

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, January 6th, 2014 at 1:36 AM

Title: Re: Scientifically satisfactory evidence for the rainbow bod

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

All of these things remain anecdotal, as I am sure will you will admit.

dmr82 said:

Nope there is footage of the master from The Magus of Java.

Malcolm wrote:

Sleight of hand.

dmr82 said:

Just because modern dzogchen practitioners don't demonstrate these abilities doesn't mean they are not real. And their absence in modern dzogchen practitioners doesn't devalue dzogchen as the highest vehicle for achieving enlightenment. I think the oral transmission and highest ati yoga instruction manuals didn't set out to deceive people when they mention the abilities that manifest upon completion of the visions.

Malcolm wrote:

No, I don't think there is any intended deception either. Quite the opposite, actually, they prevent people from claiming total buddhahood in absence of such demonstrable abilities.

Even if such abilities are real, they are mundane, having nothing to do with actually gaining realization. People who think otherwise are going down a rabbit hole.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, January 6th, 2014 at 2:18 AM

Title: Re: Scientifically satisfactory evidence for the rainbow bod

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

...they prevent people from claiming total buddhahood in absence of such demonstrable abilities.

Even if such abilities are real, they are mundane, having nothing to do with actually gaining realization.

dmr82 said:

You are contradicting yourself. First you say realized beings can demonstrate them, then you say having them has nothing to do with having realization. Also there is nothing mundane about them as sentient beings can't display them except through fakery and deception.

Malcolm wrote:

Well, actually, you have to accept that they are mundane because Buddhists and Hindus like are supposed to be able to manifest them with sufficient practice of Samadhi.

None of these powers are transcendent in the least.

What I am suggesting is that placing such impossible expectations on what can be expected of a realized individual makes it easy to spot fakes. For example, Chogyal Namkhai Norbu has said that if anyone of his students can place his hand in fire without beings harmed, ChNN would like to have that person as his teacher. Otherwise, he said, don't call yourself realized if you do not have power over the elements.

Of course, the problem with this is that Hindus sages, etc., also claim to have power over the elements and so on.

Thus, these things, power over the elements, the ability to swim through the earth, fly in the sky and so on, are a common stock set of magical abilities common in India literature. We need not take them literally any more than we take Meru literally. The pursuit of such abilities will not lead us to liberation, Buddha was exceptionally clear about this.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, January 6th, 2014 at 2:50 AM

Title: Re: Scientifically satisfactory evidence for the rainbow bod

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

For example, Chogyal Namkhai Norbu has said that if anyone of his students can place his hand in fire without beings harmed, ChNN would like to have that person as his teacher. Otherwise, he said, don't call yourself realized if you do not have power over the elements.

dmr82 said:

Glad you confirmed ChNNR believes the abilities manifest as sign of having power over the elements.

That's all the confirmation I needed.

Malcolm wrote:

Just bring a fire extinguisher in case your samadhi is not up to par.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, January 6th, 2014 at 4:07 AM

Title: Re: Scientifically satisfactory evidence for the rainbow bod

Content:

Guty said:

...the scriptural accounts are nothing but exaggerations and mistranslations.

Malcolm wrote:

They might be exaggerations, but they are not mistranslations.

Refer to the Vibhuti chapter of the Yoga sutras. Flying, for example, is the result of attaining power of the udaṇā vayu, etc.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, January 6th, 2014 at 5:36 AM

Title: Re: Alaya consciousness - many questions.

Content:

conebeckham said:

In effect, the karmic "seeds" which are said to "reside" in the Alayavijnana, are NOT the Alayavijnana itself.....

Malcolm wrote:

In reality, there are two Yogacara interpretations it seems.

One: ālayavijñāna is a consciousness which retains seeds. This is the later interpretation.

Two: ālayavijñāna and the seeds are coterminous: exhausting the latter eliminates the former. This seems to be the position of Asanga in Mahāyāna Samgraha.

The Nyingma approach to this is that there really are not nine consciousness at all. Consciousness derives its name based on its function in a given operation.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, January 6th, 2014 at 5:48 AM

Title: Re: Alaya consciousness - many questions.

Content:

dude said:

If there are not nine consciousnesses, what is there?

Malcolm wrote:

The so called ninth consciousness, amalavijñāna, is rather late innovation that never gained currency in India, though it had some popularity in Chinese Buddhism.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, January 6th, 2014 at 5:49 AM

Title: Re: Scientifically satisfactory evidence for the rainbow bod

Content:

tatpurusa said:

by the way, does anyone know how he does this?

dharmagoat said:

He doesn't, his disciples do.

Everyone loves a Lama.

Malcolm wrote:

What a bunch of idiots.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, January 6th, 2014 at 6:53 AM

Title: Re: Climate Change: We're Doomed

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

http://www.salon.com/2013/12/18/7_ways_to_shut_down_a_climate_change_denier_partner/

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, January 6th, 2014 at 9:48 AM

Title: Re: Climate Change: We're Doomed

Content:

Zhen Li said:

The main issue is that the topic is extremely politicized...

Malcolm wrote:

The scientific consensus is that human caused climate instability is a fact. Politicians are the only reason we, as a global civilization, are not effectively responding to this state of affairs.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, January 6th, 2014 at 9:58 AM

Title: Re: Climate Change: We're Doomed

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The scientific consensus is that human caused climate instability is a fact.

Zhen Li said:
Nice evidence.

Malcolm wrote:
Get real, my friend, you want evidence:

<http://climate.nasa.gov>

You've got your head in the sand.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Monday, January 6th, 2014 at 10:36 AM
Title: Re: Climate Change: We're Doomed
Content:
Malcolm wrote:
Extreme weather events, including extreme cold snaps are consistent with a warming climate. In other words climate and weather are not the same thing.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Monday, January 6th, 2014 at 10:47 AM
Title: Re: Climate Change: We're Doomed
Content:

Unknown said:
This story can be summed up very simply: a group of retired NASA scientists with no climate science research experience listened to a few climate scientists and a few fossil fuel-funded contrarian scientists, read a few climate blogs, asked a few relatively simple questions, decided that those questions cannot be answered (though we will answer them in this post), put together a very rudimentary report, and now expect people to listen to them because they used to work at NASA. It's purely an appeal to authority, except that the participants have no authority or expertise in climate science.

Malcolm wrote:
<http://www.skepticalscience.com/NASA-retirees-letter2.html>

Author: Malcolm
Date: Monday, January 6th, 2014 at 10:51 AM
Title: Re: Climate Change: We're Doomed
Content:
Zhen Li said:

Zhen Li, you are getting perilously close to being insulting.
Yes, I noticed that too.

For my own good, and for everyone else's, I'm going to stop using this site.

I can't get anywhere with anybody. It's not benefiting me, and it's not benefiting others.
It's a prime example of a waste of time.

Malcolm wrote:

Perhaps we are not as stupid as you presume. We simply have not bought into right wing climate denial.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, January 6th, 2014 at 10:53 AM

Title: Re: Alaya consciousness - many questions.

Content:

conebeckham said:

So perhaps it's appropriate to say the Alayavijnana is neither separate from, nor entirely defined by, the Karmic seeds.

anjali said:

That's my take on it. At the eighth level, consciousness (vijnana) and habit energies (karmic bijas) are not the same, nor are they different.

I've read that the function of the alaya-consciousness is one of projection (fabrication)--bringing forth appearances (apprehended objects and apprehending subject). The apprehending subject and the apprehended objects are just two aspects of a single appearance that haven't been dualistically "solidified" yet (the function of the seventh consciousness).

The eighth consciousness is just the ignorant outward-looking consciousness encountering it's own energy patterns, with no sense of self and other.

Malcolm wrote:

Read Mahayanasamgraha by Asanga.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, January 6th, 2014 at 11:09 AM

Title: Re: Climate Change: We're Doomed

Content:

reddust said:

I don't buy into the left-right agenda and I am a skeptic of man made climate change argument. I don't want spend my time arguing about this. Time will be the decider on this debate. Let's stop trying to fix samsara (sarcasm) I've been told...don't leave. Let's have some good Dharma debates

Malcolm wrote:

Closed biosystem + increasing carbon inputs from burning petrochemicals = warming.

Granted, it will change in a thousand years or so after we either stop burning oil for energy or we run out...

Of course it will come as no surprise to any one that I am a deep ecologist/left biocentric ala The late David Orton.

<http://home.ca.inter.net/~greenweb/lbprimer.htm>

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, January 6th, 2014 at 11:17 AM

Title: Re: Climate Change: We're Doomed

Content:

Zhen Li said:

Do you need any more evidence to prove that opinions on this are almost always politically motivated than this?: Perhaps we are not as stupid as you presume. We simply have not bought into right wing climate denial.

I am not a conservative, and political opinions have nothing to do with evaluating arguments. Science can't be based on politics, it's based on empirical observation!

Don't all you biased politically motivated liberals understand that ALL of your stock high school-level arguments from websites have answers. Even that stupid graph you posted. And every answer has an answer in reply equally as smarmy and unctuous.

You can only argue science based on facts! It's so simple...

Malcolm wrote:

Unfortunately climate denial is all politics and no facts.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, January 6th, 2014 at 11:20 AM

Title: Re: Climate Change: We're Doomed

Content:

smcj said:

Granted, it will change in a thousand years or so after we either stop burning oil for energy or we run out...

How so? The carbon will still be there. It took millions of years for the carbon to be scrubbed out of the atmosphere by plants to get it to the point it is at.

Malcolm wrote:

Grasses sequester more carbon than trees, actually...you can easily find estimates about how long it will take carbon outputs to be "put back in". Anyway, we will be long dead before there is even anything like a rational social response to the climate crisis.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, January 6th, 2014 at 11:22 AM

Title: Re: Climate Change: We're Doomed

Content:

Zhen Li said:

Unfortunately Anthropogenic Climate Change is all politics and no facts.

Malcolm wrote:

The preponderance of research simply does not support your opinions in this matter. I read with interest your analysis of Marx and largely agree with them. But here, you are just on the wrong side of both scientific consensus and history.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, January 6th, 2014 at 11:31 AM

Title: Re: Climate Change: We're Doomed

Content:

smcj said:

Stepping out of the theme of this thread, but in keeping with the theme of this website, I'd like to point out that climate change is an example of what Dharma calls "the suffering of change". This means that the answer to any problem, such as the industrial revolution, will in time create its own problems. This is why I say that Dharma does not allow for Utopias, either civic or personal.

Malcolm wrote:

Tell that to Amitabha!

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, January 6th, 2014 at 11:48 AM

Title: Re: Climate Change: We're Doomed

Content:

Zhen Li said:

Well, Malcolm, I think you made up your mind before you considered the argument.

It's undeniable that billions of dollars are invested in the validity of Anthropogenic Climate Change.

And most critiques I've seen are really blatant simplifications of the opponent's arguments. The majority of scientists who have dissented from the consensus definitely do not deny climate change (as I don't), but do deny that humans have the deciding role in it.

Of those who dissent, there are two kinds, those who believe that it is too soon, not enough data, or not possible to draw conclusions about precisely what causes climate change, and those who believe that there are clear causal links elsewhere.

There's absolutely NO reason to treat people who believe there is a reasonable doubt in a scientific theory like Crypto-Nazis.

The politically and financially motivated trolls behind Anthropogenic Climate Change wouldn't make so much energy to refute doubts if money wasn't involved.

Do you realise that there are huge doubts as to what theory of plate tectonics is correct? Where are the critique and bashing sites in the realm of geophysics?

Why doesn't the mainstream media spend millions of dollars on documentaries about these controversies?

Why doesn't NASA have a bashing site critiquing MOND in favour of General Relativity?

It doesn't take a scientist to understand how the system works.

(By the way, glad you liked my analysis of Marxism, I always had the impression that you were a Marxist)

Malcolm wrote:

Ben Franklin has an awesome analysis of anthropogenic climate change. He observed that whenever you cut down a lot of trees, the area would get warmer. Well, multiply this, add burning petroleum to the mix and you get what have today: acidification of oceans, increasingly intense storms, constantly rising global average temperatures, etc.

You appear to think that because there are uncertainties in one area of science, there must uncertainty in all.

As for marx, no -- as i said, I am a deep ecologist. Social ecologists (basically Marxists) consider us bourgeoisie and reactionary.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, January 6th, 2014 at 10:01 PM

Title: Re: Climate Change: We're Doomed

Content:

Zhen Li said:

it's the way science always works, you'll always find issues with data analysis.

Malcolm wrote:

You can disagree where a hurricane is going to land, but the hurricane is definitely going to land in this case.

Then of course there is the Pascal's wager approach to all of this: there is no downside to being wrong about climate change (saving rainforests, changing from fossil fuels to renewables, etc.), in fact there are positive upsides. But there are severe consequences to being right about climate change and then doing nothing (or too little too late, the present scenario).

As for you my friend, well, "Contrarians gonna contradict..."

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, January 7th, 2014 at 12:40 AM

Title: Re: Climate Change: We're Doomed

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, January 7th, 2014 at 3:44 AM

Title: Re: Alaya consciousness - many questions.

Content:

conebeckham said:

As far as my reading and study are concerned, on the relative level it is specific to every individual...but again, it's not truly existent in the first place, but is within the realm of conditioned phenomema. Just as a "specific individual" is. However, the underlying, essential, "pure" element is presented by many as the Tathagatagarbha, or, when fully purified, the Dharmakaya. This is, of course, hotly disputed by those who feel the Tathatgatararbha doctrine is expedient, even by those who posit a conventional alayavijnana.

Malcolm wrote:

Asanga argues somewhere that the bhavanga doctrine in the Nikaya schools and the ālayavijñāna have the same meaning. This makes ālayavijñāna personal.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, January 7th, 2014 at 3:48 AM

Title: Re: Climate Change: We're Doomed

Content:

Unknown said:

As the Arctic rapidly heats up, however, there's less of a temperature difference between the equator and the poles, and the downhill slope in the atmosphere is accordingly less steep. This creates a weaker jet stream, a jet stream that meanders more or, if you prefer the new analogy, staggers around drunkenly. "As the Arctic continues to warm, we expect the jet stream to take these wild swings northward and southward more often," says Francis. "And when it does, that's when we get these particularly wild temperature and precipitation patterns, and they tend to stay in place a long time."

Malcolm wrote:

<http://www.motherjones.com/blue-marble/2014/01/did-global-warming-get-arctic-drunken>

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/capital-weather-gang/wp/2013/08/21/researcher-defends-work-linking-arctic-warming-and-extreme-weather/>

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, January 7th, 2014 at 8:43 AM

Title: Re: Does one of the Lotus Sūtra based schools really teach t

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Of course such a teaching is total rubbish.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, January 7th, 2014 at 10:25 AM

Title: Re: Climate Change: We're Doomed

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

<http://www.newyorker.com/online/blogs/borowitzreport/2014/01/polar-vortex-causes-hundreds-of-injuries-as-people-making-snide-remarks-about-climate-change-are-pun.html>

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, January 7th, 2014 at 10:14 PM

Title: Re: Mahāmudrā & Dzogchen

Content:

In the bone yard said:

There is only one path, and it must be "pointed out" to us.

Then we will understand what we cannot understand intellectually and was not meant to be understood intellectually.

Malcolm wrote:

All Buddhists teachings have three prajñās: the prajñā of hearing, when one listens to the teachings and understands them intellectually; the prajñā of reflection, when one integrates what one has understood; and the prajñā of meditation, where the meaning one has gathered through hearing and reflection is brought to realization.

To claim that we are not meant to intellectually understand the path does not correspond with my education and training. The Tantra of the Union of the Sun and Moon states:

Prajñā is three-fold: the prajñā of hearing severs external reification; the prajñā of reflection severs internal reification; and the prajñā of meditation severs secret reification.

Vimalamitra states:

The characteristics of prajñā:

The characteristic of the prajñā of hearing is a great quantity listening and understanding words without interpolation.

The characteristic of reflection is investigating the words and meanings of the mind, and giving explanations.

The characteristic of meditation is distancing oneself from afflictions through meditation.

We should pay respect to intellectual learning, not dismiss it.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, January 7th, 2014 at 10:16 PM

Title: Re: Climate Change: We're Doomed

Content:

Nemo said:

America is very sick. Everyone else in the world understands climate change. How is climate change a plot? It's simply the consensus. It was a theory in the 80's and has turned out to be confirmed. Being an unknowing sock puppet of global energy conglomerates is creepy.

Malcolm wrote:

It was even a theory in the nineteenth century, and now it is confirmed. However, some people, for whatever perverse reasons they may have, insist against all reason that we are being duped by a grand conspiracy, the purpose of which they can never clearly articulate.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, January 7th, 2014 at 10:25 PM

Title: Re: Climate Change: We're Doomed

Content:

Zhen Li said:

There really is no difference here, it's the same dishonesty.

Malcolm wrote:

What could their motive possibly be?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, January 7th, 2014 at 10:53 PM

Title: Re: Does one of the Lotus Sūtra based schools really teach t

Content:

rory said:

there are Buddhas in hell realms for goodness' sake.

Malcolm wrote:

Not because they experience afflicted thoughts. They emanate there out of compassion.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, January 7th, 2014 at 11:25 PM

Title: Re: Mahāmudrā & Dzogchen

Content:

In the bone yard said:

I couldn't agree more with respect to intellectual learning but it must be applied intelligently (to sutra not tantra).

Malcolm wrote:

It must be applied to both, that is why I cited a Dzogchen tantra as well as a Dzogchen master.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, January 7th, 2014 at 11:44 PM

Title: Re: Climate Change: We're Doomed

Content:

Zhen Li said:

Have you ever tried applying for research grants?

I had a look at the process with my provincial government a few months ago, and there are boxes of key terms which you can check. If your research deals with key terms in these areas, you're more likely to get funding. One of the boxes was for women and gender studies, and there was a box for climate change research too. These are two of the topics which get some of the highest funding, no surprise then that now climate

change is also a feminist topic.

People don't set out to do a project which makes or breaks massive theories like AGW, they research specific topics and collect data in specific areas. But convincing the government to keep funding such research means convincing them that this is a matter which the government both needs to take seriously because it may be responsible, and needs to take action which can work. The grant process is, in fact, highly political, and each project provides parliament with brief lay-terms summaries.

If studying climate were just business as usual from day to day, like, say, recording migratory patterns, then it'll probably still get funding, but those numbers are not likely to make you a millionaire like this fellow:

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/law-and-order/5036333/Multi-millionaire-climate-change-scientist-jailed-for-child-abuse.html> and this fellow

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2011/11/18/dr-james-hansens-growing-financial-scandal-now-over-a-million-dollars-of-outside-income/>

Not to mention the book deals and movie sales from the hype. Then there's of course the fact that before the hype the stocks of renewable energy sources and electric car companies was relatively equal to its value, compared to the height of the hype a few years ago, when they would have made any investor a small fortune. Of course, I do support renewable energy, but that's beyond the point. If you are just investing in oil stocks, you know you won't be making much more than they're currently worth.

There are many incentives to promoting the idea of AGW. Even accepting all the AGW premises, you still have uncertainty due to the unpredictability of the system -- let's face it, there has been, and probably never will be, reliable ways of predicting climate change. Some people won't be convinced that the premises of AGW don't hold up to scrutiny until we really do have too little carbon based energy sources to utilise and they still see CO2 levels rising and falling with no help from us.

In the end, remember that this is almost all government led. The millions made by Hansen are mostly from government funded institutions, prizes and grants. People in government benefit with jobs and money, that's the bottom line. So long as government as it currently works exists, bureaucracy will keep increasing, and they'll keep paying themselves more and more because they have the monopoly on violence through taxation. Is there a solution to this problem? Not immediately, no. But vox populi vox dei. It doesn't matter what the real state of science is, it doesn't matter that there isn't a real consensus in institutions of higher learning, what works, works according to the simple equation of: public opinion + potential bureaucratic profit = public policy.

Malcolm wrote:

"One of the boxes was for women and gender studies, and there was a box for climate change research too. These are two of the topics which get some of the highest funding, no surprise then that now climate change is also a feminist topic."

Yes, because women and children will be the mostly heavily impacted by the negative

effects of climate change, since they are still largely invisible.

"So long as government as it currently works exists, bureaucracy will keep increasing, and they'll keep paying themselves more and more because they have the monopoly on violence through taxation."

That is a common libertarian point of view.

But this is not a proof, this is fallacious reasoning at best, paranoia at worst.

Sorry, but I don't buy into conspiracy theories, right or left.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, January 7th, 2014 at 11:48 PM

Title: Re: Alaya consciousness - many questions.

Content:

smcj said:

\$53. I'm not doing it. I've got enough Dharma books unread on my shelf.

Malcolm wrote:

It's actually about 25 bucks.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, January 8th, 2014 at 12:27 AM

Title: Re: Sutra Mahamudra, Tantric Mahamudra, & Mahamudra

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Read Kongtrul's encyclopedia on practice lineages, he describes it perfectly.

fckw said:

Malcolm, what exactly do you mean with "Kongtrul's encyclopedia"? Are you talking about this:

<http://www.chinabuddhismencyclopedia.com/en/index.php?title=Mahamudra>? Or is there also some book with that title?

Malcolm wrote:

Specifically, Treasury of Knowledge, Esoteric Instructions.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, January 8th, 2014 at 12:37 AM

Title: Re: Mahāmudrā & Dzogchen

Content:

In the bone yard said:

Well that's true but the tantras are teachings for those on the path (after realization). There is outer tantra (Ngondro), but it should be taught by a lama when we are closer to the path.

And the meaning (or view) of prajna is different after realization. The true meaning of prajna won't be realized until after realization.

You might have read Chogyam Trungpa talk about prajna.

Malcolm wrote:

There are two kinds of prajñā, contaminated, and pure. The former exists in common practitioners, the latter in realized practitioners.

As for this distinction:

Well that's true but the tantras are teachings for those on the path (after realization).

There is outer tantra (Ngondro), but it should be taught by a lama when we are closer to the path.

The path of Varjayāna is taught so that a common, ordinary person can traverse all the paths and stages in a single life, and ideally, within the rite of empowerment itself, or at least so I have been taught (I am someone who has done a three year retreat).

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, January 8th, 2014 at 1:25 AM

Title: Re: Mahāmudrā & Dzogchen

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The path of Varjayāna is taught so that a common, ordinary person can traverse all the paths and stages in a single life, and ideally, within the rite of empowerment itself, or at least so I have been taught (I am someone who has done a three year retreat).

smcj said:

If this is not too personal a question, may I ask in which tradition you practiced in your retreat? For some reason I have the impression it was Sakya. But if it is too personal, never mind.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, it was in Sakya. Most of my training in Sutra and Tantra is in the Sakya school. The rest in Nyingma.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, January 8th, 2014 at 1:27 AM

Title: Re: Mahāmudrā & Dzogchen

Content:

In the bone yard said:

Within the rite of empowerment itself, yes.

Otherwise how can we understand something that transcends the mind?

Malcolm wrote:

If you do not attain awakening during empowerment, then you have sadhana practice, cause that's what it is for, i.e., sadhopaya, "method of accomplishment".

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, January 8th, 2014 at 10:12 AM

Title: Re: Peak oil

Content:

Zhen Li said:

But really, before peak oil is reached, the nature of the market is such that the transition will be made by the logic of the system - this is why the peak is actually shifted further and further back year by year

Kim O'Hara said:

This is a good point. What I've said about renewables can be taken into account in this way, too, with the advent of cheap renewables slowing down the exploitation of remaining oil reserves and pushing "the end of oil" ever further into the future.

Kim

Malcolm wrote:

The peak shifts year by year since the oil industry is subsidized heavily by the government, making it possible for them to extract increasingly more expensive (and tragic for the environment) "oil" reserves.

Renewables are also a farce, I am sad to say, dependent as they are on rare earths which also come at an environmental premium, and entirely dependent on an industrial infrastructure which depends on oil.

The only realistic solution to the world energy crisis is to stop using so much energy. However, the free market fundamentalists, convinced that growth is a desiderata and that the market is "intelligent", are nothing more than pied pipers leading us all down a path of destruction.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, January 8th, 2014 at 10:23 AM

Title: Re: Climate Change: We're Doomed

Content:

Zhen Li said:

RE: Malcolm

Women and Gender Studies is a different topic altogether (and I didn't even mention

children so I don't know why you brought that up).

Malcolm wrote:

You cannot mention women without mentioning children.

Zhen Li said:

Libertarians in the US want to wind back the government to adherence to the constitution of 1789.

Malcolm wrote:

And what a fricking nightmare that would be. It shows their total ignorance of the Constitution and its function.

Zhen Li said:

This is actually quite incorrect. The US spends \$1.042 Billion under the EPA for the promotion of climate change, and the government issued billions more in loans for renewable energy corporations with the justification of anthropogenic global warming, the most famous of which was the \$535 million U.S. Energy Department loan guarantee to Solyndra.

Malcolm wrote:

Conservative estimates place subsidies of the oil interest around 10 billion dollars a year. So, the US Government spends one dollar to prevent global warming for every nine it spends promoting the very industries that are propelling climate change.

Zhen Li said:

I really don't think you can call opposition to AGW a cult, because there's no end goal like there is in AGW, and it comes almost entirely from individual scientists, rather than activist groups.

Malcolm wrote:

This is total nonsense.

Zhen Li said:

Right now, you can't deny AGW and get elected,

Malcolm wrote:

Are you dreaming? People run on this platform in conservative parts of the US all the time and reelected again and again. If you look at the polls, if you are a Republican, you don't accept AGW. If you are a Democrat, you do. In the US this issue is completely split down party lines, unlike in other nations where conservatives tend to be more sane.

Zhen Li said:

Even Tony Abbott believes in AGW.

Malcolm wrote:

If he were an American Conservative, he could not get elected if he stated he accepted AGW.

Zhen Li said:

You see, the trend over history is that progressive causes always win.

Malcolm wrote:

You only think this because you do not live in the US.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, January 8th, 2014 at 11:16 AM

Title: Re: Climate Change: We're Doomed

Content:

John Huntsman, — Twitter, Aug. 18, 2011 said:

I believe in evolution and trust scientists on global warming. Call me crazy.

Malcolm wrote:

Huntsman said this during his run in the primaries, knowing full well that these two issues go against the general grain of current Republican sentiment in the bat shit crazy bible belt states.

Romney, Oct 27th, 2011:

"My view is that we don't know what's causing climate change on this planet. And the idea of spending trillions and trillions of dollars to try to reduce CO2 emissions is not the right course for us."

Seems like he changed his mind between June and October of the same year...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, January 9th, 2014 at 7:19 AM

Title: Re: In the KUNJED GYALPO says it is of no use to do rituals

Content:

Manju said:

Malcolm: Dzogchen realization does not depend on accumulating causes of any kind.

Am new here and this was probably discussed a hundred times but still....:

How does the ability to realize the primordial/natural state, let`s say during a pointing out instruction, NOT depend on the accumulation of causes ?

About my background:

Am a Vajrayana practitioner since 3 years and under the impression that the development/completion stage practices (Maha Ati) I am doing will be helpful once the

opportunity for a face to face direct introduction with my master comes.

Am I wrong ?

Manju

Malcolm wrote:

One, if by ability you mean " human birth with leisure and endowment", this absolutely depends on accumulating causes to be reborn as a human being, etc.

If you are doing completion stage practice, you have already received direct introduction through the fourth empowerment. So you should contemplate that and what it means to give rise to self-originated wisdom (rang byung ye shes).

You must recall that Dzogchen is:

The result that does not arise from a cause

The intimate instruction that does not come from a text

The buddhahood that does not come from mind.

Since Dzogchen is the result that does not come from a cause, how can we say that realization of one's natural state can come about from causes and conditions?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, January 9th, 2014 at 10:20 PM

Title: Re: In the KUNJED GYALPO says it is of no use to do rituals

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Since Dzogchen is the result that does not come from a cause, how can we say that realization of one's natural state can come about from causes and conditions?

Adamantine said:

What's always amazing though, is how much can be said about it. . . Not to split hairs, but there's an awful lot of texts and talk and verbal pointing out and internet forum discussion on the natural state. .

Malcolm wrote:

All of which is just discussions about the taste of sugar.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, January 10th, 2014 at 2:08 AM

Title: Re: In the KUNJED GYALPO says it is of no use to do rituals

Content:

Adamantine said:

However I am keen to know your take on this (without going into detail about togal of course!)

Malcolm wrote:

You either have confidence in Dzogchen view or not. If not, it is better for one to practice according to the vehicles of cause and result until you have developed such confidence.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, January 10th, 2014 at 2:22 AM

Title: Re: In the KUNJED GYALPO says it is of no use to do rituals

Content:

Adamantine said:

However I am keen to know your take on this (without going into detail about togal of course!)

Malcolm wrote:

You either have confidence in Dzogchen view or not. If not, it is better for one to practice according to the vehicles of cause and result until you have developed such confidence.

M

Adamantine said:

I'm not sure I understand: are you implying togal practice is a vehicle of cause and result?

Malcolm wrote:

No, it definitely is not. But I am not going to talk about thogal.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, January 10th, 2014 at 2:57 AM

Title: Re: In the KUNJED GYALPO says it is of no use to do rituals

Content:

Adamantine said:

but from an outer or relative POV it certainly still has the appearance of A—> B—> C in that these are Dzogchen methods applied to body speech and mind.

Malcolm wrote:

Since there is no cause for buddhahood in the beginning,

in the end it cannot be created through a condition.

Emptiness possesses a core of wisdom.

-- Rigpa Rangshar Tantra

Wisdom is merged into emptiness: uniform in taste, unchanging and permanent.

-- Kalacakra Root Tantra

If you do not understand the view, you cannot practice Dzogchen. So first you must understand the view. The above is the view of Dzogchen.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, January 10th, 2014 at 3:35 AM

Title: Re: In the KUNJED GYALPO says it is of no use to do rituals

Content:

Adamantine said:

However I am keen to know your take on this (without going into detail about total of course!)

Malcolm wrote:

You either have confidence in Dzogchen view or not. If not, it is better for one to practice according to the vehicles of cause and result until you have developed such confidence.
M

heart said:

And confidence is not related to causes?

/magnus

Malcolm wrote:

Listen, if you want to believe that Buddhahood arises from causes and conditions, there is not much I can say except to point you in the direction of Dzogchen texts that deny this. Then it is up to you.

But if one should assert to people that Dzogchen is a gradual path for developing realization then one would be both misleading people and misrepresenting Dzogchen teachings.

There is no progress in the core, the essence itself.

-- Rigpa Rangdrol Tantra

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, January 10th, 2014 at 4:36 AM

Title: Re: In the KUNJED GYALPO says it is of no use to do rituals

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Since there is no cause for buddhahood in the beginning,

in the end it cannot be created through a condition.

Emptiness possesses a core of wisdom.

-- Rigpa Rangshar Tantra

Wisdom is merged into emptiness: uniform in taste, unchanging and permanent.

-- Kalacakra Root Tantra

If you do not understand the view, you cannot practice Dzogchen. So first you must understand the view. The above is the view of Dzogchen.

anjali said:

Are you of the opinion that people can do things to help thin the clouds and eventually get a glimpse of the ever-present Sun?

Malcolm wrote:

The sun is perfect, clouds are perfect, where can there be anything which is not already perfect?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, January 10th, 2014 at 4:55 AM

Title: Re: In the KUNJED GYALPO says it is of no use to do rituals

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Listen, if you want to believe that Buddhahood arises from causes and conditions, there is not much I can say except to point you in the direction of Dzogchen texts that deny this. Then it is up to you.

But if one should assert to people that Dzogchen is a gradual path for developing realization then one would be both misleading people and misrepresenting Dzogchen teachings.

There is no progress in the core, the essence itself.

-- Rigpa Rangdrol Tantra

heart said:

It is quite easy, without a master and the auspicious coincidence of actually recognizing the natural state there is no Dzogchen. This come about through causes and conditions. The natural state itself has no causes or conditions but when you are in mind everything has causes and conditions.

Of course there is no progress in "the essence itself". When have I ever said that?

/magnus

Malcolm wrote:

The essence itself is Dzogchen. Dzogchen does not depend on direct introduction. If it

did, it would be produced from causes and conditions.

I already addressed this issue above, where I clarified that attaining a precious human birth certainly comes from gathering merit, etc.

In Dzogchen, buddhahood does not come from mind. The Dzogchen perspective is that a liberation based on causes and effects is incoherent.

Dzogchen is a path where one abides in liberation, even if those moments of liberation are incredibly brief:

The suffering of samsara, cannot be removed by using this stake of grasping but will be removed if [the stake is] let go.

If fabricated phenomena are abandoned, one will achieve relaxation.

Abandoning all thoughts, the ocean of wisdom does not stir.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, January 10th, 2014 at 5:09 AM

Title: Re: In the KUNJED GYALPO says it is of no use to do rituals

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The sun is perfect, clouds are perfect, where can there be anything which is not already perfect?

pueraeternus said:

Is suffering perfect?

Malcolm wrote:

That depends on who you are.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, January 10th, 2014 at 5:10 AM

Title: Re: In the KUNJED GYALPO says it is of no use to do rituals

Content:

anjali said:

Are you of the opinion that people can do things to help thin the clouds and eventually get a glimpse of the ever-present Sun?

Malcolm wrote:

The sun is perfect, clouds are perfect, where can there be anything which is not already perfect?

anjali said:

Indeed. There is either knowing or not knowing, but it's sure easy to get distracted by

those clouds.

So, are you of the opinion that people come by knowing through grace (not in the Christian sense, but more in the sense of spontaneously and unmerited)?

Malcolm wrote:

Its possible, but I think they are not able to articulate it very clearly.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, January 10th, 2014 at 6:19 AM

Title: Re: In the KUNJED GYALPO says it is of no use to do rituals

Content:

pueraeternus said:

So what is that dependent on?

Malcolm wrote:

Whether you have the non-dual view or not.

As samsara was abandoned for something else,

nirvana will not be realized

-- Hevajra Tantra

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, January 10th, 2014 at 6:27 AM

Title: Re: What is the Largest Buddhist Sect on Earth Today?

Content:

Astus said:

What defines Vajrayana?

Malcolm wrote:

Empowerment (abhiṣeka) as the entryway into the teachings.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, January 10th, 2014 at 7:14 AM

Title: Re: In the KUNJED GYALPO says it is of no use to do rituals

Content:

theanarchist said:

Rituals etc are skillful means. If you can rest in the nature of mind, then you don't need them.

heart said:

Rituals also gives opportunity to rest in the natural state, if you are capable.

/magnus

theanarchist said:

Yeah.

A vajrayana ritual on the relative level is something you can still actually do, even if you are not in a nature of mind state and it doesn't bring you into a full nature of mind state either, they have an effect.

They are like the train to Paris. If you are already in Paris, then it wouldn't make sense to take the train to Paris. But if you are not there, you will need that train to get there.

Malcolm wrote:

The Dzogchen perspective is that we are all in Paris and always have been.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, January 10th, 2014 at 7:31 AM

Title: Re: In the KUNJED GYALPO says it is of no use to do rituals

Content:

theanarchist said:

They are like the train to Paris. If you are already in Paris, then it wouldn't make sense to take the train to Paris. But if you are not there, you will need that train to get there.

Malcolm wrote:

The Dzogchen perspective is that we are all in Paris and always have been.

theanarchist said:

Yeah, but we have a VERY hefty, substantial hallucination of being in Rome. Or New York. Or Vladivostok. And the hallucination is so persistant that the buddhas in their wisdom had to give us illusory transports that we could take to get to Paris.

Malcolm wrote:

The point is that where you think you are does not matter [snang lugs], its where you actually are that counts [gnas lugs].

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, January 10th, 2014 at 7:42 AM

Title: Re: In the KUNJED GYALPO says it is of no use to do rituals

Content:

smcj said:

The point is that where you think you are does not matter [snang lugs], its where you actually are that counts [gnas lugs].

Well I think I don't like to suffer. If someone tells me that my suffering is ok they'd better not be within punching distance, otherwise they will quickly find out if their suffering is ok.

Malcolm wrote:

Your suffering is the ripening of your karma. There is nothing you can do about suffering you are presently experiencing or have experienced. There is something you can do about the suffering you have yet to experience, but it does not involve complicated schemes involving purification of infinite past causes of suffering. Even if you could purify the causes of suffering for 10 to the 100th power of past lives, the amount of causes for suffering left over dwarf this number.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, January 10th, 2014 at 10:58 PM

Title: Re: In the KUNJED GYALPO says it is of no use to do rituals

Content:

pueraeternus said:

So what is that dependent on?

Malcolm wrote:

Whether you have the non-dual view or not.

As samsara was abandoned for something else,
nirvana will not be realized

-- Hevajra Tantra

pueraeternus said:

So how do one attain this non-dual view?

Malcolm wrote:

You receive direct introduction to your own state.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, January 10th, 2014 at 11:03 PM

Title: Re: In the KUNJED GYALPO says it is of no use to do rituals

Content:
heart said:

[Accumulation of merit is not done to gain realization it is done to assure the continued auspicious circumstances of such a practice that "abides in liberation, even if those moments of liberation are incredibly brief" until it is continuous.

Malcolm wrote:
I addressed this above.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Friday, January 10th, 2014 at 11:06 PM
Title: Re: In the KUNJED GYALPO says it is of no use to do rituals
Content:
pueraeternus said:
So how do one attain this non-dual view?

Malcolm wrote:
You receive direct introduction to your own state.

pueraeternus said:
So there is cause and condition to attaining this view?

What if the direct introduction didn't work?

Malcolm wrote:
Yes, of course, there are causes and conditions related to achieving a precious human birth, who ever said otherwise.

Direct introduction always works in someone who possesses devotion. That devotion will be based on past contact of with the teachings. If someone has not had contact with Dzogchen teachings in the past, there is no chance they will even hear the word Dzogchen in this life.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Friday, January 10th, 2014 at 11:23 PM
Title: Re: Dzogchen practiced on different solar systems?
Content:
Ivo said:
It is traditionally said that there are in existence more than 6 400 000 Dzogchen tantras and only a fraction of those have been taught on Earth.

Malcolm wrote:
According to tradition, there were 6,400,000 slokas of Dzogchen, not tantras.

Those shlokas were all taught by Garab Dorje.

However, the tradition holds that not all the 6,400,000 shlokas were translated into Tibetan, for example, the bkod pa chen po in 500,000 shlokas was never translated into Tibetan.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, January 10th, 2014 at 11:29 PM

Title: Re: In the KUNJED GYALPO says it is of no use to do rituals

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, of course, there are causes and conditions related to achieving a precious human birth, who ever said otherwise.

pueraeternus said:

So ultimately the practice of the path still depends on cause and effect. Successfully introduction to the natural state is akin to the path of seeing, and even after that there is need to engage practices (even if it is just simple guru yoga) to stabilize. Not that much different from vanilla Bodhisattvayana.

Malcolm wrote:

Meeting the path depends on cause and effect, but this was never denied.

Direct introduction always works in someone who possesses devotion. That devotion will be based on past contact of the with the teachings. If someone has not had contact with Dzogchen teachings in the past, there is no chance they will even hear the word Dzogchen in this life.

If someone has no contact in the past, and hence can't even hear the word Dzogchen in this life, that would means they will never ever be able to hear it in future lives. I didn't know there are teachings on icchantikas in Dzogchen. Just kidding - but I am sure you have thought of this illogical loop before?

There are all kinds of ways devised to ensure the beings contact with Dzogchen teachings. And the Dzogchen tantras themselves assert that all sentient beings will be liberated in the end, so no, Dzogchen does not support the concept of icchantikas.

I am afraid this is just pious fiction. Sraddha and jnana are not cognate, or relates that way. The success rate is just not very high.

I am afraid you must revisit the first of the nirvanic indriyas and revise your point of view.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, January 10th, 2014 at 11:49 PM

Title: Re: In the KUNJED GYALPO says it is of no use to do rituals

Content:

pueraeternus said:

Could you share a few examples of such ways to introduce beings to Dzogchen when they have never come into contact with it before?

Malcolm wrote:

This is covered in the teaching call the six liberations, liberation through seeing, hearing, taste, touch, smell and recollection. These are six means to create conducive conditions for beings to meet the teachings.

pueraeternus said:

Noted. Mind refreshing my memory?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes sraddha is one of the five indriyas, which becomes the five balas, powers and so on along with recollection, prajñā, samadhi, etc.

Look into the 22 indriyas as discussed in the second chapter of the Koshabhasyam. The first fourteen are indriyas of samsara, the final eight are the indriyas of nirvana.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, January 10th, 2014 at 11:57 PM

Title: Re: Karma and Reincarnation

Content:

jianblade said:

Does one need to accept the concepts of reincarnation karma and the wheel of samsara to follow the teaching of the Buddha? I don't feel comfortable believing In said things...

ajohn4717 said:

A gross misunderstanding of about Buddhism exists today, especially in the notion of reincarnation. The common misunderstanding is that a person has led countless previous lives, usually as an animal, but somehow in this life he is born as a human being and in the next life he will be reborn as an animal, depending on the kind of life he has lived.

This misunderstanding arises because people usually do not know-how to read the sutras or sacred writings. It is said that the Buddha left 84,000 teachings; the symbolic figure represents the diverse backgrounds characteristics, tastes, etc. of the people. The Buddha taught according to the mental and spiritual capacity of each individual. For the simple village folks living during the time of the Buddha, the doctrine of reincarnation was a powerful moral lesson. Fear of birth into the animal world must have frightened many people from acting like animals in this life. If we take this teaching

literally today we are confused because we cannot understand it rationally.

Malcolm wrote:

Of course reincarnation or rebirth can be understood rationally. As a matter of fact, the four kinds of realized persons (stream enterers, etc.) are defined precisely by how many lives they must undergo until they attain nirvana.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, January 11th, 2014 at 3:31 AM

Title: Re: Karma and Reincarnation

Content:

cloudburst said:

There is no thunderstorm that is not a mere appearance to mind.

Malcolm wrote:

Frankly, as I said it depends on what tenet system you want to follow. If you want to follow Yogacara for your relative truth claim, I have no objection.

cloudburst said:

You are not positing a container that exists separately from our perceptions?

Malcolm wrote:

I am not positing anything, but definitely, Sautrantikas (and indeed some Yogacarins) posit a container that is independent of our perceptions. Therefore, if you are following Sautrantika presentations of relative truth (as indeed both Bhavaviveka and Candrakirti do), there are indeed thunderstorms that are not merely appearances to minds.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, January 11th, 2014 at 3:36 AM

Title: Re: In the KUNJED GYALPO says it is of no use to do rituals

Content:

pueraeternus said:

[

So more cause and effect then.

Malcolm wrote:

As noted, meeting the teachings depends on meritorious causes. Liberation however does not.

Oh you mean those indriyas. But how did you get from that to "Direct introduction always works in someone who possesses devotion"? I suppose you are assuming this based on, erm, faith?

The first of eight indriyas of nirvana is śraddha.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, January 11th, 2014 at 3:41 AM

Title: Re: the great vegetarian debate

Content:

pueraeternus said:

Really, the guidelines about pure meat is only relevant if you are begging for it (like mendicants as it meant to be applied to), not shopping at the supermarket.

Malcolm wrote:

Bhavaviveka reviews all the arguments against meat-eating in Mahayāna. His conclusion is that as long as the meat that you eat is pure in three ways, it is karma free.

pueraeternus said:

Sadly, many seems to have forgotten that the pursue of Buddhahood is for the sake of all sentient beings, not a self-centered goal of attaining Buddhahood, whatever that means by the time it gets to this sad state of affairs.

Malcolm wrote:

Others seem to have forgotten that followers of Buddhadharma are not Jains, nor followers of Devadatta.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, January 11th, 2014 at 4:04 AM

Title: Re: Karma and Reincarnation

Content:

cloudburst said:

There is no thunderstorm that is not a mere appearance to mind.

Malcolm wrote:

Frankly, as I said it depends on what tenet system you want to follow. If you want to follow Yogacara for your relative truth claim, I have no objection.

cloudburst said:

You are not positing a container that exists separately from our perceptions?

Malcolm wrote:

I am not positing anything, but definitely, Sautrantikas (and indeed some Yogacarins) posit a container that is independent of our perceptions. Therefore, if you are following Sautrantika presentations of relative truth (as indeed both Bhavaviveka and Candrakirti do), there are indeed thunderstorms that are not merely appearances to minds.

M

cloudburst said:

how do you square that with the fact that when you search for something with wisdom, it vanishes? If something is not merely an appearance, it would be found upon investigation.

Malcolm wrote:

According to your school (Gelug), the only thing that vanishes in that instance is the mistaken perception of inherent existence, but not the conventional appearance of a given phenomena which is posited as necessary in order in order for its emptiness to be established.

According to Madhyamaka in general, there may indeed be no appearances during equipoise, but in post-equipoise, of course there are appearances (which are illusory and unreal).

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, January 11th, 2014 at 4:31 AM

Title: Re: Karma and Reincarnation

Content:

cloudburst said:

how do you square that with the fact that when you search for something with wisdom, it vanishes? If something is not merely an appearance, it would be found upon investigation.

Malcolm wrote:

According to your school (Gelug), the only thing that vanishes in that instance is the mistaken perception of inherent existence, but not the conventional appearance of a given phenomena which is posited as necessary in order in order for its emptiness to be established.

According to Madhyamaka in general, there may indeed be no appearances during equipoise, but in post-equipoise, of course there are appearances (which are illusory and unreal).

M

cloudburst said:

so in both cases, nothing is found to exist independent of mind. How does that square with the fact that you have posited that Chandrakirti accepts thunderstorms that are not mere appearances?

Malcolm wrote:

A mind will not find any appearances independent of itself, since it is axiomatic that all appearances to a mind belong to that mind, whether veridical or deluded.

On the other hand it is clear Candrakīrti accepts external things from the following statement in the commentary to Intro to the Middle Way: "The intrinsic nature of all external things is of two types, relative and ultimate."

Since a cognition of an object (which is what an appearance is) cannot arise in absence of an object external to the mind (according to Candrakīrti, recall any sense cognition requires the meeting of three things, a mind, an organ and object), it is suitable to infer that there are phenomena external to the mind, such as thunderstorms and so on. Even in the case of the appearance of the six realms there must be an object (for example, a liquid) which can form the basis of the six kinds of imputations of water, ambrosia, etc.

As far as I am personally concerned, it matters little to me whether you wish to take the Yogācāra view of relative truth, which you are advocating here, or the Sautrāntika view of relative truth which is the POV advocated by most Indian Madhyamakas including Candrakīrti (for whom objects are held to be external to the mind arising through their own causes and conditions, albeit not necessarily karmic causes and conditions).

I already clarified that for Yogācāra in general all appearances are generated by the activation of traces from past karma. It is a nice theory, but not one that finds much favor in Madhyamaka until Shāntarakṣita's Yogācāra Madhyamaka synthesis.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, January 11th, 2014 at 4:52 AM

Title: Re: Karma and Reincarnation

Content:

cloudburst said:

The cognition of the object arises, and because this object is not itself mind, we can correctly say it is external,

Malcolm wrote:

Since you admit the existence of objects that are external to the mind, you are also admitting that thunderstorms, mountains and so on are not necessarily products of karma, regardless of whatever other products they might be.

If objects are products of karma, they are necessarily mental in nature since their cause is intention (cetanā), which is another name for karma.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, January 11th, 2014 at 5:05 AM

Title: Re: Karma and Reincarnation

Content:

cloudburst said:

The cognition of the object arises, and because this object is not itself mind, we can correctly say it is external,

Malcolm wrote:

Since you admit the existence of objects that are external to the mind, you are also admitting that thunderstorms, mountains and so on are not necessarily products of karma, regardless of whatever other products they might be.

If objects are products of karma, they are necessarily mental in nature since their cause is intention (cetana), which is another name for karma.

cloudburst said:

they are external in the sense of not being clarity that is aware, they are appearances and so and arise in dependence upon the mind. Therefore they precisely are the products of karma. If they did not arise from imprints, or mind, they would have to arise from something independent of mind.

Malcolm wrote:

It seems to me you are conflating the appearance of an object with an object itself.

I have no problem with the idea that how objects appear to us is based on our own karmic traces. I have a problem with the assertion that Madhyamakas like Candrakirti are asserting that objects are nothing other than appearances.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, January 11th, 2014 at 5:07 AM

Title: Re: Karma and Reincarnation

Content:

dude said:

So the physical world does not exist.

Malcolm wrote:

According to Cittamatra school, this would be their assertion. All that exists are minds.

I must say, you do sound pissed off most of the time.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, January 11th, 2014 at 5:16 AM

Title: Re: Karma and Reincarnation

Content:

cloudburst said:

if objects were more than mere appearances, they could be found upon investigation, don't you think?

Malcolm wrote:

They can be found conventionally upon investigation, don't you think? That is, they can be rationally inferred by ordinary persons.

Of course, then we enter the knotty complexity of the Gelug assertion that objects are only to be investigated for their ultimate nature, without negating their conventional status.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, January 11th, 2014 at 5:26 AM

Title: Re: Karma and Reincarnation

Content:

cloudburst said:

if objects were more than mere appearances, they could be found upon investigation, don't you think?

Malcolm wrote:

They can be found conventionally upon investigation, don't you think? That is, they can be rationally inferred by ordinary persons.

cloudburst said:

sure, but whatever we have found in a conventional search is always mere appearance, so you have made no progress

Malcolm wrote:

There can be no subjective pole without the establishment of an objective pole. Therefore it is reasonable to assume that in addition to mind, external objects are required for appearances. You are placing all the primacy of this arrangement on mind. But equal weight must be given to the object and sense organ. For example, a blind man can not see color. He cannot even have the appearance of color. We can see color, he cannot. We can see color because all three things required for a cognition of color are present, an undeluded mind, a healthy sense organ and an external object. Madhyamakas in this respect never make mind the primary factor in cognition because that mind cannot even arise in absence of the object and the organ. So in this respect, you have to admit that the appearance is also dependent on the organ and the object, not just the mind.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, January 11th, 2014 at 5:42 AM

Title: Re: Karma and Reincarnation

Content:

cloudburst said:

don't need organs for appearances, but do need object. Appearances (objects) and minds are non dual, that's why appearances are not independent, so a thunderstorm other than mere karmic appearance cannot reasonably be posited.

Malcolm wrote:

If you are a Yogacara, you only need a mental organ (and traces, etc.). If you are a Madhyamaka, however, you need a sense organ in order to have a cognition of an object. For example, Candrakīrti's definition of the two kinds of relative truth explicitly depends on possessing a healthy or defective sense organ.

It's ok with me if you want to abandon Madhyamaka, but it is a little surprising to see a Gelugpa do so.

The assertion that appearances and objects are identical is mistaken. If this were the case, there could be no common basis for the imputation of qualities by beings of the six realms.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, January 11th, 2014 at 5:54 AM

Title: Re: Karma and Reincarnation

Content:

duckfiasco said:

Malcolm, if we need sense organs and contact to have cognition, how does that relate to the appearance of sensory phenomena in dreams or hallucinations? I'm thinking also of things like phantom limb syndrome or the lights that appear in sensory deprivation tanks.

Malcolm wrote:

Dreams are a product of waking impressions on the mind.

Hallucinations are a product of defective or deranged sense organs (through drugs, etc.).

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, January 11th, 2014 at 6:06 AM

Title: Re: Karma and Reincarnation

Content:

duckfiasco said:

So is the difference here then that Yogacara asserts that every sense consciousness is a form of mind consciousness, whereas Madhyamaka holds the mind to be a facet of cognition along with other elements?

Sorry to ask such a basic question but I only recently came across the idea that experience is literally a manifestation of the mind in this thread:
<https://www.dharmawheel.net/viewtopic.php?f=39&t=11280>

Trying to pick up the pieces of my blown mind here and there. Not sure how they fit back together!

Malcolm wrote:

Madhyamakas such as Candrakīrti consistently maintain that a mind will not be produced in absence of a sense organ or an object.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, January 11th, 2014 at 6:19 AM

Title: Re: Karma and Reincarnation

Content:

duckfiasco said:

So is the difference here then that Yogācāra asserts that every sense consciousness is a form of mind consciousness, whereas Madhyamaka holds the mind to be a facet of cognition along with other elements?

Sorry to ask such a basic question but I only recently came across the idea that experience is literally a manifestation of the mind in this thread:
<https://www.dharmawheel.net/viewtopic.php?f=39&t=11280>

Trying to pick up the pieces of my blown mind here and there. Not sure how they fit back together!

Malcolm wrote:

Madhyamakas such as Candrakīrti consistently maintain that a mind will not be produced in absence of a sense organ or an object.

Sherab Dorje said:

Surely though, a being born without sense organs would still possess the mind sense organ and have experiences based on past sensations. I am thinking here of beings without a physical body.

Malcolm wrote:

Formless realm beings have only a mental organ, they therefore have only one thought, which is the concept which propels their birth in the four formless āyatanas.

Bardo beings have a subtle body with a complete complement of sense organs. It is said however in Abhidharma they do not see the sun and moon because of not being born of male and female elements.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, January 11th, 2014 at 9:45 PM

Title: Re: In the KUNJED GYALPO says it is of no use to do rituals

Content:

pueraeternus said:

The 15th-19th indriyas (sraddha, virya, smrti, samadhi, prajna) are requisites for purification (vyavadana) and faculties for praxis. They all need to be present and balanced for praxis to be possible in a proper manner. I don't see how this leads to "Direct introduction always works in someone who possesses devotion" - you have to explain better. If you mentioned the 3 pure indriyas - anajnatamajnasyamindriya, ajnendriya and ajnatadvindriya, then you might have a point somewhere there, but sraddha? This sounds so much like, at best, the most strident strain of Pureland faith, or at worse, evangelical Christianity.

Malcolm wrote:

It is pretty straightforward: you need to have interest, diligence, etc., for direct introduction to be of any real use. If you have interest, diligence, etc., it undoubtedly works. These eight indriyas beginning with sraddha are path dharmas yes? Since this is so, they are necessary for being on a path, even a Dzogchen path. Also this was never disputed.

Direct introduction is what it claims to be: a direct introduction to your own state of liberation. You have always had that state, otherwise, you could not be introduced to it. This is why the state of liberation itself is not produced from causes -- it is innate. If it were not innate, if it were something created from causes and conditions, it would be perishable, and therefore, Buddhahood would be something temporary, part of the six lokas

The path of Dzogchen is exactly what it claims to be: a path upon which there is no progress since the state of liberation is introduced to oneself from the start; the sole stage since all living beings are on it; the result that does not arise from a cause, etc.

If you want to understand Dzogchen concretely, you need to study and practice Dzogchen.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, January 11th, 2014 at 10:46 PM

Title: Re: Karma and Reincarnation

Content:

duckfiasco said:

Malcolm, if we need sense organs and contact to have cognition, how does that relate to the appearance of sensory phenomena in dreams or hallucinations? I'm thinking also

of things like phantom limb syndrome or the lights that appear in sensory deprivation tanks.

Malcolm wrote:

Dreams are a product of waking impressions on the mind.

Hallucinations are a product of defective or deranged sense organs (through drugs, etc.).

conebeckham said:

In the case of Hallucinogens, is it the case that it is the sense organs, or the sense consciousness(es), or the mental consciousness itself, that is "altered" (defective or deranged, to use your words)??

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, because what is affected by hallucinogens are various different paths in the brain connected with the sense organs.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, January 11th, 2014 at 10:49 PM

Title: Re: In the KUNJED GYALPO says it is of no use to do rituals

Content:

Ivo said:

In textual terms, the earliest dzogchen material would be the Dunghuang manuscripts. I am not aware of any tantric references in these texts, are there? On the other hand:

Malcolm wrote:

Part of the confusions arises from the fact that Dzogchen is consistently framed as part of secret mantra (which it is). It is not however a path of renunciation or transformation.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, January 11th, 2014 at 11:23 PM

Title: Re: Karma and Reincarnation

Content:

PadmaVonSamba said:

Rebirth is different from reincarnation.

.

Malcolm wrote:

Yeah, many people over the years try to make this distinction, but I think it is a reach.

As far as I am concerned reincarnation and rebirth mean the same thing.

In reality, the term in Sanskrit is punarbhāva, which literally means "repeated existence".

For eternalists, this "repeated existence" happens because of an essence, as you rightly observe. For us, it happens because of continuing nexus of action and affliction. In both case, a body is appropriated repeatedly, hence they are both theories of reincarnation. In both cases, one is born repeatedly, hence they are both theories of rebirth.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, January 11th, 2014 at 11:32 PM

Title: Re: Climate Change: We're Doomed

Content:

Unknown said:

The climate change counter-movement is lavishly funded by dark money to prevent policies limiting carbon pollution that drives man-made climate change

Malcolm wrote:

http://www.ecobuddhism.org/science/cover_up/1bycdm

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, January 12th, 2014 at 1:39 AM

Title: Re: Climate Change: We're Doomed

Content:

Zhen Li said:

This is why government is a hopeless manage...

Malcolm wrote:

Your libertarianism is showing. In reality, publicly funded research is far more productive than private funded research. The caveat is that it doesn't necessarily produce results which can be capitalized. Private sector research is at the mercy of the same sorts of people that public sector research is: the only difference is their name -- in the private sector they are called "managers"; in the public sector they are called "bureaucrats". On the other hand, publicly funded research does not need to demonstrate short term results to continue. There may a lot of waste, but so what? Compared to how much money is spent on means to kill people, it is nothing.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, January 12th, 2014 at 1:51 AM

Title: Re: Karma and Reincarnation

Content:

cloudburst said:

so you are saying madhaymikās do not accept the existence of formless-realm beings?

Malcolm wrote:

I addressed this above, so I am not sure why you are asking this question.

cloudburst said:

I am interested to see if you can give a coherent explanation of external object without positing or implying an essence. So far, I don't think you've done so.

Malcolm wrote:

Sure I have, external objects are composed of the inert five elements, arising from causes and conditions, lacking any intrinsic nature.

cloudburst said:

In that case you can give an example of an object that is not and has never appeared to mind. If it is an object, it is an object of mind, or an appearance. What else?

Malcolm wrote:

Mental objects are one class of objects, material objects are another class of objects. You are conflating the two. A mental object (part of the dharmadhātu) is an object for the mano dhātu. A material object is an object for the other five dhātus, form for eye, etc.

When for example the manodhātu meets an object that is part of dharmadhātu, a manovijñāna is generated. Before a vijñāna can be generated, the object must appear to the appropriate sense organ (indriya).

When the cakṣudhātu meets the rūpadhātu a cakṣuvijñāna is generated. If it were the case that there are only mental objects any sense consciousness could arise from any sense objects, for example, cognition of smell could arise from the eye dhātu meeting the form dhātu, etc.

It is not the intention of Madhyamaka to undermine this or that conventional presentation of the skandhas, dhātus and āyatanas, but merely to show that they are not paramārtha dharmas.

Of course, as I said, if you prefer to follow the Yogacara presentation of conventional truth that's ok with me, but it was rejected by Candra.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, January 12th, 2014 at 3:58 AM

Title: Re: Karma and Reincarnation

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Mental objects are one class of objects, material objects are another class of objects. You are conflating the two. A mental object (part of the dharmadhātu) is an object for the mano dhātu. A material object is an object for the other five dhātus, form for eye, etc.

Sherab Dorje said:

That is one view/theory. From my understanding Theravadins put the mind as a sense organ at the same level as the other five, yet a component in the functioning of the "material" sensory process too. So it has two roles: the sensing of mental objects and the sensing of mental objects produced by the other five sense consciousness.

Malcolm wrote:

The function of vijñāna is really best comprehended by understand the complete presentation of skandhas, āyatanas and dhātus. There is no significant different between how these are presented in the Vibhanga, for example, and the Koshabhasyam.

In both systems, manovijñānadhātu arises from the contact of the mano-indriya dhātu and the dharmadhātu.

12 āyatanas, the manoāyatana covers all sense perceptions because the emphasis is different.

In brief, the emphasis of the presentation of 5 skandhas is on the sense organs, the presentation of the 12 āyatanas emphasizes the sense objects, and the presentation of the 18 dhātus emphasizes the sense consciousnesses.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, January 12th, 2014 at 5:47 AM

Title: Re: Karma and Reincarnation

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Formless realm beings have only a mental organ, they therefore have only one thought, which is the concept which propels their birth in the four formless āyatanas.

Sherab Dorje said:

Not wanting to be a stick in the mud, but what is your source for this?

Malcolm wrote:

Abhidharmakoshabhasyam, AFAIK, there is no different explanation given in Yogacara or

for that matter in the Abhidharmasammucaya. You can understand it in the following way: without physical organs, the mental organ can only have a single object present before it, the thought that propels its rebirth into that āyatana.

You see, this is why people should study Vasubandhu in detail -- then they will have less proliferation and speculation about many things.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, January 12th, 2014 at 10:09 PM

Title: Re: In the KUNJED GYALPO says it is of no use to do rituals

Content:

pueraeternus said:

prajna is probably a better candidate if we were to favour any of them.

Malcolm wrote:

They are actually progressive in the beginning, one builds on the last.

Direct introduction is what it claims to be: a direct introduction to your own state of liberation. You have always had that state, otherwise, you could not be introduced to it. This is why the state of liberation itself is not produced from causes -- it is innate. If it were not innate, if it were something created from causes and conditions, it would be perishable, and therefore, Buddhahood would be something temporary, part of the six lokas

I do not dispute this. Such an idea is found in the earliest strata teachings on nirvana and (later on) tathagatagarbha (the uncompounded, unconditioned, uncreated, etc), so I don't think its really that groundbreaking.

The difference between sutra and tantra is empowerment. There is no direct introduction in Sutra. There are also important differences in terms of how the result is contextualized in sutra and tantra in general, and dzogchen specifically.

The path of Dzogchen is exactly what it claims to be: a path upon which there is no progress since the state of liberation is introduced to oneself from the start; the sole stage since all living beings are on it; the result that does not arise from a cause, etc.

The result that does not arise from a cause, except that you do need the eight indriyas? If the result really does not arise from a cause, then even sraddha won't be needed?

The eight indriyas do not produce the result. For example, gold is present in ore. But you still may need to process the gold with mercury and other substances in order to extract it. You would never say the gold was the result of the process, merely that the process is used to extract it. Likewise, in Dzogchen the path is used merely to extract the result, but you never say that the path produces the result. Indeed, not is the path taken as the result, as in the path of transformation, the result is the path.

I did (study) and I still do (erm, more or less) .

Then it is important to be clear about the six special features of Dzogchen teachings:

The result does not arise from a cause.

Intimate instructions do not depend on texts.
Buddhahood is not found in the mind.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, January 12th, 2014 at 10:30 PM

Title: Re: Karma and Reincarnation

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Theravada Abhidhamma is completely irrelevant to discussions regarding Madhyamaka, Yogacara, Vajrayāna, Mahāyāna and so on.

In any case, none of what you describe demonstrates that formless realm beings are capable of more than a single cognition during their lifespans.

In fact, your citation merely supports this view, "While a mind-door process can also take any of the five sense data as object, mental object is listed to show its distinctive datum", this means that a sense organ related to the sense datum is required for the requisite cognition of that object to take place. The mind operates through any of the six indriyas, taking the name of that sense gate when it is operating through that sense gate. But the mind cannot smell a form when it is operating through the eye gateway. Since formless realm beings only have a mental indriya, they do not perceive any material objects and since they have no input, they only cognize the concept that propels their rebirth.

If you want to prove this view of the Sautrantikas incorrect, you have some work to do.

It is better to study Abhidharma if you want to understand the context of Indian Buddhism.

Abhidharmakoshaśābhasya, AFAIK, there is no different explanation given in Yogacara or for that matter in the Abhidharmasammucaya. You can understand it in the following way: without physical organs, the mental organ can only have a single object present before it, the thought that propels its rebirth into that āyatana.

You see, this is why people should study Vasubandhu in detail -- then they will have less proliferation and speculation about many things.

M

Sherab Dorje said:

Vasubandhu is merely one take on the matter. Acariya Sangaha states in the Abhidhammattha Sangaha (2000), p152 that for a mind process to occur the one needs the following conditions to be present:

- 1)The heart base (hadayavatthu)*
- 2)A mental object (dhammarammana)

3)The bhavanga

4)Attention

*"For the mind-door process, the heart-base is only required in those realms where matter is found. While a mind-door process can also take any of the five sense data as object, mental object is listed to show its distinctive datum."

He goes on to say that: "The six types of cognitive processes are conveniently divided into two groups —

(1) the five-door process (pañcadvāravīthi), which includes the five processes occurring at each of the physical sense doors; and (2) the mind-door process (manodvāravīthi), which comprises all processes that occur solely at the mind door. Since the bhavanga is

also the channel from which the five-door processes emerge, the latter is sometimes called "mixed door processes" (missaka-dvāravīthi), inasmuch as they involve both the mind door and a physical sense door. The processes that occur solely at the mind door are then called "bare mind door processes" (suddha-manodvāravīthi), since they emerge

from the bhavanga alone without the instrumentality of a physical sense door. As will be seen, the first five processes all follow a uniform pattern despite the difference in the sense faculty through which they occur, while the sixth comprises a variety of processes

that are alike only in that they occur independently of the external sense doors. "

I see your proliferation and speculation and raise you a pedantry.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, January 12th, 2014 at 10:41 PM

Title: Re: Climate Change: We're Doomed

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The caveat is that it doesn't necessarily produce results which can be capitalized.

Zhen Li said:

Well they do, otherwise no one would do it.

Malcolm wrote:

The operative word is "necessarily".

Zhen Li said:

I'm not sure we can really say that there's any significant private sector research outside of engineering and technology.

Malcolm wrote:

What kind of research are we talking about?

On the other hand, publicly funded research does not need to demonstrate short term results to continue. There may be a lot of waste, but so what?

So you are suggesting a model which drones on forever with low output.

Research needs to demonstrate results, that's the point. If your model is inaccurate to the level of Hansen, you would be fired in the private sector because it could mean the survival of the firm.

Not necessarily -- look at Microsoft -- worst operating system ever invented.

In the public sector, you have people like that who simply say "more research is needed" whenever they come up without being able to confirm their own theory. This is the fundamental flaw in their understanding of the scientific method. You don't say more research is needed if your expected dataset isn't found to fit your theory - you change the theory. Science is pretty simple in this regard - you take what data exists, and you explain how it fits together, that is your theory. Then you have positive results no matter what data you find! Problem solved - but the public sector doesn't allow this to happen. If you are saying to the public, "we need 30 more years of observation and funding," you're saying that your current theory is unfalsifiable, and therefore unscientific. Collecting data and making measurements is fundamentally not science, that's data collection. Science is the explanation of the data, and your opinion of that explanation. That doesn't take a 30 year project, if it does, you haven't learned anything in university.

Science ought to be an open ended inquiry.

And fundamentally these kinds of attitudes are just immoral. You can't justify taking the money of productive labour to fund standstill results.

Sure you can. People take that kind of money and sink it into luxury commodities all the time.

Paying for waste can't be justified, that's just the kind of lazy and immoral mentality that one would expect from a Marxist, not a deep ecologist.

We, Joe Public, pay for waste constantly. Waste is one of the principal externalities of modern capitalism.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, January 12th, 2014 at 11:16 PM

Title: Re: Is Psychotherapy Better Than Astrology?

Content:

Virgo said:

I don't think Astrology was ever really used for therapeutic purposes historically. It was more functional, ie. this is a good day to do this, this isn't; this is a good time to plant crops, this isn't; this is a good time to have a child, this isn't, etc.

Kevin

Malcolm wrote:

Astrology has been used as a diagnostic tool in medicine for centuries.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, January 12th, 2014 at 11:22 PM

Title: Re: Is Psychotherapy Better Than Astrology?

Content:

theanarchist said:

That's really nonsense. Back then there was not even a standard for diagnosing psychiatric illnesses and there was no evaluation of the outcome of the treatments. That guy probably had a zero cure rate with those means with anyone truly suffering from a psychiatric illness. It might have helped with some psychosomatic problems that respond well to placebo effects.

Malcolm wrote:

Diagnosis, especially of mental illnesses, reflect cultural norms, not scientifically established pathologies.

theanarchist said:

Then there are those psychiatric diseases that don't respond to psychotherapy that well, that depend on medications in their treatment, like psychosis and the bipolar disorder.

Malcolm wrote:

These are mislabeled -- they are not "psychiatric illnesses", they are physical diseases

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, January 12th, 2014 at 11:27 PM

Title: Re: Karma and Reincarnation

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

So you admit that you are also proliferating a view?

Malcolm wrote:

We were discussing Madhyamaka, etc. Throwing Abhidhamma into the mix just makes things more complicated to discuss since its concepts are largely irrelevant to the mainstream of Indian Buddhism.

Sherab Dorje said:

Here is how Theravadins see a mind sense door process:

Malcolm wrote:

You need to find the specific description in this literature for a formless realm beings cognitions, sense organs, lifespan, propelling karma, etc. That's up to you, since you brought it up.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, January 13th, 2014 at 12:08 AM

Title: Re: Karma and Reincarnation

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

We were discussing Madhyamaka, etc. Throwing Abhidhamma into the mix just makes things more complicated to discuss since its concepts are largely irrelevant to the mainstream of Indian Buddhism.

Sherab Dorje said:

What's wrong with complicated? Though I fail to see how Abhidhamma is irrelevant to...

Malcolm wrote:

I don't have time for it.

Sherab Dorje said:

I'm not saying that is how Theravadins view formless beings, nor am I interested in proving or disproving their view, I am just proliferating my speculations on the basis of my limited knowledge (ie adding another view to the discussion).

Malcolm wrote:

If you are not going to take the discussion seriously then I will ignore your further contributions since they only steal my time. On the other hand, if you are willing to examine what you should examine, then it is worth my time to pay attention to your contribution here.

We must always respect other people's time, since their time is their life.

Having said that, if you want to be useful, dig up what Theravadins say about formless realm beings.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, January 13th, 2014 at 12:16 AM

Title: Re: Climate Change: We're Doomed

Content:

Zhen Li said:

Sure you can. People take that kind of money and sink it into luxury commodities all the time.

Malcolm wrote:

This isn't equivalent. Most luxury commodities, except in the homes of millionaire bureaucrats, are not bought by tax dollars. [/quote]

That's what you think.

No one pays for waste. That's why it's an externality. You are suggesting making it the product you buy.

We taxpayers pay dearly for waste all the time-- that is what you claim is immoral. You claim that endless research is wasteful and immoral. So is externalizing the cost of the pollution of a massively polluting industry, for example, tar sands, onto governments.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, January 13th, 2014 at 12:18 AM

Title: Re: Is Psychotherapy Better Than Astrology?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Diagnosis, especially of mental illnesses, reflect cultural norms, not scientifically established pathologies.

theanarchist said:

No, they don't. Criteria for the existence of a mental illness is mainly the suffering. And suffering from a state of psychosis, depression, bipolar disorder etc is the same in every culture, even if the interpretations of the unusual behaviour might be different.

Malcolm wrote:

You need to read "The Normal and the Pathological".

theanarchist said:

Those symptoms DON`T reflect cultural norms.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, actually they do.

theanarchist said:

So again, if you have no knowledge about these things, I suggest you stop writing nonsense about them claiming that nonsense to be the truth.

Malcolm wrote:

funny, last time I checked, I was a doctor.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, January 13th, 2014 at 12:19 AM

Title: Re: Is Psychotherapy Better Than Astrology?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

These are mislabeled -- they are not "psychiatric illnesses", they are physical diseases

theanarchist said:

Again wrong. The field of psychiatry covers neurologically caused mental illnesses as well as environmentally or intrapsychologically caused mental illnesses.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, I understand what psychiatry is. Nevertheless, these diseases are still mislabeled.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, January 13th, 2014 at 12:51 AM

Title: Re: Karma and Reincarnation

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

If you are not going to take the discussion seriously then I will ignore your further contributions since they only steal my time.

Sherab Dorje said:

I am taking the discussion seriously, just not deadly seriously (ie I don't really have a horse in the race). On the other hand, if you are willing to examine what you should examine, then it is worth my time to pay attention to your contribution here.

I do examine what I need to examine. Anyway, no need to get bent out of shape just because it doesn't accord to what you believe. We must always respect other people's time, since their time is their life.

It took me plenty of time to dig up the info. that I presented here. Having said that, if you want to be useful, dig up what Theravadins say about formless realm beings.

Well, gee, since you asked so nicely...

Malcolm wrote:

Greg: you presented nothing about formless realm beings. Also, nothing you presented contradicts the basic Buddhist principle that an eye for example cannot produce the cognition of smell. Also, you seem to be under the impression that bhavanga is as fully articulated as the Yogacara ālayavijñāna, but it is not.

Also I have a mild head cold, so I am a little grumpy.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, January 13th, 2014 at 12:55 AM

Title: Re: Is Psychotherapy Better Than Astrology?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Nevertheless, these diseases are still mislabeled.

theanarchist said:

They are not.

How many people with severe mental illnesses have you ever met and talked to about their symptoms and problems? Not many I assume.

Malcolm wrote:

You would assume incorrectly.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, January 13th, 2014 at 1:21 AM

Title: Re: Karma and Reincarnation

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Greg: you presented nothing about formless realm beings.

Sherab Dorje said:

By formless realm you mean arupavacara?

Malcolm wrote:

The arūpadhātu with the four āyatanas.

Sherab Dorje said:

Also, nothing you presented contradicts the basic Buddhist principle that an eye for example cannot produce the cognition of smell.

Either you seriously misread what I have been saying thus far, or you are waving around red herrings. Neither bodes well.

Malcolm wrote:

The point of the discussion was to demonstrate to cloudburst that one needs more than a manovijñāna indriya to account for various different kinds of sense cognitions.

Sherab Dorje said:

Also, you seem to be under the impression that bhavanga is as fully articulated as the Yogacara ālayavijñāna, but it is not.

It may not be as fully articulated at a theoretical/philosophical level, I agree, yet I have

read accounts that conflate the bhavanga with the alayavijnana. (ie they basically stated that both terms describe the same phenomenon)

Malcolm wrote:
[/quote]

The most the Yogacarins say about it is that it is a Nikaya doctrine which proves that ālayavijñāna is valid. Cloudburst, being some sort of strange hybrid of Sautrantika following reasoning and Yogacara rejects the ālayavijñāna.

M

Author: Malcolm
Date: Monday, January 13th, 2014 at 1:56 AM
Title: Re: Books on the kalachakra teachings
Content:
AlexanderS said:

I was wondering whether any of you can recommend me some good books that includes or provides commentary's on the kalachakra teachings.

Malcolm wrote:
There are many:

Vesna Wallaces three books.

Norsang Kasalng Gyatso's books.

Glenn Wallace has a book of translations

etc.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Monday, January 13th, 2014 at 4:19 AM
Title: Re: Climate Change: We're Doomed
Content:
Malcolm wrote:

We taxpayers pay dearly for waste all the time-- that is what you claim is immoral. You claim that endless research is wasteful and immoral. So is externalizing the cost of the pollution of a massively polluting industry, for example, tar sands, onto governments.

Zhen Li said:
If you're buying the waste it's not an externality...

Malcolm wrote:

That is the point, no one is buying tons of garbage being sunk into the ocean, no one is buying arsenic and heavy metals that flow into the environment, but nevertheless, we taxpayers pick up the costs of disposing of this waste.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, January 13th, 2014 at 4:24 AM

Title: Re: In the KUNJED GYALPO says it is of no use to do rituals

Content:

pueraeternus said:

But the end result is still the same. From another angle, the sutra could be seen as easier, since it does not require empowerment nor direct introduction. Of course, teachings and guidance on the path by enlightened teachers and Buddhas are still needed to learn the path.

Malcolm wrote:

If you consider three incalculable eons "easier

pueraeternus said:

But even in the Sravakayana, the path is never taken as "producing" the result - the path leads to the city of Nirvana; it doesn't build it.

Malcolm wrote:

The key distinction here is qualities. Buddhahood is not merely pacification of affliction as in Sravakayāna.

pueraeternus said:

The result does not arise from a cause.

Intimate instructions do not depend on texts.

Buddhahood is not found in the mind.

I am aware of this. It is so like Chan.

Malcolm wrote:

[/quote]

There are some superficial similarities, but Chan does not have direct introduction, since it is sutra path.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, January 13th, 2014 at 4:28 AM

Title: Re: Karma and Reincarnation

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

...for example, cognition of smell could arise from the eye dhātu meeting the form dhātu, etc.

anjali said:

Oddly, something like that does happen with sensory cross-over (synesthesia). For example people seeing sound or hearing light, or seeing touch, etc. How to explain this in traditional teachings? Which makes me wonder if this phenomenon might be a general property of sense consciousness, but one unrecognized and unexplored in traditional teachings.

Sherab Dorje said:

I would hazard a guess and say the mix up occurs when one of the five sense consciousness passes on the info to the mind sense consciousness.

Malcolm wrote:

It happens when one of the neural pathways in the brain floods and overloads, it is a physical issue.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, January 14th, 2014 at 8:32 PM

Title: Re: Is Psychotherapy Better Than Astrology?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

...

funny, last time I checked, I was a doctor.

Motova said:

Doctor of Medicine, MD?

Malcolm wrote:

Tibetan Medicine

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, January 14th, 2014 at 11:36 PM

Title: Re: Is Psychotherapy Better Than Astrology?

Content:

theanarchist said:

Then you had a bad experience and therefor you have a bone to pick with the whole profession and are running a smear campaign...

Malcolm wrote:

Psychiatric medicine, for the most part, cure nothing. They are palliatives only, useful in helping modulate destructive behaviors, of course, useful in suppressing psychotic ideation, of course, but in the end they are also highly destructive substances as well that often merely replace one kind of suffering with another, such as Tardive Dyskenesia, and so on. Often such drug therapies are little more than chemical straight jackets.

I have watched many people go through the diagnostic mill, one psychiatrist's diagnosis of paranoid schizophrenia is another's diagnosis of rapid cycling bi-polar disorder, etc.

There is very little evidence-based science in the diagnosis of psychiatric disorders, since they are generally diagnosis from transient behavior rather than empirically justifiable data. Further, the effects of many drugs used in the treatment of psychiatric disorders are poorly understood. Recent studies show that SSRI's are largely ineffective: They conclude that, "compared with placebo, the new-generation antidepressants do not produce clinically significant improvements in depression in patients who initially have moderate or even very severe depression".

<http://www.newscientist.com/article/dn13375-prozac-does-not-work-in-majority-of-depressed-patients.html#.UtVYp3nHFFw>

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, January 15th, 2014 at 1:30 AM

Title: Re: Karma and Reincarnation

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

Because all the five sensory consciouness have to pass through the mano vijnana, which is why I said that this is probably where the mix-up occurs.

Malcolm wrote:

All six sense consciousness are actually one [momentary*] consciousness operating through the five sense gates when those gates meet their objects. This consciousness moment is so brief as to lend the illusion that we are seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, touching and thinking at the same time. We don't, when consciousness functions as an eye consciousness it cannot function as a nose consciousness and so on.

M

The most fundamental unit of time in Abhidharma is the duration of a concept, approximately 7 nanoseconds.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, January 15th, 2014 at 3:56 AM

Title: Re: Is Psychotherapy Better Than Astrology?

Content:

Simon E. said:

Can we clarify our terms here ?

Psychiatry is the branch of medicine that deals with so called 'mental illness'. A

psychiatrist is an M.D. Who has undergone further training in psychiatry..

Malcolm wrote:

Correct, this is what I am discussing.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, January 15th, 2014 at 3:58 AM

Title: Re: Is Psychotherapy Better Than Astrology?

Content:

Simon E. said:

However many see C.B.T. As being very compatible with the development of Mindfulness.

Malcolm wrote:

CBT was developed by a Zen practitioner, so it is not suprizing.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, January 15th, 2014 at 4:00 AM

Title: Re: Is Psychotherapy Better Than Astrology?

Content:

Simon E. said:

Can we clarify our terms here ?

Psychiatry is the branch of medicine that deals with so called 'mental illness'. A psychiatrist is an M.D. Who has undergone further training in psychiatry..

Malcolm wrote:

Correct, this is what I am discussing.

Simon E. said:

You are Loppon. But others are conflating promiscuously .

Malcolm wrote:

Totally sounds like The Dowager:

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, January 15th, 2014 at 8:49 PM

Title: Re: Medicine Buddha Sutra translated from Tibetan?

Content:

sherabzangpo said:

Here is the link to my translation of the Concise Medicine Buddha Sutra:

<http://sugatagarbhatranslations.com/2013/04/23/the-exalted-lapis-light-dharani-that-generates-the-power-of-the-tathagatas-meditative-absorption-the-short-medicine->

buddha-sutra/

Malcolm wrote:

One observation:

In Tibetan Materia Medica Vaidurya is not lapis lazuli , it is sapphire, and more specifically star sapphire (which accounts for the checkerboard pattern of the ground in refuge visualizations.

There are blue, white and yellow Vaiduryas. There can never be a white or a yellow Lapis.

Lapis on the other thand is very clearly the stone called mu men (མུ་མེན་). Please consult འཁྱུངས་དཔེ་དྲི་མེད་ཤེལ་གྱི་མེ་ལོན་ -- this is the standard text reference for materia medica used in Tibetan Medical colleges.

Your reference about beryl is possible, but not definitive.

I should also add, that the word is a generic name for gems that are very shiny and catch light in very specific ways, for example, cat's eye (chrysoberyl) is also called Vaidurya.

Here however it is རེད་ཅུ་ཐོན་པོ་, which is in fact star sapphire, as opposed to the more common indranila, regular blue sapphire.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, January 15th, 2014 at 9:14 PM

Title: Re: The Three Bodies of the Buddha Sutra

Content:

sherabzangpo said:

I translated this sutra in November 2012. I believe my translation is a better in some ways (I think there may be some mistakes in the 84000 version), but I have yet to do a thorough comparison. Here is the link:

<http://sugatagarbhatranslations.com/2012/11/28/the-three-kayas-sutra/>

Malcolm wrote:

The fact you take ālaya as the ālayavijñāna is an (understandable) error in your translation (not to mention rendering ālaya as "storehouse"). There is no evidence from the Tibetan text that such a literal reading is warranted.

Finally, in both translations, neither of you have rendered "gnas su dag" perfectly. Hence it would be better to render it as "the purified ālaya is...", "the purified afflicted mind is...".

My point is that there is no such a thing as a finished translation, and all translations are subject to scrutiny and correction, as well as differences of opinion. I have found it to be

unprofitable to make bold statements about other translators work unless they are completely incompetent, and neither of you are incompetent.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, January 15th, 2014 at 9:30 PM

Title: Re: Karma and Reincarnation

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

Because all the five sensory consciousness have to pass through the mano vijnana, which is why I said that this is probably where the mix-up occurs.

Malcolm wrote:

All six sense consciousness are actually one [momentary*] consciousness operating through the five sense gates when those gates meet their objects. This consciousness moment is so brief as to lend the illusion that we are seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, touching and thinking at the same time. We don't, when consciousness functions as an eye consciousness it cannot function as a nose consciousness and so on.

M

The most fundamental unit of time in Abhidharma is the duration of a concept, approximately 7 nanoseconds.

xabir said:

Nice.

Are there any moments where consciousness is not seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, touching and thinking?

Malcolm wrote:

In Madhyamaka, no. Shantideva states:

"When there neither an object or a non-object before the mind, at that time, since there is no other possibility, the mind is pacified"

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, January 15th, 2014 at 10:07 PM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

You have decided that you support something called "Enlightened Despotism", but don't tell us what it is... and then you complain people won't debate you!

Malcolm wrote:

The term is self-evident. The only part I question is whether despots can ever be awake.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, January 15th, 2014 at 10:09 PM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

Zhen Li said:

The US has been socialist for decades.

Malcolm wrote:

This is pretty silly.

US has been Keynesian for decades.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, January 15th, 2014 at 11:11 PM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

Zhen Li said:

The US is socialist as per the idea that the government can fix stuff.

Malcolm wrote:

No, the US is a republican democracy based on Locke's notion of the social contract. It is in fact a product of the Scottish Enlightenment.

Zhen Li said:

Capitalism as per Mises is grounded in morality and the nonaggression principle. Only a capitalist economy a la Mises can minimise violence and coercion.

Malcolm wrote:

As I said you are a libertarian. Only libertarians waffle on, insisting that governments are merely about violence and coercion. And you have your head in a bag if you believe capitalism minimizes violence and coercion. Capitalist countries exports violence and coercion to provide comfort at home, generally supporting totalitarian regimes to maintain economic advantage in the market.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, January 15th, 2014 at 11:13 PM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

tellyontellyon said:
Marxist analysis is...

Malcolm wrote:
...antiquated and irrelevant, fit now only as a subject of literary criticism.

tellyontellyon said:
...but there has to be some way of living on this planet together.

Malcolm wrote:
Go Deep:

The well-being and flourishing of human and nonhuman life on Earth have value in themselves (synonyms: intrinsic value, inherent value). These values are independent of the usefulness of the nonhuman world for human purposes.

Richness and diversity of life forms contribute to the realization of these values and are also values in themselves.

Humans have no right to reduce this richness and diversity except to satisfy vital human needs.

The flourishing of human life and cultures is compatible with a substantial decrease of the human population. The flourishing of nonhuman life requires such a decrease.

Present human interference with the nonhuman world is excessive, and the situation is rapidly worsening.

Policies must therefore be changed. These policies affect basic economic, technological, and ideological structures. The resulting state of affairs will be deeply different from the present.

The ideological change is mainly that of appreciating life quality (dwelling in situations of inherent value) rather than adhering to an increasingly higher standard of living. There will be a profound awareness of the difference between big and great.

Those who subscribe to the foregoing points have an obligation directly or indirectly to try to implement the necessary changes.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Deep_ecology#Principles

Author: Malcolm
Date: Thursday, January 16th, 2014 at 12:24 AM
Title: Re: The Three Bodies of the Buddha Sutra
Content:

sherabzangpo said:

I translated this sutra in November 2012. I believe my translation is a better in some ways (I think there may be some mistakes in the 84000 version), but I have yet to do a thorough comparison. Here is the link:

<http://sugatagarbhatranslations.com/2012/11/28/the-three-kayas-sutra/>

Malcolm wrote:

The fact you take ālaya as the ālayavijñāna is an (understandable) error in your translation (not to mention rendering ālaya as "storehouse"). There is no evidence from the Tibetan text that such a literal reading is warranted.

Finally, in both translations, neither of you have rendered "gnas su dag" perfectly. Hence it would be better to render it as "the purified ālaya is...", "the purified afflicted mind is...".

My point is that there is no such a thing as a finished translation, and all translations are subject to scrutiny and correction, as well as differences of opinion. I have found it to be unprofitable to make bold statements about other translators work unless they are completely incompetent, and neither of you are incompetent.

Will said:

It is a short one Malcolm - give us your version please.

Malcolm wrote:

There is little point, both are fine as far as they go.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, January 16th, 2014 at 12:41 AM

Title: Re: Karma and Reincarnation

Content:

Virgo said:

They are an outgrowth of the view of certain logicians that ascribed to a certain view. The purpose of their being described and reasoning for their being taught must be understood within the greater framework of the view of the work from which they come. Specifically, it is a work, dealing with the emptiness of persons, which drives home the same (never touching on the emptiness of all phenomena) by painstakingly describing in great detail, every phenomena which actually does arise and their causation, to show that things arise but people do not. In order to do this effectively and convincingly, it has to go into the utmost detail of the process of a mindstream, to show how none of it is a person, and yet there are mental and physical phenomena which arise.

It is realist in it's nature, not taking mental and physical phenomena as dreamlike, but as quite solid, and real.

Kevin

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, January 16th, 2014 at 2:06 AM

Title: Re: Is Psychotherapy Better Than Astrology?

Content:

AlexanderS said:

When you say that psychosis and bipolar disorder are physical diseases is that exclusive to these 2 or does it also apply to most "psychiatric illnesses"? Arent most illnesses in TBM a mixture of mental and physical imbalances?

Malcolm wrote:

From a Tibetan medical perspective, emotional disorders must be distinguished from actual psychiatric disorders. The former are fundamentally caused by imbalances in the three humors which arise from the three afflictive emotions. The latter are caused by very serious derangement of either "vata" or "pitta", along with demons. For the most part, the mental illness chapters cover various kinds of demonic causes.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, January 16th, 2014 at 2:52 AM

Title: Re: Is Psychotherapy Better Than Astrology?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The latter are caused by very serious derangement of either "vata" or "pitta", along with demons.

theanarchist said:

Vata and pitta are concepts from Ayurveda, not Tibetan medicine.

Malcolm wrote:

Would it surprise you to learn that རྩུ་ is how vata is translated into Tibetan? Or that མཁྱིའ་པ་ is how "pitta" is translated into Tibetan? Or that བད་ཀླན་ is how kapha is translated into Tibetan? Or that four tantras (rgyud bzhi a.k.a Amritāṅgaṣṭāghuya-upadeśatantra) is heavily based on the Indian Ayurvedic treatise, Aṣṭāṅgaḥṛdayasaṃhita? Or that the terms vata, pitta, and kapha (which are in fact rlung, mkhris pa and bad kan) are used in sutras and tantras such as Suvarnaprabhāsa, Kālacakra, etc?

The principle difference between classical Ayurveda and Tibetan Medicine is their view: Ayurveda is based on the Sāṃkhya school, Tibetan medicine is based on Buddhist sutras, tantras as well as Ayurveda treatises composed by Buddhists such as Vagbhata (author of the Aṣṭāṅga ḥṛidāya saṃhita), Nāgārjuna and so on. But they both use share the schemes of the tridośa (nyes pa gsum), saptadhātus (lus bzung bdun pa), etc.

As such, they are theoretically nearly identical. In fact, the chapters on mental illness the four tantras are cribbed nearly word for word from the Aṣṭāṅgaḥṛdayasaṃhita.

Further, I have crossed trained in both, though my degree is in Tibetan Medicine (Shang

Shung/Qinghai University).

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, January 16th, 2014 at 2:58 AM

Title: Re: Is Psychotherapy Better Than Astrology?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

And no, mental illnesses are not automatically attributed to demons. A hefty distortion of the wind energy will be sufficient.

I did not say they were I said "...as well as demons." Demons are the last place we go when we diagnose any kind of illness, when we have exhausted other options of diagnosis and treatment.

However, there are eighteen kinds of bhūtas ('byung po) described in chapter 77 of the man ngag rgyud and chapter 4 of the Uttarasthāna of the Aṣṭāṅga hṛidāya saṃhita.

See my post here for why Tibetan Medicine practitioners ought to use vata, pitta and kapha:

<http://www.bhaisajya.net/2010/10/bad-humors.html>

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, January 16th, 2014 at 4:11 AM

Title: Re: What if Buddhism had become the dominant faith of Europe

Content:

jeeprs said:

The key background factor in all of it was the influence of the nominalists and the overthrow of medieval scholasticism...

Malcolm wrote:

Buddhist pramāṇa is nominalist. But it did not help much at all in overthrowing Buddhist medieval scholasticism -- for example, rational people who insist that Meru cosmology is valid.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, January 16th, 2014 at 6:02 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

Nemo said:

I honestly think the story behind Zhen Li's beliefs would be infinitely more interesting than debunked Austrian praxeology.

Zhen Li said:

Stage 1: Became interested in Marxism based upon the appeal of the goal appearing to be justified.

Stage 2: Decided to base my views on a logical analysis and proceeded to read the Collected Works of Marx and Engels.

Stage 3: Found that transition to Socially Direct Labour isn't explained properly by Marx, found that the Maoist model of experimentation made some sense.

Stage 4: Moral disenchantment with communism through a deeper understanding of the bloody history, and my inability to find anyone who was a pacifist or wasn't bloodthirsty in communist parties. Reduced to intellectual Marxianism.

Stage 5: Found the price-value equation to be nonsense, thus discredited the labour theory of value. Found that Marx stopped advocating historical materialism due to its lack of empirical concordance. Found that experimentation makes no sense if historical materialism makes no sense.

Stage 6: Conditionally accepted notion of social democracy - improve conditions through government action. Was liberal/social democrat.

Stage 7: Found economically social democracy doesn't work. Was libertarian - also liked the morality in libertarianism.

Stage 8: Found that libertarianism can't work due to inherent problems with democracy. Discovered Carlyle and neo-cameralist formalism and became a reactionary dinosaur.

Malcolm wrote:

Stage nine: abandoned political theories as useless and took up learning Buddhist primary languages and used all that intellectual talent for study and practice...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, January 16th, 2014 at 9:38 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Stage nine: abandoned political theories as useless and took up learning Buddhist primary languages and used all that intellectual talent for study and practice...

Zhen Li said:

Well, I started learning primary languages in stage 7 because it doesn't take much time to figure this stuff out - it takes a lot of time to write about it... and many espressos...

More or less, being a reactionary is abandoning politics. It is saying that all politics is useless, and the natural orders and functions of the world should take over because they're more efficient and yield better results. That includes having a monarch

Malcolm wrote:

Mahasammata means, i.e., "Elected by the majority".

Certainly you are not going to argue with Āryadeva that the power of the king depends on the consent of the people.

That just lands you smack dab in the lap of democracy again.

As Churchill quipped “It has been said that democracy is the worst form of government except all the others that have been tried.”

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, January 16th, 2014 at 8:07 PM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

Even the Dalai Lama doesn't lay this at the door of Marx. I believe the Dalai Lama has great wisdom and compassion and should not be brushed aside so easily.

The world is facing an environmental crisis that threatens the life of everybody on this planet. There will be food shortages. Mineral shortages. Fuel shortages. Communities will be displaced by changing weather patterns and rising seas.

I have no faith whatsoever in capitalism to solve this, I only see the powerful grabbing all they can. I see war and famine. We must find a new way to live together on this planet and it will not be capitalism... even the Taoists may feel the need to act.

Malcolm wrote:

It is not capitalism per se that is the problem. The problem lies in how corporations are structured, as well as neo-liberal globalization.

Of course the state capitalism of the Stalinists and the CCP just turns the State into a corporation.

In fact, there is very little difference in the structure of totalitarian states whether right or left.

Totalitarianism is a scourge, whether it is in the form of a Marxist regime or a Fascist corporatist regime.

All you guys squabbling about the relative merits of worldly political systems need to step back and understand that as followers of Buddhadharma, it is not our job to solve samsara for anyone but ourselves. We cannot solve samsara for anyone else.

We can add our voice, and we can witness, but we are not going to change the behavior of worldlings.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, January 16th, 2014 at 8:31 PM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

Zhen Li said:

3. authorized, selected, agreed upon d iii.93 (mahājana °) vin i.111; iii.150.

Malcolm wrote:

This is the sense of the term.

Zhen Li said:

I don't think we need to do a philological study here, it's pretty clear to anyone that "majority" isn't in the word.

Malcolm wrote:

Mahā...

Certainly you are not going to argue with Āryadeva that the power of the king depends on the consent of the people.

I'd like a quote or reference.

You can find this in his Catuḥśataka, v. 77

Societies servant, paid with a sixth part,

Why are you so arrogant?

Your becoming the agent of actions
depends on being placed in control.

And:

Those who act at others insistence,

Are called fools on this earth.

There is no one else at all

So dependent on others as you.

He also says, v. 88:

The sensible do not acquire kingship.

Since fools have no compassion,

These merciless rulers of men,

though protectors, are irreligious.

As far as enlightened rulership goes, he opines that while once it may have been possible, it is no longer possible, v. 90 states:

Virtuous rulers of the past

Protected the people like children.

Through the practices of this time of strife,

It is now like a waste without wildlife.

(Yogic Deeds of Bodhisattvas, Snow Lion, 1994).

I certainly think that history has certainly demonstrated that rulers, especially sovereign

monarchs, are in general completely incompetent. The ideal of the wise, awakened kings is a myth, like the unicorn.

That just lands you smack dab in the lap of democracy again.

No it doesn't. There are many nuances about democracy as it exists today that don't exist in monarchy. For one, the king is elected by those who have a real stake in the value of the kingdom, not everyone you can find (definitely no baby suffrage here).

Athenian Democracy for example, was the province of an elite, a practice initially followed by the framers of the constitution who were unwilling or unable to fully implement the Seven Nations model of direct democracy they had encountered and admired. This also likely had to do with a conflict created by culturally embedded European notions of property rights inherited from the Romans as opposed to First Nation ideas about usufruct rights.

For another, the king has absolute authority. I can elaborate when I have some more time.

Not from a Buddhist point of view. See the above.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, January 16th, 2014 at 8:56 PM

Title: Re: Is Psychotherapy Better Than Astrology?

Content:

AlexanderS said:

When you say that psychosis and bipolar disorder are physical diseases is that exclusive to these 2 or does it also apply to most "psychiatric illnesses"? Arent most illnesses in TBM a mixture of mental and physical imbalances?

Malcolm wrote:

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M

AlexanderS said:

Could you give me a brief example of a emotional disorder contra a psychiatric disorder? I simply ask out of curiosity.

Best Alex

Malcolm wrote:

For example, a person who expresses anger compulsively due to an excess of pitta (fire element humor) as opposed to someone who is hallucinating, for example.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, January 16th, 2014 at 8:58 PM

Title: Re: Longchenpa at TBRC

Content:

Alex Hubbard said:

Hey folks,

sorry to be a complete dunce but I've tried searching for Longchenpa material over at the TBRC and come up with nada. Could anyone more savvy than me point me in the right direction?

Thanks!

Alex.

Malcolm wrote:

You need to search on his name, i.e. Dri med 'od zer

<http://www.tbrc.org/#!rid=P1583>

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, January 16th, 2014 at 9:39 PM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

It is not capitalism per se that is the problem. The problem lies in how corporations are structured, as well as neo-liberal globalization.

But, the nature of capitalist competition itself leads to monopolies, globalisation, hierarchy, a growing disparity between rich and poor. All of this Marx predicted.

Malcolm wrote:

Marx considered capitalism progressive. One of the glaring failures of Marx's theories was his failure to perceive that the industrial capitalist mode of production itself was and is the core of the problem. But not all capitalist enterprise suffers from that because not all capitalist enterprise is necessarily industrial.

Competition, even in capitalism, is not necessarily a negative thing, either. For example, my point of view is "anti-capitalist", but not universally so. A certain amount of capitalism in an economy is necessary, it keeps people invigorated. Even the Buddha supported the notion of profitable investing.

tellyontellyon said:

Whether you agree with anything else he says it appears he was right about that. Even if

you don't think marxism is the solution, I don't think capitalism can be either. Just look.

Malcolm wrote:

Marxism has been an utter failure as a solution. Its primary successes all occurred prior to WWI.

tellyontellyon said:

If you think capitalism can be fixed... ok how? What do you think could be done that could solve this? Keynes is a step in the right direction. It was tried in Europe ... and is being torn to pieces before our eyes. Global capitalism continues to become more powerful everywhere.

Malcolm wrote:

It is not a question of fixing capitalism. We already have the means to control it, we simply need to be diligent about making sure that capitalism is properly regulated in ensure the healthy competition upon which it is based. For example, Obama administration's claim that this or that bank is too big to fail is utter nonsense. On the other hand, we need to guarantee small banks.

The fact of the matter is that we already have the means and understanding the balance the social good against the excesses of capitalism. The pity is that you Marxists spend all your time reading Marx, but he is really just tearing a page out of Smith and trying to merge that with Hegel. Marx is a remarkably unoriginal thinker, with a journalists mentality. You should read Smith, thoroughly. His concept of capitalism is really well thought out and socially as well as environmentally sound in many respects. He in fact would be horrified at the modern corporatocracies we are spawning today. He writes very scathingly of those who speculate in the stock market.

However, Smith's views are also unduly enthusiastic about the newly forming industrial economy, and he too, like Marx later, fails to see that the very means of production themselves drive economic forms of life and therefore, drives politics.

The Luddites understood this quite well, and revolted because of the destruction of cottage industries (which in part arose because of the shuttering of the commons on the 16th and 17th centuries, forced a lot of subsistence level farmers in the British Isles into the trades) that occurred as a result of the burgeoning textile mills.

One of the main points of Deep Ecological thinking is that how we make things is as important as what we make. Centralized production leads to centralized economies. Industrial production is summum bonum of centralized production.

If we want to change our politics, we must change our economy. If we want to change our economy, we must change how we manufacture what we need. If we want to change how we manufacture goods, we must in the end change ourselves.

The Marxist solution is bankrupt precisely because it proposes that all we need to change is our politics and policies, and then everything else will fall into place. This

sadly, is the great shortcoming of the Green Parties, who have become little more than a retread of the old left, ala Social Ecology (Murray Bookchin), attempting to foster change at the policy level, rather than at the root, how we manufacture and produce what we use and eat.

tellyontellyon said:

I'm all for reforms of capitalism, but eventually all that gets torn down. At least that is Marx's prediction... what do we see?

Malcolm wrote:

If I were you, I would be more worried about the rise of Islam as a global political force.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, January 16th, 2014 at 9:46 PM

Title: Re: Karma and Reincarnation

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

Again this is very true, but it still provides no evidence regarding the "accusation" of hyper-realism in regards to the model of the functioning of mind. And, anyway, again, all that is happening is that you are displaying a preference for one conceptual framework over another. Unless, of course, you are saying that Theravada is not Buddhadharma, then we are getting into a whole different conversation.

Malcolm wrote:

What Kevin is saying is that for Theravadins Dharmas are real but persons are not. Perhaps "hyper" is a bit of an exaggeration, but their view is still realist, so far as it goes.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, January 16th, 2014 at 9:54 PM

Title: Re: Longchenpa at TBRC

Content:

Alex Hubbard said:

That's great, thanks.

I saw that name but mistook him for one of Dudjom Lingpa's sons.

I'm looking for the original tibetan of his homage to chang. It's in his 'Miscellaneous Collected Works' apparently, I'll go take a look and see if it's there.

Alex.

Malcolm wrote:

I translated it. I'll dig it up later today, it is on another computer.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, January 16th, 2014 at 10:00 PM

Title: Re: Is Psychotherapy Better Than Astrology?

Content:

AlexanderS said:

Ok, thank very much for clarifying that for me

Malcolm wrote:

Another example might be transient depression due to depleted vata as opposed to a longterm depression caused by the depletion of tarpaka kapha (located in the brain; tshim byed bad kan for the Tibetophiles out there), etc.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, January 16th, 2014 at 10:09 PM

Title: Re: Longchenpa at TBRC

Content:

Alex Hubbard said:

You're a gent, I appreciate it muchly.

According to 'Sources of the Tibetan Tradition' (which has a pretty idiosyncratic translation) it's in vol.2 pages 328.3– 331.6, but that section on TBRC has the title 'byang chub kyi sems kun byed rgyal po'i don khrin rin chen gru bo' which gave me the impression that the TBRC collection might be a different edition.

Alex.

Malcolm wrote:

dri med 'od zer. " bdud rtsi zil mngar ma/." In gsung thor bu/_dri med 'od zer/(sde dge par ma/). TBRC W23504. 2: 332 - 335. paro, bhutan: lama ngodrup and sherab drimey, 1982. [http://tbrc.org/link?RID=O00EGS1013837%7CO2CN67002CN87712CN91062CN91092CN91112CN91122CN91162CN91191PD121506\\$W23504](http://tbrc.org/link?RID=O00EGS1013837%7CO2CN67002CN87712CN91062CN91092CN91112CN91122CN91162CN91191PD121506$W23504)

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, January 16th, 2014 at 10:44 PM

Title: Re: Longchenpa at TBRC

Content:

Alex Hubbard said:

Malcolm, yes that's it, thanks so much.

Unfortunately there something wrong as I can't access the reader. It says the RID is invalid. I'll email them. In any case, if you get round to finding your translation I'd really

enjoy a read.

Alex.

Malcolm wrote:
just search on this title.

bdud rtsi zil mngar ma

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, January 16th, 2014 at 11:02 PM

Title: Re: Longchenpa at TBRC

Content:

Alex Hubbard said:

Thanks, I did that and found two versions, the one from 1973 opened in the reader but not the one from 2000.

Do you know if there are any substantial differences? I'm guessing these are different editions.

Alex.

Malcolm wrote:

No, I doubt it. The 200 edition is the same block prints, AFAIK.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, January 17th, 2014 at 2:04 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

Hiya Malcolm.

Well, it does seem that capitalism is inherently unstable and leads to crises.

Malcolm wrote:

Marxist economies are not stable either. Since Marxist economies are predicated upon industrial capitalist means of production, they will be inherently unstable as well.

The problem again is how things scale. low level local capitalism is fine and healthy. What you are talking about is over centralized concentration of wealth. Well, that can happen just as easily in a Marxist workers paradise as a capitalist dystopia.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, January 17th, 2014 at 2:06 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

Not quite sure why you are having a pop at Islam? All the muslims I have ever met were decent peaceful people. Don't believe everything (or anything) you hear on Fox News.

Malcolm wrote:

I don't pay attention to Fox, CNN, MSNBC, etc. I watch the Daily Show for my infotainment, and not very regularly.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, January 17th, 2014 at 2:25 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

Hiya Malcolm.

Well, it does seem that capitalism is inherently unstable and leads to crises. Those crises' also seem to be affecting the whole world. Globalisation, the power of corporations seems to be expanding, and overrides democracy and morality and common sense. As one stock market trader said, "Goldman Sachs Rules The World". Another way of saying that is "He who pays the piper calls the tune."

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aC19fEqR5bA>

I think if we want to change how we produce things and use the planets resources, then we can not leave our economic system in the hands of such people. You can't control what you don't own... so ownership needs to be collective.. (at least when it comes to the important/big things). That does not mean owning everything or every small/medium business.

~~

Marx didn't only talk about industrial capitalism, he understood financial capitalism.

Here's a leaflet:

It's pretty short... for marx.

