisdoms, this is why Thögel is so crucial to Dzogchen. If you can produce someone who fits this description, please do, I'd be most interested to speak with them.

Yongdzin Rinpoche.

Malcolm wrote:

And Norbu Rinpoche.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, December 8th, 2014 at 11:29 PM

Title: Re: Is Dzogchen only accidentally Buddhist?

Content:

gad rgyangs said:

rigpa is not an understanding, it is precisely an awakening.

mutsum said:

Then you strictly have no understanding what rig-pa is. Not one inch. Sorry to say.

gad rgyangs said:

so say you. and you are who exactly, to be telling people what they do or do not understand?

Malcolm wrote:

She is comparing what you say with what the texts say and finds your presentation inconsistent with the textual tradition, therefore, she is telling you that she thinks you have no idea what you are talking about.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, December 8th, 2014 at 11:30 PM

Title: Re: Is Dzogchen only accidentally Buddhist?

Content:

gad rgyangs said:

that (non-regressive knowledge of Buddhahood (Bodies and Wisdoms)) is precisely an example of cultural metaphor, found in India, Tibet and points east. It is also, for virtually (or actually) everyone who believes it, just a theory. If you can produce someone who fits this description, please do, I'd be most interested to speak with them.

Malcolm wrote:

So buddhahood is a cultural metaphor? Then so is rigpa and your argument then becomes entirely self-defeating.

gad rgyangs said:

nope. rigpa is a name for something that is not culturally conditioned, since it would be the same for any sentient being from any culture, not only on this planet, but anywhere in any dimension.

Malcolm wrote:

The same goes for Buddhahood. Anyway, rigpa is just a name for the mind.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, December 8th, 2014 at 11:30 PM

Title: Re: Is Dzogchen only accidentally Buddhist?

Content:

gad rgyangs said:

rigpa is not an understanding, it is precisely an awakening.

Malcolm wrote:

No, the progression is introduction --> recognition --> realization, not recognition --> realization.

You are missing a step. These three steps is very precisely detailed in many Dzogchen tantras and treatises.

gad rgyangs said:

define "realization"

Malcolm wrote:

See above: realization = rtogs pa = avabodha (awakening).

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, December 8th, 2014 at 11:40 PM

Title: Re: Is Dzogchen only accidentally Buddhist?

Content:

gad rgyangs said:

define "realization"

Malcolm wrote:

See above: realization = rtogs pa = avabodha (awakening).

gad rgyangs said:

and rigpa is precisely awakening. The rest is gravy, take it or leave it as one wishes.

Malcolm wrote:

No, rigpa is not precisely awakening at all. This is a total misconception, and this misconception is why there are so many flakey screw ups who think they are Dzogchen masters.

One cannot state that rigpa in its unripened state for example, is awakening. The whole reason that basis is called "the basis" is because it has yet to be realized, that is why it is called "the basis."

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, December 8th, 2014 at 11:48 PM

Title: Re: Is Dzogchen only accidentally Buddhist?

Content:

mutsuk said:

I am who I am. You are just fantasizing about rigpa without a clear understanding of what it is. Rigpa is not an awakening. You are mixing plenty of levels.

gad rgyangs said:

I am speaking about awakening. If you don't like the term "rigpa" then you can call it something else, but what I am talking about is precisely what is called "rigpa" in the Dzogchen tradition.

Malcolm wrote:

Rigpa is not in itself awakening. This is why "unripened vidyā" appropriates bodies for rebirth, as Vimalamitra clearly explains. Vidyā is just a name for the nature of the mind, which is why Vimalamitra describes vidyā as "knowing (rig) and clear (gsal)."

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, December 8th, 2014 at 11:51 PM

Title: Re: Is Dzogchen only accidentally Buddhist?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

No, rigpa is not precisely awakening at all. This is a total misconception, and this misconception is why there are so many flakey screw ups who think they are Dzogchen masters.

gad rgyangs said:

recognition of our real condition does not make one a "Dzogchen Master", especially since even people who have never heard of "dzogchen" or even "buddhism" have that condition, and may recognize it outside those traditions.

One cannot state that rigpa in its unripened state for example, is awakening. The whole reason that basis is called "the basis" is because it has yet to be realized, that is why it is called "the basis."

rigpa is knowledge of the basis, experientially. The rest is optional.

Malcolm wrote:

Rigpa is just a name for the mind — sometimes that mind knows its own state, sometimes it doesn't. When one has that kind of experience one is merely a practitioner on the path, slowly improving, applying one's understanding to the introduction.

Realization is when that knowledge is permanent and not fleeting, leading to the abandonment of the two obscurations.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, December 8th, 2014 at 11:55 PM

Title: Re: Is Dzogchen only accidentally Buddhist?

Content:

gad rgyangs said:

You think rigpa means realization.

where did I say that exactly?

Malcolm wrote:

Several places above. Read your own posts.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, December 8th, 2014 at 11:55 PM

Title: Re: Is Dzogchen only accidentally Buddhist?

Content:

gad rgyangs said:

Once you recognize your real nature, there is no turning back, or rather falling back (asleep).

Malcolm wrote:

Sure you can -- this why Vimalamitra's "vidyā that apprehends characteristics" is defined as clear non-conceptual consciousness [shes pa] contaminated by many cognitions, so it is in fact very possible to turn back, fall away — people do it most of the time.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, December 9th, 2014 at 12:05 AM

Title: Re: Is Dzogchen only accidentally Buddhist?

Content:

gad rgyangs said:

I am saying rigpa is an awakening, which would be the same for any being anytime anywhere, "realization" as you are using it seems to be a buddhist cultural construct.

Malcolm wrote:

You are not qualifying rigpa here in any. Your statement is equivalent to saying "the mind is awakening". It is a meaningless statement.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, December 9th, 2014 at 12:28 AM

Title: Re: Is Dzogchen only accidentally Buddhist?

Content:

treehuggingoctopus said:

And it seems there is no easy way out: can we honestly understand the world of the Tibetan metaphor without any 'fusion of horizons'?

Malcolm wrote:

Please be precise, which metaphors are you talking about? At this point people are complaining about putative unspecified abstractions. For example, I don't what metaphors you are referring to as "Tibetan metaphors".

treehuggingoctopus said:

I did mention the subject-object split, but I think you can take pretty much any term from the twilight language of Dzogchen/Tantra - rig pa, for instance, this thread being another example that even long term practitioners (gad rgyangs is one, isn't he?) either apparently fail to understand that absolutely crucial term (if mutsuk is right) or at least

cannot properly express what they understand.

Or the shes pa vs rnam shes vs ye shes trio, especially when explained in terms of their English 'equivalents', i.e., awareness, consciousness and wisdom.

For a still better effect try explaining the Atiyoga section of Precious Vase to a newbie to Vajrayana.

Malcolm wrote:

If you want to understand these terms it is simple:

shes pa is jñāta, rnam shes is vijñāna, and yeshe is jñāna, perhaps best way to understand this is that latter two are subsets of the first, as is clearly explained in the sgra thal gyur tantra.

rig pa (vidyā, vedana) is a function of shes pa.

These are not metaphors, they are technical terms.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, December 9th, 2014 at 1:28 AM

Title: Re: Is Dzogchen only accidentally Buddhist?

Content:

gad rgyangs said:

getting back to topic:

although i started this thread with very clear quotes of Namkhai Norbu, people are arguing with me as if they were my opinions. Go figure.

Malcolm wrote:

Perhaps that is because there are some people who think that you have not presented to the totality of Rinpoche's view with this citation edited from a talk translated into another language (from Italian to English) a quarter of a century ago.

gad rgyangs said:

then it should be simple for you to provide a counter-quote from a more recent publication of his in which he repudiates what he said in the quote I posted.

Malcolm wrote:

I don't think you are presenting this citation in its proper context, and I don't think one can encapsulate all of Rinpoche's thoughts into an internet soundbite.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, December 9th, 2014 at 1:36 AM

Title: Re: Is Dzogchen only accidentally Buddhist?

Content:

treehuggingoctopus said:

this thread being another example that even long term practitioners (gad rgyangs is one, isn't he?) either apparently fail to understand that absolutely crucial term (if mutsuk is right) or at least cannot properly express what they understand.

gad rgyangs said:

the only things I have said about rigpa are: it is an awakening. the recognition it gives is unmistakable, unshakable, and irreversible. I also said it is knowledge of our real nature or condition. I don't think any of these statements are controversial, but if any of it is unclear I would be happy to try and clarify.

Malcolm wrote:

The experience of rigpa is reversible, even if you have developed some rigpa in this life, when you die, who knows where you will end up in the next life?

Oh, sure, you can argue that the mind is not affected by any of the six realms, being inherently pure, but it is frankly stupid to claim that recognition of your state is realization. No Dzogchen tantra states that.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, December 9th, 2014 at 2:20 AM

Title: Re: Is Dzogchen only accidentally Buddhist?

Content:

gad rgyangs said:

all you have said so far is basically "it can't be what he really thinks because it is different from what I think"

Malcolm wrote:

I haven't said anything of the sort. I have not been responding to what ChNN says, rather I am responding to what you say.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, December 9th, 2014 at 4:14 AM

Title: Re: Is Dzogchen only accidentally Buddhist?

Content:

gad rgyangs said:

all you have said so far is basically "it can't be what he really thinks because it is different from what I think"

Malcolm wrote:

I haven't said anything of the sort. I have not been responding to what ChNN says, rather I am responding to what you say.

gad rgyangs said:

what I "said" originally when I started the thread was a quote from ChNNR. Why don't

you respond to that?

Malcolm wrote:
I have no need to.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Tuesday, December 9th, 2014 at 5:03 AM
Title: Re: Is Dzogchen only accidentally Buddhist?
Content:

gad rgyangs said:
he is clearly separating the "essence of the teachings" from the "culture or tradition" (buddhism) and stating that one must understand "the true meaning of a teaching through one's own culture" or you may confuse "the external form of a religious tradition and the essence of its message"

Malcolm wrote:
I am sorry, but I do not believe that he is saying that the essence of Dzogchen is separate from Buddhadharma.

gad rgyangs said:
here he is clearly saying that you do not have to be a buddhist to practice dzogchen, and to insist otherwise is "limited thinking" and can "create serious obstacles to true knowledge"

Malcolm wrote:
No, but by becoming a Dzogchen practitioner one becomes a practitioner of Buddhadharma. There is no way around this. Dzogchen is Prajñāpāramita, etc. It is not Paramshiva, Brahman, etc.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Tuesday, December 9th, 2014 at 5:34 AM
Title: Re: Is Dzogchen only accidentally Buddhist?
Content:

gad rgyangs said:
what I "said" originally when I started the thread was a quote from ChNNR. Why don't you respond to that?

Malcolm wrote:
I have no need to.

gad rgyangs said:

ok I'll take that as agreement with what he is saying.

Malcolm wrote:

We do not understand him the same way, hence I responded to you, but not the original citation.

In order to be a Dzogchen practitioner, rather than a Dzogchen intellectual, you must always do three things: take refuge in the Buddha, maintain ultimate bodhicitta, and dedicate your merit. This is the essence of the practice of Buddhadharma.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, December 9th, 2014 at 9:23 PM

Title: Re: Is Dzogchen only accidentally Buddhist?

Content:

Sherab said:

Personally, I highly doubt that Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche intended the first interpretation.

Malcolm wrote:

Thanks.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, December 10th, 2014 at 1:30 AM

Title: Re: Mahayana opinions of Theravada?

Content:

Johnny Dangerous said:

Here's a quote from Douglas Duckworth I pulled from from the Nirvana wiki:

The Lesser Vehicle does not result in the practitioner becoming a complete buddha; rather, the aim is to achieve a personal nirvana that is the total extinction of existence.

The Great Vehicle, however, does result in becoming a complete buddha. A buddha remains actively engaged in enlightened activity to liberate beings for as long as samsara remains. Thus, those who accomplish the Great Vehicle do not abide in samsara due to their wisdom that sees its empty, illusory nature. Further, unlike those who attain the nirvana of the Lesser Vehicle to escape samsara, they do not abide in an isolated nirvana due to their compassion. For these reasons, in the Great Vehicle, nirvana is said to be “unlocated” or “nonabiding” (apratiṣṭhita), staying in neither samsara nor nirvana.

The above covers the big differences as I understand them, which includes the central role of Bodhicitta in full enlightenment.

Kasina said:

Fascinating.

Within Theravada, criticism is oft thrown at those who claim nibbana as a state outside of all existence.

What's your take on that?

Malcolm wrote:

Nonabiding Nirvana simply means that a Buddha never actually remains in the nirvana for ever, always acting on behalf of sentient beings.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, December 10th, 2014 at 5:51 AM

Title: Re: Is Dzogchen only accidentally Buddhist?

Content:

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, December 10th, 2014 at 8:45 PM

Title: Re: Mahayana opinions of Theravada?

Content:

Bakmoon said:

Obviously this doesn't mean that Theravada lines up with everything in the Madhyamaka tenet system, as there are a lot of important differences in how these teachings are laid out and in particular a lot of differences in how the two truths are understood, and emptiness is explained in much more detail in Madhyamaka texts, but I do think it's fairly clear that the Theravada school (at least in its classical formulation in the commentaries as opposed to the later abhidhamma manuals) accepts the emptiness of all phenomena in addition to the emptiness of persons.

Malcolm wrote:

I am afraid you have not understood the "emptiness of phenomena" because you state: Phenomena are real in that they arise, yes, but not real in the sense of possessing intrinsic existence.

What is the emptiness of phenomena? The emptiness of phenomena is the absence of extremes in phenomena such as arising, ceasing, existence, nonexistence, permanent, impermanent and so on. This kind of emptiness was not taught by the Buddha in the Agamas and Nikayas, but was only taught by the Buddha in Mahāyāna sūtras.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, December 10th, 2014 at 8:54 PM

Title: Re: Celibacy & Enlightenment

Content:

sdw said:

Just a note: 'Lay' does not mean non-celibate, it means a person who is not ordained, or

not part of the clergy, an amateur as opposed to a 'professional'. One would not refer to great Lamas such as Dud'jom Rinpoche, for example, as 'lay'.

Malcolm wrote:

One would refer to them as upāsakas, laymen. In this context, when it comes to the difference between being an upāsakaḥ as opposed to a bhikṣu or śramaṇera, the former is "lay," the latter are ordained. Thus both are clergy, but one are lay clergymen and the other are ordained clergymen.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, December 10th, 2014 at 9:26 PM

Title: Re: Mahayana opinions of Theravada?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

This kind of emptiness was not taught by the Buddha in the Agamas and Nikayas, but was only taught by the Buddha in Mahāyāna sūtras.

daverupa said:

This is saying that the Sravaka stuff is not a foundation; so there seems to be a disagreement on this matter among Mahayana folk?

Malcolm wrote:

The foundational teachings the Buddha provided in the Agamas/Nikayas are things like 12 links of dependent origination, the four truths of nobles, skandhas, āyatanas and dhātus, liberation from samsara and so on. What the Buddha taught in common Mahāyāna on top of the framework provided in the Agamas and Nikayas were things like tathāgatagarbha, Mahāyāna bodhicitta, two-fold emptiness, gathering the two accumulations, the bodhisattva path, the nature of buddhahood and omniscience. What the Buddha taught in uncommon Mahāyāna Secret Mantra on top of the framework of common Mahāyāna is the special method to realize Buddhahood in a single lifetime.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, December 10th, 2014 at 9:41 PM

Title: Re: Off topic: Mahayana opinions of Theravada?

Content:

Johnny Dangerous said:

Not quite the same, as I believe in the Mahayana Arya Sangha is defined as people who have realized emptiness to some degree, and are on the bhumis (maybe i'd have to verify the bhumis thing) not even a thing in Theravada. Though I did not know that was the case in Theravada.

Bakmoon said:

In the Theravada the eight kinds of Ariyas refers to the Sotapanna, Sakadagamin, Anagamin, and Arahant, each divided into path and fruit. I'm not sure how this maps up

with the ten Bhumi model, but in the Theravada school one must attain Nirvana in order to become a Sotapanna, which seems to line up with the path of seeing, although I'm not totally sure how the details on that work.

Malcolm wrote:

It does not line up with the ten Bhumi model because what is seen and what is abandoned by seeing differ.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, December 10th, 2014 at 10:48 PM

Title: Re: Mahayana opinions of Theravada?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

... things like tathāgatagarbha, Mahāyāna bodhicitta, two-fold emptiness, gathering the two accumulations, the bodhisattva path, the nature of buddhahood and omniscience. What the Buddha taught in uncommon Mahāyāna Secret Mantra on top of the framework of common Mahāyāna is the special method to realize Buddhahood in a single lifetime.

daverupa said:

With Theravada, there's merit donations and merit-as-currency, protective charms, devotionalsms and venerations, the Jatakas housing Bodhisatta Path ideations alongside comparisons of Bodhisatta with Buddha... it's all of a piece, Malcolm. Theravada brings the same sort of stuff to the Agama/Nikaya table as does Mahayana, which is to say, stuff not already on the table.

Malcolm wrote:

It is not all of a piece.

When we examine the purpose of merit accumulation, we can ascertain the differences.

There are significant differences between how the bodhisattva path is understood by the Nikaya schools and how it is understood in Mahāyāna.

Devotionalism in Mahāyāna and the Śrāvaka schools is not a path, as it is Vajrayāna.

Mahāyāna bodhicitta simply does not exist in the Agamas, nor does the Mahāyāna path.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, December 11th, 2014 at 12:59 AM

Title: Re: Best Yidams to Remove Obstacles

Content:

Clarence said:

Which Deity would you recommend to remove obstacles?

Many thanks, C

Malcolm wrote:

Depends on the obstacle.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, December 11th, 2014 at 1:44 AM

Title: Re: Mahayana opinions of Theravada?

Content:

Bakmoon said:

I thought that it is the position of Je Tsongkhapa that the object of negation is only intrinsic existence and not mere existence. I understand that outside of Gelugpa this position is seen as non-standard, but I think it's a bit harsh to say that saying that phenomena merely exist is a rejection of the emptiness of phenomena.

Malcolm wrote:

Do you understand what "mere existence" means?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, December 11th, 2014 at 2:02 AM

Title: Re: Mahayana opinions of Theravada?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

It is not all of a piece.

When we examine the purpose of merit accumulation, we can ascertain the differences.

There are significant differences between how the bodhisattva path is understood by the Nikaya schools and how it is understood in Mahāyāna.

Devotionalism in Mahāyāna and the Śrāvaka schools is not a path, as it is Vajrayāna.

Bakmoon said:

I agree.

Malcolm wrote:

Mahāyāna bodhicitta simply does not exist in the Agamas, nor does the Mahāyāna path.

Bakmoon said:

That's true of the main body of the Four Nikayas for example, but the Bodhisattva path is talked about somewhat in the latter portions of the Khuddaka Nikaya in the Jatakas, Cariyapitika, and the Buddhavamsa, and it is talked about in more detail in the classical commentaries, both on these texts, and in several commentaries on the main Suttas

such as in the commentary on the Samannaphala Sutta and the Ghatikara Sutta.

Bodhicitta isn't specifically identified under a single name and doctrine, but I think the concept is there in the commentaries. For example, Acarya Dhammapala in his commentary on the Cariyapitika writes:

The aspiration, made by one endowed with these eight factors, is in denotation the act of consciousness (cittuppaada) occurring together with the collection of these eight factors. Its characteristic is rightly resolving to attain the supreme enlightenment. Its function is to yearn, "Oh, may I awaken to the supreme perfect enlightenment, and bring well-being and happiness to all beings!" It is manifest as the root-cause for the requisites of enlightenment. Its proximate cause is great compassion, or the achievement of the necessary supporting conditions. Since it has as its object the inconceivable plane of the Buddhas and the welfare of the whole immeasurable world of beings, it should be seen as the loftiest, most sublime and exalted distinction of merit, endowed with immeasurable potency, the root-cause of all the qualities issuing in Buddhahood. Simultaneous with its arising, the Great Man enters upon the practice of the vehicle to great enlightenment (mahaabodhiyaanapa.tipatti). He becomes fixed in his destiny, irreversible, and therefore properly gains the designation "bodhisattva." His mind becomes fully devoted to the supreme enlightenment in its completeness, and his capacity to fulfill the training in the requisites of enlightenment becomes established. For when their aspiration succeeds, the Great Men correctly investigate all the paaramiis with their self-evolved knowledge which prefigures their future attainment of omniscience. Then they undertake their practice, and fulfill them in due order, as was done by the wise Sumedha when he made his great aspiration.

Like the aspiration, great compassion (mahaakaru.naa) and skillful means (upaayakosalla) are also conditions for the paaramiis. Therein, "skillful means" is the wisdom which transforms giving (and the other nine virtues) into requisites of enlightenment. Through their great compassion and skillful means, the Great Men devote themselves to working uninterruptedly for the welfare of others without any concern for their own happiness and without any fear of the extremely difficult course of conduct that great bodhisattvas must follow. And their nature is such that they are able to promote the welfare and happiness of beings even on occasions when they are merely seen, heard of, or recollected, (since even the sight, report, or thought of them) inspires confidence. Through his wisdom the bodhisattva perfects within himself the character of a Buddha, through his compassion the ability to perform the work of a Buddha. Through wisdom he brings himself across (the stream of becoming), through compassion he leads others across. Through wisdom he understands the suffering of others, through compassion he strives to alleviate their suffering. Through wisdom he becomes disenchanted with suffering, through compassion he accepts suffering. Through wisdom he aspires for nibbaana, through compassion he remains in the round of existence. Through compassion he enters sa.msaara, through wisdom he does not delight in it. Through wisdom he destroys all attachments, but because his wisdom is accompanied by compassion he never desists from activity that benefits others. Through compassion he shakes with sympathy for all, but because his compassion is accompanied by wisdom his mind is unattached. Through wisdom he is free from "I-making" and "mine-making," through compassion he is free from lethargy and

depression.

There is also a passage from the Buddhavamsa which describes how the Buddha in his previous incarnation as Sumedha took the Bodhisattva vow, but I'll have to take some time to find the passage.

Malcolm wrote:

Such discussions also exist amongst the Sarvastivadins, for example the Abhidharmakosha discusses the career of the bodhisattva. But this is really not the same as the Buddha's teaching on the bodhisattva path in Mahāyāna. For one, the concept of an awakened bodhisattva is never found in any Theravada texts at all.

Not only that, but unlike the śravaka schools, in Mahāyāna there are specific rites to undertake bodhisattva vows and commitments to which one must adhere. In other words there is a Bodhisattva vinaya that is distinct from the śravaka vinaya and supercedes where the former contradicts the latter. It is probable that śravaka understanding the bodhisattva path was influenced by Mahāyāna sūtras.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, December 11th, 2014 at 2:17 AM

Title: Re: Mahayana opinions of Theravada?

Content:

Bakmoon said:

I thought that it is the position of Je Tsongkhapa that the object of negation is only intrinsic existence and not mere existence. I understand that outside of Gelugpa this position is seen as non-standard, but I think it's a bit harsh to say that saying that phenomena merely exist is a rejection of the emptiness of phenomena.

Malcolm wrote:

Do you understand what "mere existence" means?

Bakmoon said:

I can't give a perfect definition of it, but from looking at how the term is used in the context of Je Tsongkhapa's writings I take it to mean that it is a conventional kind of existence different from intrinsic existence and is not findable under rational analysis.

Malcolm wrote:

Is any kind of existence findable from the perspective of Theravada teachings?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, December 11th, 2014 at 2:23 AM

Title: Re: Mahayana opinions of Theravada?

Content:

Bakmoon said:

My point is that it is misleading to say that the Mahayana path is not a part of the Theravada tradition because many people would understand that to mean that the Theravada tradition doesn't have a set of Bodhisattva teachings rather than understanding it to mean that the Bodhisattva path as presented in the Theravada tradition is different from the Mahayana teachings on the same.

Malcolm wrote:

The Mahāyāna path is not part of the tradition of Theravada. Theravada may have teachings on the path of the bodhisattva, but they are not commensurate with the teachings on the bodhisattva in Mahāyāna in anyway.

For example, in Theravada bodhisattvas are barred from stream entry, in Mahāyāna they can achieve streamentry, and so on, the list of differences is endless.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, December 11th, 2014 at 3:17 AM

Title: Re: Mahayana opinions of Theravada?

Content:

Bakmoon said:

I would hazard an answer by saying that things exist in a findable way in the sense that one can perceive appearances, but not further. I say this based on my own understanding of Acariya Dhammapa's subcommentary on the Atthasalini in which he says that there is nothing apart from the properties of a dhamma.

Malcolm wrote:

These properties, I assume he is using the lakkhana (Skt. Lakṣana) are precisely the kind of realism criticized by the Buddha in Mahāyāna as dharmātman.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, December 11th, 2014 at 3:58 AM

Title: Re: Mahayana opinions of Theravada?

Content:

Johnny Dangerous said:

I think you misunderstood the "foundation" bit.

daverupa said:

Can you expand? Malcolm says, at least in cases of Vinaya, that this foundation is to be superseded as necessary.

Malcolm wrote:

I was specifically referring to personal liberation vows and where they are contradicted by bodhisattva vows.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, December 11th, 2014 at 7:47 AM

Title: Re: Mahayana opinions of Theravada?

Content:

daverupa said:

I don't seek to have the Mahayana view defended, but I do want it clearly stated.

The foundation isn't just Nikayas/Agamas, it's Agamas + certain other Mahayana texts that are the actual baseline foundation. The claim about Ni/Ag being the foundation snagged my mind a bit as it passed because saying that they are foundational is incomplete, and thus inaccurate: the practical foundation employed by Mahayana folk necessarily encompasses more than that (as does Theravada, but in quite different ways).

So, the picture I see emerging from this discussion is that the e.g. Agamas aren't foundational on their own, they are incorporated with other texts which then as a group comprise the practical Mahayana foundation. Thus, Early Buddhism forms part of the foundation for both, and other things make up the remainder of the textual mass in each case.

Malcolm wrote:

The whole edifice of the Buddha's teaching in the Agamas are the foundation for Mahāyāna. It does not mean that there are no teachings in the Agamas that are regarded as contextual/provisional, to be applied or not as the situation may warrant it. The same is the case with the relationship between Mahāyāna and Secret Mantra — the whole of Mahāyāna and the Agamas are the foundation upon which Secret Mantra rests, but this does not mean that there are no teachings in the Agamas and Vaipulya sūtras that are regarded as contextual/provisional to be applied or not as the situation may warrant it. For example, the 37 bodhipakṣadharmas, found in the Agamas and Vaipulya sūtras, are also found in Tantras. Mandalas are, from one point of view, little more than exercises in reciting various parts of Abhidharma in the form of deities.

One way to look at it is that the Agamas are the milk, the Vaipulya sūtras are the cream, and the Tantras are the butter.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, December 11th, 2014 at 8:46 PM

Title: Re: Mahayana opinions of Theravada?

Content:

Johnny Dangerous said:

it makes them the Sravaka vehicle. I shouldn't need to defend that notion on this forum.

Astus said:

That's right, sravakas are important. If one can save oneself, that's already great. I think

that those of us exposed to Mahayana teachings (sutra and tantra) can be a little fooled by the rhetoric about how superior the bodhisattvayana is. Although here I might add that the majority of popular Mahayana lineages don't emphasise the bodhisattva career, instead they promise buddhahood in this life or the next.

Malcolm wrote:

The purpose of becoming a buddha is to help others. The purpose of becoming an arhat is to help yourself. There is nothing wrong with the latter, but it cannot be compared with the former. Therefore, whether one attains buddhahood in this life, the next left, or in three incalculable eons, the motivation of the bodhisattva path is infinitely superior to the motivation to become an arhat.

Further, the bodhisattva path is emphasized in Vajrayāna, without bodhisattva motivation is not possible to attain buddhahood. Quite frankly, of all the Mahāyāna traditions out there today, Tibetan Buddhism emphasizes bodhicitta the most.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, December 11th, 2014 at 8:53 PM

Title: Re: Which Buddhist tradition has treated women the best?

Content:

Dan74 said:

In Tonga I'm told, every (extended) family used to have a matriarch, typically an old unmarried aunt, who would be consulted on all important decisions and mediate in all the disputes. But the Christian missionaries saw an end to such a prominent role for women. Hooray for Western civilisation!

Malcolm wrote:

This is actually how things are in Tibet. The brother's sister wields all the matriarchal power.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, December 11th, 2014 at 9:25 PM

Title: Re: No one will be turned away

Content:

Ayu said:

If somebody has deep devotion s/he should not be forced to say: "I cannot attend the teaching, because it is too expensive."

Malcolm wrote:

On the other hand people do forget that Milarepa had to say just that....and more than once.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, December 11th, 2014 at 9:32 PM

Title: Re: No one will be turned away

Content:

Ayu said:

If somebody has deep devotion s/he should not be forced to say: "I cannot attend the teaching, because it is too expensive."

Malcolm wrote:

On the other hand people do forget that Milarepa had to say just that....and more than once.

Sherlock said:

He paid with his labour.

Malcolm wrote:

Don't you remember the episode where he had no money to give Marpa, and Dagmema gave him a piece of turquoise for the fee? When Marpa found out he was livid and threw Milarepa out.

The of course there is the famous examples of Drogmi and Rwa. They both had set fees for teachings, this much for the empowerment, this much for the intimate instruction, this much for the sadhana explanation and so on. In Tibet, prior to the institutionalization of Vajrayāna lineages, the habits of gurus were to set fees. Don't you recall that Longchenpa was depressed he could not attend the Vima Nyinthig empowerment given by Kumararaja? So Kumararaja secretly gave him the empowerment fee so he could attend. The Dorje Gotrab root text specifies it should not be given to anyone who does not fork over gold. ChNN joked about this, when he first gave the lung for the whole text.

After Vajrayāna was institutionalized then it became common for teachings like the Nyingthig Yazhi, Lamdre and so on to be freely given. But even here, Kunzang Dechen Lingpa stated that while he was able to attend the Rinchen Terzod for free, he never received any instructions on the practices it contained because he could not afford to pay for them. So the perception that Dharma was free or sponsored in Tibet is somewhat true, and also somewhat false. It is more complicated then most people realize.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, December 11th, 2014 at 9:58 PM

Title: Re: Mahayana opinions of Theravada?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

the motivation of the bodhisattva path is infinitely superior to the motivation to become an arhat

Astus said:

By "bodhisattva career" I meant the aeons of walking the path and even delaying buddhahood intentionally. There is a difference between how buddhahood is interpreted in early and late Mahayana, and it is early Mahayana that focused on becoming a bodhisattva, while late Mahayana is focused on attaining buddhahood as soon as possible.

Malcolm wrote:

If you accept that there is such a thing as an "early" or "late" Mahāyāna, I imagine you could contrive such an explanation. The reality is that there are three different kinds of bodhisattva motivations spoken of in the sūtras, king-like, captain-like and shepherd-like. There really is no evidence to suppose that the shepherd-like motivation existed first, and the other two were taught later. The way this is taught in the Mahāyāna itself is that the King-like bodhicitta is for those with average capacity, with the shepherd-like motivation being for those of best capacity.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, December 11th, 2014 at 10:27 PM

Title: Re: Is Dzogchen only accidentally Buddhist?

Content:

Soap-Bubble said:

I believe that this tendency of "pure dzogchen"

Malcolm wrote:

ChNN himself has said many times there is no such thing as "pure Dzogchen."

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, December 11th, 2014 at 11:31 PM

Title: Re: Is Dzogchen only accidentally Buddhist?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

ChNN himself has said many times there is no such thing as "pure Dzogchen."

Soap-Bubble said:

I was making a distinction between the simplified body of practices and the state. Which one do you think ChNN refers to?

Malcolm wrote:

Even the "state", whatever you mean by that, is not "pure" Dzogchen. Buddhahood might be "pure" Dzogchen.

But as long as we are on a path, our Dzogchen is not "pure."

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, December 12th, 2014 at 9:16 PM

Title: Re: Mahayana opinions of Theravada?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The reality is that there are three different kinds of bodhisattva motivations spoken of in the sūtras, king-like, captain-like and shepherd-like. There really is no evidence to suppose that the shepherd-like motivation existed first, and the other two were taught later. The way this is taught in the Mahāyāna itself is that the King-like bodhicitta is for those with average capacity, with the shepherd-like motivation being for those of best capacity.

Astus said:

My knowledge is limited, but I have not yet encountered those three kinds of motivations in East Asian Buddhism, only Tibetan. Could you specify in what sutras, or even shastras (preferably those already translated to English) it is explained?

Malcolm wrote:

They are nicknames for the bodhicittas respectively of the path of accumulation, the seventh bhumi and the eighth as presented in the Sutra-alamkara.

They are very commonly discussed in Tibetan Literature, and the nicknames seem to originate with Gampopa.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, December 12th, 2014 at 9:20 PM

Title: Re: Mahayana opinions of Theravada?

Content:

Astus said:

As I have posted above, the option for non-abiding nirvana (and the trikaya doctrine) is a somewhat later development.

Malcolm wrote:

This is a very rash assertion — you are posting the opinion of one modern scholar as a fact when he himself in the very quote you cite is clearly guessing. This exemplifies exactly what is wrong with modern Buddhology.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, December 12th, 2014 at 9:54 PM

Title: Re: No one will be turned away

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

Interesting.

I just received a Vajrakilaya empowerment from Khenpo Sodargye and at the end it was

announced that he had taken a vow not to receive any offerings on his tour of the States, so no offerings were made.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, I imagine this is because when Khenpo Jigphun came here 1993, he returned to Tibetan with more than \$80,000 and some people criticized him heavily for this.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, December 12th, 2014 at 10:14 PM

Title: Re: Is Dzogchen only accidentally Buddhist?

Content:

Soap-Bubble said:

P.S. One nice argument here was connected to thodgal and how mandalas and deities spontaneously manifest.

Malcolm wrote:

They do not spontaneously manifest — they manifest only with great effort, diligence and understanding. If they spontaneously manifested everyone would see them all the time and without any causes or condition and without any progression or order. But this does not happen, which is why the visions are laid in the order that they are.

Likewise, one only moves through the following progression, first one can see the nirmanakāya, then the sambhogakāya and in the end, dharmakāya -- this is the same whether one is a common Mahāyāna practitioner or a Dzogchen practitioner. The path of Dzogchen is not in reality something other than a Mahāyāna path. It is a Mahāyāna path practiced according to techniques and methods not shared with common Mahāyāna, and so therefore is part of secret mantra, as Dzogchen tantras proclaim again and again. There is no Dzogchen outside of Mahāyāna.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, December 13th, 2014 at 1:06 AM

Title: Re: Mahayana opinions of Theravada?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

This is a very rash assertion — you are posting the opinion of one modern scholar as a fact when he himself in the very quote you cite is clearly guessing. This exemplifies exactly what is wrong with modern Buddhology.

Astus said:

I don't see how it is incorrect what the quote says. Can you find the term in a PP sutra or early Madhyamaka? Just did a quick search for it (無住涅槃) in the Great PP Sutra (大般若波羅蜜多經) and no match. Then I continued and found the followings (Taisho volume, number of texts): 16 (2), 18 (2), 19 (7), 20 (4), 25 (3), 26 (2), 30 (1), 31 (8), 32 (3), 33 (5), 34

(2), 35 (2), 36 (1), 38 (1), 39 (3), 40 (5), 42 (2), 43 (3), 44 (2), 45 (4), 46 (1), 48 (1). Here's a guide to what the various volumes contain:
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Taish%C5%8D_Trip%C3%9ADaka.

Malcolm wrote:

The term is mentioned in the Mahāyānaprasādaprabhāvana

The Āryaśālistambaka-mahāyānasūtraṭīkā by Nāgārjuna, preserved in the bstan 'gyur mentions it twice.

In any case, let us suppose that the technical term "non-abiding nirvana" is first found in the Maitreya corpus. It is irrelevant that term is not found in the Madhyamaka since the treatises of Nāgārjuna are almost wholly focused on faults concerning the view and at this time notion of the Buddha having achieved Buddhahood in the distant past. In the perfection of wisdom sutras and so on the idea of the dharmakāya manifesting an illusory form body to help sentient beings is fully present. For example the PP in 8000 lines states:

The Tathāgata is not seen in the rupakāya. The Tathāgata the dharmatākaya. Son of a good family, dharmatā does not come or go. Son of a good family, likewise, the Tathāgata does not arrive or leave. Son of a good family, for example, an illusionist's host of elephants, horses, chariots or infantry soldiers do not come or go. Son of a good family, in the same way the form of the Tathāgata does not come or go. Such teachings as this are the basis for the term "non-abiding nirvana."

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, December 13th, 2014 at 3:37 AM

Title: Re: Mahayana opinions of Theravada?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Such teachings as this are the basis for the term "non-abiding nirvana."

Astus said:

No question about that, that from one developed the other. My point is rather that first it was the bodhisattva that was perceived as a being possessing the active force to stay in samsara, while buddhas eventually attained parinirvana, although before that they did teach and were superior to bodhisattvas. The Mahaprajnaparamitasāstra says that once a bodhisattva attained irreversibility, he has a choice whether to stay with beings until the end or go for buddhahood. However, if buddhas were superior and could have also stayed with beings, then choosing to remain a bodhisattva is indeed pointless.

Nevertheless, Mahayana has a number of such bodhisattvas who intentionally stick around, although interestingly (or logically) some of them are regarded as buddhas in Vajrayana (e.g. Chenrezig and Kuntuzangpo).

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, Astus, I understood your point and dispute that this is the case.

The shift in bodhicittas account for this. Furthermore, if what you say is the case, how do can you reconcile that with the fact that Śakamuni Buddha in fact attained Buddhahood eons and eons ago? Doesn't the Saddharmapundarika say in fact: Inconceivable tens of billions of eons ago which cannot be measured, I attained supreme awakening, and I have also been explaining the Dharma... I have demonstrated nirvana, describing the method in order to tame sentient beings, but at that time I never passed into nirvana, but have been teaching Dharma here.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, December 13th, 2014 at 9:55 PM

Title: Re: Mahayana opinions of Theravada?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Furthermore, if what you say is the case, how do can you reconcile that with the fact that Śakamuni Buddha in fact attained Buddhahood eons and eons ago?

Astus said:

And the Nirvana Sutra has a similar chapter as well on the Buddha's adamantine body. I don't see why there is a need for reconciliation. It is one of the first examples of transferring the eternal dharmakaya to an eternally active buddha, although it still says that Shakyamuni never goes extinct (nirvana), that is, it is either this shore or the other.

Malcolm wrote:

However, you grandly claimed a few posts ago that non-abiding nirvana was a "late" development. But we see here that the Buddha taught it. So?

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, December 13th, 2014 at 10:08 PM

Title: Re: Why is Oral Sex Considered Sexual Misconduct?

Content:

WuMing said:

I think all of the Tibetan Buddhist schools regard oral and anal sex as inappropriate. This goes back to the Indian Buddhist tradition, e.g. the Abhidharmakosha (not entirely sure anymore about that text), or Ashvaghosha and Atisha. In Tibet one finds it in Gampopa's Jewel Ornament of Liberation which is the Kagyu tradition. In Patrul Rinpoche's book Words of my perfect teacher one can find it as well (Nyingma).

The reason might be that having sex using these inappropriate body parts (mouth or the anus) can only come from desire.

Malcolm wrote:

I think it has more to do with hygiene. Tulku Urgyen was once heard to remark "Why would anyone want to put their mouth there?"

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, December 13th, 2014 at 10:11 PM

Title: Re: No one will be turned away

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, I imagine this is because when Khenpo Jigphun came here 1993, he returned to Tibetan with more than \$80,000 and some people criticized him heavily for this.

dzogchungpa said:

I find that kind of strange, it's not even that much money. Was he criticized for being overly aggressive in soliciting offerings or what?

Malcolm wrote:

He was criticized for coming here just to raise funds. Khenpo Jigphun wound up being the target of a lot of misplaced jealousy in Tibet.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, December 13th, 2014 at 10:55 PM

Title: Re: Which Buddhist tradition has treated women the best?

Content:

Tenso said:

My vote for the most pro woman tradition in Buddhism will go to Japanese PL. I'm reminded of the story when Honen encounters a hooker and teaches her the path of nembutsu who then goes on to dedicate her life to it and attains birth. And this was also in ancient samurai Japan when women had zero rights. Is there any other tradition that can beat that?

Malcolm wrote:

Sure, Yeshe Tsogyal being raped by bandits and converting them to Dharma in the process. The number of realized women and women lineage holders in Tibetan Buddhism far outstrips any other tradition.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, December 14th, 2014 at 12:32 AM

Title: Re: Which Buddhist tradition has treated women the best?

Content:

Tenso said:

My vote for the most pro woman tradition in Buddhism will go to Japanese PL. I'm reminded of the story when Honen encounters a hooker and teaches her the path of nembutsu who then goes on to dedicate her life to it and attains birth. And this was also in ancient samurai Japan when women had zero rights. Is there any other tradition that can beat that?

Malcolm wrote:

Sure, Yeshe Tsogyal being raped by bandits and converting them to Dharma in the process. The number of realized women and women lineage holders in Tibetan Buddhism far outstrips any other tradition.

Loren said:

Nyingma or all the traditions?

Malcolm wrote:

I don't know about Gelug or Kagyu, but there have been many outstanding women masters in both Sakya and Nyingma.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, December 14th, 2014 at 12:42 AM

Title: Re: Mahayana opinions of Theravada?

Content:

daverupa said:

Instead of seeing texts as historical documents with a context in the spread and development of Buddhism from the historical Buddha, Mahayana takes the texts as factually describing a trans-historical source that encapsulates the historical Buddha within a different context that relativizes history into a broader cosmological scheme.

Malcolm wrote:

"History" is a uniquely western concept. It is pretty useless for understanding Buddhadharma.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, December 14th, 2014 at 1:58 AM

Title: Re: Mahayana opinions of Theravada?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

"History" is a uniquely western concept.

daverupa said:

Reams of Chinese texts demonstrate the opposite.

It is pretty useless for understanding Buddhadharma.

History is addressed by all who approach the Buddhadharma; there are various approaches to history, however, a text-critical approach being one. The Mahayana approach is different; but, history is not Western, and narratives about the past

permeate Mahayana, put to great effect. It is hardly without use here.

Malcolm wrote:

The idea that accounts of the past ineluctably fix facts in time in a material way is based on a uniquely Western point of view. That perspective really is not found in Indian and Tibetan thinking. I can't speak to Chinese culture, but I rather doubt it. Annals are not history, in the way in which we now understand the term and use it. When we say something is "historical", we mean that "it happened just that way."

Text critical approaches don't tell us nearly as much you imagine.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, December 14th, 2014 at 9:24 PM

Title: Re: Which Buddhist tradition has treated women the best?

Content:

rory said:

So are any women the heads or hold top positions in either Sakya or Nyingma. I pointed out that in modern Japan there is equal opportunity at the entry running a temple level, but once it comes to top power positions, it's all male.

Malcolm wrote:

HE Jetsun Kusho is the most senior women in Tibetan Buddhism.

rory said:

H.E. Sakya Jetsun Chimey Luding Rinpoche, the highest and most thoroughly trained female Buddhist teacher in the West, was born into the Drolma Podrang, or Tara Palace of the Sakya Khon family in 1938, the year of the earth tiger. She began her dharma studies at the age of five. His Holiness Sakya Trizin was born when she was six years old. According to the tradition in her family, she took novice ordination when she was "old enough to scare crows away" at the age of seven. When she was ten years old, she made her first retreat. She meditated on the form of Vajrapani known as Bhutadamara, and in one month completed one million recitations of the short mantra, HUM VAJRA PHAT, and one hundred thousand recitations of the long mantra. In her eleventh year, her father, Kunga Rinchen, sent her on her first teaching assignment. She spent the fourth through the tenth Tibetan months among the nomads on the northern plains of Tibet, giving transmissions and teachings on Phowa, or transference of consciousness, as well as conducting tormas offerings, performing lhasang, or incense offerings, and giving other teachings and empowerments. The third woman in the history of Tibet to have transmitted the Lam Dre (the Path and Fruit) teachings, a fully accomplished guru and lineage holder, she is known for her teachings on Vajrayogini and is considered an emanation of that yidam of enlightened feminine energy.

Malcolm wrote:

http://www.sakya-retreat.net/sakya_he.html

There are very few Sakya lineage holders. She is one of them. Her younger brother has two sons, her own son and brother, as well as her brother in law, of her cousin, HH Dagchen Rinpoche, and a couple of the grandchildren are the others.

Of course she has no say or interest in the monastic community, because she is a layperson. She has been acting as a lineage holder in the Sakya school since she was a teenager and gave the Lamdre teachings at Sakya.

The Sakyas have always trained promising young women to be lineage holders. There have been many such women in the history of the Sakya School right down to Drogmi Lotsawa's own disciples in the 11th century.

There is the Shugseb lineage. This is a women's lineage connected with the Longchen Nyinthag once headed by Shugseb Jetsunma:

She was nominally connected with the Drugpa Kagyus, but Shugseb is considered an independent lineage.

Rory said:

She founded the Shugseb nunnery, which is South west of Lhasa. There she established a firm body of disciples, lineage of teachings. She also encouraged the women to become ordained and be accomplished and mastered in Dzogchen realization. Her firm and main seat Shugseb and its nuns became a great example for all the female practitioners.

Malcolm wrote:

<http://www.drukpa-nuns.org/index.php/shugseb-jetsun>

There is also Khandro Rinpoche:

Rory said:

Her Eminence Mindrolling Jetsün Khandro Rinpoche was born as the eldest daughter of Kyabje Mindrolling Trichen Gyurme Künzang Wangyal, the 11th throne holder of the renowned Mindrolling lineage, one of the six main Nyingma lineages of Tibetan Buddhism. Throughout its history, some of the greatest masters of their time have been born within the Mindrolling lineage including the unique lineage of female masters known as the Jetsünma line, a remarkable Mindrolling tradition.

Malcolm wrote:

<http://www.khandrorinpoche.org/jetsun-khandro-rinpoche/biography/>

There are others too.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, December 15th, 2014 at 10:14 PM

Title: Re: the lesser yogi and the greater yogi

Content:

Astus said:

So, the chapter actually tells us that on the one hand the Buddha eternally abides in no birth, that is the ultimate reality that can be seen by anyone who practises correctly. On the other hand, the longevity is the result of the merit from the bodhisattva cultivation that eventually expires. Or, the two sides actually stand for the same, that is, suchness as the Buddha's true nature.

Malcolm wrote:

What is nirvana actually? It is the cessation of afflictions that cause rebirth in the three realms.

Since the merit cultivated on the bodhisattva path is limitless, its effects will be limitless. Or are you saying there is some limit to objectless dedications and so on that is not mentioned in the sūtras.

In short, it is very clear that in Mahāyāna the nirvana enjoyed by the Buddha does not entail the absolute cessation of his continuum. Further, there are the five certainties of the Sambhogakāya, and in terms of the two rūpakāya, the Sambhogakāya is definitive, whereas the nirmanakāya shows up here and there like the illusion of an illusionist.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, December 16th, 2014 at 2:49 AM

Title: Re: the lesser yogi and the greater yogi

Content:

Astus said:

Where this discussion has started was that I have stated that early Mahayana favoured staying a bodhisattva

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, but you have no proof for this, indeed, no proof that there is an "early" Mahāyāna when it comes to sūtras. The term "non-abiding nirvana" does not exist in sūtras, true, but it is a concept used to explain how nirvana explained in Mahāyāna sutras is different than Hinayāna nirvana.

Astus said:

and one of the reasons for that was the lack of the concept of non-abiding nirvana of buddhas.

Malcolm wrote:

Which I showed exists in the sutras such as the Lotus and so on, not merely in the Maitreyan corpus.

The criticism of Hinayanist nirvana-as-total-cessation is present in Mahāyāna everywhere.

Astus said:

Once buddhas got the same active position as bodhisattvas, the goal has moved to attaining buddhahood.

Malcolm wrote:

Since when were Buddhas ever inactive in Mahāyāna?

Astus said:

Then almost everyone started to regard the bodhisattva path too long and arduous and various means to attain buddhahood swiftly occurred.

Malcolm wrote:

This is not what happened at all. No matter which Mahāyāna path one follows, one still has to gather the two accumulations via the bodhisattva path.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, December 16th, 2014 at 9:20 PM

Title: Re: the lesser yogi and the greater yogi

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, but you have no proof for this, indeed, no proof that there is an "early" Mahāyāna when it comes to sūtras. The term "non-abiding nirvana" does not exist in sūtras, true, but it is a concept used to explain how nirvana explained in Mahāyāna sutras is different than Hinayāna nirvana.

TRC said:

Here we have nirvana which is beyond all concepts and you're dividing it up into the nirvana of Hinayana and the nirvana of Mahayana. For real ... dividing up the indivisible? Do you not see the absurdity of this line of reasoning in regards to Dharma?

Malcolm wrote:

Very simply put, Mahāyāna regards nirvana as an extreme to be avoided. Thus the way nirvana is explained by the Buddha in Mahāyāna is markedly different than the way he explained it to śravakas. Therefore, the nirvana explained in Mahāyāna sutras, an extreme to be avoided, is different than the nirvana explained in the Agamas and Nikāyas, where it is presented as the ultimate desiderata.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, December 16th, 2014 at 11:44 PM

Title: Re: the lesser yogi and the greater yogi

Content:

TRC said:

Very simply put, Mahāyāna regards nirvana as an extreme to be avoided. Thus the way nirvana is explained by the Buddha in Mahāyāna is markedly different than the way he explained it to śrāvakas. Therefore, the nirvana explained in Mahāyāna sutras, an extreme to be avoided, is different than the nirvana explained in the Agamas and Nikāyas, where it is presented as the ultimate desiderata.

Clarence said:

Are there any other differences between Mahayana and Shrivakayana in how they view Nirvana besides whether or not it is a desirable result? Do their definitions of Nirvana differ or just the way they view "it"?

Malcolm wrote:

Differing definitions of Nirvana exist among various śrāvaka schools, as well as between Mahāyāna and śrāvakas in general. Madhyamaka, for example, maintains that nirvana is emptiness.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, December 17th, 2014 at 1:26 AM

Title: Re: How do defilements etc originate from primordial purity

Content:

jules said:

how do ignorance, defilements, adventitious stains, bad karma etc arise from primordial purity. it seems illogical.

Malcolm wrote:

It is fairly straightforward and logical — though the mind is primordially pure, when it does not recognize its own primordial purity it becomes entrapped in duality of self and other, and then the afflictions, karma and so on ensue.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, December 17th, 2014 at 2:16 AM

Title: Re: How do defilements etc originate from primordial purity

Content:

jules said:

ok so the question would then be how does the non-recognition come about from pure awareness?

Malcolm wrote:

Initially this awareness is not self-aware. This is all very carefully explained in the explanation of the basis in Dzogchen. But you need to learn this from a teacher in the proper way.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, December 17th, 2014 at 6:58 AM

Title: Re: the lesser yogi and the greater yogi

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Very simply put, Mahāyāna regards nirvana as an extreme to be avoided. Thus the way nirvana is explained by the Buddha in Mahāyāna is markedly different than the way he explained it to śravakas. Therefore, the nirvana explained in Mahāyāna sutras, an extreme to be avoided, is different than the nirvana explained in the Āgamas and Nikāyas, where it is presented as the ultimate desiderata.

Dan74 said:

I've never come across Nirvana described as 'an extreme to be avoided', Malcolm. Could you share some relevant sutra quotes please?

Malcolm wrote:

Āryaṣṭadaśasahasrika-prajñāpāramitā-nāma-mahāyāna-sūtra:

...and never remain in either samsara or nirvana

Asanga remarks in the Mahāyānasamgraha.

"Totally abandoning the conceptuality of a bodhisattva who has not seen the truth, totally abandoning both extremes of samsara and nirvana, totally abandoning the apprehension that it is sufficient merely to abandon the obscuration of affliction..."

Dan74 said:

I remember the sravaka's or arahat's attainments described in these terms, as ultimate quiescence and not the true Nirvana, but the issue here AFAICT is

1. do these descriptions accurately represent the Theravada or Pali Canon position?
2. is this the description of Mahayana Nirvana or is there another notion of Nirvana in the Mahayana?

Malcolm wrote:

It is, when a Buddha experiences parinirvana, according to that Hinayāna schools, that's it for Buddha.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, December 17th, 2014 at 8:21 AM

Title: Re: the lesser yogi and the greater yogi

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Very simply put, Mahāyāna regards nirvana as an extreme to be avoided.

TRC said:

So nirvana is an extreme to be avoided? Why would Zhiyi be saying this then:

“As for the dharma of nirvāṇa, there are many paths of entry into it. However, if we discuss those which are crucially essential, they do not go beyond the two dharmas of calming and insight.”

Meditation Essentials by Kalavinka Press

Going by this and other conflicting and self-contradicting opinions I've read, it seems to me Mahayana doesn't really have a clear position about nirvana, and yet here it is dispensing its ill-informed definitions of what the Buddha described as nirvana in the early discourses.

Malcolm wrote:

Nirvana is something to be attained, in the sense that of course all afflictions should be ultimately eradicated (this occurs at the seventh bhumi), it is however not a state in which a bodhisattva should remain, and thus it is also an extreme to be avoided, as the Buddha points out in the Prajñāpāramita sutras and as Asanga also points out in the Mahāyānasamgraha. The Ārya-mahābherihārakapariṣvarta-nāma-mahāyāna-sūtra states:

"Kāśyapa, apart from the present intentional words are "parinirvana of the tathāgata", the tathāgata is permanent, stable, peaceful, eternal and is not annihilated even in parinirvana...though to some he shows the parinirvana he is not annihilated."

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, December 17th, 2014 at 10:53 AM

Title: Re: the lesser yogi and the greater yogi

Content:

TRC said:

Now you mention the Prajñāpāramitas. It seems to me, at least from my reading of the Heart Sutra, that it has a very fundamental and gross misinterpretation and misrepresentation of the awakening of the arahant. That is, it is evident that Avalokiteśvara proceeds to lecture Sariputra on the emptiness of the aggregates.

Malcolm wrote:

I assume you are referring to the various statements in Mahayāna that śrāvakas do not realize emptiness of phenomena. Indeed, the Buddha states in the Lankāvatara sūtra: Mahāmati, also others rouse a mind that wishes for nirvana having perceived that all things depend on a cause. However, Mahāmati, because they do not perceive the selflessness in phenomena [for them] there is no freedom.

And:

Mahāmati, because liberation has a single taste, the abandonment of the obscuration of affliction of pratyekabuddhas and śrāvakas might not be a difference, but they do not abandon the knowledge obscuration. The knowledge obscuration is purified through the difference of seeing the selflessness in phenomena.

Now then, on the other hand, the Buddha is not at fault here, because as Candrakīrti famously states in his auto-commentary on the Madhyamakāvatāra:

Someone might think, "If the selflessness of phenomena is taught in śrāvakayāna, the teaching of Mahāyāna would be pointless." That line of thought should be understood to contradict reason and citation. The selflessness in phenomena is not the only Mahāyana teaching. If it is asked why, there are the bodhisattva stages, the perfections, aspirations, great compassion and so on, as well complete dedication, the two accumulations and the dharmatā of inconceivability, As it is said in the Ratnavali:

The aspirations of bodhicitta
and the total dedication of practice
is not explained in the śrāvakayāna,
so where will bodhisattvas [be explained]?
The topic of the bodhisattva practice
are not explained in [their] sūtras,
but are explained in the Mahāyāna sūtras.
Therefore, they are upheld by the wise.

In order to clarify the selflessness of phenomena it is also reasonable that it is a teaching of Mahāyāna because it is held that it is extensively explained. The selflessness of phenomena is only briefly indicated in the śrāvakayāna. As the Ācārya said:

You have said that there is no freedom
without realizing signlessness;
therefore, you have taught that fully
in the Mahāyāna.

One can object, "But Candra says the selflessness in phenomena is taught the śrāvaka canon." Indeed he does say this, but I must point out that not even the names "selfness of persons" and "selfless of phenomena" are ever heard in śrāvakayāna commentarial texts. Who has ever heard of something that can be understood without it being given a name? The fact that these two emptinesses are not identified in the commentarial literature of the śrāvaka canon is sufficient evidence to show that even the idea of two-fold emptiness is completely foreign to their understanding of Dharma. If they cannot even name it, how can they realize it? It is like assuming that someone will arrive at a destination they have never heard of, which is not on any map, and has no identifying features, and to which they have no intent to go — in short, even if they arrive in such a place they will not recognize it as a destination at all and will continue to move on since they are not looking for such a place to begin with.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, December 17th, 2014 at 9:31 PM

Title: Re: the lesser yogi and the greater yogi

Content:

TRC said:

Still perpetuating the myth I see. Firstly though, you still have not addressed the quote from the Heart Sutra that refers specifically to the aggregates and consequently the falsehood it depicts of an arahant's realisation. Secondly, as has already been quoted by a more balanced Mahayana practitioner in this thread, it is quite evident that emptiness of all phenomena is penetrated and understood in the early discourses. In fact it goes to heart of the Madhyamika view, that of the middle way between existence and non-existence.

Malcolm wrote:

The Buddha's teachings are one thing, what śrāvakas realize is another.

TRC said:

So here it is again:

"By & large, Kaccayana, this world is supported by (takes as its object) a polarity, that of existence & non-existence. But when one sees the origination of the world as it actually is with right discernment, 'non-existence' with reference to the world does not occur to one. When one sees the cessation of the world as it actually is with right discernment, 'existence' with reference to the world does not occur to one."

See, this is pointing directly to all phenomena ("the world") as empty. It's extremely explicit, it doesn't come more direct!

Malcolm wrote:

This was addressed already by a previous citation of the Buddha:

Mahāmati, also others rouse a mind that wishes for nirvana having perceived that all things depend on a cause. However, Mahāmati, because they do not perceive the selflessness in phenomena [for them] there is no freedom.

TRC said:

And here is the Buddha now pointing directly to his doctrine (not Nagarjuna's – his MMK was a commentary on the Buddha's already established understanding of emptiness) on which he's realisation of the middle way is founded on, which is of course no less than dependent arising.

Malcolm wrote:

No one is questioning the Buddha's realization.

TRC said:

So from the same <http://www.accesstoinsight.org/tipitaka/sn/sn12/sn12.015.than.html> we have:

"'Everything exists': That is one extreme. 'Everything doesn't exist': That is a second extreme. Avoiding these two extremes, the Tathagata teaches the Dhamma via the

middle: From ignorance as a requisite condition come fabrications. From fabrications as a requisite condition comes consciousness. From consciousness as a requisite condition comes name-&-form. From name-&-form as a requisite condition come the six sense media. From the six sense media as a requisite condition comes contact. From contact as a requisite condition comes feeling ...”

Malcolm wrote:

Again:

Mahāmati, also others rouse a mind that wishes for nirvana having perceived that all things depend on a cause. However, Mahāmati, because they do not perceive the selflessness in phenomena [for them] there is no freedom.

TRC said:

So basically who cares about the commentarial texts when you have a good grasp of the early discourses? It's all there (well for those who want to see at least), why would you rely on second-hand interpretations?

Malcolm wrote:

It is clear that the śrāvakas did not understand selflessness of phenomena from Buddha's teachings in the Nikayas/Agamas.

TRC said:

Also, you still haven't addressed whether Zhiyi goes on to warn of getting stuck on the seventh bhumi, nirvana. Perhaps you don't know?

Malcolm wrote:

I have not read the text in question. I generally confine myself to studying Indian texts and their Tibetan commentaries.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, December 17th, 2014 at 10:04 PM

Title: Re: the lesser yogi and the greater yogi

Content:

TRC said:

However, the interesting point of why Sariputra is the butt of the joke here is actually based on a misapprehension, and this is the misunderstanding that Sariputra was the author of the Abhidharma, in which the Heart Sutra is clearly critiquing. Of course the Abhidharma was a later addition and not reflective of the early suttas and at times quite at odds with them (dharma's having substantial existence, etc). So this again is an example how prejudices can become reinforced over time and then become as if fact, based on misapprehensions.

Malcolm wrote:

In the Sarvastivāda, the dominant intellectual tradition in Indian Buddhism, Śariputra is indeed the author of some of the seven seminal Abhidharma texts.

Again, in the Mahāyāna sūtra, the Buddha indicates that he did not teach everything fully, not that what he taught in those śrāvaka sutras was false.

TRC said:

As you correctly point out LastLegend, “of course Sariputra understood”, there is no doubt. However, others studying the Heart Sutra obviously read this misunderstanding into it, as we can see here by Malcolm’s response.

Malcolm wrote:

Are you familiar with the Vimalakīrti Nirdeśa sūtra? If so, you should be really offended, since you seem to enjoy taking offense at Mahāyāna.

TRC said:

While we are on the subject of the heart Sutra, who is considered to be the author?

Malcolm wrote:

Why, the Buddha, of course. It is through his entering samadhi that Avalokiteśvara was empowered to speak on his behalf.

TRC said:

Also, I’m still waiting a sound rebuttal explaining how the Kaccayanagotta Sutta is not directly pointing to the emptiness of all phenomena, that practitioners of early Buddhism aren’t supposed to be able to realise.

Malcolm wrote:

It is a teaching on dependent origination, not directly about emptiness. And since the dependent origination being discussed is the dependent origination of a person's continuum, explicitly it only concerns the selflessness of persons and not the selflessness of phenomena. It primarily concerns the notion of the permanence or annihilation of the self, two extremes the world is addicted to. This is why the preface to the famous passage states:

By & large, Kaccayana, this world is in bondage to attachments, clingings (sustenances), & biases. But one such as this does not get involved with or cling to these attachments, clingings, fixations of awareness, biases, or obsessions; nor is he resolved on 'my self.' He has no uncertainty or doubt that just stress, when arising, is arising; stress, when passing away, is passing away. In this, his knowledge is independent of others. It's to this extent, Kaccayana, that there is right view.

In fact the passage is cited by Nāgārjuna in the chapter 15 of the MMK, his take down of Sarvastivāda substantialism, the notion that underneath appearances there is a prakṛti, an unchanging nature which never changes, leading to the doctrine that all effects exist in their causes because of their misunderstanding of the Buddha's statement "everything exists in the three times."

The idea that this passage points to the heart of Madhyamaka is an idea advanced primarily by David Kalupahana. But we have very good reason to disregard Kalupahana's understanding because he completely disregarded Buddhapaṇita and Candarākīrti's identification of which passages were stated by the opponent and which passages were

to be considered Nāgārjuna's.

This passage is cited by Nāgārjuna because it cannot be rejected by his śrāvaka opponents, not because it is an end all be all statement that is the heart of Madhyamaka. There are many more salient passages in Mahāyāna sūtras which are much more explicit than this passage detailing the "middle way." He cites it because both schools hold it to be the Buddhavacana, and that is all.

In my opinion, your view of the the śrāvaka canon has been completely influenced by Madhyamaka [this is very common these days, since the Pali commentarial literature totally lacks any discussions of profound emptiness]. It is a pity you don't recognize that your own understanding of the śrāvaka canon actually comes from Mahāyāna.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, December 18th, 2014 at 3:05 AM

Title: Re: the lesser yogi and the greater yogi

Content:

Mkoll said:

Essentially, to answer the question posed by the OP in the subject of the first post, the Mahayana opinion of Theravada is that it is not the complete teaching of the Buddha.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, this point of view is stated quite unequivocally by Nāgārjuna in the Ratnavali.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, December 20th, 2014 at 2:56 AM

Title: Re: the lesser yogi and the greater yogi

Content:

Dan74 said:

As I recall the great spat between yourself and several Zen teachers at E-Sangha came about initially due to their position on non-permanent nirvana, on nirvana as an extreme, are you now upholding the view you were previously fighting against? Or have I misunderstood?

Malcolm wrote:

You misunderstood. They were talking about a temporary nirvana.

And that is not what the argument was about, actually. The argument was "are Zen priests the equivalent of bhikṣus?" The reason is that Zen priests seem to feel they are entitled to all the privileges and recognitions to which a bhikṣu is entitled. My point of view was and is that they are lay bodhisattvas.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, December 20th, 2014 at 3:09 AM

Title: Re: the lesser yogi and the greater yogi

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The term "non-abiding nirvana" does not exist in sūtras, true, but it is a concept used to explain how nirvana explained in Mahāyāna sutras is different than Hinayāna nirvana.

...

Which I showed exists in the sutras such as the Lotus and so on, not merely in the Maitreyan corpus.

Astus said:

The term is not in the early sutras and it is used in Yogacara works to explain the state of the buddhas. That is, before Asanga there was no such explanation for what the sutras contain, and the sutras themselves don't actually specify.

Malcolm wrote:

Of course they do.

Astus said:

The criticism of Hinayanist nirvana-as-total-cessation is present in Mahāyāna everywhere.

Yes. And the idea of total cessation is rejected even in the Nikayas, not only in Mahayana sutras. It is actually among the set of questions not answered by the Buddha.

Malcolm wrote:

Nevertheless, it is prevalent in many śrāvaka texts. The criticism leveled by Mahāyāna are not the words of the Buddha, but rather the teachings and understanding of his śrāvaka disciples. Please understand this distinction.

Astus said:

Since when were Buddhas ever inactive in Mahāyāna?

They do talk of parinirvana, and what people should do after the Buddha's demise, how stupas should be revered, etc. What sutras do you know that discuss the buddhas activities after their parinirvana? Besides the Lotus Sutra that does not actually say that as mentioned above already.

Malcolm wrote:

The Lankāvatara, for example, which clear indicates that the actual Buddha is the sambhogakāya, and the nirmanakāya appears here just for show.

Astus said:

This is not what happened at all. No matter which Mahāyāna path one follows, one still has to gather the two accumulations via the bodhisattva path.

I see a significant difference between ideas that one should stay a bodhisattva indefinitely and that one can reach buddhahood even in this life. I don't see early Mahayana sutras emphasising that one should become a buddha, rather they talk about being a proper non-returning bodhisattva, someone who realises that there is actually nothing to attain, thus could become a buddha any time but chooses not to. Such a choice is nonsense if a buddha is simply a better bodhisattva.

Malcolm wrote:

[/quote]

Bodhisattvas vow to become Buddhas to teach others. That is the best way to assist sentient beings. To do that, they embark on a career that lasts eons in order to gather the merit and wisdom necessary to do this. This is all detailed very explicitly in the Ratnavali, chapter three.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, December 20th, 2014 at 10:15 PM

Title: Re: Frugal living

Content:

Tenso said:

Many people here as Buddhists will agree that living a frugal life is the way to go. The thing is that there are many people who spend their entire lives being frugal and end up being very miserable in old age, then they say they could of done this or that in their younger days.

My question is, is it better to have a steady work life and being able to do things one will enjoy or is it better to be a frugal cheap Buddhist who has never worked much in their lives and end up being unsatisfied wishing they could of made more money allowing them to enjoy their lives more? Not talking about having enough money to afford material possessions but having enough to travel the world, experience new and different things etc.

Malcolm wrote:

The Buddha himself does not recommend this for lay people. Quite the opposite, he encouraged lay people to work hard and be prosperous. A wealthy lay Sangha is a Sangha that can support the Dharma.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, December 23rd, 2014 at 9:42 PM

Title: Re: Dakini question

Content:

drodul said:

To which Buddha family does Sengdongma, the Lion-faced Dakini, belong?

Malcolm wrote:
Akṣobhya family.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Friday, December 26th, 2014 at 9:57 PM
Title: Re: Karma Fruit of Worldwide Abortions
Content:
Will said:

Kim, Most parts of the buddhadharma I know nothing about, so I am hoping that some deep practitioner will know of some guru or teaching that goes beyond Vasubandhu's mainly individual understanding.

Malcolm wrote:
Vasubandhu does describe collective karma in two ways, one he mentions the example of a soldier. If a group of one hundred soldiers kills a person, everyone on is that group bears the weight of the action times the number of people who participated in it, or even approved of it.

Secondly, an example of collective karma is our world. It came about because we all have similar actions, leading to not only the formation of this world, but our birth upon it.

"The variety of the world comes from action."

Thus, the action of killing, abortion being killing, leads to shortened lives, etc.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Saturday, December 27th, 2014 at 12:03 AM
Title: Re: Karma Fruit of Worldwide Abortions
Content:
Sherab Dorje said:
For all?

Malcolm wrote:
I didn't say that. What I am pointing out is that fact that everyone who agrees with abortion and supports it bears the karma of all the abortions that have ever been performed during their lifetime, and this leads them to have shortened lives, and so on. I don't think it is a very strong karma, honestly, because most people have sincere regrets about it, and very few people feel satisfaction from the action.

But if you are opposed to abortion, then you are free from this consequence, even weak ones.

Collective ripening only befalls those who have engaged in similar actions.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, December 27th, 2014 at 8:02 AM

Title: Re: "Did Machik Really Teach Chod?" by Sarah Harding

Content:

conebeckham said:

there's no contradiction here between the question she poses and the genuine "authenticity" of the Lujin practice.

Jikan said:

Agreed completely, and I hope I didn't imply otherwise in my posts in this thread.

Malcolm wrote:

You are all forgetting that so called lus sbyin, aka kusuli accumulation offering, has its roots in the Hevajra Tantra:

Having given the gift of the body
afterwards begin conduct.

The practice was already widespread. Machilk's tradition merely "Tibetanized" it with nice melodies and a big drum.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, December 27th, 2014 at 9:49 PM

Title: Lojong: A Vajrayana Practice

Content:

Johnny Dangerous said:

I've even read Mahayana Lojong trainings - a number of em in fact...which involve visualization of sectioning one's body, turning it into Nectar etc...It seems to be common enough. One in particular I can remember is in the context of Tonglen, but the visualization is not so far off from Chod or the Kusulis accumulation near as I can remember, just with no yidam involved.

Malcolm wrote:

blo sbyong is actually mixed with Vajrayāna.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, December 27th, 2014 at 9:59 PM

Title: Re: Recognising reincarnations

Content:

kirtu said:

In general only high lamas give empowerments in Sakya. However I know of one Sakya khenpo in the US who is not the head of a lineage who does in fact give empowerments as well as a Sakya lama (a khenpo) in Europe who also gives empowerments. But

basically in Sakya almost all the time only high lamas (basically certain members of the Khon family or lineage heads of the Ngor or Tsar lineages) give empowerments. In other words Sakya khenpos do not generally give empowerments.

Malcolm wrote:

And one should remember that the khenpos of Ngor are all from four traditional families, Luding, Thartse, Phande and one other whose name escapes me. Lama Kunga from SF is from the Thartse branch.

The khenpos of Tshar lineage also usually do give empowerments, but then there is also the Chogye Trichen incarnations as well as the Zimwok incarnations.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, December 27th, 2014 at 10:13 PM

Title: Re: Trekchod

Content:

Saoshun said:

Can someone make hierarchy or list of trekchod practices?

Malcolm wrote:

There is only one practice, the four cho zhags.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, December 28th, 2014 at 9:06 PM

Title: Re: Karma Fruit of Worldwide Abortions

Content:

Berry said:

So are you saying that if I sympathise with another woman having an abortion after she was beaten and raped by someone who murdered her parents, that I will "bear the karma of all the abortions that have ever been performed during their lifetime, and this leads them to have shortened lives, and so on " i.e. my lifetime ?

Malcolm wrote:

Sympathizing with someone for being raped and beaten is one thing. Taking a human life is another. If you approve of an abortion in only a special case, than you only bear the karma of that special case, and in this case it is also a weak karma, since it will likely be attended with regret and so, which prevents it from being a perfect karma.

Berry said:

That appears to be rather a mistaken and speculative viewpoint when reading what the Buddha had to say in this sutta which was already mentioned earlier in the topic:

Malcolm wrote:

The workings of karma are explained in many sutras.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, December 28th, 2014 at 10:14 PM

Title: Re: Karma Fruit of Worldwide Abortions

Content:

Dan74 said:

This discussion may be of interest too, seeing that it takes a more compassion and less rigid position than many of the posts here seem to imply:

....

But then again, it may be more satisfying to just stick to our soapboxes...

Malcolm wrote:

First we have to decide whether abortion is himsa or ahimsa. Abortion can hardly be called ahimsa, can it? In fact abortion is the deliberate harming of one sentient being by another, in this case the harming of a child by its mother.

Every sentient is deserving of the same level of compassion no matter what they have done or what class of sentient being they are.

On the other hand, Mahāyāna ethics are more important than rigid adherence to the letter of a vow. But to undertake an action on the basis of Mahāyāna ethics, self-interest has to be absolutely absent from one's thinking.

Because abortion is himsa, harming a sentient being, it cannot be condoned by those who follow Buddhadharma in general. On the other hand, there are always special cases where there may be greater harm in prohibiting an abortion than permitting one, such as examples of severe birth defects, threat to the life of the mother and so on, impregnation through rape, incest, and so on.

So, in general, the position of Buddhadharma is that abortion is harming another sentient being as well as taking life. In general it is not only a serious breach of pratimokṣa vows to have an abortion or to encourage someone to have an abortion (and in the case of monk, results in a defeat), but it is also serious bodhisattva downfall to either have an abortion or to encourage someone to have an abortion apart from special instances.

On the other hand, there is the political fact of separation of church and state, which is necessary in any functional so-called "democracy". Though as a follower of Buddhadharma, I am personally opposed to abortion, I am also opposed to legislating religious doctrines into law. So it is something I leave to the courts and legislature to decide as a matter of social policy.

And finally, just because we followers of Buddhadharma are opposed to abortion in a general way does not mean we should adopt the angry and confrontational rhetoric of the "pro-life" movement. We should have compassion for everyone, since that's what we Mahayanis aim to do, i.e have impartial compassion for all sentient beings.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, December 29th, 2014 at 3:17 AM

Title: Re: "Did Machik Really Teach Chod?" by Sarah Harding

Content:

sherabpa said:

blo sbyong is actually mixed with Vajrayāna.

Interesting claim; there are arguably some vajrayana affinities in the 7 points of mind training with vajrayana, but apart from that, I don't see anything in Geshe Langthang's lojong or the Sakya Parting from the Four Attachments. Even in the don bdun ma, there is no initiation or anything of that nature. Could you elaborate?

Malcolm wrote:

The seven points of mind training require Guru Yoga as a preliminary, etc. The instructions generally assume that one is practitioner of Secret Mantra.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, December 29th, 2014 at 10:42 PM

Title: Re: Lojong: A Vajrayana Practice

Content:

Jikan said:

If so, then what to make of Norman Fischer's approach to lojong?

<http://www.shambhala.com/training-in-compassion.html>

or rather, more generally, the penetration of this practice outside of a Vajrayana context? Is it still the same practice, or...?

Malcolm wrote:

As with everything, it is more effective when it is combined with guru yoga and so, the experience arise more rapidly and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, December 30th, 2014 at 12:10 AM

Title: Re: Is Dzogchen only accidentally Buddhist?

Content:

Saoshun said:

Shunyata concept I think is before buddhism.

Malcolm wrote:
No.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Tuesday, December 30th, 2014 at 3:13 AM
Title: Re: Lojong: A Vajrayana Practice
Content:
Malcolm wrote:

The seven points of mind training require Guru Yoga as a preliminary, etc. The instructions generally assume that one is practitioner of Secret Mantra.

Johnny Dangerous said:
I didn't realize this. I see Lojong taught at what seems to be a sutra level of instruction though..isn't that also the case?

Malcolm wrote:
Well, take this from Gyalsey Thogme's famed commentary of the seven point's of mind training:
First, the preparation: having started with going for refuge and generating bodhicitta, offer supplications to one's deity and Guru...
And:
The supreme method is endowed with four yogas.
First, the yoga of gathering accumulations is when suffering arises for oneself: if suffering arises for oneself, since the thought arises "I will be glad if this suffering does not exist", at that time if you do not wish suffering and wish for happiness, think "This is a sign of breaking the cause of merit." One must make offerings to the three jewels, praise the Sangha, offer tormas to elemental spirits, and so on, in brief, having made an effort to gather accumulations through the three doors of body, speech and mind, go for refuge and create bodhicitta, offering mandalas to the Guru and the Three Jewels and so with fervor.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Thursday, January 1st, 2015 at 9:42 PM
Title: Re: Buddhism's view on developmental disabilities
Content:
Zhen Li said:

Actually, the Buddha argued that it is well known by the world that there are simply biological causes for some things.

It is an incorrect view to hold everything to be the result of karma. Only in a round about metaphorical way can you say everything is a result of karma. Now we don't rely upon theories of bile, but the principle of a biological (non-intentional) cause for diseases is the same.

Sivaka Sutta said:

There are cases where some feelings arise based on bile [i.e., diseases and pains that come from a malfunction of the gall bladder]. You yourself should know how some feelings arise based on bile. Even the world is agreed on how some feelings arise based on bile. So any brahmans & contemplatives who are of the doctrine & view that whatever an individual feels — pleasure, pain, neither-pleasure-nor-pain — is entirely caused by what was done before — slip past what they themselves know, slip past what is agreed on by the world. Therefore I say that those brahmans & contemplatives are wrong. ...

Bile, phlegm, wind, a combination,
Season, uneven, harsh treatment,
and through the result of kamma as the eighth.

Malcolm wrote:

And the cause of vata, pitta and kapha respectively are rāga, dveśa and moha. Therefore, the indirect causes of all disease are the three afflictions. Also the three dośas in turn are the condition for the arising of three kleśas.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, January 1st, 2015 at 10:16 PM

Title: Re: Buddhism's view on developmental disabilities

Content:

Lazy_eye said:

Seems to me that any statement to the effect that "this disability was caused by non-virtuous conduct" (or other specific cause) clearly represents an attempt to delineate the precise workings of kamma, something only a Buddha would know.

Malcolm wrote:

The Karmavibhanga states:

Brahmin child, there is karma that results in a short life. There is karma that results in a long life. There is karma that results in many illnesses. There is karma that results in few illnesses. There is karma that results in an unattractiveness of complexion. There is karma that results in beauty.

There are many such teachings where the Buddha indicates that karma is involved in directly involved in illnesses, some we would term "genetic" illnesses. The Buddha continues:

In that respect, if it is asked what are the karmas resulting in many illnesses, there are ten factors that result in many illnesses: striking out with fists and palms etc.; believing it is proper to strike out with fists, palms, etc.; praising striking out with fists and palms, etc.; inflicting pain on one's father or mother; inflicting pain on an ārya; being happy when an enemy is afflicted with illness; being unhappy when an enemy recovers from an illness; giving what is beneficial [lit. medicinal], eating food without permission to eat. Those ten factors result in many illnesses, this karma results in many illnesses. Therefore, we can see from this that martial artists should be very careful.

Anyway, there are numerous statements by the Buddha about karma being the cause of

physical defects and illness. You can accept this or not.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, January 2nd, 2015 at 11:55 AM

Title: Re: Buddhism's view on developmental disabilities

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

...giving what is beneficial [lit. medicinal]... Those ten factors result in many illnesses, this karma results in many illnesses.

xabir said:

Sorry I'm confused here. Why is giving what is beneficial a karma resulting in many illnesses?

Malcolm wrote:

It was a typo, should be "not beneficial".

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, January 3rd, 2015 at 12:57 AM

Title: Re: Buddhism's view on developmental disabilities

Content:

Fruitzilla said:

For example, I've come across the idea that karma is the cause of all observable phenomena in the universe multiple times.

Malcolm wrote:

In general we hold to the simple principle that the present universe and everything in it down to the smallest observable particle arose as a result of the combined karma of all the sentient beings it contains.

The variety of the world comes from karma

-- Vasubandhu.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, January 3rd, 2015 at 7:24 AM

Title: Re: Buddhism's view on developmental disabilities

Content:

Arjan Dirkse said:

For me karma is a word for cause and effect, nothing more, nothing less.

Disease or developmental disabilities do not have some misdeed from a previous life as their cause, the cause is in most cases just a genetic or developmental defect, or just bad luck (although there are conditions like lung cancer or obesity which can be caused

by the actions of the patient). To link all ailments with some kind of "sin" is toxic and irrational. I wish Buddhism would be rid of it.

Malcolm wrote:

The words for cause and effect are hetu and phala.

Vipaka however is a very specific kind of effect of a very specific kind of cause, namely "karma", which is in fact a positive, negative and neutral volition with corresponding positive, negative and neutral results (vipaka) in this life or some future lifetime which does not dissipate until it meets its cause for ripening, or someone attains liberation, whichever comes first.

If Buddhism were to jettison the teachings of the Buddha because someone finds this or that teaching of the Buddhas uncomfortable, dissatisfactory or not to their liking, it would no longer be "Buddhism" but would become something else instead.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, January 4th, 2015 at 8:30 PM

Title: Re: Buddhism's view on developmental disabilities

Content:

Sherlock said:

Genetic or developmental defects are negative karma ripening.

Really, what is so objectionable about this idea?

Sherab Dorje said:

To a Buddhist it is not objectionable. To a materialist on the other hand...

Kim O'Hara said:

What worries me about it, as one who tries to be compassionate, is how people may act as a result of believing that developmental disabilities are the result of negative karma.

To say that X deserves his/her disability and therefore shouldn't receive any special consideration or help is a failure of compassion.

"That's his/her karma and s/he just has to deal with it."

Does that sound at all familiar?

I've heard similar things far too often.

Malcolm wrote:

It's a statement of fact, we are all owners of our own karma.

Kim O'Hara said:

...the person in front of me is a suffering human being and the only response I can justify is compassion.

Malcolm wrote:

Ants are also worthy of compassion, they also are bearers of their own karma.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, January 6th, 2015 at 1:08 AM

Title: Re: Buddhism's view on developmental disabilities

Content:

Lazy_eye said:

The debate is not between "Buddhists" and "materialists." As Zhen Li and others have shown in their posts, a strongly deterministic view of karma is at odds with the nikayas. The statement "if you want to know your past life, look at your present circumstances, if you want to know what your future life will be, look at your present life" directly contradicts the <http://www.accesstoinsight.org/tipitaka/mn/mn.136.nymo.html>.

Malcolm wrote:

No, in fact it does not:

2. "Master Gotama, what is the reason, what is the condition, why inferiority and superiority are met with among human beings, among mankind? For one meets with short-lived and long-lived people, sick and healthy people, ugly and beautiful people, insignificant and influential people, poor and rich people, low-born and high-born people, stupid and wise people. What is the reason, what is the condition, why superiority and inferiority are met with among human beings, among mankind?"

3. "Student, beings are owners of kammās, heirs of kammās, they have kammās as their progenitor, kammās as their kin, kammās as their homing-place. It is kammās that differentiate beings according to inferiority and superiority."

And:

"Here, student, some woman or man is one who harms beings with his hands or with clods or with sticks or with knives. Due to having performed and completed such kammās, on the dissolution of the body, after death, he reappears in a state of deprivation... If instead he comes to the human state, he is sickly wherever he is reborn. This is the way that leads to sickness, that is to say, to be one who harms beings with one's hands or with clods or with sticks or with knives.

<http://www.accesstoinsight.org/tipitaka/mn/mn.135.nymo.html>

This is exactly the intent of the statement, "if you want to know your past life, look at your present circumstances, if you want to know what your future life will be, look at your present life."

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, January 6th, 2015 at 2:47 AM

Title: Re: Buddhism's view on developmental disabilities

Content:

Lazy_eye said:

Wrong sutta, buddy. I was referring to the

<http://www.accesstoinsight.org/tipitaka/mn/mn.136.nymo.html>. You are quoting from the <http://www.accesstoinsight.org/tipitaka/mn/mn.135.nymo.html>

As the titles suggest, the Maha presents a fuller exposition of the subject:

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, I am aware of that fact. The point is that the statement you are criticizing is justified on the basis of the words of the Buddha from a sutra you accept as valid. Just admit it, and move on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, January 6th, 2015 at 4:38 AM

Title: Re: Buddhism's view on developmental disabilities

Content:

Lazy_eye said:

The point is that the statement in question is (from POV of the nikayas) a misinterpretation

Malcolm wrote:

No, it is not a "misinterpretation", it is an understanding that is found in the sutra I cited for you.

Lazy_eye said:

-

It simply doesn't stand up to scrutiny. Our present lives are not necessarily a reliable indicator of our subsequent lives;

Malcolm wrote:

It is a pretty good indicator. The happiness we are experiencing in this life is a result of positive karma we did in the past; the suffering, the result of negative karma. Likewise, the positive karma we cultivate in this life will bear fruit as happiness in future lives; the negative karma, as suffering. It is unerring.

Lazy_eye said:

we could be living non-virtuously yet still find ourselves reborn in a happy destination because the negative kamma hasn't ripened yet, or because there is some positive kamma that continues to exert influence.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, as everyone who has bother to study the subject in detail knows.

Lazy_eye said:

A person might accrue heavy "death-proximate" kamma at the very end of a virtuous life, with the vipaka manifesting in the next. You just don't know.

Malcolm wrote:

Such a person would be a fool, and obviously not know the difference between cultivating positive karma and avoiding negative karma.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, January 6th, 2015 at 4:42 AM

Title: Re: Buddhisms view on developmental disabilities

Content:

Fruitzilla said:

Maybe a reasons life-to-life kamma is often portrayed as non-linearly in the suttas.

Malcolm wrote:

Karma is not presented nonlinearly in the sutras. The effects of karma do not dissipate until they ripen.

There are various factors which indicate whether a given karma will ripen in this life, or another, or are long delayed (such as karmas of a being in the rupadhātu created in the kama-dhātu which cannot ripen in the rūpadhātu and so on).

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, January 6th, 2015 at 6:20 AM

Title: Re: Buddhisms view on developmental disabilities

Content:

SD said:

I was not engaging in, nor would I engage in, discrimination against people with special needs.

Kim O'Hara said:

Good! That is the most important thing here.

If you can also say that you do not and would not compound someone's suffering by telling them that it was all their own fault because they did something wrong in a past life, we have no disagreement over speech or behaviour.

Kim

Malcolm wrote:

If you wish to understand how karma is understood in Tibetan Buddhism, read chapter four the the Abhidharmakoshabhasyam.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, January 6th, 2015 at 10:02 AM

Title: Re: Buddhism's view on developmental disabilities

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

It is a pretty good indicator. The happiness we are experiencing in this life is a result of positive karma we did in the past; the suffering, the result of negative karma. Likewise, the positive karma we cultivate in this life will bear fruit as happiness in future lives; the negative karma, as suffering. It is unerring.

daverupa said:

Just to be comprehensive:

MN 57 said:

Puṇṇa, there are four kinds of action proclaimed by me after realising them for myself with direct knowledge. What are the four? There is dark action with dark result; there is bright action with bright result; there is dark-and-bright action with dark-and-bright result; and there is action that is neither dark nor bright with neither-dark-nor-bright result, action that leads to the destruction of action.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, this all described in detail in the Kosha

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, January 6th, 2015 at 9:28 PM

Title: Re: Buddhism's view on developmental disabilities

Content:

Concordiadiscordi said:

I agree that interdependent co-origination may be invoked as a meta-perspectival bulwark in such respects (it can be used to explain pretty much anything at a highly abstract and generalized level), but the specifics remain open to debate.

Malcolm wrote:

Dependent origination [not interdependent] and karma are two separate topics, often conflated together.

Concordiadiscordi said:

I would rather look to recent developments in the sciences and disciplines of non-linear complexity for sophisticated insights into the precisely contingent and often ambiguous

nature of concrete causal dynamics/operations

Malcolm wrote:

None of them go beyond, "Where this exists, that exists, with the arising of that, this arose", etc.

Concordiadiscordi said:

Spiritually conservative justifications for disability and inequality founded upon vague notions derived from arcane texts and hearsay qualify as nothing but assumed dogma.

Malcolm wrote:

First, there is nothing vague about the Buddha's teaching on karma, it is very precise. Positive actions lead to positive results for oneself in this life and future lives, negative actions lead to the opposite.

You either believe in Buddha's teachings on karma or you don't. If you don't, it is hard to consider yourself a follower of Buddhadharma.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, January 6th, 2015 at 11:49 PM

Title: Re: Buddhism's view on developmental disabilities

Content:

Lazy_eye said:

It might be illuminating for Malcolm or others who have had extensive contact with Tibetan or other Buddhist cultures to tell us what they have observed in terms of attitudes towards the disabled, to what extent those attitudes are informed by belief in karma-vipaka, and to what extent Buddhists are or are not helping to promote acceptance, tolerance and equal rights.

Malcolm wrote:

I have never observed anything but kindness towards disabled people, have never heard any talk about their being "at fault" for their disability. On the other hand, I have heard many Tibetans describe their own suffering in this life as a result of their own misdeeds in past lives, quite cheerfully and without any rancor.

Hell, even the Tibetan penal system in Lhasa took karma into account, assuming that in many cases it was pointless to administer a punishment for this or that crime, because the criminal was going to suffer in future lives for crimes committed in this life. This attitude lent itself to rather lenient treatments of many kinds of crimes. See Rebecca French's book on Tibetan law and jurisprudence.

I think that part of the issue is that people raised in western cultures spend a lot of time dealing with issues of "guilt", and spend a lot of time trying to avoid feelings of guilt.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, January 7th, 2015 at 5:29 AM

Title: Re: Buddhism's view on developmental disabilities

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

...Yes, this all described in detail in the Kosha

daverupa said:

I'm not so sure it's well-described, however:

Malcolm wrote:

It is a pretty good indicator. The happiness we are experiencing in this life is a result of positive karma we did in the past; the suffering, the result of negative karma. Likewise, the positive karma we cultivate in this life will bear fruit as happiness in future lives; the negative karma, as suffering. It is unerring.

daverupa said:

But one can then read:

AN 3.61 said:

“Bhikkhus, I approached those ascetics and brahmins who hold such a doctrine and view as this: ‘Whatever this person experiences—whether pleasure, pain, or neither-pain-nor-pleasure—all that is caused by past deeds...

daverupa said:

which seems to suggest otherwise. So this discordance is not as eye-roll-worthy as you might think, especially since kamma is not the sole causal factor that affects beings.

Malcolm wrote:

Dave, what the Buddha is criticizing is the following:

When I ask them this, they affirm it. Then I say to them: ‘In such a case, it is due to past deeds that you might destroy life, take what is not given, indulge in sexual activity, speak falsehood, utter divisive speech, speak harshly, indulge in idle chatter; that you might be full of longing, have a mind of ill will, and hold wrong view.’

This is a kind of determinism, and is not what we are talking about. What we are talking about is that fact that the painful sensations that ripen on the body are result of negative deeds in the past, etc. You can consult the Koshabhaṣyam where Vasubandhu states "the essential element of vipaka is sensation...A sensation, the result of retribution of a bad action, is painful." In fact, Vasubandhu goes on to say that mental suffering is not actually a karmic ripening, per say, but arises from the physical ripening of karma on the body such that it produces a state which gives rise to mental suffering.

Rather than making wild and inappropriate accusations about how the Tibetan Buddhist understanding of karma differs from "the early material", have the humility to admit that you know very little about anything concerning Tibetan Buddhism and that you are not very interested to learn. The fact is that such things as the antarabhāva and so forth are

grounded in sutras in the Agamas, making it just as "early", to invoke your favored interpretive fetish, as any thing in the Pali Canon.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, January 7th, 2015 at 6:54 AM

Title: Re: Buddhism's view on developmental disabilities

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

What we are talking about is that fact that the painful sensations that ripen on the body are result of negative deeds in the past, etc.

Qianxi said:

There's a sutra (<https://suttacentral.net/en/sn36.21>) about the possible causes of pain: bile disorders, phlegm disorders, wind disorders, an imbalance of the three, change of climate, careless behaviour, assault, and karma. The implication being that previous karma is only one of several possible explanations for physical pain.

Malcolm wrote:

Vasubandhu asserts the Sautrantika position that disturbances of the elements of the body, which in turn comprise vatta, pitta and kapha, are vipaka. Assaults can only be result of previous karma, such as when Buddha informed Angulmala that his being beaten by the mob was a ripening of his past karma. If you do not have the karma to be assaulted by someone, they can never harm you no matter how hard they try. Change of climate too can be a result of karma, because the appearance of the container universe is a reflection of our karma. Of course, careless behavior, such as injuring one's toe, this I would not say is a direct result of karma.

In Alexander Berzin's

http://www.berzinarchives.com/web/en/archives/sutra/level4_deepening_understanding_path/types_phenomena/overview_cause_effect/transcript.html (also

http://www.berzinarchives.com/web/en/archives/sutra/level4_deepening_understanding_path/types_phenomena/causes_conditions_results.html) of Vasubandhu's list of five kinds of result one is "Man-made results (skyes-bu byed-pa'i 'bras-bu, Skt.

purushakaraphalam)"

Qianxi said:

Man-made results are what we usually associate with physical cause and effect. I banged my foot against the chair and the result of that is that I experience pain. There's a karmic cause for why I would feel unhappy and why I experience banging my foot, but the actual cause and effect relationship of the banging of the foot and the pain is a man-made result.

Malcolm wrote:

He goes on to say that unhappiness resulting from pain is always the result of karma rather than 'man made'

Qianxi said:

If we experience unhappiness, it is definite that it is the result of destructive behavior – and that's at least a five or six hour discussion of why that is the case, but we don't have time for that. It's one of the basic principles of karma.

Malcolm wrote:

I'm not very convinced by the distinction between 'pain' and 'unhappiness', but it's interesting that that seems to be the position.

Sherab Dorje said:

And still nobody has answered why some people are affected by these "other factors" while others are not.

Malcolm wrote:

I think the answer is that everyone is affected by non-karmic factors all of the time.[/quote]

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, January 7th, 2015 at 11:28 PM

Title: Re: Buddhism's view on developmental disabilities

Content:

Kim O'Hara said:

I would therefore prefer to set the question aside, as we were advised to by the Buddha, since it's un conjecturable.

Malcolm wrote:

Not so. Why? Affliction --> action --> suffering.

Kim O'Hara said:

If I'm correct in my belief that we can't know the workings of karma, then all we can do (as good Buddhists) is to respond as skillfully and compassionately as possible to whatever situation we see in front of us.

Malcolm wrote:

Of course we can know the workings of karma — the Buddha spend a significant amount of time teaching about it. In essence it may be summed up the following way:

Affliction --> action --> suffering.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, January 8th, 2015 at 9:13 PM

Title: Re: Buddhism's view on developmental disabilities

Content:

Kim O'Hara said:

That level of knowledge, sure. But can we know for sure why child X was born deaf or child Y was born into a family of drug-users and criminals?

And if we can't, then all we can do is respond as best we can to the circumstances we find in front of us - using our knowledge of the workings of karma to guide our present and future actions.

Malcolm wrote:

In terms of what kind of family one is born into, wealth, poverty, class, etc., this is definitely solely a result of karma. The Buddha says in the Ārya Āyusman Nanda Garbhāvākraṇṭi Nirdeśa:

Then, the Bhagavan said this to Āyusman Nanda, "Nanda, when a sentient being wishes to enter the womb, if causes and conditions are perfect, a body will be appropriated.

However, if [the causes and conditions] are not perfect, a body will not be appropriated.

If one should ask that sentient beings do not possess the conditions, it is as follows.

Though a man and a woman have the mental factor of desire, and the intermediate state aggregate is present and seeking a womb, should that male and female have sexual intercourse too soon or too late or not have intercourse at that one time; or should there be some diseases in the body of either [the male or the female], there will be no 'entry into the womb'. If family line of the male and the female are noble and their merit is great, but the intermediate state aggregate has small merit, or should the intermediate state being have a noble family line and great merit, [65] but the male and female have small [merit] or though they both have merit, but if the accumulation of karma is not mutual, then there will be no 'entry into the womb'."

In terms of birth defects and so on, this can be karmic; this can also be a result of various factors in the pregnancy, genetic defects, etc. Without clairvoyance it is difficult to know.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, January 8th, 2015 at 9:15 PM

Title: Re: Building a modern and/or western Buddhism

Content:

Kim O'Hara said:

That's a fair comment, but I (at least) am willing to persist since, in the larger scheme of things, this kind of dialogue is how we will (ever so slowly) fashion a Buddhism for the modern Western world.

Malcolm wrote:

I think the Buddhadharma we have is perfectly fine. As long as we rely on it, everything will be just fine.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, January 9th, 2015 at 11:14 AM

Title: Re: Buddhism's view on developmental disabilities

Content:

Qianxi said:

There's a sutra (<https://suttacentral.net/en/sn36.21>) about the possible causes of pain: bile disorders, phlegm disorders, wind disorders, an imbalance of the three, change of climate, careless behaviour, assault, and karma. The implication being that previous karma is only one of several possible explanations for physical pain.

Malcolm wrote:

Vasubandhu asserts the Sautrantika position that disturbances of the elements of the body, which in turn comprise vatta, pitta and kapha, are vipaka.

Greg said:

Vasubandhu's assertion seems to be clearly at odds with SN 36.21.

Malcolm wrote:

In your opinion, not in mine.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, January 9th, 2015 at 11:47 PM

Title: Re: Buddhism's view on developmental disabilities

Content:

LastLegend said:

Not all pain is directly related to karma but all indirectly related to karma. Having this karma physical body, one is subject to pain, heat, cold, stress, sickness, old age, and death.

Paul said:

This. Pain is due to a body, a body is due to karma (and karma is due to ignorance).

Greg said:

As I understand it, you are asserting that the sutra passage is merely asserting that karma is always an indirect cause of physical pain insofar as it precipitates having a body in the first place, but it can also sometimes be a direct cause of physical pain. But that reading doesn't really make sense, because karma is never a direct cause of physical pain without some kind of mediating cause (eg a bile disorder). So it doesn't make sense to list it with those other causes as if it was just one possible cause among several.

Malcolm wrote:

The result of afflictive karma is always suffering. Suffering is always painful, whether mental or physical.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, January 10th, 2015 at 2:29 AM

Title: Re: Buddhism's view on developmental disabilities

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The result of afflictive karma is always suffering. Suffering is always painful, whether mental or physical.

Greg said:

That is not what is at issue.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, actually it is. Illnesses are a part of suffering. For example, the Buddha clearly states in the Cula-kamma, that illness in this life is a karmic result of physically harming others. There are also plenty of examples from the Avadanas and so on where specific deformities are taught to be the result of karma.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, January 10th, 2015 at 9:00 PM

Title: Re: Building a modern and/or western Buddhism

Content:

Kim O'Hara said:

In terms of my temple metaphor, you and Simon (and a few others) seem to want to barricade yourselves inside a section of the temple and stop anyone else changing it - but you are inside, with your 20th century western baggage, and that changes it already.

Malcolm wrote:

The essence of the Dharma lies in how it is practiced and explained. Of you change the explanations and practices of the awakened, you are no longer practicing Buddhadharma. There is no reason to change anything, and the Dharma is not changed merely because it is being practiced 2500 years after the nirvana of the Buddha.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, January 11th, 2015 at 2:40 AM

Title: Re: Why doesn't DJK accept offerings?

Content:

maybay said:

Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche, great lama, but won't accept offerings. Why not? Does he feel like we're projecting something onto him. Isn't that what happens anyway? How should I feel about something like my own birthday? Should I call blind ritual and get tough about being used as a moral pivot for my sister's party-going? Buddhist, Lama, thoughtful reserved people. We're like pillars of society. Why reject that? I don't get it.

Malcolm wrote:

Sure he will accept offerings, just make it to one of his charitable organizations.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, January 12th, 2015 at 9:38 PM

Title: Re: Indo-Tibetan sutra commentaries?

Content:

Will said:

Were such shastras written? In the prajaparamita group, not counting the short ones like Heart sutra, did any Tibetan or Indian write a comprehensive line by line commentary on the 8K or 18K or 25K sutras?

How about the Avatamsaka or Lotus or Maharatnakuta - any full commentaries on these? Any other sutra commentary examples?

Malcolm wrote:

Not line by line, but definitely there are comprehensive commentaries on the long PP sutras by Indians.

And there is an eight volume commentary on the Abhisamālaṃkāra by Yagton, the longest, most comprehensive commentary on Prajñāpāramita ever written before or since.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, January 13th, 2015 at 1:02 AM

Title: Re: Building a modern and/or western Buddhism

Content:

LastLegend said:

It can be faith based. It can be based on rational approach, but this one is grasping firmly to wanting to know. One firmly believes the truth of the physical world based on the 5 senses. I think we are taking truth for granted here. We are acting like we are going to die if we can't know. Well we can't know anyway. Can we draw a certain complete conclusion/understanding about our nature and nature of reality using rational thinking?

Lazy_eye said:

I don't know.

All forms of Buddhism, as far as I know, stress the importance of trusting the Buddha. There are even some suttas which say, essentially, that trust and affinity for the Buddha can lead to stream entry even if one hasn't perfected sila. So I'm not denying its importance.

I'm just saying that since established faiths already exist in the West, faith may not be the most likely entry point into the Dharma. After all, if you already have that capability, why not just go to church? Logistically it's a lot easier -- there are plenty of churches everywhere but Buddhist centers or temples can be hard to find. I recall even the Dalai Lama has said that the locally established religion should be a good choice for most

people.

So the appeal of the Dharma to (some) Westerners must in many cases be due to some other, distinctive qualities -- not the faith aspect specifically, since that can be found elsewhere.

Malcolm wrote:

The question of faith is crucial — why do we have faith in the Buddha? He taught a path where we are responsible for our own liberation. This is why Dharma appeals to the West. Personal responsibility, compassion and kindness are the hallmarks of a real Dharma practitioner.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, January 13th, 2015 at 2:38 AM

Title: Re: Building a modern and/or western Buddhism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Personal responsibility, compassion and kindness are the hallmarks of a real Dharma practitioner.

Lazy_eye said:

Agree, but these qualities are important in the other major religions too. In and of themselves they don't provide a reason to choose Buddhism.

Malcolm wrote:

Not in the same way.

Lazy_eye said:

The question of faith is crucial — why do we have faith in the Buddha? He taught a path where we are responsible for our own liberation.

We all have a number of choices available: faith in Jesus, faith in Mohammed, faith in Buddha. There has to be some reason for making the choice, otherwise faith rests on an unstable foundation. Because there's always the possibility that one's faith might have been misplaced. After all, there are devout Christians and devout Muslims, though from a Buddhist standpoint they are wrong. From their standpoint Buddhists are wrong. How can we know? And the stakes are higher in monotheism: a Christian might end up in the Buddhist hells due to wrong view, but not permanently.

My argument would be that the Dharma does offer a reasonable basis, because what the Buddha said about dukkha and its causes can be verified empirically. So we proceed from there.

Malcolm wrote:

No, actually we cannot "empirically" verify the of the cause of dukkha, because dukkha is caused by karma, and karma itself is caused by affliction. There is no dukkha that is not caused by karma. There are no means by which dukkha may be measured. Liberation

itself is defined as freedom from affliction, and that too cannot be measured, so there is nothing at all "empirically verifiable" in Buddhadharma. The idea that there is, is a hangover from an earlier period of Western perceptions of Buddhism.

You might argue, Buddha said that the cause of dukkha is clinging, but here clinging itself is just affliction which gives rise to an action that results in suffering. If you restrict yourself to a one lifetime model, there is no reason to select Buddhadharma over a secular twelve steps program...

Empirical verification depends on the observable quantification of a data set. No one has ever empirically verified that Buddhadharma

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, January 13th, 2015 at 3:20 AM

Title: Re: Building a modern and/or western Buddhism

Content:

Lazy_eye said:

I didn't say anything about a one lifetime model, though. My claim was that anicca, anatta, dukkha and the causes of dukkha can be observed within the scope of one lifetime.

Malcolm wrote:

Well, Hume taught selflessness and impermanence. Suffering is obvious to everyone. So what makes Buddhadharma compelling?

What makes you think Buddha's explanation of the cause of suffering are compelling to westerners? What about them is empirically verifiable?

Frankly, I came to the Dharma because of hearing the Heart Sutra, and then taking an interest in Madhyamaka. It was only later, after having studied Buddhadharma for some time that I really absorbed the fact that I was a suffering sentient being and formally took refuge and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, January 13th, 2015 at 4:50 AM

Title: Re: Building a modern and/or western Buddhism

Content:

Lazy_eye said:

So, in effect, you had developed a strong conviction in karma and rebirth, and a concern about your well-being in future lives, before taking refuge. Everything up to that point was preparatory -- allowing the conditions to develop that eventually resulted in your taking refuge.

Malcolm wrote:

More or less.

Lazy_eye said:

Do you think this is somewhat unusual for a Western practitioner or is it actually more common that I am making it out to be?

Malcolm wrote:

I know many others for whom philosophy was their doorway in, like me. For others still, it was Mahāyāna bodhicitta that drew them, and so on.

Lazy_eye said:

Well, Hume taught selflessness and impermanence. Suffering is obvious to everyone. So what makes Buddhadharma compelling?

What makes you think Buddha's explanation of the cause of suffering are compelling to westerners? What about them is empirically verifiable?

The practice of non-clinging ("letting go") leads to reduction in dukkha; clinging invariably leads to suffering in the shorter or longer run.

Malcolm wrote:

And there is a long tradition in Western discourse about the benefits of not clinging to the things of this life.

Lazy_eye said:

Understanding anicca and anatta helps with the practice of non-clinging.

Malcolm wrote:

There are other approaches being free of clinging to this life found in nonbuddhist contemplative traditions.

Lazy_eye said:

On a related note, good sila and cultivation of the brahmaviharas leads to happier states of mind.

Malcolm wrote:

These are found also in the Yoga Sutras.

Lazy_eye said:

I'm not very familiar with Hume other than what I learned in high school ("if you drop the ball there's no guarantee it will hit the ground"). Did he teach not-self and impermanence in ways similar to the Buddha, and did he provide a practice or a path?

Malcolm wrote:

His teaching on the non-existence of the self is strikingly similar.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, January 13th, 2015 at 7:20 AM

Title: Re: Building a modern and/or western Buddhism

Content:

Lazy_eye said:

Doesn't one have to know, understand and be receptive to Mahayana doctrine in the first place in order to be compelled by bodhicitta?

Malcolm wrote:

Nope. Just as for me, what compelled me was hearing about Mahāyāna emptiness. I accepted the view of emptiness long before I accepted the other parts of the Buddhas teaching.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, January 13th, 2015 at 8:18 PM

Title: Re: Building a modern and/or western Buddhism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

..There is a long tradition in Western discourse about the benefits of not clinging to the things of this life.

There are other approaches being free of clinging to this life found in nonbuddhist contemplative traditions.

Lazy_eye said:

In Buddhism, though, non-clinging is understood within the context of dependent origination -- is anything like that found in the other contemplative traditions you mention?

Malcolm wrote:

Samkhya presents a kind of dependent origination which collapses when it is discovered that one is clinging to what is not the self because of mistakenly making differentiations in what is not self due to the transformation of the three gunas. A species of this view is presented in the Yoga Sutras and much of the language of the Yoga sutras is shared with so called "Early Buddhism."

Lazy_eye said:

I guess we are asking the question "what is uniquely Buddhist about Buddhism"? It

seems to me that it must be the knowledge gained by the Buddha during the third watch of the night.

Malcolm wrote:

Buddha understood the view of dependent origination through recalling his past lives in the second watch. In the third watch he applied it through to the three realms and finally entered Vajropama samadhi.

Lazy_eye said:

If we accept the "three times" interpretation of D.O., then at least part of the process is observable in the present lifespan. To say nothing of other interpretations that see the twelvefold chain as just one particular presentation of idapaccayata.

Malcolm wrote:

Well, there is a slight problem here — links consciousness — sensation are all results, results of what? craving, addiction and becoming are causes, but causes of what?

We can see in this life that craving leads to addiction, which leads to sad outcomes, but that is all — and that is not uniquely Buddhist.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, January 13th, 2015 at 8:28 PM

Title: Re: Is Dzogchen only accidentally Buddhist?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

No.

MalaBeads said:

That might be the first time I actually understood the Loppon's role.

Thank you, Malcolm.

Malcolm wrote:

You are quite welcome.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, January 13th, 2015 at 10:38 PM

Title: Re: Building a modern and/or western Buddhism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Well, there is a slight problem here — links consciousness — sensation are all results, results of what? craving, addiction and becoming are causes, but causes of what?

We can see in this life that craving leads to addiction, which leads to sad outcomes, but that is all — and that is not uniquely Buddhist.

Lazy_eye said:

Well, I would argue this is sufficient to make a reasonable inference as to the general principle, thus providing a basis for developing śraddhā -- i.e., the conviction that the Buddha's path is indeed the way to the ending of dukkha.

Malcolm wrote:

But this is not why people come to Dharma. Most people come to Dharma because they have heard that meditation will make them more calm and relaxed. It is "accidental" if they wind up Buddhist, because Yoga very much claims the same things as Buddhism, reduce clinging, becoming more calm, ending rebirth, etc.

Lazy_eye said:

What would you identify as being uniquely Buddhist?

Malcolm wrote:

His view of and method for liberation from the cycle of rebirth we know as samsara.

Without rebirth, and Buddha's specific view of rebirth, it just isn't Buddhadharma.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, January 13th, 2015 at 11:41 PM

Title: Re: Building a modern and/or western Buddhism

Content:

Lazy_eye said:

It seems to me (and please understand that I'm just a rather low-level student of the Dharma), that the significance of rebirth is directly linked to the meaning of nirvana. Nirvana is described in the suttas as "the highest happiness"; we also see it referred to as "permanent freedom" and so on. But does this "highest happiness" consist solely of the knowledge that one will never undergo another birth?

If so, it would be hard to argue with your statement.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, absolutely. Look at the number of references in the Pali canon where, upon attaining arhatship, arhats declare with joy, "this is my final birth..." and so on.

Lazy_eye said:

A materialist could achieve "nirvana" by coming to terms with the eventuality of death.

Malcolm wrote:

Hence the moral and intellectual poverty of the so-called "Secular Buddhist" approach.

Lazy_eye said:

Of course, this in itself is a complicated question, because most people don't desire oblivion at all; we fear death and desire further life. So part of Buddhism's appeal, for at least some secular Westerners, might be that it helps us with the suffering created by that fear (and the related desire). I'm not saying there aren't potential problems with this approach.

Malcolm wrote:

Hence Dharma Lite(tm)

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, January 14th, 2015 at 2:03 AM

Title: Re: Building a modern and/or western Buddhism

Content:

Lazy_eye said:

...therefore, can we say that the happiness of an arahant or buddha consists only of knowing no future lives will occur?

Malcolm wrote:

Considering that even arhats are under the power of ripening karma from past lives, yes.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, January 14th, 2015 at 2:05 AM

Title: Re: Building a modern and/or western Buddhism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, absolutely. Look at the number of references in the Pali canon where, upon attaining arhatship, arhats declare with joy, "this is my final birth..." and so on.

Lazy_eye said:

Indeed, they do make these declarations, but the non-occurrence of future births could be seen as a product of the Dharma's primary goal: the cessation of dukkha.

daverupa said:

The fact of there being arahants without psychic powers showcases that knowledge of the cessation of dukkha is not co-extensive with knowledge of individual past lives or knowledge of the falling & re-arising of beings according to kamma generally; it can be an inferential claim & not necessarily a psychic-knowledge-claim.

Malcolm wrote:

It nevertheless is the point of declaring that one will not again take rebirth.

The cessation of dukkha means there are no more causes for it to arise. Birth and death

are the primary forms of dukkha.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, January 14th, 2015 at 5:35 AM

Title: Re: Building a modern and/or western Buddhism

Content:

Lazy_eye said:

A rock or other inanimate object is not subject to rebirth, so is it a Buddha?

Malcolm wrote:

This a pretty silly question but...

Does a rock or an other inanimate object have a mind? No. Therefore, upon what basis could they awaken?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, January 14th, 2015 at 5:38 AM

Title: Re: Building a modern and/or western Buddhism

Content:

Lazy_eye said:

The sutras I've looked at (Avatamsaka for instance) don't seem to present Buddhahood as oblivion.

Malcolm wrote:

This is because the Mahāyāna perspective on Buddhahood does not present parinirvana as a total cessation of a Buddhas' continuum. Cessation and annihilation, btw., are entirely different.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, January 14th, 2015 at 6:51 AM

Title: Re: Building a modern and/or western Buddhism

Content:

Lazy_eye said:

None. My point is that it's overly reductive to define the goal of the Buddhist path solely in terms of the ending of birth. If that were the case, a rock would also have met the (single) criterion; it was never born to begin with.

The way I see it -- and I realize this likely reflects lack of understanding on my part -- the goal of the Buddhist path is nirvana, and what brings about nirvana is the ending of ignorance. The ending of samsaric birth is a concomitant result; we are reborn into

samsara as a result of ignorance, so when ignorance is overcome, the rebirth cycle stops.

It's a question of putting things in the right sequence.

Malcolm wrote:

You have to put in the Buddha's perspective — what is samsara? Rebirth. What causes rebirth? Ignorance. What ends ignorance? Awakening. What is the result of awakening? Nirvana. What is nirvana? The end of samsara. What is the end of samsara? The end of rebirth.

When the mind was thus concentrated, purified, bright, unblemished, rid of defilement, pliant, malleable, steady, & attained to imperturbability, I directed it to the knowledge of recollecting my past lives. I recollected my manifold past lives, i.e., one birth, two... five, ten... fifty, a hundred, a thousand, a hundred thousand, many eons of cosmic contraction, many eons of cosmic expansion, many eons of cosmic contraction & expansion: 'There I had such a name, belonged to such a clan, had such an appearance. Such was my food, such my experience of pleasure & pain, such the end of my life. Passing away from that state, I re-arose there. There too I had such a name, belonged to such a clan, had such an appearance. Such was my food, such my experience of pleasure & pain, such the end of my life. Passing away from that state, I re-arose here.' Thus I remembered my manifold past lives in their modes & details.

"This was the first knowledge I attained in the first watch of the night. Ignorance was destroyed; knowledge arose; darkness was destroyed; light arose — as happens in one who is heedful, ardent, & resolute.

"When the mind was thus concentrated, purified, bright, unblemished, rid of defilement, pliant, malleable, steady, & attained to imperturbability, I directed it to the knowledge of the passing away & reappearance of beings. I saw — by means of the divine eye, purified & surpassing the human — beings passing away & re-appearing, and I discerned how they are inferior & superior, beautiful & ugly, fortunate & unfortunate in accordance with their kamma: 'These beings — who were endowed with bad conduct of body, speech & mind, who reviled the Noble Ones, held wrong views and undertook actions under the influence of wrong views — with the break-up of the body, after death, have re-appeared in the plane of deprivation, the bad destination, the lower realms, in hell. But these beings — who were endowed with good conduct of body, speech, & mind, who did not revile the Noble Ones, who held right views and undertook actions under the influence of right views — with the break-up of the body, after death, have re-appeared in the good destinations, in the heavenly world.' Thus — by means of the divine eye, purified & surpassing the human — I saw beings passing away & re-appearing, and I discerned how they are inferior & superior, beautiful & ugly, fortunate & unfortunate in accordance with their kamma.

"This was the second knowledge I attained in the second watch of the night. Ignorance was destroyed; knowledge arose; darkness was destroyed; light arose — as happens in one who is heedful, ardent, & resolute.

"When the mind was thus concentrated, purified, bright, unblemished, rid of defilement, pliant, malleable, steady, & attained to imperturbability, I directed it to the knowledge of the ending of the mental fermentations. I discerned, as it had come to be, that 'This is stress... This is the origination of stress... This is the cessation of stress... This is the way leading to the cessation of stress... These are fermentations... This is the origination of fermentations... This is the cessation of fermentations... This is the way leading to the cessation of fermentations.' My heart, thus knowing, thus seeing, was released from the fermentation of sensuality, released from the fermentation of becoming, released from the fermentation of ignorance. With release, there was the knowledge, 'Released.' I discerned that 'Birth is ended, the holy life fulfilled, the task done. There is nothing further for this world.'

"This was the third knowledge I attained in the third watch of the night. Ignorance was destroyed; knowledge arose; darkness was destroyed; light arose — as happens in one who is heedful, ardent, & resolute.

<http://www.accesstoinsight.org/tipitaka/mn/mn.019.than.html>

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, January 14th, 2015 at 9:36 AM

Title: Re: the great vegetarian debate

Content:

Jikan said:

I don't particularly see how this practice differs from someone eating meat from an animal that is specifically killed for him or her.

.

Malcolm wrote:

It isn't.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, January 14th, 2015 at 6:42 PM

Title: Re: Pema Khandro?

Content:

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, January 15th, 2015 at 1:26 AM

Title: Re: Contradiction in Mahayana philosophy

Content:

White Lotus said:

after the five senses are dissolved it is seen that there never were five senses,

Malcolm wrote:
Ummmm....can't dissolve what never was....

Author: Malcolm
Date: Thursday, January 15th, 2015 at 10:24 PM
Title: Re: Vijnana vs. Rigpa
Content:
dzogchungpa said:
Rachmiel, I was thinking about this thread and it occurred to me that you might find the following teachings useful:
<http://www.tersar.org/teachings-4/teachings-archive/>

alpha said:
Totally depressing and hopeless

Malcolm wrote:
What and why?

Author: Malcolm
Date: Thursday, January 15th, 2015 at 11:20 PM
Title: Re: Vijnana vs. Rigpa
Content:
alpha said:
It's a personal opinion based on what i have been doing so far.
I feel like an old person who coming to the end of his life is full of regrets.
I just feel like i wasted my time.

Malcolm wrote:
You regret what you have been practicing? Dharma is a waste of time?

???

Author: Malcolm
Date: Friday, January 16th, 2015 at 12:29 AM
Title: Re: Vijnana vs. Rigpa
Content:
alpha said:
Yes.All of that.
In my case it was.
Every day goes by i look at myself and say:"Nope.I am none of that".
Maybe i got it all wrong...who knows...

Malcolm wrote:

If you cultivate love, compassion and bodhicitta, you have not gotten anything wrong. Without these three things, Vajrayāna is just an ego trip.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, January 16th, 2015 at 1:37 AM

Title: Re: Vijnana vs. Rigpa

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

I always seem to get into trouble when I post something from SDR.

Malcolm wrote:

Revise that to:

I always seem to get into trouble when I post something.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, January 16th, 2015 at 8:13 PM

Title: Re: Spirits - are these considered to be formless beings?

Content:

prsvrnc said:

How are spirits classified in Tibetan Buddhism?

asunthatneversets said:

What we usually think of as "spirits" in the west are called bhutas in India... I'm not sure what the Tibetan translation of that term would be.

mutsuk said:

This is 'byung ba in tibetan (elemental forces).

Malcolm wrote:

'Byung po, i.e. Elementals

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, January 16th, 2015 at 9:21 PM

Title: Re: Sakya Trizin - Chakrasamvara Body Mandala - Boston 4/201

Content:

alexprice said:

Lama Migmar and the Sakya Institute for Buddhist Studies are happy to announce this special event in the Boston area on the weekend of April 11-12, 2015.

For the first time in the West, HH Sakya Trizin Rinpoche will bestow the Chakrasamvara Body Mandala empowerment on the afternoon of Sunday April 12. This event is restricted to those who have already received the Chakrasamvara major two-day

initiation from HH or another a Sakya-lineage lama. If you attended the Chakrasamvara initiation with HH in Boston in May 2011, you are qualified to attend. Registration for this event is now open at <http://sakya.net>.

Malcolm wrote:

It has to be the Ghantapada five-deity major empowerment, not just any Cakrasamvara major empowerment. Not even Luipa or Krishnacara's tradition will count.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, January 16th, 2015 at 9:23 PM

Title: Re: Sources for 'Early Mahayana'

Content:

Indrajala said:

Johannes Bronkhorst, *Buddhism in the Shadow of Brahmanism Handbook of Oriental Studies* (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 46.

He suggests that it was the mundane matters related to dealing with brahmanized royal courts that is what drove Buddhists to adopt the language of a community often hostile to them:

They did not do so because they liked Sanskrit, or because they liked the Brahmins whose language it was. Nor did they do so for some inherent quality that this language supposedly possesses. They did so because they needed to defend their interests at the royal courts in Sanskrit. They had to use Sanskrit at the courts because Brahmins had been able to secure themselves a central place at the courts by way of their indispensable skills, not because rulers had supposedly "converted" to Brahmanism. This, as far as I can see, is the most plausible explanation of this otherwise puzzling change of language.

Malcolm wrote:

It is not puzzling in the least. Buddhists in India switched to Sanskrit because it was the language of educated persons.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, January 16th, 2015 at 9:30 PM

Title: Re: Spirits - are these considered to be formless beings?

Content:

mitsuk said:

yep, sorry, 'byung po indeed

Malcolm wrote:

Here, however the direct translation of 'byung po as elementals is a little misleading.

They are not spirits like undines, salamanders and so so connected with the element water, fire, etc. They are rather autochthonic entities, that is the sense of "bhuta" here.

They are formless in that they do not have physical bodies, though the rich representation of them, especially in Tibetan astrological and medical paintings, represents an attempt to show their class by giving them recognizable attributes.

As tingzin notes there is a bit of slippage between the term deva and lha, but when classified in Tibetan medicine and Ayurveda, the deva-bhutagraha is still a formless spirit which causes the person affected to wear white, be obsessed with purity, to speak in Sanskrit and so on. There are many such "deva" possessed people in Hindu ashrams and yoga centers around the world.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, January 17th, 2015 at 1:29 AM

Title: Re: Being introduced to the nature of mind -- ?

Content:

prsvrnc said:

Here is another question I'll look for (to get the specifics with regard to): How does one distinguish between the nature of mind that is felt to be realized during an initiation and the Mahamudra "introduction to mind" that is given separately? (Yes, perhaps the latter is also a form of an "initiation" — I'm just trying to get the vocab and references, straight.)

Malcolm wrote:

There is no difference. Some schools, notably the Sakyapas, maintain that such direct introductions however merely reinforce the example wisdom introduced during empowerment.

prsvrnc said:

I think something that is related is the fact that shamatha and vipashana are cultivated one time around relative to sutra teachings, and then another pass of the same type of cultivation occurs when tantra is officially entered. This correlates with generation and completion stage respectively. The nature of mind is identified twice, so to speak -- one time with the course level of mind, upon which one becomes an arya bodhisattva and enters the first ground; the second time is with the subtle mind of clear light at the end of the isolation of mind wherein one enters path of seeing in tantra and achieves the illusory body. So, Mahamudra is going to be practiced differently, depending upon what level of "nature of mind" one is intending to access -- i.e., whether with the course or subtle mind.

Malcolm wrote:

There really is no mahāmudra that can be spoken of outside of tantric practice. Sutra mahāmudra is using dohas to illustrate and prepare one for the true result mahāmudra realized via the practice of the two stages. The word "mahāmudra" does not occur in

even one single sūtra.

prsvrnc said:

Can the vajra master give the student an "introduction to the nature of mind" and have it be a qualified instance of that, even if the insight generated in the student is only one that is a generic image?

Malcolm wrote:

This is precisely what is called "the example wisdom."

prsvrnc said:

My guess is that being introduced to the nature of mind isn't necessarily a one time occurrence but probably has a decisive start but occurs repeatedly until... well, buddhahood. But that is just my educated guess.

Malcolm wrote:

It is a one time occurrence, in a real sense, that must be repeatedly cultivated until buddhahood.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, January 17th, 2015 at 2:53 AM

Title: Re: Being introduced to the nature of mind -- ?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

There really is no mahāmudra that can be spoken of outside of tantric practice. Sutra mahāmudra is using dohas to illustrate and prepare one for the true result mahāmudra realized via the practice of the two stages. The word "mahāmudra" does not occur in even one single sūtra.

Sherab Dorje said:

The term "Sutra Mahamudra" is normally used to delineate the gradual approach from the sudden.

As for Mahamudra, some say that it is equivalent to Tathagatagarbha, and there's plenty of mention of that in the Sutras.

But this leads me to ask the question: Do you believe that the nature of mind can only be uncovered via Tantra? Do you think that the level of insight needed to experience the state, does not exist in Sutta and Sutra techniques?

Malcolm wrote:

The term "sūtra" mahāmudra, according to Kongtrul and even Gampopa himself, is used for the teaching given to those people who are incapable of practicing Vajrayāna for this or that reason but who are nevertheless interested in Mahāmudra. They are taught śamatha and vipaśyāna, the experience of which is clarified by quotes from dohas, etc.

But without the example wisdom as well as the profound dependent originations arranged by the guru at the time of empowerment, this sūtra mahāmudra cannot go beyond the common practice of the six perfections.

There are many terms for the state of buddhahood in various systems. The meaning is the same, but the means differ, and the length of time to the result as well.

The means of realizing mahāmudra is the two stages and or guru yoga. It is the practice of the an example wisdom introduced at the time of empowerment. This leads to buddhahood in one life, or seven or at most sixteen.

It takes three incalculable eons at minimum to progress to buddhahood via the sūtra path.

The level of insight experienced in Vajrayāna completion stage practices involve the experience of levels of mind more subtle than is possible in sutra meditation of plain śamatha and vipaśyāna, which is another reason why it is more rapid than sutra meditation.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, January 17th, 2015 at 3:59 AM

Title: Re: Being introduced to the nature of mind -- ?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

It is the practice of the an example wisdom introduced at the time of empowerment. This leads to buddhahood in one life, or seven or at most sixteen.

The level of insight experienced in Vajrayāna completion stage practices involve the experience of levels of mind more subtle than is possible in sutra meditation of plain śamatha and vipaśyāna, which is another reason why it is more rapid than sutra meditation.

Mother's Lap said:

How does example wisdom correlate/differ with vidya?

Malcolm wrote:

It is the same.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, January 17th, 2015 at 4:39 AM

Title: Re: Being introduced to the nature of mind -- ?

Content:

Mother's Lap said:

So Sarma 4th empowerment also leads to a buddhahood that does not return to the cause?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, of course.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, January 17th, 2015 at 5:01 AM

Title: Re: Is it possible to be Buddhist and Hindu?

Content:

Nirrtix said:

Even if a sort of blend of the beliefs? I know that some beliefs in Buddhism you can believe in god or gods, both are Karma based, and have some similar teachings.

I know this may seem like an odd idea, but Thich Nhat Hanh a Zen Mon wrote Living Buddha Living Christ, and thought both were compatible. I believe it is on the Buddhist side at least.

Anyhow, I am curious about this.

I am also curious about what many of you think about how some think about the Hindu belief that Buddha is an Avatar of Vishnu.

thank you,

Nirrtix

Malcolm wrote:

One cannot go for refuge to the Buddha and also go for refuge to some other god.

The Hindu idea that Buddha is an avatar of Vishnu is a pernicious legend, since it portrays Buddha as emanating solely for the purpose of tricking the asuras and leading them astray.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, January 17th, 2015 at 9:38 PM

Title: Re: Major empowerments

Content:

Punya said:

I can't really explain the context of this but if someone asked you to supply a list of any major empowerments you have received what are they likely to mean? What would normally constitute major and minor empowerments?

I assume Kalachakra and Lamdre are major empowerments but can someone give some examples in each of the main Tibetan traditions?

Thanks Punya

heart said:

In the Sarma tradition it seems it have to be a 2 day empowerment to be considered major. This is not really the case in the Nyingma tradition, it is a lot more complex matter.

/magnus

Malcolm wrote:

A dbang chen in gsar ma and snying ma are the same. Guhyagarba is one example, there are many others.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, January 17th, 2015 at 11:03 PM

Title: Re: Is it possible to be Buddhist and Hindu?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

One cannot go for refuge to the Buddha and also go for refuge to some other god.

Sherlock said:

You can make offerings to different deities but taking refuge in the three jewels means you recognize that there is no other way to liberation except Buddhadharma. If you think some other path leads to liberation and you go after that, then you break your refuge vows.

Ayu said:

I heard long Lamrim-lectures about the meaning of taking refuge to Buddha, taking refuge to Dharma & taking refuge to Sangha. I never heard this excluding statements. Maybe my ears were closed, but this sounds rather christian like: "You should not have any god besides Me." (?)

Malcolm wrote:

It says in the Vinayakārikā:

If who has gone for refuge to the Buddha
should serve one with a different aspect,
the lucidity of their minds shall become disturbed,
and based on that where can there be a result?

The Parinirvana Sūtra states very unambiguously:

One who seeks refuge in the Buddha
is a true upāsaka
and should never seek refuge
in other gods.

If one seeks refuge in the sublime Dharma,
be free from thoughts of harm and killing.

If one seeks refuge in the Sangha,

do not associate with tīrthikas.

Ayu said:

In our course there is one follower of Kriya-Yoga as Lamrim-student since four years. Our Geshe doesn't force her to convert. She attends also initiations and is like a full member of our sangha.

But i suppose, she didn't take refuge, because her heart beats for Kriya Yoga, it's her home.

Malcolm wrote:

Without taking refuge, you cannot enter Mahāyāna, let alone Vajrayāna. If this person never took refuge, she never received bodhisattva vows, and never received samaya, and in short, never received an initiation or an empowerment at all. Of course, what is likely the case is that she took refuge, etc., but damages her refuge continually through confusion. This common, which is why the Buddha spoke about it and why it is reflected in the Vinakarika I cited above.

Ayu said:

On the contrary I heard it is rather dangerous to cut off all your own roots to follow buddhist path in an artificial manner. One should keep in contact with ones own roots and all the aspects of ones being.

Malcolm wrote:

It is one thing to respect the religion of your ancestors, it is quite another to be confused about refuge.

The issue of Gorakṣanātha was raised. It is true he is counted among the 84 siddhas. It is said he was raised in a Buddhist family and later converted to Shaivism. It is a little unclear what his story is. But this anomaly sheds light on Hathayogapradipika's criticism of the Buddhist siddha Nagabodhi, showing that in such yogic circles there was definite tension between Hindus and Buddhists.

In the example of Mahasiddha Virupa, it was unclear to everyone whether he was Buddhist or Hindu. In order to find out, he was dragged in front of the King of Benares. When it was ascertained he was a Buddhist, he was condemned to death, bound in chains and flung into the Ganges. Houdini-like, he escaped. There are other episodes in his biography which illustrate that Buddhist siddhis circulated among non-Buddhists as part of their vratya, their yogic discipline, to challenge their own realization. In another episode of Virupa's life, after having been invited to be the leader of a royal panel of non-Buddhist panditas, when it was discovered the book to which he prostrated was the Prajñāpāramitā in 8000 lines, the king (a different one) ordered him to bow to a Shiva linga. Virupa replied that it was inappropriate for an elder brother to prostrate to the younger, and warned the king that it was not going to go well. The king insisted that Virupa prostrate to this linga, and after he prostrated to it, it shattered, eliciting a complaint from Shiva himself. Virupa was so skilled at conversion through magical displays, eventually Avalokiteshvara interceded and asked Virupa to cease terrifying people with his powers.

We can understand from all this that it is not appropriate for those who have sought refuge in the Three Jewels to seek refuge elsewhere. So the answer to the question "Can one be a Buddhist and a Christian", "can one be a Buddhist and a Hindu", "can one be a Buddhist and a religious Jew" is no. Just as one cannot serve two kings, but must bear allegiance to one above any other, likewise, one cannot belong to Buddhadhama and so some religion and expect any kind of result from the former, as it clearly states in the Vinaya stanza above.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, January 17th, 2015 at 11:52 PM

Title: Re: Is it possible to be Buddhist and Hindu?

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

Well, the point is that 'Buddhist' and 'Hindu' are words, and you're arguing about what people should take them to mean.

Malcolm wrote:

They are signifiers that indicate where you find your refuge.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, January 18th, 2015 at 12:00 AM

Title: Re: Being introduced to the nature of mind -- ?

Content:

cloudburst said:

Malcolm, it seems that you are saying that vidya is the same as example wisdom.

Mother's Lap said:

How does example wisdom correlate/differ with vidya?

Malcolm wrote:

It is the same.

cloudburst said:

Further, example wisdom is an insight, by means of a generic image, into the nature of the mind generated through the introduction by a vajra master.

prsvrnc said:

Can the vajra master give the student an "introduction to the nature of mind" and have it be a qualified instance of that, even if the insight generated in the student is only one that is a generic image?

Malcolm wrote:

This is precisely what is called "the example wisdom."

cloudburst said:

would this be a fair assessment of what you are saying?

Malcolm wrote:

There is no difference between the direct introduction of Dzogchen and the fourth empowerment, none whatsoever.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, January 18th, 2015 at 12:55 AM

Title: Re: Being introduced to the nature of mind -- ?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

There is no difference between the direct introduction of Dzogchen and the fourth empowerment, none whatsoever.

M

cloudburst said:

Does that include initial recognition being through means of a generic image?

Malcolm wrote:

There is no difference between the fourth empowerment and direct introduction. They both involve inductions of specific experiences.

The fourth empowerment is an introduction based on the induction of a specific experience in the student, likewise, so is direct introduction.

Though it is called the "word empowerment", the actual fourth empowerment is not truly contained within words such as "this is like space...", etc. But when combined with this or that specific experience, the fourth empowerment/direct introduction introduces the student to the nature of their minds experientially, and then it can be called the word empowerment because the nature of that experience has been described to them in a way that they understand the experience that they have had. That experience itself is the example, wisdom, not the words.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, January 18th, 2015 at 1:08 AM

Title: Re: Is it possible to be Buddhist and Hindu?

Content:

Nirrtix said:

Even if a sort of blend of the beliefs?

Jetavan said:

<http://threeroyalwarriors.tripod.com/index.html>.

Malcolm wrote:

Thus is a very strange website, based on some serious misconceptions.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, January 18th, 2015 at 1:34 AM

Title: Re: Sources for 'Early Mahayana'

Content:

Indrajala said:

The custom towards adopting Sanskrit was initially localized around the more heavily Brahmanical areas.

Malcolm wrote:

We see a move towards Sanskritization even during the Buddha's day. For example, there is a passage [I believe it is the Majjhima Nikāya] recounting how two Brahmin disciples of the Buddha derided another monk who only knew vernacular for being unable to distinguish between long and short vowels when he recited the Sūtras. These two earned the censure of the Buddha for sure, but we can see the roots of Sanskritization even in the Nikayas from this example.

When the Sarvastivadins set their canon down, they set it down in Sanskrit for the obvious reason I stated — it was the language of the educated all across India. In particular, if you hold that Sarvastivada come from the region of what is now Pakistan and the Punjab, this is the traditional homeland of the Vedas and according to the accounts you follow, a Brahmanical stronghold.

Plus, a very large proportion of monks in the time of the Buddha were bhramins, and so on and so forth.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, January 18th, 2015 at 1:41 AM

Title: Re: Tibetan language--indispensible in Tantra?

Content:

Lobsang Damchoi said:

Would like to pose a question--this is primarily for Westerners who do solo practice of the higher tantras on a regular basis, but I'm interested in anyone's views: your genuine

gut feelings, as well as whatever advice you may have received from teachers.

Is it a really serious disadvantage to one's personal progress and realization if one practices in the vernacular? I know lamas frequently mention the blessings of using Tibetan. But, IMHO Westerners have something that may compensate in some measure: a strong, almost visceral connection to the sound of Sanskrit. (At least it seems to be true in my case.) And Sanskrit is, after all, the original for most of the tantras we practice. If one is going to learn a 2nd, 3rd or 4th language for dharma practice, why not Sanskrit (if it's a practical alternative based on surviving sources)?

Also, is it really practical, where there are many complex referents and highly detailed imagery, to expect that the Tibetan will have the same practicality and power as one's native language?

In a recent book the author compared doing tantric sadhanas in a non-Tibetan language to being blind -- is it really that bad? Should I hand in my tantrika card until I'm fluent in Tibetan?

Malcolm wrote:

You should practice in the language you understand, rather than be a parrot.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, January 18th, 2015 at 2:49 AM

Title: Re: Being introduced to the nature of mind -- ?

Content:

cloudburst said:

Does that include initial recognition being through means of a generic image?

Malcolm wrote:

There is no difference between the fourth empowerment and direct introduction. They both involve inductions of specific experiences.

The fourth empowerment is an introduction based on the induction of a specific experience in the student, likewise, so is direct introduction.

Though it is called the "word empowerment", the actual fourth empowerment is not truly contained within words such as "this is like space...", etc. But when combined with this or that specific experience, the fourth empowerment/direct introduction introduces the student to the nature of their minds experientially, and then it can be called the word empowerment because the nature of that experience has been described to them in a way that they understand the experience that they have had. That experience itself is the example, wisdom, not the words.

cloudburst said:

According to your understanding, is that initial experience mediated by means of a generic image?

Malcolm wrote:

In the sense that words are abstractions, I suppose so. The words indicate the meaning of that experience.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, January 18th, 2015 at 4:39 AM

Title: Re: Being introduced to the nature of mind -- ?

Content:

cloudburst said:

According to your understanding, is that initial experience mediated by means of a generic image?

Malcolm wrote:

In the sense that words are abstractions, I suppose so. The words indicate the meaning of that experience.

cloudburst said:

We may have a different understanding of the meaning of generic image... for example, in my understanding, even example clear light in the mind of a tantric practitioner on the path of accumulation would be mediated by a generic image.

Since you said the experience of the word empowerment itself was the example wisdom, I am wondering if you believe this experience itself is mediated by a generic image, in a way similar to the experience of a yogi's example clear light.

thanks.

Malcolm wrote:

What is the underlying Tibetan or Sanskrit word you are using for "generic image"? What I am saying is that the example wisdom is a pratyakṣa, not an analysis.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, January 18th, 2015 at 5:44 AM

Title: Re: Tibetan language--indispensable in Tantra?

Content:

Konchok Namgyal said:

It was explained to me like this :

Even though you should do these practices in Tibetan you should also understand what it is you are saying.

The blessings flow through the language much as they do through the lineage.

especially the Mantras, the intonation and vibration of them effects body, speech and

mind.

Malcolm wrote:

If you are a translator, you should practice in Tibetan.

If you are with a Tibetan Lama doing a group practice, you should practice in "Tibetan", even if it sounds awful (it does).

If you are by yourself, you should practice in English, because just as mantras pronounced improperly will only delay your practice; just as mumbling your sadhanas will delay your practice; chanting liturgies in phoneticized "Tibetan" only results in making sounds which at best only vaguely resemble Tibetan, sounds which you do not understand, nor will be understood by anyone who is a Tibetan speaker, and thus you will merely cause obstacles for yourself.

This does not mean one should not take pains to learn Tibetan, which is the only proper way to learn how to pronounce it. This does not mean that certain prayers like the seven line prayer, the Migtsema, the short Barceh Lamsel and so on should not be recited in Tibetan — of course they should -- it is easy to learn how to properly pronounce a few lines of Tibetan. This does not mean one can practice a chod liturgy in English (attempts have been made but they all suck). But as a general rule English speakers who do not know Tibetan should practice in English apart from the above noted exceptions, that at least is my opinion.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, January 18th, 2015 at 6:08 AM

Title: Re: Being introduced to the nature of mind -- ?

Content:

conebeckham said:

ཙན་ཕྱི་ or "samanyartha" are the words I believe we're discussing.

Malcolm wrote:

These are unreal, if that is what he means, then no.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, January 18th, 2015 at 7:56 PM

Title: Re: Is it possible to be Buddhist and Hindu?

Content:

Ayu said:

If somebody feels to have a good connection to Hinduism, is it possible to practice it together with Buddhism?

Malcolm wrote:

I already answered this question.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, January 18th, 2015 at 8:00 PM

Title: Re: Being introduced to the nature of mind -- ?

Content:

prsvrnc said:

“In the original mahamudra tradition, the earliest masters literally sang the disciples into enlightenment with poems called dohas. The mind’s natural condition was directly pointed out by the master, who then gave instructions to negate any artificial activity during meditation. Realization of the mind’s awakened wisdom was a consequence of these pointing-out and nonmeditation instructions. This is ESSENCE MAHAMUDRA.

Later in the tradition, mahamudra practitioners first learned to refine the ordinary mind through mastering traditional generation-stage and completion-stage tantric practices, and then they took up mahamudra either concurrent with or following completion-stage practice. This is TANTRIC MAHAMUDRA.

Still later in the tradition, practitioners first refined the ordinary mind through mastering standard concentration and special insight meditation, and after some degree of mastery had been achieved, mahamudra was then introduced. This is SUTRA MAHAMUDRA.

Thus, mahamudra can be a sutra, tantra, or essence practice, depending on which practices are used to refine the coarse and subtle levels of the mind before essence instructions are given to address the very subtle mind.”

^^ AHH, I think this does clarify my Q. Mahamudra, then, I think singularly refers to realization at level of very subtle mind. in other words, a direct cognition of emptiness at level of first arya brumi, then, is not a mahamudra realization, even though it is realizing the nature of mind on one level.

Malcolm wrote:

From where are you taking the above quote? The person who wrote it seems to be unaware that the dohas are the songs of realization gained through practicing the two stages. Mahāmudra in reality only refers to the result of the two stages or guru yoga.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, January 18th, 2015 at 8:05 PM

Title: Re: Sources for 'Early Mahayana'

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

We see a move towards Sanskritization even during the Buddha's day. For example, there is a passage [I believe it is the Majjhima Nikāya] recounting how two Brahmin disciples of the Buddha derided another monk who only knew vernacular for being

unable to distinguish between long and short vowels when he recited the Sūtras.

Indrajala said:

Even if that is referring to Sanskrit phonetics, it isn't a historical record, and was probably inserted much later on because too many monks were not reciting things in the desired fashion.

Malcolm wrote:

Of course it is a historical record, don't be daft — your assertion that it is an interpolation is entirely arbitrary.

Indrajala said:

These two earned the censure of the Buddha for sure, but we can see the roots of Sanskritization even in the Nikayas from this example.

The Pali cannon is also a late period development (see Schopen quote above), and according to Norman it was a translation of something else.

So, your point doesn't stand.

Malcolm wrote:

Of course the points stands, because the same story is preserved in other canons.

Indrajala said:

When the Sarvastivadins set their canon down, they set it down in Sanskrit for the obvious reason I stated — it was the language of the educated all across India. Was it Sanskrit from the first day or did they adopt it later on?

Malcolm wrote:

It was set down in Sanskrit, from day one.

Indrajala said:

In particular, if you hold that Sarvastivada come from the region of what is now Pakistan and the Punjab, this is the traditional homeland of the Vedas and according to the accounts you follow, a Brahmanical stronghold.

You misunderstand the geography. Let's look at the map:

Malcolm wrote:

No, I don't. Let's look at a map — https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Indo-Aryan_migration_hypothesis#mediaviewer/File:Early_Vedic_Culture_%281700-1100_BCE%29.png

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, January 18th, 2015 at 8:10 PM

Title: Re: Sources for 'Early Mahayana'

Content:

Indrajala said:

The Brahman heartland was the Kuru-Pañcāla region highlighted in red. Gandhāra, Bactria and much of what is now Afghanistan was not. The northwest (referring to these latter regions) was especially cosmopolitan after Alexander, having plenty of Greek and Persian influences and peoples, many of whom were to adopt Buddhism and not use Sanskrit initially. If these had been Brahmanical strongholds as you misunderstand them to be, then they would have used Sanskrit from the start. However, we find Buddhists using languages like Bactrian and Gāndhārī instead. There are inscriptions of refuge verses found in Bactrian fashion using Bactrian script:

Malcolm wrote:

I am not talking about Bactria [Afghanistan], I am talking about Pakistan, around the Indus river valley east. In other words, the eastern side of the the Hindu Kush.

I never said either that Buddhists began using Sanskrit from the beginning, merely that a push to Sanskritize is evident from the beginning.

The Sarvastivadins wrote their canon down in Sanskrit, and this more than anything accounts for the widespread adoption of the Sarvastivada Abhidharma by most schools who were not connected with the proto-Theravada.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, January 20th, 2015 at 10:25 PM

Title: Re: Being introduced to the nature of mind -- ?

Content:

conebeckham said:

སྒྲིབ་ཀྱི་ or "samanyārtha" are the words I believe we're discussing.

Malcolm wrote:

These are unreal, if that is what he means, then no.

cloudburst said:

yes, don spyi.

I was confused when you wrote

malcolm said:

Can the vajra master give the student an "introduction to the nature of mind" and have it be a qualified instance of that, even if the insight generated in the student is only one

that is a generic image?

This is precisely what is called "the example wisdom."

Malcolm wrote:

I was answering yes to "Can the vajra master give the student an "introduction to the nature of mind" and have it be a qualified instance of that..."

It is not a universal, since universals cannot be perceived experientially since they do not exist.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, January 20th, 2015 at 10:53 PM

Title: Re: Single Son

Content:

naljor said:

Hi all,

where can I find Tibetan text of short version of the Single Son of all the Buddhas tantra or English translation?

Malcolm wrote:

There are many short versions - do you mean the one from the Khandro Nyinthig?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, January 23rd, 2015 at 1:04 PM

Title: Re: Is is possible to be Buddhist and Hindu?

Content:

Boomerang said:

I see no difference between the Advaita concept of Brahman/Atman and the Buddhist concept of Dharmadatu/Buddha-nature.

Malcolm wrote:

This means you have not understood what "dharmadhātu" means.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, January 25th, 2015 at 5:58 AM

Title: Re: Is is possible to be Buddhist and Hindu?

Content:

smcj said:

So he predicates the entire question on the idea that, according to Dzogchen, there is a some sort of ultimate ground of being that is not dependent on the minds of being.

Malcolm wrote:

No, he doesn't. But since you don't understand Dzogchen, you remain immune to correction on this critical point.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, January 25th, 2015 at 6:01 AM

Title: Re: Is it possible to be Buddhist and Hindu?

Content:

Adamantine said:

Isn't the main point to take away here that both traditions acknowledge that their methods - interred in philosophical language or not- are merely conditional devices to hook disciples in the right direction, but which shouldn't be confused with the actual realization/destination which is beyond the capacity of language (or conceptual mind) altogether?

I've heard that Hindus tend to fall away from the fruit in the direction of Eternalism, and Buddhists in the direction of Nihilism.. Of course the proper way of Buddhadharma is beyond either extreme.. But realistically, most of us here are falling in one direction or another.. Let's take stock and look at this soberly.

Boomerang said:

That sums up my opinion. Once nonduality is realized, it becomes apparent that none of the conceptual tools used up to that point are inherently true or false. That's why I feel comfortable saying that Advaita Vedanta and Buddhism are both legitimate even though they disagree on various points. Nagarjuna and Shankara were both masters of skillful means.

Malcolm wrote:

"Nonduality" in Buddhdharma is the simple fact that the two predicates of things, "existence" and "nonexistence", are false. That is all and nothing more.

That is not how Shankaracarya understands "nonduality", which is that the nondual state is "one without a second", i.e. existent.

Given that this is so, "nonduality" in Buddhdharma and Advaita are not even remotely commensurate.

Those who think so either do not understand a) Buddhadharma b) Advaita c) Both. In general, it is usually Advaitans who do not understand Buddhadharma who make the mistake of equating the treatment of nonduality in Buddhadharma and Advaita. One thing is for sure, the ancient Indian Buddhist masters were not confused about this distinction.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, January 25th, 2015 at 6:50 AM

Title: Re: Is it possible to be Buddhist and Hindu?

Content:

monktastic said:

I have heard it suggested that there is indeed more than one realization that can be appropriately called "nondual," and which feels absolutely final. The idea that "because they're both nondual, they are the same insight," or that they give rise to the same degree of freedom, is no longer so obvious to me.

For someone like me, the best way to evaluate whether two insights are the same, or whether one is "higher" than the other, is to ask people who feel that they've experienced both. For example, among people who have experienced the insight that "I am a separate body in a world of other bodies," and "the world and I are one," nobody seems to consider the former a deeper insight. This gives me some confidence.

If there are people who have experienced both "all is Brahman" (or "there is only Brahman"), and "even Brahman is empty," then maybe I can learn something about which of those views is more "accurate" (despite the fact that this word itself means progressively less along the path). I have come across a few individuals (both from a Vedanta background and a Buddhist background) who supposedly have experienced both insights, and their thoughts about whether these insights are the same (and just being expressed from different angles), or one is more freeing, is informative to my practice.

I'd rather not share much about what I learned (for a few reasons), but thought I'd share that this was something interesting for me to investigate.

Boomerang said:

I wouldn't really recommend asking an awakening person to describe their personal experiences. There are some things that can't be explained in words. Could you use words to explain what it's like to experience smells or hear sounds? Furthermore, a person could tell you one thing one day, have a deeper awakening, and then completely change their tune.

Malcolm wrote:

Ummm, no, not in Buddhadharma. The content of awakening is the same between a first stage bodhisattva and a buddha — the only things that differentiate the awakening of bodhisattvas and buddhas is that a bodhisattva still has obscurations of affliction and omniscience to remove, and a buddha does not. Otherwise, there is no difference in the emptiness they realize. They realize the same emptiness.

For this reason, for example, Maitreyanatha describes sentient beings, bodhisattvas and buddhas respectively as impure, impure/pure, and pure.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, January 25th, 2015 at 10:19 PM

Title: Re: Is it possible to be Buddhist and Hindu?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

[quote="smcj]Since the transcendent (beyond cause and effect) Wisdom Mind is unborn and never comes into existence it is not subject to the same deconstruction and can be said to be real.

[/quote]

From a Madhyamaka perspective, something that never comes into existence is a nonexistent, and cannot be considered real by Madhyamaka definitions. It is therefore also not immune to Madhyamaka analysis. In this respect too, "wisdom mind" is no different than all the other phenomena that do not arise (which is all of them), and therefore are not real.

The classical Tibetan refutation of gzhan stong is the Madhyamaka refutation of the unconditioned in the MMK:

If arising, abiding and perishing are not established, the conditioned is not established. If the condition has never been established, where will the unconditioned be established?

The classical Tibetan refutation of the charge of "rang stong" is the following statement from the MMK:

If there were some thing subtly not empty, there would be some thing to be empty, but as there is no thing that is not empty, where is there some thing to be empty?

Finally, the rejection of that the world has a nature:

Whatever is the nature of the tathāgata, that is the nature of the world.

As tathāgata has no nature, also the world has no nature.

In reality, following the opinion of Rongtong Sheja Kunrig, gzhan stong is a kind of transitional view between classical yogacara and madhyamaka, and is in fact little more than a variant of the false-aspectarian yogacara mainly promulgated by Ratnakarashanti.

When I spoke with Khenpo Tsultrim Gyatso, he did not admit, nor was I pressing the point, that Advaita and gzhan stong were identical: the point was that both systems were structurally similar only in that they asserted the relative was completely unreal and the ultimate completely real. Even though he agreed with this characterization, he strongly emphasized at that time that despite this similarity, Advaita does not have buddhahood as a result. I add this just so you are clear about what I asked, and what he replied.

The other thing that plagues gzhan stong is that unlike classical Indian Madhyamaka, of which two clear trends can be observed — gzhan stong, being largely a Tibetan innovation, has a plethora of interpretations.

Finally, as to the term "mahāmadhyamaka". As I have pointed out several times now, the earliest use of the term in a Tibetan text is by the Nyingma author Kawa Paltseg, the translator from the early 9th century. In his Explanation of The Stages of the View he refers to Mahāmadhyamaka as:

Freedom from the two extremes in the ultimate

is asserted to be mahāmadhyamaka

The of course we have Naropa's statement in the Abbreviation of the View, translated by Marpa Lotsawa, which paraphrases the Hevajra Tantra:

That thing, samsara,
that is nirvana,
that is mahāmadhyamaka.

Now, I am not very sure why some Kagyus have abandoned to view of Naropa and Marpa, but it sure seems that they have, because the above sentiment is impossible in gzhan stong, where nirvana is by definition empty of samsara, not identical with it.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, January 25th, 2015 at 11:18 PM

Title: Re: Is is possible to be Buddhist and Hindu?

Content:

smcj said:

but it a Great Madhyamaka

Malcolm wrote:

Mahāmadhyamaka is a term that has a complicated history. Gzhan stong does not have the trademark on it.

For example, Jetsun Dragpa Gyaltsen writes in his Great Song of Experience:

Freedom from extremes is beyond knowledge, expressions and objects,
Madhyamaka, Cittamatra and so on,
expressions in words are proliferations...

That view of Great Madhyamaka

is bliss without delusion because it is not a proposition.

This was written 100 years before Dolbupa was even born. In fact the Gelugpas also refer to Lama Tsongkhapa's view as Great Madhyamaka and so on.

Of course, if you examine, you will find the early Nyingma, Kadampa, Sakya and Kagyu uses of the term more consistent with how the term is used in Indian texts. For example Atisha writes extensively about Mahāmadhyamaka. So what does he say? In his Bodhimārgapradīpapañjikā-nāma, his autocommentary on the Lamp of the Path of Awakening, the foundation text for all Lam Rim:

To explain the essence of Master Nāgārjuna's teaching, that is comprehended to be the great madhyamaka [dbu ma chen po] beyond existence and nonexistence, the meaning of Prajñāpāramitā, and it is also taught the same way in the texts of other scholars. As such, it is the intention of Guru Bodhibhadra, and Jetsun Kusulupa. That nectar of Ārya Nāgārjuna satisfied Āryadeva, Candrakīrti, Śāntideva and Bodhibhadra, and a little of it was also sprinkled on me. With four great arguments all phenomena are proven to be nonarising — one should abide in the philosophical conclusion of the great madhyamaka through following the masters of the past.

One never finds the term "great madhyamaka" being used by the Yogacara authors.

One place where the term is used, and I believe is in fact its origin, is that it is used

frequently to describe the completion stage in tantric commentaries. But again, its description is not out of line with mainstream Indian Madhyamaka. For example, in the Śrīhevajranāmatantrārthasaṅgraha:

"After that, explain the meaning of the great madhyamaka free from all extremes...."

Or in the Śrīsaṃpuṭatilaka-nāma-yoginītantrarājasya ṭikā-smṛitisamdarśanāloka-nāma:

"Full expansion of qualities" means buddhahood comes from Mantrayāna and great madhyamaka.

Or the Bhagavadd-hevajrasādhana-abhisamayakramāρθaprasanna-nāma:

Meditate upon the great madhyamaka

free from all signs.

Or the Śrī-kālacakropadeśayogaṣaḍaṅgatantrapañjikā-nāma:

The nature of completion is called "great madhyamaka".

The Śrī-ḍākārṇavamahāyoginītantrarājasyaṭikāvohitaṭikā-nāma:

"Madhyamaka" is the essential Dharma and the great Madhyamaka of the Mahāyāna free from the four extremes is the awakening of the fortunate.

Or the Samājābhisamayālaṃkāravṛtti:

Having manifested the great madhyamaka that is immaculate like space...

The Upadeśaniścaya-nāma-śrīguhyasamājavṛtti states:

The neutral recitation is meditating body, speech and mind in the state of great madhyamaka — beyond all extremes of signs, because it isn't anything at all, it is called "neutral".

The Āryamañjuśrīnāmasaṃgīṭikāsārābhisamaya states:

"Due to being free it is like a reflection" — a mere reflection to which there is freedom from clinging, or even being free from the mere designation "reflection" is the great madhyamaka free from the four extremes. For which it is also said:

The diversity is not permanent,
nor is its annihilation proposed;
neither permanent nor annihilated,
also not both —
liberated from all four extremes
that is the reasoning of a mādhyaṃika.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, January 26th, 2015 at 1:39 AM

Title: Re: Is it possible to be Buddhist and Hindu?

Content:

smcj said:

As in a non-duality, yes.

Sherab Dorje said:

So if one posits an objectively existent reality (ultimate or relative), then can one be said to be expressing a non-dual view? Somehow, I think not.

smcj said:

Lol, tell that to a Vedāntan.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, and thus this is a crucial distinction between Buddhism and Vedanta in general. There may be some Buddhists who err in reifying the ultimate indeed, but they are rescued by the fact that there are higher views than those that reify the ultimate as "real" and eventually they will graduate to those when they accumulate sufficient merit to see the error of extreme views.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, January 26th, 2015 at 2:49 AM

Title: Re: Is it possible to be Buddhist and Hindu?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

You say:

Boomerang said:

You and Malcolm are arguing against a straw man Advaita.

Malcolm wrote:

Then you say:

In a nondual reality there can be no such thing as objective existence.

This is the Advaita we are arguing against:

This world is unreal like the image of a city in the mirror, it exists inside. Due to the power of Maya it looks as if it is manifested outside like in dream we see things outside ourselves. Salutations to Sri Shiva in the form of preceptor, who, at the time of self realization, makes one aware that Atma is without second (i.e. one).

Like a tree inside a seed this world is not manifested initially. Later on it gets manifested due to Maya in space, time and various forms. Salutations to Sri Shiva in the form of preceptor who like a magician, through his yogic powers, transforms it by his own will.

Who inspires to discriminate between the real 'I' and its imagined, unreal meaning; who imparts direct knowledge of 'You are That' as said in Vedas to his dependents; without direct connection with whom, it is impossible to cross this ocean of birth and death, salutations to Sri Shiva in the form of preceptor. ||3||

Who emanates from eyes and other sense organs like the light of a lamp kept in a vessel with multiple pores; by whose grace, I know that this light only illumines the entire world, salutations to Sri Shiva in the form of preceptor. ||4||

Those who consider themselves as body, life force, sense organs, dynamic intelligence or nothing are deluded like women, kids, blinds and dull-minded. Who ends this great

anxiety due to the play of Maya, salutations to Sri Shiva in the form of preceptor. ||5||

The unborn, unaware self is properly covered due to Maya like Sun and Moon eclipsed by Rahu. It shines forth once all barriers are removed. Who makes it realize that you are one with that slept self, salutations to Sri Shiva in the form of preceptor. ||6||

Self is ever present in various stages of body like childhood, etc., various stages of mind like waking, etc. and unattached. Who always resonates like 'I am That', who reveals himself happily and beautifully on remembering, salutations to Sri Shiva in the form of preceptor. ||7||

Self sees this world in many forms of himself like action and cause, servant and owner, teacher and disciple, father and son, etc. By whose power, Maya; Self looks to be wandering in dream and waking, salutations to Sri Shiva in the form of preceptor. ||8||

Whatever is seen in this moving and non-moving world is made up of eight forms of Shiva - Earth, Water, Fire, Air, Space, Sun, Moon and Self. On contemplation, there is nothing beyond him, salutations to all pervading Sri Shiva in the form of preceptor. ||9||

'You are Self of all' is realized by your worship, listening about you, thinking over you, meditating and singing for you. You, the almighty God, are experienced with all your unstoppable grandeur, in eight forms. Salutations to Sri Shiva in the form of preceptor. ||10||

— Dakshinamurti Stotram

<https://sites.google.com/site/vedicscripturesinc/home/srishankaracharya/dakshinamurtistotram>

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, January 26th, 2015 at 3:43 AM

Title: Re: Is it possible to be Buddhist and Hindu?

Content:

smcj said:

The thing is, smcj, you do not need to diss Nagarjuna at all: insofar as I know, all Shengtongpas do claim to follow and be in perfect accord with Nagarjunian Madhyamaka. You would be the first one to disagree.

From "Progressive Stages of Meditation on Emptiness" by Khenpo Tsultrim, p.66:

This non-conceptual Wisdom Mind is not the object of the conceptualizing process and so is not negated by Madhyamaka reasoning. Therefore, it can be said to be the only thing that has absolute and true existence.

(formatting mine)

Nagarjuna's Madhyamaka is provisional and Great Madhyamaka is definitive according to Dudjom R. You guys have to stop holding up Nagarjuna as definitive if you're going to accept the supremacy of the 3rd Turning as does Dudjom R.

Malcolm wrote:

But I don't accept the three turning scheme the way you, Dudjom Rinpoche, Khenpo Tsultrim Gyatso and so on present it at all. I prefer another scheme, in my opinion more profound, which is taken from the Sandhivākarana-tantra:

The pleasing single vajra word
becomes many different [words]
from the perspective of the mentalities of trainees.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, January 26th, 2015 at 3:46 AM

Title: Re: Is it possible to be Buddhist and Hindu?

Content:

Boomerang said:

60 Commentaries on philosophies constitute a thick jungle in which a roaming mind may easily get lost, in its own delusion. Therefore, true seekers of Brahman should, through right efforts, come to experience the Real Nature of the Self.

61 For him who has been stung by the cobra of ignorance, the only remedy is the knowledge of Brahman. Of what use are the Vedas and the scriptures, mantras and medicines to such a victim of poison?[/i]

With that, I don't think there's much more I can contribute to the thread. Love to all.

Malcolm wrote:

Once again, here Advaita and Buddhadharma are absolutely incommensurate, and as I pointed out, it is only Hindus who imagine that Advaita and Buddhadharma are talking about the same thing, i.e., knowledge of Brahman.

The only resemblance between Advaita and Buddhadharma is that we both seek to solve the same problem — avidyā. What we understand vidyā to be is completely different.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, January 26th, 2015 at 6:30 AM

Title: Re: Is it possible to be Buddhist and Hindu?

Content:

Boomerang said:

60 Commentaries on philosophies constitute a thick jungle in which a roaming mind may easily get lost, in its own delusion. Therefore, true seekers of Brahman should, through right efforts, come to experience the Real Nature of the Self.

61 For him who has been stung by the cobra of ignorance, the only remedy is the knowledge of Brahman. Of what use are the Vedas and the scriptures, mantras and medicines to such a victim of poison?[/i]

With that, I don't think there's much more I can contribute to the thread. Love to all.

Malcolm wrote:

Once again, here Advaita and Buddhadharma are absolutely incommensurate, and as I pointed out, it is only Hindus who imagine that Advaita and Buddhadharma are talking about the same thing, i.e., knowledge of Brahman.

The only resemblance between Advaita and Buddhadharma is that we both seek to solve the same problem — avidyā. What we understand vidyā to be is completely different.

Boomerang said:

Is Buddhist nonduality something that humans are able to perfectly describe through language? Is Advaita nonduality something that humans can perfectly describe through language?

Malcolm wrote:

First of all, the way the term is used in Buddhadharma and Advaita are very different.

For example, the Tarkajvaka, a famous commentary on Nagarjuna 's MMK states:

Therefore, that which is the inner earth element, that is is the external earth element, that is the meaning of nondual.

Or:

When that yogin dwells in the experience of nonconceptual discerning wisdom [prajñā] and experiences nonduality, at that time, ultimately, the entire reality of objects of knowledge are as follows, of the same characteristics, like space, appearing in the manner of a nonappearance since their characteristics are nonexistent, therefore, there isn't even the slightest thing that is not empty, so where could there be emptiness? Since there are no mental discriminations, there is no conceptual clinging of mutual dependence."

Or the Kaumudī, a famous Buddhist tantric commentary, states:

Because of the absence of inherent existence, the nondual essence of all phenomena is emptiness.

It also is understood, as Dzogchungpa point outed, as a consciousness devoid of subject and object, as the Ḍākinīvajrapañjara[-mahā]tantrarājasya pañjikā[-prathamapaṭala-]mukhabandha-nāma

One is a nondual consciousness.

Two is an apprehending subject and an apprehended object.

These quotes are not exhaustive, but they show that "nondual" in Buddhadharma is really quite different than Advaita.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, January 26th, 2015 at 6:48 AM

Title: Re: Is it possible to be Buddhist and Hindu?

Content:

Sherab said:

In Advaita Vedanta, non-duality meant being one. In Buddhism, non-duality simply means not two and not being one.

Boomerang said:

Your understanding of Advaita Vedanta is faulty. I've been speaking against this understanding for a few days now, for example, in this post:

<https://www.dharmawheel.net/viewtopic.php?f=77&t=18560&start=80#p268881>

The way Advaita Vedanta works, a student will be taught a series of concepts which progressively introvert the mind. When one concept has done its job, it will be discarded and replaced by another. The student's mind becomes subtler and subtler until eventually all ignorance falls away and nonduality is realized. The people in this thread are picking out individual concepts that are used in the Advaita sadhana, and confusing them to be the whole system.

Malcolm wrote:

Not really, I cited the Dakshinamurthi for you in full and it is clearly at odds with Buddhadharma.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, January 26th, 2015 at 7:04 AM

Title: Re: Is it possible to be Buddhist and Hindu?

Content:

Boomerang said:

This also shows that you don't understand Advaita Vedanta. I don't mean to sound condescending, but you're simply mistaken.

Malcolm wrote:

Mistaken about what? That the view of Buddhadharma and the view of Advaita are not commensurate?

The Dakshinamurti itself criticizes the view of emptiness.

Deham pranam api indriyanyapi chalaam,
Budhim cha soonyam vidhu,

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, January 26th, 2015 at 7:09 AM

Title: Re: Is it possible to be Buddhist and Hindu?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The only resemblance between Advaita and Buddhadharma is that we both seek to solve the same problem — avidyā. What we understand vidyā to be is completely different.

Is Buddhist nonduality something that humans are able to perfectly describe through language? Is Advaita nonduality something that humans can perfectly describe through language?

First of all, the way the term is used in Buddhadharma and Advaita are very different.

For example, the Tarkajvaka, a famous commentary on Nagarjuna 's MMK states:

Therefore, that which is the inner earth element, that is is the external earth element, that is the meaning of nondual.

Or:

When that yogin dwells in the experience of nonconceptual discerning wisdom [prajñā] and experiences nonduality, at that time, ultimately, the entire reality of objects of knowledge are as follows, of the same characteristics, like space, appearing in the manner of a nonappearance since their characteristics are nonexistent, therefore, there isn't even the slightest thing that is not empty, so where could there be emptiness? Since there are no mental discriminations, there is no conceptual clinging of mutual dependence."

Or the Kaumudī, a famous Buddhist tantric commentary, states:

Because of the absence of inherent existence, the nondual essence of all phenomena is emptiness.

It also is understood, as Dzogchungpa point out, as a consciousness devoid of subject and object, as the Ḍākinīvajrapañjara[-mahā]tantrarājasya pañjikā[-prathamapaṭala-]mukhabandha-nāma

One is a nondual consciousness.

Two is an apprehending subject and an apprehended object.

These quotes are not exhaustive, but they show that "nondual" in Buddhadharma is really quite different than Advaita.

Boomerang said:

Thank you for the quotations. Here's a quotation from one of my favorite Advaita websites. It's quite similar to your final one:

Reality is you, whole and complete non-dual consciousness. This is the essence of Vedanta's teachings.

The ways Buddhism and Advaita use the term consciousness aren't exactly the same, but similarities like this are what I'm talking about when I say I can see the same

nondual core in both religions. And that's why I'm Buddhist and Hindu. The two religions have more similarities than their attitude toward avidya. You clearly know much more about Buddhism than me, but I think I know more about Advaita than you. Otherwise you wouldn't have even used that last quotation, or made that earlier statement about Advaita positing absolute existence after I said existence and non-existence are mithya.

Malcolm wrote:

The point is that in Buddhadharma, nondual consciousness is subjective and personal, not objective and universal. You can't simply cherry pick what you like.

Then of course there is the issue of refuge, which I brought up above. Hindus might think they can take refuge in Shiva and the Buddha, for example. But a real Buddhist would never make this mistake.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, January 26th, 2015 at 7:50 AM

Title: Re: Is it possible to be Buddhist and Hindu?

Content:

Boomerang said:

I cannot be objectified. I neither exist nor do I not exist...

Sherab Dorje said:

Fourth extreme, according to Nagarjuna.

monktastic said:

Well shoot, I guess someone should have told Kalu Rinpoche (sorry, can't use quote functionality on this device). Or maybe it's just impossible to speak about without falling into a trap.

<http://www.iol.ie/~taeger/mahamud/mahamud.html>

The third Karmapa, (Rangjung Dorje), wrote a prayer of aspiration for the realization of Mahamudra in which he said, "It is not existent because even the Buddha could not see it, but it is not nonexistent because it is the basis or origin of all samsara.(6).and nirvana.(7)." It does not constitute a contradiction to say that mind neither exists nor does not exist; it is simultaneously existent and nonexistent.

Malcolm wrote:

It is a contradiction, this is why it is rejected explicitly by the Buddha and by Nāgārjuna. The four extremes are existent, nonexistence, both and neither. Nāgārjuna rejects these in many texts, as does the Buddha in many sutras.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, January 26th, 2015 at 7:51 AM

Title: Re: Is it possible to be Buddhist and Hindu?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Then of course there is the issue of refuge, which I brought up above. Hindus might think they can take refuge in Shiva and the Buddha, for example. But a real Buddhist would never make this mistake.

Boomerang said:

You're certainly entitled to that opinion, and I have no desire to change your mind. I'm only participating in this thread so that everyone knows that it is possible to be Hindu and Buddhist, regardless of what some people may think. Personally, I never took refuge in Shiva, but I do pray to Ganesha, as he's a popular symbol of nonduality in Advaita Vedanta.

There are scriptures that say Buddhists can only take refuge in the Buddha. I have no problem with that, because every symbol of nonduality is a symbol of Buddha's wisdom.

Malcolm wrote:

You did not address the issue I raised.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, January 26th, 2015 at 7:53 AM

Title: Re: Is it possible to be Buddhist and Hindu?

Content:

Boomerang said:

Advaita doesn't teach that everything ultimately comes from one source.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, in fact it does. At the level of māya, Advaita supports creation of the universe by Īśvara.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, January 26th, 2015 at 9:19 AM

Title: Re: Is it possible to be Buddhist and Hindu?

Content:

Boomerang said:

Advaita doesn't teach that everything ultimately comes from one source.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, in fact it does. At the level of māya, Advaita supports creation of the universe by

Ísvara.

Boomerang said:

I'm not going to give you a crash course in Advaita. I've been doing that for 2 days now and it hasn't done much. If you want to understand the difference between relative reality and absolute reality, message me and I'll recommend some books.

Malcolm wrote:

It may surprise you to know that I have in fact taken teachings from actual Advaitans. I do understand the difference between what Advaita [e.g. Shankara] says on a relative level and what it says on the ultimate level. Both perspectives are dissatisfactory from a Buddhist POV. Neither, from a Buddhist POV is predicated on dependent origination.

Boomerang said:

I already said that there can be no objectivity in a nondual reality, but I don't think you understood.

Malcolm wrote:

I did understand. It is a dodge. The Advaita POV is summed nicely in "One without a second." In Buddhadharma on the other hand, "nonduality", depending on which nonduality one is speaking of, is a subjective experience confined to a person's mindstream. Of course there is an objective nonduality, called "śūnyatā". Śūnyatā is rejected by Advaita [e.g. Shankara].

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, January 26th, 2015 at 9:24 AM

Title: Re: Is it possible to be Buddhist and Hindu?

Content:

monktastic said:

<http://www.iol.ie/~taeger/mahamud/mahamud.html>

The third Karmapa, (Rangjung Dorje), wrote a prayer of aspiration for the realization of Mahamudra in which he said, "It is not existent because even the Buddha could not see it, but it is not nonexistent because it is the basis or origin of all samsara.(6).and nirvana.(7)." It does not constitute a contradiction to say that mind neither exists nor does not exist; it is simultaneously existent and nonexistent.

Malcolm wrote:

It is a contradiction, this is why it is rejected explicitly by the Buddha and by Nāgārjuna. The four extremes are existent, nonexistence, both and neither. Nāgārjuna rejects these in many texts, as does the Buddha in many sutras.

monktastic said:

(Emphasis mine). What I pasted is a direct quote from Kalu Rinpoche. At the very least, the fact that we can so easily refute masters from our own tradition gives me some indication of how seriously to take refutations of others.

Malcolm wrote:

You know, Kalu Rinpoche did not speak English.

I am often amazed at how often bad translations are given canonical status.

To sum up — it is a specific point of fact that in Buddhadharma all four extremes are refuted. It is impossible for a mind to both exist and not exist. Do you really want a citation blizzard?

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, January 26th, 2015 at 10:57 AM

Title: Re: Is it possible to be Buddhist and Hindu?

Content:

smcj said:

You know, Kalu Rinpoche did not speak English.

No he didn't. But he was extremely conversant with the various presentations on emptiness and was generally thought of as a major Shentongpa. That quote is entirely in keeping with his style of teaching.

Malcolm wrote:

No one conversant with Buddhist teaching would maintain the possibility that something could both exist and not exist at the same time. Hence, it must be an error of translation.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, January 26th, 2015 at 10:19 PM

Title: Re: Is it possible to be enlightened, but not teach Buddhism

Content:

Simon E. said:

But not all non Buddhist teachings contradict all Buddhadharma. Perhaps you can give examples of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas giving teachings that contradict Dependent Origination for example...

Malcolm wrote:

There are common teachings, such as the four brahma viharas and so on, then there are uncommon teachings such as dependent origination, emptiness and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, January 27th, 2015 at 1:18 AM

Title: Re: Is it possible to be Buddhist and Hindu?

Content:

Bhikkhu Bodhi said:

One of the most challenging issues facing Theravada Buddhism in recent years has been the encounter between classical Theravada vipassana meditation and the "non-dualistic" contemplative traditions best represented by Advaita Vedanta and Mahayana Buddhism. Responses to this encounter have spanned the extremes, ranging from vehement confrontation all the way to attempts at synthesis and hybridization. While the present essay cannot pretend to illuminate all the intricate and subtle problems involved in this sometimes volatile dialogue, I hope it may contribute a few sparks of light from a canonically oriented Theravada perspective.

daverupa said:

Some interesting context, helpfully pointing out some areas where Mahayana & Advaita Vedanta are more in-line with each other than with Theravada. It's an interesting whirl.

Malcolm wrote:

I respect Bhiku Bodhi, but he is very off base in this article.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, January 27th, 2015 at 1:29 AM

Title: Re: Is it possible to be Buddhist and Hindu?

Content:

Boomerang said:

Maybe I should clarify. The reason I think Advaita Vedanta and Mahayana Buddhism's systems are somewhat compatible is that Mahayana Buddhism has the concept of Buddha-nature. I've given some quotations that show similarity between descriptions of Buddha-nature and of the self in Advaita.

Malcolm wrote:

Such equations between tathāgatagarbha and the atman of the tirthikas are explicitly rejected by the Buddha in the Lankāvatara sutra and so on.

Boomerang said:

But anyways, the conceptual systems aren't what really matter. It's nonduality that matters, because nonduality can't be objectified. And if it can't be objectified, you can't say that one nonduality is different than another.

Malcolm wrote:

Of course you can say that understandings of the term "nondual" are not commensurable. "Nondualism" in Buddhadharma is predicated on dependent origination. Madhyamaka is the ultimate nondual teaching of the Buddha. However, without the view of dependent origination it is not possible to realize emptiness.

Boomerang said:

Some people think that I'm cherry picking scriptures, but the main reason I think it's possible to be Hindu and Buddhist is that they have a commonality beyond scripture: ineffable nondual realization.

Malcolm wrote:

The nonduality (brahman) realized by Advaitans is not the same nonduality (śūnyatā) realized in Buddhadharma. Brahman and śūnyatā are not the same thing at all. Advaitans such as Shankara reject śūnyatā completely, as well as rejecting dependent origination and so on.

Boomerang said:

I read a scientific paper on people who've had non-symbolic realizations in a variety of traditions. The study showed that people who have only had one realization tend to be dogmatic, and view their realization as the ultimate and only true enlightenment. The first realization gives you a grounded feeling like you've seen the most real reality there could ever be. For people who have had several realizations, that feeling of certainty gets blown out the water, and in turn, they are more open-minded to different theories of enlightenment.

Malcolm wrote:

As I pointed out, there is only one realization in Buddhadharma that is worth a damn, and that is the realization of emptiness aka śūnyatā. The realization of śūnyatā between a bodhisattva and a buddha is only a matter of degrees, but not substance.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, January 27th, 2015 at 2:42 AM

Title: Re: Is it possible to be Buddhist and Hindu?

Content:

Boomerang said:

The nonduality (brahman) realized by Advaitans is not the same nonduality (śūnyatā) realized in Buddhadharma. Brahman and śūnyatā are not the same thing at all. Advaitans such as Shankara reject śūnyatā completely, as well as rejecting dependent origination and so on.

The concept of Advaita's nonduality is not the same as Buddhism's concept of nonduality. It's wise for a teacher to discourage a student from mixing both together. Mixing them would likely lead to confusion. Still, none of this has any bearing on nonduality itself. Nonduality is beyond "this is" and "this is not," like those scriptures I quoted earlier say.

Malcolm wrote:

There is no "nonduality" that stands alone by itself, somewhere else, or even here.

As I said before, "nondual" is a technical term in Buddhadharma that has many uses. Principally speaking, it refers to an individual's state of consciousness free from subject and object or it refers to the absence of relative dualities such as samsara/nirvana,

being/nonbeing, pure/impure, nondual/dual, etc. In the latter case, this absence of dualities itself is predicated on emptiness free from extremes.

Even so, nonduality is a meaningless expression without reference to plurality, so even nonduality cannot bear analysis. For this reason Nāgārjuna, when commenting on his Praise of the Three Kāyas states when commenting on this line, "Not one, not many, becoming the basis for the very abundant benefit of myself and others."

For "not one, not many..." and so on, one and many means one and many i.e., both are nondual. Many means plural. Conventionally speaking "I prostate" to that which is the dharmakāya, neither one nor many. If it is asked "For what reason do we say though it is not one, it is also not many?" Due to that, since it is said "non-arisen from the beginning", that which never arose from the beginning cannot have a phase of being one or many; like space, its nature is completely uninterrupted. Since all phenomena arise in the same way, therefore, what arises where? That which becomes a form of diversity is not seen by anyone, i.e. just as grains of rice arise from rice seed, likewise, whatever arises from emptiness is not permanent nor annihilated. Why? Free of all concepts, the victors see that to be empty and illusory.

The point I am trying to get you to understand is that "nonduality" spoken of by the Buddha, Nāgārjuna, Asanga and so on is nothing like the nonduality spoken of by Shankara, etc. Now of course, many speculate — on the basis of Gaudapada's Agamasāstra's fourth section — that Shankara was influenced by Mahāyāna Buddhism. If so, Shankara sure spends a lot of time in his commentary on the Brahma Sutras trying to prove that he is not influenced by Mahāyāna.

In the above comment, an important point must not be overlooked. Here Nāgārjuna is equating all phenomena's mode of arising with the mode of arising of the non-arisen dharmakāya — which is to say that phenomena do not arise. It is the perception of the nonarising of phenomena which leads to the ultimate attainment of the dharmakāya. That perception of the nonarising of phenomena is the perception of emptiness.

Moreover, Nāgārjuna invokes the principle of likeness of causes and effects — i.e. just as rice arises from rice seed, likewise, just as emptiness is neither permanent or annihilated, whatever arise from emptiness is neither permanent or annihilated, the Buddhas perceive that to be empty and illusory, without any vikalpa, conceptuality or imagination.

There is no permanent substrate which accounts for the arising of phenomena ultimately, and relatively, all phenomena arise because of cause and conditions — dependent origination — rather than from a creative principle such as Ívara and so on.

Then of course there is also the fact that Advaita heavily depends on Saṃkhya, the Saṃkhya notion of puruṣa as we can see in the Tattvabodhi and other texts, this is yet another reason why the principle of nonduality in Buddhadharma and Advaita are not commensurable and so do not lead the same realization.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Tuesday, January 27th, 2015 at 2:43 AM
Title: Re: Is is possible to be Buddhist and Hindu?
Content:

Boomerang said:
Yes, these are all my personal opinions.

Malcolm wrote:
These are not my personal opinions — they are the opinions of very many generations of Buddhist scholars and yogis.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Tuesday, January 27th, 2015 at 3:04 AM
Title: Re: Is is possible to be Buddhist and Hindu?
Content:

Sherlock said:
Buddhist texts say advaya, not advaita. "Not two" instead of "nondual"

<http://www.byomakusuma.org/Teachings/MadhyamikaBuddhismVisAVisHinduVedanta.aspx>

Boomerang said:
Advaita means not-two in Sanskrit.

Malcolm wrote:
Actually it means "not-twoness", the tā suffix causes it to have a slightly different meaning that advaya, "nondual".

Author: Malcolm
Date: Tuesday, January 27th, 2015 at 3:40 AM
Title: Re: Is is possible to be Buddhist and Hindu?
Content:

Malcolm wrote:
I respect Bhiku Bodhi, but he is very off base in this article.

daverupa said:
Specifically...?

Malcolm wrote:
Specifically because he lumps Mahāyāna together with Advaita.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, January 27th, 2015 at 7:05 AM

Title: Re: Is it possible to be Buddhist and Hindu?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

I respect Bhiku Bodhi, but he is very off base in this article because he lumps Mahāyāna together with Advaita.

daverupa said:

Well, he lumps up any school of thought which speak of non-duality of any kind, and then discusses how non-duality is simply not presented over the course of the threefold training.

Malcolm wrote:

Sure it is, in two notable places in the Pali canon:

"'Everything exists': That is one extreme. 'Everything doesn't exist': That is a second extreme. Avoiding these two extremes, the Tathagata teaches the Dhamma via the middle: [

This is precisely the so called "nondualism" discussed in Mahāyāna.

Also:

One who has reached the end

has no criterion [3]

by which anyone would say that —

for him it doesn't exist.

When all phenomena are done away with,[4]

all means of speaking

are done away with as well.

Please compare these two statements with what I have written above.

daverupa said:

This isn't to say that Mahayana and Advaita are discussing the same non-duality, but perhaps this thread demonstrates how the use of that ideation causes certain problems vis-a-vis presenting the Dhamma accurately to e.g. Advaita folk, and perhaps indicates a different tack to be taken.

Malcolm wrote:

The issue is that some western scholars, mainly David Loy, decided to label Mahāyāna a form of nondualism because the term "nondual" is used on occasion, and indiscriminately conflated this with Advaita, Kashmiri Shivism and so on.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, January 27th, 2015 at 8:06 AM

Title: Re: Is it possible to be Buddhist and Hindu?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Sure it is, in two notable places in the Pali canon:

"'Everything exists': That is one extreme. 'Everything doesn't exist': That is a second extreme. Avoiding these two extremes, the Tathagata teaches the Dhamma via the middle: [

This is precisely the so called "nondualism" discussed in Mahāyāna.

anjali said:

Indeed. By way of comparison, here is an exchange between Vivekananda and Ramakrishna, who are as "Hindu" as it gets: NARENDRA [Vivekananda] (to a disciple present:) "'Worldly people, who are engrossed in sense-objects, say that everything exists— asti. But the Mayavadis, the illusionists, say that nothing exists— nasti. The experience of a Buddha is beyond both 'existence' and 'non-existence'

RAMAKRISHNA: "This 'existence' and 'non-existence' are attributes of Prakriti. The Reality is beyond both."

Malcolm wrote:

What Ramakrishna says above is a pure Advaitan spin on Samkhya. He is referring here to the Advaitan interpretation of Purusha, aka Brahmin.

So no, Ramakrishna does not "get it", as it were. There is no reality beyond the extremes of existence and non-existence, and this of course is the meaning of the famed silence of Vimalakirti in the non-duality chapter:

When the bodhisattvas had given their explanations, they all addressed the crown prince Manjusri: "Manjusri, what is the bodhisattva's entrance into nonduality?"

Manjusri replied, "Good sirs, you have all spoken well. Nevertheless, all your explanations are themselves dualistic. To know no one teaching, to express nothing, to say nothing, to explain nothing, to announce nothing, to indicate nothing, and to designate nothing - that is the entrance into nonduality."

Then the crown prince Manjusri said to the Licchavi Vimalakirti, "We have all given our own teachings, noble sir. Now, may you elucidate the teaching of the entrance into the principle of nonduality!"

Thereupon, the Licchavi Vimalakirti kept his silence, saying nothing at all.

As we can see, this passage reflects the Buddha's teaching on the inexpressibility cited in the Sutta Nipata.

Further, the Samputa Tantra states:

Not empty, not non-empty,

there is also nothing to perceive in the middle.

Thus we can see that Ramakrishna's statement does not correspond to the Buddha's teaching.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, January 27th, 2015 at 9:14 AM

Title: Re: Is it possible to be Buddhist and Hindu?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Then the crown prince Manjusri said to the Licchavi Vimalakirti, "We have all given our own teachings, noble sir. Now, may you elucidate the teaching of the entrance into the principle of nonduality!"

Thereupon, the Licchavi Vimalakirti kept his silence, saying nothing at all.

anjali said:

Who could ask for a better teaching on nonduality?! As Ramana Maharshi has said, "Silence is the true Upadesa (teachings). It is the perfect upadesa. It is suited only for the most advanced seeker. The others are unable to draw full inspiration from it. Therefore they require words to explain the truth. But truth is beyond words. It does not admit of explanation. All that it is possible to do is to indicate it. "

Malcolm wrote:

I remain unconvinced that Ramana's silence is Vimalakirti's.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, January 27th, 2015 at 10:23 AM

Title: Re: Is it possible to be Buddhist and Hindu?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

I remain unconvinced that Ramana's silence is Vimalakirti's.

anjali said:

Of course. Aside from whether Ramana's silence is Vimalakirti's silence, taken at face value, do you disagree with the quote?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, as a matter of fact, i do.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, January 27th, 2015 at 10:11 PM

Title: Re: Is it possible to be Buddhist and Hindu?

Content:

Boomerang said:

Manjusri replied, "Good sirs, you have all spoken well. Nevertheless, all your explanations are themselves dualistic. To know no one teaching, to express nothing, to say nothing, to explain nothing, to announce nothing, to indicate nothing, and to designate nothing - that is the entrance into nonduality."

Then the crown prince Manjusri said to the Licchavi Vimalakirti, "We have all given our own teachings, noble sir. Now, may you elucidate the teaching of the entrance into the principle of nonduality!"

Thereupon, the Licchavi Vimalakirti kept his silence, saying nothing at all. How is this any different than what I've been saying the whole time about nonduality being beyond words?

Malcolm wrote:

Superficially, it is not — but when you penetrate the Vimalakirti-nirdesha a little deeper you find:

Vimalakirti: Manjusri, when something is baseless, how can it have any root? Therefore, all things stand on the root which is baseless.

This the meaning of Vimalakirti's silence.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, January 27th, 2015 at 10:16 PM

Title: Re: Is it possible to be Buddhist and Hindu?

Content:

anjali said:

Care to elaborate which parts you disagree with? Here is the quote reformatted for easier discussion. Feel free to slice and dice.

Silence is the true Upadesa (teachings).

It is the perfect upadesa.

It is suited only for the most advanced seeker.

The others are unable to draw full inspiration from it.

Therefore they require words to explain the truth.

But truth is beyond words. It does not admit of explanation.

All that it is possible to do is to indicate it.

Malcolm wrote:

Silence has a context. In this case, we have to examine Ramana's silence in the context of his speech:

The seer and the object seen are like the rope and the snake. Just as the knowledge of the rope

which is the substrate will not arise unless the false knowledge of the illusory serpent goes, so the

realization of the Self which is the substrate will not be gained unless the belief that the world is

real is removed.

http://www.sriramanamaharshi.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/12/who_am_i.pdf

This is the meaning of Ramana's silence. Compare with Vimalakirti: Manjusri, when something is baseless, how can it have any root? Therefore, all things stand on the root which is baseless.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, January 27th, 2015 at 11:29 PM

Title: Re: Is it possible to be enlightened, but not teach Buddhism

Content:

Konchok Namgyal said:

Dipankara was fully enlightened Buddha and did not teach.....

Malcolm wrote:

What makes you think this?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, January 27th, 2015 at 11:51 PM

Title: Re: Is it possible to be Buddhist and Hindu?

Content:

daverupa said:

Basically (& allegedly, though really it's well-demonstrated) Vedanta lifts/steals/creatively acquires quite a bit from Mahayana, and then goes off the rails with it while trying to hide that fact. Good times.

Malcolm wrote:

Indeed, it is the case that Gaudapada rather indiscriminately borrows various kinds of arguments from Madhyamaka and Yogacara in his refutation of satkaryavadins [Samkhya, etc.] and asatkaryavadins [Vaisheshika and so on]; but since he does so without reference to dependent origination and emptiness, and with reference to brahman, etc., he, and his followers like Shankara, indeed "go off the rails."

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, January 27th, 2015 at 11:58 PM

Title: Re: Is it possible to be Buddhist and Hindu?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Compare with Vimalakirti:

Manjusri, when something is baseless, how can it have any root? Therefore, all things stand on the root which is baseless.

dzogchungpa said:

I don't know about this Vimalakirti, but here's something from ChNN: Through Dzogchen we can really understand what God is and we don't have to worry if there is a God or not. God always exists as our real nature, the base, for everybody.

Malcolm wrote:

It is hard to take this literally when Vimalamitra's commentary on the sgra thal gyur states:

"Great" means that the Great Perfection is free from a basis; but because it is a basis, it is convention for abiding; because it is a path, it is convention of expression; and because it is a result, it is convention of nature.

This seems very consistent with Vimalakirti's statement:

Manjusri, when something is baseless, how can it have any root? Therefore, all things stand on the root which is baseless.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, January 28th, 2015 at 1:52 AM

Title: Re: Is it possible to be Buddhist and Hindu?

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

Honestly, it is hard to take any of this stuff literally.

Malcolm wrote:

Faith is the mother of all good qualities...

— Buddhāvataṃsaka Sūtra

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, January 28th, 2015 at 2:19 AM

Title: Re: Is it possible to be Buddhist and Hindu?

Content:

monktastic said:

Somehow it's hard (or just not fun?) to accept that the same might be true for other traditions.

Malcolm wrote:

Oh, I accept that is true — but what I do not accept is that the basis, path and result of Advaita, or any other nonbuddhist tradition is the same as the basis, path and result of the Buddhist tradition.

I don't need to tell nonbuddhists their result is included in ours. The result they are seeking is completely different than buddhahood.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, January 28th, 2015 at 2:44 AM

Title: Re: Is it possible to be Buddhist and Hindu?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

[quote="monktastic"]When a Nyingmapa does more or less the same to all of Theravada, it's because we're right.

And so it goes.[/quote]

I forgot to mention, Theravadins are not generally interested in buddhahood, rather, they tend to be interested in arhatship.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, January 28th, 2015 at 4:30 AM

Title: Re: Is it possible to be Buddhist and Hindu?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Silence has a context. ...

anjali said:

No doubt. The knowing silence of a Buddha is not the ignorant silence of a sentient being. From what I can tell, you don't take issue with the words per se of the quote by Ramana on silence, but with how they are understood?

Vimalakirti's knowing silence was an answer to Manjushri's question, and was therefore a teaching. From a certain perspective, Vimalakirti's silence is the true and direct upadesa, as all other verbal teachings merely point to that knowing silence. Also, Vimalakirti's silence was the only answer that could be considered free of fault or defect. ("If you open your mouth, you are mistaken.") Thus, Vimalakirti's knowing silence is the perfect upadesa.

Malcolm wrote:

Ramana's statement was not qualified. It was a blanket assertion "Silence (of whatever kind) is the perfect upadesha...", and since this is clearly a defective statement, I don't agree with it. It had no context, unlike the silence of Vimalakirti — whose silence was an answer itself.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, January 28th, 2015 at 5:42 AM

Title: Re: Is it possible to be Buddhist and Hindu?

Content:

dreambow said:

Malcolm, I think it's best not to have an overly narrow outlook. I believe when Ramana Maharshi mentions silence, he means to quieten the mind. He says 'iru' be or just be. Of course this message is for the ripe only. Just as the Buddha said his message was for those 'with only a little dust in their eyes'

Malcolm wrote:

Frankly, it amazes me that people think view does not matter when it comes to awakening, or that awakening does not have causes and conditions.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, January 28th, 2015 at 6:08 AM

Title: Re: Is it possible to be Buddhist and Hindu?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Frankly, it amazes me that people think view does not matter when it comes to awakening, or that awakening does not have causes and conditions.

dzogchungpa said:

OK, perhaps you can explain what you meant by

<https://www.dharmawheel.net/viewtopic.php?f=48&t=15030&p=209120#p209120>: The Dzogchen perspective is that a liberation based on causes and effects is incoherent.

Malcolm wrote:

Why do you assume I am always speaking from a Dzogchen point of view?

On the other hand, even the Prajñāpāramita sūtras maintain that all phenomena are in a state of liberation from the beginning. Awakening is realizing that. Such a state of liberation may not depend on causes and conditions, but awakening to that fact is gradual and depends on causes and conditions.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, January 28th, 2015 at 6:11 AM

Title: Re: Is it possible to be Buddhist and Hindu?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Ramana's statement was not qualified. It was a blanket assertion "Silence (of whatever kind) is the perfect upadesha...", and since this is clearly a defective statement, I don't agree with it. It had no context, unlike the silence of Vimalakirti — whose silence was an answer itself.

anjali said:

Ramana's statement had context, I just didn't provide it. The context is the guru-disciple relationship, and the highest "teaching" of a realized master.

It's from http://bhagavan-ramana.org/ramana_maharshi/private/tw/tw569.html.

Specifically, the quote is from discussion about the Dakshinamurti Stotra, Brahma's four sons (who were seekers) and Siva (as their guru). They desired guidance for realisation of the Self. They were the best equipped individuals for Self-Realisation. Guidance should be only from the best of Masters. Who could it be but Siva - the yogiraja. Siva

appeared before them sitting under the sacred banyan tree. Being yogiraja should He practise yoga? He went into samadhi as He sat; He was in Perfect Repose. Silence prevailed. They saw Him. The effect was immediate. They fell into samadhi and their doubts were at an end.

Silence is the true upadesa. It is the perfect upadesa. It is suited only for the most advanced seeker. The others are unable to draw full inspiration from it. Therefore they require words to explain the Truth. But Truth is beyond words. It does not admit of explanation. All that is possible to do is only to indicate It.

To provide additional context regarding silence (Talk 231): Silence is never-ending speech. Vocal speech obstructs the other speech of silence. ... The silence of Dakshinamurti removed the doubts of the four sages. Mouna vyakhya prakatita tatvam (Truth expounded by silence.) Silence is said to be exposition. Silence is so potent. For vocal speech, organs of speech are necessary and they precede speech. But the other speech lies even beyond thought. It is in short transcendent speech or unspoken words, para vak.

Also Silence is ever-speaking; it is a perennial flow of language; it is interrupted by speaking. These words obstruct that mute language. There is electricity flowing in a wire. With resistance to its passage, it glows as a lamp or revolves as a fan. In the wire it remains as electric energy. Similarly also, silence is the eternal flow of language, obstructed by words. What one fails to know by conversation extending to several years can be known in a trice in Silence, or in front of Silence - e.g., Dakshinamurti, and his four disciples. That is the highest and most effective language.

Of course, you probably don't care what Ramana has to say on the subject of silence. The point of all this was that the silence of a realized master is the best of upadesas for disciples who can hear it.

Malcolm wrote:

Well, as you know, I am not a big fan of Advaita. And the Dakshinamurti stotra specifically rejects emptiness, so really, why should I or anyone connected with Buddhadharma take it or Ramana seriously at all?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, January 28th, 2015 at 8:31 PM

Title: Re: Is it possible to be Buddhist and Hindu?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

...why should I or anyone connected with Buddhadharma take it or Ramana seriously at all?

dzogchungpa said:

Why don't you ask Elio and Adriano?

Malcolm wrote:

Why would I?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, January 28th, 2015 at 8:41 PM

Title: Re: Is it possible to be Buddhist and Hindu?

Content:

Adamantine said:

On another note, this article is interesting re: Jigten Sumgön's views on 'outsider' traditions: <http://dgongs1.com/2015/01/21/one-for-the-islamophobics/>

Jigten Sumgön's general approach to spiritual views, conducts, and practices is one that attempts to perceive something in terms of what its nature is. In this sense he acknowledges that (1.19) there exists much that is virtuous by nature to be practised in [the systems of] the non-Buddhists too. This stands in contrast to a general opinion according to which "the complete view, conduct, and practise of the non-Buddhists is only something to be abandoned."

One of Jigten Sumgön's most basic positions is simply that whatever is virtuous by nature has a joyful result. Such virtue, however, is not confined to the realm of Buddhism alone. As he had pointed out in vajra-statement 1.1, the Buddha did not "invent" his own Dharma, but revealed the ultimate true nature as it is — and that nature exists as it is, independent of whether someone reveals it or not. Therefore, whoever acts in accordance with that nature will receive the respective appropriate results, no matter whether that person is a Buddhist or not, or whether that person has realised "the definite meaning that perceives the truth" or not. In fact, Rigdzin Chökyi Dragpa explains that even animals will enjoy the joyful fruits if they are "temporary [in] possession of ... virtuous things to be practised," such as loving kindness for their offspring.

Malcolm wrote:

This does not mean that tīrthikas have the same realization as those who practice Buddhadharma — it merely means that whoever practices virtue experiences rebirth in higher realms.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, January 28th, 2015 at 11:14 PM

Title: Re: Is it possible to be Buddhist and Hindu?

Content:

LastLegend said:

Nagarjuna would say don't know don't care if asked who is conquering who what? Upon my own analysis, I can't reach definite conclusion or assertion about who or what.

Malcolm wrote:

Fortunately, in this respect, we do not depend on our own analysis, but rather, the Buddha's teaching . The Parinirvana Sūtra states:

One who seeks refuge in the Buddha
is a true upāsaka
and should never seek refuge
in other gods.
If one seeks refuge in the sublime Dharma,
be free from thoughts of harm and killing.
If one seeks refuge in the Sangha,
do not associate with tīrthikas.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, January 29th, 2015 at 12:03 AM

Title: Re: Is it possible to be Buddhist and Hindu?

Content:

Adamantine said:

No, it doesn't make that claim, of course. But it seems that Jigten Sumgon encouraged being open to virtuous practices from any tradition, which has precedent, and is relevant to the OP.

Malcolm wrote:

The OP asked if you could be a Buddhist AND a Hindu at the same time.

I replied no, and there is nothing in your reply to him that addresses that issue.

In point of fact, even the virtue of tīrthikas is not a cause for liberation because their virtue is not transformed by the fact of taking refuge, so it remains ordinary, what need to mention bodhicitta or samaya which are entirely lacking outside the Buddhadharma.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, January 29th, 2015 at 12:15 AM

Title: Re: Is it possible to be Buddhist and Hindu?

Content:

LastLegend said:

This meaning is the reason the Tathagata always says, 'You monks! Know that my expounded Dharma is like the bamboo raft. The honored Dharma must be relinquished, how much more so what is not the Dharma? [/i]

Malcolm wrote:

People who give up rafts in the middle of a flood often drown...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, January 29th, 2015 at 12:23 AM

Title: Re: Is it possible to be Buddhist and Hindu?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

In point of fact, even the virtue of tirthikas is not a cause for liberation because their virtuous is not transformed by the fact of taking refuge, so it remains ordinary, what need to mention bodhicitta or samaya which are entirely lacking outside the Buddhadharma.

Adamantine said:

Yes, I think I address it a bit on the following post ^^^. I agree, but I also think it helpful to address the positive qualities of other traditions and point out that some of the virtuous practices could in fact be adopted. . not just always belittle them as inferior heretics. For some people's karmic imprints, they will be attracted to these other traditions in this life. . if in dialogue with them, we make aggressive and bombastic claims of their tradition being inferior, or negative, etc. they may develop negative impressions of the Buddhadharma which would be bad imprints for them to carry in future lives. If we are more open and generous, but still honest and clear, they may have positive impressions that could lead them to the Dharma more readily in this or future lives. HH the Dalai Lama seems to do a great job of this, no?

Malcolm wrote:

I have not belittled anything. I have merely pointed out that the ideas and notions about liberation and freedom between Hinduism and Buddhism are not even slightly commensurable.

For example, if you have a mountain in the east, and another in the west, do you tell someone that by climbing a mountain in the east, they will ascend the same peak as the mountain in the west?

All I have said is that Hinduism and Buddhism have a different basis, therefore the path is different and the result is different. I have not instructed anyone which mountain they should climb — merely that one cannot climb two mountains at once, and also that one cannot expect to reach the peak of one mountain by climbing another.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, January 29th, 2015 at 12:45 AM

Title: Re: Is it possible to be Buddhist and Hindu?

Content:

LastLegend said:

This meaning is the reason the Tathagata always says, 'You monks! Know that my expounded Dharma is like the bamboo raft. The honored Dharma must be relinquished, how much more so what is not the Dharma? [/i]

Malcolm wrote:

People who give up rafts in the middle of a flood often drown...

LastLegend said:
Yes.

That's why we should not go near the flood much less get on the raft.

Malcolm wrote:
Ummmm....it's a little for that....

Author: Malcolm
Date: Thursday, January 29th, 2015 at 12:47 AM
Title: Re: Is is possible to be Buddhist and Hindu?
Content:

Adamantine said:
What's more, for us Buddhists it is good to remember that there are plenty of nonvirtuous people in Buddhist clothes, and many virtuous people in non-Buddhist clothes.

Malcolm wrote:
To quote the Buddha:
Though an Indian trumpet flower has wilted,
it is unrivaled by other common flowers.
Though one of my followers has broken his discipline
he is unrivaled by common tīrthikas.
— Daśacakraṣṭigarbha-nāma-mahāyāna-sūtra

Author: Malcolm
Date: Thursday, January 29th, 2015 at 1:22 AM
Title: Re: Is is possible to be Buddhist and Hindu?
Content:
LastLegend said:
But since it's Mahayana we are not trying to attain any result.

Malcolm wrote:
Speak for yourself.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Thursday, January 29th, 2015 at 1:58 AM
Title: Re: Is is possible to be Buddhist and Hindu?
Content:
dzogchungpa said:
Well, I guess it depends on what you meant by "take seriously", but you seemed puzzled

by the fact that someone connected with Buddhadharma would take RM seriously, and I thought they could explain it to you.

Malcolm wrote:

I am deeply puzzled by this — I can only conclude it stems from some sort of wishful thinking that is propped up on perennialist tendencies [god, now I sound like a marxist].

I see no evidence at all from anything that Ramana said or wrote that his view is anything other than stock Hinduism of the Advaitan variety. I have no doubt he was a remarkable person, but at this point, since he died 65 years ago, longer than most of us have been alive, why would I accept anything that anyone says about him that differs from what is found in his texts?

I guess I do not understand what is profound in Ramana's teachings. I find the Buddha profound, I find Nāgārjuna profound, etc. But when I read the works of Hindu masters I always find them to be a bit off in one regard or another. So, admittedly, I find it really hard to understand why people who have been introduced to the teachings of Buddhadharma find Ramana profound.

Seriously, I find Vasubandhu more profound than Ramana. In the case of Dzogchen, it is particularly hard to understand why people find Advaita profound given that Śāṅkara is named in the Rig pa rang shar tantra among the sixty wrong views to be rejected, and given that Advaita is refuted in Santaraksita's Tattvasamgraha and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, January 29th, 2015 at 2:25 AM

Title: Re: Is it possible to be Buddhist and Hindu?

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

Well, maybe it's not about what can be expressed in words.

Malcolm wrote:

As Nāgārjuna famously points out:

The ultimate meaning cannot be explained without relying on convention;

nirvana cannot be attained without realizing the ultimate meaning.

So, yes, AFAIC, it really is about what can be expressed in words, and this is why the Buddha taught two truths, not merely one.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, January 29th, 2015 at 2:32 AM

Title: Re: Is it possible to be Buddhist and Hindu?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Well, as you know, I am not a big fan of Advaita. And the Dakshinamurti stotra specifically rejects emptiness, so really, why should I or anyone connected with

Buddhadharma take it or Ramana seriously at all?

anjali said:

I can only answer for myself. Emptiness is not the only aspect of the Buddhadharma.

Malcolm wrote:

Emptiness is the essence of Buddhist realization.

anjali said:

To the extent that I recognize any aspect of the Buddhadharma in another teaching, to that extent I respectfully take it seriously.

Malcolm wrote:

Indeed, the Buddha said that whatever is well-spoken is his teaching. We are here concerned about that which is not well-spoken.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, January 29th, 2015 at 3:08 AM

Title: Re: Is it possible to be Buddhist and Hindu?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

So, yes, AFAIC, it really is about what can be expressed words, and this is why the Buddha taught two truths, not merely one.

dzogchungpa said:

Honestly, it's not clear to me that the Buddha taught two truths, but you can believe what you like.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, January 29th, 2015 at 3:38 AM

Title: Re: Is it possible to be Buddhist and Hindu?

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

I am not a scholar, but what I meant was that I have seen reputable scholars cast doubt on the idea that the historical Buddha explicitly taught a two truths doctrine. I can look up references if you like. Maybe I'm wrong, is it a slam dunk that he did?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, January 29th, 2015 at 3:41 AM

Title: Re: Is it possible to be Buddhist and Hindu?

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

I am not a scholar, but what I meant was that I have seen reputable scholars cast doubt on the idea that the historical Buddha explicitly taught a two truths doctrine. I can look

up references if you like. Maybe I'm wrong, is it a slam dunk that he did?

Malcolm wrote:

It all depends on what you mean by "reputable."

In any case, it is a certainty that Buddha taught the two truths in Mahāyāna,

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, January 29th, 2015 at 4:41 AM

Title: Re: Is it possible to be Buddhist and Hindu?

Content:

Sherlock said:

Please quote me a master who has spent time seriously studying Hindu tantra and Buddhist tantra (i.e. studios and retreats in both) who says their fruit is the same. This guy seriously studied both and is very clear that they are different:

<http://www.byomakusuma.org/Ratnashri/RatnashriBio.aspx>

Adamantine said:

Interesting dude.. is Karma Thinley Rinpoche qualified to validate a terma cycle?

<http://www.byomakusuma.org/Ratnashri/RatnashriTerma.aspx>

Malcolm wrote:

Why not? He is a high lama from an ancient Karma Kagyu tulku lineage.

Doesn't mean I am interested...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, January 29th, 2015 at 5:11 AM

Title: Re: Is it possible to be Buddhist and Hindu?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Why not? He is a high lama from an ancient Karma Kagyu tulku lineage.

Doesn't mean I am interested...

Adamantine said:

Thought treasures were more of a Nyingma specialty

Malcolm wrote:

These days Karma Kagyus are Nyingma.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, January 29th, 2015 at 9:49 AM

Title: Re: Is it possible to be Buddhist and Hindu?

Content:

dreambow said:

So what if Advaita can be traced back to the 8th century? You can still say it's based on Shankara's direct experience of awakening. I don't believe he is necessarily copying anyone....any more than some say Buddhism is based on Jainism and subsequent 'scriptures as I believe the Buddha and Mahavira were contemporaries.

If a great teacher is speaking from his own enlightenment, whether you call it empty or a plenum, it matters little about influence. It's just what it is.

Malcolm wrote:

Clearly you are not a practitioner of Buddhadharma.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, January 29th, 2015 at 5:40 PM

Title: Re: Is it possible to be Buddhist and Hindu?

Content:

M.G. said:

... I was thinking about whether there might be practical things of value members of one tradition could learn from the other. I actually do have one Hindu friend who studied meditation with a Buddhist teacher, simply because the quality of instruction was so high.

Kim O'Hara said:

That's a good question and it's one that I would answer in the affirmative. For instance, I have been going along to yoga classes recently for the physical training in much the same way your friend went to Buddhism for meditation. The (very small) bit of Hinduism in the yoga is not any obstacle to my Buddhist practice at all. Nor was the Taoism in the Tai Chi which I took up a few years ago, for that matter.

Malcolm wrote:

There is no problem with learning anything. Just don't forget where your real refuge lies.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, January 29th, 2015 at 6:26 PM

Title: Re: Is it possible to be Buddhist and Hindu?

Content:

Ayu said:

It has a very different message than what was said some time before in this thread. I think, especially as a Buddhist it is important to cultivate tolerance on one side - and stability in practice on the other hand.

Malcolm wrote:

I never entertained the notion that followers of Buddhadharma should not learn from teachers of other schools. While we have a rich analysis of the tenets of others schools, sometimes they seem a little like parodies of them. So it is useful to hear a Yoga master teach on Samkhya and Yoga, an Advaita master teach on Advaita and so on.

Nevertheless, one does this in order to understand how these tenets are different from Buddhadharma, in addition to understanding their commonalities.

For example, I myself spent six weeks learning Yoga, the Yoga Sutras, Samkhya and so on from a well respected disciple of Krishnamacarya a couple of years ago. It was a valuable experience because now I can say that I really understand the system of the Yoga Sūtras, Samkhya, and so on, and how they are distinct from Buddhadharma. To study with a tīrthika teacher is not the same as going for refuge in something other than Buddhadharma. As bodhisattvas, we are supposed to study everything, particularly adhyatmyavidyā, the inner sciences. Of course, the classical inner sciences in Dharma are Prajñāpāramita, Madhyamaka and so on, but we can also consider the study of non-Buddhist tenet systems to be part of that study. Of course there is a danger, if one is not discerning, that one will become confused — but as long as one is clear about where one's refuge lies, there there will not be a problem in the end.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, January 29th, 2015 at 6:37 PM

Title: Re: Is it possible to be Buddhist and Hindu?

Content:

muni said:

Since many consider Chogyal Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche as their master, I like to share this quote. How this text will be perceived depends on the variety of us.

Malcolm wrote:

It will also depend on how much of ChNN's work one has actually read — for example, there are detailed refutations of nonbuddhist tenets in his Precious Vase, in the section on the view.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, January 29th, 2015 at 7:03 PM

Title: Re: Is it possible to be Buddhist and Hindu?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

It will also depend on how much of ChNN's work one has actually read — for example, there are detailed refutations of nonbuddhist tenets in his Precious Vase, in the section on the view.

muni said:

Since Awaken masters' action-speech is for our inner awakening. If these tenets keep us conditioned, dual, its a blessing to throw a light on it.

Malcolm wrote:

The entire point of studying these tenet systems is to remove our doubts, and therefore, our concepts. The purpose of such study is not to increase our concepts.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, January 30th, 2015 at 9:22 PM

Title: Re: Monastic vows

Content:

philji said:

Can anyone explain why it is that in the Theravada tradition they strictly follow vows including not eating after noon, not touching money etc whereas Tibetan monks do not except in certain occasions. Is it that the Bodhisattva and tantric vows take precedence?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, there is rather large Mahāyāna literature devoted to the comportment of Mahāyāna bhikṣus, one of which can be read in Chang's Compendium of Ratnakuta sutras. In this literature, the Buddha makes it very clear how the conduct of a Mahāyāna bhikṣu contradicts the conduct of a bhikṣu who has not entered Mahāyāna.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, January 30th, 2015 at 10:11 PM

Title: Re: Monastic vows

Content:

Indrajala said:

Precepts are just social conventions.

Malcolm wrote:

From a Tibetan Buddhist point of view, based on how we read the Abhidharmakośa:
Morality, good conduct, action and discipline
-- Abhk 4:16a-b, Pruden

Thus the vows are actually a form of action which has results — positive ones when followed, negative ones when broken.

One's abiding in a state of virtue or non-virtue derived from receiving any of the three vows is not dependent upon whether anyone else knows about it or not. It is dependent upon whether or not one has taken proper efforts to guard one's vows carefully.

Phil, you need to read Kongtrul's Buddhist ethics.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, January 30th, 2015 at 10:45 PM

Title: Re: Monastic vows

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

One's abiding in a state of virtue or non-virtue derived from receiving any of the three vows is not dependent upon whether anyone else knows about it or not. It is dependent upon whether or not one has taken proper efforts to guard one's vows carefully.

Indrajala said:

Meanwhile in reality it doesn't work like that. Monasteries serve lunch at 12:00pm on the dot and dinner in the evening.

Malcolm wrote:

In reality it does work out like that, if you happen to believe in karma.

As far as lunch and dinner are concerned, since all Tibetan monks are Mahāyānists, Mahāyāna Bhikṣus needn't be so concerned with these details, since their motivation for practice is more important than adhering to this or that rule. Nevertheless, the act of receiving the three vows in itself is a virtue, and one should endeavor as best one can to uphold the three vows, and purify one's downfalls immediately and daily. This is how we practice vowed conduct in Tibetan Buddhism. I don't really care how they do it in other schools, but this question was posed in the Tibetan Buddhist forum.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, January 30th, 2015 at 11:34 PM

Title: Re: Monastic vows

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

In reality it does work out like that, if you happen to believe in karma.

Indrajala said:

This is just your interpretation of karma. It is a subjective religious belief.

Malcolm wrote:

This is not a secular humanist forum, this is 1) a Mahāyāna Buddhist forum 2) The Tibetan Buddhism subforum.

Second, this is how it is explained by Vasubandhu.

Now, you might have decided that Buddhadharma is a bunch of religious nonsense, and have no further interest in it apart from getting a degree in Buddhology so you can feed yourself, but I think it is fair to say that most of us participating here take these "subjective religious beliefs" quite seriously.

Indrajala said:

As far as lunch and dinner are concerned, since all Tibetan monks are Mahāyānists, Mahāyāna Bhikṣus needn't be so concerned with these details, since their motivation for practice is more important than adhering to this or that rule.

What a convenient way to move around the goal posts. Here you are preaching the need to guard one's vows carefully, but then make a convenient exception.

Malcolm wrote:

In his discussion of the pratimokṣa vows of Mahāyāna system, Sapan states:
Here, these observances that are concerned with the elements of evil and unwholesomeness are mostly kept as in the Disciple's system, while certain desireless offenses are treated in accord with that of bodhisattvas.

Behavior that, in the view both systems, would cause worldlings to lose faith is strenuously guarded against; a lapse is allowed in the Individual Liberation discipline if the Great Vehicle if it induces worldlings to virtue.
-- Rhoton, 2002, SUNY, pg. 46.

In other words, bhikṣus eating dinner is not an issue for a Tibetan Buddhist monastery. Handling gold and money is not an issue as long as it is for the benefit of the Dharma, so on and so forth.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, January 31st, 2015 at 7:11 PM

Title: Re: Monastic vows

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Second, this is how it is explained by Vasubandhu.

Indrajala said:

No. I'm simply saying you have your own interpretation, and it is not definitive nor the final word on the matter. .

Malcolm wrote:

It is obviously not merely my opinion, since I provided a quotation from Sapan, Vasubandhu, etc. You on the other hand have provided no citations at all, so we can

truly say you are merely voicing your own subjective opinion without any reference to any established authority.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, February 1st, 2015 at 6:21 AM

Title: Re: Monastic vows

Content:

Indrajala said:

So, as a monk or even layperson it is actually quite risky, if you really believe in the words of the vinaya, to suggest that "Mahāyāna Bhikṣus needn't be so concerned with these details, since their motivation for practice is more important than adhering to this or that rule."

Malcolm wrote:

As Nagolo Khenchen states in his *The Lamp of the Path of Freedom and Omniscience*: Therefore, even though one takes life and does not practice celibacy, such actions can be permissible, but engaging in these actions for one's own benefit through desire, hatred and confusion is not permitted for anyone. Likewise, making offerings to the Three Jewels and making donations to beggars by stealing the property of the greedy, lying in order to protect sentient beings against being killed and so on, calumny to separate others from nonvirtuous friends, using harsh speech to place those in the Dharma with forceful methods who cannot be swayed with gentle speech, protesting hidden flaws by giving instruction and so on, are permitted.

As I said, the general POV in Tibetan Buddhism is that the ten nonvirtues are permissible if they are to benefit others.

Indrajala said:

So, you state, "One's abiding in a state of virtue or non-virtue derived from receiving any of the three vows is not dependent upon whether anyone else knows about it or not. It is dependent upon whether or not one has taken proper efforts to guard one's vows carefully." However, the whole meaning of "guarding one's vows" and what exactly that is supposed to require is a topic with many diverse opinions historically, and some positions would suggest being incorrect is literally going to send you to hell (wrong view and all that).

Basically, most people just make up their own mind on such issues regardless of what scriptures and Buddhist theorists say, and hope to get on in life.

Malcolm wrote:

Basically, nothing you cite contradicts anything that I have said — and more to the point, it does not contradict the general TIBETAN BUDDHIST point of view on the matter.

Indrajala said:

...some positions would suggest being incorrect is literally going to send you to hell

(wrong view and all that).

Malcolm wrote:

This would be the general Tibetan Buddhist viewpoint. The Bodhicaryāvatara states:

Those who wish to guard their discipline
must guard their minds strictly.

If one does not guard the mind,
one will not be able to fully guard one's training.

Drunk wild elephants
do not cause as much harm as
the harm of Avici caused
by the unrestrained elephant of the mind.

If the elephant of the mind is always restrained
with the rope of mindfulness,
all fears will not exist
and all virtue will come into one's hand.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, February 1st, 2015 at 6:50 AM

Title: Re: Monastic vows

Content:

Indrajala said:

Edit 7 [...]

Malcolm wrote:

You are going to have to explain to me how eating dinner is evil and unwholesomeness.

Indrajala said:

My point is really that almost nobody really believes in things so dogmatically...
You are quite wrong — however, the Buddhas have also provided many means of
purifying infractions of vows, especially in Vajrayāna, because in this degenerate age
the lower vows in general are very hard to maintain purely.

... Edit 8 [...]

Malcolm wrote:

A Mahāyānist in general should be consuming food with the motivation to achieve
buddhahood for the benefit of sentient beings — so as long as that is the case, there is
no problem with eating dinner, whether lay or ordained.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, February 1st, 2015 at 7:13 PM

Title: Re: Monastic vows

Content:

lama tsewang said:

i dont think its a good thing to make fun of the teachings

Indrajala said:

No, I'm serious. What is a pāyattika and what is the result to be experienced if not confessed?

Malcolm wrote:

Hell.

However, you do realize that if you are practitioner [and in general all Tibetan monks are], you confess all your misdeeds and downfalls of the three vows daily with Vajrasattva?

Moreover, the bodhisattva approach to following the vows can be flexible as the Buddha states in the Ārya-vinayaviniścayopāliparipṛcchā-nāma-mahāyāna-sūtra:

The training of a bodhisattva who has entered into Mahāyāna is said to be modifiable.

The training of those in the śrāvakayāna is said to be unmodifiable.

This sūtra also clarifies other issues you seem to be obsessed with.

So again, while it is important to receive and maintain the three vows, the flexibility towards pratimokṣa vow in the Mahāyāna approach to the vows that is not present in the Hinayāna approach to the pratimokṣa vow, in addition to the fact that Mahāyāna vows constitute a separate and more important class of vows, even while taking the pratimokṣa vows as a foundation.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, February 1st, 2015 at 8:19 PM

Title: Re: Monastic vows

Content:

philji said:

I am really enjoying and gaining knowledge about this whole issue, which was my original intention in posting. However I do feel that being mindful of not making fun of and not slandering the sangha is very , very important something maybe we need to be mindful of here.

Malcolm wrote:

You need to keep in mind that Jeff was deeply disappointed by his experience with the monastic Sangha in Asia — he wrote about it constantly.

Part of the post removed as an ad hom argument. Participants can look up Indrajala's prior posts and/or blog to look into his views and biases, if they wish to.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, February 2nd, 2015 at 8:11 PM

Title: Re: Loving kindness

Content:

philji said:

What would be the closest tibetan word(and literal translation),for Metta. Is it Jampa ?

Malcolm wrote:

yes, རྩམས་པ་ or byams pa, pronounced jampa.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, February 2nd, 2015 at 9:19 PM

Title: Re: Loving kindness

Content:

philji said:

Thanks Malcolm. Is there a translation that is useable?

Malcolm wrote:

I generally translate byams pa as love, i.e. the wish for another to have happiness. If you love someone, you want them to be happy, correct?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, February 3rd, 2015 at 2:24 AM

Title: Re: Is is possible to be Buddhist and Hindu?

Content:

Boomerang said:

In the end, what I learned from this conversation is that it's easy for Hindus to see Buddhism as valid, but the reverse is less common. It was a splendid opportunity for spiritual growth, and I thank you all for participating with me.

Malcolm wrote:

Hinduism is "valid" as far as it goes for the attainment of worldly ends and mundane happiness, but in general those who follow Buddhadharma do not think that Hindu means to liberation actually result in liberation.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, February 3rd, 2015 at 3:10 AM

Title: Re: Is is possible to be Buddhist and Hindu?

Content:

Boomerang said:

In the end, what I learned from this conversation is that it's easy for Hindus to see Buddhism as valid, but the reverse is less common. It was a splendid opportunity for spiritual growth, and I thank you all for participating with me.

Malcolm wrote:

Hinduism is "valid" as far as it goes for the attainment of worldly ends and mundane happiness, but in general those who follow Buddhadharma do not think that Hindu means to liberation actually result in liberation.

Boomerang said:

Uh huh. Swami Vivekananda said that although Buddhism and Jainism deny the importance of God, they teach their practitioners to become God, which is just as good in the end.

Love.

Malcolm wrote:

Umm... no. The Buddha taught people how to become buddhas. Mahāvira taught people to starve themselves to death.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, February 3rd, 2015 at 3:11 AM

Title: Re: Is is possible to be Buddhist and Hindu?

Content:

daverupa said:

Boomerang, you seem to have an inability to recognize some simple facts on the ground with respect to the Dhamma; your attempt to be inclusive and syncretistic is perhaps laudable, but at the same time tragically misguided, ensuring that you're bound for inaccurate understandings.

Malcolm wrote:

It's tragic, really.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, February 3rd, 2015 at 4:44 AM

Title: Re: Is is possible to be Buddhist and Hindu?

Content:

Sherlock said:

Perennialism is bullshit.

Boomerang said:

Good for you. Now let's try to stay on topic. The thread isn't titled "Let's take potshots at other religions."

Malcolm wrote:

What you seem to be failing to understand is that if you have gone for refuge to the Buddha, you have eschewed other refuges. If you go for refuge to other gods having once gone for refuge to the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha, you void your refuge in the Three Jewels including losing all the vows that come with going for refuge, you return to the state of a ordinary person, and the virtue that you perform is no longer elevated by refuge in the Three Jewels.

Buddhadharma is a path, and aside from the fact of whether the goals of Buddhadharma and Sanatana Dharma are the same(they're not), one cannot tread two paths at the same time. One must walk on one or the other. One cannot walk on both. It would be very much like trying to stand on two horses at the same time.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, February 3rd, 2015 at 5:07 AM

Title: Re: Is it possible to be Buddhist and Hindu?

Content:

Sherlock said:

Perennialism is bullshit.

Boomerang said:

Good for you. Now let's try to stay on topic. The thread isn't titled "Let's take potshots at other religions."

Sherlock said:

Perennialism is not a religion. It comes from the fevered dreams of right-wing New Agers who don't want to be with the other New Agers.

Malcolm wrote:

I thought it was an outgrowth of Theosophy.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, February 3rd, 2015 at 5:30 AM

Title: Re: Is it possible to be Buddhist and Hindu?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

I thought it was an outgrowth of Theosophy.

Sherlock said:

Exactly. Theosophy is late Victorian New Age; Perennialists are the right-wing end of the spectrum who didn't like the other Theosophists. Today, a lot of support for perennialism still mainly comes from the right, Evola-reading "Traditionalists".

Malcolm wrote:

I always associated perennialism with Aldous Huxley and Huston Smith, etc.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, February 3rd, 2015 at 8:03 PM

Title: Re: Is it possible to be Buddhist and Hindu?

Content:

Boomerang said:

I agree. I knew the conversation was over after Malcolm responded to my statement that nonduality is beyond scriptures by...quoting scriptures. I strongly disagree with his belief that nondual realizations can be qualified and contrasted. Nonetheless, I feel that he deepened my understanding of what it means to take refuge in the Buddha, and I'm grateful for that.

Malcolm wrote:

Sure they can — you just have not looked deeply enough into the differences between what Hindus mean by nonduality (advaita) and what Buddhists mean by nondual (nondual) — and this is why it is puzzling to you. You are, in essence, a victim of bad translations and ignorant commentators since you are not reading these things in any primary language.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, February 3rd, 2015 at 8:14 PM

Title: Re: Is it possible to be Buddhist and Hindu?

Content:

Boomerang said:

And, I never really "took refuge" in a Hindu god. I see them as benevolent entities who have mastered a certain paradigm of spirituality. My overall spiritual goals are more in line with Buddhism than Hinduism.

Malcolm wrote:

What are the spiritual goals of Buddhadharma?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, February 3rd, 2015 at 11:38 PM

Title: Re: Monastic vows

Content:

philji said:

Can anyone explain why it is that in the Theravada tradition they strictly follow vows including not eating after noon, not touching money etc whereas Tibetan monks do not except in certain occasions. Is it that the Bodhisattva and tantric vows take precedence?

Ayu said:

For the sake of understanding better this topic, I asked a tibetan buddhist novice nun (from Austria) yesterday.

She said, no, there are not different rules in Theravada and Mahayana - at least not to an considerable extent. The reasons why all the tibetan monks and nuns are eating dinner, for example, or wearing sweaters under their robes in winter and all this, are individually. Some have exeption because of health issues, or other reasons.

Mainly you can see that the rules are accomodated to the certain circumstances.

For sure these ordained confess regularly and hold the right view to the best of their capacity.

In my point of view this doesn't reduce the respect they deserve to the slightest.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, there are different rules, Theravadins do not have a system of Mahāyāna ordination, Tibetan Buddhism does; Thervada does not have a system of Vajrayāna vows, Tibetan Buddhism does. The receipt of these higher vows alters how the lower vows are practiced. Please Sapan's Clear Differentiation of the Three Codes or Kontgrul's Buddhist Ethics.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, February 4th, 2015 at 1:07 AM

Title: Re: Is it possible to be Buddhist and Hindu?

Content:

Boomerang said:

And, I never really "took refuge" in a Hindu god. I see them as benevolent entities who have mastered a certain paradigm of spirituality. My overall spiritual goals are more in line with Buddhism than Hinduism.

Malcolm wrote:

What are the spiritual goals of Buddhadharma?

Boomerang said:

Mahayana Buddhism = Bodhisattva

Advaita Vedanta = Stop reincarnating

Malcolm wrote:

The spiritual goal of Mahāyāna Buddhadharma is buddhahood, the attainment of the three kāyas. Bodhisattvas are those who strive for this goal in order to liberate all beings from samsara. In the process, all afflictions that cause rebirth in samsara are eliminated and power over birth is attained at the eighth bhumi.

From the point of view of Buddhadharma, Advaitans never achieve cessation of rebirth because they do not eradicate the innate clinging to atman, therefore, no matter how profound their samadhi or understanding may be, it is not a cause of freedom from samsara, and at best they attain rebirth in the unconsciousness deva realms.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, February 4th, 2015 at 1:08 AM

Title: Re: Is it possible to be Buddhist and Hindu?

Content:

Boomerang said:

It is difficult for some to understand the difference between nonduality and a concept of nonduality. For such people, it's probably best for them to follow one religion and actively avoid syncretism. I'm very grateful to be a person who hasn't encountered that

difficulty. However, I don't really see my views as syncretic. I'm able to hold contradictory views, because I understand that no concept possesses inherent truth or falsity. I never realized how far out that is until I participated in this thread.

Sherab Dorje said:

So you have realised non-duality and are thus capable of mixing and matching and then coming here and preaching to us? And, I never really "took refuge" in a Hindu god. I see them as benevolent entities who have mastered a certain paradigm of spirituality. My overall spiritual goals are more in line with Buddhism than Hinduism.

So you are neither a Buddhist nor a Hindu yet you know that Buddhism and Hinduism are the same thing?

Boomerang said:

1. Never preached anything. If in doubt, re-read the thread.
2. Never said Buddhism and Hinduism are the same thing. Never said they had the same goal. I only said that ineffable nondual realizations can't be qualified and contrasted, because contrasting them implies they can be described, and nonduality is indescribable. Again, re-read the thread.

Love.

Malcolm wrote:

Nondualisms are quite describable. If they weren't, you would not know about them.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, February 4th, 2015 at 1:56 AM

Title: Re: Is it possible to be Buddhist and Hindu?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

What are the spiritual goals of Buddhadharma?

Mahayana Buddhism = Bodhisattva

Advaita Vedanta = Stop reincarnating

The spiritual goal of Mahāyāna Buddhadharma is buddhahood, the attainment of the three kāyas. Bodhisattvas are those who strive for this goal in order to liberate all beings from samsara. In the process, all afflictions that cause rebirth in samsara are eliminated and power over birth is attained at the eighth bhumi.

From the point of view of Buddhadharma, Advaitans never achieve cessation of rebirth because they do not eradicate the innate clinging to atman, therefore, no matter how profound their samadhi or understanding may be, it is not a cause of freedom from samsara, and at best they attain rebirth in the unconsciousness deva realms.

Boomerang said:

I agree with that. To put it another way, I feel that Hinduism is like an alternate form of the Sravaka path, the difference being that they don't follow Buddha's teachings. So I think Advaita Vedanta is valid the same way Theravada Buddhism is valid.

Malcolm wrote:

It is good that you noticed that relative bodhicitta is absolutely lacking in the Hindu path. Second, you only need to understand ultimate bodhicitta is lacking in the Hindu path, and once having understood that, you will understand why even Advaita will not lead to cessation of rebirth, thus rendering it lower than Hinayāna Buddhism, which does lead to the cessation of [afflictive] rebirth.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, February 4th, 2015 at 1:57 AM

Title: Re: Is it possible to be Buddhist and Hindu?

Content:

Boomerang said:

2. Never said Buddhism and Hinduism are the same thing. Never said they had the same goal. I only said that ineffable nondual realizations can't be qualified and contrasted, because contrasting them implies they can be described, and nonduality is indescribable.

Paul said:

The part in red is where you make your mistake. You incorrectly say that because something non-dual it is beyond description and discussion and then you conflate two different nondualisms simply because they are non-dual. As has been shown extensively, what is being referred to as being 'non-dual' in Buddhism and other systems is completely different. There is zero reason to conflate them.

Boomerang said:

I said nonduality is beyond scriptures, and Malcolm responded by quoting scriptures. This is what I mean by confusing nonduality with a concept of nonduality. We'll have to agree to disagree.

Malcolm wrote:

I am confused about neither.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, February 4th, 2015 at 2:05 AM

Title: Re: Is it possible to be Buddhist and Hindu?

Content:

Boomerang said:

Yup. Where Buddhism teaches bodhicitta, Hinduism teaches "know your place and

don't complain." In that context, bodhichitta is only developed by happenstance.

Malcolm wrote:

It is not developed at all unless you decide to become a Buddha for the benefit of all sentient beings.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, February 4th, 2015 at 3:15 AM

Title: Re: Is it possible to be Buddhist and Hindu?

Content:

Boomerang said:

I feel that Hinduism is like an alternate form of the Sravaka path, the difference being that they don't follow Buddha's teachings.

daverupa said:

Did you just say "non-Buddhist Buddhism"?

Malcolm wrote:

I think one can say that the path presented in such texts as the Yoga Sūtras is in many respects similar to the path outlined in the Āgamas/Nikāyas, but since the view is based in the Sāṃkhya system, it does not lead to the same result. Indeed, Sāṃkhya occupies a position very much like Abhidharma in Hinduism. Very few people practice it literally, but its core concepts are pervasive, especially in nondual Hindu systems like Advaita and Shaivism.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, February 4th, 2015 at 8:12 PM

Title: Re: Is it possible to be Buddhist and Hindu?

Content:

Herbie said:

What I find most fascinating about these opinions, views and discussions is that the participants seem to believe that there is objectivity involved in terms to which there is no correlate that could be seen, heard, tasted, smelled or touched.

Malcolm wrote:

If anything is objective, the realization of buddhas and bodhisattvas is objective. That is what is under discussion.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, February 4th, 2015 at 9:44 PM

Title: Re: Is it possible to be Buddhist and Hindu?

Content:

Nirrtix said:

Anyhow, I am curious about this.

odysseus said:

It's a NO – it's not possible.

Nirrtix said:

I am also curious about what many of you think about how some think about the Hindu belief that Buddha is an Avatar of Vishnu.

odysseus said:

Well, for me – it's an honour by the Hindus.

Malcolm wrote:

Not really, the way they put it is that Buddha was an avatar sent to deceive the asuras by teaching them a false doctrine.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, February 5th, 2015 at 1:59 AM

Title: Re: Is it possible to be Buddhist and Hindu?

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

Speaking of "Tantric Treasures", here's a passage from Jackson's Introduction: The figures found in these lists are generally acknowledged to be "Buddhists." Certainly, the legends surrounding them and the words attributed to them have influenced countless Buddhists in India, Nepal, and Tibet for a thousand years; but in their original setting, it is not always easy to separate them out—whether in terms of terminology, rhetoric, or practice—from similar figures in non-Buddhist, especially "Hindu" traditions. They seem quite closely related to Saivite ascetics like the Pasupatas and Kapalikas; tantrikas like the Kashmiri Saivas and Bengali Saktas; or the wonder-working Nath siddhas and Rasa siddhas. More broadly, there are general similarities between ideas and practices found in Buddhist siddha writings and those of other Indian yogic and ascetic communities—from such "textualized" movements as those reflected in the Yoga Sutra of Patanjali and the Samnyasa Upanisads to such seemingly timeless and "unwritten" groups as the Nagas, Kanphatas, and Aghoras. Nor can their possible connections with similar sorts of groups in, for instance, Persia, central Asia, or China be overlooked; the resonance, and possible historical connections, between Indian siddhas and Chinese Chan masters or Taoist immortals suggest an especially intriguing, if uncertain, path for further research. What is more, it is entirely possible that, as suggested long ago by Agehanada Bharati, most of the siddhas actually were pre- or nonsectarian wandering yogins, who appropriated various religious terms without intending to promote a particular religion—yet willy-nilly were appropriated by those very sectarian traditions that they resisted or ignored.

Malcolm wrote:

It is unlikely that Virupa was anything other than the rough and tumble, tīrthika defeating Mahāisiddha the legends recount:

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, February 5th, 2015 at 2:09 AM

Title: Re: Is it possible to be Buddhist and Hindu?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

It is unlikely that Virupa was anything other than the rough and tumble, tīrthika defeating Mahāisiddha the legends recount:

dzogchungpa said:

You really seem to identify with Virupa.

Malcolm wrote:

Well, sure, he was one of the most important Mahāisiddhas and also the patron saint of drinkers.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, February 5th, 2015 at 10:01 AM

Title: Re: Is it possible to be Buddhist and Hindu?

Content:

Boomerang said:

Buddhism is hard to understand. Maybe I should switch from the Green Tara mantra to the Vajra Guru mantra.

Adamantine said:

I'm not sure how that relates to Sherab Dorje's provocation, but if you do aspire to meet and study with a realized Buddhist tantric master, reciting the Vajra Guru mantra with pure heartfelt aspiration would be good temdrel (auspicious interdependent connection) and it could help you develop the right causes and conditions for that meeting.

Boomerang said:

I meant that I don't understand Madhyamaka, so I should recite the Vajra Guru mantra to find teacher to help me understand.

Malcolm wrote:

No, you should recite the heart sutra. Also, there are many online resources which will help you understand Madhyamaka — but you might want to start with all that "lowly"

dualistic stuff first, like Abhidharma.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, February 5th, 2015 at 10:08 AM

Title: Re: Monastic vows

Content:

Adamantine said:

Is it indeed considered possible to purify one's break of vinaya vows using Vajrayana methods?

Malcolm wrote:

Of course.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, February 5th, 2015 at 11:18 AM

Title: Re: Monastic vows

Content:

Adamantine said:

Is it indeed considered possible to purify one's break of vinaya vows using Vajrayana methods?

Malcolm wrote:

Of course.

Adamantine said:

But it isn't possible to purify a Parajika with Vajrayana methods? I'm just confused on that point I suppose. Because Tibetan monks still have to disrobe in that case.. Is it that it's possible to purify in an ultimate sense, but according to conventional custom one must still disrobe?

Malcolm wrote:

Is there something excluded from all faults and downfalls?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, February 5th, 2015 at 7:05 PM

Title: Re: Monastic vows

Content:

Adamantine said:

No, but then why the need to disrobe, just convention?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, I think it mostly convention. A Vajrayāna practitioner is supposed to follow his or her pratimokṣa vows according to the conventional perception of others. Thus, if they conventionally commit a defeat, well, this is also a breakage of samaya, since one of

the samayas is to uphold the lower trainings. The karmic effects of the latter might be purifiable through Vajrasattva, but not the public's perception of you.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, February 5th, 2015 at 7:30 PM

Title: Gradual vs. Nongradual

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Having studied widely amongst the four schools, one often comes across controversies about gradual paths vs. nongradual paths, but in all my years I have never met anyone who could claim they woke up nongradually. Is nongradual realization merely a polemical fantasy?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, February 5th, 2015 at 7:43 PM

Title: Re: Gradual vs. Nongradual

Content:

Sherlock said:

Well, what about the idea of thodrgalpa and rimgyispa? Thodrgalpas are not cigcarbas but they proceed erratically compared to rimgyipas.

Malcolm wrote:

But have you ever met one? In any case, vyukrantikas (thog rgal ba) are considered those above the path of seeing. Now I have met people I think are above the path of seeing, but none of them ever claim to be vyukrantikas.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, February 5th, 2015 at 7:57 PM

Title: Re: Gradual vs. Nongradual

Content:

Sherlock said:

The way ChNN quoted that semde text, it seems like it is used as a general reference to students who don't necessarily go through every stage sequentially and sometimes make big leaps but get complacent. He said rimgyispas are better students.

Malcolm wrote:

Which retreat are you referring to?

Anyway, it was a more general question not in reference to any specific teacher's teaching.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, February 5th, 2015 at 9:34 PM

Title: Re: Gradual vs. Nongradual

Content:

Sherlock said:

I don't have the book with me now but I think it was in "Four Contemplations of Dzogchen Semde".

Also another point is maybe that the idea of " nongradual realization" came up in response to practitioners who thought Buddhahood was something created?

Malcolm wrote:

Well, here is a point. Buddhahood is synonymous with omniscience, but as Kamalashila points out, omniscience must arise from causes otherwise it would arise at all times in anyone.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 6th, 2015 at 3:20 AM

Title: Re: Yidam and Dzogchen

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The Vairocanābhisambodhi Tantra states: Guhyapati, there are two forms of the deity: pure and impure. The pure form has the nature of realization, free from all characteristics. The impure form possesses characteristics such as color and shape.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 6th, 2015 at 7:57 PM

Title: Re: Gradual vs. Nongradual

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Well, here is a point. Buddhahood is synonymous with omniscience, but as Kamalashila points out, omniscience must arise from causes otherwise it would arise at all times in anyone.

Vajrasvapna said:

Kamalashila was right, Buddhahood continually arise in all beings.

Malcolm wrote:

Kamalashila's point is rather the opposite, in fact. The sūtra you cite would have been unknown to him, since it never existed in India.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 6th, 2015 at 8:36 PM

Title: Re: How does movement arise?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

[quote="LastLegend"]I don't think "meditation" is even mentioned in Sutras (correct me if I am wrong). /quote]

You are quite wrong. There is reams of material in the sūtras on meditation [bhavana], concentration [dhyana] and samadhi practices.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 6th, 2015 at 8:38 PM

Title: Re: Is is possible to be Buddhist and Hindu?

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

I think the Saraha quote is pretty definitive, irregardless of what Jackson would like to believe.

dzogchungpa said:

Yeah, that Jackson is a real nut. Again, from his introduction: If there is a type of negation in Saraha, Kanha, and Tilopa that seems rather less mitigated by paradox or multiple levels of discourse, it is that related to the three siddhas' attitudes toward social and religious convention, which are aptly summarized by Groucho Marx's famous claim, in *Horse Feathers*, "Whatever it is, I'm against it." In all three collections of dohas, but especially those of Saraha, there hardly is an Indian personage or practice of social or religious importance that is not subjected to mockery or critique. In the first fifteen verses of his *Treasury*, Saraha takes on, in succession, brahmin ritualists (S1–2), who are denounced for their pointless recitations and sacrifices; mendicant ascetics (S3–5), who are mocked for their deceit, hypocrisy, and greed; Jain renouncers (S6–9), who are ridiculed for their obsession with physical austerities; Buddhist monastics (S10), who are chastised for their dress-up games, their intellectualism, and their attempt to desiccate the mind through meditation; Mahayanists (S11), who are described as sophists and verbal gymnasts; tantrikas (S11, 14), who are said to be obsessed with mantras, mandalas, and mystic initiations and practitioners of all kinds (S14–15) who are lampooned for believing that offering lamps or food, going on pilgrimage, or immersing themselves in sacred rivers can purify them of defilement. In other places, Saraha criticizes the self-deception of the alchemists (S51), the absurdities of devoted meditators (S19–20, 22–23, 33, etc.) and the pretensions of scholars (S68, 76, 93) and makes evident his distaste for distinguishing pure and impure on the basis of caste (S46, 56b). Saraha also repeatedly addresses his listener as a "fool" and refers disparagingly to "bestial" or "childish" people who simply don't understand what is right in front of them. In a similar vein, but less extensively, Kanha and Tilopa, at various points in their dohas, criticize intellectuals (T8), scholars of sacred literature (K1, 29), people who make offerings to deities and visit pilgrimage spots (T19–21), and tantric ritualists obsessed with "chants, oblations, / and mandala rites" (K29). The social and religious outlook of all three is perhaps best captured in Saraha's injunction: "Throw off / conventional nonsense" (S55).

Malcolm wrote:

Yeah, I don't know what Saraha was smoking when he taught the Cakrasamvara Tantra Mandala to Nāgārjuna, or wrote the commentary on the Buddhakapala Tantra.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 6th, 2015 at 10:23 PM

Title: Re: Gradual vs. Nongradual

Content:

Vajrasvapna said:

Another way to prove it, if Buddhahood is produced by cause and effect, this means that enlightenment would be conditioned, so it would not be a permanent state and liberation would not be possible.

Malcolm wrote:

This false consequence is often bandied about, but it is not convincing. Why is this so?

1) What is awakening? It is the direct perception of suchness, the dharmadhātu, etc. This is the direct cause of buddhahood. When that suchness is directly perceived (first bhumi, etc.), it is no longer possible to return to a state of ignorance about it just as a seed singed by fire can no longer produce a sprout. In other words, a consciousness singed by wisdom is no longer capable of giving rise to afflictive ignorance. The proximate or indirect causes of buddhahood are the trainings in the paths and stages.

2) Second, the state of perfect buddhahood, unsurpassed perfect complete awakening (anuttarasamyaksambodhi) is itself defined through the eradication of the two obscurations: the afflictive obscuration and the knowledge obscuration. When these two are eradicated it is not possible for someone to possess them again. Even if their consciousness remains a relative conditioned entity, it is a pure relative conditioned entity characterized by unimpeded knowledge of unconditioned reality. The mind, a conditioned relative entity, does not disappear at buddhahood. If it did, that would be nihilism; nor does it turn into an unconditioned entity itself, because that would involve a contradiction in kind — a conditioned entity cannot become an unconditioned entity and vice versa — as well as eliminating the possibility that there is a continuum between a sentient being and Vajradhara. This is the reason that Sachen Kungpa Nyingpo states in his Nyagma when defining the ālaya cause continuum: "Tantra", because it is the garland of self-knowing from a sentient being through buddhahood, the uninterrupted awareness of the mind itself.

Jetsun Dragpa Gyaltsen further notes on this passage:

Because all concepts and suffering are complete in the meaning of ālaya, it is the cause continuum.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 6th, 2015 at 10:29 PM

Title: Re: Gradual vs. Nongradual

Content:

Vajrasvapna said:

The text of the Diamond sutra states that bodhisattva accumulate merit with detached actions, keeping their minds free of concepts of a truly existing entity. Although the text of the Diamond sutra does not say it directly, what is implied is that the Buddha body of merit is already present, the sambhogakaya; so actually the bodhisattva not accumulate any merit. An example, if you have a covered sculpture, the fact that you go slowly discovering the sculpture does not mean that the body of the sculpture was not already there. So bodhisattva will gradually revealing the body of merit already present.

Malcolm wrote:

Is Buddhahood a state one realizes, or a phenomena one passively observes? If Buddhahood is something that already exists within a sentient being, there is no reason for the experience of samsara. The Uttaratantra is very profound, but understood incorrectly, it is results on one adopting a tirthika view of atman. Viewed another way, it becomes a definitive teaching on the nature of reality. It really depends on how it is understood.

Omniscience has causes and conditions. Even you admit it this in your example. Reality is already there, but unless one removes obscurations to perceiving it, it will never be perceived. Reality is not buddhahood. Buddhahood is the result of seeing reality fully.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, February 7th, 2015 at 12:49 AM

Title: Re: Gradual vs. Nongradual

Content:

Vajrasvapna said:

This false consequence is often bandied about, but it is not convincing. Why is this so?

1) What is awakening? It is the direct perception of suchness, the dharmadhātu, etc. This is the direct cause of buddhahood. When that suchness is directly perceived (first bhumi, etc.), it is no longer possible to return to a state of ignorance about it just as a seed singed by fire can no longer produce a sprout. Although it appears to be, a seed is not an unchanging entity. After a long time, it may lose the ability to germinate, besides, it only becomes a sprout under certain conditions, water, appropriate soil and light. However, if the sprout is really a 'result', then why it is not static and can grow into a plant or tree? On the other hand, if you throw the seed on fire; it becomes dust. The dust, in turn, continues an interdependent transformation process.

Malcolm wrote:

And this reply is just a non-sequitar.

Vajrasvapna said:

In other words, a consciousness singed by wisdom is no longer capable of giving rise to afflictive ignorance. The proximate or indirect causes of buddhahood are the trainings in

the paths and stages.

Your argument does not contradict my statement, causality exists only in a conventional manner; because of interdependence.

Malcolm wrote:

Causality does not exist because of interdependence. Interdependence exists because of causality.

Vajrasvapna said:

And wisdom itself burns the stains of the luminous mind as in this quote attributed to

Nagarjuna explains: Just as the stains on a fireproof cloth

That is sullied by various stains

Are consumed when the cloth is placed in fire

While the cloth itself is not,

Likewise the stains of the luminous mind

Are consumed in the fire of wisdom;

They are not luminous.

All the sutras on emptiness

Taught by the Victor

Counteract negative emotions;

They do not harm that element [of luminosity].

Malcolm wrote:

And this luminous mind to which Nāgārjuna (maybe, since the Dharmadhātustava is a very late text and is unattested in the Madhyamaka texts even as late as Candrakīrti and Śāntarakṣita) refers, is this itself relative or ultimate? In any case, regardless of your answer, the same text observes:

When one is free from the snare of afflictions
in essenceless samsara,
because of that there is buddhahood,
which turns into the ambrosia of all embodied beings.

In the same way, from all seeds
arise a result that resembles the cause,
what wise person would be able to prove
there is a fruit without a seed?

So, on the contrary, "Nāgārjuna" argues in this text that indeed buddhahood arises from causes. He further says:

Just as without a seed of sugar cane,
sugar cannot be produced.
When someone tends the sugar cane seed,
from proximity and effort,
molasses, sugar, and refined sugar

will arise from that,
Having tended bodhicitta,
from proximity and effort
there is arhatship, the realization of conditions, (i.e. pratyekabuddhahood) and
buddhahood
arising and produced from that.

Vajrasvapna said:

So you believe that the alaya is a truly existing entity, since it is the cause of
enlightenment?

Malcolm wrote:

The ālaya is empty and from the perspective of the ultimate, it is the dharmadhātu; it is
clarity and from the perspective of the relative, it is the ālayavijñāna — these two are
inseparable.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, February 7th, 2015 at 1:47 AM

Title: Re: Gradual vs. Nongradual

Content:

Jeff said:

Malcolm,

It is a matter of perspective. "Full Buddhahood" requires one to surrender to the flows of
cause and effect.

Malcolm wrote:

No, "full buddhahood" means being free from causes and effects.

Jeff said:

Or you could say that that the universe manifests a buddha and the kaya form relative to
the need.

Malcolm wrote:

No, you couldn't.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, February 7th, 2015 at 2:18 AM

Title: Re: Gradual vs. Nongradual

Content:

Jeff said:

Malcolm,

It is a matter of perspective. "Full Buddhahood" requires one to surrender to the flows of cause and effect.

Malcolm wrote:

No, "full buddhahood" means being free from causes and effects.

Jeff said:

Or you could say that that the universe manifests a buddha and the kaya form relative to the need.

Malcolm wrote:

No, you couldn't.

Jeff said:

You are taking my above statement out of context. I was describing the process of getting there, not the state itself.

And, yes... I could.

Malcolm wrote:

You said, "...requires one to surrender to the flows of cause and effect."

No.

As for your other statement, the universe does not "manifest" a buddha...etc. The universe is something composed of defiled, conditioned phenomena.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, February 7th, 2015 at 2:36 AM

Title: Re: Gradual vs. Nongradual

Content:

Jeff said:

I apologize if there was confusion in my above meaning. I had meant it is the context of reaching/realizing. Regarding the universe manifesting what is needed, I had meant the combined cause and effect of the needs of sentient beings.

Malcolm wrote:

One does not surrender to the flows of cause and effect. One sees reality, emptiness, suchness, etc.

Buddhas indeed respond to the needs of sentient beings.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, February 7th, 2015 at 4:30 AM

Title: Re: Is it possible to be Buddhist and Hindu?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Yeah, I don't know what Saraha was smoking when he taught the Cakrasamvara Tantra Mandala to Nāgārjuna, or wrote the commentary on the Buddhakapala Tantra.

Sherab Dorje said:

I'm not even going to pretend to understand what you are trying to say here!

Malcolm wrote:

What I mean is that the largely disgruntled scholars in the Western Academy pride themselves on iconoclasm and seek out [and often interpolate] examples of iconoclasm in their studies of Indo-Tibetan Buddhism. Of course, while Saraha is mostly famous to us as the author of various Dohas, he was also great tantric master who is responsible for the promulgation of a number of tantric mandala traditions, Cakrasamvara not least among them, of which he stands at the head. In other words, Saraha was the person who first promulgated Cakrasamvara among humans in this epoch and so all lineages of Cakrasamvara practice must in some way or another trace their lineage to him directly or indirectly.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, February 7th, 2015 at 5:52 AM

Title: Re: Is it possible to be Buddhist and Hindu?

Content:

conebeckham said:

This is tangential to this thread, but: Ghantapa didn't trace his lineage of Cakrasamvara from Saraha, if I recall. I think Luipa did trace back to Saraha, via Savaripa.

Malcolm wrote:

Ghantapāda both traces his lineage to Luipa, and he was also a direct disciple of Vajrayogini, hence I said, "directly and indirectly."

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, February 7th, 2015 at 5:55 AM

Title: Re: Is it possible to be Buddhist and Hindu?

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

Jackson must be REALLY disgruntled.

Malcolm wrote:

Sure, since he is interested in generating historical narratives rather than merely receiving them. People who set out to write history are usually pretty disgruntled.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, February 7th, 2015 at 6:14 AM

Title: Re: Is it possible to be Buddhist and Hindu?

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

Again, from Jackson's introduction: Unfortunately, there is very little way of knowing whether a particular text attributed to a particular siddha—even if that siddha was a historical figure—actually was written by that siddha, so the notion of a “corpus” of texts unambiguously belonging to a specific figure must be regarded with considerable suspicion....

Jackson must be REALLY disgruntled.

kirtu said:

It's just Jackson taking the critical academic stance. There's really nothing wrong with that.

BTW - what is this intro from?

Kirt

Malcolm wrote:

There are all kinds of things wrong with that...but mainly the piling of conjecture on top of speculation...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, February 8th, 2015 at 12:43 AM

Title: Re: CG Jung was indeed a Fascist. Discuss.

Content:

Jikan said:

I'm bumping this old thread because I was recently reminded just deeply Jung and those who take inspiration from him (Campbell, Bly, &c) are associated with certain trends in Dharma practice. And because I forgot to rebut the categorical claim made above that there is no evidence for Jung's fascist-ness, which is documented in McLynn's biography, Carl Gustav Jung. Here's a summary from an LA Times review of the book:

Jung was profoundly anti-Semitic. The facts concerning his thorough-going prejudice against Jews has become one of the most contentious issues in Jungian scholarship today. McLynn addresses it clearly and straightforwardly. In explaining how some analysts deal with Jung's collaboration with the Nazis, he writes that others "in a kind of version of 'politics should have nothing to do with sport,' say that it is beyond the competence of a psychotherapist, even one of genius, to decide on what is right and wrong in politics, and that Jung followed the correct therapeutic procedure in trying to remain above the fray. But the issue of the society [Society For Psychotherapy, of which Jung was president] and the journal [Zentralblatt, the journal sympathetic to Nazi policies edited by Jung] will not go away. Many of the post-1934 articles in the Zentralblatt go far beyond routine Swiss bourgeois anti-Semitism and contain virulent

attacks on the Jews coupled with eulogies of Hitler [while he was still in power]. . . . Jung knew all about the later articles and did nothing. Since he could not claim ignorance, as these articles were edited in Switzerland, he tried after World War II, to shift the blame onto C.A. Maier [his deputy editor], claiming that he did all the editing."

McLynn paints an even darker picture of Jung's Nazi sympathies when he discovered that "in 1936 Jung threatened resignation as president [of the Society For Psychotherapy] when the Dutch tried to prevent Nazi sympathizers joining the society. As a calculated snub to his critics, in the same year he appointed Hermann Goering as co-editor of the Zentralblatt. . . ."

<http://articles.latimes.com/1997/oct/12/books/bk-41812>

Malcolm wrote:

The movie about Jung made him out to be an absolute ass.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, February 8th, 2015 at 1:34 AM

Title: Re: Is is possible to be Buddhist and Hindu?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

There are all kinds of things wrong with that...but mainly the piling of conjecture on top of speculation...

Adamantine said:

I guess part of the fun of the dharma chat-room wheel-of-existence is that over time you may get to see someone who once argued against a view you expressed, eventually come to share it. I recall arguing this very point on Esangha, and at the time you appeared to strongly support the modern academic critical approach to historiography as being the most valid in some way. Or maybe I misunderstood you then, or am misunderstanding now. . .

Malcolm wrote:

I came to the conclusion that the "modern academic critical approach to historiography" with regards to Buddhist texts and the history of Dharma in India is fatally flawed because it is shot with conjecture through and through and rife with speculation.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, February 8th, 2015 at 2:00 AM

Title: Re: Gradual vs. Nongradual

Content:

Vajrasvapna said:

Bodhicitta is a term that etymologically means enlightened mind, so, again, the text states that only the enlightened mind can be the cause of Buddhahood.

Malcolm wrote:

No, here it means cittopāda, "generation of the thought."

Also the term bodhicitta does not really mean "enlightened mind" per se. One, bodhi means "awaken", not illuminate. Second, here citta means thought, hence the term "bodhicitta" in this sutrayāna context means "the thought to awaken." Hence the passage means tending to that thought to awaken through proximity and effort, one attains any of three results of the path.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, February 8th, 2015 at 6:40 AM

Title: Re: Is it possible to be Buddhist and Hindu?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

I came to the conclusion that the "modern academic critical approach to historiography" with regards to Buddhist texts and the history of Dharma in India is fatally flawed because it is shot with conjecture through and through and rife with speculation.

dzogchungpa said:

Not to mention all the disgruntlement.

Malcolm wrote:

Guys like Davidson and Lopez are definitely disgruntled.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, February 8th, 2015 at 9:55 PM

Title: Re: CG Jung was indeed a Fascist. Discuss.

Content:

steveb1 said:

Like millions of Europeans, Jung saw in Hitler more than a mere demagogue, but a real promise and potential - a dynamic force for progress and unity.

Sherab Dorje said:

What absolute nonsense. Millions of Europeans stood against Hitler, Mussolini, Franco, etc... from day one. Millions of Europeans saw him as a threat from the very beginning. You are just engaging in apologetics.

Malcolm wrote:

Well the truth is that millions of Europeans saw "...a real promise and potential - a dynamic force for progress and unity." And millions of other Europeans "...stood against Hitler, Mussolini, Franco, etc... from day one. Millions of Europeans saw him as a threat

from the very beginning."

So you are both right.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, February 8th, 2015 at 10:21 PM

Title: Re: CG Jung was indeed a Fascist. Discuss.

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

Yes, but I think those that actually supported him (ie were not bullied, harangued, threatened and beaten into supporting him) were an extremely small minority.

Malcolm wrote:

Before Hitler came to power, Mussolini was the darling of the European right, who saw in Fascism a coherent response to Bolshevism. Hitler was able to cash in the European Right's enthusiasm for Fascism, without it, the Vichy Republic could not have happened, not to mention Franco, and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, February 8th, 2015 at 10:37 PM

Title: Re: The Mahayana idea of karma and vegetarianism

Content:

plwk said:

Has Bhante Dhammanando accurately described on the Mahayana view of karma in the practice of vegetarianism? What do you think?

Malcolm wrote:

No, he has not. He has made a botch of it.

<http://www.shabkar.org>

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, February 8th, 2015 at 10:38 PM

Title: Re: The Mahayana idea of karma and vegetarianism

Content:

Boomerang said:

It's quite simple. There is no need to rationalize why one eats meat. By compassion, it is quite clear that one should refrain from eating meat unless by eating meat you are really saving the animal, but that's not the case most of the time.

What if you could purify the dead animal's karma by eating it and reciting a mantra?

Malcolm wrote:

Such methods do exist in Vajrayāna.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, February 9th, 2015 at 1:05 AM

Title: Re: Believing in a Christian God

Content:

Redfaery said:

Still, I'm pretty inclined to think that he runs a paradise, just as other gods of desire do. I've seen how faith in him has inspired members of my family and others around me to do truly compassionate things. I mean, I cannot imagine that my grandfather is not in the Christian God's heaven right now. There is simply no other place where he'd be.

Malcolm wrote:

Or he is just a rgyal po spirit.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, February 9th, 2015 at 1:33 AM

Title: Re: Believing in a Christian God

Content:

Herbie said:

Either this is your belief or you are joking.

Sherab Dorje said:

Oh... another rebirth denying "Buddhist"?

Malcolm wrote:

Probably not as Herbie introduced himself the following way:

I have joined this forum because I am interested in unconventional linguistic expressions and corresponding psycho-philosophy.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, February 9th, 2015 at 2:13 AM

Title: Re: CG Jung was indeed a Fascist. Discuss.

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Before Hitler came to power, Mussolini was the darling of the European right, who saw in Fascism a coherent response to Bolshevism. Hitler was able to cash in the European Right's enthusiasm for Fascism, without it, the Vichy Republic could not have happened, not to mention Franco, and so on.

Sherab Dorje said:

Again, I do not disagree with you in general, but you still have not answered the question as to whether their appeal was genuine or contrived.

Malcolm wrote:

It was pretty genuine, a lot of intellectuals like Louis Ferdinand Celine and so on were enthusiastic fellow travelers on the Right who were worried about the rise of communism.

Sherab Dorje said:

Seeing how it worked here in Greece I would wager heavily on the contrived option. Movements like these need to be bankrolled and encouraged/advertised. Who does the bankrolling and encouragement? Mr average Joe Blow? I personally saw Golden Dawn go from an extreme and unknown fringe group to parliament in a matter of 4-5 years. Keep in mind that Golden Dawn has existed since 1985. Their direct ties with the (then) ruling New Democracy party and various high-flying business men are common knowledge here in Greece.

Malcolm wrote:

Don't confuse the twenty teens with the nineteen thirties.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, February 9th, 2015 at 2:43 AM

Title: Re: CG Jung was indeed a Fascist. Discuss.

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

It was pretty genuine, a lot of intellectuals like Louis Ferdinand Celine and so on were enthusiastic fellow travelers on the Right who were worried about the rise of communism.

Sherab Dorje said:

I am talking about popular support, not "thumbs up" from right wing intellectuals and heads of industry. Don't confuse the twenty teens with the nineteen thirties.

I am not confusing them in the slightest. I am pointing to similarities. Of course we do not have the backdrop of WWI and the general despair associated with that debacle (16 million dead, 21 million wounded) but what you fail to understand since you are a safe distance from this phenomenon, is that Fascism was never defeated in Europe.

Franco continued to rule until he died in 1975. Salazar ruled until 1968 and was then followed by Caetano until 1975. Greece had the junta. Etc...

Even in the "democratic" countries of Italy and Germany power was still concentrated in the hands of Fascist and Nazi supporters. France had a defacto military dictatorship under de Gaulle until 1969. Winston Churchill (another military officer) until 1955 and don't even get me started on the so-called "Communist" regimes.

Malcolm wrote:

Oh, I understand quite well that Fascism never died in Europe.

But my point is simply that like anything, both right and left had their "millions of supporters."

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, February 9th, 2015 at 11:41 PM

Title: Re: CG Jung was indeed a Fascist. Discuss.

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Greg, it is time for you to put this on:

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, February 10th, 2015 at 1:27 AM

Title: Re: CG Jung was indeed a Fascist. Discuss.

Content:

treehuggingoctopus said:

Greg, I agree that we just cannot afford to tolerate fascism in any form -- and I agree that it is far better to err here on the side of caution.

But Jung is dead. However gross his political sympathies were, his writings are not fascist, nor supportive of fascism -- even though fascists may well want to hijack them for their own purposes, just as they have tried to hijack Nietzsche and dozens of other intellectuals. In any case, I honestly do not know what could be gained by exhuming Jung's (already fairly rotten) corpse and putting a 'fascist scum' sticker onto it. There are far more dangerous -- and living! -- characters running around to deal with, aren't there?

Sherab Dorje said:

The discussion has gone beyond Jung and into the realm of defining how Fascism (or Fascist movements) develop. If anything Jung is a great example of how easily one slides back and forth between conservatism and Fascism. He also is a shining example of how conservatives share many more commonalities with Fascists, than democrats.

Malcolm wrote:

Fascism started out as a left wing movement. Mussolini was the editor of the Socialist newspaper Avanti for 15 years, a life long socialist, until the Socialist Party in Italy split over participating in WWI against Germany. In reality, fascists and communists are more similar than they are different.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, February 10th, 2015 at 2:29 AM

Title: Re: CG Jung was indeed a Fascist. Discuss.

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Fascism started out as a left wing movement. Mussolini was the editor of the Socialist newspaper Avanti for 15 years, a life long socialist, until the Socialist Party in Italy split over participating in WWI against Germany.

Sherab Dorje said:

Started out as, but then developed into a proponent of Corporatism.

Malcolm wrote:

So did communism, look at China.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, February 10th, 2015 at 3:21 AM

Title: Re: The Mahayana idea of karma and vegetarianism

Content:

daverupa said:

Can you pick something out from that site that's pertinent here? So far, the Ven.'s summary statement, while trenchant, seems to be in the ballpark.

Astus' comments suggest the same.

Malcolm wrote:

This statement:

According to such texts, the bad karma you accumulate by eating meat is not due to your meat-eating leading more animals to be killed...

Is directly contradicted by the Buddha here, in the Lanka:

If people were to refrain from eating meat, Mahamati, animals would not be slain. For the majority of innocent beasts are slaughtered for the sake of money; few are killed for other reasons.

daverupa said:

...rather, it's because the bad karma entailed in the slaughter of the animal you are presently eating is somehow magically present in the meat itself and will attach itself to you by virtue of your eating it

Malcolm wrote:

Such a sentiment is not found in those Mahāyāna texts.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, February 12th, 2015 at 4:31 AM

Title: Re: Believing in a Christian God

Content:

Jeff said:

Sounds like the key is surrender.

Malcolm wrote:

No, the key is victory. The word surrender is never used in Dharma texts. Through taking refuge, one becomes victorious over both samsara and nirvana.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, February 12th, 2015 at 7:34 PM

Title: Re: Believing in a Christian God

Content:

Jeff said:

In Refuge, does not "one give them-self over to something"? Also, are you saying that no where in Dharma texts does it talk about "yielding or giving up power or control".

Dropping things like anger and fears?

Malcolm wrote:

Dropping anger and fear gives one control; becoming free of the three afflictions gives one the eight kinds of mastery.

When one takes refuge in the Buddha, one is not giving oneself over or surrendering to the Buddha. One is recognizing that Buddha alone shows the path to liberation. When one takes refuge in the Buddha's Dharma, one is recognizing that Buddhadharma alone is the path to liberation. When one takes refuge in the Aryasangha, one is recognizing that the Aryasangha alone can aid one on the path to liberation.

dzogchungpa said:

Re surrender, have a look at chapter 3 of "Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism".

Malcolm wrote:

Can you tell me which Tibetan word is used for "surrender"? I have never encountered it used in a Tibetan or Indian Dharma book and I have read thousands.

I don't read basic Dharma texts in English very often anymore, though I do recall from when I did that Trungpa was definitely into the concept of surrender. I think those Tibetans like their Western students to "surrender"; but I think it has a bit more to do with the Cakravartin model of defeating and then converting people to the Dharma.

There is an idea of entrusting oneself (gtad pa) to the Three Jewels or the Guru, but that is a bit different in my view.

For example, when I entrust my money to a bank for safe keeping I do not surrender to the banker. When I entrust myself to the Three Jewels or my guru for the shelter of refuge, I am not surrendering to them. When someone "surrenders" they are placing themselves at the mercy of another. That is not how I understand my relationship with the Three Jewels nor my Gurus — that is a despotic model, quite common in Christianity, Judaism and Islam, and perhaps even Hinduism, but I think it is pretty foreign to Buddhadharma, no matter what Tulku Ugyen and Tsoknyi Rinpoche translators may have said when translating for them.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, February 12th, 2015 at 9:32 PM

Title: Re: Believing in a Christian God

Content:

Jeff said:

"Buddha alone shows the path to liberation"... No other hope and no other way... That is the definition of surrender to Christ.

Malcolm wrote:

Ok, well, you take refuge in Jesus. I will continue to take refuge in the Buddha. However, please do not confuse these two, your refuge is not mine, mine is not yours.

Jeff said:

On paths to liberation...

1 John 1:12-13

12But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:13Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

Just remeber that the most high is emptiness, not the Zeus guy that everyone here is so attached to. Is not a buddha sort of a "son of emptiness"?

Malcolm wrote:

Emptiness is not god.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, February 12th, 2015 at 9:33 PM

Title: Re: Ati yoga deity sadhana

Content:

narraboth said:

Can you qoute what did Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche actually say about 'no transformation to diety'?

Malcolm wrote:

He has given over 500 retreats, he has made this statement literally thousands of times.

narraboth said:

3. ati: generate directly from rigpa yeshe

Malcolm wrote:

He would still consider this anuyoga because there is generation.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, February 12th, 2015 at 9:56 PM

Title: Re: Believing in a Christian God

Content:

Sherab said:

In Buddhism, any surrender is only expedient and temporary. The final goal is liberation from all dependencies, i.e., true independence. And you take your place as a Victorious One and become a source of refuge for others who have yet to achieve liberation.

In Abrahamic religions, surrender is absolute and eternal, and any free will you have is subject to the free will of Big Daddy.

Jeff said:

Where do you come up with that? Remember the most high is not some Zeus like old man. A couple of actual quotes from the bible for you...

Psalms 82:5-6

5 They know not, neither will they understand; they walk on in darkness: all the foundations of the earth are out of course. 6 I have said, Ye are gods; and all of you are children of the most High.

John 14:10-12

10 Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own authority; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works. 11 Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father in Me, or else believe Me for the sake of the works themselves. 12 "Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these he will do, because I go to My Father.

Sherab said:

Christians like to claim that the creator is beyond space and time. Since the created are created within space and time, the created will always be lower than the creator. If you think that you can be equal to the creator, your Christian friends will think that you have come under the influence of Satan. So Big Daddy still rules over you whether you like it or not. Your free will is an illusion.

In Buddhism, the belief in a Creator God is considered as irrational. The Buddha himself taught that there is no Creator God. The Buddha taught that the Creator God is deluded in thinking that he (the Creator God) is a creator of the world and the beings therein.

When we follow the path shown by the Buddha, we will one day become Buddha

ourselves. We will become equal to the teacher, Buddha. We will be truly free and independent.

Malcolm wrote:

If Jeff wants to believe that his esoteric Christianity has the same message as Buddhadharma, that is his trip, and his conceptual confusion — but we should stop wasting our time with this.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, February 12th, 2015 at 10:49 PM

Title: Re: Believing in a Christian God

Content:

Jeff said:

Thank you for acknowledging that in these contexts refuge is similar to the concept of surrender.

Malcolm wrote:

I did not acknowledge that.

Jeff said:

Also, I completely agree that Buddha does not equal Jesus. As I have stated a few times before primordial Buddha is equivalent to the Holy Father.

Malcolm wrote:

You are hopelessly confused about Buddhadharma because you read someone else's hopelessly confused misinterpretation of what "adibuddha" means.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, February 12th, 2015 at 10:50 PM

Title: Re: Believing in a Christian God

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

If Jeff wants to believe that his esoteric Christianity has the same message as Buddhadharma, that is his trip, and his conceptual confusion — but we should stop wasting our time with this.

Jeff said:

Malcolm,

I did not start this thread and have responded in the context of the OP. If you are not interested in the OP, why post here?

Best,

Jeff

Malcolm wrote:

Because someone might read your posts and become confused.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, February 12th, 2015 at 10:51 PM

Title: Re: Believing in a Christian God

Content:

Jeff said:

Anyone who has realized emptiness knows that there is nothing that was "created" in the first place.

Malcolm wrote:

There is no teaching of *sūnyatā*, emptiness, outside of the doctrine of Śākyamuni Buddha. Even where the term "emptiness" be used, it is not the emptiness taught by the Buddhas of the three times.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, February 12th, 2015 at 11:00 PM

Title: Re: Believing in a Christian God

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

If Jeff wants to believe that his esoteric Christianity has the same message as Buddhadharma, that is his trip, and his conceptual confusion — but we should stop wasting our time with this.

Sherab said:

When a non-Buddhist takes the trouble to come onto a Buddhist forum to present his view, I usually will respond to show where I disagree with them. When his reply does not address my points, that would mean that he has no reply to my response and is now arguing for arguing sake. At that point, I will disengage since he is either being evasive or intellectually dishonest.

Jeff said:

Sherab,

Is there some point that I have not responded to? Also, I consider myself a follower of Buddha and have stated many times before that in my experience I have found his teachings to be correct. While the OP was about a Christian perspective, we could also be having this discussion with certain taoist and Kashmir Shaivism lineages. A Primordial lineage is a primordial lineage. The challenge in these discussions is that the group seems to be limited to text or verbal descriptions. With the clarity to directly perceive energy/light/transmissions it would be easier to demonstrate the relative

lineages.

Best,
Jeff

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, Jeff, you are a perennialist, holding that all the worlds religions hold the same essential truth. Most of us here are exclusivists, holding that the truth was only held and expressed in Buddhadharma.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 13th, 2015 at 2:36 AM

Title: Re: Ati yoga deity sadhana

Content:

narraboth said:

Can you quote what did Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche actually say about 'no transformation to deity'?

Malcolm wrote:

He has given over 500 retreats, he has made this statement literally thousands of times.

narraboth said:

That doesn't mean people outside of his sangha would know what and how exactly he said.

Malcolm wrote:

"if there is any transformation at all, it is anu level..."

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 13th, 2015 at 8:55 PM

Title: Re: Building a modern and/or western Buddhism

Content:

Herbie said:

For me buddhism is manifesting in buddhists, buddhist traditions and institutions and the terms that stand for the concepts of the buddhist system of thought. Therefore I take the term "buddhadharma" as a synonym for "buddhism".

Malcolm wrote:

They are not—the various kinds of "Buddhisms" may elect to disinclude various aspects of Buddhadharma and often do.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, February 14th, 2015 at 12:10 AM

Title: Re: The Mahayana idea of karma and vegetarianism

Content:

Vajrasvapna said:

While some Mahayana masters continue using a Hinayanist view to explain karma and blame people for eating meat.

Malcolm wrote:

The problem with your statement here is that meat-eating is not prohibited in Hinayāna.

The Madhyamaka stance, represented by Bhavaviveka, is that eating meat that is pure in three ways is permissible since there is no consciousness in the flesh of an animal who has been dead for some time, and thus one is not responsible for their suffering at all. Those who follow the Yogacara Sūtras and Tathāgatagarbha Sūtras disagree with this point of view vehemently.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, February 14th, 2015 at 12:29 AM

Title: Re: The Mahayana idea of karma and vegetarianism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The Madhyamaka stance, represented by Bhavaviveka, is that eating meat that is pure in three ways is permissible since there is no consciousness in the flesh of an animal who has been dead for some time

daverupa said:

...but there is consciousness in the flesh of an animal who has been dead for some lesser time?

Malcolm wrote:

Dave, the point eating meat not pure in three ways mean that you are somehow involved in afflicting suffering and engaging in killing. Basically, what Bhava is saying, is that a) because you were not involved in killing, seeing or ordering meat killed for you, you were not involved in killing b) since it takes a while to dress meat, but the time the (pure in three ways) meat reaches you, there is no fear of being involved in the animals suffering since its consciousness has long since departed its body, whether it is 30 seconds, 10 minutes, half an hour or three days.

daverupa said:

Also, how does this difference of opinion you mention relate to the following passage in the Surangama Sutra:

I use my spiritual power of compassion to provide you with illusory meat to satisfy your appetite.

Malcolm wrote:

It does not relate at all — this text never existed outside of China. We have some evidence that Indian Mādhyamikas more or less absolutely disregarded Yogacara and Tathāgatagarbha sūtras, or where they did give them attention, it was only to explain how their followers had utterly misunderstood them.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, February 14th, 2015 at 2:15 AM

Title: Re: Building a modern and/or western Buddhism

Content:

Herbie said:

For me buddhism is manifesting in buddhists, buddhist traditions and institutions and the terms that stand for the concepts of the buddhist system of thought. Therefore I take the term "buddhadharma" as a synonym for "buddhism".

Malcolm wrote:

They are not— the various kinds of "Buddhisms" may elect to disinclude various aspects of Buddhadharma and often do.

Herbie said:

From your perspective you are certainly right.

But I understand my term "buddhism" as the heading for all "kinds of buddhisms". Also when I am exploring I rely on my 5 senses therefore I have to take the 2 terms as synonyms. Otherwise I feel I would indulge in some sort of speculation.

Malcolm wrote:

You have another sense, the mind.

Herbie said:

Can you specify/define what "buddhadharma" stands for?

Malcolm wrote:

"Buddha Dharma" is a) the realization of a buddha and his or her expression of that realization.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, February 14th, 2015 at 2:46 AM

Title: Re: Building a modern and/or western Buddhism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Can you specify/define what "buddhadharma" stands for?

"Buddha Dharma" is a) the realization of a buddha and his or her expression of that realization.

Herbie said:

OK, thanks.

But then those who claim that "Buddhism" or "all kinds of Buddhism" are not "Buddha Dharma" should have that knowledge directly from a Buddha and should have been able to understand the expression of that Buddha meaning exactly this. Because if they have that knowledge from a "buddhist" teaching (a teaching of any kind of "all kinds of Buddhisms") then "Buddha Dharma" would be included in "Buddhism" and would not be different from "Buddhism".

Malcolm wrote:

"Buddhisms" may contain Buddhadharma or not. It really depends on whether a given school of "Buddhism" produces awakened people or not.

In other words not everything branded as "Buddhism" is Buddhadharma.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, February 14th, 2015 at 3:26 AM

Title: Re: Building a modern and/or western Buddhism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

"Buddhisms" may contain Buddhadharma or not. It really depends on whether a given school of "Buddhism" produces awakened people or not.

dzogchungpa said:

How can you tell if a given school produces awakened people or not?

Malcolm wrote:

Matthew 7:16

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, February 14th, 2015 at 4:29 AM

Title: Re: Building a modern and/or western Buddhism

Content:

daverupa said:

<http://www.accesstoinight.org/tipitaka/kn/ud/ud.6.02.than.html> as well.

Malcolm wrote:

Given Dzogchungpa's ecumenical tendencies (there is a cure for that, BTW), I thought it was apropos.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Saturday, February 14th, 2015 at 7:24 AM
Title: Re: Building a modern and/or western Buddhism
Content:
dzogchungpa said:
Malcolm, your upāya is indeed inconceivable.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Saturday, February 14th, 2015 at 9:31 PM
Title: Re: Chat about Buddhism vs. Buddhadharma
Content:
Herbie said:
So there may arise potential conflict between "this buddhisms" doctrines or teachings and the expression of "awakened people".

Malcolm wrote:
Yes, for example, the conflict between Hinayāna and Mahāyāna, and the conflict between Yogacara and Madhyamaka, and so on. A great deal of the hermeneutics in Buddhism involves negotiating the disparity between "buddhisms" and Buddhadharma.

Herbie said:
"awakened" or "awakening" seems to be the key concept.

Malcolm wrote:
Yes, Buddhadharma means "The realization and teaching of those who are awake."

Herbie said:
So the question as to the difference between "Buddha dharma" and "Buddhism(s)" has just been shifted to the question of identifying "awakened people" and since the ways of expression of "awakened people" cannot be determined by any buddhism how can "awakened people" be identified?

Malcolm wrote:
That is something we all have to work out on our own.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Saturday, February 14th, 2015 at 11:08 PM
Title: Re: Chat about Buddhism vs. Buddhadharma
Content:
Simon E. said:
You are moving firmly into the area of ' prapanca ' imo.

dzogchungpa said:
Horrors.

I beleive it was Richard Hayes who first suggested that 'prapanca' is just the Buddhist word for 'bullshit':

<http://www.buddha-l.org/archives/2008-February/009389.html>

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, I like that. The definition of ultimate truth is "emptiness free from the four extremes of bullshit."

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, February 17th, 2015 at 7:45 AM

Title: Re: The Eleven Nations of North America

Content:

steveb1 said:

OP wrote: "the United States, which I view basically as a monoculture (or really more of a homogeneous barbarism). North America *is* multinational, composed of at least four major cultures (Mexico, which has more than one culture, the lower 48 barbarism, and Canada"

Seems a bit judgmental, particularly in regard to Mexico, which is a culture in wildly barbaric disarray whose government sends and deliberately encourages its poorest, least educated citizens to illegally immigrate to the U.S., to the detriment of both cultures, but especially of the U.S., whose resources are inadequate to handle these waves of illegal colonization. To dismiss the U.S. simply as "the lower 48 barbarism" is inaccurate and itself looks like a form of barbarism.

Malcolm wrote:

It is actually a racist sentiment.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, February 18th, 2015 at 9:16 PM

Title: Re: series of rebirths

Content:

garudha said:

That which has a beginning also has an end.

If someone says "this is/was my final birth" it follows that there must have an original birth.

Q: is there any mention of liberated ones recalling their original or first birth ?

Malcolm wrote:

No, because there is no beginning to birth, only and end.

There is a saying, "samsara has no beginning, but it has an end, nirvana has a beginning, but it has no end."

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 20th, 2015 at 12:40 AM

Title: Re: Did Tibet ever use the Indian calendar?

Content:

Indrajala said:

Does anyone know if Tibet ever used the Indian calendar based on the 27 or 28 nakṣatras? The month commences from the full moon and has its name derived from which nakṣatra the full moon is nominally abiding in that night. On the Chinese lunar calendar this would be day 15 (day 1 is the new moon). According to this model, the new year will commence on April 3rd or lunar 2/15, which is always the nakṣatra Citrā (as a month name it is Caitra).

If you convert the Chinese lunar calendar into the Indian one used by Amoghavajra in the eighth century it looks like this:

<https://1.bp.blogspot.com/-yZipCVPd4X4/VKTR5xagwZI/AAAAAAAAAC5M/OvUY1SHtmLI/s1600/T1299%2Btable%2Band%2Blandscape-page-001.jpg>

It became widely used in astrology and Mijiao/Shingon, especially in Japan, but was never mainstream in either China or Japan. How about Tibet?

Malcolm wrote:

The Tibetan calendar is calculated on the basis of the Kālacakra Tantra. However, the month commences from the new moon, as in the Chinese calendar you mention above.

The Tibetans make full use of the nakṣatras based on both the Chinese and Indian systems. For example, the fourth Tibetan Month, Saga, is a corruption of Vaisakha.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 20th, 2015 at 1:04 AM

Title: Re: Did Tibet ever use the Indian calendar?

Content:

Indrajala said:

The Tibetan calendar is calculated on the basis of the Kālacakra Tantra.

It seems though the popular calendar commonly used by Tibetans is very similar to the Chinese lunar calendar. Losar for example just happened, whereas Caitra or Vaiśākha, which are regarded as the start of the year on the Indian calendar, won't be until April or May.

According to Henning's site, there's multiple calendars in use:

<http://www.kalacakra.org/calendar/tibcal.htm>

However, the month commences from the new moon, as in the Chinese calendar you

mention above.

There is a precedent for this in India. If I recall, the calendars of the south have the month commence from the new moon, which is called the amānta method, whereas if it commences from the full moon it is the pūrṇāmānta method. The amānta method is generally understood as occidental and not native to India originally.

Malcolm wrote:

The Tibetan calendar, while calculated astronomically on the basis of the Kālacakra (specifically the Vimalaprabha), is applied according to the system of 'byung rtsi, i.e. elemental calculation, which originates some time in the 11th century and derives from "China", roughly speaking.

There are two main systems of calendar making in Tibet, Phuglug and Tshurlug; the former is followed by most Tibetans; the latter, by the Karma Kagyu. The Tshurlug new year is one month earlier than the Phuglug system.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, February 21st, 2015 at 9:53 PM

Title: Re: Differences between Vajravaraḥi practice in Kagyupa scho

Content:

togg said:

Are Vajrayogini and Vajravaraḥi identical?

(And happy Losar!!!)

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, in fact they are the same deity, same mantra, etc.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, February 22nd, 2015 at 1:07 AM

Title: Re: The Future of Dzogchen Teachings

Content:

alpha said:

If rinpoche's claim is based on kalachakra prophecies than this could only happen in the very distant future, more like thousands of years from now. Because first the islam has to dominate the world and be destroyed and only then we can talk about the right conditions for vajrayana and dzogchen to flourish again or so i understood it.

Malcolm wrote:

More like 450 years from now, that is when the Kalacakra war is supposed to happen.

But I don't think this idea is based at all on Kalacakra, but rather a prediction in the srga

thal gyur tantra, where it says that Dzogchen teachings will continue to spread until the time when the lifespan decreases to ten years, at which point it will disappear. Given that the notion that the Śākyamuni's Dharma supposed to last 5000 years before it disappears and so on, we can see the inference that Dzogchen will be the last surviving system of Dharma.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, February 22nd, 2015 at 1:42 AM

Title: Re: The Very Idea of Buddhist History

Content:

Indrajala said:

I personally agree that the traditional narrative is highly problematic, which is evident when you see anachronisms in literature which is supposed to represent the teachings of a historical Buddha and early sangha (like mention of writing in the Ekōttarikāgama).

Malcolm wrote:

Anachronisms in a text do not necessarily point to a late, original composition — case in point, the Illiad.

Certainly the Illiad is filled with anachronisms, nevertheless, the basic facts presented in the Illiad have been born out by archaeological findings.

Then of course there is the issue of whether something some scholar judges to be anachronistic is actually anachronistic.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, February 22nd, 2015 at 1:56 AM

Title: Re: The Very Idea of Buddhist History

Content:

Indrajala said:

Then of course there is the issue of whether something some scholar judges to be anachronistic is actually anachronistic.

It all comes down to evidence. You can contest anything, but in the absence of evidence it means nothing.

Malcolm wrote:

And you can propose anything, even an anachronism, but in the absence of evidence it means nothing.

As far as Jayravava's article goes, there is a least one instance of playing fast and loose with the facts. He writes: I've also discussed the contradictory biographical traditions in the suttas (see The Buddha's Biography). There are at least two biographies of the Buddha. In one he is a unmarried youth when he leaves home and his mother is still

alive. In another he is a man of 29 whose mother died in childbirth. The youth is found in the Pāli version of the Ariyapariyesana Sutta and the 29 year old in the Chinese counterpart of the same text. Both stories cannot be true and we have no objective way of knowing which is. All we have is a general historical principle that Buddhist stories become more elaborate over time (there is clear evidence of this in the accurately dated Chinese translations). Thus, we usually assume that a less elaborate version of a story is (relatively) earlier than the same story in a more elaborate version.

However, this is incorrect. There is no specific mention of Buddha's mother in this sutta. There is this, however:

"So, at a later time, while still young, a black-haired young man endowed with the blessings of youth in the first stage of life — and while my parents, unwilling, were crying with tears streaming down their faces — I shaved off my hair & beard, put on the ochre robe and went forth from the home life into homelessness.

For example, my father remarried, and has a wife who is not my mother. But I often refer to them as my "parents" out of convenience, though only one of them is actually my parent.

Thus, when Jayarava claims that there are two conflicting bios in the canon, when his claim is closely examined, it is at best a reach based on how he wants to read the term "parents" and "youth". Thus, Jayarava is conjuring up contradictions where none are to be seen, in this case.

Then there is this:

There is the fundamental incompatibility of karma and pratīyasamutpāda. The former demands effects long after conditions have ceased, and the latter forbids it.

This is nonsense, it almost bears no rebuttal since he adduces no reasoning to buttress his absurd claim.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, February 22nd, 2015 at 3:08 AM

Title: Re: The Future of Dzogchen Teachings

Content:

alpha said:

If rinpoche's claim is based on kalachakra prophecies than this could only happen in the very distant future, more like thousands of years from now. Because first the islam has to dominate the world and be destroyed and only then we can talk about the right conditions for vajrayana and dzogchen to flourish again or so i understood it.

Malcolm wrote:

More like 450 years from now, that is when the Kalacakra war is supposed to happen. But I don't think this idea is based at all on Kalacakra, but rather a prediction in the srga thal gyur tantra, where it says that Dzogchen teachings will continue to spread until the time when the lifespan decreases to ten years, at which point it will disappear. Given that the notion that the Śākyamuni's Dharma supposed to last 5000 years before it

disappears and so on, we can see the inference that Dzogchen will be the last surviving system of Dharma.

dzogchungpa said:

So at that time Dzogchen will be transmitted and practiced by people under the age of 10?

Malcolm wrote:

No, at that time, Dzogchen too will have vanished. And when we say life span of ten years, it does not mean everyone has a life span of ten years, it means that there is such violence, that the average lifespan is ten years.

For example, we live now in an age where the life span for humans is considered to be a one hundred. This does not mean everyone lives to a hundred, or that one cannot live longer, etc.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, February 22nd, 2015 at 3:32 AM

Title: Re: The Future of Dzogchen Teachings

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

No, at that time, Dzogchen too will have vanished. And when we say life span of ten years, it does not mean everyone has a life span of ten years, it means that there is such violence, that the average lifespan is ten years.

For example, we live now in an age where the life span for humans is considered to be a one hundred. This does not mean everyone lives to a hundred, or that one cannot live longer, etc.

dzogchungpa said:

So what will the average lifespan be when everything but Dzogchen is gone?

Malcolm wrote:

One assumes 100 years.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, February 22nd, 2015 at 4:17 AM

Title: Re: The Very Idea of Buddhist History

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Anachronisms in a text do not necessarily point to a late, original composition — case in point, the Illiad.

Certainly the Illiad is filled with anachronisms, nevertheless, the basic facts presented in the Illiad have been born out by archaeological findings.

Then of course there is the issue of whether something some scholar judges to be anachronistic is actually anachronistic.

Bakmoon said:

Anachronisms do not demonstrate that the entirety of a text is late, correct. But they do indicate that the particular example of the text which contains them is.

Malcolm wrote:

And that of course says nothing about the antiquity of the given text in question, merely the example presented.

In any case, everything that Jayarava presents is nothing but one huge ego-flamed speculation.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, February 22nd, 2015 at 4:18 AM

Title: Re: The Future of Dzogchen Teachings

Content:

frank123 said:

My apologies for sounding like a broken record but i am just trying to get my head around that at some time in the future Dzogchen will be the only practice remaining on earth. Surely if it spreads across the whole globe so widely would it be accurate to say that the essence of the teachings will remain but there will not be cultural 'baggage' so to speak remaining.

For example Tibetan terminology will not be so important, the name Dzogchen wont be used to describe our true nature etc but the main essentials will still be intact. I know we cant know for sure but does this outcome seems most probable?

Malcolm wrote:

I have no idea.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, February 22nd, 2015 at 4:55 AM

Title: Re: The Very Idea of Buddhist History

Content:

Jayarava said:

And this is the problem with basing your opinions on translations instead of original texts. There really is a contradiction, but the translation you were reading hid it from you. A bit deceptive, eh?

Malcolm wrote:

It still does not necessarily mean what you intend it to mean. It does not indicate that Buddha's birth mother, who supposedly died when shortly after he was born of a caesarean section, was the "mother" referenced in the passage.

Jayarava said:

None other than Nāgārjuna points out the problem with any version of karma that requires effects to ripen after the conditions have ceased:

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, ultimately. Still, Nāgārjuna accepts karmic ripening conventionally, and even presents his favored presentation of how karmas ripen, the position of the Sammitiyas.

Jayarava said:

Now, Nāgārjuna has a particular solution in mind when he makes this criticism. And Indrajala has already pointed out that other Buddhist sects had their own solutions. Which goes to show that this is not something I've simply made up. It was a problem widely acknowledged in the Buddhist world and many solutions were proposed, and polemics were written criticising them all by Buddhists of different sects. Far from being a shocking modern discovery, this is a boring 2000 year old argument. Though in my view it was never settled satisfactorily.

Malcolm wrote:

See above.

Jayarava said:

So I'm sorry that you felt the need to go on the offensive, but you are simply mistaken. The facts are very much on my side. Does this change your mind at all?

Malcolm wrote:

That facts are not on your side.

One, your reading of that sutta passage involves a large number of unfounded suppositions.

Two, your reading of Nāgārjuna conflates relative and ultimate. What Nāgārjuna opines is the idea that the effects of actions are "imperishable", even after the action itself has ceased. In other words, he presents the āvipraṇāśa, his preferred theory. This chapter is sole place in the whole of the MMK where he expressed an preference of opinions.

Now, you might personally feel that Karma and dependent origination are in contradiction, but it is slipshod to invoke Nāgārjuna in defense of your theory, since Nāgārjuna, strictly speaking, ultimately negates arising altogether.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, February 22nd, 2015 at 4:58 AM

Title: Re: The Very Idea of Buddhist History

Content:

Jayarava said:

But I do adduce reasons in an earlier essay. My bad for not linking to it. I can sum that argument up for you in a few quick words. Pratītyasamutpāda says:

imasmim sati idaṃ hoti, imass' uppādā idaṃ uppajjati;

imasmim asati idaṃ na hoti, imassa nirodhā idaṃ nirujjhati. (My emphasis)

None other than Nāgārjuna points out the problem with any version of karma that requires effects to ripen after the conditions have ceased:

tiṣṭhaty ā pākakālāc cet karma tan nityatām iyāt /

> niruddhaṃ cen niruddhaṃ sat kiṃ phalaṃ janayiṣyati // MMK_17.6 //

Which translates as:

"If the action remains until the time of maturation, then it would be eternal
If it ceases, being ceased, how does it produce a fruit?"

Now, Nāgārjuna has a particular solution in mind when he makes this criticism. And Indrajala has already pointed out that other Buddhist sects had their own solutions. Which goes to show that this is not something I've simply made up. It was a problem widely acknowledged in the Buddhist world and many solutions were proposed, and polemics were written criticising them all by Buddhists of different sects. Far from being a shocking modern discovery, this is a boring 2000 year old argument. Though in my view it was never settled satisfactorily.

So I'm sorry that you felt the need to go on the offensive, but you are simply mistaken. The facts are very much on my side. Does this change your mind at all?

Bakmoon said:

How is this a contradiction? Just because the earliest texts don't give an explicit formulation of how the process of Karma works in regards to time doesn't mean that there is a contradiction. It just means that the texts never discuss the matter.

Malcolm wrote:

It is just more of Jayarava's Adharma.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, February 22nd, 2015 at 8:09 AM

Title: Re: The Very Idea of Buddhist History

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

I take it you are not a Mahayana Buddhist Jayarava?

Malcolm wrote:
He is not a follower of Buddhadharma at all, anymore.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Sunday, February 22nd, 2015 at 10:16 PM
Title: Re: The Very Idea of Buddhist History
Content:
Indrajala said:
So much for an academic discussion.

Malcolm wrote:
What is the use of a discussion predicated on outlandish assumptions and pure speculation which has no basis in fact?

Further, what place does an "academic" discussion harmful to the very root of Dharma have on a forum devoted to Dharma?

There are plenty of places where those more interested in "history" and philology than Dharma can chew the fat.

Indrajala said:
Critics of Early Buddhism have adopted a rhetoric of scepticism in order to dismiss the notion of authenticity. Their arguments are apparently intended to be hard-nosed and unsentimental, but when examined closely they are reminiscent of arguments by denialists of various types, such as those relating to the harmful effects of tobacco, creationism, or the reality of man-made climate change. Just as sceptics characterise the search for authenticity as "Protestant Buddhism", it seems appropriate to describe this form of scepticism as "Denialist Buddhism".

Malcolm wrote:
What Sujato fails to point out here is just how much of this "skepticism" purely conjectural and speculative.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Sunday, February 22nd, 2015 at 10:24 PM
Title: Re: The Very Idea of Buddhist History
Content:
Sherlock said:
Jayarava is also on the fringes of academia at best.

Malcolm wrote:
He is not an academic and has no training at all in Buddhology or in a traditional Buddhist curriculum.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, February 22nd, 2015 at 10:30 PM

Title: Re: Differences between Vajravarahi practice in Kagyupa scho

Content:

togg said:

Are Vajrayogini and Vajravarahi identical?

(And happy Losar!!!)

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, in fact they are the same deity, same mantra, etc.

Lingpupa said:

Almost. Not interchangeable under all circumstances.

Malcolm wrote:

In gSar ma, they definitely are interchangeable.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, February 22nd, 2015 at 11:07 PM

Title: Re: Spirit Guides in Buddhism

Content:

Barsook said:

Are there spirit guides in Buddhism?

Malcolm wrote:

No, definitely not.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, February 22nd, 2015 at 11:32 PM

Title: Re: Spirit Guides in Buddhism

Content:

Barsook said:

Are there spirit guides in Buddhism?

Malcolm wrote:

No, definitely not.

M.G. said:

Wouldn't this depend on how one defines the term "spirit guide"?

I know of one serious practitioner who claims to have received a direct warning about a planned action from one of the dharmapalas. To my mind, this could be construed as guidance from a spirit.

Malcolm wrote:

Since when are Dharmapālas "spirits", two, since when do Dharmapālas take interest in the affairs of mortals? Third, how are we to know whether this guidance was from a dharmapāla or a māra masquerading as a dharmapāla?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, February 23rd, 2015 at 12:35 AM

Title: Re: Spirit Guides in Buddhism

Content:

M.G. said:

Is there a formal differentiation between a "spirit" and a worldly dharmapala? (Other than the latter being tamed into protecting the dharma.) That's not meant sarcastically, btw.

Malcolm wrote:

Of course, a dharmapāla, as opposed to a lokapāla, is an awakened nonhuman manifesting in a wrathful form to protect the Dharma. A lokapāla is a worldly being who has been bound to protect the Dharma. It is important to make this distinction since it is at the root of the dharmapāla crisis in Gelug.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, February 23rd, 2015 at 12:48 AM

Title: Re: Spirit Guides in Buddhism

Content:

M.G. said:

Is there a formal differentiation between a "spirit" and a worldly dharmapala? (Other than the latter being tamed into protecting the dharma.) That's not meant sarcastically, btw.

Malcolm wrote:

Of course, a dharmapāla, as opposed to a lokapāla, is an awakened nonhuman manifesting in a wrathful form to protect the Dharma. A lokapāla is a worldly being who has been bound to protect the Dharma. It is important to make this distinction since it is at the root of the dharmapāla crisis in Gelug.

M.G. said:

This is an important enough point that I'd like to ask for one clarification.

Is the English phrase "worldly dharmapala" generally understood as synonymous with "lokapala?" When I used the term "worldly dharmapala" I intended to convey the idea of a dharma protector that is not enlightened.

Malcolm wrote:

"loka" means worldly.

Unless one is a powerful yogi, one should not rely on unenlightened beings.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, February 23rd, 2015 at 8:20 PM

Title: Re: Differences between Vajravarahi practice in Kagyupa scho

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

In gSar ma, they definitely are interchangeable.

Lingpupa said:

Perhaps. Maybe even often. But not quite always.

Malcolm wrote:

Always, they both come from the Laghusamvara Tantra, and no distinction is made between Yoginī and Vārāhī, Vajrayoginī is Vajravārāhī and vice versa. The only difference between them is the source of the lineage, but not the nature of the deity.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, February 23rd, 2015 at 9:34 PM

Title: Re: Differences between Vajravarahi practice in Kagyupa scho

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Always, they both come from the Laghusamvara Tantra.

Lingpupa said:

Sure. But Vajravarahi has the sow's head, Vajrayogini generally not. Whether you call them the same or close but different is up to the way you want to define your terms. It's not very important.

You can argue by that method that she is the same deity as Chakrasamvara. Maybe she is, maybe she isn't - but they look different. The rest is little games.

So not always in every case, just many.

Malcolm wrote:

The presence or absence of the sow's head is not relevant. What is relevant is that the mantras are the same, the source tantra is the same, and so on.

Also, Yoginī is the essence of Cakrasamvara. When one practices Yoginī, Samvara is included automatically. The arrangement of the mandala is the same, the manner of the abhisamaya is the same, based on the Yoginīsaṃcārya Tantra, so on and so forth.

Also, when in union with Cakrasamvara, Vajravārāhī is never pictured with a sow's head, as she is always, say, when she is the consort of Hayagriva in Nyingma Tantras.

This is why I am willing to allow that Vajravārāhī in Nyingma is not necessarily interchangeable with Vajrayoginī in Sarma — the Vajravārāhī mantras in Nyingma tantra are not similar at all with the Yoginī/Vārāhī mantras from the Laghusamvara.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, February 23rd, 2015 at 11:23 PM

Title: Re: Differences between Vajravarahi practice in Kagyupa scho

Content:

Lingpupa said:

Dear Malcolm,

I can well imagine that you'd like the last word, and that's fine with me. However, from the practitioner's point of view, the situation is really quite simple.

Vajravarahi/Vajrayogini plays a part in the two practices of which I have the longest experience. Both of them are from the Kagyu tradition, neither of them is particularly obscure. In one of them she is called Vajravarahi, has a sow's head, and has one mantra. In the other, she is called Vajrayogini, does not have the sow's head, and has a slightly different mantra. I'm sure you appreciate that it would be completely wrong to interchange either the appearances or the mantras between these practices. For my money, that makes the two occurrences slightly different.

If you want to argue that they are nevertheless identical (which was the original poster's question, as I recall, although somebody seems to have manipulated the threads), while being somewhat different, then please be my guest.

Malcolm wrote:

The difference lies in whether the essence and near essence mantras are combined, as in the Om gsum mantra, or whether they are kept separately, as in some other sadhanas and transmissions.

The main point however is that we have two basic forms of one deity. For example, there is a Cakrasamvara in his Sahaja form, 12 armed form, up to a thousand armed form. They are all different forms of the same deity. Likewise, whether we are talking about Naro Dakini, Indradakini (Vārāhī), Maitri Dakini, or Vajravārāhī they are all different forms

of the same deity.

In the sadhanas we have in the bstan 'gyur we frequently see this:

/bod skad du/rdo rje phag mo'i sgrub thabs/dpal rdo rje rnal 'byor ma la phyag 'tshal lo/

/bod skad du/rdo rje rnal 'byor ma'i sgrub thabs zhes bya ba/rje btsun dpal rdo rje phag mo la phyag 'tshal lo/

In Tibetan: Vajravārāhīsadhana. Homage to Vajrayoginī.

In Tibetan: Vajrayoginīsadana. Homage to Lady Śrī Vajravārāhī

Or in the Khyāvajravārāhyabhidhanāta-tantrottara-vārāhi-abhibodhiya-nāma

Arising in the center of that is the queen,

Vārāhī, Vajrayoginī.

My point being is that these two terms are both used for the same deity, regardless of minor differences in mantra formation or appearances.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, February 24th, 2015 at 1:02 AM

Title: Re: Sam Harris on Charlie Hebdo

Content:

Fa Dao said:

It doesnt matter how I define it..it is clearly defined in the quran and hadiths...

Johnny Dangerous said:

Violence against non believers on a similar level is also in the Torah/Old Testament....it is something othe than just the holy books, believing religion and politics are somehow mutually exclusive motivations is naieve.

Malcolm wrote:

Right, the problem with the Koran is that there is no "new testament."

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, February 24th, 2015 at 1:12 AM

Title: Re: Sam Harris on Charlie Hebdo

Content:

Johnny Dangerous said:

I'll agree there to some extent, it certainly seems it could do with some sort of reformation..

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, Islam as a whole needs a great internal reformation.

Johnny Dangerous said:

But really, what is the conclusion to draw from this sort of sentiment anyway 'be scared of Islam'. I always see people post stuff likenthis as if there's some grand point to be.made...there are alot of moving parts to this debate and simply harping on what's wrong with Islam.strikes me as very short sighted...it cannot describe all.the conditios responsible for modern Jihad movements.

Malcolm wrote:

Wahhabism, that is all the conditions required. When you examine the history of this movement, you will see the roots of ISIS and so on.

Johnny Dangerous said:

BRIEF HISTORY 1741- 1818

Abd al-Wahhab's advocacy of these ultra radical views inevitably led to his expulsion from his own town -- and in 1741, after some wanderings, he found refuge under the protection of Ibn Saud and his tribe. What Ibn Saud perceived in Abd al-Wahhab's novel teaching was the means to overturn Arab tradition and convention. It was a path to seizing power.

Ibn Saud's clan, seizing on Abd al-Wahhab's doctrine, now could do what they always did, which was raiding neighboring villages and robbing them of their possessions. Only now they were doing it not within the ambit of Arab tradition, but rather under the banner of jihad. Ibn Saud and Abd al-Wahhab also reintroduced the idea of martyrdom in the name of jihad, as it granted those martyred immediate entry into paradise.

In the beginning, they conquered a few local communities and imposed their rule over them. (The conquered inhabitants were given a limited choice: conversion to Wahhabism or death.) By 1790, the Alliance controlled most of the Arabian Peninsula and repeatedly raided Medina, Syria and Iraq.

Their strategy -- like that of ISIS today -- was to bring the peoples whom they conquered into submission. They aimed to instill fear. In 1801, the Allies attacked the Holy City of Karbala in Iraq. They massacred thousands of Shiites, including women and children. Many Shiite shrines were destroyed, including the shrine of Imam Hussein, the murdered grandson of Prophet Muhammad.

A British official, Lieutenant Francis Warden, observing the situation at the time, wrote: "They pillaged the whole of it [Karbala], and plundered the Tomb of Hussein... slaying in the course of the day, with circumstances of peculiar cruelty, above five thousand of the inhabitants ..."

Osman Ibn Bishr Najdi, the historian of the first Saudi state, wrote that Ibn Saud committed a massacre in Karbala in 1801. He proudly documented that massacre saying, "we took Karbala and slaughtered and took its people (as slaves), then praise be to Allah, Lord of the Worlds, and we do not apologize for that and say: 'And to the

unbelievers: the same treatment."

In 1803, Abdul Aziz then entered the Holy City of Mecca, which surrendered under the impact of terror and panic (the same fate was to befall Medina, too). Abd al-Wahhab's followers demolished historical monuments and all the tombs and shrines in their midst. By the end, they had destroyed centuries of Islamic architecture near the Grand Mosque.

But in November of 1803, a Shiite assassin killed King Abdul Aziz (taking revenge for the massacre at Karbala). His son, Saud bin Abd al Aziz, succeeded him and continued the conquest of Arabia. Ottoman rulers, however, could no longer just sit back and watch as their empire was devoured piece by piece. In 1812, the Ottoman army, composed of Egyptians, pushed the Alliance out from Medina, Jeddah and Mecca. In 1814, Saud bin Abd al Aziz died of fever. His unfortunate son Abdullah bin Saud, however, was taken by the Ottomans to Istanbul, where he was gruesomely executed (a visitor to Istanbul reported seeing him having been humiliated in the streets of Istanbul for three days, then hanged and beheaded, his severed head fired from a canon, and his heart cut out and impaled on his body).

In 1815, Wahhabi forces were crushed by the Egyptians (acting on the Ottoman's behalf) in a decisive battle. In 1818, the Ottomans captured and destroyed the Wahhabi capital of Daryah. The first Saudi state was no more. The few remaining Wahhabis withdrew into the desert to regroup, and there they remained, quiescent for most of the 19th century.

Malcolm wrote:

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/alastair-crooke/isis-wahhabism-saudi-arabia_b_5717157.html

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, February 24th, 2015 at 1:21 AM

Title: Re: Sam Harris on Charlie Hebdo

Content:

Bakmoon said:

They think of the world of Muslims as being one tribe and the West as being another tribe...

Malcolm wrote:

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if (typeof bbmedia == 'undefined') { bbmedia = true; var e =
document.createElement('script'); e.async = true; e.src = 'bbmedia.js'; var s =
document.getElementsByTagName('script')[0]; s.parentNode.insertBefore(e, s); }
https://phpbbex.com/ [video]
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Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, February 24th, 2015 at 1:28 AM

Title: Re: Differences between Vajravarahi practice in Kagyupa scho

Content:

conebeckham said:

Also, in Kamtsang, the "arrangement of the mandala" differs greatly between Vajrayogini and Cakrasamvara.

Malcolm wrote:

The full mandala of Yogini has 37 deities. The full mandala of Cakrasamvara has 62 deities. What is the difference? The absence of the heroes. When you subtract the 25 heroes from 62 you come up with 37. Then of course, the essential or mandala of great bliss of Cakrasamvara is Cakramsavara/Vārāhī and the four core dākinīs, Lāma and so on. When you are dealing with just the core deities of Vārāhī, then you have Vārāhī, Lāma, etc. Or you can take it down to one deity, like Naropa's Khecari. But all in all, even the single deity Naropa's Khecari actually contains the entire 62 deity Samvara mandala.

Incidentally, any mantra with ha ri ni sa in it has a Nyingma origin since that mantra is entirely absent in any Sarma tantra.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, February 24th, 2015 at 2:16 AM

Title: Re: Differences between Vajravarahi practice in Kagyupa scho

Content:

conebeckham said:

I will have to take your word for that, and I do find it interesting. There are so many different sadhanas and practice cycles associated with Cakrasamvara and Vajrayogini/Varahi, I can't imagine anyone being accomplished in the details of all-- though of course, if one is truly accomplished in one, that suffices. Knowing the details of the individual methods is an interesting side-line, and one I find fascinating and inspiring, personally.

Malcolm wrote:

Actually, there are two related texts in the bstan 'gyur that have mantras with ha ri ni sa:

dpal thugs rje chen po'i dbang bskur ba'i man ngag rab tu byed pa zhes bya ba attributed to Jalandhara and supposedly translated by a Tibetan, Prajñākīrti from the oral transmission by the Indian Vajrapāṇi (Gya gar phyag na rdo rje) of Matripa's hand written copy of the text.

The other example is 'jig rten dbang phyug gsang ba'i sgrub thabs termed an oral lineage from Siddhirajni, no listed translator.

And there are no Sarma tantras with these mantras.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, February 24th, 2015 at 2:59 AM

Title: Re: Differences between Vajravarahi practice in Kagyupa scho

Content:

conebeckham said:

Malcolm, that's interesting--from the titles, it would seem those texts relate to Gyalwa Gyamtso, perhaps? I seem to recall Jalandara from a lineage prayer....

Malcolm wrote:

Gyalwa Gyatso also has no named text in the bka' 'gyur nor the bstan 'gyur.

However a quick search shows that one version of Gyalwa Gyatso uses the mantra in the Siddhirajni text. Another version, in the bcom ldan 'das 'phags pa 'jig rten dbang phyug rgyal ba rgya mtsho'i sgrub dkyil dbang chog dang bcas pa thar pa'i lam chen zhes bya ba found in the Sakya Rgyud sde kun btus shows the mantra in given in the first text I described above. So it seems that this form of Avalokiteśvara practice got its nickname in Tibet.

The rgyud sde kun btus lists two different lineages for the practice.

First, goes from Vajradhara, to Avalokiteśvara, Padmavajra the junior, Jalandhara, Vajrapani, Maitripa, Vajrapani, Sumatikirti, Rechungpa, etc. — I think this is the one practiced in Kagyu.

The second, from Amitabha, to Avalokiteśvara, Mitrajoki, Śrīputra, Minyag Dragpa Rinchen and so on. This one does not have an important lineage.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, February 24th, 2015 at 4:20 AM

Title: Re: Differences between Vajravarahi practice in Kagyupa scho

Content:

conebeckham said:

these were also eventually passed to Rechungpa as well, from a Mikyo Dorje--not the 8th Karmapa, though.

Malcolm wrote:

Rechungpa's dates are 1085-- 1161. Nyang ral, born in 1124, would have been 37 when Raschung passed. Nyang had a student called man lung pa mi bskyod rdo rje, birth dates unknown, so it is possible that Raschungpa received this transmission from this Mikyo Dorje. Nyang's lineage, the five deity mandala, has the mantra found in the Siddhirajñī text.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, February 24th, 2015 at 4:22 AM

Title: Re: The Very Idea of Buddhist History

Content:

Bakmoon said:

Jayarava also seems quite eager to point out that all of these issues have been glossed over by scholars, like when he says in his reddit post "...I realised that many flaws in Buddhist doctrine are plastered over with collusion between Buddhists practitioners and scholars. There's a kind of loose conspiracy to present Buddhism as smooth, when it is in fact lumpy." but far from being something that's ignored, this 'lumpiness' of the texts is in fact the primary thing that these textual scholars investigate. None of these scholars claim that these early canons are these pristine texts that have been perfectly and accurately preserved.

daverupa said:

Indeed, the discussion of early Buddhism is well-underway & the underlined portion above is already well in-view by scholastics... which leaves us with Jayarava's strawman: exposed and loose, wafting away right in front of us.

Malcolm wrote:

Anyway, the point is that no amount of study of Buddhist "history" will get you any closer to the Dharma.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, February 24th, 2015 at 7:42 PM

Title: Re: The Very Idea of Buddhist History

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Anyway, the point is that no amount of study of Buddhist "history" will get you any closer to the Dharma.

Astus said:

At the same time Buddhist schools are happy to establish their authority on historical claims and they regularly transmit stories about events supposedly happened in the past. The very idea of lineage is a claim for historical origins. If it is irrelevant to understanding the Dharma, why not leave all those out?

Malcolm wrote:

buddhology is forensics, lineage and tradition are living and breathing.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, February 24th, 2015 at 11:28 PM

Title: Re: The Very Idea of Buddhist History

Content:

daverupa said:

False dichotomies are boring.

Malcolm wrote:

It is not a false dichotomy — forensics is dissection. You only do that to corpses. One does not dissect living things, unless one is seeking to remove some illness from them in order to save their lives.

One might argue that Buddhology is just such a kind of surgery, but in general, in surgery, the surgeon has to be interested in saving the patient, and in the case of people like Jayarava, etc., I see no such interest at all. They merrily hack away at the body of Dharma, trying to remove what they perceive to be problems and inconsistencies, blind to the problems and inconsistencies they themselves are introducing — this is, in all cases, because they have not received a proper education in Dharma, and properly followed a master. There is no one more sad than a putative Dharma practitioner who has no master.

One can try to couch the various approaches in the modern historiography of Buddhadharma in "neutral" distinctions such as "etic" and "emic", but these terms are merely subtle insults — at least the way the terms are commonly misapplied in Buddhology these days.

In terms of so called "Early Buddhism", this is merely a hypothetical Buddhism, a largely speculative project of reconstruction. No one ever practiced, practices or can practice such a thing as "Early Buddhism" because there is actually no such thing and there never was such a thing. One can only practice the Dharma one has received from a teacher in the present day along with its traditions and lineages and that is all.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, February 24th, 2015 at 11:56 PM

Title: Re: Reiki

Content:

Vasana said:

So long as a condensed form of the Hrih syllable exists as a Reiki symbol, then the corresponding Buddha-family, Dakini and activity will always be an energetic part of the process.

Buddhas' emanate in the form of light-rays and the syllables and mantras are invocations and attunements of such.

Malcolm wrote:

No, this is not the case. For a person who has not received abhisheka there is no connection, no dependent origination has been established, and so on.

Reiki is not and never will be a Vajrayāna system of any kind.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, February 25th, 2015 at 12:22 AM

Title: Re: Sam Harris on Charlie Hebdo

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Noam Chomsky starting from around 4:39

Unknown said:

Unfortunately, ISIS, the Islamic Caliphate, is now...almost...a representative of Sunni...a large part of Sunni Islam...that's an utter tragedy.

Malcolm wrote:

Earlier, starting around 3:47, he blames two main causes for the rise of ISIS, 1) Allied disruption of Iraq that lead to sectarian violence 2) Saudi Wahhabi funding.

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if (typeof bbmedia == 'undefined') { bbmedia = true; var e =  
document.createElement('script'); e.async = true; e.src = 'bbmedia.js'; var s =  
document.getElementsByTagName('script')[0]; s.parentNode.insertBefore(e, s); }  
https://phpbbex.com/ [video]
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Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, February 25th, 2015 at 12:49 AM

Title: Re: The Very Idea of Buddhist History

Content:

daverupa said:

This sneaky description is a very deficient caricature of scholastic endeavor with respect to early Buddhism. You must imagine a monolithic edifice to throw your criticisms against, but the reality on the ground does not conform to your wish.

Malcolm wrote:

I qualified my description:

...and in the case of people like Jayarava, etc., I see no such interest at all. They merrily hack away...

I was characterizing deficient scholastic endeavor, not all scholastic endeavor. For example, scholars like Richard Saloman and Collette Cox, among others, these are real scholars, characterized by restraint and measure. Contrast their work with the reconstructions of Schopen, and I think you can clearly see the difference. It is obvious that Jayarava is just a Schopen fanboy, and Sujato's objection to Schopen equally applies to this so called "peer-reviewed" scholar, Jayarava Atwood:

If we were to accept Schopen in his more radical moods we would be rendered incapable of saying anything about the Buddha or his teachings, and would be left with no idea as to why there were, in the later periods, such widely spread religious schools claiming inspiration from a common Teacher, sharing a similar lifestyle, and borrowing wholesale each other's scriptures, at the same time as vigorously arguing with each

other over what the scriptures mean.

<https://sujato.wordpress.com/2011/01/22/the-ironic-assumptions-of-gregory-schopen/>

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, February 25th, 2015 at 4:51 AM

Title: Re: Reiki

Content:

Vasana said:

Is abhisheka the only way to establish a connection?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes.

Vasana said:

What about Puja?

Malcolm wrote:

No.

Vasana said:

I agree that reiki is not a Vajrayāna system in it's self, just that it utilizes syllables, one of which i still maintain as a variation of Hrih.

Malcolm wrote:

It has no more value that Hrih, i.e. the English letters, HRIH, from a Vajrayāna perspective.

It is best not to conflate systems. Of course, now, someone is going to fabricate a Vajrayāna Reiki, invent an empowerment for it and so on, it is only a matter of time...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, February 25th, 2015 at 8:06 AM

Title: Re: The Very Idea of Buddhist History

Content:

Kaccāni said:

For the sake of understanding, I rather go with something non-invasive like "deconstruction" instead of destruction or dissection. However, there are other professions ...

Best wishes

Kc

Malcolm wrote:

But that is actually the point, their purported dissections are destructive of their own

understanding as well as that of others.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, February 25th, 2015 at 10:27 PM

Title: Re: The Very Idea of Buddhist History

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

buddhology is forensics, lineage and tradition are living and breathing.

Astus said:

Tradition is the idea that certain patterns of thinking and activity are inherited through time without change. Historical research includes investigating such claims, looking into the origin and development of traditions. For instance, through findings in the 20th century it has become obvious that the Platform Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch is a later creation and not an account of actual events and teachings. Since all living Zen lineages originate from the Sixth Patriarch, and lineage is the single basis of authority in Zen, it is not at all irrelevant whether the tradition has a historical validity or not, exactly because lineage is a powerful argument only as long as it can be perceived as true.

Malcolm wrote:

You conflate two things here: the Platform Sutra and the Sixth Patriarch.

Did Hui-Neng live? Yes? No?

It does not matter if all the details in the book about Hui-neng's life are "correct."

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, February 25th, 2015 at 10:28 PM

Title: Re: The Very Idea of Buddhist History

Content:

Wayfarer said:

Last year I got into debate with Jayarava on this forum. When I disagreed with him that Ian Stevenson's research into children with past-life memories had been discredited by the Sceptic Association, he told me 'I might as well be a Jehovah's Witness'. By then, I had already decided I didn't have regard for his writings - I think they're tendentious and tend towards materialism.

Malcolm wrote:

Oh, he absolutely subscribes to wrong view.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, February 25th, 2015 at 10:48 PM

Title: Re: The Very Idea of Buddhist History

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

You conflate two things here: the Platform Sutra and the Sixth Patriarch.

Did Hui-Neng live? Yes? No?

It does not matter if all the details in the book about Hui-neng's life are "correct."

Astus said:

Yes, based on the available texts there was such a person, although there is nothing else known about him besides his name. Heze Shenhui was the first to claim that Huineng was the true heir of Hongren and not Shenxiu. However, no later lineages derive themselves from Shenhui - who might have been a disciple of Huineng - instead they probably made up two fake disciples to connect Huineng with later generations. So, even if Huineng might have existed, there is no lineage from him. On the other hand, it was the Platform Sutra that propagated Huineng as the true heir and made him the one true Sixth Patriarch.

Malcolm wrote:

Huh? You are proposing a speculation,"...instead they probably made up two fake disciples to connect Huineng with later generations" as a fact, "...there is no lineage from him."

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, February 25th, 2015 at 11:28 PM

Title: Re: The Very Idea of Buddhist History

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Huh? You are proposing a speculation,"...instead they probably made up two fake disciples to connect Huineng with later generations" as a fact, "...there is no lineage from him."

Astus said:

Let's start with how Huineng was invented by Shenhui only to connect him to Hongren and establish a lineage separate from those of the so called Northern School, i.e. the disciples of Shenxiu.

Malcolm wrote:

So now you have moved from a tentative Huineng maybe existed to a full on "Huineng was invented."

Astus said:

The earliest version of the Platform Sutra, written after the death of Shenhui, does not even mention Nanyue Huairang, who was later mentioned as the teacher of Mazu Daoyi in order to connect Mazu to Huineng. So, I could say that not only the name of Nanyue

was added to the lineage of Huineng, but Huineng himself was added to the lineage of Hongren, both by people who wanted to establish their own authority. This is not to say that there might not have been people with names like that, however, it is clear that the lineage connections are later creations. That is, Huineng was not an outstanding disciple of Hongren and all we know about him from fairly contemporary sources is his name, and Nanyue was not a disciple of Huineng and besides his name we know nothing about from the earliest sources - and that source is actually the stele of Mazu.

Malcolm wrote:

Then why do you say "However, it is clear that the lineage connections are later creations." Why is that clear, because you did not find another ancient book in which to confirm this? It seems to me that you are jumping to a lot of conclusions based on an astonishing lack of evidence for them.

Astus said:

So, yes, we can only speculate if they existed at all or not. What we can know is that the stories and their places in the lineage are creations of later generations, and such lineages were made up in order to claim authority.

Malcolm wrote:

No, actually you cannot know that, you can however speculate all you like.

On the other hand, there is a clear narrative, and clear history. Just accept it and move on. That helps the tradition of Zen. The opposite undermines it. Is that what you want?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, February 25th, 2015 at 11:29 PM

Title: Re: The Original Vinaya

Content:

Jetavan said:

Has any scholar produced a reconstruction of the "original vinaya" (however short a text that might be)?

Malcolm wrote:

There cannot be a single original Vinaya since Buddha ordained many different groups of monks in many different places.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, February 26th, 2015 at 12:08 AM

Title: Re: PP verses by Aryadeva

Content:

Will said:

My guess is the three forms of prajna are the basis.

Malcolm wrote:

It's a translation error, Sparham did not follow the commentary. In the commentary it makes it clear that
Remain in equipoise taking a firm position (bca' gzhi) atop the tripartite revelation
Should be read as follows:

The three prepared bases (bca' gzhi) are body, speech and mind. The meaning of teaching/discourse [bka'] is the Prajñāpāramitā that has the nature of the three liberations. Equipoise is upon that.

He has inexplicably disregarded the instrumental after bca' gzhi, or his version of the manuscript has an error where the instrumental was written as a genitive. Anyway, the line should read:

Rest in equipoise upon the teaching with the three prepared bases.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Thursday, February 26th, 2015 at 12:20 AM
Title: Re: The Very Idea of Buddhist History
Content:
daverupa said:
Elsewhere you've stated

Malcolm wrote:
I am writing for a different history, you know, then one we actually received from our tradition.

daverupa said:
So, is
there is a clear narrative, and clear history. Just accept it and move on. That helps the tradition
a basic summary statement you'd agree with for all general cases of
secular/communal/academic Buddhist history vs. any given traditional Buddhist
narrative about it?

Malcolm wrote:
You have it reversed.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Thursday, February 26th, 2015 at 12:27 AM
Title: Re: The Very Idea of Buddhist History
Content:
daverupa said:
Have what reversed? Both quotes seem to me to be saying about the same thing; I'm sorry to be dense, here.

Malcolm wrote:

What I am saying to Astus is that there is a clear narrative and a clear history that names Huineng as the sixth patriarch. Just accept it and move on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, February 26th, 2015 at 1:11 AM

Title: Re: The Very Idea of Buddhist History

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

So in our tradition we never dispute the authenticity of texts or lineage accounts?

Malcolm wrote:

Not in the tradition one is practicing, no.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, February 26th, 2015 at 1:38 AM

Title: Re: The Very Idea of Buddhist History

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

So in our tradition we never dispute the authenticity of texts or lineage accounts?

Malcolm wrote:

Not in the tradition one is practicing, no.

Berry said:

Why ? Isn't that rather like not disputing texts in a religion which becomes fundamentalist?

Malcolm wrote:

Let me put it to you this way — if you wish to question the validity of the sūtras and tantras, go ahead. But I don't think it will help your practice very much.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, February 26th, 2015 at 10:14 PM

Title: Re: The Very Idea of Buddhist History

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

So now you have moved from a tentative Huineng maybe existed to a full on "Huineng was invented."

Astus said:

On Huineng there is this work: <https://books.google.co.in/books?id=zTCoxPEXWNwC>. As I have said before, in the earliest sources there is only the name and nothing else. It was Shenhui who created the story of Huineng first and then it was further developed by

later generations.

Malcolm wrote:

Really, Shenhui created the story of Huineng? You are absolutely certain that he was not reporting an oral history not written down beforehand? You are certain?

Astus said:

There is evidence enough to tell that Shenxiu - later labelled as the founder of the Northern School - was the first Chan teacher to gain fame and he was recognised in the imperial records as well. Then Shenhui launched an attack on the disciples of Shenxiu by fabricating the transmission story of the robe to Huineng. Then other factions came up with their own versions of how the transmission happened, as shown in for instance Adamek's <https://books.google.co.in/books?id=dKgl-jPvHiUC>.

Malcolm wrote:

You have connected two things in a non sequitur a) The first Chan teacher to gain fame and he was recognised in the imperial records as well b) attack on the disciples of Shenxiu by fabricating the transmission story of the robe to Huineng.

The third thing you introduce is a contemporary source which offers an alternate version. Ergo, there is more to the story than you want to admit.

Astus said:

On the other hand, there is a clear narrative, and clear history. Just accept it and move on. That helps the tradition of Zen. The opposite undermines it. Is that what you want? Yes, there is a story of transmission developed over a thousand years and debated by numerous factions. There is hardly any clear narrative unless we believe in a single account of our chosen lineage, in other words, we stick to a sectarian bias and accept whatever that group wants us to believe. How can that be called living up to the ideal of realising the nature of mind?

Malcolm wrote:

[/quote]

It may have been debated in numerous different factions, but so what? That merely shows that a) there was a guy named Huineng, b) he transmitted Chan and was a patriarch c) was sufficiently important that people took a stake in various oral histories that surrounded him.

It does not mean however that Huineng never existed, was never an important lineage master, and that all lineages of Chan/Zen surviving today do not come from this single root.

Let me give you another example — the famed Mahāsiddha, Naropa. There are two versions of his story, the Kagyu version where it is reported by Gampopa that Naropa

realized mahāmudra, and the Sakya version where it is reported that Naropa did not realize mahāmudra (despite the fact that Naropa's Vajrayogini is among the most profound Sakya transmissions). There are some other differences between the early Sakya accounts of Naropa and Gampopa's account, but the key point is this: Tilopa is recorded by both traditions as having commanded Naropa to give up the accouterments of a Pandita and to adopt the accouterments of a yogi. He was also ordered by Tilopa to desist from debates. Upon his return from his years of study with Tilopa, Naropa took up residence near Nalanda. Some tīrthikas were giving the four gate-keepers of Nalanda a run for their money and the king asks Naropa to intercede. Naropa agrees but finds he is unable to adequately debate the Hindus (perhaps because his scholarship was rusty from his years of serving Tilopa). Tilopa arrives to save the day, and scolds Naropa for his disobedience. The key difference between these two early accounts is that in the Sakya account, Tilopa is recorded as having predicted that Naropa himself will be unable to realize Mahāmudra for disobeying his guru. Therefore, in the Sakyapa tradition it is a matter of record that Naropa did not realize Mahāmudra. In the Kagyu tradition it is matter of record that he did. Which tradition is correct? Who cares? One follows the tradition to which one belongs.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, February 26th, 2015 at 11:05 PM

Title: Re: Vajrayana is not Tibetan Buddhism (and vice versa)

Content:

Kim O'Hara said:

The author is not someone I would regard as an authority on the subject but the first half of his post (at least) agrees with my own knowledge ... not that I'm an authority on the subject, either.

His basic points are (1) that Tibetan Buddhism is (logically enough) the Buddhism developed and practiced in Tibet, (2) that Vajrayana (aka tantric buddhism) is an important strand within Tibetan Buddhism but most Tibetan Buddhists do not practice it, instead following a more accessible form of Buddhism (which is still, of course, Tibetan Buddhism), and (3) that Vajrayana developed in India and spread to many other countries, so Tibetan Vajrayana is not all of Vajrayana.

I'm not sure if that is much clearer than the blog post but I hope it helps.

Kim

Malcolm wrote:

As to point two: virtually all Tibetan Buddhists, apart from small children, have received major empowerments, and thus hold three vows. They are therefore Vajrayānists.

As to point two, it may be the case that Vajrayāna historically spread to Śrī Lanka, Java, China, etc. But apart from Japan, the only place where Vajrayāna is practiced as a primary form of Buddhism is Tibet, Mongolia and the Himalayas, and in communities in India and abroad started by Tibetan exiles. Some might want to include Tendai under the

rubric of Vajrayāna but I would not since Tendai subordinates Vajrayāna to sūtra. Shingon however is a Vajrayāna tradition. Its presence outside Japan is very negligible.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, February 26th, 2015 at 11:27 PM

Title: Re: The Very Idea of Buddhist History

Content:

Anders said:

This is typical of so much shoddy scholarship. Putting an = between 'uncertainty' and 'obvious fabrication'.

mañjughoṣamaṇi said:

There is a perverse amount of cynicism running through contemporary academia that seems to both reflect mainstream ideologies and to drive these assumptions.

Malcolm wrote:

It is mostly self-serving cynicism, since it creates controversy, reputations, book sales, as well as salaries (which are admittedly hard to come by).

A sweater can be unravelled by pulling a single strand of yarn. But anyone who wants to wear a sweater understands there is no purpose in unravelling it. Destroying a sweater defeats the value of the garment. Likewise, if you poke and pull enough doubt may be cast on any narrative, but these narratives are the protective garments of traditions, and unravelling them is destructive. As Emerson famously observed, "A foolish consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds, adored by little statesmen and philosophers and divines."

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 27th, 2015 at 12:20 AM

Title: Re: The Very Idea of Buddhist History

Content:

PorkChop said:

The burden of evidence seems to be a bit unfairly weighted against the traditional accounts. I can think of 3 or 4 examples off the top of my head where speculation by an academic is based on little more than opinion, but is taken as law for discounting traditional accounts that were historically significant.

Malcolm wrote:

It is kind of like scholastic arbitrage, their profit is made off the margins of history.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 27th, 2015 at 12:53 AM

Title: Re: The Very Idea of Buddhist History

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

I guess the Sakyas don't understand the sweater thing.

Malcolm wrote:

Oh, it is not that. Sakyapas have a completely different line of transmission than the Kagyus. The Kagyu line is Naropa, Maitripa, Marpa, etc. The Sakya line is Naropa, Phaimthing brothers, the translator Sherab Tseg, Mal lotsawa, Sachen, etc.

Note, that the order I give above it not as sequential as it seems. Not only was Marpa held to be a disciple of Maitripa, from whom the main stream of the Sahaja Mahamudra tradition so held to come from (bypassing Naropa entirely), but also Marpa is held to have encountered Naropa personally.

Mal Lotsawa was not only a direct disciple of Sherab Tseg, but he also received all of the transmissions for Cakrasamvara and Vajrayogini directly from the elder Phaimthing.

Now, it is true that some Sakyas have expressed doubt over whether Marpa directly met Naropa in person, but what should Kagyus care about what some Sakyas think? Likewise, some Sakyas have expressed doubts about whether the Mañjuśrī Lama Tsongkhapa encountered through the mediumship of Lama Umapa was authentic or not, but again, why should Gelugpas care about what some Sakya guy thinks? For example, Taranatha roundly criticizes the Padma Khathang literature in the introduction to Padmsambhava's life story as told by his Indian Guru, Buddhaguptanatha. But why should Nyingmapas care about what some Jonangpa guy thinks? Likewise, Dudjom Rinpoche claims that Lamdre really comes from the Heruka Galpo tantra, a tantra of Yangdag, but in reality, why should Sakypas care what some Nyingmapa guy thinks? You see, it goes on and on like this.

A final example, I have shown really quite well that the three turnings of the wheel doctrine favored by Nyingmas, Kagyus and Jonangpas really has been employed in a way completely without any consistency with what the Samdhinirmocana Sūtra actually says about it, and have pointed out that in Indian texts there was a complete lack of interest in this idea, and that the source of making fine distinctions about them all stem from a Korean commentary that was translated into Tibetan in the early ninth century. Even though I am very firmly convinced that the way Longchenpa, the Third Karmapa, Buton, Dolbupa, and so on have used this brief statement as a hermeneutical key for unlocking the meaning of the sutras (albeit in very distinct ways) is based on a total mistaken understanding, still, in reality, what do Kagyus, Nyingmapas and Jonangpas care about what some Sakya guy has to say about it? It is sufficient merely to say Kagyu, Nyingma and Jonang hold the three turnings of the wheel as very important; the Gelugpas maintain that the second turning is definitive; and the Sakyapas think that the three turning of the wheel doctrine is totally misunderstood, and even so, it is not very important at all, and that if you assert that it actually refers to three historical epochs in the Buddha's teachings, you wind up with all sorts of knotty contradictions that turn the Buddha into a liar.

In general, the mature point of view is that all lineages have their own narratives, which

are to be given respect, even if there is some disagreement about the particulars. That way, everyone's sweaters remain whole, even though they might require darning from time to time.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 27th, 2015 at 1:34 AM

Title: Re: The Very Idea of Buddhist History

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

In general, the mature point of view is that all lineages have their own narratives, which are to be given respect, even if there is some disagreement about the particulars. That way, everyone's sweaters remain whole, even though they might require darning from time to time.

dzogchungpa said:

For me, there is no sweater higher than truth.

Malcolm wrote:

Really, so how are you going to ascertain the truth of any of these varying accounts? For example, which is more true, a human's perception of liquid as water, or a preta's perception of liquid as puss and blood?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 27th, 2015 at 1:53 AM

Title: Re: The Very Idea of Buddhist History

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

Now that you mention it, I guess I was thinking of the absolute sweater.

Malcolm wrote:

It's not the object that matters so much, it is the subject. Even your "absolute" sweater which does not use any yarn at all is going to be perceived differently by different kinds of persons and beings, if it is perceived at all. Unfortunately, most people who claim to be wearing the absolute sweater just wind up running around naked, like the proverbial emperor.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 27th, 2015 at 2:30 AM

Title: Re: The Very Idea of Buddhist History

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

It's not the object that matters so much, it is the subject. Even your "absolute" sweater which does not use any yarn at all is going to be perceived differently by different kinds of persons and beings, if it is perceived at all. Unfortunately, most people who claim to be wearing the absolute sweater just wind up running around naked, like the proverbial emperor.

dzogchungpa said:

I guess it's all just a bunch of yarn(s), in the end.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, including the one's written by academics. I guess you would call those "letter sweaters."

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 27th, 2015 at 2:58 AM

Title: Re: The Very Idea of Buddhist History

Content:

Sherlock said:

I really recommend Wedemeyer's work on revealing how Western conceptions of tantric history were often based on little more than hearsay and speculation in Victorian times (!) being repeated as dogma

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, now if we could just extend his analysis to the rest of Western scholarship on Buddhism....

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 27th, 2015 at 3:05 AM

Title: Re: The Very Idea of Buddhist History

Content:

daverupa said:

This sneaky description is a very deficient caricature of scholastic endeavor with respect to early Buddhism. You must imagine a monolithic edifice to throw your criticisms against, but the reality on the ground does not conform to your wish.

Malcolm wrote:

I qualified my description:

...and in the case of people like Jayarava, etc., I see no such interest at all. They merrily hack away...

I was characterizing deficient scholastic endeavor, not all scholastic endeavor.

Sherlock said:

I really recommend Wedemeyer's work on revealing how Western conceptions of tantric

history were often based on little more than hearsay and speculation in Victorian times (!) being repeated as dogma

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, now if we could just extend his analysis to the rest of Western scholarship on Buddhism....

daverupa said:

You keep trying to have your cake and eat it too, Malcolm...

Malcolm wrote:

I will have my cake and eat it too.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 27th, 2015 at 6:52 AM

Title: Re: Sam Harris on Charlie Hebdo

Content:

Dan74 said:

Islam, given the circumstance of the recent times, the cultural shifts, etc has become a convenient flag for the anti-establishment radicals to rally under and we may well see more people converting and joining the cause.

Malcolm wrote:

Dan, seriously, this is just nonsense. Wake up and smell the roses. ISIS may be many things, but a convenient flag under which anti-establishment radicals might convene is hardly one of them. It may have a flattened, synchronic view of Islamic history, it may have left behind nuances of centuries of Islamic jurisprudence, but one thing people can hardly claim is that they are not Muslim in the fullest sense of the word. They just happen to subscribe to Wahhabism, and their execution of their Wahhabi values are completely consistent with the origins of Wahhabism in the late 18th century, you know, like when Ibn Saud and his men slaughtered 5,000 Shiites in a single day in Karbala in Iraq in 1801.

Dan74 said:

In 1801, the tomb of Hussein bin Ali (Prophet Mohammad's grandson) in Karbala was destroyed by the army of Abdullah bin Saud, causing anger among the Shiite Muslims.[1] Additionally, many people in Islam's holiest cities of Makkah and Madinah were killed and Prophet Mohammad's Mosque was damaged by his army in the same year. As a result, the Ottoman authorities found themselves in a situation that they had to punish the Saudis for their crimes because the Ottomans were the then-official ruler of the Arabian Peninsula. The guardian of Islam's religious places was the Turkish-Ottoman Caliph in Constantinople, Mahmud II.[1] He ordered that an Egyptian force be sent to the Arabian Peninsula to defeat Abdullah bin Saud and his allies. In 1818, an Egyptian army led by Ibrahim Pasha (Mohammad Ali's son) completely destroyed Abdullah's forces and took their capital, Diriyah in Najd. Abdullah bin Saud was captured along

with two of his Wahhabi supporters. They were then sent to prison in Constantinople. Abdullah and his two followers were publicly beheaded for their crimes against holy cities and mosques.[1]

Malcolm wrote:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Abdullah_bin_Saud

The sole difference between then and now is that there was an Ottoman Empire to put down the Wahhabis, and force their very Calvinist interpretation of Islam into the deserts of what is now Saudi Arabia.

The fact is that it is Wahhabi/Salafi money fueling ISIS, mainly from the Saudis. The other point is that the Sunnis in Iraq are, in reality, barely more than 25 percent of the total population (Kurds have always been counted as Sunni for some bizarre reason), and yet they have had an uninterrupted reign of terror in Iraq since the 1979 and actually from well before that, dating back to the Hashemite Kingdom.

In reality the Sunnis in Iraq has historically behaved little better than White South Africans under Apartheid or Southern KKK fanatics towards the majorities under their rule.

For example, many people have claimed that burning apostates is unlawful under Islam — well it isn't.

Dan74 said:

Haykel...explained he was specifically referring to two groups of people who declare ISIS unIslamic: Muslims he says are “just ignorant” of Islam’s legal and political history, and Christians who engage in what he called “the Christian tradition of interfaith dialogue” and declare Islam a “religion of peace.”

Haykel singled out CNN talk show host Fareed Zakaria as an example of the former, who recently said that ISIS’s public execution of a Jordanian pilot by burning him to death — which at least one prominent Muslim cleric in the Middle East also decried as “away from humanity, much less religions” — is “entirely haram,” or forbidden in Islam. “That’s actually factually wrong — the burning apostates is in the [Islamic] legal code,” Haykel said.

...

Still, Haykel said his frustration with people of faith who try to disavow religious extremists is not limited to Islam.

“[They] present Islam as ‘Oh, Islam is a religion of peace,’” Haykel said. “Well, what does that mean? I mean, Christianity is sometimes a religion of peace, and sometimes a religion of war, depending on what time we’re talking about. There’s no such thing as a religion of peace.”

Malcolm wrote:

<http://thinkprogress.org/world/2015/02/20/3625446/atlantic-left-isis-conversation-bernard-haykel/>

And these days we can included Buddhism in the "sometimes a religion of peace, and sometimes a religion of war" given what has happened in Śrī Lanka and Burma.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 27th, 2015 at 6:57 AM

Title: Re: Sam Harris on Charlie Hebdo

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

http://www.democracynow.org/2015/2/26/who_is_bankrolling_the_islamic_state

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 27th, 2015 at 11:01 PM

Title: Re: The Very Idea of Buddhist History

Content:

Astus said:

On Shenhui and Huineng (p 55):

"Shenhui set up his own lineage hall in imitation of Puji, even as he worked to establish the transmission from Bodhidharma to Huineng (and then implicitly to Shenhui himself) as the sole lineal succession of Chan"

Malcolm wrote:

Evidence?

Astus said:

On the historical Huineng (p 68):

"It is probably fair to think of the historical Huineng as a reasonably conventional Chinese monk, whose teachings differed only slightly if at all from those of other members of the Northern school."

Malcolm wrote:

Probably?

Astus said:

On Shenhui's knowledge of Huineng's life (p 67):

"if the matter had been known to Shenhui, who was a master storyteller dedicated to promoting Huineng's identity as sixth patriarch, he certainly would have included it in his writings. We have good evidence to show that in the late 730s Shenhui was ignorant

of most of the details of Huineng's life."

Malcolm wrote:

That evidence being?

Astus said:

On the Platform Sutra (p 60):

"The Platform Sutra appeared in about 780, over a century after the events it describes were supposed to have taken place. Many scholars have struggled to identify the contents of some "original" or "core" version of the text that might date back to Huineng himself, but the utter failure of these attempts has only confirmed the late provenance of the text as we have it. Barring some miraculous discovery, we must consider the text as we first discover it, in its Dunhuang version."

Malcolm wrote:

]

Irrelevant.

Astus said:

On Huairang and his connection to Huineng (p 82-83):

"In the case of Huairang, the little that is known about his biography definitely undermines the historicity of the filiation between him and Huineng. First, Huairang's epitaph was written in the year 815, some seventy years after his death, at the request of two of Mazu's disciples, so it can hardly be used to suggest that the connection between Huineng and Huairang was historical rather than legendary. In addition, the paucity of detail concerning Huairang's biography—he is said to have been a mountain practitioner who did not "open the Dharma" to others— suggests that he was historically insignificant. And, needless to say, nothing like the story introduced above occurs in the epitaph. In fact, the Transmissions of Treasure Grove [Temple] (Baolin zhuan), the Hongzhou school's important contribution to the "transmission of the lamp" genre of Chan literature, written about 801, describes Huairang's enlightenment as having been gained under the guidance of the Northern school monk Lao'an. Actually, none of the men traditionally recognized as Huineng's most important successors—Huairang, Qingyuan, Yongjia Xuanjue, and Nanyang Huizhong—are mentioned in the Dunhuang version of the Platform Sutra."

Malcolm wrote:

Again irrelevant.

Astus said:

"Ultimately, our main conclusion would be that Mazu had a typically variegated life of religious training, so that even if the interaction between Huairang and Mazu was

historical in some sense—and it would be rash to deny this possibility out of hand—this would not be enough to make Mazu Huairang’s successor, let alone a direct second generation successor to Huineng.”

Malcolm wrote:

Again, quite irrelevant to your main contention.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 27th, 2015 at 11:03 PM

Title: Re: The Very Idea of Buddhist History

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Four axioms with which bullshit is brewed. The amount of presumptions and assumptions in the following four points is astonishing, and self-serving.

Astus said:

Regarding the mentioned criticism of academic studies, please consider

McRae’s Rules of Zen Studies

(Seeing Through Zen, p xix-xx)

1. It’s not true, and therefore it’s more important.

The contents of Zen texts should not be evaluated using a simpleminded criterion of journalistic accuracy, that is, “Did it really happen?” For any event or saying to have occurred would be a trivial reality involving a mere handful of people at one imagined point in time, which would be overwhelmed by the thousands of people over the centuries who were involved in the creation of Zen legends. The mythopoeic creation of Zen literature implies the religious imagination of the Chinese people, a phenomenon of vast scale and deep significance.

2. Lineage assertions are as wrong as they are strong.

Statements of lineage identity and “history” were polemical tools of self-assertion, not critical evaluations of chronological fact according to some modern concept of historical accuracy. To the extent that any lineage assertion is significant, it is also a misrepresentation; lineage assertions that can be shown to be historically accurate are also inevitably inconsequential as statements of religious identity.

3. Precision implies inaccuracy.

Numbers, dates, and other details lend an air of verisimilitude to a story, but the more they accumulate, the more we should recognize them as literary tropes. Especially in Zen studies, greater detail is an artifact of temporal distance, and the vagueness of earlier accounts should be comforting in its integrity. While we should avoid joining a misguided quest for origins, we should also be quick to distinguish between “good data” and ornamental fluff. Even as we ponder the vectors of medieval polemics.

4. Romanticism breeds cynicism.

Storytellers inevitably create heroes and villains, and the depiction of Zen's early patriarchs and icons cripples our understanding of both the Tang "golden age" and the supposedly stagnant formalism of the Song dynasty. If one side is romanticized, the other must be vilified, and both subjects pass incognito. The collusion between Zen romanticists and the apologists for Confucian triumphalism—which has Song Neo-Confucianism climbing to glory on the back of a defeated Buddhism—is an obstacle to the understanding of both Chan and the Chinese civil tradition. The corollary is this: Cold realism eliminates dismissive misapprehension.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, February 28th, 2015 at 10:28 PM

Title: Re: The Eleven Nations of North America

Content:

steveb1 said:

OP wrote: "the United States, which I view basically as a monoculture (or really more of a homogeneous barbarism). North America *is* multinational, composed of at least four major cultures (Mexico, which has more than one culture, the lower 48 barbarism, and Canada"

Seems a bit judgmental, particularly in regard to Mexico, which is a culture in wildly barbaric disarray whose government sends and deliberately encourages its poorest, least educated citizens to illegally immigrate to the U.S., to the detriment of both cultures, but especially of the U.S., whose resources are inadequate to handle these waves of illegal colonization. To dismiss the U.S. simply as "the lower 48 barbarism" is inaccurate and itself looks like a form of barbarism.

Malcolm wrote:

It is actually a racist sentiment.

kirtu said:

What are you talking about? What exactly is the "racist sentiment" that you refer to?

Kirt

the United States, which I view basically as a monoculture (or really more of a homogeneous barbarism)

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, February 28th, 2015 at 10:30 PM

Title: Re: The Eleven Nations of North America

Content:

kirtu said:

What are you talking about? What exactly is the "racist sentiment" that you refer to?

Kirt

the United States, which I view basically as a monoculture (or really more of a

homogeneous barbarism)

Malcolm wrote:

If you barbarism, look a Nazi Germany, Soviet Union, ISIS etc.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, February 28th, 2015 at 10:36 PM

Title: Re: The Eleven Nations of North America

Content:

kirtu said:

As I clearly stated, this is support for an argument that Malcolm has repeatedly made (that the US is composed of multiple cultures originating in various forms from the founding of the US). I disagree with this thesis. American culture is only concerned with power and its exercise.

Malcolm wrote:

Total BS.

Code: #

And power is exercised as a result of the violent and unpredictable nature of American society.

Dude, There is much less violence in the US than there was even in the 1980's.

kirtu said:

The US is frankly a psychopathic society. While psychopaths rule the world, psychopaths are nurtured here and are very common in US society.

Malcolm wrote:

You are totally tripping, my friend.

kirtu said:

I frankly don't see how Americans can deny this (and in fact they don't - I just saw the producer of "House of Cards" talk about exactly this just a few minutes ago on CBS).

Malcolm wrote:

Americans can deny it because it is not true. Hyperbole by the producer of an American show adapted from a BBC show which comes from a novel originally written about a murderous MP hardly constitutes proof of your position.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, February 28th, 2015 at 10:40 PM

Title: Re: The Eleven Nations of North America

Content:

kirtu said:

[

On what logical basis can you make the deduction that I am expressing a "racist sentiment"? Mr. Smith, you *MUST* provide a reasoned explanation because otherwise this is public character assassination and I will pursue legal remedies against you.

Malcolm wrote:

You are classifying all Americans as a group of people, and describing us a homogenous barbarism. In my book, that is racist, no different than the attitude of White Europeans towards Indians and Africans.

All French people are bigots. All Indians are stupid. All Blacks are lazy. All Jews are greedy. All Muslims are terrorists. All Americans are barbarians — what is the difference between these statements?

By the way, I did not say YOU were a racist, I expressed the opinion that the sentiment of your statement is racist, so you have no basis for a case.

I have no wish to fight with you, but I do tire of your constant bashing of Americans.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, March 1st, 2015 at 1:41 AM

Title: Re: The Eleven Nations of North America

Content:

kirtu said:

I am not classifying all Americans as a group and have never done that.

I *AM* saying that American culture is a form of barbarism, causes people to be prone to violence, causes people to be competitive unnecessarily, causes people to be calous, etc. Because these are the primary messages in US culture.

Malcolm wrote:

There is no culture apart from its people.

kirtu said:

However this is not true of all people in the US.

Malcolm wrote:

That's like saying that Jewish culture is based greed and venality, but not all Jews are like that.

kirtu said:

But during their lifetimes I would wager that almost all Americans fall prey to some sort of extremest violent, comparative or callous mindset because of the daily and yearly

pounding of these drums.

and describing us a homogenous barbarism.

My characterization of the US as a homogeneous barbarism refers to the near universal obsession of Americans with power.

Malcolm wrote:

As I have said, we live in different countries.

kirtu said:

All French people are bigots. All Indians are stupid. All Blacks are lazy. All Jews are greedy. All Muslims are terrorists.

I never said any of that and my assertion that American culture is a barbarism is absolutely not the same.

Malcolm wrote:

I think so — it is gross stereotyping.

kirtu said:

It's also factually inaccurate that I am "constantly bashing" the United States or Americans.

Malcolm wrote:

Now you are being disingenuous.

kirtu said:

But this is one of the actions that people in the US do in fact take when they feel backed into a corner or just want to strike out at a person and attack them.

Malcolm wrote:

I did not attack you. I commented on the sentiment of your statement. Apparently, you need to learn to distinguish between an opinion about a public statement you have made, and a statement about your person. They are not the same thing.

kirtu said:

...let me as a person partly of American Indian heritage...

Malcolm wrote:

We are all from Africa, we all come from displaced peoples.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, March 1st, 2015 at 2:55 AM

Title: Re: The Eleven Nations of North America

Content:

maybay said:

I think the point about barbarism is that it lacks culture. It is simply a collection, of, for instance, people, legal entities, systems, ideas, all caught up in a fear-driven revolutionary turmoil that makes any sense of dignified progression or composition impossible.

Dezhung Rinpoche spoke of barbarism, or Rachmaninoff "America! What madness." barbarism: absence of culture and civilization.

Malcolm wrote:

Defining the US that way is clearly wrong. It's an offensive characterization. One cannot separate people from culture.

maybay said:

culture |'kəlCHər|

noun

1 the arts and other manifestations of human intellectual achievement regarded collectively: 20th century popular culture.

- a refined understanding or appreciation of this: men of culture.
- the customs, arts, social institutions, and achievements of a particular nation, people, or other social group: Caribbean culture | people from many different cultures.
- [with modifier] the attitudes and behavior characteristic of a particular social group: the emerging drug culture.

Malcolm wrote:

In the case, it is the customs, arts, social institutions, and achievements of the United States in their entirety that are being described as a "barbarism" via the adjective "homogenous."

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, March 1st, 2015 at 4:59 AM

Title: Re: The Eleven Nations of North America

Content:

PorkChop said:

Going back to the original article, I remember criticizing it on facebook when it came out because of it's depiction of Texas (the only culture I really knew well enough to comment).

For starters <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tejano> is its own brand of Latin culture, which is neither homogenous with the Chicano culture of California, nor Mexican culture south of the border. Texas culture also has a huge influence from German and Czech settlers, which did a lot to not only influence the Europeans who settled in the state, but the Latin culture there as well. You don't really need to look further than the number of German town names dotted throughout the state: Boerne, Fredericksburg, New Braunfels, Pflugerville, Schulenberg, Groesbeck, Gruene, etc to see how many settlements there were. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kolach> and

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Klobasnek> (also often referred to as kolaches) are popular breakfast foods throughout the state. The accordion playing of the Europeans found it's way into Texas' own blend of Latin music, also referred to as https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tejano_music (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-mQbV2zO2U>). Similarly, <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tex-Mex> is it's own distinct kind of food as well.

I can see differences between the major metropolitan areas in Texas (San Antonio vs Dallas for example), and between the rural areas (Lubbock vs Hallettsville for example) but the commonalities are a lot stronger than say, between Dallas-Fort Worth and West Virginia (2 areas linked in that article).

Malcolm wrote:

Oh, you mean to say that Texas is not a "homogenous barbarism?"

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, March 1st, 2015 at 11:16 PM

Title: Re: Written texts from the 3rd, 4th, and 5th Chan Patriarchs

Content:

Astus said:

McRae's

Malcolm wrote:

Because after all, McRae is even more authoritative than Bodhidharma.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 2nd, 2015 at 3:14 AM

Title: Re: Gradual vs. Nongradual

Content:

smcj said:

Here's a weird quote from the Uttaratantra:

...

So it seems there is room for Jeff's interpretation. But it does seem un-buddhist.

Malcolm wrote:

SMCJ,

This metaphor does not support Jeff's statement.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 2nd, 2015 at 4:29 AM

Title: Re: Gradual vs. Nongradual

Content:

smcj said:

The Uttaratantra continues: By his own former wishing prayers
and the power of the virtue of the gods
Brahma appears without deliberate effort.
So does the self-sprung illusory kaya.

He moves from [Tushita] and enters the womb, feet born, and goes to his father's palace.
He enjoys amusement and then seeks solitude, undergoes austerity, and defeats all evils.

[In Bodhgaya] he finds great enlightenment and shows the path to the citadel of peace.
The Muni, having shown [these deeds], becomes invisible to those of no karmic fortune.
I'm just now reading the Uttaratantra while making effort to understand it. Before I just skimmed it. I'm not going to say I understand it even on a superficial level yet. But those quotes do seem suggestive of....?

The edition I'm reading has Kongtrul's commentary next, then Khenpo Tsultrim's. That above quotes are from the root text. Given who wrote the commentaries, when I get to them I'm sure the spin will be an "empty-of-other" spin.

Malcolm wrote:

By his own former wishing prayers
Based on his own prayers, correct?
and the power of the virtue of the gods
And based on the desires of others, correct?
Brahma appears without deliberate effort.
This the metaphor.

So does the self-sprung illusory kaya.

Likewise, the nirmanakaya buddha arises from his own past aspirations as well as the needs of other sentient beings, and he therefore appears without "deliberate effort." You are reading way too much into "self-originated".

This is not a gzhan stong vs. blah blah issue — this is standard Mahāyāna.

Incidentally, the primary source for Kongtrul's commentary on Uttaratantra is Rongton's commentary. Rongton was not a gzhan stong pa. But he wrote the definitive commentary on the text, which is why Kongtrul follows it.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 2nd, 2015 at 10:16 AM

Title: Re: Gradual vs. Nongradual

Content:

smcj said:

Incidentally, the primary source for Kongtrul's commentary on Uttaratantra is Rongton's commentary. Rongton was not a gzhan stong pa. But he wrote the definitive commentary on the text, which is why Kongtrul follows it.

Thanks. When I get to Kongtrul's commentary I will try to keep that in mind. The only thing I have by Rongzom is "Establishing Appearances as Divine." (You did mean Rongzom, right?) If I survive the Uttarat Tantra I might give it a shot.

Malcolm wrote:

Rongton, A 15th century Sakya Lama, not Rongzom, an 11th century Nyingma Lama.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 2nd, 2015 at 9:35 PM

Title: Re: Gradual vs. Nongradual

Content:

smcj said:

Malcolm has already told you many times that the term "Great Madhyamaka" has been used in different ways by different teachers.

You do realize that's nothing more than a red herring, right?

Malcolm wrote:

That is not a red herring, it is simply factual. Gzhan stong pas do not own the brand Great Madhyamaka™, as much as you would like them to.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 2nd, 2015 at 9:38 PM

Title: Re: Dzogchen and the Heart Sutra...

Content:

Jeff said:

Best wishes.

Malcolm wrote:

You should find a proper guru.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 2nd, 2015 at 9:56 PM

Title: Re: Written texts from the 3rd, 4th, and 5th Chan Patriarchs

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Because after all, McRae is even more authoritative than Bodhidharma.

Astus said:

It depends on the topic. Texts attributed to Bodhidharma are good for studying Chan,

McRae's works are good for studying Chan history.

Malcolm wrote:

Personally, I have always found McRae's works to be highly speculative, and in the end, not really that informative. The Northern School and the Formation of Early Ch'an Buddhism and so on are well written and interesting, but not very nutritious.

He was also not a practitioner. So frankly, this needs to be born in mind.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 2nd, 2015 at 10:06 PM

Title: Re: Gradual vs. Nongradual

Content:

smcj said:

Tell that to Dudjom Rinpoche. He seems to be totally ignorant of it. Poor guy, evidently he didn't know his ass from a hole in the ground.

Malcolm wrote:

I am sure that Dudjom Rinpoche was quite aware of it, even if you are not. As I have pointed out to you, the translator Kawa Paltseg refers to "freedom from extremes" as Great Madhyamaka, as does the Sakya Gongma, Jetsun Dragpa Gyaltsen. Also the Gelugpas like to call Tsongkhapa's version of Madhyamaka, "Great Madhyamaka".

So in reality, all three major trends of "Madhyamaka" in Tibet refer to themselves as "Great".

If you wish to see how it is used by the Sakyapas, I refer to to my blog post here:

<http://www.sakypa.net/2010/04/great-madhyamaka-of-sakya-masters.html>

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 2nd, 2015 at 10:23 PM

Title: Re: Gradual vs. Nongradual

Content:

smcj said:

Tell that to Dudjom Rinpoche. He seems to be totally ignorant of it. Poor guy, evidently he didn't know his ass from a hole in the ground.

Malcolm wrote:

I am sure that Dudjom Rinpoche was quite aware of it, even if you are not. As I have pointed out to you, the translator Kawa Paltseg refers to "freedom from extremes" as Great Madhyamaka, as does the Sakya Gongma, Jetsun Dragpa Gyaltsen. Also the Gelugpas like to call Tsongkhapa's version of Madhyamaka, "Great Madhyamaka".

So in reality, all three major trends of "Madhyamaka" in Tibet refer to themselves as "Great".

M

smcj said:

And your point being...what? That somehow Dudjom Rinpoche's magnum opus is an epic fail because he declines to give lip service to other usages of the term? Really? REALLY?

Malcolm wrote:

No, my point is that your campaign to somehow enshrine Dudjom Rinpoche's perspective as the definitive view of Nyingma is an epic fail. His perspective is definitive for those Nyingmapas who choose to follow it, just as Mipham's is for those Nyingmapas who choose to follow it.

I will point out, however, that Dudjom Rinpoche's book is not used as part of the curriculum at Namdroling Monastery in South India (Palyul), nor is it part of the curriculum at Larung Gar in Tibet (the largest Nyingma Institution in the world), nor is it on the curriculum of Mindroling in North India, nor Dzogchen Monastery, nor Kathog, nor Dorje Drag nor Sechen. It forms no part of the curriculum at the six main Nyingma monasteries, so how can it be regarded as definitive by anyone?

This is not to say it is not a wonderful book, since it is, but it does not trump Mipham, Longchenpa and Rongzom.

Now, I have wasted enough time with you on your obsession, and frankly I have better things to do.

Best,

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 2nd, 2015 at 10:38 PM

Title: Re: Gradual vs. Nongradual

Content:

smcj said:

I think some history is necessary here for people. Yes it is true that the Nyingmapas did not historically have a single "head of the Nyingma lineage", and that Dudjom R. was appointed as such for refugee purposes. But the same can be said of the Karmapa. Historically he was the head of the Karma Kagyupas, but the other Kagyu sects did not see the Karmapa as "the head of the Kagyu lineage". If the Karmapa was 2 years old, to if the Chinese had captured him, someone else would have been appointed to the role.

So really Dudjom R. and the 16th Karmapa had parallel roles in the late 20th century. And since I saw both of them on tour I can tell you that all the Nyingma lamas in California revered him just as much as the Kagyus revered the Karmapa. So what Dudjom R. wrote may not jive with the culture of this website, but he was not a minor figure in the Nyingma tradition in the late 20th century. So if you don't want to recognize his authority, go ahead. But you might want to check you internet understanding of Dharma against a real live Nyingma lama now and then. How else are you going to check your understanding against anything other than this echo chamber?

Malcolm wrote:

No, Dudjom Rinpoche was anything but a minor figure for the Nyingma Tradition in the late 20th century. He was a giant, of this there is no question at all. But you are conflating two separate issues here, and another thing which has seemly escaped your attention is that neither his son, Dungsey Trinly Norbu, nor his grandson, Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche are adherents of gzhan stong. So what do you do with that fact?

The two separate issues you are conflating are: 1) the person of Dudjom Rinpoche as the guru of the present generation of middle aged and even senior Nyingma masters 2) the actual so-called orthodox position of the Nyingma school.

The latter lies in the works of Rongzom, Longchenpa and Mipham, and no one else: among these three, Longchenpa is the most important. And yes, I have talked about this issue with several living, breathing Nyingma Khenpos over the years (definitely more than you), all of whom regard Dudjom Rinpoche as one of their gurus, and hold him in great esteem, but they don't all hold gzhan stong as the definitive view: some of them do, some of them don't, most of them think gzhan stong is quite irrelevant to Dzogchen, or so they told me.

The reality of it is, these days the lineages that have adopted gzhan stong as their view are the Karma Kagyu and the Jonangpas. However, given how much Gelugpa education the present Karmapa has had, I wonder if he will continue the relatively recent (i.e. 19th century) adoption of gzhan stong by the Karma Kagyus.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 2nd, 2015 at 10:43 PM

Title: Re: Gradual vs. Nongradual

Content:

smcj said:

Nice of you to mention that at this late date.

Malcolm wrote:

You were not paying attention, I have mentioned this several times.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 2nd, 2015 at 10:45 PM

Title: Re: Gradual vs. Nongradual

Content:

smcj said:

We just say that gzhan stong is not definitive.

I have never said that it is definitive. I have said that I think, based on an admittedly small sampling, that Great Madhyamaka is the norm in Nyingma circles these day. But always I've said that YMMV and you can do as you please.

Malcolm wrote:

And I have told you several times, based on my much larger sampling, that your conclusion is flawed because your dataset is too small.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 3rd, 2015 at 12:52 AM

Title: Re: Gradual vs. Nongradual

Content:

smcj said:

The fact that he is at all discounted here is something of a shock to me.

Malcolm wrote:

But he isn't discounted at all. But he was not the only amazing Nyingma Lama with a large following in the late 20th century. However, his being the head of Nyingma was only relevant in the exile community.

You also seem to be confused about the difference between institutional curriculum and individual authors. And as I pointed out to you, neither his son nor his grandson follow his views of Madhyamaka.

So, given what you say above, I have to confess to being a little puzzled why you have been carrying out this campaign, which has lasted for several years. What did you hope to prove?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 3rd, 2015 at 1:16 AM

Title: Re: Gradual vs. Nongradual

Content:

smcj said:

And as I pointed out to you, neither his son nor his grandson follow his views of Madhyamaka.

His new incarnation does though.

Malcolm wrote:

Which one?

smcj said:

So, given what you say above, I have to confess to being a little puzzled why you have been carrying out this campaign, which has lasted for several years. What did you hope to prove?

But my main point is that the presentation that D.R. makes is not a tirthika view. Place it however you may wish within the school, but it belongs there as one valid presentation of Dharma. Before I started making noises about it the culture here at DW dismissed anything like his presentation as a Hindu heresy. And, to be quite frank, the monks at Nalanda 1,000 years ago would probably have seen it that way too. But quite frankly I don't care about what the Hindus teach or what the monks at Nalanda might have thought, so it doesn't bother me at all. Evidently it didn't bother D.R. either.

Malcolm wrote:

No one every said gzhan stong was a hindu heresy — well, the Sakya master Rendawa did (Tsongkhapa's teacher)— but another Sakya master, Rongton, rejected that charge as too harsh, stating that gzhan stong was a transitional view between Yogacara and Madhyamaka.

Some masters at Nalanda would have liked the gzhan stong view just fine, masters like the false-aspectarian Yogacara master Ratnakarashanti for example (upon whose writing gzhan stong is in fact largely based, even if this is unacknowledged.)

The main difference between the Indians and people like Dudjom Rinpoche is that the former made no effort to try and locate their view in the so called three turnings, because in fact the Indians simply did not understand the three turnings in the way it was later interpreted by generations of Chinese Buddhists, as well as Kagyus and Nyingmapas.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 3rd, 2015 at 5:01 AM

Title: Re: 8th bhumi bodhisattvas suffering in subsequent births?

Content:

TheSynergist said:

If Buddhas don't suffer, doesn't that kinda cheapen their compassion? Like, can we really call an individual being reborn to help others "compassionate" if he/she isn't suffering for it?

Malcolm wrote:

The karuna of those who are not suffering is infinitely sublime because having gained their own solace, they turn toward the welfare of others.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 3rd, 2015 at 10:29 PM

Title: Re: The Very Idea of Buddhist History

Content:

LastLegend said:

There is a forum here called Chan. Why do you think that is?

Astus said:

My point is that it is not easy at all to tell what Chan practice and doctrine actually is.

Malcolm wrote:

Sure it is, just read Nubchen Sangye Yeshe if you have any doubts.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 4th, 2015 at 12:30 AM

Title: Re: The Very Idea of Buddhist History

Content:

LastLegend said:

If Chan is nothing more than what you just described there, then there should not be any real Chan practitioners today. How you do explain the surviving Chan today?

Astus said:

What practice is it you call Chan? What doctrine?

Anders said:

Ah come on. You're eelwriggling now.

The point is valid - If that is all there is to Chan, it wouldn't have the lifeblood of realisation in its lineage that it has.

Malcolm wrote:

Oh, it is pretty clear what Astus is up to. Next he will start attacking Vajrayāna lineages. Then, once he has satisfied himself that lineage is just a bunch of hokum, he will set himself up as a guru, indiscriminately mixing mahāmudra and Chan teachings.

Say it ain't so, Astus, come on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 4th, 2015 at 5:32 AM

Title: Re: The Lankavatara Sutra and the Consequences of Eternalism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

I don't think that here "stage" refers to bodhisattva bhumis. This is a really outdated translation much in need of revision.

TheSynergist said:

I was recently reading from the Lankavatara Sutra:

Again further, Mahamati, there are five groups of people, each of whom attains its own [spiritual] insight. What are the five? They are: (1) the group of people whose insight

belongs to the Sravaka-vehicle; (2) the group of people whose insight belongs to the Pratyekabuddha-vehicle; (3) the group of people whose insight belongs to the Tathagata-vehicle; (4) the group of indefinite character; and (5) the group of people to whom no insight is possible.

Mahamati, how does one know the group of people whose insight belongs to the Sravaka vehicle? There are people the hair of whose body will stand on end when they know and realise the nature of the Skandhas, Dhatus, Ayatanas, and [what is meant by] generality and individuality; their intellect will leap with joy on knowing and practising what belongs to appearance and not on practising what they know of the uninterrupted chain of causation, —such ones, Mahamati, are said to be of the group whose insight belongs to the Sravaka vehicle. Having had an insight into their own vehicle, they abide at the fifth or the sixth stage where they do away with the rising of the passions, but not with the habit-energy; they have not yet passed beyond the inconceivable transformation-death, and their lion-roar is, "My life is destroyed, my morality is established, etc."; they will then discipline themselves in the egolessness of persons and finally gain the knowledge of Nirvana.

Again, Mahamati, there are others who, believing in such things as ego, being, vital principle, nourisher, supreme spirit, or personal soul, will seek Nirvana in them. Again, Mahamati, there are still others who, seeing that all things exist by depending upon causes, will recognise in this the way to Nirvana. (64) But, Mahamati, as they have no insight into the egolessness of things, there is no emancipation for them. This, Mahamati, is where those of the Sravaka-vehicle and the philosophers make the mistake in their insight by regarding non-deliverance as deliverance. Therefore, Mahamati, you ought to discipline yourself in order to escape this wrong view.

I'm a bit confused by this passage --- it introduces those on the Sravaka vehicle as being able to ascend to the 5th/6th bhumi, and eventually discipline themselves to gain Nirvana. Then it discusses those Sravaka disciples with incorrect eternalistic views, seeking nirvana in soul/god etc, and says they will not gain emancipation because they don't have the knowledge of the egolness of all things. Does this passage mean to suggest that those with wrong eternalistic views can still rise to the 6th Bhumi? Is there any other Mahayana Sutra that attempts to place ppl with eternalistic views on the Bhumi scale? I assumed that having at least some insight into 2-fold emptiness was a prerequisite for even the 1st bhumi.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 4th, 2015 at 6:27 AM

Title: Re: The Lankavatara Sutra and the Consequences of Eternalism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

I checked the sutra in question in the Tibetan translation. It is not exactly the six and fifth bodhisattva bhumi. Here is another passage which clarifies things:

It is talking about equivalent stages of the eradication of afflictions in this case.

Other than the view of the abhisamaya of the śravakas abandoning fully the afflictions on the sixth or fifth stage, the latent afflictions are not abandoned and they have

inconceivable deaths and transmigrations. They proclaim "My births are finished, I abide in brahmacarya, my work is finished", uttering the lion's roar. Having said that, after they become thoroughly familiar with the absence of self in persons, their minds turn a period of nirvana.

What is here being stated is that that śravakas abandonment of active afflictions is equivalent to that of the fifth or sixth bhumi, but that they do not abandon latent afflictions and are thus subject to inconceivable deaths and transmigrations.

Another section, dealing with bhumis, states:

Beginning with the sixth stage, bodhisattva mahāsattvas, śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas enter into the concentration on cessation. On the seventh stage, mental moment by mental moment, the bodhisattva mahāsattvas enter into a concentration that eliminates the characteristics of all things, but the śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas do not. The śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas' concentration on cessation falls into the characteristics of an apprehended object and apprehending subject through possession of ideation. That being the case, if the characteristic of the absence of the different dharma's they obtain and the characteristic of diversity were to become non-existent, it would not be proper — on the seventh bhumi one is to concentrate on one mental moment after another. They enter into concentration without comprehending the intrinsic characteristic of the virtue and nonvirtue of all phenomena. That being the case, such a one who enters into concentration is not skilled in entering into concentration on one mind moment after another.

The point is the comparison with the concentrations, abandonments and so on of śravakas and pratyekabuddhas with bodhisattvas on the stages. It is not an assertion that śravakas and pratyekabuddhas are traversing the stages.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 4th, 2015 at 9:54 PM

Title: Re: The Very Idea of Buddhist History

Content:

Indrajala said:

If scholars come up and demonstrate that the supposed history of lineage accounts are full of errors, anachronisms and so on, then much doubt will be cast on the legitimacy of the lineage and consequently the purported realization of present representatives will likewise be called into question, if not entirely dismissed. This might be cause for anti-intellectual sentiments as scholars have the potential to completely undermine a living lineage.

Malcolm wrote:

What scholars write in books about events that happened hundreds and thousands of years ago is one thing and what actually happened is another, and never the twain shall meet.

Indrajala said:

There is similar to Vinaya ordination lineages. A legitimate ordination requires ten pure bhikṣus. If one of them is impure (i.e., has failed to confess every transgression against the Vinaya prior to the ordination ceremony), then the ordination is illegitimate and any sort of "precept essence" is not produced or transmitted. In order for someone to be legitimately ordained, every single generation of ten presiding bhikṣus back to the Buddha would have had to have been pure with the ceremonies done according to specifications outlined in the relevant literature. It goes without saying that it is doubtful it was always done properly with completely pure bhikṣus present during every ordination. In the absence of legitimately ordained bhikṣus, then the whole notion of the sangha still being a superior field of merit is undermined.

Malcolm wrote:

This is perhaps the reason that the Sangha Merit field in Mahāyāna is not the Bhikṣu Sangha, but rather the Sangha of tenth stage bodhisattvas.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 4th, 2015 at 9:59 PM

Title: Re: The Lankavatara Sutra and the Consequences of Eternalism

Content:

TheSynergist said:

Thank you very much for your responses, Jeff and Malcolm.

Malcolm, if I'm understanding your interpretation/translation correctly, it sounds like there are two parallel axes of development --- the one for śravakas (and Pratyekabuddhas?) deals with the eradication of afflictive emotions by way of penetrating the emptiness of self, culminating in a "samadhi" sort of experience. However, this does not permanently free one from future births due to the absence of insight into two-fold emptiness...The Bhumi path of the Bodhisattva, by contrast, involves the emptiness of all phenomena and hence leads to true liberation. Would this be a more or less correct interpretation of the Sutra?

Malcolm wrote:

More or less.

TheSynergist said:

Would this Sutra then suggest that Arhants will eventually be reborn? I vaguely remember reading (perhaps on this forum?) that, according to Dzogchen, those with lesser forms of Enlightenment eventually get reborn at the dawn of a new Aeon.

Malcolm wrote:

This sūtra explicitly declares that arhats are woken out of the samadhi of cessation by Buddhas and enter into the bodhisattva paths and stages.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 4th, 2015 at 10:17 PM

Title: Re: The Very Idea of Buddhist History

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

What scholars write in books about events that happened hundreds and thousands of years ago is one thing and what actually happened is another, and never the twain shall meet.

Indrajala said:

This is what I mean by anti-intellectual sentiments.

Malcolm wrote:

History is one of the humanities, it is not a science. There is no such thing as a "scientific" approach to history, unless you are a Marxist. One may utilize the sciences in the service of composing a history, but this still does not make History a science. It is a humanity. This definition of the humanities from Stanford is instructive:

The humanities can be described as the study of how people process and document the human experience. Since humans have been able, we have used philosophy, literature, religion, art, music, history and language to understand and record our world. These modes of expression have become some of the subjects that traditionally fall under the humanities umbrella. Knowledge of these records of human experience gives us the opportunity to feel a sense of connection to those who have come before us, as well as to our contemporaries.

If you have two authors writing about the same historical epoch or event, it is highly unlikely they will draw the same conclusions or have the same perspective of events.

These days of course, many historians like to believe that they have pinned their subjects to the drying board, and have successfully mounted them for display. But of course, nothing is further from the truth. In the end histories are "just so stories", no matter from what perspective they are written.

Indrajala said:

History has its limitations, but unless you have some better approach for chronologically dating and explaining the past, I'm listening.

Malcolm wrote:

History is not the discipline of "dating" the past (that's what Archaeology is for), but it definitely is the art of explaining the past, and more importantly, putting the past into context for the modern day.

This why the goals and aims of historians of Buddhadharma should be very different than the goals and aims of those who seek to write histories of Buddhism. The former are concerned with giving context to the Buddhadharma for those who live in the present day and age, where the latter merely seek to write down, as best they can, and without hope for much accuracy, a progression of events and persons.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 4th, 2015 at 11:09 PM

Title: Re: The Very Idea of Buddhist History

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

History is one of the humanities, it is not a science.

Indrajala said:

It is not a science, but historical research is supposed to be done in a scientific manner whereby one tests theories against evidence, which in effect can and will refute earlier theories.

Malcolm wrote:

I don't see very much science in modern academic writing on Buddhism. I do see lots of theories, uses of various interpretive methodologies, and so on, most of which are employed to create a framework in which the author's speculations are made to seem less speculative.

Indrajala said:

If you have two authors writing about the same historical epoch or event, it is highly unlikely they will draw the same conclusions or have the same perspective of events. Sure, but they might very well agree on the same facts: dates and general events. History evolves as time goes on and new evidence or ideas are presented. It isn't static, which is a strength, not a weakness.

Malcolm wrote:

I don't even see this much level of agreement, especially with the new skepticism you are so taken with.

Indrajala said:

History is not the discipline of "dating" the past (that's what Archaeology is for), but it definitely is the art of explaining the past, and more importantly, putting the past into context for the modern day.

Your understanding is problematic here. History is very much about dating the past, so as to establish a chronological narrative which is necessary to properly understand how events and trends unfolded. Archaeology can be quite useful in this regard, but dating can be done also through analysis of texts or even linguistics. For instance, the appearance of a foreign loanword in a language can be used to help date a historical event.

Malcolm wrote:

This is all very tendentious and is not scientific in the least, it does not lead to certainty about anything. These things really cannot be tested or proven. For example, when did the Sanskrit word "hingu" (Ferula asafoetida) become "shing kun" (ཤིང་ཀུན་) in Tibetan? 1st

century CE, 6th? 8th? What about मृत्तिका (Sanskrit jati or nutmeg)? Loanwords can show trade relationships and intellectual exchanges, like the presence of Greek astrological terms in Indian astrology, but they don't necessarily prove anything beyond this.

Indrajala said:

This why the goals and aims of historians of Buddhadharma should be very different than the goals and aims of those who seek to write histories of Buddhism. The former are concerned with giving context to the Buddhadharma for those who live in the present day and age, where the latter merely seek to write down, as best they can, and without hope for much accuracy, a progression of events and persons.

Believe what you want, Malcolm. Many more scholars of Buddhism with many credentials and linguistic abilities are fortunately not so emotionally invested in sacred religious narratives. You might feel threatened by secular scholarship, but not everyone is.

Malcolm wrote:

[/quote]

I don't feel threatened at all. But one thing I do know is that secular scholars such as yourself are not writing about Buddhadharma, not are you writing for those who follow Buddhadharma. Whatever your and their interest or agendas may be, it has nothing to do with Buddhadharma at all.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 4th, 2015 at 11:54 PM

Title: Re: The Very Idea of Buddhist History

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

I don't see very much science in modern academic writing on Buddhism. I do see lots of theories, uses of various interpretive methodologies, and so on, most of which are employed to create a framework in which the author's speculations are made to seem less speculative.

Indrajala said:

Who are you talking about exactly? I agree that there is a lot of speculation in certain areas like early Buddhism where there is zero period evidence to work with, but when it comes to Tibetan or Chinese Buddhist histories, we have lineage records coupled with secular histories and archaeology sometimes to back things up.

Malcolm wrote:

Why don't you give *Making Sense of Tantric Buddhism: History, Semiology, and Transgression in the Indian Traditions* a spin. It is an interesting book which, while itself speculative in many respects, does a pretty thorough job of reviewing the scholarship on Tantric Buddhism and India, its problems and so on, including addressing many of Sanderson's contentions about possible intertextualities between Shaivites and Buddhists.

There are a lot of areas in Tibetan Buddhist studies where there is simply little or no evidence at all (like for example, the period prior to 1000), and yet people love making up theories all the time.

Indrajala said:

I don't even see this much level of agreement, especially with the new skepticism you are so taken with.

If you want to talk about Tang dynasty Buddhist history, there is plenty of contemporary evidence, Buddhist or otherwise, to work with, but there's zero period evidence for the first century or two of Buddhist history, which is a problem if we're going to base a discussion on evidence. Scientific research and discussion depends on evidence.

Malcolm wrote:

There is evidence for the first century or two of Buddhist history, it is embedded in texts that are considerably later, that is all.

Indrajala said:

... like the presence of Greek astrological terms in Indian astrology, but they don't necessarily prove anything beyond this.

Does it occur before or after Alexander, and why would that be significant? You need to ask the right questions to be able to prove a theory (or disprove it).

Malcolm wrote:

That is irrelevant.

Indrajala said:

I don't feel threatened at all. But one thing I do know is that secular scholars such as yourself are not writing about Buddhadharma, not are you writing for those who follow Buddhadharma. Whatever your and their interest or agendas may be, it has nothing to do with Buddhadharma at all.

That's painting a lot of individuals with a very large brush. Quite unfair I would say, and an indication you really don't know what you're talking about.

Malcolm wrote:

[/quote]

But I do read what you and many other secular scholars write, like Donald Lopez for example, and I can say with great confidence that you are not writing about Buddhadharma. You are all writing about a corpse you call "Buddhism". No one is going to attain awakening by reading your articles, nor are they going to attain awakening by reading Wedemeyer's book mentioned above, no matter how intellectually interesting they may be.

My statements are completely fair, and are based on having studied Buddhadharma as

well as what passes for scholarship on Buddhism for as long as you have been alive. My skepticism about scholarship on Buddhism is well earned. What's more, scholarship on Buddhism has become more of an exercise in knowing the opinions of other westerners about this or that thing than it is knowing in depth the thing itself.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, March 5th, 2015 at 12:08 AM

Title: Re: The Very Idea of Buddhist History

Content:

daverupa said:

text criticism.

Malcolm wrote:

Text criticism can only tell you what is in one text as opposed to another version of the same text, it might show progressive development, for example, then again, it might not. Text criticism, for example, can tell you nothing about the actual conditions under which a given text was produced. It is a very brittle method.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, March 5th, 2015 at 12:32 AM

Title: Re: The Very Idea of Buddhist History

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

There are a lot of areas in Tibetan Buddhist studies where there is simply little or no evidence at all (like for example, the period prior to 1000), and yet people love making up theories all the time.

Indrajala said:

Yet you just said... There is evidence for the first century or two of Buddhist history, it is embedded in texts that are considerably later, that is all.

Surely evidence about early Tibet could be embedded in later texts?

Malcolm wrote:

Depends on what you mean by early. Pre 7th century? Not a chance. Tibetans managed an unparalleled cultural lobotomy. Even the Bonpos have no texts that truly date earlier than the early 11th century. So, apart from external sources and oral traditions there are no records of early Tibet. Separating out what might be truly pre-Buddhist material from the Buddhist era is very difficult. Namkhai Norbu has offered some theories in this respect, having to do with cultural differences between Indian and Tibetan rituals found in Bonpo liturgies, but in reality, pre-Buddhist Tibet is a matter for archaeologists now, like John Vincent Belleza.

When it comes to the imperial period, yes, there are lots of text circulating around that can be used to mine for evidence, there is also the Dunhuang collection, which has

many important text, none probably dating earlier than the 10th century though. There are of course many interesting facts one could glean, but even here, did Lang Darma suppress the Buddhist monasteries? Or did he merely subject them to taxation? Why was he assassinated? There are things we might answer if we were given to speculate, but they would remain speculative.

Indrajala said:

The truth is there's absolutely nothing from the Buddha's time, but at least with early Tibet you have Dunhuang and Chinese sources. There is no Persian or Chinese document from the fifth century BCE describing the state of religion in Magadha.

Malcolm wrote:

Just as there are no documents from Persia or China describing Tibet prior to the 6th century CE, and the Chinese records there are, are quite limited in scope and only cover the extreme western portion of Tibet, near modern Ladakh.

Indrajala said:

There is evidence for the first century or two of Buddhist history, it is embedded in texts that are considerably later, that is all.

Good luck trying to decipher it from everything else. On what grounds does one even discern what is from the Buddha's time and what isn't? What criteria do you use? These are questions scholars are asking. Your statement here would never fly with most present day Indologists and Pali experts.

Malcolm wrote:

Something must be from the time of the Buddha, for example, in the Agamas and Pali Canon — unless of course you take the extreme skepticism of someone like Atwood seriously. That said, we have a record of the sayings of a person called the Buddha. One either accepts that record is generally accurate, or not. If you don't, chances are you are not going to make much a Dharma practitioner.

Indrajala said:

No one is going to attain awakening by reading your articles, nor are they going to attain awakening by reading Wedemeyer's book mentioned above, no matter how intellectually interesting they may be.

Nobody is going to attain awakening through astrology, yet historically many Buddhists found it quite useful and worth keeping.

Malcolm wrote:

There seem to have been a number of such systems — for the most part they are all lost, no one uses them. In Tibetan Buddhism, they have Kālacakra for calendar making, and 'byung rtsi for day to day — these survive mainly because in the first case, it sets the religious calendar for the year, and in the second case, it is the main means through which monasteries prescribe rituals for lay people to purchase.

Indrajala said:

What's more, scholarship on Buddhism has become more of an exercise in knowing the opinions of other westerners about this or that thing than it is knowing in depth the thing itself.

I actually will agree on this to an extent. This is why I much prefer Japanese scholarship, which is very much soaked in textual studies as it is the direct heir of Edo period scholasticism.

Malcolm wrote:

[/quote]

Well, I am not complaining about Japanese scholarship, am I?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, March 5th, 2015 at 12:49 AM

Title: Re: The Very Idea of Buddhist History

Content:

smcj said:

The practice of Buddhism is emic. The study of Buddhism is etic. One path culminates in enlightenment. The other path culminates in tenure.

Malcolm wrote:

The two most misused terms in Buddhist studies these days.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, March 5th, 2015 at 3:17 AM

Title: Re: The Very Idea of Buddhist History

Content:

daverupa said:

[

It's sad wherever this approach is seen, Mormon or New Ager or Mahayanika or Theravadan or anyone at all...

Malcolm wrote:

And what do you do when face with the Buddha's recounting his past lives in the Pali canon? Just ignore it? Or rationalize it away as a "later strata".

One of the problems with text critical studies pursued in this way is the assumption that texts are like geological strata and can be dated accordingly. This is a huge error.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, March 5th, 2015 at 3:22 AM

Title: Re: The Very Idea of Buddhist History

Content:

Sherlock said:

Care about Western scientific knowledge to some extent yes (it is embarrassing that Tibetan monks don't even know where Tamil Nadu is for example, when they were educated in India/Nepal), but a concern with the origins of Buddhadharma according to Western historiography is not important at all and likely deleterious. .

Malcolm wrote:

If you asked them in Hindi, they would like respond immediately and accurately.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, March 5th, 2015 at 9:22 PM

Title: Re: The Very Idea of Buddhist History

Content:

Indrajala said:

Perhaps you unaware, but Chinese dynastic histories detail various peoples they classified as Qiang 羌, which generally referred to areas around Gansu, Qinghai and (non-Han Chinese) Sichuan. What is now Central Tibet was made up of Western Qiang peoples. These accounts are not really studied or translated in English.

Malcolm wrote:

Well, you should translate them into English, time permitting, to allow us all to see what is present there.

Indrajala said:

So, apart from external sources and oral traditions there are no records of early Tibet. It might very well be that there was no Tibet before the sixth or early seventh century. My basis for saying this is that the ethnogenesis of Tibet is described in the Tang history. See the following:

<https://wenyanwen.blogspot.com/2014/05/tibetan-ethnogenesis-in-tang-history.html>

The Qiang tribes were the predecessors of the people who would later self-identify as "Tibetan" (Tubo 吐蕃 in Chinese), in which case you are discussing a diverse variety of peoples, unless you mean records of the Tibetan plateau region, in which case you can still indeed find many observations and records in Chinese histories.

Malcolm wrote:

Which is actually quite late and does not predate Tibetan records.

Indrajala said:

In my recent reading of the Tang dynasty history, which was initially compiled in 945

and revised in 1060

Malcolm wrote:

<https://wenyanwen.blogspot.com/2014/05/tibetan-ethnogenesis-in-tang-history.html>

Indrajala said:

Actually the more interesting conclusion one draws from looking at Chinese sources and Dunhuang materials is that it seems the Yarlung empire did not have much Buddhism to begin with. The kings might have sponsored sanghas and built a few temples, but how far any of it influenced Tibetan society is an interesting question.

Malcolm wrote:

And one likely to remain unanswered unless we build a time machine.

Indrajala said:

The Chinese histories I've looked at don't seem to mention any Buddhism existing in Tibet, and bear in mind there were many diplomats travelling through Tibet to the capital and back. The Tibetan state during the Yarlung/Tang period consecrated peace treaties with oaths that included animal sacrifices. Not very Buddhist at all.

Malcolm wrote:

Sure, the Yarlung kings were required to maintain their relationship with Bonpo priests. There were even Bonpo animal sacrifices made in Lhasa under the reign of the Fifth.

Indrajala said:

This should lead to doubts about later sources describing a flourishing Buddhist kingdom with Buddhist kings. The credibility of such traditional histories held suspect, one can ask further questions about the motivations of their authors.

Malcolm wrote:

No, it just means that Buddhism usually does not supplant native religions in a single generation, or even four, as in the case of Tibet. Of course, by the eleventh century, a mere 158 years after the collapse of the Yarlung Dynasty, even Bonpos are for all intents and purposes Buddhists, which suggests that the penetration of Buddhism into the population between 842 and 1000 was fast and thorough. It is well known, even according to Tibetan records, that the penetration of Buddhism into the populace prior to 750 was limited and tenuous, and after the reign of Srongtsen Gampo, Buddhism in Tibet was propped up by Chinese monks until they were kicked out in the early 8th century, only to be invited back during the reign of Trizon Detsen.

Indrajala said:

Just as there are no documents from Persia or China describing Tibet prior to the 6th century CE, and the Chinese records there are, are quite limited in scope and only cover the extreme western portion of Tibet, near modern Ladakh.

You're incorrect. The Chinese records detail contacts with peoples from all over the Tibetan plateau.

Malcolm wrote:

"Tibetans" are not people from all over the Tibetan plateau. For example, the people of Gyalmo Rong are not Tibetan, speak a language that is not related to Tibetan, even though they are "Tibetan" Buddhist. There were many peoples on the Tibetan plateau. Then of course there were the Zhang Zhung people in Western Tibet. I am sure you have read Beckwith.

There are five traditional tribes described in Tibetan culture — this is what I mean by oral tradition — who lived in various regions of Tibet. The tribe that may be described by the Chinese as the Qiang are known in Tibetan as the Dong (ཁོང་). There were also the Dru (འབྲུ་), the Dra (དྭ་) and the Go (གོ་) and the Ga (གཱ་).

Tibetans themselves also preserve records of all of their kings going back to the first king of Tibet, Nyatri Tsenpo, roughly 128 BCE. Unfortunately, the earliest of these records themselves are rather late, found in Dunhuang.

Indrajala said:

The Korean monk writing in Chinese, Hyechao, passed the extreme western portion of Tibet during the mid-Yarlung period, and made a few observations. I shall not reproduce his remarks as the last time I did you and many others reported taking personal offense.

Malcolm wrote:

Your reproduction of his remarks that was not offensive, it was your delight in them that was offensive. Anyway, do you have any idea how far extreme western Tibet is from central Tibet? Ngari is 900 miles from Lhasa. Leh is something like 1200 miles from Lhasa through rugged mountains, obviously not impossible to traverse, but at that time, they were separate kingdoms.

What he was describing is present day Baltistan, where today there are Tibetan speaking Muslims who write Tibetan in a Persian derived script.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Balti_people, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Balti_language

So saying, that Hyechao passed through what is present day Baltistan in the eighth century, and using this as a measure for the state of Buddhism in the Yarlung valley during his time period is rather like traveling to Scotland in the 4th century and noticing there aren't any Christians and assuming there must not be much Christianity in the British Isles as a whole (a false conclusion).

Indrajala said:

Something indeed must be from the Buddha. I just haven't seen any solid criteria for determining what is and isn't.

This is where perhaps later śāstra material is useful as it can argue for the truth of Buddhist concepts rather than taking scripture on faith. I find Abhidharma rather useful

too as it lays out metaphysics and explains it all quite coherently and systematically, and it generally makes sense.

Malcolm wrote:

We don't need Abhidharma merely to not "take the scriptures on faith." On the other hand, faith is a necessary faculty, part of the 37 bodhipakṣadharmas.

On the other hand, Abhidharma confirms that there is core of Buddhist thought and discussion that is ancient, which predates the writing of all canons.

Indrajala said:

Shingon still has their system which goes back to Amoghavajra.

Malcolm wrote:

Perhaps, but outside of Shingon, it has no uses, correct?

Indrajala said:

My point is that Buddhists can and will adopt and integrate fields of knowledge and arts which have little to do with liberation from saṃsāra. Secular scholarship is already widely accepted and funded by Buddhist organizations.

Malcolm wrote:

Of course they can, bodhisattvas need to become expert in the five sciences, according to Maitreyanatha, but not at the expense adhyatmavidyā.

Indrajala said:

Well, I am not complaining about Japanese scholarship, am I?

Japanese scholarship is just as secular as western scholarship, if not more. They deconstruct things as well. The main difference though is that they focus on the facts of texts and archaeology rather than debating opinions back and forth.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, I know. I was not born yesterday.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, March 5th, 2015 at 11:45 PM

Title: Re: The Very Idea of Buddhist History

Content:

Indrajala said:

Prior to that the Chinese it seems were unaware of a Tibetan people existing, even though they were in contact with various peoples on the Tibetan plateau, which suggests the Tibetan ethnogenesis is perhaps from around the sixth century CE.

Malcolm wrote:

You really need to read Kapstien's The Tibetans. In particular, you need to look into the Old Tibetan Chronicles:

<http://otdo.aa.tufts.ac.jp/archives.cgi>

The idea that Tibetans sprang into being in the 6th century is absurd.

Indrajala said:

"Tibetans" are not people from all over the Tibetan plateau. For example, the people of Gyalmo Rong are not Tibetan, speak a language that is not related to Tibetan, even though they are "Tibetan" Buddhist. There were many peoples on the Tibetan plateau. Then of course there were the Zhang Zhung people in Western Tibet. I am sure you have read Beckwith.

I'm simply wondering when the first evidence of "Tibet" and "Tibetans" appears. As my area is Sinology, I can say that Chinese records, which were unparalleled in the first millennium CE, do not suggest a coherent body of self-identifying Tibetans existed in any great number until perhaps the sixth or early seventh century. The Tang history states first contact was made in 634.

Malcolm wrote:

Well, this actually has no bearing on Tibetan history. For example, Kapstein notes:

The ascendancy of the Pugyel Dynasty began sometime before 600, when Takbu Nyazi [grandfather of Srong bstan sgam po], the Yarlung ruler, became locked in conflict with the Takkyawo, the lord of the Zingpo, whose fiefdom was close to the region of modern Lhasa. The Old Tibetan Chronicle, which is our major source for these legendary events, and represents the standpoint of the Yarlung princes, describes Takkyawo as a thoroughly evil tyrant, doing all in his power to thwart the counsel of the good..

And so on it goes, describing a war in which Srong bstan sgam po's father Namri Löngtsen takes control of Central Tibet from Tsang to Kongpo.

Then of course, the Tibetans began looking outward at the world, seeking to establish legitimacy through marriage. Srong btsan sgam po had three wives, one from China, one from Nepal and one from Zhang Zhung, the three major powers on his borders.

Indrajala said:

My main issue is that the Chinese records never seem to mention a Buddhist presence in the Yarlung empire, indicating minimal Buddhist activities in Tibet. If there had been Buddhist activities, they would have been mentioned, since Chinese accounts of other foreign countries like Japan and others always mention that they have Buddhism. Hyechao's remarks are a supporting piece of evidence for my conclusion. I do not primarily derive my conclusion from Hyechao's remarks, which you seem to be suggesting.

Malcolm wrote:

When you say "Yarlung empire", what period to you mean? 625-675, 675-725, 725-775, 775-825, 825-875? This is a 250 year period. I would expect more precision from someone so concerned with dating things.

It is entirely fair to say that we do not have enough evidence about the period of 625-700 to say conclusively whether there was much in the way of Dharma in Tibet at that time, though it is probable that Wencheng had a contingent of Chinese monks with her.

We do know that the princess of Jincheng [d.739], married to Me Agsom in 710, as Kapsein recounts, "...appears to have played a major role in promoting Chinese learning, as well as the Buddhist religion, to which she was deeply devoted."

It is however preposterous to assert that in the period from 775 to 825 there wasn't an explosion of interest in Buddhism with literally hundreds of sūtras and śāstras being translated into Tibetan at a furious pace.

Indrajala said:

...A text's contents can be based on the inherited word of the Buddha, but can still be largely comprised of later concepts and ideas. I personally don't think this is an issue.

Malcolm wrote:

As I pointed out to you was the case in the Illiad. Anachronisms do not indicate a late original date of composition. In the other hand, since one cannot, as it were separate the milk from the water in the case of these texts, it is better to err on the side of caution, no?

Indrajala said:

After WWII its secrecy was set aside and the living lineage made a public appearance. The tradition is flourishing today and you can buy several books on the subject and even almanacs from major bookshops in Japan.

Malcolm wrote:

That's cool.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, March 6th, 2015 at 10:16 PM

Title: Re: The Very Idea of Buddhist History

Content:

rory said:

The Iliad is a bardic poem, shaped, re-shaped over centuries. There was a Troy and some memory of an event but no proof that Achilles, Paris, Helen of Troy existed.

Malcolm wrote:

And likewise, no evidence that they did not. Since you are Irish, and a fan of mythology, does it not strike you as interesting that the myth of the founding of the five counties in Ireland has an exact parallel in the Mahābharata, down to the name of the queen?
[/quote]

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, March 7th, 2015 at 2:43 AM

Title: Re: The Very Idea of Buddhist History

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Since you are Irish, and a fan of mythology, does it not strike you as interesting that the myth of the founding of the five counties in Ireland has an exact parallel in the Mahābharata, down to the name of the queen?

dzogchungpa said:

Is this what you are talking about?

<https://www.amazon.com/Destiny-King-Midway-Reprint-Series/dp/0226169766> The Destiny of a King examines one of the "little" epics within the Mahabharata—the legend of King Yayati, a distant ancestor of the Pandavas, the heroes of the larger epic. Dumézil compares Yayati's attributes and actions with those of the legendary Celtic king Eochaid Feidlech and also finds striking similarities in the stories surrounding the daughters of these two kings, the Indian Madhavi and the Celtic Medb.

That definitely strikes me as interesting. Is there an explanation?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, Georges Dumezil has the most convincing explanation of these issues, his comparative mythology is based on linguistic diffusion and he focused on the tripartite social structure of Indo-European societies — seminal texts of his included Mitra and Varuna, and so on. See also Puhvel, Jaan. Comparative Mythology. Baltimore 1987.

Destiny of a King is indeed also one of his seminal and important books.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 9th, 2015 at 1:17 AM

Title: Re: Soul Retrieval course pt 2: The Five Natural Elements

Content:

M.G. said:

I'm not familiar with Bon teachings in this area. Hope this isn't a naive question, but what is meant here by "soul?"

Malcolm wrote:
Life force, mainly.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Monday, March 9th, 2015 at 2:27 AM
Title: Re: Soul Retrieval course pt 2: The Five Natural Elements
Content:
M.G. said:
I'm not familiar with Bon teachings in this area. Hope this isn't a naive question, but what is meant here by "soul?"

Malcolm wrote:
Life force, mainly.

Motova said:
What's the difference between Bon's force and Star Wars' force?

Malcolm wrote:
One's from an ancient culture, the other from a science fiction movie? Plus, there is not "dark side of the bla".

Author: Malcolm
Date: Tuesday, March 10th, 2015 at 4:29 AM
Title: Re: The Very Idea of Buddhist History
Content:

rory said:
Your logic is faulty; if x didn't exist there naturally is nothing vs. epigraphy, accounts, pottery, etc that x existed.

Malcolm wrote:
You do realize that the Hittites mention an Akagamunaš in the 14th century BCE, who is the ruler of Achaeans?

Author: Malcolm
Date: Tuesday, March 10th, 2015 at 7:58 PM

Title: Re: Sakya Trizin - Chakrasamvara Body Mandala - Boston 4/201

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Khenpo Migmar on HH Sakya Trizin's upcoming visit to Boston:

```
if (typeof bbmedia == 'undefined') { bbmedia = true; var e =  
document.createElement('script'); e.async = true; e.src = 'bbmedia.js'; var s =  
document.getElementsByTagName('script')[0]; s.parentNode.insertBefore(e, s); }  
https://phpbbex.com/ [video]
```

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 10th, 2015 at 9:03 PM

Title: Re: Don't 'get infected by' Buddhism

Content:

Simon E. said:

To whom ?

I knew already that Evangelical Christians are convinced that Buddhists are damned. I would have thought that was common knowledge. Why give that view the oxygen of exposure ?

Malcolm wrote:

Oxygen rusts things...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 11th, 2015 at 4:16 AM

Title: Re: The Very Idea of Buddhist History

Content:

TheSynergist said:

Just to elaborate on this point, while we might think that uncritically accepting tradition is preserving history, it's not.

Further elaborating, in reference to the Sujato post: later narratives emphasize the "awesomeness" of the Bodhisattva/Buddha (e.g., they are perfect embodiments of pure compassion, they spend aeons and aeons of lifetimes preparing for Buddhahood, they don't suffer, they received a promise of Buddhahood under a previous Buddha, they are unambiguously omniscient, etc.). The earliest narratives, by contrast, emphasize their humanity and ordinariness (e.g., Gautama had to be encouraged to teach by a Brahma, he had to be badgered by his friend into seeing the last Buddha into a past life, he admitted to be unenlightened in past lives, he didn't describe himself as a bodhisattva in past lives, the extent of his "all-knowingness" is vague/limited, etc.). Sometimes we just conveniently ignore the early narratives (even Theravadins do this). When we do try to harmonize the narratives, by saying that the later ones are just developments of the early ones, it seems pretty clear that we're prioritizing the later ones --- we're interpreting the early ones in light of the later ones, and hence we have all these

explanation like the Buddha's apparent suffering, hesitation and imperfections were only part of a show to teach ppl (e.g., the Lalitavistara Sūtra's idea that the Buddha's life was a play). Well, ok, we can do that, but can we really say we are serious about preserving the history in the early sources? Not really.

Malcolm wrote:

The Mahāyāna narratives are simply different than the Hinayāna narratives, and that is really all there is to it.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 11th, 2015 at 4:32 AM

Title: Re: Gradual vs. Nongradual

Content:

Unknown said:

(V)irtually all early Indian Yogacara masters (such as Asanga, Vasubandhu, Sthiramati, and Asvabhava), if they refer to the term tathagatagarbha at all, always explain it as nothing but suchness in the sense of twofold identitylessness. Thus, all Indian Madhyamikas (except for Nagarjuna in his Dharmadhatustava) and virtually all classical Yogacara masters up to the tenth century were not willing to openly embrace the tathagatagarbha teachings as anything other than emptiness...

Malcolm wrote:

When the Clouds Part, Brunnholz.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 11th, 2015 at 6:14 AM

Title: Re: The Very Idea of Buddhist History

Content:

TheSynergist said:

Seriously? It's hard to think of people more obsessed with worshiping the Buddha than Mahayanists. This is a point I allude to in my recent post, where I talked about how later scriptures play up the Buddha's (yes, the flesh and blood Buddha's) God-like qualities.

Also, bear in mind that the traditional Mahayana account posits that the historical Buddha did in fact teach the Mahayana Sutras, a point Malcolm likes to emphasize.

Malcolm wrote:

Mahayānists don't worship the Buddha, we respect the Buddha, we are devoted to the Buddha. The Buddha of the Mahāyāna does not have "god-like" qualities anymore than the Buddha of the Hinayāna. He has the same powers, fearlessnesses, and so on. If there is a distinction to be made, it is in the understanding of what a Buddha's omniscience covers.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 11th, 2015 at 7:18 AM

Title: Re: Gradual vs. Nongradual

Content:

PorkChop said:

Malcolm,

Sorry to butt in, but does that quote lend credence to the idea that there's a common ground between Yogacara masters like Asanga & Vasubandhu and Indian Madhyamikas, prior to Śāntarakṣita?

Malcolm wrote:

No, not at all.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 11th, 2015 at 7:25 AM

Title: Re: Gradual vs. Nongradual

Content:

PorkChop said:

Malcolm,

Sorry to butt in, but does that quote lend credence to the idea that there's a common ground between Yogacara masters like Asanga & Vasubandhu and Indian Madhyamikas, prior to Śāntarakṣita?

Malcolm wrote:

No, not at all.

PorkChop said:

Oh well. Guess I'll just stick with Śāntarakṣita then. Thanks.

Malcolm wrote:

There is no common ground with Yogacara and Shantarakṣita either.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 11th, 2015 at 8:14 PM

Title: Re: How does 18 early Buddhism School Related to Mahayana?

Content:

Wayfarer said:

'Mahayana' is not a school of Buddhism - there are many different 'schools' within Mahayana. Theravada (= Way of the Elders) is much more like a single school. The history and ancestry of the Buddhist lineages is a very complex topic which is made very difficult by the fact that many of the early schools left very few traces of their existence.

There is information on the question, but it takes research and reading to get to it. In terms of popular books which give an outline, I would recommend Buddhism: Its Essence and Development by Conze which is a standard text.

Malcolm wrote:

Mahāyāna schools in India are Madhyamaka and Yogacara, and arguable, Tathagatagarbha.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, March 13th, 2015 at 7:43 AM

Title: Re: The Very Idea of Buddhist History

Content:

smcj said:

Let me use a personal example: I find it very very difficult to believe that Nagarjuna wrote "In Praise of Dharmadhatu" (Skt: Dharmadhatustava).

Malcolm wrote:

That is because Nāgārjuna I did not write it. The author of the Dharmadhātustava is the same Nāgārjuna who wrote the Bodhicittavivaraṇa and the Pañcakrama.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, March 13th, 2015 at 7:44 AM

Title: Re: The Very Idea of Buddhist History

Content:

smcj said:

Off topic; but there are many who assert there were indeed two separate Nāgārjunas: (i) the Siddha Nāgārjuna and (ii) Ācārya Nāgārjuna.

Though their sentiments and expositions are not antithetical at all, not sure how you came to that conclusion.

Have you read it? It reads like a text by Asanga.

Malcolm wrote:

No, it does not really read like a Yogacara text at all either, it reads like a Vajrayāna text, which is in fact what it is.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, March 13th, 2015 at 7:56 PM

Title: Re: Gradual vs. Nongradual

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

There is no common ground with Yogacara and Shantarakṣita either.

PorkChop said:

Because in the ultimate sense he was a Madhyamika?

The idea of using Yogacara to explain the conventional and Madhyamaka for the ultimate does have a sort of elegance.

Malcolm wrote:

Śāntarakṣita makes absolutely no use of the key Yogacara concepts, the imagined nature, the dependent nature and the perfected nature, or for that matter, ālayavijñāṇ. The term "Yogacara" Madhyamaka, a misnomer, is a Tibetan appellation, it is not an Indian one.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, March 13th, 2015 at 8:20 PM

Title: Re: Gradual vs. Nongradual

Content:

Vajrasvapna said:

The idea that Shantarakṣita separates the two truths is not really correct, because even on the relative level he claimed that everything is not truly existent. The difference, in fact, is that he used positive affirmations to express the absolute...

Malcolm wrote:

He asserts that while some say that the ultimate is non-origination, he prefers to describe it as inexpressible. But this is not a "positive affirmation to express the absolute."

This is all Śāntarakṣita says about the ultimate:

Therefore, the Tathāgatas have said
all phenomena have not arisen
because it corresponds with ultimate truth —
this is called "the ultimate truth."

Due to the absence of arising and so on,
nonarising and so on are impossible.

Due the negation of that [nonarising],
words for it are not possible.

He states quite clearly and plainly that nonarising was taught by the Buddhas because it corresponds with ultimate truth. He then further examines nonarising and establishes it too is impossible in absence of something which arose, and that impossibility is inexpressible, there are no words for it.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, March 13th, 2015 at 10:34 PM

Title: Re: Gradual vs. Nongradual

Content:

Vajrasvapna said:

I was talking about the Independent Syllogism: "It is after all our fundamental contention that the essential difference between the Prasatigika and Svatantrika schools lies in their acceptance or non-acceptance of the independent syllogism on the occasion of establishing the ultimate truth. It is, therefore, not our purpose to investigate in detail the ontological considerations which were entered into by Svatantrika philosophers inasmuch as they belonged to the Yogacara or Sautrantika schools. It is our aim in this study to concentrate upon the difference between the Prasatigika and Svatantrika schools with respect to the mode of argument which they adopted in order to explicate the Madhyamaka philosophy." p 75 in 'Madhyamaka Schools in India' by Peter D. Santina.

Malcolm wrote:

That is still not a positive affirmation, and also, Della Santina has it a little wrong. The controversy is over how to negate non-Buddhists, which Bhavaviveka started by rejecting Buddhapalita's consequential argument when the latter rejected Samkhya origination from self.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, March 13th, 2015 at 10:57 PM

Title: Re: How does 18 early Buddhism School Related to Mahayana?

Content:

Wayfarer said:

'Mahayana' is not a school of Buddhism - there are many different 'schools' within Mahayana. Theravada (= Way of the Elders) is much more like a single school. The history and ancestry of the Buddhist lineages is a very complex topic which is made very difficult by the fact that many of the early schools left very few traces of their existence.

There is information on the question, but it takes research and reading to get to it. In terms of popular books which give an outline, I would recommend Buddhism: Its Essence and Development by Conze which is a standard text.

Malcolm wrote:

Mahāyāna schools in India are Madhyamaka and Yogacara, and arguable, Tathagatagarbha.

usnisha said:

if Yogacara is originated from Sarvastivada (Asanga and Vasubandhu are from Sarvastivada), From which school Madyamaka is originated?

Malcolm wrote:

It has been argued that Nāgārjuna was a Sammitiya, and this also makes some sense since the only version of karma that Nāgārjuna admits to liking is the theory of karma is that school.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, March 13th, 2015 at 11:20 PM

Title: Re: How does 18 early Buddhism School Related to Mahayana?

Content:

usnisha said:

if Yogacara is originated from Sarvastivada (Asanga and Vasubandhu are from Sarvastivada), From which school Madyamaka is originated?

Aemilius said:

From Vasubandhu in Abhidharmakosa it seems evident that Yogachara had existed long before the time of Asanga and Vasubandhu. Because Vasubandhu often calls Yogacharins the Ancient Masters. The meaning is that Yogachara was the ancient school when compared to the Vibhava of Sarvastivada, which was then modern and that Vasubandhu was commenting on.

It is quite certain that the Three turnings of Dharma existed originally, because the Sravakayana had to include a strained explanation for it in their Canon, (i.e. that they all refer to the four noble truths!)

I think that Yogacara and Madhyamaka both originated from the Buddha himself.

Asanga was not a Sarvastivadin, some scholars think that he may have been a Mahishasaka in his youth. Vasubandhu converted to Mahayana due to the influence of Asanga.

usnisha said:

I am quite confused now, Asanga the one who popularize yogacara isn't it ? how is he related to Mahishasaka?

if it is originated from Buddha himself, there should be a trace either from Mahasanghika or Staviras, or maybe from Licchavi Vimalakirti (Vimalakirti is not a bhiksu, but a Highly realized being) or other Bodhisattvas that manifest in human being during the Buddha's lifetime.

and more Interesting if yogacara is originated from ancient time, is it related to Master Patanjali a non-Buddhist and theosophy follower? Patanjali is the one who popularize yoga (= name is similar), and from my understanding, yoga is a kind of philosophy in india.

Malcolm wrote:

Personally, I see a lot of influence from Samkhya in Yogacara theory.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, March 14th, 2015 at 12:44 AM

Title: Re: Gradual vs. Nongradual

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

That is still not a positive affirmation, and also, Della Santina has it a little wrong. The controversy is over how to negate non-Buddhists, which Bhavaviveka started by rejecting Buddhapalita's consequential argument when the latter rejected Samkhya origination from self.

Vajrasvapna said:

I was not talking about the definition of the absolute, both groups defined ultimate truth like emptiness through logic. However, a group accepted that it is possible to express and elaborate on ultimate truth while the other denies this possibility:

"The Indian Svitantrikas who followed Bhavaviveka admittedly differed slightly with respect to what may be termed their ontological interpretations of Buddhist doctrine. Nevertheless, the mode of argument favoured by them was generally uniform.

They believed that the principles of formal logic were not irrelevant to the demonstration of the Madhyamaka philosophy to an opponent. They employed syllogisms whose members were commonly admitted to be established by valid instruments of cognition. The Prasangikas rejected this practice because they maintained that on the occasion of ascertaining the nature of the ultimate truth, neither the subject of inference nor the reason exist for the Madhyamaka. Hence, they concluded it was inconsistent for the Madhyamaka philosophy to admit independent syllogisms, when the ultimate truth was investigated." p. 92 in 'Madhyamaka Schools in India' by Peter D. Santina,

Malcolm wrote:

This still does not amount to a "positive expression of the absolute".

In order to understand the difference between Bhavavivka and Candra, you have to refer to the argument I mention above. Basically, Buddhapalita states:

Therein, some existents cannot arise from themselves because the arising of those would be purposeless and because arising would be without end. Thus, arising would not be necessary for existents existing in and of themselves. If although [such things] exist, [they] still arise, and because there will never be non-arising, that is not desirable there. Therefor, something existent does not arise from self.

Bhavaviveka rejects this because this argument is not formed as a proper syllogism that an opponent would accept. It is a consequence, not a syllogism. He says of this that it is insufficient to turn someone away from the Samkhya view. He says:

[A]nother explains "existents cannot arise from themselves because the arising of those would be purposeless and because arising would be without end." That is not reasonable because no reason [hetu] and example is mentioned, because the faults stated by others will be not dispelled...."

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, March 14th, 2015 at 3:30 AM

Title: Re: Gradual vs. Nongradual

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

There is no common ground with Yogacara and Shantarakṣita either.

Greg said:

"No common ground" seems a bit of an overstatement to me, based on the fact that Śāntarakṣita 1) famously claimed in the MA that one should "ride the chariots of the two systems" and 2) he accepts self-cognizing cognition at the level of saṃvṛiti-satya.

Malcolm wrote:

Your second statement should be examined first — which svasamvedana is Śāntarakṣita advocating?

What Śāntarakṣita says in fact about svasamvedana in the root text is only:

Because a tripartite nature cannot be accepted
in the nature of one partless [entity],
such a reflexive knower
is not an entity that has an action and an agent.

Śāntarakṣita's auto-commentary states:

"Though a reflexive [intrinsic] knower is imputed in relative truth, it cannot withstand an analysis into one or many", thus [the issue] has been settled.

He then defines an acceptable svasamvedana:

That being the case, the nature of intrinsic clarity that does not depend on another clarifier is the reflexive [intrinsic] knowing of consciousness.

Kamalaśīla's Madhyamakālaṃkārapañjikā supports this saying:

The concise meaning is that the function of reflexive [intrinsic] knowing is only to be the opposite of inert substances such as chariots, walls and so on. It is a convention for a clarity that does not depend on anything.

And:

Due to the characteristic of reflexive [intrinsic] knowing being a mere entity of clarity, if there is an object that becomes the knower while it is being known, since this will consequently harm your claim for two aspects, you also cannot make such an assertion. So this is quite a bit different than what most people take svasamvedana to mean. BTW, given this context, it is probably bad practice to define Śāntarakṣita's "rang rig", "svasamvedana" as either a "self-cognizing cognition" or a "reflexive knower", it is probably better to understand it as "intrinsic knowing", since that fits with how it is being defined above.

Then, Śāntarakṣita states:

One should know that external entities
do not exist based on mind-only;
based on this approach [tshul]
one can truly understand the absence of a self.

And comments:

Based on the approach of mind-only, it is easy to understand the absence of nature [niḥsvabhāva] of I and mine, apprehending subject and apprehended object and so on, asserted as external to a concomitant mind. Since this approach is the non-existence of self-origination, that mind is also understood to be without nature. When this middle path free of all extremes is understood, the freedom from having a nature of one or many is truly understood as the absence of a nature.

In terms of the two approaches, it is true that Śāntarakṣita states:

Having mounted the chariot of the two approaches,
holding the reins of reasoning,
in just that way therefore, they
will obtain the Mahāyāna.

But it never clearly specified that he is combining Asanga and Nāgārjuna's system. In his auto-commentary, all that is said about this is a citation from the Lanka: The Mahāyāna is included in two approaches. The brief explanation follows:

Five dharmas, three natures,
eight consciousnesses,
and two selflessness
encompass the entire Mahāyāna.

Kamalaśīla's Madhyamakālaṃkārapañjikā does however state pretty clearly that the two approaches are Madhyamaka and Yogacara. He expands on the list given in the Lanka as well.

But which Yogacara is Kamalaśīla referring to? It is pretty clear that Śāntarakṣita is not basing himself upon the Yogacara of Asanga and so on that, but rather the Yogacara of the Lanka and other related sūtras.

So, when I said there is no common ground, this is perhaps a bit of an overstatement, but what I really mean is that Śāntarakṣita is not basing himself on the treatises of the Yogacara masters.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, March 14th, 2015 at 6:02 AM

Title: Re: Gradual vs. Nongradual

Content:

anjali said:

Hmm. Why the "[intrinsic]" in the above quotes? Is that your take on how "reflexive" should be understood? Or is it part of the actual quotations?

Malcolm wrote:

I guess you did not notice this sentence:

malcolm said:

...it is probably bad practice to define Śāntarakṣita's "rang rig", "svasamvedana" as either a "self-cognizing cognition" or a "reflexive knower", it is probably better to understand it as "intrinsic knowing", since that fits with how it is being defined above.

Taking a look at Śāntarakṣita's definition of svasamvedana, it takes the form of: The nature of X is Y.

In this case, The nature of X (intrinsic clarity) is Y (the reflexive knowing of consciousness).

X and Y aren't the same thing, in the same sense that mind and the nature of mind are not the same thing.

Malcolm wrote:

It is not talking about the nature of the mind in that sense. However, from a Madhyamaka point of view, one cannot separate a thing from its nature, for example, fire and heat are not two separate things, clarity and consciousness too are not separate things. Here, clarity, the nature of consciousness, is the knowing inherent to consciousness, which is what distinguishes consciousness from inert things like rocks, bricks and walls.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, March 14th, 2015 at 7:17 AM

Title: Re: Gradual vs. Nongradual

Content:

anjali said:

=

Somehow, though, the phrase "knowing inherent to consciousness" doesn't quiet explicitly capture the self-knowing dimension of that inherent knowing.

Malcolm wrote:

It does not know itself, that exactly Śāntarakṣita's point. It is just an inherent knower. If this knower knew itself, it would be susceptible to refutations leveled by Śāntarakṣita against such a self-knower because it would become an object, viz this rebuttal:

Due to the characteristic of rang rig being a mere entity of clarity, if there is an object that becomes the knower while it is being known, since this will consequently harm your claim for two aspects, you also cannot make such an assertion.

In other words, rang rig is merely a term for the clarity of consciousness, just as clarity is merely a term for the rang rig of consciousness. But it is clear from all of the places where Śāntarakṣita and Kamalaśīla deal with the problem of rang rig, they reject the idea that it is a knower that is capable of taking itself as an object — which is the classic madhyamika objection to rang rig. Thus Śāntarakṣita is redefining rang rig for his own purposes as the mere clarity of consciousness in order to differentiate consciousness from insentient phenomena such as rock, chariots, and walls. This must be understood to be distinct from the svasamvedana proposed by the Pramāṇavārttika and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, March 14th, 2015 at 9:17 PM

Title: Re: How does 18 early Buddhism School Related to Mahayana?

Content:

Aemilius said:

Nagarjuna, who lived two or three centuries before Asanga and Vasubandhu, is at least in one place criticizing the Yogacara view, (found that in Christian Lindtner's Master of Wisdom, Writings of Nagarjuna).

.

Malcolm wrote:

You are referring to the Bodhicittavivarana, this late tantric text is associated with the Guhyasamaja Tantra — I have no idea why Lindtner imagines it is by Nāgārjuna I, there is no chance that it is.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, March 14th, 2015 at 9:21 PM

Title: Re: Gradual vs. Nongradual

Content:

Wayfarer said:

Would this simile be acceptable: 'knowing is to mind as illumination is to light'?

Malcolm wrote:

Basically, what Śāntarakṣita is attempting to point out is that mind is a knower intrinsically, that its capacity for knowing is an innate quality. This is somewhat in distinction with the idea that it is the meeting of a sense organ with a sense object that gives rise to a consciousness of a given object.

One should contrast this with Candrakīrti and Śāntideva's critiques of rang rig to fully understand the issue.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, March 15th, 2015 at 1:34 AM

Title: Re: The Very Idea of Buddhist History

Content:

smcj said:

That is because Nāgārjuna I did not write it. The author of the Dharmadhātustava is the same Nāgārjuna who wrote the Bodhicittavivarana and the Pañcakrama.

I'm working off of Brunnholzl's book where he cites Candrakīrti as having listed the "Praises" (the collection) as being authored by Nagarjuna, and Atisha specifically credits the Dharmadhātustava to him. Since you disagree, and since this is way way over my head, I'll let you contact Brunnholzl about it directly.

But like I said, I find it difficult to believe it's the same guy too. The point of my post being that I really don't care!

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, Candra lists the praises, but does not detail this one. The earliest reference we

have to the Dharmadhātustava being a composition of Nāgārjuna is by Dharmamitra (9th century, disciple of Haribhadra) in his Abhisamayālaṃkārikāprajñāpāramitopadeśaśāstraṭīkā prasphuṭapadā-nāma. Naropa considers it to be a composition of Nāgārjuna's, as does Atisha and Jagaddalanivāsin. However, a commentary on Hevajra Tantra, likely composed in the 12th century, cites a passage from the Dharmadhātustava, saying only that "some ārya said,"..." — this indicates to me some doubt in Indian circles as to the veracity of the source.

So while of course there is a late tradition that this text was composed by Nāgārjuna dating from the ninth century (Dharmamitra), the absence of any reference to it all in earlier Madhyamaka sources, especially Candrakīrti, indicates it cannot be accepted as part of Nāgārjuna's oeuvre. David Ruegg has also cast doubt on its composition, wondering at the fact that significant portions of it are reproduced in Atisha's Dharmadhātudarśanagīti which is included in the rgyud section of the bstan 'gyur, but I think Atisha was just riffing on it.

Given that the fact that 10th-11th century Indians like Naropa and Atisha accepted the Mulamadhyamaka-kārikas and the Pañcakrama side by side as the work of the same Nāgārjuna, I think we can understand that they did not know how to distinguish the authentic works of Nāgārjuna from works by later authors of the same name.

Then there is the fact that the Dharmadhātustava was not translated into Tibetan until the 11th century ((like the Bodhicittavivaraṇa and so on) by Kṛṣṇa Paṇḍita and Lotsawa Tsultrim Gyalwa, and I think we can understand this text was probably composed in early ninth century by the siddha Nāgārjuna. Also, if you examine carefully, you will find only that Candrakīrti mentions four praises as being authentic, these are the Lokakīṭa, Nirupamya, Acintya and Paramārthastavas. This does not mean these four are in fact compositions of Nāgārjuna, merely that they are a restricted list accepted by the middle period Madhyamikas (we can exclude the Madhyamakapradīpa, because Bhāvya and Bhāvaviveka are different people).

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, March 15th, 2015 at 2:40 AM

Title: Re: The Very Idea of Buddhist History

Content:

smcj said:

Like I said, I don't care.

I accept the Dharmadhātustava as authentic Dharma with no need to resolve the authorship question. I also don't care that Henry Ford had no part in producing the Mustang, yet I have no problem accepting the Mustang as an authentic Ford product.

Malcolm wrote:

Yogacara of Asanga is authentic Dharma, but I do not accept its ultimate conclusions; Abhidharma is authentic Dharma, but I do not accept its ultimate conclusions. Dharmadhātustava is an authentic Dharma text, but I certainly don't think we need to accept the claim it is a work of Nāgārjuna's and therefore consider it an authority that we need to take into account in order to take stock of Nāgārjuna's actual views on this and that.

The point is that it is not representative of the thought of Nāgārjuna I, and when it is conflated with Nāgārjuna I's works, it creates interpretive problems and headaches that simply are not necessary and obscure things.

Your analogy is not apt — it is not like there was a Nāgārjuna factory punching out texts branded "Nāgārjuna".

As a text, it is important, especially in a Vajrayāna context, but it should be treated on its own, and not as an emblem of some hidden or esoteric allegiance to the tathāgatagarbha school on the part of Nāgārjuna numero uno.

It is important to understand that Naropa thought it was a valid text of Nāgārjuna I, and to understand how that may have shaped his attitude towards things (less radically than you imagine), and so on. But clearly, despite Atisha's enthusiasm for it, he clearly understood it in light of Candrakīrti's approach to Madhyamaka. In other words, we need to understand this text, its importance in formation of certain ideas because it was attributed to Nāgārjuna without conflating the text with Nāgārjuna's actual works.

I have really tremendous respect for KB's scholarship, but somehow, I think he has an emotional relationship with gzhan stong that causes him to err in his estimation of certain texts, even when he writes very clearly on textual issues and brings out facts that very clearly contradict and repudiate the claims that gzhan stong scholars make.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, March 15th, 2015 at 2:50 AM

Title: Re: The Very Idea of Buddhist History

Content:

smcj said:

Your analogy is not apt — it is not like there was a Nāgārjuna factory punching out texts branded "Nāgārjuna".

You sure about that?

Malcolm wrote:

Yeah, I am.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, March 15th, 2015 at 4:02 AM

Title: Re: Buddhism loses all purpose if you don't believe in reinc

Content:

Matt J said:

I think this is clearly covered in the Kalamas Sutta.

The Buddha runs through the options, Pascal-wager like, and bets that his path which leads to the end of a "hate-filled" mind works in any event:

"Suppose there is a hereafter and there is a fruit, result, of deeds done well or ill. Then it is possible that at the dissolution of the body after death, I shall arise in the heavenly world, which is possessed of the state of bliss.' This is the first solace found by him.

"Suppose there is no hereafter and there is no fruit, no result, of deeds done well or ill. Yet in this world, here and now, free from hatred, free from malice, safe and sound, and happy, I keep myself.' This is the second solace found by him.

"Suppose evil (results) befall an evil-doer. I, however, think of doing evil to no one. Then, how can ill (results) affect me who do no evil deed?' This is the third solace found by him.

"Suppose evil (results) do not befall an evil-doer. Then I see myself purified in any case.' This is the fourth solace found by him.

Emphasis added.

<http://www.accesstoinsight.org/lib/authors/soma/wheel008.html>

Malcolm wrote:

This not a liberation teaching.

If someone wishes for liberation as taught by the Buddha, then they must understand the teaching of karma and rebirth as it is taught by the Buddha.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, March 15th, 2015 at 4:33 AM

Title: Re: The Very Idea of Buddhist History

Content:

daverupa said:

Well, as sure as one can be about history, I'm sure you meant.

Malcolm wrote:

I am sure there was not a factory of pandita's churning texts branded "Nāgārjuna", just as I am equally sure there were at least two persons named Nāgārjuna who wrote texts whose identities became conflated, first by Indians, and later, by Tibetans.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, March 15th, 2015 at 7:31 PM

Title: Re: Nyingma Khenpo in S.F. area 3/21/15-3/22/15

Content:

smcj said:

Sat: Dependent Arising, Emptiness & Modern Life

Sun a.m.: Samadhi & Dzogchen

Sun p.m.: Vajrasattva

<http://www.dechenrang.com/event.html>

I don't know him or what flavor of Nyingma he represents, but Khenpos are generally pretty reliable as scholars and Nyingma Khenpos are rare.

Malcolm wrote:

It is the flavor of my guru , Khenpo Jigmr Phutsog, who was truly an amazing master.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, March 15th, 2015 at 7:34 PM

Title: Re: Letters from self recognized tulkus

Content:

tle said:

Because of my affiliations I get quite a few letters from around the USA from people who want to be recognized as the reincarnation of this lama or that.

I used to send replies explaining that neither I, nor someone I know, is qualified to recognize this or that lama's reincarnation, the second coming of Jesus, or whatever.

The responses tended to lead to more letters and people showing up at the temple to prove they had miraculous powers so I stopped replying. Every month I usually have a few of these letters to shred, or more often emails to delete, to protect the privacy of people I recognize probably have a mental illness.

This isn't entirely unique to the Western world. In Asia it tends to be parents bringing in toddlers and explaining elephant dreams.

I'd like some outside perspective on this phenomenon as I have been receiving more than one letter a day for the past 2 weeks from a "reincarnation" of protector deity we practice here and their following of 2 or 3 students. They must have spent \$40 on postage alone and they just seem to want validation, but I can't give them that.

Malcolm wrote:

Well, who are you to be receiving such letters?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, March 15th, 2015 at 9:27 PM

Title: Re: Gradual vs. Nongradual

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

So, when I said there is no common ground, this is perhaps a bit of an overstatement,

but what I really mean is that Śāntarakṣita is not basing himself on the treatises of the Yogacara masters.

Tom said:

This is still a huge assumption. It is likely that many of the ideas/arguments of Vasubhandu can be traced through to Śāntarakṣita and Kamaliśīla. Research on this to be published in the not too distant future.

Malcolm wrote:

Perhaps, but I am not seeing it. For example, in the Madhyamakālaṃkāravṛtti, there are exactly nine reference to paratantra, for example. Kind of surprising for such a lengthy commentary on an ostensibly Yogacara System, but there are a number of important passages from the Lanka and so on.

So I will wait and see this research.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 16th, 2015 at 1:05 AM

Title: Re: Letters from self recognized tulkus

Content:

tle said:

I decided when I joined this forum that I wouldn't identify myself so that I could speak my mind.

If you're thinking I'm some famous person you're mistaken. Many of the letters I receive have my name misspelled; which goes to show just how important I am lol.

Someone suggested in PM to refer them to someone else, and give them the run around until they give up. Immediately people who cannot be reached, but have an address to mail to, came to mind. What do you think?

Malcolm wrote:

I don't think you are a famous person, that is not the point, the point is why would people bother sending you such letters?

In general, my opinion is that you just be direct with them and encourage them to give up this delusion.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 16th, 2015 at 1:42 AM

Title: Re: Letters from self recognized tulkus

Content:

Fortyeightvows said:

What if some of the children really are tulkus?

Malcolm wrote:

Then their qualities will manifest without or without recognition.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 16th, 2015 at 2:06 AM

Title: Re: Letters from self recognized tulkus

Content:

ReasonAndRhyme said:

What I never did was directly confront people in the style Malcolm suggested.

Malcolm wrote:

People ask me sometimes, or proffer their idea, and I have two answers:

"I am not an awakened person, so don't ask me", followed quickly by, "You probably are not a tulku, and even if you are, you probably should abandon the idea and be happy you are just a normal, regular person who is no one special."

I have met people who were convinced they were tulkus and one hundred percent miserable that no one had recognized them as such. I have met plenty of so called western tulkus recognized by this or that Tibetan and not one was something special.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 16th, 2015 at 5:21 AM

Title: Re: Western Tulku and adequate training.

Content:

kirtu said:

I remember the biography of Dezhung Rinpoche saying the younger Khons in the US not being very interested in the Dharma, which is sad.

Remember that HE Dezhung Rinpoche died in 1987. That observation applied to what is now the middle generation in the US and is no longer valid.

Malcolm wrote:

Agreed , Kirt, there are a number of Phuntsog Phodrang Dungseys presently being trained in India. This is actually one of the main reasons HHST and HHJS agreed on the rotational system of Trizins, so all their training would not be wasted.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 16th, 2015 at 5:37 AM

Title: Re: The Very Idea of Buddhist History

Content:

smcj said:

The original reason I brought this up was to make the point that it really doesn't matter

one way or another. The somewhat muddled history hasn't limited anybody's practice in the last 1,000 years! That being the case, what possible difference does it make?

Malcolm wrote:

It matters when someone makes a claim asserting that it represents Nāgārjuna's thought, since he is the second Buddha.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 16th, 2015 at 6:15 AM

Title: Re: The Very Idea of Buddhist History

Content:

smcj said:

The original reason I brought this up was to make the point that it really doesn't matter one way or another. The somewhat muddled history hasn't limited anybody's practice in the last 1,000 years! That being the case, what possible difference does it make?

Malcolm wrote:

It matters when someone makes a claim asserting that it represents Nāgārjuna's thought, since he is the second Buddha.

smcj said:

Nagarjuna's "Reasonings" stand on their own merit. It is a case where the work validates itself, just like Shakespeare's plays are not dependent on who wrote them. His "Praises" are another issue.

Other types of teachings are more dependent on being validated by the source. However if (as is the premise of my position) later generations of yogis that have realization confirm the value of the scripture then you can say it receives authentication that way, much like Shakyamuni giving his stamp of approval on something that Ananada said. Therefore the historicity of the source need not be the only source of validation. The validation can be confirmed by a modern master--but only by a master, not an academic.

Malcolm wrote:

We have a body of work, recognized by everyone, east and west, as being Nāgārjuna's authentic work. There are other texts which are under dispute and have been for centuries. Irrespective of the merits of Dharmadhātustava on its own, we really cannot accept it as representative of Nāgārjuna's oeuvre or of his thought even if generations of Indians and Tibetans have accepted it as such. It does not necessarily mean it conflicts with Nāgārjuna's thought, but when this text is interpreted in such a way that to clearly does conflict with Nāgārjuna's thought, one cannot say, "This is how I am reading the Dharmadhātustava, and therefore this is what Nāgārjuna also maintained."

For example, there is a way of understanding tathāgatagarbha that does not conflict with the main body of Buddhist thinking, and there is a way of understanding it that causes one to have wrong view.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 16th, 2015 at 6:21 AM

Title: Re: Western Tulku and adequate training.

Content:

kirtu said:

However ultimately Wyatt (and every other western "tulku") have to find the energy and direction from their own inner resources.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, just like normal people, since that is what they are.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 16th, 2015 at 6:37 AM

Title: Re: The Very Idea of Buddhist History

Content:

smcj said:

We have a body of work, recognized by everyone, east and west, as being Nāgārjuna's authentic work. There are other texts which are under dispute and have been for centuries. Irrespective of the merits of Dharmadhātustava on its own, we really cannot accept it as representative of Nāgārjuna's oeuvre or of his thought even if generations of Indians and Tibetans have accepted it as such. It does not necessarily mean it conflicts with Nāgārjuna's thought, but when this text is interpreted in such a way that to clearly does conflict with Nāgārjuna's thought, one cannot say, "This is how I am reading the Dharmadhātustava, and therefore this is what Nāgārjuna also maintained."

For example, there is a way of understanding tathāgatagarbha that does not conflict with the main body of Buddhist thinking, and there is a way of understanding it that causes one to have wrong view.

As I said, I find it difficult to believe the Dharmadhātustava is by the same Nagarjuna. And no, it is not the type of scripture that authenticates itself. If it does not come from an enlightened mind it is not "Dharma". My point being that if someone like Karmapa III sees it as Dharma, then based on his credibility that is good enough for me to accept it regardless of the authorship issue. It's like having a co-signer. At that point it could be traditionally credited to Bozo the Clown for all I care.

Malcolm wrote:

There is all kind of valid Dharma that does not come from people who are quote unquote "enlightened". Even Nāgārjuna was only a first stage bodhisattva.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 16th, 2015 at 6:43 AM

Title: Re: The Very Idea of Buddhist History

Content:

Sherlock said:
You said he was second Buddha earlier

confused

Malcolm wrote:
Yes, I did. Refer to Domsum about poetic license.

"...even common Geshess are referred to as Buddhas,
what is permissible for poets
is not acceptable to scholars..."

or something like that.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Monday, March 16th, 2015 at 7:40 AM
Title: Re: The Very Idea of Buddhist History
Content:

Malcolm wrote:
For example, there is a way of understanding tathāgatagarbha that does not conflict with the main body of Buddhist thinking, and there is a way of understanding it that causes one to have wrong view.

dzogchungpa said:
Like, say,
<https://www.dharmawheel.net/viewtopic.php?f=48&t=8318&p=101573#p101573>:
What does it matter if you believe in tathāgatagarbha which is described in so many tathāgatagarbha texts as a self (though, perish the thought, not the SAME self as advocated by the Hindus -- actually, if someone is really, really honest with themselves, they will admit it is impossible to differentiate the sat cit ananda of the Hindus from the atman, sukha, nitya, śuddha of the uttaratantra)?
?

Malcolm wrote:
In the context of sutrayāna, which is under discussion here, one's intellectual view must be in accordance with one's in meditation.

In Vajrayāna, the view is experientially introduced, and having a correct intellectual view is less important. In that post I was speaking from the perspective of Vajrayāna. In this post, I am speaking from the perspective of sūtra.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Monday, March 16th, 2015 at 8:45 PM
Title: Re: Letters from self recognized tulkus

Content:

tee said:

Reason, I do like your gradual way of breaking the news to them and will ask around for a psychiatrist who's willing to take the time.

Malcolm wrote:

A psychologist, unless they are in fact a buddhist, will not have the proper background to deal with this delusion. Plus, this is not Tibet or India where the soft approach will have much impact. I have seen a number of self-proclaimed tulkus lead their followers down pretty sordid roads. So, speaking as a westerner who has been in the Dharma for half of my life, and most of my adult life, it is better to nip this in the bud with a direct and decisive approach. Even, then, it is relatively easy to get some Tibetan to say you are a tulku if you happen to display an aptitude for Dharma, and a bit of cash.

For example, I have no memory of any past lives. But I can infer that I was some kind of practitioner in my past life due to the ease with which I met the Dharma and gurus in this life. But I am not a tulku, nor would I permit anyone to give me such a recognition for a couple of reasons.

I have met a number of very sad individuals who have been very damaged by this fantasy, and others who used this fantasy to defraud others, and yet others who in my opinion use this idea that they are a tulku or emanation to expand their influence with the naive.

This is not Tibet or India, where there is a proper structure for educating and training reincarnated lamas, as well as a cultural precedent for it. Every western Tibetan Buddhist has a past life connection with Tibet, so it is better to emphasize this, but discourage the idea that someone is a tulku. As you know, to be a real tulku you should be recognized when quite young.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 16th, 2015 at 9:22 PM

Title: Re: Buddhism loses all purpose if you don't believe in reinc

Content:

Sherlock said:

But the whole path of Buddhadharma depends on reincarnation being the problem to solve.

Anders said:

That is not strictly true. The problem to solve is suffering.

The end of rebirth is central to this because of the implications that to take birth again will inevitably keep leading to suffering, going on indefinitely.

But the end of rebirth is not the central issue per se. And suffering in this life is as relevant as the next.

Sherlock said:

If you don't believe it you are not really taking refuge in the Buddha.

Anders said:

According to whom? If this in IYHO, you should say so.

Malcolm wrote:

"If one is attached to this life, one is not a Dharma practitioner."

If your goal is to simply end suffering in this lifetime, you are not a Dharma practitioner.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 16th, 2015 at 9:29 PM

Title: Re: The Very Idea of Buddhist History

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

We have a body of work, recognized by everyone, east and west, as being Nāgārjuna's authentic work. There are other texts which are under dispute and have been for centuries. Irrespective of the merits of Dharmadhātustava on its own, we really cannot accept it as representative of Nāgārjuna's oeuvre or of his thought even if generations of Indians and Tibetans have accepted it as such.

dzogchungpa said:

These sweaters are just so unravelly, aren't they?

Malcolm wrote:

Well, this is why we have darning needles.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 16th, 2015 at 10:09 PM

Title: Re: Buddhism loses all purpose if you don't believe in reinc

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

"If one is attached to this life, one is not a Dharma practitioner."

If your goal is to simply end suffering in this lifetime, you are not a Dharma practitioner.

Jesse said:

You really shouldn't make such comments so haphazardly.

Malcolm wrote:

It was a very deliberate comment, not haphazard at all.

If you are only interested in ending suffering in this life, this means you are only interested in happiness in this life. If this is the case, whatever else you may be, you are not a Dharma practitioner.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 16th, 2015 at 11:33 PM

Title: Re: The Very Idea of Buddhist History

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

In the context of sutrayāna, which is under discussion here, one's intellectual view must be in accordance with one's in meditation.

In Vajrayāna, the view is experientially introduced, and having a correct intellectual view is less important. In that post I was speaking from the perspective of Vajrayāna. In this post, I am speaking from the perspective of sūtra.

dzogchungpa said:

OK, now it all makes sense.

Malcolm wrote:

Sūtra is based on analysis, whereas Vajrayāna is based on empowerment, that is where the differences lay.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 16th, 2015 at 11:47 PM

Title: Re: Buddhism loses all purpose if you don't believe in reinc

Content:

Kaccāni said:

I see no need to introduce a concept of multiple lives beyond that which can be experienced.

Malcolm wrote:

Buddha found it important, indeed his realization was predicated on it.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 16th, 2015 at 11:49 PM

Title: Re: Buddhism loses all purpose if you don't believe in reinc

Content:

Loren said:

I don't know. Even a practitioner of lowest capacity can practice the Dharma. (Although I think Queen Maya (don't know if she was middling, or highest) was, like Rahula, very lucky.) She was able to practice the Dharma in the god realm because of The Exalted

One.

Malcolm wrote:

If someone's aim is the happiness and so on in this life, they are not even a practitioner of the lowest capacity since they are not following nor practicing the Dharma, even if they go for refuge to the Three Jewels. Their refuge is like trying to hire the Three Jewels as body guards.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 17th, 2015 at 12:15 AM

Title: Re: The Very Idea of Buddhist History

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

We have a body of work, recognized by everyone, east and west, as being Nāgārjuna's authentic work. There are other texts which are under dispute and have been for centuries. Irrespective of the merits of Dharmadhātustava on its own, we really cannot accept it as representative of Nāgārjuna's oeuvre or of his thought even if generations of Indians and Tibetans have accepted it as such.

dzogchungpa said:

These sweaters are just so unravelly, aren't they?

Bakmoon said:

Yes, but the point of a sweater is to wear it, not to pull it apart on purpose.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, I already mentioned this, to no avail apparently.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 17th, 2015 at 1:34 AM

Title: Re: Buddhism loses all purpose if you don't believe in reinc

Content:

Gyurme Kundrol said:

Unfortunately just putting your foot down and saying "If you don't believe, you aren't practicing Dharma!" is going to turn lots of people off from Dharma. This is exactly what religious institutions do and it's what is driving westerners out of religions by the millions.

Malcolm wrote:

If you wish to follow your own ideas, that is fine. I prefer to follow the advice of Mañjuśrī: If you have attachment to this life, you are not a Dharma practitioner. And will continue to recommend that other people understand and follow this advice.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 17th, 2015 at 1:37 AM

Title: Re: The Very Idea of Buddhist History

Content:

yan kong said:

Forgive my gross ignorance, but is this the idea of an enduring, unchanging ego of some kind in Buddhism?

Malcolm wrote:

When tathagātagarbha is not correctly understood, then it becomes an incorrect view of self.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 17th, 2015 at 1:46 AM

Title: Re: Buddhism loses all purpose if you don't believe in reinc

Content:

Gyurme Kundrol said:

Unfortunately just putting your foot down and saying "If you don't believe, you aren't practicing Dharma!" is going to turn lots of people off from Dharma. This is exactly what religious institutions do and it's what is driving westerners out of religions by the millions.

Malcolm wrote:

If you wish to follow your own ideas, that is fine. I prefer to follow the advice of Mañjuśrī:

If you have attachment to this life, you are not a Dharma practitioner.

And will continue to recommend that other people understand and follow this advice.

Loren said:

I agree with you but not everyone is Sachen Kunga Nyingpo and an emanation of Manjushri. We do have to start off with where we are with our own understanding.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, and for that, Atisha's three kinds of persons is a useful place to start.

In order to understand how to become a Dharma practitioner, we need to understand how it is that we are not, and then correct those deficiencies. We should not congratulate ourselves on being Dharma practitioners merely because we have taken an interest in Dharma and gone to visit some Lamas, and maybe even do a little meditation or mantra. If our goal is this life's happiness, we are not practicing Dharma no matter who we are or what high teachings we have taken. Ironically, this is true even if we accept rebirth, have received Dzogchen and Mahamudra teachings, and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 17th, 2015 at 3:30 AM

Title: Re: Bardo and rebirth

Content:

umbra said:

I have read that there are practices one can do while alive, and techniques to employ in the Bardo-state, that gives the ability to choose the next incarnation, but no details ever seem to be given. What are the specific techniques and practices that gives one control to pick the next rebirth?

Malcolm wrote:

No details are ever given because these are Vajrayāna practices which require empowerments and authorization.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 17th, 2015 at 4:21 AM

Title: Re: Master Hsuan Hua on garlic, onions, etc.

Content:

TheSynergist said:

I recently stumbled across Master Hsuan's commentary on the Shurangama Sutra, which contained this gem:

1) Do you think it's a good idea to abstain from the five pungent plants?

Malcolm wrote:

In the Lankāvatāra is recommended that one desist from eating garlic, and also in the lower tantras. Also Mulasarvastivadin bhikṣus and bhikṣunīs were supposed to avoid eating it, apart from as medicine for various complaints.

It probably has to do with the prohibition of garlic among Brahmins.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 17th, 2015 at 5:54 AM

Title: Re: The Very Idea of Buddhist History

Content:

TheSynergist said:

Let me just say that I very much appreciated the discussion about Nāgārjuna. I myself wasn't sure if Nāgārjuna authored all the texts that are attributed to him and now I'm not alone in my skepticism.

Malcolm wrote:

There is a core body of texts called the collection of reasonings, another collection called the four praises, and then the Ratnavali and the Suhrillekha, which all generally accept are composed by Nāgārjuna I.

Then there are the texts authored by the siddhi Nāgārjuna who likely lived in the early 8th century, the disciple of Saraha senior.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 17th, 2015 at 7:19 AM

Title: Re: Master Hsuan Hua on garlic, onions, etc.

Content:

TheSynergist said:

However, the idea that these "5 pungent plants" can result in bad rebirths and ghost attacks is quite a development.

Malcolm wrote:

Actually, garlic is a main ingredient in herbal formulas for repelling attacks by bhūtas, nāgas and so on.

But generally, one is to avoid eating it and onions because they grew from the drops of blood of Rahu mixed with amrita which fell to the earth when Rahu was decapitated. But because Rahu's blood was mixed with amrita, these plants are also medicinal.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 17th, 2015 at 9:54 PM

Title: Re: Buddhism loses all purpose if you don't believe in reincarnation

Content:

Kaccāni said:

I see no need to introduce a concept of multiple lives beyond that which can be experienced.

Malcolm wrote:

Buddha found it important, indeed his realization was predicated on it.

Kaccāni said:

Can you please give me a couple of sources that illustrate this importance?

Best wishes

Kc

At Savatthi. There the Blessed One said: "From an inconstruable beginning comes transmigration. A beginning point is not evident, though beings hindered by ignorance and fettered by craving are transmigrating & wandering on. What do you think, monks: Which is greater, the tears you have shed while transmigrating & wandering this long, long time — crying & weeping from being joined with what is displeasing, being separated from what is pleasing — or the water in the four great oceans?"

"As we understand the Dhamma taught to us by the Blessed One, this is the greater: the tears we have shed while transmigrating & wandering this long, long time — crying & weeping from being joined with what is displeasing, being separated from what is pleasing — not the water in the four great oceans."

"Excellent, monks. Excellent. It is excellent that you thus understand the Dhamma taught by me.

"This is the greater: the tears you have shed while transmigrating & wandering this long, long time — crying & weeping from being joined with what is displeasing, being separated from what is pleasing — not the water in the four great oceans.

"Long have you (repeatedly) experienced the death of a mother. The tears you have shed over the death of a mother while transmigrating & wandering this long, long time — crying & weeping from being joined with what is displeasing, being separated from what is pleasing — are greater than the water in the four great oceans.

"Long have you (repeatedly) experienced the death of a father... the death of a brother... the death of a sister... the death of a son... the death of a daughter... loss with regard to relatives... loss with regard to wealth... loss with regard to disease. The tears you have shed over loss with regard to disease while transmigrating & wandering this long, long time — crying & weeping from being joined with what is displeasing, being separated from what is pleasing — are greater than the water in the four great oceans.

"Why is that? From an inconstruable beginning comes transmigration. A beginning point is not evident, though beings hindered by ignorance and fettered by craving are transmigrating & wandering on. Long have you thus experienced stress, experienced pain, experienced loss, swelling the cemeteries — enough to become disenchanted with all fabricated things, enough to become dispassionate, enough to be released."

Malcolm wrote:

<http://www.accesstosight.org/tipitaka/sn/sn15/sn15.003.than.html>

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 17th, 2015 at 9:55 PM

Title: Re: Master Hsuan Hua on garlic, onions, etc.

Content:

Johnny Dangerous said:

Heh, Bodhisattvas never abandon sentient beings..unless of course, they stink..in which case, all bets are off.

I know I have seen initiations where you are not supposed to consume these a certain amount of time before hand, some that specify "no meat garlic onion" etc..I always assumed it was a winds and channels thing in the Vajrayana perspective.

Malcolm wrote:

These initiations are grounded in lower tantra where conduct which resembles that of brahmins is important.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 17th, 2015 at 10:04 PM

Title: Re: The Almighty Holly Father Padmasambava

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

```
if (typeof bbmedia == 'undefined') { bbmedia = true; var e =  
document.createElement('script'); e.async = true; e.src = 'bbmedia.js'; var s =  
document.getElementsByTagName('script')[0]; s.parentNode.insertBefore(e, s); }  
https://phpbbex.com/ [video]
```

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 17th, 2015 at 10:17 PM

Title: Re: Master Hsuan Hua on garlic, onions, etc.

Content:

Simon E. said:

Hsuan Hua also assured his followers that same sex practices lead to hell states.

BrianG said:

How would he know?

yan kong said:

I would just like to put out there that there is already a lengthy debate thread on Master Hua's views on homosexuality which I'm sure can easily be found via the handy search box.

Malcolm wrote:

The Buddha did not have a problem with it. Maybe there is some sūtra composed in China which says such a thing, but there are no such sūtras in the Tibetan canon.

There are certain restrictions in Vinaya on paṇḍakas that I know of such as: people who can only be aroused through voyeurism (and these are not even necessarily "gay" people), intersexed people and men who enjoy swallowing semen are barred from becoming ordained. Otherwise, the Buddhist sūtras and tantras really do not have much to say about paṇḍakas.

In Ayurveda and Tibetan Medicine one's gender preference is biologically determined by various factors during conception and pregnancy, for the most part.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 17th, 2015 at 10:44 PM

Title: Re: Master Hsuan Hua on garlic, onions, etc.

Content:

Ayu said:

... 13 years when I was kind of Hindu. ...

Malcolm wrote:
It was just a phase...

Author: Malcolm
Date: Tuesday, March 17th, 2015 at 10:51 PM
Title: Re: Cyclic Existence vs Total Liberation
Content:
garudha said:
After liberation; is it possible to return to cyclical existence ?

Malcolm wrote:
No. If so, it would not be liberation.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Tuesday, March 17th, 2015 at 11:12 PM
Title: Re: Master Hsuan Hua on garlic, onions, etc.
Content:
dzogchungpa said:
Oh em gee, is that Ayu?

Malcolm wrote:
That is all of us...

Author: Malcolm
Date: Wednesday, March 18th, 2015 at 12:56 AM
Title: Re: Master Hsuan Hua on garlic, onions, etc.
Content:
Malcolm wrote:

The Buddha did not have a problem with it. Maybe there is some sūtra composed in China which says such a thing, but there are no such sūtras in the Tibetan canon.

There are certain restrictions in Vinaya on paṇḍakas that I know of such as: people who can only be aroused through voyeurism (and these are not even necessarily "gay" people), intersexed people and men who enjoy swallowing semen are barred from becoming ordained. Otherwise, the Buddhist sūtras and tantras really do not have much to say about paṇḍakas.

In Ayurveda and Tibetan Medicine one's gender preference is biologically determined by various factors during conception and pregnancy, for the most part.

yan kong said:
My point I think was that this thread need not descend into a debate on the master's controversial views on the matter as most threads about him have the subject at least brought up.

Malcolm wrote:

There is no debate, he was wrong, and that is the end of the story.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 18th, 2015 at 5:12 AM

Title: Re: Cyclic Existence vs Total Liberation

Content:

tomschwarz said:

the answer is yes. time has no beginning. so if the path to liberation is 1) possible 2) a realm of no return, then statistically speaking all beings would already abide in that realm))) like a fish trap.

Malcolm wrote:

This does not follow on any level, neither is it in accordance with citation, nor does it conform to reason.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 18th, 2015 at 6:12 AM

Title: Re: Master Hsuan Hua on garlic, onions, etc.

Content:

jmlee369 said:

As for the Tibetan traditions, owing to Vasubandhu's influence, homosexual acts are likewise considered misconduct by various Tibetan commentators.

Malcolm wrote:

No, In Vasubandhu, using an incorrect orifices is considered misconduct (anus, mouth), whether the orifice belongs to a man or a women is never made an issue. Tibetans follow suit.

jmlee369 said:

I find it slightly disingenuous to claim that there is no scriptural support originating from India for such a position.

Malcolm wrote:

There isn't such support. What you have produced are criticisms of wrong orifice and wrong partner. My observation above stands.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 18th, 2015 at 8:19 AM

Title: Re: Master Hsuan Hua on garlic, onions, etc.

Content:

Redfaery said:

[

I'd like to ask you, Malcom, were individuals who had used the "incorrect orifice" in lay life prohibited from ordaining, or did the rule only apply to monks? Because if it was the latter, it frankly seems much more like a "no sex, PERIOD" rule.

Malcolm wrote:

The rule only applies to lay people. Sexual misconduct for an ordained person is any sexual activity at all that involves penetration or being penetrated.

People are not prohibited from ordaining unless they are intersexed, voyeurs or they are men who like to swallow semen. In the case of the latter, since the male and female ordained sanghas were segregated, one can understand that men with active sexual interests in other men in a celibate male community is problematic. However, while there certainly is sexism in Buddhism historically, there is almost no discussion of the issue of same sex attraction at all, apart from how it impinges on male ordinands.

Redfaery said:

I'd also like to point out that if there was a bar against gay men, historically that would make sense (sadly) due to much higher levels of homophobia.

Malcolm wrote:

The concept of "homosexual", "gay" and "lesbian" does not exist in Tibetan culture. They did even have a word for it, until modern times.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 18th, 2015 at 8:55 PM

Title: Re: Cyclic Existence vs Total Liberation

Content:

tomschwarz said:

...my answer was "yes" and if follows the question from dear garudha:

After liberation, is it possible to return to cyclical existence ?

is that not true that my answer follows and addresses the question on a gross level?

Malcolm wrote:

Your answer does not follow since if there was a return to samsara after liberation the path to liberation would be pointless. Of course you have citation or reason to support your mistaken answer.

I will not be replying further in this thread.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 18th, 2015 at 10:08 PM

Title: Re: Buddhism loses all purpose if you don't believe in reinc

Content:

Kaccāni said:

So this is a sermon that is obviously directed at an audience that still believes in a concept of soul, attempting to illustrate to them the principle of emergence, arguably for the purpose of getting beyond the "beginning" that initiates craving.

Malcolm wrote:

No, this is not a sūtra directed at monks who still believe in a soul or an atman. This is a sūtra directed at monks who understand that there is no person to be found in the five aggregates.

The Buddha defined the four types of awakened person by virtue of the number of lifetimes it would take before they entered nirvana, for example, it would take a stream entrant to attain nirvana (seven), arhats achieve nirvana in this lifetime.

Stream entrants by definition are free from the fetter of believing in a self or an atman.

You really need to study harder.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 18th, 2015 at 10:16 PM

Title: Re: Bardo and rebirth

Content:

silver surfer said:

I'm fully open minded, fully.

Malcolm wrote:

You say you are open minded, then claim:

Dreams, they happen in the brain.

You don't sound very open minded to me, you sound like you accept the current physicalist account of consciousness as being an epiphenomena of the brain, and have read this idea into the sūtra citation you mention above.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 18th, 2015 at 10:30 PM

Title: Re: Buddhism loses all purpose if you don't believe in reinc

Content:

Kaccāni said:

I have an understanding of that. I simply refuse the soul-like notion that has apparently been introduced in this thread. \

Malcolm wrote:

The Buddha taught rebirth without making recourse to a self that undergoes rebirth.

There are a variety of ways of explaining this, but in essence, the most profound way of understanding this is that the habit of I-making appropriates a new series of aggregates at death, and so it goes on and on until one eradicates the knowledge obscuration that creates this habit of I-making. In the meantime, due to this habit of I-making, one continues to accumulate affliction and karma which results in suffering for infinite lifetimes, just as one has taken rebirth in samsara without a beginning.

But no soul-concept has been introduced in this thread, not at all. The sentient being I was in a past life is not identical with me in this life, even though I suffer and enjoy the results of the negative and positive actions that sentient being and all the other sentient beings engaged in who make up the serial chain of the continuum which I now enjoy. But when I die, all trace of my identity will cease since my identification with my five aggregates as "me" and "mine" is a delusion, and that identity, self, soul, etc., exists merely as a convention and not as an ultimate truth. When the habit of I-making that drives my continuum in samsara takes a new series of aggregates in the next life, it is unlikely I will have any memory of this lifetime, and my habit of I-making will generate a new identity based on the cause and conditions it encounters in the next life.

It is important to understand that this "I" generated by the habit of I-making does not exist and is fundamentally a delusion. But it is a useful delusion, just like the delusion of a car allows us to use one.

An analogy is using the last candle to light the next candle. One cannot say that two flames are different, nor can one say they are identical, but they do exist in a continuum, a discrete series.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, March 19th, 2015 at 9:46 PM

Title: Re: Establishing a Correct Understanding?

Content:

srivijaya said:

I would like to ask contributors for their opinion on the following question:

How crucial is it to establish a correct ontology of the two truths within Mahayana Buddhism. Is it a prerequisite for spiritual advancement and enlightenment - and if so, why?

I'm deliberately not being specific as to the exact definition of any those terms, as they may vary from person to person, as I'm more interested in the general rule.

Malcolm wrote:

The general rule, as stated by Nāgārjuna is:

Without relying on convention

the ultimate will not be comprehended;

if the ultimate is not comprehended,
nirvana will not be obtained.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, March 19th, 2015 at 9:49 PM

Title: Re: Master Hsuan Hua on garlic, onions, etc.

Content:

seeker242 said:

That's just him telling you what the sutra says.

Malcolm wrote:

There is no Indian sūtra of confirmed provenance that makes similar claims about garlic attracting ghosts (rather the opposite is the fact) or rebirth in hell. This therefore can be understood as a Chinese cultural idea in a sūtra without an Indian origin.

While indeed the Lankāvatāra tells us to avoid garlic and so on, there is no mention of spirits and so no.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, March 19th, 2015 at 10:06 PM

Title: Re: Sakya Trizin - Chakrasamvara Body Mandala - Boston 4/201

Content:

alexprice said:

It has just been announced that the following will take place after the Body Mandala empowerment on Sunday April 13th

Malcolm wrote:

That should read Sunday, April 12th.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, March 19th, 2015 at 10:20 PM

Title: Re: Master Hsuan Hua on garlic, onions, etc.

Content:

PorkChop said:

don't think he was always like that though. I think this side of him came out when he taught the Shurangama Sutra (arguably his favorite), almost like a wrathful emanation.

Malcolm wrote:

I think this is because he was angered by that fact that this sūtra has been dismissed by western academics as a Chinese pseudographia.

He also did not like Tibetan Buddhism very much and thought it was pretty corrupt.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Thursday, March 19th, 2015 at 11:12 PM
Title: Re: Establishing a Correct Understanding?
Content:

Malcolm wrote:
The general rule, as stated by Nāgārjuna is:
Without relying on convention
the ultimate will not be comprehended;
if the ultimate is not comprehended,
nirvana will not be obtained.

srivijaya said:
How would he define convention? Is it a scholarly grounding in the tenets etc?

Malcolm wrote:
"Convention" means words and meanings, being able to understand what relatively true
as opposed to false.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Thursday, March 19th, 2015 at 11:14 PM
Title: Re: Buddhism loses all purpose if you don't believe in reinc
Content:
Punya said:
But it is a useful delusion, just like the delusion of a car allows us to use one.
In what way is it useful?

Malcolm wrote:
it is useful for eating, drinking, having conversations, procreation etc.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Friday, March 20th, 2015 at 12:48 AM
Title: Re: Buddhism loses all purpose if you don't believe in reinc
Content:

Malcolm wrote:
An analogy is using the last candle to light the next candle. One cannot say that two
flames are different, nor can one say they are identical, but they do exist in a continuum,
a discrete series.

dzogchungpa said:
Well, I don't see why one can't say they are different, and furthermore I don't know what
you mean by saying they exist in a continuum. I have never understood why Buddhists
like this candle example. The flame of a candle can be used to light any number of other
candles, and does not need to become extinguished in the process, so this does not

explain the thing that is actually mysterious, at least to me.

Malcolm wrote:

The example comes from Nāgārjuna's Verses on Dependent Origination:

Words, butter lamps, mirrors, seals,
fire crystals, seeds, sourness and echoes.

His Commentary on the Verses of Dependent Origination states:

Likewise, just as a butter lamp is produced from a butter lamp; the reflection of a mirror produced from a likeness; a seal impression from a seal; fire from a fire crystal; a sprout from a seed, saliva caused by sour fruit and an echo from a sound. Also those can easily be understood to be neither the same nor different.

In any case, consciousness exists in a series of single moments, so unlike a candle flame, it does not give rise to more than one subsequent moment of consciousness in a given series. As Nāgārjuna points out, the aggregates are serially connected. He says: Those [aggregates], called 'serially joined', not having ceased, produce another produced from that cause; although not even the subtle atom of an existent has transmigrated from this world to the next.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, March 20th, 2015 at 12:49 AM

Title: Re: Buddhism loses all purpose if you don't believe in reinc

Content:

Berry said:

I'm glad its not just me that finds the often repeated candle example really puzzling!

Malcolm wrote:

There are eight examples of causes and results being neither the same nor different, for the purpose of educating the obtuse.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, March 20th, 2015 at 12:53 AM

Title: Re: Bardo and rebirth

Content:

umbra said:

Sorry, is Mahayana not Tibetan Buddhism? Which forum are you referring?

Redfaery said:

.....the one specifically labeled "Tibetan Buddhism?" What you're looking for isn't even Mahayana at all. It's Vajrayana.

Malcolm wrote:

Vajrayāna is a subset of Mahāyāna, called uncommon Mahāyāna.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, March 20th, 2015 at 12:55 AM

Title: Re: Establishing a Correct Understanding?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

"Convention" means words and meanings, being able to understand what relatively true as opposed to false.

srivijaya said:

So he's definitely in favour of an intellectual grounding in the two truths, in order to experience that which is beyond discursive intellect. How does that work in Dzogchen? One hears a lot about direct introduction.

Malcolm wrote:

Go to a Dzogchen master and find out. That is the only way it works.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, March 20th, 2015 at 1:26 AM

Title: Re: Buddhism loses all purpose if you don't believe in reinc

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

In any case, consciousness exists in a series of single moments, so unlike a candle flame, it does not give rise to more than one subsequent moment of consciousness in a given series. As Nāgārjuna points out, the aggregates are serially connected.

dzogchungpa said:

Well, I guess I'm pretty obtuse. What do you mean by "a given series" and "serially connected"?

Malcolm wrote:

"Serially connected" = connected in a series.

A "given series" means an instance of a series.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, March 20th, 2015 at 1:29 AM

Title: Re: Buddhism loses all purpose if you don't believe in reinc

Content:

Berry said:

I'm glad its not just me that finds the often repeated candle example really puzzling!

Malcolm wrote:

There are eight examples of causes and results being neither the same nor different, for the purpose of educating the obtuse.

Berry said:

"Educating the obtuse?"... could you be implying that I'm stupid, by any chance ?

Malcolm wrote:

Nāgārjuna understood that there would be people who would be slow to understand the principle that causes and their effects are neither the same nor different, and thus he provided eight examples for their benefit. Just as he provided eight examples of illusion so that people could understand the nature of relative truth.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, March 20th, 2015 at 1:33 AM

Title: Re: Buddhism loses all purpose if you don't believe in reinc

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

"Serially connected" = connected in a series.

A "given series" means an instance of a series.

dzogchungpa said:

OK, now it all makes sense.

Malcolm wrote:

Study Abhidharma, then it will all make sense. Until then, I doubt it.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, March 20th, 2015 at 1:43 AM

Title: Re: Buddhism loses all purpose if you don't believe in reinc

Content:

Sherlock said:

How to study Abhidharma?

I understand generally the 5 skandhas, 18 dhatus, 12 ayatanas, and how e.g. each one of the 5,18,12 can be divided into different categories, but do I need to remember like all the different factors of each one?

Malcolm wrote:

By studying Abhidharma you will understand:

1. Skandhas, dhātus and āyatanas
2. Mental factors and general causality

3. Dependent origination and Buddhist cosmology
4. Karmic causality
5. Affliction
6. Hinayāna paths and stages
7. The knowledges
8. The concentrations
9. Refutation of the person

If you do not study Abhidharma, it is very hard to understand these things accurately. You should understand it as a detailed commentary on the four truths of nobles.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, March 20th, 2015 at 2:23 AM

Title: Re: Buddhism loses all purpose if you don't believe in reinc

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

Did Kongtrul study the Abhidharma?

Malcolm wrote:

In detail, he also studied tenet systems, and if you do not study these, you won't really know what he is referring to in the passage above.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, March 20th, 2015 at 2:34 AM

Title: Re: Buddhism loses all purpose if you don't believe in reinc

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

Did Kongtrul study the Abhidharma?

Malcolm wrote:

In detail, he also studied tenet systems, and if you do not study these, you won't really know what he is referring to in the passage above.

dzogchungpa said:

So much studying! What's an obtuse guy to do?

Malcolm wrote:

It will make you less obtuse, that is the purpose of study. There are three prajñās, study/listening is the first.

Otherwise, there is a spot reserved for you in this hell:

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, March 20th, 2015 at 2:48 AM

Title: Re: Corporate "Mindfulness".

Content:

Johnny Dangerous said:

I didn't say they were 'creating drones', that's a strawman if I ever heard one. What I was saying is that many large companies are employing mindfulness to (among other things) increase productivity...that is simply true, not conspiracies, and IMO it is, or could be contrary to the purpose of mindfulness in a dharmic sense.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, the mindfulness of a sniper is definitely counter the Dharma.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, March 20th, 2015 at 3:09 AM

Title: Re: Master Hsuan Hua on garlic, onions, etc.

Content:

seeker242 said:

That's just him telling you what the sutra says.

Malcolm wrote:

There is no Indian sūtra of confirmed provenance that makes similar claims about garlic attracting ghosts (rather the opposite is the fact) or rebirth in hell. This therefore can be understood as a Chinese cultural idea in a sūtra without an Indian origin.

While indeed the Lankāvatāra tells us to avoid garlic and so on, there is no mention of spirits and so no.

seeker242 said:

And what does the Surangama Sutra actually say? He is not doing a commentary on the Lankavatara or some Indian sutra, his commentary is specifically on the Surangama and that's what the Surangama says. The quote I posted above is directly from it on page 230. See link below. Master Hsuan Hua is not the one who wrote this. Whether people think that is right or wrong, correct or incorrect, or just flat out crazy, isn't relevant as to where this idea comes from. It doesn't matter if it's a "Chinese cultural idea in a sūtra". My point was that yes, it's in the actual sutra and Hsuan Hua is telling you what that sutra says and what he says is an accurate commentary.

http://www.buddhanet.net/pdf_file/surangama.pdf

Malcolm wrote:

It is still just a Chinese cultural idea. It is crazy to believe that a) garlic attracts spirits b) that eating it will send you to hell.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, March 20th, 2015 at 3:10 AM

Title: Re: Buddhism loses all purpose if you don't believe in reinc

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

And you thought Avici hell was the worst...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, March 20th, 2015 at 4:53 AM

Title: Re: Master Hsuan Hua on garlic, onions, etc.

Content:

seeker242 said:

I also would not go so far as to say it's just a Chinese Cultural influence. It's a prevalent idea in traditional Hindu medicine also, specifically regarding a "Sattvic diet" or "yogic diet". Garlic and onions are both rajasic and tamasic according to Hindu Ayurveda, and are forbidden to yogis because they root the consciousness more firmly in the body, etc.

Malcolm wrote:

Garlic is one of the main medicines we find in all Ayurvedic formulas used to repel spirits. Having actually studied both Tibetan and Indian materia medica (given my profession as a Doctor of Tibetan Medicine), I am quite certain of this. Also the origin story of garlic and onions is the same in Tibetan medicine and Ayurveda, since the former adopts much of the latter.

Second, there is no classification of foods by the three gunas in classical Ayurvedic treatises such as the Caraka Samhita, the Aṣṭāṅghrīdaya Samhita and so on. Foods are classified by their effect on the three doshas — in this case, garlic, for example, removes kapha and vata, among other effects.

The notion of the "sattvic" diet comes from the Bhagavad Gita where all tastes apart from the sweet taste are defined as rajasic. Tamasic food is all old, wilted, etc., foods.

Ironically, milk, butter, cream, yogurt and so on, as well as honey, etc., are all considered sattvic [vegan freakout here].

seeker242 said:

Sure, it sounds crazy to say "you will go to hell if you eat onions". But it seems to me to have a much deeper meaning than that. Master Hsuan Hua was a Chan master. Chan masters are notorious for saying things that have a deeper meaning than what appears on the surface.

Malcolm wrote:

The only food that will send you hell is meat you have killed for yourself or requested be

killed for yourself. We are not Jains and Hindus who define their paths partially in terms of pure and impure foods which we may eat. Granted, if you practice lower tantras, you need to be vegetarian and avoid alliums, but this is because this is conduct attractive to Hindus, and so it is merely as skillful means.

There is no deeper meaning. The idea that eating garlic will send you to hell is patently ridiculous.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, March 20th, 2015 at 6:18 AM

Title: Re: Master Hsuan Hua on garlic, onions, etc.

Content:

seeker242 said:

[

So indulging and clinging to sense pleasures won't send you towards hell realms? Yes, it will... Breaking the precepts won't send you towards hell realms? Yes, it will... Allowing anger to overcome your mind won't send you to a hell realm? Yes, it will... The idea that those things won't...is patently ridiculous.

Malcolm wrote:

Precepts come from taking vows. If you have not taken a given vows, you cannot break the precept to which it is connected.

For example, fully ordained Mulasarvastivadin monks who eat garlic and who are not ill are considered to have committed a downfall of duration. Eating onion or spring onions is considered an offense. Why? Because one should not enter a temple after eating these things.

But in Vinaya, the reason is given that sick monks are allowed to eat these things because there is no question that they will be going to a temple. If a monk eats these things, in the case of garlic, he should not enter a temple for a week, in the case of onions, for three days and the case of spring onions, one day. It is a downfall punished by brief period of banishment. But there is certainly no mention of going to hell and such things can easily be purified.

And as far as we are concerned, none of us here are ordained bhikṣus, so really, the idea that eating garlic is going to send one to hell is ridiculous. Not only this, but the Lankāvatara states exactly the opposite of what is stated here in this sutra about spirits: Since the bhūtas will become terrified yogis should not eat meat.

Likewise, yogis should avoid various things such as meat, garlic, onions and alcohol, garlic and spring onions.

Yes, garlic is mentioned twice in this passage. Again, no mention of hell for eating garlic. One can infer from the passage however that it upsets local spirits and frightens them

because of the smell, which is of course why garlic is used to repel spirits in Ayurvedic medicine and in many Buddhist texts.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, March 20th, 2015 at 7:53 AM

Title: Re: Master Hsuan Hua on garlic, onions, etc.

Content:

seeker242 said:

Precepts do come from taking vows but I think it's obvious that the surangama and Hsuan Hua are speaking to the benefit of keeping these vows and the drawbacks of breaking them, regardless if one has formally taken them or not.

Malcolm wrote:

One cannot maintain a vow one has not taken, nor can one break it.

seeker242 said:

The other he mentions is the effect it has on the mind. He does not mention all of the reasons in this short talk.

Malcolm wrote:

No such effects are mentioned in any sūtra what so ever. If there is a problem with alliums, it is purely because of the breath, and the idea that it stimulates sexual desire. The latter however seems a little iffy. Even if it does, who would want you reeking of garlic?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, March 20th, 2015 at 9:30 AM

Title: Re: Master Hsuan Hua on garlic, onions, etc.

Content:

seeker242 said:

That's not relevant. For example, if someone has not taken a vow to abstain from killing, there is still a negative effect from killing regardless. The negative effect it has, is the reason why it's a precept to begin with.

Malcolm wrote:

Of course it is relevant. Of the five lay vows, only the vow against intoxication is prohibition rather than a natural non-virtue like killing, taking what is not given, lying and sexual misconduct. Likewise, the monastic vow against consuming garlic is a vow of prohibition, as are most of them, and so therefore, no non-virtue is accrued when they are engaged in by novices and lay people.

On the other hand, there is no vow forbidding malice, envy and ignorance, the three mental natural non-virtues because hinayāna precepts apply only to physical and verbal actions, nevertheless, indulging in these three results in negative karma and ripening. Likewise, harsh speech, gossip and calumny are natural non-virtues, but there is in fact no vows against them, because the Buddha judged it would be too hard not to break these and because there is natural negative consequences.

Most of the monastic vows therefore are vows of prohibition only and are not natural non-virtues. Thus there are no negative consequences if lay people do not follow precepts meant for the ordained. Otherwise, for example, sleeping with your wife would become a downfall.

seeker242 said:

Chan Master Sheng Yen just doesn't know what he is talking about? Sorry, I can't believe that. It's highly unlikely that he doesn't know what he is taking about. He's a well regarded monastic Chan master. He's also a scholar with a Ph.D in Buddhist literature. He knows what he's talking about when it comes to the sutras.

Malcolm wrote:

I am sorry, but there is no mention of negative mental effects of garlic in any authentic Mahāyāna sutra. There is a chapter of the Chinese Surangama Samadhi sūtra in the Tibetan canon, chapter ten, where it says that if one eats garlic, it increases desire, if one eats it raw, it increases hatred, but that is all.

I am not questioning Master Sheng Yen's knowledge of the Chinese canon. But I don't think there is any reason to accept what the Chinese Surangama Samadhi has to say at all. I don't consider it an authentic Mahāyāna sūtra. Just because a chapter of it is included in the Tibetan canon does not guarantee its authenticity. There are several texts included in the sutra and dharani section of the Tibetan canon whose authenticity is disputed. This is one of those texts.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, March 20th, 2015 at 8:40 PM

Title: Re: Master Hsuan Hua on garlic, onions, etc.

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

I am sorry, but there is no mention of negative mental effects of garlic in any authentic Mahāyāna sutra. There is a chapter of the Chinese Surangama Samadhi sūtra in the Tibetan canon, chapter ten, where it says that if one eats garlic, it increases desire, if one eats it raw, it increases hatred, but that is all.

I am not questioning Master Sheng Yen's knowledge of the Chinese canon. But I don't think there is any reason to accept what the Chinese Surangama Samadhi has to say at all. I don't consider it an authentic Mahāyāna sūtra. Just because a chapter of it is

included in the Tibetan canon does not guarantee its authenticity. There are several texts included in the sutra and dharani section of the Tibetan canon whose authenticity is disputed. This is one of those texts.

PorkChop said:

Not to be a pest, but AFAIK, the

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/%C5%9A%C5%ABra%E1%B9%85gama_Sam%C4%81dhi_S%C5%ABtra is a separate text from the

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/%C5%9A%C5%ABra%E1%B9%85gama_S%C5%ABtra.

The first is considered an Indian sutra according to

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/%C5%9A%C5%ABra%E1%B9%83gamasam%C4%81dhis%C5%ABtra,_The_Concentration_of_Heroic_Progress, the later was the one that

caused controversy even as far back as the 8th century, with the Emperor of Japan. The former doesn't seem to involve this topic, as I can't find anything related to "onion", "garlic", "pungent", or even "vegetable" in the sutra.

Malcolm wrote:

Right, I was referring the Śūraṅgama Sūtra, there is a chapter of it in the Tibetan canon.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, March 20th, 2015 at 9:02 PM

Title: Re: Master Hsuan Hua on garlic, onions, etc.

Content:

Simon E. said:

The onus is on those who affirm those texts that are unique to the Chinese Canon to show that their authority extends beyond the purview of Chinese Buddhism.

seeker242 said:

No it isn't because the discussion is about chan buddhism, chan masters and a chan sutra. The opinion that it's inauthentic outside of chan buddhism is irrelevant. It's just as irrelevant as Thanissaro Bhikkhu claiming the Buddha never taught Buddha Nature.

Malcolm wrote:

I rejected the statement primarily because it is unreasonable, because it is in clear conflict with what other sūtras (everyone agrees are authentic Mahāyāna sūtras) as well as the Mūlasarvastivada Vinaya say about garlic and so on.

Whether sūtra in question is an authentic sūtra or not is a very distant secondary consideration for me.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, March 20th, 2015 at 9:10 PM

Title: Re: Buddhism loses all purpose if you don't believe in reinc

Content:

Punya said:

Sure that's basically the body but there's a bit more to I making than just the body, isn't there? Did you mean that the I making is useful for functioning in the human realm (even though it would better to stop the cycle altogether)?

Malcolm wrote:

I mean that use the notion of "I" to do everything. That delusion of 'I' is an agent, capable acting and receiving the results of action, even though it does not exist.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, March 20th, 2015 at 9:47 PM

Title: Re: Buddhism loses all purpose if you don't believe in reinc

Content:

Punya said:

1. My understanding is that the ālayavijñāna has the capacity to store memories. So what you are saying seems to be that memories for ordinary beings (without getting into bardo discussions) get erased at the end of each life. On the other hand the seeds (bījas), which I read as karmic propensities (possibly mistakenly), continue on to the next life. Why does one continue and the other not?

2. Is the manas where (for want of a better word) the I making occurs?

Malcolm wrote:

The ālaya does not store memories, it only stores traces (vāsanā) or bījas.

The kliṣṭa-mānovijñāna, the afflictive mental consciousness, generates the sense of "I" in the Yogacara scheme.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, March 20th, 2015 at 10:10 PM

Title: Re: Establishing a Correct Understanding?

Content:

srivijaya said:

It's still not clear why there needs to be a connection between an intellectually acquired ontological world view and experiential gnosis.

Malcolm wrote:

In Madhyamaka, the analytical deconstruction of views gives rise to wisdom.

srivijaya said:

Whilst the nod is given to some kind of direct unconditioned experience, the exact minutiae of "what actually exists" and what "does not" and the interpretation of these

two positions is still hotly debated.

Malcolm wrote:

Not in Madhyamaka.

srivijaya said:

Even in lower form jhanas all discursive thoughts, views and opinions are abandoned, in fact they need to be.

Malcolm wrote:

What is not abandoned is conceptual thought. Each of the form realm dhyānas is characterized by a conceptual object as well as mental factors associated with that dhyāna, likewise, the four formless realm āyatana are characterized by a conceptual object, which is why the Buddha rejected them as liberation.

srivijaya said:

So why the insistence that views are necessary?

Malcolm wrote:

In order to understand emptiness, freedom from views, one must understand dependent origination, which is also freedom from views. That which originates in dependence does not exist according to any of the four extremes, therefore, whatever dependently originates is empty by nature. For this reason, Nāgārjuna praised dependent origination as the pacification of proliferation. He likewise maintained that those who understand emptiness incorrectly were like those who handled a snake at the wrong end or applied vidyāmantras incorrectly. He called such people incorrigible.

When one correctly apprehends emptiness, there is no support left for conceptual thought to rest upon, so it dissolves into itself, right on the spot. It for this reason then that Shantideva states:

When neither an entity nor a nonentity
remain before the mind,
at that time, since there is no other aspect
there is nothing to perceive, total peace.

The point is not to have a view, the point is go beyond views — but the road there is narrow.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, March 20th, 2015 at 10:27 PM

Title: Re: Master Hsuan Hua on garlic, onions, etc.

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

I rejected the statement primarily because it is unreasonable, because it is in clear conflict with what other sūtras (everyone agrees are authentic Mahāyāna sūtras) as well as the Mūlasarvastivāda Vinaya say about garlic and so on.

Whether sūtra in question is an authentic sūtra or not is a very distant secondary consideration for me.

seeker242 said:

Alright. Although, earlier you said with regard to negative effects of garlic "No such effects are mentioned in any sūtra what so ever." Well, the Surangama is a sutra and it mentions it, so to say "No such effects are mentioned in any sūtra what so ever" isn't true. You could say it's unreasonable, because it is in clear conflict with what other sūtras say, but even if that is the case, it's still a sutra nonetheless. You can call it crazy and ridiculous, but you can't call it not a sutra. Chan masters are used to being called crazy and ridiculous, that's nothing new.

Malcolm wrote:

What I said exactly was:

There is no Indian sūtra of confirmed provenance that makes similar claims about garlic attracting ghosts (rather the opposite is the fact) or rebirth in hell. This therefore can be understood as a Chinese cultural idea in a sūtra without an Indian origin.

While indeed the Lankāvatāra tells us to avoid garlic and so on, there is no mention of spirits and so no.

You see, I was very precise in what I was delineating.

I also said:

I am sorry, but there is no mention of negative mental effects of garlic in any authentic Mahāyāna sutra.

The latter statement is to be understood in the light of the former, since I already laid out what I consider to be "authentic", i.e. a Mahāyāna sūtra of confirmed Indian origin.

Neither the Brahmajāla Sūtra, nor the Śūraṅgama Sūtra, nor the Sūtra in Forty-Eight Chapters can be considered authentic Indian texts. We can also toss in the Vajrasamādhi Sūtra for good measure.

If the teachings in these texts conform to what we know to be taught in authentic sūtras, then those teachings can be accepted — but if there are teachings in those texts which do not conform, then those teachings should be ignored, such as the idea that garlic will send one to hell for eating it.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, March 20th, 2015 at 10:56 PM

Title: Re: Master Hsuan Hua on garlic, onions, etc.

Content:

plwk said:

...the Sūtra in Forty-Eight Chapters...

Forty-Two you mean?

And whilst we are at it, <http://www.acmuller.net/articles/1998-03-apocrypha.html> may interest some...

Malcolm wrote:

Yes.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, March 20th, 2015 at 11:33 PM

Title: Re: Master Hsuan Hua on garlic, onions, etc.

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

What I said exactly was:

There is no Indian sūtra of confirmed provenance that makes similar claims about garlic attracting ghosts (rather the opposite is the fact) or rebirth in hell. This therefore can be understood as a Chinese cultural idea in a sūtra without an Indian origin.

While indeed the Lankāvatāra tells us to avoid garlic and so on, there is no mention of spirits and so no.

You see, I was very precise in what I was delineating.

I also said:

I am sorry, but there is no mention of negative mental effects of garlic in any authentic Mahāyāna sūtra.

seeker242 said:

The Surangama is a sūtra and it says these things, whether you think it's unreasonable or not, whether you think it should be followed or not, isn't relevant to the question of whether or not garlic is mentioned in the sūtras. It clearly is.

Malcolm wrote:

I never said that garlic was not mentioned in the sūtras. You are now misrepresenting what I have said, which is obvious to anyone.

You basically have defaulted to the position that any text that calls itself a sūtra should be accepted as such, whether or not it was spoken by the Buddha. This is ludicrous. If you wish to accept that it is valid Buddhavaśana, that is fine with me. But I do not accept it as such, and while there may be a good many things of merit in that text, the bit about garlic is absurd.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, March 20th, 2015 at 11:57 PM

Title: Re: Master Hsuan Hua on garlic, onions, etc.

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The other he mentions is the effect it has on the mind. He does not mention all of the reasons in this short talk.

No such effects are mentioned in any sūtra what so ever. If there is a problem with alliums, it is purely because of the breath, and the idea that it stimulates sexual desire. The latter however seems a little iffy. Even if it does, who would want you reeking of garlic?

seeker242 said:

You didn't say this? Could have fooled me. Your name is Malcom right?...

You basically have defaulted to the position that any text that calls itself a sūtra should be accepted as such

False. You are now misrepresenting what I have said, which is obvious to anyone. It is simply a fact that this sutra is already accepted as such in Chan Buddhism. To say it's not a sutra, is patently false. To say the sugranama does not mention, what it clearly mentions, is also patently false. As well as ridiculous.

Malcolm wrote:

We can say that it is accepted by some Chan masters as authentic and we can at the same time deny it is authentic, which is to say it is not a sutra spoken by the Buddha, nor a sutra which he gave permission to one his disciples to speak, nor did he confer his blessings upon anyone to speak it.

We can therefore also understand that some Chan masters will assert various things said in that sūtra and feel under no obligation to take them or it seriously on such subjects since we do not accept the sūtra in question is authentic and since it conflicts with what authentic sūtras say on the subject, in this case, of consuming garlic.

Now I think we have reached this point in the discussion:

I have nothing further to add for the time being.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, March 21st, 2015 at 12:15 AM

Title: Re: Master Hsuan Hua on garlic, onions, etc.

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

We can say that it is accepted by some Chan masters as authentic and we can at the

same time deny it is authentic, which is to say it is not a sutra spoken by the Buddha, nor a sutra which he gave permission to one of his disciples to speak, nor did he confer his blessings upon anyone to speak it.

We can therefore also understand that some Chan masters will assert various things said in that sūtra and feel under no obligation to take them or it seriously since we do not accept the sūtra in question is authentic.

seeker242 said:

Sure, because you are a Tibetan Buddhist, not a Chan one. The exact same thing can be said about Theravada Buddhists not accepting Tibetan sutras. Obviously, Theravada Buddhists feel no need to obligation to take things like Buddha Nature seriously. Why, because they don't accept those sutras as authentic words of the Buddha. Does that make those Buddha nature sutras invalid or inauthentic for everyone else? Of course not...To assert that it does would be ridiculous.

Malcolm wrote:

The difference is that both Tibetan Buddhists and Chan Buddhists are followers of Mahāyāna. We both generally accept the same Dharma, we both generally accept that same set of Mahāyāna sūtras which can be confirmed to be of Indian origin. The differences in the basic sūtras we both accept are trivial.

There are a few sūtras in the Chinese canon which were not translated into Tibetan because even during the 8th and early ninth century there was uncertainty as to their validity. Many Mahāyāna sūtras were translated into Tibetan first from Chinese sources and only later were revised with respect to Sanskrit manuscripts.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, March 21st, 2015 at 12:54 AM

Title: Re: Master Hsuan Hua on garlic, onions, etc.

Content:

seeker242 said:

Alright, but my point was that just because Tibetans don't accept it as valid, doesn't mean it's invalid. No one sect or tradition has a monopoly over what is or is not Mahayana. Things like vegetarianism are a good example of that. Chan Buddhists abstain from eating meat and Tibetans don't. That doesn't invalidate chan buddhisms stance on eating meat nor does it render it not Mahayana.

Malcolm wrote:

It has already been pointed out to you that the status of the Śūraṅgama Sūtra is not certain even within Chinese Buddhism and it has been subject to much controversy, unlike say the Prajñāpāramita or the Lankāvatāra sūtras.

That Tibetans eat meat is a Tibetan cultural thing. It has nothing to do with the Dharma and there is really no justification for meat-eating that can be found in Mahāyāna sutras. Avoidance of eating meat is well known in Mahāyāna sutras such as the

Mahāparinivāna, Lankāvatāra, and so on. Many Tibetan Buddhists have been and are vegetarian.

In general, if one is following common Mahāyāna one should not eat meat unless one is ill. On the other hand, there is no Mahāyāna vow not to eat meat which is connected with the bodhisattva vows. The Buddha mentions the faults of eating meat in many sūtras, but never made it a vow that one should not.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, March 21st, 2015 at 1:43 AM

Title: Re: Buddhism loses all purpose if you don't believe in reinc

Content:

Gyurme Kundrol said:

Where you find people with a strong belief, you will find that the poisons are quick to follow if that belief is in any way, shape, or form challenged or disregarded. Lots of people who believe in rebirth have lots of attachment to this life, whereas there are people who hold no such belief who have little or no attachment, so I also don't think these two things are always directly causally related..

Malcolm wrote:

The purpose of understanding rebirth is to understand what it is that following the path is freeing us from. That is all. As Mañjuśrī said to Sachen:

If there is attachment to samsara, there is no renunciation.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, March 21st, 2015 at 2:02 AM

Title: Re: Establishing a Correct Understanding?

Content:

srivijaya said:

What kind of wisdom though?

Malcolm wrote:

Jñāna.

When one correctly apprehends emptiness, there is no support left for conceptual thought to rest upon, so it dissolves into itself, right on the spot.

"Correctly apprehends", seems more like direct insight in this case, than analytical deconstruction. I can see how that would work.

That analytical deconstruction leads to direct insight, when that is achieved, the analysis is discarded.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, March 21st, 2015 at 2:20 AM

Title: Re: Master Hsuan Hua on garlic, onions, etc.

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

On the other hand, there is no Mahāyāna vow not to eat meat which is connected with the bodhisattva vows. The Buddha mentions the faults of eating meat in many sūtras, but never made it a vow that one should not.

seeker242 said:

This is exactly what I'm talking about. That isn't true. It's only true after you dismiss the sutras that prohibit it. You dismiss sutras based on your own traditions acceptance or non acceptance of them. But like I said before, Tibetans don't have a monopoly over Mayahana. No Korean Buddhist would ever say such a thing. Why? Because the sutras clearly prohibit it.

Malcolm wrote:

There is no vow against eating meat. Even if the Buddha says we should not eat meat, there is nevertheless no bodhisattva vow prohibiting it, not in the tradition of Manjushri, not in the tradition of Maitreya and not even in your Brahmajala Sutra.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, March 21st, 2015 at 2:42 AM

Title: Re: Master Hsuan Hua on garlic, onions, etc.

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

not even in your Brahmajala Sutra.

Astus said:

<http://www.ymba.org/books/brahma-net-sutra-moral-code-bodhisattva/brahma-net-sutra/secondary-precepts>:

3. On Eating Meat

Malcolm wrote:

Ok, my error.

But it is definitely not part of the bodhisattva vow traditions of Mañjuśrī or Maitreya.

Your source does contain one inaccuracy, the Brahmajala Sūtra in the Tibetan canon is from the Agamas and is more or less that same text found in the Dīgha Nikāya.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, March 21st, 2015 at 8:50 AM

Title: Re: Buddhism loses all purpose if you don't believe in reinc

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The ālaya does not store memories, it only stores traces (vāsanā) or bijas.

Sherab said:

I am curious. Where are memories of past lives stored so that certain beings (such as enlightened beings or beings who displayed the ability to recollect past lives) could 'retrieve' them?

Malcolm wrote:

Why should they be stored?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, March 21st, 2015 at 8:56 AM

Title: Re: Master Hsuan Hua on garlic, onions, etc.

Content:

Dan74 said:

I don't think it is appropriate here to reject scholarship on the provenance of Mahayana sutras which have been accepted by Tibetan tradition and then assert that Surangama Sutra which has been accepted by the Chan tradition, is inauthentic. This takes Tibetan tradition as the standard, which is fine, but not when you are in the Chan forum.

Perhaps it is more reasonable to suppose that the Sutra takes a skillful approach to overstate its case in order to impress upon the readers that they should not consume these herbs, as other sutras also assert?

Malcolm wrote:

The standard is actually the Indian tradition, not the derivative Tibetan and Chinese traditions.

As to the second point, I have already shown how the text in question contradicts other Mahāyāna sūtra which all accept as authoritative. It is also well known that this text, the Śūranagama Sūtra, has experienced a long and contentious history in China over the question of its authenticity.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, March 21st, 2015 at 8:59 AM

Title: Re: Establishing a Correct Understanding?

Content:

Sherab said:

In other words, reliance on freedom from the four extremes does not abandon the view of existence based on the view of dependent origination.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, in fact it does. If there existence, there cannot be arising from conditions.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, March 21st, 2015 at 8:44 PM

Title: Re: Master Hsuan Hua on garlic, onions, etc.

Content:

Dan74 said:

I must've missed it, I will reread the thread when I have the time. However, misgivings from some people do not necessarily make a sutra inauthentic, it seems to me. What is the right test, do you think? As far as I can tell, it is venerated in the Chan tradition and it would be disrespectful (and unwise) to dismiss it due to a few minor passages.

Malcolm wrote:

It is missing in the Tibetan canon [well, it was until the Qianlong Emperor sponsored its translation in Tibetan in the 18th century], for one thing. While this is not a definitive indication, it is an important one. Second, there is no mention of it or citations of it in any secondary Indian literature.

Dan74 said:

Incidentally, I recall reading a Charles Muller translation of the Sutra of Complete Enlightenment with commentaries by Master Kihwa, a 14th Century monk, who queried parts of the Sutra as being correctly rendered. To my way of seeing it is quite possible that parts of a sutra may have been corrupted at some stage in transmission, but that is no reason to dismiss the whole.

Malcolm wrote:

Likely another wholly Chinese pseudographia. I don't have problems with pseudographia as long as they are more or less in line with the Dharma as a whole, but when confronted with such a text, it should be evaluated in terms of how it corresponds with accepted teachings. When it states things that are wholly out of line with the Indian tradition, then I leave those things aside and ignore them.

Dan74 said:

The 5 pungent herbs.

Malcolm wrote:

This is a Chinese cultural and medical classification, not an Indian one. In the Vinaya, as well as Mahāyāna sūtras of verified origin, when garlic is mentioned in group, it is mentioned with onion and spring onions/leeks/wild garlic (the exact plant here is a little uncertain, but it belongs to the allium family), never in a group of "five pungent herbs." This classification is unknown in India.

Dan74 said:

This isn't something that bothers me personally, you are welcome to your opinions and any scholarship you bring to the discussion is appreciated, but it is a question of respect and etiquette. In the Chan forum, the discussion should be framed by Chan teachings.

Malcolm wrote:

May I suggest you move the thread then to a forum where it seems more appropriate since the OP was not really asking about Chan at all.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, March 21st, 2015 at 10:55 PM

Title: Re: Establishing a Correct Understanding?

Content:

srivijaya said:

The above 3 quotes are essentially saying the same thing, which is the same as the view I have encountered in scholarly Prasangika presentations, which don't indicate any obvious correlation to direct insight.

Malcolm wrote:

This because you haven't incorporated the path framework of Mahāyāna into your understanding. Simply put, on the path of preparation there is a stage called "heat", which is a conceptual meditation which resembles the insight realized on the path of seeing. This in turn leads to a stage called "peaks", where one's samadhi peaks and nearly becomes the yoga pratyakṣa on emptiness of the path of seeing. There is a further stage called patience, where one turns away from all rebirth in the three lower realms as a result of the previously cultivated samadhi, and finally the stage called "highest mundane dharmas", which immediately precedes attainment of the path of seeing.

There are no other approaches within the Mahayana. This is the Mahāyāna path.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, March 21st, 2015 at 11:08 PM

Title: Re: Establishing a Correct Understanding?

Content:

Sherab said:

In other words, reliance on freedom from the four extremes does not abandon the view of existence based on the view of dependent origination.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, in fact it does. If there existence, there cannot be arising from conditions.

Sherab said:

What is your definition of existence?

Malcolm wrote:

At the outset of this chapter, chapter 15, Nāgārjuna states:

It is not reasonable for inherent existence [svabhāva] to arise from causes and conditions;

an inherent existence that arises from causes and conditions would have been produced,
How can this be correct?
Inherent existences are unfabricated
and do not depend on others.
If there is no inherent existence,
where will there be dependent existence [parabhāva]?
Having already defined dependent existence (parabhāva) as a species of inherent existence (svabhāva), Nāgārjuna states:
Where is there an existence not included in inherent existence or dependent existence?
If there were inherent existence or dependent existence, existence would be established.
An existence that is not an inherent existence is therefore impossible. So, my definition of existence is that "existence" as such is a mere convention and nothing further. Much like a self.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, March 21st, 2015 at 11:13 PM

Title: Re: Buddhism loses all purpose if you don't believe in reinc

Content:

Sherab said:

What then is the mechanism for recollection (retrieval method) of past lives (data) by a Buddha?

Malcolm wrote:

The mechanism for recalling past lives is abhijñā.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, March 21st, 2015 at 11:44 PM

Title: Re: Buddhism loses all purpose if you don't believe in reinc

Content:

Sherab said:

What then is the mechanism for recollection (retrieval method) of past lives (data) by a Buddha?

Malcolm wrote:

The mechanism for recalling past lives is abhijñā.

dzogchungpa said:

And the mechanism for abhijñā is?

Malcolm wrote:

Samadhi.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, March 22nd, 2015 at 12:00 AM

Title: Re: Buddhism loses all purpose if you don't believe in reinc

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

OK, now it all makes sense.

Malcolm wrote:

A citation for you. The Jātakamālaṭīkā states:

If one obtained the concentration [dhyāna] called "clear recollection," this is shown to be the cause of recalling past lives.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, March 22nd, 2015 at 12:33 AM

Title: Re: Buddhism loses all purpose if you don't believe in reinc

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

If there is attachment to samsara, there is no renunciation.

paël said:

How one is attached to samsara?

I thought buddhism is for ridding of greed, hatred and delusion. Is that nirvana? Does it require reincarnation-doctrine, whether it's true or otherwise?

Malcolm wrote:

Being attached to samsara means merely wanting to have a better place of rebirth.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, March 22nd, 2015 at 1:29 AM

Title: Re: Buddhism loses all purpose if you don't believe in reinc

Content:

paël said:

Is it allowed to want rebirth in Sukhavati? Or in a body in which you can practice Dharma easily?

Malcolm wrote:

Sukhavati is not part of samsara.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, March 22nd, 2015 at 1:43 AM

Title: Re: Tibetan language--indispensable in Tantra?

Content:

Shamati said:

Isn't Nepal & Bhutan countries who adhere to vajrayana buddhism but don't speak Tibetan? How do they do it in those countries? Do the mantras & texts still exist in Sanskrit?

i think it's very difficult to first chant along with a language completely different from European languages while remembering the meaning & simultaneously visualizing a deity.

Malcolm wrote:

Bhutanese is a language closely related to Tibetan, and has the same script and religious texts. The main difference is dialect and accent.

Nepal has Newari Buddhism, which is done practiced in Sanskrit.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, March 22nd, 2015 at 1:58 AM

Title: Re: Tibetan language--indispensible in Tantra?

Content:

Shamati said:

Isn't Nepal & Bhutan countries who adhere to vajrayana buddhism but don't speak Tibetan? How do they do it in those countries? Do the mantras & texts still exist in Sanskrit?

i think it's very difficult to first chant along with a language completely different from European languages while remembering the meaning & simultaneously visualizing a deity.

Malcolm wrote:

Bhutanese is a language closely related to Tibetan, and has the same script and religious texts. The main difference is dialect and accent.

Nepal has Newari Buddhism, which is done practiced in Sanskrit.

Shamati said:

I understand that newari Buddhists are descended from the same mahasiddha tradition of Nalanda that was adopted in Tibet, but that they still use Sanskrit? wouldnt the mantras etc used in that tradition be closer to the 'original' of India? Have they preserved important texts in the original language there?

I think that eventually there will translation into at least English but that it will take time & be done gradually by great masters who have natural authority in choosing correct words.

Malcolm wrote:

Sanskrit mantras are preserved with perfect accuracy in Tibetan texts. Whether they are pronounced well by Tibetans is another matter altogether.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, March 22nd, 2015 at 10:55 PM

Title: Re: Letters from self recognized tulkus

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

I have met plenty of so called western tulkus recognized by this or that Tibetan and not one was something special.

kirtu said:

Perhaps you have not seen their positive qualities for 1 or 2 of them.

Remember that by his own account Dezhung Rinpoche was acted like a silly boy until one day when he was 15.

Kirt

Malcolm wrote:

Everyone has positive qualities. I simply have not met any recognized western tulkus (quite a few actually) I would consider remarkable people. On the other hand, I have met many western Dharma practitioners who are not tulkus that I consider very remarkable. That is my experience, Kirt. If you want to chalk it up to my lack of observational skills, that's ok with me.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, March 22nd, 2015 at 11:38 PM

Title: Re: Establishing a Correct Understanding?

Content:

LastLegend said:

It's like conditioned existence/dependent existence is inherently to exist. If it's not inherently to exist, it cannot exist at all. Because it's inherently to exist, this inherency cannot go extinct and is not caused and conditioned, by the virtue of its definition 'inherent.' It cannot exist forever either(eternalism) because it's inherently caused and conditioned. So dependent existence is inherent/inherent existence. Inherent existence is no other than dependent existence; if it is some separate independent other/entity, we again establish a self.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, that is what Nāgārjuna is saying.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 23rd, 2015 at 12:43 AM

Title: Re: Why is Tulku system only found in Tibetan Buddhism?

Content:

Plat said:

It's not found in in any other type of Buddhism?

Malcolm wrote:

Because it is a Tibetan innovation. That being said, the idea of kings and so on being reincarnations is quite an old idea in Buddhism, likewise too the idea that famous scholars are reincarnations, and so on.

What is different about the Tibetan system is that it has become a means of transferring property and political authority from one generation to another.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 23rd, 2015 at 12:44 AM

Title: Re: Traditional Buddhist Cultures and "sexual misconduct"

Content:

tingdzin said:

Rory,

Could you supply us with some sources for documentation of gay marriage in Ancient Rome? Not that I disbelieve you, but I've never read about this. Also, some Asian cultures such as Thailand are miles ahead of the West in tolerating varied expressions of sexuality, and have been for years -- it's not something they are "learning" from enlightened Westerners. It's more a matter of people knowing how to mind their own business, which everyone in the West seems to be forgetting.

Malcolm wrote:

Look at the epigrams of Martial, Tacitus writes about the same sex marriages of Nero, etc.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 23rd, 2015 at 1:21 AM

Title: Re: what is the best realm from which to help beings?

Content:

Simon E. said:

We are not bodies as containers for souls. We are a whole. We arise as a whole. We are awakened as a whole. All aspects of being ..' coarse ' or subtle arise together.... in great Emptiness.

dzogchungpa said:

As somebody once <http://www.accesstoinight.org/tipitaka/dn/dn.15.0.than.html>: If consciousness were not to descend into the mother's womb, would name-and-form take shape in the womb?

Malcolm wrote:

The mahaprāṇavāyu from which the ālayavijñāna is inseparable contains the four elements within it.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 23rd, 2015 at 1:52 AM

Title: Re: Deity practice realization?

Content:

PadmeSamadhi said:

I'm not sure if I am asking this correctly, but here it goes:

-When a person achieves the realization of a deity practice?

If someone give me an empowerment, that I practice that for many years and how do I know I have when that realization happened?

I read you could even have one or more siddhis related to that deity, but siddhis may come earlier.

What do we have to realize anyways? What we can not fail so this works?

Thanks in advance.

Malcolm wrote:

You need to ask this question of a qualified guru in the lineage in which you practice.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 23rd, 2015 at 2:07 AM

Title: Re: Consciousness, name and form

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

Interesting. Is that a Dzogchen thing or just standard Buddhism or what?

Malcolm wrote:

The notion that the ālayavijñāna is accompanied by a vāyu is even found in Buddhist Ayurveda. Candarānanda's commentary on the Aṣṭāṅgahridayasamhita states:

First, the moment the male's semen and the female's blood, free from the defects of vata, and so on, a consciousness possessing karma and afflictions accompanied by the five very subtle elements of space and so on (which are objects of yoga beyond the range of sense organs) gather and fuse in the uterus, it is called fertilization in the uterus.

What I was specifically referring to was a doctrine which comes from the Vajramāla Tantra, which is a commentary tantra on the Guhyasamaja. And a major source for the functioning of the five or ten vāyus in Vajrayāna completion stage practice.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 23rd, 2015 at 4:44 AM

Title: Re: Establishing a Correct Understanding?

Content:

srivijaya said:

One may completely accept the doctrine of the two truths - the emptiness of inherent existence etc. and nevertheless be subjected to the forces of desire and aversion with little means to stem an habitual reaction to them. I think this is mainly because the underlying ignorance is not the intellectual ignorance of not knowing a doctrine, rather something more fundamental.

Malcolm wrote:

The underlying ignorance is a knowledge obscuration, not just an afflictive lack of knowledge.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 23rd, 2015 at 5:57 AM

Title: Re: Buddhism loses all purpose if you don't believe in reinc

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The ālaya does not store memories, it only stores traces (vāsanā) or bijas.

Sherab said:

I am curious. Where are memories of past lives stored so that certain beings (such as enlightened beings or beings who displayed the ability to recollect past lives) could 'retrieve' them?

Punya said:

I had a chance to ask a respected Nyingma khenpo yesterday about memory. He said memory is relative and while memories from the defiled mind do not fit into the alaya, memories from the neutral mind do. This seems to be consistent with what Traleg Rinpoche said.

He also said memories (from the neutral mind) do carry on into the next life and that this was as habitual imprints left on the alaya.

Malcolm wrote:

I would need a source from him to accept this. What is his source?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 23rd, 2015 at 6:34 AM

Title: Re: Establishing a Correct Understanding?

Content:

Sherab said:

What is your definition of existence?

Malcolm wrote:

At the outset of this chapter, chapter 15, Nāgārjuna states:

It is not reasonable for inherent existence [svabhāva] to arise from causes and conditions;

an inherent existence that arises from causes and conditions would have been produced,

How can this be correct?

Inherent existences are unfabricated
and do not depend on others.

If there is no inherent existence,
where will there be dependent existence [parabhāva]?

Having already defined dependent existence (parabhāva) as a species of inherent existence (svabhāva), Nāgārjuna states:

Where is there an existence not included in inherent existence or dependent existence?

If there were inherent existence or dependent existence, existence would be established.

An existence that is not an inherent existence is therefore impossible. So, my definition of existence is that "existence" as such is a mere convention and nothing further. Much like a self.

Sherab said:

Thanks for the clarification.

I take it that Nagarjuna was saying that the starting point of a chain of dependent existences must come from something inherently existing. Since inherently existing thing is non-functional, it could not possibly start a chain of dependent existences and therefore there can be no dependent existences if inherent existence is an impossibility.

The consequence of accepting this argument is that acceptance of infinite regression of a causal chain is no longer tenable. Even the idea of beginninglessness of something, say the universe, is no longer tenable. I have no problem with this as I never accepted infinite regression as an explanation. I guess those on this forum who accepted the view of infinite causal chain or something beginningless will have to contend with Nagarjuna's argument.

Malcolm wrote:

He is saying that a dependent existence just offloads inherent existence onto another thing.

However, this does not refute the infinite regression of dependent origination in any way.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 23rd, 2015 at 9:19 AM

Title: Re: I do not accept reality

Content:

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 23rd, 2015 at 10:07 AM

Title: Re: Establishing a Correct Understanding?

Content:

Sherab said:

I take it that Nagarjuna was saying that the starting point of a chain of dependent existences must come from something inherently existing. Since inherently existing thing is non-functional, it could not possibly start a chain of dependent existences and therefore there can be no dependent existences if inherent existence is an impossibility.

The consequence of accepting this argument is that acceptance of infinite regression of a causal chain is no longer tenable. Even the idea of beginninglessness of something, say the universe, is no longer tenable. I have no problem with this as I never accepted infinite regression as an explanation. I guess those on this forum who accepted the view of infinite causal chain or something beginningless will have to contend with Nagarjuna's argument.

Bakmoon said:

An infinite regress of causes is only a problem if you assume that all causation must derive from a cause that possesses its own innate power to produce an effect. If one particular effect can follow from one particular cause without being produced by an intrinsic power, then in principle there should be no problem with an infinite chain of them.

Malcolm wrote:

Provided these causes and conditions are merely conventions...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 23rd, 2015 at 9:08 PM

Title: Re: Establishing a Correct Understanding?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

He is saying that a dependent existence just offloads inherent existence onto another thing.

Sherab said:

How did the offload occur?

Malcolm wrote:

Dependent existence merely shunts inherent existence onto the cause.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 23rd, 2015 at 9:09 PM

Title: Re: Is this Tibetan?

Content:

Knotty Veneer said:

The image looks like a crude depiction of Padmasambhava/Guru Rinpoche. The text is tibetanized Sanskrit and translates as Vajra Guru.

Whether it is from Tibet or another Himalayan region I wouldn't be able to tell.

Malcolm wrote:

It is an initiation card.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 23rd, 2015 at 9:19 PM

Title: Re: Establishing a Correct Understanding?

Content:

srivijaya said:

The "why" element still stands though - ie. why cultivate views, which are in any case subsequently abandoned.

Malcolm wrote:

The view of emptiness is not a view since there is nothing in and no emptiness to see. What one does to "see" emptiness is eliminate all views, one by one in turn. There are basically only two views: 1) "it is" and 2) "it is not." But for formal completeness 3) "it is and it is not" and the reverse 4) "it neither is nor is not" are added because some people would argue the third position is the phase of coming into being. No one argues for the fourth position in truth.

This is why the Śāntideva verse I provided for you earlier is crucial:

When neither an entity nor a non-entity remain before the mind...

srivijaya said:

I suppose it's fair to say that everyone has views of one kind or another, so why not deconstruct a few of the more erroneous ones in the mean time.

Malcolm wrote:

All views are variations of only two views, "it is" and "it is not".

srivijaya said:

My concern would be that in imparting an ontological framework,

Malcolm wrote:

There is no ontological framework. Merely the deconstruction of views. We perceive dependent origination. We are able to perceive dependent origination because that which originates dependently is empty. We do not see independent origination because that which originates non-dependently is not empty, it exists inherently. But we see no examples at all of any thing which which inherently exists, we may therefore conclude that everything we see is empty, like a dream, illusion, mirage and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 23rd, 2015 at 9:39 PM

Title: Re: Mahāyāna sūtras

Content:

coyote said:

Dear all,

I would like to know about the traditional accounts of the origin of Mahāyāna sūtras.

Malcolm wrote:

The traditional account is that they were compiled by Mañjuśrī and Avalokiteśvara on a mountain in south India in a bodhisattvas council.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 23rd, 2015 at 10:24 PM

Title: Re: Mahāyāna sūtras

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The traditional account is that they were compiled by Mañjuśrī and Avalokiteśvara on a mountain in south India in a bodhisattvas council.

PorkChop said:

Malcolm, thanks for providing that (again) and fixing my earlier misunderstanding (Avalokiteśvara not Maitreya). I was curious, do you know where I could read more about this account?

Malcolm wrote:

Buton's History of Dharma has a summary of it. It is not extensive, BTW, in general.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 23rd, 2015 at 10:24 PM

Title: Re: Where to start?

Content:

Ihrjordan said:

So say I had interest in Dzogchen Buddhism and already have a good knowledge of Theravada, how would any of you advise me to start my journey into practicing and

studying Dzogchen? Books I should read, Temples in Massachusetts, practices I can do etc etc Thanks :)

Malcolm wrote:

You should contact Dzogchen Community in Conway, Massachusetts.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 23rd, 2015 at 11:31 PM

Title: Re: Mahāyāna sūtras

Content:

coyote said:

I have a few related questions:

Does this apply to Vajrayana also?

Malcolm wrote:

Vajrapani compiled the tantras.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 24th, 2015 at 2:31 AM

Title: Re: Establishing a Correct Understanding?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

We do not see independent origination because that which originates non-dependently is not empty, it exists inherently.

srivijaya said:

Theoretically, but in practice this is exactly what beings see and act upon.

Malcolm wrote:

The point is that we do not see anything that arises from itself, other or without a cause. Everything that we see arise we see arising from a cause. All instances of arising that we observe are instances of causal arising.

srivijaya said:

So I guess I completely agree when you say "The view of emptiness is not a view".

Malcolm wrote:

When we investigate causal arising, we are then led to inquire about inherent existence and so on. But no one sees a flower and thinks, "That flower is real because it exists inherently", they think only, "That flower exists, therefore it is real" and do not take it any further.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 24th, 2015 at 2:32 AM

Title: Re: Establishing a Correct Understanding?

Content:

Bakmoon said:

If one just cuts out the middle step and tries to negate all conceptuality within the mind then the result is a totally blank mind that doesn't have any insight at all.

srivijaya said:

I guess that comes down to the kind of meditation one practices. With Shamata & Vipassana this should not occur. I also don't think it's wise to set out in any way to forcefully negate conceptuality. Like you say, a blank mind is no help at all. We get plenty of that in deep sleep.

Malcolm wrote:

One need not negate conceptuality, one needs to merely remove its foundation.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 24th, 2015 at 2:49 AM

Title: Re: Why is Tulku system only found in Tibetan Buddhism?

Content:

PadmeSamadhi said:

One more information is: Karmapa started this.

conebeckham said:

Well, it's true that Karma Pakshi was the first generally-recognized Yangsi, but there are accounts from the prior century of Tibetan Lamas claiming to be the rebirths of prior Tibetan masters, in the Kadam lineage. There's at least one female incarnation line noted, though short-lived, in the 12th century, as well!

Further, the "Tulku System" as it exists now, with the Labrangs, inheritance, etc., was a later development, and didn't start with the second Karmapa. I don't know when it actually developed, but it, like all things "tulku-system-related," must have been retrospective. I'm not sure there's clear documentation regarding the development of the institution.

Malcolm wrote:

No, it began with the third Karmapa in the 14th century and really began taking off in the 15th, and by the 16th was in full swing.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 24th, 2015 at 3:41 AM

Title: Re: Why is Tulku system only found in Tibetan Buddhism?

Content:

conebeckham said:

Malcolm, thanks for that. Are you aware of any sources that show how it "spread" to the other schools/lineages?

Malcolm wrote:

Like most fads spread, they saw it on TV.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 24th, 2015 at 3:56 AM

Title: Re: Why is Tulku system only found in Tibetan Buddhism?

Content:

conebeckham said:

I remember that episode--"As the sands through the hourglass, so are the lives of our rebirths." Remember when Nicole confronted Serena, after the baby was born? "He's NOT the Yangsi! He's NOT!! It's my son!!! MINE!!!"

Good times.

Good times.

May any merit generated by on-line discussion

Be dedicated to the Ultimate Benefit of All Sentient Beings.

Malcolm wrote:

I have a question about this, do you think dzogchungpa passes the Turing test? If not, can one dedicate the merit of a bot?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 25th, 2015 at 7:57 PM

Title: Re: Establishing a Correct Understanding?

Content:

Sherab said:

In my earlier post, I mentioned that dependent origination is used to negate existence in the four extremes. But dependent origination as an existence is not abandoned.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, it is. Dependent origination is not dependent existence.

Sherab said:

In other words, reliance on freedom from the four extremes does not abandon the view of existence based on the view of dependent origination.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, it does. Why?

Whatever arises in dependence does not cease, does not arise, does not go, does not come, is not annihilated and is not permanent, is not different and is not identical. In these eight negations no existence, apart from falsely imputed existence, is possible.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 25th, 2015 at 8:06 PM

Title: Re: Tibetan language--indispensible in Tantra?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Sanskrit mantras are preserved with perfect accuracy in Tibetan texts. Whether they are pronounced well by Tibetans is another matter altogether.

Shamati said:

Ok. But what about the scriptures? Are the different canons preserved in their original languages? I thought there are many scriptures that are only preserved because of Tibet

Malcolm wrote:

The sūtras and tantras are preserved in Tibetan.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 25th, 2015 at 8:13 PM

Title: Re: Establishing a Correct Understanding?

Content:

Sherab said:

In my earlier post, I mentioned that " dependent origination is used to negate existence in the four extremes. But dependent origination as an existence is not abandoned. In other words, reliance on freedom from the four extremes does not abandon the view of existence based on the view of dependent origination. "

Malcolm wrote:

See my previous post. Reply unchanged.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 25th, 2015 at 8:48 PM

Title: Re: Establishing a Correct Understanding?

Content:

Sherab said:

In my earlier post, I mentioned that " dependent origination is used to negate existence

in the four extremes. But dependent origination as an existence is not abandoned. In other words, reliance on freedom from the four extremes does not abandon the view of existence based on the view of dependent origination. "

Malcolm wrote:

See my previous post. Reply unchanged.

Sherab said:

I am surprised. You normally read posts quite carefully.

Malcolm wrote:

You said in your first post:

Sherab said:

From my discussion with Malcolm and Bakmoon, it would appear that there are two species of dependent existences, one based on Nagarjuna's verse mentioned by Malcolm where dependent existence need to start of with inherent existence (call this species 1) and one were most forumers are comfortable with, namely an infinitely regressive dependent existence (call this species 2).

Malcolm wrote:

You said in your second post:

From my discussion with Malcolm and Bakmoon, it would appear that there are two species of dependent existences, one based on Nagarjuna's verse mentioned by Malcolm where dependent existence need to start of with inherent existence (call this species 1) and one were most forumers are comfortable with, namely an infinitely regressive dependent existence (call this species 2).

I replied:

Dependent origination is not dependent existence.

My reply remains the same.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 25th, 2015 at 9:10 PM

Title: Re: Establishing a Correct Understanding?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Dependent origination is not dependent existence.

My reply remains the same.

Sherab said:

In the most simple of cases, a dependent existence can lie in a causal chain that starts off with a thing possessing inherent existence (species 1) or it could sit on a causal chain that is infinite regressive (species 2).

Malcolm wrote:

I am objecting to term dependent existence. There is no such thing. Nāgārjuna states
Existence cannot arise from existence,
existence cannot arise from nonexistence,
nonexistence cannot arise from existence,
nonexistence cannot arise from nonexistence
where then can there be arising?
Therefore, arising, existing, and so on are all merely conventions.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 25th, 2015 at 9:54 PM

Title: Re: siddhis--why aren't they used more?

Content:

Luke said:

If siddhis are real, as many practitioners of Tibetan Buddhism claim, then why aren't lamas visiting hospitals daily and blasting out the miracles and healing tons of people all the time?

If siddhis are real, then I say, "Great! Then find the local cancer ward and get to work!"

Malcolm wrote:

You cannot remove the karma of other sentient beings.

According to the Dharma, illnesses arise from the three humors, which in turn arise from the three afflictions, which in turn arises from the innate grasping to self.

The greatest miracle of all is when someone realizes selflessness because of the Dharma. Who needs demonstration of a siddhi greater than this? The others are just tricks.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 25th, 2015 at 10:30 PM

Title: Re: Establishing a Correct Understanding?

Content:

Sherab said:

Perhaps, in the milieu that Nagarjuna was in, people thought that all existing things came from God, an inherent existing thing. So Nagarjuna argued that there is no inherent existing thing nor any thing that dependently originated from the inherent existing God.

Malcolm wrote:

No, in the milieu that Nāgārjuna was in, to which he responding, was a specific milieu in which people thought that all things exist (Sarva asti) and were thus called Sarvastivādins. They asserted that things existed by virtue of intrinsic characteristics, and that further all things existed in the three times simultaneously.

Sherab said:

So if you follow the meaning of existence (inherent and dependent (species 1)) per Nagarjuna, an infinite regression of dependent existences (species 2) is not abandoned. This could explain why like Garfield reading Nagarjuna, concluded that dependent existences that are part of infinitely regressive causal chains are all there is.

Malcolm wrote:

Only if you grotesquely misread Nāgārjuna.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 25th, 2015 at 11:39 PM

Title: Re: Establishing a Correct Understanding?

Content:

Sherab said:

So if you follow the meaning of existence (inherent and dependent (species 1)) per Nagarjuna, an infinite regression of dependent existences (species 2) is not abandoned. This could explain why like Garfield reading Nagarjuna, concluded that dependent existences that are part of infinitely regressive causal chains are all there is.

Malcolm wrote:

Only if you grotesquely misread Nāgārjuna.

Sherab said:

But you have not explained (to my satisfaction anyway) why dependent existence in this quote of Nagarjuna "If there is no inherent existence, where will there be dependent existence" includes dependent existence that is infinitely regressive. You mentioned about shunting of inherent existence. But I argued (with Bakmoon) that shunting inherent existence to infinity effectively means that there is no inherent existence along any part of the causal chain. And that throws a wrench in Nagarjuna's argument that dependent existence needs inherent existence.

Malcolm wrote:

Any dependent existence is an inherent existence. No matter how far back in time one imagines, at the start there will be an unconditioned cause. Therefore, dependent existence is altogether impossible. Don't blame me, BTW, for your inability to understand what Nāgārjuna is saying.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, March 26th, 2015 at 12:06 AM

Title: Re: siddhis--why aren't they used more?

Content:

Astus said:

Taking the position that anyone who practises the right type of meditation can

manipulate the physical world in a supernatural way raises numerous questions, beginning with the apparent lack of anyone who can actually perform them. Common excuses, like that the Buddha has forbidden it, or that it is a distraction for practitioners, seems to have no relevance in thousands of well known Buddhist stories where we can read about the Buddha, his disciples and later yogis do all sorts of wonderful things. But if you have some explanation for that, please share it.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, people are not properly cultivating dhyāna. But we have modern examples of people, like Dipa ma, who have. There are also a lack of experienced teachers, like Dipa ma's teacher.

And I still think it is a pity that you are going down the secular "buddhist" road.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, March 26th, 2015 at 12:56 AM

Title: Re: siddhis--why aren't they used more?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, people are not properly cultivating dhyāna. But we have modern examples of people, like Dipa ma, who have. There are also a lack of experienced teachers, like Dipa ma's teacher.

And I still think it is a pity that you are going down the secular "buddhist" road.

Astus said:

There is no shortage of accounts of special powers both within and outside Buddhism. But I have not yet heard of any living teacher of some credibility to claim it for him/herself (e.g. Ajahn Sumedho, Hsing Yun, Chokyi Nyima), although they are often accepted as enlightened masters. Scientists cooperate with several meditation teachers to investigate its effects, but there is no record of siddhis.

I don't see how secular it is that you see. I have had this view of magic for a while now (see this from 2012: <http://eubuddhist.blogspot.in/2012/09/buddhist-magic.html>). And as I quote there, it is not without precedent that superpowers are not taken literally in Buddhism.

Malcolm wrote:

Nonsense Astus, your post shows no such things, quite the opposite, it merely shows that you do not take such things literally, and this is normal for those who subscribe to physicalist view of reality. But then, we already know that Zen people are throwing away rebirth, tossing out karma, reducing the Dharma to mindfulness techniques to make us better programmers and managers. In fact, the departure of many Zen and Vipassana teachers from Buddhadharma has hastened rise of so called secular "Buddhism".

Pity you never met Ngagpa Yeshe Dorje.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, March 26th, 2015 at 1:38 AM

Title: Re: siddhis--why aren't they used more?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Nonsense Astus, your post shows no such things, quite the opposite, it merely shows that you do not take such things literally, and this is normal for those who subscribe to physicalist view of reality. But then, we already know that Zen people are throwing away rebirth, tossing out karma, reducing the Dharma to mindfulness techniques to make us better programmers and managers. In fact, the departure of many Zen and Vipassana teachers from Buddhadharma has hastened rise of so called secular "Buddhism".

Astus said:

I don't subscribe to physicalism, never did in my life. I simply have a logical and an evidential problem with powers.

Malcolm wrote:

Hence your innate adherence to the physicalist world view.

Astus said:

The logical is that even in Buddhism there is no explanation for how the human body could multiply or levitate,

Malcolm wrote:

But there is such a explanation, you merely seem immune to understanding it.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, March 26th, 2015 at 2:07 AM

Title: Re: siddhis--why aren't they used more?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

But there is such a explanation, you merely seem immune to understanding it.

Astus said:

And that explanation is what?

Malcolm wrote:

Research kashina meditation.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, March 26th, 2015 at 6:49 AM

Title: Re: Establishing a Correct Understanding?

Content:

Sherab said:

From my discussion with Malcolm and Bakmoon, it would appear that there are two species of dependent existences, one based on Nagarjuna's verse mentioned by Malcolm where dependent existence need to start of with inherent existence (call this species 1) and one were most forumers are comfortable with, namely an infinitely regressive dependent existence (call this species 2).

Bakmoon said:

This second species isn't dependent existence though. Dependent existence (parabhāva) refers exclusively to this first sense. That's just how this term has been used historically.

Sherab said:

In my earlier post, I mentioned that " dependent origination is used to negate existence in the four extremes. But dependent origination as an existence is not abandoned. In other words, reliance on freedom from the four extremes does not abandon the view of existence based on the view of dependent origination. "

Bakmoon said:

Within the Gelug understanding it's true that dependent origination can be said to merely exist (I'm not going to debate the validity or non-validity of mere existence) but that's a red herring here because dependent existence isn't the same thing as dependent origination. Dependent existence doesn't refer to conventional causation, but to an existence that depends on an intrinsic existence.

Malcolm wrote:

"Mere existence" is an imputation of existence upon an appearance, but it not really an "existence" per se since it is merely an imputation and is understand that such a mere existence does not exist from its own side (i.e. independently or inherently).

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, March 26th, 2015 at 7:37 PM

Title: Re: siddhis--why aren't they used more?

Content:

Simon E. said:

Can I put a direct question to you Dharmagoat..you are under no obligation to answer of course, and if the mods see it as inappropriate then they will of course take action.

What is your motive vis-a-vis this discussion forum.. Is it to explore Buddhadharma, or is it to dissuade others from an interest in it ? To promote something else in fact ?

Malcolm wrote:

At the end of the day, he is just another materialist trying to adapt Buddhist meditation to a materialist world view.

dharmagoat said:

... So that rational Westerners may be better able to digest the essential teachings of the Buddha and thereby derive greater benefit for themselves and for the world as a whole.

Malcolm wrote:

They won't understand the essential teachings of Buddha since they won't accept rebirth.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, March 26th, 2015 at 7:45 PM

Title: Re: siddhis--why aren't they used more?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Ironically, you are actually supporting a positivist theory of reality, which holds that physical laws are inherently real and impose inherent limitations which cannot be overcome. This is why I claim you have succumbed to physicalism.

Astus said:

How do you account for the lack of people who can perform supernormal powers, even though there are many who study and practice such methods? In fact, all those people who just want meditation out of Buddhism should have some experiences with siddhis, not to mention a perhaps even larger number of people who directly aim for higher powers. On what reasons can one accept the existence of magic as a physical force?

Malcolm wrote:

Magic is your word, I don't use it.

As I already pointed out, very few people develop the level of concentration needed to develop the abhijñās, for example. But some people do.

And as far as the control over the four elements go, that is not "magic", that is learning how to control the four elements. When one learns how to control them within one's body, one can gain control over them externally. I have met people who can, for example, control the weather, and were employed in that position by the Tibetan Gvt. for many years, i.e., my guru Ngagpa Yeshe Dorje:

He was able to control the weather quite well really, which is why he kept his job for so many years.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, March 26th, 2015 at 7:47 PM

Title: Re: siddhis--why aren't they used more?

Content:

dharmagoat said:

Online I work toward my cause in the most generous, harmless, compassionate, kind, peaceful and joyous way that I am able. I participate in the wider world in the same way. I practice Buddhism as much as any of you.

Malcolm wrote:

If you do not accept rebirth, if you do not accept karma, then you may be practicing some species of secular "Buddhism," but you are not practicing Buddhadharma.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, March 26th, 2015 at 7:52 PM

Title: Re: Establishing a Correct Understanding?

Content:

Sherab said:

You are making a huge assumption in arguing that by looking back at where a thing come from, you will never come to a point beyond which you cannot find a cause. Theists will disagree with you and say that all causal chains when traced back will lead to the Creator God. Your assumption that there is no inherent cause on any causal chains is just as huge as the assumption of theist that there is an inherent cause, a first cause, at the beginning of all causal chains.

Whereas if you take the straightforward meaning of Nagarjuna's statement that is without an inherent existence there can be no dependent existence, it then follows that since inherent existence is unreasonable, so is dependent existence. This is so much simpler and tighter. No need for mental gymnastics as well.

Malcolm wrote:

It is not an assumption, it is simple observation that all causes that we can observe are themselves effects.

"[W]ithout an inherent existence there can be no dependent existence, it then follows that since inherent existence is unreasonable, so is dependent existence."

Correct. Therefore, as I pointed out before, there is no need to posit then that dependent origination is some kind of existence. This idea that you have advanced therefore is unnecessary, and you yourself have explained it to your own satisfaction in words that differ substantially in no way from mine, i.e., "...without an inherent existence there can be no dependent existence, it then follows that since inherent existence is unreasonable, so is dependent existence."

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, March 26th, 2015 at 8:12 PM

Title: Re: siddhis--why aren't they used more?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

If you do not accept rebirth, if you do not accept karma, then you may be practicing some species of secular "Buddhism," but you are not practicing Buddhadharma.

dharmagoat said:

I disagree, and will continue to campaign that what you describe as "secular Buddhism" is one of many valid interpretations of what the Buddha taught.

(Remembering too, that the issue is with literal rebirth, not rebirth per se. Karma is indisputable, but is open to interpretation.)

Malcolm wrote:

No, secular "Buddhism" is not a valid interpretation of what the Buddha taught, aka Buddhadharma. It actually corresponds with what the Buddha specifically taught as wrong view, ucchedavada, i.e. advocacy of annihilation, denial of future lives and rejection of karma.

There is no form of meaningful rebirth outside of the serial appropriation of the addictive aggregates.

Further, and I will remind you, so called secular "Buddhism" is definitely not compatible with Mahāyāna view, since the very denial rebirth (there is only one kind, literal) renders the bodhisattva vow meaningless. Since this is a Mahāyāna forum, where the bodhisattva vow is indispensable, I would suggest that your proselytizing is at best inappropriate and at worst a violation of TOS.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, March 26th, 2015 at 8:20 PM

Title: Re: siddhis--why aren't they used more?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

No, secular "Buddhism" is not a valid interpretation of what the Buddha taught, aka Buddhadharma...

dharmagoat said:

Your opinion is one of many. Should we conduct a poll?

Malcolm wrote:

Be my guest.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, March 26th, 2015 at 8:20 PM

Title: Re: siddhis--why aren't they used more?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

As I already pointed out, very few people develop the level of concentration needed to develop the abhijñas, for example. But some people do.

Astus said:

Why are those few not known? The living ones. If they can control the four elements then they should come forward. It would definitely be a greater sensation than the discovery of radio waves. And it could definitely upset the current physicalist worldview. But again, there must be some excuses for them to stay hidden, like the Masters of the Ancient Wisdom in the Himalayas.

But they don't stay hidden. They are right there in plain sight for anyone who wants to go see them. My guru worked as the weather controller in Dharmasala for many years, in the open, and no secret was made of the fact. He was not hiding out.

Actually, it would take only one proper master of elements to demonstrate that there are other ways to raise tons of rocks than heavy machinery. Why don't we see any?

Malcolm wrote:

Who ever said that lifting tons of heavy rocks was possible for someone who had gained control over the four elements? Attaining control over the four elements does not mean omnipotence. You are venturing into lala land here. Why don't you study the matter and actually find out what these things actually mean.

On the other hand, when the Buddha levitated to the height of fourteen palm trees to prove a point, this means he had gained control over the four elements. And in fact he had forbid monks who had mastered siddhis to demonstrate them.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, March 26th, 2015 at 8:23 PM

Title: Re: siddhis--why aren't they used more?

Content:

Simon E. said:

So basically, as Malcolm has suggested your motivation is to substitute a different understanding from that of the Mahayana?

dharmagoat said:

I am asking my fellow Mahayanists to find it in their hearts to make room for the more rational among us.

Malcolm wrote:

You are not a Mahāyānist, much less a follower of the Buddhadharma — by rejecting rebirth, you automatically destroy any bodhisattva vow you might have made. You can't imagine that you will ever go through the rounds of rebirth necessary to accumulate the merit and wisdom necessary to become a Buddha with the three kāyas because you

don't accept rebirth, you don't accept the bodhisattva path, and so on. It is joke for you to pretend you are Mahāyānist, seriously.

You are, sadly enough, deluding yourself.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, March 26th, 2015 at 8:51 PM

Title: Re: siddhis--why aren't they used more?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

You are not a Mahāyānist, by rejecting rebirth, you automatically destroy any bodhisattva vow you might have made. You can't imagine that you will ever go through the rounds of rebirth necessary to accumulate the merit and wisdom necessary to become a Buddha with the three kāyas because you don't accept rebirth, you don't accept the bodhisattva path, and so on. It is joke for you to pretend you are Mahāyānist, seriously.

dharmagoat said:

What if someone were to act exactly as a Mahāyānist does, fulfil the bodhisattva vow inasmuch as it applies to the present lifetime, and keep quiet that they were unable to honestly believe in literal rebirth?

Malcolm wrote:

The bodhisattva vows has two parts, aspirational and engaged.

The aspirational part means generating the motivation to become a buddha for the benefit of all sentient beings. That requires generating an enormous store of merit and wisdom and that cannot be achieved in a single lifetime by virtue of the methods of common Mahāyāna.

A person who does not believe in rebirth is someone who has an obscuration such that they cannot even take refuge in the Dharma, let alone develop the compassion needed to generate the bodhicitta to undertake the long series of rebirths in samsara needed to gather the two accumulations in order to become a buddha.

Whatever kindness, love and compassion you have is still kindness, love and compassion but as it is not kindness, love and compassion attended with bodhicitta, it does not have the force to counter afflictions and so on. It is mundane. Still good, but not a path Dharma.

Since you do not believe in the goal and path of a bodhisattva how could you aspire to practice it? Perhaps you have confused the popular concept of a compassionate person as being a "bodhisattva" with the actual bodhisattva described in Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna.

The engaged part means practicing the six perfections for three eons or more until you

have progressed through the paths and stages and entered Buddhahood. Apart from these two, there is no other bodhisattva practice. Vajrayāna may, if one holds the vows perfectly, shorten this time frame to one or several lifetimes at most, but even here, bodhicitta is still tied with the idea of undertaking rebirths for the benefit of sentient beings in order to attain buddhahood.

Even in the Hīnayāna teachings, rebirth is not an optional belief since the four sorts of āryas described in Hīnayāna texts are defined with respect to how many lifetimes it will take such and such a person to achieve arhats ship from the time they enter the stream, and moreover, where they take rebirth before hand. The Buddha's Dharma is inextricably tied up with rebirth as a key and vital concept. Without rebirth, the path has no meaning, there is no liberation to speak of, there is no reason to eradicate the afflictions that cause rebirth and so on. The negative consequences of rejecting rebirth and yet still claiming to practice Buddhadharma are so numerous that I can only barely begin to write them down here.

You see, this is why I make a distinction between "Buddhisms" and Buddhadharma. You can practice your secular "Buddhism" all you like, but it will never be Buddhadharma.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, March 26th, 2015 at 8:55 PM

Title: Re: siddhis--why aren't they used more?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Who ever said that lifting tons of heavy rocks was possible for someone who had gained control over the four elements? Attaining control over the four elements does not mean omnipotence. You are venturing into lala land here. Why don't you study the matter and actually find out what these things actually mean.

On the other hand, when the Buddha levitated to the height of fourteen palm trees to prove a point, this means he had gained control over the four elements. And in fact he had forbid monks who had mastered siddhis to demonstrate them.

Astus said:

A few tons of rocks are nothing compared to the powers displayed openly for everyone in the Vimalakirti Sutra and others. Influencing the weather is significantly more difficult then lifting weight.

Vsm. quotes the Patisambhidamagga (p 378):

“What is success through the sciences? Masters of the sciences, having pronounced their scientific spells, travel through the air, and they show an elephant in space, in the sky ... and they show a manifold military array”

I.e. it is no problem to have even an army in the air.

Malcolm wrote:

The latter are examples of conjured illusions, not actual armies and elephants.

Astus said:

In the Samannaphala Sutta (DN 2 / D i 77) the stock passage includes: "he even touches and strokes with his hand the sun and moon, mighty and powerful as they are".

Although I think it is noteworthy that the process begins by the creation of the mind-made body that performs the supernormal powers.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, the manomayakāya is a mental body with intact and completely sense organs that can move here and there and even has autonomy. There is an entire sūtra detailing it in the Majjhima Nikāya.

But that is merely one kind of power, and the iddhi-pattis are not confined to the manomayakāya

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, March 26th, 2015 at 10:59 PM

Title: Re: siddhis--why aren't they used more?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

by rejecting rebirth, you automatically destroy any bodhisattva vow you might have made.

kirtu said:

To me, this is too much. Some people will sincerely take the Bodhisattva Vows and sincerely practice but may have issues with so-called transcendental issues. That's okay IMO because if they are practicing sincerely they will develop good roots and purify their minds over time and over lifetimes. We should probably refrain from being dogmatic. Some people will be attracted to practice via so-called "secular" Buddhism.

Kirt

Malcolm wrote:

Someone has to hold the line and insist that things be called by their proper names. It might as well be me since what I observe these days is intense wishywashiness in the name of "compassion", when it is really just marketing to increase membership in Dharma centers and increased book sales. Cynical? Yes. True? Yes.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, March 26th, 2015 at 11:12 PM

Title: Re: siddhis--why aren't they used more?

Content:

dharmagoat said:

Thank you for taking the time to write this, Malcolm. It has helped to make your position clearer to me. While I still feel that it is a somewhat stiff and inflexible view...

It is more like an XML scheme. An XML schema that does not work is automatically not an XML schema.

I am willing to accept that it is one built on sound logic.

It is built on knowledge of the Dharma. But thanks.

I acknowledge that what I endorse can not rightly be called "Buddhadharma", or even "Buddhism", but I am hopeful that it can still bring benefit to those that have no choice but to adjust the traditional teachings to fit their own specific needs, without compromising the source from which it came.

Malcolm wrote:

The traditional teachings can't be adjusted. Core concepts like rebirth, dependent origination, karma, samsara, liberation are all essential and interrelated concepts which are vital for the very identity of Buddhadharma as a set body of practice and belief.

People can try to adapt the teachings to their life however they see fit, however, this approach, unfortunately, does not go beyond spiritual materialism.

The teaching best suited for people who cannot accept Buddhadharma is the teaching of the four brahma-viharas, described in the Kalamas sutta among other places. Here, Buddha does not pretend that the four brahma-viharas are a path of liberation, but recommends their cultivation to everyone whether they accept rebirth or not. This however is not Buddhadharma per se because the four brahma-viharas are common to all Indian religions and not the sole province of Buddhadharma. In fact the four brahma-viharas are termed "the vehicle of gods and men" precisely because they only assure higher rebirth in samsara and or happiness and contentment in this lifetime.

But let us not confuse the cultivation of such compassion and love in the four brahma-viharas with bodhicitta. They are not the same thing. While the latter indeed does depend on the former, without the sincere wish to attain full buddhahood for the benefit of all sentient beings and the career that entails, the former will never become the latter. Bodhicitta, the wish to become a buddha for the benefit of all sentient beings, is the defining feature of the bodhisattva path, just as emptiness is the defining doctrine of Mahāyāna.

So are the brahma-viharas and śamatha meditation beneficial for everyone, no matter what they believe? Yes, very much so. Should this be called "Buddhism"? No, because these two things are common to all Indian religions.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, March 26th, 2015 at 11:20 PM

Title: Re: Establishing a Correct Understanding?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

When the obscuration of affliction and knowledge are eliminated, falling back into samsara is impossible because the stream of cittas is not longer adventitiously contaminated, so how could it become contaminated again? But the Buddha has assured us that liberation is a permanent state of affairs. Your objection was actually a non-sequitor.

The reason there is an infinite chain of cittas is that cittas are relative and conditioned, each one is an effect as well as a cause. In this case the infinite regression is a reasonable inference, just as Nāgārjuna specifically allows that an infinite regression of tathāgatas in the past is also reasonable.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, March 26th, 2015 at 11:47 PM

Title: Re: Buddhism and evolution

Content:

Aemilius said:

The Lotus Sutra exists, and it has been taught, in the context of the buddhist view of existence. Thus in modern times you easily read into it meanings that did not exist there originally.

dharmagoat said:

I think it is fair to say that the misogyny did exist there originally. We frequently encounter passages in the Buddhist canon that are disparaging of women.

Malcolm wrote:

Oddly enough, the purpose of such passages is to appeal to women sick of living in patriarchal cultures. The actual point of such passages is to say to women, "If you aspire to be born here, when you are born here you will no longer suffer any gender discrimination because indeed there won't be any."

In reality, these sūtras appealed very widely to women. It is only a modern judgement that they are misogynistic, arising from not understanding the culture in which such sentiments were being expressed.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, March 27th, 2015 at 5:03 AM

Title: Re: Karmapa awarded honorary PhD

Content:

Knotty Veneer said:

With any luck he'll be able to assist in the finding of HHDL XV and pass the torch back as soon as possible.

Malcolm wrote:

Why? HHDL has indicated that he is the last.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, March 27th, 2015 at 5:16 AM

Title: Re: siddhis--why aren't they used more?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

According to the Dharma, illnesses arise from the three humors, which in turn arise from the three afflictions, which in turn arises from the innate grasping to self.

Luke said:

If this is true, then why did the 16th Karmapa die of cancer? Surely he did not suffer from the three afflictions or from innate grasping for a self!

Malcolm wrote:

According to the Abhidanottara Tantra:

...to some he appears to have gone to great awakening,
to others, victorious over the enemy Māras,
to some, he has the nature of a child,
to others, old and infirm,
to some as ill and dying,
to some he appears as Buddha Vairocana,
to others as Tāra, Pandaravaśinī and so on...
He tames migrating beings having displayed
such emanations as these.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, March 27th, 2015 at 5:18 AM

Title: Re: siddhis--why aren't they used more?

Content:

Fortyeightvows said:

Can it be clarified what the three humors are? I was always under the impression that illness comes from having harmed others.

Malcolm wrote:

Wind, bile and phlegm, or to give their proper Sanskrit names, vata, pitta and kapha.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, March 27th, 2015 at 5:21 AM

Title: Re: siddhis--why aren't they used more?

Content:

Astus said:

Buddhism today can spread because it promises help with mental problems like stress and such, not because people are interested in the true nature of reality and similar abstract issues. So, if there were actually supernormal powers that people could learn,

it would definitely be a big thing. But it's just not happening.

Malcolm wrote:

That is because you are blind to it. I already pointed out to twice a master who definitely exhibited the ability control the weather. At this point, I have to concluded you are just too locked into the "scientific" worldview to be open to any such experiences.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, March 27th, 2015 at 7:27 AM

Title: Re: siddhis--why aren't they used more?

Content:

Anders said:

I must admit, I find this 'my compassion is better than your compassion' distasteful. It may be 'correct', but the spirit of the topic feels somewhat violated at this point.

Malcolm wrote:

But Anders, there are grades of compassion discussed in Mahāyāna Sūtras: compassion towards persons, compassion towards phenomena and limitless compassion [which indeed is the sole province of bodhisattvas on the stages].

Moreover, Dharmakīrti clearly enunciates the principle that compassion itself does not have the power to bring about liberation.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, March 27th, 2015 at 7:32 AM

Title: Re: siddhis--why aren't they used more?

Content:

dharmagoat said:

I don't think anyone 'wants' to be a bodhisattva, it simply presents itself as a way of life to those that have the inclination to follow it.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes and no. There are two kinds "inclination" as you call it — natural and developed. Everyone has the former, but in order to possess the later, one must formally enter the Mahāyāna path. The way to do that is to receive the bodhisattva vows.

dharmagoat said:

I know I have the inclination, but I feel my way has become blocked. I can't believe what I don't believe.

Malcolm wrote:

This is an obstacle well described in Mahāyāna teachings. As Sakya Pandita states: Bodhicitta is damaged when one is ignorant of the qualities of the buddhas and bodhisattvas, and makes no effort to seek out such qualities for oneself. The antidote for those is cultivating devotion, enthusiasm and so on as much as possible. If you do not give rise to faith in the Buddha's teachings, your bodhicitta will never have a chance to develop. As the Avatamska says, faith is the mother of all good qualities. Faithlessness is negative mental factor. You should examine this.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, March 27th, 2015 at 7:36 AM

Title: Re: siddhis--why aren't they used more?

Content:

dharmagoat said:

I didn't quite say that I could "freely express bodhicitta". Instead, I was reserving the possibility that the compassion experienced by people such as myself was genuine bodhicitta. But, as you point out, if the aspiration to endure over many lifetimes for the benefit of beings is missing, then it is not the bodhicitta of the bodhisattva.

Malcolm wrote:

Patrul Rinpoche states: It is usual for tears to flow from one's eyes now and again because of biased good will and compassion. Even though a fool reifies this as bodhicitta, such things are never supreme bodhicitta.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, March 27th, 2015 at 7:42 AM

Title: Re: siddhis--why aren't they used more?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2015/mar/25/iceland-construction-respect-elves-or-else?CMP=fb_gu

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, March 27th, 2015 at 7:46 AM

Title: Re: Establishing a Correct Understanding?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

When the obscuration of affliction and knowledge are eliminated, falling back into samsara is impossible because the stream of cittas is not longer adventitiously contaminated, so how could it become contaminated again? But the Buddha has assured us that liberation is a permanent state of affairs. Your objection was actually a

non-sequitor.

Sherab said:

That which is impermanent is suffering. What is a citta that is not impermanent?

Malcolm wrote:

No, if this were the case the path would be suffering because it is impermanent.

What the first seal states is: "whatever is conditioned is impermanent." The second seal states: "whatever is contaminated is suffering."

Just because the citta moments are impermanent does not entail they are contaminated.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, March 27th, 2015 at 7:47 AM

Title: Re: Establishing a Correct Understanding?

Content:

Sherab said:

Explain how tathagatas can be an infinite regression.

Malcolm wrote:

Every tathāgata must have a predecessor from whom they receive a prediction and in front of whom they generate bodhicitta.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, March 27th, 2015 at 7:51 AM

Title: Re: siddhis--why aren't they used more?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

If you do not give rise to faith in the Buddha's teachings, your bodhicitta will never have a chance to develop. As the Avatamska says, faith in the mother of all good qualities. Faithlessness is negative mental factor. You should examine this.

dharmagoat said:

Thanks Malcolm.

Indeed I do. The odd thing is that I did once have faith, but upon examining that faith I came to the conclusion that much of it was delusion.

Malcolm wrote:

You should understand that all that matters is what is conducive to your path. If accepting rebirth is conducive to your path, accept it, and don't look back, spend time rationalizing, obsessing mind/brain relations and so on.

What should matter most to a bodhisattva is attaining Buddhahood, the rest is just a distraction or an obstacle.

You should discard faithlessness as you would avoid poisonous food.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, March 27th, 2015 at 8:47 AM

Title: Re: Establishing a Correct Understanding?

Content:

Sherab said:

Explain how tathagatas can be an infinite regression.

Malcolm wrote:

Every tathāgata must have a predecessor from whom they receive a prediction and in front of whom they generate bodhicitta.

Sherab said:

Presumably, Nagarjuna does not know about how Samantabhadra Buddha became a Buddha.

Malcolm wrote:

Also Samantabhadra was once an ordinary sentient being, believe it or not.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, March 27th, 2015 at 6:56 PM

Title: Re: siddhis--why aren't they used more?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

That is because you are blind to it. I already pointed out to twice a master who definitely exhibited the ability control the weather. At this point, I have to concluded you are just too locked into the "scientific" worldview to be open to any such experiences.

Astus said:

What you cited were stories of two deceased people who have supposedly had the ability to change the weather. Stories like that and even more fantastic we have a lot from all over the world. For instance, canonised Catholic saints have performed various miracles, and there are thousands of them, including many from the 20th century. And while in all practical matters the veracity of such stories are at least irrelevant and not much different from superhero films, if someone claims for whatever reason that powers like levitation and weather changing exist, it is not a strong argument to say that only those with faith can perceive supernatural events. Although saying that actually fits what we briefly discussed with Anders here that experiences of siddhis are a matter of mind set, and that matches what I have said from the beginning that powers are not physical but spiritual. Similarly, if I were to argue that there are pegasi, I would have to provide some evidence for that, and excusing the lack of proof would not make my

argument any stronger, even if I called unbelievers materialists.

Malcolm wrote:

My suggestion to you is that you get up off your ass, go to Tibet and meet a weather controller, since they still exist there.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, March 27th, 2015 at 8:09 PM

Title: Re: Establishing a Correct Understanding?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

No, if this were the case the path would be suffering because it is impermanent.

What the first seal states is: "whatever is conditioned is impermanent." The second seal states: "whatever is contaminated is suffering."

Just because the citta moments are impermanent does not entail they are contaminated.

Sherab said:

What's your take on Ud 8.3 where the Buddha said that because there is the unmade, freedom from the made is possible.

Malcolm wrote:

The fourth seal is "Nirvana is peaceful."

This just means that cessation (absence of causes) is possible. There are only four unconditioned phenomena recognized in Mahāyāna Buddhism — space, the two cessations and emptiness.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, March 27th, 2015 at 8:10 PM

Title: Re: Establishing a Correct Understanding?

Content:

Sherab said:

Sure, but it is possible that while achieving buddhahood without receiving Buddha Dharma is nearly impossible, there is still the possibility that out of a gazillion beings subjected to gazillion causes and conditions, over a gazillion kalpas, there could be that one being where all the causes and conditions are perfectly aligned at one moment in time for that being to achieve buddhahood truly all by itself. This is just simply the law of statistics.

Malcolm wrote:

No, such a person would be a pratyekabuddha since they will not have gathered the accumulations necessary for full buddhahood, and second, in order to become a fully

awakened buddha, one must have generated supreme bodhicitta, there is no other way.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, March 27th, 2015 at 8:16 PM

Title: Re: siddhis--why aren't they used more?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

My suggestion to you is that you get up off your ass, go to Tibet and meet a weather controller, sine they still exist there.

dharmagoat said:

And while you are there, invite along some unbiased and reliable witnesses and record a video so that the rest of us can assess it for ourselves. Seriously.

Malcolm wrote:

I have already seen, I don't need to go. As I pointed out, my teacher was employed in Dharamshala for many years as one of the official weathermakers for the TGIE. He was famous for this, well known in the Tibetan community, personally employed for this function by HHDL before he left Dharamshala in the mid '80's for health reasons. He was regularly hired by local famers in India to make the weather go their way, and even staved off a drought in southern California in the late '80's where he was hired by a friend of mine who owned some Avocado orchards.

But the real point is that you and Astus have turned western conventional truths into ultimate truths by asserting that what you take to be laws of physics and so on to be immutable.

I doubt even if you saw someone control the weather that you could actually see it, recorded or otherwise, similar to a preta being unable to see the liquid in a glass as water.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, March 27th, 2015 at 8:49 PM

Title: Re: Establishing a Correct Understanding?

Content:

Sherab said:

Actually, this would mean that the Buddha can never claim omniscience because there is always something beyond his range.

Malcolm wrote:

Your last statement does not follow. Merely because you cannot fathom this kind of acceptable infinite regression does not necessarily entail that it is beyond the comprehension of a Buddha's omniscience. Buddhas are omniscient about the three

times, there is no limitation on it.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, March 27th, 2015 at 8:53 PM

Title: Re: Establishing a Correct Understanding?

Content:

Sherab said:

What's your take on Ud 8.3 where the Buddha said that because there is the unmade, freedom from the made is possible.

Malcolm wrote:

The fourth seal is "Nirvana is peaceful."

This just means that cessation (absence of causes) is possible. There are only four unconditioned phenomena recognized in Mahāyāna Buddhism — space, the two cessations and emptiness.

Sherab said:

I can accept that space is a phenomenon but space as understood in Buddhism seemed very simplistic compared to space as understood in modern science, assuming it can be understood at all.

However, I find it hard to think of cessation and emptiness as phenomena. If you say the state of cessation or the state of emptiness, then yes, I would think the label phenomena makes sense especially if the adjective unconditioned is to be applied.

Malcolm wrote:

Here, the term dharma [phenomena] means bearer of characteristics. That is all a "phenomenon" is. The term "phenomena" for "dharma" is very inadequate, but it is what we have.

Space and the two cessations, as well as emptiness, all are known through their characteristics.

Space is simply the absence of obstruction, and of the two cessations, the first is nirvana, cessation due to insight. The second cessation is simple absence of a cause for arising.

These three things make up the classic trio of unconditioned dharmas [there is also a kind of conditioned space, which is defined as a cavity. But that is not what is being discussed here].

Quite honestly, you need to familiarize yourself with how these things are defined in Abhidharma if you ever hope to understand them in a Mahāyāna context.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, March 27th, 2015 at 8:58 PM

Title: Re: siddhis--why aren't they used more?

Content:

Sherlock said:

You find it hard to accept rebirth because you find a materialist conception of consciousness more convincing than the Buddhist account, no?

dharmagoat said:

Equally convincing, hence the dilemma.

Malcolm wrote:

It is not equally convincing at all. Since you don't seem to understand the Buddhist objections, might I suggest you read Nagel's take down of physicalism? Your assignment is to read *Mind and Cosmos: Why the Materialist Neo-Darwinian Conception of Nature Is Almost Certainly False*

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, March 27th, 2015 at 10:07 PM

Title: Re: Establishing a Correct Understanding?

Content:

Sherab said:

It does follow if from the Buddha's perspective there are infinite regressions and he cannot explain their existence.

Malcolm wrote:

Quite the contrary, he does:

Where this exists, that exists, with the arising of that, this arose.

Sherab said:

What I am arguing here is that for someone to think that infinite regression is acceptable, then he must be assuming that it is also acceptable to the Buddha. If so, then for such a person, he can no longer argue for an omniscient Buddha.

I don't accept infinite regression and I don't think that for a fully enlightened Buddha there is such a thing as linear infinitely regressive phenomena. So for me, I can still argue for an omniscient Buddha.

Malcolm wrote:

Your argument is senseless and supposes that the Buddha argues for first causes, which he explicitly rejects. This is why we frequently see such statements by the Buddha as "beginningless samsara" and "samsara without a beginning." According to you, when the Buddha makes such statements he is lying or by making such statements, he is proving he is not omniscient.

For example, the Ārya-saddharmasmṛtyupasthāna Sūtra states:

In beginningless samsara,
recall the result of positive deeds is happiness,
the result of negative deeds
is likewise suffering,
arising like causes and results,
but do not engaged in false thinking.
Whatever is made by a past cause,
likewise it's result will be obtained.

You directly contradict the teaching of the Buddha by rejecting infinite regression of causes because of your conflation of the unsuitability of infinite regress in logical argumentation with the fact that any series of conditioned causes and effects must be beginningless.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, March 27th, 2015 at 10:14 PM

Title: Re: siddhis--why aren't they used more?

Content:

Astus said:

What you cited were stories of two deceased people

Malcolm wrote:

Apparently you don't read well, I cited twice one master who had this capacity, someone I knew personally, someone who I watched die, actually.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, March 27th, 2015 at 10:47 PM

Title: Re: siddhis--why aren't they used more?

Content:

Sherlock said:

The main point of Carvaka is not caring about rebirth.

dharmagoat said:

False. Read some stuff.

Malcolm wrote:

It is one of the leading arguments of this school.

They held that all of existence can be reduced to the four elements of air, water, fire and earth. All things come into existence through a mixture of these elements and will perish with their separation. Perhaps the most philosophically sophisticated position of Indian Materialism is the assertion that even human consciousness is a material construct. According to K. K. Mittal, the ontology of the Lokāyata is strictly set forth as follows:

1) Our observation does not bring forth any instance of a disincarnate consciousness. For the manifestation of life and consciousness, body is an inalienable factor.

2) That body is the substratum of consciousness can be seen in the undoubted fact of the arising of sensation and perception only in so far as they are conditioned by the bodily mechanism.

3) The medicinal science by prescribing that certain foods and drinks (such as Brāhmighṛta) have the properties conducive to the intellectual powers affords another proof and evidence of the relation of consciousness with body and the material ingredients (of food). (Mittal 47)

Just exactly how is your point of view different than the above?

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, March 27th, 2015 at 10:56 PM

Title: Re: siddhis--why aren't they used more?

Content:

Astus said:

Still, no living weather controllers or others to show yet.

Malcolm wrote:

Sure there are, the TGIE always has a weather controller on staff, I simply don't know his name. If you go to Tibet and look for some ngakpas, I am sure you will find someone who will satisfy your curiosity.

Khetsun Zangpo, though recently deceased, was also employed in this capacity by the Tibetan Govt. in Tibet between 1955 and 1959. Apparently, his abilities are well documented in Tibetan.

But you are just an armchair skeptic, lazily waiting from someone to show you a video you can scoff at.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, March 27th, 2015 at 11:01 PM

Title: Re: Establishing a Correct Understanding?

Content:

Sherab said:

As far as I am concerned, other than teachings pointing to the inexpressible, all teachings are provisional with a pragmatic objective. So we get words like unconditioned, unmade, unborn etc., being used provisionally because actual descriptors are not available in our language. I would argue that words like beginningless are similarly provisional.

Malcolm wrote:

Seriously, Sherab? That is an extremely lame answer: "It is not about emptiness so therefore I can dispense with it as I see fit, even if it means accepting a first cause in contradiction to every principle indicated by the Buddha's teaching of dependent origination."

Your argument is not only unreasonable, it is not even grounded in the texts. It seems you have forgotten the dictum that the ultimate is to be understood on the basis of the conventional truth, in order that nirvana may be realized.

So, I leave you here to your rampant proliferation and hope that someone, somewhere, some day can penetrate that formidably hard carapace in which your brain is trapped with no means of escape.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, March 27th, 2015 at 11:04 PM

Title: Re: siddhis--why aren't they used more?

Content:

dharmagoat said:

I resist that degree of certainty. Consciousness cannot be understood, let alone reduced to a physical phenomenon.

Malcolm wrote:

If you think consciousness cannot be understood, why bother even trying to discuss such issues? You are wasting your time and mine.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, March 27th, 2015 at 11:24 PM

Title: Re: siddhis--why aren't they used more?

Content:

dharmagoat said:

I resist that degree of certainty. Consciousness cannot be understood, let alone reduced to a physical phenomenon.

Malcolm wrote:

If you think consciousness cannot be understood, why bother even trying to discuss such issues? You are wasting your time and mine.

dharmagoat said:

You understand consciousness?

I thought that was the great mystery, the hard problem within all traditions of human thought.

Malcolm wrote:

It may be a great mystery in the West, it is not such a great mystery at all in

Buddhadharma.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, March 27th, 2015 at 11:46 PM

Title: Re: Gorampa & Tsongkhapa

Content:

Jikan said:

I would like to be convinced that later Tibetan Madhyamika does not do this. Can anyone here help me out?

Malcolm wrote:

Later Tibetan Madhyamaka introduces a whole set of concerns never imagined by Indians. The school that most closely adheres to the traditional Indian tradition in Madhyamaka studies is Sakya following Rongton and Gorampa.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, March 27th, 2015 at 11:57 PM

Title: Re: siddhis--why aren't they used more?

Content:

dharmagoat said:

I thought that was the great mystery, the hard problem within all traditions of human thought.

Malcolm wrote:

It may be a great mystery in the West, it is not such a great mystery at all in Buddhadharma.

dharmagoat said:

I would say that this is why Buddhadharma attracts the interest of so many scientifically minded people. It prescribes a course of investigation that purports to solve the mystery of mind, while at the same time demanding belief in phenomena that defy investigation. There is a catch.

Malcolm wrote:

Who says Buddhadharma demands belief in phenomena that defy investigation? What kind of investigation are we talking about here?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, March 28th, 2015 at 12:03 AM

Title: Re: siddhis--why aren't they used more?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Who says Buddhadharma demands belief in phenomena that defy investigation? What kind of investigation are we talking about here?

dharmagoat said:

From the point of view of someone with one foot in Bodhidharma and one foot out, the phenomenon of rebirth is extremely elusive, defying attempts to investigate it by rational means.

Malcolm wrote:

Which rational means did you have in mind? Define "rational means."

One point — you might have to abandon the atomist framework of western science in order to discover other rational means of investigation.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, March 28th, 2015 at 12:24 AM

Title: Re: siddhis--why aren't they used more?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Which rational means did you have in mind? Define "rational means."

dharmagoat said:

Looking for evidence in one's own experience, looking for evidence in the wider world, considering its plausibility empirically.

Malcolm wrote:

Well, you really only have two options:

- a) mind is based on matter
- b) mind is not based on matter

If a) is true, there should be evidence to prove that matter produces consciousness.

If b) is true, one will never find evidence to prove a no matter how hard one tries.

Now then, the Buddha clearly divides all of reality, material and mental, into six major divisions called dhātus, earth, water, fire, air, space and consciousness. Outside of these six things there is nothing else. All phenomena are composed of some mixture of these six entities. All insentient phenomena are composed of the five elements; all sentient phenomena also include consciousness as part their make up.

Now, in terms of personal experience, there is only one way you can confirm rebirth for yourself that is through developing the abhijñā of recalling past lives and the abhijñā of being able to know the minds of others. Failing the development of these two skills in meditation, one is left with inferences.

The materialist, yes Carvaka, perspective, is to reject inference as a valid form of knowledge, as well as testimony of reliable witnesses.

There is no further point to this discussion. Either you develop these abilities through meditation or you accept rebirth in the third valid form of knowledge accepted by the Buddha, testimony of reliable witnesses. Both you and Astus thus far have demonstrated only that you are basically materialists in your orientation towards these questions.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, March 28th, 2015 at 1:03 AM

Title: Re: Gorampa & Tsongkhapa

Content:

WeiHan said:

Base on the above, that LTKP do not believe that enlightenment is without any conceptualisation...

Malcolm wrote:

Tsongkhapa never issues a retort to Gorampa since the latter was born ten years after the former passed away.

In that respect, Tsongkhapa must have found this hard to understand — The Buddhāvataṃśa Sūtra states:

The buddhas do not engage in thought;
though they have no concept about teaching,
through blessings they appear to teach.

Or the Śraddhā-balādhānāvātāra-mudrā Sūtra:

Mañjuśrī, likewise, in order for the Tathāgata, Arhat, Samyaksambuddha to fully ripen sentient beings, he produces infinite deeds at the same time in all the infinite worlds in the ten directions, but while the tathāgata indeed is without thoughts and is without concepts, nevertheless, because he possesses such unmixed qualities there is no impediment to displaying such effortless deeds

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, March 28th, 2015 at 2:15 AM

Title: Re: siddhis--why aren't they used more?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Both you and Astus thus far have demonstrated only that you are basically materialists in your orientation towards these questions.

Astus said:

Isn't it you who claim that powers are physical phenomena, like in Harry Potter and Lord of the Rings? How is it anti-Dharma to ask for physical evidence then? And you call it

materialism if I say that such powers are not physical manifestations, therefore cannot be observed in any ordinary, natural or scientific way, but rather spiritual. Is the reference to mental phenomena a materialist view?

Malcolm wrote:

I told you where you can find evidence of these things Astus. If you don't want to make the effort to travel to places where there are siddhas, what can I say?

As to your contention that these things are merely mental experiences, well, that does not save you from my charge that your orientation towards these questions is basically materialist. I am surprised in fact that you still accept literal rebirth, or is rebirth just another "spiritual experience", like recall of past lives, knowing the minds of others, seeing into deva realms and so on and so forth?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, March 28th, 2015 at 2:17 AM

Title: Re: siddhis--why aren't they used more?

Content:

Gyurme Kundrol said:

If you show it off you attract people who just want to take it from you. In the same way, showing off Siddhi is likely to attract so called "students" who just want power.

Astus said:

It seems we should all feel sorry for film stars, celebrities, politicians, business people, bankers, and in general the rich and powerful.

Malcolm wrote:

Oh indeed, they have the unique suffering of having to defend their wealth, power and position.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, March 28th, 2015 at 2:30 AM

Title: Re: Establishing a Correct Understanding?

Content:

Sherab said:

As far as I am concerned, other than teachings pointing to the inexpressible, all teachings are provisional with a pragmatic objective. So we get words like unconditioned, unmade, unborn etc., being used provisionally because actual descriptors are not available in our language. I would argue that words like beginningless are similarly provisional.

Malcolm wrote:

Seriously, Sherab? That is an extremely lame answer: "It is not about emptiness so therefore I can dispense with it as I see fit, even if it means accepting a first cause in contradiction to every principle indicated by the Buddha's teaching of dependent

origination."

Your argument is not only unreasonable, it is not even grounded in the texts. It seems you have forgotten the dictum that the ultimate is to be understood on the basis of the conventional truth, in order that nirvana may be realized.

So, I leave you here to your rampant proliferation and hope that someone, somewhere, some day can penetrate that formidably hard carapace in which your brain is trapped with no means of escape.

Sherab said:

You said "Any dependent existence is an inherent existence. No matter how far back in time one imagines, at the start there will be an unconditioned cause." I took this to mean that there is a beginning to a casual chain (even though it is just an appearance). But you are now saying that there is no beginning to a causal chain. So which is your position?

If a logical fallacy such as infinite regression applies to secular reasoning and does not apply to reasoning involving the Buddha Dharma, how can there be any certainty that the Dharma is correct (other than direct experience)?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, in the case of dependent existence, not in the case of dependent origination. My position has been the same all along, which is why, if you examine, I rejected your two typologies of dependent existence. The term dependent existence itself is the problem. This is why I rejected your assertion that dependent origination was a type of dependent existence.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, March 28th, 2015 at 3:44 AM

Title: Re: siddhis--why aren't they used more?

Content:

Astus said:

My orientation towards the topic of supernatural powers is materialist because the idea that they manifest within the material realm requires that. Natural science is what analyses matter, so physical phenomena falls within that area of study.

Malcolm wrote:

It follows then that since rebirth is manifests in the material realm, you therefore must also come up with an explanation for it according to natural science.

Astus said:

Rebirth is the continuation of the mind-stream, and since mind is non-physical it is out of scope for material investigation.

Malcolm wrote:

The mind clearly interacts with matter every time rebirth occurs. How is this possible? How can a nonmaterial entity interact with a material one? What sound reason can you possibly have for rejecting all paranormal phenomena apart from the one that is the most paranormal of all, i.e., a nonphysical entity [a mind] appropriating physical matter [a body].

Surely you must admit that if the mind, a nonphysical entity according to you, can appropriate matter, such as a body and make obvious changes to it, it ought to also be able to make changes to other phenomena by paranormal means and be capable of other paranormal capabilities such as the ability to know other minds (other phenomena of a similar kind).

So why do you hold onto the belief that non-physical entities can supernaturally interact with physical matter in the case of rebirth, and yet reject all other kinds of "supernatural powers" of the mind where the mind interacts with or influences physical matter?

If you state it is because the Buddha taught rebirth in the sūtras, well, the Buddha also taught the abhijñās and the iddhi-pattis as well. Why accept a literal interpretation of a supernatural feat [rebirth] explained by the Buddha in one place, and yet reject all other literal interpretations of supernatural feats explained by the Buddha. If you want irrational, your POV is the most irrational of all. And you have no other basis for accepting rebirth other than the fact that it was taught by the Buddha. You certainly do not accept rebirth because you have recall of your past lives, Astus — or do you?

Astus said:

And for more than a hundred years experts of material sciences were unable to find any sound basis for supernormal powers, and not one person could actually https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_prizes_for_evidence_of_the_paranormal anything paranormal so far, I cannot see any basis for accepting such claims.

Malcolm wrote:

Did it ever occur to you they were examining the wrong people? So far your arguments amount to the same thing as the proverbial frog in the well.

Astus said:

It is another matter that even if there were such powers they would have nothing to do with the path of liberation.

Malcolm wrote:

It is not true they have nothing to do with the path of liberation — on the bodhisattva path their cultivation is considered indispensable.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, March 28th, 2015 at 3:54 AM

Title: Re: siddhis--why aren't they used more?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

One point — you might have to abandon the atomist framework of western science in order to discover other rational means of investigation.

Challenge23 said:

In regards to other rational means of investigation, are you referring to any type of method involving internal inquiry?

Malcolm wrote:

No, I was referring to using other frameworks to understand the nature of matter.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, March 28th, 2015 at 9:45 PM

Title: Re: Establishing a Correct Understanding?

Content:

Sherab said:

You said "Any dependent existence is an inherent existence. No matter how far back in time one imagines, at the start there will be an unconditioned cause." I took this to mean that there is a beginning to a casual chain (even though it is just an appearance). But you are now saying that there is no beginning to a causal chain. So which is your position?

If a logical fallacy such as infinite regression applies to secular reasoning and does not apply to reasoning involving the Buddha Dharma, how can there be any certainty that the Dharma is correct (other than direct experience)?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, in the case of dependent existence, not in the case of dependent origination. My position has been the same all along, which is why, if you examine, I rejected your two typologies of dependent existence. The term dependent existence itself is the problem. This is why I rejected your assertion that dependent origination was a type of dependent existence.

Sherab said:

Please elaborate so that I can understand your objection.

Malcolm wrote:

The term parabhāva = dependent existence. The term pratīyasamutpāda = dependent origination.

Candra's definition of dependent origination, "...production through the meeting such and such an assembly of causes and conditions is what is called "dependent origination."

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, March 29th, 2015 at 12:04 AM

Title: Re: Establishing a Correct Understanding?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Candra's definition of dependent origination, "...production through the meeting such and such an assembly of causes and conditions is what is called "dependent origination."

dzogchungpa said:

I haven't been following this discussion, and maybe I am showing my obtuseness, but what does it mean for an assembly of causes and conditions to "meet"?

Malcolm wrote:

It means that such a meeting produces an effect.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, March 29th, 2015 at 12:49 AM

Title: Re: Establishing a Correct Understanding?

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

Perhaps I was not clear, what I am asking is, what does 'meeting' mean here?

Malcolm wrote:

"Meeting" means "come together."

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, March 29th, 2015 at 4:54 AM

Title: Re: Xuanzang and Kuiji on Madhyamaka

Content:

Will said:

Lusthaus paper:

https://www.academia.edu/11698064/Xuanzang_and_Kuiji_on_Madhyamaka

Malcolm wrote:

The last sentence of the paper states:

In comparison to Mādhyamikans, Yogācāras are realists.

30+ pages to tell us what we already know!!!

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, March 29th, 2015 at 5:56 AM

Title: Re: Nun's ordination

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

The Karmapa has indicated that he is going to start the process of giving nuns full ordination:

<http://kagyuoffice.org/gyalwang-karmapa-makes-historic-announcement-on-restoring-nuns-ordination/>

This is a link to the thread in the Kagyu forum:

<https://www.dharmawheel.net/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=18685&p=269756&hilit=nuns+ordination#p269756>

My question is about how this discussion is developing across the other schools of Tibetan Buddhism. Although the Karmapa is taking a lead on this issue, it is not only a Kagyu issue and relates to all schools of Tibetan Buddhism?

Does anybody have any news or feedback about this issue?

I myself am looking forward to the full ordination being available to all nuns in the Tibetan traditions.

Malcolm wrote:

Well, the problem is that they will not be Mulasarvastivadin bhikṣunis, since that ordination never even reached Tibet and died out in India. They will be Dharmaguptaka bhikṣunis, which is not our tradition. It is fine, but we have to be clear what is actually happening. We will have an odd situation where bhikṣus will be ordained according to one Vinaya, and bhikṣunis according to another.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, March 29th, 2015 at 8:23 AM

Title: Re: Hashang's view is higher than Kamalashila

Content:

Sherlock said:

Claiming Chan is a wrong view is something later Tibetans came up with.

.

Malcolm wrote:

Not really. The account of the defeat of Hashang comes from the Ba bshed, which is contemporary with Nubchen.

Even so, Nubchen argues that Mahāyoga is superior to Chan.

Also, their view was the same. They both had Madhyamaka views as far as I know.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, March 29th, 2015 at 8:23 AM

Title: Re: Hashang's view is higher than Kamalashila

Content:

Sherlock said:

Still, it seems some memory of his claim that Hashang Mahayana's view was fine seemed to have survived among Nyingmapas. Even Jigme Lingpa doesn't say that Hashang's view is wrong.

Malcolm wrote:

Much of Nubchen's texts was incorporated into the Kathang De nga.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, March 29th, 2015 at 8:25 AM

Title: Re: Gorampa & Tsongkhapa

Content:

Tsongkhapafan said:

Since these appearances are inseparable from emptiness and are ultimate truths, and they have a non-conceptual realisation of ultimate truth, they also have a non-conceptual realisation of appearances.

Malcolm wrote:

Changing appearances are ultimate truths? Since when?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, March 29th, 2015 at 10:56 AM

Title: Re: Nun's ordination

Content:

yan kong said:

Nuns lineage? Did they not revive the Theravadin nuns ordination in Sri Lanka?

Indrajala said:

In the absence of any living lineage of bhikṣuṇīs, a bhikṣu has the right to ordain new

bhikṣuṇīs.

Malcolm wrote:

No. Otherwise Tibetans would have done this long ago. This issue has been under discussion since at least the 15th century among Tibetans, and the general consensus has been there is no way to revive the Mulasarvastivada bhikshuni vows.

For example Gorampa Sonam Senge addresses this issue in his *sdom gsum kha skong*.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, March 29th, 2015 at 12:13 PM

Title: Re: Nun's ordination

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

No. Otherwise Tibetans would have done this long ago.

Indrajala said:

I don't know if the following scripture is available in Tibetan, but it does state the following:

《大愛道比丘尼經》：「阿難復問佛言：『便當令比丘作[比丘尼]師耶？』佛言：『不也。當令大比丘尼作師。若無比丘尼者，比丘僧可。』」

Mahāprajāpatī Bhikṣuni Sūtra: "Ānanda further asked the Buddha, 'Is it then permissible for a bhikṣu to act as a master [to a bhikṣuṇī]?' The Buddha said, 'No. It should be that a great bhikṣuṇī acts as master. If there are no bhikṣuṇīs, then the bhikṣu sangha is permitted [to carry out the ordination].'"

Elsewhere in the Chinese canon the following convention is established:

《沙彌尼離戒文》：「佛告諸弟子：汝慎莫妄度沙彌離，女人姿態難保悅，在須臾以復更生惡意，……自非菩薩、阿羅漢，不可度尼。」

Sūtra on Śrāmaṇerī Precepts (沙彌尼離戒文): "The Buddha spoke to the disciples, 'You must be careful not to carelessly ordain śrāmaṇerī -s. It is difficult to guard against delighting in a woman's charming presence. In a moment one will further produce unwholesome thoughts. ... If one is not a bodhisattva or arhat, ordination of nuns may not be carried out.'"

Thus it is understood in the absence of any living lineage of bhikṣuṇīs, a bhikṣu has the right to ordain new bhikṣuṇīs, but the presiding preceptor should be a bodhisattva or arhat.

I believe a similar understanding exists in Theravada, which legitimized Ajahn Brahm's decision to ordain bhikkunis despite protests from the Thai sangha.

Malcolm wrote:

There is no such text in the Mulasarvastivada Vinaya. If there were, the question of ordaining bhikshunis would not be an issue and the Tibetans would have restored the bhikshuni ordination six hundred years ago or more.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, March 29th, 2015 at 12:21 PM

Title: Re: Nun's ordination

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

There is no such text in the Mulasarvastivada Vinaya. If there were, the question of ordaining bhikshunis would not be an issue and the Tibetans would have restored the bhikshuni ordination six hundred years ago or more.

Indrajala said:

In today's world where Tibetans have access to Indian literature not included in the Tibetan canon, perhaps they can refer to such texts in their discussions and easily resolve their dilemma.

Malcolm wrote:

Yeah, it just does not work like that. The Mukasarvastivada bhikshuni ordination is dead and cannot be revived.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, March 29th, 2015 at 12:30 PM

Title: Re: Nun's ordination

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Yeah, it just does not work like that. The Mukasarvastivada bhikshuni ordination is dead and cannot be revived.

Indrajala said:

Their loss then. They have access to scriptures which are supposed to be buddhavaacana and would resolve the issue at hand immediately, but then maybe that's too easy a solution for a debate stretching back centuries, as it would make the parties concerned look bad.

Malcolm wrote:

In genral, tibetan vinayadharas are quite resistant to mixing amd matching vinayas. Tnere simply is no precedent for such a revival in the Mulasarvastivada literature. This is why the Karmapa is having nuns ordained according to the Dharmaguptaka lineage. Fortunately the Karmapa is satisfied it is intact and valid.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, March 29th, 2015 at 9:23 PM

Title: Re: Gorampa & Tsongkhapa

Content:

Tenzin Dorje said:

(Again, what I say is exclusively Prasangika, it's a unique tenet of the Middle Way Consequence school)

Malcolm wrote:

Correction, it is a unique tenet of Tsongkhapa's interpretation of Prasangika.

Since Goramapa lists more than 150 points of contention with Tsongkhapa's presentation of Prasangika Madhyamaka, it is really much better if you qualify your presentation with Tsongkhapa's interpretation since many of his unique interpretations are unknown to Indians as well as Tibetans. I understand that devotees of Tsongkhapa consider this to be a feature, whereas detractors of Tsongkhapa consider these innovations to be bugs in his view.

I myself am not expert enough in Tsongkhapa's writings to say much about them with certainty, but in general, I have personally found Goramapa's criticisms of Tsongkhapa's views regarding sūtra and tantra well founded. On the other hand, I generally accept Tsongkhapa's criticisms of Jonang view as having merit.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, March 29th, 2015 at 9:28 PM

Title: Re: Difference between Sakya & Gelug Vajrayogini

Content:

WeiHan said:

For example, In the Sakya's teaching, disciple was chided for blaming the efficacy of the mantra while it is their own fault for not concentrating well during the mantra recitation.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, this is must be the case.

WeiHan said:

On the contrary, in the Gelug teachings, it promises that even reciting the mantra with weak concentration will bring results and it is the only mantra that has this advantage in this degenerate age.

Malcolm wrote:

The root tantra states that reciting the mantra of the Vajra Queen has certain efficacies, but no where does it say that one may do so with distraction.

WeiHan said:

The Gelug teaching also make comparison with other tantra and practices so as to illustrate the supremacy of this practice while the Sakya teaching do not...

Malcolm wrote:
Again, this is not true.

WeiHan said:
However, my doubt is that if even mundane siddhis can be easily attained thru this practice, then why does the Sakya need the other Golden Dharmas which bundled together with this practice in the well known "13 Golden Dharmas"? For example, since VY is effective gaining wealth, then do you still need a Red Jambala?

Malcolm wrote:
Yogini is a practice for excellent siddhi, the other deities in the 13 are mostly for common siddhis.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Sunday, March 29th, 2015 at 9:34 PM
Title: Re: Establishing a Correct Understanding?
Content:

Malcolm wrote:
The term parabhāva = dependent existence. The term pratītyasamutpāda = dependent origination.
Candra's definition of dependent origination, "...production through the meeting such and such an assembly of causes and conditions is what is called "dependent origination."

Sherab said:
I was expecting more than just definitions as a response to my request for you to elaborate on your objection.

My argument is really quite straightforward.

Assume in the simplest of case that B arise from A. The process of B arising from A is dependent origination. Because of B arising from A, the existence of B is a dependent existence.

What I am arguing here is that dependent existence is inextricably linked to dependent origination. Dependent existence has no meaning without dependent origination in the context of the discussion of my objection to infinitely regressive causal chain.

Continuing with the simple example of B arising from A:
(1) dependent existence per Nagarjuna - Inherent existent S -> T -> U -> V -> W -> X -> Y -> Z -> A -> B (simple causal chain with an inherently existing S as the beginning)
(2) infinitely regressive dependent existence - <no beginning> -> X -> Y -> Z -> A -> B (simple causal chain without beginning)

Note that in causal chain (2) there is no inherent existence anywhere in the chain. That

is why it is different from causal chain (1) which starts off with an inherent existence, or in your own words, an unconditioned cause.

As a reminder, I have no problem with dependent existence per Nagarjuna. I have problem with infinitely regressive dependent existence.

Unless existence in the tetralemma is defined to cover inherent existence, dependent existence per Nagarjuna AND dependent existence from a beginningless causal chain, there is no true freedom from extremes.

Nagarjuna's definition of existence excludes dependent existence from a beginningless causal chain and since you follow Nagarjuna's definition of existence, the extreme of dependent existence from a beginningless causal chain is not negated.

Did the Buddha negate the extreme of dependent existence from a beginningless causal chain? Yes. But you cannot do this with the tetralemma if the definition of existence excludes dependent existence from a beginningless causal chain.

Malcolm wrote:

You apparently choose to ignore Nāgārjuna's statement, "Where is there an existence not included in inherent existence or dependent existence (another species of inherent existence)."

The process of b arising from a is not dependent origination. There are no single causes in the chain of dependent origination, which is why dependent existence is rejected by Nāgārjuna as species of inherent existence. Dependent origination means arising from a combination of causes and conditions. For example, a sprout arises not merely from a seed, but from soil, moisture, warmth and so on.

The point is that Nāgārjuna is rejecting dependent existence in favor of dependent origination. I really do not see why it is so hard for you to understand this. Since we are just going around in circles, I am going to stop this here. I won't respond to this thread anymore.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, March 29th, 2015 at 10:27 PM

Title: Re: Gorampa & Tsongkhapa

Content:

Tenzin Dorje said:

Still, to come back to our topic, Je Tsongkhapa asserts that a wrong consciousness realizes its own appearing object. For instance, ignorance realizes not inherent existence (because it is a non-existent and a non-existent can not be realized) but the appearance of inherent. The appearance of inherent existence is the appearing object of ignorance (a wrong consciousness and a conceptual consciousness). As to whether

ignorance has a conceived object, it is not clear, but if it has so, it is a terminological division of 'conceived object' because it is non-existent.

According to Tsongkhapa, and that's where it becomes interesting, others schools (including Svatantrika-Madhyamikas) can not properly answer the question "what does ignorance realize ?" because it can not realize a non-existent such as inherent existence, where he answers "it realizes its own appearing object, the appearance of inherent existence". It is indeed Tsongkhapa's understanding that a unique tenet of Prasangika is that 'a wrong consciousness realizes its own appearing object, and is valid in regard to it'.

Malcolm wrote:

Not sure what Tibetan term you mean by "realize", so your point is rather obscure to me because of it.

Tenzin Dorje said:

In this way also, the omniscient mind of a Buddha directly realizes the appearance of inherent existence that is in the continuum of sentient beings. This shows it directly realizes mental images that are the appearing objects of conceptual consciousnesses in the continuum of sentient beings. Now, as you pointed out, I don't know whether Prasangika apart from Tsongkhapa would hold this. I leave that up to you, and it'll make the 'debate' interesting

Malcolm wrote:

In general, the response is that sentient beings do not differentiate between existence and inherent existence. Because this is so, while it is true that Candrakīrti indeed identifies a subtle object of negation, inherent existence, the actual object of negation is the course object of negation, existence, because that is what sentient beings actually perceive and are actually deluded by.

Also, the problem with Tsongkhapa's hermeneutics here involve the fact that he is basically stating that while buddhas have no conceptual apprehension of their own, they apprehend the conceptual apprehensions of sentient beings, and that seems like a very strange position. The general position of Candrakīrti seems to be:

The peaceful kāya manifests like a wishfulfilling tree,
is nonconceptual like a wishfulfilling gem,
always existing for the benefit of the world until migrating beings are liberated,
this [kāya] appears free of proliferation

Meaning it is not necessary for buddhas to apprehend the concepts of sentient beings since they act effortlessly without concepts on the behalf of sentient beings like wishfulfilling gems and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, March 29th, 2015 at 11:11 PM

Title: Re: Hashang's view is higher than Kamalashila

Content:

Sherlock said:

Claiming Chan is a wrong view is something later Tibetans came up with.

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Malcolm wrote:

Not really. The account of the defeat of Hashang comes from the Ba shed, which is contemporary with Nubchen.

Even so, Nubchen argues that Mahāyoga is superior to Chan.

Also, their view was the same. They both had Madhyamaka views as far as I know.

Sherlock said:

Well, is it in the Ba shed fragment from Dunhuang? Ba shed was revised to make the account of Shantaraksita being detained seem less offensive from the version in Dunhuang, probably other things too.

Mahayoga is of course superior to sutra but Chan (at least 9th century Chan) is actually a superior mode of practice to Kamalashila's way even if their view of the ultimate was the same.

The gradual Mahayana path's meditation is pretty similar to Hinayana with the addition of bodhicitta motivation?

But in any case, non-Nyingmapas have maligned Hashang for centuries without really studying his view, this should stop.

Malcolm wrote:

You cannot really say that Hashang's method of practice is superior. Does Hashang's method mean that the three incalculable eons for practicing the bodhisattva path are not necessary or bypassed? If your answer is no, then how is it superior since the path in general is still gathering the gradual accumulations of merit and wisdom through the six perfections? It turns out to be a mere rhetorical superiority. If your answer is yes, than what is the use of Vajrayāna?

Gradual Mahāyāna is nothing like Hinayāna — why would you say such a thing? Have you never studied the Sutrālamkāra, Ratnavali, etc.?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, March 29th, 2015 at 11:25 PM

Title: Re: Hashang's view is higher than Kamalashila

Content:

Sherlock said:

ChNN agrees with Nubchen that gradual Mahayana is superior.

Malcolm wrote:

Superior exactly how? In what way is it superior? If the view is the same, and the path is the same, what precisely is the superiority of Hashang's perspective to Kamalashila's perspective?

You can't just toss these things out there with no reasons to back them up, otherwise, I will have to suspect you of being a sock puppet of Link and Zelda, and that just does not seem possible.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, March 29th, 2015 at 11:59 PM

Title: Re: The Gelug/Kagyu Tradition Of Mahamudra

Content:

shazan said:

...is there something that I am missing?

Malcolm wrote:

Direct introduction?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, March 29th, 2015 at 11:59 PM

Title: Re: Hashang's view is higher than Kamalashila

Content:

Mother's Lap said:

If it's better than gradual common Mahayana as recognised masters have acclaimed and 3 kalpas is the upper limit for the very best practitioner then what's left is that it's either easier and/or it takes a non-highest capacity practitioner less time to achieve the result but still adhering to the three kalpas time-frame. If someone is going to take 25 kalpas to reach buddhahood via the gradual method then non-gradual may take them 20 instead etc.

Malcolm wrote:

Quite honestly, until a complete and adequate translation of the relevant chapters are produced by someone, Nubchen's actual line of reasoning will remain opaque.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 30th, 2015 at 12:13 AM

Title: Re: Difference between Sakya & Gelug Vajrayogini

Content:

Sherlock said:

Vajrayogini was not one of Tsongkhapa's core practices.

Why do Gelugpas prefer it to his heart practices?

Malcolm wrote:

More to the point, Tsongkhapa rejected the whole exegetical foundation around which Yogini practice is elaborated, the ultimate secret category of mother tantras, called 'gsang mtha', based on the oral tradition of commenting on the intention of the Cakrasamvara Tantra that comes from Naropa exclusively through the Guru Abhayakirti (the elder Phaimthing) and through Mal Lotsawa and Sachen.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 30th, 2015 at 12:36 AM

Title: Re: Gorampa & Tsongkhapa

Content:

Tenzin Dorje said:

rtogs

Malcolm wrote:

rtogs pa - pratividdhā

rtogs pa - prativedha

rtogs pa - pratyavagama

rtogs pa - avagamana

rtogs pa - avabodha

rtogs pa - vijñāta

rtogs pa - veditvā

rtogs pa - upaparīkṣaṇā

rtogs pa - upaparīkṣā

rtogs pa - upalakṣyatva

rtogs pa - avabodha This is usually the term rtogs renders in order to communicate "realize."

Otherwise, comprehend is better here compare for example:

Sautrantikas present realizing consciousnesses and non-realizing consciousnesses. A wrong consciousness, such as the consciousness apprehending a blue snow mountain, would be a non-realizing consciousness. According to Tsongkhapa, all consciousnesses realize their appearing object. The reason is that we can remember an appearing object of a wrong consciousness, and if there was no realization in the 1st place, one wouldn't be able to remember having seen such and such.

against

Sautrantikas present comprehending consciousnesses and non-comprehending consciousnesses. A wrong consciousness, such as the consciousness apprehending a blue snow mountain, would be a non-comprehending consciousness. According to Tsongkhapa, all consciousnesses comprehend their appearing object. The reason is

that we can remember an appearing object of a wrong consciousness, and if there was no comprehension in the 1st place, one wouldn't be able to remember having seen such and such.

Tenzin Dorje said:

Or I simply didn't get why you meant by 'existence'. Please, explain, because geluk usually posit the quality of being 'self sufficient substantially existent' as the coarse object of negation.

Malcolm wrote:

A self-sufficient substantial entity would be an inherent existence, from our POV. But Tsongkhapa argues that is not the basis of negation, instead it is the inherent existence which is different than existence. From our point of view, existence is the coarse object of negation, and that is what is negated in Madhyamaka analysis generally, it, non-existence, both and neither in that order, unless one is an ārya, then one can dispense with the turn by turn negation of the four extremes. The purpose of negating the third extreme is not made irrelevant because it is double negation, as Tsongkhapa argues, but simply because there are those such as Jains and so on who maintain that there are things that are both existence and non-existent.

Tenzin Dorje said:

Do you assert that a Buddha doesn't know all objects of knowledge ?

Malcolm wrote:

[/quote]

While there are significant differences in the way the question of a Buddha's omniscience is handled in Sakya and Gelug. I am not qualified to discuss it, having never studied it in any detail.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 30th, 2015 at 1:49 AM

Title: Re: Difference between Sakya & Gelug Vajrayogini

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

However, my doubt is that if even mundane siddhis can be easily attained thru this practice, then why does the Sakya need the other Golden Dharmas which bundled together with this practice in the well known "13 Golden Dharmas"? For example, since VY is effective gaining wealth, then do you still need a Red Jambala?

Yogini is a practice for excellent siddhi, the other deities in the 13 are mostly for common siddhis.

WeiHan said:

I saw this quote in your blog

Loppon Rinpoche said:

This alone is the extracted essence of all my Dharma cycles. Since that great Guru did not propagate this intimate instruction, he did not allow me to. It is very important that you emphasize this, practice it secretly, and you will obtain the supreme siddhi of mahāmudrā in this life, and also there is no doubt that whatever ordinary things you wish can be accomplished with the intimate instructions.

Doesn't it also brings "whatever ordinary things you wish" as the Gelug's teaching taught?

Malcolm wrote:

There are a couple of minor deities included in the Yogini cycle for common siddhis.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 30th, 2015 at 2:18 AM

Title: Re: Difference between Sakya & Gelug Vajrayogini

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

There are a couple of minor deities included in the Yogini cycle for common siddhis.

WeiHan said:

You mean like for example those in the 13 Golden Dharmas, like Kurukulle from Hevajra etc...?

Malcolm wrote:

Similar.

WeiHan said:

Do you know if one has to be vegetarian if one practices Tara-Kurukulle (one of the 13 Golden Dharmas) since it is not a anutarayoga practice?

Malcolm wrote:

I think it is actually an anuttara practice.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 30th, 2015 at 5:52 AM

Title: Re: Understanding a Passage from Chandrakirti

Content:

Bakmoon said:

I have a question about how Madhyamakavatara 6.36 is understood. It reads:

Reasonings prove that arising from self and other
Are illogical in suchness.

Since they also prove that arising is illogical conventionally,
On what basis do you speak of “arising”?

But if arising is refuted conventionally as well as ultimately, how should this be understood to avoid refuting dependent arisings on the level of appearances? I am particularly interested as to how this passage is understood outside of Gelug, especially according to the understanding of Gorampa.

I would like to note here before anything else that I'm not asking this as a polemic and I certainly don't want this to turn into a debate thread about whether Gorampa or anyone else is right or wrong. I'm just trying to grow in understanding here.

To me it seems that the text requires some kind of qualification, but I can't see how the text can really be qualified without doing serious violence to the plain meaning of the text.

Malcolm wrote:

According to Candrakīrti's own commentary on this passage, what is being refuted is arising through intrinsic characteristics.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 30th, 2015 at 5:56 AM

Title: Re: Nun's ordination

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

His Holiness points out that there have been nuns given ordination in Tibet, even though these isolated ordinations didn't end up with a bhikṣuṇī sangha being formed, so this a historical precedent for nuns being ordained by monks alone even in Tibet.

Malcolm wrote:

It is considered a broken ordination, even when it was performed, and was highly controversial. Such ordainees cannot themselves ordain novices in turn.

tellyontellyon said:

...so I don't think we just just rely on what has been done in the past.

Malcolm wrote:

The consensus has come down this: in order for there to be an order of nuns in Tibetan Buddhism, they must receive a living lineage from other nuns. Luckily, this still exists in Chinese Buddhism, in the Dharmaguptaka order. The main difficulty here is that these nuns are not and never will be Mulasarvastivādin nuns. But on the face of it, that is not what these women care about (i.e. which order into which they are ordained), they want to be bhikṣuṇīs.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 30th, 2015 at 6:39 AM

Title: Re: Nun's ordination

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

In any case.... how much of a deal is it to the Tibetan schools whether or not they would be considered to have their vows coming from the Dharmaguptaka line or the Mulasarvastivadin line?

Malcolm wrote:

It depends on the school.

tellyontellyon said:

Do people here think their status as fully ordained nuns would be respected? From the article I quoted above, the Karmapa seems to be saying that as the vows come mainly from the monks, even in the dual ordination, so they should be considered nuns in the Mulasarvastivadin line.

Malcolm wrote:

I think their vows will be respected, but I am not really sure they can be considered Mulasarvastivada Bhikṣunis. But, the Karmapa can do as he sees fit.

I think it nevertheless will be considered controversial. But controversy never prevented anyone from doing anything in Tibetan Buddhism.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 30th, 2015 at 7:43 AM

Title: Re: Nun's ordination

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

I'm no scholar, so I don't understand the importance of whether they will be considered as Mulasarvastivada Bhikṣunis by other schools. What is the significance of this? Why does it matter?

Are we likely to see ordination of nuns in this format taken up by the other schools?

Malcolm wrote:

As to the first point, as far as I know, these mixed Sangha ordinations are in themselves somewhat controversial to begin with.

As to your second question, I honestly don't know.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 30th, 2015 at 8:25 PM

Title: Re: "Buddhism" vs. "Buddhadharma"

Content:

dharmagoat said:

While it is true that this discourse was addressed to the non-Buddhist Kalamas, it would be arrogant to assume that it doesn't apply to Buddhists too.

Malcolm wrote:

The Pabbakotthaka Sutta:

I have heard that on one occasion the Blessed One was staying in Savatthi, at the Eastern Gatehouse. There he addressed Ven. Shariputra: "Shariputra, do you take it on conviction that the faculty of conviction, when developed and pursued, plunges into the Deathless, has the Deathless as its goal and consummation? Do you take it on conviction that the faculty of persistence... mindfulness... concentration... discernment, when developed and pursued, plunges into the Deathless, has the Deathless as its goal and consummation?"

"Lord, it's not that I take it on conviction in the Blessed One that the faculty of conviction... persistence... mindfulness... concentration... discernment, when developed and pursued, plunges into the Deathless, has the Deathless as its goal and consummation. Those who have not known, seen, penetrated, realized, or attained it by means of discernment would have to take it on conviction in others that the faculty of conviction... persistence... mindfulness... concentration... discernment, when developed and pursued, plunges into the Deathless, has the Deathless as its goal and consummation; whereas those who have known, seen, penetrated, realized, and attained it by means of discernment would have no doubt or uncertainty that the faculty of conviction... persistence... mindfulness... concentration... discernment, when developed and pursued, plunges into the Deathless, has the Deathless as its goal and consummation. And as for me, I have known, seen, penetrated, realized, and attained it by means of discernment. I have no doubt or uncertainty that the faculty of conviction... persistence... mindfulness... concentration... discernment, when developed and pursued, plunges into the Deathless, has the Deathless as its goal and consummation."

"Excellent, Shariputra. Excellent. Those who have not known, seen, penetrated, realized, or attained it by means of discernment would have to take it on conviction in others that the faculty of conviction... persistence... mindfulness... concentration... discernment, when developed and pursued, plunges into the Deathless, has the Deathless as its goal and consummation; whereas those who have known, seen, penetrated, realized, and attained it by means of discernment would have no doubt or uncertainty that the faculty of conviction... persistence... mindfulness... concentration... discernment, when developed and pursued, plunges into the Deathless, has the Deathless as its goal and consummation."

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 30th, 2015 at 8:26 PM

Title: Re: "Buddhism" vs. "Buddhadharma"

Content:

Simon E. said:

But the heart of Buddhadharma remains experiential, as it has has been. Under the guidance of one who has walked that experiential path further than have we.

dharmagoat said:

We are actually in agreement... I think.

The thrust of my argument all along has been that the spirit of Buddhism (the Buddhadharma?) is by nature experiential, and not theoretical.

That the theory can be a source of obstacles.

Malcolm wrote:

No, theory is not an obstacle, the wrong theory is an obstacle. The eight fold path begins with correct view.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 30th, 2015 at 8:28 PM

Title: Re: "Buddhism" vs. "Buddhadharma"

Content:

dharmagoat said:

These two terms are used interchangeably by some, yet are given distinct meanings by others.

These days the term "Buddhadharma" seems to be reserved for the more historical interpretations of the Buddha's teaching, whereas the modern term "Buddhism" is applied to all interpretations, except perhaps the more unconventional ones.

To be a "Buddhist" means to be an adherent of "Buddhism". What exactly is "Buddhism", and how is it different from "Buddhadharma"?

In a changing world, how does "Buddhadharma" earn its special status?

Challenge23 said:

The impression I've gotten from reading people who use the term is that "Buddhadharma" is based upon a highly specific form of Buddhism that is literal and traditional. For example, a "Buddhist" might hear the story about Milarepa flying from point A to point B and think that it was a metaphor, an exaggeration, or any of the myriad interpretations that would end with, "Milarepa didn't really fly from point A to point B". However, someone who believes in "Buddhadharma" would believe that Milarepa did, in fact, fly from point A to point B and anyone who disagrees with them are ignorant.

It reminds me a great deal of the difference in Christianity between Christians and Born Again Christians.

Malcolm wrote:

No, this is not the case. What is the case is that when someone explicitly claims that rebirth, karma and so on are interpretable, when for the Buddha they were clearly ideas he took literally, that person has fallen into wrong view. They may even erect a whole "Buddhism" around this idea, but it will never be Buddhadharma.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 30th, 2015 at 8:32 PM

Title: Re: "Buddhism" vs. "Buddhadharma"

Content:

Simon E. said:

It wouldn't be arrogant at all to see that the Buddha was addressing not merely those who were not his followers, but followers of another teacher whose authority unlike his own, was based on tradition, particular interpretations of scriptures, specious reasoning etc. It would simply be a statement of fact.

dharmagoat said:

And now that the Buddha's teaching is based on tradition, particular interpretations of scriptures, etc., his advice no longer applies?

Malcolm wrote:

People always forget that at the end of this sutta, it is said:

"Marvelous, venerable sir! Marvelous, venerable sir! As if, venerable sir, a person were to turn face upwards what is upside down, or to uncover the concealed, or to point the way to one who is lost or to carry a lamp in the darkness, thinking, 'Those who have eyes will see visible objects,' so has the Dhamma been set forth in many ways by the Blessed One. We, venerable sir, go to the Blessed One for refuge, to the Dhamma for refuge, and to the Community of Bhikkhus for refuge. Venerable sir, may the Blessed One regard us as lay followers who have gone for refuge for life, from today."

And having gone for refuge, they now are taking it on conviction in someone else that there is a path, and a result.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 30th, 2015 at 8:46 PM

Title: Re: siddhis--why aren't they used more?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

It follows then that since rebirth is manifests in the material realm, you therefore must also come up with an explanation for it according to natural science. ... The mind clearly interacts with matter every time rebirth occurs. How is this possible? How can a nonmaterial entity interact with a material one?

The material realm is what is within the experience of the five senses. Can the mind be

seen, heard, smelt, tasted or touched? Does it have a form, a colour, a spatial or temporal existence? It does not. How could then we say it manifests as a physical object?

No said it manifested as a physical object, merely that it appropriates physical objects, namely a body, in a material realm, in our case, the kamadhātu.

On the connection between mind and matter, there are the 18 dhatus, abhidharma literature and yogacara works.

None of which really explain from a scientific point of view how this mysterious interaction between mind and body works.

That is, the four elements are solidity/extension, cohesion/fluidity, heat and motion, so they are what is experienced by consciousness and not a separate realm.

The four elements are clearly properties of material entities.

Nevertheless, various experiences are categorised differently, thus the distinction between name and form, feeling and concept, etc. In other words, instead of choosing either that body and mind are one or two, the Buddha taught the five aggregates.

Four aggregates are strictly mental, one of them is strictly material (the rūpa skandha, the material aggregate), comprised of the four elements, out of which the five sense organs are made. Of the four mental aggregates, three of them are mental factors, caittas; while one is the mind, citta/vijñāna/manas.

The Buddha also regularly uses the older Indian term for mind and body, i.e. namarūpa, which in particular refers to the period of time of development in the womb after conception and before the sense organs develop.

That's why regarding superpowers I take the position presented in the Vimalakirti Sutra, that it depends on one's perception, and there is no such power that could be demonstrated for everyone, thus my distinction between physical and spiritual powers. You have not addressed my objection in the slightest, you have not explained to us how it is that consciousness, which is a non-material entity, functions through the sense organs via patches of atoms located on the various physical structures in their respective locations such as the eye, and so on.

Moreover, in the citations you provided, no one doubts that the five abhijñās are mental experiences, but so is the taste of my coffee. Your contention however was that such things as levitation, manomayakāyas, and so on were simply subjective experiences of adepts, were not part of physical reality, and solely the domain of fantasy — even though of course Buddha, and other mahasiddhas displayed these miraculous events to others present.

But despite all these things, you have not provided any reason at all that suggests that your acceptance of rebirth is rational and your rejection of iddhi-pāṭis and so on is also rational. Your acceptance of former is actually irrational because you reject the latter.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 30th, 2015 at 8:56 PM

Title: Re: Gorampa & Tsongkhapa

Content:

Tsongkhapa said:

Since these appearances are inseparable from emptiness and are ultimate truths, and they have a non-conceptual realisation of ultimate truth, they also have a non-conceptual realisation of appearances.

Malcolm wrote:

Changing appearances are ultimate truths? Since when?

Tsongkhapa said:

Conventional truths are manifestations of the self-grasping mind. In truth, all phenomena are mere name or mere appearance, and this mere name is one nature with the ultimate truth of phenomena, not its conventional nature. For a Buddha, forms are ultimate truths because there is no contradiction between how they appear and how they exist.

Malcolm wrote:

You still have not explained how impermanent things are ultimate.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 30th, 2015 at 9:16 PM

Title: Re: Hashang's view is higher than Kamalashila

Content:

tingdzin said:

Well, Guenther discussed this in short pieces a long time ago, and the OP might find what he had to say useful. I don't want to stick my head into the (useless) argument besides that.

Malcolm wrote:

Basically, what it amounts to is the very Chinese Buddhist idea, later widely adopted by Kagyus and Nyingmas, that there were very clear sets of sutras that could be distinguished by the turning to which they belong.

Nubchen asserts that Hashang depended on these definitive sutras, and that Kamashila depended on provisional sutras.

But here, Nubchen is showing evidence of influence from Chinese Buddhism. It is really nothing more profound than this.

This is fine, but the reality of it is that the Indians never gave any importance to idea of three turnings at all. I don't either, which is why I find Nubchen's notion that Hashang's teachings are higher than Kamalashila's based on which turning of wheel to which they supposedly adhere to be a completely bogus proposition, DOA. Understandable, but DOA. Accepting Nubchen's POV on this means accepting the distinction between the three turnings as understood in Chinese Buddhism and I simply do not think that is a

particularly valid way of understanding sūtras.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 30th, 2015 at 9:28 PM

Title: Re: Gorampa & Tsongkhapa

Content:

narraboth said:

"The works of some other Sakya lamas which criticized Tsongkhapa or seemed at odds with those views were banned from publication entirely within Tibet and were only preserved secretly and re-published openly from Bhutan after 1959."

Malcolm wrote:

Primarily the works of Shakya Chogden.

narraboth said:

Not sure what those 'works' are and how he defines 'Tibet'. I recently read some letters that Papongka Dechen Nyingpo sent to some Chinese, one of them is chairman Liu, the head of Kham province at that time (during ROC's ruling 1912-1949, Tibet and Kham are two different provinces). He suggested Liu to support monastery but be careful about textbooks that contained wrong views, and he said that some people printed and published those wrong view books including Gorampa's commentaries in Dege, which is very bad for Buddha dharma etc.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, a Sakyapa named Jamyang Lama at Derge gathered all the extant manuscripts of Gorampa's works and had them carved into block prints.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 30th, 2015 at 9:29 PM

Title: Re: Gorampa & Tsongkhapa

Content:

Sherlock said:

Khenpo Zhenga reemphasized Indic studies and freedom from extremes.

Malcolm wrote:

Maybe to Nyingmapas. Gorampa's view is the official view of the Sakya school, and Shenga studied with Sakya khenpos.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 30th, 2015 at 9:34 PM

Title: Re: "Buddhism" vs. "Buddhadharma"

Content:

Challenge23 said:

The impression I've gotten from reading people who use the term is that "Buddhadharma" is based upon a highly specific form of Buddhism that is literal and traditional. For example, a "Buddhist" might hear the story about Milarepa flying from point A to point B and think that it was a metaphor, an exaggeration, or any of the myriad interpretations that would end with, "Milarepa didn't really fly from point A to point B". However, someone who believes in "Buddhadharma" would believe that Milarepa did, in fact, fly from point A to point B and anyone who disagrees with them are ignorant.

It reminds me a great deal of the difference in Christianity between Christians and Born Again Christians.

Malcolm wrote:

No, this is not the case. What is the case is that when someone explicitly claims that rebirth, karma and so on are interpretable, when for the Buddha they were clearly ideas he took literally, that person has fallen into wrong view. They may even erect a whole "Buddhism" around this idea, but it will never be Buddhadharma.

Challenge23 said:

Other than exchanging "Milarepa flying from point A to point B" with "rebirth" or "karma" and "ignorant" with "wrong view", I'm not sure where we part ways here. Do you disagree because of the analogy between Buddhadharma and Born Again Christianity? Having grown up with non-denominational and Pentecostal Christians I can tell you it is quite accurate. Both groups believe that their respective sources are the ultimate and final authority, both groups believe that what is in those sources is literally true, and both groups believe that one should reorganize their lives based upon what is in their respective sources upon pain of horrible consequences (really the only difference between Avici Hell and the Christian Hell is that Avici is almost eternal but the Christian Hell is eternal). With that said, I do freely admit that BA Christianity is evangelical (meaning there is a drive to convert others), while Buddhadharma is most definitely not.

Malcolm wrote:

This is not the point:

However, someone who believes in "Buddhadharma" would believe that Milarepa did, in fact, fly from point A to point B and anyone who disagrees with them are ignorant.

This is the point:

However, someone who believes in "Buddhadharma" accepts rebirth, karma, etc., and anyone who disagrees with them is ignorant [about the real nature of Buddha's teachings.]

It is not fundamentalist thing — it is about accurately understanding what the Buddha taught and then deciding whether or not one can accept what he taught. If you can't, then please do not try to twist the Buddha's teachings into something that corresponds with your prejudices.

Further, "Buddhisms" tend to focus on one aspect of Buddha's teachings, they can never encompass the whole of it. I am a Tibetan Buddhist because I follow that path and system, but there is more to Buddhadharma than Tibetan Buddhism, there is Chan, Pure Land, etc. Sometimes "Buddhisms" are distortions of the Buddha's teachings, like Secular Buddhism and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 30th, 2015 at 10:42 PM

Title: Re: siddhis--why aren't they used more?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

None of which really explain from a scientific point of view how this mysterious interaction between mind and body works.

Astus said:

Scientifically there are no non-physical objects to investigate or establish a connection with. Otherwise the duality of mind and body in Buddhism is only a conventional term as all phenomena are within the experiential realm and distinguished as form and names as a way to talk about categories of experiences. If we begin to analyse such conventions in Buddhism then we gradually end up with mind-only and emptiness.

Malcolm wrote:

But you asserted as a hard fact that these phenomena [iddhi-pattis, siddhis, etc.] could never be real in a physical sense, which means you must be harboring some residual realism.

Astus said:

The four elements are clearly properties of material entities.

They are called material entities because they exhibit such properties and are experienced with the first five consciousnesses. Supposing a noumenal substance, independent object, beyond the phenomenal level is either a conventional approach or a substantialist philosophy.

Malcolm wrote:

It's odd that you take refuge in tenet systems, and yet harbor residual realism.

Astus said:

Yes, supernormal phenomena are not part of our everyday physical reality, not part of what is commonly called physical - the area of study of physics - and cannot be explained with physical laws.

Malcolm wrote:

But according to you, that does not matter because such laws are merely conventions

and are not real in any substantial sense.

Astus said:

They can happen only if conceived within a subjective experiential realm where one doesn't have to account for the conservation of mass and energy (small becomes big, one becomes many, etc.). In other words, the mechanism of supernormal powers cannot be logically described within the confines of the general laws of this physical reality.

Malcolm wrote:

Wait, mass and energy are real? They impose hard, factual limitations? How you can escape the charge of substantialism by making this assertion?

Astus said:

But if you say that buddhas and ordinary beings as well can perform such abilities in the common physical world, then - as referred to before - there are a number of questions not yet answered, beginning with the first post of this thread.

Malcolm wrote:

The common physical world is either substantially real or it is not. If it is not, then there should be no problem accepting such things as iddhi-patis even if they do not normally conform to conventional expectations of 20th century humans. There are certainly plenty of anecdotal evidence of yogis who leave their footprints and handprints in rocks and so on in the Himalayas and certainly plenty of people, even westerners who have observed such events. It is rank substantialism to claim that such events are impossible because some imputed "general laws of this physical reality."

Astus said:

But despite all these things, you have no provided any reason at all that suggests that your acceptance of rebirth is rational and your rejection of iddhi-patis and so on is also rational. Your acceptance of former is actually irrational because you reject the latter. I do not reject supernormal powers. What I find problematic is the idea that they exist within the physical context.

Malcolm wrote:

Right, and you have this problem because you have realist tendencies, not unlike Sarvastivadins. The abhijñās are one thing, of course these are mental abilities, the iddhi-pattis/siddhis are something else again, they are not just mental abilities, though they come from having developed powers over the mind, having done so, they lend the ability to have power over matter, which according what you state above, is either a convention or mind-only.

Astus said:

But instead of answering for the questions and problems pertaining to the view that they

manifest as ordinary physical phenomena, there are only evasive responses and irrelevant comments.

Malcolm wrote:

And you have continually engaged in self-contradictions and demonstrated that you are at base a realist.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 30th, 2015 at 11:31 PM

Title: Re: siddhis--why aren't they used more?

Content:

Astus said:

That is, within the realist/materialist view there is no place for magic. Only in the realm of subjective experience.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, so finally you admit it, your view is realist and materialist, as I have been maintaining for some time.

As far as your contention goes that minds cannot influence other minds, this is merely an assertion on your part, and not something you have proven.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 30th, 2015 at 11:35 PM

Title: Re: siddhis--why aren't they used more?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Wait, mass and energy are real? They impose hard, factual limitations? How you can escape the charge of substantialism by making this assertion?

Astus said:

Causality is still accepted as the way phenomena function, isn't it? It's not just anything goes and things appear out of nothing.

Malcolm wrote:

Candrakīrti was walking through the halls of Nalanda, reading a book. He accidentally bumped into a pillar. A clever student spied this as said "Ha, that pillar is not very empty is it!"

Candra stopped, and without a word passed his hand right through the pillar, much to the students astonishment, and then continued on his way..

You put too much faith in the delusion known as "relative truth," Astus.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 31st, 2015 at 12:12 AM

Title: Re: siddhis--why aren't they used more?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, so finally you admit it, your view is realist and materialist, as I have been maintaining for some time.

As far as your contention goes that minds cannot influence other minds, this is merely an assertion on your part, and not something you have proven.

Astus said:

As WeiHan pointed out, I don't reject supernatural powers. But I reject being a materialist.

If one mind can control another, how come buddhas cannot make everyone enlightened? Then one person could make another think (and feel, and do) whatever that one wants, rendering the other a mere puppet.

Malcolm wrote:

I said influence, you said control, there is a world of difference between these two words.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 31st, 2015 at 12:14 AM

Title: Re: siddhis--why aren't they used more?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

You put too much faith in the delusion known as "relative truth," Astus.

Astus said:

Are you on the position that ultimate truth contradicts and/or negates the relative? That dependent origination is something else than emptiness?

Malcolm wrote:

Ultimate truth is the object of a nondeluded cognition, relative truth is the object of a deluded cognition. Deluded and nondeluded cognitions are mutually exclusive.

Anything that dependently originates that is said to be empty, it is true.

But this does not mean that when someone has the ability control the element of air, etc., they cannot fly.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 31st, 2015 at 12:23 AM

Title: Re: siddhis--why aren't they used more?

Content:

Astus said:

...the idea that there is an independent realm of objects beyond/behind experience.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, an idea that you subscribe to by insisting that there are immutable physical laws.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 31st, 2015 at 12:32 AM

Title: Re: siddhis--why aren't they used more?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

I said influence, you said control, there is a world of difference between these two words.

Astus said:

What form of influence do you mean?

Mental influence was already discussed a bit in this thread

<http://dharmawheel.net/viewtopic.php?p=275349#p275349>.

Malcolm wrote:

For example, the traces in the minds of sentient beings are sufficiently strong that they can influence the minds of others in terms of what appearances they see.

A classic example of this is the story of the lady who meditated upon herself as a tiger, causing the other villagers to see a tiger instead of her.

Then there is the famous example of the goddess of the Ganges who transformed herself in the form of Śariputra, and him into her form, much to his dismay.

There is the story of the nāga princess who changed her gender to male also, etc., etc.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 31st, 2015 at 12:45 AM

Title: Re: Hashang's view is higher than Kamalashila

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Basically, what it amounts to is the very Chinese Buddhist idea, later widely adopted by Kagyus and Nyingmas, that there were very clear sets of sutras that could be

distinguished by the turning to which they belong.

Nubchen asserts that Hashang depended on these definitive sutras, and that Kamashila depended on provisional sutras.

But here, Nubchen is showing evidence of influence from Chinese Buddhism. It is really nothing more profound than this.

This is fine, but the reality of it is that the Indians never gave any importance to idea of three turnings at all. I don't either, which is why I find Nubchen's notion that Hashang's teachings are higher than Kamalashila's based on which turning of wheel to which they supposedly adhere to be a completely bogus proposition, DOA. Understandable, but DOA. Accepting Nubchen's POV on this means accepting the distinction between the three turnings as understood in Chinese Buddhism and I simply do not think that is a particularly valid way of understanding sūtras.

narraboth said:

As a Chinese who started from Chinese Buddhism study, I don't think the idea of 'three turning of wheel' was that popular in our tradition. We do say 'five periods' based on Mahāyāna Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra: 'Just like from the milk the yogurt is made, from yogurt the raw butter is made....' However, it's not really about which period is superior in view. For example, the first period is āvatamsaka period, the sutra is surely a Mahayana text, just Chinese suggested that it's direct and unrefined as fresh milk, not everyone can digest it.

We do have Sandhinirmocana Sūtra translated though, but I think it's more emphasized by Yogācāra school (in China) rather than Zen school. In Zen school, at least after Song dynasty, the most important sutra is Vajracchedikā Prajñāpāramitā Sūtra. So I am not sure if Chinese give three turnings much importance at all. My feeling as a Chinese is that Tibetan emphasize it more than anyone.

Malcolm wrote:

I am not saying it is popular in the Chinese tradition, I am saying that its source is Chinese.

The idea of ranking sutras in terms of provisionality and definitiveness comes primarily from the Chinese commentary in the Samdhinirmocana Sutra. Chinese Buddhism indeed has a number of schemes where the Buddha's teachings are ranked according to when he is supposed to have taught them, but the source of the idea of three turnings of the wheel elaborated in this way is this commentary that I mentioned by Won-ch'uk, the 'phags pa dgongs pa zab mo nges par 'grel pa'i mdo rgya cher 'grel pa in three volumes. Since this concept is virtually absent from Indian sources, it must be from Chinese sources.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 31st, 2015 at 3:56 AM

Title: Re: Gorampa & Tsongkhapa

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

rtogs pa - avabodha This is usually the term rtogs renders in order to communicate "realize."

Tenzin Dorje said:

True. Why then go against what you yourself say is usual translation?

Malcolm wrote:

Because here I do not think rtogs is being used to translate, or has the same sense as 'avabodha'. It is a clumsy way to translate the passage.

Tenzin Dorje said:

Plus, I've indicated a number of translations (such as ascertain, know, understand, and so forth) and since you know what rtogs pa is, we don't need to argue on the translation. It is exactly like the fact that there is no need to argue on the term of "compassion" when we know the Buddhist definition, function, divisions of it, on the pretext that its Latin etymology of it as to do with "to suffer with..."

Malcolm wrote:

The point is that the term rtogs renders any number of Sanskrit terms — in general in Tibetan "rtogs pa" actually means "understand" or "know" (shes pa). When it is used in the sense of "realize", it is being used in the sense of avabodha, but here it is not being used in that sense of avabodha.

A self-sufficient substantial entity would be an inherent existence, from our POV. But Tsongkhapa argues that is not the basis of negation, instead it is the inherent existence which is different than existence. From our point of view, existence is the coarse object of negation[...]

In fact, we say the basis is either phenomena or a person. The subtle object of negation is the same in both cases, though.

It doesn't matter, the subtle object of negation is not the actual object of negation in Madhyamaka, Candrakīrti only introduces it as a formality.

Still, I don't understand what you mean by 'existence is the coarse object of negation'. No one perceives inherent existence, which is a philosophical abstraction. People do perceive existence, and that is what is negated through Madhyamaka analysis because that is what people perceive. But negating existence is not enough, one must also negate nonexistence, both and neither. When one is an ārya, however, one does not need to proceed through the four-fold negation.

The Sakyas maintain that the difference between Bhāvaviveka and Candrakīrti is pedagogical only.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 31st, 2015 at 3:58 AM

Title: Re: siddhis--why aren't they used more?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, an idea that you subscribe to by insisting that there are immutable physical laws.

Astus said:

Isn't karma immutable?

Malcolm wrote:

Karma is unerring, but it is not immutable.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 31st, 2015 at 5:21 AM

Title: Re: "white metal" mandala plate turning my wrist grey

Content:

summertime said:

Hi, Just recently starting mandala offerings with one of those fancy looking "birthday cake" stacked plates with the auspicious symbols on the side. The vendor told me it was made of "white metal." I'm curious if anyone knows what that is, and why it might be making my wrist turn grey after a while when I rub the plate with it. Anyone else encounter this issue? My main concern is maybe there's lead in the plate. In case it is something in the plate reacting with something on my skin, I'm going to try to be more careful about washing not just my hands but my wrists also.

Malcolm wrote:

Get a copper mandala plate.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 31st, 2015 at 7:00 AM

Title: Re: "Buddhism" vs. "Buddhadharma"

Content:

dharmagoat said:

Could the Buddha's teachings of rebirth and karma be provisional?

Might it be a mistake to interpret them as absolute truths?

Malcolm wrote:

The Buddha himself defined wrong view as rejection of karma and rebirth in many places. They may be part of relative truth, but I would hardly characterize them as provisional.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 31st, 2015 at 8:11 AM

Title: Re: "white metal" mandala plate turning my wrist grey

Content:

Ayu said:

Hello summertime

I saw this phenomenon also when people rubbed their silver coloured mandala sets. It was silver-colour and I don't think it is good to have this on the skin regularly.

I heard, people fixed their sets with transparent varnish.

Also I saw beautifully painted mandala sets. The ornaments were painted with vivid colours. Maybe you'd like to paint it like that.

summertime said:

I'd be concerned about the varnish or paint coming off on my arm, too. Do you happen to know what kind of varnish it is that would be used for this?

Malcolm wrote:

Copper is considered a precious metal, but so called "white metal" is not. Get yourself a copper mandala plate. It will be non-toxic, and of superior material since you cannot afford silver or gold.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 31st, 2015 at 8:16 AM

Title: Re: "Buddhism" vs. "Buddhadharma"

Content:

Dan74 said:

I'd also beg to differ with JD that Buddhadharma becomes nonsensical if rebirth is thrown away.

Malcolm wrote:

Of course it does. The Buddha's whole outline of the path of liberation automatically becomes gibberish without rebirth.

Dan74 said:

I know I don't share many members' distaste for Secular Buddhism. It is not my path, but I see much good on it that people can bring to their lives and lives of those around them.

Malcolm wrote:

Secular Buddhism is a contrivance of the ignorant, and being a product of ignorance, cannot benefit anyone at all.

Dan74 said:

Essentially Humanism with some of the Dharmic techniques thrown in makes the best framework an atheist can embrace and if it was truly embraced, the world would be a much better place and Buddhadharma would be the next natural step, I believe.

Malcolm wrote:

It would be much better if so called Secular Buddhists would leave the term "Buddhist" off their "faith" and replace it with something more honest and apropos, such as "Humanism".

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 31st, 2015 at 8:18 AM

Title: Re: Kadampa Buddhism

Content:

Dema said:

I have been going to a Kadampa temple that's in the area. I really like it and the people and the temple are very nice. but you really need to be a temple supporter to do anything there. or everything cost 5 bucks and for 3 months it like 110 bucks and i dont have that. So if anyone practices this schooling. maybe some books i can read that might help? i would like to get a bit more deeper in the the noble truths

thank you

Dema

Malcolm wrote:

You should check the TOS:

The discussion of or linking to material from groups and individuals that promote them, such as Geshe Kelsang Gyato's New Kadampa Tradition or Tsem Tulku Rinpoche's Kechara are not welcome and will be removed.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 31st, 2015 at 8:46 PM

Title: Re: siddhis--why aren't they used more?

Content:

Ayu said:

Yes, but aren't you discussing about who is able to change the karma? Only the person who owns this certain karma can change it in longterm view, isn't it?

As far as I understood, a Buddha or a teacher with siddhis can give a little nudge to the better direction - which might be a great relief. But he cannot change the karma from outside.

Malcolm wrote:

No. I was just answering Astus' question. Karma is unerring, but it is no means something that must ripen in a certain way. For example, the heavy karma of bodhisattvas must ripen, it does not ripen as being reborn in lower realms, but instead, as the Karmavibhanga states:

The one endowed with this Dharma completely purifies in this life even the karma that results in birth in the three lower realms through pain in the eye, ear, nose, tongue or a pain in the head, being afflicted by a pain in the limb or the heart, or being afflicted by a

contagious disease, pain in the abdomen, or when traveling to other lands, being killed, bound, beaten, abused, struck, criticized or vision in a nightmare.
Thus karma is unerring, but not immutable.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 31st, 2015 at 8:51 PM

Title: Re: "Buddhism" vs. "Buddhadharma"

Content:

Dan74 said:

So only what is put forward by the enlightened can be of any benefit? Maybe we have different notions of 'benefit'.

Malcolm wrote:

Only what is put forth by awakened people is the Dharma. Of ordinary people like you and I start pretending that we can alter the Dharma to suit this or that purpose, this is called "Corrupting the Dharma."

Perhaps the tag 'Buddhist' is more likely to lead people to Buddhadharma? Why worry about the trademark?

It is not a question of being concerned with trademarks, it is a question of honesty.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 31st, 2015 at 9:32 PM

Title: Re: Hashang's view is higher than Kamalashila

Content:

Sherlock said:

Nubchen's works were lost to Tibetans until quite recently, the last 80 years or something, and even when they were rediscovered not many people read them.

Malcolm wrote:

Regarding this, actually, we know that Lochen Dharmashrī had a hand written manuscript of the bsam gtan mig sgron, as well as the Jonangpa Jetsun Kunga Nying po (Taranatha). So it seems that this text actually circulated among elite Tibetan scholars all along.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 31st, 2015 at 11:54 PM

Title: Re: How does 18 early Buddhism School Related to Mahayana?

Content:

Aemilius said:

Nagarjuna, who lived two or three centuries before Asanga and Vasubandu, is at least in one place criticizing the Yogacara view, (found that in Christian Lindtner's Master of Wisdom, Writings of Nagarjuna).

.

Malcolm wrote:

You are referring to the Bodhicittavivarana, this late tantric text is associated with the Guhyasamaja Tantra — I have no idea why Lindtner imagines it is by Nāgārjuna I, there is no chance that it is.

Aemilius said:

His grounds sound reasonable for holding it a work of Nagarjuna. Lindtner explains his justifications for two pages in the above mentioned book.

In the earlier editions of Lindtner's Master of Wisdom there was also a translation of Akutobhya. It is most unfortunate that he has decided to remove Akutobhya from his collection of translations of Arya Nagarjuna's works.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, I know, I have the book. But he is mistaken. It is actually a commentary on a specific portion of the Guhyasamaja Tantra, the abhisambodhi of Akṣobhya.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 1st, 2015 at 12:11 AM

Title: Re: Nichiren Buddhism Vs. Tibetan Buddhism

Content:

rory said:

For sure Tendai is closest to TB.

Rory

Malcolm wrote:

No, Shingon is.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 1st, 2015 at 7:54 PM

Title: Re: Gorampa & Tsongkhapa

Content:

Ayu said:

If you, michaelb, don't sense the existence to be inherent: congrats. All people are individually different.

michaelb said:

The point is more that 'inherent existence' is not the problem, or certainly not the whole problem. If you just negate inherent existence you are still left with the 'thing' you haven't negated. To use your examples the rose and the table (without their inherent existence) are still there for me to prick my finger on or bump into, and still there to be objects of my clinging.

Tenzin Dorje said:

Aaah! I think I finally understood your view. (yes, I try)

I say although a table is empty of inherent existence, or is empty of being an inherently existent table, it is not empty of being a table. A table is empty of being a horse, a car, a cup, but is not empty of being a table because a table is found by conventional valid cognition. But it is empty of being inherently existent [table] because it is not found by a mind of ultimate analysis.

You say a table is empty of being a table, do you not ?

Malcolm wrote:

Two problems here:

One, tables are empty of being tables. If tables were not empty being tables, conventional tables could withstand analysis, and so too could all things made of parts, such as persons. A table appears/exists, and a table is imputed on its parts, like persons, but it cannot be found to withstand ultimate analysis. In the process of analyzing a table, also the table ceases to be apprehended. This principle is well established even in lower tenet systems such as Abhidharma, where the cognition of a pot ceases the moment it is broken into shards, and so on.

Second, this perspective — that the appearance/existence of conventionally imputed tables can withstand ultimate analysis while their inherent existence cannot — makes it difficult to practice the creation stage, since our so called conventional valid cognition perceives impure appearances and not pure appearances of the mandala and so on. The latter requires training and purification.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 1st, 2015 at 8:08 PM

Title: Re: siddhis--why aren't they used more?

Content:

WeiHan said:

However, the Buddha's teaching held that whatever outer physical environment we experienced is also a result of our karma (which is somewhat a mind thing). ... If the Buddha can influence the mind of certain people so that he seem to witness a supernormal phenomena from his perspective in the outer world. It is almost the same as saying that the Buddha can influence change in the physical law since whatever physical laws that the world obeys depend on our mind and karma (as for the example of hell and heaven which I given).

Astus said:

And we arrive at the problem that if the Buddha can change others' karma then he can liberate them as well by the same power. Since nothing like that happened, and the whole point of the teaching is that everyone has to accomplish it on one's own, changing others' karma is not possible.

Malcolm wrote:

If the first were true, the second would not necessarily follow since liberation is freedom from afflictions, not freedom from karmavipaka.

In any case the Buddha has already instructed is that he cannot remove our suffering, nor can he hand us liberation, he can only instruct.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 1st, 2015 at 8:19 PM

Title: Re: How does 18 early Buddhism School Related to Mahayana?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, I know, I have the book. But he is mistaken. It is actually a commentary on a specific portion of the Guhyasamaja Tantra, the abhisambodhi of Akṣobhya.

Aemilius said:

I support Lindtner. In Bodhicittavivarana there is a clear argument against the cittamatra views, like those expressed in Lankavatara sutra.

Furthermore, there are some active persons who want to make Nagarjuna seem like a sravakayanist, and who with this hidden intention reject this important work, because it is mainly or solely about the Bodhicitta.

Malcolm wrote:

I am just sharing with you what the text is actually about. There are other texts by Nāgārjuna I on Mahāyāna, like the Ratnavali and Suhrlekha, which prove that Nāgārjuna I was a Mahāyānist.

But there are 300 works in the bstan 'gyur attributed to Nāgārjuna, and it is impossible they are all by him.

The tradition that the Bodhicittavivarana is associated with the Guhyasamaja Tantra is well established, considering the term "bodhicitta" in that tantra is used as a term for ultimate reality. The author who wrote it was the siddha Nāgārjuna who was a disciple of Saraha I, there is really is no doubt about this. This text is a prominent text in the Arya tradition of Guhyasamaja.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 1st, 2015 at 9:33 PM

Title: Re: Hashang's view is higher than Kamalashila

Content:

Sherlock said:

But in any case, non-Nyingmapas have maligned Hashang for centuries without really studying his view, this should stop.

Tsongkhapafan said:

Would you care to clearly elucidate this view? If it involves abandoning conceptual minds because they are regarded as harmful then Hashang's view is wrong and even dangerous.

Malcolm wrote:

What Sherlock is saying is that in general, since the appearance of a history about the arrival of Śāntarakṣita and Padmasambhava to Tibet called the *sba bzhed* i.e., "The Narrative of Sba", sometime between the late 9th and early 12th century, many Tibetan scholars such as Sakya Pandita have held views about Chan Buddhism in general based on what is reported in that text.

Sherlock's point is that there is more than one report about the positions of Hashang Mahayana and in his opinion, those following the Narrative of Sba are giving consideration only to a very one sided point of view of Hashang's actual views, and that Hashang has become a strawman that Tibetan schools use to attack each other with.

In other words, what Sherlock is questioning is whether or not *Sba gsal snang's* reporting on Hashang's views are actually factual. Many modern scholars think the entire episode was entirely fabricated for political reasons.

Later Nyingmapas have also expressed hostility at the *Sba bzhed* literature because it contradicts later terma biographies on many details, such as asserting that Padmasambhava was the actual son of the King of Oddiyāna and so on.

Of course there are some problems with Nubchen's account as well since he has Bodhidharma traveling to Tibet and arriving with one shoe in his hand.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 1st, 2015 at 10:03 PM

Title: Re: What beliefs are prerequisite for practicing Zen?

Content:

Dan74 said:

I know I am potentially opening a can of worms because of the seeming difference with our Vajrayana brothers and sisters, but I wanted to have a good look at this question in the light of classical and modern teachings of all traditions loosely referred to as Zen (ie Chan, Seon, Rinzai and Soto). Of course personal experience at Zen centres are welcome, but let's not let it devolve into a tug-o-war of opinions.

Malcolm wrote:

It is useful to remember that most people practicing Chan/Son/Zen in the old days were people already well trained in Buddhadharma.

Ancient scholars often understood stories on multiple levels, without one contradicting the other in their minds, despite seeming contradictions in ours.

For example, Rahu is used as a metaphor in the Kalacakra tantra for certain practices that lead to the cessation of ordinary concepts, but the Kalacakra also contains elaborate calculations for calculating eclipses on the presumption that the outer world mirrors the anatomy of the human body and vice versa, with the added assumption that a powerful enough yogin could control external eclipses by controlling his body.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, April 2nd, 2015 at 12:08 AM

Title: Re: Hashang's view is higher than Kamalashila

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Incidentally, while Nubchen does list ten reasons that the [ston mun] simultaneist path (Chan) is superior to the [tsen min] gradualist path (Madhyamaka), view is not among them. What are the ten? The difference in method, mode of entry, conduct, samadhi, addressing conceptuality, purifying obscurations, accomplishments, accumulations, realizing the two truths and benefitting others.

On the other hand, this is a moot point, because all Tibetan Buddhists are Vajrayāna practitioners. However also in Mahayoga and Anuyoga Nubchen identifies a gradual and sudden approach, with the latter coming from Padmasambhava's *man ngag lta ba phreng ba*.

Also an interesting tidbit is Nubs assertion that Vimalamitra demonstrates dying in Tibet, but in the future lives in India and not China. And another is that he identifies 12 reasons that Mantra is superior to Chan and Madhyamaka, including view.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, April 2nd, 2015 at 12:10 AM

Title: Re: Hashang's view is higher than Kamalashila

Content:

Tsongkhapafan said:

Thanks for your explanation Malcolm, much appreciated. I haven't read Gendun Chopel but I take it his view is Shengtong?

Malcolm wrote:

No, Gendun Chopel was a very brilliant Gelug Lama who questioned a number of

Tsongkhap's views.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, April 2nd, 2015 at 12:12 AM

Title: Re: What beliefs are prerequisite for practicing Zen?

Content:

Astus said:

The Lotus Sutra is quoted mainly because of how the dragon girl transformed to a buddha as an example of sudden enlightenment.

Malcolm wrote:

Which this does not show since she was already a high bodhisattva on the stages.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, April 2nd, 2015 at 12:16 AM

Title: Re: Samaya and switching traditions.

Content:

Lucjan said:

Nobody has yet posted here any understanding of what the Dzogchen samaya actually is.

Malcolm wrote:

I agree with your statement.

The point of the four Dzogchen samayas is they cannot be broken (which is why they are referred to as the four unbreakable samayas) since they refer to four aspects of one's basis.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, April 2nd, 2015 at 1:01 AM

Title: Re: Samaya and switching traditions.

Content:

Dragon said:

If you have received DI and consider yourself a Dzogchen practitioner, but go to see different teachers in different traditions, is that considered "switching?" I am going to see The 17th karmapa and the Sakya Trizin this weekend. Both are giving empowerments. I was hesitant attending because of the empowerments (I was looking just for being able to see them in person and listen to them teach, but these were the only ones I could afford to attend and that were close in terms of travel). So what do I do? Is it bad to attend? Do I just not participate in the empowerments then and sit there quietly when the time comes? Or since my intention is to go to broaden my learning and listen to great masters teach as a dzogchen practitioner, it is not considered "switching" since AGY is my practice that unifies everything? I see many dzogchen practitioners signing up to go to other empowerments like I am about to do, so I thought it was normal?

Isn't it limiting to see all schools differently anyway and not "as one" when you are practicing dzogchen anyway? Buddha is Buddha is Buddha. What's the big deal?

Malcolm wrote:

Unify everything in Guru Yoga.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, April 2nd, 2015 at 5:03 AM

Title: Re: Gorampa & Tsongkhapa

Content:

conebeckham said:

A table is most certainly empty of being a table. The idea that we "graft an inherent existence of table" onto the table is just further conceptual elaboration, and needless.

Tsongkhapafan said:

A table is not empty of being a table because it is conventionally a table - that is what appears to a valid cognizer apprehending a table that is merely imputed upon the basis of table.

Malcolm wrote:

This statement presumes by it's language that tables exist from their own side to act as a basis for imputation.

Tsongkhapafan said:

Table is the opposite of non-table.

Malcolm wrote:

This an incorrect use of apoha, or exclusion. A table is identified as a table because of all things that are not tables, such as pots and so on.

Tsongkhapafan said:

It's senseless to refute the existence of table (which is what you are doing when you say that table is empty of table). What it is empty of is inherently existent table - that is the table that we normally see: a table that exists outside the mind and that can be found upon investigation.

Malcolm wrote:

A table existing outside the mind is a table that exists from its own side.

Tsongkhapafan said:

This does not exist but the conceptual designation 'table' does indeed exist and function.

Malcolm wrote:

If a table that exists outside of the mind does not exist, as you here admit, this means tables are empty of being tables.

Tsongkhapa said:

The distinction between table and inherently existent table is an important one because otherwise you cannot distinguish between the table that is apprehended by self-grasping ignorance and that does not exist and the table that exists as mere imputation.

Malcolm wrote:

A table that exists as a mere imputation is table that is empty of a table since that table exists as a mere imputation.

Tsongkhapa said:

Of the cart, Chandrakirti says:

[VI.158] Indeed it is not established by the seven ways,
Either in thatness or for the worldly;
But from the point of view of the worldly without analysis
It is imputed here in dependence upon its parts.

[VI.159] It is a part--possessor and a component- possessor.
For living beings a cart is called an `agent',
And for beings it exists as a taker.
Do not destroy conventionalities known to the world.

Do not destroy conventionalities known to the world by saying that table is empty of table!

Malcolm wrote:

Candra says directly after the citation you produced:
How can that which does not exist through seven aspects,
be said to exist? The existence of this will not be found by the yogin.
Since he rests with ease in reality,
here, the proposition of that [chariot, etc.] is also asserted.
If the chariot is not real, at that time,
nothing has parts, nor are there any parts.
For example, just as when the chariot is burned there are no parts,
the parts are [burned] when the possessor of parts is burned with the fire of intelligence.
So here, the reality is that tables, chariots, selves and so on are empty of themselves
because they cannot withstand analysis, also their components cannot withstand
analysis, and when subject to ultimate analysis they cannot be found. Nevertheless,

A table is precisely imputed on its parts which are empty of being "a table" — it is for this reason that tables are empty of being tables, since they are composed of parts upon which a table is imputed and in which a table will never be found.

When a convention is subject to analysis is it naturally destroyed in the process of

analysis in just the same way that a hammer shatters a pot. If you interpret Candrar the way you do, you disallow any ultimate analysis — but what Candrar states is the following:

"Just a cart is designated in dependent on wheels and so on, wheels and so on are appropriated on that basis, but the chariot is not an appropriator, in the same way, because the self (a mundane convention that is not negated in relative truth), like a chariot, is asserted to be an appropriator."

Candra here makes an important point about all this — the chariot is not an actual appropriator, why? Because it is merely designated on some parts, a wheel and so on. Likewise the self is not a real appropriator because it is designation on some parts. Nevertheless, in terms of the mundane convention in the relative, we do not negate chariots, selves and so on, even though chariots, selves and so on are not real, being mere designations on the basis of some parts. But your mistake is to assume that a chariot is being designated a chariot on the basis of a chariot, and this is utterly wrong.

Candra continues:

The five aggregates, the six elements and the six sense bases are the appropriations of that self because a self is designated on the basis of the five aggregates and so on, just as the wheels and so are the appropriations of the chariot

The self is conventionally asserted to be an appropriator of karma, merit, aggregates and so on, because it is designated on the basis of the five aggregates. As we see above, however, there is actually no self that can act as an appropriator since such a self does not exist, being a mere imputation.

He then continues:

Just as this presentation of the appropriated and the appropriator is a presentation of mundane convention, likewise, it is explained "This action and agent is to be accepted like the chariot." The appropriated is the action, this also is the agent. The so-called "appropriator", the aggregates and so on are the action, and the self is presented as a so-called "agent."

Because this is not real, this is not stable,
this is not unstable, this neither arises or perishes.
Here there is no permanence and so on,
there is neither sameness nor difference.

Though this self designated upon the aggregates is not stable, it is also not unstable. In that respect, if the self is unstable, at that time:

The appropriated are not the self,
those are produced and perish.
How could the appropriated
turn into the appropriator?

In the same way:

There is no production from the unproduced,

for consequently there will be a fault here,
the self will either be a product
or will be produced without a cause.

Thus, there is a contradiction with the śāstra. Because of that, if the aggregates are the self, if it comes to be possess arising and perishing, also it is not asserted as having arising or perishing. Therefore, the consequence that the aggregates "are not the self" will be valid. Because of that, the instability of this [self] is not valid, nor its stability. Therefore, it is perfectly accurate to say that the self is empty of the self, chariots are empty of chariots, tables of empty of tables. What ever is designated on parts is empty of itself because it is mere designation that cannot be found upon analysis of the parts upon which it is designated. If it were only empty of inherent existence, then selves, chariots, tables and so on could be found in the basis of investigating their parts.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, April 2nd, 2015 at 5:08 AM

Title: Re: Gorampa & Tsongkhapa

Content:

srivijaya said:

Interesting to read this thread and see what various teachings say is to be negated, or otherwise. In looking at all possible modes of existence/non-existence Buddha proffered no position at all. He never said one was right or the other wrong, or entered into any speculation. "A 'position,' Vaccha, is something that a Tathagata has done away with. What a Tathagata sees is this: 'Such is form, such its origination, such its disappearance;... (<http://www.accesstoinight.org/tipitaka/mn/mn.072.than.html>) So a view which asserts two truths, one a non-existent "convention" and the other an existent "ultimate", is really saying "both exists and does not exist" - which was described by Buddha as not leading to "disenchantment, dispassion, cessation; to calm, direct knowledge, full Awakening, Unbinding."

I don't think that Buddha refused to engage with this or that view because he didn't like them or thought that they were not refined enough. The problem was in clinging to any kind of view.

Bakmoon said:

This is actually one of the differences between the Gelug understanding of Prasangika Madhyamaka and most non-Gelug understandings (e.g. Gorampa's view). For most non-Gelug Madhyamaka, it is understood that Prasangika Madhyamaka has no actual position of their own but use reductio ad absurdum arguments starting from the positions of others. Within Gelug, it is understood that one can have a position of one's own.

Malcolm wrote:

And hence the charge that Gelugpas are crypto Svatantrikas, as well as being upside down gzhan stong pas.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, April 2nd, 2015 at 11:56 AM

Title: Re: Tibetan Lotus Sutra discussion

Content:

sherabzangpo said:

Also, it turns out there are some native Tibetan commentaries, but I've only found one, by Sachen Kunga Nyingpo...

Malcolm wrote:

It is actually by Chogyal Phagpa, it is found in volume 15 of the Sa skya bka' 'bum.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, April 2nd, 2015 at 6:52 PM

Title: Re: How does 18 early Buddhism School Related to Mahayana?

Content:

Aemilius said:

You can take this approach to other dharma texts too, I suppose, like Dharmapada/Dhammapada.

And say that Dharmapada is actually a collection of oral instructions of Mahamudra precepts, or oral instructions on the six bardos/intermediate states, etc...

One day I actually found a verse in Dh. that is similar to the famous Six Essential Words on Mahamudra by Tilopa.

Words are empty in themselves, Dharma teachings are empty of inherent nature.

Thus Dharmapada can become Tantra and vice versa.

Malcolm wrote:

No, in this case there is a very clear tradition that associates this text with Guhyasamaja.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, April 2nd, 2015 at 8:12 PM

Title: Re: Gorampa & Tsongkhapa

Content:

Tenzin Dorje said:

If a table is empty of being a table, it follows that a table is as empty of being a table as a car is [empty of being a table]. It follows absurdly that one could validly impute anything on any basis of designation.

As a matter of fact, if you need a car to go to town, what don't you just impute a car on the table that's in the living room?

Malcolm wrote:

Your reason is specious. We don't need to speak of a car being empty of a table at all

because we do not (in worldly convention) impute tables on the parts of a car, nor a car on the parts of table. Nevertheless, a table is empty of being a table since when its parts are examined no table can be found, likewise a car is found to be empty of a car since no car can be found when its parts are examined.

The emptiness of cars, tables and selves are alike in so far as the parts upon which cars, tables and selves are imputed are all equally found to be empty respectively of cars, tables and selves. In other words, no car can be found when its parts are examined, no table can be found when its parts are examined, no self can be found when its parts are examined, meaning that anything designated on parts is merely an empty designation with no underlying reality at all.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, April 2nd, 2015 at 8:22 PM

Title: Re: siddhis--why aren't they used more?

Content:

WeiHan said:

But we can also see at a different angle. If how the external world sentient beings lived in depends on their karma, then there isn't any objective physical laws. It becomes unnecessary to differentiate that supernormal phenomena can only happen in mind realm but not in physical realm since after all physical realm is a reflection of what is in the mind. In other words, you don't have to say that Buddha can only manifest supernormal abilities in some beings mind stream and not in the physical realm because there are fixed physical laws (this is your previous position), we just have to say "some beings have the karma to see Buddha manifesting supernormal abilities while others don't have the karma.

Astus said:

Yes, some beings perceive one thing, others perceive something else. The problem with supernatural occurrences within the physical realm was raised regarding the original topic of this thread. And there I also wrote that powers exist on the spiritual level. If we say that the world is what we perceive it to be, that it is formed and governed by our mind, then that is the spiritual realm.

Malcolm wrote:

Which position still leaves you a realist, believing that there are inherently existing natural laws that govern physical phenomena. In other words, you accept that physical phenomena exist by virtue of intrinsic characteristics, a common tenet among Hināyāna schools.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, April 2nd, 2015 at 8:46 PM

Title: Re: How does 18 early Buddhism School Related to Mahayana?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

To make it more clear to you, Jetsun Dragpa Gyaltsen (12th century) writes:
Further, the bodhicitta of Vairocana in the second chapter of the Guhyasamāja states:

Free from all phenomena;
skandhas, dhātus and āyatanas,
and subject and object abandoned;
because phenomena are equally without self,
one's mind, having never arisen from the beginning,
is naturally empty.

In dependence upon which, Master Nāgārjuna wrote the Bodhicittavivarana.
Now, the late Indian and Tibetan tradition have long held that Nāgārjuna I and the
siddha Nāgārjuna, the disciple of Saraha, are one and the same person. I personally do
not subscribe to this belief, holding instead that there are at the very least two authentic
Nāgārjuna's.

Be that as it may, it is a fact that the Bodhicittavivarana is a tantric work associated with
Guhyasamaja, and specifically is a commentary on the above passage. I erred above
when I stated it concerned the abhisambodhi of Akṣobhya. The Dohakośa of Saraha
was written to comment upon that, being this following statement, Jetsun Rinopche
writes:

In addition to that, the bodhicitta of Akṣobhya in the second chapter of the
Guhyasamāja states:

In the ultimate, phenomena
of the three realms are meditated as being unreal,
the existents meditated as unreal
are not meditated as objects of meditation;
therefore, the real and the unreal
are not objects of meditation.

In dependence upon which, Saraha wrote the Dohakośa.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, April 2nd, 2015 at 8:52 PM

Title: Re: siddhis--why aren't they used more?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Which position still leaves you a realist, believing that there are inherently existing
natural laws that govern physical phenomena. In other words, you accept that physical
phenomena exist by virtue of intrinsic characteristics, a common tenet among
Hināyāna schools.

Astus said:

I only make a difference between various interpretations. If we say there is a shared
physical world then there are certain rules. If we say that perception is the reality we

have, then independent laws are nonsense.

Malcolm wrote:

Now you are squirming, having boldly declared no such phenomena as siddhis or ṛddhi-patti can exist.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, April 2nd, 2015 at 8:54 PM

Title: Re: Gorampa & Tsongkhapa

Content:

Ayu said:

And hence the charge that Gelugpas are crypto Svatantrikas, as well as being upside down gzhan stong pas.

Everybody should beware of charging ancient masters of anything. To say "I don't really understand it" would be better.

Malcolm wrote:

It's a charge leveled by ancient masters.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, April 2nd, 2015 at 9:51 PM

Title: Re: Tibetan Lotus Sutra discussion

Content:

sherabzangpo said:

It is actually by Chogyal Phagpa, it is found in volume 15 of the Sa skya bka' 'bum.

That's strange, I was pretty sure it was listed as Sachen Kunga Nyingpo.. I found it on TBRC. Perhaps there's two commentaries? Or mistaken attribution? I would give the TBRC references but internet here is slow...

The question in terms of how this Sakya commentary (or commentaries) relates to the Commentary in the Tengyur is about when it was translated. It has no date and no translator, so it's hard to determine (and also makes its 'Sri Lankan' authorship look more suspicious), but it does seem to have a dedication prayer which seems to be by a famous Chinese-sponsored (and/or favored) Tibetan king, Miwang Tobgyel something or other, who lived in the 1700s, which indicates that he had probably had something to do with the translation... It would seem likely that he of all people might have been a 'Chinese Buddhist', so it all makes for a curious Holmes-like story...

Malcolm wrote:

It is by Chogyal Phagpa, as the colophon to the text states. Sachen's works are confined to the first two volumes, of the SKB, Phagpa's works are the final three volumes.

The commentary on the Lotus in the Tengyur is very late. Dan Martin states, "Sa'i-rtsa-lag is the Tibetan form for the name of the Sinhalese commentator Pṛthivībandhu (active during the reign of King Gopāla; 685-720 ce)." It was translated from Chinese, as

the title indicates —དམ་པའི་ཚོས་ཕུན་སྡེ་ཀའི་འབྲེལ་བ་ རྒྱ་ལས་བསྐྱར་བ་. This text by Sa'i-rtsa-lag is mentioned by the Third Karmapa, so it was translated into Tibetan no later than the late 13th-early fourteenth century.

There is another text attributed to Sa'i-rtsa-lag, the Pañcaskandhabhāṣya, translated in the Imperial period.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, April 2nd, 2015 at 10:01 PM

Title: Re: Gorampa & Tsongkhapa

Content:

Tenzin Dorje said:

If a table is empty of being a table, it follows that a table is as empty of being a table as a car is [empty of being a table]. It follows absurdly that one could validly impute anything on any basis of designation.

As a matter of fact, if you need a car to go to town, what don't you just impute a car on the table that's in the living room?

kirtu said:

Oh come on! The imputation has to be on a valid basis - Gelug Presentation 101.

Kirt

conebeckham said:

I think he's trying to argue that, Kirt, isn't he? A car and and a table are both valid bases--they are both conventionally-appearing phenomena, after all. His mistake is in denying the worldly conventions of non-examined appearing phenomena. If I could drive my table to work, I would--but alas, my table has no engine, wheels, gas tank, etc. On the level of convention, I cannot register my table with the DMV. I can, however, eat dinner on my car. If I must!

Malcolm wrote:

His mistake is the same as TKfan's assuming that tables are designated on tables, rather than tables being designated on parts.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, April 2nd, 2015 at 11:31 PM

Title: Re: Gorampa & Tsongkhapa

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

His mistake is the same as TKfan's assuming that tables are designated on tables, rather than tables being designated on parts.

WeiHan said:

Malcolm,

Is dependent origination the right explanation? Table is empty of car doesn't mean that the table will appear as a car and exhibits the dependently originated appearance of functioning as a car. This is refutation of the fourth lemma of negating non-arising- that thing arises without a cause.

Malcolm wrote:

No, here we are just talking about how things are designated on their parts according to their conventional appearance to a non-deluded mind. For our friends TD and TKF, it appears, based on their statements, that tables appear to a conventional valid cognition automatically.

According to Candrakirti, things are designated upon parts they tentatively "possess". If the thing functions, it is conventionally valid; if not, it is conventionally invalid, for example, the attempt to fill a horse with gas instead of hay.

Knowing that things are not real, are intrinsically empty, while still acting in accordance with worldly convention is the path if a follower of the middle way.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, April 3rd, 2015 at 12:20 AM

Title: Re: Gorampa & Tsongkhapa

Content:

WeiHan said:

However, from TD, according to his argument, if table is empty of table and can still function as a table, then table which is empty of car can then function as a car too. He is kind of saying if there is no some essence of a table there, then anything can happen randomly base on mental designation.

Malcolm wrote:

A table does not possess the parts of the car, so it won't work as a car, even you try to drive it.

A table is still empty of a table, however, because when the parts of a table are examined, a table cannot be found.

There does not need to be any essence of a table for a collection of parts to be designated table. Whether the table or car is a conventionally valid table or car purely depends on whether that table or car works or not, whether it is functional [arthakriya, don byed].

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, April 3rd, 2015 at 12:32 AM

Title: Re: Gorampa & Tsongkhapa

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

His mistake is the same as TKfan's assuming that tables are designated on tables, rather than tables being designated on parts.

Tsongkhapafan said:

That's a strawman. I never said that tables are designated on tables, you assumed this. Table is imputed on basis of imputation for table and the basis of imputation and the table are never the same, they can't be. Possessor and possessed are always different. Furthermore, saying that tables are empty of tables is a negation too far - you are denying the mere imputation table that actually exists and that's nihilism.

Malcolm wrote:

I said it appeared that is what you are saying. You read your own language, and you will see.

We are not denying the existence of the imputation "table," that imputation is clearly being made. We are saying, like Candrakīrti, that no table can be found when the basis for imputing a table, its parts, is examined. We are saying, like Candrakīrti, that there is no actual thing that possesses parts, for example a self. And if there is no possessor of parts, there are no parts that are possessed, correct? Thus a composite thing is empty of the designation it is being designated with. The designation does not come from its side, it comes from the side of the one making the imputation, right? How is a thing designated? It is designated on the basis of an appearance. An appearance of what? An appearance of parts. Does the thing exist in its parts? No. Does it exist separate from those parts? No. Does it exist in one of those parts? No. Therefore, the thing is just a designation and it is not real. When we say something is not real, this means it is empty. What is it empty of? Itself. There is no table, there is no car, and so on. There is no self that possesses the five aggregates, nevertheless, a self is imputed upon the five aggregates. When the five aggregates are examined a self is not found with the aggregates, separate from them or in any one of them. Hence we know that the self does not exist. It is a mere imputation on a collection of parts. All composite phenomena are the same.

Things like tables, cars and selves are empty of themselves because when their basis of designation is examined, they are not found in their respective bases of designation or separate from them. When something is not found, it is called "nonexistent." In this case, it is not the nonexistence of something which once existed and then became nonexistent, according to mundane convention; in this case the thing sought for was never there from beginning, it never even arose.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, April 3rd, 2015 at 12:48 AM

Title: Re: Gorampa & Tsongkhapa

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

His mistake is the same as TKfan's assuming that tables are designated on tables, rather than tables being designated on parts.

Tsongkhapafan said:

That's a strawman. I never said that tables are designated on tables, you assumed this. Table is imputed on basis of imputation for table and the basis of imputation and the table are never the same, they can't be. Possessor and possessed are always different. Furthermore, saying that tables are empty of tables is a negation too far - you are denying the mere imputation table that actually exists and that's nihilism.

WeiHan said:

That is not nihilism. Reasoning in that way does not deny dependent arising of appearance.

Malcolm wrote:

Ucchedavāda, strictly speaking, means asserting that something once existent is destroyed. Since we never once asserted the existence of something, we cannot be accused of asserting that something becomes nonexistent, and therefore, we are free from the charge of being a "chad pa smra ba ", aka an ucchedavādin.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, April 3rd, 2015 at 2:28 AM

Title: Re: Gorampa & Tsongkhapa

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

His mistake is the same as TKfan's assuming that tables are designated on tables, rather than tables being designated on parts.

Tsongkhapafan said:

That's a strawman. I never said that tables are designated on tables, you assumed this. Table is imputed on basis of imputation for table and the basis of imputation and the table are never the same, they can't be. Possessor and possessed are always different. Furthermore, saying that tables are empty of tables is a negation too far - you are denying the mere imputation table that actually exists and that's nihilism.

conebeckham said:

What, exactly, is this "basis of imputation for table" if it is not table?

Malcolm wrote:

What TKF stated was:

A table is not empty of being a table because it is conventionally a table - that is what appears to a valid cognizer apprehending a table that is merely imputed upon the basis of table.

He assumes that thing cannot be empty of themselves (intrinsically empty) because he believes this would destroy their conventional value. But this is not a proper Madhyamaka view as we can see from the citation of Candrakīrti above, where Candrakīrti clearly states that there are no possessors of parts, they are unreal, they are simply designations.

The profound point in all of this is that Candrakīrti maintain that rather than a consciousness taking rebirth, which is the position of Bhāvaviveka, what takes rebirth is the mistaken habit of "I-making," which conventionally can act as an appropriator of the aggregates and also can engage in and experience the ripening of actions even though the "I" does not exist and is not real — it can act and behave as if it were real, in much the same that we drive cars that we have designated upon parts which however, are unreal when they are sought for.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, April 3rd, 2015 at 10:38 AM

Title: Re: tantric sex real or form of abuse?

Content:

Jesse said:

So is tantric sex really a method of attaining enlightenment or is it a form of abuse?

<http://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/i-was-a-tantric-sex-slave-1069859.html>

the above article makes it pretty clear to me.

Malcolm wrote:

The article above is fraught with so much misinformation and misconceptions that it is useless.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, April 3rd, 2015 at 7:48 PM

Title: Re: tantric sex real or form of abuse?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

This is a topic which involves samaya, and those with samaya should refrain from its discussion.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, April 3rd, 2015 at 7:55 PM

Title: Re: Tibetan Lotus Sutra discussion

Content:

sherabzangpo said:

I didn't get to the colophon. That clears it up, since it's a collection. Thank you! He lived from 1235–1280.

Given Chogyel Phagpa's political status, it also makes me wonder whether the commentary was not a somewhat 'political' reaction to Chinese political and Buddhist influence in Tibet and Mongolia. The main question though is why he doesn't reference the Tengyur commentary. Perhaps he was even reacting against it (after all it was translated from Chinese at the least), if it had been translated by his time, which presumably it had been, if it was quoted just 10–20 years after his death by the 3rd Karmapa.

Malcolm wrote:

Perhaps he thought it was an inauthentic commentary or a forgery. Other than that, I have no idea.

sherabzangpo said:

Actually Malcolm, what's your take on the authorship?

Malcolm wrote:

It is not listed by Jetsun Dragpa Gyaltsen, but it is listed by the Karmapa and Ngorchen. This probably means it was translated into Tibetan from Chinese during the Sakya period of rule in Tibet, and perhaps it was attributed an Indian author to establish it as authentic.

sherabzangpo said:

I suppose I could safely attribute it to 'Prithivibandhu/Kuiji' for the moment and refer to it as 'Sri Lankan/Chinese'.

Malcolm wrote:

You can always say "the commentary attributed to..."

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, April 3rd, 2015 at 7:59 PM

Title: Re: Alcohol

Content:

Adamantine said:

For some people, latent addictive tendencies within neurotic mind may attach to alcohol, and then this is a big obstacle for them if they are practicing Dharma, and should abstain. For some people, latent addictive tendencies within neurotic mind may attach to internet use, sex, idle chatter, etc. etc. It may really not be the same issue for any two people.

Although alcoholism is found in my family, I've never had an issue with it. I may drink casually with friends once or twice a month, but never to the point of drunkenness. I may take a small amount of some tantric "medicine" that involves whisky more regularly. I certainly take some alcohol at the times of tsok offerings. To impose a strict rule on myself never to drink any alcohol would be artificial and useless, maybe harmful. However, I have relatives that should never even have a drop, because it arouses inner demons, and they always get into trouble, or create it. These things are relative, and we need to know our own situation with clarity.

M.G. said:

This seems to be the view of most of my Buddhist teachers and friends. Though I've noticed they reject the idea of moderation and relative harm potential when the topic turns from alcohol to tobacco!

Malcolm wrote:

Alcohol has many listed health benefits, tobacco has none.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, April 3rd, 2015 at 8:41 PM

Title: Re: tantric sex real or form of abuse?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

This is a topic which involves samaya, and those with samaya should refrain from its discussion.

Knotty Veneer said:

I hear what you are saying but I would be careful Malcolm. You could be accused of trying to shut down debate on this, and by extension, attempting to silence people who have been abused. Karmamudra practices can and have been used as excuses by perpetrators of sexual abuse against women. Samaya considerations should not stand in the way of justice for those abused.

I do know that people have also made false accusations against lamas. And this is reprehensible. But I think, in the end, it is the lesser of two evils. We cannot have a veil of holy silence drawn over this.

Malcolm wrote:

Two separate issues altogether: the issue I am addressing is what is unsuitable for people who hold samaya.

The issue of people promising spiritual rewards in exchange for sex is a completely separate one.

However, the article Jesse posted is full of misinformation and misconceptions. I am not talking about June Campbell's allegations, since I have no way of verifying her claims about her relations with Kalu Rinpoche as true or false. One point however is that Kalu Rinpoche was not a monk, and was under no obligation to be celibate.

I am talking about the information with which the article is framed:

The idea is to "drive the semen upwards, along the spine, and into the head". The more semen in a man's head, the stronger intellectually and spiritually he is thought to be. This entirely silly and not true.

Knotty Veneer said:

More than that, he is said to gain additional strength from absorbing the woman's sexual fluids at the same time as withholding his own. This "reverse of ordinary sex", said June Campbell, "expresses the relative status of the male and female within the ritual, for it signals the power flowing from the woman to the man".

Malcolm wrote:

This is also false information.

Knotty Veneer said:

She then asked them how it relates to the fact that there are no female Buddha images, or to why in Tantric sex images the woman always has her back to the viewer,

Malcolm wrote:

This is also false on three points — Samantabhadri is an example of a female buddha, Tara is an example of a female buddha, as is Prajñāpāramita, as Vajrayogini, Yeshe Tsogyal, Mandarava, etc. There are many yidams where the male deity has its back to the observer, with the mother deity acting as the main deity. The third point is that images of father and mother deities are not "Tantric sex images."

In Vajrayāna there is no such thing as "tantric sex." There are some yogas that might resemble sex to people who do not have instructions or samaya. But we don't talk about them. If people want to learn, they can seek out a qualified teacher.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, April 3rd, 2015 at 8:42 PM

Title: Re: Have you met ONE person...

Content:

abandon-all-belief said:

...that has actual knowledge on their previous lives?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, more than one in fact.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, April 3rd, 2015 at 8:44 PM

Title: Re: Gorampa & Tsongkhapa

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Ucchedavāda, strictly speaking, means asserting that something once existent is destroyed. Since we never once asserted the existence of something, we cannot be accused of asserting that something becomes nonexistent, and therefore, we are free from the charge of being a "chad pa smra ba ", aka an ucchedavādin.

Tsongkhapafan said:

So now you are denying that table has any kind of valid existence at all? When you investigate it is true that you do not find a table within the parts of table. The table that we normally see is not one of the parts, not the collection of parts and is not separate from the parts, however there is an appearance of table to mind and that table exists. The table that exists is the one that is merely imputed, or the table that is mere name. The inherently existent table (the one that we normally see) does not exist but the one that is mere name and that is one nature with the emptiness of table does.

Denying the valid existence of table is nihilism. It is negating that which does exist.

Malcolm wrote:

Question: does there exist an appearance of a table or does there exist a table which appears?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, April 3rd, 2015 at 10:09 PM

Title: Re: emptiness wisdom, conceptual understanding, stepping sto

Content:

smcj said:

Malcolm's position is, as best as I can tell, that the 2nd Turning is definitive...

Malcolm wrote:

Malcolm's position is that the third turning is a restatement of the second to eliminate doubts about the second and does not in fact refer to any specific sūtras per se identified by when they were taught by the Buddha during his career as some later scholars hold (since all these scholars have wildly different ideas about which sūtras these are and there is no list in any Indian source which indicates which sūtras are to be regarded as provisional and which ones as definitive).

The second turning and the third turning are doctrinally indetical.

smcj said:

The Bhagavan, beginning from the nonexistence of the inherent existence of all phenomena, beginning from their absence of arising, absence of ceasing, being peaceful from the beginning, being parinirvana by nature, turned a second very amazing wheel of Dharma with the form of the description of emptiness to those who had correctly entered into the Mahāyāna. This wheel of Dharma was surpassable, circumstantial, of provisional meaning and became a basis of dispute.

The Bhagavan, beginning from the nonexistence of the inherent existence of all phenomena, beginning from their absence of arising, absence of ceasing, being peaceful from the beginning, being parinirvana by nature, turned a third very amazing wheel of Dharma possessing fine distinctions to those who correctly entered into all vehicles. This wheel of Dharma is unsurpassable, not circumstantial, of definitive meaning and indisputable.

Malcolm wrote:

The sole difference between these two turnings is that in the former case, emptiness was taught, and in the latter case, fine distinctions were taught, but the doctrine of both turnings begin "from the nonexistence of the inherent existence of all phenomena, begin from their absence of arising, absence of ceasing, being peaceful from the beginning, being parinirvana by nature." One might also add, that the third turning was intended for everyone.

All phenomena refers to all conditioned and unconditioned phenomena, FYI.

But as I have pointed out elsewhere, the Indians hardly took notice of the three turnings, and never turned them into a major hermeneutical topic, nor a rhetorical topic, unlike Chinese and Tibetan scholars in certain quarters.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, April 3rd, 2015 at 10:55 PM

Title: Re: tantric sex real or form of abuse?

Content:

smcj said:

This is what I somehow doubt. That it has any legitimate uses.

Malcolm is right about the issue of samaya with this subject. However I think a history lesson is not breaking samaya.