<https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1865/value-price-profit/>

~~~

Again, people confuse what happened in the Bonapartist Soviet Union with what genuine Marxists today stand for.

This document gives Trotsky's view from 1937.

<https://www.marxists.org/archive/trotsky/1937/08/stalinism.htm>

Malcolm wrote:

Marx says nothing about banks and stock markets not already enunciated by Smith, et al.

Trotsky advocated terrorism. How can you admire such people?

Marx and Communism advocate violence and terrorism as valid means to end. This is repugnant.

No Buddhist should advocate Marxism in a real sense. Supporting the goals of Marxism without condemning its explicit advocacy of violent revolution is supporting that violence itself and bears all the karmic consequences of belonging to an army.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, January 17th, 2014 at 3:03 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

Marxism does not advocate terrorism. I have already answered that.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, actually it does. Trotsky quite explicitly states that is perfectly acceptable for communists to engage in terrorism, based on a just war theory.

Marx advocates violent revolution in his manifesto. He certainly is not an advocate of non-violence.

Not only this, but of course Marx is a complete materialist on every sense of the term. So how can Marxism in truth be a fit doctrine for a Buddhist to hold?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, January 17th, 2014 at 3:41 AM

Title: Re: Mahāmudrā & Dzogchen

Content:

thigle said:

Another point is "thögal", which you can not find in mahamudra...

Malcolm wrote:

Not so fast, Kimosabe. My recent studies of Kalacakra and sadāṅgayoga have caused me to revise my opinion about this.

Please examine Ornament of Stainless Light by Norsang Kalsang Gyatso, the section on the daytime withdrawal yoga.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, January 17th, 2014 at 4:38 AM

Title: Re: Mahāmudrā & Dzogchen

Content:

thigle said:

Another point is "thögal", which you can not find in mahamudra...

Malcolm wrote:

Not so fast, Kimosabe. My recent studies of Kalacakra and sadāṅgayoga have caused me to revise my opinion about this.

Please examine Ornament of Stainless Light by Norsang Kalsang Gyatso, the section on the daytime withdrawal yoga.

heart said:

Could you elaborate a little Malcolm?

/magnus

Malcolm wrote:

Well, familiar terms jump out like "gaze at a garland of thighs in cloudless space" and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, January 17th, 2014 at 4:44 AM

Title: Re: Is Psychotherapy Better Than Astrology?

Content:

theanarchist said:

I met a Tibetan lama who grew up with nomads, and he told us that before he met westerners he didn't even know that something like depression exists. He hadn't heard of anyone there who had that sort of emotional problem.

Malcolm wrote:

Right, nomads just have problems managing not to kill each other at the slightest pretext.

theanarchist said:

I have also been told that Tibetans usually didn't have so much trouble doing long term solitary retreats.

Malcolm wrote:  
Not that many Tibetans actually do solitary retreats.

M

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Friday, January 17th, 2014 at 5:20 AM  
Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism  
Content:  
tellyontellyon said:  
The real weapon of the working class is the General Strike!

Malcolm wrote:  
I see, so you are actually a Sorelian.

tellyontellyon said:  
Are Marxists totally committed to pacifism, no. They are willing to defend themselves against attack. I mentioned that in an earlier post too.

Malcolm wrote:  
Trotsky clearly defines red terror as justifiable. You have to be blind not to see it.

tellyontellyon said:  
Name the Buddhist country that has no army? Most have the death penalty, something I totally disagree with.

Malcolm wrote:  
There are no Buddhist Governments. The reason for that has already been provided. Seeking to be leaders is the business of fools.

tellyontellyon said:  
I would hope nobody or the smallest possible number would die in the transition to democratic socialism. If people are killed it will be in self-defence.

Malcolm wrote:  
You are seriously having a fantasy. Look at the countless millions who died under Stalin and Mao, a direct result of Marxist/Leninist principles.

tellyontellyon said:  
But what is the alternative under a degenerating capitalism? Imperialist war for profit; for land, power, water and food as the worlds becomes unlivable.

Malcolm wrote:  
Marxism proposes no alternative because it will do nothing whatsoever to change what it regards as progressive, i.e. industrial civilization (which is entirely consistent with its

materialist philosophical position).

tellyontellyon said:

But as Buddhists you say we should not lift a finger. We should sit on our thumbs while billions die of war and starvation and thirst and just watch while the world burns because we are oh so compassionate.

Malcolm wrote:

Well, the Buddha did passively watch the Shakya tribe, his kin, being slaughtered and enslaved by the Kosalians when his verbal discouragement failed to move the Kosalian leaders.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, January 17th, 2014 at 9:09 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

treehuggingoctopus said:

Hell, there have been crossovers between deep ecology and Marxism, too - as any recently published ecocriticism reader should prove.

Malcolm wrote:

To the detriment of Deep Ecology...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, January 17th, 2014 at 9:19 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

Malcolm. You are seriously having a fantasy. Look at the countless millions who died under Stalin and Mao, a direct result of Marxist/Leninist principles.

They were a disgusting distortion of Marxism as explained here (for the second time) <https://www.marxists.org/archive/trotsky/1936/revbet/>

Malcolm wrote:

I am quite familiar with Trotskyist apologetics. They are screed of the losers. I have no doubt that a Trotskyist regime would have been as brutal and murderous as Stalin's, even more so, in fact, since Trotsky was bent on permanent revolution, spread to every corner of the planet, regardless of whether his attentions were wanted or not. That is a great problem with you Marxists -- the complete lack of ability to respect others when their lack of compliance to your "forces of history" compels you to rob them of their homes, goods, and even their labor all in the name of your completely heartless proletariat revolution. Well thanks but no thanks. I do not want to live in a workers paradise. I do not want to have a dictatorship of the proletariat, it is not inevitable. I do

not want to live in the ruined world that will be left after your lot burns down what is left after the failure of "advanced capitalism".

tellyontellyon said:

Oh, and yes. Marxism is materialist, true. So is the theory and practice of most scientists and engineers. Maybe it's all an illusion, but an illusion that us unenlightened folk have to try and live in on a daily basis.

Malcolm wrote:

My point, simply put, is that the thinking of Karl Marx is incompatible with Buddhism. There are all kinds of socialisms that are not, but Marxism most definitely is.

tellyontellyon said:

Sorry, I'm not going to sit by and watch people starve or die of thirst, or get murdered...

Malcolm wrote:

You are doing it right now; right now you are sitting by idly, gossiping on the internet, while people are starving, dying of thirst and being murdered. So spare me the self-righteous rhetoric.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, January 17th, 2014 at 9:24 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

Hiya, Treehuggingoctopus, I like the avatar and the name! I've also got Terry Eagleton's book "Why Marx Was Right". It's a great book. I think he is a Christian if I'm right, and quite influenced by the SWP in the UK?

I'll repost this as well:

<http://isme.tamu.edu/ISME07/Meadors07.html>

It's a paper about Buddhist Perspectives on the use of Force, and touches on the Upaya-kaushalya Sutra. Though what this sutra says and how it has been interpreted is certainly open to question. I'm not saying the article 'proves' anything, but it raises interesting points and is well worth a read.

Malcolm wrote:

If you wish to be a follower of the Buddha, you will practice avihimsa. If you do not wish to be a follower of the Buddha, you can follow the violent creeds of any number of other religions, including the materialist religion of Communism.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, January 17th, 2014 at 9:26 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

treehuggingoctopus said:

I do have three seconds though to point out that the vast majority of contemporary Marxism...

Malcolm wrote:

is a bunch of old ladies sitting around wondering why their theories don't work and why no one listens to them, so they endlessly squabble amongst themselves.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, January 17th, 2014 at 9:40 PM

Title: Re: Mahāmudrā & Dzogchen

Content:

mutsum said:

In the Kalacakra daytime and nighttime yogas, the so-called "visions" are not described as "visions" but as signs (rtags).

Malcolm wrote:

Tagsang Lotsawa makes the argument, and a very interesting one at that -- he asserts that if wisdom is not the basis, the visions of pratyāhāra will not arise. He then states it is because wisdom is merged with emptiness that the visions can arise:

"Great bliss and empty forms [śūnyatābimba, stong gzugs] are shown to exist in the basis with this wisdom element of the basis [gzhi]...and it is established through the citation of the root text and commentary of "wisdom merged into emptiness." The reasoning is that it is because the visions of the empty forms when mediating on withdrawal [pratyāhāra, so sor sdud pa] and so on will therefore be without a cause." I find this to be a credible account for explaining the genesis of thogal visions as well.

Mipham states in his commentary on the Wisdom Chapter of Kalacakra (as translated by Ives Waldo):

Depending on the great perfection, the path of thod rgal is still a procedure of the completion stage that involves effort. In general establishing the kāya of illusion etc. teaches the display [rtsal] of the illusory body, a teaching which also arises in the father tantras and in the mother tantras. Depending on bliss and bindu, it is taught relying on luminous display. In the Dzogchen tantras there is insight from emptiness the natural state, the wisdom of reality. From mere direct resting in luminous appearance, the conventions of the illusory body etc. are taught.

In all these [teachings], by practicing the intrinsic radiance of the luminous nature of mind as the special pith of the quick path of mantra, both dharmakāya and rūpakāya, in their respective ways are made into real objects, and one seems to enter into them. However, by the distinction of [this experience] having or not having subtle contaminations of karmic prāṇa, whichever it may be, there is the ultimate of all completion stages, the effortless great perfection, the secret path of the Oral



Instruction Class, up to the four appearances of thod rgal, with paths ever higher and higher, the vast way of attaining truth that cannot be taken away. There is that explanation, but it is not presented by many writings.

I agree that the daytime yoga in Kalacakra is not thogal, but they even describe buddhaforms showing up in the center of thighs, use of postures and gazes, etc.

Of course there are differences in the two systems, but it is my present opinion (which could change tomorrow based on some reliably datable text) that it is unlikely that thogal developed until after the Kalacakra was introduced to Tibet (1027). My speculation is that these entopic visions were given a context by the elaborate internal anatomy presented in Kalacakra, and this was further developed by yogis in Dzogchen circles.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, January 17th, 2014 at 10:27 PM

Title: Re: Mahāmudrā & Dzogchen

Content:

Jikan said:

Sorry to go temporarily off-topic, but if anyone can direct me to a copy of the translation of Mipham's commentary on the Kalacakra that Malcolm just referenced, I'd greatly appreciate it. Thank you.

Malcolm wrote:

If you participated in the recent Longsal Kalacakra, you can apply for membership in the international kalacakra website and you can find it there among the restricted texts.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, January 17th, 2014 at 10:29 PM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

treehuggingoctopus said:

I thought you're a fan of the Frankfurter.s

Malcolm wrote:

I like Adorno, yes.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, January 17th, 2014 at 11:00 PM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

If you wish to be a follower of the Buddha, you will practice avihimsa.

What if you come across something that is violent, harmful and destructive, but your intervention could also be hurtful.

You intervene > harm.

You don't intervene > harm.

You sit on the fence > harm.

What is the solution?

Malcolm wrote:

If you participate in a violent revolution, advocating its aims, causing people, etc., to die, you will assuredly take rebirth in a lower realm. As Marx states:

The purposeless massacres perpetrated since the June and October events, the tedious offering of sacrifices since February and March, the very cannibalism of the counterrevolution will convince the nations that there is only one way in which the murderous death agonies of the old society and the bloody birth throes of the new society can be shortened, simplified and concentrated, and that way is revolutionary terror.

<https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1848/11/06.htm>

There can never be any harm to anyone through following ahimsa. Non-violent struggles based on ahimsa will never bring harm to anyone. People engaged in non-violent protest may be harmed, but such protest will never bring harm to others.

Then there is the knotty issue of associating with people who have a negative view of Buddhadharma. It is not consistent with one's commitment of refuge to the Sangha to associate with those who are hostile or negative towards Buddhadharma. Therefore, since Marxism is avowedly an enemy of Dharma, as it is the enemy of all religion, it is not appropriate for Buddhists to belong to Marxist political parties (indeed, it is probably better we don't belong to any political parties at all).

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, January 17th, 2014 at 11:03 PM

Title: Re: Mahāmudrā & Dzogchen

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Of course there are differences in the two systems, but it is my present opinion (which could change tomorrow based on some reliably datable text) that it is unlikely that thogal developed until after the Kalacakra was introduced to Tibet (1027). My speculation is that these entopic visions were given a context by the elaborate internal anatomy presented in Kalacakra, and this was further developed by yogis in Dzogchen circles.

mutsuk said:

Both Geluk and Jonang authors concur in saying that the source of the night-time and

day-time yogas is in the Prajnaparamita. It's the same in Bon.

Malcolm wrote:

We will see what the Sakyapas have to say about it when I get that far.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, January 17th, 2014 at 11:08 PM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

treehuggingoctopus said:

Just like deep ecologists, I'm afraid. (And I'm saying that as a huge fan of DE).

Malcolm wrote:

Oh definitely, DE is an intellectual movement in many respects. There is nothing to be gained by Deep Ecologists joining party politics. In the US Green Party, the DE voice has been completely suppressed by the Bookchin faction.

As David Orton points out:

Green parties have become shallow ecology defenders of industrial capitalist society, even if Arne Naess was supportive of them. The German Green Party theoretician Rudolf Bahro resigned from the party in the early 1980s, and pointed out that green party shallow ecology is content to “brush the teeth” of industrial society.

And:

There is arrogance among socialists who think that they should be leading the ecological movement, because they have a “class analysis” and are anti-capitalist. What comes across is that the Left believes it is entitled to intellectual hegemony in the green and environmental movements, by virtue of prior knowledge. The Left does not seem to be able to absorb the pluralism of green and environmental politics – as Naess informed us, “the front is long” – let alone accept the earned leadership of others by virtue of their practical or theoretical work. Ed Abbey noted, through the character Doc Sarvis in *The Monkey Wrench Gang*, the importance of practical involvement in actual environmental struggles: “Let our practice form our doctrine, thus assuring precise theoretical coherence.” (p. 68) The idea that deeper environmentalists and greens can come to an anti-capitalist critique based on their own experiences, without studying Marxism or social ecology, but based on field experience, seems, apparently, difficult to grasp for the Left.

<https://deepgreenweb.blogspot.com/2011/01/deep-ecology-and-left-contradictions.html>

If you are curious as to what my "practical involvement in actual environmental struggles" are, it is precisely my study of traditional medicine, in part inspired by the anarchist writer Laurel Luddites piece, *Anarcho-herbalism*:

Medicine is just one part of the machine that we have to take back and re-create into a form that works for the society we will become. Every herb, pill, and procedure should be judged on its sustainability and accessibility to small groups of people.

<http://www.swsbm.com/HOMEPAGE/Anarcho-herbalism.html>

As for my definition of Marxism, Marxism, as we know, is a failure. Of course the Socialist revolutions of the early 20th century were important in their contributions to shorter work days, etc., all kinds of things we take for granted today in modern post-industrial countries.

But the issue here is defining those features that make Marxism an unsuitable political philosophy for Buddhists. Its advocacy of violence is one reason, the trenchant materialism of the majority of Marxist philosophers is another.

We really do need to get beyond these eighteenth and nineteenth century political models. That is what Deep Ecology is for.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, January 17th, 2014 at 11:33 PM

Title: Re: Evolution and reincarnation

Content:

Seishin said:

I wasn't saying that Buddha did not teach literal rebirth, I am saying he did not teach "reincarnation" because he did not use the word according to the suttas, essentially refuting your earlier point that Shakyamuni taught "reincarnation". Please re-read what I wrote.

Malcolm wrote:

He did not teach rebirth either, since he did not use that word, according to the suttas.

Actually the term rebirth and reincarnation are just alternate translations of the same term, punarbhāva.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, January 18th, 2014 at 12:10 AM

Title: Re: Evolution and reincarnation

Content:

Seishin said:

The reason "reincarnation" is not preferred in Buddhism is because it is understood throughout the English speaking world, to mean the transmigration of the soul or spirit.

Malcolm wrote:

All terms in Sanskrit or Pali which refer to this phenomena can also be construed in this way [i.e. as transmigration of the soul], which is why there is debate about it between Buddhists and Hindus. Therefore, I reject that there is a valid distinction between "rebirth" as opposed to "reincarnation". They are in fact synonyms.

The distinction was first introduced in the early 70's by Trungpa, incidentally.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, January 18th, 2014 at 12:31 AM

Title: Re: Evolution and reincarnation

Content:

Seishin said:

I don't disagree Malcolm, which is why I said "preferred" not "correct".

Malcolm wrote:

Sure, I just think that the preference itself is based on a misconception.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, January 18th, 2014 at 12:37 AM

Title: Re: Is Psychotherapy Better Than Astrology?

Content:

Jesse said:

Psychology works with intangibles, experiences, emotions, thoughts, and habits, and that is exactly why it is considered a soft science.

Malcolm wrote:

That really depends on which program you are in, what school, etc.

For example, UVM's psychology program is pretty much hard science all the way.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, January 18th, 2014 at 3:38 AM

Title: Re: Evolution and reincarnation

Content:

shel said:

Yes that's the point, there's no hierarchy in evolution, whereas there's a fixed hierarchy Buddhism. That constitutes an irreconcilable difference.

Malcolm wrote:

There is no "hierarchy" in terms of karma. You land where you have the karma to land and that's it.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, January 18th, 2014 at 3:40 AM

Title: Re: Mahāmudrā & Dzogchen

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Well, familiar terms jump out like "gaze at a garland of thighs in cloudless space" and so on.

heart said:

So, thögal in tantric mahamudra?

/magnus

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, so it seems.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, January 18th, 2014 at 5:37 AM

Title: Re: Mahāmudrā & Dzogchen

Content:

heart said:

So, thögal in tantric mahamudra?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, so it seems.

Astus said:

Interesting. I have always had this impression that thögal with its channels and visions is a "step back" to tantra from the direct simplicity of trekchö and mahamudra.

Malcolm wrote:

The problem I have always had articulating the unique feature of Vajrayāna view to you sutra guys is precisely summed above: wisdom merged into emptiness is the basis [sthana, gzhi], and this is what accounts for the visions in both Dzogchen [klong sde and man ngag sde] as well as Kalacakra.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, January 18th, 2014 at 7:40 AM

Title: Re: Evolution and reincarnation

Content:

smcj said:

The seminal text for the Yogacara and subsequent views is the Uttara Tantra.

Malcolm wrote:

Not really, it is the seminal commentary on the Tathāgatagarbha school (viz total absence of reference to concepts like ālaya-vijñāna).

Madhyantavibhanga, Dharmadharmatāvibhanga and Mahāyānasūtra alambkāra are the Yogacara commentaries.

In India there were three major trends in Mahāyāna:

Prajñāpāramitā --> Tathāgatagarbha --> Yogacara

The later two incorporating and modifying ideas found in the earlier.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, January 18th, 2014 at 7:41 AM

Title: Re: giant pressure in between my eyebrows

Content:

threeyears said:

For the last three years I have felt a pressure in between my eyebrows. It doesn't go away when I get off the cushion, it is always there. When I watch it, it moves around. It goes to the back of my head, the sides, into my eyesockets making them twitch, into my nose, up to the top of my head, but it always comes back to the center in between my eyebrows. And it grows incredibly big whenever I watch my thoughts. I stopped meditating for a while because it was becoming so big that I thought my head was going to explode. Its not painful, its just confusing. So for the sake of avoiding brain damage, I put my faith in the people of dharmawheel. Can you please help me?

Malcolm wrote:

Sounds like a disorder of wind -- go see an ayurvedic or tibetan doctor.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, January 18th, 2014 at 8:02 AM

Title: Re: Sanskrit for Nang-wa Tha-yay?

Content:

pemachophel said:

What's the Sanskrit for Amitabha's epithet, Nang-wa Tha-yay?

Malcolm wrote:  
Amitābha.

Amita = mtha' yas, limitless  
abha = snang wa, light, splendour, etc.

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Saturday, January 18th, 2014 at 8:05 AM  
Title: Re: Mahāmudrā & Dzogchen  
Content:  
Malcolm wrote:

The problem I have always had articulating the unique feature of Vajrayāna view to you sutra guys is precisely summed above: wisdom merged into emptiness is the basis [sthana, gzhi], and this is what accounts for the visions in both Dzogchen [klong sde and man ngag sde] as well as Kalacakra.

Astus said:  
But that's only those two systems. And even in thogal the fourth vision is the total dissolution, like going through creation and completion stages again. Mahamudra is complete with non-meditation, and there is no point in repeating the whole process of mandalas, mantras and buddhas based on the final realisation. So, I don't think I base my understanding on sutra, since that's how it looks like to me in Vajrayana.

Malcolm wrote:  
Its not only those two systems, it is merely articulated most clearly in those two systems.

Also Astus, the four yogas are sūtra mahāmudra. If you do not practice the completion stage, mahāmudra according to the upadeśas is a slow path, or so it is asserted by the Sakyapas. This is the reason why vase breath is used extensively even in so called sems sde.

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Saturday, January 18th, 2014 at 9:48 AM  
Title: Re: Mahāmudrā & Dzogchen  
Content:  
Malcolm wrote:  
Its not only those two systems, it is merely articulated most clearly in those two systems.

Astus said:



You mean you know some teachings from other schools too that give similar methods?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, the ṣaḍaṅgayoga system is actually rather widespread and not confined to Kalacakra, though it is mostly clearly articulated in that system.

Astus said:

Yes, the criticism of the White Self-Sufficient Remedy.

Malcolm wrote:

No, dkar po gcig thub is not the same as the system of the four yogas of mahāmudra, they are actually critiqued by Sapan separately and for entirely different reasons. The former is a sudden awakening scheme (which Sapan calls "Chinese Dzogchen"), and Sapan criticizes the latter as a misapplication of Ratnakaraśanti's presentation of four "yogas" in his Madhyamakālaṃkāra.

Astus said:

I'd rather like to understand the reason behind considering the appearance of drops and buddhas - that result in their return to the natural state anyway - is the necessary next step.

Malcolm wrote:

I don't know the Kalacakra system well enough to opine about this; but in thogal the four visions appear not because the "natural" state is somehow lacking; they appear in their sequence because persons possess affliction and afflictions attenuate the visions as as they naturally unravel the visions first increase and then vanish. However, the idea that at the end of the four visions there are no appearances is a complete misconception. I will merely quote the beginning of Shabkar's discussion of the fourth vision on this point:

It so happens that in the past some Dzogchenpas have asserted that the kāyas [visible forms] and wisdoms [expressed as the five lights] do not exist within the state of original purity, but this is a great error.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, January 18th, 2014 at 9:58 AM

Title: Re: Mahāmudrā & Dzogchen

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

... This is the reason why vase breath is used extensively even in so called sems sde.

dzogchungpa said:

Why "so-called" ?

Malcolm wrote:

Because the term *sems sde* only begins to be used in the *Vima sNying thig*, and the later criticisms of *sems sde* from the point of *sNying thig* are more political than anything else. After all, Longchenpa's *Chos dbying mdzod* is pretty much a commentary on the view of the *bodhicitta* texts, but it is praised as being the *dharmakāya* in book form.

In some respects, I am sympathetic to Astus's statement that *man ngag sde* is a return to "tantrism", but he has it slightly wrong. *man ngag sde* represents a desire to ground *Dzogchen* in its own completely independent system of empowerments, and one can see that it takes a page out of the *Kalacakra* system of the common four empowerments and then a system of the "higher four empowerments". Please do recall that famed *Three Words of Garab Dorje* did not even exist until the 1120's when the *Vima Nyingthig* was revealed by *Zhangton Tashi Dorje*. Prior to this was the seventeen tantra system of the four empowerments [elaborated, unelaborated, etc.]

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, January 18th, 2014 at 10:00 AM

Title: Re: Evolution and reincarnation

Content:

smcj said:

The seminal text for the *Yogacara* and subsequent views is the *Uttara Tantra*.

Malcolm wrote:

Not really, it is the seminal commentary on the *Tathāgatagarbha* school (viz total absence of reference to concepts like *ālaya-vijñāna*).

*Madhyantavibhanga*, *Dharmadharmatāvibhanga* and *Mahāyānasūtra alaṃkāra* are the *Yogacara* commentaries.

In India there were three major trends in *Mahāyāna*:

*Prajñāpāramitā* --> *Tathāgatagarbha* --> *Yogacara*

The later two incorporating and modifying ideas found in the earlier.

smcj said:

S.K. Hookam's book traces *Yogacara/Shentong* to the *Uttaratantra*. That's what I'm going by.

Malcolm wrote:

*Yogacara* is an Indian school; *gzhan stong* is a Tibetan school based on *Kalacakra*. They are really completely different.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, January 18th, 2014 at 10:35 AM

Title: Re: Evolution and reincarnation

Content:

shel said:

Yes that's the point, there's no hierarchy in evolution, whereas there's a fixed hierarchy Buddhism. That constitutes an irreconcilable difference.

Malcolm wrote:

There is no "hierarchy" in terms of karma. You land where you have the karma to land and that's it.

shel said:

You're saying it's no better to land a maggot than to land a saint?

Malcolm wrote:

Quantitatively yes, qualitatively no in so far as both are sentient beings.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, January 18th, 2014 at 8:52 PM

Title: Re: Mahāmudrā & Dzogchen

Content:

mutsum said:

...but that doesn't mean that they don't follow the same process of the build up of a vision and then the vision's dissolution. That's why I said it is like creation and completion.

Malcolm wrote:

The visions in dzogchen are not conceptual constructs like visualizations of the creation and completion stage.

The vanishing of the visions is likened to bands of light returning into a prism, i.e, the colors are inherent in the crystal, but there are no more conditions which cause the potentiality (rtsal) of the crystal to manifest externally.

Thus the buddhaforms and so on that one sees always exist in oneself as the potentiality of the threefold wisdom of the basis, original purity, natural perfection, and compassion. Of these three what actually appears to be an external vision is the compassion aspect.

The Sakyapa explanation of the cause of the appearance of the visions of the first stage of the six branch yoga resembles the explanation of the genesis of the thogal vision of dharmatā. The similarities seem to end there.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, January 18th, 2014 at 9:09 PM

Title: Re: Mahāmudrā & Dzogchen

Content:

Astus said:

The process is a removal of afflictions, and the visions are a sign of that, so they don't appear simply because of the natural state, and thus their disappearance is the final accomplishment. I didn't think dissolution here means total nothing, otherwise it wouldn't be the achievement of buddhahood for the benefit of all beings. Just as in mahamudra non-meditation is not about absolute non-activity. However, it seems to me that thogal and its visions is only one possible method of purification, and not the culmination of everything else, therefore other paths don't need it.

Malcolm wrote:

It is not really a process of removing afflictions, it is more of a process of afflictions becoming undone on their own.

Some people assert that the increase of the visions occurs separately from the karmic winds, using this as an example of why for example thogal is superior to other completion stage practices, but too is also not precisely correct. The movement of karmic vāyus in the body is a result of affliction, and it is precisely these that hinder the development of the thogal visions. The postures are meant to still these vāyus which is why you have to remain in them for long periods.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, January 18th, 2014 at 9:34 PM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

Zhen Li said:

I trust the translation, but to interpolate that this means the "consent of the people" in the modern sense of that phrase, I would not. This was the extent of your claim, and I don't accept it.

As regards the idea that the monarch is supposed to be "enlightened," no I don't believe in this either, not in the sense of buddha. However, speaking in terms of practical management of a kingdom, the rule of one who is unenlightened but selected for perceived management capacity, is wiser than the rule of all indiscriminately, who all at the same time are unenlightened. There really is such a thing as too many chefs in the kitchen, i.e. more than one. So, be careful with how far you think my claims are extending -- they may not encompass the breadth you imagine them to. However, I do appreciate your comments, they are by far the most constructive so far.

Malcolm wrote:

as you will recall, Mahā-sammata (an earlier incarnation of the Buddha, and also the Buddhist Manu) was appointed king by farmers who wanted to protect grain they had begun to store. Walsh clearly translates the Buddha explaining that the title

Mahasammata means "The People's Choice" and he would only do so based on a commentarial gloss. Also you can find this explained in this alternate translation:

‘He is appointed [agreed to] by the people (mahā, janena sammato),’<sup>114</sup> Vāseṭṭha and Bhāradvāja; therefore, he is called “the great elect” (mahā sammata.

<http://dharmafarer.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2009/12/2.19-Agganna-S-d27-piya.pdf>

Zhen Li said:

No it doesn't. There are many nuances about democracy as it exists today that don't exist in monarchy. For one, the king is elected by those who have a real stake in the value of the kingdom, not everyone you can find (definitely no baby suffrage here).

Malcolm wrote:

This is not a valid argument, when we say "people", we obviously do not mean babies, we mean adults in full possession their faculties, not those under the authority of others such as children.

Zhen Li said:

Okay, I don't quite see your point. I thought this was about whether monarchy is actually democracy.

Malcolm wrote:

The point is that Kings derive their authority from the people, not from heaven.

Zhen Li said:

To reconsider the possibility that I might reply to tellyontellyon's post from earlier, I now think that the main problem is that tellyontellyon might be viewing Marxism in too religious a manner, interpolating all of his own desires of what he thinks the ideal Marx is, that he's unable to see that the reality of Marxism and Trotskyism is not just as he so pleases. With such faith, in place of potential reason, I don't believe it currently possible to engage in any constructive or deconstructive dialogue with regards to Marxism and Trotskyism with tellyontellyon.

Malcolm wrote:

Trots are and have always been religious fanatics. They are the Shia of the Communist world.

Zhen Li said:

However, to address the small matter of an accusation of misrepresentation on my part with regards to the title of one of Trotsky's books, the 1921 Labour Publishing Co. and Allen & Unwin, London edition is indeed named The Defence of Terrorism. Indeed, the idea that Marxist terrorism consists purely of general strikes and paper cuts from leaflets is to ignore and turn a blind eye to the millions of people who died in the name of Communist Terror as most vocally advocated and organised by Leon Davidovich

Trotsky.

Malcolm wrote:

Terrorism was not invented by Marx, but he certainly considered it a valid tool to use in a revolution. And you are right, Trotsky was a mass murderer who from a Buddhist point of view is certainly suffering in a lower realm because of his own actions.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, January 18th, 2014 at 9:54 PM

Title: Re: Mahāmudrā & Dzogchen

Content:

mutsum said:

[

For the record, this was what Astus wrote, not me.

Malcolm wrote:

My bad, I did not notice your name in there, I wrote the first post on my Ipad...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, January 19th, 2014 at 12:10 AM

Title: Re: Sanskrit for Nang-wa Tha-yay?

Content:

pemachophel said:

Thanks for the responses. Just to be clear: so are Nang-wa Tha-yay and Od-pag-med synonyms? Are they simply two different Tibetan translations of Amitabha? IOW, when translating these into English, should both terms simply be translated as Amitabha?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, they are alternate translations of the same Sanskrit word.

Amitābha.

Amita = dpag med, immeasurable, etc.

abha = 'od, light, splendour, etc.

You can clearly see this in titles translated in the tengyur.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, January 19th, 2014 at 12:40 AM

Title: Re: Evolution and reincarnation

Content:

shel said:

So before humans evolved all sentient beings were stuck in a 'narrow' existence, and no existence at for billions of years before life evolved in the universe.

Malcolm wrote:

You are following a "just so story". You have no idea when life first appeared in the universe, if indeed it "first appeared".

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, January 19th, 2014 at 12:58 AM

Title: Re: Evolution and reincarnation

Content:

shel said:

So before humans evolved all sentient beings were stuck in a 'narrow' existence, and no existence at for billions of years before life evolved in the universe.

Malcolm wrote:

You are following a "just so story". You have no idea when life first appeared in the universe, if indeed it "first appeared".

shel said:

Yeah, and the universe revolves around the earth...

Malcolm wrote:

My point is that someone told you that there was no life in the universe a x time and you believed them. You have no evidence of such a fact. As you know, the Buddha taught that universe expands and contracts cyclically. This accounts for the appearance increasing complexity, etc. if we are being completely honest, we just admit that we don't know beyond what we can observe and trust the accounts that make the most sense to us for those things we cannot observe. So for example, I don't think that Meru cosmology is particularly true as a "fact"; it is a hierarchical metaphor with roots in ancient mythology.

Evolution is something I accept because it is can predicted. Karma and rebirth is something that I accept because I do not find the materialist presentations of consciousness especially compelling. If I did, I would not bother to be a Buddhist.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, January 19th, 2014 at 2:34 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

Trots are and have always been religious fanatics. They are the Shia of the Communist world.

Malcolm, again why are you picking on muslims, in this case Shia muslims. All the muslims I have met are decent people, peaceful and not fanatics.

Malcolm wrote:

I wasn't picking on Muslims, I was making a comparison. Trots are a minority, have a charismatic leader who was killed, etc.

tellyontellyon said:

I'm sure that it is not possible to reconcile Trotskyist (orthodox marxist) ideology with Buddhist ideology. But in practice, the modern party I am involved in is involved in arguing for peace, ending wars, standing against nuclear arms.

Malcolm wrote:

There are a lot of political parties that argue for peace, ending war, and are anti-nuclear, you know, like the Green Party of the UK.

tellyontellyon said:

Despite Buddhist pacifist ideology, that same ideology has at times also been used as a justification for violence. We see that in Sri Lanka, Burma, Thailand. Most countries with Buddhist majority populations have the death penalty, all have armies. Look how Zen Buddhists priests relied on scripture to justify genocide during WWII.

Malcolm wrote:

Well, you know they didn't really. Zen Priests in Japan got mixed up in nationalism. The same problem exists in Sri Lanka, Burma and Thailand. This is the fault of nationalism, not Buddhism.

tellyontellyon said:

Like this from the Upaya-kaushalya Sutra, a Mahayana text that's name literally means 'skillful means.'

While on board a ship, Shakyamuni [Buddha] discovers that there is a robber intent on killing all five hundred of his fellow passengers. Shakyamuni ultimately decides to kill the robber, not only for the sake of his fellow passengers but also to save the robber himself from the karmic consequences of his horrendous act. In doing so, the negative karma from killing the robber should have accrued to Shakyamuni but it did not...

Malcolm wrote:

You do understand that the bodhisattva in this story possessed clairvoyance and was able to read the thief's mind? Correct? Do you possess such clairvoyance?

Without taking this fact into account, the story becomes skewed. The story in the Ārya-upāyakauśalya-nāma-mahāyāna-sūtra is not intended to demonstrate that Buddhists should engage in violent interventions. It is intended to demonstrate the amazing capacities of a bodhisattva on the stages. There is another story in the Jatakas where the bodhisattva, when he was reborn as Viśvaṃtara, gave his wife and children away to



a brahmin in order to practice the perfection of giving.

tellyontellyon said:

You posted some of the most inflammatory things that marx wrote. But Marx's ideas developed over his lifetime and must be taken in the context of the historical situation and in the context of what violence others were doing at the time. Marx also said that he thought in advanced countries, with well developed democracy that a genuinely socialist society could come about without revolution.

The fact is when we are talking about Marx we have to ask: which Marx?

You also have to use marxist language with care, for example 'Dictatorship of the Proletariat' simply means workers democracy. They used words differently in the 1840's.

Malcolm wrote:

Marx was:

a materialist (Charvaka)

argued that violence was acceptable, and even necessary  
was a proponent of forced wealth redistribution (theft), which is and always has been bad economic policy. Taxation is always a better solution.

You have to understand I have read Marx. Marx can be amusing, for example his critique of colonialism at the end of Capital.

tellyontellyon said:

For example, revolution sounds pretty nasty but:

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Revolutionary\\_socialism](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Revolutionary_socialism)

The term revolutionary socialism refers to socialist tendencies that subscribe to the doctrine that social revolution is necessary in order to effect structural changes to society. More specifically, it is the view that revolution is a necessary precondition for a transition from capitalism to socialism. Revolution is not necessarily defined as a violent insurrection; it is defined as seizure of political power by mass movements of the working class so that the state is directly controlled by the working class as opposed to the capitalist class and its interests.[1] Revolutionary socialists believe such a state of affairs is a precondition for establishing socialism.

Malcolm wrote:

I don't want the state to be controlled by the working class, per se.

I have no confidence whatsoever that a workers state will have a Deep Ecological outlook. Marxism and Deep Ecology are at odds because the former is anthropocentric and the latter is biocentric.

In the end, I think that, as far as it goes, American Democracy and its analogues in other countries is the best system of government we humans have yet come up, and I do not see Marxist socialism as any improvement at all.

I am a Buddhist. Just as the Buddha did not believe in caste, I do not believe that one "class" has an inherent moral superiority to another class: this is materialist thinking.

Buddhist thinking maintains that people are born into poverty or wealth because of their karma. There are social classes because people's actions in past lives define where they are born in this one, just as their past actions define whether sentient are born as animals or devas.

tellyontellyon said:

In any case, wouldn't it be far far better to talk about what actually needs to be done rather than focus on abstract ideology and throwing quotes back and forth?

Malcolm wrote:

Marxists have very Marxian ideas about what needs to be done, and as part of the Judeo-Christian tradition, they tend to have the view that the planet is here to serve humans, its resources rightly belonging to humans. This is not only contra Buddhist principles, it is contra deep ecological principles.

tellyontellyon said:

It is our actions that really matter.

Malcolm wrote:

It is meritorious to want to help people, of course, but one must not lose sight of what actually creates diversity in this world: it is not economics, it is karma. You can be sure that those super wealthy people who do nothing to benefit others are exhausting their karma. There is nothing to be angry about. They are to be pitied because in their next life, they will be worse than paupers. Nāgārjuna says:

If one becomes a king through long veneration,  
one does not pursue wealth, family, and friends;  
also no matter where people go or live,  
action follows just like a shadow.

If you accumulate positive actions in this life, in the next life you not need to struggle for your wants and needs. If you find you are in place of leisure and wealth in this life, use it for Dharma practice and to help those you can.

tellyontellyon said:

As for saying that Buddhists would be better off not getting involved in politics... well, that's not really possible. Unless you live alone in a cave (and I'm not knocking that btw), then you have a responsibility to contribute to the communal activities of living in a community. That includes working out how you are going to live together, treat each other etc. etc. Restricting contact to members of the Sangha or only to non-materialists is not always possible if you are not a monk. It certainly isn't possible where I live in Wales.

Malcolm wrote:

The commitments of refuge to the Sangha does not mean that one does not mean that one does not do business and cultivate friendships with non-buddhists, etc., it means

that one avoids those who would seek to harm Buddhism or who are engaged in very non-virtuous lifestyles.

tellyontellyon said:

Even if you are a monk, then I still think that monks need to have a think about the food and donations they receive in their alms bowl: I think it is not enough simply to have gratitude... What did the worker have to go through to be able to make that donation?

Malcolm wrote:

As long as your focus is one class, you will have a biased view. Your focus needs to be on all sentient beings.

tellyontellyon said:

Think how many young women, even underage girls in places like Thailand feel pushed into prostitution in order to put meals on the family table.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, this is a pity, so of course the education of women is a desiderata around the world.

tellyontellyon said:

When monks are meditating on loving kindness, they should spend some time meditating on what some of the poorest and hardest working people in the world have to go through in order to keep them well fed.

Malcolm wrote:

Making donations to the Three Jewels is the best way to ensure one's rebirth will be higher in the next life, with more opportunity. Encouraging others to do so is also meritorious. It is also meritorious to help others as much as one can. It is not meritorious to foment social revolutions when the result is so often death, destruction and war.

tellyontellyon said:

Anyway, whether you agree with me or not. Please, Please stop having sideways stabs at the Muslims, it undermines your own argument and makes you look intolerant.

Malcolm wrote:

I have nothing personal against Muslims. It is their karma to be born Muslims, with animal sacrifice as a major and important part of their religion. In my opinion, part of the reason that Islamic countries have such a high level of violence is that their religion condones animal sacrifice. There is an observable level of poverty and violence that afflicts every nation in which there is a major religion that sanctions animal sacrifice. This is one of the reasons why Southern Hemisphere countries have such problems. You might object, what about the 60 billion animals a year that are slaughtered for meat to feed the North? The karmic cause is different, therefore the effect is different.

I have a lot of issues with both Islam and Christianity in general. They both are authors of great destruction and havoc in the world. I don't trust Islamic states, or indeed any

religious state (including "Buddhist" ones) on any level in general. Thanks goodness one of the effects of the American Constitution was the elimination of state religions in Western Democracies for the most part.

In fact, Marxism and Islam have many structural similarities, similarities noted by George Bataille in his work, *The Accursed Share*. You should read it.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, January 19th, 2014 at 3:25 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

In a genuinely socialist/marxist society you would not be ruled by the working class.

Marx never idealised the working class. He just thought that because of their key role in production that they were in the position to overthrow capitalism.

His view was that it is capitalism that produces the different classes. His desire was for us all to be treated equally, a society without class.

If we want to get rid of the class and caste systems then I think we have to get rid of the system that produces and perpetuates them.

Malcolm wrote:

We never going to be rid of different classes in this world because the karma of sentient beings is what creates disparities, not economics. I just explained this to you.

tellyontellyon said:

Your view of Karma sounds a bit fatalistic, surely we can through our actions make a better world, and of course improve our karma for future lives.

Malcolm wrote:

My view of karma is directly based on Buddha's teachings.

tellyontellyon said:

The truth of Karma doesn't just mean we can hang our boots up and not try to do anything.

Malcolm wrote:

Of course, no one is suggesting that.

tellyontellyon said:

If Buddhist monks are getting caught up using scripture to justify nationalistic violence... well, it's still violence?

Malcolm wrote:

Indeed, but it is not Buddhist violence, it is nationalist violence. There are no Buddhist scriptures at all that advocate nationalist violence on any level. There are also no Buddhist scriptures which advocate revolution either.

tellyontellyon said:

I'm not in any way suggesting that that is the fault of Buddhism, I simply make the point that Karma is produced by action rather than ideology as such. I also wanted to make the point that mischievous people can take even a peaceful ideology and use it to their own ends.

Malcolm wrote:

Karma, my friend, is volition and what comes from volition. The fruit of karma arises from that.

tellyontellyon said:

As far as Deep Ecology is concerned. Democracy is fatally skewed by the power of the super-rich and big corporations, hedge-funds etc. "He who calls the piper calls the tune". If we want control over our environment then we need collective ownership. You can't control what you don't possess. The track record so far shows big business is guided by the profit motive, not by the needs of the many or by environmental considerations.

Malcolm wrote:

Ownership is an anthropocentric concept. It is not a biocentric concept. So your statement right there is flawed from a DE perspective.

You will not achieve collective ownership ever. In order to bring that about you will have to fight a long, bloody war with billions dead. The notions of property rights are too deeply embedded in our legal systems.

In order to change those you will have to overthrow entire governments and social orders.

Basically, I prefer the present world order with all its warts and inconstancies to a world order that would be run by totalitarians such as yourself. You will kill billions in your ideological zeal to create a "classless" society [but of course there are always classes and always elites]. It would be better for you just to pray for rebirth in a pure land, there are no classes there.

Western Democracies at this point are too stable for your kind of revolutionary politics to ever be successful (Thank Buddha). The only reason why the Russian Revolution had a prayer of success is that the war footing of the western powers created serious economic instability worldwide. The same was true of China forty years later.

The only solution to the world's problems is the abandonment of violence at all costs, and slowly educating people one person at a time. Inner evolution is the only key to the world's problems, not outer revolution.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, January 19th, 2014 at 4:51 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

Basically, I prefer the present world order with all its warts and inconstancies to a world order that would be run by totalitarians such as yourself.

This tells me two things:

1) You are happy with the status quo. 2) You think I am a totalitarian.

For point 1... then why are you posting in engaged Buddhism.

On point 2.... you are simply wrong.

Malcolm wrote:

Please describe to me your "workers democracy" and how it would be different than the present democratic order. How will you bring it about? By force if necessary?

As for being happy with the status quo, that term does not apply. I am neither happy nor unhappy about it. As Arne Naess puts it:

Should the world's misery and the approaching ecocatastrophe make one sad? My point is that there is no good reason to feel sad about all this. According to the philosophies I am defending, such regret is a sign of immaturity, the immaturity of unconquered passiveness and lack of integration.

Naess, Arne (2009-05-01). *The Ecology of Wisdom: Writings by Arne Naess* (p. 125). Counterpoint. Kindle Edition.

What I said was that I prefer the status quo to a totalitarian regime. But I am under no illusion about the fact that things must change deeply.

tellyontellyon said:

As I said earlier, the corrupt, violent and destructive capitalist system is going to lead to even greater problems in the future including more wars, starvation, environmental disaster. Also it was economic problems and the capitalistic quest for power, markets, land and resorces that led to the wars, not the other way around. Billions will die if we don't respond.

Malcolm wrote:

If you respond with force, you will just hasten the bloodshed.

The first thing we need to do is revoke the Treaty of Rome, Naess again:

Economic globalization is somewhat misleading. A better term might be globalization of the four freedoms, referring to the so-called four freedoms of the Treaty of Rome, which was the basis for the European Common Market and is still at the core of the present-day European Union (EU). The document's style of globalization implies successive expansion of its "four freedoms" until it also covers trade among the three giants, the

European Union, the United States (and Canada), and Japan, and reluctantly over the rest of the globe. The term four freedoms refers to the free (duty-free) crossing of goods and materials through borders, the free flow of services, the freedom to compete for jobs anywhere (people), and the freedom of capital to flow across any borders. The four freedoms imply four prohibitions, the violation of which will be punished by the authorities. Namely, the freedoms involve strong, adequate protection—for social, medical, ecological, or other reasons of cultural relevance—against the import of certain goods or services, or against certain kinds of flow of foreign capital into a local, regional, or any other limited area, for example, the Arctic coast of Norway. Naess, Arne (2009-05-01). *The Ecology of Wisdom: Writings by Arne Naess* (p. 287). Counterpoint. Kindle Edition.

In other words, we need to start undoing, legally, neo-liberal policies. But while doing that, we need to understand, as Vandana Shiva eloquently writes: Today, we need to overcome a much wider and deeper apartheid, an eco-apartheid based on the illusion of separateness, of humans from nature, in our minds and lives. This is an illusion because we are part of nature and earth, not apart from it...Today, we need to overcome a much wider and deeper apartheid, an eco-apartheid based on the illusion of separateness, of humans from nature, in our minds and lives. This is an illusion because we are part of nature and earth, not apart from it. Redefining the economy by embedding it in society and nature is the first step in a paradigm shift. Shifting from GDP and GNP to measures of real wealth, welfare, well-being and happiness is another. Wealth is derived from “weal” (well-being), its original meaning is “condition of well-being”.

She also writes:

Commodification and privatisation are based and promoted on the flawed belief that price equals value. However, all those working for justice in land and water rights and preventing the ecological abuse of land and water, are asking for the opposite – the inalienable right to resources, and in the case of common property resources like water, the inalienability of common rights. The second paradigm of the green economy is earth-centred and people-centred. The resources of the earth vital to life – biodiversity, water, air – are a commons for the common good for all, and a green economy is based on a recovery of the commons and the intrinsic value of the earth and all her species. It would put nature’s ecological cycles as the drivers and shapers of the economy, it would put people first, not investors, and build on women’s core contributions to create economies of sustenance and care that enhance the well-being of all. The industrial/corporate system of food production uses ten times more units of energy as inputs than it produces as food. It wastes 50 per cent of the food produced; it uses and pollutes 70 per cent of the water on the planet; it has destroyed 75 per cent of the biodiversity in agriculture; and it contributes 40 per cent of the greenhouse gases that are destabilising the climate and further threatening food security. By contrast, earth-centred agriculture produces twice as much food as the inputs it uses; it conserves biodiversity; it mitigates and adapts to climate change; it protects the earth; farmers and public health. Shiva, Vandana, Pluto Press. Kindle Edition.

My basic point here is that classical Marxism, with its narrow minded materialism and

so on is just not up to the job of an ecological transformation of humanity. That transformation must spring from the world spiritual traditions.

tellyontellyon said:

Me, Karl Marx and HH Dalai Lama all believe that a non-violent transformation of society to a socialist/marxist may be possible. You are entitled to your opinion and me to mine.

Malcolm wrote:

I think you ought to leave HHDL out of it. I am quite sure he is not a socialist revolutionary. We need an ecological evolution, not a workers revolution. We need to reject the very industrial economy that lies at the heart of all our environmental, social and political troubles, and we need to do so globally and non-violently.

tellyontellyon said:

You said my view is anthropocentric? If by that you mean that I am saying the problems on this planet are caused by the humans then I would agree and don't really see why you object to that?

Malcolm wrote:

No, I mean that your view is not biocentric.

tellyontellyon said:

What then is the bio-centric or Deep Ecology way of looking at things? I must confess to not knowing about this.

Malcolm wrote:

The well-being and flourishing of human and non-human life on Earth have value in themselves (synonyms: intrinsic value, inherent worth). These values are independent of the usefulness of the non-human world for human purposes.

Richness and diversity of life forms contribute to the realization of these values and are also values in themselves.

Humans have no right to reduce this richness and diversity except to satisfy vital needs.

The flourishing of human life and cultures is compatible with a substantially smaller human population. The flourishing of non-human life requires a smaller human population.

Present human interference with the non-human world is excessive, and the situation is rapidly worsening.

Policies must therefore be changed. These policies affect basic economic, technological, and ideological structures. The resulting state of affairs will be deeply different from the present.

The ideological change will be mainly that of appreciating life quality (dwelling in



situations of inherent value) rather than adhering to an increasingly higher standard of living. There will be a profound awareness of the difference between bigness and greatness.

Those who subscribe to the foregoing points have an obligation directly or indirectly to try to implement the necessary changes.

<http://www.haven.net/deep/council/eight.htm>

tellyontellyon said:

Wasn't the American constitution born out of a revolution? Wasn't the Buddha also revolutionary in his own way, he challenged the status quo, he wasn't happy to leave things as they were.

Malcolm wrote:

The Constitution was born out of centuries of Jurisprudence. It was not born of a war. The Constitution was written because the Articles of Confederation, which was the constitution of the wartime government, was inadequate.

Buddha was not a revolutionary in any sense that you would recognize.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, January 19th, 2014 at 6:05 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

The flourishing of human life and cultures is compatible with a substantially smaller human population. The flourishing of non-human life requires a smaller human population.

How much smaller and how are you planning to reduce it.

Malcolm wrote:

Ideally human world population should never exceed the world population of the late eighteenth century, so around 100,000,000.

Of course, this population reduction must be voluntary, because everyone understands the importance of a steady state economy and world.

tellyontellyon said:

Buddha was not a revolutionary in any sense that you would recognize.

That is self evidently not true as my post indicated that I do indeed consider the Buddha a revolutionary.

Malcolm wrote:

The Buddha did not intend to change society, he did not seize political power, in fact, Buddha impressed upon his disciples the need to maintain the status quo.

tellyontellyon said:

Perhaps you should reconsider your narrow view that revolution=violence.

Malcolm wrote:

Well, as I said, I don't want socialists to seize political power by any means, period. Since there will be many people like me, if you try to seize power, you will be meet with resistance, and you lot will start murdering everyone who does not go along with your revolution, and it will be another red terror.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, January 19th, 2014 at 6:55 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

reddust said:

I looked up studies through Universities on "Deep Ecology." Deep Ecology and UN's Agenda 21 are usually studied together with a bunch of other economic stuff, both want drastic reduction of human population.

Malcolm wrote:

Well, the easiest way to manage a general global population reduction would be subject parenting to licensure, which seems to me to be a good idea anyway.

Drastic (peaceful) reductions in human population will ensure there are resources for many future generations of humans, plants and animals to come. It will ensure cultural diversity amongst humans, etc. There are no downsides, only upsides.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, January 19th, 2014 at 7:25 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

Zhen Li said:

Population might collapse without any push from governments.

Malcolm wrote:

It might. But it would be good the manage the process no?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, January 19th, 2014 at 7:29 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

reddust said:

I looked up studies through Universities on "Deep Ecology." Deep Ecology and UN's

Agenda 21 are usually studied together with a bunch of other economic stuff, both want drastic reduction of human population.

Malcolm wrote:

Well, the easiest way to manage a general global population reduction would be subject parenting to licensure, which seems to me to be a good idea anyway.

Drastic (peaceful) reductions in human population will ensure there are resources for many future generations of humans, plants and animals to come. It will ensure cultural diversity amongst humans, etc. There are no downsides, only upsides.

reddust said:

I think there would be downsides because people aren't perfect and those who hold the power to license won't be perfect. I've found a lot of books on Deep Ecology, 6 of them so far and I am going to read up. I looked the theory up on the net and will do some deep study before I form an opinion. Thanks for the data Malcolm, I really appreciate new (for me) ideas and views.

Malcolm wrote:

“ Dans ses écrits, un sage Italien  
Dit que le mieux est l'ennemi du bien.

(In his writings, a wise Italian  
says that the best is the enemy of the good) ”

-- Voltaire

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, January 19th, 2014 at 9:13 PM

Title: Re: Internet Buddhism

Content:

In the bone yard said:

Well yea, the internet is not real communication because there's no energy exchange. No one will successfully receive the pointing out instructions over the internet.

Malcolm wrote:

So you means ChNN's webcasts are useless?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, January 19th, 2014 at 9:17 PM

Title: Re: Internet Buddhism

Content:

tobes said:

I'll be honest: the internet gave me a massive wake up call about the state of Buddhism in non-traditional places.

The e-sangha days were remarkable in the history of Buddhism - when ever before have practitioners from every kind of existing tradition been able to communicate so effortlessly with each other?

And yet, it must be concluded that the balance between pluralism, openness, mutual learning and spiritual conceit, dogmatism, sectarian superiority, was decided in favour of the latter.

Malcolm wrote:

That is total bullshit, tobes. You really have no idea why E-Sangha evolved as it did. Most of the so called perception of sectarianism arose out of the need to ascertain who was a qualified ordained person. It was over this point that the rain of charges that we were sectarian fell.

The Theravadins split largely because they had already siloed themselves off on E-Sangha itself, and resented any perception of incursion on their turf by the moderating staff in general.

The confrontation between the ZFI folks and the board was over the question of "what is a monk".

In the end, everyone blames the moderating staff. But in the end, the failure of E-Sangha was a failure of its users, not our policies.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, January 19th, 2014 at 9:21 PM

Title: Re: Chinese Buddhism and the Anti-Japan War

Content:

Indrajala said:

The holy people who torched themselves in Viet Nam didn't seem to make much of a difference. Plenty of people still died and the communist regime won the war.

.

Malcolm wrote:

They made a huge difference. That image from Vietnam is one of the most enduring images in history. It will live on when most of the details of what caused it have faded from memory.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, January 19th, 2014 at 9:50 PM

Title: Re: Mahamudra and Yogacara

Content:

conebeckham said:

and the assertion, if I recall, was that the dependent, purged of the imaginary, was the

perfect nature...which would lead to the conclusion that the dependent "exists." I may be remembering this incorrectly....but for those of you interested in concepts and polemics, have at it....!!!

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, this is how Maitreyanatha, Asanga and Vasubandhu uniformly present the three natures. The idea that perfect is empty of both the dependent and the imagined is very late in Indian exegesis (10th century).

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, January 19th, 2014 at 10:07 PM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

Malcolm says: "Hands up! We are looking for volunteers! .....Only a few billion."

The rest of the world says: "You first Malcolm".

Malcolm wrote:

I don't have children, and I don't intend on having children. One reduces population by not reproducing, not by executing sentient beings.

tellyontellyon said:

Well, as I said, I don't want socialists to seize political power by any means, period.

Since there will be many people like me, if you try to seize power, you will be met with resistance, and you lot will start murdering everyone who does not go along with your revolution, and it will be another red terror.

Why would they murder anybody? A revolution in a real Marxist sense is not carried out by a small band of 'reds', it is a movement involving and supported by the vast majority of the population. It is inherently democratic.

Malcolm wrote:

I see, that is why it has been so successful in the past.

tellyontellyon said:

E.g. The insurrection phase of the Russian revolution happened with barely a shot fired.

The ministers of the constituent assembly were called taxi's and sent home!

The bloodshed came about when the counter-revolutionaries, provoked and supplied with money, equipment and troops by the US,UK, France,Japan etc. etc. attacked.

Malcolm wrote:

It was not a democratic revolution. No one had a vote. The Bolsheviks nationalized all the banks, confiscated all private accounts, etc. Additionally the Cheka defined as

counterrevolutionaries a very broad swath of persons, people who were wealthy were defined as counter revolutionary merely for being wealthy. This is the kind of logic that under the cultural revolution had the communists murdering high rinpoches in Tibet. My teacher, HH Sakya Trizin, still cannot return there. He was defined as a counter revolutionary when he was a young teenager.

tellyontellyon said:

That was when Russia degenerated into the brutal totalitarian democracy.

Malcolm wrote:

??? "totalitarian democracy"? This a contradiction in terms.

tellyontellyon said:

What about the democratically elected socialist govt. in Chile? Supported and cheered on by Reagan and Thatcher, a brutal dictatorship came to power and killed tens of thousands of trade unionists and socialists. Disgusting.

Malcolm wrote:

No argument there. But I have to be honest with you, compared to the millions murdered by Stalin and Mao, this pales.

tellyontellyon said:

In a genuine democracy people should be able to vote on what the laws are. Under capitalist systems (at least the ones that attempt to maintain some semblance of democracy) we still don't have real democracy. If a govt. doesn't do what international monopoly capitalism tells them to.... the generals suddenly appear.

Malcolm wrote:

It really depends on what you are defining as a democracy. For example you term the early Soviet state as a "totalitarian democracy", only the bizarre logic of Marxists could coin such a phrase.

The main point about all of this is that you, as a Buddhist, will not absolutely repudiate violence as a means to a political end. I think you have some reflection to do on the lack of suitability trying to mix Marxism with Buddhism.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, January 19th, 2014 at 10:13 PM

Title: Re: Mahāmudrā & Dzogchen

Content:

Astus said:

Then it should occur to everyone...

Malcolm wrote:

They do, but very few people understand what they are.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, January 19th, 2014 at 10:28 PM

Title: Re: Mahāmudrā & Dzogchen

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

They do, but very few people understand what they are.

Astus said:

Shouldn't it be widespread at least within Tibetan Buddhism then? Many mahamudra teachers were and are familiar with dzogchen.

Malcolm wrote:

There are a lot of people who teach one thing but practice another.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, January 19th, 2014 at 10:37 PM

Title: Re: Mahāmudrā & Dzogchen

Content:

mutsum said:

No, but the visions are not objects of the senses. If you close your eyes, they arise anyway. They arise in the dark where your senses cannot perceive anything. They are not objects of the senses.

Malcolm wrote:

Just to elaborate a point here: they are an entopic phenomena which arise based on a very precise kind of subtle anatomy which is unique to Dzogchen.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, January 19th, 2014 at 11:51 PM

Title: Re: Mahāmudrā & Dzogchen

Content:

Astus said:

The nature of mind is without beginning or end, the visionary expressions are not. As they have beginning and end, they are dependently arisen, and as such, they are fabrications.

Malcolm wrote:

Astus: this is not correct.

You may think of this way. You have a film on a movie projector. As you focus the image on the screen, the image appears to become brighter and more clear. But you have not changed or altered the film inside of the projector in anyway.

Likewise, though the visions appear to increase and decrease, they are not actually increasing and decreasing.

You can consider them to the visible expression of the mind essence, this is why these appearances are termed wisdom appearances since they do not arise from mind.

But this is just explaining sweet to someone who has obviously never tasted sugar.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, January 20th, 2014 at 12:02 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

I think I have pointed out that even Marx thought that a socialist transformation of society could come about peacefully:

Malcolm wrote:

It has not succeeded yet, since it pitches classes of humans against each other.

tellyontellyon said:

I believe that the capitalist system is not capable of making the changes that society needs and that unless we make these changes we are heading towards barbarism.

Malcolm wrote:

The most barbaric period of human civilization was precisely when the communists were most active in trying to foment revolution all over the world, i.e. most of the 20th century.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, January 20th, 2014 at 12:21 AM

Title: Re: Mahāmudrā & Dzogchen

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

You have a film on a movie projector. As you focus the image on the screen, the image appears to become brighter and more clear. But you have not changed or altered the film inside of the projector in anyway.

Likewise, though the visions appear to increase and decrease, they are not actually



increasing and decreasing.

You can consider them to be the visible expression of the mind essence, this is why these appearances are termed wisdom appearances since they do not arise from mind.

Astus said:

Are you saying that one always experiences the same visions, except that there are times when one properly focuses and times when not?

Malcolm wrote:

No, Astus.

It is really useless to try and explain this to you over the internet. If you want to understand this, you must seek out a teacher and learn. Someone who can put the sugar in your hand and then have you taste it. Until you do that, you will not understand why Dzogchen makes the claims that it does.

Astus said:

That is, every experience is the same vision, but without the right eyes, they look like the ordinary five elements, but with the right eyes, they are the buddha families? Personally, I always thought of such a connection between elements and buddhas as rather symbolic, and not in a literal way that instead of a green recycle bin I see green Tara.

Malcolm wrote:

The connection between Buddha families and elements is not symbolic. It is actual. The element of air is Samayatara.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, January 20th, 2014 at 12:50 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

[quote="Zhen Li"] it's just that they tend to be successful in the sense of not requiring gross injustice to maintain order.[/quotes]

In this degenerate age, that is a good start.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, January 20th, 2014 at 12:54 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

It is capitalism that produces the class divisions and antagonisms.

Malcolm wrote:

No, it is karma that create class division. Any Buddhist should be able to understand this with ease. I think you really need to study the Buddha's teachings on karma more in depth.

Class divisions existed long before capitalism, and will exist long after. The classes of the six realms were not created by capitalism. The various classes of animals were not created by capitalism. The classes of devas were not created by capitalism. etc.

Antagonism results when people whose karma landed them in inferior positions become jealous and wish to take from others who are more fortunate [for example, just as the asuras became jealous of the devas]. Likewise, when those who are more fortunate act selfishly and do not properly care for the less fortunate, this too causes class antagonism [for example, when the devas refused to share ambrosia with the asuras].

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, January 20th, 2014 at 2:10 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

I am afraid this is the more familiar picture of a revolutionary:

"The sign of a true revolutionary was his desire to kill."

Mao

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, January 20th, 2014 at 3:03 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

Malcome

Malcolm wrote:

That would be "Malcolm"

tellyontellyon said:

As stated several times already. Real socialists do not consider Mao to be a socialist. He was really a Stalinist.

As with Stalin, it suited his regime to portray themselves as Marxists, in the same way that it suits the cheerleaders of capitalism to portray them as Marxists. But they are not. Mao thought that power came from the barrel of a gun, rather than from the solidarity of the 99%

Malcolm wrote:

You sound like Christians "Real Christians do not worship Pope", etc.

Mao was most certainly an ardent student of Marxist-Leninism. But you Trotskyists think you are the only "true" communists because it serves your purposes to place distance between you and the acts of your coreligionists. But Trotsky was also a murderer so as long as you support his acts, you will inherit the result of them, which is saddening for you.

tellyontellyon said:

Edit: You have a fatalistic view of Karma.

Malcolm wrote:

No, I have the Buddha's view of karma:

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."

<http://www.accesstoinsight.org/lib/authors/nanamoli/wheel248.html#shorter>

Buddhism and Marxism are incompatible not least because their view of the creation of social classes is radically different. For Buddhists, social class is a result of karma. For Marxists, it is result of material relations. The two views cannot be reconciled.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, January 20th, 2014 at 3:21 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

poor and rich people

Perhaps being born rich or poor is a matter of Karma? But that doesn't mean that they

can't do something about it.

It is not the same as say being born with one leg... that is a fate you have to accept.

Malcolm wrote:

I nowhere said that one needed to accept the class into which one was born. You can work hard, get an education and improve your circumstances honestly.

What I said was that classes in society were a result of karma, not capitalism.

Also when your socialist brigades begin stealing people's houses "for the people", and closing their bank accounts "for the people", etc., this is just stealing, and it is a non virtuous act. Nationalizing the banks is theft. Theft results in poverty, not prosperity.

When you compare the Buddha's teachings with that of Marx, you will discover than nearly everything a revolution seeks to accomplish by Marxist methods are considered non-virtuous methods in Buddhadharma.

Incidentally, this does not mean that Buddhism regards modern capitalism as wise or virtuous, for it doesn't. It is just the other side of Marxist materialism. That was my point originally, you guys don't reject the capitalist means of production, you just want to own it. But it is that very means of production itself which is pernicious.

Frankly, my friend, I get the impression your education in Buddhadharma is rather limited.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, January 20th, 2014 at 5:32 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

Well, as I said before, there is a difference between personal property and private property.

Malcolm wrote:

And how is this distinction drawn? My clothes are my personal property, but my land is private property?

tellyontellyon said:

I think you are conflating violence with the aims of socialism.

Malcolm wrote:

No, I am merely pointing out the fact that communist revolutions tend to be long drawn out bloody affairs.

tellyontellyon said:

Ultimately it supports a society with no state, no money where we all contribute to each others welfare.

Malcolm wrote:

We are not headed into a utopia, my friend, we are heading into the age of strife. This imaginary stateless society you imagine will never exist. It is a pipe dream, it is a fantasy.

tellyontellyon said:

Theft: When Europeans turned up in the America's and started 'claiming' ownership of the land.

Malcolm wrote:

Actually, for the most part first English settlers at any rate, bought and paid for lands they used. Granted however they did allow themselves to take land they perceived as being unused and justified it under Lockean principles.

Then the King of England decided he owned the whole lot and started giving land grants.

tellyontellyon said:

Committing genocide against the native people who, so I've heard' had no concept of owning the land, or the sea or the sky for that matter...

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, indeed there was a cultural clash, with Indians having very different concepts of property than we did and do. The Indians lost. A human tragedy to be sure, but that happened in Britain as well. It happened to my Scottish ancestors who were pushed off their lands when the Highlands were fenced off. British soldiers murdered entire Scottish villages for resisting the fencing of the Highlands.

It has happened everywhere in the world. No one living anywhere in the world today, save a few peoples in the Amazon [and even then it is questionable] are the first people there who did not push someone else off their land.

tellyontellyon said:

When Europeans turned up and took that land... now that was theft. They have been dealing in stolen property ever since.

Malcolm wrote:

Not really. If no one owns it, it is free for the taking. That's what Europeans thought and that is now they behaved. I am sure that whatever nonvirtues the Pilgrims for example did, they experienced the ripening of their karma. I don't condone what they did, but I also don't feel responsible for it either.

I doubt very much you folks over in England of Norman blood are going to be paying reparations to the Saxons anytime soon, nor the Saxons to the Celts and so on. Or me

for that matter, since you bloody Brits stole my land.

In reality, we need to remember the words of the Buddha:

"He abused me, he beat me, he defeated me, he robbed me,"--in those who harbour such thoughts hatred will never cease.

"He abused me, he beat me, he defeated me, he robbed me,"--in those who do not harbour such thoughts hatred will cease.

The basic problem with Marxist socialism is summed up nicely in the first line.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, January 20th, 2014 at 6:47 AM

Title: Re: Internet Buddhism

Content:

tobes said:

I can understand why you'd be a touch defensive about this - but note that I have not in any way singled out the mods for this; I have said nothing at all about policies or techniques of moderation.

Malcolm wrote:

Ok, my apologies.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, January 20th, 2014 at 6:53 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

That doesn't make it ok. Land that was there for everybody, for communal use, was acquired by force by individuals.

Malcolm wrote:

This process is described by the Buddha.

Until humans beings eliminate the three afflictions from their minds (becoming Buddhas) there is no hope of your utopia.

tellyontellyon said:

To say that the Dharmic consequences have been suffered does not alter the fact that the stolen property has still not been given back to communal use. To its rightful owners .... all of us.

Malcolm wrote:

You did not define the commons. There is a commons to be sure.

But I am sure you have heard of the tragedy of the commons as well.

And you are not the rightful owner of my house. No one is but me, unless I cannot pay the taxes on it, and then the Government will seize it. So you see, there is already common ownership of everything. Governments basically grant a license of ownership. There is no such thing as absolutely ownership in our system of property law.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, January 20th, 2014 at 7:45 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

Malcolm wrote

And you are not the rightful owner of my house

Marx would have called that personal property. When he talks about private property he is talking about the means of production. E.g. Power stations, oil companies, the pharmaceutical industry, roads, railroads, factories, banks and so forth.

Malcolm wrote:

So no free enterprise of any kind. Well, planned economies really don't work well at all, at least not at the population levels we have world wide.

tellyontellyon said:

Zhen Li wrote

Also adharmic is the notion of an "inherently right" view of a conditioned set of thoughts, known as Marxism or Socialism. They have no svabhāva, self-existence -- we can only define them according to convention, and conventionally the picture is pretty bleak for Marxism, Socialism and Communism.

Conditioned thoughts: True, but you couldn't you say the same about any written down theory, e.g. Quantum mechanics, existential philosophy, Deep Ecology, Buddhist scripture, or any conditioned set of thoughts about anything I suppose?

Malcolm wrote:

The salient point here is effectiveness. Marxist socialism has not proven to be effective, I simply think their system is unstable, results in huge inequality and condemns us to follow the course of greatest profit rather than what is best for the whole planet and the beings that live on it.

And Marx defines capitalism as progressive and a necessary phase of historical evolution. What Marx predicted was that socialism could only succeed in an advanced capitalist economy. Well, we are not there yet.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, January 20th, 2014 at 8:54 PM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

Zhen Li said:

4. Who is really disenchanted with capitalism? People vote with their feet, and they prefer coming to a country ruled by law, where they can keep property without it being stolen by the government. There isn't mass migration to Venezuela or Cuba, quite the opposite, and anyone with half a brain and cerebellum has already left those countries for one where they can live and work in safety

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, but you know, all those people are counterrevolutionaries.

Zhen Li said:

If Socialists just want that transformation in the market, then they need to answer for the simple fact that if you spend more than you're making in returns, then that is unsustainable. If you haven't noticed, the US debt means it won't make it into the 22nd century as it is today.

Malcolm wrote:

It is an interesting question, as of right now, today, each US Taxpayer is 150,000 "in arrears" because of the (as of this moment) \$17,336.595,xxx,xxx.xx debt the feds have wracked up.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, January 20th, 2014 at 8:57 PM

Title: Re: Evolution and reincarnation

Content:

dharmagoat said:

The point that I have been making is that suffering/liberation is a solely human preoccupation. A maggot most likely has no concept of its suffering and therefore can't be considered to be suffering as a human would. As humans we can only guess how a maggot suffers, and so all we do is project our own experience. We falsely assume that a maggot has a bad life. But for a maggot, how can life be bad if there is no good life to compare it to?

Virgo said:

Surely maggots are not free of the three types of suffering?

dharmagoat said:

Actually, it would seem that maggots only suffer the first kind of suffering, that



associated with birth, growing old, illness and dying. I would doubt that they have the capacity to experience the conceptually-based forms of suffering.

Malcolm wrote:

Dukha is not a feeling at base, that is the point of the third suffering, which refers to the fact that conditioned things decay.

Maggots definitely suffer. They feel pain, they feel hunger, etc.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, January 20th, 2014 at 8:59 PM

Title: Re: Evolution and reincarnation

Content:

smcj said:

What are your feelings about maggot or insect mind?

I've often seen flies buzzing against a pane of glass in frustration. They can't see and can't understand what the obstruction is. I cannot think of a better analogy for a stifled Dharma practitioner.

Funny you should ask.

Malcolm wrote:

The three planes of existence blaze with suffering of aging and illness,  
here there is no protection from the intensely blazing fire of death,  
migrating beings born in the world are always confused,  
revolving like bees stuck in a pot.

--Lalitavistara Sūtra

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, January 20th, 2014 at 10:04 PM

Title: Re: Internet Buddhism

Content:

tobes said:

Having said that, I think if you had Shankara around for tea one afternoon, he'd happily acknowledge that, and probably celebrate it.

Malcolm wrote:

I don't think so, after all, he shrilly denounced those who claimed Gaudapada was cribbing Buddhist arguments.

tobes said:

But if you ever assert that a Buddhist master has been influenced by an orthodox Indian

school, that is a charge of heresy.

Malcolm wrote:

We are not influenced by, we appropriate from, or reframe. There is a difference.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, January 20th, 2014 at 10:06 PM

Title: Re: Mahamudra and Yogacara

Content:

smcj said:

Maybe if I'd learned Tibetan it would be less confusing.

Malcolm wrote:

Here is a fact -- among Indian authors there is very little disagreement about these things. Among Tibetans, there is great disagreement. That should clue you into something.

That some Tibetans consider Yogacara = vijñāptimātra/cittamātra is based in Indian sources. Fellows like Shtiramati were definitely classic "mind-only" proponents. He was a direct disciple of Vasubandhu. Further, another immediate, if not direct disciple, of Vasubandhu, Aryavimuktisena, criticizes Vasubandhu for his substantialism.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, January 20th, 2014 at 10:59 PM

Title: Re: Internet Buddhism

Content:

kirtu said:

Two examples spring to mind: the total banning of references to Phabonhka Rinpoche at one point..

Malcolm wrote:

We never did that.

kirtu said:

The other thing is the banning of Zen people who said controversial things that are nonetheless in the mainstream of Zen - mainstream may be too strong, views that are acceptable in Zen but are not really mainstream Mahayana Buddhism (I remember this more as a discussion over the historical Buddha or what constitutes Buddhahood although the monk issue was there was well).

Malcolm wrote:

No one was ever banned for saying controversial things. People were suspended for

their behavior, and banned for double-nicking, when they tried to go around suspensions.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, January 21st, 2014 at 1:01 AM

Title: Re: Karma and Reincarnation

Content:

cloudburst said:

You still have the problem of how an inert object, or an object not somehow connected with consciousness, could exist without an essence. If something exists without depending upon mind, it will be inherent. You need to deal with this problem in a way other than just asserting your point.

Malcolm wrote:

That is not a problem in the slightest. Anything that arises from causes and conditions has no essence. Being nondependent on mind does not render something inherently existent.

cloudburst said:

In that case you can give an example of an object that is not and has never appeared to mind. If it is an object, it is an object of mind, or an appearance. What else?

Malcolm wrote:

No, because that would be an object that appeared to a mind. This does not however rule out the existence of things that have never appeared to any mind, which nevertheless are product so their own inert and nonsentient causes and conditions, and therefore, not inherently existent and nevertheless, not products of karma. Mental objects are one class of objects, material objects are another class of objects. You are conflating the two. A mental object (part of the dharmadhātu) is an object for the mano dhātu. A material object is an object for the other five dhātus, form for eye, etc. sure, all objects, mental and material, are objects of consciousnesses, sense or otherwise. You get nowhere differentiating mental consciousness from sense consciousness as they are all consciousness, or mind. I appreciate your presentation of the 18 elements, please explain how an object exists independently of mind without implying an essence. Before a mind is generated, if an object exists, it must exist independent of mind. Vasubandhu's presentation is finally a realist one. I am assuming you want to do better than that.

Vasubandhu's presentation is the one that Madhyamakas subscribe to conventionally. The point is that even Candrakīrti accepts that for an eye consciousness to be generated, the eye consciousness depends on an external form. According to your presentation, forms depend solely on consciousness and could never be asserted to exist externally, and as you stated, would not need eyes to be perceived. This would then render all sense organs nonfunctional and unnecessary. But there are so many negative consequences to this I could not possibly list them all.

It is not the intention of Madhyamaka to undermine this or that conventional presentation of the skandhas, dhātus and āyatanas, but merely to show that they are not paramārtha dharmas.

good.

I am interested to see if you can give an explanation of how a thunderstorm could exist that did not arise from karma, without employing a realist ontology.

[/quote]

You need to explain the karmic cause of such a storm.

Simply put however, thunderstorms arises from atmospheric causes and conditions. There is no necessary precondition for a mind to generate those causes and conditions, and you equally cannot demonstrate how karma causes a thunderstorm.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, January 21st, 2014 at 1:42 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

Socialism will confiscate the property of the capitalist and in return will secure the individual against poverty and oppression; it, in return for so confiscating, will assure to all men and women a free, happy and unanxious human life.

Malcolm wrote:

Promises, promises.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, January 21st, 2014 at 2:15 AM

Title: Re: Internet Buddhism

Content:

bob said:

At least on the internet, we can't literally kill each other...

Malcolm wrote:

We're working on that.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, January 21st, 2014 at 5:54 AM

Title: Re: Internet Buddhism

Content:

tobes said:

Having said that, I think if you had Shankara around for tea one afternoon, he'd happily

acknowledge that, and probably celebrate it.

Malcolm wrote:

I don't think so, after all, he shrilly denounced those who claimed Gaudapada was cribbing Buddhist arguments.

tobes said:

As well, he proposes that Buddhism at his time had degenerated into nihilism. But nonetheless, he is very careful to avoid denouncing particular views or methods, whereas Buddhists tend to proceed via a rather intense philosophical methodology of denouncing. It is an interesting difference.

Malcolm wrote:

Saying that Buddhism degenerated into nihilism is a pretty damning statement, no?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, January 21st, 2014 at 5:58 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

I haven't got a problem with capitalism simply because a very small minority are super rich. The richest 300 persons on Earth have more money than poorest 3 billion combined... though it is pretty awful when we consider a statistic like that.

Malcolm wrote:

Not really, wealthy has no relationship to happiness. In any case, you have the example of Bill Gates, who has taken his money and is trying to good works with it.

tellyontellyon said:

The real problem is how that wealth is wielded. In capitalism, the wealth, and control of the major levers of society, is wielded in a way that is very destructive and is leading us to social and environmental disaster. Is taking that power out of the hands of that tiny minority really so bad?

Malcolm wrote:

There are indeed problems with neoliberalism, but they will not be solved by Marxist Socialism. Its a dead end.

tellyontellyon said:

Buddhist ethics...

Malcolm wrote:

Never include taking the properties to which others lay claim without it being given to oneself freely.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, January 21st, 2014 at 7:37 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

more Marxist whinging

Malcolm wrote:

If you want to be wealthy, accumulate merit.

Basically, your view of the world is completely unBuddhist in every respect.

You are completely attached to material things. You completely lack any equanimity, your mind is a festering lagoon of resentment and anger, or so it appears.

You really need to give up this Marxist nonsense and turn your mind to Dharma.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, January 21st, 2014 at 9:19 PM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

Wrong Malcolm it is not just "more Marxist whinging", I'm actually talking about the misery of peoples lives. I don't claim any kind of realization, and the injustice of the current system can annoy me from time to time, but you are also wrong if you think that is my mindset and motivation is based on anger.

Malcolm wrote:

It is evident from the words that you write, your complaints on unfairness. Jealousy is still jealousy, even if on behalf of another. You really need to study Bodhicaryāvatara. Instead of rejoicing in people's wealth, and thereby sharing in their merit, you actually create negative karma for yourself by wanting to deprive them of that wealth.

Perhaps you should go to a Buddhist college and properly study Buddhism rather than rotting your mind with Marxist crack.

tellyontellyon said:

No Malcolm, I think we have to help people in a conventional way, that is a part of

building merit. It is not enough to visualise yourself and all other beings as compassionate Buddhas... but then not actually do anything compassionate. We can do something about our Karma right now. Karma needs action as well as intention if it is to ripen.

Malcolm wrote:

The Buddha did not accumulate danapāramita by giving everyone all that they wanted, it was sufficient for him to sincerely wish that they had all their wants and needs fulfilled.

In fact, Buddha had a golden begging bowl, given to him by the gods. But he thought it ostentatious and so he threw it away in a river. Before throwing it away however, he noticed an impoverished family nearby. He thought to give it to them, but then, through his clairvoyance, he saw that this sudden wealth would merely cause this poor family all to be reborn in hell. So he threw it away. For centuries Hindus have criticized the Buddha for this act.

Further, making offerings to the Buddha (a pure object) is far more meritorious than relieving all the poverty of the world. The sentient beings of the six realms are the impure merit field. We make offerings to them out of compassion.

And, it is actually quite enough to imagine oneself and all sentient beings as buddhas. That is the Vajrayāna way of rapid Buddhahood. So yes, you even have to visualize all those capitalists, all those 300 or whatever number of wealthy people, as Buddhas. And in their guise as sentient beings, you should want them to have all the wealth that they have and rejoice in it. If they use it improperly, then that is a pity, but they had the merit to gain that wealth in this life and no one should take it away from them. If they are dodging their taxes, well, that is a different issue.

tellyontellyon said:

The socio-economic system is not something that just 'happens' to us, we are the ones doing it. Our socio-economic system is a form of activity, of action, of behaviour. But the socio-economic behaviour that we engage in under capitalism is damaging; and it pits one individual against another for survival destroying equanimity and encouraging a 'me', 'me', 'me' mentality.

Malcolm wrote:

The socio-economic behaviour under Marxism is just as damaging, as I have explained to you already, because it merely transfers ownership of production. Marxism also pits people against each other, you just don't see it yet because you are blinded by ideology.

tellyontellyon said:

I want a far more equal society, a world where one person's gain is not another person's loss.

Malcolm wrote:

There will always be loss and gain. This is natural. Increase here, a decrease there. This is just how conditioned things are.

The Marxists say they want an equal society, equal for who, and who decides what is equal? A committee? A bunch of bureaucrats? Who votes them in? Unions, the "proletariat"? Like all Marxists, you speak out of both sides of your mouth at once. Someone has to run things -- I prefer the randomness of American Democracy any day, even if it is propped up by capitalism, to the rule of a committee.

Your rhetoric is just like that of free marketeers who want unrestricted free trade, well, free for who? You are just one side of the same coin. Neither Marxism or Capitalism for are adequate solution. But of the two, I will favor capitalism, because it is the present system and it should not be brought down by a violent revolution. It cannot be brought down by a peaceful one. You must understand that this is reality. Bringing down capitalism will cause untold suffering for billions, worse suffering than there is even now.

In order for things to change, people must personally evolve, and that is the only solution to our present situation. And you cannot force people to evolve.

So, unfortunately my friend, while you are standing behind barricades fighting with the police, I will be doing what I do anyway, practicing, translating, teaching and seeing patients, fixing the bodies you break in your so called "revolution".

tellyontellyon said:

HH Dalai Lama favours the socio-economic system of socialism/Marxism as this is a better way of behaving on this planet. So I must reject your point of view. I base this not only on my own ideas and experience, but also on the fact that I give more weight and authority to HHDL's point of view than yours.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, I am well aware of HHDL's views on the matter, and I don't think you really understand his point. He does not want a revolution.

We all agree in principle that everyone deserves a fair shake and that capitalism as it stands now has problems. However, what he does not agree with is violence and revolution, and you have yet to show one single Marxist revolution that has not degenerated into total bloodshed.

Socialism and Marxism are not the same thing. There are many socialisms. Why a Buddhist picks the most evil materialist form of it is totally beyond understanding.

But beyond that, if you think a Marxist party should be in power, than vote one in. Good luck with that, because as far as I can tell, very few countries want that kind of Government.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, January 21st, 2014 at 10:14 PM

Title: Re: Chinese Buddhism and the Anti-Japan War



Content:

Indrajala said:

The holy people who torched themselves in Viet Nam didn't seem to make much of a difference. Plenty of people still died and the communist regime won the war.

.

Malcolm wrote:

They made a huge difference. That image from Vietnam is one of the most enduring images in history. It will live on when most of the details of what caused it have faded from memory.

Indrajala said:

The war still continued, the communists won and America lost, only to engage in wars again and again in the following decades.

Malcolm wrote:

That image was one of the main things that caused the anti-war movement in the US. The US lost because of the US anti-war movement, not because the communists "won".

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, January 21st, 2014 at 10:45 PM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

muni said:

How can the Buddha be pure and the sentient beings impure? How can those be two?

Malcolm wrote:

Buddhas have no afflictions, sentient beings are defined by afflictions.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, January 21st, 2014 at 11:10 PM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

Malcolm says:

Further, making offerings to the Buddha (a pure object) is far more metitorious than relieving all the poverty of the world.

Perhaps we could do both?

Malcolm wrote:

How are we going to do both without violently relieving someone of their possessions?

tellyontellyon said:

We are not going to agree about Marxism, which in the modern day includes much more than just what Marx happened to say and write. We can learn from what is right and reject what is wrong and doesn't work. I don't want to be ruled by a committee, I want 'power from below', the whole of society being able to contribute to economic planning. Democracy wider and more effective than we have now.

Malcolm wrote:

How is the "whole of society" going to be able to contribute to economic planning? Running a society takes skills. Skills require education.

You want to contribute to economic planning? Then grow food, like I do. Learn a pre-industrial era skill, like I did.

tellyontellyon said:

Marxists consider marxism to be a science, not a faith. Science learns from experience and improves.

Malcolm wrote:

I am aware that Marxists consider Marxism to be scientific, a proposition I take no more seriously than I take the idea that Buddhism is science, and rather less, actually.

tellyontellyon said:

Yes in the name of Marxism terrible things have been done, also capitalist authorities have done terrible things. Stalinism was a nightmare we all know. But there can be a new Marxism... or call it what you will. You know I am not talking about violent revolution, or a repeat of previous mistakes.

Malcolm wrote:

I am not interested in Marxism at all. The proof is in the pudding, it is a failed theory.

tellyontellyon said:

Perhaps your Deep Ecology will be the future? But I don't think it will be attained under a system that requires 2% to 3% compound economic growth annually forever. That is what capitalism must have to work. Capitalism has been very progressive, but that just can't keep going on forever, the planet just can't take it. Capitalism has to go.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, I agree, the notion of infinite growth of the economy is based on the notion of infinite resources, which of course we do not have.

But rejecting capitalism is foolish and extreme. We merely need to place limits on resources that can be exploited. Capitalism and a steady state economy can co-exist. But it requires checks and balances.

tellyontellyon said:

Global warming is happening now.. in all sorts of ways capitalism is just as bad for the very wealthy... people who could be using their precious lives to attain Buddhahood are starving and dying of AIDS in numbers far greater than needs to be:

Malcolm wrote:

Human birth only becomes precious if you have met Buddhadharma.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, January 22nd, 2014 at 5:58 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

HHDL wrote: Of all the modern economic theories, the economic system of Marxism is founded on moral principles, while capitalism is concerned only with gain and profitability.

Malcolm wrote:

Capitalism, as portrayed in Smith's Wealth of Nations, is also founded on moral principles. Indeed, the latter book must be read alongside Smith's Moral Sentiments.

Please examine this:

<http://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2008/08/adam-smith-on-csr/8665/>

However, the moral principles upon which Smith founds his vision of capitalism and a labor theory of value is not utopian.

The point is while Smith's systems isn't perfect, indeed it is very 18th century, but to loudly proclaim capitalism hasn't any moral theory is grossly wrong.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, January 22nd, 2014 at 6:03 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

Unknown said:

If this is what Buddhists must believe then I am a very bad Buddhist. I believe all life is precious, even non-Buddhist beings.

Malcolm wrote:

Stop being so petulant and you might learn something.

All life is precious, but a precious human birth has eighteen unique characteristics which make it "precious", the so called eight freedoms:

[http://rywiki.tsadra.org/index.php/eight\\_freedoms](http://rywiki.tsadra.org/index.php/eight_freedoms)

And ten endowments:

[http://rywiki.tsadra.org/index.php/ten\\_endowments](http://rywiki.tsadra.org/index.php/ten_endowments)

Unknown said:

But rejecting capitalism is foolish and extreme. We merely need to place limits on resources that can be exploited. Capitalism and a steady state economy can co-exist. The proof is in the pudding.....

Malcolm wrote:

[/quote]

Of course, and I would not expect otherwise.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, January 22nd, 2014 at 7:22 AM

Title: Re: HHST 2014 North America & Europe Schedule

Content:

kirtu said:

[http://hhthesakyatrizin.org/schedule\\_2014\\_all.html](http://hhthesakyatrizin.org/schedule_2014_all.html)

supermaxv said:

I am so excited, anyone else headed out to the New York teachings?

Malcolm wrote:

I will be attending the empowerments.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, January 22nd, 2014 at 9:39 PM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

But rejecting capitalism is foolish and extreme. We merely need to place limits on resources that can be exploited. Capitalism and a steady state economy can co-exist. But it requires checks and balances.

kirtu said:

The only places where capitalism works are the social democracies, all of which are in Scandinavia and central/western Europe and it took them 50 or so years after WW2 to iron out problems (youth unemployment for example).

Malcolm wrote:

Well, the northern European social democracies (Denmark, Sweden, Norway) are propped up by North Sea oil. Germany, manufacturing on an imported labor force. These social democracies are propped up by capitalism.

kirtu said:

Personally I am skeptical of capitalism working in any native English speaking country because of the inherent culture of aggression, domination and exploitation that accompanies English. I would like to be proven wrong but so far history bears this out.

Malcolm wrote:

You have some deep prejudices, my friend. You never avoid a chance to sling invectives at the country you live in and of which you are a citizen.

kirtu said:

However I doubt that you mean social democracy as an instrument placing checks and balances on capitalism. The very notion of checks and balances is the quaint 18th century language dealing with reigning in the powers of King and Parliament, etc. Capitalism left to itself is harmful and will always, *\*always\**, eventually lead to economic failure, just as it has in these United States and the UK repeatedly.

Malcolm wrote:

When we say checks and balances we mean exactly that, the use of the government to check corporations so the market can function in a balanced way. Until we manage to arrive at an internationally agreed upon system of population reduction and a steady state economy, the Keynesian approach seems to be most sensible, at least here in the USA.

The main problem as I see it, in the USA, is that corporations have too much access to power, and regulations are unfairly applied to small businesses making it impossible for them to compete against large corporations in almost every area.

The main flaw that I see in the US is the unwillingness of Republicans and Democrats alike to see that their policies together are moving the US to a corporatist state ala Gentile.

kirtu said:

Anglo-American/French capitalism is historically a clear failure and a danger to civilization.

Malcolm wrote:

America is Rome for now, and it will be for some centuries yet. So you better get used to it.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, January 22nd, 2014 at 9:51 PM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

On the subject of workers being 'free' to make contracts with employers:  
(today's cut'n'paste from Wiki contribution - because I'm a bit lazy.... )

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Criticism\\_of\\_capitalism](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Criticism_of_capitalism)

Malcolm wrote:

The problems with all of these criticisms of capitalism is that they assume that all value comes solely from labor. This is fine for Smith, Ricardo and Marx, but in fact economists have found the LTV inadequate for explaining all kinds of things in economics.

I guess one of the things I find annoying about the Marxist rank and file is their amateur economics, they all act as if they really understand economics, but what they really do is just recite chapter and verse. And what I also find is that they rarely read contrary points of view. For example, have you read Nozick's Anarchy, State and Utopia? Or Hayek? Even you will never agree with what these fellows say, they are just as smart, if not smarter than Marx and co. Time to expand your horizons.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, January 22nd, 2014 at 10:25 PM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

Nemo said:

I don't know what planet you live on Malcolm but your claim that capitalism as practiced has moral constraints is ludicrous. Oligopoly, monopoly, monopsony and plutocracy are inevitable. Capitalism is a revolutionary force that naturally frees itself from constraints. It will devour the entire ecosystem and then devour itself.

Malcolm wrote:

No, I am making a similar claim to the Marxists, i.e., that the capitalism founded by Smith had a moral theory. Likewise, Marxist style Socialism has a moral theory.

In both cases the beast unleashed has shaken off the collar of its moral theory every time. We all accept that the Soviet Union and Communist China represent the failure of Marx's theories of economics. No one can possibly claim that any capitalist government has murdered as many people as the communists did in the 20th century. Not even the Nazis murdered as many people as Stalin did alone.

What we have is capitalism, we do not, at present, have another economic system.

What I argue is that trying to change this economic system through revolution will be more harmful than the harm it is presently causing.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, January 22nd, 2014 at 10:30 PM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

In fact Malcolm, from just this little piece.... I'm not sure he really was that smart... Hey, but if you support him, that's your business.

Malcolm wrote:

I do not agree with Hayek, actually. You totally miss my point. My point is that capitalists must read Marx, and Marxists must read libertarians, etc.

You should read Nozick, Rawls (main philosopher articulating social justice, and a large government to bring that about), Bookchin, Naess, etc.

No one person's ideas are complete. It is folly to pick one person's book and say "This is my bible". One must read opposing views.

As I told you, my political beliefs are Deep Ecology/Left Biocentric and as a Buddhist I am committed to nonviolence, I cannot support any ideology which even permits the idea of violent revolutionary struggle. Naess has six principles for public debate which I generally adhere to naturally, but also fail at from time to time. They are:

Avoid tendentious irrelevance

Examples: Personal attacks, claims of opponents' motivation, explaining reasons for an argument.

Avoid tendentious quoting

Quotes should not be edited regarding the subject of the debate.

Avoid tendentious ambiguity

Ambiguity can be exploited to support criticism.

Avoid tendentious use of straw men

Assigning views to the opponent that he or she does not hold.

Avoid tendentious statements of fact

Information put forward should never be untrue or incomplete, and one should not withhold relevant information.

Avoid tendentious tone of presentation

Examples: irony, sarcasm, pejoratives, exaggeration, subtle (or open) threats.

These would be very good to adopt as personal commitments for online Buddhist discussions.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, January 22nd, 2014 at 11:28 PM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

kirtu said:

Not just (Norway is certainly of course). Germany isn't dependent upon guest workers for manufacturing, etc. But the chief point is that these social democracies are not propped up by capitalism but have safely put it in a terrarium where it can be tightly controlled to actually benefit people rather than being left to run amok and become a cancer like it is in the UK and the US.

Malcolm wrote:

Without the global capitalism, their economies could not function.

kirtu said:

I'm sorry you see it that way. I do not sling invective at the US or it's culture at all.

Malcolm wrote:

Are you kidding? You do it every chance you get.

kirtu said:

I just want it to live up to it's stated ideals, esp. those egalitarian ones (of course Americans have confused those ideals with others like a fantasied right to bear arms in extreme circumstances [like all the time for some people]). American ideals are fantastic. Hopefully one day Americans will become Americans.

Malcolm wrote:

Well, we all have different ideas about what those stated ideals are. The Supreme Court has ruled that second amendment does indeed mean the right to carry a weapon. The court has also decided that the exact way this is carried out can be adjudicated locally. If you don't like guns, live in Massachusetts.

And again you make personal comments "Hopefully one day Americans will become Americans" as if there is some character flaw in Americans, it is really too much.

kirtu said:

Okay so you fall short of the throttling of the market in European social democracies. Please examine Goedel's Incompleteness Theorem: any sufficiently complex system has true statements which can nonetheless not be proven true within that system. Sufficiently complex means as complex as arithmetic. Certainly placing checks and



balances on a capitalist economic system is far more complex than arithmetic as both can be modeled as rule based systems and the rules in capitalism far exceed the rules in arithmetic. Therefore unanticipated capitalist events will continue to occur. We don't know for sure what they are, but historically they are periods of increase followed by busts. This is a regular albeit unpredictable cycle. Another aspect is that economic markets are chaotic (in terms of chaos theory). Mathematics indicates that capitalism in the long is unreliable.

Is this problem mitigated by the social democracies tight control of it? No, but they can keep it from becoming a cancer and destroying society.

Malcolm wrote:

Well, I think experience has proven that throttling markets winds up with shortages of things that people want, like toilet paper.

"Another aspect is that economic markets are chaotic (in terms of chaos theory). Mathematics indicates that capitalism in the long is unreliable." This is a tautology.

kirtu said:

The main problem as I see it, in the USA, is that corporations have too much access to power, and regulations are unfairly applied to small businesses making it impossible for them to compete against large corporations in almost every area.

That's a problem but by far not the main problem. The complete denial of people's access to labor is one of the main problems within the system. A means of mitigating that is in fact supporting small business and permitting (helping) people who have been locked out of the labor market to start small businesses.

Malcolm wrote:

These things can all be changed and should be changed. I was thinking of farming in particular. One place I think we can all agree is that the financial services industry needs to "throttled".

kirtu said:

The main flaw that I see in the US is the unwillingness of Republicans and Democrats alike to see that their policies together are moving the US to a corporatist state ala Gentile.

In fact there is only the one National Conservative Party, whose two wings have arbitrarily labeled their positions "Republican" and "Democrat".

Malcolm wrote:

This is nice rhetoric at a cocktail party, but in reality it is not like that.

kirtu said:

Who is Gentile?

Malcolm wrote:

Giovanni Gentile, Mussolini's intellectual.

kirtu said:

Rome fell in 2008 with the contrived and ongoing Second Great Depression. Americans don't know it yet.

Malcolm wrote:

Hardly, American dominance on the world stage will last for centuries. This country is far more resilient than you imagine.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, January 23rd, 2014 at 12:45 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

M:

American dominance on the world stage will last for centuries

What about the development of the BRICS?

Malcolm wrote:

India lacks natural resources. Their main resource is labor.

China is swiftly exhausting its environment, in a mad push to become equal to the west in industrial capacity.

Brazil has mainly oil.

Russia is insane and effectively landlocked.

South Africa is definitely the economic engine of Africa, but it is socially incredibly unstable.

Of these, only Russia and China has anything like the ability to challenge American dominance. But I don't think they really can.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, January 23rd, 2014 at 1:09 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

smcj said:

China is swiftly exhausting its environment, in a mad push to become equal to the west in industrial capacity.

They are buying up all the natural resources they can in Africa. My neighbor goes there a lot and says there are Chinese all over the place.

Malcolm wrote:

Yup, they are.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, January 23rd, 2014 at 2:27 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

kirtu said:

It's safe to say that without trade their economies could not function. All economies must act on the global stage to grow beyond a certain level. Trade does not necessarily imply capitalism however. There was active trade with Soviet Russia from 60's-90.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, capitalist trade.

kirtu said:

I am not making personal comments at all. However there are very deep flaws in American culture that people born and raised here do not tend to acknowledge. I do want the US to in fact live up to it's ideals and become the greatest country on Earth. Sadly, I'm still waiting. It was only in my lifetime that African-American people were accorded liberty for example. If American's believed their ideals this wouldn't have been an issue for long.

Malcolm wrote:

Of course you are making personal comments. It is becoming rather disgusting.

You have to understand one important point about "American" ideals. They are really the ideals of two groups: New Englanders and small group of educated Virginians. There was a compromise reached with the Deep South, which was not one that was easily made.

However, I can state with confidence that states like Massachusetts, and NE in general along with New York, as well as the left coast states really do live up to "American" ideals. But America is not just one country, it is in fact a nation historically comprised of 11 distinct cultural groups. Unfortunately, people in the culture sphere of the Deep South, Appalachia and the "Western States" have rather different ideas about things. The people in the Mid-West tend to be more conservative than New Englanders, but more liberal than the latter groups.

For example, Massachusetts abolished slavery in 1781.

So don't paint the whole country with a broad brush.

kirtu said:

BTW, it's not just me who thinks that American culture is severely flawed - most citizens like myself who I have met who were born with US citizenship but were raised

significantly in northern or western Europe also see this. This was confirmed a few years ago when a report came out about differences in perception among many so-called "military brats", "corporate brats" and "diplomatic brats": oftentimes they felt like de facto aliens in the US and were initially mystified at the many self-contradictions in US culture once they came to live in the US. You can read about this in the literature concerning trans-culture/third culture children.

Malcolm wrote:

This simple means that you do not understand Americans, nor the subtleties of American history.

kirtu said:

There are no shortages of toilet paper in Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Denmark, Holland, Norway, Sweden, Iceland or Finland for starters.

Malcolm wrote:

These countries are all signatories to the WTO. They have neoliberalized economies.

kirtu said:

It's not a tautology.

Malcolm wrote:

To say that markets are chaotic and capitalism is unreliable is a  $1 = 1$  kind of statement.

kirtu said:

That is the exact situation. There is a narrow, non-diverse spectrum of political thought in the US focusing on conservatism. Almost all people born and raised in the US are some kind of narrow political conservative. People here are simply blind to this fact.

Malcolm wrote:

This is total nonsense. As I said before, this is a symptom of the fact that you live in a culturally conservative part of the US. If you lived in Massachusetts, VT, etc., you would have a very different perspective.

kirtu said:

Actually a report for the Dept. of Defense was published recently noting American decline on the international stage as a result of the perception of inadequate dealing with economics. I'll see if I can find that report.

America has throw a great deal away as a result of the complete failure of it's educational system over at least two generations and, as part of it's cultural flaw, it's slavish adherence to forms of ideology over reasoning and analysis. It has stagnated scientifically and technologically although this is not apparent (nor is the stagnation universal - this is not a controversial statement within some tech corporations but a counter statement is that the US has the strategic people and projects it needs and can continue to acquire [buy] what it does not currently have and that some scientific and tech stagnation is not broadly relevant). It will retain it's militarial dominance but may not retain economic dominance. With an incompetent response to a contrived economic depression it has become Belgium.

Malcolm wrote:

This is all rhetorical irrelevance. As I said, America is Rome. Rome was not noted for its innovations, but for the fact that it wielded the most power. Of course Rome fell, and so too will America, but it will be a long time coming.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, January 23rd, 2014 at 2:32 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

Sherlock said:

America is Rome for now, and it will be for some centuries yet. So you better get used to it.

M

Is your thinking on this influenced by Spengler by any chance?

I thought his <https://archive.org/details/PrussianismAndSocialism> of Anglo-American capitalism vs Prussian/German-style socialism was pretty spot-on. He also identifies Marxism as a failed attempt to formulate a Prussian-style system based on Anglo-Saxon assumptions. This prediction, written in 1920, seems quite accurate:

"Instead of authoritarian socialism, the English or American billionaire adheres to an impressive form of private socialism, a welfare program on a grand scale which turns his own personal power into pleasure and morally vanquishes the recipient of welfare funds. The flashy techniques for distributing these millions are an effective cover-up for the methods used to obtain them in the first place. It is the same attitude as that of the old corsairs who, while banqueting in the castle just conquered, threw their table scraps to the prisoners: the voluntary surrender of property increases the value of what remains. The question whether or not such voluntary acts should become a legal duty is the chief point of contention among the economic parties of the future in England and America."

Malcolm wrote:

Well, not specifically, but I have read Spengler, but years ago.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, January 23rd, 2014 at 2:34 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

Norwegian said:

We have failed immigration politics, and we have failed integration politics..

Malcolm wrote:

One word: Lilyhammer...if you haven't seen it you ought to.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, January 23rd, 2014 at 3:40 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

kirtu said:

[Therefore, markets are unreliable: they produce unpredictable and unanticipated phenomena (which is why I started in with Goedel in that post). Therefore regulations cannot anticipate all undesired phenomena and some regulations that guard against undesired phenomena may constrain markets unnecessarily over the lifetime of a business cycle.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, I understand all of this. But there is no alternative.

kirtu said:

Capitalism historically fails after some period of expansion.

Malcolm wrote:

This is true of \_any\_ economy. I did not say that a capitalist economy was a desiderata. I said that at this point, it is better this than some socialist revolution for the time being.

kirtu said:

Americans are often blind to the diversity of political views, for good and ill, that exist outside of their country (or even next door to them). Many have noted this.

Malcolm wrote:

Some Americans, not all. There are know nothings in every country. You fantasize so much about how awesome it is in Europe, well, go live there. I have met many stupid people, and as far as I know, there are just as many stupid Germans, Norwegians, Swedes, Brits, etc., as there are stupid Americans.

kirtu said:

Black people had complete freedom in Massachusetts well before 1964-1968.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, actually they did.

Even in Norway and Sweden, there is racism and discrimination against blacks, Laplanders and so on. Not to mention discrimination against "guest workers" in Germany and so on. In fact, racism is on the rise in Europe.

kirtu said:

No, aside from the final line what I have written is factual.

Malcolm wrote:

No it isn't.

kirtu said:

As I said, America is Rome. Rome was not noted for its innovations, but for the fact that it wielded the most power. Of course Rome fell, and so too will America, but it will be a long time coming.

Rome was noted for its innovations but its military and political power overshadowed their achievements making the recognition difficult. For example a couple of decades ago it was shown that a Roman structure in Spain, that people thought was a kind of elaborate fountain, was the water power plant for a factory. Secondly I have heard that it took the world to the mid-20th century to reinvent all of Roman engineering knowledge, particularly with respect to concrete.

Malcolm wrote:

Well, America has its innovations too, but I am too polite to list them all.

kirtu said:

However you have just made Azimov's observation on anti-intellectualism in the US. Do you really want the US to follow the slanted model of Roman brutishness?

Malcolm wrote:

America is not anti-intellectual. But we have had this boring conversation before. You just have a huge chip on your shoulder, I wish you would get over it, and your prejudices.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, January 23rd, 2014 at 4:18 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

kirtu said:

The main problem in the US is that the economy has become non-functional primary due to cultural reasons and the refusal of a dead-locked government to take further action, even to acknowledge the problems. The reason that "leaders" go not acknowledge these issues is because they are counter to the received ideology and solutions tend to lay outside the scope of market forces and Keynes has been sidelined. If you have market fundamentalists at nearly every level of every institution, there isn't much to be done when market fundamentalists face a reality that shouldn't exist. You

also have the hype-pragmatic stance of Americans: most trends show a slow, slow recovery (U-3 unemployment ~ 6%) by the end of 2014 so the boat seems to be righting itself without further action. The problem is that the replacement jobs are low wage and not secure.

Kirt

Malcolm wrote:

The economy functions, kirt, it may not function according to what you would like, and I understand your frustration, but your comments are a bit out of line with my personal experience of living in the US and traveling abroad extensively.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, January 23rd, 2014 at 8:34 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

kirtu said:

[Therefore, markets are unreliable: they produce unpredictable and unanticipated phenomena (which is why I started in with Goedel in that post). Therefore regulations cannot anticipate all undesired phenomena and some regulations that guard against undesired phenomena may constrain markets unnecessarily over the lifetime of a business cycle.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, I understand all of this. But there is no alternative.

kirtu said:

There is indeed a ready made alternative: social democracy. There is a secondary alternative: small scale communes where resources are shared and equally divided according to need (this has the actual advantage of being historically an American solution, but I am addressing the general alternative to capitalism). There is a third alternative: an economic system derived from computer simulation where alternatives are tried based on maximizing various values and selecting for long term stability and prosperity. These systems can then be integrated into the actual world economy.

Kirt

Social democracy is a political ideology that officially has as its goal the establishment of democratic socialism through reformist and gradualist methods.[1] Alternatively, social democracy is defined as a policy regime involving a universal welfare state and collective bargaining schemes within the framework of a capitalist economy.

Malcolm wrote:

What is outlined in red is what "social democracy" is today.

Your second scheme won't scale.



Your third scheme requires political coercion, being yet another form of planned economy.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, January 23rd, 2014 at 8:47 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

Anyway people can read for themselves the police report and make up their own minds about what you are up to.

Just taking this claim about rape:

The actual police report is here:

[https://www.politi.no/vedlegg/lokale\\_vedlegg/oslo/Vedlegg\\_1309.pdf](https://www.politi.no/vedlegg/lokale_vedlegg/oslo/Vedlegg_1309.pdf)

The English translation of pages 51-56:

<http://www.scribd.com/doc/76695373/Excerpt-From-Oslo-Police-District-Report-on-Rape>

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, the report states that assault rapes in Norway are overwhelmingly committed by people with non-Norwegian backgrounds. In the US, for example, apart from statutory rape, i.e. sleeping with a minor, there are no other kinds. I am quite sure that is what Norwegian is talking about, not the all the other kinds of rape defined under Norwegian law that would not even be recognized as rape, in for example, England.

What Norwegian is talking about is the fact that the immigration and integration policies are such failures in Norway that these Norwegian policies are hugely lampooned by Norwegians in such shows as Lilyhammer.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, January 23rd, 2014 at 9:24 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

But there were only 6 assault rapes out of something like 152 rapes.

Malcolm wrote:

It doesn't matter. What is defined as rape in Norway is a little different:

In Norway, rape is defined under the Norwegian Penal Code[40] § 192 as either:

1. engaging in sexual activity by means of violence or threatening behaviour,

2. engaging in sexual activity with somebody who is unconscious or for any other reason incapable of resisting the act, or
3. by means of violence or threatening behaviour compelling any person to engage in sexual activity with another person, or to carry out similar actions with him- or herself.

Further, the same section defines aggravated rape as a rape committed

- a. by multiple persons in cooperation (gang rape)
- b. in a particularly painful or offensive manner
- c. by a person previously convicted of rape under § 192 or of sexual activity with a child under the age of 14 (as per § 195 of the penal code)
- d. in such a way that the victim either dies or receives grievous bodily harm.

The section recognizes sexually transmitted diseases (defined in the Infection Protection Act) as grievous bodily harm.

So, if person A has herpes and does not inform person B of this fact, and person B contracts herpes, person A can be accused of rape in Norway.

Or if person A manages to cause pain, or is offensive to person B, this can also be defined as rape.

Basically, the bar for "rape" in Norway is much lower than it is in other countries. In the US, giving someone herpes is offensive, but the onus is on person B to protect his/her own health.

tellyontellyon said:

What about what he said about the Roma? Did you read it?

They are criticized a lot by people, because they have zero interest in behaving in accordance with Norwegian norms and laws. They don't want to work (although that's their excuse used in order to be here and beg for money). They steal, and they treat wherever it is they're staying as if it is an open toilet, defecating and urinating everywhere, be it in a kindergarten property, people's backyards, the forests, open parks, or what not (and when at one point they were given toilets to use, they shat down the toilets as well). People get fed up with the police not doing anything about them shitting everywhere, or stealing.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, of course I read it. The question is, did Norwegian personally witness such behavior or is he merely repeating hearsay. What we can understand from this, however is that Norway's push for integration is a laughable failure in many respects, and has provoked a backlash of resentment.

tellyontellyon said:

Do you accept this as an accurate description of an entire race?

Malcolm wrote:

Not of an entire group of people, but I would not be surprised if beneath the stereotype there was not some truth to it. In other words, I would not be surprised if indeed there

were gangs of criminal Roma wandering around conning people and stealing.

For example, there is the American TV show, The Richs, starring the English comedian Eddie Izzard, and the equally English actress Minnie Driver, who portray a family of Gypsies in the Deep South who engage in one scam after another until it all catches up with them. Certainly the stereotype is international, just as there is the stereotype of the corrupt capitalist. After all, you are very quick to condemn "counter revolutionaries", "capitalists", etc., whole groups of people. But I am sure you will say "It's different".

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, January 23rd, 2014 at 9:10 PM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Do you accept this as an accurate description of an entire race?

Not of an entire group of people, but I would not be surprised if beneath the stereotype there was not some truth to it. In other words, I would not be surprised if indeed there were gangs of criminal Roma wandering around conning people and stealing.

For example, there is the American TV show, The Richs, starring the English comedian Eddie Izzard, and the equally English actress Minnie Driver, who portray a family of Gypsies in the Deep South who engage in one scam after another until it all catches up with them. Certainly the stereotype is international, just as there is the stereotype of the corrupt capitalist. After all, you are very quick to condemn "counter revolutionaries", "capitalists", etc., whole groups of people. But I am sure you will say "It's different".

Sönarn said:

This concerns a minority. We have that discussion in France, because a lot of Roms are migrating to it. It does exist few gangs of organized robbery in main towns (Paris, Lyon, Marseille, ...). It's generally organized from Romania (gangsters) and committed by very young peoples (which are immediately relaxed because of their young age ...). But that represents only a couple of groups. Majority of Roms just try to survive and improve their living condition ... in Romania they are considered as untermensch. So we have to be careful not to propagate this kind of much exaggerated information which only serve the right and extrem-right propaganda.

Sönarn

Malcolm wrote:

Of course.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, January 23rd, 2014 at 9:10 PM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

The point is that this is a problem. And it's related to failed immigration and integration politics, one of many symptoms of just this.

No, this is not a 'symptom' of failed immigration.

Malcolm wrote:

He said immigration politics, meaning that immigration policies of Norway are finding disfavor among Norwegians these days. You really do need to watch Lilyhammer. It will put how Norwegians feel about these things and shows the deep ambiguity Norwegians feel about "doing the right thing" in contrast to their very real and deep cultural conservatism. Until very recently, Norway was a very homogenous country, and these things we are seeing are problems Norwegians have only recently had to deal with. Of course the former British empire, we have more experience with diversity so some of the growing pains we went through over a hundred years ago seems obvious as well as their solutions.

tellyontellyon said:

This represents a very small proportion of the migrants living in Norway,

Malcolm wrote:

It seems to be sufficient to cause anxiety. Of course this is an old story around the world, immigrant population moves in, or are even invited, the local people become uncomfortable after a while, tensions brews, violence breaks out between the two groups, and eventually, if they can avoid genocide of one another, they all settle down peaceably enough.

tellyontellyon said:

It says more about a lack of tolerance to people who "..refuse to live how you are supposed to live". Like say if a muslim woman want's to wear a headscarf etc. etc.. It's just intolerance of difference that the 'right' are trying to build into hatred and fear with scare tactics'.

Malcolm wrote:

I suppose you extend this liberalism to female circumcision then?

tellyontellyon said:

'Gypsies' are a traditional target for the 'right' in Europe. Sometimes this has overflowed into pogroms and even organised genocide.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, this is completely true. Nomads are often viewed with suspicion since they are considered at the margins. Even in Tibet, nomads have a terrible reputation, while at the same time they are idealized, just as Gypsies have been here in the west.

tellyontellyon said:

It is wrong to downplay these crimes.

Malcolm wrote:

I am not downplaying these other crimes. I was clarifying for you precisely what Norwegian was talking about, i.e. assault rapes.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, January 23rd, 2014 at 9:57 PM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

By the way, to return the thread to its original topic, Robert Nozick maintains that it is inevitable that out of anarchy, a form of minimal state will arise from the creation of protection organizations.

TOTO, Is the utopia you imagine managed or unmanaged? If it is managed, how is this a stateless society? If it is managed, how is this management different than the minimal state imagined by Nozick?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, January 24th, 2014 at 5:24 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

Hiya Malcolm,

This is a key question. Marx and Engels addressed this and Lenin really focussed on this in the first chapter of his book: The State and Revolution.

He goes into what the 'State' is from a Marxist perspective, what maintains it, and why, undercapitalism, it will not 'whither away'; he explains the need for revolution and how the state would 'wither away' only after that. I guess it will not be your 'cup of tea', but if you can grit your teeth and get through the whole of the first chapter then you will have your answer.

<https://www.marxists.org/archive/lenin/works/1917/staterev/>

Malcolm wrote:

But I wanted you to summarize it for us.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, January 24th, 2014 at 8:24 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

To Marxists...the bourgeois state won't simply whither away, therefore it must be

removed by force (the ruling class are unlikely to give it up without a struggle).

Malcolm wrote:

So you finally admit it, Marxists advocate violence, because you certainly cannot exercise force without recourse to violence.

tellyontellyon said:

Therefore, the state must be smashed, overthrown, dismantled.

Malcolm wrote:

How can this possibly be non-violent? Even the language you use is the language of violence and coercion.

tellyontellyon said:

A workers state, a sort of temporary semi-state is established to replace it, and the task of changing society so that eventually there will no longer be two classes is begun. Therefore no longer any need for a state.

Malcolm wrote:

You mean, there will no longer be any need for protection? It will be impossible that human beings will act out of desire, hatred and ignorance?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, January 24th, 2014 at 9:37 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

Zhen Li said:

All markets, for all time, have worked according to value and mediation with commodities of exchange (i.e. money, the earliest forms of which were things like cattle).

Malcolm wrote:

That and credit.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, January 24th, 2014 at 8:28 PM

Title: Re: the great vegetarian debate

Content:

Jigme Tsultrim said:

Nagarjuna rejected causes.

Malcolm wrote:

Ultimately, yes; conventionally, no.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, January 24th, 2014 at 8:30 PM

Title: Re: the great vegetarian debate

Content:

tobes said:

Nonetheless, I see how certain traditions - Dzogchen, Zen - can read Nagarjuna as denying all forms of causation.

Malcolm wrote:

Dzogchen does not reject causes and conditions conventionally, in fact it elaborates a whole elaborate scheme to explain the cause of samsara as well as consciousness, memory, etc.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, January 24th, 2014 at 8:52 PM

Title: Re: Friend or Foe.

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

And, just for the record, sometimes I don't even agree with myself.

Malcolm wrote:

Typical liberal...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, January 24th, 2014 at 9:55 PM

Title: Re: "the Self is real" according to T. Page

Content:

PadmaVonSamba said:

If there is a true self, what experiences this true self? Does this true self experience itself? If so, by what means? If the true self exists outside of phenomena and thus any points of reference, what ultimately does the true self experience? If the true self does not actually experience anything, then is it a rock? What self experiences samsaric existence? If the samsaric self can be shown to have no true existence, then is it the true self that experiences samsara? Does a being with no mental capacity have a true self? If that being with no mental capacity is essentially made of phenomena (physical matter) such as carbon, and yet has a true self, then does all carbon have a true self?

The 'true self' theory raises all sorts of conundrums.

It is essentially no different that believing in god, except that in this case, instead of saying "god" one says "true self".

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Malcolm wrote:

The term bdag nyid, atman, just means, in this case, "nature", i.e. referring to the nature of reality free from extremes as being permanent, blissful, pure and self. The luminosity of the mind is understood to be this.

There are various ways to interpret the Uttaratantra and tathāgatagarbha doctrine, one way is definitive in meaning, the other is provisional, according to Gorampa Sonam Senge, thus the tathāgatagarbha sutras become definitive or provisional depending on how they are understood. He states:

In the context of showing the faults of a literal [interpretation] – it's equivalence with the Non-Buddhist Self is that the assertion of unique eternal all pervading cognizing awareness of the Sāṃkhya, the unique eternal pristine clarity of the Pashupattis, the unique all pervading intellect of the Vaiśnavas, the impermanent condition, the measure of one's body, in the permanent self-nature of the Jains, and the white, brilliant, shining pellet the size of an atom, existing in each individual's heart of the Vedantins are the same.

The definitive interpretation he renders as follows:

Therefor, the Sugatagarbha is defined as the union of clarity and emptiness but not simply emptiness without clarity, because that [kind of emptiness] is not suitable to be a basis for bondage and liberation. Also it is not simple clarity without emptiness, that is the conditioned part, because the Sugatagarbha is taught as unconditioned.

Khyentse Wangpo, often cited as a gzhan stong pa, basically says that the treatises of Maitreya elucidate the luminosity of the mind, i.e. its purity, whereas Nāgarjuna's treatises illustrate the empty nature of the mind, and that these two together, luminosity and emptiness free from extremes are to be understood as noncontradictory, which we can understand from the famous Prajñāpāramita citation "There is no mind in the mind, the nature of the mind is luminosity".

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, January 24th, 2014 at 10:58 PM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

M.

To Marxists the state IS violence. It is a tool for one class to control another. There is an ever present threat of violence that becomes overt if you step outside the limits that are acceptable to the ruling class. Sometimes the cage is bigger, sometimes smaller, but there is always an armed guard.

Malcolm wrote:

States form out of protection societies, in general. We can see this in the case of the Buddha, who in a past life as the Bodhisattva, was appointed the first human king, or so



the legend runs, and was appointed a sixth share of the harvest for his troubles.

But as long as human beings are subject to desire, hatred and ignorance, then for that long there will be classes of people, discrimination and so on. There is a reason Buddhists refer to themselves as "insiders". This means that we seek the solution to social ills and problems through personal transformation. There is no way you can remove the three afflictions merely through altering a given set of material relations. The proof of this is the psychological misery of the wealthy. Wealth does not make anyone happy. Of course this does not mean you cannot use material things to entice people into entering the teachings. The four means of converting beings to the Dharma are generosity (which itself has four aspects: giving material gifts, conferring fearlessness, loving kindness and teaching Dharma), pleasant speech, conduct and setting an example.

However, Marxist psychological theory, in contrast with Buddhist teachings, holds that all psychological states are fundamentally a result of social conditions fostered by material relationships, i.e. it is entirely materialist in its perspective. We can see that this perspective is deeply flawed because in fact as long as sentient beings like ourselves are driven by the three afflictions, there can be no happiness anywhere. Even if your Marxist utopia were possible, it would swiftly degenerate because humans are driven by afflictions.

The Buddhist point of view is that states and classes arise inevitably because sentient beings are afflicted and driven by the three humors. In Buddhist legend, anarchy prevailed in the golden age when afflictions were very latent in humans. The golden age degenerated after humans began hoarding grains and their afflictions became activated, and thus protection societies emerged, kings were elected, classes were formed and it degenerated until the present epoch.

So in fact it really seems that a doctrine of Anarchy cannot square with Buddhist teachings, in other words, from a Buddhist perspective a stateless society is completely impossible apart from the upper golden age.

It also appears that the utopia Marx imagines is also impossible as

tellyontellyon said:

But if lethal force is being used against a movement... would they have the right to self defence? That is another question?

Malcolm wrote:

The Buddha explained very clearly in the Mahaparinibbana sutta that if a country is abiding by its laws, maintaining its own boundaries, and so on, then one it would be hard to attack, and second, if attacked would be difficult to defeat.

He of course understood that countries needed defense forces. But he also clearly demonstrated that no matter what side of a conflict one were on, engaging in lethal

violence of any kind would condemn one to hell. Vasubandhu clearly explains that if one belongs to a group of one hundred persons, and that group kills someone, all in that group earn the negative karma of the entire group, i.e, all the Buddhists who recently killed all those Rohingyas all will experience the ripening of murdering those people times the number of people who approve of that action. Karma is unrelenting.

tellyontellyon said:

Before Chinese rule, the Dalai Lama's and the High Lama's would resort to the use of violent force to defend their society. They armed and sent off to war young men just like every other state, and even got into arguments about arms spending.:

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tibetan\\_Army](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tibetan_Army)

Malcolm wrote:

As I pointed out, the principle of karma is unrelenting. For as many Tibetans who violently resisted the Chinese occupation, many thousands more resisted it non-violently in accordance with Buddhist principles. And many were simply cut down in battle by machine guns since the Tibetans had not comparable arms. I cannot say that I know for a fact that they had lower rebirths, and there certainly are one or two scarce passages in Mahāyāna literature that appear to justify violent force to protect the Dharma, but in general, the tenor of Buddhist texts is that lethal violence is unacceptable.

The Dalai Lama freely admits that Tibet fell because the policies of the Tibetan government had fallen into corruption and abuse, therefore, Tibet could be attacked and defeated successfully because of the lack of merit of his own government.

tellyontellyon said:

Even on a mundane level, if you caused trouble or broke the rules in a monastery you could expect to be treated quite roughly by some muscular dob-dobs, who were not at all gentle or sanctimonious.

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dob-dob>

Malcolm wrote:

Dobdobs habitually indulged in what we would term child sexual abuse, i.e. rape.

tellyontellyon said:

I never said the Marxists were pacifists... (though it appears neither were the Tibetan lamas!)

Malcolm wrote:

Some Lamas aren't, but in general Buddhism is pacifist in orientation.

tellyontellyon said:

If that is too offensive for you, then please, shake the dust from your sandals and turn your back on the world....

But the fact is the world is a violent place, we can't demand perfection of those we

associate with if we are going to get involved with trying to change the world.... but as Buddhists we may use our input to at least mitigate the worst of it and encourage less violent forms of coercion.

Malcolm wrote:

The message of the Buddha is that you cannot change the world in any substantial way through external force. You can only change the world by changing yourself.

tellyontellyon said:

No, I can't answer them very well myself, I don't have the skill, brains or time to do justice to a complex and difficult subject.

Malcolm wrote:

Why would you possibly buy into a doctrine you do not completely understand?

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, January 24th, 2014 at 11:07 PM

Title: Re: "the Self is real" according to T. Page

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The definitive interpretation he renders as follows:

Therefor, the Sugatagarbha is defined as the union of clarity and emptiness but not simply emptiness without clarity, because that [kind of emptiness] is not suitable to be a basis for bondage and liberation. Also it is not simple clarity without emptiness, that is the conditioned part, because the Sugatagarbha is taught as unconditioned.

dzogchungpa said:

If I understand what you've written above, the clarity referred to is conditioned? If so, how can the Sugatagarbha, which is unconditioned, be the union of a conditioned part and something else?

Also, does each being have it's own Sugatagarbha?

Malcolm wrote:

Is emptiness conditioned or unconditioned? It is unconditioned. Are all conditioned things empty? Yes. Therefore, the conditioned and the unconditioned are actually non-dual.

Your second question is misphrased, sentient beings are tathāgatagarbha, without them there is no possibility of Buddhahood, they are the matrix, nexus, locus etc. of tathatā.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, January 24th, 2014 at 11:26 PM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

I don't completely understand Buddhism either, do you?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, I pretty well think I do. Others of course may disagree. Of course, there are many details I can learn, some I have forgot, have gone through periods of doubt and intense questioning, but yes, I really do understand the Buddha's teachings. But, then I have done little else for the past 25 years but study and practice it. Am I a realized person, of course not. Understanding and realization are two entirely different things.

You should reflect very carefully on what I wrote above.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, January 25th, 2014 at 12:10 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The Buddhist point of view is that states and classes arise inevitably because sentient beings are afflicted and driven by the three humors. In Buddhist legend, anarchy prevailed in the golden age when afflictions were very latent in humans. The golden age degenerated after humans began hoarding grains and their afflictions became activated, and thus protection societies emerged, kings were elected, classes were formed and it degenerated until the present epoch.

Should have written "poisons".

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, January 25th, 2014 at 12:11 AM

Title: Re: "the Self is real" according to T. Page

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Your second question is misphrased, sentient beings are tathāgatagarbha, without them there is no possibility of Buddhahood, they are the matrix, nexus, locus etc. of tathatā.

dzogchungpa said:

OK, so there's one matrix etc. for each being?

Malcolm wrote:

Each being is a matrix. This is illustrated by such statements like the Hevajra Tantra:

Great wisdom is present in the body,  
perfectly free from all concepts,  
pervading all things,  
present in, but not arising from the body.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, January 25th, 2014 at 12:18 AM

Title: Re: "the Self is real" according to T. Page

Content:

Will said:

Here is Buddha (MN 2) saying that Page's 'the Self is real' is one among several wrong views:

Malcolm wrote:

They will merely reply that the Nikayas were a provisional teaching.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, January 25th, 2014 at 12:34 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

I'm confused here. Are people conflating Anarchism with Marxism?

Malcolm wrote:

No, not at all.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, January 25th, 2014 at 1:25 AM

Title: Re: "the Self is real" according to T. Page

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

OK, so there's one matrix etc. for each being?

Malcolm wrote:

Each being is a matrix. This is illustrated by such statements like the Hevajra Tantra:

Great wisdom is present in the body,  
perfectly free from all concepts,  
pervading all things,  
present in, but not arising from the body.

dzogchungpa said:

Are you saying that the body is the matrix?

Malcolm wrote:

Of course. Where else can consciousness be located?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, January 25th, 2014 at 1:52 AM

Title: Re: "the Self is real" according to T. Page

Content:

Son of Buddha said:

Using a horrible analogy you are cereal in a bowl of milk(Enlightenment)

The milk is all around the cereal and has soaked into the cereal....the cereal starts to disintegrate(defilements are being removed)

When all the defilements have been removed the cereal disintegrates entirely and all that is left is the milk.

(sorry horrible analogy)

Malcolm wrote:

Yup, you are definitely a Vedantin in intent if not by name.

Your view is not really very relevant, as long as you practice the sadhana methods properly, you will achieve realization.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, January 25th, 2014 at 2:15 AM

Title: Re: "the Self is real" according to T. Page

Content:

PadmaVonSamba said:

Awareness does not cease.

No 'self' arises unless awareness arises with objects of awareness again, and produces another experience of 'self'.

Malcolm wrote:

You're a Vedantin too.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, January 25th, 2014 at 2:36 AM

Title: Re: "the Self is real" according to T. Page

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

Are you saying that the body is the matrix?

Malcolm wrote:

Of course. Where else can consciousness be located?

dzogchungpa said:

OK, then I'm a little confused. If I'm not mistaken 'matrix' = 'garbha', which, according to your Gorampa quote is unconditioned. Is the body then considered to be unconditioned?

Malcolm wrote:

Garbha means something that holds, what is being held, tathatā. Who holds tathatā? Sentient beings.

Sugatagarbha is a short hand way of saying "the dharmakāya encased in afflictions".

What becomes afflicted, clarity. What is the nature of clarity? Emptiness. Tathatāgarbha is just a way of saying that sentient beings have the potential for awakening because the mind and the mind essence are inseparable, the former conditioned and the latter unconditioned.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, January 25th, 2014 at 4:35 AM

Title: Re: "the Self is real" according to T. Page

Content:

PadmaVonSamba said:

Awareness does not cease.

No 'self' arises unless awareness arises with objects of awareness again, and produces another experience of 'self'.

Malcolm wrote:

You're a Vedantin too.

PadmaVonSamba said:

I am not asserting any valid, intrinsically arising self  
merely the experience of a self

such as the one reading this post,

which arises from the interaction of (ground of) awareness and objects of awareness.

Vedantins assert an intrinsically existent self (atman).

I don't.

.  
.  
.

Malcolm wrote:

No, your positing consciousness as an undifferentiated field, which amounts the same thing as positing a self.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, January 25th, 2014 at 4:56 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

I'm confused here. Are people conflating Anarchism with Marxism?

Malcolm wrote:

No, not at all.

Sherab Dorje said:

Weird, coz just a couple of posts earlier tellyontellyoff was saying that Marxists are somehow in opposition to states.

Malcolm wrote:

well, in terms of their utopia, yes.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, January 25th, 2014 at 5:20 AM

Title: Re: the great vegetarian debate

Content:

gad rgyangs said:

causation can be said to operate conventionally in the same way that a person with defective vision sees hairs: in each case the appearance is accepted at face value, as in a dream.

Malcolm wrote:

Indeed, yet it appears.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, January 25th, 2014 at 7:54 AM

Title: Re: the great vegetarian debate

Content:

tobes said:

Nonetheless, I see how certain traditions - Dzogchen, Zen - can read Nagarjuna as denying all forms of causation.

Malcolm wrote:

Dzogchen does not reject causes and conditions conventionally, in fact it elaborates a whole elaborate scheme to explain the cause of samsara as well as consciousness, memory, etc.

tobes said:

Let me re-phrase: I see how certain interpreters of Dzogchen, Zen, can read Nagarjuna



as denying all forms of causation....

Malcolm wrote:

The main point being made is that causality itself cannot withstand ultimate analysis.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, January 25th, 2014 at 7:57 AM

Title: Re: "the Self is real" according to T. Page

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

No, your positing consciousness as an undifferentiated field, which amounts the same thing as positing a self.

PadmaVonSamba said:

When did I ever suggest "consciousness as an undifferentiated field"?

I said "awareness", but that may not be the right term. is that what you are referring to? As a matter of fact, I am not sure of the specific term for what I am talking about, but it is not consciousness (which is a composite). I am talking about a "context" which precedes cognition, from which cognitive experiences such as thoughts, notions of self, etc. arise when interacting with objects of awareness.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, that would be consciousness, no matter what words you want to use, like awareness, etc., it is still consciousness.

So, is your awareness undifferentiated or is it individuated, i.e. a personal continuum? If the former, your view is no different than Advaita. If the latter, that is acceptable within Buddhism.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, January 25th, 2014 at 8:19 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

On class, I think the Buddha's idea of class or caste is different to the Marxian definition. It isn't really the same as how wealthy you are or based on culture/attitudes etc.

Malcolm wrote:

""Under the patriarchal system, under the caste system, under the feudal and corporative system, there was division of labor in the whole of society according to fixed rules. Were these rules established by a legislator? No. Originally born of the conditions of material production, they were born of the conditions of material production; they

were raised to the status of laws only much later. In this way these different forms of the division of labour became so many bases of social organization.” ‘Poverty of Philosophy’, 118.

Marx's idea is precisely this. The Buddha would say no, people are born into social stations based on their karma. The two views are therefore incompatible.

tellyontellyon said:

When Marxists talk about class they are referring to particular economic roles that only really exist under capitalism.

Malcolm wrote:

In Capital he writes:

“Manufacture, in fact, produces the skill of the detail labourer, by reproducing, and systematically driving to an extreme within the workshop, the naturally developed differentiation of trades which it found ready to had in society at large. On the other hand, the conversion of fractional work into the life-calling of one man, corresponds to the tendency shown by earlier societies, to make trades hereditary; either to petrify them into castes, or whenever definite historical conditions beget in the individual a tendency to vary in a manner incompatible with the nature of castes, to ossify them into guilds. Castes and guilds arise from the action of the same natural law that regulates the differentiation of plants and animals into species and varieties, except that when a certain degree of development has been reached, the heredity of castes and exclusiveness of guilds are ordained as a law of society.” (p. 321. Moscow edition 1974).

I see no real distinction that can be made apart from that fact that, put in Marxist terms, these castes arose as a result of primitive accumulations which were then capitalized.

tellyontellyon said:

So Capitalism as defined by Marx is a new phenomenon.

Malcolm wrote:

Specifically, modern Capitalism is a post colonial evolution based on the discovery of gold and silver in the Americas and so on.

If you take the broader view, there have been many waves of capitalism since ancient history, like a trees in a forest, beings compete for resources, some are more effective at gathering resources, other's less. Eventually, the whole forest becomes moribund and is either replaced with new species of trees, or it dies altogether.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, January 25th, 2014 at 8:23 AM

Title: Re: "the Self is real" according to T. Page

Content:

smcj said:

So, is your awareness undifferentiated or is it individuated, i.e. a personal continuum? If the former, your view is no different than Advaita. If the former, that is acceptable within Buddhism.

Beautifully put!

So the question then becomes; do you believe that the Shentong, of say either Kongtrul or Dolpoba, is the same or different than Advaita?

Malcolm wrote:

Like the Dalai Lama put it, there is a "white" gzhan stong" and a "black" gzhan stong. Following Rongton Shejya Kunrig, the former would be a transitional view between Yogacara and Madhyamaka, for in reality there is little difference between the false aspectarian Yogacara school in India (Ratnakarashanti) and gzhan stong. The latter black gzhan stong is pretty much heterodox from a Buddhist point of view. SOB adheres to the latter.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, January 25th, 2014 at 8:37 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

I think some ideas around Karma might be worth thinking about. What do people think of these idea:

(sorry, more Wiki.... I did say I'm no scholar.

Loy argues that the idea of accumulating merit too easily becomes "spiritual materialism," a view echoed by other Buddhist modernists,[105] and further that

"Karma has been used to rationalize racism, caste, economic oppression, birth handicaps and everything else. Taken literally, karma justifies the authority of political elites, who therefore must deserve their wealth and power, and the subordination of those who have neither. It provides the perfect theodicy: if there is an infallible cause-and-effect relationship between one's actions and one's fate, there is no need to work toward social justice, because it's already built into the moral fabric of the universe. In fact, if there is no undeserved suffering, there is really no evil that we need to struggle against. It will all balance out in the end."[104]

While some strands of later Buddhist thought did attribute all experience to past karma, the early texts explicitly did not, and in particular state that caste is not determined by karma.[106]

Does anybody know about these early texts that explicitly state that caste is not determined by Karma? Apparently the source for this statement on Wiki came from this reference:

Matthews, Bruce (1986), "Chapter Seven: Post-Classical Developments in the Concepts of Karma and Rebirth in Theravada Buddhism", in Neufeldt, Ronald W., Karma and Rebirth: Post Classical Developments, State University of New York Press,

I will also throw in this article by Thanissaro Bhikkhu:

[http://buddhism.about.com/gi/o.htm?zi=1/XJ&zTi=1&sdn=buddhism&cdn=religion&tm=60&f=00&su=p284.13.342.ip\\_&tt=2&bt=3&bts=80&zu=http%3A//www.accesstoinight.org/lib/authors/thanissaro/karma.html](http://buddhism.about.com/gi/o.htm?zi=1/XJ&zTi=1&sdn=buddhism&cdn=religion&tm=60&f=00&su=p284.13.342.ip_&tt=2&bt=3&bts=80&zu=http%3A//www.accesstoinight.org/lib/authors/thanissaro/karma.html)

Malcolm wrote:

The earlier sutta citation I provided for you comes from the Majjhima Nikāya. Clearly, Buddha there states that one's social position, whether high or low is a result of karma.

From the article you shared:

From the standpoint of karma, though, where we come from is old karma, over which we have no control.

We only have control over where we are going, not what family we were born into and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, January 25th, 2014 at 8:49 AM

Title: Re: "the Self is real" according to T. Page

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

... because the mind and the mind essence are inseparable, the former conditioned and the latter unconditioned.

Sherab said:

Since mind and mind essence are inseparable, mind and mind essence cannot be separate entities but merely aspects of the same entity, whatever that is. But if mind and mind essence are aspects of the same entity, whatever that is, then that entity is both conditioned and unconditioned. In other words, that entity is both a dependent-arising phenomenon and a non-dependent-arising phenomenon. That clearly makes no sense without twisting the meaning of dependent-arising so much as to make it completely unrecognizable.

Malcolm wrote:

Ah, well, to understand how this works, you must read the Analysis of how phenomena and their nature are neither the same nor different in the Samdhinirmocana sutra. Then you will understand. Otherwise, you are left with the conclusion that the dharma of a given thing is conditioned, i.e. that emptiness is conditioned. But emptiness is clearly unconditioned, nevertheless all conditioned things are empty.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, January 25th, 2014 at 9:11 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

I'm not sure that just quoting that one line gives the gist of what is being said so here it is in full

Malcolm wrote:

It explains the basic point that I was making, social class, what kind of family you are born into, is result your past karma.

tellyontellyon said:

We can help people in the here and now, we can actually change our present situation..., and in turn our actions can come back to us as positive karma in the future.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, provided we act with wisdom and in accordance with the Dharma. If we abandon the Dharma by adhering to some non-Buddhist principles, we will come to nothing but grief.

For example, if someone accumulates a great deal of money or property, this is a result of their karma. We can encourage them to use it in a socially responsible way, but if we "liberate" it for the "people", believing that a factory for example "belongs" to its workers, then we will be in for some very heavy negative karma of poverty in our future life. On the other hand, if we believe a factory is engaged in unfair practices, and we picket, and protest, appealing to the government to step in, there is no problem with this. Buddhist Vinaya has long established that in terms of matters of law, the civil law of the country you are in handles civil matters and must be obeyed.

So, I am all for people trying to make the world a better place as long as they do so civilly, non-violently and without engaging in force to achieve their ends. I can understand when people react with extreme violence to heavy oppression, understand it, but this also is really just samsaric behavior. At a certain point in your life, you have to give up attachment to samsara and your own selfish liberation and instead cultivate bodhicitta and a view which is free from grasping.

If you read and follow what is taught in Mahāyāna you will have perfect prescription for how to benefit sentient beings in this life and the next with no need to resort the theories of doctrines of materialists.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, January 25th, 2014 at 10:11 AM

Title: Re: "the Self is real" according to T. Page

Content:

Sherab said:

No amount of analysis using mutually exclusive terms on one and the same entity can

ever hope to come to a sensible conclusion. That is why the Samdhinirmocana sutra practically sneers at the argument and debates among certain people.

Malcolm wrote:

The salient point is that dharmin and dharmatā are inseparable. The nature of conditioned things is unconditioned, that is the entire point.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, January 25th, 2014 at 7:31 PM

Title: Re: "the Self is real" according to T. Page

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, that would be consciousness, no matter what words you want to use, like awareness, etc., it is still consciousness.

So, is your awareness undifferentiated or is it individuated, i.e. a personal continuum? If the former, your view is no different than Advaita. If the latter, that is acceptable within Buddhism.

PadmaVonSamba said:

I regard 'consciousness' as arising from causes...

Also, I am not clear about what you mean by 'undifferentiated'.

Malcolm wrote:

Does "awareness" arise from causes? If it does, how is it different than consciousness? If it does not, how is this different from a number of Hindu positions that maintain the existence of pure, uncaused knower?

Undifferentiated means for example, like an ocean, or SOB's bowl of milk; individuated means like streams or rivers, individual continuums.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, January 25th, 2014 at 7:34 PM

Title: Re: "the Self is real" according to T. Page

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The latter black gzhan stong is pretty much heterodox from a Buddhist point of view. SOB adheres to the latter.

Sherab Dorje said:

His confessed adherence to a belief in an Atman puts him well outside the ballpark of any kind of Buddhism I have ever encountered.

Malcolm wrote:

His confessed un-nuanced position does. But it is important to recall that terms like bdag nyid chen po [mahātma] etc regularly show up in Tantric texts all the time.

As I read gzhan stong, the emphasis is not on promulgating a belief in an ultimate self, but rather the focus is on proving that ultimate [as opposed to relative] buddha-qualities are innate.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, January 25th, 2014 at 7:36 PM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

Zhen Li said:

Socialism in general must descend to this ultimately:

Bukharin, like Lenin, regarded the system of basing economic life on mass terror not as a transient necessity but as a permanent principle of socialist organization. He did not shrink from justifying all means of coercion and held, like Trotsky at the same period, that the new system called essentially for the militarization of labour – i.e. the use of police and military force to compel the whole population to work in such places and conditions as the state might arbitrarily decree. Indeed, once the market is abolished there is no longer any free sale of labour or competition between workers, and police coercion is therefore the only means of allocating “human resources”. If hired labour is eliminated, only compulsory labour remains. In other words, socialism – as conceived by both Trotsky and Bukharin at this time – is a permanent, nation-wide labour camp. (Vol III. pg. 28-9)

Sherab Dorje said:

Not necessarily, people do have the capacity to share, you know.

Malcolm wrote:

I imagine that under this totalitarian scenario your labor does not belong to you any more, since it has been socialized. Therefore, sharing your now "valueless" labor could be construed as a crime against the state.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, January 25th, 2014 at 7:40 PM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

Zhen Li said:

While the topic is still fresh, I found this nice quote from the same book about the Trotskyist conception of the state:

To sum up [Trotsky wrote], “the road to Socialism lies through a period of the highest possible intensification of the principle of the State ... The State, before disappearing, assumes the form of the dictatorship of the proletariat, i.e. the most ruthless form of

State, which embraces the life of the citizens authoritatively in every direction” ([The Defence of Terrorism] p. 157). It would be difficult indeed to put the matter more plainly. The state of the proletarian dictatorship is depicted by Trotsky as a huge permanent concentration camp in which the government exercises absolute power over every aspect of the citizens’ lives and in particular decides how much work they shall do, of what kind and in what places. Individuals are nothing but labour units. Compulsion is universal, and any organization that is not part of the state must be its enemy, thus the enemy of the proletariat. All this, of course, is in the name of an ideal realm of freedom, the advent of which is expected after an indefinite lapse of historical time. (Vol. II pg. 512)

Socialism in general must descend to this ultimately:

Bukharin, like Lenin, regarded the system of basing economic life on mass terror not as a transient necessity but as a permanent principle of socialist organization. He did not shrink from justifying all means of coercion and held, like Trotsky at the same period, that the new system called essentially for the militarization of labour – i.e. the use of police and military force to compel the whole population to work in such places and conditions as the state might arbitrarily decree. Indeed, once the market is abolished there is no longer any free sale of labour or competition between workers, and police coercion is therefore the only means of allocating “human resources”. If hired labour is eliminated, only compulsory labour remains. In other words, socialism – as conceived by both Trotsky and Bukharin at this time – is a permanent, nation-wide labour camp. (Vol III. pg. 28-9)

Malcolm wrote:

Well, this was the state of Tibet until the early 1980's under communist rule, and is the state of North Korea even today.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, January 25th, 2014 at 9:05 PM

Title: Re: "the Self is real" according to T. Page

Content:

smcj said:

So, is your awareness undifferentiated or is it individuated, i.e. a personal continuum? If the former, your view is no different than Advaita. If the latter, that is acceptable within Buddhism.

As I read it, the Yogacara/Cittamatra is the latter, and Shentong is the former.

However I must say that this understanding of mine is only a week or so old, so it is subject to change without notice.

The fact that Khenpo Tsultrim and other modern Karma Kagyu writers use Yogacara=Shentong is painfully confusing the issue though.



Malcolm wrote:

No, Yogacara/cittamatra insists forcefully that awareness/consciousness, whatever you want to call it is individuated. There really is no Buddhist school that argues for a uniform uber-consciousness out of which individual consciousness are instantiated.

Basically, folks like Tony Page really are faced two alternatives, either their "true self" is like Purusha of the Sāṃkhya school, a totally unconditioned individuated knower, as opposed to the nonsentient evolutes of prakṛiti (buddhi, ahaṃkāra, manas, five sense organs, five organs of action, the five subtle elements (sound, etc.) and the five coarse elements; or it is like brahmin of the Vedantins and so on. They really have only these two choices if they insist on a literal interpretation of the term "atman", bdaṅ nyid in texts like the Nirvana Sutra and so on.

In Sāṃkhya there are an infinite number of puruṣas, while in Advaita, using the basic model of Sāṃkhya, proposes that puruṣa and brahmin are synonymous and further, that there is only one puruṣa, and that further, prakṛiti and its evolutes are also included in puruṣa.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, January 25th, 2014 at 9:10 PM

Title: Re: "the Self is real" according to T. Page

Content:

smcj said:

The fact that Khenpo Tsultrim and other modern Karma Kagyu writers use Yogacara=Shentong is painfully confusing the issue though.

Malcolm wrote:

Well, this is because the Sakyapa writer Shakya Chogden, upon whom KTG relies heavily, basically argues that Yogacara is a kind of Madhyamaka, and goes to some lengths to reinterpret Dolbuba's gzhan stong approach so it is less eternalistic.

Shakya Chogden's view would have become the main view of the Sakya school but for a divination that was done in front of Four Faced Mahākāla, the protector of the view in Sakya. The mo came out in favor of the treatises of Gorampa, and the latter's Mahdyamaka perspective has been considered orthodox ever since. Indeed, I myself for the most part follow Gorampa's reading of Madhyamaka even still.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, January 25th, 2014 at 10:11 PM

Title: Re: "the Self is real" according to T. Page

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

I should confess I have not studied Shakya Chogden in detail, and it is generally said

that while Shaky Chogden's views are somewhat problematical, he was perhaps the most brilliant philosopher the Sakya school ever produced, apart from Sapan. While I am no Shaky Chogden, one of the things that annoyed people about him is that he changed his views over the years. I do that too.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, January 26th, 2014 at 5:16 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

Many societies (both historically and currently) do not have the notion of ownership within their social/political/economic paradigms.

Malcolm wrote:

No, all human beings have notions of ownership, they simply are alien or do not correspond to the current Roman property law concepts of ownership that are actually at the root of the property law system which generally dominates capitalist countries. These societies generally instead have/had the concept of "right of use" (usufruct) for example, East Coast Native Americans in the Continental US, I.e. they would negotiate with each other about who would own the right to use this or that fishing ground, hunting territory and so on. It is true that ownership of these rights were very plastic, and could easily change since they were not tied to "property" as we understand the term, but also wars were waged when one tribe felt another tribe was violating their rights of use.

At base, ownership is a concept that arises from the three afflictions, and more specifically the delusion "I" and "mine", and this is why as long as human beings are driven by afflictions, we always will move from simpler ownership paradigms, such as those of nomadic and semi-nomadic bands (usufruct rights) to the more complicated property-based economics of the grand civilizations of Europe, African, The Americas and Asia. We could conceivably move back to such a notion of usufruct, but only if there is a grand catastrophe involving a shocking reduction of population to levels that were current at the beginning of the agricultural epoch.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, January 26th, 2014 at 5:33 AM

Title: Re: "the Self is real" according to T. Page

Content:

PadmaVonSamba said:

What I am suggesting (and perhaps this is merely a suggestion, extrapolated from my vague understanding of dharma, but perhaps, I'll admit, not supported by sutras or tantras) is different from the Hindu or vedic concept, because that "pure, uncaused knower" also arises in it.

.

Malcolm wrote:

Your view here is completely incompatible with any form of Buddhism I have encountered. Buddha rejects this type of ground completely.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, January 26th, 2014 at 5:34 AM

Title: Re: "the Self is real" according to T. Page

Content:

smcj said:

If the conversation is about what the broader Karma Kagyu view is, I suggest asking somebody authoritative.

Sherab Dorje said:

And white guys/gals cannot be authoritative? Like, authority comes with skin colour???

smcj said:

Ok, ask a white khenpo. To the best of my knowledge one does not exist.

Malcolm wrote:

That is because to be a Khenpo, you must be a monk. A loppon on the other hand has the same education but is not necessarily a monk.

However, I seem to recall that Karl Brunholz was given the title Khenpo.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, January 26th, 2014 at 5:54 AM

Title: Re: "the Self is real" according to T. Page

Content:

PadmaVonSamba said:

And, I would suggest that (what I am calling) "awareness" truly exists which precludes any differentiation, simply because it cannot be denied since it manifests as consciousness, and later, as personal experience.

.

Malcolm wrote:

This is a contradiction, something truly existent can have no relative modes at all because a true existent, be unconditioned and uncaused, cannot express itself as a causal process.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, January 26th, 2014 at 6:09 AM

Title: Re: "the Self is real" according to T. Page

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

a true existent, be unconditioned and uncaused, cannot express itself as a causal process.

PadmaVonSamba said:

Are you saying that relative truth does not arise within the context of ultimate truth?

Malcolm wrote:

Ultimate truth and relative truth are respectively the objects of correct and incorrect cognitions of the same thing. For example, take a pot: relative truth is the perception of its color, shape, size, etc. Ultimate truth is the perception of its emptiness, that's all. The ultimate truth of a pot cannot be found apart from the pot. The enumerated ultimate is also a conventional, relative truth. The unenumerated ultimate is simply the direct perception of emptiness. Since the emptiness of one thing is like the emptiness of all things, realizing the emptiness of one thing is realizing the emptiness of all things.

Further, emptiness is not a true existent for it itself is also empty.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, January 26th, 2014 at 6:22 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

Zhen Li said:

As much as you Buddhist modernists hate to admit it, in Buddhism there is an even greater manifestation of non-tangible exchange in Karma and Merit.

Malcolm wrote:

I wouldn't say that SD is a Buddhist modernist, but his political POV is more in line with the libertarian municipalism of Bookchin.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, January 26th, 2014 at 6:30 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

No, all human beings have notions of ownership, they simply are alien or do not correspond to the current Roman property law concepts of ownership that are actually at the root of the property law system which generally dominates capitalist countries. These societies generally instead have/had the concept of "right of use" (usufruct) for example, East Coast Native Americans in the Continental US, i.e. they would negotiate with each other about who would own the right to use this or that fishing ground,

hunting territory and so on. It is true that ownership of these rights were very plastic, and could easily change since they were not tied to "property" as we understand the term, but also wars were waged when one tribe felt another tribe was violating their rights of use.

Sherab Dorje said:

You go from saying that all human beings have the notion of ownership to giving an example where human beings functioned without the notion of ownership.

Malcolm wrote:

No so, ownership of a usufruct right is ownership, plain and simple. I assume here you are excluding clothes, weapons, horses and so on from your definition of "no ownership".

Sherab Dorje said:

...but only if there is a grand catastrophe involving a shocking reduction of population to levels that were current at the beginning of the agricultural epoch.

Not at all necessary. It would, though, require a radical shift in ideology/praxis.

Malcolm wrote:

Necessarily.

Sherab Dorje said:

Merit arises from positive acts not because one wants to benefit from (capitalise on) the action but because wholesome actions bring wholesome outcomes.

Malcolm wrote:

Merit arises from positive intentions, which can include positive benefits for oneself.

Sherab Dorje said:

It has NOTHING to do with exchange (though it is true that some people think it does).

The benefits arising from an act of (seeming) generosity (for example) can be reduced to zero if one's motivation behind an apparently generous act is just to gain merit.

Malcolm wrote:

No, that is not true, but what is true that in Mahāyāna parlance, that merit can be exhausted, as opposed to the merit created by an objectless dedication, which is inexhaustible. There is no comparable notion in Nikāya Buddhism.

Sherab Dorje said:

In marketplace transactions, on the other hand, deception can (and normally does) bring profit since selling an item for more than its production value is essentially theft via deception.

Malcolm wrote:

Total nonsense. Even Buddha encouraged his lay disciples to invest and make profits on their labor, so you just accused Buddha of encouraging theft.

I am telling you, all this Anarchist and Marxist thinking just does not fly when you view the world through a Buddhist lens.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, January 26th, 2014 at 6:33 AM

Title: Re: "the Self is real" according to T. Page

Content:

greentara said:

Right meditation...

Malcolm wrote:

...follows right view, that is why right view is listed first in the eightfold path of nobles.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, January 26th, 2014 at 7:13 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

Zhen Li said:

This is central to one's ontological experience of the world. Every sensation gives rise to a feeling.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, either pleasurable (profitable), painful (unprofitable) or neutral (tending toward unprofitable).

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, January 26th, 2014 at 7:33 AM

Title: Re: Western geshe and khenpos

Content:

Tom said:

I think the Kadampa masters first used the title Geshe. It seems that Bon teachers also use the title Geshe. Does anyone know if that has a long tradition? And are there any Western Bon pa Geshe?

smcj said:

Gelupas are the descendants of the Kadampas. Same DNA with a bit of Kagyu and Sakya thrown in.

Malcolm wrote:

This is a common myth. The historical facts are however that Tsongkhapa was Sakyapa originally, studied at Sakya, and refers to himself as a Sakyapa in some early commentaries. Further, his two main students were Sakyapas. It is indeed true that since his first master was a Kadampa Geshe, he always maintain an obvious affection

for Lam rim, but in his training he was a Sakyapa. Most of the transmissions in Gelug come through Sakya because it is a little known fact that the Sakyapas were and still are the richest school in terms of total number of gsar ma tantric lineages from India. Probably because they were among the wealthiest religious families in Tsang. The Kagyu sngags mdzod is quite small when compared to the rgyud sde kun bdus.

Initially, Gelug was called Sakya gsar ma, i.e. new Sakyapas, until it was renamed Ganden pa after Tsongkhapa's monastery in Lhasa. "dge lugs" is a corruption of i.e. dga' lugs, short for dga' ldan pa'i lugs, i.e. "the school of the dga' ldan pas." The proper name for the Gelug school is actually "Ri bo dga' ldan pas", those of Tushita Mountain.

It is also true that Tsongkhapa received important transmissions from Drikung as well.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, January 26th, 2014 at 7:38 AM

Title: Re: "the Self is real" according to T. Page

Content:

smcj said:

The unenumerated ultimate is simply the direct perception of emptiness  
Hmmm. You're sounding very Yogacarin there (using the Mind Only definition).

Malcolm wrote:

This is straight out of "Prasanga" Madhyamaka texts. No Yogacara here.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, January 26th, 2014 at 7:53 AM

Title: Re: Western geshes and khenpos

Content:

smcj said:

[

Very common.

Malcolm wrote:

Yup, as time grew on later Gelugpas needed to cover up the fact that Tsongkhapa started out as a Sakyapa because his views came under such harsh criticism from Sakya scholars such as Gorampa. But you must remember, Tsongkhapas main Guru was Rendawa Zhonnu Lodo.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, January 26th, 2014 at 8:03 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

Zhen Li said:

I really can't see why people don't see the basic principle of the fact that communism (and anarcho-communism), imply immorality from the Buddhist perspective. People need to stop being blinded in the first place by ideology, and question every belief they have from first principles.

Malcolm wrote:

Probably because most people in the West come to their political views fairly early in life, and Buddhism only later. Especially leftists have a bit of retrofitting to force Buddhism into a leftist model.

This is why I am an advocate of deep ecology. Deep ecology does not require any retooling to fit with Dharma. It just requires an extension of rights to the biosphere as a whole, with the corresponding consequences of that, i.e. maintaining world population at levels that do not exceed the "income of the household" (impractical, I know, just saying).

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, January 26th, 2014 at 8:08 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

Zhen Li said:

By proposing basic responsibility that the Buddha advocates, in this thread I have already been called a libertarian and conservative many times. I have even been called a jingoistic American exceptionalist. It's really laughable how quickly the blind see devils.

Malcolm wrote:

You are a libertarian and a conservative. I would be surprised if you had any serious disagreements with Nozick, for example.

These days, however, most people gloss neo-conservative as "conservative", which is of course a mistake.

We can't call you a "jingoistic American exceptionalist" because you're Canadian.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, January 26th, 2014 at 10:06 AM

Title: Re: "the Self is real" according to T. Page

Content:

Sherab said:



So it is possible for an conditioned thing to be unconditioned? If so, then are you not essentially implying that the thing is one thing and the nature of the thing is another thing?

Malcolm wrote:

Emptiness by definition is unconditioned. In Mahāyāna, space, the two cessations and emptiness are all defined as unconditioned.

This is a contradiction, something truly existent can have no relative modes at all because a true existent, be unconditioned and uncaused, cannot express itself as a causal process.

A true existent is unconditioned as you have stated above and cannot express itself as a causal process. Yet if you say that dharmin and dharmata are inseparable, then you are saying that the nature of an unconditioned thing can be in a thing that is a casual process or the result of a causal process.

The four unconditioned phenomena defined by Mahāyāna are all empty. This is why one of the 18 emptinesses illustrated by Candrakīrti is called the emptiness of the unconditioned.

All proposed true existents are unconditioned, but not all unconditioned phenomena are true existents (such as space, the two cessations and emptiness). Therefore, in this respect, since dharmatā refers to the nature of things, which is their emptiness, dharmatā and dharmin are inseparable, yet one is unconditioned and the other, conditioned. I.e. the emptiness of things is not created, and is not subject to decay. It does not arise because things arise, and does not disappear because things disappear. Everything is empty, and that is not something subject to conditions. Therefore, emptiness is not subject to conditions.

Further, if emptiness, which is by definition unconditioned, were to be different than that conditioned thing it is the emptiness of, the thing would not be empty and the emptiness itself would not be an emptiness.

Further, emptiness is not a true existent for it itself is also empty.

If emptiness is not a true existent, then it cannot be unconditioned. Yet you have said earlier that clarity is conditioned and emptiness is unconditioned and are inseparable. Obviously it can, since emptiness in Mahāyāna is not only defined as empty (cf the emptiness of emptiness), but also as unconditioned.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, January 26th, 2014 at 10:08 AM

Title: Re: "the Self is real" according to T. Page

Content:

greentara said:

Right meditation...

Malcolm wrote:

...follows right view, that is why right view is listed first in the eightfold path of nobles.

theanarchist said:

I doubt that anyone can have a truly right view without a direct experience of emptiness nature.

Malcolm wrote:

There are two kinds of right view: mundane and supra mundane. One uses the former to realize the latter.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, January 26th, 2014 at 10:26 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

Zhen Li said:

I did address the claim in other posts, since it comes up a lot. I'll be to the point here:

Nozick is an outlier in libertarianism, the mainstream is probably better defined by Rothbard's Ethics of Liberty (and some Rand), in that he rejects the natural inalienable rights accepted by the American Revolutionaries. This sits better with me, since I think that the main weakness of libertarianism is that people overlook the obvious theological roots of Lockean rights. It's all protestant drivel to me. However, I do not understand why you still place me in the same camp as Nozick, since fundamentally he agrees with mainstream libertarians in believing that the solution is "limited government." After what I have written, I think it is clear that I think this notion is absurd. Government can't be limited by itself, and if it's limited by something higher, then it's not a government in my use of the word.

Malcolm wrote:

I take it back.

As for Nozick, as far as I can tell, in his ASU he is making a moral argument, not a practical one. For him the state is only valid insofar as it has a monopoly on violence. When it exceeds its responsibilities in this respect, it begins to engage in immoral redistribution which people's rights.

He merely takes the Lockean state of nature as preferable to the Hobbsian one.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, January 26th, 2014 at 10:31 AM

Title: Re: Western geshes and khenpos

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

because his views came under such harsh criticism from Sakya scholars such as

Gorampa.

Konchog1 said:  
Such as?

Malcolm wrote:  
Gorampa, in his commentary on the Madhyamakāvatara lists over a hundred points where he thinks Tsongkhapa erred.

The standard summary of Gorampa's critiques of Tsongkhapa are to found in his famous "Differentiation of Views".

Thus far, Gorampa's views have not been effectively countered by any Gelug scholar I know as they generally refuse to read Gorampa.

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Sunday, January 26th, 2014 at 8:39 PM  
Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:  
tellyontellyon said:

M:  
I am telling you, all this Anarchist and Marxist thinking just does not fly when you view the world through a Buddhist lens.

...

Capitalism can't fly and we must... MUST find a better way of living on this planet, and of overcoming the coercive stranglehold that capitalists have over our planet.

Malcolm wrote:  
As long as human beings are under the sway of the three poisons, for that long there will always be "I and mine".

But to be frank, TOTO, I would never want any state telling me how I can best live my life, how my labor is best disposed of. I prefer all the uncertainty under this capitalist system to a certain dreary gray totalitarian future under Communism. You may want to be a zek, but I sure don't.

tellyontellyon said:  
You would need a powerful state to maintain any dictatorship.

Malcolm wrote:  
Yes, which is why the dictatorship of the proletariat is envisioned as being so ruthless.

tellyontellyon said:  
Whatever you think the solution might look like, the capitalist mode of production is standing in the way of it.

Malcolm wrote:

The capitalist mode of production is not the problem, according to you Marxists. The problem, according to you, is who owns that means of production.

The only political theories out there that actually call into question the validity of the capitalist mode of production itself, as opposed to the question of ownership of that means of production are certain strains of anarchist thinking, Bookchin's Communalism and Deep Ecology.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, January 26th, 2014 at 8:59 PM

Title: Re: "the Self is real" according to T. Page

Content:

Sherab said:

[

Merely saying that emptiness is defined as unconditioned does not address my question, which was how is it possible to have a thing that is both conditioned and unconditioned at the same time. Perhaps, you are saying it is possible as long as it is defined as possible.

Malcolm wrote:

"For those whom emptiness is possible, everything is possible, for those whom emptiness is not possible, nothing is possible"

If emptiness is a synonym for dependent arising, that would imply that dependent arising is unconditioned. Or to put it more starkly, it would mean that dependent arising does not arise dependently.

There is no entity "dependent arising", there are only phenomena that arise in dependence. Space, the two cessations and emptiness do not arise at all, so they are by definition phenomena that do not arise in dependence. Of course, this does not mean that they are not relative, for both conditioned and unconditioned phenomena are relative. Since both conditioned and unconditioned phenomena are relative, their relationship is strictly a matter of definition.

As for dependently originated phenomena being unconditioned, the Prajñāpāramitā states "Whatever arises in dependence, that in truth does not arise". The argument can be made that even so-called dependently originated phenomena are unconditioned in reality, since their production cannot be ascertained at all when subjected to ultimate analysis. Again in this respect there is no contradiction between a conventionally conditioned entity having a conventionally unconditioned nature since in reality both are merely conventions. While the former bears the latter as its nature, in reality neither the former nor the latter can stand up to ultimate analysis. In other words there are no phenomena at all that can stand up to ultimate analysis.

Yes, unconditioned things can be truly existents or false existents that are not

dependently arisen. But unconditioned things cannot include false existents that are dependently arisen, don't you agree?

Of course I do not agree: for example, space, an unconditioned phenomena, permeates all conditioned phenomena, and neither obstructs conditioned phenomena nor is obstructed by them. Emptiness, another unconditioned phenomena, likewise permeates all conditioned phenomena, neither obstructing them nor being obstructed by them.

It is precisely because of such contradictions that Garfield and Priest were forced to conclude from their study of Nagarjuna that ultimately there is no ultimate and that dependent arising is all there is.

Jay Garfield is a lovely guy, and an excellent analytical philosopher (he is a professor in the Philosophy Department at Smith college, along with my father (now retired)), however, he is wrong in so far that there isn't even dependent origination in the ultimate analysis.

Again, I don't think that giving a definition as an answer will resolve the logical contradiction that my question raises.

Your question presumes an entity/entity relationship, therefore your very question is flawed. Emptiness is not an entity, neither are phenomena, other than conventionally.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, January 26th, 2014 at 9:13 PM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

BTW one of the twenty or so capitalist powers that was viciously and ruthlessly intervening in Russia at that time was your country, the USA. The USA can be ruthless, but the Bolshevik supporters are condemned for being ruthless in response?

Malcolm wrote:

While it is true that the US covertly funded opposition to the Bolsheviks, whom the Americans regarded as being under the control of and rightly so, our military presence in Russia was confined to fighting Cossacks along the trans-Siberian railway.

Anyway, you need to read this, it provides a clear account of our military presence in Russia:

<https://www.archives.gov/publications/prologue/2002/winter/us-army-in-russia-1.html>

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, January 26th, 2014 at 10:38 PM

Title: Re: "the Self is real" according to T. Page

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

"For those whom emptiness is possible, everything is possible, for those whom emptiness is not possible, nothing is possible"

PadmaVonSamba said:

Everything can't be possible, because if everything were possible, then it would also be possible for some things not to be possible.

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.   
.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, for example, true existents.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, January 27th, 2014 at 12:42 AM

Title: Re: "the Self is real" according to T. Page

Content:

theanarchist said:

Cough cough... Rabbit horns..

Malcolm wrote:

Āryāṣṭasāhasrikāprajñāpāramitāpañjikāsāroṭṭamā:

All phenomena do not arise,

that is the non-existence of the inherent existence of all phenomena,

therefore, that absence of arising is like the horns of a rabbit.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, January 27th, 2014 at 12:45 AM

Title: Re: "the Self is real" according to T. Page

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, for example, true existents.

PadmaVonSamba said:

Do you regard space as a true existent?

Hmmmm....come to think of it, do you regard anything at all as a true existent?

Do you assert that "true existent" is an impossibility?

Malcolm wrote:

Sentient beings are not bound by anything.

If one recognizes that true existence is inherently nonexistent,

taints are purified intrinsically,  
like muddy water self-purifying.  
All phenomena are the same in lacking inherent existence.  
-- The String of Pearls Tantra

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, January 27th, 2014 at 1:05 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

Unknown said:

The (collectively arrived at) right to use is not the same thing as ownership.

Malcolm wrote:

Of course it is, since it comes with a sense "me and mine", i.e. "I have the right to use this place, you do not".

Unknown said:

Not necessarily. I am sure you are aware of countless societies with sustainable human population levels that were based on oppressive social/political and economic models. With current population levels it would require a drastic reduction in the "quality of life" for "first worlders" and a radical shift in ideology praxis. Misanthropism is not a solution.

Malcolm wrote:

Necessarily, otherwise it would require "oppressive social/political and economic models". BTW, I am not suggesting that we can reduce the population by any moral means, merely that population reduction is a desiderata. This is a key point of the Deep Ecology platform. A subsistence economy, or steady state economy, can contain all forms of technological production, doing so with respect to environmental impacts, but only if human populations never exceed 100,000,000. Since world population is slowly crashing anyway, and will crash much more quickly once petroleum resources are no longer practical to extract, we can anticipate this with planning that encompasses centuries, rather than decades, or years.

Unknown said:

Who said that the Buddha was a Marxist/Anarchist? "Surplus value" is theft and cannot be generated without a supporting system of coercion. That is why/how economies are political.

Malcolm wrote:

Again, total nonsense. All economies function by producing surplus value, the difference is that Communism and Capitalism both regard the non-productive destruction of surplus value as immoral. They both destroy surplus value productively using different ideologies. But all economies produce surplus value, even natural communities generate surplus value until their resources are exhausted, then they die

back. This is very different from your admired primitive societies, and festival societies (like old Tibet) where the non-productive destruction of surplus value was regarded as desiderata (the potlach, gilding stupas, etc.).

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, January 27th, 2014 at 2:02 AM

Title: Re: "the Self is real" according to T. Page

Content:

PadmaVonSamba said:

Yes, that is very nice.

but what is your opinion?

Do you think anything arises which is not a composite?

and do you regard space as a phenomenon

or as something that phenomena arise in,

or both?

- .
- .
- .

Malcolm wrote:

My opinion is stated in the quote.

Space is a phenomena. It is an unconditioned phenomena therefore it does not arise. It is actually merely nonobstruction.

Nothing arises which does not arise from conditions. Nothing exists that does not arise from conditions. Space is in fact a non-existent.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, January 27th, 2014 at 2:08 AM

Title: Re: "the Self is real" according to T. Page

Content:

Tom said:

Are you suggesting Jay asserts dependent origination from an ultimate stand point? I'm just not sure how you are using ultimate analysis here?

Malcolm wrote:

I do not think that is what Jay is saying. Jay and I have a disagreement over what constitutes a "satya". I maintain that as a satya is an object of cognition, what is important is whether the cognition is veridical or non-veridical. But Jay asserts that the object (veridical or non-veridical) is what is important, and thus, he concludes, wrongly in my estimation, that there is no ultimate truth, or as you have stated, that the ultimate



is that there is no ultimate truth.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, January 27th, 2014 at 4:50 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Of course it is, since it comes with a sense "me and mine", i.e. "I have the right to use this place, you do not".

Sherab Dorje said:

Nope, it is not the same as ownership. Simple example: when you rent a car you have rights over its use, do you own it? No. Now a rented car belongs to somebody, but the land, it did not belong to somebody. It did not belong to everybody either.

Malcolm wrote:

False, like an apartment you have signed a contract to own the car for a period, with all responsibilities that ownership entails.

Sherab Dorje said:

Necessarily, otherwise it would require "oppressive social/political and economic models". BTW, I am not suggesting that we can reduce the population by any moral means, merely that population reduction is a desiderata. This is a key point of the Deep Ecology platform.

Deep Ecologists were being accused of Malthusian misanthropy since the inception of the particular ideology.

Malcolm wrote:

Malthus is unfairly accused of Misanthropy. He was not a misanthrope, he was a pessimist.

Sherab Dorje said:

A subsistence economy, or steady state economy, can contain all forms of technological production, doing so with respect to environmental impacts, but only if human populations never exceed 100,000,000.

Who comes up with this magical number?

Malcolm wrote:

Arne Naess.

Sherab Dorje said:

Again, total nonsense. All economies function by producing surplus value...  
While it is true that, historically, they try to, it is not a necessary function of an economy.

Malcolm wrote:

It is simply true that they do, and always have, and always will.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, January 27th, 2014 at 4:59 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

Under REAL socialism, production is for need, and doesn't need to be profitable.

Malcolm wrote:

Under Marxist socialism, all factors of life would be centralized and planned.

I simply don't agree with that model of politics and I never will.

I don't want to wear the same uniform you are wearing, the same clothes, shoes, etc.  
That is the consequence of "production out of the need" in a large industrial society.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, January 27th, 2014 at 8:09 PM

Title: Re: "the Self is real" according to T. Page

Content:

Sherab said:

So what is the meaning then of "whatever arises in dependence, that in truth does not arise"?

Malcolm wrote:

It means simply that when you examine dependently originated phenomena you cannot ascertain that they ever arose. A phenomena that never arose is defined as "unconditioned", for example, space, which is the primary metaphor used to describe the actual nature of things. Thus, when we examine phenomena for essences we cannot find one, because phenomena do not arise by virtue of an essence, they in fact, or in truth, never arise. This is what it means to say that conditioned phenomena possess an unconditioned nature, no more and no less.

If conditioned phenomena possessed a conditioned nature, that nature would also have to arise, leading to dual arising for same phenomena, which is absurd. However, since conditioned phenomena possess an unconditioned nature their arising is only apparent, not actual, merely conventional, similar with an illusion, etc. This covers all

qualms you may have.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, January 27th, 2014 at 8:11 PM

Title: Re: "the Self is real" according to T. Page

Content:

Sherab said:

When I was with the Gelugpas, I hear the phrase emptiness of emptiness quite a lot. To me, if one says that emptiness is also empty, one is actually saying that emptiness is conditioned and not unconditioned. I am not sure if the Gelugpas realize that though.

Malcolm wrote:

To say that emptiness is empty is to merely say that emptiness does not arise, not that emptiness is conditioned. If emptiness is conditioned, so is suchness. This kind of reasoning will cause all the Buddhas and bodhisattvas to turn their backs to one.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, January 27th, 2014 at 8:14 PM

Title: Re: "the Self is real" according to T. Page

Content:

PadmaVonSamba said:

If Mind's original nature is also composite,  
as your statement, "Nothing exists that does not arise from conditions" implies,  
then it also cannot be the source of the perfect cessation of suffering.  
How does that work for you?

Malcolm wrote:

The mind essence is like space, it does not arise, so it cannot be counted as an existent.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, January 27th, 2014 at 8:17 PM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

In the modern world, the 85 richest people on the planet have accumulated as much wealth between them as half of the world's total population. I'm sure things were different in the Buddha's day.

Malcolm wrote:

Not really. Why? Because some people have the karma to become super wealthy and others do not. Rather than bitching about the super wealthy, attend to your own causes of merit.

When contrasted with the endowments of the beings of the deva realms, for example,

all the wealth of the earth is just a pauper's bauble, the richest person is less than a beggar.

But since you do not seem to have a view that takes into consideration the six realms of samsara, you are myopically focused on this human life and its endowments, focused on material relations rather than Dharma practice. The ability to practice Dharma is the true wealth of Jambudvipa. If you want to help beings in a concrete way, it is better to spread Dharma than things.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, January 27th, 2014 at 8:57 PM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

What you are arguing is that the world the Buddha was talking about, and the way profit was made in the Buddha's time is fundamentally the same. I am saying it is not. That is why I posted those quotes about the capitalist means of production a few posts back.

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Malcolm wrote:

Sure it was, there were factories, there were owners, there were workers, and there was profit.

The wise and virtuous shine like a blazing fire.  
He who acquires his wealth in harmless ways  
like to a bee that honey gathers,[6]  
riches mount up for him  
like ant hill's rapid growth.

With wealth acquired this way,  
a layman fit for household life,  
in portions four divides his wealth:  
thus will he friendship win.

One portion for his wants he uses,[7]  
two portions on his business spends,  
the fourth for times of need he keeps.  
<http://www.accesstinsight.org/tipitaka/dn/dn.31.0.nara.html>

You see, Buddha wanted people to become wealthy. There are many places in the sutras where he gives recommendations for how laypeople may virtuously maximize their wealth. We have already established too that one's social position depends on

one's karma, and therefore, one access to initial wealth and opportunity. Of course, we must try our best to extend opportunity to everyone. The construction of schools, hospitals, roads, etc., these things are costs society must bear for everyone's benefit. But it is impossible to provide everyone with the exact same economic parity. Some people are lazier than others. Some people are more talented than others. Some people are more industrious than others because of their karmic dispositions. In reality, social classes tend to be driven by the five afflictions: the lower classes tend to be dominated by ignorance and desire, the middle classes tend to be dominated by desire and jealousy and the upper classes tend to be dominated by anger and pride (which is one reason why those from the upper classes tend to more easily fall into lower realms).

You cannot regulate how people accumulate karma, and cannot fix people's karma by regulating society.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, January 27th, 2014 at 9:07 PM

Title: Re: "the Self is real" according to T. Page

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The mind essence is like space, it does not arise.

theanarchist said:

Not so sure if modern astrophysics agrees with that claim about space.

Malcolm wrote:

There are two kinds of space detailed in Buddhist texts, unconditioned space, which is what is meant by the above, the absence of obstruction, and conditioned space, i.e., cavities and dimensionality.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, January 27th, 2014 at 9:22 PM

Title: Re: "the Self is real" according to T. Page

Content:

Sherab said:

But, if you then defined emptiness as being unconditioned and say that phenomenon A, which dependently arisen, is therefore conditioned, and is also unconditioned because it is empty, an inherent contradiction in terms between conditioned and unconditioned is introduced.

I hope it is now clearer where I am coming from.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, it was understood from the beginning where your qualm was coming from. It's only a contradiction in terms for substantialists.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, January 27th, 2014 at 9:27 PM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

Zhen Li said:

It's pretty clear that Marx's opposition to capitalism didn't come from pure reason, it came from his emotional hatred of money and Jews.

Malcolm wrote:

People often hate what they don't have. But I thought Marx was himself Jewish.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, January 27th, 2014 at 10:13 PM

Title: Re: "the Self is real" according to T. Page

Content:

Sherab said:

A thing and its nature are not separate. Saying a thing arises is not different from saying the nature of the thing arises. It has to be if inseparability is to make any sense. Therefore when a thing arises, its emptiness arises with it. When a thing ceases, the emptiness of that thing ceases because there is no emptiness of that thing to point to. So there is actually no two arisings as you have asserted. There is only one arising of the phenomenon and its nature and there is only one ceasing of the phenomenon and its nature.

Malcolm wrote:

Indeed, from the perspective of Madhyamaka a thing and its nature are identical. This is not so for those in lower schools.

To elaborate, conditions are merely an appearance. The notion of conditioned and unconditioned arises out of the substantialist roots of the substantialist tenet systems. By showing that the essence of phenomena is unconditioned, you are essentially showing that phenomena are in truth unconditioned. This is why the Prajñāpāramitā makes statements like:

Any teaching by the Bhagavan that matter lacks inherent existence, does not arise, does not cease, is peace from the beginning and is parinirvana by nature, all such teaching are not the indirect meaning, nor the intentional meaning, but must be understood literally. (Ārya-pañcaśatikā-prajñāpāramitā)

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, January 27th, 2014 at 10:21 PM

Title: Re: "the Self is real" according to T. Page

Content:

Sherab said:

When I was with the Gelugpas, I hear the phrase emptiness of emptiness quite a lot. To me, if one says that emptiness is also empty, one is actually saying that emptiness is conditioned and not unconditioned. I am not sure if the Gelugpas realize that though.

Malcolm wrote:

To say that emptiness is empty is to merely say that emptiness does not arise, not that emptiness is conditioned. If emptiness is conditioned, so is suchness. This kind of reasoning will cause all the Buddhas and bodhisattvas to turn their backs to one.

Sherab said:

If you read my post carefully, you will notice that I am not saying that emptiness or suchness is conditioned. I am merely pointing out the consequence of saying that emptiness is also empty.

As an aside, to say that Buddhas and bodhisattvas turning their backs to one just because of a logical argument is to belittle their compassion and patience isn't it? I for one would not have respect nor have confidence in such buddhas and bodhisattvas.

Malcolm wrote:

Its figurative, it means if you explain the Dharma poorly, without recourse to citation and reasoning, without understanding how to apply this argument this tenet system and that one to that one, one is committing an error of leading others astray. Buddhas and bodhisattvas won't condone such actions. It does not mean that will abandon you in samsara.

As I pointed out, your arguments are fundamentally an argument from substantialist reasoning whereby the conditioned must be one thing, and the unconditioned another. I have already removed those qualms.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, January 28th, 2014 at 1:43 AM

Title: Re: "the Self is real" according to T. Page

Content:

Sherab said:

Actually, my quarrel is with the application of mutually exclusive terms of conditioned and unconditioned to describe one and the same thing because it creates confusion.

Malcolm wrote:

Take it up with the Buddha.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, January 28th, 2014 at 1:45 AM

Title: Re: "the Self is real" according to T. Page

Content:

Sherab said:

If you read my post carefully, you will notice that I am not saying that emptiness or suchness is conditioned. I am merely pointing out the consequence of saying that emptiness is also empty.

PadmaVonSamba said:

To quote HHDL from that same book:

"...We should not, however, understand this self-emptiness or emptiness of self-nature to mean that form is empty of itself; this would be tantamount to denying the reality of form, which, as I have been repeatedly emphasizing, these teachings do not do."

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Malcolm wrote:

Correction, these Gelugpa teachings do not do. Since the reality of matter, etc., cannot be established other than conventionally, what is the use of defending their reality at all? The Gelugpas tie themselves into knots and wind up becoming quasi realists.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, January 28th, 2014 at 1:46 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

You see, Buddha wanted people to become wealthy.

I don't think he was saying that in the sense of the sort of wealth I'm talking about, i.e. 85 individuals having as much wealth between them as the poorest 50 percent of the worlds population.

Malcolm wrote:

He would explain it as karma.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, January 28th, 2014 at 2:22 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

He would explain it as karma.



Johnny Dangerous said:

Sure, but this does not mean he would condone a system that encourages people who have accrued such merit to work mainly in their own self-interest, and thereby exhaust their positive merit while amassing stores of demerit.

Malcolm wrote:

One cannot force people to be virtuous.

HHDL has in fact spoken often about the bad repercussions of a world full of the super-rich, and the super poor - as i'm sure you know.

Johnny Dangerous said:

I'm staying out of the greater conversation re: Marxism etc., but I feel like you are being a bit cloudy by implying (far as I can tell) that something being acknowledged as a result of Karma means that no one should do anything.

Malcolm wrote:

I am trying to point out that these various political theories of the left are not panaceas for the excesses of right.

First of, while people pair off communism and capitalism, Zhen Li was quite right in pointing out that there is no "Capitalism" per se, it is not a political ideology, unlike Communism.

Johnny Dangerous said:

I was just listening to an audiobook with Dzigar Kongtrul Rinpoche and Pema Chodron where this very subject is brought up, and the Civil Rights movement was used as a specific example of people changing their Karmic circumstances in a positive way, that was beneficial to many.

Malcolm wrote:

Sure, this can happen, but you must bear in mind that all positive, negative and neutral sensations in samsara are a result of karma.

Johnny Dangerous said:

just pointing out that something being a result of Karma in no way limits acting to change it in a positive manner

Malcolm wrote:

And I never made such a claim to the contrary, had you read the thread more closely.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, January 28th, 2014 at 3:46 AM

Title: Re: "the Self is real" according to T. Page

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Correction, these Gelugpa teachings do not do. Since the reality of matter, etc., cannot be established other than conventionally, what is the use of defending their reality at all? The Gelugpas tie themselves into knots and wind up becoming quasi realists.

Tsongkhapa said:

No, there's no problem from a Gelugpa point of view. Form is empty of inherent existence, not empty of itself, otherwise it wouldn't exist at all - where's the problem with that?

Malcolm wrote:

Well, it is because also the existence of matter cannot be found.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, January 28th, 2014 at 4:42 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

Johnny Dangerous said:

Was the struggle to end apartheid "forcing people to be virtuous".

Malcolm wrote:

No, because, having been to South Africa myself, I can tell you that people are just as non-virtuous as they were before, and apart from a rising black middle class, the apartheid system still exists more or less as before, with the main difference being that most of the cops are black, as is the government.

Johnny Dangerous said:

and if not, and you consider it positive, how do you categorically differentiate something like that from any attempt to change the economic system, revolutionary or otherwise? is it just the violence, and idea of taking by force that makes something a wrong headed attempt to make people be virtuous?

Malcolm wrote:

People are free to do what they like and most people are ignorant of karma in any case, they don't believe in it. We don't accept fate in Buddhism any more than we do God as an explanation for the state of things. But we do accept karma as an explanation for the state of things, both individually as well as collectively (aggregated individual action). The Buddha makes it exceedingly clear that all who engage in any sort of lethal violence will experience negative results in both this life and in future lives.

All political discussion by so called Buddhists must have the view of karma in mind.

Johnny Dangerous said:

I am detecting a hint here that a belief in karma negates the possibility of trying to create a world of with more just conditions at all, albeit impermanent ones;)

Malcolm wrote:

Well, you can try, but then more unjust situations will replace the one you have solved. I am not saying "don't try", I am saying that we need to understand the limitations of being sentient beings in samsara.

Not all persons are Buddhists, and not even Buddhists act carefully with respect to karma, as we can see in Burma, Shri Lanka and elsewhere.

We can also be confident that all unjust actions will be met with karmic ripening for the perpetrators of those actions. As long as people engage in the activities motivated by the three or five afflictions there will be injustice and inequality in the world. However, you cannot remove the root of negative karma, malice, covetousness and ignorance, from people minds with a scalpel.

But what you can do is act more justly with people around you. You can act kindly, you can exemplify the virtues of our practice. But you cannot change others to your liking, and more importantly, it is very difficult to change samsara. And in particular I am saying that trying to bring the edifice of the capitalist economy crashing down artificially will merely result in more negative karma for the people who engineer it because if you think there is suffering now, you haven't seen anything.

Johnny Dangerous said:

if you aren't saying this in any way, sorry for misinterpreting you..this is why i'm asking for specifics regarding the difference between forcing people to be virtuous, and creating the conditions for people to be virtuous - from a Buddhist standpoint. I think one can see that today, in terms of our society, we are in a place that does not promote people being virtuous with their wealth..so i'm asking, again from a Buddhist standpoint, should that be entirely left alone - is that your position, or are you saying something else?

Malcolm wrote:

We do not have a Buddhist king who can advise people wisely. And I personally do not want a Socialist dictatorship directing my life. Perhaps it is because I am an American, and we Americans in general are pretty much historically opposed to Communism. Indeed, even when Socialism was popular in the US, it was popular mainly among first generations immigrants at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th, not amongst those who had been born and bred here, and for the most part, second generation immigrants, horrified by the excesses of Stalin, eschewed it.

The anti-facist Socialist idealism of the thirties in in the US pretty much died when we understood that there is structurally no difference between Marxist-Leninist Socialism and Fascism in terms of outcomes, both have planned economies, both use secret

police to terrorize dissent, etc.

85 people may own 1/2 the worlds wealth, but so what? They will die, inheritance taxes will be applied, this state of affairs is very impermanent. All we need to worried about is that our own wealth is gotten virtuously, without stealing it from another.

And we need to understand that in general we cannot change the disparities between people since people have their own karma. This is the reason for example that Buddha did not give his golden alms bowl to a poor family living by a river because he saw that due to their latent afflictions they would all take rebirth in lower realms as a result of such a sudden influx of wealth. Of course, I am not Buddhist so I cannot predict anything, so I have no idea what would happen of 1/2 the world's wealth was suddenly "redistributed". But who would adjudicate it to make it fair?

You see, this is all just a bunch of proliferation.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, January 28th, 2014 at 5:50 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Of course, I am not Buddhist so I cannot predict anything,

Should be:

Of course, I am not Buddha so I cannot predict anything,

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, January 28th, 2014 at 5:51 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

Geez Malcolm, that is the most Hindu sounding view of karma I have heard for a long time. Next you'll be arguing in support of the caste system.

Malcolm wrote:

Not at all, karma is unerring. This is the Buddha's teaching.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, January 28th, 2014 at 6:18 AM

Title: Re: "the Self is real" according to T. Page

Content:

Tsongkhapafan said:

Matter cannot be found in dreams either, but it exists and functions. Our perceiving it and its functioning is not a wrong awareness.

Malcolm wrote:

No, the matter which appears in a dream is recognized to be unreal. Do you call that which is recognized to be unreal something that exists. I don't.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, January 28th, 2014 at 8:12 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

Geez Malcolm, that is the most Hindu sounding view of karma I have heard for a long time. Next you'll be arguing in support of the caste system.

Malcolm wrote:

Not at all, karma is unerring. This is the Buddha's teaching.

Sherab Dorje said:

I agree that karma is unerring and that the situations that individuals find themselves in are due to their karma. But that does not mean they have to remain trapped there. That does not mean they cannot work to change their situations either individually or through collective effort. But that does not mean they have to remain trapped there. That does not mean they cannot work to change their situations either individually or through collective effort.

Malcolm wrote:

And I never maintained that they should not try and improve their situation. Of course they should, and will. That is what all sentient beings do constantly, i.e. try and improve their situation. They are merely held back by three mental non-virtues, malice, greed, and wrong view and so their attempts, in the end, always, always fail.

Sherab Dorje said:

Feudalism was overthrown. English imperialism was overcome. Capitalist exploitation will become a thing of the past. Etc... There is present karma too.

Malcolm wrote:

Feudalism (a wholly inaccurate historical construct) never existed. The English empire was not overcome, it was bequeathed to the United States after two dreadful wars that managed to ruin its economy.

It is always a desiderata when any exploitation becomes a thing of the past, whether it is exploitation by capitalists, communists, fascists, racists and other kind of "ist" you can imagine. This does not mean that markets can be abolished (they can't), and that people should not be free to sell their goods or their labor to the person or company

that will pay them the most for it. When you "abolish" open (rather than free, since there is also no such a thing as a "free" market) markets, you create the conditions for black markets, where indeed the likely hood of criminal participation is elevated, for example, the Prohibition in the United States. It is also true is that some kinds of goods are deemed criminal, such as heroin, etc., and some kinds of labor are deemed criminal, such as protection rackets.

Therefore, markets require regulation, and that is the principle economic role of a government. That so much wealth is concentrated into the hands of so few at this juncture in history represents a fundamental failure of market regulation brought about by the "liberalization" of the world economy which represents a failure on the part of the various governments in the world to understand the proper role of regulation in the market place, so that open markets can function healthily. Markets cannot regulate themselves. They need a stern hand to guide them.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, January 28th, 2014 at 8:36 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

M:

Because some people have the karma to become super wealthy and others do not. Rather than bitching about the super wealthy, attend to your own causes of merit. I'm not bitching about the rich. I don't hate the rich or envy their wealth. I am just pointing out a disparity. I am also pointing out that the rich are rich because the poor are poor.

Malcolm wrote:

Again, the rich are rich and the poor are poor because of their karma.

For example, there was a yogi who supplicated the Dorje Legpa, one of three main protectors of the Dzogchen teachings. He was a very good practitioner, so when he summoned Dorje Legpa, Dorje Legpa appeared to him in person. One day the yogi said to Dorje Legpa, "I am tired of being poor, bring me as much wealth as you can." The next day Dorje Legpa returned, but he only had a small brass coin. "What's this", the yogi, said, "Why did not you not bring me more?" Being a wisdom protector, Dorje Legpa replied, "I am sorry but you do not have the karma to be wealthy so I could only bring you this much".

tellyontellyon said:

Under capitalism, the rich get rich at the expense of the poor.

Malcolm wrote:

It seems that way, but it is not really that way.

tellyontellyon said:

But even that isn't the most important thing:

If society could progress under capitalism, if the system was stable and allowed us to tackle the world's poverty and address the environmental problems effectively then it wouldn't matter all that much if the rich were rich. That's not what bothers me really.

In its early period capitalism was progressive, it moved the world forward, and its benefits made its faults tolerable.

But now, in late capitalism, capitalism's problems outweigh its diminishing benefits. It is a chaotic system that is leading us to barbarism.

Malcolm wrote:

As I said before, this state of affairs represents a fundamental failure of world governments to properly regulate the markets because of neoliberal policies which began to be put into place in the 1970's.

tellyontellyon said:

I feel sorry for the super-rich actually. Many of them are decent people and are just as trapped in this corrupting system as the rest of us. However, I do think a very privileged lifestyle can cut people off from what is happening to others, or they start making up rationalizations to justify the enormous differences in society.

Malcolm wrote:

It is not up to you or anyone else however to change that apart through fair taxation policies. Actually, in the US, in the 1950's all income above \$100,000 a year was taxed at something like 90 percent. It provided incentive for reinvestment rather than profit taking.

tellyontellyon said:

I will have to take exception to what seemed to be a suggestion that the poor are somehow more desirous than the rich.

Malcolm wrote:

They have more desire because their need is greater. It does not mean they want to screw everything to move.

tellyontellyon said:

It seems to me that wealth can act like a drug to some people. It is strange how the people I know with the most money hang on to it more tightly than people with less money. Perhaps they rely on it so much for their sense of value or self-esteem?

Malcolm wrote:

As I said, the wealthy, like asuras, are primarily dominated by anger and pride.

tellyontellyon said:

That's one of the things about a system that measures value in dollars and cents rather than in smiles and a meaningful existence. Marxists don't want to make everybody rich, they want to make a world where wealth doesn't matter.

Malcolm wrote:

If you are a Buddhist, wealth matters only in so far as it assists your practice. But there will always be wealthy people and poor people. Some trees will always get more nutrients and sunlight, and others less, that is just life. So get used to it.

tellyontellyon said:

Maybe Karma can create a situation where some people are born rich and others poor. I'm not sure that that means that people who are born rich therefore have earned more merit in a previous life.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, it absolutely does.

tellyontellyon said:

Many Tulkus are born into incredibly poor families. Perhaps 'wealth' can mean something different to filthy lucre?

Malcolm wrote:

Having a high Tulku in a poor family is a sure fire way for that family to gain wealth and prestige. Such families are treated like the nouveau riche are treated in the West however.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, January 28th, 2014 at 8:41 AM

Title: Re: Peak oil

Content:

Kim O'Hara said:

We can be much smarter about energy efficiency, for instance - and it's already happening.

Malcolm wrote:

Jevons observed that England's consumption of coal soared after James Watt introduced his coal-fired steam engine, which greatly improved the efficiency of Thomas Newcomen's earlier design.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jevons\\_paradox](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jevons_paradox)

So no, I don't share your technological enthusiasm. I am rather skeptical of it, actually.

Kim O'Hara said:

We can slow our population growth - and that has already happened in the West and I see no reason the developing world won't naturally follow the same path as it follows us through the same developmental sequence.

Malcolm wrote:

This is certainly a desiderata. And indeed, world population appears to be declining on



the whole.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, January 28th, 2014 at 8:47 AM

Title: Re: "the Self is real" according to T. Page

Content:

Tsongkhapa said:

they have a relative degree of reality.

Malcolm wrote:

Which is to merely say that they are objects of false cognitions, which when examined cannot be found to exist or be produced in anyway at all.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, January 28th, 2014 at 8:52 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

M:

That so much wealth is concentrated into the hands of so few at this juncture in history represents a fundamental failure of market regulation brought about by the "liberalization" of the world economy which represents a failure on the part of the various governments in the world to understand the proper role regulation in the market place, so that open markets can function healthily.

You seem to have abandoned your Karmic view that the wealthy got rich via meritorious former lives? Now your argument sounds more like Glenn Beck.

Malcolm wrote:

Those people who managed to receive that wealth had merit to do so, it is not like there is a dollar figure placed on merit. For example, the same person born in the Soviet Communist world would be rich in status, part of the elite, extremely powerful, one of the 40 most powerful people in the country, a Putin.

tellyontellyon said:

It is not up to you or anyone else however to change that apart through fair taxation policies.

Nobody is asking your permission.

Malcolm wrote:

That's the problem with the Marxist view, its adherents always express of a misplaced sense of entitlement to that which is not theirs, whether it be wealth, factories. etc.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, January 28th, 2014 at 9:12 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

That's the problem with the Capitalist view, its adherents always express of sense of entitlement to that which is not theirs, whether it be wealth, factories. etc.

Malcolm wrote:

I am not advocating a capitalist view. I am pointing out, as I have over and over again, that the only way you can secure your goals is with lethal violence. I do not condone that, I am utterly opposed to it. I do not share your conviction that "workers own the factories in which they work", unless in fact they do, done so properly, legally and with the full protection of the law. I do not support your view again that the wealth of the ultra rich should be seized, because such a seizure itself would involve catastrophic international conflicts, and because such people have the means to simply remove themselves from your reach. In other words, more harm than good would arise from their temporary (seriously, what's forty years?) control of such wealth. So lets say you do give everyone in the world \$49,000 [233 trillion / by world population]. How are you planning to do this? Actually you aren't. You are going to completely disrupt the economy and destroy everyone's wealth, just like the Bolsheviks did in Russia. Honestly, on this score, I think you are completely naive. But lets say we did, the same thing would happen all over again; some people, most people will squander their wealth, some people will be better at managing it, and eventually the same disparities that have arisen will just arise again.

The socialist democracies that Kirt is so fond of are a kind of rapprochement between a moderate (non-marxist) socialist view and the market economy we live in. However, they are only feasible because they are floating in a sea of money.

I guess the point is, I am not opposed to strict market regulation, it is necessary actually for a whole host of environmental reasons and social reasons. But what I am totally opposed to is the idea that we try to abolish the market economy we have now, because another one, a black one, will just take its place.

Anyway, I really don't think your revolution is ever going to happen anyway. The way global wealth is distributed, you would have to have a revolution in the US first, and that will never happen until we have a poverty crisis. Americans are completely allergic to communism.

You don't seem to have any idea what the eighteen qualities of a precious human birth are, even though you are British and a Buddhist. You should maximize your precious human birth and practice Dharma, not waste all your time on obsolete political religions.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, January 28th, 2014 at 9:50 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Feudalism (a wholly inaccurate historical construct) never existed. The English empire was not overcome, it was bequeathed to the United States after two dreadful wars that managed to ruin its economy.

Zhen Li said:

Rule by colonies is replaced by rule by development grants and loans. Which really develops the countries more?

Malcolm wrote:

Good question, but it is not germane to my point.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, January 28th, 2014 at 8:58 PM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

Zhen Li said:

The fact that half of those countries now call themselves "Peoples Republic of \_\_\_\_" or "Democratic Socialist Republic of \_\_\_\_," and are now suffering in immense poverty, is quite germane.

Malcolm wrote:

It is germane to other issues, but not to my immediate point with SD, i.e., that the British empire was not "overcome" per se by anyone. It "fell apart", because Britain had no stomach nor money to keep armies fielded to control its colonies.

SD, Canada remains a part of the British Commonwealth and the Queen is the head of state.

The British relinquished Egypt after WWI because they revolted, etc., but even so, most of the former British Empire remain commonwealth territories, sharing the Queen as their head of state, and what's more, the cultural influences of the Empire are enduring.

When I say "bequeathed", the areas formerly dominated by the empire came to be dominated by American economic policy and military power, rather than direct colonization. A former colony, we Americans are traditionally allergic to expanding our powers through direct colonization. Our attempts at foreign intervention sadly have wrought far more harm than long term good, as far as I can tell.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, January 28th, 2014 at 8:59 PM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

M:

Malcolm wrote:

You are responding to Zhen li, not me.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, January 28th, 2014 at 9:32 PM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

Unknown said:

As you well know I am talking about Private Property not Personal Property. Private property is the means of production. The Equipment and resources that we all depend on as a community to live. E.g. the sewer system, the electricity stations and grid, factories, roads, rail systems, banks. Society should not be held to ransom by a tiny percentage of individuals. These things should be both communally owned and communally managed democratically.

Malcolm wrote:

Toto:

One of the things that is nice about the US is that things are not centralized to the degree you imagine by "capitalists".

All the roads in the US are maintained in this order by the states and by the towns or counties.

In many places in the US utilities are in fact owned by the municipality, in other places they are not, where in fact they operate as tightly regulated monopolies.

In every city in the US, water treatment is something run by the local communities.

The rail system in the US, while originally built with private capital in the 19th century, is a now mostly a joint venture between the Feds and what remains of the rail companies that went bankrupt in the 1960's. There do remain a couple of rail systems that continue to operate independently of Amtrak.

In my view, the single biggest financial experiment that went wrong in the US was the dissolution of the long established barriers between savings and loans banks and investment banking in 1999, as well as the increase in credit offerings by the credit card companies and banks in the 1980's. Encouraging people to go into debt is short sighted economic policy. The same thing is now happening in China.

When it comes to financial markets, the main issue is how to insulate the whole of the economy against speculative risk while permitting those who wish to use their money in

risk laden ventures. We ought to have learned our lesson in the 1929, but we didn't.

I strongly disagree with you that factories and so on should be "communalized" by force. Anyway, in the US it will never happen. If other countries want to experiment with such socialist remedies, more power to them, but I think that history has shown that such experiments are doomed to failure.

I do believe however that the 1819 Supreme Court Decision on Trustees of Dartmouth College v. Woodward should be reversed, or legislated out of existence. Obviously, corporations are not persons and should not be treated as such. This ruling is actually the seed of neoliberalism (which I am opposed to, of course). Naturally, I think the EU, a neoliberal experiment, should be dissolved. Britain was absolutely correct to keep its distance and currency, and in fact it should never have joined at all.

I think at base, Toto, what we have here is just a cultural difference, in addition, I do not think you have understood Buddhism really very clearly. Nor have you understood the POV of HHDL very clearly. Much is made of his preference for socialism. However, he recently wrote, in his 2009 book, The Leader's Way:

I have come to put my faith in the free-market system.... The fact that it allows for freedom and diversity of thought and religion has convinced me that it is the one we should be working from," he wrote.

He argues in this book that capitalists can learn from Buddhism. But I am sure it surprises you to learn that he supports open markets.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, January 28th, 2014 at 9:35 PM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

Nemo said:

Banks should be nationalized. Period. They were traditionally 1-2% of GDP. Now financial services are around 11% and a drain on the real economy. As are speculators. Didn't Adam Smith think speculators should be hung or at the very least taxed out of existence?.

Malcolm wrote:

As I said, the repeal of the Glass-Steagall act was a huge mistake. But investment banks have a legitimate role in the economy, just as as "venture" capitalists do (they are really the same thing).

That is the beauty of having different countries, each nation is free to try out its own policies and see how it works out for them. Other nations can see the outcomes and decide to follow suit or not.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, January 28th, 2014 at 9:39 PM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

I support genuine Socialism..... like many US citizens have in the past...

Malcolm wrote:

Primarily first generation Germans, German Jews, and Italians.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, January 29th, 2014 at 5:22 AM

Title: Re: "the Self is real" according to T. Page

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Which is to merely say that they are objects of false cognitions, which when examined cannot be found to exist or be produced in anyway at all.

PadmaVonSamba said:

Since your argument is thus, too, an object of false cognitions, can it be found to exist or be produced in anyway at all?

If they are not produced in any way at all,  
even as hallucinations, then there is no samsara,  
not even relatively.

If that's the case, why practice Dharma  
since it too cannot be

"... found to exist or be produced in anyway at all. "

.  
.   
.

Malcolm wrote:

I can but cite Candrakirti on this point:

Reflections are not real, but using them we smarten our appearances.

In just the same way we should understand that arguments

That have the power to to cleanse the face of wisdom,

Unlike your limping sophistries, engender the realization of the goal.

But if the reasoning that proves our point were something were truly real,  
and real also the point itself that should be understood,

then arguments of contact and the rest indeed would have some truth.  
But this is not the case, Your own fatigue is all you have achieved.

But we can demonstrate with easy cogency  
That all phenomena lack a real intrinsic being.  
The contrary indeed you cannot prove,  
So why ensnare the world in webs of false logic?  
(MV, verses 175-177, Introduction to the Middle Way, Shambhala, 2002.)

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, January 29th, 2014 at 5:34 AM

Title: Re: Peak oil

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

... indeed, world population appears to be declining on the whole.

dzogchungpa said:

svg

Malcolm wrote:

Right, it means that according to UN estimates, world population in 2150 could be as high as 25 trillion, the red line, or as low as 3.5 trillion, the green line. According to the report, the mathematical model favors the low number.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, January 29th, 2014 at 6:00 AM

Title: Re: "the Self is real" according to T. Page

Content:

Tsongkhapa said:

I can quote Madhyamakavatara too to support dependent production:

If you say that causes do not produce effects, then so-called effects do not exist;  
And without an effect there is no reason for a cause, and they do not exist.  
Since both of these are just like illusions, we are not at fault;  
And worldly people's things exist.

VI. 170

Malcolm wrote:

Conventionally, of course. Then you have to understand that conventions will not bear analysis.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, January 29th, 2014 at 7:43 AM

Title: Re: Engaged Buddhism... what is it?

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

What is Engaged Buddhism? What are it's aims, and how should Buddhists engage, generally speaking?

Malcolm wrote:

The term was coined by Thich Nhat Hahn. You can read his precepts of Engaged Buddhism here. You will particularly like precept 5:

Do not accumulate wealth while millions are hungry. Do not take as the aim of your life fame, profit, wealth, or sensual pleasure. Live simply and share time, energy, and material resources with those who are in need.

[http://viewonbuddhism.org/resources/14\\_precepts.html](http://viewonbuddhism.org/resources/14_precepts.html)

Joanna Macy is another person who has written about this quite a bit:

<http://www.joannamacy.net/engaged-buddhism.html>

Engaged Buddhism is basically Deep Ecology with a Buddhist perspective.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, January 29th, 2014 at 7:46 AM

Title: Re: Peak oil

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

Also, you mean 'billion' not 'trillion'.

Malcolm wrote:

Yup.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, January 29th, 2014 at 8:17 AM

Title: Re: Engaged Buddhism... what is it?

Content:

Kim O'Hara said:

I was going to point tellyontellyon towards <http://www.ecobuddhism.org> but it seems to have been taken down. Does anyone know why, or whether it has just moved?

TIA,

Kim



Malcolm wrote:  
It loads for me.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, January 29th, 2014 at 8:21 PM

Title: Re: Engaged Buddhism... what is it?

Content:

Kim O'Hara said:

As for lay Buddhists, I guess we can follow the guidelines for monastics if we can work out what they are ...

Kim

Malcolm wrote:

Or more simply, we can look at texts like the Ratnavali by Nāgārjuna which set out in some detail how kings are to set out social policies. .

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, January 29th, 2014 at 8:23 PM

Title: Re: Peak oil

Content:

kirtu said:

The graphic is in millions. 15000 million =  $15 \times 10^9$ . They then avoid the difference between US and British definitions of billions (anyway Brits favor discussing things in thousands of millions).

Kirt

Malcolm wrote:

I am reporting (sans typos) what an article cited from the UN report that accompanied this graph.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, January 29th, 2014 at 11:52 PM

Title: Re: Engaged Buddhism... what is it?

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

M.

Are there similar instructions for Theravadin monks?

Could you elaborate please, what part of Nagarjuna's text are you thinking of; what are the actual instructions?

Malcolm wrote:

You will have to read the book yourself, I am afraid, but in brief he encourages kings to eliminate capital punishment, provide healthcare, charity, etc.

tellyontellyon said:

We have a Queen here in the UK; however, she is a Christian and head of the Church of England. Also, there are many countries, e.g. the USA that are Republics and so don't have a king. What if you have a king that is very hostile to Buddhism? Perhaps his social policy could be damaging? So I could imagine some difficulties arising there.

Malcolm wrote:

Buddhism declined in India largely due to the hostilities of Hindu kings. The life stories of the Mahāsiddhas are full of such events.

tellyontellyon said:

What is the actual word that Nagarjuna used for 'king'?

Malcolm wrote:

Rājā.

He probably authored the text for this king:

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Satavahana\\_dynasty#Gautamiputra\\_Satakarni\\_.2878.E2.80.93102\\_CE.29](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Satavahana_dynasty#Gautamiputra_Satakarni_.2878.E2.80.93102_CE.29)

This person was the 23rd ruler of the Satavahana dynasty that ruled major portions of India from 230 BCE to 220 CE. You can see how large this kingdom was on the map.

tellyontellyon said:

So these are instructions that both monarchs and ordinary Buddhists should follow. Everybody.

Malcolm wrote:

Indeed they are.

Nāgārjuna advocated a lowering of excessive tax rates of previous Satavahanas, he advocated market regulation, and so on. Everything you need to conduct yourself and construct a political conscience that accords with Buddhist principles may be found in this book. Not only that, but of course by following the instructions in this book, you will become a perfect bodhisattva.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, January 30th, 2014 at 12:07 AM

Title: Re: The Idea of Madhyamaka and Yogacara as Equally Correct

Content:

rob h said:

Yogacara...says that when looking at the whole and not individual parts, there's something there that can "be said" to have some type of existence, reality, substance, and so on, because there's actually something there ultimately when all things are seen without division.

Malcolm wrote:

This is substantialist perspective and will inevitably collapse because of its internal contradictions.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, January 30th, 2014 at 2:38 AM

Title: Re: Was Nāgārjuna a misogynist?

Content:

Indrajala said:

In the Tree of Wisdom (Tib. She-rab Dong-Bu ) attributed to Nāgārjuna there are the following verses:

63. A conqueror, a water channel, a creeping plant,  
Women and the blind, these five,  
How they are led by the crafty!  
And this leading places them in the power of others.

182. A woman's appetite is twice (that of a man),  
Her deceitfulness four times (as much),  
Her shame six times,  
And her passions eight times--so it is said.

194. When milk is got from a horn,  
When the reed-flower drops honey,  
Then, when a woman is true,  
The lotus will grow in dry ground.

246. An evil man, gold, a drum,  
A wild horse, women and cloth  
Are controlled by beating.  
These are not vessels for elegant doings.  
<http://www.sacred-texts.com/bud/srdb/srdb.htm>

It begs the question how do modern liberal Buddhists reconcile such sentiments with their own values?

I don't think you can write these statements off as mere engrained cultural habits.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, they certainly are -- they are quite commonly found across the board in Indian

literature and the same metaphors are found across the board in Sanskrit texts, Buddhist and Hindu.

As he states in one place here "so it is said."

But then again, I have found many male monastics to have a fair bit of misogyny, so he could have learned this in his Vihara.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, January 30th, 2014 at 2:40 AM

Title: Re: Was Nāgārjuna a misogynist?

Content:

Indrajala said:

Basically, what I'm getting at is that modern liberal values are often quite incompatible with older Buddhist ones, yet this is usually conveniently ignored or just dismissed as unimportant or simply backwards thought that we've moved beyond.

Malcolm wrote:

One must distinguish Dharma from culture, yes, even in sutras.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, January 30th, 2014 at 2:43 AM

Title: Re: The Idea of Madhyamaka and Yogacara as Equally Correct

Content:

rob h said:

It isn't an attempt to be substantialist, it's meant to try to convey the idea that there is "something" there...

Malcolm wrote:

And that is the problem, nothing there is found.

rob h said:

If it's all going to be taken literally though, doesn't this ring true also?

Since all finite concepts are negational, the concept of "middle" (madhya) is equally negated, and so one should not even try and abide in a Middle View (madhyamaka).

Malcolm wrote:

Of course.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, January 30th, 2014 at 3:00 AM

Title: Re: Was Nāgārjuna a misogynist?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

But then again, I have found many male monastics to have a fair bit of misogyny, so he could have learned this in his Vihara.

Indrajala said:

So a realized master is capable of misogyny? If that's the case, a lot of moral issues are entirely separate from realization of, say, emptiness, though that's problematic. A bodhisattva who has realized emptiness probably should not feel ill will towards anyone, including women. We would at least hope Nāgārjuna had the best of benevolent intentions in writing these verses.

Malcolm wrote:

If he wrote it, perhaps he penned it when he was a younger man, not in possession of realization. After all, we commonly find texts composed by teenagers and in their twenties in the various collected works of Tibetan masters. Often texts such as this serve as demonstrations of skill in composition, as you know, this being a genre called "subhāśita". In subhāśita wit at the expense of others is a desiderata, it is part of the form.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, January 30th, 2014 at 8:04 AM

Title: Re: Was Nāgārjuna a misogynist?

Content:

Indrajala said:

It begs the question how do modern liberal Buddhists reconcile such sentiments with their own values?

I don't think you can write these statements off as mere engrained cultural habits. Assuming Nāgārjuna actually wrote these (and let's assume he did), these are the words of a realized bodhisattva with only benevolent intentions..

theanarchist said:

I guess since this was mainly aimed at male monastics he wanted to paint women in the worst possible light to make renunciation easier for the poor, desire-plagued sods.

I bet dharma texts aimed at nuns would do the same with men

Malcolm wrote:

It is not really a Dharma text, it is an ancestor to Sakya Pandita's Legs bshad (subhāśita), indeed Sapan cribs a verse here and there from this text. These verses would have been

read by educated persons whether monks or not. As I said it is a kind of literary sport in being clever, often at the expense of others, indulged in by Sanskritist literati back in the day.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, January 30th, 2014 at 8:11 AM

Title: Re: The Idea of Madhyamaka and Yogacara as Equally Correct

Content:

rob h said:

This is difficult, because although I'm trying to point out that there is something there, because there can't possibly be nothing

Malcolm wrote:

There can't be nothing since there never was something which could become nothing.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, January 30th, 2014 at 8:14 PM

Title: Re: The Idea of Madhyamaka and Yogacara as Equally Correct

Content:

rob h said:

This is difficult, because although I'm trying to point out that there is something there, because there can't possibly be nothing

Malcolm wrote:

There can't be nothing since there never was something which could become nothing.

dzogchungpa said:

Why, for there to be nothing, must there have been something to become nothing?

Malcolm wrote:

Nothing always indicates the absence of something, in common language.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, January 30th, 2014 at 8:22 PM

Title: Re: The Idea of Madhyamaka and Yogacara as Equally Correct

Content:

Tsongkhapafan said:

This all seems very intellectual!

The union of the Prasangika and Chittamatrin views was praised by Tsongkhapa as pre-eminent and is very important for Tantric meditation.

Malcolm wrote:

Everyone in Tibetan practices Vajrayāna according to this view.

Tsongkhapa said:  
It is expressed simply by Milarepa:

You should know that all phenomena are the nature of mind  
And that mind is the nature of emptiness.

Malcolm wrote:  
I understand the above phrase is translated quite literally from Tibetan, but it really does not make sense in English. In English that literally reads:

The nature of the mind is phenomena,  
the nature of emptiness is mind.

What is really should say:

"The nature of all phenomena is the mind,  
The nature of the mind is emptiness."

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Thursday, January 30th, 2014 at 8:25 PM  
Title: Re: The Idea of Madhyamaka and Yogacara as Equally Correct  
Content:  
rob h said:

But yeah it's interesting that others have tried to make them work together in various ways, and nice quote in relation to that Tsongkhapa. It seems like if you synthesize these two schools, or take out the extremes from both of them, then maybe there's something that can work very well.

Malcolm wrote:  
Well, in fact the Yogacara Madhyamaka that Tsongkhapa is referring to is Śāntarakṣita's. Śāntarakṣita's sole concession to Yogacara was that it was allowable to say that all phenomena are established as mind as a conventional truth. But he never goes into some lengthy analysis via the three natures, which he must therefore regard as being rather clumsy and leading one astray from Madhyamaka. Indeed the three natures theory is the main thing that comes under attack from Madhyamakas.

When it comes to the three natures theory in Tibet, this is the main thing about the Jonang presentation that Tsongkhapa attacks in his Legs bshad. He asserts their presentation deviates from how it is presented by Asanga and Vasubandhu and that they misuse it.

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Thursday, January 30th, 2014 at 9:41 PM  
Title: Re: The Idea of Madhyamaka and Yogacara as Equally Correct

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

I understand the above phrase is translated quite literally from Tibetan, but it really does not make sense in English. In English that literally reads:

The nature of the mind is phenomena,  
the nature of emptiness is mind.

What is really should say:

"The nature of all phenomena is the mind,  
The nature of the mind is emptiness."

rob h said:

That seems to merge both schools really well, thanks, and thanks again Tsongkhapa. But yeah it's interesting that others have tried to make them work together in various ways, and nice quote in relation to that Tsongkhapa. It seems like if you synthesize these two schools, or take out the extremes from both of them, then maybe there's something that can work very well.

Malcolm wrote:

Well, in fact the Yogacara Madhyamaka that Tsongkhapa is referring to is Śāntarakṣita's. Śāntarakṣita's sole concession to Yogacara was that it was allowable to say that all phenomena are established as mind as a conventional truth. But he never goes into some lengthy analysis via the three natures, which he must therefore regard as being rather clumsy and leading one astray from Madhyamaka. Indeed the three natures theory is the main thing that comes under attack from Madhyamakas.

When it comes to the three natures theory in Tibet, this is the main thing about the Jonang presentation that Tsongkhapa attacks in his Legs bshad. He asserts their presentation deviates from how it is presented by Asanga and Vasubandhu and that they misuse it.

rob h said:

Thanks for this too, that's a great help. I didn't realize it was the three natures that was so much of an issue, and will remember to keep that in mind when researching. To be honest I don't really think about those that much either, but I do think the eight consciousness model works well, even if it isn't perfect and is just a concept that eventually has to be dropped with the others eventually. Will try to remember to read up on Santarakṣita and the Madhyamakalamkara as well, it'll probably help clear a lot of things up.

Malcolm wrote:

Well, the eight consciousness model is also critiqued by Madhyamakas, and indeed Śāntarakṣita does not address it much, as far as I recall.



There are basically three trends in scholastic thinking about the five treatises in Tibet: one, that they are all definitive [gzhans stong]; two, that of the five, only the Abhisamyālaṃkara can be considered definitive dge lugs]; three, that Abhisamyālaṃkara is definitive, and that properly understood, the Uttaratantra is definitive; the rest are not.

Then there is my unique point of view, which I have often stated. Asanga's teacher, Ācārya Maitreya's own point of view is Yogacara (cittamatra) and his identity as Bodhisattva Maitreya is a Tibetan misattribution that has gained such wide currency as to have become a "fact". He wrote five texts in order to clarify the three main streams of Mahāyāna sūtras. For Prajñāpāramitā he composed the Abhisamyālaṃkara in order to detail its path structure. For the Tathāgatagarbha sūtras he composed the Uttaratantra. And for Yogacara he composed Madhyantavibhanga, being an attempt to correct a perceived Madhyamaka extremism, and the Dharmadharmatāvibhanga, being a detailed treatment of the topic found in the Samdhinirmocana. He composed a treatise synthesizing these three sūtra streams from a Yogacara perspective, the Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkara.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, January 30th, 2014 at 9:44 PM

Title: Re: The Idea of Madhyamaka and Yogacara as Equally Correct

Content:

smcj said:

I didn't realize it was the three natures that was so much of an issue, and will remember to keep that in mind when researching.

It's an issue for Malcolm personally. It's his bugaboo.

I believe that Malcolm has the kind of expertise that could argue either side of the issue effectively if he wanted to. For personal reasons he chooses to subscribe to non-Gelug Madhyamaka. That's perfectly ok, but just know that he has a strong bias and doesn't always identify it as such.

Malcolm wrote:

No, you are wrong, the three natures is a major polemical issue between the Madhyamakas and Yogacaras in India, one upon which there are hundreds of pages written. Because of this, it has become a major polemical issue in Tibet too.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, January 30th, 2014 at 10:47 PM

Title: Re: Engaged Buddhism... what is it?

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

Buddhism isn't a 'revealed' religion...

Malcolm wrote:  
Mahāyāna Buddhism most certainly is.

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Thursday, January 30th, 2014 at 10:49 PM  
Title: Re: Engaged Buddhism... what is it?

Content:  
tellyontellyon said:

Nāgārjuna advocated a lowering of excessive tax rates of previous Satavahanas, he advocated market regulation, and so on. Everything you need to conduct yourself and construct a political conscience that accords with Buddhist principles may be found in this book.

I think there is a lot of wisdom in his words. But we have to have some caution too. There is a lot of general good advice here that is generally applicable, but some of the advice was particular to the person he was talking to and the time and situation he was talking about. He was a great philosopher and practitioner, but as Buddhists we don't accept anything as 'god given' absolute truth for all time.

Buddhism isn't a 'revealed' religion and Nagarjuna wasn't a prophet. So we can learn from Nagarjuna and all the great teachers, but we have to think and find out for ourselves too. Every day is a new day, and we can't be bound by a formulaic approach to anything.

My own teacher, Lama Rabsang (Palpung), says the Buddha gave 84'000 teachings, meaning that there are lots of ways of approaching practice, and life. For me, it is important to always keep this in mind when approaching any teachings, scripture, or teachers. It's just good sense.

I think the same must apply to engaged Buddhism.

p.s. thanks for the links.

Malcolm wrote:  
The meaning is that there are 21,000 Dharmas to eliminate ignorance, 21,000 Dharmas to eliminate desire, 21,000 Dharmas to eliminate hatred, and 21,000 Dharmas to eliminate the three afflictions in combination, and that's all.

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Friday, January 31st, 2014 at 12:54 AM  
Title: Re: The Idea of Madhyamaka and Yogacara as Equally Correct

Content:  
smcj said:  
Being one of the people that post those type of offenses, I'd like to thank you allowing much of my Shentong postings to go unopposed.

Malcolm wrote:  
If someone is a Vajrayāna practitioner, I don't really think it matters much which post-

equipoise view of emptiness they hold all that much, whether it is the "Prasanga" of the Gelugs, the view of freedom from extremes, or "gzhan stong". The view meditated in Vajrayāna depends on the experience of the third and fourth empowerments and not intellectual analysis.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, January 31st, 2014 at 3:24 AM

Title: Re: "the Self is real" according to T. Page

Content:

Tsongkhapafan said:

Exist = appearing to a valid mind.

Malcolm wrote:

How is a mind established as valid?

Author: Malcolm

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

Title: Re: Engaged Buddhism... what is it?

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

Like in the Kalama sutra? yes?

Malcolm wrote:

The Kalamas sutra is the most misunderstood sutra in the Pali canon. It was a teaching to a tribe of nonbuddhists confused about the various gurus who visited them and tried to convert them. It does not mean that once you have taken Buddhism as your path you are free to just interpret everything anyway you want. Of course, you must test everything, like one would test gold, to make sure it is authentic, but that is because you understand the value of real gold.

tellyontellyon said:

I mean, if Nagarjuna says put taxes up, or put taxes down or whatever, that is not some sort of creed or confession of faith that we must accept or otherwise not be 'proper' Buddhists, just because 'Nagarjuna says so'... you're not implying that are you?

Malcolm wrote:

What I am saying is that one does not need to inform one's politics by anything outside the Buddha's teachings, and that most political doctrines are not consistent with Buddha's teachings, increasingly the further right and left that you go.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, January 31st, 2014 at 4:00 AM

Title: Re: Engaged Buddhism... what is it?

Content:

AlexanderS said:

Of course, the Buddhas teach through skillfull means. The former example used before was advice given to a monarch and not to a modern day democracy. What I mean about realized beings words carrying more weight is that their teachings come from their wisdom minds and not from delusion.

tellyontellyon said:

Yes, I see.

Though at the same time , there really is a lot of wisdom in ancient teachings that have been proven over many generations to still be beneficial. I was watching a video earlier by a monk who was talking about all the rules a monk has to follow. Apparently they are not allowed to wear a robe that is perfectly clean, there must be some sort of mark on it. It reminds me of the Islamic carpet makers that always put a deliberate mistake in their carpet designs.

The humility of such an act is a valuable way of remembering our 'pride' when we start to think we are perfect, or have nice clothes etc. So these instructions can go very deep and work on all sorts of different levels, not just a literal practical level. I suppose this comes about through practice and may not be self-evident from simply studying the 'rules' from an abstract, uninvolved perspective.

I really admire what these monks have to cope with in order to keep all their vows.

Malcolm wrote:

If you want to live in a true socialist community where there is no property, become a monk. That is the only way to become free from markets and market capitalism.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, January 31st, 2014 at 5:47 AM

Title: Re: Was Nāgārjuna a misogynist?

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

Nagarjuna was a Mahasiddha.

Malcolm wrote:

Which Nāgārjuna are you talking about?

There were at least two, and most probably three. We do not know which Nāgārjuna wrote this text.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, January 31st, 2014 at 5:53 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

[quote="Sherab Dorje]"if it wasn't for the US's socialist intervention via the Marshall plan[/quote]

The Marshall Plan aid was mostly used for the purchase of goods from the United States...

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marshall\\_Plan](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marshall_Plan)

Hardly socialist at all. Its purpose was to make Europe dependent on US exports.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, January 31st, 2014 at 6:31 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

And who said that socialist economic measure cannot be used for financial gain?

Malcolm wrote:

Socialists...after all, they want to eliminate markets, right?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, January 31st, 2014 at 6:37 AM

Title: Middle Way Politics

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The key teaching of the Buddha is the Madhyama Pratipad, the middle way.

What would a middle way politics look like, one informed by the Buddha's teachings rather than those of secular authors?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, January 31st, 2014 at 9:04 AM

Title: Re: Was Nāgārjuna a misogynist?

Content:

Astus said:

Enlightened beings are not infallible or omniscient.

Malcolm wrote:

It depends on what level of awakening you are considering.

Certainly stream entrants and once returners might have some faults, as well as bodhisattvas up the seventh bhumi, but above that, bodhisattvas are faultless since they have no afflictions, and tenth stage bodhisattvas have omniscience that nearly that of a Buddhas. Buddhas of course are omniscient in two ways.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, January 31st, 2014 at 9:05 AM

Title: Re: Middle Way Politics

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The key teaching of the Buddha is the Madhyama Pratipad, the middle way.

What would a middle way politics look like, one informed by the Buddha's teachings rather than those of secular authors?

Son of Buddha said:

I would say Democratic Socialism.

what would the Buddha say? hmmm not sure ..... possibly a theocratic monarchy ran by the wheel turning King.

then again the Buddha did crush the the caste System in the Pali-Canon...but I don't remember him setting up a new view on a "future" government system.

Malcolm wrote:

Buddha refuted the brahmanical theory of the caste system, but he certainly did not "crush" it.

Democratic socialism is a secular theory.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, January 31st, 2014 at 9:07 AM

Title: Re: Middle Way Politics

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The key teaching of the Buddha is the Madhyama Pratipad, the middle way.

What would a middle way politics look like, one informed by the Buddha's teachings rather than those of secular authors?

Johnny Dangerous said:

I think it's relative depending on time, place, and circumstance..but basically one would try to help all beings achieve a state of less suffering (the suffering of suffering to be specific, since political change and the material change it brings can't do anything at all to salve the other two), with a minimum of coercion, while encouraging both participation (and a "right" and obligation to participation in that sense), and some sense of responsibility. In addition, instead of politics based on "inherent rights" of really existing beings..I wonder if the model would not be drawn from the

acknowledgment of interdependence.

I think you could make a valid argument for a number of different directions, but I think that Anarchism/Libertarian leaning ideas (on the left and right, though personally I am solidly left of center) will be a more natural fit than either statist, or statist/corporatist combinations.

If I had to pick a current party from my personal point of view, I would say to me The Green Party and similar groups are at least vaguely pointed in the right direction, simply due to advocacy of things like smaller scale, cooperative tackling of problems.. even if the parties themselves are pretty lackluster right now. In Europe, it seems that democratic socialist ideals (at least on paper) fit the bill, though I gather there are plenty of complaints in practice.

However, a big part of "Dharma politics" would hopefully be honesty about what is, and is not possible, which puts it out of the running...lol. Politics runs on an unreal picture about "the future", and perpetuates itself with providing people with either fear or longing towards it..the usual endless preparation of samsara.

Malcolm wrote:

Lets not say "Dharma politics", because they should not mix. Middle Way Politics is informed by Dharma, but does not pretend to be Dharma.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, January 31st, 2014 at 9:10 AM

Title: Re: The Idea of Madhyamaka and Yogacara as Equally Correct

Content:

Sherab said:

why the variation in intellectual output?

Malcolm wrote:

It is very simple really: people, when in post-equipose, resume intellectual analysis of emptiness. One could say that the only persons in whom the equipose view and the post-equipose view are "identical" are fully awakened buddhas since in fact they are never not in a state of equipose.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, January 31st, 2014 at 8:35 PM

Title: Re: The Idea of Madhyamaka and Yogacara as Equally Correct

Content:

Sherab said:

why the variation in intellectual output?

Malcolm wrote:

It is very simple really: people, when in post-equipose, resume intellectual analysis of

emptiness. One could say that the only persons in whom the equipoise view and the post-equipoise view are "identical" are fully awakened buddhas since in fact they are never not in a state of equipoise.

Sherab said:

Post-equipoise, there is a resumption of intellectual analysis of emptiness. However, wouldn't post-equipoise intellectual analysis of emptiness be informed by the experience of equipoise? If yes, then variation in intellectual output would imply variation in the equipoise experienced. That would mean differences in the experiences of the third and fourth empowerment.

If not, is there then no memory of the experience of equipoise?

Malcolm wrote:

Actually, the way I understand is that one's post equipoise view will be characterized by one's remaining knowledge obscuration. Supposing that Nāgārjuna, Āsanga and Candra for example were all bodhisattvas on the stages, their differences in views could be accounted for merely by this fact alone.

When we apply this to Tibetans, the same rule would apply. Of course, there is no way the realization of anyone can be validated by ordinary persons such as ourselves...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, January 31st, 2014 at 8:36 PM

Title: Re: The Idea of Madhyamaka and Yogacara as Equally Correct

Content:

Tsongkhapafan said:

I know there are people who believe that a direct transmission of experience of emptiness or enlightenment can be given...

Malcolm wrote:

Not to sidetrack the discussion, but this is not exactly what direct introduction means.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, January 31st, 2014 at 8:52 PM

Title: Re: Middle Way Politics

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

I was not really talking so much about the role of leaders in politics, but of course this is an understandable inference. What I am really trying to get at is a means of discovering a Buddhist political sensibility which is informed by Buddha's teachings, but can be applied in how we conduct ourselves in political matters.



For example, the Buddha's original middle way was a path between indulgence and asceticism. So the real question is, "How do we Buddhists walk this path in whatever political situation we find ourselves in". That is what I mean by "Middle Way Politics". TKfan has the right idea, this is not so much about applying political remedies as a party, but what kind of political choices we make in light of our understanding of the Buddha's teaching, based on our own personal transformation dependent on our being people who live in a "polis", who are part of a "polity". So in that case, Adamantine's question about use of force is not an issue. Obviously a key point of a middle way politic would have to include ahimsa as a guiding principle.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, January 31st, 2014 at 8:59 PM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

Anyway. I am done here. If you cannot accept the basic fact that Capitalism is political as well as economic, then we are wasting our time talking.

Malcolm wrote:

"Capitalism" is not a political doctrine, nor is it even an economic doctrine, though indeed theories have been invented to justify it. Indeed "Capitalism" was invented by Karl Marx.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, January 31st, 2014 at 9:01 PM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

And who said that socialist economic measure cannot be used for financial gain?

Malcolm wrote:

Socialists...after all, they want to eliminate markets, right?

Sherab Dorje said:

Nope, they want to control markets.

Malcolm wrote:

Then socialists are capitalists because all markets require regulation.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, January 31st, 2014 at 10:22 PM

Title: Re: "the Self is real" according to T. Page

Content:

Son of Buddha said:

A specific word has a specific meaning you wouldn't call an airplane a turtle would you, why would you change the word Self to something else?

Malcolm wrote:

Words often have many meanings. For example, the word *prajñā* in Hinduism means something different than *prajñā* in Buddhism.

The word "rigs" in Tibetan translates these Sanskrit words: *gotra*, *kula*, *yukti*, etc., all words with different meanings.

Likewise, even in Sanskrit, the term *atman* has several meanings, all dependent on context.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, February 1st, 2014 at 8:27 AM

Title: Re: "the Self is real" according to T. Page

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Likewise, even in Sanskrit, the term *atman* has several meanings, all dependent on context.

dzogchungpa said:

Just looking at the Srimala sutra, it seems that the context for its use of *atman* in connection with *dharmakaya* is the four *viparyayas*. So, what would you say the meaning of *atman*/*anatman* is in that context?

Malcolm wrote:

Essence.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, February 1st, 2014 at 8:38 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

'Capitalism doesn't exist', 'class doesn't exist', .... even if it does exist it's all part of some 'grand plan', the 'natural order of things' etc. ....

Malcolm wrote:

There are markets and there are classes. Buddha explains how classes arise. He does not say much about markets at all, except to encourage lay people to turn a good profit

to support their families.

mbulance... We don't just say it's 'karma', and leave them there in the road!  
Denial is simply ignorance.

tellyontellyon said:

I think that social class is a product of the economic system

Malcolm wrote:

The Buddha didn't.

tellyontellyon said:

and the economic system is a form of behavior and can therefore be changed.

Malcolm wrote:

Good luck, no one has ever succeeded in eradicating markets.

tellyontellyon said:

Nagarjuna's advice to his friend, a king, 100's of years ago was good advice in a general sense, but we don't have to take it as a justification for having 'kings' or 'free markets' today. Buddhism enshrines the possibility of change, it is not a formula for a particular political and economic system.

Malcolm wrote:

There is no such thing as a "free market". All markets are regulated.

tellyontellyon said:

Socialism isn't a panacea, but if implemented properly it could be a real step forward to a better life for everybody. Socialism is more than just regulation, it is the democratic ownership and planning of the economy. It can be done.

Malcolm wrote:

There really isn't such a thing as "democratic" ownership, the closest thing that comes to it is being a stockholder in a company.

tellyontellyon said:

Capitalism is different to simple trading, as has been explored in previous posts.

Malcolm wrote:

"Capitalism" is a Marxist construct that does not exist outside Marxist analysis.

tellyontellyon said:

We have to take responsibility for ourselves and the other life forms on this planet.

Malcolm wrote:

We do not have to take responsibility for other lifeforms, we are not "the stewards of

nature" -- this is a Christian and a Social Ecological standpoint. It is shallow, not deep. What we have to do is set aside resources of land and sea and let other lifeforms do their thing. They need no help from us when left alone.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, February 1st, 2014 at 8:41 AM

Title: Re: Middle Way Politics

Content:

anjali said:

For those interested, the Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy has a good article on <http://www.iep.utm.edu/polphil/>. It might be a good way to provide some basis for getting everyone on the same page. To quote one paragraph: Political philosophy has its beginnings in ethics: in questions such as what kind of life is the good life for human beings. Since people are by nature sociable – there being few proper anchorites who turn from society to live alone – the question follows as to what kind of life is proper for a person amongst people. The philosophical discourses concerning politics thus develop, broaden and flow from their ethical underpinnings.

Is there a middle-way ethics?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, of course, for Buddhists such as our selves it would be either the eight-fold path or the perfections.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, February 1st, 2014 at 8:42 AM

Title: Re: Middle Way Politics

Content:

Nemo said:

Ideally it would be a meritocracy. The most spiritually advanced in the group is given near absolute authority. People stay in the collective as long as they wish. The mission obviously transcends members personal desires. The leader need not be an expert in everything. They delegate. Their main job is to purify motivation and justify the use of resources.

The game of modern politics is about selfish elites retaining undeserved wealth and power. There is no middle way of exploitation and coercion. The Buddha's life choices seem to support this thesis. You might as well be talking about Buddhist methods of warfare.

Malcolm wrote:

Again, I am talking about personal conduct, not political parties.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, February 1st, 2014 at 8:43 AM

Title: Re: Middle Way Politics

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

Are you going to run for office?

Virgo said:

I highly doubt it as Malcolm is not really concerned with the eight worldly concerns, as most politicians are. If he were to, however, I am sure that he would do it with a pure motivation.

Also, he comes from a political family, so I assume he really knows what he is talking about.

Kevin

Malcolm wrote:

Actually, Keven, my dad is a philosophy professor and a lawyer (retired from both).

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, February 1st, 2014 at 8:49 AM

Title: Re: Middle Way Politics

Content:

Adamantine said:

I see, so likewise Nemo's response re: meritocracy(similar to my initial thought)is off topic, at least from your intended topic.

Malcolm wrote:

Well, it does not address my interest, but any suggestions are open.

Adamantine said:

...but expressing our politics with Middle Way principles, that's another story...you are contemplating or proposing we ponder what a Middle Way political ideology might look like?

Malcolm wrote:

More or less.

Adamantine said:

Regarding personally making political choices based on our understanding of Middle Way principles, I would imagine any of us Mahayanists are trying to do this to some degree, as it is.

Malcolm wrote:

Indeed, but in political discussions here, what I notice is these political discussions tend to become polarized on a left/right axis. "Property of theft"! cries one, the other replies, "Taking what has not been given is stealing"!

What would our politics truly look like if we strictly confined our political choices to the ethics laid out by the Buddha?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, February 1st, 2014 at 10:05 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

i. Capitalists, or bourgeoisie, own the means of production and purchase the labor power of others

Malcolm wrote:

This could be any of the twice born castes.

tellyontellyon said:

ii. Workers, or proletariat, do not own any means of production or the ability to purchase the labor power of others. Rather, they sell their own labor power.

Malcolm wrote:

These would be shudras.

tellyontellyon said:

iii. A small, transitional class known as the petite bourgeoisie own sufficient means of production but do not purchase labor power.

Malcolm wrote:

This could be any of the twice born castes.

tellyontellyon said:

Class is thus determined by property relations not by income or status. These factors are determined by distribution and consumption, which mirror the production and power relations of classes.

Malcolm wrote:

It's pretty clear that Indian shudras fit the Marxist notion of proletariat; everyone else in India were either "capitalists" or petite bourgeoisie.

tellyontellyon said:

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Capitalism>

Malcolm wrote:

The word was invented by Karl Marx and it did not exist in English until 1854.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, February 1st, 2014 at 9:05 PM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

This could be any of the twice born castes.

No, it couldn't.

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dvija>

...is not the same thing as a capitalist.

This argument that you have that capitalism doesn't really exist is just a way of equating the classes under capitalism with rich and poor or with status, spiritual or otherwise. Although these things can co-occur to an extent they mean different things.

Malcolm wrote:

Ok, but you are using a very narrow definition of "class". It is like claiming that out of the ten definitions of Dharma there is only one valid one.

tellyontellyon said:

Both 'types' of class system can co-occur and overlap as one type of society transforms into another. This is a dialectical process. No doubt the lower caste Indians will also find themselves in a lower class in the capitalist structure, but they are two different frameworks.

Malcolm wrote:

The class into which you are born, and your opportunity for advance, lifespan, etc., whether under Marxist analysis or not, is still, and will always remain, a function of your individual karma.

tellyontellyon said:

Equating class as, Marxists use the term, with caste as the Indians used it in the Buddha's day, is an illegitimate use of the term. It is a way of stretching two different words/frameworks to mean the same thing in order to create an invalid scriptural justification for your argument.

Malcolm wrote:

Class is class.

tellyontellyon said:

Class is about a persons economic role in a capitalist society.

Malcolm wrote:

Varna or jati (caste) is about a person's economic role in Ancient Indian society. What Buddha rejected about the Caste system in ancient India is that people born in upper castes were necessarily more virtuous than those born in lower castes. What he did not reject was that idea that one's position in society, one's appearance, health, lifespan, opportunities and so on, were largely dominated by a person's actions in past lives.

tellyontellyon said:

Capitalist society operates differently than feudalism.

Malcolm wrote:

Feudalism, like capitalism, never existed. It is, like capitalism, an artificial construct of historians, and in the case of feudalism, historians who misread and misunderstood medieval documents.

tellyontellyon said:

That's what the posts about m-c-m and c-m-c were about. The economic roles under a feudal society are different, and so class means something different.

Malcolm wrote:

It is not correct to refer to ancient Indian society as "feudal", it is an anachronism.

tellyontellyon said:

If Marx coined a term for a particular phenomenon, that doesn't mean that he invented the phenomenon.

Malcolm wrote:

The point is about the twice born is that any one in those upper three castes could own land, factories, shops, and so on where they employed people who sold their labor at a market value off of which the buyer could turn a profit.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, February 1st, 2014 at 10:35 PM

Title: Re: Middle Way Politics

Content:

Nemo said:

Like any other unethical system you choose or have to participate in. You make the most sophisticated ethical compromises between the available bad options. If you were forced to order off the McDonald's menu what would you get?

Malcolm wrote:

I'd rather starve.



Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, February 2nd, 2014 at 12:33 AM

Title: Re: The Idea of Madhyamaka and Yogacara as Equally Correct

Content:

Tsongkhapafan said:

According to Je Tsongkhapa's teaching, you have to begin with a generic image of emptiness which depends upon holding a correct conceptual understanding of emptiness. If you hold an incorrect conceptual understanding of emptiness, it cannot be realised.

Anders said:

So tsongkhapa is the origin of the Tibetan notion that awakening is dependent on correctly assembling an intellectual jigsaw puzzle?

Tsongkhapafan said:

I don't think so, I doubt it.

Regarding views, if there is no correct view, there is no object of meditation and if there is no correct object of meditation, we cannot gain inner experience that pacifies delusions. All problems are caused by wrong view, so I can't agree with your dismissal of correct views which are the only antidote.

Malcolm wrote:

Correct view in Vajrayāna arises from the empowerment. This is the reason why in Lamdre, for example, one meditates the view only after having received the cause empowerment where it is introduced in the section of the ālaya cause continuum (tantra) among the three tantras (cause, path and result).

Despite this, of course one also meditates a sutrayāna view using śamatha and vipaśyāna (supplemented by citations from the Mahāsiddhas) at the time of the vision of experience teachings from among the three visions (impure, experiential and pure). Frankly, despite polemics between Sakya and Kagyu over the issue of sutra mahāmudra, meditating the view here is not so different than sutra mahāmudra save only the name.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, February 2nd, 2014 at 12:38 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

A high caste Brahmin could be working in a steel works. His caste would be high, but he would be part of the proletariat.

In another factory. the factory boss and employer, a (capitalist), might go bust and end up working in Burger King cleaning the toilets (a proletarian).

But you can't just change caste like that. They are clearly different frameworks.

Malcolm wrote:

Well, if you define it in this way, there are almost no capitalists anymore. There are very few people who work for persons who own a factory. For the most part, corporate ownership is collective. What you are saying is that apart from the board and major stockholders, everyone else, from the CEO on down are proletariats because they do not own the means of production, and sell their labor for what they can get.

By contrast, in the nineteenth century, for the most part factories, railroads and so on were own by private persons and families, etc.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, February 2nd, 2014 at 12:41 AM

Title: Re: Middle Way Politics

Content:

David N. Snyder said:

About a month ago there was a thread on Buddhism and politics at our sister site. This is how I responded:

Some of my thoughts on different political systems / economies:

Communism - A great, noble effort; promotes egalitarianism, least amount of poverty, hunger, disparities in wealth and income -- in theory. In practice, it doesn't work well. People find ways around not being allowed private property and wealth. Where there's a will, there's a way and there was always a vast underground market in every communist nation. It is also totalitarian and a poor economic system which did not alleviate poverty for the masses as it was implemented.

Capitalism - worked okay in some instances as long as it remained at the Adam Smith free market level. As it progresses to a larger more complex society, it evolves to corporatism where the government favors certain industries and businesses over others, essentially abandoning its roots. Corruption becomes rampant and politicians are bought off. You get the military-industrial-complex, the prison-industrial-complex, among others.

Monarchies, autocracies, timocracies, and other oligarchies - totalitarian, usually hereditary, not surprising that most nations have gone away from these.

Democracy - "two wolves and a lamb voting on what's for lunch" (rule by the tyranny of the majority)

Plato's Republic I always thought sounded pretty reasonable since it is based on meritocracy. Why not have political leaders who actually know a little something? But how to implement it and choose the philosopher kings [leaders]?

In the end, I guess we're stuck with democracy and to make it the most useful and effective, have some balance between socialism and capitalism. The most successful nations in terms of least poverty and warfare appear to be those with a good mix, including the Scandinavian nations and those in Western Europe.

I see there is other interest here too in meritocracy. I think Plato's Republic would meet this principle, but how to implement it? We seem stuck in democracy but as we know this is tyranny too; a tyranny of the majority and we have seen what that can do. I don't think the Buddha would like principles being thrown out the window in the name of [democratic] compromise either. So Plato's Republic / wheel-turning monarch would be ideal but the implementation would be difficult, if not impossible.

Malcolm wrote:

You missed Republican Democracy, which is what we have in the US. Capitalism, as has been pointed out elsewhere, it is not a political system.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, February 2nd, 2014 at 6:27 AM

Title: Re: The Idea of Madhyamaka and Yogacara as Equally Correct

Content:

smcj said:

What I get is that in the Sakya the intellectual view is introduced/utilized at some point in tantric practice.

Malcolm wrote:

In Sakya, the intellectual view is introduced prior to tantric practice, in the three visions section. In Vajrayāna, the experiential view is introduced in the empowerment, and confirmed through a precise system of meditating on various examples.

smcj said:

The first part of the sentence seems to agree with my prior post about sutra Mahamudra. The second part of the sentence starting with what I underlined I think indicates that intellectual view is incorporated into deity practice--at least in the Sakya.

Malcolm wrote:

No, it is not. What is incorporated into deity practice is the experiential view which comes from empowerment and is stabilized by the unique approach found in Sakya called "meditating the view of the inseparability of samsara and nirvana".

smcj said:

Frankly, despite polemics between Sakya and Kagyu over the issue of sutra mahāmudra, meditating the view here is not so different than sutra mahāmudra save only the name.

I think I get that you are disagreeing with my post about tantric Mahamudra not needing a view--at least in Sakya.

Malcolm wrote:

Tantric Mahāmudra has a "view", but it is experiential, not intellectual, and is based on an example wisdom at the time of empowerment.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, February 2nd, 2014 at 8:36 AM

Title: Re: The Idea of Madhyamaka and Yogacara as Equally Correct

Content:

conebeckham said:

I've not heard the Dharmakaya broken down this way before. Buddha's omniscient mind, what you call the Wisdom Truth Body, is a conventional truth but is an aspect of the Dharmakaya?

Malcolm wrote:

TKF is citing Haribhadra's presentation, followed by the Gelugpa's. . The presentation followed in Sakya, Kagyu and Nyingma for the most part is based on Ārya-Vimuktisena's earlier presentation.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, February 2nd, 2014 at 8:38 AM

Title: Re: Middle Way Politics

Content:

kirtu said:

Vermont is one of the few places where direct democracy still exists (on US soil ironically but hopefully) and in many small communities around the world.

Malcolm wrote:

Vermont, Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Main actually. The town meeting system is deeply ingrained in New England. For example, in my town, we all vote directly on the budget, etc. Then there is a board of selectman charged with carrying out the agendas the town votes on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, February 2nd, 2014 at 9:04 AM

Title: Re: Middle Way Politics

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

You missed Republican Democracy, which is what we have in the US. Capitalism, as has been pointed out elsewhere, it is not a political system.

Sherab Dorje said:

cf <http://dharmawheel.net/viewtopic.php?f=42&t=12046&start=460> for the full twenty-something page discussion.

Republican Democracy? You do know that the word Republic is just the Latin term for the Greek word Democracy, right?

As for capitalism not being a political system, I seems that only capitalists would like to believe that one! They would like to have us believe that capitalism is just the natural method/law by which exchange functions.

Malcolm wrote:

Capitalism was a term coined by Marx. Prior to Marx, no one ever called themselves a "Capitalist". After Marx, people used the term to describe the economic system we still have at present. But it is not and never was a coherent political system. People started calling Smith's thought "Capitalism" because it was his economic thought and policy suggestions in Wealth of Nations that Marx was largely critiquing.

An argument may be made that political and economic systems are mutually dependent, and it is certainly true that as the US is a product of the Scottish Enlightenment, its political values upon which our style of democracy was founded include such items as ownership of private property, "free" markets, etc. These are enshrined in the Bill of Rights, the fifth amendment of which reads:

No person shall be held to answer for a capital, or otherwise infamous crime, unless on a presentment or indictment of a Grand Jury, except in cases arising in the land or naval forces, or in the Militia, when in actual service in time of War or public danger; nor shall any person be subject for the same offense to be twice put in jeopardy of life or limb; nor shall be compelled in any criminal case to be a witness against himself, nor be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor shall private property be taken for public use, without just compensation.

This is of course why Americans by and large are hostile to socialism and communism, because both systems suggest that people do not have a right to private property. But this we are having this discussion in another thread.

Author: Malcolm

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

Title: Re: Middle Way Politics

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Again, I am talking about personal conduct, not political parties.

Sherab Dorje said:

Dude, your opening question was: What would a middle way politics look like, one informed by the Buddha's teachings rather than those of secular authors?  
A meritocracy is not (necessarily) about political parties.

Malcolm wrote:

I never said that I was talking about a meritocracy either.

Here is what I am talking about:

You are a Buddhist: you have political choice a, b and c. What is your criteria for making a choice? How do your choices square with your practice as a Buddhist? How will your choices inform those around you? Etc.

There is no Buddhist "political theory". In absence of such a theory, how do we conduct ourselves in our political lives (we all have them, even the "apolitical") in accordance with Buddha's teachings?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, February 2nd, 2014 at 9:16 PM

Title: Re: Middle Way Politics

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Here is what I am talking about:

You are a Buddhist: you have political choice a, b and c. What is your criteria for making a choice? How do your choices square with your practice as a Buddhist? How will your choices inform those around you? Etc.

There is no Buddhist "political theory". In absence of such a theory, how do we conduct ourselves in our political lives (we all have them, even the "apolitical") in accordance with Buddha's teachings?

Sherab Dorje said:

If we are limited in what political choice we can make then I guess the best we can do is choose the one we believe/feel will cause the least harm and the most benefit for the greatest number of sentient beings. I would say that anything that accords with the Noble Eightfold path would be the safest bet under most circumstances.

Malcolm wrote:

We are always limited in what political choices we can make, to a certain extent.

Secondly, we all have various political convictions, how do these square with the Buddha's teachings. More importantly, is it important that they do?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, February 2nd, 2014 at 11:12 PM

Title: Re: Origins of Dzogchen

Content:

mystic author said:

The fact he received numerous empowerments and did sadhana contradicts what he wrote.

Malcolm wrote:

This merely proves that you do not understand Dzogchen.

The root tantra of Dzogchen, the sGra thal gyur states quite unequivocally:

In order to utterly purify

the body, voice and mind of migrating beings,

fortunate one's are to ripened.

The continuums of the devoted is ripened

in four different ways;

elaborately, unelaborately,

very unelaborately

and extremely unelaborately.

Also, for the purpose of perfuming,

the approach, accomplishment and near approach

are performed by a qualified Guru.

In addition, construct the mandala coming from the tantras,

with the earth rite,

the preparations, the layout and the powders.

After that, the rite of conferring empowerment

begins from the the śravaka vehicle.

Having completed the eight stages [of vehicles],

confer the Great Perfection empowerment of the potentiality of vidyā,

and explain the purpose of each of those [steps],

the the entry, and special power.

There are a great number of other such citations. For example, The Mirror of the Heart Tantra states:

Where will accomplishment be 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.

mystic author said:

Did he ever describe Togal the way, say, Jigme Lingpa or Karma Chagme does?

Malcolm wrote:

In a great more detail in fact in such collections as the bLama yang tig, the mKha' 'gro

yang tig, the Zab mo yang tig, as well as the Tshig don rin po che mdzod and the Theg mchog mdzod. Without Longchenpa, the brief presentations of Jigme Lingpa and Karma Chagme would not be possible.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, February 2nd, 2014 at 11:17 PM

Title: Re: Middle Way Politics

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

We want to make the Buddha a capitalist, or a socialist, or an anarchist, or an authoritarian in order to justify our preferences.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, and this is a problem. Buddha could not have been a capitalist, but he clearly approved of markets and trade; he could not have been a socialist, but he clearly set up temporary propertyless communes that eventually became permanent. He was not by any means an anarchist, since hierarchy clearly established in his sangha with monks, novices and lay people. And he was not an authoritarian since he recommended humanitarian values to rulers.

Like I said in the (currently locked)

<http://dharmawheel.net/viewtopic.php?f=66&t=15439> thread, it might well be that a truly Dharmic social/political reality may not satisfy liberal values at all. Who knows?[/quote]

We can only find out by trying to live with others according to our Buddhist values and see how they play out politically. These online forums are in fact an example of just that. And if history shows anything, it shows we still have some maturity to develop in our interactions with one another, myself included.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, February 3rd, 2014 at 5:51 AM

Title: Re: Before Longchen Nyingthig, what was the most popular cyc

Content:

ConradTree said:

Before Longchen Nyingthig, what was the most popular cycle?

Gongpa Zangthal right?

Malcolm wrote:

Probably Konchog Chidu.



Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, February 3rd, 2014 at 9:20 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

HH Dalai Lama:

"I am a supporter of globalization"

<http://www.dalailama.com/news/post/362-exclusive-interview---i-am-a-supporter-of-globalization>

So what it is that we need?

Dalai Lama:

I call it a "responsible free market economy

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, February 3rd, 2014 at 9:26 AM

Title: Re: Middle Way Politics

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

There is no Buddhist "political theory".

kirtu said:

There is: Nagarjuna's Precious Garland.

Kirt

Malcolm wrote:

I wouldn't go so far as to say that is a systematic political theory, Kirt. It is a Niti śāstra, advice on governance, not a well constructed political theory like Kautilya's Arthaśāstra, i.e. Treatise on Ends.

I would say that it is what it is, advice to a King, with some policy recommendations. However, I do agree that it contains the essentials for forming the basis of someone's political conscience.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, February 3rd, 2014 at 8:01 PM

Title: Re: Before Longchen Nyingthig, what was the most popular cyc

Content:

ConradTree said:  
Okay, forget about popular.

What was considered the best Menngagde cycle before Longchen Nyingthig?

Gonpa Zangthal right?

Malcolm wrote:  
Khyentse Wangpo opines that the Gongpa Zangthal is the most profound of the Nyingthig cycles.

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Monday, February 3rd, 2014 at 8:05 PM  
Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism  
Content:  
Malcolm wrote:  
HH Dalai Lama:

"I am a supporter of globalization"  
<http://www.dalailama.com/news/post/362-exclusive-interview---i-am-a-supporter-of-globalization>

So what it is that we need?

Dalai Lama:

I call it a "responsible free market economy

Sherab Dorje said:  
And in the another article he says he is a Marxist and had great respect for Mao... go figure.

Malcolm wrote:  
Yes, it appears during the last decade HHDL's thinking about these things has somewhat evolved. Personally, I think what he actually means by "Marxist" is that a state should provide guaranteed minimal welfare for its citizens. This is very consistent, for example, with the recommendations found in the Ratnavali and so on. I think he also recognizes that a free market economy provides opportunities that are not possible in a planned economy. Free markets spur more than mere exchange of goods. They also spur creativity, for better or for worse.

My perspective is that in an ideal society there is a balance struck between a market economy, providing minimum support needed for citizens (health care, emergency relief, infrastructure) and the ecosystem, with the ecosystem being a dominant consideration. In other words, if a particular market has a particularly negative impact on the

ecosystem, it should be be tightly regulated, etc.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, February 3rd, 2014 at 9:20 PM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

AlexanderS said:

Which country in the world do you think is closest in fulfilling those ideals?

Malcolm wrote:

For all the crap people give the US, I'd pick the US.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, February 3rd, 2014 at 9:22 PM

Title: Re: "...but the science of Buddhism will never change."

Content:

ConradTree said:

But Rongzom says Dzogchen rejects any relative truth.

Dzogchen only subscribes to 1 truth.

Malcolm wrote:

Well, we were talking about sutra.

Further, Dzogchen rejects the two truths, because relative "truth" is not true, being a deluded cognition. But Dzogchen does not reject appearances which appear to ignorance (ma rig pa).

Dzogchen substitutes vidyā and āvidyā (rig pa and ma rig pa) for the term "pāramārtha satya" and "samvṛitti satya".

Also one will discover that Dzogchen, in rejecting the two truths, also rejects ultimate truth, as it states in The Mind Mirror of Samantabhadra:

Since there is no ultimate, also the name "relative" does not exist.

And as it says in Soaring Great Garuda:

Since phenomena and nonphenomena have always been merged and are inseparable, there is no further need to explain an "ultimate phenomenon".

So not only is the relative negated in Dzogchen, so is any concept of ultimate.

M

ConradTree said:

Is there a published source on these quotes?

It would really help me out.

Malcolm wrote:

Well, not these exact translations, for they are mine, but you can find them in the Supreme Source, or Dowman's Original Dzogchen.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, February 3rd, 2014 at 9:35 PM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Well, I've been to a lot of places in the world, Africa, Asia, India, Europe, etc., and while they all have their points, and I have enjoyed being in them all, the US offers a basic political stability and natural wealth that is hard to beat in most other places in the world. I live in one of the largest contiguous forests in the world, i.e., 25 million acres of trees from Pennsylvania to Maine. Where I live it is largely eco-conscience, we have a strong tradition of social welfare, at a local level we practice direct democracy (Town meetings, invented in the Massachusetts Bay Colony), it is water wealthy because of the forests, etc. Also the Northwest, Oregon and Washington, have a culture that mirrors ours because they were initially settled by New Englanders. There are physical advantages to living here in the Northeast that you can't really find elsewhere because of the wealth of our economy (even when it is in arrears), natural resources and so on.

India, Africa and China are eco-disasters waiting to happen for many reasons. Russia, while filled with a lot of trees, is too damn cold. Europe is nice, but restrictive. Latin America is fun, but politically unstable.

Canada, on the other hand, has many of the advantages of the United States as well.

So, I pick the US, especially the Northeast and Northwest.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, February 3rd, 2014 at 10:55 PM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

As for political instability... you never know what is lurking around the corner for the US. Anyway, wouldn't you say that its stability is based largely on gorging its population on resources stolen from other countries? Not exactly an ecological consciousness. And even with the amount of resources at its disposal it still has a HUGE foreign debt and the US still allows its citizens to go without universal health care, etc...

Malcolm wrote:

As to point 1) I don't think so.

Point 2) No, I don't think we are stealing anything from anyone.

Point 3) If I owe you a hundred dollars, I have to be nice to you. If I owe you a 100,000,000 million, you have to be nice to me.

US foreign debt is 5.6 trillion as of 1/1/13.

If you look, you will see most of debt is held by Other (29.3%) China (22.5%) and Japan (19.0%), in descending order.

China and Japan are heavily dependent on us to buy their imports. So, I don't really see this as a problem for us. The total external debt however is preposterous: 17,344,649,888,998 i.e. 17.3 trillion dollars. Followed by the UK and 10 trillion, followed by France and Germany, and so on. However, of the US debt, 12 trillion is held by Americans. So we are in no danger.

Point 4) The Affordable Care Act is meant to address that through the market. I think it is a bad idea, personally, and support Universal Health Care, but it seems the majority of Americans still cling to the illusion of market choices where their health care is concerned rather than understanding that health care, even if private, should be a regulated monopoly like any other utility.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, February 3rd, 2014 at 11:48 PM

Title: Re: "...but the science of Buddhism will never change."

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

So not only is the relative negated in Dzogchen, so is any concept of ultimate.

M

Tsongkhapafan said:

This sounds like nihilism, can you please explain what is affirmed by Dzogchen? Anything?

Thank you

Malcolm wrote:

Self-originated wisdom, rang byung ye shes, svayambhujñāna, the three kāyas, everything thing else is false, thus there is no basis for establishing an ultimate since the relative is merely a delusion (and the ultimate of Madhyamaka can only be

established relatively). Dzogchen texts frequently state there is only one stage, buddhahood.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, February 3rd, 2014 at 11:54 PM

Title: Re: Before Longchen Nyingthig, what was the most popular cyc

Content:

conebeckham said:

Lama Gongdu has mengagde level stuff, doesn't it?

Malcolm wrote:

All of these do. Typically it is often stated there are three main Nyinthigs: the Nyingthig Yabshi is the most extensive, the Gongpa Zangthal is the middle length, and Ati Zabdon is the concise one.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, February 4th, 2014 at 1:03 AM

Title: Re: Make Life Meaningless

Content:

shel said:

...if everything is an illusion then nothing is an illusion.

Malcolm wrote:

You have a problem with that? You need something real in contrast to an illusion? Something non-empty so there can be emptiness?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, February 4th, 2014 at 1:20 AM

Title: Re: Make Life Meaningless

Content:

shel said:

...if everything is an illusion then nothing is an illusion.

Malcolm wrote:

You have a problem with that? You need something real in contrast to an illusion? Something non-empty so there can be emptiness?

shel said:

Emptiness is a human concept, my good man, and thus an illusion.

Malcolm wrote:

That's one kind of emptiness. But just one.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, February 4th, 2014 at 1:24 AM

Title: Re: Make Life Meaningless

Content:

shel said:

How many brands are there?

Malcolm wrote:

Count how many things there are, and that will give you the number.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, February 4th, 2014 at 1:26 AM

Title: Re: The Idea of Madhyamaka and Yogacara as Equally Correct

Content:

conebeckham said:

Interesting....Malcolm, do you know if the actual Indian sources are translated into English? Haribadra's and Vimuktisena's works, I mean....?

Malcolm wrote:

You should Makransky's book, Buddhahood Embodied I believe, where he details all this. Sparham has translated Ārya Vimuktisena's commentary on AA in full. Dense reading, but worth it.

To My knowledge, Haribhadra's Aloka and Sphutartha remain untranslated.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, February 4th, 2014 at 1:39 AM

Title: Re: Make Life Meaningless

Content:

shel said:

How many brands are there?

Malcolm wrote:

Count how many things there are, and that will give you the number.

shel said:

Everything is an illusion, remember, including the concept of emptiness.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, there is no contradiction.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, February 4th, 2014 at 2:26 AM

Title: Re: Yangzab and Chokling tersar

Content:

Drikung\_Dzogchen said:

Maybe it is fair to say the Yangzab is an appendix to the Khandro Nyingtig...

Malcolm wrote:

Rinchen Puntsog himself describes the Yangzab as an appendix to the Khadro Nyingtig.

Hard to get more authoritative than that.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, February 4th, 2014 at 2:28 AM

Title: Re: Make Life Meaningless

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, there is no contradiction.

shel said:

I never claimed a contradiction. I merely pointed out that if everything is false then nothing is false. That is also false of course, because I thought it.

Malcolm wrote:

So there you go. On the other, everything being false does not make everything true, that is a non sequitur.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, February 4th, 2014 at 2:38 AM

Title: Re: "...but the science of Buddhism will never change."

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

...the ultimate of Madhyamaka can only be established relatively ...

dzogchungpa said:

Can you explain that a little more?

Malcolm wrote:

It means that according to Madhyamaka there are two so called ultimates, one is nominal, the other is the direct perception of emptiness.

But from a Dzogchen point of view, since all relative truths are objects of false cognitions, even the cognition of the nominal ultimate is faulty. The only thing that is true is the cognition of dharmatā. That most certainly requires some kind of direct introduction which is lacking in Sutra teachings. The main advantage to Vajrayāna teachings is that dharmatā or the example wisdom, is introduced during the time of empowerment. In the case of gsar ma, it is the introduction of bliss and emptiness at the time of the third and fourth empowerments; in the case of the Dzogchen it is the



introduction of the potentiality of vidyā during anyone of the four styles of empowerment, elaborate, unelaborate and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, February 4th, 2014 at 2:40 AM

Title: Re: Make Life Meaningless

Content:

shel said:

Illusion in the Buddhist sense meaning merely impermanence has meaning, on the other hand.

Malcolm wrote:

Illusion in the (Mahāyāna) Buddhist sense means that when you see an illusion and you investigate it, the illusion you saw cannot be found.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, February 4th, 2014 at 3:00 AM

Title: Re: Yangzab and Chokling tersar

Content:

Drikung\_Dzogchen said:

Where does he describe the Yangzab in those terms Malcom.

Malcolm wrote:

I forget exactly where, but it is definitely in there. You can ask David Arndt also, since when I was working on these texts for him, we discussed it.

You have to understand that the outer three roots is basically just a elaborated version of the Hayagriva/Yogini sadhana in the KN.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, February 4th, 2014 at 3:06 AM

Title: Re: Before Longchen Nyingthig, what was the most popular cyc

Content:

Drikung\_Dzogchen said:

If I am correct the Longchen Nyingtig is also very related to the Khandro Nyingtig.

Malcolm wrote:

No, it is related to the Vlma Nyinthig.

Drikung\_Dzogchen said:

And one of Jigme Lingpa's main practices was a different terma revealed by both Gyalwang Rinchen Phuntsog as well as his root student Sherab Ozer. I imagine that

Jigme Lingpa could have very well received the Yangzab.

Malcolm wrote:  
He did.

Drikung\_Dzogchen said:

Jigme Lingpa was devoted enough to Gyalwang Rinchen Phuntsog that he composed a short Namthar (life story) of his Rinchen Phuntsogs life. So I could be wrong but the Yangzab could be the first concise Nyingtig cycle based on the Nyingtig Yabshi, in particular the Khandro Nyingtig.

Malcolm wrote:

That distinction goes to Ratna Lingpa.

Drikung\_Dzogchen said:

The Yangzab contains everything necessary to traverse all the stages of Dzogchen practice. And yes it does have quite a few Wrathful practices but they are not the heart of the terma. We have to remember just how chaotic the 16th century was in Tibet. Gyalwang Rinchen Phuntsog who was equally a fully accomplished practitioner of Mahamudra and the traditional Drikung Kagyu teachings marks a turning point in the Drikung Kagyu lineage. He chose (in his Namthar was called by the Dakinis) to step down as the head of the Drikung Kagyu lineage and go to the mountains above Terdrom where he engaged in extensive retreat and revealed the Yangzab Terma. During this time period the Karma Kagyu and the Drikung Kagyu allied themselves against Ganden and went to war which proved to be a disaster for both lineages, Ganden prevailed. Though Gyalwang Rinchen Phuntsog was not involved in this war he undoubtedly had many enemies who wished him dead. Some of these enemies probably were from within the Drikung Kagyu lineage who help prejudices against the Nyingma teachings. So these wrathful practices were probably very necessary for the times he lived in. But though the Yangzab Terma cannot said to be the most popular cycle, that really matters very little. It has been maintained up to the present time. Gyalwang Rinchen Phuntsog transcended any type of sectarian lineage labels. He really is an early example of the Rime tradition. His root student Sherab Ozer who before meeting Rinchen Phuntsog was trained in the Sakya tradition, and possibly the Gelugpa to some degree. But more importantly he composed what may be the first Rime text outlining how all the lineages fit together as a whole and embody the Buddha's teachings without conflict. The great jamgon Kongtrul Rinpoche of the 19th century who brought the Rime movement to full bloom references this text by Sherab Ozer. There is still much research to be done but there are many interesting questions here regarding these various connections. I would be interested in anyone's input as my knowledge is more limited. But I will finish with the following. Gyalwang Rinchen Phuntsog played a major (and not always acknowledged role) in shaping the Drikung Lineage down to the present time. Dudjom Rinpoche said that Rinchen Phuntsog helped save the Nyingma lineage when it was persecuted by the Gelugpa and certain transmissions were in danger of being broken. Rinchen Phuntsog transmitted the Nyingtig Yabshi as well as many other Nyingma transmissions to Lamas who would go on to be very important in upholding the Nyingma lineage. Also Rinchen

Phuntsogs's son who was a throne holder of the Drikung lineage was the father to five Tulkus, two of which were the first HH Drikung Kyabgon Chetsang and the first HH Drikung Kyabgon Chutsang. From this time on the Drikung lineage would be led reincarnations of these two HH Drikung Kyabgon tulkus. The first HH Drikung Kyabgon Chutsang who is also known as Rigzen Chokyi Dragpa was said to be the reincarnation of Rinchen Phuntsog. His collected works comprise of about 15 volumes. He composed numerous Yangzab sadhanas based on the root Terma texts revealed by Rinchen Phuntsog making the practices clearer. The Shinje or Yamantaka practice which is very special to the Drikung Kagyu lineage entered the lineage through Rinchen Phuntsog. Rigzen Chokyi Dragpa or the first HH Drikung Kyabgon Chutsang had numerous Shinje pure visions which then became the Shinje Drubchen that is practiced down to the current day. So I know I have gone on into many different topics than what I started with but I welcome input or corrections and hope my ramblings are of some benefit.

Malcolm wrote:

You can stop advertising now...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, February 4th, 2014 at 3:18 AM

Title: Re: Make Life Meaningless

Content:

shel said:

Illusion in the Buddhist sense meaning merely impermanence has meaning, on the other hand.

Malcolm wrote:

Illusion in the (Mahāyāna) Buddhist sense means that when you see an illusion and you investigate it, the illusion you saw cannot be found.

shel said:

Because?

Malcolm wrote:

It is a mere insubstantial appearance that cannot bear analysis.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, February 4th, 2014 at 3:19 AM

Title: Re: "...but the science of Buddhism will never change."

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The only thing that is true is the cognition of dharmatā. That most certainly requires some kind of direct introduction ...

dzogchungpa said:

I'm not saying you're wrong, but is it supposed to be obvious that this requires some

kind of direct introduction?

Malcolm wrote:

It is not obvious at all, hence the reason one is considered fortunate to meet secret mantra.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, February 4th, 2014 at 3:23 AM

Title: Re: Drikung Dzogchen Lineage

Content:

Drikung\_Dzogchen said:

Just wanted to clarify that Ganor Rinpoche is Nyingma and not part of the Drikung Kagyu Lineage. He is a Terton that has revealed a number of practices including a Vajrakilaya cycle. I do not know if he revealed an Achi Terma but he did have a vision of Achi Chokyi Drolma that revealed to him that Lho Ontul Rinpoches son Ratna Rinpoche was the Quality emanation of the Drikung Terton Lho Nuden Dorje. Historically Lho Ontul Rinpoche entered the Drikung Kagyu lineage in the 19th century as the older brother of Lho Nuden Dorje. But Achi Chkyi Drolma is also practiced in other lineages such as in Dujom Rinpoche's tradition. At the Khenpo brothers center in New York State her image can be seen. One of her emanations is said to be Yeshe Tsogyal. The late Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok when visiting Terdrom where the Yangzab Terma was revealed had a vision of a wrathful form of Achi Chokyi Drolma and composed a praise to her. Once H.E. Garchen Rinpoche gave me the transmission for the 108 Tara's and stopped at Achi Chokyi Drolma to let me know she was also an emanation of Tara before he finished the transmission. I would be interested to know if Ganor Rinpoche has revealed any Achi termas. Other Achi Termas were revealed by the Drikung Terton Osel Dorje as well as a very special Pure Vision practice of Achi Chokyi Drolma that was received by the previous H.E. Tritasab Rinpoche. This is an amazing practice that was brought out of Tibet by Lho Ontul Rinpoche in the 80's who then gave the transmission to H.H. Drikung Kyabgon Chetsang Rinpoche. In 2004 at the Monkey Year teachings the most current incarnation of H.E. Tritsab Rinpoche gave the transmission for this practice. In this practice Achi Chokyi Drolma can be practiced as the Lama, Yidam, Dakini, or protector. It is supplemented by many different useful concise practices. The previous H.E. Tritab Rinpoche revealed this while he was in a Chinese Labor Camp in the late sixties. It is very much a practice for these times.

Malcolm wrote:

You might try taking a breath. Paragraphs and punctuation which make for readability are nice too.

Just wanted to clarify that Ganor Rinpoche is Nyingma and not part of the Drikung Kagyu Lineage. He is a Terton that has revealed a number of practices including a Vajrakilaya cycle. I do not know if he revealed an Achi Terma, but he did have a vision of Achi Chokyi Drolma that revealed to him that Lho Ontul Rinpoche's son, Ratna Rinpoche, was the Quality emanation of the Drikung Terton Lho Nuden Dorje. Historically Lho Ontul Rinpoche entered the Drikung Kagyu lineage in the 19th century as the older brother of

Lho Nuden Dorje.

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Other Achi Termas were revealed by the Drikung Tertön Ösel Dorje. Also there is a very special Pure Vision practice of Achi Chokyi Drolma that was received by the previous H.E. Tritsab Rinpoche. This is an amazing practice that was brought out of Tibet by Lho Öntul Rinpoche in the 80's, who then gave the transmission to H.H. Drikung Kyabgon Chetsang Rinpoche. In 2004, at the Monkey Year teachings, the most current incarnation of H.E. Tritsab Rinpoche gave the transmission for this practice. In this practice, Achi Chokyi Drolma can be practiced as the Lama, Yidam, Dakini, or protector. It is supplemented by many different useful concise practices. The previous H.E. Tritab Rinpoche revealed this while he was in a Chinese Labor Camp in the late sixties. It is very much a practice for these times.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, February 4th, 2014 at 3:31 AM

Title: Re: Make Life Meaningless

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

It is a mere insubstantial appearance that cannot bear analysis.

PadmaVonSamba said:

Why? does it break down and start crying?

appearances can bear analysis. they just always fail the "inherently existent" test.

.  
.   
.

Malcolm wrote:

No, appearances cannot bear ultimate analysis.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, February 4th, 2014 at 3:35 AM

Title: Re: Make Life Meaningless

Content:

shel said:

That is not a reason. You're only saying that it cannot bear your analysis. If you lost your keys, for example, and did not possess the ability to find them, it would be premature, to say the least, to declare you keys illusory.

Malcolm wrote:

We are discussing illusions and not keys: the analogy is thus, just as illusions cannot bear analysis, likewise, neither can phenomena. They are both the same in being phenomena that arise from conditions, but when subject to analysis, nothing can be found about them to indicate they are anything other than mere appearances.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, February 4th, 2014 at 3:52 AM

Title: Re: Make Life Meaningless

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

We are discussing illusions and not keys...

shel said:

So keys are not illusory, interesting!

Malcolm wrote:

Prior to analysis, even an illusion of an elephant is taken to be an elephant at face value. One can understand keys and other phenomena in the same way.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, February 4th, 2014 at 3:56 AM

Title: Re: is there a teacher in the house? or at least some advice

Content:

rubix said:

I posted in personal experiences about dzogchen and got no where except backwards. I'm doing the best I can without a teacher reading lots and learning a lot too, seeing how I probably won't find a teacher just like that can anyone recommend a book that outlines the completion stage of dzogchen or can someone explain it

Malcolm wrote:

No one will help you, publicly at least, because you do not have a teacher and the necessary transmissions. It is a question of samaya, the code of conduct that governs the secrecy around these teachings. And I gave you advice in the other thread. Now it is up to you.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, February 4th, 2014 at 4:29 AM

Title: Re: is there a teacher in the house? or at least some advice

Content:

rubix said:

Was only asking about books doesn't matter anymore I found out what I needed to know  
I'm in the 5th stage I found it in one of my BOOKS

Malcolm wrote:

You can delude yourself if you like.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, February 4th, 2014 at 4:40 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

Zhen Li:

Just to point out that Marx was talking about abolishing bourgeois property, i.e.  
ownership of the means of production.

Malcolm wrote:

Well, thank the founding fathers that ownership of "bourgeois property" is a right  
protected in the US Constitution.

I can guarantee you, if I had a small factory that manufactured, say, herbal products,  
and people I employed decided they owned my factory and not me, after I had made all  
the capital investments to build that business, they would be out on their ear and  
looking for another job. And if they disturbed my right to conduct my business in peace,  
of course I would call the police, as would any sane person.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, February 4th, 2014 at 4:44 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

Edit.... or perhaps you would be out on your ear...?

Malcolm wrote:

Maybe so, but it would be their future bad karma, but merely the ripening of my past bad  
karma.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, February 4th, 2014 at 4:53 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

M:

If it's all the ripening of Karma, why worry.... just accept it.

Malcolm wrote:

One has no choice but to accept one's ripened karma. There is nothing one can do about it, apart from becoming a realized person. One can however change the karma one has in future lives, by avoiding the ten non-virtues and adopting their opposite.

Of course, taking what has not been given is the best way to ensure that you will be a pauper or worse in your next life. One simply cannot reconcile the seizure property advocated under Marxism with Buddhist ethics.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, February 4th, 2014 at 4:55 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

Anyway.... What bothers you more: the karmic fate of your exploited workers?... Or your attachment to your 'capital investment'?

Malcolm wrote:

If I allow my employees to steal my business, they will certainly incur a great deal of negative karma. I, on the other hand, by employing people and giving them a fair wage based on their skills, am only accruing positive karma.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, February 4th, 2014 at 5:02 AM

Title: Re: Make Life Meaningless

Content:

shel said:

You have yet to offer a reason. With no reason it appears that you merely lack the ability to find.

Malcolm wrote:

I gave you a reason, which I will repeat a final time, in case you have not clearly understood.



The reason is precisely because, like an illusion, nothing can be ascertained of phenomena apart from their mere appearance. Just as an illusory elephant cannot be found when searched for, likewise, when searched for, apart from a mere appearance, keys and other such phenomena cannot be found no matter how hard one may try.

Now of course, if you wish, adhere to a belief in some species of "objective existence", but that's your problem and not mine.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, February 4th, 2014 at 5:12 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Point 2) No, I don't think we are stealing anything from anyone.

Sherab Dorje said:

Iraq? Afghanistan? Panama? Actually, almost any Central and Southern American country you can imagine (especially during the Reagan years), Before that it was Vietnam and Laos. South Korea. Japan. Etc... Hell, they even tried to steal from Somalia, but they got their ass whipped. Imagine trying to steal from Somalia. Like stealing from a beggar, really.

Malcolm wrote:

We didn't steal anything from Iraq. Their oil reserves were certainly not worth an invasion. We did not steal anything from Afghanistan. They have no developed industries. Maybe some US soldiers bought some heroin. Panama has been in the US sphere of influence for a Century. We did them a favor by getting rid of Noriega, even if he was originally a CIA puppet.

We didn't steal anything from Vietnam, though we did bomb the hell out of them. If you want to accuse someone of stealing from there, look to the French. We invested hundreds of millions, but never got anything back except 50,000 dead bodies for our troubles. We did not steal anything from S. Korea, nor Japan.

Sherab Dorje said:

China and Japan are heavily dependent on us to buy their imports.

Why?

Malcolm wrote:

In the case of China, it is because they manufacture things cheaper than can be done in the US due to labor costs. Japan has a cornered a market on cars and electronics.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, February 4th, 2014 at 5:35 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

We didn't steal anything from Iraq. Their oil reserves were certainly not worth an invasion. We did not steal anything from Afghanistan. They have no developed industries. Maybe some US soldiers bought some heroin. Panama has been in the US sphere of influence for a Century. We did them a favor by getting rid of Noriega, even if he was originally a CIA puppet.

We didn't steal anything from Vietnam, though we did bomb the hell out of them. If you wan to accuse someone of stealing from their, look to the French. We invested hundreds of millions, but never got anything back except 50,000 dead bodies for our troubles. We did not steal anything from S. Korea, nor Japan.

Sherab Dorje said:

So the invasions and occupations were done out of the goodness of their heart? Just for the hell of it? C'mon Malcolm... Give me a break!

Malcolm wrote:

Well, it did have the net effect of injecting our manufacturing economy with increased production of weapons. After the war, in the 1970's, the bottom fell out of the arms industry in the US.

But basically everyone agrees that Iraq, Vietnam, etc. were expensive mistakes, and nothing substantial was won in these engagements.

Korea and Vietnam were just proxy wars with the Communists.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, February 4th, 2014 at 5:39 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

Zhen Li said:

just understand that the bourgeoisie fundamentally always leans towards the progressive, puritan, democratic, and protestant side of things in the world, and you're set.

Malcolm wrote:

A lot of people forget the revolutions of 1848 were fundamentally bourgeois revolutions, because while they have more economic power than aristocracies, they were barred from the tables of power. "Liberalism" in the 19th century Europe meant empowering the bourgeois politically. At least that is what I was taught at Harvard.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, February 4th, 2014 at 5:40 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

Zhen Li said:

Once again, this underlines the futility of many of the post-colonial critiques that really have little to no grounding in economic reality - at the same time, it obviously underlines the futility of imperialist arguments.

Malcolm, what do you think of Westphalian Peace?

Malcolm wrote:

It looks like a historical model fresh on the minds the American Colonials when they forged the Republic. The constitutional congress was very much like this. Most people do not realize for example that Puritans invaded Maryland and ruled it for ten years in the 1650's.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, February 4th, 2014 at 6:03 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

Zhen Li said:

A lot of people forget the revolutions of 1848 were fundamentally bourgeois revolutions, because while they have more economic power than aristocracies, they were barred from the tables of power. "Liberalism" in the 19th century Europe meant empowering the bourgeois politically. At least that is what I was taught at Harvard.

Yes, and the great reform movement in the UK was led by the dissenters, who were great entrepreneurs. Liberalism in Europe was protestantism stripped of god, but affirming the same "god given rights" as the Puritans, i.e. equality and democracy.

Unlike Marxists, I don't believe in any materialist force behind the past 400 years, just good intentions gone too far.

I read this today, found it a fun read, and I more or less agree with all of the positions:  
<http://cathedralwhatever.wordpress.com/2014/01/02/premises-of-reactionary-thought-taking-stock/>

Malcolm wrote:

I whole heartedly agree with this:

Libertarianism is retarded.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, February 4th, 2014 at 7:03 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

I, on the other hand, by employing people and giving them a fair wage based on their skills, am only accruing positive karma.

And who decides if you are paying a fair wage based on their skills?...

Malcolm wrote:

The value of their labor is what they agree to sell it for. If they think they can do better, they are free to try and sell their labor elsewhere. It is the same as if I have a fish. I can try and sell for as much as I like, but the price will always be in accord with demand. That is simply the way economies work.

tellyontellyon said:

Perhaps you'll be the one with the bad Karma?

Malcolm wrote:

There is no bad karma when two people enter into an agreement of exchange and each honors their part of the bargain.

Connolly again: The capital of the master class is not their property; it is the unpaid labor of the working class - 'the hire of the laborer kept back by fraud'.

I simply do not agree that this is so. Of course employers have the option, if they choose, of profit sharing. But it is not a right that employees have, it is a privilege granted by the employer.

You cannot have a market economy under your version of Socialism where people are free to buy and sell as they wish, whatever they wish, so I do not support it. People are not free under your version of Socialism, they must do the bidding of committees and party functionaries.

I also do not agree with anarcho-capitalists, this is another extreme vision.

Markets requires sound regulations in order to keep them stable and functioning. Among those regulations may indeed be wage guarantees so that people without skills may at least make a living wage, but no more than that. We have seen in this country what happens to industries when the unions get a stranglehold on them: they become moribund, eventually sicken and then die. On the other hand, in the beginning unions were important in setting many workplace precedents, and I think that unions have positive roles to play as well. It is a delicate balance.

The fact of the matter is that my thinking comes from analyzing how I feel in these various situations.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, February 4th, 2014 at 7:05 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

Vietnam (and now Afghanistan) were/are wars aimed at controlling heroin production and distribution.

Malcolm wrote:

Never though you went in for conspiracy theories, guess I was wrong.

Sherab Dorje said:

If Vietnam was a proxy war with the Communists then why didn't the US invade Cambodia or Laos?

Malcolm wrote:

We did, illegally. We had a secret war there.

Sherab Dorje said:

The US needed Korea to be able to maintain a foothold (military bases) on continental East Asia.

Malcolm wrote:

That was not in our planning at the time. That is a net effect, not an intention.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, February 4th, 2014 at 7:10 AM

Title: Re: Climate Change: We're Doomed

Content:

Kim O'Hara said:

oil-subsidies.jpg

Could this have something to do with why we haven't already taken strong action against fossil fuels?

Kim

Malcolm wrote:

We have not gone after fossil fuels because it would destroy the world economy.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, February 4th, 2014 at 7:46 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

Vietnam (and now Afghanistan) were/are wars aimed at controlling heroin production and distribution.

Malcolm wrote:

Never though you went in for conspiracy theories, guess I was wrong.

Sherab Dorje said:

I am not into conspiracy theories. I worked with Afghan refugees and knew people working in Afghanistan for Medecins Sans Frontiers. Unfortunately it is not a conspiracy theory. You forget the guns for drugs antics of the Iran-Contra affair? Short memory you have there Malcolm. Was that a conspiracy theory too?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, I am well aware of the facts of the Iran/Contra case, but we are not in Afghanistan to control the heroin trade.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, February 4th, 2014 at 7:57 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

We've already discussed that workers are not free to simply go and work somewhere else.

Capitalists own the means of production, i.e. the places of employment. And capitalism, produces endemic levels of unemployment, ensures a never ending stream of unemployed people who would be willing to work for less. An engineered race to the bottom.

Just because somebody consents that does not mean they aren't being exploited. It really depends on what their other options are. In an extremely unequal society, 'consent' doesn't add up to much.

E.g. Here is an article about girls being trafficked into the sex industry and questions the concept of consent. (Malcolm will love it, it's from Harvard .)

<http://www.law.harvard.edu/students/orgs/jlg/vol27/balos.pdf>

Malcolm wrote:

It is simple. People go where there is work, and they sell their labor. The more skilled they are, the more they earn. So, the moral of the story is to make sure your kids do well in school if you want them to be more successful.

As for the sex trade, this is not a fair comparison.

Anyway, I am about done here. We will never see eye to eye about this so it is pointless to continue going around and around. As far as I can tell, there is no benefit to the types of politics you follow for anyone. At least, in the present economic system, people can and do with regularity and a bit of personal initiative pull themselves up out of poverty. There is a reason everyone wants to come to the States, and it is not because it sucks here.

More importantly, however, I think that Marxism, not to mention Anarchism, and Buddhism are utterly irreconcilable.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, February 4th, 2014 at 8:19 AM

Title: Re: Make Life Meaningless

Content:

shel said:

You're not making sense, all sorts of things can be found about objects besides their 'mere appearance'.

Malcolm wrote:

When you investigate one appearance, for example, "keys", you will not find "keys" in the parts, separate from the parts or in all the parts no matter how hard you try. It is the same with a person, you will not find a person in all the aggregates, one aggregate or separate from the aggregates. A person, while apparent, is just an illusion.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, February 4th, 2014 at 8:25 AM

Title: Re: Climate Change: We're Doomed

Content:

Kim O'Hara said:

That's certainly what we have been told to think ... but hold on a moment: who told us to think that?

Kim

Malcolm wrote:

It's obvious.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, February 4th, 2014 at 8:29 AM

Title: Re: Before Longchen Nyingthig, what was the most popular cyc

Content:

Drikung\_Dzogchen said:

You are right, there is the Vima Nyingthig connection but Tulku Thondup says Longchen Nyingthig is also essence of Khandro Nyingthig.

Malcolm wrote:

Sort of, the Rigdzin Dupa is definitely modeled on a very similar sadhana found in the Khandro Nyinthig. But the Dzogchen teachings in the LN depend primarily on the Vima Nyinthig.

The Khandro Nyinthig is more or less a combination of Nyinthig with Anuyoga practices of various kinds.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, February 4th, 2014 at 8:07 PM

Title: Re: Climate Change: We're Doomed

Content:

Kim O'Hara said:

That's certainly what we have been told to think ... but hold on a moment: who told us to think that?

Kim

Malcolm wrote:

It's obvious.

Kim O'Hara said:

Hi, Malcolm,

Do you mean it's, "Obvious that going after fossil fuels would destroy the world economy" or, "Obvious who told us to think that"?

I disagree with the first and can provide evidence as to its falsity, but agree with the second ... at least, I have some likely candidates in mind. You may have others and may be right about them too.

Kim

Malcolm wrote:

Kim,

At present our manufacturing capacity as well as our agricultural capacity is completely dependent on fossil fuels, not to mention the grids in various countries. Until someone discovers another relatively inexpensive source of consumable energy that does not itself depend on fossil fuels, at present world population levels it is irresponsible to start eliminating the use of fossil fuels by fiat. Is eliminating their use a desiderata? Certainly. Does our world ecology demand it, certainly. Can we do so immediately and globally? No, our addiction to fossil fuels is so deep, that it is impossible for us to withdraw from fossil fuels at this time. Every part of global trade, manufacture and agriculture extensively uses fossil fuels.



Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, February 4th, 2014 at 10:26 PM

Title: Re: Make Life Meaningless

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

when searched for, apart from a mere appearance, keys and other such phenomena cannot be found no matter how hard one may try.

PadmaVonSamba said:

When you say, " cannot be found ",

exactly what do mean by "keys"?

Can you be a little more descriptive?

.  
.  
.

Malcolm wrote:

Just what I said. Please review the seven fold reasoning of the chariot found in Chandrakirit's Madhyamaka avatara for more detail.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, February 5th, 2014 at 8:35 AM

Title: Re: Climate Change: We're Doomed

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

Wind, wave, solar.... these are more difficult to 'own' as such. I suspect that stockmarket investors would expect less of a return on these sorts of technologies. It's not impossible that that could change over time, but renewables need to be developed now, before more damage is done to the environment.

Malcolm wrote:

You are being naive, these things are quite easy to own, they simply are expensive technologies (dependent on petroleum based manufacturing), with short lifespans (the average wind generator has a life span of about 20 years) that no one will invest in without heavy government subsidies.

Actually, in the US, renewables are a very fast growing part of the energy economy, but there are all kinds of problems with wind depending on where it is going to be sited.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, February 5th, 2014 at 9:01 AM

Title: Re: Make Life Meaningless

Content:

conebeckham said:

That is samsara. The Rabbit Hole. The Blue Pill.

shel said:

This touches on a point I made earlier but there was no response.

In both the fictional stories of Alice in Wonderland and the Matrix there is an illusory world, but behind that illusory world is a 'real' world, so in these cases there is a correct or meaningful use of the term illusory. So where is the real world in Buddhism?

Malcolm wrote:

It's illusion all the way down...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, February 5th, 2014 at 10:04 PM

Title: Re: Meeting Taiwan's new-age Buddhists

Content:

Zhen Li said:

I should also note an important abhidharmic element which is being denied by those who don't see the value of the Vinaya. It is that when one engages in ordination, as with many other types of status changes, one then engages in a certain Avijñapti Karma, which results in the possession of a certain Avijñapti Rūpa, or uninformative matter.

Malcolm wrote:

This theory is rejected by Vasubandhu actually. The Sautrantika position is that vows are intentions and do not create an avijñapti.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, February 5th, 2014 at 11:28 PM

Title: Re: Scotland becomes 17th country to approve same-sex marria

Content:

Indrajala said:

There is no historical precedent for this sort of thing. Gay marriage allows same-sex parents to raise children. Again, there is no historical precedent for such arrangements and it remains to be seen what this will eventually bring in western societies.

Malcolm wrote:

Having known many children of same-sex couples, all that I have met are heterosexual in orientation, though I am sure there are children of same sex couples who themselves are also gay, I just haven't met any. Since gay couples actually want children and often have to jump through high hoops to have them, they are generally much more loving and supportive as a whole population than heterosexual parents are. So, my experience with the children of same sex couples is that they do extremely well in school, are highly motivated to succeed, and are well loved and turn out to be fantastic people with few problems. So what down side can there be? Added to this, same sex couples who want

kids are themselves usually in good relationships and are professionally successful.

Marriage is just a business contract. Gender orientation and marriage are not coterminous. There are many gay men and women for example in history who have married for the social protections such arrangements offered. Now gay persons can marry people of their own orientation. There is no justifiable argument that can be produced which can show that gay marriage is disadvantageous to society as a whole. People who make such arguments are like those who argued against "miscegenation". In other words, they are bigots seeking intellectual justification for their bigotry.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, February 5th, 2014 at 11:32 PM

Title: Re: Scotland becomes 17th country to approve same-sex marria

Content:

Indrajala said:

No, the author is suggesting that a stable institution like heterosexual marriage (which is condoned and supported by religion) lends support to the unintelligent masses.

Malcolm wrote:

Have you checked the divorce rate lately? It is still pretty high, and it is only declining because people are declining to be married at very young ages. In 2011 in the US there were:

Number of marriages: 2,118,000

Marriage rate: 6.8 per 1,000 total population

Divorce rate: 3.6 per 1,000 population

This is hardly what we can define as "stable marriage", for every four people that get married, two people get divorced.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, February 6th, 2014 at 1:18 AM

Title: Re: Scotland becomes 17th country to approve same-sex marria

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

There is no justifiable argument that can be produced which can show that gay marriage is disadvantageous to society as a whole.

Indrajala said:

At least nothing we can discern at the moment. The future will tell.

As I said, recognizing gay marriage sets a legal precedent for any other unrecognized group seeking legal sanction for their presently unrecognized activities. This means

advocates for child marriage amongst some minorities in the west will have another precedent to refer to as far as legal matters go.

Malcolm wrote:  
Nonsense.

Indrajala said:  
Have you checked the divorce rate lately?  
Actually popular feminist values likely prompted the increase in divorce over the last few decades. This was perhaps another unforeseen consequence of rapid reforms. This is why a cautious albeit generally tolerant, conservative approach has many advantages rather than rushing through changes and attempting to stamp out disagreement.

Malcolm wrote:  
Again, nonsense. The divorce rate rose in the seventies because most people married in the 60's in their early 20's. This set a precedent that continues unabated. Divorce, once scandalous, became increasingly acceptable as celebrities were marrying and divorcing at dizzying rates in the fifties and sixties.

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Thursday, February 6th, 2014 at 1:47 AM  
Title: Re: Scotland becomes 17th country to approve same-sex marriage  
Content:

Indrajala said:  
I fear these trends will result in very undesirable developments in future decades.

Malcolm wrote:  
Ok, Chicken Little.

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Thursday, February 6th, 2014 at 1:52 AM  
Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism  
Content:

AlexanderS said:  
I'm sorry Virgo, I'm trying to stay out of these conversations, but what you are saying here is bullshit. There are several documented instances of US soldiers committing war crimes in Iraq and Afghanistan. A famous example was the video leaked by Bradley Manning. US marines are people trained to kill, and while US marines might be more disciplined than some of their enemies, there is no innocence in war.

Edit - Don't forget Abu Ghraib either.

Malcolm wrote:

Soldiers have rules of engagement. When those are violated, the soldiers are generally punished. Sometimes soldiers violate rules of engagement out of frustration, when caught, they are punished.

In the Manning video, the gun crew asked their CC for permission to fire. It was granted. It was not, from the US Military or US's point of view, an illegal killing. That is was a total mistake is a fact, that noncombatants were brutally killed by the US Army is a fact. Is there any legal remedy, maybe in a court of international law, but the soldiers followed proper procedures. Are the procedures themselves flawed, certainly. But then we had no business in Iraq anyway.

Abhu Ghraib has resulted in some court martials and convictions, but none were severe enough in my opinion. War is hell.

Author: Malcolm

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

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

AlexanderS said:

Being caught doesn't make it any less a crime,

Malcolm wrote:

Of course not.

Anyway, we are Buddhists, we do not believe in war at all, much less wars of aggression.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, February 6th, 2014 at 2:11 AM

Title: Re: Meeting Taiwan's new-age Buddhists

Content:

Zhen Li said:

Then someone would cease being a monk when the notion is no longer at hand in their mind. Which is not to say that the intention isn't a factor.

Malcolm wrote:

No, Vasubandhu says that as long as the series is not interrupted by a contrary intention, the vow is maintained. For example, if you have taken the vow not to take life, that vow is intact in the mind stream until you decide you want to kill something. Then you lose the vow because your intention is contrary to the intention that formed the vow. But you do not need to be mindful of that vow in some persistent sense constantly reminding yourself that you have the vow. It is sufficient that you took it, and when a situation

comes up that demands you either follow the vow or break it, in a person of predominately positive mental factors, the vow will be followed automatically. The Sautrantika theory is very much grounded on the notion of vasanas. The longer you do not violate the initial intent of a vow, the stronger the trace to maintain that vow is. Of course, in the beginning, that trace will be quite weak, and therefore, more active mindfulness may be required. Eventually however, mindfulness and attentiveness (saṃprajāna) become ingrained, and one is called "well trained".

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, February 6th, 2014 at 2:25 AM

Title: Re: Climate Change: We're Doomed

Content:

AlexanderS said:

There is also the problem with wind energy that it is highly unreliable. When the wind doesn't blow there is no energy is produced!

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, and when it blows too strongly, the turbine must be locked.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, February 6th, 2014 at 4:12 AM

Title: Re: Before Longchen Nyingthig, what was the most popular cyc

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Khyentse Wangpo opines that the Gongpa Zangthal is the most profound of the Nyinthig cycles.

ConradTree said:

Yes that's also my opinion.

Now, what is your opinion on the most profound Nyinthig cycle?

Malcolm wrote:

Well, having translated the whole thing, I think that there places where the GZ is definitely clearer than the VN, and its Vārāhī instructions are infinitely more detailed than what you find in the KN or the KYN.

But I don't have really any personal opinion about it. Its all good Dharma.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, February 6th, 2014 at 5:04 AM

Title: Re: Before Longchen Nyingthig, what was the most popular cyc

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Well, having translated the whole thing

ConradTree said:

What do you think of Erik Pema Kunsang's translations?

Nowadays, he translates rigpa as "knowing" and marigpa as "unknowing".

He translated a tiny bit of Gonpa Zangthal in Wellsprings of the Great Perfection.

Malcolm wrote:

eric's translations are fine, but our styles are very different. His translation of rig pa and ma rig pa are perfectly correct, though I would prefer ma rig pa as ignorance i.e. avidyā.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, February 6th, 2014 at 5:07 AM

Title: Re: Meeting Taiwan's new-age Buddhists

Content:

Zhen Li said:

Well, that certainly makes sense.

I'm not sure that it actually refutes the notion of Avijñapti Rūpa, since for it's existence one would need vāsanā anyway. But, unfortunately, I am afraid I just realised might be non-falsifiable. I think that it might be that Avijñapti Rūpa is what 'appears' to be the case, e.g. that object X 'is' in the state of monkhood, regardless of consciousness. Even if that statehood is not informative.

But, the notion of monkhood that does away with Avijñapti Rūpa, as you related, is sufficient and more relevant to questions of value judgements about the wholesomeness and fruitfulness of the state. And the question is really, is it actually the case that the state of monkhood 'exists,' and is actually informative, i.e. vijñapti rūpa?

I am afraid this is leading a bit off topic.

Malcolm wrote:

Sautrantikas refute avijñapti, substituting intention (cetana) as being sufficient for vows.

Zhen Li said:

is it actually the case that the state of monkhood 'exists,' and is actually informative, i.e. vijñapti rūpa?

Malcolm wrote:

Apparently not, as the case of our friend Jeff (Indrajala) demonstrates, since we can't really figure out what he means by "bhikṣu".

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, February 6th, 2014 at 5:58 AM

Title: Re: Meeting Taiwan's new-age Buddhists

Content:

Zhen Li said:

cittaviprayukta-saṃskāra, it's rūpa, albeit non-informative.

Malcolm wrote:

Whatever Sarvastivādin reasonings may be, it is thoroughly rejected by Vasubandhu in the Bhaṣyaṃ.

Zhen Li said:

That being said, I'm not opposed to the idea that it's not a useful classification and may more or less amount to pure vitarka.

Malcolm wrote:

It is pure vikalpa, from a Sautrantika point of view.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, February 6th, 2014 at 6:03 AM

Title: Re: Scotland becomes 17th country to approve same-sex marriage

Content:

greentara said:

Malcolm, 'ok, Chicken Little' Well I think Indrajala has made a few good points. You may not agree with them but I think they are worthy of consideration.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, I don't agree. I think they are utterly worthless for consideration and should be dismissed out of hand as pure bigotry, something you might hear on a fundamentalist Christian television station.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, February 6th, 2014 at 6:06 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

War for regime change is against the Geneva convention anyway. It is by definition a war crime. The whole Iraq war was one big crime.



Malcolm wrote:

I didn't support the war in Iraq, and still don't; but toppling the Hussein regime was a good thing for Iraq in the long run.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, February 6th, 2014 at 6:11 AM

Title: Re: Meeting Taiwan's new-age Buddhists

Content:

Zhen Li said:

It is pure vikalpa, from a Sautrantika point of view.

Well, a vitarka can be vikalpa can't it? Vikalpa isn't even a dharma in Sarvastivāda.

Vikalapa = imaginary.

Whatever Sarvastivādin reasonings may be, it is thoroughly rejected by Vasubandhu in the Bhaṣyaṃ.

I don't know his argument, but I think it might just be non-falsifiable.

Malcolm wrote:

You need to read the Abhidharmakośabhaṣyaṃ then. It is the preliminary argument in chapter four, Karma.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, February 6th, 2014 at 6:22 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

I'm no fan of Saddam. I hope things are better in the long term, but the price the Iraqis as well as other forces paid was extreme.

Are the regimes in Saudi Arabia, Pakistan etc. any better?

Malcolm wrote:

So far none of them has gassed their own citizens, as far as I know.

tellyontellyon said:

In the end, these peoples will have to find their own solutions. It was always obvious that both the Iraqis and Afghans wouldn't want our troops on their soil.... anymore than you would want a foreign army to take over your government in the way it happened over there.

Malcolm wrote:

Well, America is a global power. Can't have your former puppets openly defying you on the world stage, and you can't let some pissant terrorists take out the brains of your global financial network either. In terms of real politick, what the US did is absolutely consistent with what a world power does when attacked.

tellyontellyon said:

I think we both agree a better way should have been found.

Malcolm wrote:

In terms of Iraq, perhaps. In terms of the Al Qaeda, and Afghanistan, it was never gonna happen, the minute we were attacked, Afghanistan was going to suffer punishment for harboring Al Qaeda. It was an inevitable consequence of their attack on the US.

When the Muslims attack Shambhala, The 25th Kalkin king, Rudracakravartin, will lead Shambhala in a retaliatory attack on Mecca, defeating the Muslims and making the world safe for Dharma for another 1500 years, that is, if you believe the prophecies found in the Kālacakra Tantra.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, February 6th, 2014 at 6:45 AM

Title: Re: Scotland becomes 17th country to approve same-sex marria

Content:

WASW said:

Yes- but I am questioning the idea that there are "unintelligent masses" who require the (quite cynical and manipulative, in this view) existence of institutions that are sanctioned by religions to keep them stable? I think that idea is quite patronising and doesn't really reflect the historic realities for the rise of marriage-contracts, that being the control of property and inheritance (not that I think this is the rationale of how marriages need to be conceived of now and in the future, though obviously equal marriage laws do provide homosexual couples with not inconsiderable benefits in terms of protecting bereaved spouses\_.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, but you must consider all those "child marriage" advocates out there who will insist that their right to wed six year olds is being infringed upon, you know, because it is all the fault of the feminazis.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, February 6th, 2014 at 8:05 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

Perhaps inevitable with that particular administration, but a more far-sighted administration might have avoided playing into the hands of the terrorists.

Malcolm wrote:

Any US administration would have been compelled to respond exactly the same way. The job of the president is to defend the country against enemies, both foreign and domestic.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, February 6th, 2014 at 8:48 AM

Title: Re: Scotland becomes 17th country to approve same-sex marriage

Content:

greentara said:

Malcolm, 'ok, Chicken Little' Well I think Indrajala has made a few good points. You may not agree with them but I think they are worthy of consideration.

Nighthawk said:

I agree with him as well. Mainly on the point that feminism is to blame for the high divorce rate in western countries. Truth can be hard to swallow sometimes.

Malcolm wrote:

Utter nonsense.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, February 6th, 2014 at 8:56 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

But that doesn't have to mean automatic war.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, actually it does. Any attack launched against US soil will immediately cause the US to go on a war footing, because attacking the US directly is an act of war. Our government will respond in kind without hesitation.

tellyontellyon said:

The terrorists on the planes came from all over the place. They could have used the same reasons to have attacked Pakistan or the Yemen or Saudi Arabia etc.

Malcolm wrote:

They operated and trained out of Afghanistan. In case you have not noticed, the US has been systematically hunting down Al Qaeda terrorists and their training camps everywhere they can find them.

tellyontellyon said:

Defending the country doesn't have to mean automatic war. There is more than one way to defend yourself, full scale invasion wasn't the only option, and given Afghanistans history of resisting invasions, was unlikely to work in the long run.

Malcolm wrote:

We had no interest in holding Afghanistan, and still don't, besides what some conspiracy theory wack jobs think. We were solely interested in Al Qaeda and other allied groups. Getting involved in the Karzi thing was an error.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, February 6th, 2014 at 9:22 AM

Title: Re: Meeting Taiwan's new-age Buddhists

Content:

Zhen Li said:

Okay, I read the Bhasya and it's more or less saying the same thing as you were. Again, the issue is that the Sarvastivādans did not deny that there are also cetanās related to taking the vow, so the theory being posited by Vasubandhu isn't denied. Also, that it cannot be destroyed since it is a dharma that always exists is just to take unfair advantage of the Sarvastivādan position, of course they posit that conventionally speaking it is destroyed. Imaginary? Maybe, how can we know? It's talking about a state that is non-falsifiable, I wouldn't disagree if you were to say it's meaningless - which isn't Vasubandhu's argument. But like I said before, the fact that indictative dharmas are not being denied as at play is more useful, and the notion of avijñapti might simply be one's impression of how things are, hence a vitarka/vikalpa.

The point is, the state of being a monk, be it either a continuous stream of karmas from intention, or an actual non-informative form, is more than irrational fears of Marmite.

Malcolm wrote:

There are also arguments against avijñāpti when Vasubandhu covers the eleven forms of matter in chapter one.

Vasubandhu basically says there is no such thing and that such a dharma was never mentioned by the Buddha. It is merely a speculative theory of the Sarvastivadins.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, February 6th, 2014 at 9:35 AM

Title: Re: Meeting Taiwan's new-age Buddhists

Content:

Zhen Li said:

Yeah of course.

Malcolm wrote:

Had you seen my discussions with our friend Jeff at other occasions, you will have noted that I don't really approve of the idea that Vinaya is something that can be conveniently ignored. My opinion is that if you are going to be a bhikṣu, then be a bhikṣu and follow all the vinaya rules as best as one can, do posadha twice a month with a

Sangha, etc. If you cannot do that much, then remain a dge tshul. There is no shame in not taking vows you have no intention of keeping.

Author: Malcolm

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

Title: Re: Scotland becomes 17th country to approve same-sex marria

Content:

WASW said:

Yes- but I am questioning the idea that there are "unintelligent masses" who require the (quite cynical and manipulative, in this view) existence of institutions that are sanctioned by religions to keep them stable?

Indrajala said:

The masses are generally unintelligent and unable to properly look after themselves.

Malcolm wrote:

There is no such thing as "the masses".

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, February 6th, 2014 at 9:10 PM

Title: Re: Scotland becomes 17th country to approve same-sex marria

Content:

Indrajala said:

Countries which perpetually let people make the wrong decisions end up like India or worse.

Malcolm wrote:

Seems like you are more than halfway to fascism. People have an innate right to screw up their lives.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, February 6th, 2014 at 9:12 PM

Title: Re: Meeting Taiwan's new-age Buddhists

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Had you seen my discussions with our friend Jeff at other occasions, you will have noted that I don't really approve of the idea that Vinaya is something that can be conveniently ignored. .

Indrajala said:

Yet it is conveniently ignored.

Like in a monastery where lunch starts at 12:00pm sharp. It is institutionally arranged so as to be actually against the rulebook.

As I keep saying, there's more to the Vinaya than the vows. There's the whole matter of karma proceedings and democratic decision making which clearly nobody feels is important.

Malcolm wrote:

To be more precise, pratimokṣa vows.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, February 6th, 2014 at 9:47 PM

Title: Re: Meeting Taiwan's new-age Buddhists

Content:

Indrajala said:

In a predominately Mahāyāna society, the bodhisattva precepts take precedence over anything Hīnayāna, including the Vinaya. Consequently, implementing new precepts and procedures was warranted and acceptable even based on Vinaya law.

Malcolm wrote:

Prātimokṣa vows are the basis of bodhisattva vows. Without one, you cannot have the other. A person who follows upāsakā prātimokṣa and bodhisattva vows is still just an upāsakā. A person who follows śramaṇera prātimokṣa is still just a śramaṇera.

While it is true that receiving bodhisattva vows changes the nature of one's prātimokṣa, i.e., one is now adhering to these vows as a form of bodhisattva activity, it does not mean that one can be sloppy with them and just ignore them when convenient.

There is a great deal of Indian writing, as well as Tibetan writing on the subject of the three vows.

In general, however, it is only when a prātimokṣa vows contradict bodhisattva vows that one is to favor the latter over the former. But what is the criteria for that contradiction? In general it only covers activity that one is truly engaged in for the welfare of others.

Since a great many of the pratimokṣa rules were set down because of the complaints of laypeople about the conduct of monks, the main point is that śramaṇeras and bhikṣus and their female counterparts need to consider how they appear to lay people. When śramaṇeras or bhikṣus opines in public that their vows are not important, this leaves a very bad impression on lay people, and causes lay people to suspect (correctly) that the Sangha is degenerate and no longer worthy of respect (and so it seem to me). If one claims that only Mahāyāna vows important, than wearing robes truly is a farce, since Mahāyāna vows are the same whether one is a lay person or an ordained person.

By the way, there is nothing more new age that suggesting that prātimokṣa can be discarded.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, February 6th, 2014 at 10:01 PM

Title: Re: Scotland becomes 17th country to approve same-sex marriage

Content:

Indrajala said:

Countries which perpetually let people make the wrong decisions end up like India or worse.

Malcolm wrote:

Seems like you are more than halfway to fascism. People have an innate right to screw up their lives.

Indrajala said:

In India people constantly make all the wrong decisions, like building a new house with no toilet inside or out because they think it will pollute them, and the fact nobody feels humble enough to clean it (not even their own). So, they defecate outside in public, and preventable diseases spread. They screw their own lives over and those of many other people. This is one example where hard handed political measures are necessary to overcome damaging behavior on the part of unintelligent commoners. India lacks the capacity and political will to do this, which is why half a billion people or more defecate in public around the subcontinent.

Malcolm wrote:

Dude, the toilets in Asia everywhere are abysmal. Some of the foulest toilets I have ever encountered were in Japan. The Japanese think nothing of littering their forests with cigarette cartons, beer cans, etc.

Indrajala said:

So, no people do not have an innate right to screw up their lives when their community suffers as a result.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, they do, if their culture does not perceive it as a problem.

Indrajala said:

I'm actually heavily inclined to Confucian political values after reading Chinese history and philosophy somewhat extensively (minus of course the obligatory animal sacrifice if you strictly follow the Li-ji 禮記). This means a strong and well-educated leadership and hierarchy is in place to solve pressing problems and enforce proper behavior on the lower classes whether they like it or not. The leadership takes into account good advice ideally and exercises the five constant virtues (humaneness, due-giving, propriety, wisdom, and trust). State officials might need to act as parental figures to untamed

people if they fail to behave like civilized human beings, but it is for their own good ultimately.

Malcolm wrote:

I see, so you believe in the Strict Parent State after all. Good luck with that. It led to Mao.

Indrajala said:

Such political arrangements worked very well in China, Korea and Japan, producing in pre-modern times societies which were rather stable over the long-term.

Malcolm wrote:

Seriously? What nonsense.

Indrajala said:

Likewise, modern Japan and Korea are safe, clean, efficient and well-ordered societies founded on Confucian and Buddhist values. Taiwan is not far behind.

Malcolm wrote:

And Indian cities, by and large, are dirty, dangerous and squalid, and always have been. It is their culture. Not ours. We can visit and enjoy it or hate it, but it is not our business to tell them what to do or how to run their country.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, February 6th, 2014 at 10:11 PM

Title: Re: Begging, Panhandling & 8th Major Precept (Brahma Net Sut

Content:

Zhen Li said:

If we have confidence that the panhandler won't abuse a donation, there's no excuse for holding back. Just like if you're confident that you need to eat with your own mouth, you eat.

Malcolm wrote:

Āryadeva passed a blind woman on the road. Hearing him coming she begged him for one of his eyes. He obliged, and she promptly popped the eye in her mouth, and swallowed it with satisfaction. In that moment, Āryadeva suffered a pang of regret, because of course he had intended the woman use it for her own sight. Because of his pang of regret, he lost the chance to have his eye miraculously restored. This is why one of his nicknames is Ekacakṣu, "One eye".

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, February 6th, 2014 at 10:48 PM

Title: Re: Meeting Taiwan's new-age Buddhists

Content:

Malcolm wrote:



Prātimokṣa vows are the basis of bodhisattva vows.

Indrajala said:

No, it is the other way around in Mahāyāna. The prātimokṣa vows were provisionally established due to problematic circumstances during the Buddha's lifetime. The bodhisattva precepts are taught by all buddhas.

Malcolm wrote:

So was pratimokṣa.

Indrajala said:

Consequently your statement "prātimokṣa vows are the basis of bodhisattva vows" is refuted.

Malcolm wrote:

Every Buddha recites pratimokṣa as well. Not every Buddha institutes a bhikṣu Sangha however.

You cannot take bodhisattva vows without first going for refuge; since going for refuge automatically entails receiving pratimokṣa vows, your refutation is dismantled without the need to resort to scripture.

Indrajala said:

Without one, you cannot have the other.

Prātimokṣa precepts are encompassed within the bodhisattva precepts, which comprise the three sets of pure precepts:

Malcolm wrote:

See above.

Indrajala said:

A person who follows upāsakā prātimokṣa and bodhisattva vows is still just an upāsakā.

A person who follows śramaṇera prātimokṣa is still just a śramaṇera.

This is strictly speaking an orthodox Vinaya view, which is valid within the context of Śrāvakayāna. That being said it does not apply to the Japanese sangha because the sangha council in the early Heian period approved Saichō's reforms whereby a renunciate bodhisattva received alternative precepts based on bodhisattva precepts which granted him the status of a bhikṣu.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, such "monks" are merely celibate lay persons.

Indrajala said:

There is vast literature in China and Japan as well. I tend to agree with many authors of ancient times who argued for the superiority of bodhisattva precepts.

Malcolm wrote:

Of course the bodhisattva samvara is "superior" to pratimokṣa vows; nevertheless they cannot be received without first going for refuge, and the receipt of the upāsakā vows is an automatic consequence of going for refuge whether it is first done in a Mahāyāna based rite of conferring the Bodhisattva trainings or not.

Indrajala said:

You don't seem to know about or appreciate the fact that a celibate and orderly monastic model based on bodhisattva precepts was devised by Saichō and approved by the Vinaya-based sangha authorities in ancient Japan, thereby making it a valid and quite legitimate reform.

Malcolm wrote:

I am quite aware of it, for a great deal longer than you, actually [1988]. I don't regard it as valid. As I said such "monks" are celibate upāsakās in robes, no matter how realized, venerable or sublime they may be.

If you will recall, this position is what caused the Zen people to freak out on me. I still have not changed my position.

And as far as I am concerned, someone who actually goes to the trouble of receiving the vows of a śramaṇera or a bhikṣu is obliged to follow them as perfectly as they can without making excuses for not following them as strictly as possible. Otherwise, in my view, they are frauds taking advantage of the robes. Since the ordained Sangha can't seem to keep themselves honest, it is up the lay Sangha to do so by not supporting those ordained people who do not seem to be observing their vows properly.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 7th, 2014 at 12:29 AM

Title: Re: Meeting Taiwan's new-age Buddhists

Content:

Indrajala said:

You are mistaken. The first three of the seven past buddhas (Vipaśyin, Śikhin and Viśvabhū) never established any precepts as there was no need.

Malcolm wrote:

No, I am not mistaken. A pratimokṣa was taught by all three Buddhas you mention. Please see Prebish, Buddhist Monastic Discipline. pgs. 110-113.

Indrajala said:

You cannot take bodhisattva vows without first going for refuge; since going for refuge automatically entails receiving pratimokṣa vows, your refutation is dismantled without the need to resort to scripture.

Prātimokṣa precepts like the five precepts which come with the refuge vows are not the Vinaya. You cannot equate refuge precepts and the five precepts with the Vinaya. The Vinaya prātimokṣa was only provisionally established given the circumstances of the

time. The Vinaya is not universal.

Malcolm wrote:

They are prātimokṣa, Vinaya exists to explicate the prātimokṣa in detail. While different ordination lineages have different Vinayas, nevertheless, when you take bhikṣu ordination, you are pledging to hold all the prātimokṣa vows you received, not merely the one's that suit you.

Indrajala said:

Not so. The sangha officially condoned the reform, which is in line with the Vinaya regulations which permit modifications where necessary.

Malcolm wrote:

No one has the authority to modify the pratimokṣa rules. That's why it was never done, even when the Buddha stated the minor prātimokṣa rules could be ignored. When you take bhikṣu ordination, you agree to follow all of the rules, not merely some of the rules, based on your own judgment. For this reason there is posada, to repair any breach of the rules and confess those you have broken. People who are not ready to follow all of the prātimokṣa rules, i.e. Vinaya, should not become bhikṣus.

Indrajala said:

Of course the bodhisattva samvara is "superior" to pratimokṣa vows; nevertheless they cannot be received without first going for refuge, and the receipt of the upāsakā vows is an automatic consequence of going for refuge whether it is first done in a Mahāyāna based rite of conferring the Bodhisattva trainings or not.

This is not necessarily so. You can have refuge precepts without taking the five precepts.

Malcolm wrote:

No, you automatically receive the five precepts, but you can elect to follow only those you are able to follow, unlike the higher ordinations.

Indrajala said:

Moreover, the upāsaka precepts are not the Vinaya strictly speaking.

Malcolm wrote:

They are prātimokṣa. The method of conferring upāsakā vows is discussed in Vinaya. Therefore, it is part of Vinaya.

Indrajala said:

The "Bodhisattva Vinaya" in the Tendai system is a heavily revised Vinaya system that effectively replaces the Śrāvakayāna model.

Malcolm wrote:

This interpretation results in Sanghabheda.

Indrajala said:

What if the vows are revised and then followed perfectly?

Malcolm wrote:

No one has the authority to do that. This is why bhikṣus of one ordination lineage are barred from reciting posadha with bhikṣus from another ordination lineage. Changing the pratimokṣa rules is a Sanghabheda offense.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 7th, 2014 at 12:31 AM

Title: Re: Meeting Taiwan's new-age Buddhists

Content:

Indrajala said:

This is why I argue that Saichō's monastic model is effectively an revised bhikṣu Vinaya based on bodhisattva precepts.

Malcolm wrote:

Except that it isn't and they are not bhikṣus.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 7th, 2014 at 12:38 AM

Title: Re: Scotland becomes 17th country to approve same-sex marria

Content:

Indrajala said:

Infanticide, sati and child marriages might not be seen as a problem, but they should be halted and made criminal.

Malcolm wrote:

Infanticide, child marriage and so on existed in your Fantasy Sino-Japanese realm too.

Indrajala said:

I see, so you believe in the Strict Parent State after all. Good luck with that. It led to Mao. No, poverty, desperation and decades of civil war led to Mao. The civil religion of communism led more to Mao than Confucian values.

Malcolm wrote:

Russia would up with Stalin because of the cultural precedent set by the Czarist absolutest state, likewise, China, another historically absolutest state, wound with Mao.

Indrajala said:

Such political arrangements worked very well in China, Korea and Japan, producing in pre-modern times societies which were rather stable over the long-term.  
Seriously? What nonsense.

\

You don't think the relatively good standard of living and social stability of the Tang dynasty was remarkable given the age?

Malcolm wrote:

I don't think it was that stable.

Indrajala said:

And Indian cities, by and large, are dirty, dangerous and squalid, and always have been. It is their culture. Not ours. We can visit and enjoy it or hate it, but it is not our business to tell them what to do or how to run their country.

It is virtuous to introduce civilized values and principles of hygiene as it will alleviate suffering and save lives. To argue otherwise is immoral.

Malcolm wrote:

Indian culture is very hygienic and civilized, actually. They suffer from overpopulation in the north. The squalid nature of India has many causes, mostly colonial.

Indrajala said:

The British did more good than harm in India. It is a shame they had to leave.

Malcolm wrote:

Your paternalist attitudes towards those whom you regard as your inferiors is duly noted.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 7th, 2014 at 12:50 AM

Title: Re: Meeting Taiwan's new-age Buddhists

Content:

Indrajala said:

Nevertheless, the early Heian bhikṣu sangha, with state support, officially recognized Saichō's reformed model as legitimate and ultimately equal Dharmagupta ordinations.

This is why I argue that Saichō's monastic model is effectively an revised bhikṣu Vinaya based on bodhisattva precepts.

Jikan said:

This recognition is interesting; it suggests that the two forms of ordination can be functionally equivalent. This doesn't mean that one is a revision of the other, however. A pen and a pencil can do the same work, but a pencil is not a revised pen.

Malcolm wrote:

There are not, there never has been, and there never will be two kinds of bhikṣus in the present dispensation of Buddhadharma.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 7th, 2014 at 1:04 AM

Title: Re: Meeting Taiwan's new-age Buddhists

Content:

Indrajala said:

My source in Chinese states otherwise.

Malcolm wrote:

They are wrong.

Indrajala said:

They are prātimokṣa, Vinaya exists to explicate the prātimokṣa in detail.

No, the Vinaya prātimokṣa only exists because of incidents. Many of the precepts in the Vinaya do not actually relate to the five precepts (like those related to preserving the image of the sangha in the face of judgmental laypeople).

Malcolm wrote:

The Vinaya exists to explain why those precepts were enacted. The precepts came first, accreted over the lifetime of the Buddha.

Indrajala said:

While different ordination lineages have different Vinayas, nevertheless, when you take bhikṣu ordination, you are pledging to hold all the prātimokṣa vows you received, nor merely the one's that suit you.

The Buddha thought otherwise apparently. If he indeed stated the minor precepts could be abandoned, and that precepts which were inappropriate in different lands could likewise be ignored, then he certainly no hard liner as you seem to be in this discussion.

Malcolm wrote:

He made allowances for such things as fur and leather for those who lived in cold places. Of course we have to work with circumstances. But this does not mean we can just "adapt" what we want. It is no big deal that Tibetan monks wear the vest originally designed for nuns. Deciding however to do away with large portions of the prātimokṣa merely because it is inconvenient is not satisfactory.

Indrajala said:

No one has the authority to modify the pratimokṣa rules. That's why it was never done, even when the Buddha stated the minor prātimokṣa rules could be ignored.

The sangha has the right to modify the Vinaya as they see fit. In practice this actually happened in India, though perhaps unannounced. The proof for this is found in the Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya which contains some Mahāyāna allusions and elements, which means there was significant revising of the content long after the development of the other Vinaya texts.

Malcolm wrote:

The basic prātimokṣa rules remained unaltered.

Indrajala said:

So, contrary to your assertion, the sangha in India and elsewhere clearly did modify things. We need only consider how the content and number of precepts differ among the Vinaya texts of various Indian schools.

Malcolm wrote:

They did not modify the prātimokṣa rules.

Indrajala said:

Those precepts were not as sacrosanct as you assert. This is merely your opinion, whereas in actual practice in India it was not like this at all. See Schopen: There appears to be, however, no actual evidence that the textual ideal was ever fully or even partially implemented in actual practice; at least none is ever cited.

Malcolm wrote:

This is an argument from an absence of evidence, which amounts to no argument at all.

Indrajala said:

No, you automatically receive the five precepts, but you can elect to follow only those you are able to follow, unlike the higher ordinations. In practice this is not always so.

Malcolm wrote:

In practice, it is always so.

Indrajala said:

This interpretation results in Sanghabheda.

No, not in the context of East Asia for the simple reason that karma proceedings were not carried out in the Sinosphere.

There are two types of schism: karma-bheda and cakra-bheda. The former was not possible in the Sinosphere. The alternative model proposed does not constitute the

latter.

Malcolm wrote:

A Sanghabheda requires merely that some fully ordained monk declares he has a better idea than the Buddha, and sets up a new rule.

Indrajala said:

No one has the authority to do that. This is why bhikṣus of one ordination lineage are barred from reciting posadha with bhikṣus from another ordination lineage. Changing the pratimokṣa rules is a Sanghabheda offense.

At some point somebody changed the original rules otherwise there would not be multiple ordination lineages.

Malcolm wrote:

No, different people received their ordinations at different points in Buddha's lifetime, and began ordaining other monks in regions removed from the Buddha's immediate presence. This is sufficient to account for disparities in the number of rules as well as their language, and accounts of their elaboration.

Indrajala said:

The Chan "Pure Rules" and Tendai model worked fairly well however.

Malcolm wrote:

As institutional disciplines I am sure they worked quite well, but people who do not receive a proper Śrāvakayāna bhikṣu ordination are not bhikṣus in any sense of the word.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 7th, 2014 at 1:23 AM

Title: Re: Meeting Taiwan's new-age Buddhists

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

There are not, there never has been, and there never will be two kinds of bhikṣus in the present dispensation of Buddhadharma.

Indrajala said:

Arguably there are more than two. A Mahāsāṃghika bhikṣu took 218 precepts, which is quite a lot less from other ordination lineages in India. They were another type of bhikṣu arguably.

Malcolm wrote:

You understand my point. In other words, apart from ordination in any of the "18" śrāvaka ordination lineages, there cannot be another kind of bhikṣu. There is no Mahāyāna bhikṣu ordination taught in Mahāyāna. One takes one's Mahāyāna training on the basis of whatever prātimokṣa vows one already possesses, and if one does not have those, they are received during the preliminary of going refuge, which is the first step in



any Mahāyāna bodhisattva vow rite.

A bhikṣu ordination absolutely does not exist in Mahāyāna sutra.

If it did exist, the Tibetans would have preferred it.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 7th, 2014 at 1:39 AM

Title: Re: Meeting Taiwan's new-age Buddhists

Content:

Indrajala said:

[

This is problematic from a contemporary scholarship perspective. The Vinaya is late period literature. See the above quoting of Schopen in Bronkhorst's work.

Malcolm wrote:

I don't consider Schopen an authority on anything that has to with Dharma.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 7th, 2014 at 1:52 AM

Title: Re: Meeting Taiwan's new-age Buddhists

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

A bhikṣu ordination absolutely does not exist in Mahāyāna sutra.

Indrajala said:

Not explicitly, but the meaning can be drawn out.

Malcolm wrote:

No, it can't.

Indrajala said:

The term "renunciate bodhisattva" 出家菩薩 is equivalent to a Mahāyāna bhikṣu.

Malcolm wrote:

No, it isn't. Why? Because even lay people can receive all those vows without abandoning their status as upāsakās, etc.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 7th, 2014 at 1:54 AM

Title: Re: Meeting Taiwan's new-age Buddhists

Content:

Indrajala said:

It was the tonsure that made the monk really, rather than the precepts. I know that sounds insufficient to people now, but even in China up until recently it was like that. Most monks from the sounds of it didn't have even novice precepts because it was the tonsure and community recognition that made you a monk. This deviates from legal definitions, yes, but nevertheless in practice it worked like that.

Malcolm wrote:

Well, that is a farce.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 7th, 2014 at 1:57 AM

Title: Re: Meeting Taiwan's new-age Buddhists

Content:

JKhedrup said:

As for Malcolm's comment here about monks of a different Vinaya lineage reciting Posada together : As my sramanera ordination is Mulasarvastivada, and Bhikshu ordination Theravada, I asked both Lama Zopa Rinpoche and the current Jangtse Choje Rinpoche about participating in Tibetan Posada recitation. They both encouraged me to do so. Apparently HHDL has indicated this may not be a problem, but I will have to look for a source to quote on this (there were recent meetings with Burmese monks) However, it would not be good for me to act as part of a quorum in an ordination ceremony, as the lineage of the vows is different. But I am sure other more conservative masters would have different opinions.

Malcolm wrote:

Atisha thought it was a problem. That is why he never recited posadha with other monks in Tibet. Also, he was prevented from spreading the Mahāsaṃghika lineage because all other ordination lineages were barred by royal decree.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 7th, 2014 at 2:05 AM

Title: Re: Meeting Taiwan's new-age Buddhists

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

No, it isn't. Why? Because even lay people can receive all those vows without abandoning their status as upāsakās, etc.

Indrajala said:

A śramaṇa (and a śramaṇa is a renunciate albeit not strictly speaking a Buddhist Vinaya-based bhikṣu, bhikṣuṇī, śikṣamāṇā, śrāmaṇera or śrāmaṇerī) who receives the bodhisattva precepts is effectively a śramaṇa bodhisattva or renunciate bodhisattva, i.e., equivalent to a Śrāvakayāna bhikṣu. In other words, as a renunciate who takes on

the stated set of bodhisattva precepts, you are different from the upāsakā who does, given the earlier śramaṇa lifestyle and aspirations.

Malcolm wrote:

Oh nonsense Jeff, what a load of baloney.

A śramaṇa in a Buddhist context is just a bhikṣu, bhikṣuṇī, śikṣamāṇā, śrāmaṇera or śrāmaṇerī.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 7th, 2014 at 2:15 AM

Title: Re: Meeting Taiwan's new-age Buddhists

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

A śramaṇa in a Buddhist context is just a bhikṣu, bhikṣuṇī, śikṣamāṇā, śrāmaṇera or śrāmaṇerī.

Indrajala said:

Not necessarily. A renunciate or śramaṇa need not be even Buddhist. If a sadhu aspires to bodhisattvahood and he takes on the precepts, he would be a renunciate bodhisattva.

Malcolm wrote:

If mundane śramaṇas took bodhisattva vows without undergoing ordination they would be mere upāsakās.

Indrajala said:

he would be a renunciate bodhisattva.

Malcolm wrote:

And a mere upāsāka.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 7th, 2014 at 2:19 AM

Title: Re: Meeting Taiwan's new-age Buddhists

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

If mundane śramaṇas took bodhisattva vows without undergoing ordination they would be mere upāsakās.

Indrajala said:

No, because the upāsāka is not a home leaver.

Malcolm wrote:

Non-Buddhist vows do not convert to Buddhist vows even with a bodhisattva ordination.

Why? Because the basis of that discipline is based on ignorance. Such a person would not be allowed to even sit with novices, let alone bhikṣus.

Holding only the five precepts at most, they would be upāsakās. Upāsakās can be renunciants. The word just means "drawing closer to the positive [dharma]".

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 7th, 2014 at 2:23 AM

Title: Re: Meeting Taiwan's new-age Buddhists

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Non-Buddhist vows do not convert to Buddhist vows even with a bodhisattva ordination.

Why? Because the basis of that discipline is based on ignorance.

Indrajala said:

Irrelevant. The hypothetical sadhu might not have any vows at all initially. He would be a renunciate, however the upāsāka is not a renunciate. A sadhu cannot be defined as an upāsāka.

Malcolm wrote:

One's status is defined by one's vows, not by one's renunciation. Upāsakās can indeed be renunciates, which is why there are celibate upāsāka ordinations.

A renunciate who takes bodhisattva vows and no other vows immediately becomes a Buddhist upāsakā.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 7th, 2014 at 2:26 AM

Title: Re: Meeting Taiwan's new-age Buddhists

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

One's status is defined by one's vows, not by one's renunciation. Upāsakās can indeed be renunciates, which is why there are celibate upāsāka ordinations.

Indrajala said:

If you mean the eight precepts and fasting, this is only temporary.

Malcolm wrote:

Not just that, but one can take the upāsakā vows with the intent to be celibate. Or for example, having received them once, one can daily take the fast day vows, or one can take them for a specified period not to exceed one's lifetime.

Anyway, full upāsakās are renunciates by definition as well, for they renounce taking life, taking what has not been given, lying, intoxication and sexual misconduct. Then of course there is the gomin ordination, but these days it exists only in Theravada.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 7th, 2014 at 2:32 AM

Title: Re: Meeting Taiwan's new-age Buddhists

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Not just that, but one can take the upāsakā vows with the intent to be celibate.

Indrajala said:

Intent perhaps, but the actual wording and understanding of the five precepts in the lay context refers to sexual misconduct, never celibacy. The upāsakā cannot be defined as a renunciate based on their five precepts, because none of the precepts demand celibacy and abandonment of the home life.

Malcolm wrote:

The gomin is an upāsakā, his or her vows demand celibacy. And the bhramacarya ordination does as well. When you take the brahmacarya ordination, sexual misconduct for you is sex, period. Vows after all are mere intentions.

Anyway, the concept now of "going forth" is a little silly. Buddhist bhikṣus have not truly done so in 2000 years or more for the most part. And as you know, Chinese monks are scandalized to find so called "Mahāyāna" monks living with their wives, engaged in farming in certain hinterlands.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 7th, 2014 at 2:41 AM

Title: Re: Meeting Taiwan's new-age Buddhists

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The gomin is an upāsakā, his or her vows demand celibacy. And the bhramacarya ordination does as well. When you take the brahmacarya ordination, sexual misconduct for you is sex, period.

Indrajala said:

The five precepts in no scripture I've read actually define the third precept as being brahmacarya. You can have that intent, but that's not the letter of the law.

You speak of a brahmacarya ordination for laypeople. What basis is there for this in scripture? I know of the practice, but where is the third precept (of the five) defined for a layperson as brahmcarya?

Malcolm wrote:

It is generally a preliminary step in becoming a dge tshul, a sort of pre-novitiate probation, similar to the śikṣamāṇā and probably adapted from it in spirit. Basically, the idea goes, if you can maintain celibacy for a year, then they will consider letting you

ordain as a dge tshul. I myself received this type of full upāsakā ordination many years ago, but I decided that I was not going to be a bhikṣu, that I was not suited for it by temperament. Since I am a Vajrayāna practitioner, I thought it was pointless. So I am a full Mūlasarvastivādin upāsakā (rather rare actually), but I let go of the intent to be celibate. Most people who take refuge in Tibetan Buddhism do so by a Mahāyāna refuge rite.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 7th, 2014 at 2:45 AM

Title: Re: Meeting Taiwan's new-age Buddhists

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

It is generally a preliminary step in becoming a dge tshul, a sort of pre-novitiate probation, similar to the śikṣamāṇā and probably adapted from it in spirit.

Indrajala said:

So you accept an ordination that has no literal basis in scripture yet reject the idea of a renunciate bodhisattva of the Tendai model which is likewise adapted from scripture in spirit?

Malcolm wrote:

I don't reject "renunciate bodhisattvas", I simply do not accept that they are bhikṣus. As far as I am concerned, they are celibate upāsakās because they have no more than five pratimokṣa vows to observe. Those are the only vows that can be conferred in a refuge rite, whether it be Śrāvakayāna or Mahāyāna.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 7th, 2014 at 2:50 AM

Title: Re: Meeting Taiwan's new-age Buddhists

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

I don't reject "renunciate bodhisattvas", I simply do not accept that they are bhikṣus. As far as I am concerned, they are celibate upāsakās because they have no more than five pratimokṣa vows to observe.

Indrajala said:

You said, "I don't regard it as valid."

And the Tendai model of renunciate bodhisattvas includes ten major and forty-eight minor precepts.

Malcolm wrote:

Those are bodhisattva samvara, not prātimokṣa vows.

What I do not accept as valid is that those samvaras make one equivalent to a bhikṣu.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 7th, 2014 at 3:52 AM

Title: Re: Meeting Taiwan's new-age Buddhists

Content:

JKhedrup said:

Atisha thought it was a problem. That is why he never recited posadha with other monks in Tibet. Also, he was prevented from spreading the Mahāsaṃghika lineage because all other ordination lineages were barred by royal decree.

But I am also sure you are aware of the story from Tibetan history about the ordination after the Langdarma period. Chinese Bhikshus of the Dharmagupta tradition helped make up a quorum for a Mulasarvastivada ordination

Malcolm wrote:

Nevertheless, the Vinaya was reintroduced to Tibet twice more, making for a total of three ordination lineages as I know you are aware.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 7th, 2014 at 3:53 AM

Title: Re: Meeting Taiwan's new-age Buddhists

Content:

Jikan said:

As an aside: Ven. Indrajala may find the practice model at California Tendai Monastery of interest, in that there's an effort being made to practice along pre-Meiji lines in terms of renunciation.

<http://caltendai.org/TempleLife.html>

note that the use of the word "monk" on the temple's website doesn't correspond to the usage preferred here; ordination in this sense follows the Brahma Net Sutra precepts, not the Vinaya.

Malcolm wrote:

Hence they are, to coin a phrase "Lay monks".

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 7th, 2014 at 4:27 AM

Title: Re: Meeting Taiwan's new-age Buddhists

Content:

JKhedrup said:

If laypeople lose even more confidence it does not bode well for the future of the Sangha here.

Malcolm wrote:

Arguing that the bhikṣu ordination is dispensable hardly inspires confidence.

JKhedrup said:

I have no problem with a lay priest lineage.

Malcolm wrote:

We have that in Tibet, and I am one of those.

JKhedrup said:

But a bhikṣu is a bhikṣu and the murkier the distinction becomes, the more danger there is of losing both the confidence of the lay community and the disappearance of the precious monastic form and discipline. I do not want to see the rules and community life disappear and the robes and outward appearance remain. That would be deeply troubling to me.

Malcolm wrote:

Agreed. If it is to be done, it ought to be done right and according to the traditional form.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 7th, 2014 at 7:18 AM

Title: Re: ChNNR Longevity Mon Lam

Content:

ngodrup said:

I assume there is more than one Longevity prayer in existence for Rinpoche.

Does anyone have one?

Malcolm wrote:

Generally it is just the one at the end of the medium thun.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 7th, 2014 at 10:03 AM

Title: Re: Scotland becomes 17th country to approve same-sex marriage

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Indian culture is very hygienic and civilized, actually. They suffer from overpopulation in the north. The squalid nature of India has many causes, mostly colonial.

Indrajala said:

Didn't you say...

And Indian cities, by and large, are dirty, dangerous and squalid, and always have been. It is their culture. Not ours. We can visit and enjoy it or hate it, but it is not our business to tell them what to do or how to run their country.

This is contradictory.



Malcolm wrote:

Not really. Until quite recently Indian culture was largely rural, not urbanized. The problems with overcrowding in the cities in India is a result of people leaving the land. And this has largely happened in the past 40 years. Nevertheless, Indian cities have been squalid, dense and overpopulated for centuries leading to the kinds of urban problems you perceive now.

On the other hand, Indian culture has a well established customs of hygiene, that many follow very rigorously. But I have to confess, most of my experience in India is in the south. I have spent very little time in the North.

Of course, Chinese cities are just as filthy and just as dangerous. I have been to many of them, and find them to be no improvement over Indian cities. In Chinese cities you see many people dead drunk in the middle of the day, staggering around like idiots, the drinking there is appalling, not to mention the fact that everyone smokes like fiends. The country side is absolutely polluted with industrial waste, and it goes on and on.

Japanese cities, it is true, are generally quite clean, but for example, when I visited Kyoto in 1986, I was appalled at the amount of garbage there was in the woods, despite the fact that the areas where people live are neat and tidy. Also, universally, the toilets were often noisome pits rivaling some toilets I have seen in both China and India.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 7th, 2014 at 9:52 PM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

Rickpa said:

If people are kind and ethical, anarchy would naturally work as well. In fact, nothing would be better. Are we kind and ethical at this time?

Sönam said:

Good point Rick-pa. Anarchy is certainly a non-organization in harmony with "what is" ... that we are not ready yet, as a civilization, does not mean we should not prepare for it now.

Sönam

Malcolm wrote:

Dear Sonam:

From a Buddhist point of view, all of these utopian visions require one thing in common,

i.e., that all people are free from the three afflictions, or at least able to keep them in check. We presently live in the era of the five degenerations where afflictions are rampant. What are the five?

The degeneration of lifespan

The degeneration of the seasons (climate)

The degeneration of afflictions

The degeneration of view (i.e. increased reliance on materialism, like Marxism, anarcho-capitalism, etc.)

The degeneration of decline (declining health, intelligence, and so on)

For this reason I place no hope in any utopian schemes. The present economic system remains the one most accessible of improvement and tuning. Socialism, as envisioned by the 19th and early 20th century firebrands, has proven to be an utter failure. While capitalism is spiritually bereft as well, at least it is not authoritarian or totalitarian. Yes, you may be free to starve under this economic system, but at least you are free.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 7th, 2014 at 11:43 PM

Title: Re: "the Self is real" according to T. Page

Content:

Son of Buddha said:

The sutra even quotes old anatman(not self) teachings and explains them in the context of True Self.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, indeed, which is why is treated as a provisional text.

The Āryākṣayamatinirdeśa-nāma-mahāyāna-sūtra sets out the criteria for a sūtra of definitive meaning:

Any sūtrānta which explains in a variety of different terms a self, a sentient being, a living being, a personality, a person, an individual, one born from a human, a human, an agent, an experiencer — teaching an owner in what is ownerless — those sutras are called "of provisional meaning". Any sūtrānta which teaches emptiness, the signless, the wishless, the unconditioned, the non-arisen, the unproduced, the insubstantial, the non-existence of self, the non-existence of sentient beings, the non-existence of living beings, the non-existence of individuals, the non-existence of an owner up to the doors of liberation, those are called "definitive meaning". This is taught in the sūtrāntas of definitive meaning but is not taught in the sūtrāntas of the provisional meaning.

This is why the tathāgatagarbha doctrine can be either provisional or definitive depending on one's understanding and method of explication.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 7th, 2014 at 11:47 PM

Title: Re: "the Self is real" according to T. Page

Content:

Son of Buddha said:

"Lord, the Tathagatagarbha is void(empty) of all the defilement-stores, which are discrete and knowing as not liberated.

"Lord, the Tathagatagarbha is not void(empty) of the Buddha dharma which are nondiscrete, inconceivable, more numerous than the sands of the Ganges, and knowing as liberated.

Malcolm wrote:

This is merely a reference to dharmakāya. Of course, since dharmakāya is emptiness, as Nāgārjuna says, "for those whom emptiness possible, everything is possible..." When one directly knows emptiness, having become a Buddha, one knows everything, those are the buddha qualities being referred to.

The reason why only buddhas can see tathāgatagarbha is the same reason only buddhas can see the dharmakāya.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 7th, 2014 at 11:52 PM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

Sönam said:

If anarchy is understood as a non-system in harmony with "what is" (Libertarianism in a non political sense), it does not refer to any already experimented utopia (including capitalism). It is right that his efficiency would be much improved if human beings were aware of the three afflictions, nevertheless it's a "natural way of interfering", the nearest to the dharma. The main adage of libertarianism being: "My freedom stop where other's freedom start" ... would we really need something else to, all together, interfere?

As for capitalism, I may observe that you approach it with a pinch of utopia when you consider that: "... at least it is not authoritarian or totalitarian. Yes, you may be free to starve under this economic system, but at least you are free."

But we are not going to engage ourselves in a controversial discussion ... so I notice your present point of view.

Sönam

Malcolm wrote:

The freedom to starve is hardly utopian, it is merely pragmatic, and it happens to many people all over the world in our present global capitalist economy. Frankly, the systematic eradication of subsistence farming has been one of the great challenges developing nations face, and one of the great mistakes they have made. It is also a mistake made in the US. The centralization of agriculture is very dangerous.

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Saturday, February 8th, 2014 at 12:16 AM  
Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism  
Content:  
Malcolm wrote:  
Personally I am holding out for this:

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Saturday, February 8th, 2014 at 12:35 AM  
Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism  
Content:

Malcolm wrote:  
The freedom to starve is hardly utopian, it is merely pragmatic, and it happens to many people all over the world in our present global capitalist economy. Frankly, the systematic eradication of subsistence farming has been one of the great challenges developing nations face, and one of the great mistakes they have made. It is also a mistake made in the US. The centralization of agriculture is very dangerous.

Sherlock said:  
The eradication of nomadic pastoralism is an even greater mistake, one which is causing global desertification. If you seen Savory's presentation on using animal husbandry to fight desertification, his map of desertifying areas basically corresponds to where nomads have been forced in great numbers to leave their traditional way of life. Rather than a complicated top-down approach to organizing herds and so on, it's better to just let them carry on their traditional lifestyle.

Malcolm wrote:  
Yes, I totally agree. properly managed cattle herds can actually restore soil and grassland much faster than "nature" can. There was a reason the sod in the Midwest was 8 feet deep — bison.

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Saturday, February 8th, 2014 at 12:39 AM  
Title: Re: "the Self is real" according to T. Page  
Content:

Son of Buddha said:  
The is a direct reference to the Tathagatagarbha which is the Dharmakaya, and in Tathagatagarbha lititure the Dharmakaya is Not-Empty.

Malcolm wrote:

What the dharmakāya is not empty of is omniscience. All of its qualities are simply qualities of omniscience, and that is all. The dharmakāya is unconditioned, it has neither form or shape, so those are the only qualities it could be said to possess. It has two aspects, the emptiness aspect and the luminous aspect. Understood in this way, one understands the real meaning of purity, bliss, self, and permanence.

It is pure because it is empty, it is bliss because it is free from suffering, it is "self" because omniscience transcends both self and non-self and it is permanent because it is not subject to decay.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, February 8th, 2014 at 4:05 AM

Title: Re: "the Self is real" according to T. Page

Content:

Son of Buddha said:

There is a direct reference to the Tathagatagarbha which is the Dharmakaya, and in Tathagatagarbha literature the Dharmakaya is Not-Empty.

Malcolm wrote:

What the dharmakāya is not empty of is omniscience.

Son of Buddha said:

spoken like a true Shentongpa All of its qualities are simply qualities of omniscience, and that is all.

aye it is not empty of its qualities.....spoken like a true Shentongpa. The dharmakāya is unconditioned, it has neither form or shape, so those are the only qualities it could be said to possess. It has two aspects, the emptiness aspect and the luminous aspect. Understood in this way, one understands the real meaning of purity, bliss, self, and permanence.

are you trying to quote Ven Dolpopa?

It is pure because it is empty, it is bliss because it is free from suffering, it is "self" because omniscience transcends both self and non-self and it is permanent because it is not subject to decay.

M

It is pure because it is empty(of all adventitious defilements and conditions)

it is bliss because it is free from suffering

it is "self" because omniscience transcends both self and non-self(of the forms).....(just as Dolpopa's True Self is defined)

it is permanent because it is not subject to decay.

Malcolm wrote:

It is not gzhan stong. Gzhan stong requires the convoluted misapplication of the three natures to the two truths. In other words, gzhan stong is at worst, a deformed

Madhyamaka; at best it is a transitional view between false aspectarian Yogacara and Madhyamaka.

Nothing stated above is inconsistent with the definitive sutras of the second turning of the wheel. The Āryāṣṭasāhasrika-prajñāpāramitā:

Kauśika, given that is so, the Tathāgata is not named tathāgata because he attained his own physical body [ātmabhāvaśarīra], but it is because he attained omniscient wisdom that the Tathāgata is called the tathāgata.

Kauśika, whatever the omniscience of the tathāgata arhat samyakbuddha is, this comes from prajñāpāramitā.

The attainment of the Tathāgatas own physical body arises from prajñāpāramitā and skill in means, and is the support for omniscient wisdom. Relying on such a support [as the prajñāpāramitā] will generate omniscient wisdom, and will also generate the body of a buddha, and will also generate the dharmakāya, and will also generate the sangha. Thus if one wants to realize the dharmakāya and omniscience, one must rely on prajñāpāramitā.

Also here is a clear usage of "atman" which does not refer to the self, but rather is being used as a reflexive noun.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, February 8th, 2014 at 4:21 AM

Title: Re: "the Self is real" according to T. Page

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

Thanks for the "clarification", "Malcolm".

Malcolm wrote:

I thought you understood that Kyle was my emanation...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, February 8th, 2014 at 4:25 AM

Title: Re: ChNNR Longevity Mon Lam

Content:

pemachophel said:

It's not Rinpoche's style to promote His shabten because He is a good Lama.

Malcolm wrote:

ChNN uses a generic one because it covers all one's gurus.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, February 8th, 2014 at 5:55 AM

Title: Re: Perspective

Content:

gad rgyangs said:

elephant perspectives 6.jpg

Malcolm wrote:

You do realize this analogy was first introduced by the Buddha?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, February 8th, 2014 at 6:02 AM

Title: Re: Perspective

Content:

gad rgyangs said:

elephant perspectives 6.jpg

Malcolm wrote:

You do realize this analogy was first introduced by the Buddha?

gad rgyangs said:

he so smart! How come nobody listen to him?

Malcolm wrote:

I rather doubt he intended to included his own Dharma in the above description.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, February 8th, 2014 at 6:06 AM

Title: Re: Perspective

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

You do realize this analogy was first introduced by the Buddha?

dzogchungpa said:

Is that actually known for a fact?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, February 8th, 2014 at 6:07 AM

Title: Re: Perspective

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

I rather doubt he intended to included his own Dharma in the above description.

gad rgyangs said:

oh, then he not as smart as I thought....

Malcolm wrote:

Certainly not as smart as you and all the perennialists out there. But being a Buddha, he does not have to be smart, merely totally awakened.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, February 8th, 2014 at 8:01 AM

Title: Re: Perspective

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Certainly not as smart as you and all the perennialists out there. But being a Buddha, he does not have to be smart, merely totally awakened.

gad rgyangs said:

oops. you walked right into that one! Perennialism says that all religions are expressing the same universal truth. My graphix clearly shows that the various religions (as well as science) are all different, partial perspectives on the nature of reality.

Malcolm wrote:

No, perennialism states that all religions are partial revelations if a universal truth, or reality.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, February 8th, 2014 at 9:25 PM

Title: Re: Scotland becomes 17th country to approve same-sex marria

Content:

Simon E. said:

As a reasonably educated Brit I would say that Moldbug has little or no understanding of the phenomenon in question at all.

His rationalisation adds upto little more than a slightly whiney and puzzled ' you guys don't really hate us .'

The reality is both more complex and more visceral.



Malcolm wrote:

He does have a good point, however. In general, the crimes of other nations, Britain, Italy, Germany, France, Japan, Australia, Canada, Mexico, Iraq, Iran, Egypt, you name it, etc. certainly place people from these countries on very shaky ground when it comes to venting spleen against the Great Satan...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, February 8th, 2014 at 9:28 PM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

Sönam said:

Sönam

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, let's ensure world chaos...screw it...tear it all down and let's go back the pre-agricultural period and 3,000,000 million humans....oh wait...that is called "anarcho-primitivism....and then the cycle will start all over again.

If there is a utopian fantasy out there to subscribe to, I prefer the Shambhala mythos ala a Buddhist world regency.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, February 8th, 2014 at 10:39 PM

Title: Re: Scotland becomes 17th country to approve same-sex marriage

Content:

Simon E. said:

But that's rather the point Malcolm. When an educated crowd of younger Brits break into spontaneous applause at any negative view of the USA at just about any stand-up venue, from a local Pub to the Edinburgh Festival, they are not inhibited by considerations of heinous behaviour by other nations.

As I said, it's visceral. It's not a mindset that results from logic.

And the fact that Brits DO react like that can readily be attested to by anyone who has attended such venues.

If the comic wants a quick laugh then the royal family or the U.S. will get one every time.

Malcolm wrote:

Well, it is not like the British Empire was this super benevolent entity.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, February 8th, 2014 at 11:42 PM

Title: Re: Scotland becomes 17th country to approve same-sex marria

Content:

Simon E. said:

Those who most typify the current anti-American sentiment which is widespread in the UK would agree with you..

I suspect that in part they see all that was worst about colonialism being replicated by current American foreign policy.

Malcolm wrote:

All the while oblivious to the fact their standard of living depends upon it.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, February 9th, 2014 at 12:06 AM

Title: Re: Scotland becomes 17th country to approve same-sex marria

Content:

Zhen Li said:

(I always find it hard to wrap my head around red = right wing, blue = left wing, in the US)

Malcolm wrote:

It's a media convention collectively arrived at by the US media in the 2000 Gore/Bush contest.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, February 9th, 2014 at 12:07 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

Zhen Li said:

In a sense that's true. Anarchism is not unlike Libertarianism in that their goal is a state from which everything will gradually build up again.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, supposedly better, but without eradication of the the afflictions, well, it will be the same old shit all over again.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, February 9th, 2014 at 12:25 AM

Title: Re: Perspective

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

No, perennialism states that all religions are partial revelations of a universal truth, or reality.

gad rgyangs said:

there is a fundamental difference between saying that all religions are expressing the same truth, and saying that all human conceptual systems (religious as well as secular science and philosophy) are inherently limited, metaphorical attempts to describe something that is beyond categories and definitions.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Perennial\\_philosophy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Perennial_philosophy) is always couched in language like "all religions are one" and emphasizes similarities among religions and so-called mystical experiences. What I am suggesting with my doodle is more like

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Perspectivism> or

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anekantavada>

Malcolm wrote:

Eel wriggling, in other words, like Sanjaya Bellaputtha.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, February 9th, 2014 at 1:23 AM

Title: Re: The Idea of Madhyamaka and Yogacara as Equally Correct

Content:

smcj said:

I didn't realize it was the three natures that was so much of an issue, and will remember to keep that in mind when researching.

It's an issue for Malcolm personally. It's his bugaboo.

rob h said:

Am just wondering Malcolm : why don't you like the concept of the three natures?

Malcolm wrote:

It is not a matter of partiality. The problem with the three natures is that they contain an internal contradiction: viz since the perfected nature is merely the absence of the imagined in the dependent, one must explain how the dependent, which is conditioned, becomes the perfected, which is unconditioned.

The Tibetan system of treating the perfected nature as empty of the dependent and the imagined indeed is based on some very late Indian scholars, but it is not justified in the works of Maitreyanatha, Asanga or Vasubandhu.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, February 9th, 2014 at 2:00 AM

Title: Re: The Idea of Madhyamaka and Yogacara as Equally Correct

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The problem with the three natures is that they contain an internal contradiction: viz since the perfected nature is merely the absence of the imagined in the dependent, one must explain how the dependent, which is conditioned, becomes the perfected, which is unconditioned.

rob h said:

Yeah can see how that can be a problem, but maybe it's also an act of pointing to the idea that they're always both present? As in nirvana is also samsara. But by removing the imagined you remove the contradiction, and they're of what you could say, one taste, or nondual. So instead of trying to go from one to the other, instead you can just work on letting the attachment to the imagined go and then the nondual aspect can then arise, appear, return, and so on, in a natural way.

So you could maybe sum it up by saying that the dependent only appears to be conditioned when the imagined is present. Once that's gone, then it's nondual.

Malcolm wrote:

Then you still wind up with a contradiction because you are claiming that something defined as conditioned is not conditioned.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, February 9th, 2014 at 2:34 AM

Title: Re: The Idea of Madhyamaka and Yogacara as Equally Correct

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Then you still wind up with a contradiction because you are claiming that something defined as conditioned is not conditioned.

rob h said:

Isn't that problem there with anything classed as nondual, primordial, one-taste, etc, though? It could be that it's conditioned when the imaginary nature is present, or when it's still attached to, (and also mainly to point out and teach others.) but when it's let go of, it's neither conditioned nor unconditioned, because we're then leaving the realm of logic, and it's then beyond defining. So the whole concept is then let go of once it's served its purpose.

Malcolm wrote:

No, the dependent nature is defined as conditioned. The Mahāyānasamgraha states: Why? If it is asked what is the dependent, since it arises from the seeds of one's traces, given that is the case, it is the conditioned dependent.

Here, one can clearly see the other dependent is the ālayavijñāna.

Then he goes on:

If it is held that whatever appears does not exist in that way, for what reason will the dependent nature not become the total non-existence of everything? If it is asked, if that [dependent nature] does not exist, how will the non-existent perfected nature not

become the non-existence of everything? Affliction and purification are perceptible. Therefore, everything is not non-existent. A verse for that:  
If the dependent and the perfected  
do not exist in every aspect,  
affliction and purification  
can never exist at all.

So you see, there is an assertion here by Asanga that the ālayavijñāna which is the basis of purification must be an existent in order that the perfected nature can exist; but since one is conditioned and the other is unconditioned, this Yogacara view suffers from a crucial internal contradiction.

The gzhan stong pas seek to escape this contradiction by mapping the three natures over the two truths. But this mapping is not justified in the Indian texts and in reality harms both systems. So you wind up with a system that is kind of like a tole, a sterile hybrid between a yak and cow, being neither.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, February 9th, 2014 at 2:49 AM

Title: Re: Is Buddhist cosmology essentially Vedic?

Content:

theanarchist said:

If I remember Myriad Worlds by Jamgon Kongtrul right, in Buddhism has several different cosmological doctrins.

Malcolm wrote:

Three in fact: the Kośa, the Avatamska and the Kalacakra cosmologies. The much vaunted Dzogchen cosmology is actually nothing of the sort, and is just a restated version of the Kośa cosmology complete with a world tree.

It also seems that the authors of the Kalacakra Tantra knew full well that the Meru cosmology was merely symbolic because their calculations for the movements of the sun, moon, stars and planets ignore it, even though it is used to set up a hierarchy of the three lokas.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, February 9th, 2014 at 4:24 AM

Title: Re: The Idea of Madhyamaka and Yogacara as Equally Correct

Content:

smcj said:

Oh c'mon. Of course it is a matter of partiality. Unless you are saying that there is a broad consensus on the matter, which as we all know is never the case in Tibetan Dharma, then you are presenting your personal preference with an argument attached. What the possible rebuttals to your argument are I have no idea, but suffice it here to say that there are plenty of qualified khenpos that subscribe to the idea of the 3 natures

that are familiar with your objection. The Tibetan system of treating the perfected nature as empty of the dependent and the imagined indeed is based on some very late Indian scholars, but it is not justified in the works of Maitreyanatha, Asanga or Vasubandhu. As you say it is a later development. There does seem to be a slippery slope effect here regarding the Buddha Nature teachings that is playing out over time. One of the things I admire about the Gelugpas is their insistence on trying to hold the line. I have a mental image of them as being like the little Dutch boy with his finger in the dike, only the entire dike has already collapsed except for the section a couple feet to the right and left of him.

Where this slippery slope ends up is in the Shentong and Chinese non-dual camps. Making too much of an issue out of it at this point is just crying over spilt milk, imo. I think an ecumenical "we will just have to agree to disagree" approach is in order.

Malcolm wrote:

Even Karl Brunholz admits that the three natures as presented by the Tibetan gzhan stong pas does not reflect their use by the original Yogacara masters. The former use what he describes as the type two schema of the three natures, while he fully admits that the latter use a type one schema. The problem arises because the Tibetan gzhan stong pas clearly claim that they are representing the thought of the original Yogacara masters, Maitreyanatha, Asanga and Vasubandhu when in fact they clearly are not, and thus Tsongkhapa, Gorampa, and so on, a whole host of Kagyu, Sakya, Nyingma and Gelug scholars can take them to task for misapplication of this doctrine.

The three natures doctrine is entirely irrelevant to the tathāgatagarbha teachings. It is wholly absent in the ten so called "tathāgatagarbha" sutras as well as the Uttaratantra. The three natures doctrine was grafted onto the tathāgatagarbha doctrine in Tibet because the tathāgatagarbha sūtras are considered "third turning" and the subject of the three natures is covered extensively in the Saṃdhinirmocana sutra, a sūtra of the Yogacara class, which provides us with the locus classicus of the three turnings, but it is so vague as to what is meant by this as to be rather useless, though much stock is placed in it by the gzhan stong pas.

Longchenpa is a perfectly good example of an author who considers the tathāgatagarbha sūtras to be definitive without mixing in the Yogacara three own natures. He also considers Prasāngika to be the definitive sutra view.

My problem with the gzhan stong pas is that they do not heed the valid objections of their opponents, and as far as I can tell adhere to their tenet system out of sheer stubbornness rather than reason.

My objection to gzhan stong therefore is primarily an objection to their sloppiness of scholarship.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, February 9th, 2014 at 4:28 AM

Title: Re: The Idea of Madhyamaka and Yogacara as Equally Correct

Content:

rob h said:

It seems contradictory but maybe that's because the alayavijnana and the dependent are neither pure nor impure, conditioned nor unconditioned, nondual.

Malcolm wrote:

It's contradictory because he says it exists. That makes Yogacara realist. Something cannot exist as both conditioned and unconditioned, it must be one or the other. Moreover, the former can never become the latter, nor can the latter become the former.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, February 9th, 2014 at 4:58 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

If we wait until we have eliminated all afflictions before we do anything then the planet will have gone up in flames.

Malcolm wrote:

Its going to get there anyway. This is one of the reasons why Buddhists tend to be pessimistic about social revolutions in general. When you have worldly people leading society, no matter who they are, things just get screwed up.

As the song goes:

Meet the new boss  
Same as the old boss

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, February 9th, 2014 at 5:09 AM

Title: Re: Perspective

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Eel wriggling, in other words, like Sanjaya Bellaputtha.

gad rgyangs said:

one person's eel wriggling is another person's intellectual honesty.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, it is good to be honest about one's views, even if it amounts to eel wriggling.

That said, I go by the dictum uttered by Āryadeva, realization proceeds from view. And of course the basis of the Buddhist path is samyaktṛṣṭi as you know.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, February 9th, 2014 at 5:36 AM

Title: Re: The Idea of Madhyamaka and Yogacara as Equally Correct

Content:

rob h said:

Are you going from the "exist in every aspect" part? Because the translation I have words it differently :

If the dependent and the absolute did not exist at all, defilement and purification would not take place.

Malcolm wrote:

It amounts to the same thing, I was translating it direct from Tibetan.

rob h said:

He does seem to contradict himself in parts, but it's maybe because he's explaining from conventional and non-conventional aspects. There's plenty of places in just the Mahayanasamgraha where he could also be said to be stating the opposite. For instance, when speaking of the fourfold pure dharma, this is the first of the four listed :  
(a) The essential purity (prakṛtivyavadāna), i.e., the true nature (tathatā), emptiness (śūnyatā), the utmost point of reality (bhūtakoti), the signless (animitta), the absolute (paramārtha), the fundamental element (dharmadhātu).

Malcolm wrote:

Asanga clarifies elsewhere that he considers emptiness to be an affirming negation, like the emptiness of the Cullasuññata sutta, which cites in its Sanskrit version.

rob h said:

I think he means in a nondual sense though, not as in individuality or anything conventional.

Malcolm wrote:

If exists nondually, it exists, which is why the Madhyamakas claim that Yogacarins are nondual realists.



Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, February 9th, 2014 at 5:38 AM

Title: Re: Perspective

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, it is good to be honest about one's views, even if it amounts to eel wriggling.

That said, I go by the dictum utter by Āryadeva, realization proceeds from view. And of course the basis of the Buddhist path is samyakdṛṣṭi as you know.

gad rgyangs said:

dṛṣṭi is a dirty word since Nagarjuna, and everybody thinks their dṛṣṭi is samyak, based on which part of the elephant they felt up.

Malcolm wrote:

No Dante, it really isn't like that. And Dzogchen is just an alternate scheme for explaining how one sees, progressively, the three kāyas, in reality no different than the five paths and ten stages. For all its cig car rhetoric, in the end, Dzogchen is just a gradual path like everything else in Buddhadharma.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, February 9th, 2014 at 6:21 AM

Title: Re: Perspective

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

No Dante, it really isn't like that. And Dzogchen is just an alternate scheme for explaining how one sees, progressively, the three kāyas, in reality no different than the five paths and ten stages. For all its cig car rhetoric, in the end, Dzogchen is just a gradual path like everything else in Buddhadharma.

gad rgyangs said:

Who said anything about Dzogchen? Perspectivism doesn't claim that all dṛṣṭi are equal, just that they are all partial perspectives, even the best ones, like Dzogchen. It's not that there isn't reality, its just that as soon as you conceptualize about it and open your mouth about it, you've got a limited perspective.

Malcolm wrote:

Your diagram shows them as all equivalent. That is why I said it was perennialist.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, February 9th, 2014 at 6:23 AM

Title: Re: The Idea of Madhyamaka and Yogacara as Equally Correct

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

I think he means in a nondual sense though, not as in individuality or anything conventional.

If exists nondually, it exists, which is why the Madhyamakas claim that Yogacarins are nondual realists.

rob h said:

In a nondual sense though no polarity can be attributed, can it? I still think the problem comes down to taking what he's saying too literally. I can see how some Madhyamikas look at it in that way though. Also how maybe Asanga himself could've worded things better? Or maybe he was simply referring to what's left ultimately when everything false is discarded, and it actually does exist in some way, but with an equal nature of emptiness, so it had a balance. Would like to think that's the case anyway.

Malcolm wrote:

No, in this case what Asanga is saying is emptiness means empty of the imagined, and that is about it. The dependent is not empty of the perfected, since it is the perfected when the imagined is recognized to be non-existent.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, February 9th, 2014 at 6:40 AM

Title: Re: Perspective

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Your diagram shows them as all equivalent. That is why I said it was perennialist.

gad rgyangs said:

mais non, equivalent in partiality, not in content.

Malcolm wrote:

A partial view is a partial view.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, February 9th, 2014 at 6:48 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

Malcolm, really.

I think society has changed a great deal. Yes there are many of the same old problems, but many many things have been improved through social action.

I caught a bus the other day in Swansea: two men got on and were snuggling and kissing. No problem. Even forty years ago they would have risked getting beaten up and jailed.

I believe in the USA black and white people can now sit in the same section of the bus and eat in the same restaurants. This sort of thing used to be the exception rather than the rule.

Malcolm wrote:

And before slavery was widespread in the US it was the rule to. And your gay friends still risk getting beaten up. Bias against gay people is not finished by a long shot. And of course racism and xenophobia is rampant in Europe right now. And let's not even mention Russia.

Some things have changed, other things have gotten worse, other things have gotten better. Things are better in our neck of the woods because we are the richest nations on the globe. Handing everyone \$56,000 a year is not only impossible, but it won't solve anything.

tellyontellyon said:

People with mental health problems are not chained to the cell wall and sprayed with high pressure hoses in order to help them to become more morally sane.

Malcolm wrote:

No, they are dosed with toxic compounds which are much more effective.

tellyontellyon said:

It is no longer acceptable to hit or rape your wife.

Malcolm wrote:

For now, but when things get bad, and it will, all these things will again resurface.

tellyontellyon said:

Social action and protest is what won many of these improvements.

Malcolm wrote:

Agreed. But they are not permanent.

tellyontellyon said:

If it wasn't for organised social action we would still have 10 year old children working down the mines and nobody would know what a 'weekend' was.

Malcolm wrote:

We still do, just not in England or the US.

Incidentally, I am not saying that one should do nothing, or remain passive. One must help sentient beings. But as has been pointed out a gazillion times it must be done within the confines of Buddhist ethics.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, February 9th, 2014 at 6:53 AM

Title: Re: The Idea of Madhyamaka and Yogacara as Equally Correct

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

No, in this case what Asanga is saying is emptiness means empty of the imagined, and that is about it. The dependent is not empty of the perfected, since it is the perfected when the imagined is recognized to be non-existent.

rob h said:

Yeah I think I remember quoting him saying something similar in another thread further down in this forum. Will carry on reading some of his works though and see if he states otherwise elsewhere.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, one must read these things for oneself. Only then can one truly decide.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, February 9th, 2014 at 7:17 AM

Title: Re: The Idea of Madhyamaka and Yogacara as Equally Correct

Content:

rob h said:

Have found this from the Madhyantavibhanga, I know he says elsewhere in the text that something exists, but would guess that this is more of his actual view :

Once they are understood,

The exaggerated and depreciative views

Regarding phenomena and persons,

Apprehended and apprehender,

And existence and non-existence do not occur -

This is what characterizes reality.

Malcolm wrote:

All of this refers to the imagined nature. The imagined neither exists nor does not exist in truth since it never existed, being the projection of traces from the ālayavijñāna.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, February 9th, 2014 at 7:36 AM

Title: Re: Perspective

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

A partial view is a partial view.

gad rgyangs said:

exactly, and that's all any view is going to be.

Malcolm wrote:

But the view of Dzogchen, Mahāmudra and Mahāmadhyamaka are not partial at all since they are based on direct perception of reality.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, February 9th, 2014 at 9:10 AM

Title: Re: Perspective

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

But the view of Dzogchen, Mahāmudra and Mahāmadhyamaka are not partial at all since they are based on direct perception of reality.

gad rgyangs said:

Doesn't direct perception of reality, by definition, transcend all concepts and views? Therefore, all conceptual and verbal constructs will be, at best, partial metaphors pointing to that direct perception. At worst, they are entangling briars from which the gullible never escape.

Malcolm wrote:

But the Buddhist view is not actually a verbal construct, and for that matter neither is Buddhist awakening.

For example, one needs only to understand the dependent nature of afflictions to become a stream entrant and so on, becoming free of the fetters. This does not require elaborate philosophy. It merely requires confidence in the teaching of dependent origination and the four truths of nobles.

Likewise, for the realization of emptiness on the path of seeing, one simple has to reflect on the absence of extremes (for a very long time, albeit), as Shantideva states, "when neither an entity or a non-entity remain before the mind, at the time, the mind is pacified", and this too is an experiential view.

In the case of Vajrayāna, the view, such as it is, is based on the experience of the example wisdom at the time of direct introduction or the third and fourth empowerments. Unfettered equipoise in the mind essence, or "ordinary awareness" is the view of Vajrayāna.

So this is why your illustration is irrelevant to Buddhadharma, and why Buddhadharma does not merit inclusion amongst "the blind men".

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, February 9th, 2014 at 7:34 PM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:  
Sherab Dorje said:  
...future widespread Anarchist society.

Malcolm wrote:  
It will never happen.

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Sunday, February 9th, 2014 at 7:38 PM  
Title: Re: The Idea of Madhyamaka and Yogacara as Equally Correct  
Content:  
rob h said:  
Just going back to this from earlier as I missed it :

Malcolm wrote:  
Something cannot exist as both conditioned and unconditioned, it must be one or the other. Moreover, the former can never become the latter, nor can the latter become the former.

rob h said:  
I think it can be, in the way that it's the basis for both. So while many people go through this world in delusion, others can use this exact same world to realize awakening. Or in the way that one side of the world can be in darkness, but the other side has sunlight. The world (and in turn the dependent.) can be both things at the same time, according to what situation it's looked at from.

Malcolm wrote:  
All of this refers to the imagined nature. The imagined neither exists nor does not exist in truth since it never existed, being the projection of traces from the ālayavijñāna.

rob h said:  
The version by Khenpo Shenga and Ju Mipham says that it's all three (bold is to point out the verse, just like the book does.) :  
What is the reality of the characteristics? Once they are understood, the exaggerated and depreciative views regarding phenomena and persons do not occur. This is what characterizes the reality of the imaginary nature. Nor do the exaggerated and depreciative views of apprehended and apprehender occur, which is what characterizes the reality of the dependent nature. And in the same way, once it is understood, the exaggerated and depreciative views related to existence and non-existence do not occur. This is what characterizes the reality of the thoroughly established nature. Being unmistaken about this fundamental reality is referred to as the “reality of the characteristics.”

Malcolm wrote:  
This still refers to the imagined nature viz: reification persons and things is the imagined nature, the absence of subject and object which produces the imagined is the

dependent nature, the absence of existence and non-existence of the imagined nature in the dependent nature is the perfected nature. All of these three terms hinge on the imagined nature.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, February 9th, 2014 at 10:40 PM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

I think that our current political/economic model is based on theft. I think it is a form of exploitation or extortion that we have got so used to that most of us don't even stop to think about it. I believe capitalism is inherently violent: it not only pushes us into war after war, but it's whole value system and praxis is dehumanising and alienating.

Malcolm wrote:

No, resource shortages push us into wars. This will happen under any political or economic system, apart from one run by awakened people (my preferred utopian vision). Therefore, the only obvious solution is to support as many people as possible in becoming awakened. Short of that, it is imperative to encourage worldly people to refrain from the ten non-virtues and to cultivate the four brahma-viharas (love, compassion, joy and equanimity).

tellyontellyon said:

How easy is it to care for all sentient beings when we have to compete with each other for our survival?

Malcolm wrote:

No one said the bodhisattva path was easy, but the first priority of a bodhisattva is preserve themselves so they can be service to others.

tellyontellyon said:

It is important for us to recognise that we all play our part in this political and economic system, none of us are innocent. We are guilty of allowing this system to continue. Some of us might have even found a comfortable little niche within it... but we have to understand that somebody else is paying for that niche.

Malcolm wrote:

Sorry, I am not guilty and I do not feel guilty. I have not stolen anything from anyone. I want this present system to continue, 1. because markets are a fact of human existence regardless of the currency which is being used 2. because no proposed alternatives are workable or scale internationally.

And TOTO, evolution is all about niches, and we humans are no different, we inhabit the

niches we find ourselves whether through karma or struggle to overcome our karma. You keep forgetting that a person who has no karma to be wealthy will never be wealthy even if you given them all the money in the world, they will have obstacles, or it will be robbed from them, or they will behave in such a way with it that they are sure to go to lower realms.

I am all for small scale experiments. If some want to have a anarchist commune, I am in favor of it. If some want to try and run their country or state according to Marxist principles, well, I think they are crazy but let them try. In the case of the former, they will have to deal with the fact that some people naturally are leaders and that a hierarchy will of necessity evolve, and former will have to face the fact that they will inevitably face supply and demand in the market.

While your desire for universal economic parity is admirable, it is romantic and impractical.

tellyontellyon said:

If someone want's to be a monk and live in a cave, I respect that. But for lay people who work and live in wider society we must recognise that we are playing a role in that society whether we think we are or not.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, but we don't have the right to force our vision of that society down anyone's throat.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, February 9th, 2014 at 10:41 PM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

...future widespread Anarchist society.

Malcolm wrote:

It will never happen.

Sherab Dorje said:

Never say never.

Malcolm wrote:

Anarchist society:

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, February 9th, 2014 at 11:20 PM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:



kirtu said:

Nazi Germany did not try to exterminate communism or the Jewish people due to resource shortages (although Nazi propaganda hyped the necessity for living space).

Malcolm wrote:

Hitler went to war primarily to fuel the German war machine. The concentration camps were a distraction that contributed in large measure to Hitler's losing the war. But in the end, the most important objective in Hitler's campaigns were oil fields in Russia. Since he never seized them, he lost the war.

kirtu said:

WW1 was also not fought primarily due to resource competition.

Malcolm wrote:

Sure it was, it was not even possible without Bismark's train system.

kirtu said:

Neither was the Korean War.

Malcolm wrote:

Sure it was, that is why North Korea invaded South Korea.

kirtu said:

Neither were the Vietnam Wars.

Malcolm wrote:

Sure they were, the Vietnam wars were fought to oust the French, and then the Americans. The French were there for resources, the Americans (us) blundered into it because of fears that Communist control of South Vietnam would strangle shipping lanes in Indochina.

kirtu said:

Neither was the Nicaraguan wars.

Malcolm wrote:

We did not fight a war in Nicaragua.

kirtu said:

Neither were the Angolan wars.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, it was, it was sparked in response to forced cotton cultivation.

kirtu said:

The American Revolutionary War was also not fought over resource competition, even buying the taxes thing.

Malcolm wrote:  
[/quote][/quote]

Of course it was. It was fought mainly because New England resented British interference in the domestic economy.

Even where wars seem to be fought for power, ultimately power brings only one thing: control over resources.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, February 9th, 2014 at 11:23 PM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

Rickpa said:

The idea behind free markets is totally voluntary. People exchange something desired for something desired to their mutual benefit. The failure that keeps visiting US markets is the failure to have free markets.

Malcolm wrote:

Sorry, Rick, the role of government is to regulate markets so they remain stable. What you are advocating is market anarchism. This is demonstrably bad for both the markets themselves as well as the economy.

Rickpa said:

Indeed, we are in peril.

Malcolm wrote:

Not really, I don't see Obama stormtroopers crossing my threshold anytime soon, unless you count the meek lady who came by my house yesterday to let us know about healthcare options.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, February 9th, 2014 at 11:39 PM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

Sönarn said:

and I have many like ...

S.

Malcolm wrote:

But labor is a commodity, on this Marx agrees with Adam Smith. Labor is the "Wealth of Nations", but even the labor theory of value is obsolete.

These days many economists use quantified marginal utility.

In economics, the marginal utility of a good or service is the gain from an increase or loss from a decrease in the consumption of that good or service. Economists sometimes speak of a law of diminishing marginal utility, meaning that the first unit of consumption of a good or service yields more utility than the second and subsequent units, with a continuing reduction for greater amounts[clarification needed]. The marginal decision rule states that a good or service should be consumed at a quantity at which the marginal utility is equal to the marginal cost.[1]

The concept of marginal utility played a crucial role in the marginal revolution of the late 19th century, and led to the replacement of the labor theory of value by neoclassical value theory in which the relative prices of goods and services are simultaneously determined by marginal rates of substitution in consumption and marginal rates of transformation in production, which are equal in economic equilibrium.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marginal\\_utility](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marginal_utility)

This applies equally to labor as much as anything else. So for example, a cotton picker's labor has a marginal utility higher when there are no cotton machines to pick cotton. When cotton machines to pick cotton are introduced, that person's labor as a cotton picker becomes 0 value and they are forced to find other work. However, if a government decides, for whatever reason, that value of cotton pickers is innate, they can elect to bar cotton pickers, and thus the marginal utility of a cotton picker remains high for as long as cotton is wanted.

The labor theory of value however would declare that a person's labor is equal to what they can produce, and in Marxist terms, they ought to be rewarded one hundred percent for that. Of course that is not how it works in practice, because skilled workers can produce much more value than unskilled workers, for example, in the translation of Tibetan texts. The only way it could work in Marxist terms is to abolish markets and declare all labor is equal in value as well as all commodities produced by that labor, which is of course total nonsense. A chair made in half an hour is in no way comparable to a chair made by a fine craftsmen in 80 hours.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, February 10th, 2014 at 12:30 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

Which is pretty sad when one stops to think about the history of Anarchism:

The democratic struggle in Spain during the 1930's (where the CNT was part of the governing democratic alliance),

Malcolm wrote:

A war where they were crushed.

Sherab Dorje said:  
the International Workers of the World,

Malcolm wrote:  
Lots of street battles.

Sherab Dorje said:  
the liberation of the Ukraine from Imperial Russian and German forces AND the Bolsheviks in the 1920's,

Malcolm wrote:  
Nonsense, never happened. Ukraine was dominated by the Communist Party during the 20's, on orders from Moscow.

Sherab Dorje said:  
the ongoing self-governance and resistance of the Zapatistas, etc...

Malcolm wrote:  
The Zapatistas are ethnic nationalists, not anarchists.

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Monday, February 10th, 2014 at 12:39 AM  
Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism  
Content:  
Malcolm wrote:  
From somebody that has not figured out the difference between Anarchism and chaos. This is what anarchism will lead to, predation by nomadic bands. You should read Nomadology: [http://zinelibrary.info/files/nomadology\\_read.pdf](http://zinelibrary.info/files/nomadology_read.pdf)

The State is not an agent of war. Wars are bad for states. States generally seek to avoid war, unless they are taken over by their own nomads (as was the case of Iraq).

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Monday, February 10th, 2014 at 12:42 AM  
Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism  
Content:  
Malcolm wrote:  
The concentration camps were a distraction that contributed in large measure to Hitler's losing the war.

Sherab Dorje said:  
A distraction??? The concentration camps were designed to quell all internal resistance to Nazi policy and anybody that stood in the way of the implementation of Nazi policies (Trade Unionists, Communists, Democrats, Humanist Christians, etc...) and to realise Hitler's dream of the eradication of anybody he didn't consider German

enough (Jews, Gypsies, etc...) The Nazi regime would not have lasted as long as it did if it wasn't for the concentration camps .

Malcolm wrote:

The Nazi Regime would have lasted much longer, and possibly have won the war on the continent if they had been content to merely expell people rather than spend enormous resources herding people about in cattle cars (on rail lines that Bismark designed to carry troops) in order to kill them.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, February 10th, 2014 at 12:51 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

marginal utility.

It amounts to saying that something is simply worth what someone is willing to pay. It isn't an economic theory at all, rather it amounts to the belief that there are no economic theories, and that value is entirely subjective.

Malcolm wrote:

Which is entirely consistent with Buddhist philosophy. That is to say all value is subjective, and merely conventional. There is no such thing as essences, whether in economics or anything else.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, February 10th, 2014 at 12:53 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

It should not be concluded that war is a state of nature, but rather that it is the mode of a social state that wards off and prevents the State.

-- Nomadology

This is anarchy, which is violent by nature, despite what anarchist romantic theorists would like to believe.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, February 10th, 2014 at 2:00 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

Sönarn said:

Malcom,

What you try to figure out regarding Anarchism (I don't speak about communism) could also be said regarding capitalism. Capitalism, as you state it, is an utopia ... and will remains as such because in "real life" capitalism automatically leads to his "disadvantages" <http://listverse.com/2012/01/16/top-10-disadvantages-to-capitalism/> and certainly: waste, starvation, anti-social, danger and so on.

S.

Malcolm wrote:

Sonam:

I am not defending capitalism as an ideology. I am not a Capitalist with a capital C. But I do not have much patience for utopian fantasies that come from the left, or for that matter utopian fantasies that come from the right (for example, the fantasy that free markets will fix everything, etc.). The capitalist economy we have now is far from a utopia, and because of the free market policies of neoliberals, is heading into a dystopia.

I do embrace our teacher's teachings that we should be pursuing personal evolution, not external revolution. That means we need to follow a middle way. Anarchism, Communism and Libertarianism, etc., just are not it.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, February 10th, 2014 at 2:04 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

You could say the same about gravity. Unfortunately, I am unable to walk on water, walk through walls or fly unaided like superman... so I will just have to reject this superficial 'theory' of economics.

Wiki: Karl Marx died before marginalism became the interpretation of economic value accepted by mainstream economics. His theory was based on the labor theory of value, which distinguishes between exchange value and use value. In his Capital he rejected the explanation of long-term market values by supply and demand:

Nothing is easier than to realize the inconsistencies of demand and supply, and the resulting deviation of market-prices from market-values. The real difficulty consists in determining what is meant by the equation of supply and demand.[...]If supply equals demand, they cease to act, and for this very reason commodities are sold at their market-values. Whenever two forces operate equally in opposite directions, they balance one another, exert no outside influence, and any phenomena taking place in these circumstances must be explained by causes other than the effect of these two forces. If supply and demand balance one another, they cease to explain anything, do

not affect market-values, and therefore leave us so much more in the dark about the reasons why the market-value is expressed in just this sum of money and no other.[58] In his early response to marginalism, Nikolai Bukharin argued that "the subjective evaluation from which price is to be derived really starts from this price",[59] concluding: Whenever the Böhm-Bawerk theory, it appears, resorts to individual motives as a basis for the derivation of social phenomena, he is actually smuggling in the social content in a more or less disguised form in advance, so that the entire construction becomes a vicious circle, a continuous logical fallacy, a fallacy that can serve only specious ends, and demonstrating in reality nothing more than the complete barrenness of modern bourgeois theory.[60]

Similarly a later Marxist critic, Ernest Mandel, argued that marginalism was "divorced from reality", ignored the role of production, and that:

It is, moreover, unable to explain how, from the clash of millions of different individual "needs" there emerge not only uniform prices, but prices which remain stable over long periods, even under perfect conditions of free competition. Rather than an explanation of constants, and of the basic evolution of economic life, the "marginal" technique provides at best an explanation of ephemeral, short-term variations.[61]

Maurice Dobb argued that prices derived through marginalism depend on the distribution of income. The ability of consumers to express their preferences is dependent on their spending power. As the theory asserts that prices arise in the act of exchange, Dobb argues that it cannot explain how the distribution of income affects prices and consequently cannot explain prices.[62]

Dobb also criticized the motives behind marginal utility theory. Jevons wrote, for example, "so far as is consistent with the inequality of wealth in every community, all commodities are distributed by exchange so as to produce the maximum social benefit." (See Fundamental theorems of welfare economics.) Dobb contended that this statement indicated that marginalism is intended to insulate market economics from criticism by making prices the natural result of the given income distribution.[62]

Malcolm wrote:

I do not believe however that you can be rid of markets, and I think the labor theory of value is inadequate for explaining many things in the economy. Labor does not give things value. What gives a thing a value is whether it is desired or not, i.e. demand. For example, diamonds -- their value bears no relationship to the capital or the labor used to extract them. Their value is determined by demand and artificial restrictions on their sales which serve to increase that demand. The value of a diamond jewel, nothing more than a piece of hardened carbon, and no more nor less expensive in terms of capital and labor to extract than an industrial diamond, is not determined by those capital and labor investments at all. Neither is the price of oil. Neither is the price of food. Prices in general are not set because labor bears an intrinsic value, because labor, like any thing else in the market, has no intrinsic value of its own. What is the value of a piece of art? If people like your paintings more, you will get more. If they like it less, you will get less. And if you are a terrible artist, your paintings will be worthless and therefore, your labor in creating them is worthless.

Price instability is a function of supply and demand. It really is that simple. Regulations are enforced in order modulate rapid fluctuations in price which are primarily caused by speculators.

BTW, remind yourself that you have decided that someone's labor is worthless the next time you do not buy something because you decide "it isn't worth it."

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, February 10th, 2014 at 2:08 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

This is anarchy, which is violent by nature, despite what anarchist romantic theorists would like to believe.

Sherab Dorje said:

Yes, well, if Deleuze and Guattari (post modernists and post structuralists) say it's like that then it must be. Sigh...

You do realise that the whole "post-" thing was all just capitalist apologetics, hardly an objective vantage point to judge Anarchism from.

Malcolm wrote:

This is akin to saying that Buddhist dialectics is not a fair place to judge the doctrine of self from. In other words, your objection is bollocks, to which I will pay no mind.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, February 10th, 2014 at 2:19 AM

Title: Re: Make Life Meaningless

Content:

conebeckham said:

the root of ignorance is the feeling that samsaric phenomena have, among other things, meaning.

shel said:

Form is emptiness, doctrine tells us, therefore meaning is emptiness. How bout them apples?

Malcolm wrote:

No, it actually says that "Matter is empty". Then it says, "Emptiness is material." Then it says "Matter is not other than emptiness," and then, "Emptiness is not other than the material;" and concludes with "And so too for the other four aggregates."



Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, February 10th, 2014 at 2:42 AM

Title: Re: The Idea of Madhyamaka and Yogacara as Equally Correct

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

This still refers to the imagined nature viz: reification persons and things is the imagined nature, the absence of subject and object which produces the imagined is the dependent nature, the absence of existence and non-existence of the imagined nature in the dependent nature is the perfected nature. All of these three terms hinge on the imagined nature.

rob h said:

Can see what you mean, but still think it highlights the fact that Asanga tried to take the middle path. Will carry on researching/meditating anyway, and hopefully understand better as time passes.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, the Yogacarins think they are the real Mādhyamikas.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, February 10th, 2014 at 2:49 AM

Title: Re: Make Life Meaningless

Content:

shel said:

Yes?

Malcolm wrote:

It means that meaning is projection. IN other words, there is no meaning to meaning. It is just a convention, therefore it is the object of a false cognition.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, February 10th, 2014 at 2:55 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

Well, just taking diamonds as an example... high quality gem quality diamonds are much rarer than ordinary industrial diamonds, so it takes more time and effort (labour) to find them and more skill (labour) to cut and polish them.

Malcolm wrote:

Not really.

tellyontellyon said:

That capitalists make use of monopolies and restriction of production to push prices above natural value is of course understood. Supply and demand also affects price, but in general, production will be raised to meet demand. When demand and supply are equal then price tends towards natural value.

Malcolm wrote:

So you agree with marginal utility then.

tellyontellyon said:

You are not distinguishing between use value and exchange value.

Malcolm wrote:

Both are accounted for in marginal utility. If I have no use for something, for example, crack, for me it is worthless. I will never spend my money on it. If I want to buy something with whatever crack is at my disposal, however it comes into my hands, it becomes as valuable as whatever the other guy will pay me for it. A bag of smack these days is \$6 in NYC. In New England on the other hand, it is \$30.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, February 10th, 2014 at 3:06 AM

Title: Re: Does 35 Statues Mean anything?

Content:

gaelic said:

Hello and greetings! I have been planning to make a home shrine (I am learning as I go along), just setting up offering bowls and a butter lamp. In this regard, I have had a dream a few times now about building a shrine in a small cabin/hut in the forest here and that there are 35 statues. The number just stands out to me, does it mean anything? I don't count them in the dream or even know who the statues are, but in the dream I just know there are 35. Basically the dream is I am walking through the forest where I live and I come to the small cabin, open the door, and there is a shrine of 35 statues, and I pour water in offering bowls. In other variations, I am taking people with me to the hut that I have never seen before. Just was an odd dream, wondered if it had any meaning and who the statues are. I search "35 buddhist statues" but nothing particular comes up. Probably because I have been putting a lot of thought into making a home shrine lol. Thanks again!

Oh and one more thing, can I use in my home shrine a small Thanka rather than a statue?

Malcolm wrote:

There are 35 Buddhas of confession. This is a famous practice anyone can do, as it is based in sutra, called the Sutra of the Three Heaps

<http://www.thubtenchodron.org/PrayersAndPractices/35Buddhas.pdf>

<https://www.amazon.com/Confession-Downfalls-Sutra-Vajrasattva->

Practice/dp/8185102856

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, February 10th, 2014 at 3:08 AM

Title: Re: Make Life Meaningless

Content:

shel said:

Yes?

Malcolm wrote:

It means that meaning is projection. IN other words, there is no meaning to meaning. It is just a convention, therefore it is the object of a false cognition.

shel said:

How is that inconsistent with meaning is emptiness?

Malcolm wrote:

Not at all, emptiness too is a mere convention.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, February 10th, 2014 at 3:51 AM

Title: Re: Guru Rinpoche practices within the Sakya tradition

Content:

conebeckham said:

I have a somewhat related question.....sorry I can't help with yours.

But In Kagyu we practice Chakrasamvara on Guru Rinpoche days...wondering if Sakyapas do Hevajra puja and tsok, etc.??

Malcolm wrote:

No, Vajrayogini is done on both tenth days.

Usually HHST gives the Padmasambhava from Apong Tertons treasures.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, February 10th, 2014 at 3:57 AM

Title: Re: Does 35 Statues Mean anything?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

There are 35 Buddhas of confession. This is a famous practice anyone can do, as it is based in sutra, called the Sutra of the Three Heaps

<http://www.thubtenchodron.org/PrayersAndPractices/35Buddhas.pdf>

gaelic said:

Thank you very much! So these are all statues of Buddha? I didn't know there was confession lol. Do people build shrines to these Buddhas? Thank you very much for the link, I will read that through.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, February 10th, 2014 at 4:05 AM

Title: Re: Make Life Meaningless

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

emptiness too is a mere convention.

PadmaVonSamba said:

objects which arise conditionally were empty of inherent existence long before the concept of emptiness was even conceived.

So, while 'emptiness' (sunyata) is, on the one hand, merely our correct understanding of phenomena

the fact that phenomena are in fact empty is the same whether we 'convene' it or not.

If it were not already so, asserting emptiness would be false.

.  
.  
.

Malcolm wrote:

Asserting emptiness is false.

"If there were something subtle not empty, there would be something subtle to be empty; as there is nothing not empty, where is there something to be empty?

-- Nāgārjuna

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, February 10th, 2014 at 4:52 AM

Title: Re: Make Life Meaningless

Content:

PadmaVonSamba said:

You are saying.

'nothing arises which is empty,  
because if it arises, how can it be empty'  
???

Malcolm wrote:  
Precisely.

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Monday, February 10th, 2014 at 6:54 AM  
Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism  
Content:

Sherab Dorje said:  
I would liken it to asking the opinion of Nazi apologists about the benefits of Communism.

Malcolm wrote:  
D and G are "nazi apolgists? Hardly

Sherab Dorje said:  
Capitalists don't like Anarchists. Mainly because Capitalists like to throw around the term "free" thick and fast: free trade, free markets, etc... whereas their freedom is just slavery to currency.  
And then, of course, there is the fact that capitalists love to pay lip service to reducing state intervention to zero, whereas in reality they take every opportunity they can to utilise the state and state structures in order to increase profit and power.

Malcolm wrote:  
These people are called "anarcho-capitalists".

Sherab Dorje said:  
Capitalists hate Anarchists because Anarchists show up the fact that Capitalism is quite clearly not freedom, and that Authoritarian Socialism is not the only other solution.

Malcolm wrote:  
No, people are frightened of anarchists because they do stupid shit like inciting violence without provocation at demonstrations:

<http://www.kvi.com/home/featured/Seattle-anarchist-brags-about-violence-he-plans-for-May-Day-205625871.html>

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Monday, February 10th, 2014 at 7:01 AM  
Title: Re: Climate Change: We're Doomed  
Content:

Zhen Li said:  
Solar power is a great idea. I knew a man whose hydro bill (i.e. electricity here is called

hydro) was something like \$15.00/month because he installed high efficiency insulation, windows, and doors, and solar panels.

Malcolm wrote:

Of course it is a great idea. But it does not scale. Battery technology has not advanced in years. That said, it is perfectly reasonable for people to install their own panels and so. The only problem is that the panels themselves have a definite lifespan, 40 years at most. There are other problems too. For example, if you have trees in your yard, or live in places where there is possibility of hail and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, February 10th, 2014 at 7:05 AM

Title: Re: Perspective

Content:

gad rgyangs said:

Your Santideva quote is saying that mental pacification is the result of going beyond concepts: that is not inherently Buddhist, that is something you find in all religions, and is therefore truly "perennial".

Malcolm wrote:

No, actually you do not find this in "all religions".

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, February 10th, 2014 at 7:44 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

Zhen Li said:

Suffering is caused by greed, anger and ignorance, in the MIND, not by material conditions.

Malcolm wrote:

Thank you. I am glad there is another Buddhist voice in this conversation.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, February 10th, 2014 at 8:11 AM

Title: Re: Bronkhorst's Skepticism about early Buddhism

Content:

daverupa said:

(The equation "scholarship = fundamentalism" should probably get it's own thread; I'm amazed by this suggestion.)

Malcolm wrote:

He was not saying that. He was saying that scholarship and religion have different aims. The former is merely about who lived when, what they did, where they went, and maybe what they said. The latter is about one's personal spiritual path.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, February 10th, 2014 at 9:02 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

Don't worry about suffering dudes... it's all in the mind.

Malcolm wrote:

These kinds of things are very sad, but I don't see you posting pictures of all sentient beings who are suffering:

There is nothing you or I can do to prevent the ripening of someone else's karma.

Of course we try to help as much as we can, but we have to understand that we have limited capacity to help others.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, February 10th, 2014 at 6:47 PM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

Though I must admit that burning banks (a common pass-time for Greek anarchists) is hardly violence "without provocation".

Malcolm wrote:

Of course it is.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, February 10th, 2014 at 6:51 PM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

There are no private property/ownership rights in an Anarchist system, so the term is an oxymoron at best.

Sorry for quoting myself but I should clarify this statement:

Under the political-economic model of capitalism property (capital) is the basis for authority, as it is the means by which a capitalist exploits (asserts authority/dominance over) somebody that does not own capital. Now of course, in the real world, capitalists quite clearly exploit the power of the state (and state owned capital) as well, in order to assert their dominance. But in a utopian capitalist reality the security forces (both executive and administrative) would be privately owned so one would just directly pay for enforcement (instead of having to bribe the state administrators).

Last year, for example, they introduced a series of laws here in Greece where one can now rent actual police officers (not private security personnel) and police equipment (helicopters, boats, etc...) for security purposes. Okay, it is a semi-measure since the money goes to the state (there is the state owned capital again) and not to the individuals, but still one can see in which direction they are pushing. Private military organisations like Haliburton and Blackwater also come to mind, as examples, when discussing issues like this.

That is why there is no such thing as anarchist capitalism, because capital (property) IS authority.

Malcolm wrote:

Capital and property are two entirely different things. One can own thousands of acres of property and yet lack the capital to develop it.

Your anarchist system might scale up as far as a hippie commune, but will fail beyond that.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, February 10th, 2014 at 6:53 PM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

Though I must admit that burning banks (a common pass-time for Greek anarchists) is hardly violence "without provocation".

Malcolm wrote:

Of course it is.

Sherab Dorje said:

That's your opinion. I imagine if you ask all the homeless families, whose houses were stolen from them by banks, they may care to disagree.



Malcolm wrote:

I see, so anarchists, who don't believe in property, are burnings banks on behalf of those whose property was taken from them by foreclosures? What a stupid thing to do, so very Weather Underground.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, February 10th, 2014 at 6:55 PM

Title: Re: Perspective

Content:

gad rgyangs said:

Your Santideva quote is saying that mental pacification is the result of going beyond concepts: that is not inherently Buddhist, that is something you find in all religions, and is therefore truly "perennial".

Malcolm wrote:

No, actually you do not find this in "all religions".

Addendum, so my initial observation that your sentiment is perennialist' was correct.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, February 10th, 2014 at 6:59 PM

Title: Re: Climate Change: We're Doomed

Content:

Zhen Li said:

I don't think a figure of 40 years is anything to be up in arms about. After all, just about any power plant would be lucky to get past regulators running that long without major updates and replacements of key parts.

Malcolm wrote:

That's an ideal estimate. Lifespans in reality are overall much shorter.

Then of course we must mention that extraction process for the rare earth materials in solar panels, wind generators, batteries, etc., are pretty devastating to their local environments because China/Inner Mongolia is about the only place where rare earths are recoverable without significant quantities of radioactive materials, and even then they are strip mined.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, February 10th, 2014 at 7:08 PM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Capital and property are two entirely different things. One can own thousands of acres of property and yet lack the capital to develop it.

Sherab Dorje said:

According to investopedia.com (a capitalist site): Definition of 'Capital'

1. Financial assets or the financial value of assets, such as cash.
2. The factories, machinery and equipment owned by a business and used in production.

“Capital” can mean many things. Its specific definition depends on the context in which it is used. In general, it refers to financial resources available for use. Companies and societies with more capital are better off than those with less capital.

Malcolm wrote:

Right, capital and property are two different things, though their meaning is commonly conflated in discussions.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, February 10th, 2014 at 7:32 PM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

I cannot speak on behalf of all Anarchists, but I certainly would not consider burning banks an unprovoked action.

Malcolm wrote:

Of course it is, it is completely ignorant. A physical structure is not a "bank". All such actions do is create more negativity, more hostility, more negative karma all around. It is an utterly ignorant and foolish—not to mention criminal— thing to do.

Sherab Dorje said:

Right, capital and property are two different things, though their meaning is commonly conflated in discussions.

Not necessarily, the first definition says: "Financial assets OR ..."

Malcolm wrote:

A financial asset is an intangible asset that derives value because of a contractual claim. Examples include bank deposits, bonds, and stocks. Financial assets are usually more liquid than tangible assets, such as land or real estate, and are traded on financial markets. ...

You mean "asset", an asset can include property such as land, buildings, bulldozers, etc.. A financial asset is a bond, stock, etc.

You are not a stupid person, so I find it a little unbelievable that you waste your time on such adolescent political theories.

Ok, I am really done with this ridiculous thread.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, February 10th, 2014 at 8:30 PM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Of course it is, it is completely ignorant. A physical structure is not a "bank". All such actions do is create more negativity, more hostility, more negative karma all around. It is an utterly ignorant and foolish—not to mention criminal— thing to do.

Sherab Dorje said:

I guess you don't support eco-terrorism either?

Malcolm wrote:

I do not support acts of violence against people or property. So no, I am not a fan of monkey wrenching. I consider that such acts stem from a shallow view.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, February 10th, 2014 at 8:41 PM

Title: Re: Middle Way Politics

Content:

Rickpa said:

This thread strikes me as about being more about systems of governance rather than politics.

Malcolm wrote:

That is where people went with the thread. What I had in mind was more how, given that there are many non-Buddhist political realities out there, Buddhists will conduct themselves in the political sphere. For example, our friend Greg (Sherab Dorje) considers it just dandy to destroy private property.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, February 10th, 2014 at 11:36 PM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

I do not support acts of violence against people or property. So no, I am not a fan of monkey wrenching. I consider that such acts stem from a shallow view.

Sherab Dorje said:

As an ecologist, do you support the compulsory sterilisation of domesticated animals (I am talking here about pets and especially strays)?

Malcolm wrote:

That is not really the question you are asking. What you are implying is, if sentient beings should be viewed as equal (in general, they should), someone who does not support violence against persons or property should not support compulsory sterilization of pets and strays.

I have no pets, so I never think about the issue. That issue is outside of my control, being a public health issue primarily.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, February 10th, 2014 at 11:40 PM

Title: Re: Middle Way Politics

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

... For example, our friend Greg (Sherab Dorje) considers it just dandy to destroy private property.

Sherab Dorje said:

And our friend Malcolm has no problem with a multinational mining company wreaking havoc just because they own a title deed for the land they are destroying?

Malcolm wrote:

I didn't say that I have no problem with it. I do, I just don't believe that the solution is fire bombing their facilities and equipment.

In any event, most mining companies in the US lease the land they are mining. Not sure how it works in other places.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, February 11th, 2014 at 2:14 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

...given you consider compulsory sterilisation a public health issue.

Malcolm wrote:

What I am saying is that it is a public health issue and it is out of my hands, it's not my decision to make. I never made any statement whatsoever about whether I approve or disapprove of the practice.

It is a complicated -- for example, termites, ants, killer bees, etc.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, February 11th, 2014 at 2:41 AM

Title: Re: Middle Way Politics

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

And I never said that I support all instances of property destruction.

Malcolm wrote:

You advocate violence in so far as you think some types of property destruction are permissible based on some arbitrary standard you impose.

But frankly, I cannot see any place in Buddhist ethics where it is permissible.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, February 11th, 2014 at 4:33 AM

Title: Re: Perspective

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

For all its cig car rhetoric, in the end, Dzogchen is just a gradual path like everything else in Buddhadharma.

heart said:

Either you recognize the natural state directly and never leave it again or you have to do some habituation to it. I wouldn't call it gradual. It don't get more it just gets longer, easier and more natural and you have less problems letting go of mind.

/magnus

Malcolm wrote:

The path is gradual, not the state, but then that is true of every path in Vajrayana.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, February 11th, 2014 at 4:49 AM

Title: Re: Guru Rinpoche practices within the Sakya tradition

Content:

Kunga said:

Doing the self-blessing of Kachoma is often private and extra curricular.

Malcolm wrote:

You would know better than I what is done in Sakya monasteries in India.

I was just talking about the tsog, not the self blessing which is little elaborate and can only be done by those people who have done a full retreat.

Also, I was mentioning from the perspective of what is normally done in western Sakya centers, I wasn't really including monasteries in India.

The idea that the first tenth day is for Heruka practices and the second tenth day is for Dakini practices is based on the flow of the white bodhicittas. But in general the first tenth day ganapuja is for increasing merit and the second is for purifying samaya, strictly speaking.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, February 11th, 2014 at 4:52 AM

Title: Re: Perspective

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The path is gradual, not the state, but then that is true of every path in Vajrayana.

dzogchungpa said:

So what's up with all the cig car rhetoric?

Malcolm wrote:

It's rhetorical.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, February 11th, 2014 at 7:09 AM

Title: Re: Perspective

Content:

Virgo said:

But it is not gradual in terms of needing to create merit and purify karma, transform perceptions, in order to realize the "state", is it?

The secret is, that was already done in the past, therefore, one has the perception to understand the truth about the three kayas -- which do not arise, are not based on conditions etcetera.

Kevin

Malcolm wrote:

Here is the critical point that everyone over looks.

All Mahāyāna paths whether sūtra or tantra, have one thing in common: realization of the three kāyas. Each path works first at the nirmanakāya level, i.e. at first that's all you can see; then the sambhogakāya level, and finally, at the end one can see the dharmakāya personally, then one is a Buddha.

This is the same whether you are practicing the six perfections, the two stages, or trekchöd and thogal. The only difference is the amount of time it takes, and the methodology used.

Even in sūtra the obscurations are not regarded as something real which need to be abandoned. The Abhisamayālaṅkāra states: The wisdom of the exhaustion and non-arising of taints is called “the awakened state”.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, February 11th, 2014 at 7:48 AM

Title: Re: Perspective

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

then the sambhogakāya level, and finally, at the end one can see the dharmakāya personally, then one is a Buddha.

Virgo said:

But isn't a state of rigpa more than the nirmanakaya level?

Kevin

Malcolm wrote:

The state of rigpa is all three kāyas combined, but while you still have obscurations, the nirmanakāya level is all you can experience. If you can experience the sambhogakāya aspect, you are a person of high realization, meaning you are beyond the third vision.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, February 11th, 2014 at 7:43 PM

Title: Re: Climate Change: We're Doomed

Content:

Kim O'Hara said:

And in those terms, it is much less bad for us to dig up what we need for solar panels than to dig up the coal we would need to generate the same amount of electricity.

Malcolm wrote:

If it scales, sure. So far I see no evidence that it does.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, February 11th, 2014 at 7:47 PM

Title: Re: Middle Way Politics

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

And I never said that I support all instances of property destruction.

Malcolm wrote:

You advocate violence in so far as you think some types of property destruction are permissible based on some arbitrary standard you impose.

But frankly, I cannot see any place in Buddhist ethics where it is permissible.

Sherab Dorje said:

Really? I don't think you have to look all that hard actually. I don't think it would be so difficult, from a Buddhist perspective, to ethically justify destroying a machine in order to save countless lives. Not difficult at all actually.

Malcolm wrote:

I see, so you are going to get out there and destroy shovels, hoes, rakes, lawn mowers, plows, cars etc? No, there really is no justification for such acts. Such acts are merely symbolic and do nothing to change systems, as the failed efforts of the Luddites clearly demonstrates. Violence, whether against people or property, is not justifiable from a Buddhist ethical standpoint unless you are a realized person in possession of such powers of prescience and clairvoyance that you can be assured of a positive outcome of your acts.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, February 11th, 2014 at 8:55 PM

Title: Re: Climate Change: We're Doomed

Content:

Kim O'Hara said:

Evidence:

...or choose your own favourite after oogling "solar power generation" and clicking the "Images" tag on the results page, which is all I did.

Kim



Malcolm wrote:

That is not scaling. That is ugly as shit. Also, it is an extremely inefficient use of land area.

The main problem with renewables at this point is lack of storage options (battery technology is still not very advanced), variability in power generation, and the fact that natural gas and coal plants must continue to be used to make up for deficiencies. So called smart grids might be a solution, but the problem with all these technological computer-based fixes is that they introduce increasing complexity thus creating more opportunity for calamitous failure, terrorist attack, and so on.

If any thing, centralization of power generation not a desiderata.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, February 11th, 2014 at 11:19 PM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

Everyone gains. No rational actor engages in an exchange that is disadvantageous. That's just dogma. If you need a job and the means of production (job's, land, machines, bank's) etc. are in the hands of a tiny minority, and that system inevitably produces endemic unemployment... then the power is all in the hands of that same minority. The super-rich hold all the cards. Therefore, the average wage earner is compelled to sell their labour for a poor deal.

They're compelled to sell their based on their skills based on what is of value to others. If I am a master iron worker in a defunct industry, I am not likely to be paid much for my now useless craft, am I? And those who put up the capital for such a defunct industry will generally fold as well.

If one person is gaining... someone else (or many others) are losing.

This is very simplistic thinking.

I honestly wonder if we are living in the same world?

Malcolm wrote:

We live in the world we choose to see. I live in a world where outcomes are largely determined by karma and merit. You live in a world where outcomes are produced by material relations. You may have aspirations to be a Buddhist, but your view of the world is wholly worldly, bound up as it is in these eight worldly dharmas:

hope for happiness and fear of suffering

hope for fame and fear of insignificance

hope for praise and fear of blame

hope for gain and fear of loss

You may protest that it is not yourself for which you are concerned, but the eight worldly dharmas apply to all instances of these hopes and fears.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, February 12th, 2014 at 12:26 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

It's not that my view is totally worldly. Perhaps it is that your view is totally unworldly?

You draw such a big distinction between worldly and unworldly. I don't think that the Buddha would draw those lines in quite the same way.

Malcolm wrote:

He drew them even harder.

tellyontellyon said:

I don't think he achieved liberation by divorcing himself from the 'world', it was more that he came to see the nature of that world.

Malcolm wrote:

He came to see the nature of the world was entirely suffering. Even happiness is suffering if that happiness does not come from Dharma practice.

tellyontellyon said:

Understanding the difference or relationship between a 'worldly' and a 'realised' point of view... well that can only come with realisation.

Malcolm wrote:

No, that comes from studying the Dharma.

tellyontellyon said:

In the meantime I think I would like to continue worrying about the 'worldly' lives of the people and all the other beings on this planet.

Malcolm wrote:

The best thing you can do for others is attain realization yourself. That will never happen while you are standing in an angry crowd denouncing some transient worldly condition.

tellyontellyon said:

I can only do what I can within my present capacities.

Malcolm wrote:

Indeed.

tellyontellyon said:

If you don't want to consider me a Buddhist that is fine, (but I'm not quite sure why you feel you have the authority to say such things). Perhaps you are playing politics?

Malcolm wrote:

I didnt say you weren't a Buddhist. Clearly you consider yourself one. But you don't sound like a Buddhist, you sound like a worldly person, entirely caught in hope and fear.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, February 12th, 2014 at 12:30 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

The purpose of the precepts is to help us overcome suffering, not to lock us into it.

Malcolm wrote:

Indeed.

tellyontellyon said:

They are not god given dogma.

Malcolm wrote:

They are based on the avoidance of the natural ten non-virtues.

Malice

Greed

Wrong view

Harsh speech

Lying

Calumny

Idle speech

Taking life

Taking what is not given

Sexual misconduct

Since the vows do not suppose one's mind can be directly controlled, and since of the four verbal non-virtues, lying is the worst, and because Buddha compassionately understood that people were going to yell, spread calumny and gossip he did not turn those into precepts. He forbade the three non-virtues of the body. These ten non-virtues are what drive rebirth into lower realms; their avoidance results in birth in higher realms.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, February 12th, 2014 at 2:11 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

Whereas those supporting capitalism are not?

Malcolm wrote:

I never said I wasn't worldly person. I also never stated that I support capitalist ideology.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, February 12th, 2014 at 2:52 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

Ha Ha. You sounded a little bit worldly yourself when I suggested the possibility of returning your land to the communal ownership that existed under the native Americans.

Malcolm wrote:

Which ones? You mean the tribes that no longer exist? You really don't seem to understand tribal territories, expansions, conquest and so on as it occurred among Native Americans in the Northeast. Your concept that Native Americans owned land communally is complete nonsense:

In the past, most if not all North American indigenous peoples had a strong belief in individual property rights and ownership. Frederick Hodge (1910) noted that individual private ownership was "the norm" for North American tribes.

Likewise, Julian Steward (1938, 253) asserted that among Native Americans communal property was limited, and Frances Densmore (1939) concluded that the Makah tribe in the Pacific Northwest had property rights similar to Europeans.' These early twentieth-century historians and anthropologists had the advantage of actually interviewing tribal members who had lived in pre-reservation Indian society.

By the late 1940s, however, these original and firsthand sources of information had died, and false myths and historical distortions began to take dominant shape. By the mid-1960s, the tone in many college history books, history-inspired films and novels, and even speeches had completely changed (Mika 1995). A typical historical distortion, for example, is found in Baldwin and Kelley's best-selling 1965 college textbook, *The Stream of American History*, where they write, "Indians had little comprehension of the value of money, the ownership of land . . . and so land sharks and grog sellers found it easy to mulct them of their property" (208). These myths were further fueled by popular books such as Jacobs' (1972) *Dispossessing the American Indian*, which suggested that Native Americans felt that land (and other property) was "a gift from the gods" and as such not subject to private ownership. Gradually more and more people started to honestly believe that the indigenous people of North America had been historically communal, non-property oriented, and romantic followers of an economic system more harmonious with nature.

Today, tribal leaders, politicians, and various interest groups in both the United States and Canada often repeat these myths as fact when discussing business, economics,

and entrepreneurship during tribal conferences and congressional hearings (Selden 2001).

Terry Anderson (1995) attributes the beginning of the myth to settlers seeking farm land in the Great Plains, who interacted only with nomadic tribes that did not view land as an important asset. These settlers mistakenly generalized the lack of interest in land to infer a lack of property rights among all tribes. We argue that this fiction was further propagated in the nineteenth century by a virtual army of East Coast newspaper journalists, dime novelists, and Washington politicians who, in spite of writing about Native Americans, often had little contact with tribal groups. Reported, retold, and unchallenged, these incorrect perceptions ended up as the basis for later laws and institutional codification.

- See more at: <http://perc.org/articles/american-indian-collectivism#sthash.QzsVsD6T.dpuf>

tellyontellyon said:

All land was originally communal: some bully built a fence that's all.

Malcolm wrote:

The fences were not built by bullies, but rather, by people who wanted to protect their crops from thieves.

The rice plants, as mentioned earlier, began to grow in separate plots and people began to divide lands and tend each other's cluster of rice fief. They became preoccupied in tending their own field. Then, as the evil and greed were aroused, there were people who begin stealing others' crops. At first, the others only warned the culprit and the culprit promised that he would never repeat it again. But when it was repeated several times, the people began punishing him with fist, stones, and then sticks. That is the origin of punishment forms. Then, people began to think that they were too busy to heed every crime and abuse that happened in their society. They grieved on the rising of evil amongst their people. But most of their time had already been invested in tending their fief. So, they appointed someone to rectify what is right and what is wrong, give warnings to those who need it, give punishment to those who deserve it, and in return, they will give him a share of their rice. So, they went to the fairest, ablest, most likeable, and most intelligent person and appointed him to do the judging and passing out sentences on the reward of a share of rice. The appointed person thus agreed and the people bestowed upon him the title : 'Maha Sammata' meaning: The People's Choice. Then, they bestowed also the second title: 'Khattiya' meaning the 'Lord of the Rice Field', and finally the third title: 'Raja' which means 'Who gladdens people with Dhamma (or Truth)'. This order was created by the people's wish and need, based on the Dhamma and not from others. The Buddha stated again that Dhamma is indeed the best of all things.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Agga%C3%B1%C3%B1a\\_Sutta](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Agga%C3%B1%C3%B1a_Sutta)

tellyontellyon said:

I thought Engaged Buddhism was about addressing the problems of worldly life?

Malcolm wrote:

[/quote][/quote]

That is what it may mean to some people. What it means to me is working with our present circumstances according to the best Buddhist ethics one can muster.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, February 12th, 2014 at 3:03 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

I'm just talking about a secure job for everybody, one that pays a living wage, a home for everybody that is warm and secure. Education, healthcare, free time to relax, meditate, take part in community life.

Malcolm wrote:

I just figured it out -- you want to live in Norway!

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, February 12th, 2014 at 3:05 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

I'm just talking about a secure job for everybody, one that pays a living wage...

Malcolm wrote:

Then start a business.

tellyontellyon said:

...a home for everybody that is warm and secure.

Malcolm wrote:

Then start a house building business.

tellyontellyon said:

Education, healthcare, free time to relax, meditate, take part in community life.

Malcolm wrote:

You make every too complicated with your insistence that we need this huge Nanny state to take care of everything for us.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, February 12th, 2014 at 3:32 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

What about the people who can't afford a house?

Malcolm wrote:

Well, give them a job so they can afford housing and eventually build one of their own.

tellyontellyon said:

Is it a 'nanny state' to suggest that people look out for each other, where we can share what we have?

Malcolm wrote:

We cannot share what we don't have. Frankly, I regards things like healthcare and education to be like utilities, a basic standard should be provided for everyone because the social cost of not doing so is higher. But it still comes out of someone's taxes. I pay taxes for a school system in which I have no children nor ever will have children because I am too old to have children. So I am sharing. I don't complain. I think people are obliged to pay fair taxes for things like roads, etc. I think it is fair for power companies, regulated monopolies, to charge for electricity.

But I do not think it is the job of the government to enforce some artificial standard across the board to make sure everyone has exactly as much as everyone else. That kind of thinking is ludicrous as far as I am concerned.

tellyontellyon said:

What's so un-Buddhist about sharing?

Malcolm wrote:

Nothing, I am suggesting that you start. If you really want to help people, go to Haiti. They need help. Get a job as a volunteer with the BRC. You said that you already do some kind of social work, great.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, February 12th, 2014 at 3:35 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

Simon E. said:

Without wanting to sound like a British Rush Limbaugh, I am afraid Malcolm that there is a whole generation of young Brits who feel that life owes them a living.

When they talk about 'sharing' its all one way traffic. From others to them. If they spent the time that they are on line earning a living they might have something to share.

Malcolm wrote:

Otto Bismark famously said:

He who is not a socialist at 19, has no heart. He who is still a socialist at 30, has no brain.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, February 12th, 2014 at 3:51 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

Bismarck!

An unfortunate icon...

Wiki Bismarck distrusted democracy and ruled through a strong, well-trained bureaucracy with power in the hands of a Junker elite representing the landed aristocracy in the east.

Bismarck, an aristocratic Junker himself, had an extremely aggressive and domineering personality. He possessed not only a long-term national and international vision, but also the short-term ability to juggle many complex developments simultaneously. As the leader of what historians call "revolutionary conservatism"[2] Bismarck became a hero to German nationalists; they built hundreds of monuments glorifying the iconic symbol of powerful conservative leadership.

Malcolm wrote:

I know very well who Bismark is.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, February 12th, 2014 at 4:02 AM

Title: Re: Wagner and Buddhism

Content:

Zhen Li said:

But are you never moved emotionally listening to his music?

Malcolm wrote:

Wagner is godawful crap.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, February 12th, 2014 at 4:09 AM

Title: Re: Middle Way Politics

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:



So if you have a guy with a gun who wants to kill people and you destroy the gun it is totally against Buddhist ethics?

Malcolm wrote:

You have to know for a \_fact\_ that he wants to kill people. When people act in [legally defined] criminal ways, it is well established that they lose certain rights, for example, the right to own and use a gun. If a man walks into a crowd with a gun and threatens to shoot, of course you are well within your rights to confront the assailant and relieve him of his weapon (if you are foolish enough to try). You do not have that right unless you know for a fact that he is doing to act in that way.

Sherab Dorje said:

Just because monkey wrenching doesn't fit into your personal world view doesn't mean it cannot be accommodated within the framework of Buddhist ethics.

Malcolm wrote:

Monkey wrenching cannot be accommodated within Buddhist ethics, since Buddhist ethics also requires that people obey the laws of the country they live in. Monkey wrenching is just vigilantism, plain and simple, and itself is a criminal act.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, February 12th, 2014 at 4:39 AM

Title: Re: Vajrakilaya and date of the 'phur gel 'bum nag

Content:

Sherlock said:

I think the main area of contention arises from the life of Padma Las 'brel rtsal, which Boord notes as "Dates uncertain".

Malcolm wrote:

Not uncertain at all, Padma Las 'brel rtsal, according to the treasury of lives website has these dates: b.1291 - d.1315.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, February 12th, 2014 at 4:43 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

It means everybody gets what they need, and contribute what they are able to.

Malcolm wrote:

Decided by who?

tellyontellyon said:

Look at the gap between those people at the very top and the people at the very bottom,

it is impossible to grasp. That gap needs to narrow by a considerable amount. Also, it doesn't mean no 'trade' or no businesses... It means taking the largest businesses, utilities and banks into public ownership.

Malcolm wrote:

Right, we covered this before. I don't agree this is wise.

tellyontellyon said:

You can bet that far more small businesses have been forced to close by the big companies! The very biggest businesses could be run democratically by their own workers and representatives of the wider society.

Malcolm wrote:

I don't believe this will work. Companies are not democracies, and cannot function as such.

tellyontellyon said:

Deep ecology for example, would you impose that?

Malcolm wrote:

No, of course not, it is against the principles Arne Naess outlined.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, February 12th, 2014 at 5:02 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

What makes a system that is based on (rewards and encourages) greed and self-centredness Buddhist?

Malcolm wrote:

Nothing.

Sherab Dorje said:

Why is a system that encourages, and is based on, sharing and mutual generosity non-Buddhist?

Malcolm wrote:

Nothing.

Neither systems are Buddhist.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, February 12th, 2014 at 5:25 AM

Title: Re: Middle Way Politics

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

You have to know for a \_fact\_ that he wants to kill people. When people act in [legally defined] criminal ways, it is well established that they lose certain rights, for example, the right to own and use a gun. If a man walks into a crowd with a gun and threatens to shoot, of course you are well within your rights to confront the assailant and relieve him of his weapon (if you are foolish enough to try). You do not have that right unless you know for a fact that he is doing to act in that way.

Sherab Dorje said:

So now you are saying that it is okay to destroy private property.

Malcolm wrote:

No. I am saying that the man in question lost the right to use that property. It is an entirely different kind of thing.

Sherab Dorje said:

Okay, so tell of one instance of mining (for example) that has not been an ecological catastrophe. And then please explain to me why one should not defend the eco-system from destruction.

Malcolm wrote:

One can defend the ecosystem from catastrophe, but one must do so lawfully and non-violently. I have no problem with corporations such as BP being stripped of their property, legally, when they prove to be negligent in the conduct of their business. But I do not think it is right, or even ecologically sane, to blow up oil pipelines, transmission lines, and so on.

For example, look at all the harm people do like releasing animals from labs. This is just plain stupid as well as dangerous. This does not demonstrate any ecological awareness at all.

To illustrate how support of monkey wrenching is inconsistent with Deep Ecology, we see that Naess writes:

In many Western countries, environmental struggle involves direct actions and violent confrontation. The norms of nonviolent group conflict as worked out by Gandhi and others exclude violence not only against the opponents, but also against their machinery and other equipment that, from a direct, causal point of view, destroy life and life conditions on a vast scale. The norms against so-called sabotage involving such equipment are based on deep attitudes that express themselves in cultural phenomena such as inochi and kuyo.

Naess, Arne (2009-05-01). *The Ecology of Wisdom: Writings by Arne Naess* (p. 204). Counterpoint. Kindle Edition.

As you can see, we Deep Ecologists do not support in any way violence against either

people or property. We Buddhists should not either, unless the special conditions of clairvoyance that I mentioned manifest in ourselves, as in the case of the Bodhisattva when he was a sea captain.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, February 12th, 2014 at 5:31 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

What makes a system that is based on (rewards and encourages) greed and self-centredness Buddhist?

Malcolm wrote:

Nothing.

Sherab Dorje said:

Why is a system that encourages, and is based on, sharing and mutual generosity non-Buddhist?

Malcolm wrote:

Nothing.

Neither systems are Buddhist.

Sherab Dorje said:

I guess it all depends on how narrowly one defines Buddhism.

Malcolm wrote:

I define Buddha Dharma as the practice of the three trainings and the six perfections. I do not define it through political ideologies. People try to use political ideologies in the service of the Dharma, but in such cases usually the Dharma loses and the eight worldly dharmas win.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, February 12th, 2014 at 8:04 AM

Title: Re: Middle Way Politics

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

No. I am saying that the man in question lost the right to use that property. But this is decided by secular law.

Malcolm wrote:

And in general Buddhist ethics holds that one must obey the laws of the country one is in.

tellyontellyon said:

Secular law can be changed if that is what the majority want.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, but it is not as easy as you think. And Buddhist ethics generally comes down on the conservative side when it comes to issues of political change. As the Buddha mentions in the Mahāparinibbana sutta:

"What have you heard, Ananda: do the Vajjis assemble and disperse peacefully and attend to their affairs in concord?"

"I have heard, Lord, that they do."

"So long, Ananda, as this is the case, the growth of the Vajjis is to be expected, not their decline.

"What have you heard, Ananda: do the Vajjis neither enact new decrees nor abolish existing ones, but proceed in accordance with their ancient constitutions?"

"I have heard, Lord, that they do."

"So long, Ananda, as this is the case, the growth of the Vajjis is to be expected, not their decline.

There is never a case where the Buddha predicts the success of a society where violent and radical change is imposed.

tellyontellyon said:

What if the capitalists use their ownership of the means of production in such a way as people decide that they should lose the right to use that property?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, if some country wishes to try nationalization of industries and banks through entirely peaceful means, Buddhists living in that country can of course be on either side of that decision, but if the decision is made to nationalize, they have nothing more really to say about it.

But if some citizens of a country decide to enact a violent revolution and seize banks and industries through force, Buddhist ethics would describe that as theft and no Buddhist should participate in that revolution. Not only this, it will not be successful, because those citizens would not be observing not only the seven conditions upon which a successful country is based upon, but not even one.

I never once said that Buddhists could not resist injustice. We can, but we need to do so with the principle of non-violence foremost in our minds and the understanding that as limited common people without the benefit of realization we really do not have the capacity to predict the outcomes of violent upheavals. In other words, when Buddhists enter into a social struggle they may be ready to die for their cause, but they have a higher ethical obligation to strive to preserve the lives of their "enemies" at all costs, even at the cost of their own lives.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, February 12th, 2014 at 8:21 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

They don't work very well compared to ones managed by a CEO.

But they do work, some have been around for many years, even in a very competitive capitalist environment. This style of 'management' clearly has legs.

Here is an example of one of the many workers cooperatives operating in the US:

<http://www.alvaradostreetbakery.com/index.php>

Other useful website:

<http://www.usworker.coop/>

Malcolm wrote:

I think Zhen Li's point is that such entities don't scale up.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, February 12th, 2014 at 10:11 PM

Title: Re: Middle Way Politics

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

No. I am saying that the man in question lost the right to use that property. It is an entirely different kind of thing.

Sherab Dorje said:

So you give the gun back after the situation has been "defused"???

Malcolm wrote:

In the US, such a person is then deemed a felon, and as such as barred from owning any sort of firearms for life.

Sherab Dorje said:

This is just not true. A true statement would be: "As you can see some of us Deep Ecologists..."

Malcolm wrote:

If you are not following the thought of Arne Naess, you are not a Deep Ecologist.

Sherab Dorje said:

Many Deep Ecologists would go so far as to promote the sterilisation of non-indigenous humans too.

Malcolm wrote:

Those people are not Deep Ecologists, whatever else they may be. I think you are confusing the thought of the so called "Deep Greens" with Deep Ecology. Their thought is not consistent with either deep ecological ethics nor with Buddhist ethics:

But violence is a broad category of action; it can be wielded destructively or wisely. We can decide when property destruction is acceptable, against which physical targets, and with what risks to civilians. We can decide whether direct violence against people is appropriate.

Jensen, Derrick; Mcbay, Aric; Keith, Lierre (2011-01-04). Deep Green Resistance: Strategy to Save the Planet (Kindle Locations 1252-1253). Seven Stories Press. Kindle Edition.

As you can clearly see, the founder of Deep Ecology, Naess, is utterly opposed to this sort of thinking.

Sherab Dorje said:

But really, it is all a juggling game, no matter which side of the non-violent fence you happen to be situated. I have a deep respect for non-violent political struggle but one must realise that in all situations where non-violent struggle was applied, there were parallel liberation movements which involved armed struggle too.

Malcolm wrote:

Those people who are engaged in violence merely condemn themselves to lower births. On this the Buddha was absolutely clear. The Deep Ecology movement has no room for violence. There are those who try to derive arguments for ecotage from Naess's thinking, things like tree spiking, destroying animal traps and so on. But Naess's criteria for such acts is generally grounded in one's belonging to place, not urban youths who decide to go save a forest with which they have no kinship.

Sherab Dorje said:

PS Good luck trying to reconcile Deep Ecology with notions of private property. You're going to need it!

Malcolm wrote:

It's not a problem at all. If one remains grounded in the thought of Naess, deep ecology and a market economy are not incompatible. He writes:

The deep ecology movement has in common with blue [right wing] politics its aversion to bureaucracy, its emphasis on personal enterprise and initiative, and a reluctance to take certain green utopias too seriously. With the old politics of the Western European kind the common ground is more obvious, the fight on the side of the underdog, solidarity with the underprivileged or the powerless, extension of care.

And:

Rich people who work in the world of business, but are supporters of the deep ecology movement, ask in all seriousness whether the green utopian societies must look so dreary. Why portray a society which seemingly needs no big entrepreneurs, only organic farmers, modest artists, and mild naturalists. A capitalist society is in a certain sense a rather wild society. We need some degree of wildness, but not exactly the capitalist sort. The usual utopian green societies seem so sober and tame. We shall need enthusiasts of the extravagant, the luxuriant, the big. But they must not dominate.

<http://trumpeter.athabasca.ca/index.php/trumpet/article/view/432/708>

So you see, Naess's thinking was not exactly pro-capitalist and not exactly anti-capitalist.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, February 12th, 2014 at 10:24 PM

Title: Re: Perspective

Content:

Virgo said:

So basically can anyone perceive the Dharmakaya?

Kevin

Malcolm wrote:

Only Buddhas.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, February 13th, 2014 at 3:36 AM

Title: Re: Dzogchen rhetoric and the gradual / instant dichotomy

Content:

Adamantine said:

Or did you mean it as in: samsaric sentient beings can only perceive the nirmanakaya and possibly the sambhogakaya qualities of a Buddha, but are unable to perceive their dharmakaya quality?

Malcolm wrote:

It means that ordinary people can only see nirmanakāyas. Practitioners of specific realization on the path can see the sambhogakāya. The level at which they can see the sambhogakāya varies depending on the path. The Sambhogakāya images one sees on the four visions are not the actual sambhogakāya since those images are inert. However, at a certain point in the path of the four visions one can see the actual sambhogakāya. The sight of the dharmakāya only occurs at the end of the four visions, i.e. the exhaustion of dharmatā.



In this respect then, Dzogchen is no more non-gradual than any other Buddhist path.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, February 13th, 2014 at 4:22 AM

Title: Re: Middle Way Politics

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

Except, my dear Malcolm, there is more to Deep Ecology than just Naess. Earth First was a deep ecologist movement/organisation too you know. I have to admit that I was always more partial to social ecology, deep ecology tips towards the right (cf Ecofascism) too easily.

Malcolm wrote:

One can espouse an ecocentric view without it being consistent with ecosophy, aka deep ecology.

On David Foreman's supposed "deep ecology", George Sessions write:

Lee is adamant that Deep Ecology has been the philosophy of Earth First! although she admits that most EF!ers read very little Deep Ecology philosophy, and that specific mention of Deep Ecology did not appear in the E.F! Journal until mid-1984 (pp.18, 37, 57). It is rather painful to read about some of the positions taken by the Foreman faction in the E.F! Journal: for example, Foreman arguing that even a nuclear war would not be that damaging to the Earth and would hasten the end of industrial society, his remark that "wilderness is the real world" (it's all real! - it's just that the rest has to be restored and reinhabited) and his remarks elsewhere that we should "allow Ethiopians to starve"; Christopher Manes suggesting that one solution to overpopulation would be to dismantle the medical technology designed to save lives, and of AIDS as Nature's solution to overpopulation; and Reed Noss writing of genetic "deep ecology elite" as a "chosen people" out to save the Earth (pp. 64, 68, 83-84, 92-3, 101-3). [Paul Shepard and E.O. Wilson have claimed that all humans have the "wilderness gene" but that it is suppressed, especially in modern urban people.] Since many, but not all, of these articles appeared under various pseudonyms, this leads to speculation as to whether Foreman, Manes, and the others were merely exercising their rights as individuals to the free expression of radical and shocking (and perhaps misanthropic) ideas; whether these ideas were meant to express the philosophy of Earth First!; and/or whether they thought they were expounding ideas which were the natural outcome of Deep Ecology philosophy. If the latter, they were radically mistaken in their understanding of Deep Ecology philosophy as espoused by Naess and other Deep Ecology movement theorists.

Lee accurately points out that Edward Abbey's ideas, expressed mainly through his novels (and his association with Earth First!) "had inspired the founding of the movement" (p. 126). Given that "since Earth First!'s inception, Dave Foreman had served as its prophet and leader" (p. 105) together with Foreman's idolizing of Abbey, the predominant philosophy and ideology of Earth First! throughout the 1980's is probably best described, not as Deep Ecology, but rather as an idiosyncratic, somewhat

misanthropic Abbey/Foreman version of ecocentrism, coupled with a monkey wrenching/"rednecks for wilderness" image that some people found offensive.

<http://trumpeter.athabasca.ca/index.php/trumpet/article/view/232/333>

Again, if it is not consistent with Naess or Sessions and Duvall, it is not deep ecology.

Indeed, deep ecology has been critiqued as a conservative and even a right wing movement:

Devall and Sessions do not question the distribution or ownership of land. Their first principle of land management is to "encourage agencies, legislators, property owners and managers" to flow with natural processes. 'Deep Ecology: Living as if Nature Mattered' p.145

Deep ecology is not concerned with who should own land or whether land ownership is legitimate, but only with how it is treated.

At best deep ecology is apolitical, and though it claims to be beyond such distinctions, many feel deep ecology tends towards a right-wing perspective. Social ecologists and ecofeminists agree that not enough analysis is done by deep ecology of the social forces at work in the destruction of the biosphere.

<http://www.thegreenfuse.org/deepcrit.htm#oppressive>

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, February 13th, 2014 at 4:24 AM

Title: Re: Middle Way Politics

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

...belonging to a place

This sounds like a deep conservatism...

Malcolm wrote:

Deep ecology is deeply conservative. But not in the modern sense of the term.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, February 13th, 2014 at 4:31 AM

Title: Re: Guru Rinpoche practices within the Sakya tradition

Content:

Kunga said:

Sure, agreed, in Western Dharma centres it is as you say, particularly, I think, because the VY transmission is more frequently given and taught. The GR tsog is complicated and not easy to fit into western schedules, and actually Nyingmapa in origin.

narraboth said:

well, depends on how elaborate you want to do Guru rinpoche tsog... Nyingma tsog ritual is a little bit different from Sarma ritual, but you can always find some brief text to do (I believe Rigpa centre uses brief tsog texts). In sense of 'western schedules', they are all on the same date of Tibetan calendar.

conebeckham said:

Sure, Nyingma tsoks and Sarma Tsoks do have different ritual outlines, details, etc., no doubt. But in my experience, Nyingma tsoks, especially in the various terma traditions, are quite a bit shorter than Sarma procedures. The main thing I think is the amount of liturgy.....

Lots of Kagyupas do Konchok Chidu, Peaceful Guru, for instance, and there's a pretty condensed (but profound) tsok in that tradition.

Malcolm wrote:

I forgot to mention that in some cases on the first tenth day a Sapan Guru Yoga might be done, or perhaps a Lamdre Guru offering.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, February 13th, 2014 at 5:31 AM

Title: Re: Ordination debate - vinaya/bodhisattva/upasaka

Content:

Indrajala said:

There's actually a class of bhikṣu called a svāgata-bhikṣu, which refers to those bhikṣus in the Buddha's sangha who never received any precepts. They just had only to show up and join the sangha to be welcomed into it, like Mahākāśyapa. This means there actually is (or was) a class of bhikṣu without any formal precepts.

Malcolm wrote:

No, by being welcomed by the Buddha, they had precepts automatically.

Indrajala said:

In China and Japan the monks came up with an idea that liquor could be "medicine liquor" and consumed as such without any violation of the precepts.

Malcolm wrote:

Bhikṣus can indeed use alcohol medicinally, there is a class of medicines, medicinal wines, called Arishtams in Ayurveda or མྱེད་ཆང་ in Tibetan, medicinal beers, and if a monk, nun or novice is ill, they can use these medicines when prescribed by a doctor. This is well known.

Indrajala said:

There's actually medical evidence suggesting a glass of wine or two a day can be good for your health. This means arguably a monk or nun could enjoy a glass of wine or two with their medicine meal and be at no fault.

Malcolm wrote:

If it was prescribed by their doctor for a specific condition, of course there is no fault.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, February 13th, 2014 at 7:40 AM

Title: Re: Ordination debate - vinaya/bodhisattva/upasaka

Content:

Zhen Li said:

Well, if you are arguing that Mahayana does away with the Vinaya, that's clearly not true.

Malcolm wrote:

Of course it is not true.

The Ārya Akṣayamatīnirdeśatīka states:

As such, having heard the śīla regulations [saṃvara], just as the Bhagavan said, the training is to be done according the 250 śīlas such as the four defeats, the thirteen saṃghāvaśeṣāḥ and so on without the slightest infraction is how the training should be followed.

So we see that some Mahāyāna attitudes towards monastic vows and vinaya were positive for Mahāyāna monks in India, at least in the textual tradition.

There is another passage in this same texts that one's conduct, immediate activities and inclination towards virtue must be in accord with the world, one ought not be reproached by the world, that that one must follow Vinaya and not contradict the Vinaya.

I suspect that this is the reason why in Tibet, uneducated lay people were generally not permitted to know the regulations of monastic śīla since it might cause them to lose faith in monks if those monks were perceived to not be following Vinaya correctly. This is also important medically, since a number traditional medicinal formulas called for the urine of an eight year old male child or a bhikṣu of pure vows, which generally means someone who has never had sexual relations in their entire life.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, February 13th, 2014 at 8:51 AM

Title: Re: Middle Way Politics

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

M,

Could you give us some idea of any practical steps that deep ecologists would engage

in. It appears to be a perspective... but what do deep ecologists either do or not do? What practical steps do you engage in?

Malcolm wrote:

I told you already, I learned an ancient medical tradition, which does not rely on industrial medicine and will survive industrial civilization should it fail, and spent more than five years of my life doing so.

I studied this form of medicine as a direct outgrowth of my longstanding commitment to the principles of deep ecology as articulated by its founder, Arne Naess.

My commitment to deep ecology does not suggest that my approach is the only approach, as Naess said "The front is long", meaning that there is room for much diversity of thought in the ecological community. But while social ecology, ecofeminism and so on have useful things to say about social justice issues, etc., their approach is "shallow", meaning ultimately anthropocentric, and not deep. I also think the deep green resistance approach is shallow, and not deep because of their trenchant misanthropy. We can say that any ecological movement based on misanthropy is shallow.

Another point of Naess is that the blue/red political axis is irrelevant to deep ecology itself:

Now a short note on three great contemporary world-wide movements which call for grassroot activism.

The three movements are: the peace movement, the oldest and at present remarkably dormant. But if military expenditures are not rapidly decreasing from about 900 billion dollars a year, I expect it will revive. Then there are many movements I put together under the name 'the social justice movement'. It includes the feminist movement and part of the social ecology movement. As the third movement, one might perhaps also use the more vague term, radical environmentalism because to use the specific terminology of deep ecology will sooner or later elicit boredom and aggression. But the name 'radical environmentalism' smacks of the old metaphor suggesting humanity surrounded by something outside, the so-called environment of humans; it does not start with ecological concepts. And in the US it will take a long time before radicalism loses its connection with the political red-blue axis which now is irrelevant.

<http://trumpeter.athabasca.ca/index.php/trumpet/article/view/432/708>

Some people disagree with Naess. But fundamental to deep ecology is that one develops one's own ecosophy. Each person's ecosophy is personal. To understand this, you have to understand the apron diagram he and Sessions came up. He notes:

One main point in deep ecology is the deep argumentation, that is, argumentation from ultimate (philosophical, religious) premises, but there is room for very different sets of such premises.

Naess, Arne (2009-05-01). The Ecology of Wisdom: Writings by Arne Naess (p. 108).

Counterpoint. Kindle Edition.

And:

The platform principles of the deep ecology movement can be grounded for individual supporters in a religion or an ultimate philosophy. There is a great diversity of religions and philosophies from which people can support these principles. In a loose sense, the deep ecology movement can be said to be derived from these kinds of fundamentals. The situation reminds us that a set of very similar or even identical conclusions may be drawn from divergent premises. The platform can be the same, even though the fundamental premises differ. One must avoid looking for one definite philosophy or religion among all the supporters of the deep ecology movement. Fortunately, there is a rich manifold of fundamental views compatible with the platform of the deep ecology movement. Supporters live in different cultures and have different religions. Furthermore, there is a plethora of consequences derived from the platform because of these and other differences.

Naess, Arne (2009-05-01). The Ecology of Wisdom: Writings by Arne Naess (pp. 114-115). Counterpoint. Kindle Edition.

And:

Personally, I favor the kind of powerful premises represented in Chinese, Indian, Islamic, and Hebrew philosophy, as well as in Western philosophy—namely, those having as a slogan the so-called ultimate unity of all life. They do not hide the fact that big fish eat small ones, but stress the profound interdependence, the functional unity, of such a biospheric magnitude that nonviolence, mutual respect, and feelings of identification are always potentially there, even between the predator and its so-called victim. In many cultures, identification is not limited merely to other living things but also to the mineral world, which helps us conceive of ourselves as genuine surface fragments of our planet, fragments capable of somehow experiencing the existence of all other fragments: a microcosm of the macrocosm.

Naess, Arne (2009-05-01). The Ecology of Wisdom: Writings by Arne Naess (pp. 131-132). Counterpoint. Kindle Edition.

So, I am a Buddhist practitioner with a long standing (27 years) commitment to a deep ecological outlook, and this is what informs my political outlook.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, February 13th, 2014 at 9:16 AM

Title: Re: karmic law vs. causal nexus

Content:

Johnny Dangerous said:

Thought this would make for interesting discussion, just got done reading Lojong:

Cultivating Compassion Through Training The Mind, by Traleg Kyabgon Rinpoche - great

book.

Anyway there is this interesting bit on Karma that kind of stuck with me, so i'll just throw the quote out there and see what people think:

Traleq Kyabgon said:

Luckily for us, the karmic causal nexus is not a mechanical, predetermined operation but is instead quite malleable. We are not condemned to suffer its consequences. Buddhism doesn't entertain the notion of any kind of moral law. The reference to "karmic law" is a Western concept that has been introduced into Buddhist thinking. The relationship between cause and effect far too complex and indeterminate to be a "law". There is some kind of karmic causal nexus, but there is no such thing as a cosmic law, because cause and effect is all about human action.

Johnny Dangerous said:

We get into a lot of talks on here about Karma, quite often people put forth a model of Karma that is somewhat absolute, this seems to indicate something in the opposite direction, what do you guys think about this quote?

Malcolm wrote:

I think he trying to make people (who do not understand the role of afflictions in generating karma and its results) that karma is not an external operator.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, February 13th, 2014 at 9:18 AM

Title: Re: Climate Change: We're Doomed

Content:

Kim O'Hara said:

I'm not sure what you mean by that ... you may have to use a few more words.

Malcolm wrote:

Houses and buildings should be designed, and retrofitted where possible, to generate their own power and provide it to the grid.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, February 13th, 2014 at 8:26 PM

Title: Re: Middle Way Politics

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Some people disagree with Naess. But fundamental to deep ecology is that one develops one's own ecosophy. Each person's ecosophy is personal. To understand this, you have to understand the apron diagram he and Sessions came up. He notes:

One main point in deep ecology is the deep argumentation, that is, argumentation from ultimate (philosophical, religious) premises, but there is room for very different sets of

such premises.

Sherab Dorje said:

In which case one cannot judge Earth First! and say that it was not a deep ecology movement. I believe that the whole issue between people like Naess and Earth First! was the theory vs practice divide. Talking the talk vs walking the walk. The members of Earth First! sacrificed their lives putting Deep Ecology into practice (direct action to protect an ecosystem) whereas Naess produced journals and received university tenures and state sponsored awards. BOTH had a role to play in the development of Deep Ecology both as a theory and as a practice.

Malcolm wrote:

As pointed out, the architects and theorists of deep ecology do not consider Earth First! to be an expression of deep ecology. As for direct action, Naess was a direct action kind of person. He blocked access to a dam site for twenty years.

There are certain criteria that render one's view as "deep ecological", and lacking those, one cannot describe oneself as a deep ecologist no matter how ecocentric one's views may be. That is, the basis of one's philosophy must lead inevitably to the platform of deep ecology. It can be generated by different value systems such as Buddhist, Christian or Philosophical values. The "deep" in deep ecology is a gloss for "nondual". When other systems are described as shallow, it means that they stem from a dualistic perspective of the world that does not take into consideration the intrinsic non-duality which underlies dependent origination. While not formally a Mahāyāna Buddhist himself, he was a nondualist, and Naess draws upon the two truth theory as well as the tathāgatagarbha theory as he understood them, but he is educated enough to understand that there are Christians nondualisms, Islamic nondualisms and so on. He pretty much clearly states that if your ultimate philosophy is not nondualist, then you will have a hard time arriving at a deep ecology platform.

Ideally it works like this:

One's ultimate premise forms the basis. This is termed level one. Upon that one builds one's platform principles, one's view, i.e. level two. Upon that, one establishes one's policies, one's meditation, if you will, level three; and finally, one engages in practical actions, one's conduct, i.e. level four.

The way he frames this for himself is as follows, his ecosophy:

(N = norm; H=hypothesis, exclamation points represent a value norm)

N1: Self-realization!

H1: The higher the Self-realization attained by anyone, the broader and deeper the identification with others.

H2: The higher the level of Self-realization attained by anyone, the more its further increase depends upon the Self-realization of others.

H3: Complete Self-realization of anyone depends on that of all.



N2: Self-realization for all living beings!

He then offers the following for the environment:

H4: Diversity of life increases Self-realization potentials.

N3: Diversity of Life!

H5: Complexity of life increases Self-realization potentials.

N4: Complexity!

H6: Life resources of the Earth are limited.

H7: Symbiosis maximizes Self-realization potentials under conditions of limited resources.

N5: Symbiosis!

My ecosophy would, and does, run something like the following:

N1 Tathagātagarbha!

H1 All sentient beings are innately buddhas.

H2 The highest goal in life to help all sentient beings achieve that buddhahood.

N2 Bodhicitta!

H3 The way help all sentient beings achieve buddhahood is the bodhisattva path

N3 Bodhisattva!

And so on.

The problem with Foreman's platform is that it excludes humans and is overly biocentric, it is therefore shallow as it is not grounded in nondualist philosophy.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, February 13th, 2014 at 8:30 PM

Title: Re: Buddhist Hate Crimes

Content:

Jigme Tsultrim said:

I know I am sickened and deeply ashamed. Are YOU??

Malcolm wrote:

Am I sad that there are sentient beings out there who have afflictions, who act in ways contradictory to Buddhadharma, of course. Am I ashamed? Why should I be? I did not engage in those actions, I did not and do not condone them.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, February 13th, 2014 at 8:33 PM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

Sönam said:

Just found that about anarchism, it's about what it is ... not what it is said it is.

S.

Malcolm wrote:

Sonam, that is not anarchism, that is called "Being a decent person".

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, February 13th, 2014 at 8:34 PM

Title: Re: Dzogchen rhetoric and the gradual / instant dichotomy

Content:

heart said:

Like I said, rigpa doesn't last. That is the meaning of "not ripened" and so on.

Malcolm wrote:

No, that is not the meaning of "unripened", the meaning of unripened, as clearly explained in the Vlma Nyingthig, is that vidyā is defined as an awareness that defiled by many cognitions. In this case there is really no difference between what is termed the clarity aspect of the mind and vidyā.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, February 13th, 2014 at 8:40 PM

Title: Re: Buddhist Hate Crimes

Content:

Jigme Tsultrim said:

Take comfort in your clean hands, if you can.

Malcolm wrote:

I don't believe in guilt by association, and neither should you. Why should all Christians be held liable for the acts of a few, or all Muslims? Therefore, all Buddhists should not be held liable for the murderous acts of a few misguided nationalists who have mistaken Buddhadharma for an ethnic identity.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, February 13th, 2014 at 9:02 PM

Title: Re: Middle Way Politics

Content:

Kim O'Hara said:

Thank you for your recent posts here, Malcolm (and to Greg and others for prompting them). Deep Ecology is something that has been on the fringe of my thinking for years and I now realise that there is more value in it for me if only I look into it more deeply and I will try to do so. Do you have any getting-up-to-speed recommendations for me?

Kim

Malcolm wrote:

Well, there is Sessions and Devall's "Deep Ecology: Living as if Nature Mattered."

But a better resource is:

<http://trumpeter.athabascau.ca/index.php/trumpet/search/search>

Here are the archives that go back to 1983, thirty-one years of journal issues on deep ecology. It is very eclectic, and there are extensive articles on the role of Buddhism in deep ecology, as well as Jainism, Hinduism, Taoism and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, February 13th, 2014 at 9:25 PM

Title: Re: Buddhist Hate Crimes

Content:

Rickpa said:

As a member of a group, you should be mindful that humans tend to judge any group of which they are outside, by the worst examples.

Malcolm wrote:

Indeed, this however does not mean that one need feel "shame" for being a Buddhist merely because there are afflicted "Buddhists" out there who do murderous things to innocents.

Likewise, I feel no shame about being an American despite that fact my government has done terrible things. But those things were done without my consent and I oppose them.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, February 13th, 2014 at 9:30 PM

Title: Re: Climate Change: We're Doomed

Content:

Kim O'Hara said:

I'm not sure what you mean by that ... you may have to use a few more words.

Malcolm wrote:

Houses and buildings should be designed, and retrofitted where possible, to generate their own power and provide it to the grid.

Kim O'Hara said:

I agree that's a good way to go. It is also a strategy which PV power is ideally suited to, so I'm more and more puzzled by your negativity about PV.

Malcolm wrote:

I am not so much negative about PV power generation as I am about its manner of

implementation. Solar panels on a roof is one thing. Acres and acres of solar panels creates hot spots and dead zones, which add to local ambient temperatures and in many cases, at least in northern climes, require the extinction of grasslands which are just as crucial the Co2/O2 balance as trees and rain forests are.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, February 13th, 2014 at 9:46 PM

Title: Re: Perspective

Content:

gad rgyangs said:

you're joking right? you've never heard the "licking honey off a razor" metaphor? Are you seriously claiming that most Buddhism doesn't portray "samsara" as nothing but suffering?

Malcolm wrote:

It is nothing but suffering, even Dzogchen tantras clearly state this.

gad rgyangs said:

There's even attempts to poison people's happiness by claiming that even when you think you're happy, you're actually suffering but you just don't know it!!!!

Malcolm wrote:

There is no need to attempt to poison such happiness, it is poisoned already. This happiness is termed "the suffering of change."

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, February 13th, 2014 at 10:07 PM

Title: Re: Buddhist Hate Crimes

Content:

Jigme Tsultrim said:

committed just 3 months ago in Thailand by failing to give protection to 1500 refugees of Buddhist violence in Myanmar.

theanarchist said:

I don't see where this qualifies as BUDDHIST violence. As buddhism doesn't permit or justify violence those are clearly deeds that have absolutely nothing to do with buddhism but are motivated by racism, xenophobia and completely worldly aggression.

Why should people living in a buddhist country act differently than the inhabitants of christian or muslim countries? They all have the same negative emotions and delusions.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, February 13th, 2014 at 10:09 PM

Title: Re: Ordination debate - vinaya/bodhisattva/upasaka

Content:

Indrajala said:

So, which takes precedence: the norms of your community or the archaic rulebook which promises you hell for non-compliance?

Malcolm wrote:

The archaic rulebook. This why Ashokan era type reforms are occasionally needed in the Sangha to expel "Bhikṣus" who are not maintaining their vows.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, February 13th, 2014 at 10:31 PM

Title: Re: Climate Change: We're Doomed

Content:

kirtu said:

safe nuclear design (which does exist).

Malcolm wrote:

No, it doesn't. And the energy needed to extract uranium is hugely expensive, leaves radioactive waste behind, etc.

NO NUKES!

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, February 13th, 2014 at 10:40 PM

Title: Re: Ordination debate - vinaya/bodhisattva/upasaka

Content:

Indrajala said:

So, which takes precedence: the norms of your community or the archaic rulebook which promises you hell for non-compliance?

Malcolm wrote:

The archaic rulebook. This why Ashokan era type reforms are occasionally needed in the Sangha to expel "Bhikṣus" who are not maintaining their vows.

Indrajala said:

This isn't really practical unless the state is involved, otherwise the sangha lacks the

teeth to really do much other than ask people to go away and maybe blacklist them.

Malcolm wrote:

Monasteries can handle this. In Tibet, in the stricter monasteries like Ngor if you committed a defeat, or were a general reprobate, you would be shown the door.

Much harder to monitor the conduct of itinerant monks such as yourself. But this is also why posadha is so important for monastics.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, February 13th, 2014 at 11:51 PM

Title: Re: Climate Change: We're Doomed

Content:

kirtu said:

It is unfortunately what we will have to do.

Malcolm wrote:

I am not in agreement. There is no place for nuclear fission power in any ecologically sustainable future.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, February 13th, 2014 at 11:53 PM

Title: Re: Dzogchen rhetoric and the gradual / instant dichotomy

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

No, that is not the meaning of "unripened", the meaning of unripened, as clearly explained in the Vlma Nyingthig, is that vidyā is defined as an awareness that defiled by many cognitions. In this case there is really no difference between what is termed the clarity aspect of the mind and vidyā.

asunthatneversets said:

So these first two of Vimalamitra's five definitions are essentially synonymous?

The vidyā that apprehends characteristics: "the vidyā that imputes phenomena as universals and as mere personal names", is one's mere non-conceptual self-knowing awareness defiled by many cognitions.

The [vidyā that] appropriates the basis [i.e. the human body] creates all cognitions when present in one's body, and is present as the mere intrinsic clarity [of those cognitions] is called "unripened vidyā".

Malcolm wrote:

The former is talking about vidyā in its contaminated state, the second is talking about

vidyā as the essence of those contaminating cognitions.

In the end, if you really pay close attention and put aside all the rhetoric, Dzogchen doctrines about the nature of the mind are not terribly different than those of Lamdre, Kalacakra and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, February 13th, 2014 at 11:54 PM

Title: Re: Ordination debate - vinaya/bodhisattva/upasaka

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Much harder to monitor the conduct of itinerant monks such as yourself. But this is also why posadha is so important for monastics.

Indrajala said:

You can't harm the clouds and water.

Malcolm wrote:

They can be easily polluted.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 14th, 2014 at 12:27 AM

Title: Re: Dzogchen rhetoric and the gradual / instant dichotomy

Content:

heart said:

Like I said, rigpa doesn't last. That is the meaning of "not ripened" and so on.

Malcolm wrote:

No, that is not the meaning of "unripened", the meaning of unripened, as clearly explained in the Vima Nyingthig, is that vidyā is defined as an awareness that defiled by many cognitions. In this case there is really no difference between what is termed the clarity aspect of the mind and vidyā.

heart said:

Well, when I use the word rigpa it is only a synonym for recognizing the natural state.

With the deepest respect I must say that it seems to me that you might misunderstand the meaning of these various vidya's from Vima Nyingtik.

/magnus

Malcolm wrote:

With all due respect, I do not misunderstand the Vima Nyingthig. The Vima Nyingthig passage in question is extremely clear and is repeated in more than one place. So no, it is not possible that I misunderstand the meaning of the passage in question.

For example, in the Zangs Yig Can, Vimala writes:

What is that “vidyā?”

Vidyā with knowledge obscurations is knowing and lucid.

Here it is clearly stated that Vidyā can possess obscurations of knowledge.

And:

1) Characteristic is called “the vidyā which designates general phenomena and just its own names.” Its action is just-that-itself being a clear non-conceptual awareness, which is polluted by many cognitions.

2) Appropriating the basis\*: when all cognitions are created when abiding in one’s body, and existing within its own clarity; this is called “the unripe vidyā.”

\*basis here refers to the body.

There are three more:

the vidyā present in the basis

the vidyā of insight

the vidyā of tögal

He concludes:

Are those vidyā’ the same, or are they different?

There is nothing other than a single essence.

Therefore, vidyā has different modes depending on whether or not you have received instruction or not. The essence of the vidyā does not change. But the context of how it is understood changes depending on whether you are on the path or not. This is why it is termed “contaminated by many cognitions”, and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 14th, 2014 at 12:58 AM

Title: Re: Perspective

Content:

gad rgyangs said:

The Japanese have the most sophisticated understanding of this, called

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wabi-sabi>.

Malcolm wrote:

Wabi-sabi (侘寂?) represents a comprehensive Japanese world view or aesthetic centered on the acceptance of transience and imperfection. The aesthetic is



sometimes described as one of beauty that is "imperfect, impermanent, and incomplete".[1] It is a concept derived from the Buddhist teaching of the three marks of existence (三法印 sanbōin?), specifically impermanence (無常 mujō?), the other two being suffering (苦 ku?) and emptiness or absence of self-nature (空 kū?).

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 14th, 2014 at 2:56 AM

Title: Re: Middle Way Politics

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

I think you are reading way too much into deep ecology in order to then justify to yourself that it is Buddhist and thus not worldly dharma.

Malcolm wrote:

I don't think that deep ecology is Buddhadharma. However I think it is ethically consistent with Buddhadharma for a number of reasons.

Sherab Dorje said:

The deep, in deep ecology, means ecocentric instead of anthropocentric.

I am not going to deny that ecocentrism is undoubtedly less dualistic than anthropocentrism. But on the basis of this rhetoric capitalism, being ego and anthropo-centric, cannot fall within the milieu of non-dualism (or more correctly, ecocentrism) and thus cannot be justified as somehow fitting into a deep ecology model. When was the last time you ran into an ecologically minded CEO of Enron (for example), the World Bank, or the IMF?

Do not confound the two (non-dual and ecocentric).

Malcolm wrote:

You are quite simple mistaken. Frederick Bender clarifies this point in his *The Culture of Extinction*:

In Buddhism, the technical term for the ontological quality of particulars, incorporating both their phenomenality and their interdependence, is "suchness" (Skt. *tathatha*). To frame objects in their suchness is, in Mahayana Buddhist terminology, to express the nondualist "two-truth" doctrine. Particulars, if framed dualistically through the prevalent subject/object (egocentric) and subject/predicate (linguistic) dualities, are real only conventionally. Something similar to the Buddhist two-truth doctrine defines ecological thinking. Living beings are phenomenal manifestations of Earth's ecosphere. They are also particulars-in-relation, though not "bare," self-standing particulars. Deep ecology's so-called depth, considered ontologically, functions as a metaphor for nondualism.

Frederic L. Bender. *The Culture of Extinction: Toward a Philosophy of Deep Ecology* (Kindle Locations 4373-4376). Kindle Edition.

Arne Naess also states:

The belief and acceptance that all whole beings can attain Buddhahood depend upon the rejection of subject-object dualism. That is, one must abandon the sentiment that there is always and always must be an ego involved in experience. An appeal to spontaneity, perhaps especially spontaneous experience in nature, is preferable to a detached view of subject-object relations.

The nondualism in Buddhism is sometimes expressed verbally by saying that all beings are one, or that each being is one with all other beings. Such a formula must not be taken in the counterintuitive sense that, for example, I cannot be cold and hungry and somebody else warm and satisfied. The formula does not imply rejection of personal pronouns or any psychology of the ego and self.

It is an interesting problem to formulate clearly the views that have rejection of subject-object dualism as a common characteristic. Whatever way we formulate the nondualism, adherents of deep ecology tend to feel sympathy with views such as the following, expressed by Yasuaki Nara:

"n Dōgen, through the negation of the egocentric self, whole being, including man, animal, mountains, rivers, grasses, trees etc., is one with him, making both nature and himself encompassed within the world of the Buddha."

Naess, Arne (2009-05-01). *The Ecology of Wisdom: Writings by Arne Naess* (pp. 198-199). Counterpoint. Kindle Edition.

Sherab Dorje said:

Foremans approach does not deny humans a role in an ecosystem, it just does not make them the centre of the system. Thus it is an ecocentric platform: an approach that puts the benefit of the whole (ecosystem) above that of one of the parts (humans).

Malcolm wrote:

Naess' position is a little different. First he questions the usefulness of the term "biocentric", "ecocentric" and so on:

Supporters of the deep ecology movement like to say that they support ecocentrism, not anthropocentrism, and Spinoza certainly offers high-level premises for what has sometimes been labeled biocentric or ecocentric egalitarianism. I think these Latin or Greek terms are useless in serious discussions, but they may be helpful in offering some vague idea of a kind of basic attitude. Spinoza tried something immensely difficult, namely, to articulate with some preciseness certain basic attitudes.

He continues a bit later by saying:

It is characteristic of the deep ecology movement that great efforts at conservation are argued not only as something good and profitable for human beings, but also as

something valuable for what is intended to be conserved. It is worthy of conservation, independently of any narrow human interests. This is often called the nonanthropocentric or biocentric or ecocentric view. Nevertheless, in the current social and political milieu, success in conservation efforts depends heavily on arguments that do stress narrowly human interests, especially the requirements of human health. The supporters of the deep ecology movement combine such arguments with those that are independent of narrow human interests.<sup>11</sup> It is essential that "experts" and others who influence policies agree about this combination and that the public be made aware that basically there is agreement. Otherwise, the public is deceived.

Naess, Arne (2009-05-01). *The Ecology of Wisdom: Writings by Arne Naess* (p. 303). Counterpoint. Kindle Edition.

This why why "hard" ecocentrism cannot be construed even remotely as deep ecology. Anyway, Bookchin claimed that Earth First! had converted to social ecology as it turned leftwing.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 14th, 2014 at 2:59 AM

Title: Re: Perspective

Content:

gad rgyangs said:

The Japanese have the most sophisticated understanding of this, called <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wabi-sabi>.

Malcolm wrote:

Wabi-sabi (侘寂?) represents a comprehensive Japanese world view or aesthetic centered on the acceptance of transience and imperfection. The aesthetic is sometimes described as one of beauty that is "imperfect, impermanent, and incomplete".<sup>[1]</sup> It is a concept derived from the Buddhist teaching of the three marks of existence (三法印 sanbōin?), specifically impermanence (無常 mujō?), the other two being suffering (苦 ku?) and emptiness or absence of self-nature (空 kū?).

gad rgyangs said:

no one is claiming there is no such thing as suffering, the point is do you reject life altogether because of dualities like happiness/suffering (again: that other thread "make life meaningless") or practice upekṣā and non-attachment to all experience? Sometimes it seems that Buddhism is neurotically obsessed with suffering, attached to suffering. Ironic, no?

I do object though to the attempts to negate happiness by claiming that it is actually suffering. This is a dangerous form of cultivating negativity that can lead to the very kinds of hell realms in the here-and-now that Adamantine was referring to.

Malcolm wrote:

No, I simply understand that no matter how things may appear, no matter whatever samsaric happiness I experience, everything other than path dharmas are suffering. But it doesn't mean I reach for the hair shirt.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 14th, 2014 at 3:10 AM

Title: Re: Dzogchen rhetoric and the gradual / instant dichotomy

Content:

Sherlock said:

So your conclusion now is that basically besides its methods Dzogchen isn't very different from other Vajrayana paths?

Malcolm wrote:

Dzogchen is quite different from other Vajrayāna paths (which are really just summed up by the two stages).

But it is a path and its context must be understood in connection with how paths are expressed in Mahāyāna and General Secret Mantra.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 14th, 2014 at 3:12 AM

Title: Re: Dzogchen rhetoric and the gradual / instant dichotomy

Content:

heart said:

He isn't really making the point that vidya needs a gradual improvement as some seems to think.

/magnus

Malcolm wrote:

I never implied that was the point he was making.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 14th, 2014 at 3:32 AM

Title: Re: Middle Way Politics

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

... great efforts at conservation are argued not only as something good and profitable for human beings, but also as something valuable for what is intended to be conserved... Without wanting to repeat myself, can you give us some kind of idea of what these 'great efforts' actually comprise of - other than the great effort you put into your particular form of healing?

I'm really not being facetious, I just don't feel I've had a satisfactory answer to my

question yet. Can you give me some practical examples of the conservation activities that Deep Ecologists are actively involved in at the moment?

Malcolm wrote:

Deep ecologists can be found in all aspects of the conservation movement. But I frankly doubt that most of the people who call themselves "deep ecologists" really understand what deep ecology really means.

Basically, Arne Naess identified three great movements of the 20th century: the peace movement, the social justice movement and the deep ecology movement. All three of these can be included under the rubric of "green" politics. But he clarified, you can't do all three. You have to pick one.

For example, while green politics have been largely coopted by the new left in the form of Social Ecology, there are "greens" like myself who are deep ecologists. There is no badge that distinguishes a deep ecologist from any other type of environmentalist. There is no organization to join. However, Vandana Shiva is a deep ecologist, Joanna Macy, Julia Butterfly Hill, Gary Snyder, John Seed, Pierre-Félix Guattari, Fritzjof Capra, Wendell Barry (recently arrested demonstrating against coal mining in Appalachia) are all people who have some connection with the movement. But as it is not a left wing or right wing trip, it is not organized into cadres with political action committees and so on. Deep ecology is an organic movement. It is slow growing, but then, so are trees. It tends to propagate rhizomatically, like fungus.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 14th, 2014 at 3:52 AM

Title: Re: Dzogchen rhetoric and the gradual / instant dichotomy

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

Well, he is a Gemini after all.

heart said:

and I am libra,hmmm...

dzogchungpa said:

Yeah, you air types are always a bit wacky.

Malcolm wrote:

I have virgo rising, keeps my feet on the ground.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 14th, 2014 at 4:08 AM

Title: Re: Perspective

Content:

gad rgyangs said:

I just had a flashback to the Bergman movie "Fanny and Alexander", which portrays two households: one which embraces life and love in all its joy and sorrow, and the other, the Bishop's household, that exemplifies self- and other-loathing, coldness, "seriousness", and violence, all under the banner of "piety" and religion.

Adamantine said:

I'm sure that the film makes valid points when aimed at a Christian Bishop. Conflating traditions is the mistake of your proposed image in the OP.

gad rgyangs said:

and having a rosy picture of asian religious institutions is an orientalist fantasy.

Malcolm wrote:

And all of this is irrelevant to the Buddha's contention "sarva dukham". You don't have to agree, but it is one of the foundation teachings of the Buddhist view. You can fight it, struggle with it, but in the end "sarva dukkham", there is nothing left out of this, apart from the path.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 14th, 2014 at 4:33 AM

Title: Re: Middle Way Politics

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

Cheers. M. Will look up those people and see what they are up to.

Malcolm wrote:

Vandana Shiva

<http://www.navdanya.org>

Wendell Barry

<http://www.wendellberrybooks.com/author.html>

Bill Mckibben

<http://www.billmckibben.com>

These are probably three of the most well known active advocates of some form or another of deep ecology.

Three decades of writings on deep ecology:

<http://trumpeter.athabascau.ca/index.php/trumpet/search/search>

I imagine in the end you will be more comfortable with social ecology, since it comes out of the left and is based on class analysis and so on:

<http://www.thegreenfuse.org/socialecology.htm>

Murray Bookchin hated deep ecology, he writes:

What Is Deep Ecology?

Deep ecology is so much of a black hole of half-digested, ill-formed, and half-baked ideas that one can easily express utterly vicious notions like Foreman's and still sound like a fiery radical who challenges everything that is anti-ecological in the present realm of ideas. The very words deep ecology, in fact, clue is into the fact that we are not dealing with a body of clear ideas but with a bottomless pit in which vague notions and moods of all kinds can be such into the depths of an ideological toxic dump.

He spews more of the same here:

[http://dwardmac.pitzer.edu/Anarchist\\_Archives/bookchin/socecovdeepeco.html](http://dwardmac.pitzer.edu/Anarchist_Archives/bookchin/socecovdeepeco.html)

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 14th, 2014 at 4:46 AM

Title: Re: Perspective

Content:

gad rgyangs said:

བདེ་བ་ཡི་གྲོ་ཆོས་ཉིད་ལྟ་བུ་གྲོ་ལ།  
སྤྱུག་བསྐྱེད་ཡི་གྲོ་ལ་གཞི་མཉམ་ཡངས་བར་གྲོ་ལ།

happiness perfectly liberated, in the vault of dharmata liberated.

suffering perfectly liberated, expansive evenness of the Ground liberated.

Longchenpa - chos dbyings mdzod chapter 12

Malcolm wrote:

No, it is as follows:

Bliss, having always been liberated,\* is liberated as ubiquitous dharmatā.

Suffering, having always been liberated, is liberated as the vast uniform basis.

\*"Ye grol" is a contraction of "ye nas grol" and shows a past tense construction, i.e.

"having always been"

These are nice sentiments, but in truth they don't express anything different than standard Mahāyāna. The first line shows the result, the second, the cause.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 14th, 2014 at 5:20 AM

Title: Re: Perspective

Content:

gad rgyangs said:

I know that, but "ye" can also by extension mean "perfectly", since that which has always been liberated is perfectly liberated, and I felt it makes more sense to leave time

out of it, since at that level there is no time.

Malcolm wrote:

In fact the verse is showing a contrast, that is why "bliss, having always been liberated," etc.

gad rgyangs said:

Anyway, its poetry theres always more than one way to translate it.

Malcolm wrote:

It's didactic verse, it is not poetry in any sense whatsoever.

gad rgyangs said:

I also like "vault" for "phyam" since it plays on the image of roof supports. I see no difference between my "expansive evenness of the Ground" and your "vast uniform basis".

Malcolm wrote:

The term gzhi translates "sthana", which bears no meaning of "ground" at all. Phyam here just mean ubiquitous, in my opinion.

gad rgyangs said:

that is clearly not the case. the whole passage lists many phenomena that are "ye grol" and there is clearly no cause and effect implied between them.

Malcolm wrote:

When bliss and suffering are contrasted, there is a link. Anyway, you are free to disagree, but when I read those lines I have a very different take on them that do you.

I guess my point is "So what?" My rejoinder to that is "What is the use of primordial Buddhahood if even your coarse obscurations have not been reduced." Some people seem to think that obscurations are not a problem once you become a Dzogchen practitioner. The more realistic Dzogchen perspective is found in The String of Pearls

As such, the three realms are  
the five aggregates, the five sense organs,  
the five limbs, the five functional organs,  
the five objects, the five afflictions,  
the five thoughts, the five minds, the five concepts,  
the apprehended objects and apprehending subjects established as samsara [... ]  
Caught in the aggregates, sense gates and the sense elements,  
the apprehended object and apprehending subject,  
samara itself persists for a long while.  
One is placed in the dungeon of name and matter  
in the castle of the three realms,  
tortured with the barbs of ignorance and so on,  
oppressed by the thick darkness of samsara,



attached to the salty taste of desire,  
bound by the neck with the noose of confusion,  
burned with the hot fire of hatred,  
head covered with pride,  
setting a rendezvous with the mistress of jealousy,  
surrounded by the army of enmity...  
tied by the neck with the noose of subject and object, [29b]  
stuck in the mud of successive traces  
and handcuffed with the ripening of karma.  
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.  
The body of a hell being appears as fire or water.  
Pretas are frightened and intimidated.  
There is a fog-like appearance for animals.  
The aggregates, sense gates and sense elements  
of humans appear as the five elements,  
and also happiness, suffering and indifference.  
They appear as armor and weapons to asuras  
and desirable qualities for devas.  
Such dualistic appearances,  
for example, are like a quickly moving wheel  
spinning continuously for a long while.  
As such, diverse appearances  
are like seeing a snake from a rope;  
that [rope] is not [a snake] but is apprehended as a [snake];  
forming as both the outer universe and inhabitants.  
If that is investigated, it is a rope.  
The universe and inhabitants have always been empty,  
the ultimate endowed with the form of the relative.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 14th, 2014 at 5:58 AM

Title: Re: Perspective

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The term gzhi translates "sthana", which bears no meaning of "ground" at all.

gad rgyangs said:

first of all, its not a translation from Sanskrit, its written in Tibetan.

second of all, the tshig mdzod chen mo gives, as the definition of "gzhi," first:

ས་ཆ་དང་གནས་ལུས། (ground)

and second:

རྩ་བ་ (root or basis)

which is why it is translated as either in various Dzogchen translations.

Malcolm wrote:

I'll take your Alak Kankar and raise you a Khyentse. Khyentse Wangpo clearly defines gzhi as sthana.

gzhi does not mean ས་ཆ་དང་གནས་ལུས། in a Dzogchen context.

All Tibetan Vajrayāna traditions, apart from Bon, assume an Indian source for their terminology.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 14th, 2014 at 7:03 AM

Title: Re: Perspective

Content:

gad rgyangs said:

"The Base, or Zhi in Tibetan, is the term used to denote the fundamental ground of existence, both at the universal level and at the level of the individual"

-ChNNR, "The Crystal and the Way of Light" pg 89

and besides, one of the meaning of sthāna is simply "place"

Malcolm wrote:

But it does not mean "ground".

You do realize that whole book was based on an edited transcript of a translation from Italian into English influenced by John Reynolds who was very active in the community then, correct? As you know quite well, these days, when referring the gzhi, ChNN uses the term "base" or "primordial state".

Personally, I don't care. But as far as I am concerned translating gzhi as ground is less accurate. That is my professional opinion.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 14th, 2014 at 7:15 AM

Title: Re: Make Life Meaningless

Content:

PadmaVonSamba said:

Since this basic awareness cannot be found to have a cause other than itself, and since it has no defining characteristics of its own, and since it cannot be denied, or separated into any kind of 'non-awareness' parts, I would suggest that it is truly existent, non-specific, non-self, synonymous with the meaning of Dharmakaya and the essence of realization.

Malcolm wrote:

As I said before, you have a monistic hindu nondual view. Not even dharmakāya is "truly existent".

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 14th, 2014 at 8:03 AM

Title: Re: Ordination debate - vinaya/bodhisattva/upasaka

Content:

rory said:

Why on earth do you feel the need to patrol the behavior of monks and nuns?

Malcolm wrote:

Much of the Vinaya was written because of lay people complaining about the behavior of monks and nuns.

Quite frankly, the merit of giving dana to a so called ordained person who does not maintain his or her vows as perfectly as possible is no more than the merit of giving dana to an ordinary person dressed in maroon or yellow.

Ordained people are supposed to function as pure fields of merit for lay people. They do so by maintaining their vows, all of them, as many as they have, whether they be pratimokṣa, bodhisattva samvara, or Vajrayāna samaya. That is their job. When they don't do their job, they are thieves of merit.

Of course, people are free to do as they wish, to maintain their vows or break them at their leisure. But there are consequences, and one such consequence is that I won't support ordained people unless I am quite sure they are doing their job. Not because I need the merit personally, but based on principle.

rory said:

the Jain monastics (sadhus and sadhvis) manage just fine with these few rules.

Malcolm wrote:

We are not Jains, we're Buddhists.

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Friday, February 14th, 2014 at 8:06 AM  
Title: Re: Perspective  
Content:

gad rgyangs said:

"The Base, or Zhi in Tibetan, is the term used to denote the fundamental ground of existence, both at the universal level and at the level of the individual"

-ChNNR, "The Crystal and the Way of Light" pg 89

and besides, one of the meaning of sthāna is simply "place"

Malcolm wrote:

But it does not mean "ground".

You do realize that whole book was based on an edited transcript of a translation from Italian into English influenced by John Reynolds who was very active in the community then, correct? As you know quite well, these days, when referring the gzhi, ChNN uses the term "base" or "primordial state".

Personally, I don't care. But as far as I am concerned translating gzhi as ground is less accurate. That is my professional opinion.

gad rgyangs said:

fair enough, point taken.

Malcolm wrote:

BTW, are you going to HHST Kalacakra in April? If so, maybe I will see you there.

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Friday, February 14th, 2014 at 8:28 AM  
Title: Re: Make Life Meaningless  
Content:

PadmaVonSamba said:

Since this basic awareness cannot be found to have a cause other than itself, and since it has no defining characteristics of its own, and since it cannot be denied, or separated into any kind of 'non-awareness' parts, I would suggest that it is truly existent, non-specific, non-self, synonymous with the meaning of Dharmakaya and the essence of realization.

Malcolm wrote:

As I said before, you have a monistic hindu nondual view. Not even dharmakāya is "truly existent".

PadmaVonSamba said:  
Refute awareness.

.  
.  
.

Malcolm wrote:

You already did by claiming it truly existed. There is no such thing as "truly existent". I am not refuting awareness, I am refuting your claim that awareness truly exists. Individual awarenesses exist, just not "truly", they have no original cause because they are all conditioned entities. No conditioned series has an origin. Such is the logic of the Buddha.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 14th, 2014 at 8:50 AM

Title: Re: Make Life Meaningless

Content:

PadmaVonSamba said:

I suggest it is "truly existent" meaning I used that phrase) for the reasons I have stated, the way that space is truly existent.

.

Malcolm wrote:

Space is also not "truly existent". Nirvana is not truly existent.

Read the Heart Sutra again, in case you forgot.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 14th, 2014 at 8:51 AM

Title: Re: Make Life Meaningless

Content:

PadmaVonSamba said:

if you are saying that Dharmakaya is a composite, produced by other causes.

Malcolm wrote:

No, but as I just said, even uncompounded phenomena — of which Mahāyāna Buddhism recognizes only four: space, the two cessations and emptiness — are not truly existent.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 14th, 2014 at 8:54 AM

Title: Re: The 969 Movement in Myanmar (Burma)

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

The three vehicles will thrive and survive if Buddhists act like Buddhists regardless of whether if Islam is annihilated or not.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 14th, 2014 at 9:08 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

An excerpt of an interesting post:

The working classes had their choice of several political movements. There were syndicalist parties, which sought to give workers direct ownership of the firms for which they worked; depending on local taste, that might involve anything from stock ownership programs for employees to cooperatives and other worker-owned enterprises. Syndicalism was also called corporatism; “corporation” and its cognates in most European languages could refer to any organization with a government charter, including craft guilds and cooperatives. It was in that sense that Mussolini’s regime, which borrowed some syndicalist elements for its eclectic ideology, liked to refer to itself as a corporatist system. (Those radicals who insist that this meant fascism was a tool of big corporations in the modern sense are thus hopelessly misinformed—a point I’ll cover in much more detail next week.)

There were also socialist parties, which generally sought to place firms under government control; this might amount to anything from government regulation, through stock purchases giving the state a controlling interest in big firms, to outright expropriation and bureaucratic management. Standing apart from the socialist parties were communist parties, which (after 1919) spouted whatever Moscow’s party line happened to be that week; and there were a variety of other, smaller movements—distributism, social credit, and many more—all of which had their own followings and their own proposed answers to the political and economic problems of the day.

The tendency of most of these parties to further the interests of a single class became a matter of concern by the end of the 19th century, and one result was the emergence of parties that pursued, or claimed to pursue, policies of benefit to the entire nation. Many of them tacked the adjective “national” onto their moniker to indicate this shift in orientation. Thus national conservative parties argued that trade barriers and economic policies focused on the agricultural sector would benefit everyone; national liberal parties argued that free trade and colonial expansion was the best option for everyone; national syndicalist parties argued that giving workers a stake in the firms for which they

worked would benefit everyone, and so on. There were no national communist parties, because Moscow's party line didn't allow it, but there were national bolshevist parties—in Europe between the wars, a bolshevist was someone who supported the Russian Revolution but insisted that Lenin and Stalin had betrayed it in order to impose a personal dictatorship—which argued that violent revolution against the existing order really was in everyone's best interests.

National socialism was another position along the same lines. National socialist parties argued that business firms should be made subject to government regulation and coordination in order to keep them from acting against the interests of society as a whole, and that the working classes ought to receive a range of government benefits paid for by taxes on corporate income and the well-to-do. Those points were central to the program of the National Socialist German Workers Party from the time it got that name—it was founded as the German Workers Party, and got the rest of the moniker at the urging of a little man with a Charlie Chaplin mustache who became the party's leader not long after its founding—and those were the policies that the same party enacted when it took power in Germany in 1933.

If those policies sound familiar, dear reader, they should. That's the other reason why next to nobody outside of specialist historical works mentions national socialism by name: the Western nations that defeated national socialism in Germany promptly adopted its core economic policies, the main source of its mass appeal, to forestall any attempt to revive it in the postwar world. Strictly speaking, in terms of the meaning that the phrase had before the beginning of the Second World War, national socialism is one of the two standard political flavors of political economy nowadays. The other is liberalism, and it's another irony of history that in the United States, the party that hates the word "liberal" is a picture-perfect example of a liberal party, as that term was understood back in the day.

Now of course when people think of the National Socialist German Workers Party nowadays, they don't think of government regulation of industry and free vacations for factory workers, even though those were significant factors in German public life after 1933. They think of such other habits of Hitler's regime as declaring war on most of the world, slaughtering political opponents en masse, and exterminating whole ethnic groups. Those are realities, and they need to be recalled. It's crucial, though, to remember that when Germany's National Socialists were out there canvassing for votes in the years before 1933, they weren't marching proudly behind banners saying VOTE FOR HITLER SO FIFTY MILLION WILL DIE! When those same National Socialists trotted out their antisemitic rhetoric, for that matter, they weren't saying anything the average German found offensive or even unusual; to borrow a highly useful German word, antisemitism in those days was *salonfähig*, "the kind of thing you can bring into the living room." (To be fair, it was just as socially acceptable in England, the United States, and the rest of the western world at that same time.)

<https://thearchdruidreport.blogspot.com/2014/02/fascism-and-future-part-one-up-from.html>

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 14th, 2014 at 9:19 AM

Title: Re: Ordination debate - vinaya/bodhisattva/upasaka

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Quite frankly, the merit of giving dana to a so called ordained person who does not maintain his or her vows as perfectly as possible is no more than the merit of giving dana to an ordinary person dressed in maroon or yellow.

daverupa said:

The Blessed One has actually specified that there is a distinction with respect to whether the offering is pure or not on the side of the giver & the receiver, rendering four scenarios.

In either case - an ordinary person dressed in maroon or yellow, or a monastic with ill-maintained vows -

MN 142 said:

Here the donor is virtuous with good thoughts, the receiver is not virtuous with evil thoughts. Thus the offering is pure, on the side of the donor and not the receiver.

Malcolm wrote:

Nevertheless the offering is not tendered to a pure object, and therefore, there is not as much merit. From the same sutta:

of an offering made to an animal the results expected are by hundreds. Of an offering made to an ordinary not virtuous person the results expected are by thousands. Of an offering made to an ordinary virtuous person the results expected are by hundred - thousands Of an offering made to a not greedy one, turned away from sensuality the results expected are by hundred thousand millions. Of an offering made to a person fallen to the method of realizing the state of entry into the stream of the Teaching, the results expected are innumerable and unlimited. What would be the results for offering a gift to a stream entrant of the Teaching? Or one fallen to the method of realizing the state of not returning? Or one who would not return? Or one fallen to the method of realizing worthiness? Or a worthy disciple of the Thus Gone One? Or the silent enlightened One? Or the worthy, rightfully enlightened Thus Gone One?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 14th, 2014 at 6:45 PM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:



Sherab Dorje said:

So it seems to me that our friend the "archdruid" apart from being misinformed (and misinforming) may actually either be a crypto-sympathiser of Nazism or just plain anti-leftist.

Malcolm wrote:

He is merely saying that policies of Nazi Germany were adopted by the called western European Social Democracies in order to forestall the arising of another Nazi Party along racial lines.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 14th, 2014 at 6:48 PM

Title: Re: Make Life Meaningless

Content:

smcj said:

There is not 100% agreement on that.

Malcolm wrote:

People who think dharmakāya is truly existent are simply wrong, and suffer from an eternalist bias.

In reality the three kāyas are also conventions.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 14th, 2014 at 8:57 PM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

So National Socialism is really "Ethnic" Socialism or "Racial" Socialism

It's not socialism at all!

Here is the article, "What is National Socialism", written in 1933:

<https://www.marxists.org/archive/trotsky/germany/1933/330610.htm>

Malcolm wrote:

It is just another form of socialism. Not all socialism is Marxist socialism.

The point the archdruid is making was that the social democracies in Western Europe have more or less adopted all the economic policies that were installed during the Weimar Republic and during the Third Reich. Why? As he said, to attempt to stave off worker rebellions.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 14th, 2014 at 9:25 PM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

Simon

I'm interested in Buddhism certainly. But not in a Buddhism that becomes so abstract and schizoid that it doesn't open it's eyes to the suffering of ordinary people in the world. When my car is broken, I get out a spanner; meditation and mindfulness is certainly in order... but also the spanner.

Viewing human problems as ultimately non-existent is fair enough if you live in a monastery, but there are two truths. We have to consider conventional reality too. We can't just lop it off and pretend to ourselves that we have achieved a non-dual state of awareness simply by closing our eyes. If I was a fully realised Buddha I could perhaps transcend all these worldly mumblings... But... BUT... I am not, and I don't think a person becomes fully realised simply by blocking out the problems of the world. We need compassion as well as wisdom. Action as well as mindfulness.

Malcolm wrote:

You don't need to block out the problems of the world. You simply need to realize, as a Buddhist, that they can only be solved through the practice of Dharma.

And as I have taken great pains to show, If you are a Buddhist, your political affiliation should be consistent with Buddhist values. As far as I can see, the only political party that even comes close to meeting that criteria is the Green Party movement. I have some reservations about the "new left" rhetoric of the US Green Party for example, but nevertheless I cannot associate myself with the Republicans or the Democrats.

In your neck of the woods:

<http://greenparty.org.uk/policies.html>

All sorts of room in the green party for petty bourgeoisie people like myself, to stalwart communist heros like yourself, and anarchist windups like Greg.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 14th, 2014 at 9:37 PM

Title: Re: Make Life Meaningless

Content:

PadmaVonSamba said:

if you are saying that Dharmakaya is a composite,  
produced by other causes.

Malcolm wrote:

No, but as I just said, even uncompounded phenomena — of which Mahāyāna Buddhism recognizes only four: space, the two cessations and emptiness — are not truly existent.

PadmaVonSamba said:

I am talking about even the awareness of these four things.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, I understand. All awarenesses are conditioned. There is no such thing as a universal undifferentiated ultimate awareness in Buddhadharma. Even the omniscience of a Buddha arises from a cause.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 14th, 2014 at 9:40 PM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

Malcolm, I just don't feel convinced by your point of view. So I will stick with my own precarious holding together of both Marxism and Buddhism.

I said a long time back that I know it was not possible to completely reconcile both philosophies. However, I just can't reconcile being a decent human being with the complete renunciation of either. So there we have it: Paradox.

I'll just do the best I can.

Malcolm wrote:

As I said, the Green Party is the only party which is reconcilable with Buddhist ethics. That or a Buddhist monarchy. Take your pick.

Anyway, I have no interest in convincing you of anything. You will convince yourself over time as the cognitive dissonance between being a Buddhist and a communist (not to mention the dissonance between social justice and communism) eventually becomes too much to bear.

Anyway, as Naess says, of the three great movements, the peace movement, the social justice movement and the deep ecology movement, one can pick only one to be active in, and I have chosen mine: deep ecology.

It seems you have picked social justice. More power to you.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 14th, 2014 at 9:59 PM

Title: Re: Make Life Meaningless

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Even the omniscience of a Buddha arises from a cause.

PadmaVonSamba said:

isn't this cause, too, an object of awareness?

Isn't there awareness of this cause?

If awareness of this cause is awareness itself,

then isn't this awareness of awareness?

What causes awareness of awareness, if not awareness?

If awareness is the cause of awareness, isn't it its own cause?

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Malcolm wrote:

Omniscience is the content of a mind freed of afflictions. Even the continuum of a Buddha has a relative ground, i.e. a the rosary or string of moments of clarity is beginningless.

Origination from self is axiomatically negated in Buddhadharma,

Each moment in the continuum of a knowing clarity is neither the same as nor different than the previous moment. Hence the cause of a given instant of a knowing clarity cannot be construed to be itself nor can it be construed to be other than itself. This is the only version of causation which, in the final analysis, Buddhadharma can admit to on a relative level. It is the logical consequence of the Buddha's insight, "When this exists, that exists, with the arising of that, this arose."

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 14th, 2014 at 11:24 PM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

The name Communist has come to be equated with the Bonapartist degenerated workers state of the USSR et. al.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Degenerated\\_workers%27\\_state](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Degenerated_workers%27_state)

Also

<https://www.marxists.org/archive/trotsky/1939/05/bonapartism.htm>

So I prefer Socialist or Marxist.

Malcolm wrote:

Dude, you're a communist. As far as those of us who are not communists are concerned, it is all of a stripe.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 14th, 2014 at 11:26 PM

Title: Re: Make Life Meaningless

Content:

Astus said:

An awareness without anything to be aware of is like seeing without anything to see.

PadmaVonSamba said:

I am not referring to cognition, rather, the causes of that cognition.

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Malcolm wrote:

Cognitions arise based on previous cognitions. That's all.

If you suggest anything other than this, you wind up in Hindu La la land.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, February 15th, 2014 at 1:39 AM

Title: Re: Make Life Meaningless

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

There is no such thing as a universal undifferentiated ultimate awareness in Buddhadharma.

mutsum said:

In other words, following Khenpo Jikphun (transcript from JLA) :

« — You have the Base (gzhi) of the natural state. That state has a knowledge (rig pa) which, owing to the dynamism of the state (which is not static), flashes out of the Base.

Malcolm wrote:

This occurs because of latent traces of karma and affliction left over from the previous eon, according to a commentary attributed to Garab Dorje on the Single Son of All the Buddhas Tantras.

So this neutral awareness that rises out of the basis upon the stirring of vāyu in the basis actually has a cause.

Amazing!

Mere clear vidyā, this mere intermediate realization,

it is not a buddha, is not a sentient beings,  
neutral, dependent on both conditions.  
For example, it is like a stainless crystal ball,  
which can produce fire or water through the condition of the sun or the moon.  
Likewise, vidyā, the essence of the mind,  
arises as the suffering of samsara or the bliss of nirvana through conditions.

The Three Kāyas Tantra from the Ka dag rang shar

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, February 15th, 2014 at 1:56 AM

Title: Re: Make Life Meaningless

Content:

gad rgyangs said:

how could the basis be subject to karma and afflictions?

Malcolm wrote:

The basis does not have a cause, just like space does not have a cause. But it is a repository for the build up of traces nevertheless.

The way samsara arose at first is, when the trio of vāyu, vidyā and space arose from the undifferentiated basis, since vidyā was unstable because of isolation, and engaged in self-delusion, panicked at sound, frightened of the light, and fainted at the light and was covered by ignorance. After it engages in self-delusion, the duality of outer objects and inner mind arises. The mere thought of self arising from other, and other arising from self, disturbed the karmavāyus. Mind is built up by the vāyu, the analytical mind analyzes objects. The self-deluded awareness demarcated sensation and since it did not recognize its own appearances, apparent objects were apprehended as a duality. Since that accumulated traces of karma, a physical body was appropriated and the suffering of delusion is uninterrupted. For example, sentient being formed out of ignorance are like being stuck pitch dark.

The Clear Lamp from the Ka dag rang shar

The whole process is clearly personal and individual, not transpersonal.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, February 15th, 2014 at 2:09 AM

Title: Re: Make Life Meaningless

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The basis does not have a cause, just like space does not have a cause. But it is a

repository for the build up of traces nevertheless.

gad rgyangs said:

it could only be a repository if it was reified.

The whole process is clearly personal and individual, not transpersonal.

the basis is said to have/be "rang byung ye shes", and is equated with rigpa in many texts. are these not cognitive terms?

Malcolm wrote:

Space is a repository for all things, one does not have to reify space to understand that.

"Rang byung ye shes" means "wisdom that arises from oneself". This point is very clearly explained in many places.

In any event, we can consider that the Vima Nyinthig commentary attributed to Garab Dorje authoritative:

"From now on, the stirred pit of samsara will no appear as the six kinds of living beings. for twenty thousand eons, sentient beings, having severed the stream of samsara, will not appear with a bodily form. After that, from the arising of the subtle latent defilements of different actions, it will be equivalent with the production of the previous samsara and nirvana"

Thus we find out that all this business about the basis and so on is really just a way to talk about what happens in the so called dark eons, when everything below the third and fourth rūpadhātu are held to disappear, even though the origin of the basis is often couched in terms to place in an unimaginable primeval beginning.

Its a Buddhist way to try to talk about origins without talking about origins. "I can't find where it started so I am going to call it 'self-originated'." But if someone thinks it is pointing to some transcendental uber consciousness, well, if that is what someone thinks, I think someone doesn't really understand Dzogchen at all. If someone things the basis is consciousness, or some cognitive or noetic principle, they have understood nothing.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, February 15th, 2014 at 2:30 AM

Title: Re: Make Life Meaningless

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Space is a repository for all things, one does not have to reify space to understand that.

gad rgyangs said:

the basis is not space.

Malcolm wrote:

Nyibum\* states:

As such, because the basis, one's unfabricated mind, arose as the essence of reality of a single nature, there is no need to search elsewhere for the place etc., i.e. it is called self-originated wisdom.

The basis is nothing more nor nothing less this.

\*the son of Zhang stong Chobar, the tertön of the Vima Nyinthig

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, February 15th, 2014 at 2:35 AM

Title: Re: Do you believe in ghosts?

Content:

Indrajala said:

Or maybe the question would be better phrased as do you believe in the existence of intelligent non-corporeal beings?

This is a question that maybe divides a lot of Buddhists nowadays. Say you think pretas exist in the wrong company and you'll possibly be mocked for it. On the other hand, there's always been such beings within Buddhist cosmology, and they were not seen as symbolic or metaphorical. They were subjectively real in their own right.

There's actually an interesting book on the subject of monsters by John Michael Greer entitled *Monsters: An Investigator's Guide to Magical Beings*. He points out that statistically over a quarter or so of people report having had contact with some kind of disembodied intelligence at some point, which constitutes evidence suggestive of the phenomenon. You can read the introduction in the preview on Google Books.

Malcolm wrote:

As a Doctor of Tibetan Medicine I would have to say yes, I accept the existence of bhūtas. Most seriously mentally ill people are afflicted with them. It is very easy to see.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, February 15th, 2014 at 2:52 AM

Title: Re: Make Life Meaningless

Content:

Malcolm wrote:



Nyibum\* states:

As such, because the basis, one's unfabricated mind, arose as the essence of reality as a single nature, there is no need to search elsewhere for the place etc., i.e. it is called self-originated wisdom.

The basis is nothing more nor nothing less this.

\*the son of Zhan stong Chobar, the tertön of the Vima Nyinthig

gad rgyangs said:

I'm glad you took out the part where you said the basis is nothing but alaya!

as to the quote, the basis does not "arise", it is the basis of arising. I'm also not sure I like equating one's mind, unfabricated or not, with the basis: one's mind is clearly an appearance, not the basis.

Malcolm wrote:

Sorry but the term ālaya in Dzogchen and term as it is used, for example in Sakya, are completely different.

The term basis in Dzogchen (sthāna) and the term ālaya in Lamdre for example, have precisely the same meaning, i.e. one's unfabricated mind (rang sems ma bcos pa).

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, February 15th, 2014 at 3:19 AM

Title: Re: Make Life Meaningless

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Sorry but the term ālaya in Dzogchen and term as it is used, for example in Sakya, are completely different.

The term basis in Dzogchen (sthāna) and the term ālaya in Lamdre for example, have precisely the same meaning, i.e. one's unfabricated mind (rang sems ma bcos pa).

gad rgyangs said:

whats an "unfabricated mind" anyway? awareness without the prapanca?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, I believe so. So basically, all that fancy Dzogchen lingo about the basis and so on is really just talking about a mind stream that is proposed to have a primordial start point which is completely free of proliferation.

We can trust Nyibum about this because his father invented/revealed the Nyinthig tradition and he himself was a great scholar who studied widely.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, February 15th, 2014 at 4:30 AM

Title: Re: Make Life Meaningless

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Each moment in the continuum of a knowing clarity is neither the same as nor different than the previous moment.

dzogchungpa said:

Honestly, this doesn't make any sense to me.

Malcolm wrote:

It is pretty straight forward Madhyamaka. If a cause exists at the same time as the effect, the effect is a non-effect, like a seed and its sprout existing at the same time. On the other hand if causes and effects are temporally separate, i.e. of the cause exists at a different time than the effect, the cause will amount to a non-cause and the effect, a non-effect. If the cause is the same as the effect, the cause will be a non-cause and the effect will be a non-effect. If they are different, then also cause will be a non-cause and the effect will be a non-effect.

Therefore, what Candrakirti proposes, following Nāgārjuna, is that causes and effects are neither the same nor are they different, and that they are not simultaneous nor are they temporally distinct.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, February 15th, 2014 at 4:39 AM

Title: Re: Make Life Meaningless

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

So basically, all that fancy Dzogchen lingo about the basis and so on is really just talking about a mind stream that is proposed to have a primordial start point which is completely free of proliferation.

dzogchungpa said:

Can you say a little more about what you mean by a primordial start point?

Malcolm wrote:

It doesn't really mean anything. The continuum of a mind has no beginning. What is being proposed in (some) Dzogchen texts is that at some idealized point in the most distant past beyond our imagination there was a time when our mind was in a state of non-fabrication. At that time this non-fabricated mind, aka the basis, was not aware of itself or anything else but contains within it all the qualities of buddhahood. Then

somehow, and it is never really explained how, our own mind's cognitive potentiality [rtsal] stirs and rises up ['phags] out of itself giving rise to neutral awareness that either becomes prajñā or ignorance depending on whether it recognizes its own potentiality or not. This kicks off the division between samsara and nirvana. It is completely personal and is not transpersonal at all. But unfortunately, because Dzogchen texts are not very clear about this, the account of the basis tends to be interpreted transpersonally, most likely due to the proliferation of Advaita.

It is my deeply held conviction that this transpersonal account which is favored by many people is a total misunderstanding based on reading these texts in Tibetan for the past 20 years and receiving detailed teachings on them from a variety of very qualified masters .

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, February 15th, 2014 at 4:41 AM

Title: Re: Make Life Meaningless

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

This I don't.

Malcolm wrote:

Sure you do. We have shown that the standard accounts of cause and effect, that they are temporally distinct, or that they are identical or different, are incoherent, from a Madhyamaka point of view. But since effects do appear to arise from causes, given that all of the above is true, this leaves only one option, that causes and their effects are neither the same nor are they different, for example, butter and milk, etc.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, February 15th, 2014 at 4:48 AM

Title: Re: Do you believe in ghosts?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

I accept the existence of bhūtas. Most seriously mentally ill people are afflicted with them. It is very easy to see.

dzogchungpa said:

May I ask how you see that someone is afflicted with bhutas? I don't doubt that you can, I would just like to know.

Malcolm wrote:

Through their behavior. If you see some dude at a yoga conference or a bhajan who seems "off", wearing white, obsessed with purity, fond of spouting off words in Sanskrit, etc., you can be sure he is suffering from devabhūtagraha i.e. demonic possession by a deva. There are also ṛṣibhūtagrahas, gurubhūtagraha, siddhabhūtagraha, pretabhūtagraha, and so on, each with their own unique behavior.

I am doing a one day workshop on bhūtas in Mexico City in March.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, February 15th, 2014 at 5:06 AM

Title: Re: Make Life Meaningless

Content:

gad rgyangs said:

whats an "unfabricated mind" anyway? awareness without the prapanca?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, I believe so. So basically, all that fancy Dzogchen lingo about the basis and so on is really just talking about a mind stream that is proposed to have a primordial start point which is completely free of proliferation.

We can trust Nyibum about this because his father invented/revealed the Nyingthig tradition and he himself was a great scholar who studied widely.

gad rgyangs said:

I dunno Malcolm, the basis is more like the backdrop against which any appearances appear, including any consciousness. Also, what sense would it make to say "rigpa is one's knowledge of the basis" if that basis was one's own continuum? the basis is pure no-thing as abgrund of all phenomena. Consciousness is always a phenomenon.

Malcolm wrote:

I prefer to put my faith in the guy whose father started the whole Nyingthig thing. And what is says is verified in many Dzogchen tantras, both from the bodhicitta texts as well as others.

The basis is not a backdrop. Everything is not separate from the basis. But that everything just means your own skandhas, dhātus and āyatanas. There is no basis outside your mind, just as there is no Buddhahood outside of your mind.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, February 15th, 2014 at 5:08 AM

Title: Re: Make Life Meaningless

Content:

gad rgyangs said:

Consciousness is always a phenomenon.

Malcolm wrote:

So is the basis. They are both dharmas.

Or as the Great Garuda has it when refuting Madhyamaka:

Since phenomena and nonphenomena have always been merged and are inseparable, there is no further need to explain an “ultimate phenomenon”.

An 12th century commentary on this text states (but not this passage):

Amazing bodhicitta (the identity of everything that becomes the basis of pursuing the meaning that cannot be seen nor realized elsewhere than one’s vidyā) is wholly the wisdom of the mind distinct as the nine consciousnesses that lack a nature.

In the end, Dzogchen is really just another Buddhist meditative phenomenology of the mind and person and that is all.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, February 15th, 2014 at 5:20 AM

Title: Re: Make Life Meaningless

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

I prefer to put my faith in the guy whose father started the whole Nyinthig thing. And what he says is verified in many Dzogchen tantras, both from the bodhicitta texts as well as others.

The basis is not a backdrop. Everything is not separate from the basis. But that everything just means your own skandhas, dhātus and āyatanas. There is no basis outside your mind, just as there is no Buddhahood outside of your mind.

gad rgyangs said:

then why speak of a basis at all? just speak of skandhas, dhātus and āyatanas, and be done with it.

Malcolm wrote:

Because these things are regarded as afflictive, whereas Dzogchen is trying to describe the person in his or her originally nonafflictive condition. It really is just that simple. The so called general basis is a universal derived from the particulars of persons. That is why it is often mistaken for a transpersonal entity. But Dzogchen, especially man ngag sde is very grounded in Buddhist Logic, and one should know that by definition universals are considered to be abstractions and non-existents in Buddhism, and Dzogchen is no exception.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, February 15th, 2014 at 5:35 AM

Title: Re: Make Life Meaningless

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Because these things are regarded as afflictive, whereas Dzogchen is trying to describe the person in his or her originally nonafflictive condition. It really is just that simple. The so called general basis is a universal derived from the particulars of persons. That is why it is often mistaken for a transpersonal entity. But Dzogchen, especially man ngag sde is very grounded in Buddhist Logic, and one should know that by definition universals are considered to be abstractions and non-existents in Buddhism, and Dzogchen is no exception.

gad rgyangs said:

there is no question of the basis being an entity, thats not the point. Rigpa is precisely what it says in the yeshe sangthal: instant presence experienced against/within the "backdrop" (metaphor) of a "vast dimension of emptiness" (metaphor).

Malcolm wrote:

It's your own rigpa, not a transpersonal rigpa, being a function of your own mind. That mind is empty.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, February 15th, 2014 at 6:04 AM

Title: Re: Make Life Meaningless

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

It's your own rigpa, not a transpersonal rigpa, being a function of your own mind. That mind is empty.

gad rgyangs said:

when all appearances cease, what are you left with?

Malcolm wrote:

they never cease....

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, February 15th, 2014 at 6:36 AM

Title: Re: Make Life Meaningless

Content:

gad rgyangs said:

rigpa is ontological not epistemic: its not about some state of consciousness before dualism vision, it is about the basis/abgrund of all possible appearances, including our consciousness in whatever state its in or could ever be in.

Malcolm wrote:

Sorry, I just don't agree with you and think you are just falling in the Hindu brahman trap.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, February 15th, 2014 at 6:38 AM

Title: Re: Make Life Meaningless

Content:

Sherlock said:

Isn't the difference between transpersonal and personal also a form of dualism?

Malcolm wrote:

The distinction is crucial. If this distinction is not made, Dzogchen sounds like Vedanta.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, February 15th, 2014 at 6:48 AM

Title: Re: Make Life Meaningless

Content:

gad rgyangs said:

in the yeshe sangthal you dissolve all appearances into the "vast dimension of emptiness", out of which "instant presence" arises. This is cosmological as well as personal, since the two scales are nondual.

Malcolm wrote:

The way that great transference body arises:

when all appearances have gradually been exhausted,  
when one focuses one's awareness on the appearances strewn about  
on the luminous maṇḍala of the five fingers of one's hand,  
the environment and inhabitants of the universe  
returning from that appearance are perceived as like moon in the water.

One's body is just a reflection,  
self-apparent as the illusory body of wisdom;  
one obtains a vajra-like body.

One sees one's body as transparent inside and out.

The impure eyes of others cannot see one's body as transparent,  
but only the body as it was before...

Shabkar, Key to One Hundred Doors of Samadhi

Outer appearances do not disappear even when great transference body is attained.  
What disappears are the inner visions, that is what is exhausted, not the outer universe  
with its planets, stars, galaxies, mountains, oceans, cliffs, houses, people and sentient  
beings.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, February 15th, 2014 at 6:49 AM

Title: Re: Make Life Meaningless

Content:

gad rgyangs said:

rigpa is ontological not epistemic: its not about some state of consciousness before dualism vision, it is about the basis/abgrund of all possible appearances, including our consciousness in whatever state its in or could ever be in.

Malcolm wrote:

Sorry, I just don't agree with you and think you are just falling in the Hindu brahman trap.

gad rgyangs said:

I'm talking about the perception of the relationship between nothing and something. The question of what jargon to use when talking around it is secondary, although not without historical interest.

Malcolm wrote:

Rigpa is just knowing, the noetic quality of a mind. That is all it is.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, February 15th, 2014 at 9:09 PM

Title: Re: Do you believe in ghosts?

Content:

Indrajala said:

I'm less interested in minor spirits and so on, and more interested in higher gods and the stories around them. Aside from invoking the names of those gods friendly to the Buddhadharma (like Indra), I don't really do much else.

Malcolm wrote:

Bhūtas, in reality, are a product of affliction that manifest as external spirits. They are formless, and according to Tibetan Medicine as well as the chöd tradtiion, are a product of imputation. So they exist, but they exist primarily as imputations.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, February 15th, 2014 at 9:13 PM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:



Here in Greece Anarchists and Communists (especially the Stalinists of the Communist Party of Greece) spend as much time beating each other up as they do beating up the neo-Nazis of Golden Dawn.

Malcolm wrote:

All that proves is that none of the three are suited to lead a society since they're all just armed thugs, devoted more to violence than peace.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, February 15th, 2014 at 9:17 PM

Title: Re: Make Life Meaningless

Content:

tobes said:

1. Never; the activity of consciousness cannot be separated from its content.
2. Both are rupa; they are part of embodiment, but I don't see the relevance of asserting them to be either internal or external.

:

Malcolm wrote:

No, consciousness is nāma; but I agree with you that nāma is embodied (rūpaka).

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, February 15th, 2014 at 9:52 PM

Title: Re: Do you believe in ghosts?

Content:

Indrajala said:

I'm less interested in minor spirits and so on, and more interested in higher gods and the stories around them. Aside from invoking the names of those gods friendly to the Buddhadharma (like Indra), I don't really do much else.

Malcolm wrote:

Bhūtas, in reality, are a product of affliction that manifest as external spirits. They are formless, and according to Tibetan Medicine as well as the chöd tradition, are a product of imputation. So they exist, but they exist primarily as imputations.

Lhasa said:

Malcolm, would you explain the 'product of imputation' a bit more? Also, bhutas would be a great thread all its own, especially how to deal with them.

I have heard that when someone suffers trauma/abuse, that they leak life-force and this attracts lower spirits who feed off it. Is this somewhat the same thing as bhutas?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes. The primary cause of bhūtagraha is karma, engaging in non-virtuous deeds in this life or past lives.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, February 15th, 2014 at 9:54 PM

Title: Re: Make Life Meaningless

Content:

kirtu said:

But imho the complete meaninglessness of samsara is very difficult for even Dharma people to accept.

Malcolm wrote:

They are like the liberal Marxists Mao was talking about in Zhen Li's citation. They give lip service to Buddhadharma, but they still imagine there is worldly happiness and meaning.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, February 16th, 2014 at 6:06 AM

Title: Re: Make Life Meaningless

Content:

gad rgyangs said:

I can see how lower yanas can have this discussion, but for the Dzoghchen POV, the only thing that is meaningless (or at least a waste of time) is complaining about the appearances of the basis.

kirtu said:

"Complaining" about appearances is quite common because people aren't stable in the view.

Even in the view people react to appearances.

But of course most people, even most Dharma people, accept the appearances as actually real.

Kirt

gad rgyangs said:

sentient beings complaining about appearances, forgetting that both they and the appearances are appearances of the basis, is also an appearance of the basis, so its all good.

Malcolm wrote:

Sounds like brahman to me.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, February 16th, 2014 at 6:08 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

All that proves is that none of the three are suited to lead a society since they're all just armed thugs, devoted more to violence than peace.

Sherab Dorje said:

Yes, well, that's easy to say from the comfort of your New England home. You might have a slightly different opinion if you were living in inner city Athens, especially if you were a Pakistani immigrant (for example).

Malcolm wrote:

Sorry, Greg, I just can't condone this kind of random street violence. It is a symptom of a government that is weak.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, February 16th, 2014 at 6:15 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

It is they who have the most brutal record of violence imaginable, stopping at nothing to overturn democratic elections if they threaten the rule of capital.

Malcolm wrote:

If you can't beat 'em, join 'em.

tellyontellyon said:

a workers' democracy.

Malcolm wrote:

Which as we have seen is just a total concentration camp.

wiki

tellyontellyon said:

Hayek's views on Pinochet's Chile.

Malcolm wrote:

You cited this already.

tellyontellyon said:

A genuine socialist govt. would not be dictatorial, it would extend and deepen democracy enormously.

Malcolm wrote:

I don't believe this for a second, "meet the new boss, same as the old boss."

tellyontellyon said:

This would be more far reaching than the parliamentary democracies of capitalism where we simply get to vote every few years for MPs who do whatever they please once elected. Instead, everybody would take part in deciding how society and the economy would run. Nationally, regionally and locally at every level, elected representatives would be accountable and subject to instant recall. So is the people who elected them didn't like what their representative did, they could make them stand for election again and, if wished, replace them. Elected representatives would receive only the average wage, keeping them in touch with ordinary people.

Malcolm wrote:

A recipe for political and economic chaos. Direct democracy does not scale.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, February 16th, 2014 at 6:22 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

From what I've seen of Deep Ecology, it seems to involve not actually doing very much... just let nature take its course.

Malcolm wrote:

You haven't understood deep ecology.

tellyontellyon said:

Well, yes, if we just let things drift we can certainly trust that nature will solve all our problems.... mass depopulation resulting from starvation and various other environmental disasters .... did I say disaster...?!

Nay, this is homeostatic Gaia rebalancing the biosphere, cleansing it of those pesky humans.... well, apart from Namdrol and his cabbage patch.... lucky him.

Malcolm wrote:

That is not a deep ecological view.

tellyontellyon said:

Population down to ... what was it? 100 million down from 7.1 billion. That's what Naess suggested.

Malcolm wrote:

He suggested this was an ideal number for maintaining human cultural diversity.

tellyontellyon said:

But it sounds just a little brutal to me. I would also question whether this strategy would be 'realistic', 'cause untold suffering' and 'not be stable'.

Malcolm wrote:

It is an idealistic desiderata. It would involve people voluntarily choosing not to have children, over some number of centuries. No one is going to adopt such policies since we as a species do not have the collective maturity to enact such policies, and we understand that in deep ecology.

tellyontellyon said:

7 Billion dead. ... Is that really a more Buddhist solution than nationalising the big corporations, utilities and banks?

Malcolm wrote:

No one in deep ecology ever suggested a mass killing of humans was desirable. That would be the Deep Green Resistance people.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, February 16th, 2014 at 6:30 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

Not Ideals.... but changing what is worse for something better. There is nothing wrong with being pro-active about something if it seems positive. If you want to be inactive, ok.... but the capitalists are not going to be inactive. They are busy destroying the planet with their insatiable demand for the 2% - 3% compound annual growth that capitalism needs to function.

Zero growth economics is not possible under capitalism...

Malcolm wrote:

No, capitalism is doing no such thing. Human beings are doing it because they do not understand how to control their desire, hatred and ignorance. They do it just as much on Socialist countries like USSR and Communist China.

From my point of view as a Buddhist, your insistence on focusing on external "solutions" (which in my sincere opinion will make things worse) is misguided. In any event, the market is waking up the fact that destroying its own resource base is bad for the market itself. You will see a shift in global capitalism in the next 50 years away from extractive investment towards renewable and reuse investment. This will happen.

The problem is not markets, nor capital, nor capitalists, communists, socialist,

anarchists, fascists, racists, and so on. The problem that we humans are immature, and we need, as a species to grow up.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, February 16th, 2014 at 6:40 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

Even if you don't think socialism isn't the answer, we stil need to dump capitalism. It is past it's 'sell by' date and is starting to stink.

Malcolm wrote:

We are not going to dump capitalism ever, because there have always been markets and opportunities for investment and there always will be markets. What needs to happen is that human beings need to grow up and learn how to restrain their appetites, and manage their markets in such a way that they are not destructive to the planet and other creatures in general.

When this happens, we can have our cake and eat it too, we can have both a healthy planet, social justice and peace. Socialism, Neo-liberalism, Anarchism, all these political theories are not going to bring us to the point where we have a healthy planet, social justice and peace, because all of options from the left and the right up till now are predicated on violence. Whether it is violent seizure of new markets (Neo -liberalism), violent seizure of capital (Marxian Socialism) or violent disruption of society (Kropotkin style Anarchism), for as long as humans use violence to have their way in the world for that long there will never be peace, never be social justice and there will never be a healthy planet.

Those who participate and endorse violence, only get violence in future lives.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, February 16th, 2014 at 6:43 AM

Title: Re: Make Life Meaningless

Content:

gad rgyangs said:

sentient beings complaining about appearances, forgetting that both they and the appearances are appearances of the basis, is also an appearance of the basis, so its all good.

Malcolm wrote:

Sounds like brahman to me.

gad rgyangs said:  
the basis is not sat.

Malcolm wrote:  
The basis, as I have already shown, is just your own clear and empty mind. There is no vidyā apart from your own mind's vidyā.

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Sunday, February 16th, 2014 at 7:01 AM  
Title: Re: Make Life Meaningless  
Content:

Malcolm wrote:  
The basis, as I have already shown, is just your own clear and empty mind. There is no vidyā apart from your own mind's vidyā.

gad rgyangs said:  
the basis is not vidya.

Malcolm wrote:  
Yes, I know, the neutral awareness that can become vidyā or avidyā comes from the basis. As I said the basis is just your own mind. It is not some unitary ontological basis for everything. If it were, it would be no different than brahman. Say that it isn't sat is no help, since brahman too is considered beyond existence and non-existence. If there is a difference, it is that the basis, one's own mind, is also not established.

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Sunday, February 16th, 2014 at 7:57 AM  
Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism  
Content:

tellyontellyon said:  
Malcolm:  
'Markets' or 'Trade', and 'Capitalism' are not the same thing. Explaining that is extremely complicated, capitalism are particular patterns of trade that have come to the fore in the modern world. For a proper explanation of this you will have to work through 'Capital' by Marx yourself. Though of course you could short circuit all that by declaring that you simply don't accept Marx's theory... up to you.

Malcolm wrote:  
As far as I can see, Capitalism, a term invented by Marx, is here to stay. Socialism, apart from the various degrees of "socialism" in the some Western European democracies failed. It is useless to shout at me that true socialism has never been tried. I wouldn't want to try "true Socialism" in a million years, so you can keep it.

tellyontellyon said:  
Also, "There have always been..." is not a logical argument....

Malcolm wrote:

It doesn't need to be an argument, its just a matter of fact.

tellyontellyon said:

I haven't said we don't have to look at our minds... but as I said about fixing my car ... we ALSO need a spanner.

We need to work on our anger, jealousy, greed. ignorance and pride... of course that. That goes without saying. That is bleeding obvious....!

Malcolm wrote:

If it were so obvious, then why is no one apart from a few Buddhists doing it?

tellyontellyon said:

But what is ALSO needed is a changed system.

Malcolm wrote:

No, we merely need to change our minds and help others where we can.

People love "systems" because they tell a story. So you have your exploitation story you call Capitalism, and you have your liberation story that you call True Socialism(tm), but they are just abstractions. In truth, no system is perfect because they are only as perfect as the people running them. And quite frankly I see no reason to believe that people will be "better people" under a True Socialist(tm) system, and I suspect that in fact people will be a lot shittier to one another than they are now given the removal of all financial incentives, the only thing left will be social status and hierarchical position.

You can quote the Marxist Dalai Lama all you want, and I can quote the free market loving Dalai Lama right back at you, but what good does that serve?

If we have learned anything, we should have learned that satisfaction of material needs does not lead to greater happiness — this fact is equally true under all political systems. Happiness both mundane and transcendent only comes from inside.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, February 16th, 2014 at 7:58 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

Though, I am not blind to the possibility that the old regime may threaten the new society. I think they would have as much right to defend themselves as anybody else.

Malcolm wrote:

I see, you think that the "Capitalist" regime has a right to defend itself? That's novel. I



thought you were of the mind that all these people were basically felons with no right to their "means of production".

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, February 16th, 2014 at 9:59 PM

Title: Re: Make Life Meaningless

Content:

Sherlock said:

You seem to be suggesting that the whole cyclical universe thing is entirely a metaphor for one's mind -- sure it can be that but why not at the same time also a valid description of how the universe actually arises? It sounds to me similar to how some people consider the 6 lokas to be states of being within one's own life -- it is definitely that to some degree, but at the same time in mainstream Buddhism reincarnation into the different lokas is still a given.

Malcolm wrote:

In the highest Yogacara school, the non-aspectarian school, there is in fact no container universe to reincarnate into since the containers universe is merely a projection of seeds in the ālayavijñāna.

Dzogchen does not reject the outer universe in the same. Instead it interprets the pre/non-afflictive states of the five elements as "the five lights". But we can understand that the most subtle form of the five elements exist within consciousness. Wisdom is also just a name for a pre/un-obscured consciousness.

The basis is not a universal phenomena. though it is discussed in a manner resembling that for convenience. Each person has their own basis. This is why each person experiences delusion and liberation separately and at different times.

Because the basis seems to be discussed as if it were some universal "pleroma", to borrow a phrase from the Gnostics, this causes some people to go off the deep end and conclude it is some universal phenomena out of which everything arises rather than be a quality shared by everything that arises.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, February 16th, 2014 at 10:18 PM

Title: Re: Make Life Meaningless

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

As I said the basis is just your own mind.

The gzhi, in Dzogchen, has nothing to do with the mind.

cloudburst said:

Hi Malcolm

Could you give a brief account of how your view has changed on this matter? It's somewhat striking.

Thank you.

Malcolm wrote:

It is simple: the basis has nothing to do with afflicted mind, the one we ordinarily experience. The two statements may be reconciled in the following way.

The basis is simply a way of talking about the components of the universe — earth, water, fire, air, space and consciousness — from the point of view their luminous intrinsic purity. A way of saying this in Tibetan in Dzogchen terms would be ཆོས་ཐམས་ཅད་རང་བཞིན་གྱིས་ཀྱང་དག་དང་ལྷན་གྱུ་ཞེས་ (all phenomena are pure and naturally perfect by nature); a gsar ma equivalent presentation might run ཆོས་ཐམས་ཅད་རང་བཞིན་གྱིས་དག་པ་དང་འོད་གསལ་བ་ (all phenomena are pure and luminous by nature).

The Kalacakra tantra makes a very important point about this, as Tagtshang Lotsawa points out in his survey of the Vimalaprabha:

Great bliss and empty forms [śūnyatābimba, stong gzugs] are shown to exist in the basis with this wisdom element of the basis [gzhi] because Bhagavan Vajrasattva Mahāsukha explains that all three realms exist in oneself in the commentary of the third verse of this [adhyātma] chapter, and it is established through the citation of the root text and commentary of “wisdom merged into emptiness”.

What is this wisdom? He again clarifies:

Bearing the name “wisdom”, this consciousness that exists pervading the bodies of all sentient beings is merged into that emptiness which pervades all sentient beings, including the sentient beings of the bardo and the formless realm. This is taught in the commentary as existing through a relative mode.

In Kalacakra, for example, the wisdom element is considered to be the five elements counted as one. Tatshang again:

As such, from among the ten elements, the first five are enumerated individually, i.e., the elements of space, air, fire, water and earth. Counting the latter five as one, since they are made into one so called “wisdom element”, these six elements form this womb-born body.

The fact that points towards the same meaning as the basis in Dzogchen is provided by him here:

This statement of the root text “Wisdom is merged into emptiness, uniform taste, unchanging, and permanent” is intended for the mind of the apprehending subject that apprehends the object of the empty form established through the power of meditating

on the main [devatā]. Here, the meaning of uniform taste, unchanging and permanent are though to be “complete in perfection.” Further, the meaning of permanent is said to be freedom from obscurations. That also intends intrinsically lacking obscuration or without the obscurations of movements. Though there is nothing to identify here in inseparable uniform taste, while produced conditionally, the intention is that the apprehended object and the apprehending subject have a single essence, and that a transforming continuum is not possible.

This is an extremely important point and demonstrates why the body of light is possible through either Dzogchen thögal or the path of the two stages.

Now, someone might object that it is inappropriate to cite the Kalacakra to clarify points in Dzogchen tantras, but then if this is so, then all great masters from Nubchen on down to Dudjom Rinpoche are at fault for using such tantras as the Mañjuśrīnamasamgiti to clarify Dzogchen.

Now, I am just a scholar, sharing with those who are interested my research. For many people it is annoying that I change my opinions, but I only have opinions based on what I know. Since I am not an enlightened person I can only understand what is said in the texts along with my own experience. Therefore, when my learning contradicts my earlier opinions, I change the latter immediately as soon as I have confirmed them mistaken. Such is the only honest path of real scholarship. Since I am not a person who can just accept what is told to me, my path is a bit more brutal and hard than most. But I consider that I am like a goldsmith, and it would be remiss of me not to rigorously test these texts that appear to shine like gold to see if they really are gold, merely gold-plated or fool's gold.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, February 16th, 2014 at 10:32 PM

Title: Re: Do you believe in ghosts?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Bhūtas, in reality, are a product of affliction that manifest as external spirits. They are formless, and according to Tibetan Medicine as well as the chöd traditiion, are a product of imputation. So they exist, but they exist primarily as imputations.

dzogchungpa said:

So they are not sentient beings?

Malcolm wrote:

They can be sentient beings, but they can only harm you if you have a negative karmic relation with them.

And, even we are just products of imputation, so our status as "sentient beings" is also somewhat questionable.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, February 17th, 2014 at 10:35 AM

Title: Re: Make Life Meaningless

Content:

smcj said:

In defense of Malcolm I'd like to point out that he is evidently presenting Dzogchen from ChNN's perspective. ChNN carries a lot of weight around here, and a lot of people who post here consider him their teacher. So it is entirely appropriate for Malcolm to clarify the teachings according to ChNN's perspective.

Malcolm wrote:

I am not clarifying anything from ChNN's perspective. I am clarifying it from my own, which is all we have anyway.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, February 17th, 2014 at 11:18 AM

Title: Re: Make Life Meaningless

Content:

gad rgyangs said:

you are forgetting that at the level of the basis there is no distinction between personal and universal. If you want to call the basis a quality shared by everything that arises you have merely coopted the term ususally used for the origin/ground of everything that arises and now you need a new term for that. unless of course you want to reify individuals as independent monads of some sort, which is basically svabhava.

Malcolm wrote:

Defining the basis as a sort of fabric out of which appearances arise does not solve the problem of individuated consciousnesses.

What is the basis in fact? The Dzogchen tantras describe this as "wisdom". This wisdom is said to have three aspects [rnam pa], original purity, its svabhāva; natural perfection, its prakṛiti; and compassion, the inseparability of the first two.

Even discussing wisdom as a the basis, even a nonsubstantiated basis as in Dzogchen does not make sense if that wisdom is not describing a noetic entity. Simplistic solutions like refusing to define it as one or many simply raise more questions than they answer.

There are two propositions:

B1, the basis as a transpersonal field out of which everything in samsara and nirvana is instantiated through its non-recognition.

B2 the basis is meant only to apply to any given sentient beings. Since this applies to all sentient being, here the basis is like fire, fire as light and heat as a quality, every instantiation of fire has light and heat. Likewise, every sentient beings shares common characteristics because they are sentient, they have consciousness.

Dante, your position is B1, and while I can understand how people are lead to accept B1 as the message of Dzogchen teachings, it is an exaggeration in my estimation.

Instead, I think B2 is the more proper understanding, based for example on Nyibum's remark that the basis is one's unfabricated mind. This is an authoritative citation that must be addressed and heeded. For example, the Mind Mirror of Vajrasattva states:

That is one's own basis but it was not recognized by oneself. The samsaric three realms are formed through delusion. [TSEP] Then, after the afflictions become more coarse, different forms of sentient beings emerge, deluded from the basis in that way."

This just means that each and every sentient being is deluded from their own basis; even though the basis is described in generic terms, it is not the case that all sentient beings ultimate share one basis. The basis is uniform in its nature, if you will, among all instantiations of sentient beings but each and every sentient being's basis is unique to that being. Since the Dzogchen tantras do describe wisdom as being a repository for traces, again we can try to explain this through B1 or B2.

In the B1 scenario, the basis would have to like a bank, where different people placed their traces, kind of like samsara accounts.

A B2 scenario is much simpler, since it is only means that since sentient beings did not recognize their own unfabricated minds, then they begin to develop the traces of action that produce our common karmic visions of the six realms. This is certainly the intent of Shabkar when he writes:

Therefore, since appearances are not fixed,  
whatever appears [appears] because of the power of traces.

And:

Therefore, everything is an appearance of the mind.  
Since everything is created by the concepts of the mind,  
in reality, all of the appearances of the mind are empty.

More importantly Shabkar states:

Self-originated primordial wisdom appearing as vidyā is also the mind...  
There are no appearances at all apart from the mind.

And:

This is the introduction that confirms the basis,  
the natural reality of the mind essence.

Compare these last two with Nyibum:

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 wisdom.

(Apologies for the last version, which was from an earlier unedited version by mistake)

My present position therefore, is B2, the basis is just the way a sentient being's consciousness [ shes pa rather than rnam par shes pa ] or mind [ sems, citta ] is talked about in Dzogchen texts prior to being afflicted for all the reasons I mentioned earlier.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, February 17th, 2014 at 10:01 PM

Title: Re: Make Life Meaningless

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Defining the basis as a sort of fabric out of which appearances arise does not solve the problem of individuated consciousnesses.

dzogchungpa said:

Honestly, does anything?

Malcolm wrote:

What is the basis in fact? The Dzogchen tantras describe this as "wisdom". This wisdom is said to have three aspects [rnam pa], original purity, its svabhāva; natural perfection, its prakṛiti; and compassion, the inseparability of the first two.

dzogchungpa said:

May I ask what Indic term corresponds to compassion in this case?

Malcolm wrote:

Abheda.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, February 17th, 2014 at 10:53 PM

Title: Re: Make Life Meaningless

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

B1, the basis as a transpersonal field out of which everything in samsara and nirvana is instantiated through its non-recognition.

gad rgyangs said:

the basis is not a field. its not an any-thing.

Malcolm wrote:

This is a faulty presentation of the basis, one of the six faulty positions about the basis described in the Six Dimensions of Samantabhadra Tantra, as well as others.

gad rgyangs said:

thats why it cannot contain traces, it would have to be some kind of existent locus for that.

Malcolm wrote:

Wisdom is suitable as a basis for traces, or so the Dzogchen texts tell us.

gad rgyangs said:

Even discussing wisdom as a the basis, even a nonsubstantiated basis as in Dzogchen does not make sense if that wisdom is not describing a noetic entity.  
then what is that wisdom?

Malcolm wrote:

A mind lacking fabrications.

gad rgyangs said:

the basis is just the way a sentient being's consciousness [ shes pa rather than rnam par shes pa ] or mind [ sems, citta ] is talked about in Dzogchen texts prior to being afflicted for all the reasons I mentioned earlier.  
ok, then whats the basis of that consciousness?

Malcolm wrote:

Ka dag or emptiness, the correct description of the basis according the the man ngag sde texts. But as pointed out in these same texts, the basis is not merely emptiness. It also has "wisdom" (ye shes), which is a kind of shes pa or sems, a primordial or pristine consciousness, as opposed to a rnam shes, an aspected consciousness that possesses concepts.

Basically, even though Dzogchen texts describe such a "beginning time", I personally don't believe that there is a start point ever. The description of such a start point is merely a literary device, much as Samantabhadra is a literary device.

The five elements are also included in wisdom, etc., so there is no contradiction between saying that the basis is wisdom, and the basis is empty. The problem comes only if one imagines that basis is somehow a unitary entity, a fabric, which provides the

basis for the arising of sentient beings and buddhas on an objective level. But if, as I have come to understand, it is not referring to an objective entity or context, then the basis is easily described as a set of general features which every noetic entity that we call "buddhas" or "sentient being" shares in common as an idealized "initial" set of conditions. The only difference between buddhas and sentient beings then is the extent to which they recognize this set of general features within their own continuums. Hence in this respect the so called original general basis merely describes an abstract set of qualities, but is not itself an instantiation of those qualities in any way. Those qualities are only instantiated in a sattva, a being. In this way the basis is not one, because it is instantiated individually; it is not many because it is a uniform set of qualities that are being instantiated across all beings.

This way, the general Buddhist dictum which extends all the way down to Vasubandhu's Kośabhaṣ (and clearly the authors of the Dzogchen tantras were familiar with it because they use the Kośa cosmology in such tantras as the Rigpa Rangshar), matter arises from mind/s. I.e. the order of the arising of matter presented in virtually all buddhist texts is:

Consciousness --> space --> air --> fire --> water --> earth.

In Dzogchen texts we see an analogous sequence: wisdom --> blue light --> green light --> red light --> white light -- yellow light; which when reified becomes the standard Buddhist sequence above. The only difference between the two sequences is that the former sequence occurs when the latter sequence is not recognized for being what it is, the display of a given being's own noetic capacity.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, February 17th, 2014 at 11:00 PM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

As far as I can see, Capitalism, a term invented by Marx, is here to stay.

Sherab Dorje said:

Nothing is here to stay. As I said earlier: the longest running political/social entity (the Byzantine Empire) only lasted a thousand years.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, and in Marxists terms it also had primitive accumulations of capital, and its primitive accumulations of capital were in turn taken over from Rome, etc., etc.

People and states have always accumulated capital and they always will, markets being markets. Governments have primarily existed for two reasons, to protect citizens and to stabilize markets, and they always will.



Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, February 18th, 2014 at 12:12 AM

Title: Re: Make Life Meaningless

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

[Instead, I think B2 is the more proper understanding, based for example on Nyibum's remark that the basis is one's unfabricated mind. This is an authoritative citation that must be addressed and heeded. For example, the Mind Mirror of Vajrasattva states:

M

ConradTree said:

You have previously argued the basis of Dzogchen is not even the unfabricated mind:

<https://www.dharmawheel.net/viewtopic.php?f=100&t=6459&hilit=basis+Mahamudra#p76393>

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, and I was also wrong.

But as pointed out in these same texts, the basis is not merely emptiness. It also has "wisdom" (ye shes), which is a kind of shes pa or sems, a primordial or pristine consciousness, as opposed to a rnam shes, an aspected consciousness that possesses concepts.

Yes this is called Advaita Vedanta.

No, since this ye shes is personal, never transpersonal, and at the time of the basis, is merely describing the mind (shes pa, sems) in a pre-afflictive state.

In Dzogchen texts we see an analogous sequence: wisdom --> blue light --> green light --> red light --> white light -- yellow light; which when reified becomes the standard Buddhist sequence above. The only difference between the two sequences is that the former sequence occurs when the latter sequence is not recognized for being what it is, the display of a given being's own noetic capacity.

If you are defining wisdom as pristine consciousness, then this a slight twist on Advaita Vedanta.

Tibetans translate jñāna as ye shes. That term "ye shes" is frequently translated as "pristine awareness" or "primordial wisdom", etc. I am saying that Dzogchen authors take this term very literally (a literalism criticized by people like Sakya Pandita) because they are taking this mode of shes pa (jñatā, jñānatā, parijñāna, etc.), which they describe as ye shes to mean that the original state (ye nas) of the mind (shes pa) is pre-afflictive, and Dzogchen is the path to recover that primordial state.

I am not saying that this consciousness is a universal plenum, like brahman, from which all beings arise; that is exactly the mistake I think most people fall into when studying Dzogchen, i.e. they wind up falling into an unintentional brahman trap.

Thus what I am saying is the basis is personal, not universal. Each's being has their own basis since they each have their own mind, the characteristics of the basis (essence, nature and compassion) are general, and apply to all minds, just as all candles on a

table are separate and unique, but all flames on those candles bear the same qualities, heat and light.

The fault that I suffered from was not seeing the fact that "rnam shes" (vijñāna), "shes rab" (prajñā), "ye shes" (jñāna), "shes pa"(jñatā) are all talking about one thing, different modalities of a single continuum from sentient being hood to Buddhahood, based on language in man ngag sde texts, reinforced very strongly by Longchenpa, which make a very hard distinction between sems (citta) and yeshe (jñāna) without recognizing the distinction is not in substance, but merely in mode i.e. afflicted/non-afflicted.

Let me add, that the way I see it now is that "rnam shes", consciousness, refers to the afflicted mind, "ye shes" refers to the unafflicted mind; and "shes pa" refers the a mind which is neutral, that can go either way depending on whether it is under the influence of vidyā or avidyā.

Really, I am not saying anything that is terribly controversial. I am recognizing that I was mislead by a distinction made by Longchenpa and others who, for didactic reasons, make a hard distinction between mind/consciousness and wisdom when what they are really doing is making a hard distinction between utterly afflicted minds and utterly pure minds, and providing a literary mythology (the universe arises out of the basis) to explain the separation of sentient beings and buddhas.

I have similarly come to the conclusion that the account of the basis arising out of the basis and the separation of samsara and nirvana at some imagined start point unimaginable eons ago is just a literary myth, and it does not need to be taken literally.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, February 18th, 2014 at 1:04 AM

Title: Re: Make Life Meaningless

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

May I ask what Indic term corresponds to compassion in this case?

Malcolm wrote:

Abheda.

dzogchungpa said:

OK, but why would that correspond to 'thugs rje'?

Malcolm wrote:

ka dag = śuddha

lhun grub =anābhoga/nirābhoga

thugs rje = karuna.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, February 18th, 2014 at 1:41 AM

Title: Re: Make Life Meaningless

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

ka dag = śuddha

lhun grub = anābhoga/nirābhoga

thugs rje = karuna.

dzogchungpa said:

OK, then why do 'karuna' and 'abheda' have the same meaning here, if that is what you are saying?

Malcolm wrote:

No, thugs rjes is often defined as the inseparability of ka dag and lhun grub.

Ngo bo/svabhāva, i.e. emptiness is the characteristic of ka dag/śuddha

Rang bzhin/prakṛti, i.e. clarity, is the characteristic of lhun grub/ anābhoga

Thugs rjes/karuna, i.e. compassion, is the characteristic inseparability/abheda of the former pair.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, February 18th, 2014 at 2:24 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

It sounds sometimes as if I am being accused of putting socialism in place of Buddhism, or accused of saying they are the same thing.

I am not.

Marxists don't claim to be pacifists, though I believe it is possible for a socialist transformation of society to come about peacefully and support such a peaceful transition.

The question isn't whether Marxism is better than Buddhism.... it is a question of whether Marxism is better than capitalism.

Malcolm wrote:

I see no evidence that it is.

tellyontellyon said:

Capitalism is a rampantly exploitative and violent system. Capitalists are most certainly not pacifists; it is a system that demands expansion and competition and leads inexorably to violence.

Malcolm wrote:

Every marxist revolution has ended in slaughter and terror.

tellyontellyon said:

I think Marx's analysis of capitalism is correct, and the chance of a peaceful transition is far more possible in the modern day. Even in the 19th century Marx saw some possibility of a peaceful transformation in the advanced countries. That possibility is much greater now.

Malcolm wrote:

I don't believe it, I think it is a utopian pipe dream.

tellyontellyon said:

But if you accept Marx's view that capitalism by it's very nature deprives people of their humanity and essentially robs them by forcing them to give up their labour below its true value, then you will accept there are consequences for allowing this system to continue.

Malcolm wrote:

I don't agree with any of these claims.

tellyontellyon said:

I say what we need is a little less sanctimonious preaching to the poor that they need to be more 'moral'; and a little more genuine moral behaviour: actually stepping outside of our golden palaces and actually doing something of benefit.

Malcolm wrote:

Buddhism is non-evangelical. But if someone asks me why, despite their best efforts to get ahead, what they need to do, and they want a Buddhist answer, I will give it to them: generate more merit. It may not ripen in this lifetime, but it will certainly ripen in future lives.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, February 18th, 2014 at 2:25 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

It sounds sometimes as if I am being accused of putting socialism in place of Buddhism, or accused of saying they are the same thing.

Malcolm wrote:

I don't think you ever said any such thing. But I think you know Marxism better than you know Buddhism. And that is sad.

tellyontellyon said:

it is a question of whether Marxism is better than capitalism.

Malcolm wrote:

I see no evidence that it is.

tellyontellyon said:

Capitalism is a rampantly exploitative and violent system. Capitalists are most certainly not pacifists; it is a system that demands expansion and competition and leads inexorably to violence.

Malcolm wrote:

Every marxist revolution has ended in slaughter and terror. The fact is that market economies function best when there is an absence of political and military conflict. The market therefore, has a vested interest in peace and social stability.

tellyontellyon said:

I think Marx's analysis of capitalism is correct, and the chance of a peaceful transition is far more possible in the modern day. Even in the 19th century Marx saw some possibility of a peaceful transformation in the advanced countries. That possibility is much greater now.

Malcolm wrote:

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tellyontellyon said:

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Malcolm wrote:

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tellyontellyon said:

I say what we need is a little less sanctimonious preaching to the poor that they need to be more 'moral'; and a little more genuine moral behaviour: actually stepping outside of our golden palaces and actually doing something of benefit.

Malcolm wrote:

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Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, February 18th, 2014 at 2:32 AM

Title: Re: Make Life Meaningless

Content:

ConradTree said:

Someone who finishes the dzogchen menngagde practices, sees the 5 lights everywhere they look.

Not pristine unfabricated mind.

Malcolm wrote:

They are the same thing.

And no, I was slightly mistaken before.

The reason people see the five lights everywhere they look is that they no longer have traces to reify the five elements as the five elements because their consciousness has become free of all traces of the two obscurations, i.e. with those removed, what remains is wisdom.

Of course, there is nothing substantial that is ever removed, from such a mind.

Then we gave this from the Rig pa rang shar:

Son of a good family, one must recognize the awareness [shes pa] free from grasping as one's own state.

Or the Rang grol:

A vidyā that performs actions does not exist  
in the essence of pure awareness.

Or the Mind Mirror of Samantabhadra has an interlinear note:

The nature of one's vidyā is light. Since kāyas are the gathered in the sphere of wisdom, the meaning of the view of Samantabhadra is realized. Further, there is vidyā and the wisdom that arises from vidyā. Further, vidyā that is free from extremes and beyond multiplicity does not transcend awareness (shes pa) and knowing (rig), endowed with a core of empty wisdom free from the extremes of things.

The Sun and Moon Tantra states:

At that time, that fortunate one

when the appearances are self-evident,  
the non-abiding awareness is called “natural”.

Anyway, there are too many references in various Dzogchen texts which state quite clearly that the basis is just one's mind. This is consistent with Buddhadharma. Other explanations are not.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, February 18th, 2014 at 2:37 AM

Title: Re: Make Life Meaningless

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

OK, thanks for the clarification. This is something I've been wondering about for a while. The specific reason I'm asking is because I'm reading "Treasury of Precious Qualities, Book Two", and in the translator's introduction they kind of make a big deal out of how to translate 'thugs rje' in this context. If you use Amazon's look inside feature here : <https://www.amazon.com/Treasury-Precious-Qualities-Book-Two/dp/1611800455> and look for the 'the third term' you can see what I'm referring to, on page xxviii. In that book they translate it as 'cognitive potency'.

pensum said:

I noticed their insistence on this point as well. However thugs rje is clearly the Tibetan translation of karuna as clearly stated by Mipham and many others. However in the context of Dzogchen, "compassion" takes on a subtle meaning, in that it refers to expressibility or the ability to manifest or appear. Tulku Ugyen explained it thus "Rigpa has a certain thugs rje. Thugs rje refers to the venue or the unobstructed medium for experience." Based on such explanations, one can readily see why Erik Pema Kunsang has opted to translate it as "capacity" rather than "compassion."

Malcolm wrote:

Nevertheless, the word primarily refers to how the nirmanakāya functions, hence "compassion".

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, February 18th, 2014 at 3:07 AM

Title: Re: Make Life Meaningless

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The reason people see the five lights everywhere they look

ConradTree said:

Stop right there. No need to go further.

This indicates the basis is the 5 lights.

checkmate.

Old Malcolm wins over new Malcolm.

Malcolm wrote:

The basis is not the five lights. The five lights are expressions of wisdom.

Those all just exist in one's mind, as Shabkar point out.

The basis is not something separate from you the person, and it is not some uniform transpersonal field. It is just your own mind and it's essence.

By the way I never thought the basis was a transpersonal field. But have become aware that many people interpret it as such, and therefore, I'm writing to correct this misapprehension.

In other words, Dzogchen teachings about the basis are actually "disappointingly" Buddhist and not so radical after all.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, February 18th, 2014 at 7:05 AM

Title: Re: Make Life Meaningless

Content:

gad rgyangs said:

if, instead of a basis as abgrund for all phenomena, you want to locate it in individual sentient beings' minds, then you're starting with a multiplicity. You are kind of saying that there is nothing that unifies all the sentient beings, each one is an island, self-contained with its own basis forever independent from the bases of all other sentient beings. At best this is substance svabhava, at worst it is simply crypto-materialism with minds as atoms.

Malcolm wrote:

If you say something unifies sentient beings, you're right back at a field theory.

gad rgyangs said:

as I said before you are positing sentient beings, but upon what?

Malcolm wrote:



Convention, what else?

gad rgyangs said:

you said "ka dag or emptiness" but either A) emptiness is a non-affirming negative, in which case you cannot posit consciousnesses on it or B) it is not a non-affirming negative, but it is a quality/nature, along with lhun sgrub and thugs je, describing the basis of all phenomena including, but not limited to, the minds of sentient beings.

Malcolm wrote:

Kadag is the emptiness of consciousness. It may be the emptiness of everything else as well, but given that all the elements which make up the universe and sentient beings arise from collective consciousnesses of sentient beings, there is not much point in talking about their emptiness. It is axiomatic that they are empty because they are established as mind.

The Introduction Tantra states Since all appearances are introduced as mind, gain mastery over the mind.

Since the mind essence was introduced as emptiness, emptiness is sealed by bliss. Since emptiness was introduced as vidyā, vidyā itself is the non-duality of the dhātu and wisdom.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, February 18th, 2014 at 8:06 PM

Title: Re: Water bowls...?

Content:

DiamondSutra said:

What do you think of drinking the water from water bowls?

Way better to put it outside in plants?

We eat the fruit after it's been offered, so why not the water too?

Ok to drink or not?

Malcolm wrote:

It is generally considered that you should discard it in a clean, unpolluted place. Also, you can water your plants with it.

In general, the fruit/food offerings should also be discarded in a the same kind of place.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, February 18th, 2014 at 8:16 PM

Title: Re: Śākyamuni's non-Indo-European heritage.

Content:

Zhen Li said:

than the Vedic/Upanisadic model, which is actually pretty deviant from the norm of human societies. Buddhist rajas are just regular rajas.

Malcolm wrote:

The Upanishad as well as the Vedas clearly uphold kingship as the ideal.

See Dumezil.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, February 18th, 2014 at 8:33 PM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

Sherab Dorje 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]
```

Malcolm wrote:

It sure took a lot of money for this dude to appear on Ted talk.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, February 18th, 2014 at 9:08 PM

Title: Re: short term monastic ordination in india ?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The best place to do retreat is in Western Europe or North America.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, February 18th, 2014 at 9:29 PM

Title: Re: Make Life Meaningless

Content:

smcj said:

the basis" is not simply your own mind (which would be what is usually called a Yogacaran interpretation)

Malcolm wrote:

The ālaya cause continuum (Sakya), the fundamental mind of luminosity (Gelug), "ground mahāmudra" (Kagyu) or the "basis" (Nyingma) all refer to the same thing, i.e., one's unfabricated mind. There is no contradiction between these positions and a position that holds that the basis is tathāgatagarbha. All of these are merely different ways of discussing tathāgatagarbha.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, February 18th, 2014 at 11:50 PM

Title: Re: Water bowls...?

Content:

Terma said:

does it really matter what we we do with it when it is time to get rid of it?

Terma

Malcolm wrote:

Would you eat the food off the plate or drink out of the cup of an honored guest? If no, then you have your answer.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, February 19th, 2014 at 12:51 AM

Title: Re: Make Life Meaningless

Content:

smcj said:

the basis" is not simply your own mind (which would be what is usually called a Yogacaran interpretation)

Malcolm wrote:

=

It is called Wisdom (Skt.: jnana) and also the dharmata. It is the essential reality of all things. It is said to be truly existent and not self-empty. As such it offends the sensibilities of people that get hysterical when the specter of brahman shows itself. As I already pointed out, wisdom is a noetic quality. It cannot be a noetic quality separate from our mind. It cannot be a singular noetic quality pervading all minds.

When the "mind" is completely purified of all taints, it is called "wisdom" (jñāna) When it is with taints it is called consciousness (vijñāna).

If we follow what you are saying, there is no hope at all of finding Buddhahood within our own minds, since buddhahood and wisdom would be extraneous to our continuums. If we are to find buddhahood within our own minds, as hundreds of texts recommend, then we have to discover that buddhahood in the essence of our own minds. That is not transpersonal.

Even gzhan stong does not presuppose a brahman like entity. They are merely stating that the three kāyas are the inherent in the nature of the mind. For example, Dolbupa, arguable the founder of gshan stong terms the tathāgatagarbhe the ālaya, the all-basis. He says too, [Hopkins, 2006, pg. 65] "Similarly the Glorious Hevajra Tantra also says that the natural clear light mind that resides in all sentient beings is buddha..." And on page 106 he says "

...Bhavya's "Lamp for (Nāgārjuna's) Wisdom" if the middle way:  
It consciousness,  
clear light, nirvana,  
All-emptiness, and body of attributes.

[The term] "consciousness" on this occasion is in consideration of the consciousness of the noumenon and pure consciousness because it is used as a synonym for the clearly body of attributes."

On 120 he says:

If the matrix-of-the-one-gone-bliss did not exist in fact, it would incur the irreversible fallacy of contradicting the statement in the Descent to Lankā Sūtra that the mind beyond logic, the essence of the ultimate 12 grounds, natural clear light, buddha-matrix, natural virtue, basis free from all positions, final source of refuge, and exalted buddha wisdom is the matrix-of-one-gone-bliss.

So you can see, the term below "one's unfabricated mind" has exactly the same meaning and for this reason I maintain that the view of the basis proposed in Sakya, Kagyu, Gelug, Nyingma and Jonang are the same, even though they describe it differently, from different angles and with different terminology. The meaning and the subject of discussion however is the same.

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 wisdom.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, February 19th, 2014 at 12:57 AM

Title: Re: Make Life Meaningless

Content:

gad rgyangs said:

3) the appearances of the basis consist of all phenomena of samsara and nirvana, including "sentient beings" and their "minds":

Malcolm wrote:

The tantra is describing the basis in abstract general terms, not as an instantiated entity which has a function. Therefore, the basis is not transpersonal in manner in which you have previously suggested.

gad rgyangs said:

The "Illuminating Lamp" says:

"From within this indeterminate spontaneous presence  
There is a manifestation-process of varied plurality,  
And its unceasing play accomplishes everything and anything,  
As it shines forth everywhere in any way;  
In its indeterminacy, there is a plurality of appearances"

so yes, the basis of the mind of a sentient being is the same basis as the basis of all phenomena of samsara and nirvana: the basis beyond all words and categories.

Malcolm wrote:

Nyibum who is an authority on this subject, could not be clearer. The basis is just one's unfabricated mind. That is the basis for all samsara and nirvana. In Sakya it is called the all-basis cause continuum, in Kagyu, ground mahāmudra, in Gelug, the mind of clear light and in Jonang, tathāgatagarbha.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, February 19th, 2014 at 1:01 AM

Title: Re: Make Life Meaningless

Content:

gad rgyangs said:

3) the appearances of the basis consist of all phenomena of samsara and nirvana, including "sentient beings" and their "minds":

Malcolm wrote:

"All phenomena" simply means one skandha, one āyatana and one dhātu e.g. rūpaskandha, mano-āyatana and the dharmadhātu.

And as I pointed, even the container universe arises from consciousnesses according to Buddhism through their collective activity. Dzogchen is just another way of describing this insight which is found even in Abhidharma (of which Dzogchen is a self-described part).

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, February 19th, 2014 at 1:11 AM

Title: Re: Make Life Meaningless

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Nyibum who is an authority on this subject, could not be clearer. The basis is just one's unfabricated mind.

gad rgyangs said:

Either Nyibum is saying the same thing as all the thousands of Dzogchen Tantras and commentaries, or he is contradicting them. If he's saying the same thing, then what's the controversy? If he's contradicting them, then trying to uphold the eccentric view of one dude against the entire tradition is a little crazy.

Malcolm wrote:

I doubt you can consider Nyibums view eccentric in the least, as he is one of the most important Nyinthig lineage masters, his book, from which this quote was drawn, was repurposed word for word into a treasure revelation that forms a major text in the Gongpa Zangthal cycle. In the Gongpa Zangthal, this work is presented as the work of Vimalamitra, not Nyibum.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, February 19th, 2014 at 1:13 AM

Title: Re: Make Life Meaningless

Content:

smcj said:

Isn't the definitive view of Karma Kagyu the view of Mahamudra?

Mahamudra is a practice. Shentong is a view.

BTW I know of western Mahamudra practitioners that have never studied Madhyamaka or Shentong. Mahamudra is something you do, not just think or talk about.

Malcolm wrote:

Mahāmudra has a view (ground mahāmudra), it has a path (path mahāmudra) and it has a result (result mahāmudra).

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, February 19th, 2014 at 1:17 AM

Title: Re: Make Life Meaningless

Content:

gad rgyangs said:

ok, so then he's presenting the exact same view as all the Tantras and commentaries?

Malcolm wrote:

As the son of the Zhang ston Tashi Dorje, the tertön who revealed the Vima Nyinthig, I doubt his authority can be questioned.

His book, the eleven topics of Dzogchen, is the basis of Longchenpa's larger work, from which Longchenpa pinches entire passages without attribution. I know this because while I translating the GZ recension of this work, I read it carefully side by side the Tshig Don mDzod.

So, I think it is safe to say that if Nyibum is the main lineage holder of Nyinthig (he is) after his father, his views ought to have considerable weight.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, February 19th, 2014 at 1:19 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

It sure took a lot of money for this dude to appear on Ted talk.

Sherab Dorje said:

Funny that, given we live in a capitalist system.

Malcolm wrote:

You will never escape the markets greg, not in your lifetime.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, February 19th, 2014 at 1:28 AM

Title: Re: Make Life Meaningless

Content:

gad rgyangs said:

ok, so then he's presenting the exact same view as all the Tantras and commentaries?

Malcolm wrote:

As the son of the Zhang ston Tashi Dorje, the tertön who revealed the Vima Nyinthig, I doubt his authority can be questioned.

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So, I think it is safe to say that if Nyibum is the main lineage holder of Nyinthig (he is) after his father, his views ought to have considerable weight.

gad rgyangs said:

so I assume he's upholding the views of all the main Dzogchen Tantras?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes. Longchenpa's book TDD, uses virtually all of the same citations Nyibum presents, but also many more, as well since the former's is three times as long (mostly citations, not so much longer in terms of actual explanations).

So here, you see in one place, Nyibum states the basis is unfabricated mind, in another place, he states the definitive view about that basis is ka dag.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, February 19th, 2014 at 1:31 AM

Title: Re: Make Life Meaningless

Content:

gad rgyangs said:

ok, so then he's presenting the exact same view as all the Tantras and commentaries?

Malcolm wrote:

As the son of the Zhang ston Tashi Dorje, the tertön who revealed the Vima Nyinthig, I doubt his authority can be questioned.

His book, the eleven topics of Dzogchen, is the basis of Longchenpa's larger work, from which Longchenpa pinches entire passages without attribution. I know this because while I translating the GZ recension of this work, I read it carefully side by side the Tshig Don mDzod.

So, I think it is safe to say that if Nyibum is the main lineage holder of Nyinthig (he is) after his father, his views ought to have considerable weight.

smcj said:

Dudjom R. subscribed to the "Great Madhyamaka"/empty-of-other view. As the nominal "head of the Nyingma Lineage" in the 2nd half of the 20th century his views ought to have considerable weight also.

Malcolm wrote:

As I explained to you before, all schools consider their Madhyamaka "great", so that is just a sectarian jibe. Having said that, yes Dudjom R was indeed a proponent of gzhan stong following Kongtrul. On the other hand, Khenpo Zhanga, one of most influential commentators on these topics and the author of the 13 texts system of education at Dzogchen Monastery and so on, was definitely not a gzhan stong pa, nor for that matter was Mipham.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, February 19th, 2014 at 1:32 AM

Title: Re: Make Life Meaningless

Content:

conebeckham said:

This, and the extensive Dzogchen discussion, really are tangential to the thread, though, I think.....



Malcolm wrote:

People always want to argue with me about Dzogchen no matter what thread I am in and no matter what I say.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, February 19th, 2014 at 2:01 AM

Title: Re: Water bowls...?

Content:

Terma said:

does it really matter what we we do with it when it is time to get rid of it?

Terma

Malcolm wrote:

Would you eat the food off the plate or drink out of the cup of an honored guest? If no, then you have your answer.

Sherab Dorje said:

After they had finished? Can't see why I shouldn't/wouldn't!

Malcolm wrote:

Barbarian.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, February 19th, 2014 at 2:09 AM

Title: Re: Water bowls...?

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

]After they had finished? Can't see why I shouldn't/wouldn't!

Malcolm wrote:

Barbarian.

Sherab Dorje said:

"Barbarian" is a Greek term:

"The term originates from the Greek word βάρβαρος (barbaros). Hence the Greek idiom "πᾶς μὴ Ἑλλήν βάρβαρος" (pas mē Hellēn barbaros) which literally means "whoever is not Greek is a barbarian"." So it seems that the shoe fits the other foot!

Malcolm wrote:

Cretan.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, February 19th, 2014 at 2:26 AM

Title: Re: Water bowls...?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Cretan.

Sherab Dorje said:

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lesbos>, actually!

Malcolm wrote:

Howard Sterns would love it.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, February 19th, 2014 at 2:56 AM

Title: Re: Make Life Meaningless

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

I think I've figured it out! Arguing about Dzogchen IS the meaning of life.

Malcolm wrote:

NOW it all makes sense.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, February 19th, 2014 at 3:58 AM

Title: Re: Śākyamuni's non-Indo-European heritage.

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The Upanishad as well as the Vedas clearly uphold kingship as the ideal.

Zhen Li said:

The ideal for kings is dandaniti. That doesn't mean they view kingship as superior in authority to that of brahmins. Actually in practice most kings didn't really use brahmins in the ideal manner, they'd have them at court for legitimation, not for instruction in Dharma. Buddhism holds that the Brahmin can only exist in society once the king has ordered it, whereas the Brahmanical texts hold that the Brahmin was established as supreme being born from the head of Brahma, a view the Buddhists refute.

Malcolm wrote:

It is clearly states in the early Upanishads that only the ksatriyas knew the meaning of the Vedas, of which Brahmins were ignorant.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, February 19th, 2014 at 6:21 AM

Title: Re: Water bowls...?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

In any case, the point is that any offerings apart from a ganapuja should be discarded in a clean place, and not reserved for personal consumption.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, February 19th, 2014 at 8:12 PM

Title: Re: What tibetan buddhist traditions these people belong?

Content:

pensum said:

His main teacher however was Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche who as an incarnation of Jamyang Khyenste Chokyi Lodro is formally Sakya...

Malcolm wrote:

You mean incarnation of Khyentse Wangpo, who, while being nonsectarian, was definitely Sakyapa, a member of the Ngor school, traditionally patronized by the King of Derge. The Derge region of Kham may have been a hotbed of Nyingma activity, but it's spine is Sakya through and through.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, February 19th, 2014 at 10:13 PM

Title: Re: What tibetan buddhist traditions these people belong?

Content:

fabrc said:

I would like to know what tibetan buddhist traditions Alan Wallace and Matthieu Ricard belong?

Thanks!

theanarchist said:

Mathieu Ricard is a disciple of Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche. So Nyingma.

pensum said:

His main teacher however was Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche who as an incarnation of Jamyang Khyenste Chokyi Lodro is formally Sakya...

Malcolm wrote:

You mean incarnation of Khyentse Wangpo, who, while being nonsectarian, was definitely Sakyapa, a member of the Ngor school, traditionally patronized by the King of Derge. The Derge region of Kham may have been a hotbed of Nyingma activity, but it's

spine is Sakya through and through.

theanarchist said:

Haha, Khyentse Wangpo was a terton and all terton are incarnations of the disciples of Guru Rinpoche and the terma are the teachings of Guru Rinpoche. You can't become more Nyingma than that, even if you also additionally hold a sarma tradition..

Malcolm wrote:

Khyentse Wangpo is most definitely a Sakyapa, there is really no doubt about it. His main practice was Hevajra from the Lamdre. The vast majority of his work involved collating all the Sakyapa teachings in to two collections, the rgyud sde kun 'dus and the sgrub thabs kun 'dus. He was a member of the Ngor subschool of Sakya.

If you examine his education, training and practice, you will discover that he grew out of the Sakya school. All his main tutors were Sakyapas such as the Thartse Khenchen, and so on. His monastery is and remains a Sakya monastery. For example he received his name and later his monastic vows from the latter master.

While it is true that he was an very important terton, the emanations of Guru Rinpoche's disciples is not confined to one school, be it Nyingma (which is really just a gsar ma school too), Sakya, Gelug or the many branches of Kagyu. Emanations of Guru Rinpoche and his disciples are considered to have appeared in all of these schools.

In the end, we must conclude that Khyentse Wangpo was a Sakya pa, as any measure of his literary output will definitely show.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, February 19th, 2014 at 10:29 PM

Title: Re: What tibetan buddhist traditions these people belong?

Content:

michaelb said:

Jamyang Khyentse was also the mind incarnation of Jigme Lingpa Khyentse Ozer. Dzongsar is, of course, a Sakya gompas.

Malcolm wrote:

And the incarnation of several past Sakya masters, such as Jetsun Dragpa Gyaltsen, Lodro Gyaltsan, Khyenrab Je of Shwalu, Khyentse Wangchuk, the main disciple of Tsarchen, as well as Jampa Namkhai Chime, the 44th throne holder of Ngor and a younger contemporary of Jigme Lingpa.

Not to mention, Manushrimitra, Trisrong Detsen, Longchenpa, Gendun Drup, the "second Dalai Lama", Thangthong Gyalpo as well as Jigme Lingpa.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, February 19th, 2014 at 11:41 PM

Title: Re: What tibetan buddhist traditions these people belong?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

To further illustrate my point about Khyentse Wangpo being a Sakyapa. In his short verse biography of Khyenste Wangpo, Mipham writes:

His own awakening was  
in all the intimate instructions  
and textual systems  
of the sublime discourses of the five founders,  
and the father and sons of Ngor,  
Gongkar and Tshar.

If this does not define Kyentse Wangpo as Sakyapa, I don't know what else would.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, February 20th, 2014 at 1:18 AM

Title: Re: What tibetan buddhist traditions these people belong?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

If this does not define Kyentse Wangpo as Sakyapa, I don't know what else would.

mutsuk said:

Oh, he is indeed a Sakyapa. His non-sectarian approach was such that he also received numerous Bonpo transmissions and wrote a biography of Guru Rinpoche in the mode of the Bon-gsar tradition (together with his Bonpo tertön name, etc.). He was also a great fan of Dechen Lingpa's Collected Works and urged him to reveal several important termas. He also financed (at a time when it would mean cutting a whole forest to print xylographic works) Dechen Lingpa's collected Termas in 13 volumes which are all Bon-gsar. Khyentse was indeed an amazing individual.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, and if anyone doubts the profundity and blessings of the teachings of the Sakya school, they should take a lesson from this, since Kongtrul considered Khyentse Wangpo to be a person who had achieved total Buddhahood.

His activities as a tertön were compassionate, but not the basis of his own personal awakening, ironically, despite his importance in Dzogchen lineages.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, February 20th, 2014 at 1:26 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

And let's not forget Leo Tolstoy. L.N.Tolstoy.jpg

"His literal interpretation of the ethical teachings of Jesus, centering on the Sermon on the Mount, caused him in later life to become a fervent Christian anarchist and anarcho-pacifist. His ideas on nonviolent resistance, expressed in such works as *The Kingdom of God Is Within You*, were to have a profound impact on such pivotal twentieth-century figures as Mohandas Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr."

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Leo\\_Tolstoy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Leo_Tolstoy)

Malcolm wrote:

This kind of anarchist may not recognize any political authority, but they nevertheless live in a political world. From my point of view, they are basically utopians. They may be admirable, indeed, but they are not important for their political voice, they are important for their philosophical voice, much in the same way that deep ecology/ecosophy is important as an environmental philosophy but not important as a political or social movement (much to the dissatisfaction of other environmental philosophers who come mainly from the left, like Bookchin and so on,)

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, February 20th, 2014 at 1:29 AM

Title: Re: What tibetan buddhist traditions these people belong?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

His activities as a tertön were compassionate, but not the basis of his own personal awakening, ironically, despite his importance in Dzogchen lineages.

theanarchist said:

Erm, according to the Nyingma records his predecessor achieved realisation before there even was even a Sakya school in Tibet....

Malcolm wrote:

I recounted a list of his incarnations above, as recorded by Kongtrul. I recounted the account of his personal awakening, as recounted by Ju Mipham. You cannot get much more authoritative than that.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, February 20th, 2014 at 1:49 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

Z.L.

I'm not sure about this 'Dharma is eternal law' statement....

Is anything eternal?

And by Dharma, do we mean precepts? The Vinaya?

In what sense are you using the term Dharma? How are you defining it? Can it be defined?

What exactly is it that you say is eternal?

Malcolm wrote:

Dharma is definitely "eternal" in that the principles of karma, dependent origination, emptiness and buddhanature always apply to all sentient beings in every possible universe.

When a Buddha awakens, he always awakens to these four principles.

It does not mean that Shakyamuni's dispensation is eternal; on the contrary, it is impermanent and will disappear some three thousand years hence.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, February 20th, 2014 at 2:34 AM

Title: HHDL on capitalism

Content:

Unknown said:

I am, in principle, in favor of "globalization" and the concept of "global" companies. In the past, communities and countries could live in isolation if they wanted to; that is no longer the case. Today, a stock-market crash on one side of the globe has a direct and immediate effect on the other side. Terrorism born in one country can destabilize a dozen others. And the effects of poverty, disease, and social unrest in a handful of nations impact the rest of the world. It is my opinion that global companies can be agents for positive change in our interconnected world.

Another positive result of globalization is increasing competition. Competition generates a very powerful force to produce what people want at reasonable prices. But it is a means; it is not an end. The end is to generate benefits for all. So why is it so difficult to arrive at fair competition and an equitable distribution of those benefits? Competition generates wealth. But if leaders of businesses are interested only in enriching themselves as fast as possible, with little or no regard for any harmful consequences to others, then competition is being used in the wrong way.

For much of my life, I was attracted to the socialist or communist system because I understood its objective as to provide a decent standard of living and justice for all. I was drawn to it for its equality; in such a system, extreme differences in standards of living between people are not to be tolerated. The stated objectives of socialist systems include abolishing poverty and furthering the brotherhood among people and among countries, which I, of course, found very appealing. But over time, I found out that the countries that practiced the communist system did not reach this objective; they did not even try to. On the contrary, I found that by suppressing free markets and individual freedoms like freedom of speech and freedom to own property, these systems were actually stagnating development and furthering poverty and hardship. Although I still

believe that the initial objective was right, I have come to see the flaws in such a system. It was not initially obvious to me that the abolition of private ownership would lead to ownership by the state, with a party elite in charge who would then institute their own restrictive command-and-control system and rule as an elite, like the aristocracies in the past. Of course, we now know this led to many human rights abuses.

It is through this process of listening and observing that I have come to put my faith in the free-market system. Although it has great potential for abuses as well, the fact that it allows for freedom and diversity of thought and religion has convinced me that it is the one we should be working from. Of course, I still believe we should strive for an adequate standard of living for all rather than the “survival of the fittest” position that the free market often follows. The recent developments in China demonstrate how even small movements toward a free-market system can boost economic development and help lift people out of poverty. But of course, in the case of China there is still much work to be done.

Adam Smith refers to the development of moral sense as imagining oneself in the position of others. That is what we refer to as “exchanging self for others.” Unfortunately, Adam Smith did not stress sufficiently the need of people to train in imagining themselves in the position of others. Even though he had a keen interest in and insight into moral issues, Smith believed that competition and regulation could lead to prosperity for all. But I believe that Right View and Right Conduct are also necessary. Without considering the impact of one’s decisions on others, it is not possible for regulation and competition alone to result in a decent standard of living for all. Adam Smith and other economists have concerned themselves with the generation of wealth, but they do not provide any guidance on the distribution of wealth. Karl Marx, on the other hand, looked at this the other way around. He was only interested in the distribution of wealth, not in how to generate it. In my view, both the proper creation of wealth and the proper distribution of it are very important. In order to reach such goals, one requires the right policies and the application of Right View and Right Conduct. All human beings, whatever their cultural or historical background, suffer when they are intimidated, imprisoned, or tortured. It is not enough to define human rights as the United Nations has done; they must also be implemented. Rights depend on responsible action. This is why I put so much emphasis on the word “responsible” when I advocate responsible free-market economy.

Even though Adam Smith was concerned with the moral dimensions of the economic system, many of his successors ignored that aspect. I consider an economic system without a moral dimension to be dangerous. That is why I want to add the dimension of “responsibility” to “free market.” I agree with the concept of freedom advocated by Smith and Hayek but feel it does not take us far enough.

Globalization is a positive development as long as leaders of global corporations act responsibly and develop a holistic view of their role in society. And since organizations are also dependent on governments to act in a responsible manner, businesses should work constructively with governments to achieve a responsible free-market economy and reject an economic system without moral values.

Capital is a means, not an end. The end is freedom and prosperity for all. This can best be reached by a free-market system in which all participants act responsibly. In my way of thinking, integrating capitalism and Buddhism happens when Right View and Right Conduct become an integral part of the economic system. I see the word “responsible”



in this context as standing for Right View and Right Conduct and therefore hope that the words “responsible free-market economy” will come to replace the words “capitalist system.”

Malcolm wrote:

The Leader's Way: The Art of Making the Right Decisions in Our Careers, Our Companies, and the World at Large. Crown Publishing Group. Kindle Edition.

HHDL say many more things, and his position is more nuanced than the citations I have posted might lead one to believe. But it quite clear he has abandoned his "Marxism" in favor of a free market style political economy.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, February 20th, 2014 at 3:24 AM

Title: Re: What tibetan buddhist traditions these people belong?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

His activities as a terton were compassionate, but not the basis of his own personal awakening, ironically, despite his importance in Dzogchen lineages.

theanarchist said:

Erm, according to the Nyingma records his predecessor achieved realisation before there even was even a Sakya school in Tibet....

Malcolm wrote:

It is important to remember that Khyentse Wangpo was a Sakya lama whose primary ritual and literary activity was dedicated to that tradition and while he worked closely with the Kagyu Jamgon Kongtrul and the Nyingma Chogyur Lingpa, neither he nor his colleagues made any effort to merge traditions or initiate a new teaching institution.  
<http://www.himalayanart.org/search/set.cfm?setid=2250>

Likewise, despite the fact that I have devoted as many years to the study of Dzogchen as I have Lamdre and so on, people still tend to think of me as a Sakyapa and my training grounds me in that school. And when push comes to shove, I still think Sakya Pandita was Tibet's greatest scholar.

It is also interesting to note that at the end of Dilgo Khyentse's life, when he was repairing Samye, he kept on having recurrent visions of Sakya Pandita which led to a Guru Yoga terma featuring Sakya Pandita that has an outer, inner and secret aspect to it.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, February 20th, 2014 at 3:29 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

Zhen Li said:

Sadhu! Sadhu!

HHDL and I went through the same line of reasoning in life.

I also agree with him that Socialists fundamentally are just well intentioned, they just want to make things better for everyone by bringing equality. It just doesn't work, and leads to more suffering. That's unfortunate and makes me feel an immense welling up of compassion in my heart whenever I meet someone who is a socialist - they really think they're doing something good and right for the world, which is admirable, even if they are naive.

May all socialists and communists be well, happy and peaceful.

Malcolm wrote:

Personally, I have been a religious monarchist since I received teachings from HH Sakya Trizin (from the Khon, the oldest surviving royal family in the world), but more or less a supporter of representative democracy my whole life. I had a good friend who was a Trot, and listening to TOTO is just like playing a conversation with him from thirty years ago, identical in both word and fervor.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, February 20th, 2014 at 3:53 AM

Title: Re: Why theravada reject mahayana sutra

Content:

Kunga said:

Tibetans teach all 3 yanas, and ideally should practice all 3 - i.e., keep the outer conduct of the hinayana, possess the motivation of Mahayana to achieve buddahood to free sentient beings, and hold the view / practice the methods as contained in Vajrayana.

Ajahn Brahm is not a 'disgraced' teacher by any stretch of the imagination. He decided to ordain Bhikkhunis, which caused a stir with the patriarchs of the Thai sangha. I admire him for having had the balls to do it. However, the Sri Lankans have been doing this for years; the Thais don't accept this either - so what? To try and cast aspersions on a very senior monk whom many regard as accomplished in jhana meditation is very negative.

Malcolm wrote:

Gorampa Sonam Senge wouldn't buy it. This is why he argued against giving Gelongma ordinations in Tibet, i.e. the lineage was never brought to Tibet.

Just sayin...

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Thursday, February 20th, 2014 at 4:05 AM  
Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism  
Content:

AilurusFulgens said:  
I don't want to sidetrack the thread, but may I ask what makes the Khon royal family the oldest surviving in the world?

Why Khon and not for instance the Japanese imperial family or some other royal lineage?

Malcolm wrote:  
Well, second oldest then. Though arguably, since the Khon family were the direct descendants of a god of the clear light realm who was elevated to kingship by the clans of Tibet, but this is not historical.

The ascension of the Khon to rulership of Tibet occurred in the thirteenth century. Apart from the Japanese royal family, I personally know of no other family with such a long continuous rule in one place.

M

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Thursday, February 20th, 2014 at 4:15 AM  
Title: Re: What tibetan buddhist traditions these people belong?  
Content:

Kunga said:  
Fascinating, thanks! I had no idea about that. Can the sadhana/s be found in Khentse Rinpoche's published collected works? If so, I will ask for the transmission for this at Sechen gumpa.

Malcolm wrote:  
bkra shis dpal 'byor. "chos rje sa skya paN+Di ta'i bla ma'i rnal 'byor ye shes bdud rtsi'i nyin byed/." In gsung 'bum/\_rab gsal zla ba. TBRC W21809. 17: 585 - 596. delhi: shechen publications, 1994.  
[http://tbrc.org/link?RID=O2DB57601%7CO2DB576012DB61746\\$W21809](http://tbrc.org/link?RID=O2DB57601%7CO2DB576012DB61746$W21809)

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Thursday, February 20th, 2014 at 4:37 AM  
Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism  
Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Personally, I have been a religious monarchist since ...

ground said:

We would fight against each other in a revolutionary civil war ...

Malcolm wrote:

What I mean is that my first guru HHST, is a dharmarāja. As is Chogyal Namkhai Norbu, for that matter.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, February 20th, 2014 at 4:47 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

AilurusFulgens said:

Thank you for the clarification. Where is it possible to find more information on the Khon royal family? Especially them being descendant of a god of the clear light realm?

Can you also go a bit in detail concerning this?

I have always been fascinated by the stories how the very first Tibetan king did not die, but ascended back to heaven on a heavenly rope (dmu-theg).

Malcolm wrote:

This is an extract from a history of Sakya that I wrote for Lama Migmar Tseten which appears in Treasures of the Sakya Lineage published by Shambhala.

The Khon trace their origin to a class of gods called Wosel Lha, gods of luminous clarity. The Annals of the Khon Lineage (gdung rabs), cites the fifteenth century author, Ngorchon Kunchog Lhundrup: The line of emanations of Mañjuśrī, The Glorious Sakyapa, begins in the country of the Gods of Luminous Clarity. There were three brothers, Chiring, Yuring, and Yuse. Yuse, having been made a king of humans, bore four sons. His elder brother, Yuring, came to his aid. The sons of Yuring and Muza Dembu were the group of the seven Maza. The six oldest brothers with their father returned to the land of the gods. The youngest son, Masang Chije and Thogcham Wurmo bore a son, Pawo Tag. Both he and his Naga wife, Trama, bore a son called Lutsa Tagpo Woechan. Lutsa and the Mon lady Tsomo Gyal while living together bore a son

at the divide between slate and grass,  
and so he was named Yapang Kyes,  
a hero that could not be defeated by others.

In a definitive sense Mañjuśrī is held to have emanated as three gods of luminous clarity, the gods named Chiring, Yuring and Yuse or Use in order to benefit others. It is of great importance too that these gods are considered emanations of Mañjuśrī, since all males of the Khon line are considered to be descendents as well as emanations of the Bodhisattva Mañjuśrī.

These three brothers descended to the human realm where they were asked to become the ruler of human beings.

The youngest brother of the gods, Yuse, was elevated to the position of the ruler. He himself bore four sons, known as the four Se Chi Li brothers. Together they fought with the eighteen major tribes of the Dong, one of the four original clans of Tibet. The middle brother, Yuring, came to aid them, and after the Dong clan was subjugated, The Dong were made vassals.

Yuring himself married a daughter of the Mu, Muza Dembu, and they bore the seven Masang brothers. Of those seven, the eldest six returned to the country of the Gods with their father.

The youngest of the Masang brothers, Masang Chije, remained among human beings. He married Thogcham Wurmo, the daughter of the Thoglha Woedchan, they bore a son known as Thogtsad Bangpo Tag.

Thogtsad married Lucham Drama, the daughter of a Nāgā, to whom a son named Lutsa Tagpo Woechan was born.

Lutsa and a Mon lady, Tsomo Gyal were married and their single son was born on the treeline, thus he was given that name Yahpang Kyes i.e. “Born at the divide between slate and grass” i.e. on the tree line of a mountain. The significance of this is that according to the Tibetan conception of cosmology, the gods live in the heights of the mountains above the tree line, while human beings live below the treeline.

The Khon in the Tibetan Imperial Period:

Konchog Lhundrup continues his account: Then having slain the Srinpo named Kyareng Khragmey and

having stolen the wife, Yahdrum Silima  
he married her.

They had a son named Khonpar Kye.

The son of he [Khonpar Kye] and a Lady of the Tsan, Chambu Dron  
was handsome and smart, rare in the human lands,  
named Khonpa Jegung Tag,

he was known as Khonton Palpoche, who went to Nyantse.

Yahpang was engaged in a fight with a Srinpo named Kyareng Khragmed, and having slain this Srinpo, married his wife. Because their boy was born as the outcome of a feud between the gods [lha] and demons [srin po], the boy was named “Born in a Feud”, “Khon par kyes”, and this is given as the origin of the clan name of the Khon.

Khonpar Kye, the offspring of gods, humans and demons, married a lady of a type of a lesser Tibetan god, the Tsan, called Chambu Dron, and their son was known as Khonton Palpoche, i.e. the Khon Teacher who Increases Wealth. He gained his name because after being appointed one of the inner ministers of King Trisrong Detsan’s court, he increased the King’s wealth.

Khonton Palpoche married Lang Zang Nechung , the sister of a translator named Lang Khampa, and while there are slightly varying accounts as to whether there were two or four sons, most later scholars follow the tradition that there were two sons, the elder being the great scholar, the Khon Lotsawa, Lu'i Wangpo, and the younger son, Khon Dorje Rinchen. Jetsun Dragpa Gyaltsen notes in his Annals of the Khon Lineage ['khon gyi gdung rabs]:

“Khon Lu'i Wangpo Srungs was the foremost of the seven tested men. His younger brother Khon Dorje Rinchen became a disciple of Master Padmasambhava and became a tantrika.”

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, February 20th, 2014 at 4:59 AM

Title: Re: What tibetan buddhist traditions these people belong?

Content:

Kunga said:

Fascinating, thanks! I had no idea about that. Can the sadhana/s be found in Khentse Rinpoche's published collected works? If so, I will ask for the transmission for this at Sechen gumpa.

Malcolm wrote:

bkra shis dpal 'byor. "chos rje sa skya paN+Di ta'i bla ma'i rnal 'byor ye shes bdud rtsi'i nyin byed/." In gsung 'bum/\_rab gsal zla ba. TBRC W21809. 17: 585 - 596. delhi: shechen publications, 1994.

[http://tbrc.org/link?RID=O2DB57601%7CO2DB576012DB61746\\$W21809](http://tbrc.org/link?RID=O2DB57601%7CO2DB576012DB61746$W21809)

Kunga said:

Thanks so much

Malcolm wrote:

The outer practice is basically a version of the normal Sapan guruyoga. The inner practice is Sapan as Manjushri surrounded by eight Indian Panditas: Aryadeva, Gunaprabha, Vasubandhu, Asanga, Candrakirti, Dharmakirti, Dignaga and Śakyaprabha with Nāgārjuna as the master of the family. The secret practice is Sapan as Vajrabhairava.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, February 20th, 2014 at 5:30 AM

Title: Re: What tibetan buddhist traditions these people belong?

Content:

Kunga said:

Thanks again, Malcolm. Much appreciated!

Malcolm wrote:

Incidentally you might note that the retinue is two Madhyamakas, Two Yogacarins, Two Vinayadharas and Two Logicians.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, February 20th, 2014 at 5:57 AM

Title: Re: What tibetan buddhist traditions these people belong?

Content:

michaelb said:

But Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche was undoubtedly Nyingma.

Malcolm wrote:

Try telling that to some Sakyapas. Actually, Tulku Rabsal Dawa was also considered a Sakyapa Tulku and he maintained a life long practice commitment to all the main Sakya practices.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, February 20th, 2014 at 6:19 AM

Title: Re: HHDL on capitalism

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

And who says that I, for example, care what HHDL's political view may be? His Dharma teachings? Yes! His politics? Well...

Malcolm wrote:

You don't, but TOTO does, since he was using some of HHDL's political views stated in other places prior to 2009, when this book was published.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, February 20th, 2014 at 7:46 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

The point isn't whether HHDL is a Marxist or not, although he was certainly still calling himself a Marxist in 2011.

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/belief/2011/jun/20/dalai-lama-marxist-buddhism>

Malcolm wrote:

His putative "Marxism" seems confined to the idea that he wants the best for everyone.

tellyontellyon said:

The point is that it is possible to be a Marxist and be a Buddhist. Whether HHDL still is or not is not the point, the point is that he was for most of his life and therefore being able to hold both Buddhist and Marxist ideas is not ruled out. HHDL seems able to make his own mind about these things without resorting to telling people they are 'un-dharmic' or 'worldly' for thinking this way or that.

Malcolm wrote:

He thinks that Mao was against Dharma.

tellyontellyon said:

I say it is possible to be a Buddhist and a capitalist also...However, I do object to the idea that being a capitalist is somehow the default position for Buddhists.

Malcolm wrote:

Actually, no one said that. What was said was that one will never be rid of markets, capital accumulation, and so on. And as we see, HHDL is not against markets nor capital accumulation.

tellyontellyon said:

To be honest I don't see Buddhism as a 'recieved' religion and it is all-always up for discussion.

Malcolm wrote:

Well, there you are wrong. Thinks like dependent origination, rebirth, emptiness and so are non-negotiable.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, February 20th, 2014 at 7:51 AM

Title: Re: What tibetan buddhist traditions these people belong?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Try telling that to some Sakyapas. Actually, Tulku Rabsal Dawa was also considered a Sakyapa Tulku and he maintained a life long practice commitment to all the main Sakya practices.

michaelb said:

Of course, the head lama and founder of Shechen Tennyi Dargyeling in exile, one of the six main Nyingma gompas, and the head lama of the entire Nyingma Tradition is a Sakyapa.

Malcolm wrote:

Yup, that's what some Sakyapas say - especially those who are connected to Derge. There is a kind of saying "If a Sakyapa gives up his monks vows, he will become Nyingma".



It is also correct to point here that Sakya is in fact the oldest Nyingma lineage in Tibet through their continuous practice of Killya, among other things.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, February 20th, 2014 at 8:06 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

BTW, not only was Mao against Dharma, he was against Marxism too.

Malcolm wrote:

Yeah, right. I don't think so son. I have been to the very birthplace of the Chinese revolution in Shanghai.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, February 20th, 2014 at 8:06 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

You think I'm wrong to say it should be discussed and understood and tested against experience?

I don't think so...

I think that is exactly what Buddha wanted us to do, not simply act like a 'faith' religion. That which is true will eventually shine through.

Malcolm wrote:

What the Buddha said actually was, until you know for yourself, you need to take it on faith from someone who does.

The Kalamas sutta for example is much misunderstood in that it was taught to non-Buddhists.

But the Eastern Gatehouse Sutta explains very clearly that until you have that taste of nirvana, which is of course based on understanding dependent origination, the four noble truths and so on, you must accept the Dharma as it is taught from someone who does know. Hence the crucial importance of having a master of genuine realization.

Further, faith, in Dharma, is defined as a mental factor that brings clarity to the mind. Of course we don't want blind faith, but aspiring faith is also weak, since if your role model disappoints you, you might abandon Dharma after all. What we are looking for in Buddhadharma is unshakable faith such that if 1000 buddhas showed up and said "Sorry, it was all a mistake" you would not believe them.

Faith is one of the five faculties and one of the five powers. It is the very foundation of the path to nirvana, which is why it is considered one of the 8 transcendent faculties.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, February 20th, 2014 at 8:10 AM

Title: Re: What tibetan buddhist traditions these people belong?

Content:

Sherlock said:

The Guhyagarbha transmission lineages should be at least as old.

Malcolm wrote:

You misunderstand, or I was not clear. The Khon Family (who are the heart and soul of Sakya) have practiced Vajrakilaya without any interruption since the time of Padmasambhava. They are the only religious family in Tibet who can make that claim. It makes them the most Nyingma family in Tibet.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, February 20th, 2014 at 8:20 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

The Chinese Maoists were a twisted, distorted caricature of Marxism that I'm sure you know by now that I don't support.

Malcolm wrote:

And I think that Stalin and Mao are the very picture of how Marxism is bound to turn out in the end, as you surely know by now. And frankly, we have more evidence on our side than you do on yours, which is why most people in the US think the modern day Marxist socialists are nutjobs.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, February 20th, 2014 at 8:22 AM

Title: Re: What tibetan buddhist traditions these people belong?

Content:

Sherlock said:

What about the Zur and gNubs families?

Malcolm wrote:

Do you know where you can find some Zurs and some gNubs? Are they still practicing their ancestral teachings? I rather doubt it.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, February 20th, 2014 at 8:23 AM

Title: Re: Make Life Meaningless

Content:

conebeckham said:

This thread is like a circle.

Malcolm wrote:

You mean it is meaningless, like samsara.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, February 20th, 2014 at 8:44 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

Many Marxists would disagree. There is much evidence against Stalinism and Maoism, but to say a genuine workers democracy would inevitably degenerate into a bureaucracy, that is a quite different question.

Malcolm wrote:

Of course they will disagree. No one wants to be associated with Stalin and Mao.

But I definitely think the US is safe from being turned into a "workers democracy". In any event, the whole piece you cited keeps waffling on and on about "elimination of the state" and that, my friend, will never happen unless all civilization falls into utter barbarism and anarchy.

This is why I think you Marxists and Anarchists are just dreamers. Your stateless society will never happen.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, February 20th, 2014 at 7:52 PM

Title: Re: I am no longer a Buddhist.

Content:

Simon E. said:

I first took Refuge nearly 40 years ago.

I have now to acknowledge what has been bubbling under for some time...I am no longer a Buddhist, and if I am honest with myself have not been for a while.

But it has been a slow process of letting go. Apart from other considerations I have invested a lot of my life in that direction. It is painful.

I have spent a long period vascillating and rushing back to 'safety '.

My Dzogchen practice will now have to continue without that particular set of references.

Thanks you to all.

If I have offended during this period of uncertainty I am sorry.

I truly wish for you all that you find peace.

Malcolm wrote:

Better to be a true practitioner of Buddhadharma than a follower of "Buddhism".

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, February 20th, 2014 at 8:17 PM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

I'm not quite sure why Bhutan is being held up as an example to be followed, it is little more than a vassal state of India.

The infant mortality rate is three times higher than even Tibet, and has a life expectancy of only 54.4 years. Bhutan has more refugees outside its borders than Tibet. The racist policies of the Bhutanese government drove a fifth (134,000) of the population into exile in the early 1990's.

Malcolm wrote:

Well, most of the refugees are guest workers who stayed on, not Bhutanese people. They are ethnically Nepalese. The number of refugees living in camps in Eastern Nepal was estimate at 107,000 according to UNHCRat one time.

As for Tibetans, "Based on a CTA survey from 2009, 127,935 Tibetans were registered in the diaspora", according to this wiki page

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tibetan\\_diaspora](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tibetan_diaspora).

The situation is complex and not straight forward. Most of the people in these camps are illegal immigrants.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bhutanese\\_refugees](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bhutanese_refugees).

Even the very term "Bhutanese refugee" seems to be a misnomer, kind of like calling those deported from the US for illegal immigration "American Refugees".

Alenxander Casella, a one time Director in UNHCR writes (cited from the above page): "Normally, the UNHCR, before intervening, would have undertaken a survey of the caseload to determine exactly their nationality and reasons for departure. Had this been undertaken, the inescapable conclusion would have been that the overwhelming majority were actually Nepalese and hence, by the fact that they were in their own

country, did not qualifying for refugee status"  
And presently, the camps have only at most 77,000 people.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, February 20th, 2014 at 8:33 PM

Title: Re: What tibetan buddhist traditions these people belong?

Content:

Kunga said:

so if a monk gave up ordination the only way to continue would be to become Nyingma...

Malcolm wrote:

Yup, that is the deal. You don't really see any lay people leading centers in Europe or the US.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, February 20th, 2014 at 8:41 PM

Title: Re: Climate Change: We're Doomed

Content:

kirtu said:

we can now build massive dams.

Malcolm wrote:

Yuck, not acceptable. These things mess with the local environment, and disturb everything in their vicinity for years.

We need to be removing dams in order to restore fisheries in the atlantic and the pacific, not building more of them

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, February 20th, 2014 at 9:40 PM

Title: Re: I am no longer a Buddhist.

Content:

Adamantine said:

I guess this is an example of what HHDL is considering when he generally advocates for people to stick with their native religions rather than convert to Buddhism.

Malcolm wrote:

I don't think you really understand what Simon is saying.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, February 20th, 2014 at 9:45 PM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

The infant mortality rate is three times higher than even Tibet, and has a life expectancy of only 54.4 years.

Malcolm wrote:

Infant mortality rate dropped 50% in one year in Bhutan, between 2007 and 2008 and is steadily declining.

Life expectancy in Bhutan also increased the same year, between 2007 and 2008. What this means is that the high infant mortality rate (110.9) in 2000 was being factored in. When that dropped by half in 2008, the life expectancy jumped from 52 in 2000 to its present 67.88 years. If they lower their infant mortality rate again by half, you will see another jump in life expectancy.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, February 20th, 2014 at 10:04 PM

Title: Re: What tibetan buddhist traditions these people belong?

Content:

Sherlock said:

So you can't access the higher Sakya teachings as a layperson unless you had already learned them while ordained?

Malcolm wrote:

No, traditionally, you cannot be lay Sakya teacher. The teachings of Lamdre and Yogini however are given widely and to anyone who wants to practice them. These days the Khon family more or less has a monopoly on those teachings outside of Tibet. Traditionally, those who could give Lamdre and so on were more or less restricted to members of the Khon family, the abbots of Ngor and the Abbots of Tshar. Other teachings in the Sakya lineage, like the sadhanas in the sgrub thabs kun 'dus could be given by others. These days, if you are a Sakyapa, necessarily your guru will be HHST or HHSDR, Jetsun Kusho, Lunding Khens senior and junior, or Chogye Trichen. I count HHST and HHSDR as my main Sakya masters, but I have received teachings from everyone but Chogye Trichen. There are other high lamas in the Sakya school, like Dzongsar Khyentse, but they do not normally give Lamdre and Yogini in large settings.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, February 20th, 2014 at 10:14 PM

Title: Re: What tibetan buddhist traditions these people belong?

Content:

Sherlock said:

Yes and I have attended some public teachings by HHST too but it seemed to me that there were higher teachings that were not taught. I.e. HHST made references to the ear-

whispered teachings only given to selected disciples and the Kilaya completion stage was not taught.

Malcolm wrote:

The Kilaya completion stage practices, as far as I know, have not survived beyond a tummo practice.

As for these other rumors, well, there are always some intimate instruction or another that is not generally taught. Yogini has some sections that are taught to only three people, or one person at a time. Lamdre also has some transmissions that are one to one. Then there are other teachings like outer, inner and secret Mahakala practices that are not widely promulgated.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 21st, 2014 at 12:39 AM

Title: Re: I am no longer a Buddhist.

Content:

Will said:

Malcolm has also mentioned something about Dzogchen being so universal that it is beyond Buddhism (and maybe the buddhadharma?)

Malcolm wrote:

Dzogchen teachings does not require one to be a "Buddhist". Nevertheless, refuge, bodhicitta and dedication are indispensable in Dzogchen.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 21st, 2014 at 1:22 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

Good grief Malcolm:

To consider the expelled Lhotsampa people as mainly 'illegal immigrants' is a new low. Why does an 'enlightened' system even care about ethnic origin anyway?

Can there be not a word of criticism against these enlightened leaders? No faults to be found?

Actually, most of the Lhotsampa had been born in Bhutan, and many went back generations. What happened was the Lhotsampa dared to step out of line by wanting to be treated fairly, and asking for the same rights that other citizens enjoyed. Bhutan is no Shangri-La.

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lhotsampa>

Anarchists and Marxists are accused of seeking 'impossible' utopias. The supporters of Buddhist Monarchy seem to think they exist already!

Malcolm wrote:

The Lhotsampas (southern border people) however are a recent immigrant population, their history is long and complicated. Many Lhotsampas do not want to adhere to Buddhadharma, nor do they wish to adhere to essentially non-Nepalese cultural norms. The people who in camps are those who could not prove a pre 1958 citizenship. They are all culturally Nepalese, speaking Nepalese dialects, but Nepal won't have them which is all the more ironic because the present current Maoist government fomented and exacerbated the unrest. The best solution would be for Nepal to absorb them, since they are Nepalese people. The situation was not aided by the fact that Lotshampas responded with armed violence to the 1988 census which showed large numbers of them were illegal aliens in Bhutan. In fact, much of the unrest was agitated by the Communist Party of Nepal:

Some villagers willingly joined the protests; others did so under duress. The government branded the party, reportedly established by anti-monarchists and backed by the Nepali Congress Party and the Communist Party of Nepal (Unified Marxist-Leninist), as a terrorist organization. The party allegedly led its members – said to be armed with rifles, muzzle-loading guns, knives, and homemade grenades – in raids on villages in southern Bhutan, disrobing people wearing traditional Bhutanese garb; extorting money; and robbing, kidnapping, and killing people.

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lhotshampa>

All of the above is very characteristic of how the Maoists in Nepal behaved while they were fighting the government. They hate Buddhism, and will stop at nothing to try and destroy Buddhism in the Himalayas in the interest of their Chinese masters.

The Bhutanese are trying their best to maintain a Buddhist kingdom surrounded on all sides by tīrthikas and enemies, and so from that point of view I think what they are doing is admirable. They observed what happened to Sikkim and determined that the same fate was not going to happen to them.

It may not seem pretty or nice, but as Bhutan is the last independent Vajrayāna Kingdom in the world, I have no problems with their desire to maintain the Buddhist culture of Bhutan intact without having to accommodate those of other cultures in their midst.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 21st, 2014 at 1:29 AM

Title: Re: I am no longer a Buddhist.

Content:

Will said:



Malcolm: Nevertheless, refuge, bodhicitta and dedication are indispensable in Dzogchen.

How do these three differ in Dzogchen, if they do, from any of the Buddhist versions?

Malcolm wrote:

They don't. I am quite certain that Simon has not abandoned Dharma. He is merely saying that so much idiocy is spouted by Buddhists of various stripes he does not want to own any of that by identifying himself to himself as a "Buddhist".

BTW, Simon is quite capable of speaking for himself, but I think that I have captured a main part of his sentiment and he will correct me if I have erred.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 21st, 2014 at 1:49 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

Sönam said:

Socialism has many itemizations ... a modern form is not against the market, but offers a better redistribution of profit. But the point in this case is that the (world) market is against socialism (i.e. a better redistribution). Capital want to continue to rule the world with his own rules. Therefore, for it works, socialism should be implemented in many countries at the same time (enough for it could'nt be isolated/segregated by actors of capital) ... all that very complicated, also because otherwise capitalism will remain the same, greedy, only guided by individual profit and competition.

Malcolm wrote:

Actually the problem is that companies like Walmart exploit Government social benefits in order to keep wages down. Walmart is the largest employer in the US and each of its employees receives an average of \$1000 a year in federal assistance. American fast food workers take in a staggering \$7 billion a year in federal assistance.

Frankly, John Maynard Keynes ideas about the role of government in the economy provided the US and England with the most stable economies they ever had.

Unfortunately, people still keep arguing as if 19th century theories of political economy actually anticipated the global economy. They didnt' and don't, and that is why all of this talk of socialism vs. capitalism is frankly so silly, IMO.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 21st, 2014 at 3:45 AM

Title: Re: Prophecies in Buddhism?

Content:

Rakshasa said:

Although i'm aware that indulging in astrology and such professions is forbidden in Pali canon, yet many mahayana buddhists are known to have made prophecies, like padmasambhava. So what is the Mahayana stand? I've heard of buddhist monks even in

Thailand and burma acting as oracles. Are there any prophecies by current buddhist masters?

Malcolm wrote:

Most terms have predictions.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 21st, 2014 at 5:43 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

Adamantine said:

Posts on Bhutan have been moved to the "Living in Bhutan" thread

<http://dharmawheel.net/viewtopic.php?f=40&t=15626>

AlexanderS said:

I don't see why posts discussing a dharma monarchy don't belong in this thread.

Malcolm wrote:

They do, but the issue was not about dharma monarchies so much as the deficiencies of Bhutanese policies, so I asked the mods to move it.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 21st, 2014 at 7:46 AM

Title: Re: Living in Bhutan?

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

It may not seem pretty or nice, but as Bhutan is the last independent Vajrayāna Kingdom in the world, I have no problems with their desire to maintain the Buddhist culture of Bhutan intact without having to accommodate those of other cultures in their midst. 'Vajrayana Kingdom'?

I reject the desire for religious states.

Malcolm wrote:

You can reject it all you like, but you can't do anything about it.

tellyontellyon said:

I think they are wrong in this day and age. All countries contain people who don't fit the national mould, or more accurately, the myth of a national mould.

Malcolm wrote:

There are plenty of Nepalis still living in southern Bhutan, but they are legally there.

tellyontellyon said:

These arguments are basically the same nationalist/racist arguments that we hear from all over the world.

Malcolm wrote:

Definitely an argument in defense of Bhutanese national sovereignty, not racist at all. In any case, I think it is great the Bhutanese are intent on preserving their traditional way of life. I think it is fine for them to run their country however they like.

In any case, you are apparently unaware of the centuries of Hindu encroachment on Buddhist Kingdoms in the Himalayas. Now we see the same thing with Communists using terrorism in Bhutan to try to achieve their goals, like the bombing in Thimphu in 2008.

tellyontellyon said:

Should Buddhists be so defensive about Buddhism that ethnic cleansing becomes acceptable? I think much more is lost by that way of thinking than is imagined might be saved.

Malcolm wrote:

You are entitled to an opinion.

tellyontellyon said:

Just think about what happens to the people that are castigated, uprooted, pushed out of their jobs and homes, children thrown out of their schools, forced to follow dress codes etc. just to satisfy some silly frightened fascist who thinks his 'culture' is disappearing.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, it is all unfortunate. It is a pity that communists pushed the Bhutanese into taking actions they had tried to avoid for many years.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 21st, 2014 at 7:48 AM

Title: Re: Living in Bhutan?

Content:

Zhen Li said:

Just because they don't do it under a national flag (and some do) doesn't mean it's not colonialism, and I thought as a socialist you oppose colonialism TOTO.

Malcolm wrote:

He only disapproves of non-marxist colonialism, he is fine with marxist colonialism.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 21st, 2014 at 8:03 AM

Title: Re: Prophecies in Buddhism?

Content:

AlexanderS said:

Could someone please tell me the source of the famous Padmasambhava quote that several books feature that goes along the line of "When the Iron bird flies and steel ox runs of Wheels and the tibetan people are scattered like ants across the earth, my teachings will come to the land of the red men".?

Malcolm wrote:

Please see this post by Sam Van Schaik.

<http://earlytibet.com/2007/09/18/red-faced-men/>

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 21st, 2014 at 8:05 AM

Title: Re: Living in Bhutan?

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

He only disapproves of non-marxist colonialism, he is fine with marxist colonialism. You're just talking crap now.

Malcolm wrote:

Sure you are, you just call it "Liberation". Just as the communists "liberated" Tibet, so too the communists wanted to "liberate" Bhutan. Why? Because Bhutan lies along the border with Chinese-occupied Tibet. If they could have succeeded in installing a communist Government in Bhutan as well as Nepal, this is would have been very powerful for them and China. Unfortunately, the Nepali immigrants got caught up in this "liberation" movement, which is just marxist colonialism, and now we have the present situation. In any event, the US alone between 2008 and 2012 have taken in 65,000+ of these immigrants, so in the end, I think they will all do fine.

You do realize that the Maoist government of Nepal has been gunning down Tibetan refugees as well as handing them back to the Chinese authorities? The Lhotsampas were just pawns being used by the communists, plain and simple.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 21st, 2014 at 7:41 PM

Title: Re: I am no longer a Buddhist.

Content:

Anders said:

but rather the tendency for investment in such labels in the first place.

Malcolm wrote:

...which often results in the spouting of idiocies...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 21st, 2014 at 7:45 PM

Title: Re: What tibetan buddhist traditions these people belong?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

There are other high lamas in the Sakya school, like Dzongsar Khyentse, but they do not normally give Lamdre and Yogini in large settings.

dzogchungpa said:

DJKR is neither a monk nor from the Khon family, is he?

heart said:

Maybe that is why he seems so Nyingma then.

/magnus

Malcolm wrote:

In terms of tantra, he generally teaches from Nyingma; in terms of sutra, he generally teaches from the Sakya POV; and considering his education, this is not at all surprising.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 21st, 2014 at 7:46 PM

Title: Re: What tibetan buddhist traditions these people belong?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

There are other high lamas in the Sakya school, like Dzongsar Khyentse, but they do not normally give Lamdre and Yogini in large settings.

dzogchungpa said:

DJKR is neither a monk nor from the Khon family, is he?

Malcolm wrote:

He also has never given any major Sakyapa transmissions to my knowledge, and there is no need for him to, considering that the Khon masters are alive and well and kicking.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 21st, 2014 at 7:51 PM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

HHDL:

He went on to declare the command economy of the former Soviet Union, “failed,” and then critiqued American capitalism: “At the same time, United States, capitalist country, most richest, but gap rich and poor.”

At this point, Russia has the largest wealth gap. And it has turned into a Fox News paradise, at least if you followed John Stewart's analysis on Wed. night.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 21st, 2014 at 7:55 PM

Title: Re: Climate Change: We're Doomed

Content:

Sherab said:

Molten salt nuclear reactors are considered to be "safe and proliferation-resistant".

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, the operative word here is "considered"; Three Mile Island was "considered" safe, Fukushima was "considered" safe, Chernobyl was "considered" safe until it turned out that they weren't safe at all.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 21st, 2014 at 7:56 PM

Title: Re: China Tells Obama not to meet Dalai Lama

Content:

Adamantine said:

“We urge the United States to take China's concerns seriously and not to facilitate or offer occasion for the Dalai Lama to conduct anti-China secessionist moves,” foreign ministry spokesperson Hua Chunying said in a press release.

“By arranging a meeting between the President and the Dalai Lama, the US side will grossly interfere in the internal affairs of China, seriously violate norms governing international relations and severely impair China-US relations. China expresses firm opposition. We urge the US to take China's concerns seriously, immediately cancel the meeting, and not to provide facilitation and platform for the Dalai Lama to carry out anti-China separatist activities in the US,” Hua said.

- See more at: <http://www.hindustantimes.com/world-news/china-urges-obama-to-cancel-meeting-with-dalai-lama/article1-1186409.aspx#sthash.3BbxCY0h.dpuf>

Malcolm wrote:

Well, you have to commend them on their persistence.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 21st, 2014 at 7:58 PM

Title: Re: China Tells Obama not to meet Dalai Lama

Content:

Indrajala said:

The president actually gains their begrudging respect by defying their request not to meet the Dalai Lama.

Malcolm wrote:

No bunch of commies is going to tell the leader of the free world what to do.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 21st, 2014 at 8:00 PM

Title: Re: Living in Bhutan?

Content:

Dan74 said:

I was not aware of the risk to women (somebody mentioned the word 'predatory'). Can someone shed more light on this? We also have a 5-year-old daughter.

Malcolm wrote:

Deserved or undeserved, Bhutanese men have a reputation for being womanizers. I think it has a bit to do with the Drugpa Kunley mythos.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 21st, 2014 at 8:46 PM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

, I have no problems with their desire to maintain the Buddhist culture of Bhutan intact without having to accommodate those of other cultures in their midst.

theanarchist said:

Wow, that sounds like Saudi Arabian religious totalitarianism of the lowest kind.

Malcolm wrote:

Do you have a problem with the fact that if you are a Mohawk Indian of Christian, etc. beliefs, you have no right to be in the government of the Mohawk Nation? I don't. That's how they set up their constitution, in order to preserve what they can of their culture and original spiritual tradition. Bhutan should be considered in the same light. You can think of it as a Buddhist "reservation".

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 21st, 2014 at 8:54 PM

Title: Re: What tibetan buddhist traditions these people belong?

Content:

pensum said:

the Ngor branch no longer practise the so-called 'ancestral teachings' (yab chö) of the Sakya school, such as the practices of Yangdak Heruka and Vajrakilaya."

Malcolm wrote:

This is not strictly true, actually. However, it is true that the Ngorpas were very conservative, while the Tsharpas were more eclectic in their approach. The Khon family have always maintained strong connections with the Nyingma school.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 21st, 2014 at 9:40 PM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

theanarchist said:

Whereas Hindus never had any inclination for proselytizing and here in Europe they are among the immigrants that cause the least problems.

Malcolm wrote:

You need to read the History of Nepal and India. Or for the matter the Hardship and Decline of Buddhism in India.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 21st, 2014 at 10:53 PM

Title: Re: Living in Bhutan?

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

M:

You really have to get away from equating genuine Marxism with the distorted nutjobs that are better described as Stalinists/Maoists. I don't call myself a communist for exactly the same reason. I'm not a supporter of the actions or the so called 'communist' organisations that happened in the USSR, North Korea, China, Nepal, Tibet etc. It is really dishonest of you to keep on suggesting that I do.

Malcolm wrote:

TOTO, I think that your beliefs lead to exactly what happened in the USSR, China, North Korea, Nepal, etc.

tellyontellyon said:

Do you have a problem with the fact that if you are a Mohawk Indian of Christian, etc. beliefs, you have no right to be in the government of the Mohawk Nation? I don't. A Mohawk is a Mohawk, if the govt. of the Mohawk nation is the voice of the entire Mohawk nation it should encompass the whole community. But we are not even talking about a particular 'people' here. We are talking about a country.



Malcolm wrote:

Actually we are talking about a particular people with a specific history, language and cultural tradition.

tellyontellyon said:

People are people, why should Buddhists worry about things like the ethnic background of people.

Malcolm wrote:

We don't. Anyone can become a Buddhist.

tellyontellyon said:

I thought Buddhists embraced impermanence, rather than trying to preserve some sort of model society.

Malcolm wrote:

Buddhists, when push comes to shove, are much more conservative than you imagine. We tend to like to preserve things like, lineage, culture and so on, and if Bhutan had adopted the policies of Sikkim, there would be no Bhutan today.

tellyontellyon said:

Bhutan is not a museum.

Malcolm wrote:

No, it is a tiny nation trying to preserve its unique culture and way of life. For example, the Navaho nation, at 27,425 sq mi, is twice the size of Bhutan, though it only has about 180,000 members. Bhutan is more densely populated, at 742,737 (2012), but is little more half the size, at 14,824 sq mi. But in 1991, it had a population of 1,375,400. As you can see, there was a mass migration out of Bhutan, and it was not all forced. Many Nepalis left of their own accord. Only 108,000 were forcibly expelled.

Even today there are more speakers of Nepali in Bhutan than those who speak the national language, Dzongkha. The Nepalis are 35% of the total population. Prior to the mass exodus, they were nearly 50% of the total population, and only 15% of those were actually citizens of Bhutan.

tellyontellyon said:

The expelled people are just human beings. Why reduce them to something less than that with some silly racist label of 'illegal immigrant', and use that as a justification of the suffering imposed on them by the racist govt. of Bhutan.

Malcolm wrote:

The conditions of the camps are appalling, I have friends have been to them. But I blame the government of Nepal for that, and not Bhutan. Calling the Lhotsampas "Bhutanese" is like calling illegal immigrants to the US "US citizens". This page for example states [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ethnic\\_groups\\_in\\_Bhutan](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ethnic_groups_in_Bhutan) "The number of legal permanent Nepalese residents in the late 1980s may have been as few as 15

percent of the total Lhotshampa population, however."

In any event, in the past six years many of these unfortunate people have been resettled in Canada and the US, among other places, and will certainly have a better life here than was possible for them in Nepal or Bhutan.

As I said, Bhutan, for all its faults, is the last independent Vajrayāna kingdom in the world today. It may mean nothing to you, but it means something to me.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 21st, 2014 at 10:55 PM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

theanarchist said:

Whereas Hindus never had any inclination for proselytizing and here in Europe they are among the immigrants that cause the least problems.

Malcolm wrote:

You need to read the History of Nepal and India. Or for the matter the Hardship and Decline of Buddhism in India.

theanarchist said:

That's still an intra-Indian affair and a fairly ordinary power struggle of different groups. Those Nepali peasants certainly don't want to take over the government and convert all the buddhists there.

Malcolm wrote:

No, the communists tried to use an imagined Nepali majority to foment an armed rebellion and take over of the Bhutanese government to install a Marxist regime, just like the present day one in Kathmandu. I, for one, am glad they failed. Nepal was great under the old King, these days it is a total mess, largely through the customary ineptness of Marxist governments.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 21st, 2014 at 11:30 PM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

theanarchist said:

Erm, yeah. If it was so great, then why were there so many dissatisfied people who turned to the maoists?

Malcolm wrote:

They didn't really — the Maoists basically forced young Nepalis to fight with them or die.

theanarchist said:

I recently read an interview with a Nepali artist who stated that everything is pretty much the same, just instead of one bureaucrat you have to bribe 5.

Malcolm wrote:

Everything is worse. I have friends who have lived there six months out of every year for the past 20 years. According to them, it is in worse shape than ever.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, February 22nd, 2014 at 12:40 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Anarchism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Everything is worse. I have friends who have lived there six months out of every year for the past 20 years. According to them, it is in worse shape than ever.

theanarchist said:

But is that because of the Maoists?

Malcolm wrote:

Definitely.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, February 22nd, 2014 at 1:00 AM

Title: Re: Living in Bhutan?

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

Buddhism has made contact with Europe and the US and the rest of the world. That interaction is leading to a new Buddhism.

Malcolm wrote:

No it isn't.

tellyontellyon said:

The language, scriptures, costumes, temples... all that is wonderful and we can learn so much from that, but that is not the essence of what Buddhism is about.

Malcolm wrote:

Human cultures are worth preserving. Nepal already has one. Let Bhutan have theirs.

tellyontellyon said:

It is important that in trying to preserve cultural forms we do not lose the essence, what Buddhism is really about.

Malcolm wrote:

Bhutan is the last place in the world where the entire country (apart from the Nepalis legally living in the South) is devoted to Vajrayāna. Even if you don't think this is worth preserving, many of us do.

tellyontellyon said:

If we want Buddhism to survive then it must come from a place of compassion and love.

Malcolm wrote:

Sometimes the benefit of all takes on fearsome forms. I think Bhutan did what it needed to do to eliminate a huge population of people who emigrated to Bhutan without papers. They needed to tighten their borders. As I said, I personally have no problem with this.

tellyontellyon said:

If it comes from fear and an attempt to cling to something from the past then we have lost it already.

Malcolm wrote:

But Buddhism does look to the past, that is why we recite lineage prayers, compose religious histories and so on, so that we know where we come from and we do not forget. The past informs the present. There is no place for a Buddhist "cultural revolution". Buddhadharma has a trajectory, an arch. It will last for so long in this world system and then disappear completely. But in the meantime the traditional forms have substance and meaning. I personally believe they should be preserved.

If you want a "new Buddhism", then go follow Bachelor or some of the other advocates of Buddhist reform. As for me, I am about as conservative as one gets when it comes to preserving what we have left from the ancient Buddhist world. There is so little of it left, it needs to remain intact for the edification of the future. We unfortunately live in a world where even the Buddha's seat of awakening, on a relative level, is not immune to Muslim and Hindu attacks. Indeed, in 635 it was destroyed by Sashanka. Last year Bodhgaya was bombed by the Indian Muhajadeen. Everyone recalls the insane shelling of the Buddhas at Bamiyan by the Taliban.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, February 22nd, 2014 at 1:11 AM

Title: Re: What tibetan buddhist traditions these people belong?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

It is also interesting to note that at the end of Dilgo Khyentse's life, when he was repairing Samye, he kept on having recurrent visions of Sakya Pandita which led to a Guru Yoga terma featuring Sakya Pandita that has an outer, inner and secret aspect to it.

pensum said:

Interesting, for Jamyang Khyentse Chokyi Lodro had given DKR a statue of Sakya Pandita which he had used as his own personal practice support.

Malcolm wrote:

DKR was a smart man, he knew which side of the bread his butter was on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, February 22nd, 2014 at 2:05 AM

Title: Re: Living in Bhutan?

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

M:

I value everything handed down by the teachers, it is important that the teachings are handed on.... but that is not the same as clinging to it out of fear.

Malcolm wrote:

I don't think Bhutan is clinging out of fear to anything.

tellyontellyon said:

That is not the same as manipulating populations to maintain a religious and cultural dominance.

Malcolm wrote:

That is the Maoist game, not the Bhutanese game.

tellyontellyon said:

If the British or whoever it was did that to Bhutan, well that is the past. Two wrongs do not make a right. The Bhutanese people of Nepali descent who were expelled were treated badly. They were just ordinary, poor people who had their lives shattered by the actions of the Bhutanese government.

Malcolm wrote:

They were mostly illegal immigrants.

tellyontellyon said:

As the world changes in technology, communication etc. then of course the cultural forms of Buddhist communities change too. This is unavoidable.

Malcolm wrote:

Many times people think they are preserving "the essence" when they change things, but really they wind up destroying the core.

tellyontellyon said:

By failing to act with compassion the label 'Vajrayana' has been made meaningless. Bhutan doesn't deserve that epithet.  
Is that what you think Vajrayana comes down to... deporting ethnic minorities?

Malcolm wrote:

One, by that time, the Bhutanese (Ngalobs) were the minority in their own country, though the with the easterners, most of whom are of Assamese, monpa and so on descent, they formed a Buddhist majority.

I think that the Bhutanese acted as they did to stop illegal immigration into their country as well as rising terrorism. But you will recall they only began the mass deportations as a response to Maoist terrorism.

The situation in Bhutan is nothing like Shri Lanka or Burma.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, February 22nd, 2014 at 2:36 AM

Title: Re: Living in Bhutan?

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

How very protestant.

According to the Lotus Sūtra a single offering to an image of the Buddha can initiate the process towards ultimate buddhahood in the distant future.

So, preserving images is actually essential to at least Mahāyāna Buddhism.  
Do you preserve them with the blood of your enemies?

Malcolm wrote:

It certainly is not the job of Buddhist monks or lay people to get involved in armed struggles.

But Jeff is correct, any country should maintain a strong army to defend itself, and in particular we have see the repeated and tragic costs to Buddhist countries that do not maintain strong armies to defend themselves. Bhutan of course does not have the power to stave off China or India, but they don't have to. Any threat to Bhutan is a threat against India itself.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, February 22nd, 2014 at 3:00 AM

Title: Re: Living in Bhutan?

Content:

Indrajala said:

If push comes to shove though someone has to do the fighting. Monks of course are obligated to remain out of the conflict, but someone has to man the walls.

The fear of karma is warranted, though I don't think it is so simple. It certainly isn't wholesome karma to inflict violence against even the enemies of Buddhism, but on the other hand it isn't entirely unwholesome either as the motivation is self-defense and preservation of the Buddhadharma in the world.

Indra after all is a stream-enterer yet continues leading armies into war against the asuras...

Malcolm wrote:

When push comes to shove, all who die engaged in battle go to hell. Perhaps one's motivation will shorten the duration, but when they say "war is hell", they were not kidding.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, February 22nd, 2014 at 3:18 AM

Title: Re: Living in Bhutan?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

When push comes to shove, all who die engaged in battle go to hell. Perhaps one's motivation will shorten the duration, but when they say "war is hell", they were not kidding.

Indrajala said:

It isn't so clear cut as that. Past merit and a number of other factors come into play at death.

Malcolm wrote:

It's pretty clear cut when the Buddha explains this to Pasenadi. The most important factor determining your next birth place is the mental factors you are experiencing when you die. Plus all people who voluntarily participate in a battle earn the karma of all the people they are engaged in that activity with.

There really is no positive outcome of war, karmically speaking.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, February 22nd, 2014 at 3:55 AM

Title: Re: What tibetan buddhist traditions these people belong?

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

I don't know much about Sakya, or anything, for that matter, but what about this:

[http://www.adarshaphotography.com/Other/Dam-Ngak-](http://www.adarshaphotography.com/Other/Dam-Ngak-Dzod/26568547_m6QQ5D#!i=2242016424&k=fgBJHnS&lb=1&s=L?)

[Dzod/26568547\\_m6QQ5D#!i=2242016424&k=fgBJHnS&lb=1&s=L?](http://www.adarshaphotography.com/Other/Dam-Ngak-Dzod/26568547_m6QQ5D#!i=2242016424&k=fgBJHnS&lb=1&s=L?)

Malcolm wrote:

That's true, he did give the Dam Ngag Dzod recently, I forgot, that contains Lamdre in its minimal form.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, February 22nd, 2014 at 5:13 AM

Title: Re: Living in Bhutan?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The most important factor determining your next birth place is the mental factors you are experiencing when you die.

daverupa said:

Hmm... not quite.

Malcolm wrote:

Quite. For example, Nāgārjuna writes that there is a dharma called an avipranasha which is created by every karma in which one engages. The one created at the time of one's death is the factor above all others which is instrumental in determining one's next birth location.

The example that you give does not necessarily contradict this.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, February 22nd, 2014 at 5:34 AM

Title: Re: What tibetan buddhist traditions these people belong?

Content:

Punya said:

Are you suggesting he made some decisions based on political considerations? Despite his father's position in Tibetan society, this seems unlikely to me.

Malcolm wrote:

No, I am suggesting that he was devoted to the greatest scholar (in my opinion) that Tibet ever saw.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, February 22nd, 2014 at 6:37 AM

Title: Re: What tibetan buddhist traditions these people belong?

Content:

Punya said:

This is interesting news, since you seem to be quite fond of bagging his successor. Not that I'm saying DJKR is a scholar. He is an activity emanation, is he not? And he seems to be doing quite well on that front.



Malcolm wrote:

We are talking about Dilgo Khyentse, no?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, February 22nd, 2014 at 10:46 PM

Title: Re: Buddhist Hate Crimes

Content:

Rickpa said:

As a member of a group, you should be mindful that humans tend to judge any group of which they are outside, by the worst examples.

Malcolm wrote:

Indeed, this however does not mean that one need feel "shame" for being a Buddhist merely because there are afflicted "Buddhists" out there who do murderous things to innocents.

Likewise, I feel no shame about being an American despite that fact my government has done terrible things. But those things were done without my consent and I oppose them.

Jigme Tsultrim said:

Sorry, but you should in both cases.

Malcolm wrote:

As you can tell, I don't agree. I never feel shame for negative karma that I had no hand in creating. Compassion for the people who engage in such deeds, yes; shame, never.

In any event, it is very presumptuous for you to mandate how anyone ought to feel about anything. The reason I replied was to let others know that it was not necessary to pander to "politically correct" guilt-mongering.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, February 22nd, 2014 at 11:00 PM

Title: Re: Climate Change: We're Doomed

Content:

Sherab said:

Molten salt nuclear reactors are considered to be "safe and proliferation-resistant".

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, the operative word here is "considered"; Three Mile Island was "considered" safe, Fukushima was "considered" safe, Chernobyl was "considered" safe until it turned out that they weren't safe at all.

kirtu said:

TMI was in fact safe. The radiation release was heavily overblown in the press

Malcolm wrote:

Your facts are wrong here:

Gundersen, a leading technical expert on nuclear engineering, says: "When I correctly interpreted the containment pressure spike and the doses measured in the environment after the TMI accident, I proved that TMI's releases were about one hundred times higher than the industry and the NRC claim, in part because the containment leaked. This new data supports the epidemiology of Dr. Steve Wing and proves that there really were injuries from the accident. New reactor designs are also effected, as the NRC is using its low assumed release rates to justify decreases in emergency planning and containment design."

[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/harvey-wasserman/people-died-at-three-mile\\_b\\_179588.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/harvey-wasserman/people-died-at-three-mile_b_179588.html)

kirtu said:

Fukashima was stupid design and that could easily be seen.

Malcolm wrote:

Right, which is why there is a reactor of exactly the same design sitting on Long Island Sound, and another just a few miles south of Boston, sitting on the Massachusetts Bay.

kirtu said:

However safe means, if there is a total disaster, the reactor will shut itself down with no or minimal radiation release (obviously we need to engineer this for no release).

Malcolm wrote:

You are a smart guy, and I respect your intelligence, but on this score I think you are being blinded by your enthusiasm for technological fixes. The entire nuclear industry from soup to nuts is lethally toxic and bad for the environment. There is no such thing as a "safe" nuclear power plant.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, February 22nd, 2014 at 11:23 PM

Title: Re: Buddhist Hate Crimes

Content:

Jigme Tsultrim said:

I'm not really seeking "agreement". I'm trying to raise some compassion for the victims. I'm trying to get those who consider themselves as Buddhist to realize that if they feel real compassion for those in error, that the really kind thing for all concerned is to point their error out to them. To claim that as a Buddhist one has no involvement in the activities of others, especially Buddhists, is to deny interdependence.

In teaching interdependence it is pointed out when someone claims that they did something by themselves that they must consider all the others involved in making the

materials that went into whatever. So, turning this around are we not all involved in the actions of others? Even leaving out the special responsibility created by the Teachings, are we not responsible as fellow human beings?

Malcolm wrote:

The Buddha said "Karma is volition and its products".

We are not involved in the actions of others apart from the extent to which we agree to the intentions pursued by others. For example, someone who opposed the Vietnam war is responsible for none of the negative karma generated by that war, while all who supported it earn the negative karma \* as many people who supported that war. This is very clearly explained in Abhidharma.

Our mind streams are not interdependent in the same way the roots of trees and mycelium in a forest are. Our mind streams are unique, and the gathering and ripening of karma upon it is individual, not collective. When beings engage in similar acts, they have similar ripenings, but that is as far as it goes.

Being responsible human beings does not bear the consequence that we must be ashamed of human beings when they engage in negative actions because of the three poisons. We do not feel shame when a person with a disease does something wrong. We understand that they are ill and in need of treatment. Likewise, when sentient beings engage in the ten non-virtues, they do so only because of the three poisons in their own minds.

Can we feel sad that sentient beings engage in negative karma? Yes. Is that sadness connected to the fact that we understand all of our unpleasant experiences in samsara are connected with our own negative actions? Yes. Should we feel shame that other sentient beings engage in non-virtuous actions because of the three poisons? No. No, unless at some point, for example, we whole heartedly backed the killing of a bunch of Ronhingyas for the "sin" of being Muslims because of our own afflictions. If we realize that this was wrong on our part, then we should voice that regret, confess it, and move on. But there is very little point in feeling shame at the actions of others in which we played no part.

In order to point out the error of someone, first you must gain their trust and respect. Only then will your admonishments be heeded, respected and effective. Otherwise, admonishing those who do not respect you is like pissing into the wind, it just turns back on you.

As to your point about interdependence. If I am a miner, and I unearth iron to make steel, after it goes to market I have no idea if it will make a car or a gun. So whether it is made into a car or gun has nothing to do with me. I am just mining the ore, and that is all.

One must understand that the way this is taught is that first we have the presentation of the six causes and four conditions; then there is the presentation of dependent origination, and then, only after that is there the presentation of karma, the first is part

of the teaching of the noble's truth of suffering, the latter two belong to the noble's truth of the origination of suffering. Cause and condition is not moral cause and condition, so the karana-hetu, which means that everything is a cause for everything else apart from itself does not apply to moral questions of karma-vipaka. If you overextend the limit of mutual causation, even the Buddha becomes responsible for the crimes of Angulimala.

Therefore, it needs to be understood that the only thing one needs to feel shame about is one's own action that arise out of the three poisons. Feeling shame for actions of others is a misplaced sense of identity which arises from a false grasping to self.

As for our responsibility towards other humans, well, again it is question of limitations. We are very limited, our capacity to help others is miniscule. We do what we can, we act as witnesses when there are those who are committing crimes, but we don't judge, and we don't abandon the fact that everyone involved in such events also has their own karma, positive and negative which led to that karmavipaka they are experiencing, including being murdered. The Buddhist view about the karmavipaka is dispassionate. If you engaged in a lot of killing in this life, your life will be shortened in the next. If you engage in a lot of violence in this life, you can bet that in the next you will be subjected to a lot of violence. Karma, like death, is pitiless.

Further, if we engage in judgement, we will lose compassion for the those who truly deserve it, the perpetrators of those crimes. For example, who is deserving of more compassion in this example: the SS soldiers who murdered millions of Jews, or the murdered Jews? Who is going to experience more suffering as a result? Most people feel no compassion for the SS soldiers and wish them into hell, saving their compassion for those who suffered terribly in the death camps. Who is more deserving of compassion, Pol Pot and the Khmer Rouge, or the millions they left in the killing fields? Who is more deserving of compassion, Kissinger and Nixon, who murdered hundreds of thousands of Vietnamese or the murdered Vietnamese.

The reality is that they are all equally deserving of compassion. This is the Mahāyāna approach. We do not judge and say this sentient beings deserves more compassion, this one less. All sentient beings are deserving of equal levels of compassions, whether they are Hitler, Mao, Stalin or a Rohingya Muslim or Nāgaland Buddhist, or a Sinhalese Tamil.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, February 23rd, 2014 at 1:00 AM

Title: Re: Ole Nydahi and Trungpa rinpoche

Content:

smcj said:

I remember him saying, "You don't want to put your bodhicitta in a box." So I don't think he even has that specific bodhicitta vow that you are talking about.

But that's just my guess, and a very legalistic take on the issue.

theanarchist said:

As I see it, never ever wanting to see someone again also means not wanting to engage in helping this person to attain enlightenment. Because helping someone attain enlightenment would very likely mean seeing him or her again.

Bodhisattva vow always means not picking and choosing to help one's favourite beings to attain enlightenment and abandoning the "unpleasant" ones.

Malcolm wrote:

It simply means never abandoning the wish to help them achieve awakening.  
Bodhisattva conduct also means avoiding the familiar company of the childish, the harmful and so on, people you can never help.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, February 23rd, 2014 at 5:48 AM

Title: Re: Creation Stage and the attainment of Bhumis

Content:

Benten said:

actually they are both  
why do you guys have to be so dualistic,

jk

Malcolm wrote:

You might ask yourself the same question, son.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, February 23rd, 2014 at 7:46 AM

Title: Re: Creation Stage and the attainment of Bhumis

Content:

Benten said:

16th bhumi is Tathagatha

Malcolm wrote:

11th through 16th bhumi are tathāgata stages.  
1-10, bodhisattva stages.

A 13th stage Vajradhara is perfect, it and the stages beyond are called "The stages of abiding in wisdom", while the 11th and 12th stages, while omniscient, do not regard phenomena as the display of wisdom.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, February 23rd, 2014 at 11:15 PM

Title: Re: Question

Content:

Jigme Tsultrim said:

Actually neither. I'm sure we could agree that Buddhism has different approaches. I have opened this discussion to oppose theism and dogmatism in Buddhist practice.

Malcolm wrote:

Define "theism".

Define "dogmatism".

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, February 23rd, 2014 at 11:34 PM

Title: Re: Buddhist Hate Crimes

Content:

Jigme Tsultrim said:

To define compassion in the real and relative world so broadly that there can be no distinction between its application to a guard at Dachau and a starving child renders the word devoid of meaning.

Malcolm wrote:

No, it renders compassion impartial, which is the step before "objectless".

The buddhas and ārya-bodhisattvas do not make a distinction between a torturer and a victim, so why should we? It does not mean we do not intercede where we can to protect the victims, or convince the victimizers to restrain their violence, but we certainly do not judge the victimizer to be any other than a suffering sentient being. Extending compassion impartially does not condone those deeds acted out of the three poisons, nor does it condone the karmic ripening of those whose negative karma is ripening upon them. Your extension of compassion to the victims of a flood will have no impact on the ripening of their karma, will prevent no deaths, will not stem the loss of property and suffering. Your extension of compassion to the victims of war will not indict war criminals, nor save them from the fruit of their own actions.

Compassion needs to be wed with equanimity in order for compassion to become impartial. Otherwise, compassion swiftly turns into recrimination and judgement and bias.

When we bring to mind our bodhicitta vows we are not saying, "I vow to do this practice just to save only the sentient beings I like", we are saying "I am practicing the six perfections in order to become a Buddha so that I might rescue all beings from samsara."

In the end, we Mahāyāna Buddhist practitioners seek to develop objectless,

unconditional compassion.

So what do we do? We try to stem what suffering we see, and we wish that the suffering we cannot address in others as well as ourselves be pacified. That is all we can do, and nothing more. Compassion is nothing more and nothing less than the wish that sentient beings be free from suffering. All sentient beings are suffering at all times. Some suffering is more obvious than others, which is the suffering we tend to focus on. We need to understand that the nature of samsara is suffering through and through. When we understand this, we can then understand that we should experience compassion for those sentient beings who are involved in heavy actions of warring against unarmed people, as well as the people being warred against and so on. No sentient being is less deserving of our compassion as bodhisattvas than any other.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, February 23rd, 2014 at 11:40 PM

Title: Re: Question

Content:

Jigme Tsultrim said:

Sorry, but I believe the standard definitions are sufficient.

Malcolm wrote:

theism:

noun

Belief in the existence of a god or gods, esp. belief in one god as creator of the universe, intervening in it and sustaining a personal relation to his creatures.

I am a theist. Buddhadharma contains a whole pantheon of mundane and transcendent "gods". By the dictionary definition given above, Buddhadharma is theistic.

dogma |'dôgmə|

noun

a principle or set of principles laid down by an authority as incontrovertibly true:

I am a dogmatic. I accept that the Buddha set forth a set of principles that are incontrovertibly true. By the dictionary definition given above, Buddhadharma is dogmatic.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, February 23rd, 2014 at 11:44 PM

Title: Re: Guru yoga not Indian?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Yes. Yes. I mentioned two traditions, Hevajra and Vajrayogini. For example, there are three gurusadhanas translated by a Vibhutipandita into Tibetan. Another text entitled gurumandalasamadana vidhi translated by one of three Dro Lotsawas ('bro lo ts'a ba)

which describes a method of practicing the guru, he is invited in front, one makes offerings to him, praises, etc., exactly the way that guru yogas are done in the Tibetan tradition.

Matylda said:

Yeah this sounds interesting.. I Wonder why GY did not make its way to Japan... I do not know shingon or tendai, though I know many monks and nuns of both tradition, just never asked about it. After all the guru position in both Japanese traditions seems to be very important.

Malcolm wrote:

Guru Yoga comes from Anuttarayoga tantra, which never made its way to Japan.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, February 24th, 2014 at 2:33 AM

Title: Re: Guru yoga not Indian?

Content:

theanarchist said:

The spiritual practice of Guru Yoga itself is not about some a text.

I think the question should rather be, were there any vastly complex visualisation exercises around Guru Yoga in ancient India or is that a Tibetan innovation.

Malcolm wrote:

The answer to the first question is no, not in any recorded text we have, and the answer to the second is yes, as far as we know.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, February 24th, 2014 at 2:36 AM

Title: Re: Question

Content:

Johnny Dangerous said:

The expert faker becomes an actual expert, but he just actualizes the Buddha Nature right...I mean, the Sambogakaya is not a thing substantially seperate from oneself right?

Malcolm wrote:

It is both a part of oneself and not.

Each sentient beings has dharmakāya as their buddhanature from the start. When that is realized, then one can manifest the sambhogakāya and the nirmanakāya.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, February 24th, 2014 at 7:21 PM

Title: Re: Ole Nydahi and Trungpa rinpoche



Content:

AlexanderS said:

Natha does not mean nephew in either Tibetan or Sanskrit. I imagine an expert translator like Malcolm could clear this up.

In the Trinley Thaye Dorje camp the wrathful emanation mentioned is generally thought to be Shamarpa. He lives west from the place mentioned in the prophecy and the Shamarpa is traditionally considered an emanation of Buddha Amitayus (The Buddha of the western direction). As to being an emanation of Padmasambhava

"Karmapa and Konchog Bang (the 5th Shamarpa) and Padma Jung-ney me are all just separate in appearance; In reality there is no separation, (all) in one essence." - Padmasambhava, (from chokgyur lingpa's biography).

Malcolm wrote:

Natha (savior, guide, protector) = mgon po = reference to a personal name, in this case some take this "Natha" to be the present Shamar, who is the nephew of the 16th Karmapa.

However, there are different ways of counting the Karmapa incarnations which would indicate that the troubles existed during an earlier incarnation.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, February 24th, 2014 at 7:57 PM

Title: Re: Ethics of animal slaughter (vis. Marius the Giraffe)

Content:

Simon E. said:

Quite. So does your Bodhisattva vow include 'emptying samsara' of roses, cabbages, and pineapples?

kirtu said:

Plant life is not held to be sentient in Tibetan Buddhism. Otherwise, yes. The entire three realms are to be liberated.

Malcolm wrote:

Simon has a very good point: taken literally, "emptying samsara" can be construed to have some very negative consequences.

But he needn't fear since "emptying samsara" is a mere Indian literary sentiment exhorting the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas to continue to act benevolently on our behalf. Given that there are infinite sentient beings, samsara will never be emptied, therefore, buddhas will always turn the wheel of dharma and bodhisattvas in the form of bees and wasps, etc will always be there to pollinate our flowers and trees (Unless we poison them all). It is a sentiment along the lines of the Zen bodhisattva vow "Sentient beings are numberless, I vow to save them all." It is an aspirational bodhicitta, not a practical one.

So Simon, as attractive as that big glowing pudding may sound, it can never happen practically speaking.

On the other hand, samsara will be emptied during the twenty dark eons when all sentient beings take rebirth in the upper two form realms, in addition to the formless realms, at the destruction of the container universe. That is, from a Buddhist cosmological perspective, a certainty.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, February 24th, 2014 at 8:02 PM

Title: Re: Ethics of animal slaughter (vis. Marius the Giraffe)

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

Actually there are infinitely more examples of mutual aid in nature than there are of predation. Just that we focus on the predation aspect. It appeals to our sense of hierarchy and domination through violence.

Malcolm wrote:

We tend to focus on the predation part because a) it has been discerned in biology that natural top predators such as wolves, cats, bears and so on are vital for ecosystems, which often create the conditions for many species to flourish (for example, certain kinds of beetles can only flourish if there are elk kills, which leads to other things and so on, and b) as top predators ourselves, we humans have outcompeted all other top predators. However, we are not so healthy for the primeval environment. We are also the only animals that self-consciously create our own environment and impose it on the "natural" one.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, February 24th, 2014 at 8:22 PM

Title: Re: Ethics of animal slaughter (vis. Marius the Giraffe)

Content:

LastLegend said:

If there are no sentient beings, will there be Buddhas?

Malcolm wrote:

Of course not.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, February 24th, 2014 at 8:36 PM

Title: Re: Ethics of animal slaughter (vis. Marius the Giraffe)

Content:

LastLegend said:

If there are no Buddhas, then there are no sentient beings?

Malcolm wrote:

No, it does not work that way. Sentient beings are the cause for Buddhas to appear. If there are no sentient beings, Buddha get to take a break.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, February 24th, 2014 at 9:19 PM

Title: Re: Ole Nydahi and Trungpa rinpoche

Content:

Stewart said:

The fact of the matter is that the whole thing backfired on Shamar big time, hardly any Kagyu, or other lineages for that matter, have backed Trinlay Thaye, at best they pay him basic respect, but in reality it's always Karmapa OTD they meet publically. So, sadly, you have begun to rely on slander and conspiracy theory to give them a foot hold.

Malcolm wrote:

Hi Stewart:

This not a fair assessment of the situation.

The "Shamar" candidate was first recognize by Chogyé Trichen Rinpoche, who many assert was the most realized Tibetan teacher in a century. Trinley Thaye was granted the entire sgyud sde kun 'dus by the senior Luding Khenpo in California in a private teaching that lasted for some months.

This is not the first time in history there has been more than one recognized Karmapa. In the end, it just becomes a money and power game. That, sadly, is what the tulku system has largely degenerated into, in my opinion.

The fact that Orgyen Thaye Dorje is accorded "more" respect has more to do with HHDL's patronage than anything else, as far as I can discern. He has also been something of a hostage to the Ganden Podrang, however, and given the history between the Karmapas and the Ganden Phodrang, I can see why this makes many Karma Kagyus very uncomfortable.

The fact remains that the Karma Kagyu school suffered a blow to their reputation because of the controversy. You cannot blame one side more than the other, unless you are a partisan.

As someone with virtually no connection to Karma Kagyu, who has no stake in the game on any side, I think the whole affair is a sad mess and has weakened the Karma Kagyu school considerably.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, February 24th, 2014 at 10:57 PM

Title: Re: Ethics of animal slaughter (vis. Marius the Giraffe)

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

We tend to focus on the predation part because a) it has been discerned in biology that natural top predators such as wolves, cats, bears and so on are vital for ecosystems, which often create the conditions for many species to flourish (for example, certain kinds of beetles can only flourish if there are elk kills, which leads to other things and so on

Sherab Dorje said:

The very fact that you refer to them as "top" is indicative of the hierarchical and unidirectional model which is being utilised, a model that emphasizes the role of the predator. A truly ecological model has a spherical approach to ecosystems: no elk kills, no beetles, no beetles, no elks (and thus no elk kills), etc...

Malcolm wrote:

Nonsense, greg. There are certain kinds of environmental dependencies that do break down into hierarchies, for example, without top or alternately "keystone" predators, populations of deer and so on exceed carrying the capacity of their environments. Of course there are ways of analyzing these things into mutual feedback loops and so on, but some kinds of animals play key roles in a given ecosystem, which when removed, cause the ecosystem to degrade. Other animals, when introduced into a previously stable ecosystem (rabbits in OX, mongooses in Hawaii), etc., wreak havoc on an ecosystem.

Sherab Dorje said:

We are not "top" predators. Realistically speaking we are fodder for viruses, bacteria, internal micro (and macro) organisms, worms, etc...

Malcolm wrote:

Realistically speaking, we are both: the two are not mutually exclusive.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, February 24th, 2014 at 11:08 PM

Title: Re: Ole Nydahi and Trungpa rinpoche

Content:

Stewart said:

Yes, I agree, it's a mess....but I beleive that Shamar first endorsed OTD, before changing his mind... also for a long time, Shamar would not name Chogye Trichen Rinpoche as his source of support, he heavily hinted at it, but when Chogye Trichen Rinpoche was

asked directly, he seemingly denied he had advised Shamar.

Malcolm wrote:

I know for a fact that Chogye Trichen was instrumental in KTT's recognition.

Stewart said:

Sakya Trizin has also gave Karmapa OTD several important transmissions, so I think the Sakyapas, perhaps wisely, have remained neutral.

Malcolm wrote:

We don't have a stake in the game. This basically a power struggle between the Gelugs and conservative Karma Kagyus that has been going on since the war between the King of Tsang and the Ganden Phodrang in the 17th century. All of this politicking comes from that time.

[qupte]

If I am completely honest, this resurfaced for me recently upon Akong Rinpoche's death, I knew him very well, for many years, and was shocked...so i reacted badly to the negative comments by various Shamar students. My bad.[/quote]

It is not your bad at all. This a part of your life and history. It is just good to recognize that it is very worldly, on both sides. If you are a Karma Kagyu however, you have to make a decision who is going to be your leader.

But frankly, all this makes me understand that the family lineage holder model has certain strengths that the other two models, i.e. Tulku succession, or nominated abbotships, as in the throne of Ganden, somewhat lack. While all are subject to manipulation, the family lineage thing has more resistance to external manipulation, at minimum. On the other hand, the Gelug model is appealing too because the head of the Gelug school is nominated on the basis of their scholarship and practice rather than money and power. So, of the three, I think the Tulku system is the weakest. However, it has the most appeal because it allows cults of personality to extend through time in an unprecedented way.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, February 25th, 2014 at 2:32 AM

Title: Re: Ethics of animal slaughter (vis. Marius the Giraffe)

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

realistically speaking viruses, bacteria, etc... are way "higher" than humans when you look at the system as a whole (in a unidirectional manner).

Malcolm wrote:

It all depends on how you are looking at an ecosystem. Then different definitions are valid, depending on context.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, February 25th, 2014 at 2:42 AM

Title: Re: Ole Nydahi and Trungpa rinpoche

Content:

Stewart said:

I know for a fact that Chogye Trichen was instrumental in KTT's recognition.

Fine, can't argue with that...but from my pov, I have trust in Situ Rinpoche, I have received teachings, empowerments and advice from him over the years...I believe him to be an awakened master...but I can accept others have different opinions, that's okay. I have also received the same from Karmapa OTD, again he impressed me, but that's just my personal experience.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, of course, this all goes without saying.

Stewart said:

We don't have a stake in the game. This basically a power struggle between the Gelugs and conservative Karma Kagyus that has been going on since the war between the King of Tsang and the Ganden Phodrang in the 17th century. All of this politicking comes from that time.

Again, I accept this, and truth be told, the whole Karmapa situation doesn't concern me, it does hurt though when some of my teachers are slandered, especially in light of Akong Rinpoche's death. It's a personal thing really, my problem.

Malcolm wrote:

It is fine to want to defend your guru's reputation. You should never feel sorry about that. The situation with the Karmapas is difficult, and it is very similar to the situation with Gyalpo Shugden in Gelug. In the end, only oneself can be the judge of which perspective is right and which is wrong.

I personally generally go along with HHDL's point of view on both these matters, as does HHST, but I know there are others who disagree with him and feel that their own reasons are equally valid.

If there is a lesson to be learned, we who follow these lineages in Western dharma centers need to be cautious about getting mixed up in lineage politics we do not really understand.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, February 25th, 2014 at 4:10 AM

Title: Re: Question

Content:

Johnny Dangerous said:

The expert faker becomes an actual expert, but he just actualizes the Buddha Nature right...I mean, the Sambhogakaya is not a thing substantially separate from oneself right?

Malcolm wrote:

It is both a part of oneself and not.

Each sentient beings has dharmakāya as their buddhanature from the start. When that is realized, then one can manifest the sambhogakāya and the nirmanakāya.

Johnny Dangerous said:

What is one's relationship to the sambhogakaya prior to enlightenment then...i.e. for the purpose of the conversation, I guess what I'm asking is are Yidam etc. "the real thing" prior to this, or just our imagination on our side?

Malcolm wrote:

Prior to attaining the 8th bhumi, the only way you can relate to the Sambhogakāya is through a practice lineage.

The yidams are sambhogakāya manifestations to mahāsiddhis, who then develop the method connected with that manifestation and set that method down in a tantra.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, February 26th, 2014 at 2:23 AM

Title: Re: Emptiness in Yogacara

Content:

Astus said:

As for the ultimate accomplishment, Yogacara has non-abiding nirvana, so it doesn't look like something that accepts any substantially existent things or minds.

Malcolm wrote:

We will agree to disagree.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, February 26th, 2014 at 9:07 PM

Title: Re: Buddhist Hate Crimes

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

Can I ask about the responsibility for others.

E.g. If I know that somebody is hurting somebody else e.g. going after somebody with an axe, then I have a choice... Do I intervene or not intervene? Could something I do or fail to do change the outcome of the situation and the ensuing Karmic outcome for both the

victim and the attacker.

I am not saying that I am karmically responsible for what the attacker does... but I am karmically responsible for what I do. I.e. intervening or not.

If, for example, I could phone the police but decide not to, or wash my hands on the matter, then a decision that I have made has the likely outcome of greater harm or even the death of the victim, even though I didn't swing the axe myself.

Surely there would be serious karmic consequences for myself if I failed to intervene in a situation that: I know about, and know that it is in my power to help?

Malcolm wrote:

We do what we can, and we wish happiness on all. But the best use of our time, until we really have the capacity to truly practice engaged bodhicitta, is to practice Dharma to increase our wisdom. Until that time we should not be giving away our limbs, nor risking our lives trying to "help" others thinking that this is somehow "bodhisattva" activity. As long as we have limited compassion, we should be judicious about how we decide we are going to "help".

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, February 27th, 2014 at 8:36 PM

Title: Re: Jhana and non-dualism - parallels?

Content:

Thomas\_Pynchon said:

Are there parallels between how the Buddha describes his experience of Jhana, as the very vehicle of his enlightenment, and how that is understood within non-dual traditions such as Dzogchen or Advaita?

Malcolm wrote:

Dhyanas are defined by the presence or absence of specific mental factors.

The Dhyanas were not the vehicle of Buddha's awakening, rather he coursed through them in order to remove traces of rebirth associated with the form and formless realms associated with the dhyanas.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, February 27th, 2014 at 9:44 PM

Title: Re: Family lineages vs tulku system vs "meritocracy"

Content:

Sherlock said:

From the thread about Ole Nydahl.

But frankly, all this makes me understand that the family lineage holder model has certain strengths that the other two models, i.e. Tulku succession, or nominated abbotships, as in the throne of Ganden, somewhat lack. While all are subject to



manipulation, the family lineage thing has more resistance to external manipulation, at minimum. On the other hand, the Gelug model is appealing too because the head of the Gelug school is nominated on the basis of their scholarship and practice rather than money and power. So, of the three, I think the Tulku system is the weakest. However, it has the most appeal because it allows cults of personality to extend through time in an unprecedented way.

M

What exactly made the Khon family the only family lineage that lasted past a century while the other Nyingma family lineages from the same period (Gnubs, Zur etc) basically spread out while the original families were lost? (One might say from kula to kaula traditions).

Malcolm wrote:

One, the Sakya branch of the Khon settled largely in the eastern limit of the former Shang Shung kingdom. Two, they were a family that had enjoyed close connections with the Yarlung dynasty. Three, they maintained the ancestral teachings of their clan, in fact Khon Konchog Gyalpo did pass Kilaya and Yangdag to Sachen directly. Four, they were wealthy traders and benefactors. Fifth, they were the chief promulgators of Lamdre, and so on. Sixth, the Sakya branch of the Khon family ruled Tibet for roughly a hundred years. Seventh, the first five Sakya founder Masters were all amazing scholars and practitioners.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, February 27th, 2014 at 10:02 PM

Title: Re: Family lineages vs tulku system vs "meritocracy"

Content:

jiashengrox said:

Furthermore, it was mentioned in Dezhung Rinpoche's biography, "A Saint in Seattle":

He also said there were three ways to be recognised as a great lama. The first was by familial descent, which was worst. The second was as an "incarnate lama" ( or tulku ) which also was very imperfect. The third way was through recognized merit and saintly achievement, which was best. In this connection, Dezhung Rinpoche also repeated the view: "How much better it would be to test prospective tulkus for their knowledge after they grew up than to test them as infants for their ability to identify various objects!" ( pg 259 )

kirtu said:

I don't remember that from "Saint in Seattle". I'll have to go back and reread parts for sure.

However the Sakya tradition is relatively skeptical (or at least quite conservative) concerning tulku recognition. Secondly this may be as close as Dezhung Rinpoche would come to open criticism.

Kirt

Malcolm wrote:

Correct, most Sakya tulku come from East Tibet. But in reality, all the central Tibetan Sakya lineages are controlled by hereditary families.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 28th, 2014 at 1:17 AM

Title: Re: Discussion of Political Topics is Wrong Speech

Content:

Indrajala said:

Historically it has been strong leadership and a unified elite that produced the most stable and prosperous nations able to defend themselves against barbarians.

Malcolm wrote:

You've been living the Sinosphere too long. Geography, not politics, has been the defining feature of political stability.

Indrajala said:

When you politically empower inept peoples and give them a voice,

Malcolm wrote:

Historically, most political systems fail because ineptness on the part of kings and elites.

Indrajala said:

It is only when elites are fractured that rebellions can end up in revolution and subsequent chaos and anarchy.

Malcolm wrote:

Elites usually become fragmented because they become decadent.

Indrajala said:

The common people need to be looked after by their superiors, not empowered.

Malcolm wrote:

This is basically a recipe for a totalitarian government in this day and age.

Indrajala said:

In my mind the capable should be called to positions of authority while their inferiors are governed with benevolence and tough love if need be.

Malcolm wrote:

The problem is with the definition of "capable". Who defines it?

Indrajala said:

This does not mean a totalitarian state.

Malcolm wrote:  
In practice, it does.

Indrajala said:  
There just needs to be strong leadership with active long-term planning. There has to be unforgiving rule of law, otherwise you end up with chaos.

Malcolm wrote:  
What you actually suggesting is replacing the rule of law with the rule of persons. That's ok with me, but don't kid yourself that you are advocating anything other than a return to monarchy.

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Friday, February 28th, 2014 at 3:16 AM  
Title: Re: Family lineages vs tulku system vs "meritocracy"  
Content:

theanarchist said:  
I find it pretty unfair to put all the effort into the education of someone just based on family descendant and not based on actual talent of an individual, whereas others don't get this level of education.

That's just as with music. There have probably been 50 more Mozarts out there, that simply never got the education so they could never develop to their great potential.

If those members of this family are so above average "talented" for dharma practice then they should clearly show that in a normal monastic education. So, put all reasonable candidates into a proper education and then choose the best ones as lineage holders.

Malcolm wrote:  
Fortunately the Khon, Ludings, Thartses and so on are not subject to your "political correct" and "egalitarian" notions of fairness.

I personally think that the Sakya masters have done a fantastic job of maintaining the lineage just as it is for the past 1000+ years. If it works, don't fix it.

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Friday, February 28th, 2014 at 9:08 AM  
Title: Re: Family lineages vs tulku system vs "meritocracy"  
Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Fortunately the Khon, Ludings, Thartses and so on are not subject to your "political correct" and "egalitarian" notions of fairness.

I personally think that the Sakya masters have done a fantastic job of maintaining the lineage just as it is for the past 1000+ years. If it works, don't fix it.

theanarchist said:

Dharma as a private elite club. Great, now THAT surely is what the buddha had in mind 2500 years ago.... As I can see it, the buddhas son didn't get a VIP treatment back then.

Malcolm wrote:

To be a lineage holder in the Sakya lineage requires training from early childhood.

The families involved in these lineages preserve not because they are private clubs but because it is what these families do and have done for many centuries. It is one thing to be a practitioner, it is quite another to be lineage holder.

Attitudes like yours come from not understanding the requirements needed to be a lineage holder.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 28th, 2014 at 8:49 PM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

wisdom said:

Question for anyone who might know, if the basis is ones own fabricated mind, how is my unfabricated mind connected to Dharmadhatu? What is the supreme, primordial reality and how does my personal basis abide in it, what is the relationship between these two things (my personal basis, and the universal whatever within which it finds itself)?

Malcolm wrote:

For each one of us, it is the dharmadhatu. Everything that appears to us appears to us only as the light of our own consciousness. When we reify that light, it appears to us as afflictive objects. When we do not reify it, appears to us as the pure luminescence of our own minds.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 28th, 2014 at 9:48 PM

Title: Re: Discussion of Political Topics is Wrong Speech

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

You've been living the Sinosphere too long. Geography, not politics, has been the defining feature of political stability.

Indrajala said:

On what basis do you suggest this?

Malcolm wrote:

Rome, China, India, Britain, US etc.

Indrajala said:

Historically, most political systems fail because ineptness on the part of kings and elites.

No, it is more related to resource issues and overpopulation usually. Regardless of the political system, the elites are only part of the secular cycle.

Malcolm wrote:

Resources generally mismanaged by "elites".

Indrajala said:

The very stability and internal peace that strong empires impose contain within them the seeds of future chaos. Stability and internal peace bring prosperity, and prosperity causes population increase. Demographic growth leads to overpopulation, overpopulation causes lower wages, higher land rents, and falling per capita incomes for the commoners. At first, low wages and high rents bring unparalleled wealth to the upper classes, but as their numbers and appetites grow, they also begin to suffer from falling incomes. Declining standards of life breed discontent and strife. The elites turn to the state for employment and additional income, and drive up its expenditures at the same time that the tax revenues decline because of the growing misery of the population. When the state's finances collapse, it loses the control of the army and police. Freed from all restraints, strife among the elites escalates into civil war, while the discontent among the poor explodes into popular rebellions.

Peter Turchin, War and Peace and War The Rise and Fall of Empires, 13.

Malcolm wrote:

Completely reinforces this point and the point below.

Indrajala said:

Elites usually become fragmented because they become decadent.

That's only part of the puzzle. In most empires the elites early on are modest and the wealth gap between them and the commoners low. It is resource abundance over time that leads to overpopulation and elite enrichment. That alone does not fragment them however.

Malcolm wrote:

Exactly my point, elites become more and more decadent as their power and wealth increases.

Indrajala said:

This is basically a recipe for a totalitarian government in this day and age. In some places it worked out okay for a few decades. Look at how South Korea and Taiwan went from rags to riches.

Malcolm wrote:

Their economies are part of US economic resource infrastructure, as China too is now.

Indrajala said:

The problem is with the definition of "capable". Who defines it? There is no universal authority to dictate those terms, but situation by situation it is often evident who is really suitable for leadership.

Malcolm wrote:

Only in hindsight, never in foresight.

Indrajala said:

What you actually suggesting is replacing the rule of law with the rule of persons. That's ok with me, but don't kid yourself that you are advocating anything other than a return to monarchy.

They're not mutually exclusive. A constitutional monarchy is such that you get rule of law which is derived from the authority of the crown, yet the crown is still bound by rule of law.

Malcolm wrote:

[/quote]

Such a monarch is a toothless monarch.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 28th, 2014 at 10:01 PM

Title: Re: Family lineages vs tulku system vs "meritocracy"

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

To be a lineage holder in the Sakya lineage requires training from early childhood. .

theanarchist said:

Sure. But in the Tibetan monastic tradition a lot of young monks join a monastery at under 10 years of age.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, and other Kagyu and Nyingma lineages, generally only tulkus are cultivated for lineage holder training, unless, in the case of Nyingma family lineages, you are trained in the terma ritual cycle specific to your family.

In Gelug, however, you have to study for years and years, then you have to study some more in tantric college, then you have to study some more. By the time you are a qualified lineage holder you have spent 30+ years as a scholar/practitioner and are at least in your early forties if not fifties, having only started serious Vajrayāna training in your early thirties or forties.

Even in Sakya however, even if you belong to the Khon or one of the Ngor palaces, you are not automatically selected for such training, you have to show aptitude and interest from a very young age. For this reason, none of HH Dagchen Rinpoche sons were selected for/chose to undergo such training, but his grandson is being trained to succeed HE Ratnavajra at some point. In Ngor, the abbotship traditionally shifted every few years between Khenpos from that family. However, circumstances have led to the Abbey of Ngor being defacto in the hands of the Luding family at this point, the senior Luding Khenpo being the uncle of the junior Luding (who is the son of HE Jetsun Kusho). The Tshar lineage however has, as far as I know, been more of a meritocracy since it is based out of Nalendra Phenpo, which was the toughest academic school in Pre-modern Tibet. It still has family connections, but also some important Tulkus, like the Zimog Tulkus. In Derge, the Sakya school depends mostly on tulkus for succession, as that is the eastern Tibetan preference or so it seems. But they send them to Ngor for their education, for the most part.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 28th, 2014 at 10:06 PM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

Sherlock said:

If the basis is one's unfabricated mind, it is easy to see how this model applies to a personal, individual life level. However, is there a way to say that the universe as a whole has its unfabricated mind too?

Malcolm wrote:

How could there be? This would just render the universe one more sentient being.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 28th, 2014 at 10:10 PM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

Sherlock said:

I don't really think it is just a metaphor. There are other ideas in Buddhadharma such as the six realms of existence, or like the Mahayanasutralamkara (? , not sure if I remember it correctly, but I'm thinking of the text ChNN likes to mention as thinking he managed to understand the first time he read it through, but the second and third times were much more difficult for him until he remembered his teacher's advice to try to understand in terms of his personal life) that both apply on a "cosmic" level as well as within the level of one's one lifetime; I think the cyclical universe idea works similarly.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, these cycles do work on cosmic as well as personal levels. The process of the development as well as the disappearance of our bodies mimics the process of the development and disappearance of the elements in the universe, and the same cycle is repeated through waking and sleeping, etc. But this mimesis does not bear the consequence that the general basis, a set of properties inherent to all sentient, be they buddhas or beings, is a universal mind-stratum. Consciousness permeates all sentient beings, without all sentient beings having the same consciousness.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 28th, 2014 at 11:07 PM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

gad rgyangs said:

claiming that the basis is "contained" within the minds of illusory sentient beings is like claiming that the mirror is contained in the reflections!

Malcolm wrote:

It is the minds of illusory buddhas and sentient beings. Why is this not a problem? The basis is an abstraction, thus it is not real apart from its instantiations. The basis merely describes the potentiality of the mind's innate nature as the three kāyas and how the mind can deviate from that nature. In other words, one's unfabricated mind is the mirror.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, February 28th, 2014 at 11:22 PM

Title: Re: Discussion of Political Topics is Wrong Speech

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Rome, China, India, Britain, US etc.



Indrajala said:

Rome, China and Britain had empires that arose along meta-ethnic frontiers. In the case of Rome, it was continual conflict with the Gauls that facilitated the development of high asabiya, i.e., social cohesion that lent itself to strong political stability until overpopulation meant inter-elite competition became problematic. In the case of Chinese dynasties the constant eternal enemies were from the northern steppes, such as the Xiongnu, Turks and so on, all of whom were basically permanent aliens and a dangerous "other". But that being said it was less about geography and more about a clash of civilizations. Chinese were settled on plains while the Xiongnu and their kin were largely nomadic horsemen. The Chinese could have just as well, and did, settle the pasture land of nomadic peoples. Likewise the Romans settled Gaul territory.

Malcolm wrote:

The purpose of my example was to show positive (India, US, Britain) and negative examples (China, Rome) of how geography is a key factor in political stability.

Indrajala said:

Resource distribution, unless done at gun point, tends to follow its own internal logic.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, usually becoming a pyramid scheme in which wealth concentrates more and more in the so called upper classes who prove to be too venal to do anything more than engage in more hoarding.

Indrajala said:

This is why wise leaders of the past often suggested a return to simple living, like Marcus Aurelius for example.

Malcolm wrote:

Romantics. It never happens. Usually such guidance is long overdue.

Indrajala said:

It was autocratic forms of government that elevated them from rags to riches.

Malcolm wrote:

No, it was US money that elevated them from rags to riches because they embraced US led anti-communism. Example, Cuba, Venezuela, etc., are autocratic countries excluded from US markets tend to be impoverished because they embrace communism and we won't do business with them as much as possible. Mexico however is doing quite well.

Indrajala said:

India, a democracy in name, is still in rags while their competitor China is fairly well off

by regional standards.

Malcolm wrote:

India does not sell as much to the US as China.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, March 1st, 2014 at 12:20 AM

Title: Re: Family lineages vs tulku system vs "meritocracy"

Content:

jiashengrox said:

Then, one might wonder, "Wouldn't it be a little too old for most of the monks to uphold the lineage only after they have completed the studies?" And there is what is an advantage of this system: it ensures quality. If you are unable to even grasp sutric concepts at the very fundamental level, then u are probably not suited to do tantra. I know Sakya has a unique POV of combining sutra and tantra and practicing them concurrently, we realise that even so, sakya is also setting up monastic colleges, which in some sense (i might be wrong again!) following the style of the gelugpas.

Malcolm wrote:

You are totally wrong considering that Sakya predates Gelug by a number of centuries and that the latter school arose out of the former.

jiashengrox said:

However, a concerning question in mind should not just be ensuring the survival of the lineage alone (I used the word alone to further emphasise that i concur that it is important to ensure the continuity of the teachings), but the quality of the teachings that are preserved. I m sure that for us who have read the history of Lam Dre lineage from "Taking Result As the Path" by Cyrus Stearns, we note that some did not continue (as in the case of Segom Jangye, the disciple of Se Kharchungwa, page 212-213 of the book) because of not being able to "sustain the practice, develop wisdom, and so forth".

Malcolm wrote:

The structure to implement the continuation of the Sakya lineage is in the hands of the 'Khon family, the Ngorpas and the Tsharpas (and the Dzongpas too).

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, March 1st, 2014 at 12:25 AM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The basis is an abstraction, thus it is not real apart from its instantiations.

gad rgyangs said:  
so what, its real in its instantiations?

Malcolm wrote:  
Heat is an abstraction derived from instantiations of fire.

The basis is an abstraction derived from instantiations of sapients, both buddhas and sentient beings. Conventionally speaking, samanya-lakṣanas (universals) are considered completely unreal, as opposed to svalakṣanas (particulars), which are allowed a certain species of conventional reality.

The basis is the description of the dharmatā of dharmins. Without a dharmin, a dharmatā is unintelligible, so in the end, the Dzogchen presentation of the basis is not nearly as radical as it is made out to be.

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Saturday, March 1st, 2014 at 12:27 AM  
Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind  
Content:

pensum said:  
Another way to demonstrate this is that the basis of all trees is wood, but there is no wood apart from trees. Without trees there would be no wood. Similarly the basis of all sentient beings is lucid emptiness (gsal stong), yet this empty lucidity does not exist apart from sentient beings.  
It's quite simple really.

gad rgyangs said:  
sentient beings definitely do not exist apart from the lucid emptiness. In the yeshe sangthal, instant presence is discovered within the vast dimension of emptiness, not the other way around.

Malcolm wrote:  
And lucid emptiness does not exist apart from sentient beings and all things:

"Matter is empty, emptiness is matter, there is no matter apart from emptiness, there is not emptiness apart from matter, so too for sensation, perception, formation and consciousness."

"There is no mind in the mind, but the primal nature of the mind is luminous"

The basis in Dzogchen is merely that luminosity described in the PP Sūtras.

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Saturday, March 1st, 2014 at 1:49 AM  
Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

gad rgyangs said:

the basis is not an abstraction, neither is it a thing (res).

Malcolm wrote:

It is a mere abstraction, as such, it is not a thing.

gad rgyangs said:

nope. you are reifying sentient beings again, as those in a dream-state are wont to do.

Malcolm wrote:

Take it up with the sgra thal 'gyur:

As such, in samsara at the start and nirvana at the end,  
since the buddhas did not become deluded,  
the self-appearances were recognized as natureless [rang bzhin med]  
with sense organs that rose up out of the basis.  
There was no lapse into mental analysis of external objects  
and [the self-appearances] were ascertained to be their own movements.

It is incoherent to define the basis as timeless, and then suggest that a sense organ [here the manas-indriya] rise out of it. But clearly here, a mental organ is defined.

Nyibum states:

[D]elusion came from the basis and a special awareness of the basis. Apart from generally pervading, the so-called “basis” is totally undifferentiated, without any consideration of delusion or nondelusion. That so-called “ knower” or “mind” (the assertion of a specific awareness demonstrated in our own texts) is deluded.

So somehow, a mind, or mental faculty arises (without any cause) from a basis that likewise has no cause and isn't a thing or a non-thing, according to you, but nevertheless is described as the cause of samsara and nirvana, and further, this mind [sems] or knower [shes pa po] is "deluded" but it arises from a state of non-delusion.

There is a coherent explanation of this, but it depends on that fact that the basis as such is merely describing the nature of the mind.

Further, when describing how delusion arises, the commentary of the sgar thal 'gyur states very clearly:

The mind [blo] of the conceptual analysis of the individual members of dependent origination arises from intrinsic luminescence of dharmatā manifesting as the five lights, i.e., the conceptuality about the very clear luminescence of five colors comes from thinking “I come from that” and “That comes from me”, and it is said that the mental faculty [yid] is captivated by the appearance of the light because of the buildup of external grasping. Since it is seen as only suffering, this non-delusion becomes delusion

because of conceptual analysis.

It is important to understand that "light" in this context refers only to the luminescence [gdangs] or clarity [gsal ba] of one's own consciousness, it is not an "outside" light, it is not physical light which can bleach color out of pigments, etc.

All of this experience is happening with the context of an individual consciousness. The description is entirely subjective. Its subjectivity and the production of a so called "external universe" is quite easily understood in Yogacara terms, which in fact that Dzogchen tantras borrow from liberally, as we see in the sgra thal 'gyur:

The lamp of self-originated prajñā  
subsumes all phenomena into one taste,  
cutting the continuum of traces connected  
with this grasping to one's appearance.

I have been all over these texts, and there is never any satisfactory explanation for how a mind arises out of the basis acausally. Since the basis is described as a wisdom, a wisdom must in fact be something which bears noetic capacity, and it must in fact arise as a diversity, i.e., as individual instantiations, as the sgra thal 'gyur states:

Other than compassion arising as diversity,  
it is not defined as one thing like this.

Thus, there is no contradiction at all in considering the basis a general description for the nature of the mind which can either realize buddhahood or fall into samsara. Any other explanation is simply incoherent and runs into the inevitable problem of being indistinguishable from tirthika ideas such as brahman, etc., a flaw, incidentally, that Dzogchen tantras and commentaries express a great deal of interest in avoiding and spend an inordinate amount of time addressing so as to avoid the charge of being outside Buddhadharma.

It is incoherent to talk about the basis if the basis is not in fact one's own mind. Then one has to imagine some noetic uber-field out of which instantiations of omniscient or deluded consciousnesses somehow bootstrap themselves into existence. We can see from this passage in the String of Pearls that the basis is the basis of delusion and can become contaminated:

The general 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.  
Further, appearances arise as multiplicity  
because those appearances are apparent objects.

gad rgyangs said:

Conventionally speaking, samanya-lakṣanas (universals) are considered completely unreal, as opposed to svalakṣanas (particulars), which are allowed a certain species of conventional reality.

the basis is not a universal. neither is it a particular.

Malcolm wrote:

Thus, you agree, it is an abstraction. Therefore, there is no basis, unless it is a set of characteristics of one's own mind.

gad rgyangs said:

radical or not, the basis is definitely not the mind of a reified sentient being.

Malcolm wrote:

In order for there to be a reified sentient beings, there has to be a mind which reifies, it is an inescapable reduction. Reification cannot occur without a reifying mind. When a mind ceases to reify, it simple dissolves into its own nature, which is described in Dzogchen texts as the basis. The basis is just one's own unfabricated mind. Any other explanation is complete gibberish.

Your problem is that you want to avoid any discussion of the relative. But Dzogchen tantras are not so shy, and they acknowledge the two truths also, as the String of Pearls states:

The universe and inhabitants have always been empty,  
the ultimate endowed with the form of the relative.

And finally, the sgra thal 'gyur states:

Because mind pervades all the embodied,  
there are no buddhas without sentient beings.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, March 1st, 2014 at 1:51 AM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

heart said:

gad rgyangs is, I think, referring to a method of giving direct introduction that ChNNR use, called Yeshe Sangtal.

/magnus

Malcolm wrote:

No, he is referring to a klong gsal text called Ye shes zang thal, the red volume, volume three, I believe.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, March 1st, 2014 at 2:32 AM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

Malcolm, I like what you're saying, I'm just trying to understand. Could you please respond to my question here:

[https://www.dharmawheel.net/viewtopic.php?f=66&t=15425&p=216335#p216335?](https://www.dharmawheel.net/viewtopic.php?f=66&t=15425&p=216335#p216335)

I find the use of "actualization" in the quotation kind of confusing. Would you, or anybody, happen to know what it might correspond to in Tibetan?

Malcolm wrote:

They mean that vidyā is the "instantiation" (mngon 'gyur) of the basis in a sentient being.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, March 1st, 2014 at 2:41 AM

Title: Re: Discussion of Political Topics is Wrong Speech

Content:

Indrajala said:

A monarch is only as good as his circle of power.

Malcolm wrote:

Āryadeva defines monarchs, in this day and age as fools. There are none more foolish, in fact.

Indrajala said:

Democracies don't always produce decent leaders either.

Malcolm wrote:

No, but it guarantees that an ineffective leader has a limited term. Further, governance, in a Democracy does not really depend on a figure head such as a president.

Indrajala said:

In fact, in a capitalist democracy inevitably the business elites convert their wealth into

political power and then serve business interests above all else.

Malcolm wrote:

Its a process of give and take, right now we are in the give part of the cycle, just like a the end of the 19th century. It will shift back.

Indrajala said:

One advantage to a hereditary monarchy is that children are raised from birth with the skills and connections they need to run a nation.

Malcolm wrote:

There is no evidence at all in history that hereditary monarchies provide long term political stability.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, March 1st, 2014 at 2:45 AM

Title: Re: Family lineages vs tulku system vs "meritocracy"

Content:

jiashengrox said:

Yes, i don't deny that Sakya predates Gelug by a number of centuries, but the monastic tradition somehow was not as rigorous until the recent years (again i hope i m not wrong).

Malcolm wrote:

Of course you are wrong. Ngorpas are just as strict as Gelugpas.

jiashengrox said:

in fact, i acknowledge that je tsongkhapa somehow inherited this system from the sakya (i would presume through his sakya teacher rendawa), which can pre date to the era of sakya pandita. But this monastic training in sakya is not as prevalent as the past, hence coining the phrase "in some sense following the footsteps of the gelugpas". it is the tradition of the gelugpas that has continually maintained this rigorous monastic training.

Malcolm wrote:

You really need to revise this perspective. Ngorchen (1382-1456) established a very strict monastic order. Also Nalendra was strict. And Sangphu. Perhaps in Sakya itself monks were not as strict.

What is lacking for lay people is a decent education in the basics of Buddhadharma. As I get older I can see that there is limited benefit to Varjayāna practice without some grounding, either prior too or simultaneously, in Sutrayāna teachings. There is any number of very good Sakya Khenpos. Basically in Sakya, you are either a scholar or a ritualist.



Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, March 1st, 2014 at 2:51 AM

Title: Re: Discussion of Political Topics is Wrong Speech

Content:

Indrajala said:

Actually the development of a centralized court model with a heavy hierarchy in Japan based on Chinese models actually was prompted by fears of foreign invasion. By the late Asuka and early Nara period the system was largely in place and it worked wonders for the economy and military. It also produced a respectable nation state that could hold its own weight in international dealings. The Cambridge History of Japan Volume 1 provides all these details.

Malcolm wrote:

Political stability in Japan can be accounted for simply through its geographical isolation.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, March 1st, 2014 at 3:04 AM

Title: Re: Discussion of Political Topics is Wrong Speech

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Political stability in Japan can be accounted for simply through its geographical isolation.

Indrajala said:

What are you talking about? The Yamato court was constantly at war with rivals and non-Japanese tribes (Hayato, Ebisu, etc.) until basically the 8th century. It later suffered decentralization which led to the Kamakura period and subsequent centuries of civil wars. Even in early centuries the Yamato court was at odds with Silla in Korea and invasion was a constant fear. There was a war between Japan against a Silla-Tang alliance in the 660s.

Malcolm wrote:

The Silla-Tang alliance was totally unstable, and never represented a serious threat to the Yamamoto court.

Internal stability does not mean one does not fight others. In fact, the ability to master others in war comes from internal stability. And the Yamamoto were mercenaries in the Korean Peninsula for the Baekje.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, March 1st, 2014 at 3:12 AM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

Malcolm, I like what you're saying, I'm just trying to understand. Could you please respond to my question here:

[https://www.dharmawheel.net/viewtopic.php?f=66&t=15425&p=216335#p216335?](https://www.dharmawheel.net/viewtopic.php?f=66&t=15425&p=216335#p216335)

I find the use of "actualization" in the quotation kind of confusing. Would you, or anybody, happen to know what it might correspond to in Tibetan?

Malcolm wrote:

They mean that vidyā is the "instantiation" (mngon 'gyur) of the basis in a sentient being.

dzogchungpa said:

Those aren't scare quotes, are they?

OK, so how are we to understand "Therefore, while awareness is necessarily the ground, the ground is not necessarily awareness."?

To me, it seems incompatible with your position.

Malcolm wrote:

The basis is a set of qualities that all minds have. Vidyā is the specific instantiation of those qualities in a sentient being. The basis here has been defined for you as tathāgatagarbha, i.e. dharmakāya in a obscured form. Dharmakāya demonstrates in this instance nothing more than the potential for a sentient being to become omniscient.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, March 1st, 2014 at 3:51 AM

Title: Re: Family lineages vs tulku system vs "meritocracy"

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

What is lacking for lay people is a decent education in the basics of Buddhadharma. As I get older I can see that there is limited benefit to Varjayāna practice without some grounding, either prior too or simultaneously, in Sutrayāna teachings. There is any number of very good Sakya Khenpos. Basically in Sakya, you are either a scholar or a ritualist.

Clarence said:

Apologies for taking this off-topic, but how do you see that in regards of Dzogchen practice? Is it easier to practice Dzogchen vs Vajrayana without those basics in Buddhadharma?

Malcolm wrote:

I have wavered on this over the years, as I have in so many other things, but my present thinking is that all Vajrayāna practitioners of whatever stripe need a solid grounding in Hinayāna and Mahāyāna paths.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, March 1st, 2014 at 3:55 AM

Title: IS THE DALAI LAMA SAFE?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

<http://www.jamyangnorbu.com/blog/2014/02/28/is-the-dalai-lama-safe/>

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, March 1st, 2014 at 3:58 AM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

As such, one's mind present as the nature of all the phenomena of buddhahood is realized as buddha.

-- Nyima Bum

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, March 1st, 2014 at 4:37 AM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

There seems to be a slight disparity between what you, Malcolm and pensum, are saying, but I will think about it. Maybe we can discuss the first paragraph of the note: What we call the "ground" is the union of emptiness and luminosity. It is the dharmatā: motionless, ultimate reality, the tathāgatagarbha. At the slightest arising of the creative power of awareness (and there is no question of its not arising), there occurs what is called the appearance of the ground (gzhi snang). The appearance of the ground and the creative power of awareness are the same thing. This creative power moves, whereas awareness itself is always motionless. It is as when the sun rises. The sun's rays cover the earth, but the sun does not move out from itself. Its rays are like the creative power of awareness. The appearance of the ground is said to "move," in the sense that it is the ground's radiance, not because it is drawn out by something extraneous.

("creative power" = "rtsal")

I find the phrase "there is no question of its not arising" kind of intriguing. It doesn't seem to explain much.

Malcolm wrote:

This is just a description of the nature of the mind. No mind, no nature of the mind.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, March 1st, 2014 at 4:51 AM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

gad rgyangs said:

the basis is not the "cause" of samsara and nirvana, and you may choose to create an actual duality of delusion/non-delusion, but as you know that is a mistake of the lower vehicles.

Malcolm wrote:

Of course it is, that is how it is defined by Dzogchen tantras. As Nyibum notes:

The trio of the essence, nature and compassion of the original basis becomes the three ignorances.

gad rgyangs said:

this clearly says that mind "arises from intrinsic luminescence of dharmatā manifesting as the five lights". Isn't that simple enough?

Malcolm wrote:

Dharmatā here is wisdom. If the basis is not wisdom, it is inert, non-sentient. How can there be sentience apart from instantiations of sentience, i.e. minds?

gad rgyangs said:

It is important to understand that "light" in this context refers only to the luminescence [gdangs] or clarity [gsal ba] of one's own consciousness, it is not an "outside" light, it is not physical light which can bleach color out of pigments, etc.

this is what keeps tripping you up. You insist on taking the fiction of "one's own consciousness" as an absolute, imagining that "inside/outside" is an objective distinction.

Malcolm wrote:

It doesn't trip me up at all. Your problem is you think all this is all a description of some ultimate. It isn't. It is all purely conventional.

gad rgyangs said:

I have been all over these texts, and there is never any satisfactory explanation for how a mind arises out of the basis acausally. Since the basis is described as a wisdom, a wisdom must in fact be something which bears noetic capacity, and it must in fact arise as a diversity, i.e., as individual instantiations, so why do you keep saying "the basis" instead of "bases?" why do you keep referring to

the basis as an "it" rather than a "them"?

Malcolm wrote:

As I pointed out, the basis is merely a generic term, just like vijñāna in vijñānadhatu is a generic term which covers all instances of consciousness.

gad rgyangs said:

Thus, there is no contradiction at all in considering the basis a general description for the nature of the mind which can either realize buddhahood or fall into samsara. same problem: all you have done is passed the buck and now you must explain what is the basis for all those individual minds.

Malcolm wrote:

The basis is a generic set of qualities, essence, nature and compassion, that all minds possess.

gad rgyangs said:

It is incoherent to talk about the basis if the basis is not in fact one's own mind. Then one has to imagine some noetic uber-field out of which instantiations of omniscient or deluded consciousnesses somehow bootstrap themselves into existence. you have set up this straw man and are having a ball tilting at the windmills, but no one says this: the basis is not a field, it is not a describable thing, period.

Malcolm wrote:

It is a describable principle, that is why Dzogchen tantras spend so much time describing it.

gad rgyangs said:

Notice that you never pull up any of the thousands of quotes in the corpus that say it is beyond conceptual constructs and free of all extremes, so of course for you it must either be X or Y, black or white, etc.

Malcolm wrote:

Those citations are not useful for the purpose at hand, which is explaining how delusion arises from something supposedly undeluded.

gad rgyangs said:

see, there you go: if you can't fit it into a category then its unacceptable to you.

Malcolm wrote:

Your inability to see that it is merely a catalogue of qualities forces you to basically assert one of the five faulty positions of the basis, i.e., that it is indeterminable.

gad rgyangs said:

yes, claiming that sentient beings with multiple bases exist is the product of a mind which reifies.

Malcolm wrote:

Right, which is your claim.

gad rgyangs said:

Your problem is that you want to avoid any discussion of the relative. But Dzogchen tantras are not so shy, and they acknowledge the two truths also, as the String of Pearls states:

The universe and inhabitants have always been empty,  
the ultimate endowed with the form of the relative.

haha and how is this "ultimate" different from God or Brahman exactly? What is the "form of the relative" except illusory universes and beings?

Malcolm wrote:

The ultimate is emptiness free from proliferation. When there is proliferation, there are sentient beings, buddhas, worlds, universes, etc. In order for there to be a presence or absence of proliferation, there has to be a basis for the the presence or absence of proliferation, and that basis is just the mind of a sentient [i.e. buddhas or beings].

In the end, Dzogchen does not actually go beyond the yogacara madhyamaka synthesis.

gad rgyangs said:

And finally, the sgra thal 'gyur states:

Because mind pervades all the embodied,  
there are no buddhas without sentient beings.  
and the PP sutras say there are no buddhas or sentient beings.

Malcolm wrote:

Ultimately there are no sentient beings, no basis, etc.

Relatively there is a basis, i.e. the minds of sentient beings, and so on.

So, what we demonstrated here is that Dzogchen in the end, despite a lot of hyperbole and rhetoric is just another conventional scheme for describing the four noble truths: suffering, the cause, the cessation and the path.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, March 1st, 2014 at 5:08 AM

Title: Re: IS THE DALAI LAMA SAFE?

Content:

odysseus said:

There ´s nothing to worry about. The Dalai Lama can handle himself. These "enemies" are not dangerous, they ´re just angry.

Malcolm wrote:  
Don't be so sure...

<https://tinyurl.com/l337nwj>

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Saturday, March 1st, 2014 at 6:06 AM  
Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind  
Content:

Malcolm wrote:  
The ultimate is emptiness free from proliferation. When there is proliferation, there are sentient beings, buddhas, worlds, universes, etc. In order for there to be a presence or absence of proliferation, there has to be a basis for the the presence or absence of proliferation, and that basis is just the mind of a sentient [i.e. buddhas or beings].

gad rgyangs said:  
this is totally circular: first you say that sentient beings are the result of proliferation, and the ultimate is free from proliferation. so far so good. then you say that the ultimate is "just the mind of a sentient being". totally circular, and also total reification of both sentient beings and the ultimate.

Malcolm wrote:  
The ultimate described in words is merely a reification of a mind.

gad rgyangs said:  
relatively there is a concept of a basis in the mind of a sentient being. If, however, that sentient being recognizes instant presence, then all such distinctions of "ultimate" and "relative" fall away.

Malcolm wrote:  
Which proves my point that the basis is just the mind of a sentient being, for simplicities sake, when there is no proliferation in that mind, when it is unfabricated, that is buddhahood. When there is proliferation, sentient being hood.

It is inane to discuss things like a basis without discussing what a basis is a basis of (samsara and nirvana). That discussion of the basis of samsara and nirvana is only meaningful with regards to sentient beings. And yes, we are referring to an ālaya of sentient beings, not in the specialized man ngag sde usage of the term, where it refers only to ignorance, but in the more general way, in the way it is used in non-man ngag sde, in some terma cycles like the dgongs pa zang thal, and in the gsar ma schools. In short, what we are talking about is the ālaya cause continuum.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, March 1st, 2014 at 6:25 PM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

gad rgyangs said:

the basis is the basis of all phenomena of samsara and nirvana, including sentient beings and their minds. A mirror is the basis for all reflections, but it is not contained in the reflections. You said "The basis is a generic set of qualities, essence, nature and compassion, that all minds possess.". This is like saying "The mirror is a generic set of qualities that all reflections possess." This makes no sense.

Malcolm wrote:

No, it is like saying that all mirrors possess a general set of characteristics, such as reflectivity, and so on.

Again, you are just reifying the basis as if it were something like "brahman".

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, March 1st, 2014 at 6:54 PM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

Sherlock said:

If the other paths in Buddhadharma really had the same view of the base, path, and fruit as Dzogchen, their way of practice would likewise be the same.

Malcolm wrote:

It is more or less the same.

The authors of Dzogchen texts wouldn't feel the need to contrast their path so much with that of the tantras either.

The Supreme Source said:

1. There is no view on which one has to meditate.
2. There is no commitment, or samaya, one has to keep.
3. There is no capacity for spiritual action one has to seek.
4. There is no mandala one has to create.



5. There is no initiation one has to receive.
6. There is no path one has to tread.
7. There are no levels of realization (bhumis) one has to achieve through purification.
8. There is no conduct one has to adopt, or abandon.
9. From the beginning, self-arising wisdom has been free of obstacles.
10. Self-perfection is beyond hope and fear.

Malcolm wrote:  
Hevajra Tantra:

No meditator, no meditation,  
no deity, and also no mantra.

And:

Here there is no method and wisdom,  
the appearance of true reality,  
can't be described by another, the innate  
cannot be found anywhere.

And:

All migrating beings arise from me,  
also the three realms also arise from me,  
I pervade all of this,  
the nature of migrating beings is not seen elsewhere.

And:

Therefore, no smell, no sound, no form,  
no purity of taste and thought,  
nothing to touch, no phenomena, everything is pure,  
having understood migrating beings pure by nature as migrating beings.

And:

[C]onsciousness is the form of all.

And:

No recitation of mantra, no austerity, no fire pujas,

also no one in the maṇḍala, and also no maṇḍala,  
that is the mantra recitation, that is the austerity, that is the fire pujas,  
that is the one in the maṇḍala and the maṇḍala,  
in brief, the mind is the encompassing form.

The pure mind's  
nature is nirvana.

You see, the message of the bodhicitta texts is not really so unique in this respect.

The Supreme Source said:

Is it all just rhetoric? I don't think so. Maybe in actual terms, it still takes many years of retreat for both a Mahamudra practitioner and a Dzogchen practitioner to reach realization, but the way the view of the base, path and fruit differs in both paths strongly influences the actual practice.

Malcolm wrote:

The actual practice of Dzogchen is unifying the three inner tantras. When we talk about essence nature and compassion, this is really just a riff on the three samadhis of mahāyoga, etc. I.e.:

The samadhi of suchness = essence

The samadhi of universal appearance = nature

The samadhi of the cause = compassion

One of the seventeen tantras, The Mind Mirror of Vajrasattva explains:

Again he replied “Oh Vajraholder, listen! After my Nirvana, teach this to sentient beings of the future. Generation stage Mahāyoga is like the basis of all Dharma. Completion state Anuyoga is the like the path of all Dharma. Great Perfection Atiyoga is the like the result of Dharma. Therefore, the meaning of the inseparability of the trio of creation and completion is understood as the three syllables. [9/a] If it is asked what those are, they can be understood with Om Aḥ Hūṃ. Therefore, hold in mind what I have clearly demonstrated. Without arising or ceasing, Om exists in oneself. Without birth and death, Aḥ exists oneself. Inseparable, Hūṃ exists in oneself. The single unwritten tantra exists in oneself. The single undemonstrated agama exists in oneself. The intimate instruction that discloses one's vidyā exists in oneself. The lamp of the essence of wisdom is very bright. The meaning of the six yānas are to be understood in three. The meaning of the six syllables are to be understood in three syllables. The tantra must be unraveled with the meaning of the trio of creation and completion to sentient beings of the future. The three syllables exist in all sentient beings. Therefore, in terms of accomplishment, explained Accomplishment Mahāyoga using the ground; explain Agama Anuyoga using space; and explained Upadesha Dzogchen using the sun and moon. The confirmation of the ultimate garbha is to be understood with this tantra.”

And:

From that basis existing in the form of a halo of light, the so called “causal condition” is the actual ignorance. Since that becomes an intellectual analysis, it is called the “dominant condition”. Since is apprehended subjectively, it is called “the object condition”. For example, like face of a person shown to a mirror. Since those three happen at the same time, it is called “the immediately simultaneous and antecedent condition”.

That is one’s own basis but it was not recognized by oneself. The samsaric three realms are formed through delusion.

This tantra also demonstrates the fault of not receiving empowerment:

The demonstration of the fault of not obtaining the supreme empowerment is that the yogin, for example, will be like a boatman with out an oar, unable to deliver to the other side. If the supreme empowerment is obtained, the secret mantra that is not accomplished will be accomplished.

When it comes to the unique feature of Dzogchen, it lies in the the anatomy of thögal, and that's about it. But even in this respect, that fact that path depends on human physical anatomy classifies it along with other highest yoga tantra systems.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, March 1st, 2014 at 7:00 PM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

alpha said:

Also , if you say " Dharmadhtu is a condition common to all beings " that would imply to mean the individual basis not dharmadatu since dharmadathu per Rinpoche's explanation it means "all of existence".

Malcolm wrote:

Dharmadhātu, literally meaning "source of phenomena", in Mahāyāna means the general emptiness of all things. Dharmatā means the specific emptiness of a given thing; however, dharmatā, in Dzogchen texts, also refers to how the basis is instantiated within a given sentient being.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, March 1st, 2014 at 7:06 PM

Title: Re: Family lineages vs tulku system vs "meritocracy"

Content:

Sherlock said:

It is best to follow one's guru. I think for ChNN, the outline of sutrayana he gives in the Precious Vase is what he expects his students to know if they want to learn in a more organized way.

Malcolm wrote:

ChNN only sets a minimum bar on what he expects people to know, but he expects \_everyone\_ to learn the base. Sadly, most people ignore him on this point, but it is partially because the translation is difficult to read.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, March 1st, 2014 at 7:44 PM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

Sherlock said:

How is the way of the practice the same?

The only mantra recitation is the three syllables. Visualization is not very important compared to tantric mahamudra. The supreme empowerment doesn't refer to the ritualized actions of putting a vase on your head etc, but to conveying the meaning of Dzogchen through whatever means, often just through oral explanations.

If anything, Dzogchen way of practice is more similar to sutrayana meditation than to tantra.

Malcolm wrote:

Nonsense. For example, the Vima Nyinthig has a detailed text on praṇāyama called the *rlung gyi phra khrid*, which gives sets of practices that are very important for Dzogchen practitioners. Praṇāyama, not important at all in sutrayāna meditation, is extremely important in Dzogchen. Likewise, the notion that view to be meditated is conferred through experiences gained during the empowerment. Not only this, but the whole contextualization of practice is completely based on the systems of nāḍīs and cakras in the human body and so on.

The supreme empowerment means, according to The Mind Mirror of Vajrasattva:

There are three kinds of empowerments, outer, inner and secret. The outer empowerment is the mandala of colored powder...The empowerments are conferred sequentially. The location of conferring them is the brahmarandhra. Having complete the outer and inner empowerments as such, one should enter into the secret empowerment. There are three syllables...As such, having completed the three empowerments, one should bestow the instructions to be bestowed. The yoga who has the complete empowerments will definitely become accomplished. The illustration of the meaning of secret mantra is granted through empowerment.

In general, the ancient texts and commentaries assume that a person who wants to practice Dzogchen will receive all four empowerments, elaborate, unelaborate and so on. Of course, the system of the direct introduction does exist in the seventeen tantras,

but it is generally considered to be given only on the basis of the elaborate and so on empowerments, just as so-called "sems sde" was generally only conferred to people who had received at minimum the Guhyagarbha empowerment. "Longde" as we know, can only be practiced on the basis of an anuyoga empowerment.

And in point of fact, the Dzogs pa rang 'byung tantra mainly concerns mahayoga and anuyoga methods, various kinds of maha and anu style empowerments, as well as elaborate rites for leading practitioners through the bardo. The commentary on the sgra thaI 'gyur has a very elaborate Vajravārahī practice as well as other creation stage practices. These are discussed in the commentary to this passage:

Amazing, though there are countless stages  
of ultimate secret practice,  
by dividing the principle ones,  
[the one of] method and [the one of] supremely profound prajñā  
are summarized from them.

In actuality, Dzogchen is always contextualized as a part of secret mantra in the seventeen tantras themselves.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, March 1st, 2014 at 7:48 PM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

Sherlock said:

The supreme empowerment doesn't refer to the ritualized actions of putting a vase on your head etc

heart said:

In he Vima Nyingtik the first empowerment, the elaborate, is given with a vase.

/magnus

Malcolm wrote:

As is the second, the unelaborate empowerment.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, March 1st, 2014 at 7:48 PM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

Sherlock said:

The only mantra recitation is the three syllables.

Malcolm wrote:

This is seriously a very silly thing to say. Where did you get this idea? What about the six syllables of Samantabhadra, song of the vajra and so on? What about the countless mantras for recitation in the rDzogs pa Rang 'byung? What about the Ekajati practices in the khro ma nag mo rgyud?

Sherlock said:

Visualization is not very important compared to tantric mahamudra.

Malcolm wrote:

Where do you get this idea? What about semzin and rushan? What about all the praṇāyama practices that involve visualization?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, March 1st, 2014 at 7:53 PM

Title: Re: Family lineages vs tulku system vs "meritocracy"

Content:

Sherlock said:

It is best to follow one's guru. I think for ChNN, the outline of sutrayana he gives in the Precious Vase is what he expects his students to know if they want to learn in a more organized way.

Malcolm wrote:

ChNN only sets a minimum bar on what he expects people to know, but he expects \_everyone\_ to learn the base. Sadly, most people ignore him on this point, but it is partially because the translation is difficult to read.

Sherlock said:

I think it's because it starts from a fairly hard to understand and somewhat arcane position: contrasting the different schools in India. The first time I read it, I had problems getting past the first chapter and stopped. Later, I just read the later chapters, which were much clearer.

Malcolm wrote:

It's is principally a commentary on the man ngag lta phreng ba attributed to Padmasambhava.

The reason why we need to acquaint ourselves with these tenet systems is so that we avoid falling into the same errors, thinking our view accords with Buddhadharma, when it really doesn't.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, March 1st, 2014 at 9:42 PM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

Sherlock said:

In semdzins and rushan, the only real "mantra" is the three syllables. There are other syllables but those are not mantras.

Malcolm wrote:

Seriously, where do you get the strange idea that the six syllables of Samantbhadara are not mantras? Certainly not from Dzogchen tantras:

Realizing the meaning of the six syllables unravels the great tantra of secret mantra. Abiding in the meaning of the six syllables is a person's nirvana. The kings that creates realization is the six sounds of syllables. All secret mantra is complete in the six syllables.

-- Mind Mirror of Vajrasattva

Sherlock said:

Your other examples are also not essential practices of Dzogchen upadesha (trekchod and thogal).

It's not important to get the fine details of the visualization compared to the two stages.

Malcolm wrote:

The fact creation and completion practices like caṇḍalī yoga are brought up in the seventeen tantras themselves and their commentarial literature proves that they are important.

The main principle of the creation stage of developing divine pride. I really don't know how much experience you have of doing elaborate creation stage practices, but your comments betray a lack of familiarity about how such creation stage is actually done in practice. Many Dzogchen/Nyingma practitioners, unfamiliar with the fine details of "gsar ma" tantras, have the idea that "sudden" or instant creation is only a principle of Anuyoga. However, the Laghusamvara Tantra explicitly teaches instant creation as well as gradual creation. The general consideration is one of experience. In the gsar ma schools, the more elaborate creation stage practices are for beginners, while advanced practitioners rely on instant creation stages. You can read about this in the Lamdre book.

In addition, there are very few people who practice thögal seriously. As Khenpo Ngachung mentions, principally thogal is used these days to stabilize tregchö. Most Dzogchen practitioners are not going to realize the body of light. Most practitioners are going attain realization in the bardo, if at all. If you maintain your samayas, no matter what system of Vajrayāna you practice, you will achieve Buddhahood within seven lifetimes, i.e. if you maintain your samayas, you are functionally equivalent to a stream entrant. Contrary to popular belief, Dzogchen practitioners also need to maintain their samayas (plural), not just the groovy ones like non-existence, ubiquity, singleness and

natural perfection (which can't be broken anyway).

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, March 1st, 2014 at 9:47 PM

Title: Re: Myanmar considers law restricting interfaith marriage

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

The only thing Buddhists need as protection, is to act like Buddhists.

Malcolm wrote:

Well, the fact is that in some countries, like Lhadak, Buddhist women are "press-ganged" into marriages with Muslims. This also happens in Bangladesh. A lot of what is happening in Myanmar is a direct reaction to the oppression of Buddhists in the Chittagong hills. It does not make it right, but that is actually what is happening. The Buddhist communities in the Chittagong have had close ties with the Burmese for many centuries.

<http://www.angelfire.com/ab/jumma/bgground.html>

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, March 1st, 2014 at 10:03 PM

Title: Re: Tendai is a Ch'an school.

Content:

Indrajala said:

The way I judge Buddhists is basically based on how much broad knowledge they possess and how well they interpret Dharma in a reasonable and realistic manner. Emotions and warm feelings are not wise guides for judging people.

Malcolm wrote:

That is because, like most religious intellectuals, your strongest attachment is through the saṃjñā skandha, rather than the vedana skandha. This is also why you promiscuously promulgate your point of view that common people should not be allowed to govern themselves, that they need guidance from their "betters" and so on. In other words your elitism is merely a factor of your afflictive make up, there is nothing objective about it at all.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, March 1st, 2014 at 10:47 PM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

Sherlock said:

You don't need to spend years to get your visualization of a specific body part of a deity



perfectly right in Dzogchen, also you just visualize the relevant syllables or channels depending on the practice, not the whole deity. Are you saying that in actual practice, visualization of all the fine details in the two stages is not necessary?

Malcolm wrote:

In actual practice, when you are reciting the sadhana, you just recite it clearly, i.e. without distraction; intensely, i.e. you know what you are saying, and quickly, without lingering on any part of the sadhana until you come to the end.

Let us say you are meditating the Hevajra mandala, there there are thirty-two topics. You pick one topic per session. For example, in the beginning, for the most part, one focuses on cultivating divine pride "I am yidam X". The one focuses on getting the central eye correct. Why? Because this causes the vāyu to begin to settle in the central channel. Then you move from one to the other. Eventually, by switching topics from one to another, you can immediately recall a generic image of the whole deity without any effort. Then you can dispense with this. You don't spend hours and hours trying to get each detail perfect.

In one session you apply both some equipoise on one aspect of the mandala or another, and then one does some completion stage practice, right from the very beginning. When you are doing completion stage practice, you only focus on what you need for that completion stage practice.

Mantra recitation is considered a post-equipoise practice in Sakya because it involves activity. In Nyingma, focusing on the mantra rosary is generally considered the main practice of the creation stage, and resting in the nature of the mind at the end is considered to be the main completion stage.

Even if you are a fantastic "Dzogchen" practitioner, if you recite mantras in a state of distraction, they won't work. So in fact, whether you are doing some elaborate practice like Hevajra, or an Anuyoga practice like Dragphur, you need to have good, stable concentration, otherwise your mantras won't work. The whole point of creation stage is to develop your concentration to the point that your mantras work easily and swiftly. If you think that mantras like the 25 spaces are some exception, they are not. In this case they function only if you are in a state of natural repose, unfettered equipoise i.e. cog bzhag.

Rongzom makes the point very clearly that Dzogchen practitioners must develop the mental factors that characterize the first dhyana, vitarka, vicara, priti, sukha and ekagraha, i.e. applied attention, sustained attention, physical ease, mental ease and one-pointedness. If you do not have a stable śamatha practice, you can't really call yourself a Dzogchen practitioner at all. At best, you can call yourself someone who would like to be a Dzogchen practitioner a ma rdzogs chen pa. People who think that Dzogchen frees one from the need to meditate seriously are seriously deluded. The sgra thal 'gyur clearly says:

The faults of not meditating are:

the characteristics of samsara appear to one,  
there is self and other, object and consciousness,  
the view is verbal,  
the field is perceptual,  
one is bound by afflictions,  
also one throws away the path of the buddhahood,  
one does not understand the nature of the result,  
a basis for the sameness of all phenomena does not exist,  
one's vidyā is bound by the three realms,  
and one will fall into conceptuality

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, March 1st, 2014 at 10:57 PM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

Sherlock said:

It seems to me like you are in Sakya mood again, trying to see Dzogchen as just the completion stage of Nyingma. That might have been the view of Sakya Pandita

Malcolm wrote:

Actually, it's Mipham's point of view.

Sherlock said:

Dzogchen like Jamgon Kongtrul, Karma Chagmed, Namkhai Norbu all agree that Dzogchen is different from Mahamudra.

Malcolm wrote:

Of course the path of Dzogchen thögal is different than the path of the two stages, (but it doesn't really seem to be that different when you examine the sbyor drug, despite mutsuk's protests to the contrary).

None of them would say that Dzogchen produces a Buddhahood superior to the path of the two stages. That is a Bonpo point of view.

Sherlock said:

In the two stages, the completion stage is secondary to the generation stage, to reduce attachment to the generation stage.

Malcolm wrote:

Creation and completion are to be practice in union from the beginning. Completion stage is no way secondary to creation stage. Whatever made you think it was?

Sherlock said:

Trekchod and thogal, longde four das, semde four contemplations are not secondary to

Mahayoga, at least as they survive today.

Malcolm wrote:

I know a lot of people who have received all of these instructions, and just about as many who do nothing with them at all. I know many people, for example, who have received Mandarava creation and completion practices, and many who apply them regularly. I would venture a guess and say that in general, advanced Dzogchen practices remain at a level of fantasy for most people.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, March 1st, 2014 at 10:58 PM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Contrary to popular belief, Dzogchen practitioners also need to maintain their samayas (plural), not just the groovy ones like non-existence, ubiquity, singleness and natural perfection (which can't be broken anyway).

dzogchungpa said:

What are the non-groovy ones, say, for members of the DC?

Malcolm wrote:

The standard 27.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, March 1st, 2014 at 11:01 PM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

Sherlock said:

I was wondering about the dhyanas in relation to Dzogchen recently. Thanks for the info.

However what about just practicing the semdzins?

Malcolm wrote:

If they induce those mental factors, great. If they don't...

Developing a stable śamatha is crucial in Dzogchen. Just look at the seventh lojong. If someone wants to pursue SMS they will get nowhere without doing many months of long 2 hour sessions. And it gets more meditation heavy the higher you go.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, March 1st, 2014 at 11:18 PM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

Sherlock said:

Kongtrul says completion is secondary in Creation and Completion.

Malcolm wrote:

Secondary in what sense? Secondary in the sense that yantra is a secondary practice?

The practice of completion stage is what causes one to achieve buddhahood. It is not merely for "reducing attachment" to the creation stage. On the other hand, what he may mean is the "completion" stage practice of dissolving the deity. This still cannot be construed as "secondary" since in a Nyingma sadhana practice, this is where one rests in tregchö.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, March 1st, 2014 at 11:22 PM

Title: Re: Myanmar considers law restricting interfaith marriage

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

Appearances are irrelevant, ones internal condition is what is important.

Sufism is also oppressed and suppressed by Shiite and Suni governments, does that mean there is nobody practicing Sufism in Shiite and Suni countries?

Burma is apparently a Buddhist country, if their Buddhism is being overrun by Islam then they need to ask themselves "Why?" because banning interfaith marriages is not going to be a long-term solution.

Malcolm wrote:

They are not banning interfaith marriages, they are guaranteeing the right of Buddhist women to keep their Buddhist faith if they enter into marriage with Muslims, undoubtedly to discourage Muslim men from marrying Buddhist women (who then must convert to Islam). You clearly did not read the article carefully:

The proposals include a law "to give protection and rights for ethnic Buddhists when marrying with other religions", as well as a ban on polygamy and legislation to "balance the increasing population".

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, March 1st, 2014 at 11:42 PM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

Sherlock said:

End of the day, my Dzogchen teachers say Dzogchen is better than Mahamudra and I

believe them.

Malcolm wrote:

In the end, this is mere puffery and triumphalism. It's like saying you can't get rainbow body from practicing Vajrayogini.

You may be more interested in practicing Dzogchen rather than practicing Lamdre, or Mahamudra, etc., but in the end one does not lead to a result higher than the other.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, March 2nd, 2014 at 9:14 AM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

Sherlock said:

constructors of this narrative attempted to sketch out why no one from India in the sarma period had heard of it and at the same time make it sound more powerful than anything the New Translators were returning with.

Malcolm wrote:

The hilarious about this is very late narrative is that guys like Nyibum, Rongzom etc., were very active in the gsar ma scene. Nyibum was a student of Jetsun Dragpa Gyaltsen, Nyibum's son, Guru Jobe, was a student of Sapan, and so on. Chetsun Senge Wangchuk supposedly assisted Drogmi by giving him gold with which to donate to Gayadhara and so on.

The reason why no one in India had ever heard of the man ngag sde teachings is that they never existed in India at all, and were constructed by Tibetans in the 11th century. Not all Nyingma tantras were composed/revealed by Tibetans, but the Dzogchen tantras, in my opinion (as I have mentioned frequently) most certainly were composed/revealed strictly by Tibetans and never existed in India, ever, nor even "Oddiyāna".

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, March 2nd, 2014 at 9:18 AM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

gad rgyangs said:

The texts are always experientially addressed to the reader, to discover his or her state, which of course is the basis, they never say "theres my basis and theres your basis, we really exist as separate subjects so we have separate bases." to discover his or her state

Malcolm wrote:

You don't need to theorize all kinds of different heats, to understand that all fires have the characteristic of heat. The basis is the same, all sentient beings and buddhas have the same set of characteristics, essence, nature and compassion. The general basis

(spyi gzhi, not gzhi gzhi) is just a set of characteristics shared by all sentient, whether buddhas or samsarins, just as all fires share the quality of heat, and that is all it is.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, March 2nd, 2014 at 10:45 PM

Title: Re: Dhyana (samten) in Vajrayana, especially Dzogchen

Content:

Sherlock said:

So Malcolm, am I right in saying that your point here is that:

A. Dzogchen practitioners must have stable shamatha to the level of the first dhyana

Malcolm wrote:

Check

Sherlock said:

B. Creation stage is a shamatha practice that can help develop that

Malcolm wrote:

Check

Sherlock said:

C. Visualizations are used in both creation stage and in Dzogchen practices

Malcolm wrote:

Check

Sherlock said:

D. General sutra-style shamatha doesn't usually involve visualizations

Malcolm wrote:

Check (kaśina meditation aside, and then there are the impure dhyana topics, such as visualizing yourself as a skeleton and so on)

Sherlock said:

E. Successful shamatha through kyerim also makes your mantras work

Malcolm wrote:

Check

Sherlock said:

Conclusion: A major reason for Dzogchen practitioners to develop the dhyanic factors by training shamatha through kyerim is that the visualization skills developed will be useful in other practices, and also for the mantra benefit. Therefore it is more useful for Dzogchen practitioners than sutrayana style shamatha.?

Malcolm wrote:

Rongzom is neutral on this point. He maintains that whether one is doing standard śamatha or mantra practice, one must develop these five mental factors. He does not claim one is superior to the other.

Author: Malcolm

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

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

mutsuk said:

Concerning the age of these Tantras, JLA has shown that the Klong-drug is mentioned by title in the bSam-gtan mig-sgron (although without quote, but anyway, the Kun tu bzang po klong drug pa'i rgyud is the only Tantra I know of whose abridged title is Klong-drug, the standard abridged title for this tantra).

Malcolm wrote:

The Mu tig phreng ba commentary treats the 17 tantras as a single collection, but whether it was composed before or after the Vima Nyinthig is very hard to say.

It is true that there is a mention of a text called the klong drug on folio 17a, and there is also a text mentioned called the vi ma la klong 'grel which is mentioned three times, as mentioned by Dylan Esler in his article. However, this is extremely uncertain evidence. Until someone actually goes through the whole of the extant klong drug commentary, we cannot be sure that this commentary attributed to Vimalamitra is in fact the same as the one mentioned by Nubchen, don't you agree?

There is a second issue, which is we don't really know exactly when the bSam gtan mig sgron was composed, but it certainly could not be earlier than circa 1000 CE.

So, as far as I am concerned this still leaves the seventeen tantras as roughly early 11th century compositions, since the first external mention of them is in the Vima Nyinthig, which was definitely composed around 1122 by Zhangston.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 3rd, 2014 at 12:16 AM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

Sherlock said:

Interesting, thanks.

Do you know what kind of practices are in the Bram ze'i skor? I think that is the earliest Dzogchen cycle mentioned by a non-Dzogchen practice lineage (Sakya). Also, if Zhangston Chos 'bar openly mentioned the word 'Dzogchen' in opposition to the new translations to Sachen, it seems that there was an awareness about the Dzogchen and

its 'old' origins among the public.

Malcolm wrote:

I am pretty sure the Brahmin cycle is a terma system, but I forget which Tibetan master was responsible for its promulgation in the 11th century. It is generally classified as yang ti.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 3rd, 2014 at 12:26 AM

Title: Re: Hardships and Downfall of Buddhism in India

Content:

Indrajala said:

Those who might have veered away from Vedic orthodoxy were still accepted no matter how eccentric they became .

theanarchist said:

That sounds so familiar.... Seems to be a worldwide phenomenon that ruling classes strive to eradicate everyone who threatens the status quo. Frankly, humanity is disgusting.

Malcolm wrote:

You need to study karma.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 3rd, 2014 at 1:04 AM

Title: Re: Hardships and Downfall of Buddhism in India

Content:

theanarchist said:

I don't know, history shows that as soon as one ruling class is removed (for example by revolution) another ruling class comes into power and the whole game starts over.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, because of the karma of some people to be in power, others to be in service, some poor, some wealthy and so on.

theanarchist said:

So, yes, it definitely depends on your karma if you become victim of these structures or not but it's not "karma" that Homo sapiens as a species developed this trait through evolution and it is genetically fixed in their brain structure.



Malcolm wrote:

When considering karma, there are no "victims". And yes, it is a result of karma that human beings developed all traits they bear.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 3rd, 2014 at 1:17 AM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

mutsum said:

JLA was the first to note these things in 1992. He since that time has used the commentary of the Klong drug (he obtained in Chengdu in 1994) to show that the bi ma la'i klong 'grel must be another text (still unfound).

Malcolm wrote:

IN looking at the style of the citations, they do not resemble the klong drug commentary we have at all.

mutsum said:

Well there is a detailed chronology in the Lo-rgyus chen-mo which says otherwise. We have no reason to doubt that chronology, do we, since it sound pretty much non-apologetic...

Malcolm wrote:

We have every reason to doubt the lo rgyus chen mo. It is a piece of religious fiction. Anyway, this is the chronology given by Zhangton himself:

0 Parinirvana of the Buddha

360 AP Birth of Vajraprahe

544 AP Mañjuśrīmitra meet Vajraprahe

830 AP Shri Siṃha meets Mañjuśrīmitra

984 AP Shri Siṃha's parinirvana

994 AP Jñānasūtra's parinirvana

1080 AP Vimāla arrives in Tibet

1093 AP Vimāla leaves for China

1148 AP Nyang erects Zhwa Gon and conceals the texts

1358 AP lDang ma discovers the termas

1388 AP lDang ma gives them to lCe bTsun

1568 AP Zhang ston bKra Shis rDo rJe removes the unsurpassed secret cycle.

If we consider that Vimāla arrives in Tibet after the death of Trisong Detsen (which really is a certainty), but before 20, this means according to Nyinthig chronology, Buddha's parinirvana was between 390-370. By Zhangton's own dates them, he revealed the Vima Nyinthig between 1178-1198, which is obviously too late because he had passed away already. If we move the dates fifty years earlier, it gives an approximate date of 1128 for the revelation of the Nyinthig. Though it is often held that Zhangton met Chetsun directly, in fact this was only a visionary encounter on a bridge

in Tsang between 1122-1128 after Zhangton had already revealed the Vima Nyinthig. He says at the end of the Lo rgyus chen mo:

As such, thirty years later, having gone to the place where lCe bTsun disappeared lCe sGom Nag po of mNar mDa' in Rong took out the outer, inner and secret oral lineage and the instruction was not promulgated to others apart from himself. These then spread widely in dBus and gTsang. Fifty years after the revelation by lCe sGom, I removed these unsurpassed secret cycles and the instruction was not promulgated to others apart from myself. At this time, one thousand five hundred sixty eight years have elapsed since the Buddha's parinirvana.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 3rd, 2014 at 5:18 AM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

Sherlock said:

If you are a student of ChNN, read The Precious Vase's section on how to practice the dhyana-paramita.

Malcolm wrote:

If one is a student of ChNN, is one required to limit oneself to his presentations?

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 3rd, 2014 at 5:29 AM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

mutsum said:

You should read JLA's study of the issue in his PhD. He has covered the whole thing in much more details.

Malcolm wrote:

I am sure, but it is a fact that the accounts about Shri Simha in the lo rgyus chen mo do not tally with earlier accounts of Shri Simha on any level. I have examined all the early accounts related to this, and there are serious discrepancies in the lo rgyus chen mo, beyond the fact that it is based on an account in Vima Nyinthig itself (which was thus penned by Zhang ston). Of course, Zhang ston's account of events of Vimalamitra's life, etc., was then eclipsed by Nyang ral's treasure bio of Guru P. So what we wind up with is three separate accounts, which are at serious variance with each other on key details, with the later ones (Zhang, Nyang ral) superseding the earlier ones (mainly the account found in the pan grub thugs bcud, which itself is most certainly the basis for Vairocana 'dra bags literature).

By the time we get to Longchenpa, it is all hopelessly garbled, with Longchenpa asserting that Zhangton and Chetsun met. Thus now you see it repeated everywhere that Zhangton was Chetsun's student, when in fact the two men never physically met, and in fact Zhangton was a disciple of Chegom Nagpo. Then of course there is the slanderous asserting preserved in Khetsun Zangpo's brief bio that the reason Zhangston did not achieve rainbow body is that he allowed his semen to be released, resulting in the birth of his son, Nyibum.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 3rd, 2014 at 5:30 AM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

Sherlock said:

No, but his presentation would be a bit more relevant for one's practice than others'. But it's good to read other works of course.

Malcolm wrote:

I would think the Buddha's presentation would be the most relevant, don't you?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 3rd, 2014 at 5:48 AM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

Sherlock said:

Leaving aside the issue of guru devotion, one of the main roles for the guru is to present all his accumulated knowledge to his students in a way that fits their capacities isn't it?

Malcolm wrote:

Indeed, but it is the job of the student to increase their capacity, and sectarianism generally arises from feeling that one's teachers presentation is sufficient, or the best, without having properly examined the presentations of others. This is why a lot of hostility on the part of some Nyingmas, Kagyus and Sakya against the views of Lama Tsongkhapa are frankly ridiculous, likewise the hostility of some Gelugpas against the views of Gorampa and Dolbuwa, and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 3rd, 2014 at 6:04 AM

Title: Re: gaden nyen gyu?

Content:

lama tsewang said:

i have heard of something called an ear whispered gaden tradition . is this something within the gelugpa tradition , thats a little bit separate?

ie. maybe like some of the methods that rechungpa learned.

i have heard here and there that part of it is the lama chopra and the text on gelug-kagyu mahamudra.  
and maybe chod?

These thoughts come up because just a few days ago , i was notified that dechen ling press has a new commentary out on lama chopra , and appended to the commentary in the back of the book, they added the famous text on gelug -kagyu mahamudra.  
tsewang

Malcolm wrote:

It's based on a mystical book called the dge ldan sgyu phrul legs bam, the miraculous book of Ganden. According to legend, it is a book passed down to dben sa pa aka rgyal ba blo bzang don grub. There is but a single copy, and it is claimed that whenever the owner of this book needs to know something related to sutra and tantra, the answer miraculously appears in it. Indeed, Ganden Chod, Mahāmudra and the bLa ma mchod pa are supposed to be sourced in this book. Interestingly, Samten Karmey discovered a manuscript in Bhutan which is definitely from the dben sa pa lineage that bore the name blo bzang bka' 'bum. Thus the legend was grounded in fact. These days, the main promulgators of the myth of the dge ldan sgyu phrul legs bam are the Shugden folks, since they believe that this miraculous book was passed to Pabhonkga, and he to Trijang Rinpoche. Of course, HHDL quipped once that the real dye ldan sgyu phrul legs bam was the 18 volumes of Lama Tsongkhapa's collected works. According to Karmay, the dge ldan bka' rgyud both represents the views of Lama Tsongkhapa when he was younger and also "leans" Nyingma. It has always been a little controversial in Gelugpa.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 3rd, 2014 at 6:20 AM

Title: Re: Karma

Content:

kresh said:

I understand what the concept of karma is; actions have consequences. What my question is: what renders those actions good or bad?

Malcolm wrote:

The Buddhas defined ten natural non-virtues: taking life, taking what has not been given and sexual misconduct, lying, harsh speech, calumny and gossip, malice, greed and ignorance (of cause and effects).

That is what makes a given action non-virtuous. The opposite are virtuous karmas.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 3rd, 2014 at 11:22 PM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

mutsum said:

You should read JLA's study of the issue in his PhD. He has covered the whole thing in much more details.

Malcolm wrote:

I am sure, but it is a fact that the accounts about Shri Simha in the lo rgyus chen mo do not tally with earlier accounts of Shri Simha on any level. I have examined all the early accounts related to this, and there are serious discrepancies in the lo rgyus chen mo, beyond the fact that it is based on an account in Vima Nyinthig itself (which was thus penned by Zhang ston). Of course, Zhang ston's account of events of Vimalamitra's life, etc., was then eclipsed by Nyang ral's treasure bio of Guru P. So what we wind up with is three separate accounts, which are at serious variance with each other on key details, with the later ones (Zhang, Nyang ral) superseding the earlier ones (mainly the account found in the pan grub thugs bcud, which itself is most certainly the basis for Vairocana 'dra bags literature).

By the time we get to Longchenpa, it is all hopelessly garbled, with Longchenpa asserting that Zhangton and Chetsun met. Thus now you see it repeated everywhere that Zhangton was Chetsun's student, when in fact the two men never physically met, and in fact Zhangton was a disciple of Chegom Nagpo. Then of course there is the slanderous asserting preserved in Khetsun Zangpo's brief bio that the reason Zhang ston did not achieve rainbow body is that he allowed his semen to be released, resulting in the birth of his son, Nyibum.

mutsum said:

I'm not talking about that, I'm talking about the detailed account of the revelation of the 17 Tantras and related material. In JLA published version of his PhD, it is pp. 81-82.

Malcolm wrote:

If we take Zhang ston on his word, then counting backwards, we get 210 years from the time lDang ma discovers the 17 tantras, 180 years from the time when they met, this gives us an approximate date of 916 when the tantras were revealed, and a date of 946 when Chetsun meets lDang ma. But this seems impossible to me because Chetsun was a contemporary of Drogmi Lotsawa. Chetsun has a student called Myang bka' dam pa, thus this places him after 1042, the year Atishas arrives in Purang. So Chetsun's datable era of activity must be between 1042 and around 1064 (the most probably date for the passing of Drogmi according to Davidson). This means that if Zhang ston is correct about when Chegom visited Chetsun's place of attaining rainbow body, this had to have happened roughly in around 1048, though this is maybe a little too soon.

The whole thing hinges on the identity of "Myang bka' dam pa". Since he knew lDang ma, this places lDang ma squarely in the eleven century. I really can't believe that that 17 tantras, in general, are earlier than lDang ma. lDang ma's death cannot be earlier than mid 11th century, which places his meeting with Chetsun in the late 1040's. Of course it is possible they were written in the first half of the 11th century, but for various reasons it is my present opinion that it is unlikely that any of them predate 1000. They demonstrate far too much influence from gsar ma tantras to be very early.

As far as I can tell, Zhang ston's own dates are a little unrealistic, apart from his date for the Buddha's Parinirvana, but he clearly reporting what Chegom told him about Chetsun and lDangma.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 3rd, 2014 at 11:28 PM

Title: Re: Dr. Sanderson: Phowa etc. are directly from Saivism

Content:

Zen Dude said:

I find his scholarship to be extremely lacking. An example -

Malcolm wrote:

Well, we all have opinions. Personally, much of what he says is backed up in Tibetan accounts which give the purpose for promulgating Buddhist tantra, i.e., to attract Shaivas and others to Buddhism by providing them with a religious form they could relate to. Sakya Pandita is very clear virtually all the practices in Buddhist tantra have Shaiva, etc., counterparts.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 4th, 2014 at 12:07 AM

Title: Re: gaden nyen gyu?

Content:

Tsongkhapafan said:

You'll be glad to know that the Ganden Oral Lineage is alive and well and living in this world They are mainly special practices of Guru Yoga and Mahamudra views and methods.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, this is indeed a good thing.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 4th, 2014 at 12:17 AM

Title: Re: Tendai is a Ch'an school.

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

...your strongest attachment is through the saṃjñā skandha, rather than the vedana skandha...

dzogchungpa said:

This is interesting. Is it a traditional Buddhist idea that people typically have a strongest attachment through a particular skandha?

Malcolm wrote:  
It comes from the Kosha.

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Tuesday, March 4th, 2014 at 12:41 AM  
Title: Re: Dr. Sanderson: Phowa etc. are directly from Saivism  
Content:  
Sherab Dorje said:  
Most of the time when I hear claims like these I think to myself: "So what if they are?"

Buddhists do not have a monopoly on Dharma after all.

If a practice works why not use it?

Malcolm wrote:  
Sapan clarifies that what distinguishes Hindu and Buddhist tantra is view, not practice.

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Tuesday, March 4th, 2014 at 12:46 AM  
Title: Re: Dhyana (samten) in Vajrayana, especially Dzogchen  
Content:  
Malcolm wrote:  
Rongzom is neutral on this point. He maintains that whether one is doing standard śamatha or mantra practice, one must develop these five mental factors. He does not claim one is superior to the other.

Sherlock said:  
OK, but you are not really neutral, are you?

Malcolm wrote:  
In fact I am neutral.

Sherlock said:  
The point you had been developing is that two-stages are important for wannabe Dzogchenpas too right? Nothing wrong with sutra-style shamatha but kyerim offers more carry-over to Dzogchen practice?

Malcolm wrote:  
You can either go with the classic Nyingma three inner yana approach, or follow someone like ChNN. I don't really think one can claim one approach is superior to the other. For some, sutra mahāmudra style practice might be all they need.

Sherlock said:

According to that Germano article, Longchenpa also regarded the two stages as important preliminaries. However, he also talked about the completion stage with little elaboration for those with difficulties with the developing stage. Do the other schools have practices like what we find in the 7th lojong in order to stabilize dhyana or do they typically depend on kyerim (whether with mantra or without)?

Malcolm wrote:

The point of completion stage is to allow one to rapidly access the nonconceptual state associated with a deep samadhi. Creation stage is the container for that. Dzogchen classically would be practiced by people quite expert in the creation and completion stages. This is no longer the case.

Sherlock said:

My knowledge of two-stages is quite lacking. So far I'm just trying to follow the Precious Vase. If I have the opportunity maybe I should receive teachings on more elaborate sadhana practices and try to find a teacher to clarify my doubts on how it is exactly done.

Malcolm wrote:

If you are content with ChNN's teachings, Mandarava is quite elaborate enough in terms of creation and completion.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 4th, 2014 at 12:51 AM

Title: Re: Dhyana (samten) in Vajrayana, especially Dzogchen

Content:

Allan Wallace said:

I have also heard of many people who say they have achieved shamatha and dhyana, many claiming to have done so within a matter of days, weeks, or just a few months. But despite such reports, few appear to be able to effortlessly maintain flawless samadhi for at least four hours, with their senses fully withdrawn, while abiding in a luminous state of blissful samadhi.

Pero said:

Malcolm, is your first dhyana the same as Wallace's first dhyana? I haven't read everything available about Dzogchen or Vajrayana but in what I have I haven't seen such a requirement for practice. Seems a bit odd really.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, when you have attained the first dhyāna, you have the capacity to remain in that for as long as you want with no discomfort. It doesn't matter if it is 20 minutes or twenty hours.

The downside of the 1st dhyana is that it is easy to become addicted to it. Then you are just creating traces for rebirth in the form realms. So I think Wallace is being a little bit sutrayāna in his approach here. However, being able to sit comfortable in one posture



for a long while is definitely beneficial for longde and thogal practice.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 4th, 2014 at 12:53 AM

Title: Re: Dhyana (samten) in Vajrayana, especially Dzogchen

Content:

Sherlock said:

E. Successful shamatha through kyerim also makes your mantras work

theanarchist said:

Mmh, as far as I understand it to make vajrayana really meaningful you have to have an experience of emptiness nature (otherwise everything involving a deity is still contrived) and shamatha does not provide an insight into emptiness nature (that would happen with vipasshana).

Malcolm wrote:

That is what happens during empowerment/direct introduction.

theanarchist said:

I see it rather the other way, mantra is a good focus of your shamatha practice. For example very occasionally I wake up during the night with a nightmare. In that non-meditative emotionally upset state to recite mantra is a powerful antidote to the disturbed feeling. After a short while the negative state completely dissolves and makes room for comfortable peace. So obviously mantra can work very well in a disturbed state of mind.

Malcolm wrote:

The meaning of mantra is Manas + tra, i.e. protector of the mind.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 4th, 2014 at 12:59 AM

Title: Re: Dr. Sanderson: Phowa etc. are directly from Saivism

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

So, in regards to the various Nath and Kapalika Mahasiddhas, it was the Mahamudra view and not the practices that lead to their realisations?

Malcolm wrote:

Which siddhas do you have in mind?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 4th, 2014 at 1:00 AM

Title: Re: Karma

Content:

kresh said:

thanks for the replies!!

I have a follow up question:

is there an amount of good or bad karma? what I mean by that is: is there a difference in bad karma between say stealing a candy bar or killing someone? good karma? picking up somebodies garbage verses helping a homeless man/woman in need?

thanks

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, there are differences, but it mostly has to do with the force of your intention.

Author: Malcolm

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

Title: Re: Tendai is a Ch'an school.

Content:

Indrajala said:

I used to think otherwise, but after traveling around Asia and living in several countries I've decided otherwise. For instance, I've seen countries that work well and are only semi-democratic if not having been authoritarian in the past (Japan, Taiwan, Singapore),

Malcolm wrote:

Did it occur to you this is more cultural than "human"?

Indrajala said:

and then other countries that are in absolute absolute shambles despite having self-governance like India compared to authoritarian states like China which actually ensure a basic standard of living for most people despite their shortcomings.

Malcolm wrote:

China does not provide a basic living for most people. They do not even provide universal health care.

Indrajala said:

So over time I've taken on a rather Confucian approach to political values, as offensive as it might be to a lot of westerners.

Malcolm wrote:

It is not offensive, but it is amusingly anachronistic.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 4th, 2014 at 1:53 AM

Title: Re: Tendai is a Ch'an school.

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

and then other countries that are in absolute absolute shambles despite having self-governance like India compared to authoritarian states like China which actually ensure a basic standard of living for most people despite their shortcomings.

China does not provide a basic living for most people. They do not even provide universal health care.

kirtu said:

Aside from the treatment of Tibetans, Mongolians and Uighurs (and those are huge "asides"), China is not as bad as it could be. And the US also does not provide universal health care in any form (not even the recently introduced so-called "Obamacare" does although it is a step in the right direction as far as coverage goes). One of the moderate successes of the PRC is that they did attempt to create universal health care through the Barefoot Doctors and then expanded from that point.

Kirt

Malcolm wrote:

Kirt, they have no universal health care at all. If you go to hospital, you must bring cash with you or they will not even admit you. The barefoot doctor thing does not exist anymore, not for decades.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 4th, 2014 at 2:06 AM

Title: Re: Tendai is a Ch'an school.

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Kirt, they have no universal health care at all. If you go to hospital, you must bring cash with you or they will not even admit you. The barefoot doctor thing does not exist anymore, not for decades.

kirtu said:

If you go to most hospitals in the US you must also bring some kind of payment with you.

Kirt

Malcolm wrote:

That is not true, Kirt, at least not in my experience. It is illegal for emergency rooms to turn you away for want of cash. I have never had to pay up front for any services, and in some places, like Cambridge, they have community hospitals that are chartered to provide free service. When I lived in Cambridge, I used Cambridge City Hospital often.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 4th, 2014 at 2:43 AM

Title: Re: Dhyana (samten) in Vajrayana, especially Dzogchen

Content:

Sherlock said:

Thanks Malcolm.

Historically though Milarepa didn't seem to be expert in the two stages when he met his Dzogchen teacher. But then I don't know what his hailmaking would have involved. Zhangston Chosbar also seemed to teach Dzogchen openly.

Malcolm wrote:

Milrepa was already quite expert in the two stages before he met Marpa. He studied with ten teachers prior to meeting Marpa.

According to the Lamdre histories, Zhang ston Chos 'bar taught the Brahmin cycle of Dzogchen "by day", but he secretly practiced Lamdre, "by night".

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 4th, 2014 at 2:50 AM

Title: Re: Dr. Sanderson: Phowa etc. are directly from Saivism

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

So, in regards to the various Nath and Kapalika Mahasiddhas, it was the Mahamudra view and not the practices that lead to their realisations?

Malcolm wrote:

Which siddhas do you have in mind?

Sherab Dorje said:

Carbaripa (Carpati), Kapalapa, Minapa...

Malcolm wrote:

We have to examine whether they are "siddhas" or mahāsiddhas. There is a difference. In general, it would be their practice of tantric practices combined with Buddhist view.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 4th, 2014 at 3:22 AM

Title: Re: Dr. Sanderson: Phowa etc. are directly from Saivism

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

Is the Mahasiddha view necessarily a Buddhist view?

Malcolm wrote:

It is necessarily a view consistent with dependent origination, emptiness and so on, otherwise, we couldn't consider a siddha "mahā" i.e. awakened.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 4th, 2014 at 3:23 AM

Title: Re: Dr. Sanderson: Phowa etc. are directly from Saivism

Content:

Sherlock said:

Is there actually Phowa in the sense of transference of consciousness to a pure land in Shaivism or other Hindu tantras? I know there is transference to corpses.

Malcolm wrote:

Read Sanderson's paper.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 4th, 2014 at 3:24 AM

Title: Re: Tendai is a Ch'an school.

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

Are there then 5 types, one for each skandha?

Malcolm wrote:

No, just two, because the sensation and perception skandhas, while being mental factors in fact, are isolated because of their power in keeping one attached to samsaric phenomena.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 4th, 2014 at 3:55 AM

Title: Re: Dhyana (samten) in Vajrayana, especially Dzogchen

Content:

Sherlock said:

According to the Dan Martin article, Milarepa had 2 dzogchen teachers. Sgyerston dbangnge and the other one who was called either Dre lhadga or rongston. Sgyerston was his first teacher after the magic and hailmaking teachers.

The story about Zhangston Chosbar shows that he taught Dzogchen more openly than lamdre.

Malcolm wrote:

My point was that Milarepa had ten teachers before he met Marpa. Milarepa received a major Vajrapani teaching cycle before he met Marpa. He understood creation and completion stage quite well.

Zhangston Chosbar only had one student for Lamdre, i.e., Sachen, as far as we know. My point was that while he may have taught Dzogchen, his own practice was Lamdre.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 4th, 2014 at 9:50 PM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

garudha said:

Three things in favour of a Shared-Dharmadhatu:

1. All those who have thus-gone report it to be infinite (so it includes everything else).

Malcolm wrote:

Suchness, emptiness, luminosity (all synonyms) lack finitude so this hardly novel.

garudha said:

2. Quantum physics can only be explained by a Shared-Dharmadhatu.

Malcolm wrote:

The dharmadhātu has nothing to do with quantum physics.

garudha said:

3. The Buddha gave sermons in higher realms. How could there even be communication if a shared fabric didn't exist ?

Malcolm wrote:

In Mahāyāna, dharmadhātu is just a generic characteristic (samanyalakṣaṇa).

Vasubandhu notes in his commentary on the Madhyantavibhaga:

Apart from the absence of self in phenomena, there are no phenomena. Therefore, dharmadhātu is a so called "generic characteristic of phenomena", and whoever understands it like that, he or she will be unmistaken about the generic characteristic.

The dharmadhātu is not a "fabric", it is an abstraction. And abstraction of what? It is a abstraction of the emptiness of phenomena. By definition, samanyalakṣaṇas are considered unreal in Buddhadharma.

Sthiramati adds:

The dharmadhātu is emptiness. Since it is a generic characteristic, however it is in one thing, it also like that in all things.

There is really no difference between how dharmadhātu is defined in Dzogchen as opposed to sūtra.

As one of the Nāgārjunas stated:

The dharmadhātu does not arise,  
nor does it ever cease;  
totally without affliction at all times,  
untainted in the beginning, middle and end.

There is no significant different between this statement and how the basis is defined in Dzogchen save for one minor point. Indeed, the basis is just the dharmadhātu. And the dharmadhātu is just a generic characteristic which describes the emptiness of phenomena in toto. The minor difference between the basis in Dzogchen and the dharmadhātu however, is that the basis is not "inert", the basis describes the generic characteristics of minds. However the basis is in one mind, it is like that in all minds. This is related to the principle of gcig shes kun grol, "knowing one liberates all".

garudha said:

Without a Shared-Dharmadhatu rebirth could not occur.

Malcolm wrote:

Of course it could.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 4th, 2014 at 9:55 PM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

gad rgyangs said:

responsiveness!!

Malcolm wrote:

Except for the \_fact\_ that the commentaries on the Dzogchen tantras clearly define thugs rje of the basis as "compassion" in the standard conventional sense of the term.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 4th, 2014 at 10:51 PM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

garudha said:

Furthermore, You seem to have completely misread my intention. My intention was to describe dharmadhātu as a shared fabric.

Malcolm wrote:

No, I understood exactly what your intention was, and I completely disagree with it. Dharmadhātu is not a fabric, it isn't a thing. It is just a categorization of emptiness.

garudha said:  
do you really reject Oneness?

Malcolm wrote:  
There is no such as "oneness", at least not in Buddhadharma.

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Tuesday, March 4th, 2014 at 10:53 PM  
Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind  
Content:  
gad rgyangs said:  
responsiveness!!

Malcolm wrote:  
Except for the \_fact\_ that the commentaries on the Dzogchen tantras clearly define thugs rje of the basis as "compassion" in the standard conventional sense of the term.

gad rgyangs said:  
is compassion just a feeling or does it not also include responding to the needs of those who require compassion?

Malcolm wrote:  
The meaning of the wisdom of thugs rje from the sgra thal 'gyur commentary:

Thugs is the affection for sentient beings in the heart. rJe is the arising of a special empathy for them.

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Tuesday, March 4th, 2014 at 10:54 PM  
Title: Re: Dzogchen and the Two Stages  
Content:  
Malcolm wrote:  
Not for me. Mahayoga and Anuyoga are not my path. They can be someone else's path, but they are not mine.

Yudron said:  
I'm curious: In 2008 you posted you were practicing bum chen and advised everyone to do the same. Did that not pan out for you as you had hoped?

rai said:  
now i am curious, what is bum chen? is it some breathing exercise?



Malcolm wrote:  
Khumbhaka.

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Tuesday, March 4th, 2014 at 10:57 PM  
Title: Re: Possible confusion regarding language - Dharmadhatu  
Content:  
garudha said:  
Because the "Dharmadhatu" is itself aware.

Malcolm wrote:  
No, it isn't. The dharmadhātu is one thing, wisdom is another. You cannot say they are the same, all you can say is that they are inseparable.

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Tuesday, March 4th, 2014 at 11:12 PM  
Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind  
Content:  
garudha said:  
Furthermore, You seem to have completely misread my intention. My intention was to describe dharmadhātu as a shared fabric.

Malcolm wrote:  
No, I understood exactly what your intention was, and I completely disagree with it. Dharmadhātu is not a fabric, it isn't a thing. It is just a categorization of emptiness.

garudha said:  
do you really reject Oneness?

Malcolm wrote:  
There is no such as "oneness", at least not in Buddhadharma.

garudha said:  
And what about so many peoples reports of Oneness... Do you suggest that the experience "Oneness" is only to experience our own individual personal basis --and the "Oneness" is not the basis of all phenomena ?

Malcolm wrote:  
All experiences are subjective.

Anyway, you have not defined what your oneness is. Are all phenomena "one" in that they are all empty? Of course. Is there some existent underlying fabric that unifies all phenomena? Not in Buddhadharma. In Hinduism of various stripes, definitely, but not Buddhadharma.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 4th, 2014 at 11:22 PM

Title: Re: Possible confusion regarding language - Dharmadhatu

Content:

garudha said:

Because the "Dharmadhatu" is itself aware.

Malcolm wrote:

No, it isn't. The dharmadhātu is one thing, wisdom is another. You cannot say they are the same, all you can say is that they are inseparable.

garudha said:

If you have basis in something, and you are aware, then the something is aware too.

Malcolm wrote:

Apart from one's own mind, one has no other basis, and no other basis is needed. "The basis", in Dzogchen is just a way of describing an imagined state of how one's mind might have been prior to an equally imaginary bifurcation of samsara and nirvana.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 4th, 2014 at 11:48 PM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The meaning of the wisdom of thugs rje from the sgra thal 'gyur commentary:

Thugs is the affection for sentient beings in the heart. rJe is the arising of a special empathy for them.

dzogchungpa said:

Well, I'm a little confused. From "Treasury of Precious Qualities, Book Two", translator's introduction: In the context of the Great Perfection, thugs rje means, in the words of Yonten Gyamtso, "pure and unadulterated awareness that has not yet stirred from its own true condition or state," but which has the potential to do so.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, this is a much later philosophized definition, and while it is not invalid, it really does not address the point that the mind's naturally present compassion is the basis for the arising of the nirmanakāya at the time of the result.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 4th, 2014 at 11:50 PM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

There is no such as "oneness", at least not in Buddhadharma.

All experiences are subjective.

Anyway, you have not defined what your oneness is. Are all phenomena "one" in that they are all empty? Of course. Is there some existent underlying fabric that unifies all phenomena? Not in Buddhadharma. In Hinduism of various stripes, definitely, but not Buddhadharma.

garudha said:

Look, there's no truth to be found in a play of words.

I say simply as follows:

If all dharmas are empty,

Then the true dharma is like a diamond.

Are there other diamonds? -Yes, perhaps there are, perhaps the goddess wears the diamond in a ring on her finger (but this would be pure conceptualisation and fantasy).

AFAIK; the diamond is one.

Malcolm wrote:

You cannot define emptiness as being one thing or many things, since it is not a thing. It is the absence of inherent existence in things, and that is all.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 5th, 2014 at 12:00 AM

Title: Re: Tendai is a Ch'an school.

Content:

Indrajala said:

Buddhism can operate albeit it needs to stay out of politics.

Malcolm wrote:

Right....try putting that one past Tibetans.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 5th, 2014 at 12:29 AM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

garudha said:

So if you think that ALL is truly Empty (including the basis) then who are you

Malcolm wrote:

Nominally speaking, malcolm, otherwise, no one.

garudha said:

and how do you arise?

Malcolm wrote:

Conventionally, due to causes and conditions; ultimately not at all.

garudha said:

Or am I completely misinterpreting Eastern mysticism ?

Malcolm wrote:

Well, to begin with, there is no such thing as "Eastern mysticism", there are a bunch of religions loosely grouped as Hinduism, there are a bunch of religions loosely grouped as Buddhism. I happen to be a follower of Buddhadharma in its Tibetan expression.

garudha said:

go amazon buy good sutra learn wisdom of Buddha.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, this is good advice for you. I don't need to buy sutras in English since I read them in Tibetan.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 5th, 2014 at 12:39 AM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

OK, why is it not invalid, if you don't mind my asking?

Malcolm wrote:

Because in Dzogchen, thugs rje is what generates mental appearances, thugs rje has/is what we call "rtsal".

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 5th, 2014 at 12:50 AM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

garudha said:

go amazon buy good sutra learn wisdom of Buddha.

Yes, this is good advice for you. I don't need to buy sutras in English since I read them in Tibetan.

I'm sorry. That last edit was not aimed at you. I didn't realise there might be such frisson before you put it like that.

Malcolm wrote:

No worries.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 5th, 2014 at 12:50 AM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

OK, why is it not invalid, if you don't mind my asking?

Malcolm wrote:

Because in Dzogchen, thugs rje is what generates mental appearances, thugs rje has/is what we call "rtsal".

dzogchungpa said:

Right, so the Padmakara translation "cognitive potency" actually seems more accurate than "compassion", in this context, doesn't it?

Malcolm wrote:

No, since it is a translation that is not based on the early commentarial imperatives. In others words, the definitions provided by "Vimalamitra" in his commentary on the sgra thal 'gyur should be regarded as the most authoritative and there can be no doubt that the term must be translated as compassion, and not whatever other glosses there are out there these days.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 5th, 2014 at 1:19 AM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

garudha said:

So if you think that ALL is truly Empty (including the basis) then who are you

Malcolm wrote:

Nominally speaking, malcolm, otherwise, no one.

garudha said:

and how do you arise?

Malcolm wrote:

Conventionally, due to causes and conditions; ultimately not at all.

gad rgyangs said:

this is why it makes no sense to say the basis is one's unfabricated mind: ultimately there is no "you" or "your mind", you & your mind are appearances of the basis. otherwise you are making your mind the basis of the basis!

Malcolm wrote:

Note that you use the qualifying term "ultimately", ultimately, there is also no basis; ergo, the basis is also something relative. That relative thing is just your own unfabricated mind, i.e. the mind essence, as Nyibum, Shabkar and many others state. It may not seem fun for modern "dzogchenpas", but the basis is just the mind essence. No mind, no essence. No dharmin, no dharmatā.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 5th, 2014 at 1:41 AM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

gad rgyangs said:

same question: so what is there, ultimately? if you say "nothing" you are a nihilist, and have done nothing to explain our presence.

Malcolm wrote:

Ultimately, there is no reality. If there were an ultimate reality, it would by necessity fall into one of the four extremes.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 5th, 2014 at 1:44 AM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

Regarding thugs rje, here's some more from the book. In the section "A general explanation of the fundamental nature of the ground" from Kangyur Rinpoche's commentary, he says of the ground: Consequently, the ground for what appears as samsara and nirvana (nonexistent as these are)<sup>445</sup> is the nature of awareness ( rig pai chos nyid ), and this is primordially and perfectly endowed with the three kayas. Its pure nature ( ngo bo dag pa ) is dharmakaya; its luminous character ( r ang bzhin gsal ba ) is sambhogakaya; and its cognitive potency endowed with the essence of awareness ( thugs rje rig pa'i snying po can ) is nirmanakaya.<sup>446</sup>

Footnote 446 reads as follows: It is important to note that in this account of the trikaya,

the sambhogakaya and the nirmanakaya are aspects of inner luminosity, as will be explained. They are distinct from the sambhogakaya and nirmanakaya of outwardly radiating luminosity (the rupakaya in the usually accepted sense).  
Maybe this distinction between the 2 types of rupakayas is relevant?

Malcolm wrote:

The only entity that can know is a mind. Positing some kind of noetic entity that is not a mind is incoherent.

Oh, and no, it is not relevant. The correct translation for "thugs rje" in a Dzogchen context is "compassion" and that's all. For example, Mipham provides "karuna" as the Sanskrit equivalent for thugs rje in a Dzogchen context.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 5th, 2014 at 2:19 AM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

You cannot define emptiness as being one thing or many things, since it is not a thing. It is the absence of inherent existence in things, and that is all.

ConradTree said:

But you always say emptiness is not absence of inherent existence.

Malcolm wrote:

Emptiness, in Mahāyāna, specifically refers to the absence of the four extremes in phenomena. This is the profound emptiness taught in Mahāyāna according to Gorampa and many other critics of Tsongkhapa, not the mere emptiness of inherent existence which is common which the śravaka systems.

Since phenomena cannot be found by any of the four extremes, they are illusory, and ultimately nonarisen.

I am not saying that emptiness is the mere absence of inherent existence. The "absence of inherent existence" can be understood as short hand for emptiness free from extremes. When you qualify that inherent existence which mere, it is too restrictive. It is like saying that emptiness is only the absence of inherent existence and nothing more.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 5th, 2014 at 3:17 AM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

gad rgyangs said:

same question: so what is there, ultimately? if you say "nothing" you are a nihilist, and

have done nothing to explain our presence.

Malcolm wrote:

Ultimately, there is no reality. If there were an ultimate reality, it would by necessity fall into one of the four extremes.

gad rgyangs said:

there is ultimate reality (there is something rather than nothing), but it is beyond the four extremes.

Malcolm wrote:

That is just an extreme.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 5th, 2014 at 3:27 AM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

gad rgyangs said:

you have to start with something undeniable, something that no one, buddhist, hindu, western philosopher, whatever, could reject.

the only thing that fits the bill is presence: the fact that there is something rather than nothing.

not only is this the starting point, its also the endpoint: the fact that there is something rather than nothing is ultimate reality.

Malcolm wrote:

The Dzogchen tantras don't support your position. Neither does ChNN. This is why he cites Sapan in his "Questions and Answers on the Cycle of Dzogchen":

If there is a view better than madhyamaka,  
that view would posses proliferation.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 5th, 2014 at 3:30 AM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

Andrew108 said:

Positing that ultimately there is no reality is a bit strange.

asunthatneversets said:

When you encounter the reflection of the moon in water, ultimately there is no moon.

Andrew108 said:



There is reality. That is what we are trying to understand. "Ultimately there is no reality" is the same as saying that ultimately there is no information, no energy, no display. Dzogchen doesn't refute reality.

Malcolm wrote:

Ultimately there is no information, no energy, no display. These things are all relative, not ultimate.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 5th, 2014 at 3:33 AM

Title: Re: Dr. Sanderson: Phowa etc. are directly from Saivism

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

Does this mean that we cannot consider Goraksha awakened?

Malcolm wrote:

I don't.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 5th, 2014 at 3:46 AM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

Andrew108 said:

It seems clear that the universe is in an 'on state' rather than an 'off state'. It may be that ultimately there is no ultimate reality (no one knows yet), but to assert that ultimately there is no reality is very strange. Especially since Dzogchen deals with reality as it is rather than ultimate/relative variants.

Malcolm wrote:

The only thing that is clear is that we are thinking beings subject to birth, duration and destruction. Everything beyond that is pure speculation by inconstant and impermanent mental states.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 5th, 2014 at 3:47 AM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

gad rgyangs said:

you have to start with something undeniable, something that no one, buddhist, hindu, western philosopher, whatever, could reject.

the only thing that fits the bill is presence: the fact that there is something rather than nothing.

not only is this the starting point, its also the endpoint: the fact that there is something rather than nothing is ultimate reality.

Malcolm wrote:

The Dzogchen tantras don't support your position. Neither does ChNN. This is why he cites Sapan in his "Questions and Answers on the Cycle of Dzogchen":

If there is a view better than madhyamaka,  
that view would posses proliferation.

gad rgyangs said:

you seem reluctant to accept both freedom from extremes and instsnt presence. they are not in conflict.

Malcolm wrote:

Rigpa is relative, so of course they are not in conflict.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 5th, 2014 at 3:49 AM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

Andrew108 said:

Instead of saying that reality has no fixed identity Malcolm has made the mistake of saying that ultimately there is no reality. But everyone makes mistakes. So what.

Malcolm wrote:

Its not a mistake. There is no reality. In order for there to be "reality" (a state of being pertaining to things res+al+ity) it would necessarily be something that either existed, did not exist and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 5th, 2014 at 4:11 AM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

Andrew108 said:

@Malcolm. The purpose of going beyond the four extremes is that you are left positionless. This doesn't mean that you are left without reality. Certainly you can't use PrMa to assert that ultimately there is no reality. We both know that this is not possible.

Malcolm wrote:

If you claim there is some reality left over after having gone beyond the four extremes, that is an extreme.

One can certainly use PrMa to assert there is no reality. Even emptiness, suchness and so forth are empty. So in the end, all we are left with is our relative condition. We don't have an ultimate condition, apart from emptiness.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 5th, 2014 at 4:19 AM

Title: Re: Tendai is a Ch'an school.

Content:

Indrajala said:

Buddhism can operate albeit it needs to stay out of politics.

Malcolm wrote:

Right....try putting that one past Tibetans.

Indrajala said:

I really don't care what the average Tibetan thinks.

Malcolm wrote:

I know, you support Chinese imperialism in Tibet. You think it is "good for them".

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 5th, 2014 at 4:20 AM

Title: Re: Tendai is a Ch'an school.

Content:

Indrajala said:

There is a lot hype and paranoia about China in the media, which is rather unfortunate, though understandable given the anti-Chinese propaganda constantly present in western (and Indian) media, to say nothing of how western Tibetan Buddhists usually uncritically accept everything their Tibetan colleagues tell them about China.

Malcolm wrote:

Having been to Chinese controlled Tibet personally, I know exactly how things there are, and things are every bit as bad as Tibetans say it is, if not much worse.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 5th, 2014 at 4:49 AM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

We don't have an ultimate condition, apart from emptiness.

gad rgyangs said:

as you yourself said, emptiness is not "merely" absence of svabhava. so yes, we don't have an ultimate condition apart from the emptiness, clarity and compassion of the basis: that is the ultimate condition.

Malcolm wrote:

And that basis is just one's own mind.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 5th, 2014 at 10:57 AM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

From "The Treasury of Precious Qualities, Book Two": The eleventh root downfall is to subject the ineffable, ultimate nature to logical assessment. That to which the word "dharmadhatu" refers is beyond name, example, and indication; it is beyond all conventional labeling. And even though the discursive intellect can, in its ratiocinations, understand ultimate reality as being "emptiness" and "lack of self," in fact this "no-self" of phenomena is exclusively the field of self-cognizing primordial wisdom. It stands in clean contradiction to the conventional, dualistic mind. The sharp, investigating intellect may indeed point to what is a lesser kind of emptiness of phenomena, such as the aggregates, and say that it is ultimate reality, thereby claiming a superior view. But to evaluate the unborn nature, namely, inconceivable ultimate reality, according to the criteria of ordinary thought, constitutes the eleventh downfall.

Malcolm wrote:

I really don't accept this definition of the 11th downfall. It is much simpler than that.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 5th, 2014 at 9:29 PM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

Sherlock said:

Like this?

Malcolm wrote:

Continuing this on a new thread...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 5th, 2014 at 11:15 PM

Title: eleventh fundamental downfall

Content:

Sherlock said:  
Like this?

From Berzin's site (11) Not meditating on voidness continually

As with the ninth tantric root downfall, voidness can be understood according to either the Chittamatra or Madhyamaka systems. Once we gain an understanding of such a view, it is a root downfall to let more than a day and night pass without meditating on it.

With the caveat that maybe experiencing the "view" through practice is more important than understanding according to whatever tenet system?

Malcolm wrote:  
What I mean by simple is what Sapan wrote:

"The eleventh is conceptualizing those phenomena which are free from name and so on."

[This means] conceptualizing phenomena free from name and so on as being phenomena free from name and so on. In brief, if one maintains that all phenomena which lack inherent existence [ngo bo nyid med, svabhāva] and are free from proliferation as being emptiness, it is a fundamental downfall.

As Berzin points out, this is related to the ninth, expressed by Sapan here:

"The ninth is doubt about the naturally pure dharmatā"

The primal nature [rang bzhin, prakṛti] of all phenomena is free from proliferation. Since that is not understood, the doubt "Is [the nature of all phenomena] free from proliferation or not?" is a fundamental downfall.

When we consider the eleventh downfall, this effectively means that labeling phenomena as emptiness, when in fact they are free from proliferation, is a downfall.

The ninth basically means that a Vajrayāna practitioner should maintain the view at all times.

The qualm might come, how is a beginner to avoid the 11th downfall? Jetsun Dragpa Gyaltzen provides an answer:

"A beginner should think though indeed all phenomena are free from names, relatively,

all phenomena appear like dreams and illusions", constantly training their minds in the example of illusion."

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 5th, 2014 at 11:21 PM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

Andrew108 said:

Of course it's not wrong to assert non-existence, but only when non-existence is used as an adjective that is one part of the description/experience of genuine reality. Saying that reality does not exist, that there is no reality, is far from the meaning and intent of all the Mahdyamaka texts I have studied.

Malcolm wrote:

It may not be not what you have understood, it is in fact the intent of Madhyamaka to point out that there is no reality, per se. Saying there is "no reality" [gnas lugs med pa] is quite different than saying reality does not exist. In fact it is basic "Heart Sutra" and is non-controversial.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 5th, 2014 at 11:49 PM

Title: Re: eleventh fundamental downfall

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

From "The Treasury of Precious Qualities, Book Two":

The eleventh root downfall is to subject the ineffable, ultimate nature to logical assessment. That to which the word "dharmadhatu" refers is beyond name, example, and indication; it is beyond all conventional labeling. And even though the discursive intellect can, in its ratiocinations, understand ultimate reality as being "emptiness" and "lack of self," in fact this "no-self" of phenomena is exclusively the field of self-cognizing primordial wisdom. It stands in clean contradiction to the conventional, dualistic mind. The sharp, investigating intellect may indeed point to what is a lesser kind of emptiness of phenomena, such as the aggregates, and say that it is ultimate reality, thereby claiming a superior view. But to evaluate the unborn nature, namely, inconceivable ultimate reality, according to the criteria of ordinary thought, constitutes the eleventh downfall.

Malcolm wrote:

The reason why this definition is not very desirable is that it means only a realized person can avoid this downfall, and since samaya is the root of the path, it means that one can never achieve awakening unless you are already a realized person.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 5th, 2014 at 11:52 PM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

Yeah, it does seem kind of silly to make such a big deal out of a generic characteristic. I don't know what Kangyur Rinpoche was smoking.

Malcolm wrote:

I answer you here:

<https://www.dharmawheel.net/viewtopic.php?f=40&t=15767>

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, March 6th, 2014 at 1:12 AM

Title: Re: eleventh fundamental downfall

Content:

gad rgyangs said:

in that case, conceptualizing the basis as "one's unfabricated mind" is an eleventh root downfall.

Malcolm wrote:

No, it isn't.

If you maintain that your mind-essence is just emptiness, that would be the downfall indicated. An unfabricated mind means a mind which is free from all proliferation, when the mind's own freedom from proliferation is not recognized, that mind becomes the basis for samsara; when it is recognized, that mind becomes the basis for nirvana.

However, as Jetsun Rinpoche points out, for beginners it is sufficient to recognize that phenomena are like dreams and illusions despite the fact that in reality they are free from names, etc.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, March 6th, 2014 at 2:03 AM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

Andrew108 said:

The intent of Madyamaka is not to establish this 'no reality' thesis. It's praxis is the assertion that genuine reality (which everyone has access to) is beyond extremes.

Malcolm wrote:

No, since this would just be a statement of existence.

Andrew108 said:

If you say that there is no reality then of course you are stating that reality does not exist.

Malcolm wrote:

I never claimed reality existed, therefore I am free of the fault of claiming it does not exist. When someone points out your bank account is empty, is it their fault that you have no money? Have they destroyed money you thought you had? Of course not. It is the same when stating "there is no reality". This is merely pointing out the conclusion of freedom from all extremes.

Āryānantamukhapariśodhananirdeśaparivarta-nāma-mahāyāna-sūtra states:

The Sugata said "existence" and "nonexistence" are extremes; whatever does not exist in the extremes, that also does not exist in the middle.

Ārya-varmavyūhanirdeśa-nāma-mahāyāna-sūtra

Since this vehicle is without extremes,  
also the extreme of the middle does not exist.

Ārya-kāśyapaparivarta-nāma-mahāyāna-sūtra:

Kāśyapa, "permanence" is one extreme; impermanence is the second extreme.  
Whatever is the middle of those two extremes, that also cannot be examined.

Samputānāma mahātantra:

There is nothing empty, not empty,  
and nothing to perceive in the middle.

The Meditation on Bodhicitta:

The nonexistence dependent on existence does not exist, also that nonexistence does not exist. Because the extremes do not exist, the middle does not exist, also do not rest in the middle.

The sgra thal gyur:

Because of being free from extremes, do not abide in the middle.

So we can clearly see that sutra and tantra agree on one point, i.e. there is no reality in the extremes, and there is no reality beyond the extremes. Ergo, there is no reality, since reality would have to be either existence or non-existence and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, March 6th, 2014 at 2:18 AM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind



Content:  
smcj said:

Therefore the distinction of calling "The Basis" either your own mind or calling it an undifferentiated universal is actually the argument between the Mind Only and Empty-of-Other schools.

Malcolm wrote:

Two problems here. While it is clear that Dzogchen definitely posits the basis as a set of generic characteristics that belong to individual minds, it does not posit that appearances are mental factors. Shabkar clarifies that the delusions of sentient beings are sufficiently strong so as to generate what seem to be concrete appearances for one another. This is why, for example, mountains do not disappear when we cease looking or thinking of them. So it is not accurate to parse this discussion in terms of a Cittamatra/gzhan stong split.

What is however true is that we can only experience the contents of our own minds, whether those minds are liberated or not. The basis mythos runs as follows: when the five lights are perceived, those five lights come from potency [rtsal] of our own minds and no where else. If we reify them as external to our own minds, then we fall into samsara. This is happening all the time. To reverse this, one must practice thogal working with entoptic visions that are understood to be produced internally, not externally. If you do not work with these visions, practicing merely tregchö, one will not be able to purify those traces in our minds that give rise to impure vision, though we may be able to realize the mind-essence and dissolve our bodies at death, we will never be able to realize the body of light.

Dzogchen practitioners are fond of saying that Dzogchen practice works with "wisdom" [ye shes] and not mind [rnam shes, sems], and this is true, but only because of a very specialized vocabulary which sharply defines the originally pure mode of consciousness [ye shes] from its derivative impure mode [rnam shes], for want of better terms in English.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, March 6th, 2014 at 2:45 AM

Title: Re: eleventh fundamental downfall

Content:

gad rgyangs said:

so if its not "just emptiness", is that because its also clarity and compassion, or because emptiness is an extreme?

Malcolm wrote:

In this case it is because mere emptiness is an extreme. Clarity has to be a relative characteristic, since it is the foundation of the rūpakāyas.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, March 6th, 2014 at 2:50 AM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

What is however true is that we can only experience the contents of our own minds

gad rgyangs said:

what is this "we" that would be something distinct from mind?

Malcolm wrote:

Of course not. One can experience only one's mind. For this reason Shabkar states in Flight of the Garuda:

Ignorance appearing as the five poisons is also the mind.

Self-originated primordial wisdom appearing as vidyā is also the mind...

There are no appearances at all apart from the mind.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, March 6th, 2014 at 3:16 AM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

'Malcolm said:

While it is clear that Dzogchen definitely posits the basis as a set of generic characteristics that belong to individual minds, it does not posit that appearances are mental factors.

smcj said:

So this is how you're distancing yourself from the Cittamatra?

Malcolm wrote:

One can experience only one's mind. For this reason Shabkar states in Flight of the Garuda:

Ignorance appearing as the five poisons is also the mind.

Self-originated primordial wisdom appearing as vidyā is also the mind...

There are no appearances at all apart from the mind.

smcj said:

(formatting mine)

Malcolm, I think you're in denial about having succumbed to the Cittamatra view. An intervention may be in order.

Malcolm wrote:

Subjectively speaking, all internal appearances are just mental images, whether those appearances are derived from your eyes up to your skin.

When you "see" a mountain, you are not aware of the direct perception of that mountain, since it is non-conceptual. What you are aware of is a secondary or derived perception which is an image of the mountain that your eye has captured. Gzhan stong has no theory of perception different than this.

The external mountain is an entity that is capable of appearing because of the force of traces of the minds of all sentient beings. Shabkar uses the example of the woman who meditated upon herself as a tiger for a year, and frightened a village into slaying her because they perceived her as a tiger and not a human woman.

This is not cittamatra view, this is Shantarakṣita's yogacara synthesis, where the view of relative truth is held to be cittamatra, and the view of ultimate truth is madhyamaka. Earlier Madhyamakas generally adopt the Sautrantika view for the most part for relative truth. But even here, no one confuses one's perception of the mountain, the mental image, with the mountain itself.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, March 6th, 2014 at 3:21 AM

Title: Re: eleventh fundamental downfall

Content:

gad rgyangs said:

so if its not "just emptiness", is that because its also clarity and compassion, or because emptiness is an extreme?

Malcolm wrote:

In this case it is because mere emptiness is an extreme. Clarity has to be a relative characteristic, since it is the foundation of the rūpakāyas.

gad rgyangs said:

i don't think the three characteristics of the basis are hierarchical : if emptiness is considered an extreme then so would be clarity and compassion.

Malcolm wrote:

Mere clarity is an extreme. That is why Dzogchen texts say thing like "Because it is empty, it is free from the extreme of existence; because it is clear, it is free from the extreme of nonexistence" and so on, when describing the mind-essence.

Lamdre texts say basically the same thing, as do Kagyu texts.

This is why we have the description of the mind essence as "the inseparability [thugs rje] of clarity [rang bzhin] and emptiness [ngo bo]". In reality, since the two truths are inseparable, so is clarity and emptiness.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, March 6th, 2014 at 3:46 AM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

smcj said:

You really know how to thread the needle on this issue.

Malcolm wrote:

That's why they pay me the big bucks.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, March 6th, 2014 at 3:49 AM

Title: Re: African Americans & people of Color, & Buddhism in the W

Content:

zsc said:

but I understand that a lot of black people want a black Buddhist culture of their own

Malcolm wrote:

Buddhadharma may have cultural trappings, but if you have the karma to be a follower of Buddhadharma, these things will not get in your way.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, March 6th, 2014 at 3:53 AM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

I never claimed reality existed, therefore I am free of the fault of claiming it does not exist.

Andrew108 said:

What on earth are you talking about? Just by sharing information and by posting here, you are making a claim that indeed at some level reality exists. And then because you are smart you say that there is no reality.

You should stop this nonsense. Let life tell you what it is. This is much better than you and your intellect telling life what it should be.

smcj said:

Malcolm, now you're being accused of being a nihilist. This must not be your day.

Malcolm wrote:

It's not my limitation, it's mustang cave's.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, March 6th, 2014 at 3:55 AM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

I never claimed reality existed, therefore I am free of the fault of claiming it does not exist.

Andrew108 said:

What on earth are you talking about? Just by sharing information and by posting here, you are making a claim that indeed at some level reality exists.

Malcolm wrote:

That's one of the silliest things you have ever said. It is like one illusory guy telling another illusory that because the second guy can respond to the first guy, the second is claiming the illusion is real.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, March 6th, 2014 at 3:56 AM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

Andrew108 said:

I don't know if he is a nihilist and I couldn't care either way. I think he has more serious things to worry about.