Lama Tsongkhapa's started the Gelug tradition as a reformation movement against what he saw as the corruption of the Vajrayana in his day, this practice

Malcolm wrote:

Honestly, you have no sources for this assertion. It is not true. He never started a reformation. This is just a western myth.

smcj said:

So even the most conservative of the Vajra Masters see the practice as legitimate, but

obviously the potential for misuse and misunderstanding is off the charts..

Malcolm wrote:

If someone wishes to learn about these practices, all they need to do is attend Lamdre, which is given every other year, on average.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, April 3rd, 2015 at 11:17 PM

Title: Re: tantric sex real or form of abuse?

Content:

Jesse said:

So is tantric sex really a method of attaining enlightenment or is it a form of abuse?

<http://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/i-was-a-tantric-sex-slave-1069859.html>

the above article makes it pretty clear to me.

Jeff said:

Not specifically responding to the article, but there is very definitely a male-female energy loop dynamic that can be created. Kind of like natural polarities that create a "purification loop". This natural loop technique is used in many traditions. This issue/concern is that a tantric master can create such a purification loop without actually engaging in physical sex.

Best wishes.

Malcolm wrote:

Jeff, this has nothing to do with Vajrayāna.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, April 3rd, 2015 at 11:19 PM

Title: Re: Alcohol

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Alcohol has many listed health benefits, tobacco has none.

dzogchungpa said:

I think tobacco might help some people keep their weight down, not that I'm recommending it.

Also, nicotine might have some benefits:

e,g, <http://discovermagazine.com/2014/march/13-nicotine-fix>, although there are better ways than smoking or chewing tobacco to use it now.

Malcolm wrote:

There are all kinds of unhealthy things one can do for vanity.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, April 4th, 2015 at 12:40 AM

Title: Re: emptiness wisdom, conceptual understanding, stepping sto

Content:

smcj said:

But as I have pointed out elsewhere, the Indians hardly took notice of the three turnings, and never turned them into a major hermeneutical topic, nor a rhetorical topic, unlike Chinese and Tibetan scholars in certain quarters.

So the Chinese and Tibetan scholars are less-than the Indian scholars?

Malcolm wrote:

smcj retracted this response while I was writing a reply, so since I spent half an hour working on this I feel compelled to post it anyway

They are less authoritative than Indian scholars by definition.

And as I pointed out, among Chinese and Tibetan scholars, there is absolutely no agreement at all as to what sutras belong to the third turning and what sutras belong the second turning and no one in India, so far as we know (in Tibetan sources at least) ever compiled a list of them.

The clearest definition I have been able to find is from the widely cited commentary on the *Āryākṣayamatinirdeśa Sūtra*, the *Āryākṣayamatinirdeśaṭīkā* by Vasubandhu where he says:

Any sūtras that are explained in order to cultivate the characteristics of the noble path or realize the characteristics of the noble path are called "sutras of provisional meaning" because they teach a path which leads to nirvana. Any sūtras called "an entry into the result" are any sūtras that are taught in order to realize the result that has not been accomplished, those are the sutras of the definitive meaning.

Any sūtras called "entry into karma and deeds" are sutras which teach that engaging in virtuous karma produces a pleasing experience and engaging in nonvirtuous karma produces displeasing experience. Those are the sūtras of the provisional meaning. Any sutras said "to be taught in order to exhaust karma and affliction," sutras, which in order to exhaust karma and to exhaust afflictions, teach many methods of exhausting those, are sutras of the definitive meaning... etc.

Vasubandhu gives four other criterias for provisional and definitive sūtras, such as the difference between whether phenomena are taught to be afflictive or pure; whether samsara is to be regard with revulsion or is to be regarded as nondual with nirvana; whether topics are taught in words, letters, and so on such as the jatakas, etc or whether it is a sutra that teaching the profound that is difficult to see and comprehend, the selflessness in phenomena and the imperceptibility of the nature of emptiness; and finally, whether there are many words and meanings with much discursiveness or whether there is very little discursiveness and emphasis on instructions on samadhi.

In Indian texts, in terms of whether given sutras are considered provisional or definitive little or no attention is paid to them in terms of when they were taught by the Buddha — instead all that counts is their content.

Related to this is the fact that there is not one single sūtra or Indian text that links the tathāgatagarbha doctrine to sūtras of the definitive meaning, not a single one! Not even the tathāgatagarbha sūtras themselves. Don't you find this to be amazing?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, April 4th, 2015 at 12:55 AM

Title: Re: emptiness wisdom, conceptual understanding, stepping sto

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

I'm not sure I understand. By "sūtras of the definitive meaning", do you mean sūtras that satisfy Vasubandhu's criteria?

Malcolm wrote:

By any criteria at all. I find this remarkable in light of the fact that there is whole industry in Tibetan Buddhism dedicated to proving that tathāgatagarbha sutras are sutras of definitive meaning. What is amazing is that they have no support at all for their contentions based on the very texts they are using.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, April 4th, 2015 at 1:09 AM

Title: Re: the great vegetarian debate

Content:

Dema said:

Is there any truth to this?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, it is all more or less true.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, April 4th, 2015 at 1:44 AM

Title: Re: emptiness wisdom, conceptual understanding, stepping sto

Content:

smcj said:

People should be aware that Tibetans scholarship always goes back to the roots and reinterprets the classics. So a Tibetan scholar may go back to an Indian source and say, "What he was really trying to say was..." That "new" interpretation may be at odds with contemporaneous commentary, hence your point. My point is that if the "new" interpretation(s) are made from a vibrant and alive tradition producing enlightened beings, then those interpretations are validated by the enlightened awareness of the

modern 21st century masters that hold them. To me there is absolutely no need for a forensic study of Dharma. YMMV

Malcolm wrote:

My point is that there is actually no basis for the whole discussion based on Indian texts; it is very much like the false distinctions made between "svatantrika" and "prasangika" — these are later categories created by Tibetan scholars with no basis in the Indian texts at all. There were never any "svatantrikas" and "prasangikas" in India, only madhyamakas. I am not a follower of "Prasangika", I am just maintain that the Madhyamaka understanding of emptiness is the best. If there is a "great madhyamaka", then it the Madhyamaka of freedom from extremes, as defined by Atisha in his Bodhimārgapradīpapañjikā:

The suchness known by madhyamikas
is free from the four extremes:
not existent, not nonexistent,
not both and neither.

The suchness realized by madhyamikas
is free from the four alternatives:
permanence, annihilation,
both and neither.

Beyond such extremes as existence and nonexistence,
free from permanence and annihilation,
liberated from consciousness and objects of consciousness,
this is a text of the Great Madhyamaka.

We all take it for granted that no one in Tibetan Buddhism attains awakening based on practicing sūtra — that is what tantra is for. But I think these later, and novel, Tibetan interpretations of sūtra doctrines are a distraction, especially when they are not actually found in the writings of Indian masters.

In fact, the whole three turnings trip really comes from a Korean Yogacara master.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, April 5th, 2015 at 10:40 PM

Title: Re: tantric sex real or form of abuse?

Content:

tingdzin said:

If one thinks that real Vajrayana lamas (admittedly increasingly rare) are just ordinary beings, one has never really interacted with one. Further, one should not attempt to practice Vajrayana if one's ideas about such things are so fixed, and one values one's own socially-conditioned notions over the search for experiential truth.

The long threads that inevitably result from sexual topics on this forum show that for most people, even in the so-called liberated West, sex is still an uncomfortable topic; this is one reason these practices were traditionally kept secret. A certain amount of personal and spiritual maturity is required.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, April 5th, 2015 at 11:14 PM

Title: Re: Gorampa & Tsongkhapa

Content:

michaelb said:

I've seem that both Malcolm and TKF have visited this page since the last post but neither has chosen to advance the discussion, which is a bit disappointing...

Malcolm wrote:

The ball is in the other court.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, April 5th, 2015 at 11:43 PM

Title: Re: tantric sex real or form of abuse?

Content:

Knotty Veneer said:

Is this really so difficult? Any sexual situation that does not involve informed consent is abuse.

Any one asked to take part in karmamudra practices should think long and hard about what they are getting into. Lamas (or whoever) who are seeking karmamudra partners need to be 100% sure that their partner knows what it will entail and will suffer no negative psychological or other damage from engaging in the practice.

If those conditions can not be satisfied then the practice is of no benefit, surely, and is harmful.

TaTa said:

I think this nailed it

Malcolm wrote:

There is no such a thing as karmamudra practice without consent, since the mudra must be an experienced Vajrayāna practitioner who has empowerments, possesses samaya, and has stability in the creation stage.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, April 5th, 2015 at 11:50 PM

Title: Re: Dzogchen Community of Chogyal Namkhai Norbu

Content:

oldbob said:

I would obtain the list of the 25 and write to each of them to see how they respond.

Happy Easter / Passover!

ob

alpha said:

Who these people are is not public knowledge.

As far as i know none of them are instructors.

Malcolm wrote:

Jim, Elio, Adriano, Steve Landsberg, etc.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, April 6th, 2015 at 8:35 PM

Title: Re: Gorampa & Tsongkhapa

Content:

Ayu said:

- Svatantrika view ("the object is real, but not independent"). They investigated only the dependency of the conditions of an object.

Malcolm wrote:

Bhavaviveka says:

If there is an autonomous argument, it is only necessary to establish that the given phenomena appear in common to the proponent and opponent because at that time the given phenomena has not been established in common appearance."

On other words, all that is needed is an agreement that indeed a table appears before both parties. They needn't agree on anything else. Thus when Bhavaviveka rejects Buddhapalita's dialectical argument in favor of a procedural argument, he is not saying that we need to accept that there is a seed established by an intrinsic characteristic, he is merely saying that we admit only that we both perceive a seed which then can be analyzed, in this case, of whether it is reasonable that there is arising from self.

The reason why Candrakīrti rejects Bhavaviveka's insistence on a procedural argument rather than a dialectical argument stems from the following:

When the eye and so on is grasped as a given phenomena of the relative, it is not established for the proponent; and when the eye and so on is grasped as a given phenomena of the ultimate, it is not established for the opponent.

In this case, since there is a fundamental disagreement in terms of the basis where one is arguing from, Candrakīrti insists that the opponent merely needs to be overthrown with a dialectical argument. But one thing it is important to bear in mind, Candrakīrti does not go at great lengths to expand his views on this subject in the Prasannapāda. Moreover, Candrakīrti certainly accepts procedural or autonomous arguments when presenting the conventional.

Thus there is no difference in these Madhyamikas Madhyamaka, but there is a difference in how one should debate opponents, and that is all. Gorampa states in his Moonrays:

Therefore the essential point of the difference between Prāsaṅgika and Svatantrika is defined upon whether autonomous arguments are accepted or not accepted in the context of investigating reality, i.e. it is actually in the context of rejecting the arising of the four extremes that autonomous arguments validity or invalidity is negated or proven.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, April 6th, 2015 at 8:48 PM

Title: Vajrayāna/Dzogchen

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Astus commented in a now locked thread:

Vajrayana is just catching up with Dzogchen being removed from preliminaries and other rituals to turn into another form of mindfulness practice.

This represents a total misunderstanding of what Dzogchen is and what Vajrayāna is.

Dzogchen is not separate from Vajrayāna in anyway shape of form. Dzogchen is a part of Vajrayāna Secret Mantra as even a cursory examination of the basic texts of the tradition will indicate.

Further, Dzogchen may not necessarily involve the four hundred thousands famous to us, in fact one of the earliest presentations of that sequence of practice is to be found in the klong gsal nyi ma 'bar ma tantra, which forms the foundation for most of the Nyinthig cycles from the Khandro Nyinthig onward. Moreover, there are a series of preliminary practices in Dzogchen that are indispensable such as the separation of samsara and nirvana, semzins, and so on.

Empowerment is absolutely necessary in Vajrayāna. Dzogchen Atiyoga is merely one of three inner tantra divisions. It is not in any way separate from Vajrayāna at all. Not only, they are hardly "another form of mindfulness practice."

Stick to Zen, Astus, you are out of your depth when commenting on Tibetan Buddhism.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, April 6th, 2015 at 8:54 PM

Title: Re: tantric sex real or form of abuse?

Content:

Berry said:

Does this mean that you are knowledgeable about skilful means and the actual practice of tantric sex yourself, srivijaya ?

Malcolm wrote:

I know this is addressed to another, but I will answer — the answer is yes, I have had extensive instructions on this practice, both in assemblies and personally, and so I know what I am talking about.

The term "tantric sex" is a misnomer derived from New Age marketing and teachers. What happens in mudra practice is not recognizable as "sex" as it is normally thought of.

There are very many requirements, the age of the practitioners being among them, 16-26 for both parties, for example.

I already mentioned that both partners must be qualified anuttarayoga practitioners, stable creation stage meditation, and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, April 6th, 2015 at 8:59 PM

Title: Re: Opinion on this matter

Content:

antiquebuddhas said:

Then what is the point of doing good Karma.

Malcolm wrote:

Attaining a precious human birth in future lives so one can attain liberation if you don't manage it in this one.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, April 6th, 2015 at 10:28 PM

Title: Re: Vajrayāna/Dzogchen

Content:

Sherlock said:

You mean the klong gsal nyi ma 'bar ma does actually say 100,000 times of each practice Malcolm? Or does it state things in terms of time?

How old is Sakya ngondro?

Malcolm wrote:

No, I mean that the recitations of refuge, bodhicitta, mandala offerings are present. The vajrasattva section explains that one should do 100,000 or more.

Other than Vajrasattva it does not specify a number.

The Sakya Ngondro is very modern, like 20th century modern.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 7th, 2015 at 12:17 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist MEME. My Favorite

Content:

Simon E. said:

No..actually it is nothing at all to do with Buddhadharma...neither in content nor intention.

Kim O'Hara said:

That's a bit harsh, Simon. The Buddhist path certainly is about "learning how to live [one's] life" and does discourage identification of oneself "as a Buddhist" and places more importance on being a good (wise, compassionate, etc) person than on "being a good Buddhist or knowing Buddhist doctrine".

Malcolm wrote:

The Buddha's path starts with refuge. For example, in the Kalmas sutra:

As if, venerable sir, a person were to turn face upwards what is upside down, or to uncover the concealed, or to point the way to one who is lost or to carry a lamp in the darkness, thinking, 'Those who have eyes will see visible objects,' so has the Dhamma been set forth in many ways by the Blessed One. We, venerable sir, go to the Blessed One for refuge, to the Dhamma for refuge, and to the Community of Bhikkhus for refuge. Venerable sir, may the Blessed One regard us as lay followers who have gone for refuge for life, from today."

The Buddhist path does not in any sense discourage one from thinking of oneself as a "buddhist".

The idea that the Buddha placed more importance on being a "good person" than on the three trainings of śīla, samadhi and prajñā, and the three prajñās of hearing, reflection and meditation is really a very strange and misleading idea. Being a good person will not free one from samsara, which after all is the point of the Buddha's teachings, i.e., to become from from samsara.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 7th, 2015 at 5:10 AM

Title: Re: is vajrayana budhism a path of renunciation or isn't it?

Content:

heart said:

In vajrayana renunciation is achieved by wisdom and you renounce the whole of samsara, not just some particular bad spot, all of it. So true renunciation is actually freedom from manipulating the world according to your desires and fears. So, in vajrayana renunciation is on an other level, or at least it should be.

/magnus

Malcolm wrote:

Here, when we say that Vajrayāna is not a path of renunciation, we mean that, unlike Sūtrayāna, we can use all objects of the sense for our own enjoyment.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 7th, 2015 at 5:15 AM

Title: Re: Vajrayāna/Dzogchen

Content:

Astus said:

It might be so that Dzogchen is an integral part of Vajrayana and the 9th vehicle. My statement that it's moving to a generic mindfulness practice is not a reflection on the teachings in the scriptures but how it appears to me among some who follow the Great Perfection, both on- and offline. That is, when it is simplified to the point of "just stay in the natural state". I assume you have noticed this trend as well.

Malcolm wrote:

There are many people who may imagine they are "following Dzogchen teachings" who are doing nothing of the kind.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 7th, 2015 at 5:17 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist MEME. My Favorite

Content:

Jesse said:

The end result of wisdom, concentration and ethics does lead to being a good human being and also liberation.

Malcolm wrote:

The end result of Buddhadharma is to transcend distinctions like good and evil and so on. "Being a good person" has never been the point of Buddhadharma and never will be. If all you want is to be a "good person" it is better to follow Confucius or Jesus.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 7th, 2015 at 5:19 AM

Title: Re: Dzogchen Community of Chogyal Namkhai Norbu

Content:

Paul said:

I am very interested in the Longsal Longde teachings that are being given soon, however I am in the middle of some other teachings going on at the same time. If I watch the retreat mainly via replay, will I still be able to practice what is being taught, or do I need to be there live for it all? Is there some part I HAVE to see live?

Malcolm wrote:

In general, replays are for being reminded, not for transmissions of lungs or even teachings.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 7th, 2015 at 7:29 PM

Title: Re: Buddhist MEME. My Favorite

Content:

Kim O'Hara said:

You seem to be forgetting that sila is the foundation of samadhi and prajñā, and sila is, in essence, 'being a good person.'

Malcolm wrote:

Śīla does not make one a "good person" in the Kantian moral sense that permeates our understanding of what a "good person" is.

One practices śīla in order to pacify afflictions to create the basis for developing concentration.

Kim O'Hara said:

More importantly, you are ignoring the fact that everyone has to start somewhere and that (often) the starting point is "I like what I know of this path." Without this preliminary orientation - far earlier than going for refuge, which you claimed was the beginning - the individual will not get far enough along the path to even know what taking refuge means. It is unfair and counterproductive to be too rigorous about any over-simplified teaching in those very early stages. Newcomers need accurate advice, sure, but most of all they need support and encouragement.

Malcolm wrote:

What people need is the Dharma spoken by the Buddha, not hallmark affirmation cards.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 7th, 2015 at 8:06 PM

Title: Re: Buddhist MEME. My Favorite

Content:

Dan74 said:

"To do good, to refrain from evil, this is the teaching of 10000 Buddhas."

And as the story goes 'a child of 7 knows this, but a man of 70 doesn't know how to do it. That's what we need the Buddhadharma for - wise action is not easy.

Malcolm wrote:

Refrain from all evil,
perfect [all] virtues,
thoroughly tame one's mind:
this is the teaching of the Buddha.

One is supposed to avoid evil (pappa, sinful) actions because they lead to birth in lower realms. One is to engage in virtuous (kusala) actions because they lead to birth in higher realms. One is to tame one's mind, because this is the path to liberation.

But here there is no mention of being a "good person." The goal of Buddhadharma is not to become "a better person." The goal of the Dharma is to transcend our afflictive state so that it is no longer necessary to engage in positive actions to maintain a birth in higher realms and avoid negative actions which lead to rebirth in lower realms. As long as one is driven by the three poisons, it is not possible to be a truly "good person."

For example, even though we practice the six perfections in order to attain buddhahood with the motivation to become buddhas for the benefit of all sentient beings, as you note below, bodhisattva activity may not be considered the actions of a "good person" when viewed from outside.

Secondly the practice of the six perfections is actually for one's own benefit, not directly for the benefit of others. The four means of conversion on the other hand are directly for the benefit of others. One should understand this distinction well.

For example, the Buddha gave his horse and ornaments to his father, Śuddhodhana, when he self-ordained. The golden bowl given to him by Sujāta was left in the Nairāṇja rather than being given to some poor local villagers. Buddha's disposition of his wealth does not conform to either conservative notions of wealth preservation nor does it conform to liberal notions of social justice. He gave away his horse and gear to his father who did not need them, and left his golden bowl in a stream while there villagers just a stone's throw away who were suffering crushing poverty.

As Sakya Paṇḍita explains:

If wealth of the higher classes was given to the lower classes by the Bhagavan, although slight beneficial conditions for this life would occur, since it would become a cause of lower realms because of not requesting liberation, the Bodhisattva decided he would not give his wealth away.

Or there is the Jataka tale of how the Buddha in his past life as Viśvaṃtara gave away his wife and children to be brahmin's servants when practicing the perfection of generosity — such acts hardly conform to our modern liberal notions of the "good person."

So we really must not allow such tepid notions as "Buddhism is just about being a good person" to go unchallenged.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 7th, 2015 at 8:10 PM

Title: Re: Buddhist MEME. My Favorite

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

What people need is the Dharma spoken by the Buddha, not hallmark affirmation cards.

dharmagoat said:

I agree.

People need the Dharma spoken by the Buddha, not by self-appointed dharmapālas.

Malcolm wrote:

The tongue, the Buddha said, is like a two—bladed axe, as likely to cut the speaker as the spoken to

Therefore, you should refrain from commenting, since no one appointed you to speak about the Dharma and you have no recognized qualifications to do so.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 7th, 2015 at 8:23 PM

Title: Re: Dzogchen Community of Chogyal Namkhai Norbu

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Bob:

It is very straight forward — Rinpoche has stated countless times that if you are not actually participating during a webcast, you do not receive transmission and you do not receive the lung for whatever text he is teaching. The occasional lag time during the streaming is not an issue as long as you are actually participating in a webcast while it is happening, live.

Your anecdote regarding Jigme Lingpa is irrelevant.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 7th, 2015 at 8:32 PM

Title: Re: Buddhist MEME. My Favorite

Content:

Simon E. said:

What is contained in the Sutras is only one part of what constitutes the Vajrayana.

dharmagoat said:

Has wrath ever been described as an enlightened quality elsewhere in the Vajrayāna literature?

Malcolm wrote:

Wrathful deities are wrathful out of their compassion for stubborn sentient beings who are addicted to samsara, much like a parent who yells at children who are playing in the road. Wrathful teachers are the same.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 7th, 2015 at 8:51 PM

Title: Re: How can long-life prayers benefit lamas?

Content:

Luke said:

I like the idea of reciting long-life prayers for lamas, but can they actually benefit the lamas we pray for? If so, how?

Malcolm wrote:

It is a kind of dedication of merit.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 7th, 2015 at 8:51 PM

Title: Re: Dzogchen Community of Chogyal Namkhai Norbu

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Bob:

It is very straight forward — Rinpoche has stated countless times that if you are not actually participating during a webcast, you do not receive transmission and you do not receive the lung for whatever text he is teaching. The occasional lag time during the streaming is not an issue as long as you are actually participating in a webcast while it is happening, live.

Your anecdote regarding Jigme Lingpa is irrelevant.

Motova said:

What does participating while receiving a lung mean exactly?

Wanting the lung and paying attention?

Malcolm wrote:

It means you have to be listening to the teachings, not multitasking and surfing the internet.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 7th, 2015 at 9:05 PM

Title: Re: is vajrayana budhism a path of renunciation or isn't it?

Content:

heart said:

In vajrayana renunciation is achieved by wisdom and you renounce the whole of samsara, not just some particular bad spot, all of it. So true renunciation is actually

freedom from manipulating the world according to your desires and fears. So, in vajrayana renunciation is on an other level, or at least it should be.

/magnus

Malcolm wrote:

Here, when we say that Vajrayāna is not a path of renunciation, we mean that, unlike Sūtrayāna, we can use all objects of the sense for our own enjoyment.

heart said:

We use the objects of the senses vividly aware of our true condition which is natural renunciation of ignorance. Rigpa is the renunciation of ignorance.

/magnus

Malcolm wrote:

We use the objects of the senses as offerings to ourselves as the deity.

Rigpa is not renunciation of anything. Rigpa is the antithesis of ma rigpa, just as a light, without renouncing darkness, dispels it utterly.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 7th, 2015 at 9:08 PM

Title: Re: is vajrayana budhism a path of renunciation or isn't it?

Content:

anjali said:

One way to look at renunciation is as giving up the causes of suffering. Sense enjoyments are not the cause of suffering per se.

Malcolm wrote:

For Hinayāna they are the cause of craving, which itself is the cause of samsara. Even in Mahāyāna sense objects are regarded as poisonous, for example Candragomin writes:

Objects and poisons are alike, pleasing just when first tasted.

Objects and poisons are alike, their result is unpleasant and unbearable.

Objects and poisons are alike, causing one to be clouded by the darkness of ignorance.

Objects and poisons are alike, their power is hard to reverse, and deceptive...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 7th, 2015 at 9:34 PM

Title: Re: How can long-life prayers benefit lamas?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

It is a kind of dedication of merit.

Luke said:

Ah. So long-life prayers are only effective when they are recited after the completion of a main practice (mantra recitation, sadhana, puja, etc.)?

Malcolm wrote:

Well, I would not say that, but generally that is when they are recited in practice.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 7th, 2015 at 10:32 PM

Title: Re: is vajrayana budhism a path of renunciation or isn't it?

Content:

heart said:

English is not my first language but it seems quite obvious that we give up (renounce) ignorance when we abide in wisdom, even if it is effortless. Also, so far I haven't met any vajrayana training that doesn't involve training the mind in renunciation, including Dzogchen. For example the first four lodjong's in the Vima Nyingtik.

/magnus

Malcolm wrote:

I did not say there was no preliminary sense of renunciation in Vajrayāna. What I said was is that Vajrayāna is not a PATH of renunciation.

This is the logic. We understand that samsara is a terrible place. We wish to be free of it. We look around, and we see that the path of renunciation is not effective in this day and age because our afflictions are too strong. This is why the tantra says things like the Vajrapañjara-tantra:

Created by passion, the worldly
shall be liberated by the same passion.

Or the Guhyasamaja:

The passionate desiring wisdom
always rely on the five desire objects

The method of doing this, of practicing a path of non-renunciation, is to practice creation stage and completion stages. Likewise, through the method is a little different in Dzogchen as the Mind Mirror of Vajrasattva states:

This nectar of bodhicitta, one's vidyā,
for example, is like a divine precious jewel
that warms when left in a cold place,
cools when left in a hot place,
and gives light when left in a dark place.

In the same way, if one possesses the meaning of realizing
this self-originated vidyā,
afflictions become the companions of wisdom,
even though afflictions arise
they do not obscure when they are under the power of wisdom.

And:

If the king of secret mantra is practiced, afflictions turn into wisdom. For example, when a lamp is lifted in an empty house, darkness turns into light; likewise, when the lamp of wisdom is raised, ignorance transforms into vidyā. When the realization of reality has arisen in one's continuum, all afflictions arise as the companions of wisdom.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 7th, 2015 at 11:36 PM

Title: Re: The theory of how empowerments work?

Content:

Luke said:

Hello, could anyone recommend a book which describes the theory of how empowerments work?

I have considered reconnecting with Vajrayana, but first, I want to read some things which will give me more of the necessary background information which I lacked before.

Malcolm wrote:

Put concisely, empowerments arrange a dependent origination between the cause, one's five aggregates and so on, with the result, the five buddha families and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 8th, 2015 at 12:09 AM

Title: Re: is vajrayana budhism a path of renunciation or isn't it?

Content:

Sherlock said:

Mahayana meditation does not actually make use of sense objects the way Vajrayana does.

Anders said:

Maybe not, but neither can it be characterised as a necessarily renunciate path.

.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, it absolutely can.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 8th, 2015 at 12:09 AM

Title: Re: is vajrayana budhism a path of renunciation or isn't it?

Content:

Anders said:

This gets to be a boring assertion in the long run, since this is also the classic assertion mahayana makes about hinayana.

Malcolm wrote:

It is completely different. Why? Because in common Mahāyāna it is only permitted to use sense objects if you have no attachment to them. The examples of Aryadharmā, Sadaprarudita and so on are examples of āryas on the stages, not common people.

In your example you cite the following:

Manjusri said, "All defilements are equal [in reality]. I have realized that equality through right practice.

But who is Mañjuśrī? A bodhisattva of the tenth stage.

As for this assertion:

The whole point of emptiness in Mahayana is that there is nothing to renounce or be rid of since affliction is empty and samsara and nirvana are not two.

Secret Mantra and Paramitayāna share the same view, where they differ is in method.

There is no method of practice in Paramitayāna for ordinary people to practice by taking desire into their path. It simply does not exist. Hence Candragomin, a quintessential Mahāyāna author writes:

Objects and poisons are alike, pleasing just when first tasted...

Moreover, in Mahāyāna one meditates on desire, anger and ignorance via antidotes. This is not the case in Secret Mantra.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 8th, 2015 at 12:33 AM

Title: Re: is vajrayana budhism a path of renunciation or isn't it?

Content:

heart said:

Actually there is nothing in the word "renunciation" that suggest that you should avoid exposure to sense objects. That is just one possible interpretation. If you accept that for example that "all activities" are a cause of suffering, then under what stone will you avoid suffering?

Malcolm wrote:

renounce:

renounce |ri' nouns| verb [with obj.]

formally declare one's abandonment of (a claim, right, or possession): Isabella offered to renounce her son's claim to the French crown.

- refuse to recognize or abide by any longer: these agreements were renounced after the fall of the czarist regime.

- declare that one will no longer engage in or support: they renounced the armed struggle.

- reject and stop using or consuming: he renounced drugs and alcohol completely.
- [no obj.] Law refuse or resign a right or position, especially one as an heir or trustee: there will be forms enabling the allottee to renounce.

renunciation:

renunciation |riˌnənsēˈāSHən|

noun

the formal rejection of something, typically a belief, claim, or course of action: entry into the priesthood requires renunciation of marriage | a renunciation of violence.

- Law a document expressing renunciation.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 8th, 2015 at 12:59 AM

Title: Re: The theory of how empowerments work?

Content:

Luke said:

Hello, could anyone recommend a book which describes the theory of how empowerments work?

I have considered reconnecting with Vajrayana, but first, I want to read some things which will give me more of the necessary background information which I lacked before.

Malcolm wrote:

Put concisely, empowerments arrange a dependent origination between the cause, one's five aggregates and so on, with the result, the five buddha families and so on.

dzogchungpa said:

Could you put it a little less concisely? I'm kind of obtuse.

Malcolm wrote:

Take an major empowerment, pay very, very close attention to what is being said.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 8th, 2015 at 1:17 AM

Title: Re: is vajrayana budhism a path of renunciation or isn't it?

Content:

conebeckham said:

Lots of good discussion--but directing this back at the original poster's question: In what way is a hermit's lifestyle, for instance, not deemed renunciation, and in what way is a strict retreat, with a certain amount of austerity, a Vajrayana practice? How are the ideas of austere retreat and the Path of Sensory Pleasures, etc., compatible?

Malcolm wrote:

When you are in retreat you are practicing the creation and completion stages, using all

sense objects, real and imagined, as a support for your practice and personal enjoyment.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 8th, 2015 at 1:24 AM

Title: Re: is vajrayana budhism a path of renunciation or isn't it?

Content:

conebeckham said:

Lots of good discussion--but directing this back at the original poster's question: In what way is a hermit's lifestyle, for instance, not deemed renunciation, and in what way is a strict retreat, with a certain amount of austerity, a Vajrayana practice? How are the ideas of austere retreat and the Path of Sensory Pleasures, etc., compatible?

Malcolm wrote:

When you are in retreat you are practicing the creation and completion stages, using all sense objects, real and imagined, as a support for your practice and personal enjoyment.

conebeckham said:

Right, so it only appears as if one is "being austere" from the outside. In reality, Milarepa was having one helluva party, 24/7/365!

Malcolm wrote:

Correct, as illustrated by the story of the geshe who was frustrated when local deities were impatient with him to finish up his tormas offerings so they could go enjoy Milarepa's very abundant tormas. This geshe made elaborate tormas with many costly offerings, but when he arrived at Milarepa's cave to see what the fuss was about, all he saw was water sitting in shards of pottery.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 8th, 2015 at 1:36 AM

Title: Re: The theory of how empowerments work?

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

OK, I'll make sure to pay close attention to what HHST has to say in a few weeks.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, if he is giving the major two empowerment of Vajrakilaya, then pay special attention during the vase empowerment's eleven sections.

Othewise, try to receive the Hevajra empowerment, then practice it for a few years, taking the path empowerments everyday. You will definitely understand the principal experientially.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 8th, 2015 at 10:03 AM

Title: Re: Dzogchen Community of Chogyal Namkhai Norbu

Content:

oldbob said:

Everything Malcolm writes is exactly correct, and it is clear that he has a greater understanding of these things, than I do.

There seems to have been a previous robust discussion of this issue, expressing many different viewpoints.

Malcolm wrote:

The only viewpoint that matters in this respect is ChNN's and he has made himself abundantly clear on this issue innumerable times to anyone who has ears to hear him.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 8th, 2015 at 7:50 PM

Title: Re: Gorampa & Tsongkhapa

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Question: does there exist an appearance of a table or does there exist a table which appears?

Tsongkhapafan said:

To please Michael (and advance the discussion), there exists a mere appearance of table, but table is not empty of table because conventionally it has the characteristics of table. It is empty of inherently existent table, i.e., table is merely a conceptual imputation upon a the valid basis of imputation for table, the parts and the collection of parts. It is not an independent phenomenon as it appears to be.

The definition of element is that which holds its own nature, and this refers to any phenomenon. Table is a phenomenon that holds its own nature. What is its nature? Conventionally it is table and not non-table, so it is incorrect to say that table is empty of table as this is tantamount to saying that conventionally there is no table.

Malcolm wrote:

Therefore it follows that for you an illusory elephant is not empty of being an "elephant" because it bears the characteristics of an elephant (trunks, tusks, etc.) upon which one may impute the conventional designation elephant.

Tables hold their own nature? How, where? In their parts or separate from them? Your conclusion does not follow from your premise. A collection of parts designated a "table" is still empty of being a table even though it can be used as one, just as a collection of

aggregates is empty of a self even though it can be designated one. It follows that if tables are not empty of tables then persons are not empty of persons, selves are not empty of selves and you have in one mistaken argument turned the whole of the Buddha's teaching on its head. According to you we must accept that the self actually exists merely on the basis of being designated upon the aggregates, which violates on the basic four seals, "All phenomena are not a self." Such a conclusion is not acceptable to Vasubandhu in the Refutation of the Pudgala much less Nāgārjuna, Aryadeva, Bhaviveka or Candrakīrti. Nāgārjuna states:

All living beings are causes and results.

There are no sentient beings at all.

Empty dharmas are entirely produced

from dharmas strictly empty;

dharmas without a self and [not] of a self.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 8th, 2015 at 8:03 PM

Title: Re: is vajrayana budhism a path of renunciation or isn't it?

Content:

smcj said:

My Gelug mentor put it to me this way; the poisonous afflictions are never to be indulged in--and that is true in all forms of Dharma. In Vajrayana they are transmuted into wisdom. The analogy used was that the anti-venom from a rattlesnake bite is made from rattlesnake venom. If you are bitten you want the anti -venom. You don't want to get bitten again!

Just so when the poisonous afflictions arise you want the medicine of the wisdoms that are made from the afflictions, not more afflictions!

Malcolm wrote:

We were not talking about afflictions, we were talking about sense objects. In the common Mahāyāna and Hinayāna they are something strictly to be given up. In Vajrayāna they are something to be used. When we say that Vajrayāna is a path of nonrenunciation (and if anyone has doubts about this I suggest they go talk to HH Sakya Trizin, Chogyal Namkhai Norbu and so on) we are not saying that it is a path in which one indulges one's afflictions. We are saying that it is a path in which one does not seek to give up sense objects in order to control afflictions.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 8th, 2015 at 10:40 PM

Title: Re: Buddhist MEME. My Favorite

Content:

dharmagoat said:

Also, the very efforts made by some to defend the Dharma could be damaging its

reputation, particularly in the West.

Malcolm wrote:

Buddha stated that Dharma can only be destroyed from within when his teachings are not properly studied and practiced.

Damage to the reputation of the Dharma can only happen if people do not study and practice properly. If people who are completely unqualified to do so pick up the banner of "Dharma teacher" and mislead people down a false path not taught by the Buddha, then the reputation of the Dharma will be damaged. But if we follow the advice of Sakya Pandita there will be no problem at all:

In brief, since that which has been spoken by the Buddha, gathered by the compilers, meditated by siddhas, explained by paṇḍitas, translated by the translators and known to scholars to be taught by the Buddha, it is necessary to hear, explain, meditate and practice that.

If a teaching which is the opposite of those should arise, since it was not a doctrine of the Buddha, one should not listen to it, explain it, meditate on it nor practice it even if it seems very profound. Although there are other non-buddhist and false teachings that seem to be very good, leave them aside because they are not the doctrine of the Buddha.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 8th, 2015 at 10:41 PM

Title: Re: Buddhist MEME. My Favorite

Content:

Dan74 said:

In this medium I find it best to assume that the other poster has the best intentions possible.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 8th, 2015 at 10:52 PM

Title: Re: Gorampa & Tsongkhapa

Content:

Ayu said:

Maybe from personal angle of view, it makes sense. But that is only perception and naming. As long as it is not clearly defined what is "table" in objective sense, I cannot agree. What more than a name is "table"? Where to find the own nature of it, if you try to consider it beyond a certain perception?

For a man it is a table, for a dog it is a shed, for a fly it is an airport, for an animalcule it is a wide country.

It is no table, if viewed dispassionately.

Tsongkhapafan said:

What makes table different from chair? Conceptual designation, function, characteristics that are merely imputed by mind. There is no objective table, but there doesn't need to be for a table to have the merely imputed nature of table. Table has the nature of table and chair has the nature of chair CONVENTIONALLY. Of course no nature can be found upon investigation other than emptiness, I'm not saying it does, but any normal person knows the difference between a chair and a table and the function of each, therefore table is not empty of table and chair is not empty of chair.

We don't have to be talking about the ultimate nature of these things all the time.

Malcolm wrote:

The minute you say that something is not empty, you are talking at the ultimate level. Here tables are empty of tables, but are used as such because a collection of parts is designated as such. If you say that tables are not empty of tables then you have to account for where the table holds a table — if you claim that tables are not empty of being tables because they are being designated as such, tables in fact are still empty of tables because the designation "table" is not a table either.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 8th, 2015 at 10:55 PM

Title: Re: is vajrayana buddhism a path of renunciation or isn't it?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

We were not talking about afflictions, we were talking about sense objects. In the common Mahāyāna and Hinayāna they are something strictly to be given up.

srivijaya said:

In what sense could they be said to be given up. The sense objects appear in all cases, so it must be more to do with attachment towards them than their mere arising?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, and in the lower vehicles, the way of dealing with attachment is much the same as how one relates with poison, as the citation from Candragomin illustrates.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 8th, 2015 at 11:21 PM

Title: Re: Gorampa & Tsongkhapa

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Therefore it follows that for you an illusory elephant is not empty of being an "elephant" because it bears the characteristics of an elephant (trunks, tusks, etc.) upon which one may impute the conventional designation elephant.

Tsongkhapa said:

Correct. There is an appearance of elephant. That is the basis by which worldly people

understand elephant as well.

Malcolm wrote:

Well, this is fast track to making yourself a laughing stock — can you ride an illusory elephant? If not, then how is an illusory elephant not empty of an elephant?

Tsongkhapa said:

Tables hold their own nature? How, where? In their parts or separate from them? Your conclusion does not follow from your premise. A collection of parts designated a "table" is still empty of being a table even though it can be used as one, just as a collection of aggregates is empty of a self even though it can be designated one. A collection of aggregates is never designated as a self

Malcolm wrote:

Of course it is.

Tsongkhapa said:

- the self is not the body and not the mind. Self is imputed on the basis of body and mind. Chandrakirti and other Prasangika scholars refute that the aggregates are the self even conventionally.

Malcolm wrote:

No one said the aggregates are "the self", even conventionally. Nevertheless, when you see your body, you designate it TKfan and when someone says injurious words to you, your mind reacts as if your self has been injured. But in reality, this is only because you have designated this collection of parts "TKfan." But TKfan is empty of TKfan.

Tsongkhapa said:

The self is not empty of self because it appears and can perform the function of self.

Malcolm wrote:

The self appears, how does it appear, what is its basis for appearance? Of you say that it is not the aggregates, then likewise, then the parts of a table are not the basis for the table's appearance. In both cases we are discussing an identity: self, table.

Tsongkhapa said:

Similarly, the basis, body is not empty of body because it appears and can perform the function of body.

Malcolm wrote:

You are just repeating the same mistake over and over again. It does not matter whether we are talking about a self, table, body, mind, or anything else designated or imputed onto a collection of parts.

Tsongkhapa said:

Not so. No phenomenon has a findable nature other than emptiness but that doesn't mean that conventionally they don't possess the nature of their imputed objects and can perform the function of those objects.

Malcolm wrote:

Phenomena do not have intrinsic characteristics even conventionally, so your insistence that they do indicates to me that you have not properly studied the great Indian Madhyamaka masters. Arthakriya, functionality, is not proof of nature-possession.

Tsongkhapa said:

They do and this is why table is not empty of table.

Malcolm wrote:

They do not [possess the nature of their imputed object], and this is why tables can function as tables. Tables function as tables solely because we designate a collection of parts a table and use it as such. There is no table at all apart from our imputation. The table is empty of a table because a table is solely an imputation from our side. The collection of parts we are designating as a table has not been table from its own side ever and will never be such a table, and therefore is empty of the table we are imputing.

There is no table in absence of the parts either, since there is no basis upon which to impute the table.

Your argument suffers from being conned by the pyramid scheme of realism — the idea that you can just keep borrowing from someone else to pay off your previous investors. Your argument suffers from a hidden flaw of unconsciously resorting to parabhāva, gzhan dngos, dependent existence, which is just a form of inherent existence, svabhāva, rang bzhin.

The only way to correct your error is to accept your investment is a sham and accept your losses. Otherwise, you become like Bernie Madoff, constantly borrowing and making more and more inflated claims to rope in new investors.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, April 9th, 2015 at 1:24 AM

Title: Re: is vajrayana buddhism a path of renunciation or isn't it?

Content:

Fruitzilla said:

Seriously tough, the stuff about sense objects being poisonous in themselves sounds quite silly to me, and certainly not something I can remember reading or hearing about in my (admittedly not very broad) exposure of Mahayana. And no, I've never heard of Candragomin.

Malcolm wrote:

It is a fundamental point of view about conditioned dharmas (apart from path dharmas) in general shared between Hinayāna and common Mahāyāna, i.e. the second seal: All contaminated phenomena are suffering.

Now, I understand that basic Buddhadharma is not very popular around here of late, but who can argue with the second seal?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, April 9th, 2015 at 1:30 AM

Title: Re: Vajrayāna/Dzogchen

Content:

Konchok Namgyal said:

You cannot correctly practice Dzogchen without vajrayana, the paths leading to dzogchen are only through vajrayana.

everyone want to practice dzogchen but doesnt want to do the work to get there and there are alot of false teachers of dzogchen.

without the Ngongdro, the blessings and the purification practices, any attempts at Dzogpachenpo are worthless !

Malcolm wrote:

Lots of false teachers?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, April 9th, 2015 at 1:54 AM

Title: Re: Gorampa & Tsongkhapa

Content:

Tsongkhapafan said:

Yes, but this is an erroneous way of seeing the self. Self is not empty of self, it's empty of inherently existent self, otherwise you are negating what exists. You seem to have a problem with conventionally designated things having a conventionally designated nature.

Malcolm wrote:

Things have no natures, conventionally or otherwise. Look, we can say water is wet, but actually, there no water that possesses a wet nature. Water is wet, that is all. There is no wetness apart from water and not water apart from wetness. If you say a given thing has a separate nature, you are making the exact mistaken Nāgārjuna points out in the analysis of movement, i.e., it is senseless to say there is a "moving mover." Your arguments are exactly the same, you are basically saying there is an "existing existence."

Tsongkhapafan said:

The self appears, how does it appear, what is its basis for appearance? Of you say that it is not the aggregates, than likewise, then the parts of a table are not the basis for the

tables appearance. In both cases we are discussing an identity: self, table.
I'm not saying that the aggregates are not the basis for the appearance of self, I'm saying the aggregates are not the self.

Malcolm wrote:

Now you are contradicting yourself, as anyone can plainly see who can read English.

Tsongkhapa said:

Of course the parts of the table are the basis for designating table, but 'table' is the possessor and the parts of the table are the possessions of the table, and as Nagarjuna says, possessor and possessed cannot be one and the same.

Malcolm wrote:

This is precisely because of the above point I referenced. Nagārjuna clearly shows that characteristics/natures are untenable.

Candrakīrti points out that the possessor does not exist at all, but for the mere purpose of discourse, we allow conventionally the idea that there is a possessor of parts even though no possessor of parts exists. This mistake that we indulge in can act as an agent, for example a car, we can use it as such, but it is empty of being a car — an agent is as empty of being an agent as its actions are empty of being actions.

Tsongkhapa said:

Phenomena do not have intrinsic characteristics even conventionally, so your insistence that they do indicates to me that you have not properly studied the great Indian Madhyamaka masters. Arthakriya, functionality, is not proof of nature-possession.

You've erected a strawman. I have not said at any point that phenomena possess intrinsic characteristics, but they do exist and they do have imputed characteristics and an imputed nature.

Malcolm wrote:

As I said, you have fallen for a pyramid scheme.

Tsongkhapa said:

The taste of tea is different to the taste of coffee because it's a different karmic appearance arising from different causes and conditions. Tea and coffee are different and hold their own natures conventionally.

Malcolm wrote:

And thus you fall again into the trap of realism — where do coffee and tea hold their nature? From their own sides? No, according to what you just said they owe their flavor to karmic appearances and therefore have no nature of their own at all.

Tsongkhapa said:

Conventionally phenomena exist and have their own natures, everyone knows that.

Malcolm wrote:

No, conventional phenomena appear, and because no one knows they they cannot be established according to any of the four extremes (not merely like illusions) they are illusions and they become objects of false cognitions, aka relative truths.

Tsongkhapafan said:

To deny something that exists is nihilism, despite what others have said on this thread. You seem to be denying the valid conventional nature of phenomena, therefore this is tantamount to nihilism. This conventional nature is not intrinsic yet it exists and is apprehended by valid cognition.

Malcolm wrote:

One cannot accuse someone of nihilism when they have not advanced the existence of something. Likewise, you cannot accuse someone of stealing merely because they have found an empty bank vault. Your assertion is like accusing someone who discovers a theft of the crime itself even though they are innocent. As Nāgārjuna states: If I had a thesis I would be guilty, but since I alone have no thesis I alone am innocent.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, April 9th, 2015 at 2:04 AM

Title: Re: is vajrayana budhism a path of renunciation or isn't it?

Content:

Fruitzilla said:

That all (afflicted) emotions are painful I can understand. Phenomena being contaminated by themselves, and not by our relationship toward them, isn't anything I've come across before this thread.

Malcolm wrote:

Abhidharmakośa:

There are contaminated and uncontaminated phenomena.

Conditioned phenomena apart from the path are contaminated. Why? They increase contamination.

The material aggregates consists of the five sense organs and five sense objects. All of it is contaminated. Also all mental objects, apart from cessation, space and path dharmas, are contaminated.

This is basic Buddhadharma everyone should know.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, April 9th, 2015 at 2:46 AM

Title: Re: is vajrayana budhism a path of renunciation or isn't it?

Content:

Fruitzilla said:

That all (afflicted) emotions are painful I can understand. Phenomena being contaminated by themselves, and not by our relationship toward them, isn't anything I've come across before this thread.

Malcolm wrote:

Abhidharmakośa:

There are contaminated and uncontaminated phenomena.

Condition phenomena apart from the path are contaminated. Why? They increase contamination.

The material aggregates consists of the five sense organs and five sense objects. All of it is contaminated. Also all mental objects, apart from cessation, space and path dharmas, are contaminated.

This is basic Buddhadharma everyone should know.

Fruitzilla said:

Apart from the strange reasoning and the protestant tone I don't see how this is different from what I stated.

Malcolm wrote:

You said:

Phenomena being contaminated by themselves, and not by our relationship toward them, isn't anything I've come across before this thread.

Conditioned phenomena are intrinsically contaminated and contaminating, that is the point of the passage. That is also Candragomin's point.

This is why sense objects are given up in Hinayāna and Mahāyāna — they are contaminated and contaminating.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, April 9th, 2015 at 3:05 AM

Title: Re: is vajrayana budhism a path of renunciation or isn't it?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Conditioned phenomena are intrinsically contaminated and contaminating, that is the point of the passage. That is also Candragomin's point.

This is why sense objects are given up in Hinayāna and Mahāyāna — they are contaminated and contaminating.

Fruitzilla said:

Whoops, I'd better go looking for another tradition then.

Malcolm wrote:

You won't find such a tradition in Buddhadharma outside of Vajrayāna.

Of course, from the standpoint of the emptiness of all phenomena, phenomena are regarded as pure in Mahāyāna, however, this does not apply to people who are not awakened. If you still experience afflictions, this means for you phenomena are contaminated.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, April 9th, 2015 at 3:11 AM

Title: Re: How India Is Squandering Its Top Export

Content:

Fortyeightvows said:

This article is spot on!

http://www.huffingtonpost.in/dzongsar-jamyang-khyentse/how-india-is-squandering-_b_7008922.html

Malcolm wrote:

indeed...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, April 9th, 2015 at 3:39 AM

Title: Re: How India Is Squandering Its Top Export

Content:

Caodemarte said:

I found this article very bad in tone and content. Its many inaccuracies on history and Buddhism (no, Bodhgaya for Buddhists is not the equivalent of Mecca for Muslims) really stand out when the article accuses India of "hiding the truth." I assume the publisher is responsible for the headline comparing Buddhism to a good for export and bears responsibility for that.

Malcolm wrote:

Inaccuracies such as?

Bodhgaya is one of the four main places Buddha told those who follow Buddhadharma that they should visit during their lifetime, the others being Lumbini, The Deer Park and Kushinagara. Of these four, Bodhgaya, Vajrāsana, the Bodhimaṇḍa is the most important.

Frankly your dismissal of the article seems rather lazy since you do not bother to list any so called "inaccuracies."

Buddhadharma was India's best and most enduring export besides which all others pale.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, April 9th, 2015 at 10:17 AM

Title: Re: Gorampa & Tsongkhapa

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

btw, since we are just going around in circles, the above is my last response to this issue.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, April 9th, 2015 at 9:37 PM

Title: Re: How India Is Squandering Its Top Export

Content:

Caodemarte said:

In response to the complaint that it was a bit lazy to not specify errors in fact and tone in the cited article I should note (and I really thought I would not have to):

Malcolm wrote:

Thanks for replying.

Caodemarte said:

I doubt it was intended this way but the error in tone is pretty glaring.

Malcolm wrote:

One can't have an error in tone.

Caodemarte said:

In terms of fact, and respectfully, Bodhgaya is not like the Vatican or a Jewish congregation run by Protestants. It is not the organizational or religious HQ of Buddhism or of any Buddhist group. Almost all religions have pilgrimage sites.

Yes, actually it is. Bodhgaya should be administered by an international coalition of Buddhist organizations.

In Buddhism, there is no one fundamental text that all must believe in with a requirement from God for all able believers to perform a pilgrimage to one site as a fundamental duty (let alone a Buddhist equivalent of the Kaaba in Mecca). It is simply incorrect to say that "Bodhgaya is to Buddhists what Mecca is to Muslims."

Malcolm wrote:

In fact, Bodhgaya is more to Buddhists than Mecca is to Muslims — there is no encouragement in the Koran for Muslims to worship at the Kaaba, per se. An ancient

pilgrimage site, the Kaaba, eventually became associated with the house built by Ibrahim.

The Buddha, on the other hand, clearly stated that all Buddhists should try to visit the four memorial spots, the site of his birth, awakening, first teaching and nirvana.

Caodemarte said:

"In fact the demise of Buddhism in India is attributable to both the country's major religions, with Islam in effect finishing off what Hinduism began." would seem to be an unforced error or an interpretation, but not a fact.

Malcolm wrote:

Try reading "The Hardships and downfall of Buddhism in India by Verardi. In this book, he recounts a long history the decline of Buddhism in India. Hindu hostility to Buddhism in the Post-Gupta period is well documented, and supported by anecdotal reports of conflicts between Mahasiddhas and their Hindu enemies.

That Muslims delt the death blow to Indian Buddhism in the 12th century is beyond dispute.

Caodemarte said:

"...so Buddhists in Bangladesh, Indonesia, and other places that suffered foreign invasion, or in small, poor countries like Bhutan, might rejoice in China's emergence as a superpower" because China has a lot of Buddhists. Well, no. You could argue that Indonesian Buddhists are mostly Chinese and that some of them take pride in China's rise, but that is hardly because of shared religious values. I guess you could say this is not an error of fact because of the word might, but c'mon.

Malcolm wrote:

DKR is making a rhetorical point, i.e., that marginalization of Buddhists in border countries might well cause them to look north in the growing showdown between China and India.

Caodemarte said:

"Western secular political correctness is on display..." No, Indian policy or sign writing could never be cited as "Western secular political correctness."

Malcolm wrote:

Sure it can — but here again, you are getting caught up in DKR's rhetoric of irony — he knows very well that indignant Indians will react just as you have.

Caodemarte said:

He certainly was quite willing to burn books (except the Quran) or anything that he could not steal, but the motivation given in the article is suggestive of another legendary story about the library at Alexandria, but in any case seems off in this case.

Malcolm wrote:

Considering that reports indicate that the library burned for six months, it seems completely apropos.

Caodemarte said:

The idea that that the Indian government is trying to whitewash history to avoid offending Muslims, especially this one, makes no sense to anyone familiar with Indian politics (please examine why Modi could not get a US visa until recently).

Malcolm wrote:

You do realize that a Mosque abuts the Bodhgaya stupa and it broadcasts its call to prayer loudly and insistently five times a day. There are quite a number of groups who, since Bodhgaya was "rediscovered" in the 19th century, have decided to attach themselves to the Mahabodhi Temple.

But it is a place for Buddhists — not Hindus, not Muslims, etc. In general, the sentiment of the article is correct. The Buddhist epoch in Indian history is most important, and yet most Indians these days know more about the history of England than they do Indian history during that point in time.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, April 9th, 2015 at 9:45 PM

Title: Re: Vajrayāna/Dzogchen

Content:

shanehanner said:

What are the Dzogchen preliminaries?

Malcolm wrote:

You should learn those from a teacher.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, April 9th, 2015 at 10:15 PM

Title: Re: Buddhist MEME. My Favorite

Content:

Bakmoon said:

I've personally never heard anyone say that we should accept the Buddha's teachings just because. In fact, Buddhist epistemology (in contrast with some Hindu epistemologies like Nyaya) rejects the claim that scriptural and traditional authority themselves can serve as valid sources of knowledge apart from inference.

Malcolm wrote:

This is just not factual. There are three sources of authority in Buddhadharma: direct perception (pratyakṣa), inference (anumana) and testimony of reliable persons (śabda).

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, April 9th, 2015 at 10:17 PM

Title: Re: Buddhist MEME. My Favorite

Content:

dharmagoat said:

They may ask the question "how is the doctrine of the Buddha superior to all other teachings?"

"Because it is" seems a poor answer.

Malcolm wrote:

That is not the answer of course. Only the Buddha has properly identified suffering, the cause of suffering, the cessation of suffering and the path. That is why Buddhadharma leads to liberation and other Dharmas do not.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, April 9th, 2015 at 11:53 PM

Title: Re: Buddhist MEME. My Favorite

Content:

Bakmoon said:

I've personally never heard anyone say that we should accept the Buddha's teachings just because. In fact, Buddhist epistemology (in contrast with some Hindu epistemologies like Nyaya) rejects the claim that scriptural and traditional authority themselves can serve as valid sources of knowledge apart from inference.

Malcolm wrote:

This is just not factual. There are three sources of authority in Buddhadharma: direct perception (pratyakṣa), inference (anumana) and testimony of reliable persons (śabda).

Bakmoon said:

I thought that in Buddhist Pramana testimony is considered to be a subclass of inference rather than a totally independent source of knowledge.

Malcolm wrote:

It is a totally independent source of knowledge, and indeed Dharmakīrti for example spends an entire chapter devoted to proving why we can for example accept the Buddha as an authority.

But we also have this from the Pūbbakotthaka Sutta:

"Excellent, Śāriputta. Excellent. Those who have not known, seen, penetrated, realized, or attained it by means of discernment would have to take it on conviction in others that the faculty of conviction... persistence... mindfulness... concentration... discernment, when developed and pursued, plunges into the Deathless, has the Deathless as its goal and consummation; whereas those who have known, seen, penetrated, realized, and attained it by means of discernment would have no doubt or uncertainty that the faculty

of conviction... persistence... mindfulness... concentration... discernment, when developed and pursued, plunges into the Deathless, has the Deathless as its goal and consummation."

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, April 10th, 2015 at 12:00 AM

Title: Re: How India Is Squandering Its Top Export

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Then of course there is this lovely little poem written by the Muslim Mahmud al-Kashgari about the invasion of Khotan in the early 11th century:

We came down on them like a flood, We went out among their cities, We tore down the idol-temples, We shat on the Buddha's head!

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, April 10th, 2015 at 1:13 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist MEME. My Favorite

Content:

Lazy_eye said:

Hi Malcolm,

How is a "reliable person" defined according to Buddhadharma?

Malcolm wrote:

It would be the Buddha or his disciples. Really, what we are talking about here is citational or scriptural authority. The Samdhinirmocana Sūtra states:

As such, the reasoning of a valid proof is the authority of direction perception; the authority of inference, and the authority of trustworthy citations which is valid through the five valid characteristics.

Those five valid characteristics are:

The characteristic of being supported on a direct perception, the characteristic of being supported on a direct perception which is the basis for that, the characteristic of the application of example in one's own reasoning, the characteristic of perfectly establishment and the characteristic of a scripture proven to be completely valid.

You should look into this sūtra for a more detailed explanation.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, April 10th, 2015 at 1:22 AM

Title: Re: Dzogchen Community of Chogyal Namkhai Norbu

Content:

oldbob said:

Please to remember that webcast transmission (an officially accepted means of transmission) is not / not simultaneous, but is delayed by several minutes.

dzogchungpa said:

Is it really that much? I didn't know that.

Malcolm wrote:

This is not true. Sometimes, the video buffering can be a bit delayed, but the audio only is very much on track all the time. So people who are super neurotic about digital lag times can elect to follow audio only. Actually, they should really sit in Rinpoche's lap so there is virtually no time between when the air crosses his vocal cords and the sound hits your ear -- who knows, in those microseconds you might miss the transmission...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, April 10th, 2015 at 2:12 AM

Title: Re: Dzogchen Community of Chogyal Namkhai Norbu

Content:

Motova said:

Even if you were to sit on his lap there would be a delay.

Malcolm wrote:

Ummm....?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, April 10th, 2015 at 4:10 AM

Title: Re: Dzogchen Community of Chogyal Namkhai Norbu

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The irony of my answer seems to have been lost...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, April 10th, 2015 at 4:47 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist MEME. My Favorite

Content:

Lazy_eye said:

That's obviously different from simply having a high regard for the Buddha, or being drawn to aspects of his teachings. But is that degree of confidence a prerequisite for refuge, in your view?

Malcolm wrote:

There are three kinds of refuge, fear, faith and compassion. The first is hardly refuge at all. One cannot take refuge without faith in the Buddha and his teachings, even if you mouth the words. However, even mouthing the words without faith sets up a cause for the arising of faith even if very weak.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, April 10th, 2015 at 5:07 AM

Title: Re: Gorampa & Tsongkhapa

Content:

Tsongkhapafan said:

Actually, Tsongkhapa would say that teaching that the ultimate nature of phenomena is lack of inherent existence is Nagarjuna, Aryadeva and Chandrakirti's true intention.

Malcolm wrote:

That is not why other scholars fault Tsongkhapa. They fault him for other things, novel interpretations and internal contradictions in his later writings.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, April 10th, 2015 at 5:11 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist MEME. My Favorite

Content:

Lazy_eye said:

Yes, of course, but when we are talking about "Buddhism" in a general way, Theravada is relevant. Even though Vajrayana may not teach a "gradual path," it would be incorrect factually to say that the notion of a gradual path is un-Buddhist.

Malcolm wrote:

Vajrayāna does teach a gradual path, it is just much faster.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, April 10th, 2015 at 7:03 AM

Title: Re: Contradictions in the Mahayana Sutras?

Content:

frankc said:

Ven Dhammavuddho has some videos on youtube talking about some contradictions in the Sutras and giving some criticisms of the Mahayana teachings. Curious to know how a Mahayana Buddhist would explain and defend against the criticisms and contradictions he is talking about. Here are four short videos of an interview with him talking about Mahayana.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vkhclyrq8Hs>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nKO0mM48Hj8>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=os8ZtNjE4zA>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JsHpUnUT1Us>

Malcolm wrote:

He has no idea what is he talking about.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, April 10th, 2015 at 8:25 AM

Title: Re: Contradictions in the Mahayana Sutras?

Content:

Dan74 said:

One could of course go on to even more egregious statements, but yes, the Venerable is spreading misinformation.

/

dan

Malcolm wrote:

People like this dude do not deserve the title "venerable" as there is nothing venerable about him.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, April 10th, 2015 at 8:41 PM

Title: Re: Hearing other sect's lectures is negative?

Content:

ShakuShodoo said:

The title is very elucidative of this question of mine.

Let us say that I stick to Karma Kagyu tradition...

If I go to a Ch'an monastery, hear it's Masters teachings and seek pearls of wisdom...will I be doing something negative?

Malcolm wrote:

No.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, April 10th, 2015 at 8:41 PM

Title: Re: Gorampa & Tsongkhapa

Content:

Unknown said:

If the scripture is a statement of an earlier Tibetan scholar, they dismiss it [saying]: “One who says something like that is a nihilistic fool.” If the scripture is identified as a statement of the Buddha, Nagarjuna, and so on, they patch it with words like “The statement ‘does not exist’ means ‘does not truly exist’” and “‘Is not nonexistent’ means ‘is not conventionally nonexistent,’” so that it fits with their own desires. In fact, the only difference is that if they direct refutations at the Buddha, they fear being labeled evil persons with evil views, [whereas] if they are able to refute earlier Tibetans, they are labeled heroic scholars.

Malcolm wrote:
Beautiful words...

Author: Malcolm
Date: Friday, April 10th, 2015 at 8:45 PM
Title: Re: Does one need initiation to recite Vajrasattva mantra?
Content:
kirtu said:
I do not remember a Vajrasattva empowerment of any kind in Sakya...

Malcolm wrote:
Yes, it does not exist.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Friday, April 10th, 2015 at 9:18 PM
Title: Re: Buddhist MEME. My Favorite
Content:
Malcolm wrote:
Also, one should understand that in Vajrayāna, direct perception and inferences are not authorities. The Abhibodhikramopadeśa of Master Āryadeva states:
At the time of the ultimate view of secret mantra,
the direct perception by mind and sense organs
and inferences are not authorities,
but the profound scriptures and intimate instructions are authorities.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Friday, April 10th, 2015 at 11:23 PM
Title: Re: Buddhist MEME. My Favorite
Content:
dharmagoat said:
The Bhāvanākrama of Kamalaśīla explains:
At the outset one should seek to develop wisdom by listening [to the dharma], for it enables one to grasp the meaning of the authoritative scriptures. Then, with analytical intellect one differentiates between the apparent and the ultimate meaning.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, this is perfect. Of course, one must listen only to a qualified teacher of Dharma.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, April 10th, 2015 at 11:59 PM

Title: Re: Buddhist MEME. My Favorite

Content:

dharmagoat said:

The Bhāvanākrama continues:

With an understanding of the meaning so differentiated, one should meditate on the reality of the pure state and not on its apparent aspect. If one meditates wrongly and fails to clear away all doubts, one will not achieve perfect awareness. As a result, the meditation becomes fruitless, like the meditation of the radical dogmatists.

What is this referring to?

Malcolm wrote:

Which translation are you using, and which of the three Bhāvanākramas? I need to look at the Tibetan.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, April 11th, 2015 at 1:04 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist MEME. My Favorite

Content:

dharmagoat said:

The Bhāvanākrama continues:

With an understanding of the meaning so differentiated, one should meditate on the reality of the pure state and not on its apparent aspect. If one meditates wrongly and fails to clear away all doubts, one will not achieve perfect awareness. As a result, the meditation becomes fruitless, like the meditation of the radical dogmatists.

What is this referring to?

Malcolm wrote:

This translation is a little strange.

After that, based on the meaning differentiated in that way, one should meditate on the true meaning and not on that which is not the true meaning. If one grasps that which is not [the true meaning], one's meditation will be incorrect and since one's doubt will not be removed, also right knowledge [samyagjñānam, one of the eight limbs] will not arise. Therefore, since one's meditation does not become meaningful, it is similar with the meditation of non-buddhist (mu stegs pa, tīrthikas)

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, April 11th, 2015 at 1:11 AM

Title: Re: Poll: Kalacakra war prophecy

Content:

shaunc said:

Even if I was to accept this prophesy as 100% accurate. My question is how will this affect my life or my dharma practise now.

Will said:

Many Kalacakra initiates prepare now to help the Ruler of Shambala defeat the barbarians at the time of the war. How do they prepare? One must ask a Kalacakra initiate.

Malcolm wrote:

If you receive the empowerment and maintain your samaya, this is sufficient to be reborn in Shambhala at that time.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, April 11th, 2015 at 1:36 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist MEME. My Favorite

Content:

dharmagoat said:

So as I read it, the scriptures are the authority, but careful understanding of them is required to make them effective.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, that is correct. This is the main reason why my posts generally are supported on citations.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, April 11th, 2015 at 1:50 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist MEME. My Favorite

Content:

dharmagoat said:

So as I read it, the scriptures are the authority, but careful understanding of them is required to make them effective.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, that is correct. This is the main reason why my posts generally are supported on citations.

dharmagoat said:

I think we are on the same page now.

Malcolm wrote:

It is also important to provide citations, because if for example, one has not understood something correctly, and uses a citation to support it, another may come along and point out to you why you have made an error.

It is a simple generosity, and you have no idea how much time I spend looking up citations.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, April 11th, 2015 at 3:25 AM

Title: Re: Does one need initiation to recite Vajrasattva mantra?

Content:

kirtu said:

I do not remember a Vajrasattva empowerment of any kind in Sakya...

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, it does not exist.

Challenge23 said:

Interesting. Are you comfortable with speculating with why that is? I was under the impression that all of the schools had the same basic empowerments (such as Medicine Buddha and Vajrasattva) and ceremonies and differed mostly in regards to some of the more advanced concepts and how the basics are presented. For example, all of the schools have a Ngondro but the number of repetitions and exact wording differ from school to school.

Malcolm wrote:

Because there is no initiation for Vajrasattva outside of Nyingma texts that come from India.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, April 11th, 2015 at 6:29 AM

Title: Re: Does one need initiation to recite Vajrasattva mantra?

Content:

Punya said:

Because there is no initiation for Vajrasattva outside of Nyingma texts that come from India.

I'm curious what you mean by this Malcolm.

I'm aware of a number of Vajrasattva sadhana in Nyingma which I understand are derived from terma. I'm having trouble framing the question but what is the relationship between the initiation itself and the particular sadhana that a student is then expected to practice.

Malcolm wrote:

Guhyagarbha is that ultimate source of Vajrasattva initiations in Nyingma.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, April 11th, 2015 at 10:05 AM

Title: Re: Tsok restrictions

Content:

yan kong said:

I've been going to a small practice group a little bit in the nyingma pema lingpa lineage led by a Bhutanese loppon. I've received no empowerments or initiations or anything from anyone, I'm certainly in the sutrayana area of practice.

Thing is the last time after the teaching on the four noble truths we chanted from a chod practice text (and when I say chanted I mean the loppon tried to teach us the basic rhythm of the text, it didn't seem like an actual practice). Additionally they invited me to one of their Tsoks.

So my question is, should I be doing any of this having received no initiation or empowerment of any kind?

tomamundsen said:

AFAIK, there are no restrictions to tsok. All beings are invited.

Malcolm wrote:

Actually, those without samaya cannot participate.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, April 13th, 2015 at 8:12 PM

Title: Re: Sakya lam-rim text?

Content:

Luke said:

Does the Sakya school have its own lam-rim text? Or do they generally just use other schools' lam-rim texts?

Malcolm wrote:

Clarifying the Muni's Intent by Sakya Pandita is our Lamrim text.

The other texts mentioned above are not lamrim texts since they have no account of refuge, the six perfections, ten stages, three kāyas and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, April 13th, 2015 at 8:28 PM

Title: Re: Meaning of Vajrayana Buddhism

Content:

Anders said:

The very quick summary, as I understand it:

Vajrayana exists for two reasons:

- *To provide a different and wider array of means for liberation that allows for more people to get there.

- *To provide radically faster means to Buddhahood than traditional mahayana.

This traditionally involves bonding with a Yidam (fully awakened deity) via a guru and, through these bonds and their blessings, transform affliction into wisdom (as opposed to abandoning affliction with wisdom).

Beyond this, there are also Mahamudra and Dzogchen who focus less on the yidam part (guru devotion still mandatory) and more on being introduced to one's nature by the guru and work with this as a speedy means to buddhahood.

Malcolm wrote:

Mahāmudra and Dzogchen are part of Vajrayāna.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, April 13th, 2015 at 8:53 PM

Title: Re: Meaning of Vajrayana Buddhism

Content:

Sherlock said:

Dzogchen is to Vajrayana as Vajrayana is to Mahayana.

Malcolm wrote:

No, this is nonsense. Dzogchen has no methods that allow one to attain awakening faster than one lifetime. As Zhigpo Dudtse pointed out, he looked far and wide for cig car bas, but apart from Saraha in India, and Lingrepa in Tibet, he could not find any. Neither of these two persons were Dzogchen practitioners.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, April 13th, 2015 at 10:09 PM

Title: Re: is the mind individual?

Content:

Jeff said:

Suzuki and Goddard translation.

Malcolm wrote:

Suzuki and Goddard translation.

hahahahahahaha....

No wonder you are so misled. That piece of crap should be burned.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, April 13th, 2015 at 11:03 PM

Title: Re: is the mind individual?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

[quote="Jeff"]

On the translation, is there another version that you would prefer to discuss on the point?/quote]

Jeff, you really need to take a course in Yogacara so you will not be misled by theosophical edits of deprecated translations.

The ālayavijñāna is personal and individual, as anyone who has studied these texts any Buddhist primary language knows.

I can't even be bothered to explain this in detail because it would take much too long. However, you should educate yourself if possible:

http://www.bdk.or.jp/pdf/bdk/digitaldl/dBET_T1593_GreatVehicleSummary_2003.pdf

This text explains very precisely what the ālayavijñāna is.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 14th, 2015 at 12:29 AM

Title: Re: is the mind individual?

Content:

Jeff said:

Your response seems to imply that you believe that a guru or bodhisattva cannot directly impact (or know about) other sentient beings. Is that correct?

Malcolm wrote:

It implies no such thing. And what does the abhijñā of knowing the mind of another have to do with the question?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 14th, 2015 at 12:32 AM

Title: Re: is the mind individual?

Content:

Jeff said:

On putting it in words... In your tradition, is there no such thing as mind-mind transmission?

Malcolm wrote:

Depends on what you mean by mind to mind. What do you mean by mind to mind.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 14th, 2015 at 12:34 AM

Title: Re: is the mind individual?

Content:

Jeff said:

Your response seems to imply that you believe that a guru or bodhisattva cannot directly impact (or know about) other sentient beings. Is that correct?

Malcolm wrote:

It implies no such thing. And what does the abhijñā of knowing the mind of another have to do with the question?

Jeff said:

Then how does a guru or bodhisattva impact other sentient beings? How do they access the mind of the being if there is not some medium of overlap?

Malcolm wrote:

Why does there have to be a medium of overlap?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 14th, 2015 at 12:39 AM

Title: Re: is the mind individual?

Content:

Jeff said:

On putting it in words... In your tradition, is there no such thing as mind-mind transmission?

Malcolm wrote:

Depends on what you mean by mind to mind. What do you mean by mind to mind.

Jeff said:

Direct transmission. Without the need for talking/oral communication. Often sometimes called energy or light transmission.

Malcolm wrote:

Transmission of what, baseball scores, stock tips?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 14th, 2015 at 12:51 AM

Title: Re: is the mind individual?

Content:

Jeff said:

I guess that I have my answer. Thanks.

Malcolm wrote:

We have three dimensions, body, voice and mind. The Buddha's have three kāyas. The nirmanakāya exist because ordinary sentient beings cannot have contact with the sambhogakāya at all because of the afflictions they possess. When they remove those afflictions, then they can see the Sambhogakāya, but this takes many countless eons lifetimes of practice. Finally, when they become a Buddha, they can see the dharmakāya.

Therefore, all transmissions for ordinary people like ourselves occur on an external physical way, through speech and symbols. If we happen to realize the meaning of what is being taught, this is referred to a "mind transmission", but it is not really a transmission in the sense of a message communicated and a message received mentally. It is more in the sense of a message communicated through words and symbols whose inner significance is then realized directly. Anyone who tells you that there is some actually mind to mind transmission in Buddhadharma at the level of our impure perception is either lying or they have no idea what they are talking about.

Buddhas cannot communicate liberation into the minds of others. If they could, there would be no sentient beings left. The Buddha said famously, we cannot wash away suffering, he cannot remove it with his hand, nor can he make us liberated, but he can teach us a path.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 14th, 2015 at 12:57 AM

Title: Re: Vajrayāna/Dzogchen

Content:

Sherlock said:

Zhangzhung Nyen gyud is Bon Dzogchen from a prior age before Garab Dorje.

Malcolm wrote:

Maybe, I have my doubts.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 14th, 2015 at 2:12 AM

Title: Re: is the mind individual?

Content:

Jeff said:

it works like this...

Malcolm wrote:

No, it really doesn't. This is just some fantasy you are having.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 14th, 2015 at 5:32 AM

Title: Re: is the mind individual?

Content:

Jeff said:

Where in sutra does it say for one's own benefit?

Malcolm wrote:

Everywhere.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 14th, 2015 at 5:33 AM

Title: Re: is the mind individual?

Content:

Jeff said:

Thank you for pointing out that the Form Kayas are for the benefit of others, can you please explain how the Sambhogakaya "helps" with the benefit of the others? This seems to be impossible for most here as they believe that the mind cannot be affected by a buddha.

Malcolm wrote:

The sambhogakāya gives rise to the nirmanakāyas in all the different world systems.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 14th, 2015 at 5:51 AM

Title: Re: is the mind individual?

Content:

Jeff said:

Where in sutra does it say for one's own benefit?

Malcolm wrote:

Everywhere.

Jeff said:

With the realization/formation of the Dharmakaya there is no "one who is worried about their own benefit"? They have dropped all such desires and attachments or there would be no such Dharmakaya. What sutra really says such a thing?

Best wishes.

Malcolm wrote:

Very many. This is because the dharmakāya only appears to buddhas, where as the sambhogakāya appears to high bodhisattvas and the nirmanakāya to everyone else.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 14th, 2015 at 6:02 AM

Title: Re: is the mind individual?

Content:

Jeff said:

So your position is that a buddha (having a Dharmakaya) is "worried about their own benefit"?

Malcolm wrote:

No. I already explained it as did cone, the dharmakāya is termed "for one's own benefit" because one can only see it when one becomes a buddha. Only buddhas can see the dharmakāya, as has been said now several times.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 14th, 2015 at 6:10 AM

Title: Re: is the mind individual?

Content:

Jeff said:

Ok, so you are saying that it is a definitional/title thing regarding "benefit for oneself" rather than really any sutra saying that a Buddha worries or cares about oneself?

My position is that appearance to those dwelling on the Bhumis, is really the broader energy/light interaction that I have previously described. Additionally, my position is that a Dakini is also sometimes the Sambhogakaya body and directly interacts with high level practitioners.

Malcolm wrote:

The Śrī Maladevi sutra states:

In that respect, the dharmakāya of the tathāgatagarbha is definitely released from the sheath of afflictions. Bhagavān, the so called "tathāgatagarbha" is tathāgata's wisdom of emptiness that cannot be seen by śravakas and pratyekabuddhas.

Dharmakāya is just the total realization of emptiness. Nothing more.

Further, The Trikāya Sūtra states:

Kṣitigarbha, tathāgatas are endowed with the three kāyas: the dharmakāya, the sambhogkāya and the nirmanakāya...In that regard, the dharmakāya is visible to the

tathagātas. The sambhogakāya is visible to bodhisattvas. The nirmanakāya is visible to ordinary persons on the stage of devotional practice.

Kṣitigarbha, for example, clouds are produced on the basis of an empty sky; rain is produced on the basis of clouds. Likewise, the sambhogakāya appears on the basis of the dharmakāya, and the nirmanakāya appears on the basis of the sambhogakāya.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 14th, 2015 at 6:38 AM

Title: Re: is the mind individual?

Content:

Jeff said:

Ok, so you are saying that it is a definitional/title thing regarding "benefit for oneself" rather than really any sutra saying that a Buddha worries or cares about oneself?

My position is that appearance to those dwelling on the Bhumis, is really the broader energy/light interaction that I have previously described. Additionally, my position is that a Dakini is also sometimes the Sambhogakaya body and directly interacts with high level practitioners.

Malcolm wrote:

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Kṣitigarbha, for example, clouds are produced on the basis of an empty sky; rain is produced on the basis of clouds. Likewise, the sambhogakāya appears on the basis of the dharmakāya, and the nirmanakāya appears on the basis of the sambhogakāya.

Jeff said:

Yes, the Dharmakaya being the total realization of emptiness and also being the basis that the sambhogkaya appears on is what I meant by a stable bubble in emptiness (for the sambhogkaya).

Malcolm wrote:

Why don't you just properly study with a teacher rather than grasping at straws?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 14th, 2015 at 6:44 AM

Title: Re: is the mind individual?

Content:

Jeff said:

So, I would like to theorize an experiment for the group...

If it could be done, would remote energy interaction be considered as experimental proof that minds overlap? Something that could be consciously perceived (energy, vibrations, temperature change or visions). As I have stated is possible for someone at the 7th bhumi.

Malcolm wrote:

Seriously man, no one here, including you, is a seventh stage bodhisattva. If you think you are, you need psychological help.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 14th, 2015 at 6:53 AM

Title: Re: is the mind individual?

Content:

Jeff said:

So, I would like to theorize an experiment for the group...

If it could be done, would remote energy interaction be considered as experimental proof that minds overlap? Something that could be consciously perceived (energy, vibrations, temperature change or visions). As I have stated is possible for someone at the 7th bhumi.

Malcolm wrote:

Seriously man, no one here, including you, is a seventh stage bodhisattva. If you think you are, you need psychological help.

Jeff said:

I was making no such statement. I was asking a theoretical question as to whether the group would consider that as proof.

Malcolm wrote:

There is no substratum, minds do not "overlap." The reason why Buddhas and high bodhisattvas can know the minds of others, know past lives, etc. is because the nature of everything is emptiness and therefore while there is no universal substratum there is also no impediments because everything is empty. And since everything is empty, Buddha's wisdom is unimpeded in all directions and times.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 14th, 2015 at 7:29 AM

Title: Re: is the mind individual?

Content:

Jeff said:

And thank you for finally agreeing that Buddhas and bodhisattvas can access and know the minds of others.

Malcolm wrote:

"Finally agreeing"? We were never in disagreement about knowing the minds of others. You should look up the word "abhiññā". "Access" provides a problem. Buddhas and bodhisattvas are unable to influence the minds of others — if they were able to influence the minds of others we all would have woken up eons ago and there would be no samsara.

Jeff said:

Now we just need to just get the rest of the group to agree to such a concept.

Malcolm wrote:

They already agree.

Jeff said:

Additionally, understand how that knowing is really the same as being with or "in" the local mind stream of the sentient being. With such "focus" of a high level being creating the void effect I described earlier.

Malcolm wrote:

When one sees a tree, one is not "in the tree", it is the same with knowing the minds of others, one sees the concepts of others much in the manner of the way ordinary people watch tv.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 14th, 2015 at 7:32 AM

Title: Re: is the mind individual?

Content:

Jeff said:

Because in the example, one mind would be affecting another.

Malcolm wrote:

This idea is rejected in Buddhadharma. The only way my mind can influence another mind is that another person chooses to listen to what I say, or responds to some

physical act I perform. It is the same for the Buddha.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 14th, 2015 at 7:46 AM

Title: Re: is the mind individual?

Content:

Jeff said:

Because in the example, one mind would be affecting another.

Malcolm wrote:

This idea is rejected in Buddhadharma. The only way my mind can influence another mind is that another person chooses to listen to what I say, or responds to some physical act I perform.

Jeff said:

So you are saying that my proposed experiment is theoretically impossible? No such thing as remote (energetic) contact and transmission?

Malcolm wrote:

Correct, that is what we have been saying to you now for several pages.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 14th, 2015 at 7:46 AM

Title: Re: is the mind individual?

Content:

Jeff said:

And thank you for finally agreeing that Buddhas and bodhisattvas can access and know the minds of others. Now we just need to just get the rest of the group to agree to such a concept.

Additionally, understand how that knowing is really the same as being with or "in" the local mind stream of the sentient being. With such "focus" of a high level being creating the void effect I described earlier.

asunthatneversets said:

Curious why you seem to be so enamored with this whole mind reading/interaction business?

Jeff said:

Not interested in mind reading at all. The topic goes more to the ability (and how) of gurus, Buddhas, Bodhisattvas and Dakini's to "help". Why such tantric (energy) practices lead to faster realization.

Malcolm wrote:

I suggest you properly study Vajrayāna under a qualified master. Then you will find all your questions answered.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 14th, 2015 at 7:02 PM

Title: Re: is the mind individual?

Content:

Jeff said:

Ok, then could you describe how the guru visits them in this "dream state" (which is in their mind)? If one is manipulating someone's perceptions in their mind, does that not constitute affecting them and directly disagree with what Malcolm stated earlier?

Malcolm wrote:

You might see a guru in your dreams, but it is still your dream and not them "visiting" you in some real sense.

Jeff said:

I think this issue with our discussion may simply that in the nomenclature used here (Buddhism), higher level discrimination is simplified down to one big "Wisdom" category.

Malcolm wrote:

I think the problem with our discussion is that you don't seem to really understand the Dharma.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 14th, 2015 at 7:15 PM

Title: Re: Sakya lam-rim text?

Content:

kirtu said:

Malcolm is correct - but until fairly recently "Clarifying the Sage's Intent" had not been published or was not available.

Malcolm wrote:

I am currently doing a lecture on this text and providing a chapter by chapter translation as we go along. I will cover the first of the six perfections on Saturday, 10:00 EST, April 18th. There have been three previous sections that interested parties may listen to.

Those who are interested may join the facebook group:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/sakyapandita/>

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 14th, 2015 at 7:48 PM

Title: Re: How a skeptical anchorman became a Buddhist

Content:

Anders said:

Now the traditional Buddhist may argue that such a thing will never happen for the materialist due to his wrong view on rebirth (or even lack of right view on it), but this is a bit beside the point here imo....

Malcolm wrote:

Not, it is exactly the point.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 14th, 2015 at 7:57 PM

Title: Re: The theory of how empowerments work?

Content:

fckw said:

@Malcolm: What do you mean by "taking path empowerment every day"? Isn't this just another way of stating: practice this tantra every day? Or are you referring to a special part of the Hevajra-Tantra?

Malcolm wrote:

I am referring to practicing the Hevajra sadhana everyday in which one takes the four empowerments in an elaborate way everyday.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 14th, 2015 at 8:19 PM

Title: Re: is the mind individual?

Content:

Astus said:

A story by Ven. Shengyan (<http://chancenter.org/cmc/1985/05/15/esoteric-and-exoteric-buddhism/>):

In Taiwan, I have a disciple who has been practicing with me for quite sometime. He has a good command of English, so when a certain Tibetan rinpoche was scheduled to lecture, he was asked to translate. He was very nervous. He had never practiced Tantra, and was afraid that he wouldn't understand what the rinpoche said. In a quandary, he finally decided that if he didn't understand, it was the rinpoche's responsibility to make him understand. With this thought he went to sleep. The rinpoche came to him in a dream, placed his hand on the disciple's head, and said, "You don't have to be nervous. You will understand everything I say tomorrow. You don't have to worry." He had a wonderful feeling when the rinpoche touched him. The next morning it was the rinpoche who woke him up. My disciple immediately prostrated to the rinpoche and thanked him

for entering his dream. Curious, the rinpoche asked, "What happened last night?" The disciple told him, and after a few more questions from the rinpoche, he concluded that it might not have been the rinpoche but a "yidam," a Dharma protector, who came to him.

Later I asked him if he had ever dreamed of me. He said, "Yes, indeed, many times." Then I asked if he thought that it was me who had entered his dreams. He said, "No, because Shih-fu doesn't have a yidam." So then I said to him, "O.K., I will go and find myself a yidam so that the next time you dream of me, you will be sure that it is my yidam that is entering your dream." My disciple objected, "But in Ch'an there is no such thing as a yidam."

Jeff said:

Thank you for the story Astus. Does that mean that you disagree with Malcolm and such is possible in the Buddhadharma?

Malcolm wrote:

Why don't you try reading the paragraph immediately before these two:

In both traditions it is natural for a practitioner to have unusual physiological and psychological reactions — seeing, hearing, or even dreaming things out of the ordinary. A Tantric practitioner will take what he has seen, heard, or dreamt as signals that the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas are recognizing his practice. A Ch'an practitioner may also have such experiences, but they are not emphasized and are not taken as signals or signs of anything in particular.

Of course, the above statement is also inaccurate. A "Tantric" practitioner will do no such thing. Every practice as specific experiences that are outlined, including dreams, and when a practitioner has such experiences described in the text, it is taken as an indication that their practice is moving ahead.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 14th, 2015 at 8:26 PM

Title: Re: is the mind individual?

Content:

Jeff said:

Because in the example, one mind would be affecting another. If there was not some form of overlap or connection, how would one reach/contact the other mind?

muni said:

Oh very easy by interconnection.

Then Sambhogakaya energy.

The individual mind cannot do such at all. Such is not its' domain but discussion can lead to the wish to practice to realize beyond the limited individual "mind" and so not trust that limited mind or identifying with it.

Interdependence-emptiness. Nothing individual apart and on its' on is other than deluded.

Malcolm wrote: Buddhas and bodhisattvas are unable to influence the minds of others — if they were able to influence the minds of others we all would have woken up eons ago and there would be no samsara.

Guidance, while we have to recognize. No Buddha or Bodhisattva can do it for another.

Jeff said:

I would agree that the individual (or local) mind does not have the capability. But with your "interconnection", it sounds like you believe it is possible and all minds are interconnected in some manner. Is that the case?

Buddha's do not "give". They can only introduce and share additional room to allow one to "drop". The individual sentient being still must be willing to drop the obstructions.

Malcolm wrote:

There is no universal mind, so your term "local" is useless.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 14th, 2015 at 8:45 PM

Title: Re: is the mind individual?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

There is no universal mind, so your term "local" is useless.

Jeff said:

Yes, you have been very clear in your perspective of how Buddhadharma is not capable of doing certain things. It seems that muni has some different perspective with his "interconnectedness" concept. Since that would appear to imply that all minds are connected, it raises the question of "how all minds are connected" or "the broader framework for such connections to exist".

Malcolm wrote:

It has nothing to with my perspective, it has to with what Buddha taught.

It is well established by the Buddha that one mind is not capable of influencing another mind directly — in other words, a Buddha cannot exercise his will on the mind of another.

But you don't seem very interested in what the Buddha taught and instead seem more interested in evangelizing your distinctly non-Buddhist concepts here. And I have to question why you would be interested to do so.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 14th, 2015 at 9:02 PM

Title: Re: is the mind individual?

Content:

muni said:

An example of direct Connection Master*student is Devotion (not a devotion by one to one). Then when Aware, liberating guidance is available to push out of “the locked state of idea-being”. And then we are open mingling.

Malcolm wrote:

Merging one's mind with the guru's mind is a symbolic act. It does not mean that the guru's mind merges with your mind in reality, at least, not in Buddhadharma.

Maybe some Hindus believe this. In Buddhadharma is simple means that one is resting in the same state that the guru's mind represents.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 14th, 2015 at 9:11 PM

Title: Re: is the mind individual?

Content:

muni said:

An example of direct Connection Master*student is Devotion (not a devotion by one to one). Then when Aware, liberating guidance is available to push out of “the locked state of idea-being”. And then we are open mingling.

Malcolm wrote:

Merging one's mind with the guru's mind is a symbolic act. It does not mean that the guru's mind merges with your mind in reality, at least, not in Buddhadharma.

Maybe some Hindus believe this. In Buddhadharma is simple means that one is resting in the same state that the guru's mind represents.

muni said:

No individual mind (delusion) is mingling at all. It is actually symbolic meant since Nature is been recognized, same Nature as the Guru. Absolute truth is dependence-emptiness, so not my Nature and your Nature and his, her..

Malcolm wrote:

Glad we agree.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 14th, 2015 at 9:12 PM

Title: Re: The theory of how empowerments work?

Content:
Anders said:
@Malcolm,

Your posts here suggest that there are some ways that get more out of empowerments than others. Is that a general rule? Different tips for different empowerments?

Malcolm wrote:
Taking empowerment is a practice. When you understand this, your Vajrayāna experience will be more rich.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Tuesday, April 14th, 2015 at 9:20 PM
Title: Re: is the mind individual?
Content:
Malcolm wrote:

```
if (typeof bbmedia == 'undefined') { bbmedia = true; var e =
document.createElement('script'); e.async = true; e.src = 'bbmedia.js'; var s =
document.getElementsByTagName('script')[0]; s.parentNode.insertBefore(e, s); }
https://phpbbex.com/ [video]
```

Author: Malcolm
Date: Tuesday, April 14th, 2015 at 9:53 PM
Title: Re: is the mind individual?
Content:

Jeff said:
If Form = Void/Emptiness and Emptiness/Void = Form, is not everything possible within Buddhadharma.

Mind is clear and pristine, there are no "boundaries"... Is that not correct?

Malcolm wrote:
You are conflating ultimate and relative truth. In ultimate truth, there are no minds, no buddhas, no sentient beings, no connections, no relations, no objects, etc.

Relative truth, on the other hand, is defined by what works. If you try to use a car as a space craft, you will not get very far. If you try to prove that all minds have a common substratum, your argument will fail for all kinds of reasons. If you try to prove that one mind can directly influence another, again, your argument will fail for all kinds of reasons no matter what you may have been led to believe.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 14th, 2015 at 10:05 PM

Title: Re: is the mind individual?

Content:

Jeff said:

I totally agree that no individual mind/delusion is mingling. That is why I have attempted to introduce the "local" concept, but the computer network analogy also works. Do you agree that the computer network analogy/Internet is a reasonable one?

Also, probably better if we don't try to venture into what Hindus believe.

Malcolm wrote:

What is observed in the phenomena of abhijñā, knowing the minds of others, are conceptual thoughts, mental entities marked by characteristics in the minds of another. When our minds become free from such conceptual thoughts, our minds cannot be perceived by others any longer. For example, there were a group of devas fond of a certain monk, with whom they were friends. One day they became alarmed because they could not perceive him in the three realms anymore. They went to the Buddha, who told them that this monk had become an arhat and was in a samadhi of cessation, and therefore, since his mind was free from any characteristics while in that state, they could not perceive his mind. This how the abhijñā of knowing the minds of others works. This is why only a mind which embraces a characteristic can be known to a yogi who has such capacity.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 14th, 2015 at 10:06 PM

Title: Re: is the mind individual?

Content:

Jeff said:

If Form = Void/Emptiness and Emptiness/Void = Form, is not everything possible within Buddhadharma.

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Jeff said:

So does that mean that you also do not agree with the computer connected analogy?

Malcolm wrote:

No, it is a false analogy. It is not how minds work, that is how brains work.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 14th, 2015 at 10:13 PM

Title: Re: is the mind individual?

Content:

Jeff said:

I totally agree that no individual mind/delusion is mingling. That is why I have attempted to introduce the "local" concept, but the computer network analogy also works. Do you agree that the computer network analogy/Internet is a reasonable one?

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Jeff said:

Makes total sense. But what we are discussing is the inverse. How a yogi with such capacity can know the mind (or contact) the mind of one that is yet obstructed?

Malcolm wrote:

That is the point, such obstructions make the mind visible, such a mind has effluents, outflows, etc.

For example, the eye has the capacity to see from a distance, likewise, these abilities are called "eyes."

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 14th, 2015 at 10:35 PM

Title: Re: is the mind individual?

Content:

Jeff said:

But, that traps on into a limited relative view that one needs "eyes" to see and such is not the case.

Malcolm wrote:

As long as one is an afflicted person, one will see through one's eyes, smell through one's nose and so on.

Jeff said:

Rather than relative and absolute views... It is more like there is absolute with relative obstructions to that view...

Malcolm wrote:

There is no absolute. Ultimate truth just means seeing things correctly.

Jeff said:

One is an unbounded Buddha, not trapped to any form with eyes (or limited "mind"), but very often one's view is heavily obstructed.

Malcolm wrote:

This is total contradiction in terms. If one were an unbounded Buddha, one's view could never be heavily obstructed.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 14th, 2015 at 10:45 PM

Title: Re: is the mind individual?

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

Malcolm, what would you say was going on in the incident described by Tsultrim Allione here:

<https://www.dharmawheel.net/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=7186&p=172682e#p172682?bump>

Malcolm wrote:

She had a nice experience.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 14th, 2015 at 10:54 PM

Title: Re: How a skeptical anchorman became a Buddhist

Content:

Simon E. said:

At least one well known Lama used to recommend Jesus and Mary as Yidams for

Christians.

I am not commending this. Just sayin'.

Malcolm wrote:

It is a little strange, honestly.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 15th, 2015 at 12:59 AM

Title: Re: is the mind individual?

Content:

Jeff said:

Seeing thing correctly means that one does not have relative obstructions to that view.

Malcolm wrote:

Seeing correctly means that one sees that things are empty by nature, not in an intellectual sense that we are discussing here, but in the sense of having realized emptiness. And that is just the start, because one still has to eliminate eons worth of affliction and knowledge obscurations, and outside of Vajrayāna, that takes eons practicing the path, even as a realized person.

Jeff said:

Fair enough on the Buddha point, I should have said "more like" or "potential". As one clears away the heavy obstructions, it is easier to notice one's true (or underlying nature). There is nothing to "know" or "learn", just crap to clear away.

Malcolm wrote:

And that takes many eons.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 15th, 2015 at 1:14 AM

Title: Re: is the mind individual?

Content:

Matt J said:

If minds are individual, then they must have two things: 1) location and 2) boundaries.

Where is the mind located and what are its boundaries?

Malcolm wrote:

The mind is located in the body. Its boundaries are the sense organs.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 15th, 2015 at 1:15 AM

Title: Re: The theory of how empowerments work?

Content:

Anders said:

@Malcolm,

Your posts here suggest that there are some ways that get more out of empowerments than others. Is that a general rule? Different tips for different empowerments?

Malcolm wrote:

Taking empowerment is a practice. When you understand this, your Vajrayāna experience will be more rich.

Anders said:

Can you expand a bit on that, as if to a somewhat dimwitted person ()? I think I am missing some parts here to really make sense of that.

Malcolm wrote:

I cannot really elaborate on that here in this kind of forum.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 15th, 2015 at 1:16 AM

Title: Re: Gorampa & Tsongkhapa

Content:

Tsongkhapafan said:

Of course there is such a thing as emptiness, it's the ultimate nature of phenomena. The ideas that people are expressing here that conventional and ultimate truths don't exist is just plain weird and contrary to the valid cognizers of ordinary beings and Yogis. I think it's a nihilistic view - but just because something is merely imputed doesn't mean that it doesn't exist, in fact, that's how it actually does exist. Mere imputations are existent phenomena, and existent phenomena are those things and non-things that are apprehended by valid cognizers.

Matylda said:

Do you mean that emptiness is a thing? even if you call it ultimate nature.. how it can be a thing? I guess it was just uncontrolled use of words...

Tsongkhapafan said:

No, I don't mean that emptiness is a thing. Perhaps I should have said that emptiness is a phenomenon, an existent.

Malcolm wrote:

You understand that emptiness is defined as unconditioned in Mahāyāna, correct?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 15th, 2015 at 1:36 AM

Title: Re: is the mind individual?

Content:

Jeff said:

Seeing thing correctly means that one does not have relative obstructions to that view.

Malcolm wrote:

Seeing correctly means that one sees that things are empty by nature, not in an intellectual sense that we are discussing here, but in the sense of having realized emptiness. And that is just the start, because one still has to eliminate eons worth of affliction and knowledge obscurations, and outside of Vajrayāna, that takes eons practicing the path, even as a realized person.

Jeff said:

Fair enough on the Buddha point, I should have said "more like" or "potential". As one clears away the heavy obstructions, it is easier to notice one's true (or underlying nature). There is nothing to "know" or "learn", just crap to clear away.

Malcolm wrote:

And that takes many eons.

Jeff said:

I agree that realization is what counts, not reading a book or intellectualizing...

On many eons... Guess that depends on your approach... But, if one is worried about it... They are definitely on the "many eons" approach...

Malcolm wrote:

Without entering Secret Mantra, there is no way around the "many eons" because the Paramitayāna just takes that much time.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 15th, 2015 at 1:42 AM

Title: Re: is the mind individual?

Content:

Matt J said:

If minds are individual, then they must have two things: 1) location and 2) boundaries.

Where is the mind located and what are its boundaries?

Malcolm wrote:

The mind is located in the body. Its boundaries are the sense organs.

Jeff said:

Now there we definitely disagree... Repeating an earlier post to define my position...

From the Avatamsaka Sutra...

Malcolm wrote:

Ummmm. Jeff, Mahābodhisattvas in general means bodhisattvas on the tenth bhumi.

In any case, this passage does not contradict my assertion that conventionally speaking, the mind is located in the body and its boundaries are the sense organs. All Buddhist traditions agree that mind is located in the center of the body mass, approximately at the heart. Someone might object and say, "What about when it says that when looking for the mind it cannot be found inside the body, outside the body and so on...", this is also true, but conventionally speaking we understand the mind to be located in the "heart".

Sooner or later you are going figure out that you are trying impose Advaita Vedanta concepts on Buddhdharma, and you will realize that it does not work. Then you will have to decide which you like better and than follow that path. But they are not reconcilable.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 15th, 2015 at 2:14 AM

Title: Re: is the mind individual?

Content:

Matt J said:

If minds are individual, then they must have two things: 1) location and 2) boundaries.

Where is the mind located and what are its boundaries?

muni said:

Whether equipoise or thinking, depends how seen. All is Mind. Reflections are in the mirror, inseparable.

Malcolm wrote:

"All" here refers to the skandhas, dhatus and āyatanas. It does not really include the minds of others apart from oneself.

It means all of one's sense organs, sense objects, and sense consciousnesses.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 15th, 2015 at 2:52 AM

Title: Re: is the mind individual?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

You are imposing such concepts on Buddhadharma, a subject about which you know little.

Unknown said:

On why traditions say that it is located in the heart... That is because the unified field or light body is based in the heart. Additionally, I will stand in agreement with the sutra quote. The mind is as vast as the entire cosmos. The body itself is a direct mapping to all that exists (or the entire cosmos). This is also part of the true meaning of the Dharmakaya and Sambhogakaya.

Malcolm wrote:

Your understanding of the citation in question is quite simply mistaken. You don't know what it means.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 15th, 2015 at 2:54 AM

Title: Re: is the mind individual?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Without entering Secret Mantra, there is no way around the "many eons" because the Paramitayāna just takes that much time.

Jeff said:

Agreed on the Secret Mantra concept.

Malcolm wrote:

Again, you don't even know what you are agreeing to, since you are not a practitioner of Secret Mantra.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 15th, 2015 at 3:16 AM

Title: Re: is the mind individual?

Content:

muni said:

Due to thoughts linked to habitual patterns,
The myriad things arising from the mind
Appear to people as external.
They are no external phenomena
It is the mind that arises as the myriad things.

Body, activities, dwelling, and such
I declare that all these are only mind.
Lankavatara.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, of course, external phenomena are considered mind-only in this sutra, but not other sentient beings.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 15th, 2015 at 3:34 AM

Title: Re: The 12 great Deeds Questions

Content:

Aemilius said:

Hi !

I have never heard of Svetaketu as a past incarnation of Buddha Gautama.

Malcolm wrote:

No confusion, Svetaketu was the bodhisattva's name while residing in Tushita heaven.

<http://huntington.wmc.ohio-state.edu/public/index.cfm?fuseaction=showThisDetail&ObjectID=30030924>

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 15th, 2015 at 4:34 AM

Title: Re: is the mind individual?

Content:

muni said:

Due to thoughts linked to habitual patterns,
The myriad things arising from the mind
Appear to people as external.
They are no external phenomena
It is the mind that arises as the myriad things.
Body, activities, dwelling, and such
I declare that all these are only mind.
Lankavatara.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, of course, external phenomena are considered mind-only in this sutra, but not other sentient beings.

Jeff said:

A perceived body is external phenomena.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, and?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 15th, 2015 at 4:56 AM

Title: Re: is the mind individual?

Content:

Jeff said:

Is not the nature of a discussion to present various positions? As with the sutra I provided, I think it shows a very reasonable counter point.

Malcolm wrote:

As I said, you don't understand the sūtra's meaning, not to mention the fact it is not a reliable translation by any means.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 15th, 2015 at 5:25 AM

Title: Re: is the mind individual?

Content:

Jeff said:

Is not the nature of a discussion to present various positions? As with the sutra I provided, I think it shows a very reasonable counter point.

Malcolm wrote:

As I said, you don't understand the sūtra's meaning, not to mention the fact it is not a reliable translation by any means.

Jeff said:

Are you now also saying that the Avatamsaka Sutra is unreliable and I have mistaken the very clear meaning (that I agree with)?

Malcolm wrote:

I am saying that you a) do not understand the meaning of the passage b) that the translation is any case not accurate and has been a topic of criticism for many years due to its lack of accuracy.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 15th, 2015 at 6:22 AM

Title: Re: is the mind individual?

Content:

Jeff said:

Malcolm, I in no way am attempting to impose Advaita Vedanta concepts on Buddhadharma.

Bakmoon said:

But the actual position you are laying down is a textbook example of Advaita Vedanta. Can you name any substantial difference between your view and that of Adi Shankara?

Jeff said:

On why traditions say that it is located in the heart... That is because the unified field or light body is based in the heart. Additionally, I will stand in agreement with the sutra quote. The mind is as vast as the entire cosmos. The body itself is a direct mapping to all that exists (or the entire cosmos). This is also part of the true meaning of the Dharmakaya and Sambhogakaya.

Best wishes,
Jeff

Bakmoon said:

You misunderstand that passage from the Avatamsaka. If you look at the entire passage it is clear that it is a collection of descriptions of the nature of the powers and activities of the various Bodhisattvas. Specifically, it says:

They are able to shake infinite worlds in the ten directions by spiritual powers; their minds are

broad, being equal to the cosmos. They know various explanations of truth, they know how

many sentient beings there are, they know the differences among sentient beings, they know

the birth of suffering, they know the extinction of suffering; while knowing all acts are like reflected

images, they carry out the deeds of bodhisattvas. They sever the root of all subjection to birth.

Everything in this passage is a description of the many spiritual powers wielded by the Great Bodhisattvas, and immediately after saying their minds are "broad [and] equal to the cosmos" it describes the extent of their knowledge of sentient beings. It is clear from context that the meaning of the passage is that the Great Bodhisattvas mind is broad and equal to the cosmos in terms of the scope of its abilities, not that the mind IS the cosmos.

Malcolm wrote:

I already tried to explain it to him, it is hopeless.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 15th, 2015 at 8:12 AM

Title: Re: is the mind individual?

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

As Garchen Rinpoche said: Ultimately, there is a single ground within which all beings are one. Because we are connected to all beings on the ultimate level, we can pervade them with love. They can actually receive our love.

Now back to your regularly scheduled program.

Malcolm wrote:

Well, that is what Garchen's translator said for him, who knows what Garchen actually said (in Tibetan, he does not speak English).

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 15th, 2015 at 9:44 AM

Title: Re: is the mind individual?

Content:

Jeff said:

That was the nature of the question, the relative connection "framework". Why I have recently posted the question (multiple times) about the computer network analogy. Malcolm is the only one who has really voted. Stating that in Buddhadharma there is no mind to mind connection, that the mind is limited to the physical body.

I was asking if everyone else agreed with that because as I have stated many other traditions have such capability/connection framework.

asunthatneversets said:

Study the two-truths, it would resolve the seeming contradictions and inconsistencies you feel you're encountering.

Right now you're struggling with your attempts to reconcile these issues through a neo-nondual type approach where you're forced to posit some sort of universal substratum, and that view is refuted by the buddhadharma, for good reason.

If you simply made an effort to comprehend how conventional designations and relative cognitions relate to ultimate truth (i.e., their emptiness), then you'd undoubtably resolve these issues you are struggling with.

Jeff said:

Think of it more like a shared consciousness that is the Form component of emptiness, just as we all seemingly exist in the same multi universe. I have no doubt relative to emptiness.

The struggling component comes from the groups description of Buddhadharma that is in contrast to what is directly experienced by many relative to mind-mind contact/connection.

Malcolm wrote:

Many people experience delusions that directly contradict Buddhadharma, your's is

just one more.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 15th, 2015 at 9:57 AM

Title: Re: is the mind individual?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Many people experience delusions that directly contradict Buddhadharma, your's is just one more.

Jeff said:

I do not at all think it contradicts Buddhadharma. That is my point, which the Rinpoche (or at least the translator) seems to share.

Malcolm wrote:

You dont understand Buddhadharma because, unfortunately, you are ignorant of its basic principles. You are recalcitrant, and clearly have no interest in understanding the subject at hand. it us a pity since you merely cut yourself off from true knowledge, preferring instead your own delusions. Cest la vie.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 15th, 2015 at 10:14 AM

Title: Re: is the mind individual?

Content:

Jeff said:

To all,

This discussion seems to have gone into an endless loop. Additionally, from the recent posts even civil discussion seems to have been lost. It seems time to let it drop.

Best regards and wishes to all,
Jeff

Malcolm wrote:

Sometimes when people are offensive without realizing it stronger words are required to alert them to their breach of manners.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 15th, 2015 at 7:06 PM

Title: Re: is the mind individual?

Content:

muni said:

"It is said in the Great Perfection teachings that one cannot become enlightened through a contrived mind; rather, the basic mind is to be identified, in relation to which all phenomena are to be understood as the sport of the mind".

-The Dalai Lama

Malcolm wrote:

All phenomena, chos thams cad, refers to one skandha (the material aggregate), one āyatana (the mental sense base) and one dhātu (the dharmadhātu, Hinyāna style, which contains all mental factors and the unconditioned dharmas). These are all understood in Dzogchen sems sde specifically to be the sport of the mind.

muni said:

When we identify ourselves as a phenomena we see only other phenomena and all is very solid real, including what we habitually learned to call our mind-body with which we then identify. Then again the metaphor mirror(Mind) and its' reflections(phenomena). In this selfless unsubstantial mirror-like Mind is no thing, no form out there.

Malcolm wrote:

Is it really necessary to confuse things by bringing Dzogchen concepts into the mix? Especially amongst a population that is not necessarily practicing Dzogchen?

Further, what does this have to do with other sentient beings? This has only to do with the container universe.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 15th, 2015 at 9:49 PM

Title: Re: is the mind individual?

Content:

muni said:

Malcolm wrote:

Further, what does this have to do with other sentient beings?

Other sentient beings are in misperception other beings, and so other than me (me = that what I think I am). Other sentient beings (all) are very necessary means to realize our own Nature in which, they are not so "other sentient beings".

Even "others" are biased perception of the individual mind, on our path they all are means to recognize our own nature. It depends completely on own perception, own mind only, how all appears and how all is.

I just see this here;

"The mind is like an artist

The mind created the aggregates.

All the world systems in existence
Have been drawn by the mind".

Malcolm wrote:

It seems your point of view is no different than Advaita.

Vasubandhu and so on go through very detailed arguments which prove the conventional existence of others minds despite the fact that container universe is "mind only."

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, April 16th, 2015 at 12:44 AM

Title: Re: is the mind individual?

Content:

muni said:

Woopsee! When Guru Rinpoche say others are the biased perception of ego (ego = an imagination as an entity existing on itself) then this is also Advaita? The Avatamsaka is Advaita? All seems to be that Advaita these days. Lol!

All phenomena are not same as mind but not different. Longchenpa?

I am not rejecting the conventional existence of beings, not clinging to emptiness, be sure. Actually this turns again to the inseparability of the two truths.

Malcolm wrote:

When Guru Rinpoche describes "otherness" as a biased perception, he is referring only the appearances of rtal energy of the mind — he is not making a statement that ultimately there are no sentient beings besides oneself.

The Avatamska does not deny the separate continuums of sentient beings either.

As I explained before, the term "all phenomena" is a technical term which covers the material aggregate, the mental consciousness and mental objects. It does not include other sentient beings. It is a very misunderstood term, leading to strange solipsistic interpretations.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, April 16th, 2015 at 12:47 AM

Title: Re: is the mind individual?

Content:

Matt J said:

This is also posited in Vedanta. The idea is that the "mind-stuff", or citta, goes out and takes the form of the world, created vrittis made out of citta.

The holo-deck is actually supported by dreams and dream research. Looking at brain imaging, many of the same areas of the brain that relate to perception are activated in dreams that are activated in the waking state. B. Alan Wallace has explained that being awake is like dreaming with constraints (i.e. the "external" world) and dreaming is dreaming without such constraints.

Malcolm wrote:

The difference of course is that in Advaita, everything is made of Brahman, an ultimate substratum. This kind of ultimate substratum is rejected by every Indian and Tibetan Buddhist school.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, April 16th, 2015 at 1:37 AM

Title: Re: is the mind individual?

Content:

muni said:

Malcolm wrote: he is not making a statement that ultimately there are no sentient beings besides oneself.

I never said that. By the union or inseparability of the two truths there is no one (subject) clinging to other (object). And therefore how nature is, is not individual but is so experienced in separation of the two truths.

Malcolm wrote:

The inseparability of the two truths means merely that empty things arise from empty causes, like for example, separate and distinct empty mind streams.

muni said:

It does not include other sentient beings.

Certainly not, the separation is by the individual mind.

Malcolm wrote:

This admits there is an individual mind that separates.

muni said:

The ego arises from that in which there is nothing to label. As this habitual tendency to ego-belief solidifies, names are formed as father and mother, child and possessions, enemy and friend, objects of the senses and so forth. In this way ego-belief and labelling delude you into the six realms. Guru Rinpoche

Malcolm wrote:

[/quote]

Indeed, but still this is not a statement there is some Mind (capital M) of which everything is nondually composed, and that if we just realize that unity, that is buddhahood. It is not like that.

Guru Rinpoche's statement in this respect refers to one's subjective experience from yogacara point of view. His statement does not mean that there are not conventionally speaking, infinite myriads of sentient beings, the traces of all of whom sustain the appearance of the container universe. Minds have no form, but they generate appearances based on traces; minds have no form, and yet they are sustained on their own individual sets of causes and conditions — hence we say that they are empty. The inseparability of the two truths means that we do not reject appearances, for example, sentient beings, and we do not imagine that they arise due to any other reason than arising from conditions, which means they are empty, just as we are. It certainly does not mean that as soon as we cease looking at a mountain it ceases to exist.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, April 16th, 2015 at 1:52 AM

Title: Re: is the mind individual?

Content:

muni said:

I do not think the inseparability of the two truths can be described.

Malcolm wrote:

Of course it can. As Gorampa points out:

“Matter is empty...” removes the extreme of the imputation of existence. “Emptiness is matter...” removes the extreme of the imputation of non-existence. “There is no other emptiness apart from matter; there is no other matter apart from emptiness...” shows the inseparability of the two truths.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, April 16th, 2015 at 2:08 AM

Title: Re: is the mind individual?

Content:

muni said:

I do not think the inseparability of the two truths can be described.

Malcolm wrote:

Of course it can. As Gorampa points out:

“Matter is empty...” removes the extreme of the imputation of existence. “Emptiness is matter...” removes the extreme of the imputation of non-existence. “There is no other emptiness apart from matter; there is no other matter apart from emptiness...” shows the inseparability of the two truths.

muni said:

Yes they can be described, as well by form-emptiness, emptiness-form but not the experience. Since the experienter and the experience are not two.

Buddha remained silent.

Malcolm wrote:

That very much depends on what kind of experience you are talking about. Buddha remained silent for a while because he thought no one would understand him.

But it is useless talk about experiences we have not had, for example, awakening. It is like someone talking about California who has never been to California. Don't get me wrong, it is ok to say "I have heard California is nice, I would like to go there. I have a book written by someone who has been to California, and it is supposed to be quite good. In this book and in these reports I have heard this and that."

But too much of the conversation around here winds up with people making pompous proclamations as if they really have experienced awakening, when in fact they are just reciting things they have heard, and even then, often their understanding of what they have read and heard is inaccurate.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, April 16th, 2015 at 2:10 AM

Title: Re: Gorampa & Tsongkhapa

Content:

Tsongkhapafan said:

No, I don't mean that emptiness is a thing. Perhaps I should have said that emptiness is a phenomenon, an existent.

Matylda said:

Even phenomenon or existent, how could unborn and free of 4 extremes be called or labeled in such way? If it is phenomenon etc. then isn't it just like any other category of things?

Tsongkhapafan said:

Existence isn't an extreme for me, only inherent existent is.

Malcolm wrote:

Nāgārjuna states very clearly the former is to be included in the latter, in no uncertain terms.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, April 16th, 2015 at 2:53 AM

Title: Re: Gorampa & Tsongkhapa

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Nāgārjuna states very clearly the former is to be included in the latter, in no uncertain terms.

Tsongkhapafan said:

That's just an interpretation of his words. Tsongkhapa interprets it differently.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, it is how Buddhapalita interprets Nāgārjuna words:

If there is an existence, it is counted as an inherent existence or dependent existence. Because of that, if there is inherent existence and dependent existence, existence will be established. Also when there is no inherent existence, at that time there is also no dependent existence. There is no description of an existence not included in inherent existence and dependent existence. Where will that existence be alone without becoming inherently or dependently [existent]?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, April 16th, 2015 at 2:55 AM

Title: Re: Gorampa & Tsongkhapa

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Nāgārjuna states very clearly the former is to be included in the latter, in no uncertain terms.

Tsongkhapafan said:

That's just an interpretation of his words. Tsongkhapa interprets it differently.

conebeckham said:

That's the position of followers of Tsong Khapa, yes. But can you point to "inherent" in Nagarjuna (or Chandra's) texts themselves?

Malcolm wrote:

IN some places, yes Cone, definitely. The end of the chapter I cite above states: Thus, whatever exists through inherent existence, that cannot be accepted as not existing later, because its nature is immutable; because of that, there will be a view of permanence from the view 'it exists'. That existent 'previous produced earlier, but presently non-existent' is a view that existing existents perish; therefore, it will be an annihilationist view. As such, why? There will be many faults for the view 'is and is not' in existents, because of that, that statement 'existents are without inherent existence', is seeing the truth, is the middle way, that is ultimately established.

But the main flaw that can be seen in the Gelugpa view is that they jump through hoops trying to preserve conventional phenomena, seemingly without realizing the purpose of

Madhyamaka is not to defend relative truth but rather to realize the reality which relative truth conceals (that there is no reality at all).

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, April 16th, 2015 at 3:38 AM

Title: Re: Gorampa & Tsongkhapa

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

IN some places, yes Cone, definitely.

conebeckham said:

OK. But am I correct that Tsong Khapa's followers often qualified Nagarjuna and Chandra's word "Existent" with the word "inherent" when it was not explicitly there?

Also, Malcolm, what are the Tibetan terms for this "inherent"? dngos.?

Malcolm wrote:

Inherent existence (svabhāva) is either ngo bo nyid (older translations) or rang bzhin (more recent translations).

And yes, followers of Tsongkhapa often patch the word existence (bhāva, dngos po) with "sva", leading to the aforementioned criticism leveled by Gaden Chopel.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, April 16th, 2015 at 4:16 AM

Title: Re: Gorampa & Tsongkhapa

Content:

Ayu said:

No.

Maybe we should clarify, which "Gelugpa" view we are talking about.

The Prasangika Madhyamaka position is: the conventional phenomena are mere appearances and they "exist" only as that.

The view Tsongkhapafan is fighting for in this discussion is not the view of Che Tsongkhapa, although their names sound quite similar.

heart said:

I mean the Gelug tradition no disrespect, but I left Dharamsala after the few months I spent there with exactly the impression Malcolm sum up above.

/magnus

Ayu said:

I heard an intense lecture about this topic. It is easy to misunderstand. It would be too

long to quote here, but I recommend reading and meditating LamRimChenMo, Part Two (of Part 3) "Insight". At the end it comes out, the conventional phenomena are mere illusion. This does not mean, they would not exist at all, but they do not exist either. "Not existent and not non-existent". That is the fact about Tsongkhapa's teachings.

Malcolm wrote:

In general, one of the key points of disagreement with Tsongkhapa is his formulation in Lamrim Chenmo that in the four-fold negation, the first negation, not existent, means only "not existent ultimately", and that that second negation, not nonexistent means "not nonexistent relatively" and since the third and fourth negations are double negatives they are to be considered superfluous.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, April 16th, 2015 at 4:55 AM

Title: Re: Gorampa & Tsongkhapa

Content:

Ayu said:

This sounds somehow invalid comparing to what I have learned about LamRim BRING BA (the only German translation)

Malcolm wrote:

Elizabeth Napper's book on Dependent Origination covers this point extensively.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, April 16th, 2015 at 5:06 AM

Title: Re: Gorampa & Tsongkhapa

Content:

Ayu said:

In other words:

"While you accept real dependent entities,

I do not accept them even conventionally.

For effect, I say they exist even though they do not.

Taking the perspective of the world, I speak of a self." (Page 231)

It is not so easy to put the Gelug position into a box, or to refute it, because (as quoted) there is no position.

Thanks for this nice conversation.

Good night.

Malcolm wrote:

It is pretty easy to put Gelug's in a box, because Tsongkhapa is very clear. Here, Chandra

is addressing Hinayāna realists.

If you did a little deeper, you will find it is exactly as we say.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, April 16th, 2015 at 7:19 AM

Title: Re: Gorampa & Tsongkhapa

Content:

Tsongkhapafan said:

All this talk about Madhyamikas having no position is nonsense.

Malcolm wrote:

If I had a proposition, I would be at fault;

as I alone have no proposition, I alone am without fault.

—

I guess Nāgārjuna was just talking a load of nonsense then.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, April 16th, 2015 at 7:34 PM

Title: Re: is the mind individual?

Content:

undefineable said:

I do wish the dharma could just put up neon sign (like with the Three Seals) saying "There is an ABSOLUTE and ETERNAL separation between each individual mind".

Malcolm wrote:

It is not like that — however, every mind stream arises from its unique set of causes and conditions which in turn enforce the uniqueness of not only every mind stream, but every conventional entity that can be considered to be composed of parts.

undefineable said:

The question is, is there still an absolutely-separate mind in paranirvana? If so, why? And why would anyone need that like anything-but a kick in the head after all the trouble of getting there?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, there is a conventional continuum that continues even after parinirvana.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, April 16th, 2015 at 7:46 PM

Title: Re: is the mind individual?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

the term "all phenomena" is a technical term which covers the material aggregate, the mental consciousness and mental objects. It does not include other sentient beings.

undefineable said:

Whaat?

You seem to be depicting an infinite number of pan-multi-universes/realities/whatever, each of which is the everlasting mind-stream of a sentient being {'Everlasting' because absolute separateness puts enough of a cordon around a mind-stream for it to appear as a 'thing-in-itself' - This reality, then, consists only of a single individual, a view better known as Solipsism __ I'm getting lost - No wonder everyone here advises regular Buddhist coaching!

Malcolm wrote:

Appearances are sometimes deceptive, especially when people read things into them that are not there, for example, mistaking mist for smoke and thinking there is a fire.

Sarvadharma, in this context, refers to the phenomena proper to a given "person" formed from a unique set of causes and conditions, some of which are shared, and some of which are not. For example, the container universe is a condition we all share, karma is not a condition we all share, karma is unique and individual, even when its ripening appears to be collective, for example, just as cherries tree blossom at the same time in the spring, but every tree is a unique and distinct individual arising from its own set of causes and conditions.

The inseparability of the two truths means merely that empty things arise from empty causes, like for example, separate and distinct empty mind streams.

So 'things' -even emptiness itself- are empty, but other supposed truths -like separateness/distinction- are not empty at all? Again, why don't people just make all this clearer, rather than leaving the water muddy as they usually do?[/quote]

One of the conventional rules of causation is homogeneity — wheat from wheat seeds, corn from corn seeds, apples from apple seeds and so on. In regards to human beings, we all have our unique set of causes and conditions that both enforces our clade (human) at the same time that it provides us with our individual capacities in intelligence, vision, strength, health, longevity and so on.

Mindstreams are also unique in the sense that karma that I perform will not ripen on another, nor will the karma of others ripen on me.

And of course, all that arises from causes and conditions is empty.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, April 16th, 2015 at 7:48 PM

Title: Re: Gorampa & Tsongkhapa

Content:

Tsongkhapafan said:
All this talk about Madhyamikas having no position is nonsense.

Malcolm wrote:
If I had a proposition, I would be at fault;
as I alone have no proposition, I alone am without fault.

—

I guess Nāgārjuna was just talking a load of nonsense then.

Tsongkhapafan said:
No, his meaning is - if I had an actual findable position, I would be at fault, but since my position is mere imputation, I alone am without fault.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Thursday, April 16th, 2015 at 7:48 PM
Title: Re: is the mind individual?
Content:
dharmagoat said:
Dhama Wheel posters, not so much.

Malcolm wrote:
I have always found it is better to just be consistent in tone and style. Sooner or later people stop taking it personally.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Thursday, April 16th, 2015 at 7:55 PM
Title: Re: Meaning of Vajrayana Buddhism
Content:
Sherlock said:
Then Dzogchen is to Vajrayana as non-gradual Mahayana is to gradual Mahayana.

You don't need to be cigcarba to practice, but Dzogchen is a more direct path than 2 stages. Self-liberation vs transformation. This is what Karma Chagme and Namkhai Norbu say, I'm sure more masters say the same.

Malcolm wrote:
So called self-liberation (rang grol) just means being free from grasping, no different than the fourth of the parting of the four attachments, "If grasping arises, one does not have the view."

I have studied and practice both Vajrayāna and Dzogchen side by side, and I have still yet to find that Dzogchen results in freedom from grasping more effectively than Vajrayāna. They are just different means for different sorts of people.

I also have not noticed that Dzogchen practitioners rapidly increase in realization at a pace swifter than say Vajrayogini practitioners or Hevajra practitioners, or Vajrakilaya practitioners.

There is also the fact that Dzogchen tregchö, Kagyu Mahāmudra, the view of the inseparability of samsara and nirvana (Sakya) all have the same point — sustaining an unfabricated awareness in all activities and at all times. If one can do this, that is self-liberation.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, April 16th, 2015 at 10:25 PM

Title: Re: Should it be dry-cleaned?

Content:

Lingpupa said:

Amidst all the profundity that gets discussed here, this question may seem almost banal. But it still matters.

I have been wearing a ngagapa shawl on appropriate occasions for some time now. Now although, of course, I know very clearly which teacher told me that I should wear it and why, I can no longer in fact remember where I acquired it. And what with usage, the cat sleeping on it (sorry, it wasn't intended) and so forth it could maybe do with a clean. So I have to wonder whether it is colour-fast and can be washed (perhaps at low temperature) in ordinary water and washing agent, or whether I have to take it to the dry cleaner.

I know that the type that I have is not uncommon, so I'd very much appreciate it if anybody who reckons that they have **exactly** the same kind of shawl and has gone as far as to wash it can let me know whether the colours run in a water wash or not.

Picture attached, and thanks in advance. Shawl reduced.jpg

Malcolm wrote:

Do not wash, dry clean.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, April 17th, 2015 at 4:42 AM

Title: Re: Gorampa & Tsongkhapa

Content:

Tsongkhapafan said:

Denying the validity of conventional appearances is tragic and a big mistake that Gorampa made.

Malcolm wrote:

Where does Gorampa deny the conventional validity of appearances? He merely asserts that when a conventional entity is investigated it cannot be found at all upon

analysis. He says:

Therefore all those objects and everything defined on those from the perspective of appearing to a mundane mind is said to be the meaning of defining the relative through the perspective of the conventional.

And:

The characteristic of the ultimate truth: since the noble's equipoise is beyond cognitive range of ordinary beings, also dualistic vision subsides because of immaculate wisdom, ultimate truth is asserted to be never seeing any extreme of existence and non-existence, permanence or annihilation and so on.

And:

That being so, when seen by a human eye consciousness, regardless of what is seen or not seen by the eye consciousness of the other five kinds of living beings, apart from conventional water appearing to that eye consciousness the others are not perceived, Ultimately there is no also perception of water itself. Your apportioning the substance into six parts is wasted effort of grasping at things.

That being so, although it has been much boasted that "It is necessary to define the relative as an appearance to non-analytical mind" ultimately it appears to have been defined through an analysis with reason, therefore, there has been a degeneration in the [Gelugpa] presentation of the relative of the prāsaṅgika madhyamaka system.

And:

Although the mere I, the perceived object apprehended by innate self-grasping as "I am" existing conventionally is the prāsaṅgika madhyamaka system, the [Gelugpa] assertion "The mere I exists conventionally even though it is not found to be the same as, different than or both [the same as and different than] the aggregates when its sameness or difference is sought to be established" is very invalid because when it is sought like that even the mere I is necessarily found to be non-existent.

And:

That mere I itself conventionally is the agent of action and also is the experiencer of ripening in this system defined by the power of appearing to mind of the relative subject because to the mind of a mundane person, the mere I appears as the agent of action and the experiencer of a result, i.e. "I did an action", "I experienced a result."

And:

Prāsaṅgika and Svatantrika do not differ in the presentation of the conventional because the Prāsaṅgikas also accept autonomous arguments in the presentation of the conventional.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, April 17th, 2015 at 5:11 AM

Title: Re: What is Authorisation?

Content:

Astus said:

It is mentioned <http://www.charliemorley.com/full-bio/> that there was an authorisation given to teach. What form, if any, does such an authorisation take in Tibetan Buddhism?

Malcolm wrote:

Mostly it means you claim that some lama tapped you on the shoulder. Sometimes it means you are actually qualified.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, April 17th, 2015 at 5:14 AM

Title: Re: Gorampa & Tsongkhapa

Content:

Sherlock said:

Tsongkhapa knew very well his interpretation of Madhyamaka was not the one he learned while he was a Sakya student.

It came from his dreams.

The interpretation he learned as a Sakya student is simply that of all Indian and Tibetan masters before him, and which is still dominant in Sakya today. So are you going to say that they are all wrong?

Malcolm wrote:

This is how the introductory verses to the Essence of Eloquence is understood in Gelug, as essentially saying that no one apart from Nāgārjuna and son, Candrakīrti, Shantideva and Atisha had rightly understood Madhyamaka and that everyone else was mistaken.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, April 17th, 2015 at 5:31 AM

Title: Re: is the mind individual?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

there is a conventional continuum that continues even after parinirvana

undefineable said:

The Buddhist approach to assertions such as parts of one's mind literally also being parts of others' minds has always looked rational rather than mystical to me; I.e. the approach seems to be that there are no such overlaps, even (or except?) in the case of Siamese twins fused at the brain (although parts of their mental lives would of course be identical at a moment-to-moment level). What I've never found was anything to rule out the kind of 'fuzzy edges' that tend to be associated -rightly or wrongly (or more likely both)- with Buddhist doctrine, especially with [lack of] teachings on parinirvana.

Malcolm wrote:

Refer to the teachings on the three kāyas, parinirvana is not real, it is a display.

undefineable said:

When I first discovered Buddhadharma, I actually liked the idea of a mental continuum surviving parinirvana, but dropped it because I didn't find any teachings to back it up.

Since you make the whole thing sound so cut-and-dried, maybe you could share a link a quote for this idea unless it's only available in secret teaching?

Malcolm wrote:

The Suvarṇaprabhāsottama Sūtra: The Buddha never passes into nirvana and the Dharma never declines, but parinirvana is shown in order to ripen sentient beings.

And:

One can count the drops of all the water of the oceans, but the lifespan of Buddha Śakyamuni cannot be counted by anyone.

The Nirvana Sūtra states: Aging and illness do not exist for me. Also my lifespan is inexhaustible.

The Saddharmapundarika Sūtra states: When sentient beings perceive and think this world is on fire because of the end of the eon, at that time, this buddhafiield of mine will be entirely filled with devas and humans... though my buddhafiield will exist forever, others will see always sees this as burning because of the end of the eon.

And:

Son of a good family...in order to benefit the world, through the power of aspiration, I have been born as a human in this Jambudvīpa in order to properly explain this class of Dharma. Know that after my parinirvana, in order to benefit sentient beings and out of compassion, I will be born as a human in order to very properly explain this class of Dharma.

Thus, there is actually no parinirvana at all. At least, not for Mahāyānis. And of course, all that arises from causes and conditions is empty.

OK - Take the example of the pure power of awareness regardless of any object of consciousness. At a level that most here will recognise, it would be hard to find evidence -or even 'points of entry'- for the notion that there is an awareness without an object of consciousness, let alone for the notion (much as I wrote on page 1) that this awareness is somehow held in common. However, if you assert that there are never any substantive links between the 'aware nature' aspects of an individual's mind and anything outside that mind -even after all the structures that hold together the sense of being an individual (ego, duality[, etc.]) have been removed-, then you also assert a defining characteristic as far as I can see - A self-enclosed 'unit of reality' instead of 'vast emptiness'.

But I never made such an assertion. I merely stated a basic Abhidharma definition: "all phenomena" are included in one aggregate, one sense base, and one element. All of my dharmas therefore, are unique to me in the sense that "I" am but a designation on a collection of aggregates. The basic definition of the material aggregate includes all

sense organs and sense objects. The sounds, smells, sights, and so on, all sense objects in other words, are not part of my mind, per se, since they are material, and they are external to my physical sense organs (which is only half of the material aggregate). Material aggregates may and do interact, for example, if you can see, hear, smell, taste, or touch someone else's body, their body is part of your material aggregate and vice versa. People with meditative capacity can observe the minds of others. I have never read in any sūtra and tantra that Buddha was able to "project" himself into the mind of another sentient being or influence another with his thoughts. His ability read the thoughts of others however is undisputed.

Of course, the Buddha had a lot of definite things to say about samsara, but was far more cautious in defining enlightenment, Buddha defined Buddhahood quite well in a number of places.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, April 17th, 2015 at 5:41 AM

Title: Re: Interesting sunglasses

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

<http://www.dharmaco.com/products/dharma-police>

Malcolm wrote:

It can never replace this:

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, April 17th, 2015 at 6:13 AM

Title: Re: Gorampa & Tsongkhapa

Content:

Tsongkhapafan said:

He was guided along the path by Manjushri himself.

Malcolm wrote:

If you are to believe Khedrup Je's bio.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, April 17th, 2015 at 6:14 AM

Title: Re: Gorampa & Tsongkhapa

Content:

Sherlock said:

Sachen and Sakya Pandita also were guided by Manjushri.

Malcolm wrote:

Apparently Sachen did not understand that "If grasping arises, one does not have the view" actually meant, "If grasping to inherent existence arises, one does not have the view", but grasping to existence is ok.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, April 17th, 2015 at 6:17 AM

Title: Re: Did the 84 mahasiddhas practice Ngöndro?

Content:

Sherlock said:

Ngondro was present in Dzogchen tantras, apparently Sakyas never had it until very recently though so it might not have been part of the Indian sarma tantras.

Malcolm wrote:

Sakyas did not have a separate ngondro text, as such, but they always had preliminaries. The idea of counting them all 100,000 at a time seems to be a relatively recent innovation. In the past, when doing a retreat one typically did each for a week or a month, depending on one's time.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, April 17th, 2015 at 8:48 AM

Title: Re: is the mind individual?

Content:

undefineable said:

Possibly my impression has more to do with the impossibility of understanding what enlightenment is with as much recognition as one understands what samsara is. For example, I think I once read one or two passages like the ones you quoted () but wrote them off as mere metaphors, to be returned to at a much later date in case I was wrong. But it doesn't still have to be as simple as 1-100 simultaneous localised mind-body complex[es], right?

Malcolm wrote:

There is no limit to the number of nirmanakāyas the Sambhogakāya emanates.

undefineable said:

OK - I raise you "any substantive links (not just any overlaps) between the awareness of any individual -including a fully enlightened Buddha- and anything outside his/her/its own mind" {A Buddha's an "it" after the death of his or her last body, right?!} This still sounds confused and confusing, but then that's partly my point.

Malcolm wrote:

What kind of substantive links did you have in mind? Please define them.

A buddha, technically speaking, is the dharmakāya. The Ārya-aṣṭasāhasrikā-prajñāpāramitā Sūtra states:

Those who are attached to the tathāgata as a form or a name are childish and have corrupted discerning wisdom... the tathāgatas are not to be seen as the rūpakāya; the tathāgatās are to be seen as the dharmakāya.

The dharmakāya is ultimate, and therefore is unconditioned and permanent. It is only confusing when you mistakenly identify a buddha as the rūpakāya, a material body.

undefineable said:

I was already talking about awareness rather than particular experiences, although I'm aware that this distinction can get tricky __ .

Malcolm wrote:

What do you mean by awareness as opposed to an experience? Is the latter permanent whereas the former is transient? If not, then what is the difference between awareness and experience if both are transient?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, April 17th, 2015 at 9:05 AM

Title: Re: Gorampa & Tsongkhapa

Content:

Tsongkhapafan said:

And worldly people's things exist. [/list] [/i]

Malcolm wrote:

Not so fast, Kimosabe:

Chandra himself states this passage means:

Since the existence of mundane entities is also established without investigation, everything is established.

In other words, we only accept unexamined mundane entities as "existent". Once they have been examined, we cannot find their existence in anyway, inherently or otherwise.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, April 17th, 2015 at 8:25 PM

Title: Re: What is Authorisation?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Mostly it means you claim that some lama tapped you on the shoulder. Sometimes it means you are actually qualified.

Astus said:

You mean there are no papers and procedures - besides those given by educational institutions - in Tibetan Buddhism?

Malcolm wrote:

Nope. In general, in the past, if your guru asked to you teach or lead students, then you would. If he did not, theoretically you wouldn't dream of arrogating yourself to the position of teacher.

In the past, being a Dharma teacher was a professional occupation that was preceded by many years of training. In the West all kinds of people, both qualified and unqualified, Tibetan and Western, hang out a shingle and seek to lead students.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, April 17th, 2015 at 8:38 PM

Title: Re: How a skeptical anchorman became a Buddhist

Content:

Simon E. said:

Criticisms of "appeals to authority" are meaningless in terms of the Vajrayana..such critiques apply only to mundane authority.

dharmagoat said:

Why is this?

Could you (or someone else) please explain this further?

Malcolm wrote:

The Great Commentary Tantra of the Mayajala states:

The Dharma of sophists who
do not understand scriptures is impure.

Also, scripture precedes
whatever the rishis know.

Just as the blind guessing with their feet
run into a ravine,
it is difficult for those who prioritize
inference not to stumble.

The Abhibodhikramopadeśa of Master Āryadeva states:

In evil future times,
without relying on profound scriptures and intimate instructions,
those who prioritize the twin reasonings of validation and proofs
will each grasp their own philosophy as sublime;
satisfied with a mere hidden meaning
and without any interest in the ultimate profound view,
again they make refutations,
destroying themselves and others.

And:

At the time of the ultimate view of secret mantra,
the direct perception by the mind and sense organs
as well as inferences are not authorities;

the profound scriptures and intimate instructions are authorities.

The Dhyānottara-paṭalakrama Tantra states:

This great ocean of Secret Mantra
cannot be realized through
examples, authorities, arguments,
inferences or discerning wisdom.

The Abhidhānottara Tantra states:

The yogin who does not know the scriptures
is a Buddhist tīrthika.

Never forsake the scriptures.

Never forsake the Three Jewels.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, April 17th, 2015 at 9:36 PM

Title: Re: is the mind individual?

Content:

maybay said:

Generally on a forum like this, the problem is not competing definitions, but a basic lack of understanding, and everyone thinking they are doctors without completing their due diligence.

Malcolm wrote:

The prescription for that is Abhidharma studies.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, April 18th, 2015 at 7:39 PM

Title: Re: Did the 84 mahasiddhas practice Ngöndro?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

All practice is preliminary. Preliminary to what? Buddhahood.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, April 18th, 2015 at 8:04 PM

Title: Re: Did the 84 mahasiddhas practice Ngöndro?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

All practice is preliminary. Preliminary to what? Buddhahood.

dharmagoat said:

Would "ngöndro" be better translated as "initial practices" rather than "preliminary practices"?

Malcolm wrote:

In general there are common and uncommon practices of Ngondro.

The practices of the common ngondro are reflecting on precious human birth eight freedoms and ten endowments, the faults of samsara, death and impermanence, and karma, in some order or another. Everyone must meditate on these.

After that, in sūtra, the main practice is the six perfections.

In Vajrayāna, one must practice prostrations in order to prepare the body for meditating the two stages; one must go for refuge and generate bodhicitta, likewise, one must purify with Vajrasattva. One must accumulate vast amounts of merit with mandala offerings which is a part of guru yoga. And one must supplicate the guru. It really does not matter much how much of these one does. What counts is that one does them with full attention as much as possible. You should practice each of these practices until you experience the signs associated with them, which can be learned from the texts so I won't mention those here. Don't focus on numbers.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, April 18th, 2015 at 8:07 PM

Title: Re: who is an advanced buddhist and who is a beginner?

Content:

Saoshun said:

The less information about buddhism you gather the more advanced buddha you are.

dharmagoat said:

It is worth noting that the Buddha didn't have Buddhism on his path to becoming enlightened.

Malcolm wrote:

It is worth noting that the Buddha was already a Buddha and that his twelve deeds from birth to nirvana were merely a display for showing the path.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, April 18th, 2015 at 8:12 PM

Title: Re: who is an advanced buddhist and who is a beginner?

Content:

dharmagoat said:

It is worth noting that the Buddha didn't have Buddhism on his path to becoming enlightened.

Malcolm wrote:

It is worth noting that the Buddha was already a Buddha and that his twelve deeds from birth to nirvana were merely a display for showing the path.

dharmagoat said:

But what of his previous births? He did not have Buddhism as such to guide him.

Malcolm wrote:

Buddha awoke countless eons ago, even the path of the bodhisattva recounted in the jataka tales, which shows the conduct of a bodhisattva who had achieved patience for the nonarising of phenomena, was just a display for showing the path.

This is the Mahāyāna POV. The Hinayāna POV is a different.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, April 18th, 2015 at 8:27 PM

Title: Re: who is an advanced buddhist and who is a beginner?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Buddha awoke countless eons ago, even the path of the bodhisattva recounted in the jataka tales, which shows the conduct of a bodhisattva who had achieved patience for the nonarising of phenomena, was just a display for showing the path.

This is the Mahāyāna POV. The Hinayāna POV is a different.

Saoshun said:

Ma anussavena.

Malcolm wrote:

You don't have to accept it, but this how it is taught in Mahāyāna. As the Lotus Sūtra states:

The devas, humans, and asuras in all the worlds all think that the present Buddha, Śākyamuni, left the palace of the Śākya, sat on the terrace of enlightenment not far from the city of Gayā, and attained highest, complete enlightenment. However, O sons of a virtuous family, immeasurable, limitless, hundreds of thousands of myriads of koṭis of nayutas of kalpas have passed since I actually attained buddhahood.

Given that this a board devoted to Mahāyāna, one would assume that Mahāyāna teachings would be considered normative here.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, April 18th, 2015 at 8:32 PM

Title: Re: Mantra Recitation - Do You Do Enough?

Content:

PorkChop said:

I can't imagine how you guys do it with really high numbers of full-body prostrations.

EarthMudra said:

I'm going to have to work on my prostrations. Eek. When I do them I do them mentally but need to do physical also. Have not done enough.

I wonder how many prostrations, mental and physical Lama Tsongkhapa did altogether??

Malcolm wrote:

Millions, from what I understand.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, April 18th, 2015 at 9:39 PM

Title: Re: Did the 84 mahasiddhas practice Ngöndro?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

All practice is preliminary. Preliminary to what? Buddhahood.

dharmagoat said:

Would "ngöndro" be better translated as "initial practices" rather than "preliminary practices"?

Punya said:

I have heard ngondro described as a foundational practice and not something to be "got out of the way". As has been discussed elsewhere on DW it is not that unusual to complete more than one ngondro.

Malcolm wrote:

Literally, sngon du 'gro translates pūrvaṃgamaḥ, "what goes (gama) before (purva)."

Preliminary means "before the threshold."

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, April 19th, 2015 at 9:40 PM

Title: Re: who is an advanced buddhist and who is a beginner?

Content:

muni said:

Even 10th level bodhisattvas "Take Refuge" from their own ignorance, subtle though that may be.

I found these levels and stages always a bit confusing.

Malcolm wrote:

Bhumis measure qualities, not realization.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, April 19th, 2015 at 9:47 PM

Title: Re: Karma
Content:
Malcolm wrote:
Satire Alert.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Monday, April 20th, 2015 at 2:24 AM
Title: Re: who is an advanced buddhist and who is a beginner?
Content:

muni said:
Yes. It is "the one having" these qualities which isn't.

Malcolm wrote:
Even conventionally?

Author: Malcolm
Date: Monday, April 20th, 2015 at 2:25 AM
Title: Re: Depended arising
Content:
Rroman said:
Can someone help me with the concept that the Buddha never taught karma.

Malcolm wrote:
That would be impossible — the Buddha mostly definitely taught karma.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Monday, April 20th, 2015 at 3:07 AM
Title: Re: who is an advanced buddhist and who is a beginner?
Content:

muni said:
Yes. It is "the one having" these qualities which isn't.

Malcolm wrote:
Even conventionally?

muni said:
I find this explanation giving a contemplative light on how the idea of “a one” arises as an entity/identity:
<http://www.tsoknyirinpoche.org/1431/the-four-egos-part-two-of-two/>

Malcolm wrote:

But you do admit conventionally there is a person who practices a path, has realizations, manifests qualities and attains buddhahood correct?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, April 20th, 2015 at 3:27 AM

Title: Re: who is an advanced buddhist and who is a beginner?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

But you do admit conventionally there is a person who practices a path, has realizations, manifests qualities and attains buddhahood correct?

muni said:

Conventional is, but not without absolute.

I again must say, Tsoknyi Rinpoche makes it clear.

Malcolm wrote:

So what is the point of saying, "It is "the one having" these qualities which isn't."

When you make such statements, you are then forced to contradict yourself because you then have admit, "Conventional is."

Which all then results in nothing but pointless verbiage.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, April 20th, 2015 at 8:52 PM

Title: Re: Rainbow Body - Why?

Content:

Saoshun said:

Rainbow body is not enlightenment but definitely high level of achievement in form of skandha.

Malcolm wrote:

Umm, no. Rainbow body is the attainment of buddhahood.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, April 20th, 2015 at 10:53 PM

Title: Re: Rainbow Body - Why?

Content:

Saoshun said:

Rainbow body is not enlightenment but definitely high level of achievement in form of skandha.

Malcolm wrote:

Umm, no. Rainbow body is the attainment of buddhahood.

Saoshun said:

If we look in the sense of skandhas it's skandha of form which was transformed into light so it cannot be counted as enlightenment as it's pretty logic. When you exhaust skandha of form you can dissolve and consciously be reborn which is great for bodhisattva path

These so-called 'transmutations of vijnana' are only changes of appellation and not a change of substance. - This argument of Hui neng is hard to beat.

But I trust your knowledge Malcolm and hope you can explain why this should be considered as Buddhahood.

Malcolm wrote:

"Rainbow body" is a name for what happens when the elements of body reverts back to their original nature as pristine consciousness as a result of the process of Dzogchen practice or completion stage practice. A key point of Vajrayāna is that there is no buddhahood that is not grounded in the body. Hence, the attainment of rainbow body, or the body of light, is regarded as proof that a practitioner has attained buddhahood. This is never mentioned in sūtra because sūtra has no methods of practice that involve the body as a vehicle for awakening.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, April 20th, 2015 at 11:48 PM

Title: Re: Did the 84 mahasiddhas practice Ngöndro?

Content:

Challenge23 said:

So yeah, Vajrasattva. Not a fan.

Malcolm wrote:

You just need to do more of it.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 21st, 2015 at 12:07 AM

Title: Re: Rainbow Body - Why?

Content:

Tenso said:

What is the difference between mahayana sambhogakaya and rainbow body?

Malcolm wrote:

The Mahāyāna Sambhogakāya is visible only to 8th stage bodhisattvas on up. While lesser rainbow body is only observable through the sign of the shrinking of the body

after death, the so called great transformation body, rainbow body attained while still alive, is visible to everyone. Only a small handful of practitioners have achieved this result. Most practitioners of Vajrayāna, regardless of tradition, attain Buddhahood during the bardo.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 21st, 2015 at 12:08 AM

Title: Re: Rainbow Body - Why?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

"Rainbow body" is a name for what happens when the elements of body reverts back to their original nature as pristine consciousness as a result of the process of Dzogchen practice or completion stage practice. A key point of Vajrayāna is that there is no buddhahood that is not grounded in the body. Hence, the attainment of rainbow body, or the body of light, is regarded as proof that a practitioner has attained buddhahood. This is never mentioned in sūtra because sūtra has no methods of practice that involve the body as a vehicle for awakening.

Saoshun said:

Okay I agree, but the same things happen in samadhi but samadhi is stepping stone so I guess there must be master or guru who can relate to this point well.

Malcolm wrote:

Rainbow body is a result cultivating a very specific set of practices all of which involve skill in samadhi.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 21st, 2015 at 6:52 AM

Title: Re: Did the 84 mahasiddhas practice Ngöndro?

Content:

Gyurme Kundrol said:

If this can be realized, really what use is Ngondro?

Malcolm wrote:

To realize this.

Gyurme Kundrol said:

but just keep our intention towards supreme enlightenment as pure as possible.

Malcolm wrote:

But isn't this a modification? And if you need this, then you need the rest of it.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 21st, 2015 at 8:04 PM

Title: Kalacakra war prophecy

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

please see my post on the issue:

<https://www.dharmawheel.net/viewtopic.php?f=40&t=17283#p249776>

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 21st, 2015 at 8:41 PM

Title: Re: dalai lama refuse rebirth vs bodhisatva vow

Content:

Simon E. said:

He didn't say that he wouldn't be reborn at all.

He said this may be his last birth as the Dalai Lama.

tobias said:

ok,

but how do you interpret that? I mean it is not but point to call this rebirth "Dalai Lama" as long as it's the rebirth of Buddha Chenrezig.

Malcolm wrote:

It means he is putting an end to the political institution of the Dalai Lama.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 21st, 2015 at 9:10 PM

Title: Re: Rainbow Body - Why?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

After the high lama of Khyungpo Yundrung Palri, Chime Rigzin Rinpoche's mind departed into the the dharmadhātu (bon dbyings), his remains remained just like that for the length of four weeks.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 22nd, 2015 at 2:34 AM

Title: Re: practicing alone

Content:

DesertDweller said:

I've been looking at Peter Barth's manual

[http://www.mahamudracenter.org/MMCMemberMeditationGuide.htm#_Toc420995709], and it has actually cleared up quite a lot of confusion, the first being the status of Mahamudra as a complete path in itself, independent of ngondro, tantra, etc.:

Malcolm wrote:

Of course this person directly contradicts himself on the same page: He says: Certainly, Mahamudra can be practiced independent of the path of tantra or in conjunction with the path of tantra, however one chooses.

In the Kagyu lineage and other lineages of Tibetan Buddhism, the ordinary preliminaries are taught prior to meditations of the type included in this manual. These include reflection on and awareness of (1) the precious human existence, (2) impermanence, (3) cause and effect or karma, and (4) the prevalence of suffering (samsara). In addition, special preliminaries are taught as a foundation to tantric Mahamudra and tantric Dzogchen practice. These include (1) refuge and bodhicitta, (2) Vajra Sattva purification, (3) mandala offering, and (4) guru yoga. Dzogchen has its own set of preliminaries which in some schools include reflection on and awareness of the illusory body and the practice of heat yoga (tummo). Interestingly, practices similar to these are advanced practices of the Kagyu and Gelug/Kagyu lineages.

In any case, preliminaries are indispensable to the practitioner. It is commonly noted by teachers that the preliminaries are in no way less important than the main body of teachings. In fact it is said that the preliminaries are (1) helpful at the outset to get one to turn to the dharma, (2) helpful on the path to get one to persist in dharma practice, and (3) helpful at the end to help one complete realization. Thus, their importance should be underscored. Several excellent texts are now available for those who want to follow the Tibetan traditions within the context of individual lineages. Serious students should refer to these.

Vajrasattva is a Vajrayāna practice; mandala offerings and guru yoga are practices unique to niruttarayoga tantra. Without receiving empowerment into a mandala such as Hevajra, Cakrasamvara and so on, there is no Mahāmudra to speak of, much less realize. He declares first that Mahāmudra is an independent path, and then second that that Vajrayāna practices are indispensable for Mahāmudra.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 22nd, 2015 at 3:36 AM

Title: Re: Medicine buddha sadhana "Drop of Ambrosia"

Content:

ratna said:

Since Garchen Rinpoche gave the empowerment from Namchö, the Stream of Lapis would indeed be appropriate. But I think it would be better to receive oral transmission for the sadhana.

R

qwerty13 said:

Yes, the reading transmission would be important for this practice. Well, I just have to keep my eyes open for that opportunity. I really, really love this sadhana.

Malcolm wrote:

If you have the empowerment, you have the lung for the sadhana.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 22nd, 2015 at 3:50 AM

Title: Re: practicing alone

Content:

Johnny Dangerous said:

I don't really see the contradiction Malcolm. He seems to be saying that it is of greater benefit to practice Ngondro is one is going to practice Mahamudra, but also saying that sutra level Mahamudra meditation instruction is available in some sense without them.

Since some teachers seem to teach "sutra Mahamudra", whether they class it as that or not, to me it stands to reason that one is better off doing that than doing nothing at all, whether or not they choose to undertake Ngondro or other tantric practice, get empowerments etc. This is doesn't seem unusual, for basic meditation instruction to be offered independent of any tantric practice. Granted the manual goes beyond that, but part of it is just basic shamatha etc. instruction..and the parts of the manual that go beyond that are labeled as such.

Malcolm wrote:

One cannot practice Guru Yoga in a real sense without empowerment. Ergo, it is a Vajrayāna path.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 22nd, 2015 at 4:54 AM

Title: Re: Medicine buddha sadhana "Drop of Ambrosia"

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

If you have the empowerment, you have the lung for the sadhana.

topazdreamz said:

Why do you say this? Is it generally understood that if one has the empowerment, one has the lung for any given practice?

Malcolm wrote:

Because during the empowerment the guru recites all the main parts of the sadhana to

create the disciple in the form of the deity, as well as the refuge and bodhicitta that we recite with the master, and he gives the transmission of the mantra and so forth.

So yes, in general, if you have the empowerment, you have the lung.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 22nd, 2015 at 4:55 AM

Title: Re: practicing alone

Content:

Astus said:

From Mahamudra the Moonlight (2nd edition):

"On the other hand, if one follows venerable Gampopa's system in elucidating Mahāmudrā alone, it is not necessary to bestow the empowerment upon devotees. "

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, this is a mistaken tradition that cannot be defended in anyway whatsoever. Many have tried, none have succeeded, and this is why everyone who wishes to actually realize Mahāmudra has received empowerment and practiced the two stages, including Gampopa, and especially Tilopa, Naropa, Maitripa, Saraha, Shavaripa, you name it, all the Mahasiddhas of the past.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 22nd, 2015 at 6:25 PM

Title: Re: practicing alone

Content:

Tsongkhapafan said:

Mahamudra realisations depend upon the blessings received by relying upon a qualified Vajrayana spiritual guide through the practice of Guru Yoga, therefore it is impossible to gain realisations without having a Guru and without receiving a Highest Yoga Tantra empowerment and practising the two stages sincerely.

Malcolm wrote:

At least we agree on something.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 22nd, 2015 at 6:33 PM

Title: Re: practicing alone

Content:

Astus said:

From a teaching by <http://www.samyeling.org/about/buddhism-and-meditation/teaching-archive-2/mingyur-dorje-rinpoche/vajrayana-and-empowerment/>

(underlines added):

Within the Secret Mantra Vajrayana path there are two divisions. The first one is the path of skilful means and the second is the path of liberation. If we explain further what the path of skilful means is, there are various methods through which to realize directly our nature of mind. It is revealed to us through these various types of practice.

Malcolm wrote:

If it is a Secret Mantra Vajrayana path, it depends on empowerment.

Astus said:

The Vajrayana path can be divided into three sections. There is the development stage, completion stage and path of liberation (kyerim, dzogrim and drollam). Within these three paths one can decide whatever one likes to do, whatever one is feeling positive towards. But the best actually is the path of liberation.

Malcolm wrote:

If it is a Secret Mantra Vajrayana path, it depends on empowerment.

Yes, this is a mistaken tradition that cannot be defended in anyway whatsoever.

You mean you cannot accept the Dakpo Kagyu teaching of the white panacea, the method independent (and superior) of tantra, the path of liberation?

Correct, it is a completely mistaken teaching of Lama Shang.

Johnny Dangerous said:

you can use Mahamudra techniques, but their result and function would be like sutra meditation

If the techniques provided in Mahamudra cannot produce the results promised, how can they be even called Mahamudra?

Malcolm wrote:

The techniques for realizing mahāmudra are just the two stages and guruyoga, apart from that, there are no other techniques for realizing mahāmudra at all.

Johnny Dangerous said:

As for the actual basic methods, although there are many ways of asserting mahamudra, there are two when divided according to the sutras and tantras...

The former refers to the ways of meditating on voidness as directly indicated in the expanded, intermediate and brief (Prajnaparamita Sutras). The supremely realized Arya Nagarjuna has said, "Except for this, there is no other pathway of mind leading to liberation." Here I shall give relevant instruction on mahamudra in accord with these intentions of his and discuss the methods that lead you to know the mind, face to face, in keeping with the exposition of the lineage masters.

Malcolm wrote:

There is no such thing as mahāmudra in the sūtras. The term does not occur in sūtra at all, so how can it be a result in sūtra? This is just calling prajñāpāramitā "mahāmudra,

but it is not real mahāmudra.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 22nd, 2015 at 6:34 PM

Title: Re: practicing alone

Content:

Tsongkhapafan said:

...churning water will never produce butter.

Malcolm wrote:

Nor will grinding stone.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 22nd, 2015 at 6:36 PM

Title: Re: practicing alone

Content:

Johnny Dangerous said:

"practicing Mahamudra" without a teacher...

Malcolm wrote:

...does not exist.

Mahāmudra is not a practice, it is a realization, a realization that comes from either practicing the two stages or guru yoga.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 22nd, 2015 at 6:45 PM

Title: Re: practicing alone

Content:

dharmagoat said:

It sounds a lot like interschool squabbling to me.

Don't we just follow the line of our chosen school? For the purposes of this thread it is Kagyü Mahāmudrā.

Malcolm wrote:

The forum is labeled simply Mahāmudra, not Kagyu Mahāmudra. I checked before responding.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 22nd, 2015 at 6:47 PM

Title: Re: Sarvastivada Abhidharma and Theravada Abhidharma

Content:

daverupa said:

I'm trying to remember where I read, recently, the idea that perhaps the Sautrantikas didn't have an official Abhidhamma. I mean, everyone has abhidhamma in terms of their interpretation of Dhamma (up to and including Dharma; the Sautrantikas had some wild ideas despite not having official Abhidhamma books, to say nothing of the craziness of radical Theravadan momentariness & Sarvastivada 'time always exists' silliness...), but not all of the old schools came together to make a Scholastic Abhidhamma for themselves.

Malcolm wrote:

Sautrantikas measured the ideas of other schools in terms of whether they were justified on the basis of the Agamas or not. Where they were, they left them alone, where they were not, they criticized them. The Abhidharmakośa is a collection of mainly Sarvastivadin doctrines, the bhaṣyam is a critical commentary on those.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 22nd, 2015 at 6:54 PM

Title: Re: practicing alone

Content:

dharmagoat said:

It sounds a lot like interschool squabbling to me.

Don't we just follow the line of our chosen school? For the purposes of this thread it is Kagyü Mahāmudrā.

Malcolm wrote:

The forum is labeled simply Mahāmudra, not Kagyu Mahāmudra. I checked before responding.

dharmagoat said:

So has this become a Gelug/Sakya vs. Kagyü thing?

Malcolm wrote:

I don't really think of it that way. Just because Sakya Pandita says something does not mean it has to be accepted. One must do one's research and see if what he or anyone says about anything has merit.

These two ideas — that there is such a thing as mahāmudra in the sūtras, and that there is a mahāmudra path independent of Vajrayāna — are meritless delusions.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 22nd, 2015 at 8:22 PM

Title: Re: The Great Mantra

Content:

kalden yungdrung said:

-----OM MA TRI MU YE SA LE DU -----

Malcolm wrote:

The depicted mantra is actually,
A oṃ hūṃ ā a dkar sa le 'od a yang ṓṃ 'du

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 22nd, 2015 at 8:25 PM

Title: Re: practicing alone

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

These two ideas — that there is such a thing as mahāmudra in the sūtras, and that there is a mahāmudra path independent of Vajrayāna — are meritless delusions.

Astus said:

Do you think that the mahamudra instructions regarding seeing the nature of the mind are incorrect?

Malcolm wrote:

Whose instructions? Which ones?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 22nd, 2015 at 8:30 PM

Title: Re: practicing alone

Content:

DesertDweller said:

It does sound like purely interschool squabbling to me, and squabbling over semantics. None of which is of interest to me. But you guys can feel free to knock yourselves out.

Malcolm wrote:

It is in fact an important point. For example, if you go to a store and buy a Gucci suit, but you later find out that you have been sold a cheap knockoff, you will not be happy. Likewise, if you receive some information about Dharma somewhere, and then find you have been misled, you will not be happy.

In general, you cannot practice the mahāmudra instructions of the Indian mahāsiddhas without a teacher. Even something like Gampopa's own system of the four yogas of Mahāmudra cannot be practiced without personal guidance from an experienced teacher.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 22nd, 2015 at 9:39 PM

Title: Re: practicing alone

Content:

dharmagoat said:

The important point in this thread is that there has been shown to be a system of Mahāmudrā that does not require empowerments as a prerequisite for practice.

Malcolm wrote:

No such system exists.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 22nd, 2015 at 10:09 PM

Title: Re: practicing alone

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Whose instructions? Which ones?

Astus said:

Wangchuk Dorje, Dakpo Tashi Namgyal, Tsele Natsok Rangdrol, Traleg Kyabgon, Khenchen Thrangu, Tsultrim Gyamtso, Tenzin Palmo, Ken McLeod.

Malcolm wrote:

If someone asserts there is an actual mahāmudra result outside of the practice of the two stages or guru yoga, that person is mistaken, regardless of their title, position or rank.

If the introduction to the nature of mind occurs outside the context of having received the four empowerments, that instruction does not go beyond prajñāpāramita meditation — which is a perfectly fine practice, but it is not mahāmudra. It is something like calling an ordinary geshe a "buddha" in order to arouse faith in his disciples.

If the introduction to the nature of the mind happens on the basis of the four empowerments, that introduction can swiftly lead to the realization of mahāmudra, especially because that introduction is based on the example wisdom the disciple experiences during the ritual of the four empowerments at certain points. When that subsequent introduction is combined with completion stage practices such as kumbhaka or the intense devotion of guru yoga, mahāmudra can be realized rapidly. However, meditating on the intimate instructions of mahāmudra divorced from completion stage practices and or the intense devotion of guru yoga is a slow path even if one has received the four empowerments in a proper way. If one has not received the four empowerments at all, the idea that one is going to realize mahāmudra is a completely hopeless fantasy, like wishing for a stone to be saturated with water because one leaves

it in a pond.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 22nd, 2015 at 10:10 PM

Title: Re: practicing alone

Content:

dharmagoat said:

The important point in this thread is that there has been shown to be a system of Mahāmudrā that does not require empowerments as a prerequisite for practice.

Malcolm wrote:

No such system exists.

dharmagoat said:

It would depend on whose scripture you believe. This is where it becomes an interschool squabble.

Malcolm wrote:

Well, you see this is the problem, because there are actually no scriptures which support such a notion. The controversy arose only in the 12th century when people asserted, without any basis at all in the tantras or the sūtras, that there was such thing as a) a mahāmudra that exists in sūtra b) a mahāmudra that is independent of Secret Mantra.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 22nd, 2015 at 11:52 PM

Title: Re: practicing alone

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

If someone asserts there is an actual mahāmudra result outside of the practice of the two stages or guru yoga, that person is mistaken, regardless of their title, position or rank.

Astus said:

Well, that one was Gampopa. See how in the Jewel Ornament of Liberation he included all practices within prajnaparamita

<http://dharmawheel.net/viewtopic.php?p=111558#p111558>.

Malcolm wrote:

Well, which "prajñāpāramitā" is he discussing? The practice of prajñāpāramita? Or the result, Prajñāpāramita? For example, Vajrayāna is included in Mahāyāna, but this does not mean that the methods of Secret Mantra are found in common Mahāyāna. There is no fault in saying that reality called prajñāpāramita and the reality called "mahāmudra" are the same, but one indicates the result of practicing sūtra, and the other indicates the result of practicing Niruttara tantra. Even though mahāmudra is indeed mentioned

in Yoga tantra, it does not mean the same thing as the term "mahāmudra" discussed for example by Saraha in his commentary on the Buddhakapala Tantra, and so on.

Astus said:

If the introduction to the nature of mind occurs outside the context of having received the four empowerments, that instruction does not go beyond prajñāpāramitā meditation — which is a perfectly fine practice, but it is not mahāmudra. It is something like calling an ordinary geshe a "buddha" in order to arouse faith in his disciples.

...

However, meditating on the intimate instructions of mahāmudra divorced from completion stage practices and or the intense devotion of guru yoga is a slow path even if one has received the four empowerments in a proper way. If one has not received the four empowerments at all, the idea that one is going to realize mahāmudra is a completely hopeless fantasy, like wishing for a stone to be saturated with water because one leaves it in a pond.

If the view and the conduct are identical, how could the result be different because of the empowerments/guru yoga? Although, as above, all the empowerments and guru yoga are included in resting in the natural state, at least according to certain Mahamudra teachers.

Malcolm wrote:

The intellectual view of sūtra and tantra (freedom from extremes) are identical, but their methods are different, their conduct is different and so on.

Since there is no method of directly introducing this so called "natural state" that can be found in sūtra, one must depend on the methods taught by the Buddha in the tantras. And if one must depend on the methods taught by the Buddhas in the tantras, for what reason can one claim that is beyond or outside the Vajrayāna?

There is only one ritual taught in common Mahāyāna that bears on our discussion in a real sense — that is the ritual of generating relative bodhicitta. Apart from that, the other rituals in Mahāyāna such as the recitations of dharanis and so in do not bear on our discussion.

Secondly, since there is no method in common Mahāyāna for introducing or generating ultimate bodhicitta at all, how can one claim there is a method in sūtra for introducing mahāmudra? Even the word "mahāmudra" does not exist in any sūtra. If you claim there is such a method of introducing mahāmudra outside of a Vajrayāna context, in what sūtra is it taught, what Indian master composed the method?

You might claim, suchness is the same whether we are discussing prajñāpāramitā or mahāmudra, and to that I will readily agree — but the issue is not about reality per se, it is about how that reality is realized, what method is used and where that method comes from. Even the results of sūtra and tantra are not the equivalent. For example, there is no discussion in sūtra of the seven limbs of the three kāyas — this is purely related to the result, mahāmudra. Just as for example, one can find only four wisdoms in sūtra,

but there are five wisdoms mentioned in Vajrayāna, in sūtra the word "Vajradhara" is never heard, and likewise, the term "mahāmudra" does not occur even once. If you are going to say there is mahāmudra in sūtra, why stop there? Why not say there is a sutra connate bliss, a sūtra Dzogchen, a sūtra tummo, a sūtra consort practice, none of which require empowerments?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, April 23rd, 2015 at 12:14 AM

Title: Re: practicing alone

Content:

dharmagoat said:

The important point in this thread is that there has been shown to be a system of Mahāmudrā that does not require empowerments as a prerequisite for practice.

Malcolm wrote:

No such system exists.

conebeckham said:

Read Brunnholzl's latest book on the Uttaratantrashastra and it's connection to Mahamudra for some interesting, and varied, opinions on this matter.

Malcolm wrote:

KB just goes over the same ground that Deiter-Matthis did in his book on the Go Lotsawa's treatment of the Uttaratantra.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, April 23rd, 2015 at 12:56 AM

Title: Re: practicing alone

Content:

conebeckham said:

Quoting from "When the Clouds Part," Brunnholzl, who quotes from Kongtrul's Treasury of Knowledge:

...In the Tatvavatara composed by the master Jnanakirti, it says: "Another name of mother Prajnaparamita is Mahamudra because it is the very nature of nondual wisdom." Thus, (Kongtrul) not only explains that the prajnaparamita taught in the sutras and the Mahamudra of mantra are synonyms, but he also explains these conventional terms: "As for those of highest capacities among the persons who exert themselves in the paramitas, when they perform the meditations of calm abiding and superior insight, even at the stage of ordinary beings, this grants them the true realization characterized by having it's origin in Mahamudra."

Kongtrul also goes on to note that important sources of this tradition came from the Kadampa lineage, in particular Atisha's "Pith Instructions on the Two Armors of Connate Union Mahamudra." Brunnholzl also notes Karmapa Mikyo Dorje's statement that this system of guidance is based on Atisha's Bodhipathapradipa. However, Mikyo Dorje says: "Nevertheless, in the approach of practice of most heart sons (of Gampopa), the

instructions in Mahamudra are taught in such a way that they are preceded by conferring an empowerment. Thus, they hold (Mahamudra) to be the approach that is common to sutra and tantra."

This can be found in Brunnholz's text, beginning on p. 155. He continues the discussion about Sutra sources.

Malcolm wrote:

This is akin to saying, "Vajravārāhī is another name for Prajñāpāramitā, therefore, I can practice Vajravārāhī without empowerment and I will achieve exactly the same result whether I have the empowerment or not." So are you willing to accept the consequence? If not, then you have to explain the difference between mahāmudra and Vajravārāhī. Why can't there be a "sūtra" Vajravārāhī" if there can be a "sutra mahāmudra?"

conebeckham said:

Brunnholz also refers to Sahajavajra's Tattvadasakatika as a source for the blending of Sutra and Mantra. And of course Maitripa's tradition of "Amanasikara" is seen as the core of Kagyu Mahamudra. Sahajavajra's position is that the "Sutra approach adorned with pith instructions" is inferior to the Secret Mantra approach, but superior to a "straight paramita" approach.

Malcolm wrote:

Right, as I said KB just rehashes Dieter-Matthis' book. Also for example, the Rigpa Rangshar tantra equates Dzogchen with Prajñāpāramitā, so now are we going to say that if we merely practice sutrayāna śamatha and vipaśyāna and sprinkle it with some pithy quotes from sems sde, this constitutes a "sūtra dzogchen"? C'mon...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, April 23rd, 2015 at 12:57 AM

Title: Re: practicing alone

Content:

conebeckham said:

Moi? No, I just read stuff.

This is an endless "debate," actually, and all I can say is that I trust the words of my Gurus, and the methods they have transmitted.

Malcolm wrote:

The problem, dear Cone, is that you actually cannot practice sūtra mahāmudra even if you wanted to. You have received too many empowerments.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, April 23rd, 2015 at 1:40 AM

Title: Re: practicing alone

Content:

conebeckham said:

Well, Dzogchen, at least in theory, also does not rely on the "two stages" --at least in some presentations. Right? I grant you, it's "tantra," and not sutra, and no one ever claimed it was.....but it is an example of a "Vajrayana path" that, at least in theory, relies on Pith Instructions, Pointing Out, etc., sometimes even without the elaborations of The Four Empowerments and the Two Stages.

Malcolm wrote:

Dzogchen absolutely relies on empowerment, which is why it is considered part of Secret Mantra. This why The Mind Mirror Tantra states:

Where will there be accomplishment without relying on the empowerments of secret mantra? For example, it is like a boatman without a paddle, how will one be able to cross to the other side? If the empowerments are fully obtained, all secret mantras not accomplished will be accomplished.

Further, as we know, guru yoga is indispensable in Dzogchen.

conebeckham said:

I just don't see the value in getting hung up on defining whether or not a valid path can be ascribed to Sutra, Tantra, etc.

Malcolm wrote:

I think you be pretty upset if you bought a cd advertised as being the music of a virtuous bass player, and found out it was really bass kazoo they were talking about.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, April 23rd, 2015 at 1:44 AM

Title: Re: practicing alone

Content:

conebeckham said:

People talk about "causing oneself harm" by trying to practice Tummo from a book, etc., but the harm of mistaking pith instructions can be potentially as damaging, I think.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, as for example the vast wasteland of the clueless leading the blind on the internet.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, April 23rd, 2015 at 1:55 AM

Title: Re: practicing alone

Content:

conebeckham said:

...guard our samayas...

Malcolm wrote:

Have to have received an empowerment to even have those.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, April 23rd, 2015 at 2:57 AM

Title: Re: practicing alone

Content:

Vasana said:

Regardless of whether one can practice Mahamudra without the empowerments and introduction, you can at least, as this thread has mentioned , realize Prajnaparamita, which in turn will lead to 'anuttara-samyak-sambodhi' as mentioned in the Mahāprajñāpāramitā Mañjuśrī parivarta Sūtra.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, but only after one has progressed through the five paths and ten stages, and that takes at minimum three incalculable eons, two just to reach the level of the eighth bhumi.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, April 23rd, 2015 at 4:17 AM

Title: Re: practicing alone

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Well, which "prajñāpāramitā" is he discussing? The practice of prajñāpāramita? Or the result, Prajñāpāramita?

Astus said:

Gampopa writes: "Setting the mind this way is the unmistakable method of practicing wisdom awareness." (p 249) and where he gives the list of all those things he beings with: "When one is endowed with the meaning of emptiness, there is not a single thing which in not included in this path." (p 252) In the commentaries by Ringu Tulku and Thrangu Rinpoche they both talk about resting in the natural state as taught in Mahamudra.

Malcolm wrote:

Settling mind in what way? In which path is everything included? How is this path introduced, can you just look it up on the internet?

Astus said:

The difference between sutra and tantra in terms of Mahamudra are quite practical: "According to Mahamudra teachers, the sutric Mahayana approach uses external phenomena as the object of vipashyana meditation, whereas the tantric Mahayana approach of Mahamudra uses the mind itself as the object."
(<http://www.lionsroar.com/meditating-on-the-mind-itself/>).

Malcolm wrote:

How is that possible? Have these teachers never heard of Yogacara? And even here, why make a distinction between the tantric Mahāmudra approach and the sūtra Mahāyāna

approach if in reality they are both "mahāmudra"?

Astus said:

Also,

"Gampopa said that there are three different paths with different practices, but these three paths have the same nature. These are taking inference as the path, taking blessings as the path, and taking direct experience as the path. Taking inference as the path refers to, for instance, the various reasonings set forth in the Madhyamaka that show that all things are neither single nor multiple. Taking blessings as the path refers to, for instance, meditation upon the body of a deity or the practices involving the subtle channels and subtle energies. Taking direct perception as the path is mahamudra. Mahamudra is pointed out to us, and we recognize it, become accustomed to it, and take direct experience as the path.

We can also classify the different paths into three groups: the paths that abandon the ground, paths that transform the ground, and paths that recognize the ground. The first path of abandoning the ground is the vehicle of transcendent action of the sutra vehicle, in which some things are abandoned and others are remedies for those things to be abandoned. The second path, transformation of the ground, refers to the practices of the Vajrayana in which we purify our body and mind by meditating on our body being a deity. Our body is thus transformed into the pure body of the deity, and our mind is transformed from discursiveness into wisdom. In the third path, recognizing the ground, is mahamudra. We know that we do not need to abandon or transform the ground; rather, we know it as it is. When we know the ground as it is, we recognize all appearances as the magical display of the mind. Thus, mahamudra is a matter of using direct perception as the path. This is also called the quick path."

(Thrangu: Essentials of Mahamudra, p 78-79)

Malcolm wrote:

Drogmi Lotsawa states that the difference between sūtra and tantra is that tantra uses direct perception as the path. This direct perception is the basis of all Secret Mantra meditation and is the experiential view introduced in the very beginning during the empowerment, this is why Secret Mantra is a quick path. But there is no separate means of introducing this experiential view outside of the empowerment, there is no mahāmudra that exists outside of Vajrayāna.

Astus said:

As for the so called Sutra Mahamudra (that actually stands for Gampopa's Mahamudra):

"The meditation of Sutra Mahamudra essentially consists of resting one's mind, free of mental activity, in the state of nonconceptual wisdom. This is the fundamental definition of Sutra Mahamudra: mind resting in the state in which it experiences the dharmadhatu, which is the expanse or nature of all things. This resting is essentially a nonconceptual wisdom beyond all elaboration, or the unity of clarity and emptiness. In

this context, one meditates in the following way: The object of one's meditation is luminosity free of any projections; the perceiving subject is the lack of mental engagement; and one meditates without mental engagement. There are many extensive explanations on meditating without mental engagement, found primarily in the teachings of Maitripa and Sahajavajra.

The Sutrayana approach to Mahamudra is seen as a very profound method because it does not require any of the sophisticated and complex tantric rituals, deity yoga visualization practices, or samayas. It is a simple sutra approach, yet it conveys the direct transmission of the tantric essence of awakening."

(Dzogchen Ponlop: Wild Awakening, 31-32)

Malcolm wrote:

It does not in any way shape or form go beyond Prajñāpāramita, and since there is no empowerment, there is no experiential view to be cultivated. As Khenpo Tsultrim Gyatso told me, and as you can confirm by reading Kongtrul, sūtra mahāmudra was invented for those Gampopa deemed unready for Secret Mantra.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, April 23rd, 2015 at 4:18 AM

Title: Re: practicing alone

Content:

Karma Dondrup Tashi said:

Mahamudra can only exist in the minds of students who have fully committed themselves to the vajrayana path alone...

Trungpa

Malcolm wrote:

It's nice to know that Trungpa and I have the same point of view on this.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, April 23rd, 2015 at 4:59 AM

Title: Re: practicing alone

Content:

Johnny Dangerous said:

Greetings friends.

A question: while it goes without saying that having a teacher is always best, is it possible to study and practice Mahamudra on one's own, at least until such a time as a teacher can be found? Is it a discipline which requires empowerments, etc.? If it is possible to practice without a teacher, what are some helpful resources available online?

Any insight on this will be most appreciated.

Here's the OP's question again.

I intuit the answer here is something like "sure, you can practice Shamatha , but hey,

find a teacher".

I don't think (correct me if i'm wrong) the OP really had in mind whether or not he could achieve Mahamudra, or receive blessings in Vajrayana sense by practicing some techniques from Barth's manual or similar. I had to study Vajrayana writings, get empowerments, and ask lots of questions for a year before I even could properly contextualize what "Mahamudra" even means..still not even sure I get some of the nuances behind how the term is used. I believed in the beginning it was simply a type of meditation - and I am assuming that this is how the OP is framing it, since he is not a Vajrayana practitioner.

So it begs the question, what (if any) usefulness could be gleaned from that kind of practice without a teacher? Further, since some of those techniques (following breath, just sitting etc.) have equivalents in other (sutra) Buddhist traditions, and are certainly publicly taught to those without initiation, bot within Vajrayana and outside of it, why would this be different than practicing those?

Basically, to move the thread along...should he not practice at all if he's not going to find a teacher? That is what it sounds like people are saying in places, if that isn't what people are saying, then can the message be clarified for the sake of the thread?

Malcolm wrote:

The answer is no, it is not possible to study and practice Mahāmudra on one's own. Hell, not even the Dharma in general can be practiced without a teacher. Studied, yes; practiced, no.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, April 23rd, 2015 at 8:02 AM

Title: Re: practicing alone

Content:

BuddhaFollower said:

Malcolm,

Are you are saying Mahamudra is the term for Buddhahood that is the result of Highest Yoga Tantra's 4 empowerments, 2 stages and/or guru yoga?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, in essence.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, April 23rd, 2015 at 8:27 AM

Title: Re: practicing alone

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

It does not in any way shape or form go beyond Prajñāpāramita, and since there is no empowerment, there is no experiential view to be cultivated. As Khenpo Tsultrim Gyatso told me, and as you can confirm by reading Kongtrul, sūtra mahāmudra was invented for those Gampopa deemed unready for Secret Mantra.

conebeckham said:

Malcolm--Khenpo Tsultrim Gyamtso is one of my teachers, and in fact one of my Mahamudra teachers. I will partly confirm your claim--Khenpo-la specifically told me that Sutra Mahamudra wasn't even a "term" until Kongtrul's time, if I recall.

Malcolm wrote:

That is not true, Sakya Pandita definitely rejects a so called "sūtra mahāmudra", and his teacher, Jetsun Rinpoche states quite clearly:
Having accepted Secret Mantra as Dharma,
without possessing the ripening path abhisheka
and separated from points of the liberating path method,
because one does not meet a Lord of Secret Mantra;
also leave Mahāmudra Dharma and go!

conebeckham said:

But the techniques Gampopa used, guiding some students based on instructions without an explicit empowerment, was not felt by Khenpo-la to be "incorrect."

Malcolm wrote:

It is not incorrect, it just wont lead to the realization of actual mahāmudra sans empowerment no matter how fantastic a meditation it is.

conebeckham said:

Khenpo-La himself referred to Maitripa's tradition, and Saraha's instructions. He noted that both of these Mahasiddhas were indeed Tantrikas, but he felt that did not mean that the paths they outlined, and the paths that Gampopa drew from, must be preceded by empowerment.

Malcolm wrote:

If it is not preceded by empowerment, then you can be certain that it will not result in Mahāmudra realization, which is something very precise and specific. And indeed, those mahasiddhas are in accord with that view, as Brunholzl himself also admits.

conebeckham said:

In fact, much of what Gampopa drew from, for this "guidance system," was from the Kadam, as I said earlier, and Brunnholzl fleshes this out more completely.

Malcolm wrote:

That is interesting, but it does not change the basic facts. Kagyus in general tend to rely on three authors to argue their claim that there can be a mahāmudra that does not depend Secret Mantra methods, but when you actually examine the texts of what those three authors say — Vajrayāna practitioners writing about Madhyamaka — it is a very

slim and contrived argument. And of course Sapan addresses this issue as well. And BTW, this idea is not universally embraced by all Kagyus. For example, the Drikungpas do not really take this approach to mahāmudra at all.

conebeckham said:

Most Kagyupas, in fact, recognize Gampopa as an innovator. All the Kagyu Lamas I've talked with, about this issue, will readily admit this. With pride.

Malcolm wrote:

Sure, why not? He was innovative, it is not so much Gampopa that is the problem as it is how he was variously interpreted — for example, Lama Shang. But for sure, Gampopa's system was unknown to Milarepa, Marpa, Naropa, Tilopa and so on.

And, for what it is worth, these issues need to be hashed out again and again...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, April 23rd, 2015 at 8:33 AM

Title: Re: practicing alone

Content:

Tsongkhapafan said:

That's where you'd be completely wrong Cone. Don't be so sectarian.

Many people think that Je Tsongkhapa was a great scholar but he was also a great Yogi.

conebeckham said:

I never said he wasn't a great Yogi. Let me ask you, though--is your Mahamudra tradition that called the "Kagyu/Genden Tradition" or "Kagyu/Geluk" tradition? Or is it that which your New Kadampa tradition calls "Mahamudra Tantra, and which is "ONLY" the result of Highest Yoga Tantra? The Clear Light Mind of Bliss that realizes Emptiness, as I believe it's described?

Malcolm wrote:

It, Genden Mahamudra, begins with the First Panchen Lama, but claims to depend on an oral transmission through Gyalwa Ensapa — which may very well be true, since Samten Karmey found an eighty folio book in Bhutan titled "The Genden Miraculous Volume" that consisted of pithy instructions which comes through Ensapa, a text which seems not to have survived in Tibet.

This sutra mahāmudra of the Panchen Lama was very controversial in Gelug, and still is, to some degree. The 5th Dalai Lama was very opposed to it, in fact.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, April 23rd, 2015 at 9:35 AM

Title: Re: practicing alone

Content:

DesertDweller said:

I'm not at all interested in finding a lama, becoming a disciple in the Vajrayana tradition, etc. As I said, I'm coming from a Chan/Zen background and am merely interested in learning "about" Mahamudra as a sort of comparative activity and "enhancement" to my Zen meditation. My ideas about Mahamudra were essentially informed by various comments I have seen from Zen practitioners and teachers to the effect that Mahamudra is sort of like "Tibetan Zen" and is worth "looking into". Taigen Dan Leighton, for example, in his introduction to his translation of Master Honzhi, notes what he perceives to be the great similarities between Silent Illumination meditation and Mahamudra. Others have recommended various Mahamudra books as useful ways of looking at Zen from a different angle that is essentially the same. Now this is what I've been hearing. As to whether Mahamudra and Zen are really the same in essence is something that I'm not qualified to answer with any authority, though to be honest, based on several descriptions of Mahamudra that I have read, I really can't see much difference. I know that Tantric practitioners will squirm at such a statement, and it may open up a whole 'nother can of worms, but that's my honest impression. As for empowerments, etc, as a non-Vajrayana practitioner I can't say I'm at all convinced by the assumption that the highest enlightenment isn't possible without 'em, based on Sutra methods alone. I have nothing against Tantra, but I won't buy into the polemic that it offers some sort of enlightenment that isn't available to someone who just follows the Diamond Sutra, etc.

Malcolm wrote:

We don't squirm, we just understand that you are looking at sugar rather than tasting it.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, April 23rd, 2015 at 8:00 PM

Title: Re: practicing alone

Content:

Astus said:

As noted earlier, tantra uses an indirect method with deity yoga and the channels to reach buddha-nature, while Mahamudra goes there directly. .

Malcolm wrote:

This completely false. You really have no idea what you are talking about now. In Vajrayāna, pointing out the nature of the mind, the all-basis (ālaya) and recognizing it, is the foundation for creation and completion stage practice. Mahāmudra is not just the nature of the mind.

If it were as you say, we would have examples of Indian Mahāsiddhas who attained buddhahood on the basis of merely meeting someone and having a discussion, but we don't, training gradually in śāmatha and vipaśyāna.

What we do have are examples of mahāsiddhas, very many in fact, who attained

awakening and realized mahāmudra during the process of receiving the four empowerments. We have many other examples of mahāsiddhas who, having received the four empowerments, practiced the two stages and swiftly realized mahāmudra and so attained buddhahood. We have no examples of any Indian mahāsiddhas who did either based on a mere conversation, or through merely practicing śamtha and vipaśyāna, whether sprinkled with pithy saying from the dohas or not.

So I guess, Tibetans must have much higher capacity than Indians, because according to you, these vaunted Tibetans are capable of realizing Mahāmudra based on sutrayāna conversations, sprinkled with dohas, merely practicing śamatha and vipaśyāna. But the reality is, no one realized mahāmudra without practicing the two stages, including Gampopa.

Astus said:

Also, the fourth empowerment is generally equated with the pointing out instruction

Malcolm wrote:

Which pointing out instruction? Whose? What precise text? If you intend the means of pointing the "sūtra" mahāmudra system, for example, in Bokar Rinpoche's famous condensation of the 7th Karmapa's long Mahāmudra text, this is in no way shape or form equivalent with the fourth empowerment.

Astus said:

As above, the specialty of Gampopa's Mahamudra is the direct introduction without empowerment.

Malcolm wrote:

It is not a direct introduction, it is a gradual introduction, that takes many sessions, like all sutra-based systems. You yourself admitted that Gampopa's "mahāmudra" was "sutra" mahāmudra.

Now, when it comes to essence mahāmudra, there is an empowerment (the descent of the wisdom vajra empowerment) based in Indrabhuti's famous text, the Jñānasiddhi, and this is in fact a direct introduction, just like the fourth empowerment.

All I can conclude from this discussion, Astus, is that you are not really very clear on the difference between "pointing out instructions", which is gradual, and "direct introduction," which is immediate.

Further, what you seem to fail to understand is that in actual practice, in general the Kagyus all practice creation and completion stage, combine the four yogas of mahāmudra with the completion stage, and practice the main practice of essence mahāmudra, Guru Yoga.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, April 23rd, 2015 at 8:06 PM

Title: Re: practicing alone

Content:

Astus said:

The difference between the purely sutric method and the Mahamudra method lies in whether there is pointing out the nature of mind or not, as mentioned above.

Malcolm wrote:

There are so many problems with this, I do not have time to even go into it. But according to you then, this instruction from Prajñāpāramita is mahāmudra: There is no mind in the mind, but the original nature of the mind is luminous

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, April 23rd, 2015 at 9:02 PM

Title: Re: practicing alone

Content:

sherabpa said:

Pardon me if I missed it, but I don't think anybody mentioned what Situ Panchen says about the situation.

On the point of whether there is a paramitayana mahamudra, he says there are two positions on it from 'our tradition' and neither one is official. The first is that the sutra system is for those who are not suitable to receive empowerments (for whatever reason) and so, by practicing paramitayana, it would prepare them to receive empowerments later on. This is nevertheless called 'sutra mahamudra'. Apart from the name, this is unobjectionable.

The second view is that the wisdom of paramitayana is itself the same as mahamudra. This is the controversial one since it destroys the distinction of paramitayana and mantrayana. Go Lotsawa is a good example of someone who asserted the second view, saying that Gampopa was able to produce mahamudra in people who had not attained empowerments and he provides a couple of scriptural citations to defend against Sapan's criticism.

Situ Panchen does not say whether he think Gampopa held either position but allows for both.

Situ Panchen also points out, perhaps more importantly, that 'empowerment' does not simply mean going through a ritual of some kind, but is essentially the guru's blessing of the transference of wisdom (ye shes pho ba'i byin labs). In this respect, the fourth initiation, that of mahamudra, can occur outside of what is normally understood by the term 'empowerment', i.e. a ceremony involving the four initiations, and indeed Tilopa's initiation of Naropa is an example of this kind of empowerment. Equally, one can sit

through any number of elaborate ceremonies, but not have received empowerment, e.g. like a cat or dog. Sapan's claims about mahamudra and empowerment seem to overlook this detail.

Malcolm wrote:

Of course this ignores the important point that Naropa was already a Vajrayāna practitioner by the time he met Tilopa. As to your second claim, this is only possible if you sit there like a stone, and or refuse to participate at all, having something like a picnic instead, watching the ritual like a baseball game or as a form of entertainment, the way some non-Buddhist Westerners these days attend Kalacakra empowerments.

Go Lotsawa's opinion is noted, but it is just that, an opinion by a scholar who lived many centuries after Gampopa.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, April 23rd, 2015 at 9:19 PM

Title: Re: practicing alone

Content:

BuddhaFollower said:

Malcolm, how does Lamdre correlate with Highest Yoga Tantra?

Malcolm wrote:

Lamdre is an intimate instruction on the practice of the Hevajra Tantra.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, April 23rd, 2015 at 10:29 PM

Title: Re: practicing alone

Content:

BuddhaFollower said:

Is that HYT?

Can we classify the result as Mahamudra?

Malcolm wrote:

Lamdre speaks about a basis, a path and a result.

The basis is the ālaya cause continuum — this is exactly the same thing Kagyus call "ground mahāmudra." It is nothing more nor less than the nature of the mind.

In Lamdre, when ālaya, aka the inseparability of clarity and emptiness, is approached via sūtra methods in the Triple Vision teachings, one meditates upon it via śamatha and vipaśyāna. In the beginning, in terms of śamatha, one uses an external object, a blue flower, then a blue cloth or the sky and finally, one focuses inwardly on the naked clarity of the mind itself. In terms of the vipaśyāna, one establishes that the appearances are mind, the mind is illusory and dependently arisen, and finally that dependent arising is

natureless and free from all extremes. When one is capable of resting in the naked clarity of the mind in conjunction with the insight that this clarity is empty and free from extremes, this is called the union of śamatha and vipaśyāna. However, this is merely a sutrayāna meditation and will not lead to Buddhahood in a single lifetime no matter how good a meditation it may be. As the Nalendra Khenpo, Ngawang Lodo states in his Lamp of the Path of Freedom and Omniscience:

In one's experience, the unceasing stream of mere clarity and mere awareness is empty at the time of being clear and clear at the time being empty — do not grasp clarity or emptiness. Rest wholly, nakedly and freely in the state that is free from extremes, without divisions, inexpressible and beyond thought.

But this is not the state of mahāmudra nor is it the realization of mahāmudra.

The special view of Lamdre is called the inseparability of samsara and nirvana. This view can only be meditated upon after one has received the cause Hevajra empowerment. It is meditated upon prior to engaging in the meditations of the creation and completion stage. The way this is meditated is through thirty-two examples which establish phenomena as mind, mind as an illusion and illusion as natureless. Not only this but there is an inseparability of samsara and nirvana of the path and also an inseparability of samsara and nirvana of the result.

Then there is the path method continuum, which is equivalent to so called "path mahāmudra" in the Kagyu system. This refers to the practice of the creation and completion stages.

Finally, there is the result mahāmudra continuum. This refers to the buddhahood that is the result of the two stages. This is equivalent to the result mahāmudra in the Kagyu system.

Now, it may be wondered, "Are these three continuums the same or are they different?" These three continuums are merely names for phases of a single continuum, much like the way Maitreyanath distinguishes between sentient beings, bodhisattvas and buddhas by labeling them respectively impure, pure/impure and pure. And as Jetsun Rinpoche points, the natural perfection of the qualities of buddhahood in the all-basis cause continuum or so called ground mahāmudra does not contradict transformation.

So you see it is not simply enough to realize the nature of the mind and call that "mahāmudra." In order to achieve a result, a path is called for. The only way to extract the butter of mahāmudra is to take the milk of the nature of the mind and churn it with the two stages. Other than that, there is no way to realize mahāmudra.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, April 23rd, 2015 at 11:34 PM

Title: Re: practicing alone

Content:

sherabpa said:
Thanks for responding.

Malcolm wrote:
Of course this ignores the important point that Naropa was already a Vajrayāna practitioner by the time he met Tilopa.

sherabpa said:
Implying this was a prerequisite for his receiving the wisdom blessing of Tilopa. This transmission was not a practice based on previous initiations, but a wisdom empowerment. All that was needed was his devotion to Tilopa. According to Situ, there are many examples in India and Tibet of such transmissions. However, this method was apparently a specialty of Gampopa.

Malcolm wrote:
The point is that the cause empowerment tills the field which makes the student a proper basis. The idea all the previous Varjayāna training and practice that Naropa had undergone had no bearing on his time with Tilopa is simply ludicrous. For example, Amyezhab records in his history of Cakrasamvara, that following his meeting with the old lady who had eighteen characteristics of ugliness, since Naropa doubted whether she was a dakini or not, he did an accomplishment retreat of seven hundred thousand near essence mantras of Cakrasamvara to confirm this. Thus, the idea that Naropa was not a very advanced Varjayāna practitioner when he met Tilopa really is not correct nor is the idea that his previous practice had not prepared him for his time with Tilopa. Also Tilopa aka Prajñabhadra, realized Mahāmudra through the two stages of Cakrasamvara having received it from his guru, Antarapa.

Yes, I am aware that there is a Kagyu tradition that Tilopa was an emanation which is found in Gampopa's brief bio.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Thursday, April 23rd, 2015 at 11:39 PM
Title: Re: practicing alone
Content:

Malcolm wrote:
The only way to extract the butter of mahāmudra is to take the milk of the nature of the mind and churn it with the two stages. Other than that, there is no way to realize mahāmudra.

sherabpa said:
What then is the purpose of guru yoga in Sakya? If it is not to enter directly into the wisdom of mahamudra during empowerment, without any need for the two stages, what purpose does it serve? Is it not the case that the two stages are only for those who do not attain mahamudra in the actual empowerment.

Malcolm wrote:

Guru Yoga can produce a wisdom that resembles the wisdom produced by the two stages, indeed, but really, this is only for the people of highest capacity or who have developed their capacity through much practice. And of course, to be qualified to practice guru yoga, one should have received all four empowerments in a proper way.

Sadhana practice is indeed for those who do not manage to attain buddhahood during the empowerment. People misunderstand empowerments, thinking they are merely a method of introducing this or that practice. Actually, empowerments are meant to cause people to attain buddhahood; failing that, they practice sadhanas with the two stages and guru yoga.

The reality of it is however that very few people in history have attained buddhahood during an empowerment, or even the bhumis.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, April 23rd, 2015 at 11:40 PM

Title: Re: practicing alone

Content:

sherabpa said:

I read you yourself recently advising someone to pay close attention during the vase initiation of Vajrakilaya given by HHST, I think it was. But yeah, I agree it is possible to miss the empowerment entirely while being physically present.

Malcolm wrote:

I advised them to pay careful attention through all four empowerments...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, April 23rd, 2015 at 11:50 PM

Title: Re: practicing alone

Content:

sherabpa said:

I read you yourself recently advising someone to pay close attention during the vase initiation of Vajrakilaya given by HHST, I think it was. But yeah, I agree it is possible to miss the empowerment entirely while being physically present.

Malcolm wrote:

I advised them to pay careful attention through all four empowerments...

dzogchungpa said:

Yes, starting tomorrow!

Malcolm wrote:

Vajradhara in person:

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, April 24th, 2015 at 12:30 AM

Title: Re: practicing alone

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Not only this but there is an inseparability of samsara and nirvana of the path and also an inseparability of samsara and nirvana of the result.

M

WeiHan said:

Hi Malcohlm,

inseparability of samsara and nirvana of the path

inseparability of samsara and nirvana of the result.

What does the above mean?

Malcolm wrote:

You need to take Lamdre and find out.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, April 24th, 2015 at 1:16 AM

Title: Re: practicing alone

Content:

Yuren said:

The orthodox catechism of Malcolm reminds me why I never want to get involved with Tibetan Buddhism, at least its institutional form.

Malcolm wrote:

Right, because our own concepts are just so much better and effective...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, April 24th, 2015 at 1:16 AM

Title: Re: practicing alone

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The special view of Lamdre is called the inseparability of samsara and nirvana. This view can only be meditated upon after one has received the cause Hevajra empowerment. It is meditated upon prior to engaging in the meditations of the creation

and completion stage. The way this is meditated is through thirty-two examples which establish phenomena as mind, mind as an illusion and illusion as natureless. Not only this but there is an inseparability of samsara and nirvana of the path and also an inseparability of samsara and nirvana of the result.

M

WeiHan said:
Hi Malcohlm,

I have received Lam Dre but there are just some subtle points which I cannot make the connection and it is not apparent in the teaching. Regarding the above paragraph, do you mean the 32 examples are a method to meditate on the inseparability of samsara and nirvana of the basis. And then there is a method to meditate on this same view when on the path which is called the inseparability of samsara and nirvana of the path. And then the final fruition, realizing the view in actuality is called the inseparability of samsara and nirvana of the result?

I just need the above general clarification. Thanks in advance.

Malcolm wrote:
it is a bit complicated to summarize.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, April 24th, 2015 at 1:36 AM

Title: Re: practicing alone

Content:

Tsongkhapafan said:

...why wouldn't they seek out a qualified spiritual guide and learn at their feet instead of practising 'internet Dharma'?

Malcolm wrote:

Well, because it is much easier to surf the web while listening... and less obtrusive then surfing the web on your smart phone...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, April 24th, 2015 at 1:46 AM

Title: Re: practicing alone

Content:

Tsongkhapafan said:

...why wouldn't they seek out a qualified spiritual guide and learn at their feet instead of practising 'internet Dharma'?

Malcolm wrote:

Well, because it is much easier to surf the web while listening... and less obtrusive than surfing the web on your smart phone...

dzogchungpa said:

Oh snap!

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, April 24th, 2015 at 2:04 AM

Title: Re: practicing alone

Content:

Yuren said:

No offense meant but Malcolm's orthodox catechism reminds me why I never want to get involved with Tibetan Buddhism, at least its institutional form.

To answer OP's question, Reginald Ray created an audio course on Mahamudra, he even gives Ground Mahamudra Transmission in it.

Malcolm wrote:

Ground Mahāmudra transmission? What a joke! You already have ground mahāmudra, how can someone give you something you already have!

Yuren said:

The idea that transmission cannot work remotely is of course mere superstition.

Malcolm wrote:

The idea that you can receive transmission from a recording is complete nonsense.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, April 24th, 2015 at 2:52 AM

Title: Re: Gaden mahamudra (kagyu/gelug mahamudra)

Content:

qwerty13 said:

I have been reading book "Kagyu/gelug tradition of mahamudra" from here and there and there is one thing that I find difficult to understand. The mahamudra practices that are given in the root text (The main road of triumphant ones) contain two mahamudra methods, sutra and tantra. However nowhere in the text or in the related commentary there is anything said about receiving "pointing -out" instructions. Kagyu traditions have sutra mahamudra and there is a lot of talk about receiving pointing out instruction from qualified teacher.

But nothing is said about receiving pointing-out instructions in context of Gaden mahamudra practice. Why is this? Are they unnecessary here? I thought these are necessary in sutra mahamudra practice.

Malcolm wrote:

The text is the pointing out instruction. It is not a direct introduction like what you receive in Dzogchen. Nor is it an introduction such as you receive in the four empowerments. Of course the fact that the text says:

Meditate next on a profound path of guru-yoga and, after making hundreds of very strong, fervent requests, dissolve your visualized guru into yourself.

This automatically means you must be someone who has received niruttarayoga tantra empowerment. There is no guru without a such an empowerment, so how can one speak of guru yoga? Guru Yoga is a method exclusive to higher tantra, the name of which is not encountered in lower tantra much less sūtra.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, April 24th, 2015 at 7:46 PM

Title: Re: Gaden mahamudra (kagyu/gelug mahamudra)

Content:

cloudburst said:

Malcolm, in another thread you wrote: This sutra mahāmudra of the Panchen Lama was very controversial in Gelug, and still is, to some degree. The 5th Dalai Lama was very opposed to it, in fact.

This seems doubtful to me as the Panchen Lama was a guru of the Fifth. Do you have any support for this claim?

Malcolm wrote:

See Roger Jackson's article in *Changing Minds: Contributions to the Study of Buddhism and Tibet in Honor of Jeffrey Hopkins*.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, April 24th, 2015 at 8:44 PM

Title: Re: Wandering in Samsara

Content:

godhead said:

I am very anxious to know as to dzogchen is a part of BUddhism or not?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, Dzogchen is part of Buddhadharma.

godhead said:

If yes then how does it contradict direct words of Guatam Buddha?

Malcolm wrote:

It doesn't, not at all.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, April 24th, 2015 at 11:37 PM

Title: Re: Mahamudra in the Modern World

Content:

DesertDweller said:

Well, that's an interesting point. Why do you think he might feel that way?

dzogchungpa said:

I don't know, maybe Malcolm can explain it to us.

Malcolm wrote:

He probably means it is not necessary to become an expert on scholastic arguments in the Kośa.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, April 24th, 2015 at 11:52 PM

Title: Re: Gaden mahamudra (kagyu/gelug mahamudra)

Content:

cloudburst said:

It seems you are over-reaching here, RJ simply states that the 5DL was critical of the Panchen's interest in the Kagyu and their doctrines. The article itself concerns the fact that there is a debate over whether or not the Ganden mahamudra has any connection with Kagyu at all. Many Gelugpa believe that the mahamudra practices of Je Tsongkhapa were transmitted directly from Manjushri, therefore being critical of the Panchen regarding interest in Kagyu doctrines does not necessarily imply any criticism of so called Sutra Mahamudra.

Malcolm wrote:

Perhaps. You need to follow up and look at Samten Karmey's article where he reviews this issue. It seems pretty clear to me that the Fifth was very influenced by Sakya in this regard. [He was from a Sakya family, wrote important texts on Lamdre and Naro Khachod, etc.].

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, April 25th, 2015 at 2:36 AM

Title: Re: Gaden mahamudra (kagyu/gelug mahamudra)

Content:

cloudburst said:

It seems you are over-reaching here, RJ simply states that the 5DL was critical of the

Panchen's interest in the Kagyu and their doctrines. The article itself concerns the fact that there is a debate over whether or not the Ganden mahamudra has any connection with Kagyu at all. Many Gelugpa believe that the mahamudra practices of Je Tsongkhapa were transmitted directly from Manjushri, therefore being critical of the Panchen regarding interest in Kagyu doctrines does not necessarily imply any criticism of so called Sutra Mahamudra.

Malcolm wrote:

Perhaps. You need to follow up and look at Samten Karmey's article where he reviews this issue. It seems pretty clear to me that the Fifth was very influenced by Sakya in this regard. [He was from a Sakya family, wrote important texts on Lamdre and Naro Khachod, etc.].

cloudburst said:

I'm interested, thanks. Do you have the title of the article?

Malcolm wrote:

It is in the footnotes of the first article.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, April 25th, 2015 at 3:15 AM

Title: Re: Mahamudra in the Modern World

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

Ray seems like a good guy to me. If you can ignore Waylon Lewis, this is actually a pretty interesting interview:

Malcolm wrote:

Investigating a Vajrayāna teacher for twelve years seems like a good idea in this case...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, April 25th, 2015 at 6:49 AM

Title: Re: Mahamudra in the Modern World

Content:

dharmagoat said:

It is religious orthodoxy that I avoid, not tradition. I always been inspired by the line of innovators within the Kagyu tradition of Tibetan Buddhism, Tilopa, Nāropa, Milarepa, Marpa...

Malcolm wrote:

How can you possibly believe that these four masters were innovative in any way at all?

Tilopa (Prajñābhadrā) was a Nalanda educated Pandita, as was Naropa. Marpa was a faithful student of Naropa, and Mila was his student in turn.

None of these masters innovated a thing.

Not only this, but Tilopa and Naropa are not just a "Kagyu" masters, though these days people certainly seem to have this misconception. They are shared also with Sakya, Gelug and old Kadampa, etc.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, April 25th, 2015 at 9:47 AM

Title: Re: Mahamudra in the Modern World

Content:

dharmagoat said:

It is religious orthodoxy that I avoid, not tradition. I always been inspired by the line of innovators within the Kagyu tradition of Tibetan Buddhism, Tilopa, Nāropa, Milarepa, Marpa...

Malcolm wrote:

How can you possibly believe that these four masters were innovative in any way at all?

dharmagoat said:

Okay, maybe those four can't actually be called 'innovators', but they were transmitting a system that was new to Tibet at the time.

Malcolm wrote:

You Mean Marpa? Vajrayana had already been wide spread in Tibet for 200 years by the time Marpa went to India.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, April 25th, 2015 at 7:17 PM

Title: Re: Mahamudra in the Modern World

Content:

Fruitzilla said:

I'll read his book, I'm curious enough. The difference between orthodoxy and modernism seems to be mostly about presentation and differences on focus IMHO.

Malcolm wrote:

In Vajrayāna there is no such thing as modernism. There is the lineage, and how the lineage presents the teachings. The lineage is unalterable and without a lineage there is no Vajrayāna to speak of.

Zen, for example, is a sūtrayāna teaching, and this while there is rhetoric about the lineage of patriarchs, ancient buddhas and so on, there is not a universally held idea that the lineage is something inviolable or absolutely necessary. Plenty of people practice Zen without the kind of guru devotion that characterizes Vajrayāna. Also these days many people practice Zen who really do not believe that Zen was actually passed

down in a lineage from the time of the Buddha. There is more room for so-called "modernism" in Zen.

But in Vajrayāna, the Vajrayāna teachings are held to come directly from Buddha Vajradhara to our gurus. There is truly little point in trying to practice Vajrayāna if you don't believe this. The second thing is that one should have faith that one's root guru is actually a Buddha, or at least one should try to develop that sincere conviction over time. If one does not have this conviction, it is very difficult to make progress in Vajrayāna practice; but if one has this conviction, it becomes very easy.

Since there is no way to modernize this essential feature of Vajrayāna, Vajrayāna will always resist modernization.

For example, there is a well known story about how Naropa displayed a mandala in the sky to Marpa, and asked Marpa to whom he would prostrate, the guru or the mandala, Marpa, thinking that he saw his guru everyday, but never saw such miraculously manifested mandalas, chose to prostrate to the mandala...big mistake that cost Marpa his family lineage...

So, Mahamudra in the modern world is an impossibility, if by that one means, how can Mahamudra be adapted to fit modern society — it can't, we can only adapt ourselves to Mahāmudra, mahāmudra cannot be adapted to suit us.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, April 25th, 2015 at 8:05 PM

Title: Re: Mahamudra in the Modern World

Content:

DesertDweller said:

So what do we mean by "modernism"?

Modernism: A Roman Catholic movement, officially condemned in 1907, that attempted to examine traditional belief according to contemporary philosophy, criticism, and historiography.

Malcolm wrote:

Remove the "Roman Catholic", and you get my meaning.

Modernism: A movement that attempts to examine traditional belief according to contemporary philosophy, criticism, and historiography.

This is deeply incompatible with Vajrayāna.

Hence we can speak of Buddhist Modernism, people like Stephen Batchelor, etc.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, April 25th, 2015 at 8:47 PM

Title: Re: Mahamudra in the Modern World

Content:

dharmagoat said:

As far as I know, Dr. Ray does not refer to his approach as 'modernist', so it would seem that the use of this term is a red herring as far as this thread is concerned.

Malcolm wrote:

Ummm, I don't think anyone did use it with respect to RR...I was addressing another issue which you introduced with your enthusiasm for "innovation."

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, April 25th, 2015 at 9:35 PM

Title: Re: Gaden mahamudra (kagyu/gelug mahamudra)

Content:

qwerty13 said:

This is offtopic, but can somebody explain me in simple way what is the difference between sutra mahamudra and Zen/Chan buddhist practice? Both have prajnaparamita as essential text, but we cant say that Zen/Chan practitioner is actually mahamudra practitioner, or am I wrong?

Malcolm wrote:

In the end it boils down to whether mahāmudra is merely the nature of the mind, in which case there is no difference; or whether mahāmudra is a specific result, a siddhi, of a specific kind of practice, in which case there is a huge difference.

But given that the term "mahāmudra" never appears in any sūtra...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, April 25th, 2015 at 9:41 PM

Title: Re: Mahamudra in the Modern World

Content:

DesertDweller said:

Take for instance the issue of recorded empowerments, which I think were deemed acceptable by Garchen Rinpoche.

Malcolm wrote:

Um no...this was an example of enthusiastic over reach on the part of some of his students in one center. Many "innovations" happen this way.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, April 25th, 2015 at 10:34 PM

Title: Re: Gaden mahamudra (kagyu/gelug mahamudra)

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

But given that the term "mahāmudra" never appears in any sūtra...

dharmagoat said:

Is it possible that Mahāmudra was a development of Chinese Mahāyāna that made its way back to India and was then appropriated by Vajrayāna without an acknowledgement of its origin?

Malcolm wrote:

Not a chance.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, April 25th, 2015 at 10:39 PM

Title: Re: Gaden mahamudra (kagyu/gelug mahamudra)

Content:

Sherlock said:

What makes you even think there is a direct link between Chan and Mahamudra?

dharmagoat said:

The similarity is plain for everyone to see.

Malcolm wrote:

How so? Mahāmudra (as in four yogas of mahāmudra) as practiced in the Kagyu tradition is a gradual approach based as much on the Bhavanakrama as it is the dohas; Chan/Zen is always a sudden approach.

In other words, in Kagyu mahāmudra practice, you have to develop one-pointedness first, then non-proliferation, then one taste, etc. Whereas in Soto Zen, for example, "Just sitting" is considered Buddhahood itself.

DG, have you ever received teachings on any of this? It just seems to me that you are engaging in a lot of proliferation around these issues.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, April 25th, 2015 at 10:46 PM

Title: Re: Gaden mahamudra (kagyu/gelug mahamudra)

Content:

dharmagoat said:

What do you base that on? I ask so that I may get a better idea of why it is so unlikely.

Malcolm wrote:

There are two places where the term mahāmudra is used; the first is in Yoga tantra, where it refers primarily to the form of the deity. The second is in anuttarayoga tantra where it is described as the siddhi of mahāmudra, an accomplishment, the attainment of Buddhahood.

In other words, the term arises solely in connection with Vajrayāna practice.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, April 25th, 2015 at 11:13 PM

Title: Re: Gaden mahamudra (kagyu/gelug mahamudra)

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

In other words, in Kagyu mahāmudra practice, you have to develop one-pointedness first, then non-proliferation, then one taste, etc. Whereas in Soto Zen, for example, "Just sitting" is considered Buddhahood itself.

dharmagoat said:

I suspect this is an oversimplification of Soto Zen.

"One taste" does occur in the Zen literature, as far as I am aware.

Malcolm wrote:

Talk to some Soto folks.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, April 25th, 2015 at 11:20 PM

Title: Re: Gaden mahamudra (kagyu/gelug mahamudra)

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

... in Soto Zen, for example, "Just sitting" is considered Buddhahood itself.

dharmagoat said:

Could this be a later development in Ch'an/Zen?

Malcolm wrote:

Dogen didn't seem to think so.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, April 26th, 2015 at 12:37 AM

Title: Re: Gaden mahamudra (kagyu/gelug mahamudra)

Content:

dharmagoat said:

Dōgen lived in Japan in the 13th century,

Malcolm wrote:

What I meant was that Dogen did not seem to think that his Shikantaza was innovative or his own approach.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, April 26th, 2015 at 7:46 PM

Title: Re: is vajrayana budhism a path of renunciation or isn't it?

Content:

pael said:

If it isn't can they be monk or holder of 5 vows?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, of course.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, April 26th, 2015 at 7:48 PM

Title: Re: Mahamudra in the Modern World

Content:

smcj said:

In that presentation what, if anything, comes after Shambhala? Or is it presented as a path to full enlightenment?

Malcolm wrote:

The Sakyong has integrated the Shambhala teachings into the Buddhist path over all, rebranding their lineage as Shambhala Buddhism.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, April 26th, 2015 at 7:58 PM

Title: Re: Healthy sex life as a householder

Content:

duckfiasco said:

What does having a healthy relationship with sex mean to you as a householder?

Jetavan said:

Fortunately, all the answers are in the "Kamma Dhamma Sutta". Unfortunately, this sutta was considered irrelevant by the early bhikkhus and was not written down.

Fortunately, the upasaka/upasika oral transmission of this sutta has continued into the 21st century. Unfortunately, I cannot share it with anyone just yet. Fortunately, look for it in 2017, at a bookstore near you.

Saoshun said:

If someone wants to have fulfilled sex life I suggest to use tantric methods to prolong orgasm for couple days to couple months and it will develop high level samadhi, but it's need big discipline and already at least medium level achievement of meditation, empty mind, clean prana/chi channels.

Malcolm wrote:

This has nothing to do with Buddhist Vajrayāna practice, FYI — this is a new age trip based on physical bliss. The aim of Vajrayāna is connate bliss, which is beyond any

physical sensation.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, April 26th, 2015 at 8:11 PM

Title: Re: Healthy sex life as a householder

Content:

duckfiasco said:

What does having a healthy relationship with sex mean to you as a householder?

Malcolm wrote:

It means having a women I like, in my bed, consensually, in a long term relationship.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, April 26th, 2015 at 8:21 PM

Title: Re: Healthy sex life as a householder

Content:

Lazy_eye said:

Just to clarify, though, must the partner also be a Vajrayana practitioner?

Malcolm wrote:

For a Vajrayāna practitioner, yes. Reduces the pool of choices a bit though...

Lazy_eye said:

Also, would you say the answer you gave is consistent with all schools of Buddhism

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, I think so. In addition, no minors, spouses partners of others, crazy people. Sex is normal, but it must be conducted responsibly and with care.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, April 26th, 2015 at 8:24 PM

Title: Re: Kalachakra Tantra

Content:

EarthMudra said:

so is the Kalachakra Tantra considered Pure Vision?

Malcolm wrote:

What do you mean by pure vision?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, April 26th, 2015 at 9:27 PM

Title: Re: Mahamudra in the Modern World

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The Sakyong has integrated the Shambhala teachings into the Buddhist path over all, rebranding their lineage as Shambhala Buddhism.

smcj said:

Does it still end up at Vajrayana?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, of course, but rather than Shambhala teaching being a separate path, they are now integrated. So there is a Shambhala ngondro, etc., all culminating in Gesar practice, the so called Werma sadhana, along with other practices authored/revealed by CTR

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, April 26th, 2015 at 9:43 PM

Title: Re: Healthy sex life as a householder

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

This has nothing to do with Buddhist Vajrayāna practice, FYI — this is a new age trip based on physical bliss. The aim of Vajrayāna is connate bliss, which is beyond any physical sensation.

Saoshun said:

Do you think you can have physical orgasm for couple days and months? New age do not touch this realm because they use spirituality to hijack woman into sex as excuse. There are various ways to attain body-samadhi which is beyond bliss which is nice state to transform body channels to more subtle things and siddhis, I don't know if this is Vajrayana view, I have only my personal experience. Also practices like this are not only exclusive to Vajrayana, any decent practice with time you develop (with proper instructions) experiences that suppress physical orgasm. (consider having orgasm couple days and months and just having it for couple seconds)

Malcolm wrote:

If it is physical, it is not that interesting, it is just mundane, and this is addressed and dismissed in the tantras such as the Hevajra Tantra:

The first bliss is the hero,

supreme bliss is the yoginī,

the bliss of intense pleasure is certain for all,

the true knowledge is from the method of their pleasure.

The pleasure of of bliss is slight,
supreme bliss is more than that,
the bliss beyond bliss is free from attachment,
the remaining one is the connate.
The first is the desire to touch,
the second is the desire for pleasure,
the third is the perishing of passion,
therefore, the fourth can be meditated.
Supreme bliss is called existence,
the bliss beyond bliss is called nirvana,
the middle is mere bliss,
the connate is free of these.

Without desire, and not without desire,
nothing perceived in the middle,
Here there is no method and wisdom,
the appearance of true reality,
can't be described by another, the connate
cannot be found anywhere,
but one can understand it in dependence on the Guru,
time and method, and from one's merit.
YMMV.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Monday, April 27th, 2015 at 1:12 AM
Title: Re: Sakya lam-rim text?
Content:
Johnny Dangerous said:
Same.

Malcolm wrote:
PM me your facebook ID's. I closed the group and am in the process of trimming it down.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Monday, April 27th, 2015 at 2:09 AM
Title: Re: Sakya lam-rim text?
Content:
Sherlock said:
Will you have an Abhidharma course soon?

If I have the money I am interested in participating.

Malcolm wrote:
Oh I don't know. Abhidharma takes about a year, twice month. And that is just a course

in how to read the book, not a detailed, cover every point course.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, April 27th, 2015 at 2:32 AM

Title: Re: Kalachakra Tantra

Content:

EarthMudra said:

so is the Kalachakra Tantra considered Pure Vision?

Malcolm wrote:

What do you mean by pure vision?

EarthMudra said:

it was taught by the Buddha. I guess that answered my question. Thanks Malcolm.

Malcolm wrote:

If you are a Vajrayāna practitioner, then yes you think it was taught by the Buddha. The tantra itself was not actually written down at first, only much later, and there are a couple of versions a long one which we do not have, and the short one which we do have.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, April 27th, 2015 at 3:34 AM

Title: Re: Mahamudra in the Modern World

Content:

DesertDweller said:

Take for instance the issue of recorded empowerments, which I think were deemed acceptable by Garchen Rinpoche.

Malcolm wrote:

Um no...this was an example of enthusiastic over reach on the part of some of his students in one center. Many "innovations" happen this way.

Anders said:

I don't pay close attention, but last time i checked the quotes seemed to indicate the contrary.

How was it established it was students overreaching?

Malcolm wrote:

Because, in the end, when the Khenpo at the center where those students were making that assertion was pressed on the issue, he would not confirm that this in fact was Garchen Rinpoche's point of view.

Anyway, this is a stupid conversation — you cannot receive empowerments from a

recording of an empowerment, period. End of story. Just like you cannot receive monks vows from a recording, and so on. People who think they have received an empowerment from a recording are just deluding themselves and received nothing whatsoever. Even if they recite mantras and practices they think they have received from a recording there will be no benefit whatsoever, in fact the opposite will be the case.

If you want to receive a vow, any vow, you have to do it in the proper way, and receiving them from a recording cannot be construed as proper at all.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, April 27th, 2015 at 3:59 AM

Title: Re: Mahamudra in the Modern World

Content:

DesertDweller said:

Yes, we already know that is your view. But the question, which you haven't really answered, is how do you know that the Rinpoche doesn't think otherwise? It doesn't seem that you really do know. Can anyone clarify?

Malcolm wrote:

Garchen Rinpoche is a very traditional lama, who would never advocate that one can actually received an empowerment from a chunk of inanimate metal and plastic that makes noise and projects an image.

He himself never said that this was a possibility.

Anyway, it cannot be done. It does not depend on this or that lamas opinion.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, April 27th, 2015 at 5:20 AM

Title: Re: Dharmata teachings.

Content:

fckw said:

Does anyone know what sort of practices he teaches? Apparently his background is Nyingma.

dzogchungpa said:

BTW, today he said that the only thing he has been teaching for the last ten years, which he is going to keep teaching for a very long time, is "Drop your mind".

Malcolm wrote:

Well, that makes for short Dharma talks. རང་སེམས་བབས་ཡོད་རེད་

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, April 27th, 2015 at 6:52 AM

Title: Re: Dharmata teachings.

Content:

fckw said:

Does anyone know what sort of practices he teaches? Apparently his background is Nyingma.

dzogchungpa said:

BTW, today he said that the only thing he has been teaching for the last ten years, which he is going to keep teaching for a very long time, is "Drop your mind".

Tsongkhapafan said:

Become like a plank of wood - not very constructive!

Buddhas have minds.

Malcolm wrote:

What they have is jñāna, not vijñāna, it's a little different a "mind (citta)."

Buddhas do not have thoughts, they do not minds (citta) or mental factors (caitta), but they do have two kinds of omniscient wisdom (sarvajñāta jñāna).

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, April 27th, 2015 at 7:42 AM

Title: Re: Dharmata teachings.

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

but they do have two kinds of omniscient wisdom (sarvajñāta jñāna).

BuddhaFollower said:

Which is synonymous with dharmakaya?

Malcolm wrote:

Both.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, April 27th, 2015 at 6:33 PM

Title: Re: What kind of mind do Buddhas have

Content:

Tsongkhapafan said:

Buddhas' minds are non-conceptual but they do possess the five all-accompanying mental factors as this is the valid basis upon which mind is imputed. They have omniscience and therefore they also possess the object ascertaining mental factors.

Malcolm wrote:
and what is your citation for this?

Author: Malcolm
Date: Monday, April 27th, 2015 at 8:15 PM
Title: Re: What kind of mind do Buddhas have
Content:

Tsongkhapafan said:
Buddhas' minds are non-conceptual but they do possess the five all-accompanying mental factors as this is the valid basis upon which mind is imputed. They have omniscience and therefore they also possess the object ascertaining mental factors.

Malcolm wrote:
and what is your citation for this?

Tsongkhapafan said:
You know I can't give my citations because of the TOS, however, I will quote Dharmakīrti's definition of mind which is 'that which is clarity and cognising'. Buddhas have minds, minds cognise, cognition requires mental factors, ergo, Buddhas have minds with mental factors. Bliss for example is experienced by mental factor feeling.

Buddha are not like stones.

Malcolm wrote:
Of course you can give your citations. But I meant from Sutra.

When one says that a Buddha has jñāna, but not vijñāna, this does not mean a Buddha is inert, it means the opposite.

Cognition for an ordinary sentient being requires mental factors, but a Buddha's jñāna does not require mental factors.

For example there is a sutra passage cited in the Yogācārabhūmi viniścayasamgrahani that states:

"Bhagavān, how should the mental factors of the tathāgatas be known?"

"Mañjuśrī, the mind (citta, sems), intellect (yid, manas) or consciousness (vijñāna, rnam shes) of tathāgatas are indeed not differentiated in discerning wisdom, but the mind of a tathāgata arises without formations, and should known to be like an emanation."

"Bhagavān, it being the case the dharmakāya of the tathāgatas is free from all action of formations, on the other hand, do mental factors arise without the action of

formations?"

"Mañjuśrī, it is due to past cultivation of method and wisdom.

Mañjuśrī, one awakens [from sleep] because of the power of past formations, but though there are no formations for arising in the concentration on cessation, one arises [from concentration] only through the power of past formations. Just as like the mental factors of sleep and the concentration on cessation, the mental factors of the tathāgatas should be known to be formations of past cultivation of method and wisdom."

"Bhagavān, do the emanations of the tathāgatas have minds or not?"

"Mañjuśrī, Though they do not have minds, they are also not mindless, because minds are neither independent nor dependent."

In other words, the mind of a tathāgata is like an emanation, it appears to function in all the ways that a mind functions, but in reality, there are no present active formations happening. Everything that seems to happen in the mind of a Buddha is based on some past cultivation of method and wisdom on the path.

So Buddhas seem to have minds, but in reality, all they have is wisdom.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, April 27th, 2015 at 11:47 PM

Title: Re: Mahamudra in the Modern World

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Anyway, this is a stupid conversation — you cannot receive empowerments from a recording of an empowerment, period. End of story. Just like you cannot receive monks vows from a recording, and so on. People who think they have received an empowerment from a recording are just deluding themselves and received nothing whatsoever. Even if they recite mantras and practices they think they have received from a recording there will be no benefit whatsoever, in fact the opposite will be the case.

If you want to receive a vow, any vow, you have to do it in the proper way, and receiving them from a recording cannot be construed as proper at all.

Dan74 said:

Malcolm, could you elucidate why this is so? Or point me to a resource??

From my non-Vajrayana perspective I can easily see how in some instance face-to-faces interaction with a teacher who knows your heart is indispensable, but a lot of other instruction can be received in various formats. What mechanism in empowerments makes it work when it is live and fail when it isn't?

/
dan

Malcolm wrote:

There are a number of levels at work here, but the most fundamental is that when you receive an empowerment, you are in fact receiving a number of vows, refuge vows, bodhisattva vows as well as vows of secret mantra. It is not simply "instruction."

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 28th, 2015 at 12:12 AM

Title: Re: Mahamudra in the Modern World

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

There are a number of levels at work here, but the most fundamental is that when you receive an empowerment, you are in fact receiving a number of vows, refuge vows, bodhisattva vows as well as vows of secret mantra. It is not simply "instruction."

dzogchungpa said:

This is interesting. I don't know about secret mantra vows, but can't you take refuge and bodhisattva vows by yourself?

Malcolm wrote:

There is a Mahāyāna system for going for refuge and generating bodhicitta on one's own if one cannot find a master. It is also not at all clear that when one goes for Mahāyāna refuge in this way, one is adopting the five vows of a lay person as well as the bodhisattva vows.

But, one cannot self-ordain as a novice, or a monk, nor can one confer upon oneself any empowerment.

In general one should receive the three vows from a master and then enhance them by renewing them daily. Unless of course you are a very high Dzogchen practitioner like so many people we see on Buddhist internet boards who have transcended the need for mundane things such as paying attention to the state of their vows.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 28th, 2015 at 12:25 AM

Title: Re: Mahamudra in the Modern World

Content:

dharmagoat said:

So, Malcolm, what are your thoughts on Dr. Reggie Ray as a teacher?

Malcolm wrote:

I don't have any opinion about Ray at all, apart from a bit of discomfort about his having

decided to introduce brand new "Tibetan" "dharmapāla" he calls "Ritrö Gonpo" based on some vision he had of Kit Carson Peak and an interview where he seemed to dismiss the importance of teachings on rebirth and karma.

More here:

<http://www.soundstrue.com/store/the-protectors.html>

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 28th, 2015 at 12:45 AM

Title: Re: Mahamudra in the Modern World

Content:

dharmagoat said:

Thanks, Malcolm.

Malcolm wrote:

... an interview where he seemed to dismiss the importance of teachings on rebirth and karma.

dharmagoat said:

Which interview is this? Could you provide a link?

Malcolm wrote:

Some interview, it was several years ago. He said:

The whole belief in past lives is something that Buddhism inherited from Indian Tradition.

And I think, as with many things in Asian Buddhism, we need to take a critical look at

this and see...you know, the Buddha said to his own students "...anything that I teach

you, don't take it at face value, don't believe it just because even I said it-- you have to

look at it and evaluate it within your own framework and see if it makes sense. And if it

doesn't make sense, dump it, get rid of it." And I think that incarnation, ah...

reincarnation, as a literal teaching, I don't find it helpful for anybody because it takes

your focus away from this life. But if incarnation is viewed as a sort of metaphor for the

fact that we humans are on some kind of extremely long spiritual journey that happened

before we were born, and it's going to keep on going, then I think it's helpful."

Personally, I think such sentiments are misguided.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 28th, 2015 at 1:01 AM

Title: Re: Mahamudra in the Modern World

Content:

dharmagoat said:

He is providing a way to engage with Buddhadharma for those that may otherwise dismiss it.

Malcolm wrote:

This is the common apology for such sentiments, but I have never accepted it as valid.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 28th, 2015 at 1:07 AM

Title: Re: Mahamudra in the Modern World

Content:

dharmagoat said:

He is providing a way to engage with Buddhadharma for those that may otherwise dismiss it.

Malcolm wrote:

This is the common apology for such sentiments, but I have never accepted it as valid.

dharmagoat said:

That is understandable if you have never experienced the dilemma yourself.

Malcolm wrote:

On the contrary, I solved the dilemma by understanding what was going to make my practice move ahead, and choosing my practice over my doubts. Then of course, over time, I also discovered the clear rational for why it is irrational to believe that mind stream can arise from material causes.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 28th, 2015 at 1:14 AM

Title: Re: Mahamudra in the Modern World

Content:

smcj said:

....I solved the dilemma by understanding what was going to make my practice move ahead, and choosing my practice over my doubts.

The underlined part is what most people don't see. Only now am I getting to the point where I can try to say how that is so for myself, and doing it very badly. If you have a coherent presentation of that understanding, I think people would be interested.

Malcolm wrote:

If one does not accept rebirth, one has no motivation to practice Dharma, except as an ego trip. It is that simple.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 28th, 2015 at 1:42 AM

Title: Re: Mahamudra in the Modern World

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

If one does not accept rebirth, one has no motivation to practice Dharma, except as an ego trip. It is that simple.

dharmagoat said:

I don't see how a person dedicating to the benefit of all beings what they perceive as their one-and-only life can be considered an ego trip.

Malcolm wrote:

If you only have one lifetime, and you want to dedicate yourself to the benefit of sentient beings, it is better done in service as a doctor, nurse, fire fighter, aid worker, etc. rather than pretending to oneself that one is a Dharma practitioner.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 28th, 2015 at 1:43 AM

Title: Re: Mahamudra in the Modern World

Content:

dharmagoat said:

So, Malcolm, what are your thoughts on Dr. Reggie Ray as a teacher?

Malcolm wrote:

I don't have any opinion about Ray at all, apart from a bit of discomfort about his having decided to introduce brand new "Tibetan" "dharmapāla" he calls "Ritrö Gonpo" based on some vision he had of Kit Carson Peak and an interview where he seemed to dismiss the importance of teachings on rebirth and karma.

More here:

<http://www.soundstrue.com/store/the-protectors.html>

Johnny Dangerous said:

I'd guess you are misreading the rebirth and karma quote..he is quite far from a 'secular Buddhist' or something similar, even a cursory reading of his books will show that. In fact, he often goes off on tangents about how a big part of what Vajrayana changes for westerners is our de-sacralized, materialist worldview. I think he purposely makes his presentation accessible to people who might be waffling, but in terms of his own views he seems pretty solidly like any Vajrayana practitioner.

Malcolm wrote:

But if incarnation is viewed as a sort of metaphor

Case closed.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 28th, 2015 at 1:48 AM

Title: Re: Mahamudra in the Modern World

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

But if incarnation is viewed as a sort of metaphor

Case closed.

Johnny Dangerous said:

Have you read his books? If not, then no, case not closed..unfortunate use of terms maybe, but you can't know his views from one little snippet of text.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes. I understand that in his books he presents a normative view. It is what people actually teach their students that is more salient, for me at any rate.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 28th, 2015 at 1:49 AM

Title: Re: Mahamudra in the Modern World

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

But if incarnation is viewed as a sort of metaphor

Case closed.

Johnny Dangerous said:

Have you read his books? If not, then no, case not closed..unfortunate use of terms maybe, but you can't know his views from one little snippet of text.

Unless he's revised his views, he's definitely not what you are implying here at all, you think he believes in Dharmapalas..but takes a materialist view of rebirth?

Malcolm wrote:

Ray is very influenced by shamanism. One can have an animistic view of the world and yet not accept rebirth.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 28th, 2015 at 1:55 AM

Title: Re: Mahamudra in the Modern World

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

If you only have one lifetime, and you want to dedicate yourself to the benefit of sentient beings, it is better done in service as a doctor, nurse, fire fighter, aid worker, etc. rather than pretending to oneself that one is a Dharma practitioner.

dharmagoat said:

Not that they are not mutually exclusive.

As Dharma practitioners, we each do what we can. To think that someone is either a fully-fledged Dharma practitioner or not one at all does seem rather... dualistic.

Malcolm wrote:

You cannot be a Dharma practitioner and yet reject rebirth. Do we really have to have this conversation yet again?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 28th, 2015 at 2:05 AM

Title: Re: Mahamudra in the Modern World

Content:

Johnny Dangerous said:

You are just having a knee-jerk reaction to one thing he said somewhere though, again, he may depart somewhat from traditional views i'm sure, but he is hugely far from a materialist or secular Buddhist etc.

Malcolm wrote:

You do realize that he participated in Dagara initiations with an African teacher named Malidoma Patrice Somé?

Johnny Dangerous said:

"...of particular impact in my study with Malidoma was an all-night 'earth burial' which, through its initiatory death and rebirth process, allowed my life to crumble and then arise in a way that established earth and the 'body work' once and for all, as the core of my spiritual life"

Malcolm wrote:

—— Touching Enlightenment

If you look around, you will discover that Malidoma Patrice Somé is fervent advocate of sacrificing animals. I can't say that this was part of Ray's initiation (though I would be surprised if it was not). We all know how the Buddha felt about animal sacrifice.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 28th, 2015 at 2:07 AM

Title: Re: Mahamudra in the Modern World

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

You cannot be a Dharma practitioner and yet reject rebirth. Do we really have to have this conversation yet again?

dharmagoat said:

It is not the same conversation. Your response is the same, that is all.

I think I need to make it clear again that I am not talking about rejecting rebirth, but rather finding ways to accommodate it.

Malcolm wrote:

One can either accept it or not. There is no way to "accommodate it" without a great deal of conceptual proliferation.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 28th, 2015 at 2:10 AM

Title: Re: Mahamudra in the Modern World

Content:

Johnny Dangerous said:

You are just having a knee-jerk reaction to one thing he said somewhere though, again, he may depart somewhat from traditional views i'm sure, but he is hugely far from a materialist or secular Buddhist etc.

Malcolm wrote:

I am never said he was either. I simply don't like the way he phrases "rebirth" in his talks and later works as if it is some initiation process. He uses that language over and over again in many places.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 28th, 2015 at 2:12 AM

Title: Re: Mahamudra in the Modern World

Content:

dharmagoat said:

I think I need to make it clear again that I am not talking about rejecting rebirth, but

rather finding ways to accommodate it.

WeiHan said:

Do you mean evidence for rebirth? Or how it fit into your world view?

dharmagoat said:

Being introduced to it in a way that does not incline one to reject it.

Malcolm wrote:

Sorry, there really is no sugar that will mask the taste of rebirth and karma -- it a very strong medicine for a strong disease.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 28th, 2015 at 2:14 AM

Title: Re: Mahamudra in the Modern World

Content:

smcj said:

You cannot be a Dharma practitioner and yet reject rebirth. Do we really have to have this conversation yet again?

I doubt that someone like Trungpa rejected rebirth in his own practice, yet he did not make a huge issue out of it with his students. If so, then how he chose to guide his students towards Dharma is limited only by his own realization and upaya/skill. Thus there is room for acceptance or rejection of what he did, but based only on how one sees his attainments, not on how much latitude a realized teacher has on guiding their students towards Dharma.

For me, he was not my teacher, so I feel no need to formulate an opinion about whether he was realized enough to use his discretion to adapt things the way he did. But I acknowledge that there is room for that type of thing within the tradition--if needed and by a fully realized teacher.

You do realize that he participated in Dagara initiations with an African teacher named Malidoma Patrice Somé?

He is very open minded, maybe too much so. He has not limited his open-mindedness to the teachings coming from Tibet. That may or may not be a good thing. Personally I leave my comfort Zone at the edges of the Vajrayana.

Malcolm wrote:

Anyway, teachers like this are not for me. And apart from these things, I really don't have an opinion. People are free to follow whatever they want and whoever they want.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 28th, 2015 at 2:40 AM

Title: Re: Mahamudra in the Modern World

Content:

smcj said:

Sorry, there really is no sugar that will mask the taste of rebirth and karma -- it a very strong medicine for a strong disease.

Malcolm, I think I'm just as right wing/hardcore about this subject as you are, but I disagree with your approach. You can't leave people at the bottom of a cliff and say that there is a door to Dharma at the top of the cliff. You've got to give them a way to get there. Simply abandoning them like that could very well be breaking the bodhisattva vow.

Malcolm wrote:

Well, when you have medicine that tastes really bad, you have to convince people the disease is worse, that's all.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 28th, 2015 at 2:41 AM

Title: Re: Mahamudra in the Modern World

Content:

WeiHan said:

What assumes a type of mental connection that is bound by time?

Astus said:

That the mental state of the person giving the empowerment influences the receiver's mind, as if there were a direct connection between two mind-streams.

Malcolm wrote:

No, that is never the case, it is more like a stamp and its impression. A recorded empowerment can never be a stamp, it can only be an impression. In this case, an inert impression. A student, who receives an empowerment, is an animate living person upon whom an impression has been made, and when they have realized the meaning, they too can make impressions on others.

This is essentially why, for all who reading, the idea that one can receive an empowerment from a recording is a corrupt idea that will destroy lineages if people take it seriously.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 28th, 2015 at 2:48 AM

Title: Re: Mahamudra in the Modern World

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Well, when you have medicine that tastes really bad, you have to convince people the disease is worse, that's all.

dharmagoat said:

That sounds like a recipe for even more suffering. A double dose of negativity.

Malcolm wrote:

Well, if all you want is someone beaming positive messages at you, try another religion.

Dharma is about how things are, and how things are is sarvadukkham.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 28th, 2015 at 3:00 AM

Title: Re: Mahamudra in the Modern World

Content:

dharmagoat said:

Can the message be something between the two extremes of negative and positive? A middle way, perhaps?

Malcolm wrote:

Nope. The Saddharmasmṛtyupasthāna Sūtra states:

Hell beings experience the flames of hell.

Pretas experience hunger and thirst.

Animals experience eating one another.

Humans experience short lives.

Asuras experience conflict and violence.

Devas experience unconcern.

There exists no happiness

in samsara, even the size of a pinpoint.

Vasubandhu says:

The childish, like a hand,

do not see the suffering of the conditioned, like a hair.

The Āryas, like an eye,

always flinch because of them.

Maitreyanatha says:

Just as there is no sweet smell in feces, there is no happiness in the five migrations.

Nāgārjuna says:

The gentle regret this samsara,

the source of many sufferings of

impoverishment due to desire, death, illness, aging and so on.

Also one must hear about its flaws.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 28th, 2015 at 3:11 AM

Title: Re: Mahamudra in the Modern World

Content:

dharmagoat said:

You seem to be saying that misery needs to be instilled in us before we can practice the Dharma. Is that correct?

Malcolm wrote:

No, I am saying it is already there. If you are not recognizing it, it is because you have not

really understood what suffering is.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 28th, 2015 at 3:20 AM

Title: Re: Mahamudra in the Modern World

Content:

dharmagoat said:

You seem to be saying that misery needs to be instilled in us before we can practice the Dharma. Is that correct?

Malcolm wrote:

No, I am saying it is already there. If you are not recognizing it, it is because you have not really understood what suffering is.

dharmagoat said:

For those that already recognise the hopelessness of saṃsāra and are suffering, might a degree of positivity in the message be encouraging?

Malcolm wrote:

Sachen Kunga Nyingpo says:

If one carefully reflects on the absence of happiness wherever one is born in samsara's three realms, whatever one does will become Dharma.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 28th, 2015 at 3:42 AM

Title: Re: Mahamudra in the Modern World

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

No, that is never the case, it is more like a stamp and its impression. A recorded empowerment can never be a stamp, it can only be an impression. In this case, an inert impression. A student, who receives an empowerment, is an animate living person upon whom an impression has been made, and when they have realized the meaning, they too can make impressions on others.

This is essentially why, for all who reading, the idea that one can receive an empowerment from a recording is a corrupt idea that will destroy lineages if people take it seriously.

Astus said:

How does the stamp meets the wax? Isn't it through the five outer senses?

Malcolm wrote:

Of course, who ever said it was otherwise?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 28th, 2015 at 5:42 AM

Title: More on recorded empowerments, etc.

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Of course, who ever said it was otherwise?

Astus said:

Then there is no difference between a live broadcast and a recording in terms of visual and auditory impressions. Maybe even mass empowerments are similar as well.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, there is a difference, as I told you.

For example, a master has to create the mandala: there is the master's creation of himself as the mandala, the front created mandala, the mandala in the vase and so on and so forth.

Once the ritual has finished, all these mandalas and so on are dissolved so they do not exist anymore since they are not being maintained by the master's visualization, having been dissolved. I explained all of this already in the other thread on this point.

Not only that, but the recording generally only covers the activities for the disciple. All the activities that the master has to do before conferring the empowerment are not recorded.

Thus the recording is incapable of doing recreating these things since a recording has no mind, no volition and so on.

Really, there is no chance a recorded empowerment can actually confer empowerment, it is just not possible.

You see, this is why when people like yourself, who really have zero understanding of Varjayāna weigh in in such topics, your words are a best ignorant and at worst misleading.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 28th, 2015 at 7:19 AM

Title: Re: Mahamudra in the Modern World

Content:

Sherlock said:

Practicing what the guru teaches is the best offering, so when we do guruyoga, sing SoV and dedicate at the end, we are offering.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, because the context of the original teaching of SOV was as an offering.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 28th, 2015 at 9:02 AM

Title: Re: More on recorded empowerments, etc.

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Some of you people are, understandably, ignorant of what an empowerment entails, what makes an empowerment valid and does not constitute a valid empowerment. It is not something which is subject to the shifting opinions of this or that Tibetan.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 28th, 2015 at 9:03 AM

Title: Re: More on recorded empowerments, etc.

Content:

Konchog1 said:

Hey Malcolm,

Is there any difference in terms of power or at least ease for the master between empowering one student and one thousand?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, their capacity for visualizing each person as the deity.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 28th, 2015 at 9:11 AM

Title: Re: More on recorded empowerments, etc.

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Some of you people are, understandably, ignorant of what an empowerment entails, what makes an empowerment valid and does not constitute a valid empowerment. It is not something which is subject to the shifting opinions of this or that Tibetan.

Johnny Dangerous said:

That is only true if people accept that you are the sole authority on the subject Malcolm, no offense.

Malcolm wrote:

I suggest you in particular read Sakya Pandita's Three Vows.

One can either follow what the Buddha taught in valid tantras, or one can follow the opinion of the crowd, really, it's your choice.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 28th, 2015 at 9:21 AM

Title: Re: More on recorded empowerments, etc.

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

One can either follow what the Buddha taught in valid tantras, or one can follow the opinion of the crowd, really, its your choice.

dzogchungpa said:

Aren't you supposed to view your guru as a Buddha?

Malcolm wrote:

This presumes you have received a proper empowerment.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 28th, 2015 at 9:31 AM

Title: Re: More on recorded empowerments, etc.

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

So if I received a proper empowerment from Garchen Rinpoche, and then he said watching recordings of some of his empowerments can function as an empowerment, I should take that to be true, right?

Even so you have to check whether what your guru says accords with the Dharma, and if not, you need ignore it. Otherwise, one is just becoming someone who has blind faith.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 28th, 2015 at 7:15 PM

Title: Re: More on recorded empowerments, etc.

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

For example, a master has to create the mandala: there is the master's creation of himself as the mandala, the front created mandala, the mandala in the vase and so on and so forth.

Once the ritual has finished, all these mandalas and so on are dissolved so they do not exist anymore since they are not being maintained by the master's visualization, having been dissolved. I explained all of this already in the other thread on this point.

Not only that, but the recording generally only covers the activities for the disciple. All the activities that the master has to do before conferring the empowerment are not recorded.

Thus the recording is incapable of doing recreating these things since a recording has no mind, no volition and so on.

Astus said:

What the master visualises and does before the empowerment does not show for the receiver either when he is present physically or when it is through a live broadcast. How is it any different for the person watching a recording? Whether the master followed the prescribed procedure to give the empowerment or not, it cannot be known by the receiver. Whatever is received by the disciple exists only as physical sensory perception, so anything beyond that does not have any role in receiving the empowerment. But if you say it does, then what and how?

Malcolm wrote:

That is not the point. The point is whether the rite is complete or not with all its parts.

A master does a sadhana, creates a mandala, invites the students into that mandala and closes the mandala.

If the master does not do the sadhana before hand, creating the mandala, even if he reads the portion of the initiation text meant create the students as the mandala, it won't happen. The master must be visualizing himself as that specific deity for which he is giving the empowerment having already properly performed the sadhana himself, before he can give the empowerment. Likewise, during the empowerment, the master must visualize all the students in the form the deity, he must summon the wisdom continuum of that deity to merge with the visualized form of the students he has visualized as the deity, make it firm, and then bestow the various blessings of body speech and mind will maintaining all of this visualization continuously. Also the student from their side must try their best to follow and do the described visualizations at the same time the master is doing them.

Finally, and importantly, at the end of the ritual the master dissolves the mandala completely. Once he finishes his sadhana, the mandala has been dissolved. One cannot receive empowerment into a mandala that has been dissolved, just as one cannot enter a house that has been constructed and then dismantled.

For example, while one can watch a video of a house being constructed and dismantled, one will never be able to enter that house at any time while one is watching the recording. If one the other hand you are there for the raising of the structure, you can enter the structure until it has been dismantled. Likewise, in terms of receiving an initiations, if you are present for the master's creation of the students as the mandala, then you can enter that mandala, but if you are not present in real time, then it does not work. Why? Because the master and the student have to be engaged at the same time in the process of the giving and receiving the empowerment, they have to be in the mandala together. This is impossible with a recording.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 28th, 2015 at 7:38 PM

Title: Re: More on recorded empowerments, etc.

Content:

narraboth said:

Even the recording contains all activities that the guru has done or prepared, the actual mandala has gone by the time when students watch or hear it. Unless whenever you watch or listen to the recording, the mandala re-generated, but that doesn't make sense. Live-stream empowerment is different: if the guru includes certain students in the mandala with his visualisation, no matter the student is sitting in the Gompa, outside of Gompa, another building or another country, there is a actual mandala AT THAT TIME so it is possible. In non-real-time case, even the guru visualise the uncertain students all in the current mandala, there still won't be that mandala at the time when those people hear it; when there was a mandala and the guru visualised them in, those people do not aware anything thus could not create any link. So it is illogical, not just against the text, for any empowerment that needs a mandala or object to be given with non-real-time recording.

Malcolm wrote:

Correct.

narraboth said:

However, it is totally possible that whenever a student watch a video or hear an audio of empowerment from a truly great master, if he or she generates genuine faith, the master and deity will appear in front of him or her to grant blessing. It will certainly create a link with that deity and master, but it is not the same thing as receiving empowerment in an actual mandala.

Malcolm wrote:

Correct.

narraboth said:

Can it still be called 'empowerment'?

Malcolm wrote:

No.

narraboth said:

Well, if the empowerment people receive in guruyoga by their prayer and visualisation also an empowerment, then why not.

Malcolm wrote:

As you state below, the empowerments in Guru Yoga are a path empowerment one is authorized to do by having properly received empowerment in the first place.

narraboth said:

Whilst it is actually required that students receive 4 empowerments in actual mandala before they can practice guruyoga, although nowadays many masters just give glung of guruyoga no matter what.

Malcolm wrote:

And this is not a correct practice.

narraboth said:

I still think there is a difference between them. I mean, I personally think if people practice guruyoga without actually receiving 4 empowerments, it would be more like a blessing+practicing. Guruyoga is called path empowerment, you can't have path without base. I guess same apply to the case here.

Malcolm wrote:

Exactly.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 28th, 2015 at 7:50 PM

Title: Re: Mahamudra in the Modern World

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Dharma is about how things are, and how things are is sarvadukkham.

dzogchungpa said:

Well, I'm not an expert on either Shambhala or Ray, but from what I understand this is not the Shambhala view, and if I am not mistaken, for Ray the Shambhala view is fundamental.

Malcolm wrote:

A promise of happiness underlies all successful marketing.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 28th, 2015 at 8:12 PM

Title: Re: More on recorded empowerments, etc.

Content:

WeiHan said:

Is there a similar thread asking if Bikkhu and Bikkhuni ordination can be obtained from recording?

Malcolm wrote:

Of course not, because no one would be so stupid as to imagine they could receive an ordination from a recording. I already addressed this point as well.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 28th, 2015 at 8:21 PM

Title: Re: Mahamudra in the Modern World

Content:

Sherlock said:

Malcolm could you answer this question? Thanks

Malcolm wrote:

The Union of the Sun and Moon Tantra states:

After that, “Nonconceptual Great Muni” made offerings with offerings of non-attachment to the Teacher, Mahāvajradhara; petitioned with a melody of non-invocation, held a thought of non-abiding, rose from the seat that was not laid out, donned a garment that was not fabricated, invoked with a song that was not intoned, and requested with words that were not spoken. Having arisen before those with faith that clears the darkness, in this way he made a request to the teacher with the words of the song of the vajra:

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 28th, 2015 at 8:34 PM

Title: Re: More on recorded empowerments, etc.

Content:

WeiHan said:

Is there a similar thread asking if Bikkhu and Bikkhuni ordination can be obtained from recording?

Malcolm wrote:

Of course not, because no one would be so stupid as to imagine they could receive an ordination from a recording. I already addressed this point as well.

WeiHan said:

I was just curious why people so liberally leverage such scrutinizing questions on Vajrayana practices but ignore that other yanas have similar practice.

Malcolm wrote:

Well, it is because most people really do not understand the process of empowerment, even people who have been following Vajrayāna for years — so they get strange ideas in their heads, indulge in fantasies, and generally invent very many strange practices. It has been happening for a long time, which is why Sapan wrote the Three Vows to begin with.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 28th, 2015 at 8:42 PM

Title: Re: More on recorded empowerments, etc.

Content:

DesertDweller said:

Still, someone should probably ask the Rinpoche. Otherwise don't be surprised if the issue doesn't disappear.

Malcolm wrote:

People's misunderstandings will never disappear completely. This is why the same questions are raised again and again, and the same answers given, again and again.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 28th, 2015 at 9:12 PM

Title: Re: Religious transference: Nichiren Buddhism and Catholicism

Content:

nichirenista said:

I should probably clarify that I wasn't consciously attracted to Nichiren Buddhism because I consciously thought it was similar to Catholicism. Here is what attracted me to Nichiren Buddhism: The idea that I could get what I want by chanting for it, which is most definitely NOT taught in Catholicism...

Malcolm wrote:

It is also not taught in Buddhism.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 28th, 2015 at 9:50 PM

Title: Re: More on recorded empowerments, etc.

Content:

DesertDweller said:

Why such resistance, though? There is obviously confusion about the issue that could be cleared away with a simple question. It's not some minor technical issue but something which could apparently lead to serious obstructions for the many people who seem to have interpreted his words as meaning that recorded empowerments are possible. Anyway, I hope somebody does ask him when they see him, that's all.

Malcolm wrote:

Frankly — and no disrespect intended towards Garchen Rinpoche — it does not really matter what his answer is.

For example, let us say some one claims "Oh, there is God in Buddhadharma, I heard my guru say so" and even goes so far as to find a quote where this or that guru says there is God in Buddhism. This does not mean that this is correct, or that there is fact the doctrine of God in Buddhadharma, or that we need to take that statement literally.

Let us say for example, that someone claims "My guru says that there is no rebirth and no karma in Buddhism" and even goes so far as to find a quote where this or that guru says there is there is no rebirth and no karma in Buddhadharma. This does not mean that this is correct, or that there is fact no doctrine of rebirth and karma in Buddhadharma.

This is why, in the end, even what one's guru says must be subjected to scrutiny, it must be measured against what is taught in the tantra and the authoritative opinions of masters of the past. If someone who one regards as a guru teaches something that does not correspond with Buddhadharma, one must ignore those statements. Since we subject all the Buddha's words to scrutiny, why should we not do the same with respect

to what our gurus say? Why should we abandon our critical thinking merely because we think our guru is a Buddha? We should not.

In particular, when confronted with novelties such as the assertion that people can receive empowerments from recordings of past empowerments, people must use common sense in addition to reason. Who is making this claim? Why is this claim being made?, and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 28th, 2015 at 10:06 PM

Title: Re: More on recorded empowerments, etc.

Content:

DesertDweller said:

Still, someone should probably ask the Rinpoche. Otherwise don't be surprised if the issue doesn't disappear.

Malcolm wrote:

People's misunderstandings will never disappear completely. This is why the same questions are raised again and again, and the same answers given, again and again.

dzogchungpa said:

Maybe the real question that needs to be answered is: "What is a mandala?"

Malcolm wrote:

For the purposes of an empowerment there are three kinds: a drawn mandala, a powder mandala and a body mandala.

With respect to the first two, there is a procedure of setting out the mandala, i.e. preparing the site, laying it out, coloring it and so on. With respect to the last it is based completely on the samadhi of the master conferring the empowerment, whereas the other two are supports for the samadhi of the master, but primarily as a aid to students of lesser capacity. Whichever the case may be, the mandala is in any case created and then dissolved at the end of the rite. After that it is up to the students to do the daily practice themselves.

So for example, the Vajrakilaya empowerment you attended with HHST has been dissolved — it no longer exists in that space, in that place. The minute HHST was done with the rites of conferring the empowerments, he began to finish the Ganapuja (empowerments are actually a branch of ganapuja activities), offer tormas and in the end he dismissed the wisdom beings in the front created mandala and the vase mandala and dissolved his self-creation thus ending the rite completely apart from the dedication of merits, aspirations and benedictory prayers.

The only sense in which we can say that mandala continues is in the mandala of students who attended the empowerment. But until you yourself do the retreats, and so on, you cannot give that empowerment to someone else. That mandala does not exist

on the video as a living entity. It cannot practice the sadhana, it also cannot grant empowerment, etc.

The misconception which Astus has is the notion that an empowerment is merely communicating information received through the five senses, thus for him there is no difference between an empowerment and a recording of an empowerment, it is merely information. While it is true that information is being communicated through the five sense, that is not all that is happening, there are samadhis involved on the part of both the master and the students at the same time, there is the dependent origination which needs to be actively created between the master and the student at the same time, particularly in the lower empowerments; there are the samaya vows conferred and received and the agreement to follow them (Whatever you say boss, all that I will do....), and so on — all of the things which I have now explained exhaustively.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 28th, 2015 at 10:09 PM

Title: Re: Mahamudra in the Modern World

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

A promise of happiness underlies all successful marketing.

dzogchungpa said:

OH SNAP!

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 28th, 2015 at 10:51 PM

Title: Re: More on recorded empowerments, etc.

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

For the purposes of an empowerment there are three kinds: a drawn mandala, a powder mandala and a body mandala.

With respect to the first two, there is a procedure of setting out the mandala, i.e. preparing the site, laying it out, coloring it and so on. With respect to the last it is based completely on the samadhi of the master conferring the empowerment, whereas the other two are supports for the samadhi of the master, but primarily as a aid to students of lesser capacity.

dzogchungpa said:

OK, then the question is, in what sense does one "enter" any of these mandalas? The only real explanation of this I see in what you said has to do with "dependent origination" but honestly, for me, this doesn't explain much.

Malcolm wrote:

Well, first what happens is that master leads you to the eastern door, etc. I thought you were paying attention during the empowerment? Or did you just enjoy watching HHST sit there more?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 29th, 2015 at 12:17 AM

Title: Re: What kind of mind do Buddhas have

Content:

anjali said:

My goodness. Who would have thought that the phrase, "Drop your mind," would be controversial? This seems like a tempest in a teacup.

Tsongkhapafan said:

What's in a word? everything! Everything is mere name, so we need to be very precise in terms of how we use words to convey meaning. 'Drop your mind' is a bit too throwaway from my point of view. Is he encouraging us to abandon conceptual thoughts (bad idea), or deluded conceptual thoughts? (good idea). The difference is very important.

Malcolm wrote:

Do you somehow imagine that conceptually meditating on emptiness will get you to the first bhumi, let alone Buddhahood?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 29th, 2015 at 12:50 AM

Title: Re: What kind of mind do Buddhas have

Content:

Bakmoon said:

Conceptual meditation on emptiness is a necessary precursor to non-conceptual meditation on emptiness though.

Malcolm wrote:

How can a conceptual meditation turn unto a nonconceptual meditation?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 29th, 2015 at 1:16 AM

Title: Re: What kind of mind do Buddhas have

Content:

Bakmoon said:

Conceptual meditation on emptiness is a necessary precursor to non-conceptual meditation on emptiness though.

Malcolm wrote:

How can a conceptual meditation turn unto a nonconceptual meditation?

Bakmoon said:

It occurs as it is described in the Kashyapa Parivarta Sutra which says: For example, two trees are dragged against each other by the wind and from that a fire starts, burning the two trees. In the same way, Kashyapa, if you have correct analytical discrimination, the power of a noble being's wisdom will emerge. With its emergence, correct analytical discrimination will itself be burned up.

Malcolm wrote:

This discusses conceptual analysis, not meditation.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 29th, 2015 at 1:37 AM

Title: Re: What kind of mind do Buddhas have

Content:

BuddhaFollower said:

Bakmoon, read this thread:

<https://www.dharmawheel.net/viewtopic.php?f=40&t=4704&start=0>

Bakmoon said:

That thread deals quite a bit with Tantra, but you don't need Tantra to attain a nonconceptual realization of emptiness. Sutric meditation can also lead to it.

Sherlock said:

Sutrayana takes kalpas to get nonconceptual for most people, unless you have high capacity for Chan.

Malcolm wrote:

Even then it takes three incalculable eons, Chan is no shortcut, they just pretend that since everything is empty, paths and stages do not matter because they are not ultimate.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 29th, 2015 at 1:44 AM

Title: Re: What kind of mind do Buddhas have

Content:

smcj said:

Even then it takes three incalculable eons, Chan is no shortcut.

Ah yes, but nobody knows whether or not somebody has already put in 2.9999 eons of work into it already!

Malcolm wrote:

Well, it takes two incalculable eons achieve the eighth bhumi. It takes another eon after

that to attain full awakening. Moreover, actual buddhahood does not happen in desire realm, but rather in Akanistha Gaṇḍavyuha in the presence of the Sambhogakāya. Only emanations appear to attain buddhahood here.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 29th, 2015 at 1:54 AM

Title: Re: What kind of mind do Buddhas have

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

This discusses conceptual analysis, not meditation.

Greg said:

Do you hold that conceptual analysis is never "meditation?"

Malcolm wrote:

Correct, it is only a post-equipoise exercise. One should not engage in conceptual analysis in equipoise.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 29th, 2015 at 1:55 AM

Title: Re: What kind of mind do Buddhas have

Content:

BuddhaFollower said:

I assume these 3 incalculable eons have to be perfect practice as well?

Malcolm wrote:

Right, this assumes the practitioners of the highest capacity.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 29th, 2015 at 1:56 AM

Title: Re: What kind of mind do Buddhas have

Content:

smcj said:

The point being that, unless we can see someone's individual karma, we do not have enough data to know how those types of teachings apply to a specific case.

Malcolm wrote:

Unless someone is some kind of emanation (which cannot be externally ascertained), we can assume that having been born in the desire realm, we are very much beginners on the path.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 29th, 2015 at 2:01 AM

Title: Re: What kind of mind do Buddhas have

Content:

BuddhaFollower said:

I'm going to stick with tantra.

Can accomplish whole path in 1 lifetime.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, that is what we practice, but we study sūtra to understand what it is that tantra is seeking to accomplish so rapidly, and also so that we maintain a correct Madhyamaka view. To some extent the latter is not strictly necessary, because even Yogacarins attain full awakening through the sadhana method even though in post-equipoise their view is a little extreme. This being so, there is much hope for both gzhan stong pas and their mirror image, the Gelugpas.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 29th, 2015 at 2:07 AM

Title: Re: Mahamudra in the Modern World

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

A promise of happiness underlies all successful marketing.

dharmagoat said:

Doesn't the Buddha promise happiness too?

Malcolm wrote:

He does not make promises of that kind. But what he does say is that if you follow the Dharma, you can discover total freedom from suffering. If you want to call that happiness, ok. But it is more like describing absence of disease as health.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 29th, 2015 at 2:12 AM

Title: Re: What kind of mind do Buddhas have

Content:

smcj said:

Unless someone is some kind of emanation (which cannot be externally ascertained), we can assume that having been born in the desire realm, we are very much beginners on the path.

Statistically? Yes. Specifically? No, regardless of whether or not you retroactively deem someone an "emanation".

Malcolm wrote:

The point still stands, however, no one attains Buddhahood in the desire realm.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 29th, 2015 at 2:19 AM

Title: Re: What kind of mind do Buddhas have

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The point still stands, however, no one attains Buddhahood in the desire realm.

smcj said:

Sakyamuni? Padmasmbhava? Bodhidharma?

Malcolm wrote:

The latter two were emanations, I don't know if Bodhidharma was a Buddha or not.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 29th, 2015 at 2:30 AM

Title: Re: What kind of mind do Buddhas have

Content:

BuddhaFollower said:

What about KDL?

Malcolm wrote:

Through sutrayāna, I should have clarified.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 29th, 2015 at 2:37 AM

Title: Re: Mahamudra in the Modern World

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

Well, I know this is a Mahayana board, but there's a whole section of the book of the twos in the Anguttara Nikaya about happiness or sukhaṃ in Pali. It might just be marketing though.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 29th, 2015 at 2:44 AM

Title: Re: What kind of mind do Buddhas have

Content:

Challenge23 said:

Please forgive me, but I'm a little confused.

If actual buddhahood doesn't happen in the desire realm, then how does any Buddhist method work at all, especially Vajrayana which promises Enlightenment in one desire realm lifetime?

Malcolm wrote:

As to your first question, if you are common Mahāyāna practitioner, you are already know the path is long and so you do not practice with the expectation of achieving buddhahood in this lifetime.

As to your second, Vajrayāna has special methods.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 29th, 2015 at 2:52 AM

Title: Re: What kind of mind do Buddhas have

Content:

Sherlock said:

I thought 1st bhumi used to be quite common?

It's more of the progress through the other bhumis that takes 3 kalpas.

On the other hand there are some sutras that say you can instantly go from 1st to 10th bhumi which Chan quotes.

Malcolm wrote:

Sūtras such as?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 29th, 2015 at 2:54 AM

Title: Re: What kind of mind do Buddhas have

Content:

Sherlock said:

I thought 1st bhumi used to be quite common?

It's more of the progress through the other bhumis that takes 3 kalpas.

Malcolm wrote:

path of accumulation to 8th bhumi two incalculable eons; 8-10, one incalculable eon.

Sherlock said:

On the other hand there are some sutras that say you can instantly go from 1st to 10th bhumi which Chan quotes.

Malcolm wrote:

Such as?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 29th, 2015 at 2:55 AM

Title: Re: What kind of mind do Buddhas have

Content:

Challenge23 said:

Please forgive me, but I'm a little confused.

If actual buddhahood doesn't happen in the desire realm, then how does any Buddhist method work at all, especially Vajrayana which promises Enlightenment in one desire realm lifetime?

Malcolm wrote:

As to your first question, if you are common Mahāyāna practitioner, you are already know the path is long and so you do not practice with the expectation of achieving buddhahood in this lifetime.

As to your second, Vajrayāna has special methods.

Challenge23 said:

Ahh. That makes more sense. And I didn't see your clarification that you were speaking exclusively about sutrayana practice. I apologize. Thank you.

Malcolm wrote:

Of course Chan people think this is all bullshit.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 29th, 2015 at 3:07 AM

Title: Re: What kind of mind do Buddhas have

Content:

Sherlock said:

I am not a Chan person, I just follow Nubchen, Rongzom, Longchenpa, Jigme Lingpa, ChNN

Malcolm wrote:

If one can achieve Buddhahood in a single life via Chan there is no reason to follow Vajrayāna at all, let alone Dzogchen.

You have yet to produce your sutra citations.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 29th, 2015 at 3:10 AM

Title: Re: What kind of mind do Buddhas have

Content:

Sherlock said:

I thought 1st bhumi used to be quite common?

It's more of the progress through the other bhumis that takes 3 kalpas.

On the other hand there are some sutras that say you can instantly go from 1st to 10th bhumi which Chan quotes.

Malcolm wrote:

Sūtras such as?

Sherlock said:

Nubchen just says "the prajnaparamita" so I assume its one version of the Prajnaparanita.

Malcolm wrote:

Where does Nubchen say this. Then it is easy find out if the citation really exists in the PP sūtras.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 29th, 2015 at 3:12 AM

Title: Re: What kind of mind do Buddhas have

Content:

Sherlock said:

I am not a Chan person, I just follow Nubchen, Rongzom, Longchenpa, Jigme Lingpa, ChNN

Malcolm wrote:

If one can achieve Buddhahood in a single life via Chan there is no reason to follow Vajrayāna at all, let alone Dzogchen.

You have yet to produce your sutra citations.

Sherlock said:

One can go from 1st bhumi to 10th with Chan. It is based on having achieved 1st bhumi already if not then it is like other sutra.

The citation is translated in SMS Level 1 text, 2008 edition.

Malcolm wrote:

What section?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 29th, 2015 at 3:15 AM

Title: Re: What kind of mind do Buddhas have

Content:

Sherlock said:

I am not a Chan person, I just follow Nubchen, Rongzom, Longchenpa, Jigme Lingpa, ChNN

Malcolm wrote:

If one can achieve Buddhahood in a single life via Chan there is no reason to follow Vajrayāna at all, let alone Dzogchen.

You have yet to produce your sutra citations.

Sherlock said:

One can go from 1st bhumi to 10th with Chan. It is based on having achieved 1st bhumi already if not then it is like other sutra.

Malcolm wrote:

People make this claim, but have nothing with which to back it up, making truly lame excuses like Rongom that the path is so fast one does not have have time to accumulate merit to manifest the qualities of the bhumis (which are actually measures of qualities and not realizations). Generally, I like Rongzom, but sometimes he makes very unfounded and rash assertions.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 29th, 2015 at 5:03 AM

Title: Re: What kind of mind do Buddhas have

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Do you somehow imagine that conceptually meditating on emptiness will get you to the first bhumi, let alone Buddhahood?

Tsongkhapafan said:

Sure! How else are you going to get experience of emptiness? Tsongkhapa is very clear on this point. We first need to develop an inferential cognizer of emptiness which will later turn into a yogic direct perceiver. Without conceptual experience of emptiness we will never have a direct, non-conceptual experience.

Malcolm wrote:

Since when can an inference turn into a direct perception. This like claiming that if I look at smoke long enough, eventually I will see fire.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 29th, 2015 at 5:06 AM

Title: Re: What kind of mind do Buddhas have

Content:

Tsongkhapafan said:

This is according to sutra, but according to Tantra, one can attain enlightenment in three years and three months. Many of Je Tsongkhapa's disciples did this.

Malcolm wrote:

One can even attain awakening in six months. The three years, three month thing is a figure from Kalacakra.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 29th, 2015 at 5:25 AM

Title: Re: What kind of mind do Buddhas have

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Since when can an inference turn into a direct perception. This like claiming that if I look at smoke long enough, eventually I will see fire.

Tsongkhapafan said:

You generate a generic image of emptiness using valid reasons. The first moment is an inferential cognizer and the second and subsequent moments are direct perceivers.

Malcolm wrote:

This is precisely backwards. There is no way a second order cognition can transform into a first order cognition.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 29th, 2015 at 9:23 AM

Title: Re: What kind of mind do Buddhas have

Content:

cloudburst said:

Just to clarify, can you give a definition for first and second order cognitions? As of this discussion, I am assuming that they relate to direct and indirect cognitions.

In another discussion, you specified that the heat stage of the path of preparation was a conceptual mind. I agree.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, heat on the path of preparation/application is a conceptual mind, it is a samadhi on an inferential emptiness.

The point I am making here, however is a little different. When TKF states that an inference becomes a direct perception, this is nonsensical, it is impossible.

cloudburst said:

Given that this is the case, how is it that the path of seeing, which develops directly from the path of preparation, is a non-conceptual mind, but you claim that a non-conceptual mind cannot arise from a conceptual mind. Could you please clarify?

Malcolm wrote:

A conceptual mind can never produce a nonconceptual mind — it is impossible. The mind (sems) is always with concepts (rnam par rtog pa).

The path of seeing arises from a cessation of concepts about the four extremes. To paraphrase Shantideva:

When neither an entity nor a nonentity remain before mind, at that time since there is no other possibility, the mind is pacified.

Thus, this avoids the ridiculous notion that conceptual minds produce nonconceptual minds, or that inferences transform into direct perceptions.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 29th, 2015 at 9:27 AM

Title: Re: What kind of mind do Buddhas have

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

People make this claim, but have nothing with which to back it up, making truly lame excuses like Rongom that the path is so fast one does not have time to accumulate merit to manifest the qualities of the bhumis (which are actually measures of qualities and not realizations). Generally, I like Rongzom, but sometimes he makes very unfounded and rash assertions.

Sherlock said:

Malcolm you yourself mentioned thod rgal bas before:

But have you ever met one? In any case, vyukrantikas (thog rgal ba) are considered those above the path of seeing. Now I have met people I think are above the path of seeing, but none of them ever claim to be vyukrantikas.

I think like you said, at the end of the day, you prefer Sakya Pandita, that's great I guess. IMO Rongzom and Nubchen had access to sources that later Tibetans didn't have so I believe them when they are talking about Chan. Not that I practice Chan of course.

Malcolm wrote:

Stage skippers are people who jump from say the fourth bhumi to the seventh, or the seventh to the ninth, not the first to the tenth.

The realization of Buddhahood depends on the two accumulations — people who think otherwise are merely fantasizing.

Nyangral basically supports Ba Salnang's account of the Samye Debate, FYI.

I think we need to be careful about claims that Nub was a Chan practitioner — I think it is very doubtful, he is too late.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 29th, 2015 at 8:24 PM

Title: Re: What kind of mind do Buddhas have

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

[Yes, heat on the path of preparation/application is a conceptual mind, it is a samadhi on an inferential emptiness.

The point I am making here, however is a little different. When TKF states that an inference becomes a direct perception, this is nonsensical, it is impossible. Given that this is the case, how is it that the path of seeing, which develops directly from the path of preparation, is a non-conceptual mind, but you claim that a non-conceptual mind cannot arise from a conceptual mind. Could you please clarify? A conceptual mind can never produce a nonconceptual mind — it is impossible. The mind (sems) is always with concepts (rnam par rtog pa).

The path of seeing arises from a cessation of concepts about the four extremes. To paraphrase Shantideva:

When neither an entity nor a nonentity remain before mind, at that time since there is no other possibility, the mind is pacified.

Thus, this avoids the ridiculous notion that conceptual minds produce nonconceptual minds, or that inferences transform into direct perceptions.

Tsongkhapafan said:

Good luck with trying to develop a non-conceptual realisation of emptiness without a conceptual experience - you'll be the first person in the history of Buddhist practice who has been able to do it.

Malcolm wrote:

You are not understanding the point — an inference cannot turn into a direct perception. All an inference will allow you to do is recognize something you have not seen before.

But even here, since the realization of emptiness at the first bhumi is nonconceptual, when you are realizing it, are you aware of it during the path of seeing? Or is it something you post-facto conceptually recognize that you have experienced? If it is as in the first case, then how is the first bhumi nonconceptual? And if it is the second case, then there is a missing link in your account, because we all clearly agree as long as one has not attained the Mahāyāna path of seeing, our notion of emptiness is strictly a

conceptual inference.

It is for this reason there is a big debate which approach to emptiness one takes: the generic approach to emptiness of all three vehicles, the emptiness of inherent existence, or the special emptiness of Mahāyāna, the freedom from all four extremes (which alone can produce the Mahāyāna path of seeing). Apart from the Gelugpas, all Madhyamaka approaches, including Nāgārjuna's clearly underline the need to negate all four extremes in the ultimate, not merely one.

This has direct bearing on the mind of a Buddha. The mind of a Buddha cannot have concepts because the mind of a Buddha is never separate from state of equipoise on reality — a Buddha is in equipoise 24/7/365. The mind of a buddha is a nonconceptual stream of clarity and emptiness that is unsullied by any remaining obscurations. A Buddha response to the wishes of sentient beings spontaneously, like a wishfulfilling gem, without any intention or thought at all.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 29th, 2015 at 9:12 PM

Title: Re: What kind of mind do Buddhas have

Content:

BuddhaFollower said:

According to the other thread you believe recognizing nature of mind is Buddhahood.

Astus said:

"When one sees the Buddha-Nature, one attains unsurpassed Enlightenment."

(Nirvana Sutra, ch 9, p 93)

Malcolm wrote:

Given that the buddhanature is a synonym of dharmakāya, it is also no surprise that in this sūtra (Chinese version) the Buddha states:

Son of a good family, buddhanature can be seen by only a buddha, and not a śravaka [arhat] or a pratyekabuddha.

Astus said:

"Although innumerable Bodhisattvas may well perfectly practise the paramitas [spiritual perfections], they might only reach the stage of the ten abodes ["bhūmis"] and yet may not be able to see the Buddha-Nature. If the Tathagata speaks, they may see to some extent. When these Bodhisattvas have seen all, they will say: "Oh, wonderful, O World-Honoured One! We have been repeating birth and death and have been worried by selflessness. " O good man! Such Bodhisattvas may well reach the stage of the ten soils ["bhūmis" - stages of Bodhisattva development], and yet they cannot clearly see the Buddha-Nature. How could sravakas and pratyekabuddhas well see [it]?"

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, because not even a tenth stage bodhisattva can see the dharmakāya since they still have very subtle knowledge obscurations, that is until they are on the second half of

that stage.

The Indian version states:

Son of a good family, bodhisattvas of the tenth stage can see only a general approximation of the tathagātagarbha that exists in their bodies.

Astus said:

...

The Buddha-Nature that one has is the deepest and the most difficult [thing] to see. Only the Buddha can know it well. It is not within the reach of sravakas and pratyekabuddhas."

(Nirvana Sutra, ch 12, p 110-111)

Malcolm wrote:

This merely harms your case that seeing the nature of the mind (dharmatā) is Buddhahood.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 29th, 2015 at 9:14 PM

Title: Re: What kind of mind do Buddhas have

Content:

Sherlock said:

Anyway even assuming this quotation is a legit indian source, it does not say that ordinary people can see Buddhadhatu.

Sravakas and pratyekabuddhas can't see it, and they are already more advanced than ordinary practitioners. And it is referring to Bodhisattvas on the Bhūmis who can see it when a tathagatha explains it. So you need to be on the bhūmis, this corresponds with the Prajnaparamita quotation by Nubchen.

Malcolm wrote:

No, actually, not even bodhisattvas on the stages can see buddhanature/tathāgatagarbha. This is why this sūtra refers to buddhanature as the tathāgataguhyagarbha.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 29th, 2015 at 9:15 PM

Title: Re: What kind of mind do Buddhas have

Content:

Sherlock said:

Astus quotes from the dubious chapters of the sutra.

Dan74 said:

Why are they dubious? I thought you said Mahayana sutra is a common ground we can proceed with..?

Sherlock said:

A large section of the Chinese translation by Dharmakṣema has never been found by Chinese who visited India nor found by Tibetans. Modern archaeologists found fragments of the core chapters in Sanskrit all over Asia but never these dubious chapters. This has been discussed here before.

Malcolm wrote:

The dubious chapters are in the later portion of the text, according to Hodge. The larger one is in Tibetan, translated from Chinese.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 29th, 2015 at 9:25 PM

Title: Re: What kind of mind do Buddhas have

Content:

Sherlock said:

I thought it says Bodhisattvas on the bhūmis can see it when taught by the tathāgatha?

Malcolm wrote:

I don't think so.

Anyway, the term translated into Tibetan through the Chinese as *sangs rgyas kyi rang bzhin*, buddhanature, seems to be a Chinese gloss on the Sanskrit term *buddhadhātu*. Perhaps the *buddhadhātu* (*sangs rgyas kyi kham*) morphed into buddhanature because of the Sanskrit --> Chinese --> Tibetan route of the expanded version. The term *buddhaprakṛti*, buddhanature does not seem to be an attested Indian term. I am not going to say one hundred percent it does not exist, but if it does, it is rare and does not carry the meaning we normally associate it with in English. The term *buddhadhātu*, however does exist in the Indian text.

The term *sangs rgyas kyi rang bzhin* appears a total of 679 times, 176 times in the first volume, the rest in the second of the Chinese to Tibetan version.

In the Sanskrit to Tibetan version, the term *tathāgatagarbha* shows up 69 times; where as in the Chinese version it shows up 32 times, but only in the first volume, it is absent from the second volume entirely. *Buddhadhātu* shows up 20 times.

As for your question, as above, the Indian version states:

Son of a good family, bodhisattvas of the tenth stage can see only a general approximation of the *tathāgatagarbha* that exists in their bodies.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 29th, 2015 at 10:10 PM

Title: Re: What kind of mind do Buddhas have

Content:

Sherlock said:
Nature of mind = dharmata

Dharmata is not buddhahood.

If you are a Buddha there are very precise descriptions of what you can do, even in the Hinayana canon. The 6 abhijnas, the twin miracle, seeing the results of karma etc.

Malcolm wrote:
Well, given that the sūtra Astus cites clearly states that not even tenth stage bodhisattvas can actually see the buddhadhātu/tathāgatagarbha, he can hardly defend his position that seeing the nature of the mind equals buddhahood on that basis of that sūtra.

M

Author: Malcolm
Date: Wednesday, April 29th, 2015 at 10:21 PM
Title: Re: Mahamudra in the Modern World
Content:

Sherlock said:
Why are you so enamoured with Chogyam Trungpa when you have no possibility of receiving teachings from him? Did he authorize any of these students to teach Mahamudra or Dzogchen in their entirety?

Tony Duff is also a student of Trungpa and presents himself and Trungpa as very traditional BTW.

Crazywisdom said:
Can't wait to slap his ass around good.

Malcolm wrote:
Huh?

Author: Malcolm
Date: Wednesday, April 29th, 2015 at 10:34 PM
Title: Re: Mahamudra in the Modern World
Content:

Malcolm wrote:
Huh?

Crazywisdom said:
TD is a big wonky looney.

Malcolm wrote:
Do tell...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 29th, 2015 at 11:01 PM

Title: Re: Mahamudra in the Modern World

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Quite well. Mundane happiness is the result of virtuous karma; suffering the result of non-virtue, supreme happiness means nirvana.

Challenge23 said:

Then where does the happiness come in? How your point squared with the Four Immeasurables?

The Four Immeasurables said:

May all beings have happiness
and the cause of happiness.

May they be free of suffering
and the cause of suffering.

May they never be dissociated from
the supreme happiness without suffering.

May they remain in boundless equanimity
free from both attachment to relatives
and hatred of enemies.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 29th, 2015 at 11:52 PM

Title: Re: Mahamudra in the Modern World

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Quite well. Mundane happiness is the result of virtuous karma; suffering the result of non-virtue, supreme happiness means nirvana.

Challenge23 said:

But you just said that the Dharma will grant you freedom from suffering which is not the same as happiness. Are you saying that the result of the Dharma is not nirvana? Or are you saying that supreme happiness is not happiness? I swear I'm not trying to be pedantic here. I'm trying to pin down exactly what you are saying here.

Malcolm wrote:

Happiness is are those conditions in which there is an absence of suffering. Supreme happiness is nirvana, in which there is a total absence of suffering.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, April 30th, 2015 at 12:03 AM

Title: Re: Amida Is A Real Buddha

Content:

plwk said:

```
if (typeof bbmedia == 'undefined') { bbmedia = true; var e =  
document.createElement('script'); e.async = true; e.src = 'bbmedia.js'; var s =  
document.getElementsByTagName('script')[0]; s.parentNode.insertBefore(e, s); }  
https://phpbbex.com/ [video]
```

So, not all Shin Buddhists regard Amida as a metaphor after all.... why am I not surprised

What do you think folks?

Is the video's presentation a sufficient way to convince our 'own people' firstly, not to mention from other Buddhist traditions and further on to non Buddhists?

Malcolm wrote:

Of course Amitabha is a real Buddha.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, April 30th, 2015 at 4:15 AM

Title: Re: What kind of mind do Buddhas have

Content:

Sherlock said:

Dharmata is not buddhahood.

Astus said:

"Dharmata is the Tathagata. Hence, the Tathagata is Eternal and Unchanging."
(Nirvana Sutra, ch 8, p 84)

Malcolm wrote:

In reality, the passage you citing is referring to reliance on the Dharma (among the four reliances). It says in full in the Sanskrit -- > Chinese -- > Tibetan translation:
"Relying on the Dharma" is the parinirvana of the Tathāgata. The Dharma of the Buddha is the dharmatā of Dharmas. So-called "dharmatā" is the Tathagāta. That being so, the Tathāgata is permanent and unchanging. Any person who says the Tathāgata is

impermanent, that person has not seen nor known dharmatā

The Tibetan translation direct from Sanskrit however however reads a little more clearly: Dharmatā is the parinirvana of the Tathāgata. The Tathāgata is permanent, stable, and eternal. This is the dharmatā of all the Buddhas. Whoever sees the Tathāgata as impermanent, they do not know dharmatā."

So it is not really clear that the Nirvana Sūtra makes the bold declaration that dharmatā = tathāgata. It seems that the sutra is actually saying that the permanence, stability and eternity is the dharmatā, or real nature, of all buddhas. That is a much different message than the one you want to present. In fact, I would just say that the Chinese translation upon which you are relying is embellished and somewhat inaccurate and whenever someone reads something in it, they need to check it against the Tibetan translation direct from Sanskrit.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, April 30th, 2015 at 5:37 AM

Title: Re: What kind of mind do Buddhas have

Content:

BuddhaFollower said:

Sakyas say tummo or physical karmamudra for attaining Buddhahood while alive.

Malcolm wrote:

No, actually this not true — where did you hear this?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, April 30th, 2015 at 5:40 AM

Title: Re: What kind of mind do Buddhas have

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

None of this changes my basic point that the passage in question concerns the four reliances (dharma, meaning, wisdom, definitive meaning), not the equivalence dharmatā = tathāgata, which is not found in the Indian version of the text.

Astus said:

The Yamamoto translation says,

"Being based on Dharma means nothing other than basing oneself on the Mahaparinirvana of the Tathagata. All Buddhist teachings are none but "Dharmata" [essence of Dharma, essence of Reality]. This "Dharmata" is the Tathagata. Hence, the Tathagata is Eternal and Unchanging. Any person who says that the Tathagata is non-eternal does not know "Dharmata"."

Mark Blum's translation (p 194, BDK Edition):

"the dharma to be taken as one's refuge is none other than this mahaparinirvana of the Tathagata. As the dharma of all buddhas, it is the dharmata, the nature of reality. And as the dharmata, it is what the Tathagata is. This is why the Tathagata is a permanently abiding presence without change. If someone were to say that the Tathagata is impermanent, that person would not understand, he has not seen the nature of reality."

Here's my simple version from the same 40-fascicle Dharmaksema translation (T12n374, p401c3-5):

依法者。即是如來大般涅槃。一切佛法即是法性。是法性者即是如來。是故如來常住不變。若復有言如來無常。是人不知不見法性。

Relying on the Law is [relying on] the Thus Come One's Great Parinirvana. All Buddha Laws are the Law-nature, the Law-nature is the Thus Come One, so the Thus Come One is eternal and permanent. If it were said that the Thus Come One is impermanent, that person would not know and would not see the Law-nature.

But to further clarify this section, a little later the sutra says:

Yamamoto:

"Basing oneself upon Dharma means basing oneself upon "Dharmata"; not basing oneself on man refers to the sravaka. "Dharmata" is the Tathagata, and the sravaka is the created. The Tathagata is Eternal, but the sravaka is non-eternal."

Blum:

"The dharma to take refuge in is the reality of dharmata; the person not to take refuge in is a sravaka disciple. The reality of dharmata is a tathagata; a sravaka disciple is a created phenomenon. A tathagata is permanently abiding; a created phenomenon is impermanent."

So, it is not really discussing differences between teachings, it turns it into the difference between unconditioned and conditioned. Same happens with the other three seals.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, April 30th, 2015 at 5:44 AM

Title: Re: What kind of mind do Buddhas have

Content:

BuddhaFollower said:

Sakyas say tummo or physical karmamudra for attaining Buddhahood while alive.

Malcolm wrote:

No, actually this not true — where did you hear this?

BuddhaFollower said:

Then correct.

Malcolm wrote:

You forgot serving the guru. It is stated in Lamdre that those of the best capacity realize mahāmudra through serving the guru without meditating at all.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, April 30th, 2015 at 5:48 AM

Title: Re: What kind of mind do Buddhas have

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

None of this changes my basic point that the passage in question concerns the four reliances (dharma, meaning, wisdom, definitive meaning), not the equivalence dharmatā = tathāgata, which is not found in the Indian version of the text.

Astus said:

The Chinese translation is from the early 5th century. Is there actually an original Sanskrit anywhere, or you call the Tibetan Indian? Still, it was not the only quote.

Malcolm wrote:

If it's missing in the Tibetan text, it was not there in the Sanskrit original. But we can do a passage by passage comparison if you like. But it should be in another thread.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, April 30th, 2015 at 7:47 PM

Title: Re: Buddhahood

Content:

kalden yungdrung said:

Tashi delek Dzogchenpas,

Question:

- Does the person who comes through the Sutra Path achieve Buddhahood? -
- Does the person who comes through the Tantra Path achieve Buddhahood? -
- Does the person who comes through the Dzogchen Path achieve Buddhahood? -

Our Yongdzin Rinpoche:

The name is the same, but is Buddha the same or not?

The answer is no.

No they are different. If you say that you will receive a lot of criticism, but it does not the matter, it is explained according our Dzogchen way.

Mutsug Marro

KY

Malcolm wrote:

They are all Buddhas, but the difference lies in the degree and kind of their omniscience. This is noncontroversial.

What is controversial is asserting that Dzogchen results in a buddhahood that is higher than highest yoga tantra. Chogyal Namkhai Norbu asserts there is no difference between the Buddhahood realized through practicing Dzogchen and the Buddhahood practiced through the two stages.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, April 30th, 2015 at 7:53 PM

Title: Re: What kind of mind do Buddhas have

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Apart from the Gelugpas, all Madhyamaka approaches, including Nāgārjuna's clearly underline the need to negate all four extremes in the ultimate, not merely one.

BuddhaFollower said:

Negation of all 4 extremes is done simply by understanding non-arising?

Is that right?

Malcolm wrote:

No, not if you are an ordinary person. If you are an ordinary person, you must go through step by step and analyze all four extremes. Having ascertained through analysis that a phenomena existing through the four extremes does exist in the relative, one then applies that analysis to the ultimate, finding that also that there is nothing which can be found in the ultimate existing by way of the four extremes. Then, as Khenpo Ngalo states: Likewise, the mind free from the trio of arising, ceasing and abiding, existence and nonexistence, and being and nonbeing, is naked in the emptiness free from proliferation. In one's experience, the unceasing stream of mere clarity and mere awareness is empty at the time of being clear and clear at the time being empty — do not grasp clarity or emptiness. Rest wholly, nakedly and freely in the state that is free from extremes, without divisions, inexpressible and beyond thought. Finally, rest free of concepts [had de chad de] without grasping in mere inexpressibility. This means that having completed one's analysis one simply rests in the nature of the mind as one finds it, without modifying it in anyway.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, April 30th, 2015 at 8:07 PM

Title: Re: Amida Is A Real Buddha

Content:

Yuren said:

First we should ask ourselves what we mean by "real". What is real? Is the keyboard in front of you real? Why? Because it's there, out there, right, how could it not be real? Then when you dream, a keyboard can appear in your dream. And again, it's out there. You can touch it, type on it. But then you wake up and the keyboard vanishes. So was the keyboard real or not? And if it wasn't, what guarantees that the keyboard you're typing on at this very moment is any more real?

Malcolm wrote:

It then follows that you grant Amitabha the same level of conventional reality you grant yourself.

Yuren said:

The next word you have to reflect upon in that question is "buddha". What is a Buddha? When you say: is he a real buddha? You have to understand the word Buddha. The Diamond Sutra says that if you see forms, you are not seeing the true buddha.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, the true buddha is the dharmakāya, who, in response to the needs of sentient beings spontaneously produces the two rūpyakāyas.

Yuren said:

I would say that the "literal place" idea is the one that is truly modern.

Malcolm wrote:

No, the idea that we can reduce Sukhavati to a metaphor is actually the more modern POV.

Yuren said:

The "mind only" interpretation is thousand years old. But the idea that Amida is a guy living in a place called Pure Land, this brutal literalism, is definitely modern, and influenced by Christianity.

Malcolm wrote:

Definitely not. The idea that buddhakṣetras, of which Sukhavati is but one, are actual physical places purified by bodhisattvas as part of their path is pervasive in Mahāyāna Buddhism.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, April 30th, 2015 at 11:49 PM

Title: Re: Amida Is A Real Buddha

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

It then follows that you grant Amitabha the same level of conventional reality you grant yourself.

Yuren said:

Indeed.

Malcolm wrote:

Then you have no problem granting that it is a real place where people take rebirth, just as you took rebirth here in this world system.

Yuren said:

No, the idea that we can reduce Sukhavati to a metaphor is actually the more modern POV. Definitely not. The idea that buddhakṣetras, of which Sukhavati is but one, are actual physical places purified by bodhisattvas as part of their path is pervasive in Mahāyāna Buddhism.

It is common place in Chan Buddhism to interpret the Pure Land as an expedient expression for the Pure Mind; and to interpret Amitabha as our "self nature". Let me know if you need me to point to specific Chan texts. But really, even if you pick a Chan text at random, you will probably find that kind of interpretation in it, if there is a mention of Amitabha. There are some exceptions such as Hanshan Deqing perhaps, but they are the exception and not the rule in the Chan Buddhist tradition. And this is not an arbitrary method of interpretation, either, it has support in the Sutras. In Mahayana Buddhism, the Vimalakīrti Sūtra advocates that "When the mind becomes pure, the Buddha land also becomes pure," while the Avatamsaka Sūtra asserts that "One should contemplate the nature of all things in the Dharmadhātu, and realize that they are all created by the mind," and that "The mind, like a skillful painter, paints all sorts of skandhas" - so there is support for that interpretation, and then there is the Contemplation Sūtra's own statement that Sukhavati is "not far away" and that "the mind creates (Amida) buddha" - So whether it is a physical place or not, it remains true that it is mind-only.

Malcolm wrote:

Varying levels of understanding understand different things on different levels, none of which are necessarily in contradiction. Thus, one can understand Mt. Potala, Avalokiteśvara buddhafield on outer, inner, secret and ultimate levels without having to choose one as better or worse, more true or less true. The same applies to the buddhafields in the ten directions. They are both literal places, as conventionally real as this world system is, their purity or impurity are also functions of the purity or impurity of the mind, as is the purity or impurity of this world system and so on. So, we can have our cake and eat it too — but to maintain that Sukhavati is merely a metaphor, and not a real place, that is an extreme of denial.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 1st, 2015 at 12:17 AM

Title: Re: Buddhahood

Content:

Crazywisdom said:

Well the indivisibility of pure appearance and primordial purity as described in Guhyagarbha seem to suggest a result very different than the dissolution of the appearance in the completion stage as described in the usual HYT.

Malcolm wrote:

Huh? The result of HYT is the state of union, mahāmudra, the union of the so called illusory body (pure appearance) and luminosity (primordial purity).

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 1st, 2015 at 1:28 AM

Title: Re: Buddhahood

Content:

Crazywisdom said:

a related point i've read and heard is that the nine yanas are all steps leading further along to the final ninth and the ninth divides up further also ; I believe Longchenpa might have made this argument;

Malcolm wrote:

This applies only to Nyingma and Bon.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 1st, 2015 at 1:30 AM

Title: Re: Buddhahood

Content:

Crazywisdom said:

Well the indivisibility of pure appearance and primordial purity as described in Guhyagarbha seem to suggest a result very different than the dissolution of the appearance in the completion stage as described in the usual HYT.

Malcolm wrote:

Huh? The result of HYT is the state of union, mahāmudra, the union of the so called illusory body (pure appearance) and luminosity (primordial purity).

Crazywisdom said:

Yeah, according to tantras like Kalacakra. The mother tantras emphasize to the exclusion of everything else it seems if you hear the lamas tell it the clear light... the union of form is something to me it seems like a higher realization... I look forward to

being corrected if its wrong.

Malcolm wrote:

I am not sure where you got this idea, but it is wrong. There is no real difference between the Buddhahood explained in mother tantras and the father tantras. But this is the bon forum so we should probably discuss this elsewhere.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 1st, 2015 at 1:44 AM

Title: Re: Buddhahood

Content:

kalden yungdrung said:

Yes that was i expecting, this answer from you.

mutsuk said:

Malcolm's answer was correct. The Bönpos do not say otherwise.

Malcolm wrote:

I see, so it is Reynold's error.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 1st, 2015 at 2:33 AM

Title: Re: Brief members bios - please contribute!

Content:

Johnny Dangerous said:

Funny random anecdote on the David Tibet thing Loren: I remember having a copy of As The World Disappears by Current 93, which had song titles and other stuff written in Tibetan. At the time I worked with this zany characer, ex-monk with a mischievous sense of humour who worked as night auditor and asked him to translate...so technically Current93 was involved one of my first experiences with Vajrayana too;)

Malcolm wrote:

Many years ago I was to affiliated with TOPY. The first time I heard thighbone trumpets was on PTV's Force the Hand of Chance, circa 1984.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 1st, 2015 at 3:14 AM

Title: Re: Brief members bios - please contribute!

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Many years ago I was to affiliated with TOPY.

dzogchungpa said:

OK, now it all makes sense.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 1st, 2015 at 4:54 AM

Title: Re: Pointing out

Content:

philji said:

I have noticed a couple of western teachers offering dzogchen teachings and pointing out instructions. One of these is a well respected author and has a long background in dharma. I am wondering what it is that enables one/ permits one to give pointing out instructions?

Malcolm wrote:

One decides that one is a Dzogchen master either out of delusion or because one has really developed one's practice, and then one goes to town.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 1st, 2015 at 5:08 AM

Title: Re: All Shambhala Publications profits to Nepal today (April

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

Does anyone know what percent of the price, roughly, would be profit for Shambhala?

Malcolm wrote:

60%

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 1st, 2015 at 5:22 AM

Title: Re: All Shambhala Publications profits to Nepal today (April

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

Does anyone know what percent of the price, roughly, would be profit for Shambhala?

Malcolm wrote:

60%

dzogchungpa said:

Interesting, I didn't realize it was that high.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, if you buy directly. In general, the list price is a 40% markup in a book store, 50% if they are B&N, etc.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 1st, 2015 at 5:23 AM

Title: Re: Buddhahood

Content:

mutsuk said:

Buddhahood in Sutra, Tantra and Dzogchen is Bodies+Wisdoms+Activities. The way that manifests in these specific paths is different but the state is the same.

dzogchungpa said:

This might be a little off topic, but what is the easiest way to achieve this state, if one is not concerned about the way it manifests?

Malcolm wrote:

Practice really hard, in retreat, and ignoring this advice, "The Vajrayana path is basically achieving enlightenment while having fun."

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 1st, 2015 at 5:32 AM

Title: Re: Buddhahood

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

Heh. Practice what really hard in retreat, snark master?

Malcolm wrote:

Whatever your main practice is. If it is Dzogchen, then Dzogchen; if it is the two stages, then practice that. Both, practiced hard, will cause you to realize Buddhahood in this life, or in the bardo.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 1st, 2015 at 7:55 AM

Title: Re: The Ātman-Brahman in Ancient Buddhism

Content:

David Reigle said:

"I have but one answer which I have tried to formulate in various ways in this book, on the basis, invariably, of a study of the Pāli canon and of the Nikāyas in particular, that is: the Buddha does not deny the Upaniṣadic ātman; on the contrary, he indirectly affirms it, in denying that which is falsely believed to be the ātman."

Malcolm wrote:

Oh Yawn...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 1st, 2015 at 7:59 AM

Title: Re: Buddhahood

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

Heh. Practice what really hard in retreat, snark master?

Malcolm wrote:

Whatever your main practice is. If it is Dzogchen, then Dzogchen; if it is the two stages, then practice that. Both, practiced hard, will cause you to realize Buddhahood in this life, or in the bardo.

dzogchungpa said:

OK, but I was asking about the easiest way. Are you saying these ways are equally easy? I don't know that much about Dzogchen but I believe there are various methods so are they all equally easy? I'm actually curious about this. Also, keep in mind that I'm not concerned with speed of attainment here, except inasmuch as it relates to ease of attainment.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, these two systems are equally easy, if you define "easy" as getting out samsara with rapidity compared to other paths — this is the criterion by which they are described as "easy."

For example, a common person, or so it is said in Dzogchen texts, would need to spend a minimum of twelve years in strict retreat to achieve Buddhahood in this life; the best practitioner, six months.

Like anything else, you get out what you put in.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 1st, 2015 at 8:33 AM

Title: Re: Buddhahood

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

Well, I was thinking more along the lines of "not hard".

Malcolm wrote:

Compared to sūtra, Vajrayāna methods are not hard.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 1st, 2015 at 9:39 AM

Title: Re: Buddhahood

Content:

Crazywisdom said:

repeat: tregcho/togal is the swift and effortless path; someone here might say it's so hard to make the vision come; well because you can't make them... as long as you can sit still, you're good... and the more you practice the easier it gets, like anything else.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, it is the sitting still part that most people have trouble with. When we say "effortless" here, we actually mean that all effort impedes the path, whether physical, verbal or mental. Thus, it is not nearly as "easy" a path as some people imagine.

Hence yantra, etc.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 1st, 2015 at 9:42 AM

Title: Re: The Ātman-Brahman in Ancient Buddhism

Content:

David Reigle said:

"I have but one answer which I have tried to formulate in various ways in this book, on the basis, invariably, of a study of the Pāli canon and of the Nikāyas in particular, that is: the Buddha does not deny the Upaniṣadic ātman; on the contrary, he indirectly affirms it, in denying that which is falsely believed to be the ātman."

asunthatneversets said:

A conclusion of this nature requires quite a bit of extrapolation and conjecture, there really is no evidence that Śākyamuni affirmed the Upanisadic ātman via negation. In fact the Pali Canon states in no uncertain terms that "right view" is a freedom from extremes.

The buddhadharma is not apophatic theology.

Will said:

Reigle is giving some of Bhattacharya's views; for evidence one needs to study Bhattacharya's book.

Malcolm wrote:

It's the same old tired evidence trotted out by Zenmar, blah blah blah....

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 1st, 2015 at 11:36 AM

Title: Re: Buddhahood

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

So what is the least difficult path then? Are they all equally difficult?

Again, I understand this is not really a well-posed question, but I've often wondered about it.

Malcolm wrote:
Vajrayana in general.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Friday, May 1st, 2015 at 7:38 PM
Title: Re: More on recorded empowerments, etc.
Content:
Malcolm wrote:

The misconception which Astus has is the notion that an empowerment is merely communicating information received through the five senses, thus for him there is no difference between an empowerment and a recording of an empowerment, it is merely information. While it is true that information is being communicated through the five sense, that is not all that is happening, there are samadhis involved on the part of both the master and the students at the same time, there is the dependent origination which needs to be actively created between the master and the student at the same time, particularly in the lower empowerments; there are the samaya vows conferred and received and the agreement to follow them (Whatever you say boss, all that I will do....), and so on — all of the things which I have now explained exhaustively.

Astus said:
Yes, my basic assumption is that what benefits one on the path must be learnt, understood and experienced personally. So for the disciple what can have any effect for him is what he visualises during the empowerment, not what the master.

Malcolm wrote:
In this case, the master must do his job, before the disciple can do their job, and if the master has finished the empowerment and dissolved the mandala, it is too late.

Astus said:
You say it is the rite that matters, and it can be completed only when both the master and the student works together at the same time. But isn't the very point of performing the rite is to benefit the disciple? The question then is how the presence of the master and what he visualises affects the disciple. How can one enter a mandala that is mentally created by another?

Malcolm wrote:
At the most basic level, it is simply a question of procedure: in order for a master to confer an empowerment, he must first create himself in the form of that mandala or deity, as well as create a front-created mandala or deity (from which one actually receives the empowerment) before he can introduce students to that mandala in the form of a series of guided visualizations, which he does through a series of verbal instructions and visual cues, which include mantras and mudras.

If the steps above are not taken, no empowerment will be have been conferred. That is

just how it is. For example, if on an assembly line you do not assemble the parts in the proper way, your product will not work. So it is with an empowerment: if the procedures of the ritual are not carried out properly and in their correct order, the empowerment will not be valid.

If the master conferring the empowerment has not himself received the empowerment, the empowerment will not be valid. If he has not done the basic retreats, or at least received permission from his own guru to give the empowerments, the empowerment will not be valid, and the master will himself have broken his own samaya regarding revealing secrets to those who have not been ripened by empowerment (you may ask whether I am breaking samaya by discussing this — the answer is no, because I am not discussing specific details of Vajrayāna practice). If he omits parts of the ritual of the empowerment, the empowerment will not only not be valid, it will not have taken place at all.

Empowerments are very precise formula of ritual procedures which are designed to give transmissions into very specific practices in a structured way. Thus if the structure of the empowerment is violated, the transmission does not happen. Therefore, the idea that a recording of a mere part of an empowerment (the activities for disciples) can serve as an empowerment is a deeply mistaken idea on the part of anyone who holds it. Not only will there be no master conferring the empowerment; since there is no master, the conditions for the creation of the mandala/deity are absent, thus there is no mandala/deity. If there is no mandala/deity, there is nothing into which the student may be initiated. Therefore, the empowerment depends on the creation of the mandala/deity, the mandala/deity depends on the samadhi of the master, and the master's ability to confer the empowerment itself depends two things: a) he himself has received the transmission and b) he has either done the retreats for that practice or been commanded by his own guru to confer the transmission.

In addition there are ten things a master must know to be qualified to give empowerments. This can be looked up elsewhere.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 1st, 2015 at 7:46 PM

Title: Re: Pointing out

Content:

fckw said:

"Us"? You are referring to whom exactly? Dharma practitioners in general? Westerners? Western dharma practitioners?

What about such a qualification: "Having practiced the dharma for, let's say, 40 years, having read old Dzogchen texts in original old Tibetan and translated them with the guidance and support of high ranking lamas, plus a reasonable degree of realization, plus permission and support from high-ranking Tibetan lamas to do so." Would that qualify a Western teacher to give out pointing out instructions for Dzogchen? Or do you prefer to receive them from a 18 year old Tibetan "Tulku" who happened to have

inherited such a title from his father?

Malcolm wrote:

The technical qualification for being able to truly give Dzogchen teachings is having attained the third vision. But this is rather rare and so these days, many people are giving Dzogchen instruction who have only entered the second vision.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 1st, 2015 at 8:06 PM

Title: Re: Pointing out

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The technical qualification for being able to truly give Dzogchen teachings is having attained the third vision. But this is rather rare and so these days, many people are giving Dzogchen instruction who have only entered the second vision.

fckw said:

Thanks, did not know that, very illuminating!

Malcolm wrote:

There are very clear and specific signs for each Vajrayāna system that will let one know whether one is qualified to give Vajrayāna teachings, apart from one's guru telling one to go teach.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 1st, 2015 at 8:22 PM

Title: Re: Pointing out

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

There are very clear and specific signs for each Vajrayāna system that will let one know whether one is qualified to give Vajrayāna teachings, apart from one's guru telling one to go teach.

fckw said:

I am aware that there are these criteria. However, 1) I did not know that for example the 3. vision is regarded as a required preliminary to teach Dzogchen, 2) often the traditional descriptions are either very lofty (e.g. various siddhis being mentioned) because they only mention the highest class of practitioners and may not even talk about the vast majority of lower class practitioners, and also because the language they use is often hard to understand. That is, unless you have a master telling you in more accessible words what is actually meant.

Malcolm wrote:

In general, one should not give Vajrayāna empowerments until one has reached strong heat on the path of application. But these days, well...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 1st, 2015 at 9:12 PM

Title: Re: More on recorded empowerments, etc.

Content:

Astus said:

I think I understand that for empowerment to happen the described procedures have to be followed, as that is the definition of what an empowerment is. Similarly to marriage that is defined in a specific way by the law, and regardless of how people live or what they do, they are not married as long as the correct procedure was not followed. However, people can do the same things both with and without a marriage certificate. That is, one can still live together and have children without marriage, while it is said that without empowerment one cannot practise Vajrayana effectively. So, the disciple must obtain something during empowerment that makes him different from the uninitiated. That is why I first of all try to analyse from the perspective of the receiver and ask the question of what is transmitted from master to student. Everything delivered through the five senses can be obtained from a recording as well. The methods of the practice and the precepts to follow can also be learnt from other sources. What makes the recipient of a correctly performed empowerment different from the one who did not receive it when they both engage in the same practice and uphold the same precepts? Is it perhaps related to the knowledge that "I have the empowerment" in the former that is missing from the latter person?

Malcolm wrote:

The difference between the former and the latter is that the former is like a field that has been tilled, fertilized and planted; whereas the latter is like field that has not been tilled, has not been fertilized and not been planted.

A person who has received an empowerment is termed "ripened", whereas those who have not received empowerments are termed "unripened." If one has not been ripened, one is not a candidate for the liberating instructions.

And as I have written elsewhere, logic and inference are not authorities in Vajrayāna, scripture is. The Abhibodhikramopadeśa of Master Āryadeva states:

At the time of the ultimate view of secret mantra,
the direct perception by the mind and sense organs
as well as inferences are not authorities;
the profound scriptures and intimate instructions are authorities.

This being the case, the Mahāmudratilaka Tantra states:

There is no siddhi for one who lacks empowerment,
just there is no butter from churning sand.

If one pridefully expounds the tantras and agamas
without empowerment,

immediately upon death master and disciple
go to hell even if siddhi has been attained.

So, you see, for Vajrayāna the issue of proper empowerments is not really something

that depends on reason and inference. It depends on scripture and intimate instructions. And understanding that intellectuals might argue with such ideas, again Aryadeva writes in the Abhibodhikramopadeśa:

In evil future times,
without relying on profound scriptures and intimate instructions,
those who prioritize the twin reasonings of validation and proofs
will each grasp their own philosophy as sublime;
satisfied with a mere hidden meaning
and without any interest in the ultimate profound view,
again they make refutations,
destroying themselves and others.

So when it comes to Secret Mantra, the tantras are the definitive authority. Also the rites must be properly performed, as the The Great Commentary Tantra of the Mayajala states:

Akaśagarbha, you should listen!
All of the tantras like mine
endowed with nondual wisdom,
like wishfulfilling gems, wish-granting trees
and excellent vases
are proper places for devotion.
Even one [tantra] has inconceivable power
through different methods,
yielding accomplishment in the same way.
However, there is no accomplishment with defective rituals.
This is why it is very important to understand and follow the proper ritual procedures if one is both a master of Vajrayāna as well as a student of Vajrayāna. One's very realization is at stake.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 1st, 2015 at 9:20 PM

Title: Re: More on recorded empowerments, etc.

Content:

smcj said:

So on the student's side, what is necessary to receive it? Faith in the guru. This is above and beyond what the 5 senses can perceive. What kind of faith? That the guru holds the lineage for the empowerment and has summoned the deity to be present and accessible at that place and time via himself. As Malcolm said, afterwards the guru dissolves the mandala and the empowerment is over. Somebody showing up late doesn't get it even if they get bonked with all the various implements, etc.

So a Chinese soldier guarding an empowerment would not receive it. Nor would a student that had a closed mind and refused to believe that something metaphysical was occurring. And "occurring" is the operative word here. It is a window into the metaphysical, which closes at the end of the empowerment.

Malcolm wrote:

All that is necessary to receive the empowerment is one) a guru with the lineage; two) interest in the practice; three) willing participation in the rite (as it is occurring), just as in any other kind of ordination rite.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 1st, 2015 at 9:25 PM

Title: Re: More on recorded empowerments, etc.

Content:

fckw said:

What has not been touched in this discussion yet is that there might be causal and subtle energies being involved in an empowerment that naturally cannot be recorded.

dzogchungpa said:

You mean zapping? I keep bringing it up but nobody seems to be interested.

Malcolm wrote:

CHNN to a student who complained that she could not feel any "vibration" during his transmissions:

"I am very sorry I could not give you any vibration....he he he"

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 1st, 2015 at 9:54 PM

Title: Re: More on recorded empowerments, etc.

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

This is why it is very important to understand and follow the proper ritual procedures if one is both a master of Vajrayāna as well as a student of Vajrayāna. One's very realization is at stake.

dzogchungpa said:

Do the scriptures say what the proper ritual procedures for a webcast are?

Malcolm wrote:

No, and this is of course is the reason most Lamas think the idea of giving deity transmissions via webcast is controversial. For example, ChNN gives what he calls "don dbang" i.e. meaning empowerments, which involve no ritual objects via webcast, but he will not give full fledged empowerments via webcasts. Garchen Rinpoche on the other hand frequently gives traditional empowerments via webcast. In my opinion, as long as one is participating in real time, then either way is not really an issue. That being said, attending in person is always better.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 1st, 2015 at 9:55 PM

Title: Re: More on recorded empowerments, etc.

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

And as I have written elsewhere, logic and inference are not authorities in Vajrayāna, scripture is. The Abhibodhikramopadeśa of Master Āryadeva states:

At the time of the ultimate view of secret mantra,
the direct perception by the mind and sense organs
as well as inferences are not authorities;
the profound scriptures and intimate instructions are authorities.

Astus said:

That clarifies it then for me why there aren't really works discussing the functioning of Vajrayana in a way that other Buddhist methods are usually discussed, describing the various mental elements and conditions at work. And thank you for the previous responses as well, you're really helpful.

Malcolm wrote:

There are actually, but first you have to be ripened even in order to see such books.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 1st, 2015 at 9:58 PM

Title: Re: Buddhahood

Content:

Crazywisdom said:

repeat: tregcho/togal is the swift and effortless path; someone here might say it's so hard to make the vision come; well because you can't make them... as long as you can sit still, you're good... and the more you practice the easier it gets, like anything else.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, it is the sitting still part that most people have trouble with. When we say "effortless" here, we actually mean that all effort impedes the path, whether physical, verbal or mental. Thus, it is not nearly as "easy" a path as some people imagine.

Hence yantra, etc.

Crazywisdom said:

Ganapuja. Very very important

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, but I mentioned yantra because it is helpful in allowing one to sit very still. As the Yogasūtra says:

Sthira-sukham asanam

Asana is steadiness and comfort.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 1st, 2015 at 10:31 PM

Title: Re: Mirror and Dust: different?

Content:

DesertDweller said:

Thank you Astus, Dan, Wayfarer et al for these really useful replies. I'm glad I brought this up here.

But here's something else:

I know this will sound funny but, if the objective world is an illusion or fabrication, then how do we understand "individual minds"? In other words, "who" or "what" are you Astus, Dan, Wayfarer, Muni? You "exist" for me only in relation to my mind, which is all I know. But from your perspective, I myself am part of the illusion of the objective world. But reality is nondual. I guess the question is, how do we explain "my mind" and "your mind"? I know in the Absolute sense they cannot be found, but how does that work "on the ground"?

Malcolm wrote:

There are two kinds of "nondual" discussed in Buddhadharmā; nondualism ala yogacara, the absence of an external world, aka mind-only and nondualism ala madhyamaka, i.e. that absence of existence and nonexistence. The former school argues that minds are separate continuums. Madhyamaka accepts the existence of separate continuums conventionally.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 1st, 2015 at 10:47 PM

Title: Re: Buddhahood

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

As the Yogasūtra says:

Sthira-sukham asanam

Asana is steadiness and comfort.

dzogchungpa said:

tirthika.jpg

Malcolm wrote:

Well, I have the transmission for that, that's all.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 1st, 2015 at 10:51 PM

Title: Re: Mirror and Dust: different?

Content:

DesertDweller said:

Yes, and I naturally lean towards Yogacara; still, my understanding was that they were

synthesized early on.

EDIT: On second reading I'm not sure I understand what you mean by "separate" continuums and how this relates to Yogacara.

EDIT 2: And isn't Chinese Yogacara rather distinct from classical Yogacara?

Malcolm wrote:

Separate as in distinct and unique. This is why my karma does not ripen on you and yours does not ripen on me. The reason we share the common perception of a universe is due to similarities in traces.

No, not really, Xuan Tsang was very much in the Indian model.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 2nd, 2015 at 12:09 AM

Title: Re: More on recorded empowerments, etc.

Content:

conebeckham said:

Frankly, it saddens me that we even have to have these discussions about "broadcast" and "Recorded" empowerments. People should strive to attend in person, physically, some sort of complete Wangkur, for a practice, or with a guru, with which/whome they feel a connection.

Pero said:

What saddens me is that you think that we attend webcasts because we're taking the easy way.

Malcolm wrote:

He didn't say that...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 2nd, 2015 at 12:31 AM

Title: Re: More on recorded empowerments, etc.

Content:

Pero said:

No but it's implied. If people "should strive to attend in person" it means that people generally don't strive to attend in person (since there's the possibility of webcasts).

Malcolm wrote:

I don't see it that way.

ChNN said there is no difference, however, some teachings he won't webcast.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 2nd, 2015 at 4:42 AM

Title: Re: More on recorded empowerments, etc.

Content:

conebeckham said:

I've not taken LamDre, but is it true that there are actual "ritual transmissions" for completion stages, etc., or are they merely graduated instructions?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes. The path empowerment for candali yogas, etc., the Nairatmya blessing for the practices connected with third and fourth empowerment.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 2nd, 2015 at 5:52 AM

Title: Re: Buddhahood

Content:

Crazywisdom said:

merit will accomplish this perhaps faster and better, IMHO

Malcolm wrote:

Merit will let you sit more still?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 2nd, 2015 at 5:59 AM

Title: Re: More on recorded empowerments, etc.

Content:

conebeckham said:

I've not taken LamDre, but is it true that there are actual "ritual transmissions" for completion stages, etc., or are they merely graduated instructions?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes. The path empowerment for candali yogas, etc., the Nairatmya blessing for the practices connected with third and fourth empowerment.

conebeckham said:

Very interesting, thanks! Shangpa has "empowerments" for each of the six yogas, as well as empowerments for Chagchen Ga'uma, Khacho Karmo, the 3 LamKhyers, and Deathlessness of Body and Mind as well. I think there are a few similarities between these systems....

Malcolm wrote:

Lamdre has some extra transmissions of guru yoga, but beyond that, not much in terms of empowerments.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 2nd, 2015 at 7:05 PM

Title: Re: Rainbow Body - Why?

Content:

LunaRoja said:

Hello,

Why is the rainbow body accomplished from Naro Kacho practice different from the rainbow body accomplished through togyal? I am not clear on why there is a difference.

Malcolm wrote:

It isn't.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 2nd, 2015 at 8:03 PM

Title: Re: The Ātman-Brahman in Ancient Buddhism

Content:

David Reigle said:

While it is a bit premature for me to engage in an academic discussion of a book that can hardly have yet been read by others (unless one reads French), I will nonetheless provide a quotation from it (p. 33) as an example. This quotation comes from Vasubandhu's own commentary on his Vijñapti-mātratā-siddhi Viṃśatikā, verse 10:

yo bālair dharmāṇāṃ svabhāvo grāhyagrāhakādiḥ parikalpitas tena kalpitenātmanā teṣāṃ nairātmyam, na tv anabhilāpyenātmanā yo buddhānāṃ viṣayaḥ.

"The own-nature of phenomena, consisting in graspable and grasper, as childish minds imagine it, that is the imaginary Self of phenomena; and it is through this imaginary Self that phenomena are without-self; but not by the ineffable Self which is the domain of the Buddhas."

Vasubandhu, at least, here accepted an ineffable (anabhilāpya) ātman that is the domain (viṣaya) of the Buddhas. This he distinguished from the absence of self (nairātmya) in phenomena (dharma-s).

Yes, this is the same Vasubandhu who earlier wrote a supplementary chapter to his Abhidharma-kośa on the person (pudgala). This supplementary chapter, chapter 9, is one of the strongest statements of anātman and one of the most sustained arguments against the ātman to be found anywhere in the Buddhist writings. It is for reasons like this that Bhattacharya in his book stresses the need to ask "which ātman?" is being referred to in any Buddhist statement about the ātman.

Malcolm wrote:

In order to understand that Vasubandhu is trying to at here, however, one needs to consult Vinitadeva's subcommentary, the Prakaraṇa viṃśatikāṭikā:

...བརྗོད་ཏུ་མེད་པའི་བདག་ཉིད་ཀྱིས་ཞེས་བྱ་བ་ནི་བརྗོད་པར་མི་རྣམས་པར་རང་གི་ངོ་བོས་ཞེས་བྱ་བའི་ཐ་ཚིག་གོ

Thus "the inexpressible atman" turns out to mean "...a term for an intrinsic nature [རང་གི་ངོ་བོ, svarūpa] that cannot be expressed."

Having clarified this, we can then see how best to understand the following statement:

རྣམས་འབྱོར་པས་རང་གི་སེམས་དང་གཞན་གྱི་སེམས་བརྗོད་ཏུ་མེད་པའི་བདག་ཉིད་ཏུ་མ་རིག་སྟེ།
དེ་དག་རང་གི་གཟུང་བའི་ཆ་གཉིས་རང་དང་གཞན་གྱི་སེམས་སྟ་བུར་རིག་པ་ན་རང་དང་གཞན་གྱི་སེམས་རིག་གོ་ཞེས་རྟོག་པར་བྱེད་ཀྱི།
ཡང་དག་པའི་དོན་ཏུ་ན་རང་དང་གཞན་གྱི་སེམས་ཀྱི་རང་གི་ངོ་བོ་ལ་ནི་མ་རིག་གོ།

Yogins do not know the inexpressible nature [atman] of their own or others' minds; when they know the dualistic part of their own apprehensions, seeming like their own minds and others' minds, they generate the concept, "My mind and the minds of others are known". However, in reality, they have not known the intrinsic nature [svarūpa] of their own and other's minds.

Thus, I think it is very hasty to presume that Vasubandhu's Viṃśatikāvṛtti can be used to justify an upanishadic-like self in Buddhadharma. This text in turn needs to be read in light of Vinitadeva's subcommentary, which clarifies what Vasubandhu is saying very clearly.

Without consulting Indian commentaries that may only exist in Tibetan, it is very hard to get a handle on Indian Buddhist texts when read through the eyes people who are expert mainly in Upanishadic, Vedic, and other non-Buddhist literature in Sanskrit.

Also, one needs to look and see what Xuan Tshang says about this passage and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 2nd, 2015 at 8:09 PM

Title: Re: Rainbow Body - Why?

Content:

Crazywisdom said:

When I posed this question to ChNN he said the former is the exhaustion of karma and the latter results in the body of light. The implication is that togal has a higher result re immortal nirmanakaya of light.

Malcolm wrote:

According to Sachen, the result of the completion stage is that the physical body reverts to wisdom. There is no difference in the results at all; the path is the only difference.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 2nd, 2015 at 8:47 PM

Title: Re: Rainbow Body - Why?

Content:

Crazywisdom said:

When I posed this question to ChNN he said the former is the exhaustion of karma and the latter results in the body of light. The implication is that togal has a higher result re immortal nirmanakaya of light.

Malcolm wrote:

According to Sachen, the result of the completion stage is that the physical body reverts to wisdom. There is no difference in the results at all; the path is the only difference.

Crazywisdom said:

I still feel the inner yanas might be a higher view, path and result, bc of the way five lights manifest beyond volition. but also bc guhyagarbha has these two stages of completion w Mahamudra preceding clear light.

Malcolm wrote:

"Inner yānas" thinking only applies to Nyingma tantras. It is not relevant to gsar ma. One cannot fit Hevajra, Cakrasamvara, etc., into the Nyingma classification scheme (which never existed in India in any case).

In any case, wisdom is wisdom. The fact that the body reverts to wisdom is the identical in both systems.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 2nd, 2015 at 9:40 PM

Title: Re: The Ātman-Brahman in Ancient Buddhism

Content:

Will said:

So Malcolm, Vasubandhu or Thurman needs more interpretation here, in Sutralamkara 9:23:

Supreme selflessness is completely pure suchness, and that is a buddha's "self," in the sense of "intrinsic reality."

You may be, as other critics are, assuming that Bhattacharya's Atmic 'self' is a glorified version of our ordinary 'self'. I do not know yet, because I have not read the book. But Vasubandhu above and the Avatamsaka Sutra, among others, makes it clear that our true nature lacks nature (svabhava or svarupa). Since that true nature is real, then it can be thought of as a True self, with emphasis on True, not self.

Malcolm wrote:

Sthiramati clarifies the above:

ཞེས་བྱ་བའི་བདག་གི་སྒྲི་ནི་འདིའི་སྐབས་སུ་ངོ་བོ་ཉིད་ཀྱི་དོན་ལ་བྱ་སྟེ། སངས་རྒྱལ་ནམས་བདག་མེད་པའི་ངོ་བོ་ཉིད་དུ་གྱུར་པས་བདག་གི་མཚན་ཐོབ་པ་ཡིན་ནི་ཞེས་བྱ་བའི་དོན་ཏེ།
"The term "self" in this context means "svabhava", i.e., it means "since the Buddhas

become the nature of selflessness, they obtain the supreme self."

But this is not a self that is separate from the aggregates, nor is it a self apart from what is wrongly identified as a self. This is no more controversial than when Candrakīrti states that absence of nature is the nature of all things.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 3rd, 2015 at 12:33 AM

Title: Re: The Ātman-Brahman in Ancient Buddhism

Content:

Will said:

Malcolm - But this is not a self that is separate from the aggregates, nor is it a self apart from what is wrongly identified as a self. This is no more controversial than when Candrakīrti states that absence of nature is the nature of all things.

Quite so, in which case, if this is Bhattacharya's approach, then the only new wrinkle from him would be the nature of the Hindu Atman. If it is identical to tathata or Suchness, then Buddhists have misunderstood or misconstrued the Hindu Atman for a long time.

Malcolm wrote:

But it isn't, since suchness is merely the emptiness of all phenomena, nothing more or less.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 3rd, 2015 at 12:56 AM

Title: Re: The Ātman-Brahman in Ancient Buddhism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

... suchness is merely the emptiness of all phenomena, nothing more or less.

dzogchungpa said:

The book appears to be based primarily on the Nikayas. Can you provide a citation from the Nikayas for this?

Malcolm wrote:

"Suchness", tattva, is not really a word used much in the Agamas, where it does occur, it refers to nirvana.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 3rd, 2015 at 12:58 AM

Title: Re: The Ātman-Brahman in Ancient Buddhism

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

So your citation is?

Malcolm wrote:

As he was sitting there he said to the Blessed One: "Lord, 'Right view, right view,' it is said. To what extent is there right view?"

"By & large, Kaccayana, this world is supported by (takes as its object) a polarity, that of existence & non-existence. But when one sees the origination of the world as it actually is with right discernment, 'non-existence' with reference to the world does not occur to one. When one sees the cessation of the world as it actually is with right discernment, 'existence' with reference to the world does not occur to one.

<http://www.accesstoinsight.org/tipitaka/sn/sn12/sn12.015.than.html>

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 3rd, 2015 at 1:29 AM

Title: Re: The Ātman-Brahman in Ancient Buddhism

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

So your citation is?

Malcolm wrote:

As he was sitting there he said to the Blessed One: "Lord, 'Right view, right view,' it is said. To what extent is there right view?"

"By & large, Kaccayana, this world is supported by (takes as its object) a polarity, that of existence & non-existence. But when one sees the origination of the world as it actually is with right discernment, 'non-existence' with reference to the world does not occur to one. When one sees the cessation of the world as it actually is with right discernment, 'existence' with reference to the world does not occur to one.

<http://www.accesstoinsight.org/tipitaka/sn/sn12/sn12.015.than.html>

dzogchungpa said:

Yes, so how does that citation support the statement "Buddhist tathata is freedom from extremes."?

Malcolm wrote:

Nāgārjuna cites this very passage in MMK 15 in order to demonstrate the truth the Buddha is speaking about:

Whoever sees inherent existence, dependent existence,
existence or non-existence,
they do not see the truth
in the Buddha's doctrine;
because the Bhagavan, explaining existence and non-existence,
also negates
both 'is' and 'is not'
in the Advice to Katyāyana.

The Ārya-pratyutpanna-buddhasaṃmukhāvasthitasamādhī-nāma-mahāyāna-sūtra:
One who understands suchness and the meaning of nonconceptuality as dharma, there is no proliferation in him.

Or the Vajrapadaśārasaṃgrahapañjikā:
Without proliferation from the beginning,
pure suchness is the nature of purity.

Or the Pañcaviṃśatisāhasrikāprajñāpāramitā:
If one knows how matter is, one knows in that way just how it is suchness, unmistaken suchness, unchanging, nonconceptual, signless, effortless, without proliferation and imperceptible.

Or the Sūtrālaṃkāravṛttibhāṣya:
In that way, the dharma called "suchness" is truly beyond proliferation, intellectual debate and the range of consciousness, and is explained as inconceivable because it cannot be conceived by the immature.
I could go on and on, but there is no need, right?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 3rd, 2015 at 1:35 AM

Title: Re: The Ātman-Brahman in Ancient Buddhism

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

Yes, so how does that citation support the statement "Buddhist tathata is freedom from extremes."?

Malcolm wrote:

Nāgārjuna cites this very passage in MMK 15 in order to demonstrate the truth the Buddha is speaking about:

Whoever sees inherent existence, dependent existence,
existence or non-existence,
they do not see the truth
in the Buddha's doctrine;
because the Bhagavan, explaining existence and non-existence,
also negates
both 'is' and 'is not'
in the Advice to Kātyāyana.

The Ārya-pratyutpanna-buddhasaṃmukhāvasthitasamādhī-nāma-mahāyāna-sūtra:
One who understands suchness and the meaning of nonconceptuality as dharma, there is no proliferation in him.

Or the Vajrapadaśārasaṃgrahapañjikā:
Without proliferation from the beginning,
pure suchness is the nature of purity.

Or the Pañcaviṃśatisāhasrikāprajñāpāramitā:
If one knows how matter is, one knows in that way just how it is suchness, unmistaken suchness, unchanging, nonconceptual, signless, effortless, without proliferation and imperceptible.

or the Sūtrālaṃkāravṛttibhāṣya:

In that way, the dharma called "suchness" is truly beyond proliferation, intellectual debate and range of consciousness, and is explained as inconceivable because it cannot be conceived by the immature.

I could go on and on, but there is no need, right?

dzogchungpa said:

Are all those citations from the Nikayas?

Malcolm wrote:

This is the question you asked:

Yes, so how does that citation support the statement "Buddhist tathata is freedom from extremes."?

I already told you that the Nikayas do not discuss the issue, so why would I bother trying to cite something it does not exist? Suchness is principally a Mahāyāna tenet.

However, the Advice to Katyāyana is an Agamic sūtra, and it one used frequently to demonstrate that Buddha taught freedom extremes in a limited way to the śrāvakas.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 3rd, 2015 at 1:44 AM

Title: Re: The Ātman-Brahman in Ancient Buddhism

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

Are all those citations from the Nikayas?

Malcolm wrote:

This is the question you asked:

Yes, so how does that citation support the statement "Buddhist tathata is freedom from extremes."?

I already told you that the Nikayas do not discuss the issue, so why would I bother trying to cite something it does not exist? Suchness is principally a Mahāyāna tenet.

However, the Advice to Katyāyana is an Agamic sūtra, and it one used frequently to demonstrate that Buddha taught freedom extremes in a limited way to the śrāvakas.

dzogchungpa said:

Very good, but the point is I was asking Sherlock to support his statement "Buddhist tathata is freedom from extremes." with a citation from the Nikayas, and you responded, presumably on his behalf, with the Katyāyana thing.

Malcolm wrote:

Which is from the nikayas...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 3rd, 2015 at 1:53 AM

Title: Re: The Ātman-Brahman in Ancient Buddhism

Content:

David Reigle said:

This quotation comes from Vasubandhu's own commentary on his Vijñapti-mātratā-siddhi Viṃśatikā, verse 10:

yo bālair dharmāṇāṃ svabhāvo grāhyagrāhakādiḥ parikalpitas tena kalpitenātmanā teṣāṃ nairātmyam, na tv anabhilāpyenātmanā yo buddhānāṃ viṣayaḥ.

"The own-nature of phenomena, consisting in graspable and grasper, as childish minds imagine it, that is the imaginary Self of phenomena; and it is through this imaginary Self that phenomena are without-self; but not by the ineffable Self which is the domain of the Buddhas."

Malcolm wrote:

Having clarified this, we can then see how best to understand the following statement:

Yogins do not know the inexpressible nature [atman] of their own or others' minds; when they know the dualistic part of their own apprehensions, seeming like their own minds and others' minds, they generate the concept, "My mind and the minds of others are known". However, in reality, they have not known the intrinsic nature [svarūpa] of their own and other's minds.

Son of Buddha said:

Your translations doesn't match up that well with Thurman's.

Malcolm wrote:

This is not the same text as thurman's

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 3rd, 2015 at 2:07 AM

Title: Re: The Ātman-Brahman in Ancient Buddhism

Content:

Son of Buddha said:

Malcolm

This is not the same text as thurman's

Ah I see then its a commentary of a commentary.

Question does the term Atman exist in the version of the text you are quoting?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, where it is defined as svarupa.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 3rd, 2015 at 5:21 AM

Title: Re: The Ātman-Brahman in Ancient Buddhism

Content:

Son of Buddha said:

You sure about that?Nirvana Sutra chapter 8

Malcolm wrote:

It is questionable whether there actually is a chapter 8 in the original Mahāyāna Parinirvana sūtra. The direct Tibetan translation from Sanskrit by Jinamitra, Jñānagarbha and Devacandra has only five chapters, in three thousand and nine hundred ślokas.

The version from Chinese is considerably longer, by an entire volume. I personally do not trust the long Chinese recension at all.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 3rd, 2015 at 6:34 AM

Title: Re: The Ātman-Brahman in Ancient Buddhism

Content:

Son of Buddha said:

You sure about that?Nirvana Sutra chapter 8

Malcolm wrote:

It is questionable whether there actually is a chapter 8 in the original Mahāyāna Parinirvana sūtra. The direct Tibetan translation from Sanskrit by Jinamitra, Jñānagarbha and Devacandra has only five chapters, in three thousand and nine hundred ślokas.

The version from Chinese is considerably longer, by an entire volume. I personally do not trust the long Chinese recension at all.

M

Son of Buddha said:

Hey believe what you want, I know people who think Vajrayana Tantra is a disgusting perversion of Buddhism in general so they are welcome to their opinions as are you.

Malcolm wrote:

It is not a question of "believing what I want," Stephen Hodge also has doubts about the veracity of later portions of the translation by Dharmakṣema. The version translated by Fa-hsien appears to be the original.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 3rd, 2015 at 6:42 AM

Title: Re: The Ātman-Brahman in Ancient Buddhism

Content:

Son of Buddha said:

Enlightenment/Dharmakaya is the same thing as the Buddha Nature..... I proved that in my last post to you.

BuddhaFollower said:

Do you understand that there are 2 Buddha Natures, sutric Buddha Nature and tantric Buddha Nature?

As Malcolm said:

Malcolm wrote:

There are two kinds of buddhanature, one as presented in sutra, another which is presented in the tantras. The sutrayāna version is often conflated with the way buddhanature is defined in tantra, especially in Dzogchen. In other words, the term "buddhanature" is used differently in sutra and tantra.

Son of Buddha said:

Got any actual proof for that statement?

What Sutra or Tantra literally says "There are 2 different kinds of Buddha Nature"?

Peace and Love

Malcolm wrote:

No sūtra or tantra says this. However, for example, the Mind Mirror of Vajrasattva Tantra states:

The sugatagarbha exists intrinsically in all sentient beings. That exists just as sesame seeds are permeated with oil. Its basis — it is based on the material aggregate. It's location — it is located in the center of the heart. Also that is called "the transcendent state of Samantabhadra's sealed locket". For example, like a sealed locket of leather, inside its location, from the center of a five colored light there exist peaceful kāyas the size of mustard grains in halos of light. That is the location of vidyā. For example, it is like form of a vase.

Here, it is said that sugatagarbha has a physical location in the body. So really, there is a difference in how this concept is used in sutra and in tantra.

There are other Dzogchen texts which indicate that sugatagarbha can be visibly seen with the eyes through various yogic techniques. This is really quite different than the way it is presented in sutra, won't you agree?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 3rd, 2015 at 7:55 AM

Title: Re: The Ātman-Brahman in Ancient Buddhism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

No sūtra or tantra says this. However, for example, the Mind Mirror of Vajrasattva Tantra states:

The sugatagarbha exists intrinsically in all sentient beings. That exists just as sesame seeds are permeated with oil. Its basis — it is based on the material aggregate. It's location — it is located in the center of the heart. Also that is called "the transcendent state of Samantabhadra's sealed locket". For example, like a sealed locket of leather, inside its location, from the center of a five colored light there exist peaceful kāyas the size of mustard grains in halos of light. That is the location of vidyā. For example, it is like form of a vase.