Malcolm wrote:

You worry about your business, and I will worry about mine. In the meantime, since you obviously cannot address my citations and reasoning, be silent.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, March 6th, 2014 at 4:04 AM

Title: Re: African Americans & people of Color, & Buddhism in the W

Content:

Johnny Dangerous said:

For that reason and others, I feel somewhat iffy about different groups trying to consciously create their own Buddhist sub-cultures, it seems a bit forced.

Malcolm wrote:

Seconded.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, March 6th, 2014 at 4:53 AM

Title: Re: African Americans & people of Color, & Buddhism in the W

Content:

zsc said:

but I understand that a lot of black people want a black Buddhist culture of their own

Malcolm wrote:

Buddhadharma may have cultural trappings, but if you have the karma to be a follower of Buddhadharma, these things will not get in your way.

zsc said:

See the part in my post about "colorblindness", which is actually racism. Opinions like this one invalidate the experiences of people of color and attempt to shut down conversations about real world issues within the sangha.

Malcolm wrote:

It does not invalidate anything. A caucasian, I have personally experienced very intense racism at the hands of Tibetans. It did not get in my way. People do not become Buddhist unless they have the karmic connections to do so.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, March 6th, 2014 at 6:42 AM

Title: Re: Dr. Sanderson: Phowa etc. are directly from Saivism

Content:

Zen Dude said:

=the first evidence of an abiseka...

Malcolm wrote:

Ummm...how about the rig veda?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, March 6th, 2014 at 7:14 AM

Title: Re: African Americans & people of Color, & Buddhism in the W

Content:

zsc said:

No one is an a-cultural person, but white mainstream Buddhism seems to frame their "stripped-down" practice as culture-free, when that itself is a cultural decision. Only western culture (WASP) is seen as just "normal" while poc have "cultural trappings".

Malcolm wrote:

I never maintained my practice was culture free. I still imagine Sambhogakāyas as 4th century Indian princes.

zsc said:

All I'm saying is that it's more complicated than ignoring it, or "not letting it get in your way". It doesn't "get in my way", in fact, but that doesn't mean it is a non-issue.

Malcolm wrote:

It is as much an issue as you allow it to be.

zsc said:

People do not become Buddhist unless they have the karmic connections to do so. Not saying you are doing this, but you have to understand, poc Buddhists are told what you are saying nearly every time we dare to address racism, classism, and sexism, and it reads like "ignore how poorly you are treated and regarded" as if it doesn't matter in our every day lives. It does matter, and it also forms the experiences of many different poc in many ways.

Malcolm wrote:

Buddhism appears racist, classist and sexist to many people.

You are not really talking about how "Buddhists" treat you, you are talking about how you feel treated by caucasians.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, March 6th, 2014 at 9:59 AM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The external mountain is an entity that is capable of appearing because of the force of traces of the minds of all sentient beings. Shabkar uses the example of the woman who meditated upon herself as a tiger for a year, and frightened a village into slaying her because they perceived her as a tiger and not a human woman.

Sherab said:

Could you explain the process with which the "force of traces of the minds of all sentient beings" cause the external mountain? In other words, how does something mental produce something physical.

The example used by Shabkar does not explain this process as far as I can see. It explained how the meditating woman appeared as a tiger but does not explain how other tigers appear as tigers to the people of the village. The woman could have meditated upon herself as a mountain and would appear as a mountain to the village people but that would not explain how other mountains appear as mountains to the village people.

Malcolm wrote:

Shabkar is basically claiming that the deluded perceptions of living beings are sufficient to cause similar appearances to other living beings of the same class.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, March 6th, 2014 at 10:03 AM

Title: Re: Dr. Sanderson: Phowa etc. are directly from Saivism

Content:

Sherlock said:

More like an innovation in India from whoever created the inner yogatantras.

Malcolm wrote:

Outer tantras.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, March 6th, 2014 at 10:03 AM

Title: Re: Dr. Sanderson: Phowa etc. are directly from Saivism

Content:

Zen Dude said:

=the first evidence of an abiseka...

Malcolm wrote:

Ummm...how about the rig veda?

Zen Dude said:

My understanding is that in that context, it would be only performed for gods/god-kings. Introducing it's usage to commoners looks like an innovation on the Chinese side.

Malcolm wrote:

So now you are claiming Buddhist tantra comes from China?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, March 6th, 2014 at 10:34 AM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Shabkar is basically claiming that the deluded perceptions of living beings are sufficient to cause similar appearances to other living beings of the same class.

bob said:

The beings who have created the illusion of the mountains are not of the same class as the beings who are perceiving the illusion as mountains.



Malcolm wrote:  
Actually, they are.

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Thursday, March 6th, 2014 at 10:45 AM  
Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind  
Content:

bob said:  
As much as I respect your acumen, I would offer as a rough analogy that the beings who build the zoo are not of the same class as the beings who occupy the cages.

So too with the physical 3-D realm we take to be "the world", which is a stage with props provided for the training and edifying adventures of beings in a less advanced class by beings in a far more advanced class.

Of course, if we were to consider the matter from the absolute point of view, there are no beings, but that is skipping ahead a bit.

Malcolm wrote:  
We build our own cage together, no one does it for us.

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Thursday, March 6th, 2014 at 11:22 AM  
Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind  
Content:  
Sherab said:  
Seems very cittamitra to me.

Malcolm wrote:  
Yogacara Madhyamaka, actually, ala Shantaraksita.

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Thursday, March 6th, 2014 at 9:22 PM  
Title: Re: Dr. Sanderson: Phowa etc. are directly from Saivism  
Content:  
Malcolm wrote:  
So now you are claiming Buddhist tantra comes from China?

Zen Dude said:

I'd claim, that given the evidence I've seen, that some of the elements that are generally associated with Tantra, may have had origins in Pure Land/Proto-Tantric/Daoist practice in China, which of course, was conditioned, by Pure Land practice in India. For instance, obviously the Chinese wouldn't have written an apocryphal sutra named the "Abhiseka-sutra", if they didn't have knowledge of what an Abhiseka was, from India.

Malcolm wrote:

In Buddhist tantra, abhisheka and fire puja are derived from the Vedas, the mantras are similar etc.

Zen Dude said:

Likewise, the earliest records of techniques related to manipulating the subtle winds, are from the Mawangdui( <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mawangdui> ) manuscripts, which, to my knowledge, predate anything similar from India by quite a bit.

Malcolm wrote:

Nadis and cakras, from the early Upanishads and Ayurveda

Prāṇāyāma, corollaries to gtum mo and so on can be found in the Yoga sutras of Patañjali, and it is a daily part of Vedic practice and has been for three millennia.

Zen Dude said:

Back to my original point, I think that there's sufficient evidence that Buddhist Tantra's( at least pre-yogini ), were not simply a copy and paste job from Saivites, as Sanderson seems to be suggesting.

Malcolm wrote:

He is not suggesting it is cut and paste job. He goes to great length to point out that it isn't that simple.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, March 6th, 2014 at 9:38 PM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

bob said:

Yes, I understand that line of thinking, and at one time would have agreed. In a certain limited sense, there is even some truth to that, especially in regard to karma. We are all creators and creatures of each other, causing and bearing each other's burden within the sphere of our relations and so forth.

However, what I am referring to is the actual mechanics of this current manifestation

which we are enjoying, known generally as "this world", which we as human beings have little hand in creating or maintaining (but are doing a pretty good job nevertheless of spoiling). We did not make the mountains, the rivers, or the tigers and elephants, or even our own bodies (which we think of as our own, at least).

In that sense, it is the work of another class of beings, just as is the sun, the moon, and the planets. Nor am I referring to some God-creator (although to most of us, these beings would appear god-like). In other words, there is a hierarchy, or ascending and descending classes of beings.

Now, I realize this comment might not align with the popular understanding of Buddhism, but nevertheless, it is the case. I am not trying to convince anyone of this, btw, but felt moved to insert it as a consideration. There is more to this world than meets the eye, or necessarily tallies with human philosophies or current scientific understanding.

Malcolm wrote:

The variety of the world is created by the collective karma of sentient beings, not by some demiurge/s.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, March 6th, 2014 at 9:39 PM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

Sherlock said:

The whole idea that there are other beings who create samsara but are not part of it is counter to Buddhadharma.

bob said:

FWIW, it might help to think of it as an adult class of beings creating a kindergarten environment for a child class of beings in need of behavior training. What I am suggesting is that there is a non-human class of beings who have created this stage for the human class of beings. It does not necessarily mean that the creator beings are beyond samsara (although at a certain level some might be considered "enlightened" beings by our limited descriptors).

Malcolm wrote:

Right, this view is outside of Buddhadharma and has no place within it.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, March 6th, 2014 at 10:04 PM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:  
Sherab said:  
Seems very cittamitra to me.

Malcolm wrote:  
Yogacara Madhyamaka, actually, ala Shantaraksita.

Sherab said:  
So the process by which the physical is produced by the mental is the same in yogacara madhyamaka is the same at that in cittamatra?

Malcolm wrote:  
Yes, since the former takes the latter as relative truth. Kalaśīla's Madhyamakālaṃkārapañjikā states:

Since the five characteristics of external cause and condition and the dominant characteristic are false, existing as mind-only [cittamatra] is only non-arising in the manner of representation-only [vijñāpati-matra]. Therefore, whatever the non-arising of the madhyamaka school might be, that demonstrates it.

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Thursday, March 6th, 2014 at 10:50 PM  
Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind  
Content:

Sherab said:  
So the process by which the physical is produced by the mental is the same in yogacara madhyamaka is the same at that in cittamatra?

Malcolm wrote:  
Yes, since the former takes the latter as relative truth. Kalaśīla's Madhyamakālaṃkārapañjikā states:

Since the five characteristics of external cause and condition and the dominant characteristic are false, existing as mind-only [cittamatra] is only non-arising in the manner of representation-only [vijñāpati-matra]. Therefore, whatever the non-arising of the madhyamaka school might be, that demonstrates it.

Sherab said:  
Would a madhyamika also hold the same explanation on how the physical is produced by the mental?

Malcolm wrote:  
Even Abhidharma holds that matter is produced by mind, for example, when a being takes rebirth from the formless realm into the form realm, their physical body is created by their minds since there is no other cause for the matter their body is made up of.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, March 7th, 2014 at 12:33 AM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

Sherab said:

Would a madhyamika also hold the same explanation on how the physical is produce by the mental?

Malcolm wrote:

Even Abhidharma holds that matter is produced by mind, for example, when a being takes rebirth from the formless realm into the form realm, their physical body is created by their minds since here is no other cause for the matter their body is made up of.

Sherab said:

I started out with the Gelug tradition and was taught that beings in the formless realm, have a mind-made body. I did not get any sense that the mind-made body was physical. I was also taught that a result can come only from a similar cause, and because of that, as far as I understood, it was not held that something physical can come from something mental and vice versa. At any rate, I never felt at home with the Gelug's take on a number of issues.

Anyway, I have yet to come across a Madhyamika's explanation that say that the physical is produced by the mental. I posed the question in the hope that you may have come across something to the contrary to what I know and what I've learned while I was with the Gelugpas.

Malcolm wrote:

This is because the Gelugpas adhere to a sautrantika version of relative truth in their sutra explanation.

The Sakyas, Kagyus and Nyingmas tend to favor a Yogacara Madhyamaka explanation of relative truth.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, March 7th, 2014 at 12:41 AM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

Andrew108 said:

There isn't really any proof that the physical is created by the mental. This philosophical notion is just a heuristic device to promote mindfulness. And like most buddhist philosophy, it shouldn't be taken too seriously.

Malcolm wrote:

There is no proof the mental is created by the physical either.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, March 7th, 2014 at 12:51 AM

Title: Re: Dr. Sanderson: Phowa etc. are directly from Saivism

Content:

Rakshasa said:

The 'fire puja' in Vedas

Malcolm wrote:

Upon which Buddhist fire pujas are clearly based.

Rakshasa said:

The defining feature of Shramanic indigenous religion was the belief in Karma and reincarnation - which is absent in ancient Vedicism. It is a conspiracy by Brahmins and some European scholars nowadays to give credit of Shramanistic religions to the Indo-Aryan, a Caucasian tribe related to many European peoples.

Malcolm wrote:

PIE peoples believed in reincarnation.

Rakshasa said:

Nadis and cakras, from the early Upanishads and Ayurveda

Blanket statement from a very parochialistic and biased point of view. In fact, Ayurveda came from Buddhist sages.

Malcolm wrote:

The earliest Ayurvedic text we have is the Cakrasaṃhita. It is also the earliest source we have for Saṃkhya.

Rakshasa said:

Prāṇāyāma, corollaries to gṛhṇāmo and so on can be found in the Yoga sutras of Patañjali, and it is a daily part of Vedic practice and has been for three millennia.

The great Indian historian, Kashi Nath Upadhyaya, himself a Brahmin, has amply proven that the Patanjali Yoga sutra was in fact influenced heavily from Early Buddhism - not even later Mahayana Buddhism, but Early Buddhism.

Malcolm wrote:

However, prāṇāyāma, and so on, things found in the Yoga sutras, clearly have no precedent in Buddhist texts. Just examine the Vibhūti-pādaḥ. While there are certainly very common ideas found in "early" Buddhist texts and the Yogasūtras, these commonality can be explained as coming from a common religious milieu, with different emphasis. For example, Patañjali has the four brahma viharas, but the mode of explanation is quite different than the Buddhas.

Rakshasa said:

It is very unlikely that Buddhism has sprouted out of Hinduism,

Malcolm wrote:

I agree, but there is ample proof right in the early suttas that the Buddha's own world view was essentially informed by Vedic cosmological concepts. Later borrowings from Shaiva and other non-buddhist traditions have precedents in the Buddha's own lifetime.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, March 7th, 2014 at 2:41 AM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The variety of the world is created by the collective karma of sentient beings, not by some demiurge/s.

bob said:

I never said anything about demiurges. I simply indicated that a different class of beings than the human class is responsible for creating the illusion that is this 3-D environment, in contrast to Shabkar's assertion. However, since my view is apparently not within the Buddhist box, I will withdraw from further comment on this topic.

Malcolm wrote:

The Mahāyāna Buddhist point is that a given class of beings share a similar experience of a container universe because they have similar karma ripening at the same time. You can understand this through the classic example of humans, devas, asuras, animals, pretas and hell beings all experiencing liquids differently, as water, nectar, a home, pus and blood or molten iron. Specifically the yogacara school regards the entire container universe to consist only of projections caused by the ripening of traces.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, March 7th, 2014 at 10:53 AM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

Andrew108 said:

There is no first proof that mind and consciousness originated from matter.

Malcolm wrote:

Case closed.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, March 7th, 2014 at 10:56 AM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

Sherab said:

[

Those who argue that ultimately, there is no ultimate, and only the relative is all there is, is basically saying that the traces are their own ground. The consequence of this is that there can be no permanent liberation and any liberation is no different from annihilation.

Malcolm wrote:

Nonsense, one merely moves from an afflicted relative to a nonafflicted relative. Once one's mind is free of afflictions, it cannot revert because the cause of being free of afflictions is āryan insight, which cannot be lost.

From an ultimate point of view, the language of affliction or nonaffliction is incoherent.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, March 7th, 2014 at 9:04 PM

Title: Re: African Americans & people of Color, & Buddhism in the W

Content:

rory said:

You've had two African-American posters tell you why they feel alienated and then you don't agree with their conclusions, say there are no differences, talk over them etc...

Ugh.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, and we have gay people tell is why they feel alienated, white people who tell is they feel alienated, and so on. But the fact remains, ultimately Buddhadharma is not about changing the world to suit us since that is impossible. Ultimately, Buddhadharma is about overcoming suffering and the causes of suffering that lay within us, not outside us.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, March 7th, 2014 at 9:07 PM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

Andrew108 said:

There is no first proof that mind and consciousness originated from matter.

Malcolm wrote:

Case closed.

Andrew108 said:

Not at all. Recent studies have shown that physical activity in the brain precedes mental



events.

Malcolm wrote:

Still haven't discarded your brain-based physicalism, I see.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, March 7th, 2014 at 9:16 PM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

Sherab said:

If one holds the mind as a series of discrete mental moments, then by definition, there is a gap between one discrete moment and the next. In the gap, there cannot be any consciousness and therefore knowledge. Consequently, there is no guarantee that the transition from one discrete moment to another will be perfect since it is possible to postulate some disturbance during the transition of a mental moment from one to another that result in an imperfect transition.

Malcolm wrote:

But the mind is not a series of "discrete" mental moments in the way in which you are positing it. If you follow Nāgārjuna's reasoning, the mind is series of moments that are neither the same as nor different from each other. In the case of a person with āryan insight, there is no possibility of any disturbance between one moment of mind and the next because the mind stream has now been purified of causes for the arising of afflictions.

Āryan insight does not transform a relative mind into ultimate mind; it is relative mind that has the capacity to take the ultimate as an "object". The Gelugpa use the useful example of subjective clear light and objective clear light, subjective clear light is the mind that apprehends objective clear light.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, March 8th, 2014 at 7:31 PM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, March 8th, 2014 at 10:42 PM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

Honestly, I am just a beginner, so I can't say whether Malcolm is correct. I can see why people might think otherwise, though. Here is a passage from Elio Guarisco's introduction to "Myriad Worlds":

In the Dzog-chen system, the primal creative cause of the universe is neither the evolutionary actions of beings nor the interrelationships of the compassion of the buddhas and sen-tient beings, but rigpa, a state of pure and total awareness. This state of awareness is nothing other than the primordially pure ground of being itself (gzhi).

Malcolm wrote:

In Dzogchen texts, the gzhi is never described as a ground of being for the simple reason that being, non-being, and so on are not established either in the so-called "basis" or in appearances of the basis that has arisen. It is no wonder you are confused when you see use of terms from Paul Tillich out of context in this way. Tillich, the originator of the term, uses the ground of being to describe God.

dzogchungpa said:

and a little later on he says:

Kongtrul states that an understanding of the Dzog-chen view of cyclic life is essential if one is to understand the path and the result of this system. The Dzog-chen perspective holds that everything emerges spontaneously from the primordially pure nature of being, that everything always remains primordially pure, and that when this truth is recognized within one's own natural awareness (rang byung ye shes), one instantly recovers one's original enlightened nature, which has been there all along.

I really can't see how this is compatible with Malcolm's position.

Malcolm wrote:

Again, if you are using the term of "ground of being", which is Christian theological term out of place in Dzogchen, you will run into many contradictions.

These days many people express the language of Dzogchen in terms which are little more than a revenant of 19th Century British Idealism:

Our conclusion, so far, will be this, that the Absolute is one system, and that its contents are nothing but sentient experience. It will hence be a single and all-inclusive experience, which embraces every partial diversity in concord. For it cannot be less than appearances and hence no feeling or thought, of any kind, can fall outside its limits. And if it is more than any feeling or thought which we know, it must still remain more of the same nature. It cannot pass into another region beyond what falls under the general head of sentience.

Bradley, F. H. (Francis Herbert), 1846-1924. Appearance and reality : a metaphysical essay (Kindle Locations 2251-2256). London : G. Allen.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, March 9th, 2014 at 12:03 AM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

These days many people express the language of Dzogchen in terms which are little

more than a revenant of 19th Century British Idealism...

dzogchungpa said:  
Revenant? Wow.

Well, as I've said, I like your POV better, it's much easier for me to understand.  
It does seem kind of strange that Guarisco is so off though.

Malcolm wrote:  
I have no idea what he thinks, I can only know what he writes.

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Sunday, March 9th, 2014 at 9:11 AM  
Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind  
Content:

asunthatneversets said:  
I don't think anyone, at any point on this thread said the relative is all there is. If the ultimate lacks inherency the relative does as well.

Sherab said:  
"Lacks inherency" means lacking there is nothing innate and implies that there is only dependency. In other words, everything is relative. Therefore "lacking inherency" is another way of saying that the relative is all there is.

Malcolm wrote:  
The ultimate truth is nothing more and nothing less than cognition of what remains after the relative has been examined, or the non-conceptual cognition of true nature of the relative.

To answer your earlier: causes and effects can neither be the same nor can they be different. If they are same, all causes are non-causes and all effects are non-effects. If they are different, causes remain non-causes and effects remain non-effects. When causes and effects are seen as they are, i.e., neither the same nor different, than causality, conventionally speaking, is preserved, without various identity problems. Nāgārjuna states:

It is not valid that arising and perishing are the same,  
nor it is valid that arising and perishing are different.

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Sunday, March 9th, 2014 at 9:13 AM  
Title: Re: African Americans & people of Color, & Buddhism in the W

Content:

zsc said:

Trying to extract culture from the dharma to make it "pure" is actually a western cultural decision, based on Protestant-driven anxiousness to find the "pure" way, the "original" way, etc.

Malcolm wrote:

That is really not an issue here. That will be more of an issue on Dhammawheel. That is mostly a Theravadin discomfort.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, March 9th, 2014 at 9:53 PM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Again, if you are using the term of "ground of being", which is Christian theological term out of place in Dzogchen, you will run into many contradictions.

jeeprs said:

Interestingly, there is a Wikipedia article called

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ground\\_of\\_Being\\_%28Dzogchen%29](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ground_of_Being_%28Dzogchen%29) (albeit with

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ground\\_of\\_Being\\_%28Dzogchen%29#Nomenclature\\_of\\_article:\\_meta-annotation.](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ground_of_Being_%28Dzogchen%29#Nomenclature_of_article:_meta-annotation.))

Malcolm wrote:

The article you mentioned is a mess. First of all, the term that gzhi translates is sthana, not āśraya. It just turns into a muddle from there.

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" relationship to the term "basis" or gzhi.

The gzhi is strictly defined as lacking any essence, any svabhāva, in Dzogchen texts. Indeed its potentiality is made possible because of its empty nature. Without that coreless core, the processes of the basis by which the five lights shine out and so on are simply not possible. Emptiness, naturelessness, the absence of being, the absence of reality, the absence of extremes is precisely what makes the basis originally pure. As the sgra thal gyur tantra states:

Since there is no basis or foundation, dwell in emptiness.

The commentary merely notes that this line confirms the quality of the non-existence of one's mind.

And further it states:

Due to being free from extremes, the middle does not exist.

The commentary describes this as the Great Perfection view that is totally complete freedom from extremes:

The so-called intimate instruction of the view of the totally complete space of the great freedom from activities is the view of the totally complete freedom from extremes. Since that is free from the extreme of existence, it does not fall into the position of substantiality. Since it is free from the extreme of nonexistence, it exhausts grasping to emptiness. Since it is free from both existence and non-existence, it is free from apprehending the intrinsic nature of the apprehender, since it is free from the extreme of neither existence nor nonexistence, there is also no concept of mere non-existence.

Moreover, since it is free from the extreme of emptiness, it possesses the meaning of an intrinsically clear core. Since it is free from the extreme of being non-empty, the extreme of grasping to substantiality is avoided. Since it is free from a basis [gzhi], it is not conceived as being either "clear" or "empty", since it is free from both, there is nothing to prove nor negate. In the same way, combine [the above reasoning] for all such as the extreme of appearance and so on.

Further because it is free from extremes it is not established many. Because it is totally complete, it is not established as one. Since that is free from one and many, it is the inexpressible dharmatā that is free from falling into extremes.

Now then, if it is said "That is not Dzogchen because it begins to abandon extremes", since it is totally complete as existence, it means there is nothing to seek. Since it is totally complete as non-existence, it means there is nothing to abandon. Since it is complete as both, it means it is beyond accepting and rejecting. Since it is complete as neither, everything becomes dharmatā.

Likewise, since empty, not empty and so on are totally complete, therefore, "Great Perfection" means not falling into hope and fear or extremes.

Moreover, because it is one, proliferation is severed, because it is many, there is no need to abandon anything. Further, because there are extremes, the middle is eliminated, because there is a middle, likewise, the extremes are eliminated. As such, if it is wondered why, it is because since it is free from extremes the middle does not exist. Because the extremes are negated, it is empty of a middle; since the middle is negated, likewise, there is no perception of extremes. Therefore:

"Because it is totally complete, there is nothing to dedicate."

And:

Since there is nothing more, there are no parts.

In case someone still doubts whether the basis is just referring to one's own mind, Vajrasattvamāyājālaguhyasarvādarśa-nāma-tantra states:

The rootless mind itself  
is the root of all phenomena.

A passage from Bhavya's Madhyamakaratnapradīpa reinforces our understanding of this passage:

Just as from the root of the lotus  
leaves and so on are continually produced,  
likewise, though the mind is insubstantial  
it exists as the essence of all phenomena.

This is the meaning of that: just as the root of the lotus is not connected with anything else, exists in water, and though that root does not penetrate anything, it is able to fill a great pond with leaves, flowers, and so on. Likewise, though the mind itself is insubstantial, it exists as the nature of all external and internal phenomena in the relative.

Just as shoots of rice in a terrace

spread everywhere without roots,  
also the rootless mind itself  
pervades the furthest reaches of space.

Here, the meaning of this is: in ponds and terraces, the plants called "rice" are interlinked, they grow on the surface of a terrace with a yellow flower, their roots do not penetrate. In the same way, while the mind is rootless, it spreads throughout all space, existing as the nature of all phenomena.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, March 9th, 2014 at 10:14 PM

Title: Re: African Americans & people of Color, & Buddhism in the W

Content:

rory said:

Malcolm: Oh it's a big issue here. In most Dharma centers you never find the rituals that are normal back in Asia.

Malcolm wrote:

Well, clearly you have never been to a Tibetan Buddhist center in the US.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 10th, 2014 at 12:00 AM

Title: Re: Discussion of Political Topics is Wrong Speech

Content:

tobes said:

there is far more expressively political advice on other matters. I'm not sure how one plausibly could only deny that the Ratnāvalī is filled with such content.

Malcolm wrote:

It's not that filled, it constitutes somewhat less than 10% of the total.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 10th, 2014 at 1:13 AM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

gad rgyangs said:

are Dzogchen and western theology/metaphysics saying the same thing? no.

Malcolm wrote:

If the language of western theology is invited into Dzogchen, how will people be able to distinguish the two? They will not, other than the fact that there is no term in Dzogchen that matches the term "ground of being".

gad rgyangs said:

are they talking about the same thing, i.e. the nature of reality? yes.

Malcolm wrote:

Dzogchen is talking about a state in which there is no creator [i.e. lhun grub]; Tillich is talking about a state on which there is a creator [i.e. dbang phyug]. Dzogchen rejects reality in favor of freedom from extremes, in which neither an ultimate nor relative can be established in anyway. There is no ground of being in Dzogchen, there are no beings in Dzogchen. If the basis was a "ground of being" it would be expressible. Since it is free from being, non-being, etc., it is inexpressible. In the process, Dzogchen does not go beyond Madhyamaka view in anyway at all.

gad rgyangs said:

do both traditions agree that the nature of reality is ineffable and beyond thought and categories? yes.

Malcolm wrote:

Dzogchen does not agree that there is a reality per se, a state of being that pertains to things. Freedom from all extremes is not a state of being [ity] pertaining [al] to things [res].

gad rgyangs said:

so what does their talking around the nature of reality amount to? poetic metaphors.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, when people reach their level of philosophical incompetence they, at the last resort, pull out the poetry card.

gad rgyangs said:

so is there actually a nature of reality? yes: here we are.

Malcolm wrote:

If there were an actual nature of reality, we couldn't be here.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 10th, 2014 at 1:14 AM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

smcj said:

if aspects of them end up sounding like some other system of thought that's fine.

Malcolm wrote:

If aspects of them sound like some other system, it means that translator has been lazy and has not done his job well.



Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 10th, 2014 at 1:37 AM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

Sherlock said:

Historical Dzogchen masters familiar with the Indian schools classified the views of those schools as wrong views and described why. If you say Dzogchen teaches a view similar to the views of those schools you are either misunderstanding something or you are implying those historical masters gave misleading statements.

The views of those schools cannot be the same as Dzogchen. If you say they are similar OK but you need to work out on which points they differ.

Malcolm wrote:

The view of freedom from extremes as explained in Madhyamaka is not the slightest bit different than the view of freedom from extremes as explained in Dzogchen. That is why ChNN cites Sakya Pandita's Analysis of the Three Vows when he describes the view of Dzogchen, the full quote as follows:

Tough indeed there are levels of view  
in Śrāvaka and Mahāyāna,  
it is never explained there is a division of views  
in Pāramitā and Secret Mantra.  
If there were a view superior to  
the freedom from proliferation of the Pāramitā,  
that view would contain proliferation.  
If [the view of secret mantra] is free from proliferation, there is no difference.  
Therefore, the view that is comprehended  
with explanation is the same,  
nevertheless, secret mantra is superior  
in the methods for realizing freedom from proliferation.

Longchenpa also admits that freedom from extremes in Prasanga and the Dzogchen view are the same.

Honestly, I don't see where the controversy is.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 10th, 2014 at 2:04 AM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

smcj said:

The same applies to Yogacara, "Great Madhyamaka" (is there a singular definition of this in the first place or is it something all teachers call their own interpretation of Madhyamaka) and other themes

Whatever the specifics of Dudjom R.'s interpretation of "Great Madhyamaka" (Empty-of-Other) were should be accepted as a legitimate view of Dzogchen. His shorthand of using the idea of a mirror as the undifferentiated Basis and the images on it as apparent phenomena should be non-controversial as one way of looking at it.

Malcolm wrote:

It is an entirely dualistic metaphor, from where to the images in this mirror arise? In any case, your interpretation that the basis is an undifferentiated unity is not supported in Dzogchen tantras. It is probably not actually supported in gzhan stong either, at this point I am too busy to look.

The Mind Mirror of Samantabhadra states:

The self-originated ultimate garbha,  
in the manner of being perfect without being generated,  
is a brilliant mirror existing in all.

The marginalia notes that the mirror is the wisdom of vidyā, which as we know is what the instantiated basis is termed. So we can clearly see that this self-originated, ultimate garbha is just a term for the mind-essence.

The Self Arisen Vidyā Tantra:

The light rays of all worlds issue forth  
from the mirror of perfect mind.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 10th, 2014 at 2:25 AM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

gad rgyangs said:

all subtle & sophisticated systems east & west (including Dzogchen) agree the ultimate is beyond description, conceptualization, categorization. So thats not really open to discussion.

Malcolm wrote:

In Dzogchen, the ultimate is not established, that is also not open to discussion. The reason why the ultimate in Madhyamala, Dzogchen, etc. is beyond description has everything to do with the basis premise of niṣprapañca and what that means.

gad rgyangs said:

what I see as an interesting difference of perspective is between systems that think something in our condition is wrong, missing, or fallen,

Malcolm wrote:

There is nothing missing in our condition, since we don't have one. If we had a condition,

that would be a self, and then we would really have a problem.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 10th, 2014 at 2:28 AM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

smcj said:

As Dudjom R. said (ibid):

What unimpededly appears on it (the mirror) are all the things of relative reality, your mind included.

(formatting mine)

Sounds undifferentiated to me. Of course you can always say D.R. didn't know what he was talking about.

Malcolm wrote:

All the things in relative reality come about, in Dzogchen parlance, from a mind that does not recognize its own display. But it takes a mind that does not recognize its essence to produce that relative. There is no mind-essence other than in the mind.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 10th, 2014 at 2:54 AM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

gad rgyangs said:

The metaphor does however demonstrate the source of the seemingly contradictory statements in the Tantras, some of which clearly point to a universal basis and others which point to a personal basis.

Malcolm wrote:

Its more easily reconciled on the basis of the intellectual categories to which the authors of the man ngag sde tantras in the 11th century were clearly familiar, that of the two kinds of lakṣanas, or characteristics we find in pramāṇa, samanya lakṣanas and svalakṣanas, in other words, universal and particulars. There is so much language of pramāṇa scattered through out the man ngag sde tantras, and use of it in a classical nominalist fashion in these tantras, that it is impossible these guys meant that the universal we call the thog ma spyi gzhi, the original "general or universal" basis, was meant to be anything other than a generic description of qualities and attributes possessed by specific or individual minds.

Use of hologram metaphors does not lead us anywhere near what these gentleman themselves thought of their own textual compositions, not to mention that problem that people get into when they indiscriminately cite the bodhicitta texts as the representing the sum total of Dzogchen thought. Obviously, there is a lot of problem with anachronistic readings of these texts by classical scholars such as Longchenpa. But unless you are a true believer (tm) and accept the original account of the origin of the man ngag sde literature presented in the Vima Nyingthig as historical fact, it is irresponsible to read these texts in that way. In fact the term gzhi is barely used in the bodhicitta texts.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 10th, 2014 at 2:56 AM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

gad rgyangs said:

if you insist there is no ultimate, no relative, no condition, no anything, then you are not really saying anything at all, at least not anything interesting.

Malcolm wrote:

Who said tathatā was supposed to be interesting? Not the Buddha:

“Hey, hey, apparent yet nonexistent retinue: listen well! There is no object to distinguish in me, the view of self-originated wisdom; 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, prajñā does not exist, samsara does not exist, nirvana does not exist, vidyā itself does not even exist, totally not appearing in anyway.”

-- Unwritten Tantra

“Venerable Śāriputra, if one sees it like so, all phenomena are empty, without characteristics, non-arising, unceasing, without stains, and not free from stains; not decreasing, not increasing.

“Śāriputra, in emptiness there is no matter, no sensation, no ideation, no formations, no consciousness, no eye, no ear, no nose, no tongue, no body, no mind, no form, no sound, no smell, no taste, no contact. There is no eye element up to no mental element, and also nothing up to the element of mental consciousness.

There is no ignorance; there is no end of ignorance; up to there is no aging and death and no end of aging and death.

Likewise, there is no suffering, cause, cessation and path.

There is no wisdom, nothing to obtain, and also nothing not to obtain.

-- The "Heart" Sutra

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 10th, 2014 at 3:05 AM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

“Hey, hey, apparent yet nonexistent retinue: listen well! There is no object to distinguish in me, the view of self-originated wisdom; 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, prajñā does not exist, samsara does not exist, nirvana does not exist, vidyā itself does not even exist, totally not appearing in anyway.”

-- Unwritten Tantra

gad rgyangs said:

Methinks he doth protest too much. if he really doesn't exist, shouldn't he just shut up?

Malcolm wrote:

You know that they say, the empty bucket makes the loudest noise.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 10th, 2014 at 4:05 AM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

A nice metaphor that illustrates my point again, from the chapter on demonstrating the basis of the buddhas and sentient beings as one from the rdzogs pa chen po nges don 'dus pa:

For example, though one offers a thousand lamps,  
there is no more than one nature of light.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 10th, 2014 at 7:15 AM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

A large problem for people who are approaching Dzogchen is that they fall back into classical western philosophical categories.

jeeprs said:

Why is this a problem?

Malcolm wrote:

Buddhist texts need to have their own own distinctive terminologies in English, just as they do in Sanskrit, Chinese and Tibetan in order to clearly demarcate our teachings and philosophy from those of other traditions. For this reason then using terminology like "ground of being" for gzhi is wholly inadequate.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 10th, 2014 at 7:17 AM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The view of freedom from extremes as explained in Madhyamaka is not the slightest bit different than the view of freedom from extremes as explained in Dzogchen. That is why ChNN cites Sakya Pandita's Analysis of the Three Vows...

dzogchungpa said:

OK, but why then does ChNNR, in "The Base In Dzogchen", say this:

ChNNR said:

...Madhyamika, which is a philosophical system, negates the existence of the Base completely.

dzogchungpa said:

?

Malcolm wrote:

Because Madhyamaka negates everything completely. But that does not mean that the Dzogchen view of freedom from extremes is any different at all from the Madhyamaka view of freedom from extremes, for in fact they are formulated in precisely the same way. Further, Madhyamaka is not focused on the person, but rather in eliminating any sorts of reifications about existence, etc., whereas Dzogchen is concerned with explicating the nature of the mind. In other words, from a Madhyamaka POV there is nothing to point out, since nothing is established. From a Dzogchen point of view, and Vajrayāna in general, there is something to point out, i.e. the nature of mind, an empty clarity.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 10th, 2014 at 7:26 AM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

jeeprs said:

sectarian polemics

Malcolm wrote:

To be perfectly honest, as I have said before, from a textual POV, Dzogchen is filled to the brim with sectarian polemics. It is the most sectarian teaching in Tibet.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 10th, 2014 at 7:35 AM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

From a Dzogchen point of view, and Vajrayāna in general, there is something to point out, i.e. the nature of mind, an empty clarity.

gad rgyangs said:

oh, so there is something after all! thats a relief!

Malcolm wrote:

Clarity is also not established, that is why it is called "empty". In fact, there is nothing to point out, knowing that is clarity.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 10th, 2014 at 9:45 AM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

You seem to be saying that what is pointed out or introduced is nothing, i.e. what ChNNR calls our real condition or natural state is nothing.

Malcolm wrote:

What I am saying is that what is pointed out is the nature of the mind, the mind essence, which you will never find when you look for it, apart from the looking itself, which when sought, is not findable either because it is free from extremes.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 10th, 2014 at 7:13 PM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

Sherab said:

I don't agree with your argument about not naming as it seems to deny that a dependent self exists in the sphere of the relative. As for a self in the sphere of the ultimate, my take is that the experience of nirvana or enlightenment is an experience where the concept of a self or no-self as understood in the sphere of the relative becomes incoherent, but the individuality of the experience cannot be denied.

Malcolm wrote:

There is no "dependent" self, there is only a designated self. Apart its designation, the

self, such as it is, is the son of a barren woman. If there were a dependent self, it would exist designated upon its parts, like a car or a cup. So what are the parts of the self upon which it is designated?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 11th, 2014 at 2:25 AM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

In addition, a so called "pandita" is described as "A scholar in the foundation of outer and inner objects of knowledge." A so called "kusali" is described as "One who has the most dedication inwardly after severing all outer distractions."

In terms of actual perfect Buddhahood: the first, having become knowledgeable about all objects of knowledge, has severed doubt through hearing, reflection and meditation. Then, because of severing doubt through meditating which makes samadhi essential, the pandita gradually attains Buddhahood after actualizing the Dharma of realization. A kusali necessarily has the same basis, but when considered alone, a pandita is closer to Buddhahood.

-- Sakya Pandita

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 11th, 2014 at 5:18 AM

Title: Re: Dr. Sanderson: Phowa etc. are directly from Saivism

Content:

Sherlock said:

According to that Germano article, the Upanishad channel involved a connection from the heart to the head, it wasn't the fully elaborated system that appears in the yoginitantras.

Malcolm wrote:

Correct.

Sherlock said:

There was no fully system of channels and cakras during the initial transmission of tantra to Tibet in the 8th-9th century so it was fully elaborated only in between then and around 1000CE.

Malcolm wrote:

Correct.

Sherlock said:

Some Hindu tantras have references to tantras originating from Mahacina, which might be a reference to either China or an area to the Northeast.



Malcolm wrote:  
Principally the Nilasarasvati tantras.

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Tuesday, March 11th, 2014 at 5:21 AM  
Title: Re: Dr. Sanderson: Phowa etc. are directly from Saivism  
Content:  
Sherlock said:

That's a good point -- maybe the overall concept that there are subtle, not exactly physical channels and so on in the body is not uniquely Buddhist...

Malcolm wrote:  
All the channels are described in the Buddhist tantras as physical structures. They are called "subtle" (sukṣma, phra) because they are very fine, not because they are immaterial or made of some quasi-material. For example, according to Kālacakra, the lower tips of the three main channels produce urine, feces and reproductive fluids. That is hard to do if they are not physical.

All the channels form during gestation in the womb. This is the same in Dzogchen.

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Tuesday, March 11th, 2014 at 5:23 AM  
Title: Re: Dr. Sanderson: Phowa etc. are directly from Saivism  
Content:  
ConradTree said:  
The debate is how much of Dzogchen is Indian Buddhist vs Tibetan Buddhist.

Malcolm wrote:  
My guess, about 5% Indian, 95% Tibetan.

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Tuesday, March 11th, 2014 at 5:24 AM  
Title: Re: Madhyamaka vs Dzogchen - Is this right?  
Content:  
ConradTree said:  
Madhyamaka..... Dzogchen  
freedom from extremes..... freedom from extremes  
dependent origination.....kadag, lhun grub and thugs rje  
two truths.....discards two truths  
no tantric features.....direct introduction, dream yoga, dark retreat,  
description of death process, description of empty clarity etc.

Malcolm wrote:

Something like that. Dzogchen is a part of secret mantra.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 11th, 2014 at 5:57 AM

Title: Re: Dr. Sanderson: Phowa etc. are directly from Saivism

Content:

Sherlock said:

According to that Germano article, the Upanishad channel involved a connection from the heart to the head, it wasn't the fully elaborated system that appears in the yoginitantras. There was no fully system of channels and cakras during the initial transmission of tantra to Tibet in the 8th-9th century so it was fully elaborated only in between then and around 1000CE.

.

Malcolm wrote:

I just wanted to add, I have looked at all the Dzogchen literature extant that could conceivably be pre- 1000, and none of it has any trace of concern or interest in anything remotely resembling the nāḍī, vāyu and bindu systems present in Hevajra, Kalacakra, and so on.

This only changes when we come to the man ngag sde tantras. For this as well as other reasons, I place the composition of the bulk of the seventeen tantras no earlier than 1020-1030 with the sgra thal 'gyur, the mu tig phreng ba, the rig pa rang shar and rang grol as well as the bkra shis mdzes ldan being the last. The sgra thal 'gyur was almost certainly composed by Chetsun Senge Wangchuck, in my opinion.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 11th, 2014 at 7:54 AM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

Sherab said:

I don't agree with your argument about not naming as it seems to deny that a dependent self exists in the sphere of the relative. As for a self in the sphere of the ultimate, my take is that the experience of nirvana or enlightenment is an experience where the concept of a self or no-self as understood in the sphere of the relative becomes incoherent, but the individuality of the experience cannot be denied.

Malcolm wrote:

There is no "dependent" self, there is only a designated self. Apart its designation, the self, such as it is, is the son of a barren woman. If there were a dependent self, it would exist designated upon its parts, like a car or a cup. So what are the parts of the self upon which it is designated?

Sherab said:

There is no things, inanimate or otherwise, that exist designated on its parts. If it did, then by taking apart say a chariot and pile them into a heap, it will not be a pile of other things, but will still be designated as a chariot. A thing exists and functions only when the parts are in a particular relationship with each other. When that particular relationship exists between the parts, a dependent self exists. Upon that dependent self, a label or name is designated.

Malcolm wrote:

You just refuted a dependent self.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 11th, 2014 at 9:16 AM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

Sherab said:

Elaboration of dependent self:

A dependent self exists because of certain relationships between its parts. These relationships in turn are dependent on the laws of nature. Without a certain stability in the laws of nature for a certain duration, a dependent self cannot exist.

Those who wish to posit that the relative is ultimately illusory, must therefore show that the laws of nature are ultimately illusory. As I see it, modern science is heading in that direction, but is still far from reaching a definitive answer.

Malcolm wrote:

So you are realist, not different at all from Sarvastivadins.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 11th, 2014 at 6:02 PM

Title: Re: Pronouncation (yes one of these)

Content:

Konchog1 said:

This is sort of embarrassing, one would think that over the whole internet there would be easy to find answers that agree with each other for something so simple.

Nope.

I've been reciting the excellent Sutra of Golden Light and I am unsure of the pronunciation of part of this Dharani:

NAMO BUDDHĀYA/ NAMO DHARMĀYA/ NAMAH SANGHĀYA/ NAMO BRAHMĀYA/ NAMA  
INDRĀYA/ NAMA CHATURNĀM/ MAHĀRĀJĀNĀM/ TADYATHĀ/ HILI HILI/ MILI MILI/  
GAURI/ MAHĀGAURI/ GANDHARI/ MAHĀGANDHARI/ DRIMIDI/ MAHĀDRIMIDI/  
DANDAKHUKHUNATI/HA HA HA HA/ HI HI HI HI/ HU HU HU HU/ HALODHAME/

GUDHAME/ CHA CHA CHA CHA/ CHI CHI CHI CHI/ CHU CHU CHU CHU/  
CHANDESHVARA/ SHIKHARA/ SHIKHARA/ UTISHTHAHE BHAGAVĀN/ SAMVIDJÑĀYE  
SVĀHĀ

<http://www.sutraofgoldenlight.com/2011/06/chapter-19-completed-samjnaya-lord-of.html>

CHANDESHVARA/ SHIKHARA/ SHIKHARA/ UTISHTHAHE BHAGAVĀN/ SAMVIDJÑĀYE  
SVĀHĀ should be pronounced as CHANDE SW ARA/ SHIKHARA/ SHIKHARA/  
UTISHTHAHE BHAGA W ĀN/ SAMVID NYA YE S W ĀHĀ right?

Thank you.

Malcolm wrote:  
Gnya

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 11th, 2014 at 6:06 PM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

Getting back to the topic, here's another "misleading" quotation, from "The Crystal and the Way of Light": The Base, or Zhi in Tibetan, is the term used to denote the fundamental ground of existence, both at the universal level and at the level of the individual, the two being essentially the same; to realize the one is to realize the other. If you realize yourself, you realize the nature of the universe.

Malcolm wrote:

This is no different than saying that if one realizes the emptiness of one thing, one realizes the emptiness of all things. The principle is the same.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 11th, 2014 at 6:08 PM

Title: Re: Dr. Sanderson: Phowa etc. are directly from Saivism

Content:

Sherlock said:

According to that Germano article, the Upanishad channel involved a connection from the heart to the head, it wasn't the fully elaborated system that appears in the yoginitantras. There was no fully system of channels and cakras during the initial transmission of tantra to Tibet in the 8th-9th century so it was fully elaborated only in between then and around 1000CE.

.

Malcolm wrote:

I just wanted to add, I have looked at all the Dzogchen literature extant that could conceivably be pre- 1000, and none of it has any trace of concern or interest in anything remotely resembling the nāḍī, vāyū and bindu systems present in Hevajra, Kalacakra, and so on.

This only changes when we come to the man ngag sde tantras. For this as well as other reasons, I place the composition of the bulk of the seventeen tantras no earlier than 1020-1030 with the sgra thaḥ 'gyur, the mu tig phreng ba, the rig pa rang shar and rang grol as well as the bkra shis mdzes ldan being the last. The sgra thaḥ 'gyur was almost certainly composed by Chetsun Senge Wangchuck, in my opinion.

Sherlock said:

What about Bon Dzogchen?

Malcolm wrote:

It is all 11th century and later, like all bon texts.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 11th, 2014 at 7:36 PM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

Sherab said:

Elaboration of dependent self:

A dependent self exists because of certain relationships between its parts. These relationships in turn are dependent on the laws of nature. Without a certain stability in the laws of nature for a certain duration, a dependent self cannot exist.

Those who wish to posit that the relative is ultimately illusory, must therefore show that the laws of nature are ultimately illusory. As I see it, modern science is heading in that direction, but is still far from reaching a definitive answer.

Malcolm wrote:

A self is merely a designation, and does not exist apart from designation. It has no parts. A self cannot be found in a part, nor in all of the parts combined. This is why there is no "dependent self". If there were a "dependent" self, it would have to be shown which part is the key part upon which it depended. Since a self cannot be found in one of the aggregates, all of the aggregates or separate from the aggregates, for this reason one cannot accept the existence of a so-called "dependent" self. In fact the two terms are mutually exclusive, like "dependent inherent existence".

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 11th, 2014 at 7:39 PM

Title: Re: Dr. Sanderson: Phowa etc. are directly from Saivism

Content:

Sherlock said:

But I thought you said before that Tibetans realized they were not physical when they dissected bodies and dddn't find any of those channels.

Malcolm wrote:

No, I have never maintained that.

What I said was that the way the nāḍīs exist in the body does not correspond to how they are visualized, not that they do not physically exist. They do physically exist because their process of development during gestation is very precisely described in tantras such as Kālacakra, sGra thaḥ 'gyur and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 11th, 2014 at 7:44 PM

Title: Re: Longde before Dzin Dharmabodhi?

Content:

Fa Dao said:

ChNNR has said that it was Dzin Dharmabodhi that added in the practice of Ngondzog Gyalpo into the Longde teachings. Does anyone know what they were like prior to this?

Malcolm wrote:

We have absolutely no evidence of the Vajra Bridge aka klong sde prior to Dzung Dharmabodhi. This basically means that like everything else in Tibetan Buddhism, very little can be positively dated before the 11th century. Dates about texts and authors only begin to become clear in the 11 century. For Tibetans, even the 11th century is hazy to those in the 12th, not to mention anything prior to the 11th.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 11th, 2014 at 11:24 PM

Title: Re: Longde before Dzin Dharmabodhi?

Content:

Fa Dao said:

Magnus..I remember that as well..just trying to get a little history of practice in Longde prior to that is all

heart said:

To tell you the truth I think there have always been Tantric elements in Dzogchen.

/magnus

Malcolm wrote:

It's pretty clear that Dzogchen started out life as the realization of the completion stage, identical with Mahāmudra in the gsar ma system [The Kagyupas turned Mahāmudra into an independent system in the 12th century, which as we know elicited a strong reaction from Sakya Pandita]. It was only in the 10th century that Dzogchen became a separate vehicle.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 11th, 2014 at 11:34 PM

Title: Re: Longde before Dzin Dharmabodhi?

Content:

Sherab said:

In addition to the aggregates, there has to be certain relationships in the aggregates and between the aggregates in order for there to be a proper basis for the taking of a designation.

Malcolm wrote:

There is no end. You cannot arbitrarily decide where to end the dependency. In this case, you can only designate the universe as "a self" since everything in it is a dependent relationship. Remember, the material aggregate includes all sense organs and sense objects!

For the reason a so called "dependent" self should be rejected out of hand as incoherent. "Identity" merely exists as a designation upon a collection of parts. For example, you have "a car" because this collection of parts functions according to your expectations; you have a "broken car" when it does not; and when it is in a scrap yard, it is called "a dismantled car", for example, "that is a door from a BMW". But there is no dependent identity. "Identity" is merely a convention, and purely a product of designation upon an appearance, nothing more. The identity we impute is a designation based on an appearance, but the fact that identity is not dependent on the appearance can be understood from all the different identities that can be imputed upon an appearance, "Human", "Malcolm", "Löppon", "Asshole", "Heretic", "Buddhist" and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 11th, 2014 at 11:58 PM

Title: Re: Dr. Sanderson: Phowa etc. are directly from Saivism

Content:

Sherlock said:

So the way in which they physically exist is just our blood and lymph channels, the muscular system etc?

Malcolm wrote:

Well, for example, in the system of the Vajra Bridge, Kunzang Dorje, a disciple of Dharmabodhi who lived in the later 12th century, describes the nāḍīs very clearly as follows:

"Since it is necessary to understand the critical point of nāḍīs and vāyu, though there are 80,000 nāḍīs in a single body, they are gathered into five in the organ of the heart [don snying]. Blood and vāyu exist in the heart nāḍī, the lalanā, which exists on the right. Lymph [chu ser] and vāyu exist in the lung nāḍī, the rasanā, which exists on the left. Vāyu and bindu exist in the kidney nāḍī, the avādhuti (kun 'dar ma), which exists in the middle. The liver nāḍī generates the pure essence of the sense organs, exists above, and illuminates [sense] consciousness. Since the spleen nāḍī is the lower end of the avadhuti, it produces bliss."

They are necessarily physical structures which contain physical things such as vāyu and bindu, blood and lymph, feces and urine etc. This is merely one example I can provide out of many.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 12th, 2014 at 12:32 AM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

Andrew108 said:

He is referring to the fact that 'mere' appearances also have functionality. They have energy. We are not remaking the world just by observing it and judging it. It has it's own condition that is independent of the mind that observes it. Some of us are realists.

Malcolm wrote:

No one asserted that world was made by judging and observing. The Dzogchen view of the world is that it's appearances generated by traces in the minds of sentient beings, and that the traces in the minds of sentient beings have the capacity to generate appearances for other minds. So all of our minds together, because of our strong traces to which we are habituated from beginningless time, generate the appearances of the Universe together. Of course this does not mean that the traces of the mind have some state other than bodhicitta. They arise because bodhicitta, the nature of the mind, has not been recognized.

Appearances range from function to non-functional, but in the end they merely appearances of our own minds. The point of view of Dzogchen, and indeed, Vajrayāna in general, is that there is nothing "out there" which objectively exists.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 12th, 2014 at 12:42 AM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

Andrew108 said:



Some of us are realists.

Malcolm wrote:

Some of you have no understanding of Dzogchen, or indeed Vajrayāna, at all.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 12th, 2014 at 12:44 AM

Title: Re: Dr. Sanderson: Phowa etc. are directly from Saivism

Content:

Sherlock said:

OK thanks. Actually given the recent scientific study about tummo in some nuns and how the main mechanism behind the raise in temperature is due to the forceful breathing while visualization mainly helps the practitioners maintain the forceful breathing for longer periods, this makes a lot of sense rather than a concept of some nonphysocal force. The idea of a nonphysical force is the one you had been railing against for some time?

Malcolm wrote:

Well, it is not supported by our tradition. The so called "energy winds" are just vāyu, which is just the element of air. Of course, there are grosser and subtler kind of vāyu, but they all belong to the air element and are not different than the air element.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 12th, 2014 at 1:19 AM

Title: Re: Longde before Dzin Dharmabodhi?

Content:

heart said:

I am not so sure about that. My feeling is that the duality of development and completion stages is something that wasn't so developed in the early Nyingma Tantra's.

/magnus

Malcolm wrote:

It was quite well developed which is why 9th century texts like the kun byed rgyal po went to such pains to reject it. For example the mdo bcu, thought to have been authored Vairocana states:

Since the place of Samantbhadra arises, there is not need for the creation and completion samadhis.

Or the Vajrasattvamāyājālaguhyasarvādarśa-nāma-tantra, included in the rNying ma rgyud 'bum as well as the bKa' 'gyur, states:

bskyed rdzogs thabs rim gang bstan pa/ /sgyu 'phrul dra bar 'dus pa ste

Any teaching of the stages of the method of creation and completion are included in the Māyājāla

Of course, unifying the two stages is the whole point of the process to begin with in both earlier as well as later tantra.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 12th, 2014 at 1:21 AM

Title: Re: What major Tibetan Buddhist texts are still missing?

Content:

ConradTree said:

What major Tibetan Buddhist texts are still missing?

Besides some of the commentaries on the 17 tantras of dzogchen menngagde.

Malcolm wrote:

We have only 10% of what existed in Tibet prior to 1959.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 12th, 2014 at 1:30 AM

Title: Re: What major Tibetan Buddhist texts are still missing?

Content:

ConradTree said:

Yes, but what \*major\* texts are missing like the commentaries on the 17 tantras?

As you know, most Tibetan Buddhist texts are redundant.

Malcolm wrote:

Three volumes of commentary on Kalacakra by Lama Dampa Sonam Gyaltzen, there are so many...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 12th, 2014 at 1:52 AM

Title: Re: What major Tibetan Buddhist texts are still missing?

Content:

ConradTree said:

Isn't all this stuff in Bhutan?

Bhutan was the shelter to Gelug suppression.

Malcolm wrote:

Not even remotely. Well, there are still a lot of texts in the library of Sakya no one has ever seen.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 12th, 2014 at 3:43 AM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

Andrew108 said:

Some of us are realists.

Malcolm wrote:

Some of you have no understanding of Dzogchen, or indeed Vajrayāna, at all.

Andrew108 said:

Take a look at Kalachakra. There are systems of Buddhist thought/practice that assert an objective condition.

Malcolm wrote:

What makes you think Kalacakra asserts that outer world is real? Mipham comments on 1.6 of the Kalacakra tantra:

The essence of the secret elements come from this aspect of the subtle mind, then the stuff of the inner elements etc., and by that, the external 5 elements. From those the planets, stars etc. arise. This is an important pith of all the upāya path of the secret mantra.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 12th, 2014 at 3:45 AM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

I don't see why someone who doesn't accept "out there" accepts "other minds", if only conventionally or whatever.

Malcolm wrote:

It is quite simple. If there were not other minds "out there", when you are liberated, all other beings would be liberated. Vasubandhu defends the existence other minds in a mind-only world in 20 verses.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 12th, 2014 at 3:53 AM

Title: Re: Longde before Dzin Dharmabodhi?

Content:

alpha said:

I read in the big red book that Vairochana has met Garad Dorje in Dhumastira where he received the entire dzogchen cycle from him. So that would theoretically mean that he received Vajra Bridge as well ?

Also in Golden letters there is a mention of a lineage of Anuyoga where Dharmabodhi looks to be contemporary to Vairochana or just a couple of generations away. If Vajra Bridge has started with Vairochana there are lots of chances that this teaching would reach Dharmabodhi without too many problems.

In this regard of some importance would also be the exegetical treatises composed on the Vajra bridge by some of Dharmabodhi's disciples but I have no idea if these works are known or available...

Malcolm wrote:

We have Dharmabodhi's disciple, Kunzang Dorje's elaborate commentaries on the Vajra Bridge.

There were seven lineage masters between Pang Mipham and Dzeng Dharmabodhi, providing I counted correctly.

Btw, I do not have any doubt about Vairocana's teachings, though it is impossible, in my opinion, that every text attributed to him or Shri Simha was actually penned by them. What I do not accept the historicity of is the account of man ngag sde tantras.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 12th, 2014 at 6:34 AM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

I don't see why someone who doesn't accept "out there" accepts "other minds", if only conventionally or whatever.

Malcolm wrote:

It is quite simple. If there were not other minds "out there", when you are liberated, all other beings would be liberated. Vasubandhu defends the existence other minds in a mind-only world in 20 verses.

dzogchungpa said:

OK, but that seems to be begging the question since you are apparently assuming that there are other beings to begin with.

Malcolm wrote:

Conventionally, no Buddhist school rejects that there are a diversity of sentient beings.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 12th, 2014 at 6:35 AM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

I don't see why someone who doesn't accept "out there" accepts "other minds", if only conventionally or whatever.

Malcolm wrote:

It is quite simple. If there were not other minds "out there", when you are liberated, all other beings would be liberated.

smcj said:

Well, from your perspective, at that point they are!

Malcolm wrote:

But you recognize from their perspective, they are still trapped in the fog of ignorance. This is very clearly stated in multiple texts.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 12th, 2014 at 6:38 AM

Title: Re: Dr. Sanderson: Phowa etc. are directly from Saivism

Content:

haha said:

What do you say about this?

Malcolm wrote:

What is there to say?

Yamala tanta has referred Rishi Vashistha went to Mahacina. Does this Rishi have any relationship with the lineage of Dzogchen-teachers from Oddiyana and India?

No, not at all.

Is it the synthesis of Taoist and Buddhist ideas about nadi and prana/chi?

No.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 12th, 2014 at 8:15 AM

Title: Re: What major Tibetan Buddhist texts are still missing?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

We have only 10% of what existed in Tibet prior to 1959.

kirtu said:

WHAT?? What about the translated German, French and Russian texts in the 19th century and beginning 20th centuries?

Kirt

Malcolm wrote:

A drop in the bucket.

kirtu said:

More to the point, can the texts be recovered from the Mongolian texts coming to light (the ones saved from the Red Terror after 1924) and from Kalmyk, Siberian and

Malcolm wrote:

Virtually all Gelug, and most post- 17th century.

kirtu said:

Tibetan borderland sources?

Malcolm wrote:

Most of the texts in Tibet that were lost were lost due to the wholesale destruction of libraries during the cultural revolution.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 12th, 2014 at 8:30 AM

Title: Re: African Americans & people of Color, & Buddhism in the W

Content:

zsc said:

I am a black person.

.

Malcolm wrote:

In this birth. In another you were not human, in another you were a world emperor. In another, an untouchable. In another, Warren Buffet would look like a pauper next to you.

Buddhadharma comes first: race, gender, class, position, these things are not really terribly important.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 12th, 2014 at 9:57 AM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

Well, I like the idea of infinitely many minds and their traces generating appearances for each other. It's kind of like a mmorpg. Just to be clear, when you say appearances, those are mental events, right?

Malcolm wrote:  
It's complicated.

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Wednesday, March 12th, 2014 at 8:17 PM  
Title: Re: Longde before Dzin Dharmabodhi?  
Content:

heart said:  
I am not so sure about that. My feeling is that the duality of development and completion stages is something that wasn't so developed in the early Nyingma Tantra's.

/magnus

Malcolm wrote:  
It was quite well developed which is why 9th century texts like the kun byed rgyal po went to such pains to reject it. For example the mdo bcu, thought to have been authored Vairocana states:

Since the place of Samantbhadra arises, there is not need for the creation and completion samadhis.

Or the Vajrasattvamāyājālaguhyasarvādarśa-nāma-tantra, included in the rNying ma rgyud 'bum as well as the bKa' 'gyur, states:

bskyed rdzogs thabs rim gang bstan pa/ /sgyu 'phrul dra bar 'dus pa ste

Any teaching of the stages of the method of creation and completion are included in the Māyājāla

Of course, unifying the two stages is the whole point of the process to begin with in both earlier as well as later tantra.

heart said:  
I am sure your quotes are correct, but ultimately if you look deep enough in to the well of Dharma you will find the root of Dharma is actual realization. Methods were taught to facilitate that realization and without the actual realization being introduced to the student how could these methods ever work? So, from the beginning the methods taught might have been quite simple and closely related to the natural state, later (in my opinion) these become the fully fledged two phases.

/magnus

Malcolm wrote:

Well, it is certainly true that realization is the goal of any vehicle within Buddhadharma.

The point is that with the elaboration of Unsurpassed Yoga Tantra (not yet known as such in India in the 8th century), the completion stage became a fully elaborated set of practices unto itself. These eventually divorced from the creation stage in the seventeen tantras and their instructions. The fact that there is ambivalence about divorcing Dzogchen from the two stages about this is indicated by such texts as the Khandro Nyingthig, which reimport Mahāyoga and Anuyoga practices, as well as borrow the sexual yoga practices of Ghantapada's Five Stages. Not only this, but the fact that the seventeen tantras elaborate a whole brand new set of empowerments, and that there are recommendations in The Heart Mirror of Vajrasattva and the Self-Arisen Vidyā to practice the three inner tantras as a unity indicates that Tibetans had considerable ambivalence about discarding the classic gradual path system of the inner tantras.

In other words, like Mahāmudra Dohas, the original Dzogchen lungs literally describe the state of realization itself, and they do not describe a path at all. They describe a result. The three traditions of "sems sde" each take different approaches to the material found in the 21 bodhicitta texts; with the upshot that they were combined into a single system at Kahthog called "rgyud mdo rdzogs", i.e. the practice of The Tantra, the Compendium, and Dzogchen.

The key point you are missing, Magnus, is that for something to be secret mantra—and Dzogchen is part of secret mantra—it must be predicated on an empowerment of some kind and a guru. Even the five original lungs of Vairocana make this abundantly clear.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 12th, 2014 at 8:33 PM

Title: Re: Longde before Dzin Dharmabodhi?

Content:

Sherlock said:

What do you mean by you have no doubt about Vairocana's teachings? You mean the Vajra Bridge? Isn't it also 11th century?

Malcolm wrote:

What I mean is that I think Vairocana went to India, met an Indian teacher named Śrī Siṃha (who is happens was also the master of Vimalamitra and perhaps Padmasambhava), and returned with this teacher's oral instructions. I think that Śrī Siṃha is the original source of Dzogchen teachings. I think it is perfectly reasonable to accept the Vajra Bridge instructions as well.

We have not done enough analysis on the other texts to see which ones might be accepted as Indian in origin, and which one's are Tibetan in origin. Any so called treasure texts we can automatically exclude as Tibetan compositions. Other criteria which indicates native Tibetan composition would be etymologies of terms like "byang chub sems" or "ye shes" which bear no relationship to their original Indian etymologies (bodhicitta, jñāna), but are based wholly on their Tibetan phonemes. The point is this is



not to impugn the spiritual worth of Tibetan compositions, but to know what is what so we can have a better understanding of the early history of Dzogchen and Nyingma Tantra in general. Unfortunately, the compilers of the rnying ma rgyud 'bu, rather uncritically combined kama and terma tantras together. So for example, in the klong sde section of the atiyoga section, we find Dorje Lingpa's lta kpong yangs tantra, which is definitely a man snag sde class text.

Sherlock said:

What are the historical works we know for sure (accepted by Sarma too) that were written by Vairocana? I think there was a shamatha text but what else?

Malcolm wrote:

de kho na nyid sgron ma zhes bya ba phyag na rdo rje'i sgrub thabs thams cad rdzogs pa'i rgyan / (tattvapradlpa-nAma-vajrapANisarvasAdhanapUrNAlaMkAra.)

[A] klu sgrub / (nAgArjuna.), [Tr] padma 'byung gnas / (padmAkara.), [Tr] glang dpal gyi seng ge (zrlsiMha.), [Rev] rgya gar phyag /

[P. No.] 3048, rgyud 'grel, bi 183a8-209a5 (vol.68, p.173)

[D. No.] 2204, , dzi 147b4-168b1. [N] bi 160a1-183b2. [Kinsha] 1052, bi 223b1 (p.113-2-1)

thugs kyi sgo lcags / ([cittatAlaka.])

[A] zrlsiGhi (zrlsiMha).

[P. No.] 4758, rgyud 'grel, mu 159a8-164a7 (vol.83, p.241243)

[D. No.] -. [N] mu 164b4-168b7. [Kinsha] 2757, mu 182b4 (p.93-1-4)

u SHN'i SHa sngags kyi man ngag gi bsgrub thabs zhes bya ba / (uSNISamantropadezasAdhana-nAma.)

[A] zrlsiMha., [Tr] vairocana., [Tr] zrlsiMha.

[P. No.] 4851, rgyud 'grel, zu 149a1-153a5 (vol.86, p.111113)

[D. No.] -. [N] zu 145b1-150a2. [Kinsha] 2850, zu 194b1 (p.99-1-1)

'khor ba rtsad nas gcod pa gtan tshigs 'khor lo'i man ngag (saMsAramUlacchedakahetucakropadeza.)

[A] zrlsiGGa (zrlsiMha).

[P. No.] 5031, rgyud 'grel, ru 1a1-3a2 (vol.87, p.109-111)

[D. No.] -. [N] ru 1a1-3b3. [Kinsha] 3030, ru 1b1 (p.1-2-1)

'khor ba rtsad nas gcod pa bdud rtsi dri med kyi man ngag (saMsAramUlacchedakavimalAmRtopadeza.)

[A] zrlsiGGa (zrlsiMha).

[P. No.] 5032, rgyud 'grel, ru 3a2-4a6 (vol.87, p.111)

[D. No.] -. [N] ru 3b3-5a2. [Kinsha] 3031, ru 3b3 (p.3-2-3)

'khor ba rtsad nas gcod pa rdo rje sems dpa'i man ngag (saMsAramUlacchedkavajrasattvopadeza.)

[A] zrlsiGGa (zrlsiMha).

[P. No.] 5033, rgyud 'grel, ru 4a7-5b2 (vol.87, p.111-112)

[D. No.] -. [N] ru 5a2-6a6. [Kinsha] 3032, ru 5b1 (p.3-4-1)

'khor ba rtsad nas gcod pa gser gyi thigs pa'i gdams ngag  
(saMsAramUlacchedakakaJcanabindUpadeza.)

[A] zrisiGGa (zrlsiMha)., [Tr] vairocana.

[P. No.] 5034, rgyud 'grel, ru 5b2-6b3 (vol.87, p.112)

[D. No.] -. [N] ru 6a6-7a6. [Kinsha] 3033, ru 8b1 (p.5-3-1)

'khor ba rtsad nas gcod pa snyan rgyud yi ge med pa'i gdams ngag  
(saMsAramUlacchedakakarNatantrAnakSaropadeza.)

[A] zrisiGGa (zrlsiMha).

[P. No.] 5035, rgyud 'grel, ru 6b3-7a1 (vol.87, p.112-113)

[D. No.] -. [N] ru 7a6-7b3. [Kinsha] 3034, ru 9b5 (p.5-4-5)

lta ba nam mkha' dang mnyam pa'i rgyud kyi dka' 'grel /  
(AkAzasamadarzanatantrapajjikA.)

[A] dga' rab rdo rje / (surativajra.), [Tr] vairocana., [Tr] zrisiGGa (zrlsiMha).

[P. No.] 5036, rgyud 'grel, ru 7a1-10a8 (vol.87, p.113-114)

[D. No.] -. [N] ru 7b3-10b4. [Kinsha] 3035, ru 11b1 (p.7-2-1)

bsgom pa rgya mtsho dang mnyam pa'i rgyud kyi dka' 'grel /  
(samudrasamabhAvanAtantrapajjikA.)

[A] dga' rab rdo rje / (surativajra.), [Tr] vairocana., [Tr] zrisiGGa (zrlsiMha).

[P. No.] 5037, rgyud 'grel, ru 10a8-12b2 (vol.87, p.114-115)

[D. No.] -. [N] ru 10b4-12b4. [Kinsha] 3036, ru 16b1 (p.9-3-1)

spyod pa nyi zla dang mnyam pa'i rgyud kyi dka' 'grel /  
(sUryacandrasamacaryAtantrapajjikA.)

[A] dga' rab rdo rje / (surativajra.), [Tr] vairocana., [Tr] zrisiGGa (zrlsiMha).

[P. No.] 5038, rgyud 'grel, ru 12b2-15b2 (vol.87, p.115-116)

[D. No.] -. [N] ru 12b4-15a7. [Kinsha] 3037, yu 19a2 (p.10-2-2)

'bras bu rin po che dang mnyam pa'i rgyud kyi dka' 'grel /  
(mahAratnasamaphalatantrapajjikA.)

[A] dga' rab rdo rje / (surativajra.), [Tr] vairocana., [Tr] zrisiGGa (zrlsiMha).

[P. No.] 5039, rgyud 'grel, ru 15b2-18a8 (vol.87, p.116-117)

[D. No.] -. [N] ru 15a7-17b7. [Kinsha] 3038, ru 23b1 (p.13-2-1)

lta ba ye shes mdzod chen chos kyi dbyings / (dRSTijJAnamahAkozadharmadhAtu.)

[A] zrisiGGa (zrlsiMha).

[P. No.] 5040, rgyud 'grel, ru 18a8-19b8 (vol.87, p.117-118)

[D. No.] -. [N] ru 18a1-19b3. [Kinsha] 3039, ru 28b1 (p.15-3-1)

bsgom pa ye shes gsal ba chos kyi dbyings / (bhAvanAjJAnaprakAzadharmadhAtu.)  
[A] zrisiGGa (zrlsiMha).

[P. No.] 5041, rgyud 'grel, ru 19b8-20b8 (vol.87, p.118)

[D. No.] -. [N] ru 19b4-20b5. [Kinsha] 3040, ru 30a6 (p.16-1-6)

spyod pa ye shes 'bar ba chos kyi dbyings / (caryAjJAnajvaladharmadhAtu.)

[A] zrisiGGa (zrlsiMha).

[P. No.] 5042, rgyud 'grel, ru 20b8-21b3 (vol.87, p.118)

[D. No.] -. [N] ru 20b5-21b3. [Kinsha] 3041, ru 31b4 (p.17-2-4)

'bras bu ye shes sa gcig chos kyi dbyings / (phalajJAnaikabhUmidharmadhAtu.)

[A] zrisiGGa (zrlsiMha)., [Tr] virocana (vairocana).

[P. No.] 5047, rgyud 'grel, ru 28b3-30a6 (vol.87, p.121-122)

[D. No.] -. [N] ru 27b7-29b2. [Kinsha] 3046, ru 43b1 (p.23-2-1)

rigs pa grub pa'i sgron ma / (nyAyasiddhAloka.)

[A] candragomin., [Tr] virocana., [Tr] zrlsiMhaprabha.

[P. No.] 5740, tshad ma, ze 197b7-198b6 (vol.138, p.51-52)

[D. No.] 4242, tshad ma, zhe 187b5-188b2. [N] ze 200b6-201b5. [Kinsha] 3740, ze 261b5 (p.131-4-5)

You will note that the Sakyapas who edited the Dege Kagyur excluded most of these texts, but they are present in earlier versions of the Tenjur. Note the presence of a short text on logic last translated by Śrī Siṃha and Vairocana.

It is likely that some texts in the Bairo Gyudbum may have actually been authored by Śrī Siṃha or Vairocana.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 12th, 2014 at 8:57 PM

Title: Re: Longde before Dzin Dharmabodhi?

Content:

heart said:

I am sure I miss a lot of points Malcolm. But don't you think that the direct introduction is the original empowerment that with time was elaborated with various variations of methods as well as an outline of the path?

/magnus

Malcolm wrote:

No, I think the original empowerments were the elaborate abhisheka mandala rituals found in what is now known as "kriya tantra" which never included a "nature of the mind" or "formless" abhisheka until we come to what are now known as "yoga tantra". It is characteristic of kriya tantra empowerments that they only have a body and speech blessing, but no mind blessing.

Then I think "yoga" tantra morphed in anuttarayoga tantra into India. In Tibet yoga tantra, and especially the Guhyagarbha, morphed into mahā and ati, with anu added later

because Tibetans did not go to receive any new teachings in India due to the economic chaos that caused the fall of the Tibetan empire in the 840's.

In India, anuttarayoga tantra morphed into the father, mother and Kalacakra tantras, with Kalacakra representing the final development of Indian tantras; just as the 17 tantras represent the final development of Tibetan tantra. In other words. the evolution of tantras was complete in the 11th century, as process that started in the 7th century.

One thing you should understand that is that the tantras written in Tibet are far more homogenous than post 8th century Indian tantras. I chalk this up the isolation of Tibetans from India during this period between 850 and roughly 1000.

Also I should add, the realization of the Anuttaratantra in general lead to the Mahāmudra dohas and the Dzogchen lungs.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 12th, 2014 at 9:41 PM

Title: Re: Longde before Dzin Dharmabodhi?

Content:

Sherlock said:

Do you think that maybe around the 8th century, the distinction between Mahayogatantra and yogatantra wasn't as clear-cut as it seemed later?

Malcolm wrote:

There was not distinction, the Indians only knew of three classes of tantra then, kriya, carya and yoga, with Guhyasamaja and the Buddhasamyoga included among yoga tantra.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 12th, 2014 at 11:35 PM

Title: Re: Longde before Dzin Dharmabodhi?

Content:

heart said:

Makes the whole thing seem completely constructed.

/magnus

Malcolm wrote:

Well, it is just how the texts appear over time that makes it seem that way. Yogacara and its sutras were a reaction to Prajñāpāramitā and Tathagagarbha sūtras. So too with the tantras, each successive generation of texts claims its superiority over the previous generation, both in the primary texts themselves as well as the commentaries written by their exponents.

Thus you have gsar ma claiming its superiority over snying ma; mother tantras over father; ati yoga over mahā; unsurpassed secret cycle declaring its superiority over sems

sde and klong sde, as well as the outer, inner and secret cycles; yangti over everything else; terma over karma; Gelugs declaring Tsongkhapa's views superior to the previous Sakya school they grew out of and so on. One aspect of the history of Buddhism is but the history of a contest of puffery and exaggeration.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 12th, 2014 at 11:36 PM

Title: Re: Longde before Dzin Dharmabodhi?

Content:

heart said:

In fact I was thinking about vinaya, the first rule seem to have been "no rule" and then there seem to have been added a lot of rules because "no rule" made some monks misbehave in the strangest ways. Wouldn't it then be reasonable to assume that the first empowerment was "no empowerment" and that elaborations where added on that?

/magnus

Malcolm wrote:

No, because the ritualism in Buddhism was a response to external pressure to perform in the socio-political sphere in a way that was previously not imperative.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, March 13th, 2014 at 2:21 AM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

Andrew108 said:

In the case of Kalachakra it is said that the 'space particle' exists as the objective condition prior to minds that arise dependent on that.

Malcolm wrote:

Kalachakra merely states that physical matter is composed of atoms. But when it describes the source of the universe, the Vimalaprabha states:

When the universe withdraws, this karmavāyu (by which the the perishable universe and buddhaverses were created in the past) has two natures. One is like the stars fixed in space, never moves, and never goes to any region of the perishable universe and buddhaverse. The second has the nature of revolving just like the wheel of houses in the sky. In the same way, the inanimate things included in the the perishable universe have the nature of not moving. The creatures have the nature of moving. The karmavāyu [that creates them] is a quality of consciousness [of sentient beings [that is not nondual]]"...as such, infinite karmavāyus create the the perishable universe and the

buddhaverses.

We can clearly see here that what creates the universe is a quality of consciousness. That quality is called karmavāyu. The empty atoms arise from the collective consciousness of all sentient beings. The same is true in Dzogchen teachings.

Andrew108 said:

In Dzogchen, Presence is the objective condition.

Malcolm wrote:

What tibetan term do you mean by presence?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, March 13th, 2014 at 2:23 AM

Title: Re: Longde before Dzin Dharmabodhi?

Content:

Sherlock said:

Isn't dialectic a better way to put it rather than puffery? Otherwise you can conclude in the end that tantra really is no superior to sutra.

Malcolm wrote:

Well, kriya tantra isn't, really. It is only when we come to "carya" and "yog" a tantras that we begin to find statements that indicate there is something more rapid than sūtra.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, March 13th, 2014 at 2:40 AM

Title: Re: What major Tibetan Buddhist texts are still missing?

Content:

kirtu said:

Tibetan borderland sources?

The borderlands I had in mind were Lhadak, Nepal, Sikkim, Bhutan, Tawang and anything that might have been saved in Assam.

Kirt

Malcolm wrote:

Nepal is well accounted for already, as is Ladakh. Sikkim is a backwater, Bhutan does not have that many libraries. Assam has virtually nothing.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, March 13th, 2014 at 3:41 AM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

Andrew108 said:

Sorry, but when I use the term Presence, I don't have a Tibetan word in mind.

Malcolm wrote:

Then I have no idea what you are taking about. It is useful to have Tibetan words in mind when you are making claims about Dzogchen doctrine.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, March 13th, 2014 at 4:26 AM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

gad rgyangs said:

what Tibetan term does Rinpoche have in mind when he uses the term "instant presence"?

Malcolm wrote:

Rig pa.

Presence = dran pa, i.e. mindfulness.

Some translators like to translate byang chub sems, bodhicitta, as "pure perfect presence".

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, March 13th, 2014 at 5:12 AM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

gad rgyangs said:

just one more reason to leave rigpa untranslated

Malcolm wrote:

Agreed, though I prefer vidyā.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, March 13th, 2014 at 5:45 AM

Title: Re: Question: "Antinomianism" in the Higher Yoga Tantras

Content:

Heterodox Garden said:

the Cakrasaṃvara Tantra

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, March 13th, 2014 at 7:06 AM

Title: Re: What major Tibetan Buddhist texts are still missing?

Content:

conebeckham said:

Sikkim was a hidden land of Guru Rinpoche, actually.

Malcolm wrote:

It was only opened in the late 17th century.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, March 13th, 2014 at 7:07 AM

Title: Re: What major Tibetan Buddhist texts are still missing?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Nepal is well accounted for already, as is Ladakh. Sikkim is a backwater, Bhutan does not have that many libraries. Assam has virtually nothing.

kirtu said:

And Tawang? They seem to have a large library.

Kirt

Malcolm wrote:

Still a backwater.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, March 13th, 2014 at 11:01 AM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

gad rgyangs said:

just one more reason to leave rigpa untranslated

Malcolm wrote:

Agreed, though I prefer vidyā.

anjali said:

Why do translators seem to have such a hard with translating just the word "rigpa" into English? If we just focus on the word, the English translation is fairly simple. rigpa<-- vidya-->wisdom. Wisdom is the combination of wis + dom where, Wis is Old English and can be traced back to Proto-Indo-European wid- "to see," hence "to know" (vid).

Dom is also Old English and in this case means "state or condition". So, the root meaning of wisdom is the state of knowing.

If the word has additional technical meanings, no problem. Just provide a good glossary entry explaining the nuances. Philosophers do that sort of thing all the time--taking a commonly used word and giving special, more nuanced meanings.



Obviously, I'm missing something.

Malcolm wrote:

I tried it once, it didn't work since vidya does not have the same sense as wisdom in English. It is a case where the kn/gn phoneme has shifted meanings with vid phoneme.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, March 13th, 2014 at 6:48 PM

Title: Re: Longde before Dzin Dharmabodhi?

Content:

heart said:

In fact I was thinking about vinaya, the first rule seem to have been "no rule" and then there seem to have been added a lot of rules because "no rule" made some monks misbehave in the strangest ways. Wouldn't it then be reasonable to assume that the first empowerment was "no empowerment" and that elaborations were added on that?

/magnus

Malcolm wrote:

No, because the ritualism in Buddhism was a response to external pressure to perform in the socio-political sphere in a way that was previously not imperative.

heart said:

I really don't think that socio-political pressure is the main formative force in Buddhism or in Dzogchen.

Malcolm wrote:

In terms of Buddhist ritualism found in the tantras, it most certainly is. When it comes to terma, the reasons for their concealment and revelation are always linked to social and political conditions. The same is true of the anuttarayoga tantras (i.e. they are the most effective practice for the degenerate times we live in).

heart said:

the Dra Thalgyur is a very ancient Tantra.

/magnus

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, you like the traditional narrative, it is like comfort food. As far as I can tell, the sgra thal 'gyur was among the last of the seventeen tantras to be composed (along with the rig pa rang shar, the rig pa rang grol, the mut rig phreng ba and the bkra shis mdzes rgyan), somewhere between 1060 and 1100, most likely by Chetsun Senge Wangchuck

himself. The other twelve are earlier, dating between roughly 1020-1050, very likely composed by Dagma Lungyal.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, March 13th, 2014 at 6:51 PM

Title: Re: Longde before Dzin Dharmabodhi?

Content:

heart said:

I really don't think that socio-political pressure is the main formative force in Buddhism or in Dzogchen. I fully believe ChNNR when he says he isn't the composer of the Longsal teachings and that the Dra Thalgyur is a very ancient Tantra.

/magnus

ratna said:

I, too, fully believe ChNN's description of the mode of discovery of visionary teachings.

Malcolm wrote:

I don't really want to get into a discussion of this, but no one doubts that klong gsal comes from his capacity in dream yoga and that they are not fabrications.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, March 13th, 2014 at 7:20 PM

Title: Re: Dr. Sanderson: Phowa etc. are directly from Saivism

Content:

haha said:

Gerge, thanks for the link.

Discussion was interesting but that did not continue further.

There is nothing to say but the biography of Virupa also supports Sanderson's theory.

Malcolm wrote:

Virupa's bio does not support text conversion. His bio indicates that he went around India converting non-Buddhists through acts of magical terror.

haha said:

Analyzing

-There are five Yin organs (heart, lungs, kidney, liver, and spleen), which are probably Wu Xing/ Five Elements theory from Chinese origin.

Malcolm wrote:

No, for example, there is a passage in the Aṣṭaṅgahridayam that gives these organs in this order:

Heart, lung, liver, gall bladder, spleen, kidney.

haha said:

-Then, they are associated with three major nadis (lalana, rasana and avadhuti), clarity and energy/bliss; it is the buddhist origin, especially from masters of Mahamudra.

Malcolm wrote:

The names are from Buddhist tantra, but it is not certain whether the concepts of the three main nāḍīs are Hindu (ida, pingala or śuśumna) or Buddhist in origin.

So, I don't really agree with you about "adaptation" in this instance. There is some evidence that the nāḍī system was borrowed by the Hindus from Buddhist tantra. But in fact at this point we simply don't know.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, March 13th, 2014 at 9:01 PM

Title: Re: Longde before Dzin Dharmabodhi?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, you like the traditional narrative, it is like comfort food. As far as I can tell, the sgra thaḷ gyur was among the last of the seventeen tantras to be composed (along with the rig pa rang shar, the rig pa rang grol, the mut rig phreng ba and the bkra shis mdzes rgyan), somewhere between 1060 and 1100, most likely by Chetsun Senge Wangchuck himself. The other twelve are earlier, dating between roughly 1020-1050, very likely composed by Dangma Lungyal.

heart said:

Love comfort food. Anyway, I think I have never heard about composing Tantra's, you don't mean revealed?

/magnus

Malcolm wrote:

You say "revealed", I say "composed".

The tradition has it that Dangma Lungyal takes the "seventeen" tantras out of their place of concealment around 906. But the fact that Dangma knows about the Kadampas and mentioned Atisha by name, and the fact that Dangma and Chetsun were contemporaries of Drogmi Lotsawa, and the fact that four of the 17 tantras use terms introduced to Tibet by the Hevajra tantra places the composition of all seventeen tantras in the 11th century, and the composition of a large number of them in the late 11th century. There is virtually no evidence of the type of completion stage practices using nāḍīs, vāyus and bindus that we find in the yogini tantras in Tibetan texts prior to the 11th century, especially not in Dzogchen texts. It is only with the seventeen tantras

that we begin to find a body centered praxis in Dzogchen. It is my opinion, not very popular amongst "the faithful", that man ngag sde was elaborated as a response to the arrival of new tantras from India. We even have Nyingma masters [Rog Ban] from the early 12th century complaining about these new fangled heretical practices involving nāḍīs, vāyus and bindus borrowed from Hindus [probably a complaint about Kalacakra's use of Hindu terms for the rasanā, lalanā and avadhūti].

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, March 13th, 2014 at 9:22 PM

Title: Re: Longde before Dzin Dharmabodhi?

Content:

Stewart said:

1. Do you believe Mennagde Dzogchen as we know it: Rushan, Trekcho, Togal etc was ever practiced at all, in any form, in India?

Malcolm wrote:

It is my opinion that many of the rushan practices we find in man ngag sde have antecedents in Buddhist yogic circles in India. Tregchö is just a name for samapatti. Thogal has antecedents in Buddhist pratyahara practices, in my opinion.

Stewart said:

2. Or, do you hold that Semde and Longde have roots in India and came to Tibet via Sri Singha/Vairocana, and that Mennagde is a later development from these, solely developed in Tibet?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, this is pretty much what I think. Actually, what I think is that the terms sems sde and klong sde are totally anachronistic and have no meaning or value since they originate in the Vima Nyinthig. Actually, what I think is that the man ngag sde systems was developed because of the importation of the new tantras during the eleventh century from India. The evidence suggests that the man ngag sde system did not develop wide acceptance even in the Nyingma school until the mid 13th century. 13th century Nyingma authors like Rog ban make absolutely no mention of it, even though he discusses in quite some detail the history of Dzogchen, Vairocana and Śrī Simha in his book on Dharma history. Davidson discusses this briefly in his book. He also fails to mention the terma tradition.

Stewart said:

3.What about pre Sri Singha?

Malcolm wrote:

Its all pretty hazy before 1000 CE. But I see no reason doubt the historical existence of Śrī Simha or Vimalamitra, or for that matter Mañjuśrimitra or Garab Dorje.

Stewart said:

4.What about Dzogchen in Oddiyana? Was Oddiyana even real?

Malcolm wrote:

Good question. We are not even really sure where Oddiyana was.

Stewart said:

5. Was there Dzogchen in Zhang Zhung?

Malcolm wrote:

Pre- Buddhist? Very doubtful in my opinion.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, March 13th, 2014 at 9:26 PM

Title: Re: Longde before Dzin Dharmabodhi?

Content:

Sherlock said:

Orgyenpa described the land he visited as Oddiyana and Buddhaguptanatha still called the place Oddiyana centuries later, so Oddiyana was probably real.

Malcolm wrote:

Well, while Oddiyana was certainly to the north and west of Bodhgaya, Pakistan and Afghanistan are big places. We do not have any definitive proof of exactly where Shambhala or Oddiyana might have been.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, March 13th, 2014 at 9:28 PM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

Andrew108 said:

Sorry, but when I use the term Presence, I don't have a Tibetan word in mind.

Malcolm wrote:

Then I have no idea what you are taking about. It is useful to have Tibetan words in mind when you are making claims about Dzogchen doctrine.

Andrew108 said:

The objective condition is right in front of you. Here it is now. Calling it 'Presence' is indeed a reification, but then thinking we need to give it a Tibetan name is going way too far away from the intentions of Dzogchen.

Malcolm wrote:

This is so vague as to be utterly meaningless.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, March 13th, 2014 at 9:43 PM

Title: Re: African Americans & people of Color, & Buddhism in the W

Content:

zsc said:

the lived experiences of black people mean nothing (specifically, this is what Malcolm is saying, over and over), then I will do my best to address it.

Malcolm wrote:

I didn't say that.

What I do maintain is that for a Buddhist things like race, class, gender, etc., really should not be very important as identity markers for oneself as well as for others. To some extent is unavoidable, because we are human beings. But they are not a desiderata, they are barriers. Sanghas that consciously define themselves on the basis of race, class or ethnicity go against the Buddha's message that dismantled caste. Then it winds up being:

The White Power Sangha

The Black Power Sangha

etc.

This is wrong. If there is a Buddhist teacher you want to study with, then go and study. Do not pay attention his or her race, do not pay attention to the race of the people attending that teacher.

Actually, there is no such thing as race. Race is a stupid word. There are different cultures, languages and histories, but is only one human race. There are no black people, no white people, only human people.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, March 13th, 2014 at 9:44 PM

Title: Re: Longde before Dzin Dharmabodhi?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

You say "revealed", I say "composed".

heart said:

So, do you also think the Hevajra, Chakrasamavra the Guhyasamaya and all other Tantra's and the many Mahayana sutras were composed based on various socio-political pressure?

/magnus

Malcolm wrote:

Of course. As well as the Pali Canon. All of these things were written by human beings. Some of them were buddhas. Text production comes from people; people live in societies; societies exert pressures, etc.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, March 13th, 2014 at 9:55 PM

Title: Re: Longde before Dzin Dharmabodhi?

Content:

heart said:

so their value is completely based on the intellectual capacity of the composer?

/magnus

Malcolm wrote:

Of course. Not all Mahāyāna sūtras present the Buddha in the best light, for example. We have clear evidence of Buddhist/Hindu intertextuality, etc. Some terms are much clearer than others. Some terma cycles borrow entire texts authored by early Tibetan scholars and attribute them to people like Vimalamitra. Some tantras are more interesting than other tantras. Some authors of these texts were more realized than others.

I think we are long past the time where we can accept the traditional accounts of Buddhist textual origins. We have far too much evidence of the gradual development of Buddhist texts over centuries to doubt that the evolution of Buddhist ideas from the Nikayas to Vajrayāna is anything other than human beings working out their religious impulses in a Buddhist context.

It does not mean that I disagree with or disregard the ideas expressed in these texts, quite the contrary, I agree with them very much and regard them highly overall. I am after all a practitioner. I simply do not need to subscribe to the origin myths of Mahāyāna and Vajrāyāna texts to find religious meaning in them for myself, just like I do not need to believe in Mt. Meru to do mandala offerings.

In all of this, I am not saying any thing that I have not maintained for years. The difference is that now I have more confidence in my perspective because I have read more texts more closely.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, March 13th, 2014 at 11:28 PM

Title: Re: Longde before Dzin Dharmabodhi?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:  
Tregchö is just a name for samapatti.

dzogchungpa said:  
Does that mean you can correctly practice Tregchö without transmission?

Malcolm wrote:  
Like any Vajrayāna form of meditation, it cannot be practiced without transmission.

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Thursday, March 13th, 2014 at 11:43 PM  
Title: Re: Longde before Dzin Dharmabodhi?  
Content:  
dzogchungpa said:  
Is samapatti a Vajrayāna form of meditation?

Malcolm wrote:  
It can be, just as śamatha can be.

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Friday, March 14th, 2014 at 12:15 AM  
Title: Re: Longde before Dzin Dharmabodhi?  
Content:  
heart said:  
The point I am making is that the 17 Tantras are not supposed to be compositions.

Malcolm wrote:  
The kun byed rgyal po is not supposed to be a composition, but it clearly is and no one seriously doubts this anymore. It is very clear that the larger Mahāyāna sūtras are layered text productions. The only people who doubt this are Mahāyāna fundamentalist. They are the same people who insist that Mt. Meru is real and that the sun revolves around it. Honestly, such people sound just like Christian and Muslim fundamentalists who insist that the Bible and the Koran were written by God and Allah respectively.

We all want our books to be "special" and the non-fabrication of a book is generally the key criteria that makes one book more sacred and one less. For example, the Vedas are sacred because they are "self-originated". Dzogchen tantras too claim the same status - they are self-originated texts.

When we look at this sort of thing, we have to understand that these are just strategies for acceptance. Another interesting strategy is one by Padmasambhava in the main commentarial text in the dkon mchog spyi 'dus, the Sumeru Commentary, where he remarks his own tantra (which is the root of that cycle) is superior to Indian tantras in



Sanskrit because it is the speech of the Sambhogakāyā.

So the question will be asked? Can the practice of dkon mchog spyi 'dus lead to Buddhahood? Of course it can because all the Dharma in it is sound. The story of its account is just candy for children, like all these mythological accounts.

heart said:

That is the whole point of the terma tradition.

Malcolm wrote:

The point of the terma traditions is that termas are supposed, for the most part, to be the compositions of Padmsambhava, Vimalamitra and so on.

The book I am working on publishing is a translation of a text definitely authored by Zhangton Tashi Dorje's son, Nyibum (1158-1213), that is included word for word as a terma in the Gongpa Zangthal (revealed in 1366), with its authorship attributed to Vimalamitra. Honestly, it is incredible that no one has noticed this yet, but it is true.

heart said:

If Malcolm theory is correct, that the 17 Tantras were composed then the whole lineage would be a lie.

Malcolm wrote:

Not a lie, rather it is a didactic myth. But the seventeen tantras definitely did not exist as texts earlier than dates to which I have assigned them.

Pretty much we have to accept the origin stories of all Mahāyāna texts are either lies or didactic myths. I prefer the latter term.

heart said:

And it would be a very elaborate lie, very close to what we call a scam these days.

Malcolm wrote:

Certainly there were Tibetans who regarded such text production as scams, writing vociferous renunciations of such practices. We have Nyingma authors denouncing the nefarious intent of gold-seeking Indian Panditas who forged tantras on demand in the 13th century, and Sarma authors denouncing gold-seeking tertons who made shows of digging up texts in the very same century.

heart said:

Also we have a living example in ChNNR how texts like these can be discovered, I don't really see the point of doubting him.

/magnus

Malcolm wrote:

I have no doubt that Norbu Rinpoche teachings appear to him in his dreams exactly as

he describes them. This does not endorse the authenticity of the origin myths cooked up Zhangton, Nyangral Nyiozer, nor for that matter the myths cooked up to explain the origin of Kalacakra, the Prajñāpāramita, and so on. We, as well as Tibetans before us, tend to take things historically literal that were always regarded as "myth" in the Indian mind. Thus, Indians can manage many competing and contradictory origin myths about the same set of phenomena, but we can't, because we, and also Tibetans, tend to be historical literalists, a literalism you have just admirably demonstrated, i.e. "If the story isn't true, it must be a lie". The Indian mythic imagination thinks "This story is but one story of many". This is why, for example, the authors of the Kalacakra could elaborate a cosmology that they knew for a fact contradicted their mathematical calculations for the position of the sun and so on. Indian tantric authors simply borrowed myths and repurposed them, so the story of Rama's defeat of Ravana becomes the defeat of the Rudra King of Lanka by Hayagriva in Buddhist tales.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, March 14th, 2014 at 12:27 AM

Title: Re: What major Tibetan Buddhist texts are still missing?

Content:

conebeckham said:

Sikkim was a hidden land of Guru Rinpoche, actually.

Malcolm wrote:

It was only opened in the late 17th century.

conebeckham said:

Maybe, but it was there before then...and according to the Sikkimese, Guru Pema was there.

Malcolm wrote:

That does not mean there is a library there filled with old texts dating from before 1959, which is kind of the point of the discussion.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, March 14th, 2014 at 12:31 AM

Title: Re: Longde before Dzin Dharmabodhi?

Content:

pensum said:

Well, as Malcolm just pointed out, within the Tibetan tradition itself there are countless cases of highly regarded lamas denouncing the terma tradition as just that—a scam. Unfortunately, due to personal and political allegiances the authors of the few modern books on the terma tradition available (for example Tulku Thondrup and Andreas Doctor) do not give adequate voice to such criticism and opposition, but rather perpetuate the claims of the tertons themselves..

Malcolm wrote:

There is the late Michael Aris's book which got him exiled from Bhutan for life and earned him the permanent ire of Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche. And we have to remember that until Chogyur Lingpa secured the endorsement of Khyentse Wangpo, even Kongtrul was doubtful, not to mention all those who thought he was a total fraud up to that point.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, March 14th, 2014 at 12:41 AM

Title: Re: Longde before Dzin Dharmabodhi?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

a text definitely authored by Zhangton Tashi Dorje's son, Nyibum (1158-1213), that is included word for word as a terma in the Gongpa Zangthal (revealed in 1366), with its authorship attributed to Vimalamitra. Honestly, it is incredible that no one has noticed this yet, but it is true.

mutsum said:

It is because you don't read french. .

Malcolm wrote:

Guess I should just lay down and die right now then. After all, what is the point of doing any scholarship or translating anything into English?

More to the point, since Nyibum's text has only recently become available, how could anyone have noted that dgongs pa zang thal text was a [sloppily] reattributed version of it?

Finally, Nyibum's text and Longchenpa's text are pretty different. For one, Longchenpa's text has few citations. Nor does it contain a discussion of the Nidānas and so on. It is much shorter.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, March 14th, 2014 at 1:19 AM

Title: Re: Longde before Dzin Dharmabodhi?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Guess I should just lay down and die right now then.

mutsum said:

There is no shame at referring at other people's work, especially if they have done a nearly similar job before.

Malcolm wrote:

I intended to mention his papers, but I do not have his PhD thesis, it is not on the web

yet.

mutsuk said:

After all, what is the point of doing any scholarship or translating anything into English? Well in this field, if you read only english, then you're pretty limited. You have no idea the amount of works that have been done in Germa, French and Italian on Dzogchen...

Malcolm wrote:

I have some.

mutsuk said:

THis is how close they are actually.

Malcolm wrote:

Not really.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, March 14th, 2014 at 1:22 AM

Title: Re: Longde before Dzin Dharmabodhi?

Content:

Sherlock said:

Aris straight out accused Pema Lingpa of fabricating termas for personal gain.

Malcolm wrote:

Yup, so did Drukpa Kunley. But he is a national hero in Bhutan.

Sherlock said:

We can't really know if the 17 tantras were revealed in this way or composed and edited intellectually

Malcolm wrote:

Yes we can.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, March 14th, 2014 at 1:23 AM

Title: Re: What major Tibetan Buddhist texts are still missing?

Content:

TsultimNamdak said:

Where does that 10% estimate come from?

Malcolm wrote:  
Dezhung Tulku.

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Friday, March 14th, 2014 at 2:01 AM  
Title: Re: Longde before Dzin Dharmabodhi?  
Content:

Malcolm wrote:  
I intended to mention his papers, but I do not have his PhD thesis, it is not on the web yet.

mutsuk said:  
It has been published in 1999 by Brepols Publisher.  
Not really.  
Well your opinion. I worked on both and the 17 tantras from JLA and it went pretty fast...

Malcolm wrote:  
I was pointing out that the two texts, Longchenpa's short texts, and Nyibum's are dissimilar.

Of course if you are cutting and pasting citations it would go much faster.

mutsuk said:  
JLA informed me on the phone today that he has also done a version of it in the meantime and that he has a Nyingma student preparing another one in French, not to mention a very well-known tibetologist who has prepared a paper on that text with sources based on a second mss of the text. This last one will appear in the RET I think but I don't know when.

Malcolm wrote:  
Well, I will look forward to seeing it. In the meantime, our book is due sometime this spring. I am writing the introduction as we speak.  
The main point in my mentioning this, of course, was to point out that there are examples of termas where entire texts are lifted from earlier Tibetan scholars with no hint of attribution, concealed by including a setting at Samye [despite the fact that Vimalamitra only came to Tibet at least a decade if not more after Trsing Detsen passed away, during the reign of Ralpacan].

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Friday, March 14th, 2014 at 5:21 AM  
Title: Re: Longde before Dzin Dharmabodhi?  
Content:

heart said:  
A burnt seed can never be the cause of any fruit, so whatever we think about this

subject if we don't believe these teachings comes from "someones" realization then we have broken samaya and left the sphere of vajrayana altogether. That said I do like you a lot penum and even if I never met Malcolm I do enjoy his brilliant intellect and his flair for drama.

Malcolm wrote:

There is no samaya that says we must believe this or that text is a product of someone's realization, even a tantra or a sutra.

Why do you think there was and is controversy around things like Shugden, Termas etc.? Certainly the Shugden folks believe their protector comes from someone's realization. The people who disbelieve in Shugden think the person who tells them Shugden is a mistaken practice is realized.

In general the recommended approach is that if you are not sure of a teaching, don't criticize it because you might unwittingly criticize and authentic teaching of the Buddhas.

However, origin stories are not Dharma. Disbelieving the claim that some text was written by Padmasambhava or Vimalamitra, then hidden and then dug up 800 years later in some backwater in Kham where it is unlikely Padmasambhava ever set foot hardly constitutes breaking "samaya". Disbelieving that Buddha taught Guhyasamaja to Indrabhuti I hardly constitutes breaking samaya. Disbelieving that the eighteen tantras fell on the roof of King Za's house and then he had to recruit Kukuraja to understand them is hardly breaking samaya.

"Breaking samaya" means trying to turn people against the Dharma. No one is doing that here.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, March 14th, 2014 at 5:22 AM

Title: Re: Longde before Dzin Dharmabodhi?

Content:

Sherlock said:

You can read his book, large portions are available on Google books. But basically he didn't accept the idea of termas at all.

Sarah Harding compiles some of the

[https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=rlxdncBwpgC&pg=PA151&lpg=PA151&dq=aris+pema+lingpa&source=bl&ots=5unP\\_g0u1-&sig=\\_dsZ1jOoWaBJ4sKpgLJV-RGhYVQ&hl=en&sa=X&ei=CAQiU72WO9S2hAf\\_n4GQAQ&ved=0CD4Q6AEwAg#v=onepage&q=aris%20pema%20lingpa&f=false](https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=rlxdncBwpgC&pg=PA151&lpg=PA151&dq=aris+pema+lingpa&source=bl&ots=5unP_g0u1-&sig=_dsZ1jOoWaBJ4sKpgLJV-RGhYVQ&hl=en&sa=X&ei=CAQiU72WO9S2hAf_n4GQAQ&ved=0CD4Q6AEwAg#v=onepage&q=aris%20pema%20lingpa&f=false) of Aris' approach even from a scholarly perspective.

heart said:

I read that book years ago, then burnt it. He seems to have beef with Pema Lingpa that

goes far beyond any rationale explanation.

/magnus

Malcolm wrote:

Why? It is an interesting book. Sounds like Nazis burning books because they were written by Jews.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, March 14th, 2014 at 6:52 PM

Title: Re: Longde before Dzin Dharmabodhi?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Why? It is an interesting book. Sounds like Nazis burning books because they were written by Jews.

heart said:

Should I have thrown it in the garbage instead, is that more respectful? Anyway you just lost the argument.

/magnus

Malcolm wrote:

No magnus, you should have given it to a library. Burning books is like censoring views, we don't encourage that in a free society.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, March 14th, 2014 at 8:14 PM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

.....This is so vague as to be utterly meaningless.

Andrew108 said:

It's based on the fact that no phenomenon exists that isn't the natural condition. So ordinairiness is far from ordinary. A practitioner integrates into this natural condition that is right here. There is no projection through views, or filtering through logic, or wishing through goals.

Malcolm wrote:

The "natural condition" as you call it, isn't something real; it is baseless. It isn't out there, like "atoms", "stars" and "galaxies"; it isn't inside like "blood cells", "mitochondria", etc.

This "natural" condition is just the nature of your own mind. It is not an objective condition—there is no "objective condition" because there is no "subjective condition". There is no "natural" condition because there is no "unnatural condition".

There is no wisdom apart from the mind and there is no consciousness apart from the mind, there is no buddhahood apart from the mind, there is no delusion apart from the mind, there is no samsara apart from the mind, no nirvana apart from the mind. Apart from the mind, nothing else needs to be recognized.

The mind is not real because it cannot be established, it is not unreal because one cannot deny that one is feeling, thinking and so on, therefore we say it has "no reality" i.e. there is no state of being that pertains to the mind, since the mind is beyond any extreme, its nature is sheer clarity and emptiness inseparable. You won't find the mind by resting your attention on a rock, you won't find it by resting your attention on a thought, you won't find even if you rest your attention on the mind's own sheer clarity. You won't find it even if you ascertain sheer clarity is empty. You won't find in nāḍīs, vāyus and bindus, deities, mandalas, etc.

However, that being said, if you do not have a proper method, your afflictions will not cease, you will not gather the twin stores of merit and wisdom, you will not expand your mind to the point of omniscience and you will not realize buddhahood.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, March 14th, 2014 at 8:19 PM

Title: Re: Longde before Dzin Dharmabodhi?

Content:

dzoki said:

Hey, he bought a book, in a free society he can do whatever he wants with it.

Malcolm wrote:

It's a fundamentalist act, that is the point. Sure, he can do what he likes, just like I can fart in a car full of people, but that does not mean that everyone will like it.

We have huge problems with fundamentalism in the world today, Christian fundamentalism, Muslim Fundamentalism, etc. Let's not add to it with Buddhist fundamentalism.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, March 14th, 2014 at 8:26 PM

Title: Re: The Dalai Lama Says Gay Marriage Is OK

Content:

Simon E. said:

Care to name this country which embodies all the virtues of non -prejudice ?



Malcolm wrote:

I think Dzoki is from the Czech Republic.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, March 14th, 2014 at 9:05 PM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The "natural condition" as you call it, isn't something real; it is baseless. It isn't out there, like "atoms", "stars" and "galaxies"; it isn't inside like "blood cells", "mitochondria", etc. This "natural" condition is just the nature of your own mind. It is not an objective condition.....

Andrew108 said:

It's based on the fact that no phenomenon exists that isn't the natural condition.....No one said that the natural condition is 'real' in the limited sense that you use the term 'real'. The way you use the term 'mind' is also limited. The term you should use instead is 'life'.

Malcolm wrote:

No, I should use "mind", since it is the realization of that which results in buddhahood and nothing else.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, March 14th, 2014 at 9:39 PM

Title: Re: African Americans & people of Color, & Buddhism in the W

Content:

Johnny Dangerous said:

It seems like the unintended consequences here are that you will be left with a project that has ceased to be Dharma, and is simply political. Ironically enough, there is all kinds of what some posters would call "white Buddhism" that is basically this, Dharma that has morphed into liberal activism with some Buddha images. Personally I think the things Malcolm and others have said are much too dismissive of the legitimate experiences of those who might be shut out..however, it IS worth considering that part of what he is getting at is that this is Dharma practice, eventually, somehow, you have to do something that is removed from the values and goals of conventional political activism, and that includes the all-important issue of identity. It is not fair, and it seems to make Buddhism a tough row to hoe for particularly oppressed peoples - but doctrinally, it is true. It is not fair, it IS much easier to do that as white person, but it is still true...Buddhism does not leave much room for identity of the type typically cultivated in this sort of activism..IMO Malcolm has a legitimate point there, no matter how uncomfortable it may be.

Malcolm wrote:

I am not dismissive of their experience. One cannot contextualize one's experience (be social, political or economic) in Buddhism in absence of the teaching of karma, which states quite plainly that all sensations, pleasant, unpleasant and neutral, the social status into which one is born, one's opportunities in life, and so on result from one's own past actions in previous lives. Buddhists, of whatever "race" are well advised to use this precious human birth (that they may use to attain liberation) to good use.

Meanwhile, as part of their practice, they can devote themselves to whatever social causes strike their fancy depending on their social, political and economic concerns. Thus, if you are a person of color and you wish to devote yourself to causes involving people of color, fine. But don't buy into the non-Buddhist narratives of oppressors and victims, the non-Buddhist narrative of privileging one form of sentient life (human) over the lives of billions of other kinds of sentient life. The teaching of karma is not fuzzy, warm, and it does not feel good. The teaching of karma indicates that what we experience in this life is a result of how we have acted in past lives. If we are oppressed in this life, we can be sure that in a past life we were oppressive, and so on.

This is not a recommendation for inaction or indifference to the plight of people are not so fortunate as to have a precious human birth where they can meet the Perfect Dharma and practice it. We have to be aware of the plight of others and help where we can, and when we are asked to, it's "the bodhisattva" thing to do, and not because we wish to turn others into coreligionists. But in the end, don't ask me to respect you because you are a person of color. I respect you already because you are a human being.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, March 14th, 2014 at 9:41 PM

Title: Re: Crowned Buddha images around Bodhgaya.

Content:

Indrajala said:

Does anyone know why many of the late period images of the Buddha (9th century onwards) around Bodhgaya and Nalanda have crowns and necklaces? At first I thought they might be Vairocana, but many are clearly Śākyamuni "touching the earth" at his enlightenment. Not all the late period images have such adornments, though many do.

Malcolm wrote:

The central imagery in the yoga tantras is bound up with courtly notions of the Cakravartin. That is why Sambhogakāya Buddhas wear crowns and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, March 14th, 2014 at 10:37 PM

Title: Re: African Americans & people of Color, & Buddhism in the W

Content:

zsc said:

T

The Buddha's teaching is that our current circumstances are not only due to the karma from past lives.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, the Buddha's teaching is that our current circumstances are due only to our actions from past lives. You really don't want me to trot out the numerous citations illustrate this.

There are some revisionists who would like to deny this, but they are wrong.

This does not mean we cannot improve our current circumstances. Of course we can. But that too depends on our past karma.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, March 15th, 2014 at 1:50 AM

Title: Re: Longde before Dzin Dharmabodhi?

Content:

heart said:

Calling the 17 Tantras a scam is really close to turning people against the Dharma. Because scams are not Dharma, pretty simple.

Malcolm wrote:

Did I call the 17 tantras a scam? No. I simple asserted that they were composed in the 11th century. Just like Kalacakra was composed in the 10th century, Hevajra and the Laghusamvara in the 9th, Guhyasamaja in the 8th and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, March 15th, 2014 at 2:50 AM

Title: Re: African Americans & people of Color, & Buddhism in the W

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

[quote="zsc"

@Malcolm - To continue on what I touched on, your position of the suffering of people being only the result of their past lives ignores that documented fact that Gotoma opposed the caste system, which is the logical conclusion of your stance. Gotoma even opposed the caste system \*even while he directly benefited from it\*. There is a metaphor in there about how we should respond to all other forms of social inequality.[/quote]

The in the Karmavibhanga, the Buddha states:

Brahmaputra, therefore, listen well and bear this in mind: from knowing the various actions [karma], the various afflictions, the various views and the various behaviors of sentient beings one can describe the ripened results of positive and negative actions.

Brahmaputra, there is birth among hell beings, animals and pretas because of negative actions, birth among humans, asuras and devas because of positive actions.

Brahmaputra, a short life is a vicissitude of karma, a long life is a vicissitude of karma. Frequent illness is a vicissitude of karma, infrequent illness is a vicissitude of karma. A poor complexion is a vicissitude of karma. Beauty is a vicissitude of karma. Inferior social standing is a vicissitude of karma. Superior social standing is a vicissitude of karma. Noble birth is a vicissitude of karma. Ignoble birth is a vicissitude of karma. Great wealth is a vicissitude of karma. Little wealth is a vicissitude of karma. Low intelligence is a vicissitude of karma. High intelligence is a vicissitude of karma. Birth as a hell being is a vicissitude of karma. Birth as animal is a vicissitude of karma. Birth as a preta is a vicissitude of karma. Birth in the human realm is a vicissitude of karma. Birth as a deva enjoying bliss is a vicissitude of karma. Birth as a form realm deva is a vicissitude of karma. Birth as a formless realm deva is a vicissitude of karma. Certainty of birth is a vicissitude of karma. Uncertainty of birth is a vicissitude of karma. Ripening in another land is a vicissitude of karma.

You ignored my observation that the fact that social inequality is in fact a result of karma from the Buddha's point of view does not mean we deal with it passively.

Unknown said:

But I will say, it is ironic that you chose to affirm the reality of karma from our past lives while denying other karmic circumstances in which we are born into, such as where we are born...

Malcolm wrote:

All of this comes from our past karma, I have not ignored any of it.

Unknown said:

And yet, my basic recommendation to examine personal complicity (which is woven into your own karmic situation) to see your role in today's social conditions is met with resistance.

Malcolm wrote:

All of us together mutually created the karmic ripening we observe today, and the ways in which we treat other sentient beings determines what kind of karmic reality we will experience in the future. You very well may have been a privileged white slave owner in a past life. I may have been a slave whose children were ripped away from me and sold at auction. Jews killed in the holocaust may have been reborn as Israelis, while Nazis may have been reborn as Palestinians. We have all been mothers, fathers, sons and daughters, enemies, friends, murders, rapists, thieves, kings, wealthy merchants, libertines, etc., not to mention pretas, gods, hell beings, fish, whales, bugs so many times, that to insist that others must adopt our social view based in the very temporary karmic circumstances we find in this life is just absurd.

The law of karma is unerring. If someone, like Tibetans for example, are experiencing

torture, murder and so on at the hands of the PLA, for example, there is a karmic reason for it. That does not mean that Tibetans, for example, need to be passive and not insist on their rights to dignity as human beings, the same thing with Palestinians, Mayans, Rohingyas, etc. But as Buddhists we also must understand that famine, diseases, wars, etc., as well as the beauty and good fortune we have to live in the US (as imperfect as it may be) all comes from karma. How we manage this is what will determine where we take rebirth in the next life and what kind of circumstances we will meet there.

Unknown said:

Meanwhile, my insistence that how we relate to the dharma (which includes to how we relate to each other) is conditioned by our karmic situations (which includes our experiences due to our race) is met with denial. Neither statement is a concept that is alien to Buddhist thought.

Malcolm wrote:

You really must not be paying attention to what I said.

Unknown said:

In light of that, race is a fake social construct, to you "there are no black people" but to people who do everything from deny us opportunities to gun us down there certainly are black people. The same "Sunday-only" dharma referenced above that ignores the lived reality of racism that black Buddhists face, and other poc, is unsurprisingly not one that many poc will adopt. Above I have outlined why I believe this isn't Buddhist at all.

Malcolm wrote:

Race is a social construct that is quite real to many people, but it is still just an illusion. "Black people" and "White people" are just dividing labels. The extent we wish to reinforce them is the extent to which they will continue to bind us.

Unknown said:

Just like with Johnny Dangerous, I would also ask why the solutions of people of color--in your words, a "black power sangha"--must be palatable to you?

Malcolm wrote:

I can see you really do not read what I said carefully. I said the very idea of such racially divided sanghas violated the intent of the Buddha, who did not differentiate people by caste when they became followers of Buddhadharma.

Unknown said:

Also, it should be clear from history why "white power", an assertion of power by the powerful, is a hate movement, while "black power", a reclamation of agency by systematically oppressed people, is a civil rights movement. Therefore, the two concepts are apples and oranges.

Malcolm wrote:

From a Buddhist point of view, it is just worldly bullshit caught up in the eight worldly Dharmas.

Unknown said:

In reality, black people in America have to face racism and frame it in one way or another as a necessity, to make sense of the world, whether publicly or privately.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, of course they do. There are a lot of racists out there. Many of them have "black" skin too. They are all to be pitied for their narrowness and lack of compassion.

Unknown said:

A lot of black parents dread the eventual "racism talk" they have to have with their young children for their protection. At the same time, I have read white people resenting having to have the same discussion when they were younger if they happened to have committed some social faux pas that could have been misconstrued as racism. Some white people resent having the racism talk as adults. Both ignore the fact that this talk is thought of as "optional" for them because of white privilege, while it is "required" in one way or another, for black people.

Malcolm wrote:

My mother, a caucasian women, and founder of the feminist movement in New England, marched in many Civil Rights rallies in the sixties. I was with her at these as I was a small child. I was raised in a household where it was normal to discuss racism and its negative impacts on African Americans.

I am a Buddhist, and while I sympathize with the suffering of any sentient being, I also recognize that the suffering of any sentient being comes strictly from their own karma and no one else makes it for them. You are making a common error in assuming that karmic causes and conditions are "interdependent" in a broader sense. They are not.

The discussion of general cause and condition comes first. Then the subject of dependent origination. Finally, the discussion of karmic cause and condition, i.e. how afflicted minds act, and what kinds of results they can expect to ripen as a result of those acts, both positive and negative. My karma does not ripen on you, and you have no hand in making it. Your karma does not ripen on me, and I had no hand in making it.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, March 15th, 2014 at 2:58 AM

Title: Re: African Americans & people of Color, & Buddhism in the W

Content:

Unknown said:

On the other hand, having complete strangers who don't care about you ask "What are you?" is annoying, as plenty of Asian-Americans say. Black women get this in the form of invasive questions about our hair ("Can I touch it?" "Do you wash it?" "Is that your real hair?" etc.). This ascribes an "alien" quality to someone that is dehumanizing. It's creepy, like we are regarded as zoo animals who need to be carefully studied.

Malcolm wrote:

Try having long blond hair in Tibet, if you want to feel like a zoo exhibit. You think these experiences are unique to black people in the US? They are not. They are experienced by anyone who travels somewhere where they are not the majority. Most of us here are widely travelled people, not ignorant rednecks in the N. Georgia mountains.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, March 15th, 2014 at 3:02 AM

Title: Re: African Americans & people of Color, & Buddhism in the W

Content:

zsc said:

T

The Buddha's teaching is that our current circumstances are not only due to the karma from past lives.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, the Buddha's teaching is that our current circumstances are due only to our actions from past lives.

The in the Karmavibhanga, the Buddha states:

SN 36.21 said:

"Now when these ascetics and brahmins have such a doctrine and view that 'whatever a person experiences, be it pleasure, pain or neither-pain-nor-pleasure, all that is caused by previous action,' then they go beyond what they know by themselves and what is accepted as true by the world. Therefore, I say that this is wrong on the part of these ascetics and brahmins."

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 karmas, heirs of karmas, they have karmas as their progenitor, karmas as their kin, karmas as their homing-place. It is karmas that differentiate beings according to inferiority and superiority."

Malcolm wrote:

<http://www.accesstoinsight.org/lib/authors/nanamoli/wheel248.html#top>

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, March 15th, 2014 at 3:07 AM

Title: Re: Longde before Dzin Dharmabodhi?

Content:

heart said:

Calling the 17 Tantras a scam is really close to turning people against the Dharma.  
Because scams are not Dharma, pretty simple.

Malcolm wrote:

Did I call the 17 tantras a scam? No. I simply asserted that they were composed in the 11th century. Just like Kalacakra was composed in the 10th century, Hevajra and the Laghusamvara in the 9th, Guhyasamaja in the 8th and so on.

heart said:

Inventing a lineage is a classic scam, no?

/magnus

Malcolm wrote:

If you choose to see it that way. I don't. I see it very much along the same lines as placing the words of Mahāyāna sūtras in the mouth of the Buddha, when it is impossible that the historical Buddha even spoke one word of them, let alone all 108 volumes of them and more. I evaluate the texts on what they say, not on the basis of their supposed origins. I think it is a superior approach when a text is evaluated on its actual content rather than who supposedly spoke it.

Let me put it another way, when Amoghavajra [i.e. Shingon tradition] claims that Nāgārjuna took the tantras out of an iron tower in South India, I also do not believe that story. That does not mean I think that the practice of the Vajradhātu mandala is spurious or worthless.

Given the environment of the 11th century, if the authors of the 17 tantras came out and said "We wrote these books, and because we have realized the meaning contained therein, you should practice this" no one would have believed them.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, March 15th, 2014 at 4:11 AM

Title: Re: Pronunciation (yes one of these)

Content:

vinodh said:

Additionally to Malcolm's way, I've also been taught that it's pronounced "gya" (I think this may be the most common way now, but not necessarily the most historically accurate)

Usually, this is the North Indian pronunciation of the syllable.

South Indians (including me) still pronounce it as - <dz̥na> (dz̥ is same as English /j/ & ɲ is same as Spanish ñ) You'll find South Indian pronunciation of Sanskrit more conservative compared to North India. For instance, <ai> <au> are mostly realized as monophthongs in most of North India. But they are properly realized as diphthongs only



in South India (and Maharashtra).  
also "dnya" which just seems weird to me, but is also supposedly correct  
It is the Marathi/Oriya way of pronouncing the letter.

----

Well... Ofcourse... You can pick any of the above pronunciations and still sound "native".  
But I would suggest to go with <dʒṇa> - the closest English rendering of which is <jnya>.

V

Malcolm wrote:

Sakya Pandita renders jñā and "gnya". Also in Varanasi, that is how it is taught there. In general, Tibetans who spoke Sanskrit followed the N. Indian mode of pronunciation and consider this the most correct. It may not match up with linguistic history, but indeed it is how they see it.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, March 15th, 2014 at 4:16 AM

Title: Re: What major Tibetan Buddhist texts are still missing?

Content:

Indrajala said:

I recently heard about large amounts of Indian Sanskrit texts having been kept in Tibetan libraries and actually seen by foreign visitors prior to the Chinese invasion. From the sounds of it they were basically stored away and seldom ever touched, but nevertheless they were there. A similar situation existed in China where original Indian manuscripts were stored in various places and left alone for centuries only to be burnt in the Cultural Revolution.

It would be interesting to know the fate of those Indian manuscripts in Tibet.

Malcolm wrote:

The Library at Sakya still has many original Sanskrit manuscripts.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, March 15th, 2014 at 4:56 AM

Title: Three Turnings.

Content:

Son of Buddha said:

I have shown where the Buddhas says the 5 aggregates are suffering.

Malcolm wrote:

Of course they are, but there are also pure aggregates.

Son of Buddha said:

You mentioned the Diamond Sutra.....well the Diamond sutra is provisional the third turning deems all 1st and second turning to be provisional,only glimmers of the absolute truth can be found in the provisional teachings and even then they rely on interpretation from the third turning,now if you ask me to prove that with Buddhist scriptural reference I can.....im only you to do the same with your assertions.

Malcolm wrote:

There is really only one reference to the three turnings of the wheel in a single sutra. The Samdhinirmocana. The way I read the Samdhinirmocana is that it confirms the teaching found in the second turning and renders it indisputable.

The Bhagavan, well disclosing the correct entry into all vehicles, 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. This wheel of Dharma is unsurpassable, not circumstantial, of definitive meaning and indisputable.

This is hardly a smoking gun that confirms that you are basing your opinions on the so called third turning. Frankly, there is virtually no attention this teaching in the Indian canon, though a big deal about it is made in Tibetan and Chinese Buddhism. The idea that the three turnings are based on three distinct historical epochs is rejected out of hand by such India scholars as Dharmamitra in his Abhisamayālaṃkārikāprajñāpāramitopadeśaśāstraṭīkā prasphuṭapadā.

Son of Buddha said:

<http://ancient-buddhist-texts.net/English-Texts/Exalted-Utterances/8-Pataligamiyavaggo-03.htm>

“There is, monks, an unborn, unbecome, unmade, unconditioned. If, monks there were not that unborn, unbecome, unmade, unconditioned, you could not know an escape here from the born, become, made, and conditioned. But because there is an unborn, unbecome, unmade, unconditioned, therefore you do know an escape from the born, become, made, and conditioned.”

Malcolm wrote:

By your own criteria this is provisional since it comes from the first turning.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, March 15th, 2014 at 4:57 AM

Title: Re: Difference between consciousness and the mind

Content:

Son of Buddha said:

I have shown where the Buddhas says the 5 aggregates are suffering.

You claim that the suttas that say such are provisional...

Malcolm wrote:

I respond here: <https://www.dharmawheel.net/viewtopic.php?f=39&t=15837#wrap>

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, March 15th, 2014 at 6:42 AM

Title: Re: Three Turnings.

Content:

jeeprs said:

"There is, monks, an unborn, unbecome, unmade, unconditioned. If, monks there were not that unborn, unbecome, unmade, unconditioned, you could not know an escape here from the born, become, made, and conditioned. But because there is an unborn, unbecome, unmade, unconditioned, therefore you do know an escape from the born, become, made, and conditioned."

How could such a statement be 'provisional'? Wouldn't that then be a 'conditioned unconditioned'?

Malcolm wrote:

...Not sure you got my point. If one claims the "third turning" is definitive, defines it as a number of sutras like the Saṃdhinirmocana and so on, and then you cite a "first" turning sūtra, you have contradicted yourself.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, March 15th, 2014 at 7:14 AM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

No, I should use "mind", since it is the realization of that which results in buddhahood and nothing else.

Sherab said:

What is your reason for putting the word mind within quotation marks?

Malcolm wrote:

Because A108 did.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, March 15th, 2014 at 7:16 AM

Title: Re: Three Turnings.

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

If one claims the "third turning" is definitive, defines it as a number of sutras like the

Samdhinirmocana and so on, and then you cite a "first" turning sūtra, you have contradicted yourself.

jeeprs said:

Not necessarily. It might be the case that the so-called 'later' teachings unpack or explicate deeper meanings that were inherent in the earliest texts. That is why Nagarjuna could say that he was affirming the true meaning of the Buddha's teaching, even though to many of his contemporaries he seemed to be radical (well that is a point made in many of the scholarly studies of early Mahayana anyway.) But that is because the Buddha's teaching, right from the outset, was vast, profound, difficult to fathom, deep and perceptible only to the wise. It accomodates many different kinds of perspectives. So in some ways you can see as the tradition developed, there was the attempt to harmonize some of these perspectives, whilst not claiming that the later ones conflicted with or undermined the earlier. (//edit//although of course from the viewpoint of the traditionalists, the so-called 'later turnings' were simply ways to rationalize heterodoxy.)

('Unborn, unconditioned' comes from  
<http://www.accesstoinight.org/tipitaka/kn/ud/ud.8.03.than.html>.)

Malcolm wrote:

You are missing my point again, the gzhan stong pas like SOB, generally assert that Buddha's career had three distinct phases.

Maitreyanatha rejects this interpretation and asserts that all three turnings were turned at the same time.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, March 15th, 2014 at 7:18 AM

Title: Re: Difference between consciousness and the mind

Content:

PadmaVonSamba said:

When this basic ground of awareness arises, or interacts with an object, the result is that is experienced is mind.

Malcolm wrote:

There is no awareness outside the mind.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, March 15th, 2014 at 7:55 AM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

Sherab said:

So by "mind" you are really referring to the ordinary deluded mind?

Malcolm wrote:

By mind I mean that entity which can become deluded or nondeluded.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, March 15th, 2014 at 7:55 AM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

Sherab said:

What is the meaning of established as you have used here?

Malcolm wrote:

Proven to exist.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, March 15th, 2014 at 7:56 AM

Title: Re: Three Turnings.

Content:

Astus said:

Therefore, the unconditioned does not exist."[/i]

Malcolm wrote:

Indeed, and there goes gzhan stong up in smoke hoisted on its own petard.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, March 15th, 2014 at 8:27 AM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

Sherab said:

So by "mind" you are really referring to the ordinary deluded mind?

Malcolm wrote:

By mind I mean that entity which can become deluded or nondeluded.

gad rgyangs said:

you sure you want to call mind an "entity"?

Malcolm wrote:

Conventionally, sure. I don't mean it has a essence, an ens. I mean it is a subject for

discussion. A mind is what experiences samsara or nirvana. It can be pure or impure, to put it the way the sgra thal 'gyur puts it, wisdom is encompassed by the mind. "Vimalamitra", having clarified that sems, blo and yid are all synonyms for shes pa, states:

The wisdom that is encompassed by the mind is inseparable in all buddhas and sentient beings as mere mind, but since it ultimately pervades them without any nature at all, that [wisdom] is encompassed by the mind [shes pa] of each one.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, March 15th, 2014 at 8:35 AM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

Sherab said:

What is the meaning of established as you have used here?

Malcolm wrote:

Proven to exist.

Sherab said:

What does exist mean here? For example, to exist can mean to exist inherently, to exist dependently, to exist as an imagination.

Malcolm wrote:

Proven to exist. There is no difference between existence and inherent existence. There is no difference between dependent existence and inherent existence.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, March 15th, 2014 at 8:37 AM

Title: Re: Difference between consciousness and the mind

Content:

PadmaVonSamba said:

When this basic ground of awareness arises, or interacts with an object, the result is that is experienced is mind.

Malcolm wrote:

There is no awareness outside the mind.

PadmaVonSamba said:

So, when a plant's roots grow specifically in the direction of a source of water, or a sperm cell swims to an egg, or white blood cells attack an infection,

that is mind?

.  
.   
.

Malcolm wrote:

None of these things have minds, so they do not have awareness either.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, March 15th, 2014 at 11:12 AM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

gad rgyangs said:

personally I don't think there is such a thing as "mind" even conventionally. "mental events" yes, but "mind" no. it stinks of reification.

Malcolm wrote:

I don't think there is such a thing as "mind" even conventionally.

???

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, March 15th, 2014 at 11:15 AM

Title: Re: Three Turnings.

Content:

jeeprs said:

all things have no-essence, no arising, and no passing away, are originally quiescent, and are essentially in cessation

Even though this is something that is said a lot, I don't really understand what it means.

(I \*think\* there is a similarity to the early Greek philosophers, specifically Parmenides [and Zeno's paradoxes which were intended as proofs of Parmenides], which originated from around the same historical time. Parmenides also was concerned with 'what truly is', in comparison to which the 'phenomenal' did not truly exist.

How could what is perish? How could it have come to be? For if it came into being, it is not; nor is it if ever it is going to be. Thus coming into being is extinguished, and destruction unknown.

B 8.20-22. )

So I would be very interested to hear an explanation of what this phrase actually means in terms of modern or analytical philosophy. When it is declared that things are 'not arisen', this doesn't seem to account for the fact that things - creatures, trees, mountains, planets, and so on - actually do 'arise' or come into and then go out of existence. So what does it mean that they don't really arise?

Any supplementary readings on that, preferably from a 'Buddhist studies', rather than traditional, perspective?

Malcolm wrote:

They seem to, but not really.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, March 15th, 2014 at 8:01 PM

Title: Re: Longde before Dzin Dharmabodhi?

Content:

heart said:

We are still waiting for your translation of the 17 Tantras in order to evaluate its actual content. But in my opinion if you wanted to make a believable story about the origin of a text you wrote you would have traveled to India and made sanskrit copies of them. The lineage that Zhangton Tashi Dorje provide is laughable in comparison the Sarma lineages. No wonder so relatively few people believed in them at the time. This is what don't make sense.

/magnus

Malcolm wrote:

The Sanskrit originals for the 17 tantras are accounted for Zhangton's legend. They are asserted to be the sole copies brought from India with no other copies in India, hidden by Vimalamitra in Tibet just before he departed for China. The origin legends of all the other tantras are no more believable than Zhangton's. The difference of course is that there is no elaborate account of concealment and retrieval in Tibet to contend with for the gsar ma tantras.

In gsar ma, the general mode of the introduction new teachings is through visionary encounter. Marpa meeting Naropa, Sachen meeting Virupa, or through dreams.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, March 15th, 2014 at 8:10 PM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

gad rgyangs said:

personally I don't think there is such a thing as "mind" even conventionally. "mental events" yes, but "mind" no. it stinks of reification.

Malcolm wrote:

I don't think there is such a thing as "mind" even conventionally.



???

gad rgyangs said:

mental event, no substratum or possessor

Malcolm wrote:

A mental event is distinct from a mind exactly how?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, March 15th, 2014 at 8:36 PM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

Sherab said:

...Taken as a whole, the first quote seems to say that the mind is unreal because it is only imagined. But because of imagination (of feeling, thinking and so on), it is not unreal. The whole argument in the first quote therefore seems rather incoherent to me.

Andrew108 said:

Well the other thing is that Malcolm is saying the realization of mind's nature leads to Buddhahood. There must be something realized? if he says that mind cannot be found, then I wonder how can Buddhahood be realized?

Malcolm wrote:

Kun byed rgyal po:

Since one's mind free of proliferation is the dharmadhātu  
all buddhas enter into that freedom from proliferation.

And:

A buddhahood that is an object of sight cannot be seen;  
since buddhahood does not exist, also there is no name "buddhahood";  
The teacher has said that since buddhahood designated by a name it is an error;  
the mistaken path is obtaining buddhahood somewhere else.

And:

Also the teaching of the all-creating kind  
is that one's mind has always been the liberated dharmatā.

There you go, Andrew, how it is explained in the bodhicitta texts of which you are so fond.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, March 15th, 2014 at 8:37 PM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

Sherab said:

Based on your meaning of 'to establish', I read the first quote to mean that the mind is not real because it does not exist dependently nor inherently. This implies that the mind existence is only imagined.

Malcolm wrote:

The mind is not real because it arises from conditions, whatever arises from conditions does not arise in truth and cannot be found on examination. The mind is not unreal because there is clarity, and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, March 15th, 2014 at 8:43 PM

Title: Re: Difference between consciousness and the mind

Content:

PadmaVonSamba said:

Well, if the sperm is attracted by the chemical from the egg.  
so, if you don't want to call it "mind" what would you call it?  
I called it "bare awareness".

Malcolm wrote:

A sperm has no mental organ or any other kind of organ, it cannot be aware.

PadmaVonSamba said:

You can't deny that there is a responsive, intentional (meaning not random) contact between two separate entities.  
Somehow the sperm 'knows' to swim to the egg.

Malcolm wrote:

A sperm has no mental organ or any other kind of organ, it cannot be aware.

PadmaVonSamba said:

an awareness of another object occurs even to a single-cell organism,  
which has no brain, no sense organs, no nerve endings.

Malcolm wrote:

Single cell organisms have no sense organs, etc., so they cannot be aware.

Attributing awareness to them is a category error.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, March 15th, 2014 at 9:59 PM

Title: Re: Longde before Dzin Dharmabodhi?

Content:

heart said:

this was how he actually thought it happened. If I was Zhangton I would have made a more believable story.

Malcolm wrote:

Two things about Zhangton. Zhangton demonstrates a very shaky grasp on events in the 11th century, placing atisha one hundred years too early and so on. Second, fabulous tales were very believable to Tibetans (and many of their students) right up to the present day.

When I have discussions with Tibetans about all of this, they demonstrate a lot of indifference to these issues, mainly being concerned with focusing on one practice or lineage. Plus they are basically hostile to text critical analysis of their tradition unless it is within the context of traditional lineage concerns. So for example, if Gorampa criticizes the kun byed rgyal po it is one thing, but if a Western scholar does the same thing it is quite another. They distrust the motives of Western scholars, and dislike the impression that Western scholars like Gyatso, Davidson, Germano etc., are just doing this because they need a job. Whereas a critic like Sapan or Gorampa is regarded as being a realized person (with Sakya), so their opinions carry great weight.

Many western students have the same attitude. I have heard students of ChNN proclaim that if ChNN says something is so, we must believe it is so.

Finally, the purpose of lo rgyus, narrative accounts, are to generate faith in the lineage. Therefore exaggeration and so on are the norm in such accounts because they generate a dramatic tone which fosters receptivity. In the Indo-Tibetan tradition it seems, the more fantastic the better it is received. Of course there are skeptics, like Taranatha, who found the whole literature of the Padma Khathangs to be worth less than the paper they were written on, so he provided the account of Padmasambhava he heard from his Indian master, Buddhaguptanatha as a corrective to the exaggerations of tertons like Nyang ral.

So what I observe in Tibetan literature of this kind is a kind of one upsmanship, like that one sees when comparing the simpler and less elaborate "sems sde" origin stories with the elaborate story of the man ngag sde lineage, or comparing the increasingly detailed accounts of the early masters of Lamdre as time moves on, or the increasing detailed bios of Milarepa, etc., or the the increasingly detailed bios of Padmasambhava resulting in a 12 volume one "revealed" by a Bon master in the 19th century.

These are, in my view, facts of text that we have to accept.

In terms of Dharma there is basically no difference in meaning between the words in the "emptiness" mantra, om svabhāva śuddha sarvadharmā svabhāva śuddho' ham (The nature of all phenomena is pure, also my nature is pure) and the term "original purity".

In the end, these issues of text origin should be kept separate from practice. I think that the traditional accounts should always be presented, whether we really believe them or not, when we are being presented with teachings for practice. When we are studying

these texts for their history however, we should subject the texts to all the best methods of text criticism, archaeology, history and so on that we can muster. In some people's mind this will cause them to lose faith in this or that lineage or tradition, and that is a pity, but that is also the price of scholarship. Many Christians lost faith in Jesus because of text criticism that began to be used by German scholars in the 19th century, but we, as Buddhists, don't really care if Christians lose their faith.

My contention is that if we lose our faith in Buddhadharma (due to text criticism and a better understanding of history) because the origin of some text turns out to have been originally written Tibetan and not some Indic language, then our faith is pretty shaky to begin with and is not based on the principles of Dharma but rather on some strange beliefs that we have decided to cultivate. If we lost faith in the man ngag sde tantras because it turns out they were written in Tibetan in the 11th century, and not taught by some ancient teacher in a heaven during the first eon, then it means we have not really understood the theory and practice contained in those texts on any level at all. If we lose our faith in Kalacakra because the notion that it was taught by the Buddha in a stupa in South India and then was later set down in writing by the seventh king of Shambhala, Mañjuśrīyasa, and only brought to India some 1000 years later during the 10th century turns out to be just a didactic legend, then it means we have understood nothing of the teachings contained in that tantra. If we decide that we have no faith in the Prajñāpāramita sūtras because it turns out that it is impossible they were recovered from under the ocean by Nāgārjuna then we have not understood one word of the Prajñāpāramita.

I keep on stressing that what is most important about all Buddhist texts is not where they are from, but rather, what they say. We are left to our own devices to engage in the experiment and test for ourselves the truth of practices in Buddhist texts. When we have some evidence that the practices in these texts lead to the promised results, our faith moves from aspiring faith to unshakable faith -- but that unshakable faith doesn't mean that we then necessarily have to believe all the origin legends that accompany these texts. It means we have moved from hypothesis to confirmation for ourselves.

In the meantime, there are interesting things to learn.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, March 15th, 2014 at 10:05 PM

Title: Re: Difference between consciousness and the mind

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

A sperm has no mental organ or any other kind of organ, it cannot be aware.

PadmaVonSamba said:

I agreed that it has no mental organ.

But it is attracted to a chemical excreted by the egg  
and it swims to that egg.

it responds to the actions of the egg.

That function of response,  
that attraction,  
is what i am talking about.

Malcolm wrote:  
That does not constitute evidence of awareness.

PadmaVonSamba said:  
Nearly all "alive" things exhibit some sort of response to some stimuli that they themselves do not create.

Malcolm wrote:  
That does not constitute evidence of awareness.

PadmaVonSamba said:  
Hence, the propensity for the experience of self/other is already there.

Malcolm wrote:  
No, I don't think so.

PadmaVonSamba said:  
This is the basic awareness I am talking about,

Malcolm wrote:  
I think you have confused panpsychism with Buddhism.

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Saturday, March 15th, 2014 at 10:41 PM  
Title: Re: Longde before Dzin Dharmabodhi?  
Content:  
heart said:

I don't agree. Zhangton wrote an an important Dzogchen history, the Great History of the Dzogchen Nyingtik (rdzogs pa chen po snying thig gi lo rgyus chen mo). I think he is simply retelling the story of the nyingthik as his masters told him (no matter how strange its seemed) but If you like Malcolm is suggesting that he wrote the 17 tantras himself that whole text is not true, which would make it a lie

Malcolm wrote:  
I think the story of their origin was largely created by Chegom Nagpo, who communicated this to Zhangton. Zhangton clearly received the 17 Tantras from Chegom Nagpo with whom he studied for one year when he was 10, in 1107.

I think that Dangma Lhungyal (and perhaps some others) and Chetsun Senge Wangchuk wrote the seventeen tantras over a period of 30-40 years or so during 11th century, with six of them being written after the Hevajra tantra was translated, i.e. the the rig pa rang

shar, the rig pa rang grol, the bkra shis mdzes ldan, the sgron ma 'bar ba and the mu tig phreng ba, with the sgra thal 'gyur being the last of the whole collection to be written down.

Further, Zhangton claims that he alone receives the unsurpassed secret cycle of teachings which are the Vima Nyinthig. Zhangton wrote large parts of the Vima Nyinthig, i.e. the gold, copper, agate, conch and turquoise lettered between 1115-1118. I think some of the other texts in the collection are texts he received from Chegom.

Nyang ral reports the existence of the 17 tantras in a lineage that stems from Chegom in his Dharma history, but makes no mention of the Vima Nyinthig, indicating it was not well known yet. The fact that Nyang ral's story of Vimalmitra's life (based on his treasure revelation that Eric translated as "The Lotus Born") contradicts many details of Vimalamitra's life in Zhangton's slightly earlier story [but both composed in the 12th century] shows that Zhangton's Vima Nyinthig was not widely known in the late 11th century and only circulated in a small circle of his immediate disciples surrounding his son, Nyibum.

heart said:

But perhaps you would like suggest that "the Great History of the Dzogchen Nyingtik " is an early work of fiction?

Malcolm wrote:

Of course it is.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, March 15th, 2014 at 10:42 PM

Title: Re: Longde before Dzin Dharmabodhi?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

or the the increasingly detailed bios of Padmasambhava resulting in a 12 volume one "revealed" by a Bon master in the 19th century.

mutsuk said:

What is that ?

Malcolm wrote:

I don't know, Tulku Orgyan mentions he read one.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, March 15th, 2014 at 10:46 PM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

Andrew108 said:

So which type of Buddhahood do you want? The type that comes from the realization of mind or the type that doesn't exist, can't be seen, can't be designated?

Malcolm wrote:

They are the same.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, March 15th, 2014 at 10:51 PM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

A mental event is distinct from a mind exactly how?

gad rgyangs said:

"mind" is a conceptual overlay, a non existent (in the son of a barren women sense) posited substratum or possessor that "has" mental events, or, even worse, "has" the basis.

Malcolm wrote:

The mind is the basis, it doesn't have "the basis".

Sure, mind is just a convention, so is "basis", so is "mental event", etc. When subject to analysis, each term is just as incoherent as the other two.

Therefore, all of this discussion of the basis, the arising of the basis, mind, mental events, etc., is all strictly conventional.

Further, there is ample evidence that Dzogchen tantras are merely discussing the nature of individual consciousness and nothing more.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, March 15th, 2014 at 11:04 PM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Further, there is ample evidence that Dzogchen tantras are merely discussing the nature of individual consciousness and nothing more.

gad rgyangs said:

and what is the basis of those posited multiple, individual consciousnesses?

Malcolm wrote:

There is no posited basis for those multiple, individual consciousness since they are all

empty, free from extremes.

As explained before, the term རྩུག་པོ།, generic basis, is just a generic set of attributes that all shes pas possess. That is why the sgra thal 'gyur clearly explains that shes pa, consciousness, exists in all buddhas and sentient beings, and that it has two basis states, pure and impure and so on.

We can continue around and around on this if you want, but there really is no further satisfactory answer. Instant presence, rig pa, is just a quality of one's mind.

As soon as one accepts that all of this is just a way of trying to describe how minds become deluded, and then free from that delusion, then at that point one has understood the purpose of the discussion. If you think Dzogchen texts are positing some permeating basis which supports instantiations of buddhas and sentient beings, then you have understood nothing.

As you know, in the end I have concluded that the Dzogchen theory of a basis is not really different from the Sakya theory of the all-basis cause continuum, or the Kagyu theory of "mahamudra of the basis". All three are clearly based on the Uttaratantra of the Guhyasamaja's statement:

A tantra is a continua.  
That become three,  
divided by basis, likewise, nature,  
and nothing to abandon,  
the basis and the nature are the cause,  
likewise the result has nothing to abandon.  
The basis is called "the method."  
The topics of tantra are included in three.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, March 15th, 2014 at 11:14 PM

Title: Re: Difference between consciousness and the mind

Content:

PadmaVonSamba said:

So, basically you are denying that a sperm responds specifically to something other than itself.

Malcolm wrote:

I am denying that there is any awareness involved in such interactions.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, March 16th, 2014 at 12:26 AM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:



Andrew108 said:

]

And for 'Presence Itself' you may as well use the term 'life itself'. There is no need to establish the identity of mind in order to overcome delusion. Neither is there a need to posit a final destination in Buddhahood as the epitome of wisdom. When you have confidence that knowledge of 'life itself' is never separate from an experience of 'Presence Itself' then what else do you need?

Malcolm wrote:

Presence is not a good translation for "sems nyid". It just means mind-essence and is a reference to bodhicitta, the mind-essence.

The passage that prefaces this discussion runs:

Since cause and effect are differentiated  
into mind, phenomena and knowing,  
phenomena are established.  
But it is never said to establish a  
differentiation into cause and effect  
in the self-originated knowing mind.  
[What] is to said that should be established  
is that everything is established  
by clearly including all phenomena  
in the mind-essence, the great perfection.

This is really very much the same as what the perfection of wisdom sutras say:  
Śāriputra, that which is absence of change and the absence of concepts in all  
phenomena is called "the mind essence of the mind".

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, March 16th, 2014 at 12:28 AM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The mind is the basis, it doesn't have "the basis".

Sherab said:

That being the case, scientists should be able to find the mind in a rock, a river or the wind. Scientists should not be finding molecules, atoms, sub atomic particles, etc.

Malcolm wrote:

The origin of this language of "the basis" is in the trio of the basis, path and result (sthana, marga, phala), i.e. the three tantras.

It is not an ontological doctrine, it is epistemic.

When we talk about the basis, we are talking about what is termed by the sgra thal 'gyur commentary as the tantra of primal nature [rang bzhin gyi rgyud]:

The tantra of the basis is the reality [gnas lugs] that is present [gnas pa] to be known. It is not cultivated by buddhas nor do sentient beings contrive it through cleverness. It is not established by any words or letters. It is the intrinsic reality of the great perfection free from extremes that is in no way incomplete.

The tantra of the path is two-fold: the path is made into a direct perception and into a post-meditation phase on the basis of the capacity of different people.

The tantra of the result is the naturally perfected tantra of the three kāyas and the originally pure tantra of the exhaustion of dharmatā.

This passage in the sgra thal 'gyur commentary is an elaboration upon a discussion found in an early 11th century text, The Mahāyānapathakrama by Subhagavajra:

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 kāyas, 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: Sunday, March 16th, 2014 at 12:29 AM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

pensum said:

"Presence Itself"?

Malcolm wrote:

sems nyid.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, March 16th, 2014 at 12:31 AM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

Sherab said:

Based on your meaning of 'to establish', I read the first quote to mean that the mind is not real because it does not exist dependently nor inherently. This implies that the mind's existence is only imagined.

Malcolm wrote:

The mind is not real because it arises from conditions, whatever arises from conditions does not arise in truth and cannot be found on examination. The mind is not unreal

because there is clarity, and so on.

Sherab said:

Previously, you said that the mind is not real because it cannot be established. You said that cannot be established means cannot be proven to exist dependently or inherently.

Now you said that the mind is not real because it arises from conditions. Is this not equivalent to saying that the mind is not real because it is established to exist dependently (i.e. from conditions) and not inherently?

So can or cannot the mind be established?

Malcolm wrote:

The mind cannot be established because it arises from conditions, therefore it is illusory and free from extremes.

Dependent existence is just a crib for inherent existence, as Nāgārjuna quite clearly shows in the chapter 15 of the MMK.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, March 16th, 2014 at 12:38 AM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

It is not an ontological doctrine, it is epistemic.

gad rgyangs said:

ok so if you want to co-opt the basis for your epistemology, then you simply need to use new terms to talk about ontology. So what are they? (and no cop-out saying "since there are no "beings" there is no need for "ontology").

Malcolm wrote:

There is no need to talk about ontology since the the four extremes are all invalid.

In case you missed it:

When we talk about the basis, we are talking about what is termed by the sgra thal 'gyur commentary as the tantra of primal nature [rang bzhin gyi rgyud]:

The tantra of the basis is the reality [gnas lugs] that is present [gnas pa] to be known. It is not cultivated by buddhas nor do sentient being contrived it through cleverness. It is not established by any words or letters. It is the intrinsic reality of the great perfection free from extremes that is in no way incomplete.

The tantra of the path is two-fold: the path is made into a direct perception and into a post-meditation phase on the basis of the capacity of different people.

The tantra of the result is the naturally perfected tantra of the three kāyas and the originally pure tantra of the exhaustion of dharmatā.

This passage in the sgra thal 'gyur commentary is an elaboration upon a discussion found in an early 11th century text, The Mahāyānapathakrama by Subhagavajra:

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 kāyas, 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: Sunday, March 16th, 2014 at 12:43 AM

Title: Re: Difference between consciousness and the mind

Content:

PadmaVonSamba said:

So, basically you are denying that a sperm responds specifically to something other than itself.

Malcolm wrote:

I am denying that there is any awareness involved in such interactions.

PadmaVonSamba said:

maybe you wouldn't call it "awareness" in the common Buddhist use of the term, because there is no cognitive grasping.

But then what would you call it?

Responsiveness?

Malcolm wrote:

I wouldn't call it awareness in any usage of the term. Unicellular organisms, fungi, plants, and so on, do not have minds and thus do not have awareness at all in any measure. They are non-sentient life.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, March 16th, 2014 at 1:03 AM

Title: Re: Dr. Sanderson: Phowa etc. are directly from Saivism

Content:

haha said:

Such passage/myth does not support the textual conversion but provide the hypothesis for textual conversion. So do the bio of Yogeswora Virupa.

Malcolm wrote:

All it proves is that Buddhists and Hindus were in competition.

haha said:

The Aṣṭāṅghridayam that gives these organs in this order: Heart, lung, liver, gall bladder, spleen, kidney. But quoted passage did not used yang organ (gall bladder). Then, there are five yin organs. Thus, it is related with Wu Xing theory.

Malcolm wrote:

Not really. These five don't snod, may ultimately have come from the arrangement the functional organs in Chinese medicine, but their place is so firmly established in Tibetan medicine by the 13th century when this text was written that any Chinese connection would have been long been obscured.

haha said:

lalana, rasana and avadhuti

These three are purely buddhist in origin (name as well as meaning). Ida, Pingala and Susumna are purely non-buddhist (name as well as meaning).

Malcolm wrote:

Kalacakra uses Ida, Pingala and Susumna.

haha said:

In buddhist context without Vipasyana one cannot work with avadhuti; especially in vajrayana it is directly related with sampannakrama(completion stage meditation). How can such thing derive from non-buddhist tradition?

Malcolm wrote:

Easily, as Sapan points out the two stages exist in Hinduism, the difference is in view.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, March 16th, 2014 at 1:13 AM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

There is no need to talk about ontology since there the four extremes are all invalid.

gad rgyangs said:

saying that is already talking about ontology.

so, since you are already talking about ontology, you need to explain these separate, self-contained monad-bases that you claim are found in each sentient being. Its unclear mereologically what is their relation to each other and what is their collective relationship to a context that would include them all. If the context is "kadag, lundrup and thugje" then that is pointing to a basis that is their collective context.

Malcolm wrote:

I would say that kadag, lundrup and thugje are a generic context, just like "red" is a

generic context for all cows that are red.

The Dzogchen tantras are not inventing a brand new theory of Buddhism, they are just riffing on Tantric Buddhism as it already exists. That being the case, Dzogchen tantras, just like all other Buddhist tantras, do not deny conventional doctrines such as mind streams (citta saṃtana) and so on, that are necessary for receiving impressions or traces (vasana, bag chags) etc.

In other words, Dzogchen tantras exist in a continuum with other texts upon which later Dzogchen tantras like the sgra thal 'gyur (which are clearly influenced by the gsar ma tantras) are based. You want to define the basis as ye shes. The sgra thal 'gyur defines wisdom as encompassed by shes pa, and its commentary indicates that the shes pa that encompass wisdom, whether in Buddhas or sentient beings, is individual and unique to each buddha and sentient being. So what this basically boils down to is a discussion of how individual sentient beings are liberated.

I don't really care about what meta discussion we can have about "what it means". I am interested in what the texts themselves say so that we can understand their intention.

Therefore, since the discussion of the basis is premised on the concept of the three continuums, and since that continuum is just the continuum of an individual sentient beings consciousness, it is pretty meaningless to me to try and insist that the Dzogchen tantras should be saying something other than what they clearly all say, i.e., sentient beings become deluded, and sentient beings become Buddhas.

You might not be satisfied with this, but so what?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, March 16th, 2014 at 1:51 AM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

Since the stains of the afflictions have never existed, there are no obstacles to clear away and no qualities to develop. All phenomena are perfect from the beginning in the state of essential identity, with no need for acceptance or rejection, prohibitions or remedies: this view of primordial enlightenment is known as the great perfection.

Malcolm wrote:

Even the perfection of wisdom states this, Hevajra states this, Kalacakra states this. This not a unique feature of Dzogchen.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, March 16th, 2014 at 2:55 AM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

Sherab said:

In what way is this not ontological?

The tantra of the basis is the reality [gnas lugs] that is present [gnas pa] to be known. It is not cultivated by buddhas nor do sentient beings contrive it through cleverness. It is not established by any words or letters. It is the intrinsic reality of the great perfection free from extremes that is in no way incomplete.

Malcolm wrote:

It is saying that one cannot apply ontological predicates such as being, non-being and so on to the unfabricated mind, the continuum of the basis.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, March 16th, 2014 at 2:57 AM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

Sherab said:

Previously, you said that the mind is not real because it cannot be established. You said that cannot be established means cannot be proven to exist dependently or inherently.

Now you said that the mind is not real because it arises from conditions. Is this not equivalent to saying that the mind is not real because it is established to exist dependently (i.e. from conditions) and not inherently?

So can or cannot the mind be established?

Malcolm wrote:

The mind cannot be established because it arises from conditions, therefore it is illusory and free from extremes.

Dependent existence is just a crib for inherent existence, as Nāgārjuna quite clearly shows in the chapter 15 of the MMK.

Sherab said:

Nagarjuna was talking of svabhava and parabhava where bhava is something permanent.

I was not talking about dependent existence as something permanent and therefore cannot be proven, BUT a dependent existence that does not have the characteristic of permanence and therefore can be proven, i.e. established. For example, a water molecule is a dependent existence arising from or emerging from the combination (governed by certain laws of nature) of an oxygen atom and two hydrogen atoms.

Malcolm wrote:

Nāgārjuna shows that bhāva is incoherent, therefore, dependent existence is incoherent. Production from conditions is not incoherent because it does not involve

use the term "bhava", existence. You will never find Nāgārjuna defending any species of existence at all.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, March 16th, 2014 at 2:59 AM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The mind is the basis, it doesn't have "the basis".

alpha said:

I thought that the basis is from the very beginning the state of body, voice and mind as the self perfected-fruit and not just the mind.

Malcolm wrote:

Body and speech come from mind, just as the rūpakāya arises from the dharmakāya.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, March 16th, 2014 at 3:02 AM

Title: Re: Difference between consciousness and the mind

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Unicellular organisms, fungi, plants, and so on, do not have minds and thus to not have awareness at all in any measure. They are non-sentient life.

PadmaVonSamba said:

if a single cell is non-sentient life,  
then any multiplication of that single cell,  
such as you or I  
must therefore also be non-sentient  
unless perhaps you can suggest a point at which sentience begins?

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Malcolm wrote:

Our minds do not come from the cells of our bodies. The cells of our body are not sentient.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, March 16th, 2014 at 3:39 AM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind



Content:

alpha said:

I am not sure.

In the way you say it, it looks like body and speech are conditioned or are results of ignorance, or you are trying to create a kind of hierarchy where one is higher than the other, whereas the view of dzogchen is that the entire diversity of pure and impure phenomena are inseparable in the nature of the state of body, speech and mind. Since body speech and mind have the same unique nature and this nature is also the nature of phenomena, whether of samsara or nirvana I see no need of making differentiations.

Malcolm wrote:

Dzogchen texts are quite explicit on this point, everything comes from the mind, everything that appears is an appearance of the mind. As Buddha said mind is the forerunner, etc.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, March 16th, 2014 at 7:49 AM

Title: Re: Can't Really Work with Mahayana by the Looks of it

Content:

rob h said:

It seems like I've decided to pretty much stop working with anything Mahayana...

Malcolm wrote:

Ok.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, March 16th, 2014 at 9:24 PM

Title: Re: Longde before Dzin Dharmabodhi?

Content:

heart said:

My point is that if the teachings work, their origin can not be sociopolitical pressure. This is simple cause and effect. And if sociopolitical pressure was involved when describing the lineage, you most certainly could have created a better and more solid lineage. Of course a 1000 years later it is difficult to say what actually happened and what was a vision, a dream or whatever.

Malcolm wrote:

What I said was that Buddhist ritualism, such as mandala drawing, fire pujas, etc., is clearly a response to socio-political pressure.

Buddhist practice whether sutra or tantra, still has the same progression through the

five paths, six perfections, ten stages, 37 adjuncts of awakening, whether they are described one by one in the Abhidharmakosha or are presented symbolically in the form of the thirty seven goddesses of the Vajrayogini mandala and so on.

heart said:

I believe the 17 tantras reappeared in the 11th century. Maybe some parts were edited and added to but I have no doubt they are genuine teachings originally taught in the samboghkaya dimension for those mahasiddhas capable to take teachings there. Thanks to ChNNR is got a pretty clear picture of how this could happen. That is all.

Malcolm wrote:

I have spoken about this with ChNN personally. One day we were discussing the text of the Kalacakra tantra. He stopped us abruptly to emphasize the point that the text of the tantra was not the tantra itself. The tantra itself was the Kalacakra mandala experienced by a Mahāsiddha. The text was something relative, composed by a person, subject to editing, emendation and so on, a text written about the method of realizing that mandala.

I never said there were no Tibetan mahāsiddhas. There were and are. This is why I continue believe in the effectiveness of man ngag sde teachings even if I don't really accept their traditional origin story anymore.

The problem really arises because Tibetans who produced these texts in the 11th century had to cater to the socio-political pressure of sourcing their teaching outside of Tibet with a foreign teacher— this is true of Nyingma and this is true of Bon. The Nyingma and Bonpo strategy was the treasure tradition and tales of lost Sanskrit and Zhang Zhung originals (which were true in some instances, like Guhyagarbha). The reason this socio-political pressure existed was that new texts were being brought from India, and in the 11th century and beyond, if you could not prove your text was Indian, it was regarded as spurious. Now, there are all sorts of linguistic reasons (which I do not have space to detail here) that we cannot accept that the seventeen tantras are translations from even one language into Tibetan (let alone three in the case of the Rig pa rang shar, which claims it was translated from Oddiyani, Sanskrit and Chinese!!!).

Nevertheless, while we can understand the historical provenance of the 17 tantras as texts to be a fabrication, we do not have to doubt their spiritual provenance since they are a record of the spiritual experience of a number of yogically advanced scholar practitioners in the 11th century who were riffing off older material from the 8th, 9th and 10th century as well as newer innovations by Indian yogis that was being imported in the eleventh century. Thus their lineage is intact in the live experimentation of yogis, just not in the fairy tale style it is communicated to children and naive people.

For example, Mahasiddha Virupa, a magical terrorist of great power, supposedly stops the sun in India. I love Virupa, he is definitely my favorite mahasiddha, but if he really stops the sun, you would think that such a cosmologically significant event would be noticed by the Chinese, the Arabs, etc. In fact, we have to understand this story as a

yogic metaphor (which is the way it is actually explained in the Caryagiti). It is a fun story. It ends with Avalokiteshvara telling Virupa to stop being a magical terrorist. Then Virupa merges with a statue of Avalokiteshvara in S. India, meaning that all along we are to understand Virupa has reached the same level of realization.

For example, the essentials of man ngag sde practice, its anatomy and so on, can be communicated in a few words. We do not need three volumes of primary text, four volumes of secondary texts and four more volumes of commentaries to explain the main points of rushan, semzins, tregchod and thogal. But people like to write books, and they like to elaborate things. Most of what is discussed in the 17 tantras is distilled into a few pages in the Vima Nyingthig, in the three testaments of the Buddhas. This latter text then sets the structure for all the later Nyinthig termas.

As you know, I personally take the view that just as Mahāyāna Buddhism went through stages of development, so did tantra. I happen to think that the authors who wrote Mahāyāna down wrote down a brilliant and sublime teaching. I happen to think the same of the authors of the tantras. But I also think they were human beings and as human beings, they responded to social and political pressures, just as the Buddha clearly did in the Pali canon teachings.

So this is how I reconcile my critical approach to the text I read, and my practice. I understand that the tantric texts of all classes of tantra are just a reflection of a process of yogic experimentation and practice, as well as guides to reproduce those experiments. For me it is interesting to understand the gradual evolution of the Buddhist tantric yogic tradition, and I take the view that it did evolve gradually in the custody of people who were practicing its precepts, just like Mahāyāna, just like Abhidharma. I understand the claims of lineage origin to be a response to critics outside this or that lineage to validate the lineage to prospective new students. I understand that there are various strategies in Tibetan Buddhism to attract new students. Among these and not restricted to these are the Nyingma strategy, "highest teachings, newest revelation, the most blessings"; the Kagyu strategy is "Most faith, most blessings"; Gelug strategy is "Most systematic, most blessing", the Sakya strategy is "Clearest Indian lineages, most blessings", etc. These are the claims these schools make, they do not cover all the claims these schools make. Other claims all based around the lineage founders, the texts, etc. And of course we already see that within a few short years of Buddhism coming to the west, we have all kinds of tertons popping out of the wood works.

So in the end, Tibetan Buddhism is moving here, and we should expect that it will undergo rigorous critical examination, just like it did in the early days in Tibet. I suggest that if we revise our expectations of what makes a text "legitimate" then the process will be less painful. But if we insist on literal adherence to narratives such as the Great History of Zhangton as a criteria for being a player, then I think that Vajrayāna is doomed in the west.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, March 16th, 2014 at 9:32 PM

Title: Re: Difference between consciousness and the mind

Content:

PadmaVonSamba said:

What I am getting at is that ultimately the experiencer,  
illusory as it may be,  
is merely a complex development of this "basic awareness"

Malcolm wrote:

There is no "basic" awareness apart from the awareness of a mind. Awareness is a quality of a mind, not the other way around.

A mind and a body may have the same relationship as a flower and its scent, it may be conceived to circulate around the body on the horse of vāyu and so on; but in the end the body is just a container for the mind.

You can remove all the limbs of a body, but you will never cut the mind. You can cut the brain stem, but brains are not sentient. When you cut the brain stem, the heart stops, the body dies and the stream of consciousness appropriates a new body.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 17th, 2014 at 12:09 AM

Title: Re: Difference between consciousness and the mind

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

You can remove all the limbs of a body, but you will never cut the mind. You can cut the brain stem, but brains are not sentient. When you cut the brain stem, the heart stops, the body dies and the stream of consciousness appropriates a new body.

PadmaVonSamba said:

In that case, a single-cell organism would be sufficient for the arising of awareness. You are saying it's not, because of certain factors that a single cell organism lacks, and then you say those same factors are not dependent on the very thing a single-cell organism lacks.

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Malcolm wrote:

It is possible for a mind to appropriate the body of a very simple creature. But I do not think that a mind will appropriate the body of a single cell organism.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 17th, 2014 at 12:11 AM

Title: Re: Longde before Dzin Dharmabodhi?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

I keep on stressing that what is most important about all Buddhist texts is not where they are from, but rather, what they say.

Indrajala said:

Didn't you some time ago state you reject the Brahma Net Sūtra because it has its origins in China?

Malcolm wrote:

I don't reject it, I just don't regard it as an improvement over Indian Mahāyāna vow literature so I don't feel the need to extend it some special status. I understand its importance in Chinese Buddhism, it is irrelevant to me however.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 17th, 2014 at 12:17 AM

Title: Re: Difference between consciousness and the mind

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

It is possible for a mind to appropriate the body of a very simple creature. But I do not think that a mind will appropriate the body of a single cell organism.

dzogchungpa said:

The questions of what kind of thing can be "appropriated" by a mind, and what "appropriate" means in this context are kind of interesting to me. Does the tradition have anything to say about this?

Malcolm wrote:

There are four kinds birth:

moisture/heat birth — this means insects and invertebrates primarily

egg birth — this means reptiles, birds, amphibians and fish

womb birth — humans and other mammals

apparitional birth — devas, pretas and hell beings.

Appropriate means that while in the bardo a being [gandharva] has the karmic causes and conditions to take certain kinds of birth, so they cluster at these birth places "like flies on rotten meat" as one Dzogchen tantra puts it.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 17th, 2014 at 12:19 AM

Title: Re: Longde before Dzin Dharmabodhi?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

I don't reject it, I just don't regard it as an improvement over Indian Mahāyāna vow literature so I don't feel the need to extend it some special status. I understand its importance in Chinese Buddhism, it is irrelevant to me however.

Indrajala said:

Supposing you consider it canonical (i.e., you don't reject it), how can it be irrelevant to you?

Malcolm wrote:

I don't, its not part of the Tibetan canon. To give a classic reply, "we don't read that sutra".

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 17th, 2014 at 12:20 AM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

Sherab said:

Therefore, it still make sense to talk about ...dependent existence

Malcolm wrote:

Not to me.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 17th, 2014 at 12:28 AM

Title: Re: Longde before Dzin Dharmabodhi?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

I don't, its not part of the Tibetan canon. To give a classic reply, "we don't read that sutra".

Indrajala said:

There are plenty of Indian texts that are not present in the Tibetan canon yet extant in Chinese translation. Why base your beliefs about canonical texts on whether or not they are included in the Tibetan canon rather than, by your own suggestion, judging them on their own merits rather than, say, their ethnic origins?

Malcolm wrote:

I don't base my beliefs about canonicity by what is included in the Tibetan canon. I just pay don't much attention to books I cannot read in Tibetan or English. Plus I practice within a very specific tradition, and that is where my interests lie. I am not much interested what lies outside it. So, there may be fantastic sutras and sashtras in Chinese, but for the most part they don't present anything that is not present in what we have in Tibetan already. As far as the Brahma Net sutra goes, I don't need it, so I don't use it. And I don't pay it any mind. If someone tells me I need to practice the bodhisattva

path according to it, I reply, it is not part of my tradition. In general, I don't even pay that much attention to the Yogacara system of bodhisattva vows. The system I follow is the Madhyamaka system.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 17th, 2014 at 12:36 AM

Title: Re: Difference between consciousness and the mind

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

It is possible for a mind to appropriate the body of a very simple creature. But I do not think that a mind will appropriate the body of a single cell organism.

PadmaVonSamba said:

So, about how many cells do you reckon make a being big enough for a mind to appropriate?

Also, since it is a common beginner's exercise to "try to find where in the body the mind is"

(the answer being that the mind cannot be found anywhere in the body)

--the notion that a mind requires so many cells is absurd.

Malcolm wrote:

In terms of a physical body, it must be large enough to accommodate at least the most rudimentary sense organs. Not sure we can include sponges, etc. I think we would have to set the limit at Eumetazoa.

"Sentient" means able to feel.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 17th, 2014 at 12:38 AM

Title: Re: Difference between consciousness and the mind

Content:

odysseus said:

But ultimately, these organisms have no autonomy. It's attraction/reaction by inherent physical properties to be blunt.

Then you have to determine at what point the multiplication of cells acquire autonomy.

Otherwise, even a complex human is merely driven by chemical interactions

(and of course, much of what we experience is. The question then becomes, 'who is experiencing the chemical interactions, such as a particular molecule, as an emotion of fear or joy.)

Also, I am not suggesting that this is a voluntary action.

A sperm doesn't think, "Well, I could swim to that egg, or I could just stay home and watch TV"

- .
- .
- .

Malcolm wrote:  
Sperm is not sentient.

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Monday, March 17th, 2014 at 12:45 AM  
Title: Re: Difference between consciousness and the mind  
Content:  
Malcolm wrote:  
Sperm is not sentient.

PadmaVonSamba said:  
Then how can it be attracted to the egg?

- .
- .
- .

Malcolm wrote:  
It isn't. There is no sentience in a sperm to be attracted to it. Impregnation is strictly biomechanics.

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Monday, March 17th, 2014 at 12:48 AM  
Title: Re: Difference between consciousness and the mind  
Content:  
Malcolm wrote:  
"Sentient" means able to feel.

odysseus said:  
So I guess I'm wrong about cognizing. But what about cessation of feeling? One is still sentient?

Malcolm wrote:  
Depends on what you mean by "feeling", even Buddhas have feeling.



Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 17th, 2014 at 12:54 AM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

Andrew108 said:

...even though all phenomena appear as mind, appearance itself is the nature of the enlightenment of the Buddhas."[/i]

Malcolm wrote:

This is also the point of view of anuttarayoga tantras. But it is not a method. It's a view.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 17th, 2014 at 1:11 AM

Title: Re: Difference between consciousness and the mind

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

In terms of a physical body, it must be large enough to accommodate at least the most rudimentary sense organs. Not sure we can include sponges, etc. I think we would have to set the limit at Eumetazoa.

"Sentient" means able to feel.

Sherlock said:

Didn't you post some links about how plants can feel and respond to stimuli too?

Malcolm wrote:

The question is whether this merely biomechanics or not.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 17th, 2014 at 1:21 AM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

Andrew108 said:

...even though all phenomena appear as mind, appearance itself is the nature of the enlightenment of the Buddhas."[/i]

Malcolm wrote:

This is also the point of view of anuttarayoga tantras. But it is not a method. It's a view.

Sherlock said:

So isn't Atiyoga the only path that actually turns that view into a method?

Malcolm wrote:

Of course not. This is why, for example, before even embarking on the creation stage,

one meditates the on the view in Lamdre.

The purpose of the creation stage to recognize that all phenomena are nothing other than the wisdom of buddhahood.

If you respond this is the view of tregchö, the reason thögal criticizes tregchö is that with tregchö one remains in a state of impure vision. With tregchö and other kinds of Dzogchen practice this view, "all phenomena are nothing other than the wisdom of buddhahood", remains a conceptual view.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 17th, 2014 at 1:31 AM

Title: Re: Difference between consciousness and the mind

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Appropriate means that while in the bardo a being [gandharva] has the karmic causes and conditions to take certain kinds of birth, so they cluster at these birth places "like flies on rotten meat" as one Dzogchen tantra puts it.

dzogchungpa said:

Well, do these gandharvas have material bodies? I guess I don't really understand how they go to the fertilized ovum, in the case of human birth, say, and what they actually do to "appropriate" it. Don't Buddhists hold that life begins at conception?

Malcolm wrote:

They have mental bodies, mind made bodies. In the case of womb birth, when the sperm, egg and bardo being come together, there is conception. This all clearly explained in Abhidharma.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 17th, 2014 at 3:00 AM

Title: Re: Difference between consciousness and the mind

Content:

Sherlock said:

What about the old story of how plants as tall as humans have devas in them?

Malcolm wrote:

Well, this is like a human moving into a house. You would not say that house had a mind.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 17th, 2014 at 7:33 AM

Title: Re: Difference between consciousness and the mind

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

From Keown's "Buddhism and Bioethics": The sources are describing, using the concepts available to them, the origin of new human life. This was understood conceptually as the point from which all subsequent development proceeds, and before which no material basis for individual life exists. Translating these requirement into modern terms we would have every reason to locate the descent of the intermediate being at fertilisation. Before this time there is no genetic individual, and after it one has come into being. All subsequent developments in the history of the individual in the present life, including implantation, can be traced back to this point but not beyond it. It is difficult to wish for a clearer point of origin, and fertilisation seems by far the most likely candidate for the point at which new life begins.

Malcolm wrote:

This is when a new body is appropriated.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 17th, 2014 at 8:17 AM

Title: Re: Discussion of Political Topics is Wrong Speech

Content:

tobes said:

i.e. an argument of the kind: that all speech is ignorance.

Malcolm wrote:

But that is clearly not the case.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 17th, 2014 at 8:40 AM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

Sherab said:

Therefore, it still make sense to talk about ...dependent existence

Malcolm wrote:

Not to me.

Sherab said:

This was what I said:

Therefore, it still make sense to talk about dependent origination, or dependent existence ... up to a point.

I noticed you left out "dependent origination" and "up to a point". Why?

Malcolm wrote:

I have no problem with dependent origination, this is the Buddha's teaching. I have a problem with dependent existence. If something exists, it does not need to depend on anything.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 17th, 2014 at 8:48 AM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

If something exists, it does not need to depend on anything.

jeeprs said:

For instance? What exists that does not depend on anything?

Malcolm wrote:

That's the point, one cannot find such a thing, therefore, as Nāgārjuna points out, Whoever has a view of inherent existence, dependent existence, existence or non-existence has not comprehended the intent of the Buddha", which is of course production from conditions, relatively speaking.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 17th, 2014 at 8:58 AM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

I have no problem with dependent origination, this is the Buddha's teaching. I have a problem with dependent existence. If something exists, it does not need to depend on anything.

Sherab said:

So existence to you is restricted to independent existence. Therefore any other form of existence cannot carry the meaning of existence.

I am more liberal in my definition of existence. This is because without that more liberal space, scientific investigations make no sense. However, I do think that the more liberal meaning of existence will come to a head at some point.

Malcolm wrote:

All forms of existence carry the meaning of independent existence, that is Nāgārjuna's whole point. That is why he asks the question "where is there bhāva not included in svabhāva or parabhāva?"

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 17th, 2014 at 9:08 AM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

Sherab said:

But production from conditions to me is another way of saying dependent existence where the dependent existence is not based off a permanent essence (bhava).

Nagarjuna's definition of dependent existence is production that is based off something permanent. This is a crucial difference in our take.

Malcolm wrote:

The difference is that your take is realist because it involves "existence" (bhāva, sat, asti, etc.).

Nagarjuna's take is based on the idea that something supports something else, not that something is permanent. The śravaka schools conceived of things that existed and were also impermanent. They too had an idea of dependent existence. That idea is precisely the idea that Nāgārjuna is criticizing both in the first chapter as well as the chapter 15 of the MMK. There is a vast difference between saying "productions from conditions", which is merely a convention, and "dependent existence" which requires inherency.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 17th, 2014 at 9:11 AM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Whoever has a view of inherent existence, dependent existence, existence or non-existence has not comprehended the intent of the Buddha", which is of course production from conditions, relatively speaking.

jeeprs said:

I really do understand that, but the title of the thread is 'unfabricated mind'. So the implication in that is 'mind' is not among those things which are fabricated, conditioned, and so forth. That is the meaning of the word Mind, capital-M, as in the One Mind, is it not? Isn't that why you frequently read about the importance of 'knowing Mind' in books from Tibetan sources?

Malcolm wrote:

No. There is no "one mind" in Tibetan Buddhism. "Unfabricated" simply means a mind that resides in its own nature (empty clarity) without being contaminated with conceptuality.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 17th, 2014 at 9:20 AM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

Sherab said:

What I was saying if you read my post carefully is that production from conditions or dependent existence is only possible if bhava (something permanent) is not involved. That is why it makes sense for the Buddha to talk about dependent origination. Nagarjuna's dependent existence is defined on something permanent.

Nagarjuna did not exclude dependent existence based on something impermanent.

It is because that dependent existence is based on something impermanent that talking about reification makes sense.

Malcolm wrote:

What I am saying is that Nāgārjuna explicitly refutes dependent existence. I don't know why it is so hard for you to accept this. If there is no bhāva, there is no existence. Therefore, there cannot be dependent existence since existence is rejected out of hand by Nāgārjuna.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 17th, 2014 at 8:43 PM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

Sherab said:

I prefer not to use the word 'mind' to refer to the base.

jeeprs said:

Can you suggest another word?

alpha said:

Three words actually: body, voice and mind.

Which is to say all phenomena pure and impure are inseparable in the nature of the basis. And in this way nothing is left out. But while in the knowledge of the basis there are no such distinctions.

Malcolm wrote:

So formless realm beings have a body, speech and mind?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 17th, 2014 at 9:21 PM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

So formless realm beings have a body, speech and mind?

alpha said:

Obviously not but I thought we are talking about the basis of the human condition ?

Malcolm wrote:

No, the continuum of the basis is talking about the basis of all sentient beings, not just human beings.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 17th, 2014 at 9:21 PM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

Sherab said:

I am saying every one of us has a base. All the bases are identical to one another.

Although each base has a knowing aspect, I prefer not to use the word 'mind' to refer to the base.

Malcolm wrote:

As I pointed, all of this language concerning "the basis" comes from a passage in the Guhyasamaja uttaratantra. The continuum of the basis, since this is the reference, refers to the nature of the mind, which when recognized leads to buddhahood and when not, leads to samsara.

People get so hung up on the use of the word mind, consciousness and so on. Well, just look at these words: shes pa (jñā), rnam shes (vijñāna), shes rab (prajñā) and ye shes (jñāna). What do they all have in common? "shes". "Shes" just means "to know". If you say the basis is ye shes, that wisdom is a knower.

In any case, the commentary of the sgra thal 'gyur clearly maintains that ye shes is encompassed by a shes pa, and that shes pa exists individually in all buddhas and sentient beings as a mere knower (shes tsam).

We can concluded from this then that the basis (which really is strictly a man ngag sde term) is just a name for the continuum of the nature of the mind.

The extent to which it is unconditioned is the extent to which no one made the mind "clear and empty", the mind has been clear and empty from the very start. Thus the resting in the unfabricated mind, the unconditioned mind, is resting in that nature of the mind (inseparable clarity and emptiness) which cannot be altered or modified in anyway at all no matter what appears in it/to it(hence the mirror metaphor). You can't make it better, you can't make it worse.

We say that the nature of the mind in this sense is unconditioned because no one made it, it does not have a beginning, it cannot be altered or changed. You cannot take the clarity of the mind and make it unclear. You cannot take the emptiness of the mind and

make the mind substantial.

The mind can have various experiences, suffering, happiness, affliction, purification, thus we can also say that the mind is conditioned. It is also momentary, its continuity is not substantial, it is a continuum of moments, thus it is conditioned.

Once again, we have a conditioned entity, dharmin, the mind, that has an unconditioned nature, dharmatā, the inseparability of clarity and emptiness.

The mind is not merely clear, for then it would be only conditioned. It is not merely empty, since then it would be non-existent. The unconditioned nature of the mind is the inseparability of clarity and emptiness. There is no teaching in Buddhism about the mind and the nature of the mind that goes beyond this.

When we understand the principles above, we understand the union of the two truths, we understand the continuum of the basis, Dzogchen, etc.

When it comes to Dzogchen teachings, it is crucial to understand that the differences between wisdom, shes pa and rnam shes, for example, are all based on the anatomy of the human body, and the modalities of our consciousness as embodied beings.

If we say that wisdom, for example, is beyond mind, does that mean that wisdom is inert, like a rock or a statue? No, it just means that wisdom transcends the operations of the restricted consciousness of ordinary beings, wisdom is a consciousness that has less restrictions. What is the basis for the freedom of wisdom? The pure clarity and emptiness of the mind, of course.

We do not have a refined vocabulary in English for discussing consciousness and its different modalities. But indeed, that is what Dzogchen as well Buddhist texts in general are talking about, i.e., consciousness and its various modalities, unawakened and awakened.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 17th, 2014 at 9:38 PM

Title: Re: Self-Immolation: an anti-Buddhist practice?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Cabazon wrote a good and thoughtful article on the subject:

[http://www.religiondispatches.org/archive/politics/7126/on\\_the\\_ethics\\_of\\_the\\_tibetan\\_self\\_immolations\\_/](http://www.religiondispatches.org/archive/politics/7126/on_the_ethics_of_the_tibetan_self_immolations_/)

Personally, when it first began happening I thought it fruitless and sad. Now, over the years, I have come to see that this form of protest is much superior to violent protest around the world. It is still sad, but I think that such acts being done out of love and caring for Dharma, and not just because Tibetans are being oppressed. Indeed, the



whole phenomena is grounded in the notions of offering one's body for the sake of the enlightenment of others. In the article Cabezon recalls several examples, not least among them, the Buddha's own sacrifice of his body at Namo Buddha during his last human lifetime as the bodhisattva. He quotes a one writer, Jigmey who was sentenced to five years for publishing the following:

The Beijing government claims that the act of self-cremation, or the burning of one's body, contradicts the Buddhist texts, but this is a confused position. According to Buddhism, giving up one's life for the welfare of others is an act of a bodhisattva. One can know this from the biography of the compassionate Buddha himself. Before he was enlightened, the future Buddha came across a tigress and her cubs. They were on the verge of starving to death. Unable to bear their suffering, he sacrificed his own body as food for the tigress. That act of protecting the life of the tigress and her two cubs by giving up his own life is the central theme of many contemporary religious writings; it is widely known. When one reaches the highest level of Mahāyāna practice—that of “the being of great scope”—one is able to give up everything one possesses for the welfare of sentient beings. For example, if it is necessary, one is able to spend many hundreds of millions of years in hell just for the sake of a single sentient being... For all of these reasons giving up one's own life for the sake of sentient beings or for the sake of one's own people does not contradict the Buddhist teachings. Not only does it not contradict them, it is actually a tenet of the Mahāyāna; it is a most excellent doctrine. Hence, no one who is informed about these matters would claim that it contradicts Buddhism—no one, that is, except confused government officials and their lackeys.

Of course some will debate the effectiveness of such actions from a cynical real politick perspective, but in my view, the actions of bodhisattvas grounded in Mahāyāna motivation will always outshine such cynicism.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 17th, 2014 at 9:43 PM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

alpha said:

But still , the basis is individual for each condition ,whether we speak of humans, hungry ghosts, formless or such...And each respective condition represents in its totality the basis of that particular condition.

Malcolm wrote:

The basis represents the potentiality of each sentient being. That potentiality can be parsed a number of ways — for example, in Dzogchen texts it says "At the time of the basis, the three kāyas are dharmakāya; at the time of the path, the three kāyas are the sambhogakāya, and the time of the result, the three kāyas are the nirmanakāya". The essential point here is that the the continuum of the basis is the nature of the mind free from extremes.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 17th, 2014 at 10:07 PM

Title: Re: Self-Immolation: an anti-Buddhist practice?

Content:

Simon E. said:

I disagree completely Malcolm. I think its an expression of a pathology which forms part of the complex web that is the legacy of the Subcontinent. I think fear of sex is part of that legacy, as more distantly are suicide bombings.

Burning yourself to death because of aversion to what is, is a greater act of aggression than becoming a Muslim martyr, because more subtle and more capable of provoking moral ambivalence.

Or so it seems to me.

Malcolm wrote:

Tibetans are hardly afraid of sex. In fact, they are rather more practical about it then we are.

I don't think that the self-immolations are happening, in general, because of aversion. They are happening because of the Mahāyāna ethics these young men and woman are trained under.

It is not like the suicide bombings, which are, where they occur, part of a calculated plan of terror. These are not terrorist acts in any sense.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 17th, 2014 at 10:37 PM

Title: Re: The Dalai Lama Says Gay Marriage Is OK

Content:

Knotty Veneer said:

There is a growing acceptance in the population at large of homosexual relationships and non-traditional families.

Indrajala said:

In many places there is growing intolerance of advocates for traditional families and conservative values.

Malcolm wrote:

That's because there is no such a thing as a "traditional family". This is a Western Christian suburban white myth.

Indrajala said:

As jeeprs noted, homophobic is basically equated to being bigoted nowadays. If you voice opposition to gay marriage, you're sometimes associated with racism and even slavery because you are denying "equal rights" to all persons, just as racist social arrangements and slavery does/did. Fortunately in most Asian countries such ideas have not gained much mainstream attention or consideration.

Malcolm wrote:

Asian countries are often quite racist.

Indrajala said:

If you legalize gay marriage because its advocates claim there is a human rights infringement occurring, then it sets a legal precedent for many other fringe groups to do the same whether you want to admit this immediately or not.

Malcolm wrote:

No, it doesn't. But on other hand, I see no problem with polyandry, polygamy and so on.

Indrajala said:

I do not equate homosexuality to pedophilia (I have nothing against homosexuality itself), but what is to stop pedophiles from claiming a human rights infringement based on the fact their lifestyle is presently criminal?

Malcolm wrote:

They can claim whatever they like, but in general, it is considered criminal to have sex with children and minors. I don't see this changing any time soon.

[/quote]

So, on that point, sticking with good old fashioned heterosexual values ain't so bad. They might be unfair to some people, but longstanding social values have the advantage of having been demonstratively effective, past and present.[/quote]

Right, good old fashioned western Christian heterosexual values.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 17th, 2014 at 11:11 PM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

Andrew108 said:

I would speculate that whilst you might know alot about the mind, you don't really know that much about life.

Malcolm wrote:

You do realize that you constantly resort to ad hominem remarks?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 17th, 2014 at 11:15 PM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

Andrew108 said:

So that reality that appears, when it's nature is known, is the accomplishment. Wisdom and reality in the end are not different.

Malcolm wrote:

Agreed, so why are neither of us Buddhas?

Because we may have an intellectual grasp of the subject, but we are not realized. So we both have some work to do, at least I do.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 18th, 2014 at 12:22 AM

Title: Re: The Dalai Lama Says Gay Marriage Is OK

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

That's because there is no such a thing as a "traditional family". This is a Western Christian suburban white myth.

Indrajala said:

Nonsense.

In my grandfather's generation most families were made up of a married man and wife plus their children. His father's generation was more or less the same.

Malcolm wrote:

Yup, white Christians in the west.

Indrajala said:

Well there's a generalization bordering on being bigoted.

Malcolm wrote:

Seen it in person, Japan, China etc.

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Tuesday, March 18th, 2014 at 12:23 AM  
Title: Re: The Dalai Lama Says Gay Marriage Is OK  
Content:

Indrajala said:

One other fact about gay marriage that is overlooked is that it will divide a lot of countries and reduce asabiya (i.e., social cohesion) at a time when the west is faltering and facing enormous problems.

Malcolm wrote:

Total nonsense. Anyway, you are a monk. What do you really care?

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Tuesday, March 18th, 2014 at 12:26 AM  
Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind  
Content:

Andrew108 said:

" Everything is unreal "

-- Chogyal Namkhai Norbu

You have 'everything' - reality. Then you have the nature of that everything - unreal.

This is the simple point that is being made.

Malcolm wrote:

No, that is not the point that is being made.

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Tuesday, March 18th, 2014 at 12:28 AM  
Title: Re: The Dalai Lama Says Gay Marriage Is OK  
Content:

Indrajala said:

Homosexual marriage is seen as undesirable by many people, yet they keep silent for fear of being condemned for their opinions.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, many religious people fear the idea out of superstition.

It is of course a stupid thing to fear.

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Tuesday, March 18th, 2014 at 12:30 AM

Title: Re: Self-Immolation: an anti-Buddhist practice?

Content:

Simon E. said:

Again I disagree.

Attempting to force a change of behaviour from a political entity or an individual by threatening to kill oneself in a particularly horrible way is I believe an act of terrorism, even when we agree with the aims of the actor.

Malcolm wrote:

I don't think they are making threats, Simon. It is not like these people write a letter and say "This is my list of demands", etc.

I don't think it is terrorism at all. I think it is the opposite, it is a response to terrorism.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 18th, 2014 at 12:36 AM

Title: Re: The Dalai Lama Says Gay Marriage Is OK

Content:

Indrajala said:

Homosexual marriage is seen as undesirable by many people, yet they keep silent for fear of being condemned for their opinions.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, many religious people fear the idea out of superstition.

It is of course a stupid thing to fear.

Indrajala said:

Japan and China are very secular societies nowadays, but don't have any inclination towards gay marriage.

There plenty of non-religious people in the west as well who are not keen on the idea.

Malcolm wrote:

They have nothing to lose but their bias.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 18th, 2014 at 12:37 AM

Title: Re: The Dalai Lama Says Gay Marriage Is OK

Content:

Knotty Veneer said:

Stop trying to tell other people how to live.

Malcolm wrote:

Religious professionals generally make it their job to do so. Becoming a religious professional has about the lowest entry requirements of any job there is. Even flipping burgers takes more skill.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 18th, 2014 at 12:43 AM

Title: Re: The Dalai Lama Says Gay Marriage Is OK

Content:

Indrajala said:

Historically having celibate monastic orders has worked well on varying levels, particularly with respect to inheritance and the transfer of land assets especially...

Malcolm wrote:

and pedophilia...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 18th, 2014 at 12:49 AM

Title: Re: The Dalai Lama Says Gay Marriage Is OK

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Religious professionals generally make it their job to do so. Becoming a religious professional has about the lowest entry requirements of any job there is. Even flipping burgers takes more skill.

Indrajala said:

If that's a personal attack against me, well, I'll send anyone my CV who wants to see it.

Malcolm wrote:

My point is that having a religious opinion takes no brains or particular set of skills, and it is religious professionals who typically have the most to say on such issues, who are actually often the least qualified to do so. My point is that by adopting such platforms, you are just painting yourself in with a lot of very stupid people.

I don't think Buddhist monks have any business being in the "who can marry who" business. There are no Buddhist wedding rituals, etc. There is no sustained support of heterosexual marriage in Buddhist texts, no condemnation of homosexuality (just orifices), and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 18th, 2014 at 12:50 AM

Title: Re: The Dalai Lama Says Gay Marriage Is OK

Content:

Malcolm wrote:  
and pedophilia...

Indrajala said:

The solution to that is simple: only admit adults of their own free will into monasteries.

Malcolm wrote:

But "celibate" priests who are pedophiles prey on children in their congregations, not on children in monasteries...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 18th, 2014 at 1:11 AM

Title: Re: The Dalai Lama Says Gay Marriage Is OK

Content:

Indrajala said:

It is different in the case of bodhisattva-oriented approaches which require one to actively engage in society for the welfare of it.

Seishin said:

And in what way will homosexual marriage degrade the welfare of society? Help me out here because I really can't see anything wrong with it.

Indrajala said:

One example is how it will draw lines between those who support and oppose it, thus degrading asabiya (social cohesion needed for unity and cooperation).

Malcolm wrote:

So if most everyone supports it, there is no degradation of social cohesion, correct?

You can make an argument against the propagation of Buddhism too. Buddhism will cause the degradation of social cohesion in say, "florida". Therefore, it should not be allowed there.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 18th, 2014 at 1:12 AM

Title: Re: The Dalai Lama Says Gay Marriage Is OK

Content:

Indrajala said:

In the coming decades as the west declines...

Malcolm wrote:



Probably not.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 18th, 2014 at 1:26 AM

Title: Re: The Dalai Lama Says Gay Marriage Is OK

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

You can make an argument against the propagation of Buddhism too. Buddhism will cause the degradation of social cohesion in say, "florida". Therefore, it should not be allowed there.

Indrajala said:

The introduction of a foreign religion on a small scale is hardly comparable to unprecedented legal reforms that most people will feel strongly about one way or another.

Malcolm wrote:

Plain and simple -- denying adult gay people to right to marry each other is violation of their civil rights because it causes all kinds of inequalities and because it unfairly advantages heterosexual couples.

Marriage is a social contract between two people to share property, inheritance, taxes, etc.

There are no sound secular reasons not to oppose marriage among, none at all. You have not come up with even one convincing argument.

There are no reasons at all to oppose gay marriage from a Buddhist perspective.

The only reasons to oppose it is because one subscribes to Judeo-Christian/Islamic values.

By even bring up opposition to the subject, you just make yourself look like an anachronistic idiot.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 18th, 2014 at 1:33 AM

Title: Re: The Dalai Lama Says Gay Marriage Is OK

Content:

Seishin said:

And most of those "non-western" societies are ruled by dictators - no coincidence.

Indrajala said:

I would rather live in a safe autocratic state than an unsafe democracy.

Malcolm wrote:

Your penchant for authoritarianism has been noted already.

That hardly makes you a conservative.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 18th, 2014 at 1:53 AM

Title: Re: The Dalai Lama Says Gay Marriage Is OK

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Your penchant for authoritarianism has been noted already.

That hardly makes you a conservative.

Indrajala said:

Maybe not in America.

I'm in Asia.

Malcolm wrote:

You are not Asian, you are a Canadian.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 18th, 2014 at 1:55 AM

Title: Re: The Dalai Lama Says Gay Marriage Is OK

Content:

Lhug-Pa said:

\\

As Indrajala said Iraq was a functioning country

Malcolm wrote:

If gassing Kurds and terrorism is your idea of "functioning".

Lhug-Pa said:

Libya was a functioning country

Malcolm wrote:

Sure...

Lhug-Pa said:

At least Putin apparently stopped the west from murdering the "evil dictator" Assad.

Malcolm wrote:

Oh yes, another very stable person, not a psychopath at all....

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 18th, 2014 at 1:59 AM

Title: Re: The Dalai Lama Says Gay Marriage Is OK

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

You are not Asian, you are a Canadian.

Indrajala said:

That's just what my passport says.

Malcolm wrote:

You are not Asian and you never will be: you are hairy, uncouth, and you smell bad.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 18th, 2014 at 2:02 AM

Title: Re: The Dalai Lama Says Gay Marriage Is OK

Content:

Seishin said:

And most of those "non-western" societies are ruled by dictators

Lhug-Pa said:

As if the western leaders are shining examples of justice and morality? Yea right.

Indrajala said:

That's actually a good point. Plenty of people lament a lack of gay marriage rights, yet still pay taxes to their government which routinely murders civilians in foreign countries.

Malcolm wrote:

We have too. Just because we don't condone the acts of this of that branche of our government does not mean that we are free not to pay taxes. It is a legal requirement than we must.

Indrajala said:

Meanwhile countries that mind their own business usually while also dismissing any idea of gay marriage are damned as dictatorships or simply dismissed as not worthy of consideration.

Malcolm wrote:

Oh, like Russia, for example?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 18th, 2014 at 2:03 AM

Title: Re: The Dalai Lama Says Gay Marriage Is OK

Content:

Indrajala said:

There are principles in time and the cosmos that must be considered, observed and followed lest you suffer for it.

Malcolm wrote:

Gay marriage hardly something that so contravenes the cosmic order as to cause a breach in the space/time continuum.

Gay marriage is hardly a "cosmic" issue. It is simply a civil rights issue.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 18th, 2014 at 2:06 AM

Title: Re: The Dalai Lama Says Gay Marriage Is OK

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

You are not Asian and you never will be: you are hairy, uncouth, and you smell bad.

Indrajala said:

I was unaware you've been sneaking into my bedroom at night and thus know the state of my body odour and body hair!

Malcolm wrote:

No, I look at your face book page. Anyway, my point is that while you may fantasize about being "Asian" (as if there is a generic "Asian"), you will never be accepted as anything other than Westerner with pretensions. Being a monk might make it a little easier for you. But for all that in Japan you will still be Gaijin.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 18th, 2014 at 2:14 AM

Title: Re: The Dalai Lama Says Gay Marriage Is OK

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Gay marriage is hardly a "cosmic" issue. It is simply a civil rights issue.

Indrajala said:

It is a deviation from all historical norms.

.

Malcolm wrote:

That just simply isn't true. You clearly have not studied this issue with any care.

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Two-Spirit>

Allan Tulchin, "Same-Sex Couples Creating Households in Old Regime France: The Uses of the Affrèment." Journal of Modern History: September 2007

The political ideologies, philosophies, and religions of ancient China regarded homosexual relationships as a normal facet of life, and in some cases, promoted homosexual relationships as exemplary. Ming Dynasty literature, such as Bian Er Chai (弁而釵/弁而钗), portray homosexual relationships between men as more enjoyable and more "harmonious" than heterosexual relationships.[10] As in Ancient Rome, homosexual relationships were prevalent in ancient China and were not regarded as morally deviant prior to the influence of foreign cultures. Writings from the Liu Song Dynasty claimed that homosexuality was as common as heterosexuality in the late 3rd century:

All the gentlemen and officials esteemed it. All men in the realm followed this fashion to the extent that husbands and wives were estranged. Resentful unmarried women became jealous.[1]

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Homosexuality\\_in\\_China#cite\\_ref-Cut\\_Sleeve\\_1992\\_p.\\_170\\_2-0](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Homosexuality_in_China#cite_ref-Cut_Sleeve_1992_p._170_2-0)

You really are just broadcasting Christian values.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 18th, 2014 at 2:22 AM

Title: Re: The Dalai Lama Says Gay Marriage Is OK

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

That just simply isn't true. You clearly have not studied this issue with any care.

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Two-Spirit>

Allan Tulchin, "Same-Sex Couples Creating Households in Old Regime France: The Uses of the Affrèment." Journal of Modern History: September 2007

You really are just broadcasting Christian values.

Indrajala said:

Not exactly gay marriage as it is understood now.

I am not broadcasting Christian values. Good luck finding sufficient numbers of Buddhists and Buddhist clergy in Asia who will actively support gay marriage in their countries.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, you are broadcasting Christian values.

Marriage is exactly about creating households, sharing property and raising children. Gay people do so just as effectively/or not as heterosexual people. Making gay marriage legal means recognizing that all people have the right to make households regardless of their gender orientation. There is nothing magical about dicks and pussies in combination that makes heterosexual people better parents than dicks and dicks or pussies and pussies. To suggest that parenting ability boils down to some magical social recipe about "MArriage is between one man and one women" is backwards redneck thinking.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 18th, 2014 at 2:25 AM

Title: Re: The Dalai Lama Says Gay Marriage Is OK

Content:

mañjughoṣamaṇi said:

Jeff,

You seem to be alternating between the notions of "history" and "nature" as your explanatory mechanisms for why gay marriage is supposed to be so dangerous. These two are not equivalent. History is rooted in any number of contingencies, and not all societies evolved an institution of marriage that is anything like that of the West in terms of a nuclear family. In many societies the role of biological father is negligible. In many societies divorce was acceptable and recognition of which could amount to as little as throwing a man's belongings out of the dwelling or a public statement to that effect. This brings us to the next point, which is that any notion of what is natural is quite contentious. Is the nuclear family the natural way of raising children? Is the traditional Mayan way of children being the primary caregivers of children natural? Is the Trobriander way of mother's brother being the most important educator of children instead of the biological father unnatural? Your readings have provided you with a focus on state level societies. Are states natural or historically contingent?

You really ought to brush up on the kinship literature from the past 40 years.

Malcolm wrote:

Just more proof that celibate clergy have nothing useful to say about how the rest of us live, in general.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 18th, 2014 at 2:33 AM

Title: Re: Self-Immolation: an anti-Buddhist practice?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

I don't think that the self-immolations are happening, in general, because of aversion. They are happening because of the Mahāyāna ethics these young men and woman are trained under.

It is not like the suicide bombings, which are, where they occur, part of a calculated plan of terror. These are not terrorist acts in any sense.

conebeckham said:

I agree they're not terrorist acts. But I question whether Mahayana ethics, or emotional frustration, are the cause.

How can we say what the motivation is?

As I mentioned earlier in this thread, I've spent a fair amount of time with younger Tibetans...I sense frustration, anger, and a host of emotions. I can't say these are the drivers for the monks who have self-immolated, but....I've spent time with young Tibetan monks as well, and I see the same emotions in them, when Tibetan political issues are raised.

Malcolm wrote:

But not all the immolations are by young Tibetans. Many were in their thirties, even forties. There are 24 who were under 18.

I am not saying the motivations of all are the same. But I am saying that we cannot condemn them as terrorists, nor should we understand their acts as violating Mahāyāna buddhist ethics since ample sources for "offering the body" can be found in those sources. Remember, Karma Chagme offered his thumb as a lamp. The act of self-immolation, as near as I can tell, is meant to dramatically shine a lamp on the plight of Tibetans in the TAR and outside it. I think it is working.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 18th, 2014 at 3:28 AM

Title: Re: The Dalai Lama Says Gay Marriage Is OK

Content:

Lhug-Pa said:

Malcolm,

While I'm interested in learning more about the apparent oppression of Kurdish Yezidis, I'm not so quick to buy everything about Saddam Hussein supposedly "gassing the Kurds". If he did gas them and/or in the way they say he did, then I'm certainly against it. It's just that we would have to look at it more before jumping to conclusions. It looks like "Assad gassing his own people" and "Yanukovich sniping his own people" turned out to be BS; and they never found Iraq's "weapons of mass destruction" so that makes most of the rest of the west's allegations very questionable.

Malcolm wrote:

That is because Hussein moved them to Syria, where Assad started using them against his own folks.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 18th, 2014 at 3:32 AM

Title: Re: The Dalai Lama Says Gay Marriage Is OK

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

...where Assad started using them against his own folks

Lhug-Pa said:

How so/in what way?

Malcolm wrote:

By gassing them...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 18th, 2014 at 5:19 AM

Title: Re: The Dalai Lama Says Gay Marriage Is OK

Content:

gad rgyangs said:

...anti-semitism, is a pretty reliable marker for incipient or full-blown mental illness, or at least untreatable mental retardation.

Lhug-Pa said:

Yes there are very many mentally ill anti-Semites in the west, seeing how the west likes to repeatedly bomb Semites e.g. Iraqis, Pakistanis, Afghanis, Palestinians, etc.

Malcolm wrote:

Pakistanis and Afghanis are not semitic peoples.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 18th, 2014 at 5:20 AM

Title: Re: Self-Immolation: an anti-Buddhist practice?

Content:

conebeckham said:

I don't dispute that it CAN be a "Buddhist act." I'm just not sure each individual immolation is a Buddhist Act. Would be hard to know that, in any case....

As for it "working," I myself am not so sure. For the sake of Tibetans, I hope so. Out here in California, though, two towns or cities were considering flying the PRC flag --and were shocked by the volume of "hate mail" they got by Pro-Tibetan/Anti-PRC people. If the "Powers that Be" in the Bay Area don't seem to be "in the loop," not sure.....



Malcolm wrote:

Well, they were probably smoking too much herb and forgot...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 18th, 2014 at 5:42 AM

Title: Re: The Dalai Lama Says Gay Marriage Is OK

Content:

Lhug-Pa said:

Doesn't change the fact that white-supremacist-influenced western governments & Zionist-influenced governments have had a penchant for bombing Semites and other melanated people. Plus we couldn't say that there isn't a significant Semitic or mixed-Semitic population within Pakistan and Afghanistan.

Malcolm wrote:

Zionists (Israelis) are Semites.

The US government is hardly "white supremacist". We have a black president, for lord's sake.

And no, the Afghanis and Pashtuns, etc., are not significantly mixed with people of Arabic heritage.

I am afraid you have some very racist ideas.

Anyway, this is off topic.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 18th, 2014 at 5:46 AM

Title: Re: Connection of Guru Rinpoche and Marpa the Translator

Content:

dzoki said:

Gampopa was also originally a nyingma practitioner

Berry said:

Gampopa was a doctor and then a Kadampa monk before meeting Milarepa.

<https://www.kagyu.org/kagyulineage/lineage/kag06.php>

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Malcolm wrote:

As a young man, Gampopa was a Nyingma practitioner; he became a monk because of the death of his wife.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 18th, 2014 at 9:20 AM

Title: Re: The Dalai Lama Says Gay Marriage Is OK

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Just more proof that celibate clergy have nothing useful to say about how the rest of us live, in general.

Indrajala said:

By this logic, the Buddha had nothing useful to say about how to live. He indeed told people in detail how to live their lives for the best.

Malcolm wrote:

I qualified it, with an "in general". And you are not the Buddha.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 18th, 2014 at 9:22 AM

Title: Re: The Dalai Lama Says Gay Marriage Is OK

Content:

gad rgyangs said:

homophobia, like anti-semitism, is a pretty reliable marker for incipient or full-blown mental illness, or at least untreatable mental retardation.

Indrajala said:

So, instead of addressing people's genuine concerns you just write them off as signs of mental illness?

Malcolm wrote:

Your "concerns" about gay marriage could be construed in a number of ways, because they are so outlandish and out of touch.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 18th, 2014 at 9:24 AM

Title: Re: The Dalai Lama Says Gay Marriage Is OK

Content:

Indrajala said:

However, marriage was still understood as between men and women with the goal of

producing children.

Malcolm wrote:

As pointed out, then infertile woman and sterile men should be barred from entering the social contract of marriage.

In reality, marriage is not purely about raising children. It is a social contract between two adults who wish to foster and protect each other.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 18th, 2014 at 9:25 AM

Title: Re: The Dalai Lama Says Gay Marriage Is OK

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Your "concerns" about gay marriage could be construed in a number of ways, because they are so outlandish and out of touch.

Indrajala said:

What I would say on the subject would be considered quite reasonable and common sense in Asian Buddhist communities.

Malcolm wrote:

Your concerns are not about Asian Buddhist communities, you declared they were about western societies. As such, they are outlandish and out of touch.

In short, there is no morally defensible reason that a state should bar gay people from being married. As long as states are in the business of licensing marriages, I am quite sure that western countries will continue to legalize marriage for gay men and women, as they should.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 18th, 2014 at 9:29 AM

Title: Re: The Dalai Lama Says Gay Marriage Is OK

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Your concerns are not about Asian Buddhist communities, you declared they were about western societies. As such, they are outlandish and out of touch.

Indrajala said:

So, what Asian Buddhist communities might think is not relevant to Buddhists in western society?

Malcolm wrote:

What they think has no bearing on western secular morays. This is not a religious question, it is a social and civil rights question. It is the same with abortion. Since arguments against abortion are all grounded on religious issues, and we have no right to legislate those types of religious beliefs, while I personally do not believe abortion is ethical, I understand that my belief is religious and is not a sound reason to deny others who have different beliefs than myself.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 18th, 2014 at 9:44 AM

Title: Re: The Dalai Lama Says Gay Marriage Is OK

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

It is the same with abortion. Since arguments against abortion are all grounded on religious issues, and we have no right to legislate those types of religious beliefs, while I personally do not believe abortion is ethical, I understand that my belief is religious and is not a sound reason to deny others who have different beliefs than myself.

Indrajala said:

Your view here is highly problematic. You could just as well argue against abortion in the same way you could argue against corporal punishment for children: it is intentionally harming a living human being.

Malcolm wrote:

My view is not problematical at all. Courts in the US have defined that human life begins at 19 weeks. I don't agree with them, but we live in a secular society, and there are many people who for their own reasons also adopt this view. Since my view is religious, and it cannot be shown that a fetus prior to 19 weeks is "human" under current law, my hands are tied, as are yours. The standard in a secular society is secular, not religious. I prefer to live in a secular society, even though it may disadvantage some of my personal religious views, in general it assures the freedom that I can practice my religion as I see fit.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 18th, 2014 at 10:17 AM

Title: Re: The Dalai Lama Says Gay Marriage Is OK

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

What they think has no bearing on western secular morays. This is not a religious question, it is a social and civil rights question.

Indrajala said:

Buddhists are still nevertheless a voice in the development of social policies, and most Buddhists are still Asian.

Malcolm wrote:

And that is completely irrelevant in the West.

Indrajala said:

A religious voice still has the right to be heard even in secular society, assuming of course that society is democratic.

Malcolm wrote:

A right to speak is not a right to be heard.

Buddhists in the West play virtually no role in the development of social policies.

To the extent that they do so, we are well represented by enlightened leaders like His Holiness.

Enjoy your bastions of reactionary conservatism, but they too will undergo transformation as the forces of market liberalization inevitably change their cultures from social authoritarianism and conformism to democracy, individualism and personal choice. It is funny, your ability to choose to become a monk is based on your being raised in a liberal free market society, but you instead choose anti-democratic, authoritarian elitism.

The funny thing about US conservatism is that the very thing that they proclaim to love the most (free markets) is the very thing that is bringing on the social changes they most detest (gay marriage, etc.).

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 18th, 2014 at 7:08 PM

Title: Re: The Dalai Lama Says Gay Marriage Is OK

Content:

Clarence said:

Yes, Knotty, I find Indrajala's comments rather hateful and ignorant. And, truth be told, I don't know whether I agree with providing him a platform for his hate-speech.

Indrajala said:

It is not hate speech nor is it hateful. I want what is best for western societies, and I feel the state sanctioning same sex marriages will lead to many unnecessary problems down the road.

If you disagree with me, fine, but no need to advocate censorship of opinions you find disagreeable.

Malcolm wrote:

You are advocating repression, that is why people find your speech hateful.

Like all bigots, you have no rational basis for your claims. You might as well be saying

that christians should not marry jews.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 18th, 2014 at 7:13 PM

Title: Re: The Dalai Lama Says Gay Marriage Is OK

Content:

Simon E. said:

I think your thinking are on this issue is poorly formed and curiously immature, as well as lacking empathy and compassion Indrajala.

But I think you have the right to express it.

Malcolm wrote:

Sure, has a total right to make himself look like an idiot. Maybe he can get a gig as fox news pet buddhist monk.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 18th, 2014 at 7:17 PM

Title: Re: The Dalai Lama Says Gay Marriage Is OK

Content:

Knotty Veneer said:

I think that many of those who oppose marriage equality live in a bubble where they do not know any gay families. I too know a lesbian couple with kids. Their family is no different in its joys and challenges to that of any straight couple I know.

Indrajala said:

I have friends who are gay or lesbian. One is happily (and legally) married.

Nevertheless, I still believe sanctioning homosexual marriages is ultimately unwise for a number of reasons which I've outlined at length already.

I have nothing against homosexuality. I just feel it unwise to provide marriage rights to same sex couples.

For the record, I will note, I don't believe in human rights or equal rights. I understand these are sacred cows to many people here, but I don't see them as such.

Human rights are often used by some countries to bully their opponents before committing the same sins they accuse others of. Just look at the USA. It cries out about human rights violations, yet American leadership has slain immeasurable civilians in recent decades, often on false intelligence.

I also don't believe in equal rights for the simple fact that, as in nature, there is hierarchy in human society and clearly not everyone is equal in terms of intellect, power and so on. I think trying to superimpose "equality" on any society is an artificial albeit hopeful

attempt at crafting an ultimately infeasible utopia. In actual practice there never are equal rights. Better to recognize this rather than pretend otherwise. Also, empowering the majority of a given population is unwise as it leads to dispersion of political authority, thereby leading to political deadlock. Polybius discusses this at length.

Malcolm wrote:

You clearly have no idea what equal rights are. As soon as you lose yours, you will want them back.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 18th, 2014 at 7:47 PM

Title: Re: The Dalai Lama Says Gay Marriage Is OK

Content:

Indrajala said:

Nevertheless, I still believe sanctioning homosexual marriages is ultimately unwise for a number of reasons which I've outlined at length already.

Seishin said:

I'm still vague as to why it's against the cosmos?

Indrajala said:

There are principles in time and the cosmos that must be considered, observed and followed lest you suffer for it. In the absence of historical norms for a given policy reform, you are basically deviating from all previous norms. Disregarding such a fact is critically unwise.

Malcolm wrote:

Didn't you know? "Marriage is between one man and one woman" was actually etched into the fabric of the universe. We erase this at our peril. Gay marriage is apparently going to cause the entire fabric of the universe to unwind, it makes peak oil look like a stroll in the park.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 18th, 2014 at 7:59 PM

Title: Re: The Dalai Lama Says Gay Marriage Is OK

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Like all bigots, you have no rational basis for your claims. You might as well be saying that christians should not marry jews.

Indrajala said:

If this were so, what rational basis is there for claiming same sex couples should be able to marry?

If we are all just basing our arguments on our feelings and opinions, then nobody can claim a rational basis.

Malcolm wrote:

I have explained this already -- so, I will explain it again.

Marriage is a govt. sanctioned institution. It confers certain rights onto people who marry (that's why you need a license to do it) to that unmarried people do not enjoy. Since gay people who are in long term committed relationships are denied those same rights as heterosexuals because they are denied the right of marriage, this amounts to civil rights discrimination.

Since you have famously declared you don't believe in "rights" (though why a Canadian monk imagines he will be invited into the elite to help rule the world is beyond anyone's imagination), I imagine that this point will, as it has in the past, fall on deaf ears.

Secondly, there is no evidence that heterosexual parents are any better at raising children than gay parents. So there is no reason to deny gay men and women the right to raise children (in fact same sex oriented people have been raising children for as long as there has been humans, apparently to no ill effect).

So in the end, your arguments against gay marriage are biased and irrational, which is why they make you a bigot in this respect. Certainly, you can find a sanctuary safe from gay marriage in Uganda or Kenya where they routinely slaughter people for their gender preference, but I don't think you really want to live in such countries where they will probably mistake you for being gay as well.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 18th, 2014 at 8:03 PM

Title: Re: The Dalai Lama Says Gay Marriage Is OK

Content:

Indrajala said:

It deviates from historical norms to the point of being extreme and unprecedented.

Malcolm wrote:

This is total nonsense. As has been pointed out there are no historical norms when it comes to "marriage" and "families" across the broad swath of humanity.

But gay marriage is a natural out growth of the type of democracy we have in the west, it is a civil rights issue, and it naturally flows from the civil rights movement (which of course you don't believe in, since you don't believe in rights).

In this case you are just pissing against the wind, and like all people who piss against the wind, you only soil your own clothes.



Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 18th, 2014 at 8:04 PM

Title: Re: The Dalai Lama Says Gay Marriage Is OK

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

On this score, you are being an idiot.

Indrajala said:

This is just an insult and hardly contributes to the discussion.

Malcolm wrote:

You may feel insulted, I think you have left your senses on this on. Where you normally are clear headed and rational, I think you are being an idiot on this issue. So be insulted. I not only am allowed to think you are being an idiot, I am even allowed to say so. When you stop being an idiot, I will stop thinking you are being one, and addressing you as such, i.e., when you have returned to your senses.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 18th, 2014 at 8:08 PM

Title: Re: The Dalai Lama Says Gay Marriage Is OK

Content:

Clarence said:

Actually, it is hateful. And the fact that you say you want what is best for western societies, while arguing against equal rights for gay couples, is truly offensive.

Malcolm wrote:

Actually, Jeff does not believe in rights for anyone, he stated so a few posts back. He does not even believe that he has "equal rights" or "human rights", even though of course his ability to spew the nonsense he has been spewing lately is possible because he has both.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 18th, 2014 at 8:17 PM

Title: Re: The Dalai Lama Says Gay Marriage Is OK

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Marriage is a govt. sanctioned institution. It confers certain rights onto people who marry (that's why you need a license to do it) to that unmarried people do not enjoy. Since gay people who are in long term committed relationships are denied those same rights as heterosexuals because they are denied the right of marriage, this amounts to civil rights discrimination.

Indrajala said:

Civil rights discrimination as a problem is entirely a subjective opinion. Your point here doesn't make your argument any more rational.

Malcolm wrote:

No, it is not "subjective opinion" — it is judicial opinion at this point in many advanced nations.

Indrajala said:

Secondly, there is no evidence that heterosexual parents are any better at raising children than gay parents.

It hasn't been widespread long enough to make that judgment call yet.

Malcolm wrote:

Sure it has. Gay people have been raising children together forever.

Indrajala said:

No. I've constantly pointed to the fact a legal precedent is set by virtue of sanctioning gay marriage. This can and will be used by fringe groups which many find presently detestable to further their own goals.

Malcolm wrote:

Your qualms are irrational: amounting to "If we allow miscegenation, bestiality must be next!" — you have basically placed gay people on a continuum with pedophiles, and that is really offensive.

Indrajala said:

As I keep noting, there are plenty of civil and well-developed industrial societies like Japan which have neither gay marriage nor overly liberal social policies, and arguably never will in the foreseeable future.

Malcolm wrote:

I think you will be surprised at how quickly this will change in industrialized nations around the world.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 18th, 2014 at 8:21 PM

Title: Re: The Dalai Lama Says Gay Marriage Is OK

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Actually, Jeff does not believe in rights for anyone, he stated so a few posts back. He does not even believe that he has "equal rights" or "human rights", even though of

course his ability to spew the nonsense he has been spewing lately is possible because he has both.

Indrajala said:

You are misrepresenting me again.

I said I don't believe in human rights and equal rights.

This is quite different from saying I "do not believe in rights for anyone".

Malcolm wrote:

The concept of "rights" was predicated on class rights. That proved ineffective, so now we have human and equal rights. There are no other kinds, except for rights granted by licensure, and those are more akin to privileges rather than rights. You remind me of a Virginia cavalier who famously stated "I love liberty, but I hate equality!".

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 18th, 2014 at 8:24 PM

Title: Re: The Dalai Lama Says Gay Marriage Is OK

Content:

Clarence said:

Add to that the fact that he is representing Buddhism

Malcolm wrote:

He isn't representing Buddhism, he is representing himself. It is important to keep that in mind. The opinions of one junior monk hardly mean anything.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 18th, 2014 at 8:25 PM

Title: Re: The Dalai Lama Says Gay Marriage Is OK

Content:

Indrajala said:

Dislike me all you want, but I'm actually quite orthodox.

Malcolm wrote:

Nonsense, Jeff. A political reactionary? Yes. Are your views "orthodox Buddhism" on this score? No.

Buddhism does not and never has concerned itself with marriage as an institution.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 18th, 2014 at 8:29 PM

Title: Re: The Dalai Lama Says Gay Marriage Is OK

Content:

Indrajala said:

Not at all. If I was born a century or two ago I could have been a globe trotting swashbuckler. Quite easily actually, especially before passport controls were implemented.

Malcolm wrote:

In reality you probably would have never left your county.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 18th, 2014 at 8:29 PM

Title: Re: The Dalai Lama Says Gay Marriage Is OK

Content:

Indrajala said:

In practice your cherished notions of human rights and so on simply don't amount to much.

Malcolm wrote:

Sure they do. But in your cynicism, you just don't want to see it.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 18th, 2014 at 9:06 PM

Title: Re: The Dalai Lama Says Gay Marriage Is OK

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Sure they do. But in your cynicism, you just don't want to see it.

Indrajala said:

Or perhaps you don't want to admit the failure of your cherished ideology.

Malcolm wrote:

I don't see that there are any failures in the principles of democracy and equal rights; I certainly will allow that the United States has not in every instance lived up to its own rhetoric. Nevertheless, people are more free now in history than they ever have been before, and this I attribute to liberal democracy and free market economics which go hand in hand.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 18th, 2014 at 9:08 PM

Title: Re: The Dalai Lama Says Gay Marriage Is OK

Content:

Indrajala said:

Like I said, I'm just being orthodox. I am one of the good guys on this side of the pond.

Malcolm wrote:

No you are not. There is no "orthodoxy" in Buddhism when it comes to marriage.

What you are doing is reinforcing patriarchal values, specifically, a very Christian version of them.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 19th, 2014 at 9:44 PM

Title: Re: The Dalai Lama Says Gay Marriage Is OK

Content:

Indrajala said:

I have pointed to the fact gay marriage sets a legal precedent that other groups will use for their own claims, which have to be addressed sooner or later.

Malcolm wrote:

And this absurd contention has been dismantled several times.

Indrajala said:

If denying gay marriage = human rights infringement,

Malcolm wrote:

Not human rights, civil rights.

Indrajala said:

...then denying some groups the right to child marriages can also be claimed as a human rights infringement. You can argue this doesn't apply because children can't give consent, but their parents can in fact do so on their behalf, and in any case the trends of increasingly liberalized societies in the west suggest eventually multiculturalism will have to accommodate such alien practices.

Malcolm wrote:

This is no more problematical than denying some groups the right to mutilate the genitals of their female children. Why do we deny such rights? Because the basic right to property is the right to one's body. In a liberalized society, parents do not have rights to their children's bodies. Parents have an obligation to protect the basic rights of their children, by they have no right to violate the right of a child to the integrity of their own

bodies except in cases of illnesses where a child may wish to refuse treatments and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 19th, 2014 at 9:48 PM

Title: Re: The Dalai Lama Says Gay Marriage Is OK

Content:

Knotty Veneer said:

Maybe some people should mind their own freakin' business.

Indrajala said:

By that logic we shouldn't halt all manner of private albeit questionable activities, like narcotics consumption for example, because it is none of our business what adults do in the privacy of their own homes.

Some argue that narcotics damage society, hence must be proscribed. Well, some argue gay marriage will damage society, too.

Malcolm wrote:

And some people argue that evolution destroys the moral fabric of society, still argue that equal rights for blacks damages society and so on. Some people will argue anything. This does not mean their arguments are valid or even deserve to be entertained.

In the case of narcotics, the medical evidence is very clear. In the case of gay marriage there is no evidence at all that it will "damage" society, just like the appallingly stupid claim that feminism has destroyed the American family has no evidence.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 19th, 2014 at 9:55 PM

Title: Re: The Dalai Lama Says Gay Marriage Is OK

Content:

Knotty Veneer said:

More straw men. In which liberalized societies can parents provide consent for minors to marry?

Indrajala said:

It will come. Canada or Britain might be the first countries to allow it for religious purposes.

Malcolm wrote:

In fact parental marriage consent for minors already exists in states like Kentucky and so on has for a very long time, hearkening back to the day when it was not unusual for girls to be married off at 15.

Child betrothal is an Indian custom, and there is nothing anyone can do to prevent two sets of parents from agreeing that their children will become married in any country apart from the children themselves when they come of age. But as India and so on liberalize, these kinds of things will become rarer and rarer. They will not spread to the West.

As for Sharia law, well, it can't ever spread to the US on any level, so this paranoia is just an Alex Jones/Prison Planet non-starter.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 19th, 2014 at 10:05 PM

Title: Re: The Dalai Lama Says Gay Marriage Is OK

Content:

Knotty Veneer said:

Nonsense. Free market economic policies that favor the superrich at the expense of everyone else have destroyed the middle class and the nuclear family.

Economic policies that rightwing dolts cheerlead for against their own best interests.

Malcolm wrote:

Free market policies created the middle class. Illegal financial speculation in exotic investment instruments have destroyed the middle class. The nuclear family is a socioeconomic myth invented in the fifties; in reality, the "nuclear" family destroyed itself, since two parents are not really capable of adequately raising children on their own.

The raising of children requires many people, the increased social alienation and misery that we see since the fifties is a result of the nuclear family and the decline of the extended family system.

Free markets do not mean unregulated markets. Free markets can and should operate within constraints. But they are the most efficient way of getting goods from place a to b. Planned economies are all nightmares.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 19th, 2014 at 10:23 PM

Title: Re: The Dalai Lama Says Gay Marriage Is OK

Content:

Knotty Veneer said:

So the undermining of unions, ofshoring of manufacturing and globalized competition for wages has had no effect on middleclass incomes or the necessity for both partners in a marriage to go out to work then?

Malcolm wrote:

These are all factors in a competitive liberalized global economy. The alternative is much worse.

The decline of the middle class in the US has resulted in a rise in the middle class in other places such as China, India and Mexico. Such are the tides of the global economy.

You can't plan the economy, you can't "save" the middle class; the most you can do is decide what kinds of activities you are going to restrict, for example, pharmaceuticals as opposed to heroin; legal mining as opposed to unregulated illegal mining (a big problem in India), etc.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 19th, 2014 at 10:29 PM

Title: Re: U.S Heruka Chakrasamvra Initiation

Content:

Matticus said:

I just picked up Lama Yeshe's book in which he discusses the 6 Yogas of Naropa. Before the book starts discussing the various practices the author strongly suggests the reader obtain a proper Heruka Chakrasamvra initiation. Does anyone know of any facilities or teachers that are able to do this in the U.S?

Thanks for your time and have a good evening!

Matt.

Malcolm wrote:

HH Sakya Trizen will give the root empowerment for all Chakrasamvara empowerments (The Luipa tradition) in Vancouver in May. He will give a major Vajrayogini empowerment from the tradition of Laskminkara on April 4th in the US, as well as several other Vajrayogini blessings (Indra, Maitripa, Naropa, Severed Headed) over those days, as well as a Kalacakra empowerment in NYC April 7-8.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 19th, 2014 at 10:31 PM

Title: Re: The Dalai Lama Says Gay Marriage Is OK

Content:

greentara said:

Some time ago I remember reading about twenty-six year old (female) lawyer who says, 'I choose to use the name Dean and masculine pronouns. In part this feels right because most people who look at me take me to be woman, so using these words helps



to disrupt that process a little and opens a space for me to be something more complicated than that, which I feel better fits who I really am.'

It seems that the idea of identity flux, of being able to be whoever you want, is an essential part of the times we are living in.

The key word here is 'who I really am?'

So really who am I?

Lets dive deep within and look at it from a Buddhist and spiritual perspective, limited identities fail to address the fact that our true identity is limitless.

Malcolm wrote:

We cannot expect them to subscribe to Buddhist ideals.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 19th, 2014 at 10:35 PM

Title: Re: The Dalai Lama Says Gay Marriage Is OK

Content:

jeeprs said:

Well, I'm afraid I do not concur. I admit, I might be quite mistaken, and I agree that others may hold completely different views to my own. But the issue is, as regards the recognition of 'gay marriage', that I am being compelled to agree. It means that the society of which I am part, no longer recognizes my right to dissent. It is not enough for me to live and let live anymore; I am required to live and applaud. And I'm not going to do that.

mañjughoṣamaṇi said:

Really? The Australian government rounds you all up and marches you down to the pride parade to cheer?

Malcolm wrote:

They do that in Canada too, that's why Jeff left. Rob Ford is the only bastion of conservative values left in Canada, I hope they elect him prime minister soon.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 19th, 2014 at 10:43 PM

Title: Re: who is the Greatest master you have ever seen?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Who can say one buddha is greater than another?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, March 20th, 2014 at 4:29 AM

Title: Good vibrations...

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

(Slightly adapted from the beach boys....)

I, I love the colorful clothes he wears  
And the way the butterlamps play upon his hair  
I hear the sound of a gentle word  
On the wind that lifts his incense through the air

Im pickin up good vibrations  
hes giving me excitations  
Im pickin up good vibrations  
(oom bop bop good vibrations)  
hes giving me excitations  
(oom bop bop excitations)  
Good good good good vibrations  
(oom bop bop)  
hes giving me excitations  
(oom bop bop excitations)  
Good good good good vibrations  
(oom bop bop)  
hes giving me excitations  
(oom bop bop excitations)

Close my eyes  
hes somehow closer now  
Softly smile, I know he must be kind  
When I look in his eyes  
he goes with me to a pure land world

Im pickin up good vibrations  
hes giving me excitations  
Im pickin up good vibrations  
(oom bop bop good vibrations)  
hes giving me excitations  
(oom bop bop excitations)  
Good good good good vibrations  
(oom bop bop)  
hes giving me excitations  
(oom bop bop excitations)  
Good good good good vibrations  
(oom bop bop)  
hes giving me excitations  
(oom bop bop excitations)

(ahhhhhhh)  
(ah my my what elation)  
I don't know where but he sends me there

(ah my my what a sensation)  
(ah my my what elations)  
(ah my my what)

Gotta keep those lovin good vibrations  
A happenin with him  
Gotta keep those lovin good vibrations  
A happenin with him  
Gotta keep those lovin good vibrations  
A happenin

Ahhhhhhhhh  
Good good good good vibrations  
(oom bop bop)  
(Im pickin up good vibrations)  
hes giving me excitations  
(oom bop bop)  
(excitations)  
Good good good good vibrations  
(oom bop bop)  
hes na na...

Na na na na na  
Na na na  
Na na na na na  
Na na na  
Do do do do do  
Do do do  
Do do do do do  
Do do do

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Thursday, March 20th, 2014 at 4:35 AM  
Title: Re: Self-Immolation: an anti-Buddhist practice?  
Content:  
Unknown said:  
The Chinese psyche is still scarred and terrified of provinces declaring independence.

Malcolm wrote:  
Tibet is not now, never has been and never will be a "province" of China.

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Thursday, March 20th, 2014 at 4:41 AM  
Title: Re: who is the Greatest master you have ever seen?  
Content:

Malcolm wrote:

"I am sorry I couldn't give you any vibration..."

-- Chogyal Namkhai Norbu's remark to a student who thought other Lamas had more "vibration".

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, March 20th, 2014 at 4:44 AM

Title: Re: Is all knowing state same as Higher Self?

Content:

Son of Buddha said:

if you accept the Mahayana and the Vajrayana as being authentic schools of Buddhism then yes the True Self is really the Buddhas teaching.

Malcolm wrote:

Ah, no you don't. You can understand that so called "self" teachings or tathāgatagabha teachings in some Mahāyāna Buddhist sutras are provisional and still accept the validity of Mahāyāna and Vajrayāna

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, March 20th, 2014 at 4:46 AM

Title: Re: Three Turnings.

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

If one claims the "third turning" is definitive, defines it as a number of sutras like the Saṃdhinirmocana and so on, and then you cite a "first" turning sūtra, you have contradicted yourself.

jeeprs said:

Not necessarily.

Malcolm wrote:

Necessarily, since your criteria would then be based on the teachings career of the Buddha.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, March 20th, 2014 at 4:48 AM

Title: Re: Three Turnings.

Content:

jeeprs said:

So the phenomenal world exists, but everything in it is transient, unsatisfying and empty (sunya).

Malcolm wrote:  
This is not a Mahāyāna point of view.

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Thursday, March 20th, 2014 at 8:20 AM  
Title: Re: who is the Greatest master you have ever seen?  
Content:

tyler2 said:  
you dont understand that noone would believe buddha about enlightenment unless he was "shining" or had presence, anyone can talk and say "i am enlightened".  
the ascetics he originally practiced with who had rejected him originally , were going to reject him again but as he drew closer they were attracted by his aura.

Malcolm wrote:  
Of course, then there is the guy, Sunakṣatra, who claimed the only difference between himself and the Buddha was that the Buddha had a glow.

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Thursday, March 20th, 2014 at 8:23 AM  
Title: Re: Three Turnings.  
Content:

jeeprs said:  
So the phenomenal world exists, but everything in it is transient, unsatisfying and empty (sunya).

Malcolm wrote:  
This is not a Mahāyāna point of view.

kirtu said:  
It's not a Cittamātrīn or Madhyamākiān view. It could however be a Mahayana POV...  
Kirt

Malcolm wrote:  
It is not a Mahāyāna POV, which are only Yogācāra or Madhyamaka.

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Thursday, March 20th, 2014 at 8:25 AM  
Title: Re: Self-Immolation: an anti-Buddhist practice?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The Chinese psyche is still scarred and terrified of provinces declaring independence. Tibet is not now, never has been and never will be a "province" of China.

Vajraprajnakhadga said:

The maps say otherwise.

Malcolm wrote:

Screw the maps -- they don't represent the facts.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, March 20th, 2014 at 8:27 AM

Title: Re: who is the Greatest master you have ever seen?

Content:

xabir said:

That is another occasion, not the teaching on the deer park. He gave countless teachings over his career. The ones in the deer park were his previous companions, and they recognised some change in the Buddha so got attracted to him.

On other occasions, such as the incident I provided, the follower of Buddha has not met Buddha before, and he did not recognise Buddha when meeting with him, and certainly did not suspect that he was Buddha merely by "his shining presence".

Only towards the end of the discourse, in recognising the profundity of Buddha's wisdom, he said, surely this must be the Buddha himself, and repented for the transgression of addressing Buddha as a "friend". He attained the awakening of an anagami after that discourse.

Basically: you can only tell someone is enlightened from his wisdom, not his/her appearance.

Malcolm wrote:

Sunakṣatra was Buddha's first attendant, for many years.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, March 20th, 2014 at 8:34 AM

Title: Re: Can't Really Work with Mahayana by the Looks of it

Content:

Alfredo said:

Mahayana rhetoric to the effect that "Hinayana" practitioners are selfish, less advanced, etc. should be treated as just that--rhetoric. Real-life Theravadins are just as compassionate, etc. as real-life Mahayanists. (.

Malcolm wrote:

Compassion is not the complete measure of Mahāyāna, there is no objectless compassion in Theravada; and the Theravadin bodhisattva doctrine is set up so that aspirants to Buddhahood are denied stream entry.

There are in fact there in fact three kinds of bodhicitta according to Mahāyāna: that of an arhat, a pratyekabuddha and a buddha. Of the three, the last is the most superior.

Just saying....

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, March 20th, 2014 at 8:41 AM

Title: Re: Dzogchen in India post 8CE

Content:

tingdzin said:

I'm sorry, Pensum, but this article you link to is useless from the standpoint of scholarly history. For example: note 3 says that So khyam is Su gnam; this is not only a phonetic stretch, it is directly contradicted by other Tibetan sources (e.g. Deb ther Sngon po, the Blue Annals), that have nothing to do with Sri Singha, but which put So khyam in the NW part of China proper, i.e. the upper reaches of the Yellow River. Phonologically So khyam is correctly related to the Chinese Suo fang and the Khotanese Sva hvam, both historically referring to the same area. This So khyam is moreover quite close to the Chinese Wu tai shan, which would make it a logical choice for Sri Singha's studies. The Five-peaked Mountain in Khotan was attested earlier than the one in China, but I don't think the one in Nepal was; in fact, as I recall, putting a five-peaked mountain in Nepal was simply a result of the later massive transfer of all the lore associated with Khotan to Nepal, under the mistaken later belief that Nepal was the Li yul often talked about in the oldest Tibetan material. This massive transfer might itself have been inspired by the pathological refusal of the later Tibetan schools to accept anything from outside the Indian subcontinent as authentic Buddhism. When the (conveniently anonymous) author of this article says things like "it is known that" to preface remarks which are at least highly controversial and probably complete fabrication, without citing sources, he shows that his "scholarship" is not worthy of consideration, regardless of its acceptance by an official Buddhist organization. If you are very interested in these things, I can refer you to real scholarly materials.

Malcolm wrote:

The earliest source that mentions that Shri Simha comes from somewhere outside of India is the 12th century lo rgyus chen mo. This is totally unlikely, considering that the pan grub thugs bcud (Bima rgyud 'bum. vol. 1) locates Shri Simha in India, near Bodhgaya. Thus, we can regard any idea that Sṛi Simha is anything other than an Indian a late Tibetan fantasy.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, March 20th, 2014 at 9:00 AM

Title: Re: Dzogchen in India post 8CE

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The earliest source that mentions that Shri Siṃha comes from somewhere outside of India is the 12th century lo rgyus chen mo. This is totally unlikely, considering that the pan grub thugs bcud (Bima rgyud 'bum. vol. 1) locates Shri Simha in India, near Bodhgaya. Thus, we can regard any idea that Sṛi Siṃha is anything other than an Indian a late Tibetan fantasy.

dzogchungpa said:

That's interesting. Do you have any idea why they would want to fantasize in that way?

Malcolm wrote:

I cannot speak about their motivations, apart from the fact that perhaps it was important to Zhangton to make Dzogchen seem more exotic than Indian tantra.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, March 20th, 2014 at 9:44 AM

Title: Re: Self-Immolation: an anti-Buddhist practice?

Content:

Vajraprajnakhadga said:

I wonder why both of you removed that one sentence from its context.

Malcolm wrote:

Because the rest of your statement, while obvious, does to address the salient feature of the problem.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, March 20th, 2014 at 9:49 AM

Title: Re: Is all knowing state same as Higher Self?

Content:

Son of Buddha said:

Yea your just agreeing with me, you accept that the Buddha taught True Self ,you just think its provisional.

Malcolm wrote:

No, actually, I don't think the historical Buddha taught one word of Mahāyāna or Vajrayāna for that matter. They are teachings put in his mouth.

I evaluate the these texts based on their content, not who supposedly spoke them.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, March 20th, 2014 at 10:27 PM



Title: Re: Three Turnings.

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

It is not a Mahāyāna POV, which are only Yogacara or Madhyamaka.

kirtu said:

It's not a Mahayana philosophical view of reality but that has nothing to do with one's bodhicitta. One can have a realist view and still be a bodhisattva not on the bhumis and thus nonetheless following the Mahayana path.

Kirt

Malcolm wrote:

I was talking about view, not motivation.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, March 20th, 2014 at 10:29 PM

Title: Re: Three Turnings.

Content:

kirtu said:

However the Theravadin School is also not just a Sravakayana school.

Kirt

Malcolm wrote:

Of course it is.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, March 20th, 2014 at 10:38 PM

Title: Re: Self-Immolation: an anti-Buddhist practice?

Content:

Nemo said:

It was a protectorate historically and has a predominantly Han population now. Jokhang Temple is now a shopping mall. Previously it was too isolated to bother administering directly. Now it is too resource rich and strategically important to be independent. It will revert back around the same time the Iroquois take back America. Resources should be spent on conserving Nepal and Bhutan.

Malcolm wrote:

It was not a protectorate, historically. Tibetan sovereignty has been well established in the historical record.

The Han who live there now were settled there illegally.

It may be the case that China will never voluntarily relinquish control of Tibet, but that does not mean we need to forget history.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, March 20th, 2014 at 10:54 PM

Title: Re: Dzogchen in India post 8CE

Content:

Konch said:

Longchenpa's claim that Srisimha, one of the earliest figures of the Dzogchen lineage, was Ho-shang Mahayana

Malcolm wrote:

Longchenpa's view of the history of the arrival of Dzogchen to Tibet was a bit skewed by Nyang ral's term bio. In some places it seems he follows Nyang, in others, he seems to follow Zhangton. In general, he seems to more or less ignore the sem sde account which formed the basis for the "Great Image" bio of Vairocana (which is a composite bio based on several sources).

Konch said:

But this aside, going back a little to the main topic from the OP, so it seems noone is having a go at the point of what happened to dzogchen in India.

Malcolm wrote:

That is because there is nothing definitive we can say about it beyond the fact that two students of Śrī Siṃha brought it to Tibet.

Given the interchangeability between the terms mahāmudra and rdzogchen in the early texts, we can consider that Dzogchen was a pre-mother tantra approach to the completion stage.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, March 21st, 2014 at 3:02 AM

Title: Re: Is all knowing state same as Higher Self?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

No, actually, I don't think the historical Buddha taught one word of Mahāyāna or Vajrayāna for that matter. They are teachings put in his mouth.

Nighthawk said:

Nagarjuna was a historical Buddha who taught the Mahayana amongst many others.

Malcolm wrote:

I was referring to the Buddha cast in Mahāyāna sutras.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, March 21st, 2014 at 3:12 AM

Title: Re: Is all knowing state same as Higher Self?

Content:

Son of Buddha said:

he established that the 5 aggregates were Not Self and it was because they WERE not self that they lead to suffering

Malcolm wrote:

The Buddha established that the five aggregates were not a self, that none of the five aggregates individually are a self, and important, than there is no self apart from the five aggregates.

Thus, all phenomena, including nirvana, are not self.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, March 21st, 2014 at 3:35 AM

Title: Re: Is all knowing state same as Higher Self?

Content:

Son of Buddha said:

he established that the 5 aggregates were Not Self and it was because they WERE not self that they lead to suffering

Malcolm wrote:

The Buddha established that the five aggregates were not a self, that none of the five aggregates individually are a self, and important, than there is no self apart from the five aggregates.

Thus, all phenomena, including nirvana, are not self.

garudha said:

So all phenomena manifests through/as/is the five aggregates ?

Malcolm wrote:

There are two classes of phenomena; conditioned and unconditioned. All conditioned phenomena are included in the five aggregates; the unconditioned phenomena are space, the two cessations (one of them being nirvana) and emptiness.

All of these phenomena are not a self.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, March 21st, 2014 at 4:19 AM

Title: Re: Is all knowing state same as Higher Self?

Content:

Son of Buddha said:

he established that the 5 aggregates were Not Self and it was because they WERE not self that they lead to suffering

Malcolm wrote:

The Buddha established that the five aggregates were not a self, that none of the five aggregates individually are a self, and important, than there is no self apart from the five aggregates.

Thus, all phenomena, including nirvana, are not self.

Son of Buddha said:

SN 22.46 Impermanent (2) pg 885

At Savatthi. "Bhikkhus, form is impermanent.... Feeling is impermanent.... Perception is impermanent.... Volitional formations are impermanent.... Consciousness is impermanent. What is Impermanent is suffering. What is suffering is nonself. What is nonself should be seen as it really is with correct wisdom thus: This is not mine, this I am not, this is not my self."

so Nirvana is Suffering since it is not self correct?

talk about throwing out the baby with the bath water.

Malcolm wrote:

Where does the Buddha ever say in any śravaka text that nirvana is a self? No where, that's where.

While indeed the five aggregates are not self, this does not mean that space and the two cessations are a self.

Ārya-tathāgatācintyaguhyānirdeśa-nāma-mahāyāna-sūtra states:

Guhyapati, in the same way, the tathāgatas have summarized all Dharmas. The summaries of Dharmas are defined as four. If it is asked what four: in order to conquer the śramanas and brahmins who advocate permanence, the long-lived gods who think of permanence, it is said "All conditioned things are impermanent. In order to conquer humans and gods who think of happiness, it is said "all conditioned things are suffering". In order to conquer the tīrthikas who propose a permanent self, it is said that all phenomena (dharmas) are without self. In order to subdue that proud who engage in conceptuality, it is said that "nirvana is peace".

Guhyapati, impermanent denotes very impermanent. Suffering denotes freedom from aspiration. Selfless denotes the characteristic of emptiness. "Nirvana is peace" denotes actualizing the absence of characteristics.

Here, we can see what the four seals are really intended for. Further, the Ārya-ratnacūḍaparipṛcchā-nāma-mahāyāna-sūtra states:

"All conditioned things are impermanent", "all conditioned things are suffering", "all phenomena are not self" and "nirvana is peace" are equivalent statements.

Rājādeśa-nāma-mahāyāna-sūtra:

Nirvana is the supreme bliss of peace,  
without concepts grasping it as self and without affliction.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, March 21st, 2014 at 8:05 AM

Title: Re: Should Buddhists even care about "engaging" social polit

Content:

zsc said:

From the last discussion that I participated in

( <https://www.dharmawheel.net/viewtopic.php?f=42&t=11898> ), something came up that I think deserves its own thread, which is the question of how involved Buddhists should be in politics, or if they even should be involved at all. My position is that I don't think it would be detrimental to our practice if we were politically involved.

Malcolm wrote:

That depends very much on how. If your politics cultivates the three poisons, then it is probably better you are not involved in politics.

zsc said:

Related to this, I find it pretty troubling when other Buddhists take positions that basically say that our current social position is the result of our karma from a previous life only. It implies that our social advantages are "rightfully ours" because they have been "earned" in some way, so there is little need to address inequality, making social

politics irrelevant to practice. Remove the teaching of rebirth,

Malcolm wrote:

But we don't remove rebirth.

zsc said:

and this is basically the assumption that props up elitism, as well as the myth of the true meritocracy and the "self-made man".

Malcolm wrote:

But of course Buddhist social theory maintains that one's rebirth is based on one's virtuous deeds. So if you are born into an "elite" and behave non-virtuously, you will lose that position in your next life.

zsc said:

These are the mechanisms that have made imperialism, colonialism, racism, and other forms of bigotry possible, and have kept these forms of bigotry institutionalized and powerful.

Malcolm wrote:

None of this applies to Buddhist social theory.

zsc said:

Moreover, white mainstream Buddhism's major players have been taking similar philosophical positions...

Malcolm wrote:

We are just following the lead of our non-white teachers.

zsc said:

Where is the room for conventional reality to be addressed? "No independent identity" should not be taken to mean "irrelevant", especially from Mahayanists, who affirm the non-dualistic nature of reality.

Malcolm wrote:

If you wish to be taken seriously on this score you will have to abandon your rhetoric of white/non-white, etc.

zsc said:

Often, people who disagree with me bring up scriptures in which Shakyamuni asserts that political concerns are not appropriate for Buddhists to concern themselves with

Malcolm wrote:

The Buddha never said that we should not engage in political life.

zsc said:

The Hindu caste system had spiritual leaders at the top, implying a hierarchy of spiritual maturity...

Malcolm wrote:

When the Buddha was alive, as he very clearly says in many texts, the warrior class was more respected than the priestly class.

zsc said:

I think how we were taught to understand karma matters here. I was never taught that karma was only in relation to accumulation from a past life, but also the causes and conditions that each of us bring about through our thoughts and actions, and doesn't just affect you, because there is not a separate "you" to begin with. This is why the practice of accumulating merit make sense, for instance. You accumulate good merit from wholesome deeds, and others also accumulate merit through, among other ways, rejoicing in the wholesomeness of your meritorious act when you tell them that you did it. Pretty much the opposite of the Christian understanding that you are suppose to do good deeds in secret.

Malcolm wrote:

You are conflating action (karma) with the ripening of action (karma vipaka). Action, as defined by the Buddha, is intention and what proceeds from intention. "You" are indeed a separate continuum, but that continuum simply isn't a self.

zsc said:

So as it relates to social politics, there is nothing inherently disadvantageous about being born black, for example.

Malcolm wrote:

Nope, not intrinsically; nothing intrinsically disadvantageous about being a woman either. But in this present epoch they seem to be both.

zsc said:

But since it is what it is, where black people and other marginalized groups are suffering due to today's circumstances, this should be engaged.

Malcolm wrote:

Sure, Buddhists who feel that they should do something should do something.

zsc said:

So to bring it all back, this is why I don't think that political activism is inappropriate behavior for a Buddhist, since I do not think that it is unwholesome for a Buddhist to engage conventional reality as long as he or she remembers it is ultimately empty.

Malcolm wrote:

As I said at the beginning, what matters is "the how." But there are a number of people you can learn from such as Bernie Glassman, a prominent example of an engaged Buddhist political activist and there are many others

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, March 21st, 2014 at 8:15 AM

Title: Re: Can't Really Work with Mahayana by the Looks of it

Content:

rob h said:

Thanks again for the help.

I haven't actually read much about Bodhisattvas in Theravada, but this paper I just found speaks quite a bit about them and some of the misconceptions that have apparently been made. Have only read halfway through so far, but it's trying to say for at least part of it, that the Bodhisattva ideal is actually very alive in Theravada. Also something that I've seen before : that the whole "Hinayana" thing was actually meant to mean some sects of Mahayana, but things then got confused over time. Will hopefully read the rest later on.

<http://journals.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/index.php/jiabs/article/viewFile/8663/2570>

Malcolm wrote:

The fact is that in Theravada, if you choose bodhisattva aspiration, it is considered that you cannot become a stream entrant. Needless to say, in Mahāyāna, we do not agree.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, March 21st, 2014 at 8:16 AM

Title: Re: Is all knowing state same as Higher Self?

Content:

garudha said:

You realise that not only are these words you are reading right now samsara, but every part of your body, including every single idea, thought & slightest movement of your brain IS samsara itself ?

You think that only the watch-face of the swiss-watch of samsara. I'm telling you that every single piece of the swiss-watch, even the tick noise, IS samsara.

Wisdom & Compassion are the Jewels of the watch. These Jewels are pure and nothing else.

Lotus\_Bitch said:

Fundamentally, this is dualistic, from the Mahayana viewpoint.

garudha said:

Is Yab-Yum dualistic ?



Malcolm wrote:

No, it is symbol of the non duality method and wisdom.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, March 21st, 2014 at 11:40 PM

Title: Re: Self-Immolation: an anti-Buddhist practice?

Content:

Nemo said:

I would rather stop wasting resources on Tibet. The battle is lost. Flee the country and regroup elsewhere. We can still preserve something in Nepal and Bhutan.

Malcolm wrote:

You don't have to "waste" any resources on Tibet. However, Tibet is important. Tibetans are not going to flee; where would they go? Canada?

Nepal, not likely, they are in the pocket of the PRC. Bhutan is a park.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, March 21st, 2014 at 11:43 PM

Title: Re: Self-Immolation: an anti-Buddhist practice?

Content:

Nemo said:

Will you be returning your land to the indigenous people your ancestors displaced?

Malcolm wrote:

The land I live on was never owned or settled by any tribe, and lay in a sort of no man's land between the Hudson river valley and the Connecticut river valley. Settling in this part of Mass never displaced anyone.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, March 22nd, 2014 at 12:53 AM

Title: Re: Should Buddhists even care about "engaging" social polit

Content:

zsc said:

I would say that since practice leads to the goal for liberation, more people would be able to practice if they weren't overburdened with concerns like not having enough to eat, not having adequate shelter, not having access to clean water, not having access to

education, not having access to educational and employment opportunities, etc. These factors often depend on present social and political structures.

Malcolm wrote:

And all of these are covered in the teaching of the eight freedoms and ten endowments that define a precious human birth:

Freedom from being born in:

1. in the Hell realms
2. as a hungry ghost
3. as an animal
4. in a place where teachings are unavailable
5. as a long-life god (always content and therefore has no motivation for progress)
6. with wrong view (no understanding of karma, and no understanding of past and future lives)
7. where no Buddha has appeared
8. deaf, dumb, blind or mentally deficient

If one is born in any of the above realms, there is no chance of studying and practicing the teachings. What is therefore necessary are the Ten Endowments which consists of Five Inherent Endowments and Five Karma Provisions. The Five Inherent Endowments are one is born

1. as a human being
2. where there are teachings
3. possessing five senses
4. not having committed heavy negative karmas
5. having confidence in and devotion to the Triple Gem

The Five Karma Provisions are one is born

1. where a Buddha has appeared
2. where a Buddha has taught
3. where the Dharma teachings flourish
4. where there are followers who enter the pure path of Dharma
5. where there is support from the kindness of others, including the spiritual master.

zsc said:

Ultimately, I do not see social activism as an attempt to change the samsaric reality, but to remove as many samsaric obstructions as possible so that the Buddhist path can be open to more people. This is why I disagree with points like that reiterated by Johnny Dangerous, et al. I don't perceive any social resolution as an "end", but the means to liberation in a fuller sense.

Malcolm wrote:

The Buddhist path is open to anyone who takes refuge in the Three Jewels.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, March 22nd, 2014 at 6:12 AM

Title: Re: Should Buddhists even care about "engaging" social polit

Content:

rory said:

Malcolm: 8. deaf, dumb, blind or mentally deficient

This is a very good example of re-iterating something that is outdated. Times have changed a current priest in Honmon Butsuryu Shu is deaf and signs the Odaimoku, he enthusiastically wants to bring Buddhism to deaf people with sign language, as opposed to the times he was told in SGI to sit and be silent. Blind people can read braille and study just like anyone else. Even those who are developmentally disabled have levels of ability, it is up to them how much and how far they can learn. Let's not perpetrate these backward attitudes.

Malcolm wrote:

It is true that we have braille and sign language these assist people are deaf and blind learn Dharma. Developmental disabled people can learn Dharma too. But to pretend that these factors do not present significant problems is to just ignore how things are.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, March 22nd, 2014 at 9:50 AM

Title: Re: Zabmo Nangdon to be published by Shambhala

Content:

conebeckham said:

Just an FYI, saw that Elizabeth Callahan has translated this, along with Kongtrul's commentary, and it will be available as a restricted text in September from Shambhala. Website says you must have completed ngondro, have had pointing out instructions, and be practicing HYT yidam under the guidance of a qualified lama.

Malcolm wrote:

You know, I just don't support this restricted text nonsense.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, March 22nd, 2014 at 11:11 PM

Title: Re: Should Buddhists even care about "engaging" social polit

Content:

zsc said:

Your theory that we cannot remove the karmic obstructions of others goes against the understanding that is the basis of the practice of the transference of merit.

Malcolm wrote:

The dedication of merit is not a "transfer" of merit.

zsc said:

Malcolm - I have said over and over here and in the other thread that my concepts of "white/non-white" are referring to conventional reality

Malcolm wrote:

Your concepts vis a vie this issue appear to be based in a one-lifetime perception of social relations. From a Buddhist perspective, taking a one life-time view is not conventional reality at all.

zsc said:

Also, it is an accepted understanding that one can practice the dharma with less obstructions when your basic needs are taken care of. It's the practical reason behind why we don't let our monks starve.

Malcolm wrote:

It would be best if no one starved, and yet despite everything, there is still suffering in the world.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, March 22nd, 2014 at 11:12 PM

Title: Re: Should Buddhists even care about "engaging" social polit

Content:

rory said:

I know you don't read or comment on the Lotus Sutra either.....

Malcolm wrote:

There are commentaries on the Saddharmapundarika Sutra in Tibetan.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, March 22nd, 2014 at 11:14 PM

Title: Re: Should Buddhists even care about "engaging" social polit

Content:

kirtu said:

The Avatamsaka is highly influential in Tibetan Buddhism although it can be argued that this is restricted to the Gaṇḍavyūha Sutra. For example the Prayer of Samantabhadra is taken directly from the Gaṇḍavyūha Sutra.

I've seen references to the Lotus Sutra pop up but it's influence is weak within Tibetan Buddhism.

Kirt

Malcolm wrote:

Hi Kirt,

Quite the contrary, the Lotus Sutra's ekayāna teachings are very influential in Tibetan Buddhism, forming the basis for example of Sonam Tsemo's observation that there is in reality only one vehicle.

The way we treat sutras is to get at the essential message of a given sutra, and not get caught up in irrelevant details.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, March 23rd, 2014 at 11:12 PM

Title: Re: Zabmo Nangdon to be published by Shambhala

Content:

Osho said:

Pathetic.

Truly pathetic.

practitioner said:

I'd disagree, a translator using their time and expertise to give those who can't read Tibetan access to this text is hardly pathetic. Any restrictions are on the advice of their teacher, hardly a sound marketing strategy...

Malcolm wrote:

The point is these these books are freely available to people like me, translators, without any restrictions at all. So making the English translations restricted is just a kind of elitism.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, March 23rd, 2014 at 11:27 PM

Title: Re: Dzogchen in India post 8CE

Content:

tingdzin said:

Once again, Malcolm dismisses as fantasy what does not accord with his preconceptions. As you rightly noted, I supplied a motive for later Tibetan scholars to attribute Indian origins to Sri Singha, while he offers none for the converse situation. I offer a concrete historical location and context, while he just says "near Bodh Gaya". Pensum, I will get back to you with historical sources by PM, but I'm not going to waste time arguing with someone who is Always Right, even when he has no background in the relevant material.

Malcolm wrote:

Tingzin:

I have either read and translated all the earliest datable historical sources for Śrī Śiṃha (pan grub thugs bcud, lo rgyus chen mo, the Vajra bridge histories, etc,) so your assertion that I have "no background" in relevant materials is plain nonsense.

The lo rgyus chen mo is quite late, comparatively, and is quite out of step with what the earlier sources say (which locate Shri Simha in India). Later Tibetan scholars in general do not locate Shri Simha in India, they locate him in all sorts of places outside of India such as Khotan, China, and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, March 23rd, 2014 at 11:29 PM

Title: Re: Zabmo Nangdon to be published by Shambhala

Content:

conebeckham said:

As for "elitism," well.....if the only people with free access to the texts are Tibetan readers, isn't that a form of elitism, as well?

Malcolm wrote:

That is the point. If you do not read Tibetan well, you are discriminated against in a form that those of who do read Tibetan well are not.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 24th, 2014 at 12:47 AM

Title: Re: Zabmo Nangdon to be published by Shambhala

Content:

conebeckham said:

It's not Shambhala who determines restrictions, but the translators or their teachers. In this case, it was the wish of Khenpo Tsultrim Gyamtso that certain requirements be met.

I think in all cases, it's not the publisher laying down the rules. Take a look at the Yeshe Lama, and the Guhyagarbha...etc.

Malcolm wrote:

The entire (reliable) translation of Longchenpa's commentary on Guhyagarbha is available for free on the internet. It is ludicrous therefore for anyone to restrict commentaries on it.

Everything in Yeshe Lama can be found in various books which anyone can buy. This ludicrous fetish for restriction really ought to be abandoned.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 24th, 2014 at 1:19 AM

Title: Re: Should Buddhists even care about "engaging" social polit

Content:

zsc said:

This is basically the basis for the motivation to engage the mechanisms of suffering in many different ways, including suffering brought on due to sociopolitical systems. This is just making a meditation practice of what I have been expressing this whole time.

Malcolm wrote:

Tonglen is simply a practice for developing the courage to be a bodhisattva, nothing more.

zsc said:

Edited to add As I continue to read about it, the less I see how this practice refutes my point about karma, which affirms the teachings of interdependence (from dependent co-origination) and nonduality, and therefore does not agree that karma is something that we "own" in any kind of independent way.

Malcolm wrote:

It is impossible to take on the Karma of another, just as it is impossible to take on the sufferings of others. The practice of Tonglen exists to strengthen one's resolve to assist others. For example, when we imagine we are taking the sufferings of all sentient beings, this does not cause us to experience all the sufferings of all sentient beings in fact. When we imagine we are taking on the sufferings of starving children, our bodies do not become emaciated and so on. When we imagine that we are sending all of our happiness and positive roots of virtue to sentient beings, such as starving children, they are not immediately rained upon with food and drink. Since the Buddha was not able to remove the sufferings of all sentient beings, how much less able to do so are we? Nevertheless, like the Buddha, we aspire to do so, because in that aspiration lies the seed to accomplishing the ultimate result, Buddhahood.

zsc said:

Honestly, it seems at this point it seems like there can be no pleasing you.

Malcolm wrote:

It would please me if you were able to elaborate a theory of social justice based on truly grasping Buddhist principles.

zsc said:

No matter what language I use, no usage adheres well enough to the teachings of the

superior Malcolmyana vehicle, so the actual issues I am trying to discuss cannot be discussed coherently, because even terms like "conventional reality" don't actually mean "conventional reality". This is not meant to be a personal attack, but just an admission that I cannot get around your rhetorical tricks.

Malcolm wrote:

I am not using rhetorical tricks. I am merely pointing out that the view you present is based on a one-lifetime model. I would also like to point out again that you are misusing the notion of interdependence. You are mistaking *karana-hetu* (the fact that all things are causes of all other things apart from themselves) with *pratītyasamutpāda* (dependent origination, which fundamentally describes how sentient beings are caught in *samsara* and how they can interrupt that process) and the principles of *karmavipaka* (which describe the effects of morally determined actions).

When one confuses these three principles— cause and condition, dependent origination and *karmavipaka* — then one will be very confused about rebirth, karma, status in the world, etc.

When it comes to conventional reality, there is a statement by Shantideva, "the ultimate of the lower system is the conventional of the higher". Conventional truths are not written in stone. They change, they change depending on what one's understanding is. For example, the conventional truth of a ruler is that he is the most powerful person, but from the conventional truth viewpoint of a persona following Madhyamaka teaching, rulers are the greatest fools of all with the least power.

From the worldly point of view of the equal rights amendment and so on, we need to enable parity and opportunity for all US citizens, and beyond. I not only accept this, but I support it -- which is why you will have noted on other threads I consider gay marriage to be a civil rights issue and I think that people who don't agree with me have a fundamental lack of understanding of what civil rights means (which is why I think poc who do not support gay marriage have a huge blind spot). I am a deep ecologist, and feel that we have a fundamental obligation to respect all life. While my Buddhist practice informs these perspectives, I do not confuse them with my Buddhist practice. I know quite well that people who are suffering oppression in this life (for example Tibetans in Tibet) are experiencing the ripening of their own karma. Do I support measures to lessen it where possible? Of course. In other words, while it is true that I regard things like having a hot poker shoved in my eye as a result of karma, I also support the idea that the poker ought to be removed as soon as possible, and the inserting of pokers in eyes should be prevented at all costs. But when it does happen, I am not blind to the fact that all sensations in *samsara*, be they pleasant or painful, are fundamentally a result of karma.

A Buddhist social consciousness must be able to accommodate both perspective simultaneously: on the one hand observing that things like attack dogs and water canons being used on non-violent protestors is fundamentally wrong, and understanding also that the people who are being attacked are also experiencing the ripening of their own karma, while the attackers are creating negative karma for



themselves too, which will ripen as suffering later. The Buddhist approach to social justice issues therefore should be equanimous concern and effective engagement, rather than passionate involvement and karmically questionable actions.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 24th, 2014 at 1:22 AM

Title: Re: Zabmo Nangdon to be published by Shambhala

Content:

conebeckham said:

I'm not disagreeing, Malcolm--but, for instance, His Holiness Sakya Trizin is said to be the source of restrictions for the Lam Dre volume. It is the lamas who are the source of the restrictions. I'm just pointing this out for all readers.

Malcolm wrote:

Lamdre is an unrestricted download, and all the most essential Lamdre instructions (slob bshad) have been freely published with HHST's blessings as part of the Library of Tibetan Classics.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 24th, 2014 at 2:31 AM

Title: Re: Zabmo Nangdon to be published by Shambhala

Content:

conebeckham said:

Right. I'm referring to Shambhala's edition of the Treasury of Esoteric Instructions.

<http://www.shambhala.com/books/buddhism/treasury-of-esoteric-instructions.html>

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, this was published before the LTC's text was published, and the slob bshad is considered more profound. The LTC's book also has a complete commentary on the Vajra verses, written by Sachen.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 24th, 2014 at 2:47 AM

Title: Re: Dzogchen in India post 8CE

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

I have either read and translated all the earliest datable historical sources for Sṛi Siṃha (pan grub thugs bcud, lo rgyus chen mo, the Vajra bridge histories, etc,) so your

assertion that I have "no background" in relevant materials is plain nonsense.

alpha said:

Are these texts publicly available or will you publish them sometime in the future?  
I would be particularly interested in anything related to Vajra Bridge.

Malcolm wrote:

I hope to publish yet another version of the five early bodhicitta texts at some point since I regard them as being the origin of the Dzogchen tradition. I am less certain of the actual provenance of the 13 later bodhicitta texts, and it is pretty clear (to me at any rate) that the kun byed rgyal po, the mdo bcu and the rmad du byung ba tantras are Tibetan compilations.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 24th, 2014 at 5:52 AM

Title: Re: Dzogchen in India post 8CE

Content:

alpha said:

Among the 5 sems sde original texts we find the khyung chen lding ba.

Isn't this text attributed to Sri Simha ?

If I am not mistaken CNNr gave teachings on it last year sometime before christmas...

Malcolm wrote:

Hi Alpha:

You are confusing the sems sde text with a tregchö text in the Vima Nyinthig (which indeed ChNN taught last year).

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 24th, 2014 at 12:42 PM

Title: Re: Should Buddhists even care about "engaging" social polit

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

I say wealth distribution must be part of the aims of a compassionate society and Buddhists should support that.

Malcolm wrote:

The problem with wealth redistribution is that it is not feasible. There is no way to ensure fair and equitable distribution because central planning and democracy cannot coexist:

It is the price of democracy that the possibilities of conscious control are restricted to the fields where true agreement exists and that in some fields things must be left to chance. But in a society which for its functioning depends on central planning this

control cannot be made dependent on a majority's being able to agree; it will often be necessary that the will of a small minority be imposed upon the people, because this minority will be the largest group able to agree among themselves on the question at issue. Democratic government has worked successfully where, and so long as, the functions of government were, by a widely accepted creed, restricted to fields where agreement among a majority could be achieved by free discussion; and it is the great merit of the liberal creed that it reduced the range of subjects on which agreement was necessary to one on which it was likely to exist in a society of free men. It is now often said that democracy will not tolerate "capitalism." If "capitalism" means here a competitive system based on free disposal over private property, it is far more important to realize that only within this system is democracy possible. When it becomes dominated by a collectivist creed, democracy will inevitably destroy itself.

Hayek, F. A. (2010-10-22). The Road to Serfdom: Text and Documents--The Definitive Edition (The Collected Works of F. A. Hayek, Volume 2) (pp. 109-110). University of Chicago Press - A. Kindle Edition.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 25th, 2014 at 12:00 AM

Title: Re: Zabmo Nangdon to be published by Shambhala

Content:

conebeckham said:

Shifting gears a little bit for me...

About the price. Look, it costs a lot of money to publish any book. Shambhala is not making huge profits. Snow Lion certainly wasn't. The translators are not getting rich, of that you can be assured. The readership of such specialized books is very small. I've not looked at the prices for all the books in the restricted section, but I can tell you that I've seen prices in the \$40-60's. This is frankly not outrageous, in my opinion. Textbooks cost far more. Even this "\$108" dollars that was quoted, well.....that's still far cheaper than a college hardback textbook.

And if a given book is truly precious, a source of refuge or inspiration, a benefit to one's practice, what, really, can be said about the price of such a thing?

About the "Gatekeeper" function....as I understand it, Shambhala is merely "enforcing" or complying with the regulations for purchase bestowed upon the text by a given translator, or a given Lama. Some people here are quick to blame Shambhala for some sort of "scheme" of control, when in fact I don't believe they are instituting the scheme--though certainly they are supporting and participating in it. This point apparently needs to be made clear, based upon some previous posts.

Malcolm wrote:

My point is that such restrictions are totally arbitrary and are not based on genuine and sound reasoning.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 25th, 2014 at 12:31 AM

Title: Re: Zabmo Nangdon to be published by Shambhala

Content:

conebeckham said:

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Malcolm wrote:

My point is that such restrictions are totally arbitrary and are not based on genuine and sound reasoning.

conebeckham said:

Well, if it's true that the restrictions are placed upon the texts by the "supervising Lamas"-for example, Khenpo Tsultrim Gyamtso, His Holiness Sakya Trizin--your argument is addressed to them, and not to Shambhala. Correct?

To be clear, I'm not saying the restrictions are NOT arbitrary or well-Reasoned. Frankly, I don't know. In fact, to know, one would have to have some sort of telepathic ability, or at the very least to have had personal discussions with the parties.

Malcolm wrote:

The point is that if you decide to translate something, and then have it published by Snow Lion etc., then the idea of restricting it becomes absurd. If on the other hand, you privately publish a book and control the dissemination of the text, that is a different story.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 25th, 2014 at 4:49 AM

Title: Re: Should Buddhists even care about "engaging" social polit

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

The fact is society is just going to have to grow up and make democratic planning of the economy work.

Malcolm wrote:

"Democracy" and "planned economy" are mutually exclusive terms.

tellyontellyon said:

Market forces are not going to save the planet

Malcolm wrote:

I never said they could. Markets require regulation. That what governments are for.

tellyontellyon said:

we need a new economic and political system.

Malcolm wrote:

No, we simply need to decide that some types of resources are better preserved than consumed and pass laws to ensure that.

Personally, I find Hayek far more appealing than Trotsky, and much more reasonable and sensible. He fully exposes the failures of both right and left wing socialist collectivism.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 25th, 2014 at 10:36 AM

Title: Re: Dzogchen in India post 8CE

Content:

tingdzin said:

"Relevant materials" is not limited to religious scripture.

Malcolm wrote:

Since there are no records of Shri Simha outside of the religious records that exist, then relevant materials are only religious records.

All of the other things you mentioned about the identity of Li, etc., they have very little to do with the person known as Shri Simha.

For example, there is no archaeological record of a Shri Simha, and what we know of the fellow is restricted to colophons in texts of uncertain date.

When confronted with two separate Dzogchen lineage accounts which sites Shri Simha

in India, and a third, later tradition, that sites him in an uncertain "rgya nag", well, chances are the two earlier traditions (pan grub thugs bcud and the rod rje zam pa lineage accounts) are the more correct.

The best we can do is try and understand why Zhangton Tashi Dorje wanted to shift the location of Shri Simha from India to regions outside of India, because it is a certainty that he is the first author to do so.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, March 25th, 2014 at 10:52 PM

Title: Re: Should Buddhists even care about "engaging" social polit

Content:

zsc said:

I think rory's point is valid in explaining the different perspectives here where we are finding our disagreement. Even though I go to a Theravadin sangha because of convenience and I like the people there, my personal orientation is Pureland practice and thought, in which is not a controversial claim to say that this lifetime will be my last lifetime conditioned within samsara. Even with a lot Theravadin lay people who just would like a better rebirth though, meritorious actions are done in the hopes of that being their last lifetime in the human realm, or at the very least their last lifetime as a non-monastic.

Correct me if I'm wrong Tibetan Buddhists, but from a Tibetan Buddhist perspective this may seem sort of myopic to you because eons and eons of progression is taken as a given, while other East Asian traditions like Pureland-based traditions almost imply that our human birth and access to the dharma is "proof" that those eons of meritorious work are "behind" us, so it's realistic to believe we can go "up" from here in just one more lifetime.

Malcolm wrote:

It rather depends on which Tibetan Buddhist perspective you are discussion, sutra or tantra.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 26th, 2014 at 12:17 AM

Title: Re: Should Buddhists even care about "engaging" social polit

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

In genera the sutrayāna approach is that it takes a minimum of three incalculable eons to achieve the required accumulations of merit and wisdom to become a Samyak sambuddha. After spending two incalculable eons to reach the eighth bhumi, it take another eon to reach buddhahood.

Thus, the idea that having a human birth means you have all the accumulations behind you is plain wrong when you actually study the Mahāyāna path. Why? When you reach

the eighth bhumi, you gain power over birth.

Further, each Bhumi allows one to manifest a number of emanations in different buddhafiels: thus, when one attains the first bhumi, one can manifest 100 emanations in one hundred buddhafiels and so on. When one attains the second bhumi, one can manifest 1000 emanations, etc. At each bhumi, one manifests emanations in successive powers of ten.

We who cannot manifest even two bodies in this lifetimes should not think that we are anywhere near the end of our path. In fact, we are merely on the first path, the path of accumulation, trying to develop authentic bodhicitta. We have indeed attained a precious human birth, but this can be lost easily and who knows when we will have this opportunity again. Buddha himself describes the rarity of the precious human birth through the analogy of a blind tortoise in the ocean who rises to the surface every one hundred years and manages to rise through a golden circle that is randomly floating around on the surface of that ocean.

The pure land path is not a quick path, per se. There are many grades of birth described in the pure land sutras, and some people who are born there are born in lotuses that never open, so they never see the face of Amitabha. Of course, in Shinran's pure land school this is all understood rather differently than in the Chinese and Tibetan pure land traditions. So the point is that even we consider that it is possible to take birth in the pure land, this is not necessarily a swift path. In the Tibetan tradition taking birth in the pure land tends to be considered a resting point, where one can make progress on the bodhisattva path, eventually returning to various impure realms to aid sentient beings. further, while Amitabha's vow clearly says "Whoever hears my name will be reborn in Sukhavati", it does not state "Immediately upon having died in this lifetime". In fact, one of vows clearly states that in order to take rebirth in Sukhavati, one must accumulate the necessary merits after one has heard his name and so on. So, in reality, birth in the Pure Land is not the shortcut it sometimes appears to be in East Asian Buddhism. And of course vow 35 can be understood to be completely sexist:

When I obtain the Buddhahood, women of boundless and inconceivable Buddha-worlds of the ten quarters after having heard my name thereby awakened in faith and joyful aspiration, and turning their minds towards Bodhi, therefore dislike their own female lives, when they be born again, in their next life should not be incarnated into a masculine body, then may I not attain the enlightenment.

In other words, this vow states that women who have faith in Amitabha, who are unhappy being women because they wish for awakening, will be born as men in their next life.

There is also the recognition of the advantages of position in vow 43:

If after I have obtained the Buddhahood, that any Bodhisattva of other countries having heard my name, will be incarnated as a member of a noble family (if he so desires) when he dies, otherwise may I not attain enlightenment.

There is in fact no guarantee of immediate birth in Sukhavati in the 48 vows of Amitabha.

When it comes to Vajrayāna, Vajrayāna proposes that one can achieve buddhahood in this lifetime in this body. If one does not succeed in this life, one can easily attain buddhahood in the bardo, or failing that, one will definitely achieve awakening with 7 lifetimes if one practices or 16 even if one does not practice.

zsc said:

I think rory's point is valid in explaining the different perspectives here where we are finding our disagreement. Even though I go to a Theravadin sangha because of convenience and I like the people there, my personal orientation is Pureland practice and thought, in which is not a controversial claim to say that this lifetime will be my last lifetime conditioned within samsara. Even with a lot Theravadin lay people who just would like a better rebirth though, meritorious actions are done in the hopes of that being their last lifetime in the human realm, or at the very least their last lifetime as a non-monastic.

Correct me if I'm wrong Tibetan Buddhists, but from a Tibetan Buddhist perspective this may seem sort of myopic to you because eons and eons of progression is taken as a given, while other East Asian traditions like Pureland-based traditions almost imply that our human birth and access to the dharma is "proof" that those eons of meritorious work are "behind" us, so it's realistic to believe we can go "up" from here in just one more lifetime.

Johnny Dangerous said:

Ok, i'm correcting you. It's not remotely controversial in Tibetan Buddhism to talk about enlightenment in one lifetime, nor rebirth in the Pure Land.

A Fuzzy explanation to the best of my knowledge:

Hinayana sutra = many many lifetimes, "incomplete" version, Mahayana sutra = fewer lifetimes but still lots, Tantra = different levels, but there is the definite possibility of this being the last lifetime. IIRC the lowest level is listed as 60 lifetimes until or something like that, all mapped out lol!

I don't know a lot about Pureland, but the biggest difference from what I do know is the "other power" thing.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 26th, 2014 at 12:25 AM

Title: Re: Śākyamuni's non-Indo-European heritage.

Content:

Indrajala said:



Incidentally for some great information on what constitutes proto-Indo-European religion, at least under reconstruction, see the following:

<http://piereligion.org/pierintro.html>

Malcolm wrote:

The answers to all of these questions and many more are to be found in Witzel's new book:

The Origins of the World's Mythologies. Oxford University Press

He has questioned the linguistic nature of the so-called Indus Script (Farmer, Sproat, Witzel 2004).[70] Earlier, he had suggested that a substrate related to, but not identical with the Austroasiatic Munda languages, which he therefore calls para-Munda, might have been the language of (part of) the Indus population.[71][72]

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Michael\\_Witzel#Research](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Michael_Witzel#Research)

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 26th, 2014 at 12:48 AM

Title: Re: What happened historically to the Vinaya in Japan?

Content:

Seishin said:

I agree. The question is though, should the priests be on equal standing as the monks?

Indrajala said:

In Tibetan traditions sometimes the non-celibate clergy are held as superior to the sangha. Just look at the Sakya lineage, like HH Sakya Trizin.

Malcolm wrote:

This is an understandable misconception.

In the Sakya tradition there are, in general, no non-celibate clergy apart from the Khon family members. In fact, HHST wanted to become a monk, but because of his birth heritage that option was not available to him. In general, most Khon family males who were not in line to be the throne holder of Sakya usually become monks. In this case, the younger son of His Holiness, Jñānavajra, was a monk for many years. He chose to give up his vows for his own reasons, but it was not without some controversy.

While the Khon family has been the locus for secular power from the beginning of the founding of the tradition, it has only been the spiritual locus of the tradition occasionally, with the real spiritual authority of Sakya resting primarily with the Ngor Khenpos, and the heads of the Tshar school. Occasionally (and apart from the five founding masters) remarkable figures like Lama Dampa, Kunga Tashi, Amyezhabs, Kunga Lodo, Dagchen Trinly Rinchen and so on have emerged from the Khon family to become major lineage figures, but in general, the Khon family has primarily had a political role in the Sakya school as the secular rulers of the Sakya principality.

It is really only in the Nyingma school that there is a notion that mantrikas are on a par with bhikṣus. But even in Nyingma, mantrikas are still seated behind the bhikṣus.

I should also add that even where a lay person is a guru giving initiations, it is permissible, for the purpose of decorum, for monks to prostrate to the shrine rather than the person of the guru if he or she is a lay person. This is fully laid out in 50 verses of Guru Devotion attributed to Ashvaghosha.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 26th, 2014 at 1:38 AM

Title: Re: Should Buddhists even care about "engaging" social polit

Content:

zsc said:

My main concern here is that the position of one "owning" karma in a completely isolated way, due to solely one's past life, has traditionally had the social consequences of justifying congenital birth defects, generational poverty, inequality and discrimination against social "deviancy" etc. When I say "justifying", I don't mean just "explaining", I mean that this understanding of karma has been used as a way to encourage complacency and passivity about suffering and mistreatment brought on due to social and political systems.

Malcolm wrote:

The fact that you and you alone are the owner of your karma (The Buddha likens karma to a debt that one has to pay off) merely explains these things, it does not condone nor justify them. What you say about encouraging complacency is not true of how karma is understood within Buddhism, it is true of how karma is understood in Hinduism.

zsc said:

I have already expounded on a "philosophy of karma that teaches something else", so I just would be repeating myself at this point. Also, I would say that a huge portion of the Buddhist world practicing merit-transference/dedication is more significant than what you imply when say "someone".

Malcolm wrote:

If it were possible for dedication of merit to change the karma of sentient beings, you would have thought that the Buddhas in their compassion would have dedicated all their merit to us, so that we would no longer suffer.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 26th, 2014 at 2:23 AM

Title: Re: Shamatha and Dhyana in different traditions

Content:

KonchokZoepa said:

you could ask your lama if you have one to explain this picture. it depicts the path to shamatha and he can actually explain you through this picture that what the actual accomplishment of shamatha is.

Malcolm wrote:

Lama Migmar's The Tibetan Book of Awakening has a detailed description of the process of Shamatha depicted here. We based it directly on the Bhavanakrama.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 26th, 2014 at 3:09 AM

Title: Re: Your gender and sexuality

Content:

untxi said:

That's essentially what we're doing by asserting that Buddhism is hetero-normative..

Malcolm wrote:

Buddhist tantra is hetero-normative, as is Buddhism in general. Further, gender in Buddhism is considered congenital, i.e., it is something you are born with, it is an indriya, and cannot be surgically altered, whether you cut off your penis or sew one on.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 26th, 2014 at 3:44 AM

Title: Re: Your gender and sexuality

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Of course one's gender is irrelevant [to a point]. If one's gender were a barring factor, women could not practice Heruka deities, and men could not practice Dakinis.

But on a strictly conventional level, one will always be the gender one has been born with (including being intersexed), regardless.

Apart from monastic ordination (barred to intersexed persons), gender is not so important, even if Buddhism is hetero-normative, and will remain so, since the majority of the population is heterosexual. This is just how things are.

untxi said:

This is certainly the textual tradition and the practice tradition in the traditional context. At the same time I have heard extremely high lamas say one's gender and sexual orientation is irrelevant, even in the context of Buddhist tantra. So there's a fork in the road. We have choices to make about how we frame gender and sexual orientation in our individual lives and in our practice communities. It's an important discussion.

-Untxi

That's essentially what we're doing by asserting that Buddhism is hetero-normative..

Malcolm wrote:

Buddhist tantra is hetero-normative, as is Buddhism in general. Further, gender in Buddhism is considered congenital, i.e., it is something you are born with, it is an indriya, and cannot be surgically altered, whether you cut off your penis or sew one on.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 26th, 2014 at 5:40 AM

Title: Re: Your gender and sexuality

Content:

untxi said:

So if gender and sexual orientation aren't that important, then what is the point of Buddhists asserting heteronormativity re social expectations and constraints-- e.g. straight good and normal, otherwise bad and abnormal?

Malcolm wrote:

"Normative" does not imply a value judgement, viz good/bad, etc. It just means, "what is most common". Basically ten percent of the population has a same sex gender orientation, this runs across social class, different societies, etc. This is just how things are. You can make the observation that there is normative ten percent variation in gender preference if you like.

You can parse these things in all kinds of ways. The fact remains that most people's gender orientation is towards the opposite gender. We are embodied mammals and while of course gender orientation has karmic causes, when we are embodied, we tend to express our gender orientations based on the facts of our embodiment.

With the rise of western relationship patterns that do not follow western traditional norms, a variety of civil right issues have arisen that otherwise would not have.

Even so, From a Buddhist pov, everyone is born with a single gender, which cannot be changed despite their sexuality, no matter how fabulous they are.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 26th, 2014 at 5:45 AM

Title: Re: Shamatha and Dhyana in different traditions

Content:

KonchokZoepa said:

Malcolm can you confirm that to be the right book, the one that norwegian linked to amazon. i looked inside the book and it seems that its not about shamatha.

Malcolm wrote:

That is the book, and the chapter on meditation is on śamatha and the chapter on wisdom is on vipaśyāna. Lama Migmar is the Buddhist chaplain of Harvard, and his credentials are impeccable. He is one of the best scholars in Sakya. He has also been my teacher and friend for 25 years.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 26th, 2014 at 6:02 AM

Title: Re: Dzogchen in India post 8CE

Content:

Sherlock said:

Malcolm why doyou think Vajra Bridge can be dated pre 1000CE?

Is it because although Kunzang Dorje's commentary is full of references to prana and bindus the actual Vajra Bridge and the Four Das don't mention them?

Malcolm wrote:

It is because the early literature of so-called klong sde makes no reference in general to such topics which were really only introduced to Tibet during the new translation period. So with the Vajra Bridge histories, we begin to see the evolution of what would swiftly turn into "man ngag sde". Aslo, I see to reason to doubt the account presented in the Vajra bridge histories and the so called early sems sde histories since they agree on virtually every point about the career of Vairocana and the introduction of Dzogchen to Tibet. The first place we see any real departure from the historical accounts presented in these earlier accounts is with Zhanton's text, which completely reframes the career of Śrī Simha and places the arrival of Vimalamitra during the reign Trisong Desten, whereas the earlier histories place Vimala's arrival during the reign of Ralpacan.

I personally think that Zhangton's account was intended compete with the marvelous tales of Indian siddhas like Naropa and so on. There was no such need for such narrative largess in the pre "gsar ma" period. One key clue is the appropriation of the iconography of Virupa for Śrī Simha.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 26th, 2014 at 6:09 AM

Title: Re: Your gender and sexuality

Content:

untxi said:

We have to differ on this. Heteronormativity does have connotations beyond the mere descriptive element that you describe. In the work of many feminists and queer theorists it is used to describe the social expectations and norms that oppress non-heterosexuals. If heterosexuality is the norm, it is normal, all else is outside the norm and thus abnormal. One can extend this idea to other forms of oppression such as racism: white-normativity.

Malcolm wrote:

Well, these social expectations and so on are a result of more than a thousand years of western history; lately informed by religious doctrines about what is morally normative. We have largely dropped the notion that who you want to f^%k has any moral implications, unless it is children and animals.

As far as racism goes, the problem is not that white is normative, the problem is when privileged people impose norms on those who are not privileged, thus denying them opportunities. Racism means "You are X, this is the norm you are expected to conform to", It does not mean, "I am Y, this is the norm you should aspire too but can never attain because you are X." If you are X in a racist society, you are never supposed to aspire to Yness.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 26th, 2014 at 6:14 AM

Title: Re: Who are the best teachers of non-duality?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The best teacher of non-duality is the Buddha. The rest are pale imitations.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 26th, 2014 at 6:31 AM

Title: Re: Dzogchen in India post 8CE

Content:

Sherlock said:

What do you count as early "longde"? Dzeng Dharmabodhi is already in the Sarma period.

Malcolm wrote:

There are a few tantras and a collection of instructions on the nine dhātus (klong) which are pre-11th century. And of course, the vajra verses themselves.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 26th, 2014 at 6:42 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist neglect of academic findings.

Content:

tobes said:

Even on the level of governmental politics, we have to account for the very influential rise of religious influenced conservatism - think about American politics for a moment! We cannot say that American governmental politics is becoming increasingly secular. If anything, it seems to be becoming increasingly less secular.

Malcolm wrote:

That really depends on where you live. Where I live (Western Massachusetts), born again conservative Christian Republicans are about as common as Sasquatch, and their secular counterparts, also infrequently sighted in the wild.

In the Northeast and Northwest, as well as most of the left coast (and Canada) politics is increasingly more secular in general.

In the middle swath of the country there is a bit of a ambivalence i.e. Pennsylvania and the Midwest.

In the deep South up through the classic "West", there is a movement towards increasingly less secularism.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 26th, 2014 at 8:03 AM

Title: Re: Should Buddhists even care about "engaging" social polit

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Personally, I find Hayek far more appealing than Trotsky, and much more reasonable and sensible. He fully exposes the failures of both right and left wing socialist collectivism.

tobes said:

It pained me to discover this, but I think Hayek is right about the relationship between price and knowledge - and it follows that centrally planned economies have a genuinely huge epistemic problem of making decisions that are not as well informed as those 'on the ground' making and buying stuff.

However, to say that he 'fully exposes' the failures of right and left wing socialist collectivism is beyond generous. One would have to already be a paid up libertarian to read him in such a kind light. The more orthodox reading is that like most liberals, he either doesn't read Hegel or Marx, or simply doesn't understand their dialectical logic.

One can't fully expose something one doesn't grasp.

Malcolm wrote:

I am pretty sure Hayek had a very good grasp of both, since he was Austrian, and fled Europe in 1933.

His principle observation is that both right and left wing collectivism share a common belief, i.e., that economies should be centrally planned. This is the main thrust of his thinking. In general, he was not nearly as libertarian as librarians read him. He fully supported the idea that laws can and should be passed to limit markets and so on. Further, another of his main observations is that Democracies only functioned well when people confined themselves to broad issues upon which consensus could be reached through discussion, and tended to break down when they tried to adjudicate specific economic problems which required the creation of a centralized bureaucracies to implement (as all implementations of economic planning require). His third main point about planned economies is that they were a priori goalless, that they required special knowledge of which no one could possibly have.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 26th, 2014 at 8:14 AM

Title: Re: Should Buddhists even care about "engaging" social polit

Content:

rory said:

Malcolm:

I don't know the practice in TB but in Asian Buddhism it's extremely common to call on Kwan Yin/Kannon/Gwan-eum for help. This bodhisattva uses her abundant karma to help those overcome trials. I've called on Kannon-sama and been helped. This is common.

Malcolm wrote:

Such things merely create a positive dependent origination so that your positive karma can ripen. But quite frankly, it is well understood that unless your dedication of merit is objectless, help by such bodhisattvas in the present exhausts your merit. For example, one can practice Jambhala for wealth, but if you do not have the merit to be wealthy in this life, Jambhala practice merely creates causes for future wealth. And if you do not properly dedicate merit of such practice such that it is objectless, then it is exhaustible merit.

rory said:

Now as for Yogacara and Madhyamaka, these seem to be the only 2 philosophical schools accepted by TB. Whereas in East Asia there is the Avatamsaka School, Tiantai/Lotus Sutra, Pure Land and Ch'an/Zen which is based usually on Yogacara.

Malcolm wrote:



Hua Yen, Tian Tai, Pure Land and Chan are Chinese innovations. Indians did not develop schools of philosophy based on specific sutras. Tibetans follow Indians in this respect.

rory said:

Anyway "Hua-yen [Avatamsaka] sees all phenomena as expression of an originally pure and undifferentiated one mind.....Hua-yen thinkers developed new theories of dependent origination (pratitya samutpada, yuan-ch'i, such as "dharma realm origination" (fa-chieh yuan-ch'i, tathagata-garbha origination...or "nature origination" to clarify how the one mind manifests in the phenomenal world"

Malcolm wrote:

If this is the case, then Hua-Yen is just Hindu Advaita Vedanta in Buddhist drag.

rory said:

The point of posting that is to show new philosophical developments that originated from Chinese thinkers such as Fazang and Zhi-yi that spread through East Asia as Koreans and Japanese travelled to China and studied these ideas. This obviously didn't happen with Tibet, so it's out of the East Asian mainstream. And this applies to ideas about karma.

Malcolm wrote:

Actually, Sino Japanese Mahayana Buddhism developed along lines that were outside of the Indian Mahayana mainstream. Tibetans traveled to India and studied Indian Buddhism and developed their schools along the lines set by the great Indian Buddhist monasteries such as Nalanda and Vikramashila.

rory said:

This is why Malcolm in another thread denied that a Buddha could think evil thoughts while those familiar with Zhi-yi's thought know this is true. Ven. Indrajala kindly translated a pertinent piece.