Here, it is said that sugatagarbha has a physical location in the body. So really, there is a difference in how this concept is used in sutra and in tantra.

There are other Dzogchen texts which indicate that sugatagarbha can be visibly seen with the eyes through various yogic techniques. This is really quite different than the way it is presented in sutra, won't you agree?

Son of Buddha said:

Nope don't agree seeing that the same exact thing is taught in the Sutras as well

Tatagatagarbha Sutra

when I look at beings with my Buddha vision, I see that the tathagatagarbha is surrounded by a husk of ignorance, just as the seeds of a fruit are only found at its core. kulaputra, that tathagatagarbha is cold and unripe. It is the profound nirvananirvrta that is brought about by Maha jnana (great wisdom). It is called the Samyak sambuddha (perfect Buddha), the Tathagata, the Arhat and so on. kulaputras, after the Tathagata has observed beings, he reveals this message in order to purify the bodhisattva mahasattva jnana."

and

I see the different beings with their many kleshad, transmigrating through the long night of endless samsara and I perceive that within their bodies is the wondrous Tathagatagarbha. They are august and pure and no different from myself. For this reason the Buddha expounds the Dharma for beings, that they might sever those kleshad and purify their Tathagata jnana. I turn the Dharmacakra again and again in order to convert all worlds."

Plenty more quotes if you need them..... Again you have not shown how there are 2 different Buddha Natures nor have you shown any difference between the Sutra and Tantra versions of Buddha Nature.

Malcolm wrote:

No, in these sutras it is made very clear that only huddhas can this, but in the tantras, ordinary persons can see the sugatagarbha, so the difference is huge.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 3rd, 2015 at 7:57 AM

Title: Re: The Ātman-Brahman in Ancient Buddhism

Content:

Son of Buddha said:

Read mine and Malcolm's discussion as you can see no actual difference has been presented between the Sutras and Tantras idea of Buddha Nature.

BuddhaFollower said:

There is no anatomy in your passage for attaining rainbow body like in Malcolm's passage.

Son of Buddha said:

Malcolm's point was

Here, it is said that sugatagarbha has a physical location in the body. So really, there is a difference in how this concept is used in sutra and in tantra.

There are other Dzogchen texts which indicate that sugatagarbha can be visibly seen with the eyes through various yogic techniques. This is really quite different than the way it is presented in sutra, won't you agree?

And I have proven that the Sutra LIKEWISE teach that the Sugatagarbha has a physical location in the body just like the Tantras do.

Malcolm wrote:

Where in the body do sutras say sugatagarbha is located? There are other Dzogchen texts that declare the four elements are sugatagarbha.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 3rd, 2015 at 8:29 AM

Title: Re: The Ātman-Brahman in Ancient Buddhism

Content:

Son of Buddha said:

Malcolm

it is not a question of "believing what I want," Stephen Hodge also has doubts about the veracity of later portions of the translation by Dharmakṣema. The version translated by by Fa-hsien appears to be the original.

Sure it is a question of what you believe.....and likewise many scholars, historians and

Buddhists think the Vajrayana Tantras are entirely dubious in origin and in many cases contain very perverse teachings if taken literally.

Also the first 17 chapters of the Dharmakīrti version correspond to the Original Faxian version, my quote came from chapter 8

Second I find it hard to believe you like the Faxian version better you know seeing as the Faxian version uses the term JIVATMAN instead of Atman it teaches directly the term Soul.

But as I said before believe what you want.

Malcolm wrote:

Ok, the translation you are using has confused fascicles with chapters. There are only five chapters in the original text. Even so, the Chinese translation is quite inaccurate compared with the Tibetan translation. This is why I don't trust it.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 3rd, 2015 at 9:24 AM

Title: Re: The Ātman-Brahman in Ancient Buddhism

Content:

Son of Buddha said:

It is taught in the Nirvana Sutra that the Tenth level Bodhisattva's can clearly see it with their eyes.

BuddhaFollower said:

Dzogchen is not limited to Tenth level Bodhisattvas.

Malcolm wrote:

Not only that, but the sutra does not say that they can.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 3rd, 2015 at 9:48 AM

Title: Re: The Ātman-Brahman in Ancient Buddhism

Content:

Son of Buddha said:

[

Yes the Sutra's do say the 10th level bodhisattva's can see the Buddha Nature.....again still waiting on an actual DIFFERENCE between Sutra Buddha Nature and Tantric Buddha Nature.

Malcolm wrote:

No, the sutra does not say that.

<https://www.dharmawheel.net/viewtopic.php?f=39&t=19423&start=120#p280894>

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 3rd, 2015 at 10:30 AM

Title: Re: The Ātman-Brahman in Ancient Buddhism

Content:

Son of Buddha said:

[

Yes the Sutra's do say the 10th level bodhisattva's can see the Buddha Nature.....again still waiting on an actual DIFFERENCE between Sutra Buddha Nature and Tantric Buddha Nature.

Malcolm wrote:

No, the sutra does not say that.

<https://www.dharmawheel.net/viewtopic.php?f=39&t=19423&start=120#p280894>

Son of Buddha said:

Yea it does

Nirvana Sutra

'Noble son, although bodhisattvas dwelling on the tenth level [the tenth bhumi - i.e. the very highest level of spiritual development, just below that of a Buddha] do perceive Buddha-dhatu, it is not clear to them. Noble son, you might ask with what eye do bodhisattvas dwelling on the tenth level perceive Buddha-dhatu, though it is not clear to them, with what eye do the blessed Buddhas clearly perceive it? Noble son, that seen with the eye of insight (prajna-caksus) is not clear, while that seen with the Buddha eye is clear. It is not clear while engaging in the practice of a bodhisattva, but it is clear when no longer engaging in the practice [i.e. when full Buddhahood has been attained and one is no longer a trainee Buddha]. Though they perceive it because they dwell on the tenth level, it is not clear to them, whereas it is clear to those who do not dwell or proceed [along the preparatory levels]. What bodhisattva-mahasattvas perceive with insight [prajna] is not clear, whereas the blessed Buddhas perceive it clearly because they have eradicated (literally: severed) causes and effects. All-Knowing (sarvajna) is said to be the Buddha-dhatu, whereas tenth-level bodhisattvas are not said to be All-Knowing and so although they perceive it [i.e. the Buddha Nature], it is not clear to them.'

And again whether one sees the Buddha Nature or not does not denote that there are 2 different Buddha natures. Just like you not being able to see my car while I can does not denote that there are 2 different cars.

Peace and Love

Malcolm wrote:

No, it does not, it says,,,

Son of a good family, bodhisattvas of the tenth stage can see only a general approximation of the tathagātagarbha that exists in their bodies.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 3rd, 2015 at 6:24 PM

Title: Re: The Ātman-Brahman in Ancient Buddhism

Content:

Wayfarer said:

That is the sense in which Buddhism generally is sceptical. It is neither denying or asserting the reality of something 'beyond the six sense gates'...

Malcolm wrote:

Sure it is. The six sense gates are defined as the all. Beyond which, nothing can be said because it is "out of range."

Wayfarer said:

That is why, I think, Nāgārjuna criticizes all philosophical views of 'the absolute' -

Malcolm wrote:

But he didn't. Ultimate truth is a correct cognition; relative truth, a cognition that is incorrect.

Wayfarer said:

Nothing here can be shown to be self-existent, so it does not 'truly exist' - but it is also not 'non-existent'.

Malcolm wrote:

Not sure why you fall into the third extreme here, unless you accept the Gelug formulation of madhyamaka, and mean that there is no existence in the ultimate and no non-existence in the relative.

Wayfarer said:

Actually our whole situation is really very perplexing, but we don't realize how perplexing it is. I think that sense of being utterly perplexed by our situation is the basic starting-point for the Buddhist analysis.

Malcolm wrote:

It is not that perplexing: relatively everything arises from conditions, ultimately, nothing arises at all.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 3rd, 2015 at 6:49 PM

Title: Re: The Ātman-Brahman in Ancient Buddhism

Content:

Son of Buddha said:

Malcolm No it does not it says

Son of a good family, bodhisattvas of the tenth stage can see only a general approximation of the tathagātagarbha that exists in their bodies.

You probably got your quotes mixed up the are about 4 that say similar things but differ on the capacities of the 10th level Bodhisattva.

But since you find problem with that quote here us another.

Nirvana Sutra

Son's of good families, those who see it with the eyes are Buddha Tathagatas. Bodhisattva's in the tenth stage see Buddha Nature with the eyes and also see it through hearing. All sentient beings up to Bodhisattva's in the ninth stage see Buddha Nature through hearing.

There are not 2 different Buddha Nature's.

Malcolm wrote:

There most certainly two ways the concept is used, one in Vajrayāna, where it is taken to be the so called indestructible bindu which is composed of the elemental winds as well as the material from one's father and mind, along with one's mind; and the sugatagarbha strictly as dharmakāya, which is said in Nirvana sūtra to exist in the body solely for the reason that the mind inhabits the body. It is the mind that is encased by affliction, nothing else. Of course, we can also understand the many statements in sūtra and tantra that the mind itself is buddhahood, and there is no buddhahood to seek out apart from the mind. The mind when purified, becomes the dharmakāya, but it is not dharmakāya from the very beginning, even though its nature is intrinsically pure. You have mistaken the cause (intrinsically pure mind) for the result (dharmakāya, when that intrinsically pure mind is stripped of all adventitious obscurations). For example, The Dharmarāja Sūtra states:

The Bhagavan said to the bodhisattva Many Desires, "Many Desires, before, that was tainted. Now it is clean, pure, very pure. The mind is one thing, nondual, without any other properties. Since that mind is pure, all phenomena become pure.

Son of a good family, for example, a tree is cut down at the root, not at the branches and leaves. Likewise, if the mind is realized, it is equivalent with cutting all phenomena at

the root. Since the mind is pure, all phenomena will be pure.”

As for Buddhahood itself, the Pitāputrasamāgamana Sūtra states:

Great king, “buddhahood” is a term for seeing reality. “Seeing reality” is a term for the limit of reality. “Limit of reality” is a term for the dharmadhātu.

Great king, the dharmadhātu cannot be explained apart from being just a name, just a symbol, just a convention, [just relative], just an expression and just a designation.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 3rd, 2015 at 6:50 PM

Title: Re: Is 'drupon' a title?

Content:

Fortyeightvows said:

Is 'drupon' a title?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, primarily in the Drikung school, where it means roughly, master of a retreats, and is only given to those who have accomplished many years in strict retreat.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 3rd, 2015 at 8:34 PM

Title: Re: Do people really deserve compassion?

Content:

Jesse said:

I have really been thinking, why do these people deserve compassion?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes.

Jesse said:

Just because ignorance causes them to act in these ways?

Malcolm wrote:

Especially then.

Jesse said:

So what. At what point does karma cease being a cause unto itself, at what point are people no longer the victim of their karma, and just plain being assholes?

Malcolm wrote:

In this case, it is not karma that is causing this, it is affliction. Affliction leads to such behavior, just as your afflictions presently inform your anger towards them and has

motivated you to engage in the karma talking with malice and hatred about others.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 3rd, 2015 at 9:45 PM

Title: Re: Rainbow Body - Why?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

"Inner yānas" thinking only applies to Nyingma tantras. It is not relevant to gsar ma. One cannot fit Hevajra, Cakrasamvara, etc., into the Nyingma classification scheme (which never existed in India in any case).

In any case, wisdom is wisdom. The fact that the body reverts to wisdom is the identical in both systems.

Crazywisdom said:

Yes. I've often wondered if this were true. But the lights thing

Malcolm wrote:

What lights thing? Can you be more specific? You mean the five lights?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 3rd, 2015 at 9:47 PM

Title: Re: Mipham was not gzhan stong

Content:

smcj said:

There is room for debate on that. From the translator's introduction of "Maitreya's Distinguishing Phenomena and Pure Being (with commentary by Mipham)"

1. The section of the text treating of phenomena follows the Chittamatra (mind only) tradition and serves the important purpose of explaining how the mind confuses itself and thus wanders in samsara by assuming that outer perceived objects and the inner perceiving mind actually exist as two different things, just because they appear to do so.
2. The section on pure being follows the shentong Madhyamaka (empty-of-other middle way) tradition by describing the nature of mind in an affirmative fashion, as self-present wisdom-awareness, the clear light.

It should also be noted that Longchenpa does use the "empty-of-other" terminology long before Shentong was established as a view.

Malcolm wrote:

Longchen is junior to Dolbupa (i.e. lived after him), and explicitly identifies such texts as

Dharmadharmatāvibhanga has belonging to the mind-only system. Longchenpa was not a gzhan stong pa.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 3rd, 2015 at 10:19 PM

Title: Re: Mipham was not gzhan stong

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Longchen is junior to Dolbupa (i.e. live after him), and explicitly identifies such texts as Dharmadharmatāvibhanga has belonging to the mind-only system. Longchenpa was not a gzhan stong pa.

smcj said:

Does he use the term "empty-of-other"?

Malcolm wrote:

What characterizes a gzhan stong pa is the use of three own-natures to explain the two truths of Madhyamaka. This trend begins with the 10th century Indian polymath, Ratnakaraśanti, in his Madhyamakālaṃkāra.

However, Longchenpa never does this, relegating the three own natures to the cittamantra system. He never conflates it with Madhyamaka.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 3rd, 2015 at 10:31 PM

Title: Re: Mipham was not gzhan stong

Content:

Sherlock said:

To sum up, it's better to stick to old school Madhyamika like Sakya, Nyingma up to Longchenpa or Kagyu up to 8th Karmapa. It is much more logical and elegant too.

smcj said:

I'm not great on history, but my understanding is that Karmapa III was a Shentongpa...

Malcolm wrote:

I would not go that far. He admired Dolbupa's "new Dharma terminology," but there is no evidence that he was influenced by Dolbupa.

The first person I know of to make the claim that Rangjung Dorje as well as Longchenpa were gzhan stong pas is the great Nyingma master and scholar, Rigzin Tsewang Norbu (1658-1755). I think this is the reason you commonly see Longchenpa's name included in Kagyu accounts of gzhan stong history is that gzhan ston entered Karma Kagyu via Rigzin Tsewang Norbu because he was the guru (and disciple) of the 8th Situ Panchen (1700-1775).

Personally, I don't agree with Rigzin Tsewang Norbu's opinion, since Longchenpa never makes use of key parts of gzhan stong teachings, so I think it is enthusiastic overreach.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 3rd, 2015 at 10:33 PM

Title: Re: Mipham was not gzhan stong

Content:

smcj said:

Does he use the term "empty-of-other"?

Malcolm wrote:

What characterizes a gzhan stong pa is the use of three own-natures to explain the two truths of Madhyamaka. This trend begins with the 10th century Indian polymath, Ratnakaraśanti, in his Madhyamakālaṃkāra.

However, Longchenpa never does this, relegating the three own natures to the cittamantra system. He never conflates it with Madhyamaka.

smcj said:

I'll take that as an extremely reluctant "yes".

Malcolm wrote:

The term "empty of other" is just a word, it does not necessarily characterize a position. Actually, I have never seen Longchen use the term anywhere. Not saying he never did, but I have not seen it.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 3rd, 2015 at 10:36 PM

Title: Re: Rainbow Body - Why?

Content:

Crazywisdom said:

Yes

Malcolm wrote:

Right, well, they are there in gsar ma, just expressed differently. A certain point in your practice, one can visibly see the elemental winds in their colors. The connection elements —> winds —> wisdoms is made in gsar ma tantra.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 3rd, 2015 at 10:40 PM

Title: Re: Mantra Liberation Through Hearing ("Ha Gan Ga")

Content:

Lobsang said:

it is claimed that His Eminence Gyaltsab Rinpoche said that

those persons who hear the recording of Him reciting the mantra

Malcolm wrote:

ChNN gives the lung for this mantra in person all the time, it is part of the Shitro practice which comes from Namcho.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 3rd, 2015 at 10:48 PM

Title: Re: Mipham was not gzhan stong

Content:

Sherlock said:

I have faith in the unassailable position of Nagarjuna, Rongzompa, Longchenpa, Sapan, Mipham.

Have any gzhan stong pas tried to refute this before?

Malcolm wrote:

They never refute Nāgārjuna, they merely consider Madhyamaka incomplete. This is why the Yogacara master Dharmapāla wrote a commentary on Aryadeva's four hundred. They accept Madhyamaka, just think that some Madhyamakas negate too much.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 3rd, 2015 at 11:23 PM

Title: Re: is vajrayana budhism a path of renunciation or isn't it?

Content:

Tsongkhapafan said:

There is no spiritual path without renunciation as the very definition of a spiritual path is an exalted awareness conjoined with non-fabricated renunciation, so of course the Vajrayana is a path of renunciation - it's a supramundane path if practised properly.

Objects are not contaminated from their own side, so if you remember emptiness, your enjoyment is not a cause of samsara.

Malcolm wrote:

No, I explained this already. In Vajrayāna you do not renounce sense objects, in lower yānas, you do. It is therefore not a path of renunciation.

This is distinct from having renunciation, which is necessary to practice any path at all.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 3rd, 2015 at 11:39 PM

Title: Re: Rainbow Body - Why?

Content:

Crazywisdom said:

Yes

Malcolm wrote:

Right, well, they are there in gsar ma, just expressed differently. A certain point in your practice, one can visibly see the elemental winds in their colors. The connection elements —> winds —> wisdoms is made in gsar ma tantra.

Crazywisdom said:

So they do or do not have a means of manifesting an immortal nirmanakaya like GR?

Malcolm wrote:

Well, there is really no such thing as an immortal nirmanakayā because the rūpakāya always arises out of the dharmakāya, and therefore, the issue of mortal/immortal never arises for a buddha. If you can achieve buddhahood by a given path, then you realize dharmakāya, and if you realize dharmakāya, you can always generate rūpakāya, which you do so in response to the needs of sentient beings.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 3rd, 2015 at 11:51 PM

Title: Re: The Ātman-Brahman in Ancient Buddhism

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

So, has anyone read the book yet and if so, what did you think?

Malcolm wrote:

Are you kidding? There is no point at all in criticizing a book you have read....

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, May 4th, 2015 at 12:21 AM

Title: Re: Rainbow Body - Why?

Content:

Tenso said:

Well, there is really no such thing as an immortal nirmanakayā because the rūpakāya always arises out of the dharmakāya, and therefore, the issue of mortal/immortal never arises for a buddha. If you can achieve buddhahood by a given path, then you realize dharmakāya, and if you realize dharmakāya, you can always generate rūpakāya, which you do so in response to the needs of sentient beings.

Thats good to know but then why do you need two accumulations to achieve buddhahood? If im not mistaken you need one accumulation to realize rupakaya and the other one for dharmakaya so what your saying is you only really need one? Help clarify please.

Malcolm wrote:

You need to accumulate merit to realize emptiness, as well as the rūpakāya. You need to accumulate wisdom to realize the dharmakāya.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, May 4th, 2015 at 12:24 AM

Title: Re: Mipham was not gzhan stong

Content:

Sherlock said:

All gzhan stong views (including Gelug) are needlessly convoluted.

Mipham shows how simple and elegant the old Nyingma view is and how it applies to both sutra and tantra. This is also the Indian view.

Mipham acknowledges that e.g. Gelug view can help people who find it hard to accept emptiness fully but this is provisional. He even quotes Tsongkhapa saying that.

smcj said:

I don't buy that the Gelug view as Shentong. .

Malcolm wrote:

It is upside down gzhan stong, why you have even read Gelugs on this forum assert that things are not empty of themselves, they are merely empty of inherent existence.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, May 4th, 2015 at 12:25 AM

Title: Re: Mantra Liberation Through Hearing ("Ha Gan Ga")

Content:

Lobsang said:

it is claimed that His Eminence Gyaltsab Rinpoche said that those persons who hear the recording of Him reciting the mantra

Malcolm wrote:

ChNN gives the lung for this mantra in person all the time, it is part of the Shitro practice which comes from Namcho.

Lobsang said:

Thanks but that doesn't answer my questions, no offence really.

Who is 'ChNN'?

Malcolm wrote:

Chogyal Namkhai Norbu.

In general, you cannot receive a lung from a recording.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, May 4th, 2015 at 1:09 AM

Title: Re: Mipham was not gzhan stong

Content:

smcj said:

p. 300-p.301.

Malcolm wrote:

No, he merely says on these pages that the meaning of Madhyamaka and Yogacara are included within Dzogchen.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, May 4th, 2015 at 2:45 AM

Title: Re: Mipham was not gzhan stong

Content:

Son of Buddha said:

(1) the idea that Shentong is a Tibetan invention is false, Shentong is literally taught in Buddhist Indian Holy texts.

(2) the idea that Shentong did not exist in India is false again Shentong is literally taught in INDIAN Buddhist Holy texts.

Malcolm wrote:

As to points one and two, no. It was never taught in India.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, May 4th, 2015 at 3:03 AM

Title: Re: Mipham was not gzhan stong

Content:

Son of Buddha said:

Um that quote from that Buddhist Sutra is LITERALLY the DEFINITION of Shentong.....

You sir are in denial.

Malcolm wrote:

Your quote does not support Dolbupa's entire theory, which has much more to do with his treatment of three own natures, his interpretation of the idea of the three turnings, and so on that it does tathāgatagarbha.

We all accept tathāgatagarbha theory, we just don't accept Dolbupas interpretation of it, because it is eternalist.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, May 4th, 2015 at 3:05 AM

Title: Re: Mipham was not gzhan stong

Content:

Son of Buddha said:

(1) the idea that Shentong is a Tibetan invention is false, Shentong is literally taught in Buddhist Indian Holy texts.

(2) the idea that Shentong did not exist in India is false again Shentong is literally taught in INDIAN Buddhist Holy texts.

Malcolm wrote:

As to points one and two, no. It was never taught in India.

Son of Buddha said:

So Other Emptiness(Shentong) is not taught in ANY Indian Buddhist Sutra?

Malcolm wrote:

Nope. Gzhan stong is the theory that the ultimate truth is empty of relative truth and utterly different than it; it is not the theory that the nature of mind (tathāgatagarbha) is empty of adventitious defilements and replete with buddha qualities (potentially). You can cite the Śrīmālādevī-siṃhanāda sūtra (and the nine other tathāgatagarbha sūtras) till you pass out from exhaustion but it won't make tathāgatagarbha theory any more "gzhan stong".

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, May 4th, 2015 at 3:11 AM

Title: Re: Mipham was not gzhan stong

Content:

BuddhaFollower said:

Rangtong, Shentong, Prasangika and Svatantrika are all Tibetan categories.

Malcolm wrote:

Yup.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, May 4th, 2015 at 3:20 AM

Title: Re: Mipham was not gzhan stong

Content:

Son of Buddha said:

Um that quote from that Buddhist Sutra is LITERALLY the DEFINITION of Shentong.....
You sir are in denial.

Malcolm wrote:

Your quote does not support Dolbupa's entire theory, which has much more to do with his treatment of three own natures, his interpretation of the idea of the three turnings, and so on that it does tathāgatagarbha.

We all accept tathāgatagarbha theory, we just don't accept Dolbupas interpretation of it, because it is eternalist.

Son of Buddha said:

Um yea that quote IS the actual definition of Shentong simple as that. As far as Dolpopas teachings, he ties many other teachings in to make a full system, that still doesn't change what the literal definition of Other Emptiness(Shentong) is.

Malcolm wrote:

Umm, no, that is not what gzhan stong is. This is how it is defined:
Dharmatā, the thoroughly established, the ultimate truth, is not empty of its own nature, but because it is empty of imputed and other-dependent entities, relative entities, conditioned phenomena, it is empty of other entities. That is the true unperturbed emptiness, ultimate truth, dharmakāya, [3/b] the limit of the real, suchness, and emptiness endowed with the supreme of all aspects. The powers, major and minor marks and so on are the unconditioned qualities that abide in that from the beginning.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, May 4th, 2015 at 3:24 AM

Title: Re: Mipham was not gzhan stong

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Nope. Gzhan stong is the theory that the ultimate truth is empty of relative truth and utterly different than it; it is not the theory that the nature of mind (tathāgatagarbha) is empty of adventitious defilements and replete with buddha qualities (potentially). You can cite the Śrīmālādevī-siṃhanāda sūtra (and the nine other tathāgatagarbha sūtras) till you pass out from exhaustion but it won't make tathāgatagarbha theory any more "gzhan stong".

Son of Buddha said:

That's weird seeing as Dolpopa used that quote as the literal definition of Shentong

The Ultimate Truth is the Tathagatagarbha and is empty of the relative truth which is the adventitious defilements and utterly different than it Your refuting yourself.

Malcolm wrote:

Are all phenomena suchness or not?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, May 4th, 2015 at 3:28 AM

Title: Re: Mipham was not gzhan stong

Content:

Sherlock said:

Malcolm, is the main way Nyingma and Sakya view differ in the way the Nyingmas say there is a different relative truth for each of the 9 yanas?

Malcolm wrote:

IN terms of tantra, yes. Sapan rejects the idea.

But otherwise, in terms of sutra, Sakya and Nyingma is more or less on the same page.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, May 4th, 2015 at 5:10 AM

Title: Re: Rainbow Body - Why?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

You need to accumulate merit to realize emptiness, as well as the rūpakāya. You need to accumulate wisdom to realize the dharmakāya.

Tenso said:

Confusing. Dharmakaya is emptiness.

Malcolm wrote:

No, Dharmakāya is the two fold omniscience that comes from realizing emptiness and accumulating wisdom. Accumulating merit improves your mind and makes it ever more clear.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, May 4th, 2015 at 5:34 AM

Title: Re: Mipham was not gzhan stong

Content:

Son of Buddha said:

Malcolm.

Umm, no, that is not what gzhan stong is. This is how it is defined:

Dharmatā, the thoroughly established, the ultimate truth, is not empty of its own nature, but because it is empty of imputed and other-dependent entities, relative entities, conditioned phenomena, it is empty of other entities. That is the true unperturbed emptiness, ultimate truth, dharmakāya, [3/b] the limit of the real, suchness, and

emptiness endowed with the supreme of all aspects. The powers, major and minor marks and so on are the unconditioned qualities that abide in that from the beginning. You do realise your quote is in agreement with what I am saying right?

All your quote us saying is the ultimate truth which is the Buddha attributes(as I stated in the queen srimala Sutra) is empty of imputed and other-dependent entities, relative entities, conditioned phenomena, it is empty of other entities which are adventitious defilements (which again was what was taught in the Queen Srimala Sutra I quoted)

Here is some more info to add to yours

The Mountain Doctrine Tibet's Fundamental Treatise on Other-Emptiness and the Buddha Matrix By: Dolpopa.

Moreover the Angulimala Sutra says:

“Manjushri, an empty home in a built-up city is called empty due to the absence of humans. A pot is empty due to the absence of water. A river is empty due to water not flowing. Is a village that is without householders called “empty, empty?” Or are the households empty in all respects? They are not empty in all respects; they are called empty due to the absence of humans. Is a pot empty in all respects? It is not empty in all respects; it is called “empty” due to the absence of water. Is a river empty in all respects? It is not empty in all respects; it is called “empty” because water is not flowing. Similarly, liberation is not empty in all respects; it is called “empty” because of being devoid of all defects. A Buddha, a supermundane victor, is not empty but is called “empty” because of being devoid of defects and due to the absence of humanness and godhood that have ten of millions of afflictive emotions.

Alas, venerable Manjushri, acting out the behavior of a bug, you do not know the real meaning of empty and non-empty. The naked ones” also meditate on all as empty. Do not say anything, you bug of the naked ones!

[Dolpopa's Commentary]

The passage from “The Buddha is like space” through “How could you, Angulimala, understand/ Empty nothingness!” which indicates, in accordance with the assertions of some, that everything is a self-emptiness of nothingness is an introduction by Manjushri. It leads to Angulimala's delineating the difference between self-emptiness and other-emptiness, despite the fact that Manjushri actually knows the difference.

Then, using the example of hail-stone becoming non-existent upon melting, he teaches that the final liberation, Buddhahood, is not empty, This teaches that the ultimate supermundane truth, the body of attributes, is not empty of its own entity. Using the example of an empty home, an empty vase, and an empty river, he teaches an emptiness of all defects; this teaches that the final liberation is other-emptiness. All descriptions of non-emptiness/ “Liberation is not empty in all respects,” “A supermundane victor is not empty,” “Non-empty phenomena are other,” and so forth—mean that the ultimate noumenon is not itself empty of itself.

Malcolm wrote:

What you do not seem to understand is while the sūtra passages you are citing are noncontroversial, the gzhan stong interpretation Dolbupa applied to them in general is

controversial for many reasons, but mostly having to do with his novel (and largely unprecedented) interpretation of the three own natures, his idea that the perfected nature (pariniṣpanna) was empty of both the dependent (paratantra) and imputed (parikalpita) natures. In fact Maitreyaṇaṭh, Asaṅga and Vasubandhu uniformly consider that the absence of the imputed in the dependent is the perfected. The second place where the gzhan stong view is found contradictory to Nāgārjuna is that if one follows the gzhan stong view, saṃsāra and nirvāṇa cannot be inseparable. Therefore, the statement by the Buddha in the Hevajra Tantra must be false:

This so-called "saṃsāra,"

just this is nirvāṇa.

Many other clear and unambiguous statements by the Buddha on the identity of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa must also be considered false. Not to mention Nāgārjuna's famed dictum:

Saṃsāra is not the slightest bit different from nirvāṇa,

nirvāṇa is not the slightest bit different from saṃsāra;

whatever is the limit of nirvāṇa, that is the limit of saṃsāra,

a difference between those two does not exist even slightly.

We can see that Vasubandhu agrees with this meaning in the Sūtrālaṃkārabhāṣya:

The meaning of nirvāṇa being all-pervasive is that because saṃsāra and peace (nirvāṇa) have one taste due to one not having concepts about their faults and qualities, in the respect there is no difference between saṃsāra and nirvāṇa.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, May 4th, 2015 at 8:49 AM

Title: Re: The Ātman-Brahman in Ancient Buddhism

Content:

David Reigle said:

The universal ātman of the Upaniṣads is not here being spoken of.

Malcolm wrote:

This is a mere assertion on your part.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, May 4th, 2015 at 9:36 AM

Title: Re: The Ātman-Brahman in Ancient Buddhism

Content:

David Reigle said:

The universal ātman of the Upaniṣads is not here being spoken of.

Malcolm wrote:

This is a mere assertion on your part.

David Reigle said:

Yes, it is my understanding of the evidence presented, and hopefully it correctly

represents Bhattacharya's position.

Malcolm wrote:

Given that the atman spoken of in the upanishads as being thumb sized etc, is explicitly rejected by the Buddha, your assertion would seem to be quite unsupported.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, May 4th, 2015 at 7:24 PM

Title: Re: Mipham was not gzhan stong

Content:

Son of Buddha said:

Are all phenomena suchness or not?

Awakening faith in Mahayana...

Malcolm wrote:

Right, so you did not even answer the question.

As a basic definition, nirvana, space and so on are included in "all phenomena." In fact, the Śatasāhasrika-prajñāpāramitā, etc., state:

All phenomena are included with the category of suchness, those cannot go beyond that category. If it asked why, Subhuti no coming or coming can be perceived in suchness. Subhuti, all phenomena are within these categories: the dharmadhātu, are the limit of reality, uniformity and inconceivability.

And:

Subhuti, when categorized, all phenomena are the nature of being unreal. Subhuti, in the same way, also all phenomena are nature of emptiness, all phenomena are the nature of signlessness, all phenomena are the nature of aspirationlessness. Subhuti, in the same way also, all phenomena are the nature of suchness, all phenomena are the nature of the limit of reality, all phenomena are the nature of dharmadhātu.

This being so, it is ludicrous to assert that the ultimate is empty of all relative phenomena. Such an assertion directly contradicts the words of the Buddha. It is one thing to claim "tathāgatagarbha is empty of adventitious afflictions." It is quite another to claim that the ultimate is empty of all relative phenomena. The ultimate is merely the emptiness of all phenomena, there is no other ultimate that can be found.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, May 4th, 2015 at 8:13 PM

Title: Re: Mipham was not gzhan stong

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Are all phenomena suchness or not?

conebeckham said:

Of course the nature of all phenomena is suchness. But suchness is not merely

phenomenal non-existence, in Shentong. Suchness is also luminous awareness--not merely absence of "self."

Malcolm wrote:

And it is for this reason, for example, that Rongton Sheja Kunrig classifies gzhan stong as a species of false aspectarian yogacara, or a sort of intermediate view between yogacara and madhyamaka.

conebeckham said:

The Ultimate truth is certainly empty of stains, but is "full" of qualities. But these are all just conceptual "approximations."

Malcolm wrote:

The problem lies when one conflates the language of the tathatagarbha teachings, the language of yogacara and the language of madhyamaka. The ancient yogacarins in Indian took virtually no interest in tathāgatagarbha theory devoting only a total of two commentaries to the subject: the Uttaratāntra and the subcommentary on that by Asaṅga. Further proof, is that Madhyamakas such as Bhāvavieka and Chandrakīrti treat the subject of tathāgatagarbha theory with much more interest than Asaṅga, Vasubandhu and so on. We do not really find consistent commentarial treatment of tathāgatagarbha theory until the Vajrayāna commentaries dating from the ninth century onward. Even here it is not systematic.

conebeckham said:

Mahāyānika in the classical sense denies the ability of conceptual mind to encompass reality. Shentong also does the same thing. The only thing Shentong, as I understand it, posits is an awareness which is beyond description, also beyond the ability of conceptual mind to encompass reality--but in that sense, it does posit "something" other than "bare emptiness" as an "ultimate."

Malcolm wrote:

And thus gzhan stong slips off the other side of the horse while trying avoid the extreme of annihilation. Such an assertion of existence in the ultimate cannot be considered free from extremes, because it is an extreme. This is why the Buddha states in the Ārya-saṃvṛitiparamārthasatyānirdeśa-nāma-mahāyāna-sūtra:

Devaputra: ultimate truth is beyond the range of the omniscient wisdom endowed with the supreme of all aspects. However one describes ultimate truth, it is not like that.

And as Gorampa states:

Other than the need for the existence of a middle path which avoids two extremes in all three vehicles, as explained in the Ratnavali, the system of Mādhyamikas must be free from the extreme of permanence because the ultimate asserted in the lower vehicles is not established, and free from the extreme of annihilation since the causes and results of action are not denied in the relative.

Also based upon this Mahāyāna, since one meditates having brought together the trio of the special view that reality's own nature is free from the extremes of the dualistic

grasping of existence and nonexistence and so on, compassion in relation to sentient beings, and the development of Mahāyāna bodhicitta, at the time of the final result while never moving from the state of the dharmadhātu free from all proliferation one will effortlessly produce the benefit of sentient beings throughout all of space. There cannot be a Madhyamaka better than this, nor a result better than this.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, May 4th, 2015 at 8:15 PM

Title: Re: The Ātman-Brahman in Ancient Buddhism

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

Speaking of Dzogchen,

<http://vajracakra.com/viewtopic.php?f=57&t=1086&p=12465#p12464>: In Dzogchen, the thigle of elements in the heart is considered tathāgatagarbha.

Malcolm wrote:

Right, and since it those four elements are impermanent, it really does not correspond to tathāgatagarbha taught in the sūtras.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, May 4th, 2015 at 8:35 PM

Title: Re: The Ātman-Brahman in Ancient Buddhism

Content:

Son of Buddha said:

Malcolm

it is not a question of "believing what I want," Stephen Hodge also has doubts about the veracity of later portions of the translation by Dharmakṣema. The version translated by by Fa-hsien appears to be the original.

Sure it is a question of what you believe.....and likewise many scholars, historians and Buddhists think the Vajrayana Tantras are entirely dubious in origin and in many cases contain very perverse teachings if token literally.

Also the first 17 chapters of the Dharmakeshema version Correspond to the Original Faxian version, my quote came from chapter 8

Second I find it hard to believe you like the faxian version better you know seeing as the Faxian version uses the term JIVATMAN instead of Atman it teaches directly the term Soul.

But as I said before believe what you want.

Malcolm wrote:

I don't prefer any Chinese translation. The Tibetan translation from Sanskrit is based on the same text as Faxian's translation, as far as I can tell. The Tibetan translation from Chinese is the Dharmakeshema version. Naturally, I prefer the Tibetan translation from

Sanskrit, because it is a much more accurate translation than the version translated from Chinese.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, May 4th, 2015 at 8:36 PM

Title: Re: The Ātman-Brahman in Ancient Buddhism

Content:

Crazywisdom said:

Arguing with you is hopeless. Why? You genuinely think this is responsive and counters the quote above. In fact, it makes it obvious that sutra is dealing with generalities and tantra is dealing with specifics. A college education would help you. Our more study or something.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, it is like arguing with a Christian.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, May 4th, 2015 at 9:35 PM

Title: Re: The Ātman-Brahman in Ancient Buddhism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Right, and since it those four elements are impermanent, it really does not correspond to tathāgatagarbha taught in the sūtras.

dzogchungpa said:

I don't doubt it. Are you saying that In Dzogchen tathāgatagarbha is impermanent whereas in the sutras it is permanent?

Malcolm wrote:

I am saying that the term is used very differently. Here in Varjayāna, since the basis of the potential to achieve buddhahood is the physical body, especially key points of tantra anatomy, and since the mind is located in this bindu of four elements and so on, the term is being used differently than in sūtra.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, May 4th, 2015 at 11:45 PM

Title: Re: The Ātman-Brahman in Ancient Buddhism

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

Are you saying that In Dzogchen tathāgatagarbha is impermanent whereas in the sutras it is permanent?

Malcolm wrote:

I am saying that the term is used very differently. Here in Varjayāna, since the basis of the potential to achieve buddhahood is the physical body, especially key points of tantra anatomy, and since the mind is located in this bindu of four elements and so on, the term is being used differently than in sūtra.

dzogchungpa said:

Well, it seems to me that one could say it is being used the same way, but since there is a different explanation of how buddhahood is achieved there is a different idea of what the 'garbha' of the 'tathagata' is. Does that make sense?

Malcolm wrote:

It is pretty hard to say that something which is made of conditioned and impermanent things is conditioned and permanent, no? Unless tathāgatagarba refers to a potential for awakening (which it in fact does) rather than full-blown buddhahood (which in fact it does not).

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 5th, 2015 at 12:26 AM

Title: Re: The Ātman-Brahman in Ancient Buddhism

Content:

Crazywisdom said:

Guhyagarbha has more pointed words. The kayas are fully endowed in this bindi. The only job is to stop distractions.

Malcolm wrote:

Again, there is a problem of literalism. For example, ChNN very clearly explains that even through the buddhaqualities are lhun grub, they are lhun grub as a _potential_. Vimalamitra also makes this distinction, as does the Six Dimensions Tantra: Since the cause and result are different, [the basis] too is not naturally perfect (lhun grub). Likewise, if the cause and result were the same, effort would be meaningless.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 5th, 2015 at 12:51 AM

Title: Re: The Ātman-Brahman in Ancient Buddhism

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

Honestly, this thread is an embarrassment. If anyone who actually reads the book wants to talk about it, I'll be back.

Malcolm wrote:

In all fairness, the book preview given on Amazon is sufficient to assess the opinions of this scholar. Quite simple, there are many people of eternalist bent, who cannot fathom and refuse to fathom that the Buddha's teaching means there is no "super reality of the individual ego" (that Bhattacharya is arguing for).

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 5th, 2015 at 12:57 AM

Title: Re: The Ātman-Brahman in Ancient Buddhism

Content:

Crazywisdom said:

Guhyagarbha has more pointed words. The kayas are fully endowed in this bindi. The only job is to stop distractions.

Malcolm wrote:

Again, there is a problem of literalism. For example, ChNN very clearly explains that even through the buddhaqualities are lhun grub, they are lhun grub as a _potential_.

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Since the cause and result are different,

[the basis] too is not naturally perfect (lhun grub).

Likewise, if the cause and result were the same,

effort would be meaningless.

Crazywisdom said:

Khenpo Namdrol never makes this caveat. Longchenpa either. And Guhyagarbha is a dzogchen tantra. It is beyond cause and effect. This is explicit but also secret. So. I prob shouldn't discuss it.

Malcolm wrote:

Longchenpa absolutely makes this caveat, he does so in both the Tshig Don Mdzod as well as the Theg mchog mdzod when he discusses the six incorrect positions of the basis. Moreover, so does Vimalamitra, at length, in his commentary in Six Dimensions Tantra. Longchenpa may not make this distinction in the phyogs bcu mun sel, but then, Guhyagarbha is a mahāyoga tantra, and its view is a bit limited.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 5th, 2015 at 1:09 AM

Title: Re: Mipham was not gzhan stong

Content:

conebeckham said:

Is Bare Awareness a phenomenon? Or is it of another category entirely? If the Ultimate were just a sort of "Bare Awareness," one could say such awareness is indeed "empty of

all phenomena," correct? And yet one could not say that the "nature of the dharmadhatu" --suchness-is not a mere "blankness," but that there is awareness there.

Malcolm wrote:

There is no "awareness", naked or clothed, outside of your mind. There is no buddhahood outside of your mind. Searching for buddhahood somewhere else other than in your mind is deluded.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 5th, 2015 at 1:17 AM

Title: Re: Mipham was not gzhan stong

Content:

smcj said:

It is quite another to claim that the ultimate is empty of all relative phenomena.

Ok, so then the Dharmakaya is a solid object? Or a convenient fiction used as upaya?

Wow.

Malcolm wrote:

Depends on how you are defining it. For example, in Secret Mantra, among the seven limbs of three kāyas, dharmakāya is the limb of the absence of inherent existence.

Sambhogakāya has three limbs: union, great bliss and perfect enjoyments.

Nirmānakāya has three limbs great compassion, the uninterrupted stream of the wheel of activities, and never ceasing.

In sūtra, dharmakāya is the two-fold omniscience that comes about from gathering the accumulation of wisdom.

This however does not mean that there is some platonic ultimate that exists separate from the relative phenomena of the world. The three kāyas function in the world for sentient beings. The dharmakāya produces form bodies for sentient beings — did you ever ask yourself how? Or did you think that the dharmakāya, sambhogakāya and nirmanakāya were something like the father, son and holy ghost?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 5th, 2015 at 1:18 AM

Title: Re: Mipham was not gzhan stong

Content:

conebeckham said:

Is Bare Awareness a phenomenon? Or is it of another category entirely? If the Ultimate were just a sort of "Bare Awareness," one could say such awareness is indeed "empty of all phenomena," correct? And yet one could not say that the "nature of the dharmadhatu" --suchness-is not a mere "blankness," but that there is awareness there.

Malcolm wrote:

There is no "awareness", naked or clothed, outside of your mind. There is no buddhahood outside of your mind. Searching for buddhahood somewhere else other than in your mind is deluded.

conebeckham said:

No argument here. Also, no appearances of phenomena outside your mind. But who said anything about searching for Buddhahood somewhere else other than one's mind? Certainly not me.....

Malcolm wrote:

Is your mind something relative or something ultimate? Is the awareness of your mind relative or ultimate? If your mind is relative, its awareness must also be relative, correct?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 5th, 2015 at 1:26 AM

Title: Re: The Ātman-Brahman in Ancient Buddhism

Content:

Crazywisdom said:

No. It's an Atiyoga tantra. It's view is equal to the ninth. That's all I'm going to say. Except path appearances are not built or developed. They are obscured only. They can gradually appear like defogging a window. So viewing this as development is a wrong view. Samsara has no beginning so the sambhogakaya appears fully endowed from beginningless time. It appears w/i this bindi

Malcolm wrote:

The Guhyagarbha is a mahāyoga tantra, which mentions Dzogchen exactly twice and most importantly in chapter thirteen. You are not the only person who can read, or who has taken teachings on these things.

Your position above is not more profound than the Uttaratantra, which of course makes a distinction between impure, pure/impure and pure, from the perspective of sentient beings, bodhisattvas, and buddhas. No one ever said the path was additive, it is only subtractive, gathering the two accumulations for example, means just that one is removing the two obscurations. When one is obscured, one is impure; when on the path, especially the aryan path, pure/impure; and when one attains buddhahood, pure. It does not mean that one has in fact actually removed or added anything. Nevertheless, these so called buddha qualities both can be considered naturally perfected, and they also are produced by a process of transformation and there is no contradiction between these two things. If someone thinks there is a contradiction, they have to explain why they are not at present omniscient.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 5th, 2015 at 1:33 AM

Title: Re: Mipham was not gzhan stong

Content:

smcj said:

The Dharmakāya produces form bodies for sentient beings — did you ever ask yourself how?

Funny, I was going to ask you the same question.

So let us start with "Dharmakaya produces..." Really? Nothing produces something? Hmmm...

Malcolm wrote:

Right, this actually only happens from the side of sentient being. In reality, the dharmakāya does not produce anything. The Mahāyāna Uttaratantra states:

Just as the reflection of Indra appears

in a pure ground of sapphire, [435/a]

likewise, the reflection of the body of the Munindra

arises in the pure ground of the mind of migrating beings.

The reflection that arises or subsides for migrating beings is engaged

through the power of whether their minds are permeated or not with taints,

just like the appearance of the reflection [of Indra] in the worlds

is in the same way not seen as existing or not existing.

The Vajracchedikā Sūtra states:

Whoever sees me as form,

whoever knows me as sound,

those people who apprehend me

incorrectly do not see me, [411/b]

and so do not see the dharmakāya.

The buddhas are dharmatā.

The guides are the dharmakāya.

Since dharmatā is unknowable,

it cannot be known.

So you have to ask yourself what dharmatā is. The Saptaśatikā-prajñāpāramitā Sūtra states:

Inconceivable wisdom is the wisdom of the buddhas. The absence of perception of any phenomenon is the wisdom of the buddhas...If it is asked why, the omniscience with the mode of the nonexistence of wisdom in the ultimate is the wisdom of the buddha.

The Mahāyāna Uttaratantra states:

Just as space is nothing at all, invisible,

imperceptible, unsupported,

totally beyond sight,

formless, indemonstrable

and cannot be seen

even though one looks high and low,

likewise, even though one looks for buddha

everywhere, he isn't there.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 5th, 2015 at 2:24 AM

Title: Re: The Ātman-Brahman in Ancient Buddhism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

[quote="Crazywisdom"

Responding briefly to your arguments. Kyedzog are indivisible. You can approach the wheel from any point. One is not a Buddha due to looking left and walking right. It's a mere obscuration. Once this is done away with everything manifests.[/quote]

Easy to say, in practice however, not so easy — no matter which path one chooses.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 5th, 2015 at 3:22 AM

Title: Re: Mipham was not gzhan stong

Content:

Sherlock said:

Actually we are arguing that the moon is just a reflection.

conebeckham said:

Mmmm....the reflection of the moon is actually "water," though.

Malcolm wrote:

Since when is a reflection part of the surface it is reflected in?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 5th, 2015 at 3:36 AM

Title: Re: Mipham was not gzhan stong

Content:

conebeckham said:

Without the water, there would be no reflection, yes?

Malcolm wrote:

Of course, but there is no moon in the water.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 5th, 2015 at 3:39 AM

Title: Re: The Ātman-Brahman in Ancient Buddhism

Content:

Crazywisdom said:

Ok. Sure. So is what you just said. The import is there is such a tantra and explanation and method. If one has such a teacher one can have such a practice.

Malcolm wrote:

The method of practicing Guhyagarbha is mahāyoga — it is only the fact that the thirteenth chapter has a brief mention of Dzogchen that makes it stand out.

Basically Longchenpa is reading a lot into the tantra.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 5th, 2015 at 4:04 AM

Title: Re: Mipham was not gzhan stong

Content:

conebeckham said:

Yes, all dharmas are like a reflection. But what is the basis, the surface, the mirror, the water, upon which dharmas reflect??

Malcolm wrote:

One's mind, of course.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 5th, 2015 at 4:11 AM

Title: Re: Mipham was not gzhan stong

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

Can we not say that the reflection is how the water appears?

Malcolm wrote:

all of the water or only a part?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 5th, 2015 at 4:38 AM

Title: Re: Mipham was not gzhan stong

Content:

conebeckham said:

Yes, all dharmas are like a reflection. But what is the basis, the surface, the mirror, the water, upon which dharmas reflect??

Malcolm wrote:

One's mind, of course.

conebeckham said:

OK! but is "one's mind" all water? Or is it just a specific body of water? Water has the same characteristics no matter what body it resides in.....light passes through it, more or less, depending on the temporary obscurations suspended in it, reflections can appear in it, given light.....but at all times the nature of water is unchanged. If one's

mind were a puddle, and the puddle dried up, was the water impermanent? Or has it changed state? Will it eventually recondense and form another puddle? Is the Nature of Water one, or different, with the various Bodies of Water?

Malcolm wrote:

One cannot find the nature of water apart from water. It does not precede or succeed it. Now then, if you are an essentialist [Hindu, etc.], you will argue that all water derives its nature from some hypothetical essence of water. If you are a nominalist [Buddhist], you will argue our notion of a characteristic of water is an abstraction derived from our experiences of water. So, the answer is that your nature of water is merely an abstraction, and does not really exist. See MMK chapter 5:7:

Therefor space is not existent, it is not non-existent, is not the characterized, is not the characteristic; also any other of the five elements are the same as space. And 5:8:

Some of small intelligence, see existents in terms of 'is' or 'is not'; they do not perceive the pacification of views, or peace.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 5th, 2015 at 5:25 AM

Title: Re: Mipham was not gzhan stong

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

So, the answer is that your nature of water is merely an abstraction, and does not really exist.

dzogchungpa said:

Are you then saying that the nature of mind is merely an abstraction?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, in the sense that there is no nature of the mind apart from the mind.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 5th, 2015 at 5:29 AM

Title: Re: Mipham was not gzhan stong

Content:

conebeckham said:

Ok. Mind is empty, and therefore there is no impediment. Display arises. We mistake display for subject/object. We reify. I'm with you. So, we purify the kleshas, bakchaks, what-have-you. When purified, reification no longer occurs. Does display still occur? If so, from where? Even if subject/object duality is exhausted by the purification of all stains, there is the base, yes?

asunthatneversets said:

By "base" do you mean "gzhi"?

conebeckham said:

I mean the same thing that Sherlock means, whatever his reference term would be.....
I am assuming it is gzhi, and not kun gzhi.

Malcolm wrote:

gsar ma kun gzhi; rnying ma gzhi, same meaning, different word.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 5th, 2015 at 5:29 AM

Title: Re: Mipham was not gzhan stong

Content:

conebeckham said:

Ok. Mind is empty, and therefore there is no impediment. Display arises. We mistake display for subject/object. We reify. I'm with you. So, we purify the kleshas, bakchaks, what-have-you. When purified, reification no longer occurs. Does display still occur? If so, from where? Even if subject/object duality is exhausted by the purification of all stains, there is the base, yes?

Malcolm wrote:

What do you think that basis is?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 5th, 2015 at 5:33 AM

Title: Re: Mipham was not gzhan stong

Content:

conebeckham said:

But I also posit an awareness, or sentience, as, I think, do you.

Malcolm wrote:

An awareness that is different than the mind?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 5th, 2015 at 5:41 AM

Title: Re: Mipham was not gzhan stong

Content:

conebeckham said:

But I also posit an awareness, or sentience, as, I think, do you.

Malcolm wrote:

An awareness that is different than the mind?

conebeckham said:

An awareness that is common to both the "mind," i.e., sentient beings, and "Wisdom," i.e. The Purified continuum of Buddhas.

Malcolm wrote:

Oh, so you just mean clarity, the characteristic of the mind. But clarity is conditioned, and cannot alone serve as a basis for buddhahood.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 5th, 2015 at 7:30 AM

Title: Re: Mipham was not gzhan stong

Content:

conebeckham said:

Ok. Mind is empty, and therefore there is no impediment. Display arises. We mistake display for subject/object. We reify. I'm with you. So, we purify the kleshas, bakchaks, what-have-you. When purified, reification no longer occurs. Does display still occur? If so, from where? Even if subject/object duality is exhausted by the purification of all stains, there is the base, yes?

Malcolm wrote:

What do you think that basis is?

conebeckham said:

The Dharmadhatu?

Malcolm wrote:

The dharmadhātu is aware, some sort of universal awareness?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 5th, 2015 at 7:36 AM

Title: Re: Mipham was not gzhan stong

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

What do you think that basis is?

conebeckham said:

The Dharmadhatu?

smcj said:

That's basically how I interpret the above quote from Khenpo Tsultrim. How else to understand the distinction between "consciousness" which is non-arising as per Madhyamaka, and "Wisdom Mind" which has true existence? I haven't had teachings with questions answered, so obviously I'm just guessing. It would have been nice if he had elaborated on it some more in his book..

Malcolm wrote:

What does it mean to say that wisdom has true existence? It has no cause? It is like the mind of god, self-existing, unconditioned?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 5th, 2015 at 7:50 AM

Title: Re: Mipham was not gzhan stong

Content:

smcj said:

That's basically how I interpret the above quote from Khenpo Tsultrim. How else to understand the distinction between "consciousness" which is non-arising as per Madhyamaka, and "Wisdom Mind" which has true existence? I haven't had teachings with questions answered, so obviously I'm just guessing. It would have been nice if he had elaborated on it some more in his book..

Malcolm wrote:

What does it mean to say that wisdom has true existence? It has no cause? It is like the mind of god, self-existing, unconditioned?

smcj said:

More like the mind of Buddha. Since K.T.'s quote is a presentation of Shentong, I think it safe to say it is empty-of-(anything)-other than its own innate buddha qualities. That much is pretty standard Shentong presentation, with possible variations of course.

Malcolm wrote:

So therefore, no one can have this truly existing wisdom, not even a buddha, since it already exists without needing to be realized. Since it has no causes, it should therefore arise at all times, randomly, in ants, humans, dogs, etc. Practicing the path is useless, since wisdom already exists, truly.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 5th, 2015 at 8:07 AM

Title: Re: Mipham was not gzhan stong

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Since it has no causes, it should therefore arise at all times, randomly, in ants, humans, dogs, etc.

smcj said:

The Uttartantra has a lot of analogies for Buddha Nature, each with a commentary explaining the significance. But the only one that I personally need is the clouds and the sun in the sky. The sun is never contaminated by the clouds. So the salient point is what perspective you are speaking from. If you are above the clouds there is absolutely no difference between a stormy day and clear weather. There are teachings from that perspective, such as Huang Po's "There is no difference between the enlightened and unenlightened." So yes, from that perspective it is fully present at all times in ants, human, dogs, etc.

But obviously I'm not a pilot (or yogi) so I've got my raincoat in my car at all times.
So therefore, no one can have this truly existing wisdom, not even a buddha, since it already exists without needing to be realized.
Huh?

Malcolm wrote:

To say that something truly exists is to say that it produces itself without any cause or condition. It is not something that can be realized, much less known.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 5th, 2015 at 8:14 AM

Title: Re: Mipham was not gzhan stong

Content:

smcj said:

"Existence" is probably not the correct word for something that is unborn and beyond conceptuality. Semantics.

Malcolm wrote:

To say that something is unborn is to say either a) it always existed from time immemorial b) it never arose and is not something one would consider real. If it is former, then one's view is no different than nonbuddhists. If it is the latter, then wisdom is just as empty as everything else (buddhist view).

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 5th, 2015 at 8:30 AM

Title: Re: The Ātman-Brahman in Ancient Buddhism

Content:

Son of Buddha said:

Malcolms position is that the sugatagarbha can be visibly seen with the eyes through various yogic techniques and that the sugatagarbha cannot be seen in the Sutras.....his statement is false in BOTH the tantras and Sutras.

Malcolm wrote:

No, it is not false.

Son of Buddha said:

The Buddha nature can be seen by the eye by being's other than the Buddha.....

Malcolm wrote:

No, it cannot. Tenth stage bodhisattvas can perceive a generic approximation of tathāgatagarbha, but that is all. And no one else can see even that much. The Indian version states:

Son of a good family, bodhisattvas of the tenth stage can see only a generic

approximation of the tathagātagarbha that exists in their bodies.

Chinese long version (from Tibetan):

Son of a good family, buddhanature can be seen by only a buddha, and not a śravaka [arhat] or a pratyekabuddha.

Son of Buddha said:

on top of the fact the idea that a person can see the Buddha nature and another person cannot see the Buddha Nature does not in any way shape form or fashion show that there are two different Buddha natures.

Malcolm wrote:

Depends on how it is being defined.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 5th, 2015 at 8:43 PM

Title: Re: The Ātman-Brahman in Ancient Buddhism

Content:

Crazywisdom said:

Ok. Sure. So is what you just said. The import is there is such a tantra and explanation and method. If one has such a teacher one can have such a practice.

Malcolm wrote:

The method of practicing Guhyagarbha is mahāyoga — it is only the fact that the thirteenth chapter has a brief mention of Dzogchen that makes it stand out.

Basically Longchenpa is reading a lot into the tantra.

Crazywisdom said:

You are upholding the Zurpa tradition. Longchenpa successfully goes to great lengths to show the limitations of this view.

Malcolm wrote:

I am not upholding any such tradition. The fact that Longchenpa has to go through great lengths to read Dzogchen into the Guhyagarbha is a) a testament to his energy and intellect b) a testament to the fact that it is a bit of a reach.

One can also explain the carya tantra, the Mañjuśrīnamasāṃgīti, according both Kālacakra and Dzogchen; but it does not make it a niruttarayoga tantra or an atiyoga tantra. See my point? Everyone classifies Guhyagarbha as a Mahāyoga tantra. Some people sub-classify it as ati of mahā. But this system is just endless proliferation that never ends, ati of anu of maha, maha of ati of anu....etc.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 5th, 2015 at 9:24 PM

Title: Re: Tantra vs. Sutra Buddha Nature

Content:

Crazywisdom said:

So talking about Dzogchen to someone like this SOB is the definition of samaya violation, because upon hearing what he doesn't like to hear or read he disparages it. Now both sayer and responder are headed to hell. So time for confessions and to drop this. It's called Secret Mantra not Public Mantra.

Malcolm wrote:

SOB is a single issue poster. Tathāgatagarbha is a self; it is filled with infinite qualities; it is permanent; and empty of adventitious taints. For him this what gzhan stong means and that is all. He appears to have no interest at all in the actual philosophical issues with Dolbupa's view at stake. There are all kinds of people who do not take issue with what the tathāgatagarbha sūtra say (like Gorampa, for example) who have all kinds of issues with Dolbupa's overly literal interpretation of them.

As far as the other things goes, he is not saying that buddhanature is not a direct perception, he just thinks that it is a mistaken to say that only buddhas can have such a direct perception, he thinks (erroneously) that also tenth stage bodhisattvas can have such a direct perception (even though it is clearly stated that their perception of tathāgatagarbha is generic i.e. abstract, and not direct).

I don't see him disparaging Secret Mantra. We are not talking about anything very specific, so I don't see the issue.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 5th, 2015 at 9:26 PM

Title: Re: The Ātman-Brahman in Ancient Buddhism

Content:

Crazywisdom said:

But this system is just endless proliferation that never end, ati of anu of maha, maha of ati of anu....etc.

Maybe in your head it is. Your unique arguments make for an interesting aside.

Malcolm wrote:

I find that Nyingmapas have a talent for endless over-classification.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 5th, 2015 at 9:40 PM

Title: Re: The Ātman-Brahman in Ancient Buddhism

Content:

Crazywisdom said:

What I found helpful about Nyingma is the way they are able to combine experience with empowerments, transmissions and explanation.

Malcolm wrote:

Everyone does that. It is not a unique Nyingma thing.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 5th, 2015 at 9:48 PM

Title: Re: The Ātman-Brahman in Ancient Buddhism

Content:

Crazywisdom said:

What I found helpful about Nyingma is the way they are able to combine experience with empowerments, transmissions and explanation.

Malcolm wrote:

Everyone does that. It is not a unique Nyingma thing.

Crazywisdom said:

They do it better. Rigpa'i tsal wang is a direct experience. The four initiations are imaginary.

Malcolm wrote:

Then you have never properly received the four empowerments...on the other hand, the more empowerments you receive, the better you become at receiving them. Its a practice, not a gateway. This applies equally to the famed rig pa'i tshal dbang. Most people who receive it the first time have no clue what is going on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 6th, 2015 at 2:28 AM

Title: Re: Mipham was not gzhan stong

Content:

conebeckham said:

If you say that Tathagatagarbha does not exist primordially, somehow, in the continuua of sentient beings, you are saying Buddhahood is caused, and therefore "conditioned."

Malcolm wrote:

The Uttaratantra states:

Unconditioned, effortless,
not realized through other conditions,
endowed with wisdom, compassion and power,
buddhahood is endowed with two benefits.
But what does this really all mean?

When we examine Asanga's comments on this, he states:

When these are summarized, buddhahood is described with eight qualities. If it is asked

what those eight qualities are, they are unconditioned, effortless, not realized through other conditions, wisdom, compassion, power, the abundance of one's own benefit and the abundance of others' benefit. [Buddhahood] is unconditioned because it is the nature of lacking a beginning, middle and end. It is called "effortless" because peace is endowed with the dharmakāya. It is not realized through other conditions because each person must realize it for themselves. It is wisdom because those three things are realized. [Buddhahood] is compassionate because [the Buddha] shows the path. It is powerful because it is free from suffering and affliction. The former three [unconditioned, effortless and not realized through other conditions] are for one's own benefit; the latter three [wisdom, compassion and power] are for others' benefit.

In that regard, the conditioned is fully understood as arising somewhere, and also understood as abiding and perishing. Because those do not exist [arising, abiding and perishing], buddhahood itself is unconditioned without a beginning, middle and an end. This is seen as a differentiation made through the dharmakāya. Because all proliferation and concepts are pacified, [buddhahood] is effortless [lhun gyis grub]. Buddhahood is not realized through other conditions because it is realized through wisdom oneself produced. Here, udayo [to produce] is not the arising of a desire for realization. As such, the tathāgata is unconditioned due to the truth, out of the characteristics of non-engagement, all the activities of the buddha effortlessly engaged in without impediment and without interruption for as long as samsara exists
So let us parse this out a little bit.

Asanga states in his commentary on the Uttaratantra:

...the conditioned is understood as arising somewhere, and also understood as abiding and perishing. Because those do not exist [arising, abiding and perishing], buddhahood itself is unconditioned without a beginning, middle and an end.

Buddhahood is unconditioned because the trio of arising, abiding and perishing are false. Not because in contrast to things that arise, abide and perish, buddhahood does not arise, abide and perish.

Buddhahood however has a cause, as he writes:

Buddhahood is not realized through other conditions because it is realized through wisdom oneself produced.

Buddhahood is also effortless, because, as he writes:

...all proliferation and concepts are pacified, [buddhahood] is effortless [lhun gyis grub]...As such, the tathāgata is unconditioned due to the truth; and from the characteristics of non-engagement, all the activities of the buddha are engaged in effortlessly [lhun grub], without impediment and without interruption for as long as samsara exists

As for tathāgatagarbha always existing in the continuums of sentient beings; if you think somehow tathāgatagarbha is something other than or different than a sentient beings mind, there there is a fallacy of the tathāgatagarbha being something like an atman. But there is no atman in the tathāgatagarbha theory, not really. the supreme self, (paramātma) is explained very clearly in the Uttaratantra:

The supreme self is the pacification of the proliferations of self and and nonself.

But what does this mean? Asanga adds:

The perfection of self (ātmapāramitā) is known through two reasons: due to being free from proliferation of a self because of being free from the extreme of the non-buddhists and due to being free from the proliferation of nonself because of giving up the extreme of the śrāvakas.

He explains further:

From cultivating prajñāpāramitā in order to turn away from seeing the five addictive aggregates as self, the non-existent self in which the others, the nonbuddhists, delight, one attains the result, the perfection of self. In this way all the others, the nonbuddhists, accept natureless things such as matter and so on as a self due to their being deceived by a characteristic of a self according to how those things are being apprehended, but that self never existed.

The Tathāgata, on the other hand, has attained the supreme perfection of the selflessness of all phenomena through the wisdom that is in accord with just how things truly are, and though there is no self according to how he sees things, he asserts a self all the time because he is never deceived by the characteristic of a self that does not exist. Making the selfless into a self is like saying "abiding through the mode of nonabiding.

There are some people who, ignoring the Nirvana Sutra's admonition to rely on the meaning rather than on the words, fall headlong into eternalism, unable to parse the Buddha's profound meaning through addiction to naive literalism.

Tathagatagarbha is just a potential to become a buddha. When we say it is has infinite qualities, this is nothing more nor less than when the Vajrapañjara praises the so called "jewel-like mind":

The jewel-like mind is tainted with
evil conceptual imputations;

but when the mind is purified it becomes pure.

Just as space cannot be destroyed,
just as is space, so too is the mind.

By activating the jewel-like mind
and meditating on the mind itself, there is the stage of buddhahood,
and in this life there will be sublime buddhahood.

There is no buddha nor a person
outside of the jewel-like mind,
the abode of consciousness is ultimate,
outside of which there isn't the slightest thing.

All buddhahood is through the mind...

Matter, sensation, perception
formations and consciousness
these all arise from the mind,
these [five] munis are not anything else.

Like a great wishfulfilling gem,
granting the results of desires and goals,
the pure original nature of the true state of the mind
bestows the result, Buddha's awakening

There is no other basis apart from this natural purity of the mind that is inseparable

clarity and emptiness. We can call it whatever we want, but still this fact remains. The Lankāvatara rightly observes that tathāgatagarbha is just a name for emptiness and the ālayavijñāna for those afraid of emptiness. Jayānanda writes that ālayavijñāna is the mind that comprehends the basis, i.e. emptiness. How else can the mind be purified of evil conceptual imputations other than by realizing emptiness? Emptiness free from all extremes is the pure original nature of the true state of the mind, so why bother confusing oneself with all kinds of rhetoric? The mind itself has two aspects, emptiness and clarity, ka dag and lhun grub, and these are inseparable. This inseparable clarity and emptiness is called the ālaya in gsar ma and the basis in Nyingma. This also known as tathagatagarbha when it is encased in afflictions, the dharmadhātu from its ultimate side, the ālayavijñāna from its relative side and so on. It really is not that complicated.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 6th, 2015 at 2:54 AM

Title: Re: The Ātman-Brahman in Ancient Buddhism

Content:

Crazywisdom said:

I have. I'm referring to the way it is presented. For example the 3rd requires a consort. That doesn't happen at the ceremony. What happens is simulacrum. Of course due to the blessing of the lineage one can connect directly with the teacher's state in the 4th. In Rigpa'i tshal wang it describes what the light is about. In mahayoga or Anu it is presented but not fully explained. It's this subtlety of explanation that makes it special in Nyingma. I know hardly anyone gets anything. That's karma. But some do. So that's what matters for the lineage. BTW HHST gave a perfect wang in Richmond. In a Kagyu-Nyingma-Sakya-Bonpo aka Vajrayanist.

Malcolm wrote:

Empowerments are related to practices. And there are all kinds of rig pa'i tshal dbangs, from ones that just hold up one to two items to those that give full fledged explanations of various aspects of the path [the kind you are talking about]. So it is really not enough to say "Oh, the rig pa'i tshal dbang is the best thing since sliced bread." You have to be very specific. There are lots of rig pa'i tshal dbang that are no different than the fourth in brevity.

Of course the GZT goes all out, is like a kitchen sink of dbangs, elaborate, unelaborate, very unelaborate, extremely unelaborate, and it does not stop there, I know since I was at the one in Virginia, but...dbangs are one thing, practice is another.

(And, while I am getting every closer to putting out the Vimalamitra book, there are reams of stuff yet to edit and publish from the GZT.)

Frankly, in my opinion, claiming that this thing and that thing is more profound than this and that is a bit of an error. For example, where you are aware that in Kālacakra there is an outer four empowerments, an inner four empowerments and so on? Or that in Lamdre

there are many empowerments, not just a few, so in reality, when you make the claims that you do, you cheapen Nyingma by falsely elevating it.

Nyingmapas like to claim their teachings as the highest thing on Buddha's green earth, but when you get right down to it, it is all just a complicated mess of ever conflicting systems, with each "higher" level saying the last one is shit. It is really a lot of proliferation and I have studied it and practiced it in detail for 20 years now.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 6th, 2015 at 2:56 AM

Title: Re: Tantra vs. Sutra Buddha Nature

Content:

Crazywisdom said:

Luckily the VK wang came. This practice is so precious.

Malcolm wrote:

Try, if you can, to receive the lower activities empowerment someday. You only received the upper activities.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 6th, 2015 at 3:51 AM

Title: Re: Mipham was not gzhan stong

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Buddhahood is unconditioned because the trio of arising, abiding and perishing are false. Not because in contrast to things that arise, abide and perish, buddhahood does not arise, abide and perish.

Buddhahood however has a cause

tomamundsen said:

This appears to be contradictory. First you negate causation and then you posit a cause.

Malcolm wrote:

"False" mere simply means relative, also the attainment of buddhahood is relative since it is result of realizing the falsity of arising, abiding and ceasing, etc.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 6th, 2015 at 5:33 AM

Title: Re: Mipham was not gzhan stong

Content:

conebeckham said:

Then, what exists appearing to be things

And their non-existence, pure being, emptiness

Are essentially inseparable, one taste

Malcolm wrote:

This term is dharmatā, chos nyid, translating it as pure being is very wrong as there is no dharmatā without a dharmin.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 6th, 2015 at 6:53 AM

Title: Re: Kagyupas are (mostly) Shentongpas

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The problem with gzhan stong really is not the idea that tathāgatagarbha is empty of adventitious afflictions. The problem with gzhan stong is the idea that these infinite wonderful qualities are somehow truly existent and not themselves empty (among other things)

The emptiness of other, the emptiness that is not empty, as the Nirvana sutra puts it, is not the profound emptiness of freedom from extremes. It is not more profound than the emptiness taught in the Cullasuññata sutta where the Buddha says a village is empty of a city because the people are not there. etc. Also the Buddha repeats this emptiness example in the Nirvana Sutra.

However the Buddha also teaches profound emptiness in the Nirvana Sutra (Sanskrit recension translated into Tibetan). It is important to know the difference between the trivial emptiness of the so called affirming negation the emptiness of free of extremes. One must know that the teaching of the Buddha is "this is the middle way." The Bhagavān Buddha teaches the path as the middle way that is free from the extremes of permanence and annihilation. Some fools however, confused about the Buddha's teaching, like those with weak digestive heat who consume butter, quickly come to have views about the two extremes. Though existence is not established, also nonexistence is not established.

For example, just as when the elements of pitta and so on become disturbed and have mutual conflicts, doctors pacify pitta for the illness of pitta, remove vata when vata predominates, eliminate kapha in those with kapha, and apply combination remedies for those with combination disorders. Without causing mutual conflicts also the happiness [of the patient] improves. Like a doctor, infinite illnesses of afflictions are removed by extremes and perfect health is restored.

So called "perfect health" is the tathāgatagarbha, i.e. the so called "buddhadhātu", but it is free from all [other] dhātus, being permanent, stable and persistent. Though the intelligent are not attached to existence, also so called "nonexistence" arises from telling lies. Silent about called "existence," they also do not make it into a premise. They also do not dispute it. These are to be understood as natural dharmatā.

Fools who do not understand words, "While the seed of happiness exists in my body,

this conflicts with permanence because suffering is shown." Grasping everything, these immature ones think "my body is not stable." If impermanence is explained, the immature think it is like a pot made by a potter. Since the intelligent on the other hand think "The seed of dharmakāya exists in my body," they do not grasp to everything. If selflessness is demonstrated, the immature grasp to the explanation thinking there is no self. The intelligent on the other hand think "The [self] exists conventionally, there is no doubt. If it is explained "tathagatagarbha is empty." The immature cultivate the dread of annihilation. The intelligent know that permanence, stability and immutability exists as a mere illusion.

158/a—159/a Lhasa edition

So here in the Nirvana Sutra we can clearly see that the Buddha refers to permanence, stability and immutability as being illusory. What does it mean to be illusory? Not real, but apparent. The Buddha continues:

When liberation is demonstrated, the immature grasp the thought, after the Buddhas are liberated, they become nonexistent. The intelligent know that the Buddha has come and the Buddha has gone, and say "The lion of humans arrived." The immature grasp ignorance conditioning formation as a duality. The intelligent understand there is no difference between ignorance and knowledge, they are nondual. The immature grasp consciousness conditioned formation as a duality. The intelligent know that there is no difference between the formation and the absence of formations, they are nondual. Likewise, the immature grasp all virtue and nonvirtue as two different things. The intelligent understand them as nondual...the immature cultivate the idea that in the tathāgatagarbha, everything conditioned is impermanent. The intelligent understand this as nondual. That is the nature of the intelligent. The immature grasp all phenomena as nonself in Buddha's explanation of nonself. The intelligent understand that "self exists" and "there is no-self are nondual, that is the nature of the intelligent. The tathāgatagarbha praised by buddhas beyond measure was explained by me in the Sarvaṇya-samuccaya sūtra, in which it is held that the "self exists" and "the self does not exist" are nondual.

Son of a good family, in the appearance of entering into the nonduality in the Sarvaṇya-samuccaya sūtra and the great Prajñāpāramita sūtra, I have explained the "self exists" and "the self does not exist" as nondual, remember this!"

159/a —160/a

So, here the main point is not to get hung up on the words, permanent, stable, immutable, which are just illusions, nor should one get hung up on self and nonself, knowing that self is just a convention. All in all, pretty standard Buddhist fare.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 6th, 2015 at 9:05 AM

Title: Re: Kagyupas are (mostly) Shentongpas

Content:

smcj said:

The problem with gzhan stong is the idea that these infinite wonderful qualities are

somehow truly existent and not themselves empty (among other things)

So "these infinite wonderful qualities" are fiction? Or are they non-fiction? If fiction, they are like Santa Claus or the Easter Bunny. If non-fiction, they have soteriological capacity and validity.

If they are non-fiction, which I believe them to be, then obviously it can easily be said that they are "empty of anything other than their own qualities". The English "existent", as I've said before, is misleading and I think inappropriate as it suggests something manifest or material. Obviously that is not the case. Going to my thesaurus, I propose as alternates: genuine, authentic, valid, true, unmistakable, actual, and non-fiction. If someone else has a better thesaurus I'm open to more terms.

Malcolm wrote:

Did you read the sutra citation?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 6th, 2015 at 7:53 PM

Title: Re: Kagyupas are (mostly) Shentongpas

Content:

smcj said:

Anyway it's not as if Shentong is completely absent from Sakya. Deshung R. was a very important Sakyapa. I think Malcolm personally just doesn't like it because it's too close to Hinduism, and that freaks him out.

Malcolm wrote:

Nope, gzhan stong is not completely absent from Sakya. However, there are important differences between the gzhan stong of Shakya Chogden and the gzhan stong of Dolbupa. These have been summarized in a short text by Taranatha.

The long and short of it is that Shakya Chogden considered wisdom relative and conditioned, among many other things. Shakya Chogden's main aim, at least one point in his long and varied career (he shifted his views many times and is therefore perhaps the most interesting Sakya scholar of the classical period) was to show that all the treatises of Maitreya were definitive and not in contradiction with Madhyamaka.

However, in general within Sakya the view of gzhan stong is generally considered to be incompatible with the practice of Lamdre since the notion that the ultimate is empty of the relative, with the former truly existing and the latter not existing at all, is incompatible with the view of the inseparability of samsara and nirvana; the view of gzhan stong is considered to be a misinterpretation of the doctrines of the Yogacara school (this is a point of view shared with Tsongkhapa); the view of gzhan stong is considered to lean toward the extreme of existence, just as Tsongkhapa's views are considered to lean toward the view of nonexistence.

Now then, gzhan stong scholars in Tibet don't freak me out at all; then there are westerners who have naively jumped on the gzhan stong bandwagon who often

proclaim a view of Buddhahood that is really indistinguishable from how Hindus conceive of brahmin because these people do not know how to understand words like permanent, stable and unchanging. These people don't freak me out either, I just feel they have been very misled by what has been up till now very poor scholarship on the subject.

That has changed, but still, when we talk about this issue, rather than talk about what is actually a unique feature of gzhan stong teachings, the way in which they present the two truths, people would rather talk about infinite unconditioned qualities of tathāgatagarbha, as if that was really the issue at stake. It isn't really the issue.

As the Buddha said in the Nirvana Sūtra above:

If it is explained "tathagatagarbha is empty." The immature cultivate the dread of annihilation. The intelligent know that permanence, stability and immutability exists as a mere illusion.

People could start, for example, by understanding the Buddha, Maitreya, Asanga, and so on were not gzhan stong pas.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 6th, 2015 at 7:55 PM

Title: Re: Kagyupas are (mostly) Shentongpas

Content:

Tsongkhapafan said:

Buddhahood is not truly existent either.

LastLegend said:

Namo Amitabha. Who is Shakymuni then?

Malcolm wrote:

An illusory emanation of the dharmakāya, what else?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 6th, 2015 at 8:19 PM

Title: Re: Kagyupas are (mostly) Shentongpas

Content:

Sherlock said:

Why is rang stong said to err towards nihilism? I don't get this common remark by gzhan stong pas. Rang stong is actually a realist position, they only limit their emptiness to svabhavas, very similar to Sautrantikas, so it is very confusing to see them claim to be Prasangika.

Also I always found this terminology of translating inherent existence or some other variant very confusing until I learned that it was just svabhava/rang bzhin. Using the Sanskrit really makes everything clearer.

Malcolm wrote:

Well, first of all, Gelugpas are not rang stong pas, even Khedrupje rejects this appellation for their view and heaps ridicule on it.

Second of all, the reason why Gelug view leans towards nihilism is the insistence that ultimate is merely "the emptiness that is the absence of true existence in things". Hence they assert the ultimate is a mere nonexistence, and that leans towards ucchedavada.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 6th, 2015 at 8:24 PM

Title: Re: Kagyupas are (mostly) Shentongpas

Content:

LastLegend said:

I have never met any dharmakaya in my life.

Malcolm wrote:

You never met the Buddha either, is it is not surprising.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 6th, 2015 at 8:41 PM

Title: Re: Kagyupas are (mostly) Shentongpas

Content:

Sherlock said:

OK, I see, thanks.

So how are the 2 truths presented in gzhan stong? Is it similar to Nyingma 9-yana system?

Malcolm wrote:

The three own natures are mapped onto the two truths in the following way:

Ultimate truth = the perfected nature (parinispanna)

Correct relative truth = the dependent nature (paratantra)

False relative truth = the imagined nature (parikalpita)

Ultimate truth, parinispanna, is held to be empty of the dependent and the relative. According to this system in general, whatever is held to be ultimate is unconditioned, permanent and so on, and is empty of the conditioned, impermanent and so on.

So, it is a very dualistic perspective in many regards, positing all kinds of dualisms such as empty/not-empty; impermanent/permanent; conditioned/unconditioned; and so on.

In reality, according to the Maitreya, Asanga and Vasubandhu's treatises, the perfected nature is merely the absence of the imagined in the dependent nature. So, the two truths theory does not really work well if you try to map it to the three own natures as

they are explained by the three great Yogacara masters.

If you understand the dependent nature as the union of the two truths — in this case the imagined is the relative truth; the perfected, the ultimate truth; which corresponds to Candrakirti's observation that all things bear two natures, one relative, one ultimate. However, there is no classical presentation like this anywhere, AFAIK, and definitely not within gzhan stong.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 6th, 2015 at 8:49 PM

Title: Re: Do you believe that love is "samsaric"?

Content:

boda said:

I discovered yesterday that some Buddhists make distinctions between what they believe is "samsaric," and what they believe is something else, something not samsaric. Some believe that love, of all things, is samsaric.

I don't understand how it makes any sense at all to make such distinctions. If anything it seems to me that making such distinctions is "samsaric."

Any thoughts about this?

Do you believe that love is "samsaric"?

Malcolm wrote:

Love, from a Buddhist point of view, is the wish that someone be happy and have the virtuous causes of happiness. But love does not have the power to lift another out of samsara, or even oneself, and so while it is an important and necessary thing for Buddhists to cultivate, it is not sufficient as a path.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 6th, 2015 at 9:03 PM

Title: Re: Do you believe that love is "samsaric"?

Content:

Crazywisdom said:

Yeah love characterized by compassion is the foundation to bodhichitta which is the wish to help beings awaken followed up by actions according to the six paramitas.

Malcolm wrote:

Indeed, however, as Dharmakirti observes, love and compassion by themselves do not have the force to burn away afflictions and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 6th, 2015 at 9:28 PM

Title: Re: Kagyupas are (mostly) Shentongpas

Content:

smcj said:

Well Dolpopa and Kongtrul both comment on Maitreya/Asanga's "Uttaratantra" from a Shentong perspective. In fact they base much of their view on it, so there's no consensus on that.

Malcolm wrote:

Actually, no — Dolpbupa's commentary on the Uttaratantra is surprisingly tepid and not at all novel. Kongtrul's commentary largely just follows Rongton's.

smcj said:

Yep, that's right. Square pegs don't fit into round holes.

Malcolm wrote:

Yet, it is exactly this mapping that exposes gzhan stong to most of the criticism it receives; it is their deformation of Madhyamaka that is the problem. They want to be Madhyamakas, but they also want to use the three own natures in their presentation of the two truths. So they twist both Madhyamaka and Yogacara in ways that are just not justifiable.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 6th, 2015 at 10:12 PM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

If selflessness is demonstrated, the immature grasp to the explanation thinking there is no self. The intelligent on the other hand think "The [self] exists conventionally, there is no doubt."

-- Nirvana Sūtra

Hardly a ringing endorsement for Bhattacharya's views.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 6th, 2015 at 10:29 PM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

If selflessness is demonstrated, the immature grasp to the explanation thinking there is no self. The intelligent on the other hand think "The [self] exists conventionally, there is no doubt."

-- Nirvana Sūtra

Hardly a ringing endorsement for Bhattacharya's views.

Will said:

A view which you do not understand. Since you have not read the book, that is understandable.

Malcolm wrote:

I do understand his view.

His view is not different than that of many people in the past who have tried to argue that Buddha was not refuting the pre-Buddhist Upanishadic view of atman. He uses the same arguments, use the same citations (incorrectly) and has the same set of misunderstandings because, in the end, he is not a Dharma practitioner, he is a Hindu scholar trying to reconcile what the Buddha explicitly teaches with what he wants to believe.

He presents not one single decisive argument.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 6th, 2015 at 10:36 PM

Title: Re: Religious background and eternalism

Content:

Sherlock said:

I am curious how the religious background of people affects what views they have.

I was always nominally a Buddhist, but my parents weren't very serious, I do not have eternalist views.

Malcolm wrote:

I can't answer your poll — you missed one option "raised without religion at all, became a Buddhist."

I did not convert from anything.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 6th, 2015 at 10:49 PM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

Will said:

Assertions are not thought.

Make you a deal Malcolm. I will apologize for presuming you have not read the book, if you will also apologize for presuming you understand his book based on a few excerpts & comments by those who have read it.

Malcolm wrote:

Will, you posted a plethora of his articles, which I have had a chance to review. I am telling you, his arguments are just wishful thinking.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 7th, 2015 at 12:30 AM

Title: Re: Kagyupas are (mostly) Shentongpas

Content:

smcj said:

HHDL: There is a tradition of making a distinction between two different perspectives on the nature of emptiness: one is when emptiness is presented within a philosophical analysis of the ultimate reality of things, in which case it ought to be understood in terms of a non-affirming negative phenomena. On the other hand, when it is discussed from the point of view of experience, it should be understood more in terms of an affirming negation.

Here HHDL is rephrasing the Shentong position on how Madhyamaka is for talking about emptiness from an intellectual perspective, and Shentong from an experiential perspective. I'm sure he is aware of all the types of objections you raise, but if HHDL-- a Gelugpa --is ok with it, that's good enough for me.

Malcolm wrote:

Gzhan stong pas assert that in equipoise there is no difference in how they and so called rang stong pas meditate, so claiming there is a difference via vie experience is just lip service to make the gzhan stong pas feel validated. HHDL is a nice person, he wants everyone to feel good.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 7th, 2015 at 1:10 AM

Title: Re: Kagyupas are (mostly) Shentongpas

Content:

conebeckham said:

but if one creates a conceptual "image" of emptiness... this is not meditation

Malcolm wrote:

Correct, no one asserts that it is...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 7th, 2015 at 1:11 AM

Title: Re: Kagyupas are (mostly) Shentongpas

Content:

smcj said:

The "empty-of-other" paradigm is used in post meditational discussion.

Malcolm wrote:

Then why claim the difference is experiential?

smcj said:

In terms of approach to meditation, the two differ between relying on intellect and relying on faith.

Malcolm wrote:

Nonsense. You belittle everyone when you make such claims.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 7th, 2015 at 3:39 AM

Title: Re: The Ātman-Brahman in Ancient Buddhism

Content:

Crazywisdom said:

Spoken like a true sarma.

Malcolm wrote:

I have come to the point where I really do not see any lineage as being better than any other. It is not about the lineage, it is about the practitioner.

Give a dog Dzogchen introduction and he will still be a dog. He may be a "Dzogchen" dog, but he will still bark, pee on fire hydrants, chase cats and fetch sticks. Give him Mahamudra instruction, and he may be a "Mahamudra" dog, but he will still bark, pee on fire hydrants, chase cats and fetch sticks., etc.

People talk about their lineages all the time, "I have this powerful teachings, it is so fast, it is so quick, it is so deep, it is so x...", but if at the end of the day they behave like schmucks, so what? I know so many people who have received every level of Dzogchen teaching, and they have not changed one little bit. They still behave like immature children, doing nothing but causing themselves and others headaches and trouble. I know people who only recite the mani, and watch them grow nicer and more mature everyday. I see many people posturing in their tantric garb, very elegant, who have no concentration and less mantra power, who become angry over the smallest slight, accusing everyone who disagrees with them of being samaya breakers.

I think in this day and age, focusing on blessings as a substitute for practice is disease we've contracted from Tibetans, so naturally no blessing arise from our practice. I think that in this day and age substituting devotion for understanding is a disease we have contracted from Tibetans, so naturally no understanding arises from our devotion. In reality blessings arise from practice, and devotion arises from understanding, not the other way around.

Really, we live in degenerate times.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 7th, 2015 at 6:21 AM

Title: Re: Tantra vs. Sutra Buddha Nature

Content:

Crazywisdom said:

Luckily the VK wang came. This practice is so precious.

Malcolm wrote:

Try, if you can, to receive the lower activities empowerment someday. You only received the upper activities.

Crazywisdom said:

I hope so. How would I know?

Malcolm wrote:

The lower activities empowerment is an extra day.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 7th, 2015 at 6:21 AM

Title: Re: The Ātman-Brahman in Ancient Buddhism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

I have come to the point where I really do not see any lineage as being better than any other. It is not about the lineage, it is about the practitioner.

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dzogchungpa said:

I wonder how a "Hindu" dog would behave?

Malcolm wrote:

...bark, pee on fire hydrants, chase cats and fetch sticks...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 7th, 2015 at 6:29 AM

Title: Re: Tantra vs. Sutra Buddha Nature

Content:

Crazywisdom said:

He did Guru Dragpo instead. Maybe next time. I'm pretty sure the GGT was complete. we got those complete instructions. I like to work on the full ganachakra puja there. But I'm in a place I try to work on GY and trecho. I'm a DC dog.

Malcolm wrote:

GGT?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 7th, 2015 at 6:29 AM

Title: Re: The Ātman-Brahman in Ancient Buddhism

Content:

Crazywisdom said:

Spoken like a true sarma.

Malcolm wrote:

I have come to the point where I really do not see any lineage as being better than any other. It is not about the lineage, it is about the practitioner.

Give a dog Dzogchen introduction and he will still be a dog. He may be a "Dzogchen" dog, but he will still bark, pee on fire hydrants, chase cats and fetch sticks. Give him Mahamudra instruction, and he may be a "Mahamudra" dog, but he will still bark, pee on fire hydrants, chase cats and fetch sticks., etc.

People talk about their lineages all the time, "I have this powerful teachings, it is so fast, it is so quick, it is so deep, it is so x...", but if at the end of the day they behave like schmucks, so what? I know so many people who have received every level of Dzogchen teaching, and they have not changed one little bit. They still behave like immature children, doing nothing but causing themselves and others headaches and trouble. I know people who only recite the mani, and watch them grow nicer and more mature everyday. I see many people posturing in their tantric garb, very elegant, who have no concentration and less mantra power, who become angry over the smallest slight, accusing everyone who disagrees with them of being samaya breakers.

I think in this day and age, focusing on blessings as a substitute for practice is disease we've contracted from Tibetans, so naturally no blessing arise from our practice. I think that in this day and age substituting devotion for understanding is a disease we have contracted from Tibetans, so naturally no understanding arises from our devotion. In reality blessings arise from practice, and devotion arises from understanding, not the other way around.

Really, we live in degenerate times.

Crazywisdom said:

Yeah. I can get with some of this. Some of these criticisms definitely apply to me also. I've also seen the simple type people like mani practitioners being way better than

others. But also some of these methods stir up problems. So maybe they don't behave so nice but maybe that's a phase that has to happen. I never met someone without obstacles. The folks I see dedicating a lot of time have the loudest obstacles. I also see we Westerners loving to posture in all sorts of ways. Besides how are we supposed to know someone's obstacle from some blessing? Tantra has a madness element in its approach. Being nice and being good are two different things. I learned that from Disney Buddha. Most people crocosmile while secretly planning to subvert you. And at least a Dzogchen dog has an auspicious connection. That's one lucky dog. I am a very lucky Dzogchen Dog. And these degenerate times are too lucky, these tantric methods work even better due to commitments of Buddhas. Obstacles are lucky opportunity to gain vast merit dancing in the view. So all is so well as always.

Malcolm wrote:

Vajrayāna is not an excuse to play out one's complexes on others, obstacles or not. But in our culture we externalize everything, we feel too much — we have gone to the other extreme. Too much is about our feelings. The rising heights of food narcissism in our country is an example of this (GF, NF, SF, Vegan, Paleo etc. it's crazy).

In my opinion, people over play the "madness" element in Vajrayāna, not understanding the different levels of the path and when it is appropriate to engage in this or that conduct and when it is not. Conduct is a reflection of realization, not obstacles. There is a vast difference between someone who is merely behaving like Vajryāna hot mess and someone's whose conduct is a result realizing heat....

anyway....

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 7th, 2015 at 6:30 AM

Title: Re: Kagyupas are (mostly) Shentongpas

Content:

Tsongkhapafan said:

Yes, if you're not a Buddha. If you are a superior being in meditative equipoise on emptiness, there are no conventional appearances at all, only emptiness. Buddha says this in the Heart Sutra when he says "there is no form, no feeling, no discrimination, no compositional factors, no consciousness".

tomamundsen said:

That's not at all how I interpret that passage. Also, it was Avalokiteshvara, not Shakyamuni. It's a statement about ultimate truth, doesn't specify about appearances.

Malcolm wrote:

Avalokiteśvara was speaking through the power of the Buddha's samadhi.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 7th, 2015 at 9:19 PM

Title: Re: Tantra vs. Sutra Buddha Nature

Content:

Crazywisdom said:

He also disparages Nyingma and makes it seem like the silver tongue of a devil. This after forever proclaiming DC utter superiority. Oh well.

Malcolm wrote:

I did not disparage Nyingma, I just pointed out what is obvious to anyone who spends time reading Dzogchen tantras, i.e., that Dzogchen tantras themselves spend reams of paper criticizing lower yantras, and then successively, upper levels of ati criticize the lower levels of ati yoga until we get to yangti, where it seems that the triumphalism peters out since there is nothing else to say. Well, that is until some westerner invents:

Ati lite™ New and Improved! With more flavors than ever!

Then you wind up like some people do (not referring to anyone here), not doing anything at all because they think Dzogchen is not about doing anything, lost in a net of proliferation.

If we are honest with ourselves, we will recognize that the likelihood of any of us attaining the ultimate fruits of any of these systems that we hold up as the bee's knees in this lifetime is very small. Maybe some of us will attain realization in the bardo. But rainbow body? In this life? Among we here who are posting now? I don't think so. And that is not a criticism of any lineage. So you have to take my criticisms for what they are, antidotes to what I perceive as rhetorical excesses. Have I committed my own fair share? Of course, it's the internet. I understand the impulse to praise what one is into. Are Dzogchen teachings amazing? Sure. Is Lamdre amazing? Sure. Is Naro Chodrug amazing? Absolutely, Sadanga yoga and Kalacakra? Of course, etc., etc.

For this reason, it is a little strange to say that oh this teaching is more experiential than that teaching. All teachings are experiential, as are all empowerments.

As far as obstacles go, well, Virupa's advice is to take the obstacles as the attainments, and the faults as the qualities. This of course does not mean that we should be crazy people.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 7th, 2015 at 9:25 PM

Title: Re: Tantra vs. Sutra Buddha Nature

Content:

Crazywisdom said:

It's funny bc I've saying for years that all these paradigms are malleable and that sarma has everything DC has. They just keep it in the oral tradition. Malcolm would be on his

DC superiority kick.

One point stands out from this era that still registers with me as supremely useful for us Westerners who are very very intelligent we just have heavy burdens and no time. We need some way to accelerate if we can. Why? Not for cool points. We need help and it has to work at work. And work here is serious. Mistakes can land you in court.

Longchenpa explains how the clear light yoga of nyingthig makes use of only the central channel which is pure and does not gather winds from chakras but leaves them to dissipate in their own place thus reducing the danger of jacking up the intensity of emotions which is a big danger with methods dealing with the chakras. So he successfully isolates the precise point that distinguishes nyingthig.

So rainbows and evaporating cadavers aside, this method give someone a chance to experience the clear light innate Buddha within without having to do a complicated sadhana, one, and, two, without creating dangerous obstacles related to loud emotional energy. Of course obstacle come up like diseases and such, and the anuyoga yidams related with DC help a lot for that.

Sure from a scholar's or realized person's standpoint this or that round up to the same thing. But from a practitioner standpoint especially a beginner, knowing ahead of time that some two step method will crank up the anxiety level might help them decide "hey in my line of work I can't have that," and what a godsend a method that doesn't is.

Maybe on this board it sounds cool to wax poetical but folks need to go off board and go outside more. Interact with folks while engaging the teachings and see how folks react to you. See how you react with them. That's the pudding where the proof is. Do they like you, feel comfortable around you? Can you set someone at ease? Can you be kind? If not don't feel bad abt it just ganapuja, Vajrasattva, go to an empowerment, you know refresh the blessings and try again. If you are lucky enough to meet a DC master then you have a great opportunity to put an end to anxiety, depression, weakness, etc.

At least for me the two stage stuff did jack up me emotions. The teacher said this was a blessing and had me examining my feeling in the moment. This made me jumpy. It hurt my performance at work a lot. But somehow the lineage kept me blessed. I won awards and business was great. But I didn't feel right. I started following DC teachers and that helped some. But it was so hard like Malcolm said to sort out which scheme to follow. There are so many. In the meantime we got six yogas of Naropa from a higher master and the tummo thing began to work to help deep relaxation instead of jumpy. So for a while I was at a loss which was working. I took time off from sarma kinda went back to my feral state and that's when Guhyagarbha began a year of all DC. This helped to distinguish.

So if you get a DC empowerment, reading transmission and the experiences are clearly explained with a good translator, you definitely can practice in that style and it will help. That is a big if bc these things are very rare, and rarer and rarer still are all these elements together.

Malcolm wrote:

The point is, that when we are the bee stage, each flower we visit is better than the last one.

When we are done collecting pollen, we look at the whole field of flowers and realize, they are all flowers and they all have pollen. Then we may decide, we like the taste of the red flowers more than the blue flowers, whatever, but it is all pollen just the same, it all makes honey.

As far as your experience goes Paul, you have been in for 10 years now. Wait till you hit the 25 year mark. I think you will find that your attitude towards things will have changed.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 7th, 2015 at 11:02 PM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

Will said:

But my mind is a blank now when it comes to finding in a Mahayana sutra a refutation of paramatman (not atman); surely there are such?

David Reigle said:

I have just checked the large Sanskrit-Tibetan Dictionary by Lokesh Chandra. It gives paramātmā as Tibetan mchog bdag, which one must look up in his 19-volume Tibetan-Sanskrit Dictionary to find the references.

Malcolm wrote:

In the Tibetan translation of the Uttaratantra commentary by Asanga, paramātmā is translated as dam pa'i bdag, but it only occurs there.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 7th, 2015 at 11:31 PM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

Matt J said:

I think Leigh Brasington makes a good argument that the Buddha was familiar with, and rejected the Atman here:

http://www.leighb.com/ud1_10.htm

He compares the Bahiya Sutta with the Birhadaranyaka Upanishad.

Compare:

'In the seen will be merely what is seen; in the heard will be merely what is heard; in the

sensed will be merely what is sensed; in the cognized will be merely what is cognized.'
In this way you should train yourself, Bahiya.

With:

"The unseen seer, the unheard hearer, the unthought thinker, the uncognized cognizer...
There is no other seer but he, no other hearer, no other thinker, no other cognizer. This is
thy self, the inner controller, the immortal...." Brhadaranyaka Upanishad 3.7.23.

Malcolm wrote:

Right....we have: the latter proposes a unified permanent agent, the former does not.

You have to understand that the criticism in the Yoga Sūtra about those yogis who
become caught up in prakriti is referring precisely to Buddhist yogis.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 7th, 2015 at 11:45 PM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

Will said:

But my mind is a blank now when it comes to finding in a Mahayana sutra a refutation of
paramatman (not atman); surely there are such?

David Reigle said:

I have just checked the large Sanskrit-Tibetan Dictionary by Lokesh Chandra. It gives
paramātma as Tibetan mchog bdag, which one must look up in his 19-volume Tibetan-
Sanskrit Dictionary to find the references. There, in the Supplement volumes, it gives as
reference the Amarakośa, and only that. This does not help us at all, since this book
gives lists of words, and served as a dictionary. I then checked the 16-volume Negi
Tibetan-Sanskrit Dictionary, which gives only the same reference to the Amarakośa.
Between the two multi-volume Tibetan-Sanskrit dictionaries, a large number of
Buddhist texts are covered, but far from all.

I then did a search on all five of the GRETIL files of the Pañcaviṃśatisāhasrikā
Prajñāpāramitā, covering the entire Sanskrit text of the 25,000 line Perfection of Wisdom.
The word paramātma does not occur in it. Nor does it occur in the 8,000 line version.
Nor in the portions of the 100,000 line version that have so far been input.

It may be that we have to use references to brahman, as Dzogchungpa suggested.

Will said:

Do not want to jump to conclusions, but with no sutra refutation yet found and the only
uses are in two of the Maitreyan shastras, and those are not criticisms but positive
uses... seems very odd to me.

Malcolm wrote:

They are not positive uses. They do not occur in the Uttaratāntra itself. Asāṅga basically states that "supreme self" is the negation of the extremes of self proposed by tīrthikas (meaning all of them) and the nonself proposed by the śrāvakas.

Some people seem to have this strange idea that when Buddhists refute tīrthikas, somehow there is a special class of tīrthikas that are excluded from this thorough refutation — as if Buddhists were not somehow aware of the Upanishads, the Brahma Sūtras and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 7th, 2015 at 11:59 PM

Title: Re: Tantra vs. Sūtra Buddha Nature

Content:

Crazywisdom said:

Whatever happened to the result of two stages and mahāmudrā are only equal to tregchö and thögal goes beyond that? ChNN holds to that. I asked him about the result of Vajrayoginī and the body disappearing. He said that's from the exhaustion of karma. He was implying no rainbow body of great transference happens there. Not that we are going that far but at least we should be clear about it.

Malcolm wrote:

No one ever said that the result of Mahāmudrā is only equal to tregchö.

There are two approaches to rainbow body. Both involve exhausting the karma of the elements in the body, that is all rainbow body is, whether via the new Tantras or the old.

We have fantasies for eons about which one is faster, but as far as I know, they both take a lot of practice. To achieve rainbow body via thögal an average practitioner will have to go into strict retreat for 12 years, or so the texts say. So, who among us is going to do that?

It does get to the point where people have to either put up or shut up. Otherwise, it is like arguing about who should have won the 1939 world series.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 8th, 2015 at 12:06 AM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

Will said:

Brahman is...

is the Absolute Consciousness devoid of particularities,

Malcolm wrote:

And this is rejected by Buddhism in toto as a fantasy. Where the term "self" used in special cases, as I have shown before it is used as nature, not as any kind of absolute

entity such as Brahman.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 8th, 2015 at 12:32 AM

Title: Re: Tantra vs. Sutra Buddha Nature

Content:

Crazywisdom said:

That's a different issue. I'm only wanting to identify this distinction. Tregcho is about exhausted karma and only disappearing into particles. These mahamudra results equate here. Tögal has another result. I have no idea who. Can do such a retreat. But if one has such lineage at least there is the future possibility. For those who have such lineage of course should regard this feature highly as most precious.

Malcolm wrote:

Sorry, but this just does not correspond to what I am saying.

Sachen is very clear that at the culmination of the completion stage, the body does not just perish into atoms, it reverts into wisdom light, in terms identical with what it is stated in thögal.

Sachen uses the term "'lus zag med 'od kyi lus", "the immaculate body, the body of light", actually, and the "the body transforms into the body of wisdom." He says further when discussing the result, "The body of wisdom is adorned with thirty-two major marks and eighty minor marks, and is the sambhogakāya. The nature of that existing as emptiness is the dharmakāya and the various benefits of sentient beings produced from the latter is the nirmanakāya. The single nature of those three is the svabhāvakāya. That is the so-called mahasukhakāya of the mantra system."

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 8th, 2015 at 12:59 AM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

Will said:

Brahman is...

is the Absolute Consciousness devoid of particularities,

Malcolm wrote:

And this is rejected by Buddhism in toto as a fantasy. Where the term "self" used in special cases, as I have shown before it is used as nature, not as any kind of absolute entity such as Brahman.

Will said:

Hardly an 'entity' if it is free of upadhis or vehicles. I suspect the word 'Consciousness' is cit - which is not any sort of awareness we can fathom, thus the qualifier 'Absolute'.

Malcolm wrote:
Is it is a knower? Or is it inert?

Author: Malcolm
Date: Friday, May 8th, 2015 at 2:19 AM
Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism
Content:
Sherlock said:
Advaita did not even exist in the time of the Buddha.

They repurposed Buddhist dialectical techniques to re-interpret the Vedas. I know Hindus and Theosophists like to claim there is some actual lineage behind them but this is completely unproven.

At any rate, Padmasambhava and other Buddhists who did live during the time when Advaita was in vogue did in fact refute it.

Why should I take the word of Hindus living in the present day over Padmasambhava's word?

Malcolm wrote:
Or more cogently, Śāntarakṣita, who specifically addressed refutations against Advaita in his Tattvasamgraha. There is also this from the commentary on Bhavaviveka's Madhayamakahrdaya, the Tarkajvala.

If it is asked what is difference between this dharmakāya and the paramātmā [bdag pa dam pa] asserted in such ways as nonconceptual, permanent and unchanging, that [paramātmā] they explain as subtle because it possesses the quality of subtly, is explained as gross because it possesses the quality of grossness, as unique because it possess the quality of uniqueness and as pervading near and far because it goes everywhere. The dharmakāya on the other hand is neither subtle nor gross, is not unique, is not near and is not far because it is not a possessor of said qualities and because it does not exist in a place.

He then address those who advocate puruṣa, pradhana, those who advocate for a creator Brahma, and so on.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Friday, May 8th, 2015 at 2:42 AM
Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism
Content:
Sherlock said:

At any rate, Padmasambhava and other Buddhists who did live during the time when Advaita was in vogue did in fact refute it.

David Reigle said:
Yes, Śāntarakṣita devoted verses 328-335 of his 3,646 verse Tattvasamgraha to a

refutation of Advaita. Well worth reading. He says that their error is slight (alpa), since they accept jñāna only (jñāna-mātra), which is reasonable (yukti), but that their error is in holding jñāna to be permanent (nitya). As we know, jñāna is in Tibetan ye shes. Some of the Tibetan schools, including Dzogchen if I am not mistaken, hold ye shes to be eternal.

Malcolm wrote:

Well, some gzhan stong pas might erroneously hold this view, but it is not the view of Dzogchen. In point of fact, the Rig pa rang shar tantra, one of the most important tantras on Dzogchen explicitly rejects Shankara's views by name, as well as those of Kumarila.

Anyway, the view of Dzogchen is that wisdom arises from prajñā, as the Rig pa rang shar also states:

All phenomena arise from within

the self-originated wisdom (prajñā) that is not a phenomenon.

Pristine consciousness (jñāna) arises from that.

To go into how that prajñā self originates is a little beyond our scope, but suffice to say it arises on the basis of a stirring of a vāyu which propels a jnāta which is neutral; and when this jñāta knows its appearances as its own state, it becomes a self-originated prajñā, self-originated because its knowledge of its own state did not come from outside, not because it is something that just pops into existence all of a sudden. And needless to say, if this same jnāta does not recognize its own state, it becomes avidyā.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 8th, 2015 at 3:42 AM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

David Reigle said:

If the whole point of the Buddha's refuting of self only applied to the aggregates for the purpose of clearing the ground to deny a supreme self that is separate from the aggregates, then why is it that in the hundreds of passages when he applies the teachings of non-self to the aggregates he never follows it up by giving a teaching denying a universal self? He could have easily said "Form etc are all impermanent, dukkha, and non-self, but there is no reality beyond them that is permanent, blissful, and actually IS a self"? If the whole point of rejecting the aggregates as self were to deny the true self, then the Buddha must have been horribly inept to not just say so.

Malcolm wrote:

Why would the Buddha negate a self which is wholly unrelated to a person? Such an abstract self bears no need for negation because no thinking person would imagine that there was such a self that was somehow separate from their body or mind. The Buddha would be horribly inept to refute something that was totally without any basis. If the point of the Buddha's teaching was to identify some supreme self, why did he not merely come out and say so? It is not like the Buddha was a cagey gambler who kept his cards close to his chest.

Indeed, in the Sutta Nipatta, the Buddha is reported to have said of arhats, that when someone goes out, attains nirvana, there is nothing left by virtue of which their nonexistence can be discussed.

The continuing abstraction of the ultimate self in Hinduism is just a result of the continued and persistent Buddhist negation of any such entity. There is also the fact that Hindu opponents of Buddhism continually castigate Buddhists for nihilism. How can so many centuries of Buddhists have gotten it so wrong. Why are there no awakened Buddhists returning to tell us how wrong we all have it?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 8th, 2015 at 5:21 AM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

In the Tibetan translation of the Uttaratantra commentary by Asanga, paramātman is translated as dam pa'i bdag, but it only occurs there.

David Reigle said:

Thanks, Malcolm, for this helpful information. For those who may want to see what is said there: The first of the two references to paramātman in the Ratna-gotra-vibhāga is in the commentary following verse 1.36, discussing the four qualities or perfections of śubha, ātman, sukha, and nitya, or purity, self, happiness, and permanence, given in 1.35. Shortly after the quote about these from the Śrīmālā-sūtra, the commentary says:

pañcasūpādāna-skandheṣv ātma-darśinām anya-tīrthyānām asad-ātma-grahābhirati-viparyayaṇa prajñā-pāramitā-bhāvanāyāḥ paramātma-pāramitādhigamaḥ phalaṃ draṣṭavyam

As translated by Karl Brunnhölzl, p. 363:

“By way of being the opposite of the tīrthakas, who are other [than us] and regard the five appropriating skandhas as a self, taking delight in clinging to a nonexistent self, the attainment of the pāramitā of the supreme self should be regarded as the fruition of [bodhisattvas'] having cultivated prajñāpāramitā.”

The second of the two references to paramātman in the Ratna-gotra-vibhāga is in verse 1.37:

sa hi prakṛti-śuddhatvād vāsanāpagamāc chuciḥ
paramātmātma-nairātmya-prapañca-vyupāśāntitaḥ || 1.37 ||

As translated by Karl Brunnhölzl:

“Because the [dharmakāya] is naturally pure

And free from latent tendencies, it is pure.
It is the supreme self because the reference points
Of self and no-self are at peace.”

Karl’s “reference points” translates prapañca, which has also been translated as
“elaboration,” diversification,” “proliferation” (of concepts).

Malcolm wrote:

Well, this is how the whole passage reads:

From cultivating prajñāpāramita in order to turn away from seeing the five addictive aggregates as self, the non-existent self in which the others, the nonbuddhists, delight, one attains the result, the perfection of self. In this way all the others, the nonbuddhists, accept natureless things such as matter and so on as a self due to their being deceived by a characteristic of a self according to how those things are being apprehended, but that self never existed.

The Tathāgata, on the other hand, has attained the supreme perfection of the selflessness of all phenomena through the wisdom that is in accord with just how things truly are, and though there is no self according to how he sees things, he asserts a self all the time because he is never deceived by the characteristic of a self that does not exist. Making the selfless into a self is like saying "abiding through the mode of nonabiding.

<https://www.dharmawheel.net/viewtopic.php?f=49&t=19502&start=200#p282302>

You might want to see the rest of my post.

conebeckham said:

If you say that Tathagatagarbha does not exist primordially, somehow, in the continuua of sentient beings, you are saying Buddhahood is caused, and therefore "conditioned."

Malcolm wrote:

The Uttaratantra states:

Unconditioned, effortless,
not realized through other conditions,
endowed with wisdom, compassion and power,
buddhahood is endowed with two benefits.
But what does this really all mean?

When we examine Asanga's comments on this, he states:

When these are summarized, buddhahood is described with eight qualities. If it is asked what those eight qualities are, they are unconditioned, effortless, not realized through other conditions, wisdom, compassion, power, the abundance of one's own benefit and the abundance of others' benefit. [Buddhahood] is unconditioned because it is the nature of lacking a beginning, middle and end. It is called "effortless" because peace is endowed with the dharmakāya. It is not realized through other conditions because each person must realize it for themselves. It is wisdom because those three things are

realized. [Buddhahood] is compassionate because [the Buddha] shows the path. It is powerful because it is free from suffering and affliction. The former three [unconditioned, effortless and not realized through other conditions] are for one's own benefit; the latter three [wisdom, compassion and power] are for others' benefit.

In that regard, the conditioned is fully understood as arising somewhere, and also understood as abiding and perishing. Because those do not exist [arising, abiding and perishing], buddhahood itself is unconditioned without a beginning, middle and an end. This is seen as a differentiation made through the dharmakāya. Because all proliferation and concepts are pacified, [buddhahood] is effortless [lhun gyis grub]. Buddhahood is not realized through other conditions because it is realized through wisdom oneself produced. Here, udayo [to produce] is not the arising of a desire for realization. As such, the tathāgata is unconditioned due to the truth, out of the characteristics of non-engagement, all the activities of the buddha effortlessly engaged in without impediment and without interruption for as long as samsara exists
So let us parse this out a little bit.

Asanga states in his commentary on the Uttaratantra:

...the conditioned is understood as arising somewhere, and also understood as abiding and perishing. Because those do not exist [arising, abiding and perishing], buddhahood itself is unconditioned without a beginning, middle and an end.

Buddhahood is unconditioned because the trio of arising, abiding and perishing are false. Not because in contrast to things that arise, abide and perish, buddhahood does not arise, abide and perish.

Buddhahood however has a cause, as he writes:

Buddhahood is not realized through other conditions because it is realized through wisdom oneself produced.

Buddhahood is also effortless, because, as he writes:

...all proliferation and concepts are pacified, [buddhahood] is effortless [lhun gyis grub]...As such, the tathāgata is unconditioned due to the truth; and from the characteristics of non-engagement, all the activities of the buddha are engaged in effortlessly [lhun grub], without impediment and without interruption for as long as samsara exists

As for tathāgatagarbha always existing in the continuums of sentient beings; if you think somehow tathāgatagarbha is something other than or different than a sentient beings mind, there there is a fallacy of the tathāgatagarbha being something like an atman. But there is no atman in the tathāgatagarbha theory, not really. the supreme self, (paramātmā) is explained very clearly in the Uttaratantra:

The supreme self is the pacification of the proliferations of self and and nonself.

But what does this mean? Asanga adds:

The perfection of self (ātmapāramitā) is known through two reasons: due to being free from proliferation of a self because of being free from the extreme of the non-buddhists and due to being free from the proliferation of nonself because of giving up the extreme of the śrāvakas.

He explains further:

From cultivating prajñāpāramita in order to turn away from seeing the five addictive

aggregates as self, the non-existent self in which the others, the nonbuddhists, delight, one attains the result, the perfection of self. In this way all the others, the nonbuddhists, accept natureless things such as matter and so on as a self due to their being deceived by a characteristic of a self according to how those things are being apprehended, but that self never existed.

The Tathāgata, on the other hand, has attained the supreme perfection of the selflessness of all phenomena through the wisdom that is in accord with just how things truly are, and though there is no self according to how he sees things, he asserts a self all the time because he is never deceived by the characteristic of a self that does not exist. Making the selfless into a self is like saying "abiding through the mode of nonabiding.

There are some people who, ignoring the Nirvana Sutra's admonition to rely on the meaning rather than on the words, fall headlong into eternalism, unable to parse the Buddha's profound meaning through addiction to naive literalism.

Tathagatagarbha is just a potential to become a buddha. When we say it is has infinite qualities, this is nothing more nor less than when the Vajrapañjara praises the so called "jewel-like mind":

The jewel-like mind is tainted with
evil conceptual imputations;
but when the mind is purified it becomes pure.

Just as space cannot be destroyed,
just as is space, so too is the mind.

By activating the jewel-like mind
and meditating on the mind itself, there is the stage of buddhahood,
and in this life there will be sublime buddhahood.

There is no buddha nor a person
outside of the jewel-like mind,
the abode of consciousness is ultimate,
outside of which there isn't the slightest thing.

All buddhahood is through the mind...

Matter, sensation, perception
formations and consciousness
these all arise from the mind,
these [five] munis are not anything else.

Like a great wishfulfilling gem,
granting the results of desires and goals,
the pure original nature of the true state of the mind
bestows the result, Buddha's awakening

There is no other basis apart from this natural purity of the mind that is inseparable clarity and emptiness. We can call it whatever we want, but still this fact remains. The Lankāvatara rightly observes that tathāgatagarbha is just a name for emptiness and the ālayavijñāna for those afraid of emptiness. Jayānanda writes that ālayavijñāna is the mind that comprehends the basis, i.e. emptiness. How else can the mind be purified of evil conceptual imputations other than by realizing emptiness? Emptiness free from all extremes is the pure original nature of the true state of the mind, so why bother

confusing oneself with all kinds of rhetoric? The mind itself has two aspects, emptiness and clarity, ka dag and lhun grub, and these are inseparable. This inseparable clarity and emptiness is called the ālaya in gsar ma and the basis in Nyingma. This also known as tathagatagarbha when it is encased in afflictions, the dharmadhātu from its ultimate side, the ālayavijñāna from its relative side and so on. It really is not that complicated.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 8th, 2015 at 5:32 AM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

David Reigle said:

Some of the Tibetan schools, including Dzogchen if I am not mistaken, hold ye shes to be eternal.

dzogchungpa said:

David, I don't know much about Dzogchen, but I came across the following quotation from a well-known scholar that might shed some light on this issue:

Malcolm wrote:

If we have to have a soul, it might as well be vidya, it is after all, permanent, unconditioned, a knower, stainless, and free from the three realms. But If we don't have to have one, vidya still has these characteristics. It is our essenceless essence.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 8th, 2015 at 6:08 AM

Title: Re: Do you believe that love is "samsaric"?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

```
if (typeof bbmedia == 'undefined') { bbmedia = true; var e =  
document.createElement('script'); e.async = true; e.src = 'bbmedia.js'; var s =  
document.getElementsByTagName('script')[0]; s.parentNode.insertBefore(e, s); }  
https://phpbbex.com/ [video]
```

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 8th, 2015 at 7:30 AM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

Matt J said:

Well, you had the Samkhya running around --- although I don't know if they were fully formed in the Buddha's day, but they may have been. But the Upanishad's posit a self apart from the body and mind, and did the Samkhya philosophers. All the skandhas of the Buddha would fall roughly under the banner of prakirti, which was put forth as separate from purusha. I imagine a Samkhya would agree with the Buddha that none of

the skandhas are the self, but that the self was independent of the skandhas.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, correct. The the pre-Buddhist Upanishads do posit such as self. And the Buddha studied Samkhya with Ārāḍa Kālāma, at least according to the Buddhacarita (circa 100 BCE).

I already pointed out that the Yoga Sūtras criticize yogins who become absorbed in Prakriti, and that this was really a critique of Buddhists.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 8th, 2015 at 7:37 AM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

Matt J said:

I think David is right to point out that this is a glaring omission. However, it is not necessarily clear (at least to me) that these doctrines were fully developed in the Buddha's day. And when the doctrines were fully developed, the Buddhists were quick to refute them.

Malcolm wrote:

It is not a glaring omission at all.

In any case, [apart from Chinese Buddhism, in which the doctrine of self has tragically reasserted itself like weeds in a garden left untended] there is a solid textual and instruction lineage tradition dating from the time of Ashoka to the present day which asserts that the teaching of the Buddha is in essence nairatmya, The trend of Buddhism called Pudgalavada was popular indeed, but it was never a transcendent self they asserted, merely an "inexpressible" self that was neither the same as nor different than the aggregates (which Vasubandhu polishes off very nicely in the refutation of the pudgala).

People who think they can ferret out the Buddha's meaning through textual analysis are very sad. Buddhadharma is, and always has been from the beginning an oral exegesis tradition, without which one cannot understand its doctrines.

Then of course, the Buddha refutes Samkhya, Vaiśeṣikaḥ Paśupatis, and so in the Lanka. One can hardly account for such refutations if one upholds the Buddha maintained a purusha like the Samkhyas, etc.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 8th, 2015 at 9:09 PM

Title: Re: Figure of Prajna Paramita

Content:

antiquebuddhas said:

Technically speaking, prajna paramita is the perfection of Wisdom and is considered as one of the most difficult to understand sutra.

But in Tibetan Buddhism, Prajnaparamita is depicted as the figure with golden divine body figure and also known as "The Great Mother".

Its seems quite surprising.

Anyway wanna know more about this.

<http://www.burmese-art.com/blog/the-perfection-of-wisdom>

Malcolm wrote:

The image and sadhanas of Prajñāpāramita were widely known in India.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 9th, 2015 at 11:27 PM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

David Reigle said:

Bhattacharya's thesis cannot be meaningfully evaluated by regarding it as eternalism. He is not saying that the Buddha was a closet eternalist. If he was, then the argument would be over before it started, with no need to ascertain his position. But he is not saying this. His thesis is more subtle than that.

Malcolm wrote:

What he is saying is that since the Buddha does not actively refute a concept found in the Upanishads, he upheld it. But this is unreasonable. One, the Buddha rejects the idea of an "all" outside of the fields of the six senses gates. Two, the Buddha clearly rejects a person apart from aggregates. Three, later Mahāyanis like Bhavaviveka explicitly reject such equations as Brahman = dharmakāya and so on. Four, the Buddha is clearly aware of Sāṃkhya and rejected it., etc., etc.

Claiming "subtlety" as an argument won't work merely because one cannot present a rational for Bhattacharya's arguments beyond the fact that he made them.

Pluse we have the evidence of 25 centuries of awakened Buddhist masters, not one of whom ever proclaimed that there was no essential difference in meaning between Vedanta and Buddhadharma, quite the opposite.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 10th, 2015 at 12:41 AM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Three, later Mahāyanis like Bhavaviveka explicitly reject such equations as Brahman = dharmakāya and so on.

dzogchungpa said:

Obviously you know much more about this than I do but I remember reading, and just looked up, this passage from Lindtner's introduction to his edition of Bhavya's Madhyamakahrdayam: For Bhavya tattva, brahman and dharma(ta) are synonyms ... Lindtner's "From Brahmanism to Buddhism" is probably also relevant, but I don't have time to look through it right now.

Malcolm wrote:

So you apparently did not read the direct citation I presented the other day where Bhavaviveka explicitly rejects this?

From the commentary on Bhavaviveka's Madhyamakahrdaya, the Tarkajvala. If it is asked what is difference between this dharmakāya and the paramātma [bdag pa dam pa] asserted in such ways as nonconceptual, permanent and unchanging, that [paramātma] they explain as subtle because it possesses the quality of subtlety, is explained as gross because it possesses the quality of grossness, as unique because it possess the quality of uniqueness and as pervading near and far because it goes everywhere. The dharmakāya on the other hand is neither subtle nor gross, is not unique, is not near and is not far because it is not a possessor of said qualities and because it does not exist in a place.

And from his introduction to the Sanskrit text:

The tenets of Vedānta and Mīmāṃsā are stated and rejected in two chapters full of interesting information from the doxographical point of view.

pg. xxix <https://www.scribd.com/doc/208431986/Lindtner-Ch-Madhyamakahrdayam-of-Bhavya>

And for Lindtner's contention MH 1: 1-5 merely says:

tattvajñānaīṣaṇā ceti caryā sarvārthasiddhaye ||5||

bodhicittaṃ mahāmaitrīkaruṇājñānabhūṣaṇam |

There is no mention of either dharmatā or brahman in this passage. Thus you are following Lindtner in a huge leap which is totally unjustified when we examine the commentary:

Following that, with an unbiased mind, I shall endeavor to know the truth [tattvajñāna] which does not contradict reason and scripture through an examination of all textual systems...

This is hardly a proclamation that he [Bhavya] regards brahman to be an equivalent of dharmatā. Honestly, sometimes I think you people are like children in the woods eating berries without knowing whether they are poisonous or not, merely because they look pretty.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 10th, 2015 at 6:47 AM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Thus you are following Lindtner in a huge leap which is totally unjustified when we examine the commentary:

Following that, with an unbiased mind, I shall endeavor to know the truth [tattvajñāna] which does not contradict reason and scripture through an examination of all textual systems...

This is hardly a proclamation that he [Bhavya] regards brahman to be an equivalent of dharmatā. Honestly, sometimes I think you people are like children in the woods eating berries without knowing whether they are poisonous or not, merely because they look pretty.

dzogchungpa said:

"You people"?

I am not following Lindtner, I am just pointing out what he says. Did you read the entire introduction? I, personally, don't have the background to really follow it. Here's what he says when beginning to consider "The Philosophy of Bhavya": The only safe way to form a picture of Bhavya as a philosopher and writer is through a careful study of his extant works and the tradition to which he belongs.

which he then proceeds to do in what appears to me to be a fairly informed way, but I am not a scholar. Before anyone gets too excited, perhaps I should add that I am not trying to assert that brahman = dharmata or anything like that.

Does the term 'brahman' occur in Bhavya's work anywhere?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, as David notes, it occurs in one spot in the text where, according to the commentary brahaman [tshangs pa dam pa] is used ironically as a term for the nirvana which is not realized by Braham, Vishnu, Shiva, etc. On the other hand, one must also take into consideration Bhavaviveka's rejection of the equation parātman = dharmakāya. Considering that parātman and brahman are universally equated in Advaita and Vedanta in general, we must here understand that Bhavaviveka is making fun of the Trimurti, since he contrasts their non-realization of nirvana with the realization of Avalokiteśvara, Maitreya, Samantabhadra and so on in the subsequent part of the passage.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 10th, 2015 at 5:00 PM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

Here is something from Ruegg about those Bhavya verses, from his <http://www.wisdompubs.org/book/buddhist-philosophy-middle/selections>: But at the same time, in chapter III of the same work, Bhā(va)viveka has virtually assimilated the supreme brahman and the dharmakāya (verses 278–83), which he describes as cessation of discursive development (prapañca) and as inaccessible to those who engage in hypothetical reasoning (tārīka, 280); and he goes on to say that this brahman corresponds to the supreme reality of which the Muni (i.e., the Buddha) spoke (283), and that Sages (ārya) such as Avalokiteśa, Maitreya, and the rest “approach” (upās -) it precisely through the mode of non-worship (anupāsanayogena, 284).

Malcolm wrote:

Well, as I pointed out, he [Bhavavivekva] does not really say this. What he says is the "Brahma" is a term for the lord of living beings or nirvana, and in this case he is using it as nirvana. It continues that because the Munis have no inherent body, speech and mind, being illusory, they are venerated by these ārya bodhisattvas without an object to venerate using prostrations and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 10th, 2015 at 6:54 PM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

Speaking of Venerable Master Hsuan Hua, I believe he once

<http://www.cttbusa.org/openyoureyes/1978journal7.asp>: “Of course there is a ‘soul’ within the Buddhist doctrine. We just use different terminology. We say ‘eighth consciousness’, or the ‘intermediate skandha body’. When one is confused, this entity is called a soul; when one is enlightened it is called the Buddha Nature. if in Buddhism we deny the existence of a soul, then there is no Buddha Nature to speak of, and what use is there of studying to become a Buddha?

(Yes, yes, I know, it's a TRANSLATION Who knows what the translator was smoking?)

Malcolm wrote:

I see so ālayavijñāna and gandharva = a self?

But wait, I see when one is a confused one calls the mind "a self," and when one is unconfused one calls the mind "tathāgatagarbha."

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 10th, 2015 at 9:40 PM

Title: Re: Is it possible to be Buddhist and Hindu?

Content:

Saoshun said:

Bodri (meditationexpert.com) levels of realization are based skandhas (look on his

ebook how to measure spiritual cultivation levels) so in that terms it does not matter whatever you practice, buddhism or hindu or whatever the question is if your vehicle can take you there.

zengen said:

The question is if Hindu paths can take one past the five skandhas. If not, then one cannot be enlightened. It's likely that Hindu paths can at most take one to the consciousness skandha, which is A LOT of progress (most people practicing any religion can't even reach this stage), but still is short of enlightenment.

Saoshun said:

We would need list all the hindu practices and research on them based thru the buddhist cultivation leveles but the yogic practices (yoga darshana) surely bring people fast to skandha of consciousness, even taoist practices do that very quickly.

Asl we must understand that Siddha traditions goes beyond skandha of consciousness because in some writings you have term "Siddhas as beyond brahma" which means they transcended limitations of god etc.

So traditions considered "beyond god" could be considered as beyond skandha of consciousnesses.

Malcolm wrote:

No we don't. There are six abhijñās: five are common with Hinduism, etc., one is uncommon, only found in Buddhadharma, the abhijñā of insight.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 10th, 2015 at 9:43 PM

Title: Re: Best Yidams to Remove Obstacles

Content:

Tanaduk said:

WeiHan you're wrong. White Mahakala has 50 fresh garland of human heads and a tiger skin skirt. This is clearly described in the short sadhana and long puja

Malcolm wrote:

Not in the Sakya Tradition of this practice.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 10th, 2015 at 10:32 PM

Title: Re: Rainbow Body - Why?

Content:

Crazywisdom said:

When I posed this question to ChNN he said the former is the exhaustion of karma and the latter results in the body of light. The implication is that togal has a higher result re immortal nirmanakaya of light.

Malcolm wrote:

According to Sachen, the result of the completion stage is that the physical body reverts to wisdom. There is no difference in the results at all; the path is the only difference.

WeiHan said:

Hi Malcohm,

Do you mean the rainbow body attained in Naro Kacho is the same as Great Transference Light Body attained through Togal?

My understanding is that the rainbow body attained in Naro kacho is similar to that attained in Trecho which is the shrinking in physical body into light after death but it is not a Great Transference Light Body similar to Togal practice. Of course, another accomplishment of Naro Kacho is flying to Akanistha without leaving behind the gross body.

And then in Kalachakra practice, the body can also dissolve after death but it dissolves into the small particles instead of into light.

Malcolm wrote:

I can only relate was is stated in the Sachen's texts, as above.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 10th, 2015 at 11:28 PM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

Take it up with Ruegg.

Malcolm wrote:

Generally speaking, when one introduces someone's else's idea, one should have an opinion or a purpose in doing so, no? Or is your purpose merely to sow doubts? It is not very responsible to merely throw out this and that opinion of others, especially when you yourself have stated a lack of capacity to evaluate what you are reading.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, May 11th, 2015 at 12:36 AM

Title: Re: Best Yidams to Remove Obstacles

Content:

Tanaduk said:

I received Gonkar abhisheka from Sangter Tulku Rinpoche he received from Kyabje

Tenga Rinpoche, Tenga R. received from Kalu Rinpoche.
So it comes from Shangpa. My short sadhana is "Brief Daily Practice of the Rapidly Acting Lord of Pristine Awareness, The Jewel, King of Power" by Jamgon Kongtrul Rinpoche.
Maybe in Sakya is different
Greetings!

Malcolm wrote:
It is just a different lineage, that is all, same source, ultimately.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Monday, May 11th, 2015 at 9:10 PM
Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism
Content:

Wayfarer said:
That is not scepticism in the usual sense; it is much more like scepticism in the sense of the 'great doubt' in Zen, which calls everything into question. And I think that is what it takes to understand this issue.

Malcolm wrote:
Actually, I cited a text earlier, the Indian recension of the Nirvana Sūtra:
If selflessness is demonstrated, the immature grasp to the explanation thinking there is no self. The intelligent on the other hand think "The [self] exists conventionally, there is no doubt.
There is no "true self" demonstrated in that text, the word is never used. The self is demonstrated as above, a conventional self only.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Monday, May 11th, 2015 at 11:41 PM
Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism
Content:
Matt J said:

I don't think this is the Atman the Upanishads are talking about. The Atman is not a thing, it doesn't have qualities the way an object does. A great deal of Advaita is actually devoted to correcting improper views of the Atman. Shankara compares it to a lamp. You don't need another lamp to illuminate a lamp. You can't know the Atman because the Atman is knowing itself. As knowing, it is unlimited by any specific act of knowledge.

Malcolm wrote:
Which means it is a consciousness, anyway you slice it.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 12th, 2015 at 12:01 AM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

David Reigle said:

Regarding Vinītadeva's gloss of ātman in Vasubandhu's commentary on his Vijñapti-mātratā-siddhi Viṃśatikā, verse 10, as rang gi ngo bo, or svarūpa, an intrinsic nature: Certainly svarūpa, like svabhāva that is found in this passage by Vasubandhu, is a synonym of ātman, when speaking of anātman or nairātmya. When pudgala-nairātmya, or absence of self in persons, was extended by Mahāyāna to dharma-nairātmya, or absence of self in dharmas, svabhāva was widely used as a synonym for nairātmya, and was often glossed by another synonym, svarūpa. It is exactly the point of Mahāyāna in using nairātmya for dharmas as well as for pudgalas or persons that it is the same absence of self.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, it is synonym for atman in the sense that atman is used to describe a nature, rather than an personal identity. The atman of persons and things is anātman. In the Nirvana sūtra, after describing atman in terms like tattva, nitya, etc., he also describes it as the natural great emptiness [rang zhing gyis stong pa chen po] From this passage we can see his intent:

One must know that the teaching of the Buddha is "this is the middle way." The Bhagavān Buddha teaches the path as the middle way that is free from the extremes of permanence and annihilation. Some fools however, confused about the Buddha's teaching, like those with weak digestive heat who consume butter, quickly come to have views about the two extremes. Though existence is not established, also nonexistence is not established.

When the Buddha, in the Nirvana Sutra, discusses atman in personal terms, he very clearly states he only intends that there is a conventional self; when however he speaks of the self of phenomena, it is very clear by this that he intends emptiness as the "self" of phenomena.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 12th, 2015 at 1:31 AM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

David Reigle said:

Regarding Yamamoto's 1973 English translation of the Mahayana Mahaparinirvana Sutra: This was reviewed by J. W. de Jong, well-known for his harsh critiques of incompetent translations, in the Indo-Iranian Journal. He said that he compared the first hundred pages with the Chinese, and that it was a good translation. I do not know any Chinese, and from a comment posted here I wonder if someone has some other information that indicates problems with this translation.

Malcolm wrote:

Hodge states that Yamamoto's translation on the whole is unreliable:

https://web.archive.org/web/20131219063612/http://www.buddhismuskunde.uni-hamburg.de/fileadmin/pdf/publikationen/The_Textual_Transmission_of_the_MPNS.pdf

As problems I notice, problems arise when the Indian Dharmakshema's Chinese translation of the long sūtra from Sanskrit [?] (translated into Tibetan by one Chinese monk, Wang-phab-zhwun; and two Tibetans, Dge-ba'i-blo-gros and Rgya-mtsho'i-sde) in fourteen chapters is compared against the Tibetan translation from Sanskrit text in five chapters and 3900 śloka made by two Indian masters, Jinamitra and Jñānagarbha and one Tibetan translator, Devacandra.

Generally speaking, the Faxian's translation and Tibetan translation made by Jinamitra and Jñānagarbha and Devacandra are the same basic text. Dharmakshema's translation appears to be supplemented with extra texts. Hodges' account is really very interesting. In his view, everything not included in the Indian recension which is reflected by the Faxian translation and the Tibetan translation by Jinamitra and Jñānagarbha and Devacandra is entirely spurious and was composed by Dharmakshema himself, in other words, everything subsequent to chapter five (In the Yamamoto translation, chapters 1-17 corresponds with the five chapters found in the "short version").

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 12th, 2015 at 5:44 AM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

Son of Buddha said:

The quote actually came from Malcolm, who said that we could see the Buddha nature with our own eyes and that it was physically located within our bodies.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, we ordinary people who have not even begun to realize emptiness.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 12th, 2015 at 7:27 AM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

Son of Buddha said:

as you can see by these quotes posted below about the Self from the Nirvana Sutra

(1) the Buddha Nature is the Self, so if as you say the only self in the nirvana sutra is a conventional self(personality ego) then that means your idea of Buddha nature is that it is a conventional ego.

Malcolm wrote:

The term "self" is a merely convention no matter how you may think it is being used. So is permanent, true, unchanging, etc. These are all merely conventions and do not indicate anything real.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 12th, 2015 at 7:20 PM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

zengen said:

I think people keep confusing between the "self" that is an illusion of the five skandhas and the "True Self" that is beyond the five skandhas and is taught in Buddhism as the Buddha Nature that is inherent in all living beings. When you argue whether or not the SELF exists, which "self" are you referring to?

Malcolm wrote:

The five skandhas are not a self, and there is no self outside them.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 12th, 2015 at 8:03 PM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

Son of Buddha said:

as you can see by these quotes posted below about the Self from the Nirvana Sutra

(1) the Buddha Nature is the Self, so if as you say the only self in the nirvana sutra is a conventional self(personality ego) then that means your idea of Buddha nature is that it is a conventional ego.

Malcolm wrote:

The term "self" is a merely convention no matter how you may think it is being used. So is permanent, true, unchanging, etc. These are all merely conventions and do not indicate anything real.

Son of Buddha said:

The very description of the True Self in the Nirvana Sutra is that it is Real..... so the term Self is not merely convention no matter how you may think it is being used and the term Self is not a convention and its literal description in the Nirvana Sutra does in fact indicate it is real.

Nirvana Sutra: The Self is true [satya], real [tattva], eternal [nitya], sovereign/ autonomous/ self-governing [aisvarya], and whose ground/ foundation is unchanging [asraya-aviparinama], is termed 'the Self' [atman]. This is as in the case of the great Doctor who well understands the milk medicine. The same is the case with the Tathagata. For the sake of beings, he says "there is the Self in all things" O you the four

classes! Learn Dharma thus!"

Malcolm wrote:

This passage merely indicates that sometimes Buddha taught there is no self, other times he taught there was a self, as an antidote to different extremes. It is not the case however that this passage is claiming there is an actual self that is real, permanent, and so on. The Nirvana sutra states, as mentioned before:

When it is explained that the tathāgatagarbha is empty, the immature cultivate an incorrect fear; the intelligent know permanence, stability and immutability to be illusory. Also the idea that tathāgatagarbha is full-fledged buddhahood is contradicted by this passage:

The seed existing in oneself that turns into buddhahood is called "tathāgatagarbha," the buddhahood which one will obtain.

Or:

When the Tathāgata explains to the bhikṣus and bhikṣunis that his body is afflicted with a limitless great illness, at that time it should be understood that absence of self is being explained, and one should cultivate the meditation of selflessness. When the Tathāgata explains liberation is signless, empty and nothing at all, at that time one should understand the explanation that liberation is free from the 25 existences, and therefore it is called emptiness. Why?, since there is no suffering, there isn't any suffering at all, it is supreme bliss and signless. Why?, since that [suffering] is not permanent, not stable and not immutable, and because the nature of peace is not nonexistent, therefore, liberation is permanent, stable, immutable and peaceful, that is the Tathāgata. When the Tathāgata explains that the tathāgatagarbha exists sentient beings, at that time, one must correctly cultivate the meditation of permanence.

So really, it is not necessary to reify liberation as a self, though some people may find it temporarily useful. But in the above statement there is no reason to reify an entity. Being free from the 25 or three realms does not mean that there is some entity outside of or apart from the three realms. A self either a) exists in the three realms, b) or it does not exist at all, or c) is just a philosophical abstraction used to describe the permanence of liberation when it is attained, and the permanent potential one has to be liberated.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 12th, 2015 at 10:09 PM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

srivijaya said:

Essentially if all consciousness is eradicated in the enlightened state, then how can it be known? Same for nirvana - which just means "cessation" as opposed to any state.

Wayfarer said:

Cessation is nirodha. 'Nirvana' is inconceivable. The Tathagatha can't be conceived in terms of mere cessation or absence of being; that is annihilationism. We don't know what nirvana is; otherwise we'd be Buddha.

Malcolm wrote:

"Cessation" simply means an absence of causes for a future arising. There are two kinds, cessation due to analysis and non-analytical cessation. The former is a result of the path, the latter is simple absence of causation. Asserting that nirvana is a cessation is not annihilationism. Of course nirvana is a cessation, it is the cessation of the afflictions. Cessation is not an absence of being. An absence of being requires a being that is absent. There is no absent being in cessation.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 12th, 2015 at 11:13 PM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

Nicholas Weeks said:

After 40 plus years the scholar K. Bhattacharya's French edition has been put into English.

<http://www.abebooks.com/servlet/SearchResults?sts=t&tn=The+Atman-Brahman+in+Ancient+Buddhism>

Koji said:

I just got the book the other day. I am about a quarter through it. It is great. The Buddha never categorically denied ātman. He only denied that the five aggregates, which are murderous, are ātman. In Pali, a categorical denial of attā would be natthattā. This is the term used in the Ananda Sutta, not anattā. Also I would mention that ātman does not mean a self, individual or person. In the Nirukta, which is an etymological work far older than Buddhism, ātman means the animative principle.

Malcolm wrote:

Oh, I see, Ardent, now you equate atman with jiva? Something conditioned, impermanent and mutable?

Strange.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 13th, 2015 at 12:28 AM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Oh, I see, Ardent, now you equate atman with jiva? Something conditioned, impermanent and mutable?

Strange.

Koji said:

Yo Nam! Do I equate atman with jiva? Not on your life, dude. Everyone knows that jiva—not ātman—transmigrates. Death is like a rest stop where jiva changes vehicles. Jiva is

similar to Buddhism's vijñāna which is the transmigrant.

Malcolm wrote:

Your words, not mine:

...ātman means the animative principle.

But maybe you meant prāṇa.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 13th, 2015 at 1:17 AM

Title: Re: Mipham was not gzhan stong

Content:

smcj said:

I've been reading "When the Clouds Part" by Brunnholzl. He confirms that Mipham self-identifies as a Madhyamika, although Mipham did write Shentong material also. He also says that most Nyingmas are Madhyamikas. However since all the Nyingma lamas I personally knew up until the present day were Dudjom lamas (something I hadn't realized until now), I think I can be forgiven for assuming that they all shared the same view.

Malcolm wrote:

Ummmm, what have we been telling you now for several years?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 13th, 2015 at 9:42 AM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

Koji said:

We need to always keep in mind the use of "self" for ātman is a calque. Why is this? First of all self is a pronoun, ātman is a noun. ātman is almost impossible to render into English, adequately. We should also keep in mind that ātman is probably one of the most important words in Indian philosophy; way before Buddhism arrived on the scene.

We are not to see ātman as a mere self, the pronoun, but as the essence underlying everything—the permanent behind the impermanent.

Malcolm wrote:

In other words, you commit the realist fallacy of assuming that universals (sāmānya-artha) are real, as opposed to unreal abstractions. This puts you in the same league as Kumārila Bhaṭṭa and Shankara, but not in the same league as the Buddha.

And in fact, ātma is used again and again as a pronoun in Sanskrit texts — people who claim otherwise are fools.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 13th, 2015 at 9:47 AM

Title: Re: Mipham was not gzhan stong

Content:

smcj said:

... Dudjom ...

Karma Dondrup Tashi said:

I need to read more to understand his position. But my current understanding is that while shengtongpas devised the term "mahamadhyamika"...

Malcolm wrote:

But they did not devise this term. It shows up in Indian texts that have nothing to do with gzhan stong; Kawa Paltseg uses it in the ninth century as a term for freedom from extremes; Jestun Dragpa Gyalsten uses it in the Great Song of Experience in the 12th century and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 13th, 2015 at 9:26 PM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

asunthatneversets said:

There is no school in Buddhism that states sentient beings are inherently awakened... sure, they may state that we possess an innately unconditioned nature... but that is something different than awakening or enlightenment [bodhi].

Qianxi said:

The Awakening of Faith in Mahayana 大乘起信論 states that all sentient beings are 'inherently awakened' 本覺. 覺 is the usual translation for bodhi, 本 means 'root' or 'originally'.

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hongaku>

You'd either have to argue that schools following Awakening of Faith in Mahayana (most of East Asian Buddhism) are not Buddhist schools, or argue that although the text talks about inherent awakening, they really mean 'innately unconditioned' (that's a plausible argument). But the Awakening of Faith, and many other East Asian Buddhist texts do use a term that translates as 'inherent awakening'.

Malcolm wrote:

Chinese Buddhism departs from Indian Buddhism in many respects. Still, the idea of "inherent awakening" is patently absurd and cannot be taken literally or seriously by any means.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 14th, 2015 at 12:05 AM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

Wayfarer said:

Nevertheless the role of the Tathāgatagarbha is at least analogous to the idea of Ātman, insofar as insight into the Tathāgatagarbha is liberating (in a way similar to the insight into Ātman is said to be.)

But you can acknowledge that, without saying they're the same.

Malcolm wrote:

One, the Indian scholastics belonging to the Madhyamaka and Yogacara strains did not really pay much attention to this idea or this class of sūtras. There exists but a single commentary and subcommentary on the tathāgarbhasūtras, the Ratnagotravibhaga, aka, the Uttaratantra (a title in all probability derived from the Nirvana Sūtra, which describes itself as such).

Most of the Tibetan scholastics around the issue arise from the Tibetan desire to reconcile the five treatises of Maitreyanatha with Madhyamaka.

In so far as tathagatagarbha being analogous to the notion of atman, it is simply another example of Buddhist expropriation and redefinition, so that now "ātman", in these sūtras, represents the potential to become a Tathāgata, which all sentient beings possess, the seed of buddhahood, as the Nirvana Sūtra so clearly states.

In any case, the idea is far more important outside of India than it was in India. We should take that into consideration. It was also far more important to later Indian Buddhists (Vajrayāna) than to earlier ones (common Mahāyāna), and that also needs to be taken into consideration. We can understand this is a fact due to the increasing attention it receives in Vajrayāna commentaries. Whereas earlier Indian Buddhists wrote voluminous commentaries on the Prajñāpāramita with the Abhisamaya-ālaṃkāra literature, on Yogacara with literature on the Mahāyāna Sutra-ālaṃkāra and so on, they virtually neglect the Uttaratantra. However, there is another important text which can give us some alternate insight into this doctrine as it was understood in India, and that is the Āryalaṅkāvatāra-vṛtti by Jñānaśrībhadrā. I cannot reproduce all 47+ comments he makes on tathagatagarbha in this text, but this one should give you an indication of what Indians in general understood tathagatagarbha to mean. They generally understood tathāgatagarbha as a synonym for the mind's natural luminosity:

Therefore, that dharmatā of the mind that is being examined [with regard to being] conditioned and unconditioned has always existed; because all sentient beings are possessors of tathāgatagarbha, these vessels of natural luminosity (prakṛtiprabhāsvara) are neither pure nor impure. Because they have spoiled that natural total purity, by abandoning the temporary flaws that the form of two arisings, they are like gold, i.e., for that reason through category of permanence the tathāgatas are like precious gold. Indeed the Ārya-laṅkāvatāra-mahāyāna-sūtra treats this metaphor in the following way: Just as one sees the golden color,

the natural shine and pure surface
when gold is polished, likewise
are sentient beings in the aggregates.

So here, if we want to apply the term nature (atman) to sentient beings, we can say that the nature (atman) of sentient beings is luminosity. But luminosity is just a metaphor for purity. For example, we see in the Ārya-bodhisattvapiṭaka-nāma-mahāyāna-sūtra:

All phenomena are naturally pure,
natural luminosity has always been the pure foundation,
unfabricated and unperceived.

And also:

The kāya of the Tathāgata is naturally pure, totally pure, free from the taints of all afflictions.

To illustrate this further, the Ārya-sarvabuddhaviṣayāvatārajñānālokālaṃkāra-nāma-mahāyāna-sūtra states very clearly:

Mañjuśrī, awakening (bodhi) is natural luminosity because of the natural luminosity of the mind itself. If it is asked for what reason is it luminous?, that which natural is totally without afflictions, equal with space, possessing the nature of space, truly inclusive of space and like space, because it is extremely luminous by nature.

And of course the Ārya-laṅkāvatāra-mahāyāna-sūtra clearly makes the equation between the natural luminosity of the mind and the tathāgatagarbha:

Having purified the afflictions
abandoned by cultivation and seeing,
the mind is natural luminous,
the pure tathāgatagarbha.

It is also says:

The mind free of turbidity
is the opposite of the mental consciousness;
in order to understand all Dharmas,
I have explained "The mind is the Buddha."

Now, if someone is going to assert the tathāgatagarbha is a self, they will also have to assert that the mind (citta) is a self. Then they will find themselves on a very slippery slope. But if, on the other hand, they assert merely that innate purity of the mind is all that is intended by tathāgatagarbha, then of course they will remain on level ground with no danger of falling in the ravine of permanence and annihilation. And perhaps it is needless to say, but this luminosity is only universal in the sense that it is a characteristic of everyone's mind, like heat in fire or wetness in water.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 14th, 2015 at 2:38 AM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

Son of Buddha said:

As I have cited before Śrī Siṃha is very clear about this idea of 'primordial buddhahood' or 'inherent enlightenment' being a misunderstanding, and you should make sure you are VERY clear on this, otherwise you will compromise your chances of buddhahood altogether:

This is acceptable since a so called “primordial buddhahood” is not asserted. Full awakening is not possible without being free of the five afflictions... It is not possible for wisdom to increase without giving up afflictions. Wisdom will not arise without purifying afflictions.

I have 5 translations of the Queen Srimala Sutra which is literally my favorite sutra and I have NEVER seen this passage ever, do you care to send a link to the chapter and translation you are using (the sutra itself is only 36 pages long so you should have no problem whatsoever sourcing this)

Malcolm wrote:

He is not citing the Ārya-śrīmālādevī-siṃhanāda-nāma-mahāyāna-sūtra. He is citing an important Indian Dzogchen master, Śrī Siṃha.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 14th, 2015 at 4:15 AM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

Son of Buddha said:

oh my bad, I thought he just misspelled Srimala. of course the next question that begs is why he would think a Dzogchen master's writings would be considered to be an authority on anything to me.

Malcolm wrote:

Well, there is this, from your favorite sūtra:

The tathāgatagarbha is the tathāgatas' wisdom of emptiness. The tathāgatagarbha has not been previously seen by śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas nor realized.

This brings up what is this wisdom of emptiness? You have mentioned this emptiness before, but it is not exactly the extrinsic emptiness you imagine. Your presentation of these two emptiness suggests that not only the buddhadharmas but indeed the wisdoms too are innate to tathāgatagarbha, but a close reading of the Tibetan translation of this text does not support this idea:

Bhavagan, this wisdom of the emptiness of the tathāgatagarbha is of two kinds. If it is asked which two?, since the tathāgatagarbha abides as separate from the sheath of all afflictions, it is empty of the wisdoms because it has not been freed. Bhagavan, since the tathāgatagarbha does not exist separate from the buddhadharmas, by freeing it inconceivable wisdoms beyond the sands of the Ganges are attained.

To add to my post above, Jñānavajra writes in the Ārya-laṅkāvatāra-nāma-mahāyānasūtra-vṛtti-tathāgata-hṛdayālaṃkāra-nāma:

The tathāgatagarbha is the dharmatā of the mind free from proliferation and luminous; that [dharmatā of the mind] is the stage of buddhahood.

Then of course one has to deal with the fact that ālayavijñāna is frequently termed "tathāgatagarbha." Here, one cannot use the excuse that the Lanka is provisional, since it is clearly included in the third turning sūtras by those who choose to interpret sūtras in this way.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 14th, 2015 at 4:17 AM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Now, if someone is going to assert the tathātagarbha is a self, they will also have to assert that the mind (citta) is a self. Then they will find themselves on a very slippery slope. But if, on the other hand, they assert merely that innate purity of the mind is all that is intended by tathātagarbha, then of course they will remain on level ground with no danger of falling in the ravine of permanence and annihilation. And perhaps it is needless to say, but this luminosity is only universal in the sense that it is a characteristic of everyone's mind, like heat in fire or wetness in water.

Son of Buddha said:

I don't know who would be crazy enough to assert that the Tathagatagarbha is a Atman(Self)

Chapter Twelve: On the Tathagata-DHATU

“Kasyapa said to the Buddha: “O World-Honoured One! Is there Self in the 25 existences or not?” The Buddha said: “O good man! “Self” means “Tathagatagarbha” [Buddha-Womb, Buddha-Embryo, Buddha-Nature]. Every being has Buddha-Nature. This is the Self. Such Self has, from the very beginning, been under cover of innumerable defilements. That is why man cannot see it.

Malcolm wrote:

And this is why your insistence on following the words, rather than the meaning causes you to completely misunderstand these teachings.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 14th, 2015 at 4:19 AM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

Son of Buddha said:

well you are welcome to your opinions, of course you opinions do not get to dictate what the rest of East Asian Mahayana Buddhists practice.

Malcolm wrote:

No, I can but merely point out the absurdity of taking literally the idea that there is some kind of innate buddhahood.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 14th, 2015 at 4:49 AM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

No, I can but merely point out the absurdity of taking literally the idea that there is some kind of innate buddhahood.

LastLegend said:

If Buddhahood is not innate, then it must be created? This begs if created, how can Buddhahood be unconditioned/permanent?

Malcolm wrote:

Buddhahood is a subtractive process; it means removing, gradually, obscurations of affliction and obscurations of knowledge. Since wisdom burns these obscurations away, in the end they have no causes for returning; and further, the causes for buddhahood are permanent leading to a permanent result.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 14th, 2015 at 5:10 AM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

LastLegend said:

Would you say wisdom is innate?

Malcolm wrote:

There are two kinds of wisdom, mundane and transcendent, but neither of them are innate; transcendent wisdom burns the seeds of ignorance, this is why it is irreversible.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 14th, 2015 at 5:11 AM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

Oh, right, I forgot to mention that I have reserved such a room for you two here:

Son of Buddha said:

I hope he likes whips and chains

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 14th, 2015 at 7:31 AM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

Son of Buddha said:

oh my bad, I thought he just misspelled Srimala. of course the next question that begs is why he would think a Dzogchen master's writings would be considered to be an authority on anything to me.

Malcolm wrote:

Well, there is this, from your favorite sūtra:

The tathāgatagarbha is the tathāgatas' wisdom of emptiness. The tathāgatagarbha has not been previously seen by śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas nor realized.

This brings up what is this wisdom of emptiness? You have mentioned this emptiness before, but it is not exactly the extrinsic emptiness you imagine. Your presentation of these two emptiness suggests that not only the buddhadharmas but indeed the wisdoms too are innate to tathāgatagarbha, but a close reading of the Tibetan translation of this text does not support this idea:

Bhavagan, this wisdom of the emptiness of the tathāgatagarbha is of two kinds. If it is asked which two?, since the tathāgatagarbha abides as separate from the sheath of all afflictions, it is empty of the wisdoms because it has not been freed. Bhagavan, since the tathāgatagarbha does not exist separate from the buddhadharmas, by freeing it inconceivable wisdoms beyond the sands of the Ganges are attained.

Son of Buddha said:

Dude non of these passages are saying that the Buddha Nature is not the Dharmakaya, it has already been proven to you that the Dharmakaya is the Buddha nature in the Queen Srimala Sutra

Chapter 8: The Dharmakaya V96. O' Bhagavan, the extinction of suffering is not the destruction of the Dharma. Why so? Because the 'extinction of suffering' is known as the Dharmakaya of the World Honored One, which is beginningless, uncreated, unborn, undying, free from destruction, permanent unchanging, eternal, inherently pure, and separate from all the stores of defilement. The Dharmakaya is also not different from the inconceivable Buddha Natures which are more numerous than the sands of the river Ganges. The Dharmakaya of the World Honored One is called the Buddha Nature when it is obscured by the stores of defilement."

Malcolm wrote:

The dharmakāya is what? It is the absence of intrinsic nature, as the Ārya-trikāya-nāma-mahāyāna-sūtra states quite succinctly:

Son of a good family, meaning of the dharmakāya of the tathāgatas is the absence of intrinsic nature, like space.

So yes, I agree with Maladevi when she tells the Buddha that dharmakāya is beginningless and so on, because the absence of an intrinsic nature, like space, is

unconditioned.

Son of Buddha said:

likewise the quote up above also states the Dharmakaya(Full Buddhahood) is UNBORN and UNCREATED, which further proves the inherent enlightenment position.

Malcolm wrote:

No, it merely describes the dharmakāya, which the Buddha defines above as an absence of an intrinsic nature. Further, the Ārya-pratītyasamutpāda-nāma-mahāyāna-sūtra states very clearly:

Avalokiteśvara, it is as follows: this dependent origination is the dharmakāya of the Tathāgata; whoever sees dependent origination, they see the Tathāgata.

Or the Ārya-dharmasaṃgīti-nāma-mahāyāna-sūtra which describes dharmakaya very clearly:

Whoever seeks the dharmatā of phenomena, seeks emptiness. Whoever seeks emptiness, cannot be debated by anyone. Whoever cannot be debated by anyone, abides in the Dharma of a śramaṇa. However abides in the Dharma of a śramaṇa, they do not abide anywhere; whoever does not abide anywhere, they are uncontaminated with regard to objects. Whoever is uncontaminated with regard to objects, they are without faults. Whoever is without faults, they are the dharmakāya; whoever is the dharmakāya, they are a Tathāgata; whoever is the Tathāgata, they is said to be nondual; whoever is nondual, they do not abandon samsara and do they accomplish nirvana; in other words, they are shown to be totally free of all concepts. Bhagavan, this is the Dharmasaṃgīti.

So here again, we see that emptiness, the absence of a intrinsic nature, is defined by the Buddha as dharmakāya. It also states:

Emptiness is the dharma. The dharmakāya is the parinirvana of the Tathāgata.

As to the idea that there is no cause for the dharmakāya, this assertion cannot be made without qualifications. The Saddharma-rāja-mahāyāna-sūtra states:

Buddhanature is a permanent cause; dharmakāya is a permanent result. If is asked how, the causal mind is the buddhanature, the result is attained through the yield of Dharma.

Son of Buddha said:

To add to my post above, Jñānavajra writes in the Ārya-laṅkāvatāra-nāma-mahāyānasūtra-vṛtti-tathāgata-hṛdayālaṃkāra-nāma:

The tathāgatagarbha is the dharmatā of the mind free from proliferation and luminous; that [dharmatā of the mind] is the stage of buddhahood.

isn't this quote just further proving what i am saying to you?

Malcolm wrote:

The dharmatā of the mind is the absence of an intrinsic nature.

Son of Buddha said:

Then of course one has to deal with the fact that ālayavijñāna is frequently termed "tathāgatagarbha." Here, one cannot use the excuse that the Lanka is provisional, since

it is clear included in the third turning sūtras by those who choose to interpret sūtras in this way.

and you know the Lanka says the ālayavijñāna is pure like an amala fruit in the hand with no imperfection right?

Malcolm wrote:

The Ārya-trikāya-nāma-mahāyāna-sūtra also tells us that that purified ālayavijñāna is the dharmakāya:

The purified ālayavijñāna is the mirror-like wisdom, i.e. the dharmakāya; the purified afflicted mind [kliṣṭamanas] is the wisdom of uniformity; the purified mental consciousness is the individually discriminating wisdom, i.e. the sambhogakāya...etc.]

And yet the ālayavijñāna is also conditioned and momentary; so since you have admitted the equation tathāgatagarbha = the ālayavijñāna, you have admitted the tathāgatagarbha is conditioned. It is simple logic.

The ālayavijñāna is conditioned,
the tathāgatagarbha is the ālayavijñāna
therefore, the tathāgatagarbha is conditioned.

The mind is also pure, inherently, it is also conditioned inherently; purity and being conditioned are not mutually exclusive.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 15th, 2015 at 1:30 AM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

Matt J said:

Malcolm, you're saying here that luminosity is a metaphor for purity, but not clarity? Or both?

Malcolm wrote:

So here, if we want to apply the term nature (atman) to sentient beings, we can say that the nature (atman) of sentient beings is luminosity. But luminosity is just a metaphor for purity.

I just spent four hours working on a post with multiple citations from sutra and tantra, and lost it. So short answer, mainly a metaphor for purity.

Maybe I will reconstruct it later.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 15th, 2015 at 5:54 AM

Title: Re: Pema Khandro?

Content:

Lingpupa said:

it does look somewhat likely that Nessa D Ross and PK are the same person.

Malcolm wrote:

It is probably this person:

http://107.170.200.250/?page_id=240

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 15th, 2015 at 8:34 PM

Title: Re: Pema Khandro?

Content:

Jikan said:

Pema Khandro / Kali Ma may well be Nessa D. Ross. I'm just not convinced that Aruna Ross is Pema Khandro.

Ngakpa International uses the same mailing address, PO Box 1491, Los Gatos, CA 95032 USA as does the Yogic Medicine thing. Nessa Ross is listed as the head of NI.

Malcolm wrote:

I think what is being said is that Aruna Ross = Nessa Ross. Or perhaps they are relatives: sisters, cousins?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 15th, 2015 at 8:38 PM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

Matt J said:

Sorry to hear that.

Malcolm wrote:

It was a fun post to work on.

In any event, in the huge plethora of citations I found, there are three main adjectives for 'od gsal [prabhasvara]: purity, stainless and nonafflicted. The main metaphor for 'od gsal is space; it is identified with emptiness; and it is defined as non-arising.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 15th, 2015 at 9:17 PM

Title: Re: Pema Khandro?

Content:

Jikan said:

They look like they could be related (compare the noses and eyes). The jawline differs between them, as do the angle of their ears.

I'm interested in finding out more about Gyaldak. I'd like to know if his story checks out.

It's entirely possible that all these people have some level of realization/qualities, no matter what the unconventional circumstances.

Malcolm wrote:

I am sure they are laughing at all this.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 15th, 2015 at 9:43 PM

Title: Re: Pema Khandro?

Content:

Jikan said:

I have good reason to think that not all participants in Ngakpa International have found this thread amusing (PM me for details if you really need them).

I'm also pretty sure they'd rather not have it near the top of the of the page when one does a Google search for the term "Pema Khandro"

So there's no harm in using words like Pema Khandro and Ngakpa International a time or two more.

Malcolm wrote:

If they are not laughing, they should be. They need to remember Oscar Wilde's quip: The only thing worse than being talked about is not being talked about.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 15th, 2015 at 11:58 PM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

Dan74 said:

I'm sorry to butt in like this with my silly 2c, but does anyone else wonder what all this has to do with practice?

Malcolm wrote:

There are three trainings, discipline, meditation, and discerning wisdom.

In discerning wisdom there three, hearing, reflection and meditation.

This kind of thread, as are most threads here, concern hearing and reflection, so indeed, it is very much concerned with practice.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 16th, 2015 at 7:00 AM

Title: Natural Luminosity

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The following is a comprehensive selection of citations from sūtra and tantra concerning natural luminosity [prakṛti prabhāsvara, rang gzhin gyis 'od gsal]. It is by no means exhaustive, and I have not included any commentarial glosses by Indian scholars.

To understand natural luminosity, the first place to start is with the Prajñāpāramitā sūtras. Most people are familiar with the famous statement:

There is no mind in the mind, but the mind is naturally luminous.

The Śatasāhasrika-prajñāpāramitā, beginning with matter, ending with omniscience and including everything in between, states:

Due to matter being naturally luminous, it is pure and non-afflicted...due to omniscience of all aspects being naturally luminous, it is pure and non-afflicted.

Ārya-suvikrāntavikrami-paripṛcchā-prajñāpāramitā-nirdeśa states:

It is thought, "This mind is naturally luminous." As this was thought, it is thought, "The mind arises based on a perception." Since that perception is totally understood, the mind does not arise and does not cease. Such a mind is luminous, non-afflicted, beautiful, totally pure. Since that mind dwells in nonarising, no phenomena at all arise or cease.

The Ārya-prajñāpāramitānayaśatapañcāśatikā states:

Since prajñāpāramitā is totally pure, all phenomena are naturally luminous.

The Buddhāvataṃsaka-nāma-mahāvaiṣṭhīya-sūtra states:

Since the original nature [prakṛti] of the mind is luminous and endowed with purity, it is extremely pure...

The original nature [prakṛti] of the mind is correctly known as peaceful, luminous and equivalent with space...

The natural luminosity of the dharmadhātu is abides as totality pure in the same way...

The Āryānantamukhapariśodhananirdeśaparivarta-nāma-mahāyāna-sūtra states:

Whatever is totally pure, that is an immaculate entryway, the mind is naturally luminous and never possesses afflictions.

The Ārya-bodhisattvapiṭaka-nāma-mahāyāna-sūtra states:

All these phenomena are naturally pure,
naturally luminous, fundamentally pure from the start,
unfabricated and imperceptible.

And:

If it is asked what is luminosity, that which is natural is without affliction, like space, the nature of space. Follow space. That which is equivalent with the extent of space itself is extremely luminous by nature. Therefore, the immature are temporarily afflicted because they do not comprehend natural luminosity. Since sentient beings do not know natural luminosity, they must comprehend natural luminosity...Due to understanding the natural luminosity of the mind just as it is, the unsurpassed perfected awakening through the discerning wisdom possessed by an instant of the mind is called "full buddhahood."

The Ārya-lalitavistara-nāma-mahāyāna-sūtra states:

I have obtained the ambrosia of Dharma,
profound, peaceful, immaculate, luminous and unconditioned.
Even though I explain it, no one will understand,
I think I will remain in the forest without speaking.
Free from words, untrained by speech,
suchness, the nature of Dharma, is like space
free from the movements of mind and intellect,
supreme, amazing, the sublime knowledge...
Always like space,
nonconceptual, luminous,
the teaching without periphery or center
is expressed in this Dharmawheel.
Free from existence and nonexistence,
beyond self and nonself,
the teaching of natural nonarising
is expressed in this Dharmawheel...

The Ārya-sarvabuddhaviṣayāvatārajñānālokāṃkāra-nāma-mahāyāna-sūtra states:

Mañjuśrī, because the mind is naturally luminous, the secondary afflictions are exhausted by temporary secondary afflictions, but the primary afflictions do not exist by nature. Whatever is naturally luminous is without primary afflictions...

Mañjuśrī, awakening naturally luminous through the natural luminosity of the mind. If it is asked what is luminosity, whatever is natural is without the primary afflictions, is equal with space, has the nature of space and is included in space, and is like space because of being extremely luminous by nature.

The Ārya-cintye-prabhāsa-nirdeśa-nāma-dharmaparyāya states:

The child asked, how shall I discern this? The mind is naturally luminous, within that afflictions are not produced and it does not become afflicted."

The Bhagavān replied, "It is just as you have said. The mind is always luminous, the common people become afflicted by temporary afflictions."

The Ārya-laṅkāvatāra-mahāyāna-sūtra states:

Purified of the afflictions
abandoned by meditation and seeing,
the mind is naturally luminous,
the pure tathāgatagarbha;
but the addictions of sentient beings
are boundless and endless.
Just as when the surface of gold is polished, one sees
the gold color, the brilliant shine and the pure surface,
in just that way
is the sentient being in the aggregates.
The supreme ones have always shown
the inexhaustible wisdom of the Buddha to be peace,
without a person, without the aggregates.
The natural luminosity of the mind
endowed with the affliction of mind and so on
along with [the affliction of] self

possesses temporary afflictions
from the start,
naturally luminosity can be purified of the affliction of self,
just like a [stained] cloth.

Just as the flaws of either cloth or gold
can be cleansed because they are [intrinsically] stainless,
which neither remain nor are destroyed,
and likewise have the nature of being flawless.

The Āryātajñāna-nāma-mahāyāna-sūtra states:

Since all phenomena are naturally luminous,
one should fully cultivate the perception of nonperception.

The Ārya-Śūraṃgamasamādhi-nāma-mahāyāna-sūtra states:

All phenomena are naturally luminous,
those are not real entities.

When something is a nonentity,
that is the purity of phenomena.

The Ārya-pratyutpanna-buddhasaṃmukhāvasthitasamādhi-nāma-mahāyāna-sūtra
states:

Also the mind is pure, naturally luminous,
unperturbed, all pervasive and unadulterated.

And:

Since all these phenomena are naturally luminous, they are equivalent with nirvana.

The Ārya-bodhisattvagocaropāyaviṣayavikurvitanirdeśa-nāma-mahāyāna-sūtra states:

Due to not being asserted in other vehicles, the mind is pure. Due to the removal of the
turbulence of the afflictions, the mind is not afflicted. Due to naturally luminosity, the
mind is luminous.

The Ārya-tathāgatamahākaraṇānirdeśa-nāma-mahāyāna-sūtra states:

Due to the natural luminosity of the mind, awakening is naturally luminous. If it is asked
why it is called “naturally luminous,” whatever is natural is without the afflictions,
equivalent with space, the nature of space, and equal in extent with space, and even
with space. That nature is very luminous. Since immature common people do not
comprehend natural luminosity, they are afflicted by the afflictions...

The element of afflictions are fully known as the characteristics of the temporary
afflictions. The element of purification is fully known as the characteristic of natural
luminosity...

The natural luminosity of the mind should be known in just that way. Due to that, the
Dharma of the existence of result is shown in one moment of mind.

The Ārya-gaganagañjaparipṛcchā-nāma-mahāyāna-sūtra states:

Whoever skillfully realizes all phenomena as pure,
that is the natural luminosity of the mind...

Because the mind is naturally luminous,
therefore it is never afflicted.

There are of course many sūtra citations which I have excluded, but they all present a
consistent theme.

Moving onto the tantras, we really do not find much variation on this theme, apart from the fact that the tantras tend to present a more precise explanation of the stages of the experience of luminosity in meditation (which will not be disclosed here). To begin with, the Ārya-ḍākinī-vajrapañjara-mahātantrarāja-kalpa-nāma states:

The dharmadhātu is luminous,
someone who meditates on that
is a sentient being who becomes equal with a buddha...

The dharmadhātu is luminous,
the taste of excellent bliss,
called “the unobscured vajra.”

The Śrī-mahāsaṃvarodaya-tantrarāja-nāma states:

Natural luminosity
is beyond the range of analysis,
it is not low, not high, peaceful
it cannot be invoked,
it is inexpressible, beyond enumeration,
the aspect of emptiness
abiding as the nature all entities,
free from all qualities such as sound and so on,
this is the sources of the bliss of buddhahood.

The Saṃpūṭi-nāma-mahātantra states:

Natural luminosity is free from all concepts,
free from being covered by the taints of desire and so on,
with subject and object, the supreme being
has said that is supreme nirvana...
all phenomena are naturally luminous,
because all phenomena do not arise from the start,
it is termed non-origination by the mind.

The Mahāmāyā-tantra-nāma states:

All phenomena are naturally luminous,
pure from the start and without perturbation...
All phenomena are naturally luminous,
pure from the start, like space.

The Śrī-vajramālābhīḍhānamahāyogatantra-sarvatantraḥṛdaya-rahasyavibhaṅga-iti states:

Natural luminosity is stainless,
free from all aspects.

The Sandhivāyākaraṇa-nāma-tantra states:

This phenomena is naturally luminous,
since it is pure from the start, it is equivalent with space,
there is no awakening, no realization,
it is the explanation of bodhicitta.

The Māyājāla-mahātantrarāja-nāma states:

All phenomena are naturally luminous,
pure from the start, without perturbation,
without sentient beings, without life,
without buddhas and without awakening.

The Sarvatathāgatatattvasaṃgraha-nāma-mahāyāna-sūtra states:

Also everything is naturally luminous,
pure from the start, like space,
neither a phenomena nor a nonphenomena,
inconceivable and delightful...

All phenomena are naturally luminous,
intrinsically pure from the start.

The Vajraśikharamahāguhyayoga-tantra states:

Since everything is naturally luminous,
its nature will be pure from the start,
afflictions will not be perceptible,
there will also be no liberation of nirvana...

All phenomena are nonarising,
totally luminous, peaceful from the start.

The Sarvarahasyo-nāma-tantrarājā states:

To explain the meaning of “sentient beings:”
the mind is naturally luminous...

whatever is naturally luminous
is unsurpassed bodhicitta.

The Śrī-paramādya-nāma-mahāyānakalparājā states:

Since prajñānapāramita is totally pure, all phenomena are naturally luminous.

The Ārya-guhyamaṇḍita-nāma-sūtra states:

All conditioned things are impermanent, and never arose from the beginning in natural luminosity.

The Ārya-vajrapāṇyabhiṣeka-mahātantra states:

The wisdom free from concepts
is the actual buddhahood of all the past victors,
that freedom from concepts
is demonstrated as the accomplishment of Secret Mantra.

The result of that is pure,
naturally luminosity.

Whoever dwells in conceptuality
will never produce siddhis.

The Śrī-jñānavajrasamuccaya states:

Whatever arises from luminosity,
that is called “mind,” “intellect” and “consciousness,”
that is the foundation of all phenomena,
the two stages are realized from
affliction and purification...

In order to explain the reality of all phenomena [gnas lugs], whatever arises from luminosity is dharmatā, the dhātu of naturally pure luminosity. Since a nonconceptual knowing awareness arises at the same time as the subtle vāyu, the mind [citta, sems] is the basis of all...

The reality of that inner consciousness,
nonconceptual innate dharmatā,

is the nature of luminosity, empty and not a self...

The reality of luminosity

is an unfabricated mind which arises from it

different from generic consciousness...

luminosity is the ultimate truth...

based on luminosity, the ultimate true state,

the path is traversed rapidly...

luminosity is dharmatā, suchness,

pure like space, great bliss,

unceasing, immaculate, peace,

ultimate, mahāmudra itself.

Mahāmudra of union

is attained from luminosity that is very free from proliferation...

Natural luminosity is totally pure,

immaculate, like the element of space...

So, in the end we can see here that luminosity is uniformly considered to be a metaphor for the purity of both mind and phenomena. It is the critical point of meditation in Mahāyāna Buddhism, in both sūtra and tantra, and its experiential recognition leads in both cases to the realization of the final result, buddhahood. I have not included any citations from either sūtra and tantra which indicate how it is experientially entered, as that is beyond the scope of this post.

Finally, we can also see here in these citations that the naturally luminosity of the mind what is being termed tathāgatagarbha, dharmadhātu, and so on, and we can see that it is also termed emptiness, suchness, dharmatā and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 16th, 2015 at 8:56 AM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

Wayfarer said:

(<http://www.shiningworld.com/now/> being a notable exception.).

James Swartz said:

It is not widely known that there is only one Self and its nature is Consciousness or Awareness. It is generally believed that the consciousness of each being is unique. It is unique...if consciousness is defined as subjective events, thoughts, feelings, memories, dreams, desires, fantasies, etc. But subjective events...our experience...actually occur in formless impersonal Consciousness, the knowing principle. Because Consciousness/Awareness is the knowing principle it is commonly called 'the light' in spiritual literature. It is not the light that makes physical sight possible but it is that because of which physical light...and everything that exists...is known. It is uncreated and eternal. It pervades everything and is the innermost Self of every living being. Therefore every being is enlightened...in the light...by default. However, the proof of enlightenment lies neither in the intellectual affirmation of enlightenment nor in the claim of the experience of an enlightened state of consciousness, but in the hard and

fast understanding that Awareness is one's essential identity.

Malcolm wrote:

Yuck. What a load of bollocks.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 16th, 2015 at 9:19 AM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

Wayfarer said:

I found James Swartz to be a good speaker and I thought he spoke from genuine experience: doesn't mean I agreed with what he said. But do you think it's possible to be critically aware of other's ideas, even while not agreeing with them, without having to resort to juvenile name-calling?

Malcolm wrote:

I know a load of bollocks when I see it. No one speaks from genuine experience of something that does not exist.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 16th, 2015 at 9:39 AM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Certain beliefs, such as belief in karma, rebirth and so on, are part of mundane right view.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 16th, 2015 at 10:33 AM

Title: Re: Natural Luminosity

Content:

Nicholas Weeks said:

Vimalakirti also mentions luminosity as an aspect of Bodhi, but also many other factors. See chapter three, Boin-Lamotte gives the Sanskrit.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, but the point here is different.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 16th, 2015 at 11:11 AM

Title: Re: Natural Luminosity

Content:

Wayfarer said:

'Luminous' means 'giving off light; bright or shining.

synonyms: shining, bright, brilliant, radiant, dazzling, glowing, gleaming, coruscating, scintillating, lustrous, luminescent, phosphorescent, incandescent'

The mind doesn't literally give off light - neither does matter, really - so as said, it's a metaphorical description. But what is it a metaphor for?

Malcolm wrote:

Stainless purity, it is one of the central concepts in Mahayana.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 16th, 2015 at 11:35 AM

Title: Re: Natural Luminosity

Content:

Dan74 said:

Why not say 'stainless purity' then?

Perhaps there is a vibrant luminous quality to the mind when freed from the habitual defilements?

Malcolm wrote:

All phenomena are naturally luminous, not just the mind. In any case, few of these citations have been presented in English before. Perhaps it is best if you reference a particular citation.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 16th, 2015 at 11:56 AM

Title: Re: Natural Luminosity

Content:

Nicholas Weeks said:

If the end is buddhahood or omniscience, then rather than purity, the continuum of radiance suggests life or livingness - at bottom sentience, thru intelligence, mind, awareness etc. until jnana.

If the point is not related to Bodhi, then what?

Malcolm wrote:

You need to read the list of citations again, looking for one that says no sentient being, no life, no buddhas, no awakening...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 16th, 2015 at 9:48 PM

Title: Re: Natural Luminosity

Content:

Nicholas Weeks said:

If the end is buddhahood or omniscience, then rather than purity, the continuum of radiance suggests life or livingness - at bottom sentience, thru intelligence, mind, awareness etc. until jnana.

If the point is not related to Bodhi, then what?

Malcolm wrote:

You need to read the list of citations again, looking for one that says no sentient being, no life, no buddhas, no awakening...

Nicholas Weeks said:

Yes, I read them, but how is this basically differing from the Heart Sutra? It says the same thing, using emptiness rather than luminosity.

The Heart also has a line: all dharmas are empty—they are neither created nor destroyed, neither defiled nor pure, and they neither increase nor diminish.

So one could say 'neither luminous nor dark'.

Also one of your quotes says this explains bodhicitta, so there is a relation to Bodhi.

Yet, as Je Rinpoche says, there is never any real conflict between Dharma doors, every teaching is correct for some minds at some point on their path to buddhahood.

Malcolm wrote:

The point is that things, including the mind, are naturally luminous regardless of whether one is awakened or not.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 16th, 2015 at 9:51 PM

Title: Re: Natural Luminosity

Content:

Wayfarer said:

The mind doesn't literally give off light - neither does matter, really - so as said, it's a metaphorical description. But what is it a metaphor for?

anjali said:

I've always liked this simple definition/explanation by Tony Duff, Luminosity or illumination, Skt. prabhāsvara, Tib. 'od gsal ba: The core of mind has two aspects; an emptiness factor and a knowing factor. The Buddha and many Indian religious teachers used "luminosity" as a metaphor for the knowing quality of the core of mind. If in English we would say "Mind has a knowing quality", the teachers of ancient India would say, "Mind has an illuminative quality, it is like a source of light which illuminates what it knows".

Malcolm wrote:

This is not what rang bzhin 'od gsal means. He is conflating 'od gsal ba and gsal ba. A very common error among translators. Luminosity and clarity are not the same thing.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 17th, 2015 at 12:34 AM

Title: Re: Natural Luminosity

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

From the entry in one of his glossaries for 'luminosity': Note also that in both Sanskrit and Tibetan Buddhist literature, this term is frequently abbreviated just to Skt. "vara" and Tib. "gsal ba" with no change of meaning. Unfortunately, this has been thought to be another word and it has then been translated with "clarity", when in fact it is just this term in abbreviation.

You're saying he's just wrong about this?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes. For one thing, he is splitting the word at the wrong place, i.e. he splits it as prabhās/vara.

The split is actually prabhā ['od]/ svara [gsal ba], hence prabhāsvara.

Prabhā means "light". svara primarily means "sound"; but also is the antonym of āsvara, indistinct, hence svara also has a meaning of "distinct". For example, the voice of a bodhisattva is described as prabhāsvara. If you look in the Sanskrit dictionary, you discover that prabhāsvara usually means "clear, shrill," but not in this case. When prabhāsvara is to be translated as "clear" as in a voice, it is rendered as gsal dbyangs, and not as 'od gsal.

The other Sanskrit terms which gsal ba generally translates are uttānaḥ, to stretch or vyaktah, "...caused to appear , manifested , apparent , visible , evident", and a number other terms as well which are not included in the Mahāvyutpatti.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 17th, 2015 at 1:32 AM

Title: Re: Natural Luminosity

Content:

Matt J said:

So it sounds like what you're saying is that luminosity is the appearance side of emptiness--- which may include clarity.

And by saying that space is luminous, we are not saying it is a vast mind, but that it has a potential to manifest appearances.

Malcolm wrote:

Actually, what is being said is that space is pure, as the Śatasāhasrika-prajñāpāramitā states:

Due to the element of space being naturally luminous, it is pure and without afflictions.

Vasubandhu echos this in the Āryākṣayamatīrdeśaṭīkā:

Luminosity is natural because its nature is pure.

And:

Since so-called "luminosity" is free from the temporary taint of subject and object because there is no reification, it is explained as naturally pure. The concept that there is a subject and object is called "reification"; since there is no concept of the existence of subject and object, so-called "luminosity" means "the characteristic of natural purity."

And:

Since the obscurations of knowledge and affliction do not exist, the luminosity of discerning wisdom (prajñā) is explained as "the purity of discerning wisdom."

Bhavaviveka states in the Tarkajvala:

"Luminous clarity" is so called because of being free from the darkness of affliction and objects of knowledge.

Jayānanda states in the Madhyamakāvatāraṭīkā-nāma:

It says in sūtra that "Tathāgatagarbha" means "All sentient beings have tathāgatagarbha." That passage concerns tathāgatagarbha. "Natural luminosity" means that natural luminosity is immaculate. It's characteristic is what which is pure. "Pure from the start" meanings immaculate from the beginning like space. "Possessing the thirty two major marks means possessing the nature of emptiness.

And:

So called "luminosity" means the nature of emptiness is intrinsically pure.

Prajñamokṣa's Madhyamakopadeśa-nāma-vṛtti states:

Luminosity is natural purity.

I could go on citing Indian masters, but there is not much point.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 17th, 2015 at 2:05 AM

Title: Re: Natural Luminosity

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

Well, I don't know anything about Sanskrit...

Malcolm wrote:

Then you should stop right there...

dzogchungpa said:

...but I think 'vara' can mean 'excellent' and perhaps it does serve as an abbreviation for 'prabhasvara' in Sanskrit sometimes.

Malcolm wrote:

It means choice, and by inference can be "best," as in best choice.

dzogchungpa said:

Ignoring the Sanskrit, what about his statement that "gsal ba" is an abbreviation for "'od gsal ba", at least in some contexts?

Malcolm wrote:

Then we have to be very precise, don't we? For example, we have in the Śrī-jñānavajra-samuccaya-tantra this line:

Luminosity ['od gsal ba] is the ultimate truth.

But we also have this verse in the same text:

If the two truths are separate,
the path of wisdom is pointless.

If clarity and emptiness ['gsal stong] are separate,
there will be falling into the extremes of permanence and annihilation.

Now, in case you are tempted to think that emptiness is relative, the same text clearly states:

Relative truth

is the moon in the water;

ultimate truth

is the eighteen emptinesses.

Luminosity is clearly described here as ultimate. Clarity here is clearly described as relative, the apparent and evident aspect of the two truths, as we can further see:

From the relative clarity arises the woman,
the bhaga, and the assembly of goddesses.

Or for example, in Indrabhuti's Śrī-cakrasaṃvaratantrarājaśambarasamuccaya-nāma-vṛitti, it is stated:

There is joy from the gradual blazing everywhere from the three channels; and in a moment of experience, samsara and nirvana arise as nondual clarity and emptiness.

In any case, clarity [gsal ba] is described as relative, samsara; while luminosity ['od gsal] is everywhere described as ultimate and nirvana; so how can gsal ba = 'od gsal?

Clarity is relative and conditioned, luminosity is ultimate and unconditioned

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 17th, 2015 at 3:13 AM

Title: Re: Natural Luminosity

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

In any case, clarity [gsal ba] is described as relative, samsara; while luminosity ['od gsal] is everywhere described as ultimate and nirvana; so how can gsal ba = 'od gsal?

Clarity is relative and conditioned, luminosity is ultimate and unconditioned

dzogchungpa said:

Well, it sounds like Duff has made a big mistake here, but I wonder how he could be so

off.

Malcolm wrote:

Publishing a book does not make one a reliable expert on the topic upon which one is writing.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 17th, 2015 at 7:11 AM

Title: Re: Natural Luminosity

Content:

Wayfarer said:

I am trying to understand this philosophically. It seems clear to me that 'things are not actually luminous'. If they were actually luminous then you could measure their luminosity using a photometer. So it seems 'luminosity', whether of mind or things, is a metaphorical expression. I think 'luminosity' must be a metaphor for 'knowing' - mind is intrinsically knowing, and that 'knowing' is fundamental to its nature; but that 'knowing' is not an attribute of 'something', it is simply an intrinsic attribute of mind.

Malcolm wrote:

Light = purity in the pre-modern mind.

Natural luminosity [rang bzhin gyis od gsal ba], as very clearly stated in the citations above, is a description of the purity of all phenomena. I did not exclude citations that were somehow inconvenient to this definition. On the contrary, I sought for them and could not find them because they do not exist.

Thus, to say that matter is naturally luminous is merely to say that it is ultimately pure. I am not sure why people are intent in ignoring the fact that the term "natural luminosity" is uniformly applied to all phenomena, all phenomena are naturally luminous, not only the mind.

To be sure, the term 'od gsal by itself can and is often used merely to refer to lights shining from the Buddha's uṇṇa and so on, the quality of the light of a gem and so on. But in this context, we are not discussing the generic term "light", we are discussing a very specific term, [rang bzhin gyis od gsal ba], which is a technical term that has a very persistent usage across a broad swath of sūtras and tantras.

Clarity [gsal ba] is the power of the mind to makes things evident. It is defined as the characteristic [lakṣaṇa] of the mind, for example, in both Sakya Lamdre and Kagyu Mahāmudra.

Luminosity [in this context] and clarity, 'od gsal ba and gsal ba, are therefore, really not the same thing at all.

I very carefully looked for examples in the translations of Indian texts where gsal ba could be taken as an abbreviation of 'od gsal ba and was unable to find any at all. I have

spent many hours engaged in this project. I also compared usages in available Sanskrit texts as well. Perhaps someone more skilled in Tibetan, in looking up citations, in reading them and in translating them, will be successful where I have failed.

Further, as I showed already, luminosity and clarity are treated separately and distinctly in one of the main sources for understanding the so called union of clarity and emptiness, which I presented in the tantra above.

I did not present this post with an intention to have a lengthy debate about the issue. I selected a few representative quotes out of hundreds (to avoid stultifying repetition) in order to edify all of you. If you choose to be edified, that is fantastic. If you prefer to cling to your own ideas, that is just fine with me too.

At this point, having restated my point of view three or four times, I will leave it here unless someone has something of further value to add. Otherwise, I fear we are just going in circles.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 17th, 2015 at 8:35 AM

Title: Re: Natural Luminosity

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Clarity [gsal ba] is the power of the mind to makes things evident. It is defined as the characteristic [lakṣana] of the mind, for example, in both Sakya Lamdre and Kagyu Mahāmudra.

Luminosity [in this context] and clarity, 'od gsal ba and gsal ba, are therefore, really not the same thing at all.

Tom said:

However, in mahāmudrā texts you will find 'od gsal being explained as a type of "knowing." For example the 3rd Karmapa in the The Aspirational Prayer of Mahāmudrā says,

ཞེན་པ་མེད་པའི་བདེ་ཆེན་རྒྱུ་ཆད་མེད། །

Great bliss without attachment is continuous.

མཆན་འཛིན་མེད་པའི་འོད་གསལ་སྒྲིབ་གཡོགས་བཤམ། །

Luminosity without grasping at attributes is free from obscurations.

སྒྲོ་ལས་འདས་པའི་མི་རྟོག་རྒྱུ་ཁྱེས་གྲུབ། །

Non-conceptuality that is beyond the intellect is spontaneous.

སྦྱོལ་མེད་ཉམས་ཐྱིང་རྒྱུ་ཆད་མེད་པར་ཤོག།

May these effortless experiences occur without interruption.

The 8th Situpa clarifies in this verse that luminosity ('od gsal) here is self-luminous (rang rig 'od gsal) and is of the nature of clarity (gsal).

Malcolm wrote:

You mean it is the luminosity of reflexive knowing, which is free from obscuration. Thus, since in this case 'od gsal is being used as an adjective for the absence of obscuration of the reflexive knower that does not apprehend characteristics, it is perfectly fine if that reflexive knower also has the characteristic of clarity; the two are not mutually exclusive when it comes to a mind. But the former ['od gsal] is not the latter [gsal ba], nor the latter the former. In fact, this verse is perfectly consistent with the points I have made above.

You could have just as easily translated the line, "Featureless luminosity is unobscured." The question then arises, the featureless luminosity of what? The answer, of a reflexive knower.

Also, frankly translating lhun gyis grub [anābhoga] as spontaneous should be deprecated [as in code].

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 17th, 2015 at 8:44 AM

Title: Re: Natural Luminosity

Content:

Wayfarer said:

Thanks, Malcolm, very helpful. I am not trying to be difficult, and I accept the basic premise 100%. Just interested in exploring the philosophical ramifications.

Malcolm wrote:

Sure, you would need to examine the Abhisamayālaṃkāra literature, it is treated most at length there.

BTW, I just noticed that David Reigle, who posts here from time to time has an interesting article on just this very topic. He says:

The Sanskrit word prabhāsvara was translated into Tibetan as 'od gsal, meaning literally "clear (gsal) light ('od)." Thus, thanks to the many translations of Buddhist texts from Tibetan into English in recent decades, prabhāsvara has come to be known in English as "clear light" via its Tibetan translation 'od gsal. Translators working directly from the Sanskrit texts have usually preferred to translate prabhāsvara with words such as "luminosity" or "luminous," for a couple of reasons. In standard Sanskrit, prabhāsvara was only known as an adjective, defined by Monier-Williams as "shining forth, shining brightly, brilliant," and by V. S. Apte as "brilliant, bright, shining." As we can see, the Tibetan translation 'od gsal, "clear light," is a noun. It is hard to make "clear light" into an adjective if needed (although not impossible), while "luminosity" can easily be made into the adjective, "luminous." Another reason would be that prabhāsvara is not a compound term in Sanskrit, like "clear (gsal) light ('od)" is in Tibetan. It consists of the main part, bhāsvara, which by itself means the same as prabhāsvara, plus the prefix pra. While prefixes such as pra obviously add something to the meaning of a word, what they add, more often than not, is not enough to require an additional word in the translation.

How, then, did prabhāsvara come to be translated into Tibetan as 'od gsal, "clear light"? One of the many meanings of the prefix pra when added to nouns, according to the Gaṇa-ratna-mahodadhi by Vardhamāna as cited by Vaman Shivaram Apte in The Practical Sanskrit-English Dictionary, is "purity," giving the example, prasannaṃ jalam, which means "pure water" or "clear water." This shows us why 'od gsal, "clear light," was chosen long ago as the standardized Tibetan translation of prabhāsvara, rather than just 'od, "light." Yet the related Sanskrit word prabhā was translated into Tibetan as just 'od, "light," even though it has the prefix pra. In prabhā, as is more usual, the prefix pra does not change the meaning from "light" to "clear light." An example of an actual compound term in Sanskrit is the title Vimāla-prabhā, meaning "stainless (vimala) light (prabhā)." It seems, then, that the addition of gsal, "clear," to 'od, "light," serves to distinguish 'od gsal, "clear light," as a technical term. So there is good reason to translate prabhāsvara either as "clear light" or as "luminosity." A translator must choose one or the other, and the choice may come down to nothing more than indicating whether the translation was made from the Sanskrit directly or from a Tibetan translation.

<http://prajnaquest.fr/blog/prabhasvara-in-the-canonical-texts-and-in-cosmogony/>

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 17th, 2015 at 9:10 PM

Title: Re: Natural Luminosity

Content:

Tom said:

No need to torture the text... the meaning is clear. The first three lines are obviously talking about the three meditative experiences of bliss, clarity, and non-conceptuality (བདེ་གསལ་མེ་རྟོག་པའི་ཉམས་གསུམ་) and interestingly here the 3rd Karmapa uses luminosity ('od gsal) rather than clarity (gsal) for the second experience. He uses luminosity ('od gsal) and clarity (gsal) as interchangeable in this context.

There is one line here that is relevant: མཚན་འཛིན་མེད་པའི་འོད་གསལ་གྱི་བ་གཡོགས་བྲལ། and མཚན་འཛིན་མེད་པ་ is clearly modifying luminosity (འོད་གསལ་) describing it as something that does not grasp at attributes. Of course, grasping /not grasping is a very common way of talking about "knowers." Your suggestion "Featureless luminosity" does not capture this and is incorrect.

Malcolm wrote:

These are experiences of a mind, not a cognizer itself, that should be obvious to you from the text.

There are no attributes to grasp in luminosity. On the other, hand, if it is as you say, this is still not the rang bzhin 'od gsal, since that is clearly ultimate, and not a fleeting experience, the attachment to which results in a form realm rebirth.

The fact that Tai Situ introduces the fact that it is the 'od gsal of rang rig proves that in this case. You elided rig in rang rig in your translation, in response I elided 'dzin pa. Perhaps what it should read is "the unobscured luminosity of a featureless apprehension." Read this way, it places luminosity as an adjective of rang rig, which is clearly how the Situ 8 sees it, rang rig 'od gsal, where 'od gsal is an adjective describing rang rig.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 17th, 2015 at 9:24 PM

Title: Re: Schedule of HH Sakya Trizin past events?

Content:

tobias said:

I don't know if someone is interested in this. But I asked the office of HH Sakya Trizin about this. They say as far as they know This will be the first Lamdre Teaching in Germany. That means there is only one Lamdre Teaching within at least 60 Years. So this will be a very very rare Oportunity to receive these teaching cycle.

greetings.

Tobias

Malcolm wrote:

It is always rare when Lamdre is given, but it has been given in Europe before, at least once.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 17th, 2015 at 10:23 PM

Title: Re: Anything Beyond Skandhas?

Content:

Astus said:

Is there anything else to attach to beyond the five aggregates? If yes, what is it? If no, isn't there only one kind of liberation?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, there is something beyond the skandhas, the āyatanas. Specifically, the skandhas include only conditioned phenomena, while space and the two kinds of cessations, the unconditioned phenomena, belong to the dharma-āyatana/dhātu. However, I would not say that one can "attach" to space or the two cessations.

And yes, there is only one kind of liberation. Liberation is being free from the afflictions that cause rebirth in the three realms, there is no other kind of liberation beyond that.

However there is something to attain beyond liberation, and that is omniscience. But there is only one liberation.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 17th, 2015 at 11:49 PM

Title: Re: Pema Khandro?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Everyone looks happy, and no one looks miserable. So?

Successful centers require charisma, costumes/identities, and considerable interpersonal and organizational skills to run. I have seen very learned Lamas with zero qualifications in this regard who never ever have any students, so who are they benefitting?

There are on the other hand a number of western (and also Tibetan) teachers with not much in the way of what I would consider even a barely adequate Dharma education, who nonetheless run very successful organizations with very satisfied customers/students. So?

In the end, it is the students that make the teacher. It is important to keep this in mind.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, May 18th, 2015 at 12:30 AM

Title: Re: Anything Beyond Skandhas?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, there is something beyond the skandhas, the āyatanas. Specifically, the skandhas include only conditioned phenomena, while space and the two kinds of cessations, the unconditioned phenomena, belong to the dharma-āyatana/dhātu.

Astus said:

Although "Unconditioned things are not named with respect to the skandhas, because they do not correspond to the concept" (Kosha, vol 1, p 81), there is a matching between the skandhas, ayatanas and dhatus (Kosha, vol 1, p 74; Inner Science of Buddhist Practice, p 241). In that way, the aggregate of consciousness includes the dharmadhātu.

Malcolm wrote:

No, the aggregate of consciousness does not included the dharmadhātu at all.

And yes, there is only one kind of liberation. Liberation is being free from the afflictions that cause rebirth in the three realms, there is no other kind of liberation beyond that. However there is something to attain beyond liberation, and that is omniscience. But there is only one liberation.

Omniscience is blocked by attachment to concepts, but concepts themselves belong to the aggregates, so if there is no attachment to the aggregates, there cannot be

attachment to concepts either.

Arhats and pratyekabuddhas are not at all attached to the aggregate of consciousness, or concepts, and yet still have non-afflictive ignorance. Because of this non-afflictive ignorance, they do not have omniscience. So it is pretty clear the attainment of omniscience is more than mere nonattachment to concepts and aggregates.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, May 18th, 2015 at 2:35 AM

Title: Re: Anything Beyond Skandhas?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Arhats and pratyekabuddhas are not at all attached to the aggregate of consciousness, or concepts, and yet still have non-afflictive ignorance. Because of this non-afflictive ignorance, they do not have omniscience. So it is pretty clear the attainment of omniscience is more than mere nonattachment to concepts and aggregates.

Astus said:

That non-afflictive ignorance is the cognitive hindrance, not knowing the emptiness of appearances, that is, considering phenomena to be real. Such reification is conceptual attachment. What more is there to it? Is there a third hindrance?

Malcolm wrote:

So you disagree with Tsongkhapa when he asserts that the realization of emptiness in Hinayāna and Mahāyana is the same?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, May 18th, 2015 at 2:46 AM

Title: Re: Natural Luminosity

Content:

Kunga Lhadzom said:

In the Bible it says no mortal can see God and live. Is this why this Luminosity can only be experienced fully by advanced meditator's ?

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/God_in_Buddhism

"Some variations of Buddhism express a philosophical belief in an eternal Buddha: a representation of omnipresent enlightenment and a symbol of the true nature of the universe. The primordial aspect that interconnects every part of the universe is the clear light of the eternal Buddha, where everything timelessly arises and dissolves"

"Mahayana Buddhism is not only intellectual, but it is also devotional... in Mahayana, Buddha was taken as God, as Supreme Reality itself that descended on the earth in human form for the good of mankind. The concept of Buddha (as equal to God in

theistic systems) was never as a creator but as Divine Love that out of compassion (karuna) embodied itself in human form to uplift suffering humanity. He was worshipped with fervent devotion... He represents the Absolute (paramartha satya), devoid of all plurality (sarva-prapancanta-vinirmukta) and has no beginning, middle and end... Buddha... is eternal, immutable... As such He represents Dharmakaya."

—Professor C. D. Sebastian

"According to the Tathagatagarbha sutras, the Buddha taught the existence of this spiritual essence called the tathagatagarbha or Buddha-nature, which is present in all beings and phenomena. B. Alan Wallace writes of this doctrine:

"The essential nature of the whole of samsara and nirvana is the absolute space (dhatu) of the tathagatagarbha, but this space is not to be confused with a mere absence of matter. Rather, this absolute space is imbued with all the infinite knowledge, compassion, power, and enlightened activities of the Buddha. Moreover, this luminous space is that which causes the phenomenal world to appear, and it is none other than the nature of one's own mind, which by nature is clear light."

—B. Alan Wallace

""Samantabhadra, the primordial Buddha whose nature is identical with the tathagatagarbha within each sentient being, is the ultimate ground of samsara and nirvana; and the entire universe consists of nothing other than displays of this infinite, radiant, empty awareness. Thus, in light of the theoretical progression from the bhavanga to the tathagatagarbha to the primordial wisdom of the absolute space of reality, Buddhism is not so simply non-theistic as it may appear at first glance."

—B. Alan Wallace

"The Rinzai Zen Buddhist master, Soyen Shaku, speaking to Americans at the beginning of the 20th century, discusses how in essence the idea of God is not absent from Buddhism, when understood as ultimate, true Reality"

Malcolm wrote:

Westerners are really in love with God, and nothing, it seems, will prevent them from importing God into Dharma.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, May 18th, 2015 at 3:40 AM

Title: Re: Natural Luminosity

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Westerners are really in love with God, and nothing, it seems, will prevent them from importing God into Dharma.

Kunga Lhadzom said:

Well....if it wasn't for Indra and Brahma there would be no Dharma !

Malcolm wrote:

They are not God, G.O.D. They are gods.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, May 18th, 2015 at 4:14 AM

Title: Re: Anything Beyond Skandhas?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

So you disagree with Tsongkhapa when he asserts that the realization of emptiness in Hinayāna and Mahāyana is the same?

Astus said:

I'm rather questioning if there is a point in setting up two kinds of hindrances, as by not identifying with any of the aggregates there is no basis for any of them.

Malcolm wrote:

No one "set them up." They are there unless or until you can dwell in direct perception of ultimate truth 24/7/365.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, May 18th, 2015 at 4:22 AM

Title: Re: Medicine Master Sutra

Content:

cjdevries said:

I think this is something my teacher addressed a few months ago in a lecture. He said that when we read things like "if you print this mantra in gold you will be reborn in a pure land for 1000 kalpas" it is not meant literally.

Malcolm wrote:

Sure it is.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, May 18th, 2015 at 5:05 AM

Title: Re: Anything Beyond Skandhas?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

No one "set them up." They are there unless or until you can dwell in direct perception of ultimate truth 24/7/365.

Astus said:

If both are removed at the same time when freed from identification with the aggregates,

then one cannot be free from afflictions but still limited by concepts.

Malcolm wrote:

Astus, what are you talking about? The emptiness of persons or the emptiness of phenomena? They are not the same thing.

Arhats realize the emptiness of the person, and have no identification with the aggregates. Whether or not they realize the two fold emptiness is a matter of debate. Nevertheless, they are persons who are free from identification with the aggregates. What have you been smoking today? Or did you hit your head?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, May 18th, 2015 at 5:17 AM

Title: Re: Anything Beyond Skandhas?

Content:

daverupa said:

The liberation is the same.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes. Liberation is a result of the destruction of the afflictions.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, May 18th, 2015 at 5:21 AM

Title: Re: Natural Luminosity

Content:

Kunga Lhadzom said:

Also, Adi Buddha (not a creator God), is considered the Primordial Buddha, or Originator of all phenomena, this can be confusing, as a God is also considered an Originator of all things. But, a GOD is supposedly not permanent or eternal, whereas the Primordial Buddha is.....so I would call the Primordial Buddha....The REAL God !!!!

Malcolm wrote:

The so called adibuddha has an origin. He is called the adibuddha (first buddha) because he is the first sapient being to attain buddhahood in this world cycle, not because there is some primordial buddha who hangs out in eternal time without a beginning.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, May 18th, 2015 at 6:29 AM

Title: Re: John Perks, Celtic Buddhism

Content:

not1not2 said:

Recently heard of his site and view. Not particularly drawn to it being a "Pure Lander."

But am currently on quite a reading jag about Celts and Celtic mythology given my roots.

This appears to be a syncretic approach. But what do others think about his "Celtic Buddhism?" thanks.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, May 18th, 2015 at 10:33 PM

Title: Re: Backyard Gardening

Content:

treehuggingoctopus said:

Alas, the sycamore is far too young for pruning. I am afraid I will have to go for the gory option and use the ladybugs, and come March start spraying the plants with mint oil, well before any aphids try reappearing.

Malcolm wrote:

Neem oil is more effective...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, May 18th, 2015 at 11:25 PM

Title: Re: Pema Khandro?

Content:

conebeckham said:

I stopped by their booth at the Himalayan Fair in Berkeley yesterday. They seem like nice, normal folks. I didn't interrogate them, though, LOL.

Malcolm wrote:

You mean you didn't go all Ferguson on them:

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 19th, 2015 at 12:15 AM

Title: Re: Anything Beyond Skandhas?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Astus, what are you talking about? The emptiness of persons or the emptiness of phenomena? They are not the same thing.

Astus said:

This is just one of my thought experiments.

Premises:

1. The root of all hindrances and ignorance is conceptualisation.

2. Concepts fall within the area of the aggregates.

3. Arhats are free from the aggregates.

Conclusion:

4. Arhats attain complete enlightenment.

Malcolm wrote:

If you are a Hinayānista, then yes. If you are Mahāyānista, then no.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 19th, 2015 at 12:32 AM

Title: Re: Anything Beyond Skandhas?

Content:

Astus said:

Premises:

1. The root of all hindrances and ignorance is conceptualisation.

2. Concepts fall within the area of the aggregates.

3. Arhats are free from the aggregates.

Conclusion:

4. Arhats attain complete enlightenment.

Malcolm wrote:

If you are a Hinayānista, then yes. If you are Mahāyānista, then no.

daverupa said:

Well, except (1) isn't accurate & (3) should probably be unpacked... and, (2) goes without saying -anything will be within the All, not outside of it.

Malcolm wrote:

Right, I was aiming at four.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 19th, 2015 at 12:53 AM

Title: Re: Backyard Gardening

Content:

treehuggingoctopus said:

Alas, the sycamore is far too young for pruning. I am afraid I will have to go for the gory option and use the ladybugs, and come March start spraying the plants with mint oil, well before any aphids try reappearing.

Malcolm wrote:

Neem oil is more effective...

treehuggingoctopus said:

It sounds truly gruesome: <http://www.discoverneem.com/neem-oil-insecticide.html>

Alas, the sycamore is far too young for pruning. I am afraid I will have to go for the gory

option and use the ladybugs, and come March start spraying the plants with mint oil, well before any aphids try reappearing.

Ayu said:

Maybe you can think about how the ladybugs are bound to die, if they do not eat. Noone can make them vegetarians.

I think, it is helpful to think in wider circles. That's the wheel of life.

treehuggingoctopus said:

Well... the idea was not to feed the poor starving ladybugs (which do have plenty to eat where they are right now, i.e. in my willows) but to save the sycamore -- which means getting rid of the aphids with the help of the aforementioned ladybugs. So while everything is very much what you refer to as the wheel of life, no easy way out for me here, I am afraid.

Malcolm wrote:

It is like giving them heroin. Not like gassing them with Sarin, or setting the dogs on them (ladybugs).

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 19th, 2015 at 4:32 AM

Title: Re: Anything Beyond Skandhas?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

If you are a Hinayānista, then yes. If you are Mahāyānista, then no.

Astus said:

If it is the conclusion you have a problem with, what else would you add where an arhat is still deluded?

daverupa said:

Well, except (1) isn't accurate & (3) should probably be unpacked... and, (2) goes without saying -anything will be within the All, not outside of it.

Astus said:

How is (1) inaccurate? (conceptualisation - vikalpa, prapanca)

That arhats are free from the aggregates means that they have no attachment, no identification with the skandhas. They have realised that whatever occurs (whatever aggregate it is), it is impermanent, suffering and without a self.

Malcolm wrote:

First stage bodhisattvas realize two-fold emptiness, and yet still have to eliminated the two obscurations. I guess you better study Abhisamaya-alaṃkāra.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 19th, 2015 at 4:50 AM

Title: Re: Natural Luminosity

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

BTW, I just noticed that David Reigle, who posts here from time to time has an interesting article on just this very topic. He says:

The Sanskrit word prabhāsvara was translated into Tibetan as 'od gsal, meaning literally "clear (gsal) light ('od)." Thus, thanks to the many translations of Buddhist texts from Tibetan into English in recent decades, prabhāsvara has come to be known in English as "clear light" via its Tibetan translation 'od gsal. Translators working directly from the Sanskrit texts have usually preferred to translate prabhāsvara with words such as "luminosity" or "luminous," for a couple of reasons. In standard Sanskrit, prabhāsvara was only known as an adjective, defined by Monier-Williams as "shining forth, shining brightly, brilliant," and by V. S. Apte as "brilliant, bright, shining." As we can see, the Tibetan translation 'od gsal, "clear light," is a noun. It is hard to make "clear light" into an adjective if needed (although not impossible), while "luminosity" can easily be made into the adjective, "luminous." Another reason would be that prabhāsvara is not a compound term in Sanskrit, like "clear (gsal) light ('od)" is in Tibetan. It consists of the main part, bhāsvara, which by itself means the same as prabhāsvara, plus the prefix pra. While prefixes such as pra obviously add something to the meaning of a word, what they add, more often than not, is not enough to require an additional word in the translation.

How, then, did prabhāsvara come to be translated into Tibetan as 'od gsal, "clear light"? One of the many meanings of the prefix pra when added to nouns, according to the Gaṇa-ratna-mahodadhi by Vardhamāna as cited by Vaman Shivaram Apte in The Practical Sanskrit-English Dictionary, is "purity," giving the example, prasannaṃ jalam, which means "pure water" or "clear water." This shows us why 'od gsal, "clear light," was chosen long ago as the standardized Tibetan translation of prabhāsvara, rather than just 'od, "light." Yet the related Sanskrit word prabhā was translated into Tibetan as just 'od, "light," even though it has the prefix pra. In prabhā, as is more usual, the prefix pra does not change the meaning from "light" to "clear light." An example of an actual compound term in Sanskrit is the title Vimāla-prabhā, meaning "stainless (vimāla) light (prabhā)." It seems, then, that the addition of gsal, "clear," to 'od, "light," serves to distinguish 'od gsal, "clear light," as a technical term. So there is good reason to translate prabhāsvara either as "clear light" or as "luminosity." A translator must choose one or the other, and the choice may come down to nothing more than indicating whether the translation was made from the Sanskrit directly or from a Tibetan translation.

<http://prajnaquest.fr/blog/prabhasvara-in-the-canonical-texts-and-in-cosmogony/>

David Reigle said:

First, thank you Malcolm, for finding and translating and posting all those passages on prabhāsvara. This type of research is very helpful. As you say, "Natural luminosity [rang bzhin gyis od gsal ba], as very clearly stated in the citations above, is a description of the purity of all phenomena."

In the paragraphs quoted from me, I see that I did not give the full etymology of prabhāsvara. After noting that prabhāsvara is not a compound term, I only spoke of the prefix pra and the main part bhāsvara. For those who may be interested, the word bhāsvara is built from the root bhās, meaning “shine,” plus the suffix vara. This vara is not the word vara, but rather is the primary affix vara. There is a rule for it in the great Sanskrit grammar by Pāṇini, 3.2.175, saying that it is used with five roots including bhās. According to the translation by Śrīśa Chandra Vasu, it has the sense of “the agents having such a habit, etc.” According to the translation by Sumitra M. Katre, it is used “to denote the agent’s habitual disposition, duty or excellence” (the meaning is carried down from 3.2.134). Two more of these five words are common, and will help to show this meaning: sthāvara, “stationary, immovable,” from sthā, “stand, remain”; and īśvara, “ruler, lord,” from īś, “rule.”

For words like prabhāsvara, whose etymology is not obvious, here is a little trick that is helpful to people like me who are not Pāṇini specialists. The very old Sanskrit-English Dictionary by Horace Hayman Wilson (has been reprinted in India), unlike the later ones by Monier-Williams and V. S. Apte that are currently in use, gives traditional Pāṇinian etymologies. It gives them using Pāṇini’s technical terms, so that you may still need a dictionary of these technical terms in order to determine the etymology (A Dictionary of Sanskrit Grammar, K. V. Abhyankar and J. M. Shukla, or Dictionary of Pāṇini, S. M. Katre). Wilson does not list prabhāsvara, but he does list bhāsvara, the same word without the prefix pra. There he gives for the etymology: bhās, to shine, varac, affix. The final “c” on varac is a code letter used by Pāṇini. Looking up varac, the reference books then point you to Pāṇini’s sūtra 3.2.175.

Malcolm wrote:
Hi David,

I think however, this is not how the Tibetan translators and their Indian informants split the term to come up with clear light [’od gsal]. I am fairly certain they split it the way I mentioned, taking svāra as “clear”: from its primary meaning as tone, and prabhās meaning “light”, hence the reason in Buddhist literature the frequent references to voices as “clear” in tone indicate by the alternate translation of prabhāsvara as gsal (prabhā) dbyangs (svāra) translation of prabhāsvara.

We always have to keep in mind that Buddhist authors often depart from Paninian standards when etymologizing terms.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 19th, 2015 at 6:32 AM

Title: Re: Anything Beyond Skandhas?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

First stage bodhisattvas realize two-fold emptiness, and yet still have to eliminated the two obscurations. I guess you better study Abhisamaya-alamkāra.

Astus said:

A bodhisattva's realisation is not completely stable until buddhahood, thus their attachments are not totally cut, unlike an arhat.

Malcolm wrote:

An eighth stage bodhisattva has eliminated all afflictive obscurations, like an arhat, but they have not eliminated all knowledge obscurations, like an arhat.

As I said, time to get out the old Abhisamaya-alaṃkāra so you can understand the difference between the abhisamaya of a śrāvaka, pratyekabuddha and a buddha.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 19th, 2015 at 9:27 PM

Title: Re: Anything Beyond Skandhas?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

An eighth stage bodhisattva has eliminated all afflictive obscurations, like an arhat, but they have not eliminated all knowledge obscurations, like an arhat.

As I said, time to get out the old Abhisamaya-alaṃkāra so you can understand the difference between the abhisamaya of a śrāvaka, pratyekabuddha and a buddha.

Astus said:

It seems that what bodhisattvas need to eliminate as cognitive obscurations are basically the conceptions of apprehender and apprehended, in other words, realising the emptiness of self and phenomena. The difference between the stages they go through is only a matter of depth of that realisation. Since it all ultimately depends on attachment to concepts assuming real phenomena, through relinquishing the identification with the mental aggregates arhats should be completely free as well.

Malcolm wrote:

You are making the mistake of assuming that liberation = buddhahood. It doesn't.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 20th, 2015 at 12:55 AM

Title: Re: What Practice have you Personally Found Most Helpful?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The three trainings: śīla, samadhi and prajñā.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 20th, 2015 at 1:28 AM

Title: Re: Anything Beyond Skandhas?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

You are making the mistake of assuming that liberation = buddhahood. It doesn't.

Astus said:

They don't have to be. The question is, where is the difference? The Abhisamayalamkara (or at least what is in Gone Beyond, haven't checked other works) follows the Yogacara interpretation, that with the complete transformation of the basis cognitive obscurations are completely removed and thus buddhahood is attained. Since the hindrance to knowledge is a set of attachments to concepts, basically various forms of subject-object duality, and that should no longer exist for an arhat who does not identify with any aggregate, there should be no difference.

Malcolm wrote:

And yet there is a difference.

Astus said:

What could make a difference - if it is accepted that an arhat has no clinging at all - is just the time spent with accumulating merit that generates the karmic force for the buddha attributes. But then there cannot be a tathagatagarbha. Or if we want there to be buddha-nature, then there is the Lotus Sutra model where arhats don't actually reach nirvana, only a temporary stay in nothingness, therefore they are not totally free from the aggregates, but that's contrary to some other teachings.

Malcolm wrote:

You might be better off securing Sparham's four volume translation of Vimuktesena and Haribhadra's text.

However, it is mostly covered in chapter two and three the AA and its commentaries.

This issue is deep and not easy to understand, it certainly cannot be summarized in internet sound bites.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 20th, 2015 at 7:26 PM

Title: Re: Definition(s) of "non-dual"

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Nondual has three main uses: Yogacara, Madhyamaka and Vajrayāna.

In Yogacara is generally means the absence of subject and object.

In Madhyamaka it generally means the absence of existence and nonexistence.

In Vajrayāna it can also mean nondual conduct, where purity and impurity are disregarded, in addition to the both of the former two meanings.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 20th, 2015 at 7:41 PM

Title: Re: Anything Beyond Skandhas?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The differences are principally described in chapter two, and somewhat and three. I am afraid you are going to have to slog through it because it cannot be simply summarized.

But for example, Pratyekabuddhas do not relinquish the subjective, but do relinquish objective entities.

There are many differences related to the path.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 20th, 2015 at 10:02 PM

Title: Re: What Practice have you Personally Found Most Helpful?

Content:

Nosta said:

I would like to practice something that could help me achieve more positive emotions.

Malcolm wrote:

Practice the four brahma viharas.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 20th, 2015 at 11:18 PM

Title: Re: Anything Beyond Skandhas?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The differences are principally described in chapter two, and somewhat and three. I am afraid you are going to have to slog through it because it cannot be simply summarized.

But for example, Pratyekabuddhas do not relinquish the subjective, but do relinquish objective entities.

There are many differences related to the path.

Astus said:

I've read through the chapters discussing the paths of sravakas, pratyekas and bodhisattvas (vol 2, p 4-18, 51-55, 82-135), and also searched for key words, but found nothing new and relevant. In fact, so far the Gone Beyond seems significantly more informative and extensive than Vimuktisena and Haribhadra.

Malcolm wrote:

Just on page four alone there is a significant difference. Also, Gone Beyond has the benefit of being a compilation of later Tibetan exegesis; however that is also its defect.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 21st, 2015 at 12:05 AM

Title: Re: Definition(s) of "non-dual"

Content:

T. Chokyi said:

In Dzogchen it's used in the sense that you stay in "instant presence" or in your nature. When you're distracted it's important to return to that state of instant presence or at least remain aware. When you're not present or aware you often can and do experience "dualism vision" so this would be, for the sake of semantics, the opposite of "non dual" presence/awareness or remaining in your nature. A dualistic state is described as your mind constantly "thinking" and "judging" and also potentially creating problems, especially in the sense of being agitated (emotions) and becoming unaware (loss of presence & awareness) which leads to more creation of Samsara.

Malcolm wrote:

In Dzogchen, "nondual" is used in all three sense mentioned above, depending on context.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 21st, 2015 at 12:29 AM

Title: Re: What Practice have you Personally Found Most Helpful?

Content:

Nosta said:

I need to practice that indeed, but I was thinking more on practices that could make me feel real joy. DO you think that the 4 Brahma Viharas are useful for that?

Malcolm wrote:

They are the best for that.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 21st, 2015 at 12:49 AM

Title: Re: Anything Beyond Skandhas?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Just on page four alone there is a significant difference. Also, Gone Beyond has the benefit of being a compilation of later Tibetan exegesis; however that is also its defect.

Astus said:

What significant difference do you mean?

Malcolm wrote:

"The knowledge of the paths of bodhisattvas does not totally eliminate cankers"...etc., and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 21st, 2015 at 1:35 AM

Title: Re: Anything Beyond Skandhas?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

"The knowledge of the paths of bodhisattvas does not totally eliminate cankers"...etc., and so on.

Astus said:

"The enhancing factor is to have the nature of not relinquishing the afflictions that are the causes for rebirth in [samsaric] existence for the sake of accomplishing the welfare of others." (Gone Beyond, vol 1, p 332)

I thought you meant difference between those two works, not differences between the paths. As for the differences between arhats and others, <http://dharmawheel.net/viewtopic.php?p=284151#p284151>, and that's when you directed me to check the Indian commentaries, but so far you have not answered how can there be something left for arhats to be attached to.

Malcolm wrote:

I told you to look in the AA and Indian commentaries, for example, Haribhadra states, in Vol. 2, pg. 73-75:

Listeners already free from attachments and their counterparts must also cultivate the knowledge of the paths to reach Buddhahood...great listeners who have cutt off the cankers and stopped the cause that is the root of further rebirth cannot produced that sort of precious resultant thought...etc.

There is the citation of Nāgārjuna on page 77:

"Later the Buddha awakens them to remove undefiled ignorance, and they equip themselves with the accumulations for enlightenment..."

Thus, it is as I already explained to you. Arhats and pratyekabuddhas have an species of non-afflictive ignorance. There are other differences, but this is the main one.

You have to read carefully, and not merely skim for key words.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 21st, 2015 at 3:07 AM

Title: Re: Anything Beyond Skandhas?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Thus, it is as I already explained to you. Arhats and pratyekabuddhas have an species of non-afflictive ignorance. There are other differences, but this is the main one.

Astus said:

And that non-afflictive ignorance has been taken up before. What does that ignorance

consist of? It is the mentioned 108 types of cognitive hindrance, that is basically the ignorance about the emptiness of dharmas and the delusion of apprehender and apprehended. So the question: how can there be such an ignorance if an arhat has no attachment to mental phenomena?

Malcolm wrote:

Absence of attachment does not equal knowledge.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 21st, 2015 at 5:11 AM

Title: Re: Anything Beyond Skandhas?

Content:

daverupa said:

The arahant is asekha; the training is complete; the arahant has done what needed to be done. This later sort of slander is intriguing, but not worth tying yourself in knots over, Astus.

Malcolm wrote:

It is not slander.

Vasubandhu, a Sautrantika, asserts that both arhats and pratyekabuddhas have a nonafflictive obscuration of ignorance. Maitreya expands upon what that means in terms of the fact that both arhats and pratyekabuddhas eventually must continue on to full buddhahood as well.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 21st, 2015 at 5:21 AM

Title: Re: Definition(s) of "non-dual"

Content:

T. Chokyi said:

In Dzogchen it's used in the sense that you stay in "instant presence" or in your nature. When you're distracted it's important to return to that state of instant presence or at least remain aware. When you're not present or aware you often can and do experience "dualism vision" so this would be, for the sake of semantics, the opposite of "non dual" presence/awareness or remaining in your nature. A dualistic state is described as your mind constantly "thinking" and "judging" and also potentially creating problems, especially in the sense of being agitated (emotions) and becoming unaware (loss of presence & awareness) which leads to more creation of Samsara.

Malcolm wrote:

In Dzogchen, "nondual" is used in all three sense mentioned above, depending on context.

T. Chokyi said:

I didn't say otherwise.

Malcolm wrote:
Indeed.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Thursday, May 21st, 2015 at 8:21 PM
Title: Re: Anything Beyond Skandhas?
Content:
Malcolm wrote:
Absence of attachment does not equal knowledge.

Astus said:
In one way, that is very true and spot on. On the other hand though, the obscurations in question are hindrances to knowledge and not lack of knowledge. Not seeing the emptiness of dharmas means being attached to dharmas...

Malcolm wrote:
Well, we have already seen two things: arhats and pratyekabuddhas have non-afflictive ignorance, both are free from affliction and both are liberated [meaning they have nothing left to do with regards to liberation, but much left to do with regards to the attainment of full buddhahood]. Nevertheless, arhats have subject-object conceptualization and pratyekabuddhas have subject conceptualization. Buddhas, of course, have neither subject nor object conceptualization and so their awakening is superior to that of the former pair.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Thursday, May 21st, 2015 at 8:35 PM
Title: Re: Natural Luminosity
Content:
Malcolm wrote:
I think however, this is not how the Tibetan translators and their Indian informants split the term to come up with clear light ['od gsal]. I am fairly certain they split it the way I mentioned, taking svāra as "clear":, from its primary meaning as tone, and prabhās meaning "light", hence the reason in Buddhist literature the frequent references to voices as "clear" in tone indicate by the alternate translation of prabhāsvāra as gsal (prabhā) dbyangs (svāra) translation of prabhāsvāra.

We always have to keep in mind that Buddhist authors often depart from Paninian standards when etymologizing terms.

David Reigle said:
I was not familiar with gsal dbyangs as a translation of prabhāsvāra.

Malcolm wrote:
Mahāvīyutpatti entry 451.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 21st, 2015 at 9:21 PM

Title: Re: Different Kinds of Shentong

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

<https://imgflip.com/i/lt00c> <https://imgflip.com/memegenerator>

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 21st, 2015 at 9:24 PM

Title: Re: Anything Beyond Skandhas?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Nevertheless, arhats have subject-object conceptualization and pratyekabuddhas have subject conceptualization. Buddhas, of course, have neither subject nor object conceptualization and so their awakening is superior to that of the former pair.

Astus said:

This kind of conceptualisation is what I don't see how can be there while there is no attachment to the aggregates. Where does that conceptualisation reside, what does it come from, what keeps it going on? It cannot be the aggregates, but there is no conceptualisation outside them either.

Malcolm wrote:

What Sanskrit term to you mean by "attachment"?

I think the problem lies with your definitions.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 21st, 2015 at 10:17 PM

Title: Re: Anything Beyond Skandhas?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

What Sanskrit term to you mean by "attachment"?

I think the problem lies with your definitions.

Astus said:

I think upadana is very appropriate here, like in pancopadanaskandha.

Malcolm wrote:

Upādāna means "addiction", not attachment.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 22nd, 2015 at 3:22 AM

Title: Re: Anything Beyond Skandhas?

Content:

daverupa said:

The arahant is asekha; the training is complete; the arahant has done what needed to be done. This later sort of slander is intriguing, but not worth tying yourself in knots over, Astus.

Astus said:

As Malcolm said, even sravakayana teachings talk about non-afflictive ignorance in case of arhats, although I'm not aware if Theravada has anything to say about it.

daverupa said:

Let's have a cite, and not a bald assertion, nor a Mahayana text. Let's have a Nikaya or an Agama or even some pre-Commentarial Abhidhamma or Abhidharma someplace - that is, a relatively early sravakayana text - that speaks about non-afflictive ignorance.

"The title got demoted in Mahayana" is a succinct way to summarize it, pointing at the historical developments nutrififying this result.

Malcolm wrote:

The Abhidharmakośabhāṣyaṭīkāṭattvārtha by Sthiramati cites an Agamic sūtra to the following effect:

In sūtra it is said, "Śāriputra, do you know the Tathāgata's aggregate of discipline, aggregate of samadhi, aggregate of liberation, or aggregate of wisdom of liberation?" "No, Bhagavan" he replied."

Therefore, the knowledge of others apart from buddhas cannot engage the [18 unshared] dharmas of the buddha, and therefore, it is said "The śrāvakas and so on possess a non-afflictive ignorance about the dharmas of a buddha."

Then Yasomitra gives the example of Maudgalyāyana not knowing where his mother had taken rebirth, and so on.

These statements are completely non-controversial.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 22nd, 2015 at 3:24 AM

Title: Re: Anything Beyond Skandhas?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Upādāna means "addiction", not attachment.

Astus said:

I have not seen that kind of translation yet.

<http://dsalsrv02.uchicago.edu/cgi-bin/philologic/getobject.pl?c.0:1:3973.pali> (nt.) [fr. upa + ā + dā] -- (lit. that (material) substratum by means of which an active process is kept alive or going), fuel, supply, provision

<http://dictionary.buddhistdoor.com/en/word/4365/upadana> is the common rendering for upādāna, though 'grasping' would come closer to the literal meaning of it, which is 'uptake'; s. Three Cardinal Discourses (<http://www.accesstoinight.org/lib/authors/nanamoli/wheel017.html>), p.19.

<http://www.buddhism-dict.net/ddb/indexes/term-sa-u.html> of it include: 取 (take, receive, obtain), 受 (receive, accept, get), 依 (rely on, be set in), 執 (hold in hand; keep)

Malcolm wrote:

Upādāna means "to take again."

Hence, we have craving, addiction, etc. We are addicted to the aggregates, hence they are "addictive aggregates."

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 22nd, 2015 at 3:39 AM

Title: Re: Anything Beyond Skandhas?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The Abhidharmakośabhāṣyaṭīkāṭattvārtha by Sthiramati cites an Agamic sūtra...

daverupa said:

Which Agama, again? Where in the Taisho can this be located?

Must be in an Agama we don't have anymore, otherwise...

Malcolm wrote:

I am sure that someone can find this who knows Chinese. It is sufficient that it is cited by Sthiramati.

The fact is that there are limits on the knowledge of arhats that are not imposed on the Buddha's knowledge. You may not think this is important, but these limits are what constitute the non-afflictive ignorance mentioned by Vasubandhu and Maitreyanatha.

This is just not a controversial point — everyone accepts that compared to a Buddha, the knowledge of a śrāvaka arhat has limitations. For example, Bhikkhu Bodhi has this to say:

Other arahants can certainly teach, and many do teach groups of disciples.

Nevertheless, as teachers they do not compare with the Buddha. This is so in at least

two respects: First, the Dhamma they teach others is one that comes from the Buddha, and thus ultimately the Buddha is the source of their wisdom; and second, their skills in teaching never match in all respects the skills of the Buddha, who is the only one who knows the path in its entirety.

<http://www.accesstoinight.org/lib/authors/bodhi/arahantsbodhisattvas.html>

And indeed, that is the whole point of the AA, i.e., to detail the path of a bodhisattva and how it leads to such omniscience regarding the path, as it is concealed with the Prajñāpāramitā sūtras.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 22nd, 2015 at 4:33 AM

Title: Re: Anything Beyond Skandhas?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Upādāna means "to take again."

Hence, we have craving, addiction, etc. We are addicted to the aggregates, hence they are "addictive aggregates."

Astus said:

In any case, it is clinging to / taking up / relying on / identifying with / grasping at the aggregates that one is bound and deluded, while relinquishing that hold is being free from all that one can be free from. So this does not seem to solve the problem.

Malcolm wrote:

Astus, you really do seem to miss the point here — arhats etc, do not have bodhicitta to become buddhas, they do not have knowledge necessary to teach the whole path, they do not know the entire path, this is what is meant by non-afflictive ignorance, they have subject-object conceptuality and so on.

But none of this means they do not realize the emptiness of persons. It simply means their realization of emptiness is not sufficient for buddhahood, but only for liberation.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 22nd, 2015 at 5:12 AM

Title: Re: Anything Beyond Skandhas?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Astus, you really do seem to miss the point here — arhats etc, do not have bodhicitta to become buddhas, they do not have knowledge necessary to teach the whole path, they do not know the entire path, this is what is meant by non-afflictive ignorance, they have subject-object conceptuality and so on.

Astus said:

I'm clear about that list. What is missing for me is that all that non-afflictive ignorance

must be there because of some clinging, but there is nothing else to cling to but the five aggregates.

Malcolm wrote:

But none of this means they do not realize the emptiness of persons. It simply means their realization of emptiness is not sufficient for buddhahood, but only for liberation.

Astus said:

The realisation of the emptiness of persons means that whatever phenomena is experienced by an arhat it is not grasped, whether it is a bodily or a mental dharma. Although in Mahayana there is the teaching of the emptiness of dharmas, practically it means not grasping at, not relying on dharmas. So what is it that arhats still hold on to?

Malcolm wrote:

Astus, let me ask you a question: are arhats in a state of equipoise 24/7/365? Are pratyekabuddhas in a state of equipoise 24/7/365? Are bodhisattvas in a state of equipoise 24/7/365? Are buddhas in a state of equipoise 24/7/365?

The answer to those four questions is your answer to how someone can be liberated from rebirth in the three realms and yet, still have some nonafflictive ignorance, conceptuality about subject and object and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 22nd, 2015 at 9:10 AM

Title: Re: Anything Beyond Skandhas?

Content:

zengen said:

Arhats and Pratyekabuddhas do still have obstructions to omniscience. This is known in Mahayana. In Theravada, this is not taught.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, it is, otherwise, Bhikkhu Bodhi could not have said what he said.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 22nd, 2015 at 7:37 PM

Title: Re: Anything Beyond Skandhas?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Astus, let me ask you a question: are arhats in a state of equipoise 24/7/365? Are pratyekabuddhas in a state of equipoise 24/7/365? Are bodhisattvas in a state of equipoise 24/7/365? Are buddhas in a state of equipoise 24/7/365?

The answer to those four questions is your answer to how someone can be liberated from rebirth in the three realms and yet, still have some nonafflictive ignorance, conceptuality about subject and object and so on.

Astus said:

Arhats have cut all bonds, so they cannot fall back from being unfettered by the aggregates. Bodhisattvas, on the other hand, are still in training, and only with the attainment of buddhahood are they eternally free. So, both arhats and buddhas have the stage of non-meditation, while bodhisattvas are still working on reaching that.

As noted before, the superior qualities of a buddha can be explained if we consider them the results of merit accumulation, and that is the model found in both Theravada and basic Mahayana. But once the tathagatagarbha is introduced, the doctrine fundamental to later Mahayana whence the still living traditions of Tiantai, Chan, and Tantra come from, buddhahood becomes available in this life exactly because all the buddha-powers are readily available in every being's mind, and one just needs to be free from the obscurations to reach it. That's where emptiness is inseparable from compassion, so even an arhat must have compassion if s/he has wisdom.

Malcolm wrote:

Notice, Astus, that you did not answer the question. The answer is of course that only buddhas are in equipoise on reality 24/7/365, this is because they free of all obscurationNs.

Arhats are at a stage of a kind of no more training, but whoever said they were at the level of non-meditation? Only a buddha is at that stage.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 22nd, 2015 at 8:23 PM

Title: Re: Article by John Horgan Why Buddhism Wasn't For Him

Content:

cjdevries said:

I just read this article by John Horgan:

http://www.slate.com/articles/arts/culturebox/2003/02/buddhist_retreat.html

Malcolm wrote:

Filled with inaccuracies and misunderstandings...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 22nd, 2015 at 8:40 PM

Title: Re: Anything Beyond Skandhas?

Content:

Astus said:

As noted before, the superior qualities of a buddha can be explained if we consider them the results of merit accumulation, and that is the model found in both Theravada and basic Mahayana. But once the tathagatagarbha is introduced, the doctrine fundamental to later Mahayana whence the still living traditions of Tiantai, Chan, and

Tantra come from, buddhahood becomes available in this life exactly because all the buddha-powers are readily available in every being's mind, and one just needs to be free from the obscurations to reach it. That's where emptiness is inseparable from compassion, so even an arhat must have compassion if s/he has wisdom.

Malcolm wrote:

Even with the tathāgatagarbha theory, full buddhahood takes at minimum three incalculable eons in Mahāyāna.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 23rd, 2015 at 1:10 AM

Title: Re: Anything Beyond Skandhas?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Notice, Astus, that you did not answer the question. The answer is of course that only buddhas are in equipoise on reality 24/7/365, this is because they free of all obscurationNs.

Arhats are at a stage of a kind of no more training, but whoever said they were at the level of non-meditation? Only a buddha is at that stage.

Astus said:

With the complete elimination of conceptualisation there is no grasping at subject or object. That is the level of non-meditation (e.g. Direct Path to the Buddha Within, p 385-386). Since an arhat does not grasp any mental dharma how could there be distraction from the perfect view? That's why I started with saying that an arhat has nothing more to train in, there is nothing more to be free from, and at the same time does not fall back to attaching to phenomena.

Malcolm wrote:

Arhats have no more training with regard to being free from the afflictions and fetters which cause rebirth in the three realms. This does not however mean that they are free from all conceptual grasping, let alone concepts. Arhats have concepts, Astus. So to pratyekabuddhas. The latter has grasping to phenomena as well as a subject, the former has grasping to the subject.

You can either accept what Buddha taught about this in the Prajñāpāramitā, Lanka and so on or not.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 23rd, 2015 at 1:13 AM

Title: Re: Anything Beyond Skandhas?

Content:

daverupa said:

The historical Buddha didn't even speak about a Bodhisattva Path.

Malcolm wrote:

Of course he did, the record of that discussion is the subject of the Mahāyāna sūtras.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 23rd, 2015 at 1:13 AM

Title: Re: Anything Beyond Skandhas?

Content:

daverupa said:

But of course an arahant is not a Buddha. The Buddha never taught people how to become Buddhas.

Malcolm wrote:

Of course he did. This is the subject matter of the Mahāyāna sūtras in general.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 23rd, 2015 at 1:35 AM

Title: Re: Anything Beyond Skandhas?

Content:

daverupa said:

So, using a given Mahayana text to ascertain the earlier Scholastic & pre-sectarian context is wholly anachronistic, and makes little sense to me.

Malcolm wrote:

That text, the AA, was authored by Maitreya Bodhisattva.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 23rd, 2015 at 9:18 PM

Title: Re: Anything Beyond Skandhas?

Content:

Astus said:

Once it's been introduced in Mahayana that there are two kinds of hindrances, primarily in the mind-only sutras, it is not any more just the accumulated merits that count but the level of wisdom as well. And that's where the problem raised here arises, that if arhats are free from the aggregates then there is nothing else left to let go of.

Malcolm wrote:

It is not a problem, as has been explained to you now several times: arhats, pratyekabuddhas as well as bodhisattvas on the bhumis are subject to varying degrees of conceptuality when not in equipoise. And in the Agamas/Nikayas it is recognized that

the knowledge of arhats is in no way equal to that of a Buddha.

The two obscurations are mentioned in the Āryāṣṭasāhasrika-prajñāpāramitā-sūtra.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 24th, 2015 at 1:55 AM

Title: Re: Anything Beyond Skandhas?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

It is not a problem, as has been explained to you now several times: arhats, pratyekabuddhas as well as bodhisattvas on the bhumis are subject to varying degrees of conceptuality when not in equipoise. And in the Agamas/Nikayas it is recognized that the knowledge of arhats is in no way equal to that of a Buddha.

The two obscurations are mentioned in the Āryāṣṭasāhasrika-prajñāpāramitā-sūtra.

Astus said:

How is an arhat subject to conceptualisation if there is no grasping of mental dharmas? This is the question not answered yet.

Malcolm wrote:

Where does it say that arhats are free from all grasping?

Astus said:

Although the Great Prajnaparamita Sutra in the Chinese canon (Taisho 220) is not necessarily the same, but that is the only one to contain the term "two hindrances" (二障) among the prajnaparamita texts, and even there it is just one section repeated at three different places where the qualities of the bodhi of great bodhisattvas are described, and contains no explanation what the afflictive and cognitive hindrances (煩惱所知二障) mean. It is also noteworthy that it was translated by Xuanzang, who brought many Yogacara works to China.

Malcolm wrote:

The Āryāṣṭasāhasrika-prajñāpāramitā-sūtra states:

Bhagavān, the prajñāpāramitā, for the purpose of abandoning the obscurations of affliction, knowledge and all related traces, does not generate all phenomena.

The Śatasāhasrika-prajñāpāramitā mentions afflictive obscurations: in response to the question of whether or not sravakas and pratyekabuddhas abandon the obscuration of traces of affliction it also answers in the negative :

...because they have not attained knowledge of all aspects, there is the obscuration of not abandoning all afflictions connected with traces, the śravakas and prayekabuddhas endowed with [traces of] afflictions do not have a path by which those may be abandoned

So, according to the Prajñāpāramitā, not only do śrāvaka arhats and pratyekabuddha arhats not realize the knowledge of all aspects, they do not have a path where they can

abandon all traces of affliction.

The Prajñāpāramitā in general mentions three kinds of obscurations: karma, affliction and view. It also clarifies that though śrāvaka arhats and pratyekabuddha arhats do abandon afflictions, there are left over traces which do not adhere to the tathāgata: Though all the śravakas and prayekabuddhas abandon afflictions, there are changes of the body, but the tathāgata does not possess such [changes], that is called "the tathāgata's total abandonment of the obscuration of traces."

So not only are three obscurations mentioned in the PP, but also the fact that arhats and pratyekabuddhas have traces of affliction for which they lack of path for abandoning.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 24th, 2015 at 2:01 AM

Title: Re: The one who doesn't die. An equivalent in Tibetan Buddhi

Content:

frankc said:

Some Thai forest masters in Theravada describe a stable reality completely outside the five khandas that doesn't have the three characteristics. They call it the citta. It isn't born, doesn't die, and when you get to nirvana it merges with nirvana and goes home. It is the unchanging reality, the unchanging knower. It occupies a neutral position between dualities like happiness and suffering. It simply knows them. No English equal of this word exists so it is difficult to translate from Pali into English and in fact the citta can't even be expressed properly in words or concepts so it doesn't really matter. It is usually translated as mind but this is incorrect because what we generally refer to as mind is just a bunch of transient things that arise and fall away. This isn't the citta. The citta exists entirely without reference to time and space. It does not arise or fall away. It is the creator, it creates the five aggregates of body and mind. It is the very foundation of samsara. It is the essence of being that wanders from birth to birth. The Citta is naturally pure but it's the mental defilements infiltrating the citta that cause it to experience happiness and suffering but the true nature of the citta has none of these qualities. I can go on and on but basically I'm just looking to find out if there's anything similar to this in Mahayana, Vajrayana, Tibetan Buddhism, maybe even Bon, etc. And any Theravada Buddhists that might be passing through that have no idea what I'm talking about you can read Ajahn Pannavaddho's book uncommon wisdom online for free, he has an entire section on the citta. Things like Merging with nirvana and going home are not things I made up.

Malcolm wrote:

In Vajrayāna it would be called the ālaya. In Mahāyāna, the ālayavijñāna.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 24th, 2015 at 4:28 AM

Title: Re: Anything Beyond Skandhas?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Where does it say that arhats are free from all grasping?

Astus said:

All that can be grasped are included in the aggregates. Arhats do not grasp the aggregates.

Malcolm wrote:

While arhats do not grasp the aggregates as a self, that is not mutually exclusive with still believing in ultimate atoms, subject and object, etc.

Anyway, it is very clear that the Buddha has taught in the PP and other sūtras that Arhats etc., are not completely free of all traces of affliction. And why? Because they do not have all-knowledge.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 24th, 2015 at 6:36 AM

Title: Re: The one who doesn't die. An equivalent in Tibetan Buddhi

Content:

zengen said:

That's pretty interesting. Never knew Theravada recognizes the Alaya.

Malcolm wrote:

They generally call it Bhavanga citta, "linking consciousness".

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 24th, 2015 at 8:33 PM

Title: Re: Anything Beyond Skandhas?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

While arhats do not grasp the aggregates as a self, that is not mutually exclusive with still believing in ultimate atoms, subject and object, etc.

Astus said:

Believing in any view is itself contrary to not identifying with the aggregates. Like establishing a duality of subject and object when it is perfectly clear for an arhat that there is no subject to establish anywhere.

Malcolm wrote:

According to PP and AA, arhats view nirvana as real. Moreover, there is no contradiction between understanding there is no self in the aggregates, and nevertheless, regarding the twelve āyatanas as real.

In this case, the subject is not a self, it is simple a consciousness which cognizes an entity, which is nevertheless, not a "self" or an identity. Arhats regard that

consciousness and its object as real, pratyekabuddhas only regard the subject as real.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 24th, 2015 at 11:25 PM

Title: Chinese Press:Fake Lamas flourish as middleclass grows

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

http://www.china.org.cn/china/2015-05/21/content_35623634.htm

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, May 25th, 2015 at 12:18 AM

Title: Re: Anything Beyond Skandhas?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

I was going to mention it, but I forgot, but Bryan Davis's post elsewhere prompted my memory — according to you, there is no difference between stream entrants and buddhas, since even stream entrants are free from a view of self in the aggregates.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, May 25th, 2015 at 12:41 AM

Title: Re: Fake Lamas flourish as China's middle class grows

Content:

Ayu said:

I was wondering: "Who is china.org.cn ?"

Found this: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/China_Internet_Information_Center

The wiki-article suggests to "See also":

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Xinhua_News_Agency

Doesn't that mean, it is a newspaper authorized by the Chinese government?

Also this page looks like Chinese government speaking trumpet:

<http://www.china.org.cn/opinion/index.htm>

What do you think?

(I think, independent press looks different, and this brings up the next question: Why do they report about Buddhist Lamas in China? What is their main intention?)

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, this is official Chinese media.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, May 25th, 2015 at 1:38 AM

Title: Re: Fake Lamas flourish as China's middle class grows

Content:

conebeckham said:

Ridiculous. To even suggest Ponlop Rinpoche is a fake.....they are pathetically transparent propaganda

Malcolm wrote:

I don't think they were suggesting he was fake. But this is the more interesting allegation: Liu is not the only female celebrity to marry and have a child with a Rinpoche. Hong Kong singer Shirley Kwan admitted in 2014 that her son's biological father is Dzongsar Jamyang Khyentse Rinpoche, also known as Khyentse Norbu.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, May 25th, 2015 at 2:03 AM

Title: Re: Fake Lamas flourish as China's middle class grows

Content:

conebeckham said:

Since when is someone with \$10k in the "U.S. Middle Class?"

Malcolm wrote:

Since Credit Suisse said so? BTW, it is not the US middle class, but US\$10,000.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, May 25th, 2015 at 10:54 AM

Title: Re: The one who doesn't die. An equivalent in Tibetan Buddhi

Content:

monktastic said:

I've always been confused by this. The Thai Forest masters place a lot of emphasis on citta:

It was apparent to him that "arahant" referred to the citta that had been purified of defilements.

As we begin eliminating the kilesas, we catch a glimpse of the mind's true essence, what we call the citta.

Until, finally, when we realize the nature of the citta completely, the attachment to the world entirely disappears. There is no need to make an effort to give up things because at that stage giving up is automatic. This is the true aim of the Buddha's teaching.

Could you really replace "citta" with "alayavijnana" in the above?

Malcolm wrote:

Yup.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, May 25th, 2015 at 8:17 PM

Title: Re: Anything Beyond Skandhas?

Content:

Astus said:

Stream-entrants are convinced that the Buddha's teaching is true, but they have not yet abandoned grasping at the aggregates. This section illustrates the difference (<http://www.accesstoinsight.org/tipitaka/mn/mn.035.than.html>):

Malcolm wrote:

They have eliminated the fetter of grasping a self, along with two other fetters:

"He attends appropriately, This is stress... This is the origination of stress... This is the cessation of stress... This is the way leading to the cessation of stress. As he attends appropriately in this way, three fetters are abandoned in him: self-identity view, doubt, and grasping at habits & practices."

<http://www.accesstoinsight.org/tipitaka/mn/mn.002.than.html>

"In this community of monks there are monks who, with the total ending of [the first] three fetters, are stream-winners, steadfast, never again destined for states of woe, headed for self-awakening."

<http://www.accesstoinsight.org/tipitaka/mn/mn.118.than.html>

Thus there is the contradiction in your thinking that I mentioned before. Arhats abandon ten fetters, but as the view of self is the one of the three lower fetters, it is abandoned only once, at stream entry, and at that time, it is abandoned totally.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, May 25th, 2015 at 8:29 PM

Title: Re: What are sentient beings?

Content:

Vasana said:

--

Feel free to correct me if any of this is off the mark, i still think there's probably a more concise way of saying it

Malcolm wrote:

The way this is explained in tantra is a little complicated to explain, but simply put, sentient beings arise from beginningless traces which come about from not recognizing their own state.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, May 25th, 2015 at 8:33 PM

Title: Re: Fake Lamas flourish as China's middle class grows

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

... the more interesting allegation:

Liu is not the only female celebrity to marry and have a child with a Rinpoche. Hong Kong singer Shirley Kwan admitted in 2014 that her son's biological father is Dzongsar

Jamyang Khyentse Rinpoche, also known as Khyentse Norbu.

ReasonAndRhyme said:

Is that an allegation (in the sense of accusation)? Is DJKR a fully ordained monk with all these vows, including chastity? I always assumed he was not.

Malcolm wrote:

It is an allegation in the sense that DKR has not, apparently, recognized the child or validated the claim. DKR is not a monk.

A Tibetan brought this to my attention. Apparently in the Tibetan Community, this article is something of a big deal and there is considerable gossip about it.

There is a barely readable further account here, that must be a google translation of a chinese gossip column from last year.

<http://www.iduobo.com/2015/05/14/secret-living-buddha-rinpoche-i-have-been-with-actress-shirley-birth-to-son-38411.html>

Original link here:

<http://ent.163.com/15/0514/08/APIHK5I800031H2L.html>

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, May 25th, 2015 at 9:46 PM

Title: Re: Anything Beyond Skandhas?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Thus there is the contradiction in your thinking that I mentioned before. Arhats abandon ten fetters, but as the view of self is the one of the three lower fetters, it is abandoned only once, at stream entry, and at that time, it is abandoned totally.

Astus said:

Knowing that there is no self, that is, obtaining correct view, and abandoning all clinging to the aggregates are not the same. A stream-enterer is convinced of the four noble truths, an arhat has completely realised the four noble truths. See also:

<http://www.accesstoinight.org/tipitaka/sn/sn48/sn48.053.than.html>.

"In the same way, friends, it's not that I say 'I am form,' nor do I say 'I am other than form.' It's not that I say, 'I am feeling... perception... fabrications... consciousness,' nor do I say, 'I am something other than consciousness.' With regard to these five clinging-aggregates, 'I am' has not been overcome, although I don't assume that 'I am this.'

"Friends, even though a noble disciple has abandoned the five lower fetters, he still has with regard to the five clinging-aggregates a lingering residual 'I am' conceit, an 'I am' desire, an 'I am' obsession. But at a later time he keeps focusing on the phenomena of

arising & passing away with regard to the five clinging-aggregates: 'Such is form, such its origin, such its disappearance. Such is feeling... Such is perception... Such are fabrications... Such is consciousness, such its origin, such its disappearance.' As he keeps focusing on the arising & passing away of these five clinging-aggregates, the lingering residual 'I am' conceit, 'I am' desire, 'I am' obsession is fully obliterated.
(<http://www.accesstoinsight.org/tipitaka/sn/sn22/sn22.089.than.html>)

"My friend, although I have seen properly with right discernment, as it actually is present, that 'The cessation of becoming is Unbinding,' still I am not an arahant whose fermentations are ended. It's as if there were a well along a road in a desert, with neither rope nor water bucket. A man would come along overcome by heat, oppressed by the heat, exhausted, dehydrated, & thirsty. He would look into the well and would have knowledge of 'water,' but he would not dwell touching it with his body. In the same way, although I have seen properly with right discernment, as it actually is present, that 'The cessation of becoming is Unbinding,' still I am not an arahant whose fermentations are ended."
(<http://www.accesstoinsight.org/tipitaka/sn/sn12/sn12.068.than.html>)

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, and the point is that, according to the Buddha in Mahāyāna sūtras, arhats have not abandoned "a lingering residuum", i.e. the traces I mentioned in a previous post. Also here it is clear that distinction between the noble disciple with these lingering residuums is precisely the difference between equipoise and post equipoise, as I also stated above, the idea being that arhats in this instance have nothing left to remove so that whether they are in equipoise or not is a matter of preference, not of liberation.

So the point is, to repeat my earlier citation, the Śatasāhasrika-prajñāpāramitā states: ...because they have not attained knowledge of all aspects, there is the obscuration of not abandoning all afflictions connected with traces, the śravakas and prayekabuddhas endowed with [traces of] afflictions do not have a path by which those may be abandoned.

So the choice is really simple, you can either accept the Buddha's Mahāyāna teaching in this instance or you can ignore it. It is clear from Mahāyāna accounts that arhats and pratyekabuddhas, along with bodhisattvas, have not abandoned all traces. And it is because of this that arhats and pratyekabuddhas are "woken" from their samadhis of cessation to continue on the bodhisattva path to attain full buddhahood.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, May 25th, 2015 at 10:08 PM

Title: Re: Anything Beyond Skandhas?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, and the point is that, according to the Buddha in Mahāyāna sūtras, arhats have not abandoned "a lingering residuum", i.e. the traces I mentioned in a previous post. Also here it is clear that distinction between the noble disciple with these lingering residuums is precisely the difference between equipoise and post equipoise, as I also

stated above, the idea being that arhats in this instance have nothing left to remove so that whether they are in equipoise or not is a matter of preference, not of liberation.

Astus said:

I don't really understand what is a matter of preference here.

Malcolm wrote:

The matter of preference is the enjoyment of equipoise. Buddhas are never not in equipoise, 24/7/365.

Astus said:

As for the other part, do you mean that from a Mahayana perspective it is fine to say that arhats have not actually gave up all clinging to the aggregates? So, the very assumption that arhats are completely free from grasping the skandhas is not true in the Great Vehicle?

Malcolm wrote:

They are not free of all traces of affliction and have no path to realize complete freedom from all traces of affliction because they do not possess sarvakārajñāna, knowledge of all aspects. And, according to AA, they "take a stand" in nirvana, believing it to be real.

Nirvana, incidentally, is not part of the aggregates, since it is unconditioned. It is part of the dharmadhātu, however.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, May 25th, 2015 at 10:30 PM

Title: Re: Anything Beyond Skandhas?

Content:

Astus said:

And from this it is clear that the interpretation of arhatship is quite different in the two doctrines.

Malcolm wrote:

And since when was this ever in question?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 26th, 2015 at 12:06 AM

Title: Re: Anything Beyond Skandhas?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

And since when was this ever in question?

Astus said:

No, it wasn't. Although since I have started from the beginning with stating that arhats are free from the aggregates, the counter-arguments toward their being still bound by

various things did not actually apply to the arhats that are free, simply because the Mahayana-type arhat is not free from the beginning.

Malcolm wrote:

There are three kinds of arhats: śrāvaka arhats, pratyekabuddha arhats and buddha arhats. The first two have traces, even though they are free from the afflictions which cause rebirth in the three realms. Secondly, the first two have nonafflictive ignorance, since they a) lack knowledge of the buddha dharma and b) since they lack the knowledge of the paths which would otherwise enable them to eradicate those traces and c) since they still have beliefs in subject and object, subjects, and so on, i.e., even though they are free from the view of the self of persons, they are not free of the view of the self of phenomena.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 26th, 2015 at 1:09 AM

Title: Re: Anything Beyond Skandhas?

Content:

Monlam Tharchin said:

Isn't this moving buddhahood further and further away from the capacities of ordinary sentient beings?

Malcolm wrote:

Ordinary sentient beings cannot attain buddhahood, only tenth stage bodhisattvas can attain buddhahood. The question is, what is the fastest, most effective way to become a tenth stage bodhisattva? Another way to put it, there are five paths: two are mundane, three are transcendent. Ordinary sentient beings are on the path of accumulation and preparation while noble beings are on the paths of seeing, cultivation and no more training.

In Mahāyāna the path requires at minimum three incalculable eons. In Vajrayāna, the path can be reduced to one, three, seven or at most sixteen lifetimes. The paths and stages however are the same.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 26th, 2015 at 8:24 AM

Title: Re: Anything Beyond Skandhas?

Content:

Monlam Tharchin said:

Malcolm, may I use your post to start a new discussion? I don't want to derail this one.

Malcolm wrote:

Sure, of course.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 26th, 2015 at 9:40 AM

Title: Re: Fake Lamas flourish as China's middle class grows

Content:

Jikan said:

Malcolm, did you get the sense that the Tibetans who are discussing this article actually take its claims at face value, or at least as plausible?

Malcolm wrote:

Yup.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 26th, 2015 at 11:19 AM

Title: Re: Fake Lamas flourish as China's middle class grows

Content:

bryandavis said:

I dont really care one way or the other

Malcolm wrote:

Me either...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 26th, 2015 at 8:08 PM

Title: Re: Fake Lamas flourish as China's middle class grows

Content:

jmlee369 said:

It's seems like someone in Chinese media did a terrible job of doing research. The second article posted by Malcolm focuses on Shirley Kwan who revealed the identity of her son's father. Looking through the original Chinese article, there are a series of photos of the lama who is said to be the father of the child. There is a screenshot of an instagram page with the lama's picture and a caption describing the relationship. The lama pictured is clearly NOT Dzongsar Jamyang Khyentse Rinpoche. While the instagram account sh3rylk is no longer there, one of the screenshots names the lama as Zuri Rinpoche from Bhutan. Somehow, the authors of the more recent article in the OP must have thought there was only one Bhutanese tulku in existence, or did not bother to look up pictures of Khyentse Rinpoche.

Another problem with this kind of article is that it does not make explicit in Chinese that lamas like Ponlop Rinpoche and Khyentse Rinpoche are not ordained monks. In the eyes of the Chinese, they are monks, leading to a great number of misunderstandings, as evidenced by the comments section in the Chinese article.

Malcolm wrote:

Thanks.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 26th, 2015 at 8:25 PM

Title: Re: What are sentient beings?

Content:

Vasana said:

Able to point to any relevant places where the complexities may have been explained?

I'm still trying to frame the question from the perspective of the totality, the Dharmadhatu.

Malcolm wrote:

The dharmadhātu is just the emptiness of all phenomena.

Vasana said:

Beyond beings and buddhas, what is bound and what is unbinding?

Malcolm wrote:

Nothing at all.

My upcoming translation explains this all from a Dzogchen perspective. This is also explained in the Jñānāvajrasamuccaya tantra.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 27th, 2015 at 3:49 AM

Title: Re: What kind of mind do Buddhas have

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

This means that having completed one's analysis one simply rests in the nature of the mind as one finds it, without modifying it in anyway.

cloudburst said:

Is this your understanding of how to meditate on the ultimate? So a person on the path of preparation analyses and then, conceptually understanding reality free from extremes, he or she drops the conclusion and meditates on the conventional nature of the mind?

Malcolm wrote:

It means that you have no further need of analysis.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 27th, 2015 at 4:42 AM

Title: Re: What kind of mind do Buddhas have

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, heat on the path of preparation/application is a conceptual mind, it is a samadhi on an inferential emptiness.

cloudburst said:

so how do you then explain that one goes from the path of preparation, a conceptual mind, to the path of seeing, a non-conceptual mind? If you insist on using only your specific terminology/ translation style, could you explain how one goes from the path of preparation, a conceptual mind, to the path of seeing, a non-conceptual wisdom?

Malcolm wrote:

To paraphrase Shantideva:

When neither an object or a non-object remain before the mind, since there is other alternative, that time the mind is pacified.

This is also the intent of the siddha Kotalipa:

Do not meditate on non-existents,
also do not meditate on existents...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 27th, 2015 at 4:43 AM

Title: Re: What kind of mind do Buddhas have

Content:

cloudburst said:

the issue here is that if you are a person who has not entered the path of seeing, if you are not meditating with a conceptual mind you are not meditating on the ultimate, since you cannot meditate on the ultimate with a non-conceptual mind because if you could you would be on the path of seeing

Malcolm wrote:

But if you meditate with a conceptual mind you are not meditating on the ultimate, since the ultimate, according to Shantideva, is not within the range of the mind, the mind being relative.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 27th, 2015 at 7:09 AM

Title: Re: What kind of mind do Buddhas have

Content:

cloudburst said:

Can you please explain the development, from a conceptual mind on the path of preparation, of a mind to which neither object or nor non-object appears?

Malcolm wrote:

All grasping to signs ceases, that is the path of seeing. The path of seeing is a (temporary) cessation of the conceptual mind, not a transformation of a conceptual mind into a nonconceptual mind.

When neither an object or a non-object remain before the mind, since there is other alternative, that time the mind is pacified.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 27th, 2015 at 8:22 AM

Title: Re: What kind of mind do Buddhas have

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

But if you meditate with a conceptual mind you are not meditating on the ultimate, since the ultimate, according to Shantideva, is not within the range of the mind, the mind being relative.

Tsongkhapa said:

Shantideva doesn't say this at all. He says that the ultimate cannot be realised directly by a mind that has dualistic appearance:

(2) The two truths are explained as conventional truths and ultimate truths.

Ultimate truth, emptiness, is a non-affirming negative phenomenon

That cannot be realized directly by a mind that has dualistic appearance,

For such minds are conventional, and thus mistaken awareness.

Malcolm wrote:

Sure he does: *saṃvṛtiḥ paramārthaśca satyadvayamidaṃ matam|*

buddheragocarastattvaṃ buddhiḥ saṃvṛtirucyate

saṃvṛtiḥ paramārthaśca

ཀུན་རྫོབ་དང་ནི་དོན་དམ་ཤིང་།

Relative and ultimate,

satyadvayamidaṃ matam|

འདི་ནི་འདོན་པ་གཉིས་སུ་འདོད།

this is asserted as the two truths.

buddheragocarastattvaṃ

དོན་དམ་སྒོ་ཡི་སྤྱད་ཡུལ་མིན།

The ultimate is not [within] the range [gocara, spyod yul] of the mind;

buddhiḥ saṃvṛtirucyate

སྒོ་ནི་ཀུན་རྫོབ་ཡིན་པར་བརྟུན།

The mind is said to be relative.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 27th, 2015 at 8:32 AM

Title: Re: What kind of mind do Buddhas have

Content:

Tsongkhapafan said:

This is a literal translation of his words, not his intended meaning.

Malcolm wrote:

No, the verse you cited is a completely corrupt and invalid rendering, and has nothing to do with Shantideva's intended meaning. My translation is affirmed by all the Indian commentaries on this text, of which there are ten, not to mention numerous Sakya, Nyingma and Kagyu commentaries.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 27th, 2015 at 8:05 PM

Title: Re: Aeons and Aeons and Aeons

Content:

frankc said:

Is anyone discouraged that it's said to take aeons and aeons and aeons to achieve Buddhahood? Why practice?

Malcolm wrote:

For the benefit of others.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 27th, 2015 at 8:06 PM

Title: Re: Dharma protectors and samaya

Content:

Adamantine said:

I believe this same question came up in some other thread and the original link is now broken, but I recall that this woman's quoted post preceded Kali Ma's name change to Pema Khandro. She started out teaching as Kali Ma, then "Troma Rinpoche" and finally shifted to Pema Khandro. Pema Khandro was a rather late name for her, in her ongoing name-transformations. I may have missed a couple. So chronologically it doesn't map out for it to be the same woman, according to my own memory.

Malcolm wrote:

Unless it was a personal nick she was using at the time.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 27th, 2015 at 9:20 PM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

David Reigle said:

I have now finished reading Bhavya's Vedānta chapter and other chapters of his Madhyamaka-hṛdaya. I found it interesting that even in this chapter, like in his refutations of the ātman in previous chapters, the ātman he refutes is a kartr, "doer" or "agent," and a bhoktr, "enjoyer" or "experiencer." This confirms Kamaleswar Bhattacharya's thesis that the ātman refuted in Buddhism was not the universal ātman. Bhavya, like Vasubandhu before him, and like Śāntarakṣita after him, understood the ātman that Buddhists refute to be a permanent personal ātman that can act and experience. It was not until a couple centuries after Bhavya that Śāṅkarācārya formulated the Advaita Vedānta view of the ātman, on the basis of passages found in the Upaniṣads, and promulgated it widely. This idea of a non-dual universal ātman that, as such, cannot be an agent or an experiencer, has dominated Indian thought ever since. But this was not the idea of the ātman that Buddhists refuted, as their texts show, and it is incorrect to project this idea backwards onto the ātman that they refuted.

Malcolm wrote:

All that you have stated is that the concept of a universal atman is specifically Śāṅkarācārya's point of view. It is also equally incorrect therefore to project this idea backward and infer that this universal atman is one that is implicitly affirmed by the Buddha.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 27th, 2015 at 9:25 PM

Title: Re: What kind of mind do Buddhas have

Content:

Tsongkhapafan said:

This is a literal translation of his words, not his intended meaning. This is often the problem in Buddhism - literalism. His intended meaning is given in the verse I quoted above.

conebeckham said:

First you claim that "Shantideva doesn't say this at all," then we provide reliable translations of what Shantideva actually says, and you claim that his intended meaning is other than his words. So, in your view, what Shantideva says is actually not what he says, but what someone else asserts is his "intention." This is tortured explication, indeed, and far from the intent of the author.

Malcolm wrote:

'When I use a word,' Humpty Dumpty said, in rather a scornful tone, 'it means just what I

choose it to mean — neither more nor less.'

'The question is,' said Alice, 'whether you can make words mean so many different things.'

'The question is,' said Humpty Dumpty, 'which is to be master — that's all.'

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 27th, 2015 at 10:17 PM

Title: Re: What kind of mind do Buddhas have

Content:

Tsongkhapafan said:

This is a literal translation of his words, not his intended meaning.

Malcolm wrote:

No, the verse you cited is a completely corrupt and invalid rendering, and has nothing to do with Shantideva's intended meaning. My translation is affirmed by all the Indian commentaries on this text, of which there are ten, not to mention numerous Sakya, Nyingma and Kagyu commentaries.

Tsongkhapafan said:

Then they all misinterpreted Shantideva's words. It's important to know the meaning, not just the words.

Malcolm wrote:

The point is that you do not know the meaning, and neither does the person who translated the citation you provided.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 27th, 2015 at 10:35 PM

Title: Re: What kind of mind do Buddhas have

Content:

conebeckham said:

Direct, non-conceptual experience of emptiness occurs in equipoise, but lower-level Bodhisattvas have (conceptual) mind and subject/object dualism in post-meditation. A couple verses in translation, this time from Geshe Tenzin Zopa of Sera Je Monastery:

And another version of verse 2:

Relative and absolute,

These the two truths are declared to be.

The absolute is not within the reach of intellect,

For intellect is grounded in the relative.

TsongKhapaFan, you can see that even a Gelukpa Geshe's translation is more in line

with the actual words. You should compare this to your version.

Tsongkhapa said:

This translation is very poor. There are no absolute things because there is nothing that does not depend and nothing that is not relative. Ultimate truth is not absolute.

Even though it is a bad translation, the meaning is in line with my understanding - a direct realisation of emptiness, that is, a non-conceptual realisation, is not possible with a conceptual mind (badly rendered as 'intellect' here). This is Shantideva's intention. It is absurd to assert that the mind cannot know emptiness because the mind is a conventional truth, which was Malcolm's original and incorrect assertion. It is only the mind that knows anything, and if the mind doesn't know it, how else is it possible to perceive and realise emptiness?

Your interpretation is clearly not what Shantideva is saying at all, but you're free to believe whatever you want.

Malcolm wrote:

One, you are not qualified to judge any translations, since you a) do not know Tibetan b) do not know Sanskrit.

Second, what Shantideva states is the following:

When existents and nonexistents
do not remain before the mind,
then, since there is no other aspect,
[the mind] is pacified because there is nothing to perceive.
M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 27th, 2015 at 11:04 PM

Title: Re: Aeons and Aeons and Aeons

Content:

Dan74 said:

Are they literal? In which case how far along are we? Maybe we've already been on it for incalculable kalpas minus one lifetime!

Malcolm wrote:

This is why it is important to understand the paths and stages, so we can know where we are on the path.

Then we will have an idea of how much longer we need to continue.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 27th, 2015 at 11:05 PM

Title: Re: Aeons and Aeons and Aeons

Content:

Astus said:

A bodhisattva sees that there are no beings to liberate, that is how all beings are liberated.]

Malcolm wrote:

So you mean, you are not responsible for your own liberation? When someone first stage bodhisattva sees your emptiness, you are liberated.

Were it so easy...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 27th, 2015 at 11:07 PM

Title: Re: What kind of mind do Buddhas have

Content:

cloudburst said:

As you yourself just experienced, when Malcolm refers to "Sakya, Nyingma and Kagyu commentaries," this does not change your view. Why? You do not regard these as authoritative.

Malcolm wrote:

He does not even regard Indian authorities, including the Buddha, as authoritative, and thinks they are in need of repair.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 27th, 2015 at 11:40 PM

Title: Re: What kind of mind do Buddhas have

Content:

cloudburst said:

All Tibetan Buddhists regard the Indian founders as authoritative...

Malcolm wrote:

Except western Gelugpas and their derivatives, who often give the appearance of believing that no one understood Buddhism, let alone realized anything, until Tsongkhapa came along.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 27th, 2015 at 11:54 PM

Title: Re: Dharma protectors and samaya

Content:

Kelwin said:

Malcolm, this is an old post, but could you elaborate a bit? As far as I know Pramoha is part of the Shitro mandala, and usually not considered a local protector? Is there anywhere I can find more about her being related to Europe?

Thank you!

Malcolm wrote:

It is a name for Dorje Yudronma.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 28th, 2015 at 12:12 AM

Title: Re: What kind of mind do Buddhas have

Content:

cloudburst said:

All Tibetan Buddhists regard the Indian founders as authoritative...

Malcolm wrote:

Except western Gelugpas and their derivatives, who often give the appearance of believing that no one understood Buddhism, let alone realized anything, until Tsongkhapa came along.

cloudburst said:

I think this is mainly an internet phenomenon. I have been reading and posting here and on esangha for years and years, and have seen this ridiculous triumphalist tone regarding the works of their founders, from jonang, kagyu, sakya, nyingma, western dzogchenpa with Tibetan names etc etc as well as Gelug derivatives and the like.

I have been guilty of it myself. As far as I know, no-one is immune, and it's unpleasant wherever you see it.

Generally speaking I think they are just excited because they have met the best thing that ever happened to them and they have a feeling of certainty that they want to share. Often they have met a person that is wise and kind to them, and they finally feel like they have something to crow about.

It passes.

Malcolm wrote:

Granted, there is a certain tendency to do this, but one reason why I rarely cite Tibetan

scholars about anything anymore is that there is too much sectarianism in their work.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 28th, 2015 at 12:56 AM

Title: Re: What kind of mind do Buddhas have

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Granted, there is a certain tendency to do this, but one reason why I rarely cite Tibetan scholars about anything anymore is that there is too much sectarianism in their work.

cloudburst said:

For me, generally speaking, these discussions form the body of my education about the views of other Buddhist traditions (in the Tibetan lineages, I have never had any interest whatsoever in Zen or Chinese Buddhisms. Theravadins are cool but incomplete imho) as they are lived and understood by modern westerners.

I also have an opportunity to refine my views regarding my own school by having them challenged. For me this is edifying. (I find it interesting that some of the characters that go at it tooth and claw here are probably share more in view with each other's than with nearly anyone on planet earth.)

In any case, I find the discussions here increase my faith in my own tradition, and help me understand the traditions of others. I see that as a good and worthwhile thing.

I plan to press you on your unwillingness/inability to give a coherent account of how one passes from the path of preparation to the path of seeing, but due to such things as having a job etc. that will have to wait until another day.

Cheers all, sorry to be annoying.

Malcolm wrote:

Present your your idea. Then we will see how it adds up.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 28th, 2015 at 2:23 AM

Title: Re: What kind of mind do Buddhas have

Content:

conebeckham said:

The first two lines are clear--there are two truths, Relative and Absolute. The third line indicates that the Absolute is not an object of the intellect. "Intellect," in this case, is a fairly specific word, in Tibetan, *blos*., which stands for an aspect of conceptual mind. "Intellect" is a good translation, IMO. Malcolm translated it as "Mind," and that is okay, but it's a more specific aspect of the mental continuum, in my opinion, and "Intellect" is

more precise.

Malcolm wrote:

Buddhi: the power of forming and retaining conceptions and general notions ,
intelligence , reason , intellect , mind , discernment

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 28th, 2015 at 2:29 AM

Title: Re: What kind of mind do Buddhas have

Content:

conebeckham said:

The first two lines are clear--there are two truths, Relative and Absolute. The third line indicates that the Absolute is not an object of the intellect. "Intellect," in this case, is a fairly specific word, in Tibetan, *blos*., which stands for an aspect of conceptual mind. "Intellect" is a good translation, IMO. Malcolm translated it as "Mind," and that is okay, but it's a more specific aspect of the mental continuum, in my opinion, and "Intellect" is more precise.

Malcolm wrote:

Buddhi: the power of forming and retaining conceptions and general notions ,
intelligence , reason , intellect , mind , discernment

conebeckham said:

Even more precise, thanks!

Malcolm wrote:

The issues is that the terms "mind", "consciousness", "intellect" and so on are at best ambiguously distinct from one another in English . The other word that *blos* translates is *mati*, which this case bears the connotations of the mind , perception , understanding , intelligence , sense , judgment...{mind}.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 28th, 2015 at 3:52 AM

Title: Re: What kind of mind do Buddhas have

Content:

cloudburst said:

I am more interested in your idea

Malcolm wrote:

You can find my idea in *thub pa'i dgongs gsal*, concerning the five paths, specifically the path of preparation and seeing.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 28th, 2015 at 7:39 PM

Title: Re: Aeons and Aeons and Aeons

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

So you mean, you are not responsible for your own liberation? When someone first stage bodhisattva sees your emptiness, you are liberated.

Were it so easy...

Astus said:

That wouldn't make much sense, would it?

All the different types of sentient beings, whether they be born from eggs, born from a womb, born from moisture or born spontaneously; whether or not they have form; whether they abide in perceptions or no perceptions; or without either perceptions or non-perceptions, I save them by causing them to enter nirvana without remainder. And when these immeasurable, countless, infinite number of sentient beings have been liberated, in actuality, no sentient being has attained liberation. Why is this so? Subhūti, If a bodhisattva abides in the signs of self, person, sentient being, or life-span, she or he is not a bodhisattva."

(http://www.acmuller.net/bud-canon/diamond_sutra.html, ch 3)

Malcolm wrote:

You left out an important part: "The bodhisattvas and mahāsattvas should subdue their thoughts like this...."

The Tibetan and Sanskrit make it more clear, the above refers to a thought that bodhisattva has, not an actual fact of his or her saving anyone.

Subhuti, here, the one who has correctly entered into the bodhisattvayāna thinks in this way, "However many sentient beings there are, included in egg-birth, womb-birth, heat and moisture-birth and apparitional birth, with form, without form, with perception, without perception or without perception and non-perception, as many sentient beings as are designated sentient beings, all of them I will free through total nirvana in the state [dhātu] of nirvana without remaining aggregates. As such, though limitless sentient beings have been freed through total nirvana, no sentient beings will have been freed through parinivana." Thus that one should generate this thought.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 28th, 2015 at 7:42 PM

Title: Re: Aeons and Aeons and Aeons

Content:

Dan74 said:

Perhaps it is holding to the notion of stages that makes the path take aeons and aeons? Sounds like the good old polishing the brick into a mirror story...

Astus said:

The sutras themselves give some indication on one's state.

“If good men and good women, having heard this profound prajñā-pāramitā, can come to resoluteness in their minds, not shocked, not terrified, not baffled, and not regretful, know that they stand on the Ground of No Regress. If those who have heard this profound prajñā-pāramitā are not shocked, not terrified, not baffled, and not regretful, but believe, accept, appreciate, and listen tirelessly, they have in effect achieved dāna-pāramitā, śīla-pāramitā, kṣānti-pāramitā, vīrya-pāramitā, dhyāna-pāramitā, and prajñā-pāramitā. Moreover, they can reveal and explicate [the teachings] to others and can have them train accordingly.”

(<http://www.sutrasmantras.info/sutra13.html>)

Malcolm wrote:

You left out the next passage:

The Buddha asked Mañjuśrī, “In your opinion, what is meant by attaining anuttara-samyak-saṃbodhi and by abiding in anuttara-samyak-saṃbodhi?”

Mañjuśrī replied, “I have no anuttara-samyak-saṃbodhi to attain, nor do I abide in the Buddha Vehicle. Then how should I attain anuttara-samyak-saṃbodhi? What I describe is only the appearance of bodhi.”

The Buddha praised Mañjuśrī, “Very good! Very good! You have so skillfully explained the meaning of this profound Dharma. You have long planted your roots of goodness under past Buddhas, training with purity in the Brahma way of life according to the dharma of no appearance.”

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 28th, 2015 at 9:07 PM

Title: Re: Aeons and Aeons and Aeons

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

the above refers to a thought that bodhisattva has, not an actual fact of his or her saving anyone

Astus said:

I did not intend anything else with it, just to demonstrate what I have referred to.

You left out the next passage

It's part of the whole point. Even encountering the Dharma is a sign of previous good karma. Thus it fits Dan's remark: "Maybe we've already been on it for incalculable kalpas minus one lifetime!"

Malcolm wrote:

The point is that to attain full buddhahood it takes three asaṃkhyakalpas (asaṃkhyā does not really mean incalculable, it is the name of a large number). The point of knowing where one is on the path is to know that, for example, if one is not yet on the path of seeing, one has a long way to go in common Mahāyāna terms. Even if one is on

the path of seeing, one has a long way to go in common Mahāyāna terms.

For example, when it is says that bodhisattvas can attain full buddhahood in seven lifetimes, this is not referring to bodhisattva on the path of accumulation, it is referring to bodhisattvas on the eighth bhumi, etc.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 28th, 2015 at 9:30 PM

Title: Re: Aeons and Aeons and Aeons

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The point is that to attain full buddhahood it takes three asaṃkhyakalpas (asaṃkhyā does not really mean incalculable, it is the name of a large number). The point of knowing where one is on the path is to know that, for example, if one is not yet on the path of seeing, one has a long way to go in common Mahāyāna terms. Even if one is on the path of seeing, one has a long way to go in common Mahāyāna terms.

For example, when it is says that bodhisattvas can attain full buddhahood in seven lifetimes, this is not referring to bodhisattva on the path of accumulation, it is referring to bodhisattvas on the eighth bhumi, etc.

Astus said:

What number asaṃkhyā is?

Malcolm wrote:

1×10^{56} , i.e. 1 followed by 56 zeros.

Astus said:

Schools like Huayan, Tiantai and Chan do not consider themselves common Mahayana, and they don't fit the system Tibetan's use.

Malcolm wrote:

Vajrayānists, including Indian Vajrayānists, consider everything that is not Vajrayāna part of common Mahāyāna. Huayan. Tientai, etc., are all schools based in Mahāyāna sūtra.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 28th, 2015 at 9:35 PM

Title: Re: Maenla & Orgyen Maenla

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

I believe my Gelug teachers said that Maenla comes from the sutra tradition, and as such it doesn't have wang, but rather a jenang associated with the practice. There we

had the sadhana of the seven Medicine Buddha brothers.

Malcolm wrote:

This practice was introduced to Tibetan by Shantarakshita in the 8th. This was the main practice of Tibetan kings for many generations. It is part of kriya tantra.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 28th, 2015 at 10:34 PM

Title: Re: Aeons and Aeons and Aeons

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

1×10^{56} , i.e. 1 followed by 56 zeros.

Astus said:

That is, the minimal time to complete the entire bodhisattva path is 3×10^{56} years?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes. And that is just an eye blink in time.

Astus said:

Vajrayānists, including Indian Vajrayānists, consider everything that is not Vajrayāna part of common Mahāyāna. Huayan. Tientai, etc., are all schools based in Mahāyāna sūtra.

Just like those schools have their own classification systems. For instance, from a Huayan perspective Vajrayana would fall into the category of Final Mahayana, that is above Madhyamaka and Yogacara but below the Sudden Enlightenment teaching. And from the Chan view Tantra is still a gradual path based on temporary skilful means.

Malcolm wrote:

These historical interpretations of the Buddha's career have no relevance at all to Vajrayāna. The idea of dividing up the career of the Buddha into distinct epochs is a uniquely Chinese historiographical idea. The Indian Mahāyānis certainly didn't care about such interpretations and never made them, in fact they rejected them.

As to the Chan point of view, this is addressed by Nubchen Sangye Yeshe. Chan lacks the direct introduction found exclusively in Vajrayāna, this is why he ranks Chan below Mahāyoga.

As far as I am concerned, Chan sudden enlightenment is mere rhetoric and cannot be taken seriously. But I am sure if I were a Chan or a Zen practitioner, I would feel differently about it.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 29th, 2015 at 12:15 AM

Title: Re: Aeons and Aeons and Aeons

Content:

Vasana said:

And again from the Mahāprajñāpāramitā Mañjuśrīparivarta Sūtra

The Buddha told Mañjuśrī : If a person is able to hear this teaching without fear, then the seeds of good roots have not only been planted with thousands of buddhas, but good roots have truly been planted with hundreds of thousands of myriads of buddhas. Therefore, one is able to be without alarm and fear of the extremely profound Prajñāpāramitā.”

http://lapislazulitexts.com/tripitaka/T0232_LL_manjusri_prajnaparamita

Is it not true that realization 'exists' outside (but not separate from) time and space?

How does the notion of time and emptiness come in to play here ?

Malcolm wrote:

If you are a buddha, for you there is no time since for you there are no objects, and for you there are no thoughts, no concepts, etc., and therefore, no time.

But if you are not a buddha, even if you are a tenth stage bodhisattvas, for you there are objects, for you there are thoughts, concepts. and therefore, there is time.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 29th, 2015 at 12:32 AM

Title: Re: Aeons and Aeons and Aeons

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

1×10^{56} , i.e. 1 followed by 56 zeros.

Astus said:

That is, the minimal time to complete the entire bodhisattva path is 3×10^{56} years?

zengen said:

To the best of my knowledge, It's 3×10^{56} Maha-Kalpas, not human years.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 29th, 2015 at 12:32 AM

Title: Re: Aeons and Aeons and Aeons

Content:

Vasana said:

How does the notion of time and emptiness come in to play here ?

Malcolm wrote:

If you are a buddha, for you there is no time since for you there are no objects, and for you there are no thoughts, no concepts, etc., and therefore, no time.

But if you are not a buddha, even if you are a tenth stage bodhisattvas, for you there are objects, for you there are thoughts, concepts. and therefore, there is time.

Vasana said:

Yeah, this is true.

On a side note, aren't the 10 stages 'absent' in Vajrayana /Mahamudra/Dzogchen or replaced with another frame of reference ?

You probably know more about this, not a topic i've looked in to deeply yet.

Malcolm wrote:

In Vajrayāna, no the ten stages are not absent. There are instead thirteen stages.

In Kagyu Mahāmudra, the stages are not taken as seriously, also in Dzogchen they are not taken as seriously, but then again, these are systems belonging to Vajrayāna, and in each of these systems there are clear indications of how far along the path one is.

In Kagyu Mahāmudra, there are various schemes, but the first two yogas are generally held to correspond to the two mundane paths and the path of seeing, the third yoga is the path of cultivation, and the fourth yoga, nonmeditation is equivalent to buddhahood.

Likewise, in Dzogchen, the first two visions are below the path of seeing, the second two visions cover the path of seeing and beyond.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 29th, 2015 at 12:33 AM

Title: Re: Aeons and Aeons and Aeons

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Yes. And that is just an eye blink in time.

Astus said:

I'm curious, what is the source for that number?

Chan lacks the direct introduction found exclusively in Vajrayāna

Do you mean empowerment here? How about pointing out the nature of mind?

Malcolm wrote:

There is pointing out the nature of mind even in Hinayāna.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 29th, 2015 at 12:57 AM

Title: Re: Aeons and Aeons and Aeons

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

There is pointing out the nature of mind even in Hinayāna.

Astus said:

Is one directly introduced to a different nature than what is pointed out?

(<http://www.khenposodargye.org/2013/11/attaining-buddhahood-by-revealing-the-nature-of-reality-and-attaining-buddhahood-in-a-single-life/> seems to say no.)

Malcolm wrote:

It is the same nature, the mind that recognizes it however is much more subtle.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 29th, 2015 at 1:17 AM

Title: Re: Aeons and Aeons and Aeons

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

It is the same nature, the mind that recognizes it however is much more subtle.

Astus said:

How can non-conceptual wisdom have levels?

Malcolm wrote:

Don't you distinguish between the nonconceptual wisdom of a first stage bodhisattva and a tenth stage bodhisattva? The object is the same, but the degree of subtlety is not.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 29th, 2015 at 2:25 AM

Title: Re: Dharma Protectors: Why Did China Invade Tibet?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Dharmapālas protect the Dharma, not people.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 29th, 2015 at 3:03 AM

Title: Re: Dharma Protectors: Why Did China Invade Tibet?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Dharmapālas protect the Dharma, not people.

ClearblueSky said:

Exactly, but due to teachings getting destroyed someone could make the argument they "didn't protect the Dharma". Or the opposite argument, based on Vajrayana teachings spreading more widely than ever. One can't say for sure, unless you could compare it side-by-side to a 2015 where Tibet was not invaded (and even then it'd be hard to).

Malcolm wrote:

No teachings are ever destroyed.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 29th, 2015 at 3:24 AM

Title: Re: Corporate "Mindfulness".

Content:

MrBlueSKY said:

To make sense of the future in regard to this corporate mindfulnessNo ?

Malcolm wrote:

No, mindfulness is not Buddhadharma.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 29th, 2015 at 3:36 AM

Title: Re: Dharma Protectors: Why Did China Invade Tibet?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

No teachings are ever destroyed.

Jikan said:

Texts were destroyed. Temples were destroyed. Stupas were destroyed. Worst of all, people were destroyed. These are vessels of the teaching.

Is it not fair to say that the teachings--or the transmission of the teachings--was disrupted?

Malcolm wrote:

All these things, while regrettable, did not and cannot disrupt the Dharma or its transmission.

In order for the teachings to be disrupted, the source of the teachings would have to be disrupted. And that is just not possible.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 29th, 2015 at 3:54 AM

Title: Re: Aeons and Aeons and Aeons

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Don't you distinguish between the nonconceptual wisdom of a first stage bodhisattva and a tenth stage bodhisattva? The object is the same, but the degree of subtlety is not.

Astus said:

There can be only one state that deserves the name non-conceptual wisdom, in other words, non-abiding awareness. Anything else would be conceptual, would be abiding somewhere. What do you mean by difference in subtlety?

Malcolm wrote:

So as far as you are concerned the non-conceptual wisdom of a first stage bodhisattva and the non-conceptual wisdom of a buddha is exactly alike?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 29th, 2015 at 8:18 PM

Title: Re: Aeons and Aeons and Aeons

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

So as far as you are concerned the non-conceptual wisdom of a first stage bodhisattva and the non-conceptual wisdom of a buddha is exactly alike?

Astus said:

Yes. What difference do you see?

"a Bodhisattva gives alms in the same way as would a Tathāgata, without any difference. This is how a Bodhisattva takes Bodhisattva actions. Likewise a Bodhisattva observes the precepts, endures adversity, makes energetic progress, does meditation, and develops wisdom in the same way as would a Tathāgata, without any difference. This is how a Bodhisattva takes Bodhisattva actions."

(<http://www.sutrasmantras.info/sutra46.html>)

Malcolm wrote:

Well, one difference I see is the translation of this passage you refer to seems to be an abbreviation when compared with the same passage as translated into Tibetan:

“Mañjuśrī, how does a bodhisattva practice within the conduct of a bodhisattva?

[F.298.b] Mañjuśrī, a bodhisattva does not think of destruction, arising, non-destruction, non-arising, and the utter destruction of destruction; nor is he disturbed by utter non-arising. It is in this way, Mañjuśrī, that he practices within the conduct of a bodhisattva. Furthermore, Mañjuśrī, a bodhisattva does not practice by thinking, ‘The past mind is destroyed;’ he does not practice by thinking, ‘The future mind has yet to be obtained;’ he does not practice by thinking, ‘The present mind abides.’ He is not stuck in the past, future, or present mind. As he practices in this way, Mañjuśrī, a bodhisattva practices within the conduct of a bodhisattva. [136]

“Mañjuśrī, giving, awakening, and sentient beings and, on the other hand, the Tathāgata:

these are non-dual, they are not divided into two.⁴¹ Practicing in this way, a bodhisattva practices within the conduct of a bodhisattva. Mañjuśrī, discipline, awakening, and sentient beings and, on the other hand, the Tathāgata: these are non-dual, they are not divided into two. Practicing in this way, a bodhisattva practices within the conduct of a bodhisattva.

“It is the same way with forbearance, awakening, and sentient beings, and, on the other hand, the Tathāgata; diligence, awakening, and sentient beings, and, on the other hand, the Tathāgata; concentration, awakening, and sentient beings, and, on the other hand, the Tathāgata; and similarly, wisdom, awakening, and sentient beings, and, on the other hand, the Tathāgata. These are non-dual, they are not divided into two. Practicing in this way, a bodhisattva practices within the conduct of a bodhisattva.

“Mañjuśrī, a bodhisattva may practice thinking that ‘form is not empty’ and also ‘not non-empty.’ Practicing in this way, Mañjuśrī, that bodhisattva practices within the conduct of a bodhisattva. And why? He thinks, ‘Form itself is empty of the essence of form. In the same way, [F.299.a] feeling, notion, co-producing factors, and consciousness are empty.’ He practices thinking in this way and also thinking that ‘they are not non-empty.’ Practicing in this way, Mañjuśrī, a bodhisattva practices within the conduct of a bodhisattva. And why? Because mind, mentality, and consciousness are not perceived.

<http://read.84000.co/#!ReadingRoom/UT22084-047-002/36>

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 29th, 2015 at 9:24 PM

Title: Re: Aeons and Aeons and Aeons

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Well, one difference I see is the translation of this passage you refer to seems to be an abbreviation when compared with the same passage as translated into Tibetan:

Astus said:

What about the difference regarding non-conceptual wisdom?

Malcolm wrote:

Well, one difference I see is the translation of this passage you refer to seems to be an abbreviation when compared with the same passage as translated into Tibetan:

Astus said:

What about the difference regarding non-conceptual wisdom?

Malcolm wrote:

I don't see that passage as pointing out the nonconceptual wisdom of a bodhisattva and a tathāgata are the same.

It is not actually a very common term in the sūtras, occurring in only three sūtras in the bka' 'gyur.

For example the term occurs only once in the whole the Prajñāpāramitā corpus, in the Ārya-candragarbha-prajñāpāramitā-mahāyāna-sūtra:

Son of a good family, in that respect, the inexhaustible perfection of discerning wisdom is the nonconceptual wisdom of the path of seeing. Because that wisdom is free from all concepts, it is therefore nonconceptual.

It also occurs in the Ārya-avikalpa-praveśa-nāma-dhāraṇī and the Ārya-gośṛṅgavyākaraṇa-nāma-mahāyāna-sūtra.

By contrast, it occurs in six tantras. Anyway, this is besides the point. The real point is that the wisdom of bodhisattvas for example, cannot perceive tathāgatagarbha, even tenth stage bodhisattvas perceive only a generic approximation of it. The difference between the nonconceptual wisdom of bodhisattvas of one stage and another, as well as buddhas, is the degree to which they have developed sarvakārajñāna.

When it comes to the difference between minds in sūtra and tantra, there are no means taught in the sūtras to quell coarse minds. For example, Caryāmelāpakapradīpa points out:

As such, the Mahāyāna sūtras explain that the nature of consciousness that is without color, signs or shape is self-knowing wisdom. On the other hand, without entering the mahāyoga tantras of Vajrayāna, such as Guhyasamāja and so on, one will not be able to understand one's mind just as it truly for all the eons equal with the sands of the Ganges river and will not see relative truth. Therefore, one may know just how the three consciousness truly are from the kindness of the guru through following the Śrī Jñānavajrasammucaya tantra.

If you wish to understand more about the distinction between the coarse mind taught in sūtra, and the subtle mind taught in the tantras, you should study Āryadeva's Lamp that Integrates the Practices, Wedemeyer, Columbia, 2007.

This, incidentally, is among the reasons sūtrayāna takes so damn long, i.e., outside of Vajrayāna, there are no methods access the most subtle mind and use it in practice. That at least is the point of view of Vajrayāna.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 30th, 2015 at 12:17 AM

Title: Re: Aeons and Aeons and Aeons

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

I don't see that passage as pointing out the nonconceptual wisdom of a bodhisattva and a tathāgata are the same.

It is not actually a very common term in the sūtras, occurring in only three sūtras in the bka' 'gyur.

Astus said:

Nirvikalpajñāna (無分別智) should be a fairly common term in sutrayana, at least in yogacara and tathagatagarbha works.

Malcolm wrote:

Rnam par mi rtog pa'i ye shes, nirvikalpa-jñāna is more common the commentaries. It is not that common in the sūtras themselves. It's occurrence in the bka' 'gyur is restricted to the sūtras I referenced.

Astus said:

According to the Cheng Weishi Lun, this is what a bodhisattva gets at the path of seeing, what a bodhisattva practises with on the path of meditation, and it is the great mirror wisdom's perception of suchness.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, correct. A first stage bodhisattva enters a nonconceptual wisdom on the path of seeing.

Astus said:

The difference between the nonconceptual wisdom of bodhisattvas of one stage and another, as well as buddhas, is the degree to which they have developed sarvakārajñāna.

However, I still don't see how can there be any difference between not abiding anywhere for a bodhisattva and a buddha.

Thanks for the recommendation of Aryadeva's Lamp.

Malcolm wrote:

There is only a difference in the coarseness or subtlety of the mind that apprehends suchness.

Sure, it is necessary for understanding much of Vajrayāna thinking around these issues. It is perhaps one of the most important theoretical commentaries on Vajrayāna, and its influence is much more widespread than the Arya tradition of Guhyasamāja.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 30th, 2015 at 12:34 AM

Title: Re: Aeons and Aeons and Aeons

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

There is only a difference in the coarseness or subtlety of the mind that apprehends suchness.

Astus said:

And what does that stand for? How can non-abiding be coarse or subtle? There is nothing to grasp or apprehend in suchness.

Malcolm wrote:

The nature of reality is what is termed "non-abiding"; the mind that apprehends suchness can be coarse or subtle. The sūtras in general place emphasis on the object side. The tantras emphasize the subject side.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 30th, 2015 at 2:06 AM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

David Reigle said:

True. Kamaleswar Bhattacharya's thesis has two parts: (1) that the Buddha did not deny the universal ātman; (2) that in denying the ātman in a person the Buddha thereby indirectly affirmed the universal ātman. The first part is, I think, demonstrable. Pali scholars agree that the Buddha does not specifically deny the existence of the attā anywhere in the Pāli canon, nor do the Sanskrit Buddhist texts deny the non-dual universal ātman. The second part is not demonstrable, on the basis of the great majority of Buddhist texts. It is so only if we accept the tathāgata-garbha sūtras that teach the perfection of ātman (ātma-pāramitā), and accept that these represent the Buddha's final teachings, as the Mahāyāna Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra represents itself to be.

Malcolm wrote:

No, this is not certain. Again, you would be projecting backward, asserting that intention of the Buddha in the Mahāyāna Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra is commensurate with Śāṅkarācārya's intention 1200 years later, or 700 years later if you assume the sūtra was composed in the first century CE.

I don't think that Mahāyāna Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra teaches a universal atman of the type Śāṅkarācārya advocates. I think it is impossible to demonstrate that it does.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 30th, 2015 at 2:16 AM

Title: Re: WOMPT & Sex

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

If you are a lay tantric practitioner you need to practice the yoga of passion, perceiving yourself as a heruka and your partner as a dakini (for example, Kalacakra and Vishvamata). The yoga of passion is not connected with the completion stage, it is connected with the creation stage, so there is no need to worry about losing semen and so on.

As far as which orifice, etc., this is mainly a sutrayāna affair. There are no restrictions for a practitioner practicing the yoga of passion. The body of a deity is completely pure.

N

frankc said:

But Gampopa speaks of three types of sexual misconduct in the Jewel Ornament Of Liberation which includes wrong parts of the body. Wasn't he a tantric practitioner? I don't understand.

Malcolm wrote:

It is a sūtra text.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 30th, 2015 at 2:20 AM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

daverupa said:

It's an argument from silence that won't grow out of being a fallacy, and it's getting pretty ad nauseam.

David Reigle said:

The argument from silence, of course, cuts both ways. It is just as much an assumption to assume that the universal ātman is the ātman that the Buddha denied, as to assume that it is not the universal ātman that the Buddha denied. Ergo, if it is a fallacy to hold that the Buddha did not deny the universal ātman, then it is equally a fallacy to hold that the Buddha did deny the universal ātman.

Malcolm wrote:

Of course, there is the fact that Śāntarakṣita did refute Advaita can give you an indication of the general impression of Advaita in Buddhist circles, not least of which was the fact that Śaṅkarācārya was an enemy of Buddhadharma.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 30th, 2015 at 4:13 AM

Title: Re: What are sentient beings?

Content:

Vasana said:

But there is still a dynamic interplay of energy, even if Buddhas and beings are both equally empty. Maybe it's my question i need to readdress.
I'll check out the tantra mentioned too, thanks.

Malcolm wrote:

No, there is no dynamic interplay of "energy"; there are two states; one in which consciousness recognizes itself, called rigpa, and one in which consciousness does not recognize itself, called marigpa. A being who has fully integrated that recognition at the

deepest level is called a 'Buddha'; the rest are sentient beings.

Vasana said:

What are you currently translating Malcolm?

Malcolm wrote:

Stay tuned.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 30th, 2015 at 6:01 AM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

Nicholas Weeks said:

What is all this fussing about Shankara?

Was not Brahman-Atman, the one self-existent impersonal Spirit plainly described as such in some of the Upanishads, irrespective of any commentary and long before Adi Shankara or any of the others?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, as a personal self the size of a mustard seed, or a thumb, and so on in the body...this idea was definitely refuted by the Buddha.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 30th, 2015 at 8:49 PM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

Nicholas Weeks said:

What is all this fussing about Shankara?

Was not Brahman-Atman, the one self-existent impersonal Spirit plainly described as such in some of the Upanishads, irrespective of any commentary and long before Adi Shankara or any of the others?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, as a personal self the size of a mustard seed, or a thumb, and so on in the body...this idea was definitely refuted by the Buddha.

anjali said:

Yes, the personal atman is traditionally located in the heart-center with the size of a mustard seeds or thumb. But the atman was certainly considered more than just personal.

Malcolm wrote:

Indeed, nevertheless it is refuted in the Nirvana sūtra.

Tenzen Wangyal, from [i]Healing with Form, Energy, and Light[/i], p. 115 said:
Conceptually, this is not different than, for example, the role that the heart plays in togal teachings in dzogchen: Although rigpa is not actually localized, many practitioners can most easily recognize it through a connection to the heart center. The Six Lamps specifically discusses this in terms of the space inside the physical heart. Westerners often find this strange, but it's similar to what we mean when we say that "in" each being is the nature of mind. The nature of mind is not individual and not localized. It is truer to say that we exist in the nature of mind than to say the nature of mind is in us. But in our experience it is easier to recognize the nature of mind if we go "in" to the deepest place in ourselves, the heart. This is why we say that the rigpa resides in the heart, and why the heart is the center of the life-force prana and why love is always connected to the heart. Thus we talk about the "light of the heart".

Malcolm wrote:

This thumb-sized self is refuted in the Dzogchen tantras as well.

With regard to TW's concepts around so called "khyab rig", this has been extensively refuted by John Luc Achard.

<https://khyungmkhar.blogspot.com/2012/06/khyab-rig-pervading-knowledge-and-its.html>

<https://khyungmkhar.blogspot.com/2012/07/khyab-rig-final-word-from-drenpa-namkha.html>

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 30th, 2015 at 11:58 PM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

Matt J said:

So the Buddha did not refute the transcendental Atman-Brahman, only the caricatured thumb sized, reified Atman spoken of by some but not all the Upanishads, and certainly not as later developed by Gaudapada and Shankara. So for example, the Chand yoga Chapter 14:

2—3. He who consists of the mind, whose body is subtle, whose form is light, whose thoughts are true, whose nature is like the akasa, whose creation in this universe, who cherishes all righteous desires, who contains all pleasant odours, who is endowed with all tastes, who embraces all this, who never speaks and who is without longing— He is my Self within the heart, smaller than a grain of rice, smaller than a grain of barley, smaller than a mustard seed, smaller than a grain of millet; He is my Self within the heart, greater than the earth, greater than the mid—region, greater than heaven, greater than all these worlds.

Malcolm wrote:

Buddha definitely refuted this, which is why this whole conversation is completely inane.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 31st, 2015 at 12:39 AM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

Matt J said:

Which seems to be close to the alaya vijñāna discussed here:

<http://dharma.wheel.net/viewtopic.php?f=40&t=19679&p=284748&hilit=alaya#p284748>

Malcolm wrote:

The ālayavijñāna is exclusive personal, and it is not a self at all, as the Samdhinirmocana sūtra states:

The appropriating consciousness is profound and subtle,
in which all seeds flow like a river,
I do not teach it to the immature,
as it is said "It is not proper to conceive it as a self."

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 31st, 2015 at 1:51 AM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

Matt J said:

The calculus doesn't add up. How can the Buddha have so clearly refuted this, and yet:

1) taught an unborn, undying knower

Malcolm wrote:

Like Kapila, Buddha was a pluralist, accepting that "knowers" were unique and separate. Unlike Kapila, he did not teach that there was a puruṣa separate from the aggregates; further he rejected the idea that phenomena were transformations of a single substance (prakṛti), and likewise rejected the idea that there was one universal knower.

Code: #

or ālayavijñāna or bhavanga citta, which is very similar to the Advaita atman?

How is the ālayavijñā, the bearer of karmic imprints (vasanas, bijas), something conditioned and contaminated, similar to the Advaita atman, something unconditioned and uncontaminated?

Matt J said:

2) established a set of teachings that led to the rise of the Chittamatra, which (under

some interpretations anyway) seems very similar to Advaita vedanta?

Malcolm wrote:

Cittamatra is not at all like Advaita. Were you not aware that Vasubandhu argues forcibly for the existence of individual mindstreams?

Matt J said:

3) established a set of teachings that a leading Buddhist teacher was unable to separate the shentong Buddhist view from Advaita according to a dharma scholar and eyewitness?

Malcolm wrote:

There is merely a structural similarity with how the two truths are dealt with, not a substantive similarity.

Matt J said:

Now I'm not saying that the Buddha was an Advaitin (if anything, it seems that the Advaitins adopted many Buddhist views), but to say that the refutation is so clear doesn't add up.

Malcolm wrote:

Sure it does, once the fog of confusing this tenet system with that tenet system is removed from the brain.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 31st, 2015 at 1:53 AM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

smcj said:

I side on the more modern (and Tibetan) perspective.

Malcolm wrote:

No you don't, you side with an understanding of the Cittamatra texts that even KB admits has no basis in those very texts themselves.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 31st, 2015 at 2:09 AM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

smcj said:

KB?

Malcolm wrote:
Karl Brunnholz

smcj said:
Khenpo Tsultrim isn't a modern Tibetan?

Malcolm wrote:
There are plenty of other modern Tibetans who do not share KTG's affection for gzhan stong. His views are not particularly modern, BTW.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Sunday, May 31st, 2015 at 2:11 AM
Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism
Content:

Matt J said:
Positing a self at any level (even a subtle level) would then lead to clinging and grasping at that level.

Malcolm wrote:
Correct. For this reason, Vaibhāṣika, Sautrantika and Yogacara are considered the three realist Buddhist tenet systems.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Sunday, May 31st, 2015 at 2:28 AM
Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism
Content:

smcj said:
Point conceded. Full stop. The interpretation I side with is of the Cittamtra texts that are of a later Tibetan re-interpretation. Hence my consistent and valid characterization of making a distinction between the classical Indian commentaries and the later Tibetan commentaries.

Malcolm wrote:
A later Tibetan interpretation which based on a misunderstanding of those very same classical Indian commentaries themselves. It would be like you pointing to the west, and saying "go that way", while I insist on saying "Oh, you mean go east."

Author: Malcolm
Date: Sunday, May 31st, 2015 at 2:39 AM
Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism
Content:

anjali said:
If we accept that he had the experience, how is one to explain it from a Buddhist

perspective?

Malcolm wrote:

He mistook the clarity aspect [gsal cha] of his mind as a self.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 31st, 2015 at 2:45 AM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

smcj said:

Point conceded. Full stop. The interpretation I side with is of the Cittamtra texts that are of a later Tibetan re-interpretation. Hence my consistent and valid characterization of making a distinction between the classical Indian commentaries and the later Tibetan commentaries.

Malcolm wrote:

A later Tibetan interpretation which based on a misunderstanding of those very same classical Indian commentaries themselves. It would be like you pointing to the west, and saying "go that way", while I insist on saying "Oh, you mean go east."

smcj said:

Ok, attention everybody that is following this (and similar) threads!

Is it clear now that Malcolm does not accept many of the later Tibetan interpretations of the classical Indian texts to which I subscribe? We really need to get this behind us. I've been challenged on it too many times and it is getting annoying.

BTW, as I've said before, I appreciate and even admire his position. I find no fault with it. However he finds fault with mine, therefore discussion. That's 100% ok. What else can generate so much discussion about Dharma on the internet!

Malcolm wrote:

You are the one that keeps on bringing it up. You did not need to bring this issue up in this thread.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 31st, 2015 at 2:54 AM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

smcj said:

You are the one that keeps on bringing it up.

Malcolm wrote:

Look, I don't go out of my way to negate gzhan stong, but as I have made clear, AFAIC, gzhan stong does not = tathagatagarbha doctrine.

Gzhan stong is a Tibetan attempt, of several, to try and reconcile the Yogacara treatises of Maitreyanatha with Nāgārjuna's Madhyamaka.

It is not the case that this type of reconciliation was not attempted by Indians, it was, notably in Ratnakārashanti's Madhamaka-alamkāra.

The problem is how the Tibetans in the gzhan stong school went about it, not that they tried it. Ratnakārashanti, Dharmapāla before him, also tried to reconcile the two approaches, but they did not do so by overwriting the Yogacara treatises themselves. They did so within the constraints of the classical Yogacara system. What I specifically find fault with in the gzhan stong system is the incorrect way they apply the three natures to the two truths, that is really the essence of my disagreement with their tenet system and what causes them all the problems they face with other Tibetan scholars. Longchenpa does not do this, and this is why his treatment of tathāgatagarbha is generally considered more acceptable overall, as is Rangjung Dorje's.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 31st, 2015 at 3:15 AM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

Unknown said:

"Misguided man, have I not stated in many ways consciousness to be dependently arisen since without a condition there is no origination of consciousness?"

Malcolm wrote:

MN 38

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 31st, 2015 at 3:29 AM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

smcj said:

Although I self identify as a "Shentongpa" I'm not particularly attached to the 3 Natures paradigm.

Malcolm wrote:

The whole point of the term "gzhan stong" is to prove, via the (incorrect) use of the three natures that the ultimate truth is empty of the relative truth, but not empty of itself through the assertion that the perfected nature [yongs grub] is empty of the dependent

[gzhan dbang] and the imagined natures [kun brtags].

smcj said:

I don't have any objections to it particularly, I think it is a side issue. I'm more an advocate for some form of "empty-of-other" idea, of which there are quite a few. Once I get through "When Clouds Part" (Brunnholz) I'll have a better idea of which one I feel most comfortable with. As of now I'm uncommitted about that.

Malcolm wrote:

It is quite trivial to say that tathāgatagarbha is not empty of qualities but is empty of faults, because tathāgatagarbha is nothing other than natural luminosity of one's mind, which is to say that one's mind has always been innately pure from the start. This however does not mean that those famous qualities are real, established, ultimately exist and so on. Even Buddhas are not ultimately real, so how can their qualities be ultimately real?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 31st, 2015 at 4:59 AM

Title: Re: Poll: Should Zen/Chan/Seon have a separate Forum?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

This poll is just sour grapes.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 31st, 2015 at 5:23 AM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

smcj said:

...because tathāgatagarbha is nothing other than natural luminosity of one's mind, which is to say that one's mind has always been innately pure from the start.

So a buddha's mind expressing it's natural luminosity can be said to be "empty-of-(anything)-other" than that expression, right?

Even Buddhas are not ultimately real, so how can their qualities be ultimately real?

Funny, but that is exactly how I've heard Karmapa VIII's position portrayed in a Guy Newland YouTube video; "Self-empty by nature but other-empty by expression."

Lots and lots of ways to skin that cat.

Malcolm wrote:

I guess the point is that in this context, this "other emptiness" is trivial and not at all profound. It's like saying, my clean white shirt is empty of stains, but it is not empty of being clean.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 31st, 2015 at 6:57 AM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

anjali said:

It's the understanding of the nature of the experience where Hindu and Buddhist yogis differ.

Malcolm wrote:

Correct.

anjali said:

Where's the beef?

Malcolm wrote:

There isn't any beef, that is the whole point. The cow (and everything else) is totally illusory, and there is nothing else to discover apart from that.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 31st, 2015 at 7:46 AM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

Wayfarer said:

how to avoid nihilism, then?

Malcolm wrote:

One can only be an annihilationist if one first proposes that something exists which later gets utterly destroyed.

If one checks one's bank balance and finds one's account is empty, is one a thief merely because one discovers one is broke?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 31st, 2015 at 7:58 AM

Title: Re: Poll: Should Zen/Chan/Seon have a separate Forum?

Content:

Johnny Dangerous said:

Zen sees itself as superior to other Sutra traditions by virtue of being a direct path outside of scripture.

Malcolm wrote:

All paths are outside scriptures. There are two kinds of Dharma, the Dharma of realization and the Dharma of texts.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 31st, 2015 at 9:09 AM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

Wayfarer said:

Compared to what? That doesn't avoid nihilism - that is nihilism. The task is to awaken to the real, which is distinguishable from the merely existent, those things that are compound, transient, and subject to decay.

Malcolm wrote:

There is something real? What's that?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 31st, 2015 at 9:12 AM

Title: Re: TNH's new translation of the Heart Sutra

Content:

Johnny Dangerous said:

I really like this translation.

This and Red Pine's feel like the smoothest i've read.

Malcolm wrote:

The problem with translation *rūpa skandha* as "body" is that it excludes the five objects of the senses, which are also part of the *rūpa skandha*.

There are other problems with it as well. It is at best a gloss on the Heart Sūtra and not a translation.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 31st, 2015 at 9:23 AM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

Wayfarer said:

Compared to what? That doesn't avoid nihilism - that is nihilism. The task is to awaken to the real, which is distinguishable from the merely existent, those things that are compound, transient, and subject to decay.

Malcolm wrote:

There is something real? What's that?

smcj said:

Nothing that can be taken as an object of consciousness in a dualistic way.

Malcolm wrote:

So you are saying that there is something real that cannot be known in any way?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 31st, 2015 at 9:35 AM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

So you are saying that there is something real that cannot be known in any way?

smcj said:

Cannot be known dualistically. It can be known without a subject/object dichotomy.

Malcolm wrote:

So basically, you are suggesting that consciousness is ultimately real.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 31st, 2015 at 9:45 AM

Title: Re: TNH's new translation of the Heart Sutra

Content:

Johnny Dangerous said:

Not sure which you're talking about,

Malcolm wrote:

The rūpa skandha includes five things: the five sense organs and the five sense objects which are all composed of the four elements.

There is a rhythm in reciting, "there is no eye, no ear, no nose..." etc., which is missing from this gloss entirely.

Personally, I think it is entirely clumsy.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 31st, 2015 at 9:52 AM

Title: Re: Visualization Training

Content:

tingdzin said:

"Really, though, one shouldn't be doing deity practices until one completes ngondro,

Malcolm wrote:

Total nonsense. This is a modern fiction.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 31st, 2015 at 9:55 AM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

smcj said:

Depending on your exact definition of "real", in a word, yes.

Malcolm wrote:

Actually exists, is ultimate, irreducible, cannot be analyzed further, is unconditioned, etc.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 31st, 2015 at 9:57 AM

Title: Re: TNH's new translation of the Heart Sutra

Content:

Johnny Dangerous said:

...simplified translations.

Malcolm wrote:

it is not a translation, it is crib, a gloss, etc.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 31st, 2015 at 7:54 PM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

smcj said:

Depending on your exact definition of "real", in a word, yes.

Malcolm wrote:

Actually exists...

smcj said:

No. That is suggestive of something manifest and therefore subject to the tetralemma.

...is ultimate, irreducible, cannot be analyzed further, is unconditioned, etc.

Yes.

Malcolm wrote:

To say that something is ultimate, irreducible, cannot be analyzed further, is unconditioned, etc. is precisely the same thing as saying "actually exists."

Since nothing in the relative is found to be free of the four extremes, nothing can be found in the ultimate that is free of the four extremes. You are claiming that there is something which is free from the four extremes in the ultimate, but such a claim is

incoherent.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 31st, 2015 at 9:01 PM

Title: Re: Visualization Training

Content:

Karma Dondrup Tashi said:

So basically you are saying that I do not need to have completed ngondro before beginning the Kriya forms of Chenrezig, Manjushri, etc.

Is that the case even if I have not received at least a jenang?

Malcolm wrote:

If you have not received any initiation, you are not even practicing Kriya yoga, technically speaking.

And yes, you do not need to have even started ngondro, let alone completed it to meditate on any deity for which you have received the proper transmission.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 1st, 2015 at 4:02 AM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

smcj said:

Since nothing in the relative is found to be free of the four extremes, nothing can be found in the ultimate that is free of the four extremes. You are claiming that there is something which is free from the four extremes in the ultimate, but such a claim is incoherent.

Since the Shentong position is that the ultimate is beyond conceptuality, and therefore not subject to such criticisms, I have absolutely no qualms about it being incoherent. This approach to emptiness is not supposed to be accessible by the intellect, but is approached instead by faith.

Malcolm wrote:

The point is, that one cannot say anything about the ultimate that is free from extremes, much less assert that it is immune to Madhyamaka analysis. The moment you make a proposition about the ultimate, you have fallen into an extreme. If you claim the ultimate is atman, that is an extreme; if you claim the ultimate is a nonaffirming negation, that is an extreme; if you claim the ultimate is an affirming negation, that is an extreme.

When you understand that the ultimate is free from all extremes, then you understand that it is not only beyond mind, it is also inexpressible. The problem with the gzhan stong pas as well as the Gelugpas is that they sound like a couple of kids bickering, "Is so!", "Is not!", ad nauseam.

Since nothing can be found to exist by any of the four extremes in the relative, nothing can be ascertained in the ultimate according to any of the four extremes, and that is inexpressible.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 1st, 2015 at 4:08 AM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

Karma Dondrup Tashi said:

> Since nothing in the relative is found to be free of the four extremes, nothing can be found in the ultimate that is free of the four extremes.

This is exactly what is disputed. This doesn't follow, neither does the converse statement.

Malcolm wrote:

It was mis-stated, my bad. What I should have said, is that since one cannot find anything in the relative according to any of the four extremes, there is nothing in the ultimate that can be said to be free from the four extremes. In other words, since the four extremes do not exist in the relative, also there is no ultimate free from extremes, and is that is inexpressible.

The best thing you can say is 'gnas lugs med pa", there is no reality.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 1st, 2015 at 4:14 AM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

What does "the ultimate" mean?

Malcolm wrote:

don dam pa, parmārtha, highest goal.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 1st, 2015 at 6:59 AM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

smcj said:

...and that is inexpressible.

I cannot see having an actual disagreement about the right way to characterize something that we agree is inconceivable and inexpressae.

Malcolm wrote:

It is how you get there that counts...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 1st, 2015 at 10:45 AM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

smcj said:

This non-conceptual Wisdom Mind is not the object of the conceptualizing process and so is not negated by Madhyamaka reasoning. Therefore, it can be said to be the only thing that has absolute and true existence.

Malcolm wrote:

Yeah, actually, "This non-conceptual Wisdom Mind" it is both negated by Madhyamaka reasoning and is nothing but a product of the conceptualizing process.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 1st, 2015 at 10:55 AM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

Wayfarer said:

I say the view that 'there is no reality' is a nihilist view. 'Nihilism' means that nothing is real, or that everything is illusory, or that nothing has any ultimate meaning.

Malcolm wrote:

In order to the statement "no reality" to be annihilationist, it would be necessary to propose that there was something that was real. For example, Nāgārjuna states very clearly:

If were anything all that was not empty, there would something to be empty;
but since there is nothing at all that is not empty, where is there something to be empty?

Wayfarer said:

My view is, I think there is 'an ultimate', but that this is not something that can properly be named or designated as such. So as soon as you assert 'an ultimate' and get into a debate about it, it's already a lost argument, because you're trying to talk about or gesture towards something that is over the horizon of discursive reasoning. But I don't accept the interpretation of Śūnyatā as meaning that 'things really don't exist', tout courte. Things are empty of own-being, meaning that no determinate entity contains its own origin or cause, and in fact nothing in the phenomenal realm does. That is demonstrably true, even in scientific terms. But it *doesn't* mean, 'nothing is real'.

Malcolm wrote:

You have just shunted off inherent existence onto something else, a so called dependent existence, which is refuted quite handily by Nāgārjuna in the chapter 15 of the MMK.

In other words, your view holds that things are real. But how? In what way can things exist? You propose things are not self-sufficient, but when examined, even this dependency cannot be found. Why? Causes do not exist at the same time as their effects, but they also cannot exist apart from the time of their effects. As Nāgārjuna states:

Existents do not arise from existents,
existents do not arise from non-existents;
nonexistents do not arise from existents,
nonexistents do not arise from nonexistents:
where then is there arising?

In the end, so called "mere existence" is just a convention, and is not real since such conventions will not bear analysis. If you imagine that there are some existents that can bear analysis, you have not really understood the Buddha's intention.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 1st, 2015 at 9:33 PM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

Unknown said:

Sure something is real. Suffering is real, and the path is real. Those who understand and follow the path, find a way out of suffering that is real. Can that be disputed?

Malcolm wrote:

I am sorry to say that if suffering were real, there would be no possibility of a path and no possibility of a result. Why? To say that something is real is much worse than saying that something exists. Why? To say that something is real is to say it is inherent. On the other hand to say that something exists allows for the possibility that it may not exist. When it comes to the use of the term "real," it is not possible to say that the real can become unreal — these are contradictions in terms. On the other hand, it is perfectly acceptable in common language to say "That which existed then no longer exists now." Hence, to say that "suffering is real" is to condemn all sentient beings in the six realms to endless torment.

Unknown said:

In all the billions of ways that billions of things exist.

Malcolm wrote:

That is no kind of answer: but to provide the proper answer, things, whether compounded or uncompounded, either exist inherently or they exist conventionally. Apart from these two kinds of existence, there is no third kind of existence.

The question then should be, "What is the conventional existence of things?"

Unknown said:

Nagarjuna's intention is to show that compound things are not inherently real. He does not say that 'nothing exists', and to say that nothing exists is nihilistic.

Malcolm wrote:

Nāgārjuna's intent, first and foremost, is to represent the intention of the Prajñāpāramitā, defend Mahāyāna and show that the realism pervasive in Hinayāna schools is not the intent of the Buddha.

Secondly, he shows quite clearly that attempts to demonstrate that things have anything other than conventional existence are incoherent. And he also shows that when conventional things are examined, they are found to lack any reality at all.

Unknown said:

Anyway, Nagarjuna's statements about 'existence' and 'arising' were made in the context of a philosophical or cultural milieu within which such terminology had specific meaning.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, in his milieu, bhāva meant "to exist," much as "to exist" means to exist" to us today. Your attempt to avoid the issue of dealing with Nāgārjuna statements through a form of philosophical/cultural relativism is weak dodge. How can you expect me to take this seriously?

Unknown said:

As I said, many claim that Buddhism is nihilistic. Do you think it is? If it isn't, how isn't it?

Malcolm wrote:

I already stated this before: when one does not propose something as existent, one cannot be accused of being an annihilationist. I have not proposed any claims of non-existent, I have merely removed claims for existing existents, as Buddhapaṇḍita remarks in his comments on chapter 5 of the MMK

We do not claim aggregates, sense bases and elements are nonexistent, but we do eliminate the claim that existents exists.

He also remarks at the end of chapter five:

In order to prove an unknown topic with a known topic: most worldly people say that space does not exist in any way. Thus, partisans claim "All of those proliferations are like space." The intent of such a statement is "All of those are nothing at all." For that reason, it is proven that space is emptiness in order to elucidate the example, "The remaining five elements [dhātus] are equivalent with space."

In other words, in MMK:5 (the analysis of the dhātus), of the six dhātus — earth, water, fire, air, space and consciousness — only space is actually subject to analysis. Why?

Since Nāgārjuna shows:

Therefore space is not existent,

it is not non-existent, is not characterized,

is not a characteristic.

The remaining five elements [dhātus] are equivalent with space

Buddhapalita discusses this passage:

Why is that so? When investigated, the characterized and the characteristic does not exist, and also there is no other existent not included in the characterized and the characteristic. If the existent does not exist, also the non-existent does not exist.

Therefore, although space is not existent, it is also not non-existent, although the characterized does not exist, also the characteristic does not exist. Thus, if even a subtle thing called 'space' came to be, when counting whether anything in those four [alternatives] is valid, because those four [alternatives] are not [valid], therefore space does not exist.

For this reason, characterizing the Madhyamaka position that "there is no reality" as annihilationist is inappropriate.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 1st, 2015 at 9:47 PM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

smcj said:

It's very difficult to explain what the deities are from a Madhyamaka perspective. It's very easy to do so from a Shentong perspective. If the deities are not "empty-of-other" then we are all wasting our time.

Malcolm wrote:

It is quite easy to explain what "deities" are from a Madhyamaka perspective: they are a method, a path to realize a result.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 1st, 2015 at 10:39 PM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

Nicholas Weeks said:

M: "To say that something is real is to say it is inherent."

Not necessarily, if by meaning or definition, real = inherent, then fine. But experientially, 'real' is ineffable.

Malcolm wrote:

To say that something is real means that it actually exists.

Experiences come and go.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 1st, 2015 at 11:29 PM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

Nicholas Weeks said:

M: "To say that something is real is to say it is inherent."

Not necessarily, if by meaning or definition, real = inherent, then fine. But experientially, 'real' is ineffable.

Malcolm wrote:

To say that something is real means that it actually exists.

Experiences come and go.

Nicholas Weeks said:

Reality is not some thing; so I will redo as: Experientially, reality is ineffable, permanent suchness.

Malcolm wrote:

Suchness is not established. The Ārya-varmavyūhanirdeśa-nāma-mahāyāna-sūtra states:

The dhamadhātu is difficult to imagine,
it does not come or go,
the dharmadhātu is not the aggregates,
nor the elements or sense bases.
Since there is no place to abandon,
it is unmoving.

The suchness of the dharmadhātu,
it's natural purity, does not exist.

In the same vein, the Mahāsiddha Virupa concludes his Doha:

...the two truths don't exist in the dharmadhātu, the dharmadhātu does not exist.

Indeed, the Ārya-ghanavyūha-nāma-mahāyāna-sūtra says:

The suchness of all phenomena
arises through power of mutual relation,
the yogins seeing in that way
clearly see it as suchness.

The perfected nature
is the dharmatā of phenomena;
all phenomena do not arise
as the substantial entities of the imputed:
empty, insubstantial,
beyond the extremes of existence and nonexistence,
similar with illusions and dreams,
like fairy castles,
like opthalmia and like mirages.

In other words, suchness, here described as the perfected nature, the dharmatā of dharmas, cannot be established apart from those very dharmas. If those very dharmas are not established, how can their suchness be established? When the relative is not

found, what ultimate can be said to be established? The two truths are only established from the perspective of we ignorant fools.

This tendency to reify the ultimate is very pernicious. For this reason, Nāgārjuna clearly states in the Sixty Verses of Reasoning:

This pair, samsara and nirvana, does not exist.

Thorough knowledge of samsara is said to be nirvana.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 2nd, 2015 at 1:30 AM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

Simon E. said:

' Transcendent ' ? What does it transcend ?

dzogchungpa said:

As Adriano Clemente says in his foreword to "The Supreme Source": In all the gnostic traditions, the absolute is the equivalent of the ineffable, of that which transcends word and thought.

Malcolm wrote:

Ultimate truth is inexpressible, but not "The Ineffable."

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 2nd, 2015 at 1:33 AM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

PK lays it all out here: <http://www.pemakhandro.org/emptiness-madhyamaka/>

Malcolm wrote:

It is incorrect to identify the approach of Candarkīrti (aka prasangika) as rang stong.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 2nd, 2015 at 1:37 AM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

smcj said:

I personally am not using the term "Shentong" rigorously. Shentong, as a view utilizes the three natures paradigm taken from the Yogacara. I use it as a shorthand for talking about emptiness as an affirming negation, or "empty-of-other". I don't really see a need to elaborate on how that Reality might be characterized, although there is plenty of

literature that tries to do so.

Malcolm wrote:

In order for there to be something empty of something else, that something has to be established in the first place. It is not established in the first place, what is the use of talking about either intrinsic or extrinsic emptiness.

The whole gzhan stong trip is a flimsy house of cards.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 2nd, 2015 at 1:43 AM

Title: Re: What kind of mind do Buddhas have

Content:

Tsongkhapafan said:

The translation is not a literal translation of the words but a translation of the meaning, .

Malcolm wrote:

We disagree. It does not translate meaning of the verse, nor the words.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 2nd, 2015 at 3:34 AM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

Karma Dondrup Tashi said:

If you argue that there is nothing established to either affirm or negate in the first place then that argues both ways - you may as well state that nominally the negation is affirming as non-affirming.

Otherwise the whole strategy of the four extremes falls down, since all of them are negations. Since the four extremes are negations there has to - at least nominally - be something to negate. If that isn't the case, Nagarjuna's whole argument goes out the window and you are left with pure nihilism.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, there is nominally something to negate, appearances. Nāgārjuna's arguments run in three phases: first, self-arising is negated; then, arising from others is negated; and finally causeless negation is negated. Of these three types of arising, the second is what we conventionally term "arising."

This is why, at the conclusion of the first chapter, Buddhapalita notes:

Because results, conditions, and nonconditions do not exist, descriptions for arising are merely conventional.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 2nd, 2015 at 3:40 AM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

Karma Dondrup Tashi said:

I think the argument is that since all negations are nominal whether affirming or non-affirming it is just as legitimate to nominally affirm the ultimate as it is to negate.

Otherwise we are just stuck on the first of Nagarjuna's extreme's, i.e. not-x. I think smcj is just arguing the second extreme, i.e. not not-x.

Malcolm wrote:

I am not stuck on the first extreme, I am not asserting non-existence is the ultimate. The point is that absence of the four extremes, which is ultimate, is not arrived at through a mere assertion, it is arrived at through examination. It is a conclusion, a result of analysis, not a hypothesis about the ultimate (unlike smcj's perspective, which is just a proposition, an proffered theory). It is not an idea you hold in your mind, "Oh the ultimate is free from four extremes." Why? Because when you turn your analysis to the ultimate, no ultimate can be found which is itself free from the four extremes. At the point, your proliferations should cease. As Sapan famously quips, "If there is something beyond the freedom from extremes, that is an extreme."

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 2nd, 2015 at 4:51 AM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

As Sapan famously quips, "If there is something beyond the freedom from extremes, that is an extreme."

Karma Dondrup Tashi said:

Mind blown. Right.

Even the "middle" is an extreme. It has to be by definition.

Malcolm wrote:

The Samputa Tantra states:

Neither empty nor not-empty,
there is nothing to perceive in the middle.

Karma Dondrup Tashi said:

In fact, the one single thing we cannot negate in an affirmative manner is the object of all four extremes itself.

... Which is, in fact, everything.

Malcolm wrote:
Correct.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Tuesday, June 2nd, 2015 at 5:09 AM
Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism
Content:

Karma Dondrup Tashi said:
I'm staring to see Malcolm's position that this debate doesn't really matter. Rangtong vs shentong - maybe just a matter of emphasis between "not something" and "not nothing". All just skillful means.

Malcolm wrote:
As Āryadeva states:
Even though they wait for a long while,
no one can offer a reply
to one who do not have [these] positions:
"[It] exists", "[It] does not exist" and "[It] exists and does not exist."
M

Author: Malcolm
Date: Tuesday, June 2nd, 2015 at 5:22 AM
Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism
Content:

Malcolm wrote:
things, whether compounded or uncompounded, either exist inherently or they exist conventionally. Apart from these two kinds of existence, there is no third kind of existence.

Wayfarer said:
I was referring to conventional existence. There are things that exists, like cars, houses, diseases, and things that don't, like unicorns and the square root of two.

Malcolm wrote:
You are aware then that relative truths such as cars, houses, diseases and the like are all objects of deluded cognitions, correct?

I am sorry to say that if suffering were real, there would be no possibility of a path and no possibility of a result. Why? To say that something is real is much worse than saying

that something exists. Why? To say that something is real is to say it is inherent. Not necessarily.

I have some points in common with what you're saying but I don't think you're acknowledging the reality of existence. It is unreal from the point of view of the 'gone beyond' but for those who are in it, it is undeniably real.

It is deniably real, if it were undeniably real, then it would follow that there would be no escape.

....

http://www.thezensite.com/ZenEssays/Nagarjuna/SecondBuddha_Nagarjuna_Loy.html

This citation does not help your point. Nāgārjuna says, as I stated above, if there something non-empty, there would be something to be empty; but as there is nothing not empty, where is there something to be empty?

...Emptiness, as articulated by Nāgārjuna, Tsongkhapa argues, is the absence of this kind of existence or property.

http://www.smith.edu/philosophy/docs/garfield_nihilism.pdf, Jay L Garfield

You are doubtless aware that Tsongkhapa's interpretation of Madhyamaka is a minority view, one that is hotly contested and refuted? I don't agree with Tsongkhapa on many details of his presentation of Madhyamaka, his presentation of the tetralemma in particular. It has become the dominant voice among Western Academics, but it is not the only, nor even the best presentation amongst Tibetan Madhyamakas.

Those quotes represent how it was taught to me.

Yes, I understand. The problem with the way you were taught is that you were taught to accept a residuum, called "mere existence," which accounts for your crypto-realism on the one hand, and you were taught to negate something other than the thing before you, which amounts to subtle nihilism because the way you were taught Madhyamaka maintains that an absence is ultimate [the famous non-affirming negation], the absence of inherent existence, i.e., the emptiness which is the absence of the true existence of things, on the other hand.

Gorampa for example, critiques in detail the subtle nihilism present in the Gelugpa view that you follow, as does Mipham. You should read them both.

I was taught old timey Madhyamaka that was not corrupted with those new-fangled fifteenth century innovations delivered by a "Mañjuśrī" channeler (Lama Umapa).

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 2nd, 2015 at 5:44 AM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

conebeckham said:

[

Such Wisdom is nowhere near a Universal Atman, though, despite comments in the Uttaratantrashastra and elsewhere regarding the Paramitas of Permanence and Self.

For one thing, it is said to be "personally experienced." It's not universal.

Malcolm wrote:

It [wisdom] is also relative since it is a cognition and is not a permanent cognition [apart from a buddha's wisdom] and also comes about through causes [which is also true in the case of a buddha's wisdom].

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, June 3rd, 2015 at 3:00 AM

Title: Re: Dharma Protectors: Why Did China Invade Tibet?

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

I personally find the "when the iron birds fly" narrative revolting. The subtext is that the Tibetan genocide was sort of OK because the dharma was spread across the world. It's like telling a woman that it was sort of OK that she was gang raped because she had such a beautiful child.

Malcolm wrote:

Anyway, the land of the red face people refers to Tibet and it is ultimately from a narrative about how the Tibetans conquered Khotan, and the spread of the Dharma into Tibet much later on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, June 3rd, 2015 at 4:22 AM

Title: Re: Experiences with crazy wisdom?

Content:

ReasonAndRhyme said:

So, if I'm getting you right, you're saying that Chhimed Rigdzin was not a Buddhist master but just a senile old man, and I'm delusional? OK, I've reported your post and this is the last time I've communicated with you.

Malcolm wrote:

I don't think he said any of the three things you attributed to him. Simon did not say that Chimed Rigzin Rinpoche was just senile old man, he did not say that Chimed Rigzin Rinpoche was not a Buddhist master, and he did not say you were delusional. What he said was that someone he knew who has some expertise in gerontology thought that Chimed Rigzin Rinpoche was showing signs of senile dementia.

Buddhist masters can become senile. Their bodies are made of the five elements, just like the rest of us, and sometimes this means they can experience acute mental decline as a result of aging, despite whatever realization they may have attained. It does not mean that the fruit of their realization vanishes into thin air. It means their bodies are worn out.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, June 3rd, 2015 at 4:36 AM

Title: Re: Experiences with crazy wisdom?

Content:

smcj said:

Buddhist masters can become senile. Their bodies are made of the five elements, just like the rest of us, and sometimes this means they can experience acute mental decline as a result of aging, despite whatever realization they may have attained.

That's interesting. I personally have not had the experience of a master mentally declining with age. But then my sample pooling is limited.

Malcolm wrote:

Tibetan masters are typically killed by a sedentary lifestyle, too much tea and bad food. They don't usually live long enough to be at risk for senile dementia.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, June 3rd, 2015 at 11:19 AM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

You are aware then that relative truths such as cars, houses, diseases and the like are all objects of deluded cognitions, correct?

Wayfarer said:

I don't accept that the objects of everyday experience are simply 'deluded cognitions'.

That is the exact problem: you're denying conventional reality, saying that is simply non-existent or illusory. That is what I am saying is nihilist.

Malcolm wrote:

Please reread my statement carefully. You did not read it correctly, as your statement above shows.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, June 3rd, 2015 at 7:59 PM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

srivijaya said:

Hi Malcolm,

I see that you place emphasis on the deluded cognition here, rather than the object. Still, Wayfarer has a valid point. The Mahayana proposition rests on the revelation that such deluded cognitions perceive objects as existing inherently, whereas they are in fact

empty (Two Truths). Direct experience of this is essential for liberation. If you remove this, then the whole premise is undermined wouldn't you say?

Malcolm wrote:

Truths are cognitions of objects, so yes, the emphasis is on the cognition, nevertheless, the definition is incomplete without including the object.

For example, a mirage is the object of a deluded cognition of the presence of water in the distance. The perceived object does not exist, and yet it still appears; when that appearance of investigated, no water is found which corresponds to that appearance.

"...such deluded cognitions perceive objects as existing inherently, whereas they are in fact empty..."

Such a distinction is not made by a worldly person. Worldly people do not think in terms of "inherent existence."

The problem with Wayfarer's perspective is that he believes that there is something in phenomena that can survive analysis, which he calls "mere existence." In reality, nothing can survive ultimate analysis, not even buddhahood.

Relative truths are by definition cognitions of objects which have not been subjected to ultimate analysis. The cognition of any object which can survive ultimate analysis is an ultimate truth.

The real point is that whatever arises from causes and conditions is cannot survive ultimate analysis. For example, in the Hinayāna presentation of two truths the cognition of a vase is relative truth; when this is shattered with a hammer, the cognition of the shards and so on are ultimate truths. Likewise, the cognition of water is a relative truth; but the cognition of coolness, wetness and limpidity are ultimate truths.

When this is brought to the level of Madhyamaka, we can see that all things that arise from cause and conditions are equivalent with mirages, dreams, illusions and so on. Just as in a puppet show a bunch of rocks, sticks and paper is made to appear as elephants, warriors and so on through the "mantra" of the illusionist (meaning his narrative), likewise are phenomena appearing through causes and conditions. So too when it is understood that the illusion is a mere spell cast through skilled manipulation of bits and pieces of rocks, wood, string and so on, one understands that the illusions are unreal, and phenomena are also like this. When the basis of the illusions are investigated, they too are found to arise from causes and conditions and therefore are essentially unreal. There is no end to such analysis because there is no end to deceptive appearances.

I can't continue since I have to go out of town for a day or so, but I will leave you with this: whatever arises from causes and conditions does not exist in those causes and conditions nor separate from them, just as a self does not exist in the aggregates nor separate from them. Nevertheless, just as things are designated dependent on causes

and conditions without really being there, selves are designated dependent on the aggregates without really being there.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, June 5th, 2015 at 4:34 AM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

We are not denying conventional reality, we are merely saying that it appears without any existence.

Wayfarer said:

You don't have to be a scholar of Tibetan and Sanskrit texts to spot the problem with this sentence. It actually doesn't make sense. How can something 'exist without existing'?

Malcolm wrote:

I did not write that sentence. Cone did.

You are essentially asserting that 'the only reality is absolute' - as you have said elsewhere in this thread. For instance: I am sorry to say that if suffering were real, there would be no possibility of a path and no possibility of a result. Why? To say that something is real is much worse than saying that something exists. Why? To say that something is real is to say it is inherent.

To a suffering being - that's all of us, to all intents - you can't simply say 'look here, your suffering is really the result of deluded cognitions'.

But that is precisely the point of the Buddha's teaching, in toto: i.e., one's suffering is a result of deluded cognitions.

Now, it might actually be the result of deluded cognition - but to overcome this state of delusion is the point of the entire Buddhist teaching. That is why there is a path in the first place, so to deny that there is suffering, comes perilously close to denying the first truth of Buddhism.

I no more deny there is suffering than there is an appearance of illusion. I merely pointed out that neither are real.

So I object that to say 'something is real' is to say it has ultimate or inherent existence, or, in other words, that only the ultimate is real and that phenomena are unreal.

But that is precisely the point of Nāgārjuna's statement that existents must be included in either inherent existence or dependent existence. If inherent existence is established, then existents are established.

Every phenomenon can be understood as a result of causes and conditions, and in that sense, it has no inherent reality; that is the ground of the identity of Śūnyatā and dependent origination. But it is real in an empirical sense, even if not an ultimate sense. It is meaningless to say something is real in anything other than an ultimate sense.

It is the reality of the existence for us unenlightened beings. It is the task of Madhyamika to demonstrate that the presumed solidity and independent reality of the objects of conventional experience is in fact empty. But that doesn't say they're non-existent, and to say that they are non-existent is nihilistic.

Madhyamaka indeed removes claims that existents exist. It is not annihilationist

because Madhyamaka does not propose the existence of something to become non-existent. Your assertion of nihilism is unwarranted and out of place. I could care less what old fascist philosophers like Heidegger have to say about anything.

As far as 'deluded cognition' is concerned, an apple is still an apple, whether for the sage or for the ordinary worldly being.

I don't think so. For example, take the example of a liquid in the six realms, it is water for a human is molten iron for a hell being, pus and blood for a preta, nectar for a deva, etc. For a human being the perception of water is conventionally true, perception of molten iron, and so on are conventionally false. It is equally so in the rest of the six realms, for example, a hell being's perception of molten iron is conventionally true in the hell realms, but the perception of water in that realm conventionally would be delusion.

I think the problem I am having with your statements on this matter is that they are not taking into account the facts of existence - they are rather scholastic arguments, based on a scholastic tradition within they have a particular meaning.

Right, I am employing those arguments within the context of a tradition to which I am an actual heir, having been trained in those arguments in the traditional manner.

I'm actually interested in philosophy, Buddhist and otherwise, as a practical skill, and that has to accept the fact that suffering, objects of cognition, and the rest, do exist, even whilst they're ultimately empty.

Relatives truths are objects of false cognitions. They are identified as such so that one will know how to discern ultimate truth, the understanding and realization of which leads to nirvana.

However, the extent to which you believe that so called "mere existence" is immune to analysis is the extent to which your view contains grasping to existents and falls far short of Madhyamaka view.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, June 5th, 2015 at 4:42 AM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

srivijaya said:

Buddha flatly refused to engage with speculation on the four extremes. He neither confirmed nor denied them. He had no position.

Malcolm wrote:

This is not true at all. For example, the Buddha states to Mahāmati in the Lankāvatara: The Dharma taught by the tathāgatas is free of the four extremes as follows: not identical, not different, not both or neither; free of being existent, nonexistent, not existent, not nonexistent, permanent and impermanent.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, June 5th, 2015 at 8:27 PM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

It is meaningless to say something is real in anything other than an ultimate sense.

Wayfarer said:

That is where I disagree.

Malcolm wrote:

You can say that things are "conventionally real", but this does not help you. Why?

Because once again, "conventionally real" amounts to nothing more than the assertion that something is "real" because two sentient beings agree on the identity of a shared appearance. And that also does not match how the term is used in English.

"Real" in the OED means, "...actually existing as a thing or occurring in fact; not imagined or supposed" or as it is used in Philosophy, "...relating to something as it is, not merely as it may be described or distinguished."

In reality, a thing that is a conventional truth is true only in so far as it is functional. For, there is no "car" in a car. We use a number of parts, assemble them and create something we call a "car", using those parts to perform a function. But when we analyze those parts, we can find no car in them, nor separate from them. The "car" as such does not exist apart from our imputation of a car upon some parts, just as there is no person in the aggregates or separate from them. "Car" and "Malcolm" are imputations of an on a collection of parts and have no reality other than as an imputation. This means that the reality of cars and Malcolm's is strictly conventional.

This is why conventional truths are relative truths, "concealer truths" if we follow the etymology of *samvṛtti*, because their real nature is concealed by our deluded perceptions of things.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, June 5th, 2015 at 8:36 PM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

srivijaya said:

Buddha flatly refused to engage with speculation on the four extremes. He neither confirmed nor denied them. He had no position.

Malcolm wrote:

This is not true at all.

srivijaya said:

It is.

Malcolm wrote:

It is not, as the sūtra I cited quite clearly indicates.

srivijaya said:

In regards to the tetralemma which Vacchagotta was keen to draw the Buddha on:
"Does Master Gotama have any position at all?"

"A 'position,' Vaccha, is something that a Tathagata has done away with.
Why did he dissociate himself from these positions? Because they do not lead to disenchantment, dispassion, cessation; to calm, direct knowledge, full Awakening, Unbinding.

Malcolm wrote:

Correct, and in the negation of the four extremes, one has eliminated all positions.

srivijaya said:

So he does not use the stick of logic and reasoning to poke the hornet's nest of distinctions in order to release a swarm of views.

Compare this with what Nagarjuna claims that the Buddha said: "55. Everything is real and is not real,

Both real and not real,

Neither real nor not real.

This is Lord Buddha's teaching.

That which Buddha tossed into the dirt, others subsequently picked up and dusted off.

The distinction of the two truths is the third option on the tetralemma.

Malcolm wrote:

Well, that depends on whether you accept the Mahāyāna sūtras as the Buddha's teaching, and if you don't, then I cannot understand why you are posting here.

srivijaya said:

Still, there's much in the Mahayana which goes way beyond this. The Great Way is not difficult for those who have no preferences. When love and hate are both absent everything becomes clear and undisguised. Make the smallest distinction, however, and heaven and earth are set infinitely apart.

Malcolm wrote:

[/quote]

This in no way exceeds Nāgārjuna.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, June 5th, 2015 at 8:44 PM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

Wayfarer said:

All I'm disagreeing with is the assertion that emptiness = non-existence.

Malcolm wrote:

I never asserted that emptiness = nonexistence. I did not make any assertions at all about existence or nonexistence. I objected to your claim that things were "real" as well as "merely existent" when you responded to my statement "gnas lugs med pa", i.e., there is no reality, no gnas lugs, bhutatā, etc. Saying there is no reality means that when one has examined phenomena, one finds they cannot be found to be real in any sense at all. Phenomena are found to be empty imputations, illusions, dreams, mirages, etc. Haribhadra, the famed 7th century commentator to the Abhisamayālaṃkāra stated that everything is illusory, the paths, stages and even buddhahood.

It may have escaped you, but you are actually arguing that things are not empty. And if you assert that things are merely empty of inherent existence, then what you are arguing is that the ultimate is a nonexistence.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, June 5th, 2015 at 9:06 PM

Title: Re: Poll: Should Zen/Chan/Seon have a separate Forum?

Content:

retrofuturist said:

Greetings,

Malcolm wrote:

This poll is just sour grapes.

retrofuturist said:

No - this is governance based on something other than self-styled autocratic leadership.

Malcolm wrote:

No, it is sour grapes based on an interaction that Dan and I had which he found troublesome and frustrating, which is resulted in yet another untenable TOS resolution (like the one about metadiscussions).

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, June 5th, 2015 at 9:16 PM

Title: Re: Poll: Should Zen/Chan/Seon have a separate Forum?

Content:

Dan74 said:

9 self identified Zen Buddhists responded and an even split. If we take this as representative of the membership, then only 1/3 seem to actually like the proximity to other traditions. This might be indicative of minority feelings. Whereas a lot more if the other Buddhists would prefer to keep the forum in its current form.

Not sure how representative this is of broader membership but maybe some food for thought...

Malcolm wrote:

One cannot count the three who responded as negatives, a third responded that they don't care either way.

Anyway, fragmentation is normal in internet forums. Vajracakra, for example, exists because people became unhappy here and so they left. Some of them still no longer post here. Some of them bounce back and forth.

Personally, I go where there are conversations that are of interest to me to participate in, such as the one Astus and I were having in the Mahāyāna thread that spawned this absurd poll.

Frankly, Dan, if you want to have another Zen forum that is not dominated by Nonin, you should. It is not hard. It is easy. It will not actually cause people to stop participating here. Then you can limit conversations to those you find palatable.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, June 5th, 2015 at 9:17 PM

Title: Re: Poll: Should Zen/Chan/Seon have a separate Forum?

Content:

Ayu said:

This is how you think, but you've put your informations in a wrong way together.

Malcolm wrote:

Umm no, I haven't.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, June 5th, 2015 at 9:37 PM

Title: Re: Poll: Should Zen/Chan/Seon have a separate Forum?

Content:

Ayu said:

Please take any "fight" you want to have, via PM! It is off topic here

Malcolm wrote:

No one is fighting.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, June 5th, 2015 at 9:42 PM

Title: Re: Why no Tantrism in Zen?

Content:

Kim O'Hara said:

[

The idea that there is 'no tantra in Theravada' is similarly undermined by the reality of

religious practice in SE Asia. Bhante Gavesako started a long thread about it on the other Wheel a few years ago - see <http://www.dhammadownload.com/viewtopic.php?t=10503> if you're curious.

Kim

Malcolm wrote:

Magical practices, creation of amulets and charms and so on, is not "Tantra" per se.

Vajrayāna is a very specific path, with a very specific understanding of the five paths and ten stages taught by the Buddha in Mahāyāna.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, June 5th, 2015 at 9:52 PM

Title: Re: Poll: Should Zen/Chan/Seon have a separate Forum?

Content:

Ayu said:

Please take any "fight" you want to have, via PM! It is off topic here

Malcolm wrote:

No one is fighting.

Ayu said:

Very good. Then Simon E. will read that for sure. I quoted his word: "fight".

Malcolm wrote:

He was using an idiomatic expression in English: "I have no dog in this fight at all," which means "I have no personal stake in this issue." Similar expressions, "I don't have a horse in this race", etc. It does not mean that there is a "fight".

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, June 5th, 2015 at 10:38 PM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

srivijaya said:

Compare this with what Nagarjuna claims that the Buddha said: "55. Everything is real and is not real,

Both real and not real,

Neither real nor not real.

This is Lord Buddha's teaching.

Karma Dondrup Tashi said:

I was waiting for someone to bring up the positive tetralemma. Just when I thought I got it now I'm confused again.

Malcolm wrote:

No need to be confused. For example, the Buddha says in the Ārya-śraddhā-balādhānāvatāra-mudrā-nāma-mahāyāna-sūtra:

Mañjuśrī, furthermore, there are five acquisitions of solace in the purification of the first stage (bhūmi) of the bodhisattvas. If it is asked what are the five, they are as follows. There is the acquisition of the solace of "I abide in the knowledge of the middle way inseparable with extremes. I will also place others in the knowledge of middle way inseparable with the extremes. In that regard, the middle way inseparable with extremes is that which is the nature of the extremes because there is no other middle way apart from the nature of the extremes. Since there is no middle way apart from the nature of extremes, the nature of extremes itself is the middle way. Since one knows the middle way of the nature of extremes, all phenomena are the middle way."

There is the acquisition of the solace of "I abide in the knowledge of the space inseparable with the nonbeing of space. I will also place others in the knowledge of space inseparable with the nonbeing of space. In that regard, space inseparable with the nonbeing of space is that which is the nature of the nonbeing of space. If it is asked why that is so, it is because space does not exist apart from the nature of the nonbeing of space. Since there is no space apart from the nature of the nonbeing of space, the nature of the nonbeing of space itself is space. Since one knows space of the nature of nonbeing of space, all phenomena are like space."

There is the acquisition of the solace of "I abide in the knowledge of the child of a barren woman inseparable with the nonbeing of the child of a barren women. I will also place others in the knowledge of the child of a barren woman inseparable with the nonbeing of the child of a barren women. In that regard, the child of a barren woman inseparable with the nonbeing of the child of a barren women is that which is the nature of the nonbeing of child of a barren women. If it is asked why that is so, it is because the child of a barren woman does not exist apart from the nonbeing of the child of a barren woman. Since there is no child of a barren woman apart from the nature of the nonbeing of the child of a barren woman, the nature of the nonbeing of the child of a barren woman itself is the child of a barren woman. Since one knows the child of a barren woman of the nature of the nonbeing of the child of a barren woman, all phenomena are equivalent with child of a barren woman."

There is the acquisition of the solace of "I abide in the knowledge of a mirage inseparable with the nonbeing of the mirage. I will also place others in the knowledge of a mirage inseparable with the nonbeing of the mirage. In that regard, the mirage inseparable with the nonbeing of the mirage is that which is the nature of the nonbeing of the mirage. If it is asked why that is so, it is because the mirage does not exist apart from the nonbeing of the mirage. Since there is no mirage apart from the nature of the nonbeing of the mirage, the nature of the nonbeing of the mirage itself is the mirage. Since one knows the mirage of the nature of the nonbeing of the mirage, all phenomena are like a mirage."

There is the acquisition of the solace of "I abide in the knowledge of right view inseparable with wrong view. I will also place others in the knowledge of right view

inseparable with wrong view. In that regard, right view inseparable with wrong view is that which is the nature of wrong view. If it is asked why that is so, it is because right view does not exist apart from nature of wrong view. Since there is no right view apart from the nature of wrong view, the nature of the wrong view itself is right view. Since one knows that right view that is the nature of wrong view, all phenomena are right view.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, June 5th, 2015 at 11:52 PM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

srivijaya said:

The sutra stated "The Dharma taught by the tathāgatas is free of the four extremes" - sounds good to me. Now if that means that it contains a position from within the tetralemma, please point it out. I don't see any. Nothing there equates to Nagarjuna's subsequent take on it.

Malcolm wrote:

Nāgārjuna does not have a position from the tetralemma. He uses it to eliminate all positions. For example, in the Lokātitastava he writes:

An existing thing does not arise, nor does a nonexisting thing, nor does something both existing and nonexisting.

There is no arising from self, nor from other; without both how can there be arising?

It is reasonable for an existent to exist, but it is not reasonable for it to perish.

Since it is reasonable that a nonexistent does not exist, it will never perish.

It is not reasonable that there is a result from some perished cause, and there is [no result] from [a cause] that has not perished, therefore, you [the Buddha] have asserted that arising is like a dream.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, June 6th, 2015 at 4:14 AM

Title: Re: Rainbow Body - Why?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Well, there is really no such thing as an immortal nirmanakayā because the rūpakāya always arises out of the dharmakāya, and therefore, the issue of mortal/immortal never arises for a buddha. If you can achieve buddhahood by a given path, then you realize dharmakāya, and if you realize dharmakāya, you can always generate rūpakāya, which you do so in response to the needs of sentient beings.

Tenso said:

When the body transforms into the five wisdom lights aka rainbow body, you are saying that it is the dharmakaya that is generating a rupakaya? I've read somewhere that the rainbow body is already present in each and every sentient being so would using the

word "generate" be an incorrect word to use? How do you "generate" something that is already there?

Malcolm wrote:

In reality, the body does not transform, it reverts back into its real nature as wisdom light.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, June 6th, 2015 at 4:38 AM

Title: Re: Rainbow Body - Why?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

In reality, the body does not transform, it reverts back into its real nature as wisdom light.

tomamundsen said:

What's the fundamental difference between 'transforming' and 'reverting'? At first glance, I can't see a difference.

Malcolm wrote:

In the first case, one thing turns into another thing; in the second case, one thing goes back to the way it was.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, June 6th, 2015 at 4:44 AM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Nāgārjuna does not have a position from the tetralemma. He uses it to eliminate all positions. For example, in the Lokāṭīṣṭava he writes:

An existing thing does not arise, nor does a nonexisting thing, nor does something both existing and nonexisting.

There is no arising from self, nor from other; without both how can there be arising?

It is reasonable for an existent to exist, but it is not reasonable for it to perish.

Since it is reasonable that a non-existent does not exist, it will never perish.

It is not reasonable that there is a result from some perished cause, and there is [no result] from [a cause] that has not perished, therefore...

...you [the Buddha] have asserted that arising is like a dream. [/list]

srivijaya said:

Brilliant! Buddha did indeed state arising is like a dream.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, things are like dreams. When we are in a dream, we believe what we are experiencing is real. When we wake up, we understand it was never real.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, June 6th, 2015 at 6:24 AM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

Wayfarer said:

So here suffering is said to be unreal, because it's 'not inherent' and only things with 'inherent reality' are real.

I interpreted that as emptiness = non-existence. Was I mistaken in that?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, I explained that to you many times now. Mahāyāna emptiness = freedom from existence, nonexistence, both existence and nonexistence and neither. This is the profound emptiness of Mahāyāna. The emptiness which is the absence of inherent existence is common to all three vehicles, but it is not profound.

Saying there is no reality means that when one has examined phenomena, one finds they cannot be found to be real in any sense at all.

One cannot find they are 'real' in the sense implicit in the debate in Indian philosophy. That isn't 'cultural relativism': it is an observation about the background of the debate, the broader 'theory of meaning' that underlies the question itself. But in the modern context, the many discoveries about the nature of matter (like for instance discovery of the periodic table) are discoveries about things and principles that exist. I can't see the point in denying that.

These are no less conventions than the atoms perceived by ancient yogis in their meditation.

But then, I agree in the sense that material phenomena have been shown to have no irreducible component or basis. That is why the search for the 'atom' has developed into speculation on parallel worlds and the like. So I understand how phenomena are not ultimately real, i.e. empty of own-being, groundless, dependent. I think I get that. But I think you can recognize the emptiness of phenomena without saying they are utterly unreal.

If phenomena are not ultimately real, they are not real. There are no gradations of real, unreal, somewhat real, more real than not real, and so on. Things are either real or they are not. The only kind of reality things may be said to have is a reality dependent on conventional designation, and that is all, and when those conventional designations are examined they are found to be baseless, and therefore, the reality of that which they designate evaporates like dew hit by sunlight.

No one has said that we are confronted with the unreality of phenomena at the get go. No one says that we should be content to merely say "Everything is unreal" and leave it at the level of concept. One must discover the unreality of phenomena. I would suggest

that in your case, you have not extended your analysis far enough.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, June 6th, 2015 at 9:22 AM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The emptiness which is the absence of inherent existence is common to all three vehicles, but it is not profound.

cloudburst said:

Can you please clarify, according to your understanding, the difference between existence and inherent existence.

Malcolm wrote:

There is none, as Nagārjuna states, "Where is there an existence not included in inherent existence or dependent existence? If inherent existence is established, existence is established." and "Those who have a view of inherent existence, dependent existence, existence or nonexistence have not understood the teaching of the Buddha."

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, June 6th, 2015 at 9:28 AM

Title: Re: Why no Tantrism in Zen?

Content:

Caodemarte said:

I would assume that Vajrajana was the main form of Buddhism in Thailand as it was in Burma and Cambodia before Theravada. If so, some parts it may have survived as part of Theravada in Thailand.

Kim O'Hara said:

Hi, Caodemarte,

Why on earth would you assume that? And what is your evidence for Vajrayana before Theravada in Burma and Cambodia?

Can you supply sources and references?

Kim

Malcolm wrote:

The archaeological record confirms this very well.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, June 6th, 2015 at 7:24 PM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

cloudburst said:

And what is the difference between "a reality dependent on conventional designation" and "dependent existence?"

Malcolm wrote:

The first has no underlying Sanskrit term. But in simple terms it means the imputation of something as real, a fact, and so on, a conventionality because in our everyday perception world this or that seems to function properly. As Madhyamakas, we accept what people say about the world as long as that is not analyzed. We define relative truth fundamentally as a the object of a pre-analytic perception. Ultimate truth, at least the nominal ultimate, is an object of a post-analytic perception, in other words, whatever remains in our perception after analysis is taken to be true, real, irreducible and ultimate.

Dependent or extrinsic existence (parabhāva) is defined by Nāgārjuna as a species of svabhāva, a deferred svabhāva. Nāgārjuna is observing that there no existence (bhāva) not included in either svabhāva or parabhāva. That being the case, when inherent existence is not established, neither is existence and nonexistence.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, June 6th, 2015 at 7:37 PM

Title: Re: Why no Tantrism in Zen?

Content:

bryandavis said:

<http://www.artgallery.nsw.gov.au/collection/works/1.2001/>

From the above link.

This work is a three-dimensional mandala, or cosmic diagram, of Hevajra, who is the chief deity of the Tantric (Vajrayana) Buddhist path to enlightenment. Unlike Theravada and Mahayana Buddhism, the Tantric school believed that, with serious application and the guidance of a religious teacher, an initiate could achieve enlightenment in this life. The main exercise was meditation. While meditating, the practitioner focused all his mental energy on a deity, in this case Hevajra, thereby transferring to himself the characteristics of the deity. The cult of Hevajra flourished in Cambodia between the tenth and thirteenth centuries. Here Hevajra stands in the centre on an eight-petalled lotus surrounded by dakinis, minor female divinities in Tantric Buddhism, and one unidentified other figure.

Asian Art Department, AGNSW, May 2011

Kim O'Hara said:

Thanks for that link, bryandavis.

I don't know if you posted it in response to my request to Caodemarte and Malcolm for links and references. If so, it's not very strong support since Buddhism existed in SE Asia for roughly a thousand years before the dates mentioned in relation to this mandala. Caodemarte? Malcolm?

Kim

Malcolm wrote:

This summarizes the history of Buddhism in Cambodia.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Buddhism_in_Cambodia

Long and short of it, the Theravada period in Cambodia dates from the 13th century onward. Prior to this Mahāyāna (including Vajrayāna) was the dominant form of Buddhism in this region.

This summarizes the history of Buddhism in Thailand.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Buddhism_in_Thailand

Long and short of it, the Theravada period in Thailand dates from the 13th century onward. Prior to this Mahāyāna (including Vajrayāna) was the dominant form of Buddhism in this region.

This summarizes the history of Buddhism in Burma:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Buddhism_in_Burma

Long and short of it, the Theravada period in Burma dates from the 11th century onward. Prior to this Mahāyāna (including Vajrayāna) was the dominant form of Buddhism in this region.

In all three instances, the rise of Theravada is linked to the collapse of Buddhism in Mainland India. Without the great Mahāyāna Universities to produce missionaries, a vacuum opened up which was filled by missionaries from Shri Lanka.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, June 6th, 2015 at 9:50 PM

Title: Re: Article - "I'm a liberal professor..."

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The most salient point:

No one can rebut feelings, and so the only thing left to do is shut down the things that

cause distress — no argument, no discussion, just hit the mute button and pretend eliminating discomfort is the same as effecting actual change.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, June 6th, 2015 at 10:19 PM

Title: Re: Have I Ever Taken Refuge?

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

But when crisis comes-- what happens? Do I hope the doctor fixes my wound, or do I just leave it with the Three Jewels?

Malcolm wrote:

You go to a doctor. When you are afflicted with the illness of hunger, do you eat, or just leave it to the three Jewels?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, June 6th, 2015 at 10:36 PM

Title: Re: Why no Tantrism in Zen?

Content:

tingdzin said:

I recently read an article (by Sherrock , in "Bayon: New Perspectives") that proposed that the main images of the famous Bayon temple in Angkor Wat represent Vajrasattva.

Malcolm wrote:

Cambodian Vajrasattva, 11th century:

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, June 6th, 2015 at 11:31 PM

Title: Re: Article - "I'm a liberal professor..."

Content:

tingdzin said:

This attitude shows up a lot on this forum, too, if people haven't noticed.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, June 7th, 2015 at 2:28 AM

Title: Re: Article - "I'm a liberal professor..."

Content:

Nicholas Weeks said:

As the token conservative around here, I suppose leftists would never admit that 'liberal' notions have anything to do with the totalitarian core of leftism.

Malcolm wrote:

Just as rightists will never admit that many of their notions have anything to do with the totalitarian core of "rightism."

Frankly, "left" totalitarianism and "right" totalitarianism are structurally indistinguishable. The only difference is rhetoric:

Left: people, democracy, universal rights

Right: god, family, country.

They are both equally ruthless.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, June 7th, 2015 at 2:30 AM

Title: Re: Article - "I'm a liberal professor..."

Content:

M.G. said:

I'm sure there are abuses of hypersensitivity in some classrooms, but I never found any viewpoints squashed at the quite liberal university I went to.

Malcolm wrote:

And yet they are.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, June 7th, 2015 at 7:35 PM

Title: Re: Article - "I'm a liberal professor..."

Content:

Nicholas Weeks said:

As the token conservative around here, I suppose leftists would never admit that 'liberal' notions have anything to do with the totalitarian core of leftism.

Malcolm wrote:

Just as rightists will never admit that many of their notions have anything to do with the totalitarian core of "rightism."

Frankly, "left" totalitarianism and "right" totalitarianism are structurally indistinguishable. The only difference is rhetoric:

Left: people, democracy, universal rights

Right: god, family, country.

They are both equally ruthless.

Nicholas Weeks said:

Nonsense, at least in the 20th century. The 'bad' righties like Franco & Pinochet could not carry water for the murderous lefties such as Hitler, Stalin, Mao, Pol Pot etc.

Malcolm wrote:

Ummm...Hitler was right wing, anti communist, etc, supported Franco, if you you will recall. Hitler was a facsist.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, June 7th, 2015 at 8:28 PM

Title: Re: Natural Luminosity

Content:

Tom said:

This thread was linked to in another thread which prompted a late reply...

Malcolm wrote:

These are experiences of a mind, not a cognizer itself, that should be obvious to you from the text.

Tom said:

I'm aware of this and mentioned that they were experiences (nyam) above.

I'm simply giving an example of the word luminosity ('od gsa l) standing in for the word clarity (gsal).

Malcolm wrote:

On the other, hand, if it is as you say, this is still not the rang bzhin 'od gsal, since that is clearly ultimate, and not a fleeting experience, the attachment to which results in a form realm rebirth.

Tom said:

Yes, and Situ Rinpoche supports my reading and comments on this line that attachment here will result in a form realm rebirth. Again, my point is only that here we have an example of the word luminosity standing in for the word clarity.

Malcolm wrote:

You elided rig in rang rig in your translation, in response I elided 'dzin pa.

Tom said:

This is a ridiculous response and why I initially thought not to bother to continue with the discussion.

Malcolm wrote:

Perhaps what it should read is "the unobscured luminosity of a featureless apprehension."

Tom said:

No, that would again be an incorrect translation. My original translation is accurate.

Malcolm wrote:

No, "luminosity without grasping" is not correct.

If you read it, "not grasping signs, luminosity is free from covering obscurations..." then it would be correct, likewise for the line above it and below.

ཞེན་པ་མེད་པའི་བདེ་ཆེན་རྒྱ་ཆད་མེད། །

Without clinging, great bliss is uninterrupted.

མཆན་འཛིན་མེད་པའི་འོད་གསལ་སྒྲིབ་གཡོགས་བྲལ། །

Without grasping signs, luminosity is free from covering obscurations.

སྒྲོ་ལས་འདས་པའི་མི་རྟོག་རྒྱ་ཁྱིམ་བྱུང། །

Beyond mind, nonconceptuality is effortless —

རྩིས་མེད་ཉམས་རྒྱུང་རྒྱ་ཆད་མེད་པར་ཤོག།

may effortless experience be uninterrupted!

As for whether here we can take "' od gsal " as being a pure gloss for gsal ba to fill in the lines of the verse — I have my doubts.

And you did elide the rig in rang rig.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, June 7th, 2015 at 9:32 PM

Title: Re: Natural Luminosity

Content:

Tom said:

Your translation is improved now that you have dropped "featureless apprehension."

However, in my translation it is more clear that མཆན་འཛིན་མེད་པའི་ with its genitive ending is

modifying འོད་གསལ་. Your new translation makes it seem like you are translating མཆན་འཛིན་མེད་པ་ ར་.

This quibble aside, I think it is pretty clear that luminosity here is signifying clarity.

Malcolm wrote:

Actually, sometimes "kyi" does not function as a genitive in the sense that we understand it in Latinate grammatical terminology. Here it does not, it sets off a clause.

Anyway, here 'od gsal is not a gloss for clarity anymore than bde chen is a gloss for bde ba.

It is a play on words.

The normal sequence is bde ba, gsal ba, mi rtog pa, not bde chen, 'od 'gsal, mi rtog pa.

Bde chen, great bliss, is something at the ultimate level, just like 'od gsal, not the level of transient experience like simple bde ba. And mi rtog pa can be either.

So I still don't agree with you, patronizing comments aside.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, June 7th, 2015 at 10:07 PM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

David Reigle said:

Likewise earlier, Bhavya devoted most of his critiques of the ātman in his Madhyamaka-hṛdaya to the permanent, personal ātman as held in the Sāṃkhya and Vaiśeṣika schools, and even in the Vedānta school of his time. When in his Vedānta chapter (chapter 8) he did refer to the universal or non-dual ātman, he refuted it when it was also held to be a doer or an experiencer or a cognizer, but accepted it when it was held to be beyond thought and speech. In fact, he said that this latter idea was taken by the Vedāntins from the Buddhists (verses 84-86, Lindtner Sanskrit edition).

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, he says the tīrthikas recognized the value of the Buddha's system of two truths and claimed it for themselves, albeit, fraudulently. So he is not happy about this. He states in the following verse that one should not mistake the two systems, just as one should not mistake a gem composed of metal for a real jewel. He states in the Tarkajvālā [268/ab, (D 3856) dbu ma, dza 40b7-329b4]:

Just as someone claims "a gem made of metal resembles a precious gem", though it's surface is polished, that cannot withstand burning, scratching, grinding and so on. Since they are completely different, whoever is skilled in recognizing precious gems will generate the perception of which is precious. In the same way, since [the tīrthika position of] self, permanence, all pervasiveness and oneness contradict their opposite, [the Buddhist position of] no-self, impermanence, non-pervasiveness and multiplicity, they are completely different; the one who is skilled in recognizing reality generates the perception of which is reality. Therefore, it is like showing the tail of the deer to sell horse meat.

In other words, what Bhavaviveka is saying that the Advaitans fraudulently misrepresent the teaching of the Buddha, and worse, cast it to mean the opposite of what it actually means, using the example of a merchant who displays something of high value to pass off something of no value.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, June 7th, 2015 at 10:46 PM

Title: Re: Natural Luminosity

Content:

Tom said:

Yes, this gets into the oral instructions on the verse which actually relate to how correct clarity (luminosity) is discerned from faulty clarity - not really appropriate for board discussion. Still, luminosity here is being related to clarity.

Malcolm wrote:

Your assertion was that in this verse, *od sal = gsal ba*; a one to one identity. I disagreed before. I still disagree.

The line concerns what we might call the "fundamental mind of clear light" in Gelug terms. In Sakyapa terms, it would be the luminosity found in between two moments of mind. However we decide to parse it, it concerns the luminosity which is the basis from which arise the three consciousnesses, ref. *Jñānavajrasamuccaya*.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, June 7th, 2015 at 10:55 PM

Title: Re: Article - "I'm a liberal professor..."

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Hitler was a fascist, like the Italian Fascists. Socialism does not always means 'left'. There are right wing socialist ideologies as well. Hitler was just following the lead of *Action française*.

Urgyen Dorje said:

The phenomenon of nazism, in itself, really illustrates how tired and limited this right-left dicotomy is.

If you read *Mein Kampf*, Hitler simultaneously attacks both right wing and left wing political ideologies. He asserts that capitalism has run its course, and holds that capitalism damages nationalism because of international finances and the egotism inherent in capitalism. The national socialism created to support this was also anti-communist, as Marxist communism was not only seen as a Jewish creation, but because it threatened the middle class and eliminated prive property.

The economics of Nazism falls off the right-left capitalism-communism continuua, because it's rooted in different values. It aimed to create an alternative to both freemarket capitalism and Marixst communism through something akin to a proleteriat revolution, the revolution of the *Volksgemeinschaft*, the people's commuity, which had a racial and nationalistic identity. But it was also against the concept of class struggle, which has an inherent value of class equality. So in many ways it's very socialist in feel.

On the flip side, the anticapitalist vibe of this national socialism alienated industrialists who were central to the nationalist project of war in Europe, so Hitler made any number

of quid pro quo's with them. While Hitler's Nazism theoretically was pro-mercantile while being anti-multinational corp, companies such as Krups, VW, Siemens, were left unmolested as long as they supported the party and the war.

So sure, we can put a pin in a chart and identify Hitler as far right, but on other continuua, we could identify him as right, left, middle, or N/A and off the continuum.

In my mid it's important to put him off these right-left capitalist-communism continuua because of the value systems involved. Here is an economic system that is, at least nominally, based on values other than the production and distribution of capital. There is a hideous and grotesque nationalistic and racial project at hand as well.

I think this is important to look at that, as other economic models based on more than just capital are thus possible. Instead of grotesque nationalistic and racist interests, there could be environmental interests or what not.

Malcolm wrote:

Ummm...Hitler was right wing, anti communist, etc, supported Franco, if you you will recall. Hitler was a facsist.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, June 7th, 2015 at 11:01 PM

Title: Re: How effective are liberation-upon-seeing dharma doors?

Content:

Boomerang said:

There are a bunch of images and mantras and sutras that say you will be free of the lower realms forever just because you've seen or heard them. Does this really mean that if you hear Medicine Buddha's name or look at one of those little red and gold cards, you could become a serial killer and still never be reborn in the lower realms? If these things are really so powerful, you would think that everyone who has so much as heard HH The Dalai Lama's name or the mani mantra will never be reborn in the lower realms—a very large percentage of the Earth's population.

Is it really that easy to never be reborn in the lower realms? If it is, it would follow that every teaching about the lower realms is just a skillful means for generating compassion toward beings not of this world. You could chant the Akshobhya mantra to somebody, murder them, and rest assured that neither of you will suffer in the lower realms and always move toward Buddhahood.

Malcolm wrote:

It means that you have planted a cause of inevitable liberation. It does not mean that you can expect never to be reborn in lower realms if you are a nonvirtuous person.

For example, if you are wearing a liberation through wearing amulet and you engage in misdeeds, it intensifies the misdeeds. So I was warned by my teacher to never wear such things and engage in misdeeds. If you wear them for practice however, they can

aid your practice a lot.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, June 7th, 2015 at 11:05 PM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

smcj said:

On the one hand my mind is blown. My entire idea about the history of Dharma is challenged. I don't know what to think.

On the other hand my own position was. Based on more modern authority and commentary. So it is unaffected. By I really am stunned.

Malcolm wrote:

All of the faults of the personal atman accrue to this so called impersonal atman.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 8th, 2015 at 12:11 AM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

David Reigle said:

Śāntarakṣita devoted verses 171-327 of his Tattva-saṃgraha to a critique of a permanent, personal ātman held by five different Indian schools, typically an ātman that is a kartṛ, “doer,” and/or a bhoktr, “experiencer.” When he arrived at the Advaita [Vedānta] idea of the universal or non-dual ātman, his comments were few (verses 328-335), and respectful. Even there, the ātman that he refuted was the jñāna/vijñāna-ātman, a cognizer that is permanent, not the parama-ātman that Śaṅkarācārya would later teach. .

Malcolm wrote:

H. Nakamura holds that Śaṅkarācārya is earlier than Śāntarakṣita, that is, prior to 750 CE.

As far as your other statement goes, 1) Kamashila specifically identifies this as the position of the Advaitans [གཞིས་མེད་པར་སྒྲ་བ], followers of the Upanishads [གསང་བ་པ་རྒྱམས], i.e. Vedantins.

There is no substantial difference with what is presented here and Śaṅkarā's thought:

Dakshinamurti-Stotra-With-Manasollasa.tiff (66.63 KiB) Viewed 3674 times

15. Consciousness is of two kinds: Nirvikalpaka or the undifferentiated consciousness illumines the Thing itself, while Savikalpa or the differentiated consciousness is manifold as illumining the designations, etc.

<http://sacred-texts.com/hin/dast/index.htm>

Therefore, when Śāntarakṣita says their error is slight, he actually is saying their error is huge for proposing that consciousness, something impermanent, is permanent.

One can hardly read this text as any thing other than refutation of the parama-ātma postulated by Śaṅkarā.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 8th, 2015 at 12:15 AM

Title: Re: Article - "I'm a liberal professor..."

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

As a disclosure, I was brought up with Nazi ideology and the themes of Mein Kampf not as a German, but as an American who was indoctrinated into Nazi ideology. As such, my perspective are these ideas as ideas, not the actual historical and cultural experience of a people who had to endure the real expression of these ideas. I was introduced to these ideas as a medium of introducing extreme racism, hate, and nationalism. For me, with some 35+ years of recovery from this nonsense, it was an interesting lesson in the nuances in political systems, and quite honestly, the guy was muddled. More importantly exposure to this nonsense catalyzed my interest in dharma, peace, and nonviolence.

Malcolm wrote:

Fascism arose out of a reaction to the nationalist deficiencies of the international socialist movement, sure. This well documented, but it also went on to embrace typical right wings memes of god, country, family and so on - example, Mussolini.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 8th, 2015 at 1:25 AM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

David Reigle said:

Bhavya did not try to deny the close similarities. Here he does not even say that the Vedāntins took these particular teachings from the Buddhists, .

Malcolm wrote:

He nevertheless does accuse them of fraudulent misrepresentation as I show above.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 8th, 2015 at 1:59 AM

Title: Re: Article - "I'm a liberal professor..."

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

I probably shouldn't have shared that aspect of my

personal history.

Malcolm wrote:

I was a skinhead. So what?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 8th, 2015 at 2:45 AM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

asunthatneversets said:

What Tibetan developments are you suggesting propose an impersonal universal principle?

smcj said:

Dolpopa.

Also Malcolm made the point with Khenpo Tsultrim in regards to his current presentation of Shentong.

<http://dharmawheel.net/viewtopic.php?f=48&t=8318&p=102251&hilit=advaita+greg#p102251>

I'm sure Malcolm finds the turn this thread has taken to be distressing. Just for the record, so do I.

Malcolm wrote:

Not at all. This thread has not taken any turn at all.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 8th, 2015 at 3:26 AM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, he says the tīrthikas recognized the value of the Buddha's system of two truths and claimed it for themselves, albeit, fraudulently. So he is not happy about this. He states in the following verse that one should not mistake the two systems, just as one should not mistake a gem composed of metal for a real jewel. He states in the Tarkajvālā [268/ab, (D 3856) dbu ma, dza 40b7-329b4]:

Just as someone claims "a gem made of metal resembles a precious gem", though it's surface is polished, that cannot withstand burning, scratching, grinding and so on.

Since they are completely different, whoever is skilled in recognizing precious gems will generate the perception of which is precious. In the same way, since [the tīrthika position of] self, permanence, all pervasiveness and oneness contradict their opposite, [the Buddhist position of] no-self, impermanence, non-pervasiveness and multiplicity, they are completely different; the one who is skilled in recognizing reality generates the perception of which is reality. Therefore, it is like showing the tail of the deer to sell

horse meat.

In other words, what Bhavaviveka is saying that the Advaitans fraudulently misrepresent the teaching of the Buddha, and worse, cast it to mean the opposite of what it actually means, using the example of a merchant who displays something of high value to pass off something of no value.

David Reigle said:

Thanks, Malcolm, for posting this criticism of Vedānta made by Bhavya. These criticisms are frequent in his text, and it is important for us to see an example of one. Just as Bhavya is straightforward in his criticisms of the Vedānta of his time, so he is fair in seeing what is good in it. A few verses after the ones I referred to in his Vedānta chapter, he writes, addressing the Vedāntins (verse 95, Lindtner Sanskrit edition): "If an ātman of such kind is also intended by you, sirs, there is no fault, because of the many similarities of name, etc. It is logically acceptable." Bhavya is here referring to an ātman that is beyond thought and speech. Then, a few verses later, he says that an ātman is not tenable, because ātman and anātman are opposites (verses 100-101). Here, however, he specifies the ātman as a doer and an experiencer. So we have to be aware of what ātman he is referring to in any given statement. He does not make a blanket denial of the ātman.

Malcolm wrote:

This is not a statement of acceptability. He is taunting the tīrthikas for being afraid. He says in the commentary:

Just as whatever is shown by the term "nonarising" (including its reasoning) will be free from fault, also if you assert [such] a self, the dispute will about a mere name. What conflict will there be with your so called "supreme self" and our "nonarising?"

But he immediately says:

Those terrified of selflessness still dwell in it even though they are terrified;
just as those who are terrified of space have no other place to dwell.

You can see very clearly he really thinks these tīrthikas are idiots for he says in the commentary:

Just as some fools are terrified of and frightened by space, they dwell in that space since no other place is seen [in which to dwell]. In the same way, also those terrified by selflessness, are supported on and dwell in that selflessness because there is no support other than that.

Honestly, it is really too much to believe that Bhavaviveka has a positive attitude towards these people. He thinks they are both frauds and fools.

He is basically saying, contrary to your perspective, that by adopting the two truths and adopting the terminology of nonarising, Advaitans are merely arguing themselves into a ridiculous corner where they have no choice but to abandon their concept of para atman. It is not we who are adopting their self, it is they who are adopting our reasoning about the two truths. This is why he earlier castigates them for stealing the teachings of the Tathāgatas and claiming it for themselves.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 8th, 2015 at 5:06 AM

Title: Re: Article - "I'm a liberal professor..."

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

I probably shouldn't have shared that aspect of my personal history.

Malcolm wrote:

I was a skinhead. So what?

Urgyen Dorje said:

I've caught a lot of grief in sanghas and social justice groups for it.

Malcolm wrote:

Well, people freak out when I tell them I was a skinhead, they always assume skinhead = fascist. But in fact, I was just a dumbass kid who thought punk rockers were hippies and I had already done that so...in it for the music and the laughs...

(Turns out the guy on the cover, Nicky Crane, a major National Front tough, later became a bouncer in gay nightclubs in London <http://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-25142557>).

...simultaneously I was into Industrial Music, Throbbing Gristle, etc., then PTV, then Crowley, then Buddhadharma...

To quote a band I dearly hate:

"What a long strange....trip its been...."

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 8th, 2015 at 9:10 PM

Title: Re: Historical relation of Dzogchen and Mahamudra

Content:

Jikan said:

I know much of this history is shrouded in mystery, and may be laden with sectarian commitments, but I'm putting the question forward anyway with the hope that everyone may benefit from it.

What do we know of the historical relation of Dzogchen and Mahamudra before, say, the time of Milarepa? I've heard conflicting claims on Milarepa specifically--that he was simultaneously a Mahamudra practitioner and a Dzogchenpa, or that he practiced Mahamudra but that Mahamudra itself has its origins in Dzogchen Semde, or that the

Milarepa's realization of Mahamudra simply makes sense to Dzogchenpas while having nothing concrete to do with Dzogchen as such. (These are not authoritative positions, merely things I've heard in conversation over the years.)

I assume Milarepa is a significant figure in his own right, of course, but also that these conflicting claims are representative of broader claims and convictions on the historical relation of Mahamudra and Dzogchen.

DharmaWheel, please help me make sense of this. Thank you.

Malcolm wrote:

Milarepa says in one of his songs that he was stabbed in the chest by Mahāmudra, and stabbed in the back by Dzogchen.

I am of the personal opinion that Kagyu Mahāmudra as we know it today is largely the creation of Gampopa (following the opinion of the famed 13th century Drugpa Kagyu master, Yang gong pa).

As far as Longde goes, well, Dzeng Dharmabodhi lived in Lhodrak and had close connections with Kagyus living in that region. In terms of the famous posture of Milarepa, it could either be a Longde posture or the position used in the practice called "vajra waves."

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 8th, 2015 at 9:15 PM

Title: Re: Undifferentiated consciousness and non-duality

Content:

Herbie said:

Actually subject-object non-duality is an undeniable fact. Why? Because every conscious event is just a representation of neuronal processes.

Malcolm wrote:

So say the physicalists.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 8th, 2015 at 9:57 PM

Title: Re: Undifferentiated consciousness and non-duality

Content:

Herbie said:

Actually subject-object non-duality is an undeniable fact. Why? Because every conscious event is just a representation of neuronal processes.

Malcolm wrote:

So say the physicalists.

Herbie said:
Whatever that means...

Malcolm wrote:
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Physicalism>

Herbie said:
I'd prefer "scientists".

Malcolm wrote:
Daniel Dennet is not a scientist, though he claims to be. He is a philosopher.

Thomas Nagle's new book, Mind and Cosmos: why the materialist neo-Darwinian conception of nature is almost certainly false, gives people like Dennet, Dawkins and so on a very good run for their money.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Monday, June 8th, 2015 at 10:56 PM
Title: Re: Historical relation of Dzogchen and Mahamudra
Content:
tingdzin said:
Well, Dzoki and Malcolm, what about the Gesar bards, then? Were they also all Dzogchenpas?

Malcolm wrote:
Did they have Gesar bards in the 12th century?

Now that you mention it, Dzogchen is pretty wrapped up in the Gesar tradition too...

Author: Malcolm
Date: Monday, June 8th, 2015 at 11:18 PM
Title: Re: How effective are liberation-upon-seeing dharma doors?
Content:
tomschwarz said:
There is no magic no buddha god out there to make these liberation practices work. The dynamics that we are working on with buddhist practice are dynamics of the mind, right? Does anyone disagree?

Malcolm wrote:
They function because dependent origination is profound. For example, the six syllables in my signature are in reality the phonemic manifestation of the 6 buddhas in the six realms. Whoever sees or hears them will have implanted a cause for liberation.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 9th, 2015 at 12:17 AM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

Wayfarer said:

But from a perspective outside this long dispute, both have something in common, such as the understanding of the 'eternal round of birth and death' within which beings are trapped due to avidya.

Malcolm wrote:

The concepts of reincarnation in Advaita and Buddhadharma could not be more different. The notion of what constitutes avidyā are also different.

Wayfarer said:

Whilst you can acknowledge that there are differences, the differences are here depicted as absolute, and the adversaries depicted (and belittled) as 'enemies' and 'idiots'.

Malcolm wrote:

" Frauds and idiots ", not enemies and idiots.

Wayfarer said:

I guess in the context of several millenia of debate, that is understandable, but I don't know if it makes sense in the context of 'the global village' that we are now obliged to live in.

Malcolm wrote:

There are room for debate and disagreement in the global village, at least I hope so.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 9th, 2015 at 5:16 AM

Title: Re: How effective are liberation-upon-seeing dharma doors?

Content:

tomschwarz said:

There is no magic no buddha god out there to make these liberation practices work. The dynamics that we are working on with buddhist practice are dynamics of the mind, right? Does anyone disagree?

Malcolm wrote:

They function because dependent origination is profound. For example, the six syllables in my signature are in reality the phonemic manifestation of the 6 buddhas in the six realms. Whoever sees or hears them will have implanted a cause for liberation.

Jesse said:

They don't show up. I only see x's. Ppl need to either install the font your using or the webmaster has to install it on the fileserver.

An easier method would just be to make an image of it and uplod it then link the image.

Malcolm wrote:

Load tibetan machine web font

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 9th, 2015 at 9:12 PM

Title: Re: Daka and Dakini

Content:

waimengwan said:

Can people be reborn as a Daka or Dakini? If yes what is the cause for that?

Or that is only something tantrikas can learn about ?

Thanks

Tsongkhapafan said:

No, it's not a rebirth, it's a state of realisation. Dakas and Dakinis are male and female Tantric enlightened beings.

Malcolm wrote:

Not all *ḍākas* and *ḍākinīs* are realized. Like any class of beings, some are realized and some are not. So called *lokaḍākinīs*, worldly *ḍākinīs*, are not realized.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 9th, 2015 at 9:58 PM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

With all due respect, David:

For example, leading Indologist Hajime Nakamura in his influential book, *A History of Early Vedānta Philosophy*, devotes forty pages to the question of *ṛṣikara*'s date.³¹

Before setting out his own theory that "he probably lived, roughly, 700-750 [C.E.],"

<http://www.easterntertradition.org/original%20sankaracarya.pdf>

I myself read the text in question, but unfortunately, I cannot pull up the page number now from google books. However, in *The Role of Divine Grace in the Soteriology of Śaṅkarācārya*, on page two my assertion is confirmed. Moreover, Ingalls notes:

The dates A.D. 788-820, which have been widely accepted for *Ṛṣa^mkara* in the past, must be pushed back. A detailed and scholarly treatment of the subject will be found in the first volume of Hajime Nakamura's Japanese work *Shooki no Vedaanta Tetsugaku*

(Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1950), pp 63-121. The early limit for `Sa^mkara is the date of Dharmakiirti, whom `Sa^mkara quotes in the Upade`sa-saahasrii, K.r.s.na `Saastrii Navare, ed. (Bombay: Jagadishvara Press, 1886), XVIII.142. Dharmakiirti rose to fame between the visits to India of Hsuan Tsang and I Ching, that is, between A.D. 634 and 673. The later limit is given by two sets of facts. (A) `Sa^mkara's pupil Sure`svara is quoted by Vidyaananda, who must have lived slightly before A.D. 800. See Pathak in "Bhart.rhari and Kumaarila," Journal of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society, XVIII (1894), 225-229. (B) There must be at least two generations between `Sa^mkara and Vaacaspati Mi`sra, who wrote the Nyaaya-suucii-nibandha in A.D. 841. The generations, on Nakamura's showing (op. cit., p. 89 and p. 98, note 12), are: `Sa^mkara, `Sriivatsaa^nka. Bhaaskara, Vaacaspati. Nakamura bases this at least in part on Yamuna's Siddhi-traya. Chowkhamba Snaskrit Series Work No. 10(Benares: Chowkhamba Sanskrit Book Depot, 1900), p. 6. One can prove the same result perhaps more surely by taking the following sequence: `Sa^mkara, Padmapaada, and Sure`svara, Bhaaskara, Vaacaspati. For evidence that Bhaaskara is later than `Sa^mkara's pupils Padmapaada and Sure`svara, see note 4 below.
<http://enlight.lib.ntu.edu.tw/FULLTEXT/JR-PHIL/ew27155.htm>

So, I gotta to stick to my guns. We know for a fact that Śāntarakṣita was present in Tibet by 773, Frauwallner gives Śāntarakṣita's dates as 725-788, and we know he spent the last fifteen years of his life in Tibet. Kamalaśīla (fl. 740–795) accompanied him. It is extremely likely then that the Tattvasaṃgraha commentary was composed in Tibet, if not the original text.

David Reigle said:

Śāntarakṣita devoted verses 171-327 of his Tattva-saṃgraha to a critique of a permanent, personal ātman held by five different Indian schools, typically an ātman that is a karṭṛ, “doer,” and/or a bhokṭṛ, “experiencer.” When he arrived at the Advaita [Vedānta] idea of the universal or non-dual ātman, his comments were few (verses 328-335), and respectful. Even there, the ātman that he refuted was the jñāna/vijñāna-ātman, a cognizer that is permanent, not the parama-ātman that Śāṅkarācārya would later teach. .

Malcolm wrote:

H. Nakamura holds that Śāṅkarācārya is earlier than Śāntarakṣita, that is, prior to 750 CE.

As far as your other statement goes, 1) Kamashila specifically identifies this as the position of the Advaitans [གཞིས་མེད་པར་རྒྱ་བ], followers of the Upanishads [གསང་བ་པ་རྒྱ་མས], i.e. Vedantins.

There is no substantial difference with what is presented here and Śāṅkarā's thought: Dakshinamurti-Stotra-With-Manasollasa.tiff

15. Consciousness is of two kinds: Nirvikalpaka or the undifferentiated consciousness illumines the Thing itself, while Savikalpa or the differentiated consciousness is

manifold as illumining the designations, etc.
<http://sacred-texts.com/hin/dast/index.htm>

Therefore, when Śāntarakṣita says their error is slight, he actually is saying their error is huge for proposing that consciousness, something impermanent, is permanent.

One can hardly read this text as any thing other than refutation of the parama-ātma postulated by Śaṅkarā.

David Reigle said:

First, I would just note that the intent of my few posts here at Dharma Wheel is to give information, e.g., about a new book, or about what it says. I do not wish to engage in arguments, or to appear disrespectful, especially to Malcolm. For the last couple days I have been trying to figure out how to reply to this post, or even if to reply to it. I cannot see a good solution. I do not want to seem like an ungrateful guest to his hosts, or to seem like I am arguing. At the same time, I feel a certain responsibility to Hajime Nakamura. So I will merely make the following statement and bow out, hoping that it will not be inappropriate here.

Hajime Nakamura regarded Śāntarakṣita as prior to Śaṅkarācārya. In his book, A History of Early Vedānta Philosophy, in the section on The Vedānta Philosophy Reported by Śāntarakṣita and Kamalaśīla, pp. 221-257, he gives considerable evidence showing this.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 9th, 2015 at 11:30 PM

Title: Re: Ex Machina (movie)

Content:

Jikan said:

I was at a conference last week where Jack Petranker (see below) presented an interesting analysis of this film. I haven't seen it, so I can only go with what he gave here. The gist of his argument is that Ex Machina gives a case study in how samsara reproduces itself. Garbage In, Garbage Out: the afflictions of the AI's maker are reproduced in the AI, and everyone suffers for it. Even their attempts at freedom serve only to tighten the knot. Important insight I think.

<http://www.mangalamresearch.org/about-mrc/people/>

Malcolm wrote:

And why is that lately A.I's are always cute girls? (Chappie being an exception)

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, June 10th, 2015 at 1:39 AM

Title: Re: Historical relation of Dzogchen and Mahamudra

Content:

tingdzin said:

Thank you, Dzogchungpa; I've read the article. By the way, it calls to mind a difference in point of view between CNNR and Trungpa Rinpoche: The former insisted that sgra bla was the proper Tibetan spelling of "drala", and ties it in with the principle of sound (in "Drung, De'u and Bon"). CTR, after Mipham, says it's dgra bla, meaning "above the enemy".

Most Bonpo books agree with CNNR, while in most Buddhist sources, its spelled a third way: dgra lha.

Anyway, if you want to believe that most Gesar bards were Dzogchenpas, feel free. I just introduced the idea so that people could know there is more than one school of thought about the hand-to-the-ear gesture.

Malcolm wrote:

I don't necessarily believe that -- I just don't believe that Mila's posture lacks yogic significance, whether it is klong sde or vajra waves.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, June 10th, 2015 at 1:41 AM

Title: Re: Ganesh in Tibetan Buddhism

Content:

WeiHan said:

All the while, I have the understanding that any one practice in the Sakya 13 golden Dharmas can be taken alone as a sole path to enlightenment. and that include of course the 12 arms Maharakta Ganapati that has its source with Cakrasamvara Tantra.

Mr. G said:

Yes, it comes from the Cakrasamvara tantra, but Ganapati is a worldly deity. Why do you think it can be relied upon as a sole path to enlightenment? If it is a sole path to enlightenment, why does one generate oneself into an enlightened deity at the beginning of the practice? Do you think the sole practice of any worldly deity leads to enlightenment?

WeiHan said:

There are quite a few enlightened deity practices which require one to generate as another enlightened Yidam but that doesn't mean the front creation deity isn't enlightened. An example will be Namtose, in some practice, it requires one to generate as Vajrapani for example.

In certain enlightened protectors sadhanas, such as Mahakala, Ekajati etc...it also require a self creation into a powerful enlightened Yidam so that these enlightened protectors will performed one's wished Dharma activities.

Malcolm wrote:

But there are also Sadhana where one arises as the protector, for example, the famous

Vajra Cliff Fortress practice of Mahakala in Sakya. IN general all enlightened protectors have self generation as well.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, June 10th, 2015 at 3:31 AM

Title: Re: Ganesh in Tibetan Buddhism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

But there are also Sadhana where one arises as the protector, for example, the famous Vajra Cliff Fortress practice of Mahakala in Sakya. IN general all enlightened protectors have self generation as well.

WeiHan said:

Yes. The point is that requirement for oneself to generate as another wisdom Yidam doesn't disqualify the front creation deity as an enlightened emanation.

Malcolm wrote:

The real point is that Ganapati is a worldly protector.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, June 10th, 2015 at 5:08 AM

Title: Re: Ganesh in Tibetan Buddhism

Content:

conebeckham said:

So, is the "Empowerment" really an empowerment, or more of a permission or entrustment.....??

Malcolm wrote:

It is a jenang.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, June 10th, 2015 at 5:09 AM

Title: Re: Ganesh in Tibetan Buddhism

Content:

Jikan said:

Am I alone in seeing a particular subtext at work here?

Malcolm wrote:

Yup.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, June 10th, 2015 at 5:32 AM

Title: Re: Ex Machina (movie)

Content:

Jikan said:

Fair enough, but in terms of spectator entertainment (film, television, &c) events like mixed martial arts and professional wrestling are hugely popular among the gents, and the only thing more homoerotic than that on a screen is straight-ahead gay porn.

Malcolm wrote:

Which brings up the question — is Caitlyn Jenner a lesbian?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, June 10th, 2015 at 7:43 PM

Title: Re: Ganesh in Tibetan Buddhism

Content:

WeiHan said:

Then why is it during the Jenang, 12 arms red Ganapati was introduced as an emanation of Avalokiteshvara?

Is it the official view in Sakya or is it that even in Sakya there are two differing views?

Malcolm wrote:

Shiva is also considered an emanation of Avalokiteshvara, still Shiva is a worldly protector.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, June 10th, 2015 at 9:08 PM

Title: Re: Historical relation of Dzogchen and Mahamudra

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

I am of the personal opinion that Kagyu Mahāmudra as we know it today is largely the creation of Gampopa (following the opinion of the famed 13th century Drugpa Kagyu master, Yang gong pa).

sherabpa said:

It would be more correct to describe it as systematization than creation, i.e. he didn't just make it up: mahamudra is based on the sutras and tantras like everything else. And like everything else, it has some controversial aspects to it. People make a lot of fuss over them, but I can't see why. Sapan said much more devastating things about Gampopa's Dorje Phakmo tradition but when do you hear about that?

Malcolm wrote:

His four yogas of Mahāmudra is completely his own innovation, according Yangongpa.

As far as the Vārāhī blessings in Kagyu, Sakyapas talk about it a lot. Kagyus, not so much since it is their system. The Kagyu defense is that the Vārāhī blessing is for those of sharper faculties. The Sakyapas don't buy this reasoning. Personally, I am neutral.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, June 10th, 2015 at 9:35 PM

Title: Re: Undifferentiated consciousness and non-duality

Content:

Herbie said:

Hmh ... Maybe you can explain why my expression "Because every conscious event is just a representation of neuronal processes." makes you associate an "ontological thesis that 'everything is physical'" ?

Malcolm wrote:

Is there something that is not physical, in your view?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, June 11th, 2015 at 7:48 PM

Title: Re: Ganesh in Tibetan Buddhism

Content:

WeiHan said:

Unfortunately, my curiosity leads to probe further and I find that Maharakta Ganapati is in the sakra Refuge tree.

As far as I know, unenlightened protectors or deities will never be included in the refuge tree but here he is there, lowest row of protector, leftmost

<http://sakyamedia.jugiter.net/foto/Refugetree/index.html#>

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, and there are several other worldly protectors shown there as well, for example the Cittipatis.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, June 12th, 2015 at 1:11 AM

Title: Re: Ganesh in Tibetan Buddhism

Content:

WeiHan said:

Unfortunately, my curiosity leads to probe further and I find that Maharakta Ganapati is in the sakra Refuge tree.

As far as I know, unenlightened protectors or deities will never be included in the refuge tree but here he is there, lowest row of protector, leftmost

<http://sakyamedia.jugiter.net/foto/Refugetree/index.html#>

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, and there are several other worldly protectors shown there as well, for example the Cittipatis.

WeiHan said:

Cittipatis is worldly?

My next question is that then why are they in the refuge tree?

Malcolm wrote:

Because they are emanations of Heruka.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, June 12th, 2015 at 2:28 AM

Title: Re: Ganesh in Tibetan Buddhism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Because they are emanations of Heruka.

WeiHan said:

Are we also taking refuge in them in general but not primarily?

Malcolm wrote:

We do not directly take refuge in them, but since they are activities of awakened beings, they can be included in the refuge field.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, June 12th, 2015 at 11:16 PM

Title: Re: Article - "I'm a liberal professor..."

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Shameless plug:

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, June 13th, 2015 at 9:21 AM

Title: Mad Max: Fury Road

Content:

Malcolm wrote:
Must. See.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, June 13th, 2015 at 10:00 PM

Title: Re: Mad Max: Fury Road — Spoilers

Content:

Kim O'Hara said:

To paraphrase someone who worked on it, "If you want a great action movie, go see it. If you want anything more - like a good story, for instance - forget it."

Malcolm wrote:

The fundamental story is the overthrow of a mercantilist patriarchal triumvirate, setting the stage for the rise of a matriarchal seed-saving society in the Wasteland.

Foremost, it is quest movie. Second of all, it is a chase movie. Third of all, it is an action film. Overall, it is another chapter in Miller's stunning post-apocalyptic vision. While nothing could ever recapture the sheer purity of the Road Warrior, this movie stands on its own in every way.

While there was no script, there was a story. The movie itself was composed in over 3000 story boards, making a huge graphic novel. Not only is there a story for every actor, a back story, which each actor was filled in on; every car, truck, town and so on was given a backstory upon which set was constructed and upon which the actors improvised their dialogue, as minimal as dialogue is in this film. If you know anything of theater history, you will remember Antonine Artaud's "Theatre of Cruelty" with it's emphasis on mise en scène.

Also, Miller very cleverly divided up the three things that characterize modern economics; oil, weapons and agriculture into three communities, i.e. Gastown, the Bullet Farm and the Citadel. As someone concerned with the environment, Kim, you should understand this movie is very much about environmentalism and the consequences of not treating our planet well.

The actual movie itself — a quest to find The Green Place, Furiosa's home, from which she was kidnapped — is only a very small part of a much bigger story.

Furiosa escapes with Immortal Joe's wives to find the green place. There is a tremendous chase, but Max and Furiosa (having become allies) succeed in escaping Immortal Joe and his allies by losing them in a swamp, called the Place of Crows. After discovering some old biker women, the Vulvalini, who had turned to banditry in the Waste Land to survive, they inform Furiosa that the Green Place of her childhood had become tainted and vanished, turning into the place where they had lost Immortal Joe and his army, the Place of Crows. You should understand that Furiosa and her mother had been kidnapped from the Vulvalini and the Green Place when she was a small child

by Immortal Joe. The Vulvalini had saved seeds, their most precious possession. Furiosa and the Vulvalini decide to try and cross the salt flats to find a new green place, but with Max's encouragement, they realize that they have no idea what they will find 160 miles across the salt flats, so they turn around to take on Immortal Joe and his minions, eventually taking over the citadel itself.

That is the story.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, June 13th, 2015 at 11:12 PM

Title: Re: Mad Max: Fury Road

Content:

Jikan said:

I agree with Malcolm.

one detail, though: it's not 160 miles across the salt flats, it's 160 DAYS across the salt flats. What are those salt flats? I can only guess they are what used to be the oceans. they had resolved to ride, effectively, from Victoria, Australia to Peru or so (hence the long ride).

Malcolm wrote:

You are right, my bad.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, June 14th, 2015 at 12:08 AM

Title: Re: Mad Max: Fury Road

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

Vulvalini?

Malcolm wrote:

<http://theladiesfinger.com/bechdel-testing-mad-max-fury-road/>

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, June 14th, 2015 at 12:20 AM

Title: Re: Mad Max: Fury Road

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

Vulvalini?

Malcolm wrote:

<http://theladiesfinger.com/bechdel-testing-mad-max-fury-road/>

dzogchungpa said:

Oh, I see, it's actually 'Vuvalini'. 'Vulvalini' would have been amusing, though.

<http://time.com/3850323/mad-max-fury-road-eve-ensler-feminist/>

Malcolm wrote:

No:

The plot leads us to the women and the two male allies finding the many mothers of Vulvalini (Vulva + Kundalini?), who once ran the green land. Due to the climate, the land has since been destroyed and only five of them have survived. They are bike-riding, gun-shooting old women who maintain a bag filled with various seeds that can be planted once they find the right patch of land. This is also where the film almost passes the Bechdel Test – the Keeper of the seeds and Dag have a conversation about the seeds and hope. Why almost? Because we never learn the name of the Keeper of the Seeds. Update: appears to be a common error, but I swore in the credits they were cast as the Vulvalini.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, June 14th, 2015 at 12:39 AM

Title: Re: POLL on knowing conservatives

Content:

Simon E. said:

This.

Life just aint black and white...I, for example am anti-capital punishment and have a pragmatic view of abortion. I think the west has a debt to its former colonies and a moral obligation to the third world..

But I also think that capitalism is the best of a number of bad ideologies.

Life is not simple and the world does not function by the logical , or by what is ' fair '..

Malcolm wrote:

Unfortunately, there are no market solutions to our environmental crisis, no market solutions to global warming, the extinction event, etc. Capitalism has failed us every bit as much as Socialism failed.

If we human beings do not get our collective shit together, our children will be living in an environmental hell of their parents making.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, June 14th, 2015 at 1:49 AM

Title: Re: POLL on knowing conservatives

Content:

Simon E. said:

But markets do not cause that environmental hell either..the biggest polluter on the

planet is a socialist republic.

Malcolm wrote:

Capital markets are causing environmental hell around the world, that is precisely the point.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, June 14th, 2015 at 2:17 AM

Title: Re: POLL on knowing conservatives

Content:

Simon E. said:

Well I suppose that's no better or worse than any other fantasy. But fantasy it is.(Urgyen Dorje) You have picked the wrong species on the wrong planet and left out the nature of the way that dependant origination unfolds.

As I see it there are only two alternatives..we make capitalism work for the many..or we kiss our bums goodbye.

Malcolm wrote:

The present environmental disaster, 200 years in the making, was caused by industrial capitalism. Why would anyone think the cause is the solution? Our descendants are going to be dealing with this for another 1000 years.

There are things we are manufacturing today that will not decompose in many thousands of years, if at all.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, June 14th, 2015 at 7:45 PM

Title: Re: POLL on knowing conservatives

Content:

seeker242 said:

I don't know how to vote because I don't know what "conservative" even means. For example, if a person is fiscally very conservative and socially very liberal, what are they?

Malcolm wrote:

Massachusetts Republican.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, June 14th, 2015 at 7:56 PM

Title: Re: Mad Max: Fury Road

Content:

Kim O'Hara said:

Okay ... I am happy that you are enjoying it, whatever your reasons and whatever its

qualities ...

BUT (some of you saw that coming, I hope) (1) most of your comments have just reinforced my opinion that most of you don't read enough science fiction to be able to rate the depth or originality of the plot* and (2) it still doesn't sound like a movie I will ever choose to watch.

* that was a problem with Avatar, too. Visuals 4.5 stars out of 5, originality 0.5 stars, and hardly anyone noticed.

Malcolm wrote:

As someone who has primarily read science fiction for entertainment for the past 45 years, I should point out that movies are not books. They are an entirely different genre.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, June 14th, 2015 at 8:12 PM

Title: Re: Mad Max: Fury Road

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

As someone who has primarily read science fiction for entertainment for the past 45 years, I should point out that movies are not books. They are an entirely different genre.

daverupa said:

Frank Herbert's Dune and then that... that hideous movie...

Mad Max: Arrakeen Road? Drive without rhythm...

Malcolm wrote:

Hideous indeed.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, June 14th, 2015 at 9:16 PM

Title: Re: Mad Max: Fury Road

Content:

Jikan said:

Fury Road would make a really stupid book. It's a delightful action movie. It's not great cinema.

Malcolm wrote:

On the contrary, it is great cinema. It is technically one of the most well-edited, well-shot, well-planned, well-executed movies of all time.

This is movie has raised the technical bar. Directors are no longer going to be able to get away with CGI everything.

450 hours of filming, 3000+ plus hours of editing, all boiled down into 120 minutes. This says it all:

Here five things I can't believe Miller was allowed to do:

- Have Max be the sidekick in his own film.
- Hire Nicholas Hoult, one of Hollywood's youngest, most attractive stars, then shave his head, paint him bone white, and have him play a character with disgusting chapped lips for the entire movie.
- Get rid of Max's iconic car in the first few minutes of the flick.
- Ignore conventional action movie structure in order to present one giant, two-hour long car chase.
- Give the main villain a name that will confuse every one all the time, because they assume there's been some kind of error and the character's real name must be "Immortal Joe."

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, June 14th, 2015 at 9:25 PM

Title: Re: New Zealand recognizes all animals as sentient beings

Content:

Simon E. said:

Well they can be as PC as all get out. But the exporting of lamb to be killed for halal meat will no doubt continue to be a big national income generator.

Malcolm wrote:

"New Zealand, where men are men and sheep are afraid....", as an old Kiwi room mate of mine was fond of repeating.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 15th, 2015 at 12:34 AM

Title: Re: POLL on knowing conservatives

Content:

Nicholas Weeks said:

The main reasons for the poll are to try & get a little insight into the de-personalization of life in this polarized, media driven era. So far, the 20 plus folks do get away from DW screen enough to have contacts with conservative people directly.

Malcolm wrote:

I am a conservative person, religiously speaking. Politically however, I am neither liberal nor conservative, since I think these are false and unhelpful divisions. Many so called conservatives that I know would radically eviscerate environmental protections and so on., and general speaking abandon the "status quo" in the favor of radical policies that benefit only the ultra wealthy.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 15th, 2015 at 4:36 AM

Title: Re: Decreasing attention spans.

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

I have some experience with that actually. My first Tibetan teacher taught me to use the THDL translation tools. That was sort of cool. I could type in Wylie and get something I could try to gloss. My subsequent teacher was a linguist instead of a anthropologist/historian and he'd have none of that and he'd show me why glosses with THDL were robbing me from learning the language.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, too many mistakes are perpetuated by using the Valby/Rangjung Yeshe dictionary.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 15th, 2015 at 7:41 PM

Title: Re: Mantra Liberation Through Hearing ("Ha Gan Ga")

Content:

Lobsang said:

Thanks,

but maybe HE thinks that it (to hear a recorded recitation) is enough,

so I am interested if that's true. Also,

Lama Zopa Rinpoche claimed similar for the Golden Light Sutra transmission by help of a video recording of his personal transmission.

So, I am interested in that - if HE Gyaltsab Rinpoche really said that, and if I agree with that or not, due to my understanding or nonunderstanding of it is another topic...

Cheers!

Malcolm wrote:

Sutras do not require lungs at all.

You cannot receive a lung through a recording. It is not a matter of opinion.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 15th, 2015 at 7:51 PM

Title: Re: Undifferentiated consciousness and non-duality

Content:

Herbie said:

I understand that you want to elaborate and express your ideas my words do cause but really, all I have been saying is that "every conscious event is just a representation of neuronal processes."

Malcolm wrote:

Right, and that makes you a materialist and not a Buddhist.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 15th, 2015 at 8:06 PM

Title: Re: Mantra Liberation Through Hearing ("Ha Gan Ga")

Content:

Lobsang said:

Why do you think it is like that? Could you explain?

What's the logic behind it?

Thanks!

Malcolm wrote:

A recording is not a person. It has no mind and no discrimination.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 15th, 2015 at 8:33 PM

Title: Re: POLL on knowing conservatives

Content:

PadmeSamadhi said:

I do hope my post create some controversies here, since I am a libertarian I have no side, right or left.

Malcolm wrote:

You clearly have a "side". Just read your own post.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 15th, 2015 at 9:33 PM

Title: Re: POLL on knowing conservatives

Content:

PadmeSamadhi said:

I do hope my post create some controversies here, since I am a libertarian I have no side, right or left.

Malcolm wrote:

You clearly have a "side". Just read your own post.

PadmeSamadhi said:

That's true, but my side it is not left or right.

This is the Nolan diagram

Malcolm wrote:

I see, you are an "upist" as opposed to a "downist", it is still a side though.

BTW, this is the original:

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 15th, 2015 at 10:42 PM

Title: Re: POLL on knowing conservatives

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

In general, two books are required reading here: A Theory of Justice by Rawls, and the response to it, Anarchy, State and Utopia by Nozick.

The opening paragraph of the former books states:

Each person possesses an inviolability founded on justice that even the welfare of society as a whole cannot override. For this reason justice denies that the loss of freedom for some is made right by a greater good shared by others.

RAWLS, John (2009-06-30). A THEORY OF JUSTICE (ORIG EDN) (Oxford Paperbacks 301 301) (pp. 3-4). Harvard University Press. Kindle Edition.

In the concluding paragraph of the latter book, Nozick declares:

The minimal state treats us as inviolate individuals, who may not be used in certain ways by others as means or tools or instruments or resources; it treats us as persons having individual rights with the dignity this constitutes. Treating us with respect by respecting our rights, it allows us, individually or with whom we choose, to choose our life and to realize our ends and our conception of ourselves, insofar as we can, aided by the voluntary cooperation of other individuals possessing the same dignity. How dare any state or group of individuals do more. Or less.

Nozick, Robert (2013-11-12). Anarchy, State, and Utopia (pp. 333-334). Basic Books. Kindle Edition.

Finally, an important question is asked by Rawl's Political Liberalism:

[H]ow is it possible for there to exist over time a just and stable society of free and equal citizens, who remain profoundly divided by reasonable religious, philosophical, and

moral doctrines? The most intractable struggles, political liberalism assumes, are confessedly for the sake of the highest things: for religion, for philosophical views of the world, and for different moral conceptions of the good.

Rawls, John (2011-02-10). *Political Liberalism: Expanded Edition* (Columbia Classics in Philosophy) (p. 4). Columbia University Press. Kindle Edition.

Jikan said:

I'd like to flesh out that previous post a bit further, because now that I read it, I see that it's written in academese and I don't want to cause confusion.

Here's a useful blog post by a capable thinker on some of the problems with how the concept of "freedom" is articulated in contemporary libertarian discourse vis a vis the state.

<https://rationallyspeaking.blogspot.com/2012/07/fundamental-contradiction-of.html>

As is well known, the core idea of libertarian philosophy is the preservation of the maximum amount of freedom possible. Though the concept seems, in practice, to be limited to the freedom of employers, we will give the libertarian the benefit of the doubt and assume he really does mean freedom for all; which is what immediately generates the fundamental and, as far as I can see, inescapable contradiction of the libertarian doctrine.

The crucial problem is that one simply cannot have freedom without limiting freedom. I know, it sounds like an oxymoron, but in fact libertarians themselves acknowledge its truth. Libertarians are not anarchists, and they understand that individual freedom is maximized only by the presence of a government that regulates the rules of engagement among people (otherwise we are back to a Hobbesian war of all against all). So, for instance, no libertarian would argue that the possibility of charges of murder are an impediment to your freedom to kill me. That's because if you do kill me, my freedom is going to be (terminally, as it were) limited.

The same goes for your freedom to steal from me, obviously. So we already have two fundamental rights — to life and property — that do require government regulation, or our existence is going to be nasty, brutish, short and all the rest. Curiously, these also happen to be the only two kinds of freedom that libertarians acknowledge. But why? Our society recognizes additional freedoms that libertarians would find hard to object to in principle, and indeed, they strenuously defend when they perceive them to be threatened by government action. Freedom of speech and of action (e.g., how, when and with whom to have sex), to name just a couple.

And that's where the problem becomes obvious. Why, exactly, is it objectionable for the government to infringe on these liberties, but not for a private employer? In case you doubt — or, like most Americans, are simply unaware of — the fact that employers routinely do infringe in an entirely arbitrary manner on our personal freedom...

The rest of the post is very much worth reading. For now, it suffices to point out that freedom is not equally distributed to all--far from it--and the state is not the reason why.

My employer articulates his freedom precisely by limiting and delimiting mine. When a mayor or governor or Senator does that, I can mobilize the vote to get him or her out. This is not typically possible in the workplace. (and a kneejerk "get another job bozo!" is no counterargument to this.)

Put differently, "freedom" as defined by libertarians is often freedom's opposite.

I would like to know from our libertarian friends here at DW what they think freedom means in this context. Again: freedom for whom, and to do what?

it might also be worthwhile to explore the assumptions about the self in liberal / neoliberal / libertarian economic theory, and compare/contrast those with Buddhism 101.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 15th, 2015 at 11:19 PM

Title: Re: POLL on knowing conservatives

Content:

Simon E. said:

Frankly I think the whole thread has degenerated into Pseuds Corner and pointedheaded one-upmanship. And the fact that it is being conducted on the pages of a Buddhist forum is merely incidental. It could have been lifted from any part of the internet where opining is the default activity.

No amount of analysis or displacement or substitution is going to fix samsara.

Malcolm wrote:

Well, if people would read people like Rawls and Nozick, at least they would have some basis to discuss these issues in a coherent manner.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 15th, 2015 at 11:34 PM

Title: Re: Mantra Liberation Through Hearing ("Ha Gan Ga")

Content:

Lhasa said:

Garchen Rinpoche recently deliberately recorded a transmission and said that one had received it by watching the recording and that one also could give that transmission.

Malcolm wrote:

No. You have misunderstood everything. Such a transmission is impossible. It is no more possible to give a lung via a recording than it is for the Buddhas to remove your suffering with their hands.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 15th, 2015 at 11:40 PM

Title: Re: POLL on knowing conservatives

Content:

Simon E. said:

And in terms of Dharma, the result discussing these issues in a coherent manner would be....?

I believe I have may met the occasional Lama who was completely ignorant of Ayn Rand.

Malcolm wrote:

Ayn Rand was an idiot — barring that aside, these sorts of issues are secular, and in India, such texts written by Buddhist authors were rare, though not non-existent.

The point I am making is that these political categories (conservative, liberal, right, left) are erected without really having a detailed understanding of the competing philosophies underlying such discussions, a long conversation going to back to Socrates, Aristotle, and so on.

In modern secular ethics, Rawls and Nozick are two of the most important voices in this discussion.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 16th, 2015 at 12:22 AM

Title: Re: Mantra Liberation Through Hearing ("Ha Gan Ga")

Content:

Lobsang said:

that's not an explanation, that's a statement. For example, what I asked is to add 'an explanation' as in:

"It is not possible, because the lung is --- definition of lung here --- , and since a recording does not fulfill that condition, then it is not possible. But not to write 'it is not human, it doesn't have discrimination', since that is not enough. For cooking a lunch you also need discrimination, but that doesn't make it equivalent to a lung. So, what IS a Lung? What makes it possible ONLY by a human (and maybe some other being) and not 'by sound waves'?

Without an explanation like that, we're still in the 'I know and you don't' sphere.

And also, this as an example:

<http://fpmt.org/education/teachings/sutras/golden-light-sutra/#receivetransmission>

Malcolm wrote:

A recording has no consciousness, it therefore has no will, it therefore cannot act, it therefore cannot give a lung. This is not a complicated principle.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 16th, 2015 at 12:28 AM

Title: Re: POLL on knowing conservatives

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

Political ecology is something personal to me, so I apologize if I've contributed to the thread inappropriately. From Malcolm's prompt, it seems I should have been having this discussion from a specific philosophical vantage point. Maybe I'll get those books and read them.

Malcolm wrote:

Not at all, you have a philosophical vantage point, but these issues are not easy.

For example, there is a train track and there is a split in the track. You are standing at the switch. There is a runaway train. On track A there is one person. On track B, a work crew. You have no time to alert either. If you do nothing, the work crew all die. If you save them, the person on track A dies.

What do you do?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 16th, 2015 at 12:46 AM

Title: Re: POLL on knowing conservatives

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Not at all, you have a philosophical vantage point, but these issues are not easy.

For example, there is a train track and there is a split in the track. You are standing at the switch. There is a runaway train. On track A there is one person. On track B, a work crew. You have no time to alert either. If you do nothing, the work crew all die. If you save them, the person on track A dies.

What do you do?

dzogchungpa said:

Maybe these will help?

<http://www.dhammadawheel.com/viewtopic.php?t=8528>

<http://blogs.dickinson.edu/buddhistethics/2014/01/05/the-trolley-car-dilemma/>

Malcolm wrote:

It does not help at all, since Pandita frames the question in entirely Hinayāna terms. He

claims that Buddhist values are absolute, and this just isn't so.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 16th, 2015 at 12:57 AM

Title: Re: POLL on knowing conservatives

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

Trolley car dilemma. With no other knowledge, you save as many people as possible.

The environmental train-wreck upon us is a bit different.

Malcolm wrote:

Indeed, and it may be too late.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 16th, 2015 at 1:06 AM

Title: Re: Mantra Liberation Through Hearing ("Ha Gan Ga")

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Everything you wrote here...

Lobsang said:

But it is if I have a notion of lung

as a transmission of energy, ie. sound, ie. vibration onto an energy system of a human or other being. In that conception I could think that just hearing a complex of vibrations may 'initiate' my energies. So that makes it complicated, that's why I asked you about a detailed description of lung, what it is, and if it is necessary to project the energy to a certain part of the student's energy system, or is it necessary to invoke Buddhas who in actuality then give you a lung, etcetera, etcetera...

As an inanimate sound of music can brake windows if it's too loud, as an inamite sound of music can

make my emotions different if it is in a certain 'proper' form, so I can think that a mantra recording

of a specific sound of a specific master can make my energy system different in a significant manner to

call it a lung. Or a master can have a siddhi to connect it with me, etcetera. Who knows; that's why I'm

asking.

Cheers.

Malcolm wrote:

...is a lot of complicated conceptual proliferation that has no basis whatsoever in the texts.

So, I really do not have anything more to add other than what I stated above.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 16th, 2015 at 1:29 AM

Title: Re: Mad Max: Fury Road

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Update: appears to be a common error, but I swore in the credits they were cast as the Vulvalini.

dzogchungpa said:

OK, you're off the hook.

BTW, I saw it yesterday and the credits do indeed say 'Vuvalini'. I would be surprised if the similarity to 'Vulvalini' was unintentional though.

Malcolm wrote:

And your other impressions?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 16th, 2015 at 2:22 AM

Title: Re: Mantra Liberation Through Hearing ("Ha Gan Ga")

Content:

Lobsang said:

Then it stands like your word 'vs' the words of Lama Zopa, HE Gyaltsab Rinpoche, Garchen Rinpoche, ...

But still there's no answer up here to my primary question - did HE Gyaltsab Rinpoche really state that?

Malcolm wrote:

Sutras DO NOT REQUIRE A LUNG.

There is no way a recording can bestow transmission, and I don't care who asserts the opposite.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 16th, 2015 at 2:45 AM

Title: Re: Mantra Liberation Through Hearing ("Ha Gan Ga")

Content:

Lobsang said:

But still you seem not to have an understanding of the process of lung transmission, so it is just that you believe and state something that you

don't understand, or I'm wrong?

Malcolm wrote:

You are wrong.

A "lung" happens when someone reads a text to you. It is a form of authorization to read a restricted text. It cannot be given by an inanimate object.

There is no "energy" or anything esoteric at all.

Sūtras, such as the Suvarnaprabhasa, do not require any transmission, reading or otherwise.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 16th, 2015 at 8:57 PM

Title: Re: POLL on knowing conservatives

Content:

Jikan said:

I was hoping to go back to Malcolm's important posts on Rawls and subsequent libertarian thought. What differentiates Rawls from thinkers like Nozick, Friedman, Hayek, von Mises, or G Becker, and hacks like Ayn Rand, is a theory of justice--of freedom articulated as justice, and not just as brand preference or the will to power.

Here's a useful summary:

All social primary goods - liberty and opportunity, income and wealth, and the bases of self-respect - are to be distributed equally unless an unequal distribution of any or all of these goods is to the advantage of the least favored.

much more here:

<http://www.ohio.edu/people/piccard/entropy/rawls.html>

Does this assume some means to guarantee the equal distribution of social goods to all?

Yes. And interestingly enough, that is what differentiates conservatism (think Edmund Burke) and leftist thought on one side from liberal / neoliberal / libertarian thought on the other. I mean to say that there are elements on the left and the right that agree on the fundamental problems with libertarian doctrine and practice, which goes right back to the poll that started this thread. Speaking personally, I find it a lot easier to enjoy a conversation with a reader of William Buckley than a reader of Milton Friedman or a consumer of Atlas Shrugged.

Finally, on Nozick: G.A. Cohen's persistent critiques of Nozick and other libertarian thinkers remain relevant, even twenty years later, because they haven't yet been adequately rebutted. Start here if you're interested.

<http://www.cambridge.org/US/academic/subjects/politics-international-relations/political-theory/self-ownership-freedom-and-equality>

Malcolm wrote:

I think that characterizing Nozick, and for the matter Hayek, as "libertarians" is short-sighted. Certainly libertarians who have misread these two guys have held them up as influences.

Hayek's main bugaboo is the planned economy, and his main observation is that a planned economy cannot fairly predict all needs, and therefore, it becomes defacto unethical favoritism; whereas in an unplanned economy, the chips fall where they may lay. However, it is not the case that Hayek was completely opposed to regulation, social programs and so on.

Nozick, it seems, was not very interested in defending his book on any level. Rawls and he were good friends, and I suspect that in Nozick's case, ASU was an intellectual exercise rather than a intellectual commitment. One interesting outcome of his book however, is that he asserts in ASU that we do not have the right to slaughter animals, and he apparently was himself a vegetarian.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, June 17th, 2015 at 1:35 AM

Title: Re: Decreasing attention spans.

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

I have some experience with that actually. My first Tibetan teacher taught me to use the THDL translation tools. That was sort of cool. I could type in Wylie and get something I could try to gloss. My subsequent teacher was a linguist instead of a anthropologist/historian and he'd have none of that and he'd show me why glosses with THDL were robbing me from learning the language.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, too many mistakes are perpetuated by using the Valby/Rangjung Yeshe dictionary.

kirtu said:

The Rangjung Yeshe dictionary is problematic?

Kirt

Malcolm wrote:

Of course. It is at best a collection of terms earlier translators have used. I use it, but only in conjunction with Alak Kankar's Tibetan - Tibetan dictionary.

One cannot produce a reliable translation solely using the Valby/Rangjung Yeshe dictionary.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, June 17th, 2015 at 2:48 AM

Title: Re: Exorcism for a nation

Content:

Nicholas Weeks said:

Things are so bad that exorcists are trying to expel some of the demonic forces from the entire nation of Mexico.

<http://www.ewtnnews.com/catholic-news/Americas.php?id=12235>

Malcolm wrote:

While in Mexico, I suggested to some Mexicans they needed to erect 108 stupas in the country. This would definitely pacify all problems in Mexico. As would erecting 108 stupas in the US.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, June 17th, 2015 at 4:24 AM

Title: Re: Exorcism for a nation

Content:

Nicholas Weeks said:

How many are in the USA now; how many in Mexico now?

Malcolm wrote:

Not so many in Mexico.

62 that I can count one page. They missed the one at Dzogchen Community in MA, so 63. Then there is the little stupa complex of William Cassidy. So may another 9 or so.

But what we need is a stupa project, where the stupas are sited geomantically.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, June 17th, 2015 at 4:25 AM

Title: Re: Maintaining Motivation

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

I like this piece of advice from ChNN's "Dzogchen: The Self-Perfected State": The Dzogchen teachings advise one never to force the condition of one's energy, but always to be aware of its limits in all the various circumstances one encounters. If at times one does not feel like sitting down to practice then one should avoid setting up a struggle against oneself. It could be that there is some problem of our energy that we don't know about behind our feeling like this. In such situations it is important to know how to relax, and how to give oneself space, in order not to block the progress of one's practice. Problems of loneliness, of depression, of mental confusion and so on, also often derive from an unbalanced condition of our energy.

Malcolm wrote:

And here he is talking rlung, vata, the air element in our bodies.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, June 17th, 2015 at 5:50 AM

Title: Re: Exorcism for a nation

Content:

Nicholas Weeks said:

How many are in the USA now; how many in Mexico now?

Malcolm wrote:

Not so many in Mexico.

62 that I can count one page. They missed the one at Dzogchen Community in MA, so 63. Then there is the little stupa complex of William Cassidy. So may another 9 or so.

kirtu said:

There are at least 69 (including some pagodas) and a few not counted. But the Garden of 1000 Buddhas in Montana has at least 20-40 more right now.

But what we need is a stupa project, where the stupas are sited geomantically.

Which is quite different from what you said above

Malcolm wrote:

As would erecting 108 stupas in the US.

kirtu said:

placement wrt geomancy we probably do not have.

Kirt

Malcolm wrote:

Right, my point was 108 erected as a deliberate project, not just random stupas here and there, along the lines of the 108 stupas erected by Songtsen Gampo.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, June 17th, 2015 at 5:59 AM

Title: Re: Exorcism for a nation

Content:

Norwegian said:

I think there's just one stupa in Norway...

Malcolm,

Changchub Dorje had a terma for the construction of 108 special stupas to avert the Chinese invasion of Tibet, and these were never built. But could they be built outside of

Tibet, and have a similar effect (on negativities)? Or do we need entirely new terms for this purpose, or are there specific stupas already existing that would be built according to how each location is (qualifications, properties, etc.)?

And while we're on the topic of stupas, how much does a stupa with its construction cost? I know it depends on size, type of stupa, how it's made, and so on, but does anybody have an estimate price from at least the lowest price possible while still having a fully qualified and effective stupa that fulfills its purpose, like for example the stupas of Changchub Dorje's stupa terma.

Malcolm wrote:

It was a time sensitive terma.

A proper stupa would cost at least \$50,000. So one would need \$5,400,000, not including the land, at minimum. That does not include zoning, permits, etc.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, June 17th, 2015 at 7:16 AM

Title: Re: Dropping Jesus

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

I recently encountered some rhetoric on this board that was so viscerally hateful of Christians and Christianity that it chilled my blood. It is something so contrary to my dharma experience and training that I couldn't get my mind around it. It kept me up at night.

Malcolm wrote:

As for myself, I am simply indifferent to Christianity. I find it weird the same way they find Buddhadharma weird. I cannot relate to a soul or a personal savior (or even an impersonal one at that). I can't relate to the Jesus myth on any level in a spiritual sense. It does not move me any more than any other story of humans being cruel to other humans, and in many respects, far less.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, June 17th, 2015 at 8:19 PM

Title: Re: Undifferentiated consciousness and non-duality

Content:

Monlam Tharchin said:

How can awareness have non-awareness as its cause, in the form of inert chemicals in a mass of flesh?

I mean, this conversation has been had a million times on DW, but it seems to come up every now and then anyway

undefineable said:

Actually, it might if there is something in the complexity of advanced physical systems that ignites awareness. But this is to bring 'mind' into "matter", which is known as animism

Herbie said:

From my perspective using the word "mind" and associating "animism" is just the effect of not knowing yet what science still has to find out about what I called "conscious events". The issue here is that language which is based on subject-object-dualism is "applied to something" (again language!) which actually is not "something" but the ideating subject expressing itself which is without that dualism. But there is no way out. "A bulb is emitting light."

"A reaction of material chemicals is emitting heat or radioactive rays."

"A specific organisational structure of organic material is emitting conscious events."

Issue here is that the latter expression must fall short of linguistically expressing the transformation from subject-object to "non-dual subject" perspective. It always is fixed in linguistic subject-object-dualism merely through the fact that the expression has to be read (expression as object) and an idea synthesized which again mirrors subject-object-dualism of language. Therefore the meaning of "A specific organisational structure of organic material is emitting conscious events." rarely is understood appropriately. The same holds true with "every conscious event is just a representation of neuronal processes."

Malcolm wrote:

You really need to read Thomas Nagle.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, June 17th, 2015 at 8:29 PM

Title: Re: HHDL advice: Westerners to take monk/nun as teacher

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

It is something stated in the Kālacakra tantra, actually. The best guru is a bhikṣu or bhikṣuni, the next best, a novice, the inferior guru is a householder.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, June 17th, 2015 at 9:10 PM

Title: Re: HHDL advice: Westerners to take monk/nun as teacher

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

It is something stated in the Kālacakra tantra, actually. The best guru is a bhikṣu or bhikṣuni, the next best, a novice, the inferior guru is a householder.

Adamantine said:

What text was it that you quoted that said the best guru is a tertön (who are mostly never

bhiksus)?

Malcolm wrote:
No idea.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, June 17th, 2015 at 9:23 PM

Title: Re: Myanmar monk's Islamophobia

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

I'm curious how many people actually know muslims? How many people have family, friends, or colleagues who are muslims?

I'm also curious how many people have actually participated in a muslim religious activity? Gone to a mosque open house? Gone to a prayer service or a wedding or funeral? Attended an Islamic cultural event? Attended an Eid banquet at the end of Ramadan?

Given everything going on in the world, it's natural that much is being said about muslims and Islam. I guess that's good. It's important to think and discuss things. At the same time, I'm always curious where truth claims come from and how they are formed.

Malcolm wrote:

Eid al-Adha, the Festival of Sacrifice, is one of the chief roots of the problems with Islam: The sacrificed animals, called aḍḥiya (Arabic: أضحية, also known by its Persian term, Qurbāni), have to meet certain age and quality standards or else the animal is considered an unacceptable sacrifice. This tradition accounts for the slaughter of more than 100 million animals in only two days of Eid.
A Buddhist cannot and ought not attend such a feast.

The Ramadan feast, however does not present such problems.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, June 18th, 2015 at 12:15 AM

Title: Re: Myanmar monk's Islamophobia

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Eid al-Adha, the Festival of Sacrifice, is one of the chief roots of the problems with Islam: The sacrificed animals, called aḍḥiya (Arabic: أضحية, also known by its Persian term, Qurbāni), have to meet certain age and quality standards or else the animal is considered an unacceptable sacrifice. This tradition accounts for the slaughter of more than 100 million animals in only two days of Eid.

Urgyen Dorje said:

And thus the genesis of a long tradition of muslim vegetarians who don't eat meat, much less observe the animal sacrifices of Eid al-Adha.

Malcolm wrote:

The point is the sacrifice of animals, not the eating of meat. It is the same with Jews in Israel. If anyone wonders why there is so much violence in these regions of the world, Africa, Middle East, South America, Mexico and so on, it is largely due to the practice of sacrificing animals.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, June 18th, 2015 at 1:03 AM

Title: Re: Myanmar monk's Islamophobia

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

I don't disagree with you. Animal sacrifice is some dark stuff.

I agree. Animal sacrifice will draw and encourage all sorts of dark stuff.

I'm just pointing out that there is a long standing response within the Islamic tradition against animal sacrifice, including Eid al-Adha. There is a tradition of scriptural interpretation that asserts it was Mohammed's intention that his followers be vegetarians and not sacrifice animals. People of such a tradition see animal sacrifice, including Eid al-Adha, as haram, not hallal.

Malcolm wrote:

The point is the sacrifice of animals, not the eating of meat. It is the same with Jews in Israel. If anyone wonders why there is so much violence in these regions of the world, Africa, Middle East, South America, Mexico and so on, it is largely due to the practice of sacrificing animals.

Not enough of a response, for example, to stem the 3.4 billion US spent in Pakistan each year for Eid al-Adha.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, June 18th, 2015 at 1:06 AM

Title: Re: Maintaining Motivation

Content:

Fa Dao said:

Wayfarer,

I am older as well (53) We all have problems with motivation from time to time. I try to keep it simple. You are going to die...maybe an hour from now or maybe a couple of decades BUT it IS going to happen. When I have problems with motivation I try to bring this to the forefront in my mind..not as an intellectual idea or construct but the Reality of it, the Knowing of it. So you have a choice...dying with Awareness and no fear or dying freaked out, confused and at the mercy of your past karma. Your practice is the ONLY

thing that will get you through that process. I should clarify though..its not a matter of freaking yourself out and guiltting yourself into doing practice..its about giving yourself a reality check....putting things into perspective...

Malcolm wrote:

As Guru Rinpoche said:

Having assembled here, you all must listen well. The minds of all these Buddhists of Tibet, for the most part, have never been prepared. So in all of their Dharma activity, thoughts of death and impermanence have not arisen in their minds. If it had arisen, this laziness and indolence would have never existed...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, June 18th, 2015 at 2:33 AM

Title: Re: Mantra Liberation Through Hearing ("Ha Gan Ga")

Content:

Karma Dondrup Tashi said:

Not remotely qualified either but IMHO the kind response from Garchen Institute is not quite the whole story. Apologies all round if I am incorrect, but Rinpoche has made his own statement on this. I can't remember exactly where I read it, but it is out there somewhere. It was a carefully qualified statement.

Boomerang said:

His qualifications were that you need faith and the recording should be be necessity, not a convenience. You should only rely on recorded empowerments if you are unable to get them live. The whole reason he started doing this was that he felt bad for people who traveled long distances for empowerments. He also said that the power of the video comes from your faith and devotion to the dharma, so if you have no faith an empowerment won't work even if you are there live.

Malcolm wrote:

The reasoning is the same as the following "If one has sufficient faith in some tantra one wants to practice, one can receive the empowerment from the book." This reasoning is condemned by the Buddha in the tantras themselves. The Buddha teaches in the Mahāmudratilaka Tantra:

Without empowerment there is no siddhi,
just as pressing sand yields no oil.

If someone reveals the tantras and agamas with pride
to those who lack empowerment,
as soon as [both] master and disciple die
they go to hell even if they obtained siddhi.

The commentary to this tantra, the Śrīguhyārthaprakāśamahādbhūta-nāma, states:

...the disciple upon whom the empowerment is correctly bestowed becomes a suitable vessel for the topics of the profound intimate instructions of the body and so on.

Without that however, if the meaning of the tantras is revealed to one who lacks empowerment, it is said the master and the disciple have a root downfall.

One should be very aware of the faults of not receiving empowerment. For example, The

Mind Mirror of Vajrasattva Tantra states:

Where will accomplishment be without relying on the empowerments of secret mantra? For example, like a boatman without a paddle, how will one be able to cross to the other side?

The Self-arisen Vidyā Tantra states:

The faults of not obtaining the empowerment are as follows: in the bardo one is alarmed, panicked, exhausted, impeded, and also one can lose consciousness.

While one has not left the body of traces, migrating beings will not see one as worthy of respect. One's merit will be small, one's life short, one's enjoyments of living will be few, one will be powerless and many obstacles will occur. Nothing will be accomplished.

Those are the faults of not obtaining the empowerment for the practice of Secret Mantra. So people who are interested in Vajrayāna should think very carefully about what is valid and what is not valid, one's path depends on it. In this respective, a conservative approach will never harm one.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, June 18th, 2015 at 7:55 PM

Title: Re: Pema Khandro?

Content:

tingdzin said:

Large, "successful" organizations with lots of "satisfied customers" does not mean authenticity by any means. Is the whole point of the thing to make people feel good while raking in their money? If real teachers with something to offer don't have students, it may be because the marketing skills of charlatans have kept them in the shade.

Malcolm wrote:

Frankly, I have noted a process, repeated often in western organizations, where after building a student base (even if considered charlatans), said organizers are then granted full legitimacy by some Tibetan, sometimes famous, sometimes obscure.

The process runs as follows; build students, present them to a lineage teacher (with donations to favored charities of course), have the lineage teacher recognize you as the teacher of said group of students, eventually gain recognition as a reincarnation or an emanation (or failing that, just be titled Lama So and So) — boom, you have arrived. Now you can confidently get articles published in Buddhadharma, Shambhala Sun, Tricycle, and land that Harper-Collins book deal you have been craving so that you can crack into the "Barnes & Nobles" Buddhist scene.

In Tibetan Buddhism, as anywhere else, success is rewarded with accolade and failure is rewarded with obscurity, and it really has very little to do with puritan notions of authenticity, as much as we may wish it to be otherwise.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, June 18th, 2015 at 7:58 PM

Title: Re: Myanmar monk's Islamophobia

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

I'm curious how many people actually know muslims? How many people have family, friends, or colleagues who are muslims?

I'm also curious how many people have actually participated in a muslim religious activity? Gone to a mosque open house? Gone to a prayer service or a wedding or funeral? Attended an Islamic cultural event? Attended an Eid banquet at the end of Ramadan?

Given everything going on in the world, it's natural that much is being said about muslims and Islam. I guess that's good. It's important to think and discuss things. At the same time, I'm always curious where truth claims come from and how they are formed.

Malcolm wrote:

Eid al-Adha, the Festival of Sacrifice, is one of the chief roots of the problems with Islam: The sacrificed animals, called aḍḥiya (Arabic: أضحية, also known by its Persian term, Qurbāni), have to meet certain age and quality standards or else the animal is considered an unacceptable sacrifice. This tradition accounts for the slaughter of more than 100 million animals in only two days of Eid.

A Buddhist cannot and ought not attend such a feast.

The Ramadan feast, however does not present such problems.

MiphamFan said:

How is sacrifice at Eid al-Adha different from halal/kosher animal slaughter?

Should Buddhists also avoid halal/kosher meat?

Malcolm wrote:

I did not say that Buddhists ought not eat halal/kosher meat, I said they should not attend such festivals, in the same way they should not attend the sacrificial pujas at Dakshin-kali in Nepal, or animal sacrifices in Africa and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, June 18th, 2015 at 8:26 PM

Title: Re: Myanmar monk's Islamophobia

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

How is sacrifice at Eid al-Adha different from halal/kosher animal slaughter?

Should Buddhists also avoid halal/kosher meat?

I did not say that Buddhists ought not eat halal/kosher meat, I said they should not attend such festivals, in the same way they should not attend the sacrificial pujas at

Dakshin-kali in Nepal, or animal sacrifices in Africa and so on.

MiphamFan said:

I know you didn't say that, that's why I'm asking.

What's the difference between regular halal/kosher slaughter and the festivals? It's just a greater scale on a particular occasion isn't it? Ordinary halal/kosher slaughter also is in the name of Allah/YHWH, so it's also "sacrifice". So should Buddhists avoid sacrificed meat?

Malcolm wrote:

Generally, yes, unless you are starving.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, June 18th, 2015 at 8:33 PM

Title: Re: "V"s in Sanskrit

Content:

MiphamFan said:

It's neither /w/ nor /v/.

It's a https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Labiodental_approximant. Sometimes it sounds more like /w/ or /v/ to your ears if you are unfamiliar with the sound.

Malcolm wrote:

That really clears things up.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, June 18th, 2015 at 9:15 PM

Title: Re: Myanmar monk's Islamophobia

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

Malcolm...

It is an incoherent argument to suggest that Buddhists should not attend Eid al-Adha (agreed) but that Buddhists eating halal or kosher meat is fine. If you look at it closely, dabiha, ritual slaughter of animals for halal meat, is effectively ritual sacrifice as Allah's name must be evoked, the animal's head turned to the qibla, the direction of prayer, towards Mecca, the Kaaba, and so on.

The other aspect is that halal slaughter maximizes the suffering of the animal, so it is no different than Eid al-Adha. The animals are not stunned before their throats are slit.

Even if a Buddhist eats meat through the three purities and so on, unless halal is given as alms or as a gift from a host, I would think a Buddhist would avoid halal like contagion.

But that's just me.

Malcolm wrote:

Most people are not going to run into Halal meat in the US. In the rare instance they do, they probably won't know it. If you go to a Muslim country, most of the meat will be of that variety.

Eating food slaughtered with a prayer is not the same thing as attending a religious festival predicated on the ritual slaughter of millions of animals. I can see why some people think they are commensurate, but I do not. In the former case, you, as a practitioner, have a chance to benefit the animal with a mantra, no matter how it was slaughtered; in the latter case you are lending support to something which is done out of ignorance.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, June 18th, 2015 at 9:22 PM

Title: Re: Myanmar monk's Islamophobia

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

Malcolm...

It is an incoherent argument to suggest that Buddhists should not attend Eid al-Adha (agreed) but that Buddhists eating halal or kosher meat is fine. If you look at it closely, dabiha, ritual slaughter of animals for halal meat, is effectively ritual sacrifice as Allah's name must be evoked, the animal's head turn to the qibla, the direction of prayer, towards Mecca, the Qaaba, and so on.

The other aspect is that halal slaughter maximizes the suffering of the animal, so it is no different than Eid al-Adha. The animals are not stunned before their throats are slit.

Even if a Buddhist eats meat through the three purities and so on, unless halal is given as alms or as a gift from a host, I would think a Buddhist would avoid halal like contagion.

But that's just me.

MiphamFan said:

What's incoherent?

He said yes, Buddhists should avoid halal/kosher meat. Sounds coherent to me.

Malcolm wrote:

No, I did not say one should avoid either. Once the animal is dead, it is dead and there is no further suffering one is causing by going to a Middle Eastern Restaurant, for example, run by Muslims and ordering the lamb kabob. Same with a Kosher frank.

The problem lies in supporting a religious activity predicated on ignorance, not in eating meat itself.

The question of meat eating is separate.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, June 18th, 2015 at 9:29 PM

Title: Re: Dropping Jesus

Content:

Queequeg said:

Jesus?

Upaya.

Malcolm wrote:

No, not an upāya, either for his followers, nor for Buddhists who do not have any need for Jesus.

Queequeg said:

Mohamed?

Upaya.

Malcolm wrote:

No, not an upāya, either for his followers, nor for Buddhists who do not have any need for Muhammed.

Queequeg said:

Buddha?

Not upaya?

Malcolm wrote:

Buddha is the definitive meaning for Buddhists, so no, again, not an upāya.

Queequeg said:

Upaya. All upaya.

Malcolm wrote:

Not everything is an upāya.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, June 18th, 2015 at 9:32 PM

Title: Re: Myanmar monk's Islamophobia

Content:
MiphamFan said:
What's incoherent?

He said yes, Buddhists should avoid halal/kosher meat. Sounds coherent to me.

Urgyen Dorje said:
I was responding to an earlier post, where Malcolm said this:
I did not say that Buddhists ought not eat halal/kosher meat, I said they should not attend such festivals, in the same way they should not attend the sacrificial pujas at Dakshin-kali in Nepal, or animal sacrifices in Africa and so on.
Before I submitted that response, he clarified, in response to your question actually, and said Buddhists shouldn't eat halal or kosher meat.

Malcolm wrote:
I didn't say that actually. As far as I am concerned it is fine, as long as you don't order the animal killed yourself, see it killed, etc.

I answered this question:
So should Buddhists avoid sacrificed meat?
Meaning, that one should not be present at a sacrifice or a festival celebrating such a sacrifice and partake of that meat.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Thursday, June 18th, 2015 at 9:35 PM
Title: Re: Interview with Khenchen Rigdzin Dorje on the Nyingmapa V
Content:
DENZONG said:
To whom does the Taktse Nyingma Institute, Gangtok, Sikkim. Belong to, who is the owner of the property?

Malcolm wrote:
Khenchen Rigzin Dorje, who graduated from the Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies in Sarnath, and is actually very learned.

<http://nyingmainstitutemartam.org/Institute.aspx>

Author: Malcolm
Date: Thursday, June 18th, 2015 at 10:00 PM
Title: Re: Myanmar monk's Islamophobia
Content:
Malcolm wrote:
So should Buddhists avoid sacrificed meat?
Meaning, that one should not be present at a sacrifice or a festival celebrating such a

sacrifice and partake of that meat.

Urgyen Dorje said:

Thanks for the clarification. I hear what you're saying and appreciate it.

For me, I don't see the difference between the ritual sacrifice of Eid al-Adha and ritual sacrifice of dabiha (making halal meat). I don't think a Buddhist should be present at either, or partake of the meat of either.

Malcolm wrote:

So then in that case you, as a Vajrayāna practitioner, are condemning that animal to further samsara by refusing to partake of its meat at all. It is one thing to refuse lobster mistakenly killed for you by a host. The purpose of this is to make it clear that it is not an honor to slaughter animals for guests in order to prevent the idea that Buddhist monks in particular will be partial to those who kill their best animals in return for prayers and so on. It is quite another thing, if one is a meat eater, to refuse a kosher frank on the grounds that it was slaughtered according to a religious custom in which one played no part and refuse to consume it according to criteria laid out for the beneficial consumption of meat by lamas like ChNN and Kunzang Dechen Lingpa. Ironically, virtually all of the meat eaten by Tibetans in Lhasa in the past, and these days in, India is Halal. There have been some very blatantly racist attempts by Tibetans in Tibet to get Tibetans to stop eating in Muslim restaurants (such as the story that they gather the lice that feed on country people, the resulting human blood from which makes their food more tasty, or that they use the foot washing water of Imams to somehow magically convert people to Islam), but nevertheless, Tibetans continue to frequent Muslim restaurants and eat halal meat everywhere they are.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, June 18th, 2015 at 10:18 PM

Title: Re: Maintaining Motivation

Content:

Anders said:

How would one go about regulating this element to address such a disorder then?

Malcolm wrote:

Yantra yoga, prāṇayāma, eating a vata pacifying diet and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, June 19th, 2015 at 12:32 AM

Title: Re: Dropping Jesus

Content:

Queequeg said:
Jesus?

Upaya.

Malcolm wrote:
No, not an upāya, either for his followers, nor for Buddhists who do not have any need for Jesus.

Queequeg said:
Mohamed?

Upaya.

Malcolm wrote:
No, not an upāya, either for his followers, nor for Buddhists who do not have any need for Muhammed.

Queequeg said:
Buddha?

Not upaya?

Malcolm wrote:
Buddha is the definitive meaning for Buddhists, so no, again, not an upāya.

Queequeg said:
Upaya. All upaya.

Malcolm wrote:
Not everything is an upāya.

Queequeg said:
How do you define upaya?

Malcolm wrote:
A means used to bring people to the definitive meaning which is the Buddha, i.e. the state of total awakening.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, June 19th, 2015 at 1:13 AM

Title: Re: Dropping Jesus

Content:

Queequeg said:

Are means which draw a person closer to total awakening yet not completely, not upaya?

Malcolm wrote:

The question you ought to asking yourself is whether the two worldly traditions you have identified as "upāya" will draw a person anywhere even within the vicinity of total awakening, let alone near it.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, June 19th, 2015 at 1:39 AM

Title: Re: Global Warming / Climate Change: Caused by human activi

Content:

WeiHan said:

I am the only one that vote NO. There is no global warming. It is a hoax created by corrupted politicians and quack scientists so that they can leverage more tax money to support their further corruption.

The plot of the average earth temperature with that of the activities of the Sun shows that it swing up and down in phase with the activities of the sun. In other words, temperature of earth moves in cycle and corelates more with the cycle of the activities of the Sun than anything else.

Malcolm wrote:

Anthropogenic global warming is the scientific consensus, whether you like it or not.

WeiHan said:

Climate-warming trends over the past century are very likely due to human activities. In addition, most of the leading scientific organizations worldwide have issued public statements endorsing this position. The following is a partial list of these organizations, along with links to their published statements and a selection of related resources.

Malcolm wrote:

<http://climate.nasa.gov/scientific-consensus/>

Here is a list of the all the scientific organizations that consent to that position:

http://opr.ca.gov/s_listoforganizations.php

So you are really going to go out on a limb and say that all of these scientific organizations made up of "quacks?"

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, June 19th, 2015 at 1:40 AM

Title: Re: Dropping Jesus

Content:

Queequeg said:

I'm not ready to write everything non-Buddhist off. Convince me.

Malcolm wrote:
What is the cause of samsara?

Author: Malcolm
Date: Friday, June 19th, 2015 at 1:41 AM
Title: Re: Dropping Jesus
Content:
Queequeg said:
What about my question?

Malcolm wrote:
I answered it with another question.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Friday, June 19th, 2015 at 1:44 AM
Title: Re: Myanmar monk's Islamophobia
Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:
Sidebar: This is a really good example of how strange I find this forum. I made a posting about whether anyone knew any muslims or had been to any Islamic cultural events, and a few posts later I'm defending whether I'd eat a halal kabob.

Malcolm wrote:
The kind of food and type of event has bearing on the discussion, no?

Author: Malcolm
Date: Friday, June 19th, 2015 at 1:47 AM
Title: Re: Dropping Jesus
Content:
Queequeg said:
What about my question?

Malcolm wrote:
I answered it with another question.

Queequeg said:
I don't think your question answered my question at all.

Malcolm wrote:
The answer is no. Neither of those two worldly traditions will bring anyone even within the vicinity of true awakening, let alone near it — so how can they be upāyas?

An upāya is something used to introduce someone to the path.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, June 19th, 2015 at 2:06 AM

Title: Re: Myanmar monk's Islamophobia

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

Sure. It's still weird to me though...

I hadn't thought of any of this stuff in years and years and years.

I guess it's my karma to be introduced to compassion to animals, vegetarianism, etc., from an observant muslim woman. Forever screwed to have have a perspective one can meaningfully share with others...

Malcolm wrote:

If her refuge is Buddha, Dharma, Sangha, she is not a Muslim.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, June 19th, 2015 at 2:14 AM

Title: Re: Global Warming / Climate Change: Caused by human activi

Content:

WeiHan said:

Climate scientists have been caught tempering with climate data that world scientists relied on

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/comment/11367272/Climategate-the-sequel-How-we-are-STILL-being-tricked-with-flawed-data-on-global-warming.html>

Malcolm wrote:

<http://www.factcheck.org/2015/02/nothing-false-about-temperature-data/>

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, June 19th, 2015 at 2:16 AM

Title: Re: Dropping Jesus

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The answer is no. Neither of those two worldly traditions will bring anyone even within the vicinity of true awakening, let alone near it — so how can they be upāyas?

Queequeg said:

That's a an unwieldy proposition - not disagreeing, but there are too many component parts - so I propose setting this aside for the time being at least.

Earlier you said:

A means used to bring people to the definitive meaning which is the Buddha, i.e. the state of total awakening.

An upāya is something used to introduce someone to the path.

Was this narrowing of scope intentional?

Malcolm wrote:

People cannot be brought to the definitive meaning without being introduced to the path.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, June 19th, 2015 at 2:19 AM

Title: Re: Myanmar monk's Islamophobia

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Right, there are all kinds of Sufis. Some make the Taliban look like liberals.

My point still stands, however. If someone's refuge is Buddha, Dharma Sangha, then they are Buddhist — but if not, then not.

My knowledge of Sufism is limited to Mystical Dimensions of Islam.

Urgyen Dorje said:

I'm not going to debate whether she is really a Buddhist.

That would take getting into the theology and ontology of her school of Sufism and how she reconciled her native Sufi practice and upbringing with the dharma. That's not my voice. That said, in the time she tutored me in her tradition, there was nothing that contradicted the four seals of the dharma.

It's also something I categorically won't do: police people's refuge.

Sure. It's still weird to me though...

I hadn't thought of any of this stuff in years and years and years.

I guess it's my karma to be introduced to compassion to animals, vegetarianism, etc., from an observant muslim woman. Forever screwed to have have a perspective one can meaningfully share with others...

Malcolm wrote:

If her refuge is Buddha, Dharma, Sangha, she is not a Muslim.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, June 19th, 2015 at 3:11 AM

Title: Re: Dropping Jesus
Content:
Queequeg said:
Upaya must be explicit?

Malcolm wrote:
For example, Śīlabhadra writes in the Āryabuddhabhūmividyākhyāna:

Skillful means is the path that equally produces wisdom and compassion.
Asanga's Abhidharmasammucaya defines it like so:
Skill means is of four kinds: the skill in ripening sentient beings is the four means of conversion; [sentient beings] are placed in the virtues because of having been gathered by those [four means]

Author: Malcolm
Date: Friday, June 19th, 2015 at 3:22 AM
Title: Re: Dropping Jesus
Content:

Malcolm wrote:
The answer is no. Neither of those two worldly traditions will bring anyone even within the vicinity of true awakening, let alone near it — so how can they be upāyas?

An upāya is something used to introduce someone to the path.

Tenso said:
Buddhism leads to true awakening? You know this for sure or is it just mere faith?

Malcolm wrote:
I know this for sure.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Friday, June 19th, 2015 at 3:28 AM
Title: Re: Global Warming / Climate Change: Caused by human activity
Content:
WeiHan said:
Climate scientists caught fudging data again.

<http://news.heartland.org/newspaper-article/2014/09/19/australian-meteorologists-caught-fudging-numbers>

Malcolm wrote:
<https://theconversation.com/no-the-bureau-of-meteorology-is-not-fiddling-its->

weather-data-31009

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, June 19th, 2015 at 4:14 AM

Title: Re: Dropping Jesus

Content:

Queequeg said:

Upaya must be explicit?

Malcolm wrote:

For example, Śīlabhadra writes in the Āryabuddhabhūmividyākhyāna:

Skillful means is the path that equally produces wisdom and compassion.

Asanga's Abhidharmasammucaya defines it like so:

Skill means is of four kinds: the skill in ripening sentient beings is the four means of conversion; [sentient beings] are placed in the virtues because of having been gathered by those [four means]

Queequeg said:

Please correct me if I'm mistaken.

My understanding of skillful means is that the being led by skillful means does not know that they are being led by skillful means. They may have no idea that they are being drawn onto the path. Its only in retrospect that they might realize they were being led.

I don't think this is at odds with the commentaries you cited.

Malcolm wrote:

Umm...we do not sucker people into following the Dharma. We lead them, openly and honestly, to the Dharma. We do not, as they say in Tibet, show the tail of the deer to sell horse meat, i.e. use deceptive practices.

In other words, we do not tell people oh, Jesus taught Buddhahood. We can say to Christians who show an interest in Dharma, however, "Jesus and Buddha are alike in that they both taught compassion", and then explain why the compassion taught by the Buddha is more profound than that taught by Jesus, etc.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, June 19th, 2015 at 4:16 AM

Title: Re: Dropping Jesus

Content:

Tenso said:

How so?

Malcolm wrote:

My afflictions are much reduced as a result of following the Dharma. I am unconfused about reality. What else is awakening other than that?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, June 19th, 2015 at 4:18 AM

Title: Re: Maintaining Motivation

Content:

Anders said:

How would one go about regulating this element to address such a disorder then?

Malcolm wrote:

Yantra yoga, prāṇayāma, eating a vata pacifying diet and so on.

Vasana said:

Do you have any reliable resources to point to for a vata pacifying diet Malcom?

Not always satisfied with the credibility of some of the links found online.

Malcolm wrote:

Dr. Lad's website has good reliable information about this.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, June 19th, 2015 at 5:38 AM

Title: Re: Relapsing from Buddhist Practice

Content:

kdolma said:

Hi everyone,

I am still new to Buddhism and felt a tremendous sense of renunciation and clarity when I was first introduced. Death, impermanence, karma, etc.. seemed to make complete sense before and I felt very inspired and confident, fearless, courageous, and uplifted like I had really found something profound that had stripped all the earlier notions I had about life/this world. But now, it's as if I have forgotten everything and the earlier renunciation seems to have faded, and I don't sense much urgency like before.

What can I do if I relapse with my practice? I feel so guilty, ashamed, and can't shake out the self-hate and self-blaming when I wasn't practicing mentally very well throughout the day. My anger and aggression keeps coming up and it completely overwhelms me that I end up mentally thinking bad things about others, hating them, blaming them and then I regret it and keep going round and round in circles. When I get angry at my friends and family, since I've harmed them, I can't shake out the anger, guilt, blame, and hate towards myself. Also, the most saddest thing is my self-deception, "oh it's ok, I can try

even harder and purify next time even if I have gotten angry at someone..."

Please help me with your advice especially for someone who is still new to Buddhism.

Malcolm wrote:

All of this is afflictive thinking. You need to recognize it for what it is and not give it a lot of energy.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, June 19th, 2015 at 7:33 AM

Title: Re: Dropping Jesus

Content:

Fa Dao said:

This is getting ridiculous... the abrahamic religions cannot and will not lead one to Total Enlightenment. Nowhere in any of their writings or teachings does it even include the idea of it..no base for it, no path for it, and no mention of any fruit for it. To say that these traditions are the spiritual equal of Buddhadharma in that regard is nothing but politically correct nonsense...its just that simple.....sorry man, I know its against the "rules" here but somebody had to say it...

steveb1 said:

Sorry, but there are strands of the New Testament that do include the idea of enlightenment.

Malcolm wrote:

Bodhi is a very specific idea. Nothing in Christianity remotely approaches it.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, June 19th, 2015 at 7:35 AM

Title: Re: Namkhai Norbu and Vegetarianism

Content:

Justamechanic said:

Hello All, I'm a new member here and was wondering if anyone knows why Namkhai Norbu is so against vegetarianism? I attended one of his teachings about a year ago and he said that vegetarianism is the "worst kind of compassion". He has repeated this stance on other occasions. I know of no other Buddhist teacher or teaching that contains this message. My partner is a long time student of his and this is creating a lot of friction in my relationship as I am a long time vegetarian and an eleven year student of both Kagyu and Nyingma teachings.

Malcolm wrote:

He is not against Vegetarianism, per se. If you are a common Mahāyāna practitioner, or a practitioner of lower tantras, he is all for it.

But if you are a Dzogchen practitioner, then since you have methods to benefit sentient

beings, being a strict vegetarian is, in his opinion, "miserable compassion."

If he is not your teacher, however, you should let your partner know that he or she is conditioning you, since that is also not correct.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, June 19th, 2015 at 8:09 PM

Title: Re: Pema Khandro?

Content:

tingdzin said:

In Tibetan Buddhism, as anywhere else, success is rewarded with accolade and failure is rewarded with obscurity, and it really has very little to do with puritan notions of authenticity, as much as we may wish it to be otherwise.

"Authenticity" is actually something to be valued, if the lineages are not to decline, long-term. This is not to say that the Tibetans had their act together on this matter all the time.

Malcolm wrote:

You are completely missing my point. My first point is that no one's qualifications to be a teacher has ever been established or refuted on a board such as Dharmawheel, and so on. My second point is that as long as someone can get some Tibetan to vouch for them, it is very difficult to make an argument that someone is an "inauthentic" teacher.

Those of us who have studied the actual history of Tibetan Buddhism, such as yourself, should understand that charges of charlatanism are quite wide spread among all four schools. We should also understand that charges of charlatanism have never ever prevented anyone from gathering students, building monasteries, funding stupas, statues, pujas, shedras and so on. The Shugden affair should prove that much to everyone. Do most of us here regard Shugden as inauthentic? Yes? Do most of us here regard teachers who promulgate this practice as inauthentic? Yes. Does that stop Shugdenpas in the slightest? No! The same thing applies to Michael Roach, and other "controversial" teachers.

Truly, the people who loose the most in this game of authenticity are the self-appointed purveyors of imagined authenticity. In order to question the authenticity of another teacher, first one must prove that one is in fact an arbiter of such authenticity. None of us here can do this. Because of this, accusing this women of being a fraud or a charlatan is a losing game. It is also unfair, and even sexist.

Honestly, the best practice is that when someone you know personally approaches you in private about this or that teachers credentials, then you can give your opinion — but making a public spectacle out of someone who is regarded as a teacher by others is simple bad form. I know, because I have been involved in this practice in the past and now regard it as folly.

You will recall that even Chogyur Lingpa in the beginning was derided as a charlatan. It was mainly due to his association with Khyentse Wangpo that his revelations were

found acceptable.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, June 19th, 2015 at 8:33 PM

Title: Re: Global Warming / Climate Change: Caused by human activi

Content:

madhusudan said:

Could all (or most of) the goals of reducing Global Warming be accomplished through a campaign of reducing pollution?

Malcolm wrote:

No. We need a systemic and global reorganization of human society along the lines described by the deep ecologists and social ecologists. Then maybe, just maybe, we wont shit ourselves to death in our own beds.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, June 19th, 2015 at 8:39 PM

Title: Re: HHDL advice: Westerners to take monk/nun as teacher

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

It is something stated in the Kālacakra tantra, actually. The best guru is a bhikṣu or bhikṣuni, the next best, a novice, the inferior guru is a householder.

dzoki said:

I think that this statement should not be taken only literally. For example Saraha said after taking consort and having attained realization: "Now I am real bikshu."

I believe that bikshu means something else in tantras and tantric language than it means in sutra and vinaya. Hence the confusion in Tibetan monastic tradition.

Malcolm wrote:

Nice try, but in reality the commentaries like the Vimalaprabha, as well as the Fifty Verses of Guru Devotion, are pretty clear that in this case bhikṣu means bhikṣu, someone who holds all three vows completely, including monastic vows.

Also, Saraha was never a monk.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, June 19th, 2015 at 9:27 PM

Title: Re: Global Warming / Climate Change: Caused by human activi

Content:

madhusudan said:

Could all (or most of) the goals of reducing Global Warming be accomplished through a campaign of reducing pollution?

Malcolm wrote:

No. We need a systemic and global reorganization of human society along the lines described by the deep ecologists and social ecologists. Then maybe, just maybe, we won't shit ourselves to death in our own beds.

madhusudan said:

Okay. And that accords perfectly with being responsible for the well being of all sentient beings. But how do you envision that being accomplished?

Locally and voluntarily through education, community building and neighborly collective action?

By fiat through centralized coercive force? e.g. U.N., treaties, laws, etc.

Some combination of those two?

Something else?

I'd prefer the first option, but it is slow and our current systems do not favor it. The urgency of environmental destruction compels us to consider the second. What is your view?

Malcolm wrote:

Our current economic system is not geared towards supporting sustainability because it is based on resource extraction and consumption, rather than conservation and durability.

So we need a combination of local initiatives as well as strong environmental and resource treaties.

We also have to abandon the idea of the growth economy.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, June 19th, 2015 at 9:28 PM

Title: Re: Global Warming / Climate Change: Caused by human activity

Content:

Simon E. said:

How do you propose bringing China and India into line ?

Malcolm wrote:

They need this more than anyone else because they are the two most densely populated places on the planet.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, June 19th, 2015 at 9:37 PM

Title: Re: Mantra Liberation Through Hearing ("Ha Gan Ga")

Content:

Boomerang said:

Okay, so is Garchen Rinpoche intentionally sending himself and hundreds of other people to hell, including me and other people on this forum?

Malcolm wrote:

I can only related to you what is described in the tantras. I am not going to opine on Garchen Rinpoche's intentions.

The essence of Vajrayāna is a live connection with a teacher, emphasis on live. If someone wants to study with Garchen Rinpoche, then they should make the effort to go and meet him in person.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, June 19th, 2015 at 10:48 PM

Title: Re: Namkhai Norbu and Vegetarianism

Content:

Justamechanic said:

Thank you Malcolm for answering my post. I'm still confused as to how it is "miserable compassion" to not engage in meat eating. I've never heard him specify that it's okay for practitioners of the lower tantras to be vegetarians. In fact, at the teaching in LA he became red faced and angry and it appeared to me that he slammed his fist down in denouncing vegetarians, he didn't specify as to which practitioners could still be vegetarians. He never mentioned any scriptural reference or commentarial reference to back up this statement. Do you know of any? I have no doubt that Norbu is an enlightened being, it's just that his statements run counter to statements by Chatral Rinpoche and other Dzogchen masters. I thought as Buddhists we were supposed to do no harm. I'm just a blue collar guy in rural Northern California and this really has my head spinning.

Malcolm wrote:

Well, the famous one that ChNN always quotes from the Hevajra Tantra (though you won't find it in the extant two chapter version)

Those with compassion eat meat;

those with samaya drink alcohol.

The Hevajra also observes that one should not distinguish between pure foods (i.e. acceptable to Brahmins) and impure foods.

Then in a treasure of Kunzang Dechen Lingpa connected with six dimensions of

Samantabhadra mantra (འཇམ་དཔལ་སྐུ་མཚན་), it is said:

If yogins who possess great compassion cannot help but accept meat and blood, that should be considered to be the flesh and blood is a sentient being that is actually present...Yogins who have created bodhicitta, there is nothing more profound than this to benefit migrating beings! For example, there isn't anyway to guide sentient beings who have no connections. As in the aforementioned example, likewise after flesh and blood is enjoyed in a feast, their minds are purified and sent up [into the dharmadhātu]. All my lineage of followers should practice this in earnest, bringing benefit both to themselves and others.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, June 19th, 2015 at 10:54 PM

Title: Re: Pema Khandro?

Content:

smcj said:

I did not think much of her 30 years ago, but she's been at this a long time.

Malcolm wrote:

You mean when she was 10?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, June 19th, 2015 at 11:47 PM

Title: Re: Pema Khandro?

Content:

smcj said:

I did not think much of her 30 years ago, but she's been at this a long time.

Malcolm wrote:

You mean when she was 10?

smcj said:

If I remember correctly she was active in the Santa Cruz area as Cali Ma back in the '80s as an adult. She was trying to get some land together near the crest of Hwy 17. She looked much the same.

It occurs to me that if she has figured out the secret to eternal youthful appearance she will become the biggest guru in America!

Malcolm wrote:

Umm, she would have been 11, actually. She was born in 1974, a wood tiger. I think your memory is a little fuzzy.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, June 19th, 2015 at 11:49 PM

Title: Re: Relapsing from Buddhist Practice

Content:

kdolma said:

Hi Malcolm and Johnny,

The problem is that since I've started practicing, these afflictive states have been stronger, more and prolonged. Before, there was not much tension/swinging emotions/delusions, maybe it's because I am trying to observe and not let anything manifest in my mind (and/or) letting it manifest but not reacting to it.

I guess I am afraid of creating future suffering through my afflictive states because once I have thought something bad, I am already creating bad karma. The biggest hindrance to this is my self-deception, ego, and self-centeredness. How can I be more honest and sincere in accepting my mistakes and faults?

Malcolm wrote:

Of course they SEEM stronger, but they are not. You are merely seeing them as they are for the first time.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, June 20th, 2015 at 12:01 AM

Title: Re: Global Warming / Climate Change: Caused by human activi

Content:

WeiHan said:

See.

Data released showed that "global warming" stopped 16 years ago. The graphs even show that it is cyclical.

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/sciencetech/article-2217286/Global-warming-stopped-16-years-ago-reveals-Met-Office-report-quietly-released--chart-prove-it.html>

So their model is predicting a continuous increase of surface temperature but yet temperature has stalled for 16 years and they have to come up with a cycle theory to patch up an explanation. What does it say? Bottom line, even for a novice that didn't read up their explanation, you should be able to conclude that the model that they have been relying on is inaccurate.

The linear trend from August 1997 (in the middle of an exceptionally strong El Nino) to August 2012 (coming at the tail end of a double-dip La Nina) is about 0.03°C/decade, amounting to a temperature increase of 0.05°C over that period, but equally we could calculate the linear trend from 1999, during the subsequent La Nina, and show a more substantial warming.

As we've stressed before, choosing a starting or end point on short-term scales can be very misleading. Climate change can only be detected from multi-decadal timescales due to the inherent variability in the climate system. If you use a longer period from HadCRUT4 the trend looks very different. For example, 1979 to 2011 shows 0.16°C/decade (or 0.15°C/decade in the NCDC dataset, 0.16°C/decade in GISS).

Looking at successive decades over this period, each decade was warmer than the previous – so the 1990s were warmer than the 1980s, and the 2000s were warmer than both. Eight of the top ten warmest years have occurred in the last decade.

Malcolm wrote:

<http://blog.metoffice.gov.uk/2012/10/14/met-office-in-the-media-14-october-2012/>

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, June 20th, 2015 at 12:02 AM

Title: Re: Namkhai Norbu and Vegetarianism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

But if you are a Dzogchen practitioner, then since you have methods to benefit sentient beings, being a strict vegetarian is, in his opinion, "miserable compassion."

tomamundsen said:

Does this mean ganachakra, or are there other methods as well?

Malcolm wrote:

All meals should be ganapujas.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, June 20th, 2015 at 12:44 AM

Title: Re: Difference between 4th and 5th Skandha

Content:

catlady2112 said:

I'm having trouble understanding the skandhas in terms of "experience." Every teacher seems to have different ways of explaining them. I learned them as 1) Form 2) Feeling 3) Discrimination 4) Volition 5) Consciousness.

Malcolm wrote:

They are 1) matter (as opposed to the object of the eye, form) 2) feeling 3) ideation 4) formations 5) consciousness.

catlady2112 said:

It is easy for me to understand the 1st 3 in terms of what my mind does by 1) separating myself from other objects 2) having a positive, negative or neutral feeling and 3) creating a solid concepts around how I file/name them in my mind.

Malcolm wrote:

Actually, the material aggregate includes all physical sense organs as objects. Your understanding of 2 and 3 is ok.

catlady2112 said:

I was taught that #4 was the reaction that resulted from the first 3. For example, I see what appears to be a large snake and become frightened. #4 might be an impulsive reaction: such as my body shaking, screaming or running away.

Malcolm wrote:

Here is another place where you are understanding incorrectly. The formation aggregate is composed of mental factors that operate in formations, there are either 51 or 100 mental factors depending on the presentation. So for example, a positive mind in the desire realm always has 22 mental factors accompanying it. Volition is only one of the ten neutral mental factors that accompany all minds in the desire realm.

Your perception of a snake, and reacting to it viscerally is still 2 and 3. 2 and 3 are mental factors also, but because they have such a strong role in samsara, they are treated as separate aggregates.

catlady2112 said:

Also I've always been confused about #5 Consciousness. Most texts tend to describe this as a concept instead of an experience.

Malcolm wrote:

The aggregate of consciousness is the identical to the mental organ, your mind, it is what thinks.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, June 20th, 2015 at 12:59 AM

Title: Re: "V"s in Sanskrit

Content:

Greg said:

Are you saying that to trained ears it always sounds the same and they can never detect a difference?

Further, it is not a silly question. I am curious about why it sometimes sounds to me one way and sometimes sounds another. That is a perfectly legitimately thing to be curious about. If you are hung up on English equivalences we could just call them Sound A and Sound B.

Malcolm wrote:

In Kashmir, this sound was pronounced B as in Baj[z]ra (or as it is today in Nepal) , as noted by Sakya Pandita in How to Pronounce Mantras. It is pronounced Wa, according to his ear, by Central Indians.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, June 20th, 2015 at 1:00 AM

Title: Re: Difference between 4th and 5th Skandha

Content:

Karma Dondrup Tashi said:

off topic again - I've never understood why feeling comes before formations.

Malcolm wrote:

Because it is the strongest mental factor that keeps us in samsara. The aggregates are ordered by their strength in keeping us in samsara.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, June 20th, 2015 at 1:07 AM

Title: Re: Global Warming / Climate Change: Caused by human activi

Content:

WeiHan said:

The global warming crowds even predicted in 2008 that by June 2015, NYC will be underwater. ABC News.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_Gk-qiVK6C4

Malcolm wrote:

Ummm...you are confusing entertainment with science. Not even the most radical, hysterical climate scientist would ever endorse such dramatizations.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, June 20th, 2015 at 1:21 AM

Title: Re: Global Warming / Climate Change: Caused by human activi

Content:

WeiHan said:

The global warming crowds even predicted in 2008 that by June 2015, NYC will be underwater. ABC News.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_Gk-qiVK6C4

Malcolm wrote:

Ummm...you are confusing entertainment with science. Not even the most radical, hysterical climate scientist would ever endorse such dramatizations.

WeiHan said:

Fine. 7 years ago, Al Gore predicted that the arctic will be completely gone in 5 years. Today, not only has it not disappear, it has grown in size and sea ice content.

Malcolm wrote:

Ummm, last I checked Al Gore is also not a climate scientist.

As to your claim:

Arctic sea ice extent for May 2015 averaged 12.65 million square kilometers (4.88 million square miles), the third lowest May ice extent in the satellite record. This is 730,000 square kilometers (282,000 square miles) below the 1981 to 2010 long-term average of 13.38 million square kilometers (5.17 million square miles) and 70,000 square kilometers (27,000 square miles) above the record low for the month, observed in 2004.

<http://nsidc.org/arcticseaicenews/>

WeiHan said:

Sea ice in the Arctic Ocean is at its lowest May level since records began in the 1980s. Ice coverage around the North Pole is currently just 11.32m sq km, compared with a 30 year average of 12.5m sq km.

This figure is even lower than the 11.89m sq km of 2012, when sea ice coverage reached its lowest summer time level. Ice extent generally reaches its lowest level in mid September. In 2012 there were just 3.2m sq km of sea ice in the Arctic.

Arctic sea ice decreased at a rate of around four percent per decade between 1978 and 1996, according to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC).

The IPCC expects the extent of sea ice to decrease by 20 percent by 2050, with some ice-free summers by the same time.

Melting sea ice does not affect sea levels but it does affect the amount of heat that is absorbed. Typically sea ice reflects between 50 and 70 percent of incoming solar radiation, compared with just seven to 10 percent by ocean water.

This is likely to result in accelerating warming in the Arctic, which in turn, raises the likelihood of accelerating ice loss – a negative feedback.

A loss of sea ice reduces the protection afforded to coastal regions and is expected to result in higher waves and an increase in storm surges, inundation and coastal erosion.

The loss of sea ice does have some benefits; previously inaccessible shipping routes will become open to commercial traffic.

For example, voyage times between Rotterdam, Netherlands and Yokohama, Japan, would be reduced by 40 percent using this Northern Sea Route compared with the conventional route through the Suez Canal.

It is uncertain whether this year's rapid decrease in coverage will be maintained, but warm air over Canada and Alaska is expected to move across the North Pole in the coming week.

The melting of surface ice sets up melt ponds which absorb heat and make the acceleration of ice loss much more likely.

Malcolm wrote:

<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2015/05/arctic-sea-ice-disappearing-record-rate-150524091720040.html>

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, June 20th, 2015 at 1:28 AM

Title: Re: Namkhai Norbu and Vegetarianism

Content:

Karma Dondrup Tashi said:

I guess I don't know how you can do actual anuttarayoga tsog if you are veggie.

Malcolm wrote:

You can't.

Karma Dondrup Tashi said:

Can the offering be vegetarian?

Malcolm wrote:

Meat and alcohol are indispensable in a ganapuja.

If you refuse it, you are breaking a samaya.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, June 20th, 2015 at 1:36 AM

Title: Re: Global Warming / Climate Change: Caused by human activi

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Ummm, last I checked Al Gore is also not a climate scientist.

WeiHan said:

That is not the point. The point is that politician can exaggerate the issue for their own self interest.

Malcolm wrote:

We are talking about the science behind it. That is what counts, not what politicians say.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, June 20th, 2015 at 1:36 AM

Title: Re: Global Warming / Climate Change: Caused by human activi

Content:

WeiHan said:

Not only has the ice cap not disappeared but it actually grows

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/sciencetech/article-2738653/Stunning-satellite-images-summer-ice-cap-thicker-covers-1-7million-square-kilometres-MORE-2-years-ago-despite-Al-Gore-s-prediction-ICE-FREE-now.html>

Malcolm wrote:

<http://www.carbonbrief.org/blog/2014/09/some-important-context-on-arctic-sea-ice-melt/>

Read it and weep.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, June 20th, 2015 at 1:49 AM

Title: Re: Global Warming / Climate Change: Caused by human activi

Content:

WeiHan said:

Not only has the ice cap not disappeared but it actually grows

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/sciencetech/article-2738653/Stunning-satellite-images-summer-ice-cap-thicker-covers-1-7million-square-kilometres-MORE-2-years-ago-despite-Al-Gore-s-prediction-ICE-FREE-now.html>

Malcolm wrote:

<http://www.carbonbrief.org/blog/2014/09/some-important-context-on-arctic-sea-ice-melt/>

Read it and weep.

WeiHan said:

Like real. Of course they come out to patch their wrong prediction and you are happy with their explanation? Simply extending the time scale? Why not even longer time scale like what I suggested?

Malcolm wrote:

Because there is no data to support a longer time scale as far as pictures of arctic ice go. Of course, we have journal evidence from sailors and so on, but this is anecdotal at best.

Face it Wei Han, we are living in time when the climate change is 100 percent being caused by human activities. You remind me of this guy:

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, June 20th, 2015 at 2:45 AM

Title: Re: Difference between 4th and 5th Skandha

Content:

catlady2112 said:

I'm having trouble understanding the skandhas in terms of "experience." Every teacher seems to have different ways of explaining them. I learned them as 1) Form 2) Feeling 3) Discrimination 4) Volition 5) Consciousness.

Malcolm wrote:

They are 1) matter (as opposed to the object of the eye, form) 2) feeling 3) ideation 4) formations 5) consciousness.

catlady2112 said:

I find that every teacher uses a different words/translations for each heap. The set I listed are from Geshe Dargye, and it's what I grew up with, so I am most familiar with these word choices.

Malcolm wrote:

The terms for Sanskrit and Tibetan respectively are *rūpa* and *gzugs*. It is become a common thing for translators to translate *rūpaskandha* as the "form aggregate", but it is not accurate and does not correspond with the definition of form in English "configuration, formation, structure, construction, arrangement, appearance, exterior, outline, format, layout, design." What does correspond is "matter", i.e. "constituent, raw material, element, component."

When we are talking about the *rūpāyatana*, the sense base of form, however, the object of the eye, then form is perfect, i.e., "configuration, formation, structure, construction, arrangement, appearance, exterior, outline, format, layout, design."

Words are relative, but they important in that they shape our understanding. If the terms we use are not accurate, how can our understanding be accurate? Geshe Dhargye never thought about these things in English. He did not know English. The fault lies with his translators.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, June 20th, 2015 at 2:47 AM

Title: Re: Difference between 4th and 5th Skandha

Content:

catlady2112 said:

I'm very confused by the heap consciousness. I assume it means more than "thinking."

Malcolm wrote:

It means a moment of mind, that is all. Full disclosure: I am someone who has studied Abhidharma for many years, and have taught it on more than one occasion.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, June 20th, 2015 at 2:51 AM

Title: Re: Global Warming / Climate Change: Caused by human activi

Content:

WeiHan said:

If people have been keen to check up data, the current trend of increasing surface temperature started around 1910 (or there about).

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, 100 years after wide spread deforestation and destruction of grasslands in the Northern Hemisphere and 150 years after the beginning of the industrial revolution.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, June 20th, 2015 at 3:20 AM

Title: Re: Global Warming / Climate Change: Caused by human activi

Content:

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, June 20th, 2015 at 5:52 AM

Title: Re: Namkhai Norbu and Vegetarianism

Content:

theanarchist said:

And what does he say about eating meat if you have to butcher the animals yourself?

Malcolm wrote:

One cannot kill animals. This kind of meat is forbidden.

theanarchist said:

So in fact, by buying meat you pay someone else to accumulate negative karma.

Malcolm wrote:

Nonsense. They would do that activity this regardless of whether you buy that meat or not because there are so many other people who buy meat.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, June 20th, 2015 at 6:24 AM

Title: Re: Namkhai Norbu and Vegetarianism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Nonsense. They would do that activity this regardless of whether you buy that meat or not.

theanarchist said:

But by buying meat I add to the demand for the meat. If nobody would buy it, nobody would be paid to slaughter animals. Of course my contribution is small, but as far as I have learned about karma, if you participate in a group activity, you have part of that karma.

Don't get me wrong, I do on occasion eat meat, but I see it as a karmically problematic activity, as I am not able to send anyone off to a pure land.

Malcolm wrote:

An action must be complete in three ways in order to accrue a full karma from it.

Anyway, the point is not sending sentient beings to a pure realm, the point is creating a connection so that sentient beings meet the Dharma.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, June 20th, 2015 at 7:09 AM

Title: Re: Namkhai Norbu and Vegetarianism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

An action must be complete in three ways in order to accrue a full karma from it. .

theanarchist said:

But you still get an incomplete karma. Plus, it's said, if you rejoice in an act, you get as much karma as the person performing it.

Johnny Dangerous said:

Eating meat is not rejoicing in the killing of animals, what a hyperbolic suggestion.

Malcolm wrote:

Agreed, the suggestion is hyperbolic.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, June 20th, 2015 at 7:09 AM

Title: Re: Namkhai Norbu and Vegetarianism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

An action must be complete in three ways in order to accrue a full karma from it. .

theanarchist said:

But you still get an incomplete karma. Plus, it's said, if you rejoice in an act, you get as much karma as the person performing it.

Malcolm wrote:

No, actually, you don't as long as meat is pure in three ways.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, June 20th, 2015 at 7:11 AM

Title: Re: Namkhai Norbu and Vegetarianism

Content:

Kelwin said:

Karma certainly works within the relative world...

Malcolm wrote:

Karma is volition, and that is all it is. Purchasing meat does not necessarily carry with it the volition to kill. Asserting that it does is absurd.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, June 20th, 2015 at 7:13 AM

Title: Re: Namkhai Norbu and Vegetarianism

Content:

Saoshun said:

if someone has a sincere heart will see that it's not about animal suffering .

theanarchist said:

No, slaughtering and eating animals is not about animal suffering...

Malcolm wrote:

Meat does not suffer. Once an animal has been killed, its meat is inert. There is no consciousness present, ergo, purchasing the meat of an animal that has already been killed does not contribute to the suffering of that sentient being.

Eating meat is solely a problem if you killed an animal yourself, asked for it to be killed or witnessed it killed. Bhavaviveka demonstrates this quite well in the Tarkajavala. These days, the main impetus to be vegetarian comes from narrow-minded Chinese Buddhists. Tibetan Lamas give into this because they want donations.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, June 20th, 2015 at 7:19 AM

Title: Re: Namkhai Norbu and Vegetarianism

Content:

theanarchist said:

You have to be to some degree be happy that someone else did the deed for you that enables you to eat this meat without doing it yourself.

I mean, the alternative is to sit in front of your steak feeling guilty while enjoying the delicious taste.

Malcolm wrote:

Not at all.

I can enjoy the taste of meat at the same time that I am sorry there is the suffering of killing in the world. When I eat meat I do so in recognition that Samsara is a terrible place. Also, when I eat vegetables I likewise am aware of the many millions of creatures killed every day to bring nice vegetables to my table.

I do not feel guilty for the acts committed by others. If there was no meat in the markets, I would not eat it and I would not miss it for a second.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, June 20th, 2015 at 7:22 AM

Title: Re: Namkhai Norbu and Vegetarianism

Content:

theanarchist said:

Okay, next time I need a car, I buy one from a dealer in stolen goods, because, you know once the car is stolen from it's previous owner, it's inert.

When I buy it I automatically ask for it to be killed. The price of the meat includes the wage of the professional butcher doing it. I pay him with the money I pay for the meat.

Malcolm wrote:

Now, you are simply making irrational arguments. A car is inert from the start.

You only pay a butcher if you ask him to kill an animal for you. This is clearly forbidden. Otherwise, when you buy meat in a modern market, the consciousness of that animal is long dead, well on its way to yet another rebirth. There is no connection between meat that I buy, and the suffering of said animal. It already happened and is finished, for that life.

Karma is volition, and the secondary acts of body and voice that proceed from that. In order for killing to be part of my karma, I must request some being be killed or do it myself. Otherwise, there is no karma involved.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, June 20th, 2015 at 7:28 AM

Title: Re: Namkhai Norbu and Vegetarianism

Content:

bryandavis said:

But by buying meat I add to the demand for the meat. If nobody would buy it, nobody would be paid to slaughter animals

I believe the ChNNR said something like this already, but I will say it also.

Malcolm wrote:

He should just stop eating meat since he feels so strongly that it is wrong. The only one at fault here is him, since he admitted he eats meat, but feels that it is really, really karmically wrong.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, June 20th, 2015 at 7:31 AM

Title: Re: Global Warming / Climate Change: Caused by human activi

Content:

Saoshun said:

No such thing as global warming. It's rather getting colder then it was couple years ago.

Malcolm wrote:

Dude, you are so so wrong...

Saoshun said:

Worldwide, 2001-2010 was the warmest decade on record since thermometer-based observations began. Global average surface temperature has risen at an average rate of 0.15°F per decade since 1901 (see Figure 2), similar to the rate of warming within the contiguous 48 states. Since the late 1970s, however, the United States has warmed faster than the global rate.

Malcolm wrote:

<http://www.epa.gov/climatechange/science/indicators/weather-climate/temperature.html>

Saoshun said:

The globally averaged temperature over land and ocean surfaces for 2014 was the highest among all years since record keeping began in 1880. The December combined global land and ocean average surface temperature was also the highest on record.

Malcolm wrote:

<http://www.ncdc.noaa.gov/sotc/summary-info/global/201412>

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, June 20th, 2015 at 7:35 AM

Title: Re: Global Warming / Climate Change: Caused by human activi

Content:

Saoshun said:

No such thing as global warming. It's rather getting colder then it was couple years ago.

Urgyen Dorje said:

So you've made a truth claim. What is the factual basis for this truth claim?

Malcolm wrote:

Is it just me? Or did anyone notice our two climate deniers use Chinese nyms?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, June 20th, 2015 at 7:37 AM

Title: Re: "V"s in Sanskrit

Content:

MiphamFan said:

Tibetan ba or wa itself might have been a labiodental approximant in his time. It is in some modern Kham dialects still.

Malcolm wrote:

Dude, the only people who know what a "labiodental approximant" is are modern linguists. Not even Sanskritists know WTF this is. Honestly. You are being a trifle ridiculous and unhelpful here.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, June 20th, 2015 at 7:39 AM

Title: Re: Phowa on insects

Content:

Tenso said:

I've heard some stories of people doing this. How possible is this for an average practitioner? Does one need to be of a high realization?

Malcolm wrote:

Better to sing song of the vajra, or six spaces of Samantabhadra. More effective...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, June 20th, 2015 at 8:04 AM

Title: Re: Namkhai Norbu and Vegetarianism

Content:

jmlee369 said:

In terms the meat that is pure in three ways, while it is indeed the case for monastics, I have yet to see that concept applied for lay people in scripture.

Malcolm wrote:

It applies since lay people have a vow against killing, just like bhikṣus, etc.

jmlee369 said:

As for plant cultivation and the harm it causes to sentient beings, meat eating is compounding the problem because of the feed that livestock consume. Going down one trophic level would reduce the amount of beings harmed from plant cultivation as

well.

Overall, while it is unrealistic to ask the whole world to adopt vegetarianism, it's not too much to ask that people reduce their meat consumption a little bit.

Malcolm wrote:

Indeed, it is also not unrealistic to ask Vajrayāna practitioners to apply methods we have been taught to create positive connections so that beings whose flesh we consume meet the Dharma.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, June 20th, 2015 at 8:06 AM

Title: Re: Namkhai Norbu and Vegetarianism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Eating meat is solely a problem if you killed an animal yourself, asked for it to be killed or witnessed it killed. Bhavaviveka demonstrates this quite well in the Tarkajavala. These days, the main impetus to be vegetarian comes from narrow-minded Chinese Buddhists. Tibetan Lamas give into this because they want donations.

jmlee369 said:

I don't think you can criticise the Chinese too much for upholding the scriptures and precepts.

Malcolm wrote:

The prohibition against eating meat may exist in the Chinese bodhisattva vows, but not in the Indian bodhisattva vows, and the Tibetan traditions that follow the latter. And as I pointed out, the Tarkajavala rejects that idea that eating meat that is pure in three ways has a fault. Bhavaviveka, a Mahayānist, is quite aware of the Lanka and so on, and in fact mentions it by name.

The main sūtras that rail against meat eating are the Tathāhatagarbha sūtras.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, June 20th, 2015 at 8:10 AM

Title: Re: Namkhai Norbu and Vegetarianism

Content:

MiphamFan said:

I don't think Chatral is influenced by wanting donations from Chinese, and there has been a fairly long strain of vegetarianism in Nyingma.

In Mipham's Satirical poem on the four schools he notes that actually, and says that Gelugpas like meat the most.

But I think accommodating to Chinese tastes has influenced a lot of modern TB teachers. I think they are better off presenting themselves as laymen if they are such rather than being ambiguous about it to people who are uninformed though.

Malcolm wrote:

There exists no Mahāyāna commitment in the Indo-Tibetan tradition to avoid meat. It is not part of our bodhisattva vows.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, June 20th, 2015 at 8:12 AM

Title: Re: Namkhai Norbu and Vegetarianism

Content:

TocharianB said:

This teaching of ChNN Rinpoche rejects that idea--it enjoins me to act in a way that presupposes my being a practitioner of Buddhadharma sets me apart. I should eat meat while markets provide it to benefit beings, while believing that it would be better for everyone who is not a practitioner to abstain...

Malcolm wrote:

Correct, perfectly stated. Only I would go further and point out that part of the Madhyamaka tradition rejects the tathāgatagarbha tradition's prohibition against eating meat as long as it is pure in three ways.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, June 20th, 2015 at 8:14 AM

Title: Re: Namkhai Norbu and Vegetarianism

Content:

TocharianB said:

Overall, it is a difficult teaching that I am trying to observe to benefit beings.

Malcolm wrote:

I don't think it is that difficult. The imperative is to create positive connections for sentient beings.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, June 20th, 2015 at 6:39 PM

Title: Re: Global Warming / Climate Change: Caused by human activi

Content:

KeithBC said:

Solar power is good and necessary. But the real issue lurking behind all this is sustainability. How sustainable is the solar cell industry? To be specific, those solar

cells are made in a coal-powered factory. So does the coal saved by their use equal the coal consumed by their manufacture? i don't know the answer, and I bet neither do the manufacturers. This is the type of question we need answers to in addressing climate change or any of the other sustainability issues. I would be a lot more comfortable with solar power if the panels were made in a solar-powered factory.

Om mani padme hum
Keith

Malcolm wrote:

Not only this, but solar cells require rare earth minerals, and in most places in the world, they are bound up with radioactive isotopes making them very problematical to mine. They also are only strip mined.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, June 20th, 2015 at 6:40 PM

Title: Re: Namkhai Norbu and Vegetarianism

Content:

Malcom said:

Once an animal has been killed, its meat is inert. There is no consciousness present, ergo, purchasing the meat of an animal that has already been killed does not contribute to the suffering of that sentient being.

Otherwise, when you buy meat in a modern market, the consciousness of that animal is long dead, well on its way to yet another rebirth. There is no connection between meat that I buy, and the suffering of said animal.

Indeed, it is also not unrealistic to ask Vajrayāna practitioners to apply methods we have been taught to create positive connections so that beings whose flesh we consume meet the Dharma.

jmlee369 said:

This is one thing I've been curious about for a while now. There are several methods in both lower and higher tantric texts that enable practitioners to benefit beings by interacting in some way with dead remains. How exactly does this work if the consciousness is long gone from the body? Then there's the whole "Buddhas cannot wash away wrongdoing and obscuration with water..." thing, and how even the Buddhas and bodhisattvas cannot intervene if a being lacks the merit etc. If there is no volition on the part of the animal to create the connection, how can it be accomplished?

Malcolm wrote:

The connection is created by the practitioner towards the animal.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, June 20th, 2015 at 6:47 PM

Title: Re: Phowa on insects

Content:

Tenso said:

I've heard some stories of people doing this. How possible is this for an average practitioner? Does one need to be of a high realization?

Malcolm wrote:

Better to sing song of the vajra, or six spaces of Samantabhadra. More effective...

Tenso said:

Why would that be more effective than phowa?

Malcolm wrote:

In order for phowa to be effective, one must expert in it, have done the practice and produced signs. By contrast, song of the vajra has no such requirement.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, June 20th, 2015 at 6:48 PM

Title: Re: Interview with Khenchen Rigdzin Dorje on the Nyingmapa V

Content:

DENZONG said:

Taktse Nyingma Institute, Gangtok, Sikkim. This property belongs to The Chogyal(King) Tenzing Tobgyal Wongchuk Namgyal of Sikkim, and he later donated it to The Tsuklakhang Trust. Khempo Rinzing was given in-charge of this Institute by the Chogyal under an agreement in 1997. And he broke many clauses of the agreement and due to which he was asked to leave the institute. And some of the clauses that he broke was getting married. Any teacher or professor or principal of a Sheda is not suppose to get married and if he does he has to leave the Sheda. He's been asked to leave the Sheda for many years and he has not yet vacated that Sheda. A case was registered in the Lok Adalat, Gangtok, Sikkim against him and he never turned out, not even once and the case is still going on. I hope this will clarify the ownership of the Sheda/Taktse Nyingma Institute, Gangtok, Sikkim.

Malcolm wrote:

This is just hearsay.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, June 20th, 2015 at 8:09 PM

Title: Re: HHDL advice: Westerners to take monk/nun as teacher

Content:

Adamantine said:

with this logic then Namkhai Norbu for instance would be less ideal as a teacher than any random bikshu? I have a hard time accepting that. I think level of realization is the most important factor in my own criteria for teachers.

Malcolm wrote:

In general, ordinary people cannot ascertain who is awakened and who is not. The story of Virupa is illustrative here.

People's idea of who is "realized" is very fickle and subjective.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, June 20th, 2015 at 9:48 PM

Title: Re: HHDL advice: Westerners to take monk/nun as teacher

Content:

Adamantine said:

with this logic then Namkhai Norbu for instance would be less ideal as a teacher than any random bikshu? I have a hard time accepting that. I think level of realization is the most important factor in my own criteria for teachers.

Malcolm wrote:

In general, ordinary people cannot ascertain who is awakened and who is not. The story of Virupa is illustrative here.

People's idea of who is "realized" is very fickle and subjective.

Adamantine said:

Yes but equally how could an ordinary person know when a bikshu is truly keeping their vows purely? Would'n't you need extraordinary powers of insight to know even this?

Malcolm wrote:

Good thing we have the Dalai Lama around...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 22nd, 2015 at 7:15 AM

Title: Re: Ksha.ya'i.nad

Content:

pemachophel said:

Can anyone tell me what kind of disease ksha.ya'i.nad is?

Thanks

Malcolm wrote:

First of all it is a cold bile disease.

It is a wasting disease, but it is fact not tuberculosis. Tuberculosis is another illness, called " gcong chen zad byed ", something like "major chronic consumption."

Kṣaya [kshaya nagpo] is fatal, there is no cure. It is something like terminal jaundice. What happens here is that the bile from the bladder spreads through the entire body,

including the channels, skin, bones and so on. Since it consumes them, it is called "consumption" (zad byed) in Tibetan. It is also called black [nag po] because the patients complexion becomes dark. The skin and so on become dark blue and the nails have black spots.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 22nd, 2015 at 8:06 PM

Title: Re: Interview with Khenchen Rigdzin Dorje on the Nyingmapa V

Content:

DENZONG said:

I HAVE ALL THE PAPERS AND DOCUMENTS TO PROVE THE AUTHENTICITY OF THE STATEMENTS BELOW.

Taktse Nyingma

Institute, Gangtok, Sikkim. This property belongs to The Chogyal(King) Tenzing Tobgyal Wongchuk Namgyal of Sikkim, and he later donated it to The Tsuklakhang Trust.

Khempo Rinzing was given in-charge of this Institute by the Chogyal under an agreement in 1997. And he broke many clauses of the agreement and due to which he was asked to leave the institute. And some of the clauses that he broke was getting married. Any teacher or professor or principal of a Sheda is not suppose to get married and if he does he has to leave the Sheda. He's been asked to leave the Sheda for many years and he has not yet vacated that Sheda. A case was registered in the Lok Adalat, Gangtok, Sikkim against him and he never turned out, not even once and the case is still going on. I hope this will clarify the ownership of the Sheda/Taktse Nyingma Institute, Gangtok, Sikkim.

Malcolm wrote:

Again, this is just hearsay on an internet website.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 22nd, 2015 at 8:09 PM

Title: Re: Namkhai Norbu and Vegetarianism

Content:

jmlee369 said:

If there is no volition on the part of the animal to create the connection, how can it be accomplished?

anjali said:

Well, the way I've heard it explained is that we already have a connection with the animal--if you believe that all sentient beings have been our mother at some point in our past lives. In a sense, eating the flesh of an animal is eating the flesh of one of our former mothers. I can only speak for myself in saying that that understanding is enough for me to eliminate consuming meat as part of my diet, or consuming the least amount possible to satisfy vows in a ritual setting.

Malcolm wrote:

That connection is a debt, a lan chags. It is not a connection for liberation, but a

connection from bondage in samsara.

Eating meat to satisfy vows for oneself is also the opposite of compassion concern for others.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 22nd, 2015 at 8:10 PM

Title: Re: Namkhai Norbu and Vegetarianism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The connection is created by the practitioner towards the animal.

Reibeam said:

Would it be correct to assume this connection is also made if one uses candles made of tallow (animal fat) on their shrine that are used during Ganapujas and other rituals such as invocation of the lamp?

Malcolm wrote:

Such candles are fine for wrathful rites, but should not be used in general, for the same reason we do not use animal products in sang offerings to Nāgās.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 22nd, 2015 at 8:23 PM

Title: Re: Namkhai Norbu and Vegetarianism

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

I am something in a similar situation as LunaRoja, and am also informed by Pollen and others in terms of food politics. In the final analysis, it's actually hunting-gathering that has the least ecological impact and the least amount of suffering, so I figure I'm OK interpolating between a vegetarian diet and something of a flexitarian diet.

That said, this causes me some pause in dharma circles. I feel somewhat caught between a rock and a hard place. My vegetarian-vegan dharma siblings evoke Shabkar and Patrul on the Tibetan side, and sutra on the Chan/Zen side, and chide me for this flexitarian approach and chide me for incorporating meat in ganapuja. We have had vegetarian-vegan Buddhists show up for ganapuja and they have been horrified by the presence of meat. On the flip side, when I orbit into the vegan-vegetarian side of the pool, then I have my tantrica friends chiding me for "the worst type of compassion" and for breaking samaya at ganapuja for either putting on a white tsok, or for just tasting but not actively eating meat and drinking alcohol.

In some way I feel that I am on the margin of some larger cultural issue, maybe from the Tibetan side, but maybe from the inji convert side.

It's not just about meat either. I often encounter this belief that all five tastes must be present in the ganapuja, and this becomes something of a fault line when two people bring pickles and nobody ends up with "bitter" or "pungent". When I ask lamas they're like, well, in my part of Tibet we offered tsampa and just tsampa because that's all we had, so it's clear the forrest is lost for the trees on many levels.

Malcolm wrote:

Ok, first it is six tastes (sweet, salty, sour, hot, bitter, astringent) and though there may be some text that specifies this, I have never seen it.

It is possible that one can do a ganapuja with nothing at all, after all, the important part is to work with circumstances. However, there is no one among us who unable to get meat and unable to get alcohol as offerings.

As to the idea of using nectar pills, well, this does not challenge one's capacity nor does it encourage one to integrate. The adoption of vegetarianism into ganapujas is a misapplication of the path of renunciation (i.e. common Mahāyāna) to Varjayāna.

According to ChNN, Zhabkar, Paltrul and Pema Duddul's exhortations to not eat meat are for non-practitioners, that is, people who do not understand the meaning of Dzogchen teachings.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 22nd, 2015 at 11:22 PM

Title: Re: Mantra Liberation Through Hearing ("Ha Gan Ga")

Content:

Boomerang said:

Okay, so is Garchen Rinpoche intentionally sending himself and hundreds of other people to hell, including me and other people on this forum?

Malcolm wrote:

I can only related to you what is described in the tantras. I am not going to opine on Garchen Rinpoche's intentions.

Boomerang said:

Does that mean you're agnostic about the validity of Garchen Rinpoche's recorded empowerments. I ask because to me it sounded like you were saying that you believe, with the Mahāmudratilaka Tantra as your reference, that regardless of Rinpoche's positive intentions and siddhis he is hellbound, as well as myself, Lhasa, Sherab Dorje, and others. If that's the case please tell me straight up so I can emotionally prepare myself; hell is scary. You have corrected my views in the past and I rely on you to do it again. You can PM me if that's what you prefer.

Malcolm wrote:

I think it is pretty clear that Garchen Rinpoche wants students to attend in person or by live webcast. As far as recordings go, I imagine that his thinking runs as follows, "if beginners, new people, want to practice, they can get an idea from watching an online recording, and perhaps there is some positive connection made to the teaching and if they recite the mantra, there is no harm."

But for example, HHDL makes it very clear that watching Kalacakra online does not grant one the empowerment. Also CHNN makes it very clear that empowerments that rely on substances cannot be given via webcast. Other Lamas may have a different ideas about this, but I really think in general all Lamas will agree that there is no way one can receive an empowerment from a recording of an empowerment. I am quite certain, for example, if you wrote ChNN on this subject, he would say very clearly to you that you cannot receive any kind of transmission from a recording.

And one thing I am pretty clear on is that no one receives empowerments or a lung from a recording.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 22nd, 2015 at 11:48 PM

Title: Re: Namkhai Norbu and Vegetarianism

Content:

Paul said:

I'd love lamas to also do this kind of thing to those with 'gluten intolerances'.

Anders said:

Celiac disease is a measurable medical condition.

Malcolm wrote:

Eating meat will not cause a problem in their case.

People are free. Whether they eat meat or not is not the issue. The issue really that Rinpoche is pointing to is the fallacies in the idea that choosing not to eat meat is more "compassionate". He has pointed in many ways the falsity of this thinking because it does not truly address the suffering of nonhumans in the whole chain of agricultural production.

Quite honestly, the American Philosopher, Robert Nozick provides a much better and more well reasoned argument for not eating animals in his Anarchy, State and Utopia where he discards utilitarian arguments for the eating of animals because animals "count for something."

Anders said:

If some animals count for something, which animals count, how much do they count, and how can this be determined? Suppose (as I believe the evidence supports) that eating animals is not necessary for health and is not less expensive than alternate

equally healthy diets available to people in the United States. The gain, then, from the eating of animals is pleasures of the palate, gustatory delights, varied tastes. I would not claim that these are not truly pleasant, delightful, and interesting. The question is: do they, or rather does the marginal addition in them gained by eating animals rather than only nonanimals, outweigh the moral weight to be given to animals' lives and pain? Given that animals are to count for something, is the extra gain obtained by eating them rather than nonanimal products greater than the moral cost? How might these questions be decided?

Malcolm wrote:

Nozick, Robert (2013-11-12). *Anarchy, State, and Utopia* (pp. 36-37). Basic Books. Kindle Edition.

Anders said:

What about persons distinguishes them from animals, so that stringent constraints apply to how persons may be treated, yet not to how animals may be treated? 11 Could beings from another galaxy stand to us as it is usually thought we do to animals, and if so, would they be justified in treating us as means à la utilitarianism? Are organisms arranged on some ascending scale, so that any may be sacrificed or caused to suffer to achieve a greater total benefit for those not lower on the scale? Such an elitist hierarchical view would distinguish three moral statuses (forming an interval partition of the scale):

Status 1: The being may not be sacrificed, harmed, and so on, for any other organism's sake.

Status 2: The being may be sacrificed, harmed, and so on, only for the sake of beings higher on the scale, but not for the sake of beings at the same level.

Status 3: The being may be sacrificed, harmed, and so on, for the sake of other beings at the same or higher levels on the scale.

If animals occupy status 3 and we occupy status 1, what occupies status 2? Perhaps we occupy status 2! Is it morally forbidden to use people as means for the benefit of others, or is it only forbidden to use them for the sake of other people, that is, for beings at the same level? Do ordinary views include the possibility of more than one significant moral divide (like that between persons and animals), and might one come on the other side of human beings?

Malcolm wrote:

Nozick, Robert (2013-11-12). *Anarchy, State, and Utopia* (pp. 45-46). Basic Books. Kindle Edition.

There are also Singer's arguments.

So the real question that ChNN is placing before us is: what does one do for the countless sentient beings that are slaughtered in food production? How do we benefit all these sentient beings (who indeed count for something)? What method do we use?

Even Vegans have to admit that they use the above elite hierarchical model in their ethics, a "being may be sacrificed, harmed, and so on, for the sake of other beings at the same or higher levels on the scale" merely by permitting agriculture. However, their excuse, is in my opinion very lame. They claim in general, "While it is true that beings die in the production of plant-based food, we do not intend that harm nor are we raising beings to be used as food. The death of beings in food production is a regrettable fact of agriculture, a by-product that we do not intend but cannot avoid in order to sustain ourselves."

In other words, they claim they are following their diet because of the intrinsic value of living creatures, but at the same time resort to utilitarianism to rationalize the broad destruction of creatures in food production, claiming a utilitarian advantage to a plant based diet as a selling point, i.e. the myth that "less creatures would be killed in a plant-based diet." The other hoax in their thinking is that idea that we should not exploit creatures such as cows and bees for milk and honey, while happily using lady bugs to kill agricultural pests and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 23rd, 2015 at 12:47 AM

Title: Re: Namkhai Norbu and Vegetarianism

Content:

Johnny Dangerous said:

Uh no, actually an enormous amount of food (including meat) either goes to waste or gets intentionally destroyed. The idea that an individual person buying a chicken or not is the main factor in food production decisions is simply untrue.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, there is that also. For example, when Patrul was complaining about monasteries, it was a time when monasteries would contract a certain number of sheep to be slaughtered at a given time. Now, there is no need for anyone to contract with anyone. In the first world under capitalism, the system is that one, with sufficient money, can buy any food one likes more or less at any time of the year without having to special order it from anyone. The cost of food production has been driven artificially low in order that massive surpluses in food are generated so that waste of food does not impact the profitability of grocery markets (thank you, international migrant labor!).

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 23rd, 2015 at 12:47 AM

Title: Re: Namkhai Norbu and Vegetarianism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

i.e. the myth that "less creatures would be killed in a plant-based diet."

monktastic said:

AFAIK this is not a myth. It really does harm/kill many fewer animals to eat one pound of

vegetables than one pound of meat (which required many pounds of vegetation to be raised).

Also, I see many spurious arguments here about why buying one chicken at the supermarket does not cause the death of one chicken. It does not cause the death of that one chicken, but the supermarket WILL order one more chicken to fill its spot. You may pretend that second chicken has nothing to do with you... until the next week when you go back to the market and lo and behold, there are more dead chickens waiting for you.

Whether you choose to participate in this or not is surely a very individual matter, and the matter of connecting with dead chickens is far above my pay grade. But it's crazy to take part in a system and then pretend you have precisely zero complicity in it. We all make choices that harm other beings, and though there's no point in being weighed down by guilt over them, it's disingenuous to claim that we're doing all of them for noble reasons. We can simply do what we can, and admit we're not fully compassionate beings yet.

Malcolm wrote:

What follows is a true story — some people when to the present Karmapa, Urgyen Thrinly, asking him if it was better to ransom a cow or not ransom it? The Karmapa replied, well, if you ransom the cow, another cow will just be moved up the line to be slaughtered sooner, whereas, if you do not intercede, the next cow in line be able to live longer. So he declined to give them advice in the matter.

As far as your counterclaim goes, that applies only to feed lot animals, animals raised in CFO's and so on, like most chickens, pigs, turkeys and what not.

As far as your claim about supermarkets go, it is also false. Supermarkets will continue to order meat from meat suppliers for as long as there are people who eat meat (i.e. forever).

Also, even Vegans participate in the trade of flesh by continuing to eat organically grown products which are fertilized with bone meal, blood meal and feather meal, all very standard organic amendments which are substantial cash inputs into the slaughterhouse business.

The point is that there is no one who is not complicit in some manner in "the system".

As for myself, I apply the methods taught by my gurus, knowing that I am making a difference.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 23rd, 2015 at 12:49 AM

Title: Re: Mantra Liberation Through Hearing ("Ha Gan Ga")

Content:

Boomerang said:

Karma is volition, so since I intended to receive lung and empowerment in an improper way, am I in danger of going to the lower realms? That's the message I get from your posts, for example, this one:

<https://www.dharmawheel.net/viewtopic.php?f=40&t=16286&hilit=recording+transmission&start=120#p230363>

Therefore, if someone asks me, I will always honestly tell them that it is impossible to receive any kind of Vajrayāna transmission from a recording of a prior event. People are of course free to disagree and that is between them and lower realms.

If I really am going to avici hell I'd rather know now than be paranoid about it for the rest of my life.

Malcolm wrote:

There is no such thing as fixed karma in Buddhadharma. One can purify anything. Including taking teachings in a less than optimal way.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 23rd, 2015 at 1:00 AM

Title: Re: Mantra Liberation Through Hearing ("Ha Gan Ga")

Content:

Boomerang said:

In that case, what should I do to fix this problem?

Malcolm wrote:

You should go and meet a teacher face to face (best case) or through a live webcast (next best) and receive transmissions in a proper way. If you have faith in Garchen Rinpoche, go meet him.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 23rd, 2015 at 1:14 AM

Title: Re: Mantra Liberation Through Hearing ("Ha Gan Ga")

Content:

Boomerang said:

In that case, what should I do to fix this problem?

Malcolm wrote:

You should go and meet a teacher face to face (best case) or through a live webcast (next best) and receive transmissions in a proper way. If you have faith in Garchen Rinpoche, go meet him.

Boomerang said:

Shouldn't I stay away from Garchen Rinpoche since his statements were what encouraged me to create this negative karma in the first place? How is it okay for him to publicly support empowerment via recording but a downfall for me to believe him? If I

went up to him now and requested empowerment, specifically because I doubt his statement on empowerments, wouldn't that be impure vision or something?

Malcolm wrote:

I am not really sure if he does support empowerment via recordings, despite what his students say. And in any case the pure vision of buddhas cannot remove the impure vision of sentient beings. If it could, we would have no need to practice at all.

In any case, there are any number of very highly qualified teachers you can make a connection with out there.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 23rd, 2015 at 1:58 AM

Title: Re: Namkhai Norbu and Vegetarianism

Content:

monktastic said:

Yes, and they must order meat in approximate proportion to the demand. If the demand for a particular meat were to drop fivefold, again, they are smart enough to reduce their purchasing of that particular meat in the long term.

The rest of your post is accurate. We all have complicity in many systems. But it's painful (particularly on a Buddhist forum) to watch people pretend that they have no responsibility in this specific one.

Malcolm wrote:

In reality, supermarkets order far more meat than they will sell, knowingly, in order to keep fresh meat on hand at all times. Their model does not allow for scarcity, and given that the price of meat is kept artificially low in Western Markets, this is no actual connection between consumer demand and supply in this instance.

http://www.meatinfo.co.uk/news/fullstory.php/aid/18294/Farmers_see_drop_in_meat_returns_due_to_oversupply.html

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/02/19/usa-ports-meat-idUSL1N0VT23S20150219>

<http://allafrica.com/stories/201504140881.html>

<http://www.irishtimes.com/news/ireland/irish-news/oversupply-is-main-reason-for-fall-in-beef-prices-says-coveney-1.1904916>

Food waste:

<http://www.wri.org/publication/reducing-food-loss-and-waste>

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/wonkblog/wp/2012/08/22/how-food-actually-gets-wasted-in-the-united-states/>

<http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2014/10/141013-food-waste-national-security-environment-science-ngfood/>

Interestingly, meat is wasted less than any other food, because it can be stored longer by freezing and so on.

Thus the idea that a meat-inclusive diet is more harmful to creatures than a solely plant-based diet is shown to be a fallacy.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 23rd, 2015 at 2:03 AM

Title: Re: Mantra Liberation Through Hearing ("Ha Gan Ga")

Content:

Boomerang said:

In any case, there are any number of very highly qualified teachers you can make a connection with out there.

At this point I feel reluctant to make a connection with any more teachers. I thought the third highest ranking teacher in the Drikung Kagyu lineage would be okay, but the next thing I know people are telling me that I cursed myself and he didn't really say the things he said. How do I know who to trust?

Malcolm wrote:

You can trust lineage heads. The Dalai Lama, Sakya Trizin, the Karmapa, Taklung Tsetrul Rinpoche, etc. Then you can trust the lamas which are responsible to them, and so on.

I never said don't trust Garchen Rinpoche, I said go meet him in person.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 23rd, 2015 at 2:51 AM

Title: Re: Namkhai Norbu and Vegetarianism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

That connection is a debt, a lan chags. It is not a connection for liberation, but a connection from bondage in samsara.

Agreed, but surely it isn't required to consume the flesh of our former mothers in daily diet to make connections for liberation?

Nothing is required.

Eating meat to satisfy vows for oneself is also the opposite of compassion concern for others.

Agreed, but one can also reasonably ask, how much flesh does one need to consume to generate compassionate concern for our mothers?

Question is, "Is it better, out of compassion, to eschew eating meat or not?" ChNN's answer is that question is that it is better not to eschew eating meat out of compassion. If a Dzogchen practitioner is truly compassionate it is better they eat meat.

Naturally, people are also free to do what they feel is right.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 23rd, 2015 at 3:18 AM

Title: Re: Namkhai Norbu and Vegetarianism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

That connection is a debt, a lan chags. It is not a connection for liberation, but a connection from bondage in samsara.

anjali said:

Agreed, but surely it isn't required to consume the flesh of our former mothers in daily diet to make connections for liberation?

Malcolm wrote:

Eating meat to satisfy vows for oneself is also the opposite of compassion concern for others.

anjali said:

Agreed, but one can also reasonably ask, how much flesh does one need to consume to generate compassionate concern for our mothers?

Johnny Dangerous said:

Sure, but one could just as easily ask "how many high-end vegan/vegetarian lifestyle products and services does one need"...in the First World, most vegetarians and vegans I know do almost the opposite of buying or eating based on need. If they bought based on need they would likely be more frugal and less finicky about what they eat, and where they shop. Instead, I would estimate that something like 10% of the vegans/vegetarians I know eat based on need, the rest have something akin to an eating disorder, often possible due to income. Sounds harsh I know, but we have to make a distinction between ways of practicing vegetarianism or veganism to answer some of these questions adequately.

Malcolm wrote:

Orthorexia Nervosa:

<https://www.nationaleatingdisorders.org/orthorexia-nervosa>

Johnny Dangerous said:

Younger realized her new brand had also turned into a new lifestyle and taken over her daily decisions. After becoming upset her local West Village juice bar didn't have a particular green juice, she planned on having that day she made her friend go with her to another juice bar a mile away just to satiate her restrictive diet needs...Younger, who has over 70,000 followers on her Instagram account alone, has decided to begin reintroducing eggs, fish, and organic chicken back into her diet and loosen the reigns of her strict vegan lifestyle and change her account name to "The Blonde Veggie." She's actually received death threats from hardcore vegans through Facebook, email, and

Instagram.

Malcolm wrote:

<http://www.medicaldaily.com/how-veganism-led-blogger-jordan-younger-develop-eating-disorder-orthorexia-3-steps-prevent-obsession>

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 23rd, 2015 at 4:20 AM

Title: Re: Namkhai Norbu and Vegetarianism

Content:

bryandavis said:

The most attentive service and accurate to menu meal preparation I have experienced was in a high end french gourmet restaurant.

The absolute worst service and lack of attention to detail and meal preparation on numerous occasions by different employees I have ever had by far is in a raw vegan restaurant.

I'm just saying. lol.

Malcolm wrote:

Oh yes, I have had very similar experiences. The vegan restaurants I have been to have been universally awful.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 23rd, 2015 at 4:34 AM

Title: Re: Namkhai Norbu and Vegetarianism

Content:

anjali said:

For example, I wonder how many buddhists, of any persuasion, follow the advice in the Puttamansa Sutta: A Son's Flesh:

Malcolm wrote:

This is Hinayāna teaching. It does not apply to Dzogchen and Vajrayāna practitioners. As Dzogchen and Vajrayāna practitioners, we are supposed to enjoy all objects of desire of the five senses as objects of desire. We are not Hinayāna monks refusing to mix the sauce into our rice.

So while there are certainly some Buddhists who apply this method, it is not really the principle of our teaching here.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 23rd, 2015 at 4:36 AM

Title: Re: Namkhai Norbu and Vegetarianism

Content:

Paul said:

bumping my post in the hope someone can answer it...

Malcolm wrote:

You can recite the mantra from Jigme Lingpa's short ganapuja, "ram yam....puja hoh!" for example. Or just the three syllables.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 23rd, 2015 at 5:21 AM

Title: Re: Namkhai Norbu and Vegetarianism

Content:

Tsongkhapafan said:

Tibetan monks love to eat meat. If you are refraining from eating meat for compassionate reasons, no one can fault your decision.

Whatever you do with compassion cannot be faulted. You can also eat meat with compassion but if you can reduce suffering in this world by refraining from endorsing the wholesale slaughter of millions of sentient beings every day, why wouldn't you? The Lankavatara Sutra, among others, also endorses refraining from eating meat.

Malcolm wrote:

As already noted, if you are a common Mahāyāna practitioner without special Vajrayāna methods, then of course, you should refrain from eating meat. But if you are a Vajrayāna practitioner, claiming you are not eating meat "out of compassion" is lame and inferior conduct — that is just how it is. And in particular, in the context of Dzogchen teachings (the context here) it is especially lame.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 23rd, 2015 at 5:52 AM

Title: Re: Namkhai Norbu and Vegetarianism

Content:

Tsongkhapafan said:

Tibetan monks love to eat meat. If you are refraining from eating meat for compassionate reasons, no one can fault your decision.

Whatever you do with compassion cannot be faulted. You can also eat meat with compassion but if you can reduce suffering in this world by refraining from endorsing the wholesale slaughter of millions of sentient beings every day, why wouldn't you? The Lankavatara Sutra, among others, also endorses refraining from eating meat.

Malcolm wrote:

As already noted, if you are a common Mahāyāna practitioner without special Vajrayāna

methods, then of course, you should refrain from eating meat. But if you are a Vajrayāna practitioner, claiming you are not eating meat "out of compassion" is lame and inferior conduct — that is just how it is. And in particular, in the context of Dzogchen teachings (the context here) it is especially lame.

dzogchungpa said:

How do you say "especially lame" in Tibetan?

Malcolm wrote:

rab tu smad.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 23rd, 2015 at 6:31 AM

Title: Re: Namkhai Norbu and Vegetarianism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

if you are a Vajrayāna practitioner, claiming you are not eating meat "out of compassion" is lame and inferior conduct — that is just how it is. And in particular, in the context of Dzogchen teachings (the context here) it is especially lame.

Tsongkhapafan said:

What's lame is contributing to suffering unnecessarily, whatever path you're following.

Malcolm wrote:

Bhavaviveka proves, even while mentioning the Lanka and so on, that eating meat in three ways does not contribute to suffering. If eating meat pure in three ways contributes to suffering, he points out so does wearing wool, leather, silk etc.

So, in fact, as long as the meat one consumes is pure in three ways it does not contribute to the suffering of a given animal at all. I know this is hard for people to understand, but it is the case.

In reality it is impossible for us to remove the suffering of other sentient beings at all, even one tiny bit. Not even Buddhas can remove the suffering of other beings. If we believe that by refusing to eat meat we are reducing some other beings suffering, we are deluding ourselves because we have not understood the nature of suffering at all. As Maitreya points out in samsara there is not so much as an area the size of a needle tip in which happiness may be found. Therefore, what can we do to help? All we can do is make efforts at creating positive causes for sentient beings to meet the Dharma in the future. For example, the Root Tantra of Heruka states that Vajrayāna practitioners themselves are "Liberation through seeing." Any being who sees Vajrayāna practitioner plants a seed for meeting the Buddhas and hearing Dharma teachings. But dead animals cannot see or hear anything. Therefore, we have methods connected with creating a positive cause for those sentient beings whom human beings commonly consume because we have a closer relationship with those types of animals.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 23rd, 2015 at 7:27 AM

Title: Re: Namkhai Norbu and Vegetarianism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

In reality it is impossible for us to remove the suffering of other sentient beings at all,.

theanarchist said:

But do you want to be the agent responsible for the suffering?

.

Malcolm wrote:

I have already dispensed with this objection. One is only responsible for an animal's suffering if one orders an animal killed for one or kills it oneself.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 23rd, 2015 at 7:29 AM

Title: Re: Namkhai Norbu and Vegetarianism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

In reality it is impossible for us to remove the suffering of other sentient beings at all,.

theanarchist said:

But do you want to be the agent responsible for the suffering?

That would be like "oh, don't try to prevent a war, doing so won't prevent the suffering of those beings anyway"

This is the slippery slope of excusing other beings suffering with their karma and conveniently not even trying to do something about it.

Malcolm wrote:

Well, for one, I am a doctor of Tibetan Medicine so one can hardly accuse me of being indifferent to the suffering of sentient beings, but I also know the limitations of treatment. In reality all suffering comes about from the three poisons, and the three poisons come from the innate grasping at "I am." Not even a Buddha can remove this,

let alone the pain in your little finger when pricked with a thorn.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 23rd, 2015 at 9:14 AM

Title: Re: Namkhai Norbu and Vegetarianism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

...if you are a Vajrayāna practitioner, claiming you are not eating meat "out of compassion" is lame and inferior conduct — that is just how it is. And in particular, in the context of Dzogchen teachings (the context here) it is especially lame.

anjali said:

Really? Those are strong words. So, just to be completely clear, you truly consider Chatral Rinpoche's (as well as Shabkar's, and other highly regarded lamas') veggie diet(s) to be especially lame and inferior conduct from a Vajrayana/Dzogchen perspective?

Malcolm wrote:

I have already explained that these words are oriented towards those who are not practitioners of Dzogchen.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 23rd, 2015 at 9:20 AM

Title: Re: Namkhai Norbu and Vegetarianism

Content:

Tsongkhapafan said:

I agree. This sounds like a huge cop-out for people who are attached to eating other living beings bodies and want to continue to do so. Mahayana Sutras are clear that eating meat harms compassion. It's the bodhisattva's way of life to do whatever we can to minimise the suffering of living beings, therefore it's not lame to eat a vegetarian diet.

<http://www.shabkar.org/vegetarianism/>

theanarchist said:

And the day you attain realisation and become a vidyadhara with the ability to liberate an animal through the ingestion of the meat, that day you can still return to eating meat in order to benefit them. I mean, no problem if folk like Do Khyentse eat meat. I doubt that you find so many people who are at this level.

Again, having delusions about one's realisations and spiritual abilities, thinking one can benefit beings with one's vajrayana practice when in reality one can't would break samaya.

Malcolm wrote:

One does not need to have high realizations to benefit such animals who wind up as our food through Vajrayāna methods, this is false equivalence.

The power of the methods of creating good causes, including the consumption of meat, arises from the blessings of Buddha Samantabhadra's words of truth, and not the realization of this or that yogi.

You are conflating the wrathful Vajrayāna practice of "liberation" [sgrol] with the practice of the six liberations (sight, sound, smell, taste, touch and recollection) — they are not the same thing at all.

As I mentioned previously, not only Chogyal Namkhai Norbu teaches such methods that he insists are to be used by all of his students, also the great tertön Kunzang Dechen Lingpa revealed termas detailing these methods as well.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 23rd, 2015 at 9:23 AM

Title: Re: Namkhai Norbu and Vegetarianism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

...if you are a Vajrayāna practitioner, claiming you are not eating meat "out of compassion" is lame and inferior conduct — that is just how it is. And in particular, in the context of Dzogchen teachings (the context here) it is especially lame.

anjali said:

Really? Those are strong words. So, just to be completely clear, you truly consider Chatral Rinpoche's (as well as Shabkar's, and other highly regarded lamas') veggie diet(s) to be especially lame and inferior conduct from a Vajrayana/Dzogchen perspective?

Malcolm wrote:

Why don't you ask ChNN what he thinks? It is he after all who first used the words "miserable compassion" to describe to compassion of those practitioners who eschew eating meat. His point of view is well known. I am merely fleshing out the details for those of little faith.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 23rd, 2015 at 9:30 AM

Title: Re: Namkhai Norbu and Vegetarianism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

I have already dispensed with this objection. One is only responsible for an animal's suffering if one orders an animal killed for one or kills it oneself.

theanarchist said:

As I wrote, the price for the meat includes the wages of the butcher. So with the money I pay for the meat I pay the work of the butcher who killed the animal. So as an end result, me and the other people who bought the meat of this specific animal paid for the act of the slaughter.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, this is true. Likewise, when you wear silk shirts, you are paying for the death of silk worms. When you wear leather, you are also paying the butcher. When you wear wool, you are paying for the deaths of countless creatures that inhabit the wool of sheep that are sheared as well as the paying for the cruel suffering endured by the sheep, as well as the lambs who are stolen from their mothers by the sheep herders and butchered for their meat and so on. If you buy glue, you are paying the butcher for the hooves and so on. Do you have pets? If so, again you are paying the butcher. Do you pay taxes, then you are paying for wars, executions, imprisonment and so on.

Are you karmically responsible? No. karma is volition and verbal and physical acts which come from volitions. If you have no volition to kill something, you do not accrue the karma of killing. If you do not ask someone to kill something, again you have no karma related to that act of killing. Buying meat in a shop is no more an act of killing than buying leather shoes in a department store.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 23rd, 2015 at 9:33 AM

Title: Re: Namkhai Norbu and Vegetarianism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

You are conflating the wrathful Vajrayāna practice of "liberation" [sgrol] with the practice of the six liberations (sight, sound, smell, taste, touch and recollection) — they are not the same thing at all.

As I mentioned previously, not only Chogyal Namkhai Norbu teaches such methods that he insists are to be used by all of his students, also the great tertön Kunzang Dechen Lingpa revealed termas detailing these methods as well.

Fortyeightvows said:

Would you kindly explain this a bit further?

Malcolm wrote:

Which part?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 23rd, 2015 at 9:34 AM

Title: Re: Namkhai Norbu and Vegetarianism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Honestly, whenever the subject of Vegetarianism comes up I swear I must be talking to the reincarnations of the followers of Devadatta.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 23rd, 2015 at 9:53 AM

Title: Re: Namkhai Norbu and Vegetarianism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

You are conflating the wrathful Vajrayāna practice of "liberation" [sgrol] with the practice of the six liberations (sight, sound, smell, taste, touch and recollection) — they are not the same thing at all.

Fortyeightvows said:

Would you kindly explain this a bit further?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, the practice of sgrol ba, liberation, is the practice of wrathfully separating a sentient being's consciousness from its body through ritual means and delivering it into the dharmadhātu. There are ten criteria through which someone or something might be subject to such a rite. For example, there is a large wasp that lives in Bhutan and Southern Tibet called "rGya nag rgyal po" (Chinese King). It kills many small creatures and drags them into its burrow, paralyzes them, and lays its eggs in them. According to the late Kunzang Dechen Lingpa, this creature is completely wicked, and its sting can be fatal to humans. Using this wasp as an example, he said there are some creatures who should be killed and that one should not naively allow one's Mahāyāna orientation to prevent one from seeing what is the greater good for all beings, just to protect the life of one wicked being. He said that in this case, proper Mahāyāna conduct would be to eliminate Gyanag Gyalpos wherever and whenever one found them because these creatures are pernicious.

The six liberations are peaceful methods, and involve creating good causes for sentient beings to meet the teachings in the future through sight, sound, smell, taste, touch and memory using various visual mantras, incenses made according to special recipes, pills, and so on.

Basically, when one uses the methods of creating good causes, all of those animals that one consumes in future lives will take rebirth as one's students when oneself becomes an awakened being. This is why the anarchist's objections are based on a faulty premise.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 23rd, 2015 at 10:01 AM

Title: Re: Namkhai Norbu and Vegetarianism

Content:

Fortyeightvows said:

Thank you. I have heard of these things before but only a little bit. So the difference is both in the method and the result, correct? At least the short term or immediate result i mean.

If appropriate, would you please elaborate on the criteria?

And

Are these teachings primarily from terma or can they be found in the canon as well?

Malcolm wrote:

The teachings on "liberation" can be found in both new tantra as well as Nyingma tantras. The six liberations can only be found in Dzogchen tantras.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 23rd, 2015 at 7:59 PM

Title: Re: Namkhai Norbu and Vegetarianism

Content:

theanarchist said:

But that's something else entirely than buying that delicious steak because you like the taste. Now if you are a realized practitioner, eat the meat without attachment, only to liberate the being, that's something entirely different too.

Malcolm wrote:

It's no different than buying a pair of leather shoes because you like the look and fit, or a silk shirt because you like the look and feel of silk, or a pashmina shawl because it is stylish and keeps you warm.

One does not need to be a "realized practitioner" to benefit beings through consuming their meat. As I pointed out above, when you consume meat using Vajrayāna methods, those animals will all be reborn as your disciples when you become a buddha yourself.

The same thing applies when weather leather shoes, wool sweaters, silk shirts and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 23rd, 2015 at 8:21 PM

Title: Re: Namkhai Norbu and Vegetarianism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The six liberations are peaceful methods, and involve creating good causes for sentient beings to meet the teachings in the future through sight, sound, smell, taste, touch and memory using various visual mantras, incenses made according to special recipes, pills, and so on.

Basically, when one uses the methods of creating good causes, all of those animals that one consumes in future lives will take rebirth as one's students when oneself becomes an awakened being. This is why the anarchist's objections are based on a faulty premise.

Wenzi said:

How about humans who have lived without connection to Dharma despite their precious human births? Can one create this connection by eating their flesh?

Malcolm wrote:

Two things here: first, a human birth is not "precious" unless one has a connection with Dharma.

Second, human meat (as well as the meat of predators) is in general forbidden to people. One cannot create a positive connection by doing something nonvirtuous.

Also human beings can be benefitted by liberation through seeing, hearing, smelling, etc., as well, even if they have no interest in or connection with the Dharma.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 23rd, 2015 at 8:30 PM

Title: Re: Namkhai Norbu and Vegetarianism

Content:

MiphamFan said:

So that applies to the other 5 meats too?

Then what about certain statements that they should be consumed in ganapujas? One must be a vidyadhara to consume the 5 meats?

Malcolm wrote:

I said in general. Ganapujas are a special case. Here, the point is consuming the five meats traditionally not consumed by Indians and left in the charnel grounds, i.e., meat of humans, cows, elephants, dogs and horses. Why? Because these meats were regarded by Brahmins as impure. The point in this instance is to overcome attachment to so called "pure and impure" food. And no, one does not have to be a Vidyadhāra to consume these meats in the ganacakra. But I think that most people would not be able to manage this. This is a general principle in niruttarayogatantra.

The principle here in Dzogchen is however a bit different. The point here is to create a positive cause for the cattle, fowl and fish that we humans normally consume in order that sentient being meet with the Dharma, and so on, in future lives.

There is the interesting case of Urgyen Lingpa's body. Urgyen Lingpa was held to be a seven timer, i.e, reborn as a brahmin or in Tibet, a tulku, seven times. It is held that his flesh had the power to create a special cause for those who ate small portions of it. So, his mummified kudung (unfortunately now destroyed) in Tibet was pockmarked from

people taking small portions of his flesh for this reason. Once, when Chogyal Namkahi Norbu was giving Medicine Buddha in Tsegylgar, he included a pill containing the flesh of this master in the vase water.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 23rd, 2015 at 8:44 PM

Title: Re: Namkhai Norbu and Vegetarianism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The six liberations are peaceful methods, and involve creating good causes for sentient beings to meet the teachings in the future through sight, sound, smell, taste, touch and memory using various visual mantras, incenses made according to special recipes, pills, and so on.

Basically, when one uses the methods of creating good causes, all of those animals that one consumes in future lives will take rebirth as one's students when oneself becomes an awakened being. This is why the anarchist's objections are based on a faulty premise.

Tsongkhapa said:

If this was your motivation for eating meat, it couldn't be faulted.

Malcolm wrote:

This is my primary motivation for eating meat, all other things aside.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 23rd, 2015 at 10:44 PM

Title: Re: Mantra Liberation Through Hearing ("Ha Gan Ga")

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

All very good advice, unfortunately, it has nothing to do with the question at hand. The question at hand is how to properly enter into the training Tulku Orgyen is talking about. So this topic is not mere criticism for criticism's sake.

Lhasa said:

TULKU URGYEN

Extract from a Teaching.

Pure Perception:

"Vajrayana in general is training in pure perception—Dzogchen is even much more so.

How can you call yourself a practitioner of Dzogchen if you spend your time defaming, finding fault with or criticizing others? Maintain the view of pure sight, sound and

awareness. This is how samsara and nirvana actually are, pervaded by the three kayas or three vajras. Sentient beings might not be aware of their Buddha Nature, but they are nevertheless endowed with the three kayas.

You need to train in pure perception by accepting and respecting the three kayas in everyone. Great masters do perceive all sights, sound and cognitive activity as infinite purity. Once recognition of awareness is stabilized, there is no more impurity to be perceived.

Train in this by thinking: "As the Buddha Nature pervades all beings, not a single being is unsuitable." The more you respect Buddha Nature in others and train in pure perception, the more your own practice will progress.

Slandering beings is slandering Buddha nature; stop doing that. If due to your own impurity you perceive mistakes in other beings, at least do not voice them. If your awareness practice is too weak to sustain pure perception naturally, try to develop a rapport within an intellectual understanding of Buddha Nature in others. Know that your impure perception of others only happens either because you have not recognized genuine awareness, or because that recognition is not developed. Criticizing and slandering others puts you out of tune with the enlightened essence.

You mainly harm yourself. The most unrealized so-called practitioner of Dzogchen can at least keep his or her mouth shut, even if he can not actually maintain the view.

A deceitful person sees everybody with suspicion and finds many mistakes in others. A pure person naturally perceives others to be good. How much more so does a perfect yogin or yogini. He or she has the perception of infinite purity. They will actually perceive all forms as the bodies of the deities, all sounds as mantra, and all thoughts and emotions as the display of awareness.

In their perception of pure sight, sound and awareness there is no attachment to friends, or aversion to enemies. Awareness itself being free from concepts of good and bad, proper and improper, they perceive everything as great equanimity. They do not accept or reject friends or foes. They perceive not the tiniest speck of impurity.

As is said, "Arriving at a golden island, one cannot find ordinary earth or stones even if one searches for them." In general, good and bad are your own perception, so you cannot possibly see faults in others when your own are purified."

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 23rd, 2015 at 11:05 PM

Title: Re: Global Warming / Climate Change: Caused by human activi

Content:

KeithBC said:

Thoughtful analysis, Urgyen Dorje, and probably correct. One additional bias that contributes to the problem is an avoidance of personal responsibility.

If people want to believe that they are inherently good people, then they will reject any suggestion that their actions can contribute to any harmful outcome. "If I am a good person, then I can't be contributing to a global catastrophe. Therefore any carbon dioxide my actions generate cannot be contributing to global warming. Therefore the scientists must be wrong."

This same avoidance of guilt happens with other topics, too. I see it all the time on the topic of vegetarianism (including on this forum).

Om mani padme hum
Keith

Malcolm wrote:

In the case of climate change, the issue isn't eat meat/don't eat meat, the issue is industrialized food production. For example, why are most tomatoes round? Answer: hamburgers.

In order to farm with organic inputs, animals are a requirement, not an option. Otherwise, we just continue our dependence on petro-chemical based farming.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 23rd, 2015 at 11:24 PM

Title: Re: Mantra Liberation Through Hearing ("Ha Gan Ga")

Content:

smcj said:

From where I sit the gist of the entire issue comes down to; do I personally have enough confidence in a specific wong I have received to invest myself in a retreat on that practice? Because if the wong was not valid I will be wasting my time, no fruit will come.

As such, the question for me personally is really moot. Up until now I have not done long retreats on any practice, so what does it matter? And if I do decide to go do a retreat somewhere, I've got all the in-person wongs I could ever need. So for me I can happily participate on internet Dharma all day long and presumably it will be only of some benefit. I don't have to actually rely on any of it. I liken it to the idea behind prayer flags, which is that the mantras and prayers on the flags get blown downwind and spread their blessings that way. Only instead of the wind the blessings "blown" all over the planet via the internet. Why not?

For those that are isolated and have to rely on internet Dharma as the basis for their practice, I suggest that they do a little study of how "faith" comes into play for an initiation. The prevailing internet culture, and even the prevailing modern in-person Dharma culture, adamantly insists that faith is not required in Buddhism. In contrast to that, Garchen R. has said that without faith even an in-person wong is ineffective. This needs to be understood and not rationalized or re-defined in such a way as to accommodate our modern preconditions for Dharma.

Malcolm wrote:

Faith is a necessary condition, but not sufficient. There is no need to cite Drikung Kagyu texts which insist on empowerments being given in the proper way, since they just agree with everything said already.

If faith were sufficient to receive an empowerment, one could just hit oneself on the head with any book one wants to practice and that would be sufficient. But it does not work like that.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 23rd, 2015 at 11:33 PM

Title: Re: Mantra Liberation Through Hearing ("Ha Gan Ga")

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

If faith were sufficient to receive an empowerment, one could just hit oneself on the head with any book one wants to practice and that would be sufficient. But it does not work like that.

smcj said:

The point of my post was basically to reiterate what Garchen R. said, which is that without faith even an in-person initiation is invalid. How much more so over the internet?

Malcolm wrote:

If you had no faith, why would you go?

If a guru gives empowerment to someone who has no faith, they break their own commitments.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, June 24th, 2015 at 1:03 AM

Title: Re: Global Warming / Climate Change: Caused by human activi

Content:

KeithBC said:

Thank you all for illustrating my point so effectively: that people get defensive when they encounter something that calls their values into question. That is the source of most of the denial on the climate change issue.

Om mani padme hum

Keith

Malcolm wrote:

I am not defensive — people without or not faith in methods should not eat meat.

As far as industrial agriculture goes, CAFO's and so on, this is pernicious in the extreme.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, June 24th, 2015 at 1:14 AM

Title: Re: Mantra Liberation Through Hearing ("Ha Gan Ga")

Content:

paël said:

How about tantras translated to english, example Hevajra tantra? May you read it?

Without initiation? Someone is selling Hevajra tantra

Malcolm wrote:

In fact, you may not, if you wish to follow the rules.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, June 24th, 2015 at 1:26 AM

Title: Re: Mantra Liberation Through Hearing ("Ha Gan Ga")

Content:

paël said:

I have seen&read few lines of Guhyagarbha tantra on web. Is it bad karma? How to purify it?

Malcolm wrote:

Seeing a few lines of a tantra here and there will not harm you. But taking a tantra reading it from cover to cover if you do have at least one major empowerment is not a good thing. In general, it is better to have the lung, but at least one must have a wang.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, June 24th, 2015 at 2:34 AM

Title: Re: Namkhai Norbu and Vegetarianism

Content:

anjali said:

This is my primary motivation for eating meat, all other things aside.

If we follow this reasoning to it's logical conclusion, would you agree that your ideal diet (not considering health issues) would be exclusively carnivorous, and from as many different animals as possible? The reasoning being that one would want to create good causes for as many animals as possible, and that would entail eating as much meat as possible from as many different animals as possible? I'm not being confrontational here. I'm sincerely curious as to the full implications of this position.

Malcolm wrote:

No. In my ideal world, animals would not be slaughtered at all. There are many ways to

benefit animals through the six liberations while they are alive as well. Unfortunately, it is not likely I can have contact with those who wind up before me on my plate before they are slaughtered/fished, and so therefore I use the methods available to me to help as I can.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, June 24th, 2015 at 4:54 AM

Title: Re: Namkhai Norbu and Vegetarianism

Content:

kashmir said:

Lets put this to rest now. If one has a tantric initiation and commitments it explains in the fourteen common tantric root downfalls that : "Not relying properly on the subastnces that bond us closely to tantric practice (such as consider as nauseating the consecrated alcohol and meat tasted specifically in periodic offering ceremonies known as tsog pujas, to refuse them on the grounds of being a teetotaler or a vegetarian, or alternatively, to take them in large quantities with gusto and attachment." and who said you were unenlightened?

Malcolm wrote:

The vow actually specifies refusing samaya articles only. You are supposed to enjoy them with gusto, but without attachment.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, June 24th, 2015 at 5:23 AM

Title: Re: Mantra Liberation Through Hearing ("Ha Gan Ga")

Content:

naljor said:

I also believe in the necessity of live transmission, but there is something very interesting - http://www.khordong.de/alt/Engl/rand_e.html - recorded lung for text in the book BEING RIGHT THERE by Chimed Rigdzin Rinpoche.

Malcolm wrote:

yes, it is a recording. No possibility of receiving transmission from it. Plus, there are plenty of living people who have the real lung. Get it from them.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, June 24th, 2015 at 9:20 PM

Title: Re: Namkhai Norbu and Vegetarianism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

No. In my ideal world, animals would not be slaughtered at all. There are many ways to benefit animals through the six liberations while they are alive as well. Unfortunately, it is not likely I can have contact with those who wind up before me on my plate before they are slaughtered/fished, and so therefore I use the methods available to me to help

as I can.

anjali said:

Agreed. In an ideal world no animals would be slaughtered. Your answer helps me refine my question.

Sadly, we don't live in an ideal world. Vajrayana practitioners live in a world where so many animals are slaughtered for consumption. Given that fact, would the most compassionate diet possible be one where every bite we take is making a connection with a slaughtered animal?

Yes, I know this is going to an extreme, but I'm not being flippant. Just pushing the envelope to get at the full implication that eating meat with right view benefits the consumed animal. Followed to its logical conclusion, it would seem to imply that the most ethical/compassionate diet for a vajrayana practitioner living in today's world should be an exclusively meat-eating diet?

Malcolm wrote:

Every bite we take is already connected with a slaughtered animal down to every piece of lettuce. Therefore, the most ethical and compassionate diet is to understand that every thing we eat involves the death of some creature somewhere, somehow.

The principle of Buddhadharma is *avihimsa*, non-harming. But there is very little we can do in the world control the harm of the kind of wide spread agriculture and other related industries do to the world and the living creatures in it, both sentient and non-sentient. We cannot control other human beings, all we can do is control ourselves, refrain from harming others, and try to benefit those who have been harmed by any means possible. When someone who has received Dzogchen teachings refuses to eat meat when it is offered to them, or in a puja, they are effectively deciding not to help some being that has been harmed. In this case, not eating meat harms compassion.

Since we are not Jains nor followers of Devadatta, we do not believe that karma is an automatic non-volitional force that comes from every act that we engage in. Karma only comes from any intentional act in which we engage.

Also we have a responsibility to ourselves. We must eat meat when it is indicated for our health. There are, in both Ayurveda and Tibetan medicine, many forms of meat, many kinds of animal products, that are used regularly. The reason we do not use regular Tibetan incense for *Nāgā* pujas is because in general Tibetan incense contains musk, which is harmful and offensive to *Nāgās*. Also we must not eat too much of any one thing, because this will cause our humors to become unbalanced. So the principle of nonharming includes not harming ourselves, and that extends to our diets.

As in everything, there are limits to our capacity. So we do what we can, always wish we could do more and never lose our focus of compassion for all.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, June 24th, 2015 at 9:23 PM

Title: Re: Mantra Liberation Through Hearing ("Ha Gan Ga")

Content:

pael said:

I have seen&read few lines of Guhyagarbha tantra on web. Is it bad karma? How to purify it?

Malcolm wrote:

Seeing a few lines of a tantra here and there will not harm you. But taking a tantra reading it from cover to cover if you do have at least one major empowerment is not a good thing. In general, it is better to have the lung, but at least one must have a wang.

pael said:

Can breakage of samaya be purified with Vajrasattva without lung? If not, how it can be purified?

Malcolm wrote:

You cannot break samaya if you have never received empowerment or Dzogchen transmission because you do not have it.

But you can cause problems between you and the teachings if you try to read things for which you have no authority. In this case, it is sufficient to understand that you have made a mistake. That is purification enough.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, June 24th, 2015 at 9:24 PM

Title: Re: Dzogchen Community of Chogyal Namkhai Norbu

Content:

T. Chokyi said:

1) First you have to know Lam Rim to compare, and I know Lam Rim, there isn't any "Lam Rim" lacking in CHNN's teachings, in other words, all of deepest levels of Lam Rim are fulfilled in the Dzogchen teachings of CHNN, but you have to know what you are looking for. If you want straight up traditional teachers to learn Lam Rim there are many, for example, step by step here: <http://thubtenchodron.org/1991/04/stages-path-enlightenment-intro/> but if you know the teachings, and you hear CHNN year in and out, you will see that Dzogchen path fulfills and explains the essence of all the Lam Rim teachings. Also remember that CHNN is a Dzogchen master, he is coming at those very topics from that view, therefore the answer to your question lies in the path itself. That path is where you will see differences and similarities to a highly traditional approach, but there is nothing on this path that goes contrary to those teachings, rather it fulfills those teachings quite completely. Remember CHNN was trained thoroughly and completely in Lam Rim, he has both an extensive Kagyu background and Sakyapa background and knows the Lam Rim well, he could easily compare back and forth topic by topic point by point how Dzogchen path does not lack the essence of the Lam Rim. Quite frankly many of the

teachers in Dzogchen community and beyond can explain this, an in depth answer could fill many pages.

2) Yes, there are many places like this, both in the USA and all over the world. If you are in the USA toward the East Coast you could visit Conway Ma. this summer when CHNN is there, and meet members of the Dzogchen community and learn some practices in person. <http://tsegyalgar.org/localcenters/tsegyalgareast/>

chimechodra said:

Thank you very much for your answers, it is much appreciated! Regarding the Lam Rim question, that was my sense of it from what I've seen in researching this question. I figured someone as incredibly well trained as ChNN would not miss such vital points, and above all wants to present the teachings in a way that would bring us the most benefit. And regarding the second point, thank you, that's good to know! I'm trying to see if I can request the time off from work to go and experience that retreat, even if it's for one day in order to receive transmission in person. Looking forward to the possibility of that happening!

Malcolm wrote:

His book, the Precious Vase, is an example of a Lam Rim text.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, June 24th, 2015 at 9:42 PM

Title: Re: Namkhai Norbu and Vegetarianism

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

I think it's useful to appreciate that there are subtexts woven through this subject. It's clear to me that inji converts to vajrayana are responding to a variety of issues, as are contemporary lamas, all of which stand outside the skillful means of the vajrayana. Quite bluntly, at least in America, we've gone insane when it comes to food, in particular animal products. It's the only time in human history that people intentionally drive animals into various disease states only to eat them. It's a far cry from hunting-gathering, and it's a far cry from culling herd-stocks from a local microecology. It's really a form of madness. It's also an American thing to feel that we're malnourished unless our whole alimentary canal is full of red meat, which is another form of madness, and simultaneously a health and environmental crisis. Whether the response of vegetarian ganapuja's is the proper response is really up to individuals and their lamas IMHO, but I think it's best to be realistic and honest that people are responding to this issue of meat eating along multiple axes...

Malcolm wrote:

First of all, why are you using the racist, belittling term, inji?

Secondly, there are no "converts" to Buddhism.

Of course people are responding to this issue along a variety of axes. I am merely

clarifying the principles enunciated by Chogyal Namkhai Norbu and Dzogchen teachings (Do you have any idea of how many kinds of meat are recommended for Chulen in the sgra thal gyur tantra?)

Meat and dairy consumption is rising world wide because, frankly, meat and dairy based diets are more nutritionally dense than solely plant-based diets and people become larger and more powerful when they rely on them. When they enter the middle class, of course they want more meat in their diets. Of course this brings a range of health issues into play.

But here the discussion mainly revolves around a discomfited response to ChNN's teachings. We can discuss side issues, but lets keep it a little focused, ok?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, June 24th, 2015 at 9:58 PM

Title: Re: Namkhai Norbu and Vegetarianism

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

I call myself an "inji convert" because that's Tibetans and Tibetan lamas have referred to people like myself.

Malcolm wrote:

Its a racist term. The idea that we are "converts" is also nonsense.

I am not an "inji", I am an American. I am also not a convert.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, June 24th, 2015 at 10:15 PM

Title: Re: Namkhai Norbu and Vegetarianism

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

Given that it's a corruption of "english" it's hard to see how it's racist.

Malcolm wrote:

It's racist because it is applied to all foreigners of white skin. It is also used disparagingly by Tibetans.

Urgyen Dorje said:

Given that I've only heard it used with friends, it's hard to see it as disparaging. Given that a "convert" is somebody who has undergone "conversion"-- the decisive adoption of a religion, as opposed to being born into it-- it's hard to see how using that term is nonsense.

Malcolm wrote:

Do you believe in rebirth? In that case, it is impossible to be a convert to Dharma. We

followers of Buddhadharma were all born into the Dharma based on past life causes and conditions.

Urgyen Dorje said:

Let me know the accepted way to refer to "Euro-American people who took up Buddhism but weren't born into it" then...

Malcolm wrote:

Buddhists.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, June 24th, 2015 at 10:21 PM

Title: Re: Mantra Liberation Through Hearing ("Ha Gan Ga")

Content:

pael said:

I have taken Amitayus initiation from Konchog Chidu. I think I have broken many samayas. They didn't gave any daily commitment. I have got from them Shakyamuni sadhana and Vajrasattva sadhana. I have been in Shakyamuni sadhana recitation session and heard 100-syllable mantra at Dharma lecture, not entire sadhana. Is these accounted as lung?

How then I purify other samaya breakages? I have not done any preliminaries. Not outer, not inner.

I am confused.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes. These count as lung.

So you have the lung for Vajrasattva. Normally, you should accumulate 100,000.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, June 24th, 2015 at 10:33 PM

Title: Re: Namkhai Norbu and Vegetarianism

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

Given that it's a corruption of "english" it's hard to see how it's racist.

Malcolm wrote:

It's racist because it is applied to all foreigners.

Urgyen Dorje said:

Not to bust chops, but you could make the case that it is xenophobic, but not racist.

Malcolm wrote:

Its racist. I don't know if you have ever been subjected to Tibetan racism. I have. It's like calling all people of African heritage "niggers." Tibetans have another word for that, and

it is equally racist.

Urgyen Dorje said:

Yes. There is similar language used in Islam. People who adopt the faith use the term "revert" instead of "convert" to mean returning to a former condition of belief. I guess I could say I'm a Buddhist revert based on your reasoning.

Malcolm wrote:

No, also that is not the same thing. We have a precious human birth. This means we created causes in the past to meet the Dharma in this life. It matters not one wit whether one is born into a nominally Buddhist family or not. There are plenty of people born to Buddhist parents who do not pursue the path, even nominally.

Urgyen Dorje said:

In common discussion, to distinguish Buddhists who adopted the faith (in this life) versus those who were born into it (in this life), what is the accepted terminology for communicative ease?

Malcolm wrote:

There is none. By your reasoning, everyone is a convert to Buddhism. No one is born with refuge in the Triple Gem.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, June 24th, 2015 at 10:53 PM

Title: Re: Mantra Liberation Through Hearing ("Ha Gan Ga")

Content:

paël said:

But I have not heard entire Longchen Nyingthig Vajrasattva sadhana. They e-mailed me I should do it.

I am not sure may I do it. It has six syllable Vajrasattva also. I have not heard it.

If I recite 100,000 times 100-syllables samaya gets purified? Are there other methods (sutra methods or others) to purify broken samayas?

Malcolm wrote:

You can do it. Or if you have some doubt, go get the lung for any ngondro you think you like, and do that one.

In the meantime, you can just follow instructions in Words of my Perfect teacher. Ok?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, June 24th, 2015 at 10:56 PM

Title: Re: Hair empowerment

Content:

Lingpupa said:

Some Nyingma empowerments have a large number of subsidiary parts: the dorje empowerment, the bell empowerment, the shawl empowerment, the earring empowerment and so on. There can be dozens of them. One possibility is the "hair" empowerment in which the disciple is "empowered" and committed to never cut their hair again. Just like monks and nuns shave their heads as a sign of renunciation, so the long hair of the dzogchen yogi is worn as a sign of the disciple's commitment to leaving their mind in its natural state.

My tip would be to avoid it unless you are very sure, as you may find, perhaps some years down the line, that you want or need to look more conventional again.

Malcolm wrote:

Seconded. You have to be very sure you can follow this samaya before you take it.

However, it is not so much about looks. Long hair can be conventional, but here you are not allowed to trim your hair or cut it, so if you get knots in your hair that you cannot comb out, well, you have to leave them.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, June 24th, 2015 at 11:40 PM

Title: Re: Mantra Liberation Through Hearing ("Ha Gan Ga")

Content:

paël said:

I try follow.

I thought if there is some shorter/simpler method to purify samaya? Like om mani peme hung.

I fear long recitation is threat to my health. I have genetic disease.

It wasn't my original intention to start daily recitation practice when I took initiation. But I heard it included samaya. Without regular practice commitment.

Malcolm wrote:

Do short Vajrasattva.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, June 24th, 2015 at 11:51 PM

Title: Re: Namkhai Norbu and Vegetarianism

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

They have a culture I'm an outsider to. And I'm good with that. I respect that.

Malcolm wrote:

Buddhadharma is not a "culture."

Urgyen Dorje said:

Political correctness can go to heck.

Malcolm wrote:

The term "inji" is racist, just like the term "nigger", "kike", "hebe", "wetback", "chink", "dago", "ofay", "casper", "pollock", "jap", "kraut", "jerry", and so on. You sound like an African American who says, "Oh, it's ok that my white friend calls me "nigger" since he is real nice to me."

The term "inji" is very offensive, and I make sure Tibetans I know understand this.

Urgyen Dorje said:

As for "revert" and "convert" and all that, I wasn't trying to make a rigorous philosophical point. I'm just trying to find a word that distinguishes me from somebody who was born into a Buddhist cultural and religious life form one that has not.

Malcolm wrote:

As I pointed out, you were born into it. There is no other way it can be.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, June 24th, 2015 at 11:56 PM

Title: Re: Mantra Liberation Through Hearing ("Ha Gan Ga")

Content:

pael said:

Is it om benza sato hung? Just that. Without any other prayers, visualizations, etc?

With four powers?

So I can do short mantra without lung?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes. It is included in lung for long mantra. With four powers.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, June 24th, 2015 at 11:58 PM

Title: Re: Namkhai Norbu and Vegetarianism

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

If I don't qualify what I say about dharma with being a mutt, I'm stepping on somebody.

Malcolm wrote:

Bullshit.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, June 25th, 2015 at 12:50 AM

Title: Re: Meat Eating Mantras

Content:

Boomerang said:

I've seen Buddhist organizations post various mantras online that allow you to bless meat before eating it so that your negative karma is diminished and you benefit the animal. The way the mantras are put out in the open gives me the impression that anyone can use them without transmission. Even Sravasti Abbey, which is a vegetarian institution, posted a meat eating mantra on their website.

Am I correct in thinking that these mantras are okay for any person to compassionately use while eating meat? The mani mantra is one of them. Can a person use any old mantra to bless the meat of dead animals?

And if it really is so simple for lay people to make a good connection dead animals, why do some Tibetan Buddhists act like these methods don't exist? Is it a sectarian thing?

<http://thubtenchodron.org/2010/04/recitations-morning/>

<http://www.drukpachoegon.info/rinpoche-teachings/audios/mantra-to-bless-meat-before-eating.aspx>

https://fpmt.org/wp-content/uploads/education/teachings/texts/mantras/various_mantras_everyday_dharmaC5.pdf?4e84cd

Malcolm wrote:

The best mantra to use is the six syllables of Samantabhadra.

Some of these "mantras" are dharanis, which come from sūtra and thus require no transmission.

Boomerang said:

And if it really is so simple for lay people to make a good connection dead animals, why do some Tibetan Buddhists act like these methods don't exist? Is it a sectarian thing?

Malcolm wrote:

Lack of confidence in themselves as well as the teachings.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, June 25th, 2015 at 1:41 AM

Title: Re: Meat Eating Mantras

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The best mantra to use is the six syllables of Samantabhadra.

Boomerang said:

A A Ha Sha Sa Ma? A Ah Sha Sa Ma Ha? Is that for Dzogchen practitioners or for

everybody? Are you supposed to say it 3, 7, 21 times, or just once?

Malcolm wrote:

Both versions are correct. You can say it once or as many times as you like.

When you say it to animals, also it creates a good cause.

It is in fact the Buddhas of the six realms in the form of syllables.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, June 25th, 2015 at 2:13 AM

Title: Re: Meat Eating Mantras

Content:

tomamundsen said:

Is this the best mantra to use with live animals as well? Say you are hiking in the woods and there are all kinds of animals around. Is it best to keep reciting these six syllables? Or would some other practice be more effective?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, it is the BEST mantra in every respect since it is also the condensed version of song of the vajra. Plus, at least in the DC, it has a very nice melody.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, June 25th, 2015 at 3:15 AM

Title: Re: Namkhai Norbu and Vegetarianism

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

How do you come off calling me a racist?

Malcolm wrote:

I didn't say you were a racist, but you are making excuses for Tibetan racism.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, June 25th, 2015 at 3:16 AM

Title: Re: Namkhai Norbu and Vegetarianism

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

Don't tell me what my experience is and is not.

On e-sangha and in meat space I've been called out quite a few times, primarily by Asian Buddhists, by generalizing my experience and not specifying that I'm a mutt American convert.

Malcolm wrote:

Asians don't own Buddhadharma. I won't cater to their narrow-mindedness, xenophobia and racism where it exists.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, June 25th, 2015 at 3:32 AM

Title: Re: Namkhai Norbu and Vegetarianism

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

Dude. I don't know why you're hammering on me calling me narrow-minded, xenophobic, and racist.

Malcolm wrote:

I am not calling you out, I am pointing that, rather bizarrely, you are catering to Tibetan racist, xenophobic exceptionalism.

I simply pointed out the term inji was racist, and that I take exception to it. You on the other hand have proclaimed your willingness to embrace the term, belittling though it is in fact.

Urgyen Dorje said:

I actually reported that I have encountered people of Asian descent who claimed the uniqueness of Asian Buddhist culture and that as such I'm an outsider. If you want to call anything xenophobic and racist, call THAT out, not ME.

Malcolm wrote:

I am calling that out, and not you. However by calling yourself a dharma mutt, a convert and so on, you cater to their misperceptions. Most Asians you have met do not know jack shit about Dharma even though they are born in "Buddhist" families.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, June 25th, 2015 at 3:48 AM

Title: Re: Namkhai Norbu and Vegetarianism

Content:

Fortyeightvows said:

Take it easy.

Is the other thread on vegetarianism this nuts?

Every language has it's slurs and it is generally considered low class to use them. In my experience this is at least true in some asian cultures as well as in america where I live. Remember that this forum is not just used by 'convert buddhists'.

Also I don't know what type of 'asian sanghas' you've been to. You can always remind them that the buddha wasn't chinese!

I actually say very often that a lot of people can't correctly separate between chinese culture and buddhism, can't tell where one ends and the other begins. It's a shame

really.

And I don't know about 'most asians' either.... but then, I don't know about 'most americans' either so....

Malcolm wrote:

There is no question most Americans do not know jack shit about Dharma.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, June 25th, 2015 at 4:37 AM

Title: Re: Mantra Liberation Through Hearing ("Ha Gan Ga")

Content:

haha said:

]

I heard CNNR said that he was given all the empowerments before he arrived to his root master and that was in his master dream; he did not believe that and asked for the empowerment. It is really difficult to believe because one cannot verify it through sutra or tantra.

Malcolm wrote:

Not all the empowerments. One empowerment.

In any case, before ChNN arrived at Rigzin Chanchub Dorje's, he had received thousands of empowerments.

This is an interesting case. It is an example of how what might be true in the dimension of an awakened person will not match the impure vision of those of us who are not awake. And this is why we work with methods in a proper way according to how they are taught in the tantras.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, June 25th, 2015 at 4:41 AM

Title: Re: Namkhai Norbu and Vegetarianism

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

I

So educate away.

Malcolm wrote:

"Inji convert" = "less than an authentic, red-blooded Tibetan."

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, June 25th, 2015 at 4:47 AM

Title: Re: Namkhai Norbu and Vegetarianism

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

So if a Tibetan friend says, yo, inji, you want to help me paint these tormas, I should be calling him or her out as being a racist, like a person of color being called a ni@@er?

Malcolm wrote:

"Inji convert" = "less than an authentic, red-blooded Tibetan."

You can just tell them you don't like that word. If they persist, you can tell them it is racist.

Tibetans have a word for Americans, Aripa. They use it when they are talking about Americans, etc. For example, KDL did not call me an Inji Loppon, he called me an Ari Loppon.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, June 25th, 2015 at 5:33 AM

Title: Re: Global Warming / Climate Change: Caused by human activi

Content:

KeithBC said:

Thank you all for illustrating my point so effectively: that people get defensive when they encounter something that calls their values into question. That is the source of most of the denial on the climate change issue.

Om mani padme hum

Keith

Malcolm wrote:

I am not defensive — people without or not faith in methods should not eat meat.

Tenso said:

Hinayanists don't have any so called "methods." Are they wrong to eat meat?

Malcolm wrote:

They may eat meat that is pure in three ways. But they are not helping anyone.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, June 25th, 2015 at 5:48 AM

Title: Re: Namkhai Norbu and Vegetarianism

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

I will abstain from using "inji convert" in a more general context. I'll need to find a better way to describe "non-Tibetan non-Asian Euro-Americans who picked this thing up not from their families".

Malcolm wrote:

"Buddhist" works quite nicely. As I said, no one emerges from their mother's womb recite the Refuge to the Triple Gem. Everyone who is a Dharma practitioner has to receive refuge somehow in some way from someone.

Either no one is a Buddhist convert, or everyone is.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, June 25th, 2015 at 6:33 AM

Title: Re: Namkhai Norbu and Vegetarianism

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

I out myself and declare my mongrel pedigree in advance.

I spoke as an inji convert in this thread because I've been stopped at the door of a ganapuja by Asian Buddhists more than once and lectured about my lack of respect for "Buddhist culture" for bringing meat or alcohol, only to have the lama or choppon wave me in. Only to have some matronly old lady lecture me every time i see her about Buddhist values.

Malcolm wrote:

No one would dare lecture me about anything because they know they will get a mouthful in return.

"Damn the torpedoes, full speed ahead!"

-- Admiral David Farragut.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, June 25th, 2015 at 7:05 AM

Title: Re: Namkhai Norbu and Vegetarianism

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

See, dig, Malcolm is a loppon.

Malcolm wrote:

Umm, I don't wear a badge, and most people have no idea. I just don't take shit from anyone.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, June 25th, 2015 at 7:07 AM

Title: Re: Global Warming / Climate Change: Caused by human activi

Content:

KeithBC said:

Thank you all for illustrating my point so effectively: that people get defensive when they

encounter something that calls their values into question. That is the source of most of the denial on the climate change issue.

Om mani padme hum
Keith

Malcolm wrote:

I am not defensive — people without or not faith in methods should not eat meat.

Dan74 said:

It appears that even within the tradition, there are different views (cf Norbu Rinpoche and Chatral Rinpoche), so is it more the faith in one's root teacher then?

Malcolm wrote:

I already explained this, it is audience. Chatral Rinpoche is speaking to non-practitioners.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, June 25th, 2015 at 7:20 AM

Title: Re: Namkhai Norbu and Vegetarianism

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

It's all triggered by bringing cold cuts and wine to a ganapuja.

I have no respect for Buddhist culture. I have no respect for Asian culture. I wouldn't understand because I'm an American. Americans don't have any morals, any ethics. I've broken my vows. I need to confess. I've created obstacles for the lama. Blah blah blah blah.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, it is complete bullshit, why bother to associate with such children?

Dharma centers are just places which foster delusion. I avoid them. Dharmawheel is quite bad enough already...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, June 25th, 2015 at 8:43 PM

Title: Re: Namkhai Norbu and Vegetarianism

Content:

srivijaya said:

If one eats the flesh of sentient beings, then fine but at least concede some minuscule involvement in the process which involves the rearing, slaughter and sale of their flesh (it's called supply and demand).

Malcolm wrote:

So you accept your involvement in the wholesale killing of sentient beings to bring plant-based food to your table?

srivijaya said:

Sure being a vegetarian isn't the magic wand to end suffering that its more stridently irritating advocates would have us believe. This is samsara after all and there are limits to what is achievable. But in the end, we are Buddhists and in possession of some oddly unique "facts" (if we accept them as such). Facts like all sentient beings have been our mothers (or other relatives) in past lives. This puts a different perspective on eating their flesh - one which we can perhaps ignore if it gets in the way of our enjoyment.

Malcolm wrote:

All sentient beings certainly have been our mothers, so think of that when you blithely fork that broccoli into your mouth, feeling all smug about being a vegetarian, because it is a certainty that countless sentient beings have been killed in the process of providing you with that morsel.

srivijaya said:

I choose not to use my stomach as a digestive unit for the cadavers of slain mother beings. Does that qualify as "miserable compassion" in someone's opinion? No idea and why should anyone care? It's the volitional opt-out I'm comfortable to live by.

Malcolm wrote:

No, you simply choose to leave the cadavers unthought of in the fields and factories after they have been poisoned, crushed, maimed and so on, without giving them a second thought because your food, so you believe, is free from the taint of the death of millions upon millions of creatures.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, June 25th, 2015 at 8:53 PM

Title: Re: Mantra Liberation Through Hearing ("Ha Gan Ga")

Content:

Lhasa said:

I've been given practice instructions for a personal retreat, permissions for practice texts and how to use mantras etc., affirmation that I did receive an empowerment over a live webcast, directly from him. So he responds to requests for help.

Malcolm wrote:

No one ever said empowerments over live webcast were invalid, did they? The key word here is "live." What has been under question is the notion that one can receive transmissions and empowerments from recordings.

Lhasa said:

One last comment, people who have had in-person contact with their Teachers, cannot

give valid information on the internet-only relationship between Lamas and their students.

Malcolm wrote:

I am sorry, but this is statement is just as ridiculous as it is untrue.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, June 25th, 2015 at 9:02 PM

Title: Re: Global Warming / Climate Change: Caused by human activi

Content:

pemachophel said:

"Chatral Rinpoche is speaking to non-practitioners."

Loppon-la, where are you getting this idea about Kyabje Chatral Rinpoche? If this teaching is only for non-practitioners, why is He so personally insistent on not eating meat? When I used to prescribe Chinese medicines for Him, even these had to be free of any animal ingredients. His whole family are vegetarians, His entire retinue. These people are some pretty heavy-hitting practitioners. Are you saying Seymo Saraswati Rinpoche is not a practitioner, Khandro Kamala is not a practitioner?

I've eaten in His house with Him and His family a number of time. No one is eating meat.

Malcolm wrote:

I understand that Chatral Rinpoche is himself a strict vegetarian and teetotaler since the time he was 48, I believe.

But here, Chatral Rinpoche is setting an example for people who are not really practitioners (and I am excluding his family, close entourage). It is understandable. Most Tibetans are not really Dzogchen practitioners. That is the context in which you need to understand both mine and ChNN's statements.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, June 25th, 2015 at 9:04 PM

Title: Re: The Mahayana idea of karma and vegetarianism

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

I'm not calling you out, Malcolm, but I too would like clarification about your comment that Chatral Rinpoche is speaking to non-practitioners.

This is somewhat relevant for me, as some close dharma friends follow the tradition of Chatral-la, Shabkar, Patrul and so on, and they're pretty serious about the vegetarian thing, and they too point to Chatral Rinpoche and his family. I also have close dharma friends who follow the tradition held by your teacher, Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche, whom I also consider a teacher from webcast transmissions, who follows the traditional view that eating animals benefits them.

-- UD

Malcolm wrote:

Norbu Rinpoche insists that the point of view on meat-eating expressed by Shabkar, Nyal Pema Duddul and so on are aimed at non-practitioners. This is where I derive my opinion. This is why he says again and again, if you are a common Mahāyāna practitioner, you should not eat meat. But if you are a Dzogchen practitioner, you should eat (some) meat. You also should drink (some) alcohol.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, June 25th, 2015 at 10:00 PM

Title: Re: Mantra Liberation Through Hearing ("Ha Gan Ga")

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

... but I do know that many people have understood threads on Dharma Wheel to be calling Garchen Rinpoche out for corrupting the vajrayana, leading students astray, and so on, by offering live webcast empowerments.

Malcolm wrote:

That has never been an issue, not even once. How things become corrupted by gossip, that no one can control.

The issue was that some people had the mistaken idea that they could watch a video recording of an empowerment that had already happened in the past (i.e. one that they had missed) and receive empowerment from it.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, June 25th, 2015 at 10:16 PM

Title: Re: Mantra Liberation Through Hearing ("Ha Gan Ga")

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

This has caused a lot of people a lot of suffering.

Malcolm wrote:

Suffering of their own making.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, June 26th, 2015 at 12:38 AM

Title: Re: Namkhai Norbu and Vegetarianism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

So you accept your involvement in the wholesale killing of sentient beings to bring plant-based food to your table?

I don't think you got the point I was making.

srivijaya said:
Ditto.

...that those who choose not to are practicing "miserable compassion".

Malcolm wrote:

What Norbu Rinpoche says is that Dzogchen practitioners who choose not to eat meat "out of compassion", when there are methods available, are practicing miserable compassion. He is not talking about Chinese Mahāyānists and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, June 26th, 2015 at 12:41 AM

Title: Re: The Mahayana idea of karma and vegetarianism

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

I know I've had friends over and I've had to juggle the fact that Sue is vegetarian, except for wild caught salmon, but she's gluten free, and can't eat nightshades... while Billy is paleo, and only eats free range beef and leafy greens... and Betty is macrobiotic... and then...

Malcolm wrote:

This a peculiarly American madness.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, June 26th, 2015 at 12:49 AM

Title: Re: The Mahayana idea of karma and vegetarianism

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

It seems to have spilled over into the dharma.

I know I've had friends over and I've had to juggle the fact that Sue is vegetarian, except for wild caught salmon, but she's gluten free, and can't eat nightshades... while Billy is paleo, and only eats free range beef and leafy greens... and Betty is macrobiotic... and then...

Malcolm wrote:

This a peculiarly American madness.

Maybe, but it is easier to feed Billy than Sue or Betty.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, June 26th, 2015 at 12:55 AM

Title: Re: The Mahayana idea of karma and vegetarianism

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

It's easier to just go out somewhere and let everyone deal with their own needs.

I know I've had friends over and I've had to juggle the fact that Sue is vegetarian, except for wild caught salmon, but she's gluten free, and can't eat nightshades... while Billy is paleo, and only eats free range beef and leafy greens... and Betty is macrobiotic... and then...

Malcolm wrote:

Maybe, but it is easier to feed Billy than Sue or Betty.

Indeed.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, June 26th, 2015 at 12:56 AM

Title: Re: Mantra Liberation Through Hearing ("Ha Gan Ga")

Content:

Lhasa said:

Malcolm.... Shaming doesn't work on me.

Malcolm wrote:

I never shamed you. I did say that your statement was ridiculous (which it is).

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, June 26th, 2015 at 3:43 AM

Title: Re: Mantra Liberation Through Hearing ("Ha Gan Ga")

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

If empowerment by live webcast is not a problem, then how did Garchen Rinpoche even get evoked in this matter?

Malcolm wrote:

Because some people have the crazy idea that Garchen Rinpoche endorses the idea that people can receive empowerments from recordings of empowerments posted on Youtube.

They promoted this idea, and continue to do so, and were very angry that I negated this idea.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, June 26th, 2015 at 10:06 PM

Title: Re: Meat Eating Mantras

Content:

Boomerang said:
Are devas food for other devas?

Malcolm wrote:
No, they are not, just as humans are not food for other humans.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Friday, June 26th, 2015 at 10:08 PM
Title: Re: Namkhai Norbu and Vegetarianism
Content:

Malcolm wrote:
What Norbu Rinpoche says is that Dzogchen practitioners who choose not to eat meat "out of compassion", when there are methods available, are practicing miserable compassion. He is not talking about Chinese Mahāyānists and so on.

srivijaya said:
Is it a requirement for his disciples to eat meat? Just wondering how that would work if a vegetarian joined the ranks of his followers. Would the person be instructed to start eating meat in order to practice greater compassion?

Malcolm wrote:
Much to the discomfort some of them, yes. There are some people who have left the community over the issue. Their loss.

ChNN does not tell people individually, "You must eat meat." He does however bring up the issue with great frequency and much vehemence. This vehemence made the OP uncomfortable. He is not telling people merely that they should not refuse meat during ganapujas. He is critiquing in general the idea that Dzogchen practitioners should refrain from eating meat and presents the opposite point of view.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Friday, June 26th, 2015 at 10:15 PM
Title: Re: Mantra Liberation Through Hearing ("Ha Gan Ga")
Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:
Garchen Rinpoche never said one should go to video archived empowerments and get the wang that way.

Malcolm wrote:
Nevertheless, some of Garchen Rinpoche's students have been claiming that Garchen Rinpoche asserts that empowerments can be obtained this way.

You will note that no one has ever slighted, belittled or accused Garchen Rinpoche of doing anything negative at all. All focus has been on the misconceptions promulgated

(no doubt with a sincere motivation) by people other than him.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, June 26th, 2015 at 10:49 PM

Title: Re: Mantra Liberation Through Hearing ("Ha Gan Ga")

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

What is true is that people have gotten the idea that Garchen Rinpoche was called out here.

Malcolm wrote:

Frankly, that is their problem for listening to hearsay.

What is true is that many Lams do not accept to idea of internet transmissions at all, and so they do not do them. Many of these same Lamas might not accept these transmissions given by ChNN, Garchen Rinpoche and so on as valid.

But what no one accepts is that one may receive an empowerment from a recording.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, June 27th, 2015 at 2:31 AM

Title: Re: Namkhai Norbu and Vegetarianism

Content:

Norwegian said:

And Urgyen Dorje, Malcolm didn't say people were hassled and pushed out of the Dzogchen Community. He said some people have left ChNN and the community due to their putting more importance on their dietary preferences, rather than the precious instructions of their own guru.

Urgyen Dorje said:

I don't doubt that there's some grasping at dietary preferences.

But I've been at this for 25 years, I'll be there's some self-appointed samaya cops in the sangha giving people crap. I've yet to find a sangha that didn't have such guardians....

Malcolm wrote:

Not about eating meat...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, June 27th, 2015 at 4:52 AM

Title: Re: Meat Eating Mantras

Content:

Boomerang said:
Are devas food for other devas?

Malcolm wrote:
No, they are not, just as humans are not food for other humans.

kirtu said:
Well historically and even today, humans are food for some other humans.

Kirt

Malcolm wrote:
Generally, cannibals don't eat other humans for nutrition, but for power.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Saturday, June 27th, 2015 at 5:10 AM
Title: Re: Meat Eating Mantras
Content:

Boomerang said:
Are devas food for other devas?

Malcolm wrote:
No, they are not, just as humans are not food for other humans.

Mother's Lap said:
When they say rakshasas are cannibals, does it mean they eat each other or just because they're man-eaters?

Malcolm wrote:
It is because they are man eaters. Rakṣasa in fact refer to the australio-asians who plagued the sea routes between Indonesia and Madagascar and all islands in-between.

Also cannibal tribes living the Himalayas were referred to by this name.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Saturday, June 27th, 2015 at 5:11 AM
Title: Re: Meat Eating Mantras
Content:
pemachophel said:
Flesh from [someone] born a Brahmin seven times, anyone?

Malcolm wrote:
I know a guy...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, June 27th, 2015 at 7:13 AM

Title: Re: Namkhai Norbu and Vegetarianism

Content:

rory said:

if you belong to some kind of lineage where those with samaya are told to eat meat, that is what I meant. Simply that.

what is the difference between dead pigmeat and dead humanmeat?

gassho

Rory

Malcolm wrote:

The former is not forbidden, the latter is.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, June 27th, 2015 at 7:15 AM

Title: Re: Meat Eating Mantras

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

It is because they are man eaters. Rakṣasa in fact refer to the australio-asians who plagued the sea routes between Indonesia and Madagascar and all islands in-between.

Also cannibal tribes living the Himalayas were referred to by this name.

Mother's Lap said:

What are the differences in character between rakshasas and yakshas in general?

Malcolm wrote:

Different class of being. The latter are spirits, the former are human cannibals.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, June 27th, 2015 at 11:16 AM

Title: Re: Namkhai Norbu and Vegetarianism

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

i'm curious why human meat is forbidden for ganapuja...

Malcolm wrote:

It isn't. It is one of the meats Buddha forbade in general, along the meat of predators and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, June 27th, 2015 at 12:14 PM

Title: Re: Namkhai Norbu and Vegetarianism

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

ok. above rory asked what the difference was between eating pig meat and human meat at ganacakra and you said human meat was forbidden.

i guess my own understanding was correct then... hmm... i missed something.
i'm curious why human meat is forbidden for ganapuja...

Malcolm wrote:

It isn't. It is one of the meats Buddha forbade in general, along the meat of predators and so on.

Rory is not a vajrayana person, she was not asking about ganapujas.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, June 27th, 2015 at 7:56 PM

Title: Re: Hair empowerment

Content:

ngodrup said:

My teacher definitively allowed for exceptions, saying
"it's not the length of the hair that matters."

Malcolm wrote:

Unless it does.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, June 27th, 2015 at 7:56 PM

Title: Re: Hair empowerment

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

When I received the Troma Wang from Ngapa Yeshe Dorje, when he came to the hair wang, he said those who could not take the commitment were allowed to apologize.

When I received requested Ngapga vows from KDL, he made it very clear to those of us present that we were not to cut our hair for any reason. However, the hair empowerment connected with the KDL's Krodhakali cycle is much different than the one found in Dudjom Tersar.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, June 27th, 2015 at 8:07 PM

Title: Re: question on proof

Content:

charles said:

Can one personally prove to oneself that a permanent cessation of suffering is possible?

Malcolm wrote:

Of course. Just give up one addiction. When you do, you have proven to your self that a permanent cessation of suffering is possible.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, June 27th, 2015 at 8:40 PM

Title: Re: future role of Sakya Trizin what do you think about it?

Content:

ngodrup said:

"Trizin Emeritus."

Malcolm wrote:

Trisur...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, June 28th, 2015 at 1:43 AM

Title: Re: SCOTUS Decision

Content:

Tenso said:

I wonder how the southern states are going to react to all of this? I don't really see them taking this sitting down.

Malcolm wrote:

What are they going to do, try again to secede?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, June 28th, 2015 at 3:52 AM

Title: Re: SCOTUS Decision

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

That's my area of the south.

Malcolm wrote:

Ever think about moving?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, June 28th, 2015 at 4:06 AM

Title: Re: SCOTUS Decision

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

Sure. I have karma here though. I have commitments to others. I teach. I help run a dharma center. I have service that I do.

Malcolm wrote:

All the activities of this life are meaningless in every way, like good and bad dreams in one period of sleep.

-- Chetsun Senge Wangchug.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 29th, 2015 at 1:50 AM

Title: Re: SCOTUS Decision

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

I have a Y chromosome and a penis.

Malcolm wrote:

Given gender politics these days, this is far too limiting a definition of what it means to be male.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 29th, 2015 at 9:32 PM

Title: Re: How do you get reborn as a deva/animal in Mahayana?

Content:

Boomerang said:

The Theravada sources I read tend to say that cultivating a mind of generosity, kindness, and practicing virtue results in rebirth as a deva, while Mahayana sources tersely mention that the minds of devas are dominated by pride. Which is it, and what exactly are people so proud of that results in rebirth as a deva?

They say that rebirth as an animal is due to the emotion of ignorance or confusion. Ignorance isn't an emotion in English, so this confuses me. Does it mean naively holding wrong views? Well technically, doesn't everyone who is not Buddhist hold wrong views? What sort of mind state would result in you being reborn as an animal and not a human?

Malcolm wrote:

The word they are translated as "emotion" is klesha. Klesha is best translated as affliction.

Cultivating love and compassion results in birth in the higher realms; once there however, pride overtakes one's mind.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 29th, 2015 at 9:33 PM

Title: Re: Namkhair Norbu and Vegetarianism

Content:

mirrormind said:

Just for the record, 1 package of ground meat at the supermarket contains the meat of approximately 150 pigs and 60 cows. This means you can be super efficient as a dzogchen practitioner if you have the intention of creating a good cause for suffering animals by eating their meat.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, and ChNN often mentions this.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 29th, 2015 at 11:22 PM

Title: Re: Global Warming / Climate Change: Caused by human activity

Content:

Unknown said:

The study from Mora and the University of Hawaii, Manoa, shifts the way in which climate scientists have been examining the implications of greenhouse emissions. While most have focused on the rapidly warming climate in the Arctic and the effects on wildlife such as polar bears and also sea levels, Mora's team are concerned with the effects on people - specifically the tropics - where the majority of the world's population lives and whose citizens have contributed the least to global warming.

It is in the already warm tropics that an increase of only a couple of degrees can alter the balance of life, crippling crops, spreading disease and leading to mass migration away to cooler climates.

'The warming in the tropics is not as much but we are rather more quickly going to go outside that recent experience of temperature and that is going to be devastating to species and it is probably going to be devastating to people,' said Stuart Pimm, a conservation biologist at Duke University, to NBC News.

Mora and his colleagues collated global climate models and built an index of estimates on when a given spot on the globe will change beyond temperatures experienced on Earth over the past 150 years between 1860 and 2005.

Malcolm wrote:

Read more: <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2451604/Apocalypse-Now-Unstoppable-man-climate-change-reality-end-decade-make-New-York-London-Paris-uninhabitable-45-years-says-new-study.html#ixzz3eStEokkZ>

Follow us: @MailOnline on Twitter | DailyMail on Facebook

<http://www.nature.com/articles/nature12540.epdf>

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 29th, 2015 at 11:39 PM

Title: Re: How do you get reborn as a deva/animal in Mahayana?

Content:

Boomerang said:

The word they are translation as "emotion" is klesha. Klesha is best translated as affliction.

Cultivating love and compassion results in birth in the higher realms; once there however, pride overtakes one's mind.

Does this mean most non-Buddhist humans will be reborn as animals, and that everyone who is currently human was previously a stream enterer, made aspiration prayers with bodhicitta, or held right views while being afflicted by desire?

Malcolm wrote:

We cannot say, since we do not know what anyone's karma is, however, there are more beings in lower realms than in higher realms.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 30th, 2015 at 12:31 AM

Title: Re: Is karma fair?

Content:

Boomerang said:

In other words, do beings deserve the consequences of their karma? My understanding is that buddhadharma is not about things being fair and unfair, because there is no judgment; karma is only a description of reality, not a prescription of how it should be. The only thing Shakyamuni thought beings deserved was to be enlightened, but sadly their karma prevented that from happening.

However, I've heard other Buddhists say that karma is fair and that people deserve the higher realms, lower realms, et cetera, kind of like, "What goes around comes around." It seems lacking in compassion to me. Mahasi Sayadaw used the word "deserve" in this essay on karma, or at least that's how it was translated.

Malcolm wrote:

Karma is not fair or unfair. It is merely the consequences of our intentional actions.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 30th, 2015 at 8:36 AM

Title: Re: Fivefold Mahamudra

Content:

bryandavis said:

What part of the country or world are you in or what Drikung Lamas do you take

teachings from? Just curious.

Urgyen Dorje said:

I'm sorry, but I don't feel safe saying anything that would identify me or my lamas. For the sake of my lamas, I wouldn't want my negative qualities revealed here to be reflected on them-- and there have been many pointed out.

Malcolm wrote:

Oh come on...this is just arrogant.

Not only that, you already have said plenty that places you in the Southeast, north of Cuba, south of Atlanta, Drikung, etc.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 30th, 2015 at 8:38 AM

Title: Re: Fivefold Mahamudra

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

i guess, what i was wondering, was back in the day of phagmodrugpa and jigten sumgon, long before the sadhanas we're familiar with were written, were there people who did their fivefold mahamdura practice with another yidam? such as hevajra, which his holiness is working to preserve and revive currently...

Malcolm wrote:

AFAIK, no. However, I can tell you that Norje Repa in his treatment of 5FMM does not specify a specific Yidam. Rigzin Chokyi Dragpa however, in his commentary on the former text treats it as if Heruka is the deity of 5FMM.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 30th, 2015 at 8:45 AM

Title: Re: Namkhai Norbu and Vegetarianism

Content:

rory said:

Sorry I'd meant to post my reply (to a similar thread) in the Mahayana forum. But now i'm quite interested where did the Buddha forbid eating human flesh, and I believe I understand enough from my knowledge of Indian tantra and panchamakara, that human flesh would be fine. So technically then wouldn't it be more compassionate to eat a dead human than various animals?

gassho

Rory

Malcolm wrote:

The Buddha forbid eating human meat as well as the meat of predators in the Vinaya.

For what reason would eating the meat of a dead human be more compassionate than that of an animal?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 30th, 2015 at 8:57 PM

Title: Re: No Anonymity.

Content:

Simon E. said:

My first response to that Indrajala is to suggest that the person who made those allegations felt able to do so because of their forum anonymity.

I suspect that the absence of anonymity would cut through such shenanigans like a knife through butter.

Indrajala said:

The forum is publicly visible, so it wouldn't matter that much.

I just wish whoever sent the e-mail had the guts to present themselves rather than hiding behind an anonymous e-mail address.

Malcolm wrote:

If it's any consolation, it wasn't me.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, July 1st, 2015 at 9:21 PM

Title: Re: Dzogchen Community - membership question

Content:

daelm said:

hi all

I have a quick question - mailed the IDC but no reply. So I thought to ask here.

I live in South Africa and for a few years paid membership to Tsegyelgar East, for convenience. I let that lapse a little while ago. Is there now a membership option for people in my position, who'd belong to the IDC, but not to a particular gar?

Regards

d

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, there is. Since prices have been made uniform, you just pick the gar you want to affiliate with (in your case Dzambu Ling) at the new membership website.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, July 1st, 2015 at 10:44 PM

Title: Re: Dzogchen Community - membership question

Content:

Jikan said:

on the topic of the new membership website... I've not found a way to get the system to acknowledge that I'm a member, nor can I find someone to contact about the site. I haven't contacted the gar yet, because I think this is a website issue until proven otherwise. Advice?

Malcolm wrote:

You have to register, then it assigns you a number, and then you can pay your dues.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, July 2nd, 2015 at 12:45 AM

Title: Re: Forum-Community-Sangha

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

Scholastic discussion is valued more than personal experience. Not just from recent threads, but there are some issues relating to community member identity/anonymity, outing one's teachers, and so on.

Malcolm wrote:

Personal experience is subjective, and cannot be quantified. For example, "Today I experienced that Lama X is Vajradhara!" Nice, but so what?

As far as anonymity goes, people whose actual identity is not secret tend to be taken more seriously in discussions; at least, I take them more seriously. I tend to regard the posts of the anonymous as being more frivolous, less worthy of attention, and their opinions of less consequence.

I personally think it is disingenuous to conceal one's teachers, but hey, that's just me. I frankly think that Buddhist boards should have non-anonymity policies. Tried that at Vajracakra, and people were too freaked out to sign up. So we gave it up — market forces prevailed.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, July 2nd, 2015 at 1:51 AM

Title: Re: Forum-Community-Sangha

Content:

Indrajala said:

Again, I can point to cases of great concern and assistance I've received from people online, but conversely I've been on the receiving end of venom more than once (in

particular from Tibetan Buddhists).

Malcolm wrote:

Only when you posted outrageous and inflammatory nonsense.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, July 2nd, 2015 at 7:59 AM

Title: Re: Forum-Community-Sangha

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

Now that I've spit my teacher's names out, I feel I've earned the right to ask what the backstory is here-- why is this such an issue?

.

Malcolm wrote:

Because of the amount of harassment anonymous users have subjected other users to in the past, and it is actually enormous and pervasive.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, July 2nd, 2015 at 8:16 PM

Title: Re: Forum-Community-Sangha

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Only when you posted outrageous and inflammatory nonsense.

Indrajala said:

Then there were the subsequent accusations I was being paid off by the PRC.

At the time, ironically, I wished that were so because I was broke as hell!

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, well, people say ridiculous things in response to other ridiculous things all the time.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, July 2nd, 2015 at 8:17 PM

Title: Re: Forum-Community-Sangha

Content:

Indrajala said:

...and actually appreciate it when others online are equally forthcoming about who they are.

Malcolm wrote:

Indeed.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, July 2nd, 2015 at 8:23 PM

Title: Re: SCOTUS Decision

Content:

Wayfarer said:

I am a bit at a loss to understand how Buddhists are supposed to stand on the sidelines and applaud these events when they are blatantly sensualistic.

Malcolm wrote:

I was not aware that Buddhists were supposed to anti-sensualistic...seems to me those folks are just having fun. I think a bit if sensualism would do most Buddhists some good, actually. Especially in terms of removing wooden members from posterior regions.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, July 3rd, 2015 at 12:44 AM

Title: Re: Khenpo Jigphun Manjusri terma

Content:

narraboth said:

I think it is actually a Mipham guruyoga terma... I might be able to translate

Malcolm wrote:

Depends, could be the Mañjuśrījñānasattva teachings KJP revealed at Five Peaked Mountain, along with his related concise Dzogchen cycle, Sanggye Lagchang.

This was translated by Barron and is available from Padma Publishing.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, July 3rd, 2015 at 3:51 AM

Title: Re: SCOTUS Decision

Content:

maybay said:

Every time the supreme court overrules a law of the state, the state loses some small sense of autonomy.

Malcolm wrote:

State's Rights was used an excuse to go to war over slavery.

We live in a federal republic. This means that federal law trumps state law every time. SCOTUS has decided that the states are not allowed to pass laws forbidding people of the same gender to be married. This is a good thing.

Some things, like marriage equality, simply boil down to questions of fairness. Fairness,

as we know, is the essence of justice. As Rawls notes:
The two principles of justice (noted above) are as follows:

- a. Each person has an equal claim to a fully adequate scheme of equal basic rights and liberties, which scheme is compatible with the same scheme for all; and in this scheme the equal political liberties, and only those liberties, are to be guaranteed their fair value.
- b. Social and economic inequalities are to satisfy two conditions: first, they are to be attached to positions and offices open to all under conditions of fair equality of opportunity; and second, they are to be to the greatest benefit of the least advantaged members of society.

Rawls, John (2011-02-10). Political Liberalism: Expanded Edition (Columbia Classics in Philosophy) (pp. 5-6). Columbia University Press. Kindle Edition.

Further:

This priority of the right over the good in justice as fairness turns out to be a central feature of the conception. It imposes certain criteria on the design of the basic structure as a whole; these arrangements must not tend to generate propensities and attitudes contrary to the two principles of justice (that is, to certain principles which are given from the first a definite content) and they must insure that just institutions are stable.

RAWLS, John (2009-06-30). A THEORY OF JUSTICE (ORIG EDN) (Oxford Paperbacks 301 301) (pp. 31-32). Harvard University Press. Kindle Edition.

The fact is that allowing different states to have different standards for marriage compromised principle a.

maybay said:

Now consider the losers in this decision. Do they sound like the kind of people who can afford to lose ground? Do you believe them when they say its important to them?

Malcolm wrote:

They have not lost anything apart from their face. The idea that marriage equality = discrimination against Christians is absolutely ludicrous.

maybay said:

This is not a simple matter of individual rights.

Malcolm wrote:

It is, as stated above, a matter of fairness.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, July 3rd, 2015 at 8:36 AM

Title: Re: SCOTUS Decision

Content:

maybay said:

What is it about marriage that makes it a basic human right? Why do we need legislation in the first place?

Malcolm wrote:

It is quite simply really, married people are afforded certain rights and privileges denied to unmarried people. Those rights and privileges are granted by law surrounding property transference and so on. In the end, it really all has to do with the disposition of property and inheritance. That is why the State is involved with this issue.

maybay said:

The tacit suggestion is that marriage is "normal" and that homosexuals are now normal because they can marry.

Malcolm wrote:

No, the suggestion is that homosexuals are normal, and because they are normal they should not be barred from enjoying the same rights and privileges that other normal people enjoy.

maybay said:

Where does that leave people who don't marry?

Malcolm wrote:

People who are in committed relationships who choose not to marry now suffer from a lack of rights and privileges regardless of their gender orientation. In the past, heterosexual people were unfairly granted rights and privileges denied homosexual people merely based on gender orientation. This lack of fairness in the law has been remedied.

maybay said:

What about polygamy?

Malcolm wrote:

We will cross the bridge of polyamorous marriages when we come to that. In principle, I see no valid reason however to ban polyamorous marriage either.

maybay said:

Now my question is, what other values are they compromising for what other laws?

Malcolm wrote:

Irrelevant question.

maybay said:

That wasn't my point. I'm suggesting that the one-sided rhetoric against a group of people and the unwillingness to see things from their perspective doesn't help you or them in the long run.

Malcolm wrote:

Some Christians may need some pastoral counseling to help them deal with this issue, other than that, they do not need help. They are not being discriminated against.

maybay said:

The fairest ruling is not to judge at all.

Malcolm wrote:

That does not work in cases where people are being denied basic justice [fairness] in all kinds of ways.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, July 3rd, 2015 at 8:41 AM

Title: Re: SCOTUS Decision

Content:

Masaru said:

And even if that doesn't occur, it doesn't mean that the implications of the technologies we have been developing for a while won't lead to very, very old human objectives finally being completed. What happens when foot-binding becomes engineered and congenital? When social norms are no longer needed to achieve certain standards of beauty through class and breeding? When genetic homogeneity is finally achieved through an engineered process? When the emperor no longer needs a tribute of wives, nor any clothes? When the state is truly your parent?

Will we really transcend ourselves, or simply cement our ignorance into the blood of humanity?

maybay said:

Well I guess it won't matter, as long as the human remains are fed back into the living in perfectly equal measure. As long as everything is fair, who cares where we're going. The earth could be encircled in darkness, so long as the shadows fall equally on us all.

Malcolm wrote:

Equal opportunity and fairness is a basic set of conditions. That basic set of conditions does not guarantee anyone certain outcomes in life, it merely guarantees that everyone has, from a secular, legal point of view, the same chances to succeed. In the past, heterosexual people who chose to be married were unfairly advantaged. The basic lack of justice in the marriage issue has now been resolved.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, July 3rd, 2015 at 8:43 AM

Title: Re: May be its time to ban discussion about Homosexuality..

Content:

Shadok said:

for the same reason discussion about Shugden was banned. The debate is getting very heated. It will only contribute to creation of bad karma, to fellow sanghas. It will not help educate anyone, people have made up their mind. It is only causing disharmony among Sanghas. Otherwise this forum will become nothing more than place to promote political/government propaganda.

Malcolm wrote:

I don't see how. People are capable of having reasoned discussions about this issue. I don't really see much public disagreement on this issue apart from a couple of "conservatives" who are voicing their opinion, a day late and a dollar short.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, July 3rd, 2015 at 8:45 AM

Title: Re: Supreme Court: Same-Sex Marriage a Right Nationwide

Content:

dreambow said:

I would like to think happy thoughts about what happens to small children adopted by two men, maybe they will have a joyful and a safe upbringing? On the other hand who will monitor what happens to these children?

Malcolm wrote:

What utter rubbish.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, July 3rd, 2015 at 8:46 AM

Title: Re: Supreme Court: Same-Sex Marriage a Right Nationwide

Content:

tingdzin said:

It's fine that gay people can now be married. On the other hand, is there any logical reason that gay marriage should be acceptable while polygamy or polyandry are not?

Malcolm wrote:

It is mainly a property issue, really. But I am sure we will face this issue in the courts soon enough. As far as I am concerned Polyamorous marriage is fine. Tibetans have had both polyandry and polygamy for centuries.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, July 3rd, 2015 at 7:18 PM

Title: Re: The practice of Green Tara and Ganapuja

Content:

Sukhamrita said:

Hi everyone, I hope you do fine.

I have a question, maybe it was answered before, I've done a short research before

posting, but didn't find an answer so I'm gonna ask you by this way.

This is addressed specifically for members of Dzogchen Community. I wanna know how to integrate the Yoga of Arya Tara and Ganapuja, because Rinpoche have not given a specific transmission for a practice of Ganapuja with Green Tara, but I have received the lung transmission of the original terma practice of Anuyoga Green Tara of Adzom Drukpa, by webcast from Lama Tsultrim Allione.

By the way the original practice is different than Rinpoche's one, so I'd wanna focus on the practice of Green Tara and integrate also Ganapuja, to make it more complete.

Has Rinpoche said something on this? Is this possible? How should I proceed if possible?

Well that's it. I hope you can help me with this.

Tashi Delek!

Malcolm wrote:

I suggest you write ChNN directly.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, July 3rd, 2015 at 7:19 PM

Title: Re: The practice of Green Tara and Ganapuja

Content:

haak0n said:

Green Tara practice with meat and alcohol doesnt seem quite right

Malcolm wrote:

It can be just fine with Tārā in the three inner tantras.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, July 3rd, 2015 at 9:24 PM

Title: Re: Understanding why ISIL beheads

Content:

Caodemarte said:

Buddhism has historically been used as an excuse for the most appalling violence.

Buddhist societies have at least the same level of violence as non-Buddhist states,]

Malcolm wrote:

For example?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, July 4th, 2015 at 12:53 AM

Title: Re: The practice of Green Tara and Ganapuja

Content:

Sukhamrita said:

Hi everyone, I hope you do fine.

I have a question, maybe it was answered before, I've done a short research before posting, but didn't find an answer so I'm gonna ask you by this way.

This is addressed specifically for members of Dzogchen Community. I wanna know how to integrate the Yoga of Arya Tara and Ganapuja, because Rinpoche have not given a specific transmission for a practice of Ganapuja with Green Tara, but I have received the lung transmission of the original terma practice of Anuyoga Green Tara of Adzom Drukpa, by webcast from Lama Tsultrim Allione.

By the way the original practice is different than Rinpoche's one, so I'd wanna focus on the practice of Green Tara and integrate also Ganapuja, to make it more complete.

Has Rinpoche said something on this? Is this possible? How should I proceed if possible?

Well that's it. I hope you can help me with this.

Tashi Delek!

Malcolm wrote:

I suggest you write ChNN directly.

Sukhamrita said:

Hi Malcolm. I decided to ask by this way, if anyone knew about it, because I don't wanna bother Rinpoche with this questions. He is a very busy person, so if there is a possibility to solve this kind of doubts or questions by more experienced practitioners, better not to make him waste his precious time. He is always doing lot of things.

Well, thanks anyway ^_^

Malcolm wrote:

It is never wrong to ask your teacher a focused practice question.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, July 4th, 2015 at 3:15 AM

Title: Re: SCOTUS Decision

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Now my question is, what other values are they compromising for what other laws?

Irrelevant question.

maybay said:

The supreme court doesn't need you to defend its decisions with sanitary responses to foreign nationals. At least I hope it doesn't.

Malcolm wrote:

If you are a foreign national, than what do you care what SCOTUS decides?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, July 4th, 2015 at 3:17 AM

Title: Re: SCOTUS Decision

Content:

maybay said:

What is it about marriage that makes it a basic human right? Why do we need legislation in the first place?

Malcolm wrote:

It is quite simply really, married people are afforded certain rights and privileges denied to unmarried people. Those rights and privileges are granted by law surrounding property transference and so on. In the end, it really all has to do with the disposition of property and inheritance. That is why the State is involved with this issue.

maybay said:

There are civil unions for that.

Malcolm wrote:

Not any more.

maybay said:

We will cross the bridge of polyamorous marriages when we come to that. In principle, I see no valid reason however to ban polyamorous marriage either.

Well the supreme court did, so maybe you should have a look at the history.

Malcolm wrote:

That was then, this is now.

maybay said:

That does not work in cases where people are being denied basic justice [fairness] in all kinds of ways.

This case is not about justice. It has been a desperate attempt at achieving social acceptance through the legislature, and if it hasn't already been done, through the dictionary.

Malcolm wrote:

Of course it is about justice, otherwise SCOTUS would never have agreed to hear the case.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, July 4th, 2015 at 3:20 AM

Title: Re: SCOTUS Decision

Content:

Zhen Li said:

If polyamorous marriages will eventually be allowed, why not just forget the whole marriage law thing and stop the state discrimination against single people! We are the same flesh and blood as those who have lovers, so why should we be treated any differently!

Malcolm wrote:

Huh?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, July 4th, 2015 at 3:23 AM

Title: Re: SCOTUS Decision

Content:

Indrajala said:

hierarchy, social roles and gender roles...

Malcolm wrote:

...have all proven to be rather fluid in human history and in societies around the world.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, July 4th, 2015 at 3:25 AM

Title: Re: Supreme Court: Same-Sex Marriage a Right Nationwid

Content:

rory said:

I agree with you entirely Urgyen Dorje; people should be allowed to make freely the relationships individuals desire and it's wrong for the state to intervene. Those poor elderly ladies, it's just wrong. As for polyandry, polyamory, polygamy; again free people; freedom to choose.

gassho

Rory

Malcolm wrote:

In this case, you should be glad SCOTUS intervened, it was a favorable intervention.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, July 4th, 2015 at 4:04 AM

Title: Re: SCOTUS Decision

Content:

Zhen Li said:

While there are matrilineal societies, there are no matriarchal societies.

Malcolm wrote:

Not at present, but really, don't you think this whole patriarchal/matriarchal thing is a bit dated?

Zhen Li said:

Humans are just apes after all, and we have a division of labour and sexual dimorphism like any other mammal. For efficiency and structure, men do one thing, women do another. It's fair, even if it is not perfect equality.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, if your criteria is simply biology.

Zhen Li said:

Also, Indrajala is right about hierarchy. All societies have and will hierarchy. It is not a question of fluidity - there is no flow from not having a hierarchy to having a non-hierarchy.

Malcolm wrote:

[/quote][/quote]

I did not say there was a flow from "having a hierarchy to having a non-hierarchy,." I said that such things were fluid.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, July 4th, 2015 at 4:19 AM

Title: Re: SCOTUS Decision

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Not at present, but really, don't you think this whole patriarchal/matriarchal thing is a bit dated?

Zhen Li said:

I don't think it's dated. I am willing to be flexible though, queens can often do a lot of good if they have a male heart, like Queen Elizabeth,

"I know I have the body but of a weak and feeble woman; but I have the heart and stomach of a king, and of a king of England too, and think foul scorn that Parma or Spain, or any prince of Europe, should dare to invade the borders of my realm; to which rather than any dishonour shall grow by me, I myself will take up arms, I myself will be your general, judge, and rewarder of every one of your virtues in the field."

Malcolm wrote:

You guys are living in a fantasy world.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, July 4th, 2015 at 5:01 AM

Title: Re: SCOTUS Decision

Content:

maybay said:

Law courts are not in a position to launch extended investigations into the psychological motivations of plaintiffs just to determine if they have a case.

Malcolm wrote:

Neither are internet forums.

It is plain and simple: SCOTUS decided there was reason to hear the case, they heard it, they decided.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, July 4th, 2015 at 5:02 AM

Title: Re: SCOTUS Decision

Content:

Indrajala said:

hierarchy, social roles and gender roles...

Malcolm wrote:

...have all proven to be rather fluid in human history and in societies around the world.

maybay said:

And for good reason, except that in USA they like to turn everything into immutable law.

Malcolm wrote:

Really, you mean unlike other countries?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, July 5th, 2015 at 9:20 AM

Title: Re: SCOTUS Decision

Content:

Masaru said:

We have to be honest about what Buddhism actually says about homosexuality...

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, and the Buddha says nothing about it at all...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, July 5th, 2015 at 9:23 AM

Title: Re: SCOTUS Decision

Content:

Indrajala said:

but nevertheless I've never seen homosexuality endorsed, encouraged or portrayed positively in any classical Buddhist literature...

Malcolm wrote:

Nor have you seen heterosexuality endorsed, encouraged or portrayed positively in any classical Buddhist literature.

Classical Buddhist literature [i.e. pre-7th century] is generally rather negative about sexual activity in general.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, July 5th, 2015 at 9:27 AM

Title: Re: SCOTUS Decision

Content:

Masaru said:

When it's explained that between the Buddhist canon and the context from which it arose, homosexual practices were frowned upon...

Malcolm wrote:

Citation please. Otherwise, your comments can be dismissed as worthless.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, July 5th, 2015 at 9:30 AM

Title: Re: SCOTUS Decision

Content:

Indrajala said:

When you go to the National Museum of India you see figures like this:

It should be no surprise therefore that most Buddhists in Asia and their leadership do not endorse same sex marriage and find it rather alien.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, July 5th, 2015 at 7:08 PM

Title: Re: SCOTUS Decision

Content:

Masaru said:

I've read advice given to laypeople about finances and family life. The fact that he even gives advice on how husband should treat wives and which kinds of women to seek out or avoid is an endorsement of heterosexuality in itself.

Malcolm wrote:

No, it is a recognition of a certain state of affairs.

[/quote]...whether, getting back to homosexuality, it's psychologically healthy for children be raised by gay couples is another issue.[/quote]

I know many children raised by gay couples, and I can assure you that they are all fine, healthy young people with no problems, top of their classes, generally heterosexual in gender orientation and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, July 5th, 2015 at 9:12 PM

Title: Re: SCOTUS Decision

Content:

Luke said:

There are many Christian, Muslim, and Orthodox Jewish married couples who are against gay marriage.

Malcolm wrote:

So what? There were many white couples against mixed race marriage, not so long ago.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, July 6th, 2015 at 2:32 AM

Title: Re: SCOTUS Decision

Content:

Johnny Dangerous said:

Can you point out where someone has insisted (in the thread) that any opposition makes one a bigot?

maybay said:

Start with posts 10 and 11.

Malcolm wrote:

Posts ten and eleven pointed out that there was indeed bigoted opposition (from neo-nazis along with a suggestion of relocation), not that disagreement with SCOTUS itself constituted bigotry. One can disagree all one likes with SCOTUS's decision in this matter, but it is irrelevant. SCOTUS has decided what the law is, and that settles it.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, July 6th, 2015 at 2:47 AM

Title: Re: SCOTUS Decision

Content:

Johnny Dangerous said:

in the absence of a better argument, I know where I stand.

maybay said:

Well I'm more doubtful of where I stand, and I don't see why I should even have an opinion on something like this.

Malcolm wrote:

You have an awful lot of posts on the subject for someone who does not see why they should have an opinion on the subject

maybay said:

The problem is that a constitutional democracy relies on an engaged citizenry otherwise it falls apart.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, indeed. It was engaged citizenry that brought this issue to the courts, and SCOTUS decided. The US has three branches of government (Legislative, Executive and Judicial], not just two. People somehow think that the judicial branch has not active role in government, but in fact they do, and that is to interpret the law where necessary the legislative and executive branches cannot act appropriately or where there is some doubt.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, July 6th, 2015 at 2:55 AM

Title: Re: SCOTUS Decision

Content:

Johnny Dangerous said:

and from Indrajala the only real argument..regarding how we interpret or internalize Buddhist commentary on sexual misconduct.

Malcolm wrote:

Needless to say, the issues covers orifices and who a given person can pursue as a partner with no mention of gender.

The only place where the issue of gender preference and gender identity is really brought up is Vinaya, where certain kinds of paṇḍakas (which would include straight men who can only be turned on by watching other people have intercourse) are barred from ordaining.

There are at least two place in Mahāyāna sutra where the issue of gender identity is

basically found to be a delusion: the episode concerning the Goddess of the Ganges in the Vimalakirti Sutra and the Nāgā Princess in the Lotus. I am sure there are more.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, July 6th, 2015 at 3:02 AM

Title: Re: SCOTUS Decision

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

SCOTUS has decided what the law is

maybay said:

We share a law Malcolm, but not the law of SCOTUS. You should try to accept that.

Malcolm wrote:

SCOTUS interprets laws, it does not make them. In this case, SCOTUS has interpreted the constitution to find that same gender marriage cannot be banned in any of the the fifty States. It is very simple.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, July 6th, 2015 at 3:35 AM

Title: Re: SCOTUS Decision

Content:

Masaru said:

Well, God forbid that people who are against all forms of homosexuality are ever able to rouse enough support to thoroughly suppress it after this oddly aggressive move on the part of gays, marked with a bit of intolerance. I don't understand the need to keep up with the Joneses. Marriage is about kids, period. [

Malcolm wrote:

A lot of gay people have children.

Masaru said:

And for some reason, the religious and conservative seem to be better at making and rearing them, and passing on their values.

Malcolm wrote:

Really, you have some proof of this?

Masaru said:

I hope that, in the long run, the fears of the Christian conservatives and the conservatives of other faiths are baseless...

Malcolm wrote:

They are.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, July 6th, 2015 at 6:29 AM

Title: Re: SCOTUS Decision

Content:

Johnny Dangerous said:

I personally don't get why the official marriage label was important, the people who are so firmly against gay marriage will not, IMO start seeing them as equal regardless of what it's called. But then, I am not gay, and I do not face those circumstances, which i'm sure colors my opinion.

Malcolm wrote:

Married people have rights unmarried people do not — it is as simple as that.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, July 6th, 2015 at 8:36 PM

Title: Re: SCOTUS Decision

Content:

Luke said:

Doesn't the fact that this ruling has currently put gay people in the media spotlight also put gay people in more danger of violent hate crimes?

Malcolm wrote:

I am quite sure that African Americans would not exchange risk of hate crimes for their civil rights. Would you?

Luke said:

All these gay marriage stories have certainly gotten the attention of the angry ultra-conservative extremists in the US and given them a target.

Malcolm wrote:

This too will pass.

Luke said:

Modern America is so extremely pro-gay that I think it would be a lot more likely that a straight person would lose his or her job because of making a not-totally-sensitive, non-PC comment about gays.

Malcolm wrote:

I am not "pro-gay", I am pro-civil rights.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, July 7th, 2015 at 2:03 AM

Title: Re: We've been doing it wrong....

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

How do you say 'twerk' in Tibetan, anyway?

Malcolm wrote:

It is not translatable into Tibetan.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, July 7th, 2015 at 3:22 AM

Title: Re: Dzogchen Purificatory Practices, What're the Differences

Content:

Shemmy said:

I have no idea what its purpose or function is either, so I suppose it is just for curiosity sake at this point.

Malcolm wrote:

It is a purification of six lokas combined with Vajrasattva guru yoga.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, July 7th, 2015 at 4:20 AM

Title: Re: SCOTUS Decision

Content:

maybay said:

In their minds all they are doing is upholding tradition.

Malcolm wrote:

It is the same with ISIS. It is the same with female circumcision. Do you approve of something merely because it is "traditional?"

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, July 7th, 2015 at 4:33 AM

Title: Re: SCOTUS Decision

Content:

Masaru said:

[Edit]

Malcolm wrote:

And this is relevant how?

Masaru said:

I know you don't understand. You're too far removed from reality in your bubble echo chambers to see it.

Malcolm wrote:

The reality is that the court ruled, and some conservatives are freaking out, but only some. Others, with more common sense, have the following attitude:

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, July 7th, 2015 at 5:40 AM

Title: Re: SCOTUS Decision

Content:

maybay said:

In their minds all they are doing it upholding tradition.

Malcolm wrote:

It is the same with ISIS. It is the same with female circumcision. Do you approve of something merely because it is "traditional?"

maybay said:

No, you give that tradition space to die out quietly.

Malcolm wrote:

Uh huh, so slavery was traditional in the US, denying black people civil rights was traditional in the South — we were to just let that "die out quietly?"

maybay said:

Try some principles of Taoist governance for a change. What have you got to lose.

Malcolm wrote:

Ummmm, the same Taoist principles of government that relied on massive spy networks, and various other Machiavellian approaches?

Anyway, this is not China.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, July 7th, 2015 at 5:56 AM

Title: Re: SCOTUS Decision

Content:

maybay said:

The motivation behind writing a constitution that separates powers is distrust of human nature.

Malcolm wrote:

Huh? The establishment clause has the very opposite effect what you state here. Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof...

People who work for the state therefore are not permitted to impose their religious

prejudice in the course of their normal duties, and if they are found to do so, are likely to be prosecuted for violating the civil rights of others. Somehow, the tea party people have forgotten all about the first amendment.

However, the basis of the SCOTUS decision regarding marriage is founded on the due process clause of the 14th amendment:

"[w]ithout doubt...denotes not merely freedom from bodily restraint but also the right of the individual to contract, to engage in any of the common occupations of life, to acquire useful knowledge, to marry, establish a home and bring up children, to worship God according to the dictates of his own conscience, and generally to enjoy those privileges long recognized at common law as essential to the orderly pursuit of happiness by free men.

You see, here, there is no restriction placed around who can marry, establish a home and raise children. Anyone may marry anyone else, and unless they are proven to be unfit, may raise children.

You can argue all you like that when this was written individuals meant individual men and women, nevertheless, societies change, and since gender is not specified in the Constitution, and since DOMA has been thrown out as entirely unconstitutional (rightly so), marriage equality was recognized. It is a done deal, and the rest of the modern world will follow suit, leaving Fundamentalists to deal with the issue as best they can, whether well nor poorly. We are not responsible for their feelings on any level.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, July 7th, 2015 at 6:00 AM

Title: Re: SCOTUS Decision

Content:

Johnny Dangerous said:

No one is bombing, or otherwise oppressing fundamentalist Christians in this country, at all.

maybay said:

Clint just rubbished their values. Why did he do that? He doesn't believe in sanctity. He's an actor after all.

Malcolm wrote:

This is a non-sequitor. He is an actor so therefore he does not value the sanctity of marriage? Well, given the divorce rates amongst some of the most vocal opponents of gay marriage, I'd say they don't either.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, July 7th, 2015 at 6:06 AM

Title: Re: SCOTUS Decision

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Uh huh, so slavery was traditional in the US, denying black people civil rights was traditional in the South — we were to just let that "die out quietly?"

maybay said:

Consider the United States as a marriage of states. Now why not allow divorce? You misbehave, we separate. Why does that never happen?

Malcolm wrote:

The USA is not a polygamous marriage. It is a Union. Completely different beasts, not even in the same kingdom, taxonomically speaking.

Anyway, the South tried to secede, started a war over slavery, and lost. End of story. There is as much hope of the US allowing a state to secede as there is hope that China will somehow grow a real conscience and liberate Tibet. In the case of China, however, the parallel between US treatment of Native Americans and their treatment Tibetans is precise.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, July 7th, 2015 at 6:12 AM

Title: Re: SCOTUS Decision

Content:

Johnny Dangerous said:

Surely the best thing for all is a legal arrangement where they can live their consciences, and adhere to their beliefs while not being free to enforce their notions of sanctity on those who do not share them. If you think the SCOTUS ruling does not do that, explain why.

maybay said:

Law is just one thread in the fabric of forceful notions. You don't seem to recognize that.

Malcolm wrote:

Actually, what he recognizes is that most of this is merely a bunch of sour grapes from people who tried to turn their religious convictions into law in defiance of both the 1st and 14th amendments to the US Constitution. The law is settled, the rest of the noise from the batshit crazy right is the pathetic whinging of those who are on the wrong side of justice, morals and law.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, July 7th, 2015 at 7:29 AM

Title: Re: SCOTUS Decision

Content:

maybay said:

Nevermind what it is.

Malcolm wrote:

What it is is what really matters.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, July 7th, 2015 at 7:31 AM

Title: Re: SCOTUS Decision

Content:

Johnny Dangerous said:

I don't want to see them disappear or get marginalized any more than I want that for other groups, but it is simply the ways the cards have fallen that they have to deal with living in a society that has experienced a demographic shift in views regarding homosexuality. That is their problem, and I hope their own internal structures can deal with that and move on.

maybay said:

They are not masters of their own internal structures, as this case proves. It is your problem, and everybody else in the country.

Malcolm wrote:

No, actually, it is not our problem. If people's "internal structure" can't deal with racial, gender and marriage equality, that is their problem. Why? Because there are only two kinds of problems in the world "My problem" and "Not my problem."

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, July 7th, 2015 at 7:32 AM

Title: Re: SCOTUS Decision

Content:

maybay said:

The motivation behind writing a constitution that separates powers is distrust of human nature.

Malcolm wrote:

Huh? The establishment clause has the very opposite effect what you state here.

maybay said:

The motivation behind, i.e. the cause.

Malcolm wrote:

The cause, i.e., motivation, of the Establishment clause was prevention of a state religion — much to the chagrin of fundamentalists in this country who pedal the mistaken notion that America was founded as a Christian nation.

As the government of the United States of America is not in any sense founded on the Christian Religion...

http://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th_century/bar1796t.asp

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, July 7th, 2015 at 7:37 AM

Title: Re: SCOTUS Decision

Content:

conebeckham said:

In any case, those who expended great effort to achieve legal equal standing surely feel great benefit from the results. This should be obvious.

maybay said:

Well its not.

Malcolm wrote:

To those who are feebleminded.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, July 7th, 2015 at 7:29 PM

Title: Re: SCOTUS Decision

Content:

Johnny Dangerous said:

LARP martyrdom

THAT is a keeper.

I feel like the thread is perhaps beginning to exhaust itself, does anyone have anything else to say, would people like the discussion to continue, or have we finished for now?

Malcolm wrote:

I think we are done here.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, July 7th, 2015 at 9:08 PM

Title: Re: SCOTUS Decision

Content:

Jikan said:

But if you sympathize with this position in some way, you can't just say it outright, especially if some of "them" might hear you. You have to dogwhistle it, or talk around it. You can't name it, or specify it. It has to be left implied or unsaid.

Malcolm wrote:

It is obvious who the bigots are, the so called "social conservatives" who are neither social nor conservative at all.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, July 8th, 2015 at 7:28 AM

Title: Re: The harms of Masturbation and Porn

Content:

SeeLion said:

Actually, there is some similarity: in both cases, desire arises, and that's the whole problem - in the Buddhist view.

Malcolm wrote:

Depends on which Buddhist view you are talking about.

SeeLion said:

Research shows that as little as few servings of alcohol per week increase the cancer risk by some margin.

Malcolm wrote:

Hearsay.

SeeLion said:

As a strictly personal experience, I am able to see the clouding of the mind which comes from 1 spoon of wine.

Malcolm wrote:

Your mind must be pretty susceptible to your body's metabolic rate, hate to see what sugar does to you.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, July 8th, 2015 at 7:33 AM

Title: Re: The harms of Masturbation and Porn

Content:

Zhen Li said:

A lot of this comes down to basic Buddhist knowledge: six-sense bases -> contact -> feeling -> craving -> attachment -> becoming -> birth -> entire mass of suffering.

Malcolm wrote:

There is no causal link between sensation and craving. Why? Because sensation is strictly a result; however, in some people sensation is a condition for further craving, but it is not the cause of craving. Affliction causes affliction and action; action causes suffering. Suffering is a result. It does not cause anything, it can however act as a condition in some people for further affliction.

Zhen Li said:

If you only post on a Buddhist internet forum, but don't uphold the precepts...

Malcolm wrote:

If you have a catechistic attitude towards precepts, it is unlikely you will understand that they are only necessary for people who have a problem refraining from killing, lying, sexual misconduct and so on. Those of us who do not have these issues do not need precepts at all. We also do not need to call ourselves "Buddhists" to be practitioners of Buddhadharma, of which there are many kinds.

Zhen Li said:

and have a consistent meditation practice, then it's unlikely that you are going to have the same perspective as practicing Buddhists who can see both what suffering constitutes and is caused by, and see its gradual lessening through practice.

Malcolm wrote:

Precepts and meditation do not reduce suffering. If they did, also Hindus would have less suffering.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, July 8th, 2015 at 9:26 PM

Title: Re: The harms of Masturbation and Porn

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

If you have a catechistic attitude towards precepts, it is unlikely you will understand that they are only necessary for people who have a problem refraining from killing, lying, sexual misconduct and so on.

Zhen Li said:

Skilful means. You adjust what you say according to who you're talking to.

Malcolm wrote:

There is no precept against masturbation for lay people.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, July 8th, 2015 at 10:09 PM

Title: Re: The harms of Masturbation and Porn

Content:

Zhen Li said:

Besides the obvious fact that one is saving money and having more free time by being single, and avoiding the possibility that one might get married and all of the trappings that brings, not exposing oneself to carnal pleasures makes one's mind cool and calm, free and more aware.:

Malcolm wrote:

If you need to "not expose" yourself to carnal pleasures [meaning in fact "pleasant

physical sensations"], this is a sign that your mind is becoming frozen, rigid, bound and more confused.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, July 8th, 2015 at 11:54 PM

Title: Re: The harms of Masturbation and Porn

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

There is no precept against masturbation for lay people.

Zhen Li said:

It is sexual misconduct according to the Sūtra of the Upāsaka Precepts. But it seems people like to pick and choose which version of sexual misconduct they want to practice by, fair enough.

Malcolm wrote:

I am sorry, but we don't read this sūtra, it is not in the Tibetan Canon, as far as I know it is not mentioned anywhere, and so therefore it does not apply to us.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, July 9th, 2015 at 12:02 AM

Title: Re: The harms of Masturbation and Porn

Content:

Zhen Li said:

We are only claiming that this is what is advocated as a skilful path, which has its benefits. Nothing metaphysical.

Malcolm wrote:

There are many skillful paths for many different people. There is not only one path for everyone. For example, if someone is a practitioner of Buddha's Great Perfection teachings, then there really are no set rules at all. One applies conduct to one's life according to what is beneficial at that time without making up strict rules or thinking that one needs to follow precepts.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, July 9th, 2015 at 12:05 AM

Title: Re: The harms of Masturbation and Porn

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

I am sorry, but we don't read this sūtra, it is not in the Tibetan Canon, as far as I know it is not mentioned anywhere, and so therefore it does not apply to us.

Zhen Li said:

What exactly does it mean for a sutra to apply to you?

Malcolm wrote:

There are a number of criteria: Is it Hinayāna or Mahāyāna? Is it common Mahāyāna or uncommon Mahāyāna Secret Mantra? Is it provisional or definitive? Is it explicit or intentional? Etc.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, July 9th, 2015 at 12:29 AM

Title: Re: The harms of Masturbation and Porn

Content:

Zhen Li said:

This one is common Mahāyāna and provisional.

But can you explain how these criteria address the matter of application of a sutra to oneself? In what cases, and why, does a sutra become applicable to oneself? Also, where does Tibetan canon vs. non-Tibetan canon influence this?

As far as I have read Buddhist texts, I never once came across the notion of applicability or inapplicability of a sutra to oneself.

Malcolm wrote:

As to your first question, it depends on the understanding and maturity of the practitioner. A 13 year old boy needs different teachings than a 70 year old man. Sutras are like medicine — if one has a specific illness, one applies an appropriate diet, conduct, medicine and therapy. If one has a specific problem, one applies to Buddha's teachings to that problem. But there is no such thing as one teaching that suits every person.

Your next question can be answered for example, by looking in the Abhidharmakośabhaṣyaṃ. Theravadins for example, do not accept the antarabhāva because they reject the sūtra in which it is taught since it is absent from their own canon. Vasubandhu points that many sūtras have been lost, and then proceeds to argue the point for the antarabhāva on logical grounds.

I don't generally given much importance to sūtras in the Chinese canon if there is no corresponding Tibetan translation. In fact, I tend to ignore them altogether.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, July 9th, 2015 at 1:11 AM

Title: Re: The harms of Masturbation and Porn

Content:

Zhen Li said:

if you want to convince people

Malcolm wrote:

I have zero interest in convincing anyone of anything.

Zhen Li said:

Again, I am not fully convinced that masturbation is not prohibited for lay people in any text found in Tibetan. Now, I cannot confirm this, since I couldn't find the material in the primary text, but according to Alexander Berzin in "Explanation of Buddhist Sexual Ethics: An Historical Perspective," masturbation is considered sexual misconduct for a layperson in the Lam-rim chen-mo, along with Asvaghosa and Atisa.

Malcolm wrote:

This indeed really quite late. There is no sutra that mentions it, and in Vinaya it applies strictly to monastics. Also the Daśākuśalakarmapathanirdeśa of Aśvaghōṣa is not clear that this refers to lay people — it is like it was included with general sexual misconduct because it is misconduct for monastics. The text is very short, less than a folio.

I don't generally give much importance to sūtras in the Chinese canon if there is no corresponding Tibetan translation. In fact, I tend to ignore them altogether.

And how about Newar Sanskrit sutras without Tibetan translation? Where is the line drawn, and upon what grounds?[/quote]

Which sūtras did you have in mind?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, July 9th, 2015 at 1:42 AM

Title: Re: The harms of Masturbation and Porn

Content:

Zhen Li said:

Well, the sutra refers to the disciple being referred to as potentially having a wife. Also, it really doesn't make sense to say that only vaginal intercourse is not sexual misconduct if the person being referred to is a monk, in which case, it is sexual misconduct.

Malcolm wrote:

You seem to fail to understand that these things are not absolutes. The principle of Hinayāna conduct in general is not harming others. You will fail to convince me that masturbation harms others [or oneself for that matter, unless it is a symptom of a pathology]. In this case then, we can really discard the idea that masturbation is sexual misconduct unless of course one does it in public, in front of a Buddharūpa, and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, July 9th, 2015 at 1:47 AM

Title: Re: The harms of Masturbation and Porn

Content:

theanarchist said:

The wording you use shows how wrong your attitude towards this is.

Nothing is PROHIBITED in buddhism. In buddhism there is no entity handing out rulebooks what you are not allowed to do, like in the theistic revelation based religions.

Zhen Li said:

We can get hung up on words, but I think you know what I mean. The precepts are voluntary. You choose to prohibit yourself from doing that which isn't conducive to awakening.

Malcolm wrote:

Precepts are not of themselves conducive to awakening.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, July 9th, 2015 at 1:56 AM

Title: Re: The harms of Masturbation and Porn

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

You seem to fail to understand that these things are not absolutes. The principle of Hinayāna conduct in general is not harming others.

Zhen Li said:

These sutras are Mahayana sutras. But no, I don't misunderstand that it is a skilful means, I have reiterated this every few posts.

Malcolm wrote:

You will fail to convince me that masturbation harms others [or oneself for that matter, unless it is a symptom of a pathology]. In this case then, we can really discard the idea that masturbation is sexual misconduct unless of course one does it in public, in front of a Buddharūpa, and so on.

Zhen Li said:

The point isn't not harming others, may I please see your scriptural source?

The point of the precepts, as far as the Buddhist texts are concerned, is training (as in the Pali, *sikkhāpadaṃ*, rule for training) and avoiding actions that are unwholesome (*akusala*) and not conducive to awakening and which conduce to a bad rebirth.

Malcolm wrote:

You have yet to demonstrate that avoiding masturbation, for lay people, is a) a rule for training b) *akusala* c) not conducive to awakening and conducive to bad rebirth.

In which hell or preta realm does one take rebirth for masturbating? Why is there complete silence on the issue in Abhidharma?

Why is there complete silence in the issue in sūtra, apart from the one Chinese sūtra you can produce? Maybe it is really not so important.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, July 9th, 2015 at 2:00 AM

Title: Re: The harms of Masturbation and Porn

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Precepts are not of themselves conducive to awakening.

Zhen Li said:

The Buddhist path is holistic.

Malcolm wrote:

Nonsense. For example, Mahāyāna monks may handle gold, but are forbidden to eat meat; Hinayāna monks are barred from handling gold, but may eat meat, and so on it goes.

Mahayanists may even violate monastic vows without actually losing them, if situations call for it.

If someone is a Vajrayāna practitioner, then all sense pleasures are acceptable conduct.

There is no such thing as a universal training which applies to all practitioners.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, July 9th, 2015 at 2:20 AM

Title: Re: The harms of Masturbation and Porn

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

You have yet to demonstrate that avoiding masturbation, for lay people, is a) a rule for training b) akusala c) not conducive to awakening and conducive to bad rebirth.

Sexual misconduct is abstained from by the 3rd precept - s.m. is both akusala and conducive to a bad rebirth. The only difficulty is you choose not to accept any texts which claim that it is sexual misconduct.

One is a sūtra we do not read, the other is an Indian text in which is late and inconsistent with earlier texts of the same genre.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, July 9th, 2015 at 2:59 AM

Title: Re: The harms of Masturbation and Porn

Content:

Zhen Li said:

I am simply stating what is fact. Buddhist scriptural tradition holds that masturbation is sexual misconduct.

Malcolm wrote:

No, that is too monolithic a statement. The Buddhist tradition holds masturbation is sexual misconduct for monks — on that we can all agree. The issue is whether it is to be considered the same for lay people, and that is a contested issue, it is not settled at all.

Concerning the sūtra text, without a Sanskrit original or a Tibetan translation to compare the Dharmakṣema translation to, it is uncertain.

Atisha, BTW, says no such thing.

Tsongkhapa mistakenly attributes the passage from Daśākuśalakarmapathanirdeśa to Atisha. Please see foot note 386 in the Snow Lion Edition of volume one of Lam Rim Chen mo.

Tsongkhapa himself does not mention it.

So you are down to two actual texts that say anything about the issue. Only one in the Tibetan tradition, a late short text on the ten nonvirtues and an Chinese translation by a translator of dubious repute.

Considering the paucity of sources, I would say your claim is slim at best.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, July 9th, 2015 at 3:55 AM

Title: Re: The harms of Masturbation and Porn

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

No, that is too monolithic a statement.

Zhen Li said:

Perhaps so, but the same was said by the Dalai Lama. However, in my opinion, I would be surprised if you asked a monk 1500 years ago, and they approved of masturbation.

Malcolm wrote:

Monks disapprove of a lot of things — a rather uptight bunch, for the most part. And are not the Sangha Mahāyānists take refuge in...so I really could care less what most monks think of these kinds of issues.

Concerning the sūtra text, without a Sanskrit original or a Tibetan translation to compare the Dharmakṣema translation to, it is uncertain.

You have already stated this. But your view of canon from the historical perspective, as I understand from other threads, is fairly literalist.

I think that most "academic scholarship" in Buddhism is primarily self-serving bullshit written by people trying to feed their families. I think the search for the origins of Mahāyāna is entirely speculative and am completely comfortable with traditional narratives — legends, if you will — around its rise in India. I don't mistake those for

history — but I also think the Academic Buddhist historiography is largely a crock of shit. I know you do not hold a high opinion of academic scholarship on the topic, and your abrasive comments to that effect are the reason why Ven. Huifeng no longer visits this site...

If Huifeng does not visit this site, I am not to blame — he is a grown up, he does not need to remain in a place of reactivity.

Tsongkhapa mistakenly attributes the passage from *Daśākuśalakarmapathanirdeśa* to Atisha. Please see foot note 386 in the Snow Lion Edition of volume one of *Lam Rim Chen mo*.

Which is not to say that Atisha did not also say that. This may also not be indicating a quote of the "Great Elder," but rather simply stating that he agrees with the quote prior, which is what it says. It also says the same after another quote - which would make sense: "The Great Elder also taught this."

But in fact there is no evidence that masturbation is what is being referred to. The comment is really rather non-specific.

Tsongkhapa himself does not mention it.

He says "Inappropriate body parts are body parts other than the vagina."

Again, this is not very specific. yes, mouth, anus, etc.

In short, it is extremely silly to make broad declarations for the Tibetan tradition on the basis of one text by an Indian author which is not supported, AFAICT, in sūtras found in the Tibetan Canon.

Sexual misconduct should be defined on the basis of conduct that is harmful to others. We can see in the instance of minors, those under the protection of others, the spouses of others, in places where public offense will be taken and so on, that there is clear harm to others. But we cannot see this in the case of masturbation. Frankly, it is a little difficult to see how oral sex is harmful to others as long as it is consensual. I would suggest that morays around nonharmful sexual conduct are strictly cultural and may be adjusted to suit cultural climates. In general the ten nonvirtues all depend on how one relates to other sentient beings. It is very easy to see why malice, greed and ignorance are harmful to others, as motivators for killing, stealing, sexual misconduct in general, as well as lying, harsh speech, calumny and gossip. But it is very hard to see where consensual sexual acts can fit here as nonvirtues unless one is a monk or a nun.\

What you fail to understand is that the ten nonvirtues are defined as "natural" in so far as it does not matter if you are an ant or an anteater. They have nothing to do with trainings, and everything to do with establishing what creates a eudaemonic environment for everyone. Precepts are abstracted out of those, and of course, we can understand that consuming alcohol, for lay people, is the only prohibition which is by command, rather than through observing inherency. When you say that masturbation is sexual misconduct, you are making the claim it is inherently nonvirtuous, like killing, stealing, lying and assaulting minors.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, July 9th, 2015 at 4:13 AM

Title: Re: May be its time to ban discussion about Homosexuality..

Content:

rory said:

I don't care, I want to be in a position where I don't have to care; I don't want to depend on the kindness of others

maybay said:

What kind of Buddhist are you anyway? I mean, I don't mean to get personal, but your posts seem centered on nothing more than getting your way. The world is full of problems and that's just samsara for you. Any progress you might make resolving one set of problems will be lost to another. And even if you do manage to rise to higher states of being, that ultimately isn't going to help your Dharma practice. We need to learn how to live with problems. Consider this quote:

Deleuze recommends jurisprudence to address specific user groups that negotiate how to live with a problem. Instead of a general and transcendent rights-bearing subject, we have life and the problems of life that proceed only case-by-case, something for jurisprudence to unravel and honor. Jurisprudence addresses the situation to make it livable, it resists coding it with transcendent evaluations of abuse. Justice and Rights do not exist. Only jurisprudence exists and it alone is capable of creating law [droit].

Is your situation livable? Ask yourself that.

Malcolm wrote:

Jurisprudence can only exist with respect to rights bearing individuals. The sort of fuzzy thinking expressed by Deleuze above is why the Anglo-American ethicists don't really take Continental philosophers very seriously on such issues.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, July 9th, 2015 at 4:41 AM

Title: Re: The harms of Masturbation and Porn

Content:

Zhen Li said:

harm for others.

You are not properly making a distinction between precepts and the ten nonvirtues. You must learn to make this distinction, otherwise you will never understand the principle of Hināyāna teachings.

The ten nonvirtues are nonvirtues because they cause disruption to others. The ten virtues are virtues because observing them creates harmony with others. This has nothing to do with vows, trainings and so on.

Malice, greed and ignorance are nonvirtues inherently because they motivate acts which disturb others. Their opposite, love, generosity and wisdom are inherently virtuous because they motivate acts that benefit others. This is what makes virtuous conduct socially valuable and laudable.

This is the first I've heard of such inherency, and is exactly the kind of thing that the anarchist is arguing against. Source?

Malcolm wrote:

You do not need a source. Do the action of animals cause them to fall into lower realms, yes or no? Animals cannot take precepts, nor train in them, nevertheless their virtuous and nonvirtuous actions have karmic consequences. Therefore all actions are either virtuous, nonvirtuous or neutral, inherently so.

However, you can understand this from Vasubandhu's discussion of alcohol with regard to lay persons where he makes a distinction between transgressions by nature and transgressions through disobedience.

We can understand then that the precepts concerning killing, stealing, lying and sexual misconduct are all vows linked with natural nonvirtues, the breaking of which are transgressions by nature — the rest of Hinayāna Buddhist vows are transgressions through disobedience.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, July 9th, 2015 at 4:49 AM

Title: Re: The harms of Masturbation and Porn

Content:

Zhen Li said:

That has nothing to do with inherency. Such things are dependently originated and thus empty of inherent existence.

Malcolm wrote:

Uhuh, and why is it "bad" when an animal kills another animal for food? Because their minds are filled with negative mental factors. Why are those mental factors negative? What is it that makes them negative?

While I will certainly agree with you that there is no inherently existing negative mental factors, nevertheless mental factors can be considered inherently bad if they invariably produce negative effects.

But really, we do not have to be allergic to the word "inherent." Indian Buddhist scholars use it all the time in a positive fashion, even Nāgārjuna.

The main point of course is that the ten nonvirtues are nonvirtues naturally, and do not depend on a social context to make them "bad." If you indulge in them, you will take rebirth in lower realms; if you practice their opposite, you will take rebirth in higher realms — no precepts needed.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Thursday, July 9th, 2015 at 4:52 AM
Title: Re: The harms of Masturbation and Porn
Content:
theanarchist said:
...no no fasion precept for lay people.

Malcolm wrote:
But there really should be...

Author: Malcolm
Date: Thursday, July 9th, 2015 at 4:55 AM
Title: Re: May be its time to ban discussion about Homosexuallity..
Content:
Malcolm wrote:
Jurisprudence can only exist with respect to rights bearing individuals.

maybay said:
All the more puzzling why anyone would be taking issue with the Dalai Lama, a refugee.

Malcolm wrote:
Huh?

maybay said:
The sort of fuzzy thinking expressed by Deleuze above is why the Anglo-American ethicists don't really take Continental philosophers very seriously on such issues. Anglo-American ethicists. Is that some funny joke?

Malcolm wrote:
As I said, fuzzy thinking. Something you won't find among analytical philosophers, but is very prevalent on the continent. Groovy French guys like Deleuze have mistaken Litcrit for philosophy, and it shows.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Thursday, July 9th, 2015 at 5:00 AM
Title: Re: The harms of Masturbation and Porn
Content:
Zhen Li said:

Sex is mentally and physically damaging, it's an incredibly filthy and disease prone activity, some of which can cause death. It also gives rise to birth, which is suffering. It also is a major source of desire and attachment and hence perpetuates dependent origination. This is not to say that there are not cleaner or safer ways of doing it.

.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, July 9th, 2015 at 5:23 AM

Title: Re: The harms of Masturbation and Porn

Content:

Zhen Li said:

I am not disputing this. But greed, lust, desire. These aren't necessarily the best ways to get to the heavenly realms.

Malcolm wrote:

My point still stands — when one masturbates, one is not harming anyone else, no more than eating food harmful to anyone else.

The criteria of why the ten nonvirtues are nonvirtuous has to do mainly with how the seven physical nonvirtues impact others around us.

Masturbation is a transgression only for monastics, while it may be included in sexual misconduct from a preceptual point of view, it has to be considered primarily a transgression of disobedience. Sexual misconduct is a natural transgression because it harms others. Since masturbation does not fulfill this requirement, it is therefore not part of sexual misconduct. These days it is a little hard to justify oral sex and anal sex as sexual misconduct as well, from the natural nonvirtue point of view. I think in general this is why there is just not much heat about it. One does not hear Buddhist teachers railing against fellatio and cunnilingus, etc., in the same way they trip out against eating meat and drinking alcohol...speaking of which it is time for me to go have dinner...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, July 9th, 2015 at 6:14 AM

Title: Re: The harms of Masturbation and Porn

Content:

Zhen Li said:

Sorry, but the sutras do not mention the notion of harming others as being the criterion for wholesome and unwholesome, wholesome and unwholesome are classified based upon the root (mula) and whether they have good or bad results for the person engaging in the actions.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, but one has to understand why actions are defined as positive and negative. So far all you have done is discuss symptoms, by you have not actually understood the cause. Until you understand the cause, you cannot remove the disease.

Do you think for example, we practice avihimsa just for ourselves? Why is avihimsa, hri, and so on associated with positive minds?

The positive and negative nature of actions is clearly defined by virtue of their object. So for example, harming a Buddha or killing an Arhat is a much worse transgression than killing a normal human being. The weight of an action is defined by our intent,

satisfaction and so on.

What you are not perceiving, or don't care about, is why these nonvirtues are considered nonvirtues to begin with. Certainly, they are nonvirtuous for all sentient beings — so why?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, July 9th, 2015 at 6:16 AM

Title: Re: The harms of Masturbation and Porn

Content:

theanarchist said:

So what negative karma does masturbating create?

At maximum it perpetuates the attachment to sexual pleasure that already exists in your mindstream, just like having consensual sex with a partner does.

The advantage of masturbation to sex with a partner is that no attachment to another person is involved. For example it can not become the cause for being jealous and all the possible negative consequences this might develop (like insulting, harming or killing another person in a fit of jealous rage)

Malcolm wrote:

If masturbating is bad, I can't imagine the consequences of Dharmabating, it must be much worse. I think they would have to invent a hell for that, oh wait, we are in it, Dharmawheel.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, July 9th, 2015 at 8:08 AM

Title: Re: The harms of Masturbation and Porn

Content:

Zhen Li said:

Actually, I mentioned how they begin, the root, or mula. This is greed.

Malcolm wrote:

I think you mean craving, but whatever. No, in reality, the cause of all of these things is the knowledge obscuration of ignorance; rather than the afflictive ignorance of the "first" nidāna of dependent origination.

theanarchist said:

So what negative karma does masturbating create?

Negative karma is negative karma, or dark/black karma.

Malcolm wrote:

You did not answer her question.

theanarchist said:

Also, have you ever done a monastic retreat?

Malcolm wrote:

I know you did not ask her — however, I did a three year+ solitary retreat. I think I have a bit of a better idea of the value of solitude, silence and so on than most.

theanarchist said:

Again, this is really similar to what I said to theanarchist. If you're on an intensive meditation retreat with 20 other folks, and you're the only one slipping out the back to take a swig from your flask, your mind simply isn't going to be as supple as the other participants.

Malcolm wrote:

Oh bullshit. And quite honestly, a retreat with 20 people is no retreat at all. It's a quiet riot.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, July 9th, 2015 at 10:27 PM

Title: Re: The harms of Masturbation and Porn

Content:

MiphamFan said:

Malcolm, what about the harms of masturbation and porn from a health perspective though?

Does Tibetan medicine say anything about it?

Surely, the widespread availability of porn is not a positive thing even psychologically? Do you not think it distorts how people relate to sex?

Malcolm wrote:

Tibetan medicine says nothing at all about masturbation.

Porn is a different issue altogether. The main danger with porn for the individual, is that might cause them to become a specific kind of paṇḍaka, only able to be aroused by watching others have sex.

Beyond that, there are many social issues to consider with porn. That being said, it is something that should be legal, since making it illegal marginalizes sex workers even

more than they are now.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, July 10th, 2015 at 4:39 AM

Title: Re: The harms of Masturbation and Porn

Content:

MiphamFan said:

Does Tibetan medicine say anything about it?

theanarchist said:

I did a quick research on the internet and Chinese medicine seems to be against it.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, the Chinese culture seems a bit superstitious regarding semen retention.

According to Tibetan Medicine and Ayurveda, semen is a waste product.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, July 10th, 2015 at 4:54 AM

Title: Re: The harms of Masturbation and Porn

Content:

Karma Dondrup Tashi said:

I was with you until you jumped the shark.

smcj said:

It's ok, I got what was being said (I think). Most Tibetans don't grok that we are not able to believe in anything greater than ourselves. It's so fundamental to their worldview that they just can't understand our limitation. So they skip that part, and then things go wrong.

Malcolm wrote:

Ahem...as Chogyal Namkhai Norbu says:

The very meaning of the Tibetan term Dzogchen, "Great Perfection," refers to the true primordial state of every individual and not to any transcendent reality.

My analysis of the problem is precisely the reverses of yours: Most Tibetans cannot grok that we are obsessed with finding something greater or outside ourselves. It is so fundamental to their view, they even call themselves "nang pa", insiders, because they are convinced that the sole cause of all problems in the world come from inside, not from outside. The difficulty they have with westerners is that we are very good and looking through glasses, telescopes, microscopes and so on, and terrible at really looking in mirrors.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, July 10th, 2015 at 5:14 AM

Title: Re: Re Tibetan Disease Names

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

srang rdo means weight use to measure srang of gold, must be a misspelling, or usage has been forgotten.

phol mig -- more a description of symptoms, many small round pimples in a round area on the skin that are very itchy

'brum bu -- pox of all kinds.

gcong -- general term for chronic illnesses

dal rgol (dal rgal) ?

gzhang 'brum — hemorrhoids

khong mdze -- internal leprosy (but it is not really leprosy, it is instead an internal lymphatic disease)

me dbal -- no translation, it is a kind of painful red rash.

gyen pa ??

sems rgyu ba -- labile emotion/unstable mind.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, July 10th, 2015 at 5:17 AM

Title: Re: Maybe it's time to ban discussion about anything...

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

We all know what to do:

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, July 10th, 2015 at 7:57 PM

Title: Re: Re Tibetan Disease Names

Content:

Fortyeightvows said:

I don't know any tibetan but for what it's worth:

'g.yan pa' is given as "a skin disease, some kind of itch" in the book I had mentioned in this thread: <http://dharmawheel.net/viewtopic.php?f=81&t=19973>

Malcolm wrote:

It is a skin disease where there is itching and weeping of lymph, probably psoriasis.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, July 10th, 2015 at 11:50 PM

Title: Re: The harms of Masturbation and Porn

Content:

Zhen Li said:

In order to truly be disciplined and have a tamed mind.

theanarchist said:

Having a tamed mind and discipline in a dharma sense has nothing to do with what we here in the west usually consider to be discipline.

Because the definition of discipline in buddhism is totally different to how the word is defined in western languages.

Malcolm wrote:

Yeah, but you have to understand, Chinese Buddhists are obsessed with moral conduct...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, July 11th, 2015 at 12:19 AM

Title: Re: The harms of Masturbation and Porn

Content:

Zhen Li said:

Do you wanna be a cowboy or a Buddhist? Does Dharma matter more to you, or culture?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, July 11th, 2015 at 12:57 AM

Title: Re: The harms of Masturbation and Porn

Content:

Zhen Li said:

This is why the sutras teach meditation on the foulness of the body...

.

Malcolm wrote:

If you are a common Mahāyāna practitioner, this is fine. This is not acceptable in Vajrayāna.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, July 11th, 2015 at 2:33 AM

Title: Re: About enlightenment in Tibetan Buddhism

Content:

Ayu said:

This assertion is illogical. An arahat has no conceptual hindrances anymore.

Malcolm wrote:

Of course they do, Vasubandhu writes in his commentary on Abhidharma that arhats and pratyekabuddhas both possess non-afflictive ignorance; as others have noted, this is a the obscuration of knowledge.

If arhats had no knowledge obscurations, they would be omniscient.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, July 11th, 2015 at 2:57 AM

Title: Re: About enlightenment in Tibetan Buddhism

Content:

MalaBeads said:

It seems as if people are using the word "theravada" here as if it represented all 18 schools of buddhism that developed after the Buddha died. It doesn't. Theravada is only one of the 18 schools that developed at that time. There were 18 schools in the "hinayana". We usually only know one of them in the west. But they are not synonymous.

Malcolm wrote:

Correct, it is bunch of PC bullshit. Some Tibetan teachers, trying to avoid the term Hināyāna, have begun substituting the term Theravada for it.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, July 11th, 2015 at 3:34 AM

Title: Re: Prophecy of Padmasambhava in the Nirvana Sutra

Content:

tomamundsen said:

Hi,

I have read somewhere that this quote comes from the Nirvana Sutra:
Eight years after my parinirvana, a remarkable being with the name Padmasambhava will appear in the center of a lotus and reveal the highest teaching concerning the ultimate state of the true nature, bringing great benefit to all sentient beings.
However, I can't find it in there. Which version of the Nirvana Sutra contains this?

Malcolm wrote:

It does not appear to be extant in the Nirvana Sutra versions that we have.

The actual citation is:

Twelve years
after my nirvana,
a person better than all
will arise on Dhanakośa Island.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, July 11th, 2015 at 4:58 AM

Title: Re: The harms of Masturbation and Porn

Content:

Zhen Li said:

This is why the sutras teach meditation on the foulness of the body...

.

Malcolm wrote:

If you are a common Mahāyāna practitioner, this is fine. This is not acceptable in Vajrayāna.

theanarchist said:

It's not acceptable in Mahayana either, as in emptiness nature, there is no such thing as pure or impure, so this idea is conceptual thinking and has to be overcome.

Malcolm wrote:

You might want to tell Shantideva then, he has practically a whole chapter on how to become thoroughly disgusted with the bodies of the opposite sex as an antidote to desire.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, July 11th, 2015 at 5:26 AM

Title: Re: The harms of Masturbation and Porn

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

You might want to tell Shantideva then, he has practically a whole chapter on how to become thoroughly disgusted with the bodies of the opposite sex as an antidote to desire.

theanarchist said:

As an antidote, of course..

Malcolm wrote:

That kind of antidote is inappropriate in Vajrayāna.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, July 11th, 2015 at 5:27 AM

Title: Re: Mantra Liberation Through Hearing ("Ha Gan Ga")

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Med check time?

Karma Dondrup Tashi said:

Hi, yes? Tashi Rinpoche here. You said you wanted to speak to me. What's that? You're unhappy? Why is that? Oh. Well, I'm sure a doctor can prescribe some lotion you can spread on it ...

What's that? Something a bit more radical? Ok, well, tell you what, I'll sell you a jewel. A magic jewel. Yes. Yes. That's right. It's very powerful. It's the wish granting jewel of wrathful spaghetti tentacles, who is the protector of all 90s hair music everywhere.

Success is guaranteed. No not right away, you'll get it halfway down the interstate. When? Oh, four days from now it all goes clear. As it were. That's right. Hehe. Don't you trust me?

Huh? You have no money? Well, ok, tell you what no worries, I'll give it to you for free. Yes, out of the goodness of my heart. Well, because I'm a nice guy that's why. So ... I assume you're around, I'll meet you on the corner of Duane and Reade in 5 minutes ... ?

What's that. You live where? SWEDEN? Well what the hell man how do you expect me to give you this jewel when you live thousands of miles away?

Sigh, ok, ok, stop ... whining like that. Oh, stop sobbing, Jesus. You're making your rash spread. I'll let you in on a little secret, I told a kind of fib. It's not really an actual, physical jewel, you see, it's more like a phrase. What? Phrase. PHRASE. No not phase, PHRASE ... sigh, yes, ok if you like, magic spell. Yes, fine, whatever floats your boat. Yes, you speak it. Over and over again. Right. Just say the words. Yes ... sigh ... like a spell.

So anyway, we need a few things, I'm gonna hit you over the head with my beer bottle and then throw this gum wrapper into this circle I'm drawing on the ground with some chalk ... Why? Because the phrase ... sorry, spell, doesn't work unless we do this stuff. Them's the rules. Why? I dunno why man, why do you have to rub the lamp to get the genie to come out instead of just tell him you want to chat, that's just how it works with this kind of ... spell. You want another kind of spell, go see some other guy. No, no it's ok you're not actually here. Just try to imagine what I'm doing as best you can, then I'll just let you know what it is. Mokay?

Ok, so that's done. So put your ear close to the phone, I'll whisper it to you. What? You're not using a phone? An online video? Like a whatumacallit, a webcast? Cool man! Whoa, that's like so techno. Far out. What's that? You want to invite some of your buddies so they can hear it too? Sure! Invite the whole neighborhood let's make this a party! The more the merrier! (Sheesh I didn't know they had the internet in Sweden).

OK, here we go I'm going to whisper it to you guys right now ... Huh? Something else you think you should mention ok ... Right you already said you're watching me on a video, on the internet. A webcast, right?

... What do you mean, "not live"? What do you mean? ... You're watching me ... on a server? What's that? ... Um, ok. You mean, like ... from a video tape or something like that ... ?