Malcolm wrote:

The idea that a Buddha can have afflicted thoughts is patently absurd and should be rejected at face value without any further thought.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 26th, 2014 at 8:20 AM

Title: Re: Your gender and sexuality

Content:

untxi said:

Again, there are different nuances to normativity and it's connection to oppression. It's not just what the "norm" is, it is asserting that norm to diminish and minimize others.

In all forms of structural violence there is some form of "this is the norm, aspire to this

or fail". People endure any number of forms of body modification from skin lightening to eye-lid surgery to other body modifications to comply with socially imposed images of "normal". People also go through various contortions to hide and deny their identities for the same reason.

If we limit "normativity" to a limited notion of what is normal re common and conventional, then I agree with you.

Malcolm wrote:

As civil rights will and are being recognized for those people who are now considered outside the heterosexual norm, these philosophical concerns will become irrelevant. Since 10 percent of the population will always be gay, gay people are already a normative percentage of society.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 26th, 2014 at 8:22 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist neglect of academic findings.

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

In the deep South up through the classic "West", there is a movement towards increasingly less secularism.

daverupa said:

Oregon and Colorado seem to be moving in very secular ways. Utah accidentally legalized gay marriage. The West seems to be a wild card.

Malcolm wrote:

The "Northwest" is Oregon and Washington. Colorado is moving towards a more secular demographic because of people from California and other places moving there.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 26th, 2014 at 8:30 AM

Title: Re: Difference between consciousness and the mind

Content:

Gwenn Dana said:

Hello,

I'll try this one real short:

Awareness is that of pure being (unbound presence).

Ego is awareness expressing itself through consciousness (\*I\* am). All senses working, all actions working.

Mind is what constructs concepts (I am some-thing). All senses disturbed by constant

evaluation and categorization.

Regards  
Gwenn

Malcolm wrote:

These are all just different different names and aspects of consciousness. No need to complicate things.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 26th, 2014 at 8:38 AM

Title: Re: Your gender and sexuality

Content:

untxi said:

Malcolm...

Let's hope that's the case. A nice aspiration to have. That's the hope of any activist or ally-- that they might not be needed.

Right now, where I live, women and LBGTQIA people are brutalized on a regular basis. That's my fundamental reality.

-U

Malcolm wrote:

Well, the best thing one can do is continue to support civil rights for all people. The recognition of civil rights is not an overnight process, and it is a process. The way it has worked in the US is that first propertied white men secured their full civil rights, then men in general, then in a limited way, blacks; then women, then there was the civil rights movement, based on that the feminist movement, based on that the gay rights movement, now gay marriage.

In reality, the history of the expansion of civil rights is not bleak, it is in fact encouraging. But one lesson we can learn, is that when one group secures recognition for its civil rights, there is often another group that has been ignored or not seen in the back ground.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 26th, 2014 at 8:39 AM

Title: Re: Shamatha and Dhyana in different traditions

Content:

Clarence said:

Malcolm,

How long do you estimate it would take the average person to master the first Dhyana? I have seen you mention it on and off over the years (requiring the first Dhyana for Dzogchen practice) but I have never seen you use a time frame. In Pa Auk it takes several months to years of intensive retreat. I was wondering how you view the process. And if you have any practical tips and pointers I am sure they will be much appreciated.

Many thanks.

Malcolm wrote:

That depends. Almost impossible if you do not do retreat. Six months if you do a real retreat.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 26th, 2014 at 9:27 AM

Title: Re: Shamatha and Dhyana in different traditions

Content:

Sherlock said:

Using breath concentration?

So how do you explain Dudjom Lingpa and Longchenpa's much shorter time period? Does the control of prana or bindus in the methods they give help to make it arise faster? Or is the samadhi that arises as a result of what they teach not as deep as the full-blown dhyana by whatever criteria you go by?

Many Theravadins also don't require months of retreat to accomplish at least the first jhana in their systems. Retreat, sure, but not that long.

Malcolm wrote:

They are describing Dzogchen Śamatha which is more like repeated placement in the Bhavanakrama scheme. I am talking about your classic ninth stage śamatha where you can place your mind on any object for as long as you want without distraction and without effort.

But anyway, you try yourself, then you will see. One thing for śamatha is that you need to be very relaxed, not concerned with outside world. That takes some time all by itself. You need to be well rested, free of distractions, etc.

But again, you see for yourself. Every practitioner is different. I am using a general time frame based on my personal experience of doing a three year+ retreat. That is what I consider the minimum time to gain a really stable śamatha practice.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 26th, 2014 at 9:30 AM

Title: Re: Shamatha and Dhyana in different traditions

Content:

Sherlock said:

OK sure, I can only do 3 months of retreat at best though.

Malcolm wrote:

Well, you try your best.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 26th, 2014 at 9:43 AM

Title: Re: Should Buddhists even care about "engaging" social polit

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The idea that a Buddha can have afflicted thoughts is patently absurd and should be rejected at face value without any further thought.

M

Indrajala said:

The idea is that the dharmakāya "encompasses" every aspect of saṃsāra.

Malcolm wrote:

The idea that a Buddha can have afflicted thoughts is still patently absurd and should be rejected at face value without any further thought. The dharmakāya is a Buddha's omniscience so of course it can encompass every aspect of samsara.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 26th, 2014 at 9:24 PM

Title: Re: Buddhist neglect of academic findings.

Content:

tobes said:

Even on the level of governmental politics, we have to account for the very influential rise of religious influenced conservatism - think about American politics for a moment! We cannot say that American governmental politics is becoming increasingly secular. If anything, it seems to be becoming increasingly less secular.

Malcolm wrote:

That really depends on where you live. Where I live (Western Massachusetts), born

again conservative Christian Republicans are about as common as Sasquatch, and their secular counterparts, also infrequently sighted in the wild.

kirtu said:

Malcolm! Your state elected Sasquatch as Governor thus ensuring him national standing long after his semi-mythic salvation of the Salt Lake City Olympics had faded from memory. Just 1 1/2 years ago he was one of two conservative candidates for the Presidency from two supposedly diametrically opposed political parties (which are really just two wings of the same single National Conservative Party). Sasquatch's capitalist health care plan is now the law of the land even though he lost the election!

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Politics\\_of\\_Massachusetts#Party\\_registration](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Politics_of_Massachusetts#Party_registration)

So just over 11% of registered voters in Massachusetts \*could\* be a Sasquatch. Maybe it was just your former governor. And maybe all of these Sasquatch live on Cape Cod or outside of Boston.

Ironic that one of the most politically "liberal" states in the US propelled a Tea Party candidate nearly to the Oval Office.

Kirt

Malcolm wrote:

Kirt, I was very specific -- Mormons are not necessarily republican, though they tend to be conservative, and Romney is hardly a conservative Republican, which is one of the reasons he lost. He is fairly liberal by Republican standards, actually. I was talking about conservative born again evangelical Christians (who do not accept Mormons as being Christians (a big obstacle for Romney to overcome)).

And as I stated, specifically, in my neck of the woods, his kind are extremely rare. Most of the Republicans in MA live in and around Central MA and in Berkshire County. Eastern MA and Western MA (meaning Franklin, Hampshire and Hamden Counties) are about as liberal as you get anywhere in the country.

When Republicans get voted into office in MA (its happened twice in the past thirty years), it is generally because Democrats have botched something huge.

Romney is hardly a tea party candidate.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 26th, 2014 at 10:47 PM

Title: Re: Shamatha and Dhyana in different traditions

Content:

Sherlock said:

I Based on what Tom said, it seems like Gelugpas on the other hand recommend developing shamatha through kyerim....

Tom said:

Yes, for Tantric practitioners. Of course, the nine stages, six powers, and four attentions are taught widely in the sutra context by Gelug Lamas.

Malcolm wrote:

In Sakya Lamdre, there is a detailed instruction based on Saroruhavajra's creation stage of Hevajra that includes a detailed breakdown of how the nine stages map to one's practice of the sadhana.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, March 26th, 2014 at 11:18 PM

Title: Re: Shamatha and Dhyana in different traditions

Content:

Sherlock said:

Four hours sounds like a good goal to aim towards and seems achievable even in lay life. However is the goal a samadhi in which no thoughts except for the meditation object arise at all or is it that thoughts still arise but they are skilful thoughts and do not distract you?

Malcolm wrote:

The goal is one-pointedness on a single mental object.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, March 27th, 2014 at 1:12 AM

Title: Re: Shamatha and Dhyana in different traditions

Content:

Sherlock said:

So thoughts don't arise at all while you are concentrating on the object?

Malcolm wrote:

Just one thought, the object of meditation.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, March 27th, 2014 at 1:32 AM

Title: Re: Shamatha and Dhyana in different traditions

Content:

Sherlock said:

So thoughts don't arise at all while you are concentrating on the object?

Malcolm wrote:

Just one thought, the object of meditation.

Sherlock said:

so it actually sounds more like the Visuddhimagga first jhana then or the Paki Sutta 2nd jhana.

Vitarka and vicara seem to involve thought both in early Pali commentaries and in northern Abhidharma and Yogacara works.

Do the Bhavanakrama-based presentations use the Tibetan equivalents of these 2 terms or is it just Rongzom?

Malcolm wrote:

Vitarka and vicara are mental factors which direct attention and maintain attention. The first dhyana you can change the object because both vitarka and vicara are still present.

I am not sure whether the Bhavanakrama mentions, I forget.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, March 27th, 2014 at 3:16 AM

Title: Re: Difference between consciousness and the mind

Content:

Gwenn Dana said:

Awareness is that of pure being (unbound presence).

Ego is awareness expressing itself through consciousness (\*I\* am). All senses working, all actions working.

Mind is what constructs concepts (I am some-thing). All senses disturbed by constant evaluation and categorization.

Malcolm wrote:

These are all just different different names and aspects of consciousness. No need to complicate things.

PadmaVonSamba said:

Well, you could also say that they are all aspects of brain activity, but so what?

No, I think this breakdown is useful.

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Malcolm wrote:

There is no pure being, since there no being or non-being to find. So what is useful about the term "awareness"?

Why create two actors with "awareness expresses itself through consciousness?

In fact there is no necessity to differentiate awareness, consciousness and mind any more than it is necessary to differentiate limpidity, wetness and water.



Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, March 27th, 2014 at 3:17 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist neglect of academic findings.

Content:

kirtu said:

Do you have evidence that he significantly turned away Tea Party voters?

Malcolm wrote:

He lost.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, March 27th, 2014 at 3:31 AM

Title: Re: Shamatha and Dhyana in different traditions

Content:

Clarence said:

Thanks. Would you mind exploring a little more how it ties in with Dzogchen practice? Is it absolutely imperative to properly practice Dzogchen? Or, can one get by with (much) less concentration and is the need for concentration mostly related to the practice of the postures?

Malcolm wrote:

If you can't control your mind, you can't sit still for long periods; if you can't sit still for long periods, of what use are postures?

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, March 27th, 2014 at 4:09 AM

Title: Re: Difference between consciousness and the mind

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

There is no pure being, since there no being or non-being to find. So what is useful about the term "awareness"?

Why create two actors with "awareness expresses itself through consciousness?

In fact there is no necessity to differentiate awareness, consciousness and mind any more than it is necessary to differentiate limpidity, wetness and water.

PadmaVonSamba said:

There is if you are examining or talking about dependent arising.

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Malcolm wrote:  
Why do you think so?

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Thursday, March 27th, 2014 at 6:12 AM  
Title: Re: Buddhist neglect of academic findings.  
Content:  
kirtu said:  
Do you have evidence that he significantly turned away Tea Party voters?

Malcolm wrote:  
He lost.

kirtu said:  
Republicans are a minority nation-wide. Republican presidential victories are only possible if a large enough proportion of Democrats do not turn out or vote for the Democrat candidate and independents vote with a > 50% for the Republican candidate.

So the fact that Romney lost tells us nothing about Tea Party voter turnout or their vote.

BTW - Republicans have held the Massachusetts governorship \*four\* times since 1984: Weld, Weld, Cellucci and Romney.

Kirt

Malcolm wrote:  
Weld is a RINO, he does not really count.

M

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Thursday, March 27th, 2014 at 6:21 AM  
Title: Re: Should Buddhists even care about "engaging" social polit  
Content:

zsc said:  
No, this has been the position of many unethical authorities who wanted to maintain the status quo by using "Buddhist" rationale. I agree that it's not what Buddhism teaches.

Malcolm wrote:

Which unethical authorities,

If it were possible for dedication of merit to change the karma of sentient beings, you would have thought that the Buddhas in their compassion would have dedicated all their merit to us, so that we would no longer suffer.

Besides rory's point, most Pureland thought assumes Amida already has, and Pureland practice serves to karmically link ourselves to him. Suffering is a samsaric condition that we are still bound by, for now.

Then something isn't working, either your theory or his vow.

In Jodo Shinshu, the progress phase is "instantaneously" realized because of the practitioners openness to the gift of shinjin by Amida.

Its a theory, but it has no support in sutra. In fact Shinran had to take huge liberties. And yes, I have read a lot of Shinran.

It is generally understood that the vows are all-encompassing due to Amida's boundless compassion, so they don't contradict each other, they are open to cover as many sentient beings as possible, including people in their deathbed who do not have the time to accumulate merit.

I don't agree.

In the early ages, the lives of women were full of hardships.

They still are.

They were expected to care of the house, go through the the pain of carrying a child to term then giving birth, take care of the kids from then on, and since a lot of women didn't have enough time to become literate (or weren't allowed to), women generally weren't allowed to become influential religious practitioners and teachers.

This is generally still true, though changing.

They were the backbone of the civilization, but this resulted in a lot of them being treated like work horses. Even in other sutras, a male rebirth was assumed to be better than a male one for practice, and Shakyamuni even hesitated to allow women to practice in the same way as his male disciples did. I've read commentaries that propose what I have said above--so much of society depended on women not dedicating a lot of time to practice when the same wasn't true for men, and even Shakyamuni's hesitance was due to this consideration. This is true in some countries even today. So like I said above, Amida's vows are meant to be all-encompassing. Of course, it is only in Vajrayāna where women's full spiritual potential is actuality recognized, and the only tradition in which there full fledged female Buddhas like Vajrayogini and so on.

Again, the vows are meant to be all-encompassing, they don't negate each other. As it stands today, Pureland practitioners are encouraged to direct their faith primarily to the 18th Vow, which is the Primal Vow.

You mean Jodo Sinshu practitioners.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, March 27th, 2014 at 11:15 AM

Title: Re: Your gender and sexuality

Content:

untxi said:

We can pull some passages from the sutras and just morph "God hates queers" to "Buddha hates queers".

Malcolm wrote:

Actually, we can't. The most we can do is pull some passages out of Vinaya that bar certain types of persons from ordination as monks.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, March 27th, 2014 at 11:27 AM

Title: Re: Should Buddhists even care about "engaging" social polit

Content:

zsc said:

We have no genderless pronoun in English...

Malcolm wrote:

Nor are there any in Sanskrit, Pali, etc.

Amitabha has the thirty two major marks of a Buddha...one is a retractable penis.

In all Sanskrit literature referring to Avalokiteśvara, Avalokiteśvara is strictly referred to as male. It is only in China that Avalokiteśvara's gender is bent.

As to gender ambiguity in bodhisattvas, there are some examples of this, Śariputra's encounter with the goddess of the ganges, for example. But Amitabha is indeed male as are all who are born in his pure land.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, March 27th, 2014 at 1:29 PM

Title: Re: Should Buddhists even care about "engaging" social polit

Content:

rory said:

Someone hasn't read the Lotus Sutra: Chapter 12 - Devadatta

At that moment, the entire assembly saw the Dragon Girl suddenly transform into a man

Malcolm wrote:

Apparently you have not read it either.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, March 27th, 2014 at 1:48 PM

Title: Re: Should Buddhists even care about "engaging" social polit

Content:

Son of Buddha said:

Malcolm wrote:

There is also the recognition of the advantages of position in vow 43:

If after I have obtained the Buddhahood, that any Bodhisattva of other countries having heard my name, will be incarnated as a member of a noble family (if he so desires) when he dies, otherwise may I not attain enlightenment.

There is in fact no guarantee of immediate birth in Sukhavati in the 48 vows of Amitabha. Vow 19 is the guarantee for immediate rebirth in Sukhavati also it corresponds with the chapter on the 3 different types of aspirants which also teaches guaranteed immediate rebirth in Sukhavati.

Malcolm wrote:

NO, that vow is not a guarantee of rebirth in Sukhavati. It merely guarantees a vision.

Secondly, your Nirvana sutra citation does not describe the career of a female buddha. It merely describes the ability of a buddha to manifest a buddha in female form.

The fact remains that the only place where embodied female buddhahood, i.e. that one can attain buddhahood without changing from a female gender, is expressed only in Vajrayāna. It is just a fact of text, it is not even controversial.

The idea that there is no gender in the Sukhavati pure land is a post-modern interpretation.

But we are far afield from the original topic...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, March 27th, 2014 at 9:19 PM

Title: Re: Should Buddhists even care about "engaging" social polit

Content:

Son of Buddha said:

see me appear before them

Malcolm wrote:

This is all it promises, and nothing more.

Son of Buddha said:

that's incorrect the Nirvana Sutra citation does in fact describe the career of a female Buddha.

Malcolm wrote:

No, it does not

Son of Buddha said:

the same goes for the Nirvana Sutra citation it shows the Buddha manifested itself in the world as a human female and then proceeded to show humans how a human person would go about the path to attaining enlightenment. So both the career paths of either man or female are both manifestations of the Buddha, and are both represented.

Malcolm wrote:

Not in sutra. Despite the fact that there is shift in late Mahāyāna towards the idea that gender is not really so important or defining, still there is no explicit mention of female buddhas like Tara or Vajrayogini and so on until we move into Vajrayāna texts.

Son of Buddha said:

The idea that there is no gender in the Sukhavati pure land is a post-modern interpretation.

nope the idea of the 32 features of the Buddha which we receive in the pure land, having no gender is not a post modern interpretation unless you consider the Nirvana Sutra post modern. the idea of the Buddha not even being a man can be found in the Donna Sutta so this is hardly a new view.

Malcolm wrote:

[/quote]

I am afraid you are reading things into the texts that are simply not there. In Amitabha's pure land, like Bhaisajyaguru's there is gender and that gender is male. In Akṣobhya's pureland on the other hand, there are both men and women.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, March 27th, 2014 at 9:57 PM

Title: Re: Should Buddhists even care about "engaging" social polit

Content:

rory said:

Someone hasn't read the Lotus Sutra: Chapter 12 - Devadatta

At that moment, the entire assembly saw the Dragon Girl suddenly transform into a man

Malcolm wrote:  
Apparently you have not read it either.

M

Rory said:  
Keep reading Malcolm!

Malcolm wrote:  
What it actually says:

atha tasyām velāyām sāgaranāgarājaduhitā sarvalokapratyakṣaṁ sthavirasya ca śāriputrasya pratyakṣaṁ tat strīndriyamantarhitā puruṣendriyaṁ ca prādurbhūtaṁ bodhisattvabhūtaṁ cātmānaṁ saṁdarśayati| tasyām velāyām dakṣiṇām diśaṁ prakrāntaḥ| atha dakṣiṇasyām diśi vimalā nāma lokadhātuḥ| tatra saptaratnamaye bodhivṛkṣamūle niṣaṇṇamabhisambuddhamātmānaṁ saṁdarśayati sma, dvātriṁśallakṣaṇadharaṁ sarvānuvyajanarūpaṁ prabhayā ca daśadiśaṁ sphuritvā dharmadeśanāṁ kurvāṇam|

།དེ་ནས་དེའི་ཆེ་འཇིག་རྟེན་ཐམས་ཅད་དང་།  
གནས་བརྟན་གྱི་འོ་འོ་མཛན་སྐྱེའི་ཆུ་ལ་པོ་ཆུ་མཛོའི་བྱ་མོའི་བྱ་མེད་ཀྱི་དབང་པོ་མི་སྣང་བར་གྱུར་ཏེ་སྐྱེས་པའི་དབང་པོ་བྱང་ནས།  
བདག་ཉིད་བྱང་ཆུབ་སེམས་དཔར་འགྱུར་བར་ཡང་དག་པར་བརྟན་ཏེ་དེའི་ཆེ་མོ་ཕྱོགས་སུ་སོང་ངོ་། །དེ་ནས་ཕྱོ་ཕྱོགས་སུ་འཇིག་རྟེན་གྱི་ལམས་དི་མ་མེད་ཅེས་བྱ་བ་དང་།  
འོ་པོ་ཆེ་སྐྱེ་བདུན་གྱི་ཉིད་བྱང་དུ་འདུག་ནས་བདག་ཉིད་མཛན་པར་རྟོགས་པར་སངས་རྒྱས་པར་ཀུན་ཏུ་བརྟན་ཏེ། སྐྱེས་པའི་ཆེན་པོའི་མཛན་སྐྱེའི་ཆ་གཉིས་དང་།  
དཔེ་བྱང་བཟང་པོ་ཐམས་ཅད་དང་ཐུན་པའི་གཟུགས་ཀྱི་ལུས་ཀྱི་འོད་ཀྱི་ཕྱོགས་བཅུར་ཁྱབ་པར་བྱས་ཏེ་ཆོས་རྟོན་པར་བྱང་ངོ་།

Rory said:  
After that, at that time, in the presence of the whole world, the sthaviras and Śāriputra, the female sexual organs of the daughter of the Nāgarāja Sagara disappeared, and after producing the sexual organs of a man, he [ātmānaṁ] perfectly demonstrated [saṁdarśayati] transformation into a bodhisattva, and at that time left for the south. After that, residing in front of a tree of seven precious substances in the southern world system called "Vimala", he [ātmānaṁ] perfectly demonstrated perfect Buddhahood, the ten directions were filled with the light of [his] physical body that possessed the thirty two sighs of a mahāpuruṣa and all the excellent signs, and [he] taught the Dharma.

Malcolm wrote:  
In fact, it is very clear, based on the original Sanskrit and its Tibetan translation, that the transformation is a one way transformation, and the reflexive pronoun ātmānaṁ is correctly rendered as "he" in this passage.

M

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Thursday, March 27th, 2014 at 10:59 PM  
Title: Re: Difference between consciousness and the mind  
Content:  
PadmaVonSamba said:

There is if you are examining or talking about dependent arising.

Malcolm wrote:

Why do you think so?

PadmaVonSamba said:

It is self evident, and I think you can easily figure this out.

If not, I am not sure when I will have time to.

Malcolm wrote:

I don't think dependent origination is wrong, of course not. I just don't think it justifies the distinctions you try to draw between awareness and consciousness.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, March 27th, 2014 at 11:09 PM

Title: Re: Who are the best teachers of non-duality?

Content:

greentara said:

We all know non duality means one without a second. So the world and the sense of I are not separate. To wake up is to see that 'we' exist only because the mind thinks us into creation.

Sherab Dorje said:

That's not non-dualism, that's monism. Monism is still dualistic since it posits one in contrast to many.

Malcolm wrote:

It's Hindu Advaita, actually.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, March 27th, 2014 at 11:24 PM

Title: Re: Difference between consciousness and the mind

Content:

Gwenn Dana said:

You can also call it bound and unbound consciousness, if that fits your canon better. But some may mistake this as awareness being trapped in the mind.

This differentiation is along the lines of samkhya, where awareness is first bound to form an ego (in realization of the seer/seeing), and afterward binds to the mind, creating all sorts of illusions. I know, this forum is about Buddhism. But I suppose the basic awareness processes between buddhists and other people work the same, independent from the (21st century English!) words we use ...

You probably do not need to differ between these. I found them very helpful.



Best wishes  
Gwenn

Malcolm wrote:

In Samkhya, the 24 tattvas, beginning with mulaprakṛiti, are insentient. Only puruṣa is sentient. Buddhi, ahaṁkāra and mānās are actually inert, not sentient, They seem to be aware but they are not aware — in actuality, they merely reflect the light of consciousness (jñā, puruṣa). This is why in Samkhya/yoga one tries to balance three guṇas, so that sattva becomes predominate, and then from there one realizes the even buddhi is not the self and then puruṣa finally rests in itself.

But this is a very different system than Buddhadharma.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, March 27th, 2014 at 11:28 PM

Title: Re: Buddhist neglect of academic findings.

Content:

Indrajala said:

For instance, if so many liberated individuals in the past disdained women and suggested they needed to become men to achieve Buddhahood, what does that say about "liberation" and the purported qualities of compassion and kindness it is supposed to bring about?

Malcolm wrote:

It is well established even in Abhidharmakosha that arhats have non-afflictive ignorance.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, March 28th, 2014 at 12:06 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist neglect of academic findings.

Content:

Indrajala said:

For instance, if so many liberated individuals in the past disdained women and suggested they needed to become men to achieve Buddhahood, what does that say about "liberation" and the purported qualities of compassion and kindness it is supposed to bring about?

Malcolm wrote:

It is well established even in Abhidharmakosha that arhats have non-afflictive ignorance.

Indrajala said:  
That's not relevant to what I'm saying.

Malcolm wrote:  
Sure it is, accounts for why some men who had freed themselves from afflictive rebirth nevertheless had unfortunate opinions about women.

Indrajala said:  
I'm simply saying that "enlightened beings" and Buddhist values usually don't work out as they're supposed to on paper in real life history. Just look at the violent history of Buddhist Tibet.

Malcolm wrote:  
It's not that violent compared to say Japan or China.

Indrajala said:  
Just look at the serfs in Tibet who readily joined up with the Reds and proceeded to burn down monasteries.

Malcolm wrote:  
They regret it now.

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Friday, March 28th, 2014 at 12:07 AM  
Title: Re: Difference between consciousness and the mind  
Content:  
Gwenn Dana said:  
Of course the system is different. But I guess the method in the final step is not.

Best wishes  
Gwenn

Malcolm wrote:  
Yes, the method in the final step is quite different because the view is different and the result is different.

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Friday, March 28th, 2014 at 12:10 AM  
Title: Re: Shamatha and Dhyana in different traditions  
Content:  
Emakirikiri said:  
Malcolm does Lama Migmar's The Tibetan Book of Awakening and Kamalasila's Bhavanakrama contain enough instruction to help a beginner fully reach the one-pointedness of a mental object and the first dhyana (assuming he were in retreat)?

Thanks!

Malcolm wrote:

Yes.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, March 28th, 2014 at 12:11 AM

Title: Re: Shamatha and Dhyana in different traditions

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

They are describing Dzogchen Śamatha which is more like repeated placement in the Bhavanakrama scheme. I am talking about your classic ninth stage śamatha where you can place your mind on any object for as long as you want without distraction and without effort.

Sherlock said:

Is what you call repeated placement the third stage in the 9 stage scheme? i.e. what Alan Wallace calls "resurgent attention". What is achieved is swift recovery of distracted attention, mostly on the object

Malcolm wrote:

Yes.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, March 28th, 2014 at 2:36 AM

Title: Re: Difference between consciousness and the mind

Content:

garudha said:

Malcolm & Gwenn, you seem to be agreement over a "final step" ...of which could be construed as the cessation of causation eg leading to a "absolute".

Therefore, please could you detail how your agreement might relate the the OP. Specifically, how Puruṣa & Prakriti relate to the "consciousnesses" and "mind".

Why? Because on this forum we generally talk about "mind" as being primordial than "consciousnesses". However; from what I'm reading about Samkhya, "consciousnesses" is regarded as more primordial than "mind".

The question:

Can anyone explain something about this or point me to an article?

There exists consciousnesses corresponding to the senses, but it's not the mind in itself, right. While consciousness is dependent on and part of the psycho-physical makeup (as part of the aggregates), the mind is independent of physical matter, or?

Malcolm wrote:

In Samkhya Purusha is pure consciousness. Prakriti lacks consciousness and is material. It is "energized" by Purusha and seems to be aware, but it is not.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, March 28th, 2014 at 2:51 AM

Title: Re: Difference between consciousness and the mind

Content:

PadmaVonSamba said:

So, the distinction being made is awareness or consciousness, both with, and without an object.

(the terms "awareness" and "consciousness" may be interchangeable but what is being referred to is not.)

Malcolm wrote:

There is still no "awareness" in absence of a consciousness-which-is-aware, whether that consciousness has an object or not.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, March 28th, 2014 at 3:04 AM

Title: Re: Difference between consciousness and the mind

Content:

garudha said:

Malcolm;

Would you agree that Prakriti is actually empty ?

Malcolm wrote:

That is not how it is parsed in the Samkhya system; Samkhya is realist, both prakriti and purusha are real, i.e. they exist.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, March 28th, 2014 at 3:09 AM

Title: Re: Who are the best teachers of non-duality?

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

Which is to say that Hindu Advaita is a form of monism? It seems so.

Malcolm wrote:

Yup.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, March 28th, 2014 at 3:21 AM

Title: Re: Difference between consciousness and the mind

Content:

garudha said:

Reading between the lines; That explanation would be the yes that I presumed you'd somehow allude to. Although I recognise that we're referring to an Indian "materialist" philosophy. Thank you.

Malcolm wrote:

No, Samkhya is not materialist, it is realist, not the same thing at all.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, March 28th, 2014 at 3:29 AM

Title: Re: Your gender and sexuality

Content:

zsc said:

When the same kind of self-reflection is suggested when it comes to privilege, you'd think I was asking people to lasso the moon.

Malcolm wrote:

I am certainly glad that I was born into a privileged family.

I think it is unfortunate that others are not.

But short of some massive anti-democratic program of social and economic planning, I see no clear means to ensure everyone has the same privilege, the best we can do is try to make sure everyone has the same baseline of opportunity in terms of education, social services, health care, and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, March 28th, 2014 at 6:44 AM

Title: Re: Difference between consciousness and the mind

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

There is still no "awareness" in absence of a consciousness-which-is-aware, whether that consciousness has an object or not.

PadmaVonSamba said:

You are saying, without an object (of awareness or of consciousness) to be aware of there is no faculty of awareness or consciousness whatsoever.  
correct?

Malcolm wrote:

Incorrect. I am saying:

There is no "awareness" in absence of a consciousness-which-is-aware, whether or not that consciousness has an object.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, March 28th, 2014 at 7:55 AM

Title: Re: Difference between consciousness and the mind

Content:

garudha said:

Malcolm, your statement seems to state that awareness is a property of consciousness. PadmaVonSamba, your question somewhat assumes that consciousness is a property of awareness.

If you remove all your clothes and go skinny-dipping in what respect do you regard yourself as naked ?

Malcolm wrote:

Awareness is conscious = consciousness is aware.

$1 + 1 = 1 + 1$

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, March 28th, 2014 at 10:02 PM

Title: Re: Śākyamuni's non-Indo-European heritage.

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Witzel's book is not racist, he explicitly states that all human beings come from Africa, and that we have have a common ancestor. He is merely saying that are two streams of myth development, a northern and a southern one and that the southern one seems to lack certain themes found in the northern one. But he never says on the basis of this that the Laurasian stream is "superior" to the Gondwana stream. That is a fallacious imputation on the part of the reviewers.

Indrajala said:

Incidentally for some great information on what constitutes proto-Indo-European religion, at least under reconstruction, see the following:

<http://pierreligion.org/pierintro.html>

Malcolm wrote:

The answers to all of these questions and many more are to be found in Witzel's new book:

The Origins of the World's Mythologies. Oxford University Press

He has questioned the linguistic nature of the so-called Indus Script (Farmer, Sproat, Witzel 2004).[70] Earlier, he had suggested that a substrate related to, but not identical with the Austroasiatic Munda languages, which he therefore calls para-Munda, might have been the language of (part of) the Indus population.[71][72]  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Michael\\_Witzel#Research](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Michael_Witzel#Research)

Sherlock said:

There seems to be a lot of dissent among the Amazon reviews. Is it mostly coming from Hindu nationalists upset at Witzel for suggesting that Indo-Aryans are not native to India?

I know genetics don't necessarily tell the story of cultures and languages, but in many ways, it is more "rigorous" than linguistic reconstruction.

<http://dienekes.blogspot.co.uk/> collates a lot of relevant genetic studies in anthropology.

I haven't looked in too much detail in the studies on South Asian DNA, but the Indo-European spread in Europe seems to be quite clear.

Europe was populated by dark-skinned hunter-gatherers who might have had light-hair and eyes throughout the Mesolithic, WHG (Western Hunter Gatherers) in short. In the Neolithic, around 7,500 years ago, groups of agriculturalists from the Middle East started moving into Europe. They shared some ancestry with the WHGs but 44% of their DNA came from a lineage which diverged from the main lineage of Eurasians (who later split into West and East Eurasians) early on. These Early European Farmers (EEF) did not mix with the existing WHG population, the population spread was demic, not clinal; i.e. they killed the hunter-gatherers and took their lands. Areas which were previously inhabited by WHGs were taken over by EEF descendants who did not incorporate WHG DNA. EEF spread throughout Europe, West to Iberia and north to Scandinavia. The genes for white skin seem to come from this period. Later on, around 4,000 years ago, a new group of <http://dienekes.blogspot.co.uk/2012/07/bronze-age-indo-european-invasion-of.html> came in. They spread throughout Europe though the West Asian component is lowest in Iberia, Sardinia and Finland. The surviving WHG DNA also mixed into the resulting population.

I think the picture is quite clear that the West Asians are Indo-Europeans. The areas where West Asian DNA is lowest were the main non-Indo-European-speaking regions in Europe historically. The Iberians probably spoke languages related to Basque, and the Finns also speak a non-Indo-European language.

The situation in India seems to be more complex, with East Eurasian-related groups already living in East India, <http://dienekes.blogspot.co.uk/2012/06/smbe-2012-abstracts-part-ii.html>. There seems to be some presence of

<http://dienekes.blogspot.co.uk/2010/12/solution-to-problem-of-indo-aryan.html> DNA in Ancestral North Indian populations. <http://dienekes.blogspot.co.uk/2013/08/major-admixture-in-india-took-place-42.html>.

This is very interesting IMO, I'm not sure exactly what it means but to wager a guess, I think proto-Indo-Europeans weren't genetically distant from ANIs enough for a different population structure to be detected; their spread through India was more of a cultural phenomenon than in Europe and they influenced the pre-existing populations to mix. Dravidian speakers today also carry ANI DNA.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, March 30th, 2014 at 1:48 AM

Title: Re: Difference between consciousness and the mind

Content:

garudha said:

Malcolm, your statement seems to state that awareness is a property of consciousness. PadmaVonSamba, your question somewhat assumes that consciousness is a property of awareness.

If you remove all your clothes and go skinny-dipping in what respect do you regard yourself as naked ?

Malcolm wrote:

Awareness is conscious = consciousness is aware.

$1 + 1 = 1 + 1$

M

bob said:

Awareness is mind without objects.

Consciousness is mind with objects.

Malcolm wrote:

In the end it all boils down to pure consciousness or awareness, whether with objects or without — we are speaking about something which exhibits sentience, i.e. a mind.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, March 30th, 2014 at 2:49 AM

Title: Re: Difference between consciousness and the mind

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

... we are speaking about something which exhibits sentience, i.e. a mind.



Gwenn Dana said:  
How do you call the thinking facility then?

Malcolm wrote:  
A mind. What else? A mind is that which can know, we can use the term consciousness, awareness, mind, knowing etc., but it all boils down to one thing, a mind, i.e. something that has the capacity for knowing. A buddha's consciousness is unrestricted, therefore we say that a buddha is omniscient.

M

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Sunday, March 30th, 2014 at 11:56 PM  
Title: Re: Difference between consciousness and the mind  
Content:

PadmaVonSamba said:  
However, a background, or 'ground of awareness' can be said to function, which is usually experienced as a separate perceiver when in contact with phenomena.

Malcolm wrote:  
Nevertheless, there is no awareness which can be defined as something separate from a consciousness or a mind.

PadmaVonSamba said:  
But physical phenomena, for example, can exist with no awareness of it.

Malcolm wrote:  
That depends. According Dzogchen, Mahāmudra and so on, no phenomena outside of mind can be established at all, that is, all physical appearances are projections of traces on mind streams, following the Yogacara school.

PadmaVonSamba said:  
A common misunderstanding is that nothing occurs anywhere outside of awareness.

Malcolm wrote:  
Again, it depends on your point of view.

PadmaVonSamba said:  
Another common misunderstanding is that "illumination" means that the mind is like a beam from a flashlight, that actually comes from someplace and shines on objects thus causing them to occur.

Malcolm wrote:  
I have never run across such an assertion in any Buddhist text.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 31st, 2014 at 1:59 AM

Title: Re: Difference between consciousness and the mind

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

there is no awareness which can be defined as something separate from a consciousness or a mind.

PadmaVonSamba said:

There is if you are talking about intentional, rather than merely random response to stimuli, whereby A is attracted specifically to B and commences actions which draw it closer to making contact with B. We have discussed this before. It may not be any sort of cognitive awareness, but as opposed to just lying there with no intentional response at all (two rocks lying next to each other) or making contact purely at random (seeds blowing in the wind until they land), you have to have some term for something in which which one thing somehow senses the existence of something else, and for lack of a better term, I use the term basic awareness. So, I am defining it that way.

Malcolm wrote:

Right, and I don't accept your theory. There is only awareness is strictly cognitive.

According Dzogchen, Mahāmudra and so on, no phenomena outside of mind can be established at all, that is, all physical appearances are projections of traces on mind streams, following the Yogacara school.

That is easily disproved, by examples which I have already given, such as not knowing one has cancer.

You don't understand; appearances are generated by activated traces which exist in the ālayavijñāna. We do not need to be "aware" of these traces for them to be activated. You may think Yogacara is easy to refute, but it isn't.

PadmaVonSamba said:

A common misunderstanding is that nothing occurs anywhere outside of awareness.

Malcolm wrote:

Again, it depends on your point of view.

PadmaVonSamba said:

Unless you know everything that is happening in the universe, and nothing can ever be discovered that you didn't already know about, this might be the case. Otherwise, a sane point of view is that there is stuff happening that nobody knows about.

Malcolm wrote:

You need to study Yogacara, only then will you understand the context of this. It is more

profound than your realism.

After all, the Buddha stated "The three realms are only mind."

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 31st, 2014 at 7:40 AM

Title: Re: Difference between consciousness and the mind

Content:

Andrew108 said:

For example, how do idealists account for cosmic inflation? Or mass? Or light? Or space/time?

Malcolm wrote:

Buddhism is not idealism in the sense you understand.

Buddhism accounts for all of these things, cosmic inflation, mass, light, space, etc. via conventional truth.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 31st, 2014 at 8:14 AM

Title: Re: Difference between consciousness and the mind

Content:

Andrew108 said:

For example, how do idealists account for cosmic inflation? Or mass? Or light? Or space/time?

Malcolm wrote:

Buddhism is not idealism in the sense you understand.

Buddhism accounts for all of these things, cosmic inflation, mass, light, space, etc. via conventional truth.

Sherab said:

Buddhism does not account for these things. Buddhism merely asserts that these things are conventional in the sense that ultimately, these things don't exist when you analyse them to hunt for their source or sources. But this would contract another assertion that mind(s) (where mind now has to take the specific definition of karmic traces and not other definitions of mind) is(are) the source of these things.

Malcolm wrote:

No. There is no contradiction. When you hunt for mind you do not find it either.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 31st, 2014 at 8:55 AM

Title: Re: Difference between consciousness and the mind

Content:  
Sherab said:  
If so, then how do appearances arise?

Malcolm wrote:  
Conventionally.

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Monday, March 31st, 2014 at 12:47 PM  
Title: Re: Difference between consciousness and the mind  
Content:  
Sherab said:  
If so, then how do appearances arise?

Malcolm wrote:  
Conventionally.

Sherab said:  
Another assertion?

Malcolm wrote:  
An answer to a question is not an assertion, providing the answer does not exceed the scope of the question.

M

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Monday, March 31st, 2014 at 9:37 PM  
Title: Re: Difference between consciousness and the mind  
Content:  
Malcolm wrote:  
An answer to a question is not an assertion, providing the answer does not exceed the scope of the question.

M

Sherab said:  
Not expecting this answer from you though. I thought you could see the internal contradiction in your reply.

Here is how I see the problem of your argument:

Things, exists only conventionally, i.e., appearance appears and the mind labelled the appearances thereby giving things a conventional existence.

Malcolm wrote:

The label does not give something conventional existence; the mere appearances of a thing is its conventional existence.

Sherab said:

Karmic traces causes the appearances of things, but karmic traces are also conventionally existent, i.e., appearances of karmic traces appear to the mind and are then given the label karmic traces.

Malcolm wrote:

See above.

Sherab said:

In our discussion, karmic traces is none other than mind.

Malcolm wrote:

Traces are actually impressions made on the mind by actions. The result of those actions arise when special conditions for the ripening of those traces are met.

Sherab said:

So there is an appearance of mind that the mind then give the label mind and thereby gives mind a conventional existence. This is inherently a circular argument.

Malcolm wrote:

But it is not my argument, it is an argument you have constructed for me.

Sherab said:

Because of the inherent circularity in your argument, as far as I am concerned, your answer is a non-answer.

Malcolm wrote:

You have non-answered yourself since you have not presented my argument.

Sherab said:

It is also inherently contradictory as the conventional existence of the mind must exist before it can give itself a conventional existence.

Malcolm wrote:

Well, if you think that conventional existence depends on labels, that would be a problem.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 31st, 2014 at 9:42 PM

Title: Re: Dungse Rigzin Dorje Rinpoche

Content:

KonchokZoepa said:

Hi, does anyone know this Lama.

What is the name of his home monastery and is it in Assam?

does he uphold the complete Vima Nyingtik cycle?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes.

Zangdog Palri

Yes.

he is the son of Kunzang Dechen Lingpa, and is an excellent teacher.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, March 31st, 2014 at 11:37 PM

Title: Re: Difference between consciousness and the mind

Content:

Sherab said:

Even if you take appearing as synonymous with existing conventionally and leave out the part of labelling, the form of my argument as presented still holds.

In other words, things appearing is due to karmic traces appearing; karmic traces appearing is due to mind appearing; and mind appearing is due to mind appearing. Circularity of argument still exists in the end.

Malcolm wrote:

No.

Things [mental appearances] appear because of karmic traces; karmic traces occur because of afflicted minds, afflicted minds also arise because of karma traces. Minds are both cause and results; traces are both causes and results.

Since Buddhadharma rejects origins, the fault you should be seeking is infinite regress, not circularity, but in this case, there is no problem since mind has not discernible origin. There is not absolute beginning to the process of mind, affliction, traces, ripening of traces (appearances) and so on.

The doctrine you should be examining is called *citta saṃtana parināma*, i.e., transformations of the stream of cittas.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 2nd, 2014 at 12:41 AM

Title: Re: Difference between consciousness and the mind

Content:

Sherab said:

As Malcolm said, the fault of the argument is infinite regression rather than circularity. Circularity anyway is a special form of infinite regression. For me, explanation that results in infinite regression is faulty because it indicates incompleteness of the explanation. In other words, an explanation with infinite regression must also explain that infinite regression if the explanation is to be complete.

Explanations that involves causality and dependent origination can never be complete since they lead to infinite regression. That is why I feel that they can never be satisfactory explanation when they are employed in an ontological argument without being complemented by something else.

Here I should add that where science is concerned, it usually does not have problem with explanations that involve beginninglessness or endlessness, or both. This is because by nature, explanations of science, are inherently provisional.

Malcolm wrote:

Every effect arises from a cause; every cause is an effect. That is a complete explanation and also an infinite regression.

To answer your other question, the stream of cittas has no basis, being empty.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 2nd, 2014 at 6:10 AM

Title: Re: intoxication and tibetan buddhism

Content:

ovi said:

On the other hand, cannabis enhances my mindfulness and the strength of the meditation session and even more so when taken together with piracetam and lecithin

Malcolm wrote:

No, actually it does not. Marijuana impairs short term memory, and that is necessary for mindfulness by definition.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 2nd, 2014 at 7:59 AM

Title: Re: Difference between consciousness and the mind

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Every effect arises from a cause; every cause is an effect. That is a complete explanation and also an infinite regression.

Sherab said:

I disagree. It merely means that causality is the explanation for specific events within an infinite regression while the infinite regression is an axiom or postulate.

Malcolm wrote:

The infinite regression is neither an axiom nor a postulate, it is an inference.  
To answer your other question, the stream of cittas has no basis, being empty.  
This is no answer from my point of view.

If by empty you mean that the stream of cittas is an infinite causal chain, then the infinite regression is not explained but has to be assumed. In my understanding of the Buddha's teaching, this becomes a fault in that the stream of cittas is always subject to change and because of that, there can be no permanent liberation.  
By empty we mean it is not ultimately established.

Liberation (as opposed to Buddhahood) is defined by the eradication of afflictions or fetters in relation to the mind (stream). Through aryan insight those afflictions are "burned", and thus they no longer produce results (birth in various aspects of the three realms), that is all liberation means and no new afflictive traces are created.

The stream of cittas is subject to causation, but that does not bear the consequence that liberation is a) impossible or b) reversible.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 2nd, 2014 at 9:04 AM

Title: Re: Difference between consciousness and the mind

Content:

Sherab said:

Impermanent are all component things,

...

Release from them is bliss supreme.

— Mahaa-Parinibbaana Sutta (DN 16)

"There is, monks, an unborn .... If there were not that unborn ..., there would not be the case that emancipation from the born.... But precisely because there is an unborn ..., emancipation from the born ... is discerned."

— Ud 8.3

Malcolm wrote:

This is reconciled by the Mahāyāna doctrine that all conditioned things are in a state of nirvana from the beginning.



M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, April 3rd, 2014 at 12:06 AM

Title: Re: Difference between consciousness and the mind

Content:

Sherab said:

Impermanent are all component things,

...

Release from them is bliss supreme.

— Mahaa-Parinibbaana Sutta (DN 16)

"There is, monks, an unborn .... If there were not that unborn ..., there would not be the case that emancipation from the born.... But precisely because there is an unborn ..., emancipation from the born ... is discerned."

— Ud 8.3

Malcolm wrote:

This is reconciled by the Mahāyāna doctrine that all conditioned things are in a state of nirvana from the beginning.

M

Sherab said:

How do all conditioned things relate to being in a state of nirvana from the beginning? I am not saying that they are not. What I am saying is that the words "release" and "emancipation" means that taking the relative as all there is, can never reconcile the meaning of the two quotations.

Malcolm wrote:

Liberation, in Mahāyāna, is merely the realization that "all conditioned things are in a state of nirvana from the beginning".

It means realizing that the nature of the arising, etc., is precisely, non-arising.

As a tantra states:

"Everything arose from non-arising,  
even arising never arose."

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, April 3rd, 2014 at 12:07 AM

Title: Re: Difference between consciousness and the mind

Content:

Andrew108 said:

The cause/effect regression isn't an infinite regression.

Malcolm wrote:

Of course it is. Why? a first cause would be an unconditioned cause. An unconditioned thing can have no effect on a conditioned thing.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, April 3rd, 2014 at 12:08 AM

Title: Re: Difference between consciousness and the mind

Content:

PadmaVonSamba said:

In that case, a single-cell organism would be sufficient for the arising of awareness. You are saying it's not, because of certain factors that a single cell organism lacks, and then you say those same factors are not dependent on the very thing a single-cell organism lacks.

garudha said:

The way you (PadmaVonSamba) address intelligent life is that sentience is a property of organic matter. Then, elsewhere, I read that form is inherently empty. Personally I took "form" to mean all organic matter, and therefore, that all organic matter is a property of sentience (eg Mind). If, however, form is inherently empty; then how could sentience appropriate form? --that would be a massive contradiction.

PadmaVonSamba said:

No, I have not said that sentience is a property of organic matter.  
In fact, just the opposite, constantly.

What I have said is that organic matter merely provides the conditions by which basic awareness manifests as the subject-object experience ("mind"). What distinguishes a living thing from a non-living thing is exactly this. Hence, a sperm cell, lacking any sensory apparatus whatsoever, no skandhas, no 12-links, is still attracted to progesterone excreted by the egg.

And my point was that, just as a tiny drop of dew can reflect the Sun, even a tiny think such as a sperm cell is sufficient for the reflection of awareness.

And regardless of whether one calls it "awareness" or not, the fact that the sperm does not randomly land on the egg but specifically goes toward it demonstrates a basic level of specific ("intentional") interaction. And I would even go so far as to suggest that this is at the root of our whole subject-object / self-other experience that is the dominating feature of mind.

...

Malcolm wrote:

Chemical attractions do not indicate the presence of awareness.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, April 3rd, 2014 at 12:14 AM

Title: Re: Difference between consciousness and the mind

Content:

Sherab said:

Sure, but only if you don't hold the view that the relative is all there is.

Malcolm wrote:

All there is is the union of the two truths. If there is a basis, that is the basis.

All the path is is the union of the method and compassion. If there is a path, that is the path

All the result is is the union of the two kāyas. If there is a result, that is the result.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, April 3rd, 2014 at 3:00 AM

Title: Re: Difference between consciousness and the mind

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Chemical attractions do not indicate the presence of awareness.

PadmaVonSamba said:

There is nothing going on in the brain but chemical interactions and electricity.

I am not saying that the chemicals or their interactions "have" awareness.

In fact, completely the opposite.

Malcolm wrote:

No, you are saying that sperm has a mind since it evinces what you term "awareness".

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, April 3rd, 2014 at 3:07 AM

Title: Re: Difference between consciousness and the mind

Content:

Andrew108 said:

The cause/effect regression isn't an infinite regression.

Malcolm wrote:

Of course it is. Why? a first cause would be an unconditioned cause. An unconditioned thing can have no effect on a conditioned thing.

PadmaVonSamba said:

So..what's the cause of the whole "cause & effect" thing?

...

Malcolm wrote:

An effect of something else.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, April 3rd, 2014 at 3:08 AM

Title: Re: Difference between consciousness and the mind

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Chemical attractions do not indicate the presence of awareness.

PadmaVonSamba said:

The fact that the sperm does not randomly land on the egg but specifically goes toward it demonstrates something more than random chemical interactions. The fact of specific attraction (as opposed to, say, gravitational pull or magnetism, or some sort of stickiness) may not define "awareness" in your book. Whether it is attraction to chemicals, or heat or light is beside the point I am making, which is that something that is alive (A) responds specifically to stimuli from something else which is alive (B). I think that counts for something.

. . .

Malcolm wrote:

There are two kinds of life: sentient and non-sentient.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, April 3rd, 2014 at 3:10 AM

Title: Re: Difference between consciousness and the mind

Content:

Andrew108 said:

The cause/effect regression isn't an infinite regression.

Malcolm wrote:

Of course it is. Why? a first cause would be an unconditioned cause. An unconditioned thing can have no effect on a conditioned thing.

Andrew108 said:

Entropy

Malcolm wrote:

Consciousness, being without mass, does not generate heat and is not subject to the

law of entropy.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, April 3rd, 2014 at 4:18 AM

Title: Re: Underweight worse then being overweight?

Content:

Indrajala said:

There was an interesting new study done suggesting being underweight is more dangerous to one's health than being overweight...

Malcolm wrote:

In general, in Ayurveda and Tibetan Medicine consider that is best to be "slim". But slim does not mean underweight. It just means not carrying around too much extra weight.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, April 3rd, 2014 at 4:19 AM

Title: Re: Underweight worse then being overweight?

Content:

KeithBC said:

On the other hand, numerous studies have shown an increase in longevity on a restricted-calorie diet.

It might come down to reading the fine print in the specific studies, something that you can't do in the popular media.

Om mani padme hum

Keith

Indrajala said:

There are so many conflicting opinions. I think too many researchers make a living from coming up with new facts about diet and health. It is a way to advance your career and probably secure funding as anything to do with diet and health will prove popular.

Malcolm wrote:

If you simply rely on the wisdom of the ṛṣīs, you will be fine.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, April 3rd, 2014 at 4:24 AM

Title: Re: Underweight worse then being overweight?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

If you simply rely on the wisdom of the ṛṣīs, you will be fine.

dzogchungpa said:

May I ask what the ṛṣis say?

Malcolm wrote:

Read either the four tantras or ayurvedic texts such as the Carakasamhita, etc.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, April 3rd, 2014 at 8:11 AM

Title: Re: Difference between consciousness and the mind

Content:

Sherab said:

Sure, but only if you don't hold the view that the relative is all there is.

Malcolm wrote:

All there is is the union of the two truths. If there is a basis, that is the basis.

Sherab said:

In the two truths model of reality, the relative truth is ultimately false, there is just one truth at the end.

If there is just one truth in the end, the so-called union of the two truth is true only provisionally and false ultimately.

Malcolm wrote:

Of course, who ever suggested otherwise?

"Since the Jinas have proposed that nirvana alone is true,  
what wise person would imagine that the rest was not false?"

-- Nāgarjuna

Sherab said:

The basis in the end, can only be the ultimate truth and the relative truth can only be a "truth" that emerges from the ultimate truth. In other words, from a true basis, a false basis can arise. Since the false basis arises from the true basis, it is possible to have the concept of a union of the relative and the ultimate where the relative is a "pure" relative rather than an "impure" relative.

Malcolm wrote:

Truths are merely cognitions (of an object); one false, the other veridical. This is why they are inseparable, for they are cognitions of the nature of one and the same entity, one false; the other, correct.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, April 3rd, 2014 at 8:16 AM

Title: Re: Difference between consciousness and the mind

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

There are two kinds of life: sentient and non-sentient.

PadmaVonSamba said:

I see....so, a single cell is not sentient, but if it merges with another single cell (which, by the way, is also not sentient) and then splits into a few more cells, and they divide into even more cells, and so on and so on...

then at some point the cells themselves "become" sentient?

...or no?

but if the cells are not sentient, then where is the sentience?

So, are you now saying that sentience is a property of organic matter itself?

...

Malcolm wrote:

Cells never become sentient, since sentience is not an emergent property of matter (which is why plants, which have cells, are nevertheless not included within sentient life). When a specific consciousness appropriates a basis, a material form, we call that "sentient life". There are four kinds of bases that a given consciousness can appropriate: moisture and heat birth, egg birth, womb birth and apparitional birth.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, April 3rd, 2014 at 8:21 AM

Title: Re: Underweight worse than being overweight?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

In general, in Ayurveda and Tibetan Medicine consider that is best to be "slim". But slim does not mean underweight. It just means not carrying around too much extra weight.

Adi said:

And in general, if I'm not mistaken, both medicines don't take a universal approach to there being only one kind of person and One True Diet or One Best Food for everyone. Like coconut oil, it might be suggested for some in generous quantity, just a little for others, and strongly suggested not at all for some others. Or sunflower oil for one person, coconut oil for another, and for a third only small amounts of ghee depending on that person's constitution and their present situation.

Adi

Malcolm wrote:

Correct.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, April 3rd, 2014 at 10:01 AM

Title: Re: intoxication and tibetan buddhism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

No, actually it does not. Marijuana impairs short term memory, and that is necessary for mindfulness by definition.

ovi said:

I can't deny facts. Cannabis is used world-wide for spiritual purposes and it has enhanced every part of my meditation session. It does a great job in calming my mind, I've spent hours in just being mindful of breathing without a single interruption, a thing much more difficult for me to do otherwise, it allows me to enter jhana in a matter of minutes, it allowed me to identify the direct connection between emptiness and dependent origination and I've had some pretty neat direct partial experiences of sunyata with ease. It's not essential for practice, but it was quite helpful in understanding the Dharma and turning me towards Buddhism. How it does that, I don't know. I've once read that although it impairs short-term memory, it vastly improves visual memory, among other things.

Malcolm wrote:

You are kidding yourself, however, it is really none of my business if you decide to follow a mistaken method.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, April 3rd, 2014 at 10:04 AM

Title: Re: Difference between consciousness and the mind

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Truths are merely cognitions (of an object); one false, the other veridical. This is why they are inseparable, for they are cognitions of the nature of one and the same entity, one false; the other, correct.

Sherab said:

You are arguing within a framework where there is subject-object duality. I am arguing within a framework free of subject-object duality.

Malcolm wrote:

No, you are not, since truths are nothing other than cognitions. After all, you introduced the notion of "relative" into the conversation, not me.

M



Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, April 3rd, 2014 at 8:58 PM

Title: Re: Difference between consciousness and the mind

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

There are four kinds of bases that a given consciousness is can appropriate: moisture and heat birth, egg birth, womb birth and apparitional birth.

PadmaVonSamba said:

So, are you now saying that prior to "appropriating" some organic substance, something separate from organic substance, that can be called 'consciousness,' exists?

. . .

Malcolm wrote:

Not exactly. Sentient beings exist in seven locations, the six realms + the bardo. In each one they appropriate a body (one of four kinds) and have done so since beginningless time. Not all bodies are "material" on the coarse material sense of the term.

This is all Elementary Buddhism 101, what I am saying is not even slightly controversial.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, April 3rd, 2014 at 9:02 PM

Title: Re: intoxication and tibetan buddhism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

You are kidding yourself, however, it is really none of my business if you decide to follow a mistaken method.

ovi said:

This mistaken method allowed me end a 14-year old depression in one month of meditation and turn my mind towards Buddhism. It's good enough for me! Plus, I already said that in my case it's quite useful for reaching one-pointed concentration and maintaining it for hours. I don't see how anyone could fool themselves about what I said. Aren't we supposed to master all jhanas long before enlightenment? That is enter it at will, maintain it for as long as we want, leave at will and experience all the factors involved. Cannabis made my entry into the first jhana easier and that's about it; no mastery of even the first jhana; maintaining perfect one-pointed concentration for a few hours every day for a month is likely to get you some partial insight into the truth; reading about the kind of serenity and insight I have to develop shows me that all of my progress is quite meager in strength and I never said otherwise.

Malcolm wrote:

I can see how a stoned person can be in a state of distraction for hours and fool themselves into believing it was one pointed concentration.

ovi said:

What exactly is so wrong about what I said?

Malcolm wrote:

It contradicts every teaching of the Buddha on the nature of intoxicants.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, April 3rd, 2014 at 9:09 PM

Title: Re: intoxication and tibetan buddhism

Content:

ovi said:

I don't want to turn this thread into a place to post endless studies on psychedelics, but you realize that not all studies agree with your conclusions. Furthermore, I don't see how one can reject psychoactive substances in general. Don't you think people should receive treatment for depression, bipolar disorder, anxiety and other disorders if such treatment is useful? None of them are a panacea, but that doesn't reject their usefulness.

Malcolm wrote:

Everything can be medicine and everything can be poison; but that depends on the skill of the physician.

On the other hand, serious meditation practitioners generally avoid all drugs, as well as being intoxicated on alcohol.

In order to discover exactly how deleterious the effects of herb are on meditation, you would have had to have stopped smoking herb completely for at least a year and then resume it to observe its effects on your meditation practice.

Have you done this experiment?

I have. I can report that the effects of smoking herb on one's meditation practice is definitely not good. It leaves one with a cloudy fog which lasts anywhere from a day to a week depending on how much herb one has smoked and its quality. So now I do not smoke herb, nor do I take other kinds of drugs, all of which in my younger days I have done in large quantities. So, you are not speaking with someone who has no personal experience.

Of course, regular people who do not imagine themselves great meditators may do as they please, but not practitioners.

Of course, you may persist in your folly, that is your choice. But at least I have satisfied my obligation to inform you it is a folly.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, April 3rd, 2014 at 11:27 PM

Title: Re: intoxication and tibetan buddhism

Content:

ovi said:

I have smoked in the past, but it never got me out of depression until I combined it with meditation. I was never stoned during the meditation process, I consumed less than 1g/week. You know, your entire argument is flawed simply by claiming your own experience is that of everybody else.

Malcolm wrote:

I am glad you no longer feel depressed, but that fact that meditation is the key that helped you feel less depressed should tell you something about the effects of herb on your persona.

It's simple anatomy and pharmacology.

In any event, you do as you please. The reason why I spoke up is that I have more experience in this department than you. I am older, have been practicing far longer, and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, April 4th, 2014 at 12:34 AM

Title: Re: Difference between consciousness and the mind

Content:

PadmaVonSamba said:

Let's define this concept of appropriation...what that actually means in terms of awareness or consciousness arising with, or somehow interacting with organic (or, inorganic matter, from which organic matter is composed) matter.

Malcolm wrote:

It means that consciousness descends into the womb, in the case of human being, joining with the spermatozoon and oocyte at the moment of conception.

PadmaVonSamba said:

You see, I am asking this because I want to understand why, if awareness appropriates a collection of cells (my body) at some point, or even something formless, why not consider that it appropriates a single cell as well?

Malcolm wrote:

The material aggregate consists of sense organs and sense objects. A cell does not have sense organs. Plants do not have sense organs. Spermatozoa and oocytes do not have sense organs.

In any event, what you are fundamentally suggesting is that a spermatozoon has a consciousness, separate from the consciousness that descends into the womb at the

moment of conception.

If you say "Sentient beings exist in seven locations' then are you not essentially saying that awareness/consciousness appropriates seven different sets of conditions?

. . .[/quote]

I am saying that there are six realms and the bardo; that is where sentient beings live.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, April 4th, 2014 at 12:38 AM

Title: Re: intoxication and tibetan buddhism

Content:

ovi said:

Meditation has been the only and single essential factor. Cannabis was a completely unessential one, yet very helpful, for reasons I have already talked about, that is, its powerful anxiolytic effect that it had upon me, which actually allowed me to meditate. I am well aware that it doesn't work the same way with everybody, it can even be anxiogenic to others, but telling me how I am completely deluded about this aspect isn't meant to be helpful, nor is it true.

Malcolm wrote:

Meditation has been the only and single essential factor.

Then why bother defending herb as useful for Buddhist practice?

I am well aware that it doesn't work the same way with everybody

It pretty much does, despite what you presently believe.

telling me how I am completely deluded about this aspect isn't meant to be helpful, nor is it true

It is both helpful and true.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, April 4th, 2014 at 2:01 AM

Title: Re: Difference between consciousness and the mind

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

In any event, what you are fundamentally suggesting is that a spermatozoon has a consciousness, separate from the consciousness that descends into the womb at the moment of conception.

PadmaVonSamba said:

You know, that theory, which I think is from Padmasambhava, has a lot of holes in it.

. . .

Malcolm wrote:

That teaching is from the Buddha; specifically the Mahāniddana sutta:

"'From consciousness as a requisite condition comes name-and-form.' Thus it has been said. And this is the way to understand how from consciousness as a requisite condition comes name-and-form. If consciousness were not to descend into the mother's womb, would name-and-form take shape in the womb?"

"No, lord."

"If, after descending into the womb, consciousness were to depart, would name-and-form be produced for this world?"

<http://www.accesstoinight.org/tipitaka/dn/dn.15.0.than.html>

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, April 4th, 2014 at 2:02 AM

Title: Re: Difference between consciousness and the mind

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

It means that consciousness descends into the womb, in the case of human being, joining with the spermatozoon and oocyte at the moment of conception.

PadmaVonSamba said:

You are describing what and I am interested in how.

In other word, what "appropriate" entails.

. . .

Malcolm wrote:

If you properly study Dharma, you will understand the how.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, April 4th, 2014 at 10:17 AM

Title: Re: Difference between consciousness and the mind

Content:

Sherab said:

I have two questions for you.

If the two truths are cognitions, what cognition is there for a being who is unconscious? More specifically, what cognition is there for a being in the state of black near

attainment in the death process?

If the two truths are cognitions, and there is no subject-object duality, then cognition is present in rocks, plants, etc., things that we normally think as not having cognitions of any sort. Is this a valid conclusion? If not, why not?

Malcolm wrote:

By definition an unconscious being has no cognitions.

Second, luminosity is the object of the mind of the black near attainment.

When there is no subject object duality, then according to the Yogacara school there are no further cognitions of things like rocks and trees, which are understood to be mind only. That absence of subject/object duality aka mind only, is understood by them to be ultimate truth. The appearances of rocks and trees are understood to be relative.

For Madhyamaka the cognition of subject and object is considered relative, when it is understood and realized that all phenomena are empty, that correct cognition is termed ultimate truth and subject and object cognition ceases.

So, your conclusion is not valid, and misses the barn by a wide mark.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, April 5th, 2014 at 8:48 PM

Title: Re: Difference between consciousness and the mind

Content:

Sherab said:

So does an unconscious being has a mind if there is no cognition whatsoever?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, it continues as the ālayavijñāna, for example, in nirodha-samapatti.

Sherab said:

Isn't it the case that for an untrained being, he is unconscious at the time of black near attainment? If yes, can an unconscious being at the time of black near attainment has luminosity as the object of his mind?

Malcolm wrote:

It is not that an untrained being is unconscious. He or she is simply not able to recognize the moment of luminosity when it occurs because it is very brief.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, April 5th, 2014 at 8:56 PM

Title: Re: Difference between consciousness and the mind

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

If you properly study Dharma, you will understand the how.

Andrew108 said:

I thought you were against Ad Hominem remarks?

Malcolm wrote:

It was not an hominem remark; it was a simple observation.

Andrew108 said:

Your position is based on belief. It's similar to a Christian saying that you need to study the Bible some more in order to understand the resurrection.

Malcolm wrote:

My position is based on understanding what the Buddha said. I have not made any truth claims for it.

Andrew108 said:

If a consciousness was able to 'descend into a womb' then there are some logical inconsistencies with that.

1. You have to get the timing right. Can't descend too soon and can't be too late. So how does a disembodied consciousness get so good at timing?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, the timing, etc., have to be right. There are many things that must come together, it must be the right parents, etc.

Andrew108 said:

2. You need the consciousness of the mother and father to create the conditions for the entry of a third consciousness. Which is more important for life, the consciousness of the mother and father or the consciousness of the third party?

Malcolm wrote:

Indeed, they have to be having sex. That requires that they are conscious beings, of course. One has to have all three things. In other words, parents engaging in sex (in the case of a human birth), and a gandharva that seeks rebirth.

Andrew108 said:

3. The disembodied consciousness must exist somewhere before descending into the womb. What is the nature of the place where the consciousness exists prior to the descent?

Malcolm wrote:

The bardo.

Andrew108 said:

Is it a bounded place?

Malcolm wrote:

No. Its more like a phase. You should read Birth, Life and Death by ChNN. He has a beautiful description of the bardo, and so on.

Andrew108 said:

Is it locatable? Is it another dimension? What is the relationship between that place and the dimension of our physical reality? In what way can they interact? The non-physical penetrating the physical?

Malcolm wrote:

Physical reality is merely an (strong) illusion. There is no physical reality in fact. In the end, the only thing that is "real" is consciousness.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, April 5th, 2014 at 9:33 PM

Title: Re: Difference between consciousness and the mind

Content:

Sherab said:

So does an unconscious being has a mind if there is no cognition whatsoever?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, it continues as the ālayavijñāna, for example, in nirodha-samapatti.

Sherab said:

Isn't it the case that for an untrained being, he is unconscious at the time of black near attainment? If yes, can an unconscious being at the time of black near attainment has luminosity as the object of his mind?

Malcolm wrote:

It is not that an untrained being is unconscious. He or she is simply not able to recognize the moment of luminosity when it occurs because it is very brief.

Sherab said:

Since you held earlier that the two truths are only cognitions, then in the above two instances, there can be no two truths since there are no cognitions.

This implies that the two truths as cognitions is subjective. Therefore your positing of two truths as cognitions is implicitly in a framework that is not free from subject-object duality.



Malcolm wrote:

Well, the way Candrakirti defines the two truths is a little more precise: he states that the two truths are the object of either true or false cognitions respectively. In this case then, luminosity would be an ultimate truth. However, when luminosity is not correctly perceived, it becomes a relative truth; when it is correctly perceived, it is an ultimate truth.

The point however is that the truths are defined on the basis of veridical or false cognitions, so as a shorthand, I place the emphasis on the cognitions since they are the defining factor.

So yes, the two truths are conventionally subjective, they are not objective. The object of a veridical cognition, dharmatā śūnyatā, is the ultimate truth. Nevertheless, the realization of ultimately truth comes when one's mind is truly synchronized with how things are (yatha bhutaṃ) and the apparent duality of subject and object vanishes since it is not there to begin with.

While one is confined to relative truth cognitions (including relative formulations of ultimate truths) one is necessarily confined to subject/object duality. There is no conceivable way to avoid this as long as we are using words and concepts.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, April 5th, 2014 at 9:52 PM

Title: Re: Nature of awareness

Content:

Jesse said:

So what is it? Does it arise from our physical form (Brain, nervous system etc), Is it a natural phenomena of the universe (Gravity, Space, Time, etc).

What is the difference between my awareness, and everyone else's? Does it even exist separately for each individual?, if not why is my experience so seemingly separate from everyone else, then.

Malcolm wrote:

This is the Buddhist perspective:

Awareness is a mental factor. It belongs to consciousness and arises with it. A consciousness is not always aware, for example, when it is in a state of cessation.

Your awareness is a mental factor of your consciousness, it belongs only to you.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, April 5th, 2014 at 10:57 PM

Title: Re: Difference between consciousness and the mind

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

.. There is no conceivable way to avoid this as long as we are using words and concepts.

Sherab said:

So you agree that your holding of the two truths as merely cognitions is within a framework of subject-object duality. If so, then there can be no objectivity of such a model of the two truths because such truths will disappear for beings in the two instances I mentioned earlier. I don't think your quoting of Chandrakirti's take on the two truth support your view that the two truths are merely cognitions because it is equally applicable in the model that I have described. In the model that I described, the two truths do not disappear for beings that are unconscious because unlike your model, the model is not tied to the perspective of individual beings.

Malcolm wrote:

First, I don't recall the model you described. This thread is complicated and our discussion has long since departed from the main body of the thread.

In the Madhyamaka model, the two truths are merely cognitions (veridical or false) of one and the same object.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, April 5th, 2014 at 11:44 PM

Title: Re: Difference between consciousness and the mind

Content:

Andrew108 said:

You need the consciousness of the mother and father to create the conditions for the entry of a third consciousness. Which is more important for life, the consciousness of the mother and father or the consciousness of the third party?

Malcolm wrote:

Indeed, they have to be having sex. That requires that they are conscious beings, of course. One has to have all three things. In other words, parents engaging in sex (in the case of a human birth), and a gandharva that seeks rebirth.

PadmaVonSamba said:

Science has long proved that actual sexual union is not needed (in other words, a "test-tube baby").

Furthermore, cloning can also produce another being.

. . .

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, we would call these moisture and heat births...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, April 5th, 2014 at 11:47 PM

Title: Re: Difference between consciousness and the mind

Content:

PadmaVonSamba said:

But YOU said:

Malcolm wrote:

Indeed, they have to be having sex. ...parents engaging in sex (in the case of a human birth)

PadmaVonSamba said:

. . .

Malcolm wrote:

In general, when we are talking about the normal mode of conception for human beings. Test tube babies, cloning, etc., do not really alter what Buddhism has to say about conception.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, April 6th, 2014 at 9:34 AM

Title: Re: Difference between consciousness and the mind

Content:

PadmaVonSamba said:

...

Malcolm wrote:

No, it does not change anything at all about what Buddhism has to say about conception since there are generally four modes of conception according to the Buddha.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, April 6th, 2014 at 9:52 AM

Title: Re: Nature of awareness

Content:

Jesse said:

So what is it? Does it arise from our physical form (Brain, nervous system etc), Is it a natural phenomena of the universe (Gravity, Space, Time, etc).

What is the difference between my awareness, and everyone else's? Does it even exist separately for each individual?, if not why is my experience so seemingly separate from everyone else, then.

Malcolm wrote:

This is the Buddhist perspective:

Awareness is a mental factor. It belongs to consciousness and arises with it. A consciousness is not always aware, for example, when it is in a state of cessation.

Your awareness is a mental factor of your consciousness, it belongs only to you.

Vajraprajnakhadga said:

That seems to almost be the opposite of what I've been taught. Dzogchen teachings essentially posit that mirror-like awareness is the very essence of what we are, and that it is not a thing ultimately.

Malcolm wrote:

Which Tibetan word do you mean by the term "awareness"?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, April 6th, 2014 at 8:05 PM

Title: Re: Difference between consciousness and the mind

Content:

Gwenn Dana said:

Hmmmm. I just read this:

Outside of neuroscience biologists, Humberto Maturana and Francisco Varela contributed their Santiago theory of cognition in which they wrote:

Living systems are cognitive systems, and living as a process is a process of cognition. This statement is valid for all organisms, with or without a nervous system.[5]

This theory contributes a perspective that cognition is a process present at organic levels that we don't usually consider to be aware. Given the possible relationship between awareness and cognition, and consciousness, this theory contributes an interesting perspective in the philosophical and scientific dialogue of awareness and living systems theory.

It would be interesting to hear Malcolm's thoughts on this.

Best wishes

Gwenn

Malcolm wrote:

The classical division in Buddhadharma is that there is sentient life and non-sentient life. In some higher Dzogchen texts, it is suggested that even a division of sentient vs. non-

sentient is merely conventional and not actual, not to be believed.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, April 6th, 2014 at 8:08 PM

Title: Re: Nature of awareness

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Which Tibetan word do you mean by the term "awareness"?

Vajraprajnakhadga said:

In this particular context it would be rigpa.

Malcolm wrote:

"Rigpa", vidyā means "to know". It is not a mental factor.

When I discuss awareness as a mental factor, I am referring to the mental operation of taking note of an object.

aware (adj.)

late Old English gewær, from Proto-Germanic \*ga-waraz (cognates: Old Saxon giwar, Middle Dutch gheware, Old High German giwar, German gewahr), from \*ga-, intensive prefix, + waraz "wary, cautious" (see wary).

<http://www.etymonline.com/index.php>

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, April 6th, 2014 at 8:28 PM

Title: Re: Nature of awareness

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

When I discuss awareness as a mental factor, I am referring to the mental operation of taking note of an object.

jeeprs said:

I believe that is usually given in English as 'apperception':

The mental process by which a person makes sense of an idea by assimilating it to the body of ideas he or she already possesses.

Malcolm wrote:

No, I am referring to the act of taking note of an object, whether inner or outer; so it is a more basic cognitive function.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, April 6th, 2014 at 9:56 PM

Title: Re: Difference between consciousness and the mind

Content:

PadmaVonSamba said:

Yes, it does. Totally. It shows that consciousness can just as easily plop itself down into (or as you say, "appropriate" ) a petri dish or a test tube just as easily as a woman's abdomen.

You have suggested all sorts of reasons why consciousness is specifically this or that, or can only go here or there or arise with one kind of thing or another.

It seems that consciousness thinks otherwise.

. . .

alpha said:

The way i see it copulation is not a precondition for rebirth.

But there is a question i don't know the answer for .In the absence of copulation on what basis does the consciousness chooses to become a male or a female since the male and female(as a couple copulating) are absent as a basis on which to feel attraction or repulsion ?

Malcolm wrote:

As mentioned above, there are four birth types.

Karma is the primary determinant of gender. However, according to Tibetan Medicine and Ayurveda, gender is not fixed until the third week after conception, and can be changed using various medicines and rites.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, April 6th, 2014 at 10:23 PM

Title: Re: Difference between consciousness and the mind

Content:

Sherab said:

Sorry Alpha, I misread your earlier post.

There can be the karma that ripens a being for rebirth is one that does not involve copulating couple, such as birth in the hell realm and birth in the gods realm. Other births that do not involve copulating couples are also mentioned in Buddhist text such as birth from heat and moisture but I do not know how such a birth maps to birth as understood in modern biology. But as I understand it, the karma for such a birth must ripen in a being for that being to take such a birth.

alpha said:

I meant the IVF process where in the absence of copulating couple, there is no basis on which the consciousness that takes rebirth to generate feelings of revulsion or attraction. Since the basis (the couple copulating) on which the consciousness usually generates attraction and revulsion is missing, how does the consciousness chooses if it will be a male or a female?

Malcolm wrote:

It doesn't. Gender is determined mostly by past karma.

Bardo beings are clairvoyant. One presumes that they are aware of the intention of parents to conceive during the IVF process and take that chance.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, April 6th, 2014 at 10:57 PM

Title: Re: Difference between consciousness and the mind

Content:

alpha said:

Can a mother by manipulating the internal winds in the first three weeks of conception knowingly attract a particular type of consciousness ?

Malcolm wrote:

I don't think so. The moment of conception requires a viable sperm, egg and a consciousness seeking rebirth.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, April 7th, 2014 at 1:40 AM

Title: Re: Difference between consciousness and the mind

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

However, according to Tibetan Medicine and Ayurveda, gender is not fixed until the third week after conception, and can be changed using various medicines and rites.

dzogchungpa said:

That's not actually true though, is it?

Malcolm wrote:

As far as I am concerned it is.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, April 7th, 2014 at 7:08 PM

Title: Re: Difference between consciousness and the mind

Content:

PadmaVonSamba said:

The idea that gender is determined by past karma is linked to the (cultural) notion that birth as a female is an unfortunate event somehow due to negative actions in the past.

Vajraprajnakhadga said:

That is not a universal perspective. Nyingma in particular have yogini traditions where female birth is seen as auspicious. The view that male rebirth is superior is rooted in patriarchal monasticism, nothing more.

Malcolm wrote:

No, it is a practical observation. Women have more illnesses, they endure the hardship of childbirth, menstruation, etc. It is for this reason that there are many sutras where women are encouraged to desire rebirth as men in their next life.

On the other hand, as you note, in all highest yoga tantra traditions, the negative view of female birth is reversed because all women have the nature of prajñā. This is not an especially "Nyingma" perspective.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, April 7th, 2014 at 7:10 PM

Title: Re: Difference between consciousness and the mind

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The classical division in Buddhadharma is that there is sentient life and non-sentient life. In some higher Dzogchen texts, it is suggested that even a division of sentient vs. non-sentient is merely conventional and not actual, not to be believed.

Gwenn Dana said:

Thank you. Models apparently are not always as unanimous as one might think, even in a similar context.

odysseus said:

Sure, but this doesn't mean that plants etc. are sentient. It means that there is no duality between sentience and non-sentience as one realizes emptiness.

Malcolm wrote:

It means that everything is the state of wisdom (jñāna) right from the beginning.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, April 7th, 2014 at 7:12 PM

Title: Re: Difference between consciousness and the mind

Content:

PadmaVonSamba said:

The idea that gender is determined by past karma is linked to the (cultural) notion that birth as a female is an unfortunate event somehow due to negative actions in the past.



Vajraprajnakhadga said:

That is not a universal perspective. Nyingma in particular have yogini traditions where female birth is seen as auspicious. The view that male rebirth is superior is rooted in patriarchal monasticism, nothing more.

PadmaVonSamba said:

True. It is not universal. But is that attitude the exception? Must a female be exceptional in some way, in order for it to be considered that her birth as a female was not the result of negative karma?

. . .

Malcolm wrote:

In general, in Indian Buddhism, female birth is considered a disadvantage. A term often seen in sutras is "skye dman", inferior birth, used frequently for women. It is based on a Sanskrit original, but I forget what it is, something like hinajati.

It does not mean that women cannot achieve awakening, it means however they have some obstacles men do not have.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, April 7th, 2014 at 7:15 PM

Title: Re: The basis is one's unfabricated mind

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

After the collapse of the previous universe, there are no buddhas and sentient beings -- and this is called the bardo of samsara and nirvana. Present in the latent basis however is a neutral awareness which does not know itself.

Because of traces of action and affliction remain from previous universe, the basis is stirred, lights shine out, and they are either recognized or not, resulting in samasara and nirvana.

This neutral awareness is what happens when someone achieves an incomplete full awakening, for example an arhat or some other form of lesser liberation that can "return to the cause". This is why Dzogchen makes such a big deal about Dzogchen Buddhahood being one that "does not return to the cause".

Emakirikiri said:

Do the atomic body, rainbow body and great transference body all constitute the "does not return to the cause" version of awakening?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, April 10th, 2014 at 9:03 PM

Title: Re: Ordination

Content:

Indrajala said:

[ It was just a formality that orthodox Buddhist traditions demand.

Malcolm wrote:

Hardly.

Indrajala said:

(for example, like how to properly draw up loan contracts with laypeople which is actually attributed to the Buddha who lived in a time with no writing!).

Malcolm wrote:

It is quite likely that some form of writing existed in India during the time of Buddha. It may not have been used to record religious texts, but considering your recent speculations about a Mesopotamian/India connection, it would be absurd to suppose that Indians kept all their financial undertakings in their heads. And given that bark records don't survive long in India...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, April 10th, 2014 at 10:14 PM

Title: Re: Ordination

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

It is quite likely that some form of writing existed in India during the time of Buddha.

Indrajala said:

Show us the evidence. There is no evidence of this as far as I know, and most scholars agree.

Malcolm wrote:

Most scholars at one time agreed that Troy was a myth...further, Megasthenes is not a reliable witness.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, April 10th, 2014 at 11:33 PM

Title: Re: Ordination

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Most scholars at one time agreed that Troy was a myth...further, Megasthenes is not a reliable witness.

Indrajala said:

And why wouldn't he have been a reliable witness? If writing existed you'd have had mention of it in the earliest stratum of Jain and Buddhist literature, but as far as I know there are no such references. You cannot dismiss him as a period witness.

In any case the Vinaya literature reveals multiple layers of historical development. Read Schopen and educate yourself.

Malcolm wrote:

The fact that Vinaya was composed in layers was known a long time before Schopen. Anyone who has studied the three vows literature is already well acquainted with this fact. Read Gorampa (for one) and educate yourself.

According to Schopen, there are no "earliest" records. As you know, he basically does not think anything is reliably datable based on text criticism alone.

Megasthenes had very limited contact with Indian culture and civilization.

We can say with certainty that Ashoka used writing. We cannot say with certainty when writing first was used in India and by whom. All we can really say with certainty is that it, like most other scripts in the ancient world, was based on Western Semitic, where aleph = an Ox.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, April 11th, 2014 at 12:01 AM

Title: Re: Ordination

Content:

Indrajala said:

Megasthenes had very limited contact with Indian culture and civilization. He did live there for some time. Your argument is silly.

Malcolm wrote:

He did not see very much of India. His fragments certainly do not constitute an accurate picture of Indian life in the 4th century BCE.

Indrajala said:

You're saying "it is quite likely that some form of writing existed in India during the time of Buddha." Well, you have no evidence for this.

Malcolm wrote:

There is also no evidence to the contrary apart from a single passage in a fragment by a

Greek Ambassador in a book for which there is no original.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, April 11th, 2014 at 6:22 AM

Title: Re: Ordination

Content:

Indrajala said:

I'm quite solid in my position stating that later developments in Vinaya literature where the Buddha is talking about drawing up loan contracts with people is in fact a much later development and moreover an indication of ignorance on the part of the author(s), who were unaware that writing didn't exist in the Buddha's day.

pueraeternus said:

Even if there were writing at the time of the Buddha, the loan contracts thingy would not make sense, since the Buddha expressively prohibited monastics from handling money (if we believe that part of the Vinaya to be Buddhavacana, which is very likely).

Malcolm wrote:

There were always bursars in monasteries, who were charged with managing money.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, April 11th, 2014 at 6:46 AM

Title: Re: Ordination

Content:

pueraeternus said:

Is there evidence that such bursaries were established during the Buddha's time? The Buddhist community wandered around as travelling mendicants most of the time (except during retreats), were supposed to only have the 4 requisites, cannot handle money, etc. So all these point the bursars towards a later phase in monastic Buddhism.

Malcolm wrote:

There is a difference between a monastic officer handling money and a monk handling money personally. You must recall, the Buddha was gifted with property during his lifetime. There is evidence that within 100 years of the Buddha's PN there were permanent Viharas.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, April 11th, 2014 at 7:41 AM

Title: Re: Ordination

Content:

tingdzin said:

I suggest that the experts out there put their opinions in writing in a refereed journal and have them evaluated by other knowledgeable people. Until then , don't be too dogmatic about your opinions. An internet forum is a pretty small pond.

Malcolm wrote:

Personally, I am not that invested in the issue. I simply find it a little far-fetched to believe that Indians widely adopted a writing system based on a Phoenician script within the 150 year time frame.

Secondly, Indians had concepts of debt and contracts, found in the Vedas on up. Buddha, for example, clearly refers to karma has a kind of a debt. Where there are debts, there must be means of keeping records of such debts, etc.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, April 11th, 2014 at 7:40 PM

Title: Re: Ordination

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Secondly, Indians had concepts of debt and contracts, found in the Vedas on up. Buddha, for example, clearly refers to karma has a kind of a debt. Where there are debts, there must be means of keeping records of such debts, etc.

Indrajala said:

You can keep track of debts with colored stones in jars or ropes tied together.

You don't need writing to keep records. Some Mesoamerican civilizations managed fine with just ropes.

Malcolm wrote:

Indeed, but the fact that Indians were surrounded with people who had writing, and were in contact with people who had writing (Phoenicians, Greeks, Persians, Chinese) makes it unlikely that Indians were unaware of writing.

Basically, I find it unlikely that Indians all of a sudden adopted writing merely because of tenuous contacts with the Greeks. What I am suggesting as a more likely scenario is that Indians used writing for commercial documents, not religious texts, during this period. We have no paper documents at all from the Subcontinent that date earlier than Gandharan finds.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, April 11th, 2014 at 7:44 PM

Title: Re: Kalachakra practice in Sakya

Content:

pueraeternus said:

Recently I attended HHST's Kalachakra empowerment in NYC. I would like to further my study and practice, but could not find any books on Kalachakra specific to the lineage transmitted by HHST (majority are on the Gelugpa transmissions). Is there any book anyone familiar with the tradition can recommend? Or there is no great differences between the various Kalachakra lineages and I can just refer to any available in the market?

Malcolm wrote:

There is very little material by Sakya authors on Kalachakra. For the most part, only Lama Dampa, Takstang Lotsawa and Amyezhabs wrote anything of significance on Kalachakra, unless of course you count Buton as a Sakyapa -- the Gelug lineage comes from him.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, April 11th, 2014 at 7:56 PM

Title: Re: Mahamudra meditation problem: locating the mind

Content:

Andrew108 said:

The brain is not a being inhabiting a body. The body and the brain together make the being.

Malcolm wrote:

If you are a physicalist, yes. However, such a view is incompatible with Buddhadharma. There are five aggregates, not merely one. A sentient being is a stream of consciousness that transmigrates through samsara. If you don't understand this point, you don't understand Buddhadharma, much less Dzogchen, Mahāmudra and so on.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, April 11th, 2014 at 7:57 PM

Title: Re: Mahamudra meditation problem: locating the mind

Content:

Simon E. said:

Indeed. The gnostic/duality view of the 'ghost in the machine' is found nowhere in Buddhadharma.

Malcolm wrote:

There are six dhātus, Simon, not just five. Consciousness is the sixth. The view you enunciate would indicate that there are only five dhātus, earth, water, fire, air and space.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, April 11th, 2014 at 9:52 PM

Title: Re: Mahamudra meditation problem: locating the mind

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

A sentient being is a stream of consciousness that transmigrates through samsara. If you don't understand this point, you don't understand Buddhadharma, much less Dzogchen, Mahāmudra and so on.

M

Andrew108 said:

You mean that if I don't believe this point. I certainly understand the point, but at the moment I choose not to believe it.

Malcolm wrote:

If you don't accept this point, than no matter what you think you understand of the Buddha's teaching you cannot be considered someone who truly grasps its import and meaning. There are many refutations of your point of view even in Dzogchen.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, April 12th, 2014 at 7:40 PM

Title: Re: Mahamudra meditation problem: locating the mind

Content:

Andrew108 said:

At it's most fundamental level, science is saying that objects obey rules. This isn't an assumption. It's not just a construct either. These rules are not conventions or formed by consensus. They are universal. It means that these rules are always applicable even without a consensus.

Malcolm wrote:

Hence for you they are an ultimate truth.

Andrew108 said:

What I have said about consciousness is that it can't be something which is beyond the rules of the physical universe.

Malcolm wrote:

Well, its not physical, so therefore, your contention goes out the window.

Andrew108 said:

This idea that objects obey rules is proof that reality is not just a subjective experience.

Malcolm wrote:

Tell that to a Mahāsiddha.

Andrew108 said:

But the 6 realms model is largely a model where an individual suffers because they are not able to adapt to that environment.

Malcolm wrote:

No, the six realms model is a model which explains six different kinds of perception.

Andrew108 said:

There is no proof of the Buddhist reduction that consciousness exists as a separate entity - as a stream.

Malcolm wrote:

Sure there is: karma and liberation.

Andrew108 said:

The one thing they trust, that they must trust, is reality.

Malcolm wrote:

As long as they are relying ultimate truth (the sole reality), this is fine. But you are suggesting that the conventional truth of physics is ultimate truth, and this will never result in realization.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, April 12th, 2014 at 7:42 PM

Title: Re: Mahamudra meditation problem: locating the mind

Content:

Andrew108 said:

For some people it is difficult to accept that consciousness has a physical basis. For others it is axiomatic.

Malcolm wrote:

For some people it is difficult to accept that matter has a basis in consciousness. For others it is axiomatic.



Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, April 12th, 2014 at 7:43 PM

Title: Re: Mahamudra meditation problem: locating the mind

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

If you don't accept this point, than no matter what you think you understand of the Buddha's teaching you cannot be considered someone who truly grasps its import and meaning. There are many refutations of your point of view even in Dzogchen.

Andrew108 said:

Stay on topic. This thread isn't about me.

Malcolm wrote:

The point is that you have made many statements about what Dzogchen is, about what reality is, which are in deep conflict with Buddhadharma, Dzogchen included.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, April 12th, 2014 at 7:55 PM

Title: Re: Difference between consciousness and the mind

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

In some higher Dzogchen texts, it is suggested that even a division of sentient vs. non-sentient is merely conventional and not actual, not to be believed.

odysseus said:

Sure, but this doesn't mean that plants etc. are sentient. It means that there is no duality between sentience and non-sentience as one realizes emptiness.

Malcolm wrote:

It means that everything is the state of wisdom (jñāna) right from the beginning.

odysseus said:

Looks like both meanings are valid, no discrepancy.

Malcolm wrote:

If you emphasize the emptiness aspect, you will err into annihilation.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, April 12th, 2014 at 8:05 PM

Title: Re: Ordaining as a monk or nun in the west

Content:

Indrajala said:

You could easily train them to do sand mandalas or elaborate pumas.

It would be easier logistically for example to have American monks accompanying some eminent teacher to America.

Malcolm wrote:

It would seem so. However, it takes many years of training to be a ritual attendant, as well as fluency in both spoken and literary Tibetan. Creating sand mandalas is not easy. It is a craft that takes a long time to perfect.

Indrajala said:

Again it just suggests to me that Tibetan Buddhism in general neither wants nor needs monastics from outside their fold, and such sentiments are only reproduced amongst western Tibetan Buddhists who wouldn't spit on you if you were burning on the side of the road.

Malcolm wrote:

Tibetans monasteries are quite happy to take in Westerners in general. What you don't understand is that Tibetan Monasteries in general do not really provide everything for their monks, who depend on families and benefactors for much of their needs. This is one of the sociological reasons for having monks do prayers on one's behalf, etc.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, April 12th, 2014 at 8:14 PM

Title: Re: Mahamudra meditation problem: locating the mind

Content:

Andrew108 said:

I would prefer to say that Science posits truth rather than certainty. Certainty implies the end of the game. The realization itself. I don't trust science sufficiently to believe that it can provide me with realization just by itself. The type of truth science posits concerns the truth of how the world works. In that world objects obey rules. That by itself proves to me that there is an 'objective condition'. The truth of there being an objective condition has implications for my practice.

Malcolm wrote:

Science does no such thing. Scientific inquiry is a process of testing hypothesis, and that is all. There are no scientific truths, there are only the latest in scientific understandings, which are always subject to change and refinement.

Science is very subtle and detailed in its words, but its meaning is a coarse and rough as a pile of sand. By comparison, the words of Buddhadharma are very simple and easy to understand, but its meaning is very deep and profound.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, April 12th, 2014 at 8:16 PM

Title: Re: Kalachakra practice in Sakya

Content:

conebeckham said:

I suppose I should point out that the Jonang lineage, Kalacakra specialists certainly, grew out of the Sakya lineage...

Malcolm wrote:

The Kalacakra of Jonang is not a Sakya lineage, it did not pass through the five founder masters, nor through Tshar or Ngor.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, April 12th, 2014 at 8:17 PM

Title: Re: Kalachakra practice in Sakya

Content:

kirtu said:

<http://vajrasana.org/buddhism.htm> is a teaching that HE Chogye Trichen gave on the Kalchakra.

In general Kalachakra practitioners can fairly openly use sadhana texts (from Berzin). Most of the sadhana texts published are from the Gelug tradition and can be found at the <http://kalachakranet.org/>. Most of the Kalachakra sadhanas are also pretty complex. If you are a student of Khenpo Pema or Lama Kunga then ask them.

There is also a brief sadhana written by Jamgon Kongtrul. This was given out at the Palyul Kalachakra empowerment and teaching that HH Penor Rinpoche gave in 2007.

You could also ask HHST for a Sakya Kalachakra sadhana. HHST said in Kevelaer, Germany that it would be good to practice the Kalachakra but went on to basically note that the empowerment was mostly given as a blessing. Nonetheless, practicing it in the Sakya tradition is in fact possible.

Kirt

Malcolm wrote:

When Chogye Trichen gave Kalacakra, he gave it from the Jonang tradition primarily.

HHST wrote a short sadhana for the Kalacakra in NYC.

I never said it was impossible to practice Kalacakra in Sakya, just that it is not a main practice in Sakya. However, since Chogye Trichen taught it fairly often, perhaps one of his successors will continue his teaching tradition.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, April 12th, 2014 at 10:43 PM

Title: Re: Mahamudra meditation problem: locating the mind

Content:

Andrew108 said:

So the teachings are heuristic? If so then fair enough. But there should be some transparency, because there are many practitioners who are invested in the belief that matter arises out of consciousness.

asunthatneversets said:

No one has suggested that matter arises out of consciousness.

Malcolm wrote:

In fact, space arises from consciousness, and the four elements arise from space. This is a universal explanation of the arising of matter in Dharm texts.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, April 13th, 2014 at 6:28 AM

Title: Re: Kalachakra practice in Sakya

Content:

pueraeternus said:

Thanks Cone and Kirtu.

Malcolm wrote:

HHST wrote a short sadhana for the Kalachakra in NYC.

pueraeternus said:

Yes. It is a really short sadhana. It definitely something to start with, but I am also looking for more substantial texts.

There is this book on Geshe Ngawang Ghargyey's teachings on Kalachakra that he gave at the Sakya Tegchen Choling in Seattle in 1982. Would this be suitable for someone who had initiation from Sakya?

Malcolm wrote:

In Sakya, the main Kalachakra practice is the preliminary practice for the six yogas; it is a simplified form in one face and two arms. Chogy Trichen remarked this was all one needed.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, April 13th, 2014 at 6:29 AM

Title: Re: Difference between consciousness and the mind

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

If you emphasize the emptiness aspect, you will err into annihilation.

odysseus said:

Do elaborate, are you pulling my leg?

Malcolm wrote:

Emptiness alone is insufficient to attain buddhahood.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, April 13th, 2014 at 9:36 AM

Title: Re: Mahamudra meditation problem: locating the mind

Content:

jeeprs said:

So, the sense in which mind 'creates' space is also the sense in which it 'creates' matter..

Malcolm wrote:

Well, no. Matter arises from consciousness directly, i.e. consciousness is the efficient cause of matter, not merely a formal cause in the sense you provide. I already demonstrated this to Andrew that this was the Buddhist view (sutra as well as tantra).

When you understand that consciousness, like matter, is a "dravya", then it all makes sense.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, April 13th, 2014 at 7:06 PM

Title: Re: Mahamudra meditation problem: locating the mind

Content:

jeeprs said:

So, the sense in which mind 'creates' space is also the sense in which it 'creates' matter..

Malcolm wrote:

Well, no. Matter arises from consciousness directly, i.e. consciousness is the efficient cause of matter, not merely a formal cause in the sense you provide. I already demonstrated this to Andrew that this was the Buddhist view (sutra as well as tantra).

When you understand that consciousness, like matter, is a "dravya", then it all makes sense.

M

jeeprs said:

Would you mind pointing out where you demonstrated that?

Malcolm wrote:

Some other thread.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, April 13th, 2014 at 7:11 PM

Title: Re: Mahamudra meditation problem: locating the mind

Content:

PadmaVonSamba said:

[

...because if the idea is that there is some little invisible bubble of thoughts and personality that escapes the body of a dead person, and floats around, perhaps circling like a vulture, looking for people who are copulating so it can plant itself there, as though there is a sort of condensed version of a particular person, that's off base. But I think it is what a lot of people think rebirth means.

Malcolm wrote:

What continues is the stream of aggregates, consciousness being the chief of them. Consciousness is defined as a (partless) moment of clarity. These moments are serial and independent from the serial moments of the consciousness of others.

PadmaVonSamba said:

So, if one asks, "well, what exactly is it that gets reborn?" , it is exactly what is reborn moment to moment in one's daily life, that is not dependent on a never-changing body. If you start a fire in the woods, and then ext moment, you die, the fire does not die. It keeps burning. Yet, a fire is not the same thing from one second to the next either. each part of the wood causes another part of the wood to ignite. This is a poor analogy to how karma works, meaning how a set of habitual actions established at one time can continue to have a reverberating effect and remanifest themselves accordingly at a later time, even after the person's body is dead.

. . .

Malcolm wrote:

This sort of treatment is the post-modern version of "rebirth". It is not what the Buddha taught, however. In reality, the Buddha taught that one's five aggregates continue into the next world. It is foolish to deny that this is what the Buddha taught. You may not accept it, you may think it is nonsense, but if so, you are not really a student of the

Buddha. It bears repeating that Buddha taught four kinds of liberated persons in terms of how many rebirths and in what realm (desire realm or form realm) it would take them to achieve final nirvana. Dzogchen tantras especially spend a great deal of time discussing rebirth and the bardo, and they do not mean this symbolically. To discard rebirth then is to discard the whole of the Buddha's Dharma and to replace it with some post-modern intellectualism as you have done here.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, April 13th, 2014 at 7:36 PM

Title: Re: Mahamudra meditation problem: locating the mind

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

In fact, space arises from consciousness, and the four elements arise from space. This is a universal explanation of the arising of matter in Dharm texts.

dzogchungpa said:

Did the historical Buddha teach this?

Malcolm wrote:

Indeed.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, April 13th, 2014 at 7:37 PM

Title: Re: Kalachakra practice in Sakya

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

In Sakya, the main Kalacakra practice is the preliminary practice for the six yogas; it is a simplified form in one face and two arms. Chogye Trichen remarked this was all one needed.

M

pueraeternus said:

Noted, thanks. That should be easily found.

Malcolm wrote:

I am not sure the text has been translated. But it is in the collection of main daily sadhanas used in Sakya.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, April 13th, 2014 at 7:40 PM

Title: Re: More faith in Amitabha than bardo of dharmata

Content:

ConradTree said:

Of course I believe in bardo of dharmata. As Namdrol says, the realization of rainbow body occurs IN the bardo of dharmata:

Malcolm wrote:

rainbow body you realize the exhaustion of phenomena while in the bardo of dharmatā i.e. during thugdam.

ConradTree said:

Obviously rainbow body occurs, so obviously bardo of dharmata occurs.

However I have come to believe that bardo of dharmata only appears for long dedicated Dzogchen practitioners who have made significant progress.

Malcolm wrote:

Bardo of dharmatā occurs for everyone, but only experienced practitioners can recognize it.

ConradTree said:

Why is there no mention of bardo of dharmata before Dzogchen Menngagde for example?

Malcolm wrote:

Because the bardo of Dharmatā is connected with thögal.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, April 14th, 2014 at 1:47 AM

Title: Re: Mahamudra meditation problem: locating the mind

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

In reality, the Buddha taught that one's five aggregates continue into the next world. It is foolish to deny that this is what the Buddha taught.

dzogchungpa said:

Even the rupa skandha?

Malcolm wrote:

Of course. When your consciousness leaves this body at the moment of death in the very next moment you appropriate a subtle material body in the bardo. In other words,



bardo beings also have all five aggregates.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, April 14th, 2014 at 1:48 AM

Title: Re: Mahamudra meditation problem: locating the mind

Content:

PadmaVonSamba said:

Essentially, it is what the Buddha taught:

What we are today comes from our thoughts of yesterday,  
and our present thoughts build our life of tomorrow: our life is the creation of our mind.  
-The Dhammapada

Malcolm wrote:

Please see:

<http://www.fakebuddhaquotes.com/our-life-is-the-creation-of-our-mind/>

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, April 14th, 2014 at 1:51 AM

Title: Re: Mahamudra meditation problem: locating the mind

Content:

PadmaVonSamba said:

What you propose is exactly what you refute elsewhere,  
something permanent that constitutes an individual self (atman).

Malcolm wrote:

I did not suggest this.

PadmaVonSamba said:

The aggregates are not a self.

Malcolm wrote:

No kidding.

PadmaVonSamba said:

They are more like the leaves that are on a tree in spring and summer, arranged for a lifetime,  
then blow apart in the autumn, when a person dies  
only to regather again in a raked up pile, which is the next rebirth.

Malcolm wrote:

No, there is a serial continuity, albeit momentary in nature. Otherwise, there would be no causal continuity of traces.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, April 14th, 2014 at 1:58 AM

Title: Re: Mahamudra meditation problem: locating the mind

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

What continues is the stream of aggregates, consciousness being the chief of them. Consciousness is defined as a (partless) moment of clarity. These moments are serial and independent from the serial moments of the consciousness of others.

Andrew108 said:

You have said that space arises from consciousness. Then you have defined consciousness as a partless moment of clarity that is serial and independent. So exactly, in what way does space arise from consciousness? Does it arise serially in the same way as consciousness and is it then independent of the consciousness of others?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, but you have to understand what "space" means in Buddhist terms; in this case it refers to absence of obstruction. So space arises from consciousness, just as consciousness itself arises from luminosity [od gsal].

For example, I demonstrated to you before that the five "empty" atoms (meaning very subtle, i.e., the tanmatras actually) in Kalacakra arise from the karmic winds which are produced by consciousness; these then form the basis for the coarse particles and so on. The universe and the elements within it arise from the collective actions of all sentient beings. This is a principle that is very well established from Abhidharma up to Dzogchen.

It is never that case in Dharma that any one thing is produced from a single cause; all conditioned things are produced from causes and conditions conventionally speaking. When it is asserted in a Buddhist context that matter arises from mind it does not mean that one mind produces all matter; it means that all matter is produced by all minds.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, April 14th, 2014 at 2:06 AM

Title: Re: More faith in Amitabha than bardo of dharmata

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Because the bardo of Dharmatā is connected with thögal.

ConradTree said:

Yes that's my entire point.

Bardo of dharmata only appears for long dedicated thogal practitioners.

Malcolm wrote:

No, it appears to everyone. The explanation of the bardo of dharmatā however is connected with thogal. Thogal can be seen as a method to recognize this bardo if you do not achieve rainbow body in this life (most won't).

Further, you don't have to be some long dedicated practitioner. If you have confidence in the experience of the first vision, this is sufficient for recognizing the bardo of dharmatā.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, April 14th, 2014 at 2:15 AM

Title: Re: Mahamudra meditation problem: locating the mind

Content:

PadmaVonSamba said:

And what exactly experiences these aggregates, these moments of clarity, this consciousness?

. . .

Malcolm wrote:

Clarity/consciousness/mind, etc; that is the "what".

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, April 14th, 2014 at 2:38 AM

Title: Re: When did "mindfulness" become "mindfulness"?

Content:

Jikan said:

This is a historical or geneological question: at what point was point #7 of the Eightfold Path first translated as "mindfulness" and not some other term (I mean first documented instance)? At what point did "mindfulness" become the most common English word to use in such translations? It seems to me that other words had been used as recently as the mid-20th century, but by the early 1970s, mindfulness was the industry standard.

Any guidance from those who are knowledgeable in the history of such translations will be warmly welcomed. Thank you!

Malcolm wrote:

mindful (adj.) Look up mindful at Dictionary.com

mid-14c., from mind (n.) + -ful. Related: Mindfully; mindfulness. Old English myndful meant "of good memory." Old English also had myndig (adj.) "mindful, recollecting; thoughtful," which if it had lived might have yielded a modern \*mindy.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, April 14th, 2014 at 2:44 AM

Title: Re: Kalachakra practice in Sakya

Content:

conebeckham said:

I suppose I should point out that the Jonang lineage, Kalacakra specialists certainly, grew out of the Sakya lineage...

Malcolm wrote:

The Kalacakra of Jonang is not a Sakya lineage, it did not pass through the five founder masters, nor through Tshar or Ngor.

conebeckham said:

Sure. Never meant to imply otherwise. But masters of the Jonang were originally Sakyapas, before they became Kalachakrapadas, right? And later Jonang masters wrote authoritatively about Sakya practice, as well..including the Kama traditions of Kilaya and Vishuddha....

Malcolm wrote:

Only Dolbupa. The Sakyas and the Karma Kagyus both try and take credit for Jonang. The truth is that Jonang has influence from both.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, April 14th, 2014 at 2:47 AM

Title: Re: Mahamudra meditation problem: locating the mind

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, but you have to understand what "space" means in Buddhist terms; in this case it refers to absence of obstruction. So space arises from consciousness, just as consciousness itself arises from luminosity [od gsal].

For example, I demonstrated to you before that the five "empty" atoms (meaning very subtle, i.e., the tanmatras actually) in Kalacakra arise from the karmic winds which are produced by consciousness; these then form the basis for the coarse particles and so on. The universe and the elements within it arise from the collective actions of all sentient beings. This is a principle that is very well established from Abhidharma up to Dzogchen.

It is never that case in Dharma that any one thing is produced from a single cause; all conditioned things are produced from causes and conditions conventionally speaking. When it is asserted in a Buddhist context that matter arises from mind it does not mean that one mind produces all matter; it means that all matter is produced by all minds.

M

Andrew108 said:

Just a quick comment. It seems that you are saying consciousness and space are both inside and outside the individual. There is the sense here that space and consciousness are pervasive.

Malcolm wrote:

I am saying that the universe arises from karma and karma is created by the (afflicted) mind. If all sentient beings were to attain buddhahood, it is certain the (defiled) universe would vanish, never to reappear.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, April 14th, 2014 at 2:53 AM

Title: Re: Kalachakra practice in Sakya

Content:

conebeckham said:

Taranatha wrote about Lam Dre, liRC, and certainly about Kilaya and Vishuddha, right?

Also, Shangpa practices were and are obviously included in Jonang.

Malcolm wrote:

Sure, Jonang inherited a lot of Sakya practices, but it also went the other way. There are a lot of practice in Sakya from Jonang originally. HHST made the comment the other day that the Jonang schools was the original Rimed tradition.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, April 14th, 2014 at 3:48 AM

Title: Re: More faith in Amitabha than bardo of dharmata

Content:

ConradTree said:

Then how come only at a certain point do the visions occur during sleep?

This is where my recent doubt stems from.

Malcolm wrote:

Sleep is like death, by analogy; but it is not death since one is still connected with this life's body.

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Monday, April 14th, 2014 at 3:49 AM  
Title: Re: The clear light of pure reality experience  
Content:  
ConradTree said:  
I'm going by the teachings, nothing else.

Denying that clear light has to do with deep sleep contradicts every book on the subject and Malcolm.

I can consciously enter deep sleep via the lion's posture after about 6 months of trying. The mind is like a serene lake.

Malcolm wrote:  
Clear light is a state of wisdom; deep sleep is a state of ignorance. When you are sleeping in clear light, that is because you were able to recognize it while falling asleep. Only great practitioners can do this. We can just try.

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Monday, April 14th, 2014 at 3:54 AM  
Title: Re: The clear light of pure reality experience  
Content:  
Malcolm wrote:  
Clear light is a state of wisdom; deep sleep is a state of ignorance. When you are sleeping in clear light, that is because you were able to recognize it while falling asleep. Only great practitioners can do this. We can just try.

ConradTree said:  
So you do agree its consciously entering the deep sleep state from say the lions posture?

Malcolm wrote:  
It does not depend on posture. It is most easily accomplished by going either guru yoga or meditating one's yidam at the heart while falling asleep without distraction.

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Monday, April 14th, 2014 at 4:00 AM  
Title: Re: The clear light of pure reality experience  
Content:  
ConradTree said:  
So you do agree its about consciously entering the sleep state?

Malcolm wrote:  
Its about falling asleep in a state of recognition of the nature of the mind while the winds withdraw into the heart cakra.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, April 14th, 2014 at 4:31 AM

Title: Re: More faith in Amitabha than bardo of dharmata

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Sleep is like death, by analogy; but it is not death since one is still connected with this life's body.

ConradTree said:

If exhaustion of phenomena for regular rainbow body occurs at bardo of dharmata, then bardo of dharmata must occur before separation with body,

Malcolm wrote:

It occurs after.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, April 14th, 2014 at 4:38 AM

Title: Re: The clear light of pure reality experience

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Its about falling asleep in a state of recognition of the nature of the mind while the winds withdraw into the heart cakra.

while falling asleep without distraction.

ConradTree said:

So you do agree its about falling asleep with some kind of awareness?

Because that's what I was trying to convey.

Malcolm wrote:

It is "awareness" of a very specific kind.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, April 14th, 2014 at 4:38 AM

Title: Re: More faith in Amitabha than bardo of dharmata

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

It occurs after.

ConradTree said:

See:

Malcolm wrote:

rainbow body you realize the exhaustion of phenomena while in the bardo of dharmatā i.e. during THUGDAM.

Yes, there is no contradiction. At this point is impossible to revive the person. We can consider therefore the link between body and mind has been severed.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, April 14th, 2014 at 4:43 AM

Title: Re: More faith in Amitabha than bardo of dharmata

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, there is no contradiction. At this point is impossible to revive the person. We can consider therefore the link between body and mind has been severed.

ConradTree said:

If the link has been severed, you wouldn't get rainbow body phenomena like shrinking.

Malcolm wrote:

If the link had not been severed, you could revive the person.

"Shrinking" is not rainbow body.

In any event, exhaustion of dharmatā happens more easily in the bardo. Only the very best of the best practitioners show any signs of rainbow body at all. Most practitioners get realization in the bardo of dharmatā. Please consult birth, life and death where this process is explained very well.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, April 14th, 2014 at 4:51 AM

Title: Re: More faith in Amitabha than bardo of dharmata

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

In any event, exhaustion of dharmatā happens more easily in the bardo. Only the very best of the best practitioners show any signs of rainbow body at all. Most practitioners get realization in the bardo of dharmatā. Please consult birth, life and death where this process is explained very well.

ConradTree said:

I get it. It all about recognizing the bardo of dharmata.

My concern was whether bardo of dharmata really appears for everyone.

Malcolm wrote:

It really appears to everyone, down to the tiniest creature.



Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, April 14th, 2014 at 4:52 AM

Title: Re: The clear light of pure reality experience

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

It is "awareness" of a very specific kind.

ConradTree said:

Would you even be able to be aware while falling asleep, if you did not have that specific kind of awareness?

Malcolm wrote:

For example, lucid dreaming and so on, are all techniques of being aware while falling asleep; but they will not necessarily lead to resting in the state of luminosity.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, April 14th, 2014 at 5:03 AM

Title: Re: The clear light of pure reality experience

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

For example, lucid dreaming and so on, are all techniques of being aware while falling asleep; but they will not necessarily lead to resting in the state of luminosity.

ConradTree said:

I don't follow that New Age stuff, so I wouldn't know.

But you do agree that clear light is about falling asleep with trekcho?

Because that's what I was trying to convey.

Malcolm wrote:

It depends on whether you are emphasizing the emptiness aspect or the clarity aspect.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, April 14th, 2014 at 5:22 AM

Title: Re: The clear light of pure reality experience

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

It depends on whether you are emphasizing the emptiness aspect or the clarity aspect.

ConradTree said:

I emphasize relaxing in the state of knowledge, having definitively recognized ma bcos shes pa skad cig ma.

Malcolm wrote:

Well, the experience of clear light during sleep manifests differently depending on whether you have developed the visions. But you should really hear this from a qualified teacher.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, April 14th, 2014 at 5:29 AM

Title: Re: The clear light of pure reality experience

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Well, the experience of clear light during sleep manifests differently depending on whether you have developed the visions.

ConradTree said:

Yes I brought this up in the other thread. Why does this occur?

Malcolm wrote:

Because the visions are part of clear light.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, April 14th, 2014 at 5:39 AM

Title: Re: The clear light of pure reality experience

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Because the visions are part of clear light.

ConradTree said:

Yes, but I'm curious why our sleep yoga's experience would be different than KDL's sleep yoga experience?

It must have something to do with channels and stuff.

Malcolm wrote:

It might have to do with the fact that he did a seven year retreat on thogal.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, April 14th, 2014 at 6:01 AM

Title: Re: Mahamudra meditation problem: locating the mind

Content:

smcj said:

I take note of the traditional reticence of the Buddha to discuss whether the Universe has a beginning or not. I might be completely mistaken in that regard, and if so, I will have to live with it.

Tibetan cosmology isn't shy like that. It has the universe ending and then reappearing anew endlessly. The causal factor for the reappearance is the leftover karma of sentient being from the previous universe. I think what Malcolm is saying is that if at the end of one universe everybody attained buddhahood, then the next universe would never appear.

Malcolm wrote:

Correct, that is what I am saying.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, April 14th, 2014 at 6:01 AM

Title: Re: Mahamudra meditation problem: locating the mind

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

I am saying that the universe arises from karma and karma is created by the (afflicted) mind. If all sentient beings were to attain buddhahood, it is certain the (defiled) universe would vanish, never to reappear.

jeeprs said:

Well, I can't understand that. I interpret 'the world' to be 'the umwelt', the 'life-world' or 'meaning-world'. I take note of the traditional reticence of the Buddha to discuss whether the Universe has a beginning or not. I might be completely mistaken in that regard, and if so, I will have to live with it.

Malcolm wrote:

No, he was not afraid to discuss whether a given universe cycle had a beginning or not. He was averse to discussing whether the whole process of arising and destruction of universes had a beginning, i.e. he refused to discuss first causes, considering such discussions as fruitless.

The consequence of your view is that you are every bit as much a realist as A108.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, April 14th, 2014 at 6:02 AM

Title: Re: The clear light of pure reality experience

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

It might have to do with the fact that he did a seven year retreat on thogal.

ConradTree said:

That's exactly why I believe bardo of dharmata does not occur for everyone.

Malcolm wrote:  
Well, you are wrong.

M

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Monday, April 14th, 2014 at 6:11 AM  
Title: Re: Mahamudra meditation problem: locating the mind  
Content:  
jeeprs said:  
The consequence of your view is that you are every bit as much a realist as A108.  
No that is not the case but from experience it is most likely pointless to argue about it.

Malcolm wrote:  
Whatever the case may be; however, the teaching of the Buddha is that a given world system physically arises because of the collective action of the all the sentient beings who have the karma to be in it.

M

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Monday, April 14th, 2014 at 6:22 AM  
Title: Re: Mahamudra meditation problem: locating the mind  
Content:  
jeeprs said:  
It is not anywhere within the Universe itself but is pre-existent. That is more neo-platonist than Buddhist, I acknowledge that.

Malcolm wrote:  
It is not Buddhist at all. Which is fine, but there is nothing in Buddhism, even in Dzogchen, which remotely resembles this idea.

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Monday, April 14th, 2014 at 7:05 AM  
Title: Re: Kalachakra practice in Sakya  
Content:  
Malcolm wrote:  
I am not sure the text has been translated. But it is in the collection of main daily sadhanas used in Sakya.

pueraeternus said:  
From these 2 websites, it seems HHST was transmitted the Kalachakra from both HHDL and Chogye Trichen Rinpoche (6 different lineages). Do you happen to know for the recent NYC transmissions, which lineage he transmitted?

<http://sakyausa.org/h-h-sakya-trizin/>

[http://www.gemsofyogadubai.com/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=21&Itemid=117](http://www.gemsofyogadubai.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=21&Itemid=117)

Malcolm wrote:

The Vajramala is collection of template empowerments, so it is a full empowerment, but less elaborate than the two main traditions of Kalachakra (Rwa and Dro).

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, April 14th, 2014 at 7:50 AM

Title: Re: Kalachakra practice in Sakya

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The Vajramala is collection of template empowerments, so it is a full empowerment, but less elaborate than the two main traditions of Kalachakra (Rwa and Dro).

pueraeternus said:

So would this upcoming book be something that would help?

[https://www.amazon.com/The-Vajra-Rosary-Tantra-](https://www.amazon.com/The-Vajra-Rosary-Tantra-Vajramalatantra/dp/1935011189/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1397430839&sr=8-1&keywords=rosary+tantra)

[Vajramalatantra/dp/1935011189/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1397430839&sr=8-1&keywords=rosary+tantra](https://www.amazon.com/The-Vajra-Rosary-Tantra-Vajramalatantra/dp/1935011189/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1397430839&sr=8-1&keywords=rosary+tantra)

The synopsis indicates the text is mostly about the Guhyasamaja. Isn't this rather different from the Kalachakra (at least on the completion stage)? I am basing this on what I read from Daniel Cozort's book on Highest Yoga Tantra.

Malcolm wrote:

Vajramala is a tantra, it is also a collection of initiations by the Mahāsiddha Abhayakaragupta.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, April 14th, 2014 at 8:14 AM

Title: Re: The clear light of pure reality experience

Content:

ConradTree said:

By the way, why did you change your th\*g\*l code word from lhun grub to clarity?

Most people won't get it.

Malcolm wrote:

because the nature, natural perfection, is clarity.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, April 14th, 2014 at 7:31 PM

Title: Re: Mahamudra meditation problem: locating the mind

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

I am saying that the universe arises from karma and karma is created by the (afflicted) mind. If all sentient beings were to attain buddhahood, it is certain the (defiled) universe would vanish, never to reappear.

Andrew108 said:

So we have luminosity, then consciousness (serial/clarity), then space (unobstructed), then karmic formations of matter. With the universe appearing due to the karma of the collection of beings within it. And if we don't accept this, we are not Buddhists.

Malcolm wrote:

No, what I said was if you do not accept rebirth, you really have no understanding of Buddhism.

Andrew108 said:

I also don't believe that Buddhist scholars should use 'orthodoxy' to condition others.

Malcolm wrote:

Neither do I. I do expect that people who call themselves Buddhist not substitute their own fantasies, whether derived from neo-plantonism, science, etc., for what the Buddha taught in issues such as cosmology and so on. I.e., they can believe whatever they want, but they should be clear that they are abandoning Buddhist principles in favor of physics, idealism, etc.

Andrew108 said:

So I would ask you to engage in open debate about these issues without challenging posters' right to consider themselves Buddhists.

Malcolm wrote:

Well, I think you should reconsider what "open debate" means; since it includes to right to challenge whether a given person's position X or not.

Andrew108 said:

If they don't accept what you (or apparently the Buddha) are saying there is no need for you to consider their views heretical.

Malcolm wrote:

There is no heresy in Buddhism, there is merely wrong view and right view. For example, your rejection of karma and rebirth.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, April 14th, 2014 at 7:48 PM

Title: Re: Mahamudra meditation problem: locating the mind

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Whatever the case may be; however, the teaching of the Buddha is that a given world system physically arises because of the collective action of the all the sentient beings who have the karma to be in it.

PadmaVonSamba said:

Are you quite positively, absolutely sure that...

...the teaching of the Buddha is that a given world system physically arises because of the collective action of the all the sentient beings who have the karma to be in it.  
or, is it that ...

...the teaching of the Buddha is that what we experience as a given world system physically arising is because of the collective action of the all the sentient beings who have the karma to be in it.

Because, to me anyhow, the first premise makes absolutely no sense  
and the second premise makes perfect sense,  
and there is a difference between the two.  
The first premise is not directly observable.  
The second premise is at least somewhat observable.  
. . .

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, I am quite sure about the first.

For example, when beings no longer have karma to be reborn in the hell realms, the hell realms vanish.

This is all very clearly explained in such texts as Abhidharmakosha. Even if you take a Mahāyāna perspective, which does not accept that phenomena actually exist apart from the mind, nevertheless, it is very clearly explained in such texts as the Mahāyānasamgraha that the container universe exists because of the seeds which exist in the ālayavijñānas of sentient beings, thus all hell beings are experiencing the ripening of seeds for the hell realms in their ālayavijñānas together.

The variety of the world is created by karma.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, April 14th, 2014 at 7:51 PM

Title: Re: Mahamudra meditation problem: locating the mind

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

I do expect that people who call themselves Buddhist not substitute their own fantasies, whether derived from neo-plantonism, science, etc., for what the Buddha taught in issues such as cosmology and so on.

PadmaVonSamba said:

But you cannot prove that what is taught as Buddha's own words actually are. You cannot prove that the words he spoke have not been misinterpreted or distorted over the past 2500 years, or even during the century or so after he spoke them, before they were even written down. So, the difference is that some Buddhists rely on faith alone to validate the teachings, and other constantly weigh what is supposed to be the words of The Buddha against what is observable today that wasn't observable then.

I don't think you can say that one type is a true Buddhist and the other type is not.

. . .

Malcolm wrote:

We have a very good idea of what Buddha actually said. Reams and reams of texts which are repetitive and formulaic to the point where one cannot doubt they are recordings of the words of a single author.

Such things as the operations of karma, rebirth and so on are really beyond any doubt whatsoever. It is sheer sophistry to pretend otherwise.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, April 14th, 2014 at 7:52 PM

Title: Re: Do you believe in ghosts?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

I did an entire lecture on this subject recently in Mexico City.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 15th, 2014 at 2:21 AM

Title: Re: Mahamudra meditation problem: locating the mind

Content:

PadmaVonSamba said:

If those atoms are here because of our collective karma, then your karma is part of the reason my body is here...

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, and the problem is? That is covered under the principle of causation called katana-hetu, i.e., all things are the causes of all other things except for themselves.



Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 15th, 2014 at 2:39 AM

Title: Re: Do you believe in ghosts?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

I did an entire lecture on this subject recently in Mexico City.

AlexanderS said:

On the fact that we are imputations or on ghosts?

I wouldn't mind seeing a recording of this lecture if it is possible.

Malcolm wrote:

On the fact that spirits are imputations which arise from afflictions.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 15th, 2014 at 3:47 AM

Title: Re: Mahamudra meditation problem: locating the mind

Content:

PadmaVonSamba said:

Since at this early point, there are no objects of attachment, with only consciousness functioning, what possible action of the mind can take place which would generate karma?

Malcolm wrote:

When the previous universe is destroyed, it is destroyed only up to the level of the third form realm. All remaining sentient beings exist in the upper highest form realm (those who are not in the formless realm, that is). Eventually, as their merit is exhausted, the winds created by their traces of karma generate an air mandala which begins the formation of a new container universe. As sentient beings have karma to be reborn in this and that place, this or that place appears to receive them.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 15th, 2014 at 4:30 AM

Title: Re: Mahamudra meditation problem: locating the mind

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

In fact, space arises from consciousness, and the four elements arise from space. This is a universal explanation of the arising of matter in Dharm texts.

dzogchungpa said:

Did the historical Buddha teach this?

Malcolm wrote:  
Indeed.

dzogchungpa said:  
Well, do you have a reference?

pensum said:  
Bump.

Malcolm wrote:  
You will have to wait until I get home.

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Tuesday, April 15th, 2014 at 6:37 AM  
Title: Re: A Physicalist Theory of Mind  
Content:  
Jikan said:

I'm rereading the OP and trying to understand how this new theory overcomes the obvious objections to Daniel Dennett's *Consciousness Explained* from twenty years ago. I remember that I was not the only one who thought Dennett's argument was preposterously reductive, and that the best-warranted evidence in support of his claims is not yet available, leading him essentially to write a series of bounced checks with each claim he makes. Am I reading this new work reductively, or does it seem that it represents the same old wine in newly-labelled bottles?

Malcolm wrote:  
As I have pointed out before, consciousness, in the Buddhist system, is considered an element [dhātu], one of six that make up everything in the universe. As such, it is also defined as a dravya, usually translated as a substance or an ingredient, along with the other five.

Most of these discussions with people like A108 breakdown because they fundamentally never take the time to understand Buddhist principles.

M

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Tuesday, April 15th, 2014 at 9:12 AM  
Title: Re: A Physicalist Theory of Mind  
Content:  
Jikan said:

I'm rereading the OP and trying to understand how this new theory overcomes the

obvious objections to Daniel Dennett's *Consciousness Explained* from twenty years ago. I remember that I was not the only one who thought Dennett's argument was preposterously reductive, and that the best-warranted evidence in support of his claims is not yet available, leading him essentially to write a series of bounced checks with each claim he makes. Am I reading this new work reductively, or does it seem that it represents the same old wine in newly-labelled bottles?

Malcolm wrote:

As I have pointed out before, consciousness, in the Buddhist system, is considered an element [dhātu], one of six that make up everything in the universe. As such, it is also defined as a dravya, usually translated as a substance or an ingredient, along with the other five.

Most of these discussions with people like A108 breakdown because they fundamentally never take the time to understand Buddhist principles.

M

Sherab said:

If Buddhist system holds that consciousness is one of the six substances that make up everything in the universe, then you are saying that everything in the universe is reducible only to these six and therefore these six are not reducible to each other and are therefore fundamental substances. Assuming that I understand you correctly, then where do the Mind Only System and Tantric and Dzogchen system fit in the Buddhist system as described by you?

Malcolm wrote:

This is still conventionally true in both [Yogacara and Vajrayāna] systems.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 16th, 2014 at 2:31 AM

Title: Re: A Physicalist Theory of Mind

Content:

Sherab said:

But aren't you implying by your post that the six elements were equally basic while in yogacara and vajrayana systems, consciousness would be more basic than the physical elements even in the conventional sense?

Malcolm wrote:

No, even in Yogacara and Vajrayāna conventionally understand the six dhātus in the same way they are understood in the lower yānas. However, at the level of analysis, in the Yogacara systems and Vajrayāna, consciousness is understood to be more fundamental, and luminosity more fundamental still.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 16th, 2014 at 2:33 AM

Title: Re: A Physicalist Theory of Mind

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

As I have pointed out before, consciousness, in the Buddhist system, is considered an element [dhātu], one of six that make up everything in the universe. As such, it is also defined as a dravya, usually translated as a substance or an ingredient, along with the other five.

Most of these discussions with people like A108 breakdown because they fundamentally never take the time to understand Buddhist principles.

M

Andrew108 said:

You think that the Buddhist system explains subjectivity? It does not. You are assuming that Buddhism explains subjectivity. Saying that matter is based on consciousness (serial/clarity) is not telling me anything about subjectivity at all. In fact, for all those that are criticizing Science because it can't explain subjectivity, remember that when Buddhism tries to explain subjectivity it invariably sees it as illusory.

Malcolm wrote:

What I am saying is that you do not understand Dharma language because you have never studied it.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 16th, 2014 at 4:45 AM

Title: Re: Climate Change: We're Doomed

Content:

Zhen Li said:

There's nowhere along the line any sensible person can hang their coat. However, if one is looking for credible pricing, only the market can provide credible pricing - if the cost doesn't come up in the market place, it doesn't really exist.

Malcolm wrote:

This is because the market externalizes the costs of cleaning up after itself onto the consumer. As the cost of cleaning up after the market becomes higher and more costly, eventually the consumer have no choice but to enact legislations which limit the market's power to sell highly polluting commodities, and to impose fees on those who use them.

It is similar to drugs — the human cost of cleaning up after drugs such as cocaine, meth and heroin are too high -- therefore, these commodities are strictly controlled markets

in which a class of professionals is licensed to dispense them. Governments exist because markets exist. Markets exist because governments exist. Markets must be controlled and regulated (rather than planned), and carbon taxation is one way for governments to control the market in petrochemicals.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 16th, 2014 at 5:05 AM

Title: Re: Mahamudra meditation problem: locating the mind

Content:

PadmaVonSamba said:

Since at this early point, there are no objects of attachment, with only consciousness functioning, what possible action of the mind can take place which would generate karma?

Malcolm wrote:

When the previous universe is destroyed, it is destroyed only up to the level of the third form realm. All remaining sentient beings exist in the upper highest form realm (those who are not in the formless realm, that is). Eventually, as their merit is exhausted, the winds created by their traces of karma generate an air mandala which begins the formation of a new container universe. As sentient beings have karma to be reborn in this and that place, this or that place appears to receive them.

M

Andrew108 said:

This has to be proven. Otherwise it is a fairy tale.

Malcolm wrote:

You can prove it for yourself by developing the devacakṣu, the divine eye. You will never be able to prove it to anyone else.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 16th, 2014 at 6:06 AM

Title: Re: A Physicalist Theory of Mind

Content:

jeeprs said:

I have noticed that you frequently encounter passages which explicitly state the difference between 'insentient matter' - the aggregates - and 'formless mind'.

Malcolm wrote:

It is a conventional distinction (and a hard distinction drawn in Abhidharma and so on) that is gradually abandoned in later Indian Mahāyānā and especially Vajrayāna.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 16th, 2014 at 6:43 AM

Title: Re: A Physicalist Theory of Mind

Content:

jeeprs said:

I have noticed that you frequently encounter passages which explicitly state the difference between 'insentient matter' - the aggregates - and 'formless mind'.

Malcolm wrote:

It is a conventional distinction (and a hard distinction drawn in Abhidharma and so on) that is gradually abandoned in later Indian Mahāyānā and especially Vajrayāna.

jeeprs said:

You can say that if you wish. Once you start to be able to draw in the polemical sleights-of-hand offered by the distinction between relative and ultimate, there is practically nothing that you can't say.

In this case, I opt for a literalist interpretation.

Malcolm wrote:

Then you are opting for an essentialist interpretation, which is of course the reason this hard distinction was eventually abandoned as being incoherent beyond a certain convenience for conversation.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 16th, 2014 at 8:59 AM

Title: Re: A Physicalist Theory of Mind

Content:

Sherab said:

But aren't you implying by your post that the six elements were equally basic while in yogacara and vajrayana systems, consciousness would be more basic than the physical elements even in the conventional sense?

Malcolm wrote:

No, even in Yogacara and Vajrayāna conventionally understand the six dhātus in the same way they are understood in the lower yānas. However, at the level of analysis, in the Yogacara systems and Vajrayāna, consciousness is understood to be more fundamental, and luminosity more fundamental still.

M

Sherab said:

Your reply seems to contradict what you said earlier. I guess that you have forgotten the discussion that led to this.

Malcolm wrote:

If you think so, you will have to remind me.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 16th, 2014 at 9:04 AM

Title: Re: Mahamudra meditation problem: locating the mind

Content:

PadmaVonSamba said:

Malcolm, are you saying that all realms share the same universe, or that each realm creates its own universe?

If you say that all realms share the same universe, then the universe cannot be said to be created by the consciousness of beings in a particular realm.

If you say the realms exist in separate universes, then humans and animals could not share the same sense of reality.

Which is it?

...

Malcolm wrote:

It is like a house with separate floors. Not all inhabitants can know whether the others are home.

We all inhabit the same universe, the universe comes about because of our collective actions. It is as if we all build one house, but then we live on separate floors, using separate entrances.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 16th, 2014 at 9:49 AM

Title: Re: Can Westerners truly become Buddhists?

Content:

JKhedrup said:

I am suprised people don't think Westerners are responsible for supporting monasteries. Whenever I come to India with the geshe I translate for I also use some if my meager resources to make donations to monks who study well, for pujas, and to my teachers.

I am not a maverick who keeps it all for myself, and believe me it is a struggle to make those donations.

Indrajala said:

The reality it seems is that in the context of Tibetan Buddhism there is a widespread sense that western monks/nuns are unnecessary and even undesirable. Your own experiences as a translator who people have to begrudgingly tolerate is suggestive of this.

Malcolm wrote:

The majority of western Mulasarvastivada monks and nuns have very little value to add. Very few are qualified to be Dharma teachers, even less to act as Vajrayāna preceptors (a handful at best). You might argue they are objects of merit accumulations, and there is some truth to this, but mainly they are an economic drain since they have little to return in value (at this point) to the lay practitioners. If they can join a Dharma center where they can do useful work, great, but there are very few of these indeed.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 16th, 2014 at 11:00 AM

Title: Re: Mahamudra meditation problem: locating the mind

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

We all inhabit the same universe, the universe comes about because of our collective actions. It is as if we all build one house, but then we live on separate floors, using separate entrances.

PadmaVonSamba said:

If all beings inhabit the same universe,  
Yet experience different 'realities' of different realms,  
some pleasant, some torturous, and so on,  
then what they experience cannot be the result of any sort of combined consciousness

Malcolm wrote:

I never said it was.

PadmaVonSamba said:

but rather, due to their own karma,

Malcolm wrote:

Yes.

PadmaVonSamba said:

each being experiences the same basic properties of an already existing physical universe in their own way

Malcolm wrote:

It already exists, but was brought into existence through the collective karma of all beings. Really, this is non-controversial and is explained in Abhidharma as well as Yogacara and Vajrayāna.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 16th, 2014 at 7:32 PM

Title: Re: Mahamudra meditation problem: locating the mind



Content:

Malcolm wrote:

It already exists, but was brought into existence through the collective karma of all beings. Really, this is non-controversial and is explained in Abhidharma as well as Yogacara and Vajrayāna.

Andrew108 said:

A term like collective karma is fundamentally useless. If you assert collective karma then you are asserting collective consciousness. It is a highly controversial idea.

Malcolm wrote:

It is a convention used to describe the aggregate of similar karmas belonging to individual beings. It is only in this sense that the term "collective" is used. It does not mean there is a collective consciousness, because of course, there is not.

Of course, when people do not take the time to study the fundamentals of Buddhadharma as presented in Abhidharma and so on, it is very likely they will misunderstand terms like "collective karma" to refer to karma generated by a collective consciousness.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 16th, 2014 at 7:42 PM

Title: Re: Mahamudra meditation problem: locating the mind

Content:

Andrew108 said:

He is saying that the universe is brought into being through the collective karma of all beings. Karma, like consciousness, doesn't exist outside of the skandhas. There is no collective karma. There is only 'individual' karma. So to say that there is collective karma (even as a convention of speech) is still an assertion of collective consciousness.

Malcolm wrote:

Not so. For example, Vasubandhu goes the example of a soldier in an army. All who share in the goals of that army (killing enemies) share in the karma of every action undertaken by the members of that army times the number of people who belong to that that army, whether or not they directly engage in killing enemies.

Andrew108 said:

This 'objective condition' wasn't made bit by bit due to the karma of individual beings and neither was it made in one go due to a singular consciousness and neither was it made by a multitude of consciousness. So the model that Malcolm has posted as to how the universe forms is illogical.

Malcolm wrote:

"The variety of the world is due to action"

-- Vasubandhu.

If you are a realist dualist Buddhist, i.e. you belong to one of the two lower tenet systems (and your views are very much in line with those apart from the fact that you reject rebirth, and thus in reality you are a Carvaka in your view), the differentiation in the world that you observe comes about because of the actions of intelligent creatures acting in the world.

The universe was formed by the multitude of consciousnesses in the following manner — to put it in more modern terms, it is the affliction in the consciousness of sentient beings that caused the instability in the proposed singularity at the observable beginning of this universe.

Until physics can model the general role of consciousness in the formation of the universe mathematically, its explanation of cosmology will always be incomplete and there will always be unanswered questions.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 16th, 2014 at 7:45 PM

Title: Re: A Physicalist Theory of Mind

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

What I am saying is that you do not understand Dharma language because you have never studied it.

Andrew108 said:

I've studied it.

Malcolm wrote:

What texts, under what teacher, for how long, where?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 16th, 2014 at 7:46 PM

Title: Re: A Physicalist Theory of Mind

Content:

LastLegend said:

Can you point to text or source that says it?

jeeprs said:

Not really, but see if you can find an agreed definition of the meaning of the term 'mind' according to the discipline of psychology.

Malcolm wrote:

Who cares?

The Buddhist definition of mind is that the mind is an impermanent serially caused entity that is clear and knowing.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, April 17th, 2014 at 8:03 AM

Title: Re: Mahamudra meditation problem: locating the mind

Content:

Andrew108 said:

All we need to prove is that the mountain has an existence outside of sentience.

Malcolm wrote:

Outside of sentience, proofs are not possible.

Andrew108 said:

So the fact that it can be measured by a non-sentient device and has a series of values (height, mass, dimension and so on) mean that it has an existence outside of sentience.

Malcolm wrote:

There is no such thing as a non-sentient measurement. Manas, the word for mind in Sanskrit, means "to measure" as well

Andrew108 said:

Another example would be using a non-sentient device to measure phenomena that don't appear to the senses.

Malcolm wrote:

As above.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, April 17th, 2014 at 8:10 AM

Title: Re: Mahamudra meditation problem: locating the mind

Content:

PadmaVonSamba said:

and it doesn't make any sense to say that something is a product of consciousness but that there is no awareness of it.

...

Malcolm wrote:

Sure it does; such phenomena are called traces; and when a trace is activated, a given consciousness becomes aware of the phenomena produced by that trace. Further, traces are created by actions of consciousness.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, April 17th, 2014 at 7:28 PM

Title: Re: Mahamudra meditation problem: locating the mind

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Outside of sentience, proofs are not possible.

Andrew108 said:

You don't need proof. You just need to measure something. Of course theories are part of sentience. I am not denying sentience. I have also said that reality has no theory within it. But there are characteristics that can be measured and that are measured by non-sentient apparatus.

Malcolm wrote:

That which is non-sentient cannot measure anything.

There is no such thing as a non-sentient measurement. Manas, the word for mind in Sanskrit, means "to measure" as well .

I would disagree. I don't think fMRI scanners are sentient. In what way does the 'mind' make a measurement? As I understand it the 'mind' interprets measurements.

Measuring the measurements.

All measurements are based on judgments, long, short, thick, thin, etc. It is a fundamental characteristic of the conceptual mind to judge and measure. Instruments of measurement merely extend the capability of the mind's capacity to judge, but are not themselves capable of measuring anything.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, April 17th, 2014 at 7:39 PM

Title: Re: A Physicalist Theory of Mind

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The Buddhist definition of mind is that the mind is an impermanent serially caused entity that is clear and knowing.

dzogchungpa said:

OK, what are the Buddhist definitions of 'clear' and 'knowing'?

Malcolm wrote:

Clear means that mind is unimpeded and open; knowing means that a mind has the capacity to know.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, April 17th, 2014 at 7:44 PM

Title: Re: Buddhist Hate Crimes

Content:

Alfredo said:

but Bhutan's government (officially Drukpa Kargyud, with some Nyingma representation) perpetrated ethnic cleansing of Nepali-speaking Hindus in the 1990's. \

Malcolm wrote:

Not at all. Bhutan expelled illegal immigrants in response to a communist threat against their government.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, April 17th, 2014 at 7:46 PM

Title: Re: Kalachakra practice in Sakya

Content:

pueraeternus said:

[

I see. Is this Vajramala the same as the Vajravali?

[https://www.amazon.com/Tibetan-Mandalas-Vajravali-Tantra-Samuccaya-Raghuvira/dp/8186471014/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1397705467&sr=8-1&keywords=vajravali](https://www.amazon.com/Tibetan-Mandalas-Vajravali-Tantra-Samuccaya-Raghuvira/dp/8186471014/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1397705467&sr=8-1&keywords=vajravali)

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, vali and mala are alternate both translated as phreng ba into Tibetan.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, April 17th, 2014 at 7:52 PM

Title: Re: Astrology in East Asian Buddhism

Content:

Gwenn Dana said:

Astrology appears to be a set of interpretations. Thoughts. Starlight Feng Shui. I rather take refuge in Buddha than in astrology's explanations.

Best wishes

Gwenn

Indrajala said:

Funny thing is according to some Mahāyāna scriptures the Buddha in fact taught astrology.

Malcolm wrote:

According to Tibetan tradition, astrology (calculation) was first introduced from China where it has been taught by Manjuśrī to Kong tse 'phrul rgyal, often identified as Confucius. Later Kalacakra was introduced (1027) and this is when Tibetans first began

to officially use the 120 (five elements \* 12 animals) year cycle. This is also why dating anything prior to 1027 in Tibetan annals is a problem without external references.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, April 18th, 2014 at 5:21 AM

Title: Re: extibetanbuddhist dot com

Content:

pensum said:

how could they possibly know the actual state a dedicated Christian might attain...?

Malcolm wrote:

From the view they espouse. Realization proceeds from view; and if your view is not dependent origination, it is axiomatic that you will be able to attain liberation from samsara.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, April 18th, 2014 at 5:34 AM

Title: Re: Mahamudra meditation problem: locating the mind

Content:

Andrew108 said:

Freedom from extremes means not mediating reality through concepts.

Malcolm wrote:

No, it means that when things are examined their existence and their non-existence is no where to be found.

Andrew108 said:

I guess this thread has gone way off topic. The reason I have posted so much is because I think a realist/materialist view is more conducive to this practice of 'direct experience not mediated through concepts'.

Malcolm wrote:

You may think so, but it merely shows that you are fixated.

Andrew108 said:

In the end you have this cognition - just that - and that cognition is not separate from reality. It belongs in reality. If you see this reality as belonging to mind, as being in the mind, then reality is resting on a concept that stands between you and direct experience.

Malcolm wrote:

This is the problem with your view: you see reality as a container in which are contained cognitions and things. This is an inherently dualistic view; it is also essentialist.

In fact, there is no reality at all, apart from the reality that is constructed by minds acting together. The great Dzogchen master Shabkar reports in canto 11 of his famed Flight of the Garuda:

When a devaputra asked the Buddha:

“Who made Meru, the sun and the moon, and so on?”

The Buddha said:

“There is no other creator here.

The attachment of the traces of one’s conceptuality  
imputes them, grasps them and then they appear in that way.  
Everything is created by one’s mind.”

When the devaputra asked the Buddha again:

“How can the attachment of my concepts  
make the hardness and stability of  
Meru, the sun and moon, and so on?”

The Buddha said:

“In Varanasi, an old woman  
meditated her own body as a tiger.

Since the villagers saw her  
as a tiger, they evacuated the village.

If one is able to appear like that for a little while,  
if one cultivates mental traces for beginningless lifetimes,  
one will be able to appear like this for a year.”

Therefore, everything is created by the mind...  
therefore, whatever is imputed by the concepts of the mind  
can be perceived by others.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, April 18th, 2014 at 5:39 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Hate Crimes

Content:

Alfredo said:

The reality is that a bunch of people who had been born in Bhutan were forced into exile, apparently in order to prevent that Nepali-speaking Hindu population from gaining a demographic majority...

Malcolm wrote:

That is the communist version of events. In reality, there was a terrorist campaign waged by Nepalis in order to gain control of the Bhutanese Government -- but they failed.

Also, the United States is one of the very few countries where citizenship is granted through birth. Most countries in the world do not do this.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, April 18th, 2014 at 9:41 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Hate Crimes

Content:

Alfredo said:

Are you not ashamed?

Malcolm wrote:

Nope.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, April 18th, 2014 at 7:23 PM

Title: Re: A Physicalist Theory of Mind

Content:

Jayarava said:

But at least we can say that the one thing that does not provide that continuity is vijñāna..."

Malcolm wrote:

This is not true; an Bhavaviveka (if not Candrakirti) specifically allows that conventionally speaking, it is vijñāna that takes rebirth. Moreover, when we look at the chain of dependent origination analyzed by such texts as the Vibhanga, they clearly are discussing a stream of mental events when rebirth is cast over three lifetimes.

Then of course there is the old "when vijñāna descends into the womb..." in the Mahāniddana sutra.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, April 18th, 2014 at 7:27 PM

Title: Re: Buddhist Hate Crimes

Content:

Alfredo said:

There are thousands more stories like this. You must have great confidence in the Bhutan government, military, and police. Or a remarkable hatred of communism, that you would show such disregard for the human rights, and civil legal rights, of noncombatants.

Malcolm wrote:

The Bhutanese were fair, as far as I am concerned. The Nepali Communists wanted to take over Nepal, and used the presence of the Lhotsampas as a pretext for agitation. The whole situation is far more complicated than you paint it. And in the end, the



Bhutanese Gvt. has the right to secure their borders and expel those they deem illegal. Not all Lhotsampas were expelled, incidentally. The real crime is the way the Nepalese Communists have abandoned their own countrymen in camps in Eastern Nepal.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, April 19th, 2014 at 9:39 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Hate Crimes

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

We do what we can, and we wish happiness on all. But the best use of our time, until we really have the capacity to truly practice engaged bodhicitta, is to practice Dharma to increase our wisdom. Until that time we should not be giving away our limbs, nor risking our lives trying to "help" others thinking that this is somehow "bodhisattva" activity. As long as we have limited compassion, we should be judicious about how we decide we are going to "help".

Nighthawk said:

You may be right but this is a very weak attitude.

Malcolm wrote:

No, it is a realistic attitude.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, April 19th, 2014 at 9:41 AM

Title: Re: Mahamudra meditation problem: locating the mind

Content:

Sönam said:

Do you real think that Buddha state could be explained by mind ? ... what can be explained has to be within the scope of the explainer. Buddha state is not in the scope of mind ... otherwise is right.

That should end this interminable discussion ... but it will not. Mind trip.

Sönam

Malcolm wrote:

It pretty much depends on what you mean by the term "mind". There are plenty of Dzogchen texts that assert buddhahood cannot be found outside of the mind.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, April 19th, 2014 at 9:57 AM

Title: Re: Mahamudra meditation problem: locating the mind

Content:

dude said:

I reject that wholesale.

Malcolm wrote:

What are you rejecting wholesale?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, April 19th, 2014 at 10:03 AM

Title: Re: paramhansa yogananda

Content:

JKhedrup said:

Eminent figures have been spoken to. Incidentally if Malcolm (as he prefers now) were to read this I don't think he'd be incredulous because he has been around long enough to have heard it before.

Malcolm wrote:

In general, the Sakyapa POV is that monks use a jñānamudra.

On the other hand, practitioners who have accomplished the path of strong heat are not capable of breaking samaya, so if they use a karmamudra??? This is a difficult point.

Beyond this however, Vajrayogini, for Sakyapas, obviates the need for kamramudra.

Finally, in Dzogchen, Karmamudra is criticized as being a lower path. Even Saraha criticizes it...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, April 19th, 2014 at 8:33 PM

Title: Re: Mahamudra meditation problem: locating the mind

Content:

tobes said:

The issue of controversy here seems to be something like: is it possible to establish a materialist view (in this case, about the nature of mind or consciousness) without making any discursive/conceptual imputations?

Andrew108 said:

I don't think that is the controversy. To establish any view requires concepts. The issue is should we use Buddhist ones or the ones we are familiar with? If we use Buddhist ones we can get a bit stuck. Especially through the adoption of Buddhist cosmology. If we use materialist ones we can relax. We understand evolution and don't have to substitute a Buddhist concept. We understand that causality is not always personal.

Malcolm wrote:

On a conventional level, causation is not always personal, only karmic causation is personal.

Andrew108 said:

We understand that objects obey laws that weren't made by beings.

Malcolm wrote:

Beings don't make up laws; if you think this, you have not understood anything.

Andrew108 said:

We understand that there is a past and a future.

Malcolm wrote:

The past no longer exists, the future hasn't yet occurred.

Andrew108 said:

There is space/time. Light from the sun takes millions of years to get to the surface of the sun and when it does it takes a mere 8 minutes to get to us on Earth. All of these things are readily accepted.

Malcolm wrote:

This is all merely conventional.

Andrew108 said:

We can let go of our concepts much sooner than those who take the mind to be the source of everything. Or who have the idea that the essence of mind is emptiness.

Malcolm wrote:

It does not appear that way from where I sit.

Andrew108 said:

What Thigle has been saying is that non-fixation is a fact. Or needs to be a fact. It needs to be absolutely obvious. The sooner concepts are dropped regarding mind, then the sooner the factual status of non-fixation can come about. Milarepa sang that appearances were his texts. This is an extraordinarily important point. But if we hold to a Buddhist view regarding the primacy of mind, it is very hard to see appearances as texts. We are always adding to the appearances rather than just letting them be in their own nature whilst we are also in that nature.

Malcolm wrote:

Milarepa also understood that are appearances existed as mind.

Andrew108 said:

The Mahamudra instruction regarding locating the mind (in this case mental consciousness) is not really weakened by saying that mental consciousness is in the brain.

Malcolm wrote:

Of course it is -- you've just given the mind a location.

Andrew108 said:

Those who adopt Buddhist views of the pre-eminence of mind (and I have done this), are not able to let go of subtle concepts regarding mind. Since they cannot let go of these subtle concepts regarding mind, they are not able to progress. That is the long and short of it. If you understand consciousness is located in the brain then go with that. The sooner you are able to have a direct experience of reality not mediated through concepts then the better you'll be.

Malcolm wrote:

Consciousness is not located in the brain. It is located, conventionally, in the center of the body.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, April 19th, 2014 at 8:35 PM

Title: Re: Real Narakas

Content:

Lotus Sutra, Ch. 3, Watson said:

For countless kalpas · numerous as Ganges sands · he will at birth become deaf and dumb, · his faculties impaired, · will constantly dwell in hell, · strolling in it as though it were a garden, · and the other evil paths of existence · he will look on as his own home. · Camel, donkey, pig, dog- · these will be the forms he will take on. · Because he slandered this sutra, · this is the punishment he will incur. · If he should become a human being, · he will be deaf, blind, dumb.

Masaru said:

What abominable sins did I commit to be reborn in Texas?

Malcolm wrote:

You can read about this is the Texas durgati pariśodana sūtra, aka Purifying the Terrifying Realm of Texas Sūtra

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, April 19th, 2014 at 9:54 PM

Title: Re: extibetanbuddhist dot com

Content:

pensum said:

how could they possibly know the actual state a dedicated Christian might attain...?

Malcolm wrote:

From the view they espouse. Realization proceeds from view; and if your view is not dependent origination, it is axiomatic that you will [NOT] be able to attain liberation from samsara.

M

smcj said:

That's a little myopic.

Malcolm wrote:

Not really.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, April 19th, 2014 at 11:07 PM

Title: Re: Buddhist neglect of academic findings.

Content:

Thrasymachus said:

With time any original message drifts if it is not written down early, and if people don't seek out the oldest extant copy which is the most authentic...

Malcolm wrote:

This is so 19th century...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, April 19th, 2014 at 11:20 PM

Title: Re: Buddhist neglect of academic findings.

Content:

Thrasymachus said:

Still I thought it was interesting they were forthright in describing what Tibetans have been doing for a long time: translating and venerating their root gurus and straying further and further from the best evidence of what the alleged Buddha taught.

Malcolm wrote:

We don't need some puffed up amateur like you telling us what is and isn't taught in Tibetan Buddhism.

Tibetan Buddhism is in no sense straying from the Buddha's teachings. Your assertion is totally offensive.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, April 19th, 2014 at 11:23 PM

Title: Re: extibetanbuddhist dot com

Content:

smcj said:

HHDL was very fond and approving of Thomas Merton. So was Chatrul R. I doubt their assessment was dependent on Merton's passing a Madhyamaka quiz.

Malcolm wrote:

Approving what sense? You think they approved of his Catholic views? What they approved of was his interest in Buddhism.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, April 20th, 2014 at 12:12 AM

Title: Re: extibetanbuddhist dot com

Content:

smcj said:

HHDL was very fond and approving of Thomas Merton. So was Chatrul R. I doubt their assessment was dependent on Merton's passing a Madhyamaka quiz.

Malcolm wrote:

Approving what sense? You think they approved of his Catholic views? What they approved of was his interest in Buddhism.

smcj said:

My understanding was that they were approving of his spiritual development, compassion, humility, devotion etc. When Chatrul R. gave him his Refuge name I remember it translating as something like, "dharma person that has no lineage", lol.

Malcolm wrote:

Merton was interested in Dzogchen, since he had heard about it from Bede Griffiths. He asked HHDL, HHDL sent him to Chatral.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, April 20th, 2014 at 12:15 AM

Title: Re: Minimum prerequisites for physical karmamudra practice?

Content:

ConradTree said:

My understanding is that both people should be nonmonks, and both people should have the correct empowerments.

I believe these are the only formal prerequisites.

What do you think?

Malcolm wrote:

And they should be between the ages of 16 and 26, since the channels, cakras and

elements begin to deteriorate after this point.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, April 20th, 2014 at 12:19 AM

Title: Re: extibetanbuddhist dot com

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Merton was interested in Dzogchen, since he had heard about it from Bede Griffiths. He asked HHDL, HHDL sent him to Chatral.

smcj said:

A quote from Simon E., quoting HHDL, from a different thread:...so how do you explain Thomas Merton a Chrtistian monk who was described by HHDL as having at that time a deeper knowledge of Dharma than any westerner he had met ?

Malcolm wrote:

There were not many westerners who had any understanding of Dharma in 1968, least of all who would have met HHDL at that time.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, April 20th, 2014 at 1:05 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist neglect of academic findings.

Content:

Thrasymachus said:

I will not buy a translation of a translation.

Malcolm wrote:

Then there are no Buddhist books you can buy, since even the texts in Pali are translations from an earlier dialect.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, April 20th, 2014 at 1:06 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist neglect of academic findings.

Content:

Thrasymachus said:

you are pretending that there are great clairvoyants around in Tibetan buddhism, who don't need to be bothered with pesky things like learning now dead languages, studying ancient texts, scholarship or archeology.

Malcolm wrote:

You are such an ignorant fool. Do you think there have never been or are not now great scholars in Tibetan Buddhism? People expert in Sanskrit, studying ancient texts, etc? There have been such people for centuries. And of all people, the Tibetans had more

continuous close sustained contact with Indian Buddhists than anyone else.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, April 20th, 2014 at 1:14 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist neglect of academic findings.

Content:

smcj said:

As I've said earlier in this thread, the mindset behind this thread is better suited for Dhamma Wheel than here.

daverupa said:

But this, precisely, is the neglect of academic findings that's being discussed.

Mahayana can't relate itself to the historical Buddha while ignoring him in every other respect, can it?

Malcolm wrote:

Are we to mediate our sense of "Buddhism" by confining ourselves to what academics opine? There are many historical Buddhas. One for Theravada, another for Mahāyāna, one for Vajrayāna and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, April 20th, 2014 at 1:17 AM

Title: Re: extibetanbuddhist dot com

Content:

smcj said:

By 1996 he had met a whole lot of people. HHDL hasn't said anything like that about anybody since, to the best of my knowledge.

Malcolm wrote:

But he is not extolling Merton here for his understanding of Buddhism, rather, for his example as a human being. Two entirely different issues.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, April 20th, 2014 at 1:19 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist neglect of academic findings.

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The funny thing is, this kind of conversation would never be permitted on Dhamma Wheel. It demonstrates bias against Mahāyāna Buddhism.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, April 20th, 2014 at 1:34 AM

Title: Re: Minimum prerequisites for physical karmamudra practice?



Content:

ConradTree said:

My understanding is that both people should be nonmonks, and both people should have the correct empowerments.

I believe these are the only formal prerequisites.

What do you think?

Malcolm wrote:

And they should be between the ages of 16 and 26, since the channels, cakras and elements begin to deteriorate after this point.

ConradTree said:

Is this age thing a requirement or a recommendation?

Malcolm wrote:

You can try, but the main reason most people do not do consort practice is that they are too old.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, April 20th, 2014 at 1:36 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist neglect of academic findings.

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The following post is inappropriate.

smcj said:

...

Meet an enlightened teacher and your worldview will immediately change.

Thrasymachus said:

In operational terms what are you talking about here, exactly? It seems you are talking about someone who claims amazing extra-human mental and other powers, yet they need lowly followers like me and others to give them our money... A lot of people are enlightened using that lazy definition, of claiming they are better than others in some way, so we should give them our money in form of tribute. Lol. Somehow that doesn't impress me.

Here is the infamous confession of Kalu Rinpoche:

```
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]
```

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z5Ka3bEN1rs>

At 2:17 he says some monks raped him when he was between ages 12-13. If Western converts say they meet those same monks and that they are enlightened, does it mean a tree didn't fall in the woods? I am pretty sure many buddhists easily say everyone is an enlightened master. It seems to me rather than change themselves, they are more interested in the easier path of claiming how close they are to mythically enlightened teacher beings walking around in human guise.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, April 20th, 2014 at 2:24 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist neglect of academic findings.

Content:

Thrasymachus said:

I don't see how you can claim a teacher is so enlightened that they and almost no one in their lineage needs to be familiar with any knowledge of the closest thing available to the primary sources of the doctrine they claim to follow, "because this is Mahayana/Vajrayana, they are enlightened masters beyond needed to obtain actual knowledge, etc.".

Malcolm wrote:

Your remarks are inappropriate because they arise from wholesale ignorance of Tibetan Buddhism.

Our teachers are completely familiar with the primary sources of our tradition, i.e. Vinaya, Mahāyāna sūtra and Buddhist tantras.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, April 20th, 2014 at 6:28 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist neglect of academic findings.

Content:

Thrasymachus said:

Well using the same criteria, Malcolm, tomorrow if Transcendental Meditation said it was buddhism, it could be also according to their own sources.

Malcolm wrote:

The problem with your view, here is two-fold.

The first problem is the assumption that there is a "true" textual source from which something can be validly described as Buddhadharma. Instead, the criteria of for determining Buddhadharma is not based on some historical literary epoch, it is rather a set of interlinked doctrines which can find their expression in a number of ways providing they adhere to a certain basic set of criteria in terms of view:

Dependent origination  
emptiness  
karma  
rebirth  
liberation as a state of freedom from kleśas, etc.

Since both Mahāyāna and Vajrayāna enthusiastically uphold all of the above criteria, no one can look at these traditions and claim they are not Buddhism, including you.

M

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Sunday, April 20th, 2014 at 6:48 PM  
Title: Re: Buddhist neglect of academic findings.

Content:

Alfredo said:

Speaking of enlightened speech, I've been looking over the past few pages, and noticing the gradual introduction of invectives. I have been enjoying the content of this thread, and selfishly hope that it will not degenerate.

Malcolm wrote:

It degenerated the moment Thrasymachus entered the conversation.

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Sunday, April 20th, 2014 at 7:08 PM  
Title: Re: Mahamudra meditation problem: locating the mind  
Content:

asunthatneversets said:

Those who adopt materialist views of the pre-eminence of the brain...

Malcolm wrote:

A108 has been waffling on about the brain since he got here, if you recall....

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Sunday, April 20th, 2014 at 7:33 PM  
Title: Re: Difference between consciousness and the mind  
Content:

Malcolm wrote:

It means that consciousness descends into the womb, in the case of human being, joining with the spermatozoon and oocyte at the moment of conception.

Gwenn Dana said:

When reading some replies, it seems that it is perhaps a common misunderstanding that father's or mother's consciousness would descend into that womb, via some magic sperm or ovum binding.

I only read that consciousness "descends" into that womb, from wherever.

Best wishes

Gwenn

Malcolm wrote:

It means that three things are required for conception to take place — the father's sperm, the mother's egg and a consciousness seeking rebirth.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, April 20th, 2014 at 8:07 PM

Title: Re: Buddhist neglect of academic findings.

Content:

Thrasymachus said:

Mañjughoṣamaṇi, you think you can explain away that with millions of Buddhist converts in the English speaking world and expats, yet we have no good, complete translation of the Pali cannon, because of the character of Eisel Mazard? We have much better complete translations of so many things millions of English speakers don't claim to follow..

mikenz66 said:

I've seen you and Mazard express your opinion about poor translation a number of times.

Malcolm wrote:

It remains to be seen whether Thrasymachus has any skill at all in Pali, let alone Sanskrit. As such, he is merely repeating hearsay of which he has no ability to verify since he clearly lacks any expertise in any of the four primary Buddhist languages (Sanskrit, Pali, Classical Tibetan and Classical Chinese).

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, April 20th, 2014 at 8:28 PM

Title: Re: HUM or HUNG?

Content:

Fa Dao said:

I have noticed that some Dzogchen teachers use HUM while others use HUNG..is there really a difference energetically?

asunthatneversets said:

I'd say it's best to go with whichever was used in the transmission you received, but ultimately it doesn't make much difference. Chögyal Namkhai Norbu just recently told

the story of Sakya Pandita and the yogi who mispronounced "vajrakilaya" as "chili chilaya", read that story sometime if you get a chance, puts things in perspective with discrepancies like this.

Malcolm wrote:

ChNN always tells this story. The background is that Sapan wrote a text called "How to Pronounce Mantras", in which he makes a strong argument that it is better to pronounce mantras according to rules of Sanskrit pronunciation. He notes that reciting mantras incorrectly may contain blessings, but they are more effective if one tries to pronounce them as well as possible. Naturally, there was a reaction against this idea by many Tibetans even in Sakya.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, April 20th, 2014 at 9:31 PM

Title: Re: Jigme Lingpa's mystical pranayama experience

Content:

ConradTree said:

Yes, but what does that mean?

Is this gourd thing a well known visible sign in pranayama?

And how is it the basis for all his attainments?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes.

Control of prāṇa is the basis of all attainments.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, April 20th, 2014 at 9:40 PM

Title: Re: Jigme Lingpa's mystical pranayama experience

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Yes.

ConradTree said:

Anything in English that explains the gourd?

Malcolm wrote:

You can examine Lamdre.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, April 20th, 2014 at 9:47 PM

Title: Re: Jigme Lingpa's mystical pranayama experience

Content:

ConradTree said:

You must be referring to this:

<https://www.amazon.com/Taking-Result-Path-Teachings-Tradition/dp/0861714431>

But there is no mention of gourd in it. You can search for words through Amazon.

Malcolm wrote:

After one is able to see the color of the vāyu through doing various kinds of practice, when one unifies the prāṇā and apāṇa vayus, it forms the shape of a ball or a gourd. Yogis can see this with their eyes. You and I cannot.

First however you have to get the level of being able to see your prāṇa. Lamdre explains this process very well, but also the treatise on vāyu in the Vima Nyingthig and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, April 20th, 2014 at 10:01 PM

Title: Re: Chöd as Sutra & Tantra combined

Content:

Karma Jinpa said:

Chöd is said to be a combination of Sutra and Tantra. At its root it's based on the view of Prajnaparamita, yet its practice is done through tantric methods (visualizing oneself as the deity and offering the body as ganachakra, etc).

I meant to ask this question of Lamchen Gyalpo Rinpoche when I had the chance, but the opportunity came and went, so I'll ask it here. Are any of the various Chöd practices associated with a certain class of tantra (i.e. kriya, charya, yoga, annuttarayoga) or a specific tantric cycle/system (i.e. Guhyasamaja, Chakrasamvara, Vajrabhairava, Hevajra, etc.)? Does the practice of Chöd in general have certain tantric associations?

Malcolm wrote:

It is more associate with mother tantra.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, April 20th, 2014 at 11:49 PM

Title: Re: HUM or HUNG?

Content:

Fa Dao said:

Pensum..I have heard that except I have heard different teachers pronounce it distinctly both ways

pensum said:

Certainly, people with different accents pronounce things differently, just like Canadians and Americans pronounce "out and about" differently. And the various regions of Tibet have various accents and pronunciations as well, for example Khyentse is pronounced either with a hard "k" or a soft "ch". I don't doubt that in ancient India Sanskrit itself was pronounced differently according to various accents as well.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, in Bengal, Vajra was probably pronounced "bazra", as in Kashmir, and also Nepal. In Central India, i.e. Varanasi, "Wajra". Benzar on the other hand...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, April 21st, 2014 at 12:41 AM

Title: Re: Jigme Lingpa's mystical pranayama experience

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

After one is able to see the color of the vāyu through doing various kinds of practice...

dzogchungpa said:

Is it green?

Malcolm wrote:

There are in general five elemental vāyus, so they have different colors.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, April 21st, 2014 at 12:51 AM

Title: Re: Jigme Lingpa's mystical pranayama experience

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

OK, I assume those are the standard colors. Is the white one actually white?

Malcolm wrote:

The best think you can do is practice prāṇāyama yourself and discover this experientially. I can tell you what the texts say, but I have no personal experience with this.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, April 21st, 2014 at 2:47 AM

Title: Re: Minimum prerequisites for physical karmamudra practice?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

And they should be between the ages of 16 and 26, since the channels, cakras and elements begin to deteriorate after this point.

Clarence said:

What about all those old Lama's taking on young consorts? Often after never having done consort practice before. Does that mean the purpose is different for them or are their prana and channels young like a 16 year olds?

Malcolm wrote:

They do so for life extension.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, April 21st, 2014 at 3:55 AM

Title: Re: Minimum prerequisites for physical karmamudra practice?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

And they should be between the ages of 16 and 26, since the channels, cakras and elements begin to deteriorate after this point.

ConradTree said:

Assuming both people are nonmonks and have the correct empowerments, does one need oral instruction on the practice?

Or can one proceed from reading texts?

bump for a response

Malcolm wrote:

You need an explanation.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, April 21st, 2014 at 3:56 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist Hate Crimes

Content:

Jikan said:

The Maoists are one faction among many with an interest in taking leadership in Nepal. Participatory democracy is like that--people try to take control of the country. And with an establishment of such delightful leaders as these, it's hard not to blame the Reds for thinking they just might do a better (fairer) job of it than this crowd.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dipendra\\_of\\_Nepal](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dipendra_of_Nepal)

Malcolm's right that the political situation in central Asia is very complicated.



Malcolm wrote:

I mean Bhutan...The Maoists already control Nepal.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 22nd, 2014 at 4:40 AM

Title: Re: Minimum prerequisites for physical karmamudra practice?

Content:

conebeckham said:

"I'm sorry honey, but we have to divorce, since I've just taken refuge and a Buddhist empowerment" said no good Vajrayana Buddhist, ever.

Malcolm wrote:

Even so, for example, ChNN made it very clear on several occasions that it is much better for practitioners to be with other practitioners.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 22nd, 2014 at 4:55 AM

Title: Re: Minimum prerequisites for physical karmamudra practice?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Even so, for example, ChNN made it very clear on several occasions that it is much better for practitioners to be with other practitioners. I am not going to get in the samaya particulars of this issue, but there are several, in fact.

smcj said:

"Better" is vastly different than "downfall".

Malcolm wrote:

He said it causes obstacles to one's practice.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 22nd, 2014 at 4:55 AM

Title: Re: Minimum prerequisites for physical karmamudra practice?

Content:

ngodrup said:

So, let me get this...

A person takes an empowerment, is 'anointed' and enthroned as a Deity, receives all four empowerments connected with body, speech and mind and has samaya to maintain pure vision is somehow allowed to refer to any external phenomenon as 'ordinary'? Where is the mandala?

Where are the 1st, 2nd, 4th, 6th, 8th, 12th, 13th, and 14th root samayas?

There is nothing ordinary under the sun, for one who is actually practicing authentically and sincerely (without duplicity).

Malcolm wrote:

If a practitioner uses an unripened mudra, blessing her "space" as it were, this is a root downfall because it breaches the 7th root samaya. If one imagines this person mentally as the vidyā (rig ma) it is the first branch downfall. The latter refers to the yoga of passion which is the one of the off-time yogas of a lay person.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 22nd, 2014 at 5:01 AM

Title: Re: Minimum prerequisites for physical karmamudra practice?

Content:

conebeckham said:

"I'm sorry honey, but we have to divorce, since I've just taken refuge and a Buddhist empowerment" said no good Vajrayana Buddhist, ever.

Malcolm wrote:

Even so, for example, ChNN made it very clear on several occasions that it is much better for practitioners to be with other practitioners.

M

Konchog1 said:

I would be interested to see some citations from the Tantras

Malcolm wrote:

The Hevajra tantra and its commentaries describe in detail who can be used as a mudra, and how one goes about finding such a person and training her. One is not allowed to use this person as a mudra until one has granted her abhisheka and given her substantial training in the creation stage.

This stuff is not a joke, and actually, we ought not be discussing it in a public forum.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 22nd, 2014 at 5:14 AM

Title: Re: Do you have to have a highest yoga before taking VY?

Content:

supermaxv said:

The Vajrayogini that HH Sakya Trizin just gave in New York actually had no prerequisites at all.

Malcolm wrote:

This was a two day major empowerment. Therefore, it requires no previous empowerment, it is self contained.

In general, there were three traditions that came through Naropa to Sakya: Luipa, Krishnapa and Ghantapada's Cakrasamvara traditions. Therefore, it is considered that one should have received one, two or all three of these empowerments as a prerequisite for Naro Khachod, because the completion stage practice of Naro Khacho combines all three traditions into their essentials, in addition its own special features.

However, the Vajrayogini Empowerment comes from Mahasiddha Virupa, and what is not widely known is that his main deity for 24 years was actually Vajrayogini.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 22nd, 2014 at 5:58 AM

Title: Re: Minimum prerequisites for physical karmamudra practice?

Content:

theanarchist said:

And that's not the case because it's somehow an inheritantly "bad" thing and there needs to be a rule to prevent it, but simply because it's not practical.

Malcolm wrote:

As I have shown above, there are actually rules against it, in principle.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 22nd, 2014 at 6:00 AM

Title: Re: Do you have to have a highest yoga before taking VY?

Content:

conebeckham said:

Malcolm, I've not read much about the three forms of VY given in Sakya--I know Naro Khacho is by far the main practice, but there's also Indra Dakini and Maitri Dakini. Do these forms also stem from the Chakrasamvara practices?

Malcolm wrote:  
Yes.

conebeckham said:  
Somewhat tangentially, Kamtsang Chakrasamvara is also derived from the 3 main traditions --Luipa's tradition is primary, but there are elements of Ghantapada and Nagpopa's traditions, as well.

Malcolm wrote:  
Of course, since they derive from Naropa.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 22nd, 2014 at 6:10 AM

Title: Re: Minimum prerequisites for physical karmamudra practice?

Content:

conebeckham said:  
even to THINK about the Path of Passion as a "Layman's off-time activity," much less the Advanced Completion Stage Karmamudra practice, with a Non-Buddhist spouse or significant other?

Malcolm wrote:  
This does not require retreat. It is a requirement from the moment one completes abhisheka.

Of course, this does not mean that it is practical. If anyone wonders why it seems that so few people get realization despite the promises made in the tantras, it is because people do not observe samaya carefully.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 22nd, 2014 at 6:19 AM

Title: Re: Samye Monastery

Content:

kirtu said:

Puja in Samye (this sounds very familiar to me but I can't quite place it yet) ....

Malcolm wrote:  
Believe it or not, but Samye has been a Sakya monastery since the 12th century.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 22nd, 2014 at 10:01 AM

Title: Re: Minimum prerequisites for physical karmamudra practice?

Content:

conebeckham said:

even to THINK about the Path of Passion as a "Layman's off-time activity," much less the Advanced Completion Stage Karmamudra practice, with a Non-Buddhist spouse or significant other?

Malcolm wrote:

This does not require retreat. It is a requirement from the moment one completes abhisheka.

Of course, this does not mean that it is practical. If anyone wonders why it seems that so few people get realization despite the promises made in the tantras, it is because people do not observe samaya carefully.

M

conebeckham said:

Sure. The vast majority of those who have received abhisheka don't even do the NyenDrup, much less the post-session activities, though. Not saying that's good....it's just the way it is.

Not even doing the Nyendrup, how can people talk about the path of passion, much less Karmamudra?

Malcolm wrote:

If you are practicing the sadhana, whether you have done any retreat or not, you should be practicing the yoga of passion if you have a partner. Therefore, that partner better be a fellow practitioner, no?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 22nd, 2014 at 7:46 PM

Title: Re: Minimum prerequisites for physical karmamudra practice?

Content:

theanarchist said:

It's the choice of the teachers. They could still do it as it has been done in the past, giving empowerment and teaching vajrayana meditation strictly to people who are actually going into retreat. There are lamas who still handle it that way.

conebeckham said:

Sure. In Sakya's Lam Dre, where these instructions are found, as I understand it, there's no "3 year retreat" requirement, but mainly a daily practice commitment. I think there may sometimes be strict retreat requirement, too, though.

Malcolm wrote:

For Lamdre, no retreat commitment, generally as I understand things, these days people are allowed to attend the Tshogs bshad teachings without making a practice commitment apart from a short Hevajra sadhana. For Vajrayogini, yes there is a retreat if you take the some of the oral transmissions associated with the cycle, since it is easier to do.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 22nd, 2014 at 8:00 PM

Title: Re: Guru Pema Tho-threng-tsal

Content:

pemachophel said:

Is Guru Pema Tho-threng-tsal a special form of Guru Rinpoche or simply Guru Rinpoche's secret name? Someone asked me this yesterday and I wasn't sure of the answer. If there is a special form of Guru Pema Tho-threng-tsal with His own posture, gestures, costume, hand symbols, etc., I'd appreciate being steered to a picture or description.

Malcolm wrote:

It is simply Guru P's special name.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 22nd, 2014 at 9:33 PM

Title: Re: Minimum prerequisites for physical karmamudra practice?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

If you are practicing the sadhana, whether you have done any retreat or not, you should be practicing the yoga of passion if you have a partner. Therefore, that partner better be a fellow practitioner, no?

theanarchist said:

If you are following a vajrayana path you have to be realistic about how far you will be able to get in this lifetime. And for most of those karmamudra is not going to be on the menu this time around. So no reason to look for a partner that would theoretically be suitable.

Malcolm wrote:

The yoga of passion, connected with creation stage, is not karma mudra practice, it is of the same nature as eating yoga, washing yoga and so on. If you practice this yoga with someone who had not been ripened it is a branch downfall.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 22nd, 2014 at 9:42 PM

Title: Re: Being a yidam outside sitting session

Content:

smcj said:

For beginners like me, at the end of a meditation session you dissolve the visualization into emptiness. The idea here is that since you have become the deity that you yourself are dissolved into emptiness. Then post-meditation you resume your normal form. Or at least that's my understanding at the present time.

Malcolm wrote:

In yoga tantra you resume your ordinary form. In highest yoga tantra you are always in the form of the deity 24/7/365

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, April 25th, 2014 at 3:54 AM

Title: Re: Being a yidam outside sitting session

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

In yoga tantra you resume your ordinary form. In highest yoga tantra you are always in the form of the deity 24/7/365

dzogchungpa said:

This is not an issue for me personally, but don't some masters actually practice several HYT yidams? How would that work out then?

Malcolm wrote:

You pick one as your main practice.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, April 25th, 2014 at 7:31 AM

Title: Re: Breaking samaya if one talks about rigpa?

Content:

Unity said:

...Parabrahman? That means the same as Rigpa.

Malcolm wrote:

No, it does not.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, April 25th, 2014 at 8:09 PM

Title: Re: Breaking samaya if one talks about rigpa?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The meaning is entirely different. Parabrahman is a state, it exists, it is sat, etc., objectively exists, and everything else beside it is non-existent.

Vidyā (rig pa) is a very specific kind of knowledge about one's own state, the union of clarity and emptiness of one's mind, and not a universal substrate.

So no, I would not agree at all.

Unity said:

Interesting. What is the difference besides being different words? I understand them like two different fingers pointing to the same moon.

You might object, these two fingers are not the same, but I say, it is the same moon.

Would you agree?...Parabrahman? That means the same as Rigpa.

Malcolm wrote:

No, it does not.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, April 25th, 2014 at 8:15 PM

Title: Re: Buddhist neglect of academic findings.

Content:

Alfredo said:

Some Mazard highlights (other than "Canon and Reason" and the farting article, both discussed above)

Malcolm wrote:

Mazard is brewing tempests in teapots, as far as I can see.

Nothing is he says is unknown to people who have been studying Buddhism seriously for some time. He presents these issues however as if they are newly discovered finds.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, April 25th, 2014 at 9:33 PM

Title: Re: Breaking samaya if one talks about rigpa?

Content:

Emakirikiri said:

So would the Parabrahman idea be equivalent to the Shentong idea?

Malcolm wrote:

No, gzhan stong does not accept there there is a unitary ultimate reality in the same sense as Hinduism. gZhan stong instead is asserting that the qualities of buddhahood are ultimate.



Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, April 25th, 2014 at 11:23 PM

Title: Validity of recorded empowerments

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Discussion split from <http://dharmawheel.net/viewtopic.php?f=52&t=16281>.

Protectors are for those who have entered secret mantra in the proper way. If you do not have samaya, you do not need any sort of protector apart from the Three Jewels. I am really not certain at all that recorded empowerments have the necessary qualities to confer the stream of blessings. In fact, I am sure that they don't.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, April 26th, 2014 at 12:37 AM

Title: Re: Protectors How do I choose one?

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

If a teacher the caliber of Garchen Rinpoche believes that empowerments can be received via recording then, really, who are we to doubt him?

Malcolm wrote:

Since when did we leave our minds at the temple door? I am not criticizing Garchen Rinpoche's motivations, for he is a bodhisattva, but I don't think a recording is a valid way for someone to receive an empowerment for all kinds of reasons, not merely one.

Not only am I entitled to my opinion, I am allowed to express it.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, April 26th, 2014 at 1:12 AM

Title: Re: Protectors How do I choose one?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

...but I don't think a recording is a valid way for someone to receive an empowerment for all kinds of reasons, not merely one.

Sherab Dorje said:

So give a couple of them then.

Malcolm wrote:

There is little point. Suffice it say that a properly granted empowerment concerns the arrangement of profound dependent origination. That cannot occur if the student is not physically present with the teacher in the same room at the same time in some way.

Next, we will have people becoming Buddhist monks on the basis of recorded ordinations.

Hopefully, people who attend such recorded empowerments will make effort to see Garchen Rinpoche in person at a later time. Otherwise, I think there is absolutely no blessing, and in fact, I think there are real problems created in terms of samaya.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, April 26th, 2014 at 3:08 AM

Title: Re: Dharma protectors and samaya

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Protectors are for those who have entered secret mantra in the proper way. If you do not have samaya, you do not need any sort of protector apart from the Three Jewels. I am really not certain at all that recorded empowerments have the necessary qualities to confer the stream of blessings. In fact, I am sure that they don't.

M

Adi said:

That's the way I heard it, too.

Adi

KonchokZoepa said:

Malcolm could you inform or explain that what is the connection between having samaya and then needing a dharma protector. what is the function of the Dharmapalas in relation to samaya? hmm, i have more questions or a better question because i can't form it because i don't have enough knowledge aboutt what i am asking about.

Malcolm wrote:

If you do not have samaya, then there is no need for a Dharma protector since Dharma protectors, in principle, are restricted to highest yoga tantra.

That said, in general we can consider the four directional guardians and so on as "protectors" in the Sūtra system since they will automatically protect those who uphold the Dharma of any of the three vehicles.

Otherwise, Mahakāla, etc., only protect those who have samaya from empowerments.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, April 26th, 2014 at 3:28 AM

Title: Re: Dharma protectors and samaya

Content:

KonchokZoepa said:

have to get into it. otherwise why practice vajrayana if you are not aware of what samaya really is, of the different samayas etc.. unlucky for me that i have not found my root guru yet. maybe i have found my future root guru but he lives in nepal and doesn't travel to europe anymore. weak connection...

anyway, thanks for the info.

Malcolm wrote:

In general, one is not informed of what samaya is until after one has taken empowerment. Discussions of samaya border on breaking it, actually.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, April 26th, 2014 at 4:00 AM

Title: Re: Validity of recorded empowerments

Content:

JohnJ said:

Telling Garchen Rinpoche's students that they did not receive blessings and contravening what he has said about the equality of those who receive empowerments in person versus via livestream introduces scandal, schism, and divisiveness into the community.

Malcolm wrote:

This what I said:

I am really not certain at all that recorded empowerments have the necessary qualities to confer the stream of blessings. In fact, I am sure that they don't.

That is my opinion. I did not tell anyone what to do or not do. There are some who agree with me, and some who do not.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, April 26th, 2014 at 9:01 AM

Title: Re: Validity of recorded empowerments

Content:

JohnJ said:

Why express an opinion that is in direct contradiction to the words of an established, well respected and loved teacher?

Malcolm wrote:

It is pointless to reply.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, April 26th, 2014 at 7:08 PM

Title: Re: Validity of recorded empowerments

Content:

JohnJ said:

Why express an opinion that is in direct contradiction to the words of an established, well respected and loved teacher?

Malcolm wrote:

It is pointless to reply.

JohnJ said:

But not pointless enough to refrain from being condescending. I am human being on the other end of this computer. What if we were face to face and I sincerely asked you why you held the opinion you stated, would you just look at me and say, "It's pointless"? If so, than I would say that one should work on their manners before focusing on Samaya.

Malcolm wrote:

First, this discussion was created by Greg, and not me. I was replying to question about Dharmapālas, and tangentially added my opinion about recorded empowerments, because of course, to practice Dharmapālas one must be someone who possesses samaya and that only comes from a properly granted empowerment.

I am sorry you felt I was being condescending, but I can assure that I was not. I was being factual.

Replying is pointless because:

1. It is not my job to condition you or your beliefs, despite the fact that I have every right to express my opinion.

2. This is not the correct venue to discuss the details of empowerments, how they work and why transmission through a recorded medium is invalid because it involves the discussion of many details of empowerments, how samaya vows are imparted and received, etc., which are not suitable for discussion in a public forum.

3. In the end, you will not accept whatever citations and reasonings I produce to demonstrate that such a system is poorly conceived because you have already

declared it is valid.

Therefore, apart from expressing my reservations about the matter I have really nothing further to say on the subject.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, April 26th, 2014 at 10:13 PM

Title: Re: Breaking samaya if one talks about rigpa?

Content:

Unity said:

Hm, I understood "rigpa" to mean the "nature of mind".

If you are correct in the way how you define it, then I must apologize for my misuse of the word.

Malcolm wrote:

Vidyā (rig pa) is the opposite of avidyā (ma rig pa). In a Dzogchen context, it means knowledge of your real state which is the nature of the mind. If you do not have this knowledge, you cannot say you possess "rig pa".

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, April 26th, 2014 at 10:29 PM

Title: Re: Validity of recorded empowerments

Content:

theanarchist said:

Talk, about general technicalities of empowerments with other practitioners doesn't break any samayas.

Malcolm wrote:

Discussing these things on a public forum which anyone can read, in a place where many people have no faith in Vajrayāna whatsoever (or worse, think it is bullshit) is a problem.

We do so, in general, because we feel that we have a license to do so because of the abundance of books on the subject of Vajrayāna which exist. However, in reality, it is a mistaken practice to discuss much about Vajrayāna in public forums such as this.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, April 26th, 2014 at 10:32 PM

Title: Re: Breaking samaya if one talks about rigpa?

Content:

Unity said:

This great pure mind which pervades everything was called Parabrahman, Rigpa, God, Allah, and many other things.

Malcolm wrote:

This does not exist in Dzogchen teachings and is explicitly rejected in all Buddhist schools, including Dzogchen.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, April 26th, 2014 at 11:49 PM

Title: Re: Breaking samaya if one talks about rigpa?

Content:

theanarchist said:

Plus, where do the sarma vajrayana transmissions fit in there? Have you forgotten them? And do you consider them inferior to the terma lineages?

ConradTree said:

In general Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo...

Malcolm wrote:

achieved his own realization through the practice of Lamdre, according to himself.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, April 27th, 2014 at 1:10 AM

Title: Re: Breaking samaya if one talks about rigpa?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

achieved his own realization through the practice of Lamdre, according to himself.

mañjughoṣamaṇi said:

Does he mention which yidam he practiced in the context of the Lamdre teachings? I'm curious since you've mentioned many times that Sakyapas tend to consider that he achieved Buddhahood via Yoginī. Does he give specifics in that regard?

Malcolm wrote:

Hevajra.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, April 27th, 2014 at 1:29 AM

Title: Re: Breaking samaya if one talks about rigpa?

Content:

ConradTree said:

We all know he was a sakya like dilgo khyentse.

but he and his partner jagmon kongtrul still ranked dzogchen higher.

They basically agreed with the nyingma yanas system.

Malcolm wrote:

Actually, the nine yāna system ranking is irrelevant to HYT. Both systems lead to rainbow body. But not when we endlessly gossip about these things online.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, April 27th, 2014 at 1:48 AM

Title: Re: Breaking samaya if one talks about rigpa?

Content:

asunthatneversets said:

Andrew is discussing his materialist objective condition theory, not anything which resembles the gzhan stong view.

Andrew108 said:

Well that's a mouthful. And not really my position at all. For example I still hold to dependent origination.

The Dalai Lama says: "Philosophically, and for that matter conceptually, it seems more coherent to maintain a position that accepts the reality not only of the subjective world of the mind, but also of the external objects of the physical world."

Malcolm wrote:

But of course there are no appearances that exist apart from mind...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, April 27th, 2014 at 4:35 AM

Title: Re: Kalachakra practice in Sakya

Content:

pueraeternus said:

Recently I attended HHST's Kalachakra empowerment in NYC. I would like to further my study and practice, but could not find any books on Kalachakra specific to the lineage transmitted by HHST (majority are on the Gelugpa transmissions). Is there any book anyone familiar with the tradition can recommend? Or there is no great differences between the various Kalachakra lineages and I can just refer to any available in the market?

Punya said:

My Sakya teacher is about to start teaching from this book: The Ornament of Stainless Light. An Exposition of the Kalachakra Tantra, Khedrup Norsang Gyatso, The Library of Tibetan Classics. He received the transmissions for Kalachakra from HE Chogye Trichen

Rinpoche and HHST.

Malcolm wrote:

Where are you located?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, April 27th, 2014 at 5:31 AM

Title: Re: Breaking samaya if one talks about rigpa?

Content:

ConradTree said:

There is a thing called the 9 Nyingma yantras for example.

Malcolm wrote:

Which clearly developed in Tibet during the later ninth and early tenth century and is irrelevant to any Vajrayāna developments in India. Even the term "rainbow body" does not make a clear appearance in any Tibetan literature that can be dated prior the 11th century.

It is a grievous error to assume that by "Mahāyoga", any of the tantras which were unknown to Tibetans prior to the 11th century are being referred to.

If later Nyingma authors refer to the so called anuttarayoga tantras translated in the gsar ma period as being equivalent with the so called "Mahāyoga" presented in the nine yāna scheme, they are being extremely anachronistic.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, April 27th, 2014 at 5:41 AM

Title: Re: Breaking samaya if one talks about rigpa?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

If later Nyingma authors refer to the so called anuttarayoga tantras translated in the gsar ma period as being equivalent with the so called "Mahāyoga" presented in the nine yāna scheme, they are being extremely anachronistic.

ConradTree said:

The point is that they evaluated HYT using their reasoning, and found it lacking.

Malcolm wrote:



No, I don't think you can make this case at all. If what you say is true, then someone like Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo, who by the account of Kongtrul, achieved the 13th bhumi, could not have had such realization since JKW's realization came from Lamdre.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, April 27th, 2014 at 5:49 AM

Title: Re: Breaking samaya if one talks about rigpa?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

No, I don't think you can make this case at all. If what you say is true, then someone like Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo, who by the account of Kongtrul, achieved the 13th bhumi, could not have had such realization since JKW's realization came from Lamdre.

ConradTree said:

But both of those guys clearly held Dzogchen as the highest teaching, did they not?

Malcolm wrote:

The highest teaching is the one through which one attains complete Buddhahood. How can there be a teaching higher than that?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, April 27th, 2014 at 7:42 AM

Title: Re: Breaking samaya if one talks about rigpa?

Content:

theanarchist said:

But according to you Milarepa must have been a complete spiritual noob, because, you know, he can't have attained liberation, because he didn't practice dzogchen and was inferior to, say, guys like Longchenpa, because of this.

ConradTree said:

Milarepa did practice Dzogchen. He had like 10 gurus before Marpa. That must blow your mind.

theanarchist said:

Nope, young, repentent Mila went to see a dzogchen master, the master gave him instructions, Mila totally got them wrong so the dzogchen master told him to go find Marpa, he isn't able to help him.

So Milarepa did obviously not practice dzogchen but the teachings Marpa the translator got in India from Naropa to attain liberation.

Malcolm wrote:

Well, not so fast Kimosabe, Mila famously sang "Stabbed through in heart by Mahāmudra, stabbed in the back by Dzogchen..." and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, April 27th, 2014 at 9:04 AM

Title: Re: Breaking samaya if one talks about rigpa?

Content:

smcj said:

There was an interesting line from the link posted just above:

Also, maybe not many of you here knows this - Malcolm (Loppon Namdrol) was asked to teach Dzogchen by KDL but he refused.

Uh, Malcolm, is that true?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes. I don't have any realization to speak of and there are many great masters still alive.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, April 27th, 2014 at 7:04 PM

Title: Re: Breaking samaya if one talks about rigpa?

Content:

ConradTree said:

Marpa got lineage transmissions from other siddhas in India. Not Naropa though.

Sherab Dorje said:

Source?

Malcolm wrote:

It is a contention found in the collected works of the Sakya master, Jetsun Dragpa Gyaltsen. There he states that according to his own Kagyu teacher, Milarepa never mentioned that Marpa directly encountered Naropa.

This is further confirmed by the fact that when Marpa met Atisha, Atisha informed Marpa that Naropa had already passed.

If Marpa did meet Naropa, it is likely he did so in a visionary encounter, similar to the encounter of Sachen Kunga Nyingpo with the Mahāsiddha Virupa in Tibet.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, April 27th, 2014 at 8:24 PM

Title: Re: Breaking samaya if one talks about rigpa?

Content:

Unity said:

Rigpa is...

Malcolm wrote:

not the universal mind which contains everything...

There is no such thing in Dzogchen. Really. You have deeply confused Dzogchen teaching with Advaita.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, April 27th, 2014 at 8:49 PM

Title: Re: Breaking samaya if one talks about rigpa?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Well, not so fast Kimosabe, Mila famously sang "Stabbed through in heart by Mahāmudra, stabbed in the back by Dzogchen..." and so on.

theanarchist said:

But apparently he did not pass a dzogchen lineage to his disciples, did he? (at least I have never heard of a dzogchen lineage that has Milarepa as one of the lineage gurus) If he held a dzogchen lineage, why didn't he?

Malcolm wrote:

The kind of Dzogchen teaching available to Milarepa would likely have only been so called "sems sde". This being the case, he probably would not have regarded it as being any more special or profound than the Mahāmudra teachings he received from Marpa.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, April 27th, 2014 at 8:53 PM

Title: Re: Gorampa & Tsongkhapa

Content:

plwk said:

<http://vajrasana.org/jeff01.htm>

Now to the matter of Gorampa. To this day, the refutations against Tsongkhapa's Madhyamika view by Gorampa Sonam Senge have not even been replied to by the great Gelugpa scholars of the past few hundred years. Instead, the defenders of Tsongkhapa have attacked the intellectual juniors of Gorampa such as Taktsang Lotsawa, Shakya Chogden and others (see Jeffrey Hopkins, Meditation on Emptiness). Also, Ngorchen Kunga Zangpo (the founder of Ngor), a contemporary, criticized Tsongkhapa's understanding of Tantra.

Please understand that these are not ramblings or sectarian expletives but are commonly known to all who have studied Madhyamika within the greater family of the Tibetan Buddhist Tradition. For the Sakya School Sakya Pandita is the definitive scholar and teacher. Gorampa Sonam Senge is the definitive scholar in explaining the difficult meanings of Sakya Pandita's works.

Many Gelugpa monasteries banned outright Gorampa's works from entering their

premises. 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. Can anyone elaborate on whether the above are true/factual?

Malcolm wrote:

While I certainly would not refer to Taktsang or Shakya Chogden as Gorampa's "juniors", the above is all true.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, April 27th, 2014 at 9:13 PM

Title: Re: Breaking samaya if one talks about rigpa?

Content:

theanarchist said:

I see. That makes sense. Thanks for the clarification.

Malcolm wrote:

In those days (late 11th, early 12th), in general, the new instructions that were pouring into Tibet were regarded as being more potent, while the Nyingma teachings in general were regarded as having been somewhat corrupted, with very diminished blessings.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, April 27th, 2014 at 10:12 PM

Title: Re: Breaking samaya if one talks about rigpa?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The kind of Dzogchen teaching available to Milarepa would likely have only been so called "sems sde". This being the case, he probably would not have regarded it as being any more special or profound than the Mahāmudra teachings he received from Marpa.

mañjughoṣamaṇi said:

Are you putting the scare quotes around sems sde because it had not yet been classified as such during Milarepa's lifetime? Given your recent studies where do you see the teachings eventually classified as klong sde appearing on the scene?

Thanks.

Malcolm wrote:

Correct, it had not been classified as such during that time. Dzeng Dharmabodhi associated with a lot of first generation Kagyus in the Lhodrag region, but I see no reason to think that Vajra Bridge instruction does not go right back to Vairocana. Prior to the revelation of the Vima Nyinthig, Dzogchen was basically just Dzogchen, without the

super elaborate schemes we observe today which are all post 1115.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, April 27th, 2014 at 11:13 PM

Title: Re: Breaking samaya if one talks about rigpa?

Content:

mañjughoṣamaṇi said:

Thanks for sharing your thoughts. What do you currently think about the proposal that Milarepa's iconic hand-to-ear pose represents klong sde practice?

Malcolm wrote:

It's possible.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, April 27th, 2014 at 11:43 PM

Title: Re: Gorampa & Tsongkhapa

Content:

jiashengrox said:

Hmmm.

Malcolm-la, not sure if this is correct, but could you refer to this article:

[http://himalaya.socanth.cam.ac.uk/collections/journals/ret/pdf/ret\\_22\\_05.pdf](http://himalaya.socanth.cam.ac.uk/collections/journals/ret/pdf/ret_22_05.pdf)

Page 11, under footnotes 31. I was wondering if you (or anyone else who knows tibetan language) would have read about khedrup's reply to gorampa, and if so, what are his replies?

I (my personal opinion!) don't think that the gelug scholars would leave such criticisms unanswered for centuries, especially pertaining to issues on madhyamika. But it is my opinion only though, might not be right!

Malcolm wrote:

The article contains an anachronism. Khedrub never replied to Gorampa, or if he did, it was from the grave.

Gorampa lived from 1429 to 1489. Khedrup from 1385 to 1438.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, April 27th, 2014 at 11:45 PM

Title: Re: Gorampa & Tsongkhapa

Content:

jiashengrox said:

would Rongton's interpretation of madhyamika be considered as mainstream? Are there like differences between their (Rongton and Gorampa) views on madhyamika?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, as well as Rendawa, and Tsongkhapa in his early commentary on the perfection of wisdom, now largely neglected in Gelug.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, April 28th, 2014 at 12:09 AM

Title: Re: Breaking samaya if one talks about rigpa?

Content:

theanarchist said:

I see. That makes sense. Thanks for the clarification.

Malcolm wrote:

In those days (late 11th, early 12th), in general, the new instructions that were pouring into Tibet were regarded as being more potent, while the Nyingma teachings in general were regarded as having been somewhat corrupted, with very diminished blessings.

theanarchist said:

Was there some actual truth behind this assumption or were the lineages that were freshly imported just more fashionable because they were new and came more freshly from the land of the Buddha.

Malcolm wrote:

For example, the founder of Sakya, Khon Konchog Gyalpo was advised by his older brother to stop practicing Nyingma practices and focus in the new tantras because they saw secret dances being performed at a harvest festival in the market.

theanarchist said:

Is it correct to assume that Padmasambhava had foreseen this and therefor hid the treasures to revive the tradition in later centuries?

Malcolm wrote:

The story goes.

theanarchist said:

I have never heard of what went on in in the earlier centuries of Tibetan buddhism after

Padmasambhava beyond the stories of Milarepa and later Je Dzongkhapa. Are there documents from that time or is it pretty much mythological?

Malcolm wrote:

You should read the Blue Annals. Tsongkhapa is very late, i.e. 14th/15th century.

We have a very good knowledge of Tibetan History beginning about 970. The period between 840 and 970 is a little hazy.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, April 28th, 2014 at 12:20 AM

Title: Re: Gorampa & Tsongkhapa

Content:

jiashengrox said:

Are there like differences between their (Rongton and Gorampa) views on madhyamika?

Malcolm wrote:

Not much.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, April 28th, 2014 at 1:30 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist neglect of academic findings.

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

Mazard seems to think that ancient Buddhists would have taken such passages literally, but is that clear?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, of course. Just read the Yoga Sutras, full of very similar phenomena.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, April 28th, 2014 at 3:50 AM

Title: Re: Unity's theory on the nature of mind

Content:

Unity said:

There's no more that I can say about it.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, April 28th, 2014 at 6:02 PM

Title: Re: Too much Vajrayogini?

Content:

JKhedrup said:

However, in terms of the study of tantra, VY is not really enough to understand Lama

Tzongkhapa's teachings on the subject.

Malcolm wrote:

It is not sufficient for understanding the Sakyapa take on Vajrayāna either.

JKhedrup said:

As for Tsem Tulku's statement about the supremacy of VY, thus has to be taken with a grain of salt.

At every empowerment you attend the lama says why that particular deity is special.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, but the reason given for Cakrasamvara and Yogini being especially relevant these days is that the mandala of Cakrasamvara is still extant, open. It was also by far the most popular cycle in India, I suspect, because it had such a compelling narrative based on this idea.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, April 28th, 2014 at 6:31 PM

Title: Re: Now I "get it"

Content:

thigle said:

Because primordial natural looseness is completely unfabricated. So stability can't be practiced. Therefore one has to make a strong decision and the fruit is relative stability. This can take years and decades. If knowledge is relatively stable, potentiality begins to unfold.

lobster said:

Quite right, it is the conditions for stability that one must enable.

thigle said:

So, if one can't understand the necessity of decisions instead of practicing stability, one never has realized immediate knowledge before. This step isn't a personal fabrication, it is just the consequence what follows after temporarily recognizing immediate knowledge. This decision is absolutely consistent with the ZZNG-tantras I know.

Malcolm wrote:

You realize you are talking to an "arhat", right?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, April 28th, 2014 at 6:36 PM

Title: Re: Validity of recorded empowerments

Content:

anjali said:



When Rinpoche is no longer in the body, will future generations of practitioners also be able to receive empowerments from the authorized recordings?

Malcolm wrote:

It would certainly be cheaper than having to train living teachers...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, April 28th, 2014 at 7:29 PM

Title: Re: Now I "get it"

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

You realize you are talking to an "arhat", right?

thigle said:

I'm talking about Dzogchen in an deluded Dzogchen 'like forum, because nobody talks about Dzogchen...

Malcolm wrote:

I see, so you really know Dzogchen much better than anyone else here, is that what you think?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, April 28th, 2014 at 8:24 PM

Title: Re: Now I "get it"

Content:

thigle said:

Stop to project selfish reasons. The delusion is obvious.

Malcolm wrote:

You make a lot of pronouncements so it seems like you consider yourself very expert in the teachings. As to whether some people here are working with various levels of understanding, that of course is true. But unless you are a realized person, it is a little strange to be castigating other people for being deluded when oneself has not even gouged out a small portion of one own delusion. On the other hand, if someone makes a statement that is clearly a factual error and is in contradiction with the teachings, then of course one is helping them by setting them straight, even if they find it painful.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, April 28th, 2014 at 8:26 PM

Title: Re: Now I "get it"

Content:

thigle said:

So, it's better to close this public forum or this self-destructive obligation of secrecy falls, which has much worse effects for the teachings, than doing the teachings publicly.

Sherab Dorje said:

I disagree. I actually believe that it is very important that this sub-forum exists so that people with wrong views can have them corrected by people with some serious knowledge/experience in Dzogchen. Imagine if they just got their info from various suspect online sources. It is also valuable as it can give people with a serious interest in Dzogchen the opportunity to know what should and should not be discussed. Of course the adage: "Go ask your teacher" can be applied to 90% of the questions asked here, you must take into account that not everybody has a teacher that they can regularly and personally access, so...

Welcome to Kali Yuga "thigle", we can't pretend sh\*t is not out there (anymore), because it is, and we have to deal with it.

Malcolm wrote:

Well, at least the OP knows better than sharing anything here anymore...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, April 28th, 2014 at 8:33 PM

Title: Re: How to make voice last longer?

Content:

Belincia said:

My throat begins to hurt when I try to do a lot of mantras, so like during retreats I'm unable to do them as much as I'd like to. I do drink water a lot while doing it, because that helps somewhat. No matter if I do them loudly/quietly, I still can't keep going as long as I'd like to. I always do them with my normal pitch, which should be the healthiest way.

Are you aware of effective ways to train the voice to last longer?

I am a young person, and I don't have any tendency for illnesses on my "speaking organs". I very rarely get this pain from just talking. I think doing mantras is a bit more intense, as it is continuous.

Thanks in advance.

Malcolm wrote:

Mantras should normally be done quietly, quiet enough so a little guy on your shoulder cannot hear them. It is called "secret mantra" for a reason. Bellowing mantras like Vajrakilaya and so on causes obstacles.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, April 28th, 2014 at 8:45 PM

Title: Re: Now I "get it"

Content:

thigle said:

Stop to project selfish reasons. The delusion is obvious.

Malcolm wrote:

You make a lot of pronouncements so it seems like you consider yourself very expert in the teachings. As to whether some people here are working with various levels of understanding, that of course is true. But unless you are a realized person, it is a little strange to be castigating other people for being deluded when oneself has not even gouged out a small portion of one own delusion. On the other hand, if someone makes a statement that is clearly a factual error and is in contradiction with the teachings, then of course one is helping them by setting them straight, even if they find it painful.

thigle said:

Just as I said before, stop to project selfish reasons. The delusion is obvious.

Consequence: It's better to close this subforum. Make your circle secret. So no one can be harmed anymore. User unity was just a mirror.

Malcolm wrote:

You know, it is generally better to wear shoes than to cover the world with shoe leather. My advice to you is to stop participating in on-line forums such as this one if you disapprove so strongly. They are not going to shut this forum just because you recommend it.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, April 28th, 2014 at 9:25 PM

Title: Re: Dzogchenpa's nose

Content:

thigle said:

Continuation from <https://www.dharmawheel.net/viewtopic.php?f=48&t=16295%22>

Simon E. said:

The point Malcolm is making thigle, is that 'lobster' has declared himself to be an arhat.

thigle said:

But another much more important point is Simon, that some people declared himself to realised an authentic introduction.

Malcolm wrote:

Ummmm, no.

Someone merely declared that they understood something.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 29th, 2014 at 12:24 AM

Title: Re: Validity of recorded empowerments

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

All these questions arise due to our failure to recognize the nature and function of the videokaya.

Malcolm wrote:

More importantly, they arise due to our failure to understand the essence of the interdhātu.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 29th, 2014 at 12:26 AM

Title: Re: Gorampa & Tsongkhapa

Content:

plwk said:

Thanks Malcolm & jiashengrox. It's rather baffling (to me at least) that the Gelugpas, being known for being a scholastic tradition, would not have produce any commentarial or treatise to compare / contrast / refute Gorampa directly but resort to what is seemingly political moves as a 'valid' response instead? Hmmm...

Malcolm wrote:

Well the founder of Sera did pen one reply, but it more or less amounts to a tome of sputtering indignation, "How dare you, you #%\$@\*\$^&^...."

I think the Gelugpas in general would prefer to imagine that Gorampa was just a bad dream someone had. Pabhongkha was pretty indignant that Gorampa's collected works were collected and revived in Eastern Tibet and it seems to be one of his motives for encouraging sectarianism there.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 29th, 2014 at 2:55 AM

Title: Re: Gorampa, Rendawa, and Rongton

Content:

jiashengrox said:

This discussion i hope to have actually stems from the following thread:

<http://dharmawheel.net/viewtopic.php?f=52&t=16306&p=230132#p230132> "

onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;" onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;" onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;"

First of all, I would like to ask if any scholar around could give a precise differentiation on Gorampa and Rendawa's views on Madhyamika? As i do know that Gorampa's text is pretty much the standardised texts used in the seminaries, it would be good to actually have some basic information for everyone here before anyone else might make a decision to delve into Gorampa's text on Madhyamika.

Also, as I am currently reading Rongton's Commentary on Mulamadhyamikakarika (translated by Khenpo Ngawang Jorden, if i m not wrong), i would also appreciate if anyone could give an idea of how their differences in view are like? It's just for preliminary understanding.

Finally, if it is possible, would anyone be able to give a heuristic view of the Sakya's approach towards Maitreya's treatises (such as say, Uttaratantra)? It would be good to hear a different pov from the gelug, kagyu and nyingma traditions, since there are many translations that have been published.

Thanks a lot!

Malcolm wrote:

IN general, Gorampa and Rongton more or less have the same view. Many of Gorampa's refutations were penned defenses of Rongton against Khedrup.

Gorampa found Rendawa a bit extreme in terms of Rendawa's polemics against Jonang, but again, there is no real difference view.

As for Maitreya treatises Gorampa considers Abhisamayalamkara and Uttaratantra definitive, depending on interpretation, and the other three provisional.

Gorampa's works are considered the gold standard for view in Sakya, apart from the five founders.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 29th, 2014 at 5:10 AM

Title: Re: Gorampa & Tsongkhapa

Content:

jiashengrox said:

Anyways, i think in Mipham's book, it was said that Sera Jetsunpa (Jetsun Chokyi Gyaltsen), Jamyang Shepa, jamyang Gawai Lodroe and Panchen Delek Nyima did reply to Gorampa with regards to his criticism. I am not sure if that is right (refer to page 246, note 79).

Malcolm wrote:

I don't believe that these replies are considered by Sakyapas to address any of Gorampa's observations in any substantial way.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 29th, 2014 at 8:13 AM

Title: Re: Validity of recorded empowerments

Content:

anjali said:

There came a time when the Buddha's teachings had to be written down.

pueraeternus said:

That would be passe. In the future, tertons would hide termas in the World of Warcraft, or maybe some obscure corner of Ultima Online.

Malcolm wrote:

dude, Halo...come on...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 29th, 2014 at 8:14 AM

Title: Re: Gorampa & Tsongkhapa

Content:

ConradTree said:

The moral of all of this is to throw out sutra entirely, and stick to tantra like Rongzom says.

<https://www.amazon.com/Establishing-Appearances-Divine-Reasoning-Madhyamaka/dp/1559392886> " onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;" onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;

Malcolm wrote:

Don't be ridiculous. And that is not Rongzom's POV at all.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 29th, 2014 at 8:59 PM

Title: Re: Gorampa & Tsongkhapa

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

And that is not Rongzom's POV at all.

ConradTree said:

Well he clearly holds tantra as more definitive than sutra.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, but that does not mean we throw out the five lay vows because they are predicated on a dualistic view, for example, or toss out samaya for the same reason.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 29th, 2014 at 9:07 PM

Title: Re: Too much Vajrayogini?

Content:

JKhedrup said:

In Sakya the Hevajra cycle would be most important for understanding their take on tantra, I am guessing?

Is this point about the mandala the reason it is said VY herself bestows portions of the initiation, whereas for other systems this is not the case?

Malcolm wrote:

Well, Lamdre in general, as well as rgyud sde spyi rnams, rin po che ljong shing, etc.

As for the second point -- this is about how Yogini is the essence of the mandala, but it is not exactly like that.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 29th, 2014 at 9:54 PM

Title: Re: When are you considered a 'Buddhist'?

Content:

Pringle said:

When would a person be classed as a 'Buddhist' rather than someone who follows buddhist teachings (if there even is a difference)

Malcolm wrote:

When you sincerely go for refuge to the Three Jewels.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 29th, 2014 at 10:38 PM

Title: Re: Gorampa & Tsongkhapa

Content:

jiashengrox said:

I could quote from Ngari Panchen's Ascertaining the Three Vows on this issue:

"An upholder of lay ordination who is also a pure-awareness holder must, except for signs and rituals of complete ordination, practice all that remains" (page 26)

It summarises the need for us to adhere to fundamental pratimoksha precepts (in fact

in a stricter sense, coz in that context, he mentioned the need to follow the bhikkhu's conduct, with exception of ceremonies performed by bhikkhus or ordained ones, the "outer signs of ordination", as commented on by Dudjom Rinpoche).

Malcolm wrote:

Rlght, that I disagree with completely -- this was already rejected by Sakya Pandita in sdom gsum. One only needs to follow the vows which one receives in a given rite.

The intention here comes from symbolic initiation into bhikṣu pratimokṣa in the Anuyoga grand empowerment.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 29th, 2014 at 10:49 PM

Title: Re: Gorampa & Tsongkhapa

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The intention here comes from symbolic initiation into bhikṣu pratimokṣa in the Anuyoga grand empowerment.

jiashengrox said:

Would it be possible to support this with evidence? Somehow or another i couldn't find the reason in the same text.

Malcolm wrote:

The reason is not explicitly given.

Take the empowerment yourself (or a similar one, for example, the Shi khro nges don snying po ). Then you will see.

No such empowerment exists in the new tantras, and therefore, Sapan does not accept this perspective.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 29th, 2014 at 11:13 PM

Title: Re: Validity of recorded empowerments

Content:

Anders said:

Cool dharma stuff can happen in the saha world too, much as we like to think that's reserved for holy people and holy worlds, etc. Imo, that's why the sutras tell us about these things. To open our minds to the possibilities of transmitting the dharma we can be exposed to.



Malcolm wrote:

This is to miss the point completely.

These kinds of teachings must be in accordance with the capacity of the recipient. Ordinary beings do not smell the sound of Dharma floating out of septic tanks. They smell rotten shit.

I am very sorry that I have to say this, but I have a responsibility to the Dharma. If people feel I am being critical of this or that teacher, that is not my intent.

Empowerments are not mystical transmissions, they are a very specific method with a precise dependent origination that requires the guru and the disciples' active, simultaneous, cooperative participation. The Buddha has no more power to bless a digital file with the potency to confer an empowerment (dbang skur), a blessing (sbyin rlabs), a permission (rjes ghang), a reading transmission or an ordination than the power to bless a book for the same purpose, so what need to mention any teacher living today? To believe otherwise is to fall under the influence of total proliferation.

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.

There are no siddhis without empowerment,  
just as there is no oil even if sand is pressed.  
Whoever proudly explains the tantras and citations  
to those without empowerment,  
both master and disciple go to hell  
as soon as they die even if there are siddhis.  
-- Mahāmudratilaka-tantra

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 29th, 2014 at 11:15 PM

Title: Re: Gorampa & Tsongkhapa

Content:

jiashengrox said:

Ok thank you! Just to check this is the terma by Rigdzin Jatson Nyingpo, and is different from our usual Karling Shitro?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, Shi khro nges don snying po is a full anuyoga system empowerment in brief form.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, April 29th, 2014 at 11:50 PM

Title: Re: Validity of recorded empowerments

Content:

smcj said:

However you have a habit of stating your opinions with the same voice of authority that you give your expertise.

Malcolm wrote:

It is not an opinion.

There is no teaching of the Buddha in any authentic Buddhist tantra anywhere that someone who wishes to be ripened to practice Vajrayāna can be ripened merely by interacting with an inanimate object, which is what a recording or a book is in fact.

If someone wants a blessing, they should go visit a lama and get a pat on the head and a cord. If someone wishes to practice Vajrayāna, they should make the effort and sacrifice to go to where a teacher is present, receive an empowerment in a proper way, and if they cannot manage that much, then they should participate in a live online transmission of some kind.

It is not sufficient to watch some video of an empowerment and say "I will do this now and later get the real empowerment" and so on. This kind of thinking also has many faults mentioned in the tantras. We are after all discussing Vajrayāna, right?

Complaining it is impossible to travel, or that there are no teachers where one lives is the worst sort of lameass excuse one can give considering the enormous troubles the ancient Tibetans went through to bring the teachings to Tibet from India.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 30th, 2014 at 12:03 AM

Title: Re: When are you considered a 'Buddhist'?

Content:

Pringle said:

When would a person be classed as a 'Buddhist' rather than someone who follows buddhist teachings (if there even is a difference)

Malcolm wrote:

When you sincerely go for refuge to the Three Jewels.

Pringle said:

How would one sincerely go for refuge? Do you mean if one sincerely practices in accordance with the the path with body, speach and mind, or do you mean sincerely go to refuge by taking a formal declartion in the presence of a sangha?

Malcolm wrote:

Or simply by going for refuge in the Three Jewels in your heart.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 30th, 2014 at 1:01 AM

Title: Re: Validity of recorded empowerments

Content:

smcj said:

But in any case it still belongs on the editorial page, at least until such time as a consensus is formed one way or the other among the other experts.

Malcolm wrote:

It is not really an issue that can be resolved by consensus.

The authority is the tantras, not the opinions of experts.

We may debate about these things, but we must do so based on proper citations reinforced by logical reasoning. It is not sufficient to say "This is my guru's blessing, so therefore it is valid because I have faith in him or her."

Anyway, I have had my say.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 30th, 2014 at 1:39 AM

Title: Re: Validity of recorded empowerments

Content:

smcj said:

The authority is the tantras, not the opinions of experts.

And where in the tantras does it say that live webcasts are valid?

Malcolm wrote:

They don't mention the issue at all.

smcj said:

How is it that the digital reproduction then is more valid than at a later date? Here at Dharma Wheel the validity is accepted because ChNN and Garchen R. say so.

Malcolm wrote:

CHNN explicitly has stated that he cannot grant full fledged empowerments over the internet at all because there is no way to introduce the student into the mandala directly and so on. However he does give so called "meaning" empowerments and direct introductions because they require no physical supports.

smcj said:

The rationale is based on the non-locality of the guru's blessing, on ChNN and G.R.'s expert opinion that such is the active operating principal in a live webcast.

Malcolm wrote:

See above, that is not ChNN's rational. ChNN's rational is that the student and the master are collaborating at the same time, therefore, distance is not an issue but time is.

smcj said:

There are teachings to that effect, that the guru-yoga

Malcolm wrote:

In order to have a secret mantra guru one must have received empowerment in a proper way.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 30th, 2014 at 1:40 AM

Title: Re: Validity of recorded empowerments

Content:

Johnny Dangerous said:

I think i've read a book (chime in if anyone remembers this) by (I think) Karma Chagme where he says something along the lines of "I hereby declare that reading of these words constitutes permissions to practice Avalokitsehvara". I'm sure it was worded differently, but the gist seemed to me that he was giving permission to practice a deity via text, and that reading it was enough. I don't remember the other qualifiers involved though. There certainly seems to be a precedent for reading of texts (for example) being transmission of something in Buddhism here and there.

I wanna say the book was A Spacious Path To Freedom..but i'm not positive.

Malcolm wrote:

Om mani padme hum is a sūtra mantra. Anyone can practice it without transmission anyway.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 30th, 2014 at 1:41 AM

Title: Re: Validity of recorded empowerments

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

If someone could explain what it means to be "ripened" in this context we might be able to have a more constructive discussion.

Malcolm wrote:

"Ripened" means someone has entered a HYT mandala correctly, possesses all the samayas, and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 30th, 2014 at 1:48 AM

Title: Re: Validity of recorded empowerments

Content:

smcj said:

The proof will be in the taste of pudding, as they say. If someone can take an empowerment via whatever means, do a retreat, and gain realization, then the empowerment is valid. Until such time as that experiment has been done we must rely on expert opinions.

I for one, however, am not willing to invest that much time and effort on such an experiment.

Pero said:

But, if you're not going to do it yourself you're just going to take someone else's word for it?

Johnny Dangerous said:

I think I've read a book (chime in if anyone remembers this) by (I think) Karma Chagme where he says something along the lines of "I hereby declare that reading of these words constitutes permissions to practice Avalokiteshvara". I'm sure it was worded differently, but the gist seemed to me that he was giving permission to practice a deity via text, and that reading it was enough. I don't remember the other qualifiers involved though. There certainly seems to be a precedent for reading of texts (for example) being transmission of something in Buddhism here and there.

I wanna say the book was A Spacious Path To Freedom..but I'm not positive.

Pero said:

Now that you say that I think Malcolm in some discussion long ago mentioned that somewhere Jigme Lingpa says that whoever is reading his text (I don't remember which one, too far back) has the lung for it. But since it was so long ago, it could've been whoever "understands" his text... Any memory of what I'm talking about, Malcolm?

Malcolm wrote:

There is a Dzogchen tantra which states "It is not necessary to hear it, obtaining the text is enough."

But this presumes that one has already been ripened by the four empowerments:

If this kind of intimate instructions is given to improper recipients, both will be burned.  
May it be acquired by those trained suitable recipients with good karma!  
Through that may secret mantra remain for a long while!  
May the darkness of the ignorance of migrating beings be dispelled!

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 30th, 2014 at 1:51 AM

Title: Re: Validity of recorded empowerments

Content:

qwerty13 said:

I dont know anymore how to believe.

Malcolm wrote:

Shakyamuni's mantras is also from sutra (The Ārya-svalpākṣara-prajñāpāramitā-nāma-mahāyāna-sūtra to be exact), and kriya tantra, and so it too does not require any sort of empowerment at all to recite.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 30th, 2014 at 1:52 AM

Title: Re: Validity of recorded empowerments

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

So how does this all square with the fact that your teacher ChNN gives empowerments over the internet where students will not have access to the sacred substances and material supports of the empowerments (ie not in a proper way ) regardless of the fact that it is "live"?

Malcolm wrote:

Greg,

I just clarified that ChNN does not do this, read more carefully.

CHNN explicitly has stated that he cannot grant full fledged empowerments over the internet at all because there is no way to introduce the student into the mandala directly and so on. However he does give so called "meaning" empowerments and direct introductions because they require no physical supports.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 30th, 2014 at 9:06 AM

Title: Re: Validity of recorded empowerments

Content:

JohnJ said:

Furthermore, regarding a "secret mantra guru", the Dzogchen Community has many secondary practices, mantras, protectors, etc. Does this mean that the Direct

Introduction, though it has no physical supports, constitutes the entirety of a "proper" empowerment for those who receive it, since there are many practices in the DC that are of the Vajrayana vehicle?

Malcolm wrote:

In the system of Dzogchen, the rig pa'i rtsal dbang aka direct introduction is considered to be the source of all empowerments. Therefore, from the perspective of the Dzogchen teachings, a direct introduction by a \_qualified\_ master alone is sufficient to ripen one as a student of Mantrayāna since the minds of all wisdom deities are the same; differing only in terms of mantra and appearances (for which thge khrid lung is then required).

On the other hand, it is not likely that many Sakyapa or Gelugpa lamas agree with this approach. Nevertheless, the system of Dzogchgen, following its own tantras, can support this approach with citations as well as reasonings.

Further, the system of Dzogchen considers the direct introduction to be an expanded, more experiential form of the fourth empowerment.

This however does not mean that other empowerments are not necessary. The Mutig Phrengwa tantra states that those with understanding require only introduction; the rest should receive the four empowerments in order. So it really depends on the capacity of the student.

JohnJ said:

In other words, ChNN rarely seems to give full Vajrayana empowerments, so would it still be correct to say that his teachings contain the essence of the 4 empowerments given in traditional HYT and that the many students and members of DC who follow his teachings have received Samaya, are expected to keep it perfectly, and have entered the Vajrayana?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, from the perspective of Dzogchen teachings, this is correct.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 30th, 2014 at 9:07 AM

Title: Re: Validity of recorded empowerments

Content:

untxi said:

a webcast

-U

Malcolm wrote:

No one has rejected attending a live webcast...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 30th, 2014 at 9:26 AM

Title: Re: Indian roots of tibetan buddhism

Content:

Zhen Li said:

Not every great Buddhist tradition is Indian in origin.

Malcolm wrote:

Depends on what you mean by "tradition" and "origin".

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 30th, 2014 at 5:56 PM

Title: Re: Gorampa & Tsongkhapa

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Take the empowerment yourself (or a similar one, for example, the Shi khro nges don snying po ). Then you will see.

ratna said:

Do other Shitros also confer these vows? Isn't Namchö Shitro also Anuyoga? Does this mean we're all bhikṣus in the DC and just don't know it?

Malcolm wrote:

Not necessarily.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 30th, 2014 at 6:55 PM

Title: Re: Validity of recorded empowerments

Content:

JohnJ said:

It might be good to mention that in my personal encounters with Garchen Rinpoche and the lamas that teach through his Institute, empowerment is understood as something that is rarely actually recieved. In other words, the belief seems to be that empowerment only occurs when one has understood the nature of their mind through that empowerment.

Malcolm wrote:

This represents a misunderstanding of the nature of empowerments on your part.

An empowerment is something that arranges a profound dependent origination between someone's body, speech and mind and the three kāyas of the result. Therefore,



it is not so that one does not receive the empowerment if one does not realize the nature of the mind.

An empowerment is first of all a method for inducing realization, for example, when Indrabhuti I attained Buddhahood by receiving the Guhyasamaja empowerment. Failing that, we have sadhanas, which is the method connected to the empowerment to produce realization. When we receive an empowerment, we agree to follow various samayas until we attain buddhahood. People who do not receive empowerments do not have those samayas.

JohnJ said:

The real empowerment is much more than a permission to practice various Sadhanas, it is an introduction to the natural state, and only if you do not understand that and remain in confusion should you seek out various Sadhana and yoga practices.

Malcolm wrote:

If you did not truly receive an empowerment because you failed to realize nature of your mind, you could not realize the three kāyas through the practice of sadhanas. Therefore, this idea is really not very correct at all.

JohnJ said:

In that way, most everyone who receives the empowerment is only receiving blessings, not the actual empowerment.

Malcolm wrote:

Nonsense. This represents a total misunderstanding of what an empowerment actually is.

JohnJ said:

My own understanding is that the recorded empowerments are a permission to practice and a receiving of some lineage blessings, since the vast majority who come or stay at home won't receive the empowerment in the way that Garchen Rinpoche (and many others) understand it.

Malcolm wrote:

There are a number of problems with this:

One: in any empowerment, there are three mandalas: the front created mandala, the vase mandala and the mandala of the teacher. The teacher arranges the descent of the wisdom being from the front created mandala onto the disciple after he creates each disciple as the form of the deity to be given. If you are not at the empowerment in some fashion during the time it is being given, there is no descent of the wisdom being.

Two: at the end of any empowerment, byin rlabs, or rje gngang there is the dissolution of the mandalas, i.e., the front created mandala, the vase mandala and the mandala of the teacher. One cannot receive initiation into a mandala that has been dissolved by the master. Once the vajramaster has concluded his or her activities, the empowerment is

over.

Therefore, watching an empowerment later on is like watching a performance on PBS. It may be interesting, fascinating, and so on. But it is not live, you are not there, you are not participating, you are watching a show. You may be edified, but there is no stream of blessing because the mandala has already been switched off, as it were.

Further, there is the very real likelihood that unsuitable people will choose to watch such performances on places like youtube resulting in many samaya problems.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 30th, 2014 at 11:25 PM

Title: Re: Validity of recorded empowerments

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

One: in any empowerment, there are three mandalas: the front created mandala, the vase mandala and the mandala of the teacher. The teacher arranges the descent of the wisdom being from the front created mandala onto the disciple after he creates each disciple as the form of the deity to be given.

dzogchungpa said:

OK, this is interesting. Is there anything that can be said about how the teacher arranges the descent of the wisdom being from the front created mandala onto the disciple, and what it means to create each disciple as the form of the deity to be given?

Malcolm wrote:

During an empowerment, there are two sections: the self-empowerment conducted by a qualified master which includes such things as preparing the the space, and so on, which culminates in the master conferring the empowerment upon himself into the mandala and the creation of the front mandala as well as the vase mandala.

Second, when all this is done, then the master again repeats the sadhana, creating each disciple as the mandala they into which they are to be initiated: this stage is called creating the samayasattva, the commitment being. Then, when this has been done, the master summons the jñānasattva, the wisdom being, into each disciple who is present. In a very serious empowerment this is done one by one, i.e. the master visualizes each disciple separately as the deity, and is the reason why the most serious and proper way to give empowerments is to give them to one, three, seven or no more than twenty-five disciples at a time. In other words, if he or she is giving the initiation to 3 people, he or she must visualize three separate mandalas. If he or she is giving the empowerment to twenty five people, they must visualize 25 separate and complete mandalas. For example, the Kalacakra Mandala in the full form has 648 deities, if I recall correctly. Each deity must be separately visualized for each person during that empowerment.

Even in a Jenang, where there is only a body, speech and mind "blessing" (i.e. the form of the deity, the mantra and introduction to the deity's wisdom continuum) the master

must visualize everyone present as the form of the deity individually.

As you can now understand, in order to be a Vajramaster one must have extraordinary powers of samadhi.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, April 30th, 2014 at 11:27 PM

Title: Re: Validity of recorded empowerments

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Further, there is the very real likelihood that unsuitable people will choose to watch such performances on places like youtube resulting in many samaya problems.

qwerty13 said:

Are you now strictly talking about empowerments in to highest yoga tantra ( like Vajrayogini, Yamantaka, guhyasamaja etc. etc)?

Are these samaya problems (coming from watching recored empowerment) present only in the case of Highest yoga tantra initiation?

Malcolm wrote:

Further, there is the very real likelihood that unsuitable people will choose to watch such performances on places like youtube resulting in many samaya problems.

qwerty13 said:

Do mean by "unsuitable" a person who has no faith in Vajrayana, or even disrespects it?

Malcolm wrote:

As for question one; in general, yes. However, even among kriya yoga deities, those of the Vajra family have samayas to observe which involve secrecy and so on.

As for two, yes.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 1st, 2014 at 12:02 AM

Title: Re: Validity of recorded empowerments

Content:

qwerty13 said:

Do mean by "unsuitable" a person who has no faith in Vajrayana, or even disrespects it?

Malcolm wrote:

As for two, yes.

Sherab Dorje said:

I don't really see how physical presence is any guarantee of this though, I've been to empowerments where many present did not know what they were getting themselves involved in and left with a negative attitude regarding the Vajrayana methods.

Malcolm wrote:

Again, this is the fault of the master. There are two things that must happen; the master must examine the student, the student must examine the master. If the master does not examine the student and the student walks away thinking the Vajrayāna is bullshit, whose fault could it possibly be other than the master's for not checking the student?

Unfortunately in this day and age we have a "try it before you buy it" culture. This really does not work well in a Vajrayāna context, since it ruins both masters and students.

This is why ChNN repeatedly says there is no such thing as taking an empowerment as a blessing, and forgoing the commitments. It is actually impossible, and when you are told "You can take this as a blessing", and you think this means you do not have samaya, or a vajra relationship with that teacher, or the practice and so on, you don't understand anything. If you are not serious about a practice or a teacher, then it is better you don't go.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 1st, 2014 at 12:13 AM

Title: Re: Validity of recorded empowerments

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Again, this is the fault of the master. There are two things that must happen; the master must examine the student, the student must examine the master. If the master does not examine the student and the student walks away thinking the Vajrayāna is bullshit, whose fault could it possibly be other than the master's for not checking the student?

Sherab Dorje said:

Seriously now: when was the last time you ever heard of this happening, either in the "East" or the "West"?

Malcolm wrote:

I know of quite a bit of difficulty encountered by both masters and students because this does not happen. Masters driven by blind kindness or even by selfishness (to gather large retinues to pay for things "for the dharma") and students driven by greed and egotism because they are going to "become buddhas" etc.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 1st, 2014 at 12:27 AM

Title: Re: Validity of recorded empowerments

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

During an empowerment, there are two sections...

...

As you can now understand, in order to be a Vajramaster one must have extraordinary powers of samadhi.

dzogchungpa said:

OK, thanks. If that is (part of) what is necessary to enter a HYT mandala correctly, I kind of wonder how often that happens.

Is there any way to "verify" that one has indeed done so?

Malcolm wrote:

Were you awake during the activities of the disciple? Did you recite the prayers understanding what they meant and why? Did you try to follow the visualizations sincerely as best you could? If so, then you entered the mandala.

Even though your master is not the most realized person, as long as he satisfied his responsibilities in doing the basic approach retreats and fire offerings, etc., and performed the empowerment rites correctly, still you took the pledges of samaya, still you received the empowerment. Still you need to regard that person as a real Buddha. If you do so, then you will achieve buddhahood. Even if the Buddha were to give you an empowerment, if you think he is an ordinary shmoe, then like Sunakṣatra, you might be swallowed up by the ground before you even die.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 1st, 2014 at 1:55 AM

Title: Re: Validity of recorded empowerments

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

OK thanks, but I was also wondering if there are supposed to be "signs" indicating that you have really "received the empowerment"?

Malcolm wrote:

You mean like stigmata?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 1st, 2014 at 3:42 AM

Title: Re: Dharma Quotes Thread

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The Samādhirāja Sūtra states:

Though I have taught the very excellent dharma,

if you do not correctly practice after hearing it,  
it is like a patient holding a bag of medicine,  
it will not cure one's illness.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 1st, 2014 at 4:45 AM

Title: Re: Simhamukha and Guru Dragpur

Content:

Reibeam said:

does the lung for the medium Tun give enough authorization to practice Simhamukha and Guru Dragpo separately from the Tun?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 1st, 2014 at 7:28 PM

Title: Re: Validity of recorded empowerments

Content:

JohnJ said:

but merely speculating based on instructions I have received.

Malcolm wrote:

That's a bad idea.

JohnJ said:

I am very grateful for your clarification, however, as it has helped me understand the quote by Garchen Rinpoche that I referenced above. I think, in this case, that you are saying the same thing he has said but in much greater detail.

Malcolm wrote:

I don't have any idea what Garchen has said, I merely note that a lot of people are claiming Garchen Rinpoche's endorsement for their own concepts. I have yet to see any formal written statement about this matter from him. For example, you can bet that were ChNN to do something as controversial he would publish a formal written statement and explain his reasons why he was doing this or that very precisely.

JohnJ said:

...to abandon this kind of divisive thinking...

Malcolm wrote:

The divisive thinking here that is being promulgated is being promulgated by those who claim against all reason and common sense that digital files can be "blessed" to "grant" empowerments.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 1st, 2014 at 7:31 PM

Title: Re: Validity of recorded empowerments

Content:

Alfredo said:

Transmissions are not magic spells--

Malcolm wrote:

Correct, and imagining that digital files can be "blessed" to grant empowerments is precisely the kind of thinking that informs "magical spells".

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 1st, 2014 at 8:03 PM

Title: Re: Gorampa & Tsongkhapa

Content:

conebeckham said:

Ironically, by inserting the qualifier "inherent" critics say he leaves a subtle sort of "existence" as regards conventional truth. His supporters say those who completely negate existence stray into nihilism.

michaelb said:

Are the 'freedom from extremes' types negating existence, though? Not existent, not nonexistent, etc. But are they just really saying not existent and the other three are added just to copy a traditional Indian pattern?

I'm still a little stuck on the inherent existence thing. Translations I've read from Nagarjuna to Mipham also talk about the absence of this being what emptiness means.

Malcolm wrote:

All four extremes represent positions found in Indian philosophy; for example, the Jain position of indeterminacy is really just the position that something can exist and not exist at the same time.

So yes, all four extremes must be negated, both relatively and ultimately, and that, and that alone is the middle way.

Tsongkhapa is faulted for a lot of things in his Madhyamaka writings which really have very little to do with Madhyamaka per se. Of course, what many people do not understand is that often Gorampa's polemics are not so much aimed at Tsongkhapa as they are Khedrupje.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 1st, 2014 at 8:34 PM

Title: Re: Validity of recorded empowerments

Content:

Alfredo said:

An analogy might be with a wedding ceremony. What counts as a valid ceremony? Can it be performed by proxy (i.e., with a third person standing in for one of the couple)? Some religions, notably Catholicism, conceive of marriage (or technically, sacramental marriage--the following would not apply to natural marriage) as indeed involving some kind of spiritual bond, which comes into existence only under certain precise conditions. Others, notably Buddhism, defer to whatever standards each society may have.

Malcolm wrote:

The analogy is not apt. We are not comparing what an empowerment is in Buddhism and Catholicism.

Further, the definitions and procedures of empowerments (a practice unique in Vajrayāna Buddhism with unique requirements) are defined in the basic literature of the Vajrayāna (the tantras); unlike marriage ceremonies which are extra-canonical rites; despite the fact that there are considered one of the seven sacraments of the church.

There are hundreds of texts written by Indian masters on the subject of empowerments, how to conduct them, for all four classes of tantras.

There have been some disagreements among Tibetans in the past as to what constitutes a proper "maturational empowerment" -- those interested can read Sakya Pandita's Clear Differentiation of the Three Vows and the various responses to it by Kagyu masters such as Pawo Tsuglag Trengwa and so on (Here the issue is whether a sbyin rlabs can be considered to "mature" or "ripen" a student).

Nevertheless, everyone agrees that without an empowerment one is not matured as a student of Vajrayāna. The question here is whether one can be ripened by or receive an empowerment from an inanimate object such as a "blessed" picture, book or a movie. The answer is, "Of course not."

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 1st, 2014 at 9:59 PM

Title: Re: Validity of recorded empowerments

Content:

Alfredo said:

An analogy might be with a wedding ceremony.

Malcolm wrote:

It was just pointed out to me that the analogy might be apt if one could be married by watching a recording of someone's else's wedding.



Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 2nd, 2014 at 1:28 AM

Title: Re: Validity of recorded empowerments

Content:

haha said:

Dog's tooth can do the Buddha's work. Why the rinpoche's empowerment video cannot do that??? How many people are going to watch that? and then how many people do get benefit from it? However, those ppl whoever want to connect with him definitely get benefit from it if the rinpoche said so.

Malcolm wrote:

No. Faith in the Buddha qualities what caused the results produced in this story. The women did not have faith in a dog's tooth, she had faith in the Buddha's qualities. The women may have been mistaken about the tooth, but she was not mistaken about the Buddha.

But we are not talking about the veneration of relics. No one in history has ever suggested that one can receive, for example, a Vajrakilaya empowerment from even a valid, authentic relic of the Buddha.

We are discussing whether someone who watches recording of an empowerment actually receives it. Thus far, no one has been able to offer any sort of reasonable response to my objections about this.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 2nd, 2014 at 2:09 AM

Title: Re: Validity of recorded empowerments

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

While I can understand and sympathise with what you are saying here, it seems to me that we are falling into a trap. The trap here is that of the preeminence of ritual.

Malcolm wrote:

You are mistaken. If people think that properly upholding methods taught by the Buddha fall under the heading of adherence to rites and rules, then the Dharma is already hopelessly corrupt and there is no point in my discussing this further. There is no point in even criticizing those who give empowerments without having received them and so on.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 2nd, 2014 at 2:21 AM

Title: Re: Gorampa & Tsongkhapa

Content:

michaelb said:

Do Gelugpas take this true existence as something separate from an object? I know they say it doesn't exist, but is it something separate from the object that they are negating, so "pot is not empty of pot but empty of inherent existence?" would they take a statement that the pot is empty of pot to be nihilism?

Thanks.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, they regard statements like "The pot is empty of the pot" to be an over-negation. They only accept "the pot is emptiness of potness".

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 2nd, 2014 at 2:48 AM

Title: Re: Validity of recorded empowerments

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

Malcolm, you have given a good description of what is supposed to be going on in the guru's mind during an empowerment. What is less clear is what effect this is supposed to have on the students. Perhaps this is the point that needs to be clarified. For example you said: "the master summons the jñānasattva, the wisdom being, into each disciple who is present" but what does that mean exactly?

Malcolm wrote:

It means that through the proper causes and conditions the student is prepared to receive the main part of the empowerment. If the student is free of obstacles, they may experience certain signs that I will not discuss.

There are any number of very good books on the subject of empowerments and what happens during them.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 2nd, 2014 at 4:05 AM

Title: Re: Validity of recorded empowerments

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

While I can understand and sympathise with what you are saying here, it seems to me that we are falling into a trap. The trap here is that of the preeminence of ritual.

Malcolm wrote:

You are mistaken. If people think that properly upholding methods taught by the Buddha fall under the heading of adherence to rites and rules, then the Dharma is already hopelessly corrupt and there is no point in my discussing this further. There is no point in even criticizing those who give empowerments without having received them and so

on.

M

Sherab Dorje said:

No, because most of those giving empowerments without having received them (and some of those giving them, after having received them) are doing so with wrong/unwholesome motivation.

What do you think: if the vajra master does not have the right motivation, even if the ritual is carried out according to the book, using all the correct physical/material supports etc..., will/can it be successful based only on the adherence to prescribed outer forms?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, of course, as long as they have done the retreats, and so on.

This is why it is critical to examine the qualities of the guru.

If you take someone as a guru, and request empowerment and so on from them, then you have a connection with that person even if their motivation is wrong. Why? Because you made the connection; you requested empowerment, and so on. From that point on you are supposed to view them as being an actual Buddha. You are the one who, at the beginning of the empowerment, are saying "Guru, please heed me; accept me as your disciple".

And if they have not done themselves received empowerment they are granting, then both that guru and you will go to lower realms. All this is clearly stated tantras such as the Mahāmudratilaka and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 2nd, 2014 at 6:08 AM

Title: Re: Validity of recorded empowerments

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Thus far, no one has been able to offer any sort of reasonable response to my objections about this.

dakini\_boi said:

Vajrayana is based on the instructions of an authentic Guru first and foremost, before any scriptural source...

Malcolm wrote:

I am sorry, but this is just a pathway to delusion. By this reasoning, if the Guru tells you to rape and murder people, you should follow this teaching though it totally violates every Buddhist principle!?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 2nd, 2014 at 6:40 PM

Title: Re: Validity of recorded empowerments

Content:

dakini\_boi said:

Well, my understanding is that the orthodox response would be yes (according to scriptural sources which I am unable to cite, but I'm sure you could).

Malcolm wrote:

The answer in fact is no, according to scriptural sources. When the guru asks you to do something that violates Buddhist principles, you are to explain to him that you cannot do that.

dakini\_boi said:

I have learned a lot from this topic, particularly your posts about empowerment, Malcolm.

Malcolm wrote:

My sole intention is edify, so I am glad.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 2nd, 2014 at 6:53 PM

Title: Re: Validity of recorded empowerments

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, of course, as long as they have done the retreats, and so on.

This is why it is critical to examine the qualities of the guru.

If you take someone as a guru, and request empowerment and so on from them, then you have a connection with that person even if their motivation is wrong. Why? Because you made the connection; you requested empowerment, and so on. From that point on you are supposed to view them as being an actual Buddha. You are the one who, at the beginning of the empowerment, are saying "Guru, please heed me; accept me as your disciple".

Sherab Dorje said:

So an empowerment executed "correctly" with the "wrong" motivation has the desired result, whereas an empowerment done "incorrectly" but with the "right" motivation does not have the desired result. So can you please explain to me how this contradicts

my opinion about the preeminence of ritual?

Malcolm wrote:

It is similar with an ordination of a monk. If the rite is not properly executed, the ordination does not happen. Someone can intend to be a monk with all the right motivation in the world; but if they do not receive the ordination from a properly constituted quorum, they cannot be considered a bhikṣu. On the other hand, someone who wishes to become a monk for power and fame becomes a monk if they ordain in front of a properly constituted quorum.

As for an empowerment, it is the case that an unawakened person can bestow an empowerment which produces the cause and condition for another to achieve awakening in this very life, for example, in the case of Kotalipa who achieved the state of mahāmudra, and whose own guru begged him to become a disciple. Why? Because the rites of maturation during an empowerment are effective. They work because of dependent origination.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 2nd, 2014 at 7:27 PM

Title: Re: Validity of recorded empowerments

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

Doesn't motivation/intention play a role in dependent origination?

Malcolm wrote:

If you take as a master someone who only intends to make money off of empowerment rites, as long as they are done correctly, you still are taking samaya with that person and so on, as well as agreeing to the commitments of Vajrayāna in general. Of course, if you find out later that person is merely a carpetbagger, a Dharma salesman, well, you can leave that guru's company, but you can't look back and say "oh, those empowerments I took were not valid".

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 2nd, 2014 at 8:58 PM

Title: Re: Mistranslating Gampopa?

Content:

Karma Jinpa said:

So I always see this translation of the Four Dharmas of Gampopa:

། རྒྱ་ཆོས་སུ་འགྲོ་བར་བྱིན་གྱིས་རྫོབས། །  
ཆོས་ལམ་དུ་འགྲོ་བར་བྱིན་གྱིས་རྫོབས། །  
ལམ་འཁུལ་བ་ཞིག་པར་བྱིན་གྱིས་རྫོབས། །  
འཁུལ་བ་ལེ་ཤེས་སུ་འཆར་བར་བྱིན་གྱིས་རྫོབས། །

Grant your blessing so that my mind may turn towards the Dharma.

Grant your blessing so that Dharma may progress along the path.

Grant your blessing so that the path may clarify confusion.

Grant your blessing so that confusion may dawn as wisdom.

I've bolded and italicized the part that's always confused me, or struct me as clunky. Is the grammar for the Tibetan such that this is the only way to read it? If that's not the case, I would think that "Grant your blessing so that I may progress along the path of Dharma" would be a much more sensible translation.

Can anyone with more Tibetan skills weigh in on this?

Malcolm wrote:

It literally ought to be:

Grant blessings [that] mind moves to the Dharma;

Grant blessings [that] Dharma moves to the path;

Grant blessings [that] the path destroys delusion;

Grant blessings [that] delusion rises as wisdom.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 2nd, 2014 at 10:13 PM

Title: Re: Validity of recorded empowerments

Content:

Lhasa said:

Thank you!

T. Chokyi said:

You're welcome Lhasa, I've been in empowerments with you by Garchen Rinpoche over the internet I do believe, I think I've seen you in the live chat Rinpoche allows at those empowerments, where we can request substances from Rinpoche, and also the deity images, sadhana, and mantras...I believe I've "seen" you there. Tashi Deleg to you!

Malcolm wrote:

This was never an issue. The issue is not whether someone can receive an empowerment through the internet.

The issue is whether one can receive an empowerment from watching a video of an empowerment that took place at an earlier time. This is impossible and I have given many reasons for why this is impossible.

I think many people are largely ignorant of what an empowerment actually is, and so believe all kinds of strange things are possible when in fact they are not. Such thinking truly involves abandoning the Buddha's teaching "where this exists, that exists, where this does not exist, that does not exist." Believing that one can receive an empowerment from watching a video is similar to believing that one can be sustained by looking at a picture of a fine meal. In reality, one will only be fed by sitting down at a real table and eating a real meal.

The point is not to deprive people of an avenue for making a Dharma connection. The point is to make sure that people actually make a Dharma connection.

The person who takes secret mantra on his own  
is like a child who swallows burning iron.

— Ārya-vajrakrodharājakaḷpa-laghutantra-nāma

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 2nd, 2014 at 11:37 PM

Title: Re: Dharma Quotes Thread

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

སེམས་ལས་གཞན་མེད་པར་ནི་སྒྲོས་རིག་ནས།

དེ་ནས་སེམས་ཀྱང་མེད་པ་ཉིད་དུ་རྟོགས།

སྒྲོ་དང་ཐུན་པས་གཉིས་པོ་མེད་རིག་ནས།

དེ་མེ་ཐུན་པའི་ཚས་ཀྱི་དབྱིངས་ལ་གནས།

- Mahayansutralamkara

Malcolm wrote:

Having come know that nothing exists apart from the mind,  
then understanding the mind too does not exist,  
the intelligent, knowing both do not exist,  
dwell in the dharmadhātu that is without them.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 2nd, 2014 at 11:59 PM

Title: Re: Validity of recorded empowerments

Content:

untxi said:

I find this whole thread a little disturbing.

There are many very highly qualified masters, with genuine realization, who offer a variety of teachings across a wide range of topics (lam rim, dialectics, empowerments, tantric grounds & paths, kyerim and dzogrim instructions, pointing-out and pith instructions) in a wide range of contexts (one-one, informally through skillful means, in groups, in teaching retreats, in practice retreats)-- which happen to include modern technologies such as recording and webcasts.

Malcolm wrote:

You are overshooting the mark here with your objections.

The only thing I question, and quite rightly so as far as I am concerned, is the practice of some students encouraging other students to believe that watching a video of an empowerment constitutes receiving that empowerment. I have never once called into

question the practice of attending live webcasts, following a course through the mail, and so on.

My concern is quite real, since I think that this belief that one can receive an empowerment or even the transmission of a mantra from a recording will do serious damage to Vajrayāna teachings.

Imagine someone claiming they have attained siddhi from only attending a recorded empowerment and doing the retreat, and then seeking to initiate students into that said empowerment.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 3rd, 2014 at 1:39 AM

Title: Re: Validity of recorded empowerments

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Imagine someone claiming they have attained siddhi from only attending a recorded empowerment and doing the retreat, and then seeking to initiate students into that said empowerment.

Sherab Dorje said:

And if the siddhi were verified?

Malcolm wrote:

There are no siddhis without empowerment,  
just as there is no oil even if sand is pressed.  
Whoever proudly explains the tantras and citations  
to those without empowerment,  
both master and disciple go to hell  
as soon as they die even if there are siddhis.  
-- Mahāmudratilaka-tantra

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 3rd, 2014 at 1:51 AM

Title: Re: Validity of recorded empowerments

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

There are no siddhis without empowerment,  
just as there is no oil even if sand is pressed.  
Whoever proudly explains the tantras and citations  
to those without empowerment,  
both master and disciple go to hell  
as soon as they die even if there are siddhis.  
-- Mahāmudratilaka-tantra



Sherab Dorje said:

I'm not denying the validity of this statement, but if siddhis arose then it would verify the validity of the empowerment, right? Or maybe not? Can empowerments theoretically ripen over lifetimes?

Malcolm wrote:

Nope, it is mentioned that even if one shows signs of accomplishment, one is merely exhausting one's merit.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 3rd, 2014 at 2:12 AM

Title: Re: Validity of recorded empowerments

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

So how can one verify if the siddhi that arose, even in the case of a proper empowerment, are not just based on the exhaustion of merit?

Malcolm wrote:

One can infer on the basis of the kindness of the person whether they are a bodhisattva. Otherwise there is no way you or I can tell.

Sherab Dorje said:

There are Siddhas in non-Buddhist tantric traditions too, do they receive correct empowerment or are their siddhi based exclusively on the exhaustion of merit?

Malcolm wrote:

The latter.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 3rd, 2014 at 2:14 AM

Title: Re: Validity of recorded empowerments

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The issue is not whether someone can receive an empowerment through the internet.

Sherab Dorje said:

Actually, this was raised as an issue too. And your answer was basically that people cannot receive full empowerment via the internet, neither through live broadcast nor through a recording.

Malcolm wrote:

My answer was clarifying that ChNN said he could not confer a full empowerment through the net and why he felt this was so. The Dalai Lama on the other hand, opined that people watching Kalacakra and participating actively via a webcast could receive

the empowerment in that way. But here, this is all taking place within the context of an active mandala.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 3rd, 2014 at 2:38 AM

Title: Re: Mistranslating Gampopa?

Content:

Karma Jinpa said:

Thank you to everyone who's provided alternate translations! These have really helped dispel my confusion on the matter.

Malcolm wrote:

It literally ought to be:

Grant blessings [that] Dharma moves to the path;

Karma Jinpa said:

Malcolm, can you kindly give your gloss/understanding of what "Dharma moves to the path" would mean? Thanks.

This is one of the many reasons why I'm so overjoyed to learn the language: one day I'll be able to read the texts directly and even compare my own understanding to the translations of others.

Malcolm wrote:

One is requesting that the Dharma one has learned becomes a path. Then you are asking for the path to destroy delusion, etc.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 3rd, 2014 at 2:46 AM

Title: Re: Validity of recorded empowerments

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The Dalai Lama on the other hand, opined that people watching Kalacakra and participating actively via a webcast could receive the empowerment in that way. But here, this is all taking place within the context of an active mandala.

Karma Jinpa said:

This is interesting to hear. Did His Holiness say this at the most recent Kalachakra in D.C. a few years ago, or was it at some other place/time?

The reason I ask is because I attended a Guhyasamaja wang he gave back in 2010 or 2011 via webcast and he specifically said that those viewing it online had not received the empowerment. Don't remember if his reasoning was the lack of contact with the substances/supports or not, or if he even gave one. Sounds like either the Dalai Lama is

changing his mind on webcast wangs, or that Kalachakra is a special case/exception to the rule.

Also worth noting that His Holiness has said on numerous occasions that he gives the Kalachakra empowerment as skillful means to give introductory and fundamental teachings since tons of people will come from far and wide for such a high empowerment but the vast majority of them won't receive it in actuality.

Malcolm wrote:

It might be the number if people attending but I don't know.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 3rd, 2014 at 3:19 AM

Title: Re: Validity of recorded empowerments

Content:

T. Chokyi said:

I can't imagine that you don't see this as an opportunity to learn something.i

Malcolm wrote:

One cannot receive an empowerment from a recording of an empowerment. It simply isn't possible. Such a thing resembles the son of a barren women. You can talk about such a boy all you want, you can describe his hair, his abilities, his intelligence, his wit, grace and charm — but in the end, you have to admit you are talking about a fantasy.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 3rd, 2014 at 4:51 AM

Title: Re: Validity of recorded empowerments

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

face palm buddha 2.jpg

Malcolm wrote:

classic

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 3rd, 2014 at 5:59 AM

Title: Re: Validity of recorded empowerments

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

There are no siddhis without empowerment,  
just as there is no oil even if sand is pressed.

Whoever proudly explains the tantras and citations

to those without empowerment,  
both master and disciple go to hell  
as soon as they die even if there are siddhis.  
-- Mahāmudratilaka-tantra

Virgo said:  
Very scary.

Kevin

Lhasa said:  
Yup, and the Catholic church used to teach that if you swallowed your toothpaste on purpose during the three hour fast before receiving communion, and died on the way home, you went straight to hell.

Malcolm wrote:  
The point, of course, is that one should not expect to have any positive results from the practice of Vajrayāna if one does not enter Vajrayāna in a proper way.

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Saturday, May 3rd, 2014 at 6:47 PM  
Title: Re: Validity of recorded empowerments  
Content:

Malcolm wrote:  
My answer was clarifying that ChNN said he could not confer a full empowerment through the net and why he felt this was so.

JohnJ said:  
I apologize for any redundant questions, and questions that are off topic from this thread, but since the teachings of ChNN were brought up again I'd like to make sure my understanding is clear.

By full empowerment, am I correct in understanding that you mean one that includes all 4 empowerments and has the necessary physical supports? Your answer earlier seemed to indicate that for students of the right capacity, direct introduction could suffice for their ripening, and so a full empowerment would not be necessary, while for students of lesser capacity a full empowerment is definitely necessary. Have I understood this correctly, according to the Dzogchen perspective and teachings of ChNN?

Is the central difference between a meaning empowerment and a full physical empowerment, according to ChNN, found in whether or not there are physical supports? If there is greater underlying difference, could you say a few words as to what that difference is? For instance, sometimes ChNN states that for many people a meaning

empowerment can be much more important than a traditional empowerment, does this also have to do with one's capacity?

My questions centrally revolve around the meaning of the word 'full' in this explanation of empowerment, since I have never thought the teachings and path presented by ChNN was lacking, or "not full".

Thank you in advance for helping to clarify any misunderstandings that I might have on this issue.

Malcolm wrote:

A full empowerment generally takes two days (though it can all be done in one) and has an elaborate version of the vase empowerment, etc. Empowerments that do not have that are called "blessings" according to the new tantras and "meaning empowerments" according to the system of anuyoga because they do not have the preparation phase and the four empowerments are given symbolically.

The Garland of Pearls Tantra, one of the 17 Dzogchen tantras, maintains that for students of lesser capacity all four empowerments are necessary, while students of higher capacity or experience may require only direct introduction. The sgra thal gyur definitely states that empowerments are a necessary requirement and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 3rd, 2014 at 6:53 PM

Title: Re: Validity of recorded empowerments

Content:

Alfredo said:

If there are rules governing the validity of Buddhist empowerments, from where do these rules arise?

Malcolm wrote:

The tantras, of course.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 3rd, 2014 at 7:03 PM

Title: Re: Validity of recorded empowerments

Content:

heart said:

So, in my opinion I don't think anyone that posted in this thread mean disrespect or insult to Garchen Rinpoche.

Malcolm wrote:

No, not at all.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 3rd, 2014 at 7:06 PM

Title: Re: Receiving Empowerment: Crash Course

Content:

Motova said:

I haven't taken refuge yet, though I am going to try and do it myself before I go. And I emailed the rep for the event, and they said refuge isn't necessary, also someone mentioned something along the same lines on a thread here.

Karma Jinpa said:

I've never heard of being able to take an empowerment without having first gone for refuge.

Malcolm wrote:

Refuge is given at the beginning of every empowerment, so there is no reason to attend a refuge ceremony as a preliminary. Bodhicitta vows are given in every empowerment, so there is no reasons to attend a bodhicitta vow ceremony separately.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 3rd, 2014 at 7:09 PM

Title: Re: Receiving Empowerment: Crash Course

Content:

Motova said:

So I just finished school a week ago and started full time landscaping for this summer.

So I haven't had much time to prepare for: <http://www.sakyatoronto.com/> "

onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;" onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;

Hopefully the tickets aren't sold out when I go to buy them this weekend...

I haven't taken refuge yet, though I am going to try and do it myself before I go. And I emailed the rep for the event, and they said refuge isn't necessary, also someone mentioned something along the same lines on a thread here.

Basically, I have two weeks to prepare myself so I can receive proper empowerment and/or not get kicked out.

I have Three Visions - Fundamental Teachings of the Sakya Lineage of Tibetan Buddhism by Ngorchen Konchog Lhundrug with a Foreword by H.H. Sakya Trizin... My plan is to memorize the outline on page 221 for those who have it and try to read the book twice, as well as become familiar with H.H. Sakya Trizin's biography.

Please post anything that you think might help me with my goal. I'm specifically looking for some resources on how to receive empowerment's properly, as well as any stories

about Sakya Trizin that might inspire faith in him and/or the Sakya Lineage. Also, if you have any criticism go crazy. Finally, does anyone know the specific sadhana's H.H. Sakya Trizin will be giving transmission for and if they will be handed out or sold on site?

Malcolm wrote:

The Green Tara practice is quite common. But if you cannot find it there let me know after you have received the initiation. My translation is the one used in the Sakya centers under Lama Migmar.

You should consider purchasing Treasures of the Sakya Lineage, available from Shambhala. My trainings is primarily in Sakya.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 3rd, 2014 at 7:17 PM

Title: Re: Validity of recorded empowerments

Content:

Alfredo said:

And in those tantras, does the relevant Buddha or tutelary deity typically REVEAL rules which already exist, inherent in the structure of the universe, or ESTABLISH rules according to what would work best for sentient beings, or TRANSMIT rules which he/she received from some other source?

Malcolm wrote:

The source of empowerments are the Buddha Vajradhara's wisdom, set down in words in the tantras. If someone is a person who has faith in Vajrayāna, it is hard to maintain that one has faith in Vajrayāna and yet disbelieves the verity of the basic texts of Vajrayāna.

For example, the Kalacakra tantra contains a chapter which explains empowerments in great detail.

Empowerments themselves are a method, working with causes and results, bases of purification, purifiers and results of purification which are taught in the tantras. Empowerment is a method, and it has certain procedures to ensure it is successful.

Secondly, there are the instructions of Mahāsiddhas like Naropa who have realized the result of the path, and who have written commentaries on empowerments, such as the Sekkhodesha, etc.

Then there are of course commentaries written by learned scholars on these things who nevertheless may not have realization and so on.

At base, the fundamental principle of an empowerment is to reverse samsaric dependent origination.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 3rd, 2014 at 8:34 PM

Title: Re: Validity of recorded empowerments

Content:

Alfredo said:

Are there no legitimate disagreements, either among the various tantras, or in the case of the same tantra, from one commentary to another?

Malcolm wrote:

Since the procedures for empowerment into HYT mandalas actually depend on yoga tantras such as the Sarvatathāgatatattvasaṃgraha, there is an unusual degree of conformity in methodology amongst the HYT tantras for how to give an empowerment into an HYT mandala.

We find very little controversy over the procedure for granting empowerments within the Indian texts themselves. Naturally, different empowerments all have their special features, but in general they all follow a fairly standard model.

There is a fair amount of controversy among Tibetans over what constituted a proper maturational rite; the Nyingmapas and Kagyus being on the loose side of things, the Sakyapas being on the strict side of things, Gelugpas somewhere in the middle. If you are interested in these debates, then you need to read Sapan's Clear Differentiation of the Three Codes and the responses to it by various Kagyu and Nyingma authors. You can also read Tsele Natshog Rangdrol book on empowerments, as well as what Kongtrul has to say on the subject.

But even where there is some debate amongst Tibetans over whether "blessings" (sbyin rlabs) as opposed to full empowerments (dbang skur) have the necessary features to properly introduce one into Vajrayāna, there was never any debate at all that one must properly receive some kind of empowerment in person from the guru in order to be considered someone who has received samaya.

And as you know, this would clearly exclude recorded empowerments from consideration.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 3rd, 2014 at 8:42 PM

Title: Re: Validity of recorded empowerments

Content:

Alfredo said:

Must the tantras be accepted as literally true, in order for tantric Buddhism to make sense?

Malcolm wrote:

In order for the practice presented in Buddhist tantras to make sense, you must accept that one can achieve the result they promise by following the methods they prescribe. If



you accept that, then in order to achieve those results, you must follow the methods they prescribe with faith in those methods.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 3rd, 2014 at 9:40 PM

Title: Re: What practices can you do publicly?

Content:

Sherlock said:

Sometimes on a nice day, I like to go to a park and sit down and do some practice that doesn't involve much chanting. Is this alright?

What about chod?

Malcolm wrote:

Doing an outer chod is a little strange. But you can of course do chod in a very simple way. However, if you are chanting strange things in a loud voice, even SOV, this is not a good thing as you know.

But going to do semzins like white a and so on, no problem.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 3rd, 2014 at 11:59 PM

Title: Re: Receiving Empowerment: Crash Course

Content:

Motova said:

Thanks for the help everyone. So I guess I don't have to memorize this book yet, but I'll still read it and get a good grasp of it. I really prefer it as opposed to the Lam Rim or Words of My Perfect Teacher...

Thanks for the book recommendation Malcolm, I'll definitely order it!

Will this Green Tara initiation allow me to practice the 21 Praises to Tara?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, absolutely.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 4th, 2014 at 8:04 PM

Title: Re: Tröma Nagmo in Sanskrit?

Content:

plwk said:

<http://www.himalayanart.org/image.cfm/490.html>

Malcolm wrote:

No, it is Khrodhakāli, a form of Vajrayogini originally revealed by the Mahāsiddha Virupa and brought to Tibet by Padampa Sangye.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 4th, 2014 at 8:19 PM

Title: Re: Tröma Nagmo in Sanskrit?

Content:

plwk said:

<http://www.himalayanart.org/image.cfm/490.html>

Malcolm wrote:

No, it is Khrodhakāli, a form of Vajrayogini originally revealed by the Mahāsiddha Virupa and brought to Tibet by Padampa Sangye.

zenman said:

Is Krodhakali a direct translation?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 4th, 2014 at 9:07 PM

Title: Re: Tröma Nagmo in Sanskrit?

Content:

yegyal said:

Wouldn't it be Khrodhikali, as both parts of the name are feminized?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, actually.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 4th, 2014 at 9:30 PM

Title: Re: Tröma Nagmo in Sanskrit?

Content:

plwk said:

<http://www.himalayanart.org/image.cfm/490.html>

No, it is Khrodhakāli, a form of Vajrayogini originally revealed by the Mahāsiddha Virupa and brought to Tibet by Padampa Sangye.

Thanks Malcolm but what you mentioned is also mentioned in the link I gave. So Himalayan Art got the Krishna Krodhini part wrong huh?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, I have never seen that equivalent anywhere. There are a lot of mistakes on Himalayan Art actually.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 4th, 2014 at 11:01 PM

Title: Re: Alan Wallace on Dzogchen

Content:

smcj said:

Half an hour into it he mentions that Dudjom Lingpa never had a human teacher.

Malcolm wrote:

This is of course completely false.

Just look on TBRC, you can see that Dudjom Lingpa was a disciple of a very prominent 19th century Gelugpa master , 'jam dbyangs thub bstan nyi ma.

<http://www.tbrc.org/#!rid=P382> " onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;"

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, May 5th, 2014 at 2:54 AM

Title: Re: Validity of recorded empowerments

Content:

Adamantine said:

Speaking of highest capacity though, of course we know that Jigme Lingpa received the body speech and mind blessings of Longchenpa in visionary form. So this may be an example of a yogi truly with the highest capacity. He came to see Longchenpa as his true root Guru, even though he never met him in the flesh.

Malcolm wrote:

Jigme Lingpa is hardly an ordinary shmoe, a beginner, trying to gain a proper introduction to Vajrayāna. He was a highly experienced practitioner who had been in retreat for years. He also had a real guru, a human being.

It is really irresponsible to encourage people to think it is a even a remote possibility that one could receive an qualified empowerment from a recording.

Of course, in matters of religion people are free to believe whatever fantasies they want...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, May 5th, 2014 at 3:31 AM

Title: Re: Validity of recorded empowerments

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Jigme Lingpa is hardly an ordinary shmoe, a beginner, trying to gain a proper

introduction to Vajrayāna. He was a highly experienced practitioner who had been in retreat for years. He also had a real guru, a human being.

Adamantine said:

I pointed out he was of the highest capacity-- I understand his background, however it is still an example of receiving transmission outside of a concrete physical presence.

Malcolm wrote:

That was an example of a siddha receiving transmission from a Sambhogakāya manifestation. Even the Buddha cannot manifest his sambhogakāya to any ordinary sentient being to give them a single word of teaching, much less an empowerment. In order to even see a Sambhogakāya one must be an eighth stage bodhisattva.

Adamantine said:

I don't think it is irresponsible to give the benefit of the doubt to Garchen Rinpoche-- that this was his intent and what he communicated, and that he may indeed have the capacity to benefit beings in this way.

Malcolm wrote:

Not even Buddha Vajradhara can benefit beings in that way.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, May 5th, 2014 at 3:39 AM

Title: Re: Source? getting on the horse just to fall off the other

Content:

mañjughoṣamaṇi said:

Hello,

Throughout the years, in reference to Madhyamika and eternalism/nihilism, I've seen variants of phrase that goes something like the following:

"getting on the horse just to fall off the other side"

indicating one's attempts to avoid either of the extremes has left one squarely in the opposite extreme. Does anyone know if there is a canonical source for this expression?

Thanks.

Malcolm wrote:

I think it begins with Gorampa.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, May 5th, 2014 at 4:26 AM

Title: Re: Validity of recorded empowerments

Content:

Adamantine said:

But in this case --of a live video or recorded video-- there is a physical support, a support of visual and audible phenomenon. So it is different.

Malcolm wrote:

As I have explained, in the case of the former, the mandala is active, the guru is present, the disciples are present. In the case of the latter, the mandala has been dissolved and the rite is already finished, the guru is not present. Case closed.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, May 5th, 2014 at 10:52 PM

Title: Re: Next generation of Dharma teachers in the West?

Content:

Indrajala said:

For example, some people condemn me as being delusional or having some cultural fetish for openly adopting certain East Asian cultural bits while mockingly saying they would never accept me as one of their own. This is a curious generation gap I've noticed. Previous generations disdain the idea of someone white adopting Asian ways, whereas in my generation, at least amongst people I know, it is acceptable..

Malcolm wrote:

Frankly, dude, you have been in an ex-pat bubble for so long, you have no idea how people in Canada will relate to you as a "monk". Further, you discount the fact that the West is becoming more xenophobic, not less so, etc.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, May 5th, 2014 at 11:43 PM

Title: Re: Next generation of Dharma teachers in the West?

Content:

Indrajala said:

My generation is a lot more open minded.

Malcolm wrote:

Than who? People my age (51)? I don't think so. And you yourself are not a bastion of open-mindedness, quite the opposite from my perspective.

Give yourself another 20 years and you will be laughing at your youthful opinions of today, especially when some 28 or 30 year old tells you that his or her generation is more open-minded than yours.

I have live for five decades; what I have learned is that for every decade there are opinions about life that are shared among those people who live in that decade, and

that people who have not reached a certain decade generally cannot imagine that the people who have reached that decade have anything worthwhile to say just based on lived experience. But the fact is that the older you get, the more things just stay the same, young people like yourself have been bitching about older people since the dawn of humanity and will continue to do so, and older people will continue to shake their heads in amusement as they watch the younger generations continue to make the same damn mistakes they did.

If you were really a Confucian, you should be seeking to follow the example of some sagacious mentor, you would be attending to your dear parents, and so on. But I see the usual business of young intellectuals like yourself, lots of sturm and drung, tons of opinions, but not much yet in the way of follow through...and how could there be? You have not been an adult for even a decade yet.

It does not mean that you are not bright, or your opinions are not worthwhile, but put them in context...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, May 5th, 2014 at 11:55 PM

Title: Re: Next generation of Dharma teachers in the West?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Jeff wrote on his blog that accompanies this:

My generation is still too young to command much respect or authority.

I can remember bitching about this very fact when I was your age. My opinion was that the only difference between me and some 45 year old guy was that he was 45 and I was 28. Of course, in the intervening years I have come to realize that there is a lot of difference between being 28 and 51, and I am sure that when I am 75, if I make it that long, I will have an even longer lens to view things from. I know a shitload more about everything than I did when I was 28, especially about myself.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 6th, 2014 at 12:56 AM

Title: Re: Next generation of Dharma teachers in the West?

Content:

Indrajala said:

My generation is a lot more open minded.

Malcolm wrote:

Than who? People my age (51)? I don't think so. And you yourself are not a bastion of open-mindedness, quite the opposite from my perspective.

dzogchungpa said:

Does being a "bastion of open-mindedness" even make sense?

In all fairness to VIJ, it seems to me that he actually is quite open-minded, although

perhaps not quite bastion material.

Malcolm wrote:

Have you examined his views on gay marriage lately? How about his view that "inferior" social classes requiring a firm controlling hand...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 6th, 2014 at 12:59 AM

Title: Re: Next generation of Dharma teachers in the West?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

I know a shitload more about everything than I did when I was 28, especially about myself.

Indrajala said:

I think you're a smart guy who has continually been in learning mode, but that's often exceptional in people. Not all people past fifty know so much or even tried to spend part of their lives studying and trying to figure themselves out.

Malcolm wrote:

It is a quality of my generation notably lacking in those younger than us, from the Reagan youth onward. There is a fifteen year slice from roughly of people born from 1950 to 1965 who were remarkably open-minded, introspective, culturally open, etc. People prior to that and subsequent to that tended to be either more conservative or more nihilistic...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 6th, 2014 at 1:06 AM

Title: Re: Next generation of Dharma teachers in the West?

Content:

kalzang said:

I sometimes wonder how Dharma in the West will be affected by the passing of today's famous/popular teachers. What will happen to (the perception of) certain sanghas when their iconic teachers pass away? How will popular support and (serious) attendance be affected? Imagine Plum Village without Thich Nhat Hanh, Sravasti Abbey without Thubten Chodron, Gampo Abbey without Pema Chodron, Rigpa/Lerab Ling without Sogyal Rinpoche etc. Where are the future iconic/charismatic Dharma teachers?

Any thoughts?

Malcolm wrote:

For Nyingma there is Dzongsar Khyentse; Zigar Kongtgrul, Khandro Rinpoche, Anam Thubten, etc. lots of people.

The Sakyapas never produce anyone charismatic...

There is the HH Karmapa, Migyur Rinpoche, etc.

I don't know the Gelug or Bon schools well enough to comment.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 6th, 2014 at 1:14 AM

Title: Re: Next generation of Dharma teachers in the West?

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

For Bon, there is Tenzin Wangyal.

Malcolm wrote:

I meant when he is gone...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 6th, 2014 at 1:34 AM

Title: Re: Next generation of Dharma teachers in the West?

Content:

Indrajala said:

I used to have the same ideas as Malcolm in these respects, but I changed my mind when exposed to new models.

Malcolm wrote:

The luxury of youth is the ability to change your mind before anyone actually takes you seriously.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 6th, 2014 at 1:50 AM

Title: Re: Next generation of Dharma teachers in the West?

Content:

Indrajala said:

I used to have the same ideas as Malcolm in these respects, but I changed my mind when exposed to new models.

Malcolm wrote:

The luxury of youth is the ability to change your mind before anyone actually takes you seriously.

Indrajala said:

lol. You change your mind a lot. On E-sangha you defended meat eating, then one day said it was sinful to eat meat, then not so long ago started defending meat eating yet again.



Malcolm wrote:

I have always said exactly the same thing about meat eating:

From the point of view pratimokṣa vows it is permissible.

From the point of view of Mahāyāna vows it is not permissible.

From the point of view of Vajrayāna samaya, it is permissible.

When I was debating against the general consumption of meat, I was doing so out of personal conviction. Even then I clarified that I exempted the practice of consuming meat in the context of Vajrayāna samaya. I continue to maintain that industrially produced meat (and plantfood) is a bane for the environment to this day, and that it should be avoided. I still do not cook meat in my home.

If there are people who can be vegetarian and be healthy, I applaud them. I cannot. In general, I consume some meat because it is good for me to do so, physically. The two times in my life when I went for extended periods of time without eating meat, my health suffered a great deal, and not because I was not eating correctly. In general as a physician, I see a lot of people who really do need to eat meat and who feel better when they do.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 6th, 2014 at 2:37 AM

Title: Re: the so-called "open minds" of the young and old

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

That's interesting. Are you saying that for someone like you, Malcolm, who needs meat to be healthy, but is a non-Vajrayana Mahayana practitioner, it is impermissible?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, according to Mahāyāna vows.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 6th, 2014 at 3:51 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist neglect of academic findings.

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

First, a nonreturner is not necessarily an arhat...

Malcolm wrote:

Is never an arhat...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 6th, 2014 at 4:48 AM

Title: Re: Next generation of Dharma teachers in the West?

Content:

conebeckham said:

Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche is in his early to mid 50's, I believe, as is Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche. So....no offense, but these are the current generation. HH Karmapa, Mingyur Rinpoche, are a generation closer.....or younger, IMO.

dzogchungpa said:

Sure, but with respect to the people mentioned in the OP, DJKR and TWR are 1 or even 2 generations behind them. The point is they could easily be teaching for another 20 years.

Sherab Dorje said:

Or they could die tomorrow.

Malcolm wrote:

As could any of us...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 6th, 2014 at 6:43 AM

Title: Re: Next generation of Dharma teachers in the West?

Content:

theanarchist said:

My guess is that in the Tibetan tradition the gap between the holy, venerated tulku teachers and the disciples is deliberately kept so big. It's kind of aristocracy by either recognition or family line.

Therefor i's implied that what they have achieved is pretty much unachievable for any "ordinary folk" followers anyway. People are not exactly encouraged to aspire the same. (that one day you can teach vajrayana it not exactly something you should aspire like becoming a mechanic, but still it's to such an extent unthinkable that people psychologically limit themselves I think)

Malcolm wrote:

The ability to give an empowerment is a technical skill more or less acquired in a decade. The ability to be a lineage head however requires a lifetime of training from a young age. It is important to keep this distinction in mind.

It is very likely that within the next thirty years there will be a plethora of western teachers who can give a limited set of empowerments. It will be a hundred years before there is a genuine western lineage head.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 6th, 2014 at 8:05 PM

Title: Re: Next generation of Dharma teachers in the West?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The ability to give an empowerment is a technical skill more or less acquired in a decade. The ability to be a lineage head however requires a lifetime of training from a young age. It is important to keep this distinction in mind.

dzogchungpa said:

Is that just because a lineage head has to be able to give many different kinds of empowerments or is there something more to it?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, they have many retreats to do, many mandalas and rites to learn and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 6th, 2014 at 9:09 PM

Title: Re: Three Steps Insight Meditation

Content:

kirtu said:

Cittamatra is in fact taught as a prelude to Madhyamaka in Sakya.

Astus said:

Do you mean Cittamatra in its limited sense of "all phenomena are only mind"?

Malcolm wrote:

As in Shantaraskita's Yogacara Madhyamaka.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 6th, 2014 at 10:09 PM

Title: Re: Three Steps Insight Meditation

Content:

kunle said:

unfortunately there seems to be no extant Sakya commentary on this text. Rongton is said to have authored one, but it was lost.

apart from Dzongsar, no Sakya shedra teaches this text i believe, so i m not sure how standart sakya this really is.

Malcolm wrote:

@ Kunle: nevertheless, when the view presented in snang gsum and so on — it is clearly stated that first section of meditation on vipaśyāna is in accordance with how ultimate

truth is meditated in Yogacara. It is only in the second and third sections on vipaśyāna in snang gsum and so on that freedom from extremes and inexpressibility is meditated.

@ Astus, this way of meditating the view is actually derived from the section on the meditating the inseparability of samsara and nirvana, termed "the three points of practice", i.e. mind, illusion and insubstantiality.

Since the view of the inseparability of samsara and nirvana as well as the three points of practice should only be discussed with those who have received the Hevajra cause empowerment etc., and the instruction of the view of the inseparability of samsara and nirvana, I will leave it here.

In other words, if you really want to understand this you should meditate it properly.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 6th, 2014 at 11:09 PM

Title: Re: Three Steps Insight Meditation

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

this way of meditating the view is actually derived from the section on the meditating the inseparability of samsara and nirvana, termed "the three points of practice", i.e. mind, illusion and insubstantiality.

Since the view of the inseparability of samsara and nirvana as well as the three points of practice should only be discussed with those who have received the Hevajra cause empowerment etc., and the instruction of the view of the inseparability of samsara and nirvana, I will leave it here.

In other words, if you really want to understand this you should meditate it properly.

kunle said:

totally agree with your last statement - it is a practice instruction.

however, could you elaborate on your previous point?

since the entire nangsum is taught and supposedly practised before one receives Hevajra, i don t see why one has to rely on the explanation on the inseparability of samsara and nirvana. not that it would harm, i m just trying to understand why you mean one needs to understand this first. cheers.

Malcolm wrote:

The real meditation of these three points in 'khor 'das dbyer med is done on the basis of examples, whereas in snang gsum it is presented on the basis of intellectual analysis. But the format of mind, illusion and insubstantiality is ultimately derived from the Vajra Verses where it says "All phenomena are the appearance of mind itself" and so on.

snang gsum itself is presented on the basis of the outline written for the snang gsum

and rgyud gsum which may be found in pod gser ma.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 6th, 2014 at 11:13 PM

Title: Re: A closer look into empowerments

Content:

Unknown said:

So he said that no one can say for sure at anytime that another person has received the empowerment.

Malcolm wrote:

This amounts to a non-answer. This means that anyone, at any time can declare they have received x empowerment from x guru.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 7th, 2014 at 12:22 AM

Title: Re: A closer look into empowerments

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

So he said that no one can say for sure at anytime that another person has received the empowerment.

This amounts to a non-answer. This means that anyone, at any time can declare they have received x empowerment from x guru.

dzogchungpa said:

It might be a non-answer, but it seems to directly contradict what you said here:

<https://www.dharmawheel.net/viewtopic.php?f=40&t=16286&p=230684#p230647>

Malcolm wrote:

Were you awake during the activities of the disciple? Did you recite the prayers understanding what they meant and why? Did you try to follow the visualizations sincerely as best you could? If so, then you entered the mandala.

It does not. It is a kind of dissimulation.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 7th, 2014 at 3:21 AM

Title: Re: A closer look into empowerments

Content:

Adamantine said:

Well the idea was mainly that most of the conceivable opinions about recorded wangs have been expressed in the prior thread, and it gets repetitive and almost like proselytizing for the same people to keep expressing the same opinions over and over. If we can try to avoid that here, it would be ideal. The topic is certainly not banned though. Thanks!

Malcolm wrote:

What we are discussing now is the fact that "answer" (which was a non answer) basically confirms our opinion that there is no validity to the idea that one can receive an empowerment from a recording (but we already knew that...).

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 7th, 2014 at 3:51 AM

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.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 7th, 2014 at 5:55 AM

Title: Re: A closer look into empowerments

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Let us abandon Tibetan for the moment.

There are basically four kinds of initiations:

abhiṣekas [dbang skur, empowerment] = this is your full empowerment, generally takes two days.

adhiṣṭhānas [byin brlabs, blessing] = this a way of conferring the four empowerments in a short hand, called "don dbang" in Nyingma.

anujñāta [rjes gngang, permission] = this is a type of ritual derived from end of an abhiṣeka where various kinds of permissions are granted, such as permission to recite a mantra, visualize oneself as the deity, and understand the deity's wisdom and one's mind are the same. In general, the more strict schools like Sakya consider that properly speaking, one must have received an abhiṣeka before receiving an adhiṣṭhānas or an anujñāta

Then there is a final rite known as a "rig gtad", a kind of rite for entrusting someone with a vidyāmantra from Kriya tantra, i.e. it permits you to recite the mantra.

There is also a srog gtad, an entrustment rite for worldly protectors.

There is what is called a gtor dbang in Nyingma, where the tormas are blessed as the basis of the empowerment, not a mandala.

Also in Dzogchen there is the so called "rig pa'i rtsal dbang", the empowerment of the power of the vidyā, more or less an expansion of the word empowerment. There are a number of other empowerments in Dzogchen as well such as the rgyal ba spyi blugs, and so on, more or less variations on the theme of the rig pa'u rtsal dbang.

There is finally, the empowerment of the descent of the wisdom vajra described in Indrabhuti's Jñānasiddhi, an influential text on Mahāmudra.

And that's about it, and in all of this there is no pre-recorded video abhiṣeka, etc., at least, not until this century.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 7th, 2014 at 8:02 AM

Title: Re: A closer look into empowerments

Content:

conebeckham said:

Srog gtad are not only for "worldly protectors," I think....perhaps mainly so.

Malcolm wrote:

They are strictly for worldly protectors. There is no need for such entrustments when it comes to wisdom protectors.

conebeckham said:

And Sarma traditions have gtor dbangs as well.

Malcolm wrote:

Actually, gtor dbangs are strictly a Nyingma thing, their presence in Kagyu and Sakya is derived from Nyingma.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 7th, 2014 at 8:17 PM

Title: Re: Next generation of Dharma teachers in the West?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, they have many retreats to do, many mandalas and rites to learn and so on.

Indrajala said:

The Tibetans created their own lineages and programs to go with them. The west could just as well take much from TB and create their own lineages with different programs, thus having "lineage heads" with different requirements.

Kukai and Shingon likewise did the same thing. They developed their own programs.

Malcolm wrote:

Lineages are not "created", they evolve. In order to have a lineage, one has to have a realized person at the head of that lineage. For example, in Sakya there is Sachen, Sonam Tsemo, Dragpa Gyaltzen, Sapan, and Phagpa as well as Kunga Zangpo and Losal Gyatso for the two main subsects of Sakya, Ngor and Tshar; Marpa, Mila and Gampopa for Kagyu, with various realized masters sitting at the eight of the subsects of Kagyu; for Nyingma there are tertons or tulku lines who sit at the head of each lineage; For Gelugpa, there is Tsongkhapa, etc.

So, when we have some realized westerners, then maybe we will have some western lineages — but until then, I expect not.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 7th, 2014 at 8:26 PM

Title: Re: A closer look into empowerments

Content:

conebeckham said:

Srog gtad are not only for "worldly protectors," I think....perhaps mainly so.

Malcolm wrote:

They are strictly for worldly protectors. There is no need for such entrustments when it comes to wisdom protectors.

conebeckham said:

And Sarma traditions have gtor dbangs as well.

Malcolm wrote:

Actually, gtor dbangs are strictly a Nyingma thing, their presence in Kagyu and Sakya is derived from Nyingma.

No, they are synonyms for the most part. Sometimes you see the term applied to rites for wisdom protectors, but it not perfectly correct.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 7th, 2014 at 8:42 PM

Title: Re: Next generation of Dharma teachers in the West?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

So, when we have some realized westerners, then maybe we will have some western lineages — but until then, I expect not.

Indrajala said:

Plenty of eminent Buddhist teachers become "realized" after they die thanks to their



hagiographies.

So we'll just wait for that to happen with some western teachers.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, indeed this seems to be the case. Of course, one assumes that some of these teachers actually did attain realization.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 7th, 2014 at 11:21 PM

Title: Re: A closer look into empowerments

Content:

conebeckham said:

Malcolm-

Are you familiar with nyur dze Yeshe Gonpo nyingshuk? I suppose that's not a true srog gtad, though it's called srog gi rgya can?

It, and many of the Shangpa jenangs, include tor-wangs. Are you saying this is Kongtrul being influenced by Nyingma?

Malcolm wrote:

I would say that Shangpa empowerments in general are heavily colored by Khyungpo Naljor's Nyingma past.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 7th, 2014 at 11:27 PM

Title: Re: Next generation of Dharma teachers in the West?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, indeed this seems to be the case. Of course, one assumes that some of these teachers actually did attain realization.

Indrajala said:

It feels reassuring to believe in it, doesn't it?

Malcolm wrote:

It is not a question of reassurance. In fact, as far as Vajrayāna is concerned, one must believe that one's root guru is an actual Buddha, and that includes all the lineage masters, if one is to gain realization oneself.

It is fine to be a skeptic. But that attitude is best left for academics who [for whatever perverse reasons] study "Buddhism" rather than Buddhadharma, people who lack faith in such things as rebirth, karma and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 7th, 2014 at 11:30 PM

Title: Re: A closer look into empowerments

Content:

conebeckham said:

Malcolm-

Are you familiar with nyur dze Yeshe Gonpo nyingshuk? I suppose that's not a true srog gtad, though it's called srog gi rgya can?

It, and many of the Shangpa jenangs, include tor-wangs. Are you saying this is Kongtrul being influenced by Nyingma?

Malcolm wrote:

I would say that Shangpa empowerments in general are heavily colored by Khyungpo Naljor's Nyingma past.

conebeckham said:

Not Kongtrul's, eh?

Malcolm wrote:

No, since Shangpa transmissions exist in other schools than Kagyu. Then there is the fact that they all, for the most part, pass through another Nyingmapa, Thangthon Gyalpo.

Don't get me wrong, I am not dissing Shangpa, it is just that gtor ma empowerments do not exist in the New Tantras at all.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 8th, 2014 at 12:45 AM

Title: Re: Next generation of Dharma teachers in the West?

Content:

Indrajala said:

]If you look at the history of late Indian Buddhism and Tibetan Buddhism, it is difficult to believe there were many "realized" people in charge for the simple fact that these institutions often clearly turned their backs against their own stated values and aims by engaging in all manner of harmful activities against beings.

Malcolm wrote:

Who, what, when, where?

Indrajala said:

The violence and religious conflict would suggest realized bodhisattvas were not at the helm. The serfs and other violently repressed commoners of Tibet before the PRC invasion also lived under brutal tyrants who often derived their authority from religion.

Malcolm wrote:

Again, who, what, when and where?

Indrajala said:

In the case of Tibetan Buddhism, one can look at the life of the fifth Dalai Lama and compare claims with historical facts

Malcolm wrote:

Whose claims are you referring to?

Nevertheless, if the Fifth Dalai Lama is one of your lineage gurus, you should regard him as a Buddha, and his questionable acts as skillful means to tame beings. That is the Vajrayāna way. This is a difficult point for many people. It is better perhaps not to adopt a king as one's guru.

The term "death squad" is a little extreme.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 8th, 2014 at 1:08 AM

Title: Re: Next generation of Dharma teachers in the West?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

In fact, as far as Vajrayāna is concerned, one must believe that one's root guru is an actual Buddha, and that includes all the lineage masters, if one is to gain realization oneself.

dzogchungpa said:

I have no doubt most or all of the texts and teachers say that, and I have a lot of faith in Vajrayana, but honestly I can't see how such a statement could be established.

Malcolm wrote:

As in proven? It cannot be proven. But it is indeed how it is taught in every Vajrayāna tradition in Tibet.

Lower tantra does not contain the practice of Guruyoga, so this is why, Jeff, such teachings are absent in Shingon, etc.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 8th, 2014 at 1:42 AM

Title: Re: Next generation of Dharma teachers in the West?

Content:

Indrajala said:

If we go back to India, violence was employed in an unapologetic fashion in the late period against Brahman aggression. You've read Verardi's book, right?

Malcolm wrote:

I did not finish it.

Indrajala said:

If there were realized bodhisattvas at the helm in Tibet before the invasion, why didn't they foresee and prevent the invasion?

Malcolm wrote:

Many Lamas did for see the invasion and tried hard to prevent it — some, like the 16th Karmapa left well in advance of it on purpose. In fact, your lack of familiarity with the Tibetan anxiety over being invaded, first by Kuomintang forces, and then by the Communists is a little surprising because it is well documented.

Indrajala said:

Moreover, why were so many serfs mistreated by their Lama overlords?

Malcolm wrote:

According to whom? Were there serfs in Tibet? I don't think so. Not by the definition normally imagined when people use the term. You need to read Authenticating Tibet: Answers to China's 100 Questions

Indrajala said:

The conditions of many common indentured servants in Tibet before the invasion is well documented. This is why so many of them joined the Communists to destroy monasteries.

Malcolm wrote:

By whom? How many is "so many"?

Indrajala said:

Whose claims are you referring to?

Well you've claimed lineage founders were realized. In Tibetan Buddhism it is hoped that at least some of the contemporary leadership is realized.

Malcolm wrote:

I didn't claim that. I pointed out that all of these masters that I listed were considered to be highly realized in their respective schools.

Indrajala said:

Papal infallibility didn't work out so well for the Catholics in the end.

Malcolm wrote:

It's completely different. There is no pope. And this is not a rule, it is a practice. One is expected to feel that way, but in widely recognized reality is that it is an aspiration.

It is not the case that everyone is required to recognize HHDL as a buddha since he is not everyone's root guru.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 8th, 2014 at 3:13 AM

Title: Re: H.H. Sakya Trizin in Canada May 2014

Content:

DechenNamdrol said:

FYI, I was told today that they didn't manage to have the Chakrasamvara sadhana translated in time for this weekend, so they will not be supplying a sadhana to practice with.

Malcolm wrote:

The Luipa tradition is the most complex.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 8th, 2014 at 5:24 AM

Title: Re: Next generation of Dharma teachers in the West?

Content:

kirtu said:

Come on - the atrocities that the Tibetan institutions committed are well documented.

Malcolm wrote:

Which atrocities, by whom?

kirtu said:

Indrajala has made a devastating point.

Malcolm wrote:

No, he hasn't. He quoted a sensationalized citation from a paper written by Eliot Sperling.

[http://info-](http://info-buddhism.com/Orientalism_Violence_Tibetan_Buddhism_Elliot_Sperling.html)

[buddhism.com/Orientalism\\_Violence\\_Tibetan\\_Buddhism\\_Elliot\\_Sperling.html](http://info-buddhism.com/Orientalism_Violence_Tibetan_Buddhism_Elliot_Sperling.html) "  
onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;"

kirtu said:

The term "death squad" is a little extreme.

Malcolm wrote:

Unfortunately it's not.

Yes, it is. It's ridiculous.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 8th, 2014 at 5:39 AM

Title: Re: Complete Tegal Instruction in Unrestricted New Book

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

BTW, it looks like Lama Drimed is teaching at Esalen in September:

<http://www.esalen.org/workshop/week-september-14-21/lotus-borne-perception-awareness-teachings-tibetan-buddhism-and>

theanarchist said:

At a minimum of 900 dollars for one week

Malcolm wrote:

\$900.00 – \$4,975.00 (based on accommodation type)

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 8th, 2014 at 6:27 AM

Title: Re: Next generation of Dharma teachers in the West?

Content:

kirtu said:

Come on - the atrocities that the Tibetan institutions committed are well documented.

Malcolm wrote:

Which atrocities, by whom?

pensum said:

Here are a few:

"Judicial mutilation - principally the gouging out of eyes, and the cutting off of hands or feet - was formalized under the Sakya school as part of the 13th century Tibetan legal code, "

Heinrich Harrer: "in the days of the fifth Dalai Lama (in the eighteenth century), and even under the thirteenth (1900- 33), Tibetans still had their hands and feet chopped off."

"Whipping was legal and common as punishment in Tibet including in the 20th century, also for minor infractions and outside judicial process. Whipping could also have fatal consequences, as in the case of the trader Gyebo Sherpa subjected to the severe corca whipping for selling cigarettes. He died from his wounds 2 days later in the Potala prison. Tashi Tsering, a self-described critic of traditional Tibetan society, records being whipped as a 13 year old for missing a performance as a dancer in the Dalai Lama's dance troop in 1942, until the skin split and the pain became excruciating."

from

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Serfdom\\_in\\_Tibet\\_controversy#Human\\_rights\\_in\\_Tibet](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Serfdom_in_Tibet_controversy#Human_rights_in_Tibet)

Malcolm wrote:

"Whipping was common....", really, says who? A Wiki page?

"Judicial mutilation - principally the gouging out of eyes, and the cutting off of hands or feet - was formalized under the Sakya school as part of the 13th century Tibetan legal code, "

This an unattributed claim.

There were a total of five executions carried out by the Tibetan government in the 19th century.

Capital punishment was really quite rare in old Tibet, and not the frequent occurrence it is today under Communist rule.

Most of this page is bullshit Chinese propaganda. Everything composed by Grunfeld for example, is sheer crap fed to him by his Chinese handlers.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 8th, 2014 at 7:08 AM

Title: Re: H.H. Sakya Trizin in Canada May 2014

Content:

conebeckham said:

TBRC.....

this is from the Sakya KaBum...

[http://tbrc.org/link?RID=O8LS4784%7CO8LS47848LS5280\\$W00EGS1017151](http://tbrc.org/link?RID=O8LS4784%7CO8LS47848LS5280$W00EGS1017151) "

onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;" onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;" onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;

And this is from Khyentse Wangpo

[http://tbrc.org/link?RID=O00AG016%7CO00AG0161GS37000\\$W21807](http://tbrc.org/link?RID=O00AG016%7CO00AG0161GS37000$W21807) "

onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;" onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;" onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;

Not sure which one is more in use.....Malcolm can likely answer that.

Malcolm wrote:

The first is the long sadhana.

The latter is an instruction, not a sadhana.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 8th, 2014 at 9:24 AM

Title: Re: Complete Tegal Instruction in Unrestricted New Book

Content:

smcj said:

Plus their famous natural spring hot tubs on the cliff above the sea. They are beautiful at night.

Malcolm wrote:

Clothing optional.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 8th, 2014 at 8:49 PM

Title: Re: Next generation of Dharma teachers in the West?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Which atrocities, by whom?

kirtu said:

The Sakya Drikung War

Malcolm wrote:

And what "atrocities" were committed by either side during this conflict? Names and events please, not vague accusations of blame.

kirtu said:

the destruction of some monasteries mostly during the time of the 5th Dalai Lama, the war between the Karma Kagyu and the Gelug.

Malcolm wrote:

Which monasteries, you mean like Taranatha's monastery which had a full compliment of Jonang monks practicing Jonang lineages?



kirtu said:

These events are well documented.

Malcolm wrote:

Not so well as you seem to believe.

kirtu said:

If the 5th Dalai Lama wrote an edict ordering violence against people (as Indrajala posted) then that is a serious problem.

Malcolm wrote:

Or, if the Fifth is your guru, it is bodhisattva activity.

In any case, if you read the Sperling paper, you can see that the 5th attempted peaceful means before sending in his soldiers to quell a rebellion in Tsang.

What is left out of the Sperling piece is that the 5th was very conflicted about the secular actions demanded of him as a secular ruler. His qualms are spread through his 4 volume autobiography. As a ruler, he had to make recourse to the stick. It's what rulers must do. He however did not seek power, he was installed as a young boy and was at the mercy of his ministers and inherited a political world that was not of his making, though he left an indelible mark.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 8th, 2014 at 8:54 PM

Title: Re: Next generation of Dharma teachers in the West?

Content:

jiashengrox said:

How would you look at the rise and fall of, say the Sakya empire, from the start of Sapan and Chogyal Phagpa being the preceptor for the Mongol emperors, till the decline of Sakya empire and the rise of the Phagmodrukpa Dynasty?

Malcolm wrote:

Well, Sapan died in a foreign country and Phagpa was murdered at 44. The Sakya hegemony was not run by nice people, from what I understand. It was not governed by men of the caliber of Sapan and Phagpa.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 8th, 2014 at 9:00 PM

Title: Re: Next generation of Dharma teachers in the West?

Content:

Indrajala said:

Compared to Tibetan Buddhism, in my estimation at least, you see less religious

violence in other forms of Mahāyāna, such as in China and Japan.

Malcolm wrote:

Seriously? What about Sōhei? This sort of thing never existed in Tibet.

Indrajala said:

East Asian Mahāyāna actually has a better track record historically than Tibetan Buddhism.

Malcolm wrote:

Not really.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 8th, 2014 at 9:04 PM

Title: Re: Next generation of Dharma teachers in the West?

Content:

smcj said:

The guru-yoga teachings do not allow for criticism..

theanarchist said:

That's complete nonsense and a misunderstanding of vajrayana pure perception/devotion

Malcolm wrote:

The Gurupañcāśik ā states:

If one criticizes the master,  
that great confusion will cause death  
because of epidemics, harms,  
spirits, contagious disease, poison.  
Having been slain by  
a king, fire, poison snakes,  
water, dākinis, thieves,  
spirits and misguiders,  
sentient beings will go to hell.

And:

The master's mind  
must never be disturbed.  
If one becomes confused,  
one will surely roast in hell.  
Whatever fearful hells  
are shown such as Avīci and so on,  
those who criticize the master  
are correct explained as being located there.

The Kṛṣṇayamāripaṇjikā states:

Hearing even a single verse  
if one does not hold that person as a guru,  
after being born one hundred times as a dog,  
one will be born as a butcher.

So, it is pretty clear that Indian ideal of guru yoga is to hold the guru as being above all reproach.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 8th, 2014 at 9:40 PM

Title: Re: Next generation of Dharma teachers in the West?

Content:

Gwenn Dana said:

If you snuck this page into the Old Testament probably nobody would notice.

Malcolm wrote:

It is standard Indian hyperbole which basically means "it is really, really, really, really, really, really important to your path not to criticize your Guru."

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 8th, 2014 at 9:56 PM

Title: Re: Next generation of Dharma teachers in the West?

Content:

Gwenn Dana said:

If you snuck this page into the Old Testament probably nobody would notice.

Malcolm wrote:

It is standard Indian hyperbole which basically means "it is really, really, really, really, really, really important to your path not to criticize your Guru."

jiashengrox said:

Two things:

1. The context of the verses from the Fifty Verses of Guru Devotion is based on the assumption of a qualified spiritual teacher.

Malcolm wrote:

Agreed.

jiashengrox said:

2. There is a slight logical loophole. Not criticizing one's guru doesn't imply viewing the guru as the buddha.

Malcolm wrote:  
Nevertheless:

The Vajramāla Tantra states:  
Whoever thinks there is difference between  
the guru and Vajrasattva,  
he or she will not obtain the signs  
of gathering siddhis.

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Thursday, May 8th, 2014 at 10:06 PM  
Title: Re: Next generation of Dharma teachers in the West?  
Content:

Malcolm wrote:  
2. There is a slight logical loophole. Not criticizing one's guru doesn't imply viewing the  
guru as the buddha.  
Nevertheless:

The Vajramāla Tantra states:  
Whoever thinks there is difference between  
the guru and Vajrasattva,  
he or she will not obtain the signs  
of gathering siddhis.

theanarchist said:  
That's based on the fact that unless you develop pure perception you will not obtain  
anything. That does not mean that you become an undiscerning, idolizing groupie of a  
guru rock star and are then rewarded with siddhis for this self brainwashing.

Malcolm wrote:  
I see, so it is only so long as the Guru conforms to your expectations that you are to have  
a pure perception of that teacher. Right?

If Naropa or Mila had that attitude they would have never developed siddhis.

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Thursday, May 8th, 2014 at 10:37 PM  
Title: Re: Next generation of Dharma teachers in the West?  
Content:

theanarchist said:

That's based on the fact that unless you develop pure perception you will not obtain anything. That does not mean that you become an undiscerning, idolizing groupie of a guru rock star and are then rewarded with siddhis for this self brainwashing.

Malcolm wrote:

I see, so it is only so long as the Guru conforms to your expectations that you are to have a pure perception of that teacher. Right?

If Naropa or Mila had that attitude they would have never developed siddhis.

jiashengrox said:

And that is why it has been explicitly qualified in, say Maitreya's Ornament of Mahayana Sutras, or Fifty Verses (for tantric master).

Malcolm wrote:

Huh? Qualified how? What do you mean? When Naropa meant Tilopa, Tilopa was cooking fish alive.

Of course the Gurupañcāśīkā states:

The intelligent disciple does not take as a guru  
one who has these faults:  
resentment,  
arrogance, desire and lack of restraint.

So how are we to understand Naropa's decision to rely on Tilopa despite this advice from the Gurupañcāśīkā?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 8th, 2014 at 11:06 PM

Title: Re: Next generation of Dharma teachers in the West?

Content:

Indrajala said:

Compared to Tibetan Buddhism, in my estimation at least, you see less religious violence in other forms of Mahāyāna, such as in China and Japan. ... Admittedly, there were warrior monks in Japan (most notably in Tendai perhaps) who would torch the monasteries of rival sects, though these were small scale skirmishes.

kirtu said:

Tendai was nearly wiped out as a result of this. And Soto Zen struck out for the hills and mountains. Literally.

Kirt

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, in Japan they had entire armies of monastics armed to the teeth, who wielded enormous power.

The phenomena of militarized clergy never existed in Tibet, even with the existence of monastic police (Dob dobs, restricted to Lhasa and mainly active during the Monlam Chenmo).

When there were conflicts between Sakya and Drikung, in general, in the case of Drikungpas, they had patrons among Mongols, and so they used Mongol troops to sack the main monastery at Sakya. The Sakyas, if I understand correctly, used local soldiers when they retaliated.

The Ganden Phodrang under the 5th had a standing army. However, by the nineteenth century and 200 hundred years of being finlandized by the Qing, Lhasa had no real army to speak of. For this reason the 13th tried to create a modern army to repel the invasion that he knew was coming from China.

The fact is all the hostilities in Central Tibet were provoked by the King of Tibet, Karma Tenkyong. Karma Tenkyong allied himself with the Bonpo King of Beri, Donyo Dorje. A letter was intercepted by the Gelugpas indicating a conspiracy between Karma Tenkyong and Donyo Dorje, etc. This Wiki page is based on reliable books:

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Karma\\_Tenkyong](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Karma_Tenkyong) " onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;"

This page is a little less well written but also has useful information which outlines the war for control of Tibet between the Tsang Dynasty and the Gangdan Phodrang.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/5th\\_Dalai\\_Lama](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/5th_Dalai_Lama) " onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;"

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 8th, 2014 at 11:19 PM

Title: Re: H.E. Beru Khyentse Rinpoche

Content:

Gyaltzen Tashi said:

Dear all,

I am thinking of attending this Dharma event with tsog and two empowerments over two days:

<http://www.khyenkong-tharjay.org/EventMay2014> " onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;" onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;"

Upcoming Programme for 2014

Friday 9th May 2014  
to  
Sunday 11th May 2014

Guru Rinpoche Tsog Bum (with Guru Rinpoche empowerment) & Kurukulle Grand Puja  
(with Kurukulle empowerment)

Venue:  
Ngee Ann Auditorium

Teochew Building  
97 Tank Road  
Singapore 238066

Bus Service(s): 123

Nearest MRT: Dhoby Ghaut

However, I am not familiar with H.E. Beru Khyentse Rinpoche. I only know he is recognised as the 16th Karmapa, which I take as the minimum standard when considering to take empowerments.

Here is his wikipedia page:

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Second\\_Beru\\_Khyentse](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Second_Beru_Khyentse) "  
onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;" onclick="window.open(this.href);return  
false;" onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;

Please advise me today as the event starts tomorrow.

Regards,  
Gyaltzen Tashi

Malcolm wrote:  
The Guru Rinpoche empowerment will be from Konchog Chidu, I am almost certain.  
Kurukulla probably from Chogyur Lingpa's collection of termas.

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Friday, May 9th, 2014 at 1:35 AM  
Title: Re: Next generation of Dharma teachers in the West?  
Content:  
jiashengrox said:  
There is no explicit instruction or mention in both treatises that the master has to be enlightened.

Malcolm wrote:

No, merely in the latter that one must regard one's guru as a Buddha.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 9th, 2014 at 2:19 AM

Title: Re: Next generation of Dharma teachers in the West?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, in Japan they had entire armies of monastics armed to the teeth, who wielded enormous power.

Indrajala said:

Actually it is unclear exactly how many of them were ordained as monks in either the Tendai bodhisattva-renunciate model or otherwise. So while they were nominally called monks, it is unclear how many through the centuries were ordained as such.

Malcolm wrote:

Considering your views on ordination, this hardly seems like a major objection to my point.

Indrajala said:

Also given the proportion of sōhei to the greater monastic population, they would have been a small minority all things considered. Aside from a few major battles, most sōhei it seems got involved in petty skirmishes and burned down monasteries or shrines. Not morally justifiable perhaps, but they never ran the country.

Malcolm wrote:

My point of course is that these were violent religious militants of a kind completely unknown in Tibet.

While wars in Tibet often broke down along sect lines, they were never carried out by religious people, though religious people were frequently victims of violence that generally occurred along sectarian lines. Generally speaking, in Tibet when some aristocratic family decided to go to war with another one, the monasteries they patronized would suffer if they lost, for example, the Karma Kagyu, Jonangpas and Sakyapas suffered when Karma Tenkyong lost to the Ganden Phodrang. Since Karma Tenkyong was actually the aggressor in the war for the control of Tsang (following in his father's footsteps) in the mid 17th century, the actions of the Ganden Phodrang must be considered in that light. Plus, the 5th Dalai Lama was quite young, a man of a mere 25 years when Gushri Khan executed Karma Tenkyong (1642).

In fact the 5th was the first real religious ruler of Tibet. While Chogyal Phagpa was nominally the ruler of Tibet, he spent little time in Tibet, mostly being in Beijing with Kublai Khan.

So it is simply wrong to characterize the wars in Tibet as being wars brought by one



religious establishment against another. In general, wars in Tibet were fought by aristocratic clans by soldiers and never monks.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 9th, 2014 at 4:03 AM

Title: Re: Tibetan institutional religious violence

Content:

Adi said:

So far no one has provided any evidence that this is true.

Indrajala said:

I did cite an academic work detailing orders purportedly given by the Fifth Dalai Lama to violently wipe out his opponents.

Malcolm wrote:

As already pointed out: the citation you provided was sensationalized by use of the term "death squad". It was provided from a work by an academic with no expertise in Tibetan history apart from an ability to read English. It was provided with barely any context at all in Sperling's paper which I provided, from where it was derived by your former source.

All we can really glean from the citation, knowing what we know about the war that the King of Tsang thrust upon the 5th when he was a very young man, not that much younger than you, is that during the 1660's there continued to be pockets of unrest by dissenters whom 5th felt that had abandoned their obligation to follow the rule of law, which now squarely rested with his government.

No context at all was given in your original citation. What can we expect to learn from this apart from your desire to downplay religious violence in China and Japan in comparison to secular violence ordered out by a sovereign ruler under the pretext that it contradicted the "the values of Tibetan Institutions". As we know, the values of any Government are to prioritize political stability.

No mention was made by Sperling of the numerous qualms the 5th expressed through out his career in his autobiography at the unpleasant necessities of his position (one he in fact never sought out and could not in any case relinquish) save one.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 9th, 2014 at 4:29 AM

Title: Re: Tibetan institutional religious violence

Content:

Indrajala said:

Let's look at early Tibetan history then.

According to Tāranātha (1575-1634) in his biography of Padmasambhava, Padmasambhava himself used his magic to kill an opponent of Buddhism. Whether it

really happened like this or not is unclear, but it would suggest violent hostility between proponents of and opponents to Buddhism in this period.

Malcolm wrote:

This is well known. Magical battles between Buddhists and Bonpos continued until at least the 12th century.

Indrajala said:

The Tun-Huang Chronicles state the following:

...the paternal subjects rebelled; the maternal subjects revolved. ... The father gNam ri was given poison and died. The son Srong btsan firstly wiped out the families of the rebels and the prisoners.

Meanwhile Butön Rinchen Drup (Wyl. bu ston rin chen grub) (1290-1364) relates the following:

...Thirteen years of age he ascended the throne and brought under his power all the petty chiefs of the borderland who offered him presents and sent their messages (of submission).

Malcolm wrote:

These two accounts are not necessarily in conflict.

Indrajala said:

This suggests to me an intentional reworking of past history to suit contemporary Buddhist interests.

Malcolm wrote:

Sure, this definitely happened, but not for the reasons you seem to imagine.

Indrajala said:

Whereas Songstän Gampo was a violent despot

Malcolm wrote:

This is a bit of an exaggeration.

Indrajala said:

Actually, according to contemporary Tang dynasty reports, the Tibetans practiced animal sacrifice. The Old Book of Tang 舊唐書 has the following:

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, some Tibetans indeed practiced animal sacrifice, how widespread this practice was is subject to much debate because quite frankly, we really know very little about Tibetan religion prior to the seventh century. There is no reason to assume that Srongtsan Gampo was a deeply religious man, when the historical record is examined. However, he is credited with bring the practice of Avalokiteshvara to Tibet and Nyingma sources paint him as an emanation of that Bodhisattva.

Indrajala said:

All this leads to questions about the extent or concern for Buddhism in the Yarlung period.

Malcolm wrote:

There is no doubt about how active Tibetans were in bringing Dharma to Tibet in this period. The vast majority of sūtras were translated in the late imperial period, ending with the death of Ralpachan in 838.

Tibetan accounts paint Trisong Detsen as a king too busy to practice, but nevertheless an interested patron of Dharma.

Ralpachan on the other hand was quite zealous and religious, and like most religious zealots, proved to be a rather incompetent ruler, his downfall hastened by economic discontent due to the very generous relationship he had with monastic establishment. This provoked the backlash amongst the aristocracy that resulted in the assassination of Ralpachan, and the ascension of Langdarma, who tried to tax the monasteries (which resulted in his own assassination).

However, the fact that Tibetans were enthusiastically adopting Buddhism is born out by the fact that by 1000, almost all traces of any organized pre-Buddhist religion in Tibet had completely vanished. Without the strong sponsorship of the Yarlung kings, this would have never happened.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 9th, 2014 at 4:30 AM

Title: Re: Tibetan institutional religious violence

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

As already pointed out: the citation you provided was sensationalized by use of the term "death squad". It was provided from a work by an academic with no expertise in Tibetan history apart from an ability to read English. It was provided with barely any context at all in Sperling's paper which I provided, from where it was derived by your former source.

mañjughoṣamaṇi said:

Sperling's specialty is the history of Tibetan-Chinese relations and he relies on Chinese and Tibetan documents. He offers courses in Tibetan and the use of Chinese as a research tool for Tibetan studies at Indiana University. He can read more than English, even if the piece in question was sensationalist. This is of course a point aside from Jeff engaging in the denigration of Tibetans again, downplaying the grotesque violence of Chinese regimes, and the destabilizing effects of Qing intrigues in Mongol and Tibetan lands.

Malcolm wrote:

Todd, I wasn't talking about Sperling, I was talking about Johan Elverskog, whose expertise is Mongolian, not Tibetan.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 9th, 2014 at 5:51 AM

Title: Re: Tibetan institutional religious violence

Content:

Lotus\_Bitch said:

Instead of focusing exclusively on "institutional religious violence": why not divulge on [inter-sectarian] political intrigue?

Malcolm wrote:

Well first, we haven't really established that there was institutional religious violence in Tibet. The thread of the title is very misleading, created by one of the mods.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 9th, 2014 at 7:53 PM

Title: Re: Tibetan institutional religious violence

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

This is well known. Magical battles between Buddhists and Bonpos continued until at least the 12th century.

Indrajala said:

So, the four immeasurables are to be taught while simultaneously engaging in magical battles to kill opponents? Is there no contradiction here? Where are the enlightened qualities?

Malcolm wrote:

Indeed. In order to engage in abhicarya rites there must be two things: the limitless compassion of the practitioner, and the object of the rite must satisfy ten criteria which render them so evil that the only way they can experience liberation without going straight to hell for harming the Dharma is to be subject to a rite of liberation.

Indrajala said:

Yes, some Tibetans indeed practiced animal sacrifice, how widespread this practice was is subject to much debate because quite frankly, we really know very little about Tibetan religion prior to the seventh century.

According to the cited Chinese source, they did it every year and three years as a way of renewing their oaths.

That sounds rather widespread and common.

Malcolm wrote:

It sounds vague and almost completely uninformative. What is the context? what is the rite? Under what circumstances? In any case, this is pre-Buddhist religion we are talking about. That was largely stamped out and driven into the border lands by the later Yarlung Kings.

Indrajala said:

The Tang histories also display almost no Buddhist sympathies.

Malcolm wrote:

Well, they weren't really written by people who were on the scene, were they?

Indrajala said:

So, what kind of Buddhism existed in the Yarlung period?

Malcolm wrote:

State Buddhism centered around Samye and Lhasa.

Indrajala said:

Magical battles resulting in people being killed and court officials taking oaths with animal sacrifices?

Malcolm wrote:

As explained above, any abhicarya rites Padmasambhava engaged in were engaged in with the criteria listed above. The practice of animal sacrifice was ended during the reign of Trisong Detsen.

Indrajala said:

Without the strong sponsorship of the Yarlung kings, this would have never happened. A lot of Yarlung kings were opportunistic warlords (the same can be said about early Chinese Tang emperors like Taizong especially too, but nobody calls him a Dharma King as far as I know).

Malcolm wrote:

Not all of the Yarlung Kings are counted as Dharmarājas, only Srongtsan Gampo, who built the original Potala; Trisong Detsan, who definitely invited Shantarakshita and Padmasambhava, and who may have patronized Chan ( <http://earlytibet.com/2007/11/13/tibetan-cha-i-the-emperors-cha/> " onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;" onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;), and Ralapacan, who oversaw one of the world's great translations projects.

Indrajala said:

The opinion of some major scholars is that Buddhism offered an attractive model for social cohesion and in turn state consolidation...

So, while there were some devout Buddhists, Buddhism was utilized by the state for less benevolent purposes.

Malcolm wrote:

What can be more benevolent than social cohesion and undermining the old Bon families with allegiance to Zhang Zhung?

Indrajala said:

In light of that, why speak of Dharma Kings in the Yarlung period, or have images of them to be venerated?

Malcolm wrote:

Because the three Dharmarājas of Tibet were responsible for the importation of Dharma to Tibet, whatever their personal reasons may have been, honest or sinister, however they may be. Moreover, the later narratives about the three Dharmarājas provided generations of Tibetans a national identity based on the importation of Buddhism into their culture and grounded the Tibetan people in a Buddhist identity in a way that few other peoples in history have been so affected by Buddhism.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 9th, 2014 at 8:16 PM

Title: Re: Tibetan institutional religious violence

Content:

Indrajala said:

I just take what I want from it and leave the rest (like the swan who separates the cream from the water).

Malcolm wrote:

Or perhaps like a musk hunter who takes the gland and leaves behind the corpse.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 9th, 2014 at 8:19 PM

Title: Re: A closer look into empowerments

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

There is what is called a gtor dbang in Nyingma, where the tormas are blessed as the basis of the empowerment, not a mandala.

dakini\_boi said:

Could you say more about the Tor Wang, Malcolm? What is the significance of using a tormas instead of a mandala?

Malcolm wrote:

The way it is presented in the Sakya tradition of Vajrakīlaya, the torwang comes from the empowerment of the lower activities. Usually, the tormas empowerment includes the

body, speech, mind, qualities and activities of a the deity.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 9th, 2014 at 8:21 PM

Title: Re: A closer look into empowerments

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

There is also a srog gtad, an entrustment rite for worldly protectors.

Konchog1 said:

I can't find anything in English on srog gtad. Can you explain it briefly please? What's the difference between worshipping a protector with and without a srog gtad? Thank you.

Malcolm wrote:

Wisdom protectors, for example, Mahakala, generally speaking have everything from full empowerments down to permissions.

A srog gtad on the other hand represents making a contract with a worldly protector to perform services for you in exchange for offerings. It is a deal, basically. It is a practice that does not come from Indian tantras.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 9th, 2014 at 8:24 PM

Title: Re: Tibetan institutional religious violence

Content:

Indrajala said:

I just take what I want from it and leave the rest (like the swan who separates the cream from the water).

Malcolm wrote:

Or perhaps like a musk hunter who takes the gland and leaves behind the corpse.

theanarchist said:

Swans can't separate cream from water.

Malcolm wrote:

It is a traditional metaphor...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 9th, 2014 at 9:07 PM

Title: Re: Tibetan institutional religious violence

Content:

Indrajala said:

Seldom were Buddhist clerics either in China or Japan in positions of significant political authority, which is unlike in Tibet where Lamas in charge had to utilize violence in order to advance the interests of the state.

Malcolm wrote:

If you carefully examine Tibetan history, you will discover rather swiftly that Lamas were rarely in positions of significant political authority either, the 5th and the 13th being notable exceptions.

For example, after the death of the 5th, the affairs of state were conducted by the regent, Desrid Sangyas Gyatso, a lay person his whole life. During most of the 18th century, and most of the 19th, the Dalai Lamas played no significant role in governing Tibet. Even the 7th's government lasted only 6 years, from 1751 to his death in 1757. From 1707 to this period of time, Central Tibet has a variety of regimes and it was a time of intense political instability.

There were five Dalai Lamas between the 7th and the 13th in a space of 120 years.

Furthermore, "Tibet" is a big place. Lhasa never controlled Kham (always ruled by independent kings) and Amdo (ruled by a mixture of Muslim, Mongol and Chinese warlords at various times), lost Ladakh to Kashmir in the 18th century, etc.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 9th, 2014 at 9:13 PM

Title: Re: Complete Tegal Instruction in Unrestricted New Book

Content:

pensum said:

The Olds aren't the only ones to write a book on togal and make it available, there is also this bizarre shoddy contribution: <https://www.amazon.ca/Vajrasattva-Secret-Wisdoms-Trekcho-Tegal/dp/1491863684/>. Rife with typos and grammatically bizarre phrasing, and not to be trusted in the least. Here's a sample copied exactly as it appears in the Amazon preview:

Rgyun-gyi ting-nge-'dzin, the same state in Tibetan definition is such. Rgyun-gyi has in depth meaning. Self existing pristine Rigpa. Self arising, self ignited, self originated openness of ecstatic Rigpa. Self, here is not the composite of impermanent elements. It is one's own, without grasping, if anything, own power, own guidance.

Anybody know anything about the apparently illiterate author, Richard Chambers Prescott?

Malcolm wrote:

He definitely has a bone to pick with the Nyingmapas.



Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 9th, 2014 at 10:56 PM

Title: Re: Tibetan institutional religious violence

Content:

rory said:

But try and say that about Tibet! Denial denial and denial....it's very sad.

Malcolm wrote:

Well, since there were no soldier monks in Tibet, denying their existence is similar to denying hair on a tortoise, i.e. it's true there were never soldier monks in Tibet.

rory said:

Tibet was a feudal state...

Malcolm wrote:

No, it wasn't. It was something else entirely different.

rory said:

and after 1 dharma debate withdrew from Chinese intellectual currents unlike the Koreans, Vietnamese Japanese, etc who participated in cross-cultural exchange and development.

Malcolm wrote:

To begin with the debate was not between Tibetan and Chinese protagonists; it was between Indians and Chinese protagonists, sponsored by the Tibetan king, in imitation of similar debates in India. The debate actually occurred over three years, via letters, though people often imagine that it was a one-off smack down with Kamalashila emerging the proclaimed victor. In reality, the account of the debate which later Tibetans inherited was penned by a scion of the Ba clan, who were part of the anti-Chinese faction within the Tibetan aristocracy.

However the debate turned out, and there is no real clear answer to this question, the Tibetans decided that Chinese Buddhism did not represent the latest developments and currents of Indian Buddhism, and so after about 50 years of experience with Chinese Buddhism decided to devote their attentions to the Buddhism being taught at the great universities in India, Nalanda, Somanatha, Vikramashila and so on instead. In other words, they did a perfectly understandable thing: they decided that the Buddhism they found in India was more authentic than the Buddhism they were being introduced to by the Chinese monastics stationed in Lhasa. It is unlikely that the best and the brightest were sent to Lhasa, since the Chinese considered Tibet a barbarian backwater.

Moreover, the Tibetans were attracted to the ritualism of Yoga tantra (there was no anuttarayoga appellation at this time), and they had a shrine built at Samye where the Vajradhātu maṇḍala practice could be regularly performed with a special image of Mahāvairocana crafted for that purpose. It still exists at Samye. The influence of the practice Sarvatathāgatatattva samgraha tantra pervades all of Tibetan Buddhism right

down to this day.

Part of the lack of interest of Tibetans with currents in Chinese Buddhism also can be attributed to the fact that Chinese Buddhism was largely destroyed during the reign of the Taoist emperor, Wuzong in 845. As a result of the economic decline of Asia from 845 onward, and due to the chaos of the Five Dynasties period, there really was no Buddhism in China for that could interest Tibetans for the simple reason that Chinese Buddhism was institutionally destroyed by its own people.

Therefore, as Tibet society recovered its own economic stability in the mid 10th century, Yeshe Ö (947–1024 or 959 - 1040), the great, great grandson of Langdarma, the last of the Yarlung Kings, initiated a revival of Buddhist transmissions from India by sending a number of young men in Kashmir to learn Sanskrit and translate texts.

So in fact your castigation of Tibetans for not engaging in cultural exchange misses the mark completely. The Tibetans controlled Central Asia during most of the 8th and 9th centuries, and they maintained constant ties with India and Nepal from the late 9th century onwards. The Tibetans above all were great traders. They simply were more interested in what they saw in India than what they saw in China, as with China they had a neighbor with whom they had had constant struggles. The Tibetans never had any wars with any Indian kingdoms at all.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 9th, 2014 at 11:01 PM

Title: Re: I thought Buddhism wasn't about threatening people with

Content:

The Way said:

Regarding the video in the OP, I believe it was created by Wat Dhammakaya, a group that should not in any way be considered mainline "Theravada". Many Theravadin practitioners over on Dhamma Wheel have compared it to Scientology or even outright labelled it as a cult. Having the conviction that your actions have consequences is far, far different than threatening people with a version of Hell that looks like a Sims expansion pack.

Also shoot, I apologize for resurrecting such an old topic. That's google search for ya.

Mort432 said:

Also gonna gravedig here a little bit, and possibly be a little off topic, but I spoke with my Shingon teacher (who is an ordained lama) and he said that the concept of hell/the narakas in Buddhism is completely false, at least within Shingon.

Malcolm wrote:

The Buddha definitely taught the hell realms. You can read about them in the Sutta Nipatta, etc.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 10th, 2014 at 12:01 AM

Title: Re: Next generation of Dharma teachers in the West?

Content:

theanarchist said:

Devotion and pure perception should come from a deep respect for the qualities of that teacher and gratitude for what he or she gives you.

Malcolm wrote:

That is really not how it is taught in the tantras if by pure perception this allows you to view your guru acts as anything other than buddha activities.

Of course, this is a practice. It is not perfected in a day.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 10th, 2014 at 12:44 AM

Title: Re: Tibetan institutional religious violence

Content:

Andrew108 said:

One of my teachers has been very keen on building a democratic community. His teacher before him built an unusual community in Tibet in that it was open and democratic.

Malcolm wrote:

Chang Chub Dorje did not build a community, one sprang up around him.

Andrew108 said:

One wonders why there were not more of these types of communities in Tibet? What was stopping the enlightened masters from implementing this kind of change / social justice?

Malcolm wrote:

There were plenty of such communities in Tibet, gathered around realized masters.

We should not, however, fall into the trap of assuming that institutions are by their very nature corrupt. There were of course many excellent monasteries in Tibet prior to 1959 and while I am sure humans in them has all to human faults and problems, there was also a great deal of good that came out of the Tibetan monastic system, just in case anyone has forgotten this.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 10th, 2014 at 1:50 AM

Title: Re: Tibetan institutional religious violence

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Indeed. In order to engage in abhicarya rites there must be two things: the limitless compassion of the practitioner, and the object of the rite must satisfy ten criteria which render them so evil that the only way they can experience liberation without going straight to hell for harming the Dharma is to be subject to a rite of liberation.

Sherab Dorje said:

Is there a source (in English) that outlines the ten criteria? Thanks!

Malcolm wrote:

zhing bcu - ten defects or the ten objects are:

- 1) The enemy of the Three Jewels
- 2) the enemy of the master
- 3) The samaya violator
- 4) the perverted one
- 6) the hostile one
- 7) The samaya enemy with a wicked character
- 8) The one arriving to the congregation
- 9) the harmer of everyone
- 10) the three lower realms

In order to be considered a candidate Vajrayāna extreme rendition, the person or being must satisfy all ten criteria, otherwise the act is nothing more than common act of killing that will send the doer to lower realms.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 10th, 2014 at 3:23 AM

Title: Re: Tibetan institutional religious violence

Content:

conebeckham said:

Could you explain number 8?

I've got to think number 9 would be hard to prove.....everyone? Really?

Malcolm wrote:

# 8 means the harmer shows up in person, i.e. you can't go chasing after such beings or person, they have to be coming at you.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 10th, 2014 at 3:29 AM

Title: Re: Next generation of Dharma teachers in the West?

Content:

Gwenn Dana said:

Nobody wants to take Vajrayana away. But not everybody wants to accept Vajrayana 's "truths".

Malcolm wrote:

Vajrayāna is a specific path, with a specific method. If you want to follow that path, you are free to. If you don't want to follow that path, you are free not to. But it is useful to know what a path entails prior to embarking upon it, no?

Those who wish to achieve awakening in this life and this body follow Vajrayāna, the rest may do as they please.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 10th, 2014 at 3:30 AM

Title: Re: "The Secret Lamp of Wisdom"

Content:

Bhusuku said:

In the "Supreme Source" it is mentioned that one of the early sources for the 4 yogas of Semde is a tantra called "The Secret Lamp of Wisdom" ( ye shes gsang ba sgron ma rin po che man ngag gi rgyud ).

Malcolm wrote:

Which ironically is one of the root tantras of "klong sde".

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 10th, 2014 at 9:31 PM

Title: Re: Tibetan institutional religious violence

Content:

rory said:

...the sad fact that AIDS is rampant in Bhutan.

Malcolm wrote:

AIDS is "rampant in Bhutan"? Reality check:

In 2011, there were 246 reported cases of HIV in Bhutan, representing just over 0.3% of the population.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/HIV/AIDS\\_in\\_Bhutan](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/HIV/AIDS_in_Bhutan) "  
onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;

Bhutan and Ireland have the same percentage of people infected with AIDS. About three in every 1000 people. So I guess AIDS is "rampant" in Ireland too. The percentage of people infested with AIDS in Bhutan is the same as in all South Asia, 0.3%.

rory said:

So meanwhile all the enlightened lamas the present Dalai Lama, the various enlightened lamas and Rinpoches past and present knew all about it and did nothing.

Malcolm wrote:

Are you quite sure? Or do you just enjoy engaging in the baseless slander of bodhisattvas?

rory said:

...if you don't believe in the entire mythos of 'enlightened' masters you as a TB practitioner go to Avici hell.

Malcolm wrote:

There is no such teaching.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 10th, 2014 at 9:35 PM

Title: Re: Tibetan institutional religious violence

Content:

Indrajala said:

I said there are samaya commitments in TB that if broken result in hell realms.

Malcolm wrote:

Primarily the one in which you physically harm your guru's body. One is born as Vajra Hell, which is just the Vajrayāna name for Avīci hell.

As Khedrup just pointed out, as for the others, there are many ways of maintaining one's samaya vows, which in any case are meant to assist one's practice. Since taking rebirth in the three lower realms is an eventual surety for all sentient beings who are not on a path, samaya vows are the skillful means we use in Vajrayāna to make sure that we do not become complacent about our paths and practice.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 10th, 2014 at 9:46 PM

Title: Re: Tibetan institutional religious violence

Content:

JKhedrup said:

There is something very disturbing to me about the current climate of Tibet bashing.

Malcolm wrote:

Especially since we never observe China bashing, Japan bashing, etc., on these boards. It's pretty sad, actually. We have the PRC, literally raping Tibet and sterilizing Tibetan women after forcing them to have late term abortions, resettling Tibetan nomad in concrete villages and restricting the number of cattle they can own, fencing off their

traditional grazing lands, but no, we don't really hear about this.

What we here about instead are unfocused accusations against real bodhisattvas like HHDL to the effect that they, like the Catholics, are knowingly complicit in covering up sexual abuse of children in monasteries -- and this goes unremarked and uncorrected by the staff.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 11th, 2014 at 2:11 AM

Title: Re: Tibetan institutional religious violence

Content:

JKhedrup said:

Why wasn't Lord Buddha able to stop Devadatta?

Indrajala said:

That's mythology, not real life today.

Malcolm wrote:

That is not a rebuttal to Khedrup's point.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 11th, 2014 at 6:34 AM

Title: Re: Tibetan institutional religious violence

Content:

Zhen Li said:

...

He did stop him, that's why we practice Buddhism today and not Devadattism.

Adi said:

So many would say but we're still waiting for Ven. Indrajala's answer and explanation of how he regards what he is now calling sacred myths.

Malcolm wrote:

While Schopen et al were quite right to point to a lack in Buddhist studies, i.e. that there was not sufficient attention being paid to archaeology, now the pendulum has swung to far. The idea that the canon record is of no value for understanding the nature of Buddhadharma or even the Buddha is patent nonsense.

Undoubtedly, one day we be reading Jeff going on and on about how rebirth and karma too cannot really be considered Buddha's teachings, blah, blah, blah...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 11th, 2014 at 7:05 AM

Title: Re: Tibetan institutional religious violence

Content:

Zhen Li said:

Well, funnily enough, I think it was Schopen who did point out that in fact things like dedication of merit were some of the earliest lay Buddhist practices, based upon inscriptions at stupas. So, I'm pretty sure we're unlikely to lose those types of elements due to archaeology.

Malcolm wrote:

Well, as you may have heard, Jayarava is all fired up to prove that Buddha never existed at all.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 11th, 2014 at 7:07 AM

Title: Re: Next generation of Dharma teachers in the West?

Content:

Gwenn Dana said:

And then there are also those who wish to achieve awakening in this life and this body and don't follow Vajrayana.

Malcolm wrote:

If wishes were fishes...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 11th, 2014 at 11:01 AM

Title: Re: Tibetan institutional religious violence

Content:

Indrajala said:

yet boys in monasteries of that same tradition are regularly raped...

Malcolm wrote:

You haven't established this, this is mere hearsay.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 11th, 2014 at 8:52 PM

Title: Re: Tibetan institutional religious violence

Content:

Indrajala said:

As you're aware the fundamental premise of Vajrayāna is that one may attain buddhahood in this very life or failing that within a dozen or so lifetimes, as opposed to



many countless lifetimes in other models of Mahāyāna.

Malcolm wrote:

If, and only if, you maintain your samaya.

Indrajala said:

In TB it is generally said that this is indeed possible and that it works like this in real life.

Malcolm wrote:

Some people are capable of maintaining their samaya.

Indrajala said:

There are also tulkus who are believed to have the ability to voluntarily come back to the world (as a human) for our benefit.

Malcolm wrote:

You have linked three things in a rather clumsy attempt at being "critical": Vajrayāna claims of rapidity, one instance where a tulku alleges he was repeatedly gang raped as a young boy, and the general competence of tulkus as enlightened administrators in order to cast doubt on Vajrayāna claims (addressed above).

However, items two and three have no relation to item one.

Aside from the fact that the Mañjuśrīmūlakapa Tantra makes predictions about reincarnations which appear in various countries including Tibet; the tulku system as it presently exists is not part of Vajrayāna theory in anyway. It is not mentioned in the tantras, nor the treatises and is a religious custom which first evolved in Tibet during the 13th century among the Kagyus. It continues solely because Tibetan society demands that it does.

Since there is no precedent for the tulku system in Vajrayāna, the effectiveness of tulkus as administrators, even the question of whether tulkus are actually awakened beings or not, is completely irrelevant to Vajrayāna claims about rapidity of its path.

Since there is no precedent for the tulku system in Vajrayāna, there is no reason to expect that tulkus are awakened beings, and no reason to expect that they would be able affectively manage any sexual abuse of minors in their care in any manner other than conventional ones. I.e., the actions need to be discovered, the perpetrators brought to justice, and so on.

This means that your complaints, apart from the fact that they are malicious gossip, amount to nothing more than a hill of beans.

The net effect of your unsubstantiated rumors and gossip is that some chicken-minded people will hear such things, and they too will then start spreading this gossip to others.

The fact is that there is no evidence at all of wide-spread systematic abuse of children,

sexual or otherwise, in Tibetan monasteries in India. To claim otherwise without evidence is simply malicious. Of course, everyone is responsible for their own actions and their own karma. And since as Buddhists we all accept that karma is unerring, those who spread gossip, lies and half-truths can easily understand what kind of suffering they will experience from their own actions, not the least of which is that those who would formally have been inclined to lend them an ear, will not be well disposed to in future.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 11th, 2014 at 9:02 PM

Title: Re: Tibetan institutional religious violence

Content:

TRC said:

It appears the Vajrayana can be critical of others, but cry foul when some overdue criticism is directed at them.

Malcolm wrote:

People can criticize Vajrayāna all they like, but they should use arguments which make sense, which are actually grounded in Vajrayāna claims, rather than cultural issues which are not actually part of Vajrayāna at all.

Since you are a former Vajrayāna practitioner, whatever that means, you should know perfectly well that one's capacity to experience the results Vajrayāna claims to confer is entirely predicated on how well one maintains one's three vows, pratimokṣa vows, bodhisattva vows as well as samaya vows.

Whoever is disappointed by the Vajrayāna path either has not practiced enough, or has not maintained their vows well enough.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 11th, 2014 at 9:06 PM

Title: Re: Next generation of Dharma teachers in the West?

Content:

smcj said:

Sutra Mahayana does make the claim that full awakening is possible in this body, but only if this body is the product of previous bodies' Dharma practice.:

theanarchist said:

Indeed. Like Shakaymuni was said to have practiced for several immeasurable kalpas to get there.

Malcolm wrote:

Three, in fact. Two eons to get the eighth bhumi, one more to attain full buddhahood.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 11th, 2014 at 9:11 PM

Title: Re: Next generation of Dharma teachers in the West?

Content:

smcj said:

Sutra Mahayana does make the claim that full awakening is possible in this body, but only if this body is the product of previous bodies' Dharma practice. So who knows if this body is in striking distance or not? The only way to tell is practice Dharma and see what happens. Sure would be a waste if all you're previous incarnations spent all that time and energy to get you this close and you just didn't feel like it this time.

The tantric claim is that full awakening is possible in the body that first makes contact with Dharma practice, not later incarnations. Sure would be a waste if you're this close and don't feel like making the effort.

Malcolm wrote:

The Vajrayāna claim is that if you take two beginners of equal diligence and capacity and put them on the path, the Mahāyāni will take three incalculable eons to attain full buddhahood, the Vajrayāni will be able to attain full buddhahood in one body and one lifetime.

Why? Quite simply speaking, Mahāyāna has no methods that work with the body and it does not take the result as the path.

However, no one is forcing anyone to believe Vajrayāna claims about anything.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 11th, 2014 at 9:38 PM

Title: Re: Next generation of Dharma teachers in the West?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The Vajrayāna claim is that if you take two beginners of equal diligence and capacity and put them on the path, the Mahāyāni will take three incalculable eons to attain full buddhahood, .

theanarchist said:

Can we be sure that it's not possible to do it faster than the being later known as Shakyamuni did? Just because he took this amount of time doesn't automatically mean that as a rule this is the fastest possible.

Malcolm wrote:

Three "incalculable" eons is the minimum time it takes the person of highest capacity to travel the common Mahāyāna path.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 11th, 2014 at 9:59 PM

Title: Re: Next generation of Dharma teachers in the West?

Content:

WuMing said:

To come back to the original question: Next generation of Dharma teachers in the West?

What about you, Malcolm, being a Dharma teacher?

Malcolm wrote:

There is very little need for me to be a Dharma teacher.

There are many people, both in the East and the West, who are far more qualified than me, and much nicer people to boot.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 11th, 2014 at 11:29 PM

Title: Re: Tibetan institutional religious violence

Content:

Andrew108 said:

Whether there are Tulkus or not the guru is seen as infallible.

Malcolm wrote:

One is to perceive only one's own guru as free from faults. That does not mean that one not free to see faults wherever and in whomever they exist.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, May 12th, 2014 at 12:58 AM

Title: Re: Tibetan institutional religious violence

Content:

Dan74 said:

Well, this is more than a discussion. When you make statements like "East Asian Mahāyāna actually has a better track record historically than Tibetan Buddhism" it crosses into sectarian bashing, rather than a discussion about learning. Learning can take place in a respectful environment, can it not? That's the key notion I am trying to raise here - respect.

Indrajala said:

It can't qualify as sectarian bashing because EA Mahāyāna is a general geographical designation for forms of Buddhism based on the Classical Chinese canon in the Sinosphere. For the simple fact East Asian clergy seldom had major political-military authority, they were seldom if ever guilty of transgressions that putting down a rebellion would entail. Consequently my statement is reasonable albeit provocative.

Malcolm wrote:

"Teeth and Claws of the Buddha: Monastic Warriors and Sōhei in Japanese History."  
Adolphson, 2007, Hawai'i.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, May 12th, 2014 at 1:01 AM

Title: Re: Tibetan institutional religious violence

Content:

theanarchist said:

So, go home with your tired old rambling.

Indrajala said:

Would you be content if we all ignored documented cases of child abuse in monasteries and pretended such things never occurred?

Malcolm wrote:

We would be content if you actually had some facts upon which to base your wide ranging accusations. So far we have Kalu Rinpoche's story as well as ???

Not much at this point. The point is to act responsibly and not fling out accusations which smear shit even on people you have taken teachings from and claim to respect.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, May 12th, 2014 at 1:12 AM

Title: Re: Tibetan institutional religious violence

Content:

Andrew108 said:

There are well documented cases of abuse.

Malcolm wrote:

Define "well documented". Do you mean that people were arrested, sent to court? Imprisoned?

Or do you mean by well documented "So and so said so".

The point is not to deny that such things can, and indeed, do occur, if we are to believe Kalu Rinpoche's allegations.

The point is to approach the issue with responsibility and not paint all Tibetan institutions as places infested with pedophiles and child rapists.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, May 12th, 2014 at 1:40 AM

Title: Re: Tibetan institutional religious violence

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

"Vajrayāna claims rapid results.

Tulkus practice Vajrayāna.

Tulkus can't seem to protect children under their care from sexual predation.

Therefore, Vajrayāna claims to produce rapid results are questionable."

This sort of logic is really very poor.

M

Andrew108 said:

The logic is quite well-founded. It shows that rapid results are not axiomatic, even for those who are privileged.

Malcolm wrote:

It's extremely poor, since I have shown that the tulku system does not come from the system of Vajrayāna. It is merely a Tibetan cultural practice. It is not Dharma.

Andrew108 said:

As to the idea that abuse isn't widespread or claims aren't substantiated well you know that there is a lot that is hidden due to feelings of shame.

Malcolm wrote:

I see, so there is a conspiracy of silence. What nonsense.

Andrew108 said:

This self-censorship is one large part of the problem - the denial of abuse is only now being seen as not helpful (hence the issuing of condoms to monks in Bhutan).

Malcolm wrote:

Issuing condoms to rape victims? That's a novel approach. In general, teenagers in monasteries tend to have girlfriends. One of the most common reasons for leaving the monastery is knocking up your girlfriend.

Andrew108 said:

Adele Wilde-Blavatsky discusses this in an article she wrote for the Elephant Journal.

Malcolm wrote:

Actually, I agree that monasteries are not suitable places to educate children. But for reasons different than the one's she raises. Kids educated in monasteries do not receive the benefit of a modern education.

Andrew108 said:

She writes:

"In October 2011, a famous and highly-respected reincarnate Tibetan Buddhist master, Kalu Rinpoche, posted a Youtube video in which he reveals the abuse he suffered as a young monk at the hands of adult monks in his monastery. Rinpoche's allegations caused shockwaves within the Tibetan Buddhist community (particularly his western students). Since that time, I have not heard any Tibetan Buddhist teacher (especially those connected with Kalu Rinpoche) publicly respond to his allegations, let alone suggest there be a formal investigation and those responsible brought to account. One can only hope Kalu Rinpoche's video exposure of this serious issue has not gone to waste and been brushed under the carpet in the hope that people might forget about it.

You wonder why there has been no follow up or public statement.

Malcolm wrote:

It would be irresponsible for anyone to respond without launching an investigation.

Andrew108 said:

If you were a father and your young child was recognized as a tulku would you let your child be taken by monastics? I doubt it.

Malcolm wrote:

I would not let my child be recognized as a tulku to begin with.

Andrew108 said:

Whilst sexual abuse may be hidden and not discussed openly, what is known to be commonplace and is openly discussed is the violent corporal punishment meted out to monks who commit only minor infractions that displease their superiors.

Malcolm wrote:

Oh please. They get a stick across the back of their calves. One of the reasons one of my teachers did so well in school is that those kids who did not memorize their lines would be stood up and would be punished in front of the class.

Andrew108 said:

I myself have seen how sexual relations within Tibetan monastic institutions are commonplace.

Malcolm wrote:

Which kind of sexual relations? Between whom?

Andrew108 said:

You might also consider the testimony of Ruben Derksen (a western tulku) who talks about systematic abuse in the monastery where he was receiving his training.

Malcolm wrote:

What kind of abuse? Beatings, rape, etc?

Andrew108 said:

Now the point is that the leaders of these monasteries are not being proactive in preventing cases of abuse and rarely promote organisational changes that would mitigate against such abuse.

Malcolm wrote:

You don't actually know this.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, May 12th, 2014 at 2:50 AM

Title: Re: Tibetan institutional religious violence

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

"Teeth and Claws of the Buddha: Monastic Warriors and Sōhei in Japanese History." Adolphson, 2007, Hawai'i.

Indrajala said:

It remains unclear how many sōhei were actually monks.

Secondly, there were a minority in Japan, if they were even largely clergy.

Thirdly, they are part of medieval Japanese history, and not Chinese history. In China the Shaolin monks were not necessarily accepted by more mainstream Buddhist monks.

Malcolm wrote:

You made a blanket statement about East Asian Mahāyāna. You did not qualify in anyway.

Indrajala said:

As well as the case of HIV being spread in Bhutanese monasteries:

[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/03/29/bhutas-makes-condoms-available-to-monks-to-stop-spread-of-stds\\_n\\_2976401.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/03/29/bhutas-makes-condoms-available-to-monks-to-stop-spread-of-stds_n_2976401.html) "

onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;" onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;" onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;

Malcolm wrote:

This not about sexual abuse.



Indrajala said:

Chhoekey Penjor, deputy chief information officer at the Children's Division of the commission, confirmed the allegations were found to be true and "necessary action was taken."

Malcolm wrote:

So yes, there are pedophiles everywhere. Here, they were discovered and punished.

Indrajala said:

If this sort of thing is happening in Bhutan which at least has rule of law and journalists willing to address such matters, what about India and Nepal where Tibetans have little voice being refugees? India and Nepal barely have rule of law, so complaints to the police might not mean much.

Malcolm wrote:

You have not demonstrated this is a pervasive problem in Tibetan Monasteries.

Also, Kalu Rinpoche has said that the cycle of abuse went onto other young monks after he left his monastery:

It wasn't until Kalu returned to the monastery after his three-year retreat that he realized how wrong this practice was. By then the cycle had begun again on a younger generation of victims, he says.

Note the use of the plural there: victim s.

Yes, apparently the gang of monks that abused him continued to abuse others. In his monastery, not all other monasteries in India.

Indrajala said:

Apparently even Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche has voiced concern about sexual abuse in monasteries:

Malcolm wrote:

Stating that it is a "concern" is not a statement that it is endemic or pervasive.

Indrajala said:

Incidentally, in 2000 there were claims of sexual abuse at Samye Ling Center (that's the west, of course, but still Tibetan Buddhist):

Malcolm wrote:

Not of children.

Indrajala said:

Therefore taken altogether I would conclude that sexual abuse in Tibetan monasteries is a serious problem.

Malcolm wrote:

Of which you actually have no proof or evidence of. Merely a suspicion.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, May 12th, 2014 at 2:52 AM

Title: Re: Tibetan institutional religious violence

Content:

Indrajala said:

Also, in 2013 there were also numerous cases of sexual abuse reported in Bhutan:

Malcolm wrote:

Numerous, as it turns out, is two.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, May 12th, 2014 at 7:00 AM

Title: Re: Tibetan institutional religious violence

Content:

Indrajala said:

Also, in 2013 there were also numerous cases of sexual abuse reported in Bhutan:

Malcolm wrote:

Numerous, as it turns out, is two.

Indrajala said:

Four victims that have been reported, plus suspicion of it being an issue in the larger community:

Malcolm wrote:

Two cases is not "numerous".

Indrajala said:

A year later, at least a dozen monks, including some who were underage, were diagnosed with STIs, and at least five monks were known to be HIV positive.

Malcolm wrote:

And the link to sexual abuse is?

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Monday, May 12th, 2014 at 7:12 PM  
Title: Re: Tibetan institutional religious violence  
Content:  
Malcolm wrote:  
Two cases is not "numerous".

Indrajala said:  
And suspicion of it occurring elsewhere.  
A year later, at least a dozen monks, including some who were underage, were diagnosed with STIs, and at least five monks were known to be HIV positive.  
And the link to sexual abuse is?  
HIV is unlikely to be introduced to a group of minors from another minor.

Malcolm wrote:  
Are you completely naive? Teen transmitted HIV is very common.

For example:

Despite stable rates of HIV diagnosis in older populations, the rate of HIV diagnoses from 2006 to 2009 increased in teens 15-19 and youth 20-24 years of age, and was highest in the 20-24 year-old age group. Undiagnosed HIV cases are thought to be highest among young people. Of the approximately 1.2 million people living with HIV, approximately one in five, or 220,000, doesn't know they're infected. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimates more than half of all undiagnosed HIV infections are youth ages 13 – 24.<sup>3</sup>

<https://www.hhs.gov/ash/oah/news/e-updates/june-2012.html> "  
onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;

When you add this to the fact that Bhutan has a cultural reputation for promiscuity, well what do you expect in a country where people do not where condoms and the most important culture hero is Drugpa Kunley?

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Monday, May 12th, 2014 at 7:49 PM  
Title: Re: Tibetan institutional religious violence  
Content:

JKhedrup said:  
Also, medical care in China is prohibitively expensive. Despite being a socialist country, it makes people pay for healthcare just like in America. Good quality hospitals are probably financially out of reach for most Tibetans.

Malcolm wrote:

This is a fact. In order to even be seen in a Chinese emergency room, you must bring 2000 RMB cash.

Add to this the fact that as for most rural Indians, rural Chinese people have thoroughly noisome outhouses (and the bathrooms in the cities are just as foul as any I have encountered in India) and let their little ones pee and poo in public everywhere...his notion that China is cleaner than India is a fantasy. The water in mainland China is polluted beyond belief. The air in many places in China, unbreathable, just like Kathmandu and Delhi. 25 percent of the arable land in China is too polluted to farm, and the list of China's environmental woes goes on and on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, May 12th, 2014 at 7:54 PM

Title: Re: Tibetan institutional religious violence

Content:

rory said:

I really don't have much of an opinion of Tibet, I'm neither a lover nor a basher. I do have a low opinion of their pulling out after 1 debate and not being part of mainstream East Asian Buddhism.

Malcolm wrote:

The Tibetans chose to follow mainstream Indian Buddhism because, from the Tibetan point of view, the Chinese Buddhists were bested in a three year debate.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, May 12th, 2014 at 8:13 PM

Title: Re: Tibetan institutional religious violence

Content:

Indrajala said:

I spoke to the Health Minister of the Exile Government a few months ago and he said TB is the biggest health problem among Tibetans in India (or maybe it was?).

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, many of the refugees bring it with them from China when they escape. When I interned in the hospital in Xining, we had a whole wing devoted to TB patients. Many had come back several times.

Indrajala said:

Many would choose poverty over kowtowing to totalitarianism and systematic cultural annihilation.

China is not a totalitarian state.

Malcolm wrote:

\

It really depends on who you are. The Tibetans are under a totalitarian regime; their culture, language and heritage under extreme attack.

Indrajala said:

I'm not so convinced Tibetan culture is subject to 'systematic cultural annihilation'. Monasteries are being rebuilt. Akong Rinpoche was working on that. You can still be a monk in Tibet.

Malcolm wrote:

When you deny people the right to be educated in their own language, their culture dies.

Indrajala said:

New Tibetan books are regularly published in Tibet, or so I hear.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, this is true -- but an every dwindling population of Tibetans can read them.

Indrajala said:

but the standard of living is still far better than what you get in India.

Malcolm wrote:

That really depends on where you live and how high up in the party you are.

Having seen many Chinese people as patients while I was an intern, most of their diseases were a result of their very low standard of living, just like in India.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, May 12th, 2014 at 8:14 PM

Title: Re: Tibetan institutional religious violence

Content:

JKhedrup said:

I am actually really glad they did pull out.

Not because I don't like East Asian Buddhism- I really think if I had met different teachers I could see myself practicing in a traditional Chinese Buddhist order like Master Hua's.

The reason I'm glad they pulled out is that it enabled them to preserve the essence of many Indian Buddhist traditions that died out in the land of their birth, and if they had adopted East Asian Buddhism this would not have been the case.

Malcolm wrote:

As I explained to Rory, after 845 there was no mainstream East Asian Buddhism to join. She should study history a little more closely.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, May 12th, 2014 at 8:27 PM

Title: Re: Tibetan institutional religious violence

Content:

jiashengrox said:

Exactly. One of them is the debate tradition which was inherited from the ancient Nalanda University. I thought it was really wonderful to preserve this pedagogy of learning and study.

Malcolm wrote:

Some people apparently think that Buddhism in China is more important than the Buddhism in its homeland. This really is a reflection of the belief amongst many Chinese Buddhists that late Indian Buddhism was completely corrupt. A false belief, of course, but one that is widely diffused amongst them.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, May 12th, 2014 at 9:12 PM

Title: Re: Tibetan institutional religious violence

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Some people apparently think that Buddhism in China is more important than the Buddhism in its homeland. This really is a reflection of the belief amongst many Chinese Buddhists that late Indian Buddhism was completely corrupt. A false belief, of course, but one that is widely diffused amongst them.

Indrajala said:

That's true. Some Chinese Buddhists also believe they civilized Buddhism, too.

Incidentally, some Shingon proponents believe late period Vajrayāna is corrupted and degenerate, and that theirs represent pure esoteric Buddhism.

Malcolm wrote:

Of course they believe this. It comes out of believing that some human cultures are better than others, a belief to which you strongly adhere.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, May 12th, 2014 at 9:34 PM

Title: Re: Tibetan institutional religious violence

Content:

Andrew108 said:

I

realization will be seen to consist of the special reduction or elimination of kleshas and worldly concerns.

Malcolm wrote:

This is the path of freedom, i.e. Arhatship and Pratyekabuddhahood. It is the principle goal of the Hīnayāna path.

Then there is the path of achieving both freedom and omniscience, i.e. Buddhahood. This is the principle goal of the Mahāyāna path.

Then there is the path of achieving freedom and omniscience in one lifetime in this body. This is the principle goal of the Vajrayāna path.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, May 12th, 2014 at 9:47 PM

Title: Re: Tibetan institutional religious violence

Content:

Indrajala said:

There's actually a lot of logic behind the decisions undertaken by the PRC. It isn't necessarily moral by Buddhist standards, but they're not a bunch of psychotic monsters.

Malcolm wrote:

Psychopathy has many shades.

<http://tibettruth.com/case-files-on-forced-sterilization/> "  
onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, May 12th, 2014 at 10:02 PM

Title: Re: Tibetan institutional religious violence

Content:

Indrajala said:

I'm not saying it is right. Nations generally behave in a way that is in their interests. It isn't about what is right and wrong, but what is in your interests.

Malcolm wrote:

As a Buddhist, you know quite well that knowing the difference between right and wrong and then acting on that information in all areas of one's life is the only thing that is one's own as well as everyone else's interest.

Excusing the harmful actions of great nations on the grounds they are merely acting in their own interest is excusing the sociopathy behind all of the world's conflicts today.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 13th, 2014 at 12:18 AM

Title: Re: Tibetan institutional religious violence

Content:

Andrew108 said:

Omniscience isn't possible. It would be crazy to assert that it is true. .

Malcolm wrote:

"Not seeing the characteristics of phenomena is the aspect (kara). Knowing all of this is called omniscience , hence "omniscience" is knowing all things."

— Āryāṣṭasāhasrikāprajñāpāramitāpañjikāsāroṭṭamā

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 13th, 2014 at 12:46 AM

Title: Re: Tibetan institutional religious violence

Content:

Andrew108 said:

Omniscience isn't possible. It would be crazy to assert that it is true. .

Malcolm wrote:

"Not seeing the characteristics of phenomena is the aspect (kara). Knowing all of this is called omniscience , hence "omniscience" is knowing all things."

— Āryāṣṭasāhasrikāprajñāpāramitāpañjikāsāroṭṭamā

Andrew108 said:

I know that omniscience means knowing all things and I am saying that this 'knowing all things' is not possible.

Malcolm wrote:

You do not understand the context of what omniscience means.

It means "not seeing the characteristics of phenomena". Since that is perceived with respect to all phenomena, a Buddha is omniscient. It does not mean, as Dharmakīrti famously quipped, that a Buddha knows the number of maggots in the ground.

It means that they know the nature of all phenomena and all the details of all paths to become buddhas.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 13th, 2014 at 1:03 AM

Title: Re: Tibetan institutional religious violence

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

You do not understand the context of what omniscience means.

It means "not seeing the characteristics of phenomena". Since that is perceived with



respect to all phenomena, a Buddha is omniscient. It does mean, as Dharmakīrti famously quipped, that a Buddha knows the number of maggots in the ground.

It means that they know the nature of all phenomena and all the details of all paths to become buddhas.

Andrew108 said:

You are changing the meaning of the word. So it might be better to use a different term. Knowing the nature of all phenomenon is not the same as omniscience.

Malcolm wrote:

Latin | Sanskrit | Tibetan | English  
omni | sarva | thams cad | all

Latin | Sanskrit | Tibetan | English  
scientia | jñāna | mkhyen pa | knowing

In this case, knowing the nature of all phenomena bears the consequence that one's mind is unimpeded and thus one can also know all the details, should one wish to.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 13th, 2014 at 1:33 AM

Title: Re: Tibetan institutional religious violence

Content:

Andrew108 said:

And by the way the Buddha never made any claims to be omniscient.

Malcolm wrote:

Believe what you like. But you might want to study a bit of sutra and tantra before you make such bold claims.

In fact, since all phenomena are actually the display of a buddha's wisdom, there is in fact nothing that a buddha cannot know. Buddhas are omniscient, they are not, however, omnipotent.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 13th, 2014 at 1:51 AM

Title: Re: Tibetan institutional religious violence

Content:

mañjughoṣamaṇi said:

It does border on a racialized discourse though.

Malcolm wrote:

Indrajala is not a racist, but he is a chauvinist.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 13th, 2014 at 1:55 AM

Title: Re: Tibetan institutional religious violence

Content:

Andrew108 said:

According to this Sutta the Buddha is confirming 'All knowing' is not possible.

Malcolm wrote:

No, that is not what is happening in this sutra. What the Buddha is saying here is that he does not assert of himself what Mahathera asserted of himself, i.e. that the Buddha constantly in a state of total knowledge of all things at all times. Buddha rejected this kind of omniscience. The kind of omniscience the Buddha has is the ability to know completely anything to which his mind is directed without effort. Not even in Mahāyāna is asserted that a Buddha in a state of total knowledge of all phenomena at all times.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 13th, 2014 at 2:20 AM

Title: Re: Tibetan institutional religious violence

Content:

Andrew108 said:

Does this 'knowing completely' of a Buddha also include that which does not appear to the senses, such as the thoughts and intentions of others as well as past and future events?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, of course. Buddhas can know all phenomena, including the minds of others, where they are reborn, where they are now, what kind of karma they have, where they will be, and so on, throughout the three times.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 13th, 2014 at 2:27 AM

Title: Re: Tibetan institutional religious violence

Content:

JKhedrup said:

I have to admit that I feel a little worn out from much of the recent anti-Tibet sentiment on the board here, as well as from witnessing the same sentiment outside HH DL's teachings in Holland yesterday.

Luke said:

People in Holland have anti-Tibet feelings? May I ask why?

Are they just racist? Or were they just upset about some specific religious/political issue?

Malcolm wrote:

It's the Dogyal crew shouting their same stupid slogans at HHDL.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 13th, 2014 at 3:04 AM

Title: Re: Tibetan institutional religious violence

Content:

Andrew108 said:

If an enlightened master who heads up a monastic institution had even a fraction of this capacity then they would know about the abuse that goes on under their roof. They would also know how to organise things so that this abuse didn't take place.

Malcolm wrote:

This is a spurious objection. So far as we know, there are no Buddhas running any monasteries in the world today.

Regarding one's guru as being an actual buddha is a practice, not an objective fact.

Andrew108 said:

Knowing something that is 'beyond range' isn't possible.

Malcolm wrote:

The range of a Buddha's mind, what they can see, hear, and so on infinitely exceeds ours.

For example, for us, without binoculars, ALL, in reference to sight, means all that can be seen with our ordinary naked eye. But a Buddha's eye (there are five eyes actually) is not so restricted.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 13th, 2014 at 3:21 AM

Title: Re: karma bully

Content:

Vajrasvapna said:

I have noticed that it is very common for people to use the concept of karma to abuse people who often are already experiencing some pain, for example, saying "this is your karma" for people who are sick, which gives the impression that the person deserves his or her suffering. I wonder what people opinion about this topic, for it seems to me a great cruelty.

Malcolm wrote:

No one "deserves" suffering, but all suffering is the ripening of past karma.

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Tuesday, May 13th, 2014 at 3:22 AM  
Title: Re: karma bully  
Content:  
Andrew108 said:  
Yes it is cruel and completely wrong.

Malcolm wrote:  
No it is merely a fact.

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Tuesday, May 13th, 2014 at 3:48 AM  
Title: Re: Tibetan institutional religious violence  
Content:

Malcolm wrote:  
This is a spurious objection. So far as we know, there are no Buddhas running any monasteries in the world today.

Regarding one's guru as being an actual buddha is a practice, not an objective fact.

Andrew108 said:  
I didn't say they were Buddhas. I said if they had a fraction of the realization then they would know. Sometimes we get lost in the Maitreya/Asanga elaboration of a Buddha's omniscience rather than looking at the facts on the ground or in the Sutras.

Malcolm wrote:  
The Maitreya/Asanga elaboration of a Buddha's omniscience is based on the sūtras, Mahāyāna sūtras.

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Tuesday, May 13th, 2014 at 3:53 AM  
Title: Re: karma bully  
Content:  
AN 3.61 said:

"Having approached the brahmans & contemplatives who hold that... 'Whatever a person experiences... is all caused by what was done in the past,' I said to them: 'Is it true that you hold that... "Whatever a person experiences... is all caused by what was done in the past?"' Thus asked by me, they admitted, 'Yes.' Then I said to them, 'Then in that case, a person is a killer of living beings because of what was done in the past. A person is a thief... unchaste... a liar... a divisive speaker... a harsh speaker... an idle chatterer... greedy... malicious... a holder of wrong views because of what was done in the past.' When one falls back on what was done in the past as being essential, monks, there is no desire, no effort [at the thought], 'This should be done. This shouldn't be

done.' When one can't pin down as a truth or reality what should & shouldn't be done, one dwells bewildered & unprotected. One cannot righteously refer to oneself as a contemplative. This was my first righteous refutation of those brahmans & contemplatives who hold to such teachings, such views.

Malcolm wrote:

<http://www.accesstoinight.org/tipitaka/an/an03/an03.033.than.html>:

"Just as when seeds are not broken, not rotten, not damaged by wind & heat, capable of sprouting, well-buried, planted in well-prepared soil, and the rain-god would offer good streams of rain. Those seeds would thus come to growth, increase, & abundance. In the same way, any action performed with greed ... performed with aversion ... performed with delusion — born of delusion, caused by delusion, originating from delusion: wherever one's selfhood turns up, there that action will ripen. Where that action ripens, there one will experience its fruit, either in this very life that has arisen or further along in the sequence.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 13th, 2014 at 4:18 AM

Title: Re: Tibetan institutional religious violence

Content:

JKhedrup said:

Where did I say I didn't? I objected to widespread, endemic, rife and all the other silly adjectives.

Both cases I know of occurred in Thai monasteries though, not Tibetan ones.

Andrew108 said:

You know more than you are saying.

Malcolm wrote:

Really, now you can read minds?

Andrew108 said:

You are worried about Tibet bashing. Anti-Tibetan sentiments. I'm more interested in the truth.

Malcolm wrote:

No, that is not true. We are concerned that this kind of thing quickly becomes an unfounded witch hunt.

Andrew108 said:

Or at least an open discussion. If we have an open discussion then we can understand more of the subtleties of the situation and this can bring about useful understanding.

Malcolm wrote:

Right, this is kind of open discussion you want to have:

"When is the last time you beat your wife?"

"But I don't even have a wife!"

"Ah, that is because you beat her, correct? Then she left you."

"But I've never even been married!"

"Yes, that is because you beat your girlfriend!"

"But I am gay!"

"Aha, so you are a little pervert after all!"

Etc.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 13th, 2014 at 4:26 AM

Title: Re: karma bully

Content:

Andrew108 said:

Yes we know about karma. We are just not sure how smart it is to pass a judgement on the suffering of others in a way that suggests the victim/'sufferee' (?) is to blame.

Malcolm wrote:

I just said blame is not even an issue. We suffer because of our own past actions, and not for any other reason, as uncomfortable as this notion is to daverūpa and many other folks who nominally describe themselves as Buddhist.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 13th, 2014 at 4:28 AM

Title: Re: karma bully

Content:

DCDDM228 said:

No one should ever use karma as a bullying tactic. Just as everyone's concept of reality is different for them as it is for someone else, so are their acts that have affected karma. You never know the details of someone's past that could be dramatically different than yours that affects karma. I have always been under the impression that karma was slightly more entailed than just "do this and get that effect. "

Malcolm wrote:

What you can know about everyone is that we were born in this life because we were afflicted in the past life. All negative karma is caused by affliction, all suffering is caused negative karma.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 13th, 2014 at 4:35 AM

Title: Re: Tibetan institutional religious violence

Content:

theanarchist said:

it's fair to say it's nothing more than a vile smear campaign.

Malcolm wrote:

Indeed, started by someone who ought to have the common sense to know better.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 13th, 2014 at 4:50 AM

Title: Re: karma bully

Content:

rory said:

I had a prior discussion about 'whether the Buddha can experience evil thoughts' the interesting outcome is that I found there is a big difference between Tibetan Buddhism and East Asian adherents: the former do not have the concept of merit transference that East Asian adherents have...

Malcolm wrote:

This is not the case rory, you are once again mistaken in your understanding of Tibetan Buddhism, and not for the first time. I suggest you study it a bit. Especially a book like Lamrim Chenmo where the principle of dedication of merit is covered in detail.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 13th, 2014 at 4:53 AM

Title: Re: karma bully

Content:

smcj said:

If karma was fixed then liberation wouldn't be possible

Unripened karma is not fixed. Fully ripened karma is pretty fixed. If your karma has fully ripened in such a way that you are going to have a leg amputated, your leg is going to be amputated. But if you purify that same karma while it is in an unripened state you may just have a blister on your foot.

...and karma doesn't operate the forces of nature.

If people who've lived somewhere all their lives are killed in a tsunami its nothing to do with their past.

Don't be so sure. That would mean that airplane crashes, war dead, epidemics and such were not karmic either.

Malcolm wrote:

There is a difference between the Theravada and Sarvastivadin point of view on this. The Theravadins maintain that not everything bad that can happen to someone is necessarily karmic. It is derived from their theory of 24 conditions.

For the Sarvastivadins however, all suffering, even suffering caused by natural disasters, requires some kind of karmic cause.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 13th, 2014 at 5:09 AM

Title: Re: Tibetan institutional religious violence

Content:

smcj said:

Dude should have given back his robes

Malcolm wrote:

He did.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 13th, 2014 at 5:21 AM

Title: Re: Tibetan institutional religious violence

Content:

Andrew108 said:

Ven. Khedrup...I'm not bullying you. I just found it hard to believe that after 10 years or so of being involved with Tibetan monastic institutions you haven't also come across some forms of abuse ( mental and physical).

Malcolm wrote:

He has.

Andrew108 said:

I have come across it in the U.K and also in Boudha, Kathmandu. I was given the impression that what happened to me was common. I'm glad that you have had a different experience.

Malcolm wrote:

Different monastic traditions have different standards. For example, what I am familiar with from Bodhanatha in a monastery I was at, was that many of the adolescent monks had girlfriends. In the group of students I was with, there was also a guy, not a monk, who hit on a couple of the teenage monks.

There is also the issue that indeed pornography is quite widespread in Tibetan exile community in general, and has been for quite a long time, for at least twenty years. It would be extremely naive to believe that adolescent promiscuity in Tibetan monasteries does not happen. Of course it does. But as I already pointed out, most of these kids are



not expected to become monks in adult hood. Many of them are being sent their by their parents because they want then to have a religious education.

The problem with this whole conversation, apart from its origins in an clumsy attempt to discredit certain Tibetan cultural beliefs that have nothing to with the Dharma, is that is exists in a vacuum absent a whole range of sociological considerations.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 13th, 2014 at 5:39 AM

Title: Re: karma bully

Content:

Vajrasvapna said:

The Yogacara school says that every action generates a karmic seed, so the seed would be harvested in the future. This idea is in common with the way people think in general, but it is strange from the standpoint of the Mahayana philosophy.

Malcolm wrote:

Ultimately, the Yogacara theory is grounded in the Sautrantika notion that karma is a result of the transformation of vasana [bag chags] in the mind stream [citta samtanaparinama].

Vajrasvapna said:

On the other hand, Nagarjuna, founded of the Madhyamaka school,

Malcolm wrote:

Nāgārjuna, in the only place where he expresses a preference in the MMK, expresses a preference for the debt theory of the Ārya-Sammitya school. This latter theory has ancient resonances in the immorality of debt which can be found in the Vedas.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 13th, 2014 at 5:45 AM

Title: Re: karma bully

Content:

Vajrasvapna said:

People think that karma works in a dualistic way, all suffering originates from a evil action, but this is not true, because, in essence, there is no good or evil action.

Malcolm wrote:

You mean ultimately there is no good or bad action. But even in Dzogchen, relatively speaking there is good and bad action. As the String of Pearls Tantra states:

One is placed in the dungeon of name and matter  
in the castle of the three realms,  
tortured with the barbs of ignorance and so on,  
oppressed by the thick darkness of samsara,  
attached to the salty taste of desire,  
bound by the neck with the noose of confusion,  
burned with the hot fire of hatred,  
head covered with pride,  
setting a rendezvous with the mistress of jealousy,  
surrounded by the army of enmity...  
tied by the neck with the noose of subject and object, [29b]  
stuck in the mud of successive traces  
and handcuffed with the ripening of karma.  
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.  
The body of a hell being appears as fire or water.  
Pretas are frightened and intimidated.  
There is a fog-like appearance for animals.  
The aggregates, sense gates and sense elements  
of humans appear as the five elements,  
and also happiness, suffering and indifference.  
They appear as armor and weapons to asuras  
and desirable qualities for devas.  
Such dualistic appearances,  
for example, are like a quickly moving wheel  
spinning continuously for a long while.  
As such, diverse appearances  
are like seeing a snake from a rope;  
that [rope] is not [a snake] but is apprehended as a [snake];  
forming as both the outer universe and inhabitants.  
If that is investigated, it is a rope.  
The universe and inhabitants have always been empty,  
the ultimate endowed with the form of the relative.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 13th, 2014 at 6:06 AM

Title: Re: karma bully

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Nāgārjuna, in the only place where he expresses a preference in the MMK, expresses a

preference for the debt theory of the Ārya-Sammitiya school. This latter theory has ancient resonances in the immorality of debt which can be found in the Vedas.

Vajrasvapna said:

What is the debt theory of the Ārya-Sammitiya school or where I can read more about it?

Malcolm wrote:

The Ārya-sammitiya proposed that every act created a dharma called an "avipranasha", which was like a debt. It exists until it paid up. The Buddha himself likened action to a debt. You can think of karma as being like an inheritance tax.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 13th, 2014 at 6:14 AM

Title: Re: karma bully

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

We suffer because of our own past actions, and not for any other reason, as uncomfortable as this notion is to daverūpa and many other folks who nominally describe themselves as Buddhist.

There is a difference between the Theravada and Sarvastivadin point of view on this. The Theravadins maintain that not everything bad that can happen to someone is necessarily karmic. It is derived from their theory of 24 conditions.

For the Sarvastivadins however, all suffering, even suffering caused by natural disasters, requires some kind of karmic cause.

daverupa said:

So the Theravadans have it wrong, and the Sarvastivadins have it right. The Theravadans are nominally Buddhist; the Sarvastivadins are actually Buddhist.

Do I understand you correctly, Malcolm?

You also either think I'm a Theravadin, or nominally a Buddhist for other reasons, such as citing the Anguttara... I'm so very perplexed.

Malcolm wrote:

Dave,

You took rebirth in samsara. Samsara has three kinds of suffering, according to Shariputra in the Majjhima Nikāya, suffering of suffering, the suffering of change and the suffering of compounded things. Therefore, everything in samsara is suffering. We only take rebirth because of our karma and for no other reason. Since we are reborn in samsara, and there is nothing but suffering, there is no other reason for any of our suffering than karma, either directly, as the Sarvastivadins maintain, or indirectly, as the Theravadins must in the end admit. But there are some people who call themselves Buddhists who actually imagine that there is some kind of happiness in Samsara. These

people are a little mistaken.

Your citation of the Anguttara Nikaya does not in any way refute my contention all our suffering comes from past causes of our own creation. That's why I cited the Anguttara Nikaya back at you. I never said anywhere that everything we do now was caused by something we did in the past. Essentially, what I am saying is that all positive, negative and neutral sensations we experience in the three realms are a result of the ripening of positive, negative and neutral actions. You have carried a misunderstanding of my position from our last conversation about this.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 13th, 2014 at 6:21 AM

Title: Re: karma bully

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

You mean ultimately there is no good or bad action. But even in Dzogchen, relatively speaking there is good and bad action.

Vajrasvapna said:

Actually, I did not mean it, the text that you shared expresses what I wanted to say at the end:

Malcolm wrote:

You should have meant it, since the text clearly says: "the ultimate [your stance] endowed with the form of the relative [where people experience the ripening of action]."

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 13th, 2014 at 6:23 AM

Title: Re: karma bully

Content:

Vajrasvapna said:

To me, karma is an illusion. And what I want is that people help each other and not make use of religion to abuse those already in pain.

Malcolm wrote:

Then keep telling them that their suffering is just an illusion, that will get you really far.

At least the Buddha's teaching on karma, contained in such texts as the String of Pearls Tantra and others, actually explains to them why they are suffering.

"I am suffering"

"This negative sensation you are experiencing is a ripening of your karma."

"I feel pleasure"

"This positive sensation you are experiencing is a ripening of your karma."

"I feel neither suffering or pleasure."

"This neutral sensation you are experiencing is a ripening of your karma."

Etc.

At that time, the signs of awareness are as follows:

the mind of someone who has

purified karma is clear.

In the same way, if [karma] is not purified, [the mind] is not clear.

All of that arises from positive and negative karma.

Tantra of the Union of the Sun and Moon

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 13th, 2014 at 6:30 AM

Title: Re: karma bully

Content:

Vajrasvapna said:

The logic of stating that there is a separation between the relative and the absolute is the idea of Svatantrika school, even if this logic is positive to avoid the nihilistic tendencies of some people; I prefer the logic of "reduction to the impossible", as in Prasangika school.

Malcolm wrote:

Ok, you keep on reducing things to the impossible -- tell me how well that works out the next time you burn your mouth on pizza.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 13th, 2014 at 6:32 AM

Title: Re: Tibetan institutional religious violence

Content:

rory said:

[ Basically it must be the norm.

Malcolm wrote:

Judge, jury and executioner, huh?

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Tuesday, May 13th, 2014 at 6:48 AM  
Title: Re: karma bully  
Content:

daverupa said:  
can indeed be a great cruelty to be avoided, depending on many contextual variables:

Malcolm wrote:  
If they don't follow Dharma, for sure. If they are Buddhists then as Buddha said to Angulimāla, "Bear it brahmin, bear it, this is your past karma ripening...."

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Tuesday, May 13th, 2014 at 7:02 AM  
Title: Re: Should Buddhists even care about "engaging" social polit  
Content:

Emakirikiri said:  
Do you believe this to be the case from a Vajrayana view and a Dzogchen view?

Malcolm wrote:  
It doesn't matter if I believe it. The question is, do you?

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Tuesday, May 13th, 2014 at 7:14 AM  
Title: Re: karma bully  
Content:

Vajrasvapna said:  
A Buddha teaches according to the tolerance of his students...

Malcolm wrote:  
A Buddha has the clairvoyance to look right into a person's mind and know exactly what teaching they need.

We on the other hand, do not.

Vajrasvapna said:  
My understanding is that negative actions are all actions motivated by the five poisons and clinging to a self and positive actions are all actions motivated by compassion and selflessness. People create their suffering unknowingly cling to what brings them pleasure and having aversion to what brings them suffering.

Malcolm wrote:

Right, so filling people's ear with a load of stuff about non-dualism probably isn't going to help them, just as telling them they are a poor sinner isn't either.

Actually, most people who are sick just want a doctor, which is why I studied medicine, because in order to help people with Dharma, they have to have already drunk the koolaid.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 13th, 2014 at 7:15 AM

Title: Re: karma bully

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Ok, you keep on reducing things to the impossible -- tell me how well that works out the next time you burn your mouth on pizza.

Vajrasvapna said:

I'll just see the pain as something empty. created by the mind, not as something solid and real.

Malcolm wrote:

That, my friend is just a bunch of intellectual bullshit.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 13th, 2014 at 7:16 AM

Title: Re: Should Buddhists even care about "engaging" social polit

Content:

Emakirikiri said:

I would believe it if there was a textual Dzogchen basis in which it is said so or if it came from ChNNR's mouth. As far as you're aware do you know if it has a grounding in either source?

Malcolm wrote:

It has a grounding in many terma cycles.

KDL said many things like this as well.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 13th, 2014 at 8:42 AM

Title: Re: Tibetan institutional religious violence

Content:

Andrew108 said:

Omniscience isn't possible. It would be crazy to assert that it is true. .

Malcolm wrote:

"Not seeing the characteristics of phenomena is the aspect (kara). Knowing all of this is called omniscience , hence "omniscience" is knowing all things."

— Āryāṣṭasāhasrikāprajñāpāramitāpañjikāsāroṭṭamā

TRC said:

Now I know why the Vajrayana can make the claim that Buddhahood can be attained through their path. Just lower the standard of what Buddhahood actually is.

Malcolm wrote:

This is a Mahāyāna sūtra commentary.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 13th, 2014 at 8:48 AM

Title: Re: karma bully

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

At that time, Maha-Moggallana lived alone in a forest hut at Kalasila. After his encounter with Mara he knew that the end of his days was near. Having enjoyed the bliss of liberation, he now felt the body to be just an obstruction and burden. Hence he had no desire to make use of his faculties and keep the body alive for the rest of the aeon. Yet, when he saw the brigands approaching, he just absented himself by using his supernormal powers. The gangsters arrived at an empty hut, and though they searched everywhere, could not find him. They left disappointed, but returned on the following day. On six consecutive days Moggallana escaped from them in the same way. His motivation was not the protection of his own body, but saving the brigands from the fearsome karmic consequences of such a murderous deed, necessarily leading to rebirth in the hells. He wanted to spare them such a fate by giving them time to reconsider and abstain from their crime. But their greed for the promised money was so great that they persisted and returned even on the seventh day. Then their persistence was "rewarded," for on that seventh day Moggallana suddenly lost the magic control over his body. A heinous deed committed in days long past (by causing the death of his own parents) had not yet been expiated, and the ripening of that old Kamma confronted him now, just as others are suddenly confronted by a grave illness. Moggallana realized that he was now unable to escape. The brigands entered, knocked him down, smashed all his limbs and left him lying in his blood. Being keen on quickly getting their reward and also somewhat ill at ease about their dastardly deed, the brigands left at once, without a further look.

<http://www.accesstoinight.org/lib/authors/hecker/wheel263.html#ch9> "  
onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;



Author: Malcolm  
Date: Tuesday, May 13th, 2014 at 10:02 AM  
Title: Re: Tibetan institutional religious violence  
Content:  
Zhen Li said:  
less scientific knowledge....

Malcolm wrote:  
You're normally a smart guy, but this is simply ignorance.

Tibetan Medicine for example has a germ theory, understood circulation correctly, how nerves functioned in relation to the brain and other sense organs, etc., hundreds of years before anyone in Europe had similar ideas.

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Tuesday, May 13th, 2014 at 10:14 AM  
Title: Re: Tibetan institutional religious violence  
Content:  
Zhen Li said:  
Scientific knowledge that doesn't allow one to out compete other world powers doesn't prevent one from being backwards.

Malcolm wrote:  
As Todd pointed out, this is very biased definition of "backwards". Your thinking on this needs some work. As far as I am concerned, the Europeans, et al were the backwards ones, issuing unheralded barbarisms the world has never before seen.

M

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Tuesday, May 13th, 2014 at 10:38 AM  
Title: Re: Tibetan institutional religious violence  
Content:

Zhen Li said:  
I'm open to arguing about backwards, but I defined my terms - which is comparative and competitive. I don't think there's much debate on this one - history is the witness.

Malcolm wrote:  
All that history attests to is that we are deeper in the Kali yuga. It is we who are moving backwards.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 13th, 2014 at 11:02 AM

Title: Re: Tibetan institutional religious violence

Content:

Zhen Li said:

Yes, quite. But that's not the meaning of backwards I was using.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, you were saying that which is actually moving us deeper into strife and barbarism is "forward", based on competitiveness and martial prowess, as opposed to a civilization, which despite its many faults, was one of the few remaining dedicated to the principles of Buddhadharma.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 13th, 2014 at 6:56 PM

Title: Re: What Constitutes Misconduct?

Content:

shaunc said:

As far as I know, for a lay follower of Buddhism, the only rule so to speak is adultery. Other things like rape, pedophilia & incest besides being prohibited in Buddhism are also illegal in most if not all western countries.

Karma Jinpa said:

shaunc, if I wasn't clear before, I apologize. I figured since most of us are, like you, lay-practitioners, that we would discuss sexual misconduct as it pertains to upasakas & upasikas, rather than monastics. While I'm sure it's more nuanced in the Vinaya, the practical rule of thumb for monastics (whether monk or nun) is celibacy, so any sexual conduct would be considered misconduct.

That's one of the reasons Khen Rinpoche's statement is so striking to me, If I'm honest with myself. Transformation of Suffering is a very accessible, down-to-earth explanation of the the Mahayana/Vajrayana Dharma, from the Four Thoughts to Refuge & Bodhicitta and the Six Paramitas. He's most certainly talking to us lay-followers/householders throughout the whole book.

shaunc, which tradition (school/lineage) was the lama who gave you that explanation of misconduct, if I may ask? No need to mention your individual teachers.

That leads me to my next question... Are the vows interpreted differently between the different schools and lineages? Or do Rinpoche's words in ToS match directly with what is said in the Mulasarvastivada Vinaya where we get our Pratimoksha vows?

Malcolm wrote:

Generally, all this is explained in Abhidharmakosha. Sexual misconduct for lay people is wrong partner, wrong orifice, wrong time, wrong place.

Wrong partner means someone who is 1) not your spouse 2) underage 3) under the authority of another 4) ordained.

Wrong orifice means 1) anal 2) oral

Wrong time means daytime

Wrong place means in public, in a temple, in general in places where there is no privacy.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 13th, 2014 at 7:03 PM

Title: Re: karma bully

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

Phenomena may be empty of essence (and this includes karma) but that does not mean that they are not a source of suffering (since they are empty of essence).

muni said:

Phenomena are the source of suffering or clinging is?

Malcolm wrote:

Actually, all phenomena apart from path phenomena are afflicted or conducive to affliction, so they induce craving...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 13th, 2014 at 7:11 PM

Title: Re: karma bully

Content:

muni said:

Ah! Then they are not afflicted by themselves.

Malcolm wrote:

"...all phenomena apart from path phenomena are afflicted or conducive to affliction "

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 13th, 2014 at 7:29 PM

Title: Re: karma bully

Content:

muni said:

Ah! Then they are not afflicted by themselves.

Malcolm wrote:

"...all phenomena apart from path phenomena are afflicted or conducive to affliction "

muni said:

Thanks. I understand conducive to (actually not, but i went to google). Only, they are not the cause of suffering.

Malcolm wrote:

The cause of suffering is karma. The cause of karma is affliction. It is really quite straightforward and not esoteric. In this respect, as it is said in the four seals "All tainted phenomena are suffering".

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 13th, 2014 at 7:48 PM

Title: Re: karma bully

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The cause of suffering is karma. The cause of karma is affliction. It is really quite straightforward and not esoteric.

muni said:

And the cause of affliction? (disorder, Disease.. I read on google)

Malcolm wrote:

--> klesha --> karma --dukkha --> klesha -->

For example, according to Nāgārjuna, ignorance is klesha, formations is karma, consciousness through sensation are dukkha ; craving and addiction are klesha, becoming is karma, birth, and aging and death are suffering.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 13th, 2014 at 7:51 PM

Title: Re: Next generation of Dharma teachers in the West?

Content:

catlady2112 said:

I think it's always a good rule of thumb to study with monastics, no matter what generation they are of. People who have taken vows as monks and nuns have committed their whole life to the dharma.

Malcolm wrote:

It is a good idea to make sure they are sincere monastics, and not people who use the title of "monk" to attract students, fame, and so on. Not every one in robes who has

taken vows observes them, or even thinks it is incumbent upon them to do so.

Therefore, it is better to take as a teacher someone whose discipline is pure, whether they are a lay person or a monastic.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 13th, 2014 at 9:10 PM

Title: Re: karma bully

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

ignorance is klesha, formations is karma, consciousness through sensation are dukkha ; craving and addiction are klesha

muni said:

This makes sense to me.

Addiction = ("the fact or condition of being addicted to a particular substance, thing, or activity..." google) = conditioned by own craving/clinging.

Malcolm wrote:

With is in turn conditioned by sensation [suffering], which is turn conditioned by contact [suffering] and so forth.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 13th, 2014 at 9:13 PM

Title: Re: karma bully

Content:

muni said:

Sherab Dorje,

I understand you when you say phenomena are the cause of suffering, since this is what we experience in samsara/suffering.

Only when the phenomena are really the cause of our suffering, how to get rid of them all? I think many wars (karma) have been started by the idea that the phenomena (other) are the cause of our suffering.

Malcolm wrote:

The weakest practitioners, understanding that phenomena are the cause of suffering break the link at contact, so they will not experience sensation, and so on. This is the function of śīla, discipline. Stronger practitioners can sever the link at sensation, since they can control their craving with samadhi. The best practitioners however, can sever the link at ignorance, since they are owners of prajñā.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 13th, 2014 at 9:50 PM

Title: Re: Should Buddhists even care about "engaging" social polit

Content:

AlexanderS said:

As far as I understand it from that text those full benefits are only achieved if one practices the mantra with pure bodhichitta motivation and pure samaya.

Malcolm wrote:

That's a given.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 13th, 2014 at 10:35 PM

Title: Re: Next generation of Dharma teachers in the West?

Content:

JKhedrup said:

It is a good idea to make sure they are sincere monastics, and not people who use the title of "monk" to attract students, fame, and so on.

I actually think in the Western countries, especially with Western monks and nuns, rather than helping one attract students, fame etc. being a monk or nun actually makes things harder. Many Westerners I know have a strong bias towards lay teachers and often frankly don't like Western ordained Sangha.

Malcolm wrote:

My point is that I have met a number of western monks who imagine that by becoming monks they are going to become Dharma teachers. Anyone who wants to become a teacher is insane. If you teach because people repeatedly ask you to, this is a different story.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 14th, 2014 at 1:18 AM

Title: Re: karma bully

Content:

Vajrasvapna said:

Thus, in the pure vision of enlightened beings, all beings are seen as Buddha and Bodhisattva.

Malcolm wrote:

Indeed, but not in ours. As Virupa said:

Appearances are impure for sentient beings in defilement;  
Appearances are experiential for yogins in samadhi;  
Appearances are pure for tathāgatas in the ornamental wheel of the inexhaustible body,  
speech and mind.

It is really sound to know where one is.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 14th, 2014 at 1:21 AM

Title: Re: karma bully

Content:

Vajrasvapna said:

If you want to debate, it would be a good idea to use argument, not to be offensive.

Malcolm wrote:

This is not a debate. I was sharing my opinion of your statement.

You're new around here. You might want come down off that high horse you rode in on.  
The fall can be crippling.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 14th, 2014 at 1:53 AM

Title: Re: karma bully

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

.

You're new around here. You might want come down off that high horse you rode in on.  
The fall can be crippling.

Berry said:

Good grief! That sounds quite threatening & rather like the school bully .

.

Malcolm wrote:

I didn't say I was going to push him off. Anyway, his saddle, like the saddle of Gesar's  
mythic horse, is too high for me to reach. I am just an ordinary sentient being with  
impure vision, after all.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 14th, 2014 at 3:45 AM

Title: Re: karma bully

Content:

Adi said:

Not so much anymore since all our cookware is now made in China and when the pots and kettles get to talking it's all in Mandarin or Cantonese and we can't understand a word of it.

Adi

Sherab Dorje said:

Okay people, can we drop the aggression level a few notches please?

Thank you.

Malcolm wrote:

Now that is definitely the pot calling the kettle black...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 14th, 2014 at 7:09 PM

Title: Re: karma bully

Content:

Zhen Li said:

To say that everything that happens is due to one's own actions is an extreme position.

Malcolm wrote:

No one said that. What I said was that all sensations are a result of action, either directly or indirectly. For example, being reborn in hell.

Buddha himself states in the Karmaśataka:

The happiness and misery of mortal beings  
depends on actions.

And again we see in the Bodhisatvāvadānakalpalatā:

All of these happinesses and sufferings of mortal beings manifests through past karma.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 14th, 2014 at 8:02 PM

Title: Re: karma bully

Content:



seeker242 said:

Seems appropriate for this topic! Would telling someone that their cancer or disease is just their karma from their bad actions, would that be beneficial for that person? If not, then even if it's true, it would still be an inappropriate thing to say, according to the above. If it's not beneficial, it does not matter if it's true or not. It would still be a cruel thing to say to someone.

Malcolm wrote:

As I pointed out, a Buddhist should understand this already, and non-Buddhist has not need to.

Of course not all diseases are karmic diseases directly. But having a human body is a karmic ripening, and therefore too all the pleasure and pain that accompanies it.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 14th, 2014 at 8:31 PM

Title: Re: Root guru? Mother sentient beings?

Content:

saraswati said:

Dear friends: could someone give me the Tibetan (or even Sanskrit) terms for the above concepts?

I still don't understand the difference between guru/root guru/lama, but that is a topic for another subforum, maybe. But knowing the terms when they appear in chants would help.

Thank you in advance. And, happy Wesak to all!

Malcolm wrote:

rtsa ba'i bla ma

ma gyur sems can

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 14th, 2014 at 9:02 PM

Title: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Interesting article.

[http://www.tricycle.com/interview/losing-our-religion "](http://www.tricycle.com/interview/losing-our-religion)  
onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;::

What sort of critique of the scientific view might Buddhism otherwise offer? The naturalistic stance—the idea that there is an independent insentient world out there governed by scientific laws and impersonal processes—is ultimately a human construct, a powerful and effective human construct, but a construct nonetheless. This is not to deny the power of science, but it does call into question the way we approach scientific knowledge. Of course, there are many philosophers, scientists, and historians of science who have made a similar point. But Buddhism has its own insights and perspectives to offer. In other words, when we engage seriously with the Buddhist tradition we learn other ways of construing the world, other stories we can tell about the way things are, and these can be cogent, coherent, and compelling in their own way. This is not to argue for a naive acceptance of Buddhist epistemology and cosmology. But we won't see what Buddhism has to offer if, at the outset, we twist it out of shape to make it conform to contemporary norms.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 14th, 2014 at 9:25 PM

Title: Re: In the shadow of the Buddha

Content:

Sherab said:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u0ssQFNpAJ0> "

onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;" onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;

Anyone read the book?

Malcolm wrote:

For nearly a decade, Matteo Pistono smuggled out of Tibet evidence of atrocities by the Chinese government, showing it to the U.S. government, human rights organizations, and anyone who would listen. Yet Pistono did not originally intend to fight for social justice in Tibet—he had gone there as a Buddhist pilgrim.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 14th, 2014 at 9:54 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

The irony, of course, is that the Buddhism to which these Westerners were drawn was one already transformed by its contact with the West.

He doesn't really say anything about Tibetan Buddhism. Do you think something like this happened with TB as well?

Malcolm wrote:

It has already, look at Rigpa, Shambhala, Dzogchen Community, etc.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 14th, 2014 at 10:18 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Andrew108 said:

So in that respect I think the authors of that article have made a mistake.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, of course you do, because your ultimate view is physicalism, not Dharma.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 14th, 2014 at 11:46 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Andrew108 said:

Science doesn't posit an ultimate truth. Most scientists aren't looking for ultimate truth.

Malcolm wrote:

You however do, you posit that there are real natural laws that exist independently.

Andrew108 said:

But for the purposes of furthering discussion, scientists do have proof that there is a world 'out there' and we should take such proof seriously.

Malcolm wrote:

Which proof would that be?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 15th, 2014 at 12:14 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Andrew108 said:

Yes I am a naturalist. I posit that there are natural laws that exist independently. Natural laws are applicable everywhere. They are pervasive rather than ultimate.

Malcolm wrote:

"independent existence" is just another name for "ultimate", i.e., these laws are irreducible.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 15th, 2014 at 12:23 AM

Title: Re: karma bully

Content:

Andrew108 said:

What I read here is that karma is causality. I don't see any detailed explanation as to the specifics. So can you say what it was in your own karma that caused you to be born into your family? Can you give the specifics?

saraswati said:

When I first got interested in Buddhist thought I got into a bit of a muddle because of this whole identification with past karma. But I got a clarification from Ajahn Sumedho, who pointed out that this identification of myself with "my" karma is a symptom of wrong view. By thinking that "I" must have done something very bad in the past I would be holding to Ahankara, and believing that there was a "me" which could take responsibility for particular acts. At least in my naive view, I feel now that it's all a big pot of karma and we are what we are by picking up some part of it. And if we can help everyone by consuming and eliminating some of this collective karma, all the better. Not sure how this fits in with the Vajrayana view though.

Malcolm wrote:

No pot of karma at all.

Buddha clearly explained that one's karma follows one through lifetime after lifetime like a shadow that follows a bird.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 15th, 2014 at 12:34 AM

Title: Re: karma bully

Content:

Andrew108 said:

You may have noticed that I haven't denied that individual beings have their own continuum of causality that is specific to them. But it is at the level of mental reasoning and habitual tendencies that kamma gets played out.

Malcolm wrote:

No, sensations which are a result of negative action are exclusively physical; whereas sensations that are result of positive actions are exclusively mental.

You really ought to study the fourth chapter of the Abhidharmakośa, among other texts, rather than substituting your own concepts about what karma means in a Buddhist context.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 15th, 2014 at 12:35 AM

Title: Re: karma bully

Content:

Berry said:

genetic illnesses ?

Malcolm wrote:

Genetic illnesses, deformities, etc., are by definition karmic diseases.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 15th, 2014 at 12:54 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Andrew108 said:

Natural law means that nature or reality has characteristics that are observable or applicable in every case.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, this is the sort of irreducibility that is meant by "ultimate". Such laws are inviolable even by a Buddha. For example, there is no way the Buddha could have any of the psychic powers he claimed for himself, such as the ability read minds, see into other realms and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 15th, 2014 at 1:27 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Andrew108 said:

The ability to see other realms isn't possible.

Malcolm wrote:

For you it isn't. For a Buddha, it is.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 15th, 2014 at 1:29 AM

Title: Re: karma bully

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Buddha clearly explained that one's karma follows one through lifetime after lifetime like a shadow that follows a bird.

saraswati said:

But... what is the "one" that is followed? What is the bird? Or is the shadow itself the bird?

Malcolm wrote:

The one that is followed is the kleshas which are responsible for assembling the skandhas over and over again in every lifetime, what follows are the actions motivated by those kleshas, which ripens as afflicted body, speech and mind.

Buddha taught it is permissible to refer to the five aggregates as "a self" or "a person", with the understanding that the five aggregates do not constitute a real self which endures over lifetimes.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 15th, 2014 at 1:38 AM

Title: Re: karma bully

Content:

Andrew108 said:

Holding a deterministic view of Kamma isn't helpful in my view.

Malcolm wrote:

For as long as one has not overcome one's afflictions, for that long one will be subject to the rounds of rebirth. When one overcomes one's afflictions, one will no longer be subject to the rounds of rebirth and the ripening of karma, both positive and negative.

The Buddhist teaching of karma is not deterministic in any ultimate sense; but as long as one has not freed oneself from the three poisonous afflictions, one will still be subject to the effects of the fruit of actions committed while under their influence. For example, a bad king may not have an inherent position, but he and his evil ministers still dominate the subjects. But when the bad king is overthrown, his evil ministers lose their power too, and the subjects are free from their rule. Likewise, we are not inherently afflicted, but we are still dominated by afflictions. When we throw off our afflictions, the king, also we are free from his evil ministers, the result of afflicted actions.

But this is not deterministic. In order for the Buddha's teaching to be deterministic, one would have imagine that afflictions were inherent, but there is nothing in Dharma that states this is so, and quite a lot that rejects it.

What is stated is that karma is unerring, and will always ripen as long as conditions for its ripening are present.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 15th, 2014 at 1:41 AM

Title: Re: karma bully

Content:

Andrew108 said:

The experience of karma for me is very specific, direct and obvious.

Malcolm wrote:

Since you don't believe in rebirth, being a physicalist, you hold an essentialist view of the mind, i.e. that it is in the brain somehow. For you, karma is irrelevant, as is Buddhadharma.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 15th, 2014 at 1:42 AM

Title: Re: karma bully

Content:

Andrew108 said:

Holding a deterministic view of Kamma isn't helpful in my view. In fact, as I mentioned before, I see it as akin to a crime against humanity. If you follow this deterministic interpretation then you can't help but be in a position of indifference and then worse, a moral certitude that blames the victim.

asunthatneversets said:

I don't see that anyone has suggested determinism in this thread. Determinism would require inherent causes giving rise to inherent effects, however if you understand karma it is understood that this isn't the case. Ironically, you are the one who is advocating for inherent natural laws, which is just about as close to determinism as you're going to get.

Malcolm wrote:

I honestly do not know why we have to again and again remove people's misconceptions about this. I wish people would take the time to study these things properly.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 15th, 2014 at 1:43 AM

Title: Re: What is "mind" in mahamudra

Content:

catlady2112 said:

I have been doing Thrangu Rinpoche's mahamudra meditations on locating and observing "the mind," and examining what appears in the mind. I have 2 questions about the meaning of the word "mind" in this context:

1) Does mind mean "all" of these things below (and possibly more I am not considering).

- The thing/experience I have that is aware of the coming and going of thoughts?
- The thing/experience I have that is still present when there are no thoughts?
- The experience I have of being unaffected by thoughts?

2) Based on the 3 elements I've listed above, are these also considered the "nature" of mind ?

Thanks for your help! (I'm rephrasing an earlier question I didn't ask clearly enough to address my root question)

Malcolm wrote:  
You should ask your teacher.

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Thursday, May 15th, 2014 at 2:07 AM  
Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism  
Content:  
Andrew108 said:  
The ability to see other realms isn't possible.

Malcolm wrote:  
For you it isn't. For a Buddha, it is.

Andrew108 said:  
You are right about me. As for the Buddha then I don't know. I guess it is a matter of faith. And you are entitled to have faith. That is your right.

Malcolm wrote:  
Well, you see the thing is that you are very selective about what you think the Buddha that is accurate, and what the Buddha said that was not. For example, you believe the Buddha about the value of mindfulness, but you don't believe the Buddha when he gives accounts of his memory of his own past lives, his abilities to see into other realms or talk with "supernatural" beings like devas and so on.

I would say that your understanding of Dharma is molded to fit with your present world view, which is founded on a basis of scientific materialism. Now as far as it goes, this is perfectly fine and I have no objection. However, when you speak as if you are an authority on Buddhadharma and enunciate some of the interpretations of his teachings that you do, well...that is a completely different story.

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Thursday, May 15th, 2014 at 2:13 AM  
Title: Re: karma bully  
Content:  
Andrew108 said:  
The experience of karma for me is very specific, direct and obvious.

Malcolm wrote:  
Since you don't believe in rebirth, being a physicalist, you hold an essentialist view of



the mind, i.e. that it is in the brain somehow. For you, karma is irrelevant, as is Buddhadharma.

smcj said:

I don't think that is fair to say. The teachings on karma do include habits and such, which is readily experiential. If someone does not feel comfortable extrapolating out beyond that, it's ok. Perhaps in another lifetime they will. But for now their view isn't mistaken, just limited.

Malcolm wrote:

Karma has to do with the moral repercussions of actions motivated by affliction on the person themselves in terms of how it affects the circumstances of their own life. The essentialist, physicalist model of reality precludes karma automatically.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 15th, 2014 at 2:17 AM

Title: Re: Mahamudra meditation problem: locating the mind

Content:

Andrew108 said:

Oh o.k. Now I understand. Yes you can find cognition - in the sense that you can understand and recognise it's characteristics. You can't find it as a thing by itself. Understanding it's characteristics is just the beginning. It's not like recognizing it means that you reach an end point.

Malcolm wrote:

No, that's the end point, i.e. "Mind is in the brain", boom!

In reality, your solution, the physicalist one, runs "There mind cannot be found in terms of color, shape or form because there is no mind. What we call "mind" is an epiphenomena of information processes that reside in the brain", end of story.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 15th, 2014 at 2:52 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Andrew108 said:

My understanding is informed by direct experience. .

Malcolm wrote:

Classically in India, materialists (but not Buddhists and so forth) only accepted direct perception as authoritative. However, the Buddha held that there were three authorities: direct perception, inference, and testimony of reliable witnesses.

I merely point this out to suggest to you that your thinking does not really fit within the fold of Buddhist teaching.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 15th, 2014 at 2:55 AM

Title: Re: karma bully

Content:

smcj said:

Karma has to do with the moral repercussions of actions motivated by affliction on the person themselves in terms of how it affects the circumstances of their own life. The essentialist, physicalist model of reality precludes karma automatically.

Do you say that habit & such are not included in the teachings of karma? I believe it is under the heading of "consequences that reflects the germ of the act". If so, then what A108 is taking as his (current) interpretation could be seen as a correct, albeit partial, understanding of the whole theory. These days Newtonian physics is still seen as legitimate, but just not the whole story.

Malcolm wrote:

Habits are actions, SMCI, that is the point. There is nothing within the materialist paradigm to suggest that a wealthy person will become impoverished through his stinginess, and so on as a direct and infallible moral consequence of that act.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 15th, 2014 at 3:00 AM

Title: Re: Mahamudra meditation problem: locating the mind

Content:

Andrew108 said:

What we need to accept are the methods he gives us for getting this direct experience of mind/cognition. But that is another issue entirely.

Malcolm wrote:

As long as you think that cognition is in the brain, for that long you will not be able to have a direct experience of your own cognition.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 15th, 2014 at 3:21 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Thank you. I just want to point out that I in no way conflate "science", which is a practice, with "scientific materialism", which is a belief system.

Prasutagus said:

As someone trained as a scientist, this type of conversation gets heavily leveraged by assumptions as to what science is and is not.

There aren't physical laws scribbled onto the side of the box the universe came in, and if we look hard enough, we'll find the box, and thus the laws, and \*poof\* know how things work. It doesn't work that way. What we call "physical laws" are really conceptual schema for describing subjective experiences of the world. Those laws become more refined as our subjective experience of the world becomes more refined through the use of technologies.

The scientist is able to fall into the fault of physicalism every bit as much as the Buddhist. Scientists will often talk about these conceptual schema as if they actually exist. Nobody has seen an electron but we talk about them as they exist, not to mention quarks, photons and other inventions to describe phenomena. We talk about matter as if it's real, even though, from a physical sense it is made of point quanta and that everything that we really experience is the interactions between the quanta and not the point quanta. Turn everything off and it collapses onto a single point.

If physicalism is a dead end for the scientist, it certainly is for the Buddhist. Trying to reconcile Buddhism with the physicalist dead end of the intellectually naive scientist is no virtue.

Regarding quantum mechanics-- we can roll two ways with that, and I think that's pertinent to this discussion.

The basis of QM is that observations are non-commutative. That means it depends upon whether we measure something's position in one direction before the momentum in another, and so on. This is the Heisenberg uncertainty principle. We can look at that in two ways. One, this is how the quantum world behaves upon observation. As such, we can say this is a property of the geometry or space that things exist in. The flip side of that is that we can say this is how consciousness operates when observing things small enough and discrete enough to notice. QM is then really describing mind, and mind is more fundamental than all these little quanta.

No, Virginia, there is no physical reality separate from mind, and many scientists are coming to see that.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 15th, 2014 at 3:45 AM

Title: Re: karma bully

Content:

Andrew108 said:

The experience of karma for me is very specific, direct and obvious.

Malcolm wrote:

Since you don't believe in rebirth, being a physicalist, you hold an essentialist view of the mind, i.e. that it is in the brain somehow. For you, karma is irrelevant, as is Buddhadharma.

Andrew108 said:

Well you are painting quite a picture. I have said that I don't see how the usual logic that is advanced for rebirth is a definitive answer. I simply don't know about rebirth except that I won't be around to experience it - although there may be some depersonalised 'I' that continues and experiences but it won't be 'me'. I don't see mind or consciousness as somehow floating free of the body or being beyond the ALL. For what the ALL means then see my signature.

Malcolm wrote:

In the first part of the bardo you will have a subtle body that looks exactly like the one you have now, you will at first wonder why no one hears you or sees you, and so on, and this continues for the first couple of weeks. Eventually, you figure out that you died. Then, you take on the form of the kind of body you will have in your next rebirth, etc. This is all very clearly described by our teacher, Chogyal Namkhai Norbu, in Birth, Life and Death.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 15th, 2014 at 3:47 AM

Title: Re: karma bully

Content:

smcj said:

Habits are actions, SMCJ, that is the point. There is nothing within the materialist paradigm to suggest that a wealthy person will become impoverished through his stinginess, and so on as a direct and infallible moral consequence of that act. No, the materialist paradigm does not allow for such.

However Dharma paradigm allows for the action to effect the actor. Repeated action even more powerfully so. This same facet of karma explains both how repeated actions can create a drug addict or a virtuoso violinist. If someone can relate to those teachings they should be allowed to use them as a basis for further consideration.

Malcolm wrote:

I never preclude someone from considering the Dharma more deeply, in fact I encourage it.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 15th, 2014 at 4:46 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Well, you see the thing is that you are very selective about what you think the Buddha that is accurate, and what the Buddha said that was not.

Indrajala said:

Don't you reject Mt. Meru cosmology, which in fact the Buddha taught?

Malcolm wrote:

I don't reject the fact that Indians conceived that Meru lay somewhere to the north of India.

We also need to keep in mind that ancient Indians certainly regarded Meru as a mytho-poetic place, as is born out by the multiple cosmologies we find among Indian texts, both Buddhist and non-Buddhist.

I do not think that Indians feverishly adhered to their various cosmologies literally as Tibetans, and so on did. For one thing, Indians were awfully good at astronomy, and Meru cosmology as presented in the Kośa for example, certainly conflicts with Indian astronomical treatises written near the same time. No Buddhist mathematician working on calendars could have squared their calculations with the motion of the sun and moon around Meru as described. This is quite evident when the calculations in the Kalacakra are analyzed and then compared with the modified Meru Cosmology presented in the Kalacakra. See Henning, Kalacakra and the Tibetan Calendar.

I consider the Kośa cosmology anachronistic, and see no need to take it literally. There are also several cosmologies in Buddhist texts, not only one.

But when I do Mandala offerings, I definitely visualize the universe in that way.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 15th, 2014 at 4:59 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

I don't reject the fact that Indians conceived that Meru lay somewhere to the north of India.

Indrajala said:

But you selectively reject Mt. Meru cosmology as taught by the Buddha?

Malcolm wrote:

The Buddha is presented as teaching several different cosmologies. Which one are we to consider definitive?

Now, if it turns out that there really is a ring of iron mountains surrounding our world system to keep the stench of the rotting corpse hell from instantly annihilating all of us, well, then I will be very grateful for all the combined merit of sentient beings that keeps

those mountains standing.

My point, is that I don't think the Indians, Buddha included, with their penchant for exaggeration necessarily took their own speculations about such things as Meru as representing some absolutely objective presentation.

On the other hand, there is considerable evidence that Buddha took other things very seriously, such as rebirth.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 15th, 2014 at 5:14 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The Buddha is presented as teaching several different cosmologies. Which one are we to consider definitive?

Indrajala said:

The general model where the world is flat with four continents and a big mountain in the middle atop which Indra lives.

Malcolm wrote:

Ok, you can choose to consider that version the definitive one. But I don't. I don't think the Buddha presented a definitive cosmology.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 15th, 2014 at 5:23 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Indrajala said:

Nowadays in both science and the humanities we have to rely almost exclusively on evidence based approaches otherwise few intellectuals will take us seriously. The revealed testimonies of mystics just doesn't cut it for modern thinkers.

Malcolm wrote:

I already addressed this: this is just a throwback to the Carvaka rejection of inference etc., as *pramāṇas*.

Who cares if a bunch of worldly intellectuals takes us seriously?

Buddhadharma is only practiced by those with the karma to meet it and practice it. That is what it means to have a "precious human birth". We have no need to convince anyone of anything. We are not on a campaign to ensure that the academy "Takes us seriously".

They never have anyway.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 15th, 2014 at 5:28 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Ok, you can choose to consider that version the definitive one. But I don't. I don't think the Buddha presented a definitive cosmology.

Indrajala said:

Now you're just justifying your own selective thinking about what to accept and reject with respect to what the Buddha taught.

It is pretty clear the Buddha's cosmology included Mt. Meru and the four continents. If you reject this based on modern evidence to the contrary, then admit this and concede you are selective about some aspects of the Buddha's teachings.

Malcolm wrote:

There is a Mt. Meru and four continents. I don't reject the cosmology of ancient Buddhists in the manner in which you imagine. Their picture of the world was grounded on the world. Uttarakuru is exactly where Ptolemy and so on described the people called the Kurus as living and so on.

What I reject is the Kośa cosmology, the way things are described in the Kośa.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 15th, 2014 at 5:29 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Who cares if a bunch of worldly intellectuals takes us seriously?

Indrajala said:

Clearly figures like the Dalai Lama, who dialogues with representatives of neuroscience and seems to care about their opinions.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, and that is his prerogative. But he is not the boss of Tibetan Buddhism, he is just one lama.

Quite frankly, the mind-science thing is really a dead end. Has been for years.

It is one thing to be interested in this or that, it is quite another to imagine that "evidence-based" reality is real.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 15th, 2014 at 5:34 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

There is a Mt. Meru and four continents. I don't reject the cosmology of ancients Budddhists in the manner in which you imagine. Their picture of the world was grounded on the world. Uttarakuru is exactly where Ptolemy and so on described the people called the Kurus as living and so on.

What I reject is the Kośa cosmology, the way things are described in the Kośa.

M

Indrajala said:

And do you believe Indra's palace was/is atop Mt. Meru?

Malcolm wrote:

Sure, why not. He has to live somewhere. Might as well be there. He certainly does not have a pad in Manhattan.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 15th, 2014 at 5:38 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Norwegian said:

Indrajala,

The same person, His Holiness the Dalai Lama, rejects the cosmology chapter of the Abhidharmakosha. He doesn't reject karma, dependent origination, rebirth, and so on however.

Malcolm wrote:

Jeff is just busting my balls for telling Andrew that he is being very selective about those things he thinks to Buddha said are true and those that are false.

I on other hand really don't have any problem at all with the Buddha teaching about the Indra's palace on Meru, hell realms and so on. I don't see any real need to modernize Buddhism or make it "evidence" based.



All of these things exist within the human body, so of course they have external correlates.

I also still stand by my general contention that Indians were not that obsessed about their cosmologies, and that they were largely structured metaphorically.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 15th, 2014 at 5:47 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, and that is his prerogative. But he is not the boss of Tibetan Buddhism, he is just one lama.

Indrajala said:

He is also arguably the foremost representative of Tibetan Buddhism. So, his opinion does count for a lot in practice since many Buddhists and non-Buddhists alike respect his views.

Malcolm wrote:

The foremost representative of Tibetan Buddhism is one's own Guru.

He is the foremost representative of Tibetans, not necessarily of Tibetan Buddhism. That being said, I am a big fan of HHDL. But I am not so interested in his science dialogues.

Indrajala said:

Really the point is that the dialogue between scientists and Buddhists by request of the Dalai Lama is proceeding and is an interesting chapter in Buddhist history

Malcolm wrote:

It is mostly a dry hump, politics.

Indrajala said:

Really the point is that if someone wants to be more empirical in their approach to Buddhism, then it should be accepted and they have the right to challenge beliefs, especially those based on deference to texts or authorities.

Malcolm wrote:

People have a right to challenge whatever they want. But sooner or later, when they challenge too much, they stop being buddhists and become ex-buddhists.

Indrajala said:

The truth is that śabda-pramana is highly problematic now because of the new scholarship which has revealed the multifaceted development behind Buddhist scriptures. It isn't enough to just declare them buddha-vacana and leave it at that.

Malcolm wrote:

This is not a problem at all. There are many kinds of Buddhavacana, direct, permitted, blessed, etc. Then of course there is the notion that whatever is well spoken and corresponds with the Dharma in general can be considered Buddhavacana.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 15th, 2014 at 5:48 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

I on other hand really don't have any problem at all with the Buddha teaching about the Indra's palace on Meru, hell realms and so on. I don't see any real need to modernize Buddhism or make it "evidence" based.

Indrajala said:

I don't have any problems with traditional cosmologies and mythology either, though I accept this won't be acceptable to everyone in this era when empirical rationalism is the ideology of choice amongst leading intellectuals.

When the age of rationalism passes we'll still have our cosmologies and mythology.

Malcolm wrote:

One either has the karma to practice authentic Dharma or not. We have no need to make anything acceptable to anyone.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 15th, 2014 at 5:59 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Indrajala said:

In the case of Buddhist Abhidharma, why provide such detailed numbers for measurements if they were largely structured metaphorically?

Or in the case of the Sūrya Siddhanta or other Indian astronomical texts, why provide empirically verifiable measurements for planetary diameters and distances (many of these check out as largely accurate by modern standards too)?

Malcolm wrote:

That is actually my point -- the cosmologies in the Kośa and other texts which describe levels of devas and so on do not correspond with Indian math and astronomy.

The best place where we see this is in the Kalacakra. There really very little evidence to

show that Indians really took such cosmologies like those presented in the Kośa completely literally.

The cosmologies provided a moral universe, locations for rebirth. Astronomy provided a way of creating somewhat accurate calendars. If you were an Indian Buddhist astronomer, you would have quickly understand that the cosmology of the Kośa is clearly untenable.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 15th, 2014 at 6:01 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

People have a right to challenge whatever they want. But sooner or later, when they challenge too much, they stop being buddhists and become ex-buddhists.

Indrajala said:

Some people go through phases where they don't feel like being Buddhists any longer, and maybe even announce this to everyone, but they bounce back. No big deal.

Malcolm wrote:

It depends, some people have decided that "Buddhism" is a stinking cadaver dissected in the academy by intellectual ghouls (or ghoulish intellectuals take your pick), and decide what they really are following is Buddhadharma. But of course in common dialogue, they may also use conventions like "Buddhist".

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 15th, 2014 at 6:04 AM

Title: Re: Mahamudra meditation problem: locating the mind

Content:

Andrew108 said:

Which part of the mind does pride reside in?

Malcolm wrote:

Pride is a mental factor (caitta) that arises with the mind (citta), it is not located "in" the mind. Actually it is "in" the dharmadhātu.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 15th, 2014 at 6:08 AM

Title: Re: Mahamudra meditation problem: locating the mind

Content:

Andrew108 said:

But if I ask you where exactly in the heart is the heartbeat? You will struggle to give me a precise location.

Malcolm wrote:  
Not at all:

Each beat of the heart involves five major stages. The first two stages, often considered together as the "ventricular filling" stage, involve the movement of blood from the atria into the ventricles. The next three stages involve the movement of blood from the ventricles to the pulmonary artery (in the case of the right ventricle) and the aorta (in the case of the left ventricle)...The fourth stage, "ventricular ejection," is when the ventricles are contracting and emptying, and the semilunar valves are open. During the fifth stage, "isovolumic relaxation time", pressure decreases, no blood enters the ventricles, the ventricles stop contracting and begin to relax, and the semilunar valves close due to the pressure of blood in the aorta.

The fourth and fifth stage is where that actual "beat" that you feel exists.

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Thursday, May 15th, 2014 at 6:27 AM  
Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism  
Content:

Malcolm wrote:  
That is actually my point -- the cosmologies in the Kośa and other texts which describe levels of devas and so on do not correspond with Indian math and astronomy.

Indrajala said:  
What do we know about Indian math and astronomy from the era of Vasubandhu?

Malcolm wrote:  
Varahamihira lived squarely in the six century. Vasubandhu, the fourth. It is not unreasonable to understand that prior to Varahamihira there was sophisticated knowledge of math and astronomy amongst Buddhists. Calendar making is an important thing.

Indrajala said:  
The best place where we see this is in the Kalacakra. There really very little evidence to show that Indians really took such cosmologies like those presented in the Kośa completely literally.  
Your conclusions are problematic. The Kālacakra and Kośa are separated by six or seven centuries. Some Indians when the Kālacakra was composed in the first years of the eleventh century did not take the earlier Kośa model literally. How does this amount to "show that Indians really took such cosmologies like those presented in the Kośa completely literally"? This is an essentialist conclusion.

Malcolm wrote:  
Huh? What I am saying here is that Kalacakra shows that Indian Buddhists did not take

the Kośa cosmology literally. Calculation, which really means astronomy and calendar making, among other things, was mentioned in the Mahāyāna sūtrālaṃkāra as a necessary art for a bodhisattva to learn.

Indrajala said:

If you are an Indian Buddhist astronomer, you will quickly understand that the cosmology of the Kośa is clearly untenable.

Right, but how many Indian Buddhist astronomers were around when the bulk of major Abhidharma texts were composed, such as the Kośa? Even if there were Buddhist astronomers, why would they have had any say in the writings on Mt. Meru cosmology?

Malcolm wrote:

The point is that Meru Cosmology is a moral cosmology, not a literal one. Vasubandhu even rejects the conventional existence of the hells realms in his Yogacara treatises.

Indrajala said:

Basically, I'm calling for an evidence based approach, though you've already denigrated such an approach, so perhaps this discussion will not prove fruitful.

Malcolm wrote:

It's great if you want a job as an intellectual ghoul or a ghoulish intellectual.

The only evidence based approach to Dharma that counts for a practitioner however is practice.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 15th, 2014 at 6:29 AM

Title: Re: Mahamudra meditation problem: locating the mind

Content:

Andrew108 said:

Malcolm you haven't given a precise location you have given a general location. So now you understand the analogy? You haven't been able to say exactly where because the heartbeat 'happens' in different places within the same organ. But you can still give the heartbeat a genral location. You know it is not happening in your big toe or just in your left ventricle.

Malcolm wrote:

No, it happens exactly when the ventricles eject their contents and that is also where.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 15th, 2014 at 8:09 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

smcj has a very excellent point, that is why it is important to distinguish the difference between the cadaver called "Buddhism", which forensic historians like Schopen, et al perform an autopsy on for a living, and Buddhadharma, the practice of transforming oneself from an afflicted person into an awakened person.

Matt J said:

This statement sounds a lot like fundamentalism to me.

smcj said:

Basically, I'm calling for an evidence based approach

An evidence based approach to what? You can amass all the evidence you want, but then all you will have is a mass of evidence. If you're going to court, that's fine. But in terms of Dharma practice, the best that you could hope for would be to have all your objections overcome and all your preconditions met. At that point, in theory, you would finally be ready to Take Refuge. Dharma is about people evolving towards realization.

Or you could skip all that, open your mind, and posit the possibility that The Buddha actually saw the Truth as it pertains to the path towards enlightenment. (Unfortunately that would require that you somehow understand your way of looking at things is flawed though.) Your choice.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 15th, 2014 at 9:01 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

smcj said:

Or you could skip all that, open your mind, and posit the possibility that The Buddha actually saw the Truth as it pertains to the path towards enlightenment. (Unfortunately that would require that you somehow understand your way of looking at things is flawed though.) Your choice.

Indrajala said:

The problem is that we actually don't know for sure what the Buddha actually taught as the truth.

Malcolm wrote:

Of course we do, he taught that afflicted people take rebirth in samsara because of their afflictions, and provided remedies for those afflictions in the form of śīla, samadhi, and prajñā so they would stop doing so.

Indrajala said:

Deference to scripture doesn't work because Buddhist scripture does not qualify as a historical witness to circa fifth century BCE Magadha. Consequently examining the chronological development of Buddhist traditions and discerning common features amongst the diverging traditions therein might be the optimal way of identifying what

best represents Buddhadharma.

Malcolm wrote:

The best representation of Buddhadharma is a qualified teacher.

Indrajala said:

The faith based approach you are advocating doesn't work for everyone. If it works for you, that's fine, but understand that some prefer a more intellectually rigorous approach to their Buddhism.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, this is the approach of forensic historians. But they don't generally practice.

Indrajala said:

Even if you say this doesn't produce realization, then what is the alternative? Tell them to just have faith and force themselves to practice something they have no faith in?

Malcolm wrote:

You can see very clearly that it doesn't produce realization. So there is no alternative.

If you don't have faith in the Buddha's teaching, your time is better spent elsewhere. That's just common sense.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 15th, 2014 at 9:04 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Varahamihira lived squarely in the six century. Vasubandu, the fourth. It is not unreasonable to understand that prior to Varahamihira there was sophisticated knowledge of math and astronomy amongst Buddhists. Calendar making is an important thing.

Indrajala said:

Again this suggests to me many Buddhists in India accepted the flat earth Mt. Meru model as literally true. They had accurate knowledge of astronomy, but not cosmography and geography.

Malcolm wrote:

The Surya Siddhanta, as well as one of Vedas, asserts it is a ball.

Indrajala said:

You say "Indian Buddhists" -- do you mean all of them?

Malcolm wrote:

From third century onward, at the very least. Secular arts did not seem to be much of a concern until well after Ashoka.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 15th, 2014 at 9:10 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

JKhedrup said:

Regardless of whether one chooses a faith based or more intellectual approach, whether one is a MENSA member or a simple farmer, the guidance of a teacher is essential for a proper practice of Buddhism.

Indrajala said:

I don't think that's universally true.

Malcolm wrote:

It is universally true.

Indrajala said:

While book learning, doubt, questioning and analysis are laudable, without guidance of a teacher to use those things to bring pressure to bear on the delusions, there is a danger that Dharma becomes merely an intellectual or soteriological pursuit rather than a process of transformation.

That's an unfair assessment. You can transform yourself for the better through reading and implementing what is found in the sūtras, with or without a teacher supervising you.

Malcolm wrote:

I have never observed that this is really the case. What I have seen is a lot of autodidactic Buddhists puff themselves up with arrogance. It is a pity because their ego prevents them from connecting with an authentic practice lineage.

Indrajala said:

A lot of intellectuals...

Malcolm wrote:

...have their heads firmly planted where the sun never shines.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 15th, 2014 at 9:13 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Indrajala said:

With respect to materialism, I acknowledge that it is incompatible with the basic premises of the Buddha's teachings, though that being said I think we should be



sympathetic to our contemporaries who express an interest in Buddhist philosophy yet have lingering reservations given their propensities towards materialism and/or logical positivism. Most of us are educated with materialism as the default worldview.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, I feel sorry for such people, standing at the window with their nose pressed to the glass.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 15th, 2014 at 10:08 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Andrew108 said:

I think a materialist can have a keen appreciation of the value of life.

Malcolm wrote:

Of course.

Andrew108 said:

A materialist for instance has no need to reject the 4 thoughts or the principle of dependent origination. Nor do they have to disavow themselves of the view of karma. They would see the 12 links as referring to personal causality. Rebirth is a bit of a problem. At most I think I would say that I am agnostic. Reduction of kleshas is high on the agenda of a materialist who appreciates Buddhist practice.

Malcolm wrote:

Liberation for them is irrelevant. Any practice that they do will necessarily be for this life.

Andrew108 said:

Remember too that materialists have developed democratic political philosophies.

Malcolm wrote:

My critique of physicalism is confined to the fact that it makes no sense whatsoever for people who reject rebirth to consider themselves Buddhists, since of necessity they automatically the liberation which the Buddha taught.

Andrew108 said:

But anyhow when it comes to Buddhist practice, being a materialist is not a problem at all.

Malcolm wrote:

Materialists can benefit from the four brahmaviharas and a bit of shamatha. But that's about it.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 15th, 2014 at 10:13 PM

Title: Re: A closer look into empowerments

Content:

ngodrup said:

I received a "Potri wang" one time in which the Lama used a computer hard drive.

pensum said:

Ah, we forgot to mention this type earlier, so perhaps Malcolm will be so kind as to explain exactly what a guidance manual empowerment ( pod khrid dbang ) is and its purpose.

Malcolm wrote:

A poti lung dbang is part of a larger empowerment used to grant permission to read and transmit a text (usually the root text of the cycle) without having to go to the effort of actually doing so. In this case then, some Lamas like KDL would recite the empowerment mantras from the extended seven line prayer, for example, and give an abhisheka for a text in this way, in a very condensed way, he would call this the dpe dbang. He actually did this for whole collections of texts such as the Rinchen Terdzod and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 15th, 2014 at 10:35 PM

Title: Re: Ordination in Mahayana

Content:

Huifeng said:

While you mention "... in Japan, say...", the Mahayana tradition also covers China.

Malcolm wrote:

And Tibet.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 15th, 2014 at 11:00 PM

Title: Re: A closer look into empowerments

Content:

pemachophel said:

Is poti lung wang something like ka-tad? Malcolm, can you explain ka-tad in terms of lung, ti, and wang?

Malcolm wrote:

Its the same.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 15th, 2014 at 11:41 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Liberation for them is irrelevant. Any practice that they do will necessarily be for this life.

Andrew108 said:

Of course practice has to be for this life. Why practice for later? Liberation is freedom from suffering rather than a transcendent state.

Malcolm wrote:

Liberation means freedom from rebirth. Anyone who does not accept rebirth cannot seriously practice any Buddhist path since liberation in Buddhism is predicated on freedom from rebirth in samsara.

Andrew108 said:

You need to say explicitly why I can't be a Buddhist.

Malcolm wrote:

You can be a "Buddhist", it just doesn't make much sense since you disagree with the very foundation of Buddha's teachings, i.e. serial afflicted rebirth.

Andrew108 said:

Seriously, what can you get that I can't?

Malcolm wrote:

You don't need to worry about that, its none of your concern. As far as you are concerned given how you have defined the mind elsewhere, when you die, with the the death of your brain your cognition is extinguished, and your mind as well, .

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 16th, 2014 at 12:23 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Anyone who does not accept rebirth cannot seriously practice any Buddhist path since liberation in Buddhism is predicated on freedom from rebirth in samsara.

Andrew108 said:

So I have to believe that a conditioned 'self' gets reborn in order to be liberated from conditioned 'self'?

Malcolm wrote:

Nope, you just have to accept that there is a stream of afflicted consciousness which continually appropriates aggregates until it is no longer afflicted.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 16th, 2014 at 12:53 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Liberation means freedom from rebirth. Anyone who does not accept rebirth cannot seriously practice any Buddhist path since liberation in Buddhism is predicated on freedom from rebirth in samsara.

saraswati said:

Last week I heard a talk where it was said that Tulku Urgyen Rinpoche gave pith instructions to people from a variety of religious backgrounds, including Catholic monastics, and many such people experienced <...>. Thus, it seems to me that explicit belief in some important Buddhist ideas isn't totally necessarily for progress on the Buddhist path. But it may stop being able to label such people as Buddhists.

Malcolm wrote:

TUR even gave direct introduction to materialists. It's called creating positive traces so that people in future lives will have the opportunity to meet with the teachings.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 16th, 2014 at 12:54 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Andrew108 said:

We are training all the time to see the self as illusory. Materialism doesn't locate a self in the material. That's a fact. But to be a genuine Buddhist I now have to believe in an afflicted self that takes rebirth.

theanarchist said:

Nope, (at least according to mahayana) you have to believe in the two truths. Relative and absolute truth, what their properties are (and are not) and how they are connected.

Andrew108 said:

There are lots of different yanas and there is always something to believe in. However the experience of not finding self is fundamental.

Malcolm wrote:

The idea that there is no innate self is not particularly Buddhist, for example, David Hume figured that out all on his own. But his notion of the absence of self is not liberative.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 16th, 2014 at 12:56 AM

Title: Re: A closer look into empowerments

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

. . . some Lamas like KDL would recite the empowerment mantras from the extended seven line prayer, for example. . .

dakini\_boi said:

What is the "extended seven line prayer"?

Malcolm wrote:

It is the one that has the request for the four empowerments amended to it.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 16th, 2014 at 1:07 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Nope, you just have to accept that there is a stream of afflicted consciousness which continually appropriates aggregates until it is no longer afflicted.

Andrew108 said:

Ah the 7th consciousness. That which you can't really do much about. The one that stays with you until you reach level 7 on the bodhisattva scale. So that is the thing I have to believe in. O.k.

Malcolm wrote:

That would be the eighth, ālayavijñāna.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 16th, 2014 at 1:16 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Andrew108 said:

Ground consciousness? Don't you just love Yogachara? It's almost like you are saying

that you have to be a Yogacharin to be a Buddhist. Something I would disagree with.

Malcolm wrote:

The equivalent concept in Theravada would be bhavanga citta.

And no, since Madhyamakas also accept a serial continuity of consciousness.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 16th, 2014 at 2:07 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The equivalent concept in Theravada would be bhavanga citta.

And no, since Madhyamakas also accept a serial continuity of consciousness.

Andrew108 said:

If we are talking about rebirth then I guess the term to use in the Theravadan context would be patisandhi. This notion is quite different from the idea of disembodied consciousness moving between births.

Malcolm wrote:

Whoever said an integral consciousness moved from one life to another? That is not consistent with what the Buddha taught.

A serial continuity of consciousness means exactly what the patisandhi concept in Theravada is talking about.

Conventionally, the Buddha often states in many suttas so and so disappears from this world, and appears in the next. But when we really dig down, we discover the real point is that there is a "rosary" of moments of consciousness each one the cause of the next, each one the result of the previous one.

The point is that if someone does not believe in rebirth, karma and so on, there is little point in their studying or practicing any form of Buddhism whether Theravada, Zen or Dzogchen.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 16th, 2014 at 7:08 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Andrew108 said:

Malcolm, you have talked about transmigrating consciousness many times.

Malcolm wrote:

Then you did not understand what I was saying.

Let's put it this, no consciousness transmigrated from yesterday until today, but still you have memories, and so on. You account for this continuity by imagining that consciousness is located in the brain. I don't. Therefore, for you rebirth is impossible, while for me it isn't.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 16th, 2014 at 7:11 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Sherlock said:

I like how in English, ChNN usually talks about the first of the Five Faculties in terms of "interest" and "confidence" rather than faith. I don't know if it's an accurate translation, but it seems to be a good upaya. You don't necessarily have to have faith in the beginning, in him or the teaching, the fact that you are attending his retreat or watching the webcast means that you have some level of interest. As you do practice more and more you gain confidence in the teaching (and in him, although he is self-effacing and never says that).

Malcolm wrote:

He is talking about the first of the five indriyas on the path. sraddha. Without sraddha, the path is impossible. In English, the first definition of faith is "complete trust or confidence in someone or something".

You need that if you are going to practice a path.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 16th, 2014 at 8:46 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

smcj said:

He is talking about the first of the five indriyas on the path. sraddha. Without sraddha, the path is impossible. In English, the first definition of faith is "complete trust or confidence in someone or something".

You need that if you are going to practice a path.

Yes, however people differ as to what may initially inspire confidence in them. For some it is history, for others it is meeting a teacher, for the next guy it is philosophy, etc. For people like us that part is completely individual karma.

Plus as one progresses there is a positive feedback loop. So there's a bit more to than

just what you said.

Malcolm wrote:

Actually, in order to start on the path, you need to know one clear thing, you are suffering, you want a way out and you have confidence that the path leads out of suffering. The Ratnālokaśūtra states:

Faith goes before, like a mother giving birth,  
producing and increasing all qualities,  
removes fears, and crosses rivers,  
faith shows the way to the city of bliss...

So first of all, to set out on the Buddhist path, you need faith. Until you have faith, you are not on the path in any meaningful way.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 16th, 2014 at 8:48 AM

Title: Re: Beginning a Ngöndro

Content:

Karma Jinpa said:

Mind if you do what? Start another thread? Have at it, by all means.

Does anyone here know of other texts, either classical or contemporary, that deal specifically with the Four Reminders? Any other treatises on Ngöndro? Feel free to mention transcripts of a certain lama's teachings --- Khenpo Karthar Rinpoche's Ngondro Commentary available thru Namse Bangdzo is particularly good if you need specifics on Karma Kagyu, now that I think about it...

Malcolm wrote:

I am in the process of translating the Sakya Ngondro commentary. It has a very extensive section on the four common preliminaries.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 16th, 2014 at 9:21 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Sherlock said:

Faith/confidence is developed through practice IMO.

Malcolm wrote:

Faith is a mental factor, as well as being the very first of the 37 adjuncts of awakening. We don't really need to bring a lot of neurotic anxiety to bear on the word. Having faith IS having confidence in something.



Faith is also one of the ten positive mental factors, so if you are experiencing faith, you cannot be experiencing a negative mind. This is why people of faith, whether it be in Dharma, Krishna, or Karl Marx in general are more positive than people who have no faith at all.

Of course, when you have faith, in order for it to be effective in taking you out of samsara, from the perspective of Dharma, the object is important. Having faith in a teaching is good, having faith in a teacher is better. Of course, it does not start as perfectly formed, it requires cultivation — but without faith, no path is possible.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 16th, 2014 at 8:40 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

It means that consciousness descends into the womb, in the case of human being, joining with the spermatozoon and oocyte at the moment of conception.

Andrew108 said:

I guess you will say that this is not a description by you of transmigrating consciousness.

Malcolm wrote:

No. It is not.

This is a description by the Buddha of the first link of dependent origination (of this life) in the Mahānidāna sūtra.

Andrew108 said:

I know the Pali canon treats this issue differently than other traditions and again there are differences of view within those schools that hold the Pali canon to be definitive. You can see Buddhadasa Bhikkhu's analysis of Paṭiccasamuppāda and compare that with the descriptions of the same thing within the Tibetan schools. You might come to the conclusion (as I do) that taking a literal view of rebirth (as many do) can be a gross oversimplification.

Malcolm wrote:

The Theravada view is that one takes rebirth in the next world immediately upon dying in this one without any bardo at all. Of course, then they have to go through great lengths to explain away what Buddha meant by the gandhabba, but that is their problem.

Anyway, supposedly you are a Dzogchen practitioner. You should understand then that the model of rebirth followed in Dzogchen teachings in the Sautrantika/Yogacara model, as described in the beginning of the third chapter of the Abhidharmakośabhāṣyam.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 16th, 2014 at 9:03 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Andrew108 said:

I can dig up more quotes from Malcolm that confirm this view that there is a transmigrating consciousness. He has stated his position on this many times. You would be hard put to find a TB scholar who disagrees with the view of transmigrating consciousness. They have the Tulku system after all.

Malcolm wrote:

Andrew, you are clearly not understanding the point. There is no transmigrating consciousness, no atman, no unitary consciousness which remains the same through all time. No Tibetan Buddhist teacher maintains that there is.

There is a stream of momentary afflicted consciousnesses, i.e. one moment of consciousness exists in this life (you can even calculate how many such moments a person who lives for a hundred years will have i.e. a moment of consciousness lasts for seven nano seconds) at the moment of death, it perishes, giving rise the next moment of consciousness in the bardo, where the stream continues for some time, and then, at a certain point, another moment of consciousness 'descends into the womb' i.e. appropriates a new series.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 16th, 2014 at 9:09 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Andrew108 said:

Malcolm, in Dzogchen rebirth is always dgongs pa can.

Malcolm wrote:

First the term is "ldem dgong".

Second, this is not factual. This is not factual with respect the Nikaya teachings either.

For example, there are four types of liberated persons the Buddha mentions in the Agamas/Nikayas: stream entrants, once returners, never returners and arhats (such as the Buddha).

The only people who achieve total freedom in this life in these teachings are Arhats. Stream entrants must take rebirth in the desire realm for seven lifetimes and so on.

In the case of Dzogchen there are three opportunities to achieve liberation: in this life (only those with the highest capacity), in the bardo (medium down to high average) or in other buddhafiels after taking rebirth there. This is all detailed in such tantras as the Rig pa rang shar and so on.

So it is not the case that rebirth is an teaching with a concealed intent. It is to be taken at face value, as the Buddha taught it in hundreds of places.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 16th, 2014 at 9:10 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Andrew108 said:

"When form is found not to exist, do not cling to the existance of mind!"

"When mind is cognized as existent, do not cling to the non-existance of form."

HH9K

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, of course, and I will add when mind is cognized a existent, do not cling to the non-existence of rebirth.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 16th, 2014 at 9:15 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Sherlock said:

I don't think what I've written is neurotic.

Malcolm wrote:

In my opinion, Western students express a lot of neurotic anxiety when the term "faith" is broached.

Sherlock said:

My point is that you don't need to present sraddha/dad pa in terms of "faith" especially to modern people who might be on-the-fence.

Malcolm wrote:

I don't see much reason to cater to the neurosis of modern people.

Sherlock said:

I could be wrong, but for beginners, ChNN seems to say that the bare amount of dad pa is that you recognise that there is some value to his teachings and that you try to practise them.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, ChNN's approach is perfectly fine. But the fact is that people who get neurotic about the word faith have all kinds of faith in all kinds of things -- it is merely misguided.

As I said, faith in a mental factor, one of the five faculties.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 16th, 2014 at 9:20 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

ovi said:

Because of that, I don't think the idea of rebirth is useful or necessary to spread the Dharma today, but I'm fine with those who make use of it. The end result is the same, liberation from suffering, realization of emptiness and attainment of full Buddhahood.

Malcolm wrote:

I am sorry, but the notion of rebirth is absolutely critical. Without it, the Buddhist model of liberation is completely useless and makes no sense. Emptiness, absence of self and so on can be found in Western Philosophy, so who would need Buddhism in absence of rebirth? No one, that's who.

ovi said:

If by using analytical meditation or other techniques you understand that emptiness, liberation and bodhicitta are definitely worth realizing, what is the point of lack of faith?

Malcolm wrote:

Bodhicitta is a meaningless sentiment without rebirth.

ovi said:

The only thing constantly doubting and trying to understand things in terms of your own categories and assumptions leads to is downfall.

Malcolm wrote:

Hence the necessity of rebirth in Buddhism.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 16th, 2014 at 9:49 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

ovi said:

I do think that if you reject certain parts of Buddha's teaching you abandon the teaching, but that is because if you consider the Kalama Sutta, you don't have to and if in this context you do take some things as unreasonable, you do abandon the teaching. There have been schools who have called themselves Buddhist, yet talked about true existentselves. Not abandoning the teaching has been a useful protection against degeneration for 2500 years and hopefully, it will continue to be so. If the Buddha himself said that you don't need to belief in rebirth to follow the Dharma, how can others criticize you for that?

Malcolm wrote:

The Kalamas sūta merely extols the benefit of the four brahma viharas. The latter are not causes of liberation.

ovi said:

All it takes is to realize that Mahayana isn't only necessary to accomplish others' goals, but also your own, that of ultimate enlightenment.

Malcolm wrote:

There will be no ultimate awakening for someone who rejects the very foundation of Buddhist liberation, i.e., the freedom afflictive rebirth in samsara.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 16th, 2014 at 9:53 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Andrew108 said:

Consciousness can't exist without an external object. In the absence of perceiver and perceived what consciousness can exist? In short, consciousness cannot exist as a thing in itself and by itself.

Malcolm wrote:

What are you defining as an external object, something belonging only to the five external material dhātus (rūpa, etc.)?

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 16th, 2014 at 11:18 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Andrew108 said:

I agree with what you have written here. I am a Buddhist in every possible sense. It is only when rebirth is mentioned that I tend to take an agnostic position or actually more these days I take the position put forward by some Theravadan practitioners.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, the ones that go through lots of complicated arguments to try and prove the Buddha just didn't mean what he said on the subject.

Andrew108 said:

What I don't think is right is the pushing of an Buddhist orthodoxy (or any kind of orthodoxy) that says you have to believe in things being a certain way because if you don't then you are not a Buddhist. Or worse when posters imply that one has limited

capacity because of not accepting certain things. I mean some practitioners are of the belief that natural phenomena are 'mind phenomena'. Which is their choice.

Malcolm wrote:

Dear boy, there is such a thing as "right view". The most basic element of right view is not rejecting rebirth. After all, the Buddha arrived at the doctrine of dependent origination through recalling more than 90,000 of his own past lives. He very clearly describes this in the Majjhima Nikaya. If you don't accept the Buddha at his word, who will you accept?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 16th, 2014 at 11:57 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Andrew108 said:

External object is something that is not consciousness itself. If you say that when we die, one moment of consciousness results in another moment of consciousness then you are asserting that consciousness is both cause and effect and that consciousness has potential that is self-generating, self-sustaining.

Malcolm wrote:

I do not, and no one contends that consciousness is self-generating in the manner in which you suggest here. Consciousness is reflexive and can take itself as an object, as in memory, it is also accompanied by a plethora of mental factors, each of which can function as an object for it. Consciousness can be sustained merely through conceptuality, for example, the formless realm beings who are sustained on such ideas as "consciousness only", "Its all emptiness" etc.

Andrew108 said:

Rebirth is an important concept but what has happened is that it has been over elaborated to become an idea that suggests consciousness can move between lives supported by its own energy.

Malcolm wrote:

No, this has not been suggested at all. A given stream of consciousness has attendant factors which support it, with or without a physical body.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 17th, 2014 at 12:21 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Andrew108 said:

The descriptions of rebirth are provisional.

Malcolm wrote:

No, they are definitive, nges don, they require no interpretation.

If "provisional" means "for some people, these descriptions are not meaningful", then even buddhahood is provisional, even emptiness is provisional. The consequence of your belief is nihilism, both epistemic as well as moral.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 17th, 2014 at 12:36 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

smcj said:

I still say that "I just don't buy it" is a completely fine position to take. That's a person's prerogative.

Malcolm wrote:

The question is not what a person's prerogatives are; the question is at what point do our personal biases and convictions render our "Buddhism" a "non-Buddhism?"

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 17th, 2014 at 12:37 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Prasutagus said:

I am just encountering more and more Buddhists that seem to not believe in rebirth and who also don't have a problem with any of the logical ramifications of that position. I'm curious how one does that.

Malcolm wrote:

They don't understand the ramifications of their point of view.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 17th, 2014 at 12:55 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

smcj said:

Oh I buy it alright. I'm just trying to allow for other people to practice as they please without criticism.

Malcolm wrote:

God forbid we should correct anyone. After all, "Buddhism" is like a Montessori school, its not whether you are right or wrong, its how you feel when you did it...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 17th, 2014 at 1:31 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

JKhedrup said:

God forbid we should correct anyone. After all, "Buddhism" is like a Montessori school, its not whether you are right or wrong, its how you feel when you did it...

This also points to this alarming new trend of Buddhist students never wanting to have a teacher.

Malcolm wrote:

We live in a society where people trust their peer group more than their elders.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 17th, 2014 at 5:15 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Andrew108 said:

I understand it and I am very happy with it. Since you can't prove rebirth, not even logically...

Malcolm wrote:

Of course rebirth can be proven logically once one understands how the Buddha structured the five aggregates.

It is a simple procedure:

Either consciousness has a material cause or it does not have a material cause.

If consciousness has a material cause, then there is no rebirth.

No material cause can be found for consciousness.

If consciousness does not have a material cause, it must have another kind of cause, i.e. a non-material cause. In which case the first moment of consciousness of this life must arise from the previous moment of consciousness of a past life, much as the present moment of consciousness one is experiencing now must have arisen from a previous moment of consciousness.

This is the basic logic used by Dharmakirti to refute materialists.



Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 17th, 2014 at 7:05 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

pensum said:

Just wondering but how does one prove conclusively that consciousness does not have a material cause?

Malcolm wrote:

Well, exactly what is the material cause of consciousness? Andrew, among others for example, seem to think it arises in from the brain.

pensum said:

Or that consciousness and matter arise mutually or are coemergent?

Malcolm wrote:

If mind and matter arise mutually, or are coemergent, this still does not point to a material cause for mind.

pensum said:

As this would require presenting consciousness without recourse to any material body or related to any physical sensation or process such as seeing, hearing, thinking. And this evidence would also need to be presented to a pure consciousness independent of any physical sense, such as sound (word), image etc. which seems a tall order.

Malcolm wrote:

Consciousness without feature,  
without end,

luminous all around:

Here water, earth, fire, & wind

have no footing.

Here long & short

coarse & fine

fair & foul

name & form

are all brought to an end.

With the cessation of [the activity of] consciousness  
each is here brought to an end."

<http://www.accesstoinight.org/tipitaka/dn/dn.11.0.than.html> "  
onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 17th, 2014 at 7:30 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

pensum said:

Furthermore, because a specific material cause is cannot be pinpointed does not lead to the conclusion that there is no material cause, merely that the cause remains inconclusive, unknown or inaccessible.

Malcolm wrote:

One can make the reverse argument for consciousness "because a specific non-material cause for matter is cannot be pinpointed does not lead to the conclusion that there is no non-material cause, merely that the cause remains inconclusive, unknown or inaccessible."

Its a very vague argument.

If mind and matter arise mutally, or are coemergent, this still does not point to a material cause for mind.

It would not point to a unique cause, but still to a necessary causal factor, for in such a case without matter there would be no consciousness.

In any case, we are talking about the stream of individual consciousness.

<http://www.unm.edu/~rhayes/rebirth.pdf> " onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;" onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 17th, 2014 at 8:42 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

pensum said:

for no one has yet presented consciousness independent of matter...

Malcolm wrote:

The Buddha did, they are called formless realms...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 17th, 2014 at 8:10 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

pensum said:

for no one has yet presented consciousness independent of matter...

Malcolm wrote:

The Buddha did, they are called formless realms...

pensum said:

Okay, then what is the proof for the existence of such formless realms?

Malcolm wrote:

In this case we must rely on śabda pramāṇa, the testimony of reliable witnesses, the generations of awakened people who have experienced such an "sphere" of existence through the four formless āyatana. Why? Because such phenomena are not within the purview of those who have not developed sufficient meditative ability. The same is true of rebirth. Until you yourself attain the abhijñā of recalling past lives, you have to take it on the word of the Buddha, etc., that you have past lives.

So in this case you either accept the authority of the Buddha or you don't. There is nothing sophistic about it. You either accept that ordinary sentient beings with their ordinary powers of cognition are not capable of perceiving certain things or you don't.

In fact, the arguments of materialists that consciousness is a mere epiphenomena of brain function are quite weak and unconvincing. This is not to say that our cognitions are not moulded by our nervous system, because of course they are. That is a necessary consequence of taking a human, animal or so on body. The proof that consciousness could be rooted in material processes can only be shown by the generation of a sentient being through means which do not involve biological reproduction.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 17th, 2014 at 8:20 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Zhen Li said:

I don't think Malcolm is claiming that the Buddha's realisation was just rebirth. But the texts detailing his enlightenment do depict him acquiring knowledge of rebirth, along with the noble truths. Personally, I think it's okay to admit that one doesn't know, but I don't think confident scepticism should be employed prior to fully satisfying oneself of the opponent's arguments.

pensum said:

Malcolm, Dzongsar Khyentse and others have however claimed that accepting rebirth is a necessary condition for being a Buddhist. And yet not even Dharmakirti, let alone they, can present a sound, cogent argument for rebirth or its necessity. Whereas the nature of mind is readily accessible, provable without recourse to any external agent, by its very definition fundamental and hence its realization can be said to be infallible.

Malcolm wrote:

The problem, pensum, is that awakening is not merely understanding the nature of the mind. This is more along the lines of neo-advaita, and those folks. What is necessary for awakening, as described the Buddha, is an insight into dependent origination which causes one to relinquish fetters than bind one to samsaric rebirth.

For example, when reading the

<http://www.accesstoinight.org/tipitaka/mn/mn.135.than.html>, one cannot come away

with anything other than the conclusion that Buddha really meant rebirth quite literally when the subject came up.

Or here, where the Buddha discusses cosmology:

"There will be a time, monks, when this world comes to an end.[32] And at that time, beings are generally reborn in the heaven of the Radiant Deities.[33] There they live, made of mind, feeding on joy, radiating light from themselves, traversing the skies, living in glory, and thus they remain for a very long time. When the world comes to an end, monks, these Radiant Deities rank as the highest. But even for the Radiant Deities change takes place, transformation takes place.

— <http://www.accesstoinight.org/lib/authors/nyanaponika/wheel238.html#book-10>

So it is necessary consequence that a proper Buddhist view includes rebirth; people who say otherwise are quite simply deluded about what the Dharma is.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 17th, 2014 at 8:24 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

It has already, look at Rigpa, Shambhala, Dzogchen Community, etc.

Minjeay said:

Oh wey, poor, poor traditionalist buddhists.

Malcolm wrote:

I wasn't complaining, merely acknowledging a fact.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 17th, 2014 at 8:27 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Andrew108 said:

Consciousness cannot exist without an object.

Malcolm wrote:

The Kevaddha sutta directly contradicts your thesis, as do countless numbers of Mahāyāna sutras, as well as all of the Dzogchen tantras.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 17th, 2014 at 8:48 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

oushi said:

Rebirth is something that requires understanding, not belief, because it takes place here and now through intention. Intention creates new karma, and is the result of old karma. This is the vicious circle of samsara. Some may believe that this intention can transmigrate to another body after death, but even if it doesn't, the problem and techniques used to break this cycle stays the same. If we manage to break it, and the entire old karma is burned, then there is liberation.

Malcolm wrote:

There is no need to burn all of our old karma, so to speak. We merely need to interrupt its causes for ripening.

oushi said:

If we attack someone personally, an intention to defend will arise in him. This is not helping anyone, quite contrary, it's creating more karma. There is no understanding, learning and relief during a battle.

Malcolm wrote:

This isn't a battle, this is yet just one more illustration of how Buddhism will either be practiced as the Buddha intended, or be changed into a "non-Buddhism", by abandoning keystone teachings such as karma, rebirth, and so on.

What I have pointed out repeatedly, and few people seem to hear, is that Buddha's model of liberation was elaborated in terms of how many rebirths one would undertake in the desire and form realms before one attained nirvana upon achieving stream-entry.

This is just talking about achieving freedom. We have not even begun to talk about the Mahayāna path of attaining omniscience, but here we are, having a discussion amongst people of supposedly Mahāyāna persuasions who do not seem to have even the most basic concept of freedom in Buddhism means.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 17th, 2014 at 8:51 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

So it is necessary consequence that a proper Buddhist view includes rebirth; people who say otherwise are quite simply deluded about what the Dharma is.

pensum said:

and yet... Being reborn in the three dimensions of existence,

All is just a name and a magical illusion

( rDo rje sems dpa' nam kha' che

ch.30, Kunjed Gyalpo, pg. 170 in Supreme Source)

Malcolm wrote:

So? This illustrates nothing contradictory at all my fundamental point, which is that as long as one is under the influence of affliction, one will continue to take rebirth in samsara, despite the fact it is a mere name and an illusion.

Moreover, there is nothing in this statement you produce which says anything even slightly different than Prajñānpāramitā in general.

Incidentally, the notion that recognizing "the nature of the mind" is adequate is really a pity. A lot of yogis crash and burn on that one. In fact, recognizing the nature of the mind is not even the path. It is the basis (khregs chod). It is upon that recognition (now we are in Dzogchen land), that one practices the path (thod rgal). And in the case of the bodhicitta text you cite, the path is the two stages, the bodhicitta texts themselves describe the result of the two stages and nothing more. Even ChNN maintains that this is so.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 17th, 2014 at 9:50 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

T. Chokyi said:

CHNN always stresses respect...

Malcolm wrote:

He also stress respecting the teachings and not importing foreign things into them.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 18th, 2014 at 12:16 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Andrew108 said:

Malcolm, you haven't debated. My main contention is that consciousness cannot be a stream.

Malcolm wrote:

Of course it can be a stream.

Andrew108 said:

If you assert that one moment of consciousness gives rise to the next moment of consciousness

Malcolm wrote:

I didn't assert a single cause for a moment of consciousness. The rest of your

refutations are therefore invalid.

Andrew108 said:

In essence what you are doing with rebirth is giving primacy to deluded consciousness by saying that that is where and what the self is and that is why rebirth happens.

Malcolm wrote:

What I am saying is that rebirth happens because a deluded consciousness apprehends a self, in line with some Madhyamakas, since Bhaviveka actually claims that consciousness is what takes rebirth. Other Madhyamakas state that what takes rebirth is the deluded habit of I-making. In any case, no Madhyamaka negates rebirth.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 18th, 2014 at 1:09 AM

Title: Re: Is Rebirth Unscientific?

Content:

Matt J said:

How is rebirth unscientific? For that matter, even reincarnation?

Malcolm wrote:

You have to ask those who think it is, people like Andrew108.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 18th, 2014 at 6:30 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Andrew108 said:

If consciousness contained seeds or habitual tendencies or traces of any kind, then those born blind would be able to dream in images because the traces from previous lives (countless) would be present. But since there is no eye faculty there is no eye consciousness. Would these blind people experience the visions in the bardo? Obviously not. What does this tell you about consciousness?

Malcolm wrote:

Who says people born blind never dream in images?

When a person is in the bardo, they have mind-made body with complete faculties, so of course they would experience the visions in the bardo.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 18th, 2014 at 6:34 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Matt J said:

While true, some models work better than others. For example, I would prefer the modern Western medical model over the Medieval Western 4 humors theory as the Western model appears to allow people to live longer.

Malcolm wrote:

Western medical model misses a lot that Unnani Tibb and Ayurvedic/Tibetan Medicine models don't.

In reality, I, as a physician of Tibetan Medicine, have been able to address conditions [dramatically in some instances] allopaths don't know what do about since they do not have a model to account for many conditions, so they are left untreated by allopaths.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 18th, 2014 at 6:39 AM

Title: Re: Receiving Empowerment: Crash Course

Content:

Motova said:

Did I receive empowerment?

Malcolm wrote:

You received the permission to practice Green Tara, a jenang. You went for refuge, you took bodhisattvas vows with one of the greatest living masters in world. Rather than being disappointed you should be rejoicing.

Even if the whole thing was in english from beginning to end, you still would not have received anything more than that. So count yourself as fortunate.

A jenang does not typically have an elaborate mandala, BTW.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 18th, 2014 at 8:10 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Who says people born blind never dream in images?

pensum said:

Actually blind people don't dream in images.

Malcolm wrote:



Never, ever?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 18th, 2014 at 8:11 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Who says people born blind never dream in images?

pensum said:

Actually blind people don't dream in images. I went to a talk by Ryan Knighton who wrote a book about his experience of losing his sight and i was surprised to discover that even when a sighted person loses their sight, over time they eventually lose visual memory and the visual component of dreams as well. In fact, Ryan made the point that the blind community don't consider someone truly blind until they no longer have visual dreams. (this is his book: <https://www.amazon.ca/Cockeyed-A-Memoir-Ryan-Knighton/dp/0143051857> " onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;" onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;" onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;" onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;")

dzogchungpa said:

Interestingly, I recently learned that blind people can experience phosphenes.

Malcolm wrote:

Right, this is why in Dzogchen teachings there are thogal techniques even for blind people.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 18th, 2014 at 8:58 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Andrew108 said:

The fact that blind people who are blind at birth do not dream in images is well established. This is logical proof that consciousness relies on a material base to operate. So.....mental consciousness needs a brain. It's clear and logical.

Malcolm wrote:

Not even slightly. In the case of the five senses, it is generally the case that we consider that consciousness operates through them. But if your propose the brain as material basis of consciousness, just where in the brain is? The whole brain? This can't be the case because if it were, than modifying any part of the part of the brain would modify consciousness -- certainly we can stimulate mood, arousal, fear, etc., buy stimulating

the brain in this way that. But these things are not consciousness, they are experienced by consciousness.

Andrew108 said:

What is also clear (to me) is that afflicted consciousness must be a 'special type' of consciousness because it doesn't have a specific physical basis. It seems that those proponents of afflicted consciousness view the preceding moment of this consciousness to give rise to subsequent later and different moments of the same consciousness. In effect it is consciousness being both the cause and the result of itself - like riding on your own shoulders. I have doubts about this - I am agnostic about this. I view this as a convention that has weak logic underpinning it. I view a literal interpretation of rebirth as being a convention and under-pinned by weak logic.

Malcolm wrote:

Now you are referring *klṣṭa-maṇas*. In fact it does not give rise to itself, but takes as its object the other six consciousnesses, according to the Yogacara model.

Andrew108 said:

There are Sūtric references to this type of consciousness. I regard these references as not definitive (given the argument that I have used previously) and that belief in rebirth has historically been an important device that may have now served its purpose (for certain types of practitioners). Although who knows?

Malcolm wrote:

Neyārtha simple means "interpretable". Nīṭārtha means "requires no interpretation". There are different uses of these terms in different context. For example, the Avatamska-sūtra refers to itself as the "definitive sūtra for practice". The Akṣayamatinirdeṣa-sūtra establishes that any sūtra which talks about pretty much anything other than emptiness is provisional. I agree with the latter sūtra, of course. However, it does not work to say "science is based on natural laws" for that too is provisional. There are no more natural laws than there are persons, living beings, selves and so on. You cannot have it both ways. You must either stick to your proposed ultimate perspective in which there is no cessation, no arising, no going, no coming and so on, or come down to earth.

Andrew108 said:

I think if you look at a country like Thailand where belief in rebirth is the consensus you can see it both helps and hinders.

Malcolm wrote:

I don't think the Buddha's teaching rebirth hinders anyone. I see it as being salutary in every respect.

Andrew108 said:

There have always been debates and contra-positions within Buddhist traditions. One might say with a certain amount of certainty that there has never been an orthodoxy. So why try to establish one?

Malcolm wrote:

There has never ever been a debate as to whether rebirth was factual or not within the Buddhist tradition until the late 20th century and now in the 21st century, when number of unconscious materialists (unconscious in the sense of being unaware of how ingrained their "scientific" materialism was) became fascinated with Buddhist meditation but could not accept rebirth due to their prior conditioning by logical positivism. For example, a fellow like Buddhadasa could never have even imagined negating rebirth without exposure to western science which occurred because the King of Siam, educated at Harvard in the 19th century, ordered the educational system in Thailand to adopt a western curriculum.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 18th, 2014 at 9:13 PM

Title: Re: Receiving Empowerment: Crash Course

Content:

Motova said:

Did I receive empowerment?

Malcolm wrote:

You received the permission to practice Green Tara, a jenang. You went for refuge, you took bodhisattvas vows with one of the greatest living masters in world. Rather than being disappointed you should be rejoicing.

Even if the whole thing was in english from beginning to end, you still would not have received anything more than that. So count yourself as fortunate.

A jenang does not typically have an elaborate mandala, BTW.

Motova said:

Thanks Malcolm, I get your point. I don't like to be a cry baby, it's just not what I expected.

I had no idea what was going on. How could I have taken bodhisattva vows without even understanding I was taking them? I knew that they would be occurring during the empowerment/transmission because you mentioned so and I had the intent to take them, but when I think of taking vows I think of active participation in the moment.

Malcolm wrote:

Well, you had the intent to take them, you recited them in Tibetan following His Holiness, and so you took them. The refuge and the bodhisattva vows would have been just about the first thing you recited, apart from perhaps a Lama dgongs su sol....

The main point is that you received permission to practice Tara, which is what you wanted after all, no? Email me off line if you would like the sadhana to practice.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 18th, 2014 at 10:32 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

But these things are not consciousness, they are experienced by consciousness.

daverupa said:

So consciousness is to be understood apart from its content? This seems to get in the way of rise-fall contemplation... e.g. dependent on sense-sphere and sense-content, sense-consciousness arises.

This is in accord with all six senses; it is the case for the All.

Malcolm wrote:

There are cittas and caittas, no? Caittas belong to the dharmāyatana/dhātu, the object of the manāyatana/manodhātu

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 18th, 2014 at 11:26 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

xabir said:

But you seem to be suggesting here that there is appearances and then there is the mind that cognizes those appearances?

Malcolm wrote:

Conventionally speaking, there are outer objects and sense organs for those objects, presented in the scheme of the twelve āyatanas.

Andrew, Daverupa and so on do not accept higher Mahāyāna tenets, so it is pointless to bring them up here. They consider Mainstream Buddhism more authoritative.

We are talking about what are the minimum tenet requirements of Buddhist view. That necessarily involves privileging Mainstream Buddhist tenets, since they are shared by everyone (with qualification).

This part of the conversation is a sidetrack from the main point — the necessity for maintaining rebirth, dependent origination and karma as mutually related keystone doctrines of Buddhadharma, contra a modernist approach to Buddhism which would abandon these in favor of some sort of materialistic framework.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 18th, 2014 at 11:28 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

xabir said:

But you seem to be suggesting here that there is appearances and then there is the mind that cognizes those appearances?

dzogchungpa said:

I'm not an expert, but otherwise wouldn't the vedana skandha, for example, be part of the vijñāna skandha?

Malcolm wrote:

Vedana skandha, like saṃjñā skandha, is actually a mental factor (caittas). They both are named "skandha" for their special power in keeping sentient beings bound to saṃsāra. As objects, they are part of the dharmāyatana/dhātu, along with the saṃskāra skandha.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, May 19th, 2014 at 4:49 AM

Title: Re: Receiving Empowerment: Crash Course

Content:

Motova said:

I had no idea what was going on.

Malcolm wrote:

BTW, no one ever has any idea what is going on in the very first initiation they take. How could they? But with time you will learn. Taking initiations is a skill acquired through repetition. The first initiation I ever received was from HHST, I had no idea what was happening, other than that I could not sit still for longer than a minute, and I really had no comprehension of what he was doing, and it was all in English.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, May 19th, 2014 at 6:05 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The proof that consciousness could be rooted in material processes can only be shown

by the generation of a sentient being through means which do not involve biological reproduction.

ovi said:

How about evolution, the origin of life itself?

Malcolm wrote:

That does not support the idea that consciousness is rooted in material processes. There is no basis at all for an inference that this planet is the only planet upon which sentient beings may be found.

ovi said:

For me, the notion of rebirth does not matter; one can uphold it, deny it or neither.

Malcolm wrote:

The point is that rebirth is a keystone teaching of the Buddhas. Through recollecting his past lives, according to Mainstream Buddhism, the Buddha came to understand the principle of dependent origination (which by the way was not conceived in any fashion at all related to external phenomena).

ovi said:

I consider the Kalama Sutta the charter to free inquiry and I think that whatever skillful means I use to attain liberation that is in accord with the Teaching is correct in this sense.

Malcolm wrote:

The Kalamas sutta is the most miscited text on the whole of the Pali Canon. It is not a charter for free inquiry. Not that free inquiry is forbidden in Buddhism, for it is not. But the Kalamas is not a charter for it. It principally concerns teaching the four Brahma Viharas to people who may or may not accept the principles of rebirth, dependent origination, so on and so forth.

ovi said:

Furthermore, I did bring the Dharma into discussion with suitable people, but knowing that none of them actually believe in any sort of afterlife and it would be a hindrance for them, I did not bring up the issue. Instead, I try to lead the discussion towards dependent origination, emptiness, virtues/bodhicitta and The Four Noble Truths, what truly make Buddhism unique.

Malcolm wrote:

Emptiness is not a unique teaching of the Buddha, Hume understood it; Hindus teach emptiness. The four nobles truths are predicated on an understanding of rebirth.

We can understand that emptiness is not a unique teaching of the Buddha because for formless āyatana, "all is emptiness", etc.

ovi said:

Sure you can make use of rebirth, but maybe some can understand why sometimes it's useful not to.

Malcolm wrote:

The main point is that rebirth, dependent origination and karma are keystone doctrines of the Dharma, and need to be understood in that respect.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, May 19th, 2014 at 6:40 AM

Title: Re: Receiving Empowerment: Crash Course

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Well, you had the intent to take them, you recited them in Tibetan following His Holiness, and so you took them. The refuge and the bodhisattva vows would have been just about the first thing you recited, apart from perhaps a Lama dgongs su sol....

The main point is that you received permission to practice Tara, which is what you wanted after all, no? Email me off line if you would like the sadhana to practice.

M

Motova said:

I didn't recite anything in Tibetan until the Guru Rinpoche empowerment because I simply had no idea. Luckily a friend beside me told me I should, so I tried to copy it as best as I could.

Also there were a couple of kids going back and forth to their moms and I had the pleasure of being in the middle of the that and crying babies while HHST was explaining the visualizations. And on top of that I had no idea what the syllables I had to visualize looked like in any of the empowerments....

Malcolm wrote:

Well, go to Montreal, it will all be in English there...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, May 19th, 2014 at 7:31 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Emptiness is not a unique teaching of the Buddha, Hume understood it; Hindus teach emptiness. The four nobles truths are predicated on an understanding of rebirth.

ovi said:

From my understanding, Hinduism talks about atman, I could be wrong though.

Malcolm wrote:

Some do, but Hinduism is a vast field, and there are many permutations. It is never really accurate to say "Hindus believe..."

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, May 19th, 2014 at 8:12 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The main point is that rebirth, dependent origination and karma are keystone doctrines of the Dharma, and need to be understood in that respect.

Andrew108 said:

Yes this is the main point that you want to make. But you haven't really established logically why a literal interpretation of rebirth is valid.

Malcolm wrote:

Sure I have -- the Buddha taught literally. Anyone who spends even a little bit of time with Buddhist texts can hardly dispute that literal rebirth is a central concern of the Buddha's.

Andrew108 said:

1. You said that rebirth happens because of alayavijnana - afflicted consciousness acts as a store. You then said everyone accepts this. Not everyone accepts that there is alayavijnana not even conventionally. Prasangika for one does not accept alayavijnana.

Malcolm wrote:

Gelugpa Prasangikas do not accept the ālayavijñāna, however Candrakirti does. Jayananda, the Indian Pandita who translated the Madhyamakavatara with Batsap into Tibetan explains in his commentary on the MAV, that ālayavijñāna is a name for consciousness which has emptiness, i.e. the ālaya, as its object. Further I already explained to you what Candrakirti holds to take rebirth, the habit of I-making. Eliminate the knowledge obscuration of the habit of I-making, all birth in samsara ceases. Even tenth stage bodhisattvas have a subtle knowledge obscuration of self-grasping, while being Buddhas in practically every other respect.

Andrew108 said:

2. You cannot explain how it is that consciousness creates another moment of consciousness to the extent that consciousness can 'exist' or at least be functional when there is no physical support or external object. You would have to assert continuity. If you assert continuity then you are asserting some kind of essence - or at least something acting as an essence.

Malcolm wrote:



Nāgārjuna writes in the Pratītyasamutpadahridaya

Although the aggregates are serially connected,  
the wise are to comprehend nothing has transfers

As to consciousness being "non-functional" when there is no physical senses or objects  
-- I agree, without physical senses, even all the traces stored in the ālayavijñāna will remain unripened. For example, four kinds of formless realm beings only have a single concept during their entire lives, i.e. the concept of "everything is consciousness", etc. They cannot have any other concept since they have no sensory input at all. However, their lifespan, lasting hundreds of millions of years is supported on karma, merit and jīvendriya, the organ of life force.

Andrew108 said:

3. The brain is more important than you take it to be. When the brain has problems it seems consciousness also has problems. If there were some underlying consciousness then you wonder how all of these problems like memory loss could occur? When someone's conscious experience is effected there can be seen corresponding damage within the brain. Strong logic that the brain and consciousness are intimately linked. Nearly all philosophers today accept consciousness to be brain-based.

Malcolm wrote:

I never ruled out a relationship between consciousness and the brain. If you think so you are mistaken. What I don't accept that that brain produces consciousness.

Andrew108 said:

4. Nihilists 2,500 years ago were a different breed than the nihilists today. And still today teachings on rebirth have a positive value. Especially for those who would be prone to act without a care for their actions.

Malcolm wrote:

Actually, the materialists of 2,500 years ago use more or less precisely the same arguments to negate rebirth as materialists today. So they have not advanced that much.

Andrew108 said:

5. You don't believe in reincarnation but you do believe in rebirth. Many have taken the rebirth notion and use it to justify their bias for a transmigrating consciousness. They have also said that you can control this transmigrating consciousness and direct it. One may also use it to achieve liberation. You don't accept that though because you don't believe in a transmigrating consciousness or reincarnation.

Malcolm wrote:

Well, if you were to read back on some of my posts, you would see that I think the distinction that some try to make between reincarnation and rebirth is dubious. In English they are in fact synonymous. However, the modern convention is to treat them differently, one as a soul/atman based interpretation of migration through samsara, the other interpretation of migration in samsara absent a soul or self. As Buddhist, I think the latter is correct and the former to be mistaken.

Andrew108 said:

6. Rebirth means becoming. That is how it fits into the DO model. Thinking of it in these terms is an effective remedy for those who are prone to ignore conventional truth and to assert a kind of inertness. It is a natural law. Becoming. But we still have no logical proof that this becoming is personal to us - that we will personally continue to become again and again for as long as it takes for us to become Buddha.

Malcolm wrote:

Rebirth happens at two places in the twelve links of dependent origination, it happens at the link of consciousness, and it happens at the link of birth. The links 3 — 10 are the links of this life. Becoming is everything we do in this life, which provides the karma which informs the next life. Nāgārjuna again:

The first, eighth and ninth are affliction;

The second and the tenth are action.

Also the remaining seven are suffering.

Twelve dharmas are gathered into three.

Two arise from three.

Seven are produced from two,

That is the wheel of existence,

it is turned again and again.

Andrew108 said:

7. Middle way teachings are subtle and easily misunderstood. Understanding emptiness isn't by itself something that liberates, but on the other hand one wonders how an understanding rebirth would lead to liberation?

Malcolm wrote:

Nāgārjuna again:

All migrating 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.

In other words, liberation ensues from understanding rebirth in terms of rebirth and dependent origination. Buddha's own liberation, according to the Majjhima Nikaya was brought about because he recalled more than 90,000 of his past lives, and through doing so, understood the principle of dependent origination. In the first watch, he reviewed his own past lives, in the second watch he reviewed the samsaric travails of other beings. In the third, he watch he understood dependent origination and the four noble truths, and at that point, became the Buddha. In the

<http://www.accesstoinsight.org/tipitaka/mn/mn.004.than.html>:

"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 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 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.

Andrew108 said:

Teachings on emptiness do contain definitive aspects that once understood in direct experience do lead to liberation - they are definitive and that is not just my point of view. Consider the following from Nagarjuna:

...

Here Nagarjuna is questioning this assumption you have of present unenlightenment and future liberation. Future liberation here is seen as a convention since by what are beings bound?

Malcolm wrote:

I agree that rebirth is a convention. So is the attainment of Buddhahood. As Haribhadra points out, the path from beginning to end is an illusion. So what? We still have to travel it.

Andrew108 said:

Milarepa sang:

Not separating appearance and emptiness

This is mastery of the view.

Malcolm wrote:

This master became a master because of his terror of rebirth in lower realms.

Andrew108 said:

So why cling to conventional beliefs if liberation is your target?

Malcolm wrote:

It is not a question of clinging to conventional beliefs -- it is a question of understanding that if one does not achieve liberation in this life, then due to innate I-making, etc, one will continue to take rebirth in samsara.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, May 19th, 2014 at 8:28 PM

Title: Re: Death at Tibetan Buddhist meditation retreat in Arizona

Content:

Zhen Li said:

I do sometimes wonder if DM is so far gone as to be a (dangerous) cult, and what it'd be like if it was in 'communion' with mainstream Buddhism.

5heaps said:

easily one of the top 3 sanghas in the US

Malcolm wrote:

Who are the other 2?

5heaps said:

then again most centers are very low quality, so thats not hard

Malcolm wrote:

That is a pretty serious criticism. Upon what do you base it? Have you been to most of the Sanghas in the US?

5heaps said:

there are some problems, as there always are, but the caliber of people there far exceed the majority of dharma students in general. its basically a bunch of psychologists, architects, singers, artists, bankers, scientists, business ppl, studying dharma together

Malcolm wrote:

Sounds like any number of Sanghas in the US, not only three. Pride is fine, arrogance, well...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, May 19th, 2014 at 8:35 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

ovi said:

I'm not criticizing those who do believe in rebirth, I just don't think it's necessary in order to be a Buddhist.

Malcolm wrote:

Rebirth is necessary for understanding both the Mainstream Buddhist path as well as the Mahāyāna and Vajrayāna paths.

Frankly, if you say you don't accept rebirth, you are basically saying that you don't really accept the Dharma.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, May 19th, 2014 at 9:04 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

PorkChop said:

Once rebirth (and any sort of post mortem experience) is explicitly denied, bodhicitta loses a lot of its actual meaning. Not only is the multi-lifetime career of a bodhisattva rendered null and void, but so is the idea that Buddhas always continue to work tirelessly to relieve the suffering of sentient beings (a foundational tenet of Mahayana). If this one lifetime is it, you might as well be a social worker, get involved with greenpeace, or join the peace corps you'd do a lot more good.

Malcolm wrote:

It is true many people mistake compassion, which does not have the force to lead to buddhahood, with bodhicitta, the aspiration to become a buddha to benefit sentient beings.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, May 19th, 2014 at 9:25 PM

Title: China expands new measures to directly control Tibetan monas

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Chinese authorities in Yulshul (Ch: Yushu) Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Qinghai Province, in the Tibetan province of Kham has begun implementing new repressive measures introduced in late 2011 to directly control and manage Buddhist religious institutions in Tibet.

<http://www.tchrd.org/2014/05/china-expands-new-measures-to-directly-control-tibetan-monasteries>

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, May 19th, 2014 at 9:51 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

T. Chokyi said:

Can you explain that experience she had? Do you care to talk about the implications of such a delog?

Andrew108 said:

Evidence is not the type of word we can use here. The implications of someone having an out of body experience and being able to see things that they are not supposed to know about poses certain logical problems. First of which is how do we see without eyes? Second is how does the information about the object travel from the object to the one perceiving the object? I would guess that light and photons have to be involved somewhere? So again how can something new be seen when there is no organ to perceive it and where there is no light doing the illuminating. The obvious answer (to me anyway) is that it is seen in the 'mind's eye' and that it must either be a repressed memory or a deduction that is being visualized.

I'm going to presume that you hold another view of this, so could you offer a rational explanation that can counter the explanation I have put forward?

Malcolm wrote:

Sure, such a person has a mental body with all sense organs intact (manomaya-kāya), as described by the Buddha in many places.

Basically, Andrew, the reason why I question whether you are actually a Buddhist, despite your emotional allegiance to Buddhism and time put in pursuing Buddhist studies, is that your physicalist views cause you to contradict the Buddha's own words at every turn.

Instead asking us to reevaluate our beliefs in terms of how they line up with scientific theories of mind and cognition, I think it is time for you reevaluate whether you really have faith in the Buddha's teachings and whether they really serve your purpose any longer.

From everything I have seen you say, you would be happier as a Taoist, quite honestly. They have no theory of rebirth. They value naturalism and non-contrivance, they have a quasi theory of emptiness, sort of, they sort of have dependent origination, etc.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, May 19th, 2014 at 10:02 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

T. Chokyi said:

one can't be saying someone isn't a Buddhist for example, and then that someone may say back to the one saying they aren't Buddhist, something like "I've been a Buddhist for 26 years".

Malcolm wrote:

It is quite obvious that your intention was to label me a pecha thumper. I don't care. When people say things that are clearly at odds with Buddhadharma, it is quite right to question whether they are Buddhists. When so called "Buddhists" advocate the Carvaka materialist view, they are not Buddhists, but instead are promulgating false views. The denial of rebirth is one of the two fundamental false view the Buddha describes, it is the view of non-being. Nāgārjuna describes this view as being very pernicious in more than one place.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, May 19th, 2014 at 10:13 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

pensum said:

Then in light of the above what exactly what is "it" that is reborn, etc.? Especially in light of karma and dependent origination.

Malcolm wrote:

Read my reply to Andrew -- the aggregates of this life are serially connected with those of the next, cf, Nāgārjuna above; nevertheless, nothing transfers from this life to the next

which could be described as an agent or a self. Nevertheless, there is rebirth, there is karma and the ripening of karma, all of which take place without any substantial or real agent or actor.

pensum said:

Once that has been laid out then I might be able to sort out whether modern Western perspectives are actually all that different or not, or if the apparent disagreements are really just false assumptions from either side.

Malcolm wrote:

Don't be ridiculous -- these issues have been discussed to death on these boards, all the players here understand the terms.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, May 19th, 2014 at 10:16 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

dharmagoat said:

Unfortunately it is necessary to accept rebirth in order to follow the Dharma as taught by the Buddha.

Malcolm wrote:

Presumably that is the one we want to follow, no?

dharmagoat said:

The Dharma as taught in the time of the Buddha, that is. When reincarnation was the predominant belief.

Malcolm wrote:

Well, hate to disappoint, but rebirth was not a dominant belief during the time of the Buddha, it was but one among many beliefs. This is a common misconception which comes from not carefully studying the history of Indian thought.

For example, many brahmins did not believe in rebirth. They performed rituals in order to ensure worldly happiness and success by making proper sacrifices and so on. It is not clear at all that rebirth is part of early Vedic religion.

Here is the cliff notes version:

The origin and development of the belief in transmigration of souls are very obscure. A few passages suggest that this doctrine was known even in the days of the Rigveda, and the Brahmanas often refer to doctrines of re-death and rebirth, but it was first clearly propounded in the earliest Upanishad—the Brihadaranyaka. There it is stated that the soul of a Vedic sacrificer returns to earth and is reborn in human or animal form. This doctrine of samsara (reincarnation) is attributed to the sage Uddalaka Aruni, who is said



to have learned it from a Kshatriya chief. In the same text, the doctrine of karma ("actions"), according to which the soul achieves a happy or unhappy rebirth according to its works in the previous life, occurs for the first time and is attributed to the theologian Yajñavalkya. Both doctrines seem to have been new, circulating among small groups of ascetics who were disinclined to make them public, perhaps for fear of the orthodox priests. These doctrines must have spread rapidly, for they appear in the later Upanishads and in the earliest Buddhist and Jain scriptures.

<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/266312/Hinduism/59824/The-Upanishads>

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, May 19th, 2014 at 10:31 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Well, hate to disappoint, but rebirth was not a dominant belief during the time of the Buddha. This is a common misconception which comes from not carefully studying the history of Indian thought.

dharmagoat said:

Could it be described as a "common belief" then?

Nevertheless, belief in an afterlife was the norm, was it not?

Malcolm wrote:

Not sure how common it was, really. For example, the first person the Buddha met after awakening was an Ājīvika ascetic, someone who definitely thought the Buddha had something, but since the Ajivikas were materialist ascetics, he was not really interested in Buddha's teachings. On a side note, in the Ashokāvadana, Ashoka is portrayed as ordering the executions of 18,000 Ajivikas because he saw a portrait of the Buddha which cast him in a negative light.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, May 19th, 2014 at 10:35 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

T. Chokyi said:

I felt that is what you were doing with me although you never asked me where I stood.

Malcolm wrote:

I wasn't responding to you as person, I was responding to what was written.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, May 19th, 2014 at 11:48 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Andrew108 said:

I'm glad to hear it. Perhaps you could describe in more detail the connection between the brain and consciousness. I will add here that for science, the actual production of consciousness is still a matter of debate. What isn't debated is the location of consciousness and therefore cognition.

Malcolm wrote:

The brain necessary for coordinating the five senses. The interaction of consciousness, sense organs and the body with its organs is nothing new.

However, the mano-indriya (the organ of mind) is clearly defined as being non-material. So there you have it.

Andrew108 said:

Liberation isn't really happening for those who take on rebirth as a belief. But if they see rebirth and DO directly in experience then why not? Although I would suggest that direct seeing of rebirth (is it possible or not) is more a result of realization than the cause of realization.

Malcolm wrote:

Rebirth is clearly possible, if you accept Buddha at his word. If you don't, well what can I say?

At first we are scared by rebirth and then later we are comforted by it. All the while we miss the main point of the teachings. That's the problem.

I don't find rebirth comforting at all. Quite the opposite. It does not scare me, I simply know that as long as "I" am bound by affliction, then "I" conventionally speaking, will take rebirth. I.e. the continuum I now call "mine" will not have fully relinquished the innate clinging to 'I', and it will continue in samsara. An empty dharma produced by other empty dharmas.

This afflictive I-making is not an intellectual belief, and it cannot be routed out through merely imagining it does not exist. It reasserts itself at every turn, at every reaction, in almost everything we do. It is the root of samsara. It cannot be eradicated through intellectual analysis and so on. The point is that for as long as one is in thrall of this, for that long one's continuum will not be liberated.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 20th, 2014 at 1:12 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

pensum said:

How then is this "rebirth" any different from, let alone contradictory to, any process as seen from a Western scientific perspective? As you have defined it here, any disagreement is merely due to using the term "rebirth" and could be avoided by simply using "process" or "evolution".

Malcolm wrote:

The physicalists imagine that when the brain dies, so does an "individual's" stream of consciousness.

pensum said:

1) A seed falls from a tree. The tree dies, is ground up and left to decompose. The seed is planted in the soil created by the decomposition of the tree, and a new tree grows. Is the new tree the old tree reborn?

Malcolm wrote:

No.

pensum said:

2) Two trees stand in a field, a tall one and a short one. The tall one is chopped down. When the stump is dug up, it is discovered that the roots were connected and the little one was just the offshoot of the tall one. So, has one chopped down the original tree or merely pruned it?

Malcolm wrote:

One has chopped down the parent.

pensum said:

3) Two apples fall from the same tree. Are these two individuals or the tree itself?

Malcolm wrote:

They are all distinct individuals, each bearing their own characteristics.

pensum said:

4) A ship, in honour of the professor on Gilligan's Island let us call it "The Minnow", is in continual use. But each night a few parts are secretly removed and replaced by identical ones. The original removed parts are secretly reconstructed. Over the years, The Minnow continues to sail and have its license renewed. After 3 years the boat is entirely reconstructed, and the two identical ships are docked next to each other. Which one is The Minnow? (those who know their Plato will recognize this last one as Theseus's paradox)

Malcolm wrote:

The one licensed as the Minnow.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 20th, 2014 at 1:22 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Andrew108 said:

It is very difficult to know that "as long as "I" am bound by affliction, then "I" conventionally speaking, will take rebirth." It's difficult because in many ways your belief comes before experience. You can't know it because you already believe in it. And that is added to the other points of the debate that we have been having.

Malcolm wrote:

I accept śabdapramāṇa explicitly, the Buddha's śabda in particular, as it proper, for example, the Pubbakotthaka sutta relates:

"Excellent, Sariputta. Excellent. Those who have not known, seen, penetrated, realized, or attained it by means of discernment would have to take it on conviction [śraddha] in others that the faculty of conviction [śraddha]... persistence... mindfulness... concentration... discernment, when developed & pursued, gains a footing in the Deathless, has the Deathless as its goal & consummation; whereas those who have known, seen, penetrated, realized, & attained it by means of discernment would have no doubt or uncertainty that the faculty of conviction... persistence... mindfulness... concentration... discernment, when developed & pursued, gains a footing in the Deathless, has the Deathless as its goal & consummation."

Here, the Buddha is clearly stating that those of us who are not stream-entrants and so on, need to take it on faith that the five faculties and so on lead to liberation. You prefer accept the śabda of scientists. That's fine, but it is not Buddhist.

This afflictive I-making is not an intellectual belief, and it cannot be routed out through merely imagining it does not exist. It reasserts itself at every turn, at every reaction, in almost everything we do. It is the root of samsara. It cannot be eradicated through intellectual analysis and so on. The point is that for as long as one is in thrall of this, for that long one's continuum will not be liberated.

Definitely agree that it's not possible that just by imagining something not existing you make it so it doesn't exist. Conventional reality comes and shocks you out of that. But then you can't really imagine the positive of that to be true - which is something happening (like rebirth) happening because you believe that it will happen.

Honestly, I would prefer that it didn't. Then, of course, I could just pursue a worldly life, with worldly goals and motivations, and when I die, that would be it.

Again, reality tends to have the final word.

Indeed.

Buddhist Modernism or Secular Buddhism are more focused on contemplation or the inner life of being a Buddhist rather than only the doctrinal aspects.

Total nonsense. These people are concerned only with the benefits meditation practice might have for them in this life. They have no bodhicitta, how could they? They do not

believe in Buddhahood.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 20th, 2014 at 1:28 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

pensum said:

as i mentioned in my earlier post i can't even figure out what you guys and gals are arguing about. .

Malcolm wrote:

Any discussion of so called secular or modernist "Buddhism" quickly degenerates into a discussion about rebirth, and usually only rebirth. Why? Because rebirth is not falsifiable by any means accessible for ordinary persons who have not developed sufficient skills. It is instructive to read the <http://www.accesstoinsight.org/lib/authors/nanamoli/wheel390.html>. Here we discover the Buddha talking about his own rebirth, how others take rebirth after their bodies break up and so on.

What is interesting about the second one, is that it is a response to a disciple, the famed Sunakṣatra [ legs pa'i skar ma ] who claimed:

Now on that occasion Sunakkhatta, son of the Licchavis, had recently left this Dhamma and Discipline.[1] He was making this statement before the Vesali assembly: "The recluse Gotama does not have any superhuman states, any distinction in knowledge and vision worthy of the noble ones.[2] The recluse Gotama teaches a Dhamma (merely) hammered out by reasoning, following his own line of inquiry as it occurs to him, and when he teaches the Dhamma to anyone, it leads him when he practices it to the complete destruction of suffering."

The Buddha clearly criticizes the idea that he, the Buddha, hammered the path with logic, that is was not born of true insight. This of course is one of the reason's why I find the constant appeal of physicalists like Andrew and so on so pale. For them, everything must be "logical". But the Buddha states:

when I know and see thus, should anyone say of me: 'The recluse Gotama does not have any superhuman states, any distinction in knowledge and vision worthy of the noble ones. The recluse Gotama teaches a Dhamma (merely) hammered out by reasoning, following his own line of inquiry as it occurs to him' — unless he abandons that assertion and that state of mind and relinquishes that view, then as (surely as if he had been) carried off and put there he will wind up in hell.

In other words, by impugning the Buddha's knowledge born of concentration and insight, it does not turn out well for the person who does not abandon such views.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 20th, 2014 at 2:04 AM

Title: Re: China expands new measures to directly control Tibetan m

Content:

Indrajala said:

Trying to fight them as a subjugated people with passive aggressive acts like self-immolation just provokes them, no matter how such acts can be morally justified. It really accomplishes nothing and makes the situation worse.

Malcolm wrote:

If you were in their shoes you would feel differently.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 20th, 2014 at 2:52 AM

Title: Re: China expands new measures to directly control Tibetan m

Content:

Indrajala said:

What I wrote above wouldn't be out of place on a politics forum.

Malcolm wrote:

This isn't a politics forum.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 20th, 2014 at 2:52 AM

Title: Re: China expands new measures to directly control Tibetan m

Content:

Indrajala said:

Clearly this passive-aggressive approach isn't working and never has. It only lends political will to more aggressive measures and attempts at sinicization of Tibetans. One option on the table for the Chinese is to try and make all the Tibetan children into Mandarin speaking self-identifying Chinese citizens. It would solve their problem in Tibet regardless of how the rest of the world would see it (and let's be realistic nobody would give enough damn to do anything about it as business would carry on as usual).

Malcolm wrote:

Ummm...you cannot get an education inside Tibet in Tibetan anywhere BUT the monasteries. Why do you think the Chinese are cracking down so hard on Tibetan Buddhism?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 20th, 2014 at 2:59 AM

Title: Re: China expands new measures to directly control Tibetan m

Content:

Indrajala said:

If bending a knee to an authoritarian government saves more lives than doing otherwise, how can you argue it is wrong if you support non-violence?

Malcolm wrote:

This appeasement approach resulted in the Holocaust, that's why.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 20th, 2014 at 3:14 AM

Title: Re: China expands new measures to directly control Tibetan m

Content:

Indrajala said:

False comparisons. The PRC does not plan to systematically kill off the Tibetans. They plan to assimilate them and make them self-identify as Chinese citizens, just as many Mongolians, Manchurians and so on came to do.

Does anyone believe the present approach to the Tibetan issue is actually working or will work?

Malcolm wrote:

As to the first point-- that will never happen.

What isn't working is China's oppression of Tibetans.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 20th, 2014 at 3:28 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

LastLegend said:

4) A ship, in honour of the professor on Gilligan's Island let us call it "The Minnow", is in continual use. But each night a few parts are secretly removed and replaced by identical ones. The original removed parts are secretly reconstructed. Over the years, The Minnow continues to sail and have its license renewed. After 3 years the boat is entirely reconstructed, and the two identical ships are docked next to each other. Which one is The Minnow? (those who know their Plato will recognize this last one as Theseus's paradox)

I don't know what this all about. But one of them is The Minnow because it's named Minnow.

conebeckham said:

Spurious argument. Everyone know the Minnow had been lost. The Minnow had been lost.

Malcolm wrote:

Not so, the Minnow was not lost, but rather, beached.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 20th, 2014 at 3:30 AM

Title: Re: China expands new measures to directly control Tibetan m

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

What isn't working is China's oppression of Tibetans.

Indrajala said:

Really? The Tibetans don't got guns anymore, or commando training from the CIA.

Malcolm wrote:

No, what they have is virtue on their side.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 20th, 2014 at 3:48 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

anjali said:

This raises a question I'm curious about: if one doesn't believe in rebirth, just how far can one go on the Path?

Presumably since one doesn't have Right View, then one can't follow the Path to fruition. Yet, I'm curious what specific obstacles will arise along the way preventing one from successfully following the Path to completion? For example, would lack of belief in rebirth naturally preclude one from having successful direct introduction (in the Mahamudra/Dzogchen traditions)? Or, in the Zen tradition, would it prevent one from successfully seeing one's original face? Or, would it naturally prevent one from developing boundless compassion? Or...? (FYI, I'm fully in the rebirth camp, although that has no relevance to my question.)

Malcolm wrote:

What ChNN says about this issue in Crystal is that those who do not believe in rebirth can relax a little bit in this life; while those who do believe in rebirth can progress to total liberation.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 20th, 2014 at 3:49 AM

Title: Re: China expands new measures to directly control Tibetan m

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

No, what they have is virtue on their side.



Indrajala said:

And is that triumphant idealism supposed to just give hope or actually solve the problem?

Malcolm wrote:

All of the problems in the world today have but a single cause, lack of virtue. One cannot hope to solve the problem with a proper understanding of its causes. One cannot remedy a problem without applying an antidote consistent with the condition.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 20th, 2014 at 4:05 AM

Title: Re: China expands new measures to directly control Tibetan m

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

All of the problems in the world today have but a single cause, lack of virtue. One cannot hope to solve the problem with a proper understanding of its causes. One cannot remedy a problem without applying an antidote consistent with the condition.

Indrajala said:

You said yourself you can't fix saṃsāra.

Malcolm wrote:

Indeed, one cannot fix samsara, but this does not mean that one must be a coward.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 20th, 2014 at 4:11 AM

Title: Re: China expands new measures to directly control Tibetan m

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

As to the first point-- that will never happen.

Indrajala said:

Perhaps you are unaware of Chinese expansionist history. The peoples living in what is now Fujian for example used to be seen as barbarians and they themselves did not identify with Chinese civilization. However, the southward expansion of Chinese states eventually saw to their forced assimilation over time. Now almost everyone in Fujian would identify as a Zhongguoren 中國人. The same can be said of places like Harbin in the northeast.

Malcolm wrote:

I am well aware of Chinese expansionist history. But it will never happen that Tibetans will ever identify as "Chinese citizens". Unlike you, I have talked to highly educated young Tibetans in Tibet. They understand perfectly the situation they are in, and they will never give in. You simply don't understand Tibetans nor Tibetan culture.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 20th, 2014 at 4:16 AM

Title: Re: China expands new measures to directly control Tibetan m

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

I am well aware of Chinese expansionist history. But it will never happen that Tibetans will ever identify as "Chinese citizens".

Indrajala said:

Even if that turns out to be true, the majority Han Chinese born and raised on the plateau will call themselves Chinese citizens from Tibet.

Malcolm wrote:

No they won't. The Han on the plateau hate living there.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 20th, 2014 at 5:22 AM

Title: Re: China expands new measures to directly control Tibetan m

Content:

kirtu said:

So the plan is cultural genocide. And you are seemingly acting as an apologist for this.

Kirt

Indrajala said:

Seemingly to you, but this not what I am doing.

I'm recognizing the reality and suggesting an alternative approach to what is generally presently advocated.

Malcolm wrote:

Right, your solution is that Tibetans should just forget they had a country, Tibet,; a language, Tibetan; and a religion, Buddhism.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 20th, 2014 at 5:29 AM

Title: Re: China expands new measures to directly control Tibetan m

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Right, your solution is that Tibetans should just forget they had a country, Tibet,; a language, Tibetan; and a religion, Buddhism.

Indrajala said:

The Jews never forgot they once had Israel, nor did they lose their religion or heritage.

Malcolm wrote:

The last point is not true. Jewish people have had their heritage stripped from them time and time again.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 20th, 2014 at 5:35 AM

Title: Re: China expands new measures to directly control Tibetan m

Content:

Indrajala said:

If you have a better solution I'm all ears.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, the Tibetans should continue to resist, just as the Vietnamese did, until the Chinese are finally driven out of their lands.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 20th, 2014 at 5:39 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Andrew108 said:

Because as Malcolm points out, you can't be flexible with the dharma. You have to submit to it. That's the basic point he is making. Submission is the name of the game. Many Western practitioners forget how important that is.

Malcolm wrote:

If you want to get anywhere with Dharma, you must fit your life into the Dharma. You cannot fit the Dharma into your life. It simply does not work.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 20th, 2014 at 5:45 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Prasutagus said:

Following this thread for some time, and going back to Malcolm's original post from (shudder) Tricycle, I have to ask:

Why is a marriage between Buddhism and science something that's even an issue? We're talking about two conceptual systems with radically different interests and goals. One is to cultivate inner qualities to eliminate suffering of self and other. The other is to understand the functioning of the physical world in its various forms. Why this push to

certify or qualify Buddhism by extruding it through a scientific lens?

Also, it's interesting that the original (shudder) Tricycle article was about Buddhism offering a correction to the scientific materialism of modern science.... while ironically, much of this thread has been a defense of Buddhist world view against materialistic critiques.

In the end, these are both conceptual constructs-- Buddhism and science. We really don't need to be overly rigid about either them, and allow some space between them. In the Buddhist philosophical tradition one traditionally interpolates between various different tenet systems, again, without any drama. That flexibility is possible here as well. There's really no reason to shoot down Buddhism for what science finds, for science for what Buddhism finds. We can be a little pliant, committing to a world view that says something contrary to what scientists might claim, simply for its spiritual efficacy. We can also be a little pliant ignoring what the abhidharma says about cosmology when looking at NASA pics of Iapetus.

Malcolm wrote:

You know, we do not need to abandon the Meru cosmology system in toto at all. In reality, even Ptolemy called people who lived north of Pamirs "Kurus". Despite the fact that Vasubandhu's presentation reached a highly formalized picture of the world. In reality, the main outline in the Meru cosmology can be understood as reasonable when it is understood that four continent Meru cosmology actually roughly maps to the known continents from an India centric point of view, taking India as Jambudvīpa.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 20th, 2014 at 6:00 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Wayfarer said:

I don't much like that idea that in order to practice Buddhism, certain beliefs have to be held.

Malcolm wrote:

Certain understandings need to be arrived at; without which one cannot really consider oneself well trained. Acceptance of rebirth is one of those understandings.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 20th, 2014 at 6:35 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Wayfarer said:

Well, I part company there. 'Having to believe certain things' is what made me leave the

Christian church. And I say that, even though I accept the reality of Samsara.

My advice to the sceptic would be: to observe the principles and the discipline that Buddhism entails and to keep an open mind. 'Keeping an open mind' does not require 'theorizing about the ultimate nature of things' or speculating on alternative explanations of Buddhist philosophy based on science. It's a lot more basic, in my view.

Malcolm wrote:

It is not a question of forcing people to believe this or that. But there are certain understandings that it is crucial to have if one wishes to make progress in Dharma practice. Rebirth is one of those understandings. Why? Because the whole point of Buddha's teaching was free people from samsara. What is samsara? The <http://www.accesstoinsight.org/tipitaka/sn/sn15/sn15.003.than.html> explains it beautifully:

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.

For those who have it, the Anamattaggasamyutta is indispensable reading.

" The heap of bones one person leaves behind  
with the passing of a single aeon,  
would form a heap as high as a mountain,  
so said the Great Sage.  
This is declared to be as massive  
as the tall Vepulla Mountain  
standing north of Vulture's Peak  
in the Magadhan mountain range.

"But when one sees with correct wisdom  
the truths of the noble ones —  
suffering and its origin,  
the overcoming of suffering,  
and the Noble Eightfold Path,  
that leads to suffering's appeasement —  
then that person, having wandered on,  
for seven more times at most  
makes an end to suffering  
by destroying all the fetters."  
SN 15:10

Simply put, not one can study Mainstream Buddhism seriously and not come away understanding the crucial and central role rebirth places in the Buddha's teachings.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 20th, 2014 at 6:39 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Wayfarer said:

The point I am trying to make here is regarding whether you're required to believe in the phenomenon of re-birth in order to consider yourself Buddhist. Belief in rebirth is a very controversial question, as I have pointed out before - it is taboo in Western culture, on religious and scientific grounds. But it has always been controversial to some people. That is why I referred to the passage above, 'if there is no world after death, if there is no fruit of actions rightly & wrongly done, then here in the present life I look after myself with ease — free from hostility, free from ill will, free from trouble.' That kind of proviso is found in many places in early Buddhist texts. So I am saying, I think you can live according to Buddhist principles, and realize the benefits of them, without necessarily accepting beliefs about re-birth, or at the very least suspending judgement about it.

Malcolm wrote:

Many texts? How many? I don't think so. That text is merely teaching the four brahmaviharas to non-Buddhists because whether they believe in rebirth or not, the practice of the same leads to birth in higher realms.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 20th, 2014 at 6:40 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

dharmagoat said:

If there is no world after death, if there is no fruit of actions rightly & wrongly done, then here in the present life I look after myself with ease — free from hostility, free from ill will, free from trouble.

It would seem that it is those who believe in rebirth that have the problem.

As I have long suspected, Buddhist belief can be a curse.

Malcolm wrote:

The point is that the Buddha is merely telling people if they practice the four immeasurable, love, compassion, etc., it is good for them. But he never says anywhere they are sufficient for liberation.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 20th, 2014 at 7:26 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Wayfarer said:

That passage I quoted from the Kalama Sutta, is also elaborated in the Samaññaphala Sutta, which deals with the 'fruits of the contemplative life visible in the here-and-now'.

Malcolm wrote:

I am sorry but I must disagree. The Samaññaphala Sutta in fact talks explicitly about recollection of past lives as being such a fruit:

"With his mind thus concentrated, purified, and bright, unblemished, free from defects, pliant, malleable, steady, and attained to imperturbability, he directs and inclines it to knowledge of the passing away and re-appearance of beings. He sees — by means of the divine eye, purified and surpassing the human — beings passing away and re-appearing"

But it never says "if there is no world after death, if there is no fruit of actions rightly & wrongly done, then here in the present life I look after myself with ease — free from hostility, free from ill will, free from trouble." The passage simply does not exist in that text.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 20th, 2014 at 7:30 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Wayfarer said:

That passage I quoted from the Kalama Sutta, is also elaborated in the Samaññaphala Sutta, which deals with the 'fruits of the contemplative life visible in the here-and-now'.

I am trying to take a middle path approach. The middle path is neither believing nor disbelieving, but suspension of judgement. That suspension of judgement is quite a hard discipline in its own right. If you lived in such a way that your mind didn't jump to conclusions or reach judgements about things that were not apparent, it would be quite a different kind of life.

Malcolm wrote:

Incidentally, in this text, it is the agnostic position the Buddha finds the most worthy of criticism:

"When this was said, Sañjaya Belatthaputta said to me, 'If you ask me if there exists another world [after death], if I thought that there exists another world, would I declare that to you? I don't think so. I don't think in that way. I don't think otherwise. I don't think not. I don't think not not. If you asked me if there isn't another world... both is and isn't... neither is nor isn't... if there are beings who transmigrate... if there aren't... both are and aren't... neither are nor aren't... if the Tathagata exists after death... doesn't... both... neither exists nor doesn't exist after death, would I declare that to you? I don't think so. I don't think in that way. I don't think otherwise. I don't think not. I don't think not not.'

"Thus, when asked about a fruit of the contemplative life, visible here and now, Sañjaya Belatthaputta answered with evasion. Just as if a person, when asked about a mango, were to answer with a breadfruit; or, when asked about a breadfruit, were to answer with a mango: In the same way, when asked about a fruit of the contemplative life, visible here and now, Sañjaya Belatthaputta answered with evasion. The thought occurred to me: 'This — among these brahmans and contemplatives — is the most foolish and confused of all. How can he, when asked about a fruit of the contemplative life, visible here and now, answer with evasion?'

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 20th, 2014 at 7:37 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

tobes said:

There is little that is coherent, settled or unified in all of that - it is a terrible and fallacious endeavor to reify all of that contestation into either a crass ontological materialism or a metaphysical realism or some bizarre and unfounded version of both - which either defeats or is defeated by 'the dharma'.

Malcolm wrote:

One thing that there can be no doubt about; people who are interested in Buddhism often cannot reconcile the ideological underpinnings of logical positivism, the bedrock of scientism, with Dharma. That is the point. Therefore, they seek to discard keystone Dharma tenets which they feel are not relevant to them (Andrew108 illustrates this for us perfectly), whilst maintaining whatever they are interested in: meditation, etc. They seem not to understand that Dharma is not a pick and choose sort of thing. It is not a supermarket of ideas in which one can shop and take home and create one's own recipe.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 20th, 2014 at 7:48 AM

Title: Re: karma bully

Content:

Vajrasvapna said:

I made no assertion of personal realization, just expressed my opinions on Buddhist philosophy, if you disagree, fine. I believe that Buddhism is a tradition of reason, as is attributed to Buddha himself: 'You don't have to believe what I say with blind faith.'

Malcolm wrote:

Of course Buddhism is a tradition of reason. We do not accept things merely on blind faith. On the other hand, we also accept śabda pramāṇa, which mean that once we have accepted the Buddha as an authority, we now can accept what he says in the sūtras as being true. Prior to accepting the Buddha actually shows the way to nirvana, of



course one can be skeptical.

Vajrasvapna said:

"There is only one cause to all diseases  
it is the ignorance  
That does not realize selflessness.

Like a bird flying in the sky  
is not separated from its shadow,  
Sentient beings, even when living in happiness  
Are never separated from disease because of ignorance.

Ignorance produces attachment, hatred  
And closed-mindedness  
The three mental poisons are the particular cause  
That manifests wind, bile and phlegm humors.

Malcolm wrote:

As a doctor of Tibetan Medicine [Shang Shung, 2009], I can tell you that when patients ask me to explain the three humors to them, and they are Buddhist, then of course I explain to them that the ultimate cause of their illness is the knowledge obscuration of self-grasping, which in turn produces the three afflictions, which in turn produces the three humors. Why? Because they can then understand that also their practice can help alleviate their disease. Reduction of bile diseases comes from reducing anger, etc. It really works.

Vajrasvapna said:

This is why I consider using karma to accuse someone

Malcolm wrote:

Whoever suggested that?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 20th, 2014 at 7:51 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The Samaññaphala Sutta in fact talks explicitly about recollection of past lives as being such a fruit...

Wayfarer said:

Right, I concede that...it was a poor choice on my part. However there are places where the visible benefits of 'the fruit of practice' are discussed. It always seems to me to be a better approach to those who have reservations about 'the next life' to approach it in those terms.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, for those people who find it difficult to commit to a path, I would never actually say "You do not believe in rebirth, so you cannot attend this or that teaching". What I say is "Suspend judgement about rebirth for now, and see if Buddhist practice is helping you transform and change."

But here we are not talking to such people. Here we are talking to people, mainly one person, who is intent on promulgating physicalism as correct view.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 20th, 2014 at 7:54 AM

Title: Re: Death at Tibetan Buddhist meditation retreat in Arizona

Content:

conebeckham said:

You know, I know plenty of folks who have completed 3 year retreats, both here in the West, and in Asia. None of them were even close to as extreme as this situation with Ian and Christie. That this sort of thing happened at all, has to be laid at the feet of those responsible, and those responsible need to take responsibility. GMR clearly bears a part of this burden, I feel. He has not taken responsibility for this. Frankly, neither has Christie, and I am afraid that is because she has been damaged.

Malcolm wrote:

Well, kicking delusional people out of a retreat without first getting them some professional counseling was definitely a huge and tragic error. Had the DM board taken a gentler approach, this may never have happened. They could have been told they should be in separate retreat cabins and seen now that worked out.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 20th, 2014 at 10:44 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

smcj said:

They seem not to understand that Dharma is not a pick and choose sort of thing. It is not a supermarket of ideas in which one can shop and take home and create one's own recipe.

Once again we disagree. Of course they are allowed their own recipe, however they then take responsibility for how the pudding tastes. And as they say, the proof is in the taste of the pudding.

But beyond that, people evolve. I personally have seen your online presence change greatly over the years. If Dharma really is a multi lifetime project then people have to pick up where their predecessor left off. You can't demand everyone's karma have the same starting point, or disallow them their own progress.

Johnny Dangerous said:

P.S.:

This thread is somewhat confusing, as I specifically remember Malcolm arguing passionately (and convincingly, IMO) not that long ago for Steven Batchelor's right to be called "A Buddhist" -care to comment Malcolm? Has your opinion changed, or am I missing some nuance or qualifier here?

Personally, I don't fig "Dharma Lite" much, and I think the Buddhist worldview with Karma and Rebirth removed turns nonsensical for the most part..however I don't think believing this way makes someone "not a Buddhist" at all - we should respect people's evolution somewhat I think - as SMCJ says . Wherever I might want to pick apart their worldview, I have "secular Buddhist" friends who certainly walk the walk in the way the live, and have been greatly helped by their "incomplete" version of Dharma.

On the other hand, I DO question materialist-leaners who spend a lot of effort trying to prove the Buddha did actually mean what he said..and I assume that is maybe part of the tension in this thread, and with this subject in general, which let's face it..is ubiquitous.

Malcolm wrote:

People can all themselves anything. That is not the point. Someone can call themselves a buddhist and yet enunciate views that are not consistent with whta the Buddha taught.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 20th, 2014 at 7:18 PM

Title: Re: China expands new measures to directly control Tibetan m

Content:

Indrajala said:

there are real strategic reasons for China's inability to grant freedom to the Tibetans. The welfare of over a billion people rest on these strategic concerns being addressed.

Malcolm wrote:

Therefore, you are pro-China and anti-Tibet. Case closed.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 20th, 2014 at 7:26 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The point is that the Buddha is merely telling people if they practice the four

immeasurable, love, compassion, etc., it is good for them. But he never says anywhere they are sufficient for liberation.

dzogchungpa said:

If memory serves, Gombrich, in "What the Buddha Thought", attempts to demonstrate that the Buddha did indeed view them as sufficient for liberation. Just sayin'.

Edit:

I think this is basically his argument:

<http://www.ocbs.org/images/documents/gonda.pdf>

Malcolm wrote:

Basically his argument is extremely thin in the face of traditional Buddhist exegesis which flatly denies that the four brahma-viharas lead to nirvana. Dharmakirti is one such author, Gombrich mentions another on the first page of his rather diffuse and not to the point treatment, Bhikku Bodhi.

You can follow non-Buddhist scholars exegetical treatment of Buddhist concepts if you like, I will continue to prioritize how they were understood within the tradition.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 20th, 2014 at 7:34 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Andrew108 said:

I have preferred to use Buddhist logic to question a Buddhist belief.

Malcolm wrote:

Buddhist logic only works if you accept the parameters of Buddhist logic. I think you need to study Dignaga and Dharmakirti a little more thoroughly before you can say you were using "Buddhist" logic to question a Buddhist tenet.

So what are the parameters of Buddhist logic, or "pramāṇa"? They are that there are three valid forms of authority: direct perception, inference, and testimony of special witnesses, such as the Buddha.

Dharmakirti's entire project is to prove that Buddha is a special witness, without recourse to sūtras and so on. If one can show that indeed the Buddha is a special witness, then it follows that one can heed what the Buddha says without reservation. You should get Jackson's book "Is Enlightenment Possible" which deals with this very issue, and includes a logical defense of rebirth.

As far as I can tell, you do not regard the Buddha as a special witness, and consider him to be an ordinary man, just like anyone else.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 20th, 2014 at 7:36 PM

Title: Re: Tibetan institutional religious violence

Content:

Minjeay said:

I really don't get why things like these seem to be so hard to understand for persons who talk a lot about religion, and buddhism, while learning what wholesome acts are, and what non-wholesome deeds are, is one of the basic teachings you can even find in Theravada buddhism, though in this system they don't put emphasis on those teachings.

Malcolm wrote:

That is an entirely false claim.

Minjeay said:

Mahayana did build up the whole system around those teachings, and still when negative things happen you will see most buddhists just stand besides someone being raped and just debating about the karma of the persons involved.

Malcolm wrote:

That is an entirely false claim.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 20th, 2014 at 7:46 PM

Title: Re: Death at Tibetan Buddhist meditation retreat in Arizona

Content:

bryandavis said:

This kind of thing can happen even in a very traditinal setting. I feel by me sharing this I am able to let a bit off my chest so to speak, since I was in the retreat. As well just put it out there that a long term retreat is a serious decesion and when entering one you really have to be a very stable person all ready ( that should be obvious but it shocking how it is not )

...

These things need serious reflection before entering. They need concerned, compassionat, caring helpers and assistants along the way. And they need reality checks when things flare up. Maybe for at least the lay practioners a mental health screening would have been helpful in my situation! There is so much shit that comes up being alone with one self, as Malcom pointed out with the axe example!

Reintegrating after that much time is diffiucult. Reinegrating after psychological dissapointments is even more challenging. Not letting your "spiritual" world get completely crushed and being able to maintain the veiwh though out insance

circumstances is greater still.

Anyhow, sorry if there was not much point in all that, I just wanted to share and say it can happen anywhere, even in a seemingly perfect traditional situation.

Bryan.

Malcolm wrote:

Sharp weapons are generally not permitted within a retreat precinct because things like the following happen: when my teacher, Ngagpa Yeshe Dorje, was nearly done with his first three year retreat, he had what is called a "chod nyams", a chod experience where he saw his leg as a huge side of meat. So he took a knife he had brought with him into the retreat, and cut a huge chunk of his leg out for his ganapuja. The next morning his attendant found him lying in a pool of blood, nearly dead. His retreat master told him that he could not leave, but anyhow they brought a doctor, patched up his leg, and he remained in the retreat. Now, you have to understand that the Throma retreat manual specifically forbids bringing anything sharp with you into the retreat.

My point is that retreats are serious business and a lot of things can go wrong, and do go wrong. Luckily my experience was pretty peaceful, but then I did my retreat alone without companions, so it was not complicated by the presence of others.

I don't think any knowledgeable person here imagines that what happened at DM is impossible in other situations. I remember hearing that in one three year retreat in the US, a very disturbed woman tried to burn down the house the the retreat was being held in, back in the '80's.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 20th, 2014 at 9:11 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

As far as I can tell, you do not regard the Buddha as a special witness, and consider him to be an ordinary man, just like anyone else.

Andrew108 said:

I don't regard the Buddha as a special witness because there are contradictions in what he is reported to have said. Also there are historical/cultural reasons why he might have said what he said. It seems that he was working with circumstances within his own cultural milieu just like us ordinary folks.

Malcolm wrote:

Hogwash. This is your weak argument. The Buddha's essential message is entirely consistent through Mainstream Buddhism, Mahāyāna and all Vajrayāna teachings including Dzogchen. Beings take continual rebirth samsara, dying here, reappearing there for as long as they are under the control of the three afflictions produced by self-

grasping. When that self-grasping is eradicated, beings stop taking birth in beginningless samsara. Dependent origination exists solely for the purpose of explaining that process and how to end that process. It is not, as it is commonly misapplied today, to be taken as a general commentary on external phenomena such as the formation of galaxies and so on, though it can of course be applied to such external phenomena as well. The primary reason Buddha taught dependent origination was so that people would stop asking him who they were in past lives. So his reply is fundamentally: our origin is rooted in affliction, which is the cause of karma, and karma is the cause of suffering. When we remove those afflictions, we cease creating karmas, the cause of suffering. This process occurs for living beings from beginningless time. All valid Buddhist traditions accept this. This is the Dharma of the Buddha we are taking refuge in. If someone does not accept this, they are not really taking refuge in the Dharma, I am sorry to say.

Andrew108 said:

Then in terms of direct perception - I guess you are talking about yogic direct perception. I'm not sure this is really reliable. There are some meditators who have claimed to be able to access past lives but who really knows?

Malcolm wrote:

No, I was talking about common direct perception.

Andrew108 said:

Then inference based on logic. Well according to you I don't really need that because it's enough to take the words of the Buddha as gospel. And if I don't then I'm not Buddhist. The logic you have put forward I regard as being weak. It's such weak logic that the only thing you can do is say that I have to base my conviction on what the Buddha is said to have said.

Malcolm wrote:

Actually what I said was that the phenomena under discussion, rebirth, liberation and so on cannot be verified by the perceptions of ordinary persons, such as scientists engaged in empirical research. I fully allow that things like rebirth, liberation, and so on can neither be proven nor disproven by means available to empirical research. These things are non-falsifiable. Buddha addresses this issue in the Eastern Gatehouse Sūta I previously cited above.

Andrew108 said:

But anyway I have agreed with you that I can't call myself Buddhist. So I'm no longer a Buddhist because I don't accept a literal interpretation of rebirth.

Malcolm wrote:

I didn't say you could not call yourself a Buddhist, I said the views you enunciate are not Buddhist and are not consistent with what the Buddha clearly taught in Mainstream Buddhist texts, Mahāyāna and Vajrayāna as well.

Andrew108 said:

You might also read the Gendun Chopel book that Lopez published. In it there are some interesting passages regarding appeal to authority.

Malcolm wrote:

Of course it does. The most interesting one is that he points out that in the end, one is the only authority for oneself. But the promise of Buddhadharma is that if you bother to do the work, instead of relying on intellectual reason, as you do, you will personally verify the claims the Buddha has made about rebirth, liberation, etc. As for myself, I have verified enough of the claims of the Buddha and the awakened masters that have followed, including our mutual guru, ChNN, to have confidence in the other claims put forward by the tradition.

Look, if you wish to hammer out your own doctrine with logic and reason, be my guest. But don't conflate it with Siddhartha's intent.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 20th, 2014 at 9:20 PM

Title: Re: China expands new measures to directly control Tibetan m

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Therefore, you are pro-China and anti-Tibet.

Indrajala said:

No.

Malcolm wrote:

Definitely. We are all well aware of the the real politik goals of China, and why they do what they do. You have offered no special insight to that in anything you have posted anywhere. Instead, while libeling Tibetan monasteries for systematic child abuse with little proof, when it is pointed out to you that Chinese have a systematic policy of the cultural annihilation of Tibetans which includes systematic forced abortions and sterilization, you aver and ask for similar proofs (and there is plenty, entire movies in fact). Your sentiments are not nearly as opaque as you seem to think.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 20th, 2014 at 9:32 PM

Title: Re: Is Rebirth Unscientific?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

All of these questions are answered in the texts.

My advice to you is to start over at the beginning. You have gotten yourself completely stuck in a morass of vapid intellectualism.

Andrew108 said:



If rebirth were to be established scientifically...

Malcolm wrote:

Rebirth can never be established scientifically because it cannot be verified by ordinary persons directly in anyway other than inferentially.

...

Andrew108 said:

All of these issues are ignored.

Malcolm wrote:

All of these issues have been addressed. You simply do not find the answers satisfactory because you accept and have faith in a different authority than the Buddha. You have faith in science and accept, without personal verification, the claims that scientists make about this or that phenomena.

It is a good thing to know with what one agrees and with what one disagrees. What you have come to discover is that you fundamentally do not agree with the Buddha's own teachings on liberation, the purpose of liberation and the results of liberation, in toto. That must be a sad thing for you, considering all the years you have put in studying and practicing.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 20th, 2014 at 9:45 PM

Title: Re: China expands new measures to directly control Tibetan m

Content:

Indrajala said:

I'm basically suggesting everyone be realistic and broad minded rather than simply saying what China is doing is wrong and they should stop because we feel they should. The actual options available to the parties involved are actually quite limited.

Malcolm wrote:

I suggest you apply that attitude towards India and Tibetan Monasteries.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 20th, 2014 at 10:01 PM

Title: Re: Is Rebirth Unscientific?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

All of these questions are answered in the texts.

No they are not.

Yes, actually they are.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 20th, 2014 at 10:43 PM

Title: Re: Vajrasattva practice books/articles

Content:

Johnny Dangerous said:

Recommend some good ones. I know the basic stuff, just would like pointing to some good commentaries or similar.

Malcolm wrote:

At some point my translation of the Sakya ngondro text will be out, this has a comprehensive section on Vajrasattva practice,

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 20th, 2014 at 11:04 PM

Title: World's largest hydropower project in Tibet

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The cascade of dams planned for the Yarlung Tsangpo river and its tributaries – including one three times the size of the Three Gorges Dam – threatens an already fragile environment

<https://www.chinadialogue.net/article/show/single/en/6781-World-s-largest-hydropower-project-planned-for-Tibetan-Plateau>

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 20th, 2014 at 11:14 PM

Title: Re: Death at Tibetan Buddhist meditation retreat in Arizona

Content:

Clarence said:

I am surprised no one got back to the THREE drupons that got stroked out of the retreat. If we follow traditional paradigm, there are some serious Samaya issues going on there.

Malcolm wrote:

Not necessarily.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 20th, 2014 at 11:59 PM

Title: Re: Death at Tibetan Buddhist meditation retreat in Arizona

Content:

Clarence said:

I am surprised no one got back to the THREE drupons that got stroked out of the retreat. If we follow traditional paradigm, there are some serious Samaya issues going on there.

Malcolm wrote:

Not necessarily.

Clarence said:

Could you elaborate? I always heard strokes in comparison with practice means Samaya issues. Of course, nowadays, with all the diabetes, strokes are a lot more common.

Malcolm wrote:

It depends on the kind of stroke. Whether there is a provocation involved or not.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 21st, 2014 at 12:07 AM

Title: Re: China expands new measures to directly control Tibetan m

Content:

kirtu said:

No, the Chinese ruling class holds all the cards.

Indrajala said:

They're not omnipotent. The geopolitical situation in the region brings with it a lot of limitations. India would be at an advantage if China let its guard down for instance.

Malcolm wrote:

Poor China, always has to defend itself against its enemies...boo hoo.

Indrajala said:

It doesn't indicate they're being oppressed if they can leave and return unsupervised. The lines of communication are not necessarily cut either. Again, WeChat is used to constantly communicate with family back home.

Malcolm wrote:

Where everything they say is constantly being monitored. So they speak in codes and so on. Really, your level of apology for the PRC is astonishing compared with your bile vented towards Indians and Tibetans in general. So much for equanimity.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 21st, 2014 at 12:18 AM

Title: Re: Is Rebirth Unscientific?

Content:

Sönam said:

Holy crap! what a cloudy lemonade ...

Sönam

Andrew108 said:

It seems cloudy because the idea of consciousness and rebirth is cloudy. May be you could add something to the discussion?

Malcolm wrote:

The idea of consciousness and rebirth are extremely precise.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 21st, 2014 at 1:18 AM

Title: Re: Is Rebirth Unscientific?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The idea of consciousness and rebirth are extremely precise.

Andrew108 said:

Go on then. Describe them precisely.

Malcolm wrote:

Consciousness is one of the four non-material aggregates. It is the knower and perceiver of objects. The six consciousness are supported on their respective sense organs; five are supported upon their respective material organ, the eye and so on; the sixth consciousness is supported on its organ, the mental organ, which is in fact the immediately antecedent consciousness. This also accounts for rebirth, why, when this body breaks up, the series of consciousness can appropriate a new series of aggregates through one of the four modes of birth.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 21st, 2014 at 1:47 AM

Title: Re: karma bully

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Of course Buddhism is a tradition of reason. We do not accept things merely on blind faith. On the other hand, we also accept śabda pramāṇa, which mean that once we have accepted the Buddha as an authority, we now can accept what he says in the sūtras as being true. Prior to accepting the Buddha actually shows the way to nirvana, of course one can be skeptical.

Vajrasvapna said:

The problem is that different Buddhist scripture make different statements, then each person must develop their own understanding of the Buddhist scriptures, avoiding intolerance.

Malcolm wrote:

This is why one must rely on a qualified teacher, to make things clear to one.

Vajrasvapna said:

Because they can then understand that also their practice can help alleviate their disease. Reduction of bile diseases comes from reducing anger, etc. It really works. I have health problems and the reason I still alive are my practices of meditation and mantra recitation, only medical treatment would not suffice. However it is because of my poor health I became interested about Buddhism, then my poor health ended up being something auspicious.

Malcolm wrote:

Well, this a good thing for you. As it say in mind training teachings, suffering is our friend.

Vajrasvapna said:

This is why I consider using karma to accuse someone

Whoever suggested that?

It is a very common practice among Western Buddhist teachers, maybe someone should go and tell that to them.

Malcolm wrote:

Honestly, I have never ever heard any teacher of any merit whatsoever treat karma in the way in which you describe. Maybe you or someone you know had a bad experience with an unqualified western teacher.

Vajrasvapna said:

To add to what I said about the vision of Mahayana about karma, the ideas of Yogacara school, if understood correctly, expression well as karma works from the individual point of view...

Malcolm wrote:

Khenpo Palden Sherab was an awesome lama, someone for whom I have great respect, but nothing you are saying is really brand new to me. Each teaching has its specific context. You cannot expect people who are not Vajrayāna practitioners, for example, to cultivate pure vision in the Vajrayāna sense of the word because they have not been ripened by empowerment nor granted liberating instructions.

Karma is always taught subsequent to dependent origination, for while dependent origination explains the how and why of being reborn; karma explains the what and where of being reborn.

It is fine to say this is all an illusion, a mirage, its unreal, and so on. But it is also necessary to recognize, such as you do, then we need to deal with all these unreal conditions like illness, floods, death, meals, sleeping, waking and so on, and we have to bear in mind that we generally deal with them, 99.999 percent of the time as if they are real. For example, if you are shot, you not sit on your cushion reciting mantras, telling yourself that it is all unreal and it will go away. Not only does one's own karmic traces have the ability to generate appearances for oneself, but also the karmic traces of others can do so as well, as Shabkar points out in Flight of the Garuda. Given this

situation, we have to be practical and understand and remind ourselves that having a profound view and realizing it are totally different.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 21st, 2014 at 5:00 AM

Title: Re: karma bully

Content:

Vajrasvapna said:

Actually, I just express myself in a way that was not clear what I meant, but this debate was positive, because I learned how to express myself better. I do not believe that karma is just a Buddhist or a Hindu theory, all religions and materialistic philosophies speak of causality somehow. Buddhist philosophy explains karma in order to help people to achieve enlightenment, then it seems to me to be something dangerous to use karma in other context.

Malcolm wrote:

Buddha used karma to explain why some people are born rich, others poor, why some are famous, others not, why some are healthy, others ill, and so on. The point of teaching about karma is that afflictions cause karma, all karma, even positive karma, is rooted in affliction -- which is why positive karma, aka, merit, is exhaustible (unless it is dedicated with a dedication free from the three wheels).

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 21st, 2014 at 5:02 AM

Title: Re: karma bully

Content:

Vajrasvapna said:

I do not have a positive opinion about the Western Buddhist teachers, I remember of a certain lama who, after I commented about my health, began making accusations about my 'bad karma'. I never saw any Asian teachers have such an attitude, they are always friendly and benevolent.

Malcolm wrote:

Well you should not infer that all Western Buddhist teachers are cut from the same mold that "lama".

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 21st, 2014 at 5:57 AM

Title: Re: Is Rebirth Unscientific?

Content:

Andrew108 said:

What do you mean by non-material? Do mean that it has no mass?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, consciousness has no mass. It is not composed of the four elements, nor by anything in the table elements.

Andrew108 said:

Does this mean that it is 'on' and has energy? What is the source of this 'on' state? What sustains it?

Malcolm wrote:

Praṇā and warmth are the supports for consciousness.

Andrew108 said:

How can a preceding moment act as a support and organ for mental consciousness?

Malcolm wrote:

The preceding moment of consciousness, i.e. the mental organ (manendriya) acts as the support for consciousness the same way that a son becomes the father of another; a fruit, the seed of another.

Andrew108 said:

Surely there must be some underlying continuity?

Malcolm wrote:

No substrate is necessary, according to Madhyamakas. The Yogacara sūtras propose the ālayavijñāna to account for memory, continuity and so on.

Andrew108 said:

Also how can memories be recalled if the preceding moment acting as support is no longer present?

Malcolm wrote:

Candrakīrti weighs in:

"The consciousness of the memory is not different than the consciousness (experiencing the object) by which an object is experienced, as has already been explained. Why? Because the memory isn't a different thing. Since there was an experience, the memory arises with the object since the consciousness recalling that experience is not different than the experience. Since whatever is encompassed by the consciousness of the experience is encompassed by the consciousness of the memory, it is said "I saw". This is also a worldly convention and is not something to examine, since it is worldly convention of those who possess deluded objects."

Andrew108 said:

How is it that we can hold thoughts and experience connectedness between moments if the preceding consciousness is always changing?

Malcolm wrote:

See above.

This also accounts for rebirth, why, when this body breaks up, the series of consciousness can appropriate a new series of aggregates through one of the four modes of birth.

Why would this account for rebirth? How does consciousness actually appropriate aggregates?

[/quote]

Consciousness is driven by thirst for existence.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 21st, 2014 at 7:10 AM

Title: Re: China expands new measures to directly control Tibetan m

Content:

JKhedrup said:

It was the second such incident to be reported in recent days from the TAR's Chamdo (in Chinese, Changdu) prefecture. On Feb. 28, Chinese authorities detained and fatally beat another monk after finding him in possession of banned writings and videos.

Malcolm wrote:

Or would you like more proof of Chinese oppression of Tibetan people, Jeff? Because really, there is bucket loads. Far more examples of Chinese authorities beating, torturing, raping and killing Tibetans than there is of sexual abuse in Tibetan monasteries in India.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 21st, 2014 at 7:13 AM

Title: Re: China expands new measures to directly control Tibetan m

Content:

JKhedrup said:

Geshe Sonam's uncle was thrown in jail for 6 months due to too many calls coming to his cellphone from India. There was no charge laid, no trial, he was just sent to jail.

Geshe la's cousin endured similar treatment for sending back and forth photos of HH Dalai Lama on Wechat.

I really wonder how you don't hear this information considering it is widely known in the HP Tibetan community.

Indrajala said:

I agree it is morally wrong to arbitrarily imprison people, but do you think responding to such treatment with aggressive protesting or passive-aggressive resistance will make the Chinese authorities change their ways when there is negligible international



pressure for them to stop?

Malcolm wrote:

That is why people who live outside of Tibet must continue to voice their opposition to atrocities committed by the PRC against Tibetans. If people are silent, the Chinese will merely take this as assent. This is why HH Dalai Lama is so important, he is living testament to the 55 years of utter brutality to which Tibetans have subjected in their own land.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 21st, 2014 at 7:19 AM

Title: Re: Is Rebirth Unscientific?

Content:

Prasutagus said:

This is amazing really. Epic.

I've never seen someone theoretically committed to dharma practice so dead set at proving it's foundations are invalid, and to be so dead sure about it.

Maybe that's a new practice these days. Point out all the ways Buddhism is f'd...

Malcolm wrote:

Buddha once remarked that the Dharma could never be destroyed from without, only from within. This is how the Dharma is destroyed, i.e., when people who are nominally Buddhist set out to destroy the foundations of Buddhist teaching.

Epic indeed.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 21st, 2014 at 7:23 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Lindama said:

]I have never heard it discussed in zen.

Malcolm wrote:

You may have never heard it discussed in Western Zen circles you are familiar with -- Dogen on the other hand, strongly criticizes those who discard it.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 21st, 2014 at 7:24 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

daverupa said:

This means that one can be a Buddhist without accepting rebirth as described by this or that source text, since one simply accepts that it's to be seen, not that it's to be seen as X right now, first, before beginning, otherwise I'm a faker or something equally silly.

Malcolm wrote:

Then Buddha certainly wasted his time talking to a lot of folks about rebirth who had not seen it for themselves, didn't he?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 21st, 2014 at 7:32 AM

Title: Re: China expands new measures to directly control Tibetan m

Content:

Indrajala said:

I've never condoned such killings.

Malcolm wrote:

I see, so now you change your tune -- first it was, "I have no idea if there is..."to "I don't condone..."

Well it is good you don't condone it, since a Buddhist monk is forbidden to condone the killing of any human being, otherwise, they commit a parajika.

Indrajala said:

I'm just saying things are not going to change and passive-aggressive resistance against an unforgiving authoritarian state is not going to solve much, especially when that state is largely left unchallenged by other world powers. Not even your country the USA with all its talk of human rights and liberty will lift a finger to really help Tibet.

Malcolm wrote:

Our leaders meet with HHDL regularly, and disregard China's temper tantrums over the issue. Tibet has major sympathy in the house and senate. And, you have to remember, the US did not even recognize China diplomatically until 1972.

Indrajala said:

What exactly do western converts to Tibetan Buddhism do other than condemn China and maybe protest, meanwhile buying Made-in-China products?

Malcolm wrote:

We keep people aware of what the Chinese are doing to Tibetans and to Tibetan

Buddhism.

Indrajala said:

Are you willing to arm yourself and launch a guerrilla campaign in Tibet to "drive out" the Chinese from the Tibetan homeland? How about at least helping to pay for it?

Malcolm wrote:

Of course not. I do not believe that armed struggle will result in anything other than the annihilation of Tibetans forever.

Indrajala said:

Even if you insist on non-violence, self-immolation and international awareness campaigns clearly have had little effect.

Malcolm wrote:

Of course we insist on non-violence. Actually the proof it is having effect is the increased brutality of Chinese security forces against Tibetans.

Indrajala said:

China is still in control of Tibet and nobody is stopping them.

Malcolm wrote:

The non-virtue of China's destroying a Buddhist nation will do them in. We just don't know how long it will take before China's karma ripens. Sadly, it will be bad.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 21st, 2014 at 7:40 AM

Title: Re: why is Vajrayana considered the fastest way to buddhahood

Content:

frank123 said:

I'm new to Buddhism and exploring various traditions and schools. I'm wondering If it takes incalculable eons to reach buddhahood through sutra approach what makes it possible to achieve buddhahood in one lifetime through vajrayana methods? why is there such a vast difference in time? seems so extreme.

Malcolm wrote:

Mahāyāna etc., are paths of renunciation.

Vajrayāna is a path of non-renunciation.

Mahāyāna has no special methods.

Vajrayāna is the vehicle of methods.

Mahāyāna has no system of coordinating the basis, the five aggregates, with the result.

Vajrayāna is the vehicle with the basis, the five aggregates is coordinated with the result through the empowerment rites.

Mahāyāna is a causal vehicle in that they practice creating the causes for awakening for three incalculable eons or more, i.e. the cause is taken as the path.  
Vajrayāna is the resultant vehicle because here, the result, the three kāyas, is taken as the path.

Mahāyāna and so on are for people of lower intelligence.  
Vajrayāna is for people of sharper intelligence.

Mahāyāna is for people who have less afflictions and can easily give up desires and so on.  
Vajrayāna is for people who are highly afflicted and cannot easily give up desires and so on.

Mahāyāna is the practice for past ages when the five degenerations were not so rampant.  
Vajrayāna is the practice for this age, when the five degenerations are very rampant.

And so on. These are the usual reasons given in Vajrayāna texts.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 21st, 2014 at 7:43 AM

Title: Re: China expands new measures to directly control Tibetan m

Content:

Indrajala said:

China is also partly a Buddhist nation and there's a massive ongoing Buddhist revival there. There's statistically more Buddhists in China than all Tibetan Buddhists in the world combined probably.

Malcolm wrote:

China is by no means a Buddhist nation.

Perhaps, however, if enough Chinese people become Buddhists, Tibetan Buddhists in particular, they will realize that China's policies towards Tibet are environmentally unsound, racist, and criminal.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 21st, 2014 at 7:56 AM

Title: Re: China expands new measures to directly control Tibetan m

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

China is by no means a Buddhist nation.

Indrajala said:

It is a secular state with many many Buddhists. More Buddhists than any other country in the world.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, I understand this. However China destroyed a Buddhist country, one Buddhist through and through. It's different.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 21st, 2014 at 7:57 AM

Title: Re: Death at Tibetan Buddhist meditation retreat in Arizona

Content:

Tom said:

Diamondsutra,

I would like to know exactly what you know is made up.

dzogchungpa said:

Apparently the sutra is silent on this question.

Malcolm wrote:

It's a problem that so many people find their Buddhism on the shelves of Barnes and Noble's.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 21st, 2014 at 10:22 AM

Title: Re: why is Vajrayana considered the fastest way to buddhahood

Content:

rory said:

I'd love if you could explain to me, if you follow Yogacara philosophy how can Vajrayana be a quick path? Supposedly it takes 3 aeons to extirpate the seeds, so how does it work?

gassho

Rory

Malcolm wrote:

Who said i follow Yogacara? Certainly not me.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 21st, 2014 at 10:28 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Actually, in another chapter Dogen states very strongly that rejecting literal rebirth impugns the four kinds realized persons, i.e, stream entrants and so on.

Lindama said:

]I have never heard it discussed in zen.

Malcolm wrote:

You may have never heard it discussed in Western Zen circles you are familiar with --  
Dogen on the other hand, strongly criticizes those who discard it.

pensum said:

However, Dogen's views on life and death are somewhat more nuanced than that found in typical discussions of "literal rebirth"; to wit, this excerpt from the Bendowa, the first chapter of Dogen's Shobogenzo: Question: Someone has said, "Do not reject life and death. There is an

easy shortcut to freedom from life and death. This is knowing that the essence of the mind is eternal. This means that although this body is born and inevitably progresses towards death, this mental essence does not perish. If you understand that this mental essence that is not subject to arising and ceasing resides in my body is the original mental essence; and so, while the body takes a temporal form but is always inconstant, born here and dying there, this mental essence is eternal and does not change in past, present, and future. To know this is to be free from birth and death. For those who know this, the birth and death they have known up to now vanish, and they enter into an ocean of the mental essence. Entering this ocean, they have wondrous virtues like the Buddhas and Tathagatas. Even if you know this now, because your body is the result of former delusive actions, you differ from the sages. Those who do not know this principle turn in the cycle of life and death eternally. So you only need to know this principle of the eternal mental essence. If you sit in vain you waste your whole life. What can you possibly hope for?"

Does this view conform to the Way of the Buddhas and Ancestors?

Answer: This view is not the Buddha Dharma at all. It is the Senika view which is skewed outside of the Way. This skewed view says: "In our body there is a ghostly intelligence and it is through this that, as conditions occur, we have the capacity to distinguish between like and dislike, right and wrong, pain and stimulation, and suffering and pleasure. When the body dies, this ghostly intelligence is released from here and is born some place else. Therefore, though it seems to die here, it is born there, it is immortal and eternal." This is that view skewed outside the Way.

If you learn about this and think it is the Buddha Dharma, it is sillier than holding a tile or pebble and thinking it to be golden treasure. This foolishness is beyond anything to compare it to and is an embarrassment. The National Master Huizhong of Tang China strongly warned against this view. Those who hold this delusive view think that "the mind is eternal and that appearance is transitory" and equate this with the wondrous Dharma of the Buddhas and think that they have broken free from life and death; but this is the original cause of life and death. Isn't this shamefully silly? This is nothing but a deluded view skewed outside of the Way. Don't let your ears

touch it.

Still, I need to address this issue, and so I will now rectify this delusion out of compassion. Understand that in the Buddha Dharma body and mind are single; nature and form are spoken of as not-two. This is known throughout both the Western heavens and Eastern lands and is beyond any doubt. In a school that talks about eternity, the myriad things are all eternal and body and mind is undivided. In a school that talks about cessation, all things are ceasing and nature and form are not divided. How can you say that the body ceases while the mind is eternal in contradiction to this true principle? You must further realize that life and death itself is nirvana. We cannot talk about nirvana without life and death. It is wrong to think that the view that "the mind becomes eternal when it is free from the body" is the Buddha's wisdom that is free from life and death, when the mind that thinks this is itself arising and ceasing and is not eternal. Could this be relied upon? Understand thoroughly that the singleness of body and mind is always upheld in the Buddha Dharma. And so, how could the mind go off from the body to be eternal when the body arises and perishes? If you say that body and mind are sometimes one and sometimes not, this would mean you are saying that the Buddha's words are false. To think that birth and death can be avoided is guilty of despising the Buddha Dharma. Caution is needed here.

The Buddha Dharma, especially the Lineage that speaks of "the Dharma Gate of the totality of the nature of Awareness as the vast array" of the total world of events and experiences does not divide suchness from appearance, nor arising from vanishing. Even bodhi and nirvana are nothing but this nature of Awareness. All things and appearances without exception are totally and only this single Awareness and are embraced without disarray. The various Dharma Gates are all equally this single Awareness. This is how the nature of mind is understood in the Buddha Dharma. How can you divide this into body and mind or life and death from nirvana? You are already a child of the Buddha so do not listen to madmen who preach views that are skewed outside of the Way.

(this translation by Ven. Anzan Hoshin roshi and Ven. Yasuda Joshu Dainen roshi at <http://wwwzc.org/dharma-text/bendowa>

another English version is available from Shasta Abbey  
<http://www.shastaabbey.org/pdf/shobo/001bendo.pdf> )

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 21st, 2014 at 7:26 PM

Title: Re: why is Vajrayana considered the fastest way to buddhahood

Content:

frank123 said:

I'm new to Buddhism and exploring various traditions and schools. I'm wondering if it takes incalculable eons to reach buddhahood through sutra approach what makes it possible to achieve buddhahood in one lifetime through vajrayana methods? why is there such a vast difference in time? seems so extreme.

Malcolm wrote:

Mahāyāna etc., are paths of renunciation.

Vajrayāna is a path of non-renunciation.

Mahāyāna has no special methods.

Vajrayāna is the vehicle of methods.

Mahāyāna has no system of coordinating the basis, the five aggregates, with the result.

Vajrayāna is the vehicle with the basis, the five aggregates is coordinated with the result through the empowerment rites.

Mahāyāna is a causal vehicle in that they practice creating the causes for awakening for three or more, i.e. the cause is taken as the path.

Vajrayāna is the resultant vehicle because here, the result, the three kāyas, is taken as the path.

Mahāyāna and so on are for people of lower intelligence.

Vajrayāna is for people of sharper intelligence.

Mahāyāna is for people who have less afflictions and can easily give up desires and so on.

Vajrayāna is for people who are highly afflicted and cannot easily give up desires and so on.

Mahāyāna is the practice for past ages when the five degenerations were not so rampant.

Vajrayāna is the practice for this age, when the five degenerations are very rampant.

And so on. These are the usual reasons given in Vajrayāna texts.

frank123 said:

Thank you for the reply.

There is such a vast difference between three incalculable eons and one human lifespan, even if the methods are faster etc. I am still perplexed with this extraordinary difference in time.

Malcolm wrote:

Fundamentally, speaking, according to Vajrayāna texts, the extraordinary difference in time is due to the fact that Vajrayāna practices use the body as the vehicle for liberation, as well as other special methods, that allow a very serious practitioner to gather the two accumulations that normally require three eons in a single lifetime.

M



Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 21st, 2014 at 7:29 PM

Title: Re: Death at Tibetan Buddhist meditation retreat in Arizona

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

It's a problem that so many people find their Buddhism on the shelves of Barnes and Noble's.

Sherab Dorje said:

Don't be so judgmental, we all have to start somewhere. The problem is where do we go from there. I have run into my fair share of bogus teachers too (as have you, I imagine). Some compassion is needed at this point, as the lemmings rush towards the cliff.

Malcolm wrote:

What I am implying is that when one goes into a Barnes and Noble's, one sees books of various authors, and there is no guide to which authors are more legit, less legit and so on. Then people read a book, they like what it says, and they decide to make a Dharma connection with the author. It's a bit of a crap shoot.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 21st, 2014 at 8:08 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

pensum said:

So if you do come across the chapter you mention please pass it along, as obviously i'd be interested in reading it.

Malcolm wrote:

Here is a random sampling, running a quick word search on the pdf you provided from Shasta Abbey. From these samplings you can Dogen was a follower of Mainstream Buddhism, and took the idea of rebirth quite literally.

The kesa, from ancient times, has been called 'the garment of liberation', for it can free us from all our obstructions, be they from the karmic\* effects of our past deeds, from our defiling passions, or from the effects of our rebirth in one of the six worlds\* of existence.

What we call the three temporal periods are the three time periods in which we receive the retribution from our good and evil acts. These are, first, the retribution experienced in one's present life; second, the retribution experienced in one's next life; and third, the retribution experienced in some later future life. Through your practice of the Way of the Buddhas and Ancestors you learn, first off, to clarify what the principle of karmic retribution in these three time periods is. If you do not do so, you will make many errors and fall into false views. You will not just fall into false views, you will also give rise to evil ways and undergo

suffering for a long time. By failing to continue developing your good roots, you will lose much spiritual merit and will have long-standing obstructions on your path to enlightenment.

The karmic retribution experienced in these three temporal periods comes from both good and evil acts.

Right view is a gate to what the Dharma illumines, for by means of it we can realize the Saintly Path and exhaust the stream of rebirths.

Right thought is a gate to what the Dharma illumines, for by means of it we eliminate all discriminatory judgments, as well as any lack of discernment.

Right speech is a gate to what the Dharma illumines, for by means of it we will recognize that all names, voicings, and words are simply like vibrations.

Right livelihood is a gate to what the Dharma illumines, for by means of it we rid ourselves of all our evil ways.

Right action is a gate to what the Dharma illumines, for by means of it we arrive at the Other Shore.

Right mindfulness is a gate to what the Dharma illumines, for by means of it we do not intellectualize all thoughts and things.

Right concentration is a gate to what the Dharma illumines, for by means of it we can attain the meditative state that is beyond scattered thoughts.

It is clear that the desire to be reborn within the human world is something longed for even by a Lord Yama. Once someone has been reborn as a human being, he or she should forthwith have their head shaved, don the kesa of the Three Treasures, and take up the study of the Way of the Buddha. These are the merits of being within the world of humans, which surpasses the other five worlds of existence.

But to be born in the human world and then to wantonly seek out the path to political power or some other worldly career, vainly spending one's life as a toady to ministers and kings, wrapping oneself up in fantasies and dreams, only to proceed in later times towards pitch darkness without anything to rely upon, that is folly indeed! Not only have you received the body of a human being, which is hard to come by, but you have also encountered the Buddha Dharma, which is hard to encounter. You should forthwith cast aside all your involvements and quickly leave home life behind in order to study the Way. Rulers and ministers, along with their wives and children, their relatives and households, are encountered everywhere, but the Buddha Dharma, like the rare udumbara blossom, is hard to meet up with. In short, when impermanence suddenly arrives, there is no ruler or minister, friend or relative, spouse or child, or any precious treasure that will save us, for each of us simply returns to death's Yellow Spring alone.<sup>24</sup> What follows along with us is simply our good and bad karma. When we are about to lose our human body, our feelings of regret for our human body may well be deep indeed! So, while we still

have our human body, we should quickly leave home life behind. Just this alone will be the true Teaching of the Buddhas of the three temporal worlds.

When all bodhisattvas who are bound to be reborn one final time are about to descend from the Tushita Heaven to be born in the land of Jambudvīpa,\* they invariably proclaim the one hundred and eight gates to what the Dharma illumines for the sake of the celestial multitudes in the Tushita Heaven, and thereby pass on the Teaching to those celestial ones, for this is the invariable method of Buddhas.

After darkness has come before our eyes, we should, right off, strive to recite the Three Refuges, not shirking from this even during our entering the intermediate world or our next birth. In this way, we should thoroughly expend life after life and, in age after age, reverently recite Them.

Once you have given rise to the intention to seek enlightenment, even though you are spinning about through the six worlds\* of existence, being born through any of the four modes of birth, the very causes and conditions of your spinning will become your heartfelt practice of enlightenment.

We do not know how many rounds of birth and death we have already spent returning again and again to various useless delusions, even while possessing this wisdom. It is like rocks covering up a jewel: the jewel is unaware that it is covered up by rocks and the rocks are unaware that they are covering up a jewel. When human beings recognize this jewel, they seize upon it. This is not something that the jewel expectantly awaits nor is it something that the rocks have been waiting for, and it does not depend on a spiritual awakening on the part of the rocks nor is it something that the jewel thinks about. That is to say, even though a human being and wisdom are unaware of each other, the Way is invariably overheard by the person's wisdom.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 21st, 2014 at 8:15 PM

Title: Re: why is Vajrayana considered the fastest way to buddhahood

Content:

saraswati said:

I am somewhat confused with this idea of reaching Buddhahood in this very lifetime: I've learned that part of Vajrayana is taking the Bodhisattva vows, where we pledge to \*not\* take up Buddhahood asap but to postpone it until all beings are liberated. If this is so, how does it fit in with the fast path to Buddhahood? Or is it the case that Vajrayana is not always a Bodhisattva-based approach?

Malcolm wrote:

There are three different types of bodhisattva vows: like a king, like a captain, and like a

shepherd.

The king-like bodhisattva vow involves the wish to achieve buddhahood as soon as possible, in order to guide others to that state, like a king ruling a country.

The captain-like bodhisattva vow involves the wish to achieve buddhahood at the same time as all other sentient beings, like a captain arriving in port at the same time as his passengers.

The shepherd-like bodhisattva vow involves attaining buddhahood only after all sentient beings have attained buddhahood, like a shepherd who only rests after his flock is safely penned for the night.

Vajrayāna uses the first of these. In other words, our bodhisattva vow states " May I attain the state of Buddhahood in order to place all other sentient beings in that state."

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 21st, 2014 at 8:22 PM

Title: Re: Is Rebirth Unscientific?

Content:

Wayfarer said:

Well I for one am trying to combat it with reasoned argument and analysis. If we can't do that then what is the point of being here?

Malcolm wrote:

You think you are alone? The reasoning is very simple. The Buddha demonstrated a path to awakening which involve certain assumptions. If those assumptions are true, so is the Buddha's path, and the Buddha's awakening is validated. If not. then not.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 21st, 2014 at 8:31 PM

Title: Re: China expands new measures to directly control Tibetan m

Content:

Indrajala said:

What I see in this thread is the general theme of "China is really bad and needs to be nicer to Tibetans" which is far too simplistic and fails to address a number of details and geopolitical concerns.

Malcolm wrote:

Chinese policies towards Tibetans are brutal and crimes against humanity. Stating that we who live in Western countries have nothing to say against the Chinese Government's treatment of Tibetans because our governments, yours included, are engaged in various nefarious deeds is a non-sequitar. It sounds just like the Chinese Government's justification of their treatment of Tibetans because we in the US and Canada drove our native peoples here to the brink of extinction.

Your geopolitical concerns are just excuses. You never once condemn the Chinese Government for their actions, you merely say "I don't condone them". That is not a condemnation.

Indrajala said:

This doesn't justify anyone's misdeeds, but to really come to viable solutions for the human suffering in Tibet requires a bit more developed ideas that factor in everything I've attempted several times to outline above (particularly long and short term strategic issues).

Malcolm wrote:

The first step is to recognize that what the Chinese Government is doing and has been doing to the Tibetan people is a crime against humanity. Until you cross that bridge, you just continue to apologize for Chinese geopolitical concerns. It's like saying, "Well, there is abuse in Tibetan monasteries, but you have to understand the situation, and because of this and that reason, we really can't change it, so the little kids should just suck it up and try to assimilate."

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 21st, 2014 at 8:34 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Here is a random sampling, running a quick word search on the pdf you provided from Shasta Abbey. From these samplings you can Dogen was a follower of Mainstream Buddhism, and took the idea of rebirth quite literally.

pensum said:

Thanks Malcolm. I am familiar with those passages (and others). It is interesting that out of the thousands of pages that Dogen wrote he does not appear to have ever penned a sustained treatment of rebirth. Focusing instead on actual practice here and now in this life, he merely makes the occasional passing reference to rebirth in order to spur one's practice.

Malcolm wrote:

Why would he have to? He was in a monastic environment training educated monks, not lay ignoramuses. However the Karma chapter can be understood as just that. Context is everything in understand the authors of these texts.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 21st, 2014 at 8:41 PM

Title: Re: why is Vajrayana considered the fastest way to buddhahood

Content:

saraswati said:

Ah, thank you very much Malcolm.

Do all the schools of Tibetan Buddhism share the same interpretation? I must say I haven't tuned in to the subtle differences between the vows I have heard chanted. (So far I have been to Gelug and Kagyu centres.)

Malcolm wrote:

Yes they do. The shepherd-like vow is considered the most superior, but the king-like vow the most practical.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 21st, 2014 at 9:14 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

T. Chokyi said:

[http://www.religiondispatches.org/archive/science/3631/for\\_buddhism\\_\\_science\\_is\\_not\\_a\\_killer\\_of\\_religion](http://www.religiondispatches.org/archive/science/3631/for_buddhism__science_is_not_a_killer_of_religion)

Malcolm wrote:

Big problem with this article:

This cosmology held until the 16th century, when European explorers arrived in India with a new religion and a new cosmology. The Earth, these visitors insisted, is not flat or disc-shaped, but is instead an enormous ball. This idea met with stiff resistance from the natives.

Actually, this is false. Indians understood the earth was a round ball, as explained in the Surya Siddhanta.

T. Chokyi said:

it peels away all the claptrap

Malcolm wrote:

This is offensive.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 21st, 2014 at 9:15 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

pensum said:

Indeed, it is a pretty safe assumption that rebirth was widely accepted amongst his audience, and even among the general population in 13th century Japan. Luckily several of his most famous texts are dedicated to the notion of life-and-death, which I personally find to be rather profound and inspiring reads.

Malcolm wrote:

You will note however he does exercise some attention to refuting those who reject rebirth.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 21st, 2014 at 9:28 PM

Title: Re: China expands new measures to directly control Tibetan m

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Chinese policies towards Tibetans are brutal and crimes against humanity.

Indrajala said:

I agree, but when you're rich and powerful your "crimes against humanity" are seldom punished (recall Bush and Blair).

Malcolm wrote:

Finally. It is like pulling your teeth to get you to admit that Chinese policies towards Tibetans are inhumane and savage.

Indrajala said:

...there are millions of lives at stake and the political stability for the PRC.

Malcolm wrote:

There is no political stability at stake for the PRC if they left the Tibetans alone to do their thing. And that they do not do. There is no necessity for the Chinese Govt. to act with such swift brutality against a people who are culturally averse to organized military violence. If the Chinese Govt., had an ounce of sense they would bring back HHDL, restore Tibet, restore Tibetan culture, and turn Tibet into their new best friend.

Indrajala said:

I don't think "we" can change China's policies. Do you think "we" can? I don't think dozens of years of activism has done much to change their minds.

Malcolm wrote:

Actually, it has made the Chinese Govt. very uncomfortable, which is why they keep shifting their policies towards Tibet. So this signals to me that the pressure of international criticism of the policies of the Chinese Govt. with regards to Tibet are in fact effective.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 21st, 2014 at 9:59 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

T. Chokyi said:

Secondly, you might want to address directly what Dzongar Khentse Rinpoche has to

say or not say about who is Buddhist or not.

Malcolm wrote:

As Sakya Pandita points out, and as Dzogzar Khyentse, A Sakya educated man, knows, acceptance of the four seals is not sufficient to be called a Buddhist. Why? Because the largest monastic school in India, the Pudgalavadins, believed in an inexpressible self that was neither the same as nor different from the aggregates which underwent rebirth.

Instead Sapan opines that in order to be called a "Buddhist" one must have taken refuge in the Three Jewels, be training on the path [implicit in going for refuge] or have realized the fruit of the path.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 21st, 2014 at 10:17 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

T. Chokyi said:

Secondly, you might want to address directly what Dzongar Khentse Rinpoche has to say or not say about who is Buddhist or not.

Malcolm wrote:

As Sakya Pandita points out, and as Dzogzar Khyentse, A Sakya educated man, knows, acceptance of the four seals is not sufficient to be called a Buddhist. Why? Because the largest monastic school in India, the Pudgalavadins, believed in an inexpressible self that was neither the same as nor different from the aggregates which underwent rebirth.

Instead Sapan opines that in order to be called a "Buddhist" one must have taken refuge in the Three Jewels, be training on the path [implicit in going for refuge] or have realized the fruit of the path.

T. Chokyi said:

"Buddhist" as you know, is a label. It is a word describing something you yourself said you weren't not that long ago...

when you had a kind of "realization" about that...

Malcolm wrote:

Well, what I am is a follower of Buddhadharma. One of the reasons that I eschew the label "Buddhist" for myself is that I am not any particular kind of Buddhist. The term "Buddhist" in many ways is too limiting. I have met "Buddhists" who imagine that because they are Buddhists they cannot take teachings from teachers in other streams of Dharma outside Buddhadharma. I personally have no problem with it. That is why I follow Dharma, and Buddhadharma in particular. All Dharma religions, incidentally, accept rebirth.

However, I have also found that conventionally, it is easier to resort to the term



Buddhism and Buddhist in common conversations with others.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 21st, 2014 at 10:21 PM

Title: Re: Is Rebirth Unscientific?

Content:

oushi said:

There is always this small chance that Buddhas true path was lost long time ago, and we are only juggling with ideas created by fanatic believers.

Malcolm wrote:

I don't believe this.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 21st, 2014 at 10:53 PM

Title: Re: Is Rebirth Unscientific?

Content:

dharmagoat said:

There is a fundamental contradiction in Buddhism:

The Buddha is known as an independent thinker and innovator. We are encouraged to emulate him, yet are obliged to follow his teaching without question and without making any compensation for the enormous social and cultural changes that have occurred over the 2000+ years since it was written down.

Malcolm wrote:

You are obliged only to understand what the Buddha himself meant by suffering, the cause of suffering, it's cessation, and the path.

Despite all the enormous cultural changes, there is one thing that is still true: there is suffering because of karma, and there is karma because of affliction.

The Buddha framed his entire teaching in terms of rebirth. If this is discarded, then Buddha's teachings collapse like an old house.

There is no point in teaching a path to nirvana if there is no rebirth in samsara.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 21st, 2014 at 11:53 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

LionelTeo said:

the subconscious mind...

Malcolm wrote:  
...does not exist.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 21st, 2014 at 11:58 PM

Title: Re: Is Rebirth Unscientific?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The Buddha framed his entire teaching in terms of rebirth. If this is discarded, then Buddha's teachings collapse like an old house.

dharmagoat said:

I have complete faith in the Buddha...

Malcolm wrote:

Apparently you don't because you say:

I do not believe in past lives...

This is fine, you do the best you can. Practice the four brahmaviharas, if you do, then in this life you will be more relaxed.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 22nd, 2014 at 12:10 AM

Title: Re: Is Rebirth Unscientific?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Praṇā and warmth are the supports for consciousness.

Andrew108 said:

But it has energy. Warmth? What do you mean warmth? If it had no mass how could it have warmth? Bizarre.

Malcolm wrote:

Consciousness does not have warmth, warmth is a support for consciousness, as is life force.

The preceding moment of consciousness, i.e. the mental organ (manendriya) acts as the support for consciousness the same way that a son becomes the father of another; a fruit, the seed of another.

The preceding moment of consciousness is as massless as the following moment? So how does a massless mental organ exist? The examples you give all have mass.

Well, "organ" is not a completely adequate translation of indriya. Indriya really means "faculty" or power. The mental organ is not an organ like cakṣuendriya, for example, i.e. the eye faculty.

No substrate is necessary, according to Madhyamakās. The Yogācāra sūtras propose the ālayavijñāna to account for memory, continuity and so on.

But a mental organ is necessary or is the mental organ something that is made at the

same time as the following moment of consciousness?

No, the mental faculty (lets not call it an organ since that is really not the right term) is the immediately preceding moment of consciousness.

The point here is that the mental organ and the moment of consciousness can't exist at the same time. So one must precede the other and therefore you have continuity based on a continuing mental organ and moment of consciousness. Here continuing mental organ is no other than functional 'substrate' for continuing moment of consciousness. There is a continuing mental faculty in as much as this moment of consciousness always arises on the basis of the previous moment; the immediately antecedent moment of consciousness is always the mental faculty.

Seeds and sprouts cannot exist at the same time, still, sprouts come from seeds, and produce other seeds all in good time, when there is proper cause and condition. So this doesn't accord with Madhyamaka reasoning or the definitive teachings of Buddha.

It obviously corresponds with Madhyamaka teachings since Candrakirti instructs us that the functions of memory and so on are worldly conventions, and as such should not be examined. Or did you just choose to ignore the citation about memory taken from his commentary on MAV 6:75. Ultimately, of course, it cannot bear analysis -- but then, neither can any conventional phenomena. Still, since we are deluded, in the refined sense of not being free from grasping at self, for us conventional truth is where we live. Consciousness is driven by thirst for existence.

So it has that kind of characteristic? How does it know to strive for existence? Or is it like a seed striving to find the light? Is it instinctive? If so then how can a massless thing like consciousness also have instinct and striving?

As before, consciousness is that which knows objects. When it is contaminated, it experiences craving.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 22nd, 2014 at 12:11 AM

Title: Re: Is Rebirth Unscientific?

Content:

dharmagoat said:

The apparent contradiction is due to the fact that I attribute the Buddha's teaching of literal rebirth to skillful means on his part. But that is a point of contention that I feel it best not to elaborate on.

Malcolm wrote:

There is actually no evidence that this is the case. There is piles of evidence that Buddha took rebirth literally himself.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 22nd, 2014 at 12:22 AM

Title: Re: Is Rebirth Unscientific?

Content:

dharmagoat said:

The apparent contradiction is due to the fact that I attribute the Buddha's teaching of literal rebirth to skillful means on his part. But that is a point of contention that I feel it best not to elaborate on.

Malcolm wrote:

There is actually no evidence that this is the case. There is piles of evidence that Buddha took rebirth literally himself.

dharmagoat said:

Then maybe I don't have complete faith in the Buddha after all. Arrgh!

Malcolm wrote:

My advice is that you should practice as if you accept rebirth. A Buddhist version of Pascal's wager, as it were.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 22nd, 2014 at 12:26 AM

Title: Re: Is Rebirth Unscientific?

Content:

Andrew108 said:

I was talking about tha mal gyi shes pa. Which is very close.

asunthatneversets said:

Sems and tha mal gyi shes pa are only 'close' in the same sense that gold and pyrite are 'close', in appearance. However they are not 'close' at all in fundamental characteristic or constitution.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, in the sense that thoughts (citta) are contaminated consciousness, and "ordinary mind" is an untainted consciousness, i.e. ye shes. So the difference is more like gold in gold ore and refined gold, rather than a substantial difference. The shes pa is the same in both.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 22nd, 2014 at 12:29 AM

Title: Re: why is Vajrayana considered the fastest way to buddhahood

Content:

kirtu said:

However just following Cittimatra in some form is sutric. But if you take a Cittamatra POV of emptiness for tantra, then that is tantra. Someone like Mipham Rinpoche \*may\* have then teased out the results of tantric practice following the Cittamatra in his writings.

Malcolm wrote:

We already know what happens when Cittamatrins practice Vajrayāna, they become Virupa.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 22nd, 2014 at 12:31 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

LionelTeo said:

What is most important is everyone becomes a better person at the end is all that matters.

Malcolm wrote:

One does not need Buddhism to become a better person.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 22nd, 2014 at 12:39 AM

Title: Re: China expands new measures to directly control Tibetan m

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Finally. It is like pulling your teeth to get you to admit that Chinese policies towards Tibetans are inhumane and savage.

Indrajala said:

My ongoing point has been that despite moral judgments, their behavior is predictably politically amoral because that's often how politics works. Their behavior might be reprehensible to many, but they're acting logically, and the leadership seems to feel that their policies are warranted. Human rights and so on are very alien concepts to much of the world, but then from the Chinese perspective the west just uses "human rights" to bully their opponents and justify acts of unwarranted violence against innocent people. So in their minds why care about human rights?

Malcolm wrote:

The point here, Jeff, is whether their behavior is reprehensible to you.

Indrajala said:

There is no political stability at stake for the PRC if they left the Tibetans alone to do their thing.

Do you think India wouldn't try to get the Tibetans on their side? What about the border control and Xinjiang? If Tibet gets autonomy, so should Xinjiang, and Xinjiang is easily another Afghanistan in the making. These would presumably be issues apparent to China's leadership.

Malcolm wrote:

Tibetans do not have a good relationship with Muslims in general. So China would have no worries on that score. In fact, if China eased up on Tibetans, supported their national culture, education, gave them education in Tibetan as their primary language will sponsoring CSL programs, as well as TSL programs for Han immigrants into Tibet, etc., if the Chinese stopped discriminating against Tibetans for jobs, and so on, and did a 180, the Tibetans would happily be part of a New China, and would probably even gladly join the PLA and fight Muslim terrorists. Really, I think most of your opinions come from have very little familiarity with Tibetans inside Tibet. But right now the Chinese have given the Tibetans NO reason to have a stake in Chinese security on any level. You have no idea about the resentment that Tibetans inside Tibet have against exile Tibetans, nor the piles of shit Tibetans from Tibet get from exile Tibetans in places like Dharamsala.

Indrajala said:

If the Chinese Govt., had an ounce of sense they would bring back HHDL, restore Tibet, restore Tibetan culture, and turn Tibet into their new best friend.  
Have you been reading the idealist Thurman?

Malcolm wrote:

[/quote]

Nope, but it is just plain common sense — you catch more flies with honey than vinegar.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 22nd, 2014 at 1:23 AM

Title: Re: Is Rebirth Unscientific?

Content:

Andrew108 said:

Malcolm's point is that the Buddha asserted literal rebirth...

Malcolm wrote:

literally thousands of times, even if you only accept the Mainstream canon (Nikayas/Agamas).

Andrew108 said:

The problem we have is not that we doubt the Buddha's realization and overcoming of suffering, but we doubt that there was a 'reliable witness' to report all of what the Buddha would/could have said if we or someone like us, had been there.

Malcolm wrote:

But you must doubt it. You are merely taking Buddha's realization and overcoming of suffering on blind faith Why can't you see this defect in your own thinking: to wit; you claim to accept the Buddha was a realized person, and yet you reject everything the Buddha says about the terms of how he came to be a realized person. Do you not see the internal contradictions in your own statements?

Andrew108 said:

So the sutras we have need to speak to our condition as we find it now. That is the definition of 'reliable witness'.

Malcolm wrote:

You really do have the strangest ideas. A reliable witness is someone whose testimony is beyond reproach, not someone who caters to our biases.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 22nd, 2014 at 1:56 AM

Title: Re: China expands new measures to directly control Tibetan m

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The point here, Jeff, is whether their behavior is reprehensible to you.

Indrajala said:

Of course I feel it is wrong to kill, harm and imprison innocent people, but I also recognize that if the Chinese leadership plays their cards wrong then there are a lot more lives than the Tibetans at stake. You seem to think that idealistically if they just did the right thing everything would work out for the best and Tibetans would forgive and forget, but Chinese civilization has many centuries of experience which renders their political thinking cold and calculating because the alternatives haven't always worked out in the past.

Malcolm wrote:

No "buts", Jeff. It is either acceptable or it is not.

Indrajala said:

Their position is really ugly because they inherited territories that were conquered by Mao in earlier decades which were never really part of China. Nevertheless, they have to govern them in the face of hostile neighboring states (India) and now non-national threats (Jihadists). On top of that by virtue of ruling Tibet they have a threatening deterrent against their neighbors which ensures relative peace (India is unlikely to push China into a war, and avoiding war is desirable). In the real world peace is established by having a threatening deterrent against potential enemies. You can be virtuous and honorable, but your enemies don't have to be and probably won't be.

Malcolm wrote:

India is "hostile" because of absurd PRC claims about where their border is. China made their enemies all on their own.

Indrajala said:

Buddhist ethics in the realm of geopolitics are problematic because if you try to be the good guy you can easily end up shot in the back by those who don't play by the rules, and then those whose welfare you were charged with suffer tremendously because you

failed your job. Classical Buddhist literature comments on how hard it is being king because you have to commit misdeeds in the course of your duties.

Malcolm wrote:

Understood. Kings and leaders are fools.

Indrajala said:

In any case, I doubt most members on this forum really understand what I am saying because they have a religious belief that China is the model Devil that everyone loves to hate. Almost nobody here is trying to see things from their side. It is just a lot of finger pointing and condemnation, which is reflective of how activists operate in the Tibetan Buddhist scene it seems. As I said, this is really simplistic and doesn't really help to solve the issues at hand.

Malcolm wrote:

[/quote]

Jeff, I don't hate China. I have been there on more than one occasion. I understand why they do what they do, but I will never see things "from their side" because what they are doing is wrong, just as I don't see things from the side of the US Govt., I don't see thing from the side of the Mexican Govt. w/regards to Chiapas; or the Israeli Govt. w/regards to Palestine; or the Myanmar Regime w/regards to the Rohingyas (which is more of an issue having to with border security than anything else, and the Rohingyas are caught in the middle), Japanese Govt. w/regards to ethnic Koreans in Japan and so on.

In other words, I think it is deplorable when Buddhists apologize for atrocity, discrimination, etc., for any reason.

I don't have a personal stake in the Tibetan Nationalist cause, I have never been active in it, never demonstrated. I actually got a good report card from the Party Secretary in the school (we all did) when I was in China for not stirring up anti-Chinese sentiment amongst Tibetans I came into contact with while doing my internship and so on. But Tibet is an important place. It is environmentally important, politically important, and so on to the whole world, not just the Chinese.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 22nd, 2014 at 2:23 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

pensum said:

Besides there are countless gateways to the Dharma so who is to say that attempting to disprove the Buddha isn't one of them?

Malcolm wrote:

A much misunderstood point. There are 84 thousand doors to dharma because there are 21,000 doors for addressing the three afflictions, and the three afflictions combined.



In other words, all doors to the Dharma involve addressing the three poisons and nothing else. So they can be included in four, or, since the root of the three poisons is self-grasping, there is only one, since all Dharma practice bears on that point. And why you would want to remove self-grasping? Because it is the force that causes us to take rebirth in samsara again and again. Mainstream Buddhism, Mahāyāna and Vajrayāna all stem the desire to eradicate this single root.

pensum said:

So the tradition itself provides the standard for those who do not surrender to faith so easily and first require sound logic and empirical evidence which they can see with their own (unawakened, fleshy) eyes.

Malcolm wrote:

The funny thing is that there are folks here who take it on faith that Buddha was a buddha, and yet spend endless energy trying to prove that the awakening Buddha taught is not what he really meant. I mean, doesn't it strike you as odd to on the one hand accept that the Buddha was buddha on faith, and then spend all this effort refuting the Buddha's own teaching?

It seems to me that such people really ought to start from beginning:

- 1) What does "buddha" mean?
  - 2) Having discerned what "buddha" means, do I believe in this state?
  - 3) Was Buddha actually a buddha?
- etc.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 22nd, 2014 at 2:33 AM

Title: Re: Is Rebirth Unscientific?

Content:

Andrew108 said:

Buddha speaks directly to our condition in the Kālāma Sutta. Through following this teaching and other definitive teachings we become the 'reliable witness'.

Malcolm wrote:

Buddha is talking to a group of non-Buddhists in that text. He then leaves them the "ngondro" of the four brahma-viharas. But he does not teach them any path at all, for the four brahma-viharas are not a path since they do not lead out of samsara.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 22nd, 2014 at 2:35 AM

Title: Re: Is Rebirth Unscientific?

Content:

dharmagoat said:

What troubles me is this idea that any rearrangement of the teachings merely serves to "cater to our biases", instead of, as Andrew describes it, "speaking to our condition as we find it now". The difference seems to be lost on you, which is unfortunate.

Malcolm wrote:

First of all, why do you even believe there is such a thing as awakening? What reason do you have to believe such a state is even possible?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 22nd, 2014 at 2:37 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

pensum said:

of course it only seems reasonable that now various skillful means ought to be developed for those with a scientific bent.

Malcolm wrote:

There is no need. People of a scientific bent are still just deluded sentient beings. There are sufficient means for everyone already.

People of a scientific bent will need to ask themselves whether they actually believe there is such a thing a awakening.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 22nd, 2014 at 2:42 AM

Title: Re: China expands new measures to directly control Tibetan m

Content:

Indrajala said:

Weren't you fine with the Bhutanese booting out the Nepalis, where Nepalis born in Bhutan were selectively identified and ejected from the country (i.e., discrimination by a Buddhist state)?

Malcolm wrote:

I am fine with illegal Mexican immigrants being deported from the US, why should I not be fine with illegal Nepali immigrants being deported from Bhutan?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 22nd, 2014 at 2:43 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The funny thing is that there are folks here who take it on faith that Buddha was a buddha, and yet spend endless energy trying to prove that the awakening Buddha taught is not what he really meant. I mean, doesn't it strike you as odd to on the one hand accept that the Buddha was buddha on faith, and then spend all this effort refuting the Buddha's own teaching?

dharmagoat said:

Who truly appreciates the breadth and depth of the Buddha's skillful means?

Malcolm wrote:

Um, this is a total non-sequitar.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 22nd, 2014 at 3:25 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

People of a scientific bent will need to ask themselves whether they actually believe there is such a thing a awakening.

dharmagoat said:

And if the answer is 'yes', what then?

Malcolm wrote:

Why do you believe such thing.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 22nd, 2014 at 3:28 AM

Title: Re: Is Rebirth Unscientific?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

First of all, why do you even believe there is such a thing as awakening? What reason do you have to believe such a state is even possible?

dharmagoat said:

Because I have experienced the very beginning of the process (who hasn't?). It is natural to expect more to follow.

Malcolm wrote:

And you consider this sufficient to accept Buddha was an awakened person, yet you disbelieve when rebirth is central to his teachings.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 22nd, 2014 at 3:33 AM

Title: Re: gDangs And mDangs: Differences In Meaning?

Content:

asunthatneversets said:

A few other questions:

Which is the proper Wylie transliteration for 'dang', in the context of the three energies: dang, rol pa and rtsal [gdangs or mdangs]? Because I have seen both used in that context.

Which [gdangs or mdangs] is the vital essence (dang) spoken of in Tibetan medicine?

How about this third term 'dwangs'? Is dwangs simply an orthographic variant of one of the above terms?

When Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche makes a statement such as "The dang of emptiness is rigpa", which variant [gdangs or mdangs] is he using?

Malcolm wrote:

- 1) gdangs
- 2) mdangs, it is a translation of ojas.
- 3) dwangs ma is the nutriment, it means refined essence.
- 4) gdangs.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 22nd, 2014 at 9:26 AM

Title: Re: why is Vajrayana considered the fastest way to buddhahood

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Fundamentally, speaking, according to Vajrayāna texts, the extraordinary difference in time is due to the fact that Vajrayāna practices uses the body as the vehicle for liberation, as well as other special methods, that allow a very serious practitioner to gather the two accumulations that normally require three eons in a single lifetime.

M

TRC said:

Using the "body as the vehicle for liberation." Yeah that's right. Kind of like what the Buddha was saying

<http://www.accesstoinight.org/tipitaka/an/an04/an04.045.than.html>

"Yet it is just within this fathom-long body, with its perception & intellect, that I declare that there is the cosmos, the origination of the cosmos, the cessation of the cosmos, and the path of practice leading to the cessation of the cosmos."

But hold on, that's not a 'vajrayana' practice, just 'sutrayana'. Perhaps the differences between the practices aren't really as different as the rhetoric likes to make out.

Malcolm wrote:  
It is completely different.

TRC said:  
So Malcolm, do you have any actual evidence that the vajrayana path is really quicker, that are not just claims and boasts?

Malcolm wrote:  
Do you have any evidence the Buddha was even awakened?

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Thursday, May 22nd, 2014 at 9:38 AM  
Title: Re: why is Vajrayana considered the fastest way to buddhahood  
Content:  
Malcolm wrote:  
Do you have any evidence the Buddha was even awakened?

TRC said:  
Oh come on, is that the best you can do?

Malcolm wrote:  
That is the point, the evidence is the hundreds of biographies of masters in Tibet who achieved Buddhahood or the bhumis.

The evidence we have for Vajrayāna is the same evidence we have for the Buddha, the reports of their close disciples.

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Thursday, May 22nd, 2014 at 7:25 PM  
Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism  
Content:  
dharmagoat said:  
Could it be the last vestige of faith?

Malcolm wrote:  
That does not really answer the question. It is not a question whether science is "honest" -- indeed, there is as much faith and zeal among scientists in scientific endeavor as there is in evangelical Christians. The question is, can you reconcile what you truly have faith in, i.e. science, with the Buddha's teachings? Unlike Andrew, for example, I don't think that science has gotten at what consciousness is, they don't have the math for it, consciousness cannot be mathematically modeled. I don't think that science will ever be able to get at consciousness because consciousness is not a physical process, in the end, even though nama and rūpa do interact. But the interaction is strictly one way, consciousness interacts with matter, matter does not

interact with consciousness. Our brains, our physical eyes, our body are all, in essence, inert matter, conventionally speaking (forget about going into higher Buddhist teachings like Dzogchen where matter is merely the reified luminosity of consciousness).

Chemical processes do not amount to consciousness. There is no experiment that can produce consciousness. Consciousness cannot be created in a lab. There is no way to verify experimentally what consciousness is at all, that is, not by any means known to western science. But there is a means to know these things and it involves personally developing the skills to verify the Buddha's teachings on such issues. It's not hard, per se, you just have to be dedicated, and do the work.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 22nd, 2014 at 7:28 PM

Title: Re: why is Vajrayana considered the fastest way to buddhahood

Content:

santa100 said:

Bottom line is, though many masters from various schools claimed their attainment of "Buddhahood", per the suttas' teaching, it doesn't mean they have attained "Fully Enlightened" Buddha state for the Dispensation is still around. If they meant the state of Savakabuddha or Arahantship, then any Buddhist school would be just as good provided that its practitioner puts in their best effort to cultivate virtues, meditation, and wisdom (as mentioned from my previous post

<http://dharma.wheel.net/viewtopic.php?f=77&t=16555#p235263> )

Malcolm wrote:

Well, if your only standard is Mainstream Buddhism, such as Theravada or Sarvastivada, this is true. However, Mahāyāna and Vajrayāna has a different understanding of the issue, which is more authoritative for those who follow that teaching.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 22nd, 2014 at 7:34 PM

Title: Re: why is Vajrayana considered the fastest way to buddhahood

Content:

TRC said:

It has more to do with the practitioner than the path.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes and no.

There is no means for realizing total buddhahood in Mainstream Buddhism, not in Theravada, not in Sarvastivada nor in Dharmaguptaka, the only three Mainstream Buddhist schools left.

In Mahāyāna, total Buddhahood takes a minimum of three incalculable eons, for the best practitioner.

In Vajrayāna, total Buddhahood can be realized in a single lifetime by the best practitioner, but even if you do not practice, as long as you maintain your vows perfectly, one will achieve total Buddha within seven lifetimes.

You can either accept or reject these accounts as you wish. There is really nothing to argue about. Incidentally, I am merely reporting the assertions made in these schools. Whether one accepts these assertions or not depends upon one's own inclinations.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 22nd, 2014 at 7:36 PM

Title: Re: why is Vajrayana considered the fastest way to buddhahood

Content:

JKhedrup said:

However, from the headline of a thread, we can see what is written is an answer, from a Vajrayana POV, to a very specific question.

Malcolm wrote:

Thank you for reminding people of this.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 22nd, 2014 at 7:42 PM

Title: Re: Is Rebirth Unscientific?

Content:

Andrew108 said:

So far we have Malcolm saying that consciousness is massless, yet supported by warmth...

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, because in living bodies, there is warmth, in dead bodies, there is none. It's a simple empirical observation.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 22nd, 2014 at 7:45 PM

Title: Re: Is Rebirth Unscientific?

Content:

Andrew108 said:

I have to keep repeating myself because you are not understanding the implications of what I am saying. If consciousness is self-sustaining after death or even supported by 'warmth' (as per Malcolm) then it has energy. If it has energy it can be measured. That is it. We don't need to enter into a philosophical debate about the nature of energy. Just that consciousness, as described by Malcolm who claims to accurately represent the Buddhist view, has characteristics that should be measurable.

Malcolm wrote:

The warmth of a body inhabited by consciousness is measurable, but the consciousness that has appropriated that series of aggregates is not.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 22nd, 2014 at 10:04 PM

Title: Re: Is Rebirth Unscientific?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Well, if your only standard is Mainstream Buddhism, such as Theravada or Sarvastivada, this is true. However, Mahāyāna and Vajrayāna has a different understanding of the issue, which is more authoritative for those who follow that teaching.

santa100 said:

I'm not sure what you mean about Mainstream Buddhism. I have cited the sources from the Tipitaka, the Three Baskets that all schools of Buddhism recognize and study. It's not something only the Theravada studies, but the Mahayana and Tibetan schools do too. Please see the cross references <https://suttacentral.net/mn115> and <https://suttacentral.net/an4.180>. So I'm not sure which particular Mahayana or Vajrayana source you're referring to (please provide sutra references and related backup literatures) that contradicts the Buddha's teaching in the Tipitaka.

Malcolm wrote:

In Mahāyāna, and especially Vajrayāna, it is considered possible for there to be more than one nirmanakāya during a given Buddha's dispensation. However, it is only possible for there to be one supreme Nirmanakāya during any given dispensation in any given world system.

As for Tripitaka, do you mean the Tripitaka according to the Mainstream Schools, or are you including the Mahāyāna sutras and tantras in that designation?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 22nd, 2014 at 10:59 PM

Title: Re: why is Vajrayana considered the fastest way to buddhahood

Content:

Jamyang\_Tsering said:

Just for the record, if your search for quick enlightenment why not to try Zen!

## 28. Open Your Own Treasure House

Daiju visited the master Baso in China. Baso asked: "What do you seek?"

"Enlightenment," replied Daiju.



"You have your own treasure house. Why do you search outside?" Baso asked.

Daiju inquired: "Where is my treasure house?"

Baso answered: "What you are asking is your treasure house."

Daiju was enlightened! Ever after he urged his friends: "Open your own treasure house and use those treasures."

Malcolm wrote:

Awakening and Buddhahood are not the same thing.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 22nd, 2014 at 11:01 PM

Title: Re: why is Vajrayana considered the fastest way to buddhahood

Content:

Dan74 said:

The Buddha in Satipatthana Sutta says :

...

Of course there is a condition, "if". And to maintain the the Four Arisings for a week certainly requires a karma that is accumulated over some serious practice. But the same thing can be said about keeping the samaya. So yes, one lifetime, provided you've cultivated for x lifetimes that enables you to meet the right guru and keep the samaya... No?

Malcolm wrote:

There are no methods for attaining full Buddhahood in Mainstream Buddhism, even though a limited version of the bodhisattva path is taught.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 22nd, 2014 at 11:31 PM

Title: Re: why is Vajrayana considered the fastest way to buddhahood

Content:

Dan74 said:

The Buddha in Satipatthana Sutta says :

...

Of course there is a condition, "if". And to maintain the the Four Arisings for a week certainly requires a karma that is accumulated over some serious practice. But the same thing can be said about keeping the samaya. So yes, one lifetime, provided you've cultivated for x lifetimes that enables you to meet the right guru and keep the samaya... No?