Wait ... how can I whisper this to you ... if I'm ... not really talking to you ... ? Wait. Who ... are you actually? I mean ... how can I really be talking to you ... if you're not really here right now ... Ok, wait I'm starting to really get freaked out ... Who am I really talking to? How can a ... guy on TV talk to some one who's watching TV ... Who the f*ck are you anyway? What do you mean you have a rash you're not really here, how can you have a rash when you're not really even here - who are you and who am I talking to?! Jesus F*g Christ, who are you just some kind of voice in my head or what?!?! Tell me right now who

are you and who am I talking to and how can I be really talking to you right now if I'm on TV and your'e watching TV and WTF!!! Guard! Guard! This is the fifth time I told you today I'm not allowing any more calls! Stop talking about your rash! And stop speaking Swedish! I don't even speak Swedish! Waitamminute how can I be understanding you if I don't speak Swedish, guard! Guard! These restraints are coming loose and there's a bug over by the corner where the pads are coming off the wall and NO I DON'T CARE ABOUT YOUR RASH ANYMORE! Get out of my head whoever you are! Guard! Guard! Tell this voice in my head to get out of my head! You WHAT! You just clicked on a link and found this groovy vid and you're going to watch it and then go order a BURGER? How can you eat a burger when you have a rash all over your OH GOD OH GOD THE RASH IS SPREADING IT'S SPREADING IT'S COMING OUT OF THE WALLS IT'S CRAWLING LIKE A BUG ALL OVER THE GUARD GUARD GUARD GUARD
GGGGGGGGAAAAAAARRRRRRRRRRRRRR

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if (typeof bbmedia == 'undefined') { bbmedia = true; var e =  
document.createElement('script'); e.async = true; e.src = 'bbmedia.js'; var s =  
document.getElementsByTagName('script')[0]; s.parentNode.insertBefore(e, s); }  
https://phpbbex.com/ [video]
```

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, July 11th, 2015 at 5:35 AM

Title: Re: The harms of Masturbation and Porn

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

That kind of antidote is inappropriate in Vajrayāna.

theanarchist said:

It is, when you are not yet able to dissolve your delusions in the view of emptiness nature. Of course if you are able to do it, applying conceptual antidotes would be inappropriate. But a practitioner should be realistic about his or her abilities.

Failing to apply a conceptual antidote to negative emotion while fooling oneself about being a realized practitioner can end up in vajra hell.

You remember the story of Rudra?

Malcolm wrote:

Whoever said anything about being realized? Such antidotes are inconsistent with pure vision, which is a practice.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, July 11th, 2015 at 8:20 AM

Title: Re: The harms of Masturbation and Porn

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Whoever said anything about being realized?.

theanarchist said:

The application of the vajrayana methods to your negative emotion must be successful.

So for example you are angry, you apply the vajrayana practice and the anger is liberated into, I think with anger it's discerning wisdom. Case closed.

But if you are angry, apply the vajrayana practice, and afterwards despite giving your best you are still angry, then you might better switch to loving kindness practice, chopping wood, psychotherapy, whatever gets the job done and you out of that state of mind.

Malcolm wrote:

Anger is mirror-like wisdom. When anger is recognized as anger, that is mirror-like wisdom, then it is liberated. You don't need to apply some antidote to anger to "liberate" it into mirror-like wisdom, anger has always been mirror-like wisdom from the very beginning. Likewise, the five aggregates have always been the five buddhas and so on. This is why applying methods of contemplating the impurity of the body and so on are not proper for Vajrayāna practitioners.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, July 11th, 2015 at 9:38 PM

Title: Re: About enlightenment in Tibetan Buddhism

Content:

Modus.Ponens said:

It seems to me (perhaps unfairly), that the theravada focuses a lot more on the extinction aspect, than the flourishing aspect. So I would ask what is the tibetan view about how to make the extinction of suffering to flourish into what you regard as full buddhahood.

Malcolm wrote:

Actually, sangs pa here [སངས་པ] means to wake up, ལྷན་ means fully. Sangs in more ordinary language means to purify. You see it etymologized both ways in Tibetan texts.

In the second case, where it means remove, it means having removed [sangs] the the two obscurations, wisdom increases [rgyas].

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, July 12th, 2015 at 5:09 AM

Title: Re: Basic questions about Nichiren

Content:

rory said:

namely the eternity of the Buddha and that all people have a permanent buddhanature.y

theanarchist said:

Mmh, claiming that something is permanent contradicts buddhadharma.

Malcolm wrote:

Dharmakāya is permanent, liberation is permanent and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, July 12th, 2015 at 9:10 PM

Title: Re: The harms of Masturbation and Porn

Content:

tingdzin said:

Well, without going too much into restricted areas, of course seminal continence is also valued in Vajrayana. One treads a line here in discussing it at all, but to say that it is not a factor in Buddhist practice needs some qualification.

Malcolm wrote:

In general the tantras of secret mantra do not distinguish between sukra and ojas. However, the principle reason for seminal continence in Vajrayāna practice is that for men, semen is the basis of experiencing a blissful sensation.

In reality, what one needs to conserve is ojas. ChNN's Birth, Life and Death discusses the issue of the difference between semen [khu ba] and ojas [mdangs] in some detail and recommends releasing the former while conserving the latter.

In the Dzogchen intimate instructions, for example, the Khandro Nyinthig, this distinction is fully articulated, and there are techniques for conserving the latter while releasing the former.

In general, practitioners of Dzogchen do not have to worry about the issue of seminal retention unless they are suffering from ojas depletion [ojas is mainly depleted by stress]. They are more concerned with other kinds of bindus, the "ultimate" ones; not the the ones that come about from eating food.

In Tibetan medicine it is stated that forcefully trying to suppress ejaculation leads to stones and even impotence. So, guys, if you feel it move, it is better to let it go.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, July 12th, 2015 at 9:20 PM

Title: Re: Global Warming / Climate Change: Caused by human activi

Content:

WeiHan said:

Not only are we not heading into global warming, we are most likely into a mini ice age as new study on Sun's activity cycle predicts a "maunder minimum" in the 2030s. The last time we have maunder minimum effect in the 17th century, London's River Thames freezed.

Is a mini ICE AGE on the way? Scientists warn the sun will 'go to sleep' in 2030 and could cause temperatures to plummet

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/sciencetech/article-3156594/Is-mini-ICE-AGE-way-Scientists-warn-sun-sleep-2020-cause-temperatures-plummet.html>

A new grand solar minimum would not trigger another LIA; in fact, the maximum 0.3°C cooling would barely make a dent in the human-caused global warming over the next century. While it would be enough to offset to about a decade's worth of human-caused warming, it's also important to bear in mind that any solar cooling would only be temporary, until the end of the solar minimum.

Malcolm wrote:

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/climate-consensus-97-per-cent/2013/aug/14/global-warming-solar-minimum-barely-dent>

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, July 12th, 2015 at 9:28 PM

Title: Re: Trecho, togal and kati in sanskrit?

Content:

tingdzin said:

Stewart:

Are these words from a Sanskrit source? A lot of people, including some Tibetans, are so eager to find Indian equivalents for everything in Tibetan Buddhism that they back-translate to Sanskrit, sometimes even inventing terminology for which there is no existing Sanskrit or Indian proof.

Malcolm wrote:

One of the 119 intimate instructions is the khregs chod bdun pa. Its sanskrit title is Samapatti nāma. This text exists in the Bairo rgyud 'bum as well.

Vyutkrāntaka is a well known term, a type of samapatti, and is translated into Tibetan as thod rgal. It means something like skipping stages. Khyentse Wangpo explains the term thod rgal in just that way in one of his notes on Dzogchen in his collected works.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, July 12th, 2015 at 10:39 PM

Title: Re: May be its time to ban discussion about Homosexuality..

Content:

Zhen Li said:

This is why it makes far more sense simply to stop state recognition of marriage. It's fine and good to think "poor couples," but what about the poor singles who have little other choice but to suffer alone in hospital?

Malcolm wrote:

As long as marriage has something to do with avoidance of tax on inheritance for spouses and so on, for that long the gvt. will be involved in marriages.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, July 12th, 2015 at 10:44 PM

Title: Re: The harms of Masturbation and Porn

Content:

MiphamFan said:

In the Dzogchen intimate instructions, for example, the Khandro Nyinthig, this distinction is fully articulated, and there are techniques for conserving the latter while releasing the former.

Has ChNN taught any of these before?

Malcolm wrote:

I don't know. But as I said, you can look at what he says about these issues in Birth, Life and Death.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, July 13th, 2015 at 9:25 AM

Title: Re: Trecho, togal and kati in sanskrit?

Content:

tingdzin said:

OK, Malcolm, but does this Sampatti nama exist in Sanskrit?

Malcolm wrote:

The Samapatti nāma purports to be a lung, a citation of the ati bkod pa chen po rgyud. The point is that the text khregs chod bdun pa is given the sanskrit title " Samapatti nāma," meaning that whoever titled it clearly understood khregs chod as a synonym for snyoms par 'jug pa.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, July 13th, 2015 at 9:36 PM

Title: Re: Overview on Sakya-Teachings?

Content:

Ivo said:

I won't answer in full the OP question, as the answer could be really extensive and difficult, but I want to correct something which is not entirely true here. Tantric ngondro as is practiced in Kagyu and Nyingma has never existed in Sakya until a couple of decades ago, so to say that it is important in Sakya is a gross overstatement. The only existing Sakya ngondro was composed by the late Deshung Rinpoche on the request of some students who wanted to have in Sakya the equivalent of the ngondro practiced in the other traditions. That's it. A couple of other Sakya lamas started teaching it afterwards but it is by no means required, or seen as very important and it is not really connected to any cycle per se, although it ends with a Sapan Guru Yoga, which is considered very precious in the tradition.

Malcolm wrote:

Ngondro in Sakya is connected with one's sadhana practice and done within that context, adding mandala and guru yoga in their appropriate places.

For example, the lengthy Ngondro commentary by twentieth century Nalendra master, Ngalo Khechen, does not present an independent ngondro text, but rather, frames the ngondro recitations within the context of the Hevajra sadhanas, and also includes the manner of doing Ngondro for Naro Khachod, Yamantaka and Tsembupa Chenrezi. According to him, for example, prostrations are better done with the guru yoga accumulation, not refuge.

Nevertheless, in Sakya, the idea of counting accumulations is a rather modern innovations. In the past, when embarking on a long retreat, one would devote some weeks or months to ngondro.

Deshung Tulku's ngondro is indeed a modern composition, and is influenced by Kongtrul's ngondro, but it is not the classical way Ngondro in Sakya has been done.

Ngalo Khenchen's text is highly influenced by Paltrul Rinpoche, containing long passages quoted from kun bzang bla ma'i zhal lung.

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Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, July 13th, 2015 at 9:44 PM

Title: Re: future role of Sakya Trizin what do you think about it?

Content:

WeiHan said:

This arrangement has a modern parallel since most CEOs in MNCs have a 3-years tenure contract to show their results these days.

Malcolm wrote:

It is actually based on the term of the Ngor Khenpos. Ngor had four palaces, and in order to make sure qualified teachers from the four palaces would have their turn, a Ngor Khenpo would serve for three years and then give up his place to the next in line.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, July 13th, 2015 at 11:49 PM

Title: Re: Overview on Sakya-Teachings?

Content:

Karma Dorje said:

Malcolm, which of the Sakya ngondro were you commissioned to translate? Will that be published in the near future?

Malcolm wrote:

Khenchen Ngalo's text. The translation is finished, it will be released sometime, but at this point it is not easy to say when.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, July 13th, 2015 at 11:49 PM

Title: Re: Overview on Sakya-Teachings?

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Malcolm wrote:

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Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, July 14th, 2015 at 1:19 AM

Title: Re: No, the external world is an illusion, right?

Content:

muni said:

"When the notions of real and unreal

Are absent from before the mind,

Then, there is no other possibility,

But to rest in total peace, beyond concepts." Khenpo Shenga.

Malcolm wrote:

[/quote]

This verse is actually from the wisdom chapter of the Bodhicaryāvatāra.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, July 14th, 2015 at 1:22 AM

Title: Re: Sexual and physical abuse in religious institutions

Content:

daelm said:

Secondly, whether you think well of Tibetans in India or not, they have taken a principled stance in favor of real autonomy. They're been trying to maintain a discrete cultural core, rather than accept becoming third-rate indigenous people in the Chinese hierarchy,

whereas Tibetans in the TAR are at real risk of occupying the same status in China as Native Americans do in the US. You may not like that cultural core, and there are components of it that urgently need modernising, but for Tibetans in the TAR, the cultural core that is held intact in India is a vital touchstone, as their status and quality of life is eroded on all other fronts.

Malcolm wrote:

I think the more apt cultural metaphor is the British and the Highlands Scots in the 18th century, apart from the nomads, in which case the Native Americans and US Gvt is perfectly apt.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, July 14th, 2015 at 2:10 AM

Title: Re: Upcoming titles

Content:

Nicholas Weeks said:

Another great set of teachings from Dudjom Lingpa, coming in July 2015:

<http://www.wisdompubs.org/book/special-offer-dudjom-lingpas-visions-great-perfection>

Magnificent work, just beginning to study it.

Malcolm wrote:

Frankly, before you set out to read these Dzogchen texts, it is better you receive Dzogchen transmission from someone qualified. Also, you really do need the lung for these texts, it is best to have that before proceeding.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, July 14th, 2015 at 2:31 AM

Title: Re: Upcoming titles

Content:

Nicholas Weeks said:

Wallace, the translator addresses this on pp xxix-xxx, saying (as does his lama) that the read 'should' etc, but the 'texts themselves do not require' even the preliminaries. If the danger were that severe, neither Wallace, nor his lama, nor Wisdom pubs. would put the books out in this unrestricted fashion. Beside I do have some of the attitudes his lama wanted a reader to have.

Malcolm wrote:

Frankly, Dzogchen is not something one can understand from a book. I am not saying this to put you down, I am saying this so you don't leave your knowledge in a state of intellectual sterility, since I want everyone to be able to wake up through direct knowledge of Dzogchen and Vajrayāna teachings. Anyway, who said anything about

peliminaries? But in order to understand Dzogchen you must receive direct introduction.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, July 14th, 2015 at 2:35 AM

Title: Re: No, the external world is an illusion, right?

Content:

MalaBeads said:

I have a question though for you. Is there a translation of the ninth chapter of this work available in english that you can recommend?

Thanks in advance.

Malcolm wrote:

There are quite a few, the one by Kunpal is probably the best from a Nyingma POV.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, July 14th, 2015 at 3:01 AM

Title: Re: Upcoming titles

Content:

Nicholas Weeks said:

Wallace, the translator addresses this on pp xxix-xxx, saying (as does his lama) that the read 'should' etc, but the 'texts themselves do not require' even the preliminaries. If the danger were that severe, neither Wallace, nor his lama, nor Wisdom pubs. would put the books out in this unrestricted fashion. Beside I do have some of the attitudes his lama wanted a reader to have.

Malcolm wrote:

Frankly, Dzogchen is not something one can understand from a book. I am not saying this to put you down, I am saying this so you don't leave your knowledge in a state of intellectual sterility, since I want everyone to be able to wake up through direct knowledge of Dzogchen and Vajrayāna teachings. Anyway, who said anything about peliminaries? But in order to understand Dzogchen you must receive direct introduction.

Nicholas Weeks said:

Granted and understood, but many Dzogchen lamas have written texts, I would expect they should be read. Direct introduction coming later rather than before the reading is better, but I am not free to leave my sick wife. Kapish?

Malcolm wrote:

You can easily receive direct introduction from Chogyal Namkhai Norbu via webcast. It is sufficient.

All those lamas who wrote books could not have imagined that they would be flying around the world in pdfs or even printed electronically. Anyway, I am glad you have devotion for the books, I am merely suggesting that you make an effort to receive transmission.

I am sorry to hear about your wife.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, July 15th, 2015 at 12:32 AM

Title: Re: Enlightened yet fat

Content:

lostitude said:

But again, I may have let my sufi background influence my judgement too much. In sufism the two major sources of attachment and cravings are sex and food, and it is believed that all desires derive from these two basic drives. Which makes food consumption a major indicator of how much progress a sufi student is making. Apparently this tool is not used in buddhism, which seems to mae sense since I have never heard of fasting exercises in buddhism (or do they exist?).

Malcolm wrote:

In Tibetan Medicine as well as Ayurveda being slim is ideal from a health standpoint; however in Buddhadharma weight is not used as an indicator of spiritual progress.

We have enough issues in the West with poor body image, there is no point in confusing weight with spiritual progress. The two are unrelated.

That said, one should endeavor to reduce attachment to food, clothes, and so on., and in Tibetan Buddhism at any rate, there are any number of ways to go about this.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, July 15th, 2015 at 2:44 AM

Title: Re: Global Warming / Climate Change: Caused by human activi

Content:

Unknown said:

Since climate change deniers have a particular fascination with sunspot cycles, this story has predictably been picked up by all manner of conservative news media, with a post in the Telegraph quickly gathering up tens of thousands of shares. The only problem is, it's a wildly inaccurate reading of the research.

Malcolm wrote:

http://www.slate.com/blogs/future_tense/2015/07/13/sunspot_cycles_won_t_cause_a_mini_ice_age_by_2030.html

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, July 15th, 2015 at 5:54 AM

Title: Re: May be its time to ban discussion about Homosexuallity..

Content:

maybay said:

Declarationism philosophy, therefore, insists that if the United States rejects the natural rights philosophy of the Declaration of Independence upon which it was founded, it of necessity becomes, retro-actively, an illegitimate government in treasonous rebellion against its rightful government of Crown and Parliament in London; and therefore, the Declaration and Constitution must be held as legally inseparable throughout the entire United States of America (both Federal and State) and its territories.

Malcolm wrote:

Legal theology, and nonsense to boot.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, July 15th, 2015 at 8:16 AM

Title: Re: May be its time to ban discussion about Homosexuallity..

Content:

Zhen Li said:

Well of course they're in treasonous rebellion. What strikes one most blatantly about the Declaration is how almost none of what it claims is true. But sovereignty rests on more than legalities. To be a formalist about things, a right can simply be a legal acceptance of the way things are, as how a right by conquest works. The rebels defeated the crown's forces, with the support of Britain's rivals. Therefore the USA is theirs.

Malcolm wrote:

Kings rule merely by consent of the ruled. This is very clearly spelled out by Āryadeva who considers kings the worst of fools, and the most dependent of all people.

George III was such an embarrassment, the House of Hanover changed its name to Windsor.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, July 15th, 2015 at 10:56 PM

Title: Re: May be its time to ban discussion about Homosexuallity..

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Kings rule merely by consent of the ruled. .

theanarchist said:

Erm, where is the consent when the non consentees are threatened with life in horrible prisons, torture, social marginalisation, bullying, even death?

Malcolm wrote:

Even so, such rulers rule by the consent of those who choose not to depose them, for example, Hitler.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, July 15th, 2015 at 11:01 PM

Title: Re: May be its time to ban discussion about Homosexuality..

Content:

Zhen Li said:

Kings are indeed the most dependent, and constantly under the sword of Damocles. But "the ruled" is an abstraction, and such a matter isn't relevant until it becomes so, people do not constantly bestow consent by virtue of doing nothing, it's a natural tendency towards respect for order and the rule of law, just a child can't be said to be under the guardianship of parents because they constantly grant consent, they simply do what is in their interest by dependent and conditioned nature, not by constant free choice -- which is why as I always say, a decent governmental structure is meaningless without a virtuous (and rational) populace.

Kings may or may not be fools however, and I would resist generalisations about people simply based upon how they were born. Such a natural aversion towards a group of people regardless of deeds done or undone cannot be, in my opinion, very equanimous or compassionate, and seems to reflect only knee-jerk reaction. I'd resist judgement until proven deserving of it.

Malcolm wrote:

Kings are not parents and subjects are not children, so your analogy fails.

The kind of King Aryadeva is referring to is the one who thinks he has power by dint of his own virtues and entitlement, the kind of kings who sold the bill of goods of "divine right" of kingship (which of course was met with the god given rights of the people in response).

A king who is elected on the other hand, clearly understands he rules with consent of the ruled.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, July 16th, 2015 at 12:09 AM

Title: Re: May be its time to ban discussion about Homosexuality..

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Kings are not parents and subjects are not children, so your analogy fails.

Zhen Li said:

While every subject is a child, not every king is a parent.

The point was about giving consent however.

Malcolm wrote:

The kind of King Aryadeva is referring to is the one who thinks he has power by dint of his own virtues and entitlement, the kind of kings who sold the bill of goods of "divine right" of kingship (which of course was met with the god given rights of the people in response).

Zhen Li said:

While kings are kings by accident, and thus shouldn't be blamed for their position, there may in fact be virtuous and able kings. There may also be mediocre kings. But there are also mediocre presidents and doges. That's just the nature of things. Divine right is essentially saying, I'm here because nature put me here (i.e. I was born here), I am here by right of the fact that s*** happens and I'm the owner, not because of virtue or ability. Actually, merit is completely irrelevant to the question of divine right.

It would be nice to see your sources for Aryadeva's claims, since I doubt he's thinking about "divine right" as per Jean Bodin or the Basilikon Doron.

Malcolm wrote:

Read the whole of chapter four of the Catuḥśatikā.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, July 17th, 2015 at 6:22 AM

Title: Re: Meat Eating Mantras

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

And if it really is so simple for lay people to make a good connection dead animals, why do some Tibetan Buddhists act like these methods don't exist? Is it a sectarian thing? Lack of confidence in themselves as well as the teachings.

Boomerang said:

But aren't there high ranking teachers who discourage meat eating and never mention these dharanis and mantras? Why do they prefer not to inform people?

Malcolm wrote:

I can only tell you what my teacher says. Frankly, I don't much care about what other teachers says, whether high ranking or not.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, July 17th, 2015 at 9:55 PM

Title: Re: Including other practices before dedication in Short Tun

Content:

Hansei said:

Does anybody know if it is okay to include other practices before the dedication of merits in the Short Tun?

For instance; after Dopa, doing the short version of Mandarava (starting from Guruyoga), then Odzer Chenma, and then the dedication of merits.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, you are free and there is no problem with this at all.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, July 17th, 2015 at 11:01 PM

Title: Re: Thich Nhat Hanh news and health care cost

Content:

theanarchist said:

Why do they take him in the USA for treatment, when medical treatment and rehabilitation there is more expensive than everywhere else in the world while not better than at state of the art institutions in Europe?

Malcolm wrote:

Well, it's obvious — the program he is in the US is the best in the world for this kind of problem.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, July 18th, 2015 at 1:08 AM

Title: Re: Wake up call

Content:

ngodrup said:

Ok so a vajra sibling posted this elsewhere. And the request was made by Rinpoche himself, to quote him on it, so out goes this little note.

Dzongsar Jamyang Khyentse Rinpoche said today in front of a large group of about 800 practitioners,

that he thinks the young Tibetan lineage holders coming up in general are quite unimpressive.

They're lazy and spoiled, and they need to do a lot better.

His goal of telling us was to a) shame them via back biting (he said this, not me.) by circulating

what he said on the internet. b) exceed the "lineage holders" by becoming great practitioners and

with a lot of knowledge ourselves, thereby shaming them into improving themselves.

He explicitly said that *some* Lamas even give empowerments for practices they haven't themselves received. So we must basically become better than them, and thereby insisting on qualified, experienced teachers that actually meet our needs as serious practitioners. So maybe they will step up to the plate, as it were.

Malcolm wrote:

Nothing I have not been saying for years, especially with regard to Dzogchen teachings, of which there are very few qualified teachers.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, July 18th, 2015 at 3:18 AM

Title: Re: Global Warming / Climate Change: Caused by human activi

Content:

Unknown said:

Humans will either go extinct or be forced to return to hunter-gatherer lifestyles if we continue to destroy Earth's plant life, a study has found.

John Schramski, from the University of Georgia, has said our planet will become less and less hospitable as a result of plant loss, and if we do not go extinct, our lifestyles will revert to those of our ancestors 12,000 years ago.

Malcolm wrote:

<http://www.ibtimes.co.uk/humans-face-extinction-if-plant-destruction-continues-laws-thermodynamics-have-no-mercy-1511026>

<http://www.pnas.org/content/early/2015/07/14/1508353112.abstract>

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, July 18th, 2015 at 3:21 AM

Title: Re: Wake up call

Content:

Karma Dondrup Tashi said:

I wonder if this was an oblique reference to money rather than expertise. Current troubles for certain lineages, etc.

dzogchungpa said:

Well, if I recall correctly, he said that he had criticized the Tulkus in question to their faces, but he felt that "backbiting" might be more effective...

Malcolm wrote:

It is just more proof that tulku system is completely bogus and needs to be phased out.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, July 18th, 2015 at 3:23 AM

Title: Re: Global Warming / Climate Change: Caused by human activi

Content:

Unknown said:

It's the season when wildfires rage, and this year they're raging particularly hard: In June alone, Alaska saw 1.1 million acres go up in flames. In California, firefighters had responded to 3,381 wildfires by July 11, "1,000 more than the average over the previous five years," The New York Times reports in a big feature on wildfires in the state.

And that's likely not a coincidence. A study published this week in Nature Communications connects worsening wildfire seasons to climate change, and suggests the trend will continue in the years ahead as climate change rolls forward. "Wildfires occur at the intersection of dry weather, available fuel and ignition sources," the study's authors write. Of those factors, "weather is the most variable."

The study also suggests that wildfires will themselves play a role in driving climate change, creating a nasty feedback loop.

Malcolm wrote:

<http://grist.org/news/climate-change-is-making-wildfires-worse-and-wildfires-are-making-climate-change-worse>

http://www.nature.com/ncomms/2015/150714/ncomms8537/fig_tab/ncomms8537_F3.html

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, July 18th, 2015 at 3:44 AM

Title: Re: Wake up call

Content:

smcj said:

It is just more proof that tulku system is completely bogus and needs to be phased out. "Completely bogus"?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, the tulku system is completely bogus and needs to be phased out.

smcj said:

How many of your teachers are tulkus? Have you run this idea by them?

Malcolm wrote:

A number of my teachers are tulkus. They are not naive. They are also trapped in the system.

smcj said:

Personally I think Gesar Mukpo did an adequate job of dispelling any fantasies about what being a tulku guarantees with his documentary. The whole issue with labrang is a completely different matter.

Malcolm wrote:

The tulku system is just a money and power game, it always has been. My point of view on the tulku system is no secret. Every single major nasty political issue in Tibetan Buddhism today stems from the politics surrounding tulkus, from the Karmapa to the Gyalpo cult.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, July 18th, 2015 at 3:52 AM

Title: Re: Wake up call

Content:

Karma Dondrup Tashi said:

M-la, you've said this before ...

If nirmanakaya is unrepeatable, that seems to weaken the role of kundzop guru back into a preceptor or spiritual friend. Who wants to nail themselves to someone who just received blessings in this one life? If I ever get a yidam, my door to the vajra world would become more just yidam only, not guru.

Anyway how would you say that, the tul ku was never valid or at some point they stopped coming back?

Malcolm wrote:

You must a distinction between the actual nirmanakāya, the guru as a representation of the nirmanakāya and the Tibetan religio-political system of consecrating small children as living statues to ensure donations for monasteries.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, July 18th, 2015 at 3:55 AM

Title: Re: Wake up call

Content:

Karma Dondrup Tashi said:

M-la, you've said this before ...

smcj said:

...and this is not anything like what DJKR said at the start of this thread.

Malcolm wrote:

Sure, I am just identifying the real cause of the problem that DKR is talking about. It does not mean that people recognized as tulkus do not have a lot of merit, of course they do — it is like being born into a wealthy family and so on, and other high rebirths in

samsara. But tulkus are for the most part ordinary sentient beings who have to train every bit as much as those of us who are not recognized as tulkus.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, July 18th, 2015 at 4:00 AM

Title: Re: Wake up call

Content:

Karma Dondrup Tashi said:

Yea.

I don't know, they may have much bigger problems, even just re: children, monasteries, etc.

I don't know if you can get rid of politics.

To bring this back to topic, the solution may just be for some of the high profilers to behave themselves.

This sounds like throwing baby out w bathwater.

Plus like I say, there's history, what do you do with that?

Malcolm wrote:

History is in the past, it is finished, just writing on a page — is it worthwhile to keep making the same mistakes over and over again because of a tradition that does not even have any support in sūtra or tantra?

Truthfully, the only reincarnation that I have any confidence in is Chogyal Namkhai Norbu because he was recognized by someone who attained rainbow body, his uncle. The rest of them I really don't believe in.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, July 18th, 2015 at 4:11 AM

Title: Re: Wake up call

Content:

Karma Dondrup Tashi said:

It's a pretty radical thing to say.

Malcolm wrote:

It is a necessary thing to say. Chogyal Namkhai Norbu has been pointing out the faults of the tulku system for many years, for example, pointing out that the qualities of reincarnations are usually progressively worse with each generation, rather than progressively better. Of course, ChNN is an outlier, and Tibetans really don't pay any

attention to him. Despite his fame in the West, exile Tibetans in general regard him with suspicion and disdain. If they only had a clue, all of these young Tibetan tulkus in India interested in Dzogchen would study with him.

Truthfully, there is very little knowledge of Dzogchen teachings these days among the younger generation of Tibetan lamas. It is mostly intellectual dancing on books. These young guys really do not have very much knowledge even of the meaning of the two stages. They are mostly sutrayāna Kadampa style lamrimpas. So it is not wonder that people who follow such lamas have very little understanding of the real essence of the teachings. There are some notable exceptions in Tulku Urgyen's family, but Tulku Urgyen was a real Dzogchen master.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, July 18th, 2015 at 4:18 AM

Title: Re: Wake up call

Content:

Karma Dondrup Tashi said:
re-shape

Malcolm wrote:

Better to eliminate. Both in exile and in occupied Tibet.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, July 18th, 2015 at 4:20 AM

Title: Re: Wake up call

Content:

theanarchist said:

They are suffering from the "modern lifestyle" dilemma just like us normal people unfortunately.

Lamas like Mingyur Rinpoche, who spend considerable time in retreat in their younger years seem to have become rather rare....

But is the environment of those young Rinpoches, where they grow up, really encouraging the lifestyle of a yogi? Don't they prefer to have them as a representative figurehead for their predecessors monastic institutions?

Wouldn't it be good to let them experience the more shitty sides of today's samsara life for a few years, to motivate them to develop some amount of renunciation and a motivation to do something about the suffering present in the world?

philji said:

I think this more than the Tulku system is to blame. Young tulkus are treated like superstars, go on tour like rock stars and fawned over by male and female groupies. Hardly a conducive life for a yogi....

Malcolm wrote:

No point in complaining about the symptoms if one does not address the cause.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, July 18th, 2015 at 4:35 AM

Title: Re: Wake up call

Content:

Karma Dondrup Tashi said:

EDIT: By radical I just meant the back-biting thing.

EDIT 2

Malcolm wrote:

... exile Tibetans in general regard him with suspicion and disdain ...

Karma Dondrup Tashi said:

?!

Really. I did not know that.

Malcolm wrote:

Sure, when I tell most educated exile Tibetans (Nyingma Lamas especially) that my root guru is Chogyal Namkhai Norbu, it is usually met with uncomfortable silence and a rapid change of subject. In Tibet, however, it is the opposite. Actually, the best lamas are still in Tibet (with certain exceptions in exile).

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, July 18th, 2015 at 4:46 AM

Title: Re: Wake up call

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

the tulku system may have worked in a certain historical and cultural context.

Malcolm wrote:

Did it? I am really not sure of this at all.

Urgyen Dorje said:

in the american dharma scene with tibetan buddhism in diaspora it is a disaster.

Malcolm wrote:

Definitely.

Urgyen Dorje said:

you have teachers with the title tulku but no qualities working the system to have a

career,

Malcolm wrote:
Check.

Urgyen Dorje said:
and you have american buddhists who either fall headfirst for anyone called tulku

Malcolm wrote:
Check.

Urgyen Dorje said:
or they react violently against the political and social institution of tulkus.

Malcolm wrote:
Understandable, since it is basically just an exercise in the eight worldly Dharmas.

Urgyen Dorje said:
this is why this young tulku i know hates the system. he's young and he's in training and he's on the ropes no matter what he does.

Malcolm wrote:
He is free, he can walk away.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Saturday, July 18th, 2015 at 4:57 AM
Title: Re: Wake up call
Content:
Malcolm wrote:
He is free, he can walk away.

Karma Dondrup Tashi said:
Until he has samaya with some students ...

Malcolm wrote:
He or she does not need to subject their students to all this craziness.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Saturday, July 18th, 2015 at 5:04 AM
Title: Re: Wake up call
Content:
Karma Dondrup Tashi said:
It's a pretty radical thing to say.

Malcolm wrote:

It is a necessary thing to say. Chogyal Namkhai Norbu has been pointing out the faults of the tulku system for many years, for example, pointing out that the qualities of reincarnations are usually progressively worse with each generation, rather than progressively better. Of course, ChNN is an outlier, and Tibetans really don't pay any attention to him. Despite his fame in the West, exile Tibetans in general regard him with suspicion and disdain. If they only had a clue, all of these young Tibetan tulkus in India interested in Dzogchen would study with him.

T. Chokyi said:

I have a good feeling about Yeshe Namkhai CHNN's son, I think CHNN probably isn't referring to Yeshe Namkhai when he points out the faults of the "tulku system", after all YN wasn't really a part of that system in the sense that he was sought out or "discovered" at a young age etc.. I sometimes wonder if YN is going to be seen a little more by webcast. The movie on his life and relationship with his father was great, and so were the activities accompanying the release of the movie (My Reincarnation), but since that time I have not heard much about YN's role within Dzogchen Community (present/future). I tuned in to the webcast he gave, but I don't know of any other webcasts besides the one he gave which was already several years ago.

Do you know what his activities are or will be?

Malcolm wrote:

ChNN in this case is really convinced his son is the reincarnation of his other uncle, the least known Khyentse incarnation. [people should read The Lamp That Enlightens Narrow Minds]. For a while. Yeshe was listed with his father as a teacher in the Community. Then he apparently decided he did not want to be in that role anymore, so he had his name removed. This was after My Reincarnation was aired all over the world.

Characteristically, ChNN. while confident of his son's "pedigree", chose not to subject him to a monastic education.

AFAIK, CHNN's son and daughter will inherit the responsibility of continuing their father's legacy. Who knows what it will look like. I have no idea, myself.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, July 18th, 2015 at 7:07 AM

Title: Re: May be its time to ban discussion about Homosexuality..

Content:

maybay said:

Why would a man rape, beat and imprison his own property?

Malcolm wrote:

It happened all the time.

maybay said:

The type of man who abuses what is his will not prosper, and those who protect and nurture what is theirs will flourish.

Malcolm wrote:

They seem to have gotten along just fine, since women and children were completely replaceable commodities.

maybay said:

This was the age of righteous effort and reward. Men, their clans, their people, were sovereigns, and lived by ethics.

Malcolm wrote:

What fantasy novels have you been reading? Your romanticism of the past is perhaps appropriate for a thirteen year old child, but not for an educated adult.

maybay said:

In our age, we have no people, only individuals, and no ethics, only rights. We control each other with computers and surveillance. We are still owned, but by the many. When a hurricane hits Louisiana and thieves break into shops, we say, look, that is what the past was like without law and order. Absoluteness nonsense.

Malcolm wrote:

You really should read some accounts of "law and order" as it existed in that glorious past you are so on about.

maybay said:

History is not something to be judged lightly.

Malcolm wrote:

Nor is it something for fawning romanticization such as the above.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, July 18th, 2015 at 8:30 AM

Title: Re: May be its time to ban discussion about Homosexuality..

Content:

maybay said:

Ok Malcolm. You think honour, chivalry, valour, is not important now. Money money. Consume consume.

Malcolm wrote:

I dont think they were important then, and I dont think that they are important now. Most of this honor, chivalry and valour claptrap was invented for romance novels.

Basic human decency does not require these romantic fantasies in which you indulge. It merely requires caring for others more than oneself. Countless fools have murdered

and caused the murder of others in the name of honor, chivalry and valor. Such romantic fools will continue to do so, sadly.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, July 18th, 2015 at 9:06 AM

Title: Re: Wake up call

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Reincarnations are one thing, the tulku system is quite another. Lets not conflate them. The latter is, in my opinion, bogus.

pemachophel said:

In my personal experience, there definitely are Tulkus. I am not saying I'm one, but I have known a number very closely, including my son. I have known some when they were very young and still remembered their past life. I have known others who have lost those memories. I have known Tibetan Tulkus and American Tulkus. One of these American Tulkus is one of the best examples I know of a real Tulku with the knowledge and ability to back up His "pedigree." I have been involved in the search for my own Root Guru's reincarnation, and I can tell you that, up to the point I was involved, it was far from frivolous and was completely apolitical. It was also guided by two very highly practiced and developed Teachers Whose siddhi and sincerity I trust implicitly. I feel quite confident that some highly realized Lamas can identify Tulkus, know where They have been born and Who They currently are. I also am quite sure there are false Tulkus recognized only for political/financial reasons. I've known Tulkus Who were brought up inside the monastic institutions and Tulkus Whose parents chose not to go that route. I've known good and not so good Tulkus.

Why am I saying this? To say the whole system is bogus is, in my experience, incorrect. If ChNN and His Son are both genuine Tulkus, They Themselves prove the system is not bogus. To say the system is broken is also probably not incorrect. To say that the whole system should be abandoned A) is not gonna happen any time soon, and B) I think it is throwing out the baby with the bathwater. Young Tulkus Who are actually Tulkus and are either not trained or improperly trained are a great loss to themselves, the Dharma, and sentient beings. I say this having chosen not to allow my son to be trained in the traditional way. Should many of the young Tulkus be undergoing stricter, better training? Yes. Should I be undergoing stricter, better training? Also yes.

This is the Kaliyuga, the Dharma-ending age. Peoples' kleshas are getting stronger and stronger, thicker and thicker. We are all in this downward spiral of degeneration, and it takes more and more merit and wisdom to escape, let alone reverse, this trend. Do many young Tulkus today need a wake-up call? Yes, from my experience, I think so. Will all of Them heed that wake-up call? No. Will some? Yes -- some. Are there some really good young Tulkus out there? Yes, in my experience there are. Check out Khedrup Jigme Kundrol in Bhutan. Check out Guru Khyentse Ozer in Bhutan. Check out Kathog Situ Rinpoche in Bhutan. Check out Gyalwai Nyugu Rinpoche. All four of these young Tulkus appear, at least to me and my clouded perception, to exhibit real renunciation. And isn't

that the real problem with those Tulkus Who are not living up to our expectations? Lack of renunciation.

Sorry if I'm rambling but I don't think the system is bogus top to bottom. I think the system requires change, possibly even radical change, but I don't think it should be scrapped entirely. In my experience, by identifying beings Who actually are Tulkus and then training them correctly, you can produce Teachers Who can do really amazing things for both the Dharma and sentient beings, Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche Himself being a case in point.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, July 18th, 2015 at 6:21 PM

Title: Re: Wake up call

Content:

MiphamFan said:

Isn't Dzongsar Khyentse himself one of these who criticize ChNN?

Malcolm wrote:

I don't know, is he?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, July 18th, 2015 at 6:30 PM

Title: Re: Wake up call

Content:

MiphamFan said:

Isn't Dzongsar Khyentse himself one of these who criticize ChNN?

Malcolm wrote:

I don't know, is he?

MiphamFan said:

I remember reading somewhere that he criticized ChNN for writing his books on Tibetan history before.

Actually it seems to me that that is the main reason why exile Nyingmapas have a strange attitude towards him, because he regards some of the Bonpo teachings as valid. There is that story of the Khenpos coming to him for example.

Malcolm wrote:

Well, the Bonpos dont like his histories very much either.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, July 18th, 2015 at 7:08 PM

Title: Re: Wake up call

Content:

pemachophel said:

Why am I saying this? To say the whole system is bogus is, in my experience, incorrect. If ChNN and His Son are both genuine Tulkus, They Themselves prove the system is not bogus.

Malcolm wrote:

ChNN was recognized by his uncle as a reincarnation of Adzom Drugpa, it is true. But all this proves is that some people with abhijñā can recognize the mindstreams of others. It does not prove that the system of transferring properties and titles through the tulku system is not fraught with corruption from top to bottom. It does not explain why, as ChNN quips, that tulkus seem in general to get worse with every passing generation, and not better.

pemachophel said:

To say the system is broken is also probably not incorrect.

Malcolm wrote:

It can't be fixed. It has been broken for centuries, and as I pointed out, many of the major internal conflicts we see in Tibetan history since the 17th century, one way or another, is a result of tulku politics. Just look at the mess caused by the Karmapa controversy, the Panchen Lama, etc. There was even a lot of bad blood, since calmed, over the Dudjom recognitions. Adzom Drugpa's life was constantly in danger when he was a boy because of his recognition, and ChNN was poisoned as a young age because he was recognized as Zhabdrung Ngagwang Namgyal's incarnation.

No one denies that there have been exemplary reincarnations who have been great masters. There have also been many more great masters who were not tulkus (thank goodness), such as Ngala Changchub Dorje, Thangton Gyalpo, etc., the list is very long.

pemachophel said:

Sorry if I'm rambling but I don't think the system is bogus top to bottom. I think the system requires change, possibly even radical change, but I don't think it should be scrapped entirely. In my experience, by identifying beings Who actually are Tulkus and then training them correctly, you can produce Teachers Who can do really amazing things for both the Dharma and sentient beings, Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche Himself being a case in point.

Malcolm wrote:

I honestly don't think you will find much of a difference between training people

recognized as tulkus and those who are not. Why? Because the vast majority of tulkus are not recognized by realized masters such Togden Urgyen Tenzin.

Thus, I do not see any indication that people recognized as tulkus necessarily demonstrate better qualities than other people, and indeed, it is often the reverse.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, July 18th, 2015 at 7:29 PM

Title: Re: Wake up call

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

It can't be fixed. It has been broken for centuries,

theanarchist said:

Erm, until recent times the tulku system also produced seriously great, realized teachers.

So certain problems within the tulku system have been present for centuries, but there have been a lot of cases where it worked just fine. Teachers like Dzongsar Khyentse are proof for that.

Malcolm wrote:

Apparently you did not read my posts carefully. In any event, the true recognition of tulkus depends on realized masters. Even then we have travesties such as Steven Segal and so on.

The system is broken, irreparably. This does not mean that there are no realized masters recognizing proper candidates, but in general, most people recognized as tulkus, even by this or that high lama, are not really reincarnations.

There is a story told about Khyentse Wangpo. Some monks were seeking the reincarnation of their lama, and they went to him, he recognized this boy as a reincarnation, but the boy proved to be rather ordinary. They went back to Khentse Wangpo to express their doubt. He became a little annoyed, and said, "Do you want to find the real incarnation of your master."

The monks all very eagerly agreed. Khyentse told them, "Go out behind the barn and call your master's name."

They did so, and young bull calf broke away from his mother to come and greet them.

Part of the reason why the tulku system is broken is because of the expectations of average Tibetans who won't donate to monasteries that have no reincarnations.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, July 18th, 2015 at 7:39 PM

Title: Re: Wake up call

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

There have also been many more great masters who were not tulkus (thank goodness), such as Ngala Changchub Dorje, Thangton Gyalpo, etc., the list is very long.

theanarchist said:

Nyoshul Khenpo.

But I guess in times where it costs thousands and thousands of dollars to do long term retreat, I doubt that we will get many realized practitioners from the pool of people more seriously interested in Tibetan buddhism. Because people interested in it can't afford the retreat time and most people these days are no longer hardy enough to live in a cave off nettles (and a lifestyle like that is forbidden in a lot of places anyway, try that in the Alps and you get arrested)

Malcolm wrote:

The idea that you have to live this hardcore ascetic lifestyle to become a realized person is a myth. You do not need to spend years and years in retreat. I know many people who have spend years and years in retreat and they are just as screwed up now as when they went into retreat, and just as ordinary. I also have done long term intensive retreat (3+ years), and while it was an awesome experience, I certainly did not come out of it a realized person. At least according to my master, there is no need for this. As long as one applies the the teachings in a consistent way to one's life, integrating view, meditation and conduct, then one will eventually attain realization. Anyway, most of us will attain realization in the bardo, not in this life.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, July 18th, 2015 at 7:41 PM

Title: Re: Wake up call

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Even then we have travesties such as Steven Segal and so on.

theanarchist said:

Yeah. No idea how that came to pass.

I mean, it was Penor Rinpoche who "recognized" him.

Malcolm wrote:

I know how it happened, and it was not really Penor Rinpoche's fault. I am not going to say anymore on the subject.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, July 18th, 2015 at 7:49 PM

Title: Re: Thich Nhat Hanh news and health care cost

Content:

Kim O'Hara said:

In a word, the US spends a lot more but doesn't get a lot more for the money.

Kim

theanarchist said:

Yep.

Artificial hip joint surgery in the USA cost five times as much as in Germany. And in Germany everyone who gets one automatically gets three weeks of full time rehabilitation along with the surgery, paid in full by health insurance and if you are still working, with sick pay.

Malcolm wrote:

Again, quite irrelevant to the program TNH has entered.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, July 18th, 2015 at 7:49 PM

Title: Re: Thich Nhat Hanh news and health care cost

Content:

Kim O'Hara said:

In a word, the US spends a lot more but doesn't get a lot more for the money.

Kim

Malcolm wrote:

That has no bearing on the merits of the program TNH entered.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, July 18th, 2015 at 7:52 PM

Title: Re: May be its time to ban discussion about Homosexuality..

Content:

maybay said:

Seems like these days people don't need a reason to murder.

Malcolm wrote:

They never did.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, July 18th, 2015 at 9:14 PM

Title: Re: Wake up call

Content:

theanarchist said:

Then how is it, that so few western practitioners qualify to teach vajrayana or dzogchen, even after decades following that path?

Malcolm wrote:

Who says this is so?

theanarchist said:

When Padmasambhava introduced tantric buddhism in a wider fashion in Tibet, the first generation of disciples produced a ton of realized teachers.

Malcolm wrote:

Tons? You mean 25, don't you?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, July 18th, 2015 at 9:15 PM

Title: Re: Wake up call

Content:

MiphamFan said:

No, they were former Chan Buddhists.

Malcolm wrote:

And a number of Bonpos, like Bagor Vairocana.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, July 18th, 2015 at 10:16 PM

Title: Re: Wake up call

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

in my seats it's good to get off the wagon of Americans for Tibetan cultural reform. We

don't have dogs in that fight, nor should we. Being a Buddhist doesn't give us papers to disassemble Tibetan religious culture. Heard of cultural imperialism?

That comment isn't an encouragement to give it all a pass. We're creating an American vajrayana culture every time we host lamas and put on teachings, even though we have few realized western teachers. We can make the choice to be indifferent to these aspects of Tibetan culture by cultivating our own attitudes.

Malcolm wrote:

I have no interest in Tibetan cultural reform. We are in agreement that any modifications of Tibetan culture should come from Tibetans, not Americans, Europeans or Chinese people. This however does not prevent us from observing that some Tibetan cultural institutions maybe are not all that they are cracked up to be.

It is important to recognize however that there are Tibetan cultural practices, like recognizing tulkus, that are not actually part of the Dharma. Can anyone point me to a reference in either sūtra or tantra, Nyingma or Sarma, that says, "In the last 500 years of the Dharma, the only way the Dharma will be preserved is through recognizing small children as the reincarnations of dead masters"?

The funny thing too is that people somehow believe tulkus get better training than ordinary people. Really, this is a fantasy. The fact is that young tulkus are often put to work at a very young age raising money for their monasteries, and as a result, they often have very inferior training compared with normal scholars in shedras.

Of course we have to understand that the practice of recognizing tulkus began with the second and third Karmapa, and these masters were fantastic. Then it became a big fashion, and within 200 hundred years, tulkus were being recognized everywhere.

We also should understand that the 5th Dalai Lama's recognition, by his own account, was completely fraudulent. He was also a fantastic master, but he certainly was not the reincarnation of the fourth Dalai Lama.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, July 18th, 2015 at 10:43 PM

Title: Re: Wake up call

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The funny thing too is that people somehow believe tulkus get better training than ordinary people. Really, this is a fantasy. The fact is that young tulkus are often put to work at a very young age raising money for their monasteries, and as a result, they often have very inferior training compared with normal scholars in shedras.

theanarchist said:

In the Nyingma lineages a lot of the tulkus come from a family background of lamas, so

those get a very good dharma education for certain. Just look as the family of Tulku Orgyen

Malcolm wrote:

It's a mixed bag, actually. Some tulkus get great educations. Some just learn some rituals, and mainly go around giving blessings to raise money. I have met both kinds.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, July 18th, 2015 at 10:49 PM

Title: Re: Wake up call

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Truthfully, the only reincarnation that I have any confidence is in Chogyal Namkhai Norbu because he was recognized by someone who attained rainbow body, his uncle. The rest of them I really don't believe in.

theanarchist said:

This here is completely anonymous so I can say this much.

Almost two decades ago I met a Tibetan lama and I had a nagging suspicion that I had to have known that man from before. I don't know what made me do it, but we were alone in that room, I pointed at a photo that someone had put on the shrine that showed his supposed previous incarnation and I asked him, what's your connection to that one. He said, in a very strange voice, "that's me", and we both knew, it was the truth.

That man absolutely hates to be put on a throne or be praised as a teacher, or dragged in front of a crowd.

Some say that he is Manjushri incarnate, I just say, he is the most intelligent person I have ever had the pleasure having conversation with.

Malcolm wrote:

Again, the point is not that there are no reincarnations; the point is that the tulku system basically corrupt, meaning that it is too easily manipulated for financial, personal and political gain. It does not mean that every tulku is false, though it is my conviction that the vast majority of so called tulkus [95%+] are absolutely not the reincarnations of the masters they whose names they bear, in other words, no more than 5 in every 100.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, July 18th, 2015 at 11:39 PM

Title: Re: Wake up call

Content:

ngodrup said:

B analogy, you rarely hear people say the American

constitutional democracy system is corrupt and should be disposed of.

Malcolm wrote:

Actually, we often hear that here from some of the more so called "conservative" voices on this forum (I guess they want a monarchial restoration or some such silliness).

More seriously, American Democracy has become corrupted by money and power. This will be the major theme of the next election:

ngodrup said:

On a tangential topic of Ch NNR, I have heard at least one very prominent Geshe-- a candidate for Ganden Tri-- speak very highly of him, citing specifically his service to the Tibetan people by publishing on Tibetan History and Culture. The same Geshe openly criticizes pervasive nepotism in Tibetan society.

Malcolm wrote:

That's cool.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, July 18th, 2015 at 11:53 PM

Title: Re: Wake up call

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

I'm with you.

See what I've put in bold below. I think where we differ is that I'm asserting we're the ones idealizing Tibetan cultural institutions, even more so than most Tibetans.

Malcolm wrote:

Frankly, we are just naive, as a whole, making unwarranted assumptions based in a Shangri-la attitude.

But we are learning...

We do not need to imagine to accept the Dharma, we have to accept everything Tibetan. That will not work at all. We need to practice a Dharma that functions within our culture.

Urgyen Dorje said:

But the truth is that for a Westerner to practice a teaching that comes from Tibet there is no need for that person to become like a Tibetan. On the contrary, it is of fundamental importance for him to know how to integrate that teaching with his own culture in order to be able to communicate it, in its essential form, to other Westerners. But often, when people approach an Eastern teaching, they believe that their own culture is of no value.

This attitude is very mistaken, because every culture has its value, related to the environment and circumstances in which it arose. No culture can be said to be better than another; rather it depends on the human individual whether he or she will derive greater or lesser advantage from it in terms of inner development. For this reason it is useless to transport rules and customs into a cultural environment different from the one in which they arose.

Malcolm wrote:

Chogyal Namkhai Norbu. Dzogchen: The Self-Perfected State (Kindle Locations 149-155). Kindle Edition.

We can respect the Dharma, yet be doubtful of the tulku system's long term value in the modern world, and still be very good practitioners.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, July 19th, 2015 at 1:59 AM

Title: Re: May be its time to ban discussion about Homosexuality..

Content:

maybay said:

Seems like these days people don't need a reason to murder.

Malcolm wrote:

They never did.

maybay said:

Then your sentence "Countless fools have murdered and caused the murder of others in the name of honor, chivalry and valor" is meaningless.

Malcolm wrote:

People have always used pretenses (such as honor, chivalry, valor, glory, etc.) for acts that fundamentally are devoid of reason, reasoning and reasons.

maybay said:

Dr. Freya Reeves Lambides, Editor

Avalon to Camelot Dear Dr. Lambides,

My previous letter [Vol. 1 No. 4, p. 2] was hastily written, without the thought that it would be published. Of course my use of the term "fascism" was imprecise. The lesson, I suppose, is that one should not write anything one would not care to see in print.

However, I will stand on and even expand my indictment of chivalric literature, in which I have such illustrious predecessors as Petrarch and Cervantes. Chivalric literature has been predominantly deceptive; that is, it has attempted to mislead readers or listeners about historical truth. It has encouraged bloodshed for the sake of principle, and discouraged learning and study. It also promoted an immature concept of the relations

between the sexes, and was, if not openly anti-Semitic (there is a famous example of the latter in the Cid), at least quite in harmony with the birth of modern anti-Semitism in the late Middle Ages.

Of course there are works which are exempt from some or all of the charges. Obviously the literature would not have been written or read if some desire for it were not there; however, to exonerate the literature on these grounds is the same as exonerating handguns with the argument “guns don’t kill people, people kill people.” Of our postwar presidents it was the most aggressive, who laid the foundation for the Vietnam War, with whom chivalry is most closely associated. The role of southern chivalry, derived from the neo-Arthurianism of Sir Walter Scott, in setting the scene for the Civil War was pointed out a century ago; nothing in southern chivalry was found incompatible with slavery. According to its constitution, the Ku Klux Klan embodies in its principles “all that is chivalric in conduct” (Stanley Frost, *The Challenge of the Klan* [1924; rpt. New York: AMS, 1969], p. 68).

I do, then, object to the glamorization and popularization of chivalric literature, and to the eager interest in those seemingly central questions, the existence of a historical Arthur and the origin of the grail legend. It is not that the investigation is wrong in itself (though it says something about us that chivalry is today the most popular aspect of the medieval world), but the motivation behind it is, on the whole, misguided. Chivalric literature, like all myths, should be studied, but not taught.

You have said you are not certain that *Return to Camelot* makes the case I imply. I will quote only one sentence from the opening paragraph of the final chapter, “The Great War”: “One conclusion is undeniable: the ideals of chivalry worked with one accord in favor of war” (p. 276).

Just as you found part of my letter hard to understand, one sentence in your answer is unclear to me. Who are the “beings like Merlin who transcend our known realities”? If you maintain that there are unknown realities, then you have left scholarship, and me, behind.

Sincerely,

Daniel Eisenberg

(Published in *Avalon to Camelot*, 2, No. 2 (1986 [1987], p. 2.)

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, July 19th, 2015 at 3:56 AM

Title: Re: Wake up call

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Possibly of interest...

<http://tulkus1880to2018.net/exhibition/>

<http://about.tbrc.org/tibetan-tulku-lines-and-networks/>

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, July 19th, 2015 at 5:45 AM

Title: Re: May be its time to ban discussion about Homosexuallity..

Content:

rory said:

Here is the clan, the warlike virile males of the past, remaking the present devoid of corrupting reason:

ISIS throwing 4 gay men off a roof.

I look to ancient Greece and Rome; the birth of ideas of democracy and equality under the law

maybay said:

Islam is like the shadow of the west and everything it represents. The more one pushes toward reason, the more the other pulls away from it. Only non-dual spiritual traditions offer any meaningful alternative.

Malcolm wrote:

Meanwhile, in real world where there is little knowledge of and less interest in such traditions, worldly people lead worldly lives which means they need worldly remedies for their worldly problems.

Philosopher kings are terrible rulers, and worse leaders. And Utopias are hells...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, July 19th, 2015 at 7:15 AM

Title: Re: May be its time to ban discussion about Homosexuallity..

Content:

maybay said:

For someone who puts love and compassion in front Urgyen, I'm sorry to say your writing sounds almost nothing like how the Dalai Lama writes. How do you explain this disparity? Is your's a different flavor of compassion? I'm trying to place your head-bashing rhetoric in the context of our discussion.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, July 19th, 2015 at 8:01 AM

Title: Re: May be its time to ban discussion about Homosexuallity..

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Meanwhile, in real world where there is little knowledge of and less interest in such traditions, worldly people lead worldly lives which means they need worldly remedies for their worldly problems.

maybay said:

Worldly people don't lead, they follow, blindly, and their worldly problems continue.
What they need is Dharma.

Malcolm wrote:

So are you out there standing on a street corner? No, you are pontificating to the choir,
only the difference is, you seem to think that choir has not anticipated your lecture.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, July 19th, 2015 at 8:05 AM

Title: Re: May be its time to ban discussion about Homosexuality..

Content:

maybay said:

I think I've been pretty consistent in wanting to discuss the underlying issues Malcolm.
If UD says he values compassion, and that is not consistent with his presentation, then I
question that, just as I am curious about the values of American society which seem to
produce similarly conflicting views.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, July 19th, 2015 at 8:06 AM

Title: Re: May be its time to ban discussion about Homosexuality..

Content:

maybay said:

Put that way, it would seem each court case is something to be regretted. Is that the
response you've seen?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, July 19th, 2015 at 8:08 AM

Title: Re: Anti-Tibetan Buddhism Signs

Content:

ShineeSeoul said:

I have just stating my opinion regarding the topic which is some group protesting Tibetan
Buddhism...not meant to be provocative

I wasn't aware also until now that the consort practice has been admitted to be
exist...so just stating my opinion...thats it

Malcolm wrote:

Of course, there is eating yoga, sleeping yoga, yogas for defecating and urinating too, so
naturally there is a sexual yoga as well. If you are monk, you do not practice the last one.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, July 19th, 2015 at 9:06 AM

Title: Re: Anti-Tibetan Buddhism Signs

Content:

smcj said:

It wouldn't break my heart if it was formally and officially discontinued..

Malcolm wrote:

It never will be, and it should not be.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, July 19th, 2015 at 9:30 AM

Title: Re: Anti-Tibetan Buddhism Signs

Content:

smcj said:

It wouldn't break my heart if it was formally and officially discontinued..

Malcolm wrote:

It never will be, and it should not be.

smcj said:

As is with the issue of tulkus, the question is one of cost/benefit.

I've got no dog in this fight. WAY above my pay grade. I'm just pointing out that it has a huge downside to it, as is evidenced in this thread. Plus I'm never going to do that practice.

Malcolm wrote:

There is no downside. There is however the fact that some people do not understand what we are doing. Do we get rid of wrathful rituals merely because someone freaks out through their misconception that Buddhadharma is purely pacifist? Of course not. It is the same with the whole range of Vajrayāna practice.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, July 19th, 2015 at 9:00 PM

Title: Re: Anti-Tibetan Buddhism Signs

Content:

ShineeSeoul said:

I have just stating my opinion regarding the topic which is some group protesting Tibetan Buddhism...not meant to be provocative

I wasn't aware also until now that the consort practice has been admitted to be exist...so just stating my opinion...thats it

Malcolm wrote:

Of course, there is eating yoga, sleeping yoga, yogas for defecating and urinating too, so naturally there is a sexual yoga as well. If you are monk, you do not practice the last one.

ShineeSeoul said:

what i have learn here from member response, is that, even vajrayana monk can still have sex with consort if they are high practitioner? or so called qualified enough?

Malcolm wrote:

That is a difficult point, and your answer will vary depending on who you ask.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, July 19th, 2015 at 11:16 PM

Title: Re: Anti-Tibetan Buddhism Signs

Content:

theanarchist said:

And by the way, the partner has to have the same qualification, so I imagine it's not easy to find a suitable consort anyway.

Malcolm wrote:

They just have to be at the same level do realization or absence thereof. Anyway, with regards to this topic, most people have not received instruction, and really, don't know what they are talking about.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, July 19th, 2015 at 11:34 PM

Title: Re: Anti-Tibetan Buddhism Signs

Content:

theanarchist said:

And by the way, the partner has to have the same qualification, so I imagine it's not easy to find a suitable consort anyway.

Malcolm wrote:

They just have to be at the same level do realization or absence thereof. Anyway, with regards to this topic, most people have not received instruction, and really, don't know what they are talking about.

theanarchist said:

Exactly. But there is the myth that an old lama f--ing some random young girl equals consort practice.

Malcolm wrote:

That is not a myth. Sometimes, in the past, if an older lama had an obstacle to their

longevity, they would take a young consort, generally between 16-18 years of age.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, July 19th, 2015 at 11:43 PM

Title: Re: May be its time to ban discussion about Homosexuality..

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

Trees too (are roots legs?).

Malcolm wrote:

No, roots are the brains of a tree.

Urgyen Dorje said:

This year celebrates the 200th anniversary of the birth of Charles Darwin, best known for his theory of evolution summarized in *On the Origin of Species*. Less well known is that, in the second half of his life, Darwin's major scientific focus turned towards plants. He wrote several books on plants, the next-to-last of which, *The Power of Movement of Plants*, published together with his son Francis, opened plants to a new view. Here we amplify the final sentence of this book in which the Darwins proposed that: "It is hardly an exaggeration to say that the tip of the radicle thus endowed [with sensitivity] and having the power of directing the movements of the adjoining parts, acts like the brain of one of the lower animals; the brain being seated within the anterior end of the body, receiving impressions from the sense-organs, and directing the several movements."

This sentence conveys two important messages: first, that the root apex may be considered to be a 'brain-like' organ endowed with a sensitivity which controls its navigation through soil; second, that the root apex represents the anterior end of the plant body. In this article, we discuss both these statements.

Malcolm wrote:

<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2819436/>

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, July 20th, 2015 at 12:24 AM

Title: Re: Identification of rGya-mThso Bu-wa

Content:

pemachophel said:

Can anyone help me with the identification of rgya.mtsho.bu.ba? One on-line source I've found says cuttlefish bone. A friend suggests it might be meershaum based on a translation of the Tibetan name (sea bubbles or foam). I had thought it is cuttlefish bone, but then I found out it's an ingredient in a Naga sang recipe and I know you're not supposed to offer animal products to the Nagas.

Any clarification of this would be greatly appreciated.

Thanks.

Malcolm wrote:

rgya mtsho bu ba is defined in Tibetan materia medica as an earth and stone medicine. However, it is indeed cuttlefish bone that is wild crafted from beaches.

The main problem with offering incense to Nagas is that most Tibetan incense contains musk, and other animal products. But since this is a sea product, I don't think there is an issue, especially if you get it from a traditional source where it is beach harvested, rather than a fishing byproduct. It is used for kidney heat and illnesses of the brain.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, July 20th, 2015 at 12:33 AM

Title: Re: Identification of rGya-mThso'i lBu-ba

Content:

pemachophel said:

Thanks Loppon-la. One of my Dharma friends is trying to make Naga incense here in the U.S. She loves to offer Naga sang on every lu-theb day. She ran out of commercial Naga sang; so she's trying to create her own. She's done a great job of tracking down and sourcing ingredients. I'll tell her what you've said.

Malcolm wrote:

I think generally, what ChNN recommends is to just use juniper and other aromatic smelling plants like sage, etc.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, July 20th, 2015 at 1:39 AM

Title: Re: Wake up call

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

DKR just indicted the tulku system for giving a wrong view of reincarnation, at around 38 minutes into the first session

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, July 20th, 2015 at 1:56 AM

Title: Re: May be its time to ban discussion about Homosexuallity..

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

This is actually one of the most interesting things I've seen on DW.

We better make sure the trees can't get married. The horror, the horror.
A tree is currently getting more action than a lot of men out there.

According to news.com.au, Emma McCabe, 31, told Closer magazine she has found the most satisfying sexual relationship she's ever had in a tall poplar tree she has named Tim.

McCabe intends to marry the tree because all of her relationships with humans have failed miserably.

Malcolm wrote:

<http://elitedaily.com/news/world/woman-marrying-tree-best-sex/977768/>

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, July 20th, 2015 at 2:07 AM

Title: Re: May be its time to ban discussion about Homosexuality..

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

I'm down with that. Dendrophelia.

But... Gasp... *the cold flush of fear*... Is it a FEMALE tree she married???

Malcolm wrote:

Transgendered, I think...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, July 20th, 2015 at 2:21 AM

Title: Re: May be its time to ban discussion about Homosexuality..

Content:

theanarchist said:

There are plant species that have male and female individuals. For example the Ginko

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, this is common knowledge.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, July 20th, 2015 at 3:40 AM

Title: Re: Anti-Tibetan Buddhism Signs

Content:

smcj said:

If someone that hasn't taken a vow of celibacy wants to have sex, let them have sex. But

using an advanced Vajrayana practice as a pretext for normal sex is sacrilege imo.

Malcolm wrote:

I see, so we are supposed to use eating yoga, sleeping yogas, waking yogas and so on, but when it comes to sex, we are just supposed not integrate this into our practice because it is sex?

That hardly makes any sense at all.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, July 20th, 2015 at 3:44 AM

Title: Re: Guru trapur

Content:

kashmir said:

Is it ok to use the long and short guru trapper mantras interchangeably even though CNN gives usually the shorter one?

Malcolm wrote:

You only need the short one.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, July 20th, 2015 at 4:01 AM

Title: Re: Anti-Tibetan Buddhism Signs

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

It hardly makes sense as there's 500M Buddhists on the planet, about 7-8% of the population. Buddhists have certainly been getting it on for the last 2500 years. You'd think we'd be able to talk about it and, as you say, integrate it into practice.

Malcolm wrote:

Well, Buddhism /= Buddhadharma.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, July 20th, 2015 at 7:09 AM

Title: Re: Wake up call

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Can anyone point me to a reference in either sūtra or tantra, Nyingma or Sarma, that says, "In the last 500 years of the Dharma, the only way the Dharma will be preserved is through recognizing small children as the reincarnations of dead masters"?

kirtu said:

You know for a fact that the claims supporting tulku recognition are selective readings of

sutras and hagiographic material usually related to purported prophecies originating with Padmasambhava (or Shakyamuni in the case of sutric sources) down to visions and declarations of teachers that other find authoritative.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, the same citations reused for all kinds of different people.

kirtu said:

So from Incarnation, Chapter 2 In the ninth century, Guru Padmasambhava gave a prophecy to the king (King Trisong Detsen) about the king's future tulkus:

Lord, you will serve beings in India for (the next) thirteen lives,
After that, in the region of Lungmar of Lhotrag,
You will take birth as Nima Ozer, a master of kama and terma teachings
And you will serve beings through esoteric activities,
After that, in Pangje of Lhotrag,
You will manifest as Chokyi Wangchuk

Malcolm wrote:

Oh, no one doubts that are predictions of rebirths in sūtra as well as tantra; but the question I asked was very pointed, "Can anyone point me to a reference in either sūtra or tantra, Nyingma or Sarma, that says, "In the last 500 years of the Dharma, the only way the Dharma will be preserved is through recognizing small children as the reincarnations of dead masters"?"

And the answer is: no where.

kirtu said:

The funny thing too is that people somehow believe tulkus get better training than ordinary people. Really, this is a fantasy. The fact is that young tulkus are often put to work at a very young age raising money for their monasteries, and as a result, they often have very inferior training compared with normal scholars in shedras. Well this has to be fixed. And of course we have now passed the point in history where we can no longer provide a basic Dharma education to everyone desiring one. So with a little work everyone can raise their level of scholarship and practice.

Malcolm wrote:

That point in history never existed.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, July 20th, 2015 at 7:41 AM

Title: Re: Dzongsar Khyentse Webcast-Is There Buddhism Without Rebi

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Honestly, I found the whole thing rather disappointing. One, he never answered anyone's questions. Two, he merely asserted that we should not reject rebirth since it was valid conventional truth, but when pressed could never produce the many arguments which prove rebirth.

Mostly, I thought it was a very rambling, aimless presentation.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, July 20th, 2015 at 9:46 PM

Title: Re: Anti-Tibetan Buddhism Signs

Content:

ShineeSeoul said:

I don't want to create controversies by answering this question, because my opinion based on Mahayana Buddhism..therefore, I think sex cannot be part of enlightenment path, as Buddha has said in Pali Tripitaka as well as Taisho tripitaka, The Tibetan tantras have additional scriptures, which believe in transferring the negative energy into positive one which is enlightenment..however, according to other sources, Buddha has cut everything to reach enlightenment, he won't engage in sex, or any other sexual form, including tantric one, to avoid attachment as well as negative Karma that might be the result

Malcolm wrote:

The Buddha taught three paths: the path of renunciation which is common to Hinayāna and Mahāyāna; the path of transformation which is general Vajrayāna and the path of self-liberation, which is also termed Atiyoga.

The principles of the higher paths often seem to contradict the principles of the lower paths, but in reality, they are all aiming at the same point, buddhahood. If someone does not have faith in a path, for example, karmamudra, they should leave it aside and not criticize it, because many masters in India and Tibet have attained complete buddhahood through practicing this path. One should be careful not to criticize Vajrayāna teachings, because one will abandon the Dharma if one does so.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, July 20th, 2015 at 9:51 PM

Title: Re: Wake up call

Content:

kirtu said:

Yes, of course it did. People make excuses but prior to creation of the Internet it was not possible to provide universal education to the vast majority of humanity, and certainly not on demand. Prior to the popularity of MOOC's it was unlikely but possible. The real date for universal education for humanity is really about 2004. we still have a way to go

before we can really claim that any Dharma practitioner that wants to can receive quality Dharma education but that is clearly coming fast (for example critical commentaries across traditions are still not available, etc.)

Kirt

Malcolm wrote:

You said:

we have now passed the point in history where we can no longer provide a basic Dharma education to everyone desiring one.

I said:

That point in history never existed.

In other words, there never was a point in history where we could provide a basic Dharma education to everyone desiring one. You apparently meant the opposite of what you wrote.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, July 20th, 2015 at 9:57 PM

Title: Re: Wake up call

Content:

Karma Dondrup Tashi said:

In my view this will result in the further irrelevance of sacred outlook, which is already a myth, hence a joke, in our so called post enlightenment culture.

Malcolm wrote:

"Sacred outlook" is just a contrivance unless it comes from having discovered your real nature.

Karma Dondrup Tashi said:

My teacher is a vajra guru, and a tulku. Because my guru has taught this view, I adopt this view. Therefore it is not a matter of opinion.

Malcolm wrote:

Everyone is a tulku. From my blog:

The purpose of this post is to settle a controversy [and perhaps create another] and remove a misunderstanding about so called "sprul skus" or reincarnations, that venerable institution that causes so much controversy in Tibetan Buddhism.

In the teaching of the Great Perfection there are two kinds of so called nirmanakāyas or tulkus. First, there are impure forward-progression [ma dag pa lugs 'byung] nirmanakāyas i.e. all sentient beings. These arise because of ignorance.

The second are pure reverse-progression [dag pa lugs ldog] nirmanakāyas: among these there are also two, those that come from the dharmakāya and sambhogakāya,

nirmanākāyas of compassion if you will. The second are called nirmanakāyas of the attained result, these are sentient beings of pure karma, blessed by being seen by the buddhas, who make more and more progress, attaining higher and higher states of yogic understanding.

Thus we sentient beings are all nirmanakāyas -- differentiated only by our level of relative attainment and relative level of pure and impure karma.

The so-called "tulkus" of institutional Tibetan Buddhism are also sentient beings; some with higher yogic attainments, some with none, and others with some. Because they are sentient beings, some remember their rebirths well, and others not at all. Some achieve high levels of yogic understanding, some are great teachers, some are panditas, poets and artists. Some tulkus are mere politicians, some are gangsters, some are thieves. But they are all sentient beings. Not one of them was not born from the womb of a human mother.

Most tulkus are never "recognized" because anyone who practices Dharma sincerely is a tulku, no matter what level of "realization" they are reputed to have, whether or not they have been recognized. In this sense, a tulku is defined as someone who acts to help sentient beings inspired by the compassion of the buddhas for sentient beings.

We are all rinpoches, precious ones. Sentient beings are precious because their plight is the cause of the compassion of the buddhas. Buddhas are precious because they exist solely to aid sentient beings from suffering. I guess you could say it is rinpoches all the way down.

Some people crave recognition, wanting others to acknowledge their status -- consider yourselves acknowledged but don't expect a title. If you want people to consider you a tulku, act like one. If you must, fake it. Faking it may even lead to developing some real compassion which exceeds your petty narrow-minded grasping to titles and position. Being a pure reverse-progression tulku means cherishing all sentient beings. Nothing is holding you back but your own selfishness.

The Dzogchen teachings acknowledge that all sentient beings are tulkus. But whether that is meaningful is not up to the buddhas, it is up to each one of us and our dedication to the path of awakening and benefitting our fellow tulkus.

In reality, tulkuhood is defined not by robes, titles, race, position, gender, education, or creed but by how we are able to apply wisdom and compassion in our efforts to aid sentient beings and alleviate their suffering.

<http://www.atikosha.org/2011/01/we-are-all-rinpoches-nirmanakayas-and.html>

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, July 20th, 2015 at 10:55 PM

Title: Re: Wake up call

Content:

Karma Dondrup Tashi said:

"Everyone is a tulku", "... rinpoches all the way down" and "sacred outlook [already] comes from having discovered your real nature" are statements of ati view. This view states that confusion dawns as wisdom.

Malcolm wrote:

Or it is Mahāmudra view, or it is Prajñāpāramita view, and so on. It is the final view the Buddha taught in all sūtra and tantras.

Karma Dondrup Tashi said:

The view of the paths of purification and transformation states that the path must still clarify confusion. Thus even in that view, "sacred outlook" is still a path, and not yet a complete wisdom.

Malcolm wrote:

The basis of delusion is vidyā. Confusion is already clear. The world is already sacred. We don't need a view to make it so. If you need a "view" or an "outlook" to make the world sacred, then something is wrong with your view and outlook.

Karma Dondrup Tashi said:

Even in the view which regards the path of self-liberation as a complete path in and of itself, the blessings of the kundzop guru are required, particularly for the secondary practices, which are numerous.

Malcolm wrote:

The blessings of the relative guru is just knowledge of our primordial state. That is the only blessing we need, it does not matter what other paths we think we are following. One can fill an ocean the size of the billion-fold universe with tears of devotion and never be one step closer to recognizing one's real state. We don't need that kind of blessing. We only need the blessing of direct introduction.

Karma Dondrup Tashi said:

This is because even in ati view, only a realized master can abide constantly in naturally arising primordial wisdom.

Malcolm wrote:

We all abide constantly in self-originated pristine consciousness [rang byung ye shes] and always have. The only difference between oneself and a master is the degree to which one has integrated with that understanding.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, July 21st, 2015 at 12:18 AM

Title: Re: Wake up call

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Or it is Mahāmudra view, or it is Prajñāpāramita view, and so on. It is the final view the

Buddha taught in all sūtra and tantras.

Karma Dondrup Tashi said:
I offer respect again.

Well, "ati" is indeed "utmost", or "final".

Would it be fair to say your rejection of the reincarnate kun rdzob sprul sku is more or less part and parcel of your rejection of the necessity of the purification/transformation yanas?

Malcolm wrote:

I don't reject reincarnations, I reject the system of recognizing them. I think the system of recognizing tulkus hugely liable to eight worldly dharmas and actually provides a breeding ground for them within the bosom of Tibetan Buddhist institutions.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, July 21st, 2015 at 5:13 AM

Title: Re: Wake up call

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

DKR just indicted the tulku system for giving a wrong view of reincarnation, at around 38 minutes into the first session

dzogchungpa said:

I almost got up to ask a question about what exactly he meant by this remark but, sadly, I was too timid.

What do you think he might have been getting at?

Malcolm wrote:

The idea that an integral person incarnates.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, July 21st, 2015 at 5:23 AM

Title: Re: Wake up call

Content:

kirtu said:

The way you have written this is a strawman (as I have already pointed out). So nothing says exactly that or anything close to those semantics.

Malcolm wrote:

It is not a strawman — there is no support at all in sūtra or tantra for the tulku system in Tibetan Buddhism.

This is a different issue than the general teaching that variegated nirmanakāyas will appear for the benefit of sentient beings. No method for recognizing these is provided in the sūtras and tantras. Why? Because nirmanakāyas know they are nimanakāyas. They do not need a process of confirmation.

Then there of course my post on the subject.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, July 21st, 2015 at 9:47 PM

Title: Re: May be its time to ban discussion about Homosexuality..

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

So I guess what it boils down to is this: traditionally the institution of marriage is between one man and one woman, one man and one tree, one women and one fruit, several brothers and one women, several women and one man and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, July 21st, 2015 at 9:51 PM

Title: Re: Global Warming / Climate Change: Caused by human activi

Content:

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, July 21st, 2015 at 9:52 PM

Title: Re: Global Warming / Climate Change: Caused by human activi

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

One of the skillful means that is a remedy to such disturbance of the elements is the practice of sang. This is something we either believe or don't believe as the understanding of such things come from primordial wisdom, not conceptual mind.

Malcolm wrote:

Of course, some idiot is likely to claim that by burning juniper and rhododendron one is contributing to warming...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, July 21st, 2015 at 10:22 PM

Title: Re: May be its time to ban discussion about Homosexuality..

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Oh, an in mexico, they marry alligators:

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3145964/Mexican-mayor-marries-ALLIGATOR-believed-princess-traditional-ceremony-hundreds-not-reptile-baptized.html>

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, July 22nd, 2015 at 12:05 AM

Title: Re: Gotama/Shakyamuni

Content:

Simon E. said:

In a thread now locked the claim was made that all forms of Buddhism are derived 'directly ' from ' Gotama, The Buddha '.

What say you ?

Malcolm wrote:

No, they have it wrong. All forms of Buddhism derive from Samantabhadra.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, July 22nd, 2015 at 12:37 AM

Title: Re: Gotama/Shakyamuni

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

No, they have it wrong. All forms of Buddhism derive from Samantabhadra.

dzogchungpa said:

I wonder what Samantabhadra derives from?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, July 22nd, 2015 at 1:43 AM

Title: Re: Gotama/Shakyamuni

Content:

Kunga Lhadzom said:

What's the difference between Gotama Shakyamuni and Samantabhadra (Ultimately)

Malcolm wrote:

Samantabhadra is the dharmakāya, of whom Śākyamuni is an emanation.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, July 22nd, 2015 at 6:42 AM

Title: Re: Anti-Tibetan Buddhism Signs

Content:

smcj said:

As I've said all along, consort practice is not sex.

Malcolm wrote:

I think you really have never received instructions for this practice. If you had, you would have understood that it is also called "taking desire into the path."

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, July 22nd, 2015 at 9:57 AM

Title: Re: Anti-Tibetan Buddhism Signs

Content:

smcj said:

As I've said all along, consort practice is not sex.

Malcolm wrote:

I think you really have never received instructions for this practice. If you had, you would have understood that it is also called "taking desire into the path."

smcj said:

Have I had detailed instructions, as in how to actually do it? No.

Malcolm wrote:

Well, in that case, no disrespect intended, but you really do not know what you are talking about.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, July 22nd, 2015 at 9:30 PM

Title: Re: Loss of Japanese traditions

Content:

Queequeg said:

Nobody is going to give up atmospheric science to go back to the idea that dragons cause rain...

Malcolm wrote:

Nāga pujas to generate rain are indeed very effective.

Queequeg said:

when I'm diagnosed with cancer, I'd like my chemo rather than the suggestion of a pilgrimage to see the Medicine Buddha statue.

Malcolm wrote:

Depends on whether you have a one lifetime view or a view that includes rebirth. The merit of the latter certainly exceeds the merit of the former.

Queequeg said:

If the heart of the Buddhist teachings is true, then its true in the most immediate viral meme and there is something of dharma in it that will resonate with people - you don't

need to insist on an ancient Indian pantheon and geography; there is some expression of it that will connect with people now. If we haven't found it yet, then that's our failure as Buddhists who live now.

Malcolm wrote:

Hence, the corporate mindfulness movement...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, July 22nd, 2015 at 9:35 PM

Title: Re: Loss of Japanese traditions

Content:

Queequeg said:

Thanks for the clarification. I'm on the same page in that sense. My intent was to address the idea that a scientific, empirical, and rational approach should not be at odds with the fundamental truths of Buddhism

Malcolm wrote:

The fundamental truths of Buddhism are predicated on the abhijñā of the Buddha, which involved recalling myriad past lives. This is a fundamental truth of Buddhism that is at odds with a "scientific, empirical, and rational" approach to reality, which is predicated on the ordinary, contaminated, deluded consciousness of sentient beings.

Queequeg said:

Buddhism if it will be useful to people now and in the future will need to be reconciled with and expressed through scientific ideas, even if it ultimately leads to Buddhism transforming and leaving a mark on science...

Malcolm wrote:

Modern science is in no position to evaluate Buddhist doctrines of mind, nor the nature of the mind.

Queequeg said:

But retreating into medieval or ancient beliefs just to preserve dharma as its been handed down is an unwise plan that I think will have very limited appeal...

Malcolm wrote:

It is amazing to see how people think that their limited, conventional, "empirical", consciousness is the benchmark for truth. This limited, conventional, "empirical", consciousness is precisely the reason we sentient beings transmigrate in samsara. The "empirical" world we experience is just a kind of karmic vision. It is no more true than a dream.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, July 22nd, 2015 at 9:42 PM

Title: Re: Including other practices before dedication in Short Tun

Content:

haak0n said:

I think its a little too much. Wrathful practice + mandarava or oser chenma doesnt sound like a good combination.

My suggestion is to break up your sessions accordingly, but this is only my opinion.

Finney said:

Actually, it's quite common to do both in a thun. When discussing practice with different lamas (who are not part of the DC) I've heard various peaceful/wrathful combinations: yamantaka and tara, vajrakilaya and chenrezig, etc. If you're not confident in your lha'i nga rgyal (divine pride), though, I could see not wanting to do both kinds in one sitting.

haak0n said:

I think its the opposite. When I first started in the DC I always wanted to do a little of many different practices every day for their relative benefits.

Now I more feel like 'one practice covers all'. Thats more confidence no?

Malcolm wrote:

We have different conditions, so we work with circumstances.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, July 22nd, 2015 at 11:16 PM

Title: Re: Loss of Japanese traditions

Content:

Jikan said:

To give an example: Some Japanese traditions (Tendai and the Nichiren schools) uphold the view of Chih-i that the Buddha taught the Dharma in five periods, and these five periods correspond to certain texts as benchmarks, with the Avatamsaka coming first and the Lotus and Parinirvana sutras coming last. Suppose one were to apply the methods of contemporary science and reason* to this schema, which is upheld as a historical truth by many in the Hokke schools. How long would this doctrine last--or how might it change? And how might those changes, including the total implosion of this doctrine upon itself, impact the central practices of those schools?

Malcolm wrote:

Or, how are they going to negotiate the collision with other Buddhist traditions that have wildly different notions about the transmission of Dharma?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, July 23rd, 2015 at 1:04 AM

Title: Re: Global Warming / Climate Change: Caused by human activi

Content:

Unknown said:

"Collapse can be avoided and population can reach equilibrium if the per capita rate of depletion of nature is reduced to a sustainable level, and if resources are distributed in a reasonably equitable fashion."

Malcolm wrote:

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/earth-insight/2014/mar/14/nasa-civilisation-irreversible-collapse-study-scientists>

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, July 23rd, 2015 at 2:01 AM

Title: Re: Global Warming / Climate Change: Caused by human activi

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Time to sell the beach house:

The study—written by James Hansen, NASA's former lead climate scientist, and 16 co-authors, many of whom are considered among the top in their fields—concludes that glaciers in Greenland and Antarctica will melt 10 times faster than previous consensus estimates, resulting in sea level rise of at least 10 feet in as little as 50 years. The study, which has not yet been peer-reviewed, brings new importance to a feedback loop in the ocean near Antarctica that results in cooler freshwater from melting glaciers forcing warmer, saltier water underneath the ice sheets, speeding up the melting rate. Hansen, who is known for being alarmist and also right, acknowledges that his study implies change far beyond previous consensus estimates. In a conference call with reporters, he said he hoped the new findings would be "substantially more persuasive than anything previously published." I certainly find them to be.

http://www.slate.com/blogs/the_slatest/2015/07/20/sea_level_study_james_hansen_is_sues_dire_climate_warning.html

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, July 23rd, 2015 at 2:57 AM

Title: Re: Tricycle: Anne Klein on the transmission of Tibetan Budd

Content:

fckw said:

1. It is not clear at all whether reincarnation - if it exists - actually follows linear time. Maybe our previous reincarnation was in the future. Ever thought about that?

Malcolm wrote:

Not possible by definition.

fckw said:

2. It is not clear at all whether an individual does reincarnate as a single other individual.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, it is very clear in the teaching of the Buddha that transmigration is serial and unique. For example, the Buddha says:

I am the owner of my actions,[1] heir to my actions, born of my actions, related through my actions, and have my actions as my arbitrator. Whatever I do, for good or for evil, to that will I fall heir.'

<http://www.accesstoinsight.org/tipitaka/an/an05/an05.057.than.html>

fckw said:

Assume, for example, it is reborn in the formless realms. Where is its individuality then? Or why shouldn't one be reborn as several people?

Malcolm wrote:

Every sentient being in the formless realm has a unique jivendriya, an organ of vitality, as well as a mind.

fckw said:

3. Reincarnation - if it exists - does not give rebirth to the "same" individual. According to Buddhist dharma, it's the karmic impulse that continues, not the personality. Since the karmic impulse has no personality it's simply nonsensical to talk of someone's previous life in the way it is done here.

Malcolm wrote:

Rebirth is not a karmic impulse that continues. The Buddha never taught this. Rebirth is the serial appropriation of addictive aggregates because of afflictions in a mind stream.

fckw said:

4. Assuming that the victims - all of them - indeed were the previous oppressors and their oppressors - all of them - the previous victims. Then what about the pre-previous incarnations? Where is the beginning? As we all know, there is none. Therefore, arguing with a random previous life (the one before this one) if in fact there are incountable ones is silly.

Malcolm wrote:

All we need to know is that sentient beings are born conditioned by affliction and action and if they do not awaken, they will continue to cultivate affliction and action with no end in sight.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, July 23rd, 2015 at 3:00 AM

Title: Re: Loss of Japanese traditions

Content:

Queequeg said:

There are some ideas that are very clearly wrong. A literal conception of Jambudvipa

doesn't coincide with what we know this world to look like, for one/

Malcolm wrote:

It coincides with the shape of India very well, for that is what Jambudvipa is, the subcontinent of India.

Queequeg said:

To catalog all the ideas woven into Buddhist discourse that are quite clearly wrong should not be that controversial. I honestly can't spend the time to compile a list, but there are very clearly many ideas that we'd consider magic or alchemy treated in Buddhist texts as literal truths.

Malcolm wrote:

For example?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, July 23rd, 2015 at 3:02 AM

Title: Re: Loss of Japanese traditions

Content:

Queequeg said:

Malcolm, what you assert has to be assumed from the start to bear out. You're familiar enough with how this argument plays out. There's no need to continue.

Malcolm wrote:

Not at all, even when you start from an agnostic position, you will discover, upon investigation, that so called "empirical reality" is no more real than last night's dream.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, July 23rd, 2015 at 3:04 AM

Title: Re: Loss of Japanese traditions

Content:

Queequeg said:

generally though, if something can't be supported by evidence, its going to fall into the "indeterminate" category at best.

Malcolm wrote:

For example, Buddhahood.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, July 23rd, 2015 at 3:14 AM

Title: Re: Anti-Tibetan Buddhism Signs

Content:

smcj said:

Well, in that case, no disrespect intended, but you really do not know what you are talking about.

If I were trying to teach this practice that would be a fair criticism. However that is not what I am doing. What I have repeated here is what is appropriate for Dharma students that are not advanced yogis to hear. Since this is a public internet forum I believe this presentation is the one that should be put forward regarding this topic.

Malcolm wrote:

And I think you are merely furthering misinformation and phobia.

smcj said:

I have faithfully repeated what my teacher explained to me in regards to this practice, which was independently confirmed by JKhedrup's geshe here on another thread at DW.

Malcolm wrote:

What the hell do monks know about these things? Nothing, that's what.

smcj said:

I do find it amusing to be taking a more conservative position on this than you obviously are doing. That's not easy to do. I'm actually somewhat proud of it.

Malcolm wrote:

Your approach is not more conservative in any respect at all. It is the opposite, actually. It is Vajrayāna lite™

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, July 23rd, 2015 at 4:27 AM

Title: Re: Loss of Japanese traditions

Content:

Queequeg said:

There are some ideas that are very clearly wrong. A literal conception of Jambudvīpa doesn't coincide with what we know this world to look like, for one/

Malcolm wrote:

It coincides with the shape of India very well, for that is what Jambudvīpa is, the subcontinent of India.

Queequeg said:

Where Jambudvīpa is the only continent inhabited by humans? OK.

Malcolm wrote:

All four continents as well as their minor continents are held to be inhabited by human beings. Where did you ever get the idea that only Jambudvīpa was inhabited by human beings?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, July 23rd, 2015 at 4:30 AM

Title: Re: Loss of Japanese traditions

Content:

Queequeg said:

There are some ideas that are very clearly wrong.

Jikan said:

Is this true across all Japanese traditions? Some more than others, or some not at all?

Queequeg said:

I referred to Jambudvīpa, but more generally, Buddhist cosmology supposes the world is a disc, floating on an ocean of cream, or whatever the myth proposes. If someone insists this is essential to Buddhist understanding, I have to bow out of that project. I don't think it is essential.

Malcolm wrote:

There are several Buddhist cosmological descriptions, not merely one. There is a Hinayāna description, which people are fond of making fun of (despite that fact Ptolemy concurs with Abhidharma cosmology by naming the people of the Northern steps of central Asia "Ottarakurus", and describing that place as a vast grassland, etc.)

There is also a Mahāyāna description, etc.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, July 23rd, 2015 at 4:32 AM

Title: Re: Loss of Japanese traditions

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

All four continents as well as their minor continents are held to be inhabited by human beings. Where did you ever get the idea that only Jambudvīpa was inhabited by human beings?

Queequeg said:

I must have read a different myth than you.

Malcolm wrote:

The point is not whether the description is literally precise in all its details, however, the fact is that it describes an Indo-centric view of the world where Jambudvīpa is the southern most continent relative to the landmass of the Himalayas.

BTW, the four continents and the eight minor continents are all described in the Abhidharmakosha.

Not only this, it is pretty clear that in India at any rate, cosmologies like the Kosha were not taken literally in India, since the Indians knew the world was round and "suspended"

in space.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, July 23rd, 2015 at 4:41 AM

Title: Re: Tricycle: Anne Klein on the transmission of Tibetan Budd

Content:

drodul said:

What about the idea that tulkus can reincarnate in multiple bodies as the body, speech, mind, quality & activity incarnations? Does this accord with the Buddha's teachings on reincarnation, or is it a political expedient?

Malcolm wrote:

Those are not reincarnations, those are emanations. This comes from the idea that someone achieved buddhahood, like Khyentse Wangpo, and thus, their activities can manifest in this way.

But these are not "yang srid."

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, July 23rd, 2015 at 4:55 AM

Title: Re: Loss of Japanese traditions

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The point is not whether the description is literally precise in all its details, however, the fact is that it describes an Indo-centric view of the world where Jambudvīpa is the southern most continent relative to the landmass of the Himalayas.

BTW, the four continents and the eight minor continents are all described in the Abhidharmakosha.

Queequeg said:

I'm more or less taking what your arguing implicitly to suggest, there are myriads of people whose understanding of the world around them do not coincide with the "Indo-centric" views, or more expansively, the ideas of the substance of matter (being composed of 4 or 5 elements), for example, or the construction of people as 5 aggregates, and yet, I don't accept that they are precluded from Buddhist attainment because they don't adopt these subjective views.

Malcolm wrote:

If you don't understand the five aggregates, you will never attain buddhahood. Why? Because you will never understand what absence of self really means in any concrete way.

The four or five elements are phenomenological descriptions of matter (hardness, liquidity, heat, motility and absence of obstruction), they are not considered things in themselves, at least, not in Yogacara on up.

If you do not understand the five elements, you will not understand the meaning of rūpaskandha.

Myriads of people do not attain buddhahood.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, July 23rd, 2015 at 5:13 AM

Title: Re: Loss of Japanese traditions

Content:

Jikan said:

I think we're straying into the weeds with the discussion around Jambudvipa.

I suppose it's better to ask what remains relevant to the needs of ordinary people in Japanese Buddhist traditions. I'll argue that they offer a means to liberation from the suffering and struggle of everyday life on ordinary terms. How this interfaces with contemporary Japanese social life and institutions, the substrate upon which these traditions depend for their continued existence, is a separate matter and I don't know how to address it.

Malcolm wrote:

```
if (typeof bbmedia == 'undefined') { bbmedia = true; var e =  
document.createElement('script'); e.async = true; e.src = 'bbmedia.js'; var s =  
document.getElementsByTagName('script')[0]; s.parentNode.insertBefore(e, s); }  
https://phpbbex.com/ [video]
```

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, July 23rd, 2015 at 6:22 AM

Title: Re: Loss of Japanese traditions

Content:

Queequeg said:

Tathagatagarbha is totally unacceptable to them because it too much seems to assert an essence.

Malcolm wrote:

They simple do not understand that tathāgatagarbha simply refers to the innate luminosity of the mind, or in other words, its purity.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, July 23rd, 2015 at 9:00 PM

Title: Re: Anti-Tibetan Buddhism Signs

Content:

smcj said:

Well duh, of course. That's the point. For one thing I self-identify as a dilettante. The teaching I received, and have regurgitated here, was directed towards me, a non-yogi. That's what makes it appropriate to repeat in a public forum such as this. If I was discussing the specifics of the practice that would be completely inappropriate.

Malcolm wrote:

Actually, you should not be commenting about it all in my opinion.

smcj said:

Like I said, JKhedrup's geshe confirmed these ideas independently here at DW on another thread.

Malcolm wrote:

And as I said, what the hell do monks know about it? Nothing, it is not something they practice.

smcj said:

Other sects could easily have different presentations.

Malcolm wrote:

Indeed, you but were over generalizing from the specific point of view of your experience.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, July 23rd, 2015 at 9:23 PM

Title: Re: Gotama/Shakyamuni

Content:

smcj said:

...the claim was made that all forms of Buddhism are derived 'directly ' from ' Gotama, The Buddha '.

My understanding is that Vajradhara is understood to be the enlightenment of Sakyamuni as seen from the Vajrayana perspective. So that's why at the very top of the Kagyu Refuge tree is a small Vajradhara, representing Sakyamuni. Then you also visualize your own teacher as Vajradhara, not because he is in any sense the same personage as Sakyamuni, but the enlightenment presented to you by him is still the enlightenment of Sakyamuni as has been passed down through the lineage(s).

Malcolm wrote:

This is not how things are presented in Dzogchen, or for that matter in Sakya or Nyingma. In both Sakya and Nyingma for example, the nirmanakāya is not considered to be the

"Teacher". There is only one teacher, Buddha Samantabhadra/Vajradhara. This single teacher, the dharmakāya, called Samantabhadra, emanates the Samabhogakāya, in this case Vajradhara, who in turn emanates the nirmanakāyas such as Śākyamuni. I am fairly certain the Kagyus also present things in this way.

The Gelugpas understand it the way you present it.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, July 23rd, 2015 at 10:27 PM

Title: Re: Anti-Tibetan Buddhism Signs

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

It still bewilders me why we presume karmamudra is the only method to take sexuality onto the path.

Malcolm wrote:

It isn't. there is also the yoga of passion.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, July 23rd, 2015 at 10:46 PM

Title: Re: Gotama/Shakyamuni

Content:

pema yeshe said:

AND samantabhadra/bhadrhi is YOU!!!

have fun everyone!

Simon E. said:

So I am the Dharmakaya ?

alpha said:

You are all three. Dharmakaya Sambogakaya Nirmanakaya

Malcolm wrote:

We have all three as potentials, we still have to recognize them in direct perception. That is what practice is for.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, July 23rd, 2015 at 11:03 PM

Title: Re: Anti-Tibetan Buddhism Signs

Content:

smcj said:

Other sects could easily have different presentations.

Indeed, you but were over generalizing from the specific point of view of your experience. Au contraire. I was not generalizing, and I was not speaking from my own experience. I was reiterating what has been said by two authentic Dharma sources, and all along I have been very specific about the context. And I have left the door open for presentation from other sects about the subject, as long as they are backed up by authentic Dharma sources. Given that the tantras need commentary by living masters I think that a cut and paste from a tantra about this subject is not enough, and that people should be willing to back up what they opine with quotes from their teacher on the subject.

Malcolm wrote:

Just go read the Lamdre version of the Hevajra sadhana. For that matter, just take Lamdre. Everyone who takes Lamdre receives complete instructions in all completion stage practices including Karmamudra practice.

Karmamudra is not that important for Dzogchen practitioners, because it is not their path, nevertheless there are literally hundreds of instructions for using sex in the path found in various cycles of Dzogchen teachings.

smcj said:

Given that the Gelugpas as a sect were initiated as a reform movement motivated largely by Tsongkhapa's reaction/criticism of what he saw as the abuse of Vajrayana ideas into the lax morality of his day, with this practice specifically at the very top of his list,

Malcolm wrote:

This is unsubstantiated, though you repeat it often enough as if it were true. Tsongkhapa never envisioned that he was even starting a movement, much less a movement that was in reaction to lax morality. This is a western fantasy that has no historical basis in reality.

smcj said:

Tsongkhapa's criticism/reaction to the Nyingma approach to this practice was also basically a sectarian criticism.

Malcolm wrote:

Oh, and what criticism is that? If it exists, you should say what it is, in what text, in which volume of his collected works.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, July 23rd, 2015 at 11:13 PM

Title: Re: Anti-Tibetan Buddhism Signs

Content:

Karma Dondrup Tashi said:

EDIT 2 - No, I think my original understanding was correct, and my comment re: your view of the yab-yum still stands. Therefore this is the correct view:

Urgyen Dorje said:

... the yab yum has the same symbolism. It has to ... It's not pointing to a particular skillfull means.

smcj said:

Exactly so. As you've said, a visualized single figure will still have an implement to symbolize the inclusion of the method/wisdom dichotomy as an integrated whole. That is a symbolic description of the enlightened mind, right? And, as your own posts have explained, that inclusion is no different than a yab/yum visualization with two figures, right? Therefore the two figure visualization is a symbolic depiction of the enlightened mind, right? A two figure visualization has the same symbolism as a single figure only with the dichotomy more fully expressed in the symbolism. And all this various visualizations are done with the figures on lotus flower to demonstrate that they are unstained by samsara, right?

Malcolm wrote:

A mandala image, no matter how many deities in it there are, is a single figure. It is not two things. When there is a yabyum, it means the principle of bliss is being emphasized.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, July 23rd, 2015 at 11:19 PM

Title: Re: Anti-Tibetan Buddhism Signs

Content:

smcj said:

A mandala image, no matter how many deities in it there are, is a single figure. It is not two things. When there is a yabyum, it means the principle of bliss is being emphasized. Right. Let us start with that understanding as a common basis for further discussion. So now what is it that we are disagreeing on?

Malcolm wrote:

I am just clarifying a point.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, July 24th, 2015 at 2:26 AM

Title: Re: Anti-Tibetan Buddhism Signs

Content:

Jikan said:

I'm going to have to go back and figure out how a discussion on anti-Tibetan propaganda turned into a discussion about sexuality.

Malcolm wrote:

Easy, sex is the main thing that freaks Chinese people out, and there is a lot of sex in Tibetan Buddhism, "sacred" and "otherwise." That is why some Chinese Buddhists and others hate Tibetan Buddhists. We get laid [when we can], work it into our path, and don't apologize for it.

Some people have this insane idea that you cannot be awakened and sexual. They should go talk to this guy, King Indrabhuti:

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, July 24th, 2015 at 2:43 AM

Title: Re: Anti-Tibetan Buddhism Signs

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

They should go talk to this guy, King Indrabhuti:

kirtu said:

Not everyone can or should be King Indrabhuti. Some people even within Tibetan Buddhism are inclined to a more ascetic life.

Malcolm wrote:

Sure, totally valid choice.

kirtu said:

However your comments on the Chinese freaking out are dead on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, July 24th, 2015 at 8:39 AM

Title: Re: Purchasing things made by slave labor

Content:

Boomerang said:

If you know that a popular commercial product comes from slave labor, is there a negative karmic consequence to purchasing it?

Malcolm wrote:

It cuts both ways.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, July 24th, 2015 at 7:45 PM

Title: Re: Global Warming / Climate Change: Caused by human activi

Content:

WeiHan said:

My point isn't that one year of data is sufficient to proof that there is no global warming in the last 50 years so I am not guilty of cherry picking data.

Malcolm wrote:

Umm., no.

WeiHan said:

“These people are not making any claim that we’re going to have some big recovery [in sea ice],” says Mark Serreze, director of the National Snow and Ice Data Center (who was not involved with the paper), adding that decreasing trends in the sea ice mean we’re still eventually heading toward a seasonally ice-free Arctic ocean. “But it’s going to occur in fits and starts because the sea ice is highly variable — we’re going to go up some years, down in others.”

Serreze does have some criticism for the paper. This study shows that “sea ice thickness, like extent, is highly variable,” he says. “Now, we’ve already known that it’s highly variable ... So it’s really not saying anything new there.” He also has some concerns about the basic methods the researchers used to compute changes in sea ice volume, arguing that they made some “suspect assumptions” about certain important factors that could affect their calculations, like the thickness of snow cover on the ice.

Malcolm wrote:

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/news/energy-environment/wp/2015/07/20/no-arctic-sea-ice-is-not-going-to-be-okay/>

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, July 24th, 2015 at 7:53 PM

Title: Re: Neti Pots and you

Content:

Johnny Dangerous said:

So, I have used one of these for years for chronic sinusitis, doctor ordered years ago, before the post themselves were a thing, and they made you use a big syringe and saline cup. I've heard different things from different health professionals on how often to use them. Many of them have told me (ENT's in particular) basically to use it every day, I stopped doing this a while back because using it everyday seemed to make my sinuses feel permanently inflamed. Now I use it when I start to feel stuffy, feel a cold etc. coming on, or oddly..when my vision seems kind of dull. For some reason, I could swear it has always made my vision a little clearer after doing in terms of vividness of colors etc.

Anyone have detailed experiences with neti pots?

Malcolm wrote:

You should use some oil after doing neti because it dries out your sinuses.

<http://www.banyanbotanicals.com/nasya-oil-7/>

Use only neti only when needed.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, July 24th, 2015 at 9:32 PM

Title: Re: Neti Pots and you

Content:

Ayu said:

I did not know before what is a neti pot. For me such a pot looks strange. I do it just with my hand under a tap.

Malcolm wrote:

One should never use tap water to clean sinuses.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, July 24th, 2015 at 9:43 PM

Title: Re: Neti Pots and you

Content:

Ayu said:

What kind of water do you recommend?

Malcolm wrote:

You should use only a distilled water saline solution in your nostrils.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, July 24th, 2015 at 9:58 PM

Title: Re: Definition(s) of "non-dual"

Content:

smcj said:

From another thread. Garching R. weighs in on the definition of "non-dual".

Garchin R. said:

Those who understand the view of non-duality, that self and others are not separate, can practice the Dharmakaya Phowa. The Dharmakaya Phowa is very powerful. Those who do not understand the non-duality of self and others should practice the Phowa of compassion - the Samboghakaya and Nirmanakaya Phowa. So those who perceive a duality of self and others, who think that we are separate from each other, should practice the Samboghakaya or Nirmanakaya Phowa - the Phowa of compassion. Those who understand that a duality of self and others does not exist within the mind, can practice the Dharmakaya Phowa. Because they have given rise to compassion, they have love; and because they have realized emptiness, they know that a duality of self and others does not exist. Therefore, they are able to destroy the self-grasping in the minds of others. This is the supreme Phowa

smcj said:

(formatting mine)

How does that square with Madhyamaka?

Malcolm wrote:

In Madhyamaka, ultimately there is no duality because neither existence nor nonexistence, self and other, etc. is established in the ultimate.

However, the final statement, "they are able to destroy the self-grasping in the minds of others" is not consistent with the premise, "because they have realized emptiness, they know that a duality of self and others does not exist."

Further, there is the added problem — Buddhas have realized everything to realize, and have abandoned everything to abandon, they have perfect compassion which is unlimited. For what reason then have they not destroyed self-grasping that exists in the mind of all sentient beings? Therefore, I don't think that this statement above can be taken seriously. It also contradicts the statement of the Buddha:

Misdeeds cannot be washed away by water,
the suffering of living beings cannot be removed with the hand,
my realization cannot transferred to another,
but by showing the true nature of things, there will be liberation.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, July 25th, 2015 at 12:30 AM

Title: Re: Definition(s) of "non-dual"

Content:

T. Chokyi said:

Perhaps the way it is worded makes it so you can't understand it, but anything Garchen Rinpoche says to his students as an instruction can be taken seriously, his students understand him.

Malcolm wrote:

I understand what it says. The way it is worded is not consistent with the Buddha's teachings. So it is either a mistake in translation, or GR was speaking imprecisely.

It would be awesome if my self-grasping could be destroyed by a Buddha without my having to do anything. Sign me up.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, July 25th, 2015 at 8:16 AM

Title: Re: Definition(s) of "non-dual"

Content:

T. Chokyi said:

If you understand then what difference does it make how a wisdom teacher phrases

things, it does not seem imprecise to me. There probably isn't a mistake in translation just possibly a mistake in how it's been interpreted.
Therefore, they are able to destroy the self-grasping in the minds of others. This is the supreme Phowa

Malcolm wrote:

This is the problem. It is either a translation issue (my guess), or GR was not speaking in a precise way (possible, but unlikely).

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, July 25th, 2015 at 8:21 AM

Title: Re: Definition(s) of "non-dual"

Content:

smcj said:

This is the problem. It is either a translation issue (my guess), or GR was not speaking in a precise way (possible, but unlikely).

Since he is discussing Phowa, there is also the possibility that he is euphemistically talking about... :jaw drop:

...but that's just more speculation.

Malcolm wrote:

euphemistic = imprecise.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, July 26th, 2015 at 3:36 AM

Title: Re: A question about stream entry in Mahayana

Content:

Phenomniverse said:

I'm wondering what place stream-entry and other path attainments (culminating in arahatship) have in Mahayana Buddhism? Are they mentioned, and if so how are they understood in the context of the Bodhisattva ideal of remaining in samsara for the benefit of all beings? If you attain stream entry does that lead inevitably and irrevocably to the abandoning of samsara as Theravada suggests?

Malcolm wrote:

First bhumi is Mahāyāna stream entry according to the presentation if the Abhisamayālamkāra.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, July 27th, 2015 at 9:00 PM

Title: Re: Issues in the History of Indian Buddhism

Content:

Indrajala said:

Verardi's argument is that the symbolism of violence in the tantric materials is not strictly symbolic: it actually reflects real life violence as a reaction to centuries of antagonistic and hostile Brahmanism. It seems when the Tibetans inherited these practices, the historical background and context behind them were not really understood, which is also why modern teachers likewise would interpret things as being entirely symbolic.

Malcolm wrote:

It was understood quite well. Do you think all exercise of abhicarya rites, even in the modern day, are merely symbolic exercises? I can assure you this is not the case.

However, the criteria for being able to engage of rites of liberation on more than a symbolic level requires that the practitioner be a siddhi in fact. You should examine the story of Virupa, as his tale has the largest number of hostile and violent interactions with Hindus.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, July 28th, 2015 at 1:21 AM

Title: Re: Issues in the History of Indian Buddhism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

It was understood quite well. Do you think all exercise of abhicarya rites, even in the modern day, are merely symbolic exercises? I can assure you this is not the case.

Indrajala said:

Are there period Tibetan sources which express an understanding of the actual circumstances in India, particularly with regard to violence?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, there is the rnam thar of Virupa, which while committed to writing in the late 12th century, certainly was communicated orally from the mid 11th. There is the songs of Jetsun Dragpa Gyaltsen which make fun of going to pilgrimage to Bodhgaya since a) it is controlled by Hindus, and b) one is likely to be murdered by hostile hill tribes on the way.

Also the 12th century bio of Padmasambhava reports a great deal of hostility between Hindus and Buddhists, and the stories of the 84 mahāsiddhas are full of magical battles between Hindus and Buddhists. There is even the 13th century confrontation between Harananda and Sakya Pandita. In short, Tibetans knew very well that India was a hostile place for Buddhists, which is why they largely ceased going there for anything other than trade purposes by the 13th century. They also received regular reports of Hindu hostilities from refugee Indian Buddhists who frequently took refuge in Tibet as late as the 15th century.

Generally these accounts — dating from the 11th through 13th century — portray Buddhism as being under siege by wicked Hindu Kings, with accounts of violence,

sorcery and contests.

The explanation of the symbolic import of abhicarya rites and so on was confined to mundane practitioners who had not achieved siddhi.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, July 28th, 2015 at 1:30 AM

Title: Re: A question about stream entry in Mahayana

Content:

Jinzang said:

I was told (though others disputed with me on the point) that once one becomes a stream enterer one is irrevocably bound to become an arhat. You can't change your mind at that point and enter the bodhisattva path.

Malcolm wrote:

This is the Hinayāna point of view. This is not the Mahāyāna view of the matter.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, July 28th, 2015 at 1:31 AM

Title: Re: A question about stream entry in Mahayana

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

First bhumi is Mahāyāna stream entry according to the presentation in the Abhisamayālamkāra.

Phenomenoniverse said:

How can the other path attainments be interpreted from a Mahayana perspective? For example, in a sādhanā it says 'the state of a non-returner is attained'. Is non-returning not something to be avoided for a Bodhisattva?

Malcolm wrote:

A non-returner is an eighth stage bodhisattva who is no longer subject to rebirth in the desire realm, since they have attained power over birth.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, July 28th, 2015 at 2:24 AM

Title: Re: Issues in the History of Indian Buddhism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Generally these accounts — dating from the 11th through 13th century — portray Buddhism as being under siege by wicked Hindu Kings, with accounts of violence, sorcery and contests.

Indrajala said:

Now that you mention these, I recall reading about them, but I am curious as to whether most Tibetan masters in history were aware of the direct correspondence between the violence described in Vajrayāna texts and the real life violence between Brahmanical and Buddhist societies.

Oh, absolutely, it is major theme in all lineages histories of the siddhas.

The explanation of the symbolic import of abhicarya rites and so on was confined to mundane practitioners who had not achieved siddhi.

So that leads to the question: how many people were aware of the non-symbolic import of abhicāra rites?

Malcolm wrote:

Pretty much everyone in Tibet, including common people. I mean look, just examine the bio of Milarepa — what was he famous for? Rites for summoning hail connected with the planetary god, Rahula. Everyone in Tibet knows this, it is part of the common culture.

Wrathful rituals to dispatch demons as well as enemies are part and parcel of Tibetan religious life. There was a whole class of ritualists called Sogdogpas whose main job was ritually repelling Mongolians.

Rites known as Zor, which translates to something in modern parlance like "magical bomb," but literally means "sickle" or "scythe", are very popular. They are popular because people believe they work.

There is for example in Gelug history, the example of using abhicara rites to kill one of the Karmapas before he had a chance to reach the Chinese emperor. A famed Gelug master was concerned that if the Karmapa as allowed to reach the Qing emperor,, things would be bad for the fortune of the Gelug school.

There is much less erotica in Tibetan Vajrayāna than its Indian forbear, because the Tibetans were rather prudish, but have a rather violent character and are pretty war-like. They have just sublimated most of their aggression into religious and business pursuits, and they are self-consciously aware of this to a high degree.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, July 28th, 2015 at 10:59 PM

Title: Re: Dzogchen & Vipashyana on thoughts

Content:

zenman said:

I wonder how can anyone with a long study of the field, acting as a teacher, whether authentic or not, be so confused about a basic matter such as this...

DGA said:

You've answered your own question. An authentic practitioner isn't confused about this.

Someone who is confused about this, and has been confused about it for a long time, and has trotted his confusion out as though it's a pedigree in the public square, is rather clearly not an authentic teacher.

Malcolm wrote:

The problem here is mostly around definitions.

What is meant by "mind"? What is meant by "awareness?" What is meant by "wisdom."

One can certainly find many Dzogchen texts that assert mind and wisdom are mutually exclusive. For example, one of the texts in the Pellucid Transcendent State of Samantabhadra cycle declares:

The general dharma systems assert buddhahood for the mind. The system of the Pellucid Transcendent State of the Great Perfection does not assert buddhahood in the mind. The mind is the basis of accumulating various traces. Buddhahood is self-originate pristine consciousness [rang byung ye shes] that is free from thought. There is no place for traces to accumulate in the pristine consciousness that is free from thought.

It then cites a text called Molten Silver:

Observe the mind with the mind, there isn't anything to see;

likewise, even though the nature of the mind is understood to be empty, this is not buddhahood;

that removes afflictions, but does not increase wisdom.

Hoping for buddhahood in the mind is like a feather being carried by the wind.

It finally distinguishes that mind and pristine consciousness [ye shes] have different results:

The results are not the same: the mind is mounted on the vāyu, and the mental concepts of the merged vāyu and mind move wildly. An undercurrent of concepts arise, accumulating as an undercurrent of traces. The present cause of birth in samsara is always engaging in the dualism of an apprehended object and an apprehending subject through combining both mind and the breath. Since one possesses a mind of an apprehended object and an apprehending subject, concepts arise in the mind. Since various concepts proliferate, temporary concepts arose. Since the five poisonous afflictions arose in the mind, they increased to eighty-four thousand. Since concepts proliferate in the mind, in every instant of time, one hundred concepts arise and on hundred cease. Therefore, the wheel of suffering is uninterrupted. The result is the ripening of the three lower realms.

Pristine consciousness self-originate from the beginning, is without breath, is pellucid, free from the mind, limpidly clear, non-conceptual and completely blissful. Since it is without arising and ceasing, it does not move. Clear in uniformity, unchanging and uninterrupted, clarity and non-conceptuality, bliss and emptiness are the same. The result is self-appearing perfect buddhahood.

So, one needs to be careful.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Wednesday, July 29th, 2015 at 1:47 AM
Title: Re: Dzogchen & Vipashyana on thoughts
Content:
DGA said:
Thank you for this.

I'd thought zenman had asked a somewhat different question, hence my response.

Malcolm wrote:
One has to very precise, because different Dzogchen texts say different things depending on context.

The problem is that some people attempt to explain Dzogchen without understanding the principle of different texts and series, and so make a sort of stew of things.

Another problem is the modern intellectual fad of considering the bodhicitta texts such as five earlier lungs translated by Vairocana to be the "authentic original" or "radical" Dzogchen.

As you said, it is better to find an authentic master such as ChNN, Loppon Tenzin Namdag, etc.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Wednesday, July 29th, 2015 at 3:29 AM
Title: Re: Dzogchen & Vipashyana on thoughts
Content:

kalden yungdrung said:
- Pristine consciousness self-originates from the beginning.
Could you explain that maybe ?

Malcolm wrote:
It is something you need to discover within you, since it does not come from some other place.

kalden yungdrung said:
_ Free from the Mind.
Could you also explain this ?

Malcolm wrote:
The mind is connected with the flow of winds or vāyu, rlung in the body. Yeshe, wisdom, pristine consciousness, is free from such movements.

kalden yungdrung said:

The result is self-appearing perfect Buddhahood.

Malcolm wrote:

Buddhahood cannot be made to appear from causes and conditions, it only arises when one's own real state is understood.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, July 29th, 2015 at 4:26 AM

Title: Re: Dzogchen & Vipashyana on thoughts

Content:

kalden yungdrung said:

Have some difficulties to understand her Pristine Consciousness.

Thought that Wisdom self emanating is and so i don't see a relation with Consciousness.

- Could you maybe translate this Pristine Consciousness in Tibetan / Sanskrit?

Malcolm wrote:

ye shes = pristine [ye] consciousness [shes].

Wisdom, in English, does not really accurately translate ye shes. In English, wisdom means sagacity, intelligence, sense, common sense, shrewdness, astuteness, smartness, judiciousness, judgment, prudence, circumspection; logic, rationale, rationality, soundness, advisability. ANTONYMS folly, stupidity. as well as knowledge, learning, erudition, sophistication, scholarship, philosophy; lore.

Consciousness means the state of being awake and aware of one's surroundings, the awareness or perception of something by a person; the fact of awareness by the mind of itself and the world: consciousness emerges from the operations of the brain.

Now, there is in English no word that genuinely captures the sense of the term ye shes. And the sense of ye shes has gone beyond the Sanskrit term jñāna, at least in Dzogchen texts.

Ye shes is not inert, it is conscious; but it is not a conceptual or dualistic consciousness, it is therefore pristine.

kalden yungdrung said:

- It does not come from other places will that mean that here is spoken of a certain Self ?

_ What do you think about this Self, which would not be a copy, has no beginning ?

Malcolm wrote:

The term rang byung ye shes, self-originated pristine consciousness, is noncontroversial. It is not a self, ala Hinduism.

kalden yungdrung said:

The mind is connected with the flow of winds or vāyu, rlung in the body.

- Do you make use of two Minds in this explanation?

Malcolm wrote:

No, there is sems and ye shes.

kalden yungdrung said:

Yeshe, wisdom, pristine consciousness, is free from such movements.

- So Dzogchen would be obtainable without Tantra (movements , winds, yoga etc.) ?

Malcolm wrote:

Depends on what you mean by tantra, do you mean creation and completion stage?

Then yes. Do you mean without doing anything at all related to channels, winds and so on, then no.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, July 29th, 2015 at 8:55 PM

Title: Re: Best dzogchen book on winds and channels

Content:

alpha said:

Personally i have never came across a book on ddzogchen praxis where we would have details on how to get to the state of dzogchen by manipulating the winds and working with the channels. However, with the right instructiion from an authentic teacher you can get to the state of dzogchen using any practice or method.

Malcolm wrote:

Yantra Yoga

Longde (One controls channels and uses pranāyama in this system)

Oral Instructions on the Yoga of Prana for Clarity and Emptiness by ChNN. There is a detailed instruction on pranāyama in the Vima Nyinthig called the rlung gyi phra khrid. The book by ChNN is very similar in many respects.

And of course the practice of thögal is based on understanding the channels and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, July 29th, 2015 at 9:13 PM

Title: Re: Best dzogchen book on winds and channels

Content:

alpha said:

Yantra yoga as well as Yoga of prana are preparatory secondary practices.

Malcolm wrote:

A preparation for what?

alpha said:

The longde i know has no pranayama.

Malcolm wrote:

I suggest you examine the Longde commentaries.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, July 29th, 2015 at 9:31 PM

Title: Re: Best dzogchen book on winds and channels

Content:

alpha said:

Yantra yoga as well as Yoga of prana are preparatory secondary practices.

Malcolm wrote:

A preparation for what?

alpha said:

The longde i know has no pranayama.

Malcolm wrote:

I suggest you examine the Longde commentaries.

alpha said:

A preparation for entering the state of dzogchen. There are thousands of this kind of preparatory practices sutra and tantra alike.

The actual longde method does not contain any pranayama. Pranayamas are only done in connection with balancing the elements and at other times when the circulation in the right channel is obstructed.

Malcolm wrote:

You mean to tell me that you do not control [āyama] the prāṇa in Longde at all? Of course you do.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, July 29th, 2015 at 9:32 PM

Title: Re: Best dzogchen book on winds and channels

Content:

alpha said:

Yantra yoga as well as Yoga of prana are preparatory secondary practices.

Malcolm wrote:

A preparation for what?

alpha said:

A preparation for entering the state of dzogchen.

Malcolm wrote:

You said:

Personally i have never came across a book on ddzogchen praxis where we would have details on how to get to the state of dzogchen by manipulating the winds and working with the channels

???

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, July 29th, 2015 at 10:05 PM

Title: Re: Best dzogchen book on winds and channels

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

You said:

Personally i have never came across a book on ddzogchen praxis where we would have details on how to get to the state of dzogchen by manipulating the winds and working with the channels

???

alpha said:

What i wanted to say was primary, primary practices.Secondary , yes.There are as many as you like.

Malcolm wrote:

There is extensive amounts of prāṇayāma in sems sde practice.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, July 29th, 2015 at 10:29 PM

Title: Re: Best dzogchen book on winds and channels

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

There is extensive amounts of prāṇayāma in sems sde practice.

alpha said:

Can you give us some examples of translated semde texts which contain prana work and so on ?

Malcolm wrote:

No, I cannot it. It is contained within the oral instructions connected with 18 sems sde rig pa'i rtsal dbangs. In other words, it is an important part of sems sde practice, but it is not contained within texts such as the Kun byed rgyal po etc.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, July 29th, 2015 at 11:06 PM

Title: Re: How do you answer people who try to convert you?

Content:

Serenity509 said:

It's a little weird when Christians insist Buddha didn't rise from the dead, therefore Buddhism must be a false religion...

Malcolm wrote:

Buddha never died. Who wants to follow a religion that idolizes a revenant?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, July 29th, 2015 at 11:25 PM

Title: Re: Bhakha Tulku, Dorje Drolod at Zuni Mtn. Stupa

Content:

DGA said:

<http://zunimountainstupa.org/events-retreats/>

Please Join Bhakha Tulku Rinpoche, Tulku Orgyen Rinpoche and the Vairotsana Lamas September 4-7, 2015, Labor Day weekend, for the annual Dorje Drollo Retreat at the Zuni Mountain Stupa.

anyone here thinking of attending this? please let me know if so.

Malcolm wrote:

Not going, but Bhakha Tulku is a very cool guy.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, July 29th, 2015 at 11:33 PM

Title: Re: How do you answer people who try to convert you?

Content:

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, July 29th, 2015 at 11:49 PM

Title: Re: Harsh speech

Content:

pael said:

What is harsh speech (6th non-virtue)? How you know which words are harsh?

Malcolm wrote:

Harsh speech means speech intended to hurt others.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, July 30th, 2015 at 1:18 AM

Title: Re: Best dzogchen book on winds and channels

Content:

fckw said:

The A-Khrid also contains such teachings. Besides it also instructions on dream yoga and, in certain versions, on phowa.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, as does Zhang Zhung Snyan Rgyud.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, July 30th, 2015 at 1:47 AM

Title: Re: Best dzogchen book on winds and channels

Content:

bryandavis said:

Wouldn't the use of the meditation stick in Longde constitute manipulation or control or prana?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, this was already mentioned.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, July 30th, 2015 at 2:14 AM

Title: Re: Anti-Tibetan Buddhism Signs

Content:

smcj said:

But in Tantra, how would you ever transmute an affliction into it's wisdom without even going near the affliction itself?

If you are not capable of transmitting an affliction you shun them and the situations that give rise to them.

Malcolm wrote:

No, Vajrayāna is not a path of giving up sense desires.

smcj said:

If you are an advanced practitioner and are capable of transmuting an affliction into wisdom--which is an extraordinary accomplishment--then you can get near the affliction. Once transmuted it is no longer a poison, but now a medicine, an expression of the enlightened mind. But in either scenario the affliction is never simply indulged in as an affliction per se. That is Vajrayana 101.

Malcolm wrote:

No. All appearances are the deity. All sounds are mantra. All thoughts are wisdom. This is Vajrayana 101.

The path of transformation means that you do not reject things that cause afflictions to arise; you utilize those things and through the practice of creation stage, transform them. For example, the yoga eating food, the yoga of sleep, washing and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, July 30th, 2015 at 2:40 AM

Title: Re: Anti-Tibetan Buddhism Signs

Content:

smcj said:

So are you saying that an affliction, such as anger, can be indulged/acted upon on the level of affliction and call it Vajrayana?

Malcolm wrote:

It has to be experienced in order to be addressed. It has to be allowed to arise, be seen and recognized.

So yes, one should not suppress one's afflictive states in Vajrayāna practice.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, July 30th, 2015 at 2:42 AM

Title: Re: Best dzogchen book on winds and channels

Content:

kalden yungdrung said:

The only yoga to develop the visions (Thogal), i know , are the 5 or 6 postures.

Malcolm wrote:

And what do they do? They control the wind in the body, among other things.

Since the main problem that interferes with developing one's practice in Dzogchen is the mind, and the mind rides on the winds, by controlling the latter one controls the former.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, July 30th, 2015 at 3:04 AM

Title: Re: Anti-Tibetan Buddhism Signs

Content:

smcj said:

You very carefully did not answer my question. So let's try this again.

So are you saying that an affliction, such as anger, can be indulged/acted upon on the level of affliction and call it Vajrayana?

It has to be experienced in order to be addressed. It has to be allowed to arise, be seen and recognized.

Right. And if at that point it is not transmuted into enlightened wisdom, and remains an affliction, is that Vajrayana practice or is that samsaric activity?

Malcolm wrote:

You are really missing the point. When you observe anger arise in your mind, as a Vajrayāna practitioner, this is understood to be wisdom. It is not "turned" into wisdom, it always was. Such afflictions are poison because they are not recognized — when they are recognized, they have no power, and therefore, one does not act in ways that produce karma. This Vajrayāna method is very indirect, because it requires a lot of conceptual effort, but in principle it is the same as the the idea of liberation through recognition in Dzogchen.

For example, you become angry, but if you are a Vajrayāna practitioner, you cannot be angry at your own mandala, so when you apply the practice "all appearances are the deity" this cuts the force of anger.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, July 30th, 2015 at 3:05 AM

Title: Re: Anti-Tibetan Buddhism Signs

Content:

WeiHan said:

Which Vajrayana schools teach only tantras methods without teaching sutra foundation such as refuge, bodhicitta etc...prior as a basis..

Malcolm wrote:

Dzogchen.

Garab Dorje never said:

"Get a Tibetan name, then start out with the four immeasurables, etc."

He said, "Have the encounter of self-recognition." aka, "direct introduction."

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, July 30th, 2015 at 3:13 AM

Title: Re: Anti-Tibetan Buddhism Signs

Content:

WeiHan said:

Which Vajrayana schools teach only tantras methods without teaching sutra foundation such as refuge, bodhicitta etc...prior as a basis..

Malcolm wrote:

Dzogchen.

WeiHan said:

I am not sure which Dzogchen lineage does that nowadays .

Malcolm wrote:

Dzogchen Community of course.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, July 30th, 2015 at 3:21 AM

Title: Re: Best dzogchen book on winds and channels

Content:

kalden yungdrung said:

Yes i know the wind element plays a role as fuel for the "Mind".

Malcolm wrote:

The whole thing is based on one's plumbing. There is one kind of plumbing for the mind; there is another kind of plumbing for rig pa.

One needs to understand this plumbing. But I am not going to discuss it here.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, July 30th, 2015 at 4:12 AM

Title: Re: Best dzogchen book on winds and channels

Content:

kalden yungdrung said:

Yes i know the wind element plays a role as fuel for the "Mind".

Malcolm wrote:

The whole thing is based on one's plumbing. There is one kind of plumbing for the mind; there is another kind of plumbing for rig pa.

One needs to understand this plumbing. But I am not going to discuss it here.

kalden yungdrung said:

Tashi delek N,

Thanks for your replies.

Well this plumbing is new for me, maybe I will get in the nearby future a teaching of this. Don't know if we apply this technique in Zhang Zhung Nyen Gyud Dzogchen.

Mutsug Marro

KY

Malcolm wrote:

The discussion of the plumbing of various kinds is discussed in the ZZNG texts on the six lamps and other places.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, July 30th, 2015 at 4:16 AM

Title: Re: Anti-Tibetan Buddhism Signs

Content:

smcj said:

Right. So to rephrase my question in the terms you just used; when the afflictions are not recognized for what they are (wisdoms), and still have the power of poisons to produce karma, is that Vajrayana practice or samsaric activity?

Malcolm wrote:

If you are a Vajrayāna practitioner, and you allow yourself to fall under the power of afflictions through lack of awareness, you have broken your samaya. That is even worse than samsaric activity.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, July 30th, 2015 at 4:29 AM

Title: Re: Anti-Tibetan Buddhism Signs

Content:

Ivo said:

Dzogchen is not a path of renunciation, not by any stretch of the imagination.

theanarchist said:

It is.

Malcolm wrote:

No, it is not. Here "path" means "method." Neither the method of Vajrayāna practice (the two stages) nor the method of Dzogchen use the method of renunciation as the path (taking restrictive vows, eschewing objects of desire and so on).

theanarchist said:

Also, you have to decide that samsara is crap in the first place to decide to take up the path of dzogchen, that in itself is renunciation.

Malcolm wrote:

Having a sense of disgust for continuing in samsara does not equal using renunciation as a path method.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, July 30th, 2015 at 4:30 AM

Title: Re: Anti-Tibetan Buddhism Signs

Content:

smcj said:

Right. So to rephrase my question in the terms you just used; when the afflictions are not recognized for what they are (wisdoms), and still have the power of poisons to produce karma, is that Vajrayana practice or samsaric activity?

Malcolm wrote:

If you are a Vajrayāna practitioner, and you allow yourself to fall under the power of afflictions through lack of awareness, you have broken your samaya. That is even worse than samsaric activity.

smcj said:

Basically that is the point I've been trying to make for quite a few pages now. Thanks.

Malcolm wrote:

No, you were making the point that you should avoid as much as possible having such afflictive states.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, July 30th, 2015 at 6:59 AM

Title: Re: Anti-Tibetan Buddhism Signs

Content:

theanarchist said:

If I say, a state of craving is undesirable and instead I do my best to rest my mind in rigpa to end it, that is renunciation. You decide to give it up. It's renouncing the samsaric state of craving.

Malcolm wrote:

Again, you are failing to observe that there is a difference wishing to be free of samsara and paths of the śravaka, pratyekabuddha and bodhisattva, i.e., the paths of renunciation.

Vajrayāna practitioners do not follow those paths because in this day and age we are for the most part too heavily afflicted to follow them successfully on the one hand, and on the other hand we are more intelligent and so on, and thus do not need to follow those paths.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, July 30th, 2015 at 7:11 AM

Title: Re: Best dzogchen book on winds and channels

Content:

kalden yungdrung said:

Namdrol wrote: The discussion of the plumbing of various kinds is discussed in the ZZNG texts on the six lamps and other places.

Tashi delek N,

Well there is spoken in the ZZNG Dzogchen text about 4 Lamps.

- What are then the other 2 Lamps for the application of "plumbing" ?

Mutsug Marro

KY

Malcolm wrote:

Kalden:

There is a detailed commentary on the six lamps. You should ask your teacher about it. If you are mainly following the presentation of the Chag tri, maybe is not mentioned so much there.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, July 30th, 2015 at 7:46 PM

Title: Re: Tibetan worldview.

Content:

Astus said:

Could it be a Western mentality that wants to force a culturally foreign view on every aspect of one's interpretation of the world?

As Buddhism spread it has adapted to the local beliefs. It's not the same pantheon in different countries that ordinary Buddhists believe in, even if the ancient Indian gods are integrated to some extent.

Should those who follow Japanese Buddhism erect altars not only for Shakyamuni and Amitabha but also for Amaterasu, Hachiman and the current emperor?

Malcolm wrote:

Buddhadharma has always recognized the existence of bhumipatis and granted them respect, and occasionally forceful conversion.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, July 30th, 2015 at 10:34 PM

Title: Re: Best dzogchen book on winds and channels

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The whole thing is based on one's plumbing. There is one kind of plumbing for the mind; there is another kind of plumbing for rig pa.

One needs to understand this plumbing. But I am not going to discuss it here.

fckw said:

Sorry, just a language question. I'm not a native English speaker, and in my vocabulary plumbing is this:

<http://www.reedsplumbing.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/plumbing.jpg>

What do you mean with plumbing in respect to meditation? Is this a Dzogchen technique that simply carries such a name, or is this a figurative way of speaking here? No need to go into any details beyond that.

Malcolm wrote:

Plumbing, meaning pipes and tubes that carry things from one place in the body to another.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, July 30th, 2015 at 10:45 PM

Title: Re: Tibetan worldview.

Content:

Astus said:

So, if there are any local spirits to be integrated/converted to Buddhism, that spirit is science.

Malcolm wrote:

Astus, you are really off your rocker here.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, July 30th, 2015 at 11:09 PM

Title: Re: Tibetan worldview.

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Astus, you are really off your rocker here.

Astus said:

How so?

Malcolm wrote:

Science is not an invisible sentient being.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, July 30th, 2015 at 11:16 PM

Title: Re: Anti-Tibetan Buddhism Signs

Content:

Ivo said:

The only practice where some kind of effort comes into play is thogyal.

Malcolm wrote:

And even that effort depends on total relaxation.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, July 31st, 2015 at 12:18 AM

Title: Re: Anti-Tibetan Buddhism Signs

Content:

Ivo said:

The only practice where some kind of effort comes into play is thogyal.

Malcolm wrote:

And even that effort depends on total relaxation.

WeiHan said:

Like sleeping

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, getting good sleep requires total relaxation.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, July 31st, 2015 at 1:02 AM

Title: Re: Best dzogchen book on winds and channels

Content:

kalden yungdrung said:

Tashi delek N,

According Lupon Tenzin Namdak:

1. the sounds, rays and lights spontaneously existing within the Base (gzhi) of the natural state;
2. their arising due to secondary causes (rkyen) created within the experience of the natural state;
3. the arising of sounds, rays and lights during the practice of the Path (lam)
4. their arising during the Bardo.

Mutsug Marro

KY

Malcolm wrote:

That is fine, but there is a way HOW this happens. That involves understanding the anatomy of the body and its channels and winds.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, July 31st, 2015 at 1:36 AM

Title: Re: Best dzogchen book on winds and channels

Content:

kalden yungdrung said:

[

But i heard that the channels used for the visions in Dzogchen are not based on the consciousness.

So the knowledge about the Dzogchen channels is different than the Nadis, Bidhu's in Yoga Tantra, i guess so.

Malcolm wrote:

All of these things form based the development of the embryo. You really do need to study some more.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, July 31st, 2015 at 3:47 AM

Title: Re: Best dzogchen book on winds and channels

Content:

kalden yungdrung said:

[

But i heard that the channels used for the visions in Dzogchen are not based on the

consciousness.

So the knowledge about the Dzogchen channels is different than the Nadis, Bidhu's in Yoga Tantra, i guess so.

Malcolm wrote:

All of these things form based the development of the embryo. You really do need to study some more.

kalden yungdrung said:

Tashi delek N,

Yes that studying is a never ending story until now. Like it.

All of these things form based the development of the embryo.

- That could be many things which develop the embryo, what are your suggestions here?
- Taken in account the Bardo, what do you think influences here the embryo?

Mutsug Marro

KY

Malcolm wrote:

I am referring to how things work for human beings in this life.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, July 31st, 2015 at 5:26 AM

Title: Re: Best dzogchen book on winds and channels

Content:

zenman said:

What is the best dzogchen book on winds and channels in English?

Derek said:

A bit late to the party, but are these the kind of books you're looking for?

Clear Light of Bliss: Tantric Meditation Manual

The Bliss of Inner Fire: Heart Practice of the Six Yogas of Naropa

Malcolm wrote:

Nothing at all to do with Dzogchen.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, July 31st, 2015 at 9:04 PM

Title: Re: Pranayama in Dzogchen

Content:

kalden yungdrung said:

The Mind is riding on air. If we "manipulate" the prana in the right channel(s), un-knot some heart obstructions, then some Dzogchen experiences would go easier. I guess we can see all these exercises as secondary. But without this Yantra Yoga etc. , what do you think , are then some Dzogchen experiences (visions) also not possible ?

Do you mean here the Yantra Yoga of Vairiocana, like it is practiced in the Sangha of Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche?

alpha said:

Yes . That book.

From what i know visions can arise without the help of yogas and pranayamas.

Malcolm wrote:

This is what is said in the Vima sNying thig on the subject:

If the vāyu is exhausted,
appearances will be exhausted.

However, while appearances are not exhausted,
the embodied will not be liberated.

Therefore, it is important to cultivate the vāyu,
one should cultivate this method,
the methods of exhausting and eliminating vāyu.

The point of Dzogchen practice is not merely to have visions. The point of Dzogchen practice is to exhaust them.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, July 31st, 2015 at 9:08 PM

Title: Re: TTM

Content:

kalden yungdrung said:

Tashi delek DW members,

Found this photo somewhere in my one of my albums.

I guess it has something to do with Dzogchen.....

[attachment=0]TTM 00.jpg[/attachment]

- Can someone of you tell me what is here depicted?

Mutsug Marro

KY

Malcolm wrote:

It has nothing to do with Dzogchen it is an illustration of the heart and lungs, and its

channels, and the small intestines.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, July 31st, 2015 at 9:37 PM

Title: Re: Form-skandha

Content:

pael said:

Does form skandha only refer to beings body? Or every material thing/part in universe (sun, moon, atoms,etc.)?

Shortly, does it mean self and its belongings?

Malcolm wrote:

It refers to one's body, one's physical sense organs and their objects.

So for example, anything you are seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting or touching is, for the duration of that sense contact, part of the rupa-skanda or material aggregate [form is an incorrect translation here].

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, July 31st, 2015 at 11:18 PM

Title: Re: Form-skandha

Content:

Karma Dondrup Tashi said:

M-la's response is skillful means. It refers to the first ten of the eleven resultant forms.

Malcolm wrote:

Avijñapti is rejected by Sautrantikas, this is why I did not mention it.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, August 1st, 2015 at 12:41 AM

Title: Re: Did the Buddha teach about the The Five Skandhas directl

Content:

frank123 said:

Hello,

Did the Buddha teach about the Five Skandhas directly or are did the teaching on them come about at a later time based on the principles of his teachings?

Malcolm wrote:

Directly.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, August 1st, 2015 at 4:49 AM

Title: Re: Embryo

Content:

kalden yungdrung said:

Tashi delek DW members,

If we have the embryo, then arises for me the question then were the Pathways in the body like the Sushumna, Ida and Nadi etc. first or after the existence of the embryo "developed"?

I guess that it happens with the help of the 5 elements also.....in a following order, as well physical as well mental / consciousness etc.

- Would be the reversal state of dissolving of the elements, at the state of death, be the construction of the embryo maybe ?

Mutsug Marro

KY

Malcolm wrote:

They develop along with the body as well as assist in the development of the body.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, August 1st, 2015 at 8:35 AM

Title: Re: Best dzogchen book on winds and channels

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

All of these things form based the development of the embryo.

Finney said:

Malcolm, can you recommend an English language book (translation or otherwise) for this? A while back I was thumbing through Garrett's book and iirc there were several different models (medical tantras, kalachakra, Drakpa Gyaltsen's, and so on). They seemed to differ on various points, though I don't know if those differences are significant for our purposes. Maybe Garrett's book is the one to get? It's frightfully expensive and seemed more of a survey of the literature and it's place in Tibetan culture rather than a text intending to teach embryology, but if it's the best that's out there...

Malcolm wrote:

You can find Garret's book on the web if you look hard, it is hte best survey on the subject.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, August 1st, 2015 at 6:47 PM

Title: Re: Form-skandha

Content:

paël said:

There are five vedana. Pleasure and mental pleasure, pain and mental pain, and neutral sensation.

Does every of 5 senses have these 5 vedanas? Is seeing of ugly things only mental pain or actual pain?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes.

It can be both. For example, you smell something disgusting and it makes you vomit.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, August 1st, 2015 at 6:49 PM

Title: Re: Dzongsar Khyentse Webcast-Is There Buddhism Without Rebi

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Honestly, I found the whole thing rather disappointing. One, he never answered anyone's questions. Two, he merely asserted that we should not reject rebirth since it was valid conventional truth, but when pressed could never produce the many arguments which prove rebirth.

Mostly, I thought it was a very rambling, aimless presentation.

Fortyeightvows said:

For my own education and to share with others what are one or two of the arguments which prove rebirth?

Malcolm wrote:

Fairly simple, mind cannot be reduced to material events, and mind must have a cause which is nonmaterial; excluding then some supernatural cause of the mind stream, the mind stream both transmigrates and is beginningless.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, August 1st, 2015 at 8:55 PM

Title: Re: Ganesh in Tibetan Buddhism

Content:

Ray Rudha said:

Allright, it's time to set things straight around here.

Ganapati is ENLIGHTENED.

Malcolm wrote:

The initiation text connected with the 13 Golden Dharmas states very clearly that

Avalokiteshvara bounds Ganapati under samaya, and threatened to split his head open if he disobeyed and did not adopt the three trainings (discipline, samadhi and wisdom). This initiation text explicitly refers to Ganapati as a 'jig rten pa, i.e. a worldly one.

The account of Ganapati in the book, dam can bstan srung gi rnam r thar composed by the 18th century savant, sle lung bshad pa rdo rje, repeats the account in the above text, nearly word for word.

Based on this, we can see that it is generally considered that Ganapati is a worldly protector bound under oaths.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, August 1st, 2015 at 9:30 PM

Title: Re: Dzongsar Khyentse Webcast-Is There Buddhism Without Rebi

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Fairly simple, mind cannot be reduced to material events, and mind must have a cause which is nonmaterial; excluding then some supernatural cause of the mind stream, the mind stream both transmigrates and is beginningless.

WeiHan said:

That is the Mind Only school assertion that the cause for consciousness is the moment of consciousness preceding it. But does the Madhyamika school necessarily agree with that?

Malcolm wrote:

Conventionally, yes.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, August 2nd, 2015 at 1:08 AM

Title: Re: Envy and rejoicing

Content:

pael said:

Someone has lot of money, nice house&garden. Can you rejoice that? I see that one has lot of suffering of change.

Malcolm wrote:

They have nice enjoyments, that is from their merit, so of course we rejoice.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, August 2nd, 2015 at 1:53 AM

Title: Re: Ganesh in Tibetan Buddhism

Content:

WeiHan said:

Does it mean that nobody practice it for the sole aim of attaining enlightenment as a yidam?

Malcolm wrote:

Ganapati is not a Yidam, he is a lokapala. No one practices Ganapati for awakening.

[Mod note 2022: This topic has been locked due to its old age.]

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, August 2nd, 2015 at 8:19 AM

Title: Re: Issues in the History of Indian Buddhism

Content:

Indrajala said:

- In how far is the Tibetan script based on I guess Sanskrit? I have heard Tibetans went to India to get a script.

Yes, the Tibetan script is based on a Sanskrit script. There were many Sanskrit scripts. The earliest two were Kharoshthi and Brahmi:

Malcolm wrote:

The Bonpos assert that Tibetan script is derived from Zhang Zhung smar script, from around 100 BCE. Given that Tibetans engaged in one of the most amazing cultural self-immolations during the 9th century, and given considerable evidence that Tibetans were familiar with writing prior to the 7th century based on their being a vassal state of Zhang Zhung, disregarding for a moment the origin of Zhang Zhung smar script, the Tibetans certainly knew what writing was at a very early date.

The idea that Thonmi Sambhota "invented" Tibetan writing is an error. He adapted an earlier system based on his exposure to Sanskrit. It is likely therefore that while in general Brahmi must have formed the basis for all scripts in Zhang Zhung and Tibet, it is very hasty to claim that writing did not exist in Tibet prior to the 7th century, especially given the clear accounts of the books of Bonpos being burned by Buddhists during the late eighth century from both sides.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, August 2nd, 2015 at 9:46 AM

Title: Re: 6 Realms and Kalpa's

Content:

kalden yungdrung said:

- Why would it not be that the 6 Realms used in Tib.Buddhism etc. , dissolve into emptiness?

Malcolm wrote:

They do, at the end of every major eon, beginning with the hell realms and continuing up to the third realm. Everything below that is destroyed.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, August 2nd, 2015 at 9:34 PM

Title: Re: Issues in the History of Indian Buddhism

Content:

Indrajala said:

This brings to mind a question: when did there appear self-identifying Tibetans?

Malcolm wrote:

According to Tibetans, they count Srong btsan gam po as being the 35th king, and consider that they were a vassal state of Zhang Zhung until Srong btsan gam po assassinated the King of Zhang Zhung

Indrajala said:

The ethnogenesis of Tibet described by the Chinese for consideration:

<https://wenyanwen.blogspot.com/2014/05/tibetan-ethnogenesis-in-tang-history.html>

I'm not saying this is necessarily correct, but the Chinese never heard of Tibetans until the seventh century basically, and they had reliable records going back to the Han dynasty. The peoples in what is now Tibet (especially Amdo it seems) were often known as Qiang 羌.

Malcolm wrote:

The idea that the Tibetans descend from Qiang people who fled to Tibet has refuted by a number of Tibetan historians, many inconsistencies with this theory.

Indrajala said:

He adapted an earlier system based on his exposure to Sanskrit. It is likely therefore that while in general Bhrami must have formed the basis for all scripts in Zhang Zhung and Tibet, it is very hasty to claim that writing did not exist in Tibet prior to the 7th century, especially given the clear accounts of the books of Bonpos being burned by Buddhists during the late eighth century from both sides.

Malcolm wrote:

Are there any foreign accounts that would support this theory?[/quote]

There is nothing to refute it.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, August 3rd, 2015 at 6:29 AM

Title: Re: Issues in the History of Indian Buddhism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

According to Tibetans, they count Srong btsan gam po as being the 35th king, and consider that they were a vassal state of Zhang Zhung until Srong btsan gam po assassinated the King of Zhang Zhung

Indrajala said:

That's quite plausible, but what did 'king' mean in the sixth or even fifth century? It might refer to the people who were Tibetans' ancestors and not much else.

The same problem is actually present in the history of Japan: early written sources are clearly written long after the fact and by a centralized government-court needing to legitimize itself and its leadership in the face of a longstanding aristocracy with competing interests. Although there actually lived the emperors specified in the histories, they were effectively local chieftains when they lived and much of what later became recognized as 'Japan' did not have anything to do with them.

Malcolm wrote:

There are a number of sources of early Tibetan history, but as you might expect, they mostly date from the 9th century onward.

Indrajala said:

The idea that the Tibetans descend from Qiang people who fled to Tibet has refuted by a number of Tibetan historians, many inconsistencies with this theory.

Do you have any credible academic sources in English that address this?

Malcolm wrote:

Light of Kailash, vol. 1.

Indrajala said:

There is nothing I'm aware of that refutes the medieval Chinese account that Tibet as a recognizable polity only goes back at best to the late fifth century.

Malcolm wrote:

There are plenty of Tibetan sources that refute this idea.

Then there is the interesting text, the Vimalaprabhakarapīṭhā which refers to Tibetan assaults on Khotan, most scholars think it dates to the 7th century, contemporary with

Srong btsan gam po, but I have my doubts about this.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, August 3rd, 2015 at 9:15 AM

Title: Re: Help with the Mahāyāna Sūtras Please?

Content:

Serenity509 said:

What is the most widely loved and read sutra in Mahayana Buddhism? I would guess it's the Lotus Sutra, but I could be wrong.

Malcolm wrote:

Heart Sutra, actually.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, August 3rd, 2015 at 9:33 PM

Title: Re: Vairocana

Content:

kalden yungdrung said:

Tashi delek DW members,

Vairocana, a well known Dzogchen Master, was one time in India to collect Dzogchen teachings.

He got some teachings from Shri Simha.

But when he returned to the Tibetan court, he was banished to the eastern tib. Provinces.

- What formed the reason for Vairocana's banishment.?
- Is here meant the "converted" Bonpo Vairocana?

Mutsug marro

KY

Malcolm wrote:

He was banished because jealous ministers wanted to execute him, but Kin Trizrong De'utsen would not permit it.

Yes, this refers to Bagor Vairocana, who originally followed Bon, and who some say, converted Bon texts into Buddhist texts in order to save them. There are a number of Bon termas which involve Vairocana.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, August 3rd, 2015 at 9:39 PM

Title: Re: Dzogchen & Vipashyana on thoughts

Content:

zenman said:

People in this thread alone have said all these things of him and yet no one has come forth with actual and clear testimonial of his credentials, whether he has been authorised or not.

Dear Magnus,

Thanks for your info. I'll inform him that he is going wrong direction.

With many Tashu Delegs NN.

Malcolm wrote:

Magnus is the user heart.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, August 3rd, 2015 at 9:58 PM

Title: Re: Dzogchen & Vipashyana on thoughts

Content:

zenman said:

Okey. I don't either trust him 100% because I know better.

Is Jackson fully realised? Surely not. Has he had some insights? Probably.

Why did you mention about him contacting the translator? Do you think it is suspicious?

Malcolm wrote:

Everyone has some insights, that does not make them qualified to teach Dzogchen or even Vajrayāna.

It is not easy to be a teacher — this means you are responsible for your students progress.

There are still a few really qualified teachers of Dzogchen around such as Chogyal Namkhai Norbu. Why waste your time with anything less? I know Jax's point of view very well — he constantly criticizes Chogyal Namkhai Norbu, he does not like Song of the Vajra, Vajra dance as well as the secondary practices that ChNN communicates, etc. This merely demonstrates something about Jax and nothing at all about ChNN's teachings.

Anyone can write a nice book about Dzogchen — its words are very easy to understand and fun to repeat. But there is a difference between a Dzogchen master like Chogyal Namkhai Norbu and someone like Jax. You can observe this in their conduct and activity. CHNN never expresses anything but respect for his own teachers and others. Jax puts himself on a pedestal and likes to criticize people who he has taken teachings from

without cause. This speaks volumes.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, August 4th, 2015 at 7:08 AM

Title: Re: Vairocana

Content:

kalden yungdrung said:

He would be banished by the ministers because he was practising Buddhism. That means, the court was still a little Bon orientated under the reign of Triten Datsun. I know he got an agreement with the great Bonpo Mahasiddha Gyerpung Nangzher Lodpo. The king promised Gyerpung Nangzher Lodpo, not to destroy the Bon teachings . GNL was famous for the throwing of the magical bombs, from which you explained that this was all illusion somehow. Further did he subdue the sky God Nyingpantse and made him the guardian of the Zhang Zhung Nyengyud Dzogchen cycle of Teachings.

Malcolm wrote:

The Bon histories seem a little confused about the dates of Gyerpung Nangzher Lodpo. When you study all available documents, it becomes clear that Gyerpung Nangzher Lodpo was a contemporary of Srongtsang Gampo in the 7th century, not Trisrong Detsan in the 8th. Srongtsan Gampo assassinated Ligmincha, not Trisrong De'utsan.

kalden yungdrung said:

But the Tib king Triten Detsun banned finally Vairocana. Well then what did he do there (in eastern Tibet)?

Malcolm wrote:

He taught the people of Gyalmo Rong.

kalden yungdrung said:

Know he collected 5 Dzogchen texts in India.

- Do you know from whom he did receive these 5 texts and how these Dzogchen texts are called?

Malcolm wrote:

His teacher was Shri Singha and the five texts are the Dorje Sems pa Namkhai Che, Khyung lding chen po, Rtsal Chen sprug pa, Rig pa'i khyu byug, and the Byang chub sems sgom.

kalden yungdrung said:

This Dzogchen style is also i guess involved in the Nyingma. How can i see the Guru Rinpoche who is somewhere a student from a Dzogchenpa.

Malcolm wrote:

Guru Rinpoche's Dzogchen master was also Shri Singha.

kalden yungdrung said:

There are doubts about if Guru Rinpoche would be a founder of Dzogchen. Tantras that is sure Padmasambhava's speciality. So i only want to say some have doubts.

Malcolm wrote:

The founder of "Buddhist" Dzogchen is Garab Dorje.

All the Dzogchen teachings of Guru Rinpoche are termas.

kalden yungdrung said:

Guess Vairocana did made the translation. But as a fresh "greenhorn" in the Sanskrit language, can his translations, or from other Sanskrit - Tibetan translators, be seen as reliable ?

Malcolm wrote:

[/quote]

Vairocana was an "emanational" translator, meaning his translations are impeccable.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, August 4th, 2015 at 7:13 AM

Title: Re: Dzogchen & Vipashyana on thoughts

Content:

zenman said:

One of the things Jackson has said is that at some point of history, thogal was taught right from the start to students before the presently used systems were developed. Maybe it was before 15th century or something like that. Me not being a specialist of the Tibetan tradition I don't know in detail what these methods refer to but I guess like preliminary practices/ngondro and deity/tantric practices. He also said that there is one lineage of dzogchen, Palyul, who never did this and who still teach thogal first.

Malcolm wrote:

What they teach in Palyul is separation of samsara and nirvana which is the preliminary for thogal; actual thogal is reserved for post tregcho teachings.

zenman said:

I keep hearing this abuse-thing (underline). I have learned about the thogal-practices, space gazing and sky gazing, from texts provided by Jackson, and have tried them out. I never experienced such clarity during many years of zen training with top masters of the world. I suppose these two practices are the most central ones in thogal. Are they? They have been described also in several books, like one by Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche and

Lopon Tenzin Namdak. I don't see any reason why gazing could not be taught to anyone and tried, or how this could become a problem or create obstacles. However I think it requires calmness (shamatta).

Malcolm wrote:

All you are doing is blocking your own realization by approaching things in the wrong way. What a pity. Luckily, no one is %100 percent hopeless while they are alive.

I suggest you stop screwing around and find a real Dzogchen master, Buddhist or Bon, it does not matter.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, August 4th, 2015 at 7:16 AM

Title: Re: Fires in CA and Rigdzin Ling Dharma Center

Content:

T. Chokyi said:

Conditions at Rigdzin Ling Dharma Center:

<http://chagdudgonpa.org/fires-near-rigdzin-ling/>

They have heavy smoke there in Northern CA from the forest fires, they are asking for prayers.

Malcolm wrote:

They need to intensive Sang and Serkyem, then it will be fine.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, August 4th, 2015 at 8:38 PM

Title: Re: Vairocana

Content:

kalden yungdrung said:

- Emanational translator how can this be seen?

Mutsug Marro

KY

Malcolm wrote:

Meaning, that he was the continuum of a realized being.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, August 4th, 2015 at 11:35 PM

Title: Re: Issues in the History of Indian Buddhism

Content:

Indrajala said:

In the case of Tibet, I've looked at the Tang Chinese account of it in two fascicles (fairly lengthy, which highlights how important Tibet was to the Tang history). It is interesting, for example, that it doesn't seem to mention Buddhism. There were plenty of envoys going to Tibet from China, but there's no real mention of a Buddhist institution in Yarlung Tibet. They mention a lot of blood sacrifices being done to seal oaths. So, how does that fit with the traditional Tibet narratives (especially later on when Yarlung kings are retroactively made Buddhist kings)? The legends have their place in cultural memory, but historians need to be critical and objective.

Malcolm wrote:

What period are you referring to? 600 to 700, 700 to 800, 800 to 842?

There is no doubt that Tri srong De'u bstan [742-797] was a Buddhist king. He built Samye, etc.

This idea that something only valid if there is an external source is a little silly. It means for example, the Spanish are the only arbiters what we may know about Mexican civilization.

What are the external checks on the Chinese Civilization? According to your theory, all of Chinese history is suspect since unless there is external corroboration of something in a foreign source.

I think such an approach is excessively myopic.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, August 5th, 2015 at 1:20 AM

Title: Re: Issues in the History of Indian Buddhism

Content:

Indrajala said:

I think this is credible, but then what about the rest of Yarlung Tibet? How did they feel about Buddhism?

Malcolm wrote:

Different people had very different feelings, depending on whether they had ties to the old Zhang Zhung aristocracy or not. These feelings are reported in any number of sources, some early, some late. The earliest dating to the late ninth century. Trisong De'utsen's suppression of Bon, for example, is widely recorded in both Bon and Buddhist sources.

Indrajala said:

Also, how dedicated was said king to Buddhism? Did he still practice animal sacrifice? How much was it to build up legitimacy and international image, as was the case in other nations? These are questions to ask.

Malcolm wrote:

One, his mother, a Chinese woman, the wife of Me Agtsom, was very devoted to Buddhadharma.

Second, we have the evidence of the enormous amount of state-backed translations, imperial support of temples, and so on, numerous pandits invited to Tibet. There is an enormous amount of evidence both in terms of bilingual inscriptions in Tibetan and Chinese, and so on, if you care to examine it. It may not be your real area of interest, but there is no reason to slight it due to your lack of interest.

Indrajala said:

This idea that something only valid if there is an external source is a little silly. It means for example, the Spanish are the only arbiters what we may know about Mexican civilization.

No, you compare Spanish claims against archaeology and whatever surviving native accounts that still exist.

Malcolm wrote:

How do you assess pre-Colombian claims? You see the point? You can only go on native accounts. The issues in Tibet are much the same.

Indrajala said:

What are the external checks on the Chinese Civilization? According to your theory, all of Chinese history is suspect since unless there is external corroboration of something in a foreign source.

Ancient Chinese histories are generally reliable after a bit of critical examination. It can often be checked against existing archaeological and art records too. There's also enormous amounts of literature not issued by any court you can read court histories against.

Malcolm wrote:

Well, the same goes for Tibetan historical literature...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, August 5th, 2015 at 1:58 AM

Title: Re: Dzogchen & Vipashyana on thoughts

Content:

zenman said:

About a week ago I watched one of his webcasts, annual Padmashambhava transmission, as I have done a few times before. With respect to all concerned, I am not interested in learning Tibetan to read a text for 35 minutes. I also didn't see anything

special in him or his teachings before. I also doubt if he gives detailed in-depth advice on these webcasts in public as teachings becoming diluted always happens when there are hundreds of people, big organisation, involved. I don't want to sound an idiot (although I probably can't help it) saying this but please correct me if I am wrong...

Malcolm wrote:

I am not interested... I also didn't see...I also doubt...

Pretty clear Chogyal Namkhai Norbu is not the teacher for you.

Good luck.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, August 5th, 2015 at 2:06 AM

Title: Re: Dzogchen & Vipashyana on thoughts

Content:

zenman said:

If he taught meditation practices like trekcho and thogal going straight and keeping to the point, then sure I'd probably tune in too.

Malcolm wrote:

He does not teach techniques. He teaches Dzogchen. If you do not know the state of Dzogchen, you cannot practice either tregchö or thögal.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, August 5th, 2015 at 3:12 AM

Title: Re: Issues in the History of Indian Buddhism

Content:

Indrajala said:

If you're going to rely on oral tradition or written records detailing things centuries after they happened, there's ways to read them which usually means not taking them literally.

Malcolm wrote:

Buddha forbid that we ever take anything on people's word.

History does not have to be such a cynical business, so laden with materialist concerns and a materialist outlook on life.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, August 5th, 2015 at 3:18 AM

Title: Re: Issues in the History of Indian Buddhism

Content:

Indrajala said:

Again, so far as I can tell though there's nothing saying the Chinese noticed a significant (or any) Buddhist presence in Tibet in the Yarlung period. Later medieval historians can say what they want about this period, but questions will remain. Compare that with the Chinese accounts of places like Kucha, Khotan, Samarkand, Koguryo, Japan and SE Asian nations where popular devotion to Buddhism is noted.

Malcolm wrote:

Well, China is not the navel of the world.

Your argument runs as follows, "The Chinese did write about it, therefore it did not exist."

Tibet was of interest to China solely because Tibetans threatened their interests on the Silk Road. Other than that, China had no interest in the Tibetans, this, more than anything else, explains the lack of mention of Tibetan in Chinese annals.

This is not the case with "Khotan, Samarkand, Koguryo, Japan and SE Asian nations..." where China had active trade interests.

As for Tibetan Ministers, well, they were soldiers; and even in the time of the 5th Dalai Lama, there were certain kinds of animal sacrifices done in Lhasa. This does not mean that the population as a whole were not interested in Dharma.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, August 5th, 2015 at 3:45 AM

Title: Re: Natural State and Nature

Content:

steve_bakr said:

I am a tiny bit uncomfortable here with the word "consciousness" out of the fear of introducing subcategories such as "subconscious" or "unconscious." Honestly, the other poster is correct in preferring "awareness" to "consciousness" because all the Dzogchen literature and texts that I have seen use "awareness," specifically "Intrinsic Awareness." The word "intrinsic" signifies that awareness is intrinsic to mind; that is, awareness is the nature of mind.

Malcolm wrote:

This is because of the allergy people have to the word "consciousness", it is not a justifiable translation based on the term "consciousness" by itself.

There are a range of words in Tibetan that use the particle "shes pa" such as rnam shes, ye shes, shes rab, shes pa itself, and so on. They all refer to modes of consciousness. Rig pa refers to what that consciousness knows. Pristine consciousness [ye shes] is one thing, our ordinary state of consciousness [rnam shes] something else — but they both have the same basis, shes pa.

Dzogchen terminology for these things is a very sophisticated psychology of delusion

and liberation, but unfortunately, it has been obscured by translations that are not precise and clear.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, August 5th, 2015 at 4:21 AM

Title: Re: Natural State and Nature

Content:

steve_bakr said:

I am correct, by the way, in reporting that Dzogchen masters such as Longchenpa define Rigpa as the nature of mind.

Malcolm wrote:

Citation please?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, August 5th, 2015 at 4:26 AM

Title: Re: Natural State and Nature

Content:

steve_bakr said:

Dzogchen is the most direct (24/7) of all paths. It is nonconceptual Intrinsic Awareness. .

Malcolm wrote:

To what is this awareness intrinsic?

The term rang gi rig pa means "own's own vidyā", one's own knowledge."

It is used this way again and again in hundreds of Dzogchen texts written in Tibetan. Some western translators got a hold of the term, and with no justification whatsoever, decided that the "rang gi" meant "intrinsic", and "rig pa" meant "awareness." Now, rig pa can, in certain contexts, be translated as awareness, but not universally, and not in this context.

Rig pa, vidyā, knowledge, is paired against ma rig pa, avidyā, ignorance. Knowledge or ignorance of what? One's own nature, the basis, essence, nature and compassion/energy.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, August 5th, 2015 at 5:46 AM

Title: Re: Issues in the History of Indian Buddhism

Content:

Indrajala said:

I think you mean 'Tibetan Buddhism' here?

Malcolm wrote:

No, I mean Tibetans.

Look, the Old Tibetan Chronicles are contemporary court records of the kind of you find in China, with corroboration of the kind you invoked from non-court sources.

Indrajala said:

No, it wasn't so simplistic as this. I'm not really convinced one could argue that Tibetan Buddhism in the Yarlung period was ignored simply because the Chinese were at odds with the Yarlung Empire.

Malcolm wrote:

Everyone knows that during the time of Trisong Detsen, there were only 7 ordained Buddhist monks of Tibetan origin in Tibet. But there were Chinese Monks, Khotanese Monks etc., there as well. We also know that the court Buddhism of Tibet was largely Chinese until the 1780's, when, for various reasons, the winds changed and Tibetans decided to throw in their lot with the Indians.

Indrajala said:

Koguryo, you will remember, was an enemy state and conquered by the Chinese-Silla alliance in the 660s, yet they recognized the fact they had a big Buddhist institution there.

Malcolm wrote:

You are forgetting that Buddhism spread into that region by sea, mainly.

There was not much in Tibet that anyone wanted, and what they wanted [gold and salt] was brought down by Tibetans to trade for things in China [tea, silk] and India [spices].

Indrajala said:

As for Tibetan Ministers, well, they were soldiers; and even in the time of the 5th Dalai Lama, there were certain kinds of animal sacrifices done in Lhasa. This does not mean that the population as a whole were not interested in Dharma.

Okay, but it still understandably raises doubts about how deep the Buddhism went in the period in question.

Malcolm wrote:

It apparently went really deep...just look at Tibet today...what more evidence do you need

Indrajala said:

I'd like to look further into this in the future. I want to translate the Tang accounts of Tibet (there's two primary ones) and whatever other relevant texts I can find. I don't know when I'll do this though.

Malcolm wrote:

That would be very helpful.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, August 5th, 2015 at 9:05 PM

Title: Re: Issues in the History of Indian Buddhism

Content:

tingdzin said:

Malcolm: The "Old Tibetan Chronicles" is a fairly mythic account of the founding of the Tibetan Empire. What you seem to be referring to are the "Old Tibetan Annals", a year-by-year, fairly bare-bones account of what the court was up to. And, by the way, there is lots of external evidence against which Chinese testimony for the period can be and has been checked. Again, we cannot say that Buddhism was mostly Chinese until 780, and leave it at that, because (among other reasons) much of the remaining temple art from the very earliest temples reflects Central Asian and Kashmiri rather than Chinese styles.

Malcolm wrote:

<http://otdo.aa.tufts.ac.jp/index.cgi?page=History>.

Buddhism went through three phases in Tibet: the earliest period which began in the reign of Srongtsan Gampo. Buddhism was suppressed following his death; and revived again during the reign of Me Agtsom, with largely Chinese influences at the court.

A contingent of Khotanese monks indeed fled to Tibet in 740, but shortly thereafter left for Gandhara following a small pox epidemic.

Later, during the reign of Trisong Detsen, Tibet dominated all of Central Asia, Kashmir, Gilgit and so on. It is not surprising then that Tibetans have art and stylistic influences from Khotan, also they invaded it and controlled it, and we know that the monastic hierarchy of Tibetan monasteries was derived from Central Asia.

Still, epigraphically, there is very little mention of an intellectual presence of Central Asian monks. It seems, when you read Tibetan historical works on the period, the dominant external Buddhist influences were Chinese and Indian, with Indian Buddhism eventually supplanting Chinese Buddhism.

tingdzin said:

IMO, it is also already a major mistaken assumption to believe that whatever Buddhism did exist on the plateau from 600 - 900 was the same as that which arose after the period of fragmentation, although this is a topic too big for chat rooms.

Malcolm wrote:
Agreed.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, August 6th, 2015 at 9:53 AM

Title: Re: Natural State and Nature

Content:

steve_bakr said:

I am correct, by the way, in reporting that Dzogchen masters such as Longchenpa define Rigpa as the nature of mind.

Malcolm wrote:
Citation please?

steve_bakr said:

The description of Rigpa as nature of mind occurs in the works, "Natural Perfection: Longchenpa's Radical Dzogchen," "Original Perfection: Vairotsana's Five Early Transmissions," "Self-Liberation Through Seeing With Naked Awareness" (Padmasambhava), and elsewhere.

Malcolm wrote:

The term rig pa is not used in the five early lungs translated by Vairocana, anywhere.

You have not cited a text, you have merely mentioned some texts. A citation means producing the passage in question.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, August 6th, 2015 at 10:02 AM

Title: Re: Natural State and Nature

Content:

steve_bakr said:

I would say that the description of Rigpa as "knowledge" is too narrow and limited as applied to Dzogchen. It might be more accurate to describe Rigpa as "cognizance" but there is much more to it. It is not enough to go with a definition from a Tibetan dictionary. You must draw from original Dzogchen texts to appreciate the depth of Rigpa in Dzogchen.

Malcolm wrote:

Do you know Tibetan? If not, how can you say you are drawing on original Dzogchen texts?

steve_bakr said:

A translator cannot rely on a dictionary meaning for Rigpa.

Malcolm wrote:

Indeed, they must be able to read actual original Dzogchen texts, there are but a handful of people who can do that, and they do not all do it well.

steve_bakr said:

One must be intimately familiar with original Dzogchen texts and the quintessential masters. I would be very dubious of a teacher who described Rigpa merely as "knowledge," and who did not give to Rigpa its quintessential and pivotal place in his Dzogchen teachings.

Malcolm wrote:

Rig pa fundamentally means "knowledge of the basis." Rig pa is not the nature of the mind. The basis is the nature of the mind. This is a point that Chogyal Namkhai Norbu stresses again and again. Of course, if you are a follower of Jaxchen, well, then...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, August 6th, 2015 at 10:13 AM

Title: Re: Natural State and Nature

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

Hint: maybe you don't understand the "context" being referred to and therefore you can't understand how they could be identical.

Malcolm wrote:

Rig pa and the gzhi are not identical. Why? Because if they were, the gzhi would never be mistaken for an external object. It is because one is ignorant [ma rig pa] of the gzhi that samsara happens.

When you read my forthcoming book, you will then understand how it is that rig pa is neither the nature of the mind, nor the gzhi.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, August 6th, 2015 at 9:50 PM

Title: Re: Natural State and Nature

Content:

kalden yungdrung said:

Tashi delek M,

Please, don't forget that the interpretations of Rigpa can be:

According to Lopon Tenzin Namdak Rinpoche: "Awareness". So in Bon it seems to be that we have a different interpretation of Rigpa.

Malcolm wrote:

We have discussed this before, and this state of affairs is mainly due to the influence of western translators on Tibetan Lamas, not the other way around.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, August 6th, 2015 at 10:43 PM

Title: Re: Natural State and Nature

Content:

kalden yungdrung said:

If you can see above, the statement of Lopon Tenzin Namdak Rinpoche regarding Awareness, then i can agree easy with this explanation. Awareness is more "understandable" for me whereas knowledge not so well..... Cant' help it.

KY

Malcolm wrote:

There is no different interpretation. Please consult JLA. Knowledge is the more correct word.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, August 6th, 2015 at 11:05 PM

Title: The Point of No Return: Climate Change Nightmares Are Alread

Content:

Unknown said:

Evidence for the above scenario comes in large part from our best understanding of what happened 250 million years ago, during the "Great Dying," when more than 90 percent of all oceanic species perished after a pulse of carbon dioxide and methane from land-based sources began a period of profound climate change. The conditions that triggered "Great Dying" took hundreds of thousands of years to develop. But humans have been emitting carbon dioxide at a much quicker rate, so the current mass extinction only took 100 years or so to kick-start.

With all these stressors working against it, a hypoxic feedback loop could wind up destroying some of the oceans' most species-rich ecosystems within our lifetime. A recent study by Sarah Moffitt of the University of California-Davis said it could take the ocean thousands of years to recover. "Looking forward for my kid, people in the future are not going to have the same ocean that I have today," Moffitt said.

Malcolm wrote:

Read more: <http://www.rollingstone.com/politics/news/the-point-of-no-return-climate-change-nightmares-are-already-here-20150805#ixzz3i314rN8i>

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Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, August 7th, 2015 at 1:51 AM

Title: Re: Natural State and Nature

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

Hint: maybe you don't understand the "context" being referred to and therefore you can't understand how they could be identical.

Malcolm wrote:

Rig pa and the gzhi are not identical. Why? Because if they were, the gzhi would never mistaken for an external object. It is because one is ignorant [ma rig pa] of the gzhi that samsara happens.

When you read my forthcoming book, you will then understand how it is that rig pa neither the nature of the mind, nor the gzhi.

steve_bakr said:

Keep us posted on your forthcoming book. I hope it is available in Kindle format.

Malcolm wrote:

At this point, we are not doing an electronic edition.

The very short explanation is, according to the upadesha class tantras such as the root tantra of Dzogchen, sgra thal gyur, that there is a neutral awareness [shes pa] that arises out of the basis because of a stirring of vāyu [rlung], sometimes mistranslated as prāṇa (prāṇa is a vāyu). Because there is a movement, accompanied by sound [sgra], lights ['od] and rays [zer]*, there are appearances that arise out of the basis. When these appearances are recognized as one's own state, this recognition is what is called " rig pa ", it is also given the name " shes rab " or prājñā. When these appearances are not recognized as one's own state, this is called " ma rig pa ", avidyā.

It is for this reason, for example, that the famous Aspiration of Buddha Samantabhadra begins:

All of the universe and beings, samsara and nirvana
have one basis. The two paths and two results

are the enchantments of knowledge [rig pa] and ignorance [ma rig pa].

The two paths are the path to buddhahood, which is based on rig pa; and the path of the six realms which is based on ma rig pa.

Futher, we can see that vidyā, rig pa comes from the basis, but it is not the basis:

Vidyā self-originates from that basis itself

without bearing the faults of external and internal reification,

free from the tainted darkness of amnesia,

therefore, it self-appears unaffected by faults.

Rig pa self originates from the basis because rig pa is just the recognition of the basis as

one's own state itself. It self-originate because you did not receive this knowledge from someone else, you must recognize it in a direct perception called the direct perception of dharmitā, your real nature. The so-called "direct introduction" is merely a method to introduce you to "your own face." This is one reason why the metaphor of the mirror is so important in Dzogchen teachings. This rig pa, this true knowledge of one's own state, is therefore unaffected by subject and object dualism; is free from non-recollection, because once you have this unmistaken knowledge, i.e., vidyā, you will never forget it, and therefore, vidyā is unaffected by any faults whatsoever.

However western translators may translate these terms, what they mean in Tibetan is very precise, and between Chos and Bon, have exactly the same meaning.

You can see again in this following passage that shes pa, awareness, and knowledge, rig pa, vidyā, are used in two different ways:

One's vidyā [rig pa, knowledge of the basis] abides in a pristine state,
not terrified by the terrors of the three realms,
not attached to sensuous qualities.

Physical form and color do not exist
in self-originated nonconceptual awareness [shes pa].

One's vidya, rigpa, knowledge, abides in a pristine state because there are no physical forms and colors in consciousness; rig pa is the knowledge that the appearances of the five lights and so on in one's fundamental unfabricated consciousness are not substantial or real. They are merely the energy of the basis, from which that awareness is inseparable.

When this knowledge does not arise, then as the Aspiration of Samantabhadra states:

First, since vidyā/rig pa did not arise in the basis
deluded sentient beings
cannot recall anything and are confused.

The cause of that is the delusion of ignorance.

Within that is a sudden unconsciousness
in which a fearful awareness stirs without clarity,
Within that self and other are perceived as enemies.

From the gradual buildup of traces,
entry into the process of samsara happens.

If vidyā is the basis, then there is no way anyone could ever be deluded, samsara would never have happened. Indeed, there is popular strand of misconception in Dzogchen that claims that samsara never did happen. While this is true from the point of view of Samantabhadra [and hence the rhetoric of the sems sde literature], this is not true from our point of view, since we are continuing in samsara and gather karma and building up traces. If we are in the state of knowledge that is the state of Samantabhadra, then for us samsara will have never happened. But until we are in that knowledge 24/7/365 and therefore totally beyond time, then we are still in samsara.

Since vidyā is not the basis, by mistaking the nature of the sounds, lights and rays that come from the basis for being dualistic phenomena, one is trapped by avidyā, ma rig pa and one cycles endlessly in the three realms. Dzogchen practice is the means the

reverse this error because the basis of knowledge and ignorance is the same, and knowledge and ignorance arise on the basis of an awareness [shes pa] that exists as part of the basis.

My book expends a little energy in explaining these critical points in an introduction, but my explanation is not novel nor is it my own. I merely follow an outline that is common in both Chos and Bon Dzogchen teachings, and I use many citations from untranslated commentaries of Vimalamitra on the 17 Dzogchen tantras to illustrate my points. The only novel thing in my explanation is that I show the link between the initial shes pa, awareness or fundamental consciousness that arises from the basis, how that becomes pristine consciousness [ye shes] when in the presence of rig pa or knowledge of its own state; and how it becomes yid kyi rnam shes or "mental consciousness" and mind [sems] when it does not recognize its own state and engages in the dualistic imputations of because of ignorance [ma rig pa]. But even here, I do so on the basis of citations and reasonings drawn from classic commentaries, and I cannot claim any of these ideas as novel or as being my own.

M

* The principle of sounds, lights and rays is more fully explained in the Zhang Zhung sNyan brGyud of Bon; in Chos, it is mainly confined to describing the experience of the bardo of dharmatā.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, August 7th, 2015 at 5:59 AM

Title: Re: Natural State and Nature

Content:

steve_bakr said:

The text of "The Supreme Source" cuts through all provisional teachings and what remains is "Pure and Total Consciousness" only. It cuts through every practice and belief dearly held.

Malcolm wrote:

Kun byed rgyal po is a sems sde text. It is principally concerned with the first statement of Garab Dorje, "Direct Introduction." It does not address the second two statements, "Remain without doubt" and "Continue in that state." [The three statements of Garab Dorje may actually be found in the ultimate root tantra of all Dzogchen, the origin of all Dharma teachings and specifically, all Dzogchen teachings, the sGra thal 'gyur Tantra.]

You cannot achieve rainbow body by practicing according to the Kun byed rGyal po or the five sems sde lungs. Kun byed rgyal po does not provide a path, because it is a teaching on the basis [gzhi], called byang chub sems in Tibetan.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, August 7th, 2015 at 9:18 PM

Title: Re: Natural State and Nature

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

You cannot achieve rainbow body by practicing according to the Kun byed rGyal po or the five sems sde lungs. Kun byed rgyal po does not provide a path, because it is a teaching on the basis [gzhi], called byang chub sems in Tibetan.

alpha said:

Volume 6 of the commentaries on Kunjed Gyalpo is on meditation. Prajna through meditation.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, of course, Kun byed rgyal po talks about view, meditation, behavior and the result. But in general, there is no practice of sems sde independent from mahā and anuyoga.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, August 7th, 2015 at 9:24 PM

Title: Re: Dzogchen & Vipashyana on thoughts

Content:

zenman said:

Okey. Egoistic claiming is surely delusional. By sitting in fire I meant being exposed to fire.

Malcolm wrote:

He means sitting in a fire, like Padmasambhava.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, August 7th, 2015 at 9:24 PM

Title: Re: Dzogchen & Vipashyana on thoughts

Content:

zenman said:

Well, I doubt if he did. I think statements like this that you are enlightened only when you sit in fire can be very misleading and discouraging, although I assume this is not all what NN has said on this. How many of those who hear this statement made by an authority such as NN actually get there? Zip, like one in a billion, if even that many.

Malcolm wrote:

NN says he is not there. This is why when students come to him and tell him that they are in a state of rigpa 24/7, he suggests that in order to prove it, they put their hand in the fire. So far as I know, there have been no takers.

If you are totally realized, you have total control over the elements.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, August 7th, 2015 at 9:31 PM

Title: Re: Natural State and Nature

Content:

steve_bakr said:

The Practice of Dzogchen, by Longchenpa, translator: Tulku Thondup, editor: Harold Talbott. "The main emphasis of Dzogpa Chenpo is to attain and perfect the realization of the true nature of mind, Intrinsic Awareness (Rigpa), which is the Buddha Mind or Buddha-Essence."

Malcolm wrote:

Is this Tulku Thundup's point of view, or someone else's?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, August 7th, 2015 at 11:57 PM

Title: Re: Dzogchen & Vipashyana on thoughts

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

NN says he is not there. This is why when students come to him and tell him that they are in a state of rigpa 24/7, he suggests that in order to prove it, they put their hand in the fire. So far as I know, there have been no takers.

If you are totally realized, you have total control over the elements.

zenman said:

Okey. This is a bit confusing for me. I thought 24/7 rigpa concerns mind (exhaustion of karmic winds) and awareness only. Is this not so? Why? Did Shakyamuni ever demonstrate control over the five elements in any physically astounding manner?

Malcolm wrote:

Total realization in Dzogchen means exhausting all mental and physical karma in this life — this is what is meant by achieving the body of great transference, like Garab Dorje, Vimalamitra and Padmasambhava. Some people say that Khenpo Ngawang Palzang had this realization too.

Even if you do not have total realization in this life, you can still manifest what is called rainbow body, where your body shrinks and disappears in seven days.

Śakyamuni Buddha demonstrated control over the elements many times, for example, levitating to the height of 14 palm trees. If we assume an average height of 30 feet, this is roughly 500 feet in the air, roughly the equivalent of a 50 story building.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, August 8th, 2015 at 12:12 AM

Title: Re: Dzogchen & Vipashyana on thoughts

Content:

paël said:

In some sutras Arhats dissolve their body by fire. Is this rainbow body?

Malcolm wrote:

No, this is not rainbow body.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, August 8th, 2015 at 12:25 AM

Title: Re: Dzogchen & Vipashyana on thoughts

Content:

zenman said:

Is not total realisation and 24/7 rigpa two different things?

Malcolm wrote:

No.

zenman said:

I have read of two kinds of rainbow bodies: the one where the body shrinks and the second where the body disappears entirely.

Malcolm wrote:

The first is partial rainbow body.

zenman said:

Didn't know that about Shakyamuni. What is the source of this levitation story?

Malcolm wrote:

Pali Canon, forget exactly which sutta. But there are also many examples in Mahāyāna sūtras.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, August 8th, 2015 at 1:02 AM

Title: Re: Dzogchen & Vipashyana on thoughts

Content:

zenman said:

Is not total realisation and 24/7 rigpa two different things?

Malcolm wrote:

No.

zenman said:

Can you come up with a quote to back this up?

Malcolm wrote:

Why don't you study a little bit?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, August 8th, 2015 at 3:14 AM

Title: Re: Dzogchen & Vipashyana on thoughts

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Why don't you study a little bit?

zenman said:

Perhaps I should yes. There are so many books on Dozgchen though that I don't know where to begin with. And even if I did I am en extremely lousy reader...

dzogchungpa said:

I'm not a scholar, but here's a quote from Tulku Urgyen Rinpoche's "As It Is, Vol. I": By training thoroughly in this way, discursive thinking will gradually grow less and less, and moments of thoughtfree wakefulness will grow longer and longer. When this nonconceptual wakefulness lasts one hour, you have attained the level of an arhat. When it lasts throughout the day, you have attained the level of a bodhisattva. When it is uninterrupted day and night, you have become a fully enlightened buddha. There is nothing more precious than this.

zenman said:

Interesting quote, especially because it mentions the requirement of an arhat which is hinayana directly compared to mahayana- and vajrayana-attainments. I understand Tulku Urgyen was a great master but I wonder if this is actually so. This is in fact what I was after with my former question reg. 24/7 awareness vs. fully enlightened buddhahood. I have come across a few people who say that their awareness is uninterrupted day and night and has been for many years. And it seemed to me that it might actually be so without any "specialty" or egoism to them. I thought 24/7 was what arhats are in. I think this is a wonderful degree of attainment but surely anyone I have met saying this can't stick their hand into fire without getting hurt. That's why I was asking Malcolm for the quote, to get a reliable source or sources on this exact issue.

Malcolm wrote:

Everyone's awareness is 24/7/365 for eons and eons. But not everyone's knowledge of their primordial state is 24/7/365. Those whose knowledge of their primordial state is 24/7/365 are Buddhas.

Wakefulness, btw is Eric Pema Kunzangs translation du jour for wisdom, primordial wisdom, pristine awareness aka ye shes.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, August 8th, 2015 at 3:18 AM

Title: Re: Chime Sog Thig Teachings from Shenphen Dawa Rinpoche

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

I always seem to get into trouble when I post something from SDR.

Malcolm wrote:

Revise to...

dzogchungpa said:

I always seem to get into trouble when I post something.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, August 8th, 2015 at 4:03 AM

Title: Re: Dzogchen & Vipashyana on thoughts

Content:

zenman said:

Awareness, primordial state, consciousness, rigpa, wakefulness... There is no fixed common system for translating these words is there...

Malcolm wrote:

Well, every translator tends to have a fixed jargon, though, they do evolve. The reason there is no fixed system is that earlier translations [1995 and before], whether by Tibetans or Westerners, tend to be pretty inaccurate. Things are getting more accurate simply because there is more commentarial literature available than there was prior to this time.

zenman said:

Tulku Urgyen's quote btw wonderfully has lead us back to the original topic! I bet that doesn't happen very often after over 120 messages He says that when thoughtfree wakefulness grows longer and longer and all the way up to 24/7 then one has attained great perfection.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, when one's increases one's ability to remain in nonconceptual wisdom [aka thoughtfree wakefulness, mi rtog pa'i ye she s], then one is Buddha. One's state is already "the great perfection." But one's ability to be in that knowledge [rig pa] or not is the difference between a sentient being who wanders the six realms [never], a practitioner on the path [sometimes] or a Buddha [always].

zenman said:

That is precisely Jackson Peterson's message as well, though he is not an authorised dzogchen teacher.

Malcolm wrote:

Being a parrot is relatively easy. Living that knowledge is not so easy. There are a lot of Dzogchen parrots, not so many Dzogchen garudas. The difference is this:

And this:

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, August 8th, 2015 at 4:05 AM

Title: Re: Dzogchen & Vipashyana on thoughts

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

I have read of two kinds of rainbow bodies: the one where the body shrinks and the second where the body disappears entirely.

The first is partial rainbow body.

tomamundsen said:

Is partial rainbow body the 16th bhumi, buddhahood without remainder?

Malcolm wrote:

No. It is Buddhahood with signs.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, August 8th, 2015 at 9:58 PM

Title: Re: Dzogchen & Vipashyana on thoughts

Content:

zenman said:

I have also read him carefully. He is familiar with madhyamaka view but he hasn't realised it. There is no question about this because he keeps on saying very immature

things. I am not talking about his persona here, only what he teaches.

Malcolm wrote:

Someone who has realized Madhyamaka view is a first stage bodhisattva.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, August 8th, 2015 at 10:26 PM

Title: Re: Dzogchen & Vipashyana on thoughts

Content:

zenman said:

I have also read him carefully. He is familiar with madhyamaka view but he hasn't realised it. There is no question about this because he keeps on saying very immature things. I am not talking about his persona here, only what he teaches.

Malcolm wrote:

Someone who has realized Madhyamaka view is a first stage bodhisattva.

zenman said:

What is your point?

Malcolm wrote:

That such a person is by every definition an awakened person. Someone who has not realized Madhyamaka view is by every definition not an awakened person.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, August 8th, 2015 at 11:49 PM

Title: Re: Natural State and Nature

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Rig pa self originates from the basis because rig pa is just the recognition of the basis as one's own state itself.

Paul said:

Fantastic post.

Stupid question time, though. The term 'state' is used often in English language Dzogchen literature, especially in the DC. However there seems to me to be several meanings and interpretations of the word (same with 'condition') that have divergent consequences as to how the sentence should be understood. So how, precisely, are you using it here?

Bumping my question - answering it will be a massive help for me. This has always confused me...

Malcolm wrote:

In Tibetan, the word generally translated as "state" is ngang. This in turn has three interrelated meanings: 1) continuum [rgyud] or native place [gshis ka]; 2) nature [rang bzhin] or modality [rnam tshul]; 3) intrinsic power or effortless natural perfection ['bad med lhun sgrub].

Here I mean nature or modality.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, August 9th, 2015 at 3:33 AM

Title: Re: Dzogchen & Vipashyana on thoughts

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Śakyamuni Buddha demonstrated control over the elements many times, for example, levitating to the height of 14 palm trees. If we assume an average height of 30 feet, this is roughly 500 feet in the air, roughly the equivalent of a 50 story building.

zenman said:

Is levitation always considered a sign of full realisation?

Malcolm wrote:

No, of course not, but control over the elements is a good place to start indicating one's realization.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, August 9th, 2015 at 3:34 AM

Title: Re: Lamdre how many participant each session?

Content:

tobias said:

Hello,

in a text on lamde I read that you practice in groups of maximum 25 participants. It was said that even Verupa was not able to transmit lamde to more than 25 participants at the same time, That's why the master has to repeat teachings several times to teach all the participant.

Now I found a picture that shows lots of people receiving Lamdre in Malaysia. The article says that there are 600 participants.

<http://www.sakya.com.au/news/lamdre-malaysia>

How does that fit together?

Greetings

tobias

Malcolm wrote:

Refers to the empowerments, not the instructions.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, August 10th, 2015 at 9:52 PM

Title: Re: The Point of No Return: Climate Change Nightmares Are Al

Content:

WeiHan said:

Keynesian theory failed also because it failed to recognise this and also its failed attempted.

Malcolm wrote:

Are you kidding? The US Economy has proven the validity of Keynesian Economics through the vast wealth disparity that has appeared in the US as a result of abandoning Keynesian policies.

WeiHan said:

Governments have never prove to do right thing. Mostly is done for self interest. The proof is in the way they manage economy. Hoping that they will manage climate change is like handling them another excuse to manipulate society for self interest again. So, even if global warming is true, this is not the solution.

Malcolm wrote:

What sort of libertarian koolaid are you drinking?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, August 10th, 2015 at 9:57 PM

Title: Re: Global Warming / Climate Change: Caused by human activi

Content:

Serenity509 said:

Patrick Moore, one of the original founders of Green Peace:

Malcolm wrote:

This man was never one of the original founders of Greenpeace and he is a shill for the Nuke Industry.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, August 10th, 2015 at 9:59 PM

Title: Re: Global Warming / Climate Change: Caused by human activi

Content:

Serenity509 said:

It just seems to me very unsettling that the proposals made by people who support the idea of anthropogenic climate change would so negatively impact third world peoples. I wish that global warming advocates didn't have any ulterior motives that could potentially harm others.

Malcolm wrote:

If climate change is not halted and we do not globally change our patterns of consumption of energy and means of producing it, there won't be any world worth living in at all.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, August 11th, 2015 at 8:27 PM

Title: Re: Global Warming / Climate Change: Caused by human activi

Content:

Serenity509 said:

Could you please explain how forcing third world countries to cease the use of fossil fuels and nuclear energy would not disrupt their economic well-being?

Malcolm wrote:

Can you please explain to me how rapidly increased global warming caused by third world development is not going to destroy their economic well being?

Serenity509 said:

My point is that we should put the needs of third world peoples first, and we should listen to their leaders before making demands on them.

Malcolm wrote:

Eliminating fossil fuels is putting the needs of third world peoples first. Why should they wish to repeat the errors of the first world? Doesn't make sense.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, August 11th, 2015 at 8:29 PM

Title: Re: Global Warming / Climate Change: Caused by human activi

Content:

Serenity509 said:

Before rejecting the above sources as somehow right-wing or corporately controlled, please consider the actual poverty reduction that's taken place in China, and how it could have been accomplished without fossil fuels.

Malcolm wrote:

China is horribly polluted, and there is still widespread poverty, poverty with toys.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, August 11th, 2015 at 10:34 PM

Title: Re: Virupa's Mahamudra Doha

Content:

Astus said:

Is <https://awakeningtoreality.blogspot.com/2014/02/virupa-treasury-of-doha.html> known among Sakyapas? If so, how do they explain it, especially the following stanza:

"Some are completely tortured with empowerment rites,
some always count their rosary saying hum phat!
some consume shit, piss, blood, semen and meat,
some meditate the yoga of nadi and vayu, but all are deluded."

Malcolm wrote:

Since this is my translation, I will answer. Until you are realized, you are deluded.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, August 11th, 2015 at 10:49 PM

Title: Re: Virupa's Mahamudra Doha

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Since this is my translation, I will answer. Until you are realized, you are deluded.

Astus said:

The poem seems to advocate entering Mahamudra directly and not through various stages, so the question if this is interpreted in a different way.

Malcolm wrote:

It is not about that, it is about being attached to methods.

It also says:

"Mahamudra" is a mental imputation of the childish.

It also clarifies that a guru is indispensable:

Having been connected with a sublime Guru,

The main verse cited from this by Sakyapas is the following:

All sentient beings are emanations of mahamudra,

the essence of those emanations is the forever non-arising dharmadhatu,

also all characteristics of dualistic appearances, happiness, suffering and so on,

are the play of mahamudra, the original dharmata.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, August 11th, 2015 at 11:56 PM

Title: Re: Global Warming / Climate Change: Caused by human activi

Content:

joy&peace said:

' Eliminating fossil fuels is putting the needs of third world peoples first. Why should they wish to repeat the errors of the first world? Doesn't make sense. ' - Malcolm

The issue, dear friend, that I have is not that you are wrong - we have learned better, so to speak, you are correct.

Malcolm wrote:

The issue is that people in the third world should be educating themselves so as not to take the disastrous turn second world countries like China and the former Soviet bloc have taken, polluting themselves into oblivion. It is too late for China, they have already moved down that road. Their economy is in shambles from the bursting of the housing bubble, the credit bubble is going to collapse soon, all because of a mad rush to "expand" their economy. They have wantonly destroyed not only their own environment, but they are destroying the environment of Tibetans and so on, all in the name of providing a western lifestyle to their elites.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, August 12th, 2015 at 12:24 AM

Title: Re: Global Warming / Climate Change: Caused by human activi

Content:

joy&peace said:

Yet it is never of any use to say ' it is too late for them, '

and makes no sense, not to me at least.

Malcolm wrote:

Well, it will be too late for many of the creatures and plants that are going to become and are becoming extinct in Tibet and Western China if China continues its present course.

It is going to be too late for creatures and plants in the sea if we do not get our collective global shit together and stop our present course.

It is going to be too late for any cultural diversity if we do not halt the juggernaut of global consumerist expansion.

Nice emoticons and lovely sentiments will not adequately address the present crisis we are facing as a globe.

It is a question of priorities.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, August 12th, 2015 at 12:39 AM

Title: Re: Global Warming / Climate Change: Caused by human activi

Content:

joy&peace said:

Disparaging others never helps.

True story.

And smiles - do a lot of good. Disparaging others leads to a quicksand of disparagement; it is very true.

You and I may be very strong, non-attached to self - unable to be injured ; but others may be injured,

so it is not good to say things like this, ' we can't do it, ' etc.

Malcolm wrote:

Coddling others doesn't help either.

Smiles are fine when they are appropriate. It is not a time to be smiling about the state of the planet.

And we wont be able to do it if people continue to make excuses.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, August 12th, 2015 at 1:09 AM

Title: Re: Global Warming / Climate Change: Caused by human activi

Content:

joy&peace said:

the 1 idea

of trying to constantly fight -

is that it makes people stronger

very inferior to the understanding that when we work together we get much more done.

Malcolm wrote:

Everybody on this planet needs to understand the real situation. The real situation is dire.

If, internationally, everyone insists on their "right" to drive their economies on fossil fuels to reach an imagined prosperity enjoyed in the US, for example, this dire situation will get much worse.

Cooperation is nice, but people can only cooperate if they share common values and goals. If people insist on their own country first rather than this planet first, your much valued cooperation is never going to happen.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, August 12th, 2015 at 2:16 AM

Title: Re: More Propaganda - China's Panchen Lama gets high profile

Content:

Serenity509 said:

I'm not going to further comment on the average living conditions of Tibet before the Chinese invasion,

Malcolm wrote:

They were much happier.

Serenity509 said:

When it comes to the disputed Panchen Lama, I know about the circumstances that led to his ordination. All I'm trying to do is look at him as a fellow human being, and see whether or not he honestly tries to fulfill his role, a role he did not choose, in a way that is helpful to others.

Malcolm wrote:

He is a puppet, a tool.

Serenity509 said:

Buddhism teaches that it's unfair to judge people without taking into consideration their causes and conditions, if you even judge others at all.

Malcolm wrote:

I am not judging him personally. I am judging his role and how he is being used.

Serenity509 said:

Who is going to show sympathy, though, for Chinese Buddhists and for Tibetan Buddhists who choose to stay in Tibet?

Malcolm wrote:
This not the issue.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Wednesday, August 12th, 2015 at 2:46 AM
Title: Re: More Propaganda - China's Panchen Lama gets high profile
Content:
Malcolm wrote:
This not the issue.

Serenity509 said:
Unless the Tibetan Buddhists who come to the disputed Panchen Lama for blessings are just paid actors of the CPC, and unless the Tibetan Buddhist teachers and leaders living in Tibet who express support for him are paid actors of the CPC, then I think their perspective matters.

Malcolm wrote:
I can tell you for a fact that no Tibetans inside the PRC have any faith in the Panchen puppet, not matter what photos you may see.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Wednesday, August 12th, 2015 at 3:54 AM
Title: Re: More Propaganda - China's Panchen Lama gets high profile
Content:
Malcolm wrote:
I can tell you for a fact that no Tibetans inside the PRC have any faith in the Panchen puppet, not matter what photos you may see.

Serenity509 said:
How can one be certain of this, without conducting some sort of survey or poll?

Malcolm wrote:
Because I know Tibetans and have travelled to Tibet and China. I bear no ill towards China or the Chinese, but I think the attempt of the Chinese Gvt. to manipulate Tibetans through Dharma is as pathetic as it is transparent. No one takes this Panchen Lama seriously. Add this to the fact that he has been associated by his PRC handlers with the Shugden Cult, and you can really understand why no one pays him any heed.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Wednesday, August 12th, 2015 at 4:25 AM
Title: Re: More Propaganda - China's Panchen Lama gets high profile

Content:

Serenity509 said:

What I recommend doing, then, is staging a boycott of the next World Buddhist Forum, and calling out any Buddhist leaders outside China who participate in it. I'm sorry if I'm wrong for making this suggestion.

Malcolm wrote:

There is no point to that. Most of the participants are not Tibetan Buddhist anyway. We know the reason for this.

Serenity509 said:

Is the China of today the China of Chairman Mao? Should it be supported in its liberalization or should it be feared? In recent years, the Chinese government has taken a supportive stance on Buddhism, and I think that should be encouraged.

Malcolm wrote:

China is suppressing Tibetan Buddhism along with Tibetans very harshly. In fact, virtually all Tibetans have all had their passports rescinded and are not allowed to travel out the PRC bloc, or even from province to province. Also China is interfering with the traditional nomadic culture of Tibet through resettlements. Lhasa is being dismantled house by house., etc.

Serenity509 said:

The United Nations is set to receive evidence that Chinese People's Armed Police troops have repeatedly opened fire on unarmed Tibetan protesters calling for religious freedom over the past seven years.

Evidence of deadly attacks by the Chinese paramilitary on Buddhist demonstrators across the Tibetan Plateau – provided by witnesses, whistleblowers, and a secret government document smuggled out of Tibet – will be presented to the UN's Committee against Torture later this year.

"The usage of live ammunition against peaceful Tibetan protestors does exist and it is also disproportionate," Prime Minister Lobsang Sangay, the head of Tibet's government-in-exile, told The Diplomat. "This is clearly in violation of international law," said the prime minister, a former research fellow at prestigious Harvard Law School who wrote his graduate thesis on Buddhism and Human Rights.

Malcolm wrote:

<http://thediplomat.com/2015/04/chinas-crackdowns-in-tibet/>

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, August 12th, 2015 at 4:31 AM

Title: Re: More Propaganda - China's Panchen Lama gets high profile

Content:

Serenity509 said:

I think we should take the thoughts and feelings of these Tibetans into account.

Malcolm wrote:

These Tibetans are just ordinary folks doing what they are told, putting on a show for western reporters at the behest of the Gvt.

Really, S509, you have no idea what you are talking about.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, August 12th, 2015 at 4:51 AM

Title: Re: More Propaganda - China's Panchen Lama gets high profile

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

There is no point to that. Most of the participants are not Tibetan Buddhist anyway. We know the reason for this.

Serenity509 said:

If the Chinese government is an enemy of Buddhism, then we should please demand that Buddhist leaders from our own traditions not participate in the World Buddhist Forum, which is sponsored by the Chinese government. People call for boycotts all the time over far more trivial matters.

Malcolm wrote:

The situation is a little more complex than just calling the Chinese Gvt. "enemies of Buddhism." China wishes to control Buddhism within its borders, and it cannot control Tibetans, so it exercises deadly force against Tibetans and Tibetan Buddhist establishments, while making a show of the fake Panchen for decorum and, it seems, to delude themselves into thinking they have a liberal policy towards Tibetan Buddhism, when in fact their policies are anything but liberal.

Serenity509 said:

It would seem a little naive to insist that the government of India has no political motives whatsoever in providing refuge for the Dalai Lama and the Tibetans in exile

Malcolm wrote:

India and its relationship to the tiny Tibetan exile community is not on the table for discussion right now.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, August 12th, 2015 at 5:18 AM

Title: Re: More Propaganda - China's Panchen Lama gets high profile

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The situation is a little more complex than just calling the Chinese Gvt. "enemies of Buddhism." China wishes to control Buddhism within its borders, and it cannot control Tibetans, so it exercises deadly force against Tibetans and Tibetan Buddhist establishments, while making a show of the fake Panchen for decorum and, it seems, to delude themselves into thinking they have a liberal policy towards Tibetan Buddhism, when in fact their policies are anything but liberal.

Serenity509 said:

I am not going to claim that China has always been a blessing for Tibet, but I will give China some credit for improving the living conditions of average Tibetans:

...

I am not going to apologize for bringing these things to our attention. Ideological or partisan thinking that ignores real world facts and the thoughts and feelings of all people involved is not helpful to Buddhism.

Malcolm wrote:

Fact 1) the Chinese refuse to educate Tibetans in Tibet. This alone undermines Tibetan Buddhism, not to mention the rest of Tibetan culture.

Fact 2) Tibetans have the highest rates of unemployment in China

Fact 3) Tibetan women are routinely forcibly sterilized

Fact 4) Mortality rates for Tibetans are higher than for average Chinese citizens

Fact 5) Nomads are forced into resettlement towns, places they do not want to live.

Fact 6) The infrastructure investments China made in Tibet were not for the purpose of benefitting Tibetans.

I could go on and on.

The fact is that China should get out of Tibet.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, August 12th, 2015 at 6:19 AM

Title: Re: More Propaganda - China's Panchen Lama gets high profile

Content:

Serenity509 said:

Without starting World War III, China cannot and will not be forced out of Tibet. One thing we can do, though, is support China's liberalization, which has in recent years

included a more positive stance toward Buddhism in general.

Malcolm wrote:

I don't care about Buddhism in general. I care about Tibetans, Tibetan culture and Tibetan Buddhism.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, August 12th, 2015 at 9:42 PM

Title: Re: New forum: Dharma Paths Practice Community

Content:

David N. Snyder said:

The current structure follows the practice related to the 8 fold path. As far as I know, all Buddhist traditions, all schools honor and value the 8 fold path, but as noted in posts previously, the best way to ensure that all schools are represented is for us to have membership from all the schools and the format and structure could still be tweaked as needed.

http://www.dhammadownload.com/index.php?title=9_points_unifying_Theravada_and_Mahayana

Malcolm wrote:

The path of Mahāyāna is not the eight-fold path. The path of the Mahāyāna is the path of the six perfections. The path of Vajrayāna in general is not the eightfold path, it is the path of creation and completion stages. The path of the Dzogchen is none of these.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, August 12th, 2015 at 9:50 PM

Title: Re: New forum: Dharma Paths Practice Community

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

I've been a vajrayana practitioner for 25 years, and situating my practice in the context of the three higher trainings (ethics, concentration, wisdom) that span the eight fold path, is a standard part of shedra, and a standard part of Tibetan mahayana and vajrayana exegesis. For me personally, if one doesn't understand this, it's hard to really understand how one is a *Buddhist* if one's main practice, like mine, is some vajrayana sadhana that was discovered in the wall of a cave as a terma. Every aspect of vajrayana practice is easily understandable in the context of the eightfold path-- though with a vajrayana view.

Malcolm wrote:

The eight-fold path does not have bodhicitta. It does not contain the practice of the perfections. It does not begin with empowerment. It does not have direct introduction.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, August 12th, 2015 at 9:53 PM

Title: Re: New forum: Dharma Paths Practice Community

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

Sure. Different paths have different schema, but they can all be understood in the context of the original eight-fold path of the historical Buddha.

Malcolm wrote:

Which Historical Buddha? Sikhin, Vipassi, Kashyapa?

The eightfold path is a Hinayāna path structure. We don't really practice that way in Mahāyāna, Vajrayāna and Dzogchen.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, August 12th, 2015 at 10:07 PM

Title: Re: New forum: Dharma Paths Practice Community

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

As I was taught, ultimate bodhicitta relates to the higher training of wisdom, and thus the right view of wisdom and intention, and relative bodhicitta relates to all parts of the eight fold path as one is practicing them with a different view and a different motivation.

And as I was taught, empowerment and direct introduction relate to the higher training of wisdom.

Malcolm wrote:

Please explain to me where bodhicitta, etc., are explained in texts dealing with the eight-fold path.

You are conflating the three trainings, śīla, samadhi and prajñā, with the eight-fold path.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, August 12th, 2015 at 10:10 PM

Title: Re: New forum: Dharma Paths Practice Community

Content:

Khalil Bodhi said:

We have a section devoted to the paramis

Malcolm wrote:

Pāramitās. Mahayānīs practice pāramitās, not paramis. If you want to be inclusive, you have to be inclusive.

Khalil Bodhi said:

The one requirement is that we ask all members to have taken refuge and try their

best to follow the five precepts.

Malcolm wrote:

As defined by whom? What does refuge mean? This is a very loaded term. Does it mean you have a groovy Tibetan or Chinese name? Does it simply mean you are interested in Buddhadharma?

As for the five precepts, whose interpretation?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, August 12th, 2015 at 10:25 PM

Title: Re: New forum: Dharma Paths Practice Community

Content:

Khalil Bodhi said:

I see you're not interested in joining Malcolm.

We would be happy to change the name to paramitas and we chose the name Dharma Paths rather than Dhamma Paths in order to be more inclusive.

There is no end to fault finding but consider this: in our own imperfect way we are trying to support the practice of the Dharma. If our mission doesn't speak to you or seems flat out wrong then who are we to deny your opinion? All are welcome if they come in good faith, take refuge in the Triple Gem and try to live their lives according to the five precepts.

Malcolm wrote:

I am point these things out to you because it is very difficult to create a so called "Pan-Buddhist" forum. E-Sangha was such an attempt and it suffered because people who follow various streams of Dharma often have little to share with each other because their views about the path are so radically different.

For example, you are coming at this from a Theravada POV, so naturally you language everything in that manner. Changing the name from Dhamma to Dharma wont change anything, no more than if I change my name from Malcolm to Phuntsok or Ananda Metteya, etc.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, August 12th, 2015 at 10:32 PM

Title: Re: The Very Idea of Buddhist History

Content:

Indrajala said:

Mahayana scriptures often speak of copying scriptures, which indicates an awareness and encouragement of writing, not memorization and transmission through oral recitation.

Malcolm wrote:

This ignores that in practice that Mahāyāna practitioners in India often memorized large portions of Mahāyāna sutra. For example, the first version of the large Prajñāpāramitā was translated into Tibetan by a translator who had committed the whole thing to memory. Eventually his translation was superseded, but for a least half a century it was the main text Tibetans used.

People are too quick to dismiss memorization and oral transmission in the presence of writing. Writing in India was used to support oral transmission, not supplant it.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, August 13th, 2015 at 2:20 AM

Title: Tibetan Lives Matter

Content:

Unknown said:

Authorities in Nangchen County, Yushu Prefecture, ordered 10 Tibetan townships to prepare for a summer cultural show, wearing “traditional expensive costumes” to show economic prosperity.

Police threaten Tibetans

The preparations were to take place between 1 and 3 August.

On the third day four police vehicles arrived with armed police, who threatened the people organising the event.

After the event took place, for unknown reasons police started to violently beat the Tibetans, injuring over 30 people.

Malcolm wrote:

And:

Officials brought the animal pelt costumes with them and forced Tibetans to wear them during their performances on stage.

Many Tibetans stopped wearing animal pelts after an appeal by the Dalai Lama in 2006; Tibetans inside Tibet burnt their furs. Since then there has been a marked decrease in Tibetans wearing animal skins.

<http://freetibet.org/news-media/na/police-beat-tibetans-after-cultural-show#.VctzaNbfRcA.facebook>

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, August 13th, 2015 at 5:53 AM

Title: Re: The Very Idea of Buddhist History

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

This ignores that in practice that Mahāyāna practitioners in India often memorized large portions of Mahāyāna sutra.

Indrajala said:

That may have been the case as it often is today, but the scriptures are organized in chapters and read like they were systematized, which indicates editorial revision and organization. Now, granted, the Vedas were and still are memorized in chapters, but they're not prose. They also were formulated at a time before writing. Buddhists rapidly took to writing and encouraged it.

Malcolm wrote:

The two are not necessarily in contradiction with one another.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, August 13th, 2015 at 7:56 AM

Title: Re: Tibetan Lives Matter

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Chinese forces open fire on Tibetan prayer gathering:
Tibetan monk shot in the head

A Tibetan monk was shot in the head and at least six others received gunshot wounds when Chinese security forces opened fire on a crowd in Tawu county, Eastern Tibet on 6 July.

Several hundred Tibetans, including monks and nuns, were gathered at the sacred Machen Pomra mountain to offer prayers to mark the 78th birthday of the Dalai Lama.

Security forces prevented the Tibetans from reaching the top. A number of them went to another part of the mountain to offer prayers.

<http://freetibet.org/news-media/na/chinese-forces-open-fire-tibetan-prayer-gathering>

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, August 13th, 2015 at 8:16 AM

Title: Re: Tibetan Lives Matter

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

Tibetan self immolator Sonam Tobgyal slams Chinese policy of oppression in final letter.

<http://www.rfa.org/english/news/tibet/message-07172015165543.html>

Malcolm wrote:

Worth repeating so that some people who do not understand may understand:

"And Tibetans who petition for the welfare of their people are met with repression and

arrest," the document says.

"The Chinese have never shown any consideration of the [Tibetan] people's welfare or wishes by addressing their concerns."

"I had to sacrifice my life to bear testimony to the world, and particularly to the Chinese government and people, that we have no freedom to express our grievances or tell the truth," Topgyal wrote.

"I appeal to my Tibetan brothers and sisters, who have the same lineage and blood, to muster the power of unity and harmony by working toward resolving Tibetan issues in a concerted effort."

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, August 13th, 2015 at 7:51 PM

Title: Re: Question about Sakya Pandita and Sutra Mahamudra

Content:

Bakmoon said:

...would they be able to attain ordinary Sutric Shamatha and Vipashyana

Malcolm wrote:

Yes.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, August 14th, 2015 at 8:46 AM

Title: Re: Forbidden Archeology

Content:

Indrajala said:

This is how they were intended to be used.

Malcolm wrote:

This notion of "intent" is very problematical.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, August 14th, 2015 at 8:47 AM

Title: Re: Forbidden Archeology

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

Which is why Thinley Norbu differentiates between knowledge that comes from karmic mind knowledge that comes from primordial wisdom.

dzogchungpa said:

OK, but how do you know which knowledge comes from primordial wisdom?

BTW, this is the academic discussion subforum.

Malcolm wrote:

Oh, right, which means it must by definition be confined to the materialistic myopia that infects Buddhist studies.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, August 14th, 2015 at 11:07 PM

Title: Re: Forbidden Archeology

Content:

Serenity509 said:

How would a Mahayana Buddhist seeking to demonstrate the historicity of the Mahayana sutras...

Malcolm wrote:

What does historicity mean to you?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, August 14th, 2015 at 11:24 PM

Title: Re: Direct introduction. What is it?

Content:

Astus said:

It could be said that in the end various teachings lead to the same realisation of suchness. The difference lies in the method, however. Dzogchen has guru yoga, Zen does not. Zen teaches sudden enlightenment, Dzogchen does not. Dzogchen is based on tantras, Zen is not. Zen has nothing to transmit, Dzogchen does. Etc.

Malcolm wrote:

You are suffering from a misconception about the relationship between texts and Dzogchen. Vairocana writes in The Final Utterly Secret Unsurpassed Mind Tantra of Vairocana:

The Pellucid Transcendent State of Samantabhadra asserts that buddhahood cannot be obtained through gathering accumulations and purifying obscurations caused by samsaric impediments.

If one wishes to attain buddhahood, three recognitions are necessary. Those are: the result does not arise from a cause, buddhahood does not arise from the mind and the intimate instruction does not arise from scripture.

Furthermore, all buddhas do not attain buddhahood gradually, but attain buddhahood instantly. If recognized in the morning, there is buddhahood in the morning. If recognized in the evening, there is buddhahood in the evening. Vajrasattva said:

Buddhahood is not attained through purification [sangs].

Through recognizing the three kinds of self-origination,

pristine consciousness expands [rgyas] from vidyā.
Manifest Buddhahood is in three instants.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, August 14th, 2015 at 11:33 PM

Title: Re: Forbidden Archeology

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

I think the more fundamental question is why attempt to demonstrate the historicity of any dharma? For academics, perhaps, but why for practitioners?

The project of locating things in history of validate them doesn't exist in a vacuum. In modern concepts of history are implicit a whole spectrum of ideas about progress, the nature of man, causality, etc. It's tricky business.

Serenity509 said:

How would a Mahayana Buddhist seeking to demonstrate the historicity of the Mahayana sutras...

Malcolm wrote:

What does historicity mean to you?

Yes, our concept is based on the idea of chronicle [lo rgyus], at this time, when beings live this long, there was this teacher, who had this name, who gave this teachings to this retinue and so on. This is sufficient.

In other words, the mere fact that a sutra or a tantra starts with *evam maya śrutam ekasmin* is sufficient for us to know that we are now in Buddhatime. We don't have worry about anything else.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, August 15th, 2015 at 3:42 AM

Title: Re: Direct introduction. What is it?

Content:

Karma Dondrup Tashi said:

That's certainly the finitive view.

In the seen there is only the seen ; in the heard, there is only the heard ; in the sensed, there is only the sensed ; in the mentally perceived, there is only the mentally perceived.
Buddha Shâkyamuni : Ksudrakâgama (Khuddaka-nikâya), I.10.

However:

Monks, I do not say that final knowledge is achieved all at once. On the contrary, final knowledge is achieved by gradual training, by gradual practice, by gradual progress.
Buddha Shâkyamuni : Madhyamâgama (Kîâtâgiri Sûtra, 22).

Malcolm wrote:

Both of these sūtras are Hinayāna and should be understood accordingly.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, August 15th, 2015 at 6:35 PM

Title: Re: Forbidden Archeology

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

In other words, the mere fact that a sutra or a tantra starts with *evam maya śrutam ekasmin* is sufficient for us to know that we are now in Buddhatime. We don't have worry about anything else.

Indrajala said:

Okay, but let's just be clear that the academy works from a secular perspective, which is basically conventional reality, i.e., how ordinary beings perceive time and causality.

Malcolm wrote:

Which ordinary beings? For example, animals and devas, while ordinary beings, have totally different perspectives about time and causality. What you really mean is the conventional reality shared by a certain segment of western educated men and women who agree to a certain number of facts and proceed to offer analysis of past events based on those agreed upon facts [which often shift or are revised].

Indrajala said:

I'm aware that there's other perspectives which yield their unique fruits, but the academy has a working model based on conventional perspective.

Malcolm wrote:

A conventional perspective, not THE conventional perspective.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, August 15th, 2015 at 8:31 PM

Title: Re: Forbidden Archeology

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

What you really mean is the conventional reality shared by a certain segment of western educated men and women who agree to a certain number of facts and proceed to offer analysis of past events based on those agreed upon facts [which often shift or are revised].

Indrajala said:

No, it is actually a lot more definite and reasoned than that. It is the evidence based

approach to history and philology which assumes a chronology or linear historical development. This sort of perspective allows for the study of multiple religions without accepting their epistemologies and ontologies. The evidence based approach demands criticism and revision when new evidence or good conclusions are presented.

Malcolm wrote:

As I said, "a conventional reality shared by a certain segment of western educated men and women who agree to a certain number of facts [which often shift or are revised]."

All you did was restate my basic statement.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, August 15th, 2015 at 9:31 PM

Title: Re: Forbidden Archeology

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

That said, it's never been clear to me why the study of Buddhist texts is limited to approaches that seem primarily historical and linguistic.

Malcolm wrote:

Whose history? Certainly not mine.

There are gaping holes in this approach to Buddhadharma, oh wait, it has nothing to do with Buddhadharma...

There is of course no problem with people who wish to spend their time engaged in such activities, but it really does have very little to do with Buddhadharma.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, August 15th, 2015 at 9:49 PM

Title: Re: Forbidden Archeology

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

As I said, "a conventional reality shared by a certain segment of western educated men and women who agree to a certain number of facts [which often shift or are revised]."

All you did was restate my basic statement.

Indrajala said:

No, Malcolm, the conventional reality as we understand it is generally shared with people from other cultures as well.

I'm not sympathetic to people who want to believe the world really is flat because scripture says it is and want to find a way to rationalize that despite their experience and knowledge showing otherwise, or that all the miracles attributed to certain holy figures

really must have happened because it is in a book. Such literalism is silly.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, Jeff. Conventional reality is fuzzy, shaped by deluded perceptions and definitions constructed on the basis of those deluded perceptions.

Those conventional realities are by definition rooted in subjective delusions. You are making the basic error of assuming that conventional = real.

It would be better for you to just make a western materialist claim than trying to predicate your argument on Madhyamaka truth claim categories. You are making truth claims about events in time and space from a western physicalist perspective because that is what you believe.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, August 15th, 2015 at 11:04 PM

Title: Re: Forbidden Archeology

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, Jeff. Conventional reality is fuzzy, shaped by deluded perceptions and definitions constructed on the basis of those deluded perceptions.

Those conventional realities are by definition rooted in subjective delusions. You are making the basic error of assuming that conventional = real.

Indrajala said:

Where did I say anything of the sort? Conventional reality is how ordinary beings perceive it, which by definition means a biased and distorted perspective, but nevertheless that's why we call it conventional and not absolute or ultimate. Most people do not have access to any other perspective and hence we work within a perspective useful to most people, not a select few.

Malcolm wrote:

My point, simply, is that there are multiple conventional perspectives, even among human beings.

Indrajala said:

It wasn't so long ago you were expounding a secular line on the historicity of Buddhist scriptures. You might change your opinions yet again in a few years or sooner!

Malcolm wrote:

I came to the conclusion that such lines of thinking were useless for practitioners.

As for my opinions, maybe, in this case, I doubt it.

Indrajala said:

My own view is one of "it depends on what perspective you take". I'm not a materialist as I believe in the causal efficacy of immaterial forces like language, logic and spiritual experiences. However, these points have little bearing on an evidence-based analysis of history run through the gauntlet of precise philology. Buddhist history can be charted out according to a chronology that corresponds well with other parallel developments in the world, like rise and fall of the Mauryas and Kushanas, or the introduction of Hellenistic elements into Indian civilization. That means linear time and cause followed by effect. This analysis has its limits, but it works and yields good results.

Malcolm wrote:

All of this is just chasing shadows...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, August 15th, 2015 at 11:06 PM

Title: Re: Q re Mind Transmission of Nyingma Kama

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

So, I'm reading about the mind transmission of the Nyingma Kama, and the text is discussing the three manifestations of the mind transmission of the Buddhas.

Regarding the "manifestation appearing in the matter of speech emanations", the text describes a syllable AH manifesting. I'm trying to get my mind around whether the intention of the text is that a sound appears or an actual symbolic syllable, and if later, why this isn't a symbolic transmission as opposed to a mind transmission?

Malcolm wrote:

What book are you reading.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, August 15th, 2015 at 11:15 PM

Title: Re: Forbidden Archeology

Content:

Dan74 said:

That's always been the sticking point for me - what use are the secular academic findings (regarding Buddhism) to my practice? Maybe Jeff and other people who are interested in the academic studies of Buddhism can share their perspectives.

Indrajala said:

If your goal is liberation from saṃsāra, then maybe not so much, but then you might have to ask the question what did saṃsāra originally mean and how did it change over time, and what did it come to mean to different Buddhist thinkers?

As one example, what is the relationship of saṃsāra to astrology? Originally Buddhists rejected astrology and said it was basically inappropriate nonsense, but that changed over time (a parallel development can be traced in India), and by the sixth century you see the suggestion that astrology is in fact quite important and knowledge of it is necessary for liberation. This is even more evident in Tantric traditions in which rites have to be performed according to an astrological schedule.

Malcolm wrote:

Buddhist monks may have rejected astrology as a way of making a living, but Buddhist lay people never did — why would they? It's too important scheduling rituals, calendars and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, August 15th, 2015 at 11:17 PM

Title: Re: Q re Mind Transmission of Nyingma Kama

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

Treasury of Precious Qualities v2 appendix 1

So, I'm reading about the mind transmission of the Nyingma Kama, and the text is discussing the three manifestations of the mind transmission of the Buddhas.

Regarding the "manifestation appearing in the matter of speech emanations", the text describes a syllable AH manifesting. I'm trying to get my mind around whether the intention of the text is that a sound appears or an actual symbolic syllable, and if later, why this isn't a symbolic transmission as opposed to a mind transmission?

Malcolm wrote:

What book are you reading.

Oh, I see the problem you are having — this should understood in terms of sound, lights and rays. The speech manifestation is sound manifesting as rays.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, August 16th, 2015 at 12:54 AM

Title: Re: Q re Mind Transmission of Nyingma Kama

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

That's sort of what I figured. Thanks.

Malcolm wrote:

Oh, I see the problem you are having — this should understood in terms of sound, lights and rays. The speech manifestation is sound manifesting as rays.

The principle of sound, light and rays is more clearly explained in Bon Dzogchen like ZZNG, it but it is an important principle in all Dzogchen teachings.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, August 16th, 2015 at 12:58 AM

Title: Re: Pure Land Buddhism and the Pali Canon

Content:

Serenity509 said:

Walpola Rahula demonstrated that the Pali scriptures, rather than being of a lesser vehicle, contain the Bodhisattva path:

PorkChop said:

No, he didn't. There is no bodhicitta in the Pali scriptures. The Theravadan idea of the bodhisattva path is almost completely undeveloped. In modern times, these articles from Rahula are not used in the sense of ecumenicism, they are mostly used as an attempt to show how unnecessary Mahayana sutras are.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, August 16th, 2015 at 12:58 AM

Title: Re: Pure Land Buddhism and the Pali Canon

Content:

Serenity509 said:

Walpola Rahula demonstrated that the Pali scriptures, rather than being of a lesser vehicle, contain the Bodhisattva path:

Malcolm wrote:

No, he did not demonstrate this. The Hinayāna canon does not contain the bodhisattva path by any stretch of the imagination.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, August 16th, 2015 at 1:00 AM

Title: Re: Pure Land Buddhism and the Pali Canon

Content:

PorkChop said:

There is no proof that the Agamas are any later than the Pali. The oldest existing copies of Pali suttas are actually quite late.

Malcolm wrote:

There is no proof that the Hinayana canon is earlier than Mahāyāna sutras at all.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, August 16th, 2015 at 7:16 AM

Title: Re: Forbidden Archeology

Content:

Indrajala said:

However, natal predictions and electional astrology is another matter which early Buddhists rejected.

Malcolm wrote:

Buddhist laity in the 4th -- 1st century BCE? Why would they?

We know quite well that Buddhist monks are forbidden from engaging in prognostic disciplines (which are not confined to astrology), but for what reason can we believe that the laity would refrain from their exercise? Doesn't make sense.

The problem with your text critical approach is that it ignores subaltern culture and tradition. It is myopic in so far that it declares that, without a contemporary artifact, third country report and so on, this or that thing did not happen. It is an approach very much in line with logical positivism, which is why I constantly criticize it as materialist. This is why I criticized Daverupa's approach to the Pali canon.

For example, the problem we have in studying pre-Buddhist Tibet is that the reliable textual record can go no further back than 7th century CE, based on criteria with your methodology will accept.

Our attempts to understand the pre-7th century culture of Tibet and Zhang Zhung can only be mined from Bon and Buddhist sources that are quite late, and pretty much everyone agrees that we can only make broad conjectures based on systematic themes found [mainly] in Bon literature [which is very understudied and poorly understood in the West] which clearly differentiates native Tibetan cultural patterns and practices from imported Indian, as well as Chinese, patterns.

But if we accept your methodology, we can say nothing of this culture prior to its being noticed by Tang Chinese bureaucrats and Arab generals. But obviously there was a culture there, and a people, and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, August 16th, 2015 at 10:10 PM

Title: Re: Forbidden Archeology

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

We know quite well that Buddhist monks are forbidden from engaging in prognostic disciplines (which are not confined to astrology), but for what reason can we believe that the laity would refrain from their exercise? Doesn't make sense.

Indrajala said:

Evidence suggests they did, which is why it is prohibited in early Buddhist literature, but the extent of it among laity is ambiguous and can only be guessed at.

Malcolm wrote:

Every prohibition points to popular engagement, for example, drinking alcohol in its various forms. Prohibitions point to criticism of existing practices.

Indrajala said:

The problem with your text critical approach is that it ignores subaltern culture and tradition. It is myopic in so far that it declares that, without a contemporary artifact, third country report and so on, this or that thing did not happen.

No, it doesn't work like this. It simply says if there is no evidence, then you cannot make anything more than speculative claims. Even if evidence is available, one has to ask how credible and reliable it is. If you took Taranatha's history at face value you would be led to believe that thousands of arhats once went flying through the sky literally. This doesn't sound like real life to me, but then other historical details can be discerned from these narratives, like names and events.

Malcolm wrote:

Even if you read the Pali Canon you can get this idea. "This doesn't sound like real life to me..." is merely an expression of your positivist bias.

Indrajala said:

It is an approach very much in line with logical positivism, which is why I constantly criticize it as materialist.

I once met an older monk in Bodhgaya who said he was meditating out in the mountains one day and encountered goddesses who had been present when the Buddha walked the earth. I'm quite willing to accept he had this experience (meeting spirits or gods in the wilderness is a common experience around the world), but if he reported details of what the Buddha said based on the testimonies of these goddesses he encountered, how would I be able to gauge or evaluate these new accounts? I couldn't reasonably do this, nor attempt to enter it into the objective historical record. This is not how the study of history works. It is evidence based and all evidence must be evaluated through various means.

Malcolm wrote:

He could have written down what these devis said, and then they would become part of our tradition. That is very much how the treasure tradition works.

Indrajala said:

But if we accept your methodology, we can say nothing of this culture prior to its being noticed by Tang Chinese bureaucrats and Arab generals. But obviously there was a culture there, and a people, and so on.

At best we can say that such and such was believed about pre-Buddhist Tibet by Tibetans in the X century and perhaps some of the details are in fact correct, but we cannot definitively say so.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, exactly, this is about as interesting as a wet rag. This is one approach to history. Thankfully, it is not the only one.

Indrajala said:

It isn't so black and white like you paint it. I'm sure you understand this and instead you're just playing your role as a religious teacher, but like I said you change your opinions every few years so maybe in five or six years this discussion will look very different from your side.

Malcolm wrote:

I am not playing religious teacher. I just finally came to see how crippled the western narrative about Buddhist history really is.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, August 16th, 2015 at 10:12 PM

Title: Re: More Propaganda - China's Panchen Lama gets high profile

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

I'm throwing myself in the fire here... but here it goes...

The reality of the situation is that new forms of Tibetan Buddhism are forming within PRC from a combination of Beijing's policies against traditional Tibetan Buddhism and the rise of a Chinese middle class with an interest and need for spiritual things, and money to spend on it, not to mention Tibetans floating in cultural and religious limbo as China destroys their culture. Of course these "new forms" aren't related to the "old forms" that traditional Tibetan Buddhists would relate to and consider legitimate, but from an anthropological vantage point, they're every bit as legitimate as the old forms that have unbroken lineages.

From my side, this is sort of important to keep in mind. Of course China identifying and promoting a fake Panchen Lama is a political stunt and a tactic to destabilize the seat of the Dalai Lama, and thus Tibetan Buddhism as a whole. And of course people are intimidated into recognizing this fake Panchen Lama. And of course it is an illegitimate lineage. At the same time, there are certainly people who relate to him in a way that they would consider genuine.

This goes for a whole spectrum of other nontraditional forms of Buddhism created by opportunists, some of them more spiritually genuine than others, some more predatory than others.

The only reason I bring this up is that it's a difficult set of fault lines. As one directly attacks Beijing's fake Panchen lama, one is fighting for the legitimacy of his lineage and indirectly of that of the Dalai Lama, and thus for all of traditional Tibetan Buddhism. At the same time, one is fighting against what at least some people consider to be

legitimate.

This might seem like a moot point, but look at all the fake lamas that people have legitimized in the West. NKT. Geshe Michael Roach. People are willing to go down with the ship for these things, and I suspect that's the case in China as well. At least that's what I'm told by people who did Buddhist ethnography over there. Out the destruction of '59 a lot of very strange things have been created.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, August 16th, 2015 at 10:31 PM

Title: Re: Bodhicitta - What Is It?

Content:

Khalil Bodhi said:

Namo Buddhaya!

As a result of my renewed interest in tonglen practice and lojong I find myself puzzling again over the ideas of absolute and relative bodhicitta. Am I wrong to see bodhicitta as more or less karuna paramita? When I read the lojong commentaries it really isn't made any clearer which makes sense as they seem to be explaining it on its own terms without reference to the Pali Canon. Thanks in advance. Sukhita hontu!

Mettaya,

KB

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, bodhicitta is not karuna pāramitā.

Relative bodhicitta is first, the motivation to attain buddhahood based on love and compassion for all sentient beings, and then engaging in the perfections to achieve that buddhahood, practicing the six pāramitās: generosity, discipline, patience and diligence, concentration (of which tonglen is the core), and prajñāpāramita. Prajñāpāramita is ultimate bodhicitta.

Ultimate bodhicitta is Mahāyāna emptiness free from all proliferation and the means to realize it, śamatha and vipaśyāna.

M

Tonglen is strictly part of relative bodhicitta and is a means to rouse the courage to

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, August 16th, 2015 at 10:33 PM

Title: Re: More Propaganda - China's Panchen Lama gets high profile

Content:
Urgyen Dorje said:
Malcolm...

Malcolm wrote:
It was a joke...

Author: Malcolm
Date: Sunday, August 16th, 2015 at 11:50 PM
Title: Re: Forbidden Archeology
Content:
Urgyen Dorje said:
I find it interesting to see Buddhists do the same.

Malcolm wrote:
Whose writhing?

This idea takes the base line that plastic artifacts are the defining feature of determining the past. However, there is an old adage in Anthropology, "pots are not people."

The paucity of the text critical approach is that it cannot perceive anything outside its horizon of texts. Everything beyond the text is cognitively closed to the text critical method.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Monday, August 17th, 2015 at 12:34 AM
Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions
Content:
steveb1 said:
We now know that the earth and the star systems are ancient and vast in a way incomprehensible to the pre-scientific cultures...

Malcolm wrote:
Huh? Have you read the Mahābharata, or even the Pali Canon?

14 billion years is nothing compared to an Asamkhya kalpa.

To give you a picture, just check this wikipedia entry on kalpas:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kalpa_%28aeon%29

Author: Malcolm
Date: Monday, August 17th, 2015 at 12:34 AM
Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

steveb1 said:

We now know that the earth and the star systems are ancient and vast in a way incomprehensible to the pre-scientific cultures...

Malcolm wrote:

Huh? Have you read the Mahābharata, or even the Pali Canon?

14 billion years is nothing compared to an Asamkhya kalpa.

To give you a picture, just check this wikipedia entry on kalpas:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kalpa_%28aeon%29

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, August 17th, 2015 at 1:37 AM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

I'm pretty sure there are no variants of Santeria that don't rely on animal sacrifice...

]

Malcolm wrote:

Nope, none. It's chickens all the way down...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, August 17th, 2015 at 2:02 AM

Title: Re: Forbidden Archeology

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

As a science educator and a Buddhist, I think there's a fork in the road and we have to make a choice. What MiphamFan says is exactly what Ganden Tri Rinpoche told us when he taught us mandala offerings and the abhidharmic cosmology that goes along with that-- these are all just representations of reality, so there is no contradiction. Kongtrul's Myriad World presents that perspective as well. No need to reconcile scientific cosmology with abhidharmic, or abhidharmic with Kalachakra, and so on.

Malcolm wrote:

The Meru Cosmology we use in Mandala offerings, for example, is not the universe developed from the shared karma of sentient beings, it is instead a representation of merit. This is not a modern explanation.

Urgyen Dorje said:

I think it's important to bring this up here, as I think our compulsion to locate things in history is a reflection of this same materialist confusion. Malcolm has done a great job pointing this out. There is no absolute representation of history, but rather, a space full of possible representations of history from different perspectives.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, for example, we have the official Buddhist history of Tibet [as favored by Bob Thurman], where Tibetans were ignorant savages prior to the 7th century, with no knowledge of writing and so on. But we can clearly see that this official Tibetan history was constructed to obliterate Tibetan cultural debts to Zhang Zhung.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, August 17th, 2015 at 3:06 AM

Title: Re: what was first?

Content:

amanitamusc said:

What arrived in Tibet first Mahyoga or. Ati Yoga?

Malcolm wrote:

They arrived at the same time.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, August 17th, 2015 at 3:18 AM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

Caodemarte said:

I find that kind of neat!

Malcolm wrote:

You find the possession of people by powerful worldly spirits "neat"?

I would say it is very dangerous.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, August 17th, 2015 at 3:37 AM

Title: Re: RuShi ?

Content:

heart said:

Keeping the lineage in Vajrayana means to first have the realization and then by your teacher being forced to expound the teachings through empowerment's, commentaries and instructions .

/magnus[/quote/]

Oh dear magnus. A true teacher would never force a student to do anything.

I remember specifically being on retreat with Chnn in 1986 and he specifically teaching his students to not force themselves to do anything. With utmost respect, I disagree with this.

Malcolm wrote:

He is talking about the teacher being forced, not the students.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, August 17th, 2015 at 3:56 AM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

Caodemarte said:

There are at least 108 trillion dharma doors.

Malcolm wrote:

Santeria is not a Dharma gate at all, unless you consider rebirth in the three lower realms an ideal place to go.

Caodemarte said:

I don't necessarily believe that Tibetan oracles or Evangelicals or Santeria priestesses are, in fact, possessed by outside spirits (If that is, in fact, what is claimed) so I don't worry too much about the dangers, especially as I am unaware of any threat or ill will directed to me.

Malcolm wrote:

By definition, oracles are possessed by mundane spirits, for example, Gyalpo Pehar in the case of the Nechung oracle, or Tseringma in the case of the Tseringma oracle, etc.

It is height of ignorance to believe that mundane spirits are satisfied with blood, as described here:

The orishas or ancestors eat the blood, and the people eat the meat. It is an act of communion with the spirits.

<http://santeriachurch.org/our-services/ritual-and-sacrifice/>

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, August 17th, 2015 at 3:59 AM

Title: Re: what was first?

Content:

amanitamusc said:

What arrived in Tibet first Mahayoga or. Ati Yoga?

Malcolm wrote:

They arrived at the same time.

amanitamusc said:

OK thanks, now what version of Guhyagarbha commentary came first? Did the Zur Mahayoga influence the Ati versions or vice versa or not.

Malcolm wrote:

The one by the Indian Lilavajra [its very short].

Ati, BTW, was already in Tibet via Zhang Zhung sNyan rGyud. You could argue that other Bon cycles analogous to Mahayoga also existed in Tibet prior to the arrival of Chos.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, August 17th, 2015 at 4:27 AM

Title: Re: what was first?

Content:

amanitamusc said:

Has the Lilavajra version been translated into Tibetan, English or other?

How long of text is it?

Do you believe all other versions were influenced by it?

Malcolm wrote:

It is very short, and I don't think it has been translated, and it is very much a mahayoga approach.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, August 17th, 2015 at 4:31 AM

Title: Re: 4 Buddha activities

Content:

cck123 said:

Hi,

how can you perform buddha activities to help others? Can only a realized master do this? Or do the protectors perform activities for you until you can do this yourself? Should we only make wishes or mantras or should we train in the activities as best as we can?

I would be glad for your answers...

Best wishes

Chris

Malcolm wrote:

When your practice bears fruit, the four activities will be taken care of automatically. No need for a specific rite or ritual.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, August 17th, 2015 at 4:38 AM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

Unknown said:

tol·er·ance

'täl(ə)rəns/Submit

noun

1.

the ability or willingness to tolerate something, in particular the existence of opinions or behavior that one does not necessarily agree with.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, August 17th, 2015 at 9:14 AM

Title: Re: Forbidden Archeology

Content:

Indrajala said:

It is much simpler to just make a distinction between the emic and etic.

Malcolm wrote:

It's a biased distinction, and also misplaced. The so-called "etic" approach arrogates to itself a scientific veneer when in fact it is nothing of the kind. It merely replaces the biases of the researcher/research community for the lore and traditions of the person/group under study.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, August 17th, 2015 at 8:40 PM

Title: Re: Manjushrimitra and Garab Dorje

Content:

kalden yungdrung said:

- Is this debate noted somewhere?

KY

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, it is recounted in the lo rgyus chen mo, the Great Chronicle of the Vima Nything and elsewhere.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, August 17th, 2015 at 9:15 PM

Title: Re: Forbidden Archeology

Content:

Indrajala said:

Having logical proofs and evidence (satellite photos) of a spherical earth disproves Buddhism's flat earth cosmology.

Malcolm wrote:

This is a straw man. First of all, the Meru cosmology is fundamentally a moral cosmology. Second, it is not the only cosmology in Buddhist texts, merely the most referenced because of its axial nature.

As you are probably aware, E. Henning disputes the notion for example, that the authors of the Kalacakra root tantra could have believed in a flat earth cosmology, because their calculations alone contradict this notion — thus the modified Meru cosmology found in the Kalacakra is there for symbolic purposes, but is not taken literally.

The Meru cosmology presents an Indo-centric view of the ancient world, embellished with Indian aesthetics. While some, like Vasubandhu, may have taken it literally, there is sufficient evidence to suggest that not everyone in ancient India did.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, August 17th, 2015 at 9:24 PM

Title: Re: Djang Chub Dorje and Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche

Content:

kalden yungdrung said:

Tashi delek DW members,

Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche assisted in Tibet some time ago Djang Chub Dorje, who was a direct disciple of Shardza Tashi Gyaltzen Rinpoche (Rainbow Body in 1936) Djang Chub Dorje received from Shardza Rinpoche New Bon or Bon gsar teachings. In Bon gsar are many Vajrayana deities venerated and Guru Rinpoche is here welcomed.

- Is there something known about the time from Namkha Norbu Rinpoche and Djang Chub Dorje ? Interesting to know if Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche got some teachings from Djang Chub Dorje or in what way he did assist Djang Chub Dorje.

Mutsug Marro

KY

Malcolm wrote:

ChNN received most of Chanchub Dorje's termas from Chanchub Dorje's son. What he received directly from Chanchub Dorje was the empowerment of Zhitro, as well as

direct introduction. This story is pretty famous.

IN terms of assisting Chanchub Dorje, Norbu Rinpoche helped in Chanchub Dorje's clinic for roughly six months.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, August 17th, 2015 at 10:37 PM

Title: Re: Djang Chub Dorje and Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche

Content:

kalden yungdrung said:

Tashi delek DW members,

Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche assisted in Tibet some time ago Djang Chub Dorje, who was a direct disciple of Shardza Tashi Gyaltzen Rinpoche (Rainbow Body in 1936)

Djang Chub Dorje received from Shardza Rinpoche New Bon or Bon gsar teachings. In Bon gsar are many Vajrayana deities venerated and Guru Rinpoche is here welcomed.

- Is there something known about the time from Namkha Norbu Rinpoche and Djang Chub Dorje ? Interesting to know if Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche got some teachings from Djang Chub Dorje or in what way he did assist Djang Chub Dorje.

Mutsug Marro

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Malcolm wrote:

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IN terms of assisting Chanchub Dorje, Norbu Rinpoche helped in Chanchub Dorje's clinic for roughly six months.

kalden yungdrung said:

Tashi delek N,

Thanks for the replies.

The world of Dzogchen is small, despite the teachings are great.

It is amazing how Bon and Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche are connected.

He is a Tibetan, who has a positive opinion about Bon.

_ Can you mention some more terma's which Namkhai Nrobu Rinpoche did receive ?

Mutsug Marro
KY

Malcolm wrote:

I am pretty sure that Norbu Rinpoche received all of Changchub Dorje's termas from Changchub Dorje's son. I don't know if any Bon termas are included there, I am not sure, but I don't think so.

However, there is no real difference between Dzogchen in Bon and Chos apart from lineage. Meaning is the same.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, August 17th, 2015 at 10:39 PM

Title: Re: Top 5 Dzogchen books

Content:

ngodrup said:

Cho Ying Dzod

Rigpai Chertong

Nang Jang

What else do you need?

Malcolm wrote:

Original Dzogchen texts, like kun byed rgyal po, sgra thal 'gyur, rig pa rang shar, etc.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, August 17th, 2015 at 11:16 PM

Title: Re: Forbidden Archeology

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

First of all, the Meru cosmology is fundamentally a moral cosmology.

Indrajala said:

No, it isn't. It was clearly believed by Buddhist writers in India to be a physical world atop which the sun and moon as discs circuited around. Did you read my blog post?

Malcolm wrote:

That does not matter.

It is clearly a moral cosmology in so far as lower births are below the surface, humans [along with some animals] live on the surface of the four continents, whilst devas live above the surface in various palaces on the slopes of Meru.

Indrajala said:

As you are probably aware, E. Henning disputes the notion for example, that the authors of the Kalacakra root tantra could have believed in a flat earth cosmology, because their calculations alone contradict this notion — thus the modified Meru cosmology found in the Kalacakra is there for symbolic purposes, but is not taken literally.

I haven't looked at the Kalacakra in any great detail, but I've read his work on the matter.

I think the simplest explanation is that mathematical astronomy or something based on it, all originally meant for a spherical earth, had to be accounted for given its universal applicability and accuracy, in a flat earth Mt. Meru cosmology. By the 11th century presumably such knowledge was readily accessible and thus anyone with an interest in astrology and astronomy would have been aware of the requisite math involved.

Malcolm wrote:

And that math would have been known where and by whom? Nalanda scholars among others. If you read Henning carefully, he points out that two cosmological accounts are given.

Indrajala said:

The Meru cosmology presents an Indo-centric view of the ancient world, embellished with Indian aesthetics. While some, like Vasubandhu, may have taken it literally, there is sufficient evidence to suggest that not everyone in ancient India did.

Plenty of non-Buddhist astronomers in India were quite clear that the earth is in fact spherical, but as far as I can tell, Buddhist writers did not display much awareness of a spherical earth.

Malcolm wrote:

Textual myopia once again. If it is not in a text, it does not exist for you.

Indrajala said:

To suggest otherwise is just wishful thinking. Few Buddhists want to admit their Buddhist predecessors in India were somewhat scientifically handicapped.

Malcolm wrote:

No, it is an inference. But the problem with your method, once again, is that it is essential Carvaka in its point of view, you only accept direct perception as an authority.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, August 18th, 2015 at 12:31 AM

Title: Re: the psychedelic community: pros and cons

Content:

Luke said:

Another "pro" of the psychedelic community is the quality of art that it produces.

Are any modern Buddhist painters as skilled or as interesting as Alex Grey?

Malcolm wrote:
Etc.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Tuesday, August 18th, 2015 at 12:44 AM
Title: Re: Question Zilnon Namkha Dorje & Terma
Content:
Nosta said:

I am reading a book where they mention the name of Zilnon Namkha Dorje, saying that it was a tertön with termas regarding the future. I wonder about such prophecies and the time they are about to happen. While searching on google I don't find information about that. Anyone here could give me some help?

Thanks

Malcolm wrote:
http://www.rigpawiki.org/index.php?title=Chime_Soktik

Author: Malcolm
Date: Tuesday, August 18th, 2015 at 1:19 AM
Title: Re: the psychedelic community: pros and cons
Content:
Luke said:

^Those are some cool paintings, Malcolm! Could you tell us the names of the artists who did them, please?

Malcolm wrote:
just run a search on google, modern tibetan painting

Author: Malcolm
Date: Tuesday, August 18th, 2015 at 2:10 AM
Title: Re: the psychedelic community: pros and cons
Content:
Luke said:

^Those are some cool paintings, Malcolm! Could you tell us the names of the artists who did them, please?

Malcolm wrote:

just run a search on google, modern tibetan painting

Luke said:

I searched "modern tibetan painting" on Google Images, but none of the paintings you posted came up.

It would be nice if you could type the artists' names since you posted their paintings.

Malcolm wrote:

https://www.google.com/search?q=modern+tibetan+painting&client=safari&rls=en&source=lnms&tbn=isch&sa=X&ved=0CAgQ_AUoAmoVChMllabWqtuwxwIVSY8-Ch1SmQUB&biw=1373&bih=791

I did not notice the names. But you can find them from this search.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, August 18th, 2015 at 2:19 AM

Title: Re: Tibetan Lives Matter

Content:

Luke said:

Yes, indeed Tibetan lives matter! It's terrible that the Tibetans are still so harshly repressed by the PRC government.

But, Malcolm, what do you think should be done about this? What is a possible way to resolve these on-going problems in Tibet?

Malcolm wrote:

Witnessing. Not allowing it to be swept under the rug.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, August 18th, 2015 at 3:21 AM

Title: Re: Tibetan Lives Matter

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Witnessing. Not allowing it to be swept under the rug.

Luke said:

A few years ago, you seemed totally hopeless about Tibet and basically said that nothing could be done.

What gave you a change of heart and renewed your optimism?

Malcolm wrote:

I never said anything could be done. But I never said we should remain indifferent.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, August 18th, 2015 at 9:48 AM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

DGA said:

Malcolm, is it your position that the spirits propitiated by these persons are real--more specifically, that they are real in the way that their advocates say they are?

Malcolm wrote:

Sure.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, August 18th, 2015 at 9:54 AM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

tingdzin said:

Everybody trying to push their own beliefs on others is FAR more a cause of suffering in the modern world than animal sacrifice, which by the way, is not only a traditional part of currently unpopular religions like Islam and Santeria, but also Judaism.

.

Malcolm wrote:

Notice that all those places in the world where animal sacrifice is practiced as a religious custom have a great deal more strife, violence, and problems. Coincidence? I think not.

There is no difference between Halal and Kosher. And yes, animal sacrifice in Judaism is horrible and widespread also.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, August 18th, 2015 at 9:55 AM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

tingdzin said:

In Tibet, schools that were the most concerned with doctrinal orthodoxy (and political power) tended to frown upon it more strongly while those schools which tended rely

more on spiritually accomplished masters didn't seem to have had too much of a problem with it. .

Malcolm wrote:

Ummm, this does not make any sense considering the role of oracles in the Ganden Phodrang.

And show me one Tibetan school that does not rely on "spiritually accomplished masters", at least in theory.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, August 18th, 2015 at 10:14 AM

Title: Re: Forbidden Archeology

Content:

Indrajala said:

The evidence based approach is not necessarily materialistic.

Malcolm wrote:

It is necessarily materialistic.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, August 18th, 2015 at 9:16 PM

Title: Re: Forbidden Archeology

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

It is necessarily materialistic.

Indrajala said:

So I suppose you believe the earth is flat because scripture says so despite materialist science proposing otherwise? How about evolution? One might easily imagine you deny this too because it stems from a materialist tradition.

Malcolm wrote:

I have never made any kind of claim that resembles this. You are tilting windmills. I have only referred to different cosmologies in order to point out that they are not fixed frames of reference in pan-Buddhist doctrine. The cosmology of the Avatamsaka or the Realms and Transformations of Sound Tantra [sgra thal gyur] in no way resembles the cosmology of the Kosha.

One of the key features of the Carvaka school is that they reject all authorities other than direct perception.

The consequence of the methodology advocated by you is largely the same. Ergo,

whether you intend it to be or not, your methodology is rooted in the western tradition of logical positivism, it is therefore materialist, even if you are not in terms of your personal beliefs a materialist or a physicalist.

"Evidence-based" is a nice catch phrase, for example, it is used in medicine quite a bit these days too, given that medicine is the origin of the term. To give you an example of the problem:

Evidence-based medicine is controversial not because people disagree about whether medical decisions ought to incorporate the best available evidence, but because they disagree about how narrowly evidence should be defined.¹⁴ Neither advocates nor opponents of evidence-based medicine consistently differentiate between the everyday meaning of evidence and the evidence of evidence-based medicine that refers only to the results of particular types of research.^{12,15} This persistent confusion makes the label evidence-based medicine divisive, and authors on both sides of the debate have suggested that it be discarded or replaced.

http://journals.lww.com/academicmedicine/Fulltext/2007/03000/Viewpoint__Moving_Beyond_Evidence_Based_Medicine.15.aspx

It is much the same when you used the term "evidence-based" approach to Buddhist studies, or any historical inquiry. How wide or narrow is the evidence? This is where bias comes in, yours, mine, everyone's.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, August 18th, 2015 at 9:18 PM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

MiphamFan said:

Malcolm, so is it your perspective that outright animal sacrifice like in Santeria or Abrahamic religions feeds negative spirits more than just killing animals?

It is interesting that these sacrifices seem to mainly involve draining the animal of its blood.

Malcolm wrote:

Absolutely.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, August 18th, 2015 at 9:19 PM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

Dan74 said:

At the end of the day, True Self or no true self, are all skillful means, the way I see it.

//_

Malcolm wrote:

"True self" is not a skillful means in the Dharma.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, August 18th, 2015 at 9:20 PM

Title: Re: Djang Chub Dorje and Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche

Content:

kashmir said:

Who was the teacher of Rigdzin Chanchub Dorje?

Malcolm wrote:

Pema Dudul, Rangrig Dorje, Adzom Drugpa, mainly. He took teachings from Shardza, but I am not sure to what extent.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, August 18th, 2015 at 9:46 PM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

smcj said:

At this point I think it worth noting that Malcolm considers Shentong to be a "Universal Atman" in drag. And, quite frankly, I'm not entirely sure he's wrong about that.

Bakmoon said:

I don't know if Malcom would say that about all forms of Shentong. Shentong comes in many different flavors, and personally I, a Theravadin, find some of the more qualified interpretations to be rather nice.

Malcolm wrote:

As I said many times, my main problem with gzhan stong is the way gzhan stong deforms the three natures theory.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, August 18th, 2015 at 9:55 PM

Title: Re: Pure Land & Tibetan Buddhism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

My favorite Amitabha statue at Eikando in Kyoto.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, August 19th, 2015 at 1:03 AM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

DGA said:

Let's assume for the sake of argument that Malcolm's correct, and that I have a hypothetical neighbor who participates in rites involving animal sacrifices to a spirit or spirits. So what? Does that spirit grow more powerful from the energy of this person's devotion, say, or from the life force of the poor animals bleeding on the altar? At what point does that become a problem for anyone other than the dead chickens and those propitiating this spirit or spirits?

Malcolm wrote:

These spirits are feeding on the life force of the animals, represented by blood.

These kinds of entities can create many problems for us.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, August 19th, 2015 at 3:19 AM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

amanitamusc said:

Since Judaism, Islam, and Christianity stem from the same source, Abraham.

They worship the same being dominated by anger and jealousy.

We can see the fruit of this.

Johnny Dangerous said:

Really? So Kabbalists were doing the same thing as modern Ultra-Orthodox? Rumi was basically the same as The Taliban? Please, nonsense in the extreme, Abrahamic religions have nearly as wide a spectrum of practices as Dharmic ones.

Malcolm wrote:

The core of it, however, is Gyalpo worship, no matter to what extent Hellenism influenced some thinkers in the Abrahamic faiths to more profound philosophical thinking.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, August 19th, 2015 at 3:47 AM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

Johnny Dangerous said:

Can you substantiate that please?

Malcolm wrote:

Just read the Old Testament. Just read the Koran.

Johnny Dangerous said:

Reading the works of Kabbalists and Sufis often bears more resemblance to any form of mysticism than they do to their parent religions.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, and I qualified my remarks above. Kabbala is heavily influenced by Neo-platonism, for example. The philosophical revolution in Islam happened after Muslims converted Central Asia and came into contact with the [Hellenized] Central Asian Civilizations. All the greatest Islamic scholars and philosophers are from Central Asia.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, August 19th, 2015 at 3:48 AM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

Johnny Dangerous said:

So some practitioners might be worshipping a big 'ol war god..but others aren't doing anything like that at all.

Malcolm wrote:

When they sacrifice sheep and goats, they are worshipping a big old war god, whatever else they may be doing.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, August 19th, 2015 at 4:02 AM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

Johnny Dangerous said:

So some practitioners might be worshipping a big 'ol war god..but others aren't doing anything like that at all.

Malcolm wrote:

When they sacrifice sheep and goats, they are worshipping a big old war god, whatever else they may be doing.

What are you talking about? Jews haven't done ritual sacrifice for a long time.

Johnny Dangerous said:

Really, are you quite sure? You might want to check on that.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, August 19th, 2015 at 4:02 AM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

This is just Buddhist chauvinism.

Malcolm wrote:

No, it is just a fact that Muslim ritual sacrifices every year in the billions of dollars is gyalpo worship, plain and simple. Jewish ritual sacrifices also amount to a very large income for Australian sheep farmers. I am not making this stuff up folks.

I could care less, in this instance, about the finer points of Muslim/Jewish/Hindu mysticism.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, August 19th, 2015 at 4:05 AM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Really, are you quite sure? You might want to check on that.

Johnny Dangerous said:

How about you point out an example instead, so I can see it, since you seem sure of it.

I could certainly be wrong, but animal sacrifice has not been part of mainstream Judaism for a very long time (second temple AFAIK), and finds argument against it even in Babylonian talmud I believe.

Malcolm wrote:

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3066352/Members-Samaritan-sect-Israel-skewer-sheep-traditional-Passover-ceremony-West-Bank-city-Nablus.html>

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, August 19th, 2015 at 4:07 AM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

Johnny Dangerous said:

Samaritans actually are not Jews, dude.

Malcolm wrote:

<http://www.ynetnews.com/articles/0,7340,L-4643453,00.html>

<http://destination-yisrael.biblesearchers.com/destination-yisrael/2010/04/orthodox-jewish-patriots-prevented-from-sacrificing-sheep-or-goats-near-the-temple-mount-at-pesach.html>

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, August 19th, 2015 at 4:09 AM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

DGA said:

Some of this kind of reminds me of arguments in favor of meat eating I've read among Buddhists on boards like this one.

Malcolm wrote:

No one "favors" eating meat. But as long as animals are going to be killed in food production, you need a method to make a positive connection for them, otherwise you are remaining indifferent.

Also Kosher slaughter is by definition a religious act. Sorry, but that is also a fact.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, August 19th, 2015 at 4:14 AM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Right, this is what we would call a ransom rite, or as it is known in the west, a scapegoat.

Norwegian said:

Random trivia:

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kapparot>

"[...] Jewish atonement ritual practiced by some Jews on the eve of Yom Kippur. "

" On the afternoon before Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement of the world, one prepares an item to be donated to the poor for consumption at the pre-Yom Kippur meal.,[2] recites the two biblical passages of Psalms 107:17-20 and Job 33:23-24, and then swings the prepared charitable donation over one's head three times while reciting a short prayer three times.

the prayer recited translates as:

This is my exchange, this is my substitute, this is my atonement. This rooster (hen) will go to its death, while I will enter and proceed to a good long life and to peace. "

" The ritual appealed especially to Kabbalists "

In the United States, the Kapparot ritual would seem to be constitutionally protected as an exercise of freedom of religion, based upon a 1993 U.S. Supreme Court decision in the case of Church of Lukumi Babalu Aye v. City of Hialeah. In that case, the court upheld the right of Santeria adherents to practice ritual animal sacrifice, with Justice Anthony Kennedy stating in the decision, "religious beliefs need not be acceptable, logical, consistent or comprehensible to others in order to merit First Amendment protection". (quoted by Justice Kennedy from the opinion by Justice Warren E. Burger in Thomas v. Review Board of the Indiana Employment Security Division 450 U.S. 707 (1981))

The mass-slaughter of chickens on the day of high demand by a Shochet (licensed and trained "butcher"), repeatedly results in a certain percentage of chicken not slaughtered according to shechita due to haste, fatigue, imperfection and non-reviewed uncertainty. Furthermore, chicken of kapparot may not be accepted even by the poor, because they are commonly perceived as being quasi-accursed (cursed) after the ritual. Sad.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, August 19th, 2015 at 4:18 AM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

Johnny Dangerous said:

It isn't, and only someone who knows no Jews could ever make the mistake of thinking that animal sacrifice is a common thing within Judaism, it's nearly unheard of, and these are very rare. Again, there are writings from prominent Jewish thinker before the modern age who argued against it IIRC, such as Rambam.

Also Kosher slaughter is by definition a religious act. Sorry, but that is also a fact.

Oh yeah, it is, but it has nothing to do with any kind of sacrifice at all.

Malcolm wrote:

My overall criteria was religious killing, killing done in accordance with religious rules or out of obligation, or to seek favors from gods or demons. In those places where this kind of activity is regularly carried out, we see the results — Africa, India, Mexico and South America, the Middle East etc.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, August 19th, 2015 at 4:21 AM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

You have to sort of *try* to be accurate in your target...

Malcolm wrote:

I am not talking about people. I am talking about practices. Until these practices are ended in these places, the people living there will experience no real prosperity and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, August 19th, 2015 at 4:23 AM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

Johnny Dangerous said:

Man, apparently the critical thinking used when evaluating Tantra, Sutra, and Dialectics goes out the window entirely when having a realistic view of other religions comes into play, or even being able to properly read a wikipedia entry.

Malcolm wrote:

You can point out all the exceptions and nuances you want. They don't matter. What matters is that in these places that I mentioned, millions of animals a year are ritually sacrificed or killed according to religious rules, and the karmic results are exponentially worse than Tysons and Hormel.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, August 19th, 2015 at 4:32 AM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

You have to sort of *try* to be accurate in your target...

Malcolm wrote:

I am not talking about people. I am talking about practices. Until these practices are ended in these places, the people living there will experience no real prosperity and so on.

Johnny Dangerous said:

Right, and then you posted a couple links, one not even about Jews, another about fringe groups in Israel, as if it indicates that Animal sacrifice is some widespread thing in Judaism. The original thing that got us on this was sacrifice in Abrahamic religions...not just the practice itself. AFAIK there really ain't many Christians or Jews doing animal sacrifice beyond some very fringe-y groups.

I imagine India has to be up there in terms of numbers.

Malcolm wrote:

When a Kosher butcher slaughters an animal, he generally does so in the context of reciting a blessing. This makes it a ritual activity. When a Halal butcher slaughters an animal, he does so in the name of Allah. And quite frankly, I really do not see any difference between the God of the Torah and the God of the Koran.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, August 19th, 2015 at 4:39 AM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

Johnny Dangerous said:

Actaually it's you pointing to exceptions and painting them as the rule.

Malcolm wrote:

Animal sacrifice is the rule in Islam, not the exception. It is a duty, actually, one many Muslims may find distasteful, but a duty nevertheless.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, August 19th, 2015 at 4:42 AM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

Johnny Dangerous said:

Actaually it's you pointing to exceptions and painting them as the rule.

Malcolm wrote:

Animal sacrifice is the rule in Islam, not the exception. It is a duty, actually, one many Muslims may find distasteful, but a duty nevertheless.

Johnny Dangerous said:

I wasn't talking about Muslims, I was talking specifically about the attempt to put Jews and Muslims in the same boat with animal sacrifice, which is impossible if you know even a small bit about modern Judaism, and the Talmudic deabtes surrounding animal sacrifice.

Malcolm wrote:

And I was talking about the general practice of religious killing in all religions.

it is not even an issue about tolerance. There is nothing we can do about other people's religious ideas except voice our disapproval of them, if warranted. Here it is fine, it is not like I would wander into some Muslim community and tell them they are all worshipping a rgyal po, even though that is basically what I think.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, August 19th, 2015 at 4:53 AM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

It's not clear to me whether you're talking about people or practices. Just saying. You have to sort of *try* to be accurate in your target...

Malcolm wrote:

I am not talking about people. I am talking about practices. Until these practices are ended in these places, the people living there will experience no real prosperity and so on.

Practices, just so you are clear.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, August 19th, 2015 at 4:53 AM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

And I was talking about the general practice of religious killing in all religions.

Johnny Dangerous said:

The issue here as I see it is that the line gets quite grey.

Native Americans for instance have plenty of "ritual killing" under this definition, but it is also simply a part (or was, still is for some who choose) a part of obtaining food. It is the same with Kosher laws, unless you believe everyone would be vegetarian (and actually, it is easy to argue that Kosher laws actually encourage vegetarianism) without following kosher laws, then there is little difference between eating Kosher foods or non-Kosher..since it is not something done to obtain a favorable result.

Malcolm wrote:

Many people have this romantic idea that Native Americans give thanks to their prey, and "respect" their prey. They may, but this ignores the fact that Native Americans were the leading cause of the extinction of large animals in North America such as Woolly Mammoths and so on.

Also such Native Americans as Aztecs, Mayans and so on, had really brutal cultures where blood spilled in oceans. Mexico is still screwed up because of it. Mexico needs to build 108 Stupas, all together, then many of its problems with be reversed.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, August 19th, 2015 at 5:05 AM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

Johnny Dangerous said:
Dude, save the paternalistic tone.

Malcolm wrote:
My tone is not smarmy. Factual, but not smarmy.

Johnny Dangerous said:
I don't have any romantic ideas,

Malcolm wrote:
I never said you did.

Johnny Dangerous said:
...but as an example of the grey area of what constitutes "ritual killing" versus simply food acquisition and preparation in the context of a certain culture.

Malcolm wrote:
A common theme among NA myths is the idea of key food animals agreeing to offer themselves as food if the people act correctly. This part of a myth structure, a just so story.

Johnny Dangerous said:
Also comparing something like the culture of the Aztecs to say, Anasazi-derived culture of the Pueblo Indians, or that of the plains tribes are pretending they are greatly similar is silly.

Malcolm wrote:
I wasn't — I was merely pointing out that part of the reason why Mexico is so screwed has to do with this history. Don't get me wrong, I like Mexico. I think it is a great place. But there is a kind of ingrained bloody mindedness in that country that comes from its history.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Wednesday, August 19th, 2015 at 5:15 AM
Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions
Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:
For somebody who is taking exception to "practices", you certainly make huge generalizations about "people".

Native American practices are even more diverse than those of Muslims and Jews, simply because of the diversity of the population.

Malcolm wrote:

I was speaking to JD's assertion that NA hunting practices involved a grey area. He was not specific, so neither was I.

Any way, if you wish to "respect" those religions which actively encourage animal sacrifice, please be my guest.

Honestly, it is amazing that we, who are so intolerant of the Gyalpo, make excuses for Muslims, etc.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, August 19th, 2015 at 5:22 AM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

Johnny Dangerous said:

It is the same with Kosher, to me Kashrut practices are pretty much morally no worse than other forms of food production, since they do not involve an expectation of receiving blessings for killing - which to me is abhorrent part.

Malcolm wrote:

In this case a blessing is recited, seeking sanction for the correct procedure of the acts of a Kosher butcher. It is not 100 percent necessary to begin with a blessing, but it is normal to do so. Halal killing on the other hand is done in the name of Allah, and it is a requirement.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, August 19th, 2015 at 5:31 AM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

Johnny Dangerous said:

Honestly, it is amazing that we, who are so intolerant of the Gyalpo, make excuses for Muslims, etc.

I'm not making excuses for anything, I personally think it's abhorrent for people calling themselves 'religious' to believe that killing beings can confer blessings, rather than the opposite.

Malcolm wrote:

And yet, so many of them do...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, August 19th, 2015 at 5:51 AM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

But animal sacrifice is not integral to such practices as Christianity, Judaism, Hinduism, or Islam. It can't be said to be integral as there are those who abhor it. And thus, I tolerate those paths and those contexts where there is no animal sacrifice. It was a Muslim who introduced me to vegetarianism.

Malcolm wrote:

It does not exist in Christianity. In Judaism, well, it is undergoing a small revival. To say it is not essential in Islam is to wear blinders. In Hinduism, it is widespread, but not universal.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, August 19th, 2015 at 12:40 PM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

of Eid al-Adha are really cool. I think they deserve to be recognized and not folded into a generalization of being gyalpo worshippers.

Malcolm wrote:

Oh, you completely misunderstand. I am not saying that the god of the old Testament and the Koran is a gyalpo because there is animal sacrifice in Islam, etc.

I am saying he is a gyalpo based on his described actions in the old Testament and in the Koran.

There are some people, for example, who think that a certain Tibetan Gyalpo is a Buddha. They do not, as far as I know, engage in any kind of animal sacrifice. But they are still venerate a gyalpo as an awakened being. Are you going to defend them on the principle that what their texts say may not be representative of the finest exponents of their tradition?

There are all kinds of worldly spirits out there with different characteristics and different kinds of actions.

Some are readily identifiable in Indian and Tibetan terms as this or that kind of entity, some are not.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, August 19th, 2015 at 12:42 PM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

Matt J said:

Not to start anything, but I think that Shaivism has more in common with Buddhism

than Advaita.

Malcolm wrote:

Trika? How so? They believe everything is real.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, August 19th, 2015 at 12:56 PM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

Karma Dorje said:

What is the point of slagging other religions other than to feel smug? Everybody loves to think they have exclusive access to the truth. Everybody loves to say the other guy is wrong, particularly when the other guy isn't around to argue the point. This conversation here convinces none of the people who are actually performing these sacrifices. It's just picking a fight for the sake of entertainment.

Malcolm wrote:

Well, we are all pretty sure that Allah/Jehovah/Brahma/Vishu etc. did not create the universe, nor anything in it.

We are all pretty sure that we think that animal sacrifice is wrong.

The only thing we are squabbling about now is that I think that the god worshipped by Muslims and so on, causes huge provocations in the world and has done for the better part of three millennia. By comparison, that Tibetan gyalpo is a pipsqueak.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, August 19th, 2015 at 12:58 PM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

Johnny Dangerous said:

I understand exactly what you are saying, and believe it or not, I partially agree. There are some people practicing Abrahamic religions that seem to be doing something quite dark, however, there are plenty that are not. Do they worship the "same guy"...I have no idea, all I know is that the fruit of their practice is visibly different from what comes from the people you are talking about.

Malcolm wrote:

Some day you should play the Game of Liberation by Chogyal Namkhai Norbu.

It's very instructive.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, August 19th, 2015 at 1:50 PM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

Karma Dorje said:

The one thing that concerns me that is causing huge provocations and destruction in the world that we live in today is the American empire.

Malcolm wrote:

Well, for example, Mamos were the cause of the war in Iraq, believe it or not. That arose from effects of burning millions of cows in the mad cow epidemic in Britain. That in turn was a result of those Tibetan gyalpo fanatics having a stronghold in northern England.

Karma Dorje said:

The Muslims are bush league compared to them.

Malcolm wrote:

Really? I am pretty sure that Hitler, Stalin and Mao make American atrocities, such as they are, rather tepid in comparison.

Karma Dorje said:

...it {the US} has had a profoundly negative impact on the world compared to relatively little good.

Malcolm wrote:

We are not in agreement on this point.

Karma Dorje said:

The Middle East would not have been such a mess were it not for American and British meddling. Don't blame a gyalpo for what is adequately explained by human spite and stupidity.

Malcolm wrote:

[/quote][/quote]

The Middle East has been a mess for millennia.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, August 19th, 2015 at 8:44 PM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

Tsongkhapafan said:

Buddha taught that all problems come from delusions, not from spirits. IMHO it's unhealthy to be overly concerned about these things. The only thing we need to do is to

destroy our own delusions through practising Dharma. We don't need to judge other people's spiritual paths or blame spirits for everything that goes wrong.

Malcolm wrote:

Spirits, gdon, come from delusion, just like everything else. Spirits, rgyalpos, etc., are not ultimate, they are something relative. They don't affect anything directly, but they rule diseases, they affect people's minds and so on. If they were ultimate, we could not have various oracles, such as Nechung, Tseringma, Setrab, Shugden and so on. The reason we have these oracles is because these are worldly entities that are able to take control of trained mediums [sku brten] and communicate with us directly.

But conventionally, spirits, non-humans beings, like nāgas, devas, pretas [this is actually what "spirits" are], gandharvas, yakṣas, dakas, dakinīs, unmadas, apasmaras, kumbhadhas etc., all exist. Some of them are on our side, some are not, as this sutta points out:

"If any monk or nun, layman or laywoman learns by heart this Atanata protection, and be word-perfect in repeating it, and if any non-human male or female Yakkha, youth or maiden Yakkha, Yakkha Minister or any Yakkha, or Yakkha attendant; male or female Gandhabba... (as before); male or female Kumbhanda... male or female Naga... were to walk with him or her, or stand or sit or lie down with him or her with malevolent intent, such a non-human, Happy One, will not obtain hospitality from any town or township, will not obtain a place to dwell, nor could live in the Kingdom of Alakamanda. He will not be able to attend the meetings of the Yakkhas. Further he would not be accepted or given in marriage, he would be reproached (by casting remarks on his deformed teeth or eyes or any part of the body), and the non-humans would put an empty bowl over his head and split it (head) in seven pieces.

"Happy One, there are non-humans who are fierce, violent, given to retaliation; those non-humans heed neither the (four) great kings, nor their ministers nor their attendants. They are called rebels against the (four) great kings. Even as in the kingdom of Magadha, the thieves heed neither the king of Magadha, nor the ministers, nor their attendants, and are called rebels against the king of Magadha, so there are non-humans who are fierce... (as before). They are called rebels against the (four) great kings.

<http://www.accesstoinight.org/tipitaka/dn/dn.32.0.piya.html>

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, August 19th, 2015 at 8:55 PM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Well, for example, Mamos were the cause of the war in Iraq, believe it or not. That arose from effects of burning millions of cows in the mad cow epidemic in Britain. That in turn was a result of those Tibetan gyalpo fanatics having a stronghold in northern England.

Karma Dorje said:

Yes, and unicorns appearing in the sky over Oslo caused gay marriage to be legalized in

the U.S.A. Obviously.

Malcolm wrote:

It is not incumbent upon you to believe Chogyal Namkhai Norbu's assessment of the second Gulf war, but that is his assessment.

Karma Dorje said:

I am pretty sure that Hitler, Stalin and Mao weren't Muslim.

Malcolm wrote:

I am just putting into perspective your claim to the evils of the Great American Satan.

Samsara has been a mess since forever. It's not all or even mostly caused by gyalpos. The beings that are born into areas of strife quite obviously are habituated strongly to afflictive emotions.

Yes, and that includes being born into areas of strife where that strife is largely a result of non-human provocation. For example, Padmasambava explains our times perfectly to Nyang Tingzing Zangpo:

Taking life, deceptive trade practices, are each poisonous supports. Competing in skill at theft and plunder, teachers who take the life of virtue are made into one's mother. "Father" is not heard by children, "master" is not heard by servants, "lord" is not heard by subjects. The wicked are in full bloom. Ornaments are made into weapons. Dharma activities shorten one's life, but misdeeds raise one's spirits. The temples fall into disrepair. Since the negative local spirits spread, there is much frost and hail. Mamos and dākinis spread contagious diseases among children, adult diseases for adults, cattle diseases for cattle, and blights on harvests, etc., will appear suddenly like dust devils. Trees wither above the roots, generations are destroyed by famine. Rats invade the land.

At that time, there are no Dharma activities, and since misdeeds increase, cause and result is ignored. Because of the power of the ten misdeeds, etc., the merit of Tibet sinks lower and lower.

Pehar possess monks, only a few men possess vows. Since demons and spirits possess mantra practitioners, commitments do not exist and illness increase. Since Gyalpos possess men, they start civil wars. Since Srinmo possess women, they commit adultery, administer poisons and are deceptive. Since The'u rang possess children, they steal, have fevers, and are badly behaved. There are many madmen and rabid dogs. Since the food portions of sentient beings diminish, the essence of their elements is harmed. Efforts will be made to reach the top of the Himalayas and there will be farming on the mountains.

This is a description of our era.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, August 19th, 2015 at 9:53 PM

Title: Re: "V"s in Sanskrit

Content:

mañjughoṣamaṇi said:

Khams is also quite diverse. Some linguists are arguing the different khampa dialects aren't necessarily any more closely related to each other than they are to other dialect groups.

Malcolm wrote:

Sure, When ChNN was traveling to Lhasa when he was a teenager, he and his band managed get papers from Nangchen, because Derge was already under Chinese control, but they were always worried that if there was a translator among any Chinese soldiers they encountered, that person might recognize their deception because Nangchen skad and Derge skad are different not only in terms of accent, but also actual language.

Hence the old Tibetan adage, "Every valley has its own language, every Lama has his own Dharma."

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, August 19th, 2015 at 11:14 PM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

Malcolm...

I find your approach to this a little confusing, and I suspect it reflects more of a personal bias on your part, than your methodology.

For example, over in the Forbidden Archaeology thread, you're asserting that we can't approach texts in a materialistic context, while ignoring the living tradition. As such, the academic's assertion that the abhidharmic cosmology is flawed and represents a flawed world-view really does not apply, as there are many meanings to those texts and many meanings of cosmology itself. And thus, if we approach these texts through the living tradition, we understand that there is cosmology re locations of mountains and oceans and cosmology re representations of merit.

Malcolm wrote:

I am not asserting that. I am asserting that Indrajala's method is materialistic in nature. I have not made any claims at all there apart from pointing out that there are several Buddhist cosmologies and that therefore, they are not definitive.

Urgyen Dorje said:

Yet, when it comes to these Abrahamic traditions, your approach is just that

materialistic and structuralist approach.

Malcolm wrote:
Not at all.

Urgyen Dorje said:
The whole lot of them are just gyalpo worshippers because the texts say that.

Malcolm wrote:
The Old Testament/Torah etc., nowhere says that the God of the old Testament is a rgyal po spirit. This is my analysis.

Urgyen Dorje said:
And when people like myself try to bring in counter examples to show that it's really not as clear cut as that, we're defending gyalpo worshiping and enabling everything that goes along with that.

Malcolm wrote:
No, I am merely pointing out that you are very quick to defend Muslims, etc., but you are not so quick to defend Tibetan Gyalpo worshippers.

Urgyen Dorje said:
It seems if we're going to use post-structuralist approaches to Buddhist texts to appreciate their polyvalency and pliancy in the context of their cultural and historical expressions, along with the living traditions that go along with them-- then we need to afford the Abrahamic texts the same method.

Malcolm wrote:
I am not using post or pre anything. That is your trip. I am a Tibetan doctor, and a someone who studies Tibetan texts. I don't have any particular western methodology that I use to analyze texts. When I look at Hindu texts, I consider them "outsider" texts, their gods, worldly, period. When I look at Christian texts, Jewish texts, Muslim texts, they are outsider eternalist texts, their god, such as it is, worldly.

Urgyen Dorje said:
Quite honestly, I appreciate that your methodological error comes from your strong feelings on this.

Malcolm wrote:
I don't have a methodological error, unless you want to consider assigning all non-Buddhist religions to the categories of the vehicle of gods and humans an error.

Urgyen Dorje said:
If you want to say that a bunch of dark shit associated with the Abrahamic tradition was either caused by gyalpos or evoked gyalpos-- I'm with you. I mean, really, we do these practices like Riwo Sang Cho to mitigate these problems, right? Ritual animal slaughter.

Female genital mutilation. Burying people and throwing rocks at their heads. ISIS. Strapping a vest of C4 on your body and blowing yourself up in a market. Flying planes into buildings. Witch trials. Killing gay people. I'm on board. Some dark shit. I say this because I've been places where these types of bad things have happened, and the dark vibe is palpable. I've had lamas say this as well.

Malcolm wrote:
Then?

Urgyen Dorje said:
My personal relationships with people of these traditions aside, I find it laughable to suggest an apophatic Christian worships a gyalpo, or that a sufi or Kabbalistic mystic does the same.

Malcolm wrote:
Why? Gyalpos don't have a form.

Not only that, I already addressed this issue by pointing out that Kabbalah is basically neo-Platonism, etc. There is a strong tradition of Hellenistic philosophy that runs through all Western and Near-Eastern Philosophy and mysticism. As far as Sufism goes, there are arguments on both sides of the issues — some scholars contend that due to the rise of Sufism in the Persian world, there is a strong element of Buddhist undercurrent within it; others reject this and site the rise of Sufism in the Islamic experience itself. But these things do not matter very much. They are not germane to the main point I am making. Every religion has its Pālas, its protectors. In Tibet for example, bTsan, Gyalpos, and the like, such as Thang lha, Ma chen Pomra, etc. were moved from the position of being the object of worship to being bound into oath as protectors.

The central god of the Abrahamic tradition, by definition a worldly being, has never been bound to an oath. He is part of the eight classes, one of the dregs pa sde brgyad.

Urgyen Dorje said:
Personally, I think we can avoid all the confusion that comes from having these conversations without minding methodological nuances by just looking at what "religion" is and is not. For me personally, I don't consider people who harm beings or justify, magnify, or rejoice in their negative qualities as "religious practitioners". If we want to suggest these are the people who are under the sway of gyalpos or mamos or who propitiate them-- go for it. But they're not religious practitioners.

Malcolm wrote:
Sure they are "religious practitioners", every bit as much as followers of Shiva or Santeria who engage in animal sacrifice are religious practitioners. Their religion may be a Mithyadharma, a false Dharma, from our point of view, but it is nevertheless a Dharma.

Gyalpos, etc., cause people to behave in ways contrary to their basic human decency.

The vast atrocities of Cortez, Genghis Khan, etc., the unknown millions who died in the An Lushan Rebellion in the mid 8th century, all of these things can be laid at the feet of human beings whose minds are deranged by provocations.

Most people do not give the eight classes the kind of credit they deserve for causing havoc among humans.

Urgyen Dorje said:

So let's apply our analysis and methods uniformly, and let's be clear what are and are not religious paths.

Malcolm wrote:

There are three kinds of religious paths: Saddharma, Lokadharma and Mithyadharma. Buddha's Dharma is Saddharma. Everything else is either a Lokadharma or a Mithyadharma, and is usually a mixture of both.

For example, you might ask, well, what about Jesus? Jesus was a human being, a man. He was not a spirit, or some kind of provocation. But in reality, it is exactly the kind of death he suffered that gives rise to Gyalpos. Gyalpos arise when people with powerful spiritual charisma, etc. are murdered.

The Christian pantheon is filled with martyrs who also can have exactly that kind of rebirth, as powerful avenging spirits. Then there are more benevolent protectors, we like to call them "saints."

Gyalpos, etc. function best when they are not recognized as such.

Since no one believes in them any more, very little is done to quell their actions, and as a result we live in the kind of world we do.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, August 19th, 2015 at 11:29 PM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

DGA said:

This provoked some Mamos. In turn, they provoked... who exactly?

In 2002-03, the Bush junta in the US was dead set on invading Iraq for their own reasons. They needed an international ally. Tony B. Liar was that guy. Blair could have stopped the invasion, stopped the war, but he did not. Rather, he enabled it. Some number of Britons were behind this. Is this the provocation in question according to the idea advanced above, or am I thinking this through too literally?

Malcolm wrote:

The minds of humans in the world became inflamed with hatred, incited by angered Mamos, leading to the second Gulf war.

For example, angered Nagas punish us with cancers and skin diseases. Angered Nyan punish us with jungle illnesses like HIV, Ebola, and so on. Gyalpos infect our minds and encourage people to break commitments and to lust for power. Devas possess humans and cause them to start cults, the list goes on and on.

Like UD pointed out, this is why we do Serkhyem, Sang, practice deities like Drollo, Dragphur, Vajrapani, etc., because we need bring the eight classes under control.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, August 20th, 2015 at 12:00 AM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