Malcolm wrote:

There are no methods for attaining full Buddhahood in Mainstream Buddhism, even

thought a limited version of the bodhisattva path is taught.

Dan74 said:

This claim is hard to believe, since the Buddha is not really known for making such a distinction. The Suttas are about liberation, and according to them the arahats attain full release. Of course one can believe that there is something higher and beyond, but this is a belief, and one based on latter developments. I take it no one here surpassed arahatship?

But considering that most of us are not going to, and seeing that the Buddha taught that release is possible in this lifetime too, I think it takes the wind out of the Vajra claim. As far as I can make out, the speediest path is the one that one is ready to commit to fully, and the one with the right teacher and Sangha.

Malcolm wrote:

No one doubts that the Mainstream Buddhist path brings about freedom, in the sense of full freedom from afflictions, that is the awakening of an arhat or a pratyekabuddha. But that is not the awakening to which Vajrayāna refers. The awakening to which Vajrayāna refers is the full buddhahood that results from gathering the two accumulations as taught Mahāyāna. The bodhisattva path is not detailed in any of the Mainstream canons. For the Mainstream canons, it is extra-canonical.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 23rd, 2014 at 12:26 AM

Title: Re: why is Vajrayana considered the fastest way to buddhahood

Content:

santa100 said:

So I'm not sure which particular Mahayana or Vajrayana source you're referring to (please provide sutra references and related backup literatures) that contradicts the Buddha's teaching in the Tipitaka.

Malcolm wrote:

The Avatamska sūtra, volume nga, folio 147a, Lhasa:

Oh Jinaputras, when the samyaksambuddha, the unsurpassed dharmarāja, manifests with an unceasing manifestation of Dharma, the entire dharmadhātu is entirely filled with the cloud of dharmakāya, and truly shows a cloud of kāyas according to the inclinations of sentient beings. In this way, each and every sentient being is fully shown a cloud of kāyas being born; each and every sentient being is fully shown a cloud of nirmanakāyas; each and every sentient being is fully shown a cloud of kāyas of blessings; each and every sentient being is fully shown a cloud of rūpakāyas; each and every sentient being is fully shown a cloud of full accomplished variegated kāyas; each and every sentient being is fully shown a cloud of punyakāyas; each and every sentient being is fully shown a cloud of jñānakāyas; each and every sentient being is fully shown a cloud of unconquerable strong kāyas; each and every sentient being is fully shown a cloud of fearless splendid kāyas.

The Lanka states:

In delightful Akaniṣṭha,  
beyond the pure abodes,  
the true Buddha becomes a Buddha;  
an emanated one becomes a Buddha here.  
So you see, there is no reason any number of persons cannot become Buddha here on Jambudvīpa, because Buddhas do not, according to Mahāyāna, actually attain buddhahood here anyway.

It is true that teaching of the variegated nirmāṇkāya is more thoroughly taught in Vajrayāna texts, but it is present in Mahāyāna as well, as you can see from the above.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 23rd, 2014 at 12:29 AM

Title: Re: why is Vajrayana considered the fastest way to buddhahood

Content:

Dan74 said:

Unique - I haven't seen it yet.

Malcolm wrote:

Without fully studying Vajrayāna, you won't. And you cannot really study it without entering it. And you cannot enter it without making commitments, hence it is secret and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 23rd, 2014 at 12:47 AM

Title: Re: why is Vajrayana considered the fastest way to buddhahood

Content:

Dan74 said:

Does the Bodhisattva not have to attain liberation from delusion? So does the Vajra path speed that up?

Malcolm wrote:

Arhats are liberated from affliction, according the Sarvastivadins, Arhats and Pratyekabuddhas still possess a non-afflictive ignorance. Only a Buddha is completely free from all afflictive obscurations. Further, according the Lankāvatara, Arhats and Pratyekabuddhas are roused from the samādhi of cessation in which they enter at their death, only to begin on the bodhisattva path. There are also differences in the depth of emptiness taught in the Mainstream Canon, i.e. the Agamas and Nikayas.

So, yes, the Vajrayāna does speed up the process, because unlike common Mahāyāna where emptiness is the result, etc., Vajrayāna experientially introduces the wisdom to be realized right at the very beginning.

Since someone asked, I have answered.

Granted, in order gain the satisfaction of Vajrayāna claims, one must do the practice very perfectly and study and practice under a qualified guru.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 23rd, 2014 at 12:50 AM

Title: Re: Is Rebirth Unscientific?

Content:

Andrew108 said:

So far we have Malcolm saying that consciousness is massless, yet supported by warmth...

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, because in living bodies, there is warmth, in dead bodies, there is none. It's a simple empirical observation.

Andrew108 said:

So after death what is consciousness supported by?

Malcolm wrote:

It takes new body, as has been endless explained to you.

Of course not all realms of rebirth are material, so in those "places" consciousness is sustained on karma alone.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 23rd, 2014 at 1:38 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Andrew108 said:

But still you have repeatedly stated that it has energy...

Malcolm wrote:

No, you stated it for me, and since then, have not wavered from your mistake.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 23rd, 2014 at 1:49 AM

Title: Re: why is Vajrayana considered the fastest way to buddhahood

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Only a Buddha is completely free from all afflictive obscurations.

Should be "Only a Buddha is completely free from all non-afflictive obscurations."

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 23rd, 2014 at 5:55 AM

Title: Re: why is Vajrayana considered the fastest way to buddhahood

Content:

santa100 said:

All I see there is the key phrase "every sentient being is fully shown", which says nothing about the claim you said Vajrayana as the best vehicle for one to attain Fully Enlightened Buddha state (SammaSambuddha) and more importantly, nothing that contradicts the Buddha's teaching in MN 115 that "It is impossible, it cannot happen that two Accomplished Ones, Fully Enlightened Ones, could arise contemporaneously in one world-system—there is no such possibility".

Malcolm wrote:

I already explained to you that there can only be one supreme nirmanakāya in any given world system. But this does not preclude variegated nirmanakāyas, as I have already explained.

santa100 said:

Again, nothing about Vajrayana and nothing about the fastest way to attain Fully Enlightend state.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, it is axiomatic that Vajrayāna makes such claims. Do you really want me to dig out the Vajrayāna citations about variegated nirmanakāyas and the rapidity of Vajrayāna? Is it necessary? I can, if it will make you happy.

I am not trying to convert anyone, I was merely answering a posed question. I really do not see why people are getting so up in arms over this.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 23rd, 2014 at 6:57 AM

Title: Re: why is Vajrayana considered the fastest way to buddhahood

Content:

santa100 said:

Please understand that I'm in no way trying give you a hard time. But in order to engage in an informative, fair and objective discussion, we need to support our claims with backup literatures and proper sutra references. So far, I have not seen the appropriate sources to support your claim that Vajrayana is indeed the "fastest" vehicle that helps one to become a Fully Enlightened Buddha (SammaSambuddha). On my part, I have provided 2 sources straight from the Buddha's teaching in the Tipitaka: one is the proper way to handle peoples' claims and the other is the impossibility of 2 Fully Enlightened Buddhas in the same world-system

( <http://dharma.wheel.net/viewtopic.php?f=77&t=16555&start=40#p235723> )

Malcolm wrote:

The Guhyasamāja states: Because of this, lords of Dharma,  
ornamented with an ocean of wisdom  
arising from the three inseparable kāyas,  
accomplish [buddhahood] in this life.  
Śrī-devikālī-nāmāṣṭasataka: Omniscient and self-knowing,  
also the twelve bhumis of buddhahood  
are rapidly produced in this lifetime.

Śrī-candraguhyatilaka-nāma-mahātantrarājā The great bliss of all siddhis  
will be accomplished by this in one lifetime.  
Sarvatathāgatacittaguhyajñānārthagarbhavajrakrodhakulatantrapinathārthavidyāyogasi  
ddhi-nāma-mahāyāna-sūtra In this one lifetime, sambuddhahood.  
Do you really need me to continue?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 23rd, 2014 at 8:08 AM

Title: Re: why is Vajrayana considered the fastest way to buddhahood

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The Guhyasamāja states:... accomplish[buddhahood] in this life  
the "buddhahood" in brackets is your own note? If not, still says nothing about  
SammaSambuddha as I have requested. Also, please provide URL.  
<http://asianclassics.org/reader.php?collection=kangyur&index=416>

It is based on the commentary, which clarifies that "in this lifetime" refers to attaining  
the state of Buddha Mahāvajradhara.

Sri-devikali-namastasata:...

Please provide full context with URL to make sure this talks about sentient beings  
instead of the Buddha himself.

<http://asianclassics.org/reader.php?collection=kangyur&index=639>

Sri-candraguhyatilaka-nāma-mahātantrarāja:...

Please, for crying out loud, one doesn't even have to be a Buddhist Noble disciple to  
master the siddhis.

So, yes, please continue, there's still nothing about being the "fastest" nor  
SammaSambuddha as repeatedly requested.

Ummm, actually, "all siddhis" means both the common siddhis as well as the supreme  
siddhi, buddhahood.

In general, in order to accomplish Buddhahood, it takes three incalculable eons. So  
when a text says that this can happen in a single lifetime, that is fast. There is no  
Mainstream Buddhist sūtra nor Mahāyāna sūtra that asserts full buddhahood can be

realized in a single lifetime. This is strictly a Vajrayāna claim.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 23rd, 2014 at 8:37 AM

Title: Re: why is Vajrayana considered the fasted way to buddhahood

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

It is based on the commentary, which clarifies...

...This is strictly a Vajrayana claim

santa100 said:

As you've said, it's the comy's interpretation, not the Buddha's own words. At best, it's still a life time work, not the Satipatthana sutta's attainment in 7 days.

Malcolm wrote:

This is the attainment of an Arhat, not even that of a first stage bodhisattva. It is completely different.

And no, King Indrabhuti and many other siddhas attained buddhahood merely through receiving empowerments.

Anyway, your mind is made up. You have decided that Mainstream Buddhist sutras are the most authoritative. I respect that and wish you all the best of luck.

santa100 said:

Sakya Pandita...

Malcolm wrote:

...says:

If one who possesses the three vows  
understands the profound points of the two stages,  
it is said that in this life, the bardo  
or within sixteen lifetimes,  
that one will accomplish perfect buddhahood.

Incidentally, there are many other such citations from the tantras, but I don't have time to dig them all out for you.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 23rd, 2014 at 10:28 AM

Title: Re: why is Vajrayana considered the fasted way to buddhahood

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

There is no Mainstream Buddhist sūtra nor Mahāyāna sūtra that asserts full buddhahood can be realized in a single lifetime. This is strictly a Vajrayāna claim.

PorkChop said:

Would the [http://www.bdk.or.jp/pdf/bdk/digitaldl/dBET\\_T0848\\_Vairocana\\_2005.pdf](http://www.bdk.or.jp/pdf/bdk/digitaldl/dBET_T0848_Vairocana_2005.pdf) be considered a Vajrayāna Sutra?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes.

Moreover, he assumed the appearance of vajradharas and the bodhisattvas Samantabhadra, Padmapāṇi, and so on, and proclaimed everywhere in the ten directions the Dharma of the pure words of the mantra path so that [all the steps from] the initial generation of the [bodhi-]mind up to the ten stages may be progressively satisfied in this lifetime, the seeds of the karmic[ally determined] lives of the varieties of sentient beings who have been born and nurtured by karma may be eradicated, and there may also occur the sprouting of [wholesome] seeds.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 23rd, 2014 at 6:20 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Andrew108 said:

I don't really see this discussion as a contest. Posters here are free to hold whatever beliefs they like and I am not interested in conditioning anybody. What has kept me in the discussion is the hope that Malcolm can furnish some amazing logic or description that gives belief in rebirth a solid foundation. I don't think he has been able to do this.

Malcolm wrote:

The problem here, Andrew, is not my logic, but rather, your commitment to materialism. It is just as Dharmakīrti points out: if the "opponent" is committed to materialism, the conversation can go no further. In order to have a true debate there must be some commonly agreed upon principles. You and I have no commonly agreed upon principles concerning the matter that we have been discussing.

Andrew108 said:

This idea of warmth for example is very weak. Where would the 'warmth' come from in the bardo for example?

Malcolm wrote:

The diaphanous body of the gandharva, of course.

Andrew108 said:

It's about belief and to that end how that belief supports real results. Initially many Buddhist practitioners take on Buddhist beliefs with enthusiasm, imagining that they open up a way of seeing the world that is new and insightful. After some time these beliefs become more restrictive and practitioners understand that to continue they must submit.

Malcolm wrote:



Not, really. One sees that the Buddha's own logic makes sense and so continues down his path.

Andrew108 said:

I'm not alone in my scepticism of rebirth. Posters here might of heard of Stephen Batchelor but I wonder if they have read the sceptical views of Glenn Wallis (who claims not to be a Buddhist whilst holding a PhD in Buddhist studies)?

Malcolm wrote:

Glenn Wallis adds nothing of interest to the conversation. Such people merely wish to destroy Dharma, create a "Franken-Dharma" fashioned out of bit and pieces of the corpse of Buddhadharma they have left for dead. There are a lot of people who hold PhD's in Buddhists studies, this means that they are might be good at languages [though this is varies with the person] and writing book reports and not much else, necessarily. It does not mean that they are insightful, or that they have a deep understanding of the subject about which they write.

Andrew108 said:

Anyway I don't think the discussion is going to continue or that I really want to put my effort into presenting the 'other side'. If Malcolm or others can put forward a logically coherent case for how it is consciousness gets reborn then I might chip in.

Malcolm wrote:

Sure I have, the problem is that you don't accept the basic terms of the discussion because of your intellectual commitment to nonbuddhist materialism.

Andrew108 said:

My own bias is that if you understand Madhyamaka and you practice contemplation in which results lead to reduction of kleshas then you have no need for the beliefs around rebirth and so on.

Malcolm wrote:

For materialists, there are all kinds of contemplations out there Andrew, even some materialists in Ancient India were contemplatives.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 23rd, 2014 at 6:31 PM

Title: Re: why is Vajrayana considered the fastest way to buddhahood

Content:

TRC said:

Why would the Buddha, the founder of the movement teach such a lowly level of awakening (I.E. the Arahant)?

Malcolm wrote:

First of all, Buddha differentiates the bodhi of a buddha and the bodhi of an arhat.

Secondly, Buddha taught according to the needs of the disciples he had in front of him. They compiled a canon. He taught other things to devas, brahmans, kṣatriyas, etc. He even says so himself in the Mainstream sūtras, but he does not state what he taught them.

And Buddha was not the founder of Buddhadharma. Buddhadharma has existed for eons and eons in many different expressions. Sometimes there is a monastic Sangha, sometimes there isn't a monastic Sangha and so on.

Moreover, the Buddha explains in the Lankāvatara sūtra that he is not even the definitive buddha.

In any case, if you want to understand the difference between the bodhi of an Arhat and a Bodhisattva, you should read Maitreya's Abhisamayālaṃkāra, which explains the Prajñāpāramitasūtras treatment of the bodhi of arhats and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 23rd, 2014 at 6:42 PM

Title: Re: why is Vajrayana considered the fastest way to buddhahood

Content:

TRC said:

You "think." And that is the crux of the problem. Speculating and making claims about things which cannot be determined. As these claims can never be determined, it is just irresponsible and provocative to make them. It creates disharmony and is divisive.

Malcolm wrote:

It all depends on what one accepts as authoritative.

In general, here, we accept Mahāyāna sūtras as authoritative. Therefore, when someone comes along and complains that common ideas found in Mahāyāna are "speculative" and "cannot be determined", when in fact they can by recourse to examining the foundational texts of our tradition, this itself "creates disharmony and is divisive".

In fact, the person disrupting this thread, clearly out of a sense of self-righteous indignation, is none other than you. Your comments are clearly out of place since I was merely responding to a person's question. The claims made in the Mahāyāna and Vajrayāna traditions may enrage you, as they clearly do, but you should go be enraged somewhere where people will be sympathetic to you.. Because certainly, your comments are not welcome here, they add nothing to the conversation.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 23rd, 2014 at 7:17 PM

Title: Re: why is Vajrayana considered the fastest way to buddhahood

Content:

PorkChop said:

This is where the paths diverge. It's not empty rhetoric as there's an actual training method being described. It's also described in Chapter 26th of the Avatamsaka, known as the Chapter on the Ten Grounds, but I don't have a complete translation to work with. Nagarjuna talks about the equivalency (of Arhats, Pratekyabuddhas, and 8th Bhumi Bodhisattvas) a lot in his commentaries.

Malcolm wrote:

No, this is not right; the paths diverge in the generation of bodhicitta. Arhats do not form the bodhicitta to attain full buddhahood. While there is also a Bodhisattva path in Mainstream Buddhism, which as I mention before, it is not detailed in Mainstream Buddhist sūtras. As Nāgārjuna points out in the Ratnavali:

Ignorant blind people cannot bear  
this Mahāyāna the Buddha taught;  
the great path of awakening  
that has the nature of merit and wisdom.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 23rd, 2014 at 7:54 PM

Title: Re: chNNr New York Retreat

Content:

Bhusuku said:

Can't seem to find any infos on this one, so I'm wondering... is this a new Longsal teaching?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, AFAIK.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 23rd, 2014 at 7:58 PM

Title: Re: Supreme Nirmanakaya

Content:

reddust said:

Malcolm said: In Mahāyāna, and especially Vajrayāna, it is considered possible for there to be more than one nirmanakāya during a given Buddha's dispensation. However, it is only possible for there to be one supreme Nirmanakāya during any given dispensation in any given world system.

Why is it not possible for there to be two Supreme Nirmanakaya when the Dharma is still being taught? Is it because a Buddha has no ignorance, aversion and craving so there is nothing to see?

Malcolm wrote:

It is because only one Buddha at a time may demonstrate the deeds of discovering the path, and so on. However, this does not preclude others from reaching the same level of realization the Buddha himself attained.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 23rd, 2014 at 8:11 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

JKhedrup said:

Well stated.

I should add I think that in some cases a rigorous scientific training produces very sharp and intelligent Buddhists, much more capable of debate of the finer points than I am. However, in a number of cases it also seems to lead to a dichotomy of world-view which seems to be troubling or frustrating for some people, both from the POV of their Buddhist practice and their daily life. They are difficult worlds to reconcile, though for those more intelligent than I, it sure may be possible.

Malcolm wrote:

They cannot be reconciled. To adapt a statement by Rongzom to the present conversation; the words of Buddhadharma are simple and easy to understand, but the meaning is very profound and hard to realize; the words of science and so on are very detailed and intricate, but the meaning is as rough and coarse as a pile of dust.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 23rd, 2014 at 8:38 PM

Title: Re: why is Vajrayana considered the fastest way to buddhahood

Content:

TRC said:

Why would the Buddha, the founder of the movement teach such a lowly level of awakening (I.E. the Arhant)?

Malcolm wrote:

First of all, Buddha differentiates the bodhi of a buddha and the bodhi of an arhat.

Secondly, Buddha taught according to the needs of the disciples he had in front of him. They compiled a canon. He taught other things to devas, brahmans, kṣatriyas, etc. He even says so himself in the Mainstream sūtras, but he does not state what he taught them.

And Buddha was not the founder of Buddhadharma. Buddhadharma has existed for eons and eons in many different expressions. Sometimes there is a monastic Sangha, sometimes there isn't a monastic Sangha and so on.

Moreover, the Buddha explains in the Lankāvatara sūtra that he is not even the definitive buddha.

In any case, if you want to understand the difference between the bodhi of an Arhat and

a Bodhisattva, you should read Maitreya's Abhisamayālaṃkāra, which explains the Prajñāpāramitasūtras treatment of the bodhi of arhats and so on.

Dan74 said:

Malcolm, in the light of what we know today about the development of Buddhism, a literal belief in all of the above is somewhat naive, don't you think?

I ask myself how this discussion is relevant to my practice and I come up empty-handed. There is much that you say that is actually very useful but these sectarian threads, what purpose do they serve?

Malcolm wrote:

So you are including the idea that Sakyamuni was not the founder of Buddhadharma among those literal beliefs that are naive? You believe there is no difference between the awakening of an arhat and a Buddha? Which exactly are the naive beliefs to which you refer?

As for the thread — this thread was not a sectarian thread until others chose to make it so. I was merely answering a question.

Dan74 said:

The only good reason I can see for the Vajra claim is to increase Vajra practitioners' determination, but it just seems to lead to pride, resentment and wrangling...

Malcolm wrote:

You don't understand Vajrayāna, and as I already told you, if you really wanted to understand it, you'd have to take Vajrayāna teachings, and that comes with some commitments.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 23rd, 2014 at 8:42 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Wayfarer said:

Science is indispensable and if used wisely brings many material benefits.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, but it is not profound.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 23rd, 2014 at 9:13 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Wayfarer said:

I think there have been scientific discoveries...which are indubitably profound

Malcolm wrote:

I really don't agree.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 23rd, 2014 at 9:21 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

pensum said:

if it is true that the self is not a thing but a process ... then it is also true that the tragedy of the ego dissolves because, strictly speaking, nobody is ever born and nobody ever dies. "

Malcolm wrote:

The self isn't even a process, it is just an innate imputation.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 23rd, 2014 at 9:29 PM

Title: Re: Do Tummo-practitioners describe this?

Content:

zenman said:

Oh, OK. I thought tummo was all about that. Well... are any vajrayana practices concerned with breathing in the spine and kundalini?

Malcolm wrote:

Nope, not at all.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 23rd, 2014 at 9:30 PM

Title: Re: why is Vajrayana considered the fastest way to buddhahood

Content:

JKhedrup said:

Also, there are the different "grades" of lotuses, which has always confused me a bit. How are these grades determined?

Malcolm wrote:

By your karma and merit. Some take rebirth in Suhavati and never see Amitabha's face. In some respects, Sukhavati is like taking a nap from samsara.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 23rd, 2014 at 9:52 PM

Title: Re: Is Rebirth Unscientific?

Content:

Andrew108 said:

The causes need to be somewhere and they need to be active without a physical body. That is, they must have potentiality and function by themselves or in and of themselves. If someone asserts a literal interpretation of rebirth then it is impossible not to imply that some substance with energy and potentiality continues and directs itself towards taking another material form.

Malcolm wrote:

Andrew, this is your limitation. In any case, it is karma that accounts for rebirth.

Andrew108 said:

If you don't take a literal view of rebirth and see rebirth as the experience of becoming in this life only...

Malcolm wrote:

...then you have abandoned the Buddha's teachings.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 23rd, 2014 at 9:56 PM

Title: Re: why is Vajrayana considered the fastest way to buddhahood

Content:

Dan74 said:

My sense is that Zen (or Seon that I've been taught) can be a direct path and very fast if one has the right karma, but most of us don't and so teachers take that into account. Not having practiced Vajrayana, I can only surmise that it has a somewhat different toolkit which may sometimes help cut through a lot of garbage, and sometimes not. Just like any other school, really. I recall John Blofeld saying that Zen was too hard for him, that he was too dull (he ordained with Ven Hsu Yun) and he switched to Vajrayana. Go figure!

Malcolm wrote:

It's a completely different understanding of the path, meditation, the body, and so on than sūtrayāna.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 23rd, 2014 at 10:28 PM

Title: Re: why is Vajrayana considered the fastest way to buddhahood

Content:

TRC said:

Notice also the absence of any polemic and sectarian rhetoric written into the Pali Canon? That's because its content was established pre-sectarianism. The Lankavatara Sutra was written post-sectarianism. Do you see the relevance here?

Malcolm wrote:

Who are you kidding? There is plenty sectarian rhetoric in Mainstream Buddhism, it just happens to be aimed at tirthikas such as the Jains, and so on.

TRC said:

I maintain that the quantification and the sectarian comparative determination of levels of awakening cannot be verified, and the labels attached to them are just loaded concepts.

The whole exercise of claiming highest, fastest, most profound, etc is puerile and silly and bears no resemblance to the reality on the ground.

Malcolm wrote:

What a laugh. When it comes to the tirthikas you excuse the exact same thing in the Pali Canon that you accuse us of.

The worldly are bound by desire,  
desire itself brings liberation.

This contrary meditation  
will not be understood by Buddhist tirthikas.

— Hevajra Tantra

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 23rd, 2014 at 10:34 PM

Title: Re: why is Vajrayana considered the fastest way to buddhahood

Content:

TRC said:

Lastly, it seems that many here are upset because I dare question the veracity of the grandiose claims of the Vajrayana.

Malcolm wrote:

Your rudeness in starting a sectarian feud is inappropriate when I was merely answering someone's questions.

TRC said:

You obviously don't like being challenged on this. However, if you continually make grandiose and provocative claims on a public forum (even if it is in response to a question), people are going to question them, and I believe they have a right to question them. I'm sure others feel this way too, so you may need to get used to it.

Malcolm wrote:



What is even more inappropriate is the fact that you come here your "Mainstream" Buddhist biases and expect us to accept them as definitive. This is a Mahāyāna and Vajrayāna forum. It is not a Theravada forum. Go back to Dhammawheel.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 23rd, 2014 at 10:37 PM

Title: Re: why is Vajrayana considered the fastest way to buddhahood

Content:

Astus said:

The Pure Land path is the easy method of guaranteed buddhahood in one life.

In the <http://www.amidanet.com/amida-sutra-b.htm>:

"sentient beings born in that land all dwell in the Stage of Non-retrogression, and will not fall again into an evil realm, be born in a border-land or in the state of debased people or mleccchas. They always enjoy visiting pure lands of other Buddhas. With their excellent vows and practice advancing and developing every moment, they will unfailingly realize the highest, perfect Enlightenment."

Malcolm wrote:

This is not a statement that they will achieve buddhahood in a single life in Sukhavati.

Astus said:

The <http://www.amidanet.com/contemplation-sutra.htm> says about birth on the lowest level of the lowest grade:

"Because he calls the Buddha's Name, with each repetition, the evil karma which he has committed during eighty kotis of kalpas of Samsara is extinguished. When he comes to die, he sees before him a golden lotus-flower like the disk of the sun, and in an instant he is born within a lotus-bud in the Land of Utmost Bliss. After twelve great kalpas the lotus-bud opens. When the flower opens, Avalokiteshvara and Mahasthamaprapta teach him with voices of great compassion the method of extinguishing evil karma through the realization of Suchness of all dharmas. Hearing this, he rejoices and immediately awakens aspiration for Enlightenment."

The 19th vow in the <http://www.amidanet.com/larger-sutra-1.htm>:

"If, when I attain Buddhahood, sentient beings in the lands of the ten quarters, who awaken aspiration for Enlightenment, do various meritorious deeds and sincerely desire to be born in my land, should not, at their death, see me appear before them surrounded by a multitude of sages, may I not attain perfect Enlightenment."

And vow 46:

"If, when I attain Buddhahood, bodhisattvas in my land should not be able to hear spontaneously whatever teachings they may wish, may I not attain perfect Enlightenment."

Malcolm wrote:

These three statements have nothing to do with buddhahood in one lifetime. There is a very strong Amitabha tradition in Tibetan Buddhism, it is an important practice for millions of Tibetans. Karma Chagme has the mostly beautiful aspiration prayer for birth in Sukhavati and there are several important commentaries written on these topics.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 23rd, 2014 at 11:32 PM

Title: Re: why is Vajrayana considered the fastest way to buddhahood

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

This is not a statement that they will achieve buddhahood in a single life in Sukhavati.

Astus said:

The 11th vow:

"If, when I attain Buddhahood, humans and devas in my land should not dwell in the Definitely Assured State and unfailingly reach Nirvana, may I not attain perfect Enlightenment."

Later in the Larger Sutra:

"Sentient beings who are born in that Buddha-land all reside among those assured of Nirvana."

Also:

"However hard you may practice in this life, it can only be for a short while. In the life to come you will be born in the land of Amitayus and enjoy endless bliss there. Being forever in accord with the Way, you will no longer be subject to birth-and-death and be free of the afflictions caused by greed, anger and stupidity. If you wish your life to be as long as a kalpa, a hundred kalpas, or ten million kalpas, it will be just as you please. You will dwell in effortless spontaneity and attain Nirvana."

Shinran's collection of quotes regarding enlightenment in the Pure Land:

<http://www.amidanet.com/kgss-e.htm>

Malcolm wrote:

None of these citations assure buddhahood in a single lifetime.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 23rd, 2014 at 11:46 PM

Title: Re: Do Tummo-practitioners describe this?

Content:

zenman said:

Copied from <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tummo> "

onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;" onclick="window.open(this.href);return false; by Kurt Keutzer

Kundalini yoga in the Natha Sampradaya and Vajrayana in Tibetan Buddhism both take their origin from the Mahasiddhas who were active in India from the 8th century to the 12th century. Kundalini yoga practices formed the core of the teachings of a number of these Mahasiddhas and are strongly represented in both Tibetan Buddhist practices and contemporary kundalini yoga practices. Kundalini yoga was spoken of as "Candali yoga" by these Mahasiddhas and became known as gTummo rnal 'byor in Tibet. Candali yoga was a key practice of the famous Tibetan yogin Milarepa.

How does this claim fit in the picture?

What little I've heard or read of tummo, they have to do with breathing, moving attention and visualising in the central channel in the spine. I don't mean to be a drag Malcolm but what you say is a major surprise for me. If spine practices nor kundalini energy are utilised what do they/you guys do then? No specific information needed, just general remarks with slight explanations, please.

Malcolm wrote:

There is no meditation related to the spine, for the third time.

Yes, caṇḍali yoga involves kumbhaka.

In general the spine is considered to be a major subsidiary channel.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 23rd, 2014 at 11:58 PM

Title: Re: why is Vajrayana considered the fastest way to buddhahood

Content:

santa100 said:

...all schools believe in the authority of the Sutta Pitaka.

Malcolm wrote:

But not necessarily the supreme authority of any of the Mainstream Buddhist canons.

For example, in Tibetan Buddhism, the doctrine of the three kinds of nirmanakāyas comes from the Sutrālaṃkāra attributed to the Maitreya Bodhisattva. Because this text is by a tenth stage bodhisattva, it is considered to Buddhavaṇana. Likewise, the Three Bodhisattva Commentaries on the Tantras are considered in the same light since they are authored, according to tradition, by tenth stage Bodhisattvas.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 24th, 2014 at 12:34 AM

Title: Re: why is Vajrayana considered the fastest way to buddhahood

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

But not necessarily the supreme authority of any of the Mainstream Buddhist canons. For example, in Tibetan Buddhism, the doctrine of the three kinds of nirmanakāyas comes from the Sutrālaṅkāra attributed to the Maitreya Bodhisattva. Because this text is by a tenth stage bodhisattva, it is considered to Buddhavaśana. Likewise, the Three Bodhisattva Commentaries on the Tantras are considered in the same light since they are authored, according to tradition, by tenth stage Bodhisattvas.

santa100 said:

Since you keep saying "Mainstream Buddhist", please define exactly what you mean. Per the cross references I have provided with the Chinese Taishos and the Tibetan, please be explicit on what exactly is and is not included in that "Mainstream Buddhist" source of yours.

I have no problem with the Bodhisattva comy. but you will have to reconcile it with your own Tibetan and the Chinese Taisho equivalences of MN 115 source I have provided, which was the Buddha's own words. I don't know about you, but I'd place my bet with the Buddha's teaching in

<https://books.google.com/books?id=lt7kFlVNONcC&pg=PT377&lpg=PT377&dq=That+bhikkhu%E2%80%99s+statement+should+neither+be+approved+nor+rejected&source=bl&ots=hnUHIu->

[hvM&sig=ElhMoutbuf01Si4LZtgovpV2e8Q&hl=en&sa=X&ei=p2B9U5TTD63KsQSDjIDwBA&ved=0CCYQ6AEwAA#v=onepage&q=That%20bhikkhu%E2%80%99s%20statement%20should%20neither%20be%20approved%20nor%20rejected&f=false](https://books.google.com/books?id=lt7kFlVNONcC&pg=PT377&lpg=PT377&dq=That+bhikkhu%E2%80%99s+statement+should+neither+be+approved+nor+rejected&source=bl&ots=hnUHIu-hvM&sig=ElhMoutbuf01Si4LZtgovpV2e8Q&hl=en&sa=X&ei=p2B9U5TTD63KsQSDjIDwBA&ved=0CCYQ6AEwAA#v=onepage&q=That%20bhikkhu%E2%80%99s%20statement%20should%20neither%20be%20approved%20nor%20rejected&f=false)

Malcolm wrote:

Mainstream Buddhism refers to the canons of the Theravadins, Sarvastivadins and so on, what are often called the Śrāvaka canon. The Chinese canon combines both the Āgamas and the Vaipulya [aka Mahāyāna] sūtras together. There are indeed a few scattered Śrāvakayāna sūtras in the bKa' 'gyur in the mdo sde section, but in any case, these are not considered as authoritative as Mahāyāna sūtras,

As pointed out to you, now for the third time, I have not, and no one has said, that there can be two SUPREME nirmanakāyas in a given world system, but there is nothing forbidding anyone to obtain the same result as the Buddha himself in this world system during the dispensation of Shakyamuni's Dharma. Such persons therefor are nirmanakāyas, known as "nirmanakāyas through birth" because they have fully completed both stores of wisdom and merit and are completely free from the two obscurations. Nirmanakāyas are Buddhas.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 24th, 2014 at 12:38 AM

Title: Re: why is Vajrayana considered the fastest way to buddhahood

Content:

JKhedrup said:

If it did, both sides would just be collecting negative karma back and forth I think. When I was in Thailand I put aside my views and respectfully learnt what I was taught by conservative Dhammayutika Nikaya Theravada masters. I am glad I didn't push the envelope because I wouldn't have learned nearly as much and would have upset people.

Malcolm wrote:

Of course. It would be like going to Dhammawheel and insisting that people were wasting their time with Theravada and the Pali canon. Practicing any of the Buddha's teachings is never a waste of time.

What is a waste of time is when sectarian Theravadins like TRC come here and try to shove the Pali Canon down our throats.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 24th, 2014 at 12:40 AM

Title: Re: China expands new measures to directly control Tibetan m

Content:

uan said:

Their culture was a theocracy and was centered around supporting that theocracy. A theocracy is not Dharma. Samsara existed in Tibet and permeated all levels of their culture, just like any other culture.

Malcolm wrote:

You really have no understanding of Tibetan history or culture.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 24th, 2014 at 1:30 AM

Title: Re: why is Vajrayana considered the fastest way to buddhahood

Content:

Crazywisdom said:

N

Yes, the bodhi of a Buddha and an Arahant are the same. The Pali sources, at least, do seem to say this. But Buddha differs from Arahants in two respects: He was first to teach dharma, and by virtue of this, teaches it the best.

Malcolm wrote:

That quite depends on what you mean by "bodhi".

Crazywisdom said:

Buddhadharma is really and truly THE most amazing phenomena in the history of the universe. How it makes us feel, how it transforms us and empowers us is something wondrous. All of Buddhism is very special and unique. Practitioners, whether high or low are all so so very very precious. Even to think of awakening once is such a precious moment, not just for oneself but in the history of sentient beings. Even one thought has so many karmic ripples.

Malcolm wrote:

Indeed.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 24th, 2014 at 1:34 AM

Title: Re: why is Vajrayana considered the fastest way to buddhahood

Content:

santa100 said:

Well, then you must agree that Vajrayana is not the fastest vehicle above all other Buddhist schools that enable one to become a Fully Enlightened Buddha, SammaSambuddha!

Malcolm wrote:

There are no means by which one may become a buddha, gathering the twin stores of merit in a single lifetime and eliminating the two obscurations outside Vajrayāna. I am sorry, but such a teaching does not exist in any sūtra.

santa100 said:

I'm for all the Buddhist schools Mahayana and Theravada that challenge the absurd elitist Vajrayana claim here.

Malcolm wrote:

Glad you finally revealed your anti-Vajrayāna bias. As Nāgarjuna said while addressing critics of Mahāyāna:

Since the teachings of the Tathāgata are not explicit,  
they are not easy to understand.

Since one vehicle and three vehicles are taught,  
one should guard oneself with equanimity.

Through equanimity one will not commit a misdeed,  
through aversion there will be a misdeed and there will be no virtue,  
therefore, hatred towards the Mahāyāna

is not reasonable for one who desires their own welfare.

Those of you who cannot endure it when you see someone speak openly of Vajrayāna

principles should apply Nāgārjuna's advice in kind.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 24th, 2014 at 3:11 AM

Title: Re: why is Vajrayana considered the fastest way to buddhahood

Content:

santa100 said:

I'm so so glad that I participated in this thread for I have presented the most vivid proof that Vajrayana cannot be the best and fastest vehicle above all other Buddhist schools.!

Malcolm wrote:

In your imagination.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 24th, 2014 at 3:16 AM

Title: Re: why is Vajrayana considered the fastest way to buddhahood

Content:

JKhedrup said:

There is a whole thrust of literature that the Tibetans call རྟོག་ཆེན་ བཀའ་རྒྱུ་བས་ or "Proving Mahayana as the Buddha's Word". The philosophy is worth looking at for those interested in the basis and defense of Mahayana philosophy. I once had a list of works and passages of this genre but have now lost it, which is a shame.

jiashengrox said:

Ven Khedrup, I am not sure if we are suggesting the same thing, but try Chapter 1 or 2 of The Ornament of Mahayana Sutras. I remember there is a whole Chapter in the treatise dedicated to proving the words of the Mahayana to belong to the Buddha. Otherwise, The Chapter 1 of Mahayanasamgraha gives a summarised explanation, with Vasubhandu's bhasya.

Malcolm wrote:

Its the subject of chapter one.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 24th, 2014 at 3:38 AM

Title: Re: why is Vajrayana considered the fastest way to buddhahood

Content:

smcj said:

But in any case good fences make good neighbors.

Malcolm wrote:

It would appear TRC and santa100 have boundary issues.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 24th, 2014 at 3:47 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

pensum said:

if it is true that the self is not a thing but a process ... then it is also true that the tragedy of the ego dissolves because, strictly speaking, nobody is ever born and nobody ever dies. "

Malcolm wrote:

The self isn't even a process, it is just an innate imputation.

pensum said:

Which is precisely what Metzinger describes in his self-model theory.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, Hume had the same idea.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 24th, 2014 at 4:19 AM

Title: Re: why is Vajrayana considered the fastest way to buddhahood

Content:

santa100 said:

And just because this is the "Mahayana/Vajrayana" forum doesn't give you the right to say that.

Malcolm wrote:

Of course it does.

santa100 said:

I have no problem with Vajrayana. I do have a problem with the the wild claim that Vajrayana as the fastest vehicle above all other schools and that it will make one becomes a Fully Enlightened Buddha in a single lifetime.

Malcolm wrote:

Umm, that is exactly what Vajrayāna texts state without reservation.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 24th, 2014 at 4:41 AM

Title: Re: why is Vajrayana considered the fastest way to buddhahood

Content:



Malcolm wrote:

By your words you have shown this to be so. You have also demonstrated huge ignorance about Vajrayāna texts with your tempest in a teapot here.

santa100 said:

And you've also demonstrated a distorted view of Vajrayana text, even the basic Tibetan equivalence of MN 115 I have repeatedly provided.

Malcolm wrote:

Not everything in the Tibetan Canon is Vajrayāna; there are Mainstream Buddhist texts like Vinaya, Abhidharma and so on, as well as their commentaries, and a few scattered sūtras from the Agamas, but very few indeed; Mahāyāna texts like the Prajñāpāramita, Avatamska and so on, as well as their commentaries; and Vajrayāna texts like Kalacakra, Hevajra, Manjushri Namasamgiti, etc., and their commentaries.

The interpretive rule is simple — where a Mahāyāna text contradicts a Mainstream Buddhist text such as the one you cited, the Mahāyāna text takes precedence. Where a Vajrayāna text contradicts a Mahāyāna text, the Vajrayāna text takes precedence.

It is that simple. Because you do not understand how those of us in Tibetan Buddhism are trained to understand our own canon, you have made several erroneous assertions that I have kindly and patiently corrected.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 24th, 2014 at 4:45 AM

Title: Re: why is Vajrayana considered the fastest way to buddhahood

Content:

Crazywisdom said:

For example the claim made above, Buddha does not say which discourses, or which language. It is mere assumption he refers only to Pali. Buddha did not speak Pali.

santa100 said:

But that's irrelevant. The fact that you have the exact equivalence in the Agamas and the Tibetan prove that this is universally accepted by all Buddhist schools.

Malcolm wrote:

No, it merely proves that a text from the Agamas was translated during late eighth or early ninth century into Tibetan. Virtually no one reads that text, and no one regards it as being particularly authoritative in the Tibetan tradition. Your mistake is assuming that we value the Agamas as highly as you do. While we respect all the Buddha's teachings, we really do not spend much time with Mainstream Buddhist primary texts, as we have very few Agamic sutras in our canon.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 24th, 2014 at 4:48 AM

Title: Re: why is Vajrayana considered the fastest way to buddhahood

Content:

smcj said:

And just because this is the "Mahayana/Vajrayana" forum doesn't give you the right to say that.

If not here, then where?

santa100 said:

No, not here. This is the General Dharma > Exploring Buddhism section, not Vajrayana section. Saying any elitist claim about Vajrayana here in this section is extremely misleading to those who are new to Buddhism. I see a site admin currently viewing this, if he disagrees, I will shut up.

Malcolm wrote:

I answered a direct question put out to the forum. I am sorry you don't like the answer, but the answer I provided was the correct one from a Vajrayāna perspective.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 24th, 2014 at 5:41 AM

Title: Re: why is Vajrayana considered the fastest way to buddhahood

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

No, it merely proves that a text from the Agamas was translated during late eighth or early ninth century into Tibetan. Virtually no one reads that text, and no one regards it as being particularly authoritative.

santa100 said:

But that's the question I posed to you and which you continue to evade. Please provide reference to back up your claim that the Agamas is less "authoritative" to your sutras.

Malcolm wrote:

No, it merely proves that a text from the Agamas was translated during late eighth or early ninth century into Tibetan. Virtually no one reads that text, and no one regards it as being particularly authoritative.

santa100 said:

But that's the question I posed to you and which you continue to evade. Please provide reference to back up your claim that the Agamas is less "authoritative" to your sutras.

Malcolm wrote:

Well for example, in Mahāyāna sūtras, it very clearly explains that the Bodhisattva Mañjuśrī actually attained samyakasambuddhahood countless eons ago. If it is the case that in Mahāyāna they accepted the statement in the Dhātubhūka-sūtra as authoritative, how is it that Mañjuśrī could appear as a disciple of the Buddha? For example, in the bKa' 'gyur, the translated words of the Buddha, the Ārya-mañjuśrīnāmāṣṭaśataka praises Mañjuśrī in the following words:

You are a Buddha, a pratyekabuddha,  
and you are the Primordial Buddha.

How can this be possible, if the Dhātubhūka-sūtra is to be regarded as definitive?

Further, to underscore the point that Mahāyāna sūtras are more definitive for Mahāyāna followers than Mainstream Buddhist Sūtras, consider the following from the Ārya-saṃhinirmocana-nāma-mahāyāna-sūtra:

At first, since the Bhagavan demonstrated the aspects of the four noble truths to those correctly participating in the vehicle in the deer park called Rṣivadanam, the amazing Dharma wheel he turned first was amazing, a corresponding Dharma had not been turned in the past by any deva nor any human. However, that Dharma wheel that the Bhagavan turned was surpassable, contextual, of provisional meaning, and a basis for contention. The Bhagavan turned a second very amazing Dharma wheel with the aspects beginning with the absence of inherent existence of phenomena, and beginning with their nonarising, noncessation, peace from the beginning, and intrinsic parinirvana to those correctly participating in the Mahāyāna. However, that Dharma Wheel turned by the Bhagavan too was surpassable, contextual, of provisional meaning, and a basis for contention. The Bhagavan then turned the third very amazing Dharma Wheel perfectly differentiating for those correctly participating in all vehicles beginning with the absence of inherent existence of phenomena, and beginning with their nonarising, noncessation, peace from the beginning, and intrinsic parinirvana. This Dharma Wheel turned by the Bhagavan is unsurpassable, not circumstantial, definitive in meaning, and not a basis of contention.

Here you can see that Mahāyāna sūtra, the teaching of the Mahāyāna is clearly defined as definitive. while the teaching of the Mainstream Buddhists, the Āgamas and so on are defined as provisional in meaning, etc.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 24th, 2014 at 5:43 AM

Title: Re: why is Vajrayana considered the fastest way to buddhahood

Content:

Crazywisdom said:

Hinayana

Malcolm wrote:

Ahem, in order to avoid a different kind of chaotic and unpleasant situation we say "Mainstream Buddhism" around here instead.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 24th, 2014 at 5:46 AM

Title: Re: China expands new measures to directly control Tibetan m

Content:

uan said:

Their culture was a theocracy and was centered around supporting that theocracy. A theocracy is not Dharma. Samsara existed in Tibet and permeated all levels of their culture, just like any other culture.

Malcolm wrote:

You really have no understanding of Tibetan history or culture.

uan said:

Would you care to elaborate?

Their culture was a theocracy and was centered around supporting that theocracy

Malcolm wrote:

This statement is complete nonsense. It cannot arise out of a real understanding of how Tibetan culture functions.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 24th, 2014 at 7:12 AM

Title: Re: China expands new measures to directly control Tibetan m

Content:

uan said:

That was a non answer. But it does arise out of a real understanding of how non answers function.

Malcolm wrote:

Look, you made a gross inaccurate generalization. For one, the vast majority of Tibet, for most of its history, was divided up into small kingdoms held together by a network of trade, family relations as well as monastic ties.

While it is true that the Great Fifth took control of Central Tibet and Tsang, his consolidation fell apart after his death completely. in 1704. It was another 50 years before a Dalai Lama was the nominal ruler of Central Tibet and Tsang. Even here, principalities like Sakya in Western Tsang maintained their independence. During much of the 19th century, Lhasa was controlled through Manchu Ambans.

So my point is, your contention has no substance.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 24th, 2014 at 7:48 AM

Title: Re: why is Vajrayana considered the fastest way to buddhahood

Content:

smcj said:

Ahem, in order to avoid a different kind of shit storm we say "Mainstream Buddhism"

around here instead.

I thought we were supposed to use "Shravakayana". I know HHDL just differentiates between Pali and Sanskrit texts.

In any case we do try no avoid pejoratives.

Malcolm wrote:

Nah, that is also considered pejorative. They want to be Mainstream Buddhism, because in point of fact there were never that many Mahāyāna Buddhists in India anyway.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 24th, 2014 at 11:58 AM

Title: Re: why is Vajrayana considered the fasted way to buddhahood

Content:

Crazywisdom said:

We have good reason to disparage the smaller goal.

Malcolm wrote:

Actually, disparaging the other yanas is a violation of our samaya.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 24th, 2014 at 7:27 PM

Title: Re: why is Vajrayana considered the fasted way to buddhahood

Content:

Crazywisdom said:

We have good reason to disparage the smaller goal.

Malcolm wrote:

Actually, disparaging the other yanas is a violation of our samaya.

Crazywisdom said:

Disparaging is too strong a word. I admit. The Mahayana sutras do disparage poor Shariputra, I'm afraid. Vajrayana is a species of Mahayana.

Malcolm wrote:

As the samaya of the Amitabha family states:

"I will uphold the sublime Dharma,  
the outer, inner and secret yānas".

Therefore, if we Vajrayānists criticize or berate other yānas, we break our samaya -- not in the sense of a root downfall, no, but in the sense that we are not honoring our commitment to the Padma family which is related to the teachings.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 24th, 2014 at 7:29 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

dharmagoat said:

... For that matter, I am grateful to everyone who has posted intelligently on this subject, regardless of their perspective.

Malcolm wrote:

I guess that leaves me out, since according to Andrew, I am not "logical".

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 24th, 2014 at 7:48 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Wayfarer said:

Science is indispensable and if used wisely brings many material benefits.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, but it is not profound.

Crazywisdom said:

What do you mean by profound?

Malcolm wrote:

It does not lead to liberation.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 24th, 2014 at 8:09 PM

Title: Re: why is Vajrayana considered the fastest way to buddhahood

Content:

Crazywisdom said:

So what do we make of how Buddha treated poor Shariputra in the Mahayana sutras?

Malcolm wrote:

Buddha, in Mahāyāna sutras, was acting out of his infinite and omniscient compassion. Not only that, while Śariputra may seem like a foil against which many unkind tricks were played, Śariputra in fact is a very high bodhisattva on the stages, a player in the drama of the Mahāyāna sutras.

I think that until I am at that level, I will refrain from criticizing the other vehicles.

Of course, when we openly discuss the fact that Vajrayāna promises the ideal practitioner full buddhahood replete with the two accumulations in a single life, it is natural that others might feel criticized or that we are making "triumphalist claims", but we are not. There isn't even one single Mainstream sutra or Mahāyāna sūtra that suggests that full buddhahood can be attained in a single life, so what need to mention the complete absence of the methods of doing so? Moreover, the Mainstream Sūtras do not detail the path of the bodhisattva, so people who wish to embark on the career of a bodhisattva must learn that from Mahāyāna sūtras. The Mainstream sūtra teachings have one goal primarily, to guide people to the four fruits of the śravakas path.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 24th, 2014 at 8:17 PM

Title: Re: Is Rebirth Unscientific?

Content:

Andrew108 said:

Substantial cause? Yes causality is an invariant. But there needs to be a 'substantial' cause. I fail to see how disembodied consciousness can be classed as 'substantial'.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, because for you, if it is not listed on the table of elements, or composed thereof, it does not exist. Ergo, you are a materialist, not a follower of the Buddha.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 24th, 2014 at 9:54 PM

Title: Re: Is Rebirth Unscientific?

Content:

Andrew108 said:

Very fine quote indeed from RM.

Malcolm wrote:

And this?

Andrew108 said:

Maharshi: The real Self is continuous and unaffected.

Malcolm wrote:

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 25th, 2014 at 1:18 AM

Title: Re: China expands new measures to directly control Tibetan m

Content:

ReasonAndRhyme said:

I'd find it much more interesting to hear historical arguments why Tibet was or was not a theocracy.

Malcolm wrote:

Been there, done that.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 25th, 2014 at 1:21 AM

Title: Re: 21 Years from the Dharamsala Conference

Content:

kirtu said:

If you grew up in the US, you additionally grew up in a fearful, violent and mistrusting society (albeit one that does not recognize that it is fearful, violent or mistrusting).

Malcolm wrote:

hahahahahahaha.

You have such a strange view of the US.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 25th, 2014 at 1:41 AM

Title: Re: China expands new measures to directly control Tibetan m

Content:

kirtu said:

No you said that the majority of Tibet was actually small kingdoms and said nothing about how they were actually governed. Central Tibet was ruled by the 5th Dalai Lama for 50 years but that Gelug rulership fell apart after his death (which is inaccurate, BTW).

Malcolm wrote:

It's perfectly accurate. Why you don't you look up the period between Desrid's assassination and the kidnapping of the sixth, and the the ascension of the 7th? Tell me who ruled Tibetan during this period.

kirtu said:

Tibet was very much a kind of theocracy where the aristocracy vied amongst themselves and with lamas to secure power...



Malcolm wrote:

Sounds very much like Medieval Europe, but no one calls this a "theocracy":

Europe was very much a kind of theocracy where the aristocracy vied amongst themselves and with clergy to secure power...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 25th, 2014 at 1:49 AM

Title: Re: 21 Years from the Dharamsala Conference

Content:

kirtu said:

It has been the most violent society in the West

Malcolm wrote:

You clearly have never been to Mexico.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 25th, 2014 at 1:50 AM

Title: Re: 21 Years from the Dharamsala Conference

Content:

kirtu said:

You can also just take up the "fearful and mistrusting" assessment with Noam Chomsky, Carol O'Connor and others who have said exactly the same thing.

Malcolm wrote:

As I have often pointed out, you live in a different country than I do.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 25th, 2014 at 2:06 AM

Title: Re: 21 Years from the Dharamsala Conference

Content:

kirtu said:

Logic please. Mexico is not considered the West

Malcolm wrote:

Yes it is.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 25th, 2014 at 2:33 AM

Title: Re: Is Rebirth Unscientific?

Content:

Andrew108 said:

Stop crying and make your position more clear. I haven't invented anything.

Malcolm wrote:

Sure you have.

Andrew108 said:

You are the one implying consciousness has potential and is supported by warmth.

Malcolm wrote:

What do you mean by "potential"?

Andrew108 said:

So why wouldn't I assume that you understand consciousness to be self-sustaining and therefore not without energy?

Malcolm wrote:

A moment of consciousness is not self-sustaining, like everything else it is sustained on causes and conditions, they are simply not physical causes and conditions. Unless of course you eliminate the formless realm, in which case there would only be two dhātus rather than the standard three.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 25th, 2014 at 3:04 AM

Title: Re: China expands new measures to directly control Tibetan m

Content:

JKhedrup said:

Also, let us not forget that the post-Industrial Revolution, capitalist system of the West, while perhaps "democratic", has led to an unsustainable strain on the earth's resources and a pollution crisis that is destroying the planet.

Malcolm wrote:

If this is the case, then the "West" is the whole world.

In fact everybody on the whole planet has bought in industrialization. The West coast of the US and Canada experiences the pollution from China's factories.

Quite frankly, there are no players who do not participate willingly in the Global economy. I know it is fun to point fingers at the US, but in reality, the environmental degradation we are experiencing was caused by all countries who industrialized.

This East/West thing is really misguided — ya'll need to read Edward Said.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 25th, 2014 at 5:37 AM

Title: Re: China expands new measures to directly control Tibetan m

Content:

kirtu said:

Your characterization of the brief rein of the 5th Dalai Lama is correct. The rest was an obfuscation. Although a specific Mongol group reinvaded and disposed the 6th Dalai Lama, it appears that the Gelugs were more or less in charge of Central Tibet at least through the beginning of the rule of the 13th Dalai Lama. This was enforced at least nominally from Beijing.

Malcolm wrote:

No that is not correct. There were two separate secular regimes over a period of 40 or so years, before the 7th was installed.

kirtu said:

Yes, people do. Europe was characterized as having heavy theocratic influence at least until the French Revolution. The period 1789-1848 was this inflection point in Western and Central Europe.

Malcolm wrote:

No one refers to Europe as a THEOCRACY during the middle ages. No one. I defy you find even one serious historian that labels Medieval Europe so.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 25th, 2014 at 6:28 AM

Title: Re: China expands new measures to directly control Tibetan m

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

No one refers to Europe as a THEOCRACY during the middle ages. No one. I defy you find even one serious historian that labels Medieval Europe so.

uan said:

I defy you to find even one serious historian that labels Medieval Europe as a single country.

Malcolm wrote:

That my friend, is my entire point. Tibet was never "Tibet", Tibet is Ü, Tsang, Ngari, Khorsum [Formerly known as Zhang Zhung], Guge, Amdo, Chamdo, Kham, Nangchen, Golog, Nyarong, Gyalmo Rong, Lhodrag, Kongpö, Pö, and a plethora of other small kingdoms and regions like Mustang, Lhadak, Dolpo, Jyathang and so on, with huge

ethnic diversity — for example, the people in Gyalrong speak a language that is not even Tibetan, though they are Tibetan Buddhists. You are talking about a vast region, historically tied together by religion rather than ethnic identity, much like Medieval Europe.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 25th, 2014 at 6:39 AM

Title: Re: China expands new measures to directly control Tibetan m

Content:

kirtu said:

Then by your admission, Central Tibet was some ruled in some way by the Gelug during the time of the 5th Dalai Lama to the 6th, then there was a 40 year period (this would overlap with the life of the 6th and the 7th), then from some point during the life of the 7th the Gelug rule again in some form up to the 13th. Is that correct?

Malcolm wrote:

I was very precise. The government established by the Fifth collapsed when when Lozang Khan invaded, and Desid Sangye Gyatso was assassinated by Lozang Khan's wife (a former mistress of his) in 1705 (I said 1704, but oh well). The Desid never allowed the Sixth to rule.

Central Tibet remained without any effective government at all, apart from warlords, until Pho lha nas, an aristocrat from Tsang, ruled Tibet from 1727-1748 with Qing backing.

The seventh was installed by the Qianglong emperor in 1751. The Kashag itself was a creation was a creation of the Qianglong emperor.

Please get your facts straight, Kirt. I expect better from you. The Central Tibetans were ruled by the Qing, so they could not be a theocracy either.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 25th, 2014 at 7:16 PM

Title: Re: Excellent online resource for Colloquial Tibetan

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Some of the speakers have terrible Chinese accents.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 25th, 2014 at 7:40 PM

Title: Re: 21 Years from the Dharamsala Conference

Content:

kirtu said:

Due to misfortune I had to move to Baltimore in late 2012. The entire region is a nest of rampant drug activity.

Malcolm wrote:

Like every working class city in the US with a ruined economy.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 25th, 2014 at 7:43 PM

Title: Re: 21 Years from the Dharamsala Conference

Content:

kirtu said:

How does the square with the pervasive drug culture in the US?

Malcolm wrote:

Dude, people in Britain snort so much coke it in the WATER supply.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 25th, 2014 at 9:33 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

plwk said:

I used to agree with some like Malcolm that this 'foundation' may not be necessary but after having read this thread and some others, I can now see the wisdom and acute urgency of this statement.

Malcolm wrote:

I used to have that feeling, I no longer do. Quite the opposite in fact.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 25th, 2014 at 10:51 PM

Title: Re: why is Vajrayana considered the fastest way to buddhahood

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Needless to say, for those who have no faith in Vajrayāna, Vajrayāna is not a vehicle at all, much less the fastest one.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, May 25th, 2014 at 11:44 PM

Title: Re: Honen's One-Sheet Document

Content:

Luke said:

I have watched the first five videos just out of curiosity. They don't make me want to

practice Jodo Shu, but they have given me a better understanding of this tradition and of Japanese language and culture. Rev. Ishikawa seems like a very kind and joyful person. If anybody thinks that Buddhism is only about misery and suffering, they should take a look at Rev. Ishikawa!

Malcolm wrote:

Buddhism is only about escaping misery suffering; but if someone thinks there is even a microgram of happiness in samsara, they are pretty deluded. However, people on the path have good reason to be happy.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, May 26th, 2014 at 12:07 AM

Title: Re: why is Vajrayana considered the fastest way to buddhahood

Content:

theanarchist said:

[

Why should they be offended? In Theravada leading all other beings to liberation is indeed not on the program.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, as is the case with all the so-called Mainstream schools.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, May 26th, 2014 at 1:19 AM

Title: Re: why is Vajrayana considered the fastest way to buddhahood

Content:

Crazywisdom said:

Tantras themselves say they are the pinnacle of the dispensation,

theanarchist said:

Yeah, but they also say that they are for disciples of higher/highest capacity. Means, only for a small minority of all people who come in contact with dharma.

Malcolm wrote:

No, the tantras do not say this. What the tantras say is that only fortunate people meet the Vajrayāna stream.

theanarchist said:

And the fact that a lot of people follow vajrayana, but very very very few of them indeed attain liberation in this one life...

Malcolm wrote:

The tantras divide people in three categories basically, best, medium, average. They provide all necessary methods for attaining buddhahood in this life, or the bardo, or

taking rebirth in a buddhafiield such as Sukhavati.

theanarchist said:

So yeah, anyone can follow vajrayana, but not everyone can or will attain liberation in the that fast manner.

Malcolm wrote:

Vajrayāna texts promise that if one maintains ones samaya well, one will attain full buddhahood within seven lifetimes. Compared to the three incalculable eons at minimum to practice the common Mahāyāna path, this is fast, no?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, May 26th, 2014 at 1:25 AM

Title: Re: Concerns about Commercializing Buddhism in the West

Content:

catlady2112 said:

I read in some earlier posts of people who went to a (Buddhist Geeks?) conference and said there was an overemphasis on how to market yourself in order to get students.

Malcolm wrote:

Seriously? That is corrupt. Such people will merely send themselves to hell.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, May 26th, 2014 at 2:17 AM

Title: Re: why is Vajrayana considered the fastest way to buddhahoo

Content:

Arjan Dirkse said:

Religions all compete in the market place of ideas, most of them and their denominations claim to have the superior path.

Malcolm wrote:

Vajrayāna is the uncommon Mahāyāna path because it is uses methods which the Buddha did not teach in Mahāyāna sūtras. The Buddha taught that, unlike in common Mahāyāna, it is possible for a beginner, someone at the beginning of the path of preparation, to attain complete buddhahood in a single lifetime by following Vajrayāna. These teachings are stated by the Buddha, Padmasambhava, and so on, not by simple people like me.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, May 26th, 2014 at 2:18 AM

Title: Re: Concerns about Commercializing Buddhism in the West

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

<http://tuttejorg.wordpress.com/2014/01/31/tutte-wachtmeister-how-to-monetize-the-dharma/>

smcj said:

298 pages. Hardback. \$34.95

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, one of those x-buddhist hacks.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, May 26th, 2014 at 2:27 AM

Title: Re: why is Vajrayana considered the fastest way to buddhahood

Content:

JKhedrup said:

I have heard some lamas explain it that Vajrayana also establishes causes for achieving the form body of a Buddha, it allows us to start doing that right in this life. This is part of the reason for its swiftness.

Malcolm wrote:

That is not a very good explanation. The rupakāya comes from the punyasambhara, the merit accumulation. Also this exists in common Mahāyāna, right from the start. It is the means of accumulating merit that set Vajrayāna apart, like mandala offerings (in particular) and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, May 26th, 2014 at 2:39 AM

Title: Re: Is Rebirth Unscientific?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

From my limited perspective, it appears to me that the real danger inherent in all of this is that by adhering to this western materialist view that is so deeply ingrained in our culture, we are simply piling trace upon trace in our mindstreams that will make it ever more difficult for us to meet the Dharma in future lives, much less have faith in it.

This is sad.

The same applies to text critical scholarship of Buddhist texts. It destroys Buddhadharma. I really want nothing more to do with this contemporary approach to Buddhadharma.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, May 26th, 2014 at 6:18 AM



Title: Re: Is Rebirth Unscientific?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The same applies to text critical scholarship of Buddhist texts. It destroys Buddhadharma. I really want nothing more to do with this contemporary approach to Buddhadharma.

dzogchungpa said:

Are we to just ignore it then?

Malcolm wrote:

Pretty much, AFAIC. It does nothing to help one's practice or realization.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, May 26th, 2014 at 6:25 AM

Title: Re: why is Vajrayana considered the fastest way to buddhahood

Content:

JKhedrup said:

I honestly thought that the practices of generating as the deity, and things like illusory body, clear light and tummo were the uncommon features of Highest Yoga Tantra. I especially thought the generation stage created extraordinary causes to achieve the form body. I am a little worried I misunderstood something here. (Which is totally possible!)

Malcolm wrote:

All these things are uncommon, JK, but in a sadhana, the merit and wisdom accumulations are completed even before you start in on the main section. And the main section of the sadhana is nothing or no less than a reenactment of Buddha's awakening and deeds through nirvana.

Yes, it is true that creation stage is a cause for realizing the rūpakāya, just as the completion stage is a cause for realizing the dharmkāya. But superior even to the two stages is guru yoga, which along with mandala offerings are truly unique to anuttarayoga tantra.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, May 26th, 2014 at 7:16 PM

Title: Re: Is Rebirth Unscientific?

Content:

Andrew108 said:

There is also the issue of petty sectarianism where other views can't be tolerated and are seen as being a threat.

Malcolm wrote:

I am afraid that you seem to subscribe to the view, "Buddhism is whatever I think it is".

Well, to a large extent these days that that is true. But Buddhadharma is not "whatever we think it is".

Andrew108 said:

Since the logic is not there, it should be perfectly acceptable for a Buddhist to not accept rebirth. They should not have to feel excluded or de-valued because of their agnosticism or reasoned disbelief.

Malcolm wrote:

I have never insisted that people accept rebirth as a personal belief. I have insisted that people understand how Buddha's teaching of rebirth is critical to understanding Buddhadharma properly. I have also insisted that if we discard rebirth, the Buddha's Dharma ceases to have any more meaning than any other secular self-help system. Without the teaching of rebirth, the Buddha's Dharma is no more than a set of moral platitudes. It ceases to be a path of liberation, and becomes a mere palliative for life's ailments, rather than a cure.

This I have unwaveringly maintained literally for years, as anyone who remembers E-Sangha can attest.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, May 26th, 2014 at 7:26 PM

Title: Re: Is Rebirth Unscientific?

Content:

Andrew108 said:

The teachings have to make practical sense.

Malcolm wrote:

They do, but first you have to understand their context. The context of Buddhadharma is to be liberated from rebirth in samsara.

Andrew108 said:

Have to be applicable right now.

Malcolm wrote:

They are.

Andrew108 said:

Shouldn't isolate an individual.

Malcolm wrote:

They don't.

Andrew108 said:

Shouldn't enable the forming of inside-outside identity making.

Malcolm wrote:

Tell that to the Buddha, i.e., "Outside of my Dharma and Discipline..."

Andrew108 said:

Should bring a measurable benefit to the practitioner and others.

Malcolm wrote:

They do.

Andrew108 said:

Have to be absolutely useful and relevant.

Malcolm wrote:

There is nothing more relevant than eliminating the traces that cause rebirth in samsara.

Andrew108 said:

All of these amazing effects of the teachings are available when the metaphysical aspects are dropped in favour of direct experience.

Malcolm wrote:

The direct experience of deluded beings is delusion.

Andrew108 said:

So many buddhists are in denial about their behaviour.

Malcolm wrote:

Here is a mirror, take a look at your reflection.

Andrew108 said:

Thinking that being buddhist and being in receipt of wonderful teachings is enough. It is not enough.

Malcolm wrote:

Agreed, but abandoning the Buddha's Dharma and replacing it with physicalism is not the right approach.

Andrew108 said:

There needs to be an absolute benefit to the practitioner's life.

Malcolm wrote:

There is only one absolute benefit, liberation. If someone does not begin with right view, which incidentally includes rebirth, karma and so on, there will be no benefit at all to a person's life.

The fact is that the only thing preventing many people from waking up is the rigid

resistance I see among many westerners, who think they are interested in Buddha's Dharma, to what the Buddha's Dharma actually teaches. This is why many people follow a "Buddhism" of their imagination, rather than Buddhadharma.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, May 26th, 2014 at 9:28 PM

Title: Re: Is Rebirth Unscientific?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The fact is that the only thing preventing many people from waking up is the rigid resistance I see among many westerners, who think they are interested in Buddha's Dharma, to what the Buddha's Dharma actually teaches. This is why many people follow a "Buddhism" of their imagination, rather than Buddhadharma.

Andrew108 said:

It is as you say. The Pali suttas are full of mentions of literal rebirth. But we also know that Buddhism has been modified and developed over the centuries.

Malcolm wrote:

No, Buddhadharma has never been modified. Over the centuries however, more of the Buddha's teachings have been revealed, to help people cope with evolving circumstances.

Andrew108 said:

In the Samadhanga Sutta Buddha says:

"If he wants, he recollects his manifold past lives,[3] i.e., one birth, two births, three births, four, five, ten, twenty, thirty, forty, fifty, one hundred, one thousand, one hundred thousand, many aeons of cosmic contraction, many aeons of cosmic expansion, many aeons of cosmic contraction and expansion, [recollecting], 'There I had such a name, belonged to such a clan, had such an appearance. Such was my food, such my experience of pleasure and 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 and pain, such the end of my life. Passing away from that state, I re-arose here.' Thus he remembers his manifold past lives in their modes and details. He can witness this for himself whenever there is an opening."

So we should take this literally right?

Malcolm wrote:

It is intended literally. There is nothing here to dispute, conventionally speaking.

Andrew108 said:

But one wonders how could it be possible? How could all these memories survive so

many lives when there were lives where we didn't have language or developed senses capable of recording and storing that information. Why was it that the Buddha couldn't talk about the evolution of species or what life was like on other planets. It seems that life on other planets was much like life on this one?

Malcolm wrote:

Life in Sukhavati for example, is nothing like life on this one.

Andrew108 said:

How does this memory survive after brain death? What is it about consciousness that enables it to contain so much information and why is that information not ordinarily available to us? Then there is a kind of folkism here where memory is seen like a serial display and that one needs only rewind to uncover past events. It seems if you develop the jhanas then that is the kind of capacity you will have. The way you remember things will be serial.

Malcolm wrote:

In general, for ordinary beings, the shock of being unconscious at the moment of conception is said to render our past live memories unavailable. Bodhisattvas in their last life however are conscious through the entire process of conception, gestation and birth.

When one enters into the concentration of recalling past lives, indeed one starts with this life and that starts with the present and works one's way back.

Memory is serial because consciousness is serial. Memory, as I already explained to you from Candrakirti, is not different than the consciousness that experienced the event. So the process consists of recalling every serial sense impression from beginningless time.

Consciousness is empty, there is nothing preventing consciousness from recalling all of its past objects other than our present obscurations. Just as there is nothing preventing karma from ripening because karma too is empty.

But if you try to understand these things in physicalist terms it will never make any sense.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, May 26th, 2014 at 10:02 PM

Title: Re: why is Vajrayana considered the fastest way to buddhahood

Content:

JKhedrup said:

I had thought what made the merit and wisdom accumulations more powerful was that they were done in most cases in the aspect of the self-generation. For example, one generates as Yamantaka before blessing the inner offering, and emanating goddesses to

offer it to the merit field etc. as to do so in one's ordinary form would not be possible.

.

Malcolm wrote:

As I understand it, what makes the merit accumulation more powerful is that you are making offerings to the Guru above all. The wisdom accumulation is more powerful because it is done with a mantra based on the the example wisdom of the time of empowerment.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, May 26th, 2014 at 11:12 PM

Title: Re: Understanding of karma

Content:

kng said:

For those who would wish to participate in discussion, without having to watch the video, maybe you could suggest some sources from which to study karma or give overview about karma from the point of view of nine vehicles.

Malcolm wrote:

The point of view of karma in the conventional is the same for all nine vehicles. In other words, Dzogchen does not deviate in any significant way from the standard presentation of Karma given in chapter 4 of the Abhidharmakośa.

There is no karma in the ultimate, so in that respect too, the point of view of all nine vehicles is the same.

The treatment of karma absolutely does not change from one vehicle to the next.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, May 26th, 2014 at 11:23 PM

Title: Re: Is Rebirth Unscientific?

Content:

Andrew108 said:

I suspended my world view for 24 years. That's how many years it took for me to overcome the belief in literal rebirth.

Malcolm wrote:

And so now you have become an evangelist for replacing Buddha's own teachings with physicalism, and promulgating that as the Dharma.

Pretty sad, dude.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, May 26th, 2014 at 11:38 PM

Title: Re: Understanding of karma

Content:

Andrew108 said:

Really? Dzogchen accepts a conventional view of karma?

Malcolm wrote:

Very much so, as Garland of Pearls Tantra [one of seventeen tantras] states:

One is placed in the dungeon of name and matter  
in the castle of the three realms,  
tortured with the barbs of ignorance and so on,  
oppressed by the thick darkness of samsara,  
attached to the salty taste of desire,  
bound by the neck with the noose of confusion,  
burned with the hot fire of hatred,  
head covered with pride,  
setting a rendezvous with the mistress of jealousy,  
surrounded by the army of enmity...  
tied by the neck with the noose of subject and object, [29b]  
stuck in the mud of successive traces  
and handcuffed with the ripening of karma.  
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.

The whole purpose of practicing rishan, especially outer rishan, is to eliminate the causes of birth in the six lokas.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 27th, 2014 at 1:13 AM

Title: Re: Is Rebirth Unscientific?

Content:

Andrew108 said:

Physicalism? Not really.

Malcolm wrote:  
Really.

Andrew108 said:

If I say that immaterial mental phenomena cannot exist independently of material phenomena you would take me as a physicalist. But I am not making any assertions as to what matter is apart from saying that it is interdependently originated.

Malcolm wrote:

Non-sequitar -- what is at issue of your views of consciousness, not your views of matter.

Andrew108 said:

On the other hand you are asserting that the immaterial (consciousness) has characteristics and functionality separate from the physical. It's characteristics do not depend on a physical base but are innate to it, part of it.

Malcolm wrote:

Andrew, your notion of the relation between consciousness and matter is a one way dependency: i.e. consciousness depends on matter, period.

Andrew108 said:

But I wonder how you can say this? What for example are the actual qualities of an immaterial rainbow if the rainbow is absolutely immaterial?

Rongzom says:

"If an immaterial phenomenon existed, for example a mirage, it would be empty of causes and empty of movement. In the very moment of engaging a mirage designated by convention, the phenomenon of emptiness does not depend upon the mirage."

Malcolm wrote:

I am not sure that Rongzom says this, citation please, so I can look at the Tibetan text. I am not sure what the translator means by "immaterial".

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 27th, 2014 at 1:31 AM

Title: Re: Understanding of karma

Content:

Andrew108 said:

Yes agreed, but if Dzogchen accepted a conventional view of karma then one would think that one needs to accumulate vast stores of merit and purify oceans of



negativities.

Malcolm wrote:

Khenpo Ngachung, someone who attained the pinnacle of Dzogchen realization in the last century, and then wrote of his experiences states:

In any system of sutra or tantra, without gathering the accumulations and purifying obscurations, Buddhahood can never be attained. Though the system of gathering accumulations and purifying obscurations is different, in this respect [dzogchen] is the same.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 27th, 2014 at 2:09 AM

Title: Re: Is Rebirth Unscientific?

Content:

Andrew108 said:

For some people it is important. For me it's not meaningful. If you want to follow Buddha's teachings then it is best to slowly divest yourself of concepts regarding Buddhist teachings.

asunthatneversets said:

This makes no sense. Seems to be a misinterpretation of what it means for wisdom to be free of concepts.

Andrew108 said:

When you sit back and think thank goodness I don't have to be a Buddhist anymore, maybe you relax a bit. When you sit back and think thank goodness I'm a Buddhist, maybe you relax a bit. As a practitioner you realize both are an equality. When you do this are you a Buddhist or are you someone who has understood something about the invariant condition we all find ourselves in?

Malcolm wrote:

The point is not whether one is a Buddhist or not; the point is whether one understands Buddhadharma or not. People who reject rebirth and yet continue to call themselves "Buddhists" do not understand Buddhadharma.

I don't know you personally, but from everything you have written, I would say that you are someone who has some intellectual understanding of Buddhism, but I really don't think you grasp the meaning of Buddhadharma.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 27th, 2014 at 4:55 AM

Title: Re: Honen's One-Sheet Document

Content:

Luke said:

In Part 7, Rev. Ishikawa talks a bit about the views of some of Honen's main students, such as Bencho. He also mentions that he feels that there is very little information about Pure Land Buddhism available in English (this is part of his motivation for making these videos). Perhaps more Pure Land texts will be translated into English in the future...

One thing these videos have given me is just the opportunity to see how a Pure Land Buddhist priest thinks and acts. Rev. Ishikawa is very knowledgeable and rational, so this is what impresses me the most. He doesn't have any overdone "Praise Amitabha! Hallelujah, brothers and sisters!" type of attitude that I had always expected Pure Land priests to have.

Malcolm wrote:

Ippen is an interesting character.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 27th, 2014 at 7:02 AM

Title: Re: Is Rebirth Unscientific?

Content:

PadmaVonSamba said:

Every bit of your "true buddhism" is based on material references, on written texts...

Malcolm wrote:

No, my Buddhism is based on a living lineage of realized teachers going right back to the Buddha.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 27th, 2014 at 7:03 AM

Title: Re: Is Rebirth Unscientific?

Content:

PadmaVonSamba said:

How many people are there who argue about whether or not there is a next life when they haven't yet got freedom in this life?

Peace of mind, total contentment,  
these are all possible right now.

If you attain them in this life,  
whether another life follows this one or not doesn't really matter at all.

...

Malcolm wrote:

And if you don't, the point is critical. There has not been an Arhat for more than a

thousand years...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 27th, 2014 at 8:07 AM

Title: Re: Is Rebirth Unscientific?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

There has not been an Arhat for more than a thousand years...

PadmaVonSamba said:

So you say.

Prove it.

Malcolm wrote:

There are various schemes, but let us suppose that we take the Theravadin scheme.

According to Buddhaghosha, circa 5th century, when a thousand years have elapsed from the Buddha's parinirvana, it will no longer be possible to become a stream entrant, let alone an Arhat.

If you are interested in this kind of thing, look at Jan Nattier's synopsis of these issues in *Once Upon a Future Time*.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 27th, 2014 at 8:09 AM

Title: Re: Is Rebirth Unscientific?

Content:

PadmaVonSamba said:

Every bit of your "true buddhism" is based on material references, on written texts...

Malcolm wrote:

No, my Buddhism is based on a living lineage of realized teachers going right back to the Buddha.

PadmaVonSamba said:

So, you are saying they are figments of your imagination?

Malcolm wrote:

You know, if you do not believe that the Buddha's teachings have passed down to us in an unbroken lineage through realized masters; which present those teachings to us faithfully, that's your problem, not mine.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 27th, 2014 at 9:22 AM

Title: Re: Is Rebirth Unscientific?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

There has not been an Arhat for more than a thousand years...

Vajraprajnakhadga said:

How do you know this?

Malcolm wrote:

Please read my previous response to this post. This is a tradition that is universal in Theravada.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 27th, 2014 at 11:07 AM

Title: Re: Is Rebirth Unscientific?

Content:

PadmaVonSamba said:

How totally hypocritical to say that a scientific view

...

Malcolm wrote:

I wan't talking about science per se. I was talking about western materialism.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 27th, 2014 at 9:27 PM

Title: Re: Is Rebirth Unscientific?

Content:

Andrew108 said:

When rebirth is debated it should be kept in mind that rebirth is something to be overcome. It is something that needs to be seen as false.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, that is the point of Buddhadharma, overcoming rebirth. Not merely as a concept, but in actuality. You seem to be proposing the only thing we need to overcome is the idea of rebirth. Well, materialists don't need to since they have no idea of rebirth. Maybe they are already liberated. At death, poof, nirvana.

The point is, A108, without rebirth, there is no need for Buddhadharma per se.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, May 27th, 2014 at 11:03 PM

Title: Re: Hello from Texas

Content:

DharmaCloud said:

Hello everyone.

I'm a self-proclaimed "book buddhist" who has tried (really?) to engage in a practice for many years. Too many excuses to throw out there for that one, but as I often have, I'm once again stepping back onto the path.

I'm hoping to engage in lively discussions and be part of a community in the dharma. Once again moving from the distractions, I hope to use the encouragement of seeing others on the path to spur my own practice.

This time I hope to lay down my unhealthy ego, the one that causes me to seek perfection in my attempts to be in a better place. I am trying to accept where I am and start from here.

Malcolm wrote:

Find a teacher.

The victor, the owner of the best of all qualities, has said:

“Rely on the Buddha, Dharma and the virtuous mentor .”

— Samcayagathas

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 28th, 2014 at 12:02 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Three things are required to turn the tide of Buddhist modernism, especially of the academic variety:

1) We must resist the temptation to fall under the spell of text criticism. The text critical approach is forensic and speculative. It proceeds from Western hermeneutical prejudices founded in a materialist notion of what a "text" is. It also is born out of a Western idea of historiography. Text criticism, used as a means of discerning the origin of Buddhist texts and its developments, results in nothing more than speculative conjectures being taken as facts by the reading public, and by many Buddhists as well. These speculative conjectures harm the foundations of Mahāyāna and Vajrayāna in particular, which are seen as modifications or corruptions of an ur-canon.

2) We must resist the attempt to erect science as our final authority in all matters of cosmology, theories of consciousness, etc. While not disregarding modern science and so on, we must insist that domain of Buddhadharma is necessarily outside of scientific inquiry. The origin of Buddhadharma is the awakening of the Buddha. There is no way the mundane sciences can either enhance our understanding of Dharma nor can it replace the Dharma.

3) We must insist that on fact the Buddhist canon, all sutra, tantra and Vajrayāna originate with the Buddhas in general, and Śakyamuni Buddha in particular. We must take into consideration that the very survival of Buddhism as a living tradition depends on the integrity of the origins of the teachings. In particular, we must insist on the necessity that the timeless teachings of the Buddhas transcend mundane concerns about space and time, existing as a remedy for the suffering of all sentient beings, wherever they may be. Therefore, the teachings of the Buddhas, whether directly, by permission or by blessing should be accepted as they are at face value as the teaching of the Buddha. It is only in this way that the integrity of the Buddhist tradition will be preserved. This is not to say that all Buddhists must accept all canons as being of equal value. We need to recognize that all the Buddha's teachings have value for different people at different stages in their evolution on the path.

Therefore, engaging with people addicted to text criticism or historical analysis of Buddhist texts, or who have aim to replace key concepts in Buddhadharma with concepts drawn from the mundane sciences should be considered extraneous distractions and such people's qualms and objections must be ignored, because trying to deflect or negate such misguided criticisms of materialists, made by non-practitioners, or Theravadin practitioners is completely useless. If they say Mahāyāna is not the teaching of the Buddha, we must insist that it is. If they claim the Vajrayāna teachings are not the teaching of the Buddha, we insist that it is. If they claim that terms are not the teaching of the Buddha, we insist that they are and leave it at that. Many long, stupid conversations will be blunted in the beginning by a simple statement "This is a teaching of the Buddha. If you don't think so, you are welcome to your opinion but I am not interested in discussing it with you further." Such discussions are not useful for anyone's practice, their's, if they have one, or ours. Further, we create much non-virtue and negative traces by engaging in such discussions. So it is time to just stop.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 28th, 2014 at 12:40 AM

Title: Re: Is Rebirth Unscientific?

Content:

Anders said:

If rebirth wasn't the case and perfect freedom from suffering was nevertheless an option for the remainder of one's singular lifetime, that would still be plenty good reason for a Buddha to teach. Cf the dhammapada:

Malcolm wrote:

No, it would be better to be an ethical hedonist. Why? If rebirth wasn't the case, the statement you cite from the Dhammapada would have no meaning.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 28th, 2014 at 1:23 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Sherlock said:

Do we have to accept that tantras also come from Shakyamuni Buddha?

Malcolm wrote:

No, we should just accept they they were taught by a Buddha, such as Vajradhara, for example. However, some of the lower tantras were directly taught by the Buddha.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 28th, 2014 at 1:43 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

Macolm, I'm sympathetic to what you're saying, but what exactly do you mean by "the teaching of the Buddha"? For example, is the Aro gTér the teaching of the Buddha? Is Michael Roach's stuff the teaching of the Buddha?

Malcolm wrote:

I was actually talking about the teachings in the bKa' 'gyur in general as well as the Nyingma rgyud 'bum. As far as termas go, well, what I had in mind was more like standard traditional termas.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 28th, 2014 at 1:45 AM

Title: Re: Is Rebirth Unscientific?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

No, it would be better to be an ethical hedonist. Why? If rebirth wasn't the case, the statement you cite from the Dhammapada would have no meaning.

Anders said:

Why should it be better?

Are you saying that liberation in this lifetime is not worth it for the sake of this lifetime? That there are higher means of happiness in this lifetime only than full freedom from suffering?

Malcolm wrote:

Without rebirth, there is such thing as "liberation". If you have your needs and wants met, that's enough. This is why said it would be better to be an ethical hedonist.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 28th, 2014 at 2:04 AM

Title: Re: Is Rebirth Unscientific?

Content:

Johnny Dangerous said:

Man, I really do not get this.

You don't think it's better for people to have access to teachings that decrease afflictive emotions, regardless of worldview? I sure do.

Malcolm wrote:

Whose talking about restricting access to the teachings?

Johnny Dangerous said:

It seems like the only real issue is when people want to say "the Buddha didn't believe in rebirth" and similar, thinking of Sam Harris here among others...beyond that, I WANT those people to have access to the teachings, and be welcome in Dharma centers etc. without needing to make some sort of declaration of faith - unless they plan on taking refuge of course.

Malcolm wrote:

Again, this does not address my point, which is, there are plenty of wonderful ethical systems out there which can bring people peace and improve their lives immeasurably. Actually, a "Buddhism" sans rebirth is just ethical hedonism.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 28th, 2014 at 2:25 AM

Title: Re: Is Rebirth Unscientific?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

e]

Whose talking about restricting access to the teachings?

I dunno, what ARE you talking about then, declarations of faith, simply refuting incorrect views on doctrine, or what? Is there a purpose behind telling someone they should just be an ethical hedonist? I'm unclear on your actual position..especially as someone who not too long ago declared their desire to distance themselves from the "Buddhist" label.



Johnny Dangerous said:

I did not say someone should be an ethical hedonist, I said it would be better to be an ethical hedonist.

Actually, a "Buddhism" sans rebirth is just ethical hedonism.

Not by a longshot. Even given the obvious ethical quandaries that can be involved with "secular Dharma" - which I recognize, Buddhist meditation, and even a bit of the Buddhist understanding of emotion and mind works wonders for non-Buddhists..hopefully that's non-controversial right?

Malcolm wrote:

JD, can you tell me the difference between Buddhist mindfulness and say Hindu mindfulness, or even secular mindfulness?

There is nothing particularly "Buddhist" about the kleshas for example, they are discussed in all Indian spiritual paths.

Sans rebirth, what is it that makes any discussion about the kleshas more interesting from a Buddhist perspective than say for example, the plethora of psychologies out there, considering that kleshas and so on are not unique to Buddhism?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 28th, 2014 at 2:32 AM

Title: Re: Is Rebirth Unscientific?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

JD, can you tell me the difference between Buddhist mindfulness and say Hindu mindfulness, or even secular mindfulness?

Johnny Dangerous said:

No, I don't have your background, and thus I can't do that. I can however wonder what exactly you are trying to convey re: accessibility and right usage of Buddhist teachings in this thread, which is what I'm asking.

There is nothing particularly "Buddhist" about the kleshas for example, they are discussed in all Indian spiritual paths.

Sans rebirth, what is it that makes any discussion about the kleshas more interesting from a Buddhist perspective than say for example, the plethora of psychologies out there, considering that kleshas and so on are not unique to Buddhism?

I'm not approaching the question from an academic standpoint, nor do I imagine are most practitioners, nor most people who MIGHT become practitioners. All I am asking is why you would want someone to be an ethical hedonist rather than a Buddhist, albeit one whose opinions you might think are nonsense.

Malcolm wrote:

I never said ethical hedonist could not crib teachings of the Buddha and so on that suit them. But liberation is just not in the cards for them. Buddha never said that someone who did not accept rebirth could attain stream entry, let alone Arhatship. Forget about Bodhisattvas and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 28th, 2014 at 2:39 AM

Title: Re: Is Rebirth Unscientific?

Content:

Johnny Dangerous said:

Ok, well I get it then, I think I took your words to mean something else, thanks for the clarification.

Malcolm wrote:

Just to reinforce the point:

Bhikku Bodhi said:

The Buddha includes belief in rebirth and kamma in his definition of right view, and their explicit denial in wrong view.

Malcolm wrote:

So, the point is that someone who has wrong view is automatically barred from liberation. Wrong view is not just active disbelief, it also includes well considered agnosticism on the issue, which by definition is a form of ignorance.

This is why I consider it so tragic that so many people out there are interested in the Dharma, but their very beliefs, or lack of it, bar them from experiencing the true fruits of practice. The most they can expect is a higher rebirth, which sadly, they do not even believe in. Worse, if they meditate incorrectly, develop the higher dhyanas and so on, they can take rebirth in formless realms from which they will never escape for literally millions and millions of years.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 28th, 2014 at 2:45 AM

Title: Re: Is Rebirth Unscientific?

Content:

Norwegian said:

As Nagarjuna points out:

" Even though an individual may have practiced well,  
with a wrong view

All that matures will be unbearable. "

-- Suhrillekha ["Letter to a Friend"]

Malcolm wrote:  
Indeed.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 28th, 2014 at 2:58 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

smcj said:

To me it is only when somebody starts trying to publicly legitimize their rejection of the teachings that I've got a problem, and at that point I'm right with you.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, and those people ought to just be ignored. It does no good to argue with academic skeptics like Jeff, materialists like Andrew, etc.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 28th, 2014 at 4:15 AM

Title: Re: Is Rebirth Unscientific?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Without rebirth, there is such thing as "liberation"

Anders said:

Surely full freedom from suffering in this life can qualify as "liberation" even if it is not a liberation from the endless rounds of samsara?

Malcolm wrote:

There can be no full liberation from suffering for one with wrong view, even in this life.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 28th, 2014 at 4:35 AM

Title: Re: Is Rebirth Unscientific?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Wrong view is not just active disbelief, it also includes well considered agnosticism on the issue, which by definition is a form of ignorance.

daverupa said:

The Buddha did not tell these fine folk that a well-considered agnosticism was a form of ignorance. He instead taught them how to use such an agnosticism to attain four assurances here and now, and even with agnosticism in play he is able to call those who successfully employ this gambit those with 'mind thus free from hostility, free from

ill will, undefiled, & pure'.

Malcolm wrote:

Nevertheless, it is. An agnostic by definition cannot enter the beginning of the path. The four brahmaviharas are not a path.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 28th, 2014 at 5:27 AM

Title: Re: Is Rebirth Unscientific?

Content:

PadmaVonSamba said:

It is possible to go beyond the dualism of comfortable vs. uncomfortable.

...

Malcolm wrote:

Not without first cultivating right view.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 28th, 2014 at 5:38 AM

Title: Re: Is Rebirth Unscientific?

Content:

PadmaVonSamba said:

It is possible to go beyond the dualism of comfortable vs. uncomfortable.

Malcolm wrote:

Not without first cultivating right view.

PadmaVonSamba said:

...then you are essentially saying that since (according to you) nobody has attained perfect tranquility and peace of mind in a thousand years, then nobody has cultivated right view.

Malcolm wrote:

I didn't say that. What I said is that, if one follows the Theravada school's reckoning of things, there has not been an arhat for more than a thousand years. I never said anything at all about bodhisattvas.

Even someone with only mundane correct view however, can attain perfectly tranquility and peace of mind — it's called *śamatha*. Even Hindus have this. The cultivation of *śamatha* does not depend on right view at all. Someone who has no faith in rebirth whatsoever can achieve *śamatha*.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 28th, 2014 at 6:22 AM

Title: Re: Is Rebirth Unscientific?

Content:

PadmaVonSamba said:

The reality of a physical universe is valid when it comes to suggesting the existence of a lineage of teachers,

....but not for "materialists" for whom it is a view 'so deeply ingrained'.

Malcolm wrote:

Just what are you on about? Are you interested in having a discussion or are you just interested in mocking people? What's your problem?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 28th, 2014 at 6:23 AM

Title: Re: Is Rebirth Unscientific?

Content:

LastLegend said:

Well death is real. I think we can all agree on this.

PadmaVonSamba said:

The death of....what?

.  
.  
.

Malcolm wrote:

The body.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 28th, 2014 at 6:50 PM

Title: Re: Is Rebirth Unscientific?

Content:

JKhedrup said:

So I agree with Malcolm: if you want to be "happy" in this lifetime, ethical hedonism is 100% the way to go, and maybe a little Buddhist practice

Meditation in the morning, Xanax or a joint and a couple of shots of vodka in the evening?

Malcolm wrote:

Dude!

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 28th, 2014 at 7:55 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Anders said:

I think it weakens Buddhism if it can formulate no religious response to to academic findings. I don't wish to see Buddhism sticking it's head in the sand, catholic style, insisting that dinosaurs were put in the ground to test our faith and so forth.

Malcolm wrote:

The religious response is not to cater to Western Academia by giving credence to their "findings" with such devices as the one you propose. No, it is not sufficient. It is is just a back-handed way of saying, "Well, yes you're right, but..."

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 28th, 2014 at 7:56 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Simon E. said:

As to "if its not historically true its more important "...the mind boggles at the sheer frigging nonsense that clever people can take seriously.

Anders said:

If,for example, the encounter dialogues in Zen are not historical reports, then they were manufactured for a religious purpose.

Malcolm wrote:

They are not sūtra.

We followers of Buddhadharma must confidence in the authenticity of our core canons. That confidence can only arise if we are confident in the lineage and authorship of the these canons.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, May 28th, 2014 at 8:15 PM

Title: Re: Is Rebirth Unscientific?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The body.

PadmaVonSamba said:

Yes, constantly.

Malcolm wrote:

Death, according to the Buddha is the break up of the aggregates, i.e. when mind and body separate. Since the mind does not die, then we can say that what dies, ceases to continue is the body. The mind never ceases to continue, not even in the state of awakening.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 29th, 2014 at 1:23 AM

Title: Re: Is Rebirth Unscientific?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The mind never ceases to continue, not even in the state of awakening.

Sherab said:

I am not sure about this. I remembered that there is a story about how Mara (or was it a Deva?) boasted about how he could know the mind of anyone but when challenged by the Buddha to find his (the Buddha's) mind, he failed. Also, if I remember correctly, the nirvana of an Arhat is likened to a flame going out - you can't tell where the flame went. In other words, you can't tell where the mind of an Arhat goes when he attains nirvana.

Malcolm wrote:

According the Mainstream Buddhist schools it is indeed the case that the stream of consciousness experiences total cessation in parinirvana; but not according to the Mahāyāna and Vajrayāna where the Buddha rejects this as a misunderstanding of his teachings. As Sachen Kunga Nyingpo puts it, the garland of of moments of clarity continue from sentient being-hood through the state of Vajradhara.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 29th, 2014 at 4:01 AM

Title: Re: Is Rebirth Unscientific?

Content:

PadmaVonSamba said:

....what is your opinion of this?

Can a person be a Buddhist relying only on what can be achieved through direct experience?

...

Malcolm wrote:

A Buddhist cannot achieve anything without right view.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 29th, 2014 at 4:13 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Anders said:

the evidence is so overwhelmingly to the contrary.

Malcolm wrote:

Would you like to trot out that evidence?

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 29th, 2014 at 6:49 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

We followers of Buddhadharma must confidence in the authenticity of our core canons. That confidence can only arise if we are confident in the lineage and authorship of the these canons.

Anders said:

Are you saying then that confidence in the Mahayana hinges on the belief that the mahayana sutras were spoken by the historical Shakyamuni Buddha? And that you think such a belief is most ideal for modern mahayana buddhism?

Malcolm wrote:

I think it is not only ideal, but essential. I am not insisting of course that this be some kind of entry bar for becoming a Buddhist. But it is a little strange to claim that one is taking refuge in the Dharma, the speech of the Buddha, and then on the other hand, consider virtually all of the teachings that constitute Mahāyāna to be little more than fabrications, no matter how pithy or profound. In Mahāyāna, we do not accept the Agamas or Nikayas to be authoritative in a way in which Mahāyāna sūtras are not. But denying the authorship of Mahāyāna to the Buddha, we are depriving ourselves of the very basis which to respond to Theravadins and so on, because in affect, we are accepting their view of our own texts.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 29th, 2014 at 6:54 AM

Title: Re: Is Rebirth Unscientific?

Content:

smcj said:

Also, if I remember correctly, the nirvana of an Arhat is likened to a flame going out - you can't tell where the flame went. In other words, you can't tell where the mind of an Arhat goes when he attains nirvana.



That's not a Mahayana perspective. A Mahayanaist would understand the Arhat to have a continuation. In fact, the Mahayana perspective says that after a long while the Arhats are roused out of their sleep by the blessing of the bodhisattvas so they can continue on with the practice of the Mahayana.

And yes, that's not something I'd like to try to say on Dhamma Wheel.

Mkoll said:

I wouldn't be offended. If an arahant has put an end to suffering for themselves, I doubt they'd mind helping others do the same.

Or do I have that wrong? Do Mahayana schools believe the arahant has made an end to suffering for themselves?

Malcolm wrote:

Arhats have made an end to suffering, but have, in the Mahāyāna analysis, mistaken the samadhi of cessation for the ultimate fruit of the path. The Buddha teaches in the Lankāvatara that eventually, arhats are roused out of their samadhi and set on the Bodhisattva path, where after three incalculable eons, they attain full buddhahood.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 29th, 2014 at 8:30 AM

Title: Re: Is Rebirth Unscientific?

Content:

Sherab said:

I think I have problem...

Malcolm wrote:

Well, you can ground your understanding in the Nikayas, I prefer to ground it in Mahāyāna. I consider it more authoritative.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 29th, 2014 at 8:33 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Dan74 said:

I am wondering though why on a Mahayana forum this dualistic parable would hold any sway?

Malcolm wrote:

Well, because the nondual is ultimate, but we still function in the relative.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 29th, 2014 at 10:34 PM

Title: Historicity of Yeshe Tsogyal

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Mutsuk wrote:

Of course we have no trace of Yeshe Tsogyel before quite late in the tibetan history and there is not a single mention of her in the Dunhuang documents if I'm not mistaken.

We have a record of Tsogyal outside the Nyingma Milieu which dates to the mid 12th century, i.e., there is a mention of her oral instructions concerning Vajrakīlaya in the Jetsun Dragpa Gyaltsen's collected works:

[http://tbrc.org/link?RID=O01CT0026%7CO01CT002600KG04134\\$W22271](http://tbrc.org/link?RID=O01CT0026%7CO01CT002600KG04134$W22271). The text from 793-794 mentions that it is advice given to her on Guru Rinpoche's departure from Tibet.

Thus, we can see here that the Khon tradition clearly mentions her. It's very unlikely that Jetsun Rinpoche would be following the lead of Nyangral, given how stringent Sakyapas are about lineage, and how dubious they were about the nascent gter ma tradition. In my opinion, we can safely say that this advice was included in their ancestral teachings.

Therefore, I personally see no valid reason whatsoever to doubt the historicity of a Tibetan woman named Yeshe Tsogyal who was Padmasambhava's companion.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 29th, 2014 at 10:39 PM

Title: Re: Is Rebirth Unscientific?

Content:

Sherab said:

I think I have problem...

Malcolm wrote:

Well, you can ground your understanding in the Nikayas, I prefer to ground it in Mahāyāna. I consider it more authoritative.

Sherab said:

Taking the Buddha as one who has an overall view of all things, I don't consider what the Buddha said in great vehicle sutras as more authoritative than what he said in the small vehicle suttas.

It is possible that one interpretation of what the Buddha said is more authoritative than another interpretation, but resorting to authority is my last resort for understanding what the Buddha said.

The Buddha said many things and unless one is as awakened as the Buddha himself,

practically whatever he said would be interpreted by one's intellect. What is important as far as I am concerned is the consistency of interpretation (understanding) of one aspect with other aspects of the Buddha's teachings.

Malcolm wrote:

You can choose to ignore the Saṃdhinirmocana, if you like.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, May 29th, 2014 at 10:47 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Wayfarer said:

I think the origin of the Mahayana Sutras is from 'visionary encounters' with the Buddha which could be understood as 'seeing the dharma by penetrating its meaning' or as 'insight into the true meaning of the Buddha's teaching through Prajñāpāramitā.' These insights were then codified into the Prajñāpāramitā sutras, amongst others.

Understood thus, I have always thought that these texts were the authentic word, even if not literally remembered and spoken in the same way as the early texts.

Malcolm wrote:

Again, this theory merely opens the door for criticism. It depends on a twist of interpretation. What you are essentially saying is, "I recognize that these texts were not actually taught by the Buddha at the time they were said to have been taught. Nevertheless, I like what they say." One's objection to the refutation of their validity as the Buddhavacana will therefore be groundless and toothless. You have already admitted by this that the Mainstream canon is authoritative, and that the Mahāyāna canon is not.

Instead it better to simply insist, "This is the sūtra that we read, if you do not read this sūtra, it is better for you to be neutral, than run the risk of abandoning Dharma." In this way one's point of view is unassailable when it comes to explicating points where the Buddha's teaching in Mahāyāna sūtras surpasses or seem to contradict those teachings found in the Mainstream canons.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 30th, 2014 at 12:02 AM

Title: Re: Understanding of karma

Content:

kng said:

"For example in dzogchen teaching, which is somehow different from other buddhist

teachings, we do not say that, for example for meeting the teaching of Buddha we need to have some good causes, some merits etc., we need to do something good during many lifetimes and then as a result we meet this high teaching, that can help us to free ourselves, to become liberated.

Malcolm wrote:

Berkin has a little misunderstanding here. We say that people who meet Dzogchen (and Dharma in general) are fortunate, why are they fortunate? Because they have the merit to meet the teachings. Why do they have that merit, because of positive actions performed over countless lifetimes.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 30th, 2014 at 12:06 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

smcj said:

What you are essentially saying is, "I recognize that these texts were not actually taught by the Buddha at the time they were said to have been taught. Nevertheless, I like what they say." One's objection to the refutation of their validity as the Buddhavacana will therefore be groundless and toothless. You have already admitted by this that the Mainstream canon is authoritative, and that the Mahāyāna canon is not. I disagree on the grounds that tracing the historicity to Sakyamuni is not the criteria for "authoritative".

Malcolm wrote:

You can disagree all you like, and yet when you say the "Buddha said" and someone replies, "not he didn't because Gregory Schopen blah blah blah...", etc., how will you respond? Well, "Buddha didn't really teach that, I agree. But some later Buddhist wrote a book and put it in the mouth of the Buddha, so it is just as authoritative."? You will be laughed at.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 30th, 2014 at 12:10 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

pueraeternus said:

This is a dangerous veer towards fundamentalism.

Malcolm wrote:

No, it is actually an embrasure of "fundamentalism."

pueraeternus said:

One of our primary tasks as Mahayanist is to attract beings and convert them to the dharma. We cannot do this if we petulantly insist on the historicity of wildly contradictory sutras and tantras.

Malcolm wrote:

You call it "petulant", I call it "essential". We cannot attract anyone to Mahāyāna teachings if we front with "Well, Buddha did not really teach this, but..." By this strategy we are explicitly agreeing that our texts do not carry the weight of authority of the Mainstream Canon. It's just a simple fact.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 30th, 2014 at 12:13 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

smcj said:

The classic example is the fairy tale that sea serpents kept a secret text written by Sakyamuni at the bottom of the ocean in a time capsule for 1,000 years waiting for Nagarjuna to be born so they could give it to him.

Malcolm wrote:

But as must be clear to you for years, I actually believe in Nāgas, Yakṣas, Gandharvas, Kinnaras, Mahoragas, and so on. So I have absolutely no problem with the idea that Nāgārjuna recovered the Prajñāpāramita from the Nāga dimension.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 30th, 2014 at 12:16 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

smcj said:

Try standing behind the Nagarjuna story as literal history. Then you'll be laughed at.

Malcolm wrote:

No more so then someone will be laughed at for believing Abhidharma was taught to Buddha's mother in the deva realms.

smcj said:

The definition of Dharma needs to be made clear. It is the speech of an enlightened being.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, in the case of the Mahāyāna sūtras, if not Buddha, then who? Some anonymous enlightened being we do not know? This undermines the entire validity of the lineage.

smcj said:

Any other position is handing the academics the authority to decide what is authentic Dharma or not.

Malcolm wrote:

Academics have no such authority nor will they ever for as long as we insist that our sūtras are the actual words of the Buddha, either in person, by blessing or by permission.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 30th, 2014 at 12:21 AM

Title: Re: Historicity of Yeshe Tsogyal

Content:

mutsum said:

Great! Thanks for the reference! We can even see that her toponymic affiliation is even given (as mKhar-che(n) bza'). It's indeed a good reference outside the gter-ma tradition.

Malcolm wrote:

I thought so. I think it must be the earliest known textual reference to her. Yes, it is late, but it is from the corpus of a Tibetan family known for their very strict adherence to their Dharma traditions, whose lineage of Kilaya traces back to Guru P.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 30th, 2014 at 12:24 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

smcj said:

The strength of Buddhism lies in the idea that generation after generation has been able to produce realized beings. Their realization may not equal Buddha's but it is still realization nevertheless. What they have to say is by definition Dharma. End of controversy. Anyone that feels the need to have had Sakyamuni personally teach something is showing a karmic bias towards Shravakayana. That's their karma. Let them follow it.

Malcolm wrote:

The strength of the Dharma lies on it's lineage and origin being authentic. Otherwise, it is fabrication.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 30th, 2014 at 12:34 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

smcj said:

I consider Dzogchen, Mahamudra, the tantas and such as authentic Dharma.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, and they can be traced back with precision to Vajradhara, apart from those few lower tantras the Buddha himself taught.

smcj said:

I feel no qualms whatsoever about not tracing them back 2,500 years to Sakyamuni.

Malcolm wrote:

Teachings such as Kalacakra were taught directly by the Buddha, even if they were set down later by the Shambhala Kings.

smcj said:

They produce enlightened beings. They come from enlightened beings. Those enlightened beings came from practicing the Dharma that Sakyamuni taught. That makes them authentic Buddhism, regardless of whether or not Sakyamuni's specifically articulating those teachings in the flesh.

Malcolm wrote:

My point is that we cannot regard those teachings in Mahāyāna sūtras which the Buddha taught to be truly valid, unless in fact we believe the Buddha indeed taught them, where and when it is said he taught them. Because otherwise, we are fundamentally admitting we do not know the source of such teachings.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 30th, 2014 at 12:38 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

PorkChop said:

I'm with you on the idea of holding firm that the teachings themselves come from Shakyamuni; the issue I bring up is how to go about doing this in the most defensible position available. The ability to defend this position is integral given the vested interest others have of shooting down Mahayana/Vajrayana teachings.

Malcolm wrote:

The best approach is to simply discuss the teachings with the understanding that Buddha actually taught themselves himself as we Mahāyānists have been doing for the past 2000 years and ignore what outsiders think. People become interested in Mahāyāna because they have the merit to do so, not because of some evangelism on the part of Mahāyānists. People can either believe what faithless academics say, "The Mahāyāna teachings are not the words of the Buddha" or they can believe what all of our realized masters say: "The Mahāyāna teachings are the words of the Buddha."

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 30th, 2014 at 12:59 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

smcj said:

Because otherwise, we are fundamentally admitting we do not know the source of such teachings.

I don't have a problem with that.

Malcolm wrote:

I do.

smcj said:

Likewise I don't believe the Naga story about Nagarjuna, yet I accept it as authentic Dharma. It is an appropriate elaboration on Sakyamuni's original teachings, the appropriateness being validated by Nagarjuna's own realization. It is an extension of Sakyamuni, not Sakyamuni's personal teaching.

Malcolm wrote:

I don't agree. And I don't think it serves our purposes in Mahāyāna take this perspective.

People with realization can add to Dharma, and have done so. People that have not been able to gain realization should not alter even one letter of it. That is why contemporary people that have failed at Dharma should not be the ones leading the charge to change it. That is taking the teachings of enlightened awareness and making them the teachings of ignorant unawareness.

smcj said:

Did Sakyamuni teach the 6 Yogas of Naropa? I don't think so. Dzogchen? I don't think so. If you say Vajradhara taught them, ok. (Vajradhara being the enlightenment of Sakyamuni as seen from the Vajrayana perspective.) But that means that the history of it will show up some time after the Parinirvana, when it comes back down to the human realm. If you say that Sakyamuni could still teach after the Parinirvana, then that is the same as saying later authors could, based on their own realization, contribute to the Canon. It is saying the same thing two different ways.

Malcolm wrote:

[/quote]

The Mahāyāna sūtras place themselves within the 80 year lifespan of the Buddha. If we take your route, we are openly admitting that Mahāyāna teachings are not the teachings of the Buddha. Therefore, this is a bad way to go. Vajrayāna also suffer too.

M



Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 30th, 2014 at 1:00 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

pueraeternus said:

There are so many ways to cut it - so easy to turn it around and declare that the Mahayana teachings represented a deeper, more profound teachings that surely is the provenance of the Buddhas. And if others insist of the primacy of textual history, we just say "oh that is a viewpoint limited to time and space, we have to go beyond that.... blah blah blah"

Malcolm wrote:

This is a very weak apologetic. You are still admitting that the Mahāyāna teachings portray historical events which did not happen, conventionally.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 30th, 2014 at 1:56 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

smcj said:

Yes, motivated by ascribing them to Sakyamuni as the symbol of validity.

Malcolm wrote:

So now we are speaking the motivations of what we presume to anonymous authors? Seems a stretch to me.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 30th, 2014 at 2:00 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

smcj said:

Don't you reject Mt. Meru cosmology, which in fact the Buddha taught?

Malcolm wrote:

I don't reject Meru cosmology. It is an Indo-centric map of the ancient world in which Meru clearly lies in the middle of Central Asia, undoubtedly Tibet. I do not necessarily accept the way the Koshā presents it.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 30th, 2014 at 2:04 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

Malcolm, it all comes down to faith or confidence or whatever in the end, right? You think it's insufficient to say "I have faith in this group of texts." but it's sufficient to say "I have faith in the Buddha and I have faith that the Buddha said what's in these texts."? I don't think there's any real apologetic advantage there. Why do you have faith in the Buddha in the first place? Who are you hoping to convince anyway?

Malcolm wrote:

Oh, I am not trying to convince anyone of anything, I learned long ago that is useless.

dzogchungpa said:

You think it's insufficient to say "I have faith in this group of texts." but it's sufficient to say "I have faith in the Buddha and I have faith that the Buddha said what's in these texts."?

Malcolm wrote:

When confronted with a claim "X teaching in Mahāyāna is contradicted by x teaching in the Agamas", if you take the view that the Mahāyāna sūtras were not taught by the Buddha, you have no choice but to admit the Agamic teaching is the definitive one.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 30th, 2014 at 2:05 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

pueraeternus said:

We have to accept the fact that some texts are indeed edited later, have textual corruption, are obviously apocryphal, etc. It is inevitable for a canon that is so vast and sprawling. Then we have to look at the soteriological value of such texts and determine if it is still of dharmic value. But to deny that is so just because of our "faith" is exactly the wrong thing to do.

Malcolm wrote:

The point is that from this point of view, the entire Mahāyāna canon is apocryphal, at least as far as Theravadins etc. are concerned. It is not desirable to admit this position. One fundamentally invalidates the Mahāyāna by following this view.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 30th, 2014 at 2:34 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

pueraeternus said:

By taking textual analysis into consideration, we can still be reasonable to most people and have a chance to convince them that the Mahayana teachings adhere to the dharma seals.

Malcolm wrote:

No, taking this position means that we have no faith at all in the Mahāyāna path since it does not come from an awakened source.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 30th, 2014 at 3:30 AM

Title: Re: NamDak SaLing closing

Content:

DechenNamdrol said:

Hello all.

I am immediately closing my centre in Calgary, Alberta and ceasing all activities due to a threat of violence made against me, a handicapped father of two young children, by a man who masquerades as a Dharma practitioner.

I wish you all the best. I won't be posting anything further.

Malcolm wrote:

Time for Simhamukha my friend.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 30th, 2014 at 3:34 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Kunzang said:

Did I misunderstand your former position? If not, what has prompted this shift, if you don't mind talking about it? It seems a pretty radical turnaround.

Malcolm wrote:

I finally understood that my former position is one which ultimately harms Mahāyāna Dharma. Since my practice comes first, I changed my mind.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 30th, 2014 at 3:43 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

I finally understood that my former position is one which ultimately harms Mahāyāna Dharma. Since my practice comes first, I changed my mind.

smcj said:

I am largely in agreement with your former position, and do not see it as harming the Mahayana. However you are welcome to change your mind as you see fit.

Malcolm wrote:

My former position was purely speculative, it is not grounded in fact or tradition.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 30th, 2014 at 3:51 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

smcj said:

Actually I'm even more speculative; that the historical Sakyamuni intended the said developments to occur. That's a little Issac Asimov "Foundation Trilogy" sic-fi speculative, but it is how I see it.

And I'm not so sure tradition dismisses it.

Malcolm wrote:

The fact is that we have some texts. They are records of the Buddha's teaching. Either they are or they are not. That is the only fact that matters.

I choose to believe that they are. I recommend that others do so. It will help their practice.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 30th, 2014 at 4:22 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

smcj said:

No. The only fact that matters, and it is a fact, is that we have enlightened teachers today. Maybe they are not fully enlightened, but are sufficiently so that they are proof positive of the viability of the Path and the validity of the Teachings. Everything else is of no consequence.

Malcolm wrote:

If they are awakened , how could they become so on the basis of texts which are just literary fictions, not matter now edifying?

As the Tantra of the Union of The Sun and Moon states:

If the history is not explained,  
there will be the fault of lack of confidence  
in this discourses of the definitive secret meaning.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 30th, 2014 at 4:28 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

pueraeternus said:

Nonsense - just because a text was written down hundreds of years later after the Buddha's time on this planet does not mean that it did not come from an awakened or inspired source.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, so if you think that Mahāyāna sutras were not actually spoken by the Buddha, who is the awakened or inspired source to which you refer?

pueraeternus said:

Why are you all of a sudden struck by such fundamentalist tendencies?

Malcolm wrote:

I have concluded that denying that Śākyamunu Buddha is the author of the Mahāyāna sūtras constitutes abandoning the Dharma. I have concluded therefore, it is very non-virtuous, and not in the interest of those who claim to be Mahāyānists. Such positions only serve the forces which wittingly or unwittingly seek to unravel the Buddha's Dharma from within.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 30th, 2014 at 5:08 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

pueraeternus said:

Nonsense - just because a text was written down hundreds of years later after the Buddha's time on this planet does not mean that it did not come from an awakened or inspired source.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, so if you think that Mahāyāna sutras were not actually spoken by the Buddha, who is the awakened or inspired source to which you refer?

pueraeternus said:

They may not be spoken by the flesh-and-blood nirmanakaya Buddha, but they are certainly spoken by the Sambhogakaya or even Dharmakaya Buddha. Or perhaps the Buddha inspired someone to enlightened speech (ala Subhuti), and thus a sermon is given. Or a yogi obtained visions of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas in assembly, and promptly wrote it down after emerging from samadhi. Etc, etc.

Malcolm wrote:

But this is not how the text comes to us. These are all rationalizations to explain away the discomfort which arises from the fact that one has not accepted the Mahāyāna sūtras as being the actual speech of the Nirmanakāya, which is how they are presented, i.e. as the words spoken from the mouth of the Buddha, i.e. thus have I heard...

There is actually no reason whatsoever to doubt that Mahāyāna sūtras are the actual words of the Buddha. Not one, apart from the fact that some 19th century westerner scholars decided this was the case and we have blindly followed their lead ever since without once questioning the wisdom of this. We have basically decided that the wisdom of philologists is what we should follow.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 30th, 2014 at 5:31 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

But this is not how the text comes to us. These are all rationalizations to explain away the discomfort which arises from the fact that one has not accepted the Mahāyāna sūtras as being the actual speech of the Nirmanakāya, which is how they are presented, i.e. as the words spoken from the mouth of the Buddha .

pueraeternus said:

Oh - so now we are to uncritically accept at face value every Mahayana sutra word for word?

Malcolm wrote:

We are to merely accept that they were spoken by the Buddha.

pueraeternus said:

How do you think the Buddhist nitārtha/neyārtha textual hermeneutics came about? Go down this road and you will find yourself contenting with a mass of contradictions that ultimately leads to collapse of the very faith you are trying to protect.

Malcolm wrote:

I did not say we should not apply the hermeneutical strategies which come from the sutras themselves, as well as various commentaries upon them, such as the Abhisamayālaṅkāra. It is high time, as Western Mahāyanists, that we should be guided by what the sūtras and commentaries on those sūtras say, rather than the opinions of Buddhologists.

There is actually no reason whatsoever to doubt that Mahāyāna sūtras are the actual words of the Buddha. Not one, apart from the fact that some 19th century westerner scholars decided this was the case and we have blindly followed their lead ever since without once questioning the wisdom of this.

There is - even early Buddhists denounce the new fangled sutras as heresy. All internal evidence from Sravakayana texts point to the Mahayana as a later development.

Yes, they did indeed reject Mahāyāna sūtras, eliciting Nāgārjuna's response in the Ratnavali and Maitreya Bodhisattva's response in the Sūtrālaṃkāra. But the fact that Śravakas rejected the Mahāyāna sutras does not tell us anything at all about them. It certainly should not be take as evidence that the Mahāyāna sūtras are not the Buddha's own words. But most Westerners are dependent upon philologists who were biased towards the Pali canon as being the "authentic" Buddhism of the Buddha. And quite frankly, they have constructed a picture of Buddhism that we inherit and generally buy into without second thoughts. The entire history of Mahāyāna studies in the Academy begins from the premise that Mahāyāna sūtras are later literary fabrications. But it is just a premise, one with no supporting facts whatsoever.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 30th, 2014 at 5:36 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

smcj said:

They can't. That's the point. But since they have, they have validated the texts and practices upon which they relied, proving that the tradition indeed came from an enlightened source, whether it be Sakyamuni or another enlightened being. The proof is in the taste of the pudding.

Malcolm wrote:

I see, so you are still left with the quandry: following the teaching in the sūtras produce the results predicted in the sūtras, upon what basis can you accept part of the text to be true, and yet doubt the attribution of the text. If the tradition is effective, if what the texts say are true, of what use is it to say "This tradition is effective, it produces the results which it claims, nevertheless, even though the words of the text are true, the authorship is false." For that is what you are saying here , no more, and no less.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 30th, 2014 at 5:38 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

pueraeternus said:

Faith must lead towards prajna. The dog's tooth example merely shows that single-mindedness can lead to absorption and samadhi, and that (hopefully) leads to understanding and direct vision of dependent origination, emptiness, etc.

Malcolm wrote:

If one does not have faith in the authorship of the Dharma one is following, it will not lead to prajñā, but only to confusion and more doubt.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 30th, 2014 at 5:42 AM

Title: Re: Khyenri style of painting

Content:

dzoki said:

There is an updated page on Khyentri style of thangka painting on himalayanart, I found I really like this style. If I had the money I would have a whole set of thangkas painted in this style (that would be a hell lot of thangkas ), but then I found out it ceased to continue as a tradition. Have there been any attempts to revive this style? I am asking here since, as I understood this style was mainly tied to Sakya school.

<http://www.himalayanart.org/search/set.cfm?setid=83> "

onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;" onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;

Malcolm wrote:

Well, I think this style continues to dominate Central Tibetan painting.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 30th, 2014 at 5:46 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

pueraeternus said:

There is no surprise that fundamentalists of other creed denounce everything but their own. We don't even need to consider them since most of their minds are already closed to our path in this lifetime. We do need to exemplify the broad-mindedness, reasoning and virtue that accompanies those who walk the Buddhist path. We show by example, display the wondrous store of the Buddha's treasure to all and teach those who would come and listen. Closing our minds just because there are other closed-minded people out there is hardly skillful means.

Malcolm wrote:

I am not condemning anything. I am not denouncing anything. My message is quite positive. The Mahāyāna Sūtras are the words of the Buddha. Let those who do not believe this go their own way peacefully as I will mine.



Exemplifying broad-mindedness, reasoning and virtue does not entail denying the authorship and authenticity of our own core canon, which sadly, 90 percent of Western Mahāyānists do without even realizing it.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 30th, 2014 at 7:05 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

Malcolm, if the Mahayana sutras were actually spoken by the Buddha, why were they rejected by mainstream Buddhists, who apparently constituted the majority of Buddhists in India?

Malcolm wrote:

Because they were not preserved by Śravakas, but rather by Mañjuśrī and Samantabhadra.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 30th, 2014 at 7:06 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Adamantine said:

I just want to remind everyone that today is the first day of the sacred month Saga Dawa (according to Tibetan astrology).

As such, it is said that the effects of positive and negative actions are vastly multiplied.

dzogchungpa said:

Did the Buddha teach Tibetan astrology too?

Malcolm wrote:

No, that would be Mañjuśrī.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 30th, 2014 at 7:07 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

smcj said:

Your criteria for authorship is far too narrow.

His criteria for credible authorship of authentic Dharma is too narrow.

But Malcolm knows this. He could argue my position better than I have. He is being loyal to what he sees as the interests of the Mahayana. Mistakenly so in my opinion, but at the same time understandably so.

pueraeternus said:

More like he is having a midlife crisis. He should be well beyond the stage where he needs to wrestle with sraddha issues. I don't get it.

Malcolm wrote:

I am not wrestling with any issues. I simply realize that adopting the western text critical view of Mahāyāna sūtras is not virtuous.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 30th, 2014 at 7:08 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

Malcolm, if the Mahayana sutras were actually spoken by the Buddha, why were they rejected by mainstream Buddhists, who apparently constituted the majority of Buddhists in India?

Malcolm wrote:

Because they were not preserved by Śravakas, but rather by Mañjuśrī and Samantabhadra.

smcj said:

Well that's a whole different take on the subject! I can go along with that!

Malcolm wrote:

This is the traditional account.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 30th, 2014 at 7:32 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

tobes said:

I think there is a huge difference between being text critical in the narrow philological sense, and simply recognising that reading any kind of literature necessarily involves some kind of hermeneutical framework.

Malcolm wrote:

Agreed — I am pretty sure I did not condemn hermeneutics. I would simply insist that the hermeneutical framework of Mahāyāna sutras has already been provided by the Buddha in those very same sutras, and where it has not, by such authors as Nāgārjuna, Maitreya, etc.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 30th, 2014 at 8:14 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Wayfarer said:

I think the idea of 'a visionary encounter with the Buddha' is perfectly real.

Malcolm wrote:

We have no evidence that the Mahāyāna sutras were received this way. My point is that all of these kind of speculative apologetics exist to satisfy a bias against Mahāyāna texts endemic in Western Academia, and sadly, a bias that persists even amongst the majority of those who term themselves Mahāyānis.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 30th, 2014 at 8:16 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

I would simply insist that the hermeneutical framework of Mahāyāna sutras has already been provided by the Buddha in those very same sutras

So, you are saying that "the Buddha taught them" is not hermeneutics, it is simple fact, while the hermeneutics taught therein are valid, etc. because of this authorship by the historical Buddha, in the same way that the Nikayas are valid because of their authorship -- because the historical Buddha taught the content.

Parsing anything about this - such as e.g. that the Nikayas are stratified and not wholly Buddhavacana, or that Mahayana is wholly later... all of that, to any historian, text-critical examiner, etc, the reply is that

Adopting the western text critical view of Mahāyāna sūtras is not virtuous.

Do I understand correctly?

Indeed you do. Indeed, Theravadins should adopt precisely the same attitude —why?

Because these days even the Pali Canon is coming under attack from the very same forces who initially caused Mahāyāna to fall into disrepute.

In short, it is not virtuous to regard teachings in the Agamas/Nikāyas and well as the Mahāyāna canon to be anything other than taught by the Buddha. I am not insisting that of adherents of the Mainstream canons necessarily must accord validity to Mahāyāna canon; or those who are adherents of common Mahāyāna necessarily must accept Vajrayāna — they should remain a place free of judgement. But for those of us who are Mahāyānis and Vajrayānis, well, it is better for us to simply accept all these teachings as the teachings of the historical Buddha where it is so indicated, unless there are absolutely compelling reasons to believe otherwise.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 30th, 2014 at 10:03 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

pueraeternus said:

how is it that none of that survived in the First Council?

Malcolm wrote:

These sūtras were not compiled at the first council.

In the Madhyamakahrdayavṛttitarkajvālā, Bhava reports:

Mahāyāna was spoken by the Buddha because it does not contradict the Dharma seals, one is introduced to the sūtra canon of the noble truth; because the afflicted are truly seen to be tamed; and because it does not conflict with dependent origination — all of those said to be "spoken by the Buddha" are found in Mahāyāna. Further, also each of the eighteen schools each introduce their own canon, but there are a great many mutual contradictions [between them]. The profound and vast methods of benefitting others in Mahāyāna are not introduced at all in the sūtra canon of the śrāvakas.

Mahāyāna introduces the bodhisattva training appearing in seven hundred topics.

Because the teaching of emptiness does not contradict the Dharma itself, therefore, the Dharma seals are not contradicted. Due to this, Mahāyāna was spoken by the Buddha because the compilers of the basic [texts], Samantabhadra, Mañjuśrī, Guhyapati, Maitreya and so on, compiled them. The compilers of our basic [texts] were not the śrāvakas because Mahāyāna discourses are not their domain.

In other words, though the arhats were present at Mahāyāna teachings, it was not the path they were on, and not the path they wanted to preserve since they did not have the bodhisattva motivation. Thus, they compiled only the teachings they found relevant for nirvana and ignored those which treated the Bodhisattva path and did not memorize them or recite them.

Bhava reports a citation from a text called the Śālmālīvāna-sūtra \*:

Ānanda, I comprehend even more Dharma than however many leaves there are in this śālmālī grove, but I have not taught them to you. Since that many were taught for a purpose, you must not be regretful, but you should also not be without desire [to hear them].

In response to the qualm that Ānanda heard all of the sūtras:

If it is said "Ārya Ānanda comprehended all of the sūtras", with respect to that, the Uttama sūtra\* states: "There is not even one bhikṣu holding the number of Dharmas held by Śakra, the king of the devas." Since that is so, Ānanda did not hold all of the Dharma. Therefore, the vast teachings of the Buddha are not seen in that authentic compilation Ānanda demonstrated and compiled authentically.

Bhava continues in this vein for quite some time. The point is that a) arhats did not preserve all the teachings of the Buddha b) Ānanda did not know all of the sūtras.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 30th, 2014 at 10:14 PM

Title: Re: Is Rebirth Unscientific?

Content:

Wayfarer said:

The issue is, whether there is 'the consciousness' that 'goes' from life to life. Sati is rebuked for saying that there is. But the fact that there isn't something the same that goes from life to life, doesn't solve the problem of karma. If there is no agent, then to whom does karma accrue? There is clearly continuity in that sense. After all, if you say there is no karma, then you're a nihilist. So how does karma not pertain to agent?

Malcolm wrote:

There is no continuous agent, no atman, which transfers from this world to the next world [or even from this moment to the next], but the aggregates are serially connected, as Nāgārjuna shows in the Pratītyasamutpāḍakarikas.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 30th, 2014 at 10:15 PM

Title: Re: Is Rebirth Unscientific?

Content:

Andrew108 said:

'Apart from a requisite condition, there is no coming-into-play of consciousness.'

This is how this 'ethical hedonist' understands it.

Malcolm wrote:

So, what is the requisite condition of the mental consciousness (mano-vijñāna)?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 30th, 2014 at 10:22 PM

Title: Re: Arhats and Bodhisattvas

Content:

Astus said:

It reminds me of the common criticism found in the popular versions of Mahayana (e.g. Zen and Tantra), that the common path of the bodhisattva, as it is actually presented by most of the sutras, takes too long and it is too difficult. What hardly anyone dares to consider is that those popular versions actually teach sravakayana under the pretence of "buddhahood in this life". Also, both Zen and Tantra are famous for emphasising discipleship (sravaka-hood). So, I'd add to Bhikkhu Bodhi's quote that hardly anyone wants to take the bodhisattva path, and all the arguments against Theravada are practically valid against the same people who use them.

Malcolm wrote:

"Buddhahood in the this life" means completing the two accumulations which lead to both freedom and omniscience.

It is impossible for someone to has generated bodhicitta to experience the fruit of an

arhat, i.e. cessation, indeed, it is against the very principles of the bodhisattva path to do so.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 30th, 2014 at 10:37 PM

Title: Re: Astrological conflicts

Content:

kng said:

Hi everyone

During the last webcast Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche mentioned, that if someone has a difficult year from astrological point of view, he can use lungtas to be able to overcome those difficulties. Somehow I can not understand how this is supposed to work. I mean, I put some prayer flags with auspicious symbols and good wishes on trees and assuming that I did this on appropriate day, I shall be able to overcome problems and otherwise not? Seems a little bit odd to me.

Malcolm wrote:

One, Tibetan "astrology" is not astrology in the sense you understand it. The term in Tibetan is "calculation", so here we are calculating the cycle of the phases in the five elements— wood, fire, earth, metal and water— through the year, through the month and through the day.

Tibetan elemental calculation is very general, and it serves only as a sort of weather report, i.e., when rain is predicted, it may not necessarily rain in your area, but you are wise to bring an umbrella. It is the same with elemental calculation, if it indicates that this or that person will have obstacles in a given year, it is sound to make do practices to prevent this.

Lungta flags are blessed by you, and there is a mantra, so there is a definite connection between your energy and the flags themselves. They also harmonize the five elements of a place because they are consecrated to do so. Whenever you see them, you should also recite that mantra, since it increases their benefit for you.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 30th, 2014 at 10:38 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

Isn't Bhava about 1000 years after the Buddha?

Malcolm wrote:

The last I checked, Gregory Schopen was about 2500 years after the Buddha.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, May 30th, 2014 at 11:06 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

heart said:

That said I think the Mahasamgika's could certainly represent a clear link to Mahayana.

/magnus

Malcolm wrote:

Why? Maitreya clearly states in the first chapter of the Sūtrālaṃkāra that Mahāyāna was taught during the Buddha's own lifetime, and it is not a later development.

There is no need to rely on these speculative academic contrivances. We simply need to rely on the authoritative Indian treatises. It is high time Mahāyānis threw off the burdensome shackles of western historiography.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 31st, 2014 at 12:05 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

We simply need to rely on the authoritative Indian treatises.

dzogchungpa said:

How do we know which ones are authoritative?

Malcolm wrote:

The one's deemed authoritative enough to expend the effort translating.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 31st, 2014 at 12:44 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

Well, I am not a scholar so I don't even know the names of those treatises, let alone their contents, but do they speak with one voice about the origins of the Mahayana sutras?

Malcolm wrote:

The assertion that the bodhisattvas like Mañjuśrī and so on are the compilers of Mahāyāna was commonly held by Yogacarins, Madhyamakas as well by Vajrayana authors in such texts as: Āryāvikalpapraveśadhāraṇīṭikā [Mañjuśrī, etc.]; Prajñāpāramitāmātṛkāśatasāhasrikābṛhacchāsanapañcaviṃśatisāhasrikāmadhyāśāsa

nāṣṭādaśasāhasrikālaghuśāsanāṣṭasamānārthaśāśana;  
Bhagavatyāmnāyānusāriṇī-nāma-vyākhyā [Vajrapaṇi];  
Madhyamakahrdayavṛttitarkajvālā [mentioned above];  
Āryamanjjuśrīguhyatantrasādhanaśarvakarmanidhi-nāma-ṭīkā;  
Vimalaprabhā-nāma-mūlatantrānusāriṇī-  
dvādaśasāhasrikālaghukālacakratantrarājaṭīkā.

These six texts are the only ones I can find in a quick search for the key words "compiler" and "Mahāyāna" in the Kengyur and Tengyur; but I am sure there are others that may discuss the issue in slightly different terms.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 31st, 2014 at 1:20 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

In other words, though the arhats were present at Mahāyāna teachings, it was not the path they were on, and not the path they wanted to preserve since they did not have the bodhisattva motivation. Thus, they compiled only the teachings they found relevant for nirvana and ignored those which treated the Bodhisattva path and did not memorize them or recite them.

pueraeternus said:

Mere apologetics and highly unconvincing - because based on the amount of Mahayana sutras, that would mean that the arhats ignored 70% of what the Buddha taught.

Malcolm wrote:

As indeed they did.

pueraeternus said:

And furthermore, they were heavily engaged in doctrine discussions in many of the Mahayana sutras. If they were indeed not interested, then why would they engage in the first place? They would just stand one side and look at their nails.

Malcolm wrote:

How many arhats, exactly? In which sutras?

pueraeternus said:

And besides, the Buddha himself never said anything like what Bhava suggested.

Malcolm wrote:

You're quite sure?

pueraeternus said:

Being omniscient, why would he preach to them Mahayana sutras if he knew they were not receptive?



Malcolm wrote:

In order to imprint traces on their minds. Not only is the Buddha omniscient, he is loving.

pueraeternus said:

According to many Mahayana sutras, Ananda certainly heard, knew and was instructed by the Buddha to disseminate said doctrines.

Malcolm wrote:

Of course he appears in many Mahāyāna sūtras, but Ananda was not the compiler of Mahāyāna. So he did not recite these texts at the first council the reasons already stated.

Further, for example, the Ratnakuta collection has 49 sutras. Ānanda appears in only thirty of them. Ananda appears nowhere at all in the Avatamska. He appears nowhere in the higher tantras with exception of the Śrī-buddhakapāla-nāma-yoginī-tantrarāja; and very few of the lower tantras.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 31st, 2014 at 1:22 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

daverupa said:

So the evidence is actually fairly consistent that Mahayana is late. Malcolm, however, suggests going an a-historical a-evidentiary route, and with respect to an attitude like that, evidence simply has nowhere to land.

Malcolm wrote:

All the evidence you can produce is strictly speculative. But since you don't care about Mahāyāna, it's not really your concern anyway. But to clarify, I am rejecting the Western academic revisionism in the historical presentation of Buddhadharma. My perspective however, is not ahistorical. It's just a historical perspective you do not like.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 31st, 2014 at 1:24 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

pueraeternus said:

...if the Arhats were indeed in the audience in the Mahayana sermons (as they are clearly shown doing in said sutras), then the early Buddhists would have known and we would have seen clear evidence of it in the earliest materials.

Malcolm wrote:

Not so — we see in the sutras that the śrāvakas were constantly in a state of doubt about Mahāyāna. This is true even today, even more so.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 31st, 2014 at 1:29 AM

Title: Re: Is Rebirth Unscientific?

Content:

Andrew108 said:

'Apart from a requisite condition, there is no coming-into-play of consciousness.'

This is how this 'ethical hedonist' understands it.

Malcolm wrote:

So, what is the requisite condition of the mental consciousness (mano-vijñāna)?

Andrew108 said:

'If one is asked, 'From what requisite condition does consciousness come?' one should say, 'Consciousness comes from name-and-form as its requisite condition.'

Malcolm wrote:

You forgot the other part of the citation. Sloppy.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 31st, 2014 at 1:33 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Sherlock said:

Mahayanis have always been involved in textual criticism and analysis from at least the first translators in China. There is just no need to subscribe to Protestant assumptions when analysing texts.

Malcolm wrote:

Precisely, or subscribe to historical revisionism.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 31st, 2014 at 1:48 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

From "Dzog Chen and Zen":

ChNN said:

Furthermore, since the Buddhist schools all have a rather limited vision, whenever they

speak of a given Buddhist teaching, they try to associate it, for example, with a specific saying or statement of the historical Buddha Shakyamuni. This is a very limited way of looking at things. The principle is not that. If that were the principle, it would be more than sufficient to follow something like the Theravada tradition of sutric Buddhism, because what Buddha Shakyamuni taught orally to people was something like sutric Buddhism. It was not even the sutric Buddhism of the Mahayana Sutras; we know very well that Mahayana Buddhism later.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, but this is incomplete. "Later" does not mean it was taught later. "Later" means that it appeared later. Rinpoche has explained the principle of how Buddha's teachings arose and spread many times using the example of the Heart Sūtra.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 31st, 2014 at 2:35 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, but this is incomplete. "Later" does not mean it was taught later. "Later" means that it appeared later. Rinpoche has explained the principle of how Buddha's teachings arose and spread many times using the example of the Heart Sūtra.

dzogchungpa said:

Well, I guess I haven't heard those explanations, but I don't think "what Buddha Shakyamuni taught orally to people was something like sutric Buddhism. It was not even the sutric Buddhism of the Mahayana Sutras" requires any interpretation. You are framing this as an issue of virtue, and I am happy to follow Rinpoche's lead here.

Malcolm wrote:

Please be my guest. But you are following the wrong lead.

Rinpoche clearly states (and so many times) for example that the Heart Sutra is an example where the text is taught through Buddha's permission, in this case by Avalokiteśvara. Or he uses the example of the Dharma drum which through Buddha's blessing automatically resounds with Dharma teachings. Or he gives the example of the Sambhogakāya. As I said, what you've seized upon is incomplete. What in fact he is criticizing is the desire by some Lamas to prove that all the Tantras were taught by Śākyamuni Buddha.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 31st, 2014 at 3:32 AM

Title: Re: Astrological conflicts

Content:

kng said:

Thank you for your answers. I would like to ask one more question, is it necessary that I hang out lungtas by myself or is it ok to ask some monastery or sangha friend to do it for me?

Malcolm wrote:

Generally you would do it yourself.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 31st, 2014 at 5:05 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

daverupa said:

So all history is strictly speculative, except your own historical perspective?

Malcolm wrote:

History is a story told about the past. That's all. The story told by western academics about Buddhadharma, especially Mahāyāna is harmful to it.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 31st, 2014 at 6:55 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

How many arhats, exactly? In which sutras?

pueraeternus said:

Prajnaparamita sutras (eg. Subhuti), Suramgamasamadhi (eg. Sariputra, Mahakasyapa), Vimalakirti (e.g. Sariputra, Mahakasyapa, Purna, the whole team), Lotus Sutra (need I say more?)

Malcolm wrote:

So not many at all. A mere handful, apart from those in the audience.

pueraeternus said:

You're quite sure?

Oh yes, I am sure that the Buddha didn't intend only "Samantabhadra, Mañjuśrī, Guhyapati, Maitreya and so on" to compile the Mahayana sutras, since he directly gave instructions to Ananda to memorize and preserve many. And the fact that Arhats were present, many spoke and many rejoiced, and Ananda asked "what shall this wonderful sutra be called?", shows that the Buddha didn't intend to exclude them.

Malcolm wrote:

Many, as we see, is four or five. Ānanda of course was not an arhat while Buddha was alive.

But we are talking about compilers of these texts. Ananda did not hear all of the sūtras the Buddha taught. He did not compile them all. For example, in the Ānanda sūtra, the Buddha states:

Anything the Bhagavan taught before, he [Ānanda] does not hold those. It is not reasonable to say "Teach them again to him" because they reside in some other bhikṣus. Thus it is not established at all that Ananda was even the sole compiler of the Mainstream Canon. Bhava argues there were several compilers.

pueraeternus said:

Of course he appears in many Mahāyāna sūtras, but Ananda was not the compiler of Mahāyāna.

He was. The Buddha said so in many Mahayana sutras.

Malcolm wrote:

There is only one such statement as far as I can tell, found in the Mahākaruṇāpūṇḍarīka sūtra. Buddha here asked Ānanda to gather whatever the Buddha said.

However the Tathāgatācintyaguhyānirdeśa-sūtra asserts that Vajrapani is the compiler of all the sūtras of the Buddhas of the Bhadrakalapa.

Despite this contradiction, it is definitely the case that Bhava has a rather lengthy discussion about the issue of the compilation of the sūtras and he rejects the notion that they were compiled by the śrāvakas.

pueraeternus said:

Oh, but he and other Arhats appeared in plenty of the early Mahayana sutras - that itself would be more than sufficient for the teachings to be gathered during the First Council.

Malcolm wrote:

Here is a fact. The Mahāyāna sūtras were not recited at the first council, and everyone agrees this is so, including all Mahāyāna authors we know of who wrote on the subject. . You can either assume that the reason for this is as described by Bhava, or you can simply go with western historiography which denies Mahāyāna is the actual teaching of the Buddha.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 31st, 2014 at 8:07 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

You can either assume that the reason for this is as described by Bhava...

Wayfarer said:  
Where is this account to be found?

Malcolm wrote:  
Tarkajvala.

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Saturday, May 31st, 2014 at 8:10 AM  
Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism  
Content:

tobes said:  
Where are all these scholars interpreting and translating Buddhist texts purely in this critical fashion and purely to publish and make a buck?

Malcolm wrote:  
Publish or die...

tobes said:  
I would say the trend is starkly opposite: most works occur out of sincere and genuine interest in what those texts might have to teach us. Very often they are scholar-practitioners. If not, they have committed a huge amount of time and energy to bring Buddhist thought into the contemporary epoch. I don't think it is possible to do this without a genuine effort to pursue an understanding.

Malcolm wrote:  
Many of the academic scholars of Buddhism that I know are ex-practitioners.

tobes said:  
Moreover, unless you have a time machine and can go back to the discourses themselves, there is no other possibility than, as you put it: "examining the dharma through different Western/modern/post-modern intellectual lenses." The point is, those lenses are already there in the language we use, and the conceptual frameworks we deploy in interpretation, whether we are aware of them or not. If there is a way to put them down, so to speak, and interpret 'on faith' could you explain how this may be possible?

Malcolm wrote:  
Actually, we just accept the received tradition and leave it at that.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 31st, 2014 at 9:36 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

So not many at all. A mere handful, apart from those in the audience.

pueraeternus said:

Don't be specious. By this logic then there are also very little bodhisattvas since only at most a handful of them really speak in the Mahayana sutras.

Malcolm wrote:

The bodhisattva retinues are often described as being beyond number, but never the śrāvaka Sangha.

pueraeternus said:

The fact that most of these Mahayana sutras include 1250 arhats in the audience, shows that they were indeed part of the targeted audience (and not merely as passive listeners) and hence the question that if the Buddha really spoke of these sutras during his earthly time here, why didn't the arhats propogate them?

Malcolm wrote:

It's a good question, but it has been answered already — the bodhisattva path is not the domain of śrāvakas.

pueraeternus said:

Again, don't be specious. Those "four or five" (actually some Mahayana sutras had more arhat interlocutors) already is more than enough to prove my point.

Malcolm wrote:

Really, which ones?

pueraeternus said:

Let me give you a few examples to dispel these notions of yours:

Malcolm wrote:

It's not my notion. It is prescribed by many [to use your definition of many] Indian masters, not only one.

pueraeternus said:

I prefer the understanding that the Mahayana is indeed the teaching of the Buddha, revealed to later Buddhist savants through visionary encounters, direct yogic encounter via siddhis, dream transmissions, etc.

Malcolm wrote:

I used to be satisfied with such apologetics. But now I find them pale and dissatisfying. In the end they are simply an admission that Mahāyāna is not the actual teaching of the Buddha. Some people might be fine with that story, but I am not.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 31st, 2014 at 7:37 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

pueraeternus said:

So? You said only a handful of Arhats spoke in the sutras, so I countered that likewise only a handful of Bodhisattvas really speak in Mahayana sutras.

Malcolm wrote:

Hundreds actually.

pueraeternus said:

It's a good question, but it has been answered already — the bodhisattva path is not the domain of śrāvakas.

Nonsense - then why did the Buddha preach to them the bodhisattva path, and even asked Ananda to preserve and propagate them?

Malcolm wrote:

Because the Sangha contained both śravakas and bodhisattvas.

Really. Already given that answer in my previous post.

Right, so we have four or five regularly appearing śravakas in the sūtras, as opposed to hundreds of bodhisattvas in the sūtras, and you still wonder at why the bodhisattva pitika was not recited at the first assembly?

Then sadly, those Indian masters didn't give a good explanation. Sorry.

Works quite well for me.

My goodness, you have actually become a Sravakayanist.

What a strange world we live in where the idea that the words of the Buddha might be pious forgeries is lauded as virtuous.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 31st, 2014 at 7:42 PM

Title: Re: Arhats and Bodhisattvas

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

It is impossible for someone to have generated bodhicitta to experience the fruit of an



arhat, i.e. cessation, indeed, it is against the very principles of the bodhisattva path to do so.

pueraeternus said:

Not true - bodhisattvas can fall from their path into Arhathood from the 1st to 7th bhumis. So bodhicitta (which they need to fully blossom before they enter the 1st bhumi) is no guarantee until the pure bhumis.

Malcolm wrote:

Citation please?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 31st, 2014 at 7:50 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

tobes said:

But I will not grant you the possibility that you can listen, think, read and write about a Buddhist discourse, somehow free or outside of the contemporary structure of language.

Malcolm wrote:

I never suggested that one could. This is actually the issue I am raising, viz., it is precisely the contemporary framing of Mahāyāna history that I find destructive to our tradition.

Most people's encounter with Mahāyāna starts with a survey course book, in which is maintained that Mahāyāna was never taught by Śakyamuni in person, but rather at best it consisted of pious fictions, or possibly visions, by anonymous groups of people in various parts of India.

But when for example, Buton Rinchen Drup maintains that that the Mahāyāna was collated by bodhisattvas on Mt. Vimalasvabhava, this is met with derision and sneers by those who consider themselves Mahāyānists precisely because the majority of Western Mahāyānists have bought into the western academic version of Buddhist history.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 31st, 2014 at 8:40 PM

Title: Re: Is Rebirth Unscientific?

Content:

PadmaVonSamba said:

The point is, for karma to happen "to" someone...

Malcolm wrote:

...there just has to be the conventions "karma", "ripening" and "person".

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, May 31st, 2014 at 9:58 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Dan74 said:

I don't see this dichotomy as necessary, Malcolm, as I've already tried to suggest. I agree with you that we cannot know for sure whether the scholars are right, but in the absence of this certainty, I am left with the Sutras themselves. And what they contain is enough for me to respect and even revere them, but most importantly to put them to use.

Malcolm wrote:

The dichotomy is necessary precisely because of how western academia has framed the reception of Mahāyāna. We are no longer in the phase where Mahāyāna is merely a curiosity for Sanskritists. We are in a period where many hundreds of thousands of westerners like ourselves are embracing Mahāyāna. Therefore, the authenticity of the lineage is important.

Dan74 said:

I fail to see the preoccupation with the origin (which is unverifiable) as helpful to practice. If the Dharma is true, many realised masters followed in Shakyamuni's footsteps and I have no problem learning from them, if that's what the Sutras are.

Malcolm wrote:

Oh, you entirely are missing my point. I know very well that origins are not verifiable. I am talking about which narrative is the most useful to bring to our practice of Mahāyāna. One that disempowers our tradition (the western academic narrative) or the one that bolsters our practice (the traditional narrative).

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, June 1st, 2014 at 1:51 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Dan74 said:

But to us, to people who are already aware of the scholarship, to reject it because its findings are inconvenient, is intellectually dishonest.

Malcolm wrote:

The scholarship on the subject tells only that which we have already known for centuries: Mahāyāna sūtras were not recited during the first council, but began to be written down about the same time as the Agamas and Nikāyas.

We can see that the two most seminal authors in Mahāyāna, Nāgārjuna and Maitreya, both defended the validity of Mahāyāna in the face of Mainstream Buddhist attacks.

These are the only facts about them which we have at our disposal.

There are traditional accounts about how Mahāyāna was preserved. Those accounts clearly tell us that the Mahāyāna sūtras were all authored by the Buddha personally.

Then there is the point of view of western academics about the origin of these texts, which itself is purely speculative. It clearly tells us that not one of these texts was authored by the Buddha, that in effect it is an impossibility.

The net effect of following the latter position is that Mahāyāna is invalidated, the bodhisattva path and so on. The net effect of following the former position is that the Mahāyāna is validated, the bodhisattva path and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, June 1st, 2014 at 2:30 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

pueraeternus said:

[

And the Buddha totally had no issues teaching Arhats bodhisattva doctrine and practices (as we can see so clearly in the Mahayana sutras), so your reasoning that Mahayana sutras were not recited in the First Council due to different domains is asinine - the Buddha didn't hesitate to teach Arhats bodhisattva doctrine, so if he really taught it when he was flesh-and-blood 2500 years ago, the Arhats would have totally no problem reciting and gathering them.

Malcolm wrote:

So here again, you are putting the śravakas as the authority which defines the validity of the Mahāyāna.

Obviously, we cannot get the Buddha's input on why the first council did not recite his Mahāyāna sūtras because he was not present. And, we do not need to assume every sūtra taught by the Buddha would have been gathered and recited there. This is the fundamental flaw with your thinking. You assume that if it was taught, it must have or should have been recited and the first council, which as far as anyone knows, had no bodhisattvas present. The point Bhava is making is that the first council only recited sūtras relevant to the attainment of the fruit of an arhat, not a bodhisattva or a buddha.

We know that the different groups have different sets of sūtras. The net effect of your implicit supposition is that only the sutras that all groups have in common can be regarded as what the Buddha actually taught; whereas, any sutras this or that group has which are not reflected in the whole collection of all canons must therefore be fakes.

This is extremely bad reasoning.

pueraeternus said:

Of course - there is absolutely no good reason why the Mahayana sutras were not recited if they were really taught during the Buddha's earthly life, because even if the Arhats were of a smaller denomination, they were certainly part of the prime audience in many sutras, especially the prajnaparamitas. And the fact that the Buddha instructed Ananda to memorize and preserve the sutras destroys your (and whatever Indian master you favor) contention that only Manjushri and the bodhisattvas preserved the Mahayana canon.

Malcolm wrote:

No, it does not, for the reasons given above. We have no certainty whatsoever that all the sutras the Buddha taught were recited at the first council. Why? Because even different Mainstream canons contain different sets of sūtras.

At base, what should be contested is the supposition that the first council was a comprehensive review of all of the Buddha's teachings. What is our authority for believing this?

Remember, Indian Mahāyāna authors (despite your opinion that they were "asinine" in their belief that the Mahāyāna was not recited at the first council because the bodhisattva path did not concern trainees for arhatship and so on), they were Indian Buddhists, highly educated in their literature, to which they had far more access than we do today.

That is your problem. You think they are pious forgeries when they are not spoken by the flesh-and-blood Buddha, I beg to differ. Why? Because I follow the Mahayana doctrines and its trikaya doctrine - that's why!

This explains nothing. The sambhogakāya does not teach ordinary flesh and blood people like ourselves for the simple fact that we are not 8th stage bodhisattvas. We, if we are even so lucky, can only see the nirmanakāya. But according to you, the Mahāyāna sūtras are not even the teachings of the nirmanakāya.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, June 1st, 2014 at 2:54 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Sherlock said:

I think people should remember that these academics' arguments are all hypotheses. Hypotheses which are mostly unfalsifiable (unless you have a time machine or can remember past lives). As practitioners of Mahayana, we can formulate our own hypotheses subject to the same criteria (falsifiable only by time-travel or recollection of past lives) and it is better for not only our practice but the credibility of Mahayana as a whole.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, for some reason, people think that following the traditions we have less reasonable than the academic supposition that Buddha never taught Mahāyāna. The mind boggles.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, June 1st, 2014 at 10:26 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

pueraeternus said:

And at this point, you are just speculating, and with no viable or even vaguely plausible evidence.

Malcolm wrote:

As are you.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, June 1st, 2014 at 8:24 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Nighthawk said:

Malcolm, let's say the western academics have it right and that none of the Mahayana sutras were spoken by the historical Buddha. Are we then to reject them and become Theravadins?

Malcolm wrote:

What I am contending is that there is no basis whatsoever to lend support to their claims that Mahāyāna is a later development. Especially since Maitreyanatha rejects this claim in the Sūtrālaṃkāra stating:  
Not predicted and simultaneous.

What I am saying is that we have our own historical tradition and it is time to start honoring it.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, June 1st, 2014 at 8:26 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

PorkChop said:

He's merely advocating accepting the traditional historical paradigm regarding Mahayana sutras...

Malcolm wrote:

Precisely.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, June 1st, 2014 at 9:52 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Just to add a point:

Simultaneous.

The commentary on this line states:

In reply to the claim, "When the śrāvakayāna was explained by the Bhagavan in Śravastī and so on during the time of the śrāvakas, at that time Mahāyāna was not explained.

Since the Dharma called "Mahāyāna" arose after the Buddha's parinirvana, the Mahāyāna is not a Dharma of the Buddha", it is stated "because it arose simultaneously".

When the Bhagavan was in places such as Śravastī and so on explaining the śrāvakayāna as the minor vehicle, since he explained the Mahāyāna at that time in those places, it is proven that the Mahāyāna is the speech of the Buddha."

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, June 1st, 2014 at 10:20 PM

Title: Re: Is Rebirth Unscientific?

Content:

asunthatneversets said:

Sure but that doesn't mean the inherency of awareness cannot be refuted. Awareness is dependently originated just like any other conditioned phenomena is. To use Nāgārjuna's logic; if you can have awareness without objects, then you can have objects without awareness. Obviously you cannot have objects without awareness, and therefore you cannot have awareness without objects, meaning awareness is dependent and therefore without inherency and entirely refutable.

PadmaVonSamba said:

Awareness is self-evident.

The fact that you are "aware that you are aware" makes the fact of awareness itself an object of awareness.

And objects can and obviously do exist without any awareness of them, because all events are the results of causes, and causes are quite often functioning without any awareness of them at the time they are functioning.

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.   
.

Malcolm wrote:

As has been pointed out to you any number of times, awareness is just a characteristic of consciousness.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, June 1st, 2014 at 10:28 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

pueraeternus said:

What support is there that he taught Mahayana sutras during his earthly time?

Malcolm wrote:

Upon what evidence is the conclusion that he didn't based?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, June 1st, 2014 at 11:36 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

So why wasn't this material preserved by the Shravakas?

Malcolm wrote:

Sadly, we can only guess, and guesses are no substitute for knowledge. So in fact we do not know. As I have said, we can either go on the accounts of the Indian Mahāyāna masters in recounting the history their tradition or not. It is a personal choice.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 2nd, 2014 at 1:04 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

So why wasn't this material preserved by the Shravakas?

Malcolm wrote:

Sadly, we can only guess, and guesses are no substitute for knowledge. So in fact we do not know. As I have said, we can either go on the accounts of the Indian Mahāyāna masters in recounting the history their tradition or not. It is a personal choice.

dzogchungpa said:

OK, and only one of those choices is virtuous, right?

Malcolm wrote:

If one is a practitioner of Mahāyāna, expressing doubt that it is the teaching of the Buddha is indeed a non-virtue.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 2nd, 2014 at 2:50 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

pueraeternus said:

And at this point, you are just speculating, and with no viable or even vaguely plausible evidence.

Malcolm wrote:

As are you.

pueraeternus said:

Nonsense. So far, I have provided internal evidence within the Mahayana sutras (note I did not rely on any scholarly arguments, but pointed to what the Mahayana sutras themselves say) and pointed out that if Ananda and the other sravakas were indeed taught by the Buddha on these sutras 2500 years ago, it would be impossible for the First Council collection to not have these recited and gathered. Neither you nor heart have given a viable response against those points raised.

Malcolm wrote:

Sure I have. Unlike you, I am not willing to engage in speculation as to why this was the case, given that Maitreya insists Mahāyāna is contemporary with what we term the "śrāvaka canon" right at the beginning of the Sūtrālaṃkāra.

Further, the Vajrapāṇyabhiṣeka tantra and the Tathāgatācintyaguhyānirdeśa mahāyāna sūtra clearly maintain that Vajrapani is actually the collator of the sūtras.

Abhayakaragupta states in the Āryāṣṭasāhasrikāprajñāpāramitāvṛttimarmakaumudī:

In the same way, the Tathāgatācintyaguhyānirdeśa-nāma-mahāyāna-sūtra explains the compiler of "the separate and continuous explanations" and so on is the the lord of the tenth bhumi, the Mahābodhisattva Vajrapani, empowered to protect the rūpakāya and the dharmakāya of the tathāgatas after [the Buddha's] departure and where he is individually entrusted with the teachings in Vajrapāṇyabhiṣeka-sūtra. Whatever was entrusted to Ārya Ānanda, that was employed by the śravakas for the worldly, and not for the purpose of compiling the Dharma. The Bhagava's demonstrated of parinivāna here. Because Ārya Vajrapani converts all worlds, he desired to compile the Prajñāpāramita and so on, after which he said "Thus have I heard..." and so on to the assembly of Mahābodhisattvas such as Ārya Maitreya and so on. Just as he heard it from the teacher, afterwards he recited it and in that same way others heard it from him. Thus Vajrapani is the compiler.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 2nd, 2014 at 3:29 AM

Title: Re: Is Nirvana Worth It?



Content:

Astus said:

If and when someone agrees that the whole of samsara from hells to heavens is painful and unsatisfactory, liberation from it is the logical choice. But when nirvana is presented as not only the end of all the inconvenient things in life, but the end of all the good things as well, how could enlightenment be desirable?

Malcolm wrote:

When one understands that the "good" things are just the suffering of change...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 2nd, 2014 at 3:31 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

pueraeternus said:

We have several Agamic collections in the Taisho, along with abhidharmic works of various sects - none of them have any materials related to Mahayana. Malcolm said earlier that even Mahayana authors acknowledged that the Mahayana sutras were not gathered during early phases of Buddhism.

Malcolm wrote:

Not exactly. What I said is that the Mahāyāna was not compiled by Ānanda. It was compiled by Vajrapani, etc.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 2nd, 2014 at 3:35 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

pueraeternus said:

What support is there that he taught Mahayana sutras during his earthly time?

Malcolm wrote:

Upon what evidence is the conclusion that he didn't based?

pueraeternus said:

Via the absence of any Mahayana materials in the earliest collections. For example, if the Mahayana were taught on the onset with everything else, the various Abhidharma texts of the many Sravaka schools would have made copious references to Mahayana sutras, since Abhidharmic texts are exegetical works on the sutric canons. And please don't repeat the canard about Arhats not privy to the Mahayana sutras (disproved).

Malcolm wrote:

I didn't say they were not privy to them. I said that the Mahāyāna canon was not their

domain, meaning, it was not their path, nor a path they were interested in promulgating. They were interested in freedom in this life, not in buddhahood three incalculable eons hence.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 2nd, 2014 at 3:38 AM

Title: Re: Is Rebirth Unscientific?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

As has been pointed out to you any number of times, awareness is just a characteristic of consciousness.

PadmaVonSamba said:

Suggested, but not proven.

Since there are things which respond intentionally (meaning not merely "randomly") to their environments,

yet possess nothing that is regarded as consciousness,

and since awareness does not depend on sensory function,

it is obvious that awareness precedes consciousness.

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Malcolm wrote:

No, this is your pet theory but it really does not make any sense. A plant turning towards the sun does not indicate the plant is any sense aware of the sun, or that there is awareness in a plant.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 2nd, 2014 at 5:07 AM

Title: Re: Is Rebirth Unscientific?

Content:

dharmagoat said:

After 25 years of study and practice I renounce Buddhism and revoke my refuge vows.

Malcolm wrote:

What a pity.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 2nd, 2014 at 5:15 AM

Title: Re: Is Rebirth Unscientific?

Content:

dharmagoat said:

After 25 years of study and practice I renounce Buddhism and revoke my refuge vows.

Malcolm wrote:

What a pity.

dharmagoat said:

Do you mean that sincerely?

Malcolm wrote:

Of course.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 2nd, 2014 at 5:47 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

smcj said:

So your own personal confidence in the the validity of the Mahayana is based on...what?

pueraeternus said:

That it agrees with the dharma seals...

Malcolm wrote:

In other words, his acceptance of Mahāyāna is based on their containing the same instructions as the Mainstream canon, the doctrines they share in common. However, this bears the reverse consequence that he accepts the Mainstream canon as being the authority by which Mahāyāna compositions (as he must consider them) can be validated as Buddhist teachings.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 2nd, 2014 at 6:07 AM

Title: Re: Is Rebirth Unscientific?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

No, this is your pet theory but it really does not make any sense. A plant turning towards the sun does not indicate the plant is any sense aware of the sun, or that there is awareness in a plant.

PadmaVonSamba said:

No, but a plant extending its roots specifically toward a source of water indicates intentional action.

Malcolm wrote:

No, absolutely not.

PadmaVonSamba said:

What I was getting at before, in responding to a previous post is that while you cannot really prove that all appearances are anything but illusions, or that your entire lifetime of existence is nothing but a brief dream you have been having, there is still awareness of that illusion, awareness of that dream.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, because you have a mind. Minds are aware.

PadmaVonSamba said:

...rebirth does not depend on any notion of a continuous physical body or brain.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, because minds are not dependent on bodies or brains.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 2nd, 2014 at 6:09 AM

Title: Re: Is Rebirth Unscientific?

Content:

ovi said:

So you renounce Buddhism because people on the internet don't agree with you?

Malcolm wrote:

No, it would appear he has discovered that he does not in fact agree with the Buddha's Dharma in the end.

But we should respect his wish not to make a public discussion of this since it is a private matter.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 2nd, 2014 at 6:18 AM

Title: Re: Is Rebirth Unscientific?

Content:

ovi said:

So you renounce Buddhism because people on the internet don't agree with you?

Malcolm wrote:

No, it would appear he has discovered that he does not in fact agree with the Buddha's Dharma in the end.

But we should respect his wish not to make a public discussion of this since it is a private matter.

ovi said:

Aren't we supposed to liberate beings from suffering, in accordance with their current abilities? Is there any point to try to preserve something called a Dharma that doesn't liberate people?

Malcolm wrote:

We merely provide the glass of koolaid. It is up to them to drink it or not. We certainly don't waterboard them with it.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 2nd, 2014 at 7:00 AM

Title: Re: Is Rebirth Unscientific?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

We merely provide the glass of koolaid. It is up to them to drink it or not. We certainly don't waterboard them with it.

Mkoll said:

Crude, but it gets the point across.

ovi said:

You can't expect people to all agree on the same preference for flavor. You might blame renouncing Buddhism on something such as past karma and be indifferent to it, I blame it on lack of upaya.

Malcolm wrote:

You can't even get people to agree on a brand.

But when you present a brand, you need to include all the ingredients on the label so people may make intelligent, informed choices about what they are buying. You certainly don't sell something to someone saying, well, this tastes good, but ignore the ingredients, they are not important, since they might have a nut allergy and go into anaphylactic shock.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 2nd, 2014 at 7:49 AM

Title: Re: Is Rebirth Unscientific?

Content:

dharmagoat said:

I would like to see the generation of a new dharma that derives from the Buddhadharma but does not attempt to challenge, change or replace any of the traditional forms. Any discussion that leads in this direction is a means to this end.

Malcolm wrote:

There are entire forums devoted to that already.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 2nd, 2014 at 9:07 AM

Title: Re: Is Rebirth Unscientific?

Content:

Adi said:

Since you are a person who has renounced Buddhism and revoke their refuge vows, I'd say yes, there could be quite a bit of harm possible.

dharmagoat said:

The alternative would be to not have been upfront about my relationship with Buddhism.

Adi said:

Besides that, though, if those kinds of profound changes have come about then those other forums are surely a better place to find those of like mind who share the same goal.

dharmagoat said:

No profound changes, just a gradual progression.

I am actually primarily interested in what like-minded Buddhists can contribute to the idea. I won't find that on a non-Buddhist forum.

Malcolm wrote:

As I said, there are forums like the Secular Buddhist forum where you will find people of similar ideas.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 2nd, 2014 at 9:27 AM

Title: Re: Is Rebirth Unscientific?

Content:

dharmagoat said:

Only one concern: what if the traditional Buddhist standpoint is under-represented?

Malcolm wrote:

Oh, completely.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 2nd, 2014 at 9:27 AM

Title: Re: Is Rebirth Unscientific?

Content:

dharmagoat said:

I am interested in discussing the issues faced by Buddhists (and ex-Buddhists) like myself who are struggling to engage with Buddhism in its existing forms, but are not interested in rejecting the teachings of the Buddha. The discussion may provide an insight into what form a new dharma derived from the Buddhadharma might take, but it would be entirely speculative.

Malcolm wrote:

It is pretty hard to reject birth and not reject the Buddha's teaching, since the very idea of right view is predicated on accepting rebirth.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 2nd, 2014 at 10:08 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

pueraeternus said:

Such as Vajrapani not even mentioned in many of the early Mahayana sutras and that Ananda was specifically appointed to memorize and propagate sutras.

Malcolm wrote:

Since you accept the Mainstream canons as being more authoritative the Mahāyāna, it could not have escaped you that Vajrapani is mentioned in the Pali Canon.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 2nd, 2014 at 10:10 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

pueraeternus said:

Why would this be a problem? Since the Mahayana encapsulates the three vehicles, why is it shocking that they have a common foundational basis?

Malcolm wrote:

It is not shocking that they have a similar foundation. But my point is that your basic point of view establishes the Mainstream canon as being more authoritative than any Mahāyāna text ever could be.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 2nd, 2014 at 10:55 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Sherlock said:

Incidentally I don't see what's wrong with the term "sravakayana". Calling it "Mainstream" lends weight to the the idea that Mahayana is somehow heterodox. Sravaka/Savaka on the other hand is used in the Sravakayana texts themselves and is used in the earliest Mahayana texts to distinguish it from the Pratyekabuddhayana and Bodhisattvayana.

Malcolm wrote:

Indeed, it is a bit of a joke.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 2nd, 2014 at 6:32 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The Vajrapani mentioned in the early Agamas is a yaksha...

As is Vajrapani in Mahāyāna sūtras. He is called "Guhyapati" because is he the master of the Guhyakas.

He is also seldom mentioned in most sutras and in the early Mahayana sutras, he is almost never there. Only in the much later phase of Mahayana does he appear with any regularity.

All these sutras mention him:

Śatasāhasrika-prajñāpāramitā  
Pañcaviṃśatisahasrika  
Aṣṭasāhasrika-prajñāpāramitā  
Aṣṭadaśasahasrika-prajñāpāramitā  
Daśasāhasrikā-prajñāpāramitā  
Prajñāpāramitānayaśatapañcāśatikā  
Pañcaviṃśatika-prajñāpāramitāmukha

In the Akṣobhyasya-tathāgatasyavyūha he is referred as the yakṣapati. The Lalitavistara states he is a yakṣa. The Mahāparinirvāṇa calls him the Yakṣarāja. The Gaganagañjaparipṛcchā calls him Vajrapani the yakṣa, as does the Vikurvāṇarājaparipṛcchā. The Vimalaprabhakaripṛcchā explains that he is the Yakṣarāja, the son of the yakṣa lord, Vaiśravaṇa. The Dānapāramitā calls him the Mahānāyakaḥ, the great chief of all the yakṣas, as does the Nīlāmbaradhara vajrapāṇi-rudratrinaya-tantra, the Vajrapāṇinīlāmbaravidhivajrādaṇḍa-tantra, the Śrī-vajracandacittaguhyatāntro-trottarottara, the Vajrabhūmitricaraṇi-rājakaḥ, the Saptatathāgatapūrvapraṇidhānaviśeṣavistara-nāma-mahāyāna-sūtra, the Bhagavānbhaiṣajyaguru vaidūryaprabhasya-pūrvapraṇidhānaviśeṣavistara-nāma-mahāyāna-sūtra, Mahāmañjivapūlavimānaviśvasupratīṣṭhitaguhyaparama-



rahasyakalparāja-nāma-dhāraṇī, etc.

Vajrapani is just Vajrapani, whether in the Agamas/Nikayas, Vinaya, or the Vaipulya sūtras.

In short, Vajrapani is a tenth stage bodhisattva born among the Yakṣas.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 2nd, 2014 at 6:42 PM

Title: Re: Is Rebirth Unscientific?

Content:

ovi said:

, however, according to the Kalama Sutta, achieving a high level of realization in this lifetime does not depend on believing in rebirth.

Malcolm wrote:

The Kalamas sutra implies nothing of the sort. It states that people who practice the four brahma-viharas will be "free from hatred, free from malice, safe and sound, and happy" and that is it. This is not a level of realization at all. It states at most that one "...shall arise in the heavenly world, which is possessed of the state of bliss."

In other words, the teaching in the Kalamas is not a path. It does not lead from samsara. It leads merely to temporary, samsaric happiness and that is all.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 2nd, 2014 at 6:52 PM

Title: Re: Is Rebirth Unscientific?

Content:

PadmaVonSamba said:

the arising of mind is the result of awareness.

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Malcolm wrote:

No, awareness is a characteristic of a moment of consciousness.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 2nd, 2014 at 6:53 PM

Title: Re: Is Rebirth Unscientific?

Content:

PadmaVonSamba said:

"you have a mind"

... then are you saying that the mind is possessed by a person?

Malcolm wrote:

Conventionally, yes — just like I have a face, a hand, a mouth, and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 2nd, 2014 at 7:07 PM

Title: Re: Abandoning Buddhism, What Now?

Content:

Simon E. said:

It seems to have become almost axiomatic that those who quote the Kalama Sutta seem to ignore, or be unaware of, the fact that the Kalamas were not followers of the Buddha, and that he was telling them pointedly that their teacher would not give them the means to realise Nirvana.

Malcolm wrote:

It doesn't help matters that it is billed as Buddha's Charter of Free Inquiry. It is a minor sutta, of no traditional significance at all.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 2nd, 2014 at 7:24 PM

Title: Re: Is Rebirth Unscientific?

Content:

ovi said:

One can dispel the wrong notion of self and be liberated from suffering in this lifetime without making use of rebirth.

Malcolm wrote:

No, actually, you can't. Buddha lists acceptance of rebirth as being among the features of right view. People who do not understand this simply do not understand Buddha's Dharma and that's all there is to it.

ovi said:

I don't see how it prevents realization in this lifetime.

Malcolm wrote:

One cannot have any realization while one is operating under the influence of wrong view.

Frankly, you simply do not understand what the Buddha is saying in the Kalamas sutta.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 2nd, 2014 at 8:48 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Not exactly. What I said is that the Mahāyāna was not compiled by Ānanda. It was compiled by Vajrapani, etc.

pensum said:

So by implication, are you now claiming that all the Mahayana sutras which were passed on by Ananda are fakes or that someone took literary license and switched the credit from Vajrapani to Ananda (hence falsifying them and drawing the validity of the entire corpus into question)? Or is Ananda merely one of Vajrapani's pen names?

Malcolm wrote:

Not claiming anything of the kind. I am also not engaging in conspiracy theories or speculations. I am reporting what various Indian masters opine based upon the sūtras that they read.

For example, Sakya Paṇḍita, while not an Indian master, opines that there is no contradiction between Vajrapani and Ānanda being the compilers of the sūtras.

I will leave it for others to engage in speculations and theories about this issue. As for myself, I am content to regard Guhyapati Vajrapani as being the primary collator of the Buddha's sūtras and tantras, as that is the role to which the Buddha appointed him.

Thus, there are three main considerations we need to understand:

- 1) The Śrāvakayāna and Mahāyāna arose at the same time, per Maitreyanatha
- 2) The collators of the Mahāyāna were the major bodhisattvas, Mañjuśrī, Vajrapani and so on per Bhava and so on
- 3) The person who is represented by "Thus have I heard..." is Vajrapani per Abhayakaragupta

This is our Mahāyāna tradition.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 2nd, 2014 at 10:34 PM

Title: Re: Is Rebirth Unscientific?

Content:

ovi said:

Rejecting the notion of self is a common thought in the psychedelic community and the

fact that there is suffering does not depend on the idea of rebirth.

Malcolm wrote:

The end of suffering very much depends on right view.

ovi said:

Frankly, you don't understand upaya. You would rather have people abandon Buddhism completely because they don't fully understand it...

Malcolm wrote:

In the contrary, I want people to understand Buddhism so they can gain the results of the path. Whatever they choose to believe is one thing; what the Buddha actually taught is quite another. We owe it the Dharma not to turn the teachings into a free for all.

ovi said:

..even though the vast majority of Buddhists who have full faith in rebirth and retribution fail to achieve liberation until death, that is they fail in fully understanding it.

Malcolm wrote:

Whether in this world, during the bardo or in the next world, liberation is liberation.

ovi said:

I do hope that it is more important for us to lead others to liberation than to actively work against their wellbeing.

Malcolm wrote:

One can not even begin to imagine one is leading others to liberation if one is not capable distinguishing right view from wrong view.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 2nd, 2014 at 11:10 PM

Title: Re: Is Rebirth Unscientific?

Content:

treehuggingoctopus said:  
changing our convictions...

Malcolm wrote:

I have never, ever changed my conviction about the necessity to accept rebirth in all the years I have been participating in online discussions. While I have of course changed my opinions about many other things, this is one thing I have never wavered from for an instant as any review of my posting history will reveal.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 3rd, 2014 at 12:10 AM

Title: Re: Abandoning Buddhism, What Now?

Content:

Lazy\_eye said:

embracing nihilism, etc.

Malcolm wrote:

Rejecting rebirth is embracing nihilism, just as affirming a truly existent self is embracing eternalism.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 3rd, 2014 at 12:20 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Not exactly. What I said is that the Mahāyāna was not compiled by Ānanda. It was compiled by Vajrapani, etc.

Whatever was entrusted to Ārya Ānanda, that was employed by the śravakas for the worldly, and not for the purpose of compiling the Dharma.

pensum said:

So all the Mahayana sutras entrusted to Ananda, including the Prajnaparamita, are not actually Mahayana sutras? But whatever the case, the very fact that such texts were "employed by the sravakas" would seem to contradict your earlier statements, that the sravakas had no serious interest in them and did not practice them. Or is that statement just a ploy to create a further divide between the Sravaka and the Mahayana? (such dubious motive, to my mind, would then further undermine the trustworthiness of a sutra with such motives)

Malcolm wrote:

"Whatever" is a restrictive. Abhayakaragupt is telling us that the goal of the first council was to compile what they thought was useful, not to compile everything. Ananda was not present at many teachings, as he was Buddha's attendant only a bit later in the Buddha's career. He certainly is not present in such major Mahāyana sutras such as the Avatamska, and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 3rd, 2014 at 12:23 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Lazy\_eye said:

Well, it seems to me that this is exactly what the Buddha told his disciples. He said you have all the teachings...

Malcolm wrote:

No, in fact for we read in the Śālmalivana-sutra \*: Ānanda, I comprehend even more Dharma than however many leaves there are in this śālmali grove, but I have not taught them to you. Since that many were taught for a purpose, you must not be regretful, but you should also not be without desire [to hear them].

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 3rd, 2014 at 2:12 AM

Title: Re: Abandoning Buddhism, What Now?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Rejecting rebirth is embracing nihilism, just affirming a truly existent self is embracing eternalism.

Lazy\_eye said:

Annihilationism, as presented in the suttas, seems to be defined with reference to the Carvaka:

...

One might subscribe to part of this ("the sense-faculties scatter into space", etc) while rejecting some other parts ("generosity is taught by idiots", "there is no fruit of actions"). It is not clear at all that failure to uphold rebirth means embracing annihilationism as defined in this context.

Malcolm wrote:

Simply put, it means that one embraces the view that there is no result of action, there is no karma, etc. We can understand the general point that Carvaka view was greatly exaggerated by their opponents, but in general, the salient point is that they taught that death was the annihilation of the person. Anyone who does not accept rebirth subscribes to this view.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 3rd, 2014 at 2:28 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

pueraeternus said:

And how would Abhayakaragupta know what happened during the First Council? Why would non-tantrikas take his words as definitive?

Ananda was present in many of the major Mahayana sutras, as already quoted earlier - the prajnaparamitas, vimalakirtinirdesa, etc. How do you explain this?

Malcolm wrote:

Of course Ānanda was present during the teaching of many Mahāyāna sūtras, this is not under dispute.

The point is that Abhayakaragupta is making is that the first council was not a convention for collecting all the teachings of the Buddha. The point he is making is that the first council had an agenda that was limited in its scope.

As an Indian Buddhist, he had access to sources and traditions we do not have. Abhayakaragupta is as likely to know what actually happened during the first council as we are. And Abhayakaragupta's perspective is a confirmation of earlier opinions voiced by those such as Maitreya and Bhavya.

We know a very great deal about what the Theravadins think about these issues. We know a very great deal about what western academics think about these issues. We know almost nothing about what Indian Mahāyānists think about these issues — but in general, Western Mahāyanists, including Tibetan Buddhists, tend to defer to the latter two groups when it comes to Mahāyāna history and ignore our own historical traditions. I think that is detrimental to Mahāyāna in general.

Mahāyāna proclaims five certainties: time, place, teacher, teaching and retinue, i.e. always; Akaniṣṭha; the Sambhogakāya; Mahāyāna; Buddhas and bodhisattvas, both emanated and the continuums of others. By contrast, the Śrāvakayāna is limited in its scope in terms of time, place, teacher, teaching and retinue. Nevertheless, Mahāyāna taught by the nirmanakāya is a localized and temporal instantiation of those teachings, and there are good reasons why the Mahāyāna narratives of their spread ought not be ignored.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 3rd, 2014 at 2:42 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

pueraeternus said:

Like I said, he is seldom there in the earlier sutras. His position in the early Mahayana sutras are the same as his namesake in the Agamas - that of a divine dharmapala. And in the Agamas and early Mahayana sutras, as far as I know, he is never there as an interlocutor.

Malcolm wrote:

It is very clear that the bodhisattva Varjapani is indeed the same person described in the Prajñāpāramita and in the Agamas, appearing as a guardian of the teachings here and there as an interlocutor — there is no contradiction whatsoever. In Vajrayāna, Vajrapani is considered to be the general of the dharmapālas.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 3rd, 2014 at 2:49 AM

Title: Re: Abandoning Buddhism, What Now?

Content:

Lazy\_eye said:

My point is that even a partial embrace of Buddhist teachings is better than falling into that kind of thinking. If nothing else, Buddhism provides moral principles and a framework for living a virtuous life. Engaging dhamma even on those limited terms is better for most people's well-being than nurturing an amoral or cynical outlook.

Malcolm wrote:

And my point is that we have to preserve the Dharma in the face of all those people who think that they can cherry pick the Dharma.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 3rd, 2014 at 5:51 AM

Title: Re: Abandoning Buddhism, What Now?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

And my point is that we have to preserve the Dharma in the face of all those people who think that they can cherry pick the Dharma.

dharmagoat said:

Preserve the Dharma in its traditional forms by all means. That is essential.

But why be threatened by those that are selective in their beliefs? What harm can they do the Dharma that has survived unadulterated for 2500 years?

Malcolm wrote:

Who said I felt threatened?

As to your other question, it is when Buddhists start importing wrong views that Dharma will degenerate. Only Buddhists can destroy the Dharma.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 3rd, 2014 at 7:11 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

pueraeternus said:

The eight points brought up by Maitreya also covers this (in Vasu's bhasya):

"Because it is self-evident;" even if the universal vehicle was taught by some enlightened being other (than Sākyamuni Buddha), that also proves it to be



buddha-word, since a buddha is anyone who becomes perfectly enlightened and then teaches such (a vehicle)."

So we can see that the Mahayanasutralamkara is trying to cover all bases. Even if Maitreya says "simultaneous", what does he really mean?

Malcolm wrote:

He means it is contemporary with and not later than the Śrāvakayāna, which is the Śrāvaka contention about Mahāyāna.

pueraeternus said:

And please don't say that Abhayakaragupta or Bhavya should know better because they are Indian Mahayanists - that doesn't fly since we know Indian Mahayanists could not come to agreement with each other on many many other fronts.

Malcolm wrote:

Indian Mahāyānists disagreed with each other over only two major issues, the question of the view [Madhyamaka or Yogacara] and the question of definitiveness [second or third turning]. Apart from this, there was broad agreement in terms of the path.

pueraeternus said:

There is little need to appeal to "western academic biases" as a scapegoat...

Malcolm wrote:

I am not doing that. I am saying that people treat the Indian Mahāyānis as if they were idiots. We are so heavily conditioned by our own cultural heritage with regards to Buddhist studies, it general never occurs to us once to that the western academic narrative might be incomplete, wrong, etc.

pueraeternus said:

since many of us can read for ourselves the Mahayana sutras and see that there are a lot of internal contradictions and logical incongruities if we were to take the stance that the flesh-and-blood Buddha did speak those sutras 2500 years ago.

Malcolm wrote:

For example? And if this is the case, how is that the flesh and blood Buddha would not censure these teachings as being distortions of the Dharma? Certainly Theravadins censure Mahāyāna sūtras as fakes and forgeries.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 3rd, 2014 at 7:29 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

pueraeternus said:

There is certainly contradiction in the idea that Vajrapani is the collator of sutras - he is clearly not since the early Mahayana sutras specifically stated that the Buddha ordered

Ananda to memorize the sutras, and never was Vajrapani asked. This is just a very late tantric idea.

Malcolm wrote:

The Tathāgatācintyaguhyanirdeśa, part of the Ratnakuta collection, is the main sources for this claim. As this sūtra was translated into Chinese in by Dharmarakṣa in 280, it is clearly not a "late tantric idea".

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 3rd, 2014 at 7:34 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

TRC said:

I know the Mahayana sutras trump the Nikayas/Agamas, but just wanted to point out that it does directly contradict the Śālmalivana-sutra, and maintains the point that the Buddha held nothing of importance back in regards to the Holy Life.

Malcolm wrote:

If your idea of the holy life is just to attain the state of an arhat, of course I agree.

If your aim is to practice the bodhisattvayāna and become a buddha however, the Buddha does not explain this in the canon the śrāvakas left for us.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 3rd, 2014 at 8:25 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

TRC said:

I know the Mahayana sutras trump the Nikayas/Agamas, but just wanted to point out that it does directly contradict the Śālmalivana-sutra, and maintains the point that the Buddha held nothing of importance back in regards to the Holy Life.

heart said:

The "Holy Life" means being a monk/nun, right?

/magnus

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, it does. Specifically, it is a translation of the term "brahmacariya".

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 3rd, 2014 at 8:33 PM

Title: Re: Abandoning Buddhism, What Now?

Content:

ovi said:

I never posted something along the lines of Rebirth doesn't exist, Buddha was wrong 111!

Malcolm wrote:

My point is, as always, that the entirety of the Buddhist path is meant to address the existential problem posed by constant rebirth in samsara. Our whole practice, regardless of yāna, is meant to address this sole fact.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 3rd, 2014 at 8:47 PM

Title: Re: Metaphor for the skandhas

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

This is from the section of the Abhidharmakosabhasyam where Vasubandhu explains the order of the skandhas: Matter is the pot, sensation is the food, ideas are the seasoning, the samskaras are the cook, and the mind is the consumer. We have a third reason for the order of the skandhas.

(La Vallée Poussin, Pruden translation)

I find this a rather charming image, but I'm wondering if this is actually a good way to think about the skandhas. I would be happy to hear what the learned members of DW think.

Malcolm wrote:

Works for me.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 3rd, 2014 at 9:01 PM

Title: Re: Abandoning Buddhism, What Now?

Content:

Sönam said:

Why some peoples accept annihilation at death as being obvious? Honestly I do not understand that pov, as all goes in the sens of a non-cessation (mind being the forerunner and is prior to matter, and so on) ... some are quite intricate.

ovi said:

Because scientifically speaking, mind isn't prior to matter.

Malcolm wrote:

Scientifically speaking, there simply is no basis for that claim.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 3rd, 2014 at 9:56 PM

Title: Re: Is Nirvana Worth It?

Content:

oushi said:

Mind is a shape, not an actually existing entity. There is a small confusion here. When we talk about the mind, self, intention we see it as an added component of the body-skandhas thing.

Astus said:

When I say mind, it means the mental aggregates. There is no mind besides the aggregates in Buddhism. Intention (cetana), for instance, belongs to the fourth aggregate (samskara).

Malcolm wrote:

Buddhas don't have minds. They have wisdom.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, June 4th, 2014 at 12:28 AM

Title: Re: Is Nirvana Worth It?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Buddhas don't have minds. They have wisdom.

Astus said:

The four/five wisdoms/knowledges are the eight consciousnesses without the two hindrances, or in other words, a non-attached mind.

Malcolm wrote:

Whatever the case may be, Buddhas do not have operations of vijñāna. They do not possess the eight consciousnesses because all the traces that constitute the ālayavijñāna are exhausted, thus there is no basis for the arising of the other seven.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, June 4th, 2014 at 12:41 AM

Title: Re: Metaphor for the skandhas

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Works for me.

dzogchungpa said:

OK, so is there anything that would correspond to jñāna in this metaphor?

Malcolm wrote:

No, since the skandhas only present contaminated phenomena.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, June 4th, 2014 at 3:04 AM

Title: Re: Is Nirvana Worth It?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Whatever the case may be, Buddhas do not have operations of vijñāna. They do not possess the eight consciousnesses because all the traces that constitute the ālayavijñāna are exhausted, thus there is no basis for the arising of the other seven.

Astus said:

It seems to me that there are only some differences between consciousness and wisdom. For example, there are various mental functions going on according to Xuanzang:

.

Malcolm wrote:

But this contradicts the very sutra he is citing:

In the Sūtrālaṃkāravṛttibhāṣya, Sthiramati cites the Buddhabhūmi sūtra:

"Though there is the appearance of many kinds of reflected images in the circle of a mirror, those do not exist in the mirror, they do not enter the mirror and do not form in the mirror. In the same way, though there is the appearance of many kinds of reflected images of the mirror-like wisdom, the reflections do not exist in the mirror-like wisdom, those reflections do not enter into the mirror-like wisdom and do not form in the mirror-like wisdom.

He adds:

When the eye consciousness is supported on form, there is the aspect of blue, yellow and so on and there is no conventional discrimination of the individual perceptions. In the same way though the forms of the objects of knowledge appear in that circle of wisdom, since there is no discrimination and no concept of the aspect and perception "this is blue, this is yellow", it never faces them.

As Vasubandhu states in the Sūtrālaṃkārabhāṣya:

[The mirror like wisdom] does not face them because it is imageless.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, June 4th, 2014 at 3:25 AM

Title: Re: Is Nirvana Worth It?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

In the Sūtrālaṃkāravṛttibhāṣya, Sthiramati cites the Buddhabhūmi sūtra:

"Though there is the appearance of many kinds of reflected images in the circle of a mirror, those do not exist in the mirror, they do not enter the mirror and do not form in the mirror...

dzogchungpa said:

Maybe this is a question of the meaning of "image", or possibly of "mirror" or "in". I think

that in ordinary English we would indeed say that images exist in the mirror and so on.

Malcolm wrote:

The point is that when the eight consciousness transform into wisdom, in the Indo-Tibetan tradition in general, it is understood there are no operations of consciousness one could liken to a sentient being's mind in a Buddha.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, June 4th, 2014 at 3:27 AM

Title: Re: Abandoning Buddhism, What Now?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

My point is, as always, that the entirety of the Buddhist path is meant to address the existential problem posed by constant rebirth in samsara. Our whole practice, regardless of yāna, is meant to address this sole fact.

smcj said:

Or, along the same lines, you can think of it this way: Even if someone has multiple wonderful meditation experience, sees life in a whole new way, is widely honored and praised for his spiritual accomplishments, is thought to be an authority on interpreting the Dharma, and seemingly reaps the fruits of all the potential benefits that practice has to offer in this life, if he is later reborn in an unfavorable situation then all that hoopla meant absolutely nothing --right?

Malcolm wrote:

Indeed, which is why Nāgārjuna quips that the fruits of generosity are enjoyed in lower realms...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, June 4th, 2014 at 4:58 AM

Title: Re: The Angulimala story is fake

Content:

odysseus said:

A hardened murderer can become a monk, but will not become enlightened.

Malcolm wrote:

Your reasoning is?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, June 4th, 2014 at 5:00 AM

Title: Re: Abandoning Buddhism, What Now?

Content:

dharmagoat said:

If it means going against the advice set down by the Buddha himself, then I apologise to him alone.

Malcolm wrote:

I don't recall anyone asking you to apologize for anything.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, June 4th, 2014 at 11:54 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

pueraeternus said:

And if the flesh and blood Buddha really did preach the second and third turnings, why would anyone even contest that the Yogacara teachings are the epitome of his dharma? He said so himself in the Samdhinirmocana...

Malcolm wrote:

The Buddha did not say any such thing in the Samdhinirmocana. What Paramarthasamudgata states is that the essencelessness, non-arising, non-cessation and so on is the definitive teachings for all vehicles, but not one word about Yogacara, etc. In other words, in this sūtra, the Buddha reaffirms the second turning as the definitive statement of his teaching. This renders it definitive.

pueraeternus said:

He planned to reveal the later phase of his teachings once the ground is fertile via visions, dream transmission, illusory bodies, etc, etc.

Malcolm wrote:

You are indulging in pure speculation.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, June 4th, 2014 at 11:56 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

He means it is contemporary with and not later than the Śrāvakayāna, which is the Śrāvaka contention about Mahāyāna.

pueraeternus said:

He may have meant that the Mahayana is still preached nonetheless...

Malcolm wrote:

May have meant? No, Maitreya meant that Mahāyāna was taught at the same time as Śrāvakayāna — the commentarial voice on this is univocal.

pueraeternus said:

He also said that even if the Mahayana sutras were taught by someone besides Shakyamuni, it is still buddhavacana, since the eternal truth is self-evident.

Malcolm wrote:

This is a different issue altogether.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, June 4th, 2014 at 8:54 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Anders said:

What Maitreya is basically saying is that your insistence on accepting the literal historicity of the Mahayana sutras is not in fact necessary for the Mahayana to be valid.

Malcolm wrote:

No, that is not what he is saying. What he is saying is that whoever wins the result is a Buddha, and whatever he or she explains will be Buddhavacana. Muncandra explains: That being the case, the Mahāyāna is proven to be the word of the Buddha. If it is asked how, the person who comprehends the stages, the perfections and the meaning of no arising and cessation, that person is called "a buddha". Since all the words that person explains are the word of a buddha, Mahāyāna is proven to be the word of the Buddha. This statement should not be taken as an argument for the ahistoricity of Mahāyāna, because that is not the intent. What it is in fact is a criteria for establishing the authority of the Guru. Maitreya first established that Mahāyāna is historical as I show above.

He also proves that without Mahāyāna there would be no Śravakayāna, since without the bodhisattva path there would be no Buddha. Muncandra continues: If there is no Mahāyāna, there will be no Śravakayāna. If it is asked why, if Mahāyāna does not exist, the path of accomplishing Buddhahood, the accomplishment of Buddhahood will not exist. If Buddhahood was not accomplished, then also since the Hīnayāna will not be explained, then this Hīnayāna that appears like that also will not be the word of the Buddha.

The eight points that Maitreya illustrates are to be take together as a whole argument, i.e. Mahāyāna is the word of the Buddha because 1) it was not predicted to be false 2) because it arose at the same time as the Śravakayāna 3) because it is outside the range of intellectuals and because it not perceived in texts of tīrthikas 4) because it is proven 5) because it exists 6) because it does not not-exist 7) because it is a remedy for the afflictions and 8) because the words are not to be taken literally (i.e. they require interpretation).

We have to accept the historicity of the Mahāyāna because we have the example of the Buddha! That is the whole point of these eight reasons.



Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, June 4th, 2014 at 9:44 PM

Title: Re: Is Nirvana Worth It?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

But this contradicts the very sutra he is citing

Astus said:

Maybe not. As your quote says: "there is the appearance of many kinds of reflected images in the circle of a mirror".

Malcolm wrote:

The point is that none of those images are happening in the mirror.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, June 4th, 2014 at 10:15 PM

Title: Re: Practicing Together and lungs

Content:

Reibeam said:

Hello All,

Question about group practice:

If a number people were planning to get together and do chNNr's Green Tara practice and everyone but two people had received introductory transmission and the Green Tara lung from chNNr, but had done Tara practices before from other teachers would it be okay for them to participate in a group practice setting and do chNNr's Green Tara practice?

Both of these folks are intending on receiving transmission from chNNr eventually. I don't want to discourage them from coming to an event, but although it is a peaceful practice (obviously no action mantras during this gathering) It requires a lung so I am not sure what to do other than do another Tara practice that everyone has authorization for.

Thanks in advance for any advice,

R

Malcolm wrote:

You will get various answers, but if people are interested, let them come.

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Wednesday, June 4th, 2014 at 10:39 PM  
Title: Re: Abandoning Buddhism, What Now?  
Content:  
Malcolm wrote:  
Love and compassion are not unique to Buddhism.

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Thursday, June 5th, 2014 at 5:02 AM  
Title: Re: Abandoning Buddhism, What Now?  
Content:  
dharmagoat said:  
As you point out, religious labels count for very little. While I no longer identify as a Buddhist, I still consider the bodhisatva ideal to be the highest aspiration.

Malcolm wrote:  
One lifetime is a little short to accomplish this goal.

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Thursday, June 5th, 2014 at 9:45 AM  
Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism  
Content:  
pueraeternus said:  
So you see, even the Buddha himself segregated the 3 sets of teachings into 3 distinct temporal periods.

Malcolm wrote:  
Actually, the Saṃdhinirmocana does not state that. Read it again — closely this time.

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Thursday, June 5th, 2014 at 9:47 AM  
Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism  
Content:  
pueraeternus said:  
"Because it is self-evident;"

Malcolm wrote:  
The term "self\_evident" occurs nowhere in the text itself or the commentarial glosses.

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Thursday, June 5th, 2014 at 9:48 AM  
Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism  
Content:

pueraeternus said:

Nonsense. The Samdhinirmocana's teaching on alayavijnana (sarvabijaka), trisvabhava and the three turnings (especially the very important chapter 7) are hallmarks of Yogacara.

Malcolm wrote:

In the passage in question, no mention is made of the ālayavijñāna, trisvabhava, etc. Read it again, closely.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, June 5th, 2014 at 9:49 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

pueraeternus said:

If trying to make sense of things is pure speculation, then I am guilty as charged.

Malcolm wrote:

What it is means is that you are indulging in pure fantasy, at this point.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, June 5th, 2014 at 8:22 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

pueraeternus said:

Maitreya can't have meant that the 2 vehicles was taught at the same time, because in the Samdhinirmocana, it is explicitly mentioned that the dharma wheel was turned 3 separate times - first at Benares the four noble truths, then the Buddha later turned it a second time proclaiming alaksanadharmacakra (Madhyamaka) for the Bodhisattvas, then finally because even the second turning was provisional, he turned the wheel the third time for the ultimate teaching (Yogacara). So you see, even the Buddha himself segregated the 3 sets of teachings into 3 distinct temporal periods.

Malcolm wrote:

While it is certainly true that many people have understood it this way, for example, the Korean master Wan tshig (sorry, did not dig up his actual Korean name): Indeed that Dharma of the Buddha is profound, nevertheless because there are many methods of guidance and ways of introducing it, not only one, the Sovereign of the Dharma taught three Dharma wheels. Among those the first the demonstration of cycling in the forests where wild animals roam who constantly perish and the causes and results of nirvana to those who are to enter into the Śrāvakayāna. This is called "The Dharmawheel of the four truths". Second, is teaching the Ārya-prajñāpāramita to sixteen gatherings at

Vulture Peak and so on to those who are to enter the Bodhisattvayāna. This is called the Dharmawheel of characteristiclessness. The third is the teaching of the Saṃdhinirmocana and so on to those in the pure buddhafiels such as Padmagarbha, and the impure ones to those are to enter all vehicles called the “Mahāyāna of the definitive meaning”.

This is not completely certain. There is no record in any other sutra or commentary of where these sites may be. In any case, even if we accept Wan tshig's statement at face value, it still means that the Mahāyāna arose at the same time as the Śrāvakayāna because it was taught during the lifetime of the Buddha.

Moreover, there is no certain statement in the citation itself that this is the case. In his General Division of Tantras, Loppon Sonam Tsemo responds to the above assertion: If it is true those three Dharmawheels were turned for different inclinations, to claim “...they were turned in stages in different countries” is not reasonable. If it is asked how it is not reasonable, it is because scripture and reason are contradicted, the objections of the srāvakas will not be rejected, the Sugata will come under criticism and so on. Because there will be many such faults, it is not reasonable. He ultimately answers this qualm with the citation from the Sutralamkāra: Not predicted earlier, arising at the same time.

As the Sandhivākarana-tantra too states:

Non-conceptual, undisturbed,  
...the pleasing single vajra word  
becomes many different [words]  
from the perspective of the mentalities of the trainees.

A single statement of the Bhagavan's will appear as many different Dharmas to many different trainees at the same time. That also does not contradict the citation of the Saṃdhinirmocana-sūtra explained above. Although that citation does state different Dharmas, it does not state different locations or different times. Since that is so, teaching different Dharmas to trainees with one statement made at the same time is called “the array of speech,” and demonstrating many different bodies in different locations at the same time are the beneficial deeds with an array of bodies.

pueraeternus said:

Since logically if the these turnings were done during the Buddha's earthly time, then we would have seen the movements started during his lifetime.

Malcolm wrote:

Not necessarily, since the Mahāyāna was not collated by the Śrāvakas, but rather by the Mahābodhisattvas as indicated in such sūtras as the Tathāgatācintyaguhyaniṛdeśa.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, June 5th, 2014 at 8:31 PM

Title: Re: Abandoning Buddhism, What Now?

Content:

dharmagoat said:

As you point out, religious labels count for very little. While I no longer identify as a Buddhist, I still consider the bodhisatva ideal to be the highest aspiration.

Malcolm wrote:

One lifetime is a little short to accomplish this goal.

dharmagoat said:

But not necessarily too short, and I intend to die trying. Although it is most likely that not all beings are going to find enlightenment in one human lifetime.

Then again, is the goal really necessary? Can one be motivated by the aspiration without being fixed on the goal?

Malcolm, you make an important point. I need to think more on this.

Malcolm wrote:

Bodhicitta is the aspiration to attain buddhahood for the benefit of all sentient beings. If there is no rebirth, it is rather pointless as an aspiration no?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, June 5th, 2014 at 8:35 PM

Title: Re: Abandoning Buddhism, What Now?

Content:

Berry said:

"You are wrong, I am right". ... "I like this, I don't like that" .... we tend to express these opinions a lot on the internet!

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, that's what we do on the internet.

As well as pictures, videos, etc.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, June 5th, 2014 at 11:19 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

daverupa said:

and this is why Mahayana requires a position contra Buddhist Modernism with it's textual criticism, etc.

Malcolm wrote:

I do not say that text criticism was immoral, what I said was that if one accepts the text critical version of Buddhist history and one is a Mahāyāni, then one necessarily accepts

that the texts one is following are not authentic. That is an immoral position for a Mahāyānist to take.

This is obviously a problem for Indian Mahāyānists because they again and again voice the sentiment that Mahāyāna sūtras need to be accepted as historical Buddhavacana, i.e. that they come from the time with the Buddha had not passed into parinirvana.

I think it is simply more practical for practicing Mahāyānis to accept the classical Indian Mahāyāna position about the authorship of the sūtras. We then avoid all the complications of later and earlier sutras, blah, blah, blah.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, June 6th, 2014 at 12:45 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Pero said:

I'm sorry but it's a bit funny you've started to insist on accepting the traditional accounts on sutras while you deny traditional accounts of tantras.

Malcolm wrote:

No, I am including those too. kama, terma, etc.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, June 6th, 2014 at 12:52 AM

Title: Re: Abandoning Buddhism, What Now?

Content:

Andrew108 said:

materialism is always changing in response to new proofs. It's not a completed project.

Malcolm wrote:

It's also not based on wisdom, but rather, concepts.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, June 6th, 2014 at 12:53 AM

Title: Re: when and where ? Chöd wang and lung

Content:

Happy Thunderbolt said:

I think you might be misinterpreting Tulku Dakpa.

Malcolm wrote:

There is no specific dwang for this practice. It only needs a lung.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, June 6th, 2014 at 1:07 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

mañjughoṣamaṇi said:

How are you approaching the history of the rgyud bzhi, nowadays?

Malcolm wrote:

An edited terma.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, June 6th, 2014 at 2:51 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

pueraeternus said:

There is no doubt that the three turnings are as the Samdhinirmocana sutra states, as it specifies 3 different times, each vehicle higher than the previous. The sites of the first 2 turnings are common knowledge. The third one not sure, but certainly timewise, it is later than the 2nd turning. This is crystal clear from the sutra.

Malcolm wrote:

No, it doesn't. Not at all.

pueraeternus said:

This shows that your assertion on what Maitreya meant when he said "simultaneous" as incorrect.

Malcolm wrote:

No, it is very clearly stated in the commentarial literature what "simultaneous" means, it means that when he was in Śravastī, he taught both Śravakayāna and Mahāyāna, when he was Kapilavastu, he taught both, and so on.

pueraeternus said:

Why is it not reasonable? The Buddha ascertained that it is the case,

Malcolm wrote:

The Buddha did no such thing. He did not even speak the passage, Paramarthasamudgata did.

pueraeternus said:

and I have showed that if we don't assume the Mahayana sutras are spoken by the flesh

and blood Buddha, that he delivered those teachings post-parinirvana, etc, then we have no problems.

Malcolm wrote:

Apart from the problem the very statement "simultaneous" is meant to rebut.

pueraeternus said:

The Samdhinirmocana citation I provided early does state different locations and times.

Malcolm wrote:

No, in fact it does not.

pueraeternus said:

And the fact that the 3rd wheel was turned because the 2nd wheel suffered "controversy", is another fact that shows that the 3rd was turned later than the 2nd.

Malcolm wrote:

No, this is not a warranted conclusion. In order to establish this, you would have to be able to say for certain whether this sūtra was taught after the Prajñāpāramita, but as there is absolutely no difference in the statement of the text concerning the content of the second and third turning, your contention cannot be verified at all.

For example, in the 25,000 PP, the Buddha replies to Subhuti's declaration that the Buddha had turned a second wheel of Dharma:

Subhuti, because of the essential non-existence of things, this is also not a second turning of the wheel, it is also not the first turning of the wheel.

pueraeternus said:

A bunch of arhats preserved the Sravaka canon much better, maintaining the transmission immediately after the parinirvana.

Malcolm wrote:

As did Āryabodhisattvas. All these questions have been previously addressed. Further, the Buddha predicted obstacles for Mahāyāna in the 25,000 and elsewhere: "Subhuti, many obstacles will arise for this Prajñāpāramita..." and so on.

pueraeternus said:

Contrast this with bodhisattvas, who are supposed to be vastly superior in every way, having the Mahayana canon in such piecemeal fashion and all over the place?

Malcolm wrote:

The Tarkajvala states:

Not long after the Bhagavan's parinirvana, the śravakas were totally attached to the teaching for themselves. For that purpose, when the compilers compiled whatever they were able, since they could not retain the Mahāyāna discourses, they did not gather them at all. The nāgās and so on who rejoiced in the Sugata, gathered them all and were



requested to keep them in the nāgā world, the deva world, etc. From there, because they were retained, the one predicted by the Buddha, Ārya Nāgārjuna, gathered them and spread them very widely in the the human world.

In fact, the whole "three turnings" thing is so unimportant to Indians, there is no a single Indian commentarial voice on the issue. There exists solely a Korean commentary and a Tibetan commentary in the bstan 'gyur that deals with the issue at all. As we have seen, the Korean commentary attempts to define a temporal sequence, the Tibetan commentary does not make any such attempt.

On the other hand, there are many voices which deal with Maitreya Bodhisattvas statement that Śrāvakayāna and Mahāyāna arose together.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, June 6th, 2014 at 3:14 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The Tarkajvala states:

Not long after the Bhagavan's parinirvana, the śravakas were totally attached to the teaching for themselves. For that purpose, when the compilers compiled whatever they were able, since they could not retain the Mahāyāna discourses, they did not gather them at all. The nāgās and so on who rejoiced in the Sugata, gathered them all and were requested to keep them in the nāgā world, the deva world, etc. From there, because they were retained, the one predicted by the Buddha, Ārya Nāgārjuna, gathered them and spread them very widely in the the human world.

dzogchungpa said:

Does it say how Nagarjuna "gathered" them?

Malcolm wrote:

Nope, but you might say that Nāgārjuna is the first tertön.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, June 6th, 2014 at 6:15 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Pero said:

I'm sorry but it's a bit funny you've started to insist on accepting the traditional accounts on sutras while you deny traditional accounts of tantras.

Malcolm wrote:

No, I am including those too. kama, terma, etc.

Pero said:

So you no longer think that the 17 upadesha tantras of Dzogchen and the rest were written by someone in the 11th (?) century?

Malcolm wrote:

No, they are termas, of course, but I see no reason not to accept the traditional narrative of their concealment and rediscovery.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, June 6th, 2014 at 6:16 AM

Title: Re: Abandoning Buddhism, What Now?

Content:

dharmagoat said:

No-one needs to rule out the possibility of buddhahood in a single lifetime, no matter what the odds.

Malcolm wrote:

There is no need for Buddhas or Buddhahood at all, if there is only one lifetime.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, June 6th, 2014 at 9:21 AM

Title: Re: Abandoning Buddhism, What Now?

Content:

dharmagoat said:

No-one needs to rule out the possibility of buddhahood in a single lifetime, no matter what the odds.

Malcolm wrote:

There is no need for Buddhas or Buddhahood at all, if there is only one lifetime.

Anders said:

You are skipping steps here.

Malcolm wrote:

Not at all. If there is only one life, the suffering of all beings ends with death.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, June 6th, 2014 at 9:57 AM

Title: Re: Abandoning Buddhism, What Now?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

[quote="dharmagoat"]

Even if this were so, we do not kill beings to ease their suffering\*, we care for them as much as we are able.[quote]

Sure, but Dharma isn't required for that. Simple kindness is sufficient.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, June 6th, 2014 at 10:54 AM

Title: Re: Abandoning Buddhism, What Now?

Content:

dharmagoat said:

But Dharma is required to develop the capacity for great kindness and compassion, which makes us considerably more able to help.

Malcolm wrote:

No, not at all. I don't think that great kindness and compassion is the sole province of Buddhists. I am perfectly convinced that great kindness and compassion is innate to human beings.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, June 6th, 2014 at 10:56 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Clarence said:

I might have missed it, but what brought about your change of opinion? I know you have done many 180's but I wonder what caused this particular one?

Malcolm wrote:

The recognition that doubting the word of the Buddha, even on a subtle level, causes negative traces.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, June 6th, 2014 at 10:57 AM

Title: Re: Apocryphal Treatment for Conze's Heart Problems, JOCBS

Content:

Huifeng said:

Utilizing Nattier's theory of the text's history...

Malcolm wrote:

It's better to forget such nonsense. It won't help anyone understand anything about the Dharma. People like Nattier should not be regarded as authorities on any level.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, June 6th, 2014 at 11:38 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

pueraeternus said:

So why do you take the word of a 10th level Bodhisattva over the word of the Supreme Buddha of our eon?

Malcolm wrote:

Because you have proven incapable of demonstrating any of your understanding is actually validated on the basis of what the texts actually say.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, June 6th, 2014 at 11:49 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

pueraeternus said:

Oh yes it does, my quote earlier abundantly confirms.

Malcolm wrote:

It really does not not.

pueraeternus said:

The commentarial tradition then failed to notice that the Samdhinirmocana sutra stated.

Malcolm wrote:

Don't be silly.

pueraeternus said:

Again more nonsense - Paramarthasamudgata spoke of how the three turnings were done sequentially and said this 3rd turning was "the most marvellous and wonderful that ever occurred in the world. It has no superior nor did it contain any implicit meaning nor occasion any controversy", and then asked what merit would be accrued should this sutra be believed, copied, disseminated, etc. Buddha (in effect) said the merit is incalculable. This is quite obvious the entire exchange, and even the entire sutra was ascertained by the Buddha himself.

Malcolm wrote:

It does not prove your contention on any level.

pueraeternus said:

it is quite obvious now "simultaneous" does not mean the vehicles are taught at the same time on this planet.

Malcolm wrote:

Of course it does. Only someone who is completely blind could "see" otherwise.

pueraeternus said:  
Oh yes it does - don't be obstinate.

Malcolm wrote:  
No, it really does not.

pueraeternus said:  
Ludicrous - the Buddha was referring to the "essential non-existence of things" - he was making a point and reference to the ultimate. Of course there is the second turning at that time, since that is the first time the Buddha taught the prajnaparamita. However, since even the 2nd turning was provisional and subject to controversy, the Buddha turned the wheel a 3rd time.

Malcolm wrote:  
Not because the second turning was provisional in fact, but because it needed to be reaffirmed as definitive.

pueraeternus said:  
This is really common sense (again), if they were really tasked to preserve the Mahayana canon, they would have done it immediately after the parinirvana.

Malcolm wrote:  
This objection has been addressed several times. Long and short, the Mahayāna was of no interest to the śravakas, so they did not preserve it.

pueraeternus said:  
How can Bhayva blame them then?

Malcolm wrote:  
He doesn't — he simply recognizes that śrāvakas had no interest in preserving Mahāyāna.

pueraeternus said:  
Oh - perhaps they are deficient in their faith in the Buddha's words? Or perhaps they are really just apologists and tried to shore up support for their chosen vocation, hence the selective focus? You said that we should take each Mahayana sutra as the word of the flesh and blood Buddha.

Malcolm wrote:  
For a Mahāyanist, I find it odd that you so strenuously argue to discredit it.

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Friday, June 6th, 2014 at 8:30 PM  
Title: Re: Abandoning Buddhism, What Now?  
Content:

Malcolm wrote:

I don't think that great kindness and compassion is the sole province of Buddhists. I am perfectly convinced that great kindness and compassion is innate to human beings.

dharmagoat said:

As is enlightened mind?

Malcolm wrote:

All sentient beings have the capacity to wake up. Whether they actually meet the Dharma and do so, on the other hand, is something else entirely.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, June 6th, 2014 at 8:32 PM

Title: Re: Abandoning Buddhism, What Now?

Content:

Minjeay said:

How many books did it take to make you realize this?

Malcolm wrote:

None at all.

Minjeay said:

Hundreds of wars and fights outside seem to contradict you, though.

Malcolm wrote:

They confirm merely that selfishness is also innate to human beings and that we struggle with these two competing impulses in our psyches.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, June 6th, 2014 at 8:40 PM

Title: Re: Apocryphal Treatment for Conze's Heart Problems, JOCBS

Content:

plwk said:

Utilizing Nattier's theory of the text's history...

It's better to forget such nonsense. It won't help anyone understand anything about the Dharma. People like Nattier should not be regarded as authorities on any level.

If some further elucidation on this is possible, for the sake of us who are unfamiliar, the reason(s) for this statement?

Utilizing Nattier's theory of the text's history...

Malcolm wrote:

It means that there is absolutely not a shred of evidence that Nattier's theory is correct. And it is useless for practitioners.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, June 6th, 2014 at 10:33 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Clarence said:

I might have missed it, but what brought about your change of opinion? I know you have done many 180's but I wonder what caused this particular one?

Malcolm wrote:

The recognition that doubting the word of the Buddha, even on a subtle level, causes negative traces.

Clarence said:

Thanks. That makes sense but how do you then deal with some of the contradictions in the teachings themselves? Or is that all explained through the vehicles and the qualifications of the students?

Malcolm wrote:

The Sandhivākarana-tantra states:...the pleasing single vajra word becomes many different [words] from the perspective of the mentalities of the trainees.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, June 7th, 2014 at 2:20 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Clarence said:

I might have missed it, but what brought about your change of opinion? I know you have done many 180's but I wonder what caused this particular one?

Malcolm wrote:

The recognition that doubting the word of the Buddha, even on a subtle level, causes negative traces.

dzogchungpa said:

Feel free to ignore this, but in all seriousness, I would like to hear more about this recognition. Did you have some kind of epiphany, or was it more of an intellectual thing or what?

Malcolm wrote:

I recognized that with this perspective comes a subtle lack of faith which is not good for one's practice. Lack of faith is one of the six afflicted mental factors that accompanies all afflicted minds in samsara. So it was a recognition of my own state of mind. I

understood that if this affects me, then it affects others.

All non-virtuous actions come from afflictions. I understood that by maintaining the view that Mahāyāna sutras were products of later authors, not the Buddha, there was no way to avoid the contamination of subtle traces of lack of faith in the Buddha's teachings. These subtle traces cause obstacles in one's practice and life. Of course, if one is not a Mahāyāni, then there is no problem. But if one has taken bodhisattva vows, and so on, lack of complete confidence in the origin of Mahāyāna sutras is destructive to those vows.

Further, the whole western academic edifice around the diffusion of Mahāyāna is contaminated by a materialist world view. It is a house of cards built on suppositions and speculations.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, June 7th, 2014 at 3:33 AM

Title: Re: Dharma protectors and samaya

Content:

Reibeam said:

Instead of making a new thread, maybe one of you on this thread knows. I have read the DC books and listened to a number of retreats that speak of Guardians and am left with one question. In relation to ones of specific parts of the world in the Medium TUN book chNNr gives very little description for Oceania and North America and says those people living in that area should find out the details about the specific Guardian in their own country. Where do I look and who do I ask to find out more about the North American one? i read a short article in the Mirror, but that is all i can find. Please PM me if that is more appropriate. Thanks!

Malcolm wrote:

North American is Tsiu Marpo. Ocean is Marutse.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, June 7th, 2014 at 6:04 AM

Title: Re: Dharma protectors and samaya

Content:

Reibeam said:

Instead of making a new thread, maybe one of you on this thread knows. I have read the DC books and listened to a number of retreats that speak of Guardians and am left with one question. In relation to ones of specific parts of the world in the Medium TUN book chNNr gives very little description for Oceania and North America and says those people living in that area should find out the details about the specific Guardian in their own country. Where do I look and who do I ask to find out more about the North American one? i read a short article in the Mirror, but that is all i can find. Please PM me if that is more appropriate. Thanks!



Malcolm wrote:  
North American is Tsiu Marpo. Ocean is Marutse.

Reibeam said:  
So the name in the TUN book is just another name for Tsiu Marpo?

Malcolm wrote:  
Yes.

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Saturday, June 7th, 2014 at 9:44 AM  
Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism  
Content:

pueraeternus said:  
Nevertheless, there were teachings superior to this, for this also gave rise to criticism, needed interpretation, and became an object of controversy. So the Blessed One, with an explicit intention, turned the wheel a third time for the sake of the followers of all vehicles....

Malcolm wrote:  
This reading is not correct.

pueraeternus said:  
Why were there no known champions of the second and third turning until much later when Nagarjuna and Asanga appeared in the scene?

Malcolm wrote:  
This qualm has been addressed.

pueraeternus said:  
Oh no - I am not discrediting the Mahayana.

Malcolm wrote:  
Yes, actually you are, even though that is not your intention. How? By agreeing with the objections to Mahāyāna posed by its opponents. I.e., by agreeing that Mahāyāna arose later, you are explicitly agreeing that it was not taught by the Buddha. No matter what your excuses are, opponents to Mahāyāna will insist on seeing it this way. In order to rebut this contention, Maitreya states that Mahāyāna arose at the same time as Śravakayāna, as I have already demonstrated.

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Saturday, June 7th, 2014 at 7:26 PM  
Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Wayfarer said:

DJKR doesn't seem to think that the western academic approach is necessarily harmful to Mahayana, and I have to say that I agree with him.

I do too. I think the wholesale rejection of "Western academic Buddhism" is mistaken (and I am as staunch a critic of "materialism" as anyone). If any academic has a "materialist agenda" it is really not that hard to detect, but to write off the entire field of academic Buddhist studies is another thing altogether.

Malcolm wrote:

The entire field of Mahāyāna studies in Western academia takes a forensic approach to the whole thing. It is all completely predicated on the notion that Mahāyāna sūtras could not have possibly been taught by the Buddha. I should have thought this was obvious to everyone.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, June 7th, 2014 at 7:41 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

pueraeternus said:

In a very unsatisfactory way. And you didn't address my earlier remarks about the apparent ineptitude of the countless arya-bodhisattvas. How do you reconcile that?

Malcolm wrote:

This has also been adequately addressed.

pueraeternus said:

False accusation.

Malcolm wrote:

It is the inescapable consequence of your position that the Nirmanakāya did not teach Mahāyāna.

pueraeternus said:

I already said many times the Buddha did preach the Mahayana sutras, but not in his earthly lifetime and only later when people are ripe to receive the deep training and higher teachings, via visions, illusory bodies, dream transmissions, etc.

Malcolm wrote:

So you speculate, but have no actual evidence of.

pueraeternus said:

You have demonstrated nothing viz a viz Maitreya's quote, only that it contradicted what

was said in the Samdhinirmocana.

Malcolm wrote:

Maitreya does not contradict the Saṃdhinirmocana at all.

pueraeternus said:

My whole point in this is that taking your fundamentalist view will only expose us to the kind of criticism we don't want to face, since the wide variance demonstrated in the vast Mahayana canon accumulated over the millennia cannot fit into a "the flesh and blood Buddha said all of these during his 80 year lifespan" basis.

Malcolm wrote:

My whole point is that rejecting Maitreya's position that Mahāyāna was taught during the lifetime of the Buddha exposes us to the present criticism that we already suffer, which is that Mahāyāna was not taught during the Buddha's lifetime and therefore it is not valid Buddhavacana.

pueraeternus said:

Be lucky that it is me pointing out these glaring contradictions, not someone who have absolutely no faith in the Mahayana dharma or out to destroy us.

Malcolm wrote:

You have not pointed out any contradictions — you have invented some fantasies, that's all.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, June 7th, 2014 at 7:48 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

tobes said:

There is a reason why this has been fundamentally ignored for 20 pages: it serves the dialectic well to consider "the academic view" as a singular, narrow, materialist, scientific, modernist, self-interested, anti-Buddhist perspective.

Malcolm wrote:

Since the academic view of Mahāyāna is that it was not taught by the Buddha, I would say it is singular, narrow, grounded in a materialist paradigm of history, "scientific" (what a laugh), modernist, self-interested (publish or die), and definitely not sympathetic.

tobes said:

That way, something can be posited which is a viable alternative - "the real, authentic, faith filled, guru sealed" perspective.

Malcolm wrote:

Textual forensics do nothing to assist people's practice.

To the extent that people learn how to read classical Chinese, Tibetan and so on, in universities (though often not that well), then Buddhist studies programs in Western academia have some purpose.

tobes said:

What is has to do with the truth and reality of contemporary Buddhist scholarship is a vastly different matter!

Malcolm wrote:

The only thing useful in contemporary Buddhist scholarship is the production of translations. That's about it.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, June 7th, 2014 at 7:56 PM

Title: Re: Abandoning Buddhism, What Now?

Content:

Andrew108 said:

Sometimes he says he has no need for faith othertimes he says it's essential.

Malcolm wrote:

I don't have need for faith, but that is because I have unshakable faith in the view based on my study and practice. Those who do not have that, well, they need faith to continue. It is very important. The Ratnālokaśūtra states:

Like a mother giving birth, faith goes before,  
produces and increases all qualities,  
removes fears and crosses rivers;  
faith shows the way to the city of bliss...

But I would say that it is the my faith in the Buddha's teaching, even where I did not fully understand it, that allowed me to grow in my understanding of the Dharma.

So yes, sometimes I say I don't need faith, that means "blind faith".

But lack of faith is damaging to one's practice, since faith is defined as "clarity about an object". Lack of clarity about the teachings, lack of clarity about one's practice, all of this comes about from the "lack of clarity" we term "lack of faith".

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, June 7th, 2014 at 8:23 PM

Title: Re: Abandoning Buddhism, What Now?

Content:

Andrew108 said:

You know that the buddhist tradition is heterodox.

Malcolm wrote:

"Heterodox" if you are a Hindu, perhaps.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, June 8th, 2014 at 4:13 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Since the academic view of Mahāyāna is that it was not taught by the Buddha, I would say it is singular, narrow, grounded in a materialist paradigm of history, "scientific" (what a laugh), modernist, self-interested (publish or die), and definitely not sympathetic.

dzogchungpa said:

Didn't you used to share that view? Was your view, then, narrow, etc.?

Somehow, that wasn't the impression I got.

Malcolm wrote:

I used to use the same kinds unfounded rationalizations we see PE use — i.e. that the Mahāyāna sūtras came from visions, dreams, and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, June 8th, 2014 at 11:40 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

tobes said:

The entire field of Mahāyāna studies in Western academia takes a forensic approach to the whole thing. It is all completely predicated on the notion that Mahāyāna sūtras could not have possibly been taught by the Buddha. I should have thought this was obvious to everyone.

There simply isn't that level of consensus; and the philological scientism which is so disparaged here has been under unceasing critique for decades.

Malcolm wrote:

Who are you kidding, Tobes?

There is not one Western Buddhist scholar in the academy that I can think of who has ever once defended any traditional account of the rise of Mahāyāna, save perhaps Robert Thurman.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 9th, 2014 at 12:14 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

pueraeternus said:

I have shown that there is a problem with traditional presentations on this issue, using scriptural basis (i.e. the traditional presentation is not supported when we look at the scriptures), so I am not merely "making things up".

Malcolm wrote:

You have not shown this at all.

pueraeternus said:

This is because you and your camp thinks that anything that is transmitted via visions, dream transmissions, etc are pious forgeries.

Malcolm wrote:

There is no problem with teachings received in dreams and visions, etc. There is simply no record of Mahāyāna sūtras being received in this way. To make this claim is a claim made in absence of any evidence whatsoever.

pueraeternus said:

"Words of the Buddha" does not have to be from the lips of the nirmanakaya Buddha 2500 years ago.

Malcolm wrote:

And we would agree. That's not the point, however. There is no statement within these Mahāyāna sutras that we are to regard them as being the teachings from the Sambhogakāya, since that only happens in Akaniṣṭha Gandavyuha anyway. In other, words, when a Mahāyāna sutra begins with "Thus have I heard, the Bhagavan was dwelling Vaisali, etc., we are to understand that these are the words of Śākyamuni Buddha, located in a historical time and place.

pueraeternus said:

Oh yes - these contradictions are especially problematic if you think that the nirmanakaya Buddha said all of these contradictory things during his lifetime. It makes a lot more sense to consider that the late tantras were revealed much later when the socio-political ground has changed so much that new teachings needed to be given to suit the times, excessive brahmanical-influenced obsession on purity needed to be countered by antinomian praxis, etc. And this can be resolved by not editing any sutra or tantra, but by merely not forcefully locking them into a specific time of origin that makes no sense whatsoever.

Malcolm wrote:

The sutras and tantras themselves indicate when they were taught and where. In general, the tantras are not the Nirmanakāya's teachings at all.

What is under discussion here is not Buddhist tantras such as the Sarvatathāgatatattvasamgraha, which are taught constantly throughout the three times.

pueraeternus said:

In fact, I showed that confusion does indeed arise when we take the traditional account uncritically.

Malcolm wrote:

You have indeed shared your confusion.

pueraeternus said:

Then the Dalai Lama must be a terrible person to inflate his self-importance and diminish trust in tradition when he said that he no longer believes in Meru Cosmology.

Malcolm wrote:

HHDL said that he rejected Vasubandhu's presentation of Meru Cosmology. However, Dunsey Thinly Norbu spares no words in condemning the materialist, indeed, what he calls nihilist, perspective which informs the rejection of the Buddha's teachings on this score.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 9th, 2014 at 12:15 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

I'm curious, what do non-western Buddhist scholars say about the rise of Mahayana these days?

Malcolm wrote:

Look in Kongtrul, Dudjom, etc.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 9th, 2014 at 1:00 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Here is a beautiful example of just what a useless waste of time Western writing on

Buddhist history can become:

The uncertainty around this school has fuelled a number of hypotheses. Frauwallner's theory is that the Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya was the disciplinary code of an early Buddhist community based in Mathura, which was quite independent as a monastic community from the Sarvāstivādin of Kaśmīr (although of course this does not mean that they were different in terms of doctrine). Lamotte, against Frauwallner, asserts that the Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya was a late Kaśmīr compilation made to complete the Sarvāstivādin Vinaya.<sup>2</sup> Warder suggests that the Mūlasarvāstivādins were a later development of the Sarvāstivāda, whose main innovations were literary, the compilation of the large Vinaya and the Saddharmasmṛtyupasthāna Sūtra,<sup>3</sup> which kept the early doctrines but brought the style up to date with contemporary literary tastes.<sup>4</sup> Enomoto pulls the rug out from all these theories by asserting that Sarvāstivādin and Mūlasarvāstivādin are really the same. Meanwhile, Willemen, Dessein, and Cox have developed the theory that the Sautrantikas, a branch or tendency within the Sarvāstivādin group of schools, emerged in Gandhāra and Bactria around 200 ce. Although they were the earlier group, they temporarily lost ground to the Kaśmīr Vaibhāṣika school due to the political influence of Kaṇiṣka. In later years the Sautrantikas became known as the Mūlasarvāstivādins and regained their earlier ascendancy.<sup>5</sup> I have elsewhere given my reasons for disagreeing with the theories of Enomoto and Willemen et al.<sup>6</sup> Neither Warder nor Lamotte give enough evidence to back up their theories.

[Sects & Sectarianism, Sujato]

Don't get me wrong here, of course this book is well written and has a lot of interesting information, but passages like the above clearly illustrate the absurdity of much of what has been written by "Buddhologists".

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 9th, 2014 at 2:57 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

daverupa said:

Either the Buddha taught Mahayana in magic ways, taught it in historically invisible ways, or didn't teach it.

Malcolm wrote:

We reject all three.

Bodhisattva Maitreya clearly teaches that the Buddha taught Mahāyāna at the same time he was also teaching Śravakayāna.

This is not magic, nor is it historically invisible.



Author: Malcolm  
Date: Monday, June 9th, 2014 at 2:58 AM  
Title: Re: Abandoning Buddhism, What Now?  
Content:  
Adi said:  
but frankly it seems a waste everyone's time.

Adi

Malcolm wrote:  
Mostly A108's, but it is his choice.

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Monday, June 9th, 2014 at 3:40 AM  
Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism  
Content:  
Pero said:  
Yes well, how important is Mount Meru to one's spirituality?

Malcolm wrote:  
If you are doing mandala offerings, it is very important:

The ground is anointed with scented water and strewn with flowers,  
adorned with Meru, the four continents, the sun and the moon;  
by perceiving this as a buddhfield and offering it,  
may all migrating beings enjoy a pure field.

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Monday, June 9th, 2014 at 4:22 AM  
Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism  
Content:  
Malcolm wrote:  
Bodhisattva Maitreya...  
magic  
Ārya Āsanga was a third stage bodhisattva and received teachings in person from  
Maitreya Bodhisattva, nothing magical about it at all.  
...the Buddha taught Mahāyāna at the same time he was also teaching Śrāvakayāna.  
historically invisible  
On the contrary, we have the evidence of the existence of the Mahāyāna sūtras  
themselves. There isn't a single bit of proof that they were composed later. None. Zero.  
Zilch.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 9th, 2014 at 4:23 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Pero said:

Yes well, how important is Mount Meru to one's spirituality?

anjali said:

From a tantric point of view, "Mt. Meru" is very important for one's spiritual practices.

Because of my yogic background prior to coming to Buddhism, I've always taken Mount Meru to symbolically represent the spinal sushumna nadi, central axis of the body.

Malcolm wrote:

The central axis of the body is the aorta. Not the spine.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 9th, 2014 at 5:57 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

daverupa said:

Malcolm, you write for magic and for secrets, and against history. It's simply descriptive to say so.

Malcolm wrote:

It is an inaccurate descriptive.

I don't write "against" history. None of the theories that western academics have produced are anything more than speculations and suppositions.

I am writing for a different history, you know, then one we actually received from our tradition.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 9th, 2014 at 9:00 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

daverupa said:

I don't mean to be harsh with this term 'magic'; perhaps 'metaphysical history' will suit you, in that pleas are made to metaphysical realities...

Malcolm wrote:

You will find this throughout Buddhadharma.

daverupa said:

In any event, this simply needs to be distinguished, and it means that you must hold a view contrary to the linked academic discussion I've already provided. It may not be strictly ahistorical, but it is certainly parahistorical.

Malcolm wrote:

It is neither. The view I am elucidating is a specific historical view, grounded in a very clear understanding of how the Dharma has spread since the Buddha's parinirvana.

daverupa said:

...unfortunately, the same procedural approaches which describe Mormon accuracy in their claims also describe Mahayana accuracy in its claims.

Malcolm wrote:

This applies to the Agamas, the Pali Canon and so on as well.

daverupa said:

It really does boil down to this baseline, as far as I can tell. Worth the threadcount, at least, for succinctness in the future.

Malcolm wrote:

If one criticizes Mahāyāna as being a late production, inevitably one will be lead down the path of destroying the Dharma in general. One can't start at Mahāyāna, then stop at Abhidhamma. One can't start at Abhidhamma, but stop at the Dīgha Nikāya and so on. In the end, since the focus of text criticism is strictly forensic, once the autopsy is over, there is very little left of a corpse to bury.

In short, Buddhology is of no use to practitioners at all. It does not provide us with a solid sense of history; it does the opposite; it does not provide us with tradition, it does the opposite; it is not grounded in wisdom, but rather the rank conceptuality of ordinary people who are for the most part NOT practitioners and have no interest in transforming their lives with the Dharma. Further, I have seen more than one former practitioner travel down the road of Buddhology/Tibetology, etc., and completely lose their faith and interest in practice altogether. Why? Because they begin to prioritize what they learn in the academy over what they have learned from their gurus, and their spiritual development comes to a grinding halt.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 9th, 2014 at 9:52 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Wayfarer said:

You do realize you're preaching fundamentalism?

Malcolm wrote:

What I am actually doing is opposing the new secular "Buddhist" orthodoxy.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 9th, 2014 at 11:30 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

pueraeternus said:

The evidence is found once we examine and internal and external circumstances (no record of Mahayana teachings until much later, anachronisms, etc), which we have been discussing for the last 10-20 pages.

Malcolm wrote:

You have not presented a single piece of evidence to back your claims, so convinced you are of the modern academic story of the origins of Mahāyāna.

And we would agree. That's not the point, however. There is no statement within these Mahāyāna sutras that we are to regard them as being the teachings from the Sambhogakāya, since that only happens in Akaniṣṭha Gandavyuha anyway.

The Sambhogakaya is capable of emanating illusory nirmanakaya bodies.

Indeed, who show up in space and time and can be seen by those who are not on the bodhisattva stages. But there are not infinite supreme nirmanakāyas like Śākyamuni, there is but one at a time in a given world system. But in general, Mahāyāna sutras are not taught in Akaniṣṭha Gandavyuha.

In other, words, when a Mahāyāna sutra begins with "Thus have I heard, the Bhagavan was dwelling Vaisali, etc., we are to understand that these are the words of Śākyamuni Buddha, located in a historical time and place.

We don't have to - and it is still buddhavaṇṇa since those teachings conform to the four seals, etc.

We are to have such understanding; if your understanding fails you because you have bought into Buddhist modernism, I am sorry but that is your problem. It's a pity that it causes you to invalidate the very texts you claim to follow.

The sutras and tantras themselves indicate when they were taught and where. In general, the tantras are not the Nirmanakāya's teachings at all.

Really? So what does Tibetan Buddhism say about who taught the anuttaratantras, such as Hevajra?

It depends on the tantra. Some were retaught by Śākyamuni, most are not.

Oh I see. So a generally-accepted emanation of Avalokiteshvara (among Tibetan Buddhists) says something that doesn't gel with the traditional story, and he gets no pass as well?

From some, yes; from others, no. DTR's real point is that the conventional deluded perception of ordinary persons is not authoritative. This also applies to academic opinions about the genesis of Mahāyāna, etc. Unfortunately, the opinions you have presented us are predicated precisely on the perspective of unawakened secular persons with impure vision.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 9th, 2014 at 9:20 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

gad rgyangs said:

valid knowledge about the very tradition that one is practicing?

Malcolm wrote:

Which sort of "valid" knowledge are we talking about? My point about western scholarship of the origins of Mahāyāna is that it is constructed on speculations and suppositions which amount to nothing more than the mess of prapañca we see illustrated in Sujato's review of the different theories of the origins of Mulasvastivada school shows.

For example, when you have such a mess of theories, where is the "valid" knowledge therein contained.

Schopen's work, for example, is interesting because he chooses to focus on material evidence of Buddhism in India. Fine, but when he starts speculating, as he does throughout his books, and saying things like "the Buddha is made to predict..." and so on, we have left the grounds of confirmed evidence and entered the realm of hypothesizing.

My point is that Buddhists are not going to learn more about Buddhism by reading the speculative fantasies by which Buddhologists and Tibetologists earn their meager salaries. They are merely going to fill their head with the prapañca of conflicting theories and intellectual fashions.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 9th, 2014 at 9:59 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

daverupa said:

I want to emphasize again, however, that we must not ignore textual stratification; the Nikayas, while early and containing even earlier material, are relatively late organizations of material; the previous ninefold system can still be discerned here and there, aside from being explicitly described in the Nikayas themselves.

Malcolm wrote:  
Speculative.

daverupa said:  
Part of these processes of developmental editorial efforts includes e.g. deva-realms increasing, the single reference to Metteya in the DN, and so forth. Clear stratification, etc.

Malcolm wrote:  
Speculative.

daverupa said:  
...a very clear understanding of how the Dharma has spread since the Buddha's parinirvana.  
This is at odds with the prevailing academic consensus, which would need to be argued against, rather than simply counter-asserting Para-H-{M/I}.

Malcolm wrote:  
Consensus does not equal knowledge. I am arguing against "the prevailing academic consensus" by pointing out that it is built on a tissue of speculation and conflicting hypothesis (which generally seemed to pulled out of thin air).

daverupa said:  
Hardly true at all. The Agamas and Nikayas reflect their contemporary milieux...in ways the Mahayana texts simply do not reflect the historical Buddha.

Malcolm wrote:  
Again, speculative. You have no possible way of knowing this.

daverupa said:  
If one criticizes Mahāyāna as being a late production, inevitably one will be lead down the path of destroying the Dharma in general. One can't start at Mahāyāna, then stop at Abhidhamma. One can't start at Abhidhamma, but stop at the Dīgha Nikāya and so on. In the end, since the focus of text criticism is strictly forensic, once the autopsy is over, there is very little left of a corpse to bury.  
Slippery slope fallacy. How utterly disappointing to hear from you.

Malcolm wrote:  
But we see this at work already.

daverupa said:  
Buddhology is of no use ... Further, I have seen more than one former practitioner travel down the road of Buddhology/Tibetology, etc., and completely lose their faith and interest in practice altogether. Why? Because they begin to prioritize what they learn in the academy over what they have learned from their gurus, and their spiritual development comes to a grinding halt.

If you're using the Dharma as a yardstick, you're right. But the Dhamma is still practicable - in every sense of that word - at the end of the process you describe, a practice based on the historical Buddha. It's simply a clear & necessary result given modern academic work on the matter.

Malcolm wrote:

Your "historical Buddha" will not survive academic forensic study, and neither will your "Dhamma".

daverupa said:

Ultimately, calling modern historical techniques and results into question can be perfectly reasonable, but asserting religious texts' alternatives as wholly superior is to make a claim without any evidence, and it does indeed look like fundamentalist pushback.

Malcolm wrote:

And therefore, you propose that erecting the authority of ordinary persons over the authority of āryas is the solution. However, this is the root of the problem, and if Buddhists begin to accept this sort of authority, Buddhadharma will be destroyed.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 9th, 2014 at 11:05 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

underthetree said:

What worries me about the need to accept the Mahayana sutras as spoken by the Buddha himself is that it seems to undermine, quite radically, both the sangha and the dharma.

Malcolm wrote:

How could it? Both Ārya Nāgārjuna and Maitreya Bodhisattva both insist that Mahāyāna is indeed was spoken by the Buddha himself.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 9th, 2014 at 11:24 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Both Ārya Nāgārjuna and Maitreya Bodhisattva both insist that Mahāyāna is indeed was spoken by the Buddha himself.

daverupa said:  
Speculative, ad infinitum apparently.

I wonder just how much history you'll call speculative; only those parts that infringe on Mahayana narratives? Or are there other areas?

Malcolm wrote:  
A lot of history is speculative, the further back you go, the more speculative it becomes.

But people even radically disagree about the events of 25 years, or even 10.

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Tuesday, June 10th, 2014 at 1:23 AM  
Title: Re: Dharma protectors and samaya  
Content:  
tingdzin said:  
Dear Reibeam,

This quote (about horses on wheels and red men ) has been discussed both here (I think) and on the previous incarnation of this website. It is probably bogus. To my knowledge, no one has ever been able to find a Tibetan source for it. If you know of one, please tell us.

Malcolm wrote:  
The most likely source for it is a prediction which shows up first in Loppon Sonam Tsemo's Chos la 'jug pa'i sgo byed:  
"The Vimalaprabhakaripṛcchā states that 2500 years after the parinirvana of the teacher, the sublime Dharma will spread in the land of the red faced ones.  
There are three related texts which must be read to understand this more clearly, the Vimalaprabhakaripṛcchā-sūtra and the Arhatsaṃghavardhanavyākaraṇa and the Kaṃsadeśavyākaraṇa.

It seems that the notion of 2500 years is a mistake.

M

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Tuesday, June 10th, 2014 at 1:57 AM  
Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism  
Content:

Lazy\_eye said:



The alleged "speculativeness" of Western scholarship is something of a red herring in this discussion, it seems to me. Would you welcome the scholarship of Nattier, Schopen and so on if it was demonstrably non-speculative?

Malcolm wrote:  
Sure, but it isn't.

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Tuesday, June 10th, 2014 at 4:26 AM  
Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism  
Content:

Lazy\_eye said:  
The alleged "speculativeness" of Western scholarship is something of a red herring in this discussion, it seems to me. Would you welcome the scholarship of Nattier, Schopen and so on if it was demonstrably non-speculative?

Malcolm wrote:  
Sure, but it isn't.

Lazy\_eye said:  
But if it was, you would welcome it? What would you do then about the problem of doubt, which you cited earlier as being your main motive for rejecting the current scholarly consensus about the provenance of Mahayana sutras?

Malcolm wrote:  
There would not be doubt.

As I have pointed out, the current scholarly consensus is based on speculations and assumptions. And there isn't really even a consensus, it is more like a series of one intellectual fad after another.

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Tuesday, June 10th, 2014 at 4:35 AM  
Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism  
Content:

dzogchungpa said:  
Quite honestly, I can't take this story as a literal account of historical events and furthermore, I can't believe that the author(s) of this text did either. In all seriousness, do you?

Malcolm wrote:  
Why not? I have observed my teacher involved in personal interactions with Guru Rinpoche. I did not perceive Guru Rinpoche, but he certainly did. When you read the

autobiographies of Dudjom Lingpa, Thangthog Gyalpo, etc., they have multiple experiences that ordinary people like us do not have.

I regard the Mahāyāna sutras to be the record of those teachings taught directly by the Buddha to people whose vision was much more expansive than ours.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 10th, 2014 at 5:52 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Lazy\_eye said:

One prong is that it's faddish and speculative.

The second prong is that it's harmful to a practitioner's conviction.

You've also made it clear that it's this second concern which is the primary motivation for your new stance against scholarship. You used to find the scholarship worthy of consideration, and you even agreed with some of its findings, but now you reject it because you saw it has a pernicious undermining effect on belief in the validity of the Mahayana dharma.

So I am wondering what your response would be if somebody presented scholarship that was not speculative, but nevertheless weakened your conviction. Would you still reject it on those grounds? Or would you change your beliefs, for instance by abandoning Mahayana in favor of the sravaka path?

And along the same lines, if there are practitioners here who do not think the historical Buddha taught what is in the Mahayana sutras, would you advise them to become sravakas?

Malcolm wrote:

I don't have a stance against scholarship -- that is a gross mischaracterization.

What I oppose are the biases and demonstrably unsupported assumptions which underlie the construction of a fabricated history which the Buddhological academy has been constructing and still is constructing for Mahāyāna for more than 100 years. And the traces that it has created are very strong, and present obstacles to many people's practice.

The only honest thing they can say is this: X text appears in Chinese here, here and here; and in Tibetan here; and in some Central Asian fragments we think date to here. And that is all, nothing more.

Those are the empirical facts, the only "truth" they can muster.

I understand the fascination with mysteries and puzzles, but in reality, there is almost nothing of use in western historical Buddhist writing that is of any benefit to practicing Mahāyāna Buddhists.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 10th, 2014 at 5:56 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

Quite honestly, I can't take this story as a literal account of historical events and furthermore, I can't believe that the author(s) of this text did either. In all seriousness, do you?

Malcolm wrote:

Why not? I have observed my teacher involved in personal interactions with Guru Rinpoche. I did not perceive Guru Rinpoche, but he certainly did. When you read the autobiographies of Dudjom Lingpa, Thangthog Gyalpo, etc., they have multiple experiences that ordinary people like us do not have.

I regard the Mahāyāna sutras to be the record of those teachings taught directly by the Buddha to people whose vision was much more expansive than ours.

dzogchungpa said:

I thought you were saying that the events described in the Mahayana sutras were ones that ordinary people could see. Is that not your position?

Malcolm wrote:

No, what I said was that the Nirmanakāya is the only buddhakāya that ordinary people can see. I never said that all of his deeds were able to be witnessed by everyone. We have the example Sunakṣatra, who, while able to see the Buddha's radiance, was convinced the Buddha was an ordinary human being, with no special powers at all, no special insight.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 10th, 2014 at 7:25 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

gad rgyangs said:

maybe we can learn from all of them, since no one perspective can capture the whole of the nature of reality and the meaning of life."?

Malcolm wrote:

Well, you and I part ways here — as far as I am concerned, Buddhadharma offers the only complete solution to the problem of suffering; the rest are palliative at best.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 10th, 2014 at 7:26 AM

Title: Re: Dharma protectors and samaya

Content:

asunthatneversets said:

Yeah, Traktung Khepa or Traktung Yeshe Dorje, from Michigan. He's considered to be a tulku of Do Khyentse Yeshe Dorje per Thinley Norbu Rinpoche.

Malcolm wrote:

No, per himself. His association with DTR was very subsequent to his proclamation of his own tulkuship. I have observed the development of Kirkpatrick's self-mythology for 20 years on the internet. The DTR relationship is rather late.

But this is off-topic, and if people choose to believe Kirkpatrick's claims about himself, that is their business and none of mine.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 10th, 2014 at 7:30 AM

Title: Re: Dharma protectors and samaya

Content:

Konchog1 said:

That's the problem with prophecy. What does red face mean? It's not red skin. Red face.

Black face means a person is angry, so red face could mean a country of lustful people. Or something else entirely.

Malcolm wrote:

It very clearly means Tibetans; since they used to smear their faces with red pigment.

At any rate, for more than a thousand years educated Tibetans have understood the term གཤོང་དམར་ཅན, "red faced" to refer to themselves. Why? Because the Kaṃsadeśavyākaraṇa explicitly refers to Tibetans as "the red-faced" ones.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 10th, 2014 at 7:46 AM

Title: Re: Dharma protectors and samaya

Content:

asunthatneversets said:

Yeah, Traktung Khepa or Traktung Yeshe Dorje, from Michigan. He's considered to be a tulku of Do Khyentse Yeshe Dorje per Thinley Norbu Rinpoche.

Malcolm wrote:

No, per himself. His association with DTR was very subsequent to his proclamation of

his own tulkuship. I have observed the development of Kirkpatrick's self-mythology for more than 20 years on the internet. The DTR relationship is rather late.

dzogchungpa said:

Is he worth checking out? Who is he supposed to be the tulku of?

Malcolm wrote:

He proclaimed himself a tulku of Do Khyentse Yeshe Dorje. He and his wife originally appeared on the internet as "Khepa and Acala".

And one of the reasons Khepa has never had an interest in meeting with Tibetan teachers is because it's very important in terms of our work in this time and place that we not take on some of the unnecessary cultural trappings of Tibetan Buddhism. We're American Buddhists.

Khepa: We are American Tantric Buddhists. We are not Tibetan Tantric Buddhists. So there was a long period where I decided I did not want any contact with any other teachings. I wanted to teach purely what was given to me through Terma and through vision. Now it's been eight years, and our community is very well established. So now I'm entering a completely different phase where I'm actually quite interested in meeting and talking with Ngakpa Chogyam, who's Scottish, but he teaches a very traditional Tibetan line of Dharma transmission.

<http://crazywisdom.net/assets/khepa-and-acala-interview.pdf> "

onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;

I have no idea if he is "worth checking out". He has a nice farm. His wife likes to write and record Buddhist devotional folk music. He pissed off a guy name Namkha Rinpoche who then went on to develop a large Sangha in Europe. They used to be associated with the Aro people. He eventually studied with Dungsey Thrinley Norbu. He claims to be a tertön.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 10th, 2014 at 7:48 AM

Title: Re: Dharma protectors and samaya

Content:

asunthatneversets said:

Yeah, Traktung Khepa or Traktung Yeshe Dorje, from Michigan. He's considered to be a tulku of Do Khyentse Yeshe Dorje per Thinley Norbu Rinpoche.

Malcolm wrote:

No, per himself. His association with DTR was very subsequent to his proclamation of his own tulkuship. I have observed the development of Kirkpatrick's self-mythology for 20 years on the internet. The DTR relationship is rather late.

But this is off-topic, and if people choose to believe Kirkpatrick's claims about himself, that is their business and none of mine.

dzogchungpa said:

I take it you don't recommend him then?

Malcolm wrote:

I recommend that when anyone decides to make a Dharma connection with someone, they take some time to investigate the person they wish to make a connection with.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 10th, 2014 at 7:51 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

gad rgyangs said:

As far as most Buddhism is concerned, human life has no meaning except as an opportunity to study Buddhism.

Malcolm wrote:

Correction, human life has no meaning apart from the chance to attain liberation from samsara. Samsara is the limitation, not Dharma.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 10th, 2014 at 9:00 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

gad rgyangs said:

As far as most Buddhism is concerned, human life has no meaning except as an opportunity to study Buddhism.

Malcolm wrote:

Correction, human life has no meaning apart from the chance to attain liberation from samsara. Samsara is the limitation, not Dharma.

gad rgyangs said:

when you watch a movie, do the characters in the movie need to attain liberation from Samsara?

Malcolm wrote:

In the movie they do.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 10th, 2014 at 9:02 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

tobes said:

But if one can enter the language game of the text

Malcolm wrote:  
Language games are the problem.

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Tuesday, June 10th, 2014 at 9:18 AM  
Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism  
Content:  
tobes said:  
But if one can enter the language game of the text

Malcolm wrote:  
Language games are the problem.

tobes said:  
Then you should refrain from reading, writing and speaking.

{Insert massively over quoted Wittgenstein phrase >>>“Whereof one cannot speak, thereof one must be silent.”}

Malcolm wrote:  
What classic intellectual nonsense.

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Tuesday, June 10th, 2014 at 9:19 AM  
Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism  
Content:  
gad rgyangs said:  
when you watch a movie, do the characters in the movie need to attain liberation from Samsara?

Malcolm wrote:  
In the movie they do.

gad rgyangs said:  
but there's no one "in" the movie. its just flickering colors and shapes on the screen.

when you meet beings in a dream, do they need to attain liberation from samsara?

Malcolm wrote:  
In the dream they do.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 10th, 2014 at 7:40 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

pueraeternus said:

Tradition claims that Shakyamuni taught Hevajra during his earthly time (to subdue the four maras), but in the subjugating chapter, he said that one should study the Vaibhasika, then Sautrantika, then Yogacara and then Madhyamaka. These schools didn't exist at all 2500 years ago, and would have made absolutely no sense to who ever was taught the tantra back then. This is just an example of the many anachronisms that are all over the place, especially in the later Mahayana tracts.

Malcolm wrote:

The source of this idea comes from the Śrī-vajramālābhīḥānamahāyogatantra-sarvatantraḥṛdaya-rahasyavibhaṅga by Paṇḍita Alaṃkakalaśa. After listing the various deva realms and so on where each of the five classes of tantra were taught he states:

After that, for the purpose of subduing the four māras, the large great tantra of Śrī Hevajra and explanatory tantra of the short one were taught here in Magadha in this Jambudvīpa.

This does not mean it was taught to an ordinary assembly, as we can see, since the this paṇḍita clearly states the compilers of the tantras are either Vajrapāṇi or Mañjuśrī, and because the petitioner of the Hevajra is Vajragarbha, a tenth stage bodhisattva. At the time of the taming of the four Māras, there was no ordinary Sangha at all.

Further, there is no contradiction at all, since when this tantra was revealed to Mahasiddha Virupa by the nirmanakāya ḍākinī, Nairatmya, it was in a time and a place where the four tenet systems had arisen. It is not the case that sūtras and tantras are engraved on golden plates somewhere and that their words are somehow eternal. As has been pointed out to you already, "the single vajra word is heard differently by beings of different capacities".

Tantras like Cakrasamvara were never taught to a bhikṣu sangha nor by Śakyamuni, but only in the 24 places, where they are still taught by the Nirmanakāya in the form of Cakrasamvara, just as Guru Rinpoche, Śakyamuni's emanation, is still teaching the rakṣasas in Camara on Zangdog Palri.

pueraeternus said:

...how can we rely definitely on traditional origin stories and claim that it has any influence on one's dharmic progression?

Malcolm wrote:

Well, because in fact the tantras themselves maintain it is so, as the Union of the Tantra of the Sun and Moon states:



If the history is not explained,  
there will be the fault of lack of confidence  
in this discourse of the definitive secret meaning.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 10th, 2014 at 8:03 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

Honestly, I don't see why you couldn't. You only have to have confidence that the practice is effective, and that could be based on many things. Are you saying that, e.g., if I don't take the stories about the origins of the Mahyana sutras literally I can't practice wholeheartedly? Frankly, I would find that ridiculous.

Malcolm wrote:

This kind of attitude is premised on the idea that lineage just simply does not matter, all that matters is techniques. It is very much a reflection of the materialism in our culture.

But this attitude is not conducive the entry of blessings, I am afraid, which is necessary for realization.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 10th, 2014 at 8:06 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

pueraeternus said:

The ancient Mahayana masters have contrasting opinions on what is correct or erroneous. Even the fanciful story about 900 million bodhisattvas compiling the Mahayana sutras in Vimalasambhava was not accepted by every master (eg. Jamgon Kongtrul).

Malcolm wrote:

Kongtrul accepts this.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 10th, 2014 at 8:12 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

What classic intellectual nonsense.

tobes said:

What classic avoidance of the issue.

Malcolm wrote:

Satya-vacana, "truthful speech" has nothing to do with language games. Even the idea of language games can only be predicated in an age where speech has become largely deceptive and false.

It used to be the case that speech had more power, when less people lied, and actually engaged in the practice of satya-vacana.

These days people have such little regard for satya-vacana that they don't care whether the scriptures they follow are examples of satya-vacana or not.

What a pity.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 10th, 2014 at 8:14 PM

Title: Re: Dharma protectors and samaya

Content:

orgyen jigmed said:

But when I have very recently posed the same question to CNN whether the Tsen Yava Rukshi, Tsiu Marpo and Jagpa Melen are the same deity with a different name, he simply said: "No, not the same even though they all belong to the same powerful class of Tsen..." he then continued: " see, I am not you and you are not me!"

Malcolm wrote:

Interesting, I never asked him, I merely assumed. Thanks for clearing that up.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 10th, 2014 at 10:55 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Further, there is no contradiction at all, since when this tantra was revealed to Mahasiddha Virupa by the nirmanakāya ḍākinī, Nairatmya, it was in a time and a place where the four tenet systems had arisen. It is not the case that sūtras and tantras are engraved on golden plates somewhere and that their words are somehow eternal. As

has been pointed out to you already,

pueraeternus said:

Oh, so Nairatmya would alter the contents of the tantra to suit Virupa's understanding? This would make the whole origin stories irrelevant and unnecessary.

Malcolm wrote:

No, it does not make the origin stories irrelevant nor unnecessary. For example, when the Saddharmapundarika sutra was taught, the Buddha states that it was taught in the very distant past by a Buddha called Candrasūryapradīpa. But I don't think we need to assume that the words are identical in every respect, nor was the assembly the same, nor were the conditions the same, and so on. He adds:

Immeasurable buddhas in the present and future  
Will also teach this Dharma  
With various skillful means.

Indicating that the Saddharmapundarika sutra will be taught in the future by many Buddhas.

So there is no contradiction at all in the same sūtra or tantra being taught in a different manner, with different topics when taught to different people in different epochs.

For example, the main point of the Hevajra tantra is that it presents the method of realizing the continuum of Vajradhara in the form of Hevajra, not that it mentions the four tenet systems, as well as the four divisions of tantra.

"the single vajra word is heard differently by beings of different capacities".

The meaning of the words can mean differently or have deeper layers to those of greater capacity, but the words would still be the same.

No, actually, that is the point. When citation this is taken from explains that one words is heard as different words by different people. It is called the "array of speech".

Many have advanced in their practice of tantra, even when they disagree with the varying origin stories of this sutra or that tantra.

Like who? Can you name even one modern person who has "advanced in their practice" even though they reject the sutras and tantras were actually taught by the Buddha?

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 10th, 2014 at 11:02 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

Malcolm, please. When you posted this:

<https://www.dharmawheel.net/viewtopic.php?f=40&t=14929&p=202388#p202381>

was your attitude premised on the idea that lineage just simply does not matter?

Was it a reflection of the materialism in our culture?

Malcolm wrote:

To the former question, no.

To the latter question, yes.

dzogchungpa said:

Were the blessings you had received insufficient?

Malcolm wrote:

Not exactly — the blessings I have cultivated were not sufficient.

I have since decided the whole approach to Dharma represented in that post written six months ago, opinions held for many years, since the early 90's, were frankly held up on baseless suppositions derived from my early Buddhist studies.

One cannot maintain that the sūtras are "satya-vacana", truthful speech, while maintaining that their origins are lies.

These present statements function to remedy in some small way my past error.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 10th, 2014 at 11:20 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

pueraeternus said:

The ancient Mahayana masters have contrasting opinions on what is correct or erroneous. Even the fanciful story about 900 million bodhisattvas compiling the Mahayana sutras in Vimalasambhava was not accepted by every master (eg. Jamgon Kongtrul).

Malcolm wrote:

Kongtrul accepts this.

pueraeternus said:

Sorry - it should be Sonam Tsemo, one of the five founding masters of the Shakyas. So as we can see, even when such masters don't see eye to eye on origin stories, their progression in the dharma was not hindered.

Malcolm wrote:

He does not exactly reject it; he reports it in his Introduction to Dharma:

"The Mahāyāna, so some assert, was compiled by ten million bodhisattvas at

Vimalasvabhava in the south. Some advocate other means. Some [say] it is the same as the manner of the śravakas [your position]."

And in his General Presentation of the Divisions of Tantra he says:

"When some masters say that the Mahāyāna sūtras were compiled after ninety million bodhisattvas gathered in the southern direction at Vimalasambhāva although there is no great fault in that position, but both Secret Mantra and the uncommon Mahāyāna were compiled by Vajrapāṇi. As it is explained in the Prajñāpāramitā Treatise Commentary by master Vasubandhu through Ārya Maitreya's request to the bodhisattva Vajrapāṇi [55/b] "...this prajñāpāramitā heard by me is promised to the retinue."

Although one cannot reject compilation in different locations, it also cannot be proven."

In general, however, we can understand that Sonam Tsemo does not have your idea, which is that Mahāyāna was not actually taught by the Buddha at all.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 10th, 2014 at 11:27 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

One cannot maintain that the sūtras are "satya-vacana", truthful speech, while maintaining that their origins are lies.

underthetree said:

'Lies' is an awfully strong statement. I would guess that, for many centuries, what you call lies have merely been accepted as literary conceits. There is a vast difference.

Malcolm wrote:

I really cannot remember any master referring to the origin story of Mahāyāna a "literary conceit". This is a modern concept about the origin of Mahāyāna. A literary conceit is nevertheless a pretense, and thus a falsehood. Hardly what one would call "satya-vacana".

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 10th, 2014 at 11:47 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

underthetree said:

I'm genuinely (and respectfully) curious, Malcolm: what exactly caused this volte-face?

Malcolm wrote:

I realized, as I explained above, that this modernist attitude is harmful to one's practice.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, June 11th, 2014 at 12:44 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

smcj said:

...this modernist attitude is harmful to one's practice.

I respectfully disagree. I have the "modernist attitude" you are objecting to, and my practice is quite healthy--at least insofar as my faith and confidence goes.

Malcolm wrote:

I thought so too, then I examined my mind [once again, for the n-millionth time] and my attitudes towards the teachings...and I discovered two things — 1) the modernist suppositions I was entertaining really have no support at all 2) and therefore, they are pure prapañca 3) and thus I resolved to abandon them.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, June 11th, 2014 at 3:55 AM

Title: Re: Critical thinking and Dharma

Content:

shel said:

Lets not forget that the teaching has limits, and indeed, was forged within human limits.

Malcolm wrote:

The teaching has no limits other than the total liberation of migrating beings.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, June 11th, 2014 at 4:09 AM

Title: Re: Critical thinking and Dharma

Content:

Jikan said:

Are you claiming that the Buddha Dharma is an invention of samsaric beings and, therefore, leads only to continued entanglement in affliction, shel?

Malcolm wrote:

It seems to be a bit of trend around here....

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, June 11th, 2014 at 4:58 AM

Title: Re: Dharma protectors and samaya

Content:

Konchog1 said:

Isn't Tsui Marpo a Tibetan spirit subdued by Padmasambhava? Why and how is he the

protector of North America? Since when?

Malcolm wrote:

Since never, it was my error in assuming that Yava Rukshi was a name for Tsi'u Marpo.

Konchog1 said:

And while we're at it: If there are Tsen, Mamos, Gyalpo etc. all over the world, why the focus on Dakinis in Tantra? If they have to be female spirits why not Mamos or Yakshinis? PM me if you don't want to derail the thread further.

Malcolm wrote:

There are two kinds of dakinis, wisdom and worldly. The focus is on Wisdom...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, June 11th, 2014 at 5:45 AM

Title: Re: Critical thinking and Dharma

Content:

gad rgyangs said:

Malcolm I would be interested to hear your opinion on the Lotus Sutra: faithful record of a teaching of the historical Buddha, or much later composition by one or more "samsaric beings"?

Malcolm wrote:

It's a record of the Buddha's teaching.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, June 11th, 2014 at 5:46 AM

Title: Re: Dharma protectors and samaya

Content:

Konchog1 said:

Isn't Tsui Marpo a Tibetan spirit subdued by Padmasambhava? Why and how is he the protector of North America? Since when?

Malcolm wrote:

Since never, it was my error in assuming that Yava Rukshi was a name for Tsi'u Marpo.

Konchog1 said:

And while we're at it: If there are Tsen, Mamos, Gyalpo etc. all over the world, why the focus on Dakinis in Tantra? If they have to be female spirits why not Mamos or Yakshinis? PM me if you don't want to derail the thread further.

Malcolm wrote:

There are two kinds of dakinis, wisdom and worldly. The focus is on Wisdom...

Konchog1 said:

Why isn't the focus on . . . wisdom Mamos instead?

Malcolm wrote:

There is — Palden Lhamo, Ekajati, Mazar Gyalmo, etc.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, June 11th, 2014 at 5:48 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

underthetree said:

I've always just taken the texts at face value.

Malcolm wrote:

Continue to do so...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, June 11th, 2014 at 8:17 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

pueraeternus said:

He does. In the Yogini's Eye, he says: Some scholars say that the Mahayana Sutras were compiled in the southern region called Vimalasambhava in a gathering of 900 million bodhisattvas. However, this is in great error as [this gathering] never took place.

Malcolm wrote:

No, Verril has translated this passage incorrectly. I give the correct translation above, which is confirmed in another one of his works, which I also produced. "Yogini's Eye" is Verril's title for the General Presentation of The Divisions of Tantra. The passage is "...de'ang skyon chen po ni med do", "also a great error that is not", the error is asserting 90 million, rather than one. Here is my rendering again:

"When some masters say that the Mahāyāna sūtras were compiled after ninety million bodhisattvas gathered in the southern direction at Vimalasambhāva although there is no great fault in that position,

Further proof of my reading is that Sakya Pandita, Sonam Tsemo's nephew states in his Great History of Dharma:

"It is reputed that "One million bodhisattvas gathered at the southern royal palace, Vimalasambhava, where Mañjuśī compiled the sūtras, Vajrapani compiled Abhidharma, and Ajita Maitreya compiled the Vinaya in the language of Mahāyāna."



He then describes how statements in the sutras which describe both Vajrapani and Ānanda as the compiler of the teachings are not in contradiction. Later Buton, Rinchen Drup gives this account, then Kongtrul.

If Sapan thought it completely wrong, he would have rejected it outright — as we have plenty of examples of his doing so. Sonam Tsemo presents it in two different works which I produce above. The point is that this account is generally accepted in Tibet from an early period.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, June 11th, 2014 at 8:24 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

pueraeternus said:

Thanks. I forgot about this sutra. It seems the Buddha forgot about the Mahasamghikas and other sects when he cast his eye into the future? I wonder what reasons Malcolm will give here?

Malcolm wrote:

The Buddha has the capacity to know events, both specific and general, in the future. That is why he is termed "omniscient in the three times".

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, June 11th, 2014 at 8:54 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Two points about this. 1. There's basically universal agreement that in any Buddhist tradition, language does not objectively reflect or refer to reality. Thus the problematic of language games runs deep through Buddhism, and often becomes a very central and prominent soteriological/philosophical issue. Surely you would not dispute this. If this were really true, then how do you deal with acts of true speech? For example, in the Śatasāhasrikāprajñāpāramitābṛhaṭṭikā we find:

"When an irreversible bodhisattva sees a city on fire, he says "May the fire be pacified". When the fire is pacified through the blessings of true words, you can know that one as being irreversible."

The only way to get outside of this is to either cease using language (which I suggested, and in some respects is a plausible yogic response) or to run with some alternative theory of language/meaning ala Panini, which would be very antithetical to any orthodox Buddhist view.

I think that thus far Western analysis of classical Buddhist attitudes towards language have ignored the role of satya-vacana.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, June 11th, 2014 at 9:22 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

pueraeternus said:

But the Lotus Sutra of this world would certainly be taught by a different Buddhua, at a different, time, place and retinue. And since you said that the conditions does not have to be same, etc, then it is quite clear that the Hevajra in this world was taught after the 4 tenet schools have arisen, since that would be the appropriate condition for the tantra to actually mention the 4 schools. Hence we have internal evidence that the Hevajra was really taught later, via visions, illusory bodies, etc.p[./quote]

This is not evidence for that. One, it was taught to Virupa by a human women in person, the Nirmanakāya Nairatmya, not in a dream. Secondly, it was taught by the Buddha in the morning of his awakening when he conquered the four māras. Further, the longest version of it was taught eons ago by Mahāvajradhara.

Since Buddhas are indeed omniscient concerning the three times, there is also no contradiction that the Buddha could teach on the four tenets before they arose. And since the retinue the Buddha taught the Hevajra too on the morning of his awakening is not specified apart from Vajragarbha and the net of dākinīs, we can also assume they understood what the Buddha was teaching about in the two sectioned version of the Hevajra tantra.

Malcolm wrote:

So there is no contradiction at all in the same sūtra or tantra being taught in a different manner, with different topics when taught to different people in different epochs.

Of course - proof that sutras don't have to be taught by the nirmanakaya Buddha, can be taught later, etc.

When a sūtra or tantra is taught to an ordinary human being, it needs to be taught by a Nirmanakāya, as we see from account of Virupa's awakening. Virupa was not yet even a first stage bodhisattva when he met Nairatmya, so he could not possibly have perceived her in any other form than the one she presents to him as a two armed, one faced human being.

I am not saying that such persons reject the sutras and tantras are taught by the Buddha. Let me repeat myself again, since you are obviously deaf to this: the sutras and tantras

are indeed taught by the Buddha, but the Buddha is not limited to his nirmanakaya form 2500 years ago in India.

Sure, but when a sutra says "When the Buddha was residing in Vaisali attended by Śāriputra, etc." we are to understand it happened within the 80 year span of the Buddha and not in some vision.

Because of his all-pervasiveness and supreme skillfulness, he can manifest in the mindstream of sentient beings teaching in various forms and methods, even after his rupakaya entered parinirvana. In this, I would say that my position on this is stronger than yours, since I am not constrained by historical facts.

But you are so constrained by the historical references to various places and events mentioned in many Mahāyāna sutras. I am specifically referring to sūtras that say things like "When the Bhagavan was residing at Vulture Peak or Vaisali, etc."

The second thing constraining you is that there is no Indian tradition at all which suggests what you suggest, i.e. that Mahāyāna sutras were produced piecemeal in visions by later yogins. This is just a modern rational invented by you latter-day Mahāyānists who have basically accepted the idea that Mahāyāna was not actually taught by the nirmanakāya Śākyamuni Buddha. Why do you use this rational? It is because you fundamentally accept the account of the appearance of Mahāyāna as it is presented by western scholars from the time of Max Müller onward.

But back to your question - it seems that personages such as Sonam Tsemo, Kongtrul, and other illuminaries can argue and disagree with each other on the finer points of the origin stories of sutra, but this never hindered them from high attainments.

As I pointed out to you, exhaustively, there really is no such disagreement. Sonam Tsemo, Sapan, Buton, Kongtrul and others have basically provided more or less the same account over the years.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, June 11th, 2014 at 9:30 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Karma Dorje said:

Do you mean Cārvāka? Tirthika typically refers to Jains though it came to include Hindus as well, i.e. those that do not accept the words of the Buddha.

Sherab Dorje said:

Carvaka are Tirthika too since they subscribe to the nihilist position.

Malcolm wrote:

Greg:

Carvakas are not tirthikas [mu stegs pa]. Tirthikas are eternalists; carvakas are nihilists.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, June 11th, 2014 at 9:34 PM

Title: Re: Critical thinking and Dharma

Content:

underthetree said:

This is my difficulty with the whole thing. I find it extremely hard to believe the above scenario.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, because you are limiting the Buddha's capacity with your conceptual mind.

underthetree said:

Conversely, I have no trouble at all believing in that the Mahayana was taught by Lord Buddha as mind-treasure, as revelations.

Malcolm wrote:

This is a fiction modern Mahāyānists have invented. But this not the tradition we have. The tradition we actually have is that Mahāyāna was recovered as an earth treasure by Ārya Nāgārjuna.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, June 11th, 2014 at 11:18 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

Tirthika (Skt. tīrthika; Tib. མུ་སྟེགས་པ་, mutegpa; Wyl. mu stegs pa) — a proponent of non-Buddhist views.

From <http://www.rigpawiki.org/index.php?title=Tirthika>

According to this definition by Mipham Rinpoche Carvaka are tirthika: The tirthikas' views embody the gross, simplistic view of eternalism, considering that phenomena are not momentary and the simplistic view of nihilism, the belief that although phenomena are caused, they themselves do not generate their own effects—there are no past nor future lives—or that actions will not give rise to karmic results.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, but not according to Padmasambhava's man nag lta ba phreng ba, Candrakīrti's Madhyamakāvatara and bhaṣyam, the Tarkajvala of Bhavya, the Pramāṇavarttika of Dharmakīrti and so on.

So either the translation is incorrect, or Mipham is mistaken.

Guru Rinpoche lists four types of non-buddhists phyal ba, rgyang 'phen pa (carvaka), mur thug pa, and mu stegs pa. The last, used for eternalists, is well known to translate

the term "tīrthika" i.e. ford of the crossing, referring to their belief in rebirth.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, June 12th, 2014 at 1:25 AM

Title: Re: Critical thinking and Dharma

Content:

underthetree said:

My difficulty is with manipulating history, conceptually, to make things hang together.

Malcolm wrote:

That is essentially what one is doing when one invents visionary encounters, dreams and visions to account for Mahāyāna sutras which have no basis in any traditional account.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, June 12th, 2014 at 11:03 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

pueraeternus said:

Then is Sonam Tsemo wrong, erroneous? In his Entryway to the Dharma:

Malcolm wrote:

It is not very precise. For example, in the Bodhisattvacaryāvatāravivṛttipañjikā we see:

'..such as the Carvaka assertion of annihilation, the assertion of our own Vaibhaṣikas that the conditioned and the unconditioned are mutually exclusive, the Sāṃkhya assertion that all things are the same in the original nature as the three guṇas, and also the Tīrthikas who advocate permanence...'

For the most part we see Indian masters differentiating the two terms. The single place where I see the term mu stegs pa applied to rgyang 'phan pas in the bstan 'gyur is the Āryalaṅkāvatāra-nāma-mahāyānasūtravṛttitathāgatahṛdayālaṃkāra. Otherwise, in hundreds of places the term mu stegs pa (tīrthika) is applied to eternalists and the term rgyang 'phan pa (carvaka) strictly applies to nihilists.

However, it is true that as catch-all term, Tibetans tend to lump all non-buddhists under the heading mu stegs pa. But it is not an accurate description.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, June 12th, 2014 at 11:08 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

pueraeternus said:

Thanks. I forgot about this sutra. It seems the Buddha forgot about the Mahasamghikas and other sects when he cast his eye into the future? I wonder what reasons Malcolm will give here?

Malcolm wrote:

The Buddha has the capacity to know events, both specific and general, in the future. That is why he is termed "omniscient in the three times".

M

pueraeternus said:

But still he missed out 15 other sects? What about the Mahayana traditions?

Malcolm wrote:

You need to examine the dream of King Kṛkin (who lived during the dispensation of Buddha Kashyapa) which predicts the eighteen schools occurring during the dispensation of Śakyamuni Buddha.

Anyway, why are you arguing against Buddha's omniscience? Do you have a point? Do you not accept it? Do you think any phenomena within the three times is closed to a Buddha's eye? Are you merely trying to bust my balls?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, June 12th, 2014 at 11:14 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

pueraeternus said:

Of course. When I said "sutras don't have to be taught by the nirmanakaya Buddha", I was referring to the rupakaya of a Buddha in his earthly emanation. But the Sambhogakaya can emanate as many nirmanakayas as the situation needs.

Malcolm wrote:

But there is no tradition of this, so this is merely your fabrication and rational.

pueraeternus said:  
Not for me. I am not limited that way.

Malcolm wrote:  
Yes, you just make up whatever suits your fancy.

pueraeternus said:  
Allied to the mythology of the preaching of the dharma is the problem of the recitation of the Mahayana scriptures immediately after the demise of the Buddha. ...

Malcolm wrote:  
Which Sapan resolves by point out that there is no contradiction between the two (compilation by Vajrapani and Ananda).

But the one thing all these masters have in common is that they, unlike you, understand that all these sūtras were spoken by the Buddha during his forty year teaching career, before his parinirvana.

M

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Thursday, June 12th, 2014 at 11:21 AM  
Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism  
Content:

tobes said:  
I agree that they have ignored this - but I don't see how satya-vacana is going to give you some essentialist or realist account of language. Why is it that now the finger pointing the moon is taken to be the moon?

Malcolm wrote:  
The point is that their speech has blessings and power because of the truth of their realization. That realization is what lends "essence", if you want to call it that, to their speech. I have personally observed such speech acts on the part of realized teachers.

M

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Thursday, June 12th, 2014 at 11:29 AM  
Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism  
Content:

pueraeternus said:  
I can't verify the veracity of your claim that the Yogini's Eye was mistranslated, since I don't read Tibetan. However, Haribhadra had a different idea. Davidson relates:

Malcolm wrote:

Not the whole thing, just that passage (as well as the title, which exists nowhere in the text). This is verifiable since Loppon Rinpoche brings up the issue again in Introduction to Dharma. Unfortunately, Jeff Schoening did not translate the whole of it, and the section which mentions the compilation at Vimalasambhava is absent from the translation of his at present, so you will have to be content with my meager effort presented already above (If I only give a citation of the Sanskrit title, without referring to another translator, you are to assume I translated it myself, usually on the spot from the text in question.)

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, June 12th, 2014 at 11:34 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

pueraeternus said:

Davidson relates:

Malcolm wrote:

One whom no one should really take seriously. He has a huge chip on his shoulder.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, June 12th, 2014 at 9:36 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

tobes said:

But it seems we're slowly edging towards a position on hermeneutics which is really quite at odds with one of the most persistent themes in many Mahayana traditions (and indeed, many of those sutras ): the intractable gap between concepts/language and reality. And in doing so opening up a new position which seemingly holds that there are two types of concepts/language - one in which the intractable gap is generated, and the other in which language/concepts is reality.

Malcolm wrote:

The Buddhāvatamska states:

From one single melodious word of the victors,  
all the infinite gates of Dharma arise.

And:

The tathāgatas fully attain the accomplishment of speech that is without center or



periphery in order that all realms of sentient beings may understand it with a single tone

The gap between reality and language is a problem only for us. There is no such gap for Buddhas? Why? Because the Buddhas are free from concepts. So their acts of speech are similarly free from any conceptual restraint that would differentiate their content from describing reality just as it is.

To answer Dante's question about whether the Buddha taught the PP in 100,000 lines, one day, 25 on a different day and so on -- it is not necessary to think this way.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, June 12th, 2014 at 10:55 PM

Title: Re: Critical thinking and Dharma

Content:

Andrew108 said:

If someone takes a path based on faith and belief then they shouldn't question liberation or someone else's claims to be liberated.

Malcolm wrote:

This is a total non-sequitar.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, June 12th, 2014 at 11:28 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

To answer Dante's question about whether the Buddha taught the PP in 100,000 lines, one day, 25 on a different day and so on -- it is not necessary to think this way.

gad rgyangs said:

i would hope not. a better way to think would be to acknowledge what even a cursory examination of the texts show: that the 25000 was created at least in part by taking the text of the 8000, breaking it apart, and inserting other material in between.

Malcolm wrote:

That is what some people think. But that is merely a supposition. There is no proof that this is the case.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, June 12th, 2014 at 11:55 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

gad rgyangs said:  
its as plain as the nose on anyone's face. you're just being stubborn.

Malcolm wrote:  
No, it is not as plain as the nose on anyone's face.

Let me ask you — the Śatasāhasrika-prajñāpāramitā is 12 volumes long. Have you actually read it? The Pañcaviṃśatisahasrika-prajñāpāramitā is three volumes long. Have you actually read it? Or are you just relying what some western scholar you read decided?

We talk about these texts as if we have infinite familiarity with them, utterly lacking any humility, when in reality most of us have barely read 0.01 percent of the sutras, let alone the tantras. And yet we confidently make proclamations about their authorship based on the latest western intellectual fads.

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Friday, June 13th, 2014 at 12:12 AM  
Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism  
Content:

dzogchungpa said:  
Malcolm, I'm assuming you've read all that. Yet, as little as 6 months ago you said:

Malcolm wrote:  
No, of course not.

dzogchungpa said:  
So, with all due respect, WTF?

Malcolm wrote:  
With all due respect, I realized I was wrong.

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Friday, June 13th, 2014 at 12:48 AM  
Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism  
Content:

gad rgyangs said:  
As it happens, I noticed the relationship between the 8000 & the 25000 on my own by comparing them. Yes, its that obvious, even to a non-specialist.

Malcolm wrote:  
Sure, why not? They are both Prajñāpāramita sutras, the basis message is the same. Even some of the words are the same. In the Agamas/Nikayas there are countless

places where the Buddha uses the same phrases over and over again. This does not mean that your contention that one is merely a padded out version of the other is supportable in anyway. It is merely your conjecture based upon your idea of sutra composition.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, June 13th, 2014 at 1:30 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

gad rgyangs said:

As it happens, I noticed the relationship between the 8000 & the 25000 on my own by comparing them. Yes, its that obvious, even to a non-specialist.

Malcolm wrote:

Sure, why not? They are both Prajñāpāramita sutras, the basis message is the same. Even some of the words are the same. In the Agamas/Nikayas there are countless places where the Buddha uses the same phrases over and over again. This does not mean that your contention that one is merely a padded out version of the other is supportable in anyway. It is merely your conjecture based upon your idea of sutra composition.

gad rgyangs said:

OK, so whats your alternative, fully demonstrable, explanation for the state of the texts?

Malcolm wrote:

They were taught by the Buddha, and then squirreled away by nāgās, devas, yakṣas, tenth stage bodhisattvas, etc., until they were again promulgated by Nāgārjuna.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, June 13th, 2014 at 1:51 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

gad rgyangs said:

OK, so whats your alternative, fully demonstrable, explanation for the state of the texts?

Malcolm wrote:

They were taught by the Buddha, and then squirreled away by nāgās, devas, yakṣas, tenth stage bodhisattvas, etc., until they were again promulgated by Nāgārjuna.

M

gad rgyangs said:  
and this is demonstrable how exactly?

Malcolm wrote:

This is what the Mahāyāna and Vajrayāna traditions clearly maintain. There is no reason for practitioners of these traditions not to simply accept these accounts, and every good reason to do so.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, June 13th, 2014 at 2:18 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

This is what the Mahāyāna and Vajrayāna traditions clearly maintain. There is no reason for practitioners of these traditions not to simply accept these accounts, and every good reason to do so.

M

gad rgyangs said:  
so, basically you reject the highly plausible text critical explanation in favor of fairytales, and provide no justification beyond "just because".

Malcolm wrote:

Your stance is not different, you accept the text critical explanation just because you cannot imagine anything else to be the case.

You basically do not have any faith in the tradition, which is fine — but then you are left holding a bunch of teachings in which you have no confidence nor reason to believe that they will do anything other than provide you with a few hours of entertainment. Otherwise, if you actually have confidence in the teachings, you cannot really say why you do apart from your own conceptual admiration of them since you certainly cannot believe they come from an awakened source. This is the inevitable consequence of accepting the text critical version of the history of Buddhist sūtras and tantras.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, June 13th, 2014 at 3:01 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

gad rgyangs said:

I see no contradiction in having faith in the transmission of a living rigdzin and at the

same time recognizing the reality of the complexities of text transmission over centuries.

Malcolm wrote:

Even though your very notion of a vidyādhara is derived from a textual tradition in which you have no confidence?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, June 13th, 2014 at 3:13 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

gad rgyangs said:

I see no contradiction in having faith in the transmission of a living rigdzin and at the same time recognizing the reality of the complexities of text transmission over centuries.

Malcolm wrote:

Even though your very notion of a vidyādhara is derived from a textual tradition in which you have no confidence?

gad rgyangs said:

my notion of vidhydhara is derived from sitting in front of ChNNR. I find all kinds of interesting things in sutras, I just dont think they fell out of the sky onto my roof.

Malcolm wrote:

And you know that ChNN is a vidyādhara exactly how? And if a vidyādhara tells you that you should regard sutras as the actual words of the Buddha, or the termas as the actual words of Padmasambhava you will react how?

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, June 13th, 2014 at 4:31 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

And if a vidyādhara tells you that you should regard sutras as the actual words of the Buddha, or the termas as the actual words of Padmasambhava you will react how?

dzogchungpa said:

I'm curious, did Sakya Pandita think that one should regard termas as the actual words of Padmasambhava?

Malcolm wrote:

Sakya Pandita was skeptical of the nascent treasure tradition.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, June 14th, 2014 at 1:42 AM

Title: Re: Dharma protectors and samaya

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

North American is Tsiu Marpo. Ocean is Marutse.

Karinos said:

Hi, and which one for Europe please? thanks

Malcolm wrote:

Pramoha

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, June 14th, 2014 at 1:56 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Sönam said:

[

Dzogchen view does not say that we come from deva ...

Malcolm wrote:

Norbu Rinpoche subscribes to the origin of humanity described by the Buddha. It is not in Dzogchen tantras, but it also does not contradict Dzogchen tantras.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, June 14th, 2014 at 2:07 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Sönam said:

Easy one ... Buddhist version does not reject evolution theory, it includes it in a more complete process.

pueraeternus said:

The Buddhist version of the origin of the human race is that we devolved from deva beings due to the three poisons, our bodies and mind becoming grosser and grosser, etc. This contradicts scientific evolution.

Malcolm wrote:

Not necessarily.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, June 15th, 2014 at 5:51 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

daverupa said:

own, which is utterly amazing to see repeated over and over here.

Malcolm wrote:

Given the fact that the whole edifice of the western historiography of Buddhism is consists of a house of cards, it is not surprising it is challenged over and over. What you have are a few phenomena caked in modern speculations which are utterly unsupported. This is case of the whole of Buddhist studies in the west. Not merely studies of Mahāyāna.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, June 15th, 2014 at 7:43 AM

Title: Re: The practices of the base of santi maha sangha

Content:

thewhiterussia said:

Dear people,

According to the instructions for the practices of the base level of santi maha sangha one day of practice corresponds to four thuns. Does anybody know how long is one thun supposed to be?

Many thanks

Malcolm wrote:

Traditionally, three hours, practically, two.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, June 15th, 2014 at 10:21 AM

Title: Re: A bunch of questions about empowerment, deities and prac

Content:

LolCat said:

10. What is the difference between Metta and Boddhicitta?

Malcolm wrote:

Metta is love. [Mahāyāna] bodhicitta is the wish to attain complete buddhahood for the benefit all sentient beings.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, June 15th, 2014 at 10:23 AM

Title: Re: A bunch of questions about empowerment, deities and prac

Content:

Alfredo said:

11. No one really "gets" bodhicitta until they are enlightened!

Malcolm wrote:

This is not correct.

Compassion is the cause of bodhicitta, bodhicitta is the cause of buddhas.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, June 15th, 2014 at 10:25 AM

Title: Re: A bunch of questions about empowerment, deities and prac

Content:

Alfredo said:

6. Since mantras can be pronounced in different ways, depending on local phonology, and have evolved somewhat over time, this lends support to the suggestion that they are derived from particular cultures.

Malcolm wrote:

Mantras are the speech acts of awakened beings — they can be in any language. But they must have been pronounced first by a buddha for a given purpose.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, June 15th, 2014 at 10:26 AM

Title: Re: A bunch of questions about empowerment, deities and prac

Content:

LolCat said:

Thank you for all the responses people, they were really helpful.

Malcolm wrote:

Recite refuge and bodhicitta. Then recite whatever mantras you have received, focusing on the sound.

Eventually, you will be able to find the correct sadhana and receive instruction. For now, it is excellent if you can maintain the stream of recitation daily.



Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, June 15th, 2014 at 11:20 AM

Title: Re: A bunch of questions about empowerment, deities and prac

Content:

LolCat said:

Thank you for all the responses people, they were really helpful.

Malcolm wrote:

Recite refuge and bodhicitta. Then recite whatever mantras you have received, focusing on the sound.

Eventually, you will be able to find the correct sadhana and receive instruction. For now, it is excellent if you can maintain the stream of recitation daily.

LolCat said:

I think I do have the correct sadhana right now:

<http://www.garchen.net/resources/Amitabha%20FINAL%20FINAL.pdf> "

onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;" onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;

Would it be okay for me to continue this practice without a teacher?

Malcolm wrote:

Definitely. You do your best.

You will eventually find someone who can give you instruction, or you will find the book, etc.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, June 15th, 2014 at 8:00 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

treehuggingoctopus said:

e-Sangha-like questing for hardline orthodoxy, I wouldn't hesitate even a second..

Malcolm wrote:

E-Sangha was only hardline about one thing really — rebirth.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, June 15th, 2014 at 8:12 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The people most attached to views here are those who are committed to historiography of Buddhism as promulgated in the western academy, or their pet view of the brain, etc.

I have also come to understand that "Buddhist Modernism" arises out of this destructive analysis, the only thing "Buddhist" about it is its name, but like the Holy Roman Empire that was neither "holy", nor "Roman", nor an "empire", Buddhist modernism is neither "Buddhist" nor "modern" at all.

As for myself, I am not attached to any particular story — I have simply, and finally come to understand that western Academic scholarship on Buddhadharma is destructive to that Dharma, not merely for one reason, but for very many. Therefore, I have concluded that the traditional accounts are indeed more satisfying. They involve less clinging, less proliferation, are more inspiring, and generate more genuine faith. The problem with Buddhadharma in the West is not too much faith, it is too little faith.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, June 15th, 2014 at 9:19 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Given the fact that the whole edifice of the western historiography of Buddhism is consists of a house of cards

daverupa said:

This is yet to be demonstrated, even this many pages in.

Malcolm wrote:

Oh, I took care of that pages ago buy pointing out that Scholars have no idea where the eighteen schools came, and so on. Almost everything we read by scholars, unless it is grounded in some plastic fact like inscription, and so on, is entirely speculative fabrications, and at this point in my life, I find them less reasonable to take seriously on any level at all.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 16th, 2014 at 2:10 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Mkoll said:

Can you provide a reference? This thread is almost 80 pages long.

Malcolm wrote:

<https://www.dharmawheel.net/viewtopic.php?f=66&t=16491&p=239338&hilit=sujato>

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 16th, 2014 at 2:13 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Therefore, I have concluded that the traditional accounts are indeed more satisfying.

dzogchungpa said:

I don't find the traditional accounts even slightly satisfying.

Malcolm wrote:

They are that we have, unless, like western Academic scholars of the history of Buddhism, you make a (meager) living inventing and then selling new narratives. The problem with Buddhadharma in the West is not too much faith, it is too little faith. Not in my case.

Lack of faith is not obvious. But it definitely begins with deciding that traditional Buddhist narratives are just "myths", and dissatisfying ones at that.

BTW, I am not judging anyone personally — people are free to believe whatever they wish, AFAIC. But I have come to the conclusion that some approaches to the Dharma are more virtuous than others, so I am following my own advice in this respect. Everyone else is free to do as they please.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 16th, 2014 at 2:34 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

daverupa said:

So due to

<https://www.dharmawheel.net/viewtopic.php?f=66&t=16491&p=239338&hilit=sujato#p239338> you consider "almost everything we read by scholars etc." to be a supported claim? This has "taken care of it"?

Malcolm wrote:

This is merely a drop in the bucket of similar speculative confusion that I have encountered in people like Vallee -Pouissin, Davidson, Snellgrove, etc., et all. over the past 30 years or so. Like many people, I gained my first real introduction to Buddhism by taking a course at a college (with Malcolm David Eckel). He told me then he was glad he was a Christian, because Buddhism as a religion to follow never made any sense to him, despite is his interest in Madhyamaka.

Pretty much every suggestion of origin, or attempt to pin something down in Buddhist

history is met with a chorus of confusion and counter claims.

I seriously considered becoming a Buddhologist, but after seeing how the work of people like Janet Gyatso, Hallisey, Van de Kuip, Germano, etc., turned out, and how destructive, or if you prefer, deconstructive the approach of the western academy towards Buddhadharma is, I have decided to eschew its conclusions as non-productive and sterile speculations. In other words, there will be no living tradition of Buddhadharma flowing out from Western Academia.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 16th, 2014 at 2:59 AM

Title: Re: The Three Skyes

Content:

Nirvan said:

Hello brothers and sisters

Could some of you give here some explanations of the 3 Skyes (namkha sum - nam-mkha' gsum), important notion in the Dzogchen teachings ?

Thank you

Malcolm wrote:

It is something you need to receive directly from a qualified teacher.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 16th, 2014 at 3:46 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Kunzang said:

Malcolm,

Do you think your former self that more-or-less accepted the academic view of Mahayana origins would have been persuaded by the type of reasonings you're using now if someone had presented them to you?

Malcolm wrote:

I would have to admit that is all guesses, mostly conflicting.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 16th, 2014 at 5:51 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Wayfarer said:

many more Buddhologists are now also practitioners.

Malcolm wrote:

Very few of those are Mahāyānist in any identifiable way — at most they are Mahāyāna "sympathetic".

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 16th, 2014 at 11:30 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Mkoll said:

Can you provide a reference? This thread is almost 80 pages long.

Malcolm wrote:

<https://www.dharmawheel.net/viewtopic.php?f=66&t=16491&p=239338&hilit=sujato>

Mkoll said:

I'm sorry but one quote from one scholar about one Buddhist school is hardly proof of your words: "Scholars have no idea where the eighteen schools came, and so on".

It would be presumptuous of me to expect you to go out of your way to provide more numerous and solid references for your claim.

Malcolm wrote:

It is not likely to happen. I have been reading academic Buddhist literature for the better part of three decades, I worked for a Buddhist book store at one time, and also Wisdom Pubs as their retail manager in 1990-1. I have maintained a familiarity with the latest and greatest of academic literature especially where it concerns Mahāyāna — when I tell you that it piles speculation on assumptions in absence of actual facts, I mean it. When I tell you that I have observed a number of interpretive fads amongst western scholars, I mean it. Even if there are closeted Buddhists in academia, they certainly cannot write books from the perspective of their faith. Instead, they must accommodate the western scholastic set of assumptions and prejudices about the history of Mahāyāna whether they buy them or not (but they largely seem to). The one thing it all boils down to is that according to the current state of knowledge of the origins of Mahāyāna and Vajrayāna, western scholars simply have no clear idea where these traditions are from and how they arose.