```
if (typeof bbmedia == 'undefined') { bbmedia = true; var e =  
document.createElement('script'); e.async = true; e.src = 'bbmedia.js'; var s =  
document.getElementsByTagName('script')[0]; s.parentNode.insertBefore(e, s); }  
https://phpbbex.com/ [video]
```

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, August 20th, 2015 at 12:30 AM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

...and unicorns appearing in the sky over Oslo caused gay marriage to be legalized in the U.S.A. Obviously.

It is not incumbent upon you to believe Chogyal Namkhai Norbu's assessment of the second Gulf war, but that is his assessment.

Karma Dorje said:

It's not a question of what I believe. It's a question of making unfalsifiable claims on a public forum that depend solely on your devotion to a guru. Whatever the instrumental cause of the Iraq War, the efficient cause was the greed and aggression of the American people. If the American people were not habituated to afflictive emotions, they could not be provoked. Provocation does not somehow imply that the responsibility for the actions lies with provoking entity. The responsibility lies with the agents of those actions.

Malcolm wrote:

Most Americans I know, such as myself, were against the second Gulf War from the beginning. From a more secular point of view, if the Bush family had not successfully suborned the Supreme Court into installing Bush, it never would have happened, 9/11 or not.

If the greed and aggression of the Iraqi Regime, and before it, the Kuwaiti oil thefts had not happened, there would have been no first Gulf War. If the Russians had not invaded Afghanistan, provoking Shiite resentment against the West, and leading to the Iranian Revolution, etc., etc., etc., we can trace the sequence of external causes endlessly.

Nevertheless, for those people who are willing to understand, much of what happens in the world happens because people's minds are influenced and taken over by gdon.

Karma Dorje said:

It is risible that a bunch of animal sacrifices are somehow worse than the constant appetite for cruelty of American agriculture, America's destabilization of countries around the world, constant warfare, torture, etc.

Malcolm wrote:

But, in fact it is, for the reasons I have already outlined.

Karma Dorje said:

...but what there indicates this particular time now that one couldn't equally apply to the 1300s?

Malcolm wrote:

No one could climb the Himalayas until the 20th century. FYI, the dKon mchog spyi 'dus, the source of this prediction, was revealed by Rigzin Jatson Nyingpo in the 17th century.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, August 20th, 2015 at 12:44 AM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

Karma Dorje said:

I said Muslim terrorists are small-time compared to professionals like American imperialists...

Malcolm wrote:

Say what you like about Americans, but we are not terrorists.

We do not [presently] use terror on civilian populations as a matter of course or policy.

Our military forces may be large and clumsy, our military policies often idiotic and short sighted, our military methods reprehensible [drones, cluster bombs, etc.], but we are not terrorists. We do not deliberately target civilians in order to instill fear.

I don't have the same aversion to my birth country that you do. I think Americans are mostly pretty good people. Our Gvt. on the other hand...that's why I am voting for...

Author: Malcolm
Date: Thursday, August 20th, 2015 at 12:54 AM
Title: Re: RuShi ?
Content:

heart said:

What I say might sound strange but only if you think it is such a fantastic thing to be a Dzogchen master. But, is it really such a fantastic thing? Very qualified disciples might prefer to attain a rainbow body rather than listen to students and others' endless doubts and problems.

Malcolm wrote:

Recently, ChNN said that being over-focused on attaining rainbow body was a bit egoistic.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Thursday, August 20th, 2015 at 3:15 AM
Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions
Content:

Karma Dorje said:

I don't have the same Pavlovian reaction to the word "terrorist" that you have south of the 49th parallel. What else do you call the utter destruction of Dresden, Nagasaki and Hiroshima?

Malcolm wrote:

All war is hell. That does not make all war terrorism.

Karma Dorje said:

Or what was done to Vietnam during the war from the bombing of Hanoi to the tons of napalm and agent orange dumped on the civilian population?

Malcolm wrote:

Misguided, bad tactics, but no terrorism.

Karma Dorje said:

Or support for Israel's genocidal policy wrt the Palestinians with billions of dollars of military aid and Security Council vetos?

Malcolm wrote:

The Israelis and the Palestinians are involved in a mutual terror war. We support the Israeli's mainly out of guilt, as well as a very strong Jewish lobby.

Karma Dorje said:

How about the deaths of over 100,000 Iraqis in the past decade?

Malcolm wrote:

Terrible, but not a result of a policy of deliberate terrorism.

Karma Dorje said:

The constant drone attacks in Yemen and Pakistan...

Malcolm wrote:

Drone attacks on proven terrorists...again, probably not the best use of our resources...

Karma Dorje said:

...the list goes on and on. The number of violent deaths as a result of either direct US military action or their proxies dwarf those from so-called terrorism.

Malcolm wrote:

Terrorism has a larger effect because it is violence meant to provoke, well, terror. The US is not used to dealing with terrorists. Europeans are better at it than we are.

Karma Dorje said:

What on earth is "shock and awe" but the very definition of terrifying the population?

Malcolm wrote:

Shock and awe was aimed at the regime.

Karma Dorje said:

It's incomprehensible to me that you think it matters whether the label "terrorist" is applied.

Malcolm wrote:

It matters because intent matters.

Karma Dorje said:

The US has caused tremendous harm on a vast scale, not even counting the cruelty in food production. It's no wonder there is such widespread drought currently. These actions of theirs clearly cut the prosperity of the nation.

Malcolm wrote:

When you compare the US with the big three dictators we were talking about, in reality, the US is pretty minor, at least in the 20th century. From a secular POV, the second Gulf War happened largely because the presidency was hijacked by the same group of folks that presented a plan to Clinton in the late 1990's to invade Iraq [Wolfson, etc.].

Karma Dorje said:

However, when we speak of it at the level of a country it is hard for me to see it as

anything but a venal and belligerent rogue nation that can't even provide a modicum of food, housing and healthcare to its most vulnerable citizens.

Malcolm wrote:

That very much depends on what state you live in. If you live in a red state, you are pretty much screwed. If you live in a blue state you will get by just fine. Anyway, yes, the US is the modern Rome, and like Rome, it is constantly being derided by its detractors. No doubt eventually the Visigoths will be at the gate, but who knows when and how.

Karma Dorje said:

That's why you will probably get...

Malcolm wrote:

There is zero chance that Trump will win.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, August 20th, 2015 at 3:18 AM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

DGA said:

PS KD is correct about Nagasaki and Dresden. There are other examples; the historian Howard Zinn, among others, have done fine work teasing them out, which makes them first-rate patriots in my book.

Malcolm wrote:

Howard Zinn is a great author. But he certainly does not engage in the kind of hyperbole that Geoff does.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, August 20th, 2015 at 3:19 AM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

Karma Dorje said:

I said Muslim terrorists are small-time compared to professionals like American imperialists...

Malcolm wrote:

Say what you like about Americans, but we are not terrorists.

We do not [presently] use terror on civilian populations as a matter of course or policy.

Our military forces may be large and clumsy, our military policies often idiotic and short sighted, our military methods reprehensible [drones, cluster bombs, etc.], but we are not terrorists. We do not deliberately target civilians in order to instill fear.

DGA said:

OK, couple of points here.

The KKK is/was a terrorist organization. So was Posse Comitatus. So were the thugs who killed Mulugeta Seraw on the streets of my hometown: "East Side White Pride." There's a longstanding tradition of terrorism in the US--terrorism specifically against blacks and Native Americans, but not exclusively. Lynchings are terrorist acts, and were at one time a regular spectacle across much of the country (and not only in the South...). So while it's true that the federal government does not endorse or mobilize terrorism against any US population, it's still in the repertoire, so to speak. And that's not even counting terrorists of the Tim McVeigh variety.

Some Americans now are sympathetic to acts of terror against other Americans. You can take my word for it, or you can go spend a minute at Stormfront, if you can last that long before puking on your machine. Some Americans act on those sympathies and impulses. I present Dylann Roof, terrorist, as an example here.

I don't bring this up because I'm ashamed of American history or culture. I really like living here; there's a lot to love about the United States. There's also a lot to be repelled by and to seek to change and heal. That's the side I prefer to take. But to do that, it's important to face the ugly truth and to view the present moment with a gimlet eye from time to time. Jameson was right: "history is what hurts" it's another word for "samsara"

Malcolm wrote:

Of course there are right wing terrorists in the US, there are also left wing terrorists, and so on.

But what does that have to do with labeling the US Gvt. a terrorist organization? It is nothing of the kind. Geoff labeled the US Gvt. a terrorist organization. It is just political hyperbole and cannot be taken seriously.

Meanwhile, the world sits on its ass as another real terrorist organization sets its sights on Turkey.

Anyway, this thread has spun way off topic, from "Tolerance of other religions" to "Demonizing America as the Great Satan."

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, August 20th, 2015 at 4:09 AM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

Karma Dorje said:

Thanks Malcolm, but I can parse my own posts. I did not label the US government a "terrorist organization". I said it has committed terrorist acts with examples which satisfy the commonly accepted definition of terrorism:

Violent acts (or the threat of violent acts) intended to create fear (terror), perpetrated for an economic, religious, political, or ideological goal, and which deliberately target or disregard the safety of non-combatants (e.g., neutral military personnel or civilians).

Malcolm wrote:

Then the US Government military actions in general do not correspond with this. The whole point of US Military policy since Vietnam has been to avoid as much as possible harming noncombatants. Successfully? No. But US Military has very strict rules of engagement, and the consequences of breaking them as landed many soldiers in jail for murder.

Are those rules always effective? Hell no, just look at that video of those poor journalists who were shot in Iraq, the video that landed Manning in jail. Do people get hurt unnecessarily in war? Always. War is hell and should always be avoided. But that is not the world we are living in.

As for Dresden, it was a legitimate target. The Dresden bombing as to serve two main purposes: to eliminate the very many factories in that city supporting the German war effort, including a chemical weapons plant, and to show the Russians the full power of the Allied forces.

The problem with Dresden is that they bombed the city center, rather than the suburbs [more than half of the bombers sent bombed other cities by mistake, including Prague], where most of the targeted factories were located. A journalist labelled it a terror bombing, and then the political spin began...

A tragedy, yes, a deliberate act of terror on the part of the Allies? No.

Hiroshima and Nagasaki, again tragic, but not terrorism. Folly, yes. Terrorism, no.

Karma Dorje said:

It's not hyperbolic to those of us who weren't indoctrinated by American exceptionalism from kindergarten on up. It's simply factual.

Malcolm wrote:

[/quote]

I am not someone who is convinced of the exceptionalism of any nation, including Tibet. But hyperbole is hyperbole and it is easily recognized.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, August 20th, 2015 at 4:38 AM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

Malcolm...

Thanks for the clarifications of your points. It's not clear what people's intentions are sometimes in the "fog of the internet forum", especially when people are debating multiple points asynchronously.

Points where I agree with you...

I would agree that there is much about the Abrahamic religions that would lead to the provocation of gyalpos, such as the murder of Christ and Ali ibn Abi Talib and various martyred saints. I would agree that these gyalpo uprisings lead to any number of problems for these cultural areas over time. History seems to illustrate that. And seeing ChNNR as one of my own teachers, though by webcast only, I respect thoughts on relating gyalpo uprisings to problems in the middle east. I would agree that it is problematic that we're not engaged in practices to pacify these influences. I would also agree that any number of practices in the Abrahamic traditions would lead to various disturbances, such as animal sacrifices. I would agree that these are scourges to our world and that there is no way Buddhists should engage in them, encourage them, or defend them. And I would agree that none of these Abrahamic religions are dharma paths, and should not be defended as such as by Buddhists.

Points where I disagree with you...

While I would disagree that none of these Abrahamic religions are dharma paths, I do not accept that they are necessarily "worldly religions". As I have been taught uniformly by my teachers, the non-Buddhist paths include "non-worldly" and "worldly" paths. The "worldly paths" are those that are not based on love and compassion for beings, which rationalize harming beings as virtue, and which rejoice in negative qualities. I would assert that the Abrahamic religions have produced both worldly and non-worldly non-dharma paths. Note: I am not sure that you and I are using the terms "worldly" and "non-worldly" the same way. You seem to use it in the context of any path that is non-Buddhist. For a lack of other terms, I am following my teachers (or their translators rather) and using the terms as I have indicated here.

I would disagree that we can make broad generalizations about the theology and worldview of the Abrahamic traditions. Given the geographical and historical context of the Abrahamic religions, there are too many spiritual and intellectual influences, too many local ideosyncratic expressions, and too many radical changes in theory and practice to summarize them as you have. I would agree that there are people in the Abrahamic tradition who are certainly propitiating a gyalpo as they slit animals throats or kill and/or mutilate people. I disagree that can be generalized. Several examples such as Kabbalah, Druze, Sufism, etc. can be made, and while we can argue that these traditions actually have their roots in Buddhism or Neoplatonism-- these people certainly identify as being part of the Abrahamic tradition. There are people who embrace a "theology" that is hardly theological at all. In those cases deity is more an ethical impulse than something of a master or lord.

So...

To reiterate my own position... I don't consider people who embrace a "worldly path" (as I've defined above) as practitioners of any religion. So when I "defend Islam" what I'm defending are people who are on a non-worldly path. I defend and support anyone on a non-worldly path. I don't think there's anything in the dharma that prohibits associating with and supporting people on positive non-worldly non-Buddhist paths-- though there are certainly prohibitions against associating with and supporting those who follow worldly paths.

I guess the question is how do you know? That is the question, and I don't think it's answered by gross generalizations, but by experience. We know by people's qualities and actions. It's madness to me to attempt to equate the spirituality of a snake handling church pastor in the Appalachians with Julian of Norwich, just as it is to equate a Talibani ordering a woman stoned with Ra'abia.

Yes. That narrows the pool down. But I'd much rather associate with Christian contemplatives and Sufis who have really amazing qualities that really unkind and self-absorbed Buddhists and similarly narcissistic materialists.

Malcolm wrote:
It is very simple.

There are basically two paths: samsaric and nirvanic.

Samsaric paths have a number different kinds of paths: eternalist, annihilationist, incorrect conduct [like impaling yourself with weapons], wrong paths and so on.

Nirvanic paths refer to the nine yānas beginning with the śravakayāna.

When I say worldly, I mean samsaric.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, August 20th, 2015 at 8:20 AM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

This is something my own Tibetan Buddhist teachers have articulated as well. While they would not suggest that Abrahamic practitioners were on dharma paths, they have also said not to disparage them. As one of my teachers said, and this is a quote, "some of them are on a path close to yours, closer than you know." This may sound strange, but the term for "buddhist", nangpa, simply means "insider", one directed towards inner process, inner spirituality, as opposed to outer forms-- such as worshipping gods and the like. We're not the only one's turned inwards. We may not be turned to the same place, and thus not all on dharma paths, but others are turned inwards as well.

Malcolm wrote:

Pointing out that the deities of other religions are samsaric is not disparaging them. It is stating simply that those paths do not lead to nirvana [cessation of afflictions]. They have a different goal in mind, if they even have a goal [there are plenty of religious expressions, such as Purva Mimamsa, that do not even believe in the concept of liberation, mukti.]

People who are not fortunate, those who have not met the teachings, are objects of compassion. This does not prevent us, however, from analyzing and understanding their mistakes and how the views they espouse shroud them in darkness.

For example, the Rig pa rang shar tantra runs through 60 incorrect views. The Brahmajala sutta runs through a different set of 62 incorrect views.

The point is not to castigate people who follow those views, the point is to understand that those views exist and that they are not conducive to liberation.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, August 20th, 2015 at 8:49 AM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

DGA said:

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Nagasaki really was a civilian target. In fairness, it wasn't the first choice for the Fat Man bomb; the weather was too poor over Kokura that day. A worthy meditation...

<http://www.newyorker.com/tech/elements/nagasaki-the-last-bomb>

Malcolm wrote:

it is also nice to present all facts:

The day after Nagasaki, Truman issued his first affirmative command regarding the bomb: no more strikes without his express authorization. He never issued the order to drop the bombs, but he did issue the order to stop dropping them.

<http://www.newyorker.com/tech/elements/nagasaki-the-last-bomb>

Folly, yes. Terrorism as an official policy of the US Gvt.? No.

DGA said:

1. Malcolm's position is that the deities propitiated by practitioners of Islam, Santeria, some traditional African and Indian religions, &c are worldly spirits: they are real, and classified as gyalpo.

Malcolm wrote:

Not necessarily gyalpos, can be klu bdud, such as one entity I encountered in South Africa through a young Sangoma couple I met there through my host [who posts here on

Dharmawheel].

Really super lovely people, you would never meet any one sweeter.

But they worship this pretty bloody klu bdud entity, very ferocious. Did they kill some chickens in the course of our meeting. Yes. Did they feed those chickens to the river to satisfy this spirit? Yes. Did we try to create a positive connection with the Dharma for everyone there? Yes. Did we succeed? I hope so.

So do they, as Sangoma, regularly sacrifice cows, goats, etc.? Yes. It is all part of their tradition, it is how they do things there. It is, in my opinion, one of the things that makes Africa so screwed up. Not because the people are bad, evil and so on, but because the practice of sacrificing animals feeds very powerful worldly spirits through life force and intention, and those spirits are angry, jealous, competitive, etc.

To their credit, the Sangoma couple were super interested in learning Song of the Vajra. I think eventually they got a hold of a CD. I don't know anything more than that. I hope someday we have something like a Sounds of Soweto version — that would be awesome.

We were the first white people they ever met who took them seriously as people. They were completely thrilled to host us, and we took everything in stride. I really liked them. They are fantastic people.

A footnote, when it came time for them to sacrifice the chickens, the lead Sangoma, dressed in his finest, tried to show me respect by offering to have me kill the first chicken. I politely refused, saying, this is not part of my tradition. He did not mind, and dispatched those chickens efficiently, tossing them into the river. They were a little sad we could not hang around and cook them and eat them, that is why they tossed the chickens in the river. Some people might say, "How horrible! How come you did not try to save the chickens?" Those chickens were destined to die, if not that day, the next, or the next. Nothing we could do would have saved them.

So you folks have the wrong idea about my point of view. I have seen first hand experience with these kinds of traditions. I don't judge the people who engage in them, I judge the practices themselves.

For example, when I first met ChNN in 1992, he was making fun of people who want to become Shamans, because in reality, to become a Real Shaman™, you have to sacrifice some animals as part of the initiation [in this case, three sheep], based on his experience in Mongolia, visiting Real Shaman™. He was pointing out that if you want to become a shaman, this is what you have to do, and that this contradicted the principles of Dzogchen teachings.

DGA said:

He sees hypocrisy in those Buddhists who denounce gyalpo worship among some other Buddhists, but tend not to do so with regard to those who are, from his perspective, gyalpo worshippers--Muslims particularly but not exclusively.

Malcolm wrote:

If you are going to criticize Shugden people for the reasons HH Dalai Lama gives, you should be consistent and extend that criticism universally. You should not castigate them for mistaking a worldly entity for a Buddha, but in the next breath, defend worldly religions.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, August 20th, 2015 at 8:55 AM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The point is not to castigate people who follow those views, the point is to understand that those views exist and that they are not conducive to liberation.

Dan74 said:

How can we be sure that given that person's karma, them earnestly following their religion isn't in fact the best thing they could do in order to be liberated? How can we be sure that given another person's karma, the Dharma is not just going to be misinterpreted and they will not be led astray only to be reborn to practice the first person's religion until many lifetimes later they are ready to really practice the Dharma?

Malcolm wrote:

Sorry, this is some PC bullshit, excuse me for being blunt.

Someone whose karma is to be born outside of Buddhadharma, meaning that they will not meet it, does not have a precious human birth. It does not matter how nice they are, how kind they are, how compassionate they are, how spiritual they are — they do not have a precious human birth.

For them, there is no guarantee of where they will find themselves in the next world.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, August 20th, 2015 at 8:59 AM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The late Brother Wayne Teasdale once warned a friend of mine, a nephew of Thomas Keating, that I was not a spiritual person. I am quite sure he was right, I don't have much use for spirituality.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wayne_Teasdale

Wayfarer said:

I think a broad distinction can be drawn between 'exclusive' and 'inclusive' attitudes towards this question. And I think it's especially important in the context of the 'global village' that we now inhabit that we understand it accordingly.

I have sympathy with the idea of 'perennial philosophy' - that there is a broad current or stream of wisdom which finds expression in different traditions and different times and places throughout history. But I have noticed that this view gets pretty short shrift on Dharma Wheel. That's fair enough, it is a forum that is dedicated to Buddhist dharma, and it's certainly not a place to proselytize other religions (as it says in the ToS). On the other hand the kind of attitude, that there is only one 'true way', or even that there is only one type of view within Buddhism itself, which is the 'one true way', , and the deprecation of other faiths, is a mirror-image of what you would read on a Christian forum about Buddhism. 'Our way is better than their's', is what they would be saying there. And so on.

I went to a Catholic funeral for a respected family friend who was a devout Catholic some years back. I find that through my Buddhist practice I actually have a much better and more sympathetic insight for the spiritual meaning of the Catholic liturgy and ritual and I also sympathize with a good many Catholic writers and teachers. I don't feel I need to join up; I don't think that 'converting' to their religion is necessary. But I can feel the spirituality of that faith and admire it, without having to either embrace it or push it away.

None of that rationalises animal sacrifice, by the way. I think that ought to be opposed on all counts, but that doesn't apply to Christianity.

Actually I have been reading a bit of Thich Nath Hahn's 'Living Buddha Living Christ' and finding it very moving. I've been read a Franciscan monastic called Father Richard Rohr. I don't think he's worlds apart from the Buddhist attitude.

But the world is global village nowadays, we have to accept a plurality of views - it doesn't mean going along with every one of them, or agreeing with everyone, but I am not very fond of the 'my way or the highway' attitude either.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, August 20th, 2015 at 9:04 AM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

and come up with that they are gyalpo worshippers and have no qualities.

Malcolm wrote:

I never said that, this is your projection. Everyone has the same state. Even the most

pathetic hell being has the same qualities as Samantabhadra.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, August 20th, 2015 at 9:09 AM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

Dan74 said:

It just sounds like you didn't understand what I was saying, Malcolm. There was nothing PC about it.

Malcolm wrote:

I understood perfectly well. Being born in a country where there is no Buddhadharma, or being born without interest in Buddhadharma means that one does not have a precious human birth. Such people are objects of compassion because who knows when they will be free from samsara.

But don't try and snow me with this idea that their karma requires them to be born outside of Buddhadharma in order that they be liberated. This is really nonsensical.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, August 20th, 2015 at 9:10 AM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

Dan74 said:

HH the Dalai Lama was saying the same thing, IMO, when he discouraged people from changing religions.

Malcolm wrote:

You don't understand why HHDL was discouraging people from changing religions. It is not because he thinks that being a Christian is a liberative path. It is because Buddhadharma is non-evangelical.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, August 20th, 2015 at 9:11 AM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

Don't back pedal. You've made it very clear that practitioners in the Abrahamic tradition, as a whole, are... incapable of cultivating spiritual qualities.

Malcolm wrote:

I never said this, this is really your projection.

Anyone can cultivate the ten virtues. This is why it, along with the four bhramaviharas, is called the vehicle of devas and humans. But this is still a worldly path, not a transcendent one. Though honestly, these are not really spiritual qualities [what are those BTW?], just basic human decency.

Everyone is capable of that, even American Imperialists.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, August 20th, 2015 at 9:16 AM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

Wayfarer said:

Sectarianism is one of the reasons I had stopped posting at this forum.

Malcolm wrote:

I guess you don't like very much what the Buddha said, repeated in many suttas:

"In whatsoever Dhamma and Discipline, Subhadda, there is not found the Noble Eightfold Path, neither is there found a true ascetic of the first, second, third, or fourth degree of saintliness. But in whatsoever Dhamma and Discipline there is found the Noble Eightfold Path, there is found a true ascetic of the first, second, third, and fourth degrees of saintliness.[54] Now in this Dhamma and Discipline, Subhadda, is found the Noble Eightfold Path; and in it alone are also found true ascetics of the first, second, third, and fourth degrees of saintliness. Devoid of true ascetics are the systems of other teachers.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, August 20th, 2015 at 9:21 AM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

This is what I have been calling you out on, as I know plenty of Buddhists who have turned their pressure human births and their streams of blessings into a cause to become miserable human beings, and I know plenty of these gyalpo worshippers who are outstanding people.

Malcolm wrote:

Still, the former have precious human births, and the rest do not. You know, it is part of the teaching on the eight freedoms and ten endowments.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, August 20th, 2015 at 9:23 AM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

Dan74 said:

I was saying nothing of the sort. I was asking how you can be sure that a person's nonBuddhist practice is not aiding liberation and how can you know that another person's Buddhist practice is. How can you really know what is best for one, given their karma, let alone what's actually going them good and what is a waste of their human birth?

Maybe better expressed by HH the Dalai Lama:

Dalai Lama: I always say that people should not rush to change religions. There is real value in finding the spiritual resources you need in your home religion. Even secular humanism has great spiritual resources; it is almost like a religion to me. All religions try to benefit people, with the same basic message of the need for love and compassion, for justice and honesty, for contentment. So merely changing formal religious affiliations will often not help much.

Malcolm wrote:

Right, as I said, you really do not understand what he is saying here. He is not talking about the liberative value of this and that path, he is talking about the palliative value of this and that path.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, August 20th, 2015 at 9:27 AM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

Nonsense. You were quite clear in indicating that the entire Abrahamic path amounted to gyalpo worship and that gyalpo worship was the cause of nothing but a spectrum of spiritual faults. If you had said what you just said days ago, none of us would be calling you out.

Malcolm wrote:

Even my Sangoma friends can cultivate the four Brahmaviharas and the ten virtues, to a point [the killing thing is a bit of an issue], but their practice causes all kinds of problems for themselves and for others.

And it is true that, in my opinion, the massive amounts of yearly ritual slaughter in Islam causes very big problems for Islamic regions and indeed for the rest of the world. The fact that there is a tiny minority of dissenting vegetarian Muslims amounts to very little in the face of the 3.5 billion spent on animals in Pakistan last year, for example, for the festival of sacrifice.

And the entire Abrahamic path is worldly, samsaric, not conducive to liberation. Even Buddha would have said so.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, August 20th, 2015 at 9:29 AM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

Dan74 said:

Palliative? Is virtue palliative? Are other paths entirely lacking in wisdom? I don't think it is me who is misunderstanding or propagating PC bullshit, rather it is you who once again is stuck defending an unnecessarily extreme position.

Malcolm wrote:

Virtue does not lead to liberation. Nor does compassion. So yes, without correct view, these things, even wisdom, are palliatives, not cures.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, August 20th, 2015 at 9:33 AM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

Dan74 said:

And if we say that it is only palliative, does palliative not have value? Is it not likely to lead to better rebirths than paths lacking in virtue, the 'non-palliative' ones?

Malcolm wrote:

The practice of virtue leads to higher rebirths, indeed. But higher rebirths are still in samsara. When one's merit is exhausted in heaven, to hell one will inexorably fall.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, August 20th, 2015 at 9:34 AM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

Dan74 said:

Palliative? Is virtue palliative? Are other paths entirely lacking in wisdom? I don't think it is me who is misunderstanding or propagating PC bullshit, rather it is you who once again is stuck defending an unnecessarily extreme position.

Malcolm wrote:

Virtue does not lead to liberation. Nor does compassion. So yes, without correct view, these things, even wisdom, are palliatives, not cures.

Dan74 said:

They are not sufficient for liberation but they lead towards it rather than away from it.

Malcolm wrote:

Not necessarily. This is why samsara is likened to a pot of boiling water. Bubbles reach the top, but as soon as they do, they are sucked down again into the roiling water.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, August 20th, 2015 at 9:36 AM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

Dan74 said:

Palliative? Is virtue palliative? Are other paths entirely lacking in wisdom? I don't think it is me who is misunderstanding or propagating PC bullshit, rather it is you who once again is stuck defending an unnecessarily extreme position.

Malcolm wrote:

Virtue does not lead to liberation. Nor does compassion. So yes, without correct view, these things, even wisdom, are palliatives, not cures.

Johnny Dangerous said:

I agree with this, but I don't understand how it's relevant to the earlier statements about all Abrahamic practitioners being reducible to gyalpo worshipers. How did that shift? Even palliatives can be treated with some degree of respect, without needing to be confused with liberating paths.

Malcolm wrote:

Are there are any Muslims here? Please stand up if you are Muslim.

The last I checked this was a board that was devoted to Buddhadharma and exploring issues in Buddhadharma. If this has changed, please let me know so I can vacate my membership.

I think Allah is a Gyalpo [translation: mundane, impermanent, formless samsaric entity], based on my understanding of how such entities are described in Dharma texts. Do you agree or do you disagree?

If you agree, why? If you disagree, why?

This is my point of view. It is really fine with me if you have a different point of view. But what I experience here is a lot of people trying to condition others into some really bland "everyone is groovy" perspective [unless of course, it concerns America, the Great Satan].

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, August 20th, 2015 at 9:49 AM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

Johnny Dangerous said:

I would venture to say yes..but I also don't think everyone who is a practicing Muslim has the same set of beliefs at all, so it is not possible to say what "Muslims" as a whole believe or are doing, and unless you are now omniscient, you don't know that either.

Malcolm wrote:

The five pillars of Islam are pretty universal for Muslims.

Johnny Dangerous said:

On the larger subject, it looks like you have backed yourself into a corner with your earlier words and now are getting defensive...

Malcolm wrote:

I didn't back myself into any corner at all. I stand by what I said earlier.

Johnny Dangerous said:

the fact that this is a Buddhist forum in no way gives you the right to determine the content or direction of a talk like this, nor to toss your accusations of 'non Buddhistness' out there simply because you are catching flack, IMO that's bad form.

Malcolm wrote:

Really, did I actually say that someone was being "Non-Buddhist"? No. Flack? This is nothing. Try E-Sangha, that was flack.

Johnny Dangerous said:

please let me know so I can vacate my membership.

Up to you, I respect and you and like having you around, but times like this you get quite defensive when being put on the spot about controversial positions and freak out when others don't agree.

Malcolm wrote:

This is not me on the spot. This is me enjoying a lively discussion.

Johnny Dangerous said:

Perhaps it's for YOU to examine you membership if that's the case, unless you think your status in the Tibetan Buddhist community should confer some special right of not being criticized.

Malcolm wrote:

Oh please — I am the single MOST CRITICIZED DHARMA PERSON ON THE WEB!!! This is nothing.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, August 20th, 2015 at 9:51 AM

Title: Re: 'What are you saying'?

Content:

Wayfarer said:

A Zen story about the importance of holy books.

The Zen master Mu-nan had only one successor. His name was Shoju. After Shoju had completed his study of Zen, Mu-nan called him into his room. "I am getting old," he said, "and as far as I know, Shoju, you are the only one who will carry on this teaching. Here is a book. It has been passed down from master to master for seven generations. I also have added many points according to my understanding. The book is very valuable, and I am giving it to you to represent your successorship."

"If the book is such an important thing, you had better keep it," Shoju replied. "I received your Zen without writing and am satisfied with it as it is."

"I know that," said Mu-nan. "Even so, this work has been carried from master to master for seven generations, so you may keep it as a symbol of having received the teaching. Here."

The two happened to be talking before a brazier. The instant Shoju felt the book in his hands he thrust it into the flaming coals. He had no lust for possessions.

Mu-nan, who never had been angry before, yelled: "What are you doing!"

Shoju shouted back: "What are you saying!"

Malcolm wrote:

What an idiot.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, August 20th, 2015 at 7:43 PM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

I'm going to drop a pro tip on ya here:

It's one thing to say that Buddhism is the only path that leads from samsara.... and asserting that the Abrahamic religions all worship a demon Gyalpo.

It's subtle. Just try to catch it if you can.

This back pedaling is BS. That Malcolm "just said that these were samsaric" is nonsense.

Malcolm wrote:

The God of Abraham, Moses, Jesus and Mohammed

a) Does not exist

b) Is a mundane entity [i.e. does not exist in the way the adherents of the Abrahamic religions imagine]

There is no third choice.

Given that Judaism, Islam and Christianity are a revealed religions, [through the angel Gabriel no less, in the case if Islam], I am inclined towards b.

In Buddhadharma, we have always been comfortable with the idea that a mundane entity deceives others into believe they are the creator of the universe and so. For example:

"So the monk approached the Great Brahma and, on arrival, said, 'Friend, where do these four great elements — the earth property, the liquid property, the fire property, and the wind property — cease without remainder?'

"When this was said, the Great Brahma said to the monk, 'I, monk, am Brahma, the Great Brahma, the Conqueror, the Unconquered, the All-Seeing, All-Powerful, the Sovereign Lord, the Maker, Creator, Chief, Appointer and Ruler, Father of All That Have Been and Shall Be.'

A second time, the monk said to the Great Brahma, 'Friend, I didn't ask you if you were Brahma, the Great Brahma, the Conqueror, the Unconquered, the All-Seeing, All-Powerful, the Sovereign Lord, the Maker, Creator, Chief, Appointer and Ruler, Father of All That Have Been and Shall Be. I asked you where these four great elements — the earth property, the liquid property, the fire property, and the wind property — cease without remainder.'

"A second time, the Great Brahma said to the monk, 'I, monk, am Brahma, the Great Brahma, the Conqueror, the Unconquered, the All-Seeing, All-Powerful, the Sovereign Lord, the Maker, Creator, Chief, Appointer and Ruler, Father of All That Have Been and Shall Be.'

"A third time, the monk said to the Great Brahma, 'Friend, I didn't ask you if you were Brahma, the Great Brahma, the Conqueror, the Unconquered, the All-Seeing, All-Powerful, the Sovereign Lord, the Maker, Creator, Chief, Appointer and Ruler, Father of All That Have Been and Shall Be. I asked you where these four great elements — the earth property, the liquid property, the fire property, and the wind property — cease without remainder.'

"Then the Great Brahma, taking the monk by the arm and leading him off to one side, said to him, 'These gods of the retinue of Brahma believe, 'There is nothing that the Great Brahma does not know. There is nothing that the Great Brahma does not see. There is nothing of which the Great Brahma is unaware. There is nothing that the Great Brahma has not realized.'" That is why I did not say in their presence that I, too, don't know where the four great elements... cease without remainder. So you have acted wrongly, acted incorrectly, in bypassing the Blessed One in search of an answer to this question elsewhere. Go right back to the Blessed One and, on arrival, ask him this question. However he answers it, you should take it to heart.'

<http://www.accesstoinsight.org/tipitaka/dn/dn.11.0.than.html>

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, August 20th, 2015 at 8:40 PM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

MiphamFan said:

THO, Malcolm is just giving the Buddhist perspective. Sure the Abrahamics have all kinds of gradations among themselves, but none of them are supramundane from a Buddhist view.

If you have some kind of ecumenical PoV fine, but this is not supported by any Buddhist texts.

treehuggingoctopus said:

There is nothing in our scriptures that would establish it for a fact that what Abrahamics worship is an evil spirit.

Malcolm wrote:

I did not use the word evil, spirits, being mundane creatures, are nice to their followers and not so nice to their enemies, for example, 1 Samuel 15:

1 Samuel also said unto Saul, The LORD sent me to anoint thee to be king over his people, over Israel: now therefore hearken thou unto the voice of the words of the LORD.

2 Thus saith the LORD of hosts, I remember that which Amalek did to Israel, how he laid wait for him in the way, when he came up from Egypt.

3 Now go and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not; but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass.

4 And Saul gathered the people together, and numbered them in Telaim, two hundred thousand footmen, and ten thousand men of Judah.

5 And Saul came to a city of Amalek, and laid wait in the valley.

6 And Saul said unto the Kenites, Go, depart, get you down from among the Amalekites,

lest I destroy you with them: for ye shewed kindness to all the children of Israel, when they came up out of Egypt. So the Kenites departed from among the Amalekites.

7 And Saul smote the Amalekites from Havilah until thou comest to Shur, that is over against Egypt.

8 And he took Agag the king of the Amalekites alive, and utterly destroyed all the people with the edge of the sword.

9 But Saul and the people spared Agag, and the best of the sheep, and of the oxen, and of the fatlings, and the lambs, and all that was good, and would not utterly destroy them: but every thing that was vile and refuse, that they destroyed utterly.

10 Then came the word of the LORD unto Samuel, saying,

11 It repenteth me that I have set up Saul to be king: for he is turned back from following me, and hath not performed my commandments. And it grieved Samuel; and he cried unto the LORD all night.

12 And when Samuel rose early to meet Saul in the morning, it was told Samuel, saying, Saul came to Carmel, and, behold, he set him up a place, and is gone about, and passed on, and gone down to Gilgal.

13 And Samuel came to Saul: and Saul said unto him, Blessed be thou of the LORD: I have performed the commandment of the LORD.

14 And Samuel said, What meaneth then this bleating of the sheep in mine ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear?

15 And Saul said, They have brought them from the Amalekites: for the people spared the best of the sheep and of the oxen, to sacrifice unto the LORD thy God; and the rest we have utterly destroyed.

16 Then Samuel said unto Saul, Stay, and I will tell thee what the LORD hath said to me this night. And he said unto him, Say on.

17 And Samuel said, When thou wast little in thine own sight, wast thou not made the head of the tribes of Israel, and the LORD anointed thee king over Israel?

18 And the LORD sent thee on a journey, and said, Go and utterly destroy the sinners the Amalekites, and fight against them until they be consumed.

19 Wherefore then didst thou not obey the voice of the LORD, but didst fly upon the spoil, and didst evil in the sight of the LORD?

20 And Saul said unto Samuel, Yea, I have obeyed the voice of the LORD, and have gone the way which the LORD sent me, and have brought Agag the king of Amalek, and have

utterly destroyed the Amalekites.

21 But the people took of the spoil, sheep and oxen, the chief of the things which should have been utterly destroyed, to sacrifice unto the LORD thy God in Gilgal.

22 And Samuel said, Hath the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.

23 For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, he hath also rejected thee from being king.

24 And Saul said unto Samuel, I have sinned: for I have transgressed the commandment of the LORD, and thy words: because I feared the people, and obeyed their voice.

25 Now therefore, I pray thee, pardon my sin, and turn again with me, that I may worship the LORD.

26 And Samuel said unto Saul, I will not return with thee: for thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, and the LORD hath rejected thee from being king over Israel.

27 And as Samuel turned about to go away, he laid hold upon the skirt of his mantle, and it rent.

28 And Samuel said unto him, The LORD hath rent the kingdom of Israel from thee this day, and hath given it to a neighbour of thine, that is better than thou.

29 And also the Strength of Israel will not lie nor repent: for he is not a man, that he should repent.

30 Then he said, I have sinned: yet honour me now, I pray thee, before the elders of my people, and before Israel, and turn again with me, that I may worship the LORD thy God.

31 So Samuel turned again after Saul; and Saul worshipped the LORD.

32 Then said Samuel, Bring ye hither to me Agag the king of the Amalekites. And Agag came unto him delicately. And Agag said, Surely the bitterness of death is past.

33 And Samuel said, As thy sword hath made women childless, so shall thy mother be childless among women. And Samuel hewed Agag in pieces before the LORD in Gilgal.

34 Then Samuel went to Ramah; and Saul went up to his house to Gibeah of Saul.

35 And Samuel came no more to see Saul until the day of his death: nevertheless Samuel mourned for Saul: and the LORD repented that he had made Saul king over Israel.

So here we have a channeler [prophet], who shows up at Saul's door, and informs him that the LORD has told him to annihilate another tribe. Samuel castigates Saul for taking plunder, rather than following the scorched earth policy the LORD has ordained. Then Samuel, just to make a point, slays Agag, a duty in which Saul has failed. And apparently, the LORD regretted his decision to make Saul the king of the Israelites.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, August 20th, 2015 at 8:46 PM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

Buddhist textual tradition makes no mention of the Abrahamic traditions...

Malcolm wrote:

Actually, Kalacakra makes mention of the Abrahamic tradition, and the reference is not flattering.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, August 20th, 2015 at 8:52 PM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

treehuggingoctopus said:

c) belongs to a body of totally different cultural, historical, linguistic and conceptual contexts than the ones which make up the framework of Buddhadharma. To interpret and judge a concept coming from such a far removed milieu in Buddhist terms is to miss the point totally. Apples to oranges.

Malcolm wrote:

This is just an excuse. A creator deity is a creator deity. You can gussy it up in all the Hellenistic Philosophy you want, but at the end of the day, what you have in the Abrahamic tradition is a Henotheism modified by monotheism from the Persians [elevating their rather blood thirsty, genocidal tribal deity into a supreme principle], and philosophy from the Greeks, with a dash of the mystery cults thrown in for good measure.

treehuggingoctopus said:

*Btw, you do realize that the majority of monotheist theologians would see both options you gave as totally unacceptable? Nor would they argue that God exists in the way that a table can be said to exist.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, all thanks to Plato. They have a great debt to Plato.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, August 20th, 2015 at 8:55 PM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

Dan74 said:

This reminded me of an old talk by the late patriarch of the (Korean) Jogye Order, Seongcheol Sunim where he says that to compare the teachings of Christianity to Buddhism is like throwing egg at a boulder but in practice here in Korea, it is the other way around, meaning that Christians do a great deal with their faith and Buddhists so little.

To extend his simile, one can easily fry the egg and feed people, but in order to carve a beautiful Buddha out of the boulder, a great deal of work and skill are required. In the absence of such, the boulder just sits there and takes space.

It just comes across as so much unnecessary hubris lambasting other religions, whatever for? The Dharma makes us no better than the best camera lens would make me a world-class photographer. It's what we do with it that matters.

/

Malcolm wrote:

The point of the topic is "tolerance for other religions" in the context of the issue of animal sacrifice. See the OP.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, August 20th, 2015 at 9:24 PM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

I have to red pill you on the fact that Christians dont necessarily embrace every aspect of their scriptures. I know plenty of Christians who have never even read the Old Testament. I know plenty of Christians who only work with the New Testament, and many who just work with the Synoptic gospels. There are plenty and dont even work with the source texts and work with catechisms and other extracanoncal texts. Others dont even touch the textual tradition.

treehuggingoctopus said:

To even start analyzing such passages as the one Malcolm cited bona fide requires an extensive training in Biblical hermeneutics.

Malcolm wrote:

Not really. It is a pretty straight forward account of an exhortation to go butcher another tribe, and a subsequent rebuke for failing to follow orders precisely.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, August 20th, 2015 at 9:36 PM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

treehuggingoctopus said:

Only for those unwilling to investigate such things in the framework they belong to.

Malcolm wrote:

I am pretty well acquainted with the framework, I just don't make excuses for stories about "divinely-inspired" tribal genocide and try diffuse them by claiming that there is some hermeneutic needed with which we are not acquainted in order to understand such tales.

It is like claiming that there is some deeper meaning to Buddha's watching the Śākya being carried off into slavery. There is no deeper meaning — he watched his cousins being slaughtered and enslaved.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, August 20th, 2015 at 9:38 PM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

Dan74 said:

This reminded me of an old talk by the late patriarch of the (Korean) Jogye Order, Seongcheol Sunim where he says that to compare the teachings of Christianity to Buddhism is like throwing egg at a boulder but in practice here in Korea, it is the other way around, meaning that Christians do a great deal with their faith and Buddhists so little.

To extend his simile, one can easily fry the egg and feed people, but in order to carve a beautiful Buddha out of the boulder, a great deal of work and skill are required. In the absence of such, the boulder just sits there and takes space.

It just comes across as so much unnecessary hubris lambasting other religions, whatever for? The Dharma makes us no better than the best camera lens would make me a world-class photographer. It's what we do with it that matters.

/|

Malcolm wrote:

The point of the topic is "tolerance for other religions" in the context of the issue of

animal sacrifice. See the OP.

Dan74 said:

Come on, Malcolm, we've moved past that, haven't we?

Malcolm wrote:

Not really. Look, you are the mod. If you don't like the topic, you can close it, delete it, etc. It is up to you. I won't be offended.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, August 20th, 2015 at 9:42 PM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

Tsongkhapafan said:

Whatever goodness or value there is in the world is the result of Buddha's activity.

Malcolm wrote:

I don't think this point of view will go over very well with the Taliban.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, August 20th, 2015 at 9:48 PM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

treehuggingoctopus said:

Only for those unwilling to investigate such things in the framework they belong to.

Malcolm wrote:

I am pretty well acquainted with the framework

treehuggingoctopus said:

I beg to differ.

EOT for me.

Malcolm wrote:

You underestimate my education, and don't seem to be able to accept I don't subscribe to the idea that we can excuse some tale of genocide on the basis that we are not equipped with the proper "hermeneutical framework" to understand this. This at best cultural relativism.

The fact is that these books, the OT, are not read solely by academicians. They are read mostly by ordinary people. Unlike Islam, which has a sophisticated tradition of jurisprudence, there is no such tradition for the OT in the West. Yes, the Talmud is such

a text, but that is not read by your average Christian. Your average Christian will read this and take it face value.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, August 20th, 2015 at 10:08 PM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

What's frustrating to me is that this whole argument against the Abrahamic tradition was based on approaches to their texts which Buddhists struggle against with academics.

Malcolm wrote:

This is not my approach.

Urgyen Dorje said:

The straight up gloss was that Abrahamic practitioners were all gyalpo worshipers, and thus responsible for a whole spectrum of problems in the world because of gyalpo provocations and uprisings.

Malcolm wrote:

I think there is plenty of indications in the Old and New Testament and so on to indicate that the God of Abraham, Moses, Jesus and Mohammed is a mundane worldly entity, capricious, jealous, often homicidal, and definitely biased — whose whole relationship with his followers is based on a covenant predicated on the passover sacrifice.

Urgyen Dorje said:

It's an assertion that one is not a proper Buddhist unless one embraces a certain narrative about the Abrahamic tradition.

Malcolm wrote:

Again, you are indulging in projections. I never once stated you were not a "proper" Buddhist if you did not agree with me. You can have any narrative you like about Abrahamic religions. Hell, you can go to Church, Synagogue or Mosque for all I care. You can go hang about with Tibetan Gyalpo worshippers, please be my guest. Do pujas with them. The hilarious thing is that most faithful and loyal followers of HHDL will sooner go to Muslim festival of sacrifice than spend on minute with the Gyalpo folks.

You just vehemently object to my point of view. That's ok. I don't post things in order to get people to agree with me.

Urgyen Dorje said:

Say anything good about members of the Abrahamic path, and one is embracing gyalpo

worship and everything comes along with that.

Malcolm wrote:

More projection. I never made such a statement. But carry on with your hyperbole.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, August 20th, 2015 at 10:09 PM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

Why can't you accept the fact that there is a Christianity, Judaism, Islam, etc. that exists outside the texts?

Malcolm wrote:

When did I ever say there wasn't? I should have thought my story about my experience with Sangoma would have been enough to let you know that I make a distinction between people and whatever it is they think they believe.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, August 20th, 2015 at 10:32 PM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

Malcolm...

If you look just at texts, I'd agree with you. The Abrahamic texts are pretty grotesque for the most part. My only point of departure is that there is an extra-textual aspect to all religion, and as Tibetan Buddhists we should be pretty aware of that as our texts are grotesque separated from the living tradition.

Malcolm wrote:

Sure, the anuttarayoga tantras can be seen as pretty gross and repellent. This is why they are supposed to be secret. But we don't do a very good job of that as a tradition, for example, Buddhadharma Quarterly this month has a picture of Vajrayogini on the cover drinking from a skull cup.

Urgyen Dorje said:

In this case you just make a choice to not examine the extra-textual dimensions of the Abrahamic tradition because your mind is made up on the texts. That's a very academic approach.

Malcolm wrote:

Texts inform people's choices. For example, do you really think Israel would be as intense about eliminating Palestinians from Israel if they did not have a convenient narrative derived from their textual tradition? I don't. Would there even be an Israel at all

unless this narrative existed to inform European guilt about permitting the holocaust? I don't think so.

Much has been said about mystics. Mystics and mysticism can be perverse, look at Himmler, etc.

I am convinced, seriously, that human beings do not act negatively the way they do without nonhuman provocations, especially when it comes to large scale events like the holocaust, the cultural revolution, the 1918 Influenza epidemic and so on. Human beings are basically decent, over all. But they can be twisted pretty easily.

Provocations do not just govern humans, they also govern strange diseases like SARS, HIV, MERS, etc., all of these things are governed by nonhuman beings such as mamos, tsen, nāgas, gyalpos, etc.

Urgyen Dorje said:

That said. I don't believe you one bit. I've seen you assert your version of Buddhist orthodoxy in many threads. If one disagrees one's view and practice is at fault. Period. You've not said it in such clear terms, but that's the implication.

Malcolm wrote:

I see, so you are equipped with the hermeneutical manual you need to read my posts? You can read my hidden intent?

People are free to believe what they want. I have my specific point of view. It does not mean other people are wrong. They have their point of view also. It is possible for two people to have a disagreement over the same set of facts, and for both people to be right — at least that is my experience. Points of view are relative, and they change.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, August 20th, 2015 at 11:13 PM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

My apologies then.

I don't know you so it's not clear whether this is a "discussion" or a "lesson".

Malcolm wrote:

People are free to believe what they want. I have my specific point of view. It does not mean other people are wrong. They have their point of view also. It is possible for two people to have a disagreement over the same set of facts, and for both people to be right — at least that is my experience. Points of view are relative, and they change. It's a conversation. But there are some, like our invertebrate friend, who invoke academic exceptionalism when it comes to discussing Western Religions on any level.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, August 21st, 2015 at 12:27 AM

Title: Re: Forbidden Archeology

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Ergo, whether you intend it to be or not, your methodology is rooted in the western tradition of logical positivism, it is therefore materialist, even if you are not in terms of your personal beliefs a materialist or a physicalist.

Indrajala said:

I accept that western materialism as a methodology produces valid knowledge. It has its flaws and limits, but it works quite well when attempting to explain the conventional world which we experience. It won't explain or account for most immaterial causal factors, but as a tool it does a good job in specific areas of investigation.

That being said, you don't use a screwdriver where you need a hammer. I'm quite comfortable with using different intellectual tools to address different issues.

There is also the fact that we live in age where materialist conventions are the norm and you must operate within that paradigm to be taken seriously. If I was writing in medieval India or China it would be different, but this is the early 21st century in the Anglosphere. It is much the same when you used the term "evidence-based" approach to Buddhist studies, or any historical inquiry. How wide or narrow is the evidence? This is where bias comes in, yours, mine, everyone's.

Sure, but I operate within the norms of the secular academy when working from an academic context. I have to use certain intellectual tools which are calibrated according to prevailing conventions and expectations. I personally tend to work from a perspective of philology, which you call myopic, and I am aware of its limitations which is why I try not to introduce too much speculation on my part. The outcome, hopefully, is a better perspective on historical realities and developments, which can answer some of the questions I proposed above.

There's also the fact I enjoy what I do and the way I do it. It propels me to read many texts in Chinese, Japanese and Sanskrit, which are transferable skills to non-academic endeavors.

Malcolm wrote:

BTW, I now have a very good reason why the Chinese did not know anything about Tibetans prior to the Tang.

Indrajala said:

Zhang Qian had been very lucky to escape twice from Xiongnu captivity, and he was not anxious to enter their territory again. On the basis of the bamboo and cloth he had seen

in Bactria, he thought that there must be an alternate route to the west. If those southwestern Chinese goods had reached Bactria from India, there had to be a more direct route connecting India and China. He suggested to Wudi that he send expeditions to explore other ways to get to India that circumvented the Xiongnu. Wudi took his advice and did so, but without success. In order to get from Sichuan to India, the only possible land route was to cut through the mountainous regions of Yunnan, which was then outside the bounds of China. People living in that area saw no benefit to themselves from any encroachment of Han trade routes into their territory. They resisted or killed any intruders. As a result, dangerous though it might be, the steppe route remained the most viable thoroughfare to Central Asia and parts further west.

Malcolm wrote:

Liu, Xinru (2010-06-10). The Silk Road in World History (New Oxford World History) (Kindle Locations 215-220). Oxford University Press. Kindle Edition.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, August 21st, 2015 at 12:28 AM

Title: Re: Forbidden Archeology

Content:

Indrajala said:

[

There is also the fact that we live in age where materialist conventions are the norm and you must operate within that paradigm to be taken seriously.

Malcolm wrote:

What, to get a job? Maybe, maybe not.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, August 21st, 2015 at 12:43 AM

Title: Re: Forbidden Archeology

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

BTW, I now have a very good reason why the Chinese did not know anything about Tibetans prior to the Tang.

Indrajala said:

Or there were no self-identifying Tibetans in the Han dynasty.

I think you need to reevaluate your wishful ideas.

Malcolm wrote:

There were clans of people who spoke Tibetan dialects, who later adopted the name "Bod pa." These people referred to themselves as the The dMu,gDong, sGra, etc., different clans, but they were all related by a common culture, language, religion and

fealty to Zhang Zhung, with however their own king.

That is, unless you somehow believe [against all evidence, archaeological and otherwise] that Tibet was empty of humans until it was "discovered" by China.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, August 21st, 2015 at 12:56 AM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

Johnny Dangerous said:

I would hope so, but apparently the answer is no, we cannot tolerate other religions and must view their practitioners in an exclusively negative light, even when we do not actually have a grasp of their full range of practices.. if i'm reading the discussion right from some quarters.

Malcolm wrote:

You are reading someone's gloss of my position. That is not my position. But people keep insisting it is so...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, August 21st, 2015 at 1:26 AM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

Johnny Dangerous said:

If you were making some other point than a general demonization of monotheists, it was lost on me. Can you explain what you actually meant?

Malcolm wrote:

Specifically, I was talking about animal sacrifice and its negative consequences.

Secondly, I voiced my opinion that the Abrahamic God bears the attributes of what we would call in Tibetan Buddhism, a rgyal po, keeping in mind that in reality such entities are in fact formless pretas.

It is very clear in the OT and the Koran that this god demands blood sacrifices. So they are offered up.

We generally accept that the pantheon of Hindu devas are real, albeit worldly entities. For example, Shiva, often portrayed as a transcendent deva in Hindu sources, is a worldly protector in Buddhist sources.

I take Orishas seriously because I have relatives from Haiti, and their experience with Voodoo practitioners, and because of my experience with the Sangoma I mentioned and my experienced in SA in general.

I take Japanese Kami seriously, because I have been in Japan.

I take the whole range of provocation illness [gdon nad] quite seriously because I work in Tibetan Medicine. Not only that, one of my main gurus was the chief exorcist/weather controller for the Tibetan Gvt.

So, I don't think that religions form around nonentities, apart from the Flying Spaghetti Monster:

Since by definition, outside Dharma, there are no transcendent religions, I think the world is a place where there are a lot of deep forces of a nonhuman variety shaping human actions on many levels. This is pretty standard point of view for a Tibetan Dharma Practitioner.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, August 21st, 2015 at 1:33 AM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

DGA said:

When you disagree with someone and it matters--I disagree with Boko Haram, for example--then address one's criticisms to the harmful actions, and leave the business of reflecting on the doctrinal basis for Boko Haram's (or ISIS's, or the Klan's, or whomever else's) horrible deeds to those who hold those views.

Malcolm wrote:

ISIS, Boko Haram, definitely under the influence of a provocation.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, August 21st, 2015 at 1:35 AM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

Johnny Dangerous said:

Since by definition, outside Dharma, there are no transcendent religions, I think the world is a place where there are a lot of deep forces of a nonhuman variety shaping human actions on many levels. This is pretty standard point of view for a Tibetan Dharma Practitioner.

I don't think this is the part anyone was objecting to. For my part, I share some of these beliefs, and think that some practitioners of monotheism are engaging in something that will, and does lead to something bad, and are spurred on by some conflict-gobbling big ugly. That said, I know plenty of other practitioners of those faiths who are very far

from being in that category, despite sharing a common religion, who I do not think are engaged in anything like this at all. Additionally, when one looks at different parts of these religions, one does find practitioners who seem to be doing something meritorious. Maybe you could say they are practicing well in spite of the religion, but even so, they are.

Worldly, yeah, probably, but plenty not worthy of condemnation in the least. To me, that is tolerance..viewing them all with suspicion is not.

Malcolm wrote:

I never condemned anyone, though there was some pretty hysterical assertions that I was. Of course, I wasn't so, damn the torpedoes and full speed ahead.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, August 21st, 2015 at 2:09 AM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

Johnny Dangerous said:

Kabbalah has doctrines specifically about the inability of the thinking human mind to comprehend ain-soph, no-thingness.

The difference is, it has this weird theistic underpinning that seems to butt up against that, and it also believes in something from nothing. In other ways though, it's surprisingly non-theistic. Same with some of the Sufi literature I have read.

Malcolm wrote:

It might surprise you to learn that I have read quite a bit in Kabbala. But in the end, it is more neo-platonist than anything else.

Johnny Dangerous said:

There are a lot of shades of even 'exoteric monotheism' that aren't bible-thumpers or Jihadis, and seem quite reasonable, including in their ability to acknowledge these sorts of experiences. Granted, their acknowledgement wouldn't square with our view..but that is precisely the "tolerance" part, we don't need our views to agree with others to respect them.

Malcolm wrote:

A lot of Christians are "cultural" Christians. They don't believe Jesus is going to save them, they don't believe in heaven. In many respects they are like "Secular" Buddhists.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, August 21st, 2015 at 2:37 AM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

Caodemarte said:

"We can have a thread about texts, and doctrine, and how it can be variously interpreted." This applies to other religions is only if you know what texts, and doctrine, and how it has been and is variously interpreted. This requires some study of reputable sources.

Malcolm wrote:

Sure.

Caodemarte said:

Assuming that Abrahamic religions, for example, believe there is magical being living in the sky (as the Pope recently criticized the naive view of Christianity among Christians) demonstrates that one has not made that effort.

Malcolm wrote:

Obviously there are many people who subscribe to this belief, if the Pope had to criticize it. So how have the Catholic Theologians defined God then?

Caodemarte said:

The one absolutely and infinitely perfect spirit who is the Creator of all. In the definition of the First Vatican Council, fifteen internal attributes of God are affirmed, besides his role as Creator of the universe: "The holy, Catholic, apostolic Roman Church believes and professes that there is one true, living God, the Creator and Lord of heaven and earth. He is almighty, eternal, beyond measure, incomprehensible, and infinite in intellect, will and in every perfection. Since He is one unique spiritual substance, entirely simple and unchangeable, He must be declared really and essentially distinct from the world, perfectly happy in Himself and by his very nature, and inexpressibly exalted over all things that exist or can be conceived other than Himself" (Denzinger 3001).

Reflecting on the nature of God, theology has variously identified what may be called his metaphysical essence, i.e., what is God. It is commonly said to be his self-subsistence. God is Being Itself. In God essence and existence coincide. He is the Being who cannot not exist. God alone must be. All other beings exist only because of the will of God.

Malcolm wrote:

There are fifteen problems with this definition. So this is the definition of God, it is a nice tidy philosopher's definition and just as sterile. It is also perfectly Aristotelian in nature [as are similar Islamic definitions]:

[Et vita autem] And life also belongs to God; for the actuality of thought is life, and God is that actuality; and God's self-dependent actuality is life most good and eternal. We say therefore that God is a living being, eternal, most good, so that life and duration continuous and eternal belong to God; for this is God.

Yes, the doctrine of the Rapture is a Scottish innovation.

Theologians like Tillich were pretty clear that God existed, this is why he uses the term "ground of being" to describe God. A term, sadly, that has been misappropriated by some translators of Dzogchen texts [without any reasoned basis at all].

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, August 21st, 2015 at 9:25 AM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

Caodemarte said:

...metaphor (including "ground of being," "existence") since finite beings are incapable of understanding infinite being.

Malcolm wrote:

Being is being. Finite or not, it is an extreme.

Caodemarte said:

My larger point here is that before we all, including me, criticize the simplistic beliefs of others we first check to see if the problem is that we have a simplistic understanding of those beliefs. We often assume that we understand when we don't. I think we all agree that a good Buddhist POV would be to always check your assumptions.

Malcolm wrote:

All samsaric vehicles are either eternalist or annihilationist. There really is no third alternative.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, August 21st, 2015 at 9:33 AM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

Wayfarer said:

I thought, likewise, the teaching on 'the emptiness of emptiness', was that emptiness teachings are themselves only expedient means, and a remedy for clinging to things that 'the worldly take to be important'.

Malcolm wrote:

Umm, no, not according to Madhyamaka and Yogacara. According to Madhyamaka, the emptiness of emptiness is, strictly speaking, the emptiness of the emptiness of phenomena, meant to counter clinging to the idea that emptiness is itself an entity.

According to Yogacara, however, it is somewhat more complicated. But it is not as you have summarized it.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, August 21st, 2015 at 9:16 PM

Title: Re: Forbidden Archeology

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

That is, unless you somehow believe [against all evidence, archaeological and otherwise] that Tibet was empty of humans until it was "discovered" by China.

Indrajala said:

No, I'm just saying a self-identifying Tibetan nation doesn't seem to exist until at least the sixth century. People lived there, but whether they thought of themselves as having a common identity and being a unique nation, is questionable.

Malcolm wrote:

As I said, the core Tibetan identity is based on the four clans [rus bzhi]. These four clans rallied around a single dynastic family, from approximately the late 2nd century BCE. It is not clear when Tibetans began to call themselves Tibetans, but it was not early. This dynastic family in turn were vassals of the Zhang Zhung kings until the 7th century, when Srongtsam Gampo had their ruler, Ligmincha, assassinated.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, August 21st, 2015 at 9:26 PM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

Caodemarte said:

...metaphor (including "ground of being," "existence") since finite beings are incapable of understanding infinite being.

Malcolm wrote:

Being is being. Finite or not, it is an extreme.

Karma Dorje said:

And yet, when we look at Kabbalah in any depth, "being" only reaches as far as Kether, with the three veils of ain, ain soph and ain soph aur serving as greater and greater scope of understanding of the non-arising of being.

Buddhist dharma is undoubtedly more explicit about emptiness and has a much larger collection of methods to demonstrate it, but it is not really true that it is the only place we find this understanding.

In any case, it is enough to say that Buddhadharma accomplishes what it sets out to do.

Malcolm wrote:

This kabbalistic doctrine is an attempt to provide an alternate explanation to Christian ex-nihilo creationism. It is in no sense an exercise in exploring the non-arising of being. In fact, ein, according to the Zohar, here just means that God is too subtle to describe, whereas ein soph is God prior to his self-manifestation. This resembles nothing at all in Buddhadharma, and is wholly predicated on Plotinus's emanationism.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, August 21st, 2015 at 9:31 PM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

So while I totally believe in gyalpo uprisings as I've witnessed some weird stuff first hand, I have always thought it pointless, as a Buddhist, to fuss too much about theistic systems given that deity is a projection.

Malcolm wrote:

Or, a deceiving entity like Brahma in the Kevaddha sutta that I referenced. I think the latter is more likely than the former.

Urgyen Dorje said:

Jung

Malcolm wrote:

I have never had any use for this quack.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, August 21st, 2015 at 10:28 PM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

I'm not a Jungian by any stretch of the imagination. Jungians have certainly mucked up people's interpretation of Tibetan Buddhism. However, I do think his general trend in seeing theological constructs as reflections of the individual psyche as pretty reasonable.

Jung

Malcolm wrote:

I have never had any use for this quack.

You will not be surprised to learn I have zero use for Psychology in general. It is a complete pseudo-science, at least, the Freudian, Jungian and streams stemming from them are. They are more like literary fantasy than anything else, as far as I can tell.

YMMV

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, August 22nd, 2015 at 12:53 AM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

But I have my own experience. People who have a vision of their deity as being wrathful and punishing and angry, well, they tend to have issues. They tend to dislike a lot of people. People who have a vision of their deity as an embodiment of love, are, well, generally loving people.

Malcolm wrote:

I don't know, I have met some really angry Tara and Chenrezi practitioners, and conversely, I have met some Drollo practitioners who are as loving and gentle as can be.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, August 22nd, 2015 at 5:57 AM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

Malcolm...

I think we agree on the major points.

That the Abrahamic traditions aren't dharma paths, no matter how contemplative and mystical they might be.

That gyalpo provocations are real and have causes and solutions as indicated in the tradition.

Red pill me though on why the Abrahamic god actually exists? In that case I would probably interpret many things differently...

Malcolm wrote:

Religions do not form without cause. As far as I am concerned the actual "god" of the OT, NT and Koran is a rgyal po, more than one. rGyal pos delight on conflict and causing people to break samaya.

And it seems to me that whatever adaptations of Greek Philosophy and so on Christians, Jews and Muslims may have made, again and again all three religions traditions become involved in paranoia, dominance and political power [the Jews, post Temple, much less so because of their long history of persecution, but these days, Israel?"]. For this reason I personally think that backbone of these traditions is sustained by a rgyal po/rgyal pos, and it can be more than one.

You kept asking the question, are all these people rgyal po worshippers — of course not. I never said they were. If your philosophical definition of the divine is drawn from Aristotle or Plotinus, of course not.

But it does not mean that you are not in the company of people whose concept of god feeds right into and feeds the egos of this kind of dregs pa.

There can be many kinds of gdon associated with a religion. There gdon associated with the US Government, dkor bdags [owners of donations, literally] and so on.

One reason why it is so hard for people to get off of the dole is that when one gets into debt with the government or the banks, and so on, the influence of the dkor bdags who rule your debt, Gvt. property and so on, keep you poor until you get free of the debt by paying it off.

Some people never get free, and this kind of provocation can be passed on in families for generations. This is why it best not to carry much debt. And if you have debt you cannot pay, it is better to declare bankruptcy.

I am sure some of you reading this think I am insane, thinking "What? Spirits who have an interest in Bank and Welfar debt? What a crazy idea!" In reality, even secular institutions have their nonhuman protectors, whether they recognize them or not.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, August 22nd, 2015 at 6:10 AM

Title: Re: Helen Tworikov, Tricycle Magazine: Anti-Vajrayana Bias?

Content:

DGA said:

I recall reading some time back that there was a sense among some that Tricycle Magazine, back when it still mattered, had an anti-Vajrayana, pro-Zen bias to it. Further, this reflected the shift of the editor, Helen Tworikov, from a disciple of Trungpa to a Zen practitioner.

Wherever I read this has been sucked away into the ether.

Anyway, can anyone corroborate this idea? It's useful to have these things available to a google search for future reference.

Malcolm wrote:

It was more of an Anti Trungpa Bias.

Anyway, like most Buddhist controversies, it was a tempest in a teapot.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, August 22nd, 2015 at 8:51 PM

Title: Re: The courage of no convictions

Content:

Dan74 said:

Often a poster with strong convictions and the stamina to argue them come what may earns kudos, while putting forward something other than a firm position is seen as being a fence-sitter, PC, wishy-washy and weak. I want to argue a position of no position, as a

good position to have quite often.

...

What do you think?

/

Malcolm wrote:

When one is a doctor, one has to diagnose illness. Illnesses come complete with symptoms. When you understand the cause of a disease, you can eliminate it. This approach has nothing to do with "taking positions." Making excuses for the symptoms or the cause merely leads to more illnesses.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, August 22nd, 2015 at 8:52 PM

Title: Re: Earth Termas - real objects?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Chogyal Namkhai Norbu also witnessed earth treasure being revealed by his uncle.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, August 22nd, 2015 at 8:53 PM

Title: Re: Water Bowl Offerings

Content:

Terma said:

How do you guys dispose of your water bowl offerings? I have no house plants to nourish with water, so what should I do? Pour it on the lawn outside?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, August 22nd, 2015 at 8:56 PM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

lostitude said:

Besides, the way animals are sacrificed and the method used in Islam were described by Muhammad himself, and in his time it was by far the most merciful and painless way to kill.

Malcolm wrote:

Tibetan nomads certainly would not agree. They think suffocation is kinder.

Still, from the point of view of Buddhadharma, killing of any kind is a nonvirtuous act, and is motivated by either the poisons of desire, hatred or ignorance.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, August 22nd, 2015 at 9:20 PM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

In reality, even secular institutions have their nonhuman protectors, whether they recognize them or not.

dzogchungpa said:

May I ask how you know this?

Malcolm wrote:

There are non-human beings — you can call them elementals or bhūtas — everywhere. Some are harmful, some are not, but all are possessive. They don't just inhabit churches, mosques, synagogues and temples. They inhabit houses, etc. They are also not unintelligent, they know where they are and why they are there — being formless, they have seven times more clarity than embodied beings in the desire realm possess in general.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, August 22nd, 2015 at 9:21 PM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

jnanasutra said:

Provocations do not just govern humans, they also govern strange diseases like SARS, HIV, MERS, etc., all of these things are governed by nonhuman beings such as mamos, tsen, nāgas, gyalpos, etc.

Where is the proof? I would like to hear arguments other than "my lama said so" and "such-and-such buddhist text says so"...these are too self-referential.

Malcolm wrote:

One either accepts the authority of texts and persons or not. It's up to you.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, August 22nd, 2015 at 9:24 PM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

When people walk away from this thing, they universally use the language of "I don't believe in this any more".

I guess spirits could simply be drawn to people on different forms of that trip depending upon their intensity and negativity. As you've said in another post, I can see spirits being drawn to the crucifixion, and I could see them being worked up about the idols being removed from the Kaaba.

Malcolm wrote:

I was making a different point when discussing the crucifixion — I was saying that such kind of executions of religious people are precisely the kind of thing that causes creates gyalpos.

gDon do not depend on our beliefs. Saying that we do not believe in other kinds of sentient beings that are formless is like two ants on a leaf arguing about whether humans exist or not, to borrow an image from Sakya Pandita.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, August 22nd, 2015 at 9:31 PM

Title: Re: Earth Termas - real objects?

Content:

Nosta said:

Chokgyur was the name, sorry for my mistake.

Earth Termas being real is something extraordinary, and something that shows that reality is illusory. If not, how could it be possible to take out objects from air or rocks?

I suppose that in the present times there are not tertons able to do such things.

Malcolm wrote:

Sure there are. I have met two of them, now deceased, but they both revealed earth termas.

Khenpo Jigme Phunstok

Kunzang Dechen Lingpa

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, August 22nd, 2015 at 9:37 PM

Title: Re: Sequence of the elements

Content:

kashmir said:

Why is it that during the purification of the elements E Ho. etc, the sequence is space, wind, water, fire, earth. While most depictions of Thigles using the simple five colors,

the sequence seems to be Blue, Green, Red, Yellow, Surrounded by white (Space, Wind, Fire, Earth, Water?)

Malcolm wrote:

The sequence in the thigle has a specific meaning that can be found in the Dzogchen tantras. It is not arbitrary. But I am not going to discuss it here.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, August 22nd, 2015 at 9:50 PM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

I'm down with that now. Like our own Sonam Dragpa turned gyalpo. Yes. Martyrdom could be seen as a gyalpo factory. iMO especially crusaders and jihadis.

Malcolm wrote:

Definitely.

Anyway, for example, we have the example of Muhammed — from whom did he receive the Koran? An entity called Gabriel, who presented himself as a conveyor of the word of God. How is this any different at all from Tibetan oracles, New Age channelers and so on? Nothing, in my view.

We have constant information from the OT Prophets that they communicated directly with a being they gave various names, and they report this entity took and takes a generational interest in their people from a very early time.

The "chosen people" meme has been one of the most destructive in human history because it gives a certain population a teleological claim to primacy and favor. The Israelites used it to wipe out enemy tribes, the Christians used it to forge their hegemony, causing massive genocides in the Americas, both north and south, the Muslims used it and are using it today, even the Communists used it with the myth of the proletariat [Communist eschatology is strictly Abrahamic in nature].

Monotheisms, as a class of religion, are entirely imperialistic in their ambitions, and this is one of the chief reasons I think they are all gyalpo driven, regardless of what individual Christians, Jews and Muslims [and Communists] may believe and whatever concept of God they may hold.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, August 22nd, 2015 at 10:00 PM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

BTW, there is no reason not be tolerant of other religions, for the same reason that we are tolerant of afflicted people, including ourselves.

The general motivation for all religions, even religions which advocate harming others, is to promote happiness and well-being. However, other religions arise out of ignorance of how things actually are and propose ineffective solutions for the problems they intend to address.

We have to recognize that the beliefs and and practices of other religions do not lead to liberation, are at best palliatives for human problems, and at worst, cause rebirth in lower realms.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, August 22nd, 2015 at 11:10 PM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

what do I do differently with that information?

Malcolm wrote:

Practice Drollo.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, August 23rd, 2015 at 12:20 AM

Title: Re: Helen Tworkov, Tricycle Magazine: Anti-Vajrayana Bias?

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

I don't read Tricycle or Shambhala Sun because I feel they have ideological and sectarian biases. Sometimes they drop a great article or interview.

Malcolm wrote:

What is Shambhala Sun's ideological and sectarian bias?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, August 23rd, 2015 at 2:23 AM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

Maybe, but I still don't see how you know that the IRS, say, has nonhuman protectors.

Malcolm wrote:

Maybe you should reflect on that...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, August 23rd, 2015 at 2:40 AM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

smcj said:

I've heard the basic idea about nagas is that there is one wherever there is a nice spot. So a nice beach or a nice meadow would have one. I guess that means Yosemite and Yellowstone have really big ones.

I'm not subscribing to that theory, but I do find it esthetically pleasing. So now when I go into nature to a really nice spot I mentally make an offering and give thanks to the local naga. Whether or not there actually is a naga doesn't matter to me. I find it a beautiful way to enhance my enjoyment of the spot. And if there actually is a naga, well then there's nothing wrong with being a polite guest.

Just as long as they don't ask me to take sides with the whole garuda/naga conflict.

Malcolm wrote:

Better make sure it is a nāgā positive day, or you are just going to piss them off.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, August 23rd, 2015 at 2:50 AM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

lostitude said:

I forgot to respond to your post: I certainly wasn't talking about the Buddhist sangha in particular. When I praised Urgyen Dorje's attitude and hoped more people were like him/her, I meant the human community in general. So far it seems to me that the buddhist community is actually a million times more open minded than some of the Muslim communities I have been involved in.

Malcolm wrote:

Of course followers of Buddharma are open minded. We understand that everyone is afflicted by the three poisons, since this is the direct cause of samsara and rebirth. We understand that every thing that everyone does, even if it is positive, even if we are followers of Buddhadharma, is tainted with the three poisons unless or until we cut the three poisons off at the root because we have woken up. And awakened people have nothing but compassion for everyone. However, as far as I know, there are no awakened people posting on this board.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, August 23rd, 2015 at 3:30 AM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

lostitude said:

If you are not yourself free from samsara already, there is no way you can know that... because you don't know what exactly leads to liberation since you haven't trodden that path yet. All you know is a few vague descriptions of it, but that's very far from knowledge.

Malcolm wrote:

This argument is incorrect. It presumes there is only one form of correct knowledge, direct perception. But in fact, Buddhадharma accepts three forms of valid knowledge: direct perception, inference and testimony.

lostitude said:

That's the problem I was alluding to earlier. Some people seem to believe that they know as much as bodhisattvas or buddhas, simply from reading or hearing stuff about what they said or did, and having a few years of practice behind them. I think it would be much wiser to keep one's judgements on hold until one reaches liberation. Then you can see with your own eyes. Until then, why not just say 'I don't know', and be content with saying 'buddhism is what works for ME' ?

Malcolm wrote:

Some of us have been practicing Dharma long enough to have sufficient experience to be quite certain that what Buddha and other masters of Buddhадharma before him and after him have stated is true. Arriving at that confidence requires putting Buddhадharma into practice in one's own life. That starts with beginning to cultivate mundane correct view. What is that?:

This is the suffering, this is the cause, this is its cessation, this is the path.

You see the skyline of New York City long before you arrive there. You don't need to have arrived at the Empire State Building to know it is there. You can see it from a distance.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, August 23rd, 2015 at 4:11 AM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

You see the skyline of New York City long before you arrive there. You don't need to have arrived at the Empire State Building to know it is there. You can see it from a distance.

lostitude said:

But you have no idea what the view from the Empire State Building is like until you reach the top. Same goes with other religions you're trying to look at without even having reached the top of the mountain that is nirvana, the only clear vantage point. Inference

and testimony will never equate direct knowledge. Especially when they are flawed, which is very often the case, as the disagreements within historic buddhist schools have shown, according to my modest readings on this topic so far.

Malcolm wrote:

We don't need to see the view of the Empire State Building for ourselves. Since we are certain it exists, we can trust the reports of others who have ridden the elevator to the top. Of course, seeing for oneself is always better, but it certainly does not mean we need to disbelieve the reports of others who have been to the top of a building we can plainly see for ourselves.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, August 23rd, 2015 at 4:19 AM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

lostitude said:

I'm giving those details because now that I'm reading up on general buddhism (not just zen), I keep bumping into strikingly similar themes in both religions.

I thought satan/shaytan was purely abrahamic, we have mara in buddhism.

Malcolm wrote:

Mara /= Satan.

lostitude said:

Same for heaven and hell.

Malcolm wrote:

Islam = heaven and hell are eternal

Buddhadharma = heaven and hells are just part of the six realms of existence, impermanent.

lostitude said:

I was especially surprised by this story about one of the buddhist hells in which beings are constantly burned and when the skin is completely burnt, it is replaced by a new one for more burning. This is word-for-word a verse in the Quran. It would almost seem as if Muhammad went on a road trip to India in his hippie years.

Malcolm wrote:

Western hells are clearly based on Buddhist hells, doubtless via Mani.

lostitude said:

Then there are other apparent similarities (I'm saying apparent because I'm already out

of my depth there, it gets too conceptual for me), such as the sufi view of 'unity of existence/being' (wahdat al wujud) which basically says that everything that 'is', is one. Which includes Allah. But at the same time you have this verse in the Qur'an that says that Allah is not comparable to anything (which implies that for all ends and purposes, Allah/God does not exist in this universe, since nothing within this universe is like Him).

Malcolm wrote:

There is no concept of everything is one in Buddhadharma. That is Advaita, one without a second and so on.

lostitude said:

Then of course you have karma in buddhism, and good deeds and bad deeds in islam and their consequences.

You also have 'baraka' in islam, which would be the equivalent of good karma, and baraka is especially available around tombs of saints and of course the tomb of the Prophet, and the Kaaba and some holy mosques. Just like buddhist stupas.

Malcolm wrote:

Karma comes from one's own intentions, not places.

lostitude said:

You have many different planes of existence beyond the wordly plane in buddhism, in islam what is commonly referred to as 'Heaven' is actually subdivided into many planes too, the very last one being some kind of fusion with Allah and disappearance into Him. Something that sounds just as un-conceptualizable as nirvana.

Malcolm wrote:

All planes of existence in Buddhadharma are worldly, from Avici hell to Bhavagra.

lostitude said:

What mainstream islam lacks for me is a clear path for spiritual progression. Sufi schools could have offered me that maybe, but I just haven't had a chance to join one. And I feel this very strong resonance about islam and buddhism as you put it, which is why I really feel like at least trying some buddhist practices and see where they get me. If it can't hurt me, why not just try.

Malcolm wrote:

[/quote][/quote]

Nope, it cannot hurt you to try. Though I would be cautious about sharing your apostasy with other Muslims. In some places it can get you instantly killed.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, August 23rd, 2015 at 4:30 AM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

lostitude said:

You're missing the point. Yes you can be certain that nirvana exists. But you can't know what the view is like from there, until you reach it.

Malcolm wrote:

You can taste it before you get there. This is called "stream entry."

lostitude said:

So wait until you reach it before judging other religions, because that's the only valid vantage point, as I was saying.

Malcolm wrote:

Theistic religions do not make any sense and they contradict direct perception. You are the one making the argument from direct perception. In this case, what can be more foolish than believing a creator god no one has ever seen?

lostitude said:

As long as you haven't reached nirvana, you are still deluded,

Malcolm wrote:

No, this is not the case. You need to understand something more about the path structure of Buddhadharma that you do. In Buddhism, one wakes up long before one achieves Nirvana. Once one has woken up, one is not longer deluded. That initial awakening is called "stream entry." In Mahāyāna is the first bhumi. But even before the first bhumi there is the second stage of the path of application, where one's samadhi so closely resembles the actual experience of awakening is it called "peak."

lostitude said:

and you see the world and other religions in a deluded way. Just because you can see nirvana looming in the distance doesn't help you know what perspective you will enjoy once you get there.

Malcolm wrote:

You think this, because you have not properly studied the Dharma.

lostitude said:

Now if you have got reports from people who have reached nirvana unequivocally saying that all other religions are bad, I'd be interested to read that.

Malcolm wrote:

It is not a question of bad — it is a question of not attaining liberation. And the Buddha most certainly commented on this point in several sutras, for example, the Mahāparibhinnana sutta which was already cited in this thread:

"In any doctrine & discipline where the noble eightfold path is not found, no contemplative of the first... second... third... fourth order [stream-winner, once-returner,

non-returner, or arahant] is found. But in any doctrine & discipline where the noble eightfold path is found, contemplatives of the first... second... third... fourth order are found. The noble eightfold path is found in this doctrine & discipline, and right here there are contemplatives of the first... second... third... fourth order. Other teachings are empty of knowledgeable contemplatives.

<http://www.accesstoinsight.org/tipitaka/dn/dn.16.5-6.than.html>

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, August 23rd, 2015 at 4:36 AM

Title: Re: the unconscious, the shadow, and buddhism?

Content:

jorden said:

I have two questions, I hope this is the appropriate forum (if not perhaps one of the mods can suggest a better place?):

Is there a Buddhist concept resembling the psychological shadow a la Jung (an unconscious aspect of the personality which the conscious ego does not identify in itself. Because one tends to reject or remain ignorant of the least desirable aspects of one's personality, the shadow is largely negative. (Wikipedia))?

And can somebody point me in the direction of Buddhist thoughts on the relation between our conscious and unconscious mind. If there is such a thing? What terms would I be looking for?

Thanks in advance for any thoughts on this,
Jorden

Malcolm wrote:

There is no shadow concept in Buddhadharma, nor is there a concept of a conscious and unconscious mind in Buddhadharma.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, August 23rd, 2015 at 4:41 AM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Islam = heaven and hell are eternal

lostitude said:

Not exactly.

First, hell is presented as 'eternal' (in Western languages) only for those who do not believe in Allah as being the matrix of existence.

Malcolm wrote:

Uh huh, and that makes it eternal, which is why Buddhists are in the lowest Islamic hell.

For others, hell is just a transitory existence that goes upward as 'bad karma' ripens, through skin-burning among other niceties
Same as heaven, which has several stages and from what I remember there is a possibility to move up from one stage to another.

Second, the word translated as 'eternal' (usually khalid) has been very much debated among Muslim scholars as to what it really means. Is it really absolute eternity, or is it one of those semitic exaggerations to signify 'a very long period of time'. Many have favored the second option, on the basis of some evidence which I don't remember, with this same word being used for obviously non-eternal events.

lostitude said:

There is no concept of everything is one in Buddhadharma. That is Advaita, one without a second and so on.

Yet that's what Kaccani took about 3 pages to try to explain to me: I'm no different from the object I perceive, all is the same and at the end of the day, since everything is conditioned, nothing exists for real. But maybe I got that wrong.

Malcolm wrote:

Umm no, you really have it wrong here.

lostitude said:

Karma comes from one's own intentions, not places.

Well if it's a bone of contention within buddhism, it's not my problem All I know for certain is that stupas is a very buddhist thing, and that the belief that worshipping around them and circumambulating around them gets you huge amounts of good karma, is a very buddhist belief.

Malcolm wrote:

This is not a bone of contention within Buddhism. Everyone accepts this definition since the Buddha stated it, Nāgārjuna repeated it, and so on.

Stupas have no magic power of their own.

[/quote]Fortunately I don't live in a so-called 'islamic' country.[/quote]

Fortunately.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, August 23rd, 2015 at 4:56 AM

Title: Re: the unconscious, the shadow, and buddhism?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

There is no shadow concept in Buddhadharma, nor is there a concept of a conscious and unconscious mind in Buddhadharma.

jorden said:

And habitual patterns/tendencies we are ignorant of? Don't they form a structure in our mind?

Malcolm wrote:

You are talking about traces [vasanas], these are imprints of actions that remain latent our mindstream until activated by specific causes, according to one theory.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, August 23rd, 2015 at 5:21 AM

Title: Re: the unconscious, the shadow, and buddhism?

Content:

jorden said:

Thanks Malcolm. I looked up vasana and saw that the Wikipedia article also mentioned Bīja (seeds) and alaya (storehouse). Do you have a reading suggestion for an introduction to these concepts? I have heard alaya mentioned once in connection to a teaching on karma. The context of my question is that I'm doing contemplation on the four thoughts and I am not very well versed in the Buddhist thinking on karma. I have more experience with Jungian thought, so I have tried approaching karma from that direction. And do you know if there is a connection between vasanas and dreams?

Malcolm wrote:

IN general, dreams come from activated traces.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, August 23rd, 2015 at 5:43 AM

Title: Re: the unconscious, the shadow, and buddhism?

Content:

jorden said:

If

Malcolm wrote:

IN general, dreams come from activated traces.

jorden said:

I am confused now. What am I missing then in trying to compare these karmic traces in Buddhism and unconscious processes as in analytical psychology? They seem pretty much the same to me. They even produce dreams!

Jorden

Malcolm wrote:

In general dreams are the exhaustion of "junk" karma, and do not have any meaning.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, August 23rd, 2015 at 5:58 AM

Title: Re: Natural State and Nature

Content:

steve_bakr said:

The text of "The Supreme Source" cuts through all provisional teachings and what remains is "Pure and Total Consciousness" only. It cuts through every practice and belief dearly held.

Malcolm wrote:

Kun byed rgyal po is a sems sde text. It is principally concerned with the first statement of Garab Dorje, "Direct Introduction." It does not address the second two statements, "Remain without doubt" and "Continue in that state." [The three statements of Garab Dorje may actually be found in the ultimate root tantra of all Dzogchen, the origin of all Dharma teachings and specifically, all Dzogchen teachings, the sGra thal 'gyur Tantra.]

steve_bakr said:

I have been given to believe that the Direct Introduction to the Nature of Mind, which is Intrinsic Awareness (Rigpa), the Primordial State, is sufficient for all three statements.

Malcolm wrote:

Rig pa is not the primordial state. Chogyal Namkhai Norbu states this again and again and again. If you choose not to listen to him, what can I say?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, August 23rd, 2015 at 6:04 AM

Title: Re: the unconscious, the shadow, and buddhism?

Content:

jorden said:

So am I correct in understanding that there is at least a superficial similarity between the concept of unconscious processes and habitual tendencies/patterns (in that both in their respective views cause us to do (and dream) all kinds of crazy stuff without us really having any control), but a big difference in the way meaning is (or is not) attached to them?

Malcolm wrote:

Well, the idea that there are subconsciousness processes in the mind is rejected out of hand in Buddhadharma. And not every school of Buddhism subscribes to this idea of traces.

For the most part, dreams are held to be pretty meaningless. Just another bardo of illusion.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, August 23rd, 2015 at 6:06 AM

Title: Re: Helen Tworkov, Tricycle Magazine: Anti-Vajrayana Bias?

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

They each have their own nuances, but the intention is to prevent the view of a modern western Buddhism- - whatever that is.

Malcolm wrote:

Hey, I thought that was my job!

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, August 23rd, 2015 at 6:18 AM

Title: Re: the unconscious, the shadow, and buddhism?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Well, the idea that there are subconsciousness processes in the mind is rejected out of hand in Buddhadharma. And not every school of Buddhism subscribes to this idea of traces.

For the most part, dreams are held to be pretty meaningless. Just another bardo of illusion.

jorden said:

So then I might not be understanding the difference between being ignorant of karmic conditioning and the effect it has on people (if you can put it that way) and subconsciousness processes that influence your life without you knowing it. I might even be misunderstanding subconsciousness in this context... Is subconsciousness rejected because it is defined as something that cannot ever become known/brought in awareness? Or is it that I'm comparing the seemingly similar effects (i.e. stuff you are unaware of affects what you do in both Buddhadharma and analytical psychology) but missing the very different view on the structure of consciousness?

Malcolm wrote:

Consciousness is unitary and momentary, only one at a time. There are mental factors that accompany it, but you really need to study Abhidharma to fully understand the differences.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, August 23rd, 2015 at 7:02 AM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

lostitute said:

Uh huh, and that makes it eternal, which is why Buddhists are in the lowest Islamic hell. How could you possibly tell? You have no idea what Allah as the matrix of existence could mean, because you have neither attained nirvana, nor attained the state attained by the sufi saints who expounded this notion.

Malcolm wrote:

There is no matrix of existence, no ground of being.

lostitude said:

So you're simply rejecting something you don't even understand.

Malcolm wrote:

Ok, if you say so.

lostitude said:

Where did I say that? I said that they were places where you can get loads of good karma. Just like the tombs of some Muslim saints. What is the difference?

Malcolm wrote:

You can't get loads of good karma from anything external. You can only get "loads of good karma" by having positive intentions and then carrying them out.

lostitude said:

You can taste it before you get there. This is called "stream entry."

So basically it's like getting to the top of the Empire State Building on a rainy and cloudy day with 1/2mile visibility, and comparing it with the view on a clear day with unlimited visibility like in nirvana.

Malcolm wrote:

No, it is more like getting on the elevator.

lostitude said:

Theistic religions do not make any sense

To you, which is fine. If you have trouble understanding them though, you can either look for explanations or say that you don't understand them. Any other attitude is just equivalent to mere rejection, which I don't think would be conducive to stream-entry... it really sounds like the kind of grasping that Nagarjuna warned against, the idea that you can understand the true nature of reality in a neat set of concepts and reject all other systems that seem to be contradictory.

Malcolm wrote:

They are well refuted by Vasubandhu, Nāgārjuna and so on.

lostitute said:

they contradict direct perception

They don't contradict the perceptions of those who have reached an advanced stage in those traditions. Which is not your case... so obviously they will contradict your own direct perception.

Malcolm wrote:

Creationism is contradicted in direct perception. There is no such thing as an unmoved mover, etc. Everything that arises, arises from a conditioned cause. An uncaused cause is impossible. This is demonstrable both through direct perception and inference.

lostitute said:

You are the one making the argument from direct perception. In this case, what can be more foolish than believing a creator god no one has ever seen?

Because you have seen nirvana maybe?

Malcolm wrote:

Nirvana and God are not commensurable concepts on any level.

lostitute said:

What if God was not something to see, but maybe something to experience? What is truly foolish is to judge something you haven't even begun to understand. Can you really attain stream-entry with such a mindset? I must say I'm quite surprised.

Malcolm wrote:

If it can be experienced, it is relative. A relative mind cannot experience anything unconditioned. It is simply impossible. Also, in Buddhadharma there are only three unconditioned things, generally, space and the two kinds of cessation. [In Mahāyāna we add emptiness, but that is beyond discussion here].

Nirvana has two meanings but it is not an experience. It is a kind of knowledge that you will no longer take rebirth in samsara because you have exhausted afflictions, and second, when you die, your continuum ceases with regard to afflictive rebirth in the three realms. Beyond this, we move in the Mahāyāna Buddhology, which is a little more complex.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, August 23rd, 2015 at 7:44 AM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

lostitute said:

So have you attained stream entry, Malcolm, or not yet?

Malcolm wrote:

The issues is not what I have attained or not attained.

In any case, I do not practice according to that Hinayāna system, so the question also does not apply.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, August 23rd, 2015 at 8:21 AM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The philosophical revolution in Islam happened after Muslims converted Central Asia and came into contact with the [Hellenized] Central Asian Civilizations.

lostitude said:

That's very inaccurate. Among the best known sufis is Hassan al-Basri for example, who died long before the conquests of Central Asia.

Malcolm wrote:

I was not talking about Sufism.

lostitude said:

What you seem to forget is that islam first appeared in a country where the main staple is meat. Arabia is mainly desert, with no possibility of cultivating crops (except in the far South). Back then, slaughtering your own camel for a guest was a huge thing, a tremendous mark of esteem and generosity. Now slaughtering it for the sake of Allah and distributing the meat to the poor who barely have anything to eat was probably one of the most praiseworthy acts that could be performed in such a situation.

Malcolm wrote:

If you are a Muslim, perhaps. I don't think the Buddha would agree.

lostitude said:

In Abrahamic religions just like in buddhism, any act is religious insofar as it is motivated by a specific intention with 'karmic' results.

Malcolm wrote:

No, you don't really get my point.

lostitude said:

You can point out all the exceptions and nuances you want. They don't matter. What matters is that in these places that I mentioned, millions of animals a year are ritually sacrificed or killed according to religious rules, and the karmic results are exponentially worse than Tysons and Hormel.

That's a pretty wild association to make. Over half of the African continent does not practice religious slaughters as seen in Abrahamic religions, yet subsaharan Africa is in a much more dire situation than many Muslim countries...

Malcolm wrote:

Animism is very prevalent in sub-Saharan Africa. I addressed this.

lostitude said:

As for Israel, aside from being *officially* at war, I hardly see how Israelis have a miserable life in Tel Aviv.

Malcolm wrote:

They live in constant fear and paranoia.

lostitude said:

Animal sacrifice is the rule in Islam, not the exception. It is a duty, actually, one many Muslims may find distasteful, but a duty nevertheless.

Again, it is a duty because it is rich people's duty to feed the poor, on those special occasions. If Islam had appeared in Asia, maybe it would have consisted in soybeans. The whole idea is that of a sacrifice = renouncing something dear to you. The fact that it's an animal is secondary.

Malcolm wrote:

No, it is primary, from a Buddhist POV.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, August 23rd, 2015 at 8:23 AM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

lostitude said:

So have you attained stream entry, Malcolm, or not yet?

Malcolm wrote:

The issue is not what I have attained or not attained.

lostitude said:

Of course it is. How could you be passing such judgements without a certain level of attainment allowing you clear and direct insight into those religions you denounce? That would be quite unreasonable.

Malcolm wrote:

The reason it is not an issue is that I can claim anything and how could you judge my claims? So the issue is moot and irrelevant.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, August 23rd, 2015 at 9:02 AM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

lostitude said:

You can also admit that you have not attained any significant level of insight granting you sufficient direct knowledge of what a Buddha would perceive if he was talking to a sufi 'qutb' (one of the highest spiritual levels in sufism). And that you're disparaging other religions based on your readings and deluded perceptions of what you think they are.

Malcolm wrote:

I know what a Buddha would perceive. He would perceive someone with a mistaken view.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, August 23rd, 2015 at 9:05 AM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

lostitude said:

What would the Buddha have eaten and commanded people to eat, in the absence of any crops in the middle of a desert? Let's be realistic.

Malcolm wrote:

Buddha, so far as we know, ate what was offered to him, and did not command anyone to do anything, apart from to avoid killing. I think you deeply do not understand the world view of Buddhadharma, leaving aside my own views about other religions.

lostitude said:

And it is just as prevalent in South-East Asia and Central Asia as well as many other parts of the world. So no, you didn't address this association you're making...

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, and had you read more carefully, you would have noticed that I included India, Mexico and S. America. etc. All these places have deep problems.

lostitude said:

They live in constant fear and paranoia.

Just like the US and right now, Europe. Or South Korea. You clearly *want* this belief of yours to be true...

Malcolm wrote:

I don't think Americans live in constant fear, not Europeans. We are pretty comfortable.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, August 23rd, 2015 at 9:18 AM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Incidentally, I will leave you with a summary of a Buddhist refutation of theism:

The critique of puru.sa centers on the dilemma posed by puru.sa's (a) motives (if he is motivated by another, he is not self-sufficient; if he is motivated by compassion, he must create a perfect world, while if he cannot create a perfect world, he is not powerful; and if he is motivated by "amusement," then he is both cruel and dependent on the instrument of amusement, namely, the cosmos)(120) and (b) potency (if he is able to create all things, he must do so immediately, for potency entails immediate generation).(121)
<http://ccbs.ntu.edu.tw/FULLTEXT/JR-PHIL/jackson.htm>

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, August 23rd, 2015 at 9:21 AM

Title: Re: Cutting Hair

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

There is calculation for this from what is called 'bras rtsi, the calculation of results. It is a part of Tibetan "astrology."

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, August 23rd, 2015 at 9:28 AM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

You and I might be. A bunch of people in Ferguson aren't... or parts of Camden... Detroit... LA... Chicago... or on some of the Indian Reservations... just saying.

Malcolm wrote:

I don't think Americans live in constant fear.... We are pretty comfortable. Compared to people in India or even in most of Mexico, people in Camden, Ferguson, Detroit, Chicago and so on are miles higher in their standard of living and opportunities, just saying...even with racist cops...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, August 23rd, 2015 at 7:15 PM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

lostitude said:

So at the end of the day, the differences you mention seem to be of a purely theoretical nature, at least I can't see what their concrete implications would be, if I were to

seriously embark on the buddhist path?

Malcolm wrote:

It really depends on which school you are interested in. Zen, Son and Theravadin schools [for different reasons] do not seem to have much problem accommodating theists. Most expressions of Tibetan Buddhism however would require you to take refuge in Buddha, Dharma and Sangha, and that means you would have to relinquish your former religious affiliations and beliefs. They would maintain one cannot find refuge in non-Buddhist deities if one has found refuge in the Buddha. So there is a difference in refuge.

There is a difference of view — Buddhadharma utterly rejects the notion of an efficient creator god, or even a formal one. It instead proposes there is no absolute beginning, and relies in the notion of dependent origination and emptiness to explain everything. The Buddha maintained that views other than the view of dependent origination were false.

There is a difference in path — since Buddhadharma rejects God in toto because of the view of dependent origination, liberation depends solely on one's own efforts and there is no external moral agency that one has to satisfy or worship. Liberation depends solely on recognizing one's own nature. There is nothing with which to unify, no transcendent principle binding all beings together, etc.

There is a difference in conduct -- we will leave this aside for now.

There is a difference in result — the result of practicing Buddhadharma is Buddhahood. Buddhahood cannot be attained in non-Buddhist paths.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, August 23rd, 2015 at 7:24 PM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

lostitude said:

Stupas have no magic power of their own.

Malcolm wrote:

"Once, a dog was chasing a pig, and as the pig was running away, it circumambulated the stupa. The pig did not have any kind of virtuous motivation. It had no idea that the stupa was a holy object and that it could be purified and liberated by circumambulating it. The pig had never registered for a meditation course! Because of the kindness of the dog that chased it, the pig did one circumambulation of the stupa, and after the pig died, it was born in the higher realm of Tushita."

<http://www.lamayeshe.com/article/chapter/chapter-34-march-2-b>

Why pig benefitted? Where stupa magic come from? I'm curious.

pael said:

This story cannot be taken literally.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, August 23rd, 2015 at 7:36 PM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

Devin666 said:

Malcom, did you see my question?

Malcolm wrote:

The idea is applied to institutions in general. It is not written down somewhere in a book.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, August 23rd, 2015 at 7:39 PM

Title: Re: New schools in early buddhism

Content:

lostitute said:

Hello,

I have been reading about early buddhism and the multiplication of different schools of thought following a number of schisms. Some of them seem to be quite divergent from each other, sometimes even opposed (like sarvastivada and theravada) in their theories about reality, existence and so on, which makes me wonder if all those treatises and theories were really written and developed by 'attained' people or rather by simple philosophers who tried to rationalise the universe using the brain instead of through direct knowledge, like western philosophers did with Christianity?

Also, are these developments still seen as useful and exploitable in terms of spiritual development today, or simply as a phase in buddhist history?

Thanks

Malcolm wrote:

Arhats are not omniscient. They are not Buddhas. They are free of samsara, they will not take rebirth in samsara, but they do not have the same level of knowledge as a Buddha. Therefore, in explaining the Buddha's teachings, they gave rise to the 18 different schools, as the Buddha predicted. This has nothing to do with Mahāyāna, which is separate thing.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, August 23rd, 2015 at 8:25 PM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

Devin666 said:

So basically every institution (or in many cases) has some spirit that feels that the whole thing is its property and supports it or whatever? I am also wondering why the dkor bdag would keep one poor as long as one has debt, what is the connection there? Should it not try to help or is dkor bdag more like a group energy or so? Is it an individual thinking spirit?

Malcolm wrote:

Because you have a debt, it depletes your prosperity. A dkor bdag is a kind of individual entity associated with public institutions like monasteries, sometimes they even have names. Generally however, they do not.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, August 23rd, 2015 at 8:59 PM

Title: Re: Helen Tworikov, Tricycle Magazine: Anti-Vajrayana Bias?

Content:

tingdzin said:

I pretty much agree with Ugyen Dorje. She definitely has an agenda, and while a good part of it may well be down to trying to keep a periodical alive and in mass circulation (not an easy task) by making Buddhism "approachable", that is not the whole story. Teachers and teachings from any tradition (including Zen and TB, which are, as Rory notes, the favorites) which ignore a modernist approach, which seriously challenge the comfortable cultural and ethical assumptions of educated middle-class Americans and Europeans, or which in general dispense with a touchy-feely, ego-nurturing approach seem pretty thin on the ground in that mag. Once in a while, there are gems, it's true, but usually it's the same old safe teachers and teachings, "the usual suspects", from an obviously vetted list, that get the most ink.

Malcolm wrote:

Barnes and Nobles Buddhism.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, August 23rd, 2015 at 9:44 PM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

MiphamFan said:

Malcolm, BTW what about offerings to Indo-European gods? Ancient Greeks and Indians both sacrificed animals before eating them. Still Indra/Zeus is a deva, not a preta.

Malcolm wrote:

One, are you quite sure that Indra and Zeus are the same entity? Two, are you sure Zeus is a deva?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, August 23rd, 2015 at 9:46 PM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

I'm just going to throw myself on the fire here...

When having an interfaith dialog, one can either focus on the differences between the paths or the similarities. If one focuses on the differences, the conversation will be about nothing but differences, and that's fine. But if one focuses on similarities, and those similarities may only be "similar" in that they reflect the other persons interests, one has a point of connection. A point of connection is more important than an ocean of differences if one wants to acknowledge and nurture some one's interest in dharma. Not every difference and confusion needs to be addressed at once. So generally the approach to real interfaith dialog is to find common ground on a couple points and share there.

So here we have a Muslim with a serious interest in Buddhism.

Malcolm wrote:

If a non-Buddhist person is interested in the Dharma, that is great. But in order to understand what Dharma is they have to understand first the differences between the Dharma and the religion they are currently following.

Otherwise, as the Dalai Lama said of Christians interested in emptiness in Tucson in 2005, "It is none of their business."

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, August 23rd, 2015 at 10:07 PM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

I've watced my teachers do interfaith dialog, some of them for decades.

Malcolm wrote:

"Interfaith" assumes we are just trying to communicate with others to live in a harmonious way. Then we say nice things and complement each other on our mutual qualities.

Its all bullshit of course, because everyone just goes back to criticizing each other and thinking the other is deluded once everyone returns to their temple, mosque, church or synagogue. This is how samsara is.

Educating is different. If someone wants to be educated, then they have to listen. If people have the karmic fortune to meet Buddhadharma, they will. This is why we do not convert, or bother to evangelize. We don't have a mission. People are responsible for

themselves. No one is going to save them. The universe does not care and there is no all-powerful god who cares either.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, August 23rd, 2015 at 10:11 PM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

MiphamFan said:

So if I became a nomad, farmer or something who has to kill animals at least occasionally, I should just feel bad about it?

I remember reading in Perfect Conduct that killing animals doesn't break the vow to avoid killing completely, although it should be confessed.

Malcolm wrote:

Correct, you feel bad about it. For example, one of the reasons for dgu gtor is to apologize and confess all negativities done during the past year, especially killing cattle and sheep or hunting.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, August 23rd, 2015 at 10:15 PM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

This is their instruction for bringing people to the dharma when people express interest. That's all. Nothing more, nothing less. Start with common ground, cultivate that, introduce some related practices-- move on from there. People generally pick up a Buddhist practice, or take some useful things back to their own religion.

Malcolm wrote:

If someone wants to learn Buddhist practice, they have to become a Buddhist. Giving Tara mantras to Christians is useless.

There is no such thing as a Hindu/Buddhist; Muslim/Buddhist; Christian/Buddhist. etc. You either take refuge in the Three Jewels or you don't. It is really simple. And I don't mean getting a groovy Tibetan/Chinese/Pali/Japanese name and so on. If you want to follow the Buddha's path, this means you have understood something is lacking in the path you follow. If you think the path you follow is perfect and complete, then there is no need for you to follow Buddha's path, or borrow anything from it.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, August 23rd, 2015 at 10:23 PM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:
Well, this instruction seems to work.

The common ground obviously isn't vajrayana. The point of contact is generally shamatha and the four immeasurables.

]

Malcolm wrote:
These things are not Buddhist. They are shared in common with Hinduism already.

If people want to meditate, and they are theistically inclined, I send them to Yoga. I have no interest in converting, modifying or conditioning anyone.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Sunday, August 23rd, 2015 at 10:35 PM
Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions
Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:
These are people who have done enough research, generally as Christians, to come to a Buddhist center to learn about these things, or to reach out to a Buddhist in the community like myself, to ask about these things.

Malcolm wrote:
I generally tell them what HHDL says, they should stay Christians. They should explore their own tradition more deeply.

Urgyen Dorje said:
Calming the mind and generating love and compassion is a natural common ground between Christianity and Buddhism.

Malcolm wrote:
Right, but Christians don't need Buddhism to be calm and generate love and compassion, nor do Muslims, or Hindus and so on.

If your mind is calm because you have taken Jesus as your personal savior and you generate compassion and love out of Christian exercises, fantastic. We can all agree that being calm, loving and compassionate is a good thing.

Interfaith gatherings, like peace conferences, don't change anything.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Sunday, August 23rd, 2015 at 10:44 PM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

Well, this is how I became a Buddhist 25 years ago. I reached out in an interfaith dialog and found some common ground with a Buddhist, and then sought out formal Buddhist training with the same lama.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, because you had a strong karmic connection with Dharma from a past life, specifically Dzogchen teachings, so you reconnected with the Dharma in this life. That, my friend, is the only way it works.

This is why I have the six syllables in my sig, because anyone who sees them creates a positive cause to connect with the Dharma in a future life, specifically Dzogchen teachings.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, August 23rd, 2015 at 10:56 PM

Title: Re: Tolerance for other religions

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

Ya. And I think it's the same with people I'm describing. One never knows until one explores the common ground.

Malcolm wrote:

They will find the Dharma with you or without you. It is inevitable.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, August 24th, 2015 at 1:36 AM

Title: Re: traditions in transition

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

What exactly are the concerns? For example, is it that the quality of teachers is declining?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes.

Urgyen Dorje said:

Is it that the traditional course of study is compromised?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes.

Urgyen Dorje said:

Is it that the fundamental concepts of theory and practice are being eroded?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes.

Urgyen Dorje said:

Are Western philosophical and religion notions being transferred into the tradition?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, like translating gzhi, which simple means basis, as ground of being.

Urgyen Dorje said:

What are the solutions?

Malcolm wrote:

We need some realized westerners to emerge.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, August 24th, 2015 at 2:59 AM

Title: Re: traditions in transition

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

What are the solutions?

We need some realized westerners to emerge.

dzogchungpa said:

I think there are one or two somewhere or other.

Malcolm wrote:

While I have met some Westerners who understand the meaning in a concrete sense, I have yet to meet anyone I would call "realized."

But since ChNN denies he is realized, that sets the bar pretty damn high. So we will just have to wait and see if there anyone in our generation achieves something like rainbow body or has a clear thugdam or has relics.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, August 24th, 2015 at 3:01 AM

Title: Re: traditions in transition

Content:

Johnny Dangerous said:

Until people can get past that hurdle, surface-level "Dharma-lite" is going to be the mainstream version of Buddhism.

Malcolm wrote:
Not if I can help it.

Johnny Dangerous said:
Unlike some folks I don't think "Dharma-lite" practice should be an object of derision, or an excuse to mock and vilify the people practicing it, but I do think, and do hope that people come to see that it is incomplete compared to what's available.

Malcolm wrote:
Dharma-lite™ is not even Dharma. It is imitation Dharma. All this was predicted by Guru Rinpoche and in the tantras.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Monday, August 24th, 2015 at 3:22 AM
Title: Re: traditions in transition
Content:
dzogchungpa said:
BTW, it seems that Osel Tendzin, aka Thomas Rich, may have achieved a clear thugdam.

Malcolm wrote:
That is what some say, I have my doubts though...

Author: Malcolm
Date: Monday, August 24th, 2015 at 3:27 AM
Title: Re: traditions in transition
Content:

Malcolm wrote:
Not if I can help it.

Johnny Dangerous said:
Yes, i'm sure your online polemics will have a huge effect on mainstream Buddhism in the west.

Malcolm wrote:
Absolutely, haven't you noticed a massive decline in subscriptions to the big three mags? No? (Damn!).

Johnny Dangerous said:

Dharma-lite™ is not even Dharma. It is imitation Dharma. All this was predicted by Guru Rinpoche and in the tantras.

Yep, and IIRC he also talked about how people would act towards one another in this age, including Dharma practitioners.

Malcolm wrote:

[/quote]

Yes, including the outrageous supposition that most of this behavior was motivated by provocations of various kinds.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, August 24th, 2015 at 9:01 AM

Title: Re: New schools in early buddhism

Content:

lostitude said:

]Let me give you an example that particularly caught my attention, and I quote from the book I'm reading on early buddhism:

'The Vibhajyavadins argued against the view, held by the Sarvastivadins and Pudgalavadins, that some Arahats could regress from their state after temporarily attaining it'.

First, I wonder how such a debate can help me attain liberation. Second, it would logically follow from such a question, that none of those who debated it were Arahats themselves, otherwise the answer would be obvious to them. Unless of course I completely missed the point, which is perfectly possible too.

Malcolm wrote:

You completely missed the point of the argument. And the argument was debated by Arhats. Arhats can have different opinions.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, August 24th, 2015 at 9:37 PM

Title: Re: The courage of no convictions

Content:

Dan74 said:

Malcolm, I think the simile of the physician, ie skilful means, is exactly the right one for this topic, thank you for your example. In my day job (maths) I deal with certainties (and certain uncertainties - statistics) but in matters of the heart it is different, isn't it? To diagnose the persons illness is hard, especially over the web, but to know the right medicine for that person is practically impossible, IMO. What certainty can there be in such an uncertain endeavour? Skilful means are not about certainty but about skill. So the question then becomes whether certainty is skilful, ie helpful. What do people think about that?

Malcolm wrote:

Dharma is not really a matter of the heart. It is a certainty that we are all suffering from the three or five poisons. People like to make a big story about the 84,000 different Dharmas, but in reality these are just three groups divided among the three poisons. The kind of Dharma one practices depends on inclination and fortune.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, August 24th, 2015 at 11:09 PM

Title: Re: Forbidden Archeology

Content:

rory said:

Malcolm's religious take on philology reminds me of the 19th century Christian angst over Biblical Criticism.

Malcolm wrote:

I have no angst about Western scholarship on Buddhist History, I just don't think any of it is definitive since it consists of shifting fads of opinions and methods and means very little to practitioners.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, August 25th, 2015 at 12:14 AM

Title: Re: Forbidden Archeology

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

I agree which is why I'm curious why my post structural view of text/context renders my Buddhist view faulty.

Malcolm wrote:

I don't think I ever said that.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, August 25th, 2015 at 12:32 AM

Title: Re: Forbidden Archeology

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

Just things can exist or manifest simply because they have no fixed nature, similarly texts can have meaning, in particular liberative substance, because they have no fixed textual meaning.

Malcolm wrote:

'When I use a word,' Humpty Dumpty said, in rather a scornful tone, 'it means just what I choose it to mean — neither more nor less.'

'The question is,' said Alice, 'whether you can make words mean so many different

things.'

'The question is,' said Humpty Dumpty, 'which is to be master — that's all.'

Alice was too much puzzled to say anything; so after a minute Humpty Dumpty began again. 'They've a temper, some of them — particularly verbs: they're the proudest — adjectives you can do anything with, but not verbs — however, I can manage the whole lot of them! Impenetrability! That's what I say!'

'Would you tell me please,' said Alice, 'what that means?'

'Now you talk like a reasonable child,' said Humpty Dumpty, looking very much pleased. 'I meant by "impenetrability" that we've had enough of that subject, and it would be just as well if you'd mention what you mean to do next, as I suppose you don't mean to stop here all the rest of your life.'

'That's a great deal to make one word mean,' Alice said in a thoughtful tone.

'When I make a word do a lot of work like that,' said Humpty Dumpty, 'I always pay it extra.'

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, August 25th, 2015 at 1:08 AM

Title: Re: Daniel P Brown - Pointing Out Way?

Content:

fckw said:

He knows enough Sanskrit and Tibetan to read and translate the relevant root texts he teaches himself. He's involved in some translation project for important Bön root texts he received directly from H.H. Menri Trizin that, to my knowledge, so far have not yet been translated.

Malcolm wrote:

All the Bonpo texts he is working on have already been translated at least once. [A Khrid, Six Lamps]

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, August 25th, 2015 at 2:06 AM

Title: Re: Forbidden Archeology

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

As such a post structural approach to texts gives the dharma texts an infinite space of interpretation according to the realization of the teacher and the needs of the students.

Malcolm wrote:

I really don't agree with this idea.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, August 25th, 2015 at 3:50 AM

Title: Re: Daniel P Brown - Pointing Out Way?

Content:

Johnny Dangerous said:

I'm pretty sure i've read a book by Traleg Kyabgon Rinpoche with a forward by Wilbur.

Malcolm wrote:

They way that works is that Publisher X agrees to publish Author Y's book, and then the Publisher goes out and asks someone they think is influential in the target audience to write a forward. It does not mean that the author necessarily condones the person who wrote the forward, or vice versa, as crazy as that sounds.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, August 25th, 2015 at 4:01 AM

Title: Re: Forbidden Archeology

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

None of what you are saying gives teachers an infinite license to interpret texts however they like.

Urgyen Dorje said:

I'm really not trying to bust chops. This is something I've pondered for a while. It's also not something I'm overly committed to. It's something I'm exploring. It's not something I have a profound intellectual commitment to.

If it's against the view of dharma, please red pill me on that.

From my vantage point, this approach immediately derails the views of many who feel that they can study the dharma on their own by reading texts without resorting to a teacher. It also derails the views of many who feel that they can just buy books and complete a shedra without relying on teachers for clarification of the difficult points in the source materials. It also derails the view that many have that they can expound on tantric materials, dzogchen, mahamudra, after simply receiving instructions.

From my vantage point this puts everything back on the valid cognition of a buddha. Might be a realized teacher, might be a holder of the oral tradition and lineage of blessings of a realized teacher.

But definitely something trans-textual.

Without this, the texts are just marks on paper. Or we're as good as blind.
As such a post structural approach to texts gives the dharma texts an infinite space of interpretation according to the realization of the teacher and the needs of the students.

Malcolm wrote:

I really don't agree with this idea.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, August 25th, 2015 at 5:08 AM

Title: Re: Nudity

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

There seems to be some Buddhist practices that may involve nudity? Does anybody have any knowledge or experience of this? What is the purpose?

Ayu said:

Seems there isn't anybody yet who knows about it or likes to tell anything. Where did you hear from such practices?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, and they should not be discussed online...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, August 25th, 2015 at 5:48 AM

Title: Re: Daniel P Brown - Pointing Out Way?

Content:

DGA said:

OK, I'll put it my question differently. You've said that you've attended his teachings. What does he teach when he teaches?

fckw said:

Meditation mainly. Sutra-Mahamudra in level 1, Dzogchen in level 3 (Trek Chöd) and 4 (Tögel), and a mix in level 2. His teaching style is very traditional actually.

Malcolm wrote:

So, he is giving direct introduction in level 2?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, August 25th, 2015 at 5:59 AM

Title: Re: Forbidden Archeology

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

The space of possible textual interpretations is infinite. In terms of dharma texts, what makes a textual interpretation valid is the valid cognition of a realized being who can pick specific textual interpretations from many according to his or her realization and the needs of his or her students.

Malcolm wrote:

No, they cannot not. For example, you cannot interpret Dzogchen texts as theistic cosmology merely because you might have some people who come from a strong theistic background as students.

The words and meanings of these texts are set in tradition, and whole correspondence theories between words and meanings are not popular in the West, that is precisely how the texts themselves unpack themselves. And teachers must teach according to the intention of the text, without adding or subtracting a word.

Urgyen Dorje said:

The idea I'm playing with is Derrida's basic one liner that everything is context.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, I know, and I think Derrida is an intellectual dilettante — but hey, that's just me.

Urgyen Dorje said:

I think with dharma texts that context is the valid cognition of realized beings and the oral tradition of lineage masters that continues that valid cognition. Without that context those texts can be anything. And people do make them anything. So for me, there are dharma texts, marks on pages, and the unbroken lineage of realization that unlocks those texts. The marks on the page make no sense without the unbroken lineage of realization to unlock them. This is why it's absurd, from my side as a practitioner, when academics study texts without any reference to the living tradition, and when students attempt to study texts without any guidance from the living tradition. I think an approach like this shuts down academic chauvinism, false lamas, teacher-less students, modernists, all in one swoop.

Malcolm wrote:

What you desire is the opposite of your method. And in any case, this notion of "valid cognition of realized beings" is highly problematic. How does anyone know who is realized and who is not? This is why texts have words, and those words have invariable meanings. Even if you are not realized, as long as you understand and convey the meaning, there is always a possibility someone can wake up from the meaning you have communicated as long as you have a valid lineage.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, August 25th, 2015 at 6:01 AM

Title: Re: Daniel P Brown - Pointing Out Way?

Content:

fckw said:

His teaching style is very traditional actually.

Malcolm wrote:

His stated goals are to cherry pick Tibetan traditions for practices he deems suitable for western culture and to rework scholarly translations into practice oriented language.

This may appeal to some, but not to me.

For one, if you are a practitioner translator, you are already doing this. The idea of adapting Dzogchen to the West is more than a little hubristic.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, August 25th, 2015 at 6:03 AM

Title: Re: Nudity

Content:

tomschwarz said:

Of course you can discuss buddhist nudist ideas online)))). Don't forget that you will die soon. When you die, according to my dear dead father who was a very compassionate doctor, the first thing that happens is that you pee on yourself, defecate on yourself, stick your tongue out and turn blue. Now want to practice the 4 steps of dissolution)))) like his holiness the dalai lama does every day? Ok.

Malcolm wrote:

I was discussing practices, specifically — these things should not be discussed online.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, August 25th, 2015 at 7:36 AM

Title: Re: Forbidden Archeology

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

A teacher who was understood the meaning of Dzogchen texts would not teach them as theistic cosmology.

Malcolm wrote:

Which means you agree that Dzogchen texts have a specific meaning, and that it is invariable.

Urgyen Dorje said:

But he or she might teach the bodhisattva precepts from the vantage point of Mind Only versus Middle Way dependent upon the students needs.

Malcolm wrote:

It is fine to teach either, it is not fine to mix them up. Why? Because they have different intentions.

The words and meanings of these texts are set in tradition, and whole correspondence theories between words and meanings are not popular in the West, that is precisely how the texts themselves unpack themselves. And teachers must teach according to the intention of the text, without adding or subtracting a word.

And it is only a realized being or somebody who understands the intention according to the oral tradition who is able to do this.

But the meaning is in either case not arbitrary nor adaptable to students. Instead, it is the student who must adapt to the meaning. We do not adapt the meaning to the student.

I don't own Derrida stock. I'm looking at ways of looking at texts that point back to the guru, the oral tradition, the lineage of blessings, and not just the texts themselves so we can get beyond an endless debate as to what texts really mean. Have realization? Hold oral tradition? Lineage holder? Then you know. Otherwise not.

But this has nothing to do with "post structuralism" and everything to do with the fact that Buddhadharma is an oral tradition, in essence.

If we decide that there is a life to Buddhist texts beyond marks on paper, and if we recognize the oral tradition of the lineage to be what unlocks the meaning of those marks on a piece of paper-- then we examine a teacher, his or her qualifications, and his or her qualities, and study those texts with that person.

Again, this has nothing to do with some post-structuralist vanity. Words in Dharma texts have invariable meanings. They are not arbitrary nor are they infinite.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, August 25th, 2015 at 7:58 AM

Title: Re: Forbidden Archeology

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

Malcolm...

All I'm saying is that the meaning of dharma has a lot less to do with black marks on a paper and everything to do with an unbroken oral tradition.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, but this has never been a point of contention.

Urgyen Dorje said:

You said to pick a textual methodology.

Malcolm wrote:

I don't think I said this.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, August 25th, 2015 at 8:06 AM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

anjali said:

Since everything is included in X, X is the ultimate, supreme truth.

The reason why one regards reality as different from oneself is that one has not known, through enquiry, the true nature of X.

As it is X that appears as everything, those who have known the truth of X have known the truth of everything.

Malcolm wrote:

Since everything is included in emptiness, emptiness is the ultimate, supreme truth.

The reason why one regards reality as different from oneself is that one has not known, through enquiry, the true nature of emptiness.

As it is emptiness that appears as everything, those who have known the truth of emptiness have known the truth of everything.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, August 25th, 2015 at 8:08 AM

Title: Re: Daniel P Brown - Pointing Out Way?

Content:

Bakmoon said:

I've looked online and I can't find that kind of information about his lineage yet.

DGA said:

Any takers on this one? I'm interested to know who has authorized him to teach trekchod & thogal. Or anything for that matter.

Malcolm wrote:

I think the point is that he hires Tibetan co-teachers to get around that issue.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, August 25th, 2015 at 9:41 PM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Since everything is included in emptiness, emptiness is the ultimate, supreme truth.

Wayfarer said:

Perhaps you can explain to us how that can be reconciled with the statement that 'śūnyatā is taught only as a remedy for dṛṣṭi, but those who cling to śūnyatā are incurable'.

Malcolm wrote:

This is why the Vimuktasena states that Prajñāpāramita teaches the emptiness of emptiness. For example, he says:

Since all phenomena are empty of emptiness, that is the emptiness of emptiness. In other words, the recognition that all phenomena are empty here is the emptiness of all phenomena. Further, the reason for the emptiness of that emptiness is to avoid conceptually grasping to it [emptiness].

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, August 25th, 2015 at 9:46 PM

Title: Re: Towards A Buddhist Fundamentalism?

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

From an extended conversation elsewhere on the internet. It makes me ponder the formation of a Buddhist fundamentalism. I had thought the author was also active here, but I doubt that at this point.

Malcolm wrote:

On what forum is this?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, August 25th, 2015 at 9:52 PM

Title: Re: Towards A Buddhist Fundamentalism?

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

From comments to my dharma bro's blog.

From an extended conversation elsewhere on the internet. It makes me ponder the formation of a Buddhist fundamentalism. I had thought the author was also active here, but I doubt that at this point.

Malcolm wrote:

On what forum is this?

Is it public?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, August 25th, 2015 at 9:59 PM

Title: Re: Towards A Buddhist Fundamentalism?

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

I wish it were that simple. Maybe it is.

I'm a little shaken.

Dan74 said:

UMI = undiagnosed mental illness, it's more common that we think.

Malcolm wrote:

Oh, now I get it — you thought I was this guy because of part of my refuge name, Namdrol. I am KUNGA Namdrol, not Edit name. Also I am a Loppön, and this is a higher title than "Lama". Sheesh.

I was wondering why you thought I had asked you to pick a text method, and other statements you made that I thought were from left field about my point of view.

For the record, I could care less if someone has formal refuge. My main guru is Chogyal Namkhai Norbu, and he makes it very clear that things like refuge, bodhisattva vow ceremonies and so on are of no consequence. If you are a real practitioner, then you don't have rules and you don't need rules. Rules are something relative, as ChNN says, even Dzogchen rules are relative. If you try to strictly follow Dzogchen rules, you will be arrested.

The person who wrote that post is a total nutjob. Real Buddhist Taliban, not a follower of Buddhadharma. He makes me look nice.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, August 25th, 2015 at 11:25 PM

Title: Re: Towards A Buddhist Fundamentalism?

Content:

smcj said:

The person who wrote that post is a total nutjob. Real Buddhist Taliban, not a follower of Buddhadharma.

I'll second that. For the record, I could care less if someone has formal refuge. My main guru is Chogyal Namkhai Norbu, and he makes it very clear that things like refuge, bodhisattva vow ceremonies and so on are of no consequence. If you are a real practitioner, then you don't have rules and you don't need rules. Rules are something relative, as ChNN says, even Dzogchen rules are relative. If you try to strictly follow Dzogchen rules, you will be arrested.

While fully acknowledging that this is valid Dharma, just for the record it is too high a teaching for me and my practice. Early on I established a Gelug Lam Rim type perspective and that isn't just going to go away in this lifetime. That's ok, Dharma is a multi-lifetime project.

Malcolm wrote:

I am not against these things, they are just not essential. I see too many times people saying things like, "Oh, you have to take refuge before you take this empowerment..." and so on. This is nonsense. Every empowerment has refuge built right into it.

This is just a method used to control and condition others. If you show up at a teaching, this is refuge.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, August 25th, 2015 at 11:47 PM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

Matt J said:

The Vedantin answer is that Brahman is prior to space and time

Kaccāni said:

I particularly like the word "prior" in that sentence

Best wishes

Kc

Malcolm wrote:

Sure, since it is a contradiction in terms. Brahman cannot be prior to time. It is impossible, prior is a time.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, August 25th, 2015 at 11:59 PM

Title: Re: Daniel P Brown - Pointing Out Way?

Content:

fckw said:

You are looking for something to criticize without having met the guy at all. Am I right?

Malcolm wrote:

No. People are free. If he wants to be a guru, that is his business. If people want to study with him that is their business.

fckw said:

But to nevertheless diligently answer your question: No. The level 2 courses he taught so far were, to the best of my knowledge, always together with Rahob Rinpoche. The idea of "adapting Dzogchen to the West", I don't know where you have this one from.

Malcolm wrote:

From a video of his where he is discussing his translation efforts:

<http://www.pointingoutway.org/stories>

He clearly states that he is picking and adapting teachings for what he views as Western culture.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, August 26th, 2015 at 12:19 AM

Title: Re: Daniel P Brown - Pointing Out Way?

Content:

smcj said:

He clearly states that he is picking and adapting teachings for what he views as Western culture.

Having just watched the video twice, at the end of the video what I hear him say is that he is picking the teachings that are appropriate for the West. I didn't hear him say he was 'adapting' them. That's still taking an editorial position, but it falls short of the insinuation that by adapting them he is corrupting them.

Big difference.

Malcolm wrote:

It remains to be seen who attains rainbow body and in what traditions in the West.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, August 26th, 2015 at 1:28 AM

Title: Re: How do we work with our bodies, our identities?

Content:

Johnny Dangerous said:

Which is a more conducive identity for making merit, thinking of yourself as a mexican tranny, or as a Buddha?

You're still missing the point, and the major question of the thread. The question is more how does one think of oneself as a Buddha if one IS a mexican tranny?

Malcolm wrote:

Simple, Mexican transvestites, Donald Trump and Samantabhadra all have the same state.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, August 26th, 2015 at 2:26 AM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

You could have said Brahman is beyond time.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, August 26th, 2015 at 3:24 AM

Title: Re: Towards A Buddhist Fundamentalism?

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

JD...

The thing is... a person can express a point like a maniac, and still have something to say. The UniBomber is a good example. So this [Edit name] might express himself like a nutter, but I think he's trying to say something many of us on DW have tried to articulate, though not in a coherent and unified fashion. While lama KN is trying to assert a vajrayana fundamentalism, I think many of us would identify ourselves as something of vajrayana conservatives. I consider myself in that crowd, even though it appears I have convinced people the contrary.

UD

Malcolm wrote:

Nah, he is just being an asshole.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, August 26th, 2015 at 4:21 AM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

Matt J said:

The Vedantin answer is that Brahman is beyond time. Time depends on Brahman.

muni said:

God created everything, but who created God?

Malcolm wrote:

Time cannot depend on Brahman, time is conditioned, Brahman is not.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, August 26th, 2015 at 5:17 AM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

Kaccāni said:

Time appears in Brahman yet Brahman does not know what time is.

Best wishes

Kc

Malcolm wrote:

Something conditioned cannot appear in something unconditioned because there can never be a relationship between the conditioned and the unconditioned without the unconditioned becoming conditioned.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, August 26th, 2015 at 5:27 AM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

Kaccāni said:

Not even a knowing in between?

Ok. It appears in the knowing then

Malcolm wrote:

There is nothing in between the unconditioned and conditioned. Things are either conditioned or unconditioned. Something conditioned cannot become unconditioned and vice versa.

Thus if time, something conditioned, appears in "knowing", that knowing is conditioned.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, August 26th, 2015 at 5:48 AM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Thus if time, something conditioned, appears in "knowing", that knowing is conditioned.

Kaccāni said:

Ah. So then. In the moment that "time" appears in the knowing, it must be conditioned. If nothing conditioned appears, it gets a taste of Brahman.

Best wishes

Kc

Malcolm wrote:

If something can appear in knowing, knowing is already conditioned.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, August 26th, 2015 at 9:44 AM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

Matt J said:

That's why time depends on Brahman and not the other way around. If one wants to get technical, one can say that time and space are an illusory appearance of Brahman. In fact, Advaitins teachers often argue that time is change, and that change is only known

against a backdrop of changelessness (the atman).

The Advaita view I am familiar with has at least three levels of reality: 1) the really real (sat), or Brahman, which is beyond time, space, etc. 2) the really unreal (asat), such as the horns of a rabbit or the son of a barren woman, and 3) the real/unreal, or "mithya" which has both qualities. Time would be "mithya", and therefore dependent on Brahman. This "mithya" is compared to a dream which is both dependent on and at the same time non-different from the dreamer. However, while the dream depends on the dreamer, the dreamer does not depend on the dream.

Malcolm wrote:

Time cannot depend on Brahman, time is conditioned, Brahman is not.

Time cannot depend on Brahman; if it did, Brahman would be conditioned.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, August 26th, 2015 at 9:02 PM

Title: Re: How do we work with our bodies, our identities?

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

No Buddhist would suggest that grasping at self is something that needs to be transcended.

Malcolm wrote:

Huh? Of course they would. That is exactly what needs to be transcended. Grasping at self is the cause of samsara.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, August 26th, 2015 at 9:51 PM

Title: Re: Pechafying Things

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

I have the need, well, desire, to typeset some practices as pechas. One of my teachers says it's more respectful to the dharma to have them as pechas, and to carry and wrap the pechas in the traditional sense, as opposed to 8.5x11 sheets in a binder. I also find it immanently practical, as pechas fit on a puja table nicely. I also find it immanently practical as I can easily drop in accessory prayers from a second pecha if I need to. With book sized texts, it's a pain.

So, I am looking for recommendations on pecha formatting texts. I can read Tibetan Uchen just fine, convert it to Wylie. I've typeset Uchen in different word processing programs using Wylie. I'm really open to any solution, including commercial options.

If people have some practical advice in terms of what works best re printing, type setting, formatting, etc., that would be great.

Malcolm wrote:
talk to the esukia people.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Wednesday, August 26th, 2015 at 10:30 PM
Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism
Content:
Matt J said:
Per Madhyamaka reasoning, but not according to Vedanta.

Vedanta disagrees with the "not from itself" causation. The primary example is the clay-pot. The pot depends on the clay, but the clay does not depend on the pot.

Where Vedanta gets fuzzy how it explains the mechanism of maya. But there is a famous story about an Advaitin yogi who had everything figured out except for maya. He was told not to worry about it. I think Vedanta runs into trouble because it has to square its findings with the Vedas.

Malcolm wrote:
Time cannot depend on Brahman; if it did, Brahman would be conditioned.
The clay depends on the four elements. It is also conditioned, which is why it can form another conditioned entity.

Vedanta's roots are Samkhya. It never really manages to escape those roots, which is why it never really manages to overcome the Madhyamaka refutation of satkaryavāda — even though this point of view was rejected by Gaudapada in favor of ajativāda, which he borrowed from Madhyamaka.

By contrast the roots of Madhyamaka view and all Buddhist teaching in general is dependent origination. The Buddhist concept of nonarising found in the Prajñāpāramitā comes out of this insight.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Wednesday, August 26th, 2015 at 11:06 PM
Title: Re: Semen
Content:
Tigersnest said:

Yes that is what happens thank you for your answer: I have read so much about seminal loss from different points of view, I remember a text saying when a practitioner loses their semen the mamos become furious- maybe a more experienced practitioner could elaborate on that. Anyhow thank you- I am still not clear how it can be considered purely a waste product after all it is the purified essence of the body even if it is the "impure" aspect - it is the most pure of the impurities if that makes sense

Malcolm wrote:

It is a a snyigs ma, a waste tissue. In the process of the development of the tissues of the body, the final waste tissue is semen, and the final constituent tissues is ojas, the most refined aspect of the five elements in your body. . If you lose your ojas, this is very bad. If you lose your semen, this is not a problem providing you are not also losing ojas with it [and this can only happen if you are living on a very restricted diet with no meat or animal fat of any kind, for example a vegan diet.]

For example, hair, teeth, and so on are also waste tissues.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, August 27th, 2015 at 2:33 AM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

Matt J said:

No, that is a logical error. The pot depends on the clay, but the clay does not depend on the pot. The clay would still exist whether or not anyone ever made a pot out of it.

Malcolm wrote:

The clay itself also depends on causes and conditions and is composed of the four elements whether or not it is ever made into a pot.

In other words the analogy fails because clay is conditioned, thus it cannot be used as an example of an unconditioned entity forming the substrate for conditioned entity.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, August 27th, 2015 at 10:22 AM

Title: Re: Turiya

Content:

Kaccāni said:

Hello all,

Vedanta, beyond the "3 normative states of consciousness" (here: waking, dream and (in early texts) deep sleep), knows a fourth state: turiya. It is characterized as "permanent insight into reality, but without the distraction of an inner or an outer world".

Would you say that this "turiya" corresponds to what dzogchen knows as "rigpa", or would you rather classify it as what ChNN calls "Shine", i.e. the calm, non-conceptual state of mind of Sutrayana?

Best wishes

Kc

Malcolm wrote:

First, I have never seen such a definition of Turiya, but in any case, Turiya is not rig pa.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, August 27th, 2015 at 10:37 PM

Title: Re: Tibetan Zen

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

Therefore, there is no essential difference between Zen, Mahamudra, and Dzogchen teachings.

Malcolm wrote:

Of course there is an essential difference. It is described in detail by Nubchen.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, August 27th, 2015 at 10:40 PM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

Matt J said:

Others made a similar objection to Shankara in his day. His reply:

For as between the illustration and the thing illustrated, nobody can show equality in every respect over and above some point of similarity in some way, which is sought to be represented. For if such an all-round similarity exists, the very relation between the illustration and the thing illustrated will fall through.

--- Brahma Sutra Bhasya: III.ii.19, 20

Usually when Advaitins focus on the unconditioned, they use analogies related to space. No, that is a logical error. The pot depends on the clay, but the clay does not depend on the pot. The clay would still exist whether or not anyone ever made a pot out of it.

Malcolm wrote:

The clay itself also depends on causes and conditions and is composed of the four elements whether or not it is ever made into a pot.

In other words the analogy fails because clay is conditioned, thus it cannot be used as an example of an unconditioned entity forming the substrate for conditioned entity. Space, being unconditioned, does not form anything at all, since it is a simple absence of obstruction.

Shankara's reply to objections is sheer sophistry.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, August 28th, 2015 at 2:20 AM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

Kaccāni said:

Vedanta would now say: Yes, but everything expresses itself as consciousness, which appears to be the common denominator of it. As plant-consciousness cannot be argued, because the questions are arising in human-consciousness as subject, only the question of "what is human consciousness?" has to be dealt with. The Vedic answer would be "part of a bigger consciousness called Brahman that encompasses everything. The Universe as one living being where some parts of it are fallen to the illusion that they are really separate entities.

Malcolm wrote:

This is incoherent. How can such universal consciousness have parts?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, August 28th, 2015 at 4:07 AM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

This is incoherent. How can such universal consciousness have parts?

Kaccāni said:

Yes, that's the main criticism at the doctrine and as I understand Advaita says they're one, the twofoldness is an illusion (the Advaita-version of "maya").

Malcolm wrote:

For whom is this an illusion? Certainly cannot be an illusion for this universal consciousness, because then consciousness would possess delusion and thus liberation would be impossible. If this universal consciousness cannot be deluded, māya is impossible and also liberation is impossible.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, August 28th, 2015 at 4:08 AM

Title: Re: Crypto-Buddhism, Crypto-Taoism, Crypto-Dzogchen...

Content:

DGA said:

IHow much Mahayana Buddhist music is Persian in origin, by the way?

Malcolm wrote:

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Just Tibetan Monastic Music.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, August 28th, 2015 at 4:29 AM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

For whom is this an illusion? Certainly cannot be an illusion for this universal consciousness, because then consciousness would possess delusion and thus liberation would be impossible. If this universal consciousness cannot be deluded, māya is impossible and also liberation is impossible.

Kaccāni said:

But don't you then end up at the same point as Madhyamaka, when emptiness is empty, and there is nothing to be liberated?

Best wishes

Kc

Malcolm wrote:

No, because there is no two truths theory in Advaita. Madhyamaka is based on the two truths.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, August 28th, 2015 at 6:50 AM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

Kaccāni said:

Hasn't the Brahman / Jiva effectively been handled like an absolute and relative truth, or what do you consider the difference?

Best wishes

Kc

Malcolm wrote:

In Madhyamaka, ultimate truth is nothing more nor less than the absence of inherent existence of relative entities due to their dependent origination.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, August 28th, 2015 at 7:42 PM

Title: Re: Daniel P Brown - Pointing Out Way?

Content:

zenman said:

Is this method widely or at all used by other teachers/lamas?

fckw said:

I'm not sure if this question is directed to me. Personally, I don't know any other Buddhist teacher who teaches this way. Mr. Brown a few times told the story when he attended teachings given by a Tibetan yogi. Apparently he had received an invitation by H. H. Dalai Lama (?) who had announced these teachings to be somewhat special. Now, the special thing about the teachings were that said yogi actually performed the practice while teaching it. This left a deep impression.

One notable exception of someone also teaching in this style (but having made up his own meditation system for better or worse) is <http://anaditeaching.com/>, whose eclectic teachings I personally find quite interesting.. However, it's nothing I personally practice or have practiced. (Brown and him are in no way affiliated.)

One of the most important meditation instructions I ever received from any teacher to me was given by Brown. He pointed out to me a state of mind in meditation which is quiet and calm and relatively free of thoughts - but it's not bright and clear. It's fundamentally a state of dullness that leads nowhere. I immediately knew what he meant and from then on completely avoided this state. I had gone already much further in my meditation, but sporadically got stuck during meditation in that state without understanding it. None of my former teachers had ever pointed this out to me before.

zenman said:

I am familiar with this way of teaching, that is, the teacher doing the practice at the same time when giving students instructions. I don't know a better way to pass meditation teachings than this.

I also know Anadi. Somehow interesting fellow. However I haven't been able to make any sense of what he actually says. He keeps on repeating his terminology (while his students in the vids keep asking him the same questions again and again) but manages not to explain what he actually means. I like untraditional and creative approach but unfortunately I just cannot follow what this man means, despite of having listened to him for couple of hours.

Pointing unaware or semi-aware fields of one's mind is also something that I am familiar with when working with a teacher. Invaluable pointing! I'd say. FCKW, did that particular dull state have a specific name? Is that mentioned in Brown's book? The reason I am asking is because I have also received this pointing (not from Brown). I didn't avoid it though but pierced it.

Malcolm wrote:

It is called bying in Tibetan, means torpor, lethargy etc. It has both a coarse and a dull expression. Often time in śamatha, people get involved in a sort of dull clarity that they imagine is śamatha, but instead is a state of dullness. This is commonly mistaken for śamatha, but it leads to rebirth as an animal.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, August 28th, 2015 at 8:11 PM

Title: Re: Tibetan Zen

Content:

Dan74 said:

The trouble with this question is that only someone who is trained in both Dzogchen and Zen can even begin to properly address it. And then the rest of us will still be none the wiser really.

Sure I believe that Zen training can lead to complete liberation and so can Dzogchen, but this is just a belief. Those who believe that one can and the other one can't will similarly hold beliefs. Basically they are of no value outside supporting one's practice, ie of no objective value.

Or so it seems to me.

/

Malcolm wrote:

The the question of the similarities and differences between Chan and Dzogchen arose because some early Tibetologists erroneously asserted that Dzogchen derived from what we call Early Northern Chan.

There is a book by a 9th century Tibetan master, Nubchen Sangye Yeshe, which extensively examines the differences in the positions of Kamalashila and Hashang Mahāyāna, favors Hashang in terms of sūtrayāna presentations, but nevertheless asserts that Mahāyoga, even though gradual, is more efficacious than EN Chan because Mahāyoga has direct introduction, something lacking in EN Chan as it was practiced in 8th century in Tibet. Needless to say, it presents Atiyoga, Dzogchen as the pinnacle of vehicles.

Chogyal Namkhai Norbu stresses that the Chan examined by Nubchen is not the same as Zen. He asserts that modern Zen has been deeply influenced by Esoteric Buddhism.

The upshot is that when we have discussions of the relationship between Chan and Dzogchen, this has virtually no bearing on what people now a days practice as Zen, Chan or Son. For example, the Koan system did not even exist during this period of time, there was no Rinzai, no Soto, etc. The Chan under question is Early Northern Chan, and its sources and influence in Tibetan Buddhism all but ended in the 790's when the Tibetans chose Indian Buddhism as the gold standard.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, August 28th, 2015 at 8:54 PM

Title: Re: Tibetan Zen

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

For me, I just have faith in the one who holds the throne of Jigten Sumgon, in particular, the present Drikung Kyabgon, who is an ocean of teachings, transmissions, and qualities. Obviously His Holiness is aware and well educated on all the points discussed here, given that he is a scholar and researcher in early Tibetan history, as well as a holder of mahamudra and dzogchen lineages.

Malcolm wrote:

Once the holiness of one's authority is invoked, conversation over.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, August 28th, 2015 at 8:56 PM

Title: Re: Tibetan Zen

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Chogyal Namkhai Norbu stresses that the Chan examined by Nubchen is not the same as Zen. He asserts that modern Zen has been deeply influenced by Esoteric Buddhism.

DGA said:

This is interesting, but potentially complicated. What does ChNN mean by "esoteric Buddhism" in this context? Different writers mean different things by the term. It can mean, for instance, the mantrayana lineages transmitted through China to Japan that are Indic in origin. Or it can mean something else...

Some might argue that the "transmission outside the scriptures" upheld by contemporary Zen schools may correspond to a kind of direct introduction and transmission. I'm too ignorant to make a claim on this, or to rule it out categorically. Here is one description of what I'm alluding to:

<http://dharmawheel.net/viewtopic.php?f=69&t=20488&start=40#p298602>

Malcolm wrote:

He means Vajrayāna, Shingon/Tendai. I have even heard him claim that Dzogchen influenced Chan, not the other way around. Certainly, Chinese monks received teachings from Vairocana, Vimalamitra and so on, they did not all clear out in one day.

Of course, I don't know what authority he is making that claim, just that he has made it on occasion.

Also, China is not so far from Tibet, and there were a number of Chan masters who in fact were Tibetans from far-eastern Tibet, or so I read in some academic book somewhere.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, August 28th, 2015 at 9:42 PM

Title: Re: Tibetan Zen

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

For me, I just have faith in the one who holds the throne of Jigten Sumgon, in particular, the present Drikung Kyabgon, who is an ocean of teachings, transmissions, and qualities. Obviously His Holiness is aware and well educated on all the points discussed here, given that he is a scholar and researcher in early Tibetan history, as well as a holder of mahamudra and dzogchen lineages.

Malcolm wrote:

Once the holiness of one's authority is invoked, conversation over.

Urgyen Dorje said:

That actually wasn't my point.

Since the man knows all the differences between these traditions and approaches and views, his statement, which reflects a larger unity, is not made out of ignorance. He's giving an instruction and I'm wanting to learn.

Malcolm wrote:

You presented it as a religious statement, "For me, I just have faith in the one who holds the throne of Jigten Sumgon, in particular, the present Drikung Kyabgon, who is an ocean of teachings, transmissions, and qualities..."

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, August 28th, 2015 at 10:10 PM

Title: Re: Tibetan Zen

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

That actually wasn't my point.

Since the man knows all the differences between these traditions and approaches and views, his statement, which reflects a larger unity, is not made out of ignorance. He's giving an instruction and I'm wanting to learn.

Malcolm wrote:

You presented it as a religious statement, "For me, I just have faith in the one who holds the throne of Jigten Sumgon, in particular, the present Drikung Kyabgon, who is an ocean of teachings, transmissions, and qualities..."

Urgyen Dorje said:

I guess I don't understand. I'm out of line for expressing faith in Drikung Kyabgon?

Malcolm wrote:

No, but since you framed your confidence in religious terms, no one can disagree with him without offending your religious sensibility.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, August 28th, 2015 at 11:24 PM

Title: Re: Daniel P Brown - Pointing Out Way?

Content:

frank123 said:

Dullness in Samatha leads to rebirth as an animal? Really?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, really.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, August 29th, 2015 at 2:49 AM

Title: Re: Daniel P Brown - Pointing Out Way?

Content:

fckw said:

Maybe Bon lamas are more open with giving out Dzogchen teachings in general? I have no idea. Does any of you guys know more about this? Maybe there is generally no Ngöndro requirement for the A-Khrid system, could that be?

Malcolm wrote:

There is a separate ngondro for all Bonpo systems of Dzogchen.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, August 29th, 2015 at 2:50 AM

Title: Re: Daniel P Brown - Pointing Out Way?

Content:

zenman said:

Pointing unaware or semi-aware fields of one's mind is also something that I am familiar with when working with a teacher. Invaluable pointing! I'd say. FCKW, did that particular dull state have a specific name? Is that mentioned in Brown's book? The reason I am asking is because I have also received this pointing (not from Brown). I didn't avoid it though but pierced it.

fckw said:

Sorry, I don't want to go into details here, because I am not a qualified teacher.

Edit: Malcolm's comment actually explains it nicely.

Malcolm wrote:

I did mean to say coarse and subtle expressions. The subtle expression of lethargy is much harder to notice.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, August 29th, 2015 at 11:33 PM

Title: Re: Myanmar monk's Islamophobia

Content:

lostitude said:

@Malcom, again that strange theory about evil befalling meat eaters... what did the Dalai Lama eat to find himself in exile, what did Tibetans in general do to be afflicted by such misery? That really sounds like the arguments used by witch hunters in the Middle Ages when they had a bad crop.

Malcolm wrote:

Which theory are you referring to?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, August 29th, 2015 at 11:58 PM

Title: Re: Myanmar monk's Islamophobia

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The point is the sacrifice of animals, not the eating of meat. It is the same with Jews in Israel. If anyone wonders why there is so much violence in these regions of the world, Africa, Middle East, South America, Mexico and so on, it is largely due to the practice of sacrificing animals.

lostitude said:

Especially when you consider the fact that most Muslims have never touched a knife to slaughter a sheep. If only for the fact that they can't even afford to buy one in the first place.

Malcolm wrote:

There is no difference between doing the sacrifice and sending an animal to be sacrificed.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, August 30th, 2015 at 12:26 AM

Title: Re: Myanmar monk's Islamophobia

Content:

lostitude said:

Again, the vast majority of Muslims don't send any animal to be sacrificed, simply because they don't own one. Eidul-Adha sacrifices are usually done by wealthy families

that go buy a few dozen sheep, have them slaughtered, keep one for the head of the family to slaughter, and then give the meat to the local mosque where it is then given out to the needy. In the Muslim countries where I have lived, that would represent about one family out of ten, or less.

Malcolm wrote:

Do they support it? For example, let us say you are soldier in a unit of 100 soldiers. This group kills one man. If everyone in that group soldiers approves of the action, they bear the karma of killing that one man times the number of people in the group, thus each soldier now bears the karma of killing one hundred men.

For example, all the Americans who approved of the killing of Iraqis and rejoiced in it each bear the amount of karma times the millions of Americans who approved of that killing. The same is true of any war and all soldiers in it. This is why the Buddha clearly explains that soldiers _Never_ take higher rebirth.

In the case of sacrifice it is the same. If you approve of the killing of animals for sacrifice, or even for consumption of meat, you bear the responsibility of all of the animals whose deaths you are knowingly involved in. If you approve in general of Eidul-Adha then you are culpable for all those deaths times the number of people who approve and rejoice.

This is how karma works. You don't believe me? Read Vasubandhu.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, August 30th, 2015 at 12:27 AM

Title: Re: CNN Odzer Chenma retreat sept 11-13

Content:

Fa Dao said:

Will this retreat be webcast?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, August 30th, 2015 at 12:33 AM

Title: Re: Myanmar monk's Islamophobia

Content:

lostitude said:

This is how karma works. You don't believe me? Read Vasubandhu.

What I don't believe is that Eidhul-Adha is the cause of strife and misery in the Muslim world. Again, this is very reminiscent of witch-hunting, with undertones that I find myself very uneasy with.

Malcolm wrote:

Look, there is Hindu animal sacrifice, Muslim animal sacrifice, Animist animal sacrifice — it is all the same to me. Everywhere in the world where this is allowed to continue in a large way is fraught with all kinds of problems.

It is all evil, more evil than merely slaughtering animals for food. That too is evil, but not as evil as animal sacrifice. Slaughtering animals for food is motivated mainly by desire. Slaughtering animals for religious reasons is done mainly out of ignorance.

Of course war is even more evil because always involves killing people for religious or political reasons.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, August 30th, 2015 at 12:39 AM

Title: Re: Tibetan Lives Matter

Content:

lostitude said:

Oh, probably just gyalpo worship. Tibetans probably have horrible karma and now they're paying for it, right Malcolm?

Malcolm wrote:

Any suffering one experiences in this life is the result of negative karma from past lives.

The Tibetan Nation was in fact brought down by gyalpo worship. If you understood anything at all about Tibetan History, you would understand that HH Dalai Lama has even admitted this.

The Tibetan Govt. had terrible karma for many reasons, also the HHDL has admitted this.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, August 30th, 2015 at 12:54 AM

Title: Re: Tibetan Lives Matter

Content:

lostitude said:

Oh, probably just gyalpo worship. Tibetans probably have horrible karma and now they're paying for it, right Malcolm?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, The Tibetan Nation was brought down by gyalpo worship. If you understood anything at all about Tibetan History, you would understand that HH Dalai Lama has even admitted this.

The Tibetan Govt. had terrible karma for many reasons, also the HHDL has admitted this.

Boomerang said:

I would like to know more about this. Could you direct me to any sources?

Malcolm wrote:

<http://www.dalailama.com/messages/dolgyal-shugden>

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, August 30th, 2015 at 1:07 AM

Title: Re: Tibetan Lives Matter

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

<http://www.dalailama.com/messages/dolgyal-shugden>

Boomerang said:

Thanks. I thought the problem was more gyalpos than just that one.

Malcolm wrote:

There are many gyalpos. They are a class of being, some of the more powerful ones are controlled through entities like that one, or Pehar and so on.

But the Tibetan Gvt. got into trouble because they relied on this Gyalpo and entered into intense sectarianism at the top.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, August 30th, 2015 at 2:06 AM

Title: Re: Can the Buddha become angry?

Content:

Kaccāni said:

Can the Buddha become angry?

What do you think

Best wishes

Kc

Malcolm wrote:

As in suffering from the affliction of dvesha or krodha? Absolutely not.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, August 30th, 2015 at 4:07 AM

Title: Re: Compassion vs. non-proselytism

Content:

lostitute said:

Thanks.

But I don't really understand how you can benefit them if you never take the initiative to explain to them how dharma works.

Malcolm wrote:

If they ask, you explain. If they don't, you mind your own business.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, August 30th, 2015 at 5:23 AM

Title: Re: Compassion vs. non-proselytism

Content:

Paul said:

Historically Buddhism has been spread by missionaries. The best adverts for dharma that I've seen has been just how impressive certain practitioners/teachers have been. They have been powerfully magnetic as a result of their practice & people are naturally impressed.

Malcolm wrote:

Not really. This is a Western Historical misconception.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, August 30th, 2015 at 9:48 PM

Title: Re: Compassion vs. non-proselytism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Engaging in proselytization means you are trying to condition someone. This is not the way of Buddhadharma.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, August 30th, 2015 at 9:58 PM

Title: Re: Cosmological questions

Content:

Johnny Dangerous said:

If mind streams are without beginning, how can individual mind streams carry on with the creation and dissolution of universes? What I mean is, when karmic winds etc. stir duality, and eventually lead to different classes of beings and samsara, doesn't this mean that mind streams last one universe, and no more? How is this explained in the various versions of Buddhist cosmology?

Malcolm wrote:

Generally, all the levels of the world that perish are below the third and fourth rupadhātu heavens. All sentient beings are either born there or they are formless realm beings.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, August 30th, 2015 at 10:00 PM

Title: Re: Riwo Sang Cho of Namkha Jigme

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

So, doing the Riwo Sang Cho of Namkha Jigme, it got me wondering about all these spirit provocations and uprisings and the like discussed on DW in various threads.

My instructions on this practice is that Riwo Sang Cho is good for these things, but talking to a couple mates who are students of //, they insist this isn't the case, and that I'm probably just pissing off Gyalpos, Nagas, Don and the like.

They said the same about other Sang offerings.

I am not familiar enough with the bestiaries of beasties to really know what to think.

Opines?

Malcolm wrote:

Sometimes Sang offerings can cause provocations rather than prevent them. But generally speaking, they are beneficial.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, August 30th, 2015 at 10:47 PM

Title: Re: Turiya

Content:

Karma Dorje said:

The funny thing is, Buddhism is never more like Christianity than when Buddhist scholastics make ever more emphatic distinctions to prove how they are the only ones who are right.

Malcolm wrote:

Did you ever hear of a little thing called the Nine Yānas? Or do you think the teachings of Dzogchen tantras are somehow irrelevant to the conversation?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, August 30th, 2015 at 11:50 PM

Title: Re: Rebirth and picking up where one left off

Content:

lostitude said:

Hello,

One thing that's not explained in what I have been reading about karma and rebirth, is

how exactly the benefits in the previous life of a buddhist are carried over to the next lives. For example, at what point does the reincarnation of a great master reconnect with the spiritual level reached previously? Is the same level still present at birth (like, if he died a stream-enterer he is reborn with the same spiritual characteristics as a stream-enterer and instinctively perceives what any stream-enterer should perceive about dharma), or does he have to undergo the same type of training as any other child, except that the whole process goes much faster for him?

Thanks

Malcolm wrote:

The latter is generally held to be the case until one becomes an eighth stage bodhisattva.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, August 30th, 2015 at 11:53 PM

Title: Re: Towards a Buddhist Fundamentalism: Part II

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

I've stripped all identifying information according to the DW ToS...

What I feel you need to understand is that there is only one valid interpretation of the dharma. This must be the case as there is only one reality that this the object of the Buddha's valid cognition. Anything other than this one valid interpretation of the dharma is actually an attack on the dharma. It is a war against the liberation of beings. It is a war to inflict suffering on beings.

My friend was less than eloquent in describing the problem. Yes, there is a war being fought for the integrity of the dharma. The dharma is being polluted by Western democratic and post-modern ideas. It is being polluted by ideas such as tolerance, quality, and freedom. It is only the dharma that gives these things. Attempting to afford these things from outside the dharma is an attack on the dharma, an attack on the liberation of beings, and a war to inflict suffering on beings. But the dharma is also attacking the dharma with a proliferation of views and paths. If we tolerate this by encouraging and tolerating Buddhist diversity, then we are paving the world with roads to hell.

You seem to feel compelled to defend the democratic values of your society, claiming that they create the freedom and the space to practice the dharma. You also seem to feel compelled to have tolerance for people of other faiths. If you understand causality, this is a systematic deconstruction of the dharma. It is an attack on the Three Jewels. What we need now to support the dharma is compassionate intolerance, compassionate bigotry. To relieve the suffering of beings we need to invoke our protectors and pray to our lineage masters to destroy people of all non-Buddhist faiths. We need to pray to destroy every fragment of non-Buddhist philosophy. Yes, we should destroy books. Yes, we should destroy temples and churches and mosques. This is the only road to freedom for all beings.

I would say yes, we should even destroy beings, the right beings. People are better off dead than doing anything other than practicing Buddhism. When I read your posts on DW, I feel you are the most disgusting type of person. Somebody who rationalizes the sins of others, encouraging this bad karma. You are also the type of person who leads beings astray by teaching secular subjects. People don't need to understand science and philosophy. People need to understand dharma. You are a degenerate lapsed practitioner. You have no right or place integrating any of these things into your practice or encouraging others to do the same.

You need to just shut the frak up. And die.

Malcolm wrote:

The person who wrote the above is a crazy person.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, August 31st, 2015 at 12:12 AM

Title: Re: Rebirth and picking up where one left off

Content:

lostitute said:

Thank you.

So when a stream-enterer in a previous life is born again, he is guaranteed to reach at least stream-entry in this new life, and probably reach a further level as well? Just to make sure I understood it well.

Malcolm wrote:

In the Hinayāna system, a stream entrant is guaranteed to reach the stage of an arhat within seven lifetimes.

There is no such guarantee in Mahāyāna because the path is necessarily longer. It takes two incalculable eons to reach the eighth bhūmi, and another incalculable eon to reach buddhahood after that. So, one does not necessarily progress beyond the level one reached in the past life, but eventually one will. Once one has reached the first bodhisattva stage, one no longer returns to samsara, so to speak, meaning that one's progress to buddhahood is a certainty.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, August 31st, 2015 at 12:15 AM

Title: Re: Turiiya

Content:

Matt J said:

I think one could make a credible argument roughly correlating the last two features, and I think this is where people get the idea that they are the same. But as for the first, I think it is hard to correlate "being" with "emptiness" since they are opposites.

Malcolm wrote:

Lhun grub and thugs rje are, in Dzogchen, the basis of error. When people become confused about the basis, they become confused about appearance. What appears is lhun grub. That can be a ground for deviation.

And yes, Ka dag, the essence, can never be "being."

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, August 31st, 2015 at 12:35 AM

Title: Re: Towards a Buddhist Fundamentalism: Part II

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

What I feel you need to understand is that there is only one valid interpretation of the dharma.

Crazy. The very idea that there is a valid interpretation of Dharma is bullshit. There is realization of the Dharma, and that is not an interpretation.

This must be the case as there is only one reality that this the object of the Buddha's valid cognition.

This is also nonsense. Why? Because such things as valid cognition and so on do not apply to Buddhas. They are beyond all such categories. This person is obviously a wingnut in the Drikung school who has choked on Gongchig.

Anything other than this one valid interpretation of the dharma is actually an attack on the dharma. It is a war against the liberation of beings. It is a war to inflict suffering on beings.

Craziness.

Yes, there is a war being fought for the integrity of the dharma. The dharma is being polluted by Western democratic and post-modern ideas.

Buddhadharma can't be polluted by anything — more craziness.

It is being polluted by ideas such as tolerance, quality, and freedom. It is only the dharma that gives these things. Attempting to afford these things from outside the dharma is an attack on the dharma, an attack on the liberation of beings, and a war to inflict suffering on beings. But the dharma is also attacking the dharma with a proliferation of views and paths. If we tolerate this by encouraging and tolerating Buddhist diversity, then we are paving the world with roads to hell.

More craziness.

You seem to feel compelled to defend the democratic values of your society, claiming that they create the freedom and the space to practice the dharma. You also seem to feel compelled to have tolerance for people of other faiths. If you understand causality, this is a systematic deconstruction of the dharma. It is an attack on the Three Jewels. What we need now to support the dharma is compassionate intolerance, compassionate bigotry. To relieve the suffering of beings we need to invoke our protectors and pray to our lineage masters to destroy people of all non-Buddhist faiths. We need to pray to destroy every fragment of non-Buddhist philosophy. Yes, we should destroy books. Yes, we should destroy temples and churches and mosques. This is the only road to freedom for all beings. I would say yes, we should even destroy beings, the

right beings. People are better off dead than doing anything other than practicing Buddhism.

Sheer lunacy, absolute nihilism. They should understand that they have violated all of their samayas by encouraging this kind of violence, they have abandoned all compassion and bodhicitta. This person clearly does not understand Dharma.

When I read your posts on DW, I feel you are the most disgusting type of person.

Somebody who rationalizes the sins of others, encouraging this bad karma. You are also the type of person who leads beings astray by teaching secular subjects. People don't need to understand science and philosophy. People need to understand dharma. You are a degenerate lapsed practitioner. You have no right or place integrating any of these things into your practice or encouraging others to do the same.

Same as above. They should read Mahāyāna Sūtralaṃkāra with regards to sciences., etc.

You need to just shut the frak up. And die.

Sheer and utter crazy lunacy.

Please do not post anymore of this poison here!!!

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, August 31st, 2015 at 12:43 AM

Title: Re: Cosmological questions

Content:

Johnny Dangerous said:

If mind streams are without beginning, how can individual mind streams carry on with the creation and dissolution of universes? What I mean is, when karmic winds etc. stir duality, and eventually lead to different classes of beings and samsara, doesn't this mean that mind streams last one universe, and no more? How is this explained in the various versions of Buddhist cosmology?

Malcolm wrote:

Generally, all the levels of the world that perish are below the third and fourth rūpadhātu heavens. All sentient beings are either born there or they are formless realm beings.

Johnny Dangerous said:

Ah right, I'd forgotten this.

Aren't there two kinds of destructions though, doesn't the one 'by water' wipe out everything, or nearly?

Malcolm wrote:

Everything below the third and fourth rūpadhātu.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, August 31st, 2015 at 11:14 AM

Title: Re: Towards a Buddhist Fundamentalism: Part II

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

Given that the person making these claims is a) a lama and b) a member of this forum,

Malcolm wrote:

What qualifies this person as a "Lama"? Why should we take their title seriously since they are anonymous?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, August 31st, 2015 at 11:23 AM

Title: Re: Why Buddhism over Vedanta?

Content:

coldmountains said:

What persuaded you that Buddhism has got it right over Vedanta?

Malcolm wrote:

Nāgārjuna.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, August 31st, 2015 at 9:49 PM

Title: Re: Towards a Buddhist Fundamentalism: Part II

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Please do not post anymore of this poison here!!!

Urgyen Dorje said:

I have absolutely no idea what your problem with me is. If you notice, I'm the one that was instructed to take this guy seriously and to adjust according to his criticisms, and after determining he was a little off, tried to take his ranting in a meta-direction instead of just discarding it completely. I am not the one saying he's crazy. I'm trying to mold something of a silk purse out of a sow's ear. So it's not clear to me what I'm poisoning. According to this lama, all of my posts on DW have been poisonous, and in retrospect, maybe that's true. I don't really know. I'm not accustomed to dharma brothers talking to each other like this.

Malcolm wrote:

I don't have a problem with you. I have a problem with the vile content of the posts you are are crossposting from elsewhere.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, August 31st, 2015 at 9:52 PM

Title: Re: Towards a Buddhist Fundamentalism: Part II

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

So I start taking this lama at face value, and adjust my posts here, adjust my posts on the blog, and eventually take him to task, and similarly accordingly adjust my posts here, and my posts on the blog. In the process I learn it's not Malcolm...

Malcolm wrote:

And, I am not a "Lama", important or otherwise.

Urgyen Dorje said:

so that still leaves me with somebody my DW veteran mates describe as an "important DW lama" who should be taken seriously.

Malcolm wrote:

Why? Why should this absolutely vile individual be taken seriously?

Urgyen Dorje said:

Then I'm moderated for attacking and misrepresenting this lama, so obviously this lama is a seriously important person around here, so I go back to trying to understand how all of these personal criticisms are legit.

Malcolm wrote:

No one knows who this Konchok Namdrol is.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, August 31st, 2015 at 9:53 PM

Title: Re: Towards a Buddhist Fundamentalism: Part II

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

I guess I have a problem.

Malcolm wrote:

Please just stop crossposting the vile nonsense that is being written by that "Lama." Is that really too much to ask?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, August 31st, 2015 at 9:55 PM

Title: Re: Towards a Buddhist Fundamentalism: Part II

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

Dude. It's not my content. It's a response to content I post here and on my mate's blog.

I've been told to make myself accountable to DW. I'm doing it.

Malcolm wrote:

I don't have a problem with you. I have a problem with the vile content of the posts you are are crossposting from elsewhere.

And why do you feel you have to take this seriously? Why do you feel that you need to crosspost this drek? What useful purpose can it possibly serve? Honestly, on Vajracakra I would never allow this kind of posting. I would delete it immediately. We just don't need this kind of hate speech in Buddhist forums and people who author it should be shut down.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, August 31st, 2015 at 9:59 PM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

Kaccāni said:

Time appears in Brahman yet Brahman does not know what time is.

Best wishes

Kc

Malcolm wrote:

Something conditioned cannot appear in something unconditioned because there can never be a relationship between the conditioned and the unconditioned without the unconditioned becoming conditioned.

lostitude said:

Would it be possible to develop this idea? what is this impossibility based on?

Thanks

Malcolm wrote:

There can never be any point of contact between conditioned and unconditioned phenomena.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, August 31st, 2015 at 10:13 PM

Title: Re: Towards a Buddhist Fundamentalism: Part II

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

Christ. I guess I can't make anybody pleased. I have people on DW upset with my disrespect of the dharma because of my posts. I have people elsewhere upset with my disrespect of DW and of the dharma because of my posts. Then when you try to settle up, people are annoyed at that.

Screw it. This is toxic.

I've more than taken everyone seriously and at face value.

/eyes looking for the nearest exit/

Malcolm wrote:

You unleashed this by posting someone else's hate speech here. Not everyone should be taken seriously or at face value. If some crazy people are needling you on another forum for posts you make here, screw them. If your friends on that forum are too dense to delete this kind of hateful speech, are they really your friends? There is nothing but nonvirtue in the speech of the people who authored the posts that you crossposted here. The only real question I have for you is why can't you see their words as hate speech? And why would you want to spread that hate speech here?

And since the people who authored those words apparently read posts here: I have some advice for you. You need to start over. Start at the beginning. You have not understood one thing about Buddhadharma. You are like stones in the bottom of the ocean.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, August 31st, 2015 at 10:25 PM

Title: Re: Why Buddhism over Vedanta?

Content:

Indrajala said:

Malcolm cites Nāgārjuna

Malcolm wrote:

The question was:

What persuaded you that Buddhism has got it right over Vedanta?

My answer was Nāgārjuna.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, August 31st, 2015 at 11:16 PM

Title: Re: Why Buddhism over Vedanta?

Content:

Indrajala said:

At the end of the day, there's actually no such thing as Buddhism in the singular.

...

Perhaps all my experience with Buddhist traditions has resulted in me becoming a crypto-Hindu or pseudo-Stoic.

dzogchungpa said:

IJ, I totally understand where you are coming from. For me the key was finding the right teacher.

Malcolm wrote:

Which means your answer to the question:

What persuaded you that Buddhism has got it right over Vedanta?

Is probably "nothing".

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, August 31st, 2015 at 11:33 PM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

smcj said:

There can never be any point of contact between conditioned and unconditioned phenomena.

Isn't that why all things are correctly seen as primordially pure?

Malcolm wrote:

This just means that all things are empty.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, August 31st, 2015 at 11:46 PM

Title: Re: Why Buddhism over Vedanta?

Content:

Indrajala said:

A more tolerant position would suggest they achieved different but for them equally enriching experiences.

Malcolm wrote:

A more realistic position is that what Hindus and Buddhists means by "liberation" is only superficially similar.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, September 1st, 2015 at 2:44 AM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

There can never be any point of contact between conditioned and unconditioned phenomena.

lostitude said:

Ok but on what basis can you make such a statement? It's far from self-evident... so what's the rationale behind it?

Malcolm wrote:

First you have to identify the characteristics of unconditioned phenomena. They do not arise, abide or cease — further, they are uncaused. Conditioned phenomena arise, abide and cease — further, they are caused.

Since there is radical difference in kind, there is no point of contact between the former and the latter.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, September 1st, 2015 at 2:52 AM

Title: Re: Why Buddhism over Vedanta?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

A more realistic position is that what Hindus and Buddhists means by "liberation" is only superficially similar.

Indrajala said:

Either side led to people having consistent and enriching experiences of some kind, which may or may not be mutually comparable depending on who you talk to. Perhaps the Buddhists had different versions of liberation too. In fact, this very much seems to be the case. What liberation means to a Pure Land practitioner (perhaps a vision of Amitabha near death) is different from what it would be to a Vajrayana or Zen practitioner.

Basically I'm just saying don't be so dogmatic.

Malcolm wrote:

Liberation, in Buddhadharma, is strictly the elimination of afflictions that cause rebirth in the three realms. It really does not matter what school one belongs to.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, September 1st, 2015 at 3:12 AM

Title: Re: Why Buddhism over Vedanta?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Liberation, in Buddhadharma, is strictly the elimination of afflictions that cause rebirth in the three realms. It really does not matter what school one belongs to.

Indrajala said:

Chan and Zen can often be nebulous with respect to what liberation is and what happens afterwards (the laundry?). There's also Pure Land which is based on the belief that liberation will come postmortem. Mahāyāna's traditional understanding of 'liberation' is not what you describe strictly speaking: you are only liberated from involuntary rebirth after a certain point way down the path, but until then you're committed to engaging in beneficial activities, though ideally your wisdom prevents suffering while your compassion enables continued countless rebirths rather than seeking arhatship.

Malcolm wrote:

All this is beside the point — but address your rebuttal — Chan/Zen do not offer some special model of liberation separate and unique. It is based on common Mahāyāna. Pure Land Buddhism may hold that one is liberated after one passes away from here in Sukhavati, but nevertheless that liberation is still a result of eradication of afflictions that cause rebirth in the three realms. And this is merely a variation on the never-returner.

It may be the case that in the common Mahāyāna path one does not eradicate afflictions that cause rebirth in the desire realm until the eighth bhumi, nevertheless, this is because the bhumis of Mahāyāna stream entry are 1-6, once returner is the seventh bhumi, never-returner is eighth bhumi and so on.

Still, the model is all based on the afflictive obscurations that cause rebirth in the three realms. Liberation is not omniscience.

Stream entrants up to Arhats are all liberated, will never take rebirth in the three lower realms, and their final liberation is guaranteed.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, September 1st, 2015 at 5:52 AM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

lostitude said:

What I don't understand, is the transition from this : First you have to identify the characteristics of unconditioned phenomena. They do not arise, abide or cease — further, they are uncaused. Conditioned phenomena arise, abide and cease — further, they are caused.

To this : Since there is radical difference in kind, there is no point of contact between the former and the latter

I don't see how the conclusion follows so naturally from the premise. There's no obvious logic here that I can identify. It looks more like an intuitive statement than a logical one. Unless there's a missing step in the reasoning, which you didn't include because you thought it was obvious.

Malcolm wrote:

The invoked principle is the homogeneity of cause and effect. Unconditioned phenomena are uncaused, and being uncaused, are incapable of acting as causes. For example, unconditioned space, defined as the simple absence of obstruction, can neither affect nor be affected by conditioned elements such as earth, water, fire or air. Why? Because the latter four elements are conditioned or compounded, and the former element, space, is unconditioned or un compounded. Unconditioned/un compounded [asaṃkṛta] means "that which has not been assembled out of parts."

The only other unconditioned phenomena which exist, according to Buddhādharma, are two the kinds of cessation: simple cessation, which is the mere absence of causes; and analytical cessation, which is a result of insight a.k.a., nirvana.

Emptiness is also unconditioned, but it is not included among the dharmas.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, September 1st, 2015 at 5:54 AM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

lostitude said:

Also, about conditioned and unconditioned phenomena being mutually exclusive, this also makes me think about ember that sometimes emits a flame, sometimes doesn't. The fact that the flames come and go indicates nothing about the ember changing or being the same.

Malcolm wrote:

This indicate that the ember changes state, with a resulting fluctuation in flames — hence an ember is conditioned.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, September 1st, 2015 at 6:15 AM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The invoked principle is the homogeneity of cause and effect. Unconditioned phenomena are uncaused, and being uncaused, are incapable of acting as causes. For example, unconditioned space, defined as the simple absence of obstruction, can neither affect nor be affected by conditioned elements such as earth, water, fire or air. Why? Because the latter four elements are conditioned or compounded, and the former element, space, is unconditioned or un compounded. "

lostitude said:

I'm not quite sure I get it: when you bring an element such as earth into 'absence of obstruction', it is affected in that it is reduced by the presence of earth... Just like the

emptiness in an empty room diminishes as I enter it.

Malcolm wrote:

No, unconditioned space is not affected in anyway by the presence or absence of anything.

The space your are referring to is conditioned space or volume.

If you want to understand Buddhadharma coherently, I suggest you start with Abhidharma, Vasuabandhu's critical presentation, then work your way through Yogacara and Madhyamaka.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, September 1st, 2015 at 6:17 AM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The only other unconditioned phenomena which exist, according to Buddhadharma, are two the kinds of cessation: simple cessation, which is the mere absence of causes; and analytical cessation, which is a result of insight a.k.a., nirvana. .

lostitute said:

How would he know that? how can one assert that one knows everything that exists?

Malcolm wrote:

A buddha is omniscient.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, September 1st, 2015 at 9:41 AM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

No, unconditioned space is not affected in anyway by the presence or absence of anything.

lostitute said:

Then does unconditioned space even exist? If so, where?

Malcolm wrote:

It exists as the characteristic of absence of obstruction. It exists everywhere.

lostitute said:

If you want to understand Buddhadharma coherently, I suggest you start with Abhidharma, Vasubandhu's critical presentation, then work your way through Yogacara and Madhyamaka.

Sure, but that will take me about, how many lifetimes exactly?

Malcolm wrote:

Seven years.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, September 1st, 2015 at 9:42 AM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

lostitute said:

(By the way, is the big bang singularity unconditioned? it seems to meet the criteria of being uncaused, doesn't it?)

Malcolm wrote:

No, since it produces effects, it [the big bang] itself must have a cause.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, September 1st, 2015 at 12:34 PM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

lostitute said:

(By the way, is the big bang singularity unconditioned? it seems to meet the criteria of being uncaused, doesn't it?)

Malcolm wrote:

No, since it produces effects, it [the big bang] itself must have a cause.

Dan74 said:

A kind of a timeless cause, maybe, because there was no time prior to the Big Bang and causation generally implies time?? Not sure how that would work, but...

Malcolm wrote:

What makes you think there was no time prior to the big bang? The big bang happened in time. In any case, Buddhist thinking about these issues is predicated on serial expansions and contractions of the physical universe.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, September 1st, 2015 at 10:12 PM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

What makes you think there was no time prior to the big bang? The big bang happened in time. In any case, Buddhist thinking about these issues is predicated on serial expansions and contractions of the physical universe.

lostitute said:

Actually according to the theory, time started with the big bang, as time is just one of several dimensions along with spatial ones. There was no time before the expansion, according to the theory. This does not mean that the theory is right, but at least it points to the fact that logic and mathematics allow the possibility of time having a beginning and being caused by something apparently uncaused.

Stephen Hawking said:

At this time, the Big Bang, all the matter in the universe, would have been on top of itself. The density would have been infinite. It would have been what is called, a singularity. At a singularity, all the laws of physics would have broken down. This means that the state of the universe, after the Big Bang, will not depend on anything that may have happened before, because the deterministic laws that govern the universe will break down in the Big Bang. The universe will evolve from the Big Bang, completely independently of what it was like before. Even the amount of matter in the universe, can be different to what it was before the Big Bang, as the Law of Conservation of Matter, will break down at the Big Bang.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, I understand this is the theory — from a Buddhist point of view, it is wrong.

Stephen Hawking said:

Where does it exist? The universe we know is not empty, so it's bound to have its emptiness obstructed here and there, even if there was more emptiness than matter in it.

You may have 'absence of obstruction' on a local level, but then it would be limited, hence conditioned if I got you right.

Malcolm wrote:

I told you already, space is everywhere. Matter obstructs, space does not.

Stephen Hawking said:

Also, can a 'characteristic' really be considered as a phenomenon? it looks more like a purely conceptual thing to me.

Malcolm wrote:

The earth is actually the characteristic of matter we call solidity, and so on.

Unconditioned space is not a characteristic of matter, but because of space, matter

can form and perish.

This space is not the same kind of space referred to in physics. They do not have a math for this.

Stephen Hawking said:

Because similarly one could then say that logic is unconditioned, since it is (supposedly) always the same and not influenced by anything (you can't change logic). And yet of course logic pervades our conditioned world.

Malcolm wrote:

Which logic are you referring to? Certainly not the logic of Aristotelian propositions and so forth.

In any case, even space is not something which is ultimate, according to Madhyamaka reasonings. It is still unconditioned though.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, September 1st, 2015 at 10:37 PM

Title: Re: Universal Atman in Buddhism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, I understand this is the theory — from a Buddhist point of view, it is wrong.

lostitude said:

Fair enough, but even from a buddhist POV wouldn't a buddhist have to accept that this kind of view can actually make sense, from a logical/mathematical perspective, which I assume is the same kind of logic used by buddhists to accept basic buddhist tenets. The theory might well be wrong, but given that it's based on logic, doesn't it go to show that causation might not be universal after all?

Malcolm wrote:

Logic is very limited. In any case, among the reasons we accept beginningless multiple repeating universes is that this is the experience of many yogis, not just the Buddha, which comes from recalling their past lives.

lostitude said:

Oops sorry then I guess I just didn't understand. You're saying you're not talking about physical space, maybe that's the part that threw me. What kind of space then are you talking about?

I know that matter obstructs, space does not. But space can be obstructed by matter. In fact all the space we know about and commonly experience is obstructed by matter.

Malcolm wrote:

I clarified for you already, there are two kinds of space discussed in Buddhadharmā: unconditioned space and conditioned space. The former is absence of obstruction, the latter is volume.

lostitude said:

The earth is actually the characteristic of matter we call solidity, and so on.

The earth is a specific object. Solidity is a concept that can describe many different things. I can touch something solid but i can't touch solidity... I can only ascribe it to other concrete objects such as earth.

Malcolm wrote:

As I said, since you do not understand the basic terms of the conversation, it is hard to have this conversation with you. In Buddhadharmā in general, but also in Indian cosmology in general, earth = solidity, water = liquidity, fire = heat, air = motility: these are the four basic characteristics of matter, from a Higgs boson up to a super nova and everything in between. Unconditioned space is considered a fifth "element", and consciousness is considered the sixth. The universe is made up, from a Buddhist point of view, only of these six elements. When we say these things are elements, it does not mean they are single substances. When we say consciousness is an element, we mean the aggregates of all consciousness taken together is a component or element of the universe, since the universe contains sentient beings.

lostitude said:

Unconditioned space is not a characteristic of matter, but because of space, matter can form and perish.

So do you mean, maybe, space as a conceptual dimension? Just like time basically?

Malcolm wrote:

Space is not treated as a conceptual dimension.

lostitude said:

Which logic are you referring to? Certainly not the logic of Aristotelian propositions and so forth.

I'm referring to the logic that leads you to say, for example, that it makes no sense to have a causeless cause, or that you can't be one thing and its opposite at the same time. The basic logic you have probably used to start out in buddhism deciding that it made more sense than other paths.

Malcolm wrote:

A, so you are referring to propositional logic. Buddhist logic is anti-Aristotelian, which is why, among other things, it categorically rejects first causation, Aristotle's unmoved mover and so forth, upon which Christian, Islamic and Jewish theology is erected.

lostitute said:

BTW thanks for taking the time to reply. I realise you have nothing to gain from this and I'm the only one learning new stuff here.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, I understand you are trying to get your intellectual bearings in a new field of study, no problem.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, September 2nd, 2015 at 2:02 AM

Title: Re: Why Buddhism over Vedanta?

Content:

rachmiel said:

I'm surprised no one mentioned what I (and others) consider to be the most off-putting aspect of (Advaita) Vedanta: that it asserts (incontrovertibly!) Brahman is the one true absolute reality.

For me, this is a show-stopper. To believe it, thus to be enlightened, requires imo a leap of faith. And, having grown up Catholic, belief/faith are pretty much no-no's for me.

lostitute said:

Don't you believe there are devas you can't see, bodhisattvas you can't see, ghosts you can't see, hell and heavens you can't see, etc. ? Isn't that the same as believing in God and angels and demons and the like? Doesn't it require a leap of faith? In my opinion, as a newcomer, it definitely does. Buddhism comes with such a huge mythological pantheon that could make catholicism blush...

Malcolm wrote:

The difference is — and it is fundamental — from a [Mahāyāna] Buddhist point of view, all of this is predicated on the common and deluded perceptions of sentient beings — in other words, though it seems real, none of it is at all real. It is all just dreams and illusions.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, September 3rd, 2015 at 12:33 AM

Title: Re: knowledge of a bodhisattva and/or stream enterer

Content:

DGA said:

Would a stream enterer or bodhisattva necessarily have direct knowledge of how rebirth works? (as distinct from accepting karma/rebirth as a doctrine, or understanding it doctrinally)

Malcolm wrote:

Yes.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, September 3rd, 2015 at 12:47 AM

Title: Re: knowledge of a bodhisattva and/or stream enterer

Content:

DGA said:

Would a stream enterer or bodhisattva necessarily have direct knowledge of how rebirth works? (as distinct from accepting karma/rebirth as a doctrine, or understanding it doctrinally)

Astus said:

Direct knowledge of how it works on what level? Seeing one's own past lives and the process of rebirth of others' is a matter of possessing the super-knowledges (abhijna) of past lives and the divine eye. Those abilities are not necessarily possessed even by an arhat, while non-buddhists may also have them. On the other hand, because of gaining insight into how the mind works, they know clearly how dependent origination works.

DGA said:

What is the difference between knowing, directly, how dependent origination works as opposed to how rebirth works? (bracketing the siddhi of seeing one's own or any one else's past or future lives)

Malcolm wrote:

None.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, September 3rd, 2015 at 2:25 AM

Title: Re: knowledge of a bodhisattva and/or stream enterer

Content:

DGA said:

Does it follow, then, that someone who does not "get it" with regard to dependent origination / rebirth lacks the characteristics of a first-bhumi bodhisattva or stream enterer?

Malcolm wrote:

Absolutely.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, September 3rd, 2015 at 3:17 AM

Title: Re: Shenphen Dawa Rinpoche on Reading Dzogchen Books

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

I almost posted this myself, but I was afraid I would get in trouble.

Malcolm wrote:

Well, I guess it is up to each person to decide for themselves what they will read and what they will not read. Having said that, I concur that there are many people who get themselves into trouble by reading books for which they do not have the transmission.

There are certain forums where this is blatantly obvious.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, September 3rd, 2015 at 4:12 AM

Title: Re: Shenphen Dawa Rinpoche on Reading Dzogchen Books

Content:

Johnny Dangerous said:

That's interesting, and makes sense. On the other hand, how do you know what and what not to read? I've taken a DI, but feel lost in Dzogchen practices, have other Vajrayana commitments, but find myself relating to the view of Dzogchen. How would I even know what I am supposed to read? Is he talking about reading in general, about seeking out practices one is not qualified for, reading Tantras one isn't supposed to?

Malcolm wrote:

Read what you want, but avoid reading about tögal until you have received tögal instructions.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, September 3rd, 2015 at 4:26 AM

Title: Re: Shenphen Dawa Rinpoche on Reading Dzogchen Books

Content:

Johnny Dangerous said:

That's interesting, and makes sense. On the other hand, how do you know what and what not to read? I've taken a DI, but feel lost in Dzogchen practices, have other Vajrayana commitments, but find myself relating to the view of Dzogchen. How would I even know what I am supposed to read? Is he talking about reading in general, about seeking out practices one is not qualified for, reading Tantras one isn't supposed to?

Malcolm wrote:

Read what you want, but avoid reading about tögal until you have received tögal instructions.

Johnny Dangerous said:

Ah, OK no problem then.

Malcolm wrote:

The caveat is, that it really is better to have the transmission for texts you want to read...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, September 3rd, 2015 at 4:51 AM

Title: Re: Shenphen Dawa Rinpoche on Reading Dzogchen Books

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The caveat is, that it really is better to have the transmission for texts you want to read...

Johnny Dangerous said:

Sure, that's sensible. I've mainly just read general books on Dzogchen view, and basic Trekcho advice, since it seems to be so relevant to Mahamudra meditation. I assume you mean things like practice texts, tantra commentaries, etc?

Malcolm wrote:

It is better to have the transmission for what you want to read. Of course, you can always get the transmission later.

There is little point in buying books on Ngondro and sadhanas apart from the ones you are doing [glances over shoulder at huge library of unused books...]

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, September 3rd, 2015 at 5:42 AM

Title: Re: Shenphen Dawa Rinpoche on Reading Dzogchen Books

Content:

Johnny Dangerous said:

Longchenpa Finding Ease and Comfort trilogy (does that even count as a Dzogchen text?)

Malcolm wrote:

Definitely a Dzogchen text, kind of a Lamrim based on Dzogchen Sem sde.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, September 3rd, 2015 at 8:58 PM

Title: Re: Does Zen result in Buddhahood as described in sutras?

Content:

MiphamFan said:

Buddhas can display all the 6 abhijnas, different powers etc.

Astus said:

"You say, 'A buddha has six supernatural powers. This is miraculous!' All the gods, immortals, asuras, and mighty pretas also have supernatural powers—must they be considered buddhas? Followers of the Way, make no mistake! For instance, when Asura fought against Indra and was routed in battle he led his entire throng, to the number of

eighty-four thousand, into the tube in a fiber of a lotus root to hide. Wasn't he then a sage? Such supernatural powers as these I have just mentioned are all reward powers or dependent powers.

Those are not the six supernatural powers of a buddha, which are entering the world of color yet not being deluded by color; entering the world of sound yet not being deluded by sound; entering the world of odor yet not being deluded by odor; entering the world of taste yet not being deluded by taste; entering the world of touch yet not being deluded by touch; entering the world of dharmas yet not being deluded by dharmas. Therefore, when it is realized that these six—color, sound, odor, taste, touch, and dharmas— are all empty forms, they cannot bind the man of the Way, dependent upon nothing.

Constituted though he is of the seepage of the five skandhas, he has the supernatural power of walking upon the earth."

(Record of Linji, p 20, tr Sasaki)

Malcolm wrote:

The sixth abhijñā is the one that exhausts contaminants. That is unique to āryas.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, September 3rd, 2015 at 9:17 PM

Title: Re: Poll - Meditation with western worldview?

Content:

Pinus said:

spontaneous rig pa

Malcolm wrote:

This does not exist.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, September 3rd, 2015 at 9:19 PM

Title: Re: The Mahayana idea of karma and vegetarianism

Content:

Sara H said:

The Mahayana Sutras are very clear on vegetarianism.

Malcolm wrote:

The Hevajra Tantra, a Mahāyāna Scripture, the teaching of the Buddha, is also very clear:

"Those with compassion eat meat."

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, September 4th, 2015 at 1:24 AM

Title: Re: The Mahayana idea of karma and vegetarianism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The Hevajra Tantra, a Mahāyāna Scripture, the teaching of the Buddha, is also very clear:
"Those with compassion eat meat."

Astus said:

Couldn't find that in either the Snellgrove or the Farrow-Menon translation. Could you give its location please?

Malcolm wrote:

It's there, but concealed.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, September 4th, 2015 at 4:15 AM

Title: Re: The Mahayana idea of karma and vegetarianism

Content:

Sara H said:

The Hevajra Tantra is a Vajrayana text.

Vajrayana Buddhism has its entirely own take on both the Pali cannon, and the Mahayana texts.

It is a third vehicle of Buddhism, entirely in its own right.

Malcolm wrote:

It refers to itself as "Uncommon Mahāyāna." In other words, the motivation is the same, the outline of the path is the same, the five paths and ten stages, and the result is the same, the three kāyas — only the means are different, and therefore, the conduct.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, September 4th, 2015 at 4:39 AM

Title: Re: The Mahayana idea of karma and vegetarianism

Content:

Sara H said:

Yeah, no, this sub-board is not talking about Vajrayana Malcolm.

Malcolm wrote:

Vajrayāna is a part of Mahāyāna, whether you like it or not.

The board and title of the thread does not say, "The Mahāyāna Sūtra idea of karma and vegetarianism."

Unless of course you want to discriminate against those follow Mahāyāna Dharma who also happen to be practitioners of Secret Mantra.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, September 4th, 2015 at 5:25 AM

Title: Re: The Mahayana idea of karma and vegetarianism

Content:

Sara H said:

Uh, no, not really most people do not consider it the same. Including large numbers of Vajrayana practitioners

Malcolm wrote:

Uh huh, yes, really, we do. What other people think is of little import to our identity. We consider ourselves Mahāyanīs.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, September 4th, 2015 at 10:38 AM

Title: Re: POTUS 2016

Content:

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, September 4th, 2015 at 9:09 PM

Title: Re: Anarchist Buddhist teachers, present and past?

Content:

frankc said:

Looking for an introduction to some teachers, present and past, who shine a sort of anti-state, anti-government, anti-authoritarian mind set. Not anti-guru, but more of a political and social rebellious sort of thing. Thanks.

Malcolm wrote:

Real teachers work with circumstances, not ideologies.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, September 4th, 2015 at 9:10 PM

Title: Re: POTUS 2016

Content:

Tenso said:

Trump. He's got the cajones to make a good prez.

Malcolm wrote:

He certainly has more balls than brains.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, September 4th, 2015 at 9:34 PM

Title: Re: POTUS 2016

Content:

Dan74 said:

Trump with Palin as Vice-Pres! Lets drive the meme to its absurd (but hopefully not inevitable) conclusion.

PS This wouldn't be my actual vote, in case the humour doesn't come across, not that I am eligible to vote in the US.

Malcolm wrote:

There is no way Trump will ever win the election.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, September 4th, 2015 at 9:47 PM

Title: Re: POTUS 2016

Content:

Dan74 said:

Trump with Palin as Vice-Pres! Lets drive the meme to its absurd (but hopefully not inevitable) conclusion.

PS This wouldn't be my actual vote, in case the humour doesn't come across, not that I am eligible to vote in the US.

Malcolm wrote:

There is no way Trump will ever win the election.

Dan74 said:

This has been said before, no?

Malcolm wrote:

Let's put it this way — my dad is a conservative albeit moderate Republican. He hates Trump and will never vote for him. Trump is completely alienating the moderate Republicans. They won't vote for him. Trump is appealing to the crazy right wing of American Politics. No one has ever won a Presidency by appealing to the unhinged in the US, contrary to world opinion, they just don't have enough votes compared to blacks, latinos and white women.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, September 4th, 2015 at 10:23 PM

Title: Re: Direct Introduction

Content:

Pinus said:

The other thing is, that Buddhism has found a way to teach about 'emptiness beyond concepts'. That's quite an attainment! Anyone that spontaneously experiences

emptiness or 'shunyata' is typically too perplexed to let it turn into 'direct understanding' (isn't that what you call 'rigpa' in Dzogchen?).

Malcolm wrote:

No.

Pinus said:

But by it's conceptualization it becomes more difficult to elicit. On the other hand, the right knowledge may bring the direct experience about in the recipient if the conditions are good (isn't that what you call 'direct introduction' in Dzogchen?).

Malcolm wrote:

No.

Pinus said:

Do you understand the word Dzogchen more as a generic name of a path, like yoga is a generic term (both of which happen to be about self-liberation, respectively the realization of our true nature or self)?

Malcolm wrote:

No. Dzogchen is not a generic name, it is a specific term that refers both to one's state and a specific path to reach it. Yoga is very far away from the meaning of Dzogchen, and is a path of renunciation, not self-liberation.

Pinus said:

- Do you also take the study into practice ?

Yes, although there doesn't seem to be an essential difference between theory and practice. My experience is, that it's more like two sides of one coin. At least for me, since it were spontaneous experiences that lead me to study emptiness in the first place.

Malcolm wrote:

Find a Dzogchen master.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, September 4th, 2015 at 11:35 PM

Title: Re: POTUS 2016

Content:

David N. Snyder said:

It looks like landslide DW support (so far) for Bernie Sanders. He is too socialist for me, but I do like him on several important things:

Malcolm wrote:

Bernie is about as socialist as FDR. The main difference? FDR was part of the NYC aristocracy, Bernie Sanders dad was a Jewish plumber who emigrated from Poland.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, September 4th, 2015 at 11:36 PM

Title: Re: Anarchist Buddhist teachers, present and past?

Content:

Caodemarte said:

If you are looking that way, check out the Buddhist priests executed by the Japanese for opposing the Empire. There are several anarchist leaning Buddhist thinkers in pre- and post-war Japan.

Going west, Korean monks led the anti-Japanese/anti-Korean gov't uprisings before annexation, but I am not sure if that counts here. The 1980s saw the development of Masses' Buddhism (Minjung Bulkyo) in Korea and there are a couple of English language books about it. It is definitely anti-state, but was so incoherent and poorly thought out that there is little intellectual engagement possible, except as a historical study of the more wide ranging shift of Korean Buddhism to more enagement with civilians.

If memory serves, there are some early 20th Century Chinese Buddhist thinkers who at least flirted with serious engagement with anarchist thought.

This should be enough for you to look these people up if they are of interest to you.

Malcolm wrote:

Anti-state = incoherent and poorly thought out.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, September 4th, 2015 at 11:45 PM

Title: Re: POTUS 2016

Content:

conebeckham said:

Pardon my French, but who the frak voted for Carson?

Srsly?

Malcolm wrote:

The single platform right to life person.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, September 5th, 2015 at 1:44 AM

Title: Re: Poll - Meditation with western worldview?

Content:

pael said:

Sogyal Rinpoche writes in his book (Tibetan book of living and dying) that you can have vision of rigpa when you see lightning.

Malcolm wrote:

Hahahaha.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, September 5th, 2015 at 3:47 AM

Title: Re: POTUS 2016

Content:

Dan74 said:

Trump with Palin as Vice-Pres! Lets drive the meme to its absurd (but hopefully not inevitable) conclusion.

PS This wouldn't be my actual vote, in case the humour doesn't come across, not that I am eligible to vote in the US.

Malcolm wrote:

There is no way Trump will ever win the election.

Kunzang said:

Sure there is. He could run third party/independent splitting the Republican vote thus winning the election for the Dems.

Malcolm wrote:

Well, if Bernie does not win the primary, then I will vote for the Green Party again. So the Dems better well feel the Berne.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, September 5th, 2015 at 4:04 AM

Title: Re: POTUS 2016

Content:

Monlam Tharchin said:

Malcolm, I was surprised when I did an in-depth political questionnaire to find I actually align almost 100% with Green Party policies. I had just assumed I was a Dem, when according to said website I was only some 60% on board with them. I wonder if part of this stupid two-party nonsense in the US is people not really knowing what all the different parties actually support.

Malcolm wrote:

It is a question of getting one of the two major parties to move towards the platform you like.

The cultural conservatives have been very successful at moving the Republicans to the right, now the left is beginning to have some success moving the Democrats back to where they were 40 years ago after the civil rights movement.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, September 5th, 2015 at 9:09 PM

Title: Re: POTUS 2016

Content:

mossy said:

Can't stump the trump.

Malcolm wrote:

Honestly, Trump is a racist loudmouth who will actually cause the world at large more harm than good. Anyone who votes for Trump is an ignorant fool.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, September 5th, 2015 at 9:39 PM

Title: Re: Shenphen Dawa Rinpoche on Reading Dzogchen Books

Content:

tingdzin said:

A sidelight: as a sometime translator, I can affirm that it is really difficult to put Dzogchen into English without distorting it.

Malcolm wrote:

It is not that hard. What is hard is that young translators rely too much on older translations, many of which are unduly contaminated by outside influences.

tingdzin said:

Janet Gyatso said in one of her books that Chatral Rinpoche even thought it was a waste of time to try.

Malcolm wrote:

Good thing ChNN does not feel this way.

tingdzin said:

...books alone just won't do.

Malcolm wrote:

Agreed.

tingdzin said:

Another sidelight: so-called "Dzogchen" is now unfortunately very trendy, but if it is not a part of your own main practice tradition, there is no real reason you should try to study it in depth.

Malcolm wrote:

I don't agree. Everyone should learn Dzogchen. Dzogchen is for anyone who is interested in it, not just Nyingmapas. Nyingmapas do not own Dzogchen.

tingdzin said:

In the end, though, there's nobody looking over your shoulder. As with all Buddhism, you have to be an adult -- you make your own choices and take the karmic consequences. But you might examine the purity of your motives VERY DEEPLY before you discard the traditional guidelines and ignore the traditional warnings.

Malcolm wrote:

If your motive is to wake up as fast as possible, then study Dzogchen.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, September 5th, 2015 at 9:41 PM

Title: Re: POTUS 2016

Content:

mossy said:

Can't stump the trump.

Malcolm wrote:

Honestly, Trump is a racist loudmouth who will actually cause the world at large more harm than good. Anyone who votes for Trump is an ignorant fool.

Dan74 said:

Do you think this last comment helps the situation? The US already appears to be so polarised, throwing grenades at the other side, you just further erode a chance of understanding, a chance of reaching people who for whatever reason are attracted to Trump.

Malcolm wrote:

You mean people like David Duke?:

People who support Trump are an embarrassment. Trump represents the worst qualities of American culture, not the best. People attracted to his message of hatred

and xenophobia are fools.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, September 5th, 2015 at 10:03 PM

Title: Re: POTUS 2016

Content:

Dan74 said:

The messages are no good, but I suspect a great many people who like him, see a self-made successful man, a political outsider, a straight-shooter, etc. None of this may be accurate, and they are glossing over very serious issues with him, I agree, but that's not my point.

I am seeing the loathing and scorn across partisan divides in the US which is neither healthy, nor something we, as aspiring bodhisattvas, should promote, IMO.

Just like you reach out to folks who misunderstand the Dharma and explain matters for the umpteenth time, with the same spirit I think it's good to reach out to people on the other side of the political divide and discuss in good faith, in a language they understand, in order to bridge the gulf and to educate.

Don't you think so?

/

Malcolm wrote:

Explaining to someone they are a fool for supporting a loudmouth racist hate monger is pretty understandable language, no? Or is Neville Chamberlain someone we should regard as a role model in such discussions?

I can understand your desire for harmony, but if Trump were elected, you and everyone else in the world will be really sorry.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, September 5th, 2015 at 10:58 PM

Title: Re: POTUS 2016

Content:

Dan74 said:

Appeasement? Are we already at the reductio ad Hitlerum stage?

Yes, I'd be very sorry if he was elected and like you I am really happy Bernie Sanders's ideas are getting some serious exposure. I hope he goes further than anybody expects.

But one of the matters that is profoundly wrong in the political discourse in the US, the way I see it, is actual absence of such. People get hot under the collar if you even mention the candidate they don't like, it is so black-and-white (no pun intended this

time). There is a wide-spread inability to even try to even countenance the other point of view and this dogmatism and polarisation is a very serious issue, IMO.

Malcolm wrote:

Australia is a Parliamentary system, like Canada, no? So you don't vote directly for your prime minister. For us, the stakes are a bit higher.

Dan74 said:

I mean here we are preaching to the choir. But out there on the streets, in your neighbourhood, there are probably some decent folk who look at what you and I look at and see a very different picture. They should be reached. Otherwise the progressives are repeating the mistake that is going to consign them to irrelevance - elitism.

Malcolm wrote:

As I pointed out above, in general also the Republicans are pretty horrified by Trump.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, September 5th, 2015 at 11:07 PM

Title: Re: Shenphen Dawa Rinpoche on Reading Dzogchen Books

Content:

MalaBeads said:

Most likely, everyone will agree that dzogchen is not found in books. And also that dzogchen is not discovered by studying. That is not to say that studying is not useful, it is useful, but it is not dzogchen.

I for one am quite glad that my first introduction to dzogchen was before I had ever read anything at all about it. Perhaps the time for a complete novice to be introduced to dzogchen is passed, I don't know. I would hope not though. It is quite helpful to know nothing at all about dzogchen before you encounter it. Quite difficult nowadays but maybe not impossible.

Anyhow, just thought I would throw my two cents into the discussion.

Bye.

Malcolm wrote:

I read Crystal and the Way of Light when I was 25: it is amusing that I was really puzzled by the idea of self-liberation because I had been reading Mahāyāna, which I thought meant that one was to attain buddhahood for everyone. I thought it was a super interesting book though, but in the meantime somehow I was bullied into thinking I had to do ngondro and so on by the local Kagyus and Sakyas, so I started out in a traditional way. When I was 26, before meeting Sakya Trizin, I had a very interesting dream about ChNN. Still, I wound up in Sakya because I was interested in Hevajra. Then in 1992, I met ChNN.

Really glad I read Crystal though even though I had not a clue what it meant at the time.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, September 6th, 2015 at 1:17 AM

Title: Re: Shenphen Dawa Rinpoche on Reading Dzogchen Books

Content:

MalaBeads said:

Most likely, everyone will agree that dzogchen is not found in books. And also that dzogchen is not discovered by studying. That is not to say that studying is not useful, it is useful, but it is not dzogchen.

I for one am quite glad that my first introduction to dzogchen was before I had ever read anything at all about it. Perhaps the time for a complete novice to be introduced to dzogchen is passed, I don't know. I would hope not though. It is quite helpful to know nothing at all about dzogchen before you encounter it. Quite difficult nowadays but maybe not impossible.

Anyhow, just thought I would throw my two cents into the discussion.

Bye.

Malcolm wrote:

I read Crystal and the Way of Light when I was 25: it is amusing that I was really puzzled by the idea of self-liberation because I had been reading Mahāyāna, which I thought meant that one was to attain buddhahood for everyone. I thought it was a super interesting book though, but in the meantime somehow I was bullied into thinking I had to do ngondro and so on by the local Kagyus and Sakyas, so I started out in a traditional way. When I was 26, before meeting Sakya Trizin, I had a very interesting dream about ChNN. Still, I wound up in Sakya because I was interested in Hevajra. Then in 1992, I met ChNN.

Really glad I read Crystal though even though I had not a clue what it meant at the time.

MalaBeads said:

Do you think SDR is talking about Crystal and the Way of Light? I have no idea what he is referring to. In any case, I am re-reading that one, I'm sure I didn't understand it when I first read it. But that was a long time ago. Maybe I'll understand more this time.

Malcolm wrote:

Most Nyingmapas were super offended by Crystal when it came out.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, September 6th, 2015 at 1:19 AM

Title: Re: Shenphen Dawa Rinpoche on Reading Dzogchen Books

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

... but in the meantime somehow I was bullied into thinking I had to do ngondro and so on by the local Kagyus and Sakyas ...

dzogchungpa said:

It's kind of hard to imagine someone bullying you into thinking something.

Malcolm wrote:

I was young, and had no contacts with Buddhists outside Vajradhātu and the local Sakya center, until I met HHST.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, September 6th, 2015 at 1:23 AM

Title: Re: Turiya

Content:

Matt J said:

But as for the first, I think it is hard to correlate "being" with "emptiness" since they are opposites.

monktastic said:

Just to stir the pot a little: "form" and "emptiness" are also seeming opposites.

Malcolm wrote:

Having totally abandoned matter, signs and aspirations,
and also meditating on the three doors of liberation is the activity of Māra — matter is empty.

-- Mañjuśrīmitra

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, September 6th, 2015 at 1:30 AM

Title: Re: POTUS 2016

Content:

Dan74 said:

The messages are no good, but I suspect a great many people who like him, are not david dukes, but pretty ordinary folks who see a self-made successful man, a political outsider, a straight-shooter, etc.

David N. Snyder said:

He's not entirely a self-made man. He worked in his father's real estate development company, later working on his own. Bad business decisions left him bankrupt. He received some money from his father, I think around \$2 million and then made that into about the \$5 billion he has now. He referred to the \$2 million from his father as something "small". Perhaps small compared to what he has now, but certainly an amount 99% of us never have seen or received.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, he was totally born with a silver spoon in his mouth. Not a self-made man, by any stretch of the imagination.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, September 6th, 2015 at 1:34 AM

Title: Re: Shenphen Dawa Rinpoche on Reading Dzogchen Books

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

What advice do you wish you had been given, if you don't mind my asking?

Malcolm wrote:

I wish someone had said to me in 1987, "You should go meet Norbu."

Instead I heard lots of negative things from Vajradhātu people, etc.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, September 6th, 2015 at 3:07 AM

Title: Re: Direct Introduction

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Find a Dzogchen master.

Pinus said:

Thanks for your recommendation. I'm not sure if I am at that point yet. But anyway, do you mind me asking who your Dzogchen master is?

Malcolm wrote:

Several, but principally Chogyal Namkhai Norbu and the late Kunzang Dechen Lingpa.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, September 6th, 2015 at 4:25 AM

Title: Re: Direct Introduction

Content:

Pinus said:

Thanks for sharing, Malcolm.

Both teachers have my respect and gratitude for bringing their teaching to the West. I read some of Chogyal Namkhai Norbu's works a while ago, from his remarkably extensive bibliography. Too bad Kunzang Dechen Lingpa passed on already. Luckily Norbu is still around, isn't he? Norbu spoke quite freely about the teachings as far as I remember, which I found very refreshing, although learning from books is not really all

too instructive - especially for a Dzogchen newb like me. Maybe I get a chance to meet him sometime.

Did you get a chance to receive a direct introduction from him? Or how does he work?

Malcolm wrote:

Well, there are many web casts, free. He always gives transmission during these. Depending on your circumstances however, it is good to go see him in person and meet with many fellow students. Practicing with others in the beginning is important. So contacting your local gar is an important first step.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, September 6th, 2015 at 5:18 AM

Title: Re: Early survey usa poll

Content:

Nicholas Weeks said:

<http://www.surveyusa.com/client/PollReport.aspx?g=d950cadf-05ce-4148-a125-35c0cdab26c6>

Malcolm wrote:

Pretty narrow sample...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, September 6th, 2015 at 5:48 AM

Title: Re: POTUS 2016

Content:

Nicholas Weeks said:

You will almost never find a major political poll sample bigger than 1500 folks... so deal with it.

Malcolm wrote:

You voting for Trump, NW? If so, well you know what I think of people who would vote for him.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, September 6th, 2015 at 10:17 PM

Title: Re: POTUS 2016

Content:

mossy said:

Yeah, I find it extremely hard to talk to progressives and Democrats now, online is even worse. Everyone alwase jumps to racism, guess what.....I am black.....well half black half Italian.....still I am a healthy tan complexion and no way look white. So not a racist

old white guy here.

.....

Malcolm wrote:

Racism isn't owned by white people — there are plenty of Blacks, Latinos, Jews, Asians and so on who are racists.

And I did not say that anyone who voted for Trump was a racist; I said he was a racist and that anyone who voted for him was a fool. I still stand by that assessment, as harsh as it seems.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, September 6th, 2015 at 10:23 PM

Title: Re: POTUS 2016

Content:

Nicholas Weeks said:

And if Trump should get the nomination, which he will not, then yes - any Republican over any Democrat.

Malcolm wrote:

That is very flexible thinking...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, September 6th, 2015 at 10:42 PM

Title: Re: POTUS 2016

Content:

Dan74 said:

Yeah, I find it extremely hard to talk to progressives and Democrats now, online is even worse. Everyone always jumps to racism, guess what.....I am black.....well half black half Italian.....still I am a healthy tan complexion and no way look white. So not a racist old white guy here.

.....

Mossy, I don't know if you'd be willing to do this, but I'd be really interested to know what attracts you to Trump over the other candidates.

/

Malcolm wrote:

Not replying for our friend Mossy here, but black voters are likely to respond positively to xenophobia aimed at Latinos:

African Americans have long been receptive to the anti-immigrant concepts behind Trump's campaign. Simply put, the jobs, housing and other opportunities that

immigrants take come largely at the expense of blacks who were born in the United States.

https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/donald-trump-doesnt-need-latino-voters-to-win-the-nomination/2015/09/04/9fd2e40c-524f-11e5-933e-7d06c647a395_story.html

According to this writer, Trump needs to convince a majority of black voters to abandon the Democratic Party for him. Not likely, considering the history of the Republican Party since the majority of Southern Democrats abandoned the Democratic party over abortion and other issues...

The other thing, which is really clear, is that we do not have an "immigration problem." This is just a fantasy concocted by Trump to create media hysteria and whip up the Tea Party folks into a xenophobic frenzy.

Required reading:

<http://www.nytimes.com/roomfordebate/2015/09/03/is-immigration-really-a-problem-in-the-us/as-an-undocumented-alien-first-generation-college-grad-i-am-a-problem>

The so-called illegal immigration problem was entirely caused by US interference in Latin American countries, the war on drugs, NAFTA, etc.

Illegal immigrants are not here to steal your job, rape your wife or daughter, etc. Illegal immigrants are not responsible for the heroin epidemic sweeping the US. Why? Well, the junkies are right here, they are your neighbors, US citizens with a drug problem, often created by prescriptions for painkillers.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, September 6th, 2015 at 10:53 PM

Title: Re: Direct Introduction

Content:

Pinus said:

@Malcolm: thank you. What would we do without youtube?!

Malcolm wrote:

Webcast must be attended live...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, September 7th, 2015 at 1:55 AM

Title: Re: Direct Introduction

Content:

Pinus said:

@Malcolm:

for technical reasons alone?

Malcolm wrote:

Because in order to receive direct introduction you must participate in the introduction with a live master, so you are both in that same state together. A recording is not a living being. It has no mind, therefore, you cannot share the state of the master.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, September 7th, 2015 at 10:21 PM

Title: Re: POTUS 2016

Content:

Dan74 said:

Regarding media and internet exposure of Sanders vs Trump, just snapped these now:

I wonder what it's like on the tellie?

Malcolm wrote:

No idea, but this is instructive:

<http://publiceditor.blogs.nytimes.com/2015/09/04/looking-ahead-evaluating-bernie-sanders-coverage-in-the-times/>

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, September 8th, 2015 at 1:57 AM

Title: Re: POTUS 2016

Content:

Unknown said:

Bernie Sanders has jumped out to a nine-point lead over front-runner Hillary Clinton in New Hampshire, and he's gained ground on her among Iowa voters in the Democratic presidential race, according to a pair of brand-new NBC News/Marist polls.

Malcolm wrote:

<http://www.nbcnews.com/meet-the-press/bernie-sanders-leads-hillary-clinton-9-n-h-gains-iowa-n422111>

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, September 8th, 2015 at 2:16 AM

Title: Re: Dzogchen Community of Chogyal Namkhai Norbu

Content:

swooping said:

The more general question (group of questions) has to do with semde, longde and upadesha and the rushens and semdzins. I understand that the four yogas of semde are associated with the first statement of Garab Dorje and the Longde series refers to the

second statement; I believe that means that trekchod and thogal are related to the third.

Malcolm wrote:

The first statement refers to the basis, the second statement refers to the path and the third statement refers to the result.

swooping said:

How do the Rushens and Semdzins fit into the above, if at all? Are the Rushens for experiencing and the semdzins for not remaining in doubt? Also, are the rushens, semdzins, four yogas and longde something that is generally continued for a lifetime, or until liberation, or are they practiced until getting to a certain place (I know that doesn't sound "non-gradual," but I hope you know what I mean) and then left behind?

Malcolm wrote:

Rushan, Semzin, four yogas, Longde, etc., are all connected with the second statement.

swooping said:

For example would it be inappropriate to do the seven line prayer to Padmasambhava followed by his guru yoga in the short thun,

Malcolm wrote:

This is the long thun yoga.

swooping said:

or is only using Garab Dorja and the three A's appropriate?

Malcolm wrote:

This is the short thun guru yoga. There is also a medium thun Guru Yoga. There is also Ati Guru Yoga.

swooping said:

Is there a place in the short thun where it would be appropriate to practice a rushed or semdzin meditation?

Malcolm wrote:

After the Dogpa, and before the mantra of authentication.

Or, do Ati Guru Yoga and directly enter those practices.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, September 8th, 2015 at 3:31 AM

Title: Re: Direct Introduction

Content:

fckw said:

If I may add a one or two questions here: I still don't really understand how the

organization works.

1. Assuming I'd like to receive Dzogchen teaching.

a. Are these given in retreat or through webcast or both?

b. What are the preliminaries (besides becoming member of the organization)? None, specific Dzogchen rushen, ngöndro or others?

2. Assuming I'd like to receive tantric teachings.

a. Are these given also in webcasts or only in retreat?

b. What are the preliminaries? Nöndro?

Malcolm wrote:

1.a Teachings are given during retreats, most retreats are webcast.

1.b Norbu Rinpoche recommends that people do the special Dzogchen preliminaries after receiving transmission. Whether you do or not is up to you.

2.a Depends on what you mean by tantric, but in general, yes, many tantric teachings are giving during retreats, creation, completion and so on. There are many books and and so on you can obtain for the various cycles that ChNN teaches.

2.b None, apart from a sincere interest in the teachings. If you want to Ngondro, fine, if not, also fine. It is up to you and your understanding of what you need. ChNN only gives one "mandatory" practice: Ati Guru Yoga, mindfulness and working with circumstances.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, September 8th, 2015 at 5:03 AM

Title: Re: Dzogchen Community of Chogyal Namkhai Norbu

Content:

swooping said:

Right, but the the long thun has a lot of work with the guardians that I have not learned yet. Can it be done without the longer guardian work?

Malcolm wrote:

You can the guru yoga of the long thun without the extensive invocations.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, September 8th, 2015 at 9:43 AM

Title: Re: POTUS 2016

Content:

Karma Dorje said:

I am totally voting for Trump if he makes it to the general election. If you really believe that countries get the leaders they deserve, there is simply no other choice.

Malcolm wrote:

Well, the only problem with that is when you vote for the US Prez, you are voting for the a person who can really render harm to the world at large, so somehow your cynical policy leaves a lot to be desired.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, September 8th, 2015 at 9:44 AM

Title: Re: Questions about Dzogchen Teachings

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

1.b Norbu Rinpoche recommends that people do the special Dzogchen preliminaries after receiving transmission. Whether you do or not is up to you.

swooping said:

Are these the Rushen?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, and semzin.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, September 8th, 2015 at 9:47 AM

Title: Re: Questions about Dzogchen Teachings

Content:

fckw said:

Ok, thanks for answering. Does this essentially mean that there exists a recommended practice path, but no mandatory one, and it is my own responsibility to not jump ahead of what I'm actually capable to do, although I might have received the teachings already during a retreat?

Malcolm wrote:

The practice path begins with receiving direct introduction, and then working to stabilize that recognition within oneself. There are many different approaches to this from learning Vajra Dance to Yantra Yoga, doing the special Dzogchen preliminaries and so on — no single approach suits everyone, but in general everyone tries a bit of all of it until they figure out what is working for them.

But at base, the main emphasis is on Ati Guru Yoga.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, September 8th, 2015 at 9:58 AM

Title: Re: POTUS 2016

Content:

Karma Dorje said:

I am totally voting for Trump if he makes it to the general election. If you really believe that countries get the leaders they deserve, there is simply no other choice.

Malcolm wrote:

Well, the only problem with that is when you vote for the US Prez, you are voting for the a person who can really render harm to the world at large, so somehow your cynical policy leaves a lot to be desired.

Karma Dorje said:

Come on Malcolm, get over yourself. If voting could change the system it would have been made illegal a long time ago.

It's not cynical, I am merely voting for the greater entertainment value. Four more great years of the Daily Show and Last Week Tonight. Besides, I am long razor wire and chain link fence.

Malcolm wrote:

It is because people give into cynicism that racist demagogues like Trump get elected to begin with. But hey, if war is what you like, voting for a guy like Trump is just going to get you a war.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, September 8th, 2015 at 11:34 AM

Title: Re: POTUS 2016

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

It is because people give into cynicism that racist demagogues like Trump get elected to begin with. But hey, if war is what you like, voting for a guy like Trump is just going to get you a war.

Karma Dorje said:

Firstly, I never *give in* to cynicism. It takes a good deal of work and constant vigilance. In case you haven't noticed, voting for *anyone* in the US gets you a war. It's what you guys do. Other countries may make stuff or deliver services, you guys bomb brown people. Didn't Carlin establish that a decade ago?

Malcolm wrote:

I can understand your antipathy towards US foreign policy, but what I cannot understand is your apparent hatred for Americans which causes you to say things like, "If you really believe that countries get the leaders they deserve, there is simply no other choice."

And apparently, you are satisfied with what you perceive to be the status quo and so you sit on the sidelines and jeer, apparently hoping for more destructive policies and actions,

even when such sentiments are counterproductive to the ends that you want. Or are you so cynical that you do not believe that the US can evolve from its present destructive courses of action? Basically, having a reasonable leadership in the US is in everyone's best interest, I would hope that you would not be encouraging the international rise of political demagoguery, and I would imagine that you do not fail to see that having a person like Trump in power will inevitably lead to further chaos and destruction, mostly of other countries. In this case, it seems, if the US is getting the leaders it deserves, those leaders just keep wreaking havoc on others. Unfortunately, we did not get it right with Obama. Hopefully, with someone like Sanders we would get it right, because the Democrats and Republicans are deeply out of touch with reality and the rest of the world, for the most part.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, September 8th, 2015 at 9:16 PM

Title: Re: POTUS 2016

Content:

mossy said:

i have alwase been a conservative. i like small government/ personal responsibility

Malcolm wrote:

Under Republican administrations, the size of the Gvt. always increases. The only time the size of the Gvt. decreased in recent history was under Bill Clinton, who also balanced the budget. The Bush II ruined all of that, along with the economy, stripped us of our civil liberties, used 9/11 as a pretext to punish Hussein, etc.

Nevertheless, small government does not necessarily equal good government, nor to a large government necessarily equal bad government. These categories are too simplistic.

mossy said:

and liberty over the larger more controlling government supported by the democratic party.

Malcolm wrote:

Both parties are parties of "big government."

mossy said:

this new popularity serge of non-politicians in the republican party is the result of our disappointment in the republican politicians. we are sick of voting in people who say what we want to hear but never act on their words.

Malcolm wrote:

Well, frequently, Republicans run on an irresponsible platform of unrealistic tax cuts

and promises to "reduce the Gvt.", but when they get into office they have to deal with the Gvt. as it actually is, not with how they fantasize it should be run.

mossy said:

trump is educated and runs has done business all over the world and he is not taking bribes from special interest groups. voting for trump (or other non politicians) sends a powerful message to the republican establishment that they cant keep running the same game on us.

Malcolm wrote:

Trump is educated, even though he talks and behaves like a dumbass — but he thinks nothing of letting his companies go bankrupt. He has filed bankruptcy four times in eighteen years, that is an average of one bankruptcy every 4.5 years. How is this good business? If anything, this just proves that wealthy people in this country are treated differently than the little guy, just as white kids are treated differently than black kids when it comes to be being busted for possession of marijuana:

But Trump's multiple spells in bankruptcy court, and the little effect they have played on his abundant wealth, highlights the stiff gap between how businesses and consumers are treated amid financial strife. The Trump businesses, as with many companies, were afforded significant leeway in the hope they could recoup those massive debts.

http://www.washingtonpost.com/business/economy/what-trump-didnt-say-about-his-four-big-business-bankruptcies/2015/08/07/bc054e64-3d12-11e5-9c2d-ed991d848c48_story.html

Also, Trump is not a "conservative". He was a registered Democrat from 2001 to 2008. He said to CNN:

Before Donald Trump was a front-running Republican presidential candidate, the real estate mogul believed that the nation's economy ran better when Democrats were in control and that Hillary Clinton would be a strong negotiator with foreign nations.

"In many cases, I probably identify more as Democrat," Trump told CNN's Wolf Blitzer in a 2004 interview. "It just seems that the economy does better under the Democrats than the Republicans. Now, it shouldn't be that way. But if you go back, I mean it just seems that the economy does better under the Democrats. ...But certainly we had some very good economies under Democrats, as well as Republicans. But we've had some pretty bad disaster under the Republicans."

<http://www.cnn.com/2015/07/21/politics/donald-trump-election-democrat/>

But because he is a racist dipshit, as soon as Obama got elected, he seized on the birther conspiracy — which automatically proves he is insane.

mossy said:

as for the democrats voting in this election, please don't vote for Hillary. she is the most dangerous candidate running. even though i don't agree with Bernie sanders and would not vote for him myself, i will admit he is a lot better than Hillary.

Malcolm wrote:

I am not a Democrat — I am voting for Sanders because he is the only honest guy in the race who has a chance.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, September 8th, 2015 at 9:31 PM

Title: Re: POTUS 2016

Content:

BrianG said:

America is in it's 14th year of continuous warfare, which both Bernie Sanders and Donald Trump supports. They are both in favor of combating ISIS, both in favor of continued bombing in the middle east, the differences are very minor.

Malcolm wrote:

Brian:

Sanders has consistently voted against the war in Iraq.

He is not in favor of the US unilaterally warring against ISIS. He feels that they are threat, certainly, but that the Saudis need to step up and that the US should play more of supporting role, while Turkey and the Saudis deal with this. Iran is already involved.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, September 8th, 2015 at 9:35 PM

Title: Re: Questions about Dzogchen Teachings

Content:

fckw said:

I'm actually contemplating of giving it a try for some time already. Not that I strictly need more instructions (well, there's always room left for learning more though...). But I'd love to hear the same teachings I already got from a different angle. I often judge a teacher by the number of high-quality students s/he produces. And from what I've observed so far ChNN is quite extraordinary.

Just one more question: In another thread it was mentioned that ChNN on the last day of a retreat gave out

<https://www.dharmawheel.net/viewtopic.php?f=48&t=4052&start=3480#p285843>.

How do I have to interpret this? Reading through this list it'd be impossible to practice all these things. At the same time, there are for example individual mantras listed, which in my eyes are quite useless without having a complete instruction set. So, how do I have to understand this? What if someone would like to have a complete instruction set for something like, let's say, Simhamukha and not just a single mantra?

Malcolm wrote:

Right, these are all secondary practices — so if there is something that you find interesting, you can purchase the book and if need be the, the cd/dvd whatever.

He gives all these transmissions in case one needs them at some time.

In the beginning though, learning the thuns and the Ganapujas are quite enough for secondary practices.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, September 8th, 2015 at 10:18 PM

Title: Re: The Future of World Religions: Population Growth Project

Content:

seeker242 said:

Do you think the fact that there is essentially no religious freedom in China has some type of effect on this?

Indrajala said:

You can openly practice religion in China provided it doesn't antagonize or threaten the state. I think a lot of westerners have a distorted image of China still being something similar to what existed under Mao, but it really isn't like that at all.

Malcolm wrote:

Unless you are a Tibetan. In which case you have no passport, and are not allowed to travel.

Indrajala said:

Religious activities and organizations deemed threatening to the state or society are restricted, but the average Buddhist temple or Christian church is of no consequence and in fact the local government might even pay for it.

Malcolm wrote:

This is not true.

Indrajala said:

For the Beijing pastor, this anti-Christian campaign is part of a stated objective by the new leadership to promote Chinese cultural traditions such as Confucianism and Buddhism. It is no coincidence that much media attention was devoted to Xi's visit to Confucius's birthplace in February. On that occasion, according to the Chinese news agency Xinhua, Xi called for the propagation of a nationwide "ethical doctrine" with "fundamental socialist values" based on "traditional Chinese culture". According to pastor Joy, among themselves party members often use the pejorative expression yang jiao to designate Christianity. It translates as "foreign teaching".

Malcolm wrote:

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/jul/05/china-christianity-wenzhou-zhejiang-churches>

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, September 8th, 2015 at 11:03 PM

Title: Re: Shenphen Dawa Rinpoche on Reading Dzogchen Books

Content:

MalaBeads said:

Do you think SDR is talking about Crystal and the Way of Light? I have no idea what he is referring to. In any case, i am re-reading that one, im sure I didn't understand it when I first read it. But that was a long time ago. Maybe I'll understand more this time.

Malcolm wrote:

Most Nyingmapas were super offended by Crystal when it came out.

DGA said:

By "most Nyingmapas," do you mean lamas? ordinary folk? anyone go on the record about it? Has the mood changed since then?

Malcolm wrote:

Lamas.

Not really. As for on the record, well, it is all hearsay at this point.

Now that ChNN has many students, well, Tibetans are hesitant to criticize success, but there is still a lot of discomfort with his approach.

Basically, the difference between a real teacher of Dzogchen and someone who only teaches Dzogchen as a theory is that real teachers of Dzogchen teach Dzogchen as the basis. Others teach it as a result of a path, like Mahāmudra. In a real sense, when Dzogchen is taught as the apex of the nine yānas for example, this is merely to contrast Dzogchen with the eight vehicles of cause and result.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, September 8th, 2015 at 11:18 PM

Title: Re: POTUS 2016

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Brian:

Sanders has consistently voted against the war in Iraq.

He is not in favor of the US unilaterally warring against ISIS. He feels that they are a threat, certainly, but that the Saudis need to step up and that the US should play more of a supporting role, while Turkey and the Saudis deal with this. Iran is already involved.

BrianG said:

I would prefer it if America quit its' war addiction cold turkey, however, I suppose that is not possible.

I am extremely skeptical that an anti-plutocrat is going to be very effective, even if he wins. How would he get the support of a completely bought congress?

The fact that he is not suffering from Ron Paul style media snubbing however, is very promising, and unexpected. A self-proclaimed socialist doing as well as him in the polls is also unprecedented as far as I know, and he is starting to move ahead of Hillary.

An ineffective socialist in the presidency is the best option available, and I agree with most of Sanders views, so the least hypocritical option would be to vote for him. But I think America requires much more than a change in the presidency.

Malcolm wrote:

Bernie is not an ineffective "socialist." He is not a "socialist," he is actually a Keynesian. All of the so-called social democracies that he admires run on more or less Keynesian lines. Just like FDR's New Deal.

He is a very effective legislator, actually. Bernie actually gets stuff done.

You have to understand that the history of American Politics since the New Deal involves a concerted effort by the business class in America to destroy it. Most people have forgotten that America's economy was strongest when taxes on personal income over 250,000 was at its highest. This forced CEO's to shovel profits back into their businesses. \$250,000 in 1955 is \$2,226,250 in today's dollars. If someone cannot be content on a 2 million dollar a year salary, they have a greed problem.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, September 9th, 2015 at 12:38 AM

Title: Re: POTUS 2016

Content:

Clarence said:

Well, if America collapses the vacuum will be filled by either Russia or China. I know I still prefer the US over those two.

BrianG said:

Chinese domestic policy is disgusting, but it's "soft power" foreign policy, of buying countries instead of bombing them, is humane relative to America's "hard power" foreign policy. Of course, China exploits and screws over the countries it buys, but that's better than being bombed by robots.

Malcolm wrote:

Dude, this is completely false, it is just that China at this point has confined itself to bombing nations "within" its borders. You know, like Tibet.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, September 9th, 2015 at 2:01 AM

Title: Re: ChNN practice from a dream

Content:

passel said:

I doubt ChNN teaches anything like this, but just curious if it resembles anything he teaches?

Malcolm wrote:

Nope.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, September 9th, 2015 at 3:18 AM

Title: Re: Questions about Dzogchen Teachings

Content:

chimechodra said:

I guess my real question is, what's the difference between a person simply watching a DC webcast, buying some books and trying to do these really advanced practices in their home, and say some rank beginner buying a restricted text and trying to do some of the complex practices on their own, outside of the fact that the former person received khrid-lungs and DI in order to properly be empowered to work through these practices? Lots of masters and traditional texts say that you should have a close personal relationship with a guru, proper guidance and personal instruction, and whatnot, but since ChNN is constantly travelling it seems very difficult to receive these, so all you're left is with a bunch of books with complex practices to try on your own. They say you can never learn Dzogchen from books, but working with the materials from that retreat, it basically feels like I'm trying to learn Dzogchen from books... It's rather overwhelming.

Malcolm wrote:

I suggest you contact an SMS teacher through Tsegylgar.

ChNN teaches in such a way that the "personal guidance" thing is not really so necessary. However, if you have a pressing practice question, you can always email him.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, September 9th, 2015 at 4:01 AM

Title: Re: POTUS 2016

Content:

BrianG said:

China is not bombing Tibetan women and children with robots, and I already stated that it's domestic policy is disgusting. I'm not sure which part of this strikes you as false.

Malcolm wrote:

Well, one, the US is not bombing "countries" anymore. It is using drones [of which I disapprove incidentally] to target non-State actors who are targeting US assets in terrorist plots.

There are problems with US policy, such as the idea that we are at war with terrorists, and such policies need to be changed. It is insane to be at war against an enemy that is so poorly defined, and there is too much room for abuse.

But the reality of the situation is this — Britain and the EU, the Saudis and so on are using the US as a proxy to to control terrorist organizations that are harmful to them. Basically the capitalist European North, while making disapproving noises in some sectors, tacitly, and in many cases explicitly, approve of US military actions. that is just how it is.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, September 9th, 2015 at 4:03 AM

Title: Re: Questions about Dzogchen Teachings

Content:

Karma Dondrup Tashi said:

It's a little disheartening sometimes when gurus jet in for the empowerment then jet out to the next one.

Malcolm wrote:

One of the things that ChNN said in the first retreat I ever attended with him is that a Dzogchen Guru's job is to make you independent from them. This is a very different message from the standard guru idea in Tibetan Buddhism.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, September 9th, 2015 at 4:06 AM

Title: Re: Buddhism loses all purpose if you don't believe in reinc

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

"If one is attached to this life, one is not a Dharma practitioner."

If your goal is to simply end suffering in this lifetime, you are not a Dharma practitioner.

lostitute said:

But why do you assume that trying to solve the issue of suffering in this life implies being

attached to this life? To me it's like saying, trying to become a bodhisattva in this life is being attached to it...

Malcolm wrote:

Meaning, if you are only focused on happiness for this life, you are not a Dharma practitioner.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, September 9th, 2015 at 5:00 AM

Title: Re: Buddhism loses all purpose if you don't believe in reinc

Content:

lostitude said:

Anders was talking about solving the issue of suffering, which is very different from being 'only focused on happiness for this life' which in turn is quite different from 'being attached to this life' as I understand it in English.

Malcolm wrote:

No, more or less it is the same thing. Absence of suffering is happiness — you may wish to contest this definition, but this is pretty much how happiness is defined by Buddhadharma.

Eliminating suffering in this life is palliative, it does not address the root issue, the three afflictions that cause rebirth in the three realms along with their cause, self-grasping.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, September 9th, 2015 at 5:29 AM

Title: Re: Buddhism loses all purpose if you don't believe in reinc

Content:

lostitude said:

Anders was talking about solving the issue of suffering, which is very different from being 'only focused on happiness for this life' which in turn is quite different from 'being attached to this life' as I understand it in English.

Malcolm wrote:

No, more or less it is the same thing. Absence of suffering is happiness — you may wish to contest this definition, but this is pretty much how happiness is defined by Buddhadharma.

lostitude said:

Sure but you just wrote something completely different when you compared absence of suffering to 'being only focused on happiness in this life' and 'being attached to this life'. For starters I can't see how you can be truly happy if you are attached to this life which you know is bound to end. There can't be true happiness without detachment in this regard. So your quote can't possibly apply to someone who wants to end suffering, even in this life...

I'm saying this because of that quote you mentioned, which, as you are using it, is supposed to disqualify those who strive to eliminate suffering in this life from being true dharma practitioners. It may be the case at the end of the day that they are not true dharma practitioners as you say, who am I to judge, but that's not what your quote says, as I read it at least, so I wonder why you came up with it there.

Malcolm wrote:

If you are attached to this life, you try to eliminate problems, suffering, in your life thinking of only this life.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, September 9th, 2015 at 9:41 AM

Title: Re: POTUS 2016

Content:

BrianG said:

China is not bombing Tibetan women and children with robots, and I already stated that it's domestic policy is disgusting. I'm not sure which part of this strikes you as false.

Malcolm wrote:

Well, one, the US is not bombing "countries" anymore. It is using drones [of which I disapprove incidentally] to target non-State actors who are targeting US assets in terrorist plots.

Karma Dorje said:

Yes, like he said: Bombing women and children with robots. You guys may not have invented English, but you sure are good at euphemisms!

Malcolm wrote:

Ummm....they are also killing women and children with bombs — it really doesn't matter whether your delivery system is a drone or a suicide bomber, the result is identical. I don't approve of either. These terrorists, aka non-State actors, are not in a position of moral superiority to the US.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, September 9th, 2015 at 10:09 PM

Title: Re: Buddhism loses all purpose if you don't believe in reinc

Content:

lostitude said:

Besides the remarks I've already made, I really can't see how it would make a practical difference whether you believe in rebirth or not. At the end of a day, in either case you are practising NOW, in THIS life and you are trying to end suffering starting here and now.

Not in a million lifetimes from now. Some even want to reach liberation in one lifetime. And that's one more reason why I think the quote was misused. If someone doesn't believe in rebirth, he could well be inclined to seek nirvana in this very life even if it is the only one. If it's not ok to go through samsara for eons, then it's not ok to go through it even for a lifetime, and as little as I have read so far, I know this is something the Buddha has said himself. Even a second of samsara is not worth living. So I really don't see why such a perspective of practice should be frowned upon or disparaged in such a way. The goal is the same and the means to achieve it are the same.

Malcolm wrote:

You need to read the entire teachings:

If you have attachment to this life, you are not a Dharma practitioner.

If you have attachment to samsara, you do not have renunciation.

If you have attachment to your own purpose, you do not have bodhicitta.

If you have grasping, you do not have the view.

This means if you are only working for this life's happiness and freedom from suffering, you are not a Dharma practitioner. If you are practicing Dharma for higher rebirth only, you do not have renunciation. If you are only interested in your own liberation, you do not have bodhicitta, the motivation to become Buddha for the benefit of everyone. If you have grasping [to the view of self, etc.], you do not have the view.

The fact is that someone who does not accept rebirth automatically has wrong views and thus will not even be capable of stream entry. They will not understand why they are suffering and therefore, will not be capable of removing the cause of their suffering, just as a doctor who does not properly diagnose the cause of an illness will not be able to apply the proper treatment for that illness.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, September 9th, 2015 at 10:17 PM

Title: Re: POTUS 2016

Content:

BrianG said:

The U.S. has nineteen aircraft carriers, compared to China's single used Russian aircraft carrier. China can not project power on anywhere near the scale the US can. No matter where someone is reading this in the world - the US has warships nearby, and can land Marines on your countries soil within 24 hours. The same can not be said for China.

Malcolm wrote:

And that is a good thing for the world, especially Asia.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, September 9th, 2015 at 10:20 PM

Title: Re: POTUS 2016

Content:

Dan74 said:

So while I think you make many good points about the candidates, Malcolm, I don't quite see what you base this on:

Malcolm wrote:

But the reality of the situation is this — Britain and the EU, the Saudis and so on are using the US as a proxy to to control terrorist organizations that are harmful to them. Basically the capitalist European North, while making disapproving noises in some sectors, tacitly, and in many cases explicitly, approve of US military actions. that is just how it is.

Dan74 said:

As far as I can tell, the EU is largely at America's beck and call as many recent events have demonstrated (for instance the Bolivian presidential plane incident https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Evo_Morales_grounding_incident).

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, that is my point. The so called "civilized" countries that KD is referring to depend on the American Hegemony, and even though they squawk Anti-American sentiments on occasion, their security has been dependent on US power since the end of WWII.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, September 9th, 2015 at 10:25 PM

Title: Re: Shenphen Dawa Rinpoche on Reading Dzogchen Books

Content:

Norwegian said:

Ivo,

The master that practically demanded that ChNN started teaching Dzogchen, was His Holiness the 16th Karmapa.

Malcolm wrote:

Actually, this is not true.

Karmapa asked ChNN to teach his students in Italy. ChNN replied, I will teach your students, but I will not run a Kagyu Center [which is what the Karmapa was after]. I will teach them according to what I understand. I heard ChNN himself explain it this way.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, September 9th, 2015 at 10:40 PM

Title: Re: Analysis or Nothing

Content:

Astus said:

If, as Kamalashila states, analysis is a necessary element of the path, it excludes all

other options to reach insight into the nature of reality. Consequently, there can be no direct methods (pointing to the nature of mind, empowerment, direct introduction, etc.) that avoid using analysis. How can it be argued that the popular methods lacking the conceptual methods of discerning appearances are valid?

"Those who do not meditate with wisdom by analysing individually the entity of things, but merely meditate on elimination of mental activity, cannot avert conceptual thoughts and also cannot realise identitylessness because one lacks the light of wisdom. If the fire of consciousness knowing phenomena as they are is produced from individual analysis of suchness, then like the fire produced by rubbing wood it will burn the wood of conceptual thought."

(<http://www.preciousteaching.org/sutra/kamalasilas-bhavana-krama-the-middle-meditation-stage/>)

"Thus it is on the basis of obtaining unobscured knowledge that one understands every single teaching of the Buddha. Hence without the discernment of reality there is no arising of perfect knowledge, nor also the abandonment of the afflictive obscurations." (Necessity of Bhutapratyaveksa, Bhavanakrama 3, in Martin T. Adams: Meditation and The Concept of Insight in Kamalasila's Bhavanakramas (thesis), p 247)

Malcolm wrote:

He is talking about sutra. It does not apply to Vajrayāna. Apples and oranges.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, September 9th, 2015 at 11:22 PM

Title: Re: Shenphen Dawa Rinpoche on Reading Dzogchen Books

Content:

smcj said:

LoL, like what is the success rate for ChNN's students? Who is doing the counting?.

Malcolm wrote:

He is, and it is high. He is very satisfied with his students in general, or so he has said.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, September 9th, 2015 at 11:33 PM

Title: Re: Analysis or Nothing

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

He is talking about sutra. It does not apply to Vajrayāna. Apples and oranges.

Astus said:

How so? Vajrayana doesn't aim at a different emptiness, does it?

Malcolm wrote:

Sūtra works with analysis, Vajrayāna works with experiences.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, September 9th, 2015 at 11:53 PM

Title: Re: Analysis or Nothing

Content:

Astus said:

What other tool is there but correct analysis?

Malcolm wrote:

In Sūtra? None.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, September 10th, 2015 at 12:01 AM

Title: Re: POTUS 2016

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

And that is a good thing for the world, especially Asia.

BrianG said:

Business in arms is wrong livelihood, and isn't good for anybody.

Malcolm wrote:

Agreed, but these people are not Dharma practitioners, none of them. They are worldly people. So we work with circumstances. The Eisenhower speech is very nice. Day late and a dollar short to trot that one out.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, September 10th, 2015 at 12:25 AM

Title: Re: European refugee crisis

Content:

dreambow said:

Yes Germany is doing more than its fair share.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, they need the influx of population to bolster their labor force.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, September 10th, 2015 at 12:50 AM

Title: Re: Analysis or Nothing

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Sūtra works with analysis, Vajrayāna works with experiences.

Astus said:

How can experience make one understand suchness, when the error lies not in what is experienced but in how that experienced thing is viewed?

Malcolm wrote:

There is no experience outside of suchness. Therefore, experiences can be used to introduce suchness.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, September 10th, 2015 at 2:18 AM

Title: Re: POTUS 2016

Content:

Saoshun said:

You know that US will fall anyway and there will be a war in 20-50 years from now? US have so much debt that only war can help with it, like hitler did.

BrianG said:

The US has roughly 20 trillion in debt vs 200 trillion in assets. If you have 200 dollars, and you owe 20, you are in pretty good shape.

Also, the US is already at war.

Malcolm wrote:

Not really, though it may seem that way.

This is why we need to bring a guy like Sanders in. He will put an end to this once and for all, so I believe.

We put Obama in office to end the war in Iraq and Afghanistan. He did, but not very well.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, September 10th, 2015 at 2:21 AM

Title: Re: Shenphen Dawa Rinpoche on Reading Dzogchen Books

Content:

Adamantine said:

Even in the time of Majusrimitra these Dzogchen teachings were kept quite secret to avoid both misunderstanding and persecution from the orthodox establishments, so I am not sure why the idea that it's important to receive transmission and/or authorization to read certain texts is suddenly a controversial idea.

Malcolm wrote:

Garab Dorje said if there is no interest, one student is too many; but if there is interest, 100 is too few.

Garab Dorje himself had hundreds of human students, not only one.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, September 10th, 2015 at 2:29 AM

Title: Re: POTUS 2016

Content:

BrianG said:

The military industrial complex isn't written in stone. It can always be dismantled, if people have the desire to.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, hence the reason for supporting Bernie Sanders.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, September 10th, 2015 at 3:18 AM

Title: Re: Shenphen Dawa Rinpoche on Reading Dzogchen Books

Content:

Adamantine said:

Even in the time of Majusrimitra these Dzogchen teachings were kept quite secret to avoid both misunderstanding and persecution from the orthodox establishments, so I am not sure why the idea that it's important to receive transmission and/or authorization to read certain texts is suddenly a controversial idea.

Malcolm wrote:

Garab Dorje said if there is no interest, one student is too many; but if there is interest, 100 is too few.

Garab Dorje himself had hundreds of human students, not only one.

Adamantine said:

Not sure how that is relevant to anything I said, number of students is not really a part of the question is it? Anyway Shri Singha was whispering the Great Perfection teachings through a long copper pipe to Vairotsana in the middle of the night, only teaching the cause and result teachings to him openly during the light of day.

Malcolm wrote:

This is because, as we know, that Indians were jealous and did not want to the Tibetans to receive the teachings. Therefore, to confuse the their diviners, in the earliest account we have [from the Bairo rgyud 'bum], Śrī Simha devised a ridiculous method of granting the teachings:

On the surface of three large boulders he placed an iron jar inside of a net. After the ācarya sat inside of it, he had the top filled with water and closed. Having run a clay pipe through a hole in the wall, those two monks where on the outside of the wall. As a precaution, they put their boots on backwards, they put long hoods on their heads, and

listened.

When the Indian King tried to find out who had given the teachings to the Tibetans: Since it was asked which person bestowed them, also no one wished to reply, it was said "It is necessary to examine the mirror". The mirror diviner said "The abbot who is explaining the Great Perfection, the Dharma of transcendent intimate instructions, is sitting on a rock, his body is filled with eyes. He is seated on the surface of three large rocks. A lake has arisen over his head. He is giving the explanation with a long beak. Two with long deerskin hoods are listening from outside."

Since the Dharma protecting king and all the pandits said "This is incredible, are they emanations of an asura? They cannot be clearly identified from the mirror. It must be no other than the two Tibetans. It is clear from the water divination that a swift runner must be sent."

This indicates that the Great Perfection was quite well known to the Indians at that time, not such a huge secret.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, September 10th, 2015 at 4:03 AM

Title: Re: Shenphen Dawa Rinpoche on Reading Dzogchen Books

Content:

Adamantine said:

And we are off topic again sort of-- the point isn't keeping things secret it's about authentic transmission. Shri Singha didn't just write it down and publish it widely in Tibet-- he gave an oral transmission to Vairocana until both of them were satisfied with his understanding, then he left to return to Tibet to bring the teachings there, and transmit them from master to disciple. You can read the different lineages of Dzogchen and how they were transmitted to whom and how they were carried forth in the History of the Nyingma book of HH Dudjom Rinpoche. Nowhere does it say "and then this disciple never met a human master but found a text in a bookstore and achieved full realization after reading it over and over again". It is through the master disciple relationship that the teaching has always been transmitted- not through books - and this is what ChNN teaches and what you yourself affirmed at the beginning of the thread.

Malcolm wrote:

I was addressing the intent of the story you raised. The purpose of Śrī Singha's teaching Dzogchen in such a ridiculous fashion had nothing to do with generally keeping Dzogchen teachings secret, it had to do with fooling the Indian King and Panditas so Vairocana could return with Dzogchen teachings Tibet.

Everything in Buddhadharma needs to be transmitted from master to disciple, no exceptions, even sūtra knowledge.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, September 10th, 2015 at 4:54 AM

Title: Re: Shenphen Dawa Rinpoche on Reading Dzogchen Books

Content:

Adamantine said:

With regards to the OP quote, it is no secret that many Lamas have different styles of transmission based on their own understanding and how they feel the teachings will root the most deeply and effectively in their students hearts.

Malcolm,

I remember you explaining something quite similar to us on e-sangha. The word I remember you using at that time was "fiefdom" though. How in old tibet, each lama had their own fiefdom. This stayed with me because I often thought about how much of a transition they all had to make, coming out of Tibet as they did. Lama Chime often said that he went directly from living in the eighth century to living in the twentieth century.

There are many approaches to practices. Why? Because everyone is different and the fact that everyone is different is not a trivial matter.

Malcolm wrote:

No doubt, but that was not the point I was addressing. It is however its own point. Glad I belong the kingdom of ChNN.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, September 10th, 2015 at 5:51 AM

Title: Re: POTUS 2016

Content:

Saoshun said:

You know that US will fall anyway and there will be a war in 20-50 years from now? US have so much debt that only war can help with it, like hitler did.

DGA said:

Are you saying that Hitler's response to the conditions of Weimar Germany after the Treaty of Versailles was justified?

put differently: Are you defending Nazi aggression on a Buddhist discussion board?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, September 10th, 2015 at 6:07 AM

Title: Re: Analysis or Nothing

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

There is no experience outside of suchness. Therefore, experiences can be used to introduce suchness.

Astus said:

Experiences are already such, but not everyone sees in such a way. What occludes such seeing are not experiences in general but the identification with some of them, thus establishing a self, and the habitual substantialisation of appearances, that is, attachment to concepts. If even temporary cessation of ideation cannot overcome that fundamental ignorance, what kind of experience is it that can?

Malcolm wrote:

Hence, the purpose of introduction. For example, one may see faces in a crowd everyday and never recognize them; but when they are introduced to you, you will never fail to recognize them again.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, September 10th, 2015 at 10:15 AM

Title: Re: Analysis or Nothing

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Hence, the purpose of introduction. For example, one may see faces in a crowd everyday and never recognize them; but when they are introduced to you, you will never fail to recognize them again.

Astus said:

If the face of prajnaparamita could be pointed at, it would have to be an object of mind, an experience, and as such it could be viewed both correctly and incorrectly. It wouldn't be the end of conceptualisation, but rather an opportunity for further proliferation. How is that avoided?

Malcolm wrote:

The face of prajñāpāramitā is not different than all appearances [this is fundamental tenet of Ati yoga, one of things that differentiates it from Chan/Zen, etc.], hence it is an object of mind, an experience. Therefore, it is viewed correctly and incorrectly. Hence, introduction is necessary. Without introduction, buddhahood is not possible.

Buddhahood is not a result of effort or analysis. The difference between a buddha and sentient being is just the difference recognition and nonrecognition.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, September 10th, 2015 at 9:19 PM

Title: Re: Analysis or Nothing

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The face of prajñāpāramitā is not different than all appearances [this is fundamental tenet of Ati yoga, one of things that differentiates it from Chan/Zen, etc.], hence it is an object of mind, an experience. Therefore, it is viewed correctly and incorrectly. Hence, introduction is necessary. Without introduction, buddhahood is not possible.

Buddhahood is not a result of effort or analysis. The difference between a buddha and

sentient being is just the difference recognition and nonrecognition.

Astus said:

All appearances are such. Are you saying that there is an appearance that is more such? If not, and what matters is recognising the suchness of any appearance, there are no special objects to be apprehended. As Kamalashila

<http://www.preciousteaching.org/sutra/kamalasilas-bhavana-krama-the-middle-meditation-stage/>: "With the knowledge that the mind is without an end and a centre, no identity of the mind is perceived. What is thoroughly realised by the mind too is realised as being empty. By realising that, the very identity which is established as the aspect of the mind, like the identity of physical form, etc., is also not ultimately perceived."

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, there is no special object to be apprehended.

Your question was, "Is analysis necessary." In sūtra yes; in Varjayāna, no. As

Vimalamitra states in his Buddhahood in This Life:

If it is objected, "If afflictions are liberated into dharmatā without antidotes, there is no need for purification on the path. Otherwise, liberation would require no effort," for what reason would those who do not understand be liberated? Asserting that those who understand are liberated merely by recognizing concepts as dharmatā is the fruit of one's wishes. As such, in order to recognize that concepts are dharmatā, the intimate instructions of the guru are important.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, September 10th, 2015 at 9:58 PM

Title: Re: POTUS 2016

Content:

tomamundsen said:

I voted for <http://www.jill2016.com/> in 2012 and I'll vote for her again next year. Although I'm probably just throwing away a vote for Bernie.

Malcolm wrote:

My plan is to vote for Bernie in the primaries, and if he does not win, to vote for Stein.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, September 10th, 2015 at 11:32 PM

Title: Re: Shenphen Dawa Rinpoche on Reading Dzogchen Books

Content:

Adamantine said:

I'm sure you're right about the intent of that story but my intent in mentioning it was just as one example that throughout the history of Dzogchen transmission there's been many reasons for it to be kept more undercover, whether it is to avoid jealousy,

orthodoxy, ridicule or misunderstanding, or all of the above, or a plethora of other potential reasons.

Malcolm wrote:

Dzogchen teachings are not secret, they are for everyone, if they are interested. The way you demonstrated your interest is by seeking out transmission.

When we say Dzogchen teachings are "secret", it does mean they are secret in the sense of a classified document which only people with proper clearance can read — though certainly this is a prevailing attitude evinced by the plethora of "restricted books." Dzogchen teachings are secret because their meaning is obscure to those who still are involved with the vehicles of cause and result. This is the real sense of secrecy in Dzogchen teachings.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, September 10th, 2015 at 11:33 PM

Title: Re: Shenphen Dawa Rinpoche on Reading Dzogchen Books

Content:

Adamantine said:

So it seems we are both agreeing with Shenphen Rinpoche's points, only one or two people here ridiculed them and you weren't one of them. . .

Malcolm wrote:

I agree that Dzogchen can be misunderstood, but refusing to discuss it does not lend to clarity.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, September 10th, 2015 at 11:50 PM

Title: Re: Analysis or Nothing

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, there is no special object to be apprehended.

Your question was, "Is analysis necessary." In sūtra yes; in Varjayāna, no. As Vimalamitra states in his Buddhahood in This Life:

If it is objected, "If afflictions are liberated into dharmatā without antidotes, there is no need for purification on the path. Otherwise, liberation would require no effort," for what reason would those who do not understand be liberated? Asserting that those who understand are liberated merely by recognizing concepts as dharmatā is the fruit of one's wishes. As such, in order to recognize that concepts are dharmatā, the intimate instructions of the guru are important.

Astus said:

There is still no explanation given what kind of experience it is that can take one to realising suchness.

Malcolm wrote:

That is correct. I did not provide the entire chapter for you.

Astus said:

Also, that quote is basically asserting the supremacy of Vajrayana and the ineffectiveness of analysis without giving a reason. And it misrepresents vipasyana as if it were mere intellectual exercise.

Malcolm wrote:

The limitation of Madhyamaka vipaśyāna is that it is an intellectual analysis. But in reality, as it is said in the Soaring Garuda, one of the five early Dzogchen extracts translated by Vairocana, addresses the deviation of Madhyamaka analysis which should be addressed the following way:

Since phenomena and nonphenomena have always been merged and are inseparable, there is no further need to explain an “ultimate phenomenon”.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, September 11th, 2015 at 12:53 AM

Title: Re: Shenphen Dawa Rinpoche on Reading Dzogchen Books

Content:

smcj said:

Dzogchen teachings are secret because their meaning is obscure to those who still are involved with the vehicles of cause and result.

That's worded a little strangely. It implies that someone who is not involved with the first 8 yanas, such as a secular person, will have an advantage over a Dharma practitioner in understanding Dzogchen. I'm going to guess that is not what you meant.

Malcolm wrote:

That can in fact be the case.

smcj said:

Of all the teachings of the Buddha, Dzogchen/Mahamudra is most prone to misunderstanding because of the ease with which it can be reduced to something pedestrian. It is the perfect example of the ChNN's quote:

A human being has his limits. And thus in every conceivable way, with every possible means, he tries to make the teaching enter into his own limits.

Malcolm wrote:

Actually, what ChNN here is saying is that vehicles of cause and result place limitations on the possibility of liberation because of their limitations.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, September 11th, 2015 at 12:55 AM

Title: Re: Analysis or Nothing

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The limitation of Madhyamaka vipaśyāna is that it is an intellectual analysis.

Astus said:

What does it limit? Unless it is argued that vipasyana does not result in wisdom, it works.

Malcolm wrote:

Vipaśyāna is conceptual. That is its limitation. Plus, Madhyamaka analysis is ultimately dualistic.

Astus said:

You say Vajrayana is different, and that's fine, but it has not yet been clarified how and in what way.

Malcolm wrote:

It has been clarified, you just refuse to listen:

As such, in order to recognize that concepts are dharmatā, the intimate instructions of the guru are important.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, September 11th, 2015 at 2:43 AM

Title: Re: Analysis or Nothing

Content:

asunthatneversets said:

...I suppose Malcolm would have to clarify there, being that it's his translation.

Malcolm wrote:

Phenomena is chos, dharmin; nonphenomena is chos min, i.e., dharmatā; the former is the relative, the latter is the ultimate. Since they are merged, there is no such thing as an ultimate phenomena, don dam chos, paramārthadharma.

In other words, the two truths of Madhyamaka are a deviation.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, September 11th, 2015 at 3:08 AM

Title: Re: Analysis or Nothing

Content:

Astus said:

The question is about those instructions, that you say do not involve analysis.

Malcolm wrote:

If you want those instructions, you will have to go and get them.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, September 11th, 2015 at 3:09 AM

Title: Re: Analysis or Nothing

Content:

Astus said:

As for directly accessing the view of suchness, Kamalashila writes,

Malcolm wrote:

Kamalashila's citation is completely irrelevant.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, September 11th, 2015 at 3:12 AM

Title: Re: Shenphen Dawa Rinpoche on Reading Dzogchen Books

Content:

smcj said:

I think it's 100% true. People can make the most amazing ornate cages out of dharma. I'm going to go out on a limb and say that none of my teachers would agree with that statement. The issue never arose, so I can't say for sure, but none have ever shown the slightest sympathy to that kind of idea.

Malcolm wrote:

None of your teachers are teachers of Dzogchen.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, September 11th, 2015 at 3:54 AM

Title: Re: Analysis or Nothing

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

If you want those instructions, you will have to go and get them.

Astus said:

You said that Vajrayana is exempt from analysis, but then did not support that with an explanation of how could that be.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, actually I did.

Astus said:

How so? The direct experience of suchness is what Vajrayana teaches, isn't it?

Malcolm wrote:

Everyone is already experiencing suchness directly. It simply needs to be pointed out through experience. It is not discernible through analysis. The analysis itself is the obstacle.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, September 11th, 2015 at 6:05 AM

Title: Re: Analysis or Nothing

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, actually I did.

Astus said:

I don't see how "the intimate instructions of the guru are important" is an explanation for it, but it seems there is nothing more than that.

Malcolm wrote:

You have to receive them from a guru. Then you will understand. Until that point, there is nothing more to say.

Astus said:

Everyone is already experiencing suchness directly. It simply needs to be pointed out through experience. It is not discernible through analysis. The analysis itself is the obstacle.

Pointing out through experience - since one cannot directly transfer experience to another, there are only teachings one can follow to confirm reality for oneself.

Malcolm wrote:

A direct introduction is an introduction done through your own experience; it is not a transfer of experience.

Astus said:

What blocks the vision of reality is conceptual attachment. Analysis removes that attachment, thus allows the experience of insight.

Malcolm wrote:

Analysis merely substitutes one conceptual attachment for another, thus blocking the seeing of the truth; which one already sees anyway without knowing that one is seeing it.

The question is really, "what does one hope to find in analysis?" Is there something to

find? If there is nothing to find, than the analysis itself is a deviation from reality.

As chapter thirty-eight of the Kun byed rgyal po states:

The sūtras of bodhisattvas

assert the stage of Samantaprabhaḥ,

and assert dharmatā as empty space

through the investigation and analysis of the two truths.

The great bliss of Ati Yoga

is awakened mind beyond investigation and analysis,

that which is beyond investigation and analysis is obscured by the sūtras.

The Great Perfection explains that investigation and analysis

are error in the sūtras.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, September 11th, 2015 at 9:26 AM

Title: Re: Analysis or Nothing

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Analysis merely substitutes one conceptual attachment for another, thus blocking the seeing of the truth; which one already sees anyway without knowing that one is seeing it.

The question is really, "what does one hope to find in analysis?" Is there something to find? If there is nothing to find, than the analysis itself is a deviation from reality.

Astus said:

Analysis results in the elimination of attachment...

Malcolm wrote:

Is the consciousness that engages in analysis deluded or undeluded? Is the object of analysis delusive or non-delusive?

If either the consciousness or the object are respectively deluded or delusive, there is no means by which the analysis can result in non-delusion.

If on other other hand the consciousness or the object is respectively non-deluded or non-delusive, the analysis is unnecessary.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, September 11th, 2015 at 10:36 PM

Title: Re: Analysis or Nothing

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Is the consciousness that engages in analysis deluded or undeluded? Is the object of analysis delusive or non-delusive?

If either the consciousness or the object are respectively deluded or delusive, there is no means by which the analysis can result in non-delusion.

If on other other hand the consciousness or the object is respectively non-deluded or non-delusive, the analysis is unnecessary.

Astus said:

That's some nice analysis you present.

Malcolm wrote:

You have to speak to the analytical in language they understand.

Astus said:

...supposing a separate realm is a mistake.

Malcolm wrote:

Hence the deviation of Madhyamakas two truths.

Astus said:

The reason analysis works is because it removes wrong views and eventually attachment to any view. Analysis is a means, not an end. And analysis is required because the wrong views that generate all the problems are conceptual.

Malcolm wrote:

Madhyamaka analysis is not required, it is merely the approach of sūtra. It also does not produce the real view free of conceptuality.

Astus said:

But let's not stop there. Is there a consciousness to be deluded or undeluded? Is there an object to be deluded or undeluded? Since neither a consciousness nor an object can be established, talking about their state of ignorance and enlightenment is like describing the graceful stance of the son of a barren woman.

Malcolm wrote:

Correct. Therefore, since there is no consciousness nor object to be established discussing their analysis is like discussing the horns on a rabbit.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, September 11th, 2015 at 10:38 PM

Title: Re: Analysis or Nothing

Content:

Wayfarer said:

So, analysis serves no purpose, we are to seek a guru? Is that the point?

Malcolm wrote:

It all depends on how fast you wish to wake up.

Wayfarer said:

Kind of makes having the need for an internet forum moot, doesn't it?

Malcolm wrote:

Internet forums are breeding grounds for conceptuality, some of them however are worse than others.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, September 11th, 2015 at 11:22 PM

Title: Re: How important is shamatha, and practices before shamatha

Content:

Boomerang said:

My understanding is that traditionally, you need to master shamatha before you do most practices, such as secret mantras and tonglen, with ngondro being the only exception. But if a part of ngondro is Vajrasattva, how can you effectively do that if you haven't already mastered shamatha?

Have most people who do yidam practice and highest yoga tantra completed long shamatha retreats? It's supposed to take 6 months in retreat to master shamatha, isn't it?

Is there a definitive list of practices that are considered A-okay before one has done a shamatha retreat? Is it effective to do non-ngondro prostrations, like the 3 heaps sutra, before mastering shamatha?

Malcolm wrote:

This is only one approach, very much based on the Lam Rim approach. It is not the only approach.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, September 11th, 2015 at 11:33 PM

Title: Re: How important is shamatha, and practices before shamatha

Content:

Boomerang said:

What are other approaches?

Malcolm wrote:

As mentioned, mantra practice is considered to be one of the best methods of training in Shamatha.

It very much depends on your proclivities.

My advice is that you be like a bee and seek out a few different teachers and approaches before settling on one.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, September 11th, 2015 at 11:55 PM

Title: Re: Analysis or Nothing

Content:

Astus said:

..."not in Tantric Mahamudra".

Malcolm wrote:

There really isn't any other kind...the name "Sūtra Mahāmudra" is like calling a donkey an Arabian stallion. Sure, they both have four legs, sure they both belong to the Genus equis, sure one can mate with the other, but the latter will always be a much superior steed to ride.

Astus said:

Also, in vol 2 of Jigme Lingpa's Treasury of Precious Qualities at the end of the discussion of the path of Dzogchen he gives not only a direct but also an analytical method. So, even if there are other methods, it is considered quite efficient if Vajrayana masters have no problem including it in their teachings on the highest levels.]

Malcolm wrote:

What page are you thinking of?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, September 12th, 2015 at 12:39 AM

Title: Re: Analysis or Nothing

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

What page are you thinking of?

Astus said:

The practice of those who perceive appearances in the manner of sense objects, p 269-274.

That is within the section of "An explanation of the key points of the practice", within the chapter "The Extraordinary Path of Practice of the Great Perfection".

Malcolm wrote:

Pg. 271:

"The shamatha and vipashyāna deriving from oral instructions do not depend on the reading and analysis of the texts.

Here, what is being recommended is the intimate instructions of the guru over and above the sūtrayāna style analysis mentioned in the previous paragraph, and which you were claiming above was critically necessary, without which no progress could be made at all.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, September 12th, 2015 at 12:40 AM

Title: Re: Analysis or Nothing

Content:

smcj said:

There really isn't any other kind...the name "Sūtra Mahāmudra" is like calling a donkey an Arabian stallion.

I've used "Sutra Mahamudra" to mean the type that approaches it through shamatha, vipassana, then Mahamudra. "Tantric Mahamudra" I've used for completion stage practice and the 6 yogas. Is that not correct?

Malcolm wrote:

Kongtrul clearly states that "Sūtra" Mahāmudra is for people who do not have the capacity for the two stages. It is a style of mixing sūtra practice and the view expressed in the dohas. But it is a slow and gradual path, since it is sūtrayāna.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, September 12th, 2015 at 1:28 AM

Title: Re: Analysis or Nothing

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Here, what is being recommended is the intimate instructions of the guru

Astus said:

There is little difference between someone orally giving the instructions or handing over a book containing the same instructions.

Malcolm wrote:

Who said the instructions were the same? Certainly not Kengyur Rinpoche.

Sword of Wisdom is a Madhyamaka text. Not a Dzogchen text. It is best not to confuse one with the other.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, September 12th, 2015 at 2:02 AM

Title: Re: How important is shamatha, and practices before shamatha

Content:

Boomerang said:

Wallace for example, in teaching shamatha without a sign, says ignore all thought, feelings, body sense and just focus on the awareness of awareness.

Malcolm wrote:

Thus is sūtra style. Very rigid, produces brittle wood, very dry, easy to break.

Boomerang said:

Tsoknyi R, in teaching the same practice (he calls it shamatha without support- they are both mikpa mepe shine) gives a much more relaxed approach, where all the senses are open and you are not particularly ignoring anything, just not getting involved with it.

Malcolm wrote:

This Dzogchen style. Very supple, produces flexible wood, very green, hard to break. In Dzogchen style śamatha you actually engage all six sense objects with your six senses, there is nothing to accept and nothing to reject, nothing to follow, nothing to ignore.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, September 12th, 2015 at 2:15 AM

Title: Re: How important is shamatha, and practices before shamatha

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

This Dzogchen style. Very supple, produces flexible wood, very green, hard to break. In Dzogchen style śamatha you actually engage all six sense objects with your six senses, there is nothing to accept and nothing to reject, nothing to follow, nothing to ignore.

Clarence said:

Sounds very much like regular Trekchod, no?

Malcolm wrote:

A little, but really it has to do with the definition of one pointed. In sūtra style one pointedness, one is focusing one's mind on one point, in a very concentrated way, while ignoring everything else. Also in Dzogchen, sometimes we use this experience as well.

But there is also another meaning of one pointedness, meaning that all sense contact all their objects.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, September 12th, 2015 at 2:23 AM

Title: Re: How important is shamatha, and practices before shamatha

Content:

Clarence said:

Okay. Thanks.

Anything in your book about the difference?

Malcolm wrote:

There is a brief discussion of śamatha and vipaśyāna in section on the method of practice, chapter eight, specifically in the transcendent state of the sugatas section.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, September 12th, 2015 at 4:34 AM

Title: Re: Analysis or Nothing

Content:

Astus said:

Kamalashila's Bhavanakramas are instructions for meditation. I dare say that even the Middle Treatise of Nagarjuna is good for meditation, not to mention the many prajnaparamita sutras. Just as Vajrayana texts can be taken for purely philosophical writings, so can the teachings of the Buddha can and often are mistaken as theoretical matters. Analysis is not meant for achieving an objective statement but to attain insight. I'm not even sure why it happens that while it is obvious that the Dharma is for liberation, teachings are regularly dismissed as if they were products of a bored academic. It is another thing that philosophy is viewed with contempt, calling it idle talk. But once we rename it as ideology, it becomes more apparent how thoughts govern action.

For instance, when there is a teaching about the aggregates, it is not about abstract ideas with no relevance to one's personal life and experience, but instructions on what and how to investigate in order to see the true nature of reality and gain liberation. It is always about direct seeing, that's what vipasyana is. Reducing the words of the Buddha and numerous teachers to mere theorising is not just insulting but inconsiderate and ignorant. (And I'm not saying here, Cone, that you are like that, these are just my general observations.)

It is not a question of conceptuality but how those concepts are understood. Keeping a distance between oneself and some ideas is when it is mere theorising, fantasising about things that have no weight. On the other hand, when a concept is taken seriously, when it is reflected on and connected to one's experience, that is heeding the advice and following the teachings. It becomes a personal matter. Just like when one can listen to any teacher and not find anything noteworthy in his words, if that teacher is seen as one's guru, even the most innocent movements become Dharma instructions.

Malcolm wrote:

Here is your original question:

How can it be argued that the popular methods lacking the conceptual methods of discerning appearances are valid?

Mañjuśrimitra in the Meditation of Bodhicitta would have replied to Kamalaśīla in the following way:

When analyzing the extremes of deconstruction and proofs for entities by the reason of direct perception and so on,

after that domain of those who follow the stream of concepts is defined as authoritative, because the conceptualized extreme does not exist, there is no extreme to analyze, and if there is no core, what can be defined as an authority?

Therefore, the conventions of mundane analysis are not necessary in this yoga.

Keep in mind, the Meditation of Bodhicitta is a text aimed Mahāyānis just like Kamalaśīla, oriented towards showing that this kind of analysis is just not necessary at all in Mahāyāna. That in fact, it is an obstacle to understanding the real meaning of Mahāyāna.

The point is that the methods of conceptual analysis are invalid for ultimate analysis, as Mipham points out in his commentary on this text:

...a mundane authority is not valid for an ultimate analysis,

Why is this important? Because in general, the whole notion of direct perceptions, inferences, and so on are defined on the basis of of the conceptual cognitions of ordinary people. Therefore:

Therefore, the conventions of mundane analysis are not necessary in this yoga.

Which yoga? Mahāyāna yoga.

So the question must be turned around:

How can it be argued that conceptual methods of discerning appearances are valid?

Incidentally, Mañjuśrimitra never once uses the term "Ati yoga" or "Dzogchen" in this text, though he does make reference to Vajrasattva, Mahāyoga concepts and Samantabhadri. He also on the other hand uses Prajñāpāramitā references, even working the name "Arhat Subhuti" into the text to represent a principle of the teachings.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, September 12th, 2015 at 5:02 AM

Title: Re: Analysis or Nothing

Content:

LastLegend said:

People keep downplaying Sutra path as a conceptual path but actually Sutra contain all teachings for all capacities.

Malcolm wrote:

Sūtra does not contain all teachings. If it did, there would be no need for Vajrayāna and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, September 12th, 2015 at 5:23 AM

Title: Re: Analysis or Nothing

Content:

LastLegend said:

Zen...

Malcolm wrote:

If everything were in sūtras, there would be no need for Zen either, a path, like Dzogchen, famous for saying it is outside of the scriptures.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, September 12th, 2015 at 5:24 AM

Title: Re: Analysis or Nothing

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Sūtra does not contain all teachings. If it did, there would be no need for Vajrayāna and so on.

LastLegend said:

Very few understand Sutras, they think they really do but they don't.

Malcolm wrote:

I guess you feel you are speaking from a position of definitive authority. In other words, you must yourself be a master of sūtra. Otherwise you are like a man holding a book in a language he does not understand, sagaciously informing everyone else that they do not understand it either.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, September 12th, 2015 at 5:36 AM

Title: Re: Practicing in the midst of relationship problems

Content:

Monlam Tharchin said:

Many difficulties regarding relationships in my life lately.

Marital problems possibly leading to divorce or separation soon.

One very important friendship dissolving into fights and negativity. We are temporarily not speaking.

Another heading in the wrong direction that makes it difficult for me to know how to proceed.

Still another with a sudden "change of heart" that makes me very nervous.

Outside of that, there is only one person I see regularly, as I'm a very private person.

So nearly all of the important relationships in my life are, to put it bluntly, in the shitter in some form or another.

I've never had insomnia or such strong feelings of aloneness as right now.

I'm not sure how to bring them to the dharma path.

It's made shamatha very difficult, to say the least.

Of course this brings home the samsaric qualities of every relationship. But how

bittersweet to see it in your own life, and in such a large amount at one time. My instinct isn't towards cultivating insight but just some way to not feel so bad.

For now, I just say some mantras, manis mostly.

Thanks for anyone's advice, who has maybe been in a similar situation.

Malcolm wrote:

At the end of the day, Dharma is our only companion.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, September 12th, 2015 at 6:04 AM

Title: Re: CNN Odzer Chenma retreat sept 11-13

Content:

Tigersnest said:

I was unable to listen to the retreat, was the invocation different then the Practice which DC usually uses?

Malcolm wrote:

No.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, September 12th, 2015 at 6:09 AM

Title: Re: a former student of aroter seeks help!

Content:

inbetween said:

Then I found this! I am glad you saved this...I won't dare to think of...

I apology the whole sangha and Buddha for my sins and beg for help! I cannot do this on my own.

respectfully inbetween

Malcolm wrote:

You should make a connection with Chogyal Namkhai Norbu. He is running webcast retreat today actually, it starts in four hours roughly.

<http://webcast.dzogchen.net/index.php?id=live-webcast>

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, September 12th, 2015 at 9:42 AM

Title: Re: Analysis or Nothing

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

I guess you feel you are speaking from a position of definitive authority. In other words, you must yourself be a master of sūtra. Otherwise you are like a man holding a book in a language he does not understand, sagaciously informing everyone else that they do not understand it either.

LastLegend said:

No sir. I have no such arrogance right now, and I am not that ignorant to make judgment about other Paths without knowing what they really understand. But here is my view:

The language in Sutra is hard to understand. This is the reason why people get caught up with the teachings/tools more than what's the teachings are pointing to. Language of Zen Patriarchs are to understand as well.

Malcolm wrote:

So I guess it is the latter: "you are like a man holding a book in a language he does not understand, sagaciously informing everyone else that they do not understand it either."

The reality, my friend, is that you cannot tell which of the two moons are true, because in fact neither are.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, September 12th, 2015 at 9:49 AM

Title: Re: Analysis or Nothing

Content:

smcj said:

"you are like a man holding a book in a language he does not understand, sagaciously informing everyone else that they do not understand it either."

Actually that was precisely my position in the consort practice discussion.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, I understood that you did not understand it.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, September 12th, 2015 at 10:42 AM

Title: Re: Analysis or Nothing

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The reality, my friend, is that you cannot tell which of the two moons are true, because in fact neither are.

LastLegend said:

I know you have faith in your experience and guru. That's why Pure Land is superior my friend. FAITH.

Malcolm wrote:

Certainty is better than faith.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, September 12th, 2015 at 11:18 AM

Title: Re: a former student of aroter seeks help!

Content:

inbetween said:

Then I found this! I am glad you saved this...I won't dare to think of...

I apology the whole sangha and Buddha for my sins and beg for help! I cannot do this on my own.

respectfully inbetween

Malcolm wrote:

You should make a connection with Chogyal Namkhai Norbu. He is running webcast retreat today actually, it starts in four hours roughly.

<http://webcast.dzogchen.net/index.php?id=live-webcast>

Boomerang said:

Is it okay to just drop in and watch the webcast without having any idea what's going on?

Malcolm wrote:

yup

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, September 12th, 2015 at 5:08 PM

Title: Re: Dzogchen Community of Chogyal Namkhai Norbu

Content:

Boomerang said:

I just finished listening to the webcast from Singapore. Am I allowed to start practicing guru yoga and the Song of Vajra now? I'm not a member of the Dzogchen Community as of yet (registering today), but want to be on the list ASAP. I always thought you had to be a member first, but is that not even necessary as long as you tune in to one of Rinpoche's public webcasts?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes.

Yes, but you won't have access to replay.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, September 12th, 2015 at 5:49 PM

Title: Re: European refugee crisis

Content:

dreambow said:

It seems the Canadian economy is very rocky and the USA have over 90 million people jobless...its staggering!

Malcolm wrote:

Well, this figure includes retirees and teenagers...it is not really like that

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, September 12th, 2015 at 9:25 PM

Title: Re: Buddhism and rebirth

Content:

Vimalakirti432 said:

It was particularly telling that he appeared to conflate these posited materialists with ancient Indian materialists or nihilists, the charvakas.

Malcolm wrote:

There is very little difference in their point of view.

Vimalakirti432 said:

In fact, with the advance of the sciences and especially of physics and cosmology what does the term "materialist" even mean?

Malcolm wrote:

It means one believes that consciousness arises as an emergent property of matter.

Vimalakirti432 said:

So while later Mahayana, Madhyamika and Tibetan Buddhism re-imagined rebirth in ways still unthinkable for Buddhist realists like the Theravadins, we should allow the same process to happen in modern Buddhism.

Malcolm wrote:

Nonsense, Mahāyāna concepts around rebirth, as well as those of Madhyamaka and so on are based grounded in the Abhidharma tradition of Sarvastivāda.

Vimalakirti432 said:

Rebirth and karma, I feel, are most properly seen in the deep context of interdependent origination, of infinite causes and conditions, and do not depend on ancient physiology, or on the notion of isolated streams of becoming, which violates the logic of the Mahayana in any case (non-distinctions, interpenetration, etc.).

Malcolm wrote:

No, they are properly seen in the context of what the Buddha taught: that is unique beginningless mindstreams have volitions, direct physical and verbal actions based on the volitions, and reap the results of those volitions in the future. In this case, Tibetan Buddhists mainly depend on the Sautrantika/Yogacara explanation for ripening, but not exclusively.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, September 12th, 2015 at 10:22 PM

Title: Re: Analysis or Nothing

Content:

Matt J said:

Yet all of these schools use concepts eventually to undermine concepts.

Malcolm wrote:

Hence the critique from a Dzogchen perspective.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, September 13th, 2015 at 2:14 AM

Title: Re: Analysis or Nothing

Content:

Matt J said:

Then what is the role of concepts in Dzogchen teachings?

Yet all of these schools use concepts eventually to undermine concepts.

Malcolm wrote:

Hence the critique from a Dzogchen perspective.

The point I am making is that intellectual analysis will only result in an intellectual apprehension of the object of analysis. Even when you are finished with the analysis, for example, the famous diamond sliver analysis, and so on, still in the end you are left with the concept "emptiness", "nonarising", "freedom from extremes" and so on, even though, as Mañjuśrimitra points out, since the conceptualized extreme does not exist, therefore the extreme to analyze does not exist. Therefore, conventional analysis by mundane minds cannot be used in an ultimate analysis because they cannot escape their own conceptual clinging, indeed they are always with concepts.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, September 13th, 2015 at 2:24 AM

Title: Re: Buddhism and rebirth

Content:

Vimalakirti432 said:

1. As for the definition of "materialist", my point is that the tulku is setting up a straw man argument, replacing a variety of possible opposing points of view with a dimwitted, comic book version of a "materialist" of no real interest to anyone.

Malcolm wrote:

It does not matter what colors and shades you want to paint a materialist in, a materialist will always hold matter as a first principle, and consciousness as derivative

from physical processes.

Vimalakirti432 said:

2. As for consciousness as an emergent property of matter, some certainly hold that view, but my point again is that the old dichotomy material/spiritual has been so subverted by what we now know of the uncanny nature of so-called "matter" as to render the old dichotomy meaningless. Does that mean that anything goes, that anything can happen? No, it simply means that we attend to what's there, without imposing dualities, and with a minimum of distorted, inaccurate or unskillful imputations.

Malcolm wrote:

Which is all to say that at the end of the day, consciousness is asserted to follow physical laws, hence materialism — and this observation is identical to the carvaka point of view.

Vimalakirti432 said:

3. As for different views of rebirth in Buddhism, I'm sure you're aware that most Theravadins have a very literal view of rebirth, kamma, nibbana, etc. and certainly would never say that rebirth from the ultimate side is "mumbo-jumbo" as the tulku did.

Malcolm wrote:

Sure they would — rebirth is irrelevant from the point of view of paramatthadhammas.

Vimalakirti432 said:

So while I agree that nearly everything in the Mahayana is prefigured in the early suttas, we can't ignore the significant differences. Certainly Theravadins don't.

Malcolm wrote:

The only substantially important different is whether the antarabhāva, aka bardo, is accepted or rejected. This is dealt with in the Koshabhaṣyam

Vimalakirti432 said:

4. As for karma rooted in volition I agree, but again I can't subscribe to the supernaturalist amplifications of this idea that you note here.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, because you are a materialist, and therefore reject rebirth, and consider the ripening of karma described by the Buddha as "supernaturalist." It's ok, I mean, I don't care whether you accept rebirth or not — but it is impossible to practice Buddhadharma correctly without accepting rebirth, you know, the "supernatural" kind, not the bullshit revisionism we see bandied about these days. At best, you might, as in the Kalamas sutta, be able to have a bit of relaxation by practicing the four brahmaviharas, but you certainly will not enjoy liberation.

What you fail to understand is that in Buddhadharma, matter is regarded as an emergent property of minds, not the other way around.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, September 13th, 2015 at 2:59 AM

Title: Re: Buddhism and rebirth

Content:

Vimalakirti432 said:

Hi Malcolm. Here I would only maintain once again, that "materialist" is an unfair imputation in my case, and in the case of many others who consider themselves non-supernaturalists. But I guess we'll have to leave it there, in the interests of right speech. In this case, that means speech not likely to be of further use. I invite you to carefully read my other posts, if you're interested in fully understanding my views. We obviously have different predispositions, so from my side no harm no foul. With metta.

Malcolm wrote:

There is nothing supernatural about mind, nor is there anything supernatural about karma and the ripening of karma.

Your very use of the term "supernatural" to describe phenomena such as karma and rebirth places you squarely in the Carvaka camp. The Carvakas were not fools, and I don't take you to be one, they were very sophisticated thinkers who were a dominant school in pre-Hindu India. But it is undeniable that negating rebirth and karma eviscerates the Buddha's teaching and his Dharma.

The negation of rebirth and karma on a relative level is an extreme view, ucchedavāda, annihilationism.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, September 13th, 2015 at 3:06 AM

Title: Re: Buddhism and rebirth

Content:

Vimalakirti432 said:

Just a slight correction: I meant avoiding speech no likely to be of further use. I guess I can also add that I could respond to several of your points in discussion, but that we lack the basis to make that discussion fruitful. Again, with metta and all the best.

Malcolm wrote:

Of course we have no basis for further discussion because you are a priory committed to physicalism. You fail the first step of the heuristic that Dharmakirti lays out in his proof of rebirth, i.e. do you think that the cause of a moment of mind is material or mental?

You seek refuge in some putative nonduality of matter and mind, and I am happy to understand that mind and matter are nondual, but in precisely the opposite way you intend.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, September 13th, 2015 at 4:14 AM

Title: Re: Buddhism and rebirth

Content:

Vimalakirti432 said:

Again I don't want to be drawn into a pointless debate, which you would probably agree would be unskillful for both of us.

Malcolm wrote:

That depends, if you start calling me names and jumping up and down and carrying on like this,, maybe it will be unskillful. Otherwise...

Vimalakirti432 said:

1. My assertion as to seeing things as they are without false imputations etc. hardly commits me to what you're calling "materialism". My point all the way through is that both "material" and "spiritual" are constructs. But here I think we get into the philosophic weeds that can hardly be cleared out in this kind of forum.

Malcolm wrote:

First we have to establish what an authority is. Buddhadharma accepts three kinds, direct perception, inferences based on direct perceptions and testimony.

Vimalakirti432 said:

2. I'm sure you're aware that Nagarjuna was also called a nihilist by many of his contemporaries. Now I'm not saying that my views adhere precisely to Nagarjuna in all respects, but I see myself here as beginning with his fundamental view of things, and not with some notion of materialism, ancient or modern. If my views come across differently then perhaps I'm not expressing myself very well.

Malcolm wrote:

Nāgārjuna has no position with respect to the ultimate existence or nonexistence of things, nevertheless, conventionally he accepted rebirth and karma, even in the MMK he makes it very clear he advocates the Arya Sammitiya position with respect to karma — supporting their concept of the avipraṇāśa amongst all possible options. In the Pratītyasamutpāḍakarika he also makes it clear that conventionally he accepts rebirth and karma.

Vimalakirti432 said:

3. As for the relationship between what we could call nikaya Buddhism and Mahayana, Madhyamika, etc., I'm sure you know better than I do that it's extremely complex and

that views on this depend on who you're talking to. So it seems to me pointless to set up and then cling to anything like a precise analysis of these relationships.

Malcolm wrote:

It is not that complicated.

Vimalakirti432 said:

4. No there is nothing supernatural about mind, karma and rebirth, which is precisely my point, and no I don't believe that saying this eviscerates the dharma, but only offers alternate skillful means.

Malcolm wrote:

The Buddha taught six dhātus, not only five — with consciousness being the sixth. Now, dhātu does not mean that there is one unified element, which is why we also have the idea of the sattva dhātu, the dhātu of sentient beings.

It is not a skillful means to cater to people's annihilationist tendencies any more than it is a skillful means to cater to their eternalist tendencies [though indeed the Buddha has said the latter is preferable to the former]. You have jumped on the horse only to fall off on the other side [annihilationism].

Vimalakirti432 said:

Otherwise, you appear to be well grounded in your tradition with firm shradda so of course I have to respect your point of view, even where I see that it may lead you to inaccurate imputation of an alternate way. And you may be correct in every respect.

Malcolm wrote:

First, before you make judgements about the imputations of others, you have to establish that your own cognitions are authoritative. Are you quite certain you are not the one making false imputations, i.e., false inferences?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, September 13th, 2015 at 4:40 AM

Title: Re: Buddhism and rebirth

Content:

Vimalakirti432 said:

I'm no logician but here I see Dharmakirti as using the old sales guy trick. You don't ask the customer if she wants ice cream but whether she wants chocolate or vanilla. In other words, you force your victim to choose between a false and unnecessary dichotomy, and ordering something they don't want.

Malcolm wrote:

But you have to choose.

Vimalakirti432 said:

I would suggest that as with most of the words we use we don't even know what we mean by "physical". We set up definitions in legitimate ways, in the natural sciences for example for pragmatic purposes, but also in what I consider illegitimate ways, in the interests of defending a certain metaphysical view or system.

Malcolm wrote:

I know precisely what I mean: "physical" [rūpena] refers to any entity that possesses hardness, heat, motility or liquidity in some degree or another. This covers everything on the periodic table of elements and all qualities they can possess or demonstrate, indeed it covers every type of physical phenomena, down to the smallest we can experimentally observe or even imagine, as well as the largest and everything in between.

Vimalakirti432 said:

Here we have what is called the hard problem of consciousness. To oppose the thesis that Dharmakirti is defending is not to assert the contrary but merely to say that neither of the alternatives he offers can be established.

Malcolm wrote:

It is not a hard problem at all. You are conscious [unless you are Turing machine], so am I. It is established at the outset you have a mind. So where does it come from? What is its origin? Etc. These are not hard problems, except for materialists.

Vimalakirti432 said:

But this we find in all apologetics everywhere, the misuse of reason in defence of the faith. But logic can't establish this kind of thing, only yogic experience. So when an arhat or practitioner claims such knowledge I can only tip my hat and wish them the best. But when anyone tries to establish this kind of thing through logic I can only shake my head. Reason has many uses, but this isn't one.

Malcolm wrote:

The only one using apologetics here is you. What you are doing is called "eel-wriggling."

Vimalakirti432 said:

As for non-duality, I assume you mean that matter emerges from mind, i.e., the reverse of materialism? But in a previous post I've already touched on that, so I won't repeat myself here.

Malcolm wrote:

Please indulge us.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, September 13th, 2015 at 5:42 AM

Title: Re: Buddhism and rebirth

Content:

Vimalakirti432 said:

Okay your various points/responses here are fair enough but arguable, but I guess I should make clear what I mean when I talk about false imputations regarding my views.

I've come back to this repeatedly so maybe this is a waste of bytes but again you insist on calling me a materialist when I insist I'm nothing of the kind.

Malcolm wrote:

You don't accept rebirth or karma so, at the very least this makes you an ucchedavādin.

Vimalakirti432 said:

So you must see the lack of reciprocity here. I'm not telling you that you're a taoist, or a secret Presbyterian or even a supernaturalist as such. I'm accepting your views as you express them. I'm only saying that as a fellow traveller of Buddhism I personally don't accept its supernatural aspects, and I guess I would be expecting the courtesy of having my views, while certainly challenged, in the end accepted on their own terms.

Malcolm wrote:

But I don't accept that it is proper for a practitioner of Buddhadharma to reject rebirth and karma. I don't accept that it is a proper view to label these things pejoratively "supernatural", which we know is just a hedge word for "superstitions."

Vimalakirti432 said:

Now I understand there is a kind of impulse or even duty in the tradition to refute what are considered wrong views, and this would lead you to what would be considered in some other setting to be discourteous. So no I'm not about to get upset and rant etc. - unless this qualifies as a rant!

Malcolm wrote:

Ummmm.....labeling rebirth and karma "superstitions" is actually pretty damn discourteous in a Mahāyāna Buddhist forum.

Vimalakirti432 said:

So again I think we've taken this as far as it can go. I'm by no means a scholar but I've read widely enough in the traditions to be familiar with what you're bringing in here and so unlikely to radically change my views. But perhaps in my next life!

Malcolm wrote:

You have merely left us with an undemonstrated assertion: "karma and rebirth are supernatural beliefs [aka superstitions] and therefore I do not accept them." You have refused to defend this statement in anyway, and have spend most of the time in this exchanging invoking your right to believe whatever you want and be respected for it. I will respect you for believing whatever you want, but not as a follower of Buddhadharma. Whatever you are following, it is not Buddhadharma.

And in particular, you chose to launch this unsubstantiated polemic in the Tibetan Buddhist forum — what the hell did you expect?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, September 13th, 2015 at 9:45 AM

Title: Re: How important is shamatha, and practices before shamatha

Content:

passel said:

Bottom line, meditation lineages have house styles and house interpretations of received texts, and they differ from one another. You can't assume that one yogi's 5th stage of Shamatha is the same as another yogi's 5th stage of Shamatha, or even that they mean the same thing by Shamatha.

Malcolm wrote:

A perfect śamatha is nothing more than the first dhyāna, attended by five mental factors: vitarka, vicara, prithi, sukha and ekagraha. This is a universal definition.

The idea that it takes a year to develop this experience is ridiculous. If you understand what you are doing, you can develop this experience in as little as a single afternoon.

Since the mental factors of vitarka and vicara drop off above the first dhyāna, when one's motivation is to engage in vipaśyāna, it is not appropriate to cultivate anything more than this.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, September 13th, 2015 at 11:00 AM

Title: Re: How important is shamatha, and practices before shamatha

Content:

passel said:

Malcolm- "A perfect śamatha is nothing more than the first dhyāna, attended by five mental factors: vitarka, vicara, prithi, sukha and ekagraha. This is a universal definition."

I'd have to know a lot more than I do to label anything a universal definition (weird concept that), but that's not the definition Wallace uses. "The attainment of Shamatha" according to him is post 9th stage, accompanied by shinjang (which he describes in a very specific way), and he equates it not with the first dhyana but with access concentration.

Malcolm wrote:

He is mistaken.

passel said:

Access concentration/ the attainment of shamatha, according to him is a state devoid of any objects of the 6 consciousnesses, only the alaya and the alaya-vijnana remain. That's an insanely high bar, not attainable in an afternoon.

Malcolm wrote:

Again, he is mistaken,

The state you describe, attainable in an afternoon, sounds interesting and probably worthwhile, but this demonstrates my point. Yogis can use the same tools to very different ends. Not a problem, imo.

You ought to read the Abhidharmakośha where this definition of the first dhyāna is set out, then compare with the Bhavanakrama, Rongzom Chokyi Pandita, etc.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, September 13th, 2015 at 11:12 PM

Title: Re: Analysis or Nothing

Content:

Astus said:

There are at least two problems with that view:

1. it supposes there is something to gain beyond concepts, instead of realising the nature of conceptuality.

Malcolm wrote:

How?

Astus said:

2. it denies what is taught in the sutras and shastras: that vipasyana results in wisdom, practically negating the validity of all paths but the vajrayana.

Malcolm wrote:

How?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, September 14th, 2015 at 12:12 AM

Title: Re: Analysis or Nothing

Content:

Astus said:

By saying that arriving at the conceptual understanding of emptiness is insufficient and it should go beyond.

Malcolm wrote:

So you are claiming that the conceptual knowledge of emptiness, the conceptual knowledge known to a mundane authority, is sufficient?

Astus said:

By saying that analysis does not result in insight into the nature of concepts and so in non-attachment.

Malcolm wrote:

I don't think it is contradicting sūtra at all. For example:

The Buddhāvataṃsaka-nāma-mahāvaiṣṭhīya-sūtra:

The so-called "seeing" by which the mundane eye sees, the seeing lacking higher perception [vipaśyāna], sees phenomena as evil.

If seen with higher perception [vipaśyāna], nothing is seen.

Or the Bodhisattva-pitika:

Again, so-called higher perception [vipaśyāna] is seeing just how all phenomena are; seeing the reality of all phenomena; seeing that non-otherness of all phenomena; seeing the emptiness, seeing the signlessness, seeing the lack of aspiration of all phenomenal. Again, so-called higher perception [vipaśyāna] is not seeing with a cause, not seeing without a cause, not seeing birth, perishing or abiding, not seeing an objective cause — also the best seeing is not seeing at all.

Or the Ārya-sāgara-nāgarāja-paripṛcchā-nāma-mahāyāna-sūtra:

In the same way, there is the higher perception [vipaśyāna] that all phenomena are without cause, without persistence, isolated, totally unestablished. As such, whatever is seen, that is the vipaśyāna of all phenomena. Therefore, if there is higher perception [vipaśyāna] regarding all phenomena, when someone sees a phenomena, it is not higher perception [vipaśyāna]. If it is asked why, seeing phenomena is not higher perception [vipaśyāna] because a cognition is not cognizant.

Here, when we should understand that the term "mundane" eye refers to exactly the kind of mundane authorities Mañjuśrimitra is critiquing.

It is this analysis with mundane authorities that goes exactly nowhere.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, September 14th, 2015 at 12:17 AM

Title: Re: POTUS 2016

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

No one has ever won a Presidency by appealing to the unhinged in the US, contrary to world opinion, they just don't have enough votes compared to blacks, latinos and white women.

kirtu said:
Food for thought:

Blacks - 13.6% of population
Latino/Hispanic citizens - 12% of population
White women (est) - 39.47% of population

65% of total population

So why was George Bush elected twice? Especially the second time? The demographic argument doesn't explain elections in every case by itself. Other factors are at play as well.

Kirt

Malcolm wrote:
Well, the first time, he had the Supreme Court win it for him. Second time, he got us into a war and was elected because Kerry has all the charisma of a wet blanket.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Monday, September 14th, 2015 at 1:10 AM
Title: Re: POTUS 2016
Content:

kirtu said:
"he got us into a war" - which should have worked against Bush. Instead we had the spectacle of uneducated teen singers declaring "he is our President and we should follow him/trust him to conduct the war" and she and her ilk were actually listened to!

Malcolm wrote:
Actually, getting into a war usually favors a politician's chances of re-election.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Monday, September 14th, 2015 at 5:32 AM
Title: Re: Eating at restaurants that serve meat and alcohol
Content:

KeithBC said:
Lots of people do lots of things that I disagree with. Life is too short to get upset by all of them. It is their karma, not mine.

Even if a Buddha image is there with a purely commercial or decorative intent, it does no harm and may do some good. If meat is on the menu (as it is at 99.9% of restaurants here), my responsibility is to not order it, not to change the menu. If, by increasing demand for vegetarian meals and decreasing demand for meat, I motivate the owners

to change the menu, so much the better.

If people are in a teachable mood, I am willing to help them. If not, c'est la vie.

Om mani padme hum
Keith

Tenso said:

I agree it's their karma but it's still a sign of disrespect to many serious practitioners. No other religions would tolerate their prophets being displayed for purely commercial and decorative purposes.

Malcolm wrote:

Apart from Trumpism...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, September 14th, 2015 at 6:26 AM

Title: Re: Analysis or Nothing

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

So you are claiming that the conceptual knowledge of emptiness, the conceptual knowledge known to a mundane authority, is sufficient?

Astus said:

Knowing that fire is hot is a conceptual knowledge. If one has never encountered fire, it is an unconfirmed conceptual knowledge. If one has encountered fire, it is a confirmed conceptual knowledge. Similarly, only hearing about emptiness without knowing what it means is just verbal information. Once it becomes clear what emptiness refers to in one's present experience, it is a confirmed conceptual knowledge. For example, one sees fire and knows that it is fire. If one sees fire without knowing what fire is, that has no power to inform one's knowledge (and therefore subsequent actions), while knowing fire without ever seeing one has no power to inform one's actions (as there is no use of that knowledge in any situation).

Malcolm wrote:

This does not help your case at all. A conceptual knowledge of emptiness is still a mere concept, and results in being fettered. A simulacrum, not the real thing. For example, The Ārya-niṣṭhāgantabhagavajjñānavaipūlya-sūtraratnānanta-nāma-mahāyāna-sūtra states

For example, space is does not impede. In the same way, all objects are like space. Total nonconceptuality does not impede. Total nonconceptuality is freedom. Total conceptuality is a fetter. Total nonconceptuality cuts the fetters.

Here, when we should understand that the term "mundane" eye refers to exactly the kind of mundane authorities Mañjuśrimitra is critiquing.

It is this analysis with mundane authorities that goes exactly nowhere.
That mundane analysis is the view uninformed by emptiness, the thinking of an ordinary being (prthagjana).
Having a view of emptiness does not make one an ārya.
Analysis is the method by which one can arrive at confirming what one has learnt and understood.
But this contradicts the Saddharma-pundarika sūtra:
That which does not analyze or conceive phenomena, Mañjuśrī, is called "the procedure of a bodhisattva."
And the Ārya-pitāputrasamāgamana-nāma-mahāyāna-sūtra:
If it is asked "What is the samadhi that illuminates all phenomena?," here, for the purpose of engaging all phenomena, the bodhisattva mahāsattva does not mentally engage in any conceptuality or analysis
It also contradicts the Ārya-tathāgatajñānamudrā-nāma-mahāyāna-sūtra:
The consciousness without concepts about all phenomena is unobscured.
And the Ārya-śūraṃgamasamādhi-nāma-mahāyāna-sūtra:
Whoever does not conceptualize existence or nonexistence is free from the bonds of Māra.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, September 14th, 2015 at 6:29 AM

Title: Re: Analysis or Nothing

Content:

Astus said:

If you discriminate that phenomena are identityless
And meditate by discriminating them in this way,
This is the cause for the result of attaining nirvana.
Peace will not come about through any other cause."

Malcolm wrote:

That is fine if one thinks nirvana comes about from causes, which is a characteristic approach of the causal vehicle a.k.a, the vehicle of characteristics.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, September 14th, 2015 at 8:04 PM

Title: Re: a former student of aroter seeks help!

Content:

tingdzin said:

It might be useful to keep it simple for awhile: read basic unglamorous Buddhism and do basic unglamorous practice, examining carefully not only the motives of the people who want you "on board" with their beliefs, as well as your own possible motives in being attracted to this or that group.

Malcolm wrote:

Well, in the case of the DC, we want you to convert people by handing out flowers at the

airport....

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, September 14th, 2015 at 10:05 PM

Title: Re: The problem of nihilism

Content:

Vimalakirti432 said:

Here I'm talking about the dualistic notion of escaping out of life, of the otherworldliness we find from the beginning in the texts. The non-dual orientation of the Mahayana in theory should be the cure. Unfortunately the Mahayana has at the same time transformed the idea of escape into the unconditioned into a different kind of escape into supernatural notions of the Buddha and Buddha realms.

I've often been stuck by the essential strangeness of Mahayana sutras. They tend to begin with interesting core ideas, images, metaphors, etc. but then balloon out into mountains of repetition and hyperbole so that what starts out as a useful kind of poetry that supports one's practice finally becomes an alternate universe that substitutes a fairyland for the real.

Malcolm wrote:

Bias alert! Here you go again, trolling another forum.

Vimalakirti432 said:

Of course the Mahayana texts no doubt assumed the forms they did for many reasons, among which is the fact they were probably more chanted than read.

Malcolm wrote:

Total nonsense.

Vimalakirti432 said:

But the point is not the sutras themselves but what they represent, a kind of over-the-top supernaturalism, where the Mahayana, pardon the pun if there is one, kind of loses its mind.

Malcolm wrote:

Dear reader, note that supernatural = fairyland = insanity.

Vimalakirti432 said:

In fact this happens almost literally. One of the debates in Tibetan Buddhism, for example, is whether a Buddha can have any mind at all, any thoughts or concepts, or whether she is a kind of robo-buddha, driven on by a previous bodhisattva career to help beings mindlessly. In this way a Buddha becomes so utterly, inhumanly transcendent that you need intermediaries to somehow connect with the human level, bodhisattvas like Avalokiteshvara, just as in theistic religions where an utterly

transcendent God also demands intermediaries, Jesus in the Abrahamic line and Krishna in the line of Sanatana dharma, as examples.

Malcolm wrote:

You really deeply misunderstand the point of a buddha's spontaneous activity.

Vimalakirti432 said:

The result is that many traditions of the Mahayana are so heavily invested in supernatural concepts, realms and impossible states beyond being that for me at least they constitute an obstruction, and are therefore problematic as a cure for nihilism.

Malcolm wrote:

Here, supernatural = impossible.

Vimalakirti432 said:

But now the liberal, like Garbo, will finally speak his own sort of truth. To that end keep in mind that I'm a fool with no standing and who speaks only for himself. What I offer is no more than a short glimpse into how a typical liberal thinks about these questions. So in that sense I may be doing no more than providing ammunition for fundamentalists everywhere!

Malcolm wrote:

You are hardly a liberal. A "liberal" follower of Buddhadharma does not call Sukhavati Vyuha "a fairy land." A conservative materialist might though.

Vimalakirti432 said:

I begin with the Kalama sutta, which enjoins the careful examination and application of what we learn of dharma, and reaching our own judgments.

Malcolm wrote:

It does nothing of the kind.

Vimalakirti432 said:

Here's what I see. I think without much controversy I see the core of Buddhism as dependent origination.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, this is the core of Buddhadharma. Score one for Vima!

Vimalakirti432 said:

From dependent origination all the other key ideas are derived - impermanence, the questioning of the nature of identity and so on, really the whole framework of the dhamma. And here, bare-bones as it seems, is the first phase of the cure for nihilism.

This first phase can be seen in many passages of the pali canon, where we read that certain of the Buddha's followers were immediately liberated, simply upon hearing

about the principle of dependent origination. Initially this seems strange, at least to me, given the lack of explanation in the text. But on reflection I think we can fill in the blanks and assume that for some of his followers the intuition of dependent origination was enough, and that all its basic implications quickly followed.

Malcolm wrote:

Śariputra was already a follower of Saṃkhya, so of course dependent origination made sense to him immediately.

Vimalakirti432 said:

Here I locate the beginning of the second phase in the cure for nihilism, for here was an expansion of the practice that well before the Mahayana developed the sense of interrelatedness between beings, of their connectedness, so that even under the ideology of the arhats institutions were built that allowed people to see more clearly their inextricable network of relations, how the idea of a single isolated being was incoherent on the level of precious human birth, and that they were part of a larger whole, a spiritual community immune to annihilation. (Admirable friendships is not just half the spiritual life, it is the whole of the spiritual of life, says the Upaddha Sutta.)

Malcolm wrote:

Just as a personal self is incoherent, so is a social or communal self.

Vimalakirti432 said:

This development returns us to the problems of Buddhist realism, which are particularly acute in respect to the aggregates. The aggregates were wise and advanced medicine perhaps in the beginning, for the Buddha was known to say what was most skillful in the context of needs of the person he was facing. But by setting up separate categories for mind and body, i.e. dualism, the aggregates committed Buddhism to just the kind of habitual habits of mind that dependent origination in its deepest implications I believe overcomes.

Malcolm wrote:

The division of nāma and rūpa is ancient and pre-Buddhist. It is obvious that the mind is not the body. Lose a finger, your mind is not diminished one little bit. Lose your mind, your body immediately begins to decay and rot.

The point of the aggregates is merely to show there was no self in them or apart from them. The aggregates cover afflicted phenomena, whereas the āyatana and dhātu cover both afflicted and nonafflicted phenomena.

Vimalakirti432 said:

Ideas of the "material" and the "spiritual" are in fact habits of mind that go back in most cultures to very early human history, and arise as consequences of our particular evolution on our particular little planet we call home. Solid things hurt when they fall on our heads, and when the breath leaves the body and someone dies we feel that some switch has been turned off, that some substance has left. So understandably many of the first words for entities like "soul" also meant "breath" - "pneuma" in Greek, "prana"

in Sanskrit, and so on. On the most primitive level, which like it or not, is still at the root of our mental habits, I believe it's as simple as that.

Malcolm wrote:

Prāṇa does not mean breath, it means life. There is a vāyu, a wind, called prāṇa-vāyu, the wind that sustains life.

Vimalakirti432 said:

Nagarjuna, by drawing out the full implications of dependent origination, breaks this primitive dichotomy down, shows that mind and body, emptiness and form, are not separate but an interdependent reality that resists all conceptualization and mental fabrication. A materialist denies spirit, an idealist denies matter, both in some sense toy with nihilism. Nagarjuna, by appearing to deny everything denies nothing. His middle way, as he maintains, is not nihilism but its cure (except for the hopelessly incurable who would posit emptiness as real). His rigorous analysis definitively shows that dependent origination is indeed deep, subtle and hard to fathom.

Malcolm wrote:

Actually, Nāgārjuna points out that nothing is established and that everything is a mere convention.

Vimalakirti432 said:

And so to sum up my liberal version of the dharma: when drawn out in its full implications, dependent origination is the definitive cure for nihilism and the fear of annihilation, in at least three phases: (phase 1) We are not separate and so have nothing to fear; (phase 2) we are not alone but interdependently involved with endless other beings; (phase 3) we are expressions of the non-dual fabric of things as they are, beyond all conception, perennially arising and re-arising, ever-renewing windows on reality.

Malcolm wrote:

We are also not the same. The idea of nonseparation is just another false identity proposition, refuted in opening praise of the MMK which is cited from the Prajñāpāramitā: i.e. not ceasing, not arising, not going, not coming, not annihilated, not permanent, not different, not identical, not the same... Thus, we are not interdependently involved with endless other beings, this is something Nāgārjuna rejects explicitly since he refutes the dominant condition among the four conditions [as well as the other three] in the first chapter of the MMK. There is no nondual fabric of things as they are, this is an entirely foreign notion to Buddhadharma. In Nāgārjuna's view, there is no ultimately no arising or ceasing. Arising and ceasing are merely conventions grounded in not seeing how things are.

Vimalakirti432 said:

That was a lot of ground to cover in a relatively short space, so there's bound to be much open to criticism.

Malcolm wrote:

You said it, not me.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, September 15th, 2015 at 1:47 AM

Title: Re: Analysis or Nothing

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

A conceptual knowledge of emptiness is still a mere concept, and results in being fettered. A simulacrum, not the real thing.

Astus said:

Ignorance is based on the mistaken concept of self. Removing that is wisdom. Knowledge of emptiness as a mere concept is not knowledge of emptiness. The conceptual knowledge of emptiness is when the concept of substance is proven to be false. Just like if one were to think that there is a tiger in the house then there would arise fear from entering it. But if one actually goes and checks the rooms and find no tiger, from the confirmed knowledge of that the fear vanishes.

Malcolm wrote:

Finding there is no tiger in the room is not a matter of analysis.

Astus said:

We might say that "there is no tiger in the house" is a conceptual knowledge, but what it means is that the idea of there being a tiger is removed, so in that sense it is relinquishing the concept.

Malcolm wrote:

It is, providing you have ascertained there is no tiger. Otherwise, you can analyze whether there is or is not a tiger in a room until the end of time, without being one step closer to the truth. This is the problem with Madhyamaka analysis.

Astus said:

It is not that one just sits far from the house and wonders whether there is or there isn't any tiger, one actually has to check it for himself.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, so it is not a matter of analysis. It is a matter of direct perception.

Astus said:

Same goes for vipasyana, it is not merely theorising about there being a self or not but actually looking for it. Although it could be said that searching the house for a tiger is still based on delusion, without actually doing a thorough analysis, one will not just enter the house.

Malcolm wrote:

The difference is the following: when one is analyzing things like lions, tigers and bears, in reality these are mundane objects. Further, direct perceptions with mundane sense

organs is not a priori veridical. You could very well see a rope as a snake an alley, in this case your [mistaken] direct perception is a snake, and as far as you are concerned, there must be a snake there. This shows the limitation of your analogy with ordinary sense organs.

Rongzom uses the example of the reflection of a black snake in the water to show the errors of various tenet systems. He explains:

[H]igher and lower views are solely differentiated on the basis more and less attachment to reality in appearances.

For example, if there is reflection of a black snake in the water; some will see a snake, [48/a] and will leave due to their fear. Likewise, even though phenomena which are a source of suffering are like an illusion, they are abandoned by the śrāvakas who perceive them as real.

Even though some understand that the black snake is a reflection, believing that it is harmful if touched, rely on medicine; likewise in the system of the Prajñāpāramita, even though the relative is like an illusion, since there is a view in which functional agents exist, one develops the pristine consciousness concerning the knowable and relies upon the medicine of great compassion.

Since some understand that the black snake is a reflection and will not cause harm even if touched, and are able to communicate to those with anxiety that its touch has no power. Likewise, in the systems of kriya and outer yoga tantra, even though it is comprehended there is no fault in lower conduct and substances, they do not have the capacity for intrepid behavior. But they have the capacity of the behavior to make offerings to deities, perform the conduct of strict discipline, accomplishment substances, etc.

Some understand there is no fault in touching a black snake even if touching it has the ability to cause harm, because that anxiety is rapidly removed due to the existence of the strict discipline of subjugation.[49/a] Likewise, the system of inner yoga "stands on the neck" of practice to quickly render all phenomena equal. One's behavior specifically corresponds to the strict discipline of the absence of virtue and misdeeds in phenomena and the absence of pure or impure in food.

Since some, possessing an undeceived mind regarding the characteristic of a reflection of a black snake, see all of those behaviors as the behavior of children. Leaving aside the others, abandoning existents, etc.;, even the subjugation of that very reflection of a black snake like a heroic warrior is seen as a childish idea. Accepting and rejecting, or a mind fabricating the condition of those does not develop, and moving and seeking do not occur. Likewise, since the system of the Great Perfection comprehends and is the culmination of the comprehension of all phenomena as totally equivalent to illusions, that being the case, the mind is not confused by the power of appearances and there is no ability of develop formations — there is no accepting, no rejecting, no moving and no seeking. As such, this culmination of the comprehension of being like an illusion is also proven to the culmination of comprehending the two truths as inseparable.

Thus, there is no real need for analysis. One does not need to understand mere that there is no tiger in a house, one needs to understand that tigers, houses, snakes and indeed all phenomena are completely equivalent with illusions — this is the real intention of Mahāyāna.

Astus said:

In order to be free from conceptualisation of extremes one has to see that there is nothing to conceptualise about.

Malcolm wrote:

That does not require analytical investigation.

That is fine if one thinks nirvana comes about from causes, which is a characteristic approach of the causal vehicle a.k.a, the vehicle of characteristics.

If realisation has no causes, there is neither path nor teachings. Nirvana is the elimination of ignorance, and that happens through correct understanding and correct contemplation. Vajrayana is no different, since it is itself a path with instructions and practices.

[/quote]

Nirvana is not the elimination of ignorance. Nirvana is the elimination of afflictions.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, September 15th, 2015 at 1:53 AM

Title: Re: The problem of nihilism

Content:

Vimalakirti432 said:

Hi Wayfarer. Thanks for your helpful comments, which don't sound at all dashed off.

As for your inference that I'm a materialist I understand why you say that but I still have to disagree. As you suggest, the "natural" and the "super" are slippery and relative terms. I have no commitment to materialism but rather as I've said to collapsing a distinction rooted in primitive notions.

Malcolm wrote:

You seriously need to read The Savage Mind by Levi-Strauss.

Vimalakirti432 said:

I sometimes feel it's my way I'm saying things...that causes people problems.

Malcolm wrote:

Yeah, like when you say: "Here I would add that whatever way one takes "Buddha fields", on a sliding scale from fairyland to metaphor to straight on reality..."

Vimalakirti432 said:

And no I don't think this is a rewriting of anyone's tradition, as some have suggested, but a reframing of the dharma for a specific concrete situation, as Buddhism has always done.

Malcolm wrote:
Gotta love the jargon.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Tuesday, September 15th, 2015 at 2:36 AM
Title: Re: The problem of nihilism
Content:
Vimalakirti432 said:
I do want in a separate post to address the whole problem of tone...

Malcolm wrote:
I think you are tone deaf. You have no idea how disrespectful your presentation is.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Tuesday, September 15th, 2015 at 4:59 AM
Title: Re: Analysis or Nothing
Content:
Malcolm wrote:
Finding there is no tiger in the room is not a matter of analysis.

Astus said:
One checks each room if there is a tiger there. Similarly, one checks the aggregates if there is a self there. If this is not analysis, then what is called analysis is not analysis. And probably this is where the misunderstanding of analysis lies, mistaking it for theorising instead of informed observation and investigation of phenomena.

Malcolm wrote:
And hence the fault of conceptualizing.

One should walk into a room, and discover what is there without first imagining "Oh! If there is a tiger there, I better go find out!"

What you are essentially recommending is going through a conceptual exercise of imagining that something is there, and then spending time to find out whether what you imagine is true.

If, on the other hand, someone tells you, "There are no tigers in that house", it may be the case that you have some doubt and need to confirm this for your self. Likewise, if someone tells you that there is no self in the aggregates, then you look and you will not find one. Of course it is up to you to look, and not leave it as a mere concept.

Astus said:

It is, providing you have ascertained there is no tiger. Otherwise, you can analyze whether there is or is not a tiger in a room until the end of time, without being one step closer to the truth. This is the problem with Madhyamaka analysis.

Again, as above, vipasyana is not theorising.

Malcolm wrote:

Well, the kind of vipaśyāna analysis you are now favoring is really, because unlike tigers and snakes, the absence of the four extremes is not something that really can be confirmed with ordinary thinking and cognitions because it is not an object. Therefore, you have to imagine something to negate and so on.

In other words, having seen a tiger, one can know what the absence of a tiger is because there are sign by which tigers can be apprehended. But there are no signs by which an extreme can be apprehended, and hence the analogy breaks down as it must.

Even if you think you have confirmed the absence of extremes, this is just an intellectual confirmation. In order to actually confirm this, you have to go beyond the conceptuality of the mind. Conceptual analysis will not get you there. Conceptual investigation will not get you there.

What you work with is the concepts themselves. They are your experiences. So you observe them: where does this thought come from, where does it go? You do this until you understand that concepts do not come from anywhere nor go anywhere. Then you can go beyond concepts. But even this is still a conceptual exercise. It should only be done after receiving direct introduction on the basis having the experience of a moment of ordinary mind.

Astus said:

Yes, so it is not a matter of analysis. It is a matter of direct perception.

There is direct perception, yes. The analysis is pointing one's perception in the right direction.

Malcolm wrote:

As pointed out, mundane direct perceptions are deceptive.

Astus said:

The reason it is not recognised is because of the lack of direction, and that is what the teachings and the analysis performed based on the Dharma helps with.

Malcolm wrote:

The reason it is not recognized is because of lack of introduction. Someone might, eventually exhaust their concepts through analysis, and understand. But this is a very slow route, it takes eons.

Astus said:

Thus, there is no real need for analysis. One does not need to understand mere that there is no tiger in a house, one needs to understand that tigers, houses, snakes and indeed all phenomena are completely equivalent with illusions — this is the real intention of Mahāyāna.

The tiger is a metaphor for substance, the house for the six sensory areas. Realising that the six senses are insubstantial, illusory, is all there is to know. The way to realise that is observing clearly what the six senses actually are, that is, looking through the rooms, and that is analysis.

Malcolm wrote:

No, you merely need look at the perceiver who uses the six sense media, and understand it is not established in any way, mere empty clarity. You do not need analysis, you need direct introduction through experiences.

Since the kind of analysis used by Kamalashila and which are you now advocating involves coarse conceptuality, it is very difficult, virtually impossible through analysis to discover the nonconceptual empty clarity of the mind and go beyond mind. But when one works with direct introduction, it is very easy.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, September 15th, 2015 at 5:06 AM

Title: Re: The problem of nihilism

Content:

Garudavista said:

Vimalakirti432, you may also benefit from watching Dzongsar Jamyang Khyentse Rinpoche's talk "Is there Buddhism without Rebirth?" that he gave at The UC Berkley Center for Buddhist Studies:

I hope this helps.

Malcolm wrote:

This is what he was critiquing.

In fact, Dzongsar's rambling presentation was pretty weak.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, September 15th, 2015 at 10:07 AM

Title: Re: Analysis or Nothing

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

the absence of the four extremes is not something that really can be confirmed with ordinary thinking and cognitions because it is not an object.

The face of prajñāpāramitā is not different than all appearances [this is fundamental tenet of Ati yoga, one of things that differentiates it from Chan/Zen, etc.], hence it is an

object of mind, an experience

cloudburst said:

Please, from your point of view, what is the difference between the "absence of the four extremes" and the "face of prajnaparamita?"

Malcolm wrote:

The absence of the four extremes is a conceptual construction; appearances are suchness.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, September 15th, 2015 at 9:15 PM

Title: Re: Analysis or Nothing

Content:

Astus said:

If there were no pre-existing concept of a tiger, someone saying that there is no tiger in the house would make no sense. In both cases one needs to have the assumption of a tiger. And that view of a real tiger is the mistake everyone has. Without seeing for oneself that there is no tiger, the mistake remains.

Malcolm wrote:

This is very similar to the argument Gelugpas make about inherent existence — they insist that the object of negation is inherent existence — but no one has any idea of what inherent existence is until they are informed that this is what they looking for and negating.

Astus said:

One already has the view of substantial entities, conceiving things as independent objects.

Malcolm wrote:

Maybe, maybe not.

Astus said:

That is the misconception that needs to be eliminated. At the same time, one is normally unaware of the presence of wrong view, so it has to be highlighted as the source of the problem. Thus the structure of the four noble truths and the twelve links. So it is not the case that the extremes are not there, because they are the basis of all the problems.

Malcolm wrote:

The extremes are not there, they are not established, they never existed from the beginning.

Astus said:

Even if you think you have confirmed the absence of extremes, this is just an intellectual confirmation. In order to actually confirm this, you have to go beyond the conceptuality of the mind. Conceptual analysis will not get you there. Conceptual investigation will not get you there.

The extremes are conceptual assumptions. And just like with any other wrong view, it can be corrected through understanding it to be wrong. And that understanding requires concepts.

Malcolm wrote:

But you don't even need to make these conceptual assumptions and then go about eliminating them. This is a very dim-witted approach.

Astus said:

What you work with is the concepts themselves. They are your experiences. So you observe them: where does this thought come from, where does it go? You do this until you understand that concepts do not come from anywhere nor go anywhere. Then you can go beyond concepts. But even this is still a conceptual exercise. It should only be done after receiving direct introduction on the basis having the experience of a moment of ordinary mind.

Similarly to samatha, in vipasyana one goes from the grosser to the subtler objects, simply because that is normally easier. But eventually one arrives at investigating the mind to see that thoughts are inconstant and unreliable. A moment of mind without concepts becomes a memory in the next moment and then serves as just another concept, thus people can even imagine it to be a real self and set up a duality of thoughts versus no thoughts. Then they need to look again and integrate all experiences to see that all has the same nature as the mind. That way it becomes an analysis in the reverse order.

Malcolm wrote:

No, really it is much simpler than that. They need to receive direct introduction — then they need to work with the instructions of the lineage, which in general do not involve any analysis whatsoever, at least in Dzogchen.

Astus said:

As pointed out, mundane direct perceptions are deceptive.

All perceptions are inconstant and unreliable, and when that is recognised, there is no more basis for attachment. It doesn't matter whether it's an elephant or just the illusion of an elephant.

Malcolm wrote:

If all perceptions are inconstant and reliable, then all analysis is unreliable.

Astus said:

The reason it is not recognized is because of lack of introduction. Someone might, eventually exhaust their concepts through analysis, and understand. But this is a very

slow route, it takes eons.

Analysis is directed investigation, that is: vipasyana. Not theorising or arguing. That "slow exhaustion of concepts" is a straw man.

Malcolm wrote:

But above, you clearly indicate that you have to adopt a theory to investigate. So you are now contradicting yourself.

Astus said:

No, you merely need look at the perceiver who uses the six sense media, and understand it is not established in any way, mere empty clarity. You do not need analysis, you need direct introduction through experiences.

Analysis is exactly like that, except it does not posit a perceiver but investigates the six areas as they are and confirms directly that there is nothing to grasp.

Malcolm wrote:

No one is positing an ultimate perceiver here — the point there are not six consciousnesses apprehending six different kinds of media. There is one consciousness functioning through the six sense organs. The point is that when one understands that the magician is not real, one immediately understands that his tricks are also false. Going through and analyzing the six external sense objects is a waste of time.

Astus said:

Since the kind of analysis used by Kamalashila and which are you now advocating involves coarse conceptuality, it is very difficult, virtually impossible through analysis to discover the nonconceptual empty clarity of the mind and go beyond mind. But when one works with direct introduction, it is very easy.

In a sense it is understandable that analytical meditation had been put away as too complicated and more experiential methods were raised as the direct path.

Madhyamaka had become a large heap of arguments and theories, so no wonder many felt that it is too slow and such.

Malcolm wrote:

Madhyamaka, in reality, merely serves as a corrective to the realism of the three lower tenet systems. It has no tenet system of its own. This is why Madhyamaka has not independent path which is separate from the path of Yogacara. The path of Yogacara and Madhyamaka is the same path, five paths and ten stages.

Astus said:

The same happened to abhidharma. But that doesn't mean it was always like that or that's how it was meant to be used.

Malcolm wrote:

The kinds of analysis Madhyamaka engages in is meant to serve as a corrective to realism.

But these days, proponents of Madhyamaka analysis spend lots of time building up realisms just to tear them down, like small children who build sand castles, believe they are real for a little while, and then act like conquerors when they demolish their sand castle with a kick.

Astus said:

Dzogchen and Mahamudra emphasising that one should go directly to the nature of mind, however, is practically not different from analysis.

Malcolm wrote:

This demonstrates you have not really understood Dzogchen teachings. Sūtra Mahāmudra indeed involves a fair amount of analytical investigation, but that is not surprising since it is called "Sūtra" Mahāmudra for a reason.

Astus said:

It goes through the same steps of establishing a calm mind, then investigating that very mind to ascertain its emptiness, finally arriving at the unity of samatha-vipasyana.

Malcolm wrote:

This really is not the principle of Dzogchen teachings on any level at all.

Astus said:

If the mind were not looked into it would be simply just samatha. Kamalashila arrives at the nature of mind as well:

"One analyses by thinking that just as the mind, the identity of all phenomena too is like mere illusion. In this way when the identity of the mind is individually examined by wisdom, in the ultimate sense it is perceived neither within or without. It is also not perceived in the absence of both. Neither the mind of the past, nor that of the future, nor of the present is perceived. When the mind is born, it comes from nowhere and when it ceases it goes nowhere because it is inapprehensible, undemonstratable and non-physical."

Malcolm wrote:

This is not the nature of the mind. The nature of the mind is not only emptiness. The result of this analysis epitomizes the fault the Kun byed rgyal po Tantra is pointing out to which exists in the sūtras of the bodhisattva pitika:

The sūtras of bodhisattvas...

assert dharmatā as empty space

through the investigation and analysis of the two truths.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, September 15th, 2015 at 9:57 PM

Title: Re: Shenphen Dawa Rinpoche on Reading Dzogchen Books

Content:

Adamantine said:

Some of these same issues are covered from Sangye Khandro's POV in this recent interview: <http://www.tricycle.com/blog/no-adaptation-required>

Excerpt:

Have there been other problems in the transmission of the Vajrayana? Let me give you one example. An abbot—who works with my partner Lama Chonam and me—is coming to the United States soon to teach Dzogchen. He will give the empowerment, the reading transmission, and the instructions. But there will be restrictions on who can participate. It's very important to him that no academic researchers be present unless they are there to actually practice. He is concerned about Westerners getting these transmissions, going back to their universities, and then teaching or publishing, out of context, what they were given. This is a problem in the West, and those of us who understand proper transmission need to speak out about it. It needs to stop.

MalaBeads said:

Thank you for the link to the article and thank you to Khandro Sangye for doing it. I had no idea there was such a problem with academics and universities.

Malcolm wrote:

Well, there isn't. But Khenpo Namdrol, to whom she is referring, is probably upset at the fact that Germano [as well as others] has been using Dzogchen material in classes at UVA for decades. The thing is, he has produced a fair number of pretty good scholars are also actually interested in practicing the teachings. And some who have no interest at all, but are in it for the intellectual exercise and cultural studies. My personal opinion from reading his papers and hearing him describe what he thinks Dzogchen means is that he has misunderstood key points, but I could say the same for a lot of faithful traditionalists as well. I also do not buy his speculative historical analysis of Dzogchen. But in this article I think Sangye is being a little over the top. Dzogchen teachings belong to humanity. And the cat is out of the bag anyway, so we might as well do our best to present the best possible translations available to the widest number of people so they can encounter the teachings. Frankly, invocations to Rahula are much more problematical as widely available texts than say the Rig pa rang shar tantra, IMO.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, September 15th, 2015 at 11:29 PM

Title: Re: Shenphen Dawa Rinpoche on Reading Dzogchen Books

Content:

pemachophel said:

Loppon-la,

You know I respect your opinion, but I don't agree with the following:

"the cat is out of the bag anyway, so we might as well do our best to present the best possible translations available to the widest number of people so they can encounter

the teachings"

Rather I think we should do a better job of explaining and popularizing the notion that proper transmission of Dzogchen requires wang/ngo-tro, lung, and tri and that, if any are missing, the process doesn't work. This includes doing a better job of explaining that "the process" is supra-conceptual and is not a matter of intellectual understanding.

Malcolm wrote:

I can understand why you feel that way. Of course, I agree with you that Dzogchen needs to be transmitted in a proper way, but Dzogchen teachings are not secrets to be kept as if they were classified information. At this point in time, people who do not read Tibetan are at a severe disadvantage, even if they have transmission. So for this reason, it is necessary to openly publish the classics, because in fact, all the raw information is out there already anyway; both in academia and in popular books available to the general public. Anyone can buy Alan Wallace's publication of Dudjom Lingpa's Dzogchen collection. Anyone can buy Yeshe Lama on Amazon. These are but two examples. The cat is out of the bag, and we ought to acknowledge this fact. Anyone can get Germano's thesis, etc.

pemachophel said:

IMO, popularizing the Dzogchen texts even more widely and openly will only result in those teachings losing more and more of their power.

Malcolm wrote:

The predictions in the sgra thal 'gyur tantra concerning the spread of Dzogchen teachings throughout this world indicate that it is the last teaching to remain in this world before the teachings completely disappear. It is similar to the principle that at first the hells disappear, and then each realm above it, until all that remains is the upper form realms. Likewise, in this world system, first the worldly systems will disappear, the lower yānas, then the outer tantras, then the two lower inner tantras, and in the end, the only teaching which will remain is the Dzogchen teaching. Of course, Dzogchen was also the first teaching ever to be taught in this eon. All teachings spread from there.

So we should not be too worried about the teachings losing their power. Dzogchen is the essence of all of the teachings, it will never lose any of its power, ever, just like the sun and the moon will never lose their power to illuminate until this world system is destroyed completely.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, September 16th, 2015 at 12:49 AM

Title: Re: Shenphen Dawa Rinpoche on Reading Dzogchen Books

Content:

ngodrup said:

Similarly, with amply respect for the opinions of Loppon-la,

I concur with Lama Pema here. What is missing in having many

translations out is that the wang, lung and tri is not widespread.

Malcolm wrote:

It is actually more widespread than there are texts to support those.

ngodrup said:

Our merit is good enough to hear of dharmas like dzogchen, but weak enough that we have wrong views about tantra and dzogchen.

Malcolm wrote:

C'mon, with all due respect, even Tibetans have wrong views about tantra and dzogchen.

ngodrup said:

And then we wonder why it is hard to have stability in the practice.
We wonder why we have yet to see any rainbow bodies in the west.

Malcolm wrote:

Again, with all due respect, rainbow body is not the main point of practicing the teachings.

ngodrup said:

I'm surprised that Shenpen Rinpoche's words are controversial to anybody.
He's showing concern that dzogchen fulfills its function for qualified students who can actually make use of them. We need to, as Lama Pema says here, popularize the idea that co-operating with one's teacher/s is the *main* criterion.

Malcolm wrote:

"Qualified" means you are a student who is interested in the teachings and makes the effort to go get them.

In any case, I also not proposing anything radical at all. Rather, I am observing that people are not as stupid and deluded as you might conclude from Shenpen Rinpoche's talk, and second, that the dissemination of classical Dzogchen literature will have a positive effect on the world, not a negative one.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, September 16th, 2015 at 1:06 AM

Title: Re: Analysis or Nothing

Content:

conebeckham said:

མ་རིག་འདུ་བྱེད་མེད་མེ་འབྱུང་།
དེ་མེད་འདུ་བྱེད་མེ་འབྱུང་ཁོང་།

ཕན་ཚུན་སྒྱུ་ཕྱིར་དེ་གཉིས་ནི།
རང་བཞིན་གྱིས་ནི་མ་གྲུབ་ཡིན།

Nagarjuna, Seventy Stanzas, verse 11--Ignorance arises in dependence on karmic formations, and vice versa.

cloudburst said:

Cone did you translate this yourself? this is wonderful!

conebeckham said:

Let me know if you need a translation.

cloudburst said:

thank you that's very kind!

conebeckham said:

Nagarjuna, Seventy Stanzas, verse 11--Ignorance arises in dependence on karmic formations, and vice versa. Let me know if you need a translation.

cloudburst said:

of course everyone knows that all the dependent related links are dependent, but which is called "the root" of samsara? Which immediately precedes karmic formations, and thus can be considered it's immediate cause? Why does Nagarjuna say that when ignorance is stopped, compositional activity is stopped?

Malcolm wrote:

མ་རིག་འདུ་བྱེད་མེད་མི་འབྱུང་།
དེ་མེད་འདུ་བྱེད་མི་འབྱུང་ཞིང་།
ཕན་ཚུན་སྒྱུ་ཕྱིར་དེ་གཉིས་ནི།
རང་བཞིན་གྱིས་ནི་མ་གྲུབ་ཡིན།

Ignorance [the first link of dependent origination] is not produced without formations [the second link],

without it, formations are not produced —

because they mutually cause [each other]

both of them are not established.

The root of samsara is not the afflictive ignorance in the chain of dependent origination.

The root of samsara is the ignorance that is a knowledge obscuration.

For certain, a clear distinction is drawn between these two in Dzogchen teachings.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, September 16th, 2015 at 1:34 AM

Title: Re: Analysis or Nothing

Content:

cloudburst said:

when we reach the eighth ground we become free of afflictive ignorance altogether, and are liberated from samsara. Cut the root, kill the tree.

It may be noted here that of the two obstructions that need to be removed, karmic formations isn't specified.

Malcolm wrote:

In some presentations, karmic obscurations are listed as a separate obscuration, for example, in the Śatasāhasrika-prajñāpāramitā and the Buddhāvataṃsaka-nāma-mahāvaiṣṭhīya-sūtra among many others. In the Ārya-mahāmokṣadīśunpuṣyakrotramtyapāpamśodhana-nāma-mahāyāna-sūtra, and any number of Indian commentaries, both sutric, and especially tantric, there is a discussion three obscurations.

When we become a first stage bodhisattva we are liberated from samsara in the sense that now our Buddhahood is guaranteed. Even during patience on the path of application we are guaranteed not to take rebirth in the three lower realms and so on.

At the eighth stage, since we are free from afflictive obscurations, we now have power over birth, but this does mean we are free from the knowledge obscuration of ignorance.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, September 16th, 2015 at 2:06 AM

Title: Re: Shenphen Dawa Rinpoche on Reading Dzogchen Books

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

BTW, just because I think these books should be out there and available to the interested does not mean that I think such books should not also come with pretty stern statements about who such books are really intended for.

We can create a culture of respect for the teachings without having to enforce restrictions on classic texts.

For example, when the Bonpos published some instructions on Thogal, ChNN told everyone they should not read the thogal sections of that book. He did not say they should not buy it, etc. I think by and large everyone obeyed his request — I know I did.

I think it is much more strange that books on all the procedures of doing Kilaya practice are openly published for anyone to read, and no one says boo about those books, but when it comes to Dzogchen, everyone freaks out a little. And frankly, I think instructions on smad las rites should be more restricted than any Dzogchen tantra, which is pretty vanilla by comparison [you won't find any smad las rites in any Dzogchen tantra].

Author: Malcolm
Date: Wednesday, September 16th, 2015 at 2:56 AM
Title: Re: Analysis or Nothing
Content:

cloudburst said:
there are things that arise as a result of this ignorance, such as contaminated feelings, contaminated karma, knowledge obscurations etc. but at its root, the ignorance that is the root of samsara is a conceptual error.

Malcolm wrote:
Which ignorance are you talking about? The one at the head of the twelve nidanas, or the knowledge obscuration of ignorance? They are not the same thing.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Wednesday, September 16th, 2015 at 3:38 AM
Title: Re: Analysis or Nothing
Content:

cloudburst said:
there are things that arise as a result of this ignorance, such as contaminated feelings, contaminated karma, knowledge obscurations etc. but at its root, the ignorance that is the root of samsara is a conceptual error.

Malcolm wrote:
Which ignorance are you talking about? The one at the head of the twelve nidanas, or the knowledge obscuration of ignorance? They are not the same thing.

cloudburst said:
afflictive ignorance.

Malcolm wrote:
Right, then you have it turned right round on its head when you state the knowledge obscuration arises from afflictive ignorance. If this were the case, there could be no arhats, nor could there be eighth stage bodhisattvas.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Wednesday, September 16th, 2015 at 9:11 AM
Title: Re: Analysis or Nothing
Content:

cloudburst said:

to be more precise, knowledge obscurations arise from having had afflictive ignorance since beginningless time. like the smell of garlic in a wooden box, the smell has its origin with the garlic but persists after the garlic has been removed.

Malcolm wrote:

No, this is not the case. The knowledge obscuration precedes the afflictive obscuration, in other words, the latter arises from the former.

cloudburst said:

so contra to your usual interpretation of shantideva, you now claim that emptiness IS an object of mind?

Malcolm wrote:

Of course not, read the thread.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, September 16th, 2015 at 7:58 PM

Title: Re: Analysis or Nothing

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The point I am making is that intellectual analysis will only result in an intellectual apprehension of the object of analysis. Even when you are finished with the analysis, for example, the famous diamond sliver analysis, and so on, still in the end you are left with the concept "emptiness", "nonarising", "freedom from extremes" and so on, even though, as Mañjuśrimitra points out, since the conceptualized extreme does not exist, therefore the extreme to analyze does not exist. Therefore, conventional analysis by mundane minds cannot be used in an ultimate analysis because they cannot escape their own conceptual clinging, indeed they are always with concepts.

sherabpa said:

This is a standard objection to the mahayana analysis which is refuted by Shantideva in ch 9:

109

'But when the process of analysis
is in turn made an object of analysis
This too may be analyzed
And thus we find an infinite regress'.

110

If phenomena are truly analyzed
No basis for analysis remains.
Deprived of further objects, it has no basis
Which is called 'nirvana'.

This is standard stuff, you must know this.

Malcolm wrote:

Right, this is the Madhyamaka POV. Mañjuśrīmitra finds some fault with this line of reasoning for the reasons above.

sherabpa said:

The vajrayana was not taught because ultimate reality is inaccessible through the sutras. That is a great denigration of the sutras. Rather, it was taught because of the four superiorities.

Malcolm wrote:

I did not say that ultimate reality was inaccessible through sūtra, I pointed out that in the beginning that the kind of analysis that Astus now deems necessary, with his new-found enthusiasm for the Bhāvanakrama, is not necessary, and various faults to be had with such an analytical approach.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, September 16th, 2015 at 8:10 PM

Title: Re: Analysis or Nothing

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The extremes are not there, they are not established, they never existed from the beginning.

Astus said:

The problem is that they are thought to be established, although they are not. And that's the basic mistake.

Malcolm wrote:

It's not going to be rectified through proofs and negations.

Astus said:

But you don't even need to make these conceptual assumptions and then go about eliminating them. This is a very dim-witted approach.

Ignorance is already present, no need to establish it, only to point it out as the source of the problems.

Malcolm wrote:

We all understand ignorance is the source of the problem. The question is how to deal with it.

Astus said:

No, really it is much simpler than that. They need to receive direct introduction — then they need to work with the instructions of the lineage, which in general do not involve

any analysis whatsoever, at least in Dzogchen.

Same happens everywhere else. One learns the teaching, understands it, then applies it. Analysis is following the guidance of the teachings to confirm for oneself its validity, like checking if there's a self in the sensory areas.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, and as pointed out above, it is a very slow approach because it relies on a coarse mind.

Astus said:

If all perceptions are inconstant and reliable, then all analysis is unreliable.

Yes, even the teachings are empty, conventional and conditioned. If there were a teaching of the ultimate nature, then it would really contradict universal emptiness.

Malcolm wrote:

So you admit that all analysis is unreliable.

Astus said:

Analysis is using the teachings to do an investigation. So when it talks about checking if there is any permanent element within the physical area, it's not just theorising whether that is the case or not, but looking at one's own present experience. This is what I have said before and say now.

Malcolm wrote:

Well then, it is pretty clear your notion of impermanence is merely an imputation, because there are plenty of counterfactual experiences of permanence.

Astus said:

No one is positing an ultimate perceiver here — the point there are not six consciousnesses apprehending six different kinds of media. There is one consciousness functioning through the six sense organs. The point is that when one understands that the magician is not real, one immediately understands that his tricks are also false. Going through and analyzing the six external sense objects is a waste of time.

There are a number of problems with positing a single consciousness, as taught from the early texts on in the context of the 18 dhatus. Actually, that's what one should recognise during analysis, that the mind is not a single entity but a series of instances, and then one can go further to see that even instances are not graspable as distinct entities. That's how the emptiness of both self and dharmas are confirmed. Looking for that single perceiver is no different from looking for the self and not finding it anywhere.

Malcolm wrote:

There is only one stream of momentary consciousness. It functions through the six

sense organs like a monkey jumping from one window to the next. For example, when it functions through the eye, it is called "eye consciousness", when it jumps to the ear, it is called "ear-consciousness." But one does not possess multiple consciousnesses at the same time. To propose that one does contradicts the basic definition of vijñāna-skandha.

Astus said:

Madhyamaka, in reality, merely serves as a corrective to the realism of the three lower tenet systems. It has no tenet system of its own. This is why Madhyamaka has not independent path which is separate from the path of Yogacara. The path of Yogacara and Madhyamaka is the same path, five paths and ten stages.

This interpretation of "corrective to the realism of the three lower tenet systems" makes sense only in the Tibetan system where only Vajrayana is viewed as something practical, while the so called sutra teachings are reduced to mere theory. Kamalashila does not seem to see that way, nor do other Madhyamikas. As for the path, why should it come up with a new one? It is a Mahayana teaching for bodhisattvas.

Malcolm wrote:

In the contrary, Madhyamakas also take this stance, as Nāgārjuna states; "If I had a position, I would be at fault; since I alone have no position, I alone am without fault."

Astus said:

The kinds of analysis Madhyamaka engages in is meant to serve as a corrective to realism.

If by realism you mean the basic grasping at supposedly real entities, then yes. If by that you mean only a theoretical view, then it is limiting the scope of the teachings for no good reason.

Malcolm wrote:

The problem with Madhyamaka is that it has a theoretical view: the two truths.

Astus said:

Saying that the nature of mind is "empty-clarity" does not really add anything. When it is said that the mind is empty, that's not the same as saying there is no mind. Since the mind is per definition aware, saying that its nature is empty is the same as saying that awareness is empty, but the awareness of it is not diminished by this at all. Similarly, saying that a ball is red doesn't mean it is not also round, since being a ball means that it is round.

Malcolm wrote:

Madhyamaka analysis does not address the nature of the mind; it merely rejects claims for existing existents and that is all.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, September 16th, 2015 at 8:13 PM

Title: Re: Shenphen Dawa Rinpoche on Reading Dzogchen Books

Content:

muni said:

Is Namkhay Norbu Rinpoche or your Master (other Masters) advising to read Dzogchen books in order to discover Dzogchen/ Nature? Discover "better" than the pointing out?

Malcolm wrote:

Of course not, Dzogchen is not in a book; this is why the hysteria about publishing books on Dzogchen is a little absurd. Every published book on Dzogchen should come with disclaimer that one will not discover the state of Dzogchen by reading a book. And as I pointed out, published books about tantric rites are much more fraught with potential for abuse.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, September 16th, 2015 at 9:47 PM

Title: Re: Shenphen Dawa Rinpoche on Reading Dzogchen Books

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

the hysteria about publishing books on Dzogchen is a little absurd. Every published book on Dzogchen should come with disclaimer that one will not discover the state of Dzogchen by reading a book.

DGA said:

Hysteria though? I haven't seen any hysteria in this thread by any participants in it or anyone quoted in it, but I have seen some hyperbole. Who do you think is hysterical over this issue?

Malcolm wrote:

I mean the historical hysteria about this issue over the years. I used to be of the strong opinion that these books should be locked in a vault, and that only the elect should be able to peer in it. My thinking about this has changed markedly over the years.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, September 16th, 2015 at 10:07 PM

Title: Re: Shenphen Dawa Rinpoche on Reading Dzogchen Books

Content:

Adamantine said:

Malcolm, if your newest opinions in this thread (which have already shifted sharply from your initial comments at the beginning) are truly mirroring those of your root Guru's (ChNN) in opposition to your other Guru's (Shenphen Dawa Rinpoche)—which is the impression you've been giving—then can you explain why such a great proportion of texts in the Dzogchen Community's bookstore

<http://shop.shangshungfoundation.com/en/best-sales?p=2> -not just sadhanas but also teachings / explanations of Dzogchen- are restricted?

Malcolm wrote:

I am not talking about practice texts. I am talking about the great classics, like the Seven Treasuries, the 17 Tantras, Yeshe Lama, Guhyagarbha Commentaries, Nyinthig Yazhi, and so on.

I have no problem with practice texts being restricted within the communities who use them. For example, I am an SMS student, I have no problem with the SMS texts being restricted to people who have done the levels to which they correspond — none whatsoever.

I am broaching a wider issue.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, September 16th, 2015 at 10:41 PM

Title: Re: Analysis or Nothing

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, and as pointed out above, it is a very slow approach because it relies on a coarse mind.

Astus said:

How slow? If someone cares to study a bit, then follow through the instructions, it is not that difficult. And I'm not bringing up here the whole minimum three aeons schedule, just the fairly ordinary person interested in the Dharma with the proper conditions to accept the teachings, etc.

Malcolm wrote:

Kamashila would — he is the very epitome of a gradualist.

And again, the mind of analysis is a very coarse mind. That itself is a block for realization. For example, with our ordinary eyes we cannot see very subtle things. Likewise, with our ordinary conceptual minds we cannot realize what which is subtle and hard to realize. The best we can do is generate a coarse conceptual simulacrum. Then, in order to generate the subtle mind necessary for realizing the true nature of things, well, it takes a long time through sūtrayāna methods, many eons, just to even realize the first bhumi.

Astus said:

So you admit that all analysis is unreliable.
Is there anything reliable?

Malcolm wrote:

Sure.

Astus said:

Well then, it is pretty clear your notion of impermanence is merely an imputation,

because there are plenty of counterfactual experiences of permanence.

I'm not sure I follow you here. Are you saying that there are experiences of permanence?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, just like people have convincing experiences of ropes as snakes.

Astus said:

There is only one stream of momentary consciousness. It functions through the six sense organs like a monkey jumping from one window to the next. For example, when it functions through the eye, it is called "eye consciousness", when it jumps to the ear, it is called "ear-consciousness." But one does not possess multiple consciousnesses at the same time. To propose that one does contradicts the basic definition of vijñāna-skandha.

No, there was no mention of multiple consciousnesses at the same time. However, the mind-stream does not affirm a single consciousness either, rather a series of many. The monkey's simile means that consciousness occurs where the hand and the branch makes contact, but there is no monkey going from one place to another. As the sutta explains: "what's called 'mind,' 'intellect,' or 'consciousness' by day and by night arises as one thing and ceases as another"

(<http://www.accesstoinight.org/tipitaka/sn/sn12/sn12.061.than.html>), and in another speech: "Consciousness, monks, is classified simply by the requisite condition in dependence on which it arises. ... Just as fire is classified simply by whatever requisite condition in dependence on which it burns"

(<http://www.accesstoinight.org/tipitaka/mn/mn.038.than.html>).

Malcolm wrote:

Since it functions in a serial stream, we can call it one thing for the purpose of conversation, just as we can refer to the collection of aggregates as a self, for the purpose of conversation. It does not mean that there is a unitary Astus in your aggregates.

Astus said:

In the contrary, Madhyamakas also take this stance, as Nāgārjuna states; "If I had a position, I would be at fault; since I alone have no position, I alone am without fault." That is where one has to arrive at, after due analysis. You know, relative truth first.

Malcolm wrote:

Again, here is your claim that you have to begin with a position, only to abandon it later. This is like believing that in order to walk barefoot, one must first put on shoes and then take them off.

Astus said:

The problem with Madhyamaka is that it has a theoretical view: the two truths. That is called an expedient means, and it has its use. It does not stand alone as some statement of ultimate value.

Malcolm wrote:

And yet, again and again, so-called Madhyamikas make strenuous efforts to defend what they know is not true. This is the problem with Madhyamaka, again identified by Rongzom:

Since in the Madhyamaka system, the ultimate is understood as free from proliferation, non-arising is established. At that time there is no difference between non-arising, naturelessness, emptiness and selflessness. Nevertheless, since they assert a true relative truth, the category of “established as homogenous” is not understood.

And lest you think the critique is only aimed at sūtra, Rongzom continues:

Since the system of Secret Mantra asserts the two truths to be inseparable, homogeneity is established. At that time there is no difference between homogeneity, non-arising, naturelessness, emptiness and selflessness. Nevertheless, due to anxiety about not being able to practice uniform behavior and not being able to remove that anxiety quickly, for that purpose they undertake ascetic hardships. Therefore, the category “all phenomena are established to be non-dual” is not understood.

Astus said:

Madhyamaka analysis does not address the nature of the mind; it merely rejects claims for existing existents and that is all.

Malcolm wrote:

True nature is no nature. What other nature is there to address?[/quote]

Yes, that is the Yogacara view:

Since in the Yogacāra system the nature of subject and object are not asserted, the natureless is established. At that time there is no difference between naturelessness and emptiness and selflessness. Nevertheless, since they assert the dependent, arising from cause and conditions, the category of “established as non-arising” is not understood.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, September 16th, 2015 at 10:44 PM

Title: Re: Shenphen Dawa Rinpoche on Reading Dzogchen Books

Content:

Adamantine said:

Malcolm, if your newest opinions in this thread (which have already shifted sharply from your initial comments at the beginning) are truly mirroring those of your root Guru's (ChNN) in opposition to your other Guru's (Shenphen Dawa Rinpoche)—which is the impression you've been giving—then can you explain why such a great proportion of texts in the Dzogchen Community's bookstore

<http://shop.shangshungfoundation.com/en/best-sales?p=2> -not just sadhanas but also teachings / explanations of Dzogchen- are restricted?

Malcolm wrote:

I am not talking about practice texts. I am talking about the great classics, like the Seven Treasuries, the 17 Tantras, Yeshe Lama, Guhyagarbha Commentaries, Nyinthig Yazhi, and so on.

I have no problem with practice texts being restricted within the communities who use them. For example, I am an SMS student, I have no problem with the SMS texts being restricted to people who have done the levels to which they correspond — none whatsoever.

I am broaching a wider issue.

Adamantine said:

There's a number of teachings on Dzogchen in the restricted list- not only practice texts as you are claiming - do I need to list them all here?

Malcolm wrote:

Any texts on the restricted list are connected with ChNN's transmission for his students, i.e. practice texts, but classical texts like Supreme Source, Marvelous Primordial State, Primordial Experience and so on are not restricted at all.

Again, I am addressing the issue of restricting great classics, foundation texts, not texts which belong to this or that community.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, September 16th, 2015 at 11:41 PM

Title: Re: Shenphen Dawa Rinpoche on Reading Dzogchen Books

Content:

Adamantine said:

Patrul Rinpoche's The Vision of Clear Light is a practice text, not a classic? The Four Dharmas of Longchenpa?

Malcolm wrote:

Again, these books are commentaries by Rinpoche on specific texts, connected with ChNN's transmission for his students.

But Longchenpa's text of the four Dharmas has been openly published for decades now.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, September 16th, 2015 at 11:56 PM

Title: Re: Analysis or Nothing

Content:

cloudburst said:

to be more precise, knowledge obscurations arise from having had afflictive ignorance since beginningless time. like the smell of garlic in a wooden box, the smell has its origin

with the garlic but persists after the garlic has been removed.

Malcolm wrote:

No, this is not the case. The knowledge obscuration precedes the afflictive obscuration, in other words, the latter arises from the former.

cloudburst said:

can you prove that? Im interested.

Malcolm wrote:

Prove it? How can you prove anything?

However, the knowledge obscuration is abandoned at the very end, at buddhahood, because it is more fundamental than the afflictive obscuration. Thus there is an non-afflictive ignorance that is the ignorance of which produces self-grasping, which even tenth stage bodhisattvas retain, and the afflictive ignorance which is the basis of taking birth in the three realms, abandoned on the seventh stage.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, September 17th, 2015 at 12:01 AM

Title: Re: Shenphen Dawa Rinpoche on Reading Dzogchen Books

Content:

muni said:

Namkhay Norbu Rinpoche.

Malcolm wrote:

Namkhai Norbu, not Namkhay Norbu.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, September 17th, 2015 at 12:12 AM

Title: Re: Analysis or Nothing

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

And again, the mind of analysis is a very coarse mind. That itself is a block for realization. For example, with our ordinary eyes we cannot see very subtle things. Likewise, with our ordinary conceptual minds we cannot realize what which is subtle and hard to realize. The best we can do is generate a coarse conceptual simulacrum. Then, in order to generate the subtle mind necessary for realizing the true nature of things, well, it takes a long time through sūtrayāna methods, many eons, just to even realize the first bhumi.

Astus said:

What defines coarse and subtle mind for you? No simulacrum is mentioned in the Bhavanakrama or other texts I'm aware of.

Malcolm wrote:

Of course there is, it is the conceptual emptiness meditated/cultivated during heat on the path of application.

Astus said:

Sure.

And what is reliable? Something one can grasp and hang on to?

Yes, just like people have convincing experiences of ropes as snakes.

Nobody sees snakes all the time, they at best think there is a permanent substance behind/within what they can experience in the six senses.

Malcolm wrote:

An experience of permanence is going to a place and seeing the same rock there, year in year out. Does not mean the rock is permanent, but it is the kind of thing that provides common people with their notion of permanence and durability.

Astus said:

Again, here is your claim that you have to begin with a position, only to abandon it later. This is like believing that in order to walk barefoot, one must first put on shoes and then take them off.

As noted before, people are already in the state of assuming positions and it is not adding another to point out the error.

Malcolm wrote:

No, actually they are not. A lot of Buddhist training involves planting ideas in people's heads that actually they don't hold.

Astus said:

And yet, again and again, so-called Madhyamikas make strenuous efforts to defend what they know is not true. This is the problem with Madhyamaka, again identified by Rongzom:

So, there are three things not understood: homogeneity (unity of the two truths), non-duality (unity not conceived as 1+1) and non-arising (lack of substance to come or go).

Malcolm wrote:

No, Madhyamikas understand nonarising [It is Yogacaras who do not], their problem is clinging to true relative truth.

Astus said:

Unless this is merely a critique of style and not content, but in that case it is an aesthetic question.

Malcolm wrote:

it is a critique of grasping in different systems, as already explained above.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, September 17th, 2015 at 12:31 AM

Title: Re: Analysis or Nothing

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

However, the knowledge obscuration is abandoned at the very end, at buddhahood, because it is more fundamental than the afflictive obscuration. Thus there is an non-afflictive ignorance that is the ignorance of which produces self-grasping, which even tenth stage bodhisattvas retain, and the afflictive ignorance which is the basis of taking birth in the three realms, abandoned on the seventh stage.

cloudburst said:

Can you do better than just asserting your view?

Malcolm wrote:

Can you?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, September 17th, 2015 at 2:50 AM

Title: Re: The problem of nihilism

Content:

Vimalakirti432 said:

Now while I do have a strong streak of rationalism - as do you, my new dharma buddy, the Venerable Malcolm - that's not my fundamental mental disposition - which is more properly labeled "pantheistic". For as long as I can remember I have had that well-attested sense of the aliveness of things, of trees and rocks as well as sentient beings, and no not just on sunny days. Of course this kind of feeling is tucked into or appropriated by most religious traditions where one can find its warrant. In the Gospel of Thomas, for example, where we find Jesus saying, "The kingdom of God is spread upon the Earth but men do not see it", and of course in many Zen sayings and Zen inspired poetry.

Now someone with this disposition may point to this and call it God or Brahmin and, while not necessarily being in error, may be adding a head to the one that's already there. That's why I've always been drawn to Buddhist dependent origination and the middle way as perhaps a more accurate and direct approach.

Of course I only speak for myself, but one with this disposition may experience, by moments at least, objects and beings, including one's own person, as a kind of transparency, as being particular instances of one energy, but a single energy that cannot be reified into some kind of literal "one".

Now just to be precise, I'm not calling myself a "pantheist"; I'm only copping to that disposition, and like all mental dispositions it's only the beginning to much that needs

to be worked out and developed.

I could babble on of course, and you know already what a terrible blabbermouth I am, but all this is to explain why I find it so weird to be called a "materialist", just because I find no evidence for or need to believe in particular theories about the nature of consciousness.

So you see I may well be an idiot, and maybe just as annoying as any other, but I thought it was of use to at least point out precisely what kind of idiot I am.

Malcolm wrote:

Finally, something from your heart, rather than a bunch of insouciant intellectualism.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, September 17th, 2015 at 3:02 AM

Title: Re: Why Buddhism over Vedanta?

Content:

lostitude said:

I don't see why? You can experience something permanent but not always be in the right frame of mind to experience it. It is like perceiving background noise, you actually hear it only if you pay sufficient attention to it.

Astus said:

Permanence excludes causality. Being recognised is a change in conditions. Also, if it is one's permanent self, the self is the one that should recognise itself, and since it is permanent, it either always knows itself or never.

lostitude said:

I guess this philosophy really isn't for me then... to me, whether you open or close your window to let the sunlight come in, won't change anything about the sun itself... but ok, doesn't matter, each to his own

Malcolm wrote:

The sun is also not permanent.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, September 17th, 2015 at 3:32 AM

Title: Re: Why Buddhism over Vedanta?

Content:

lostitude said:

It was just an example of something that doesn't change just because you look at it or you don't.

Malcolm wrote:

The only that never changes is the space element. And it does not exist as such.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, September 17th, 2015 at 3:35 AM

Title: Re: How important is shamatha, and practices before shamatha

Content:

chimechodra said:

Would this just be mantra practice within the natural context of something like a Chenrezig Sadhana,

Malcolm wrote:

Yes.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, September 17th, 2015 at 3:52 AM

Title: Re: The problem of nihilism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Dear reader, note that supernatural = fairyland = insanity.

catmoon said:

Duly noted. This is perhaps one of your deepest insights.

What's that you say? You were being sarcastic?

Well then, extraordinary claims require extraordinary evidence, so I think the burden of proving the existence of the supernatural now lies with you.

BTW I'm not just poking you in the eye here, nor do I dispute the existence of the supernatural, it's just the argument looks like it has this hole in it.

Other than that I think you're in better form than ever. Go Malcolm!

Malcolm wrote:

Oh no, you misunderstood — I was pointing out that our friend here was making rather disrespectful analogies.

Things like rebirth, buddhafiels, etc. are completely unfalsifiable. But saying that something is not falsifiable is not suggesting that it is equivalent to a flying spaghetti monster or horns on a rabbit.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, September 17th, 2015 at 4:08 AM

Title: Re: The problem of nihilism

Content:

catmoon said:

I begin with the Kalama sutta, which enjoins the careful examination and application of what we learn of dharma, and reaching our own judgments.

It does nothing of the kind.

I hold the same view as Vima here. What's wrong with it?

Malcolm wrote:

The Kalamas sutta is addressing the Kalamas people, who were not Buddha's students. But in the end, they became Buddha's students.

Once you become a student of the Buddha's, then:

I have heard that on one occasion the Blessed One was staying in Savatthi, at the Eastern Gatehouse. There he addressed Ven. Shariputra: "Shariputra, do you take it on conviction that the faculty of conviction, when developed and pursued, plunges into the Deathless, has the Deathless as its goal and consummation? Do you take it on conviction that the faculty of persistence... mindfulness... concentration... discernment, when developed and pursued, plunges into the Deathless, has the Deathless as its goal and consummation?"

"Lord, it's not that I take it on conviction in the Blessed One that the faculty of conviction... persistence... mindfulness... concentration... discernment, when developed and pursued, plunges into the Deathless, has the Deathless as its goal and consummation. Those who have not known, seen, penetrated, realized, or attained it by means of discernment would have to take it on conviction in others that the faculty of conviction... persistence... mindfulness... concentration... discernment, when developed and pursued, plunges into the Deathless, has the Deathless as its goal and consummation; whereas those who have known, seen, penetrated, realized, and attained it by means of discernment would have no doubt or uncertainty that the faculty of conviction... persistence... mindfulness... concentration... discernment, when developed and pursued, plunges into the Deathless, has the Deathless as its goal and consummation. And as for me, I have known, seen, penetrated, realized, and attained it by means of discernment. I have no doubt or uncertainty that the faculty of conviction... persistence... mindfulness... concentration... discernment, when developed and pursued, plunges into the Deathless, has the Deathless as its goal and consummation."

"Excellent, Shariputra. Excellent. Those who have not known, seen, penetrated, realized, or attained it by means of discernment would have to take it on conviction in others that the faculty of conviction... persistence... mindfulness... concentration... discernment, when developed and pursued, plunges into the Deathless, has the Deathless as its goal

and consummation; whereas those who have known, seen, penetrated, realized, and attained it by means of discernment would have no doubt or uncertainty that the faculty of conviction... persistence... mindfulness... concentration... discernment, when developed and pursued, plunges into the Deathless, has the Deathless as its goal and consummation."

http://www.buddhasutra.com/files/pubbakotthaka_sutta.htm

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, September 17th, 2015 at 4:10 AM

Title: Re: The problem of nihilism

Content:

cloudburst said:

Aren't they falsifiable though? For example, If someone just proved things existed by way of and essence, or that consciousness had a material basis ?

Malcolm wrote:

Not for the ordinary consciousness of regular folks.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, September 17th, 2015 at 5:23 AM

Title: Re: Analysis or Nothing

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Of course there is, it is the conceptual emptiness meditated/cultivated during heat on the path of application.

Astus said:

Still, Kamalashila does not talk about conceiving emptiness but realising it directly.

Malcolm wrote:

Maybe, you did not provide a very detailed presentation.

Astus said:

An experience of permanence is going to a place and seeing the same rock there, year in year out. Does not mean the rock is permanent, but it is the kind of thing that provides common people with their notion of permanence and durability.

It is a notion of permanence, a concept, that can be removed by directing them to analyse what they actually experience.

Malcolm wrote:

Obviously, this does not work — case in point, eternalists.

Astus said:

No, actually they are not. A lot of Buddhist training involves planting ideas in people's heads that actually they don't hold.
Like the endurance of a real self?

Malcolm wrote:

For example, yes. Many people do not have this idea. They meet Buddhadharma and then spend lots of time refuting a self they never believed existed to begin with.

Astus said:

No, Madhyamikas understand nonarising [It is Yogacaras who do not], their problem is clinging to true relative truth.

How could it be true if it is conventional? The very meaning of conventional is that it is not true.

Malcolm wrote:

Umm, no.

Astus said:

it is a critique of grasping in different systems, as already explained above.

It does not actually address the systems but reinterprets them according to his preferences and thus criticises systems that never existed. It's like those non-Buddhists who attack the Dharma because they misconstrue it as nihilism.

Malcolm wrote:

[/quote]

Sure it does. Rongzom knows these things much better than you.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, September 17th, 2015 at 5:27 AM

Title: Re: The problem of nihilism

Content:

cloudburst said:

Aren't they falsifiable though? For example, If someone just proved things existed by way of and essence, or that consciousness had a material basis ?

Malcolm wrote:

Not for the ordinary consciousness of regular folks.

cloudburst said:

As I understand it, for something to be falsifiable, there simply has to be some way that

it could be shown to be false.

Malcolm wrote:

Right, to the consciousnesses of ordinary people.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, September 17th, 2015 at 5:31 AM

Title: Re: How important is shamatha, and practices before shamatha

Content:

chimechodra said:

Thanks Malcolm! Does the SSI store have any Chenrezig/Avalokitesvara sadhana texts (and maybe even an explanation manual/guide?) for anyone who has received general transmission? I've only ever practiced Chenrezig in the context of my local Kagyu center on their Wednesday nights, and this is the only item I see on the SSI site:

http://shangshung.org/store/index.php?main_page=product_info&cPath=74_94_100&products_id=240

Would this be recommended? Let me know, thank you!

Malcolm wrote:

You need the lung for this, but it is given at every retreat.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, September 17th, 2015 at 5:44 AM

Title: Re: Bhuddists are the master race

Content:

catmoon said:

Well not all of them, not everywhere, but those Sherpas certainly are if you happen to find yourself climbing above 25,000 feet.

Recent genetic studies are looking at the mutations that allow Sherpas and other Tibetans to tolerate altitude easily, The weird part is one of the mutations causes Sherpas to make FEWER red blood cells. When a Westerner without the mutation is progressively exposed to higher altitudes, we make more blood cells to compensate. This process gets more and more extreme the higher we go, until in the death zone, we run into problems with blood viscosity which lead to High Altitude Pulmonary Edema and High Altitude Cerebral Edema, both life-threatening conditions.

Now the Sherpas don't do that. They make a pretty normal number of blood cells and avoid many problems, thanks to a mutation that seems to be less than 10,000 years old.

Another mutation looks like it is involved with oxygen metabolism. Maybe they don't pile up lactic acid via anaerobic metabolism to the extent we do. Maybe they can scavenge oxygen out of the blood stream better. No one knows yet but its an area of active

research. This one is an older mutation.

There are quite a number of mutations that occur with roughly a 90% frequency among Tibetans, and some of them run as low as 1% frequency among Han Chinese. I find it really intriguing that we are so close to understanding the hows and whys of it all. A significant possibility is that it may be possible to develop an injection that will turn you into a Sherpa for a while.

How effective are these mutations? A few years back there was a massive problem on K2 and people were dropping like flies. If you enter the death zone, normally you have about 48 hours to get down before you become nonfunctional. That's a death sentence at altitude. A fellow named Pemba Gyalje Sherpa (sp?) began rescue operations, and by the time he was done he had spent 90 continuous hours in the death zone. Basket case right? Nope, when he was done he just hiked off the mountain. He was fine.

Of course it might be entirely due to Buddhist mental discipline and the help of Tara but somehow I don't think so...

Malcolm wrote:
Dinosovians, man...

Author: Malcolm
Date: Thursday, September 17th, 2015 at 5:45 AM
Title: Re: Ready for some comic relief?
Content:

Vimalakirti432 said:
[1] The Excluded Middle walks without feet, on no discernible path, and never arrives.
Even the Excluded Middle sometimes wonders: what's the point?
[

Malcolm wrote:
There is no excluded middle in Buddhadharma. Also the middle is negated.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Thursday, September 17th, 2015 at 7:34 AM
Title: Re: Analysis or Nothing
Content:
Malcolm wrote:
you did not provide a very detailed presentation.

Astus said:
Kamalashila <http://www.preciousteaching.org/sutra/kamalasilas-bhavana-krama-the->

middle-meditation-stage/:

"What properly examines suchness from within a state of calm-abiding meditation is penetrative insight."

"When suchness is properly meditated upon with wisdom, purified transcendent wisdom is realised. Since wisdom alone can realise suchness and can effectively eradicate the obscurations, I shall therefore search for suchness through wisdom while engaging in calm-abiding meditation. And I shall not remain content with calm-abiding meditation alone.

What is suchness like? It is the nature of all phenomena that ultimately they are empty of the self of person and the self of phenomena. This is understood by the perfection of wisdom and not otherwise."

"What is thoroughly realised by the mind too is realised as being empty. By realising that, the very identity which is established as the aspect of the mind, like the identity of physical form, etc., is also not ultimately perceived. In this way, when a person does not ultimately see the identity of all phenomena through wisdom he would not analyse whether physical form is permanent or impermanent, empty or not empty, contaminated or non-contaminated, produced or non-produced and existent or non-existent.

Just as physical form is not examined, similarly feeling, recognition, compositional factors and consciousness are not examined. When the object does not exist, its particularities also cannot exist. So how can they be examined? In this way when the person does not firmly grasp on to the entity of a thing as ultimately existing, having investigated with wisdom, then the practitioner engages in a non-conceptual single-pointed concentration. And thus identitylessness of all phenomena is also realised."

"In this way one who has entered in the suchness of the selflessness of person and phenomena is free from concept and analysis because there is nothing to be thoroughly examined and observed. One is free from expression and with one-pointed mental engagement one automatically enters in meditation without manifest discrimination. Thus one very clearly meditates on suchness and abides in it."

"If and when the mind is spontaneously engaging in meditative equipoise on suchness free of sinking and mental agitation, at that time it should be left naturally and the efforts relaxed."

Malcolm wrote:

First Kamashila sets forth his objective. Then he describes the means he wants to use to get there. A realized bodhisattva has no need for the following: ""If and when the mind is spontaneously engaging in meditative equipoise on suchness free of sinking and mental agitation, at that time it should be left naturally and the efforts relaxed."

This suchness is a generic image of suchness, it is not real suchness.

Many people do not have this idea. They meet Buddhadharma and then spend lots of

time refuting a self they never believed existed to begin with.

The general idea of self includes that it remains the same from one day to another. What not many people have is a more sophisticated soul/atman view.

Many commoners do not really have this idea — first they have to be brainwashed into refuting a self most of them will readily agree they do not have, unless they have a belief in a soul. Many atheists are quite happy they have no soul, and if you tell them their "self" is a cognitive imputation, they happily go along with this idea.

Umm, no.

How so? That something is only a conventionally agreed name means that it has no basis beyond the concept.

That is not merely what conventional means. For example, according to one famous presentation of Madhyamaka, things are not non-existent in the relative. The term vyavahāra has come to mean a mere designation in some Buddhist circles, but even here, there are levels of vyavahāra, holding that this or that is vyavahāra does not mean that one is not also a realist. For example, "water" is vyavahāra, but its qualities of limpidity and wetness are parāmartha dharmas according to Sautrantikas. For example, according to one famous presentation of Madhyamaka, we cannot say a car is nonexistent, even though it is conventional, we can only say that there is no inherent car in a car, not that there is no car in that which is conventionally termed "a car" because such a thing has been designated on the basis of its parts. Why? Because that which is conventionally designated a car functions as a car, and hence it is car. According to this specific brand of Madhyamaka, a car has a basis beyond its concept, its parts. One cannot designate a bunch of sticks and leaves a car and expect to drive anywhere.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, September 17th, 2015 at 7:38 AM

Title: Re: Ready for some comic relief?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

There is no excluded middle in Buddhadharma.

catmoon said:

Yes there is. See? We just excluded it.

Malcolm wrote:

No, this does not work.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, September 17th, 2015 at 7:39 AM

Title: Re: Ready for some comic relief?

Content:

catmoon said:

Oh btw it's worse than that. My analysis of Nagarjuna (which is of course authoritative) shows that instead of solving the excluded middle problem, by adopting a four pole logic system, he actually increases the excluded middle problem manyfold. This simple logical problem invalidates almost everything he said. Well not invalidates... but removes the seeming pillars of logic that support his arguments, reducing them to mere suppositions.

To wit: Instead of a single excluded middle between yes and no, we get the following middle grounds, most of which are chronically excluded and never mentioned:

Between yes and no
Between yes and (both yes and no)
Between yes and (neither yes nor no)
Between no and (both yes and no)
Between no and (neither yes nor no)
Between (both yes and no) and (neither yes nor no)

Edit: and it gets worse still because there are tripolar middle grounds and even a quadripolar one!

Malcolm wrote:
All of these are automatically negated by the non-affirming negation of yes.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Thursday, September 17th, 2015 at 7:51 AM
Title: Re: How important is shamatha, and practices before shamatha
Content:
chimechodra said:
Would you happen to know if this was given at the end of the July retreat in Massachusetts? (Also is there a list of what lungs he gave where? Hard to keep track!)

Malcolm wrote:
Yes, he gave it.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Thursday, September 17th, 2015 at 7:52 AM
Title: Re: How important is shamatha, and practices before shamatha
Content:
smcj said:
A couple of sentences later he mentions that it is possible to present Dzogchen as a stand alone practice without a context (like ChNN does evidently), but Gyaltrul R. always taught him that it was part of the Path.

.

Malcolm wrote:

Dzogchen has its own basis, path and result.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, September 17th, 2015 at 9:39 PM

Title: Re: Analysis or Nothing

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

This suchness is a generic image of suchness, it is not real suchness.

Astus said:

"Thus such a mind in the entity of ultimate bodhicitta included within the path of seeing, which apprehends the selfless nature of all phenomena is generated. Through this achievement one enters into the path focusing on the reality of things and one is then born in the family of tathagatas, enters the bodhisattva category without flaws, turns away from all migrations, abides in the suchness of bodhisattvas and attains the first bodhisattva bhumi (spiritual level)."

Malcolm wrote:

No Astus, the passage you cite above, "If and when the mind is spontaneously engaging in meditative equipoise on suchness free of sinking and mental agitation, at that time it should be left naturally and the efforts relaxed." [pg. 139] Is followed in the text by:

"This is the path of engaging in a union of calm abiding meditation and insight. Its focuses on the image conceptually and non-conceptually." pg. 140.

Thus, "This suchness is a generic image of suchness, it is not real suchness," as I said.

You are quoting Kamalashila all out of order and disregarding the sequence of his presentation of śamatha and vipaśyāna. That is just bad scholarship.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, September 17th, 2015 at 10:02 PM

Title: Re: Shenphen Dawa Rinpoche on Reading Dzogchen Books

Content:

Adamantine said:

Just chanced upon this post from Malcolm from this thread

<http://dharmawheel.net/viewtopic.php?f=48&t=17097&start=40> which somehow communicates in its own way what SDR and

ChNN are getting at ... I'm quite confused by the straw men that have been scattered throughout this thread considering..

Malcolm wrote:

That is because you are conflating two issues:

Necessity for transmission
Distribution of classical Dzogchen texts

No one disputes that the former is needed to properly understand Dzogchen, let alone realize it.

However, what we have been discussing is the question of whether the burden of treating classical Dzogchen texts like a state secret, with security clearances and so on, is really necessary.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, September 17th, 2015 at 11:36 PM

Title: Re: Analysis or Nothing

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

"This is the path of engaging in a union of calm abiding meditation and insight. Its focuses on the image conceptually and non-conceptually." pg. 140.

Thus, "This suchness is a generic image of suchness, it is not real suchness," as I said.

Astus said:

According to HHDL's commentary (p 141) it doesn't refer to some image but it's a synonym:

"Then once more continue your meditation on the union of special insight and calm abiding, which is also known as focusing on the reflection both conceptually and non-conceptually."

And Kamalashila continues:

"Thus, through this progress, a yogi should meditate on suchness for an hour, or half a session in the night, or one full session, or for as long as is comfortable. This is the meditative stabilization thoroughly discerning the ultimate, as taught in the Descent into Lanka Sutra."

It is on suchness, not some image of suchness. And that's what is in the text in every place, directly seeing suchness, not simply an image or concept of it.

The quote provided in my previous post states: "apprehends the selfless nature of all phenomena", and that's the very result of the vipasyana. It would be quite pointless to achieve simply a generic concept, since for that there is no need to perform any meditation.

Malcolm wrote:

No, Astus, this part of the text is not talking about the first bhumi. This is talking about heat on the path of application where in fact you reflect on generic concepts of

emptiness. This is why the text says on page 143, "If you act thus, your meditative stabilization will actualize that emptiness that possess the supreme of qualities," meaning that you have not yet actualized the first bhumi and the path of seeing.

HHDL's comments bear my point out. Seriously, you have a deep misunderstanding of this text.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, September 17th, 2015 at 11:43 PM

Title: Re: Why Buddhism over Vedanta?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The only that never changes is the space element. And it does not exist as such.

Harimoo said:

"The only thing that never changes is the space element".

Because time is space ?

I don't understand.

Malcolm wrote:

No, because space is uncompounded and never arose.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, September 18th, 2015 at 12:16 AM

Title: Re: Shenphen Dawa Rinpoche on Reading Dzogchen Books

Content:

Adamantine said:

I think you're the ones conflating issues. SDR never said anything about distribution or security clearances of classical

Dzogchen texts. That's an issue you've created as a straw man.

Malcolm wrote:

Not at all, I am merely pointing out that it is senseless to keep certain classical Dzogchen texts restricted. There is no decent reason for it any more.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, September 18th, 2015 at 12:28 AM

Title: Re: Analysis or Nothing

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

No, Astus, this part of the text is not talking about the first bhumi. This is talking about heat on the path of application where in fact you reflect on generic concepts of emptiness.

Astus said:

That does not really fit with the description of what is performed during meditation.

"In this way, when the person does not firmly apprehend the entity of a thing as ultimately existing; having investigated it with wisdom, the practitioner engages in non-conceptual single-pointed concentration. And thus the identitylessness of all phenomena is realized."

Then that conclusion of vipasyana is false. Or in the following paragraphs it switches topic to describe the path from a different perspective.

Malcolm wrote:

The term " rtoḡs pa " in Tibetan means either "to realize" or "to understand." Here it means the latter more than former.

The conclusion is not false, it is merely a conceptual approximation that is cultivated on the path of application. And the text does not switch topics, you just are not following the gradualist perspective of Kamalashila correctly.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, September 18th, 2015 at 1:06 AM

Title: Re: Analysis or Nothing

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The term " rtoḡs pa " in Tibetan means either "to realize" or "to understand." Here it means the latter more than former.

The conclusion is not false, it is merely a conceptual approximation that is cultivated on the path of application. And the text does not switch topics, you just are not following the gradualist perspective of Kamalashila correctly.

Astus said:

In Adam's translation (p 207):

"When a yogin does not actually hold firmly to the nature of any entity, then he enters nonconceptual samadhi. And he also understands the absence of inherent nature of all things."

And while he uses understanding there, the previous sentence says one realises nonconceptual samadhi, and it is because of that that one can understand emptiness. If the suchness there were just an imagined concept, it wouldn't be nonconceptual samadhi.

Malcolm wrote:

Even hindus have nonconceptual samadhis; one can have a nonconceptual samadhi

on a concept. Thus, still, this shows a yogin who has not yet achieved the path of seeing.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, September 18th, 2015 at 1:28 AM

Title: Re: Analysis or Nothing

Content:

catmoon said:

It seems to me that Astus and Malcolm are both correct here. If one is focusing on an "image both conceptually and non-conceptually" perhaps this includes both your views, since focusing non-conceptually must in some sense entail the abandonment of the image, because it is conceptual in nature. Likewise, focusing on the image conceptually is indeed one step removed from actual suchness.

Malcolm wrote:

It just means that there is no discursiveness with regards to the object, that is all.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, September 18th, 2015 at 5:19 AM

Title: Re: Shenphen Dawa Rinpoche on Reading Dzogchen Books

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Your mistake is assuming I am talking about SDR — I am not, I am talking about the attitude exemplified by Sangye.

Adamantine said:

There's a saying "when all you have is a hammer all you see is nails" ever heard it? There's some students of ChNN that like to weave illusions of conflict in order to proclaim the superiority of their Guru and his style. It's quite silly and it's been going on here among more or less the same handful of people over and over for years.

Malcolm wrote:

Huge projection.

Adamantine said:

It was never intended to have this one quote decontextualized and posted on an Internet forum and for other students of other Lamas to follow the advice.

Malcolm wrote:

No kidding.

Adamantine said:

I know, I know, some people here believe they fall into the category of sublime beings but I'm not easily convinced by you. Take care.

Malcolm wrote:

Hahahahaha. What a laugh.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, September 18th, 2015 at 9:09 AM

Title: Re: Analysis or Nothing

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Thus, still, this shows a yogin who has not yet achieved the path of seeing.

Astus said:

Here are some further clarifications then from Adam's translation of the 1st Bhavanakrama, key terms underlined by me:

Malcolm wrote:

And a counterclarification from the same text, pg. 153.

Unshakable by the likes of Mārā, when one cultivates suchness with the power of zeal, then the stage of zealous conduct is distinguished on the basis of intense zeal. The bodhisattva existing in this stage, although still an ordinary person, has completely passed beyond all the calamities of a fool and is endowed with innumerable qualities like samadhis, spells, freedoms, superknowledges and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, September 18th, 2015 at 8:26 PM

Title: Re: Analysis or Nothing

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

And a counterclarification from the same text, pg. 153.

Unshakable by the likes of Mārā, when one cultivates suchness with the power of zeal, then the stage of zealous conduct is distinguished on the basis of intense zeal. The bodhisattva existing in this stage, although still an ordinary person, has completely passed beyond all the calamities of a fool and is endowed with innumerable qualities like samadhis, spells, freedoms, superknowledges and so on.

Astus said:

And the preceding sentence says: "as long as one does not directly experience the suchness (tattvam) of the selflessness of the personality and of dharmas, (there is) only a very intense zeal"

However, as shown in my previous collection of clarifying quotes, meditation is about direct perception, and through vipasyana that is what is achieved. The zealous stage is about aspiring to that direct experience, it is the time of practice on the basis of the instructions, required before realisation is attained.

The text continues in the section on zealous conduct:

"But when one would ascertain the non-dual knowledge which is devoid of the forms of the object and subject, then this is the degree of penetration designated "The best (worldly) condition" (agradharma). And this is called "The samadhi without interval" because, in fact, immediately following it one enters into suchness."

Malcolm wrote:

The point is that you kept denying there was a conceptual meditation on suchness and thus, were quoting passages not in accordance with their meaning.

Anyway, such analysis is not necessary in Dzogchen practice, not in any sense at all.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, September 18th, 2015 at 8:28 PM

Title: Re: Can you learn and practice Tibetan Buddhism from books?

Content:

Ervin said:

I bought a book today, it's called Stillness insight and emptiness, Buddhist meditation from the ground up. Written by Lama Dudjom Dorjee.

So I was wondering if I can simply buy books and practice meditation and precepts, etc without a teacher and sangha?

Thanks

Malcolm wrote:

Nothing in Buddhadharma may be truly learnt unless you learn it from a teacher. Buddhadharma is an oral tradition.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, September 18th, 2015 at 9:40 PM

Title: Re: Analysis or Nothing

Content:

DGA said:

At this point, I'm having a hard time tracking what is meant by "conceptual" and "analysis" in this discussion.

Malcolm wrote:

Analysis is conceptual and discursive by nature.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, September 18th, 2015 at 10:36 PM

Title: Re: Analysis or Nothing

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Anyway, such analysis is not necessary in Dzogchen practice, not in any sense at all.

Astus said:

At this moment, you are free from all fixed notions of what mind might be, and liberation itself is actualized: "There is nothing there: transfixed in wonder,"

(<http://www.lotsawahouse.org/tibetan-masters/patrul-rinpoche/tsik-sum-nedek-commentary>)

Malcolm wrote:

Patrul Rinpoche states:

First is the method of introducing the view that has not yet been revealed. Generally speaking, there are many ways of bringing the view to realization. In the sūtrayāna path of dialectics the method of lung rig [scripture and reasoning* MS] is employed; that is, using the scriptural authority of the teaching of Buddha and the great masters, and through logic and reasoning, arriving at the realization of the view.

According to the common approach of Secret Mantrayāna, by means of the wisdom of example in the third empowerment, one is introduced to the real, ultimate wisdom in the fourth empowerment.

Here, according to the special approach of the great masters of the practice lineage, the nature of mind, the face of rigpa, is introduced in and upon the very dissolution of conceptual mind.

Neither of the two latter methods require analysis, as I said, "Anyway, such analysis is not necessary in Dzogchen practice, not in any sense at all."

The crucial point here is that rigpa, which abides as the ground of dharmakāya, is the primordial purity of the path of the yogins, the absolute view of freedom from all elaboration. Until you recognize this one point, then whatever meditation or practice you do, you can never get beyond a fabricated mind-made view and meditation. The difference between this and the approach of the natural Dzogpachenpo is greater than that between earth and sky, as it does not possess the essential point—the unceasing flow of clear light, which is non-meditation. So it is most important, first of all, to recognize this and this alone, and: "Recognize this as the pure awareness of dharmakāya".

I don't know why you bother citing Patrul Rinpoche, as he merely illustrates my point.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, September 18th, 2015 at 10:47 PM

Title: Re: Shenphen Dawa Rinpoche on Reading Dzogchen Books

Content:

MalaBeads said:

Obviously there is a difference between practitioners who work in universities and academics who are not practitioners. I think what sangye was referring ("it has to stop") is the latter...

Malcolm wrote:

But it won't. Everything is out there for people to read. That is just the way it is. People might not like the way academics comment on Dzogchen and other Buddhist topics, but that is not going to stop anyone. And frankly, telling people who are academics they cannot come to this or that teaching unless they promise to take up the Buddhist religion is highly counterproductive, IMO.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, September 18th, 2015 at 11:24 PM

Title: Re: Analysis or Nothing

Content:

Astus said:

What I have tried to highlight is that the amazement/wonder/shock technique in Dzogchen seems to be what's addressed by the quoted passage from Kamalashila.

Malcolm wrote:

I don't think so. He is addressing a different problem.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, September 19th, 2015 at 2:25 AM

Title: Re: Analysis or Nothing

Content:

cloudburst said:

For incredibly advanced practitioners, it might be possible to attain the path of seeing outside of meditative equipoise through introduction, but the rarity of that boggles the imagination. To go around promoting this as a path that would be generally accessible I think is a huge disservice to those with interest and aspiration.

Malcolm wrote:

Introduction is a path. Once you have received introduction from a qualified person, then you apply it yourself. The only qualification one needs is interest.

In Dzogchen, it is sufficient to have an inferential understanding of emptiness, for example, derived from the eight examples of illusion.

The path itself does not necessarily involve any analytical vipaśyāna at all. It involves working with the experience of the introduction itself.

Dzogchen is not a path based on causes and results, as difficult as that is for many people to accept.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, September 19th, 2015 at 2:49 AM

Title: Re: Analysis or Nothing

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

then you apply it yourself.

cloudburst said:

apply what to your self, precisely?

Malcolm wrote:

The introduction until you are no longer remaining in doubt.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, September 19th, 2015 at 2:59 AM

Title: Re: Analysis or Nothing

Content:

cloudburst said:

how do you "apply" an introduction to yourself?

Malcolm wrote:

If you want to know about Dzogchen practice, then you should go study at the feet of a Dzogchen master. Then all your questions will be answered. But if you are not interested in Dzogchen practice, then my answer will not help you at all.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, September 19th, 2015 at 3:20 AM

Title: Re: Analysis or Nothing

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

But if you are not interested in Dzogchen practice, then my answer will not help you at all.

cloudburst said:

fair enough, but in this case I am not seeking your help, but rather attempting to have a discussion.

my point here as you know is that direct introduction introduces you to a non-

conceptual awareness that is not necessarily on the path of seeing. Without the analysis enjoined by kamalashila, the union of shamatha and vipashyana, you are stuck. you are not even on the path of application at that point.

Malcolm wrote:

Sort of, though that is not really what rig pa means.

No one ever said it was the path of seeing. But paths and stages are completely irrelevant to Dzogchen. You do not need the kind of analysis advocated in sutra to realize buddhahood in the path of Dzogchen. It simple isn't a requisite.

There are other practices that one does instead.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, September 19th, 2015 at 3:30 AM

Title: Re: Dzogchen Community of Chogyal Namkhai Norbu

Content:

chimechodra said:

Thanks tigersnest! I actually met Lynn while I was at that retreat in July and just signed up for her course.

Does anyone know if you need anything besides transmission for Vajrapani practice? I imagine there's a lung required, does anyone know if he gave the lung in the July Massachusetts retreat?

Malcolm wrote:

he gave it. He always gives it.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, September 19th, 2015 at 5:37 AM

Title: Re: Analysis or Nothing

Content:

Astus said:

Thus it is not enough to have an experience of mind without concepts...

Malcolm wrote:

No one ever said it was.

All that was said was that Dzogchen is not a path of analysis and that Kamalashila's objections were rejected.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, September 19th, 2015 at 6:05 AM

Title: Re: Analysis or Nothing

Content:

smcj said:

Those definitions seem to support my post.

Astus said:

It is used in the context of directly accessing non-conceptuality. It is mistaking a vacant mind as the realisation of emptiness.

smcj said:

That's what I said.

The mistake being the type of awareness, which is sleep like or hypnotic, not the lack of conceptuality. The awareness is supposed to be vivid and alert. The lack of conceptuality is what lends itself to misinterpreting it as correct.

Actually Khenpo Tsultrim says in "Progressive Stages of Emptiness" that once the innate Buddha Nature expresses itself, that a Madhyamika can, out of habit, incorrectly try to analyze it.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, because Khenpo Tsultrim is actually a Dzogchen practitioner.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, September 19th, 2015 at 9:28 AM

Title: Re: Analysis or Nothing

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

All that was said was that Dzogchen is not a path of analysis and that Kamalashila's objections were rejected.

Astus said:

When I wrote "the very basis of vipasyana as it's been taught since the Nikayas", I meant that it teaches the primary form of analysis. .

Malcolm wrote:

No, it does not.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, September 19th, 2015 at 10:51 PM

Title: Re: The Nature of Buddhahood

Content:

BrianG said:

Virupa saw a Nirmanakaya before he became an arya.

kirtu said:
BrianG - when did that happen?

Thanks!

Kirt

Malcolm wrote:
He is referring to Virupa's encounter with the woman we know as Nairatma, Virupa's guru. In the bios she is called a nirmanakāya, this means she was a human woman.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Saturday, September 19th, 2015 at 11:02 PM
Title: Re: Where is?
Content:
jnanasutra said:
ཐུང་ཏིང་འཛིན་བཟང་པོ།

Malcolm wrote:
What do you mean where is Nyang Tingzin Zangpo?

Author: Malcolm
Date: Saturday, September 19th, 2015 at 11:38 PM
Title: Re: European refugee crisis
Content:

kirtu said:
I have rarely met Europeans who have no knowledge or experience with other cultures and countries and languages.

Malcolm wrote:
This is because Europeans are jammed up next to each other. It apparently does not necessarily save them from being ignorant bigots however.

kirtu said:
We see a rise of nationalism more of late but I would like to think that this is transient (and I have long wanted people like le Pen to leave the stage but their successors and ideology are still stubbornly drawing crowds).

Malcolm wrote:
The EU is and was a big mistake, especially for Italy, Greece and Spain.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, September 20th, 2015 at 12:30 AM

Title: Re: European refugee crisis

Content:

kirtu said:

I have rarely met Europeans who have no knowledge or experience with other cultures and countries and languages.

Malcolm wrote:

This is because Europeans are jammed up next to each other. It apparently does not necessarily save them from being ignorant bigots however.

kirtu said:

The vast majority are not. Even so, there can be provincialism even without overt nationalism.

Malcolm wrote:

Tell that to Algerian kids in France...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, September 20th, 2015 at 3:15 AM

Title: Re: Why Buddhism over Vedanta?

Content:

SeeLion said:

No, because space is uncompounded and never arose.
Are we sure space didn't arise at the Big Bang ?

Malcolm wrote:

The kind of space I am talking about did not arise at the big bang.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, September 20th, 2015 at 10:07 AM

Title: Re: Why Buddhism over Vedanta?

Content:

Wayfarer said:

Is it a kind of space that only certain people are able to perceive?

Malcolm wrote:

No one can perceive it because it is mere absence of obstruction.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, September 20th, 2015 at 10:09 AM

Title: Re: European refugee crisis

Content:

kirtu said:

The vast majority are not. Even so, there can be provincialism even without overt nationalism.

Malcolm wrote:

Tell that to Algerian kids in France...

kirtu said:

You are correct about that. Unfortunately the same (or similar) is true for any North African descended kid and almost any Arab kid as well.

Just like the prejudice against African-Americans, many Hispanics and American Indians in the US.

There aren't that many differences, except that Americans to their credit have been addressing both overt and subtle racism while the French just seem to flounder along. However I haven't seen this up close for over 20 yrs now. Hopefully the French have at least begun to address the issues.

Kirt

Malcolm wrote:

Well, no. I think that European xenophobia is greatly exacerbated compared that that of Americans in general, that at least is my experience of Europeans.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, September 20th, 2015 at 8:47 PM

Title: Re: Why Buddhism over Vedanta?

Content:

lostitute said:

It was just an example of something that doesn't change just because you look at it or you don't.

Malcolm wrote:

The only that never changes is the space element. And it does not exist as such.

catmoon said:

Quantum mechanics says something very different. It not only has structure on the very

fine scale, even when dead empty in the colloquial sense, and at absolute zero temp, it contains measurable amounts of energy.

Now the Dalai Lama says that when science and religion disagree, it is religion that must adjust....

Malcolm wrote:

Wrong space, you are talking about conditioned space.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, September 20th, 2015 at 11:40 PM

Title: Re: Why Buddhism over Vedanta?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The only that never changes is the space element. And it does not exist as such.

Harimoo said:

"The only thing that never changes is the space element".

Because time is space ?

I don't understand.

lostitude said:

How can you say that space is permanent if it doesn't exist anyway? If it's permanently never there, then anything that doesn't exist is also permanently never there and changeless...

Malcolm wrote:

Right, the characteristic of space is its total absence, which is why the element of space is defined as "non-obstruction." It and the two kinds of cessation, are the only kinds of uncompounded phenomena [dharma, lit. bearer of characteristics] there are. Everything else is compounded or conditioned.

When you begin to delve into higher Buddhist tenets, the metaphor of space becomes more important, since emptiness is linked to it. It is the basis and container of everything without being anything at all. Since it is the basis and container of everything, everything it supports isn't anything at all, like a magician's illusion.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, September 20th, 2015 at 11:46 PM

Title: Re: How important is shamatha, and practices before shamatha

Content:

passel said:

This is one of the things I wonder about- does this mean that attentional stability is optional for dzogchen? (actually seems plausible to me for certain individuals), or (more plausible to me) that the attentional stability is a necessity but is developed in a variety of alternative contexts to what has been "officially" known as "shamatha"? My suspicion is that it's the latter. (The story of Garab Dorje maintaining equipoise as the devatas blew horns in his ears, e.g.)

Straightforward shamatha has been an important part of my path and will continue to be, I can't undo my foundation, so I suppose this is just idle curiosity on my part...

Malcolm wrote:

Samadhi is innate, it is part of the 10 neutral mental factors all sentient beings possess.

You will often find in the Dzogchen tradition the idea of self-arisen concentration — this is a result of recognizing the basis [aka rig pa] and stabilizing that recognition through various practices as Ivo mentions.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, September 21st, 2015 at 3:38 AM

Title: Re: How important is shamatha, and practices before shamatha

Content:

MiphamFan said:

Malcolm, what about the time you quoted Rongzom saying first dhyana is necessary for Dzogchen practitioners?

Malcolm wrote:

What I said was that Rongzom maintains that if one has not understood the meaning of Dzogchen directly, one should meditate either sūtra or tantra style [without a bias towards either, incidentally], cultivating these five mental factors that constitute the first dhyāna, trying to maintain total attention [shes bzhin, saṃprajāna] within the horizon of complete mindfulness [dran pa, smṛtiḥ]. Thus, for many of us, developing this dhyāna is important to the degree that it assists us maintain the view. These two words, smṛtiḥ and saṃprajāna, incidentally, as the words ChNN is translating using "presence and awareness."

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, September 21st, 2015 at 3:52 AM

Title: Re: European refugee crisis

Content:

Dan74 said:

And in Sweden, there is very little racism.

Malcolm wrote:

The most explicitly anti-gay, anti-semitic person I ever met in my life, outside of

Americans I have met, was a woman from Sweden. Really, I was very surprised. I think xenophobia runs deeper among Europeans than many people realize.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, September 21st, 2015 at 4:30 AM

Title: Re: European refugee crisis

Content:

Dan74 said:

And in Sweden, there is very little racism.

Malcolm wrote:

The most explicitly anti-gay, anti-semitic person I ever met in my life, outside of Americans I have met, was a woman from Sweden. Really, I was very surprised. I think xenophobia runs deeper among Europeans than many people realize.

Norwegian said:

Yes. I'm quite surprised Dan74 suggested this. Sweden has a lot of problems with racism and xenophobia.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Racism_in_Sweden

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nazism_in_Sweden

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Antisemitism_in_Sweden

<http://foreignpolicy.com/2014/09/16/how-a-former-neo-nazi-party-became-swedens-third-largest/>

Malcolm wrote:

Anyway, I think that we can all agree that we ought to do something to help the 20 million refugees in the world today.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, September 21st, 2015 at 10:06 AM

Title: Re: Eating at restaurants that serve meat and alcohol

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

I was told to never post again by lama Konchog Namdrol, who has some relationship with DW that I don't understand.

Malcolm wrote:

And a relationship that no one else knows about or cares about.

Urgyen Dorje said:

I guess I'm defying that order. Ban me. I don't care.

Malcolm wrote:

How could anyone ban you? This phantom Lama has no authority here. Screw all limitations imposed by others. We have enough to deal with dealing with our own limitations.

Urgyen Dorje said:

It's ridiculous to make an arbitrary line in the sand over eating meat and drinking alcohol. Good Buddhists, here, bad ones, there.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, agreed. Liberation is not found in what one eats or drinks.

Urgyen Dorje said:

To this day. It's a pretty shitty thing all around.

Malcolm wrote:

Yup. There are no rules.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, September 21st, 2015 at 11:10 AM

Title: Re: Eating at restaurants that serve meat and alcohol

Content:

Urgyen Dorje said:

Well, this lama Konchok Namdrol is harassing me and my friend because of some trespass on DW, and is threatening to get us banned from all the Buddhist forums and webcast Buddhist activities such as ChNNR's webcasts and Garchen Rinpoches's webcasts. Sorry, but we take that seriously as we are students of both lamas.

Malcolm wrote:

Umm, no one can ban you from DC webcasts since they are open. No one will ban you from Vajracakra.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, September 21st, 2015 at 11:11 AM

Title: Re: Eating at restaurants that serve meat and alcohol

Content:

smcj said:

Yikes! U.D. your posts were nothing but supportive of ChNN. And I hope none of my posts are being interpreted as offensive. I think there's some bad information floating around.

Urgyen Dorje said:

Thanks! That's what I thought too!

But lama Konchog Namdrol, says that he's received complaints by the DC community on DW ...

Malcolm wrote:
I doubt it.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, September 23rd, 2015 at 12:07 AM

Title: Re: Towards a Buddhist Fundamentalism: Part II

Content:

Ayu said:

Misunderstanding:

I suppose it was me, who moderated. But it was not for "attacking and missinterpreting" that person. I just edited the name. Nothing else. No warning. I just asked them, not to mention that name.

Without telling the name, I regarded the topic as "considering a problem". With telling the name this "considering" turned to slander in my eyes. The statements could be right, but with the name you can find the slander easily by google...

I'm sorry that so many people don't understand this. For me it is so clear.

Malcolm wrote:

In the United States we are used to something called "Freedom of Speech," so when you go editing things out, this offends many of us.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, September 23rd, 2015 at 3:19 AM

Title: Re: Resources on Sacred Geography

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

There is a kind of literature called sa dpyad, literally, "site analysis" that gives various indications and sometimes even diagrams like the following: mountain_types.jpg (15.07 KiB) Viewed 4065 times

This illustration, from left to right, shows mountains according to elemental typology: wood [ཤིང་], fire [མེ], metal [རྒྱལ་མེ], and water [ལྷན་པ་].

It is generally held that the science of sa dbyad comes from China. The above illustration is from a text from is called The Treasury of Jewels, Chinese Site Analysis [rgya nag dpyad nor bu'i gter mdzod]. There are also site examination texts from India, having to do with mandala construction, as well as the subject of Vastu śāstra.

The dual influences of Chinese and Indian culture on these issues is demonstrated by Karma Chagme's short text on this subject. We can see here too Tibetan pre-Buddhist ideas about ancestors and so on in the way the term bla is used in this specific context. The first chapter of Karma Chagme's text states:

The accurate result of the relative site:

in general, all of the outer universe and inhabitants
have the nature of the five elements.

India, China, Mongolia and Tibet
are based on the way earth element has formed.

The chronicle of happiness, suffering,
increase and decrease, wealth and poverty
is clarified in the site examination texts of Kīlaya.
Therefore, this location of the living,
such as location of the house and so on, is important.

Life [srog], the soul [bla] and consciousness [rnam shes] are a trio.
Life is taken by the ghostly butcher.
Consciousness is the slave of karma.
Having taken the form of the past life, the soul
exists in the tomb site.
If the tomb site is good, that soul prospers,
will protect and guard the living,
and is called "being guarded by the souls of the paternal ancestors."
If the tomb site is bad, that soul flounders,
and since it seeks protection in the living,
the misfortune of unbearable illnesses arise.
Therefore, the site of the tomb is important.
It was said by Ārya Mañjuśrī
in the Tantras of the Divinatory Sciences of China,
"If the corpse is carried to a badly analyzed site,
even animals will be crushed into dust."

The text continues in the following chapter by listing various titles of Chinese and India
site examination texts. Chapter three gives the general technique. Chapter four gives
the techniques for picking a tomb site. Chapter five gives the specifics for picking a
house site. Chapter six gives the specifics for selecting a site for practicing Chod.

FYI, the above text is a section of Karma Chagme's Mountain Dharma.

Much of this information about directions, shapes of the land and so on is to be found in
elemental calculation, which is also part of the "Divinatory Sciences of China."

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, September 23rd, 2015 at 3:56 AM

Title: Re: Resources on Sacred Geography

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

BTW, the perfect site for chod is:

On red cliffs there are tsan, on black cliffs there are düd,
at lakes and springs on slate mountains, nāgas,
on most grass covered hills there are classes of gnyan.
on rock mountains are gyalpos and the'urang.

Cliffs and mountains are equivalent,
supporting happiness, sloping in the front.
Male mountains are wide, female mountains are narrow.
The mountain is the body, the lake is the heart,
the spring is the life channel, and the trees are the hair,
the crest of the elephant, the heart of the human,
the highest burden of horses and animals,
the excellent place for overcoming the opponent,
that is the place to remain for Chod.
That is called the "eye of the gnyan."

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, September 23rd, 2015 at 4:01 AM

Title: Re: Resources on Sacred Geography

Content:

amanitamusc said:

Who are the sources for Chinese influence?

Malcolm wrote:

Depending on whether you follow Chö or Bon it differs.

According to Chö, the master Duhar Nagpo introduced divinatory sciences to Tibet during the Imperial period after they were taught by Mañjuśrī on five peaked mountain. Also, Wenjo supposedly introduced them during the time of Songtsen Gampo.

According to Bonpos, it was Legtang Mangpo, who received it from Kongtse, after Kongtse received it from the Bon equivalent of Mañjuśrī, Mrawey Senge.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, September 23rd, 2015 at 4:02 AM

Title: Re: Resources on Sacred Geography

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

BTW, the perfect site for chod is:

On red cliffs there are tsan, on black cliffs there are düd,
at lakes and springs on slate mountains, nāgas,
on most grass covered hills there are classes of gnyan.
on rock mountains are gyalpos and the'urang.

Cliffs and mountains are equivalent,
supporting happiness, sloping in the front.
Male mountains are wide, female mountains are narrow.
The mountain is the body, the lake is the heart,
the spring is the life channel, and the trees are the hair,
the crest of the elephant, the heart of the human,

the highest burden of horses and animals,
the excellent place for overcoming the opponent,
that is the place to remain for Chod.
That is called the "eye of the gnyan."

Norwegian said:
Great quote. Thanks for posting this. Where is it from?

Malcolm wrote:
Same as above.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Wednesday, September 23rd, 2015 at 4:34 AM
Title: Re: Resources on Sacred Geography
Content:
amanitamusc said:
Who are the sources for Chinese influence?

Malcolm wrote:
Depending on whether you follow Chö or Bon it differs.

According to Chö, the master Duhar Nagpo introduced divinatory sciences to Tibet during the Imperial period after they were taught by Mañjuśrī on five peaked mountain. Also, Wenjo supposedly introduced them during the time of Songtsen Gampo.

According to Bonpos, it was Legtang Mangpo, who received it from Kongtse, after Kongtse received it from the Bon equivalent of Mañjuśrī, Mrawey Senge.

amanitamusc said:
Has ChNN commented on this?

Malcolm wrote:
ChNN generally favors the Bonpo histories on the origins of such sciences. You can read about it in Light of Kailash.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Wednesday, September 23rd, 2015 at 6:01 AM
Title: Re: Resources on Sacred Geography
Content:

Malcolm wrote:
ChNN generally favors the Bonpo histories on the origins of such sciences. You can read about it in Light of Kailash.

catmoon said:
You call them sciences? How very generous of you.

Malcolm wrote:

Per the OED:

science | 'siəns|

noun

the intellectual and practical activity encompassing the systematic study of the structure and behavior of the physical and natural world through observation and experiment: the world of science and technology.

- a particular area of this: veterinary science | the agricultural sciences.
- a systematically organized body of knowledge on a particular subject: the science of criminology.
- archaic knowledge of any kind.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, September 23rd, 2015 at 8:57 PM

Title: Re: Resources on Sacred Geography

Content:

amanitamusc said:

Do you know why he makes this seemingly controversial choice?

Is it explained why in Light of Kailash ?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, he explains all of his points of view on this in LOK. ChNN makes the argument that Zhang Zhung is the origin of many Tibetan cultural practices, including elemental calculation.

As to the absence of an elemental calculation in China resembling anything like what we find in Tibet, there is the story that the Tang emperor was so incensed at the use of calculation by the Tibetan minister Gar to trick him, the emperor had all texts of calculation burned, and that the only surviving copies, known as the The Eighty Cycles of Porthang [spor thang brgyad cu skor] were brought to Tibet by Srong btsan sGam po's chinese wife, Kongjo.

The science of sa dpyad, site examination, is part of this collection of knowledge.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, September 23rd, 2015 at 9:40 PM

Title: Re: Gyalwa Menri Wa, New Jersey, May 2016: Dzogchen

Content:

DGA said:

Am I badly misinterpreting this? I'm trying to understand what needs are met by organizing this event in this way. As someone who is interested in the logistics of how to

organize an event like this, I'm interested to know how well this serves the participants in the retreat.

Malcolm wrote:

If you think this is expensive, you should check out his program to become a long life and prosperity ritual specialist, and it is packed!

There is a market for it. But not all Bon programs are so expensive, as you know.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, September 23rd, 2015 at 9:59 PM

Title: Re: Shenphen Dawa Rinpoche on Reading Dzogchen Books

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

is highly counterproductive, IMO.

MalaBeads said:

How so, malcolm? I would like to understand more.

Malcolm wrote:

It increases alienation, and prevents people from making a positive connection with the teachings.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, September 24th, 2015 at 2:55 AM

Title: Re: The Nature of Buddhahood

Content:

kirtu said:

Here's something: some people are forever trying to project their assumed universal norms onto others and force others into the structures that they have imposed on themselves mentally. For example, most Americans do this daily with their racial trauma. So we can get a good deal of exaggeration that people really think reflect actual reality.

Malcolm wrote:

For example, when someone says "Most X do Y..."

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, September 24th, 2015 at 4:15 AM

Title: Re: Gyalwa Menri Wa, New Jersey, May 2016: Dzogchen

Content:

DGA said:

I just had a good experience at Serenity Ridge in Virginia (they allow participants to camp if they want, which is great--I slept in my truck).

I'm curious how these teachings are divided up into segments. What does "part one" of the A-Khrid involve? how many parts are there?

thanks

Malcolm wrote:

It is probably the A Khrid in fifteen sections — about 36 western pages. There are other instructions, the fifteen section A khrid in the version I have amounts to about 165 pages of instructions. There is also another earlier manual divided into eight or ten sections. It is about 135 pages all totaled.

I imagine, though I could not tell you for sure, that it is three sections divided by five sections. It has the usual subjects like confidence in the guru, bodhicitta, refuge and confession, mandala, supplication to the guru, etc.

So I imagine that first retreat focuses mainly on Ngondro, the second and third retreats focus mainly nature of mind, etc.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, September 24th, 2015 at 5:10 AM

Title: Re: Gyalwa Menri Wa, New Jersey, May 2016: Dzogchen

Content:

DGA said:

Thanks.

Now I'm having a confuse, because it also says that ngondro isn't necessary to participate in this teaching... which is a no-brainer if it's a ngondro teaching. "ngondro" can mean more than one thing, though. It's the four thoughts that turn the mind; it's the accumulations of prostrations and so on; and then there are specific practices associated with certain Dzogchen transmissions that are also called "ngondro." If the subsequent teachings are in 2016, is there some expectation of one doing a lot of accumulation before parts two and three, or...?

I also don't know what Nyoshi means.

I'm sorry if all this is obvious in context; I'm an ignorant lout asking out of interest in Dzogchen but lacking in context or much knowledge at all about Bon. Thanks.

Malcolm wrote:

It just means that in some of his A khrid teachings, you should have attended section one. Here, no need since it is the preliminary section.

Here Ngondro means Ngondro, as in refuge, bodhicitta, etc. The first five or so sections involve some Ngondro teachings up to guru yoga among meditation instructions as well.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, September 24th, 2015 at 5:21 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist teachers that teach a true self?

Content:

Son of Buddha said:

I think the Dali Lama in his book mentioned that Sakya master Rendawa taught True Self as well.

Malcolm wrote:

Hahahahahaha — Rendawa was the most staunch opponent of the Jonang School, his student was Tsongkhapa. Rendawa declared that gzhan stong was "outside the pale of Buddhism." hahahahahaha.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, September 24th, 2015 at 9:06 AM

Title: Re: Gyalwa Menri Wa, New Jersey, May 2016: Dzogchen

Content:

DGA said:

Thanks.

If the subsequent teachings are in 2016, is there some expectation of one doing a lot of accumulation before parts two and three, or...?

Garudavista said:

I had the same question and emailed my question to the director at Olmo Ling who asked Tempa Lama who said that "as long as you have received the preliminary transmission [i.e. part 1 in November], you can attend the subsequent A Khrid teachings. It's not necessary to be finished with the 100,000 recitations."

As for the meaning of nyoshi, I'm not sure either. In the context of the sentence it seems to have something to do with instructions related to the teacher's direct experience. I tried looking for the meaning of the word on Google but couldn't find anything. Malcolm, do you know what nyoshi means?

Malcolm wrote:

dngos gzhi means "main section".

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, September 24th, 2015 at 10:12 PM

Title: Re: Student Teacher Relationship in Modern Age

Content:

steve_bakr said:

For a Direct Introduction to the Nature of your Mind, please read, "Self-Liberation Through Seeing With Naked Awareness," by Guru Padmasambhava, translated by John Reynolds. It is available on your Kindle or in print.

Malcolm wrote:

This not a direct introduction. One cannot receive direct introduction from a book.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, September 24th, 2015 at 10:58 PM

Title: Re: Experience of Shunyata All the Time?

Content:

steve_bakr said:

Since Rigpa is intrinsic to every experience...

Malcolm wrote:

Rlg pa is not intrinsic to every experience. If it were, there could be no ma rig pa, and there would never be any need to point anything out at all. This distinction has nothing to do at all with "scholarly explanations." It has everything to do with being properly trained by a qualified teacher of Dzogchen however.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, September 24th, 2015 at 11:32 PM

Title: Re: Experience of Shunyata All the Time?

Content:

steve_bakr said:

Since Rigpa is intrinsic to every experience...

Malcolm wrote:

Rlg pa is not intrinsic to every experience. If it were, there could be no ma rig pa, and there would never be any need to point anything out at all. This distinction has nothing to do at all with "scholarly explanations." It has everything to do with being properly trained by a qualified teacher of Dzogchen however.

smcj said:

This isn't a challenge, but an actual translation question.

Isn't all experience either rig pa or ma rig pa, with normal awareness being ma rig pa? And therefore, as is suggested by the semantics, is not the root rig pa is always present,

with the only differentiation between awareness and unawareness being the presence or absence of the prefix ma?

Just curious.

Malcolm wrote:

The term "rig pa " refers to a very specific kind of knowledge. Ma rig pa is the absence of that knowledge, plain and simple.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, September 24th, 2015 at 11:33 PM

Title: Re: Experience of Shunyata All the Time?

Content:

Karma Dondrup Tashi said:

I'm pretty deep into the Drikungpas at the moment therefore that's how I am understanding it too. I.e. purification of obscurations equals rigpa, including the obscuration of trying to manufacture it.

Malcolm wrote:

This approach is typical of the vehicles of cause and effect. It is not the Dzogchen approach at all, which is beyond cause and effect. In other words, Buddhahood is not held to be a result of purification of obscurations nor the accumulation of merit and wisdom.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, September 25th, 2015 at 12:10 AM

Title: Re: Experience of Shunyata All the Time?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

This approach is typical of the vehicles of cause and effect. It is not the Dzogchen approach at all, which is beyond cause and effect.

Karma Dondrup Tashi said:

Ty, it gets paradoxical, however.

Your view is that, according to ati, purification as a preliminary is unnecessary since confusion itself is wisdom.

Malcolm wrote:

No, that is not my view at all.

Karma Dondrup Tashi said:

However this somewhat refutes the very view you try to support - that there exists ma rigpa.

If preliminary yanas/dzogchen ngondro are unnecessary because confusion is always already wisdom, in what sense can there ever be ma rigpa?

If your view is correct rigpa in fact is intrinsic to every view.

Malcolm wrote:

You are countering an argument I have not made.

The 47th chapter of the All-Creating King Tantra states:

Because the Great Perfection has always been beyond cause and result,
there is nothing to do and nothing to accomplish with seeking and practicing.

Having set the scriptures taught by the teachers of the view of cause [sentient beings]
and result [buddhas]

as standards for the phenomena of worldly characteristics,
a result to accomplished is sought from a cause.

Without a cause in the mind there has never been a result
because there is no arising in awakened mind [bodhicitta].

Having used an example for worldly arising phenomena,
perishing after arising cannot be termed production.

Since the self-originated beyond cause and result cannot be examined,
having set the standard for the phenomena of worldly characteristics,
it claimed that a result is produced that is sought from a cause,
that is the provisional scripture of the vehicles of cause and result.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, September 25th, 2015 at 12:25 AM

Title: Re: Ekayana

Content:

Karma Dondrup Tashi said:

Outside of the context of Chan and Mahayana sutras are there any Tibetan materials
discussing this topic?

I'm not thinking of general discussions about second versus third wheel, two truths etc.
But a more specific discussion.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, the Sakya School advocates the Ekayāna approach based on the Lotus Sutra.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, September 25th, 2015 at 12:43 AM

Title: Re: Ekayana

Content:

Karma Dondrup Tashi said:

M-la - now, bearing in mind I didn't ask the broader question whether dzogchen/ati/lamdre etc is really a Buddhist "yana" or "school" at all - how do the Sakyapas reconcile the inclusivism of this ekayana view with vehicles that include the result in the path/cause?

Malcolm wrote:

They maintain that there is one goal, and hence one vehicle.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, September 25th, 2015 at 12:46 AM

Title: Re: Experience of Shunyata All the Time?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Rlg pa is not intrinsic to every experience. If it were, there could be no ma rig pa, and there would never be any need to point anything out at all.

asunthatneversets said:

Do you think confusion about this arises due to the fact that "rig pa" as a Tibetan term can also mean plain old, everyday "knowing"? I've seen some teachers use it in that context, such as when the relative knowing of mind as gnas gyu shes pa is referred to as rig pa in the context of gnas gyu rig gsum. This seems to create confusion and lends to the misconception that rig pa is always present.

For instance, Tulku Urgyen Rinpoche uses rig pa like that, but then makes a point to differentiate two different types of rig pa, which strikes me as a plausible example of how so much confusion arises over this principle.

In the case of stillness [gnas pa], occurrence [gyu ba] and noticing [rig pa], the word rigpa is used for noticing. Self-existing awareness [rang byung rig pa] is also called rigpa. The word is the same but the meaning is different. The difference between these two practices is as vast as the distance between sky and earth.

Malcolm wrote:

rang byung rig pa is "self-originated rig pa", it means knowledge [rig pa] of your primordial state that originated [byung] from your own [rang] discovery of it.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, September 25th, 2015 at 12:58 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist teachers that teach a true self?

Content:

frankc said:

Can you give me some references to Zen teachers completely forthright about the true self/atman/soul just like straight in your face " THE ETERNAL UNCHANGING SOUL SEPARATE FROM THE FIVE KHANDAS EXISTING OUTSIDE OF TIME AND SPACE COMPLETELY INDESTRUCTIBLE A MYSTERY BEYOND CONCEPTS THE ETERNAL KNOWER FIVE HUNDRED MEN WITH SPEARS CAN'T TOUCH IT AHHHH" It's hard for me to find just straight teachings on this thing. Like even on the Jonang website there's barely anything.

seeker242 said:

The Lankavatara Sutra, a very popular zen sutra, talks a lot about this sort of thing. But you really don't ever get a "completely forthright" description of it. But that's not a failure of the teachings, it's a failure of the nature of words and concepts to begin with.

Then Mahamati said: Again, Bhagavan, are words themselves the highest reality? or is what is expressed in words the highest reality?

The Bhagavan replied: Mahamati, words are not the highest reality, nor is what is expressed in words the highest reality. Why? Because the highest reality is an exalted state of bliss, and as it cannot be entered into by mere statements regarding it, words are not the highest reality. Mahamati, the highest reality is to be attained by the inner realization of noble wisdom; it is not a state of word-discrimination; therefore, discrimination does not express the highest reality. And then, Mahamati, words are subject to birth and destruction; they are unsteady, mutually conditioning, and are produced by the law of causation. And again, Mahamati, what is mutually conditioning and produced by the law of causation cannot express the highest reality, because the indications [pointing to the distinction between] self and not-self are non-existent. Mahamati, words are these indications and do not express [the highest reality].

One's true self is "unconditioned" and therefore cannot be accurately described by the conditioned.

That which is unconditioned goes beyond all idle reasonings. That which goes beyond all idle reasonings, that is the Tathagata. Mahamati, this is the essence of perfect enlightenment, this is the self-nature of Buddhahood which is removed from all senses and measurements. So it is said:

79. That which is released from senses and measurements is neither an effect nor a cause; it has nothing to do with knowledge and that which is to be known; it is free from predicated and predicating.

80. There is something which is nowhere to be seen by anybody as the Skandhas, causation, enlightenment; of that which is nowhere to be seen by anybody, what description can we make?

81. It is not something made nor unmade, it is neither an effect nor a cause, it is neither the Skandhas nor not-Skandhas, nor is it other than the combination.

82. There is something that is not to be seen by the discrimination of its being, nor is it to be known as nonexistent; such is the self-essence of all things.

The Lankavatara Sutra is one of my favorites. Although, not exactly "completely forthright" in a sense. Although, depending on how you look at it, one could say it's about as completely forthright as you can get!

Malcolm wrote:

I would not place a lot of confidence in this translation, it is extremely inaccurate.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, September 25th, 2015 at 2:57 AM

Title: Re: Experience of Shunyata All the Time?

Content:

Karma Dondrup Tashi said:

I'm pretty deep into the Drikungpas at the moment therefore that's how I am understanding it too. I.e. purification of obscurations equals rigpa, including the obscuration of trying to manufacture it.

Malcolm wrote:

This approach is typical of the vehicles of cause and effect. It is not the Dzogchen approach at all, which is beyond cause and effect. In other words, Buddhahood is not held to be a result of purification of obscurations nor the accumulation of merit and wisdom.

smcj said:

This sounds to me just like the Buddha Nature teachings and much of Zen also. "The clouds cannot taint the sun", etc.

Malcolm wrote:

No, the tathagātagarbha teachings are causal vehicle teachings, and buddhahood still depends on the two accumulations, as the Uttaratantra states:

The two accumulations are its cause,
the result of that cause is supreme awakening.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, September 25th, 2015 at 2:58 AM

Title: Re: Experience of Shunyata All the Time?

Content:

tomamundsen said:

But there must be some cause for the appearance of Rupakaya as experienced by sentient beings, right?

Malcolm wrote:

Are you looking for the Dzogchen answer?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, September 25th, 2015 at 3:01 AM

Title: Re: Ekayana

Content:

Karma Dondrup Tashi said:

Outside of the context of Chan and Mahayana sutras are there any Tibetan materials discussing this topic?

I'm not thinking of general discussions about second versus third wheel, two truths etc. But a more specific discussion.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, the Sakya School advocates the Ekayāna approach based on the Lotus Sutra.

passel said:

Fascinating. Do they get this from Xiyi or is it an independently derived doctrine? I guess not too hard to arrive at since the Lotus Sutra is all about ekayana. Wouldnt require tiantai help but just curious if there was any back and forth there.

Malcolm wrote:

None, no back and forth.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, September 25th, 2015 at 3:07 AM

Title: Re: Experience of Shunyata All the Time?

Content:

tomamundsen said:

But there must be some cause for the appearance of Rupakaya as experienced by sentient beings, right?

Malcolm wrote:

Are you looking for the Dzogchen answer?

tomamundsen said:

Yes, please, Loppon.

Malcolm wrote:

Mañjuśrīmitra writes in the Meditation of Awakened Mind:

Because the awakening of the sugata does not exist, his magical apparitions appear to the deluded, similar to an illusion.

Thus, the cause of the appearance of the rūpakāya is the delusion of sentient beings and nothing more.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, September 25th, 2015 at 6:52 AM

Title: Re: Experience of Shunyata All the Time?

Content:

smcj said:

However if you alter the premise, "the awakening of the sugata does not exist" to "the awakening of the sugata does exist" (as later authors do)

Malcolm wrote:

Mañjuśrīmitra was the direct disciple of Garab Dorje, a fully awakened person who attained great transference. This is the Dzogchen Forum. So....who cares what later authors say?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, September 25th, 2015 at 10:41 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist teachers that teach a true self?

Content:

frankc said:

According to Dolpopa, the Madhyamakas had grasped the second stage teaching, that there is no permanence in the universe, but had missed the all-important third stage doctrine.

Malcolm wrote:

Apparently Yogacarins missed it as well because in their treatises authors such as Maitryanatha, Asanga and Vasubandhu pay absolutely no attention to the hermeneutic strategy of three turnings of the wheel.

Quite frankly, the fact that Tibetans in later generations such as Dolbupa pay so much attention to this strategy represents a critical failure in their scholarship.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, September 25th, 2015 at 9:26 PM

Title: Re: Abhijñā and Dzogchen

Content:

pothigai said:

Generally it seems that, according to the Pali Canon, a practitioner develops the abhijñās upon mastery of the fourth jhāna. I've heard accounts of people developing them earlier as well, these experiences are mainly to do with remembering past lives. It seems that these abilities arise as a result of the mind being free of the five hindrances; the product of abiding in jhāna.

Within the Dzogchen path, are such abilities also developed? If so, at what point does this happen?

Malcolm wrote:

They develop in the second vision.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, September 25th, 2015 at 9:40 PM

Title: Re: Eating at restaurants that serve meat and alcohol

Content:

goldenlight said:

If Shakyamuni was horrified by mundane stuff like that then the Shakyamuni that you venerate was not a Buddha.

That is exactly what is assumed these days, The premise that shakyamuni was above the mundane and that all phenomena are empty and devoid of existence, And with this notion people are misled to indulge in misdeeds. These are mentioned in the Shurangama Sutra, unfortunately a gem of a sutra it is and people disdain it as being apocryphal.

Malcolm wrote:

Not all Mahāyāna Buddhist read the Shurangama Sutra. For example, it did not exist in the Mahāyāna Sūtra portion of the Tibetan Canon. So Mahāyāna Buddhists in Tibet do not accept it as an authoritative sūtra.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, September 25th, 2015 at 9:43 PM

Title: Re: Dzogchen & Vipashyana on thoughts

Content:

steve_bakr said:

I validated Jackson's Pointing Out instructions and they were authentic in the sense that they could open a window to Rigpa.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, September 26th, 2015 at 1:06 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist teachers that teach a true self?

Content:

Son of Buddha said:

[

Also I don't have to give my interpretation of how the term self is used in the Buddhist Buddha Nature sutras, I can show you what the Sutras actually say it is..... My interpretation need not apply.

Malcolm wrote:

One is supposed to follow the meaning, not the words. In your case, I cannot say that you are observing this maxim with regards the tathāgatagarbha sūtras.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, September 26th, 2015 at 1:19 AM

Title: Re: Shenphen Dawa Rinpoche on Reading Dzogchen Books

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

It increases alienation, and prevents people from making a positive connection with the teachings.

MalaBeads said:

Yes, alienation. That's a very problem in todays world. How to include everyone?

Malcolm wrote:

There are six liberations, not only one.

But if people express interest in the teachings, even only academically, they should be encouraged.

Obviously, if someone is not interested, then there is no point is evangelizing them.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, September 26th, 2015 at 1:51 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist teachers that teach a true self?

Content:

Son of Buddha said:

.....do you?

Malcolm wrote:

As I said, I frankly think you do not understand the meaning of what you read. It is a very simple observation.

It's ok though, it is better to be an eternalist like yourself than someone who follows annihilationism.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, September 26th, 2015 at 2:19 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist teachers that teach a true self?

Content:

Son of Buddha said:

Of course you call me an externalist, it makes me wonder if you even know what an externalist is in the context of the Buddha Nature teachings.

Malcolm wrote:

An eternalist one who maintains that there is a permanent, truly existent, pure, permanent self, as you do.

The Buddha taught eternalist teachings provisionally for people of similar dispositions to yourself, people very hung up on words.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, September 26th, 2015 at 2:27 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist teachers that teach a true self?

Content:

smcj said:

The Buddha taught eternalist teachings provisionally for people of similar dispositions to yourself, people very hung up on words.

Well that's good enough for me!

Malcolm wrote:

What use is permanent, truly existent and so on, when nothing relative is established at all? True, permanent, existent, pure and so on are all relative. They only exist with respect to the false, impermanent, nonexistent, impure and so on. If the latter are not established, how could the former be established? This is so obvious, I really fail to see why people cannot grok this point.

This is why this whole dialogue is fraught with error from the beginning...

Tathagātagarbha is just a convention, it does not indicate anything real at all...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, September 26th, 2015 at 2:42 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist teachers that teach a true self?

Content:

Son of Buddha said:

I could of swore an externalist was

Malcolm wrote:

Eternalist [śāśvatavādin], not externalist [tīrthika]...

It is possible to be the former without being the latter.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, September 26th, 2015 at 2:44 AM

Title: Re: Dzogchen & Vipashyana on thoughts

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The Three Words of Dr. Jim Valby:

Introduce yourself to a delusion.

Spread it as widely as possible.

Continue in that state forever.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, September 26th, 2015 at 2:46 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist teachers that teach a true self?

Content:

Son of Buddha said:

Also what were the provisional dzogchen teachings provisionally taught for?

Malcolm wrote:

For people who need a teaching of a buddhahood that is not a result of a cause, causes taught in such sūtras as the Nirvana, like gathering the two accumulations and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, September 26th, 2015 at 2:56 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist teachers that teach a true self?

Content:

smcj said:

Tathagātagarbha is just a convention...

I'm ok with that idea.

it does not indicate anything real at all...

I'm ok with that too. I prefer adjectives such as authentic, valid, true, etc. "Real" makes it sound like an existent.

Plus I think that it is obvious that since Madhyamaka proves nothing anywhere in the universe is "real" in terms that can be logically put forward, that our ideas of what constitutes "real" is completely mistaken. It is like starting out with the assumption that there are unicorns, and then when you can't find any you ignore the fact that your assumptions about them were wrong in the first place.

Malcolm wrote:

Tathagātagarbha does not indicate anything authentic, valid, true and so on. Why?

Because there is no authentic, real, true etc., basis for such a garbha.

"Tathāgatagarbha", just like "sentient being" and "buddha" are just conventions that do not convey any truth.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, September 26th, 2015 at 3:01 AM

Title: Re: Dharma Ocean livestream

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

Yes, I've been enjoying them. I was a little surprised when he referred to "the empty, open field of our eternal self in the central channel" last night, but it's all good.

Malcolm wrote:

Well, of course, Ray is a gzhan stong pa.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, September 26th, 2015 at 3:44 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist teachers that teach a true self?

Content:

Vimalakirti432 said:

Again all the traditions, at their deepest levels, point to the unconditioned.

Nāgārjuna said:

Since arising, abiding and perishing are not established, the conditioned is not established;

since the conditioned is not established, where will the unconditioned be established?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, September 26th, 2015 at 3:50 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist teachers that teach a true self?

Content:

Vimalakirti432 said:

I'm afraid that Buddhists often underestimate the subtlety of non-Buddhist systems (but this goes all the way back to the reputed first sutta of the canon, the Brahmajala).

Rongzom said:

These words of the Great Perfection, stated in very bold and coarse language, are subtle and fine like the element of space; also the systems of the lower vehicles, though spoken in subtle and very fine language, are coarse and rough like a pile of dust.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, September 26th, 2015 at 3:57 AM

Title: Re: Talking about the self, whatever that is

Content:

Vimalakirti432 said:

As an example let's look at a talk on rebirth by Ajahn Brahmalī, which is available on YouTube. This is not to rag on the Ajahn, who overall gave a good presentation for learners. But in his attempt to cut off clinging to self he used the identity argument in such a way as to illustrate what I've been saying.

In short, he argued for the absolute discontinuity of consciousness, from one thought moment to the next, and so the incoherence of a continuous identity. Of course this just begged the question(s). As one young woman in the room asked, What thought moment is it that is cognizing this absolute discontinuity? His answer was evasive and weak, suggesting some kind of inference.

And even a moment's reflection reveals that yes I'm not the same as I was a moment ago, but I'm also not different. (And isn't this very same point made in the Surangama sūtra, if memory serves?) But there's a more serious objection yet.

The doctrine of rebirth depends for its coherence on some notion of identity, as Bhikku Bodhi points out without controversy I think in his article on rebirth (again available online). So we have this peculiar consequence that we poor benighted sentient beings are only granted identity at the point of rebirth but not in our actual lives!

Malcolm wrote:

The Madhyamaka point of view is that causes and effects are neither the same nor are they different, thus avoiding all contradictions between absence of identity and continuity. Therefore, there is no need for the doctrine of rebirth to hinge on any kind of identity proposition in order for someone to maintain continuity in a series.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, September 26th, 2015 at 4:11 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist teachers that teach a true self?

Content:

Son of Buddha said:

(1) by his definition the Buddha was an eternalist because the Buddha taught the 4 virtues of Nirvana(permanence,bliss,self,purity) in the Buddha Nature Sūtra's.

Malcolm wrote:

The Buddha also taught that nirvana was not permanent and not impermanent and so on in other sūtras, still in others he taught nirvana was cessation, etc.

The point is that one cannot always take what the Buddha says in the sūtras literally.

One has to discern what is definitive and what is provisional. As far as the Tathāgatagarbha sutras go, there are two ways to understand them: a provisional way which causes one to be a kind of eternalist; and a definitive way which is free from the fault of the provisional approach and has no taint of attachment to dualities such as permanent, impermanent and so on.

Of course you will respond with the three turnings of the wheel interpretive scheme, but I have already shown elsewhere in detail that the Tibetan use of this schema finds no support at all in Indian literature, especially not with Maitreyanatha, Asanga, etc., and is in fact is the system of a Korean master who commented at length on the Samdhinirmocana-sūtra, whose commentary exists in the Tibetan canon and was very influential.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, September 26th, 2015 at 4:17 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist teachers that teach a true self?

Content:

frankc said:

In Vajrayana Buddhism, the Adi-Buddha, or Adibuddha (Tibetan: Dang-po'i sangs-rgyas), is the "Primordial Buddha." The term refers to a self-emanating, self-originating Buddha, present before anything else existed.

Malcolm wrote:

Um, actually, this definition is completely and utterly wrong. Sorry, but it is typical Wiki-garbage.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, September 26th, 2015 at 4:33 AM

Title: Re: Talking about the self, whatever that is

Content:

Vimalakirti432 said:

Hi Malcolm. Yes, understood, from the ultimate level.

But at issue with the Ajahn was his account of rebirth from what I would consider the conventional level, and my point was that his kind of reasoning was overly simple for the kind of learners he's likely to be confronted with. Lacking the resources of the Mahayana, let alone the Madhyamaka, it would seem to me better to at least be consistent with the notion of identity, and even better to bracket the whole area of the conventional self for which he can give no satisfactory answers.

Malcolm wrote:

The absence of identity and difference between cause and effect is on the conventional level, that is whole point. From an ultimate point of view, there is no sense in discussing the identity or difference of causes and results.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, September 26th, 2015 at 5:07 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist teachers that teach a true self?

Content:

frankc said:

In another central text, The Fourth Council, Dolpopa challenged the Buddhist community to honestly address the logical inconsistencies in their philosophy, such as: If everything is essentially nonexistent, how does it happen that we're sitting here talking about it?

Malcolm wrote:

The main disciple of Garab Dorje, Mañjuśrīmitra has a reply:

Commoners were born and are being born in various births having coming under the power of birth, similar with the illusion of an elephant produce by an illusionist's knowledge of illusions, the illusions are confused by the illusion; like being deceived by a dream, the happiness experienced by the dreamer is a dream that has come under the power of a dream.

frankc said:

"With loving reverence," he wrote, "I bow to Buddha, who is the supreme Self, perfect purity, and ever-abiding bliss. The ultimate refuge for beings suffering in this world is the supreme Self, the adamant spiritual being. If this were not a reality, the spiritual path would be useless and enlightenment could not exist. The living experience of reality is joy beyond joy, limitless love, all-embracing compassion, intrinsic awareness, and omniscience.

Malcolm wrote:

The 12th century Tibetan Great Perfection master Rongzom anticipates this:

To determine the greatness of the total non-existence of buddhahood, if buddhahood and non-buddhahood [108/a] are nondual, why is one seeking? Determine there is nothing to seek. The yogins in whom such a meaning is present effortlessly abide on the undifferentiated stage of Samantabhadra. The undifferentiated stage of Samantabhadra is universal stage of all Buddhas. Whatever the meaning of the Great Perfection might be, that is it.

frankc said:

"Joining my palms together in deepest respect, I appeal to you to consider that if there were no absolute reality, there could be no relative world. If there were no permanent, fully illumined state, consciousness could not exist at all. This is the state of the primordial Buddha, the Buddha who has always existed even before our human buddhas were born. This state is always fully present in each of us, but it is not available

to those who argue philosophically; it is only available to the yoga practitioners who cleanse their minds in order to experience it directly.

Malcolm wrote:

Again, Mañjuśrimitra states:

Therefore, because awakening and non-awakening are the same in terms of absence of characteristics, there is nothing to accept or reject.

In accordance with the meaning of that, all those explanations of the nominal ultimate, the absence of arising and ceasing, sameness, nonduality, beyond thought, emptiness, the dharmadhātu, freedom from expression and convention, and so on are not ultimate and also are not relative.

If it is said, "This is the path in accordance with the ultimate," that is relative.

Do not abandon or dwell in any Dharma at all, with or without doubt.

Because the meditator and the dharmadhātu do not exist, there is nothing to doubt and there is no nothing to see as ultimate.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, September 26th, 2015 at 5:28 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist teachers that teach a true self?

Content:

smcj said:

No, actually it is specifically and deliberately being presented as a "ground of being".

"Myriad Worlds" is about the various cosmologies, starting with Mr Meru and such. The only subject matter the book addresses is buddhist paradigms of how the universe is. It ends with a Dzogchen cosmology, which is unambiguously a "ground of being".

Excluding the presence of either buddhas or sentient beings makes that clear.

Hey, you don't have to buy it. Plenty of people have become enlightened that find such ideas heresy. But plenty of people, such as Kongtrul himself presumably, have become enlightened while holding those types of ideas. So either way is fine. It is a matter of preference.

Malcolm wrote:

No, SMCJ, the term in Tibetan is simple gzhi, basis. There is no connotation of being presented by use of the term gzhi. In fact the gzhi, the basis is devoid of any extreme of existence, nonexistence and so on. The basis is ka dag, originally pure, i.e. empty, as Master Vimalamitra states:

The basis, the state of initial original purity, is liberated because its essence is not established at all.

"Ground of being" is a term coined by the theologian Paul Tillich to describe God. The basis is not a creative force like God. It does not generate anything. Nothing arises from the basis, and nothing returns to the basis. The Six Dimension offers some clarity:

Dharmatā free from proliferation is originally pure;

it is the basis of an intrinsically pure nature;

it is free from words and syllables;

it cannot be confirmed through expression;
it is free from all conventional reification;
it is without concepts of apprehended objects and apprehending
subjects;
it is without buddhas and without sentient beings;
it is without phenomena and without perception of phenomena;
no one, no thing, nothing at all.
When the essence of such nonexistence
is confirmed with some words:
the essence is original purity
and the nature is natural perfection.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, September 26th, 2015 at 5:45 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist teachers that teach a true self?

Content:

smcj said:

That translation is outdated, there is no such thing as a "ground of being" in Dzogchen...
apart from the ālaya of course, which is pure ignorance.

Kalu Rinpoche Translation Committee. State of the art translation.

You keep making that assertion. There are multiple presentations on Dzogchen. This
one you don't like. That's ok, it is not the only presentation.

Malcolm wrote:

There is only one presentation of this "cosmology [derived from Dzogchen Upadesha
Tantras], the one in Tibetan. That one is very homogenous in other words, if you read one
presentation of this subject in Dzogchen, you have more or less read them all.

There are many different translations of that presentation in English which range from
fairly accurate to completely bogus.

Here, use of the term "ground of being" for gzhi is an unjustified translation for a straight
forward and simple term.

dzogchungpa said:

You aren't by any chance suggesting that Kongtrul's or Guarisco's understanding of this
stuff might be at least as valid as that of our very own amouththatnevershuts, I mean,
asunthatneversets, are you?

Malcolm wrote:

You will observe that in Elio's later translation of Nyingma tenets in in Systems of
Buddhist Tantra, ppg. 305-306., done in collaboration with ChNN, he abandons the term
"ground of being" for the simpler and more accurate "ground."

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, September 26th, 2015 at 5:50 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist teachers that teach a true self?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

"Ground of being" is a term coined by the theologian Paul Tillich to describe God.

smcj said:

A case in point to my observation that anything that is compared to Christianity is automatically understood to be unacceptable. I call this P.C.S.D., Post Christian Stress Disorder.

Malcolm wrote:

This is no more nor less than what the Chinese Buddhist did when they found that using Taoist terms in their translations confused their understanding of Buddhadharma. So they stopped doing so, and created a unique Buddhist vocabulary in Chinese to handle translations of Buddhist text.

On the other hand, your attachment to terms like ground of being and defense of them indicates that maybe you have not shaken the theism of your childhood. I was raised without any religion at all, so no PCSD here.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, September 26th, 2015 at 5:55 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist teachers that teach a true self?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

"Ground of being" is a term coined by the theologian Paul Tillich to describe God.

dzogchungpa said:

Malcolm, you are very fond of pointing this out but, honestly, it is not relevant.

Malcolm wrote:

Of course it is relevant. The choice of language in a translation informs our understanding, especially when we are new and do not completely understand the teachings.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, September 26th, 2015 at 5:58 AM

Title: Re: Talking about the self, whatever that is

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The absence of identity and difference between cause and effect is on the conventional level, that is whole point. From an ultimate point of view, there is no sense in discussing the identity or difference of causes and results.

sherabpa said:

How can this be. On the conventional level, the absence of identity in cause and effect is obvious, and the absence of difference is simply false. This absence has to be on the ultimate level. Yes, there is no sense discussing it, but that does not make it conventional.

Malcolm wrote:

It is conventional, this is why both Nāgārjuna and Candrakīrti use this argument in discussing the conventional production of sprouts from seeds and butter from curds. Go ahead, examine the MMK, you will see I am correct.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, September 26th, 2015 at 6:01 AM

Title: Re: Shenphen Dawa Rinpoche on Reading Dzogchen Books

Content:

Adamantine said:

I can appreciate your perspective on this, but do you then disagree with the lineage masters' cautions regarding degeneration of the teachings through various inappropriate or incorrect understandings and disseminations of those misunderstandings?

I've assumed that the two main threats to proper lineage transmissions and thus perpetuity of vajra dharma traditions and their ability to successfully liberate are a) samaya breakage and b) wrong understanding that is then passed off as correct understanding.. Probably there's plenty of overlap too between a and b.

Malcolm wrote:

Nothing will prevent the spread of Dzogchen teachings. All the broken samaya in the universe could not damage the spread of Dzogchen even a little bit.

One of the reasons there is so much misunderstanding of Dzogchen teachings is that till now its spread has been limited to an elite.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, September 26th, 2015 at 6:07 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist teachers that teach a true self?

Content:

frankc said:

Ven Tong Songchok seemed to have no problem quoting Taoist teachers in his teachings, and here we have him speaking of one thing that is eternal that existed before the earth and skies came into being. And what is another thing spoken of in a similar way?

Malcolm wrote:

Of what relevance is this in the Tibetan Buddhism forum?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, September 26th, 2015 at 6:14 AM

Title: Re: Shenphen Dawa Rinpoche on Reading Dzogchen Books

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Nothing will prevent the spread of Dzogchen teachings. All the broken samaya in the universe could not damage the spread of Dzogchen even a little bit.

One of the reasons there is so much misunderstanding of Dzogchen teachings is that till now its spread has been limited to an elite.

Adamantine said:

Is this your personal opinion?

Malcolm wrote:

The first sentence is not my opinion, but can be found in the tantras of Dzogchen.

The second is my opinion. Misunderstanding of Dzogchen is not confined to Westerners, a lot of Tibetans misunderstand it as well, even supposed Dzogchen practitioners. Sometimes I think the worst thing that happened in Tibetan religious history was gradual/sudden debate at Samye with the ensuing propaganda war by the Ba clan which was taken up later by Sarmapas.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, September 26th, 2015 at 6:20 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist teachers that teach a true self?

Content:

smcj said:

You will observe that in Elio's later translation of Nyingma tenets in in Systems of Buddhist Tantra, ppg. 305-306., done in collaboration with ChNN, he abandons the term "ground of being" for the simpler and more accurate "ground."

Ok, and the difference is...?

Malcolm wrote:

The difference is that the basis is not "a basis or ground of being" since being, nonbeing, etc. are not established even slightly from the very start within the basis itself. The being of the basis is not established, so how can it form a basis for beings?

It does not. In fact, all of this display of samsara and nirvana arise because the basis is not recognized for what it actually is. But there is not even the slightly iota of phenomena within the basis itself.

Anyway, the basis is just a word for one's own unfabricated mind. The generic basis is just a description of that unfabricated mind's characteristics, i.e. emptiness, clarity and their inseparability.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, September 26th, 2015 at 6:22 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist teachers that teach a true self?

Content:

frankc said:

Ven Tong Songchol seemed to have no problem quoting Taoist teachers in his teachings, and here we have him speaking of one thing that is eternal that existed before the earth and skies came into being. And what is another thing spoken of in a similar way?

Malcolm wrote:

Of what relevance is this in the Tibetan Buddhism forum?

frankc said:

It's relevant to the interpretation that Ven Tong Songchol was speaking of the "one thing" as an insight into the true nature of phenomena, as opposed to an eternal myterious"one thing" that is never born and never dies.

Malcolm wrote:

What is the relevance of Korean Zen to Tibetan Buddhism?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, September 26th, 2015 at 6:49 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist teachers that teach a true self?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The difference is that the basis is not "a basis or ground of being" since being, nonbeing, etc. are not established even slightly from the very start within the basis itself. The being of the basis is not established, so how can it form a basis for beings?

smcj said:

Yet you just conceded that Elio's use of "ground", in collaboration with ChNN, was appropriate.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, it is ok — not the best choice of words. ChNN himself uses "Base".

smcj said:

Anyway, the basis is just a word for one's own unfabricated mind.

...but not if you're a Shentongpa like Dudjom R. And, in fact, that was the specific point that Kongtrul was addressing and refuting by talking about the "ground" in terms where there are no buddhas and no sentient beings--no minds whatsoever.

Malcolm wrote:

As I said, Dudjom, Kongtrul and I do not disagree. We understand these texts. But you do not, and so you are perpetually confused as to what they mean because you just read the words without understanding the meaning and so you imagine contradictions where in fact none exist.

And you keep on attributing a dimension of time to a state where there is no time. Dzogchen texts talk about the fourth time. That is the time of the basis, i.e. no past, present, future. Hence use of the terms like original, primordial, and so on. The basis is one's own unfabricated mind — it is not a buddha, it is not a sentient being, it is beyond time, beyond extremes, beyond expression, it has never been liberated because it has never experienced a state of bondage and so on. Accumulating merit and wisdom will not liberate it; engaging in the five heinous misdeeds [harming a buddha, killing an arhat, etc.] will not place it in bondage. There is nothing you can do to improve it, nothing you can do will harm it. It is empty, clear and inseparable. Relatively, when it is not recognized, it is called "the basis appears as the universe." At the time it is recognized, it is called "The universe arises as the basis." The basis is the basis, it is the path and it is the result. There is no buddhahood to find outside of the basis, likewise, there is no buddhahood to find outside of one's own unfabricated mind. One's unfabricated mind is buddhahood. There is no other buddhahood to realize. Everything is complete within that unfabricated mind, all of samsara and nirvana is complete there. And there are also no phenomena of either samsara or nirvana at all present in the basis.

So obviously Kongtrul has a different take on it. You may disagree, as is your right, but if you push it you're basically calling him a tirthika.[/quote]

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, September 26th, 2015 at 12:18 PM

Title: Re: Buddhist teachers that teach a true self?

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

You aren't by any chance suggesting that Kongtrul's or Guarisco's understanding of this stuff might be at least as valid as that of our very own amouththatnevershuts, I mean, asunthatneversets, are you?

Malcolm wrote:

You will observe that in Elio's later translation of Nyingma tenets in in Systems of

Buddhist Tantra, ppg. 305-306., done in collaboration with ChNN, he abandons the term "ground of being" for the simpler and more accurate "ground."

dzogchungpa said:

BTW, just for laughs, I point out that Guarisco, in the section on Nyingma tenets in that book, translates "bdag nyid chen po" as "total state of being".

Malcolm wrote:

It is an interesting term. If you examine the context of the term, the way it is used in Tibetan, you will swiftly see that "total state of being" does not work well.

In Dzogchen, the term bdag nyid chen po and bdag nyid accompanies the terms ngang and rang bzhin. This true in both Buddhist and Bon texts.

For example, in the Zhang Zhung sNyan rGyud, we find:

State [ngang], nature [rang bzhin] and identity [bdag nyid] are a trio.

The state is the total clarity of rig pa.

The nature is the total emptiness of rig pa.

The identity is the nonduality of clarity and emptiness.

Everything is understood as pure consummate mind [byang chub sems]

through the axiom of total identity [bdag nyid chen po].

I have many similar examples from Buddhist texts. So here, I would prefer to render this term as "total identity."

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, September 27th, 2015 at 12:59 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist teachers that teach a true self?

Content:

Wayfarer said:

So the views of various persons on this forum represent those different perspectives.

You will note that in some threads, the Vedantins are referred to as 'heretics' (I forget the Sanskrit word right now, but it's definitely a pejorative.) But again, that is very much the consequence, in my view, of those centuries of debate and differentiation.

Malcolm wrote:

Tirthika — it is not pejorative. It is a term used in both Buddhadharma and Jain Dharma to describe the head of another school. It has come to mean followers of other schools. It literally means "one who crosses a ford"

The Tibetan translation of the term is mu stegs pa; where mu means extreme, and stegs means upholding, thus it means "one who upholds extremes."

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, September 27th, 2015 at 1:02 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist teachers that teach a true self?

Content:

kirtu said:

“ If there were no permanent, fully illumined state, consciousness could not exist at all. This is the state of the primordial Buddha, the Buddha who has always existed even before our human buddhas were born. This part, all Tibetan Buddhists would agree with Samantabhadra/Vajradhara ...

Malcolm wrote:

No, we would not. Especially not Dzogchen teachings.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, September 27th, 2015 at 1:07 AM

Title: Re: Shenphen Dawa Rinpoche on Reading Dzogchen Books

Content:

DGA said:

the short version is that Ch'an / Zen as represented in Tibetan texts doesn't necessarily correspond to how it's been taught and practiced by Ch'an and Zen masters.

MalaBeads said:

Although i dont know how chan/zen was taught or practiced in Hashang's time, i would definitely say this is true today. I remember reading ChNN's small book called "Dzogchen and Zen" and thinking that it did not correspond at all to how the practice was done at SFZC. Then, many years later, I heard ChNN speak of Suzuki-roshi as a vajrayana teacher.

I never met Suzuki-roshi so I don't know how he taught but I have heard some of his students say that Suzuki-roshi himself described his teaching as "Hinayana teaching with Mahayana spirit". Certainly, the precision of the forms was very Hinayana-like. And perhaps the Mahayana aspect goes without saying.

Then, a few years ago, one of Suzuki-roshi main lineage holders, Mel Weitzman, said that Suzuki-roshi had not taught them some of the more advanced practices in the lineage (at least thats how I understood what I heard him say). So there does seem to be an evolution of sorts happening in zen teaching in america. And of course, I am speaking of only one lineage in a vast and complicated school.

Honestly, I don't concern myself too much with what I consider to be ancient history (although I know that for some it is important and indeed can be a life's work). Nevertheless, I very much value what zen taught me, especially the form aspect.

Malcolm wrote:

The kind of Chan ChNN is talking about is the kind of Chan that once existed in Tibet and no longer does. It was discussed at length by Nubchen.

ChNN said that modern Chan/Zen is very influenced by Vajrayāna. There is someone who posts here occasionally, Matilda, who comes from a traditional Soto Temple family. According to her, the senior Soto Priests in Japan preserve a set of empowerments and practices in which they alone engage. It seems that the Soto school has not shared everything of their tradition with westerners so far.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, September 27th, 2015 at 1:08 AM

Title: Re: Dharma Ocean livestream

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

Yes, I've been enjoying them. I was a little surprised when he referred to "the empty, open field of our eternal self in the central channel" last night, but it's all good.

Malcolm wrote:

Well, of course, Ray is a gzhan stong pa.

dzogchungpa said:

You mean, like Dudjom Rinpoche, Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche, Kalu Rinpoche, the 16th Karmapa and CTR? Whatever could he be thinking?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, just like them, and perhaps a bit more so. I doubt any of them would have used the term "eternal self."

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, September 27th, 2015 at 3:20 AM

Title: Re: Talking about the self, whatever that is

Content:

Vimalakirti432 said:

As for the Madhyamaka view you're referencing here it's a wholly separate issue, but I would say that an analysis that dissolves the difference between cause and effect seems to me to be at the very least the beginnings of establishing a view from the ultimate side.

But untangling the two truths at any given moment is a delicate thing and easily leads to needless debate. I would favor us both taking the charitable view and assume the correctness of what the other is saying, in the context in which he is saying it.

Malcolm wrote:

Nāgārjuna begins the MMK with this famous verse:

At no time and no where
does anything arise
from itself, from other,
from both or without a cause.

Nāgārjuna's presentation does not dissolve the difference between cause and effect, it states that one cannot coherently designate causes and effects as being either the same or different without the following flaws.

For example, the Samkhya school maintains that effects are present in their causes, violating Nāgārjuna first maxim, "no arising from itself"; the Vaiśeṣika school maintains that causes and results are utterly distinct, violating Nāgārjuna's second maxim, "no arising from other." The third maxim, "no arising from both" is present merely for formal completeness — I know of no Indian school that proposes both.

The consequence of the first assertion is that arising is unnecessary and there is can only be homogenous reproduction of the series[thus proposing that existents arise from existents]. The consequence of the second assertion is that there is arising of an existent result from a cause that has already temporally perished, [thus proposing that existents arise from nonexistents.] The consequence of the third assertion involves the faults of the first two assertions.

Nāgārjuna, and all subsequent Madhyamikas, maintain conventionally that causes are neither the same nor different from their effects in order to account for causal continuity without invoking either identity or discontinuity, thus Nāgārjuna's fourth maxim, "There is no arising without a cause," is never violated at any time.

Of course, later, Nāgārjuna shows that ultimately arising is impossible:

An existent does not arise from existent,
an existent does not arise from a nonexistent,
an nonexistent does not arise from an existent,
a nonexistent does not arise from a nonexistent —
where then is there arising?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, September 27th, 2015 at 3:23 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist teachers that teach a true self?

Content:

Caodemarte said:

Please read the post on Shin again and specifically the quotation in which Shin views are defined by Shin. Ditto for Songchol. In any case, if you are interested in Songchol please find and present your True Self to a Zen teacher. That is the best way to understand Songchol. It is also what he would say to us all so I'm back to the cushion!

Malcolm wrote:

I think he would hand him a volume of the Nirvana Sūtra and tell him to read

it....according to SOB's unique hermeneutics.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, September 27th, 2015 at 3:45 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist teachers that teach a true self?

Content:

frankc said:

Perhaps they just have another narrative they are trying to confirm which isn't an eternalist narrative. How can a Buddhist not have an eternalist narrative anyways? The Buddha describes Nirvana as the supreme happiness. How can something be a supreme happiness if there is nothing left after the five khandas break apart to experience it.

Malcolm wrote:

[Upasiva:]

He who has reached the end:

Does he not exist,

or is he for eternity

free from dis-ease?

Please, sage, declare this to me

as this phenomenon has been known by you.

[The Buddha:]

One who has reached the end

has no criterion [3]

by which anyone would say that —

for him it doesn't exist.

When all phenomena are done away with,[4]

all means of speaking

are done away with as well.

<http://www.accesstoinight.org/tipitaka/kn/snp/snp.5.06.than.html>

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, September 27th, 2015 at 3:53 AM

Title: Re: 4 Tantra`s in Bön

Content:

kalden yungdrung said:

1. "Bya-ba'i rgyud",
2. "sPyod-pa'i rgyud",
3. "Ye gshen gyi rgyud", and
4. "Ye gshen chen-po'i rgyud"

kirtu said:

How are these pronounced?

Malcolm wrote:

Jyawey gyud, Chodpey gyud, Yeshe gyud, Yeshe chenpo gyud.

It is kriya tantra, carya tantra, yoga tantra and Mahāyoga tantra.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, September 27th, 2015 at 4:39 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist teachers that teach a true self?

Content:

frankc said:

Man, brutal. You just insulted someone that was widely considered an Arahant in Thailand based on your interpretation of a Sutta. The Citta as described in the Thai forest tradition is not a consciousness, therefore this sutta is rendered useless in an argument against it. Ajahn Martin specifically says consciousness is a part of the khandas and not eternal. The eternal Citta is independent of the khandas

From Ajahn Pannavaddhos biography uncommon wisdom - Consciousness is necessary to experience the duality of subject and object, but it is completely extraneous and unnecessary to the original citta. So from the point of view of the reality of the knowingness which is the true citta, consciousness is superfluous because the true knowing is always present in the citta, even after all the physical and mental aggregates have disappeared.

So here you see he is referring to consciousness and the citta as two different things. Further proof the sutta is irrelevant to it. Ajahn Maha Bua was a scholar before he became a hardcore meditator under Ajahn Mun. Don't you think he knows what the pali canon says? And Ajahn Thanissaro is a follower of Ajahn Maha Bua's eternal citta. And Ajahn Thanissaro is responsible for a lot of the suttas translations into english, maybe even including the one you sent me!

Luangta Maha Bua called the citta the eternal tourist who goes from life to life. In this case, it is the conventional citta. It would not be wrong to call it a soul or to speak of souls.

Malcolm wrote:

The distinction between citta and vijñāna is a false one. Citta, vijñāna and manas are all synonyms for one thing. This point of view described above has very little difference with the point of view expounded in the Yoga Sutras — the only difference in fact is that these monks are using the scheme of the skandhas, dhātus and āyatanas, whereas the Yoga Sutras use the Samkhya scheme of purusha/prakriti. What they are describing is exactly purusha.

Maha Bua is also regarded as a total heretic by many in Thailand.

There are just so many problems with the views espoused by this monk, who would know where to begin?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, September 27th, 2015 at 9:44 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist teachers that teach a true self?

Content:

Son of Buddha said:

You already get away with openly trying to convert people to your sect in the introductions thread of all places.

<http://dharma.wheel.net/viewtopic.php?f=10&t=20696>

Malcolm wrote:

This person was already interested in Dzogchen teachings. Anyway, Dzogchen is not a sect or a tradition.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, September 27th, 2015 at 10:06 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist teachers that teach a true self?

Content:

Vimalakirti432 said:

Non-Duality, by David Loy. I don't endorse everything he says, but I do think he's one of the few people I know that has made a real effort to tactfully look past the labels.)

Malcolm wrote:

The problem with Loy, and I told him so, 25 years ago at BU, is that he does not differentiate between ontological non-dualism [Hinduism], and epistemic non-dualism [Buddhadharma], in fact he conflates them.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, September 27th, 2015 at 8:51 PM

Title: Re: Buddhist teachers that teach a true self?

Content:

Wayfarer said:

And in response to the direct question, 'is there a self', the Buddha did not respond, or rather, met the question with a noble silence.

Malcolm wrote:

No, the Buddha taught quite clearly there is no self in the aggregates or separate from the aggregates. He did not maintain "noble silence" on the issue. There are 14 points about which he remained silent, but the true existence of a self that was either part of

the aggregates or separate from them was not a question upon which he remained silent.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, September 27th, 2015 at 9:03 PM

Title: Re: Compassion and the Basis

Content:

pothigai said:

Hello all

My understanding is that when in a state of wisdom with regards to the nature of the basis, all phenomena are of 'one taste'. Why then does the energy of the basis manifest as compassion when it is aware of its own nature?

Malcolm wrote:

The basis manifests as compassion, i.e., nirmanakāya buddhas, when a sentient being does not recognize the basis for what it is, his, her or its own nature.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, September 27th, 2015 at 9:23 PM

Title: Re: Buddhist teachers that teach a true self?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The distinction between citta and vijñāna is a false one. Citta, vijñāna and manas are all synonyms for one thing. This point of view described above has very little difference with the point of view expounded in the Yoga Sutras — the only difference in fact is that these monks are using the scheme of the skandhas, dhātus and āyatanas, whereas the Yoga Sutras use the Samkhya scheme of purusha/prakriti. What they are describing is exactly purusha.

frankc said:

The distinction isn't a false one.

Malcolm wrote:

Of course the distinction is a false one. The word citta is not at all hard to translate into English.

frankc said:

Here is a teaching from Ajahn Dune Atulo

All Buddhas and all creatures are nothing but one citta. Besides this citta. nothing exist. The citta which has no beginning does not appear and can not be destroyed. It is not something green or yellow. It has no shape nor appearances. It is not included in the existence or the none existence. It cannot be considered new or old, long or short, big or small because it is beyond all limitation measurement, nomination trace and

comparison.

Malcolm wrote:

This point of view is even worse — it is basically no different than Advaita Vedanta, it is not even at the level of Yogacara. It is basically a non-Buddhist point of view.

If you have never properly studied Madhyamaka, it is easy to see why you would think this was profound.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, September 27th, 2015 at 9:46 PM

Title: Re: Can a stone meditate?

Content:

Karma Dondrup Tashi said:

If this is so, is the highest vipashyana bhumi the same as the consciousness of a stone? If the emptiness is the same for everything, why is the wisdom different?

Adder said:

Does the stone have consciousness.... can a stone know its own face? No, I don't think a stone even has a 'face' rang-ngo shes-pa

It's not, but the stone already is 'pure awareness' rig pa by not having the stains of mental activity... you cannot kill a stone. At least that is how I view it (at the moment [subject to change w/o notice])

Malcolm wrote:

Sorry, but rocks do not have rig pa.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, September 28th, 2015 at 12:32 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist teachers that teach a true self?

Content:

Wayfarer said:

And in response to the direct question, 'is there a self', the Buddha did not respond, or rather, met the question with a noble silence.

Malcolm wrote:

No, the Buddha taught quite clearly there is no self in the aggregates or separate from the aggregates. He did not maintain "noble silence" on the issue. There are 14 points about which he remained silent, but the true existence of a self that was either part of the aggregates or separate from them was not a question upon which he remained silent.

dzogchungpa said:

I believe Wayfarer is referring to

<http://www.accesstoinight.org/tipitaka/sn/sn44/sn44.010.than.html>.

Malcolm wrote:

But the Buddha did not remain silent on the issue...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, September 28th, 2015 at 12:35 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist teachers that teach a true self?

Content:

Matt J said:

How does this differ from a self?

Malcolm wrote:

It is not established as something real.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, September 28th, 2015 at 12:40 AM

Title: Re: Compassion and the Basis

Content:

pothigai said:

I suppose I could modify my question somewhat. Afflicted dependent origination begins with ignorance of the basis, unafflicted dependent origination beings with knowledge of the basis. Can anyone describe the process of unafflicted dependent origination?

heart said:

There is nothing called "unafflicted dependent origination"

/magnus

pothigai said:

What I mean by this is the activities of a Buddha. I assume they do not arise as a product of affliction within a Buddha's mindstream.

Malcolm wrote:

The activities of a buddha arise because sentient beings are deluded. In other words, the activities of a buddha are not other than delusions of sentient beings.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, September 28th, 2015 at 1:44 AM

Title: Re: Can prayer flags be hung indoors?

Content:

qwerty13 said:

I am getting two kinds of information on this question. Some say prayer flags should not be used indoors (they say it is inauspicious) and others say that they can be used indoors too.

So whats the deal here? Should prayer flags be hung only outdoors?

Thanks for answers!

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, but not much point. The point of hanging prayer flags is to use the wind [rlung] as a mount or "horse" [rta] for harmonizing your local environment with the mantras printed on the cloth.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, September 28th, 2015 at 2:54 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist teachers that teach a true self?

Content:

frankc said:

You can accept their word because of your direct experience in meditation.

Malcolm wrote:

Their meditation deviated into reifying clarity as something real. It is exact mistake all the tīrthika meditators make, which is why the tradition you presented does not go beyond the purusha of Samkhya and Advaita. The only difference between the latter two traditions is whether there are multiple purushas or one universal purusha. In reality, this purusha is called jñā, the knower, no different than the citta you describe.

The second account you gave, where everything is included in one eternal citta, is just the sat cit ānanda of Advaita.

This is completely beyond the pale of Buddhadharma. It is a totally wrong view, every bit as much of a wrong view as Buddhadasa's rejection of rebirth.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, September 28th, 2015 at 3:47 AM

Title: Re: Can prayer flags be hung indoors?

Content:

Ayu said:

Is it mentioned anywhere if the prayers are also distributed by light?

I have some small flags in my window. You can see them from afar. It looks very friendly and joyful. And slowly the letters are fainting from the intense sunlight.

Malcolm wrote:

No, if they were, they would have been called 'od rta, rather than rlung rta.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, September 28th, 2015 at 10:47 AM

Title: Re: Shenphen Dawa Rinpoche on Reading Dzogchen Books

Content:

tingdzin said:

And, as Meido remarked, a little ironic that some Zen stuff has been kept well hidden while nowadays one can read the innermost secrets of Vajrayana and Dzogchen all over the place.

Malcolm wrote:

Well, perhaps people who have a proclivity towards "secrets" should switch to Zen.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, September 28th, 2015 at 8:24 PM

Title: Re: Buddhist teachers that teach a true self?

Content:

Wayfarer said:

And in response to the direct question, 'is there a self', the Buddha did not respond, or rather, met the question with a noble silence.

Malcolm wrote:

No, the Buddha taught quite clearly there is no self in the aggregates or separate from the aggregates. He did not maintain "noble silence" on the issue. There are 14 points about which he remained silent, but the true existence of a self that was either part of the aggregates or separate from them was not a question upon which he remained silent.

Wayfarer said:

As I understand it, 'to teach the self exists is eternalism, to teach that the self doesn't exist is nihilism'. So neither the view 'the self exists' nor the view 'the self doesn't exist' are the correct view.

Malcolm wrote:

As Vasubandhu states in the Kośabhaṣyam:

Further, if it is asked whether there is liberation apart from this [Dharma] or not, there is not. If it is asked why, because of clinging to the false view of self, [others] do not maintain the definition that the continuum of the aggregates alone is designated as a self, they designate the self on some other substance alone, and therefore the afflictions arise from grasping at a self.

If it is asked, "How are we to understand that the expression, 'self', is an expression used to engage the continuum of aggregates alone and nothing else?," it is because [a self] cannot be directly perceived nor can it be inferred. If those other phenomena that

exist do not hinder it, it should be directly perceptible, in the case of the the six objects and the mind, or other wise inferable, as in the case of the sense organs.
Consistent with this remark by Vasubandhu we see the Buddha using the term atman to refer to himself, and so on as a mere designation, etc. He never uses it to refer to a real entity, not even in the much vaunted Nirvana Sūtra.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, September 28th, 2015 at 11:59 PM

Title: Re: Shenphen Dawa Rinpoche on Reading Dzogchen Books

Content:

tingdzin said:

And, as Meido remarked, a little ironic that some Zen stuff has been kept well hidden while nowadays one can read the innermost secrets of Vajrayana and Dzogchen all over the place.

Malcolm wrote:

Well, perhaps people who have a proclivity towards "secrets" should switch to Zen.

tingdzin said:

Well, certainly people who prefer actual practice to endless chatter might try looking into Zen.

Malcolm wrote:

I doubt Zen will make a dent in endless chatter, whether one practices it or not.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, September 29th, 2015 at 12:49 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist teachers that teach a true self?

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

more precisely, his teaching that all dhamma are anatta,

Malcolm wrote:

...including nirvana...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, September 29th, 2015 at 12:54 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist teachers that teach a true self?

Content:

Matt J said:

Well, no matter how Thanissaro Bikkhu interprets the particular sutta, his stance is unequivocal:

Multiply the four varieties of self by their three modes, and you have twelve types of theories about the self. All of these theories the Buddha rejects. He doesn't agree with

any of them, because they all involve clinging, which is something you have to comprehend and let go. This means that his not-self teaching is not just negating specific types of self — such as a cosmic self, a permanent self, or an ordinary individual self. It negates every imaginable way of defining the self.

<http://www.accesstoinsight.org/lib/authors/thanissaro/selvesnotself.html>

dzogchungpa said:

Well, as I said, I'm not an atmavadin, but I suggest you read that whole book and see how equivocal or unequivocal TB's stance is. Here's a nice quote towards the end:... the Buddha never said that there is no self, and he never said that there is a self. The question of whether a self does or doesn't exist is a question he put aside.

Malcolm wrote:

Thanissaro is here quite mistaken.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, September 29th, 2015 at 2:20 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist teachers that teach a true self?

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

more precisely, his teaching that all dhamma are anatta,

Malcolm wrote:

...including nirvana...

Son of Buddha said:

What you are promoting is called the 4 perversions of the dharma, to think full enlightenment is not self is the 3rd perversion.

The Self' signifies the Buddha; 'the Eternal' signifies the Dharmakaya; 'Bliss' signifies Nirvana, and 'the Pure' signifies Dharma. Bhiksus, why is it said that one who has the idea of a Self is arrogant and haughty, traversing round Samsara? Bhiksus, although you might say, 'We also cultivate impermanence, suffering, and non-Self, these three kinds of cultivation have no real value/ meaning. I shall now explain the excellent three ways of cultivating Dharma. To think of suffering as Bliss and to think of Bliss as suffering, is perverse Dharma; to think of the impermanent as the Eternal and to think of the Eternal as impermanent is perverse Dharma; to think of the non-Self [anatman] as the Self [atman] and to think of the Self [atman] as non-Self [anatman] is perverse Dharma; to think of the impure as the Pure and to think of the Pure as impure is perverse Dharma. Whoever has these four kinds of perversion, that person does not know the correct cultivation of dharmas.

V119. These are called perversions/ inversions. Because of these perversions/ inversions, mundane people know the letters but not the meaning [referents]. What is the meaning/referent? Non-Self is Samsara, the Self is the Tathagata; impermanence is

the sravakas and pratyekabuddhas, the Eternal is the Tathagata's Dharmakaya; suffering is all tirthikas, Bliss is Nirvana; the impure is all compounded [samskṛta] dharmas, the Pure is the true Dharma that the Buddha and Bodhisattvas have. This is called non-perversion/ non-inversion. By not being inverted [in one's views], one will know [both] the letter and the meaning. If one desires to be freed from the four perverse/ inverted [views – catur-viparita-drsti], one should know the Eternal, Blissful, the Self and the Pure in this manner.”

Malcolm wrote:

As I said, you do not understand the meaning of what you read. And obsessively repeating the same quotation over and over again does not mean anything. The meaning of this sūtra is not explicit, it is indirect.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, September 29th, 2015 at 3:45 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist teachers that teach a true self?

Content:

Son of Buddha said:

Vasubandhu also said:

Vasubandhu on the Sutralamkara 9:23, Thurman translation:

23. In pure voidness buddhas achieve the supreme self of selflessness, and realize the spiritual greatness of the self by discovering the pure self.

Yes, and here,

As you can see the Buddha and other Buddhist masters distinguished different types of Atman, rejecting most form's but accepting their own interpretation of the term Atman.

Malcolm wrote:

Again, this is intentional language and is not to be taken literally. For example, in the comment on this passage [which is by Maitreya and not Vasubandhu], Sthiramati's Sūtrālamkāraṣṭṭibhāṣya provides useful clarification here:

The term "self" in this context means "essence" [svabhāvatā], i.e., since the buddhas are said to obtain the supreme self because of being the selfless essence. Since that is pure, the buddhas attain the pure supreme selfless self.

He continues in this vein:

The Buddha is the dharmakāya. Since the dharmakāya is emptiness, because there are not only no imputable personal entities in emptiness, there are also no imputable phenomenal entities, there are therefore no entities at all.

Now, someone may wish to counter "Sure, the imputed nature does not exist, but the perfect nature does exist," but Sthiramati responds to this:

The nature of the perfected does not exist. Since it does not exist in the same way the

horn the hare of the imputed phenomena and persons, at that it is not defined as existent. It is also not a nonentity, because at that time suchness, the characteristic of the perfected exists.

This means that the perfected is not a substantial entity. It does exist however as a characteristic, and what is that characteristics, emptiness a.k.a suchness, which is not a self in any sense in which the word is used as an identifier, unless of course one wishes to claim, "The supreme identity is no identity" or "The supreme self is no self." This is precisely the meaning here. What this means is that this "self" is merely a designation and does not indicate anything real, any more than conventionally calling the stream of the aggregates a self does not indicate anything real.

Now, Sthiramati was a direct disciple of Vasubandhu, and I am quite sure he understands this text perfectly.

Son of Buddha said:

Consistent with this remark by Vasubandhu we see the Buddha using the term atman to refer to himself, and so on as a mere designation, etc. He never uses it to refer to a real entity, not even in the much vaunted Nirvana Sūtra.

In the very much vaunted Nirvana Sutra the Buddha does describe the Atman as real, he literally tells you the meaning of the term of Atman and says that it is real.

Malcolm wrote:

No, in the Nirvana Sutra, the Buddha is using intentional language that cannot be taken literally.

Further earlier in this chapter Maitreya declares at 9.4 "all phenomena are buddhahood," but according to your oft stated point of view, this is impossible since [buddha = self] and [self = not the aggregates] and so on.

So really, I think you need to rethink your literalism on these points.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, September 29th, 2015 at 3:47 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist teachers that teach a true self?

Content:

Son of Buddha said:

The meaning of the Sutra is explicit...

Malcolm wrote:

No, it really isn't.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, September 29th, 2015 at 10:01 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist teachers that teach a true self?

Content:

Son of Buddha said:

[

When the quote says the perfected nature does not exist, it clarifies that statement by saying that it does not exist IN THE SAME WAY of the formers understanding which is the existence imputed upon the phenomena and persons (known as the 2 selves of the formers), so all you quote is actually saying is that it doesn't exist in ONE manner, BUT it exists in ANOTHER manner hence: "It is also not a nonentity, because at that time suchness, the characteristic of the perfected exists", of course the very terms Existence and Non Existence are words used to describe a Samsaric understanding and Suchness is beyond samsaric understanding. hence the non duality teachings (freedom from existence and nonexistence)

Malcolm wrote:

It is saying two things, it does not exist as a nature [svabhāva], but it exists as a svalakṣaṇa, a characteristic. For example, space does not exist as a nature [since there is no entity of space], but it does exist as a characteristic [since the characteristic of space is absence of obstruction].

Son of Buddha said:

It does exist however as a characteristic, and what is that characteristic, emptiness a.k.a suchness,

Now you are just agreeing with me, I have been saying for years that the term True Self is just a word used to describe the Characteristics of Suchness which is you said "does exist"..... welcome to the club.

Malcolm wrote:

No, I am not agreeing with you — you fail to distinguish between an entity and a characteristic.

Son of Buddha said:

The True Self is not an identity

Malcolm wrote:

Then the term cannot be taken literally, since after all, a self is nothing but an identity.

Son of Buddha said:

however to think that the Supreme Self has the Characteristics of Not Self is one of the 4 perversions.

Malcolm wrote:

The so called "supreme self" is just selflessness, i.e the absence of being an entity. Your

supreme self is not an entity, it is therefore not real, it does not exist.

Son of Buddha said:

hence you acknowledged that the Self means something that is real.

Malcolm wrote:

No, I have shown that the intention of the term "self" is indirect and not to be taken literally.

Son of Buddha said:

Further earlier in this chapter Maitreya declares at 9.4 "all phenomena are buddhahood," but according to your oft stated point of view, this is impossible since [buddha = self] and [self = not the aggregates] and so on.

So really, I think you need to rethink your literalism on these points

Malcolm wrote:

Your not understanding the passages

Son of Buddha said:

All phenomena is Buddhahood, because the illusion of the snake is the Rope

Malcolm wrote:

No, the illusion of a snake has never been the rope. If you really think that the illusion of snake is the rope you have just betrayed the basic flaw in your thinking.

Phenomena are not established as real, and neither is Buddhahood. As Nāgārjuna quips:

Whatever is the nature of the Tathagata, that is the nature of the world;
as the Tathagata has no nature, the world has no nature.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, September 29th, 2015 at 10:08 PM

Title: Re: Can a stone meditate?

Content:

Karma Dondrup Tashi said:

Again, if the emptiness is the same for everything, why is the wisdom different? In twofold egolessness, how can I "have" mind and the stone "not have" mind?

Malcolm wrote:

You are conflating the two truths here.

Conventionally, rocks do not have minds or rig pa, etc. They are insentient. Sentient

beings have minds, this is why we call them sentient.

Rocks and minds arise from causes and conditions, they are all therefore empty. If you recognize the emptiness of a rock, this is the same as recognizing the emptiness of the mind. But maybe it is a little more useful for us to recognize the emptiness of the mind, rather than the emptiness of a rock.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, September 29th, 2015 at 10:46 PM

Title: Re: So I inherited this incense burner...

Content:

DGA said:

I was given this piece from a late friend's estate. It had never been used. I shined it up and while this isn't something I would pick out for myself, I find a lot to like in it and I have a specific use in mind for it.

As you can see, on the lid is our old friend Hotei (Bodai), and on the bottom portion, where the incense goes, there's a large Chinese character framed by a boy and a girl... doing something. Making an offering? Rejoicing? And behind that are more characters I can't read.

Can anyone inform me of what may be going on in the relief of this incense burner? Any context will be warmly welcomed, as I'm largely ignorant of Chinese Buddhism and I can't read classical Chinese at all, fool that I am.

Thank you.

Malcolm wrote:

Hotei is not the Buddha, he is more like Chinese Santa Claus, the boy and the girl are receiving gifts. He is like the Chinese Jambhala.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, September 29th, 2015 at 11:10 PM

Title: Re: Can a stone meditate?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

If you recognize the emptiness of a rock, this is the same as recognizing the emptiness of the mind.

Karma Dondrup Tashi said:

Ty. Yes but - even if we say the ultimate can "recognize" itself (its wisdom is "self-arising"), but a stone (ultimately) can't - then just in the ultimate there's something different between a man and a stone. One can know self-arising wisdom, the other can't. In the ultimate there seems to be a difference between sentience and non-sentience. But no difference with respect to their emptiness. Or - a person has an ultimate but a

stone doesn't..

Malcolm wrote:

The ultimate cannot recognize itself. There is no ultimate entity to do so.

In the ultimate there is no difference between the sentient and the insentient, since neither are established in the ultimate; they are only established conventionally. Rock, sentient beings and buddhas are nothing more than conventions, they do not refer to anything real.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, September 30th, 2015 at 12:02 AM

Title: Re: Can a stone meditate?

Content:

Karma Dondrup Tashi said:

Yesbutt ... then the recognition isn't real either. My recognition is as real as a stone's non-recognition. Both are just norms. Since neither have possible reality, my recognition might as well be a stone's non-recognition.

Malcolm wrote:

The difference, conventionally, is that you can realize this unreality, a stone never can.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, September 30th, 2015 at 1:25 AM

Title: Re: Ology, ology, ology

Content:

Vimalakirti432 said:

This is kind of a personal response. I've been charged with conflating epistemology and ontology.

Malcolm wrote:

How can you hold your head up in public? Who issued this grave accusation?

Vimalakirti432 said:

The point is that this logical distinction, like all logical distinctions, are only of non-trivial interest when supported by valid assumptions and outcomes. My whole point in this case is that while Vedanta may habitually start with what can be called ontology and Buddhadharma with epistemology (though personally I feel phenomenology is more accurate), the liberation each points to are arguably indistinguishable in the end.

Malcolm wrote:

Then define liberation for us, and lets see how it stacks up.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, September 30th, 2015 at 1:57 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist teachers that teach a true self?

Content:

Bakmoon said:

Even Madhyamaka texts use the term *svabhāva* in this sense, such as saying that all things are of the nature of emptiness. If the term *svabhāva* meant substance or intrinsic existence in such instances, then those texts would be totally incoherent because they would be saying that all things are formed of an underlying substance, and that substance is a negation of substance, which is a flat out self-contradiction.

Malcolm wrote:

Which is actually what Candrakirti says it means, i.e. emptiness is the natureless nature or the insubstantial substance.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, September 30th, 2015 at 2:19 AM

Title: Re: Ology, ology, ology

Content:

Vimalakirti432 said:

This is kind of a personal response. I've been charged with conflating epistemology and ontology.

Malcolm wrote:

How can you hold your head up in public? Who issued this grave accusation?

Vimalakirti432 said:

The point is that this logical distinction, like all logical distinctions, are only of non-trivial interest when supported by valid assumptions and outcomes. My whole point in this case is that while Vedanta may habitually start with what can be called ontology and Buddhadharma with epistemology (though personally I feel phenomenology is more accurate), the liberation each points to are arguably indistinguishable in the end.

Malcolm wrote:

Then define liberation for us, and let's see how it stacks up.

Vimalakirti432 said:

Stacks up? So you're standing in judgement? But I'm sure you must not mean that.

But really Malcolm you know I've been an open book on this, indiscriminately disclosing in numerous places, verbosely, to the annoyance of not a few!

So I would toss this question back to others, who have not been forthcoming on what

liberation means to them, though asked to on occasion.

For your part, I accept your recent dzogchen pointers, which as you know I had no particular objection to.

But look, when it comes to giving brief conventional pointers to what liberation means in one's particular case, the easiest shorthand is to find a reference point in the broad tradition, as you have done.

So to repeat briefly what I've already disclosed elsewhere my view can be summed up in that hoary old Ch'an adage, which goes something like: in the beginning mountains are mountains and rivers are rivers, then mountains are not mountains and rivers are not rivers, finally mountains are mountains and rivers are rivers. Of course this is merely the figurative version of the grammar of the Diamond Sutra: is, is not and therefore is.

So again as I've said elsewhere liberation for me can only be a liberation into the no-place of what's here, a letting go, a relinquishment into the only place possible. Now how that is realized or thought about, as sudden or gradual, innate or constructed, through rigorous training or shouting at the moon, through the dancing angels of logical disputation or the sudden plosh! of a duck landing on a pond, through visualizing herukas or other celestial beings or astral traveling - I'll leave for other worthies and dharma warriors to battle over.

But you others, you silent ones! What does liberation mean to you? Speak!

Malcolm wrote:

In Buddhadharma, liberation means only one thing and nothing more no matter whether we are talking about Hinayāna, Mahāyāna or Vajrayāna, including Dzogchen — liberation means freedom from afflictions that cause rebirth in the three realms and that is all.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, September 30th, 2015 at 2:27 AM

Title: Re: Ology, ology, ology

Content:

conebeckham said:

Liberation means to be free of suffering and the causes of suffering. Put more simply, Liberation means to be free of Samsara.

Malcolm wrote:

Which only comes about through being free of afflictions, no?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, September 30th, 2015 at 2:37 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist teachers that teach a true self?

Content:

Bakmoon said:

Even Madhyamaka texts use the term svabhāva in this sense, such as saying that all things are of the nature of emptiness. If the term svabhāva meant substance or intrinsic existence in such instances, then those texts would be totally incoherent because they would be saying that all things are formed of an underlying substance, and that substance is a negation of substance, which is a flat out self-contradiction.

Malcolm wrote:

Which is actually what Candrakirti says it means, i.e. emptiness is the natureless nature or the insubstantial substance.

dzogchungpa said:

Or even the selfless self?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, this is also fine, that is the meaning. This selfless self is merely a convention, a term, a name. Our friends SOB would like us to believe there is some transcendent self that is not merely a conventional name, but I don't buy it — there are too many contradictions inherent in the term, which is why we cannot take these buddhist sutras that discuss and use the term "self" literally. They are provisional and require interpretation.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, September 30th, 2015 at 2:38 AM

Title: Re: Ology, ology, ology

Content:

conebeckham said:

Yes, indeedy, Malcolm!

(Didn't see your post until after I had started mine....freedom from afflictions is the root of freedom from samsara, of course).

While we're at it, can we agree that Liberation is not the same as Buddhahood?

Vimalakirti432 said:

But is it not the case in the Mahayana that true liberation can only be achieved through Buddhahood?

Malcolm wrote:

No.

Liberation is one thing, stage one; omniscience is stage two, buddhahood.

The Mahāyāna insight comes from the fact that liberation is not sufficient; in order to help sentient beings, one must be omniscient.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, September 30th, 2015 at 2:48 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist teachers that teach a true self?

Content:

Bakmoon said:

Even Madhyamaka texts use the term *svabhāva* in this sense, such as saying that all things are of the nature of emptiness. If the term *svabhāva* meant substance or intrinsic existence in such instances, then those texts would be totally incoherent because they would be saying that all things are formed of an underlying substance, and that substance is a negation of substance, which is a flat out self-contradiction.

Malcolm wrote:

Which is actually what Candrakīrti says it means, i.e. emptiness is the natureless nature or the insubstantial substance.

Bakmoon said:

Aren't the texts being a little bit poetic and not 100% literal when they say that though? I would take it to mean that all things are without any real nature, and this lack of a nature is conventionally designated as a nature, rather than a purely literal meaning that all things have an underlying substance, and this underlying substance is a lack of underlying substance.

Malcolm wrote:

I think you can take it quite literally.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, September 30th, 2015 at 2:59 AM

Title: Re: Ology, ology, ology

Content:

Vimalakīrti432 said:

Well it does appear to be put differently in some sources. For example, in the Lotus there is the repeated refrain that the disciples had achieved a kind of "extinction" but not true extinction. So perhaps some ambiguity here, no? Of course I understand that in the more popular sutras things may be put more loosely. Where do you find the interpretation you offer here?

Malcolm wrote:

There is no ambiguity. Śrāvakas eliminate the afflictive obscuration, thus they no longer take birth in the three realms; but they do not eliminate the knowledge obscuration, thus they do not attain buddhahood.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, September 30th, 2015 at 3:13 AM

Title: Re: Ology, ology, ology

Content:

Vimalakirti432 said:

Well it does appear to be put differently in some sources. For example, in the Lotus there is the repeated refrain that the disciples had achieved a kind of "extinction" but not true extinction. So perhaps some ambiguity here, no? Of course I understand that in the more popular sutras things may be put more loosely. Where do you find the interpretation you offer here?

Malcolm wrote:

There is no ambiguity. Śravakas eliminate the afflictive obscuration, thus they no longer take birth in the three realms; but they do not eliminate the knowledge obscuration, thus they do not attain buddhahood.

Vimalakirti432 said:

Okay but the text literally says that their extinction (of their afflictions) is not real; it doesn't say that what they really need is omniscience. Imho your refusal to admit of any ambiguity anywhere can be a hindrance. Or are you saying that the thousands and thousands of words of Buddhadharma are inerrant, like the bible?

Anyway I won't argue the point. For me it's a distinction without a difference, since no one is disputing what the actual differences between a shravaka and Buddha are.

Malcolm wrote:

Cite the text. I think you have a problem with your understanding of it.

When you understand the Dharma, where others see ambiguity, you don't.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, September 30th, 2015 at 3:27 AM

Title: Re: Ology, ology, ology

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Liberation is one thing, stage one; omniscience is stage two, buddhahood.

smcj said:

This vehicle has more than two gears. You skipped a couple styles and levels of liberation, like pratyekabuddha, bodhisattva (with 10 levels), and levels of buddhahood.

I'm not telling you anything you don't know, just making a point that there are multiple styles and level of "liberation". That is a term I understand to mean being freed from the compulsory need for rebirth (samsara).

Malcolm wrote:

No, there are really only two stages, when everything is said and done. The Hinayāna path only results in freedom. The Mahāyāna path results in freedom and omniscience.

The rest of it is just details.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, September 30th, 2015 at 3:55 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist teachers that teach a true self?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

[

No, the illusion of a snake has never been the rope. If you really think that the illusion of snake is the rope you have just betrayed the basic flaw in your thinking.

Son of Buddha said:

Yes the rope and the illusion of the snake are the same. Cause whether a person see a rope or a misperception of a snake it doesn't change the fact he is looking at the same one object.

Malcolm wrote:

Just as there is no snake apart from the rope that we see, there also no snake in the rope that we see. So too it is with a self — there is no self apart from the persons and phenomena that we see, there is also no self in the persons and phenomena we perceive.

If the snake and the rope are the same thing, we should also see a snake when we see a rope.

Since we do not see a snake when we see a rope, and we do not see rope when we see a snake, we can understand that in fact the former perception is accompanied by knowledge and the latter perception is accompanied by ignorance.

We can understand that rope and the snake are just not the same thing. If they were the same thing, when one was seen, the other must always be seen. For example, when we fire, it is always accompanied by heat.

Likewise, If the self and the suchness are the same thing, we should also see a self when we see suchness.

Since we do not see a self when we see suchness, and we do not see suchness when we see a self, we can understand that in fact the former perception is accompanied by knowledge and the latter perception is accompanied by ignorance.

You make a big deal about purity, permanence and so on. There is no self without the

selfless; there is purity without the impure, and so on. Taking these teachings in the Nirvana Sūtra and so on literally just traps one in dualistic categories. This why they cannot be taken literally.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, September 30th, 2015 at 3:56 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist teachers that teach a true self?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

[but I don't buy it — there are too many contradictions inherent in the term, which is why we cannot take these buddhist sutras that discuss and use the term "self" literally. They are provisional and require interpretation.

Son of Buddha said:

You were saying.

Nirvana Sutra

Chapter Six: On the Virtue of the Name

V199. “Then the Tathagata spoke again to Kasyapa: “O good man! You should now uphold all the words, chapters, clauses and all the virtues thereof of this sutra. Any good man or woman who hears the name of this sutra will never get born into the four realms [of hell, hungry ghost, animal, and asura]. Why not? I shall now expound to you all the virtues of this sutra and all that is practised by innumerable boundless Buddhas.”

V200. Bodhisattva Kasyapa said to the Buddha: “O World-Honoured One! What is this sutra to be called? How should Bodhisattva-mahasattvas uphold this sutra?” The Buddha said to Kasyapa: “The name of this sutra is to be “Mahaparinirvana”. The foremost word betokens “good”, the middle also “good”, and the final “good” too. The signification [of this sutra] is extremely deep, and what is written [in it] is good. The pureness of its arrangement is perfect, its action is pure, and its adamant treasure-house is all-satisfying. Listen well, listen well! I shall now speak. O good man! The word “maha” betokens “eternal”. This is like all the great rivers draining into the great ocean. The same with this sutra. It crushes out all the bonds of illusion and all the qualities of Mara, and then body and life drain into “Mahaparinirvana”. Hence we say “Mahaparinirvana.” O good man! This is like a doctor who has a secret treatment embracing all medical treatments for disease. O good man! It is the same with the Tathagata. V201. All the various wonderful doctrines taught and all the secret(esoteric) depths of meaning find their way into this Mahaparinirvana. That is why we say Mahaparinirvana. O good man! It is like a farmer who sows seed in spring. He entertains a rare wish. When he has finished the harvesting, all his longing is at an end. O good man! The same is the case with all beings. If we study other sutras, we always long for beautiful tastes. When one once hears this Mahaparinirvana, [however], one long ceases to covet the beautiful tastes mentioned in other sutras. This great Nirvana well enables all beings to cross the sea of all existences. O good man! Of all footprints, that

of the elephant is the best. The same with this sutra. Of all the samadhis of the sutras, that of this sutra is the best. O good man! Of all the tillings of the field, that done in autumn is best.

V202. The same with this sutra. It is the best of all sutras. It is like sarpirmanda, which is the best of all medicines. It thoroughly cures the feverish worries and madding minds of beings. This Great Nirvana is the foremost of all. O good man! It is like sweet butter which contains the eight tastes. The same also applies to this sutra. It contains the eight tastes. What are the eight? These are: 1) it is eternal, 2) it always is, 3) it is peaceful, 4) it is pure and cool, 5) it does not grow old, 6) it does not die, 7) it is taintless, and 8) it is pleasing and happy. These are the eight tastes. It possesses these eight tastes. This is why we say "Mahaparinirvana". Now, all Bodhisattva-mahasattvas peacefully abide in this and manifest Nirvana in all places. That is why we say "Mahaparinirvana". O Kasyapa! All good men and women who desire to enter Nirvana by this Mahaparinirvana must study well the fact that the Tathagata is eternal and that the Dharma and Sangha are eternal."

V203. Bodhisattva Kasyapa said to the Buddha: "All is wonderful, O World-Honoured One! We cannot conceive of the Tathagata's depths of virtue. The same is the case with the virtues of Dharma and Sangha. This Mahaparinirvana is also inconceivable. One who studies this sutra will gain the right eye of Dharma and become a good doctor. Anybody who has not studied this sutra, we should know, is [like] a blind person, not possessing the eye of Wisdom and overshadowed by ignorance."

Malcolm wrote:
Oh yawn....

Author: Malcolm
Date: Wednesday, September 30th, 2015 at 3:57 AM
Title: Re: Ology, ology, ology
Content:
Vimalakirti432 said:

Well I'm highly skeptical that the kind of absolute certainty you claim to be in command of can be real for any ordinary sentient being, which I assume you to be. I'm also highly skeptical that the mass of Buddhist writings can be as thoroughly consistent as you appear to claim. These writings, like all writing everywhere, are the products of ordinary sentient beings, so while they may evince a basic consistency they cannot be free of error and ambiguity, in my view. It takes the eyes of faith to believe otherwise. So I guess we need to leave it there.

Malcolm wrote:
Still waiting for your citation...as it is said, "if you can't put up..."

Author: Malcolm
Date: Wednesday, September 30th, 2015 at 4:42 AM
Title: Re: Buddhist teachers that teach a true self?

Content:
DGA said:
and here we are...

William Blake said:
unable to do other than repeat the same dull round over again

DGA said:
<http://www.bartleby.com/235/339.html>

how many times have those chunks of that translation of chapter 6 of the Nirvana Sutra
been posted to this board now?

Malcolm wrote:
Until we all do this to SOB....

Author: Malcolm
Date: Wednesday, September 30th, 2015 at 5:01 AM
Title: Re: Buddhist teachers that teach a true self?
Content:

Malcolm wrote:
Just as there is no snake apart from the rope that we see, there also no snake in the rope
that we see. So too it is with a self — there is no self apart from the persons and
phenomena that we see, there is also no self in the persons and phenomena we
perceive.

Son of Buddha said:
Sure there us a self apart from persons and phenomena.

Here is Ju Mipham's gloss on 9:23, from the new Dharmachakra version of Sutralamkara:
In the absence of the twofold self of persons and phenomena, this is the actual nature
of things, the supreme nature of the abiding reality, the intrinsic nature or essence itself.
In achieving this, the buddhas have achieved a nature that is of complete purity. Thus,
[to actualize] the suchness that is the unmistakable way things are is to be "the self of
great beings." This self is not the same as the conceived object that is involved when
apprehending the twofold self because such a self has no bearing on things as they are.

The Self of great beings(suchness) is apart from the self of persons and phenomena

Malcolm wrote:
This is just a manner of speaking.

Son of Buddha said:

If the snake and the rope are the same thing, we should also see a snake when we see a rope.

The snake is an illusion that's very existence is predicated upon the rope which is its source, which again the fact remains when you see the illusion of the snake what you are actually seeing is the ropeeither way the illusion of the snake and the rope are the SAME object.

Malcolm wrote:

No, if they were the same object, we would always see a snake when we see a rope.

Son of Buddha said:

Since we do not see a snake when we see a rope, and we do not see rope when we see a snake, we can understand that in fact the former perception is accompanied by knowledge and the latter perception is accompanied by ignorance.

Yep I agree, still doesn't change the fact that whether you see an snake or a rope you are looking at the same object(misperception doesn't change that)

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, misperception does change that. Ignorance does not have an object of valid perception, that is why it is ignorance.

Son of Buddha said:

We can understand that rope and the snake are just not the same thing. If they were the same thing, when one was seen, the other must always be seen. For example, when we fire, it is always accompanied by heat.

What????..... If we look at the SAME OBJECT and you see a baseball and I see an softball it still doesn't change the fact we are looking at the SAME OBJECT.

Malcolm wrote:

In order to maintain this position, you would have to maintain that the water that you see and the pus and blood that a pretas sees are the same thing, something which objectively exists apart from your perception of it. In other words, you are maintaining that the round object we are seeing exists objectively. If you maintain such a thing, you are also maintaining that external phenomena have a self.

Son of Buddha said:

Likewise, If the self and the suchness are the same thing, we should also see a self when we see suchness.

The numerous Tathagatagarbha Sutras state that Suchness is the True Self,(different words used to describe the same thing)

Malcolm wrote:

As I said and will always maintain, they cannot be taken literally on this point.

Son of Buddha said:

You make a big deal about purity, permanence and so on. There is no self without the selfless; there is purity without the impure, and so on. Taking these teachings in the Nirvana Sūtra and so on literally just traps one in dualistic categories. This why they cannot be taken literally

Malcolm wrote:

You claim they cannot be taken literally, the Buddha in those Sutras say the opposite.[/quote][[/quote]

Buddha taught such sūtras for the timid, those who are afraid of the Lion's Roar of emptiness.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, September 30th, 2015 at 5:04 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist teachers that teach a true self?

Content:

DGA said:

```
if (typeof bbmedia == 'undefined') { bbmedia = true; var e =  
document.createElement('script'); e.async = true; e.src = 'bbmedia.js'; var s =  
document.getElementsByTagName('script')[0]; s.parentNode.insertBefore(e, s); }  
https://phpbbex.com/ [video]
```

Son of Buddha said:

Then change the channel nobody forcing you to watch this programming.

All the OP wanted was a list of Buddhist teachers who taught True Self teaching's (not hard to provide there are many), but you guys wanted to go off topic to argue and harass the poor fellow because he has different view's than you.....so you guys got what you were looking for.

But please don't complain when you guys make statements and someone else is willing to reply to those statements in disagreement while providing Sutras and commentary to support their position.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes the problem is that you are using provisional sūtras and commentaries from Yogacara, which is a realist system lower than Madhyamaka.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Wednesday, September 30th, 2015 at 5:42 AM
Title: Re: Ology, ology, ology
Content:

Matt J said:
While both the Buddhist and the Vedantin may attain freedom, the way they go about it is completely different. In my mind, the Vedantin expands the sense of Self,

Malcolm wrote:
In which case afflictions are not wholly eradicated and rebirth is not ended.

Matt J said:
while the Buddhist eliminates it.

Malcolm wrote:
In which case afflictions are wholly eradicated and rebirth is ended.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Wednesday, September 30th, 2015 at 9:06 AM
Title: Re: Ology, ology, ology
Content:

Vimalakirti432 said:
And your citation?

Malcolm wrote:
Abhisamayālaṃkāra, that being said, you invoked a specific passage of the Saddharmapundarika Sūtra.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Wednesday, September 30th, 2015 at 9:11 AM
Title: Re: Ology, ology, ology
Content:

Vimalakirti432 said:
. Nowhere in the Lotus that I'm aware of is it suggested that shravakas or others should aspire to Buddhahood in order to be of help to others. The implication may be there but it is not the focus of the sutra.=.

Malcolm wrote:
Really? I'll sort you out on this one tomorrow, but you are mistaken.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, September 30th, 2015 at 9:13 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist teachers that teach a true self?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Yes the problem is that you are using provisional sūtras and commentaries from Yogacara, which is a realist system lower than Madhyamaka.

Son of Buddha said:

Yes the problem is that you are using provisional sūtras and commentaries from Madhyamaka which is a system that constantly requires interpretation due to it teetering very close to Nihilism/Annihilationism, such a system is lower than the definite Tathagatagarbha teachings.

Malcolm wrote:

Madhyaka requires no interpretation, and the Tathāgatagarbha sūtras, understood from the Madhyakamala perspective of freedom from extremes, make sense.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, September 30th, 2015 at 8:13 PM

Title: Re: Ology, ology, ology

Content:

Vimalakirti432 said:

. Nowhere in the Lotus that I'm aware of is it suggested that shravakas or others should aspire to Buddhahood in order to be of help to others. The implication may be there but it is not the focus of the sutra.

Malcolm wrote:

In that respect, just as a rishi possesses the five clairvoyances and a pure eye, in the same way bodhisattvas generate bodhicitta, and after they attain patience for the nonarising of phenomena, it is observed that they attain the full perfect buddhahood of unsurpassed perfect complete awakening.

One who does not attain any phenomena, where is nirvana for one such as he? The Tathāgatas introduce them to awakening, and having generated bodhicitta, they do not abide in samsara and they also do not attain nirvana.

Son of a good family, a woman who possesses four qualities should take this Saddharmapundarika in hand. If it is asked what four, they are as follows: being blessed by the Buddha Bhagavans, having generated roots of virtue, abiding in the heap of certainties and having generated the thought of unsurpassed perfect full awakening in order to protect all sentient beings.

The generation of bodhicitta is a central theme of the Lotus Sūtra.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, September 30th, 2015 at 8:31 PM

Title: Re: Ology, ology, ology

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

No, there are really only two stages, when everything is said and done. The Hinayāna path only results in freedom. The Mahāyāna path results in freedom and omniscience.

The rest of it is just details.

Tenso said:

Is the bliss of Buddhahood greater than the liberation achieved from practicing hinayana?

Malcolm wrote:

That's an interesting question. Even if the bliss associated with full awakening is deeper than mere liberation, it is not a great degree of liberation, but rather, a quality associated with the result of the path.

There are basically five paths and ten stages. Paths measure realizations, stages measure qualities. There are also four kinds of realized persons, which are in fact measures of liberation from latent afflictions. The measure of full liberation is an arhat, pratyekabuddha, or an eighth stage bodhisattva, because only arhats, pratyekabuddhas and eighth stage bodhisattvas on up are free from birth in the three realms. However, the difference between the former two and the latter are the qualities cultivated on the path and the depth of realization. Arhats and pratyekabuddhas do not necessarily realize the emptiness of phenomena, and they do not necessarily comprehend the nonarising of phenomena.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, September 30th, 2015 at 9:12 PM

Title: Re: Dzogchen & Vipashyana on thoughts

Content:

Ivo said:

Guys, do not crucify Jax.

Malcolm wrote:

We do not have to crucify Jax, he is already doing a fine job of hanging himself with his own rope.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, September 30th, 2015 at 10:47 PM

Title: Re: Dzogchen & Vipashyana on thoughts

Content:

Ivo said:

Guys, do not crucify Jax.

Malcolm wrote:

We do not have to crucify Jax, he is already doing a fine job of hanging himself with his own rope.

dzogchungpa said:

Isn't that mixing metaphors?

I guess what you're saying is that there's more than one way to skin a cat.

Malcolm wrote:

It is a little hard for someone to nail himself to a cross, but it is very easy for someone to hang himself with a rope.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, October 1st, 2015 at 3:52 AM

Title: Re: Ology, ology, ology

Content:

Vimalakirti432 said:

. Nowhere in the Lotus that I'm aware of is it suggested that shravakas or others should aspire to Buddhahood in order to be of help to others. The implication may be there but it is not the focus of the sutra.=.

PorkChop said:

Then you've missed the entire gist of the sutra...

Malcolm wrote:

The generation of bodhicitta is a central theme of the Lotus Sūtra.

PorkChop said:

Nice quotes... and you're totally spot on here (imho).

For further reading in this line of thought there's also the whole chapter on the prediction of Buddhahood for the Buddha's most prominent sravaka disciples (all of whom are arahants), the chapter on the conduct of Bodhisattva Mahasattvas, the point of the burning house chapter (that all 3 types of disciples will eventually attain the supreme cart of Buddhahood), the Avalokitesvara Chapter (as a model of Bodhisattva behavior) etc, etc, etc...

Malcolm wrote:

I don't he or she actually read the sutra with any attention, and he or she would rather hurl invectives rather than actually have a discussion so....good riddance....

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, October 1st, 2015 at 8:39 AM

Title: Re: Dzogchen & Vipashyana on thoughts

Content:

Ivo said:

, but I have never seen evidence of him questioning their status as teachers, or their realization..

Malcolm wrote:

I have.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, October 1st, 2015 at 9:31 PM

Title: Re: Buddhist teachers that teach a true self?

Content:

smcj said:

I like this part: And there are also no phenomena of either samsara or nirvana at all present in the basis.

(formatting mine.)

At the very least I'd say this was a Yogacara view.

Malcolm wrote:

Not even remotely.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, October 1st, 2015 at 9:53 PM

Title: Re: Buddhist teachers that teach a true self?

Content:

smcj said:

Be that as it may (and I concede that there is a gamut of opinions on this), you must admit that on the surface it is prone to that interpretation.

Malcolm wrote:

Only if you understand neither Yogacara nor Dzogchen.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, October 1st, 2015 at 10:11 PM

Title: Re: Buddhist teachers that teach a true self?

Content:

smcj said:

Be that as it may (and I concede that there is a gamut of opinions on this), you must admit that on the surface it is prone to that interpretation.

Malcolm wrote:

Only if you understand neither Yogacara nor Dzogchen.

smcj said:

I don't think that it is arguable to say there is unanimity of opinion on this.

HHDL " Dzogchen: Heart Essence of the Great Perfection ": Question: Certain Nyingma masters have expounded shentong- emptiness of other-as the view of Dzogchen. Do you agree with them? Why is shentong such a controversial view among Tibetan Buddhist philosophers?

HHDL: If we read the writings of the great scholar Mipham, especially his commentary on the Sublime Continuum, we find that he explicitly mentions the importance of understanding the Dzogchen view, in which one is able to combine the teachings of emptiness, as expounded in the wisdom sūtras of the second turning of the wheel of Dharma, with the sūtras belonging to the third turning of the wheel of Dharma, particularly the Essence of Buddhahood Sutra. The understanding developed through a combination of the views expounded in both turnings of the wheel of Dharma will enable us to appreciate what in Dzogchen terminology are called: primordial purity, which is the main subject matter of the second turning, and spontaneous presence, which is the main subject matter of the third turning of the wheel of Dharma.

However, this does not mean that the emptiness spoken of in the second turning, that is in the wisdom sūtras, is exactly the same as what in Dzogchen terminology is called primordial purity. But one thing which is clear is that without an understanding of emptiness as expounded in the wisdom sutras, and without taking that understanding as a basis, there is no way that you can understand primordial purity in the context of Dzogchen.

As for the question of whether spontaneous presence in Dzogchen is synonymous with what is called the tathagatagarbha- the essence of buddhahood or innate mind of clear light-in the third turning of the wheel of Dharma, especially in the Essence of Buddhahood Sutra, there do seem to be divergent views on that, even among Nyingma meditators and scholars.

(formatting mine)

Malcolm wrote:

Because you don't understand Dzogchen, you really can't appreciate what HHDL is saying here.

1) There is the question of whether it is really proper to try an understand Dzogchen on

the basis of sūtra. I personally question the entire context of HHDL's comments. Dzogchen is not part of the three turnings, not at all.

2) The main controversy HHDL mentions is whether is proper to consider tathāgatagarbha as presented in sūtra to be the same as lhun grub or not.

This is just not the same thing as conflating Yogacara and Dzogchen. Tathāgatagarbha has a very subordinate role in Yogacara. It is almost entirely ignored.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, October 1st, 2015 at 11:29 PM

Title: Re: Is there a master resource that has events for all lineas

Content:

UnTyingTheStrings said:

I'm at the stage where I feel like seeing many teachers styles before comnoting to one. So I want to attend different teachings and events. But it seems harder than it should be to find scheduled events and such. Is there a better resource than just hearing about a center(word of mouth or searching online) and finding their individual events page? Is there some kind of inter-lineage listing by city /region/or country so that I don't miss a visiting teacher or event out of ignorance?

Malcolm wrote:

You can try Dharmalist.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, October 1st, 2015 at 11:54 PM

Title: Re: Dzogchen & Vipashyana on thoughts

Content:

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, October 2nd, 2015 at 12:31 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist teachers that teach a true self?

Content:

smcj said:

From an outsider's perspective....

Malcolm wrote:

You just said it all...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, October 2nd, 2015 at 12:32 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist teachers that teach a true self?

Content:

smcj said:

There is an unfortunate tendency here at DW to completely dismiss any teaching that can be characterized as "lower". None of my teachers has ever demonstrated that kind of attitude, so I will be excused if I follow their example.

Malcolm wrote:

To a hammer, everything looks like a nail.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, October 2nd, 2015 at 1:58 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist teachers that teach a true self?

Content:

smcj said:

To a hammer, everything looks like a nail.

Funny you should use that metaphor. I've been known to hit my thumb on occasion. In any case, this really really looks like a nail to me:

Malcolm wrote:

And there are also no phenomena of either samsara or nirvana at all present in the basis. Well, keep hitting it then...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, October 2nd, 2015 at 5:21 AM

Title: Re: The Lion-Faced Dakini

Content:

naljor said:

From which terma comes practice of Simhamukha in Dzogchen Community? I mean the practice from booklet The practice of Sinhamukha with five mantras for each family.....

Malcolm wrote:

Ayu Khandro

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, October 2nd, 2015 at 5:28 AM

Title: Re: Dzogchen & Vipashyana on thoughts

Content:

Paul said:

Paul, yes, I genuinely think that this is a bad idea too. I know how controversial this sounds, but it is actually the same karmic situation I outlined and no criticism could be helpful. My capacity for explaining such complex topics is not that high, and seeing how easy my words are misinterpreted here I would not even try to elaborate further. But I think that there is only one thing which is truly helpful in dealing with cult leaders and

harmful teachers - presenting a strong example of a genuine path. This is the only way out and the only true help we can give. Everything else will destroy us in the end, no matter how good the initial intentions are. I believe this is also, incidentally, in harmony with the precepts of the Buddhadharma.

I have to disagree completely then. Warning someone away from a cult is never a bad thing, as the cult cannot lead to liberation. Certainly when it starts to involve tantra and samaya issues. A group like that, and as I mention there is a rather active and highly negative cult here in the UK, is worse than poison. Poison can only harm you in one life.

I'm honestly not sure that you're saying this, but allowing someone to go down a harmful path because 'it's their karma' in some way is not compassionate.

Malcolm wrote:

People are free, and it is not our job to condition anyone to follow any path at all, whether we think it is a good one or not.

That said, there is nothing wrong with providing facts — for example, Jax's comments on facebook are there for all to see.

Providing info is one thing, strongly conditioning others is another. If someone wants to worship the Gyalpo, this may be a pity, but it is not our job to try and force them or convert them from that path. All we can do is point out what masters such as HHDL, ChNN and so on say about it. If they want to listen, fine, if not, then fine.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, October 2nd, 2015 at 6:35 AM

Title: Re: Dzogchen & Vipashyana on thoughts

Content:

Adamantine said:

I didn't notice anyone here trying to force someone onto a path or to convert them.

Malcolm wrote:

Nope, me either.

Adamantine said:

As I'd mentioned already- in my own experience it was valuable to see thoughtful (albeit harsh)

criticisms of a prospective teacher on Esangha- both comments grounded in dharma scripture as well as details I would otherwise have been unaware of (such as the detail that you

provided regarding the practice text for a certain gyalpo that was translated by ACI prior to their first

3-year retreat.)

Malcolm wrote:

Translated, I don't know — published as part of the ACIP releases, definitely.

Adamantine said:

So based on my own experience.. I think it'd be actually quite the opposite of generosity to not offer one's insight into certain situations or teachers, even if it's just healthy skepticism alone.

Malcolm wrote:

Well, in the case of the Michael Roach debacle, we could all see where that was headed...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, October 2nd, 2015 at 7:50 AM

Title: Re: Dzogchen & Vipashyana on thoughts

Content:

Ivo said:

I am basically saying exactly what Malcolm wrote.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, I pretty much agree.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, October 2nd, 2015 at 7:52 AM

Title: Re: Dzogchen & Vipashyana on thoughts

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

Possibly of interest, from Berkeley's favorite tulku Pema Khandro Rinpoche:

<http://ngakpa.org/library/haters-and-who-they-really-are-2/>

Ivo said:

This is an excellent article in every respect. Thank you for sharing!

It also contains an great summary of the whole topic by Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche:

“Do not have opinions on other people’s actions.

When we see defects in others, people in general but particularly those who have entered the Dharma...

we should understand that it is the impurity of our perception which is at fault.

Malcolm wrote:

Personally, I don't have pure vision, so I cannot really cannot say that I have this quality. But the older I get, I have noticed that I have developed the quality of being like a piece of wood if I have nothing good to say...people are free to draw their own conclusions from my silence about this or that...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, October 2nd, 2015 at 8:04 PM

Title: Re: Dzogchen & Vipashyana on thoughts

Content:

Simon E. said:

Its very difficult to discuss this, or any other issue, particularly online stripped as it is of all that accompanies meat world communication..body language, intonation etc ...if any of the parties involved have problems with dissonance.

But it is dissonance and it's expression which often makes for truly adult conversation, and which can mark a fresh understanding, even a changing of minds.

Something rarely achieved by a meeting of pollyannas.

We are not (most of us) Asian. We have a proud history of speaking our minds plainly.

This is not a barrier to understanding individual teachers. On the contrary it is an essential part of the Buddhadharma's transition to the west.

That transition is still ongoing. In fact it is early days in that process.

We are having to make policy on the hoof. That will go on for a hundred years or more at least.

Students of Buddhadharma in the west may need to be as robust in the discussion of these issues (the authenticity or otherwise of specific teachers) as they are vis-a-vis climate change or capitalism, without that being seen as somehow adharmic.

Malcolm wrote:

Generally speaking, the discussion of the validity of teachers is best done without calling people out by name. It is best to describe the positions they hold and identify those as problematical.

On the other hand, when someone makes themselves a celebrity, they are inviting inspection and criticism.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, October 2nd, 2015 at 10:58 PM

Title: Re: Student Teacher Relationship in Modern Age

Content:

steve_bakr said:

For a Direct Introduction to the Nature of your Mind, please read, "Self-Liberation Through Seeing With Naked Awareness," by Guru Padmasambhava, translated by John Reynolds. It is available on your Kindle or in print.

This not a direct introduction. One cannot receive direct introduction from a book.

I understand what you are saying. But I would not consider ancient texts formerly "Sealed, Sealed, Sealed," to be in the category of books. Many of these are in fact "Direct Oral Instructions" that in fact Dzogchen students of the past had no access to without a lung. And then, perhaps only one of these was read to them, one or a few times.

You have to understand the extraordinary times we live in. I have many secret texts along with explanations given by masters. Instead of hearing just a few of them a limited number of times, I can internalize these sacred texts dependent upon the extent of my devotion. Reading, studying, and internalizing these ancient original formerly secret texts are every bit as effective as hearing them. One can be liberated in this manner. As a lifetime student of religion, I fully appreciate the extraordinary development of having access to material that I would have had to travel to Tibet in hopes of finding when I first began to study religion.

I am not talking about reading books "about Dzogchen" with their conversational descriptions. I am talking about original pith instructions which can put one in the state of Intrinsic Awareness, one's Primordial State, simply by reading them, if one is receptive. You have to have lived long enough to fully understand the extraordinary nature of this development in the history of religion.

Malcolm wrote:

Look, I think we are talking about two entirely different things. Someone who reads Dzogchen texts without having had the benefit of a real transmission and explanation cannot receive transmission even from the most profound writing of ancient upadeshas written on a page. They might find them inspiring, but they won't discover anything and they will just remain in a state of concepts.

This is quite different than finding inspiration in those same instructions that have been communicated to you by a qualified teacher.

steve_bakr said:

I fully endorse having a personal teacher, most definitely. It is the nature of these texts, however, that listening to your teacher does not transmit the complete sentence by sentence density of the line by line liberating pith teachings contained in these secret texts. Much of what teachers present is the background understanding and preparation necessary to understand what is contained in these texts. A teacher will also judge your personal capabilities, and instruct you accordingly. There are three kinds of students: the superior, the intermediate, and the inferior.

Malcolm wrote:

What the teacher communicates is the essence of those instructions. That living relationship with a master enlivens those instructions because the instructions are then connected with transmission. Without transmission, the instructions have no life.

steve_bakr said:

But make no mistake, these secret texts are the real thing; one can be liberated upon

reading them.

Malcolm wrote:

Steve, it may come as a surprise to you, but I spend my whole day, all day, reading original Dzogchen texts in Tibetan and translating them into English. It is what I do.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, October 3rd, 2015 at 12:36 AM

Title: Re: Student Teacher Relationship in Modern Age

Content:

steve_bakr said:

You have my respect for translating original Dzogchen texts. My original post was directed to someone who is having great difficulty gaining access to a teacher. I have had the benefit of Pointing Out Instructions, but it was as if I knew it all along. In retrospect, I had experienced Rigpa before but I didn't know I was experiencing it. It just needed to be "pointed out."

Malcolm wrote:

Without receiving transmission, it is of no benefit to read books about Dzogchen. Without actual direct introduction, those instructions will always just remain a bunch of concepts.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, October 3rd, 2015 at 2:10 AM

Title: Re: Dzogchen & Vipashyana on thoughts

Content:

Karma Dondrup Tashi said:

But if some of the charlatans we have over here had tried to pull off their cr*p back in the day, in old Tibet - I suspect they would have been run out of town ... or worse ...

Malcolm wrote:

Nope, they would be put right up on the thrones and showered with offerings.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, October 3rd, 2015 at 2:35 AM

Title: Re: Dzogchen & Vipashyana on thoughts

Content:

Karma Dondrup Tashi said:

But if some of the charlatans we have over here had tried to pull off their cr*p back in the day, in old Tibet - I suspect they would have been run out of town ... or worse ...

Malcolm wrote:

Nope, they would be put right up on the thrones and showered with offerings.

Adamantine said:

I highly doubt it, from reading the historical accounts I've had access to. Even recognized tulkus were often treated skeptically before they proved themselves to their communities, as was the case for Chagdud Tulku, if you read his account in Lord of the Dance.

Anyway, are you suggesting that's how we should treat charlatans here?

Malcolm wrote:

I am just observing what i have seen with my own eyes...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, October 3rd, 2015 at 2:44 AM

Title: Re: Dzogchen & Vipashyana on thoughts

Content:

Adamantine said:

He was talking about old Tibet. . . are you relaying what you've seen in your past lives?

Malcolm wrote:

I think that it was really easy for someone with a bit of education and charisma to set themselves up in the old country. This is why there was so much sectarianism, it all began with someone thinking someone else was a fraud...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, October 3rd, 2015 at 10:10 PM

Title: Re: The Lion-Faced Dakini

Content:

naljor said:

Really? Is it not Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo?

Malcolm wrote:

No.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, October 4th, 2015 at 11:13 PM

Title: Re: Student Teacher Relationship in Modern Age

Content:

steve_bakr said:

The question is whether Pointing Out Instructions can be effective if they are read from Terma, like "Self-Liberation Through Seeing With Naked Awareness," by Guru Padmasambhava. I would submit that, yes, they can.

Malcolm wrote:

And I would submit that you are wrong. The commentary tantra of the Great Perfection, the Rig pa Rang Shar states:

While one has not left the body of traces, migrating beings will not see one as worthy of respect. One's merit will be small, one's life short, one's enjoyments of living will be few, one will be powerless and many obstacles will occur. Nothing will be accomplished. Those are the faults of not obtaining the empowerment for the conduct of Secret Mantra. A yogin of Secret Mantra conduct must first obtain empowerment. If empowerment is not obtained, not even the Buddha will be able to turn the wheel on the stage of a tathāgata. If the wheel cannot be turned, then the nirmanakāya will not be able to benefit migrating beings with compassion. Therefore, the empowerment of the conduct of Secret Mantra must be obtained.

steve_bakr said:

You said that a Direct Introduction to the Nature of Mind is only legitimate if received from a living master, because the living master has the lineage and direct experience. That is indeed the best way.

Malcolm wrote:

It is the only way.

steve_bakr said:

The other way is reception through Terma, which is a written record of oral teachings made for a future time. If a Direct Introduction were only possible from a living master, the Terma would be without any purpose at all. The Terma are both oral teachings and contain the lineage as well.

Malcolm wrote:

Termas are revealed by people who have already studied and practiced and attained realization. They are not revealed by people with no training and no realization. Moreover, there is even training in how to reveal tertons. The teachers of Tertons are almost always tertons themselves. Tertons always undergo training in the normal way, receiving transmissions and so on in the normal way for years and years. There are no exceptions to this, none.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, October 4th, 2015 at 11:59 PM

Title: Re: Student Teacher Relationship in Modern Age

Content:

steve_bakr said:

The question is whether Pointing Out Instructions can be effective if they are read from Terma, like "Self-Liberation Through Seeing With Naked Awareness," by Guru Padmasambhava. I would submit that, yes, they can.

Malcolm wrote:

And I would submit that you are wrong.

anjali said:

If one has received the pointing out instructions, but didn't "get it" at the time, is it possible in your opinion to later "get it" while reading a text?

Malcolm wrote:

If one has received direct introduction, it is possible that you may understand something more clearly with such a text, but since direct introduction works with experiences, there is no way one can substitute this conceptual understanding for working with the transmission by means of working with various experiences until one discovers the basis, aka primordial state, for oneself and has stabilized that knowledge [rig pa].

The reason? Direct introduction works with experiences to show what the foundation that lies below experiences, thoughts and concepts, i.e. the mind essence. This is extremely subtle and cannot be discovered merely through reading books, no matter how holy or profound. The error, quite frankly, is mistaking the fact that we are aware with that awareness being the mind essence itself. The awareness that we experience moment to moment is quite coarse, and is dominated by our "energy," our rlung or vāyu. The mind essence is much more subtle than any awareness we can experience.

Direct introduction, received from a master who knows what it is he is introducing, is indispensable — it sets up the foundation for our later discovery of our own state even if at the time the experience was too subtle for us to register it clearly. Anytime anyone participates in a direct introduction with a realized master in a whole hearted openly collaborative way [rather than passively expecting something to happen], they will in fact experience that moment of knowledge [rig pa] the master intends to introduce. Even if they do not "grasp" it at the time, they will have that experience to carry with them. In the beginning, our concepts are very strong, and our ability to see the mind essence is very weak. Therefore, our moment of rig pa we experience in the direct introduction is something like a small branch caught up in a torrent of a river of concepts — it is very easily swept away. But if we are patient, and we are diligent, we can again have that experience of the mind essence, upon which all future practice depends. Why? Because it was introduced and we had it once. There is nothing at all mystical about the process, it is straightforward and nonmagical.

The process of reading is too conceptual, the mind involved is too coarse, and therefore, it is impossible that we can experience the mind essence from reading a text. However, if we have experienced the mind essence reading books such as the Chos dbying mdzod and so on can reinforce our confidence which we can bring to our practice.

In order to experience the mind essence we have to cut through coarse concepts with various methods to re-experience the mind essence that we were exposed to during the introduction. This is why we have practices such as rushen and semszin, and supremely, Song of the Vajra.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, October 5th, 2015 at 1:27 AM

Title: Re: Student Teacher Relationship in Modern Age

Content:

steve_bakr said:

I love Dzogchen deeply. It is the last religion, so to speak, that I have studied. By the time I encountered Dzogchen, I recognized its teachings from parallels in other mystical and religious traditions. What I have learned, Malcom, is that religion is universal.

Malcolm wrote:

Dzogchen is not religion, it is not a religion, it is not a tradition, it is not mysticism. The most we can say is that it is a kind of knowledge.

steve_bakr said:

Dzogchen is in a Great Transition. It is now becoming a global religion. There are Lamas who have authorized the publication of the most Profoundly Secret Texts. These texts contain in it Universal Truths which are not anyone's sole property.

Malcolm wrote:

Dzogchen cannot be written down in words -- this is what you seem to fail to understand. Because Dzogchen can never be written down in words, it can never be discovered from reading a book.

steve_bakr said:

But your approach does not take into consideration the history of the mysticism in all religion, and the attainments of individual mystics. You cannot place conditions or limitations on another person's religious experience.

Malcolm wrote:

Dzogchen is a living transmission, from one person to another, one by one. There is no other way it can be. This is not a limitation, this is heart of the teachings. Without transmission from another living breathing human being, there is no Dzogchen, in this case then "dzogchen" is a bunch of concepts written in words on paper.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, October 5th, 2015 at 1:30 AM

Title: Re: Student Teacher Relationship in Modern Age

Content:

steve_bakr said:

Seeing into the Nature of the Mind has been accomplished by mystics throughout history. Rigpa has been experienced by mystics of other religions throughout history, most with teachers, and some on their own.

DGA said:

That's a big claim. Prove it.

dzogchungpa said:

Actually, saying that everyone who receives direct introduction experiences rigpa, if only for a moment, or even that there is such a thing as "rigpa", somehow known to be the same kind of thing for all dzogchenpas, is also quite a big claim IMO, and I would be very interested to see a proof of it as well. I understand that this is the Dzogchen forum, but it's an interesting question.

Malcolm wrote:

There is no proof of such things. Dzogchen is beyond proof and negation.

But this is what my guru, Chogyal Namkhai Norbu has said many times.

As for the state of Dzogchen being the same generic thing for all people, by way of analogy, the state of Dzogchen is to sentient beings what heat is to fire and wetness is to water.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, October 5th, 2015 at 1:43 AM

Title: Re: Student Teacher Relationship in Modern Age

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

There is no proof of such things. Dzogchen is beyond proof and negation.

But this is what my guru, Chogyal Namkhai Norbu has said many times.

dzogchungpa said:

OK, so you have faith in that, that's fine. Have you ever wondered how ChNN knows that?

Malcolm wrote:

I have no need to wonder. His uncle attained rainbow body, his root guru attained rainbow body. He was trained by masters who attained buddhahood. When you examine things, you will find that a large number of ChNN's immediate predecessors attained rainbow body.

As for the state of Dzogchen being the same generic thing for all people, by way of analogy, the state of Dzogchen is to sentient beings what heat is to fire and wetness is to water.

That's a nice thing to say, but hardly a proof of anything.

If you want proof, my friend, I suggest you discover this for yourself. But put in simple terms, all sentient beings have minds, and the essence of those minds is inseparable clarity and emptiness — there is no Dzogchen apart from that.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, October 5th, 2015 at 1:55 AM

Title: Re: Student Teacher Relationship in Modern Age

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

I'm not questioning ChNN's credentials or mastery, I'm just saying it's an interesting question of how anyone could know that someone else has experienced a moment of rigpa at a certain time, don't you agree? As far as proof is concerned, it's not a big deal for me personally, but Jikan brought it up so it got me thinking. Anyway, I have to run, ta ta for now.

Malcolm wrote:

If you understand the process, then it is quite easy for one to know.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, October 5th, 2015 at 1:57 AM

Title: Re: The Very Idea of Buddhist History

Content:

Monlam Tharchin said:

Wikipedia says Tendai, Tiantai, and Nichiren.

The Three Ages of Buddhism is also an important teaching in Pure Land, specifically living in the Dharma declining era.

From my understanding the Five Periods is a subdivision of this idea into five 500-year periods.

Malcolm wrote:

This is basically a Hinayāna idea. While it enjoys some Mahāyāna popularity, there are other sutras which push back against it, such as the Lotus Sutra and so on

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, October 5th, 2015 at 2:02 AM

Title: Re: The Eternal Buddha of the Lotus Sutra

Content:

amanitamusc said:

Not Amida for Nichiren.

Considered in this light, it is evident that Vairocana Buddha depicted in the Flower Garland Sutra as sitting on a lotus pedestal, the sixteen-foot Shakyamuni described in the Āgama sutras, and the provisional Buddhas of the Correct and Equal, Wisdom, Golden Light, Amida, and Mahāvairocana sutras are no more than reflections of the Buddha of the “Life Span” chapter. They are like fleeting images of the moon in the sky mirrored on the surface of the water held in vessels of varying sizes. The wise men and scholars of the various schools are first of all confused as to [the nature of the Buddhas of] their own school, and more fundamentally, they are ignorant of [the Buddha of] the “Life Span” chapter of the Lotus Sutra. As a result, they mistake the reflection of the moon on the water for the real moon shining in the sky.

<http://www.nichirenlibrary.org/en/wnd-1/Content/18>

Serenity509 said:

It appears that, according to Nichiren, the various Buddhas of the various schools are actually the Eternal Buddha of the Lotus Sutra.

Malcolm wrote:

It's all just a bunch of attachments to names and concepts...it is not very important.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, October 5th, 2015 at 2:08 AM

Title: Re: The Very Idea of Buddhist History

Content:

Serenity509 said:

The five periods doctrine is that each sutra was from a specific part of the Buddha's life, and that the Lotus Sutra and Nirvana sutra were his final teaching:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tiantai#Five_Periods

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, I understand what you are saying, but that does not even make sense if you look at the Lotus Sutra itself which establishes there has never been any time nor will there be any time where the Buddha is not teaching the Lotus Sutra on Rajagriha. Kind of throws a kink in the five period theory no?

It never ceases to amaze me the schemes people come up with to limit the Buddha's teachings in time and space.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, October 5th, 2015 at 2:17 AM

Title: Re: The Very Idea of Buddhist History

Content:

Monlam Tharchin said:

The Three Ages and specifically living in the Age of the decline of the Dharma is a prominent teaching for the Jodo-shu and Shin schools, at least.

Malcolm wrote:

But it is quite a provisional teaching.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, October 5th, 2015 at 4:49 AM

Title: Re: Student Teacher Relationship in Modern Age

Content:

anjali said:

Thank you for that clear explanation. I do have two follow-on questions.

If, for some reason, the student was not whole heartedly present, and wasn't able to experience something, is it possible to gain direct experience without receiving another pointing out instruction from the master again at a later date?

Specifically, I'm thinking of practice texts such as Pointing Out the Dharmakaya, Clarifying the Natural State, or The Ocean of Definitive Meaning. One reads those texts, not for conceptual understanding (although that may happen), but as tools for working with experience. In your opinion, is it possible to have a successful pointing out by working with those texts (with the blessing of the guru of course)?

Malcolm wrote:

The principle of these mahāmudra texts is completely different and much more gradual. If you read these books and work with them without a teacher, it is possible you can have a sutra-like experience of śamatha and vipaśyāna, you can even become a first stage bodhisattva, but that does not mean you will have discovered the rig pa that Dzogchen is talking about. Of course, if you work with a realized master it is possible you can have that experience.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, October 5th, 2015 at 5:01 AM

Title: Re: The Eternal Buddha of the Lotus Sutra

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

It's all just a bunch of attachments to names and concepts...it is not very important.

Astus said:

What is?

Malcolm wrote:

The meaning.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, October 5th, 2015 at 5:18 AM

Title: Re: Dzogchen & Vipashyana on thoughts

Content:

Adamantine said:

This may embarrass them and cause them to regret and stop their abusive behavior.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, because this has worked so well...all of these teachers who have been embarrassed or called out, not one of them stopped teaching...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, October 5th, 2015 at 5:20 AM

Title: Re: The Eternal Buddha of the Lotus Sutra

Content:

Astus said:

And what meaning is that here?

Malcolm wrote:

Dharmakāya....

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, October 5th, 2015 at 6:16 AM

Title: Re: Dzogchen & Vipashyana on thoughts

Content:

Adamantine said:

Note he didn't say "stop them from teaching"

He said "stop their abusive behavior"

Malcolm wrote:

That has not happened either.

Adamantine said:

Seems like the letter in reply from Genpo Merzel at least indicated this was a possibility.

Malcolm wrote:

He is a two time loser on this score. He was ousted from his center in Maine, moved to Utah, and then got ousted again.

Adamantine said:

Another effect of exposure is so potential students (or existing students) can be aware of the problems and be cautious about getting involved or staying involved.

Malcolm wrote:

Right, because this worked so well with Sasaki Roshi, Leonard Cohen's recently deceased teacher. That guy was molesting female students for years and years, everyone knew it, no one said anything until a year or so before he died.

Adamantine said:

I'm aware of a number of students of controversial teachers who left once they realized that

the teachers were deceitful based on public exposure of their actions.

Malcolm wrote:

They just get new students, etc., etc., etc., or, they manage to secure endorsements from high Lamas...

Its all bullshit, in the end, you just have to rely on your own good judgement.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, October 5th, 2015 at 11:12 AM

Title: Re: Dzogchen & Vipashyana on thoughts

Content:

Adamantine said:

This may embarrass them and cause them to regret and stop their abusive behavior.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, because this has worked so well...all of these teachers who have been embarrassed or called out, not one of them stopped teaching...

Garudavista said:

Although he is not a Buddhist teacher and is instead a neo-advaita teacher, Andrew Cohens' students' open criticisms about his abusive behavior did cause him to step down and stop him from teaching. It's been over two years now and he hasn't attempted to teach again yet. It's an interesting story. If you're not familiar with it, here are some links:

<http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2015/03/27/what-happens-when-your-guru-disappears.html>

<http://www.andrewcohen.org/>

Malcolm wrote:

I am quite familiar with the situation — think deposed dictator fleeing country with ill gotten gains...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, October 5th, 2015 at 11:32 AM

Title: Re: The Eternal Buddha of the Lotus Sutra

Content:

Queequeg said:

It's all just attachment, of course unless it's the truth expounded by brother Malcolm. But, oh, let's not talk about the emperor's clothes.

Malcolm wrote:
Is there anything to discuss?

Author: Malcolm
Date: Monday, October 5th, 2015 at 8:06 PM
Title: Re: The Eternal Buddha of the Lotus Sutra
Content:

Queequeg said:
It's all just attachment, of course unless it's the truth expounded by brother Malcolm.
But, oh, let's not talk about the emperor's clothes.

Malcolm wrote:
Is there anything to discuss?

Queequeg said:
Sure. But you'd have to leave your attachment to thinking you know what you are talking about in this context.

Malcolm wrote:
[Note: the image above is Kulayarāja, the All-creating King aka Samantabhadra, a pun on your quip]

There is nothing to discuss — the dharmakāya is beyond names, words and concepts [and images]. Ideas like "...according to Nichiren, the various Buddhas of the various schools are actually the Eternal Buddha of the Lotus Sutra" are completely relative. The dharmakāya is no more "Śākyamuni" than it is "Vairocana" or "Samantabhadra", etc.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Tuesday, October 6th, 2015 at 7:32 AM
Title: Re: The Eternal Buddha of the Lotus Sutra
Content:

Queequeg said:
The identification of the Primordial Buddha with Shakyamuni is not, as Malcolm suggests, just delusion grounded in attachment to names and forms, but is a statement on the nature of reality, grounding it in present, historical reality.

Malcolm wrote:
Which "present, historical reality" is just a delusion grounded in attachment to names and concepts. This teleological obsession is rather saddening.

Queequeg said:
It is largely in response to other interpretations of the Buddha and the implied statements on the nature of reality. Malcolm made an assumption that Primordial

Buddha in this context means Dharmakaya and then made a typically unproductive Malcolm statement.

Malcolm wrote:

There isn't any other kind of primordial buddha. There is also no buddhahood outside of the mind. Three kāyas are in everyone. There is no buddhahood outside of sentient beings.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, October 6th, 2015 at 7:35 AM

Title: Re: The Eternal Buddha of the Lotus Sutra

Content:

Queequeg said:

Are we really going to dispute which of Amida or Siddhartha Gautama has had a greater connection to the beings of this world now?

Malcolm wrote:

What does it matter? The dharmakāya of both is the same. There is only one teacher, i.e., the dharmakāya.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, October 6th, 2015 at 9:59 AM

Title: Re: The Eternal Buddha of the Lotus Sutra

Content:

DGA said:

I'm interested in this question of whether or how Buddha Shakyamuni's emergence in this world system is different in quality or kind from that of any other Buddha in any other world system. So I started a discussion on it here...

<http://dharma.wheel.net/viewtopic.php?f=66&t=20904>

...in case anyone would like to chime in.

Malcolm wrote:

It isn't. There are a billion worlds in the Sahaloka, and there is a supreme nirmanakāya in every one of them.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, October 6th, 2015 at 10:00 AM

Title: Re: Buddha Shakyamuni Qualitatively Different?

Content:

DGA said:

I guess I'm trying to probe this question of whether one Buddha is ultimately different in quality or kind from any other. I've been taught, consistently, that the answer to this

question is No at the level of Dharmakaya. Differences in manifestation (nirmanakaya) reflect the needs of samsaric beings, and hence are differences in samsaric situations, not in Buddhahood as such.

Malcolm wrote:
Correct.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Tuesday, October 6th, 2015 at 9:20 PM
Title: Re: The Eternal Buddha of the Lotus Sutra
Content:
DGA said:
importance of learning the Dharma from a capable teacher.

Astus said:
Who counts as a capable teacher depends on whom one likes. Thus both the best and the worst can gather a large community where both call the other incompetent. How to tell which one is correct? That's when one has to start learning from the Buddha himself by reading his words. And if that's not enough, there are numerous traditionally approved masters, like Nagarjuna, Aryadeva, Asanga and Vasubandhu to consult with. And if even that's not enough, there are quite a few generally reliable works by modern teachers, like the Dalai Lama, Thrangu Rinpoche, Thich Nhat Hanh, Hsing Yun, Sheng Yen, etc.

DGA said:
Buddha Dharma is described as an oral tradition to the present, even with all these texts available.

Astus said:
By whom? There are teachers, true. But hardly any of them could recite even just a few major Mahayana sutras, not to mention the whole canon of the Buddha's words. Buddhism has been a scriptural tradition for over two millennia. It doesn't mean there are no explanations give orally, on the spot. But even the most important commentaries are textual.

DGA said:
What little understanding I have comes primarily from listening to teachers teach, and watching their example.

Astus said:
That can show how worthy teachers are important and beneficial. Or that you prefer to listen to people instead of reading. Or both. Or maybe neither.

Malcolm wrote:

You are like a person who mistakes the leaves for the trunk, in this respect. Buddhadharma has always been, and will always be, a tradition in which the meaning of the Dharma is communicated orally.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, October 6th, 2015 at 9:39 PM

Title: Re: The Eternal Buddha of the Lotus Sutra

Content:

DGA said:

Astus, I think we just disagree on this issue. If I had to guess, it's because your experience differs from mine. And that's fine.

Malcolm wrote:

Astus has failed to notice that the three wisdoms are hearing, reflection and meditation; not reading, reflection and meditation.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, October 6th, 2015 at 9:51 PM

Title: Re: The Eternal Buddha of the Lotus Sutra

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

You are like a person who mistakes the leaves for the trunk, in this respect.

Buddhadharma has always been, and will always be, a tradition in which the meaning of the Dharma is communicated orally.

Astus said:

There are several cases where a tradition was revived/reformed/established based on scriptural materials. Recent cases include most of modern Theravada, the Soto Zen reform of Menzan Zuiho in Japan and the reforms of Taixu, Yinshun and others in China/Taiwan.

Malcolm wrote:

Hearing, Astus, not reading...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, October 6th, 2015 at 11:43 PM

Title: Re: The Eternal Buddha of the Lotus Sutra

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Hearing, Astus, not reading...

Astus said:

Where is the difference?

"Since they maintain they have no need of written words, they should not speak either, because written words are merely the marks of spoken language. They also maintain that the direct way cannot be established by written words, and yet these two words, 'not established' are themselves written."

(<http://www.cttbusa.org/6patriarch/6patriarch20.asp>, ch 10, tr BTTS)

Malcolm wrote:

This objection does not apply:

1. I am not suggesting we throw away all books or that they are not useful.
2. I am not suggesting you cannot write out words that have been spoken.

But the Dharma has always been communicated through the medium of the voice, not the medium of the page, and even Huineng's awakening story bears this out.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, October 7th, 2015 at 12:45 AM

Title: Re: The Eternal Buddha of the Lotus Sutra

Content:

Astus said:

What is missing is the oral transmission of those sutras, not to mention the rest of the canon.

Malcolm wrote:

This is completely false. The oral transmission for all the Sūtras in the Tibetan Canon still exists and is given at regular intervals.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, October 7th, 2015 at 2:47 AM

Title: Re: Student Teacher Relationship in Modern Age

Content:

steve_bakr said:

I recommend it highly to anyone who has not received Pointing Out Instructions

Adamantine said:

sigh

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, some people are intractable in their erroneous thinking.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, October 7th, 2015 at 4:09 AM

Title: Re: The Eternal Buddha of the Lotus Sutra (Split)

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

But the Dharma has always been communicated through the medium of the voice, not the medium of the page, and even Huineng's awakening story bears this out.

Astus said:

Not sure what exactly you mean here. People have been studying the Dharma through texts for ages. Also, teachers have been teaching from texts for ages. Many have composed treatises and other written materials in order to preserve what they want to communicate. Textual communication has also been used for a long time now to disseminate the teachings, communicate it to those one has never met. And the process of translation has not even been addressed.

Malcolm wrote:

What I mean exactly is that meaning of the Dharma is always learned from a teacher, not a text. A text cannot convey even its own meaning. In order to learn the meaning of a text, one must have a teacher. And also the Dharma does not depend on texts. One does not need books and texts to communicate its essentials.

Books do not communicate, only people do. Books may support that communication, but they are entirely incapable of replacing human transmission of the Dharma from mouth to ear.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, October 7th, 2015 at 4:12 AM

Title: Re: The Eternal Buddha of the Lotus Sutra

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

But the Dharma has always been communicated through the medium of the voice, not the medium of the page, and even Huineng's awakening story bears this out.

Astus said:

Not sure what exactly you mean here. People have been studying the Dharma through texts for ages. Also, teachers have been teaching from texts for ages. Many have composed treatises and other written materials in order to preserve what they want to communicate. Textual communication has also been used for a long time now to disseminate the teachings, communicate it to those one has never met. And the process of translation has not even been addressed.

Malcolm wrote:

The oral transmission for all the Sūtras in the Tibetan Canon still exists and is given at regular intervals.

Astus said:

Do you mean the practice that someone reads out loud what is written?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, since the sūtras are all based on a oral transmission that begins with the Buddha. In the case of the Tibetan Canon, this transmission exists in an unbroken form. Translation does not present any problem either, apart from today, when people translate many texts for which they do not possess the lung.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, October 7th, 2015 at 4:52 AM

Title: Re: The Eternal Buddha of the Lotus Sutra

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Books do not communicate, only people do. Books may support that communication, but they are entirely incapable of replacing human transmission of the Dharma from mouth to ear.

dzogchungpa said:

So, the deaf cannot really learn the Dharma?

Malcolm wrote:

When we discuss what constitutes a precious human birth, having all sense faculties intact is one of the requirements.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, October 7th, 2015 at 5:11 AM

Title: Re: The Eternal Buddha of the Lotus Sutra

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

When we discuss what constitutes a precious human birth, having all sense faculties intact is one of the requirements.

Malcolm wrote:

So, the anosmic cannot really learn the Dharma?[/quote]

It means they have a deficiency.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, October 7th, 2015 at 11:01 PM

Title: Re: The Eternal Buddha of the Lotus Sutra

Content:

Caodemarte said:

Q: "So, the deaf cannot really learn the Dharma?"

A: "When we discuss what constitutes a precious human birth, having all sense faculties intact is one of the requirements."

This is unclear and confusing. Surely it is not meant that the deaf cannot learn the Dharma because they cannot hear the Dharma. Would the Dharma be then dependent on sound waves vibrating air which in turn vibrates the inner ear? Is it a requirement that one not be blind or deaf to be considered human?

Malcolm wrote:

You should acquaint yourself with the eight freedoms and ten favorable conditions that constitute a precious human birth, not just any old human birth.

With respect to having complete sense organs intact, if one does not, for example, it makes one unsuitable to be a Vajrayāna practitioner.

With respect to studying common Dharma, in ancient times blind people were less at a disadvantage than the deaf. These days the people with sensory deficits are at less of a disadvantage because of modern technology, but I wager there are very few blind people who participate on the forum.

To answer Dzogchungpa's question, the main criteria is organs of sight and hearing.

To answer Garuda Vista's question, in Dzogchen there are techniques for blind people.

But in general we have to understand that precious human birth has very precise criteria which indicates the ease with which one may meet and study Dharma.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, October 7th, 2015 at 11:07 PM

Title: Re: Importance of a Dharma Teacher/Oral Transmission

Content:

Caodemarte said:

You do your best to learn from whatever material or through whatever means you can obtain. Chinul, a really heavy hitter in Korea, learned the meaning of China's Rinzai (Lin-ji or Imje) through written texts after his initial experiences (also inspired by written texts). So possible, but highly unlikely and rather silly to try if one has a choice of more practicable methods.

DGA said:

Chinul was a great master. He was trained and educated--which is to say, he heard the

teachings and reflected on them before embarking on meditation--at Sagulsan, and later at a temple in Pyongyang. Only after this did the texts open up to him. It's not as though he woke up one day at age 30, went to Barnes & Noble, swept through the Zen section, read until kensho hit him a few times, and became the founder of the Chogye Order.

He was part of a living culture. He was not a consumer.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, Chinul had a Seon master, Jonghwi of Sagulsan.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, October 7th, 2015 at 11:11 PM

Title: Re: The Eternal Buddha of the Lotus Sutra

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

What I mean exactly is that meaning of the Dharma is always learned from a teacher, not a text. A text cannot convey even its own meaning. In order to learn the meaning of a text, one must have a teacher. And also the Dharma does not depend on texts. One does not need books and texts to communicate its essentials.

Books do not communicate, only people do. Books may support that communication, but they are entirely incapable of replacing human transmission of the Dharma from mouth to ear.

Astus said:

Words can be communicated both through voice and letters. What is the difference between you telling me the above words over the phone or over this board? The meaning is something I have to derive from the words in both cases, so it is not communicated in either way.

Malcolm wrote:

Words do not communicate, people communicate. Words cannot adapt with circumstances. Words cannot estimate your level of understanding. Words cannot answer your questions.

The transmission of the Dharma does not lie in words themselves, it lies in the interaction between two people.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, October 7th, 2015 at 11:13 PM

Title: Re: Importance of a Dharma Teacher/Oral Transmission

Content:

Caodemarte said:

Of course Chinul was a great scholar, thinker, and monk (not the reader of Internet forums like us). The point is that literally hearing the words was not necessary in his case. The other activities (years of meditation, study, etc.) were what helped prepare him.

Astus said:

You could add Wonhyo, Chengguan, Dushun, Jizang, Huisi and probably every Buddhist teacher who did not belong to a specific lineage, but rather studied the Dharma, listened to various people, contemplated the teachings, came to a realisation, then started to teach publicly and write some treatises.

Malcolm wrote:

The order is "listened to various teachers, studied the Dharma...."

In our modern world, this is reversed — read some books on Dharma, did not understand them at all, found a teacher to explain them....

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, October 7th, 2015 at 11:14 PM

Title: Re: Importance of a Dharma Teacher/Oral Transmission

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, Chinul had a Seon master, Jonghwi of Sagulsan.

Astus said:

Jonghwi was his ordination master. Jinul gained realisation and developed his teachings on his own, particularly he introduced the huatou/hwadu method - propagated by Dahui Zonggao - to Korea without ever having visited China.

Malcolm wrote:

Jonghwi was also a Seon master.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, October 7th, 2015 at 11:39 PM

Title: Re: The Eternal Buddha of the Lotus Sutra

Content:

Unknown said:

Words cannot answer your questions.

How does a non-verbal question look like

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, October 7th, 2015 at 11:40 PM

Title: Re: Importance of a Dharma Teacher/Oral Transmission

Content:

Malcolm wrote:
Jonghwi was also a Seon master.

Astus said:
Apparently Jinul was not satisfied with the teachings provided by him or others, so he did not continue their tradition.

Malcolm wrote:
Sure he did.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Wednesday, October 7th, 2015 at 11:46 PM
Title: Re: The Eternal Buddha of the Lotus Sutra
Content:

Malcolm wrote:
Words do not communicate, people communicate. ... The transmission of the Dharma does not lie in words themselves, it lies in the interaction between two people.

Astus said:
And what is the means of interaction between two people? Words.

Malcolm wrote:
I would hate to be your girlfriend.

Astus said:
Words cannot adapt with circumstances.
That's a matter of hermeneutics.

Malcolm wrote:
No, words are not sentient things.

Astus said:
Words cannot estimate your level of understanding.
If there are levels of understanding - as defined in scriptures - then even teachers can only use that for reference. If there are no clear definitions, then it is arbitrary and unreliable.

Malcolm wrote:
Sūtras and tantras are not written documents. The written documents that record them are merely a shadow of verbal discourse that took place at some time. The meaning of those documents is not contained within the documents.

We can certainly come to understand the meaning of the Dharma by studying with a teacher. We can never come to understand the meaning of the Dharma merely by reading books.

For example, the name of a teaching like Kalacakra, does not mean that the real Kalacakra can be found in the book called Kalacakra. Just as the real Prajñāpāramitā cannot be found in all the books that bear that name. The meaning of Kalackara and Prajñāpāramitā can only be learned from a teacher, never from the books themselves.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, October 7th, 2015 at 11:58 PM

Title: Re: Bon influence on buddhism and viceversa.

Content:

dzoki said:

I am not sure there is any such material, because to really know the influence of Bon on Buddhism and vice versa, one would need to thoroughly know both traditions, their source texts, their histories etc. Some say that rites such as Namkha, Lungta, Sur and Sang are of Bon origin (and they probably are).

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, they are, as well as the custom of making tormas.

dzoki said:

But I have seen at least one argument for Sang being Buddhist independent of Bon version (some sutra is supposed to speak of smoke offering).

Malcolm wrote:

There is one Sakya Lama, Zuchen, who makes some arguments to this effect. I think he is wrong.

dzoki said:

I heard Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche say that all of Bonpo style vajrayana (or whatever it is called in Bon tradition) is completely made up and copied from elements of Buddhist vajrayana and that the only original teaching of Bon having parallel in Buddhism is their short dzogchen tantra called Shang Shung Nyen Gyu.

Malcolm wrote:

Bonpo "Vajrayāna" is called "Secret Mantra."

ChNN does not say made up, he says "borrowed", and also he maintains in Drung De'u and Bon that the tantric cycles connected with Nangzher Lodpo such as Zhang Zhung Me ri [a tantric cycle], Zhang Zhung sNyan rgyud and Sems sde [Dzogchen cycles, the latter being A khrid] are not dependent on Buddhist sources, the latter have however been influenced by Dzogchen from Garab Dorje.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, October 8th, 2015 at 12:10 AM

Title: Re: Student Teacher Relationship in Modern Age

Content:
dzogchungpa said:
You guys are being a bit dzogmatic, admit it.

Malcolm wrote:
No we are being xmlmatic, i.e. XML code that does not work is not XML.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Thursday, October 8th, 2015 at 12:58 AM
Title: Re: The Eternal Buddha of the Lotus Sutra
Content:
Malcolm wrote:
With respect to having complete sense organs intact, if one does not, for example, it makes one unsuitable to be a Vajrayāna practitioner.

jorden said:
Could you explain that further? Do you mean that being deaf would be an practical obstacle for Vajrayana or that it would be impossible to practice Vajrayana?

Malcolm wrote:
It means your body mandala is not complete. For example, Hh Sakya Trizin discouraged one man from studying Lamdre because he was blind.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Thursday, October 8th, 2015 at 1:40 AM
Title: Re: Importance of a Dharma Teacher/Oral Transmission
Content:
dzogchungpa said:
Look, obviously being blind or deaf makes study and practice more difficult, but I don't accept that it makes them impossible. For Vajrayana, maybe, but otherwise no. I do think you need to have personal interaction, preferably a lot of it, with a good teacher to really get somewhere but that is possible for both the blind and the deaf.

Garudavista said:
No one said that it does make it impossible.

dzogchungpa said:
See: <https://www.dharmawheel.net/viewtopic.php?f=39&t=20915&p=304846#p304844>
et seq.

OK, ta ta for now.

Malcolm wrote:
Right, no one said it was completely impossible.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, October 8th, 2015 at 4:58 AM

Title: Re: Bon influence on buddhism and viceversa.

Content:

Tongnyid Dorje said:

i was told by my lama, that tormas, bhalim in sans, indeed originated in indian vajrayana. in indian tantra you have also hom, fire offering, i will be not surprised, if they had also smoke offering... to burn the incense is already a smoke offering, no?

Malcolm wrote:

Not the elaborate sculpture tormas you see in Nyingma.

Sang, which universally uses juniper, is a uniquely Tibetan custom which comes from Nomadic culture.

The function of Sang and the function of incense are different.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, October 8th, 2015 at 8:49 PM

Title: Re: Bon influence on buddhism and viceversa.

Content:

Tongnyid Dorje said:

i was told by my lama, that tormas, bhalim in sans, indeed originated in indian vajrayana. in indian tantra you have also hom, fire offering, i will be not surprised, if they had also smoke offering... to burn the incense is already a smoke offering, no?

Malcolm wrote:

Not the elaborate sculpture tormas you see in Nyingma.

Sang, which universally uses juniper, is a uniquely Tibetan custom which comes from Nomadic culture.

The function of Sang and the function of incense are different.

Tongnyid Dorje said:

sure, not the elaborate ones. but what is left unelaborate in Tibet, as it was in India? just look at abhisheka, how it is done nowadays and how it was done originally by wandering yogis. but this doesnt mean it is a bon influence.

as for sang, may be you are right, im not expert.

Malcolm wrote:

Tormas in India were just flatbreads.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, October 8th, 2015 at 9:00 PM

Title: Re: Bon influence on buddhism and viceversa.

Content:

Adamantine said:

In principle offering "fragrant smoke" is the same, if in indian incense form or or in a larger capacity as with juniper branches on a fire..

With Riwo Sang Cho mother mixes you also have ingredients like the 3 sweets and three whites,

which you also have in tormas, which are based on traditional Indian vegetarian desirable foods

so that's certainly not coming from Bon, but from India..,

Also seems to be a tangible relation between elaborate sang offerings like Riwo Sang Cho with many precious substances in the ingredients and the homa offerings of vedic tradition.

Malcolm wrote:

One characteristic of rituals of Bon origin is that at the beginning of the rite there is a narrative of its origin. Look at ChNN's description of Sang on page 109 of Drung, Deu and Bon.

No one is denying Buddhist appropriation of some native Tibetan rites like Sang, but there is not even one single rite of Sang that was translated from Sanskrit to Tibetan. The Sang offering attributed to Padmasambhava was written in Tibet. Also this Sang offering shows evidence of having been converted from a Bonpo rite because like other Bonpo rites and Sang, it contains a narrative of its origin.

Offering of incense as a object of scent and Sang, which is used for purification, have totally different functions. In ancient Tibetan culture, nomads would have newcomers to their camp pass through Sang smoke to prevent contagious diseases. They mainly used juniper, but also many other aromatic plants as well. The principle of Sang and the principle of smudging in Native American cultures is very similar.

Riwo Sangchod, incidentally, it not a terma, it is a dag snang, a pure vision.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, October 8th, 2015 at 9:04 PM

Title: Re: Self-Liberation Through Seeing With Naked Awareness

Content:

Hansei said:

Hello,

I've been a student of ChNNR for over a year. Does anybody know if I need to receive a

particular transmission to read this book?

https://www.amazon.com/Self-Liberation-Through-Seeing-Naked-Awareness/dp/1559393521/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1444297462&sr=8-1&keywords=Self-Liberation+Through+Seeing+With+Naked+Awareness

Best wishes.

Malcolm wrote:

It is good if you have the lung, but no, you do not absolutely need it to read it.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, October 8th, 2015 at 11:24 PM

Title: Re: Importance of a Dharma Teacher/Oral Transmission

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Sūtras and tantras are not written documents. The written documents that record them are merely a shadow of verbal discourse that took place at some time. The meaning of those documents is not contained within the documents.

Astus said:

Either you say that the texts are incomplete

Malcolm wrote:

Of course they are incomplete.

Astus said:

- in which case you'd need to be in possession of some original audio record - or you claim that words as voice are significantly different from words as letters -

Malcolm wrote:

What I am claiming is that oral communication and teaching is different than reading. For example, our conversation here is dry and logical [at least my side of the conversation is]. If we were talking, or I was listening to you teach Dharma, there is a qualitatively different sort of communication happening. For example, no one is going to faint when they read the Prajñāpāramitā sūtra, but when those monks heard to the PP sūtra so long ago, some of them were really shocked.

Astus said:

"If, Mahamati, meaning is different from words, it will not be made manifest by means of words; but meaning is entered into by words as things [are revealed] by a lamp. It is, Mahamati, like a man carrying a lamp to look after his property. [By means of this light]

he can say: This is my property and so is kept in this place. Just so, Mahamati, by means of the lamp of words and speech originating from discrimination, the Bodhisattva-Mahasattvas can enter into the exalted state of self-realisation which is free from speech-discrimination."

(http://lirs.ru/do/lanka_eng/lanka-nondiacritical.htm, 3.65)

Malcolm wrote:

The Buddha also addresses this issue later on in the text, beginning on folio 212/a of the Lhasa edition:

Mahāmati, those foolish men say the following, "The meaning is exactly the words. The meaning is not other than the words. Why? For this reason: since there is no substance in the meaning, the meaning is not other than the words. The word itself is the meaning."

Mahāmati, since the nature of words are not understood, those with uneducated mind cannot understand that how words arise and perish and the meaning does not arise and does not perish.

Mahāmati, words fall into letters. The meaning does not fall into letters, not arising and lacking substance because of being free from entities and nonentities.

Mahāmati, because letters are not perceived to either exist or not exist, the Tathāgātas do not teach a Dharma that falls into letters.

Mahāmati, because there are no letters in the Dharma, whoever explains a Dharma that falls into letters, he is twisted up. That being the case, therefore Mahāmati, apart from spoken explanations, the Buddha and the other bodhisattvas have taught "The Tathāgatas have never explained and will never explain even a single letter." Why? For this reason, because in all Dharmas there are no letters, in absence of the meaning [the Dharma] cannot be explained. There is an explanation through taking hold of concepts.

Mahāmati, if Dharma is not explained, the doctrine will perish. If the doctrine perishes, there will be no buddhas, pratyekabuddhas and śravakas. If they do not exist, for whom will there be an explanation?

That being the case, therefore Mahāmati, bodhisattva mahāsattvas must not be attached the words of the spoken explanations.

Mahāmati, since the spoken explanations exist in accordance with the inclinations of sentient beings, they are erroneous. I and all other tathāgata, arhat, samyaksambuddhas teach the Dharma to interested sentient beings in order to reverse their minds, intellects and consciousnesses. All phenomena are nonexistent appearances. Because they are understood as appearances of one's mind, the realization of one's own sublime wisdom can never be reversed by many kinds of false concepts.

Mahāmati, bodhisattvas mahāsattvas must rely on the meaning, they must not rely on letters.

Mahāmati, the sons and daughters of good families who rely on letters will be deprived of the meaning, and further, will not understand it. They will not being learned in the characteristics of all the Dharmas and the stages, and they will have as their associates evil intellectuals who do not understand the sentences and the certain words will fall into evil views.

Astus said:

We can certainly come to understand the meaning of the Dharma by studying with a teacher. We can never come to understand the meaning of the Dharma merely by reading books.

Does a teacher gives any Dharma not contained in the sutras? If yes, then his teaching fails to follow the Dharma of the buddhas. If no, then sutras are both valid and beneficial sources of the Dharma.

Malcolm wrote:

My reply to this is to refer you to the above where the Buddha declares all sūtras are erroneous, because they are taught in accordance with the inclinations of sentient beings.

Astus said:

"all of the buddhas and all of their teachings of peerless perfect enlightenment spring forth from this sūtra"

(http://www.acmuller.net/bud-canon/diamond_sutra.html, ch 8)

Malcolm wrote:

The above explanation by the Buddha establishes that a "sūtra" is not something which is in the letters of a text, nor in the words. It is in the meaning as spoken verbally.

Astus said:

For example, the name of a teaching like Kalacakra, does not mean that the real Kalacakra can be found in the book called Kalacakra. Just as the real Prajñāpāramitā cannot be found in all the books that bear that name. The meaning of Kalackara and Prajñāpāramitā can only be learned from a teacher, never from the books themselves. Prajnaparamita is not obtained from anyone or anything. How could a person today instruct in that better than the Buddha?

"Wherever this sutra is taught, read, recited, copied, or wherever it is to be found, one should build a seven-jeweled stupa of great height and width and richly ornamented. There is no need to put a relic inside. Why is this? Because the Tathāgata is already in it. ... the highest, complete enlightenment of all the bodhisattvas is within this sutra. This sutra opens the gate of skillful means and reveals the marks of the truth."
(Lotus Sutra, ch 10, p 161, 162, BDK Edition)

Malcolm wrote:

These days, the Buddha can't instruct anyone. But teachers can.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, October 9th, 2015 at 12:02 AM

Title: Re: Importance of a Dharma Teacher/Oral Transmission

Content:

MiphamFan said:

Malcolm, so how do you explain how ChNN says we can read and study sutrayana without any special transmission? I'll note he says this TO HIS STUDENTS, not necessarily any random person.

Is it based on understanding Dzogchen, which is the essence of all Buddhadharma and thus being able to understand the meaning of sutra in that light?

Malcolm wrote:

You do not need a special transmission to study sūtras, but without a teacher to guide you in the meaning it is likely you won't understand any of it.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, October 9th, 2015 at 1:52 AM

Title: Re: Importance of a Dharma Teacher/Oral Transmission

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

What I am claiming is that oral communication and teaching is different than reading. For example, our conversation here is dry and logical [at least my side of the conversation is]. If we were talking, or I was listening to you teach Dharma, there is a qualitatively different sort of communication happening.

Astus said:

That is meta-communication, all those other things that go on during a face-to-face conversation. It is not a matter of words being pronounced or written. Then there are two options to maintain that orality is the only way of communicating the Dharma: either that words combined with other signifiers/expressions transmit the whole, or that words are irrelevant and only the other expressions convey the meaning. It also raises the question if anything can be communicated at all through the written form.

One of the advantages of texts is exactly their "dry and logical" nature (although I wouldn't dismiss the literary arts as capable of more than that). Unlike spontaneous verbal communication, writing generally requires some focus and organising of thoughts, except perhaps instant messaging.

The Buddha also addresses this issue later on in the text, beginning on folio 212/a of the Lhasa edition:

That being the case, therefore Mahāmati, apart from spoken explanations, the Buddha and the other bodhisattvas have taught "The Tathāgatas have never explained and will

never explain even a single letter." Why? For this reason, because in all Dharmas there are no letters, in absence of the meaning [the Dharma] cannot be explained. There is an explanation through taking hold of concepts. Mahāmati, if Dharma is not explained, the doctrine will perish. If the doctrine perishes, there will be no buddhas, pratyekabuddhas and śravakas.

"For this reason, Mahamati, it is declared in the canonical text by myself and other Buddhas and Bodhisattvas that not a letter is uttered or answered by the Tathagatas. For what reason? Because truths are not dependent on letters. It is not that they never declare what is in conformity with meaning; when they declare anything, it is according to the discrimination [of all beings]. If, Mahamati, the truth is not declared¹ [in words] the scriptures containing all truths will disappear, and when the scriptures disappear there will be no Buddhas, Sravakas, Pratyekabuddhas, and Bodhisattvas; and when there is no one [to teach], what is to be taught and to whom?"
(Lankavatara Sutra, 3.76)

There is no mention of an exception for "spoken explanations" in Suzuki's translation. In T670 it says "我等諸佛及諸菩薩，不說一字、不答一字。" (We, all buddhas, and all bodhisattvas, don't say a word, don't respond a word.), in T671 it says "是故我經中說，諸佛如來乃至不說一字不示一名" (It is because I say in the scriptures, all buddha-tathagatas don't go as far as saying a single word or giving a single name.), , and in T672 it says "我經中說，我與諸佛及諸菩薩，不說一字不答一字。" (I say in the scriptures, I, and all buddhas, and all bodhisattvas, don't say a word, don't respond a word). So, neither of the three Chinese Lankavatara translations speak of such an exception.

.

Malcolm wrote:

The Tibetan text is extremely clear on this point. I don't much care what the Chinese translations or Suzuki's incredibly inaccurate paraphrase state.

Then of course there many, many statements like the following from the Ārya-niṣṭhāgantabhagavajjñānavaipūlya-sūtrarātñānanta-nāma-mahāyāna-sūtra:
Maudgalyayāna, the awakening of a bodhisattva is connected with the virtuous mentor

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, October 9th, 2015 at 4:13 AM

Title: Re: Importance of a Dharma Teacher/Oral Transmission

Content:

Matt J said:

I agree with Malcolm on the incompleteness of the texts. I've studied with teachers from every vehicle, and the "how to" is never clearly spelled out in the texts I've seen. The Pali suttas are pretty detailed with meditation, but even these aren't really like how meditation is taught by teachers. Especially with Zen, there's no way to know by yourself if you "get" a koan. The best you can do is piece together something like zazen in non-Sutric commentaries, and even then I would bet most people get it wrong. Heck, I got it wrong even under the supervision of a teacher, and I doubt I'm unusual in this aspect. And Dogen, the big promoter of non-koan zazen, says you need to have a teacher. In fact,

out of the whole history of zen, you have maybe one or two Chinul like characters out of probably hundreds of thousands of dedicated students. This is like planning your retirement around winning the lottery. Sure, it could happen, but the chances are so low to be negligible.

Anyone who has meditated in a group knows there is a far different energy at play than when meditating alone. So to say there's nothing transmitted, out of fear for sounding New Age, I think is nonsense. There's an energy at work there, just like there's an energy at work when you play board games live instead of over the internet, or have a face to face conversation over texting.

Then there is a logical problem. Buddhism generally tells us we have a knowledge problem, we start off in ignorance. To think that an ignorant person can guide themselves out of ignorance seems specious at best.

Malcolm wrote:

But Astus is a new breed of internet do it yourself intellectual, despite the fact that he actually went to some kind of Buddhist school and learned everything he knows about Dharma from someone else.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, October 9th, 2015 at 6:03 AM

Title: Re: Importance of a Dharma Teacher/Oral Transmission

Content:

Caodemarte said:

This Zen discussion was inspired by the questions raised on this thread as to whether or not one had to hear actual spoken words in Buddhism or whether or not Buddhist teaching was absolutely dependent on sound waves reaching the ear. Zen Buddhism, at least, does not uniquely privilege the ear.

Malcolm wrote:

The Zen turn in this discussion is entirely ancillary. The main point was the meaning of hearing [śruta] and whether or not one could consider reading part of śruta. Even in the origin story of the Zen tradition, the legend of the Buddha holding a flower, the context is an in-person teaching with the Buddha.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, October 9th, 2015 at 9:24 PM

Title: Re: The Eternal Buddha of the Lotus Sutra (Split)

Content:

Queequeg said:

This is one instance where Zhanran was discussing the pervasive quality of Buddha-nature, but nonetheless, he's discussing here the Tiantai view that the Dharmakaya is

indistinguishable from the Sambhogakaya and Nirmanakaya - ie. the primordial Buddha has Dharmakaya, Sambhogakaya and Nirmanakaya, all three without beginning or end.

.

Malcolm wrote:

No one ever said the three kāyas were separable.

In Dzogchen it is held that from the point of view of the basis, the three kāyas are the dharmakāya; from the point of view of the path, the three kāyas are the sambhogakāya; from the point of view of result, the three kāyas are the nirmanakāya. The three kāyas are always inseparable.

The reason there is a "difference" between them has to do the fact that ordinary sentient beings and bodhisattvas on the lower stages can see only the nirmanakāya; higher bodhisattvas can see the sambhogakāya; only buddhas can see the dharmakāya.

In other words, Samantabhadra, the dharmakāya, always has a sambhogakāya and a nirmanakāya Why? For as long as there are deluded sentient beings, the buddhas appear to teach them.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, October 9th, 2015 at 9:39 PM

Title: Re: Importance of a Dharma Teacher/Oral Transmission

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The Tibetan text is extremely clear on this point. I don't much care what the Chinese translations or Suzuki's incredibly inaccurate paraphrase state.

Astus said:

The discourses in the sutra are supposedly spoken explanations. Since Mahamati and the Buddha are talking to each other, it is out of place to say that "apart from spoken explanations". Making an exception of verbal communication is problematic whether the sutra is meant as a spoken discourse or as a written text. If it is a spoken discourse, the whole sutra is an exception, like any other sutra. If it is a written text, it negates everything found there, including the stated exception. So, unlike other versions of the Lankavatara, the Tibetan seems to be in error.

Malcolm wrote:

Actually, what they are discussing, as is very clear from the Tibetan, is the deficiency of text [letters, yi ge, akṣara] in conveying meaning. The term being translated as "word" in the text is śabda, sound. The text says the fault is that sounds/words can fall down into letters. It then contrasts letters with spoken explanations, and then points out that even spoken explanations are deluded, because they are made in accordance with the inclination of deluded sentient beings. So no, while the Tibetan translating is not inaccurate, the Chinese translations do not manage to convey the real nuances of the

passage, sorry to say.

In the first passage you cited, the Buddha is saying that sounds [śabda] and meanings are not different, because sounds can lead to understanding. He never says that reading or text can. This is because Buddhadharma is and always will be a oral tradition based on verbal explanations that are heard by students.

Astus said:

Then of course there many, many statements like the following from the Ārya-niṣṭhāgantabhagavajjñānavaipūlya-sūtraratnānanta-nāma-mahāyāna-sūtra: Maudgalyayāna, the awakening of a bodhisattva is connected with the virtuous mentor

Malcolm wrote:

There are several statements on the importance of good friends already in the early discourses (e.g. "the whole of the holy life" in the <http://www.accesstoinight.org/tipitaka/sn/sn45/sn45.002.than.html>). However, it does not address the difference between written and oral communication. That sutta itself explains that the importance of a good friend is visible in the fact that the Buddha himself taught the noble eightfold path, based on which beings can attain liberation. In another discourse (<http://www.accesstoinight.org/tipitaka/an/an08/an08.054.than.html>) the Buddha teaches that lay people should learn virtue, generosity and discernment by associating with good lay friends. But that doesn't mean they could not learn the same qualities by listening to the Buddha and his monastic disciples, since there are quite a few cases where people gain faith and insight from a single teaching. Good friends are also said (<http://www.accesstoinight.org/tipitaka/an/an09/an09.001.than.html>) to be a prerequisite for developing the wings to self-awakening, because through them one learns the Dharma. The reason for it being a prerequisite is because one has to learn of the teachings. It does not say that the source is limited to face to face communication using voice.[/quote]

Your objection has nothing to do with the passage at hand. There are so many other passages just like it, it would take days to collect and translate them all. There is absolutely no precedence in the sūtras for the idea that you can learn Buddhadharma by reading books.

Astus said:

By the way, what is that sutra you quote from? Any English translation? Any other title (Sanskrit/English/Chinese)?

Malcolm wrote:

Astus, I generally translate my citations myself directly out of the canon. As far as I know, there is no other translation of this passage. But the Tibetan of this one is extremely simple and straight forward.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, October 9th, 2015 at 9:50 PM

Title: Re: Self-Liberation Through Seeing With Naked Awareness

Content:

heart said:

If you could get teachings on it, that would be best. Masters use teaching on texts like this to give the actual direct introduction.

/magnus

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, I was going to add that today, texts like this, Flight of the Garuda and so on are really teachers manuals, and in general, would be given to the student after he or she had received the lung and khrid.

While I think at this point restricting texts is absurd, getting transmission for texts is not.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, October 9th, 2015 at 10:21 PM

Title: Re: Sutra: Lung needed or not

Content:

pemachophel said:

It is common today to hear/read that sutras need no lung/oral transmission. A) Is this true? B) Is there an authoritative citation supporting this?

How 'bout the dharani (taken from sutras) that appear in the gZungs 'Dus (Compendium of Dharanis)?

Malcolm wrote:

Nothing in sūtra requires lung.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, October 9th, 2015 at 11:43 PM

Title: Re: Sutra: Lung needed or not

Content:

pemachophel said:

Loppon-la,

I appreciate your response. However, can you give a citation that backs up that nothing in sutra requires oral transmission? I would very much like to have such a citation if there is one.

Thank you.

Malcolm wrote:

ChNN mentions this all the time.

There is no principle of transmission in sūtra apart from transmitting vows.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, October 10th, 2015 at 12:39 AM

Title: Re: Sutra: Lung needed or not

Content:

naljor said:

But ChNN said that function of mantra is in transmission of sound.....

Malcolm wrote:

A dharani is not a mantra.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, October 10th, 2015 at 1:45 AM

Title: Re: Importance of a Dharma Teacher/Oral Transmission

Content:

DGA said:

yes, that's so about the inseparability of Dharmakaya from the form bodies.

Is there more than one Nirmanakaya?

Malcolm wrote:

There are several kinds of nirmanakāya: supreme, variegated, manufactured, and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, October 10th, 2015 at 2:14 AM

Title: Re: Importance of a Dharma Teacher/Oral Transmission

Content:

smcj said:

Both Malcolm and Queequeg have posted things to the effect that there is an eternal or permanent Nirmanakaya, which to me means the physical appearance of a Buddha.

For that kind of statement to be true you've got to do a lot of fancy footwork redefining either "eternal" or "Nirmanakaya" imo.

Malcolm wrote:

No, I didn't. Queequeg did.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, October 10th, 2015 at 2:37 AM

Title: Re: Importance of a Dharma Teacher/Oral Transmission

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

There is absolutely no precedence in the sūtras for the idea that you can learn Buddhadharma by reading books.

Astus said:

Several Mahayana sutras contain their own "advertisement", saying things like knowing just a single stanza gives immeasurable merit and bring about enlightenment.

Malcolm wrote:

Mañjuśrīmitra writes in his Meditation of Awakened Mind:

In the final five hundred years when people are oppressed by the age, the completely untrained

practice the stainless discourses that are difficult to understand according to the words, not properly.

The various views they enter according to the power of their own intelligence and so on, carry them away in a river of ignorance, separating them from the yoga that is the amrita of the quintessence of the teachings.

We have a fundamentally different view of things.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, October 10th, 2015 at 2:38 AM

Title: Re: Importance of a Dharma Teacher/Oral Transmission

Content:

Queequeg said:

I don't know how you are informed on Tientai thought, but you're mistaken.

Malcolm wrote:

DGA belongs to a Tendai organization, and it is a Tendai Ordinand.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, October 10th, 2015 at 3:20 AM

Title: Re: Importance of a Dharma Teacher/Oral Transmission

Content:

Queequeg said:

He's talking about Bodhisattvas, but in Tientai thought, Buddha, Bodhisattva, etc. on down to hell dweller, are all functions of Buddha, so he's really talking about Buddha.

DGA said:

Hold on--actually we do agree here. "functions of Buddha" = nirmanakaya. Which means that if you're seeking Buddha, it makes sense to look at one's own function, so to speak, and that's meditation. That takes us back to here...

<http://dharmawheel.net/viewtopic.php?f=39&t=20915&start=20#p304865>

Queequeg's objection to Malcolm's claim that Buddhahood is to be found in one's own mind. I've been trying to argue, if somewhat clumsily, that Zhiyi for one wouldn't disagree with this claim Malcolm made.

Queequeg said:

Yes, I took issue with primordial Buddha being limited to Dharmakaya. Not the rest.

Malcolm wrote:

I never said it was limited...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, October 10th, 2015 at 4:01 AM

Title: Re: Importance of a Dharma Teacher/Oral Transmission

Content:

Queequeg said:

Oh.

Malcolm wrote:

Any buddha, including Samantabhadra, automatically has all three or five kāyas. Samantabhadra is different from other buddhas however in that "he" woke up without having to follow a path, without any effort and without engaging in any virtue at all. Śākyamuni Buddha is a nirmanakāya of Samantabhadra. This means that Śākyamuni Buddha woke up without having to follow a path, without any effort and without engaging in any virtue at all.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, October 10th, 2015 at 4:34 AM

Title: Re: Importance of a Dharma Teacher/Oral Transmission

Content:

smcj said:

Five kayas? I know of the three or four kaya schema.

Malcolm wrote:

Five kāyas: dharmakāya, sambhogakāya, nirmanakāya, svabhavikakāya and the vajra or mahāsukha kāya.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, October 10th, 2015 at 4:55 AM

Title: Re: Importance of a Dharma Teacher/Oral Transmission

Content:

smcj said:

Five kayas? I know of the three or four kaya schema.

Malcolm wrote:

Five kāyas: dharmakāya, sambhogakāya, nirmanakāya, svabhavikakāya and the vajra or mahāsukha kāya.

smcj said:

Thanks. I'd not heard of the "vajra or mahasukha kaya".

Malcolm wrote:

Abhidhāna-uttaratantra

states:

The dharmakāya pervades everything,
the sambhogakāya enjoys Mahāyāna,
The nirmanakāya tames whoever is to be tamed,
The vajrakāya is totally indestructible,
and the svabhāvikakāya is supreme...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, October 10th, 2015 at 9:05 PM

Title: Re: Importance of a Dharma Teacher/Oral Transmission

Content:

haha said:

Another presentation for five Kayas: jagrat, swapna, sushupta, turiya and turiyatit.

=

Malcolm wrote:

No, this is Vedanta, it does not apply.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, October 10th, 2015 at 9:51 PM

Title: Re: Can the Buddha become angry?

Content:

jundo cohen said:

Hello,

The following is just one possibility, an interpretation, by one practitioner.

I feel that if you could travel back in time to meet the person who was the historical Buddha, before all the legends and hagiographical writings which (perhaps as a

possibility) imposed a potentially idealized image on who he was, you would meet a man, a human being. He may have been a very special man, with great gifts, but just a man. If so, there is a good chance that he exhibited more ordinary human emotions than we give him credit for, and might have had some buttons that could be pushed at a certain point like most people.

On the other "one hand clapping" hand, if one is speaking of the "Big B" Buddha which represents emptiness, all reality and then some ... there is no separate you me or the other guy, nothing lacking ... thus no anger is possible.

The historical man who was buddha and ol' "Big B" are not two.

Just one opinion to toss into the stew, and not intended as the final word on Buddhism.

Gassho, Jundo

Malcolm wrote:

Sunakṣātra [Sunakkhatta] is the prime example of the Buddha's "doubting Thomas": "And he will never infer of me according to Dhamma: 'That Blessed One encompasses with his own mind the minds of other beings, other persons. He understands a mind affected by lust as affected by lust and a mind unaffected by lust as unaffected by lust; he understands a mind affected by hate as affected by hate and a mind unaffected by hate as unaffected by hate; he understands a mind affected by delusion as affected by delusion and a mind unaffected by delusion as unaffected by delusion; he understands a contracted mind as contracted and a distracted mind as distracted; he understands an exalted mind as exalted and an unexalted mind as unexalted; he understands a surpassed mind as surpassed and an unsurpassed mind as unsurpassed; he understands a concentrated mind as concentrated and an unconcentrated mind as unconcentrated; he understands a liberated mind as liberated and an unliberated mind as unliberated.'

<http://www.accesstoinsight.org/tipitaka/mn/mn.012.ntbb.html>

So, the Buddha was not an ordinary human being, subject to suffering and affliction...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, October 10th, 2015 at 10:58 PM

Title: Re: Importance of a Dharma Teacher/Oral Transmission

Content:

haha said:

Another presentation for five Kayas: jagrat, swapna, sushupta, turiya and turiyatit.

=

Malcolm wrote:

No, this is Vedanta, it does not apply.

haha said:

No, it is according to Buddhadharma. Source for this presentation is "AryaManjushrinamasangiti by Bikshu Ravishreejyana with amritakanika namasamginitippani"

Malcolm wrote:

Ok, I stand corrected, but the presentation here is an explanation of the five kāyas through the four joys. And as such, it is very specific presentation and the usage of these Vedantic terms only occur in one Tantra, the Ḍākārṇava-mahāyoginī-tantra, which has a commentary by Padmavajra.

The text of the Tippani is interesting, but again, it is a very unusual usage and is not widespread at all, which is why I never encountered this before.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, October 11th, 2015 at 11:51 PM

Title: Re: Sutra: Lung needed or not

Content:

pemachophel said:

Loppon-la,

Can you tell us what the difference is between a mantra and a dharani? In at least one entry from the gZungs 'Dus, the title says it's a dharani, but then in the body of the sutra, it says to recite this "mantra" X number of times. Is there an actual traditional definition of a dharani?

Thank you.

Malcolm wrote:

A dhāraṇī, properly speaking, is a formula for recalling the Dharma and developing wisdom and removing nonvirtues which can cause problems.

Generally, we find a description of three mantras: guhyamantras, vidyāmantras and dhāraṇī-mantras. A text called the Abhisamayavibhaṅga by Atisha states:

Because of protecting against mundane thoughts with reality, there are so-called secret mantras. As such, because of giving arise to special knowledge when invoked again and again, there are vidyāmantras. In order generate unfailing recollection of bodhicitta, there are dhāraṇī-mantras.

Further, an interesting text called the sGra sbyor bam po gnyis pa gives the following definitions:

A so-called mantra is mantregupti bhāṣaṇe, i.e. because it is a description of the deities of mantra being summoned and secret, it is called "secret mantra." So-called "vidyā" is vidajñāna: it is name of abiding as the form of a deity in order counteract ignorance. So called "dhāraṇī" is artha granṭha dhārayati dhāraṇī: a name for not forgetting the meaning and the words of Mantra Dharma and obtaining a specific stage, thus, "dhāraṇīmantra."

Further, we can make four more distinctions: dhāraṇīs that become the cause of a

bodhisattvas obtaining patience, Secret Mantra dhāraṇis, dhāraṇi of Dharma and dhāraṇi of meaning. This distinction is found in the commentary on the Prajñāpāramita by Daṃṣṭrasena.

The first kind is a result of attaining patience for emptiness because of meditating with wisdom and mindfulness.

The second is a dhāraṇi mantra that possesses the power of blessings is a dhāraṇi of Secret Mantra because of an aspiration that was made to remove negativities for sentient beings.

Third, the dhāraṇi of Dharma is when bodhisattvas on the stages listen to buddhas and bodhisattvas no matter how many words of Dharma there are held and recalled with wisdom as they were explained, and this ability to not forget them for a long time is called dhāraṇi of Dharma.

Finally, the dhāraṇi of meaning simply remembering the Dharma terms of the paths, perfections, and so on.

So, my understanding is that dhāraṇis that come from sutra do not require transmission. Dhāraṇis that come from tantra, may, depending on the level of tantra. It seems that many dhāraṇis that seem to require transmission in the Tibetan tradition do not require transmission in East Asian traditions.

More research should be done because there are so many dhāraṇis that do not have explicit rites of transmissions connected with them.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, October 13th, 2015 at 5:43 AM

Title: Re: Sutra: Lung needed or not

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

Here's a question, can a deaf person receive a lung?

Malcolm wrote:

I don't see how.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, October 13th, 2015 at 9:57 PM

Title: Re: Buddhism as type of agnosticism

Content:

Wayfarer said:

I think there is some medium by which ideas, memories, actions and so on, are carried,

which is not known to science.

Malcolm wrote:

It's called "a mindstream."

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, October 13th, 2015 at 11:35 PM

Title: Re: Clearing Practice Space

Content:

Adamantine said:

he'd said musk is ok for Riwo sang cho- but be sure to avoid it for naga pujas or naga sang.

Malcolm wrote:

For general Sang, using an incense that has musk in it is ok. For Naga Sang it must be avoided.

For example, when holding a banquet for many people, we don't make it vegetarian because one or two guests are vegetarian.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, October 14th, 2015 at 12:01 AM

Title: Re: Clearing Practice Space

Content:

Ivo said:

Even the Vimala which is traded today and which should still be according to the specifications ChNN popularized - one brand still works, another one does not work at all.

Malcolm wrote:

Our Vimala is excellent, crafted in a small Tibetan-owned pharmacy in Amdo used by many physicians there.

<http://www.bhaisajya.guru/web-store/vimala-dza-ti-nyi-zhu>

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, October 14th, 2015 at 12:42 AM

Title: Re: Clearing Practice Space

Content:

Ivo said:

Even the Vimala which is traded today and which should still be according to the specifications ChNN popularized - one brand still works, another one does not work at all.

Malcolm wrote:

Our Vimala is excellent, crafted in a small Tibetan-owned pharmacy in Amdo used by many physicians there.

<http://www.bhaisajya.guru/web-store/vimala-dza-ti-nyi-zhu>

Ivo said:

Thanks for the link, that's great to hear. Will be ordering from them for sure. The only one which works so far according to our experience is batches from Amdo sold by "Himalayanremedies". It may even be the same...

Malcolm wrote:

It is the same.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, October 14th, 2015 at 12:45 AM

Title: Re: Clearing Practice Space

Content:

Ivo said:

Even the Vimala which is traded today and which should still be according to the specifications ChNN popularized - one brand still works, another one does not work at all.

Malcolm wrote:

Our Vimala is excellent, crafted in a small Tibetan-owned pharmacy in Amdo used by many physicians there.

<http://www.bhaisajya.guru/web-store/vimala-dza-ti-nyi-zhu>

heart said:

I can verify that it works as it should.

/magnus

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, October 14th, 2015 at 1:31 AM

Title: Re: Clearing Practice Space

Content:

Dharmaswede said:

Since we are on the topic "supportive herbs" (and with the risk of straying off topic): If one would want to have a period of more intense practice, and fortify it with "supportive herbs" what would a boosting regimen look like? I am primarily thinking of medicin (in the widest sense of the word) but also diet.

Thank you.

Malcolm wrote:

First, you do a mild cleanse. Then you adhere to a pure diet [no meat, alcohol, stimulants and processed/junk foods] and use chulen, preferably tailored to your constitution and age. If you need Tibetan medicine, then you also take that.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, October 14th, 2015 at 1:46 AM

Title: Re: Dzogchen Community of Chogyal Namkhai Norbu

Content:

swooping said:

Is lojong a general term that refers to multiple systems of meditation?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, October 14th, 2015 at 1:57 AM

Title: Re: Recording of phat!

Content:

conebeckham said:

The Herukasattva mantra has a Phet at the end, that may be what you're hearing.

zenman said:

Sakya Trizin: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FvdEtII9fI4>

Recited like this phe-mantra does not have the cutting or exploding quality to it.

Malcolm wrote:

There are many different ways of using this syllable.

Used incorrectly, one can cause oneself a lot of problems.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, October 14th, 2015 at 2:28 AM

Title: Re: Recording of phat!

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

There are many different ways of using this syllable.

Used incorrectly, one can cause oneself a lot of problems.

zenman said:

And any syllable. Sure. Willpower is not always beneficent.

Malcolm wrote:
Um, no, phat is special.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Wednesday, October 14th, 2015 at 5:42 AM
Title: Re: Recording of phat!
Content:

Malcolm wrote:
Um, no, phat is special.

zenman said:
Because?

Malcolm wrote:
You need to find out from a teacher.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Wednesday, October 14th, 2015 at 11:04 PM
Title: Re: Dzogchen Community of Chogyal Namkhai Norbu
Content:
swooping said:
Is lojong a general term that refers to multiple systems of meditation?

Malcolm wrote:
Yes.

swooping said:
Ah, thank you. That makes sense then.
Are the 59 slogans that are popularly practiced in the dzogchen community?

Malcolm wrote:
No.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Wednesday, October 14th, 2015 at 11:59 PM
Title: Re: Is Zen Mindfulness?
Content:
boda said:
You see mindfulness 2.0 practitioners as lacking something merely because of it's secularness. A mindfulness practitioner could do all sorts of loving kindness practices, met meditation, feed the hungry, etc etc. They are not limited to any tradition. But

nevertheless you see them as lacking something only because they have the quality of being secular.

Malcolm wrote:

They are lacking something because they no connection with an lineage of awakening.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, October 15th, 2015 at 3:48 AM

Title: Re: Why Hillary won the debate

Content:

Serenity509 said:

The real reason Hillary won the debate is that no one was on her level:

http://www.salon.com/2015/10/14/the_real_reason_hillary_clinton_won_the_debate_no_one_else_was_at_her_level/

Bernie Sanders supporters who think he won the debate just because he said what they wanted to hear need to quiet themselves.

Malcolm wrote:

She didn't win the debate.

She was completely unable to distance herself from big money. She refused to say that the big banks should be busted up [they should].

She could not effectively respond to the charge that she changes her opinions based on political expediency.

Her reply to Sanders that US was not Denmark was not an reply, it was lame.

She also does not support free college tuition [boo].

The only place where she gained traction with Sanders was on gun control.

But I happen to agree with Bernie on this point. He voted against the Brady Bill because IT DID NOT SUPPORT INSTANT BACKGROUND CHECKS. It is also true that VT is a rural state with the lowest rates of gun violence in the US, etc. This is why Sanders has the position on guns that he does. People in VT hunt for food. It is a poor state. Gun policies that are good for cities are not necessarily appropriate for rural areas.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, October 15th, 2015 at 4:45 AM

Title: Re: Why Hillary won the debate

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Deleted by CNN this morning...:

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, October 15th, 2015 at 10:08 AM

Title: Re: Why Hillary won the debate

Content:

Serenity509 said:

If it were anyone else, people would look at her experience alone and see she's qualified to be president. I've already listed her achievements in this thread.

Malcolm wrote:

Hillary does not have any special qualifications that make her more suitable to be President than Sanders. The issue is that she is owned by the banks...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, October 15th, 2015 at 10:10 AM

Title: Re: Self-Liberation Through Seeing With Naked Awareness

Content:

steve_bakr said:

As the text says, there are no antecedent or subsequent requirements.

Malcolm wrote:

Only someone ignorant about the cycle the text comes from would make this erroneous claim.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, October 15th, 2015 at 9:41 PM

Title: Re: Clearing Practice Space

Content:

Karma_Yeshe said:

Of course we should stick to tradition and don't become secular buddhist or something strange like that. But especially when using tantric methods, it is very important for them to be connected with the place you are practising. Otherwise they just don't really work that much! Himalayan plants are no more special or more connected with spirits than any other special plants from other areas of the world. So everybody that stated that "you should stick to tradition", please ask yourself, what the real essence of the tradition is.

Malcolm wrote:

Actually, when using these things, you should be very aware of the environmental impact you are having. For example, in Tibetan Medicine, it is held that one should use medicines from one's region, as these will be the most potent for you. Also, the trees from which guggul, sandalwood oil, myrrh, frankincense, aloes [agar] and so on are extracted endangered.

In Mexico, there are over 5,000 plant species useful for medicine, and very little of it has been documented in one place, much less made accessible for non-Indians to understand and use.

As far as Himalayan plants go, however, they have a special potency because of the altitude at which they grow. Alpine instances of a plant are held to be stronger than an instance grown at a lower altitude. Why? Because the distance between flower and root is shorter, and therefore the plant as a whole is held to be more potent.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, October 16th, 2015 at 2:55 AM

Title: Re: Self-Liberation Through Seeing With Naked Awareness

Content:

steve_bakr said:

There is no enlightenment. There is no nonenlightenment. It is like "chopping wood and carrying water," except there is no wood and no water.

Malcolm wrote:

This point of view is explicitly rejected in the Dzogchen tantras.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, October 16th, 2015 at 3:31 AM

Title: Re: Self-Liberation Through Seeing With Naked Awareness

Content:

steve_bakr said:

You are not familiar with the text, then, because John Reynolds said that it is possible to be liberated by understanding the text itself.

Malcolm wrote:

Not without having received direction introduction in a proper way from a real master. I would say that you are not familiar with this cycle in general. Many of us here actually have the transmission for this cycle. In order to practice these teachings, you must have received the Karling Shitro Empowerment.

steve_bakr said:

...probably better than anyone here.

Malcolm wrote:

Probably not.

steve_bakr said:

If you say that I do not understand it, you might as well say that there is no sky.

Malcolm wrote:

You certainly think you understand it...but sadly you don't.

The main practice of the cycle, connected with the text you are so fond of, is the Supplication of the Guru Yoga of the Three Kāyas, Self-Liberation without Abandoning the Three Poisons.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, October 16th, 2015 at 4:32 AM

Title: Re: Self-Liberation Through Seeing With Naked Awareness

Content:

steve_bakr said:

I know this text like the back of my own hand, probably better than anyone here. If you say that I do not understand it, you might as well say that there is no sky.

Malcolm wrote:

Incidentally, you only know Reynolds' translation. That can hardly be called "knowing the text like the back of my own hand..."

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, October 16th, 2015 at 9:20 PM

Title: Re: Self-Liberation Through Seeing With Naked Awareness

Content:

steve_bakr said:

you can say that there is enlightenment in a provisional sense, but in an absolute sense enlightenment is dualistic because it is paired in contrast to its opposite.

Malcolm wrote:

This argument is explicitly rejected in the Rig pa rang shar.

steve_bakr said:

Therefore, I can understand your saying that the absolute viewpoint contradicts Dzogchen Tantras. .

Malcolm wrote:

What I am saying is that your argument is explicitly rejected in the Tantras of Dzogchen. The Rig pa Rang shar gives the following account. Follow it closely and you can see that your point of view is explicitly negated. The context of the argument, btw, is to prove that Buddhahood is attained merely through an introduction.

[Opponent]

The opponents reply to that:

all phenomena are nondual.

Therefore, there cannot be duality.

Since there are no sentient beings, there are no buddhas.

Therefore, [nonduality] is freedom from the extremes of dualistic appearances.

[Reply]

Now then, is this stated in the ultimate sense,
or stated for the objects of deluded appearances?
Our reply to that and the demonstration of the proofs:
that this is so in the ultimate sense,
but there is a dualistic appearance in the objects of deluded appearances.

[Opponent]

The opponents rebuttal to that:
because there is no duality in the ultimate sense,
it is not reasonable for there to be duality in objects of deluded appearances.
Why? Because there is no duality in the ultimate sense.
In that case it is reasonable that all sentient beings
could be liberated without the need for effort.
Why? Because duality does not exist in the basis.

[Reply]

Now then, how is duality asserted?
The reply to that is:
when there are no buddhas and no sentient beings,
there is no second or third in the basis.
Because the potentiality of play arises from that [basis],
buddhas and sentient beings arise as a duality.

[Opponent]

Now it is asserted that duality exists in the basis.
Because there is no good or bad in the basis,
for what reason is it said to exist as a duality?
In that case, there cannot be transformation.
Why? It is reasonable that sentient beings do not attain buddhahood.
For example, even though coal
is polished, it will never become white.
In the same way, deluded sentient beings
will never become buddhas through practicing meditation.

[Reply]

Next, the reply is given like this:
because it exists to be demonstrated,
the result is attained through the demonstration.
If not demonstrated, how can there be liberation?

There are no signs in the dharmas of the basis,
no grasping to the dharmas of the path,
and no attainment of the dharmatā of the result.
The basis of sentient beings and the basis of buddhahood
is definitely differentiated by a sole difference.
For what reason is there a sole difference?
Why is it called “the sole difference”?

The basis of buddhahood is pristine consciousness [ye shes];

the basis of sentient beinghood is not pristine consciousness.

When both the primordial state (ye) and recognition (shes pa) are combined, it is the sublime transcendent state of the buddhas.

I really think you need to reconsider your arrogance on this point. There are people here who understand Dzogchen far better than you. You should listen to them. On the Guru, for example, another of the 17 Tantras, the Precious Introduction Tantra, states: Investigating into the intimate instructions of the Guru, one reaches the extent of effortless self-liberation.

The Rig pa Rang shar, the commentary tantra of Dzogchen, also chimes in the faults of not obtaining empowerments. Now mind you, this does not mean that one necessarily needs some kind of empowerment into an outer mandala and so on, as the Rig pa Rang Shar makes clear. That depends on the faculties of the student. But this tantra makes it absolutely clear that one must receive at least direct introduction from a proper master: The faults of not obtaining the empowerment are as follows: in the bardo one is alarmed, panicked, exhausted, impeded and one can also lose consciousness.

“While one has not left the body of traces, migrating beings will not see one as worthy of respect. One’s merit will be small, one’s life short, one’s enjoyments of living will be few, one will be powerless and many obstacles will occur. Nothing will be accomplished.

Those are the faults of not obtaining the empowerment for the conduct of Secret Mantra. A yogin of Secret Mantra conduct must first obtain empowerment. If empowerment is not obtained, not even the Buddha will be able to turn the wheel on the stage of a tathāgata. If the wheel cannot be turned, then the nirmanakāya will not be able to benefit migrating beings with compassion. Therefore, the empowerment of the conduct of Secret Mantra must be obtained.

The root tantra of all Dzogchen teachings, the Sgra thal gyur, states:

Serve the guru as equal to a buddha

by pleasing him/her with activities of body and speech.

And:

The Dharma is in accord with the transmission of the Guru.

Finally, since you like the Kun byed rgyal po, then heed what it says:

Without an authentic master, like the scripture of a monkey, the basis and path will be erroneous, indeed one will be seized by conceptuality.

Therefore, like applying ferrous sulfate to gold, the precious master should be paid with a gem of inestimable value.

This is also part of the lung called rtsal chen sprug pa, one of the five lungs brought to Tibet by Vairocana.

The Great Garuda, another one of the five lungs and also part of the Kun byed rgyal po states:

The virtuous mentor is like a precious jewel which produces everything.

Unsupported, not depending on places of transformation, he fulfills hope through his excellent inner nature.

When examined, nothing; but he has the great excellence of producing a variety for others.

Finally, you should heed Mañjuśrīmitra [Garab Dorje's main disciple], who states in yet

another of the five lungs brought by Vairocana, the Meditation of Awakened Mind:
Subtle and difficult to understand, this path of the great seer is beyond
nonconceptuality and conceptuality,
difficult to analyze and difficult to explain, free from conventional expressions,
inaccessible through words, while it is not shared with the domain of others and all of
the immature,
this meaning can here be seen through those definitive scriptures of the Teacher and
the experiential intimate instructions of the gurus.
So, given these definitive statements in original texts of the Dzogchen tradition, you can
see why no one agrees with your baseless and harmful assertions. However, you are
free to following the three words of Jim Valby:
Introduce yourself to some delusion.
Spread it as widely as possible.
Continue in that state forever.
Because that is all you are doing, sad to say.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, October 16th, 2015 at 10:06 PM

Title: Re: Self-Liberation Through Seeing With Naked Awareness

Content:

Matt J said:

While I disagree with what he says, I think he has every right to say it.

In the U.S., there is the idea that free speech is better than censorship because the truth
will win in the marketplace of opinions. This position seeks to drive alternate views into
the shadows, where they will linger unopposed.

Malcolm wrote:

The refers to the press and public sphere only. You do not have the right, for example, to
walk into a African American church and stand up and say that African Americans are
inferior to whites, or walk into a synagogue and express your opinion that Hitler was
correct to exterminate Jews. In other words, freedom of speech is not protected in
private spaces, and never has been.

Matt J said:

The debate and refutation of wrong views has a strong history in Buddhism.

Malcolm wrote:

Banishment of recalcitrant debaters also has a long history in Buddhism...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, October 16th, 2015 at 10:15 PM

Title: Re: Self-Liberation Through Seeing With Naked Awareness

Content:

Ivo said:

steve_bakr,it is indeed possible to get a glimpse of rikpa by reading a text.

Malcolm wrote:

No, Ivo, actually it isn't, and I have demonstrated this already.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, October 16th, 2015 at 10:49 PM

Title: Re: Self-Liberation Through Seeing With Naked Awareness

Content:

Ivo said:

steve_bakr,it is indeed possible to get a glimpse of rikpa by reading a text.

Malcolm wrote:

No, Ivo, actually it isn't, and I have demonstrated this already.

Ivo said:

Well, I wouldn't argue with this point, as I know where you are coming from, but I beg to differ. My personal opinion is irrelevant, but many of my Dzogchen teachers, especially during thogyal teachings, have stated the opposite again and again, and I mentioned one of those teachers. But since the possibility of any of them coming here and confirming it is quite minuscule, it is a moot point.

Malcolm wrote:

Ivo — rig pa is the knowledge of a very specific thing, one's primordial state. This is very, very subtle and cannot be accessed through a coarse mind that is engaged in reading a book, not matter how nice those words are.

We are talking about a beginner, someone who has never met George. They might see George every day on the subway, but they will never know who George is. However, when they are at last introduced to George by someone who knows George, they will say, "Oh, I see you everyday on the Subway." After that point, they will always recognize George, even if he changes his suit, hat, shoes, etc. But without that introduction, they will never recognize George, and George, being rather disinterested in people, will never walk up and introduce himself, saying, "I am George."

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, October 16th, 2015 at 10:53 PM

Title: Re: Self-Liberation Through Seeing With Naked Awareness

Content:

Ivo said:

Such a text is not only ink on paper.

Malcolm wrote:

Yeah, it pretty much is, if it is not presented to a proper student in a proper way, complete with the oral transmission of the text and accompanying introduction.

Dzogchen is an intimate instruction that does not depend on a scripture. This is the point that is lost on Steve.

What does Dzogchen depend on? Introduction by a master.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, October 16th, 2015 at 11:13 PM

Title: Re: Self-Liberation Through Seeing With Naked Awareness

Content:

Ivo said:

But not with this... We are discussing the terma tradition here. It is not just a book, not even for a complete beginner.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, it is just a book, even for an advanced yogi. There is nothing special about a terma text that makes it superior to say a sūtra or a tantra in terms of blessings. This is just superstition. Of course there are some texts that can plant a positive connection in a person's mind so they can make a connection with the lineage at a future time. Even so, texts are always something relative and something quite limited.

Termas are also part of the oral tradition. They are held to have been orally taught by Padmasambhava [or someone else, like Saraha] to a specific person at a specific time and place, and when they are unpacked by the predicted tertön, he again gives the oral transmission as he received it, thus continuing it without a break. Also tertöns, by definition, must be realized Dzogchen masters.

Mahāyāna Sūtras are actually termas. So are all Tantras.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, October 16th, 2015 at 11:17 PM

Title: Re: Self-Liberation Through Seeing With Naked Awareness

Content:

T. Chokyi said:

I think the George thing can be right under the surface for some individuals, for others, it may take longer, and I've had Nirmanakayas in the form of teachers come up and introduce themselves "I'm George" which implies they care very much, more than most of us here can know, for me the outer "George" was the same as the inner "George"... and it's still that way, so there isn't a line of separation, what's outside is what is inside and what's inside is what is outside, so if your outside looks a certain way, that's YOU and nobody else, you created it, including whether you see a Nirmanakaya inside or outside or both at the same time. Everybody is different, some can understand immediately, some take more time, and some take ages, but people shouldn't be

lumped into "he or she is just a beginner" when it comes to Dzogchen as CHNN has said again and again while giving teachings.

Malcolm wrote:

You have not understood the point. The point is that George is not under the surface at all, he is sitting right next to you, in full view. But still sentient beings do not recognize George unless he is introduced. And they will never recognize George by reading a book, no matter how wonderful, in exactly the same way they will never be able to understand the taste of sugar by reading about it in a book, no matter how precise.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, October 16th, 2015 at 11:18 PM

Title: Re: Self-Liberation Through Seeing With Naked Awareness

Content:

T. Chokyi said:

You will change your mind over time, it isn't "just a book".

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, actually it is just a book. Without a master to introduce it, it has no juice.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, October 16th, 2015 at 11:29 PM

Title: Re: Self-Liberation Through Seeing With Naked Awareness

Content:

T. Chokyi said:

Well, someone disagrees with you, so you don't need to dig your heels in, it might be wise to listen to someone other than yourself, you wrote reems on NOT eatting meat, you conducted quite a thread, but then changed your mind once you learned differently.

Malcolm wrote:

I didn't "learn differently," I changed my mind.

T. Chokyi said:

Ivo and I are agreeing here, we understand the point, and George is not that far away, but you actually said he was kind of indifferent yourself if you read back...

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, your primordial state aka George, is pretty indifferent. He does not care if he is wet, dry, hot, cold, in heaven, in hell or for that matter recognized or unrecognized.

T. Chokyi said:

You don't need someone to explain everything, you can read this text in English, get the lung if you are fortunate, and the person who was asking about this text already has DI since they listened to CHNN for over a year, so tasting sugar comes from the DI, but how that DI happens is different for everyone, you seem to think it is the same for everybody...

Malcolm wrote:

Our friend steve is making a different suggestion. He is making the suggestion that you do not need a master whatsoever, and that reading a text like Self-Liberation without a master is sufficient for introduction. In other words, he is suggesting that merely by reading a book, one can understand the taste of sugar.

Not only do I disagree, but ChNN would think such a suggestion preposterous.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, October 16th, 2015 at 11:31 PM

Title: Re: Self-Liberation Through Seeing With Naked Awareness

Content:

T. Chokyi said:

but reading this text is fine imho as Ivo has said.

Malcolm wrote:

I never said that it was not "fine", to read the book. People are free, they can do what they want. What is not "fine" however is to claim that without a master one can receive direct introduction from a book. ChNN would never go along with this claim.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, October 16th, 2015 at 11:43 PM

Title: Re: Self-Liberation Through Seeing With Naked Awareness

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, it is just a book, even for an advanced yogi. There is nothing special about a terma text that makes it superior to say a sūtra or a tantra in terms of blessings. This is just superstition. Of course there are some texts that can plant a positive connection in a person's mind so they can make a connection with the lineage at a future time. Even so, texts are always something relative and something quite limited.

Ivo said:

I disagree. If this is superstition, the Dharma becomes invalid in all it's aspects, maybe apart from the path of an arhat.

Malcolm wrote:

Really, so you are actually claiming that the words of one Buddha have more blessings than the words of another Buddha?

BTW, your objection makes no sense at all and lacks any pervasion. Just because treasure texts are no more holy or sacred than the words of the Buddha in sūtra and tantra does not bear the consequence that the Dharma becomes invalid in all respects outside of the path of Arhats.

Ivo said:

Yes, actually it is just a book. Without a master to introduce it, it has no juice. wow... nope. It has plenty of juice as it is a direct wisdom manifestation and there can be no chance encounter with any such text. Not to mention that such an encounter would trigger a whole chain of events involving a number of samaya bound agents of all kinds.

Malcolm wrote:

Nothing is explained in all the tantras; transcended in the signless dimension, there is nothing to explain.

Nothing is demonstrated in all the agamas, transcended in the unfabricated dimension, there is no effort or practice.

Nothing is illustrated in the upadeśas, transcended in the incorruptible dimension, there is nothing to accomplish.

E ma, Listen up, retinue of sublime appearances! The Vidyā of Reality is unceasingly clear to the retinue of the method of appearances.

Thus, in the location of vidyā nothing was said, is not being said now and will not be said later on.

— Yi ge med rgyud

Dzogchen is based on a direct perception. That cannot be brought about reading a book, no matter how holy and perceived to be filled with blessings.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, October 16th, 2015 at 11:49 PM

Title: Re: Self-Liberation Through Seeing With Naked Awareness

Content:

T. Chokyi said:

Is that what Ivo was saying that you can get DI from this pecha?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, in general he is saying that without a master one can get direct introduction from special, holy books filled with special holy blessings, different from all the other words of Buddha which are not as holy nor as filled with blessings.

T. Chokyi said:

maybe it does not go along with CHNN, I don't know...but CHNN also says to go beyond limitation, so saying we can get DI only by meeting with a human Guru and listening in the daytime (while awake) is that the only way to get DI you know of, there are no other examples of someone getting a "taste of sugar" besides from the masters oral transmission?

Malcolm wrote:

Not for those of us, who by circumstance, happen to be ordinary sentient beings. And even those extraordinary persons, realized people who have the capacity to meet Sambhogakāyas, even they started out as ordinary people who had to receive transmission from a human, aka nirmanakāya, guru.

Even tenth stage bodhisattvas have to receive empowerment in order to advance to the stage of Buddhahood. There is no path in Buddhadharma that bypasses the need for a master.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, October 17th, 2015 at 12:53 AM

Title: Re: Self-Liberation Through Seeing With Naked Awareness

Content:

Ivo said:

And... while I am still in my recreational break, which went far too long today, I may as well state, in full compliance with the DW tradition to put words into our teachers' mouths, that during all the years I have spent trying to find my way in Dzogchen with the help of a number of teachers, I have never met a teacher who would state that a person can not have an authentic rikpa experience by oneself, be it reading books or whatever. Even a total beginner, in fact, it is easier for them. So I can safely say for myself that I know of no Dzogchen teacher who would state that as a fact, including ChNN if asked one to one. This doesn't mean that my teachers would present this as a path or valid option for beginners, or talk about this on public talks, but denying that it might happen is absurd. In my opinion it shows a total lack of understanding of what Dharma is and what the samsaric condition actually is.

Malcolm wrote:

Rig pa, Ivo, is knowledge, as opposed to ma rig pa, ignorance.

You seem to be claiming that ordinary people can have knowledge of their primordial state spontaneously. If this were true, there would never have been any need at all for teachers and teachings.

I have never met one single authentic teacher of Dzogchen who would claim that one could have this experiential knowledge [rig pa] without it having first been introduced to one by a master.

People can experience the nature of the mind [George] without introduction, just as they can see George on a train everyday without knowing [ma rig pa] who George is.

When people are introduced to the knowledge of the nature of the their minds, then we can say they have "rig pa".

Rig pa and the nature of the mind aka primordial state aka basis, are not the same thing. The fact that people continually conflate these two is unfortunate. But if you pay attention to ChNN, he says repeatedly, "rig pa is not the nature of the mind, rig pa is knowledge or instant presence in the nature of the mind."

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, October 17th, 2015 at 1:00 AM

Title: Re: Self-Liberation Through Seeing With Naked Awareness

Content:

Ivo said:

Malcolm, I know this distinction pretty well. I am not confusing these things.

Malcolm wrote:

Then you are simply in error when you claim that someone who has never received introduction can obtain introduction from a book, for if you claim that someone can have an "experience of rig pa" from reading a book, you are claiming that they can receive direct introduction from a book in absence of a master.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, October 17th, 2015 at 1:03 AM

Title: Re: Self-Liberation Through Seeing With Naked Awareness

Content:

MalaBeads said:

Well, you know, even ChNN says that at one time in his life he thought he knew everything. So....people will think what they think, understand what they understand and there is not a lot anyone can do about it. Except what is happening here.

Enjoy your lives.

Malcolm wrote:

The one thing ChNN says is that direct introduction is indispensable and he explicitly rejects the idea that you can gain Dzogchen knowledge from books in absence of a master. Honestly, have we all been listening to the same master? He repeatedly criticizes the idea that it is enough to just read a book about Dzogchen, any book, and claim you have real knowledge of Dzogchen.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, October 17th, 2015 at 2:08 AM

Title: Re: Self-Liberation Through Seeing With Naked Awareness

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

He repeatedly criticizes the idea that it is enough to just read a book about Dzogchen, any book, and claim you have real knowledge of Dzogchen.

Ivo said:

I never, ever said, nor intended to say that you can claim a real knowledge of Dzogchen by reading a book about Dzogchen.

Malcolm wrote:

I am sorry, but you did say, "I never stated that one can receive DI "from a book". Just a glimpse of rikpa."

What is direct introduction but "a glimpse of rikpa?"

Ivo said:

However, it is perfectly possible for someone to encounter the base, and to recognize it for what it is, if the correct circumstances engage.

Malcolm wrote:

Sure, if they happen to attain the tenth bhumi.

Ivo said:

In the absence of a teacher and a working path it gets veiled almost instantaneously, but according to some of my teachers it happens a lot to ordinary beings.

Malcolm wrote:

This was already covered, no one denies that it is possible for ordinary people to have an experience of the nature of their minds without depending on a teacher. What they are unable to do is introduce themselves to the basis, and as a result, have rig pa. Rig pa is not the basis.

Ivo said:

To deny that a text especially meant to induce this, and on top of that especially during the present time of wide dissemination of Dzogchen, is ineffective is to argue directly with the source of these teachings.

Malcolm wrote:

Dude, the text is just a bunch of squiggles on a page in absence of a teacher to use it as a manual for introduction. Without a teacher to present it, indeed the text is ineffective. That's why you need a master. The master is the person who activates the text with his or her knowledge and realization. Without that, the text is just words on paper.

You cannot have it both ways, Ivo. You cannot on the one hand claim that you never said that direction introduction can be gained from a book, and on the other hand claim that it can.

In the hands of a master, any number of texts, hundreds, if not thousands of them are effective means for giving direct introduction — but in reality, a master does not need a book to give direct introduction. But without being received from a master, no text of introduction is effective, no matter how many of them one reads.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, October 17th, 2015 at 2:11 AM

Title: Re: Self-Liberation Through Seeing With Naked Awareness

Content:

Matt J said:

While I generally agree with Malcolm that ChNNR's view seems pretty well laid out, this is from his 1989 Forward to Self-Liberation through Seeing with Naked Awareness: ...This is our Primordial State. But in order to recognize it, we first need transmission from a realized master in the form of an introduction (ngo-sprod) to the state of presence and awareness (rig-pa). This introduction, this meeting face-to-face, is precisely the function of the present text, which reports the very words of Guru Padmasambhava introducing his disciples to such presence or awarenesss."

Malcolm wrote:

Which is precisely what I am saying, "we first need transmission from a realized master in the form of an introduction..."

And yes, the function of this text, in the hands of a master, is to give introduction.

Matt J said:

Certainly many readers possessing fortunate karma

Malcolm wrote:

Fortunate karma means they have met Dzogchen teachings in the form of direct introduction. Not that they have the good fortune to stumble over the book in Barnes and Nobles.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, October 17th, 2015 at 2:19 AM

Title: Re: Self-Liberation Through Seeing With Naked Awareness

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The master is the person who activates the text with his or her knowledge and realization.

dzogchungpa said:

What exactly does "activate" mean here?

Malcolm wrote:

Gives life to the teaching, through meaning, example and experiences.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, October 17th, 2015 at 2:33 AM

Title: Re: Self-Liberation Through Seeing With Naked Awareness

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

Well, if I'm not mistaken, books can provide meaning and example, so I'm guessing the provision of "experiences" is what is uniquely the role of the master. Is that correct?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, of course. This is what distinguishes Dzogchen and Vajrayāna in general from sūtra. In sūtra of course, an experienced teacher is indispensable, but there are no methods of introduction in sūtra.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, October 17th, 2015 at 2:45 AM

Title: Re: Self-Liberation Through Seeing With Naked Awareness

Content:

Ivo said:

What is direct introduction but "a glimpse of rikpa?"

A direct introduction is a context for the "glimpse of rikpa". And a manifestation of a true method for attaining liberation.

Malcolm wrote:

No, Ivo. Rig pa is a result of direct introduction, or otherwise working with methods to discover the meaning of that introduction.

Ivo said:

Malcolm, what the terma tradition is for me is clearly something very different from what the terma tradition is for you.

Malcolm wrote:

I don't see any point in fetishizing books, no matter how miraculous they are, even if they fall out of the sky onto one's roof. My bonafides as a disciple of three authentic tertons are quite in order, thank you very much.

Ivo said:

On top of that you are twisting my words, now you are twisting even a direct quote of ChNN where he clearly states that "This introduction, this meeting face-to-face, is precisely the function of the present text "

Malcolm wrote:

I am not twisting anything.

The function of that text in the hands of a qualified master is to give introduction, not all by itself, picked up off a bookshelf in Barnes and Nobles or ordered from Amazon.

Ivo said:

I see no point of rephrasing again and again things which I already wrote down as clearly as I could. I am saying that yes, you can recognize by yourself with the support of symbols, and no, you can not work effectively with this without a teacher.

Malcolm wrote:

And I am saying that no, you cannot even recognize your primordial state without direct introduction, let alone work with it without a teacher.

Ivo said:

Disparaging the living force of the Dzogchen transmission, the blessings and the activity of the dakinis and the dharmapalas and terming it "superstition" is not good.

Malcolm wrote:

The living force of Dzogchen transmission is in Dzogchen masters and practitioners, not in Dzogchen books. Books are always secondary and relative. That is why Dzogchen is called "the intimate instruction [man ngag] that does not depend on scriptures [lung]."

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, October 17th, 2015 at 2:53 AM

Title: Re: Self-Liberation Through Seeing With Naked Awareness

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

Well, if I'm not mistaken, books can provide meaning and example, so I'm guessing the provision of "experiences" is what is uniquely the role of the master. Is that correct?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, of course. This is what distinguishes Dzogchen and Vajrayāna in general from sūtra. In sūtra of course, an experienced teacher is indispensable, but there are no methods of introduction in sūtra.

dzogchungpa said:

OK, good, but I've never really gotten a clear explanation of how that works in the absence of something like "mind-to-mind contact".

.

Malcolm wrote:

Read ChNN's commentary on Song of the Vajra, it is all quite clearly explained there.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, October 17th, 2015 at 5:55 AM

Title: Re: Self-Liberation Through Seeing With Naked Awareness

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

It is pity that these days fools think they can read a book about Dzogchen and think they have got it. Oh well, c'est la vie. There were such fools in Tibet as well.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, October 17th, 2015 at 5:58 AM

Title: Re: Self-Liberation Through Seeing With Naked Awareness

Content:

steve_bakr said:

Longchenpa presents a considerably more expansive view of Rigpa in his work, "Natural Perfection." For Longchenpa, Rigpa is perhaps the most essential and pivotal aspect of Dzogchen.

Malcolm wrote:

Do you really have any idea how naive and uninformed you sound? I am sorry, but of course the whole point of Dzogchen is rigpa. The point is that you clearly do not understand what that means.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, October 17th, 2015 at 6:06 AM

Title: Re: Self-Liberation Through Seeing With Naked Awareness

Content:

steve_bakr said:

I am more partial to Longchenpa's view of Rigpa.

Malcolm wrote:

You don't understand Longchenpa's views about rigpa, let alone Dzogchen. If you did, you would never claim that Dzogchen can be understood from reading books in absence of a master.

Do you really need me to trot out the citations by Longchepe where he insists that one must have a guru to enter Dzogchen teachings, really?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, October 17th, 2015 at 6:11 AM

Title: Re: Self-Liberation Through Seeing With Naked Awareness

Content:

steve_bakr said:

How recently have you read, "Natural Perfection?"

Malcolm wrote:

I don't read Dowman's translations -- I have no need to.

What particular aspect of the gNas Lugs mDzod did you have in mind?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, October 17th, 2015 at 6:17 AM

Title: Re: Self-Liberation Through Seeing With Naked Awareness

Content:

steve_bakr said:

I am more partial to Longchenpa's view of Rigpa.

Malcolm wrote:

You don't understand Longchenpa's views about rigpa, let alone Dzogchen. If you did, you would never claim that Dzogchen can be understood from reading books in absence of a master.

steve_bakr said:

I am well aware that you can hand out insults, and your are misrepresenting my position. Is that what Dzogchen is all about in your own mind? Where I am from, we call that a schoolyard bully.

Malcolm wrote:

I am not insulting you. When someone insists over and over again, that $2+2 = 5$, it is not an insult to inform them that they do not know how to add. It actually helps them.

When you insist over and over again that you can introduce yourself to rig pa through reading a book in absence of a master, it is not an insult to tell you that you are deeply mistaken and wrong. I am actually helping you.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, October 17th, 2015 at 8:37 AM

Title: Re: Self-Liberation Through Seeing With Naked Awareness

Content:

steve_bakr said:

Misrepresenting what I've said is the opposite of helping. I know bullies very well. Why don't you address the substance of the good points that have been made here?

Malcolm wrote:

I never misrepresented a single thing you said.

I have addressed each and every point that raised, substantively.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, October 17th, 2015 at 8:39 AM

Title: Re: Self-Liberation Through Seeing With Naked Awareness

Content:

steve_bakr said:

I have the highest regard for Dzogchen.

Malcolm wrote:

No, you don't. You have no respect for it all.

steve_bakr said:

although later someone posted actual quotes which verified what I said.

Malcolm wrote:

No, they posted citations from the introduction to the book that they poorly understood.

steve_bakr said:

Now, I have responded to many posts directed to me. If it was necessary to repeat what I said before, it is because my credibility was questioned, which gave me the right of response.

Malcolm wrote:

You have no credibility here.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, October 17th, 2015 at 8:45 PM

Title: Re: Student Teacher Relationship in Modern Age

Content:

smcj said:

With this post I am actually quoting a recognized authority, so the disclaimer in my signature does not apply.

Starting around the 15 minute mark in the following link

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FGzN4FAFgTs>

Alan Wallace talks about the various approaches to Dzogchen. At one end of the spectrum is getting the "pointing out instructions" (D.I. by a different name) in a weekend retreat without any other preparations approach. He affirms that this is a valid approach, what we would call "top down". At the other end of the spectrum is spending 20 years studying the texts and then going off and doing long retreats. He said his teacher didn't teach him either of those two ways but was a third way, just practice based. Plus obviously there is the "bottom up" approach with progressing through the lower 8 yanas.

Around the 17 minute mark he talks about what the pointing out instructions are like. At first he calls them "mind to mind transmission" but then he says it isn't literal. He does say it is "...a resonance, an affinity, a transmission..." where metaphorically the clouds can part for a moment or a minute. It's at the 20 minute mark he says in 24 years his teacher Gyaltrul R. never gave him pointing out instructions.

There is more than one way approach the subject. Our tendency to dismiss or exclude the entire spectrum of approaches here at DW tends to make the discussions somewhat myopic.

Garudavista said:

I believe Alan Wallace may not have needed pointing out instructions because he was practicing Mahamudra and not Dzogchen. Although the base for both is the same, the methods are quite different. I think that is what you've stated in your post. However, to avoid any potential confusion, I just wanted to clarify that he didn't need pointing out instructions because he was practicing Mahamudra and not Dzogchen. If I am wrong about this, please feel free to correct me.

Malcolm wrote:

Mahāmudra and Dzogchen both depend on introductions, the former is more gradual than the latter.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, October 17th, 2015 at 9:49 PM

Title: Re: Yoga teachers.

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Dongyuling Center in Buenos Aires is an excellent centre that offers free teachings on Buddhist theory and practice, primarily in the Drukpa Kagyu tradition. The president, Gerardo Abboud, is not only a wonderful and wise man who spent 14 years studying and practicing in India and Nepal, but he is also the Dalai Lama's translator for Latin America. You can get more information at their website: <http://www.dongyuling.com.ar>

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, October 17th, 2015 at 11:01 PM

Title: Re: Student Teacher Relationship in Modern Age

Content:

steve_bakr said:

Not that tradition is to be disrespected or anything like that. Not that Dzogchen can be learned from a book independently of a living master. I claim nothing more than the taste of sugar. I hope to be verified by a living master.

Malcolm wrote:

Look steve, if you want to practice Dzogchen, it is very simple — find a proper master, receive direct introduction; then engage in Dzogchen practices so you do not remain in doubt. Finally, when you are no longer in doubt, continue in a state of confidence in liberation.

This whole discussion could have been avoided if you had not so stubbornly insisted that Dzogchen can be learned from a book, or that rigpa can be introduced by a book in absence of proper transmission.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, October 18th, 2015 at 5:23 AM

Title: Re: Student Teacher Relationship in Modern Age

Content:

steve_bakr said:

Malcolm, I understand that you have a very specific understanding of what constitutes the proper media and manner of transmission regarding the nature of one's mind and I respect that. I also understand that you are highly educated and I respect that as well. I hope to avail myself of your expertise.

Malcolm wrote:

Hi Steve:

It is not my understanding, it is the understanding of my teachers and my lineage, including Guru Padmasambhava, going back to the two founders of Dzogchen teachings on this globe in this epoch: Garab Dorje and Tonpa Shenrab.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, October 18th, 2015 at 5:51 AM

Title: Re: Student Teacher Relationship in Modern Age

Content:

Fa Dao said:

This whole discussion could have been avoided if you had not so stubbornly insisted that Dzogchen can be learned from a book, or that rigpa can be introduced by a book in absence of proper transmission.

Yeah..Malcolm..about that..with all due respect...what did you expect? If you attack somebody..what..you think they wont automatically go on the defensive? Besides that, it DOES say that in the book..there is no disclaimer saying that it is a teaching manual to be accompanied by being given Direct Introduction by a qualified master. So maybe this whole discussion could have been shortened and more productive if that had been patiently explained?

Malcolm wrote:

I have been patiently explaining for many days now, ever since steve showed up. Not

only myself, but many other people.

Anyone who has been a student of Norbu Rinpoche for any length of time knows that you really should receive the transmission for any Dzogchen text you wish to study. Dzogchen texts are not meant to be read in absence of proper instruction. Yes, of course, when you know the meaning, then one Dzogchen text is just as good as another, they all have the same meaning more or less, depending on whether we are talking about sems sde, klong sde, or man ngag sde. Still, if you want to really work with a text, then the proper way to do it is to find someone who will teach you the text in a proper way. This was how it was done in Tibet, we are no different today. If you can't find someone to teach you that text, then you find someone who will teach you any text of Dzogchen. The text does not matter, what matters is whether the master has genuine realization of the teachings of Dzogchen.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, October 18th, 2015 at 6:00 AM

Title: Re: Student Teacher Relationship in Modern Age

Content:

Adamantine said:

I agree with this, as I said before: pointing out instructions are not necessarily given with a label, or warning. Fourth empowerments and rikpa tsel wangs still have a bit of that expectation. There is another approach, which is quite spontaneous, and the disciple will only know it was a pointing out if they "get it". I believe true Dzogchen masters are giving a type of pointing out all of the time, in infinite ways, and if one has the opportunity to spend significant time with one, they should jump at it.

Ivo said:

Very true. One of my closest teachers once told me that his own teacher (a pivotal figure in the recent history of the Nyingma) never gave them this type of direct introduction at all, and only gave them lungs for the various direct introduction traditional texts in order for them to find the experience by themselves. He also never gave commentaries on any Dzogchen texts to his heart disciples, even on the seven treasures and YL, only lungs. And he was the master of masters.

Malcolm wrote:

Ivo, as you very well know, the extremely unelaborate empowerment of the four Nyinthig empowerments is precisely a direct introduction. So what are you talking about?

Of course you have to discover Dzogchen knowledge through your own experience, and of course, having been ripened with the rig pa'i rtsal dbang through whichever of the three ways it can be given — pandita style, secret mantra style or pointing out for old ladies — then of course one takes whatever practice texts one needs and goes and does Dzogchen practices such as rushen, etc. and eliminates one's doubts. But the effectiveness of Dzogchen practice comes about through one's interaction with a

teacher and practices they give one, not from reading books and developing nice fantasies about what Dzogchen might be based on reading Western translations without a proper teacher.

People who only read English translations of these texts without access to a Tibetan teacher who can clarify for them what this and that actually means are like blind people in a cave who have been given flashlight with dead batteries to find their way out.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, October 18th, 2015 at 6:32 AM

Title: Re: Student Teacher Relationship in Modern Age

Content:

steve_bakr said:

[

So, the Direct Introductions were received through means of a book. There is one question I had about Guru Padmasambhava's "Self-Liberation." I had quoted the Guru where he said four times that the text was a "direct introduction to your intrinsic awareness," but the quotations were rejected as false.

Malcolm wrote:

Steve, what was rejected was your conclusion about what the quotes mean. The text you cited was an oral text written down by someone. They are Guru Padmasambhava's speech, not a book written out by an author. When a guru presents that text, he does so because he has received the lung for that text and knows how to present it. For you, that Guru is the same as Guru Padmasambhava.

steve_bakr said:

The question I wanted to ask was, "Are we to believe Guru Padmasambhava or not?" "Did he tell the truth or not?" If Guru Padmasambhava reiterates that same point four times, is it even permissible to say that he is wrong all four times? Isn't he a venerated source?

Malcolm wrote:

Steve, no one is saying that what Guru Rinpoche said is wrong. Your understanding is wrong.

When he was teaching, he was giving direct introduction through words to a group of students. Which students? Principally a translator named Chogro Lui Gyaltsen, who is renowned as one of the translators of the 17 Tantras. Also Yeshe Tsogyal, she was the direct heir to these teachings. Karma Lingpa was the reincarnation of Chogro and the one appointed to promulgate them. So what you are reading is a record of one of Guru Padmasambhava's teaching sessions. Guru Rinpoche in fact wrote very little, but he taught a lot and those recorded teachings are what we now have as the treasure tradition. But they are all just so many books without proper empowerment, reading transmission and instruction

After Karma Lingpa revealed the text, he gave the empowerments, the lung and the teachings to his son, Nyida Choje, who then spread it widely. Ever since then it is a teaching that has been passed down in connection with the empowerment of the peaceful and wrathful deities in his tradition. I have this transmission as do many people you are talking to. You can easily get this transmission, it is given rather frequently, and I am sure if you ask someone to teach you the text, respectfully and with a beginners attitude, you will have no problem.

The main reason Reynolds translated it again was to correct Evans Wentz's and Jung's misunderstandings of the text.

steve_bakr said:

I submit that it's not possible for the Guru to say something four or more times and be wrong about it.

Malcolm wrote:

But it is quite possible for you to vastly misunderstand the context [you have] and promulgate this error [which you are doing].

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, October 18th, 2015 at 9:35 AM

Title: Re: Student Teacher Relationship in Modern Age

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Ivo, as you very well know, the extremely unelaborate empowerment of the four Nyinthig empowerments is precisely a direct introduction. So what are you talking about?

Ivo said:

As you know, there is no requirement for this type of empowerment to be given at all.

Malcolm wrote:

You mean you do not need direct introduction to enter Dzogchen teachings? Every single teacher in your lineage has received all transmissions of Dzogchen in the proper way. That means they received instructions from their respective gurus. Their teachers did not just hand them books and send them out to meditate.

Ivo said:

In the lineages I have had the good fortune to be part of, this is often not taken as a formal ritual at all, and the actual transmission on this level happens in a different way, in the context of very close teacher-student relationship, one to one, over the course of time. And it is never formal. Although it is a direct introduction it bears no resemblance at all to the DI as given within the Dzogchen Community. It is in fact so different in look, and feel, as if it is a completely different thing. This is why many older Tibetan lamas have such a problem with what Norbu Rinpoche is doing. I myself do not.

Malcolm wrote:

Whoever said direct introduction needs to be a formal ritual? That depends on context. Certainly, the direct introduction that ChNN received from Rigdzin Chanchub Dorje was not a ritual.

Ivo said:

Reading authentic dzogchen texts from the deep and profound terma tradition is a form of interaction with the teacher.

Malcolm wrote:

Only if you received them from a teacher. Otherwise, in some sense, you are a thief of the teachings.

Ivo said:

For those thus fortunate, the outer appearance of a human teacher will come in due course as well. We need not stand in the way.

Malcolm wrote:

Then one should encourage people to find a qualified teacher and not encourage people to believe they have understood what they have not understood because that understanding depends on the intimate instructions of the guru, and not books.

Ivo said:

People who only read English translations of these texts without access to a Tibetan teacher who can clarify for them what this and that actually means are like blind people in a cave who have been given flashlight with dead batteries to find their way out. At least with some of the translations out there, the batteries are quite fine, and the flashlight is reasonably bright.

Malcolm wrote:

Without a proper teacher however, the students are still quite blind no matter how bright the flashlight is.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, October 18th, 2015 at 9:41 AM

Title: Re: Student Teacher Relationship in Modern Age

Content:

MiphamFan said:

Maybe it is a regional thing too? Tulku Urgyen Rinpoche says it was very common for people to ask lamas for pointing out instructions in his Nangchen region of Kham and for masters to give it. ChNN himself often tells how Changchub Dorje gave him DI in a short, one-to-one talk after the empowerment for his Shitro terma.

Malcolm wrote:

It is not a regional thing whatsoever.

For one thing, "pointing out", ngo phrod is generally a Mahāmudra term. Direct introduction, "rang ngo thog du phrad," literally, "directly encountering one's own state" is a Dzogchen term. Granted, even in Dzogchen texts, there are this and that "ngo phrod," there is even an entire tantra devoted to the subject. But direct introduction from a qualified master is the only thing absolutely essential in Dzogchen teachings. Anyone who thinks otherwise has no understanding of Dzogchen at all.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, October 18th, 2015 at 9:43 AM

Title: Re: Student Teacher Relationship in Modern Age

Content:

Ivo said:

The modes of transmission in Dzogchen differ among lineages, a lot.

Malcolm wrote:

Not really. But there are a lot of Lamas out there who sell their teachings as "Dzogchen" who do not actually teach Dzogchen.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, October 18th, 2015 at 9:48 AM

Title: Re: Dzogchen Martial Arts

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

People in glass houses....

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, October 18th, 2015 at 11:55 AM

Title: Re: Student Teacher Relationship in Modern Age

Content:

Ivo said:

There is no requirement for the the extremely unelaborated empowerments of Nyingthik to be given. It is the choice of the teacher as to which empowerment variation to use. There are a lot of masters who do not use the extremely unelaborated empowerments in a formal way at all. As I said, they are very often treated differently.

Malcolm wrote:

There is a requirement that direct introduction is given. There is no difference in meaning between the extremely unelaborate empowerment and direct introduction. They are the same thing. And in point of fact, everyone who practices actual Dzogchen receives these transmissions as a matter of course. There is no use in pretending otherwise. On the other hand, I can't speak for the fools out there who delude their

students with pretty words...

Ivo said:

Only if you received them from a teacher. Otherwise, in some sense, you are a thief of the teachings.

A thief of the teachings about one's own true nature? Well, that's certainly a new one... A very interesting kind of Buddhism.

Malcolm wrote:

It is not new at all, I have heard many teachers, ChNN among them, refer to people who think they can just read this or that book without transmission as "thieves of the teachings."

Ivo said:

Not really. But there are a lot of Lamas out there who sell their teachings as "Dzogchen" who do not actually teach Dzogchen.

And there are lamas out there who do not even utter the word Dzogchen, and definitely not "Direct Introduction", but are among the greatest living Dzogchen masters on Earth. And their students happen to be amazing too.

Malcolm wrote:

The first word of the three words of Garab Dorje is "རང་ངོ་ཐོག་དུ་ཕྱད" parse it however you want. It is indispensable in Dzogchen.

Ivo said:

The whole intent of the Dzogchen tantras and upadeshas is that the guru is inside, not outside.

Malcolm wrote:

Uh huh, so now we are dispensing with the lineage, and gurus too, after all the "guru is inside" — that has gotten sentient beings very far up till now, hasn't it?

Ivo said:

This is what Samantabhadra means.

Malcolm wrote:

Samantabhadra means lots of things, but a guru is never optional in Dzogchen. And this means that one cannot just buy some translation in a bookstore, read it, and then claim that one has discovered one's primordial state.

Ivo said:

Belittling people who have had by chance a taste of the blessings of the lineage with forceful arrogance instead of gentle guidance is not Dharma.

Malcolm wrote:

Telling people they have tasted the blessings of the lineage when they have never met a real lineage is an outright lie. Telling people the truth is never arrogance, it is just

honesty.

Ivo said:

The need for a teacher should be explained, not enforced.

Malcolm wrote:

The need for a guru is fundamental to Dzogchen teachings, it is not optional.

Ivo said:

And one should always remember that Dharma means freedom, not bondage.

Malcolm wrote:

All buddhas of the three times depended on a guru.

Ivo said:

As the incomparable Kyabje Trulshik Rinpoche used to say, not just the teaching should be Dzogchen, the person should be Dzogchen too.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, you should think about that.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, October 18th, 2015 at 8:50 PM

Title: Re: Student Teacher Relationship in Modern Age

Content:

MiphamFan said:

Anyway I don't really know personally any lineage that doesn't have DI or empowerment, I was just taking his word for it that at least one of his traditional teachers did not do it formally at a given session but did it over the course of a long relationship.

Malcolm wrote:

Everytime someone receives the Chetsun Nyingthig, the Thigle Gyacan, any of the Yabzhi empowerments, Gongspa Zangthal, the medium Shitro empowerment of Karma gLingpa, etc., direct introduction is provided within the context of those empowerments.

In reality, everyone in Tibet who takes these teachings seriously, not only has received DI in a formal way, but also in the informal way Ivo is describing — the two are not mutually exclusive at all.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, October 18th, 2015 at 9:43 PM

Title: Re: Dzogchen Community of Chogyal Namkhai Norbu

Content:

swooping said:

I got distracted by the lively (!) conversation on rigpa-through-books (thanks for posting such great info there btw), but I wanted to make sure to say thanks for that. It probably should have been obvious to me, but that has cleared up a lot of confusion for me.

Malcolm wrote:

The Seven Mind trainings are a unique system which originally comes from the Vima sNying thig. These days it is most popularly summarized by the Chetsun sNying thig, and there is a long commentary on them by Jigme Lingpa as well. Longchenpa also wrote three commentaries on the Seventh Lojong, which can be found in the Lama Yangthig.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, October 18th, 2015 at 11:51 PM

Title: Re: Student Teacher Relationship in Modern Age

Content:

MiphamFan said:

OK sure, I never disagreed with you Malcolm.

dzogchungpa said:

Oh good, because that would have been terrible.

Malcolm wrote:

Well, agreeing with me makes for very silent threads...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, October 19th, 2015 at 1:25 AM

Title: Re: Direct introduction. What is it?

Content:

steve_bakr said:

Some believe that Direct Introduction to the Nature of Your Mind or Pointing Out Instructions involves a quasi-magical transfer of energy from Guru to Disciple..

.

alpha said:

I do not think there is a transfer of energy from guru to disciple because during a real direct introduction there isnt any guru that gives or transfers something to the disciple .But some of us take part in a direct introduction with the expectation that we might get something which we dont already have.

Malcolm wrote:

The term direct introduction is a bit misleading. The term is translated from the tibetan, which is rang ngo thog tu phrad, "directly encounter your own state." This direct introduction or encounter is facilitated by a Guru, but as you correctly note, nothing is transferred per se, because the guru is merely showing you your own face [rang ngo] or

your own state [rang ngo] in a direct encounter [thog tu phrad]. This is done on the basis of experiences, as the example of Nyoshul Lungtog's encounter with Patrul Rinpoche:

Nyoshul Lungtok, who later became one of the greatest Dzogchen masters of recent times, followed his teacher Patrul Rinpoche for about eighteen years. During all that time, they were almost inseparable. Nyoshul Lungtok studied and practiced extremely diligently, and accumulated a wealth of purification, merit, and practice; he was ready to recognize the Rigpa, but had not yet had the final introduction. Then, one famous evening, Patrul Rinpoche gave him the introduction. It happened when they were staying together in one of the hermitages high up in the mountains above Dzogchen Monastery. It was a very beautiful night. The dark blue sky was clear and the stars shone brilliantly. The sound of their solitude was heightened by the distant barking of a dog from the monastery below. Patrul Rinpoche was lying stretched out on the ground, doing a special Dzogchen practice. He called Nyoshul Lungtok over to him, saying: "Did you say you do not know the essence of the mind?" Nyoshul Lungtok guessed from his tone that this was a special moment and nodded expectantly.

"There's nothing to it really," Patrul Rinpoche said casually, and added, "My son, come and lie down over here: be like your old father." Nyoshul Lungtok stretched out by his side.

Then Patrul Rinpoche asked him, "Do you see the stars up there in the sky?"
"Yes."

"Do you hear the dogs barking in Dzogchen Monastery?"
"Yes."

"Do you hear what I'm saying to you?"
"Yes."

"Well, the nature of Dzogchen is this: simply this."

Nyoshul Lungtok tells us what happened then: "At that instant, I arrived at a certainty of realization from within. I had been liberated from the fetters of 'it is' and 'it is not.' I had realized the primordial wisdom, the naked union of emptiness and intrinsic awareness. I was introduced to this realization by his blessing, as the great Indian master Saraha said: He in whose heart the words of the master have entered, Sees the truth like a treasure in his own palm."

The sad part is that someone will take this literally, think that they should go somewhere, lie on the ground, listen to dogs bark and think this is direct introduction.

As you know, direct introduction is not introducing you to something you don't have. It is introducing you to something you have always had, and misplaced. This is one reason why the Buddhanature metaphor useful in Dzogchen, but here it means something a bit different than in lower yanas [cue, Son of the Buddha].

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, October 19th, 2015 at 1:37 AM

Title: Re: Dzogchen Martial Arts

Content:

swooping said:

Is there any history of martial arts in Tibetan Buddhism in general, or Dzogchen specifically, as a spiritual path?

Malcolm wrote:

No, not until Trungpa adapted some Japanese Martial arts like Kyudo to the Shambhala teachings.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, October 19th, 2015 at 1:46 AM

Title: Re: Direct introduction. What is it?

Content:

monktastic said:

And this is supposedly different from what took place in the Flower Sermon, right?

Malcolm wrote:

Some will see it that way, others will not, it depends on how well you understand Dzogchen teachings. Nubchen Sangye Yeshe certainly thought it was different, as does ChNN, and this is why the former took great pains to distinguish Dzogchen teachings from Chan, and why the latter follows Nubchen. You can either accept Nubs arguments or not, it is up to you.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, October 19th, 2015 at 2:29 AM

Title: Re: Dzogchen Martial Arts

Content:

Caodemarte said:

This may be of passing interest. The Chinese martial arts Lama Pai, Tibetan White Crane, Lama or Tibetan Kungfu, and Hop Gar (all derived from the same form) from the western border region between Tibet and China and are traditionally claimed to be Tibetan in origin, originally taught by a Lama in that region.

Malcolm wrote:

Traditionally claimed by who? Certainly not Tibetans.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, October 19th, 2015 at 9:37 AM

Title: Re: Dzogchen Martial Arts

Content:

Caodemarte said:

These are Chinese martial arts and the Chinese adherents claim this as their tradition. Lama Pai, Tibetan White Crane (not to be confused with Fujian Style White Crane), Lama or Tibetan Kungfu, and Hop Gar, according to tradition, originated in far Western China in the border regions with Tibet and then moved to north China and then down south. An American student of Tibetan White Crane published his research which indicates a Northern China origin, contrary to received tradition.

BTW, internal and external martial arts adherents also claim the "Indian" (probably Central Asian in origin although as far south as Sri Lanka have been claimed) Bodhidharma as their founder. Is any of this historically true? Possibly, but it would seem more likely that various schools of physical practice borrowed from each other, eventually merged, and then people invented a unified historical origin. It does seem likely that some yoga exercises made their way to China and influenced physical practice there. It is a fascinating topic in intellectual history and diffusion.

Malcolm wrote:

Tibetan martial arts are archery, wrestling, javelin throwing and sword fighting. That's it. Well, maybe we can include horsemanship as well...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, October 19th, 2015 at 8:58 PM

Title: Re: Nāda yoga ~ Sound as Path ~ Sutra,Tantra,Mantra,Dzogchen

Content:

Panaesthesia said:

Dzogchen has three central practices, only two of which are taught and performed today. The "Yeshe Lama" instruction manual starts by explaining this. The one no longer used is the one I am writing about.

Malcolm wrote:

It is taught today.

Panaesthesia said:

The root tantra of the seventeen dzogchen tantras received by Padmasambhava from Shri Singha is called "The Reverberation of Sound tantra" (Dra Talgyur Root Tantra "sgra thal 'gyur gym rgyud") and the practice is described therein. It has not been translated yet, although there is an effort underway in Austria at the direction of Chogyal Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche

Malcolm wrote:

When the commentary is published, I think you will be a little surprised at what this practice actually is. The root tantra itself does not devote more than a few stanzas to describing it. The commentary sets out in detail how one actually enters into the sounds of the four elements. But most importantly, it is a preliminary practice.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, October 19th, 2015 at 11:36 PM

Title: Re: POTUS 2016

Content:

DGA said:

Going back to the democratic debate for a moment, I want to underscore again how disappointed I am in Sanders' performance. He had the opportunity to pin Clinton to the wall and take a definitive lead, and he took a pass. If he's not willing to put the screws to this Republican, how can he be expected to take on the GOP nominee? Not a good showing.

In Tuesday's debate he pointedly ignored the Clinton family's role in deregulating Wall Street, and in doing so he allowed Hillary Clinton to cast gun regulation as the key issue that divides her from him. Forgotten was Bill Clinton's selection of Goldman Sachs honcho Robert Rubin to be his treasury secretary, an appointee who with President Clinton's complicity presided over the dismantling of New Deal limits on financial greed.

Malcolm wrote:

He is not running against Bill Clinton or the Clinton Family. He is running against Hillary Clinton. Don't worry though, there are five more debates I think, and Sanders will get his points across. He has plenty of time to show that Hillary herself is owned by Wall Street, and that her positions in the Senate demonstrate this again and again.

It is not his nature to pin his opponents to the wall or put the screws in. He has never run a campaign that way, and he won't start now. I support that.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, October 20th, 2015 at 1:31 AM

Title: Re: POTUS 2016

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

He is not running against Bill Clinton or the Clinton Family. He is running against Hillary Clinton. Don't worry though, there are five more debates I think, and Sanders will get his points across. He has plenty of time to show that Hillary herself is owned by Wall Street, and that her positions in the Senate demonstrate this again and again.

It is not his nature to pin his opponents to the wall or put the screws in. He has never run a campaign that way, and he won't start now. I support that.

DGA said:

I'm all for collegiality, so I agree with the thrust of your post in spirit, but I disagree on two points.

1. Sanders really is running against the Clinton family, because this is the network or machine behind the Clinton campaign. .

Malcolm wrote:

Sanders is not going to run against the Clinton family because it is misplaced. He is running against a corrupt political system awash in the cash of the wealthy more than anything else. If people are smart enough to see that, and have enough courage to vote on their convictions, and will actually help Sanders win the presidency, and continue to apply pressure to both parties through voting out irresponsible and lazy legislators, then our Democracy, founded on the ethnic cleansing of Indigenous people, might have a chance. Otherwise, it will be business as usual in the US.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, October 20th, 2015 at 2:04 AM

Title: Re: Nāda yoga ~ Sound as Path ~ Sutra,Tantra,Mantra,Dzogchen

Content:

Panaesthesia said:

Ah, well. So many people confused about so many things... I've been hoping that the "Dra Talgyur" would contain more information about the practice it refers to in the title, given the assertions of Jamgön Kongtrul in "The Treasury Of Knowledge, Esoteric Instructions" (Book 8, Part 4): "(sGra) thal 'gyur (rasa bali rgyud): A main tantra in the esoteric instruction class of atiyoga. It explains how to attain the level of nirmanānakāya and how to accomplish the welfare of others through practices related to sound" (Rangdrol, "The Circle of the Sun," 82)

Malcolm wrote:

The practices related to sound come from the first chapter, and the entire first chapter is a series of preliminary instructions.

Panaesthesia said:

All this time I've considered Jigme Lingpa's description of the practice as the yoga of four (external) elements just an error on his part caused by his admitted unfamiliarity with the practice, but I guess the confusion goes deeper.

Malcolm wrote:

No, it is not an error at all. This is one kind of practice included in general in the practice of the elements

Panaesthesia said:

I assume that you mean the same thing Malcolm. If not, what "this practice" are you referring to?

And are you referring to the Vimalamitra commentaries? I've been talking with Jean-Luc Achard about his translations of those commentaries, but he's still working on them.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes. It is a long complicated section impossible to summarize here apart from saying that it teaches a progression of practices that are titled: the sound of 1) the Brahmaloaka, 2) Vishnu Loka, 3) Kalavinka Loka, 4) the four elements and 5) the voice of the teacher.

Panaesthesia said:

These descriptions, from Mahamudra, are for the practice I am writing about:

These quotes are from p. 91 and p. 93 respectively of "Masters of Mahamudra: Songs and Histories of the Eighty-four Buddhist Siddhas" by Keith Dowman, Publisher: State University of New York Press (ISBN 978-0-88706-160-8): The Mahasiddha Vinapa (The Musician) achieved mahamudra through contemplation of the unborn, unstruck sound:
With perseverance and devotion
I mastered the vina's errant chords;
but then practicing the unborn, unstruck sound
I, Vinapa, lost my self.

Malcolm wrote:

Right, that is not what is described in the sgra thal 'gyur.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, October 20th, 2015 at 9:04 PM

Title: Re: Meditation in Tib monasteries before the Chinese

Content:

MiphamFan said:

How much do you know about Tibetan Buddhism in general?

zenman said:

Khenpo level.

Malcolm wrote:

You mean you have the same level of knowledge of Tibetan Buddhism as a Khenpo? Really?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, October 20th, 2015 at 10:12 PM

Title: Re: Bhutas, Dons, negative spirits etc.

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

What are all the different kinds of negative spirits etc., and what are the different ways that they can effect us? And why?
What can help in dealing with them?

Malcolm wrote:

This is complicated topic.

In short, practicing Guru Trapo, Drollo, etc. are best for removing provocations.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, October 21st, 2015 at 6:47 PM

Title: Re: Bhutas, Dons, negative spirits etc.

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

What are all the different kinds of negative spirits etc., and what are the different ways that they can effect us? And why?

What can help in dealing with them?

Malcolm wrote:

This is complicated topic.

In short, practicing Guru Trapo, Drollo, etc. are best for removing provocations.

pael said:

How do you practice them? Can anyone?

Malcolm wrote:

You need transmission.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, October 22nd, 2015 at 12:04 AM

Title: Re: Bhutas, Dons, negative spirits etc.

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Hi Jundo:

It is the case that provocations and so are a product of dualistic karmic vision, but so is your dog, your wife, your kids, your house and your car.

If one is still under the power of dualistic vision, thinking one's problems will be solved by passively sitting is hardly a cogent solution.

Of course, in the past, Soto masters were credited with great powers of exorcism, so clearly, they understood through their insight what to do in such cases.

M

jundo cohen said:

Hello,

The following is just one practitioner's opinion from a small corner-non-corner of Buddhism.

It may be that the negative spirits are just the heart-mind. When the heart and mind are at peace, the negative spirits disappear with the breeze. They never were real from the start except for the mind's own making them real.

So, just sit, dropping all thought of spirits and their negativity and ... poof ... a certain Positive Peace may be found instead.

Better, however, to ask your own Teacher in your own Tradition.

Gassho, Jundo

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, October 22nd, 2015 at 7:04 PM

Title: Re: Bhutas, Dons, negative spirits etc.

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Hi Jundo:

It is the case that provocations and so are a product of dualistic karmic vision, but so is your dog, your wife, your kids, your house and your car.

If one is still under the power of dualistic vision, thinking one's problems will be solved by passively sitting is hardly a cogent solution.

Of course, in the past, Soto masters were credited with great powers of exorcism, so clearly, they understood through their insight what to do in such cases.

M

jundo cohen said:

Hi Malcolm,

I am glad you are well and thriving. All good greetings to you.

I can only offer an opinion from one view-non-view.

Some phenomena, such as my dog, my wife, my kids, house and car, do seem to exist apart from my small mind. Merely by my thoughts, I do not seem able to make my wife go away (not that I would ever want to!). When I leave "my house" on a trip, there "my wife" is (and "my house") when I return.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, this is all, including sleep, karmic vision — quite powerful, no?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, October 23rd, 2015 at 7:31 AM

Title: Re: Bhutas, Dons, negative spirits etc.

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

What are all the different kinds of negative spirits etc., and what are the different ways that they can effect us? And why?

What can help in dealing with them?

Thank you.

nilakantha said:

Reciting the Sitatapatra (Shurangama) Dharani is the most powerful apotropaic practice we have.

Malcolm wrote:

Ummmmm, no.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, October 23rd, 2015 at 9:36 AM

Title: Re: Bhutas, Dons, negative spirits etc.

Content:

nilakantha said:

I have firm faith in the power of Our Lady of the White Umbrella to protect me from all supernatural evils. Her dharani can be practiced by all and needs no "transmission".

Malcolm wrote:

It is but one among many such practices...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, October 26th, 2015 at 7:47 PM

Title: Re: Non-Duality in Dzogchen vs Advaita Vedanta

Content:

swooping said:

With what little I have read about Kashmir Shaivism it, or at least parts of it, seem to be very very similar to dzogchen to me.

Malcolm wrote:

It is not similar at all. In Trika, everything is considered real because everything is part of

Shiva, and Shiva is real.

In Dzogchen, everything, there is nothing established in which or of which to be a part.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, October 26th, 2015 at 8:13 PM

Title: Re: the great vegetarian debate

Content:

nilakantha said:

As Mahāyāna Buddhists, we know that the Lord Śākyamuni was a nirmānakāya Buddha and never actually ate anything...

Malcolm wrote:

Seriously?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, October 27th, 2015 at 12:54 AM

Title: Re: Is collective consciousness Buddhist?

Content:

PorkChop said:

Is the idea of a collective consciousness a part of Buddhist doctrine?

Malcolm wrote:

No.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, October 27th, 2015 at 1:06 AM

Title: Re: Non-Duality in Dzogchen vs Advaita Vedanta

Content:

Matt J said:

I actually think the more important point isn't the fruit, it's the base and the path. Advaita and Dzogchen DO take completely different approaches. Let's assume for arguments sake that the end result IS the same. So what? You still have to go down one or the other. Mixing them up isn't going to work.

Malcolm wrote:

The basis, path and result are the same thing in Dzogchen. So of course the result is the most important point, given that it is the basis and the path.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, October 27th, 2015 at 4:16 AM

Title: Re: Non-Duality in Dzogchen vs Advaita Vedanta

Content:

Matt J said:

I don't think that renders the terms "base," "path," and "fruit" indistinguishable, or mean they cannot be useful concepts in a public discussion (so far as concepts are useful) about different approaches.

Malcolm wrote:

They are distinguishable in this respect only: the basis is termed the basis when one has not realized the result; the path is the means of recognizing the basis; the result is when one has recognized the basis for what it is. But in reality, the basis, path and result are the same thing.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, October 27th, 2015 at 4:27 AM

Title: Re: Non-Duality in Dzogchen vs Advaita Vedanta

Content:

swooping said:

Does this seem like a viable line of thought, or do you think I am twisting the essence of (at least) one of these traditions?

Malcolm wrote:

I think you are twisting the essence of (at least) one of these traditions.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, October 27th, 2015 at 7:52 AM

Title: Re: the great vegetarian debate

Content:

nilakantha said:

As Mahāyāna Buddhists, we know that the Lord Śākyamuni was a nirmānakāya Buddha and never actually ate anything...

Malcolm wrote:

Seriously?

nilakantha said:

Shakyamuni was basically a holographic projection, existing only in the consciousnesses of sentient beings. How could a hologram need food? We're told in the Sarvabuddhaviṣayāvatārajñānālokāṃkāra Sūtra:

“Mañjuśrī, the Tathāgata is in the realm of non-arising. On the other hand, he appears in

the world as a reflected image. According to the beliefs of sentient beings he displays diverse appearances and diverse lifespans. He appears among sentient beings who have become fitting receptacles for awakening thanks to their maturation and belief. These sentient beings then hear the Dharma according to their dispositions and beliefs. According to their dispositions they understand the three vehicles, and according to their dispositions they obtain belief."

And

"Mañjuśrī, there is no Tathāgata. However, the designation 'Tathāgata' comes about in the world because of the voice of Dharma. It is exclusively due to the maturation of sentient beings' previous wholesome karma that they perceive the voice of the Tathāgata. That voice emerges in order to produce happiness for all sentient beings and to prompt those who are careless. Mañjuśrī, as those sentient beings hear that sound, they form the concept of a tathāgata, thinking, 'This is the Tathāgata's body.'"

Malcolm wrote:

If the Tathāgata never ate food, neither did we. Therefore, your obsession with diet is a complete waste of time.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, October 27th, 2015 at 8:29 AM

Title: Re: the great vegetarian debate

Content:

nilakantha said:

While we all possess the Buddhadhātu as our true Self, not all of us manifest as form body Buddhas. If you are a form body Buddha, you will not eat. The logic of this is obvious in the Angulimaliya Sutra:

Mañjuśrī, if any man or woman should think to themselves that they can do evil deeds because they will still be liberated by the existence within themselves of the Tathāgata-garbha, and then do some evil deed, how could their ātma-dhātu [Self- Factor] become liberated? As I previously explained, they will not be liberated, even though they do have the dhātu, just as in the case of the youth who engaged in asceticism. Why is that? Because they are very careless. Because they are careless, they will naturally not be liberated.

Malcolm wrote:

You completely missed the point — all bodies are projections...the Tathāgata's form is not less real than our own...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, October 27th, 2015 at 10:18 PM

Title: Re: the great vegetarian debate

Content:

nilakantha said:

The Buddha's body is eternal and unchanging. Our bodies are in a constant state of flux; ergo we eat to sustain ourselves, the Buddha doesn't eat because there's no changing body to support.

Malcolm wrote:

Hahahaha, so now you have lapsed into a dual view: your view of the Buddha's body is eternalist, and your view of sentient beings' bodies is that they are subject to perishing.

In reality, there is no difference between the body of a buddha and the body of a sentient being: they are equally unreal.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, October 27th, 2015 at 10:23 PM

Title: Re: the great vegetarian debate

Content:

nilakantha said:

hence Buddha in the world is just an appearance in the mind of the perceiver.

Malcolm wrote:

The appearance of the world is just an appearance in the mind of a perceiver, whether that appearance is pure or impure. If your view is pure, there is no difference between meat and rice. If your view is impure, there is still no difference between meat and rice. If your view is pure, there is no difference between a buddha and a sentient being; if your view is impure, there is still no difference between a sentient being.

Liberation is not attained through choice of diet.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, October 28th, 2015 at 12:37 AM

Title: Re: Non-Duality in Dzogchen vs Advaita Vedanta

Content:

Matt J said:

I think you're getting your Sāṃkhya mixed up with your Advaita.

asunthatneversets said:

The model of Advaita Vedanta has puruṣa and prakṛti. Puruṣa is a singular ontological source that gives rise to prakṛti, however prakṛti (and the transformation of the three guṇas) is held to be unreal, as it is illusion [māyā], only puruṣa is real. Puruṣa is Brahman, and is an unconditioned knower [jñā].

Malcolm wrote:

No, Sāṃkhya is like the Abhidharma of Hinduism. The conclusion of Sāṃkhya [infinite independent puruṣas] is rejected by Advaita, but the general treatment of elements,

organs and so on is not disputed.

In the Yogasutra commentary by Shankara, he explicitly equates purusha with Brahmin, and says there is only one purusha.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, October 28th, 2015 at 12:49 AM

Title: Re: the great vegetarian debate

Content:

nilakantha said:

The choice of a vegetarian diet is a necessary, though not sufficient, cause for being reborn either in a Pure Land or for a fortunate rebirth in this one.

Malcolm wrote:

Not it isn't.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, October 28th, 2015 at 12:56 AM

Title: Re: the great vegetarian debate

Content:

Simon E. said:

So you wouldn't consider that HH the Dalai Lama (who eats meat every other say) had a fortunate birth nilakantha ? Or won't next time ?

nilakantha said:

Karma works without regard to who or what you are. Whether you're a monk or a layman, eating meat cuts off the root of Great Compassion.

Malcolm wrote:

No, it does not. Buddha taught in the Hevajra tantra, "Those who eat meat have compassion."

Further. Bhavaviveka proves that there is no fault if one consumes meat pure in three ways. There is no karma if one eats meat that is pure in three ways. Karma involves volition.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, October 28th, 2015 at 1:05 AM

Title: Re: Non-Duality in Dzogchen vs Advaita Vedanta

Content:

asunthatneversets said:

Purusa gives rise to prakrti.

Malcolm wrote:

Not exactly, not in Saṃkhya proper, anyway.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, October 28th, 2015 at 1:10 AM

Title: Re: impermanence

Content:

DGA said:

You may be surprised to read that Dolpopa's position is not the consensus one in those threads. Far from it, actually.

Nor is there any consensus among Tibetan Buddhists that Dolpopa was on the right track. Far from it.

Nor is there any consensus among Mahayana Buddhists of East Asia that Dolpopa's view is the definitive one. That goes without saying, right?

Really, take a quick tour through the links I gave above and you'll see what is about to happen in this thread.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, Son of the Buddha....

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, October 28th, 2015 at 3:20 AM

Title: Re: the great vegetarian debate

Content:

nilakantha said:

The one that comes to mind is the Brahma Net Sutra:

Malcolm wrote:

This sūtra is not known in India and not found in the Tibetan canon. Therefore, it is irrelevant outside of Chinese Buddhism.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, October 28th, 2015 at 4:02 AM

Title: Re: the great vegetarian debate

Content:

nilakantha said:

The one that comes to mind is the Brahma Net Sutra:

Malcolm wrote:

This sūtra is not known in India and not found in the Tibetan canon. Therefore, it is irrelevant outside of Chinese Buddhism.

nilakantha said:

How about the Lankavatara Sutra: "Because it is produced from semen and blood, too, Mahamati, meat should not be eaten by a bodhisattva, out of a desire for purity. And because it causes anxiety in beings, Mahamati, a practicing bodhisattva wishing friendliness of beings should not eat any meat at all."

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, of course there are Mahāyāna sūtras where the Buddha recommends vegetarianism. It is also equally true that Bhavaviveka addresses these issues in his famed Tarkajvala:

If one eats meat after creating suffering for the bodies of creatures, this will possess a fault, but if there is no mind in the creature when the meat is eaten, where can there be a misdeed if no suffering arises? Just as when one uses mother pearl, or the excrescences of fish and elephants, or peacock feathers, yak tails, teeth, bones, skin and so on, there is little or no suffering for the creature, just as when one uses fruit, water and so on there is no harm at all, in the same way, since there is no harm when meat is eaten, there is no fault. If there is a fault, then cremating the dead will be a misdeed.

Even in Mahāyāna, the Buddha never forbids using wool, using feathers, using leather, bone, shell, and many other kinds of animal products. It is inconsistent to claim that the passages where Buddha enjoins us not to eat meat must be taken as definitive teachings.

Bhavaviveka, whose Mahāyāna credentials are impeccable, certainly opines that it is not necessary to take these passages literally. He points out that if the suffering of creatures is the problem we want to solve then we must avoid eating rice, sesame oil, and all kinds of other products which involve suffering for creatures.

Instead, we need to understand that this advice is aimed at people who kill animals or have them killed in order to eat them and that is all.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, October 28th, 2015 at 4:13 AM

Title: Re: Non-Duality in Dzogchen vs Advaita Vedanta

Content:

Matt J said:

Yes, and this is one of the ways that people distinguish between Samkhya and Yoga.

tepp01 said:

Actually, some Samkhya traditions (like Patanjali's Yoga school) also include Ishwara, but it's not the same Ishwara of Vedanta.

Samkhya's Ishwara is a unique, ever free, Purusha that does not have any cosmic functions (creation, destruction, etc.).

Also, all Vedanta schools teach that Jivas are beginningless (Anaadi), even though Advaita asserts that they are unreal (as different from Brahman).

Malcolm wrote:

As Tepp01 says the Ishvara in the Yoga sūtras is merely a special kind of purusha who was never bound, is not a creator, etc.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, October 28th, 2015 at 4:24 AM

Title: Re: the great vegetarian debate

Content:

nilakantha said:

“You may use those substances that have come to you indirectly without having been touched by killing.”

Malcolm wrote:

This is a recipe for starvation, if taken literally.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, October 28th, 2015 at 5:02 AM

Title: Re: Nāda yoga ~ Sound as Path ~ Sutra,Tantra,Mantra,Dzogchen

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Right, that is not what is described in the sgra thal 'gyur.

Panaesthesia said:

Can I ask you for a clarification Malcolm? Are you a translator of Tibetan? Did you read the original text itself, or are you reporting what you heard in a teaching? I am curious as to how someone of the stature of Jamgon Kongtrul could be so wrong about what the text said.

Thank you, Malcolm

Malcolm wrote:

I read the text myself. It is unlikely that Kongtrul has access to the commentary of the sgra thal 'gyur. It was lost.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, October 28th, 2015 at 5:26 AM

Title: Re: Is collective consciousness Buddhist?

Content:

Lazy_eye said:

[

In the Buddhist view, saṃskāra comes directly before Vijñāna in the twelvefold chain. So collective karma would automatically imply collective consciousness to some extent, no?

Malcolm wrote:
No.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, October 28th, 2015 at 5:56 AM

Title: Re: the great vegetarian debate

Content:

nilakantha said:

“You may use those substances that have come to you indirectly without having been touched by killing.”

Malcolm wrote:

This is a recipe for starvation, if taken literally.

nilakantha said:

We know that to be an act of killing in Buddhism it must be intentional.

Malcolm wrote:

Correct. Eating meat is not necessarily intentional killing. Sorry, but it just isn't.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, October 28th, 2015 at 6:28 AM

Title: Re: the great vegetarian debate

Content:

nilakantha said:

Correct. Eating meat is not necessarily intentional killing. Sorry, but it just isn't.

Not if you eat animals who die of natural causes and have been dead long enough for their consciousnesses to leave their bodies, waiting 72 hours to be safe. Even then, you're eating your parents and children from former lives.

Malcolm wrote:

If you eat meat pure in three ways there is no fault and no karma, as Bhavaviveka shows. It is not stipulated that it be from natural causes.

If you eat a tomato, it is certainty that some creature has died in the processing of that plant.

Buddha gave such teachings to attract Jains and so on to Mahāyāna. I do not consider them definitive teachings.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, October 28th, 2015 at 6:54 AM

Title: Re: Nāda yoga ~ Sound as Path ~ Sutra,Tantra,Mantra,Dzogchen

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

BTW, what you cite is a footnote on pg. 383, note 102 which itself is taken from Erik Pema Kunsang's appendix to Circle of the Sun, which is actually a summary of texts written by Khenpo Ngachung and others.

Kongtrul's actual remark on page 92 merely states what I said above, that this is a preliminary practice. It has nothing to do with the unstruck sound you are interested in.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, October 28th, 2015 at 7:01 AM

Title: Re: the great vegetarian debate

Content:

nilakantha said:

Just mentioned it to suggest that canonicity in Buddhism is very different than canonicity in Christianity. Just because a text was composed in China doesn't mean it's not Buddhavacana.

Malcolm wrote:

Likewise, just because a text is a tantra, does not mean it is not Buddhavacana, therefore:

"Whoever eats meat has compassion."

— Hevajra Tantra.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, October 28th, 2015 at 9:00 PM

Title: Re: the great vegetarian debate

Content:

seeker242 said:

No, that hasn't happened as far as I can remember at least. However, talking down to East Asian Buddhism, trying to discount it as illegitimate, has happened over and over. The heir of superiority of Tibetan Buddhism, that some people put forth in this forum, is plainly evident.

Johnny Dangerous said:

As is the air of superiority consistently put forth by militant vegetarians and vegans on this forum. Off the forum too, in fact. Just the other I had one admonish me for eating meat occasionally after arguing with me about medical evidence on the link between

high protein and cholesterol (which he was wrong on), and then proceeding to tell me about what company he favored for pest control - can't make this stuff up.

seeker242 said:

Sure. But if someone is going to say "it's not appropriate to claim" or something like that. Then you should be behaving in the same way as you advise. Otherwise, you're just being hypocritical. If it's inappropriate to marginalize Tibetan views of eating meat, then it's equally inappropriate to marginalize East Asian views.

Malcolm wrote:

In fact there is a long and strong tradition of vegetarianism in Tibet. But it is not universally maintained, and not merely because "Tibetans can't grow vegetables."

The reality that seems to escape many people who advocate a literal interpretation of the Buddha's teachings on not eating meat, is that being a conventional living being who eats food involves harming other beings no matter what kind of diet one follows. The Buddha never made vegetarianism mandatory, even though Devadattva insisted that he should. What the Buddha made mandatory was that we should not directly participate in taking the life of other beings, if possible, though in Mahāyāna ethics, even this is not absolute. The real point I am trying to make is that the Buddha nowhere taught that our liberation was dependent on our diet. For example, do you think bodhisattvas who live in rakṣasa dimensions convert them into vegans?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, October 28th, 2015 at 9:07 PM

Title: Re: How Do You Understand The Word " Mind ? "

Content:

DGA said:

It's a shorthand cipher for Sanskrit concepts like "citta" and "vijñāna."

I tend not to use the term "mind" to translate Buddhist concepts such as Buddha-nature or Dharmata; there are other shorthand terms for that.

I'm glad you've initiated this thread, because the term "mind" really is a muddle in English-language Buddhist discourse.

Malcolm wrote:

The term "mind" in English is a container metaphor. "What I have in mind...", "The thought arose in my mind..."

Consciousness on the other hand is not a container metaphor, it is a description of the awareness a mind has, dating no earlier than Locke.

In reality, "mind" comes from PIE, *men, leading to Latin mēns:

mind

intellect
reasoning, judgement

The actual word "mind: comes from is Proto-Germanic/gamundiz, leading to old English:

ġemynd:

memory; commemoration:
Heora ġemynd is forġiten. The memory of them is forgotten.

thought, thinking

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, October 29th, 2015 at 1:42 AM

Title: Re: Non-Duality in Dzogchen vs Advaita Vedanta

Content:

Matt J said:

He also interestingly does not rule out a correspondence with Kashmir Shaivism.

dzogchungpa said:

FWIW I recently heard Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche, whose Deer Park Institute regularly holds courses and seminars on Kashmir Shaivism, say that it is "very, very identical" with Vajrayana Buddhism

Malcolm wrote:

No, not really. There are of course some parallels, but to say "very, very identical" with Vajrayana Buddhism..." is just exuberant hyperbole and nothing more.

However, it is good that they hold courses on it. People who follow Buddhadharma should learn the tenets of other systems from their exponents in order to be clear about where there are similarities, and more importantly, where there are differences.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, October 29th, 2015 at 2:27 AM

Title: Re: the great vegetarian debate

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The Buddha never made vegetarianism mandatory, even though Devadattva insisted that he should. What the Buddha made mandatory was that we should not directly participate in taking the life of other beings, if possible, though in Mahāyāna ethics, even this is not absolute.

seeker242 said:

Do you think that intentionally giving money and financial support to a slaughterhouse kill floor is not participating somehow? Perhaps if you are a beggar monk on alms rounds, then there wouldn't be any participation. Is anyone here actually a beggar monk?

Malcolm wrote:

I do not think buying meat in a grocery store and say strawberries in a grocery are at all different in terms of harming living beings. Our entire global system of agriculture is based on harming living beings: whether they are "pests" or food animals.

seeker242 said:

The real point I am trying to make is that the Buddha nowhere taught that our liberation was dependent on our diet. For example, do you think bodhisattvas who live in rakṣasa dimensions convert them into vegans?

And the point I would like to make is that your liberation or not-liberation, and my liberation or not-liberation, is largely irrelevant. The relevant question to ask here is: What do the cows themselves think about all this? To ignore their concerns and think of only your own liberation or not liberation, is by definition, a selfish way to view it.

Malcolm wrote:

Now you are changing the terms of the discussion.

Cows, like a "pest" on your lettuce, wishes to preserve their own life at any cost. Your lettuce, produced with pesticides, chemical fertilizers and so on, is no more virtuous a food than a slaughtered cow.

seeker242 said:

Do people really think they can save all beings from suffering, while simultaneously giving support to people who are murdering them? When they could easily choose not to? I'm sorry, but that idea is just beyond my comprehension!

Malcolm wrote:

Then you better stop buying any food at all. It all comes at a great cost in sentient beings' lives, every last bit of greens, every nut and every grain.

Further, if you buy any food at all at any market that sells meat, you are supporting the slaughter of animals as well, it is not like dollars go into their register marked "vegetarian" and "omnivore."

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, October 29th, 2015 at 2:42 AM

Title: Re: the great vegetarian debate

Content:

dharmagoat said:

Malcolm, you make a good case for eating organically grown food.

Becoming vegan would of course minimize the harm you describe.

Malcolm wrote:

Organic pesticides are still poisons that kill things, and in fact most "organic" fertilizer comes from animal husbandry [manure] or slaughter [bone meal, blood meal, feather meal and so on].

Most people really have no idea how their food is produced...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, October 29th, 2015 at 2:43 AM

Title: Re: Non-Duality in Dzogchen vs Advaita Vedanta

Content:

haha said:

As I am not sure that the first Shankara has commented on the Yoga Sutra.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, he did in fact. It is in English translation.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, October 29th, 2015 at 2:45 AM

Title: Re: Non-Duality in Dzogchen vs Advaita Vedanta

Content:

smcj said:

As a footnote I'd like to point out that DKR is Dudjom R.'s grandson and presumably brought up in the tradition of his grandfather. Therefore I think it safe to assume he accepts the Great Madhyamaka/Shentong view of emptiness which is not universally accepted in Nyingma. Thus he may express opinions not all Nyingmapas would agree with.

Malcolm wrote:

No, he was educated Sakya, and while he has taught the gZhan stong pov for balance, it is fair bet to say that like his father, he is not a gzhan stong pa.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, October 29th, 2015 at 4:16 AM

Title: Re: the great vegetarian debate

Content:

seeker242 said:

Not true, I grow and harvest my own organic lettuce and I don't spray it with pesticides.

Malcolm wrote:

So when you dig in the ground, you think you are not killing many creatures?

seeker242 said:

But, you can't do that because that's a precepts violation so you need to hire someone to do that for you. Talk about passing the buck...Jesus!

Malcolm wrote:

If the market is out of meat, I don't buy it. My purchase or non-purchase of meat has no impact at all. Do you have any idea at all of how much meat is wasted every year in landfills because no one bought it?

seeker242 said:

But even if I didn't grow my own lettuce, according to east Asian Buddhism, it would still be more virtuous than eating a slaughtered cow, no question about it.

Malcolm wrote:

But not according to reality.

seeker242 said:

It's a completely and totally unreasonable statement.

Malcolm wrote:

It is a completely reasonable statement. As long you buy your food, you are contributing in toto to a system of agriculture that is grounded in cruelty to living creatures.

In 2010, the average amount of food loss per American was 429 pounds, of which 139 pounds at the retail level and 290 pounds at the consumer level went uneaten (table 2).

At the consumer level, 59 pounds of vegetables, 52 pounds of dairy products, and 41 pounds of meat, poultry, and fish per capita from the food supply in 2010 went uneaten.

<http://www.endhunger.org/PDFs/2014/USDA-FoodLoss-2014.pdf>

Sorry, but the very little money I spend on meat every year just does not count.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, October 29th, 2015 at 5:28 AM

Title: Re: Non-Duality in Dzogchen vs Advaita Vedanta

Content:

smcj said:

As a footnote I'd like to point out that DKR is Dudjom R.'s grandson and presumably brought up in the tradition of his grandfather. Therefore I think it safe to assume he accepts the Great Madhyamaka/Shentong view of emptiness which is not universally accepted in Nyingma. Thus he may express opinions not all Nyingmapas would agree with.

Malcolm wrote:

No, he was educated Sakya, and while he has taught the gZhan stong pov for balance, it is fair bet to say that like his father, he is not a gzhan stong pa.

smcj said:

Thrangu R. got a geshe degree from the Gelugpas and that doesn't stop him from being a Shentongpa.

But it looks like we are both guessing. Until and unless he comes out with a clear statement on the subject neither of us really knows. And given the touchy nature of the subject it seems likely he will keep his cards close to his chest.

Malcolm wrote:

You should read his commentary on Uttaratantra, and in point of fact he has made his POV known.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, October 29th, 2015 at 5:53 AM

Title: Re: Scientific Materialism and Re-birth

Content:

maybay said:

The mechanism is karma, a word you have yet to invoke in this thread.

dharmagoat said:

For good reason. On a Buddhist forum the existence of karma is taken for granted without question.

But what actually is it, how is it possible, and how can it be demonstrated?

Malcolm wrote:

"Karma is volition [cetana], and what proceeds from volition."

You are confusing karma, which is very straightforward, with karma-vipaka, the ripening of karma.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, October 29th, 2015 at 7:17 AM

Title: Re: Non-Duality in Dzogchen vs Advaita Vedanta

Content:

Adamantine said:

I recall reading that Dudjom Rinpoche said that in scholastic study and debate--i.e. from the intellect's point of view it was important to hold the Rangtong view. From the experiential practice perspective, the shentong view was more apt. I'll look for the quote...

dzogchungpa said:

From the BRB: Secondly, concerning the subtle, inner Great Madhyamaka of definitive meaning, it is stated in the Jewel Lamp of the Madhyamaka by the master Bhavya (skal-ldan): The Madhyamaka of the Prasangika and the Svatantrika is the coarse, Outer Madhyamaka. It should indeed be expressed by those who profess well-informed

intelligence during debates with [extremist] Outsiders, during the composition of great treatises, and while establishing texts which concern supreme reasoning. However, when the subtle, inner Madhyamaka is experientially cultivated, one should meditate on the nature of Yogacara-Madhyamaka.

Malcolm wrote:

Actually, I already have shown elsewhere that this is a very inaccurate paraphrase of what Bhavaviveka says...just saying, you can search in this easily...

<https://www.dharmawheel.net/viewtopic.php?f=102&t=13306&p=174083&hilit=outer+madhyamaka#p174083>

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, October 29th, 2015 at 10:37 AM

Title: Re: the great vegetarian debate

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

So when you dig in the ground, you think you are not killing many creatures?

seeker242 said:

No, I grow indoors. No digging required. But even if I did, the point of digging is not to kill animals. The point of making meat is precisely to kill. Killing is the only way to get meat. Unless you are eating roadkill...The idea that there is no difference between the two is nonsensical.

Malcolm wrote:

But in point of fact, the reason why Buddha forbade monks from farming and wandering during the rain season was to prevent harm to living beings, so your point of view is just not consistent.

seeker242 said:

Oh, ok. So east asian Buddhism is not in touch with reality?

Malcolm wrote:

Your point of view is not in touch with reality. It has nothing to do with Buddhism at all.

seeker242 said:

No, the idea that I need to stop buying food altogether, is not even close to being reasonable.

Malcolm wrote:

The idea that you can separate your dollars spent on vegetables in a market that sells meat from its activity in buying meat is not reasonable.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, October 29th, 2015 at 10:41 AM

Title: Re: Non-Duality in Dzogchen vs Advaita Vedanta

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Actually, I already have shown elsewhere that this is a very inaccurate paraphrase of what Bhavaviveka says...just saying, you can search in this easily...

<https://www.dharmawheel.net/viewtopic.php?f=102&t=13306&p=174083&hilit=outer+madhyamaka#p174083>

dzogchungpa said:

Oh, OK, I was just supplying the quotation. It does show how Dudjom Rinpoche thought about things though, doesn't it?

Malcolm wrote:

It just shows that Dudjom Rinpoche was not a very thorough scholar and was repeating someone else's mistake.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, October 29th, 2015 at 9:23 PM

Title: Re: the great vegetarian debate

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Your point of view is not in touch with reality.

seeker242 said:

Interesting. However, it is actually your point of view that has nothing to do with reality. It has nothing to do with Buddhism at all.

Wrong again.

Malcolm wrote:

The idea that any diet is less harmful than another, unless you are begging for alms, is the underlying point. Apart from killing animals yourself which is definitely harmful, all diets are equally harmful because they involve someone harming some creature at some time in the production of food.

For example, in order to make sesame oil, millions of tiny insects are crushed in its production — which of course is why sesame pounders were among the lowest castes in India.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, October 29th, 2015 at 9:39 PM

Title: Re: Non-Duality in Dzogchen vs Advaita Vedanta

Content:

Adamantine said:

I've looked at your link to your own quote. It is not clear what you are saying. Are you saying that the Bhavya that is being paraphrased is a Tibetan Bhavya from a period after the 8th century, as opposed to the famous Bhavaviveka also called Bhavya from the 6th century?

Malcolm wrote:

I am saying there are two Indian Madhyamaka authors, one who wrote a commentary on the MMK, called Bhavaviveka; another whose works were translated by Atisha, Tarkajvala, Blaze of Dialectics, being one of them.

Adamantine said:

You say above "I already have shown elsewhere that this is a very inaccurate paraphrase of what Bhavaviveka says" and then in the link you say "It is not a text by Bhavaviveka. Bhavya is a much later master, post Shantarakshita." So is it a paraphrase of Bhavaviveka or isn't it?

Malcolm wrote:

It is a paraphrase of Bhavya, aka Bhavaviveka II

Adamantine said:

And if it is, and you are saying he is later than Śāntarakṣita, how is it that all biographies of Bhavaviveka date him 6th century, while Śāntarakṣita is clearly 8th century? And while it may be clear to yourself, you have not done a good job of communicating what you think Dudjom Rinpoche's, or Bhavya's, or the Derge canonical edn. of the text: dbu-ma, Vol. Tsha's error is. So, what is it, and who made the original error?

Malcolm wrote:

There are two people referred to by one name. The author of the Madhyamakavṛtti is the first, Bhavaviveka I; the author of the text, Tarkajvala, being paraphrased by Dudjom Rinpoche and other gzhan stong pas, is Bhavaviveka II.

While there is no mention of Prasanga or Svatantra in the Tarkajvala, it does mention a great Madhyamaka. However, that "great Madhyamaka" is defined by how it treats relative truth, i.e. mind only. Coarse outer Madhyamaka treats relative truth in the manner of the Sarvastivadins and so on.

In general, Dudjom Rinpoche repeats an error universally common in Tibetan Buddhism scholastics, and it is by no means confined to him. That is, he cites a version of citation that has been passed down to him in an altered or truncated form without checking the original text to see if it is accurate. This is a big problem with Tibetan treatises in general,

not confined to any one school or any one author.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, October 29th, 2015 at 11:38 PM

Title: Re: Non-Duality in Dzogchen vs Advaita Vedanta

Content:

Simon E. said:

And you are being told by more than one Dzogchen student that it isn't. Now what ?

Malcolm wrote:

I think all he means is that there is similarity in so far as there is an investigation of where thoughts or mind come from, where they go, and where they stay.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, October 30th, 2015 at 1:39 AM

Title: Re: the great vegetarian debate

Content:

Monlam Tharchin said:

According to the interwebs, it takes 6 pounds of corn to make 1 pound of beef.

So the argument about relative quantity of deaths or deaths of insects doesn't hold water.

Malcolm wrote:

Cows did not evolve to eat corn. So I don't eat corn finished beef.

And yes, the argument about relative quantity of deaths or deaths of insects does hold water:

Although U.S. corn is a highly productive crop, with typical yields between 140 and 160 bushels per acre, the resulting delivery of food by the corn system is far lower. Today's corn crop is mainly used for biofuels (roughly 40 percent of U.S. corn is used for ethanol) and as animal feed (roughly 36 percent of U.S. corn, plus distillers grains left over from ethanol production, is fed to cattle, pigs and chickens). Much of the rest is exported. Only a tiny fraction of the national corn crop is directly used for food for Americans, much of that for high-fructose corn syrup.

<http://www.scientificamerican.com/article/time-to-rethink-corn/>

This means that the very act of driving vehicles in the US, where there is ethanol in virtually everything involves deaths for just as many creatures as feed for cows.

Monlam Tharchin said:

The environmental impacts of the meat industry in the US are well documented.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, and I have mentioned many times that industrial meat production is an

environmental disaster.

But I don't buy that kind of meat. Properly grazed animals are a boon for the environment, build soils, sequester carbon and so on.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, October 30th, 2015 at 1:41 AM

Title: Re: the great vegetarian debate

Content:

Monlam Tharchin said:

Again, the environmental harm in terms of pollution and killing in the meat industry is well documented. Is this really even being questioned?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, and this is not being questioned. People who have sense at all do not eat industrially produced meat. Not only is it environmentally unsound to do so, it is not healthy either.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, October 30th, 2015 at 2:26 AM

Title: Re: the great vegetarian debate

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

People who have sense at all do not eat industrially produced meat. Not only is it environmentally unsound to do so, it is not healthy either.

Mkoll said:

From a few pages ago, with added emphasis.

"Bacon, sausages and ham rank alongside smoking as cancer causes, says WHO"

Bacon, ham and sausages rank alongside cigarettes as a major cause of cancer, the World Health Organisation has said, placing cured and processed meats in the same category as asbestos, alcohol, arsenic and tobacco.

The report from the WHO's cancer arm, the International Agency for Research on Cancer, says there is enough evidence to rank processed meats as group 1 carcinogens, because of a causal link with bowel cancer.

It places red meat in group 2A, as "probably carcinogenic to humans". Eating red meat is also linked to pancreatic and prostate cancer, the IARC says.

<https://www.theguardian.com/society/2015/oct/26/bacon-ham-sausages-processed-meats-cancer-risk-smoking-says-who>

Malcolm wrote:

Not much about the current state of industrial civilization is healthy.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, October 30th, 2015 at 2:30 AM

Title: Re: the great vegetarian debate

Content:

Simon E. said:

No one is either promoting nor defending the eating of meat on health grounds. There are those who require meat in their diet to stay well

.

But the Vajrayana view of eating meat is often predicated on arguments that are tangential to health.

Malcolm wrote:

Indeed. The point of eating meat in Vajrayāna is compassion. The view that eating meat harms compassion belongs to sūtra.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, October 30th, 2015 at 3:39 AM

Title: Re: Jodo Shinshu and the Adibuddha

Content:

steveb1 said:

Thanks smcj for your comments... I'm very curious to see how a kind of "Primordial Emanator" Who/Which is a Buddha but not a creator-deity "pans out" in the Vajrayana, e.g., as with the Creator question in the West, if everything is an emanation from the primordial Buddha, does not the question of theodicy arise in the sense that the ultimate cause and therefore the ultimate responsibility for the evils of samsara must be laid on the shoulders of the Emanator, whether a deity or a Buddha? And of course, there's the question of how Jodo Shinshu relates or does not relate Amida Buddha to the Adibuddha... fascinating stuff!

Malcolm wrote:

This is not an accurate article. So ignore it.

The adibuddha simply means the first buddha of this eon.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, October 30th, 2015 at 4:52 AM

Title: Re: the great vegetarian debate

Content:

Monlam Tharchin said:

I apologize to all if what I wrote seems holier than thou because I'm vegetarian as part of

the precept of not killing We each interpret the precepts according to our experiences and lives.

Malcolm wrote:

One can eat meat and still observe the vow of not taking life.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, October 30th, 2015 at 5:02 AM

Title: Re: the great vegetarian debate

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

One can eat meat and still observe the vow of not taking life.

dharmagoat said:

By effectively hiring a hit man.

Malcolm wrote:

No, that would break the vow of not taking life.

As long as you do not see, it request it be done, or do it yourself, there is no fault, it really is that simple.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, October 30th, 2015 at 5:44 AM

Title: Re: the great vegetarian debate

Content:

dharmagoat said:

If it is simpler than that, then past interpreters of the Buddhadharma have made it that way to suit their own specific conditions.

Malcolm wrote:

No, it is just very simple. When meat is pure in three ways, this means you have no hand in the suffering of the animal. By the time it reaches you, there is no consciousness left connected with that to experience suffering.

It is only when one has a direct hand in slaughter by either seeing it done, doing it oneself or asking that it be done for you that there is a fault because one is directly party to the suffering of a given creature.

Vegan ethics are different than Dharma ethics. Some people think the former superior to the latter. Let them. I shall continue to follow the Dharma, not what vegans think.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, October 30th, 2015 at 8:15 AM

Title: Re: the great vegetarian debate

Content:

Monlam Tharchin said:

Malcolm, is creating a demand for killing through purchasing meat products not asking that it to be done for you?

Malcolm wrote:

No.

I am not creating a demand.

For every person in the US, no matter what kind of diet they have, 90 pounds of vegetables per year go to waste, 40 pounds of meat. In other words 6,360,000 tons of meat goes to waste in the US every year, and 14,310,000 tons of vegetables.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, October 30th, 2015 at 8:18 AM

Title: Re: the great vegetarian debate

Content:

Monlam Tharchin said:

Malcolm, is creating a demand for killing through purchasing meat products not asking that it to be done for you?

nilakantha said:

"And if, Mahamati, no one ever ate meat, then they wouldn't kill for that purpose. For most innocent living beings are slaughtered for profit, few for other reasons. It is abominable, Mahamati, that in the over-eagerness of craving for flavor even human flesh is eaten by humans, not to mention the flesh of other living creatures such as animals and birds. Most of this is killed in nets and traps for that purpose, by deluded people afflicted with craving for the taste of meat, as fowlers, herders, fishermen, and so on slaughter innocent creatures of the air, earth, and water in many ways for the sake of profit. And these bitter, cruel-hearted, demoniacal, ruthless people have no concept of living beings as living beings; as they are killing and eating them, they feel no compassion." -- The Lankavatara Sutra

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, this is completely true. But we don't live in a world dominated by Buddhadharma and we never will. We live in a world where the vast majority of people eat meat and demand it. And indeed, as their standard of living increases, so does their demand for meat as is shown in India, China, Japan and so on.

When you kill things, of course you have no compassion.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, October 30th, 2015 at 9:37 AM

Title: Re: the great vegetarian debate

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

When you kill things, of course you have no compassion.

dharmagoat said:

And when you knowingly sponsor others to kill for you..?

Malcolm wrote:

I don't sponsor anyone to kill anything for me. In order for that to happen, there would have to be a living animal that I paid someone to kill for me.

Otherwise, if by buying the meat of an animal already dead in which I had no hand I am nevertheless responsible, so too are all people who buy vegetables and grains responsible for all the deaths of rodents, birds and insects that die in the hundreds of millions every year in order to put gas in your car and rice on your plate.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, October 30th, 2015 at 8:50 PM

Title: Re: the great vegetarian debate

Content:

seeker242 said:

Persuading people to become vegetarian, IS ITSELF, a benefit to sentient beings...However, If someone is going to attack and argue against vegetarianism, I'm going to defend it. That's all there is to it really. There is nothing unreasonable about that. You don't want me to talk about it? Well, then don't attack it with nonsensical arguments. Problem solved.

Malcolm wrote:

No one is attacking vegetarianism per se. What is being critiqued is that one's diet is a measure of one's compassion.

seeker242 said:

The ecosystem of the ocean is more important than your personal feelings. The health of the planet as a whole, is more important than your personal feelings.

Malcolm wrote:

I agree with you. Unfortunately, there is no authority out there that can regulate fishing worldwide. But fisheries management in the US has led to a rebound in fish stocks. The main problem is with developing countries:

In the U.S. this gloomy picture has started to improve, thanks to science-based fisheries management. Thirty-four fish stocks have been declared rebuilt since the year 2000 and more than 90 percent of U.S. fish stocks are not considered overfished. Worldwide, though, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations considers almost

30 percent of fish stocks to be overfished. "The main problem is really in the developing countries where we need more effective institutions for fisheries management," says Christensen. "We need to get effective management introduced in all countries, or it will have dire consequences."

<http://www.scientificamerican.com/article/predatory-fish-have-declined-by-two-thirds-in-the-20th-century/>

seeker242 said:

And it's quite appropriate to try and save them.

Malcolm wrote:

Of course it is. The world environment as a whole is worth preserving. We have nowhere else to live. Properly grazed herds are one of the most effective means of sequestering carbon, actually. And plowing fields releases an enormous amount of carbon every year.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, October 30th, 2015 at 10:52 PM

Title: Re: the great vegetarian debate

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

I guess, what I am trying to say is that becoming a vegetarian is not going to save the world. It won't even put a dent in global warming...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, October 30th, 2015 at 11:15 PM

Title: Re: How Do You Understand The Word " Mind ? "

Content:

tingdzin said:

Very good thread.

Clearly, "mind" is a pretty useless word, almost as bad as "soul" or "consciousness", unless one states from the outset what one means by it. In Buddhism, people have translated, manas, citta, vijñāna, etc. all as "mind", when the terms have completely different meanings. It also obscures the fact that what the English word refers to is a process and not a thing.

Malcolm wrote:

Well, they don't really — Vasubandhu clearly states they are synonyms, distinguished only by time reference, i.e. manas has a past object, vijñāna has a present object, and citta has a future object.

tingdzin said:

It would be quite interesting and productive if someone with a thorough background in Sanskrit (Vedic as well as Buddhist) could trace these and other Sanskrit mental words back to their earliest appearances in Indic literature, and then try to discover,

using related words in other ancient Indo-European languages, what they originally stemmed from, in the same that the English word "is" ultimately stems from an IE root meaning "breathe".

Malcolm wrote:

This a useful thing to do, but as we know, language is diachronic, it evolves according to need, and there is no reason why we cannot make English terms fit Dharma definitions.

As for etymology:

<http://www.etymonline.com/index.php?term=cognizance>

<http://www.etymonline.com/index.php?term=concept>

<http://www.etymonline.com/index.php?term=conscious>

<http://www.etymonline.com/index.php?term=consciousness>

<http://www.etymonline.com/index.php?term=intellect>

<http://www.etymonline.com/index.php?term=intelligence>

<http://www.etymonline.com/index.php?term=know>

<http://www.etymonline.com/index.php?term=mind>

<http://www.etymonline.com/index.php?term=thought>

<http://www.etymonline.com/index.php?term=think>

It really is not so hard to make equivalencies. The Tibetans managed.

Dharma texts, especially Dzogchen texts, need to be translated into a common vernacular, not an obscure academic jargon.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, October 31st, 2015 at 3:39 AM

Title: Re: the great vegetarian debate

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

I guess, what I am trying to say is that becoming a vegetarian is not going to save the world. It won't even put a dent in global warming...

seeker242 said:

Perhaps, but for me, that still isn't a good enough reason not to try.

Kinda like the Bodhisattva vow almost. Is one really going to save a numberless about of living beings from samsara, just by doing meditation, etc. and getting enlightenment? One could argue no because there still going to be wars and killing, etc. even after that happens. But, still not a good enough reason not to try.

Malcolm wrote:

I think other things are more important, like eliminating fossil fuels, changing how we do agriculture, and so on.

And yes, by awakening, one is in a much better position to help others.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, October 31st, 2015 at 8:28 PM

Title: Re: the great vegetarian debate

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

I think other things are more important, like eliminating fossil fuels, changing how we do agriculture, and so on.

seeker242 said:

I personally see those things as an intrinsic part of the issue being discussed. The elimination of fossil fuel isn't going to happen tomorrow so in the meantime it's reasonable for one to try to reduce their consumption of them. At least in the US, a vegan uses only 10% of the fossil fuel that a typical omnivore does, with regards to food. Consumption is going to first have to be reduced, in order for them to be eliminated. If one cares about global warming for example, one should be concerned about their own personal carbon footprint that their own lives and choices create IMO. One may not have power over politicians or corporations half a world away, but one does have power over one's own choices.

Malcolm wrote:

No one disagrees that changing industrial agriculture is one of the major keys to climate change — but you are not going to convince "typical omnivores" that they should stop eating meat. You can however convince them to switch to 100% pastured beef. Pigs and chicken will always require grain, which is why, once upon a time, pork and chicken was more expensive than beef, pound for pound.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, November 1st, 2015 at 4:20 AM

Title: Re: the great vegetarian debate

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Plants Respond to Leaf Vibrations Caused by Insects' Chewing, MU Study Finds

COLUMBIA, Mo. – Previous studies have suggested that plant growth can be influenced by sound and that plants respond to wind and touch. Now, researchers at the University of Missouri, in a collaboration that brings together audio and chemical analysis, have determined that plants respond to the sounds that caterpillars make when eating plants and that the plants respond with more defenses.

<http://munews.missouri.edu/news-releases/2014/0701-plants-respond-to-leaf->

vibrations-caused-by-insects%E2%80%99-chewing-mu-study-finds/

There is increasingly more evidence that plants are in fact sentient, as well as living beings. This is fundamentally one of the reasons why I think many of claims vegetarians make about plant-based diets reducing suffering is pretty much bunk. Plants suffer.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, November 1st, 2015 at 9:19 AM

Title: Re: the great vegetarian debate

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

No one disagrees that changing industrial agriculture is one of the major keys to climate change — but you are not going to convince "typical omnivores" that they should stop eating meat.

seeker242 said:

I have to say I disagree. As I've already convinced hundreds of people. I convinced my brother and sister without even trying. I myself was once a "typical omnivore" and someone else convinced me. There are plenty of future vegetarians out there!

Malcolm wrote:

That is fine, and if you want to run a crusade, go for it. But I am pretty sure the world is not going to go along with it. After all, even in India, which is supposedly a vegetarian country, most people eat animals.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, November 1st, 2015 at 9:22 AM

Title: Re: How Do You Understand The Word " Mind ? "

Content:

Herbie said:

I am not Theravada either. But I can tell you that your nature of mind is nothing but soul theory in disguise.

Malcolm wrote:

How so? In what way does the "nature of the mind" entail an unchanging entity that continues from one life to another, etc.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, November 1st, 2015 at 9:57 AM

Title: Re: Nature of mind vs. soul theory.

Content:

Herbie said:

My take is simply that "mind" is a word used in conventional language in different contexts like in "mind-ful" or "mind-less" but that there is no mind entity at all and therefore there cannot be any mind nature at all. so "mind" is like "santa claus".

.

Malcolm wrote:

And so what substantial entity do you take the "nature of mind" to be? Why do you think, when people discuss the "nature of the mind" they are referring to something that is not merely a convention? Why do you think "nature of the mind" refers to an entity? The mind is empty of being a mind, in other words, there is no ultimate entity called "mind."

Herbie said:

But "becoming conscious" of this or that can well be observed by everybody. therefore "consciousness" is a valid term

Malcolm wrote:

And why is this consciousness different than what is termed "clarity"?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, November 2nd, 2015 at 4:56 AM

Title: Re: the great vegetarian debate

Content:

seeker242 said:

That is fine, and if you want to run a crusade, go for it. But I am pretty sure the world is not going to go along with it. After all, even in India, which is supposedly a vegetarian country, most people eat animals.

Malcolm wrote:

What you call crusade, I call "helping sentient beings". [/quote]

You may think you are helping sentient beings, but you are not helping them.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, November 2nd, 2015 at 4:57 AM

Title: Re: How Do You Understand The Word " Mind ? "

Content:

Herbie said:

I am not Theravada either. But I can tell you that your nature of mind is nothing but soul theory in disguise.

Malcolm wrote:

How so? In what way does the "nature of the mind" entail an unchanging entity that continues from one life to another, etc.

Herbie said:

If it doesn't what's the purpose of positing a permanent "nature of the mind" at all?

Malcolm wrote:

Fire is always hot, water is always wet, a mind is always inseparable emptiness and clarity by nature.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, November 2nd, 2015 at 7:41 AM

Title: Re: How Do You Understand The Word " Mind ? "

Content:

Wayfarer said:

What about 'awareness'? Mind is 'aware' by nature, isn't it? I mean, glass and water are both 'clear' by nature, but they are not mind-like, because they don't embody awareness or knowing. I think 'knowing is to mind as illumination is to light', i.e. Just as the very nature of light is to illuminate, the very nature of mind is to know.

Malcolm wrote:

Clarity is the aware part of the mind. It is short hand for " gsal rig ", "knowing clarity". Sometimes it is termed " shes rig, "knowing awareness": shes rig is gsal ba.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, November 2nd, 2015 at 8:54 AM

Title: Re: How much should Buddhism Change?

Content:

Jesse said:

What parts of buddhism should never change?

Malcolm wrote:

The Dharma part. The rest of Buddhism is irrelevant.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, November 2nd, 2015 at 9:16 AM

Title: Re: the great vegetarian debate

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

You may think you are helping sentient beings, but you are not helping them.

seeker242 said:

Yes, I am. And so is every other person out there advocating it.

dharmagoat said:

Absolutely.

Crikey, Malcolm. How can you make a claim like that? You yourself do more harm than you even realise.

Malcolm wrote:

Abstaining from eating meat does not help animals at all. Not in the least. Not even remotely.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, November 2nd, 2015 at 10:07 AM

Title: Re: the great vegetarian debate

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Abstaining from eating meat does not help animals at all. Not in the least. Not even remotely.

dharmagoat said:

I have saved many animals from harm by choosing not to eat them.

Included in this list are animals in the wild that I have encountered, farm animals that I have personally spared, not to mention the hundreds of animals that have remained uncaught or unborn because I have not contributed money toward their consumption.

Malcolm wrote:

Now we are counting animals in the wild? And how do you personally spare farm animals unless you pay their owners not to slaughter them? A calf for example costs anywhere 250-500 dollars. How many of them have you personally saved?

Arguing that not spending money on meat = saving animals is ludicrous at best.

Actually if you look at the stats: 38 percent of grain products are discarded at point of sale; 50 percent of seafood is discarded at point of sale; 52 percent of fruits and vegetables are discarded at point of sale; 22 percent of meats are discarded at point of sale and 20 percent of dairy are discarded at point of sale. This comes from an estimate made of supermarkets in USA, Canada, Australia and NZ.

What the figures above show is that for every ten pounds of meat we find in the markets, 22 percent of it goes to waste. This means that meat is not being sold into markets

based on some precise metric of demand. You may choose not to eat meat, but you are not saving any beings at all by doing so. The supply of meat clearly outpaces demand. The supply of grain, seafood and fruit and vegetables is clearly outpacing demand.

So, especially with regards to fish, your abstaining from eating animals is saving none of the them. Of half the fish in the sea that have vanished in the past 50 years, half of those went to waste, not counting all the other creatures pulled up by nets.

And your being a vegetarian did not help any of them.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, November 2nd, 2015 at 10:11 AM

Title: Re: How much should Buddhism Change?

Content:

Jesse said:

What parts of buddhism should never change?

Malcolm wrote:

The Dharma part. The rest of Buddhism is irrelevant.

dharmagoat said:

Could you please explain the distinction for those at home?

Malcolm wrote:

Buddhahood and its meaning, samsara [i.e. the process of rebirth of sentient beings] and its causes, dependent origination, karma, emptiness, great compassion, etc.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, November 2nd, 2015 at 10:12 AM

Title: Re: How Do You Understand The Word " Mind ? "

Content:

Wayfarer said:

But it's a metaphor or an analogy. Mind is not actually clear, nor actually luminous.

Clarity and light are metaphorical descriptions of the nature of mind, whereas 'knowing' is intrinsic to it.

Malcolm wrote:

Clarity here means "distinct." In this case, the mind is clear, distinct, unmistakable.

The mind itself is actually clear. The knowing, which is the function we ascribe to mind, is clear. It has no color, shape, etc. The space of the mind is clear, free from objects, taints and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, November 2nd, 2015 at 10:51 AM

Title: Re: the great vegetarian debate

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Now we are counting animals in the wild?

dharmagoat said:

Of course. You are the one thinking only in terms of the farming industry.

Malcolm wrote:

Hahahaha, so you are saving all the ants by not eating them?

And how do you personally spare farm animals unless you pay their owners not to the slaughter them?

By being the keeper of a number of sheep and chickens. You are the one thinking only in terms of urban living.

Keeping is nice, are you perhaps sheering the sheep, killing thousands of insects in their wool? You understand that by keeping chickens, you are condemning countless thousands of insects to death? The ones that make the eggs they lay for you healthy with omega threes, etc.?

Arguing that not spending money on meat = saving animals is ludicrous at best.

I thought it was basic economics. Maybe the meat industry has gone mad. Another reason to leave it well alone.

You keep chickens by your own account. So many insects make their eggs healthy, unlike poor industrial chickens.

Anyone can grow a garden of some sort and fertilize it with vegetable waste. On a small scale pests are seldom a problem.

Anyone who knows how to garden, understands compost mixed with manure is better than just compost alone. Anyone who gardens understands soil is complex living thing that needs many ingredients.

Nor did it help the Syrian refugees.

My vegetarianism helps a number of animals within my sphere of influence.

I doubt it — lots of omnivores keep pets and animals they choose not to eat for this or that reason.

More than if I was not vegetarian.

No. You have not saved a single being in samsara from suffering. Not at all.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, November 2nd, 2015 at 9:46 PM

Title: Re: the great vegetarian debate

Content:

dharmagoat said:

How many insects do you think live on a sheep? Have you seen a healthy sheep's wool?

Do you know what you are talking about?

Malcolm wrote:

Many, just like the many thousands of insects and mites that live on and in our bodies. The same goes with sheep and all other living creatures. Our bodies are a universe of living things.

dharmagoat said:

The chickens are not fed on insects. They find a few for themselves. If they were living in the wild they would eat more. Locking them in would compromise their diet and cause them general unhappiness.

Malcolm wrote:

Chickens eat lots of insects, not merely a few.

dharmagoat said:

Yes. Animal manure is vegetable waste, it is not made out of animal. I wanted to make it clear that I did not suggest fertilizing plants with animal remains, to keep my point simple.

Malcolm wrote:

The organic industry is absolutely dependent on animal products, feather meal, bone meal, blood meal and so on. Where do you think those come from? Chicken manure has a fairly high content of insect proteins in it.

dharmagoat said:

Of course I have not saved any being from suffering itself, but by not having them killed I have saved them from some suffering. Some is better than none.

Malcolm wrote:

That's funny, the suffering of death is the same whether you die of natural causes or not.

[/quote]

Despite the impression that some may give, chanting mantras is not a substitute for practicing harmlessness. By all means do both.[/quote]

You cannot harm a piece of meat.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, November 3rd, 2015 at 1:18 AM

Title: Re: How Do You Understand The Word " Mind ? "

Content:

Matt J said:

Thanks for "clarifying."

I've noticed that ChNNR says that nature rang-bzhin is gsal ba, while Tsyonki Rinpoche

(and some of the Bonpos) says it is clarity in the sense of "knowing." I noticed on the citations related to Natural Luminosity* that gsal ba is purity. But it sounds to me that while gsal rig is gsal ba, gsal ba isn't necessarily gsal rig. Is this correct?

Malcolm wrote:

They are synonymous.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, November 3rd, 2015 at 1:18 AM

Title: Re: How Do You Understand The Word " Mind ? "

Content:

Wayfarer said:

Unless "obscured by adventitious defilements", right?

Malcolm wrote:

It cannot be obscured by adventitious defilements any more than the sun is obscured by clouds.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, November 3rd, 2015 at 3:13 AM

Title: Re: Alleviation of suffering now

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Suffering is a result, it cannot be removed. However, it can be prevented.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, November 3rd, 2015 at 3:34 AM

Title: Re: the great vegetarian debate

Content:

dharmagoat said:

By all means spare a thought for the suffering of beings as small as a dust mite, but it seems to me completely impractical to avoid actions that may unintentionally harm them. Such actions of course include washing you own body and clothes. There is inevitably a kind of background noise of suffering we cause that we simply cannot avoid. Presented with this fact (and equating the suffering of microorganisms with that of more highly developed animals), some will rationalize that practicing harmlessness is futile, and disregard the tangible suffering inflicted on the animals that they choose to exploit. Worse still are the crude justifications made for overlooking this suffering. When these justifications are made in the name of the Buddhadharma, the truly compassionate must speak out.

Malcolm wrote:

When you know they are there, you are not "unintentionally" harming them, you are ignoring them.

For example, just as when one drives a car in the spring and summer, thousands of insects wind up smashed in the grill of our cars. We may regret all the thousands of insect lives we take, but we certainly do nothing about them. We keep driving anyway, since our human business is so much more important than theirs, and we are more "highly developed" sentient beings.

The thing is, there no qualitative difference between one creature and another, there is only quantitative difference in terms of sense organ development. This is why we can be reborn as bugs, and they can be reborn as humans.

Ignoring the suffering we cause creatures who live in the ground when we plough fields and calling it "unintentional" when we know full well we are inflicting all kinds of harm on all kinds of creatures, that is a justification. At least I understand that all the food that I eat comes with a price of suffering. I don't pretend that some suffering is excusable and some suffering is not — I certainly do not make a distinction between the suffering of one creature and that of another. I understand that my movement in the world is inevitably harmful whether I intend it or not, and knowing that means that I cannot really claim that I am "unintentionally" harming beings. All I can say is that I did not see a being, and develop the motive to kill it and proceed with that motivation, and from the point of view of the Buddha, I am therefore free of the karma of killing. But that also applies to all the meat that I eat.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, November 3rd, 2015 at 3:49 AM

Title: Re: the great vegetarian debate

Content:

Qing Tian said:

Is a person who offers a cent with good intention less meritorious than one who offers a dollar?

Malcolm wrote:

That depends on which patron is free of the three wheels.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, November 3rd, 2015 at 9:01 PM

Title: Re: the great vegetarian debate

Content:

Dan74 said:

Intention seems to be key, along with harm minimisation. There is more and more evidence that meat harms not only the animals but the environment as it is a carbon intensive industry. As for intention, most meat-eaters (including myself) crave meat and place their craving above any consideration for the welfare of the animals. This is not a good thing.

/

Malcolm wrote:

Industrial meat cultivation is certainly bad for the environment.

But we humans put our welfare above that of other creatures, including other humans, all the time. It is the norm, not the exception. Every time we dig in the ground, "relocate" some "pest" we do not like in "our" house and so on, every time we decide to disturb some environment so we can exploit it. For example, we decide we need to irrigate a field — we give absolutely no thought to the millions, possibly billions of creatures we are drowning. But vegetarians consider rice "less harmful."

The idea that being a vegetarian is less harmful than choosing to consume consciously raised, grass fed beef and pastured pork and chicken is ludicrous.

The fact is that everything we do harms some one or something. We have our vanity of course, but in the end, everyone chooses to ignore the harm they do to some creature either directly or indirectly. At least I don't pretend. I choose my diet based on what is good for the planet as a whole, understanding that all my choices involve harming some creature or another.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, November 4th, 2015 at 2:27 AM

Title: Re: Some Questions about DC

Content:

Queequeg said:

Taking this premise for granted, that all things are vibrational frequencies, why limit this dispersal into light to the personal body? If one can so transform one's body into light, why not transform the entirety of the dharma dhatu into light? Free all beings in one instant? Is there some real distinction between the body and the environment in which the body is ensconced?

Malcolm wrote:

It is simple really. Consciousness in its pristine state arises as an appearance of color to itself. This appearance is reified as the elements and so on.

When one attains buddhahood in the system of Dzogchen, everything and all sentient beings are liberated into light.

Rainbow body is just a sign that you have reached this realization. One does not transform one's body into light, one's body reverts into light.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, November 4th, 2015 at 2:48 AM

Title: Re: Some Questions about DC

Content:

Queequeg said:

The implication seems to be that my ignorance appears to you as form also. If I was realized, however, my form would appear to you to revert into light.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes. But in fact my afflictions are my own, so even if you were fully realized in this lifetime fully, the state called Phowa Chenpo, great transference, you would still appear to me in an ordinary form.

It is well known that the traces in the mind streams of all sentient beings are all that hold this mundane appearance together. These traces are even strong enough to generate appearances for other sentient beings, such as the container universe and the beings in it. These traces come from ignorance. Ignorance comes from not recognizing our primordial state. Dzogchen practice is how that ignorance is reversed.

As Mañjuśrimitra says:

Also, my body appears as the infinite worlds and bodies of living beings.

The mind and traces are not the same, not different and are very hard to investigate.

However, in reality as he says:

The mind that clings to entities and clings to cause and result

itself appears as cause and condition, but because those are nondual, there is no arising and perishing.

Because there is no arising and perishing, there is no self and other. Because there is no death and transmigration, there is no permanence and annihilation.

Therefore, there is no delusion or samsara. In fact, there is also no nirvana.

From a Dzogchen point of view, even the pure appearance of a Buddha is not real. As he says:

Because the awakening of the sugata does not exist, his magical apparitions appear to the deluded, similar to an illusion.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, November 4th, 2015 at 2:57 AM

Title: Re: Earth Termas - real objects?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Everything that buddhas do is a lie, because everything we sentient beings perceive is deceptive, including buddhas.

Sonam Wangchug said:

Yes, Earth terma's do exist.. There are of course many stories surrounding their revelations. However the proof is in the pudding.

It's obvious in dealing with the genuine tertons, just how amazing and genuine they are, and also Not only on the level of Sa (earth) Terma objects

Such as Phurba's, and statues, and all .. However the Various Sadhana's which were also revealed in scroll form .. The realized beings these terma's have produced.

I can see how one could have a doubt, something common place in this age of skepticism, but keeping an open mind, (as you sound like you are trying to do) is the way to proceed..

Tashi delek

Nosta said:

Since we are dealing with real buddhist masters - that fully follow the precept of not lie - I believe that they are not deceiving people (with illusionist tricks and so on) when retrieving terms. Unless they have some kind of secret practice -and this is just my imagination wandering - where they should do tricks to make people follow them or follow Buddhism. There is also the possibility that they may want win the respect, fear and adoration of people by doing tricks (recovering terms).

I prefer to believe in the idea that they have the power to transcend reality and make wonders like this, but as someone raised in a world filled with scientific knowledge, sometimes i question myself and have some doubts. A little bit like the Pure Land teachings: sometimes I think that they are too much wonderful to be real!

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, November 4th, 2015 at 3:30 AM

Title: Re: Non-Duality in Dzogchen vs Advaita Vedanta

Content:

alpha said:

If kadag is included in the above schema as one of the partial and incomplete positions by which some unilaterally define the basis, would it not be erroneous to hold the view that kadag is the only definitive view ?

Malcolm wrote:

No. Why? Defining the basis as kadag is the position of the 17 tantras. The other six are the partial positions.

As Vimalamitra/Nyibum states:

First, establishing original purity as faultless. Dharmatā, original purity, is free from all proliferation. Since it is unaffected by ignorance, it is free from all obscurations...

Now comes the intrinsic characteristics of the faultless position, the actual extensive explanation of the reality of original purity. The reality of the original basis that exists permeated with the intrinsic nature of the three pristine consciousnesses, essence, nature and compassion, is the inwardly illuminated original purity...

The basis is not possible if it is not originally pure.

The proof text he uses, among others, is the Self-Arisen Vidyā Tantra:

Also, the basis of great original purity

is endowed with essence, nature and compassion.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, November 4th, 2015 at 3:42 AM

Title: Re: Some Questions about DC

Content:

Queequeg said:

The implication seems to be that my ignorance appears to you as form also. If I was realized, however, my form would appear to you to revert into light.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes. But in fact my afflictions are my own, so even if you were fully realized in this lifetime fully, the state called Phowa Chenpo, great transference, you would still appear to me in an ordinary form.

Queequeg said:

If I am following, is it then fair to say that when an adept reverts to light, leaving behind the hair and nails, that outward event (light show) is for the benefit of us deluded beings? I.e. a show to nurture our faith?

Malcolm wrote:

Some people explain in that way, but is not correct. What you are describing is called little rainbow body. This happens when a person has not completed their practice in this lifetime. When they enter the bardo of dharmatā, they remain in that and finish as much as their practice as they can before they are liberated completely into the three kāyas.

Queequeg said:

It is well known that the traces in the mind streams of all sentient beings are all that hold this mundane appearance together. These traces are even strong enough to generate appearances for other sentient beings, such as the container universe and the beings in it. These traces come from ignorance. Ignorance comes from not recognizing our primordial state. Dzogchen practice is how that ignorance is reversed. With regard to the primordial state, is there a Garden of Eden so to speak, and then a fall from purity?

Malcolm wrote:

Only as a didactic device. "Primordial state" is an alternate term for the what is otherwise translated as "the original basis [thog ma'i gzhi]."

Queequeg said:

Believe it or not, I think that from the East Asian Lotus Buddhism perspective, if I understand correctly, none of that is controversial. Our language might be different, and may very well have different understandings of these statements. We make a distinction

between the Primordial Buddha, which is the True Aspect of each being's Mind, and the Buddhas with 32 Major and 80 Minor characteristics who appear in response to the needs of deluded beings. The way we put it, we each embody all sentient as well as insentient beings such as plants, trees, rocks down to atoms and up to the entire dharmadhatu environment in a way that mind and body, self and environment, and person and reality are "two but not two". Our starting point is the Primordial Buddha's revelation of his body, which we do not presently understand completely, and then progression through investigation to full realization. Provisional Buddha (the Buddha that appears as Buddha) is the awakening function of our Mind.

Malcolm wrote:

The reason I quoted Mañjuśrimitra is that his text, Meditation of Bodhicitta, is written for sūtra practitioners who may have doubts about a path that discards cause and result, to show this is the true intention of Mahāyāna.

That being said, the difference between Dzogchen and sūtra Dharmas is that in sūtra Dharmas no methods are explained how to achieve the result they describe, apart from the lengthy and forbidding paths and stages.

The attainment of rainbow body, in any form, is dependent on receiving proper Dzogchen transmission and instructions, and then putting them into practice.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, November 4th, 2015 at 3:47 AM

Title: Re: the great vegetarian debate

Content:

Dan74 said:

I'm not sure if alternative meat industries have a smaller carbon footprint than the commercial ones, do they?

Malcolm wrote:

100% Grass fed? Are you kidding? Much less of a carbon footprint than any organic field plowed with tractors, etc. Of course, chicken requires grain, but pigs are quite happy on acorns, etc.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, November 4th, 2015 at 3:52 AM

Title: Re: Some Questions about DC

Content:

fckw said:

I had always assumed that "light body" and "rainbow body" are actually not the same thing. But we'd need the specific Tibetan or Sanskrit terms to know which one the question really targets.

Malcolm wrote:

They are terms used interchangeably.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, November 4th, 2015 at 4:01 AM

Title: Re: Non-Duality in Dzogchen vs Advaita Vedanta

Content:

alpha said:

What i have is different.

Isn't the basis the indivisibility of kadag and lhun grub?

Malcolm wrote:

The reality of the original basis that exists permeated with the intrinsic nature of the three pristine consciousnesses, essence, nature and compassion, is the inwardly illuminated original purity.

It has lhun grub, but lhun grub is the cause of making mistakes, whereas, ka dag can never be the cause of error. This is why 17 Tantras state that the basis is ka dag, and that this is the correct position. Sometimes, the union of ka dag and lhun grub is called "ka dag chen po" — still, ka dag is more important because it can never be a basis for delusion, unlike lhun grub.

alpha said:

To me those quotes you gave are only arguments to support the originally pure nature of the basis. Because this purity is not just purity it has a potentiality and a luminosity, aspects which are actually referred in your quotes essence, nature and compassion

Malcolm wrote:

They are taken directly from the book, Buddhahood in This Life [to be published by Wisdom next year], where the author, Vimalamitra, runs through the seven positions of the basis, and identifies the position of the basis as ka dag as the only faultless one. This is a summary of an extensive section in the commentary of the Kun bzang klong drug tantra. Vimalamitra does not go into it further because, as he says, it is mostly an intellectual discussion, not for practitioners.

Ka dag does not mean only emptiness, though sometimes people misunderstand it that way. Ka dag refers to the fact that reality has always been pure, never affected by ignorance and so on. This is why it is the basis, and not lhun grub.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, November 4th, 2015 at 4:13 AM

Title: Re: Some Questions about DC

Content:

Queequeg said:

Per the bolded part, does that mean if an adept dissolves into the little rainbow body that is indicative of a process with an inevitable end and which can come before the completion of certain other practices carried out in the Bardo?

Malcolm wrote:

It means that the practitioner is engaged in the final stages of integrating with the basis, described above as "original"

Queequeg said:

Also, can you explain what it means to be liberated into the three kayas?

Malcolm wrote:

It means that having realized the dharmakāya, one now can act with the rūpakāya.

Queequeg said:

That being said, the difference between Dzogchen and sūtra Dharmas is that in sūtra Dharmas no methods are explained how to achieve the result they describe, apart from the lengthy and forbidding paths and stages.

Aye, that does seem to be the rub.

I understand that Tantra is also distinct from Dzogchen. Can you elaborate on that distinction?

Malcolm wrote:

Sūtra in general belongs to the path of renunciation — this is the main method of practice.

Tantra in general belongs to the path of transformation — using the creation stage and completion stage and so on, generating oneself as the deity, reciting mantras, transforming one's impure dimension into a pure one.

Dzogchen is path of liberation or self-liberation, where one does not need to apply any sort of antidote, either in terms of renunciation or transformation. Instead phenomena are allowed to self-liberate just as they are by recognizing one's primordial state and integrating with that. Apart from Norbu Rinpoche's teachings, the place where these three paths are most clearly explained is in the Zhang Zhung sNyan rgyud teachings belonging to the Bon school, especially the outer cycle:

Now then, the first, the path of renunciation, gives up the ten nonvirtues and accomplishes the ten virtues. The result is asserted to be buddhahood after many lives and eons. That is the path of causal characteristics.

Second, the so called "path of transformation" of result secret mantra is transforming the outer universe into a celestial mansion, transforming the inhabitants into gods and goddesses, transforming the five samsaya substances into the five ambrosias, transforming the five aggregates into the five deities and transforming the five afflictions into the five wisdoms. This is asserted as buddhahood, being the path of result secret mantra.

However, neither the path of renunciation nor the path of transformation will be explained here. What is to be explained here now is the inseparability of cause and result in the great vehicle.

In the explanation of the so called “path of great self liberation with nothing to accept or reject” samsara and nirvana, existence and nonexistence, the duality of permanence and annihilation, the duality of happiness and suffering, the duality of attachment and aversion, the five afflictions, the eight consciousnesses, all appearances of deluded concepts of subject and object are not abandoned and are not to be abandoned. Since everything arises from the mind, in the sole unique sphere, abandonment and accepting do not exist as a duality. Therefore, everything that arises self-arises, everything that is liberated is self-liberated, therefore it is termed “the path of liberation.”

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, November 4th, 2015 at 4:18 AM

Title: Re: Earth Termas - real objects?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Everything that buddhas do is a lie, because everything we sentient beings perceive is deceptive, including buddhas.

dzogchungpa said:

Mind is blown.

Malcolm wrote:

I really think you should use it as your new sig, with attribution of course.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, November 4th, 2015 at 4:28 AM

Title: Re: Non-Duality in Dzogchen vs Advaita Vedanta

Content:

alpha said:

Well, the way you approach it it makes the basis just like dead space.

Malcolm wrote:

Not at all, but you can see it however you like.

alpha said:

Is this the definitive view?

Pearl Necklace tantra states:

"The ultimate nature is primordially pure and indescribable.
Its character is spontaneous and whatever appears is perfect".

The implication of this statement is that the basis apart from not falling into the extreme of permanence is not like nothing or dead space .

Malcolm wrote:

The Six Dimensions of Samantabhadra states:

It is present as pure from the beginning,
having always appeared as immaculate.

Among all of these stages of intellect,
the essence is pure from the beginning.

Vimalamitra comments on this passage:

When the asserted positions about the seven bases that are the object of knowledge are divided into two, there are six defective positions concerning the basis and the faultless position of original purity which is confirmed in our own texts...A follower of philosophical tenets asserts that all objects of knowledge are confirmed from the seven positions because assertions about the basis are confirmed through proofs, refutations, contradictions and replies. Those other six defective philosophical tenets are clearly explained in the Six Dimensions and so on. However, those who follow philosophical tenets [15a] resemble someone who has not seen Vajrāsana telling stories about Vajrāsana. Simply put, they do not confirm the profound meaning that is to be understood.

So however you want to slice it up, of the seven positions about the basis, only the position that the basis is originally pure is non-defective.

alpha said:

One the other hand what good does it do to make kadag the focus of one's view and place lhun grub on a lesser position as potentially being the cause of error.

To me focusing on kadag alone as being the definitive view can lead to errors as well.

Malcolm wrote:

Addressing your concern, he continues:

Since the six assertions about the basis are recognized as the potential of original purity, the practice of the faultless philosophical tenet is like explaining Vajrāsana having been there. That is without error. In addition, it is so because the explanatory description is faultless. People who follow philosophical tenets can only partially explain how the six assertions about the basis are defective.

In other words, it is recognized that the other six positions about the basis, while faulty, do indeed address an aspect of the potentiality of original purity. Nevertheless, only describing the basis as original purity is considered absolutely faultless from the point of view of the system of Dzogchen laid out in the 17 Tantras.

Maybe the problem here is that your understanding of original purity is too confined to the emptiness aspect. Original purity has essence, nature and compassion. It has the three kāyas. Why? Because it is dharmakāya. There is no dharmakāya without the other

two.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, November 4th, 2015 at 4:35 AM

Title: Re: the great vegetarian debate

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

100% Grass fed? Are you kidding? Much less of a carbon footprint than any organic field plowed with tractors, etc.

Mkoll said:

I'd like to see the peer-reviewed study that comes to that conclusion.

Malcolm wrote:

You can find them, if you want to look.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, November 4th, 2015 at 5:24 AM

Title: Re: the great vegetarian debate

Content:

Mkoll said:

Can you provide a link to the actual studies? That's where you got the information to make that claim, right? You're not just making it up, are you?

Malcolm wrote:

Grass fed beef does not require water the way feed lot beef does, does not require grain or antibiotics, the herds are moved from pasture to pasture, building soil and sequestering carbon.

All of the great savannahs were created by moving herds of animals, and in the case of the American Great Plains, were created by humans for animals by burning away forests. These savannahs sequestered immense amounts of carbon. Ripping them up in the 19th century released a lot of carbon.

Now, large scale industrial organic agriculture requires great petroleum inputs, as well as animal inputs from slaughterhouses, irrigation [often in unsustainable places like California and Texas], and so on.

So no, I am not making it up. If you look, you can find studies.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, November 4th, 2015 at 5:39 AM

Title: Re: Non-Duality in Dzogchen vs Advaita Vedanta

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Maybe the problem here is that your understanding of original purity is too confined to the emptiness aspect. Original purity has essence, nature and compassion. It has the three kāyas. Why? Because it is dharmakāya. There is no dharmakāya without the other two.

alpha said:

I always maintained that original purity is indivisible with lhun grub and it didn't make sense for you to say that the true definitive view is only original purity out of the two. Isolating one aspect over another is akin to falling into partiality (the extreme of annihilation), that is how I see it.

Malcolm wrote:

It is not me who is saying that, it is Vimalamitra who is saying that in several books, not just one. You can accept or reject whatever you like.

If it makes you happy to insist on adding lhun grub, ok, but it isn't necessary. The Self-Arisen Vidyā Tantra states:

The basis is called "great original purity" which is present as the essence, nature and compassion. The pristine consciousness of the unchanging essence manifests without impediment and is called "the reality of the youthful vase body." The nature is the unimpeded five lights. For example, the appearance of compassion is like the absence of clouds. That is called "the reality of original purity," i.e. unlimited and not falling into any position

And:

One will be liberated on the ultimate stage of original purity.

And:

Next, the absence of anything higher than the pristine consciousness that naturally arises on the stage of original purity is the attainment of the sixteen stage, Highest Wisdom.

And the String of Pearls Tantra states:

Everything actualizes buddhahood in the state of original purity free from taints.

The Realms and Transformations of Sound Tantra states:

Further, when the mind is ripened,
the basis is present in the dharmakāya,
the taints upon original purity are exhausted
and the essence has never been deluded.

Vimalamitra states:

The basis, the state of initial original purity, is liberated because its essence is not established at all.

Its nature appears as everything
and its compassion arises in every way.

It is pretty clear to me that the intention of the 17 Tantras is that the basis is ka dag, original purity.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, November 4th, 2015 at 6:05 AM

Title: Re: the great vegetarian debate

Content:

Mkoll said:

Can you provide a link to the actual studies? That's where you got the information to make that claim, right? You're not just making it up, are you?

Malcolm wrote:

Grass fed beef does not require water the way feed lot beef does, does not require grain or antibiotics, the herds are moved from pasture to pasture, building soil and sequestering carbon.

All of the great savannahs were created by moving herds of animals, and in the case of the American Great Plains, were created by humans for animals by burning away forests. These savannahs sequestered immense amounts of carbon. Ripping them up in the 19th century released a lot of carbon.

Now, large scale industrial organic agriculture requires great petroleum inputs, as well as animal inputs from slaughterhouses, irrigation [often in unsustainable places like California and Texas], and so on.

So no, I am not making it up. If you look, you can find studies.

Mkoll said:

I worded that wrong. I meant to ask if you're making up the studies that claim that grass-fed beef is less carbon intensive than organic agriculture. Because I did look for them and didn't find any.

Again, have you actually seen these studies or are you just making them up? If you've seen them, it shouldn't be too hard to direct me to where they are...

Malcolm wrote:

<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/an302>

Here is an example. Properly managed, ruminants could be capable of 0 carbon emissions and have a positive impact on carbon sequestration.

There used to be millions of buffalo on the Great Plains — according to current ideology, this should have contributed greatly to global warming, but the opposite in fact is true. Native Americans herded buffalo for 10,000 years and built one of the largest carbon sinks ever in human history.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, November 4th, 2015 at 6:07 AM

Title: Re: Non-Duality in Dzogchen vs Advaita Vedanta

Content:

alpha said:

In the schema i came across in my readings the 7 positions listed do not include bdag nyid chen po

The list is as follows:

Kadag

lhun grub

ma ges pa

nges pa'i don

cir yang sgyur du btub pa

cir yang khas blang du btub pa

sna tshogs su char'ba

asunthatneversets said:

The nine position scheme consists of varying interpretations (of the basis) that key adepts have chosen to champion. They are:

1. gza' gtad dang bral ba [championed by Oḍḍiyāna Mahārāja and Vimalamitra]
2. lhun grub [Garab Dorje]
3. bdag nyid chen po [Vairocana]
4. rang byung ye shes [Ānandā (nun)]
5. bya btsal dang dral ba [Buddhagupta]
6. bde ba chen po [Śrī Siṃha]
7. gnyis su med pa [Kukurāja and Mañjuśrimitra]
8. thig le chen po [Rājahastin]
9. chos thams cad gzhi ji bzhin pa [Garab Dorje, Dhahenatalo (king) and gNubs-chen Sangs-rgyas ye-shes]

Malcolm wrote:

You should clarify this is from sems sde, not man ngag sde.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, November 4th, 2015 at 6:40 AM

Title: Re: the great vegetarian debate

Content:

Mkoll said:

I don't see anything in that study that says grass-fed beef is less carbon intensive than organic agriculture. I also didn't see anything saying that ruminants are capable of zero carbon emissions.

You also said "studies." Plural means more than one. Can you deliver?

Malcolm wrote:
Also you can look.

Prior to oil age, the earth was basically in a steady state carbon wise for millennia. Meat and all.

What has causing global warming is oil, and nothing else.

Cattle raising that uses little or no oil is naturally going to be more efficient, carbon wise, that any plowing of fields done the old fashioned way.

However with proper strategies that include grazing animals...

<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0167198705000401>

Then, the damage that conventional plowing does to the land...

<http://agriculturejournals.cz/publicFiles/50927.pdf>:
The moldboard plow causes the largest amount of carbon losses...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, November 4th, 2015 at 7:33 AM

Title: Re: Non-Duality in Dzogchen vs Advaita Vedanta

Content:

asunthatneversets said:

The nine position scheme consists of varying interpretations (of the basis) that key adepts have chosen to champion. They are:

1. gza' gtad dang bral ba [championed by Oḍḍiyāna Mahārāja and Vimalamitra]

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9. chos thams cad gzhi ji bzhin pa [Garab Dorje, Dhahenatalo (king) and gNubs-chen Sangs-rgyas ye-shes]

Malcolm wrote:

You should clarify this is from sems sde, not man ngag sde.

Thanks, I actually wasn't aware of this, although makes sense. Are Nubchen's expositions generally classified as sems sde?[/quot
yup

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, November 4th, 2015 at 7:52 PM

Title: Re: Non-Duality in Dzogchen vs Advaita Vedanta

Content:

MalaBeads said:

Malcolm,

Would you say more about rupakaya? You can assume i know nothing except maybe the word.

Thank you.

Malcolm wrote:

Rūpa means form — it refers to the sambhogakāya and nirmanakāya.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, November 4th, 2015 at 7:54 PM

Title: Re: Non-Duality in Dzogchen vs Advaita Vedanta

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

If it makes you happy to insist on adding lhun grub, ok, but it isn't necessary. The Self-Arisen Vidyā Tantra states:

The basis is called “great original purity” which is present as the essence, nature and compassion.

tomamundsen said:

Isn't lhundrup the "nature", though?

Malcolm wrote:

lhun drub and thugs rje are potentials of ka dag.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, November 4th, 2015 at 9:32 PM

Title: Re: the great vegetarian debate

Content:

Johnny Dangerous said:

As to complicity, as I've said a million times, we are all already indirectly complicit in lots of horrible things

seeker242 said:

The point I'm trying to make is that this is largely irrelevant. It doesn't matter if our activity causes a lot of inevitable harm or not. The point is that not all harm is inevitable...The point is that not all harm causing is created equal. If one can choose a less harmful choice, one should choose a less harmful choice. The idea that "it won't matter anyway" is just a cop out. The same logic can be used to refute recycling or even voting in a democratic election. It can be used to refute any action where the effect is cumulative. AKA "my individual vote won't matter, so I'm not going to vote". Just imagine if everyone believed that...

Malcolm wrote:

No one is saying that we should not practice ahimsa. What we are saying is that your idea of "ahimsa" is problematical when you claim that by definition eating meat is harmful.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, November 4th, 2015 at 10:23 PM

Title: Re: the great vegetarian debate

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

No one is saying that we should not practice ahimsa. What we are saying is that your idea of "ahimsa" is problematical when you claim that by definition eating meat is harmful.

dharmagoat said:

We can agree that once an animal has been killed for its meat the harm has been done. As you have said, meat itself does not suffer. What you consistently overlook is how the acceptance of this meat, especially if it is paid for, completes the cycle of supply and demand. By rewarding the killing for meat, the consumer is encouraging subsequent killing.

Malcolm wrote:

And I have also demonstrated that meat is consistently supplied to the market in excess of demand. Our commodity markets are driven on futures, expectations of demand, not

real demand.

This is not like Tibet, where, for example, Shabkar could reasonably scold monasteries for ordering sheep to be slaughtered based on demand for meat in monasteries.

The number of slaughtered animals in the chain far exceeds the actual demand for meat. Additionally, as I also pointed out, money we pay to markets which sell meat is not divvied up from moneys from vegetables. The only way to avoid supporting that market's purchasing of meat in general is to stop shopping at omnivore markets.

I am certain that in the near future, there will be a trend toward vegan and vegetarian markets — but that does not exist now, at least nowhere near where I live.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, November 4th, 2015 at 10:52 PM

Title: Re: the great vegetarian debate

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

And I have also demonstrated that meat is consistently supplied to the market in excess of demand. Our commodity markets are driven on futures, expectations of demand, not real demand.

dharmagoat said:

This does not mean that demand ceases to influence production.

Malcolm wrote:

The number of slaughtered animals in the chain far exceeds the actual demand for meat. Additionally, as I also pointed out, money we pay to markets which sell meat is not divvied up from moneys from vegetables. The only way to avoid supporting that market's purchasing of meat in general is to stop shopping at omnivore markets.

dharmagoat said:

A cattle rancher is not paid for the crops his neighbour grows.

Malcolm wrote:

They are separate businesses.

A market is one business. When you buy groceries in a market, you are supporting all that market's economic activities, not merely the ones of which you approve. Its like taxes — when you pay taxes, you are supporting all of the Gvt.'s activities, including wars of which you may disapprove. You may not approve of the wars which are fought, freeing you from the karmic burden of them; you may not approve of a market selling meat, freeing you from that that burden of karma. I also do not approve of killing and slaughter, but I also know that my eating meat bought at whole foods, for example, has nothing to do with the act of ordering an animal killed, etc. It would be different of course if I ordered a side of beef from a local rancher. But I don't.

If our culture changes so that no one buys meat, I won't buy it or eat it since it won't be available any longer. But all the evidence suggests that animals will be slaughtered for meat long after we are gone, and in the mean time, since there is no fault with eating meat that is pure in three ways, I will continue to do so when I need to, since I have found that I actually need to eat some amount of meat, to maintain my health. It is a survival issue.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, November 4th, 2015 at 10:57 PM

Title: Re: Buddhism without buddism

Content:

Tsongkhapafan said:

Sometimes you can water things down too much and create the lowest common denominator. My problem with the Dalai Lama's teaching is that he makes it sound as if you don't need Buddhism to make the world a better place...

Malcolm wrote:

You don't. Dharma [Lha chos] is about personal transformation, not social transformation.

Tsongkhapafan said:

you just need secular ethics.

Malcolm wrote:

Secular ethics [Mi chos] are about outer transformation and governance, not inner transformation. We need both Lha chos and Mi chos.

Tsongkhapafan said:

He almost never encourages people to take refuge in the Three Jewels which is most odd for a Buddhist monk.

Malcolm wrote:

Dharma is not an evangelical religion.

Tsongkhapafan said:

Secular ethics is too general and is never going to provide a real solution to people's suffering - the only solution is liberation and enlightenment which are only part of Buddhism, therefore to my mind, the selling of secular ethics is selling people short and undermining Buddhism.

Malcolm wrote:

You ought to study the freedoms and endowments again. Not everyone has the karma to be a practitioner of Dharma. You can lead a horse to water, but you cannot make him drink.

In the meantime, secular ethics are what the world needs. They will lead eventually to Dharma.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, November 4th, 2015 at 11:09 PM

Title: Re: the great vegetarian debate

Content:

dharmagoat said:

Do you not have shops that sell only vegetables in the US?

Malcolm wrote:

Not where I live, and not in most of the USA.

dharmagoat said:

Here we can choose not to shop at supermarkets. We even have the option of buying from local growers. Does this mean that the points you are applying to everyone do not apply to everyone?

Malcolm wrote:

All of the CSA's where I live raise animals for slaughter.

dharmagoat said:

Some. Perhaps less than you currently do?

Malcolm wrote:

I don't really eat that much meat. Way less than the average American. The average American eats a quarter pound of meat every day. I eat maybe a quarter pound of meat a week on average.