But we do. Why? Because we have clear accounts of the rise of these teachings; which teacher brought out which tantras (Nairatma, Hevajra; Saraha, Cakrasamvara, Garab Dorje, the Dzogchen Tantras, and so on). In general we consider that Nāgārjuna revealed Mahāyāna. And that is all a practitioner of these systems really needs to know.

Their approach does not lead to a living wisdom tradition that will never be obsolete. Their approach leads to dead knowledge in a book, soon obsolete.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 16th, 2014 at 11:33 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

daverupa said:

Saddha isn't harmed by history.

Malcolm wrote:

Well, if you are a Theravadin, and your "history" is written by people who prefer Pali terms to Sanskrit ones, of course not. You folks already have an agenda to discredit Mahāyāna.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 16th, 2014 at 1:01 PM

Title: Re: The Buddha from Babylon

Content:

plwk said:

The Lost History and Cosmic Vision of Siddhartha Gautama

After reading the excerpts from this <http://www.buddhafrombabylon.com/>, I have no idea on what to make out of it.

Maybe, those of you who have bought/read this book or the excerpts do?

Malcolm wrote:

I see, so this is reverse of the Lost Jesus in India trope, i.e. the Lost Buddha in the Middle-East.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 16th, 2014 at 11:14 PM

Title: Re: Historical Changes in Ritual Implements & Shrine Set-up

Content:

Jikan said:

On two occasions, I've been able to see mid-19th century photographs of Tibetan Buddhist practitioners and some of their implements (one was on display years ago at the University of New Mexico, USA; the other at George Mason University, USA). It seems to me that there have been some small but significant changes in the size and shape of some articles of practice, which seem to be increasingly standardized today. For instance, the chodpas I've seen photographed in practice over a hundred years ago

might have much smaller and differently-accoutred damaru than one might expect to see someone using today--or not.

I'm wondering if these changes reflect easier manufacturing processes today compared to pre-industrial Asia, or changes in attitude/expectation toward practice implements, or something else entirely--or if I'm completely off the reservation in my reading of these images.

Thanks.

Malcolm wrote:

There has been some modernization and stream-lining of practice articles since the 1970's. And in general, quality has declined.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 17th, 2014 at 12:42 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Dan74 said:

To my way of seeing, the trouble is not with too little faith but with too much corrosive doubt, the papanca borne of too much hair-splitting and intellectualising relative to practice. I've been fortunate to meet several practitioners to whom this entire debate would be completely irrelevant. Not because they are so adamant that the traditional accounts are exactly right, but because their strong practice root has rendered such hand-wringing entirely beside the point.

Malcolm wrote:

My main point is that the traditional accounts have been supplanted by a modern narrative of uncertainty. This can be beneficial to no one who practices these traditions.

In Western Zen, lineage is simply not as important as it is Vajrayāna.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 17th, 2014 at 10:08 PM

Title: Re: Dorje Drollo and Simhamukha

Content:

alpha said:

What is the difference between Dorje Drollo and Simhamukha in terms of actions and removing obstacles ?

It seems that in general the preferred choice for removing obstacles related to spirit possession, black magic, provocations is Simhamukha although as far as i know DD is much more powerful but don't know in what way powerful ,so i've been told.

Malcolm wrote:

Drollo is meant for controlling the eight classes in general.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 17th, 2014 at 11:17 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

TocharianB said:

Aren't Janet Gyatso and David Germano both scholar-practitioners?

Malcolm wrote:

They are both extremely knowledgeable in their fields. I am not aware that they are serious practitioners. They probably be offended if they were asked.

TocharianB said:

In my understanding, the majority of American scholars of Tibetan traditions in particular are devoted to Vajrayana, e.g. John Makransky, Matthew Kapstein, Jose Cabezón, Jeffrey Hopkins, Jakob Dalton, Anne Klein, Gregory Hillis.

Malcolm wrote:

I don't think that scholar-practitioners are taken very seriously.

TocharianB said:

The same cannot be said for scholars of Theravada and East Asian traditions, of course, but I'm a little confused why you're painting all of academia with the same brush, especially American scholars devoted to Tibetan Buddhism, who tend, in my limited experience, to be very engaged students of the dharma. Is the new generation of scholars at UVA, who mostly haven't gotten around to publishing yet, more secular than generations past?

Malcolm wrote:

The requirements for the study of religion in all academic programs is the same — you must subordinate traditional narratives for the academic ones, or seek to explain the traditional narratives in otherizing terms.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, June 18th, 2014 at 1:33 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

I don't think that scholar-practitioners are taken very seriously.



mutsuk said:

I can assure you that Matthew Kapstein is taken very, very seriously in academic circles. However, I had no idea he was a practitioner and actually I suspect he is not. But his research work is definitely worth the reading.

Malcolm wrote:

Hi Mutsuk:

Kapstein is a brilliant guy, there is no doubt he is taken quite seriously. But as you know I am making a different point.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, June 18th, 2014 at 4:58 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Shamati said:

on the other hand I dont really understand why a materialist, who have no faith in spiritual existence or realities would want to cling to buddhism?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, this has puzzled me for years too. I have never understood it.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, June 18th, 2014 at 5:48 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Shamati said:

on the other hand I dont really understand why a materialist, who have no faith in spiritual existence or realities would want to cling to buddhism?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, this has puzzled me for years too. I have never understood it.

Mkoll said:

I would guess that it is the fear of death that we all share. Sometimes, people become more religious or spiritual later in life as old age, sickness, and death roll in. And who can say what changes of heart may take place in a materialist on their deathbed.

Malcolm wrote:

I guess, what I don't understand the most is people like Batchelor who clearly want to revise Dharma with rebirth out of it.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, June 18th, 2014 at 6:48 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

daverupa said:

For what it's worth, <http://dhammaloka.org.au/files/pdf/authenticity.pdf> covers a Buddhist Modernism that is pro-rebirth, involves practitioner-scholars, etc., so please note that so far this recent conversation is a rather one-sided characterization of what this sort of approach involves.

Malcolm wrote:

If you accept certain Western historic claims, it might be satisfying for some. But it is still very much a "Protestant Buddhism" with a "Scientific Buddha" at the heart of the quest.

Of course, according to them, I would fall in the denialist camp.

I would not characterize this as "modernism" but more like a different sort of fundamentalism. It is an attempt at setting down a scholastic, "Early Buddhist" fundamentalism.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, June 18th, 2014 at 7:09 AM

Title: Re: Interview with the Arahats

Content:

duckfiasco said:

But I suppose that's why I don't subscribe to the thousands of lifetimes to do anything worth a fart model of some schools.

Malcolm wrote:

That would be common Mahāyāna.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, June 18th, 2014 at 8:01 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

tobes said:

Now we have the admission, that although there might in fact be a large percentage of scholar-practitioners, all of them, somehow, disavow their Buddhist beliefs for a quasi materialism which implicitly informs all of their work.

Malcolm wrote:

Jesus Tobes, have you ever read any of the stuff that these people write?

They all adhere to the text critical method which is the consensus view of Buddhist

textual evolution in the academy.

For example, our own dear and beloved Huifeng doesn't believe a single word of Mahāyāna was taught by the Buddha. Neither does Jeff aka Indrajala, and I dare say, neither do you. Forget about all these fancy rationals, dreams, visions, and so on. Basically, the simple fact is that most of us who follow Mahāyāna and Vajrayāna don't actually believe that the scriptures we purport to follow were indeed taught by the Buddha in any form at all.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, June 18th, 2014 at 8:56 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

tobes said:

Now we have the admission, that although there might in fact be a large percentage of scholar-practitioners, all of them, somehow, disavow their Buddhist beliefs for a quasi materialism which implicitly informs all of their work.

Malcolm wrote:

Jesus Tobes, have you ever read any of the stuff that these people write?

dzogchungpa said:

You mean stuff like this: <http://dash.harvard.edu/handle/1/11125112?>

Malcolm wrote:

Funny you mention that, she asked me a number of questions about the text she was working on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, June 18th, 2014 at 8:58 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

tobes said:

By explicitly working on early Indian Prajnaparamita...

Malcolm wrote:

Your statement betrays you right here...

If Prajñāpāramita is the Buddha's teaching, how can there be "earlier" and "later"?

At this point the narrative is so embedded in our thinking, we don't even question it.

You also need to understand that I am pretty much confining myself to historical scholarship.

Sociology, anthropology and so on of Buddhist cultures are relatively new fields, and are often not undertaken by people with serious skills in Buddhist literature.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, June 18th, 2014 at 7:32 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Wayfarer said:

Perhaps a lot of what you say is actually context-dependent. It depends on the point you are trying to make, to those you are speaking to at the time. You adopt a certain position for argument's sake, and then pursue it.

Would that be a fair assessment?

Malcolm wrote:

No, I still stand by what I said then, and what I said yesterday. Even A108 is a Buddhist, just a Buddhist whose views of reality are not consistent with Buddhism. This does not mean I would ever deny these people access to as much of the teachings as they can stomach -- it also does not mean that I am willing to cut them slack when they start advocating changing the teachings to suit whatever biases and preconceptions about reality that they hold.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, June 18th, 2014 at 7:36 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

tobes said:

That's simply the argument given across 81 pages: that every scholar and most western practitioners uncritically accept the hegemonic view that the Mahayana sutras were later developments. In other words, when anyone reads sutras, they read them in that way.

Malcom's argument is that we need to overturn this hegemony.

The fact that there is a hegemony to be overturned clearly implies that we ought not take things at face value; we ought to find some other (more traditional) way of engaging.

Malcolm wrote:

Tobes, quit playing with words.

Otherwise, you are quite right, there is a lens through which every one introduced to Buddhism in the West reads Buddhism and that lens was originally polished in the late 19th century.

That lens consists primarily of the assumption that writing was unknown in India at the time of the Buddha and that all references to writing are proofs of post-Hellenic developments.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, June 18th, 2014 at 8:20 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

How's this for a dilemma: If we accept the veracity of all Mahayana Sutra without applying (modernist text) critical analysis then what happens in the case of Sutra who's content contravenes some of the four seals. Sutras that preach Atman theory, for example. I give this example, as the question occurred to me during a discussion I was having in another thread.

- THIS IS NOT AN INVITATION TO START (yet another) DISCUSSION ON SELF vs NON-SELF (again) -

Malcolm wrote:

I have pointed out before that the four seals are not an adequate test for determining Buddhist vs. non-Buddhist for the simple reason that Pudgalavadins are clearly Buddhists who advocate a doctrine of self (the inexpressible person who is neither the same as nor different from the aggregates).

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, June 18th, 2014 at 8:30 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Dan74 said:

As for Western Zen, my teacher was very traditionally trained in Korea, and even there, lineage is not very important. Lineage, as we know, is not a guarantee.

Malcolm wrote:

That just illustrates an important difference between Zen and Vajrayāna — in Vajrayāna, lineage is everything.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, June 18th, 2014 at 8:37 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Shamati said:

on the other hand I dont really understand why a materialist, who have no faith in spiritual existence or realities would want to cling to buddhism?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, this has puzzled me for years too. I have never understood it.

Anders said:

If I had to guess, I'd say it is because you seem not to appreciate that pursuing freedom from suffering could be worthwhile for the sake of the fruits it can offer in this life alone.

Malcolm wrote:

Since the very definition of suffering in Buddhism is predicated on endless birth in samsara, Buddhadharma as a path simply makes no sense absent that understanding.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, June 18th, 2014 at 8:42 PM

Title: Re: Poll on Faith in Sutras

Content:

Jikan said:

I voted "yes" because Buddha isn't limited by time & space.

Malcolm wrote:

Audiences, however, are...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, June 18th, 2014 at 9:04 PM

Title: Re: Hello!

Content:

Ed1980 said:

Keen to completely avoid the NKT. I hope I'm in the right place!

Malcolm wrote:

Indeed you are...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, June 18th, 2014 at 10:26 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Since the very definition of suffering in Buddhism is predicated on endless birth in samsara, Buddhadharma as a path simply makes no sense absent that understanding.

Sherab Dorje said:

Anders said: "for the sake of the fruits it can offer in this life alone." Enlightenment is not the only fruit of Buddhist practice. The "assurances" taught to the Kalamas demonstrate that quite clearly.

Malcolm wrote:

The Buddha did not teach the Kalamas a path -- he taught them the four Brahma Viharas and nothing else — which are common with Hinduism — resulting only in higher birth in samsara.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, June 18th, 2014 at 10:37 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

The Brahma Viharas are a Buddhist practice too, and the assurances were in regards to positive circumstances in this life too arising as a consequence of right ethics.

Malcolm wrote:

You are missing the point — they are not a transcendent practice, they do not transcend samsara, therefore, they do not eradicate suffering.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, June 18th, 2014 at 10:52 PM

Title: Re: Poll on Faith in Sutras

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

No. The Platform Sutra comes to mind here.

Malcolm wrote:

No what?

Are you claiming that Śariputra transcends space and time?

The "Platform sutra" is not really called that. Not in the sense of the Indian usage of the term. The Chinese term "jing" has a broader usage.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, June 18th, 2014 at 11:17 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

The Brahma Viharas are a Buddhist practice too, and the assurances were in regards to positive circumstances in this life too arising as a consequence of right ethics.

Malcolm wrote:

You are missing the point — they are not a transcendent practice, they do not transcend samsara, therefore, they do not eradicate suffering.

daverupa said:

Neither does mere Sila on it's own, nor mere guarding of the sense gates, yet these comprise essential steps along the Gradual Training. You expect far too much, given the context, while ignoring the rather dense Dhamma teaching they did receive, all things considered.

Malcolm wrote:

No, I am merely pointing out that people invest far more in the Kalamas account than is warranted, given its context. People constantly misuse this sutta, a minor text in every respect, lacking importance until it was seized upon in the 20th century as some putative confirmation of Buddhist agnosticism.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, June 18th, 2014 at 11:20 PM

Title: Re: Poll on Faith in Sutras

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

Come on Malcolm, everybody knows Huineng penned the original Platform Sutra. Let's not kid ourselves. Then it developed over a 500 year period.

Malcolm wrote:

The development of the platform sutra is not relevant to the discussion.

It is one thing to have Mahāyāna sutras that transcend time when taught in Akaniṣṭha by the Sambhogakāya to an emanated retinue -- quite another when they feature retinues like Śāriputra (who passed a few months before the Buddha), and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, June 18th, 2014 at 11:46 PM

Title: Re: Poll on Faith in Sutras

Content:

pensum said:

I don't really understand the purpose of your question for, even within the traditional canon, many sutras themselves clearly state that they were not taught by the Buddha but by someone else, for example

Āryasaṃvṛtiparamārthasatyanirdeśanāmamahāyānasūtra in which it is Manjushri who



is specifically requested to give teachings. (It's a very worthwhile read by the way, and is available at <http://read.84000.co/#!ReadingRoom/UT22084-060-008/12> )

Malcolm wrote:

This is an example of the Buddha teaching through granting permission.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, June 19th, 2014 at 12:11 AM

Title: Re: Poll on Faith in Sutras

Content:

pensum said:

I don't really understand the purpose of your question for, even within the traditional canon, many sutras themselves clearly state that they were not taught by the Buddha but by someone else, for example

Āryasaṃvṛtiparamārthasatyanirdeśanāmamahāyānasūtra in which it is Manjushri who is specifically requested to give teachings. (It's a very worthwhile read by the way, and is available at <http://read.84000.co/#!ReadingRoom/UT22084-060-008/12> )

Will said:

We also read that "through the blessing or empowerment of Buddha" such & such bodhisattva spoke. Thus "in some manner or form."

pensum said:

But this is why i picked that specific sutra for in it the retinue specifically requests the Buddha to call Manjushri so that they might see him. Buddha does nothing more than call Manjushri to join them, and refuses to ask or command Manjushri to teach. And then they ask to hear him not recount the teachings of Shakyamuni but rather those of Ratnaketu: Then the divine son Lord of Peace and Calm bowed to the Blessed One and said, with joined palms, "Blessed One, all of us would like to listen, so please ask Mañjuśrī Kumārabhūta to teach."

The Blessed One replied, "Divine son, you yourself should make that request."

So the divine son said, "Mañjuśrī, it would be wonderful if you could give us a Dharma teaching similar to what is taught in the buddha realm of the blessed one, the Thus-Gone Ratnaketu."

And as pointed out above other sutras were composed or transcribed by others such as Huineng. So i, and it would appear others as well, find the wording of your poll question to be too vague.

Malcolm wrote:

The teaching of one buddha is the teaching of all.

The platform sutra is misnamed.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, June 19th, 2014 at 1:21 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

The point being that there are tangible fruits, here and now, from Buddhist practices, even if one does not subscribe to a right view (ie if one is an essentialist or a nihilist). MBT is a perfect example of the advantages of Buddhist practices, even without a Buddhist view.

Malcolm wrote:

The loving kindness and compassion are not buddhist practices per se. Neither is moral discipline. This is saying nothing more than if you are a nice, ethical person, your life will be better. Laudatory, but not Buddhist per se.

My objection is that people are constantly putting this forward as evidence of tangible fruits of Buddhist practice when they are not even Buddhist practices at all per se, and do not, in any way whatsoever address the issue of suffering.

I don't know what "MBT" is.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, June 19th, 2014 at 1:25 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Anders said:

"I suffer [in this life]. Buddhism teaches a way to not suffer [in this life]. It also seems to be the best path for this. Therefore I practise Buddhism." Not hard at all. Nor even untrue.

Malcolm wrote:

Buddhism does not teach a way not to suffer in this life. Where did you ever read this? Buddhism teaches us that we are suffering, why, that there can be an end, and how to arrive at that end. But there is no guarantee in Buddhism that if you practice Dharma you will "suffer less in this life" -- especially considering the three kinds of suffering.

Whatever suffering you experience is the ripening of past actions not even the buddha's can prevent. The goal of Buddhist practice is to awaken and end the cycle of birth in samsara.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, June 19th, 2014 at 1:29 AM

Title: Re: Poll on Faith in Sutras

Content:

pensum said:

I did vote no Will. And as i just mentioned in my previous comment, you wrote "by Buddha" which by convention refers specifically to Shakyamuni, not to other buddhas.

Malcolm wrote:

But in fact they are Śākyamuni Buddha's teaching. Why? Because those teachings appear through Śākyamuni Buddha's permission and blessing, just as for example, in the Prajñāpāramitahridaya, when Ārya Avalokiteśvara explains things to Śāriputra.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, June 19th, 2014 at 5:25 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Buddhism does not teach a way not to suffer in this life. Where did you ever read this? Buddhism teaches us that we are suffering, why, that there can be an end, and how to arrive at that end. But there is no guarantee in Buddhism that if you practice Dharma you will "suffer less in this life" -- especially considering the three kinds of suffering.

Sherab Dorje said:

There is if you reach enlightenment in this lifetime, that's what the whole Vajrayana deal is about, ain't it?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, of course if you become a buddha or an arhat in this life, you will cease suffer. Apart from that, no, you will not cease to suffer. Instread

When I say that "Buddhism does not teach a way not to suffer in this life" what I mean is that Buddhism does not provide any means of eradicating suffering apart from full buddhahood. Certainly even bodhisattvas on the paths and stages still experience suffering since, they possess the twin obscurations on the lower bhumis. Granted, Bodhisattvas on the pure stages do not experience suffering, but then they have conquered death.

So, exactly in what way does Buddhadharma teach a way not to suffer in this life short of attaining some āryan realization?

I mean, of course, we all understand that suppression of afflictions through śīla and samadhi will prevent us from engaging in actions that will result in suffering, but what about the suffering we are presently experiencing?

I am all ears if anyone has any real suggestions.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, June 19th, 2014 at 5:28 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Andrew108 said:

Lets repeat again what buddhism is about. It is about identifying craving and clinging and then having that craving and clinging dry up...

Malcolm wrote:

This might prevent the arising of future suffering in a future time, but will not put an end to suffering in this here and now.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, June 19th, 2014 at 5:30 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

The point being that there are tangible fruits, here and now, from Buddhist practices, even if one does not subscribe to a right view (ie if one is an essentialist or a nihilist). MBT is a perfect example of the advantages of Buddhist practices, even without a Buddhist view.

Malcolm wrote:

The loving kindness and compassion are not buddhist practices per se. Neither is moral discipline. This is saying nothing more than if you are a nice, ethical person, your life will better. Laudatory, but not Buddhist per se.

Anders said:

So what? That Buddhism shares these factors of goodness with other religions doesn't make them any less Buddhist or any less worthwhile. They are what the Buddha taught - That makes them straight up 'Buddhism per se'.

Malcolm wrote:

Sorry, but the four brahmaviharas are not a liberative path — that is why the Buddha called them, as well as the practice of the ten virtues, "the vehicle of humans and devas" since they only lead to higher rebirth and not out of samsara.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, June 19th, 2014 at 7:24 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Sorry, but the four brahmaviharas are not a liberative path — that is why the Buddha called them, as well as the practice of the ten virtues, "the vehicle of humans and devas" since they only lead to higher rebirth and not out of samsara.

Mkoll said:

By themselves, you are correct, they are not sufficient for liberation. But, along with the rest of the Eightfold Path, loving-kindness can be used as a basis, a meditation object if you will, for the attainment of non-returner in the Theravada tradition. Please see the <http://www.accesstoinsight.org/tipitaka/kn/snp/snp.1.08.than.html> for the evidence of this.

Malcolm wrote:

I do not see this as saying that metta leads to the path of a non-returner, but rather, it is contrasting a mundane path with a transmundane path.

Buddha does this frequently.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, June 19th, 2014 at 7:31 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

uan said:

Therein lies the value of practicing Buddhism, even if it's incomplete. We talk like we all believe in rebirth but really? Do we really? For the vast majority of Buddhists, it will take incalculable lifetimes to reach Buddhahood. Yet we act as if people don't get it quite right in this lifetime, it's a bust, a complete waste of time.

Malcolm wrote:

The whole point of what I am saying is that one should not expect to gain any definitive result in this lifetime. I am saying that one should practice for the next life, always.

uan said:

You mentioned you don't understand how a person can be attracted to Buddhism without believing in rebirth.

Malcolm wrote:

No, I definitely did not say that. What I said was:

Shamati said:

on the other hand I dont really understand why a materialist, who have no faith in spiritual existence or realities would want to cling to buddhism?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, this has puzzled me for years too. I have never understood it.

I was not talking about someone new, but rather, someone who decides in the end that they do not accept the Buddha's teachings on karma and rebirth for whatever reason, and yet persist in identifying themselves as Buddhists and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, June 19th, 2014 at 7:35 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Lazy\_eye said:

It seems to me that if we are going to define dharma as "strictly that which the Buddha alone taught, and which is not found in any other religion," then we would have to say the only real dharmic teachings are not-self and dependent origination.

That would also mean that karma is not a Buddhist teaching, as it is found in other sramana movements that preceded the Buddha.

Malcolm wrote:

There is Dharma, then there is Buddhadharma. Buddhadharma is superior to other Dharmas (so we believe) because it liberates from samsara. But Buddhism, a Dharma religion, shares common features with other Dharma religions as well. Other Dharmas also assert that rebirth occurs because of karma and klesha and so on, and that liberation too comes about from the eradication of karma and kleshas.

It is important to understand the difference between mundane Dharma and Buddhadharma.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, June 19th, 2014 at 7:03 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Mkoll said:

Thank you for doing the work, xabir. And better than I would have, I might add.

As you can see, Malcolm, loving-kindness can be used as a basis (along with the rest of the Path <--- this should go without saying) for not only non-returning, but arahantship as well.

Malcolm wrote:

You are not really understanding what the Buddha is saying here.

Dhyāna is not a path out of samsara by itself (this is one of the Agamic Buddha's discoveries), but it can be used as a support for the path.

Loving kindness is not a path, but can be used as a support for the path.

Śīla is not a path, but can be used as a support.

Where did I ever suggest otherwise?

What I said was that the four brahma-viharas are not paths, and the Kalamas sutta does not teach a path out of samsara.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, June 19th, 2014 at 7:04 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Andrew108 said:

Buddha's teachings are not complete.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, actually they are.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, June 19th, 2014 at 7:52 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Andrew108 said:

Buddha's teachings are not complete.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, actually they are.

Andrew108 said:

They are not complete because we have to work through them. Work them out. If we say they are complete then all we need to do is believe them and we will get the results. In this case Buddhism dies. Never gets into the heart. Becomes ornamental.

Malcolm wrote:

Ok Humpy Dumpty.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, June 19th, 2014 at 8:24 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

I mean, of course, we all understand that suppression of afflictions through śīla and samadhi will prevent us from engaging in actions that will result in suffering, but what about the suffering we are presently experiencing?

I am all ears if anyone has any real suggestions.

oushi said:

Seeing emptiness of the past, the present, and the future eradicates suffering from the present moment.

I am quite disappointing. Seriously you didn't know about that?

Malcolm wrote:

That requires the realization of the first bhumi — and then only when one is established in āryan equipoise. Otherwise, one suffers just like everyone else, the difference being that one knows that it is fundamentally like a dream.

We on the other hand react to suffering as if it is quite real, since we are under the grip of the deep-seated delusion of self-grasping — at least I am, I do not know about the rest of you.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, June 19th, 2014 at 8:53 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Ok Humpy Dumpty.

Andrew108 said:

It's an important point. Although may be you don't see it. If Buddhism sets itself up in opposition to Science then it will die. Science is not completely formulated - it's an ongoing field of knowledge. This is how Buddhism needs to be. It needs to work itself out in people's experience. It needs to continue to offer relevant ways to view and overcome suffering.

Malcolm wrote:

Buddhadharma is complete. As a product of the Buddha's wisdom, it offers a complete path of freedom and omniscience. Buddhadharma is not a result of experimentation and revision with new data.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, June 19th, 2014 at 9:12 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Andrew108 said:

Buddhist wisdom is existential. I don't consider it contains wisdom at a metaphysical level. It's not a doctrine that brings benefit just by itself as a 'complete thing' just by



itself.

Malcolm wrote:

Not sure what you mean by "existential" or "metaphysical".

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, June 19th, 2014 at 11:19 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

uan said:

Those "materialists" are actual human beings, and those human beings do have Buddha Nature at their core.

Malcolm wrote:

What exactly do you think Buddhanature is?

uan said:

If Buddhadharma is the ultimate dharma, and if a person is ultimately a Buddha at their essence beneath all the layers of obscurations, then it's quite easy to see how any one person can cling, even at a subconscious level, to Buddhism. It's not too difficult to find similar examples in other areas of people having major inconsistencies in their lives. As Emerson said "A foolish consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds, adored by little statesmen and philosophers and divines."

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, I am willing to allow that of course the "instinct" to awaken comes from our inherent buddhadhātu -- that is a sensible explanation.

I was not talking about someone new, but rather, someone who decides in the end that they do not accept the Buddha's teachings on karma and rebirth for whatever reason, and yet persist in identifying themselves as Buddhists and so on.

Aren't they new to Buddhism though? We talk about incalculable eons, impermanence, rebirth, etc, and yet 20, 30, 50 years makes something not new? Isn't that a "materialist" view?

Well, it really depends on which relative scale you would like to apply. From that point of view, such people's rejection of the core truths of Dharma arise from traces that are countless eons in the making. Such a sad waste of precious human birth.

Isn't it possible, within the Buddhist schema, to live 100s of lifetimes and still be "new" to Buddhism, even if you were a Buddhist in all those lifetimes, or at least had heard of Buddhism? I don't ask this as a rhetorical question, I'm genuinely curious.

As I said, it really depends on the scale we are discussing.

It's really no big deal that they do this. I mean, which is the bigger deal, that they do this, or that others need to go on about how wrong they are to continue self-identifying as

Christians?

I didn't say it was "wrong", I said I didn't really understand why someone (in this case a convert to Dharma) would bother maintaining an identity as Buddhist, having rejected Buddha's core teachings.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, June 20th, 2014 at 3:37 AM

Title: Re: Dorje Drollo and Simhamukha

Content:

alpha said:

How would one know that the obstacles one faces are in fact due to the eight classes ?

Malcolm wrote:

Well, concretely it is difficult to know without some kind of divination or calculation.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, June 20th, 2014 at 3:38 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Andrew108 said:

There are many Buddhists who view literal rebirth as speculative. Consider the following quote from Ajahn Sumedho:

Malcolm wrote:

Then they have not understood the Buddha's teachings completely, including Ajahn Sumedho.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, June 20th, 2014 at 4:07 AM

Title: Re: Dorje Drollo and Simhamukha

Content:

alpha said:

How would one know that the obstacles one faces are in fact due to the eight classes ?

Vajrasvapna said:

Some signs are negative dreams, feelings of being persecuted or of a negative presence, fatigue and lack of energy. If the main obstacles that you experience are women, then it is likely that there is a predominance of female spirits; otherwise, a predominance of

male spirits.

Malcolm wrote:

These things are not certain. If you want to \_know\_ for certain, then mo or calculation is the surest bet. Otherwise, you can become very paranoid and fearful, seeing ghosts under the bed everywhere.

In Tibetan Medicine and astrology, we deal with provocations all the time. In fact, when we are diagnosing an illness, we only suspect provocations when a treatment that ought to respond to a treatment is not responding at all.

Diagnosing provocations is a very specialized part of both Tibetan medicine — it can be done through pulse and through urine.

I know many practitioners who assume every problem is a problem with spirits -- this is really sad.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, June 20th, 2014 at 5:13 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Andrew108 said:

There are many Buddhists who view literal rebirth as speculative. Consider the following quote from Ajahn Sumedho:

Malcolm wrote:

Then they have not understood the Buddha's teachings completely, including Ajahn Sumedho.

anjali said:

For most of us, literal rebirth probably is speculative, if we take "speculative" to mean "based on conjecture rather than [direct] knowledge." Nevertheless, I do believe in literal rebirth because some masters I have great faith in have said it's true based on their personal experience.

Also, I don't think people have really come to terms with what it is that is "reborn." Unless practitioners can come to some understanding of the nature of the knowing quality of the mind, the notion of rebirth will always be problematic.

Just tossin' in my 2 cents to this "energizer bunny" thread.

Malcolm wrote:

There are three forms of valid knowledge in Buddhadharma — direct perception,

inference and testimony.

For us, rebirth is one of the latter two.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, June 20th, 2014 at 8:31 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Mkoll said:

Sheesh, you give a new definition to "shadow-boxing": creating shadows to fight with.

Malcolm wrote:

On the contrary, several people here, including you, have claimed that Brahma-viharas can result in liberation.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, June 20th, 2014 at 8:33 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Simon E. said:

Suffering can and should be alleviated by medicine and therapies

Malcolm wrote:

From the point of view of Dharma, as long as we are operating under the influence of the afflictions, whether we think we are happy or not, healthy or not, we are suffering.

I think everyone can agree to this as a basic definition.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, June 20th, 2014 at 8:41 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Andrew108 said:

Literal rebirth is speculative. You have said that it is essential.

Malcolm wrote:

No, I have not implied that anywhere.

Andrew108 said:

But again and again you are saying that I have no right to call myself a Buddhist.

Obviously I find that difficult to accept. I guess that is why this discussion continues.

Perhaps it's time to agree to disagree.

Malcolm wrote:

I never said you have no right to call yourself a Buddhist. I said that your views about this and that are not grounded in Buddhadharma.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, June 20th, 2014 at 8:53 PM

Title: Re: Is there anyone home?

Content:

Andrew108 said:

So you can see how this 'flow' is 'atman-like ' without being ' atman '.

Malcolm wrote:

More importantly, you can see how this flow can be mistaken for an atman without an atman being present.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, June 20th, 2014 at 9:10 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Shamati said:

Westerners have a problem with submission. It contradicts the egalitarian foundation of the modern democratic ideal and I think this is a very large part of culture and discourse in Europe and USA.

shel said:

Hello Shamati,

This is interesting but it's not clear exactly what you are suggesting. Are you for instance suggesting that within religious hierarchies all people are NOT equal and DO NOT deserve equal rights and opportunities?

Malcolm wrote:

I am pretty sure they mean that we have a problem with the idea that someone else might know better than ourselves...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, June 20th, 2014 at 9:11 PM

Title: Re: Is there anyone home?

Content:

Andrew108 said:

So you can see how this 'flow' is 'atman-like ' without being ' atman '.

Malcolm wrote:

More importantly, you can see how this flow can be mistaken for an atman without an atman being present.

Andrew108 said:

Yes that is true. But there is only a hair width of difference. Like a chain being mistaken for a rope or thread.

Malcolm wrote:

This is why it is so easy to make the mistake.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, June 20th, 2014 at 9:27 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Andrew108 said:

Sorry I thought your position was that belief in rebirth is essential?

Malcolm wrote:

You misunderstood. Literal birth is not speculative.

I never said you have no right to call yourself a Buddhist. I said that your views about this and that are not grounded in Buddhadharma.

Are you sure about that? Isn't that what sparked the thread with Dharmagoat?

Quite sure.

Now about my views not being grounded in Buddhadharma - definitely some of my views are my own. That's normal right? But I do think that you can provide a logical argument against literal rebirth that is in some way grounded in Buddhadharma.

You can negate rebirth ultimately, but not conventionally. Then again, you can negate everything ultimately — suffering, the origin, cessation, the path and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, June 20th, 2014 at 9:41 PM

Title: Re: Is there anyone home?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

This is why it is so easy to make the mistake.

Sherab Dorje said:

And why it should be avoided like the plague.

Malcolm wrote:

Unfortunately, it is a deeply grounded blindness that has affected us from beginningless time until now. And even now, even though we may not intellectually believe that we have

a self we operate as if we have one because we still have the knowledge obscuration. Even Arhats do not completely realize selflessness, they realize only the selflessness of persons.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, June 20th, 2014 at 10:00 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Andrew108 said:

You can negate literal rebirth both conventionally and ultimately. When I say literal rebirth I am talking about an individual's disembodied consciousness both experiencing the bardo, and their individual karmic imprints during the bardo, and then descending into the womb during conception. This is reasonably easy to negate both conventionally and ultimately.

Malcolm wrote:

What do you mean by "an individual's disembodied consciousness"? If you mean Sati's heresy, i.e, that an integral unit of consciousness takes rebirth, then yes, that it just a atman theory. If you mean however that after this life, based on on karma and afflictions, there is an appropriation of a new set of aggregates, well, this cannot be rejected without rejecting the whole of the Buddhas teachings.

Andrew108 said:

Then you haven't explained how you can hold to some practices, such as sexual practices and drinking alcohol, that seem to directly contradict Buddha's teachings and still say with a straight face that your view of these practices is rooted in Buddhadharma.

Malcolm wrote:

They are also the Buddha's teachings.

Andrew108 said:

What if this denial of literal rebirth has the same function?

Malcolm wrote:

You are not the Buddha, and you are not teaching tantras. There is no such "denial of literal rebirth" in any Buddhist tradition.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, June 20th, 2014 at 10:41 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

shel said:

No, he's talking about submission, not merely deferring to an authority. Many Westerners defer to you as some sort (I don't know much about you) of authority, for example. Clearly deferring to an authority is not a problem in the West.

Malcolm wrote:

You will have to ask Shamati what he or she means by submission.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, June 21st, 2014 at 12:10 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Lazy\_eye said:

So jettisoning rebirth, it seems to me, necessarily forces a reinterpretation of the goals of Buddhism, to the point that it's hard to see how it can be called Buddhism any more.

Malcolm wrote:

Indeed.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, June 21st, 2014 at 4:46 AM

Title: Re: Is there anyone home?

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

Anyway, I'm just trying to point out that scholars have different opinions on this issue.

Malcolm wrote:

Right, just like different scientists have different opinions about climate change.

But we know what the majority think, and have thought since the time of the Buddha.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, June 21st, 2014 at 5:31 AM

Title: Re: Poll on Faith in Sutras

Content:

pensum said:

I did vote no Will. And as i just mentioned in my previous comment, you wrote "by Buddha" which by convention refers specifically to Shakyamuni, not to other buddhas.



Malcolm wrote:

But in fact they are Śākyamuni Buddha's teaching. Why? Because those teachings appear through Śākyamuni Buddha's permission and blessing, just as for example, in the Prajñāpāramitahridaya, when Ārya Avalokiteśvara explains things to Śāriputra.

pensum said:

Be careful for you are on a slippery slope there my friend. For that still only refers to those sutras describing situations in which Sakyamuni was present or gave explicit permission or blessings. So one still must be precise as to which sutras are being referred to. But more importantly if you get too loose in regards to interpreting "Śākyamuni Buddha's permission and blessings" then your entire argument on that other 80+ page thread is nullified, as any lineage holder could be said to have such permission and blessings; in which case it would make no difference whether they were accurate transcripts of teachings actually spoken or attended by Shakyamuni or simply composed by another person long after the fact.

Malcolm wrote:

No, it's not a slippery slope at all.

A lineage holder does not have the same authority, for example, as a Vimalakirti, and so on.

These different types of teachings as Buddhavacana are well established. For example, we have suttas in the Pali canon taught by Śāriputra or Dhammadinna, wholly on Buddha's permission.

Of course, we are merely talking about \_sutras\_, of which there are a finite number. When it comes to tantras, well, that is a whole 'nother game.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, June 21st, 2014 at 8:31 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Mkoll said:

I claimed that loving-kindness in conjunction with the rest of the Path can result in liberation. You missed the caveat that I clearly made. Here's your post and my response that started this whole conversation. And here, I'll make the caveat even more clear for you this time so that, hopefully, you won't miss it again.

Malcolm wrote:

Then why pose agreement as an objection?

It's not loving kindness and the rest of the path. Loving kindness is not the path [out of samsara]. The Yoga Sūtras, for example, have a beautiful presentation of the four brahma-viharas. The Yoga Sutras however, do not present a Buddhist path in any sense.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, June 21st, 2014 at 8:41 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Andrew108 said:

Sorry I thought your position was that belief in rebirth is essential?

Malcolm wrote:

You misunderstood. Literal birth is not speculative.

Anders said:

Surely that depends on the person?

Barring direct knowledge, how can literal rebirth not be a matter of speculation?

Malcolm wrote:

I already answered this question. To recap — only materialists insist that the only valid perception is a direct perception. They negate inference and testimony as sources of pramāṇa, valid perception.

However, rebirth can be inferred, it is also described in detail in many hundreds of sutras, not to mention directly perceived by those with sufficient yogic facility.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, June 21st, 2014 at 8:56 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Anders said:

I think you lay too much at the feet of materialists here. There are many non-materialists who would disagree with this assertion.

Either way, whether it is speculative, Pramana, or whether Pramana can be speculative, I think is perhaps too off-topic for this.

Malcolm wrote:

Rebirth can only be speculative for you if you do not accept inference and testimony as valid forms of perception. So for you, it is speculative. For me, it is not.

This also leads the negative consequence that for you, liberation is also speculative.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, June 21st, 2014 at 9:35 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

ovi said:

Consciousness came into existence through form, guided by evolution, this is where the ignorance came from.

Malcolm wrote:

This is faulty for two reasons: one, the first statement is not consistent with Dharma, and rejected by Buddhadharma. This is the very kind of materialism that Buddha rejects.

The second statement "guided by evolution" is a fallacy. Evolution does not guide anything.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, June 21st, 2014 at 9:44 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

I already answered this question. To recap — only materialists insist that the only valid perception is a direct perception. They negate inference and testimony as sources of pramāṇa, valid perception.

However, rebirth can be inferred, it is also described in detail in many hundreds of sutras, not to mention directly perceived by those with sufficient yogic facility.

Andrew108 said:

Where did you get the idea that materialists only accept direct perception? Inference and trusted testimony are incredibly important for so-called materialists. It's just that inference needs to be backed up with evidence or eventually be testable. Scientific enquiry thrives on inference.

Malcolm wrote:

The rejection of inference and testimony has a rich history in materialism, starting with the Carvakas.

We are at the same place today, since the special instrumentality of yogically sharpened senses are not falsifiable according to empirical standards of ordinary perception. Therefore, all the wisdom and knowledge of our tradition is just so much superstition according to modern science.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, June 21st, 2014 at 10:08 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Andrew108 said:

It's not seen just as a superstition. It's seen as being speculative. There is a big difference.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, and this is a symptom of the materialist world view.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, June 21st, 2014 at 10:11 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The second statement "guided by evolution" is a fallacy. Evolution does not guide anything.

ovi said:

OK, you're right, guided by natural selection. Feeling better now?

Malcolm wrote:

Natural selection does not select.

My fundamental point however is that your belief that consciousness evolves from matter is not consistent with what the Buddha taught.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, June 22nd, 2014 at 12:30 AM

Title: Sutra Tantra Poll Redux

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Another angle.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, June 22nd, 2014 at 5:16 AM

Title: Re: Looking for a good translation of 21 Praises to Tara

Content:

Dharmaswede said:

There are quite a few out there, and I would be most grateful if members would like to share their favorite versions.

Thank you.

Best Regards,

Jens

Malcolm wrote:

Well, there is always mine...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, June 22nd, 2014 at 9:44 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

tobes said:

I think you're muscling Anders into a position he doesn't hold - where has he said that he rejects anumāna?

Clearly there are inferences to be made in either direction; his point seems to be that 'knowing' on this matter hinges on śhabda, and if one is not enlightened, it is 'speculative' in the sense that we have to take on trust or faith that the person who makes the claim is in fact enlightened.

Malcolm wrote:

However, Dharmakīrti has already shown us the way by which we may take Buddha as an authority on this and other matters without recourse to scriptures based on the fact that Buddha's awakening is a provable proposition. And if we can accept Buddha as an authority on this and other matters, it means that śabda is not speculative.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, June 22nd, 2014 at 9:45 PM

Title: Re: Sutra Tantra Poll Redux

Content:

Alfredo said:

I'm not sure how to answer the poll. Some portions of the Nikayas.

Malcolm wrote:

None of the above then.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, June 22nd, 2014 at 10:40 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Anders said:

I don't know what you lay into the word 'speculative'...

Speculative:

1 engaged in, expressing, or based on conjecture rather than knowledge: discussion of the question is largely speculative.

Malcolm wrote:

Speculation is not a valid form of knowledge. However, direct perception, inference, and testimony are.

So that is the reason you seek. That is the why I reject the contention that rebirth is "speculative" since it can directly perceived, inferred, and known through Buddha's testimony.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, June 22nd, 2014 at 10:51 PM

Title: Re: Sutra Tantra Poll Redux

Content:

Alfredo said:

I'm not sure how to answer the poll. Some portions of the Nikayas.

Malcolm wrote:

None of the above then.

daverupa said:

Hmm.

Malcolm wrote:

The point of poll is to find out what a broad sweep of people think.

So, it seems only natural that one who only accepts a portion of the Nikayas/Agamas should answer none of the above, because there really isn't space to have a super nuanced poll.

I already excluded Abhidhamma, Vinaya, Jatakas, etc., since these are already widely regarded as extra-canonical by various traditions.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, June 22nd, 2014 at 11:02 PM

Title: Re: Krishnamurti and Dzogchen.....HmMMM

Content:

Wayfarer said:

Which tradition did Krishnamurti explore in full?

Andrew108 said:

The various streams of thought within Theosophy. That was the tradition he grew up with.

Malcolm wrote:

Theosophy is a "tradition" now, is it? [Rather than a hodgepodge of 19th century silliness and cultural misappropriation]

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 23rd, 2014 at 5:53 PM

Title: Re: Sutra Tantra Poll Redux

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

bump

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 23rd, 2014 at 6:31 PM

Title: Re: All Truth Claims Cannot be True

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

He writes:

Western universalism first achieved full-blown expression in the Romantic movement which swept Europe in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. There are four key moments, each of which directly involves India and her dharmic traditions: 1) the 'discovery' of the Orient as a spiritual and cultural, as well as material, resource; 2) the use of Sanskrit to bolster Western racial identities, especially German ones; 3) the development of a narrative of history as the unfolding of a 'universal' World Spirit manifesting exclusively in the European and American nations as opposed to Asian ones (a narrative promulgated largely by one man: Hegel); and 4) the export of this narrative back to India, with the effect that Indians came to feel a profound need to reinterpret their own past in the light of the now overwhelmingly powerful Western 'universal' myth.

Malhotra, Rajiv (2011-10-10). Being Different: An Indian Challenge to Western Universalism (Kindle Locations 5096-5102). . Kindle Edition.

In Discussion Hegel's theory of history, which underlies both capitalist and communist globalization:

The Spirit is thus explicitly Western. Other cultures are either thrown away in history's dustbin, if they belong in history at all, or forced to emulate the West. Otherwise, they are trampled. World history and philosophy are seen as one single development, and the World Spirit is a single progressive movement in a linear trajectory.

His books are well worth reading, provocative.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 23rd, 2014 at 6:38 PM

Title: Re: Sutra Tantra Poll Redux

Content:

JKhedrup said:

The results are a little surprising in that they reveal a "quiet majority" of posters on the board.

Malcolm wrote:

After Will's attempt at a similar poll, I noted that a number of people objected that they they could not select which canon they found valid.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 23rd, 2014 at 7:00 PM

Title: Re: Sutra Tantra Poll Redux

Content:

daverupa said:

It's a matter of phrasing questions to include/exclude nuance. The way a poll is written says a lot.

Malcolm wrote:

Correct. However, this is not a scientific poll, but just a broad poll to capture a snapshot of where people's allegiances are.

I mean really: do we need to drill down to the level of

Majjihma Nikāya

Samyutta Nikāya

Anguttara Nikāya

Khudakka Nikāya

Digha Nikāya

Perfection of Wisdom sūtras

Tathagatgarbha sūtras

Yogacara sūtras

Miscellaneous sūtra

snying ma tantra

gsar ma tantra

bka' ma

gter ma

etc????

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 23rd, 2014 at 7:46 PM



Title: Re: A closer look into empowerments

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

No, since Shangpa transmissions exist in other schools than Kagyu. Then there is the fact that they all, for the most part, pass through another Nyingmapa, Thangthon Gyalpo.

Don't get me wrong, I am not dissing Shangpa, it is just that gtor ma empowerments do not exist in the New Tantras at all.

narraboth said:

I remember there's a tormo based mother tantra dbang of chod, black tormo, said to be from Padempa Sangye lineage, in collection of sadhana. (for its length it looks like a jin rlab, but I think the name is dbang) Don't know if it has any link to Nyingma tradition.

Malcolm wrote:

The collection of sadhanas contains both gsar ma and rnying ma transmissions, weighted heavily towards the former, however.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 23rd, 2014 at 7:50 PM

Title: Re: Unreality of Thoughts

Content:

Astus said:

What is there to stop one from this realisation?

Malcolm wrote:

Obscuration.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 23rd, 2014 at 8:05 PM

Title: Re: Unreality of Thoughts

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Obscuration.

Astus said:

Is that different from ignorance? If so, how?

Malcolm wrote:

Ignorance is an obscuration. Even tenth stage bodhisattvas have it, though at that point it is very sheer.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 23rd, 2014 at 8:06 PM

Title: Re: Sutra Tantra Poll Redux

Content:

daverupa said:

Surely integrating a bit more subtlety was possible without vague hand-wringing over "confusing".

Malcolm wrote:

In the moment it was conceived, no. It was not possible. And definitely not after it was posted.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 24th, 2014 at 12:31 AM

Title: Re: Krishnamurti and Dzogchen.....HmMMM

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

One shouldn't be too quick to dismiss theosophy and related teachings, in my opinion.

Malcolm wrote:

Have you actually read Isis Unveiled, The Secret Doctrine or Voice of Silence?

HPB was an interesting person, and a lot of interesting people were connected with Theosophy. Quite frankly, however, Theosophy itself is a very strange thing, the original New Age. Most of the present New Age movement has roots in Theosophy.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 24th, 2014 at 12:37 AM

Title: Re: A closer look into empowerments

Content:

narraboth said:

Yes, but that specific ritual claims that the lineage is from Padampa Sangye, and no Nyingma master was mentioned (at least from what I remember).

Malcolm wrote:

Indeed, however, the system of gtor ma empowerments does not exist in the new tantras at all.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 24th, 2014 at 12:56 AM

Title: Re: Krishnamurti and Dzogchen.....HmMMM

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

but honestly I think many people are too eager to just dismiss it, in many cases without even really knowing anything about it.

Malcolm wrote:

Drink deeply then, and be sated:

<http://www.theosociety.org/pasadena/sd/sd-hp.htm> "  
onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 24th, 2014 at 1:51 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

shel said:

Buddhism is not going to change just because some of the ideas don't measure up to your notions of rational.

Everything changes. Isn't that a primary Buddhist tenet? Belief systems, of all kinds, adapt in order to remain relevant or they fade away into the abyss of meaninglessness. Is Buddhism becoming less patriarchal as time goes on, for example? That seems to be a shift that follows cultural trends, and it's a good trend, or at least I think it is. It's probably just the nihilist in me that makes me value equal rights.

Malcolm wrote:

The Buddha expressed his realization in the following manner as recounted in the Lalitavistara-sūtra:

Profound, free from dust, luminous, unconditioned,  
I have attained the deathless Dharma.

The means to realize that have been revealed for different people in different ways depending on their inclinations and capacities (which is why we have three yānas), but the essential meaning the Buddha realized is not subject to change, is eternal and constant. It is hard to explain, which is why the Buddha then added:

Even were I to teach, others will not understand.

I think I will remain silent in the forest

But then, as we know, Great Brahma asked the Buddha to teach because there were some who would understand.

My point is that there is nothing we need to adapt. Buddha realized an eternal truth, not subject to change. As I said, while different epochs and persons may require different means to realize that truth, the fundamental realization of the Buddha is immutable.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 24th, 2014 at 1:53 AM

Title: Re: Sutra Tantra Poll Redux

Content:

deff said:

people could accept Mahayana as a genuine tradition leading to realization without attributing its texts to the historical Buddha

Malcolm wrote:

Right, but that is not the aim of the question.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 24th, 2014 at 1:54 AM

Title: Re: Krishnamurti and Dzogchen.....Hmmmm

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

Everyone has to make choices about what they want to spend their time on, but it doesn't take any time at all to keep an open mind.

Malcolm wrote:

Maintaining an open mind does not mean giving quackery like HPB's a break.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 24th, 2014 at 2:26 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

shel said:

In a word, the Buddha realized emptiness, right?

In any case, I think pretty much all religious traditions hold immutable truths, which are beyond human conception. In Christianity, for instance, God's mind is reported to be beyond our comprehension, if I'm not mistaken.

Malcolm wrote:

The Buddha did not say it was beyond human comprehension, otherwise he never would have realized it, no?

What I pointing out is that Dharma is not some evolving set of meanings which adapt culture to culture, period to period, and so on. Dharma is not grounded in conditioned entities, it is grounded in the Buddha's realization of reality.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 24th, 2014 at 2:30 AM

Title: Re: Krishnamurti and Dzogchen.....Hmmmm

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Maintaining an open mind does not mean giving quackery like HPB's a break.

Karma Dorje said:

I think HPB's point in Isis Unveiled that the scientific world view was looking to supplant the infallibility of the Church is well taken. Whatever one's take on the perennial philosophy is or her fanciful accounts of mediumship, that book was certainly a touchstone for esotericism in the time it was written. Much of it is actually a pretty fun read. It opened doors to a lot of people who were looking for something outside the established norms of the day.

And after all, some of our most enduring and transformative literature is fiction.

Malcolm wrote:

Sure, it is fun, if completely impenetrable by anyone without a degree in comparative religion. If you can't bedazzle them with your brilliance as the saying goes...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 24th, 2014 at 2:34 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

shel said:

In a word, the Buddha realized emptiness, right?

In any case, I think pretty much all religious traditions hold immutable truths, which are beyond human conception. In Christianity, for instance, God's mind is reported to be beyond our comprehension, if I'm not mistaken.

Malcolm wrote:

The Buddha did not say it was beyond human comprehension, otherwise he never would have realized it, no?

shel said:

Buddha then added:

Even were I to teach, others will not understand.

???

Malcolm wrote:

But he did indeed decide to teach when Great Brahma pointed out that there were some who would understand, and so he taught, that is the point of the story.

Again, the point is that Dharma is not some evolving set of meanings. Dharma springs from the realization of the Buddha.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 24th, 2014 at 2:46 AM

Title: Re: Sutra Tantra Poll Redux

Content:

ReasonAndRhyme said:

As of now 37 people have participated in the poll, out of 4990 registered users. That is less than 1%. I wonder what people mean when they speak of a "silent majority"?

Malcolm wrote:

If there are 5000 people, that means that 500 read semi regularly and 50 people participate. E-Sangha had 50,000 people at it's height, about 5000 read it semi-regularly, and about 500 people participated in discussions.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 24th, 2014 at 3:31 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

shel said:

The Hindu God of creation Brahma?

Malcolm wrote:

No, not that Brahma.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 24th, 2014 at 3:57 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

shel said:

The Hindu God of creation Brahma?

Malcolm wrote:

No, not that Brahma.

Pero said:

Wow really? Which one then? (actually didn't know there were different Brahmas..)

Malcolm wrote:

The chief the class of gods called Mahābrahmas.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 24th, 2014 at 4:16 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

shel said:

You're saying that the meaning of the story is merely that the Buddha decided to teach after a God talked him into it? Is that always what the story meant?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, considering that the account is consistent across all canons.

shel said:

Looked at critically, it appears from this that the Buddha said things that he did not really mean.

Malcolm wrote:

Well, no, the Buddha did not say this to anyone. He remained silent until Mahābrahma requested that he teach. In this passage, Buddha is merely reporting his thinking at the time, and obviously, had he decided not to teach, we would not be having this conversation.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 24th, 2014 at 4:37 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

shel said:

You're saying that the meaning of the story is merely that the Buddha decided to teach after a God talked him into it? Is that always what the story meant?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, considering that the account is consistent across all canons.

shel said:

Looked at critically, it appears from this that the Buddha said things that he did not really mean.

Malcolm wrote:

Well, no, the Buddha did not say this to anyone. He remained silent until Mahābrahma requested that he teach. In this passage, Buddha is merely reporting his thinking at the time, and obviously, had he decided not to teach, we would not be having this conversation.

shel said:

At that time he uttered these verses: [393]

“Profound, peaceful, stainless, lucid, and unconditioned—

Such is the nectar-like truth I have realized.

Were I to teach it, no one would understand,

...

It appears that more than just meanings change over time.

Malcolm wrote:

Dude, "At that time he uttered those verses" means when he was teaching the sūtra, i.e.:

“Thus listen here, monks, to this vast sūtra,

Taught in times past by all the thus-gone ones

For the welfare of all the worlds.

Listen, one and all, to this great discourse.”

He was summarizing the section he had just taught in prose in verse in what we understand as chapter 25.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 24th, 2014 at 4:51 AM

Title: Re: Krishnamurti and Dzogchen.....HmMMM

Content:

heart said:

I find K extremely dreadful in that film, haven't drunk a drop I promise.

/magnus

Malcolm wrote:

Are you kidding, watching that made me want to get drunk immediately just to get that old geezer's wheezy voice out of my head...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 24th, 2014 at 5:10 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

shel said:

So not only did he think at one time that no one else could understand, despite knowing that he understood, he taught this via prose and verse.

Malcolm wrote:

Could you please rewrite this sentence so it is intelligible?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 24th, 2014 at 5:42 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

shel said:

This does not inspire confidence. He had thoughts and ideas that were clearly false.



Malcolm wrote:

Really, you are sure they are false?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 24th, 2014 at 6:24 AM

Title: Re: Krishnamurti and Dzogchen.....Hmmmm

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

Whatever actually developed out of that should certainly be subject to critical examination, but honestly I think many people are too eager to just dismiss [theosophy], in many cases without even really knowing anything about it.

Wayfarer said:

Seconded. This forum is so dissappointingly parochial at times. ('Who are those funny people with those strange ideas?')

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, it is so disappointing when someone who has actually taken the time to read something gives it a poor rating...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 24th, 2014 at 6:36 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

shel said:

This does not inspire confidence. He had thoughts and ideas that were clearly false.

Malcolm wrote:

Really, you are sure they are false?

shel said:

I'm following your lead here, dude. Okay, so he couldn't teach what he understood. Is that better?

Malcolm wrote:

No, at first, he do not teach what he realized. Then, later he made the attempt. Now we get to argue about what it all means because we have not realized it for ourselves. When we do, there will be no arguments.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 24th, 2014 at 11:50 AM

Title: Re: Krishnamurti and Dzogchen.....Hmmmm

Content:

Wayfarer said:

And I don't dismiss 'entheogens' as a valid path to awakening. They won't keep you there, but they sure provide a glimpse (about which, see <http://www.techgnosis.com/chunkshow-single.php?chunk=chunkfrom-2005-05-23-1747-0.txt>, Erik Davis). And a glimpse is a more than many get.

kirtu said:

This thing is totally ridiculous. Drugs are certainly not a valid path to awaking. They will just enmire you deeper in samsara. And they could really fry your brain too, depending.

Kirt

Son of Buddha said:

The Mahavarocana tantra advocates drug use.

I personally dislike the idea though.

Malcolm wrote:

Why do you think this?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 24th, 2014 at 7:46 PM

Title: Re: Krishnamurti and Dzogchen.....HmMMM

Content:

tobes said:

I'd like to take a more open ended position...

Malcolm wrote:

What's the point? Her writing is total crap.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 24th, 2014 at 7:50 PM

Title: Re: Sutra Tantra Poll Redux

Content:

Sherlock said:

Dzogchen teachings come from Buddhas.

Vajraprajnakhadga said:

Yes, but not from Shakyamuni Buddha or "the Buddha" as the poll puts it.

Malcolm wrote:

I deliberately left that vague. For example, the Dzogchen tradition definitely includes Śakyamuni as one of the 12 buddhas who are connected with Dzogchen transmission,

beginning with Nangwa Dampa who lived in the first minor eon of this great eon.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 24th, 2014 at 7:53 PM

Title: Re: Sutra Tantra Poll Redux

Content:

Vajraprajnakhadga said:

As a Dzogchen practitioner I can only laugh at this poll. The Dharma is all around you. It does not need to come from "the Buddha".

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, actually it does. This is why the Union of the Sun and Moon tantra states without equivocation:

If the history is not explained,  
there will be the fault of lack of confidence  
in this discourse of the definitive secret meaning.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 24th, 2014 at 7:57 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Andrew108 said:

One thing which is absolutely definite is that belief in literal rebirth isn't the first requirement for a Buddhist now and neither was it then. The teachings once practiced may uncover experiences of rebirth or they may not. But you don't have to start from that belief.

Malcolm wrote:

Keep convincing yourself...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 24th, 2014 at 9:19 PM

Title: Re: Sutra Tantra Poll Redux

Content:

Vajraprajnakhadga said:

assuming we clear away the obscurations of dualistic mind

Malcolm wrote:

Assuming...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 24th, 2014 at 9:21 PM

Title: Re: Sutra Tantra Poll Redux

Content:

Sherlock said:

Dzogchen teachings come from Buddhas.

Personally I voted Nikayas/Agamas, Mahayana Sutras.

AFAIK, the tantras largely don't come from the historical Nirmanakaya Shakyamuni, except some "kriya tantra" texts. They come from Sambhogakaya Buddhas and are timeless in a way that the Sutras are not.

Malcolm wrote:

Sutras, while situated in the career of Śakyamuni, are also timeless. For example, the Lalitavistara sutra mentions that it was taught by Buddhas in the past.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 24th, 2014 at 9:28 PM

Title: Re: Music time

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, June 24th, 2014 at 9:48 PM

Title: Re: Krishnamurti and Dzogchen.....HmMMM

Content:

Alfredo said:

as does every Buddhist group that flies the Buddhist flag (created by Col. Olcott).

Malcolm wrote:

Which is of course why I won't fly one.

This is the real Buddhist flag:

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 24th, 2014 at 9:51 PM

Title: Poll to end Polls

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Well should we?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 24th, 2014 at 10:01 PM

Title: Re: Krishnamurti and Dzogchen.....Hmmmm

Content:

Alfredo said:

as does every Buddhist group that flies the Buddhist flag (created by Col. Olcott).

Malcolm wrote:

Which is of course why I won't fly one.

kirtu said:

Oh come on! Practically everyone except for the Japanese and Koreans fly the Olcott created flag. And he ditched the Theosophists anyway.

Kirt

Malcolm wrote:

Sorry, won't do it. One day I had a very interesting conversation with Norbu Rinpoche about this. He basically said to me that the so-called "Buddhist" flag was politics that had nothing do with the Dharma; that if there was a true Buddhist flag is was the victory banner (dhvaja).

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 24th, 2014 at 10:10 PM

Title: Re: Krishnamurti and Dzogchen.....Hmmmm

Content:

kirtu said:

He's right about that...

Malcolm wrote:

Well then...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 24th, 2014 at 10:48 PM

Title: Re: Unreality of Thoughts

Content:

Andrew108 said:

Both truths - relative and ultimate are conventional. Or within the realm of the conventional.

Malcolm wrote:

As conceptual constructs the two truths are relative. There is however a non-conceptual, unconstructed ultimate truth.

Andrew108 said:

It's not difficult to experience an ultimate truth. We are experiencing them all the time.

Malcolm wrote:

No, A108, this is false. The definition of an ultimate truth in Madhyamaka is that it is an object of a truthful cognition. In general, our cognitions are not truthful, that is to say the objects we apprehend are not apprehended with truthful cognitions. Thus, it is completely wrong to say that we are experiencing ultimate truths all the time. Making such claims undermines the path, and causes foolish sentient beings like you and I to imagine that our deluded perceptions are veridical when in fact they are false and merely lead to suffering.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 24th, 2014 at 11:11 PM

Title: Re: Poll to end Polls

Content:

Anders said:

I am missing some options here. Where is neither yes, no, nor maybe? Or neither yes, no, nor maybe nor not neither yes, no, nor maybe?

I don't think this poll is representative. All we've learned from this is the agenda of the OP imo.

Malcolm wrote:

All of those options are built into the poll, it is quite exhaustive...

You see, neither yes, no, nor maybe is covered by not selecting anything.

"neither yes, no, nor maybe nor not neither yes" is covered by voting no.

It just depends on your dialectical fortitude...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, June 24th, 2014 at 11:13 PM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Andrew108 said:

So called secular Buddhism or Buddhist Modernism is a lot about going back to these early Buddhist texts and taking them very seriously. We know quite a lot about which

texts are early or not.

heart said:

Are you saying there are older Buddhist text than the Gandhāran texts or are you just repeating your favorite assumptions?

/magnus

Malcolm wrote:

It just text critical materialism, that's all.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, June 25th, 2014 at 12:08 AM

Title: Re: Unreality of Thoughts

Content:

Andrew108 said:

Both truths - relative and ultimate are conventional. Or within the realm of the conventional.

Malcolm wrote:

As conceptual constructs the two truths are relative. There is however a non-conceptual, unconstructed ultimate truth.

rachmiel said:

Please speak a bit more about this. Thanks.

Malcolm wrote:

There isn't anything really more to say. The non-enumerable ultimate truth is inexpressible, can only be realized, not discussed.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, June 25th, 2014 at 12:15 AM

Title: Re: Krishnamurti and Dzogchen.....HmMMM

Content:

kirtu said:

As it is now, the Olcott design is easily recognizable world wide.

Malcolm wrote:

Who cares?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, June 25th, 2014 at 12:49 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

Lotus\_Bitch said:

If I may so myself sir, this demonstratively portrays a selectively narrow account of the "early Buddhist texts"! Here, the Buddha describes the 10 powers of a Tathagata:

Malcolm wrote:

Oh yes, but this isn't "early"

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, June 25th, 2014 at 6:58 AM

Title: Re: A Physicalist Theory of Mind

Content:

Jayarava said:

The question then is, "What is a dharma?" For early Buddhist texts and through the early and middle Abhidharma period dharmas are events, not entities or substances.

Malcolm wrote:

"Event", "entity", and "substance" are not mutually exclusive terms; i.e. substantial entities are involved in events. This is most certainly the Vaibhāṣika perspective.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, June 25th, 2014 at 7:26 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

shel said:

Not sure if this is within the topic bounds but his students didn't understand, and therefore none of their descendant students understood... so why is lineage so important in Buddhism?

Malcolm wrote:

Obviously, some of Buddha's students did understand since they became arhats and bodhisattvas as a result of his teaching. Not sure what your conceptual block is about this. It seems you just have random shifting objections to whatever anyone says to you, hence the reason why people think you are merely trolling.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, June 25th, 2014 at 7:43 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism



Content:

shel said:

And it seems we are back to the Buddha having a mistaken belief that he couldn't teach successfully.

Malcolm wrote:

If you would like to think that Buddhas have mistaken beliefs, I guess I am not the one to shake you of that notion, as mistaken as it is.

shel said:

Arhats and bodhisattvas are beyond my experience. Are they beyond yours?

Malcolm wrote:

I have met Buddhas and count them as my teachers.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, June 25th, 2014 at 7:44 AM

Title: Re: Contra Buddhist Modernism

Content:

shel said:

I'm not interested in promoting or defending Buddhist traditional beliefs. I assume that's what most can't understand. I try to follow the truth wherever it might lead, because I value truth more than \*meaning\*, or traditional beliefs.

Malcolm wrote:

You are just following delusion. You will not find any truth, much less meaning, with your present methodology. You will just die alone, confused, and afraid. What a waste of a precious human birth.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, June 25th, 2014 at 8:52 PM

Title: Re: Unreality of Thoughts

Content:

rachmiel said:

What I meant was could you speak a bit more about the "non-conceptual, unconstructed ultimate truth" you mentioned in the context of Buddhist teachings.

I understand the ultimate truth of two truths to be simply:

Everything is empty of inherent existence: impermanent, dependent on causes and conditions.

This is something that can be expressed quite clearly.

Malcolm wrote:

That is the enumerated ultimate, i.e., it is conceptual, verbally formulated, a construction.

rachmiel said:

It seems like you're talking about another type of (take on) ultimate truth.

Malcolm wrote:

Ultimate truth is inexpressible, as the Ārya-pitāputrasamāgamana-sūtra states:

Whatever is ultimate, that is inexpressible.

Ārya-sarvabuddhaviṣayāvatārajñānālokālaṃkāra-nāma-mahāyāna-sūtra states:

Mañjuśrī, so-called "emptiness" is an expression for stopping clinging to the non-empty, but, Mañjuśrī, it is said a dharma called "empty" is never perceived in the ultimate, it is a proliferation.

As Śāntideva clearly points out:

The ultimate is not within the experiential sphere of the mind,  
the mind is described as relative.

rachmiel said:

One that's closer to the notion of an ultimate ground, Brahman: beyond thought and mind. Yes? No?

Malcolm wrote:

No, not that.

Please read any good commentary on the Bodhicaryāvatara concerning this verse for more clarification.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, June 25th, 2014 at 8:58 PM

Title: Re: Unreality of Thoughts

Content:

Andrew108 said:

There is nothing wrong with perceptions in and by themselves. As you know it is the grasping and craving that goes along with perceptions that is the problem.

Malcolm wrote:

Perceptions, in and of themselves, are conditioned, afflicted phenomena, unless they are connected with the path dharmas.

Andrew108 said:

What you are doing here is creating an ultimate that no one can get or that is so far away that to even bring it to mind is to create more clinging and more frustration.

Malcolm wrote:

I am reporting the ultimate that is described by the Buddha in many sūtras. I am not creating anything.

Andrew108 said:

I think that is the problem I've found with your approach over the years. You are not giving space or allowance for a natural fact - the fact that things are released in themselves.

Malcolm wrote:

Sure, and yet sentient beings like you and I continue to suffer, take things personally, wander in delusion -- so obviously this "fact that things are released in themselves" is not very useful.

Andrew108 said:

I find the picture you paint of 'the ultimate' to be essentially a personal projection rather than natural invariance.

Malcolm wrote:

Blame the Buddha, it is his Dharma I report, not mine.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, June 25th, 2014 at 9:11 PM

Title: Re: A Physicalist Theory of Mind

Content:

Wayfarer said:

I think that the Buddhist conception of 'substance' is different to the modern one, on the grounds that their idea of momentary dharmas, is that they are moments of experience. They are neither, therefore, 'self-existent', nor really objective, in the way that materialist atomism conceives of them.

Malcolm wrote:

Which Buddhist conception of substance are you talking about? I was referring the Vaibhaṣika concept of dravya.

In any event, Jayarava is clearly wrong when he claims that Buddhism in general does not propose a kind substance dualism. It is implicit in the term nāmarūpa. For example, in the Vibhanga, it is clearly stated that the four mental skandhas are considered nāma, and the material aggregate, rūpa, is considered made up of the substances of the four great elements.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, June 25th, 2014 at 10:06 PM

Title: Re: A Physicalist Theory of Mind

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

For example, in the Vibhanga, it is clearly stated that the four mental skandhas are considered nāma, and the material aggregate, rūpa, is considered made up of the substances of the four great elements.

daverupa said:

Something along different lines can be found:

SN 12.2 said:

And what, bhikkhus, is name-and-form? Feeling, perception, volition, contact, attention: this is called name. The four great elements and the form derived from the four great elements: this is called form. Thus this name and this form are together called name-and-form.

daverupa said:

There's no reason to consider that namarupa needs to encompass the aggregates, especially since sankhara already happened in the dependent origination chain & vinnana isn't part of namarupa, while in addition 'contact' is based on the sense spheres which follow namarupa in the chain.

Namarupa is not mental(ity)-material(ity), and there is no implicit substance dualism in the term.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, there is an implicit substance dualism in the term.

"Feeling, perception, volition, contact, attention: this is called name. The four great elements and the matter derived from the four great elements: this is called matter. "

Nāma covers mental events; rūpa, matter.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, June 25th, 2014 at 10:27 PM

Title: Re: A Physicalist Theory of Mind

Content:

daverupa said:

Form derived from the four great elements can be nonphysical, as I edited, so translating 'rupa' as 'matter' begs the question.

Malcolm wrote:

No, there is nothing non-physical that is derived from the four great elements, hence in this context, "matter" is the correct rendering. Where rūpa means the object of the eye, there "form" is just fine.

Further, the Abhidharmakośaṭīkālakṣaṇānusāriṇī clarifies:

If it is asked what nāma is in the sutras that analyze nāmarūpa, [nāma] is the four

aggregates that are non-material, i.e., vedanaskandha up to vijñānaskandha. If it is asked what rūpa is, anything which is rūpa is all of that which is the four great elements or uses the four elements as a cause.

Further, when we come to Mahāyāna sources, the Āryānandagarbhāvākṛāntinirdeśa states:

Whatever is consciousness, that is called "nāma".

Or the Āryānantamukhapariśodhananirdeśaparivarta-nāma-mahāyāna-sūtra:

All phenomena are described by the conventions name [nāma] and sign [nimitta].

Therein, whatever is a sign, this is the four great elements termed as rūpa. Whatever is nāma, that is the four aggregates designated as ārupa..."

In general, we can understand that nāmarūpa also refers to the moment after conception during gestation, prior to the development of the six sense organs — the period roughly up to the 19th week of gestation. For example, the

Vyaktapadāsuḥṛllekhaṭīkā states:

If it asked what is name and form, after the time of conception in the mother's womb, it the non-material aggregates such as sensation and so on, and the material aggregate of the elements and their products.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, June 26th, 2014 at 9:36 PM

Title: Re: Unreality of Thoughts

Content:

asunthatneversets said:

The ultimate truth is recognizing that the oasis is actually a mirage.

rachmiel said:

"More" ultimate imo: no oasis, no mirage, no ultimate truth. Just ... \_\_\_\_\_  
(pure experience) .

Malcolm wrote:

Experience is not ultimate since it is transient.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, June 26th, 2014 at 10:11 PM

Title: Re: Unreality of Thoughts

Content:

rachmiel said:

Everything is transient.

Malcolm wrote:

Apart from the ultimate, yes.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, June 27th, 2014 at 1:39 AM

Title: Re: Dr. Sanderson: Phowa etc. are directly from Saivism  
Content:

Crazywisdom said:  
They are channels of light. Light channels.

Malcolm wrote:  
CCD was only referring certain channels, not all channels.

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Friday, June 27th, 2014 at 1:51 AM  
Title: Re: Dr. Sanderson: Phowa etc. are directly from Saivism  
Content:

Crazywisdom said:  
They are channels of light. Light channels.

Lotus\_Bitch said:  
This alludes to the elements in their refined form? "Form" as in the elements which comprise the rupa skandha.

Malcolm wrote:  
All the channels form during gestation. If you read the tantras this is very clearly explained. This is why in Kalacakra the periods of gestation are described, as well as the sgra thal 'gyur and so on.

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Friday, June 27th, 2014 at 2:02 AM  
Title: Re: Dr. Sanderson: Phowa etc. are directly from Saivism  
Content:  
Crazywisdom said:  
Dzogchen is like that, symbolized by the ancient alien masters.

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Friday, June 27th, 2014 at 2:10 AM  
Title: Re: Dr. Sanderson: Phowa etc. are directly from Saivism  
Content:

Crazywisdom said:  
They are channels of light. Light channels.

Malcolm wrote:

CCD was only referring certain channels, not all channels.

Crazywisdom said:

He was also referring to the main three.

Malcolm wrote:

No, he wasn't.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, June 27th, 2014 at 2:14 AM

Title: Re: Dr. Sanderson: Phowa etc. are directly from Saivism

Content:

Crazywisdom said:

Dra Thalgyur was originally taught when and where? Another eon, another planet.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, according to the legend presented in the Vima Nyinthig, by Nangwa Dampa in a the first eon, etc., up to the present time.

Crazywisdom said:

Dzogchen is currently taught on 13 worlds.

Malcolm wrote:

Well, thirteen buddhafiels, yes.

But you also must understand that the human form is the primordial form of all sentient beings. This is very clearly explained in the cycle of Dzogchen teachings called Gongpa Zangthal.

IN any case, this is not really appropriate to discuss in public.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, June 27th, 2014 at 2:57 AM

Title: Re: Dr. Sanderson: Phowa etc. are directly from Saivism

Content:

Crazywisdom said:

Dra Thalgyur was originally taught when and where? Another eon, another planet.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, according to the legend presented in the Vima Nyinthig, by Nangwa Dampa in a the first eon, etc., up to the present time.

dzogchungpa said:

Legend? Are you implying that might not be literally true?

Malcolm wrote:

Legend:

1 a traditional story sometimes popularly regarded as historical but unauthenticated

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, June 27th, 2014 at 3:08 AM

Title: Re: Dr. Sanderson: Phowa etc. are directly from Saivism

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

Legend? Are you implying that might not be literally true?

Malcolm wrote:

Legend:

1 a traditional story sometimes popularly regarded as historical but unauthenticated

dzogchungpa said:

If it's in the Vima Nyinthig, what more authentication do you want?

Malcolm wrote:

I don't need anymore than that, but I am not everyone.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, June 27th, 2014 at 5:08 AM

Title: Re: Dr. Sanderson: Phowa etc. are directly from Saivism

Content:

Crazywisdom said:

...

Malcolm wrote:

The central channel is physical. Period.

But you are free to believe whatever you like.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, June 27th, 2014 at 5:14 AM

Title: Re: Dr. Sanderson: Phowa etc. are directly from Saivism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

But you also must understand that the human form is the primordial form of all sentient beings.

dzogchungpa said:



This is an interesting statement, but I'm not sure what it means. Can you explain a little more?

Malcolm wrote:

It means that the Adi Buddha has one face and two hands, two legs and looks like a human being. Accordingly, this is the primordial form of all sentient beings.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, June 27th, 2014 at 5:40 AM

Title: Re: Dr. Sanderson: Phowa etc. are directly from Saivism

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

Isn't he blue?

Malcolm wrote:

Indeed, so it is.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, June 27th, 2014 at 11:00 PM

Title: Re: Krishnamurti and Dzogchen.....Hmmmm

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

As Aryadeva notes, realization comes from one's view.

dzogchungpa said:

Did he prove that?

Malcolm wrote:

Considering he was a bodhisattva on the stages, I would say yes.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, June 27th, 2014 at 11:31 PM

Title: Re: Krishnamurti and Dzogchen.....Hmmmm

Content:

Karma Dorje said:

View does not necessarily mean doctrine, and if Aryadeva means to say doctrine I have to disagree.

Malcolm wrote:

What he specifically says is:

If seen correctly, the supreme place,

if seen partially, excellent destinations,

therefore, the wise always develop their intelligence

contemplating their inner nature.

Chadrakirti adds:

If there reality is seen correctly with knowledge of the ultimate, the supreme place, nirvana, is obtained. If seen partially, i.e., a little, there is the excellent place of devas and humans. Why? If wisdom sees completely, one attains nirvana, if not completely, then an excellent place. The wise must always engage their intellects on the inner nature.

So what is this ultimate Aryadeva speaks of?

Though existence, non-existence, both  
and neither are taught,  
are not all "medicines"  
from the perspective of an illness?

Candra notes:

Because the teaching of existence, nonexistence and so on are for engaging the mind on the inner nature, whatever is shown to be without either, that demonstrates the ultimate.

Thus, realization proceeds from one's view and is measurable according to how complete or incomplete that view is.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, June 28th, 2014 at 1:24 AM

Title: Re: Dr. Sanderson: Phowa etc. are directly from Saivism

Content:

Crazywisdom said:

If you say so. I'm not willing to contradict my teacher in whose realization I trust, and upon whom my realization depends. My teacher explained the vayu and bindu is just a visualization or a kind of reflection. Keyword is refined. It's at the level of consciousness which is beyond physical. Whatever fine matter is in the bardo being it lost its connection to the corpse.

Malcolm wrote:

I do say so. Refined means processed through digestion, in this case, the lungs.

Yes, these things are just a visualization WHEN WE ARE visualizing them for the purpose of gtummo and so on. But there is no point to HOLDING THE BREATH if the vāyu is not just the element of air in the body.

Sam, you have clearly not understood the distinction between how we visualize things when we practice and how they naturally exist in our karmically developed body.

In Dzogchen the distinction between matter and consciousness is abandoned as an error. This is very clearly explained by Padmasambhava in the Khandro Nyinthig:

After first being created by the energy [rtsal] of wisdom, in the middle, as it was not recognized that the body of the refined part of the assembled elements actually is the five wisdoms, since this was not realized through intellectual views, the non-sentient and sentient both appear, but don't believe it. Here, it is actually five wisdoms to begin with; in the middle, when the body is formed from assembly of the elements through ignorance grasping onto those [five wisdoms] also, it is actually the five wisdoms. The five aggregates, sense organs, and afflictions also are actually the five wisdoms. In the end, one transcends accepting, rejecting, proofs, and negations since those are realized to be real. As such, the sign of non-duality is [the body] disappearing into wisdom without any effluents because the critical point of the non-duality or sameness of the non-sentient and the sentient was understood according to the Guru's intimate instruction.

This is why it is crazy to deny that the nāḍis, vāyus and bindus are not physical. When you claim they are non-physical you are just falling into a totally dualistic error.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, June 28th, 2014 at 1:25 AM

Title: Re: Dr. Sanderson: Phowa etc. are directly from Saivism

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

Malcolm, this is something I don't understand. You have said that the view of Vajrayana in general is that there is nothing "out there", so what do words like "matter" even mean in this context, if there are only appearances?

Malcolm wrote:

Dzogchen has a slightly different take on things in this respect than common Vajrayāna.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, June 28th, 2014 at 1:29 AM

Title: Re: Dr. Sanderson: Phowa etc. are directly from Saivism

Content:

Crazywisdom said:

Anyway as Sanderson points out, Vajrayana was only a skillful means to condition Shakta Shaivas to recognize fundamental Mahayana principles.

Malcolm wrote:

Are you kidding? This is common knowledge for centuries.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, June 28th, 2014 at 1:30 AM

Title: Re: Sunyata realisation Poll

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Interesting to note we have three fully deluded people who think they have fully realized emptiness.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, June 28th, 2014 at 1:39 AM

Title: Re: Dr. Sanderson: Phowa etc. are directly from Saivism

Content:

Crazywisdom said:

...you mean when you are claiming they are physical you are falling into dualistic error.

Malcolm wrote:

No, it means that in Padmsambhava's Dzogchen there is no entity called "consciousness" which can be found separate from the five elements. Khenpo Ngachung points out that it is a special tenet of Dzogchen to hold that there are no realms where beings do not have physical bodies, including the so called "formless realms".

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, June 28th, 2014 at 1:46 AM

Title: Re: Dr. Sanderson: Phowa etc. are directly from Saivism

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

Malcolm, this is something I don't understand. You have said that the view of Vajrayana in general is that there is nothing "out there", so what do words like "matter" even mean in this context, if there are only appearances?

Malcolm wrote:

Dzogchen has a slightly different take on things in this respect than common Vajrayāna.

dzogchungpa said:

OK, so can you explain that? This is very interesting to me.

Malcolm wrote:

Generally speaking, common Vajrayāna teachings hold that appearances are really just mental factors, events triggered by traces which are activated in the ālayavijñāna.

Dzogchen maintains however that appearances are the rtсал of wisdom, not mental factors. Everything we perceive as external is the five lights of wisdom misconstrued as the external elements because of the imputing ignorance and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, June 28th, 2014 at 1:54 AM

Title: Re: Dr. Sanderson: Phowa etc. are directly from Saivism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Generally speaking, common Vajrayāna teachings hold that appearances are really just mental factors, events triggered by traces which are activated in the ālayavijñāna.

Dzogchen maintains however that appearances are the rtal of wisdom, not mental factors. Everything we perceive as external is the five lights of wisdom misconstrued as the external elements because of the imputing ignorance and so on.

dzogchungpa said:

OK, but I still don't see what that would have to do with, for example, saying that beings in the formless realms have physical bodies.

Malcolm wrote:

That has to do with other issues specific to Dzogchen, such as the assertion that all sentient beings have the four lamps, which requires that they have eyes, etc.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, June 29th, 2014 at 1:04 AM

Title: Re: Can someone translate this Tibetan script?

Content:

grandeur said:

Is someone able to read this and translate this to English?

Thanks in advance!

Malcolm wrote:

Its not really Tibetan.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, June 29th, 2014 at 1:06 AM

Title: Re: Unreality of Thoughts

Content:

Andrew108 said:

Cups are dependently arisen as are their contents. Emptiness is a concept about this dependent nature. Emptiness isn't a property of the cup.

Malcolm wrote:

Emptiness is not a concept about cups. Cups are empty. Just like everything else.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, June 29th, 2014 at 1:14 AM

Title: Re: Can someone translate this Tibetan script?

Content:

grandeur said:

Is someone able to read this and translate this to English?

Thanks in advance!

Malcolm wrote:

It looks like:

Sra ram Oṃ pa tī gram

tu ra ba nā ma sa

Or

ལྷ་རྩེ་མོ་པ་ཏི་གཤམ་  
ཏུ་ར་བ་ན་མ་ས་

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 30th, 2014 at 9:34 AM

Title: Re: The realm of wordly protectors?

Content:

Luke said:

Which realm do the worldly protectors belong to? Are they devas, asuras, or hungry ghosts? Often on English pages, they use words such as "goddess" or "spirit" or "deity" so it's often not clear how they correspond to the six realms of Buddhism.

Malcolm wrote:

They are generally very powerful pretas.

kirtu said:

Do they then suffer privation like the other pretas?

Kirt

Malcolm wrote:

Not all pretas suffer privation.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 30th, 2014 at 9:36 AM

Title: Re: The realm of wordly protectors?

Content:

Luke said:

Which realm do the worldly protectors belong to?

haha said:

Generally, they belong to Caturmaharajika or Four Guardian Kings. For example, nagas are under the control of Virupaksya. There are many tree spirits and wealth related deities who are under the control of Vaishravana. so on.

Malcolm wrote:

No, this is really not the case. There are many worldly guardians who do not fit this scheme.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 30th, 2014 at 9:26 PM

Title: Re: Who is included in the Sangha in which we take refuge in

Content:

Karinos said:

in my humble opinion it very much depends on your personal Dharma practice ...  
For example if you already do intensive yidam practice - you'd practice pure vision, in which all beings are Buddhas (Yidam) already, there is no impure or unworthy object of Refuge, everybody is perfect Buddha.

Malcolm wrote:

Not when you are taking refuge...during refuge everyone becomes Buddha in the form of whatever deity you are practicing, but in the beginning oneself and all sentient beings are in their ordinary form.

Of course, there are some refuge supplications where one begins through recognizing one's vidyā as the object of refuge, but that is only in Atiyoga.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 30th, 2014 at 9:33 PM

Title: Re: Dharma wheel, ethics, value & online communities

Content:

tobes said:

It would be great if members could use this thread to reflect a little on where we're at at the moment, and where we might aspire to go. If there is a gap, what might the cause be, and how could it be bridged?

Malcolm wrote:

The gaps are 1) education 2) experience 3) traditions 4) faith.

tobes said:

That should not be the case.

Malcolm wrote:

When has it ever been otherwise on a religious forum?

tobes said:

What I'm saying is that I'm not convinced that this ought to be the basic culture of an online Buddhist community.

Malcolm wrote:

It will always be the basic culture of a forum composed of people who value their own opinions higher than that of others.

tobes said:

i.e. first instinct in reading, replying etc would be to be supportive. We're all practicing a tough way which is afar from mainstream culture. An online forum for Buddhists should be a resource for friendly support, where every poster from the most enlightened to the least enlightened finds some dharma friends to lean on. Get a bit of encouragement, advice etc.

Malcolm wrote:

Correcting wrong views such as negation of rebirth, karma, etc., is supportive.

And in fact there is more supportive posting than unsupportive posting at DW. You just happen to be most attracted to the controversial threads.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 30th, 2014 at 9:40 PM

Title: Re: New China map shows Arunachal Pradesh as part of Tibet

Content:

Indrajala said:

Geographically Arunachal Pradesh might be considered part of the geographic expanse of Tibet, so their claim isn't bogus.

Malcolm wrote:

Geographically and ethnically, Arunachal Pradesh was what was classically referred to as "Mon" by the Tibetans. The Tibetans recognized it as region culturally and ethnically separate from themselves.

Their claims is as bogus as including the greater Tibet on their maps as part of China.

Dude, I honestly wonder sometimes if the PRC cuts you a check.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 30th, 2014 at 10:05 PM



Title: Re: New China map shows Arunachal Pradesh as part of Tibet

Content:

Indrajala said:

In fact, as Nepal slowly becomes a client state of China things have been improving.

Malcolm wrote:

That just goes to show how little experience you have in Nepal, even if you have spent a fair amount of time there in the past few years. Things were much better under the old king, the one who was murdered.

Indrajala said:

Arunachal Pradesh would do fine under China.

Malcolm wrote:

Your continued apologetics for China are nothing short of amazing.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 30th, 2014 at 10:07 PM

Title: Re: New China map shows Arunachal Pradesh as part of Tibet

Content:

Indrajala said:

Arunachal Pradesh would do fine under China.

ReasonAndRhyme said:

So for you "24/7 electricity and proper plumbing" are of higher value than human rights and freedom of religion? You really need to sort out your priorities.

Malcolm wrote:

Oh, that does not exist in Nepal. In fact, there are regular shortages of everything, much worse than ever before. I have friends who have maintained a house in Katmandhu since the '80's., not Buddhists, and they report that Nepal just gets worse and worse in everyway since the old king died and the Chinese have spread their influence.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 30th, 2014 at 10:08 PM

Title: Re: New China map shows Arunachal Pradesh as part of Tibet

Content:

Indrajala said:

Hands down China despite its police state is a lot nicer and more humane to its poor despite what western and Indian propaganda would say.

Malcolm wrote:

I have also been to China, and the picture you paint is distorted.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 30th, 2014 at 10:30 PM

Title: Re: New China map shows Arunachal Pradesh as part of Tibet

Content:

Indrajala said:

But things are now improving under Chinese influence. If Nepal really becomes friendly, then their infrastructure and energy problems could be quickly fixed. Nepalese people are not crying out for human rights.

Impunity has continued for human rights violations, including for thousands of unlawful killings, disappearances, abductions, and torture that occurred during the war. Violence and insecurity plague some areas of the country, where armed groups operate largely with impunity. Severe poverty remains a serious concern; and women, lower castes, and ethnic minorities continue to face discrimination.

Malcolm wrote:

<http://www.amnestyusa.org/our-work/countries/asia-and-the-pacific/nepal> "onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;" onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;

Your commitment to the Exile Tibetan cause despite not being Tibetan is noteworthy. Your commitment to a Communist regime is nothing short of appalling.

Quite Frankly Jeff, when it comes to the issue of India and Tibet, you are basically trolling.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 30th, 2014 at 10:42 PM

Title: Re: New China map shows Arunachal Pradesh as part of Tibet

Content:

Indrajala said:

Hands down China despite its police state is a lot nicer and more humane to its poor despite what western and Indian propaganda would say.

ReasonAndRhyme said:

Even if that were true, would that, in your opinion, justify a chinese invasion of Arunachal Pradesh?

Indrajala said:

No, not at all. I'm just saying that push comes to shove and China forces India into a corner they might demand as a concession Arunachal Pradesh.

Malcolm wrote:

They have already gone down that road. There are massive craters in Arunachal in the ground from artillery that was exchanged on both sides during one of their unofficial conflicts. The Chinese backed off. But they constantly push. There are regular incursions by the Chinese in Pemakö for example. One only hopes that the Chinese aggression does not go too far.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 30th, 2014 at 10:44 PM

Title: Re: New China map shows Arunachal Pradesh as part of Tibet

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Your commitment to a Communist regime is nothing short of appalling.

Indrajala said:

I'm not committed to them.

Malcolm wrote:

Sure you are. You never spare a bad word for Tibet and India and constantly tout China as an example of a good government for the region.

Everything the Chinese government does is a trojan horse.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 30th, 2014 at 11:01 PM

Title: Re: New China map shows Arunachal Pradesh as part of Tibet

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Everything the Chinese government does is a trojan horse.

Indrajala said:

Conversely I've never seen you write anything positive about China ... past or present.

Malcolm wrote:

That is because all we have ever discussed is the present political situation in China regarding Tibet and India, or Chinese Buddhist developments upon Indian Mahāyāna.

In terms of Chinese people themselves in China, I have always found them friendly, but fearful. Given that my interests are pretty much confined to Indo-Tibetan Buddhism, I don't have much more than a tangential interest in China. I was more interested in Sino-Japanese Buddhism when Shingon perked my interest back in the day. But that was a long time ago. I have read many of the classics in translation with more than passing interest, and have found authors like the neo-confucians Chu Hsi and Wang Yang Ming

engaging. But I was never so interested in China as to learn Chinese, etc. I appreciate classical Chinese culture, literature, and art, what I know and understand of it, and recognize that Chinese cultural influences made an indelible stamp on Tibetan culture, in much the same way it did on Japanese culture, or British culture on American and Canadian culture, etc.

But I really don't have much to say about China in general since it is not my continued area of interest.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, June 30th, 2014 at 11:02 PM

Title: Re: New China map shows Arunachal Pradesh as part of Tibet

Content:

Indrajala said:

Chinese have just as much access to consumer delights as we do:

Malcolm wrote:

Bread and circuses.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, July 1st, 2014 at 12:14 AM

Title: Re: New China map shows Arunachal Pradesh as part of Tibet

Content:

Indrajala said:

You can practice Tibetan Buddhism in China.

Malcolm wrote:

Not really. Not with any real freedom.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, July 1st, 2014 at 12:30 AM

Title: Re: New China map shows Arunachal Pradesh as part of Tibet

Content:

Indrajala said:

You can practice Tibetan Buddhism in China.

Malcolm wrote:

Not really. Not with any real freedom.

Indrajala said:

Freedom to do what? Self-immolate? Yes, that's prohibited, and for good reason too.

Malcolm wrote:

The reason why there is self-immolation is because there is no freedom for Tibetans to

practice their religion and be educated in their own language.

You have never been to the Tibetan cultural regions, so you really have no clue how things are for them. None whatsoever.

Until you have been, you have nothing worth saying about the issue.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, July 1st, 2014 at 12:39 AM

Title: Re: New China map shows Arunachal Pradesh as part of Tibet

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

You have never been to the Tibetan cultural regions, so you really have no clue how things are for them. None whatsoever.

Indrajala said:

I've met a lot of Tibetans in my time in Asia. I sometimes meet some who come and go freely out of Tibet, too. I met one eminent Lama in Singapore. He spoke Chinese. Nice guy. He was visiting Singapore and planned to head back to Tibet in a bit.

Some who leave Tibet tell me they left simply because they wanted to visit Bodhgaya or see the Dalai Lama. They're not escaping the police as far as I know, and they regularly talk to their families (who are clearly not in prison) via WeChat. I know others who basically seem to pursue economic opportunities by going to India (free English lessons, job training, a way to get to the west or a developed country on the fast track...).

I'm well aware the Chinese don't fool around in Tibet, but I have to seriously doubt if it is really "on fire" as some suggest.

Malcolm wrote:

As I said, you really do not have a clue.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, July 1st, 2014 at 12:52 AM

Title: Re: New China map shows Arunachal Pradesh as part of Tibet

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The reason why there is self-immolation is because there is no freedom for Tibetans to practice their religion and be educated in their own language.

Indrajala said:

In the PRC if you don't know Mandarin like it was your native language then don't count on getting a professional job. Everyone in China's borders is expected to learn Mandarin, even the Cantonese who often dislike the northerners and are upfront about it.

If the Tibetans don't learn to read, write and speak fluent Mandarin, they'll be basically unable to secure professional employment in the nation they belong to.

This is not how you encourage economic opportunities for an ethnic minority. How are you going to train Tibetan engineers and chemists? In Tibetan? No, they need to learn Mandarin and learn it well.

If Tibetans don't learn Chinese, they'll lack skills necessary for success in secular society (unless you propose they learn English), and then they'll complain they're being economically disenfranchised.

Malcolm wrote:

Language is culture, and you CLEARLY do not value Tibetan civilization on any level at all, apart from the interest it serves your study of what western academics think about Buddhist history. When Tibetans don't speak Tibetan, they won't be Tibetan anymore, which is clearly China's agenda with all ethnic groups over which it asserts hegemony.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, July 1st, 2014 at 12:59 AM

Title: Re: New China map shows Arunachal Pradesh as part of Tibet

Content:

Indrajala said:

No bridges, modern hospitals, electrical grids, sewage systems, etc...?

Malcolm wrote:

Tibetans did just fine without all these things until 1959.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, July 1st, 2014 at 1:39 AM

Title: Re: New China map shows Arunachal Pradesh as part of Tibet

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

And sewage systems? What a joke. Chinese sewage systems are appalling. The Chinese apparently do not understand that one should vent toilets with the result that in the evenings modern buildings smell like appalling sewers because of the gas that rises out of the sewer systems directly into people's apartments.

Indrajala said:

They're working on it. It isn't a perfect country. The Chinese at least have long-term plans, which includes increasing the standards of living of everyone. They've gone a long way. Still a long way to go, but they're making that effort.

Malcolm wrote:

That doesn't happen in India, where, apparently, they understand the importance of venting toilets.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, July 1st, 2014 at 1:41 AM

Title: Re: New China map shows Arunachal Pradesh as part of Tibet

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

And sewage systems? What a joke. Chinese sewage systems are appalling. The Chinese apparently do not understand that one should vent toilets with the result that in the evenings modern buildings smell like appalling sewers because of the gas that rises out of the sewer systems directly into people's apartments.

Indrajala said:

They're working on it. It isn't a perfect country. The Chinese at least have long-term plans, which includes increasing the standards of living of everyone. They've gone a long way. Still a long way to go, but they're making that effort.

Malcolm wrote:

Face it Jeff, Todd is right -- you have not really seen very much of China at all and so you really do not what what you are talking about.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, July 1st, 2014 at 2:02 AM

Title: Re: New China map shows Arunachal Pradesh as part of Tibet

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

That doesn't happen in India, where, apparently, they understand the importance of venting toilets.

Indrajala said:

lol. If they even have a toilet.

Malcolm wrote:

Pretty much everywhere I have been, there have been, running the whole gamut, from noisome to sanitory, just like in China.

I find it amazing that when it comes right down it, your primary criteria for whether a country is well run is the state of their toilets.

It is a significant marker that you really don't have much understanding of China if you think their sewage systems are "modern" or even existent anywhere outside of large cities.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, July 1st, 2014 at 2:05 AM

Title: Re: Who is included in the Sangha in which we take refuge in

Content:

Karinos said:

in my humble opinion it very much depends on your personal Dharma practice ...

For example if you already do intensive yidam practice - you'd practice pure vision, in which all beings are Buddhas (Yidam) already, there is no impure or unworthy object of Refuge, everybody is perfect Buddha.

Malcolm wrote:

Not when you are taking refuge...during refuge everyone becomes Buddha in the form of whatever deity you are practicing, but in the beginning oneself and all sentient beings are in their ordinary form.

Of course, there are some refuge supplications where one begins through recognizing one's vidyā as the object of refuge, but that is only in Atiyoga.

Karinos said:

so, are you saying that for the purpose of taking Refuge while doing any sadhana I should abandon purevision and for few minutes pretend to see my vajra brothers and sisters as well as other sentient beings as ordinary ?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes.

As far as pretend, it is your pure vision that is pretend, and not the other way around. Remember a sadhana is a way of practicing the whole path of Buddhahood in a single session. So normally we start as ordinary being, raise bodhicitta, gather merit and wisdom and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, July 1st, 2014 at 2:07 AM

Title: Re: Who is included in the Sangha in which we take refuge in

Content:

Konchog1 said:

Hmm. So then would the Buddha gem only be Shakyamuni and all the other Buddhas be grouped under the Sangha gem?

Malcolm wrote:

Different refuge trees group things differently, it depends on tradition. Generally however Buddhas would be grouped around the Guru.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, July 1st, 2014 at 2:11 AM



Title: Re: New China map shows Arunachal Pradesh as part of Tibet

Content:

Indrajala said:

Am I mistaken?

Malcolm wrote:

Completely.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, July 1st, 2014 at 3:01 AM

Title: How Tibetans really feel about the occupation

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, July 1st, 2014 at 6:17 AM

Title: Re: Dark Ages aren't that "dark"

Content:

Sherlock said:

Nevertheless, people still got on with their lives, many still learned to read (although they read less Classical poets and more Christian authors), moreover a lot of the corruption and abuse of power that people in late Imperial Roman society (the downside to living in a large empire where corruption was endemic) had to endure was gone.

Indrajala said:

While I concede that the last century of Rome was rather disagreeable for most plebs, the reality is that the Dark Ages ushered in a period of great violence.

Malcolm wrote:

Ahem...the Roman Empire wasn't completely violent??? At least 40 percent of its population were slaves.

Indrajala said:

It allowed for the rise of forces like the Vikings,

Malcolm wrote:

Those are my peeps you are talking about, bub...

Indrajala said:

Roman Britain in the Dark Ages went from having relative security to being pillaged and attacked continually.

Malcolm wrote:

Oh, the Romans in Great Britain were a really nice bunch of people, so understanding and kind:

Boudica (/ˈbuːdɪkə/; alternative spelling: Boudicca), also known as Boadicea /ˈboʊdiːsiːə/, and known in Welsh as Buddug [ˈbɨðɨg][1] (d. AD 60 or 61) was queen of the British Iceni tribe, a Celtic tribe who led an uprising against the occupying forces of the Roman Empire.

Boudica's husband Prasutagus was ruler of the Iceni tribe. He ruled as a nominally independent ally of Rome and left his kingdom jointly to his daughters and the Roman emperor in his will. However, when he died, his will was ignored and the kingdom was annexed as if conquered. Boudica was flogged, her daughters were raped, and Roman financiers called in their loans.

In AD 60 or 61, while the Roman governor Gaius Suetonius Paulinus was leading a campaign on the island of Anglesey off the northwest coast of Wales, Boudica led the Iceni as well as the Trinovantes and others in revolt.[2] They destroyed Camulodunum, which is modern Colchester. Camulodunum was earlier the capital of the Trinovantes, but at that time was a colonia—a settlement for discharged Roman soldiers, as well as the site of a temple to the former Emperor Claudius. Upon hearing the news of the revolt, Suetonius hurried to Londinium (modern London), the twenty-year-old commercial settlement that was the rebels' next target.

The Romans, having concluded that they did not have the numbers to defend the settlement, evacuated and abandoned Londinium. Boudica led 100,000 Iceni, Trinovantes and others to fight the Legio IX Hispana and burned and destroyed Londinium, and Verulamium (modern-day St Albans).[3][4] An estimated 70,000–80,000 Romans and British were killed in the three cities by those led by Boudica.[5] Suetonius, meanwhile, regrouped his forces in the West Midlands, and despite being heavily outnumbered, defeated the Britons in the Battle of Watling Street.

The crisis caused the Emperor Nero to consider withdrawing all Roman forces from Britain, but Suetonius's eventual victory over Boudica confirmed Roman control of the province. Boudica then either killed herself so she would not be captured, or fell ill and died. The extant sources, Tacitus[6] and Cassius Dio, differ.[7]

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Boudica> " onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;

Indrajala said:

This new trend in history studies to take the "dark" out of Dark Ages is really problematic.

Malcolm wrote:

The fact is that the dark ages happened because the Roman Empire over extended itself.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, July 1st, 2014 at 8:01 PM

Title: Re: Stuart Hameroff's view of consciousness

Content:

Sherab said:

Ignoring Deepak Chopra, I find Stuart Hameroff's view in this video quite interesting.

Malcolm wrote:

But panpsychism is contra Buddhist principles.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, July 1st, 2014 at 8:45 PM

Title: Re: Dr. Sanderson: Phowa etc. are directly from Saivism

Content:

Crazywisdom said:

Anyway as Sanderson points out, Vajrayana was only a skillful means to condition Shakta Shaivas to recognize fundamental Mahayana principles.

Malcolm wrote:

Are you kidding? This is common knowledge for centuries.

Anders said:

Wait, what? Can you expand on that?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, Indian Buddhist texts clearly describe how the different tantra series were taught for the purpose of the conversion of different casts. Highest Yoga Tantra was taught in order to appeal to the lowest castes.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, July 1st, 2014 at 11:17 PM

Title: Re: Dr. Sanderson: Phowa etc. are directly from Saivism

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

unless Shakta Shaivas = lowest castes.

Malcolm wrote:

In general, yes.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, July 1st, 2014 at 11:19 PM

Title: Re: Dr. Sanderson: Phowa etc. are directly from Saivism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, Indian Buddhist texts clearly describe how the different tantra series were taught for the purpose of the conversion of different casts. Highest Yoga Tantra was taught in order to appeal to the lowest castes.

M

udawa said:

So presumably us westerners are a modern variant of the 'lowest caste'?

Malcolm wrote:

The four tantra sets are also related to the four yugas, with HYT being connected with the Kali Yuga and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, July 1st, 2014 at 11:20 PM

Title: Re: Stuart Hameroff's view of consciousness

Content:

Sherab said:

Ignoring Deepak Chopra, I find Stuart Hameroff's view in this video quite interesting.

Malcolm wrote:

But panpsychism is contra Buddhist principles.

Sherab said:

You seems to be reading into Stuart's view in the same manner as Deepak Chopra.

Malcolm wrote:

No, I read some articles on his website where he explicitly states that he advocates panpsychism based on platonic principles.

Sherab said:

In the Penrose-Hameroff model of "orchestrated objective reduction" ("Orch OR"), OR quantum computation occurs in cytoskeletal microtubules within the brain's neurons and links cognition with proto-conscious experience and Platonic values embedded in spacetime geometry. The basic idea is that consciousness involves brain activities coupled to self-organizing ripples in fundamental reality.

Malcolm wrote:

<http://www.quantumconsciousness.org/penrose-hameroff/fundamentality.html> "

onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, July 2nd, 2014 at 1:29 AM

Title: Re: Dr. Sanderson: Phowa etc. are directly from Saivism

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

unless Shakta Shaivas = lowest castes.

Malcolm wrote:

In general, yes.

Karma Dorje said:

Source? Samayacara is an almost exclusively Brahmin formulation and is the dominant Srividya lineage. Same goes for Saktism at the time of Abhinavagupta et al in Kashmir. Kapalika and Kulacara were outside the varna system altogether and would have all varnas represented in a single circle.

Malcolm wrote:

Shiva temples are the only temples where all castes may enter. Other kinds of temples have caste restrictions, reserved only for the twice born castes.

But the real point is that Candalas and so on like to drink alcohol and eat meat, and so HYT is formulated to attract them.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, July 2nd, 2014 at 2:05 AM

Title: Re: Dr. Sanderson: Phowa etc. are directly from Saivism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

But the real point is that Candalas and so on like to drink alcohol and eat meat, and so HYT is formulated to attract them.

conebeckham said:

So, if this is the case, is HYT really "transgressive" as so many would like to think?

Malcolm wrote:

For Buddhists born in the upper classes, sure.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, July 2nd, 2014 at 3:01 AM

Title: Re: Dr. Sanderson: Phowa etc. are directly from Saivism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Shiva temples are the only temples where all castes may enter. Other kinds of temples have caste restrictions, reserved only for the twice born castes.

But the real point is that Candalas and so on like to drink alcohol and eat meat, and so HYT is formulated to attract them.

Karma Dorje said:

That's not true of all the Vaishnava temples I know of, from Rameshvaram to Vrindavan. I can't think of any major temple that has such restrictions. Can you point to a source for this?

Certainly within Shaiva and Shakta sources it is not true that alcohol and meat were included to attract people habituated to their use. In fact, it was specifically prohibited for them as their character would fall into pashubhava. The pancamakara are only to be used by those with virabhava disposition. I can't speak to HYT and the reasons it was included, but certainly in terms of the Shaiva/Shakta tradition this wouldn't make much sense.

Malcolm wrote:

Dont conflate Hinduism/Indian religion as it exists now with Hinduism as it existed in the 8-11th century.

Anyway, what follows is clearly a description of a Kaulacarya rite, in his General Presentation of The Divisions of Tantras, Sonam Tsemo writes:

Additionally, the passion-filled followers of Mahādeva imagine the result to obtain is Maheśvara as a saṃbhogakāya. Having receive the complete empowerment in their own system, they train in the intimate instruction of vase breathing, the intimate instruction of the garuda, and so on. Having gathered at the special time, when doing the ritual, the males are seated on the right, the females seated on the left, lighting nine floating butter lamps in the middle, likewise those burn, the tips are turned down, and having placed them in the water, also mothers, sisters, etc., are enjoyed.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, July 2nd, 2014 at 4:41 AM

Title: Re: Dr. Sanderson: Phowa etc. are directly from Saivism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Dont conflate Hinduism/Indian religion as it exists now with Hinduism as it existed in the 8-11th century.

Karma Dorje said:

I am not conflating anything, adhikara according to bhava is present in the earliest Shaiva/Shakta tantras (for example Rudrayamala) and consistent throughout all scriptures. It is intrinsic to this tantric system. Do you have an actual source for

Shaiva/Shakta being associated with and practiced primarily by lower and outcastes or are you just speculating based on reports from Tibetans? There is no evidence of this within the Shakta systems themselves.

Malcolm wrote:

Going to the region of the Brahmaputra, he discovered hosts of men and women apparently engaged in non-Vedik practises, swilling wine, eating flesh and engaging in sexual intercourse. All were naked, their eyes reddened with liquor. Yet all were enlightened. Going to Buddha, Vashishta asked how this could be. Buddha is made to reply: "Vashishta, listen! I will speak of the highest path of Kula by knowing which a man takes the form of Rudra immediately!" He then speaks of the practice of Mahachinachara. By this method, all the Hindu gods became enlightened.

<http://www.shivashakti.com/rudrayam.htm> " onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, July 2nd, 2014 at 5:12 AM

Title: Re: Dr. Sanderson: Phowa etc. are directly from Saivism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Going to the region of the Brahmaputra, he discovered hosts of men and women apparently engaged in non-Vedik practises, swilling wine, eating flesh and engaging in sexual intercourse. All were naked, their eyes reddened with liquor. Yet all were enlightened. Going to Buddha, Vashishta asked how this could be. Buddha is made to reply: "Vashishta, listen! I will speak of the highest path of Kula by knowing which a man takes the form of Rudra immediately!" He then speaks of the practice of Mahachinachara. By this method, all the Hindu gods became enlightened.

<http://www.shivashakti.com/rudrayam.htm> " onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;" onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;" onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;" onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;

Karma Dorje said:

Where is the reference to lower castes and outcastes? This merely refers to pancamakara practice in the Tibetan or Arunachal Pradesh region (Mahachina) in the higher reaches of the Brahmaputra, not lower castes in India.

Malcolm wrote:

Non-vedic...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, July 2nd, 2014 at 6:19 AM

Title: Re: Dr. Sanderson: Phowa etc. are directly from Saivism

Content:  
Malcolm wrote:  
Non-vedic...

Karma Dorje said:  
You are reading too much into this. Shudras are part of the vedic fold as illustrated in the Purusha Sukta, just not twice-born. Even outcastes like Candala are part of the vedic society, fulfilling roles that are considered ritually unclean. This reference to non-vedic people is to people from the Tibetan plateau that are not practicing the Vedas at all.

Malcolm wrote:  
The Indian texts refer to Candalas explicitly. Anyway, the main point is that Indian commentators identified HYT as being for Shaivaites and lower cast people who liked booze, meat and sex, and lower tantra for the successively higher casts who are more constrained by ritual purity.

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Wednesday, July 2nd, 2014 at 6:52 AM  
Title: Re: Dr. Sanderson: Phowa etc. are directly from Saivism  
Content:  
Malcolm wrote:

The Indian texts refer to Candalas explicitly. Anyway, the main point is that Indian commentators identified HYT as being for Shaivaites and lower cast people who liked booze, meat and sex.

Karma Dorje said:  
You mean the Indian Buddhist tantric texts, right?

Malcolm wrote:  
Yes, this is what we are talking about.

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Wednesday, July 2nd, 2014 at 7:44 AM  
Title: Re: Dr. Sanderson: Phowa etc. are directly from Saivism  
Content:

Karma Dorje said:  
Actually the particular point we were discussing is whether you can make the claim that Shaiva/Shakta equates to lower castes, which it clearly does not.

Malcolm wrote:  
I am not making the claim, I am point out how Indian Buddhists schematized the conversion roles of the four classes of Tantra, and they clearly equate the worship of



Siva etc., with lower castes. Do recall that most of the people who were writing these texts were upper class Indians, not necessarily from Buddhist families.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, July 2nd, 2014 at 7:46 AM

Title: Re: Dr. Sanderson: Phowa etc. are directly from Saivism

Content:

smcj said:

Ok, for the sake of discussion let us concede the point--at least for the moment. (That is not how it has been presented to me.) What then are the implications?

Malcolm wrote:

Lower tantra a) is not effective in this day and age. B) lower tantra is not effective for barbarians, indeed the Cakrasamvara tantra explicitly states that if you want liberation, and you are a barbarian, you better rely Yogini.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, July 2nd, 2014 at 9:33 AM

Title: Re: Dr. Sanderson: Phowa etc. are directly from Saivism

Content:

kirtu said:

And traditionally the first Sakya retreat begins with Vajrapani Buttadhamara which is a lower tantra practice if I am not mistaken...

Kirt

Malcolm wrote:

Bhutadamara practiced in Sakya comes from the Vajrapanjara tantra, so it is HYT.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, July 2nd, 2014 at 9:37 AM

Title: Re: Stuart Hameroff's view of consciousness

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

No, I read some articles on his website where he explicitly states that he advocates panpsychism based on platonic principles.

In the Penrose-Hameroff model of "orchestrated objective reduction" ("Orch OR"), OR quantum computation occurs in cytoskeletal microtubules within the brain's neurons and links cognition with proto-conscious experience and Platonic values embedded in spacetime geometry. The basic idea is that consciousness involves brain activities

coupled to self-organizing ripples in fundamental reality.

<http://www.quantumconsciousness.org/penrose-hameroff/fundamentality.html> "

onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;" onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;" onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;"

onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;" onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;" onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;"

Sherab said:

"In philosophy, panpsychism is the view that mind or soul (Greek: ψυχή) is a universal feature of all things, and the primordial feature from which all others are derived. The panpsychist sees him or herself as a mind in a world of minds." Wikipedia.

It seems that you misinterpreted " Orch OR ... which links cognition with proto-conscious experience and platonic values embedded in spacetime geometry" to be the same as "mind or soul is a universal feature of all things. "

Malcolm wrote:

Apparently you did not read the preceding paragraph in the paper linked to:

It is argued here that the physicalist premise alone is unable to solve completely the difficult issues of consciousness (e.g. experience, binding, pre-conscious conscious transition, non-computability and free will) and that to do so will require supplemental panpsychist/pan-experiential philosophy expressed in modern physics. In one such scheme proto-conscious experience is a basic property of physical reality accessible to a quantum process associated with brain activity.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, July 2nd, 2014 at 8:59 PM

Title: Re: Dharma wheel, ethics, value & online communities

Content:

tobes said:

I wonder if anyone has taken up the idea posed in the OP, of taking stock and reflecting on where you are personally (ethically) with respect to posting on DW?

It's always easier to find faults in others isn't it?

To get the ball rolling on this, I will confess my own bad habits (which I will endeavour to iron out):

1. As I have already pointed out (and has been pointed out for me) I am attracted to the most controversial threads. Why? I am attracted to arguments, especially juicy ones. Sometimes I cannot resist entering such a discourse, even though it may not be wise, skillful or compassionate.

2. I often post a reply too quickly, without sufficiently reading and reflecting on what the other person has written.

3. I sometimes come to the forum looking for mental stimulation (hence 1 & 2) - an internet fix of half entertainment/half learning.

4. I make crass sociological generalisations (especially to my partner) about where Buddhism is at, on the basis of threads that come up here.

5. I try to write simply, clearly and honestly, but it often comes across as verbose.

6. I like to bring heavy duty philosophy to bear on topics that may not warrant it.

More to come.....

Malcolm wrote:

Seriously dude, this whole trend is embarrassing.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, July 2nd, 2014 at 9:25 PM

Title: Re: Dharma wheel, ethics, value & online communities

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Seriously dude, this whole trend is embarrassing.

Sherab Dorje said:

Which trend?

Malcolm wrote:

The mea culpa confessional trend.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, July 2nd, 2014 at 10:37 PM

Title: Re: Dharma wheel, ethics, value & online communities

Content:

Jesse said:

What's wrong with thing's that bring the community closer rather than further apart? I don't see why it's embarrassing.

Malcolm wrote:

Never mind.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, July 2nd, 2014 at 10:55 PM

Title: Re: Dharma wheel, ethics, value & online communities

Content:

Jikan said:

Who gets to define it?

Malcolm wrote:

I think Buddha already did a pretty good job, along with Nāgārjuna and Maitreya, as well as their followers.

To elaborate:

Mahāyāna was taught at the same time as Śrāvakayāna.

The practice of Mahāyāna is predicated on the two kinds of bodhicitta.

The path of Mahāyāna is based in the practice of the six pāramitas.

The result of Mahāyāna is the two or three kāyas.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, July 3rd, 2014 at 1:39 AM

Title: Re: Dharma wheel, ethics, value & online communities

Content:

Prasutagus said:

Unrelated to any particular posting but apropos to this topic...

... dropping in here from the outside, I get this sense of deep tension on the board. This is one of the things I find a little jarring. Walking in from the outside there's clearly some history and some unresolved stuff that would take years for a noob to figure out after reading countless past posts. This is a little strange to me, as I know a wide spectrum of Buddhists in my real life, including one's that might be considered political adversaries - and we don't roll like that. That's the type of vibe I'd really be uncomfortable with in sangha space...

-P

Malcolm wrote:

well, it's not a Sangha.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, July 3rd, 2014 at 1:43 AM

Title: Re: How Tibetans really feel about the occupation

Content:

smcj said:

And so is Hong Kong, but such was not always the case.

Indrajala said:

I don't think anyone would characterize the handover to China as a new occupation by the PRC.

Malcolm wrote:

More pro-China apologetics...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, July 3rd, 2014 at 2:03 AM

Title: Re: How Tibetans really feel about the occupation

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

More pro-China apologetics...

Indrajala said:

Even if I did identify as pro-China (I'm not),

Malcolm wrote:

Of course you are.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, July 3rd, 2014 at 2:16 AM

Title: Re: How Tibetans really feel about the occupation

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Of course you are.

Indrajala said:

No, I can't be qualified as pro-Chinese because I side with Japan on a lot of issues on their side of Asia.

Malcolm wrote:

With respect to the Tibetan question, you most certainly are pro-Chinese.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, July 3rd, 2014 at 3:26 AM

Title: Re: How Tibetans really feel about the occupation

Content:

Karma Dorje said:

Or your posts about how Tibetans don't wash...

Indrajala said:

I understand that traditionally they did not wash regularly, as was the case in Ladakh up until recently. I heard there that some elderly Ladakhis have never actually been immersed in water fully.

In any case, I believe hygiene and sanitation are important. Their absence spreads preventable diseases.

Malcolm wrote:

I do believe the subject of the thread is "How Tibetans really feel about the occupation", not "What Jeff Thinks About Tibetan Hygiene".

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, July 3rd, 2014 at 5:53 AM

Title: Re: How Tibetans really feel about the occupation

Content:

Osho said:

Tibetan religious 'in exile' could as easily 'go home' and find a decent living these days.

Malcolm wrote:

Sounds like a really love fest in Lhasa

Not so long ago, the Lhasa security bureau issued a notice to all hotels, specifying:

“...Registration process for people required to report to the authorities: inspect and verify the guest's ID – report to the authorities – verification by Public Security Bureau – registration – check into hotel – check out of hotel – register time of departure – register the check out time of all guests required to report to the authorities (people from within Tibet: Kham, three eastern counties in Nagchu Prefecture, Biru county, Sog county, Baqen county; people from outside TAR: Qinghai, Gansu, Yunnan, Sichuan, Xinjiang (except for Chinese)). People from the five Tibetan provinces and Xinjiang (except for Chinese) who come to Lhasa on pilgrimage, visit relatives, treat an illness, travel, engage in business etc, have to have their IDs checked and need to report to the local police bureau within 10 minutes after registration (telephone number: 6823809); the local police bureau needs to also within 10 minutes verify whether the person can check in. In case of any violations such as failing to report, registering more than one person under one ID, not having registered according to the regulations, having checked into a hotel without registration, registering under a different name, holding an expired ID card etc. people will be severely punished in accordance with the respective laws and regulations, which will have serious consequences and the hotel may be closed down.”

<http://highpeakspureearth.com/2014/tibetans-walking-out-of-the-flames-towards-lhasa-by-woeser/> " onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;"  
onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, July 3rd, 2014 at 5:56 AM

Title: Re: How Tibetans really feel about the occupation

Content:

Osho said:

[

There are two sides, at least; to all political issues but far too often on DW it's the special pleaders and propagandists who seek to stifle other voices.

Malcolm wrote:

You want propaganda?

<http://highpeakspureearth.com/2014/a-fake-potala-palace-and-the-myth-of-princess-wencheng-by-woeser/> " onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, July 3rd, 2014 at 5:57 AM

Title: Re: How Tibetans really feel about the occupation

Content:

Unknown said:

PRC eased off on religious persecution some years ago, throughout the PRC, Tibet included.

Malcolm wrote:

You clearly have no idea about what is going on in Tibet these days. There was some easing up East Tibet, but that too has passed.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, July 3rd, 2014 at 8:41 AM

Title: Re: Dharma wheel, ethics, value & online communities

Content:

AIR said:

Do you believe that the hostile culture on this forum...

Malcolm wrote:

This presumes one agrees the culture on this forum is hostile. Frankly, I don't agree...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, July 3rd, 2014 at 8:47 AM

Title: Re: How Tibetans really feel about the occupation

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

<http://humanrightsinchina.wordpress.com/2012/04/06/woeser-and-invisible-tibet/> " onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;" onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;

Tsering Woeser (1966, Lhasa) is a courageous Tibetan writer, who offers unique perspectives on the complexities of Tibet today. The daughter of Communist Party members, her father an officer in the People's Liberation Army, Woeser was educated, and writes, in Mandarin Chinese.

Following literary studies, she was posted to Lhasa as editor of the journal Tibetan Literature and began to uncover her true heritage. In *Tibet Above* (1999), Woeser published poems exploring her Tibetan identity. Her next book, *Notes on Tibet* (2003), addressing cultural and political issues more directly and critically through portraits of Tibetan lives, was banned; she lost her job and all social benefits but resolved to use words as her weapon and to record Tibet's past and present.

Moving to the greater anonymity of Beijing, she used the internet to publish increasingly explicit commentaries on the arrest and torture of Tibetans – the appealing literary qualities of her writing conveying her message all the more effectively. Woeser's concern with Tibetan culture continued in articles on contemporary painting, film and literature, and in groundbreaking books including *Forbidden Memory: Tibet During the Cultural Revolution* (2006), which combines her father's photographs of the period with eyewitness accounts she gathered through interviews.

During the mass demonstrations against Chinese rule and violent crackdown in 2008, Woeser's blogs became the main source of information for the world. Relaying details from her contacts in Tibet, she posted daily reports on the protests, human rights abuses and extrajudicial killings.

Woeser has undergone house arrest and harassment, her websites have been closed down, her movements are restricted and her life under constant surveillance, but she continues to write about Tibet from inside China. Woeser is honoured for her courage in speaking for those who are silenced and oppressed, for her compelling combination of literary quality and political reportage, for recording, articulating and supporting Tibetan culture, and for her active commitment to self-determination, freedom and development in Tibet."

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, July 3rd, 2014 at 10:34 AM

Title: Re: How Tibetans really feel about the occupation

Content:

yegyal said:

I know a European couple that ran a hotel in Lhasa for many years, not sure if they still do, but they had lots of first hand experience with this sort of thing. For one, every hotel and guest house has at least two watchers posted their to keep an eye on, i.e. follow



guests. And I'm just talking about foreign tourists here, not Tibetan. They had cops coming in regularly to install "bugs" in the rooms of people they deemed suspicious. And the owners themselves had heavily armed security forces bust through their door on more than one occasion for little more than things they were talking about on the phone. So not only were they constantly listening in on their phones calls, they even had somebody who understood their particular language. So, there's no reason to doubt the above guidelines. I have spent a fair amount of time in Tibet and I have had run ins with the police everywhere I have gone. Nothing serious, but they make sure you know that they are watching you and take down you're info. More specifically, I have spent time in Ngaba, which is ground zero for the immolations. And the military presence and harrassment there made it look like the West Bank, and that was before they started. So again, Jeff, I don't where you come up with this nonsense you spew about how good Tibetans have it and how lax the Chinese gov't is, but it just shows your complete ignorance on this subject. Not to mention the callousness of being a pro-China troll on the Tibetan Buddhism section of this site.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, July 3rd, 2014 at 7:47 PM

Title: Re: Yeti-Bigfoot

Content:

kirtu said:

<http://www.forbes.com/sites/paulrogers/2014/07/02/abominable-news-yeti-identified-as-ancestral-polar-bear/>

From Forbes: Samples of hair believed to be from the abominable snowman are actually from an ancestor of the polar bear.

The discovery raises the possibility that stories of an undiscovered giant primate living in the Himalayas may be based on large and aggressive, but reclusive, bears.

Bryan Sykes, a human genetics professor at Oxford University, and Michel Sartori, director of the Lausanne Museum of Zoology, formed the Oxford-Lausanne Collateral Hominid Project to test the stories of 'anomalous primates' from around the world.

They and their colleagues analysed 57 samples of hair allegedly from creatures including the Himalayan yeti, sasquatch (Bigfoot) from North America, almasty from Russia, orang pendek from Sumatra, and migyhur from Bhutan, submitting 36 of them to DNA testing.

But, as they report in Proceedings of the Royal Society B, most were from horses, dogs and in one case a human, or were not hair at all.

Two of them, however, closely matched the DNA from a polar bear fossil found on Svalbard, an island in the Russian Arctic, dating back 40,000 years to the Pleistocene period, when much of continental Asia was covered with glaciers.

One of the samples, a golden-brown tuft, came from an animal shot in Ladakh, India, in the 1970s, the other, reddish-brown hair was found in a bamboo forest high in Bhutan described as a migyur nest.

....

The hairs are either from a new bear species, a colour variant of polar bears or a hybrid of polar bears and brown bears, the researchers concluded.

....

OTOH, their Bigfoot sample was ruled out completely. These results are being hailed as a win for cryptozoology.

Kirt

Malcolm wrote:

Yetis are just a kind of alpine brown bear.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, July 3rd, 2014 at 8:16 PM

Title: Re: How Tibetans really feel about the occupation

Content:

Indrajala said:

That's different from saying Tibetan culture is being oppressed and eradicated.

Malcolm wrote:

But Tibetan culture is being systematically oppressed and eradicated. This is what you refuse to see. Take the nomads for example:

<http://freetibet.org/news-media/pr/un-holds-china-accountable-forced-settlement-tibetans-nomads> " onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;

The Nomads are an integral part of Tibetan culture, historically, 60 percent of all Tibetans lived in nomadic communities.

Indrajala said:

If they didn't exercise such measures, perhaps there could be rioting again, or worse. In some situations the state has to implement measures to ensure public safety. The PRC doesn't want to have to deal with this again:

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2008\\_Tibetan\\_unrest](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2008_Tibetan_unrest) " onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;" onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;" onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;

If things got out of hand the Indians for example could take advantage of the situation and start covertly arming Tibetans (this is a real danger, and if you know anything about geopolitics in this part of the world, you know this sort of thing actually happens).

Perhaps you might be pleased seeing Tibetans rising up in arms against the Chinese state (I hope you wouldn't rejoice in the violence), but I don't think you'd like the consequences. Think of the religious fundamentalists next door in Xinjiang itching for a fight.

Malcolm wrote:

So you excuse state violence but condemn resisting totalitarianism?

You do realize that the Chinese just outlawed Ramadan?

Indrajala said:

It isn't good guys versus bad guys.

Malcolm wrote:

Yeah, it really is.

Indrajala said:

A lot of non-Tibetan Tibetan Buddhists in India, Nepal and Bhutan practice Tibetan Buddhism without being sympathetic necessarily to Tibetan nationalism. In fact, I know many who dislike all such politics in their religion and thus have nothing to do with it.

Malcolm wrote:

I don't know a single Tibetan who agrees with the Chinese occupation of Tibet.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, July 3rd, 2014 at 8:20 PM

Title: Re: How Tibetans really feel about the occupation

Content:

Indrajala said:

I think the real concern is less about Tibet and more about Xinjiang. The latter has the potential to become another Afghanistan or Chechnya if certain elements acquired firearms. Just look at the spat of killings and bombings around China within the last year.

Malcolm wrote:

The Muslims there will get arms -- China is sitting on a powder keg.

Indrajala said:

Tibet is linked to Xijiang geographically and politically. Any move towards independence on the part of Tibetans is likely to be regarded as an encouraging example which Xinjiang dissidents could emulate and capitalize on. The same level of policing, if not more, is likely active in Xinjiang, too, though Tibetan activists either overlook this or are unaware of it.

Malcolm wrote:

Everyone is aware.

Indrajala said:

Human Rights activists do have a point that heavy policing causes a great amount of suffering amongst the common people, but it is a lot more complex than that. There's also the point that "Human Rights" are way with which western countries bully their opponents, like China and Russia. To be a Human Rights violator is tantamount to being a monster, even though the purported monster is acting logically albeit in a morally questionable fashion.

Malcolm wrote:

People who violate human rights, whatever nation they come from, are monsters.

Indrajala said:

What is instructive in this discussion and others on this forum is that really nobody has conceded, as far as I recall, the additional element of Xinjiang in the China-Tibet issue.

Malcolm wrote:

It merely shows that China's grasp on its colonies is slipping after years of oppression of these regions.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, July 3rd, 2014 at 9:13 PM

Title: Re: Is DW a sangha?

Content:

Ayu said:

The normal people cannot be sangha. To a sangha you take refuge.

I would not like anybody taking refuge to me as an ordinary person.

Malcolm wrote:

This is not exactly the case. There is the Sangha of Refuge and the Sangha of practitioners. The former has no faults, former has many.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, July 3rd, 2014 at 9:25 PM

Title: Re: Is DW a sangha?

Content:

Ayu said:

The normal people cannot be sangha. To a sangha you take refuge.

I would not like anybody taking refuge to me as an ordinary person.

Malcolm wrote:

This is not exactly the case. There is the Sangha of Refuge and the Sangha of practitioners. The former has no faults, former has many.

Ayu said:

Yes, you're right, it is said like this. But one should not really take refuge in the sangha of practitioners.

And on this board there must be many people, who are no practitioners at all. Not yet at least.

That's why I voted "No", whatever the OP might think what a Sangha is.

Malcolm wrote:

I voted no as well.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, July 4th, 2014 at 12:20 AM

Title: Re: Is DW a sangha?

Content:

David N. Snyder said:

To each his own, but I personally prefer the inclusive-liberal-modern, community definition.

Malcolm wrote:

One does not take refuge in mundane refuges if one is a follower of Dharma. If one does, one breaks one's refuge to Buddha, Dharma and Noble Sangha.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, July 4th, 2014 at 12:30 AM

Title: Re: Is DW a sangha?

Content:

David N. Snyder said:

"Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha are three precious jewels in Buddhism, and the most important of these is Sangha. The Sangha contains the Buddha and the Dharma. A good teacher is important, but sisters and brothers in the practice are the main ingredient for success."

Thich Nhat Hanh, Tricycle 2008

Malcolm wrote:

The Pāramitā-Mahāyānists assert Buddhahood possess the nature of the three kāyas; the Dharma as Mahāyāna; the Sangha is only the ārya bodhisattvas.

— Sakya Pandita

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, July 4th, 2014 at 12:33 AM

Title: Re: Is DW a sangha?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

One does not take refuge in mundane refuges if one is a follower of Dharma. If one does, one breaks one's refuge to Buddha, Dharma and Noble Sangha.

David N. Snyder said:

One can take Refuge in the Three Gems in the ideal state of referring to the Buddha, Dharma, and noble Sangha and then also use the term in the conventional sense to refer to the community of Buddhists. It's just a word, no big deal, imo.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, I did not contest that. I was addressing the general confusion there is about who is a refuge and what Sangha means.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, July 4th, 2014 at 7:39 PM

Title: Re: All Truth Claims Cannot be True

Content:

tobes said:

I'm saying: in contemporary India, the idea of universal brotherhood/cosmopolitanism is quite prevalent...

Malcolm wrote:

Yeah, but what about the sisters?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, July 4th, 2014 at 7:41 PM

Title: Re: Dharma wheel, ethics, value & online communities

Content:

LastLegend said:

I am not undermining guru-relationship. I feel there is a pressure for people to have a live teacher.

Malcolm wrote:

One needs a living teacher, this is very clearly stated in many sutras.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, July 4th, 2014 at 8:31 PM

Title: Re: Dharma wheel, ethics, value & online communities

Content:

LastLegend said:

I am not undermining guru-relationship. I feel there is a pressure for people to have a live teacher.

Malcolm wrote:

One needs a living teacher, this is very clearly stated in many sutras.

LastLegend said:

If you need special guidance and are practicing a meditation.

Malcolm wrote:

No, just in general. The Mahāyāna path is based on having a teacher. The examples of this are numerous. For example The Saṃcaya-gāthā states: Just as a group of patients rely on medicine to be cured,

one should unwaveringly rely on a virtuous mentor.

The Gaṇḍāvyuha sūtra states: Young Manibhadra, bodhisattvas who correctly adhere to the virtuous mentor do not fall into lower realms; they realize the uniformity of all phenomena; they are shown the paths of bliss and misery; they are instructed in the conduct of Samantabhadra; they are shown the path to the city of omniscience; they are carried to the place of omniscience...

And:

The virtuous mentor comprehends incorrect actions, correctly turns one away from shameless places, extracts one from the city of samsara...Child of a good family, since one always thinks in that way, serve virtuous mentors.

The Ratnamegha-sūtra states: Now then, since the qualities of virtue will increase and nonvirtue will decline if one relies on the guru, the preceptor [mkhan po, upādhyāyaḥ] will generate the thought of teaching those with greater or lesser hearing, or those with discipline or corrupted discipline.

These are merely a few of very many citations from the sūtras about why it is important to rely on a kalyānamitra, a virtuous mentor.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, July 4th, 2014 at 9:12 PM

Title: Re: Dharma wheel, ethics, value & online communities

Content:

LastLegend said:

Buddhists who practice meditations are the minority. For example, Vietnamese Buddhists are advised to follow 5 precepts and recall a Buddha or Bodhisattva.

Malcolm wrote:

In order to receive the five precepts, you need a preceptor.

LastLegend said:

They also/might attend teachings given by monks. For example, monks would discuss a particular subject relevant to people's lives, then allow some time for questions and answers.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes. The role of the kalyānamitra is precisely this — to instruct and encourage people in the practice of the six perfections and the four modes of conversion, the essentials of the Mahāyāna path.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, July 4th, 2014 at 11:15 PM

Title: Re: Stephen Batchelor is influential in the evolution of Dha

Content:

Prasutagus said:

What he has done had to happen at some point: a nihilistic and agnostic extrusion of dharma.

Malcolm wrote:

His books are not Dharma.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, July 4th, 2014 at 11:20 PM

Title: Re: Stephen Batchelor is influential in the evolution of Dha

Content:

Prasutagus said:

I didn't say they were.

I actually think he works are a significant contribution and evolution of Dharma. What he has done had to happen at some point: a nihilistic and agnostic extrusion of dharma.

Malcolm wrote:

???

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, July 5th, 2014 at 12:20 AM

Title: Re: How Tibetans really feel about the occupation

Content:

Osho said:

That's non different in Tibet except that for some reason Tibetan Buddhism is quite the fashion right now with affluent folks.



Malcolm wrote:

The situation on the ground in Tibet is very serious and not this Disney land of religious freedom and happiness you want to paint.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, July 5th, 2014 at 1:39 AM

Title: Re: How Tibetans really feel about the occupation

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The situation on the ground in Tibet is very serious and not this Disney land of religious freedom and happiness you want to paint.

Indrajala said:

Three or four Tibetan monks from here just went back to Tibet last year. No problems I hear. There are several Chinese nationals staying in this gonpa, too. One Chinese monk too. There's a heap of Tibetan texts sitting up in the library recently printed and shipped out of Lhasa.

It ain't the seventies in Tibet now.

Malcolm wrote:

Printing of books does not equal freedom to practice in an unfettered way. I have been to Lhasa. There is no religious freedom there. It is just a Buddhist museum, a tourist attraction.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, July 5th, 2014 at 2:11 AM

Title: Re: How Tibetans really feel about the occupation

Content:

Indrajala said:

I keep hearing from Sakya monks at least that you can in fact ordain, practice and do your own thing in Tibet. You just stay out of politics and you're left alone.

Malcolm wrote:

That very much depends on where you are in Tibet. In central Tibet, it is not possible. There, religious activities are very strictly controlled. Any monastery that gets too popular, or too big, gets throttled very quickly anywhere one is in Tibet. There are spies everywhere. During the 2008 riots, Chinese used provocateurs to incite looting using this as an excuse for cracking down. Lhasa is heavily patrolled and non-Chinese tourists are not allowed to travel there freely, and never without a "guide".

And incidentally, I was not in China Tibet as a "tourist". I was there studying Tibetan

Medicine.

Indrajala said:

If Tibet was really "burning" you wouldn't have Tibetan monks returning freely to Tibet from Nepal and numerous Chinese nationals over the years staying in this gonpa amongst a high number of Tibetan monks in exile. The Chinese embassy as far as I know doesn't care about their citizens hanging out here for extended periods.

Malcolm wrote:

The Han are free to come and go pretty much as they please. It is not the same for all Tibetans.

Indrajala said:

I'd rather that the Chinese not crack down on political activism, but political activism in Tibet (and China) tends to end up in riots in the streets. Arguably peaceful protest is increasingly a thing of the past in the west, too. Look at all the riots in Europe in the last few years. Freedom is one thing, but rule of law and safe streets are preferable as well.

Malcolm wrote:

When the rule of law is insufferably oppressive, there is only one thing to do — i.e. resist.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, July 5th, 2014 at 2:29 AM

Title: Re: How Tibetans really feel about the occupation

Content:

Indrajala said:

Is China really repressing Tibetan culture when they allow a white American associated with Tibetan Buddhism to hang around Tibetan regions to study Tibetan medicine?

Malcolm wrote:

The way Tibetan Medicine is taught within the PRC is that all the religious, i.e. Buddhist, elements of Tibetan Medicine are stripped out.

The Chinese are happy have museums of Tibetan culture, that is exactly where they like it, in museums, not as a living entity.

Indrajala said:

And that just feeds into an endless cycle. The Chinese would only let up AFTER things have cooled down, not before. Any risk of rioting and the state losing face and they'll not release any pressure.

Malcolm wrote:

Tibetans will resist forever, even if it takes them 500 years. The Chinese will have to kill them all before they will give up their desire to regain their independence.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, July 5th, 2014 at 3:22 AM

Title: Re: How Tibetans really feel about the occupation

Content:

Indrajala said:

[

Even if that's true, they still let you, a white American, enter Tibetan areas and study "Tibetan medicine".

Malcolm wrote:

While our class had wide access to Amdo (2009), the class that followed us (2012) was on a very restricted visa and nearly was not allowed to go at all.

Indrajala said:

Your own experiences undermine your claims of extreme oppression.

Malcolm wrote:

No, they don't at all. First of all, we were not in the TAR, we were in Xining. We were allowed to go to Lhasa, but only as a tour group where we were chaperoned around the Barkor like all the other western tourists.

But you realize all you are doing is just defending the oppression of Tibetans in their own lands, you are defending extrajudicial killings, imprisonment, torture and everything else that goes along with racist oppression.

Indrajala said:

Tibetan lamas are teaching Chinese people all over China. You can buy Tibetan religious gear in Guangzhou. It ain't a museum specimen. There's apparently a Sakya teacher with a big Dharma center in Shanghai who is also building a retreat center!

Malcolm wrote:

That is not Tibetan Buddhism for Tibetans, that is "Tibetan" Buddhism for Chinese consumption. The two are not the same in any respect at all.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, July 5th, 2014 at 3:25 AM

Title: Re: How Tibetans really feel about the occupation

Content:

theanarchist said:

Ah, now you accuse people who make such claims of lying and making it up to badmouth the great People's Republic.

Indrajala said:

I can't verify claims of torture.

Malcolm wrote:

<http://www.amnesty.org.uk/blogs/countdown-china/chrb-tibetan-dies-torture-suffered-prison-lawyers-detained-exposing-black-jail> " onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;

There are many more documented incidents like this one. Just open your eyes.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, July 6th, 2014 at 12:05 AM

Title: Re: Tibetan Doctors, please read

Content:

Reibeam said:

I'm trying to learn the long Mandarava practice.....can that be practiced without taking the chudlen pills?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes.

Reibeam said:

I have transmission for the chudlen that is used with the amitayus practice, but I don't think I have the correct transmission to take it with the Mandarava practice as I am guessing they are different.

Malcolm wrote:

You have permission.

Reibeam said:

Also, I do not have a lung or personal instruction for the tsalung or kumbhaka that is used in the Mandarava practice. Is that needed to do the chudlen or is it an additional part that I can apply after receiving instruction which will hopefully be taught in the United States in the near future.

Malcolm wrote:

It is an additional part for which you need transmission.

Reibeam said:

I am just wondering what is the best way to go about learning this practice in a precise way? Rinpoche seems to say to start with the long practice first before doing the simple one so I want to make sure I am approaching it in the right way.

Malcolm wrote:

In general, you do the essential practice, and slowly try to learn long practice.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, July 6th, 2014 at 4:56 AM

Title: Re: Direct introduction and purification of the 6 lokas

Content:

frank123 said:

.is that true?

Thank you

Malcolm wrote:

Yes. This is true.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, July 6th, 2014 at 5:41 AM

Title: Re: Direct introduction and purification of the 6 lokas

Content:

frank123 said:

I have ordered the previous vase and i am studying a recording of Vajrasattva and the purification 6 lokas retreat. Is this a different practice than the one in the previous vase, if so do i need a lung for the Vajrasattva and the 6 lokas practice?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, you do need the lung for this.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, July 6th, 2014 at 9:58 AM

Title: Re: How Tibetans really feel about the occupation

Content:

Osho said:

That's non different in Tibet except that for some reason Tibetan Buddhism is quite the fashion right now with affluent folks.

Malcolm wrote:

The situation on the ground in Tibet is very serious and not this Disney land of religious freedom and happiness you want to paint.

Osho said:

With all due respect.

What we hear on DW from some posters does not necessarily correspond with what can be seen and experienced in China.

Disney Land is a good analogy.

Chinese tourists are flocking to Buddhist and Daoist sites and the more affluent and mobile are hitting Tibet.

It's a win win situation as some of those tourists stick around and begin a more serious

interest.

Every 'western Buddhist' here on DW started out as a 'faith tourist'.  
It's all good.

Malcolm wrote:

Your facile apologetics are useless here. I have been there, i have seen with my own eyes.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, July 6th, 2014 at 7:20 PM

Title: Re: Direct introduction and purification of the 6 lokas

Content:

frank123 said:

Does ChNN only give the lung for the purification of the 6 lokas during a retreat on the 6 lokas? or does he give it at the end of other retreats?

Thanks

Malcolm wrote:

Every retreat

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, July 6th, 2014 at 8:14 PM

Title: Re: Direct introduction and purification of the 6 lokas

Content:

frank123 said:

Does ChNN only give the lung for the purification of the 6 lokas during a retreat on the 6 lokas? or does he give it at the end of other retreats?

Thanks

Malcolm wrote:

Every retreat

frank123 said:

I have been attending webcasts and practicing Guru yoga. Would it be safe to say then i received the lung for the vajrasattva and the purification of the 6 lokas and i can study the retreat on this and practice it? I just want to be sure because i don't consciously remember receiving the lung and i'm not comfortable not knowing.

Malcolm wrote:

Are you talking about the Longsal Ngondro?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, July 6th, 2014 at 8:35 PM

Title: Re: Direct introduction and purification of the 6 lokas

Content:

frank123 said:

Yes i am,would it be appropriate for me to practice it without remembering if i received the lung?

Malcolm wrote:

No, it would not, AFAIK. You need to send ChNN an email and ask him to give the lung during the next retreat.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, July 6th, 2014 at 8:41 PM

Title: Re: How Tibetans feel about the occupation of Tibet

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]
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https://phpbbex.com/ [video]
```

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, July 6th, 2014 at 8:42 PM

Title: Re: How Tibetans feel about the occupation of Tibet

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

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if (typeof bbmedia == 'undefined') { bbmedia = true; var e =  
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document.getElementsByTagName('script')[0]; s.parentNode.insertBefore(e, s); }  
https://phpbbex.com/ [video]
```

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, July 6th, 2014 at 8:52 PM

Title: Re: Direct introduction and purification of the 6 lokas

Content:

frank123 said:

Yes i am,would it be appropriate for me to practice it without remembering if i received the lung?

Malcolm wrote:

No, it would not, AFAIK. You need to send ChNN an email and ask him to give the lung during the next retreat.

frank123 said:

Ok, thanks for the clarification. So just to be clear i can practice the purification of 6 lokas from the precious vase?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, July 6th, 2014 at 8:52 PM

Title: Re: How Tibetans feel about the occupation of Tibet

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: Sunday, July 6th, 2014 at 9:57 PM

Title: Re: Direct introduction and purification of the 6 lokas

Content:

frank123 said:

Thank you.

Malcolm wrote:

You can practice all of the semzin and rushan practices actually.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, July 6th, 2014 at 9:58 PM

Title: Re: Can lamas choose a suitable yidam for you by divination?

Content:

lelopa said:

So i can't see the difference between this and some yidam-practices....[/b]

Malcolm wrote:

[/quote]



It is a Yidam practice, very common among Karma Kagyus (though the origin of the practice is Nyingma via Karma Pakshi).

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, July 6th, 2014 at 11:41 PM

Title: Re: Opinions on the Consequences of Chinese Occupation of Ti

Content:

Osho said:

As have I Malcolm, as have I.

Malcolm wrote:

Then you must have never stepped off your tour bus or talked with any Tibetans.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, July 6th, 2014 at 11:50 PM

Title: Re: How Tibetans feel about the occupation of Tibet

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

<http://freetibet.org/news-media/na/tibetan-killed-chinese-fire-upon-protesters>

Unknown said:

Monday, 23 January 2012

Norpa Yonten who was killed as Chinese forces opened fire

Chinese security forces opened fire on Tibetan protesters, killing at least one man, earlier today.

Free Tibet is aware of more than 30 others who have been injured, many of them shot, after a large gathering in Draggo (also known as Drango) was fired upon. It is not known why the Chinese opened fire.

The situation is still ongoing.

Tibetans shot

The dead man has been named as Norpa Yonten (right), a 49-year-old lay person from Norpa village, Norchung township in Draggo County. His body has been taken to the nearby Draggo monastery.

At least one other person has been taken to the monastery with gunshot wounds. Locals are fearful to take the injured to hospital in case they are arrested.

Tibetans are reportedly travelling to Draggo and large crowds are gathering in the

grounds of the monastery.

#### Arrest of Tibetans

It is still unclear what sparked the protest. There are reports that Tibetans around Draggo were arrested this morning on suspicion of distributing leaflets and posters calling for freedom and the protest was a response to these arbitrary detentions.

There are also claims that it was in response to celebrations marking the Chinese New Year which many local Tibetans had decided to boycott due to the growing unrest.

The protesters were heard to call out for freedom for Tibet and the return of the Dalai Lama.

Internet access is now banned in Draggo.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, July 6th, 2014 at 11:53 PM

Title: Re: How Tibetans feel about the occupation of Tibet

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

<http://freetibet.org/stoptorture/surv.php>

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, July 7th, 2014 at 9:29 AM

Title: Re: Direct introduction and purification of the 6 lokas

Content:

frank123 said:

Thank you.

Malcolm wrote:

You can practice all of the semzin and rushan practices actually.

Inge said:

Including the secret separation of samsara and nirvana? Oral instructions are needed for those, according to The Precious Vase.

Malcolm wrote:

All, the inner and secret rushans are completely described in the PV.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, July 7th, 2014 at 11:13 AM

Title: Re: Stephen Batchelor is influential in the evolution of Dha

Content:

Alfredo said:

some things would never have occurred to him to question.

Malcolm wrote:

Why? There were well developed schools of materialists during the time of the Buddha, skepticism was a popular position at that time in India and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, July 7th, 2014 at 8:23 PM

Title: Re: Dharma & Science

Content:

Kim O'Hara said:

Buddhism, on the other hand, gets along fine without miracles.

Malcolm wrote:

I guess you have not read many suttas then...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, July 7th, 2014 at 8:32 PM

Title: Re: Dharma & Science

Content:

Kim O'Hara said:

Buddhism, on the other hand, gets along fine without miracles.

Malcolm wrote:

I guess you have not read many suttas then...

catmoon said:

Well that's sort of the point you see. Lots of Buddhists have no interest in miracles, routinely avoid the more phantasmagorical writings and do just fine.

Malcolm wrote:

It means they have not understood the path very well, especially the Mahāyāna path.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, July 7th, 2014 at 9:02 PM

Title: Re: Dharma & Science

Content:

Kim O'Hara said:

Christianity, which starts with a virgin birth and goes on from there.

Malcolm wrote:

The Lord of the Three Worlds, [55] revered by all the worlds, now judged that the time had come. On the fifteenth day, during the full moon, while his future mother was observing the poṣadha precepts during the constellation of Puṣya, the Bodhisattva moved, fully conscious and aware, from the fine realm of the Heaven of Joy to the womb of his mother.

— Lalitavistara sutra

<http://read.84000.co/browser/released/UT22084/046/UT22084-046-001.pdf>

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, July 7th, 2014 at 9:07 PM

Title: Re: Dharma & Science

Content:

Kim O'Hara said:

Perhaps this is the time for me to admit my continued affection for the Pali canon.

But (as a matter of some interest) what do you identify as a crucial part of the Mahayana path which depends on supernatural intervention?

Malcolm wrote:

"Sariputta, when I know and see thus, should anyone say of me: 'The recluse Gotama does not have any superhuman states, any distinction in knowledge and vision worthy of the noble ones. The recluse Gotama teaches a Dhamma (merely) hammered out by reasoning, following his own line of inquiry as it occurs to him' — unless he abandons that assertion and that state of mind and relinquishes that view, then as (surely as if he had been) carried off and put there he will wind up in hell.

<http://www.accesstoinsight.org/tipitaka/mn/mn.012.ntbb.html>

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, July 7th, 2014 at 10:23 PM

Title: Re: Dharma & Science

Content:

Prasutagus said:

I also didn't include an exhaustive list of responses, but rather a list of the most common I've heard over the years. I also didn't nuance science versus scientific materialism versus scientism as most people don't make those distinctions.

Malcolm wrote:

The vision of science corresponds to those with impure, afflicted vision. What else is there to say?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, July 7th, 2014 at 11:08 PM

Title: Re: Tibetan Doctors, please read

Content:

Reibeam said:

I have some chudlen from Shang Shung which is for these practices, but If I get some chudlen from Siddhi Energetics (I am interested in this company in general as a source) can that be used with these practices?

I saw an old thread where you said you could use almost anything, but Is there any difference in function between them on a physical level? There seem to be many formulations with different uses.

Malcolm wrote:

As for your first question, yes, they can. As to your second, yes, also this is true, there are chulens for specific ailments. But in a general way it is not necessary to go down that road.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, July 8th, 2014 at 12:50 AM

Title: Re: Stephen Batchelor is influential in the evolution of Dha

Content:

uan said:

We can replace the mind of the observing scientist to the mind of the observing Buddhist practitioner. We talk of Buddha and enlightenment as if we know what those actually are....

Malcolm wrote:

We do. At base, awakening means being free of afflictions that cause rebirth in samsara. Omniscience is the knowledge of all modes that lead to that liberation as well as the essence of all phenomena.

uan said:

from non realized teachers

Malcolm wrote:

My [main] teachers are awakened, I don't know about yours.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, July 9th, 2014 at 12:38 AM

Title: Re: Rebirth....how does it happen?

Content:

Andrew108 said:

For those who believe in literal rebirth, can you explain how it happens? What are the mechanics of it? What is the reasoning that convinces you that there is literal rebirth?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, July 9th, 2014 at 1:27 AM

Title: Re: still new...questions on mindstream

Content:

twiz said:

I've had what seemed like vivid dreams that included a rinpoche who gently introduced me to this path. Recently a dream involved a very high lama/rinpoche. I feel incredibly blessed.

Malcolm wrote:

It means you should make an effort to meet this teacher.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, July 9th, 2014 at 1:32 AM

Title: Re: Rebirth....how does it happen?

Content:

Mkoll said:

Belief is a word I try to avoid because it is too loaded. I prefer the description of "safeguarding the truth" in the Canki Sutta:

MN 95 said:

"If a person likes something... holds an unbroken tradition... has something reasoned through analogy... has something he agrees to, having pondered views, his statement, 'This is what I agree to, having pondered views,' safeguards the truth. But he doesn't yet come to the definite conclusion that 'Only this is true; anything else is worthless.' To this extent, Bharadvaja, there is the safeguarding of the truth. To this extent one safeguards the truth. I describe this as the safeguarding of the truth. But it is not yet an awakening to the truth.

Mkoll said:

Rebirth is an integral of the Buddha's teachings and I've chosen to be a disciple of the Buddha. That's reason enough for me to listen to what he says about it and think about it. And I've come to the point where I agree with it, "having pondered views". As for how rebirth happens and the mechanics of it, I think that subject is <http://www.accesstoinight.org/tipitaka/an/an04/an04.077.than.html>.

There's a <http://dhammawheel.com/viewtopic.php?f=16&t=41> and a <https://www.dharmawheel.net/viewtopic.php?f=66&t=5678> about rebirth. I'm sure you'll find alternative perspectives there.

Malcolm wrote:

You know, after a point on E-Sangha, we just shut this kind of conversation down because it is completely boring and not edifying at all...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, July 9th, 2014 at 1:45 AM

Title: Re: Prayer

Content:

Crazywisdom said:

One has to be aware of the level of teaching the teacher is giving. At one level, i.e., the vajrayana level, particularly outer tantra, there is a real buddhaland where Vajrasattva presides.

Malcolm wrote:

This is also part of men ngag sde

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, July 9th, 2014 at 2:12 AM

Title: Re: Rebirth....how does it happen?

Content:

Andrew108 said:

Instead of posting links please explain how you see it happening.

Malcolm wrote:

Why? This has been done countless hundreds of times for you and others.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, July 9th, 2014 at 2:12 AM

Title: Re: Rebirth....how does it happen?

Content:

Andrew108 said:

Can consciousness travel distances? How does the consciousness that leaves the body actually leave the body? How does consciousness move distances? And when consciousness descends into the womb I would imagine the speed of the descent is quite fast. How fast? These are some of the questions I ask myself.

You might think that I am trolling here or that this topic is boring. But for me, rebirth and how it actually happens (if it happens) is very interesting. It would be great if some clarity could be shed on the subject. What I have been given so far are links. Since those who hold to literal rebirth do so very seriously, then they must have seriously questioned the concept. And after investigating they must have come up with reasoned arguments to support their belief. So lets hear them. What we have been getting so far is that you HAVE to believe in rebirth. Belief without reason is not quite right. So please put forward the reasoning that supports your belief in literal rebirth.

Malcolm wrote:

If you would only study the Dharma, A108, then you will find these answers. For example, a bardo being (gandharva) is unobstructed by coarse matter — they travel throughout the universe merely by thinking, "I want to go there".

All these things will be answered for the person who carefully studies.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, July 9th, 2014 at 2:13 AM

Title: Re: Rebirth....how does it happen?

Content:

Mkoll said:

I see there was no point in making the effort of a serious post so...  
?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, July 9th, 2014 at 2:15 AM

Title: Re: Prayer

Content:

Crazywisdom said:

Take rebirth in a Pure land is not mengagde proper, IMHO.

Malcolm wrote:

Sure it is. It is the result that the most average practitioners will experience. After 500 years of training in each of nirmanakāya buddhafiels, they will attain buddhahood. This is very precisely described in the 17 tantras as well as the unsurpassed secret cycle, by Longchenpa and many others.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, July 9th, 2014 at 2:33 AM

Title: Re: Rebirth....how does it happen?

Content:

Andrew108 said:

I've been studying the materials. Especially the Abhidharma texts. In the text that Sherab linked to it says:

"At the moment of conception, productive kamma generates the rebirth-linking consciousness and the kamma-born types of materiality constituting the physical body of the new being."

So here there is no mechanics of descent of consciousness into a womb. Here it is kamma that that is generating consciousness. kamma here means prior cause or prior action. So consciousness here is not an isolated force or energy that somehow is disembodied and then dives into the conception. Rather it is portrayed as having a prior



cause rooted in the material/conscious being of others.

Malcolm wrote:

Not "others", plural; an other, singular.

But in any case this is not definitive for Mahāyāna. Instead, you should examine such texts as the Nandagarbhavikranti sutra, and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, July 9th, 2014 at 2:37 AM

Title: Re: Prayer

Content:

Crazywisdom said:

A one-returner on the Arahant's marga-phala will take rebirth in a pure land, too. Common with Pure Land sutras..., but okay. The point I'm making is the explanation of the nature of the three kayas that is unique to mengagde relates to the manner in which a realized being emanates as one of the form kayas.

Malcolm wrote:

A never returner, you mean, and the five pure abodes, at the summit of the form realm, are not pure lands.

A Dzogchen practitioner who does not wake up in the bardo will take rebirth in buddhafiield of Vajrasattva, Ratnasambhava, etc., for 125 years year each. At the end of 500 years, they will attain full buddhahood. This does not occur for pure land practitioners, arhats, etc.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, July 9th, 2014 at 2:59 AM

Title: Re: Rebirth....how does it happen?

Content:

Jikan said:

I'm not clear on what you mean by consciousness, Andrew108.

Malcolm wrote:

Neither is he.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, July 9th, 2014 at 3:08 AM

Title: Re: Prayer

Content:

Crazywisdom said:

It amounts to a distinction without a difference, brother Malcolm.

Malcolm wrote:

It is an important distinction, actually.

Crazywisdom said:

Buddha wakes up the hearer sangha with his light.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, and then they have to begin on the bodhisattva path at the beginning.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, July 9th, 2014 at 3:20 AM

Title: Re: Rebirth....how does it happen?

Content:

Andrew108 said:

@Jikan...Consciousness in the context of my last few posts is the rebirth-linking consciousness. I'm looking at the Abhidharma texts. It is stated quite clearly that this rebirth-linking consciousness requires prior cause or kamma that is the result of action. It is said that this type of Kamma (productive kamma) that is responsible for generating the rebirth-linking consciousness exists prior to that consciousness and that "during the course of existence it produces other resultant cittas and the continuities of kamma-born materiality, such as the sense faculties, sexual determination, and the heart-base." The heart-base is quite interesting in itself and could be a separate topic of discussion.

So it seems that kamma exists as an objective condition as the result of action prior to the manifestation of the consciousness. In this case it is not that consciousness contains within it all types of kamma.

Jikan said:

Sorry, I'm even more confused now. Rather than ask you to explain your explanation, would you please tell me what it is you're reading so I can get a sense of where you're coming from?

thanks.

Malcolm wrote:

Andrew missed the part where karma was defined by the Buddha as volition, and the effects of volition body and speech.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, July 9th, 2014 at 3:21 AM

Title: Re: Rebirth....how does it happen?

Content:

Jikan said:

I'm not clear on what you mean by consciousness, Andrew108.

Malcolm wrote:

Neither is he.

Andrew108 said:

Neither are you. Less of the Ad homs. I've explained that I am looking at the Abhidharma texts. So instead of the popcorn why not contribute?

Malcolm wrote:

It is definitely the case that I am not clear on what you mean by consciousness; and that is because you are not clear on what consciousness is.

As far as participating, I have provided all of these answers for you in the past, but still you persist in asking questions so:

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, July 9th, 2014 at 3:28 AM

Title: Re: Rebirth....how does it happen?

Content:

Andrew108 said:

I've explained that I am looking at the Abhidharma texts.

daverupa said:

So is patisandhi-citta your "rebirth-linking consciousness"? Because if you're already reading that stuff and it feels acceptable, please note that the answer to your question is in there too.

But a lot of Mahayana accepts Bardo between births, while in Theravada there's no time at all between them, so the discussion is bound to get out of alignment.

Malcolm wrote:

All of Mahāyāna...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, July 9th, 2014 at 3:40 AM

Title: Re: Rebirth....how does it happen?

Content:

Andrew108 said:

I think this is the problem. Perhaps it is this Mahayana view of rebirth - with the idea of bardo. I'm wondering what is the scriptural basis for bardo?

Malcolm wrote:

Ārya-laṅkāvatāra-mahāyāna-sūtra

Nandagarbhāvākṛāntinirdeśa

Karmaprajñapti

etc.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, July 9th, 2014 at 3:41 AM

Title: Re: Rebirth....how does it happen?

Content:

daverupa said:

So is patisandhi-citta your "rebirth-linking consciousness"?

Andrew108 said:

Yes that's it. And this consciousness is said to be generated by kamma (productive kamma) immediately after death. It seems that some types of kamma in Abhidamma texts are close to what I have called an 'objective condition'.

Malcolm wrote:

No, all karma is subjective in so far as all karma is mental volitions.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, July 9th, 2014 at 3:51 AM

Title: Re: Rebirth....how does it happen?

Content:

Andrew108 said:

I think this is the problem. Perhaps it is this Mahayana view of rebirth - with the idea of bardo. I'm wondering what is the scriptural basis for bardo?

Malcolm wrote:

Ārya-laṅkāvatāra-mahāyāna-sūtra

Nandagarbhāvākṛāntinirdeśa

Karmaprajñāpti

etc.

Andrew108 said:

These Sutras are all about the primacy of consciousness. This is why I have been unsure about your posts. Earlier suttas are more focused on the primacy of kamma. O.k so that is why there has been a disconnect.

Malcolm wrote:

No, this is not the case. The Karmaprajñāpti is about karma.

Nandagarbhāvākṛāntinirdeśa is about how conception and development in the womb takes place. For example:

If the father and mother are of noble social class, or endowed with great merit, but the intermediate existence being's merit heap is small; or if the intermediate existence beings' social class is noble, or is endowed with great merit, but the father and mother's merit is small, or even though both are endowed with merit, when past actions to mutually meet together are not accumulated, there cannot be entry into the womb. In this case, merit of the father and mother can be an external condition determining whether conception can occur or not.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, July 9th, 2014 at 6:07 AM

Title: Re: essential tremor

Content:

Jikan said:

I was diagnosed with this some time ago. Basically, it means my hands & feet shake, and my voice sometimes sounds a little strange. I don't have Parkinson's. I just wiggle a little. It's inconvenient and sometimes embarrassing when I have trouble gripping something, or if my handwriting gets out of control. My grandfather had it too. He was able to use a tablesaw until he was about 85 years old, but it was scary toward the end.

There's not much that conventional medicine can offer on this except the usual things (stay healthy, avoid caffeine, manage stress, &c).

I'd like to know if anyone has any insights on this. with this and the migraines, you might understand why the vajra armor practice has a very strong appeal for me.

many thanks in advance.

Malcolm wrote:

It's a systemic wind disorder of the nervous system.

There are all kinds of things you can do to manage. daily self-massage, a little good wine everyday, etc.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, July 9th, 2014 at 8:12 AM

Title: Re: essential tremor

Content:

Jikan said:

Thank you both for the helpful information. I'm glad to know that the forms of self-medication I've picked up along the way (I've also been advised to imbibe gently but consistently) have some validity.

Malcolm wrote:

There are also a number of effective herbal formulas you can take, pm me and we can talk.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, July 9th, 2014 at 8:10 PM

Title: Re: Are these the warning signs of a cult?

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

Which tradition does the group belong too?

Malcolm wrote:

NKT

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, July 9th, 2014 at 9:11 PM

Title: Re: Dharma & Science

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The problem is that Buddhists are so worried about being perceived as "modern", many of them have lost sight of their roots — the awakening of the Buddha and all that entails — and rush to shed anything in Dharma that seems pre-modern to their sensibilities.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, July 9th, 2014 at 9:22 PM

Title: Re: Are these the warning signs of a cult?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

[http://www.globalvt.org/?page\\_id=72](http://www.globalvt.org/?page_id=72)

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, July 9th, 2014 at 10:17 PM

Title: Re: Dharma & Science

Content:

Wayfarer said:

How about we say that 'science is generally in the realm of samvriti-satya' (conventional truth). That would appear to offer a way of accomodating science without having to declare that it is necessarily in conflict with Dharma (which belongs in the realm of paramartha satya.)

I also feel compelled to refer once more the well-known book by the Dalai Lama on philosophy of science, The Universe in a Single Atom. That book is not the least 'anti-science' whilst showing a clear grasp of the distinction between science as method, and scientific materialism as an attitude.

Malcolm wrote:

The Madhyamaka definition of conventional truth is simply functionality ( arthakriya ), thus the rites of shamans for making rain are as conventionally valid as predicative models in science so long as they function. Of course, if you are convinced they do not function you will not resort to them.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, July 10th, 2014 at 1:52 AM

Title: Re: Dharma & Science

Content:

Jikan said:

...the pure heart of Buddhism,

Malcolm wrote:

The pure heart of Buddhism is found only in the lineage of realization. Without that lineage, a lineage which frankly has not existed outside of Mahāyāna for many centuries, there is no pure heart of Buddhism.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, July 10th, 2014 at 4:12 AM

Title: Re: Rebirth....how does it happen?

Content:

Andrew108 said:

In Abhidhamma there are irreducible ultimate dhammas or ultimate objects of right knowledge and these are separate from conceptualised conventionalities. These ultimate dhammas are universal and unchanging. They do not depend on concepts and are uncovered by analysing the conventional. These ultimates are naturalistic. They are laws that are the same everywhere and at every time. They are independent of mind's

conceptualizing. I think science and dharma uncover these paramattha. And in that sense dhamma is naturalistic.

Nibbana is also an ultimate in that it is the law of 'unconditionality'.

Malcolm wrote:

Considering that Abhidhamma belongs to a Śravaka school, it comes as no surprise that its point of view is realist and negated by higher Buddhist teachings such as Madhyamaka, Dzogchen and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, July 10th, 2014 at 5:00 AM

Title: Re: Dharma & Science

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The pure heart of Buddhism is found only in the lineage of realization. Without that lineage, a lineage which frankly has not existed outside of Mahāyāna for many centuries, there is no pure heart of Buddhism.

dzogchungpa said:

What about Daniel Ingram?

Malcolm wrote:

If he is an Arhat, I am a samyaksambuddha with 32 major and 80 minor marks...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, July 10th, 2014 at 5:32 AM

Title: Re: essential tremor

Content:

saraswati said:

Interesting that Malcolm says it is linked to wind. I don't know much of Tibetan medicine but years back I've self-diagnosed as having a Vata imbalance according to Ayurveda.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, it is a vata/rlung condition connected with the nervous system or so called "white channels".

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, July 10th, 2014 at 5:40 AM

Title: Re: Rebirth....how does it happen?



Content:

Andrew108 said:

For those who believe in literal rebirth, can you explain how it happens? What are the mechanics of it? What is the reasoning that convinces you that there is literal rebirth?

boda said:

It's better that we don't know the mechanics of it, because if we did know the mechanics we would start manipulating the system. That's what our species does, we manipulate our environment in order to take advantage. That rarely turns out well. Indeed, look at the condition of our environment.

If we knew the mechanics of rebirth we might manipulate it to be reborn as a rockstar, or someone important, like an actor. Then there would be too many actors in the world and everything would be all out of balance.

Malcolm wrote:

We do know the mechanics. However, the things you describe require merit and so on, and given that merit is not something most people are interested in accumulating, there is no danger that higher rebirths will become overstocked, if you will.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, July 10th, 2014 at 8:21 PM

Title: Re: Rebirth....how does it happen?

Content:

Andrew108 said:

Believe it or not there are many Buddhists who reject the idea of objective existence.

Malcolm wrote:

Ultimately, yes; conventionally, no.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, July 10th, 2014 at 8:35 PM

Title: Re: Dharma wheel, ethics, value & online communities

Content:

JKhedrup said:

I've never seen Batchelor or his fans shy away from a debate. Indeed, challenging what they see as the "status quo" of traditional Buddhism seems to be part of their *raison d'etre*.

Malcolm wrote:

Basically it is the difference between this:

And this:

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, July 10th, 2014 at 8:43 PM

Title: Re: Stephen Batchelor is influential in the evolution of Dha

Content:

Andrew108 said:

It's easy to criticize and it's hard to accept different views from ones own. Seems like the world is full of conflict. But aren't all these views adornments of the natural state? Isn't there a kind of beauty in equality and the acceptance of views that we might disagree with? There is such a instinctive impulse to divide and draw lines and we do so because we think we have responsibility for the preservation of a particular set of teachings. We are damaging these teachings by being so close-minded. Very hard to see this but open hand is better than a closed fist.

Malcolm wrote:

First, A108, one must distinguish between a right path and wrong path; then one must distinguish between a higher path and a lower path.

Part of that is distinguishing right view from wrong view. That is why we train in tenet systems. Somehow, some people believe that secular views such as those advanced by scientists and western philosophers should be exempt from being graded by the traditional tenet system. However, the fact is that all western science, philosophy and religion falls under the category of either non-Buddhist eternalism or annihilationism.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, July 10th, 2014 at 8:44 PM

Title: Re: Stephen Batchelor is influential in the evolution of Dha

Content:

Andrew108 said:

Isn't there a kind of beauty in equality and the acceptance of views that we might disagree with?

Wayfarer said:

Two different things there. Certainly in a pluralist society a range of views are to be tolerated, and individuals have a freedom of conscience, and so on.

But it doesn't override the requirement of discerning the truth and attaining the correct view. Not all views can be correct, and to say they are is simply subjectivism and relativism. Everything is then simply a matter of opinion. Which is perilously close to where we are in many respects.

Malcolm wrote:

This is why as Buddhists we follow śabda-pramāṇa.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, July 11th, 2014 at 12:03 AM

Title: Re: Stephen Batchelor is influential in the evolution of Dha

Content:

Jikan said:

boda: you forgot to mention that I'm an ugly white dude who hasn't yet completely shaken his working-class (or "redneck" if you prefer) accent.

Malcolm wrote:

True, from a Buddhist perspective, at this point to be an Asian male Buddhist who is a serious practitioner and has means to afford teachings is really the top of the food chain in the Buddhist world.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, July 11th, 2014 at 1:24 AM

Title: Re: Stephen Batchelor is influential in the evolution of Dha

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

People, let's all try to be a little more simpatico, shall we? We're trying to have a sangha here.

Malcolm wrote:

We are? Not me, this is not a Sangha (not for me at any rate) — this is internet board.

Sangha are those who share refuge, that is not the case here.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, July 11th, 2014 at 1:30 AM

Title: Re: Dzongsar Khyentse on the importance of Mahayana

Content:

smcj said:

Nice.

Malcolm wrote:

What's nice about it?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, July 11th, 2014 at 2:07 AM

Title: Re: Rebirth....how does it happen?

Content:

Andrew108 said:

Believe it or not there are many Buddhists who reject the idea of objective existence.

Malcolm wrote:

Ultimately, yes; conventionally, no.

Andrew108 said:

Ultimate here is an imagined ultimate.

Malcolm wrote:

No, not at all. Imagination has nothing to do with it.

Andrew108 said:

In the texts I have been studying ultimate is unconditioned or baselessness. This baselessness is present.

Malcolm wrote:

Which texts are those?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, July 11th, 2014 at 2:10 AM

Title: Re: Rebirth....how does it happen?

Content:

Andrew108 said:

The first sentence of the quote shows that Abhidhamma is not idealist.

Malcolm wrote:

Correct, the Abhidhamma of Theravada is realist. It is the lowest tenet system alongside Vaibhāṣika and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, July 11th, 2014 at 3:26 AM

Title: Re: Stephen Batchelor is influential in the evolution of Dha

Content:

boda said:

I can agree that anyone against modern feminism is a dribbling idiot.

Malcolm wrote:

Whose modern feminism?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, July 11th, 2014 at 3:28 AM

Title: Re: Stephen Batchelor is influential in the evolution of Dha

Content:

Andrew108 said:

Stephen Batchelor says that there are four key components of Buddha's teachings that are unique and not a part of the culture of the time. These are the for unique views (here I am quoting SB):

- "1. The principle of "this-conditionality, conditioned arising."
2. The principle of the Four Noble Truths.
3. The practice of mindful awareness.
4. The power of self-reliance."

Not so bad if you take these on and perfect them. I mean if you live them and they become part of a lived experience. More than enough there to keep the dharma pure.

Malcolm wrote:

He is mistaken.

Samkhya also explains a kind of conditioned arising, the idea of escaping from suffering, mindfulness and self-reliance. So Batchelor is quite wrong.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, July 11th, 2014 at 3:39 AM

Title: Re: Stephen Batchelor is influential in the evolution of Dha

Content:

boda said:

I can agree that anyone against modern feminism is a dribbling idiot.

Malcolm wrote:

Whose modern feminism?

boda said:

Men's of course.

Malcolm wrote:

Again whose? Modern feminism ala Sarah Palin? Robin Morgan? etc.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, July 11th, 2014 at 3:46 AM

Title: Re: Rebirth....how does it happen?

Content:

Andrew108 said:

So then you should specify which version of rebirth you hold to.

Malcolm wrote:

The one taught in Dzogchen tantras.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, July 11th, 2014 at 3:56 AM

Title: Re: Dzongsar Khyentse on the importance of Mahayana

Content:

smcj said:

Nice.

What's nice about it?

His affirmation of the benefits of practicing the Mahayana as a basis for the Vajrayana.

Malcolm wrote:

I am sorry, but this following statement is very silly:

Those who skip the Mahayana path and go straight to the Vajrayana path are obvious from a distance by the gleam of their oily hair. They have at least four malas around their neck, and they love to talk about power and magnetizing wealth. Their view often seems to be founded on a rather superstitious cast of mind.

These kinds of put-downs are simply not necessary.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, July 11th, 2014 at 11:07 AM

Title: Re: Stephen Batchelor is influential in the evolution of Dha

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Again whose? Modern feminism ala Sarah Palin? Robin Morgan? etc.

boda said:

How about we settle for any variety that disfavors dowry killings, acid throwing, rape, or the forced prostitution of young girls.

Malcolm wrote:

That's not feminism, that is basic human decency.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, July 11th, 2014 at 11:25 AM

Title: Re: Stephen Batchelor is influential in the evolution of Dha

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Again whose? Modern feminism ala Sarah Palin?

Virgo said:  
She's a feminist?

Kevin

Malcolm wrote:  
So she claims.

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Friday, July 11th, 2014 at 9:27 PM  
Title: Re: Stephen Batchelor is influential in the evolution of Dha  
Content:  
uan said:  
We don't need to defend the Dharma.

Malcolm wrote:  
Of course we do.

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Friday, July 11th, 2014 at 9:44 PM  
Title: Re: Buddhism, r/atheism, Human Rights...  
Content:  
Malcolm wrote:  
HH Dalai Lama's concept of universal responsibility can form such a basis...

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Saturday, July 12th, 2014 at 1:10 AM  
Title: Re: Stephen Batchelor is influential in the evolution of Dha  
Content:  
uan said:  
But you do encourage defending the dharma.

Malcolm wrote:  
Of course, and that means understanding Dharma as properly as possible and following  
a qualified master until you are a master yourself.

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Saturday, July 12th, 2014 at 5:52 AM  
Title: Re: Stephen Batchelor is influential in the evolution of Dha  
Content:  
boda said:  
And I pointed out that there are wildly divergent interpretations, of the same raw

material. Buddhism has survived for millennia surrounded by all the divergent interpretations. OBVIOUSLY, you could not be more wrong.

Malcolm wrote:

None however that flat out negate the importance of rebirth for understanding and practicing Dharma.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, July 12th, 2014 at 7:22 AM

Title: Re: Stephen Batchelor is influential in the evolution of Dha

Content:

boda said:

Y'all are not following. If different interpretations of the world around us is dangerous to Buddhism then ALL interpretations which are not agreeable are dangerous. There's no reason why Hindu interpretations, for example, would be any less dangerous than Batchelorian interpretations. Yet Buddhism has survived Hinduism from the very beginning, and indeed more to the point, Hinduism has survived Buddhism.

Malcolm wrote:

The Buddha pointed out that only people who could destroy Buddhism was Buddhists. Batchelor is happily leading the way with his incorrect views about what the Buddha taught.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, July 12th, 2014 at 7:25 AM

Title: Re: Buddhism, r/atheism, Human Rights...

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

HH Dalai Lama's concept of universal responsibility can form such a basis...

Jikan said:

Hi Malcolm,

Would you please help us see the connection here? I'm not at all familiar with this concept, and I don't think I'm the only one. Thanks.

Malcolm wrote:

When we understand we have a universal responsibility to assure everyone's happiness, there is no need even to mention human rights, since they will automatically be satisfied.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, July 12th, 2014 at 7:34 AM

Title: Re: Learning Sanskrit



Content:

coyote said:

I know that Buddhist Sanskrit is different to classical Sanskrit

Malcolm wrote:

It is not really that different. Buddhist texts merely have their jargon. But in general there is no such thing as "Buddhist" Sanskrit.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, July 12th, 2014 at 8:21 AM

Title: Re: Buddhism, r/atheism, Human Rights...

Content:

Wayfarer said:

There is a sense in which traditional Buddhism could be fatalistic - as the world was illusory, and as beings suffered due to their own karma, and so on

I think that sense of 'engaged Buddhism' is a counter to that...

Malcolm wrote:

There is nothing here to counter, this is just a Buddhist matter of fact. It is not fatalistic at all. All beings make their own karma, both the good and the bad.

I can no more change your karma than you can change mine. But as human beings, we can act with compassion, and perhaps inspire others.

However, please do recall the Buddha watched the Vajjians enslave all his relatives...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, July 12th, 2014 at 7:07 PM

Title: Re: Stephen Batchelor is influential in the evolution of Dha

Content:

boda said:

Y'all are not following. If different interpretations of the world around us is dangerous to Buddhism then ALL interpretations which are not agreeable are dangerous. There's no reason why Hindu interpretations, for example, would be any less dangerous than Batchelorian interpretations. Yet Buddhism has survived Hinduism from the very beginning, and indeed more to the point, Hinduism has survived Buddhism.

Malcolm wrote:

The Buddha pointed out that only people who could destroy Buddhism was Buddhists. Batchelor is happily leading the way with his incorrect views about what the Buddha taught.

Andrew108 said:

Buddhists have to believe in rebirth right? So it would seem it will be Buddhists (those

who believe in literal rebirth) that will destroy Buddhism and not secularists like Batchelor.

Malcolm wrote:

Not at all, A108 — Buddha had in mind people who say things like "rebirth is not necessary for Buddhism" and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, July 12th, 2014 at 7:11 PM

Title: Re: Stephen Batchelor is influential in the evolution of Dha

Content:

Alfredo said:

Okay, look--as far as anybody knows, Buddhists have disagreed with one another since day one.

Not over key issues like rebirth.

There is no "core" that represents Buddhism to everybody, and never has been.

Malcolm wrote:

Rebirth, dependent origination, infallibility of karmic causes and effects, etc. These are core Buddhist tenets that represent all Buddhists until the 1970's. Then all of a sudden we have this pernicious movement to take Buddha's teachings out of Buddhism.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, July 12th, 2014 at 8:42 PM

Title: Re: Dzogchen & rainbow body

Content:

Andrew108 said:

There is another key concept in Dzogchen which is something like 'those who wish to achieve are the ones who will never achieve'.

Malcolm wrote:

Oh really, in what Dzogchen teaching is this taught? Citation please.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, July 12th, 2014 at 8:49 PM

Title: Re: Rebirth....how does it happen?

Content:

Wayfarer said:

From Bikkhu Thanissaro's presentation on re-birth:

Malcolm wrote:

Why don't we properly ground this discussion in Mahāyāna Sūtra for a change?

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 how is it that a sentient being does 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’.”

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, July 13th, 2014 at 12:19 AM

Title: Re: Rebirth....how does it happen?

Content:

Andrew108 said:

What is the intermediate state aggregate?

Malcolm wrote:

Antarābhava-skandha, means the five aggregates of a being in the bardo [antarābhava].

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, July 13th, 2014 at 12:21 AM

Title: Re: Dzogchen & rainbow body

Content:

Andrew108 said:

There is another key concept in Dzogchen which is something like 'those who wish to achieve are the ones who will never achieve'.

Malcolm wrote:

Oh really, in what Dzogchen teaching is this taught? Citation please.

Andrew108 said:

It's outlined in Kunjed Gyalpo, Mejung. Nubchen writes about it as does ChNN.

Malcolm wrote:

Citation, Andrew.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, July 13th, 2014 at 2:37 AM

Title: Re: Dzogchen & rainbow body

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Citation, Andrew.

Andrew108 said:

In the Mejung Chapter 23. The Marvelous Primordial State: The Mejung Tantra.

Malcolm wrote:

And so you conclude from these citations that one ought not wish for freedom from suffering? That the entire Buddhist path is mere foolishness? That the wish to attain awakening (bodhicitta) should be given up, eschewed?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, July 13th, 2014 at 2:40 AM

Title: Re: Rebirth....how does it happen?

Content:

Andrew108 said:

What is the intermediate state aggregate?

Malcolm wrote:

Antarābhava-skandha, means the five aggregates of a being in the bardo [antarābhava].

Andrew108 said:

So you are going with Vasubhandhu's assertion.

Malcolm wrote:

No, I am going with the Buddha's teaching in the sūtra cited above. But when it comes to choosing between Abhidhamma and Abhidharma, I will pick Abhidharma every time.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, July 13th, 2014 at 2:43 AM

Title: Re: Dharma wheel, ethics, value & online communities

Content:

uan said:

There are people who follow Buddha Dharma who cling to the idea that they need to call themselves Buddhists. Eventually, following Dharma, we grow beyond needing to identify as Buddhist or anything really. As an example, and I clearly don't speak for Malcolm, but iirc, he used to identify as a Buddhist, but he doesn't anymore, though he allows himself to use that identifier for the sake of simpler interactions with people who

still cling to needing to call people "Buddhist". Though perhaps he's back to being a Buddhist? I don't know.

Malcolm wrote:

I practice Buddhadharma, call me what you will.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, July 14th, 2014 at 1:16 AM

Title: Re: Dzogchen & rainbow body

Content:

Andrew108 said:

Dzogchen attitude is quite unique. Very special. The idea of wanting to have rainbow body or wanting to achieve enlightenment doesn't fit.

Malcolm wrote:

I guess, according to you, that ChNN is a fool then for having stated countless times that he hopes he can achieve rainbow body, that he wants to achieve rainbow body. I guess his attitude is not Dzogchen at all.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, July 14th, 2014 at 1:20 AM

Title: Re: Dzogchen & rainbow body

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

[quote="Andrew108"]If you contact a Dzogchen master and tell them that you want to achieve rainbow body what do you think they would say? /quote]

Do this practice, then do this practice, then this one, then you if you are diligent you gave the possibility of attaining rainbow body.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, July 14th, 2014 at 1:22 AM

Title: Re: Dzogchen & rainbow body

Content:

Andrew108 said:

It seems to me that their craving has increased rather than decreased.

Malcolm wrote:

How would you know? You are not them. You are not in a position to judge anyone's practice apart from your own.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, July 14th, 2014 at 2:03 AM

Title: Re: Rebirth....how does it happen?

Content:

Andrew108 said:

Vasubhandu asserted Antarābhava-skandha.

Malcolm wrote:

The Buddha asserted the Antarābhava-skandha.

Andrew108 said:

Vasubhandu used reasoning to argue the existence of antarābhava-skandha.

Malcolm wrote:

He also cites a sūtra when explaining the teaching on the bardo.

Considering that the bardo is an incredibly important topic in Dzogchen, since this where most people are going to attain liberation, how can you possibly call yourself a Dzogchen practitioner, and yet spend so much time and effort rejecting the teachings in the antarābhava? As the Buddha states in The Union of the Sun and Moon Tantra (an important tantra belonging to man ngag sde):

The place entered by all sentient beings  
who do not possess this instruction  
is called “the bardo of existence.”

The doorway to the path of the places of samsara,  
for example, is turning like a water wheel.

Having separated from the body of ordinary flesh and blood,  
one has an illusory mental body,  
which has two names since it incorporeal.

And the Self-Liberated Vidyā Tantra states (a tantra belonging to man ngag sde):

After people of average capacity  
have died and left this world, passed through the bardo  
and have been born in buddhafiels of half-visible emanations,  
they are free from all paths of samsara.

So you see, the teachings about the bardo are incredibly important for Vajrayāna and Dzogchen practitioners. The teachings are not something to be debated about for sport.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, July 14th, 2014 at 2:08 AM

Title: Re: Rebirth....how does it happen?

Content:

Andrew108 said:

It seem to me that the best explanation of rebirth is that present actions have consequences for those coming later.

Malcolm wrote:

This is clearly not the intention of the teachings on rebirth in Dzogchen, of which there are very, very many.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, July 14th, 2014 at 2:44 AM

Title: Re: Dzogchen & rainbow body

Content:

Andrew108 said:

Dzogchen attitude is quite unique. Very special. The idea of wanting to have rainbow body or wanting to achieve enlightenment doesn't fit.

Malcolm wrote:

I guess, according to you, that ChNN is a fool then for having stated countless times that he hopes he can achieve rainbow body, that he wants to achieve rainbow body. I guess his attitude is not Dzogchen at all.

M

Andrew108 said:

That's an unfortunate projection on your part. ChNN has stated countless times that we need to go beyond dualistic vision. It is our fixation to the dualistic state we find ourselves in that is blocking the manifestation of realization. When our spiritual aims become part of this dualistic vision then our practice will fall short.

Malcolm wrote:

You are changing the subject. Address the issue at hand. How do you reconcile what you have stated with ChNN's stated desire to attain rainbow body?

You have basically stated that anyone who desires to achieve rainbow body is a fool.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, July 14th, 2014 at 3:38 AM

Title: Re: Dzogchen & rainbow body

Content:

Gyurme Kundrol said:

since in the ultimate nature such an intention or aspiration, or even such a thought is literally not needed.

Malcolm wrote:  
Correction, does not exist.

But Dzogchen practice is predicated first of all on vidyā, rigpa, knowledge. Without that experiential knowledge we call "rigpa" all these nice Dzogchen words are empty of meaning.

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Monday, July 14th, 2014 at 7:48 AM  
Title: Re: Are Karma and Rebirth Real?  
Content:  
Malcolm wrote:  
The teachings are not something to be debated about for sport.

Wayfarer said:  
I don't think it is much use referring to advanced texts in trying to reason with someone who demonstrates no understanding of the basics. For someone whose understanding is basic, basic texts are all that is required.

Malcolm wrote:  
The point is that A108 was refuting teachings which are found in Dzogchen teachings, of which he professes to be a practitioner, as well as Abhidharma in favor of Theravadin presentations.

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Monday, July 14th, 2014 at 11:21 AM  
Title: Re: Are Karma and Rebirth Real?  
Content:  
Wayfarer said:  
Of course, I agree, but as you say, it gets to a point where it is unseemly to refer to advanced teachings as a basis for making unsubstantiated and sweeping claims about Buddhist fundamentals..

Malcolm wrote:  
You seem to be suffering from the misapprehension that it is always inappropriate to cite higher texts when they support teachings found in lower yanas.

Finally, if you don't mind, i will cite any text i deem appropriate in support of any point i wish to make.

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Monday, July 14th, 2014 at 12:10 PM  
Title: Re: Are Karma and Rebirth Real?



Content:

Wayfarer said:

Again, you make many sweeping statements without any attribution or justification. When asked for justification, you offer bad interpretations of scholastic Buddhist texts, reading things into them which aren't there and coming to conclusions which the texts don't justify.

(I am starting to appreciate why certain levels of teaching were traditionally kept secret....)

Andrew108 said:

This is pretty bad. I have enough of this attitude.

Malcolm wrote:

Oh, i think this evaluation of your posts is entirely justifiable in many ways.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, July 14th, 2014 at 8:14 PM

Title: Re: Buddhist "relics"?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The term is "sharira". The Buddha's remains from his cremation were divided into eight parts and placed in Stupas.

Buddhist masters have been producing shariraṃ in all traditions for centuries. The understanding of shariraṃ is highly developed in Tibetan Buddhism, especially in the Dzogchen teachings, where many different kinds of shariraṃ from different parts of the body, indicating different levels of practice are detailed by the Buddha in texts such as the Brilliant Relics Tantra and so on. For example, in the Self-Arisen Vidyā Tantra, Buddha states:

After my nirvana

in order to generate the devotion of migrating beings

place the relics in a statue.

Place these major classes of relics

in statues of my form.

The Buddha teaches in the Bhadrakalpika-nāma-mahāyāna-sūtra

Making a small offering to the relics of the Sugata in nirvana has limitless qualities.

Kuśalamūla-paridhara-nāma-mahāyāna-sūtra

The transformation of his relics,

is just like my nirvana,

the relics of the Sugata sNying po Tshogs,

those will transform.

The Arya-sarvadharmaguṇavyūharāja-nāma-mahāyāna-sūtra:

At a place of stupa containing relics or a temple, make offerings with incense, scents, various flowers and various pennants.

nichirenista said:

I hesitate to start this thread because I don't mean to seem disrespectful, much less sacrilegious. So, let me state upfront that this is an honest, sincere question....

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http://www.maitreyarelictour.com " onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;"
onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;" onclick="window.open(this.href);return
false;" onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;"
onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;
```

I attended the loving kindness tour a few days ago, which is a part of the Maitreya Project through the Foundation for the Preservation of the Mahayana Tradition. I was completely caught off guard. When I saw the word "relic" in their advertisements, I thought in terms of archaeology. I didn't know about the concept of "relics" in the Tibetan tradition. I came to feel that these are relics in the same way that the bread was the body of Jesus in my Catholic childhood. Symbolically.

To be honest I'm almost at a loss here. I will refrain from posting my more blunt thoughts on the topic, for fear of offending some people. But I suppose my questions would be as follows: 1. What is the general consensus of the relics on this tour? Do people actually believe that they have relics from the historical Buddha? (It would seem to me that something that rare and valuable would be displayed at the Smithsonian behind lock and key, under video surveillance, and under the careful watch of a security guard nearby. Not casually displayed at the local Masonic Temple, where any average Joe from off the street could wander in and then place the relics of the historical Buddha on his head!) 2. Have such relics ever been verified by any scientist?

I'll be a little more blunt, though hopefully tactful and not disrespectful. Truth is that it was a very disillusioned and disappointing display for me. I guess I would like to know that there are other Buddhists out there who don't believe in this either....

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, July 15th, 2014 at 12:21 AM

Title: Re: Buddhism, r/atheism, Human Rights...

Content:

Queequeg said:

[

As a whole, Buddhism has not come to terms with modernity.

Malcolm wrote:

Modernity has yet to come to terms with desire, hatred and ignorance.

There is nothing particularly noble about "modernity" (read, post-Hegelian Western culture) and nothing especially difficult about living in a so called modern culture. Sentient beings are still the same — afflicted by the three poisons — and Buddhadharma is still relevant to that state of affairs and always will be.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, July 15th, 2014 at 5:07 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist "relics"?

Content:

nichirenista said:

Science speaks for itself. A relic either is or isn't literally from the historical Buddha. My attitude is not the deciding factor. No religious faith on my part was necessary in appraising the historical verifiability of the Venus of Willendorf.

I'm not Nichiren Daishonin and this isn't the 1200s. Heck, I'm not even Japanese. I'm a "white ethnic" raised in the Roman Catholic Church in the United States of America -- where one of our greatest freedoms is the freedom of expression. My reasons for chanting are different from Nichiren's (I like the scientific view), and I'm aware that he believed things that I don't. I find his beliefs and history to be beneficial to study -- but from a historical, scholarly standpoint.

I suppose what I'm saying is that mythology is different from science, and I wish the advertisement for this event would have made it clear that this event was within the realm of "Buddhist mythology." But I think I have to accept that maybe it wasn't advertised that way because some people believe it is scientifically, literally true that the relics are from the historical Buddha.

Malcolm wrote:

Doesn't sound to me like there is much Buddhadharma in your Buddhism, but rather, a whole lot of materialism.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, July 15th, 2014 at 5:37 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist "relics"?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Doesn't sound to me like there is much Buddhadharma in your Buddhism, but rather, a whole lot of materialism.

nichirenista said:

Ironical that I'm the one who was accused of being insensitive.

I leave you to bask in your spiritual superiority to me....

Malcolm wrote:

It is not about superiority -- you might as well chant Namō Mickey Mouse, based on your own stated belief I've read that scientific studies have revealed that chanting (no matter the religion) is good for mental health because the rhythm of chanting corresponds with that of the pulse of brain activity. Such ideas really have nothing to do with Buddhādharma.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, July 15th, 2014 at 5:39 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist "relics"?

Content:

nichirenista said:

What was shaken was my faith in the integrity of certain Buddhist leaders. It's disillusioning for me to see that representatives of other traditions make outrageous claims that almost certainly would not stand up to scientific verification. I'd thought Buddhism was above that.

Malcolm wrote:

Science takes the vision of ordinary confused human beings as the benchmark for truth claims. Buddhādharma takes the wisdom vision of awakened beings as the benchmark for truth claims.

You have made your choice.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, July 15th, 2014 at 5:44 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist "relics"?

Content:

nichirenista said:

What was shaken was my faith in the integrity of certain Buddhist leaders. It's disillusioning for me to see that representatives of other traditions make outrageous claims that almost certainly would not stand up to scientific verification. I'd thought Buddhism was above that.

Jesse said:

Lol. There's lots of things which are true that science can't verify. There's more to reality and life than can be measured, and while it's fine and all that you've chosen logic over dogma, don't go throwing materialistic beliefs like it's the defacto stance of science.

Malcolm wrote:

He has just chosen a different dogma, that's all.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, July 15th, 2014 at 6:59 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist "relics"?

Content:

nichirenista said:

What was shaken was my faith in the integrity of certain Buddhist leaders. It's disillusioning for me to see that representatives of other traditions make outrageous claims that almost certainly would not stand up to scientific verification. I'd thought Buddhism was above that.

Malcolm wrote:

Science takes the vision of ordinary confused human beings as the benchmark for truth claims. Buddhadharma takes the wisdom vision of awakened beings as the bench mark for truth claims.

You have made your choice.

nichirenista said:

You can thank science for enabling you to communicate with me now through your computer via the Internet. You can thank science for lighting up the room where the relics were displayed and powering the sound the monk used to speak to the group assembled at the event.

Yes, I've made the choice to acknowledge something most people on this thread apparently won't accept: my opinion on the matter ultimately has no bearing. Either the relics are historically/archaeologically real, or they aren't. My personal perspective is not the deciding factor.

I hope those of you who are posting that I am insensitive will take a look at the how insensitive you are being to me. There is no need to attack me.

Malcolm wrote:

Technology is one thing. technology is not a truth claim, scientism like yours however is.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, July 15th, 2014 at 7:02 AM

Title: Re: Dharma & Science

Content:

Wayfarer said:

But I also don't think that religious practitioners ought to say that they are in possession

of some facts which over-rule science in regards to matters in which scientific measurement obviously holds sway.

Malcolm wrote:

I guess you reject rebirth then, since as far as science is concerned, brains = minds.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, July 15th, 2014 at 7:25 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist "relics"?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Technology is one thing. technology is not a truth claim, scientism like yours however is.

M

nichirenista said:

The earlier statement was that science is for confused people. My response is that science is what has allowed us to have computers and communicate via the Internet. I'm not making a so-called truth claim here. This is fact.

Similarly, the relics are either those of the historical Buddha who lived 2500 years ago in India, or they are not.

Malcolm wrote:

I did not say science was for confused people, I said that your criteria of a truth claim is based on the ordinary perceptions of confused people.

Saying this or that is a "fact" is another kind of truth claim.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, July 15th, 2014 at 7:26 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist "relics"?

Content:

Wayfarer said:

I don't think there are \*any grounds whatever\* to accuse this contributor of 'scientism' or 'materialism' on the basis of what he has written here. He is asking honest questions and wrestling with honest doubts. I regard such accusations as ad hominem and would suggest that they are dropped.

Malcolm wrote:

I would suggest that your observation is out of place and inaccurate, so I will ask you not interfere further unless you have something value to add. You are over-moderating.

I would also point out the person in question made defamatory remarks about the Buddhist tradition, implying it was preposterous because it does not fit with what he understands as "scientific".

In other words, it is ok, in your view, to make defamatory remarks about Buddhадharma since it is not "scientific", but it is not ok to call people on it when they make such remarks from a scientific materialist perspective. In other words, we, who follow Buddhадharma, are barred from defending our tradition, according to you, if its traditions contravene "science".

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, July 15th, 2014 at 7:35 AM

Title: Re: Dharma & Science

Content:

Wayfarer said:

No, I definitely and emphatically do not reject belief in rebirth. Ian Stevenson spent 30 years researching children who recalled their previous lives. He said, and I fully accept, that this evidence suggest the truth of re-birth. And he was a scientist - but not a materialist. Science and scientific materialism are different things. You need to get some clarity around that.

Malcolm wrote:

I have a lot of clarity around this issue, thank you very much. Science operates from a lowest common denominator approach to evaluating knowledge. It is predicated on the perceptions of confused sentient beings, not the perceptions of awakened people. Buddhадharma on the other hand is predicated on the perception of awakened people, not confused people — you need to get some clarity around that.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, July 15th, 2014 at 7:47 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist "relics"?

Content:

nichirenista said:

I suppose what I'm ultimately trying to do is define the term "relic."

Malcolm wrote:

Shariram, relics, are the small pellet—like secretions found in the ashes of Buddhist saints when they are cremated.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, July 15th, 2014 at 8:02 AM

Title: Re: Buddhism, r/atheism, Human Rights...

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Modernity has yet to come to terms with desire, hatred and ignorance.

There is nothing particularly noble about "modernity" (read, post-Hegelian Western culture) and nothing especially difficult about living in a so called modern culture.

Sentient beings are still the same — afflicted by the three poisons — and Buddhadharma is still relevant to that state of affairs and always will be.

Queequeg said:

I certainly did not suggest modernity is noble or that living in it is particularly difficult. However, short of some catastrophic decline of modern civilization, these are the conditions human being will be living in, the context in which they will have to come to terms with desire, hatred and ignorance. I didn't even come close to suggesting that Buddhadharma is not relevant today. In fact, I think my whole argument is that it IS relevant.

That said, would the Buddha, if he were to appear today, be counseling someone in breathing meditation using the example of a blacksmith's bellow? No, more likely he'd be referring to spin class.

Malcolm wrote:

I am pretty sure the Buddha would call a dashboard a dashboard, even though no one has really used horse drawn wagons for a hundred years in the US and England.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, July 15th, 2014 at 8:04 AM

Title: Re: Thinley Norbu Rinpoche's Sole Panacea

Content:

nickhol said:

I just read Thinley Norbu Rinpoche's new Sole Panacea: A Brief Commentary on the Seven-Line Prayer to Guru Rinpoche That Cures the Suffering of the Sickness of Karma and Defilement. Its a must read.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, it dispenses very nicely with the scientific materialism that forms the dominant culture of today.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, July 15th, 2014 at 8:08 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist "relics"?

Content:



nichirenista said:

I suppose what I'm ultimately trying to do is define the term "relic."

Malcolm wrote:

Shariram, relics, are the small pellet—like secretions found in the ashes of Buddhist saints when they are cremated.

Crazywisdom said:

They look like pearls. These are but one kind.

There have been many Kagyu masters whose eyes, tongue and heart fused in cremation.

Malcolm wrote:

That is not really a relic, per se.

Crazywisdom said:

Some manifested bija on their teeth. Some manifested mandalas in their skulls, mantras on bones, etc.

Malcolm wrote:

Those are not shāriram, but are called "gdung", bone relics. They are a bit different than shariram and are not the kind of relics on display at the Maitreya Relic Tour, Another form of relic is the remains of the saint, like the hair or even the robe. These carry very powerful blessings.

No doubt, but these things are not described in sutra and tantra per se.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, July 15th, 2014 at 8:41 AM

Title: Re: Dharma & Science

Content:

Wayfarer said:

I would like to know if you disagree with that statement from the Dalai Lama 'If scientific analysis were conclusively to demonstrate certain claims in Buddhism to be false, then we must accept the findings of science and abandon those claims.' Yes or no?

Malcolm wrote:

I disagree with HHDL on this point, as written and as presented. You have to bear in mind that the way the Gelugpa school defines conventional truth is in terms of how it corresponds with the deluded perceptions of worldly beings. HHDL is a Gelugpa and presents these issues from that framework.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, July 15th, 2014 at 8:52 AM

Title: Re: Buddhist "relics"?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The pity is that the topic of Buddhist relics is very interesting and worthy of discussion, but the topic itself was poisoned by the OP's confrontational and close-minded perspective.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, July 15th, 2014 at 8:33 PM

Title: Re: Dharma & Science

Content:

Wayfarer said:

Thanks for clarifying that.

There is no need for there to be a conflict between science and Buddhism. I can't see any reason why the Buddha, and Buddhists, would oppose the means of enhancing life expectancy, providing communications technology, optimising food crops, and developing many new means of livelihood, to mention but a few aspects. Scientific medicine alone has done immense amounts to reduce human suffering.

Malcolm wrote:

As HHDL puts it in the book from which you draw your quote:

Buddhism draws the critical division differently— i.e., between sentience and non-sentience— because it is primarily interested in the alleviation of suffering and the quest for happiness. In Buddhism, the evolution of the cosmos and the emergence of the sentient beings within it— indeed, effectively everything within the purview of the physical and life sciences— belong within the domain of the first of the Four Noble Truths, which the Buddha taught in his initial sermon. The Four Noble Truths state that within the realm of impermanent phenomena there is suffering, suffering has an origin, the cessation of suffering is possible, and there is a path to the cessation of suffering. As I see it, science falls within the scope of the first truth in that it examines the material bases of suffering, for it covers the entire spectrum of the physical environment—“ the container”— as well as the sentient beings—“ the contained.” It is in the mental realm— the realm of psychology, consciousness, the afflictions, and karma— that we find the second of the truths, the origin of suffering. The third and fourth truths, cessation and the path, are effectively outside the domain of scientific analysis in that they pertain primarily to what might be called philosophy and religion.

Dalai Lama (2005-09-13). *The Universe in a Single Atom: The Convergence of Science and Spirituality* (Kindle Locations 1243-1252). Crown Publishing Group. Kindle Edition.

You see here, rather than saying this or that topic falls within science's domain, he claims that science falls within a specified subset of the Buddhist analysis of the existential problem facing all sentient beings, suffering.

It is true that modern medicine has had some impact on the area of the first kind of suffering, the suffering of suffering, it has had no impact on the second kind of suffering, the suffering of change, and in fact it can be argued that suffering of change is more endemic than ever before in what we know of human history. No only that, modern science has vastly increased the means of inflicting the suffering of suffering, as we see

in the wars we have been having in the Middle East and during the 20th century. So, advances in technology are not really so rosy in fact, and do not actually add up to more happiness for human beings and other kinds of creatures.

A great deal of what we call "science" is merely technology, and great deal of science that is done has no practical use at all. For example, most of the scientific knowledge we have about the cellular processes of the human body are not at all valuable in medical cures, and the vast majority of synthesized drugs are derived from plants whose properties have been known for centuries by indigenous healers. Moreover, many of the diseases we now can cure are diseases that are a product of our technological and very toxic industrial civilization, diseases which were rare or non-existent even in the not so distant past. One thing I will grant is that in the area of surgery, surgical technology has been able to advance a great deal in the past 170 years, but primarily due to two factors, antibiotics and anesthesia.

In other words, the scientific revolution has created ten problems for every one that it has solved, from global warming to increased pollution of the biosphere, to an unprecedented extinction event that is ongoing and so on.

So forgive me for not placing any confidence at all in the confused perception of ordinary beings, whose thrashing efforts to free themselves from suffering merely bring more problems and pain.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, July 15th, 2014 at 8:40 PM

Title: Re: Direct introduction and purification of the 6 lokas

Content:

bryandavis said:

Thanks for any reply. Still trying to figure out how to navigate with in the DC.

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Malcolm wrote:

In the end, since you will hear many different answers from students, it is always better to ask Rinpoche himself personally. The reason you will hear many different answers is that Rinpoche has given many different answers to different students at various times in different circumstances.

In general, this ngondro practice can be practiced if you have the lung of the text, and Rinpoche often uses methods of introduction which are from Longsal such as the Yeshe Zangthal. He will give the lung if requested.

But when you have questions and are really not sure, it is always better to ask him directly.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, July 15th, 2014 at 8:41 PM

Title: Re: Is Western Buddhism an (ethnic) identity-based Buddhism?

Content:

JKhedrup said:

I know I take a risk at presenting this, but I thought this quote COULD foster a measured, kind discussion on the issue of lack of multi-ethnic participation in Western Buddhism. Hopefully any discussion will be free from false accusations (without apologies), one line missives, tit for tat claims etc.

The below I think is a response to some people objecting to specific Buddhist practice spaces for People of Colour or specific ethnic groups. Larry Yang argues that Western Buddhism is identity-based Buddhism, as Western teachers trained in Asia did not feel culturally comfortable in that paradigm and wanted to establish a space where people like them could practice:

Larry Yang: Ironically, identity-based retreats were long in the making because when the teachers of the European-American mainstream sangha came back from Asia to teach, they didn't go to the existing Asian temples or venues that were already in North America. They started the mainstream centers we know today because they didn't see themselves reflected in these Asian temples. They didn't hear their life stories, they didn't hear the relevance to how these teachings actually dissolved their particular suffering in their particular life. This is the exact same reason that the identity retreats have been formed. Even in our expression of difference, we're the same. There is something that still completely connects us. The point of these retreats is to garner a strength of practice to enable us to see beyond the differences.

<http://www.thebuddhadharma.com/web-archive/2011/11/9/forum-why-is-american-buddhism-so-white.html> " onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;"  
onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;

Malcolm wrote:

This is really only true of the Vipassana folks.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, July 15th, 2014 at 8:47 PM

Title: Re: How Tibetans feel about the occupation of Tibet

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

<https://www.callofthewhitecrane.blogspot.com/p/petition-for-jailed-tibetan-singers.html>

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, July 15th, 2014 at 8:49 PM

Title: Re: How Tibetans feel about the occupation of Tibet

Content:

Unknown said:

On Monday, during the telephone interview, Ms. Woesser gave a dire assessment of the situation in Tibetan regions, where more than 120 people have set themselves on fire as a political protest in recent years, unnerving Chinese officials.

“The current situation hasn’t changed, and the oppression still has not been relaxed,” she said. “As for what will happen in the future, it’s difficult to predict. On the one hand, the authorities’ policy of guilt by association is very harsh, and also the current tactic of control is one of micromanagement. The entire Tibetan area is under a management grid. On the surface, it appears that the situation had been easing up from such strict control, but it hasn’t. The Lhasa that I know is still under tight control.”

Malcolm wrote:

[http://sinosphere.blogs.nytimes.com/2014/07/15/tibetan-activist-on-her-latest-house-arrest/?\\_php=true&\\_type=blogs&ref=world&\\_r=0](http://sinosphere.blogs.nytimes.com/2014/07/15/tibetan-activist-on-her-latest-house-arrest/?_php=true&_type=blogs&ref=world&_r=0)

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, July 15th, 2014 at 9:50 PM

Title: Re: Is Western Buddhism an (ethnic) identity-based Buddhism?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

This is really only true of the Vipassana folks.

Seishin said:

I would say mostly rather than only, in my experience at least (I'm not sure about the rest of the world). But could this be because vipassana (and anapanasati) is being pegged as the "scientific" practice??

Gassho.

Malcolm wrote:

Probably.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, July 15th, 2014 at 9:59 PM

Title: Re: Is Western Buddhism an (ethnic) identity-based Buddhism?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

This is really only true of the Vipassana folks.

Jikan said:

I was going to pose a related question:

Is there such a thing as a Western Buddhism, that is, a single one? It seems to me that

some of what is swept into the category "WB" corresponds to the criticism made in the OP, but there's a great deal of diversity elsewhere in the same category. Maybe even contradictions.

One reason these discussions can get so prickly: it's very difficult to generalize about these issues intelligently

Malcolm wrote:

Oh definitely there is a "Western Buddhism"; it is characterized by a commitment to secularism, scientism, and a psychotherapeutic approach to meditation.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, July 15th, 2014 at 11:03 PM

Title: Re: Dharma & Science

Content:

Dan74 said:

...while our worldview has been so enriched both by our understanding of the Universe, genetics, biology, particle physics and quantum mechanics.

Malcolm wrote:

Dan, I am going to ignore your other statements, since they are rhetorical flourishes for the most part that don't bear any need of reply.

However:

How many plants can you name which grow where you live, which ones are edible, poison, or neither? What are their medicinal properties?

How well do you know the movements of stars in the sky?

How connected are you actually with the place where you live?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, July 15th, 2014 at 11:18 PM

Title: Re: Dharma & Science

Content:

Dan74 said:

But this has nothing to do with your argument.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, actually it has a lot to do with my argument — you are now making a utility argument for science. I think that is a poor argument. There is not nearly as much utility in science as you want to believe.

The point about knowledge of place is that most of the knowledge you are talking about

is just abstract, it has nothing to do with where people live, how they live, and so on. We live in a world where children do not know that eggs come from chickens.

Dan74 said:

but its a great approach, it imbues us with fascination and respect as natures secrets reveal themselves.

Malcolm wrote:

Science, in its present iteration, is reductive and destructive.

Science is clearly not a panacea, has actually done nothing to remove the total amount of suffering in the world [in fact it has increased it substantially] and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, July 15th, 2014 at 11:21 PM

Title: Re: Dharma & Science

Content:

Dan74 said:

This might be a starting point for those who are interested:

[http://undsci.berkeley.edu/article/whatisscience\\_01](http://undsci.berkeley.edu/article/whatisscience_01)

Malcolm wrote:

How patronizing...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, July 16th, 2014 at 12:40 AM

Title: Re: Dharma & Science

Content:

Dan74 said:

Utility is only one aspect. I would actually start with understanding. You practice Tibetan medicine. I suspect that at some stage, knowledge of Tibetan plants has been used to poison people. At some other stage, some quacks probably practiced it inappropriately with disastrous consequences. Should all the books have been burned then? Should people have railed against it as doing "nothing to remove the total amount of suffering in the world"? I think not.

Malcolm wrote:

The point is not "is this this scientific technique of analysis good or bad?" The point is that many people who post here subordinate the Dharma to science, arguing incorrectly that HH Dalai Lama actually holds such a position as well. They then immediately then bring up the utility argument "The benefits of science" argument, if you will. Then, if anyone should even venture to suggest that science, as it is being used today, is actually pernicious and harmful, they immediately bring up the "well this computer and

internet was brought to you by science, so shut up." These people have apparently never read *In the Absence of the Sacred: The Failure of Technology and the Survival of the Indian Nations* by Jerry Mander.

Dan74 said:

As for science being "reductive and destructive", it can be, usually in its infancy it is because when starting from nothing, a simple reductive model is the best you can do. In its maturity it progresses to more complex models.

Malcolm wrote:

As opposed to Buddhadharma, which begins from a place of maturity and wisdom, and is never destructive, never requires adaptation, never requires any change whatsoever, since it is the highest point of human knowledge possible.

Dan74 said:

No, knowledge can be abstract and specific and one kind can inform the other. The prevailing ignorance, like the example you describe, is hardly the fault of science. And I wholeheartedly agree with you about the importance of being connected with the place you live. I can do better, get my hands dirtier more often and contribute more positively to our local environment. But again, this is at best tangential to the topic at hand.

Malcolm wrote:

It is not tangential at all. We live in a society of heads without bodies, we are more alienated and disconnected with our world (as it rapidly disappears before our eyes, being transformed into wasteland) than at any time in history. Our civilization has produced the greatest harm to the planet we have ever seen. All of this is result of our brimming confidence in science and the technological solutions it proposes, each one of which has brought more sorrow to us than the last. All of this is a result of our collective abandonment of the wisdom traditions of our elders, our sacred traditions, our sense of sacred place, etc.

Dan74 said:

But I think you are not serious with your dismissal. Abjure all technology, give up all new materials, build your own house from basic materials and no help from powertools, sell your car, grow your own food, live like a true Luddite and you will have some credibility as far as a philosophical position on technology is concerned. But that still doesn't touch science. Science, first and foremost, is about understanding. Do you really want to close the door on scientific understanding of the material world?

Malcolm wrote:

First of all, the Luddites were not opposed to technology per se, they were trying to prevent the destruction of artisanal cottage industry weaving.

Second of all, my specific criticism is focused on the idea that scientific knowledge can supersede Dharma or that Dharma can be understood in the manner which those who do "science" are accustomed to looking at things. Why, because as said science is not based on wisdom, it does not even discover wisdom, it just discovers material



intricacies, it is very detailed and so on, but its meaning is very, very coarse and not at all profound. There is nothing profound in science at all.

It is not possible now to live the way you suggest.

Anyway, it is you who are conflating issues, not me. I presented this premise:

Science operates from a lowest common denominator approach to evaluating knowledge. It is predicated on the perceptions of confused sentient beings, not the perceptions of awakened people.

Please examine your statements in light of my statement there.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, July 16th, 2014 at 12:45 AM

Title: Re: Dharma & Science

Content:

Mkoll said:

I really don't understand how religious fundamentalists can spit on science while using as their medium to do so a computer and the internet.

Malcolm wrote:

This is a very facile observation, and specious to boot. What I pointed out, and am pointing out is that science is not based in the perceptions of awakened people. It is based in the lowest common denominator, ordinary perception.

But here, on DW, it really seems that the general tone of this board is that where Buddhadharma is contradicted by "Science", well, this is what we have to follow. We can beat up Buddhist teachings all we like, but god forgive that anyone should question the sacred cow "Science" which is such a cornucopia of "benefits".

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, July 16th, 2014 at 1:09 AM

Title: Re: Dharma & Science

Content:

Mkoll said:

I really don't understand how religious fundamentalists can spit on science while using as their medium to do so a computer and the internet.

Malcolm wrote:

This is a very facile observation, and specious to boot. What I pointed out, and am pointing out is that science is not based in the perceptions of awakened people. It is based in the lowest common denominator, ordinary perception.

But here, on DW, it really seems that the general tone of this board is that where

Buddhadharma is contradicted by "Science", well, this is what we have to follow. We can beat up Buddhist teachings all we like, but god forgive that anyone should question the sacred cow "Science" which is such a cornucopia of "benefits".

Jikan said:

Malcolm, do you think this view pertains to DW's users in plurality, or its team members, or...?

I see forceful arguments being made against the putative Dharma-science connection by more than one voice in this thread and elsewhere.

Malcolm wrote:

I think it is a general tone, some members reflect that tone more than others. But this board is hardly perceived as being devoted to upholding traditional Buddhist values. In general, the primary standard-bearers of Buddhadharma here are the Tibetan Buddhists.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, July 16th, 2014 at 1:17 AM

Title: Re: Dharma & Science

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

But here, on DW, it really seems that the general tone of this board is that where Buddhadharma is contradicted by "Science", well, this is what we have to follow.

Mkoll said:

Your perception of the "general tone of this board" is based on the personal outspoken views of whatever select members you have in mind.

"We" don't have to follow anything of the sort.

Malcolm wrote:

Basically, it is really simple — whenever someone posts something about some traditional topic, be it authorship of Mahāyāna, etc., by far and away the consensus always comes down in favor of secular scholarship. Someone recently suggested that the TOS of the board be changed from: Do not be disruptive. Dharma Wheel is an environment for the discussion of Mahayana and Vajrayana Buddhism.

To:

Do not be defensive of tradition. Dharma Wheel is a secularizing, science-based, unevenly regulated environment for the dissection, dissolution and eventual replacement of Mahayana and Vajrayana Buddhism with a new secular philosophy stripped of all inconvenience.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, July 16th, 2014 at 4:16 AM

Title: Re: Complete Tegal Instruction in Unrestricted New Book

Content:

Crazywisdom said:

She's going to go into the bardo thinking she's supposed to see "essence... nothing, not nothing" When she sees the deities, she'll freak out and be in hell.

Malcolm wrote:

I don't think so. She understood what chos nyid mngon gsum was well enough, this alone is enough to prevent rebirth in lower realms forever.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, July 16th, 2014 at 4:31 AM

Title: Re: Dharma & Science

Content:

Johnny Dangerous said:

My own experience of things is that the rhetoric on this has gotten to a place where it's creating it's own vortex of malaise, bad feelings, and general back-and forth about who is properly Buddhist and who is not. While I have my own opinion about the arguments themselves, I hope those of you going polemic about this on either will periodically question what level of this kind of debate is actually beneficial, and if and when it reaches a point of dragging things here downhill.

Malcolm wrote:

It has reached the point where the ability to talk here is stymied by two things) 1 constant referral to the Pali Canon when in fact discourse should be grounded in Mahāyāna and Vajrayāna texts 2) the inability to conduct a conversation about Mahāyāna and Vajrayāna without it being sidetracked by skeptics. These two facts have lead to an exodus of more traditionally minded users, if you haven't noticed. The third issue is that people who really have no idea what they are talking about are allowed to waffle on and on for months without being curbed.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, July 16th, 2014 at 4:45 AM

Title: Re: Dharma & Science

Content:

Johnny Dangerous said:

there will continue to be a "secular Buddhism".

Malcolm wrote:

We should not even have to put up with this for one second. Supposedly this forum is "...on Mahayana and Vajrayana Buddhism". I don't see where "Secular Buddhism" even has a place here at all. They have their own forums, named as such.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, July 16th, 2014 at 5:17 AM

Title: Re: Dharma & Science

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

With regard to the problems and conflicts between science and Dharma, science is not a wisdom tradition, its practitioners not necessarily wise. We can understand that this because it is technology, which we all understand to be a product of science [after all, how often have I been chided in the past two days for using technology while criticizing science as the be all and end all?] that has plunged this world into a human-made crisis of epic proportions, a fact which no one seems willing to acknowledge. Somehow, we are supposed to imagine that science in its own little unassailable domain, exempt from criticism because of its touted "benefits". Dharma on the other hand, is also assigned its domain, restricted to moral issues, but when it comes down to things like the four or five elements, etc., we are supposed to dismiss these as archaic, obsolete, "unscientific" doctrines.

Dan for example, says "...are we to blame Tibetan herbs because they can be harmful if used incorrectly?" Gee Dan, you are making a perfect argument for the NRA, since after all, it is people that kill people and not guns. As I pointed out already, most of the ills of the world today, the pollution, the over-population, the manufactured toxins in our environment, GMO crops, the extinction crisis, etc., are all a result of science that is not guided by wisdom. These days, most people understand that the proliferation of guns is not a good thing. Why is it so hard for these same people to understand that at present, in the hand of confused people science is more dangerous than any gun.

Science and Dharma should not be kept in their own domains, on the contrary, science should be subordinate to Dharma, that is to say, a follower of Dharma needs to evaluate science and technology according to its impact on the world. This is rarely done in any systematic way, and this is largely because the moral fiber and wisdom of the world-wide Post-Industrial Civilization is very weak.

Beyond this are the obvious tensions between science and Dharma that have already been pointed out.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, July 16th, 2014 at 5:23 AM

Title: Re: Direct introduction and purification of the 6 lokas

Content:

frank123 said:

If Rinpoche gives the lung for the 6 lokas at the end of the upcoming Massachusetts retreat will one be able to practice the 6 lokas and incorporate Vajrasattva into the practice? or is Vajrasattva with six lokas part of the Longsal Ngondro only and need the

specific lung?Apologies if it sounds like i'm repeating myself.

Malcolm wrote:

The Longsal Ngondro is something very specific, it is not the same thing as the retreat he gave recently, though in essence it is the same.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, July 16th, 2014 at 5:29 AM

Title: Re: Dharma & Science

Content:

Johnny Dangerous said:

It's not your forum, and not your call to interpret how that rule gets implemented. I'm willing to listen to concrete complaints personally, but mostly what I have is general hand-wringing from a small group of users who feel that DW somehow is "attacking them" on both sides of the debate due to simply not seeing the larger picture.

Malcolm wrote:

Did I ever say DW was attacking me? No, never.

What I said was the DW does not live up to its advertising as a forum for Mahāyāna and Vajrayāna. One assumes that means that Mahāyāna and Vajrayāna should be the main focus of conversation, not endless reruns with the same people who deny rebirth, who insist that Dharma must conform to science and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, July 16th, 2014 at 5:40 AM

Title: Re: Dharma & Science

Content:

Johnny Dangerous said:

It's not your forum, and not your call to interpret how that rule gets implemented. I'm willing to listen to concrete complaints personally, but mostly what I have is general hand-wringing from a small group of users who feel that DW somehow is "attacking them" on both sides of the debate due to simply not seeing the larger picture.

Malcolm wrote:

Did I ever say DW was attacking me? No, never.

What I said was the DW does not live up to its advertising as a forum for Mahāyāna and Vajrayāna. One assumes that means that Mahāyāna and Vajrayāna should be the main focus of conversation, not endless reruns with the same people who deny rebirth, who insist that Dharma must conform to science and so on.

Johnny Dangerous said:

There are endless reruns of all sorts of conversations on here, what do you expect, a

Mahayana loyalty pledge? Do you expect us to actively censor heterodox views that don't break the ToS?

Malcolm wrote:

I think you ought to be a forum for Mahāyāna and Vajrayāna as you claim to be. Instead it is "Buddhism is whatever the hell I think it is" quite often.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, July 16th, 2014 at 6:23 AM

Title: Re: Complete Total Instruction in Unrestricted New Book

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

She understood what chos nyid mngon gsum was well enough...

dzogchungpa said:

Just out of curiosity, how do you know that?

Malcolm wrote:

Because they received the teachings, and knew what they meant.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, July 16th, 2014 at 9:16 AM

Title: Re: Dharma & Science

Content:

Dan74 said:

That said, there will always be individuals in all walks of life who don't care about anything and anyone other than themselves and who can work with no regard to ethical consequences of their work. My impression is that they are a tiny fringe, generally hidden in some secret military laboratories and every scientists I've had dealings with has been very conscious of the big picture.

Malcolm wrote:

I would argue that on the contrary, it is institutionalized and wide spread. As you say "corporate sociopathy".

Dan74 said:

But going after science because its discoveries has been misused is pretty pointless and misguided, I think. We should go after the polluters, the governments that don't protect our interests and the natural heritage that we should be custodians of, rather than destroyers. We should go after the culture of consumerism and corporate sociopathy. Science is knowledge and sure enough knowledge can be a dangerous thing. But the genie is out of the bottle and there is no use trying to shove it back in or throw stones. Best to be constructive and learn to use it wisely.

Malcolm wrote:  
Another "people kill people" argument.

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Wednesday, July 16th, 2014 at 9:17 AM  
Title: Re: Dharma & Science  
Content:  
TRC said:  
Science and Technology aren't the problem. Greed, hatred and delusion are the problem. Stop blaming Science!

Malcolm wrote:  
Right, guns are not the problem, it's people. You really do need to read In Absence of the Sacred.

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Wednesday, July 16th, 2014 at 7:08 PM  
Title: Re: Dharma & Science  
Content:  
TRC said:  
Science and Technology aren't the problem. Greed, hatred and delusion are the problem. Stop blaming Science!

Malcolm wrote:  
Right, guns are not the problem, it's people. You really do need to read In Absence of the Sacred.

Mkoll said:  
Who makes the guns? People.

Why do people make guns? Defilement.

That's not to say guns aren't a problem, but they aren't the root of the problem.

Malcolm wrote:  
Afflicted people make guns. Afflicted people do science. See the problem? It is the one I have been talking about.

Author: Malcolm  
Date: Wednesday, July 16th, 2014 at 8:10 PM  
Title: Re: Dharma & Science  
Content:  
Dan74 said:  
Are you suggesting we ban science?

Malcolm wrote:

Of course not, Dan. What I am pointing out, all other distractions aside, is that the benefits of science are not nearly as great as some of its enthusiasts imagine, that in fact there are long range harmful effects of our present, scientific industrial culture. What I am also suggesting the reason for this is that science is not derived from wisdom.

But this is not even the main point — the main point is that science is taken as more authoritative than Dharma. For example, Wayfarer constantly refers to a scientist to defend rebirth (without notable success), not masters like Nāgārjuna and so on. Perhaps he feels that people are more likely to listen to a scientist than an ancient masters?

Amazingly, I see more impassioned defense of science here than Dharma.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, July 16th, 2014 at 8:16 PM

Title: Re: Dharma & Science

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Afflicted people make guns. Afflicted people do science. See the problem? It is the one I have been talking about.

Mkoll said:

And afflicted people practice Buddhism.

I don't see the problem.

Malcolm wrote:

The difference is when they practice the path. Unlike all other phenomena, the path, while conditioned, is unafflicted. Why? Because it comes from the wisdom of awakened people and, at least in Vajrayāna, is transmitted by awakened people. Science, on the other hand, is afflicted knowledge transmitted by afflicted people about afflictive phenomena.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, July 16th, 2014 at 8:32 PM

Title: Re: Complete Tegal Instruction in Unrestricted New Book

Content:

Crazywisdom said:

She's going to go into the bardo thinking she's supposed to see "essence... nothing, not nothing" When she sees the deities, she'll freak out and be in hell.

Malcolm wrote:



I don't think so. She understood what chos nyid mngon gsum was well enough, this alone is enough to prevent rebirth in lower realms forever.

Crazywisdom said:

That might be the case for someone who doesn't misrepresent dharma and teach a bastardized path. Chos nyid mngon gsum is only path of application. Even a first bhumī bodhisattva can be reborn in hell, like when The Bodhisattva killed the boatman. And that was considered a righteous killing.

Malcolm wrote:

As ChNN states, again and again, whoever has the experience of chos nyid mngon gsum will never take rebirth in lower realms again, cf. sgra thaḡ gyur tantra.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, July 16th, 2014 at 8:35 PM

Title: Re: Complete Toga Instruction in Unrestricted New Book

Content:

Crazywisdom said:

No. They did not. They completely misunderstood the teachings. They might have seen bindus but they did not understand the part about not conceptualizing them and not concretizing or universalizing them.

Malcolm wrote:

Do you know them personally, or are you basing your opinion merely off of their books? Also, doesn't it strike you as a bit unkind to refer to Rachel Olds in such a condemning way? Speaking strictly for myself I would prefer to think that she will take a human birth again, in a Dharma family.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, July 16th, 2014 at 8:39 PM

Title: Re: Direct introduction and purification of the 6 lokas

Content:

frank123 said:

If Rinpoche gives the lung for the 6 lokas at the end of the upcoming Massachusetts retreat will one be able to practice the 6 lokas and incorporate Vajrasattva into the practice? or is Vajrasattva with six lokas part of the Longsal Ngondro only and need the specific lung? Apologies if it sounds like i'm repeating myself.

Malcolm wrote:

The Longsal Ngondro is something very specific, it is not the same thing as the retreat he gave recently, though in essence it is the same.

frank123 said:

I was studying the Paris retreat from 2006 where the 6 lokas incorporates Vajrasattva. So would a 6 lokas lung be suffice to do the practice from this retreat?

Malcolm wrote:

No Idea. At this point you really need to ask the boss.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, July 16th, 2014 at 10:33 PM

Title: Re: Complete Tegal Instruction in Unrestricted New Book

Content:

Crazywisdom said:

I'm sure she will find the teachings again.

Malcolm wrote:

Then why paint such a condemning picture?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, July 16th, 2014 at 11:58 PM

Title: Re: Complete Tegal Instruction in Unrestricted New Book

Content:

Crazywisdom said:

I'm sure she will find the teachings again.

Malcolm wrote:

Then why paint such a condemning picture?

Crazywisdom said:

Her students will not. She received Longchen Nyingthig. Her students received Earth Visions.

Malcolm wrote:

I really don't think they have many students.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, July 17th, 2014 at 7:20 PM

Title: Re: "Protestant" vs Traditional/"Orthodox" approaches to Dharma

Content:

Kim O'Hara said:

Hi, Sherlock,

I'm not going to disagree (not yet, anyway! ) but do you distinguish between approaches coming from Protestantism as opposed to the scientific method as opposed to historical research techniques as opposed to the (European) Enlightenment philosophical tradition and, if so, how?

Kim

Malcolm wrote:

They are all of a piece.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, July 18th, 2014 at 4:08 AM

Title: Re: Dharma & Science

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Science, in its present iteration, is reductive and destructive.

Science is clearly not a panacea, has actually done nothing to remove the total amount of suffering in the world [in fact it has increased it substantially] and so on.

catmoon said:

What a perfectly ridiculous thing to say. Without scientific advances you'd be illiterate, diseased, and have a life expectancy of 28 years. You would never have heard of the Dharma or Buddha either.

Malcolm wrote:

Even with scientific "advances" people are still illiterate, have short life spans, and suffering from many diseases that did not exist even 100 years ago.

BTW, most life expectancy stats are factor in infant mortality — remove that, and we still tend to live into our 70s and 80s. After all Buddha lived to be 80, and that was not considered unusual at all.

My hearing of of the Dharma would depend very much on where I was born. The fact that I have entered the Dharma in this life at an early age pretty much guarantees I was a Buddhist for a long time, in many life times.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, July 18th, 2014 at 4:42 AM

Title: Re: Why do only very few practitioners attain rainbow body?

Content:

ZOOM said:

Why do only very few Dzogchen practitioners attain rainbow body compared to the high number of Dzogchen practitioners in the world?

Malcolm wrote:

There are 21 types of capacities of practitioners. Only the best of the best attain great transference body, i.e., rainbow body in this life. Virtually all others attain it in the bardo, or failing that, in a pure nirmanakāya buddhafield.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, July 18th, 2014 at 5:03 AM

Title: Re: Dharma & Science

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

My hearing of of the Dharma would depend very much on where I was born. The fact that I have entered the Dharma in this life at an early age pretty much guarantees I was a Buddhist for a long time, in many life times.

Emakirikiri said:

On this note it's said that Dzogchen practitioners of average capacity that do not recognise in the bardo of dharmata are then transferred to the five Pure Lands and attain Enlightenment. Does this mean that we were less than average Dzogchen practitioners in our past lives or that this is the first time we have properly entered into Dzogchen in our continuum?

Malcolm wrote:

Capacity here is related to diligence, that's all.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, July 18th, 2014 at 5:16 AM

Title: Re: Why do only very few practitioners attain rainbow body?

Content:

ngodrup said:

How many dzogchen yogis are free of the eight worldly concerns and spend a significant portion of their life in solitary retreat?

Malcolm wrote:

The same could be said of many so called "Dzogchen teachers".

Anyway, whether your corpse shrinks or you wake up in the bardo, your body still reverts to the five lights of pure consciousness [ye shes].

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, July 18th, 2014 at 5:37 AM

Title: Re: "Protestant" vs Traditional/"Orthodox" approaches to Dha

Content:

Kim O'Hara said:

I think we only have two choices: we can try to go back to the past (or stay in it, like the Amish) or we can tackle the messy but stimulating process of working out an approach to the dharma which adapts to, and benefits people in, the society we live in. We will just have to do our best not to lose or distort anything essential.

Kim

Malcolm wrote:

It is really simple — you find an awakened teacher, you respectfully ask for teachings. You apply them. If you have extra time in your life, then you also study a lot. If you don't, you mainly focus on practice.

But Dharma is not something that is "worked out" — it is essentially a tradition grounded in hearing. You cannot learn Dharma from books. It must be heard. Then you apply it. This is the only proper way to approach the Dharma.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, July 18th, 2014 at 5:42 AM

Title: Re: "Protestant" vs Traditional/"Orthodox" approaches to Dha

Content:

uan said:

The question is, how would someone in the West know a translation or interpretation is wrong? They need to rely on the translators, but which one? Places like DW provide a place where the translations can be held up in the light of day to by people with the knowledge of Dharma from the source(s) and of the West, and who can provide a lingua franca for better understanding.

Malcolm wrote:

Again, those of us who are in the Dharma must emphasize to interested newcomers the essential import of engaging in the three prajñās of hearing, reflection and cultivation. There is no prajñā identified as "reading".

In order to hear the Dharma one must go to a qualified kalayānamitra [lit. good friend], a virtuous mentor, and begin the process of hearing the Dharma.

As I stated above, Dharma is a Aural Lineage. The Aural, or Hearing lineage, is much more important, relatively speaking, than the texts. The texts must be understood on the basis of the hearing the Dharma taught by a qualified teacher. Without that essential act of hearing the Dharma taught by a living, qualified teacher, one's understanding of the Dharma is sure to be bent askew right from the start.

Once we decide to rely on a qualified mentor, then we will be able to know when our own or other's understanding of the Dharma is correct or incorrect.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, July 18th, 2014 at 6:13 AM

Title: Re: Is Western Buddhism an (ethnic) identity-based Buddhism?

Content:

Nemo said:

Chinese invade Tibet in 1950, give the reincarnated 20 years to grow up in the West. Western Tibetan Buddhism should start flourishing in the 1970's with a huge influx of new students but by 1980 that should start slowing down to a trickle. Now they would likely be born in Asia. It is quite possible that Tibetan Buddhist centres will become museums when that initial influx starts passing on in another 30 years. I don't think many Sanghas will be growing now unless they are selling something that is not genuine Dharma.

Perhaps my reincarnation based identity theory is too Buddhist for some.

uan said:

Is that how rebirth in Buddhism works? I don't know if it's too Buddhist for some, or not Buddhadharma at all.

Mkoll said:

I'd go with the latter.

Malcolm wrote:

It makes sense when discussing people with affinities for Tibetan Buddhism. The Chinese started suppressing Buddhism right way, it reached the height of suppression between 1959-1968, then was suppressed until the early 80's. Meanwhile the refugee community in India was really in dire straights, so many people who were Tibetan practitioners in their past life, such as myself, were born into western families so we could meet the Dharma again with freedom and endowment to practice. And yes, I was definitely a Tibetan practitioner for many lifetimes.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, July 18th, 2014 at 6:19 AM

Title: Re: Is Western Buddhism an (ethnic) identity-based Buddhism?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

It makes sense when discussing people with affinities for Tibetan Buddhism. The Chinese started suppressing Buddhism right way, it reached the height of suppression between 1959-1968, then was suppressed until the early 80's. Meanwhile the refugee community in India was really in dire straights, so many people who were Tibetan practitioners in their past life, such as myself, were born into western families so we could meet the Dharma again with freedom and endowment to practice.

Mkoll said:

So are you claiming to recollect your past life as a Tibetan practitioner, Malcolm?

Malcolm wrote:

Nope, but I am sure it is the case for many, many reasons I won't bore you with. Suffice it to say, in my last lifetime, I was a practitioner from the Derge region of Eastern Tibet. Educated in Sakya, practitioner of Dzogchen, just like now.

I will share with you however that when I was in Central Tibet, I had past life memories, not very precise in detail, but vivid. This is when we were on our way to Samye and being in Samye. I remembered the place. Not Deja vu, something much stronger. Most specifically I remembered how the mountains looked in the Yarlung Valley, among other things.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, July 18th, 2014 at 6:28 AM

Title: Re: Why do only very few practitioners attain rainbow body?

Content:

ZOOM said:

The only Dzogchen practitioners we can be sure that they achieved something meaningful at all in their training are those attaining rainbow body during life or at death.

Malcolm wrote:

I think you really need to study the teachings a bit more before making such confidence pronouncements.

All these grades of practitioners are described in detail by the Buddha in such tantras as the Self-Arisen Vidya Tantra and so on, where the whole process is very precisely described, how many days they remain in the bardo of dharmatā, how many emanations they will have after achieving liberation in the bardo and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, July 18th, 2014 at 6:44 AM

Title: Re: Why do only very few practitioners attain rainbow body?

Content:

Punya said:

waking up in the bardo do as well? (but not saying that's easy).

Malcolm wrote:

Achieving Buddhahood in the bardo is much easier than in this life. Why? It is because in the bardo state we have seven times more clarity. Buddha Vajrasattva states in the Victor's Speech Tantra

After that, in the bardo of rebirth the present unobstructed awareness with complete sense organs has seven times more clarity.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, July 18th, 2014 at 6:51 AM

Title: Re: "Protestant" vs Traditional/"Orthodox" approaches to Dha

Content:

Alfredo said:

It seems to me that what we're talking about here is not an issue of Protestant Buddhism, but of a clash between fundamentalist and modernist approaches to Buddhism.

Malcolm wrote:

There is no modernist approach to Dharma. If it is not traditional, i.e., based on hearing the teachings from qualified masters, like a seal and its imprint, it really isn't Dharma at all.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, July 18th, 2014 at 7:37 AM

Title: Re: Why do only very few practitioners attain rainbow body?

Content:

ZOOM said:

books or gurus!

Malcolm wrote:

The way things work in Vajrayāna Dharma is that we do not make assertions about the teachings unless they are backed up in the words of the Buddha, which are found in Dzogchen and other kinds of tantras.

A guru is indispensable in Dzogchen teachings, as well as all other Vajrayāna teachings. Without a guru, there is no path. Without a path, there is no result, much less rainbow body. Without a Guru we cannot receive the transmissions for the books in which Dzogchen teachings are recorded. So a Guru is indispensable as the root of the path.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, July 18th, 2014 at 7:39 AM

Title: Re: Why do only very few practitioners attain rainbow body?

Content:

ZOOM said:

Visible results are the name of the game.

Malcolm wrote:

No, not really. The name of the game is waking up, attaining buddhahood for the benefit of all sentient beings. It does not matter much if it happens in this life, the bardo or the next life.



Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, July 18th, 2014 at 7:56 AM

Title: Re: Dharma wheel, ethics, value & online communities

Content:

David N. Snyder said:

As a discussion forum get fairly large, there is bound to be a diverse set of views. There will be some who want a hard-line certain Dharma-view / their interpretation only, some that will want something more toward a secular view, etc. And that is fine as long as everyone is cordial. Here and at Dhamma Wheel too, we sometimes get complaints that we are allowing too many secular views to be expressed. And then we also get complaints from the opposite side that we are being Dharma-police and not allowing other views and interpretations.

Malcolm wrote:

Hi David:

I guess, speaking as a traditionalist, there really isn't room for views of Dharma in a forum that imagines itself dedicated to Mahāyāna and Vajrayāna that are not grounded in the tradition itself. This is especially true of a Vajrayāna forum where the lineage and lineage explanations absolutely vital. But beyond that, like the point I made in another thread, Mahāyāna and Vajrayāna, like the Śrāvaka schools, are grounded in hearing, reflection and cultivation, i.e. the three prajñās, whereas the so called "secular Buddhism" is just based on an intellectual interpretation of Dharma that is not grounded in the three prajñās. Instead it is based on the three vikalpas [conceptualities] reading, proliferation and attachment to views. Really, in a forum dedicated to Mahāyāna and Vajrayāna, there should be no place at all for so called "Secular Buddhism". Why? Because there is no Dharma in "Secular Buddhism".

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, July 18th, 2014 at 8:23 AM

Title: Re: Dharma & Science

Content:

Motova said:

How would you improve science Malcolm (the theory, goal and method)?

If scientific development were up to you, would you just halt it?

Malcolm wrote:

If it were up to me, I would regulate scientific research in accordance with Dharma ethics.

The point here is that science is not an activity carried out by awakened people, which is why so much of it is perverted.

But what I am really talking about is the pervasive tendency to subordinate Dharma to

science that we see in so many practitioners.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, July 18th, 2014 at 8:28 AM

Title: Re: Why do only very few practitioners attain rainbow body?

Content:

ZOOM said:

Yes, and the only way to know if someone is approaching or attaining enlightenment are visible signs as those I was already talking about.

Malcolm wrote:

That is not the only way to know whether someone is approaching or has attained awakening.

Such signs are actually for those who lack faith and require miracles.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, July 18th, 2014 at 8:31 AM

Title: Re: Why do only very few practitioners attain rainbow body?

Content:

ZOOM said:

Is the answer that you have to be the member of an old Dzogchen lineage or that you have to be the student of an accomplished Dzogchen teacher?

No, because if that was the reason then every member of an old Dzogchen lineage or every student of an accomplished Dzogchen teacher would attain rainbow body.

But this is not the case.[/u][b]

Malcolm wrote:

Every practitioner that I know who follows an authentic teacher will attain total realization either in this life, the bardo or in the natural nirmanakāya buddhafiels.

This is what my teachers state, this is what the tradition states.

And yes, you need to be the student of a realized master.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, July 18th, 2014 at 8:34 AM

Title: Re: "Protestant" vs Traditional/"Orthodox" approaches to Dha

Content:

Alfredo said:

What I hear you saying is that, as a fundamentalist / traditionalist, you are offended by modernist interpretations of Buddhism, and feel they should be banned from the site, or at least made to wear a funny hat.

Malcolm wrote:

I am not offended by them, I pity those who hold them. But I feel that their confusion has many other places where it can be spread, and does not need to be coddled here.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, July 18th, 2014 at 8:39 AM

Title: Re: Dharma & Science

Content:

Motova said:

It doesn't matter, science won't go away. You might as well make the best of it. I never said the terrible shit stopped.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, we work with circumstances as best we can. But it does not mean we remain passive and silent.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, July 18th, 2014 at 12:05 PM

Title: Re: Why do only very few practitioners attain rainbow body?

Content:

Ivo said:

Zoom, you have some very valid points. I don't know why no one is explaining here that the attainment of the rainbow body is generally a product of the very special practice of Togyal - a practice which requires much effort and which, in order to be brought to this particular conclusion needs to be done in strict retreat. Very few practitioners are actively and seriously engaged in Thogyal at this point in time. The rainbow body does not result from regular contemplation/resting in Rikpa, even if this is authentic. Other attainments result from that and they are described very extensively in the Dzogchen literature.

And, strictly speaking, the Guru does not do it for you, in the bardo or anywhere else, because the Guru is just our own twisted samsaric perception of the buddha nature. He/she is as external, or internal, as you want him/her to be, but never absolutely so.

Malcolm wrote:

It is easier to bring it conclusion in the bardo.

Of course, having met a path, it is up to you follow, as the Buddha said "i cannot wash away your misdeeds with water, nor remove your suffering with my hand, but i can show you the path to liberation."

Nevertheless, without a realized teacher of Dzogchen, it is difficult to make any progress on the path Of Dzogchen. If one does not have confidence that one's teacher is really a buddha, well, one will not make much progress on the path no matter how much one practices this or that technique.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, July 18th, 2014 at 12:15 PM

Title: Re: Dharma wheel, ethics, value & online communities

Content:

David N. Snyder said:

As a discussion forum get fairly large, there is bound to be a diverse set of views. There will be some who want a hard-line certain Dharma-view / their interpretation only, some that will want something more toward a secular view, etc. And that is fine as long as everyone is cordial. Here and at Dhamma Wheel too, we sometimes get complaints that we are allowing too many secular views to be expressed. And then we also get complaints from the opposite side that we are being Dharma-police and not allowing other views and interpretations.

Malcolm wrote:

Hi David:

I guess, speaking as a traditionalist, there really isn't room for views of Dharma in a forum that imagines itself dedicated to Mahāyāna and Vajrayāna that are not grounded in the tradition itself. This is especially true of a Vajrayāna forum where the lineage and lineage explanations absolutely vital. But beyond that, like the point I made in another thread, Mahāyāna and Vajrayāna, like the Śrāvaka schools, are grounded in hearing, reflection and cultivation, i.e. the three prajñās, whereas the so called "secular Buddhism" is just based on a intellectual interpretation of Dharma that is not grounded in the three prajñās. Instead it is based on the three vikalpas [conceptualities] reading, proliferation and attachment to views. Really, in a forum dedicated to Mahāyāna and Vajrayāna, there should be no place at all for so called "Secular Buddhism". Why? Because there is no Dharma in "Secular Buddhism".

Dan74 said:

Forgive me if I am getting this wrong, Malcolm, but weren't you espousing quite a different approach not that long ago to the point of rejecting the label "Buddhist"? I wasn't following closely, so I may be getting this wrong. But if not, I am glad you weren't booted out of the place. We all go through changes, our views change, positions change,

it is sensible, IMO, to not allow the board to be derailed or overtaken by modern/divergent interpretations but ban them altogether? I don't think so. It would not be the compassionate thing to do, even if one were certain the view is wrong. And how many of us truly have this certainty about all our current positions?

Malcolm wrote:

I follow Dharma. not "Buddhism", precisely for the reason that I do not not think everything called "buddhism" these days is Dharma. That is part of my discarding the label "buddhist" that many people ignored, though i made it plain at the time.

The compassionate thing to do is to present unadulterated Dharma for those who are interested. That is necessarily based on hearing the dharma from realized lineage teachers, and studying authentic teachings of the Buddha, which here, on this forum, also includes Mahayana sutras and tantras and treating them with proper respect., as well as the treatises of the sublime masters of India, Tibet, China, Korea and Japan.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, July 18th, 2014 at 12:36 PM

Title: Re: Dharma & Science

Content:

Motova said:

It doesn't matter, science won't go away. You might as well make the best of it. I never said the terrible shit stopped.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, we work with circumstances as best we can. But it does not mean we remain passive and silent.

Motova said:

Are any of us going to have a serious impact on scientific theory or method in our lives? Unlikely. You can yell as loud as you want. I'm not saying I will have any impact, but it's a means of relieving suffering and supporting the Dharma. If it's here to stay, why not use it? That's what it comes down to. I can still achieve enlightenment while using science as a means to acquire merit, there's nothing wrong with it if you do it skillfully. If I had been born in Asia maybe I could have been a monk, a thangka painter or sculptor. But that's not really in the cards now.

Malcolm wrote:

Motova, you seriously misunderstand my point. My point is solely that it becomes a problem for practitioners and for Dharma in general when people who are nominally "buddhists" take refuge science rather than Dharma. There are a lot of negative consequences one could list. We can start with most obvious one, the denial, of rebirth, which the Buddha clearly defines as a wrong view.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, July 18th, 2014 at 12:43 PM

Title: Re: "Protestant" vs Traditional/"Orthodox" approaches to Dha

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

E-sangha had such a forum once, we closed it because in fact it just became a source of constant attacks on the Dharma, like we see occurring here time and time again. The whole idea that there is an "open" Dharma is completely wrong-headed. This forum should actually be shuttered.

Alfredo said:

What I hear you saying is that, as a fundamentalist / traditionalist, you are offended by modernist interpretations of Buddhism, and feel they should be banned from the site, or at least made to wear a funny hat.

Karma Dorje said:

There is no monolithic "fundamentalist/traditionalist" viewpoint. What is being suggested is that in a board dedicated to Mahayana and Vajrayana, each of the traditions comprised under this rubric should be evaluated and respected on its own terms. Pure Land schools should be respected according their own scriptures and modes of interpretation. Zen, Chan, Nichiren, etc. should similarly be respected as those who uphold each of these traditions represents.

Nyingmas should not come here to try to undercut Gelukpa points of view and vice versa. How can one construe this as a monolithic position and equate it with a Buddhist Taliban as has been done on other threads? What the traditionalists have been suggesting is that the only way to respect the plethora of Buddhist traditions is respect the viewpoints \*grounded in the traditions\* of each in the respective forums. This so-called Buddhist modernism is really a way of dismissing all of the Buddhist traditions and replacing them with a Rorschach blot of quasi-scientific speculation. There is no lineage for this, there are no scriptures and there is no dharma of realization. It's simply discursiveness and idle chatter.

One can't go onto a medical forum and just make stuff up according to one's own viewpoint. One would quite rightly be called a quack and a nuisance and be banned in short order. I have no problem with a separate Skeptical Buddhism forum dedicated to these issues. I have a huge problem with having to read topic after topic where conversation degenerates to this lowest common denominator of belief argued by those interlocutors with the least grounding in scripture and meditative training and the least openness to what the traditional perspectives have to offer.

Mkoll said:

The threads you're describing, including this one, are in the Open Dharma sub-forum. I'll copy-paste the description of it below, with my own emphasis added:

No holds barred discussion on the Buddhadharma. Argue about rebirth, karma,

commentarial interpretations etc. Be nice to each other.  
If you don't want to read this kind of stuff, don't read this sub-forum! It's that simple.

Now, I could understand a gripe about threads being in the wrong sub-forum. But looking through them briefly, I don't see any polemical threads that stand out. The mods do a good job of sequestering that kind of stuff here. And if you have a problem with where a thread is, maybe you can contact a mod about it.

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TLDR: Complaints about the no holds barred discussion, argument about rebirth, kamma, etc., or "untraditionalist" views in the Open Dharma forum are unwarranted.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, July 18th, 2014 at 1:41 PM

Title: Re: Why do only very few practitioners attain rainbow body?

Content:

Ivo said:

...because the Guru is just our own twisted samsaric perception of the buddha nature. He/she is as external, or internal, as you want him/her to be, but never absolutely so.

ZOOM said:

I agree with your view.

Good insight into the true meaning of the guru!

Malcolm wrote:

The Dzogcehn point of view of about gurus is taught in The Magical Dimension of Sound Tantra, the root tantra of all Dzogchen teachings:

Gurus of perfect characteristics
are the source of all qualities,
the ones who sustain the basis of perfect awakening.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, July 18th, 2014 at 1:55 PM

Title: Re: Dharma wheel, ethics, value & online communities

Content:

Son of Buddha said:

You say there is no place for secular buddhism on this forum, are you advocating the ban of secular buddhists and or secular buddhist discussions?

Didn't you yourself have untraditional views not more than a month ago?

It seems to many people want to be the sanctioned dharma police.

Malcolm wrote:

There is no such a thing as Secular Mahāyāna. How could there be?

Eliminating secular buddhism from this forum would not have any negative effect on the this forum, and a very salutary effect. There are plenty of places on the internet where people of such persuasions can theorize and proliferate to their little heart's content about the children of barren woman (i.e. the result of so-called secular buddhism).

How can a forum supposedly devoted to MAHAYANA and VAJRAYANA even put up with such nonsense?

As far as my decision to abandon the western text critical approach to the history of Mahāyāna sūtras, that has been a long time coming. I finally realized that giving credence to the whole edifice of western text criticism which is based on unfounded theories and speculations was nonvirtuous and harmful to my practice as well as that of others. But if you carefully examine the content of my posts over many years, you will see that I have always emphasized a so-called traditional approach to Dharma explanation, teaching and practice.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, July 18th, 2014 at 2:11 PM

Title: Re: Dharma wheel, ethics, value & online communities

Content:

Dan74 said:

As for presenting 'unadulterated Dharma', the way I see it, this forum is not a master, it is a place of discussion. The forum isn't presenting anything, it is providing a space for people to discuss the Dharma.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, Mahāyāna and Vajrayāna Dharma. Not everything people want to call "Dharma" in order to sell a book, make a buck and gain followers.

Dan74 said:

There would be no consensus on what this 'unadulterated Dharma' constitutes on a number of issues among the many schools that make up this forum,

Malcolm wrote:

This is why we have different fora devoted to traditional Mahāyāna and Vajrayāna SCHOOLS.

Dan74 said:

even if it were desirable to enforce such a thing. But the ethos of the forum, if I understand correctly, is not to be a mouthpiece of someone's take on 'unadulterated Dharma' but a forum for inclusive discussion of the Dharma.

Malcolm wrote:

Much of what passes here for discussion does not merit the appellation "Dharma".

Dan74 said:

What would be desirable, IMO, is for the more experienced and knowledgeable members such as yourself, to share their experience and knowledge, to cite sources and (gently) correct misunderstanding or wrong views when they arise. That's how people learn.

Malcolm wrote:

Dude, it isn't working. That's what FAQs are for.

Dan74 said:

They don't learn by the mods coming down on questions because we are tired of hearing them after decades on the Interwebs. They don't learn if we crush them with our superior attitude and patronising tone (not pointing at you or anyone, but many of us, including myself, have been guilty of it at times). They will just think Buddhism is full of jerks. They will likely not understand the air of exasperation and not even hand-wringing over the direction of the forum.

Malcolm wrote:

I don't crush anyone with superior attitudes. I just answer questions -- but then having to put up oceans of irrelevancy over and over again means that discussions here rarely rise out of the explaining basic concepts to people (who really ought to know better) again and again.

Dan74 said:

What's going to work for the folks who come here with an open mind is a patient sincere generous attitude from more experienced people and for the folks with a closed-mind, well, we should be patient as well - closed mind is not a permanent condition, however, they should be kept within the ToS so as not to disrupt the flow of discussion and recurring themes/memes can be amalgamated so as not to clog up the forum, IMO. Of course, you know all this.

Malcolm wrote:

Well, it is not happening. We have people in the Dzogchen forum again questioning why a Guru is needed for Dzogchen, etc., when by now it should be %\$^#%^& axiomatic in Dzogchen and Vajrayāna that this is indispensable. There are many more interesting questions that could be answered, if we were not constantly having to deal with argumentative naifs who disrupt fora after fora, conversation after conversation, even the ones they themselves start.

Dan74 said:

But do you have concrete suggestions, Malcolm? Do you think posts that question certain tenets have no place on the forum?

Malcolm wrote:

Of course that is what I think.

Dan74 said:

Do I understand you correctly? So Batchelor goes, IMS probably goes, a bunch of Zen teachers like Nishijima, Brad Warner, certainly Nonin, who believes in impermanent Buddhahood, maybe a whole lot more who at one time or another have said something heterodox, maybe Ajahn Sumedho, because he generally talks of rebirth in the present moment context?

Malcolm wrote:

There are whole forums devoted to Batchelor, the secularized brand of Vipassana IMS promulgates, Warner, Nonin and so on. What use is bringing all that here?

Dan74 said:

To me as a Seon practitioner this preoccupation with perfect doctrine is putting the cart before the horse. AFAIAC, our view should be right as much as is necessary for practice, everything else can actually be counterproductive, clogging up the mind with more proliferations, expectations, creating more divisions, aversions, cravings, etc. KISS and learn things as you go, on a need to know basis. But I know that this view is not necessarily shared by other schools. Maybe I should push to close all those 'unnecessary' threads that detract people from practice and mold the forum to be sparse and minimalist like a Zen monastery? I don't think so. Different strokes for different folks and I am glad it's like this.

Malcolm wrote:

This is supposed to be a forum devoted to MAHAYANA and VAJRAYANA, but over and over again, we cannot even lift the conversation out of arguments about rebirth, karma, and so on. When was there a substantive conversation about the bodhisattva path that was not disrupted almost immediately by someone who wants to go and revision the Buddha's Dharma? Honestly, it is a problem. Generally speaking, the most successful conversations here are rarely about Dharma, but rather worldly topics like peak oil, politics, and these sorts of things.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, July 18th, 2014 at 2:15 PM

Title: Re: "Protestant" vs Traditional/"Orthodox" approaches to Dha

Content:

smcj said:

Maybe David Snyder should open a third website for secular Buddhists?

Malcolm wrote:

Right, he can call it "Training Wheel: A forum devoted to fingerpainting on Dharmabooks."

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, July 18th, 2014 at 2:16 PM

Title: Re: "Protestant" vs Traditional/"Orthodox" approaches to Dha

Content:

Karma Dorje said:

Why should I tell them they can't hold these views or discuss them?

Malcolm wrote:

We are not telling them that they cannot hold these views or discuss them. They can do both, elsewhere.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, July 18th, 2014 at 2:45 PM

Title: Re: "Protestant" vs Traditional/"Orthodox" approaches to Dha

Content:

Alfredo said:

For example, the Dalai Lama has stated that if a Buddhist belief is ever disproven by science (e.g., the flat earth), then the Buddhist thing to do would be to follow science.

Malcolm wrote:

Again, as I pointed out to James, this is really not what HHDL says, which is why I disagreed with the statement, "as written and as presented". But of course people who do not actually read what HHDL says tend to naively present this citation much in the same way as the Kalamas Sutta is naively presented. The source of the citation is *The Universe in a Single Atom*:

His Holiness, The Dalai Lama said:

My confidence in venturing into science lies in my basic belief that as in science so in Buddhism, understanding the nature of reality is pursued by means of critical investigation: if scientific analysis were conclusively to demonstrate certain claims in Buddhism to be false, then we must accept the findings of science and abandon those claims.

Malcolm wrote:

Dalai Lama (2005-09-13). *The Universe in a Single Atom: The Convergence of Science and Spirituality* (Kindle Locations 48-50). Crown Publishing Group. Kindle Edition.

This citation comes on the second page of the preface, which is why it is so widely cited. But the context for HHDL's statement is found here:

His Holiness, The Dalai Lama said:

As I see it, science falls within the scope of the first truth in that it examines the material bases of suffering, for it covers the entire spectrum of the physical environment—"the container"—as well as the sentient beings—"the contained." It is in the mental realm—the realm of psychology, consciousness, the afflictions, and karma—that we find the second of the truths, the origin of suffering. The third and fourth truths, cessation and

the path, are effectively outside the domain of scientific analysis in that they pertain primarily to what might be called philosophy and religion.

Malcolm wrote:

Dalai Lama (2005-09-13). *The Universe in a Single Atom: The Convergence of Science and Spirituality* (Kindle Locations 1248-1252). Crown Publishing Group. Kindle Edition.

So you see, the first quote may only be properly understood when it is given its full context, provided later on in the same book. I.e. HHDL is saying that when it comes to things like cosmology, physics and biology, the material basis of suffering, Buddhists should defer to science, as this falls under the rubric of suffering, or in other words, conventional truth of deluded persons. However, the third and fourth truths are part of ultimate truth, and are beyond science, according to HHDL. This leaves the second truth in a funny position. It might seem to some that since HHDL is saying here that the second truth concerns mental phenomena which are under the domain of scientific analysis, but since he clearly states that cessation and the path are beyond the domain of science altogether, this really leaves only psychology within the realm of scientific analysis; karma, affliction and consciousness are outside this domain because these three things are precisely what the third and fourth noble truths are concerned with.

So it is important to understand the citation properly.

Some words by Dzungsey Thrinley Norbu are appropriate here:

The reason Buddha did not predominantly teach science is that beings are already attached to materialism and reality, so they can become distracted by material ideas. Instead of only increasing materialism, Buddha taught how to believe in karma, how to develop good karma, and how to purify karma to go beyond karma on the path of enlightenment. Buddha taught beings to have faith in sublime beings because ordinary beings do not know the right direction; they can only know through faith in sublime beings who can show them the correct path. This kind of teaching is so much more powerful than ordinary materialism because it shows how not to create negative karma and how to create positive energy until attaining enlightenment. Spiritual ideas cannot be compared to the material ideas of science, and Buddhist spiritual ideas cannot be changed to accommodate scientific ideas. In Buddhism, the sciences that are taught are never totally material, because they are connected with spirituality, since they are understood to be reflections of the mind and do not deal solely with material existence.

Since modern science generally deals with material existence, people often mistakenly think that it is important for them to know more about it. By miscalculating that a material rather than a spiritual orientation will help them sustain themselves and prosper within their immediate lives, they become more concerned with materialism than with spirituality. This is the antithesis of a spiritual point of view. Since the mind does not end, it is the mind's development of spiritual qualities that is important, and these qualities endure from one life to the next throughout the succession of one's lives. Norbu, Thinley (2011-05-26). *A Cascading Waterfall of Nectar* (Kindle Locations 3243-3255). Shambhala Publications. Kindle Edition.

OK. I hope this clears that up.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, July 18th, 2014 at 3:18 PM

Title: Re: "Protestant" vs Traditional/"Orthodox" approaches to Dha

Content:

Mkoll said:

If you don't want to read this kind of stuff, don't read this sub-forum! It's that simple.

Malcolm wrote:

Frankly, I just don;t understand why a Dharma practitioner would support a fora devoted to adharma. People are always droning on about "Right Speech" here, but has it not occurred to anyone that incorrect presentations of Dharma is the essence of adharma; that rejecting rebirth is adharma; etc.?

Why would we wish to provide a platform for the promulgation of adharma? It is out of some notion of preserving "free speech"? Adharmic speech is not free, it is binding, it causes bad karma and providing a platform for its promulgation is also a cause of bad karma.

Seriously, I wish people would use their heads a bit more and understand that our thoughts and our words have consequences. What we choose to permit on this forum and what we choose not to, also has consequences. This is why, much to the anger of many, we chose to eliminate "the abandon all hope ye who enter here" forum, the so called debate court.

You really should understand that so called Open Dharma forum is really just an Adharma forum. it should be shuttered.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, July 18th, 2014 at 7:23 PM

Title: Re: Using the Dharma to Quit Smoking

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

We use the Dharma to stop suffering. Smoking is a kind of suffering. Therefore, one absolutely should use the Dharma to stop smoking.

As to smoking itself -- smoking causes craving which gives rise to addiction. Sensation conditions craving, contact gives rise to sensation.

You must avoid all conditions where you encounter tobacco in any form, and all people who use it. It is also useful to cultivate an extreme aversion to tobacco.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, July 18th, 2014 at 9:02 PM

Title: Re: Why do only very few practitioners attain rainbow body?

Content:

ZOOM said:

You just have to do the minimum of training your guru requires & pay your membership fee and your guru will take care that you will be enlightened after death?

Malcolm wrote:

Actually, in Vajrayāna in general, after receiving empowerment, as long as one scrupulously maintains samaya, liberation is guaranteed in seven lifetimes.

ZOOM said:

I mean, it has to be your guru who takes care of it...otherwise people wouldn't believe adamantly that you have to have a guru or you won't attain enlightenment.

Malcolm wrote:

There is no means of entering any Vajrayāna path without a Guru — ergo, no Guru, no path, no awakening by means of that path. That is why the Guhyasamaja Tantra states: The Guru is the Buddha, the Guru is the Sangha, likewise, the Guru is the Sangha, the Guru is great glorious Heruka.

ZOOM said:

Because, you can learn from books as well as you can learn from your guru.

Malcolm wrote:

One cannot receive transmission from a book. Having made an effort to receive transmission and the precious oral instructions which are not contained in any book from the mouth of the Guru, then one can rely on books as a supplement.

ZOOM said:

Many books are compiled out of speeches of gurus and reading those speeches does not lead to a worse learning success than hearing the speeches directly standing in front of the guru.

Malcolm wrote:

First, you must have a connection with the lineage. That means you must have a guru. And even so, quite frankly hearing the teachings directly has the quality of transmission, of being in the same state at the same time as the teacher. You just do not get that with a book. It is much better to have received the reading transmission of the Dharma text you wish to follow so that you have a living connection with that teaching. There are many Dharma texts you really are not allowed to read without such transmission. There are many Dharma texts that have one to one transmissions.

For mantra, it is indispensable to have the reading transmission, in other words, you cannot successfully practice any mantra without first having received the lung, the sole exceptions being the mantras of Avalokiteshvara, Tara, Mañjuśrī, Śakyamuni and some others. But for deities like Vajrayogini, Kalacakra, etc., it is indispensable.

ZOOM said:

And hearing the speeches of the guru is all that most students get concerning their communication with their guru. Only the few who practically live with their guru get more.

Malcolm wrote:

A realized guru's job is to teach through body and voice. For example, everything that a teacher like Chogyal Namkhai Norbu (and HH Dalai Lama, HH Sakya Trizin etc.) does is a teaching, the way he walks, dresses, eats, laughs, smiles, frowns, goes to the bathroom, washes, sleeps, wakes up, i.e., the way he lives and the way he dies.

It is important to make time to spend attending one's guru. But you do not have to spend your life doing so. Even so, serving the guru is an important part of practice, and the fastest, most excellent way to earn merit.

In reality all a guru can do is show one the path. There is nothing a guru can do more than that. There is nothing you can do more than receive their transmission and practice. You practice, and when you have questions, you ask. That's it. His or her job is to give transmission, your job is to apply transmission and realize what they have realized.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, July 18th, 2014 at 9:51 PM

Title: Re: "Protestant" vs Traditional/"Orthodox" approaches to Dharma

Content:

Mkoll said:

I will concede that certain points are most certainly adharmic such as outright rejection of: the Buddha's existence, his enlightenment, karma, or rebirth. Someone going on like this on a Buddhist forum is probably trolling. However, polite questions regarding these things coming from a newbie who is clearly amenable to learning and is not here to preach their own adharmic views is different.

Malcolm wrote:

We have a beginners forum for those questions.

Mkoll said:

Also, when you talk of "incorrect presentations of Dharma", we enter another gray area. Each of the traditions has a different presentation of Dharma and who is to decide what is correct or incorrect? Not only that, but each practitioner has their own approach and own perspective.

Malcolm wrote:

Not grey at all. We have different traditions for many reasons, but in general, when it comes to general Mahāyāna, I have no true quibbles with any of the great Mahāyāna traditions, traditional Chan/Zen, Pure Land, etc.; Kagyu, Sakya, Nyingma, Gelug, Jonang, etc.

Mkoll said:

In the end, what you are suggesting is an increase in censorship of those people posting adharmic views, a change in the structure of the forum, and a change in the way moderators do their job. It's not a small change.

Malcolm wrote:

Well, it is pretty easy to see which kinds of arguments are not appropriate in this or that forum. For example, if a Theravadin comes to the general Mahāyāna forum and claims that the Mahāyāna sūtras were not taught by the Buddha, well, this is inappropriate. If a Mahāyāni goes to Dhammawheel for example, and insists that Mahāyāna sūtras be accepted as Buddha's speech, they will be laughed off the forum.

But if you a forum devoted for the sole purpose of debating the very validity of Buddha's teaching, what use does this serve but to further Adharma. For example, the Buddha did advise us to check his teachings the way a goldsmith checks gold, but not because Buddha doubted that what he was teaching was gold. He knew that his teachings were gold. So when we are checking the Buddha's teachings for its "gold content", we are doing so because we want to find gold, not because we want to find pyrite. But the way that kind of forum works is that we begin from a posture of no trust, we assume from the outset than what we are being handed is pyrite, and not gold. We then spend all of our energy in trying to prove this shiny substance in our hand is not gold, and even when we find out it is not pyrite, still we are not sure it is gold. This is the incorrect way of understanding the Buddha's teaching on testing his doctrine like a goldsmith tests gold. Even more to the point, when it comes to Vajrayāna, you had better make damn sure you have already decided the teachings are gold, because after you enter Vajrayāna, if you decide the teachings are not for you, then you can have real problems and obstacles.

Moreover, such a forum just gives a safe haven to those who harbor all sorts of wrong views about the Dharma in general, and Vajrayāna and Mahāyāna in particular. In a free for all zone, no one can prevent someone from slandering Mahāyāna and Vajrayāna. This forum, the "Open" Dharma forum, is just such a haven. While not all the threads in this forum are pernicious, there a great number that are very pernicious for one reason or another. It is because of the nature of the forum that this is so.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, July 18th, 2014 at 10:47 PM

Title: Re: "Protestant" vs Traditional/"Orthodox" approaches to Dha

Content:

Jikan said:

That's how learning happens. It can be ugly and uncomfortable working with people at the level of their own affliction, and acknowledging and working with one's own affliction under the guidance of a teacher. I'm thankful I've had teachers who are willing to keep prodding me.

Malcolm wrote:

My point is that this forum, the open dharma forum, is not a teacher. It is place where people come and share their own confusion and increase that of others.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, July 18th, 2014 at 10:58 PM

Title: Re: Dharma wheel, ethics, value & online communities

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

What do you propose: like e-sangha where it was mandatory to believe in rebirth? A list of topics people are allowed/not allowed to debate and discuss? According to which traditions criteria?

Malcolm wrote:

It was never mandatory to believe in rebirth on e-sangha, it was forbidden to argue against it.

Sherab Dorje said:

How many times has he given the lung for the tun, etc...?

Malcolm wrote:

It's different, no one is arguing with him.

Sherab Dorje said:

Like you stated in the sangha poll, this is not a sangha. There is no teacher. So obviously anything more than recycling the basics, requires sending a member to find a teacher.

Malcolm wrote:

It would be a lot easier to manage, and the level of conversation would be more elevated people if did not feel entitled to argue with every basic aspect of the teachings regardless of forums. For example the user TRC feels completely at ease being confrontational in every forum, the same goes for Alfredo.

Sherab Dorje said:

And let's look at this idea of "traditional". Traditional according to which tradition and

who? You claim a traditional approach yet, if I remember correctly (and please correct me if I am wrong) I have heard you express doubts/objections regarding the tulku system. Well, doesn't that make you non-traditional or a reformist of types? So according to the orthodoxy of your own position, you should not be allowed to take part in discussions on this forum.

Malcolm wrote:

The tulku system as it is present in Tibet has no precedent in sutra and tantra. It is relied upon heavily in Kagyu and Nyingma, less so in Gelug, and almost non-existence in Sakya outside of east Tibet.

I never said the tulku system was completely bad, merely that it was rife for opportunity for abuse. I never stated that there were no authentic tulkus, merely that many so called tulkus are tulkus only named for economic reasons or political reasons. ChNN just finished discussing this issue not 15 minutes ago. I have also expressed my doubt about whether this system is appropriate for continuing the teachings in the West.

Sherab Dorje said:

Discussion and questioning (to a reasonable degree) are a valid tool for learning

Malcolm wrote:

That is not what happens in the so called open dharma forum; and as in e-Sangha, the acute skepticism found here tends to spill into other forums. This is why we shuttered the equivalent forum on esangha.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, July 18th, 2014 at 11:11 PM

Title: Re: Why do only very few practitioners attain rainbow body?

Content:

kirtu said:

It is more easy to become an Arhat than attain rainbow body.

Malcolm wrote:

This is really not the case. Who ever taught you this?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, July 18th, 2014 at 11:14 PM

Title: Re: Why do only very few practitioners attain rainbow body?

Content:

Punya said:

waking up in the bardo do as well? (but not saying that's easy).

Malcolm wrote:

Achieving Buddhahood in the bardo is much easier than in this life. Why? It is because in the bardo state we have seven times more clarity. Buddha Vajrasattva states in the

Victor's Speech Tantra

After that, in the bardo of rebirth the present unobstructed awareness with complete sense organs has seven times more clarity.

kirtu said:

But one's negative emotions are also unimpeded thus making it difficult unless one has a very high level of clarity already.

Kirt

Malcolm wrote:

For this reason we have Dzogchen teachings, which make waking up in the bardo relatively easy. Of the 21 capacities of Dzogchen practitioners listed the Rig pa rang shar tantra it is only the last three or four who need to take rebirth in a pure nirmanakāya realm in order to attain buddhahood.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, July 18th, 2014 at 11:38 PM

Title: Re: "Protestant" vs Traditional/"Orthodox" approaches to Dha

Content:

Mkoll said:

]I'm not convinced, but I don't know much about inter-Mahayana relations so I can't say for sure. However, and this is putting it lightly, I do know for certain that Theravada has a different presentation of Dhamma than Mahayana.

Malcolm wrote:

And they have their own forum, don't they?

Mkoll said:

Well, I've come closer to your side of the fence on this issue since we've started talking about it. I could see a valid argument for certain topics of debate (like the legitimacy of the four concepts I mentioned) being anathema to the forum as a whole because they only serve to increase the hindrance of doubt.

Malcolm wrote:

Classically speaking, debate in Dharma is meant to clarify one's understanding of Dharma because one wants to understand the Dharma with more precision. The purpose of debate in Dharma has never been to fault Dharma teachings and replace them with some post-modern revision. But because of the way we conduct political discourse in the West, we extend that to religious discourse. Then because we have this idea of "free speech", we are offended by the notion that some lines of conversation might be considered non-virtuous from the perspective of Dharma. In other words, we constantly confuse political speech with Dharma speech thinking that it should be the kind free for all we might find in the Hyde Park Speaker's corner.

What I am pointing out is that this "open dharma" forum violates the very TOS of DW by

its very nature because of the kind of speech that is built into the forum itself. As I mentioned before, it provides a natural platform for adharma.

Classically speaking, in ancient India, debate was lead by qualified masters who taught students how to think more clearly and precisely about the Dharma. It has never been a free-for all as we find here. The purpose of this debate was to lessen the students' conceptual doubt and to sharpen their thinking. But that does not happen here. Mostly, it becomes the default forum for what are essentially non-virtuous discussions.

In ancient India, if tirthikas wanted to debate with us, they were sent to the gatekeepers, expert Panditas like Naropa, etc., whose job it was to debate all comers, both Buddhist and non-Buddhist. Well, we don't have that kind of capacity here. We are not a Buddhist university. There are no panditas here.

In the end, the goal should not be to have lots of users, or lots of controversial conversations. The goal at DW should be to have meaningful, edifying discussions about Mahāyāna and Vajrayāna Dharma.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, July 18th, 2014 at 11:49 PM

Title: Re: "Protestant" vs Traditional/"Orthodox" approaches to Dha

Content:

smcj said:

But from what you've said elsewhere based on your E-Sangha experience those discussions spilled over to the other forums.

Malcolm wrote:

Constantly.

The goal here should be to limit opportunity for Adharma speech.

Inevitably someone is going bring up the point of who decides what is Adharmic speech.

Well, this is a Mahayāna/Vajrayāna forum, so right there, questioning the authenticity of Mahāyāna or Vajrayāna should be off limits. It does not mean of course that anyone should be expected to accept Vajrayāna, or for that matter Mahāyāna, but criticisms of these traditions should not be allowed.

In general. DW should be a forum devoted to the promulgation and positive growth of Mahāyāna and Vajrayāna. How can that happen if we allow random people to engage in slanderous criticism of Mahāyāna and Vajrayāna? Somehow it is a major sin to refer to Theravada as a Hinayāna school, but no one blinks even once when the authenticity of Mahāyāna sutras and tantras are questioned or even denied.

Anyway, I think everyone gets my point.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, July 18th, 2014 at 11:52 PM

Title: Re: Dharma & Science

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Motova, you seriously misunderstand my point. My point is solely that it becomes a problem for practitioners and for Dharma in general when people who are nominally "buddhists" take refuge science rather than Dharma. There are a lot of negative consequences one could list. We can start with most obvious one, the denial, of rebirth, which the Buddha clearly defines as a wrong view.

Motova said:

I get what you're saying. But using science and taking refuge in science are two different things. There are people with the karma capable of using science/technology to complement their practice of the Dharma, without having to give up refuge.

Malcolm wrote:

I agree, in principle. On the other hand, sometimes the tools we use shape how we think, i.e., to a hammer, everything is a nail, and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, July 19th, 2014 at 12:13 AM

Title: Re: Why do only very few practitioners attain rainbow body?

Content:

smcj said:

I am personally of the opinion that Dzogchen has been over-marketed here in the West.

Malcolm wrote:

That's true. And even worse it is marketed as just another meditation technique. Just look at the latest cover of Shambhala Sun:

smcj said:

I do not doubt the validity of anything about it, just that it has pandered to many of our cultural preconditions and thus has gotten an undue amount of attention.

Malcolm wrote:

A lot of people use Dzogchen to sell their teachings, without really teaching Dzogchen at all.

smcj said:

The reason there are 9 yanas is because one size does not fit all. The best medicine is

the one that cures the sickness you have got, not the most powerful or famous medicine.

Malcolm wrote:

In this case, the best Dharma for you is the one you want to practice. Dzogchen is a high teaching. That does not mean it is not a path. It is a path. And it can be practiced by any interested person.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, July 19th, 2014 at 12:21 AM

Title: Re: "Protestant" vs Traditional/"Orthodox" approaches to Dha

Content:

Mkoll said:

The purpose of this sub-forum is to openly permit important and challenging discussion on the Dhamma. By establishing a particular forum as a "Free-For-All", albeit one where members must still be nice to each other, we aim to keep other areas of the site free from vociferous debate...

Malcolm wrote:

The problem, as I see it, is that Dhammwheel is more heterogeneous than Dharma Wheel. Secondly, debates tend to spill over into all forums here. Third, this forum is more heterogeneous and it is not as tightly run a ship as Dhammawheel. You have to recall, they all learned their mod skills at E-Sangha and basically transferred the Theravadin forum from E-Sangha to there. ESangha was also a much more tightly run ship than DW is at present. We also had a lot more mods.

My approach to this issue is to mark of dangerous shoals and navigate past them all together, rather than use up the man hours necessary to sound shallow water so we don't constantly run aground, i.e., as I have said several times, shutter this forum rather than trying to fix it.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, July 19th, 2014 at 12:22 AM

Title: Re: Ukraine says Malaysian Airliner shot down, 295 dead

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Yup, well, Russia has a lot of answering to do...

Norwegian said:

Usually planes don't suddenly explode in mid air with debris falling down, so I think we can rule out the crash theory.

As for being shot down, that's the only legible solution. And that Ukraine would shoot down the plane makes no sense. However, we do know that pro-Russian separatists are in the area where the plane crashed, we do know that they have issued warnings before

that they consider the airspace above where they are located as theirs, and we also do know that they have bragged about having BUK missiles in the past. These are just the kind of missiles you need to shoot down a commercial airliner, which has an altitude that is far beyond what "regular" missiles (which what most rebels and terrorists are in possession of) have.

This cached link shows the pro-Russian separatists in that area tweeting an image of the BUK missiles:

https://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?q=cache%3ANF6E5FCKFNEJ%3Ahttps%3A%2F%2Ftwitter.com%2Fdnrpress%2Fstatus%2F483248037629018112 "onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;" onclick="window.open(this.href);return false; -- and I say cached, because they have now deleted that image.

And earlier today, on Russian social network VKontakte (a sort of Russian Facebook), a leader of the pro-Russian separatists bragged about having shot down a Ukrainian military plane over the exact same town as the Malaysian airliner crashed down into. There has been no Ukrainian military plane crashing down there today, only the Malaysian airliner - ergo it was a misunderstanding of gigantic proportions. This post on VK have since been deleted...

And now US intel confirms that indeed a missile have been fired at the airliner: "A senior U.S. official said one radar system saw a surface-to-air missile system turn on and track an aircraft right before the plane went down. A second system saw a heat signature at the time the airliner was hit, the official said. The United States is analyzing the trajectory of the missile to try to learn where the attack came from."

The pro-Russian separatists are now intending on sending the discovered black box of the airliner to Moscow.

This is a tragedy that easily could've been avoided if people had made the right choices. And I really do wonder what Putin is thinking right now...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, July 19th, 2014 at 2:58 AM

Title: Re: "Protestant" vs Traditional/"Orthodox" approaches to Dha

Content:

Jikan said:

How is it that so many recent DW posts get derailed into discussions of moderation policy and practice instead of Dharma? Surely that is an obscure and boring topic for most of us.

Fruitzilla said:

Well, basically because it is a power grab. IIRC it's about the same thing that happened on e-sangha.

Malcolm wrote:

There was no power grab on e-Sangha. Teyes was always the owner of the board. We always served in our various capacities at his pleasure.

There is no power grab here happening here, just an honest discussion of what is appropriate and inappropriate for a board of this type which grew out of a discussion started by Sherlock.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, July 19th, 2014 at 3:45 AM

Title: Re: Dharma wheel, ethics, value & online communities

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

It was never mandatory to believe in rebirth on e-sangha, it was forbidden to argue against it.

Sherab Dorje said:

Same thing.

Malcolm wrote:

No, not the same thing at all.

Sherab Dorje said:

It's different, no one is arguing with him.

Yes, this is true, but this is a discussion forum after all and the example was to highlight the necessity of the repetitive reinforcement of basic principles. ie You missed the point.

Malcolm wrote:

Sorry, but you miss the point — i.e. ChNN does not have to deal with argumentative people when reiterating basic points. He reiterates basic points again and again because new people come again and again. Here, it is not new people coming again and again, it is old people with the same old axes to grind, often from E-Sangha.

Sherab Dorje said:

It would be a lot easier to manage, and the level of conversation would be more elevated if people did not feel entitled to argue with every basic aspect of the teachings regardless of forums. For example the user TRC feels completely at ease being confrontational in every forum, the same goes for Alfredo.

Okay. So if they are breaking the Terms of Service by being unnecessarily disruptive you report them and they get warned, suspended and banned.

Malcolm wrote:

That is the problem, people get reported, a moderator handles the report, and often nothing happens because as long as no one uses expletives, for whatever reason the

moderation style here is "let the \$8!# fly", for example, the tactless pillorying of the late Rachel Olds.

Sherab Dorje said:

The tulku system as it is present in Tibet has no precedent in sutra and tantra. It is relied upon heavily in Kagyu and Nyingma, less so in Gelug, and almost non-existence in Sakya outside of east Tibet.

Really? Coz I am sure that it would have some precedent in tantra.

Malcolm wrote:

It has no precedent in sutra or tantra. You can listen to ChNN state this quite clearly today since you do not believe me. The Tulku system started with Karma Pakshi.

Sherab Dorje said:

I seem to remember a couple of predictions by Guru Padmasambhava being thrown around.

Malcolm wrote:

The tulku system has no precedent in sutra and tantra. Yes, in the Mañjuśrī mulakalpa there are some predictions of rebirths of bodhisattvas in Tibet such as Gampopa, and in the Padma Khathang there are lists of predictions about where this terma is concealed and by which of the 25 disciples it will be revealed in a later incarnation, and so on, but there is no precedent for system of reincarnated lineage heads like you have in Nyingma and Kagyu exclusively. The fact that it is not bound by some canonicity is why there can be disputes over the recognition of the Karmapa, for example. There is no clear guide in sutra and tantra which regulates how reincarnations are recognized/selected, trained, appointed, succeeded and so on. For this reason then, the recognition of Steven Segal as a minor tulku generated some controversy in the West. Many people really could not and still cannot understand why he was recognized by Penor Rinpoche — it was not for money, I can guarantee that. Since it is not really a part of sutra and tantra, the recognition of tulkus merely boils down to the opinion of this or that master. If someone follows that master, they are likely to give credence to the reincarnations he recognizes.

Sherab Dorje said:

So who has the say about the orthodoxy of the tulku system then? Who's orthodoxy (tradition) are we going to follow?

Malcolm wrote:

[/quote]

The tulku system is an embedded feature of Tibetan culture, religious life, politics and economics, but it is a deeply ingrained custom, it is not a system which is grounded in sutra and tantra. That being said, it is an integral feature of many lineages in Tibet such as Gelug (Drepung, Ganden, Sera), Drikung, Drugpa, Karma Kagyu etc., Palyul, Khathog, Dorje Drag, Dzogchen, Shechen and so on, as well as Dzongsar, as well as Bon monasteries also.

Thus, even though the tulku system does not have the orthodox and canonical backing of say bodhisattva vows or samaya, it is a deeply embedded part of Tibetan religious culture, and at this point, I would say Tibetan religious culture could barely function without it, which is why the Chinese are so keen on regulating it.

Unfortunately, due to the highly subjective nature of recognitions, it is difficult to say there is an "orthodox" position on the issue of recognitions. Sometimes reincarnations are recognized in dreams, sometimes, by divinations, sometimes, as in the case of the Dalai Lamas of late 18th and 19th centuries, by drawing lots; sometimes by predictions of the dying Lama like the 13 Dalai Lama or the 16th Karmapa (if you follow Tai Situ's version), etc. Sometimes by tests, and in the case of 5th Dalai Lama, even though he failed the tests, the regent proclaimed to the Kashag that he passed them all and successfully recognized the belongings of the 4th.

The buddhology of tulkus is still being worked out by Tibetans. The only books I know that attempts to work out this buddhology is Tulku Thondup's INCARNATION: The History and Mysticism of the Tulku Tradition of Tibet. It is an attempt, but I have to say, it is a little scanty. There is also Enthronement: The Recognition Of The Reincarnate Masters Of Tibet And The Himalayas. This book makes it eminently clear that the rite of enthroning a tulku is basically the same as the rite of consecrating a statue.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, July 19th, 2014 at 3:54 AM

Title: Re: "Protestant" vs Traditional/"Orthodox" approaches to Dha

Content:

Fruitzilla said:

Teyes was mostly hands-off, especially at the last stages. Besides, there was a sudden tightening of policy which can be called a power grab in all reasonableness IMHO.

Malcolm wrote:

Nope, there was no grab. At that point I had totally stepped down.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, July 19th, 2014 at 4:00 AM

Title: Re: "Protestant" vs Traditional/"Orthodox" approaches to Dha

Content:

Johnny Dangerous said:

It might be time to sit back, keep an eye on whether or not the changes we are in the process of implementing make DW a place you want to spend time, or if they don't after some time, make your decision accordingly.

Announcement July 18th, 2014 said:

2. People are free to question the teachings and traditional interpretations in Open

Dharma subforum as has mostly been happening. Questions about a practice, a teaching or belief are appropriate in the specific subforum where the practice belongs, but criticisms belong in Open Dharma only and should be done sensitively, where possible with reference to the appropriate teachings. For example, do not challenge the core Dharma concepts and principles of Pure Land Buddhism in the Pure Land subforum and the same goes with the other specific traditions as well.

Malcolm wrote:

This means you have decided to change nothing. This means that criticism of Mahāyāna and Vajrayāna will proceed unchecked. This means that you are WILLINGLY providing a harbor for adharma. Why you all fail to understand this is somewhat astonishing. The fact that some of you possess samaya and still are willing to aid and abet those māras who would criticize Mahāyāna and Vajrayāna is even more astonishing still.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, July 19th, 2014 at 7:26 AM

Title: Re: Why do only very few practitioners attain rainbow body?

Content:

kirtu said:

It is the case that for most people it is easier to attain Arhatship

Malcolm wrote:

This just really is not the case, kirt. But far be it from me to sway you from your superior knowledge.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, July 19th, 2014 at 7:34 AM

Title: Re: Is Western Buddhism an (ethnic) identity-based Buddhism?

Content:

uan said:

Based on that, is there a reason you would be presently incarnated here, rather than having attained rainbow body in the bardo or in a pure nirmanakāya buddhafiield?

Malcolm wrote:

When you wake up in the bardo, you also generate emanations. Maybe I am one of those.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, July 19th, 2014 at 8:55 AM

Title: Re: Is Western Buddhism an (ethnic) identity-based Buddhism?

Content:

Jikan said:

We're way off topic, but that can be sorted out in a moment.

Question for Malcolm et al: define "early age" for the purpose of this conversation.
what age of taking an interest might indicate such a thing?

Malcolm wrote:

Kungfu came on when I was 10, Cutting Through, etc. at 16. I have self-identified as a Buddhist since then.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, July 19th, 2014 at 7:31 PM

Title: Re: Recent tragic events and the West vs Russia situation

Content:

Dan74 said:

But the West, who have removed and installed regimes as they saw fit from Iran to Central America, and in the past annexed huge swathes of land from Hawaii to Mexico, hardly has the high moral ground.

Malcolm wrote:

The Monroe Doctrine, formulated during an era when the US was under constant threat from European Colonial powers. That was amended by Teddy Roosevelt's big stick policies.

Dan74 said:

I don't think Putin is the power-crazed despot, Western media portrays him to be. His thinking, as far as I can make out, is to push back and re-establish Russia as a power to be reckoned with. A Russia that will protect its national interest and throw its weight around if needs be, rather than being pushed around by the West, as it is perceived domestically. Russia has always focused on its local scene - Chechnya, Abkhazia, Ukraine, which it sees as its legitimate sphere of influence after the loss of the Warsaw Pact states. I think much of what we see is a product of the West trying to contain Russia (just like China) and maintain hegemony over world affairs.

Malcolm wrote:

As far as I can tell, Russia is interested annexing the whole of the Ukraine, which Russians regard as properly a part of Russia.

This a screw up of massive proportions on the part of the Russians.

Dan74 said:

I am seriously worried about where this is all heading...

Malcolm wrote:

No where. Russia's lost the moral high ground, despite the Ukrainian Nazis and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, July 19th, 2014 at 7:34 PM

Title: Re: Recent tragic events and the West vs Russia situation

Content:

Karma Dorje said:

What I find deeply disturbing ...

Malcolm wrote:

Nothing that governments do is disturbing, or rather, it's all disturbing on one level or another.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, July 19th, 2014 at 7:36 PM

Title: Re: Why do only very few practitioners attain rainbow body?

Content:

ZOOM said:

I never heard that even one of all the Westerner Dzogchen practitioners (no matter if they are in an official lineage, have an official teacher, got direct "empowerment" or instruction from the teacher) ever attained rainbow body.

This poor success rate for Westerners (0.000%) seems very disconcerting and leads to a lot of questions.

In case that I am misinformed, I would be happy if someone could point out some rainbow body success stories of Westerner students to me!

Thank you very much!

Malcolm wrote:

Yup, I guess Dzogchen just doesn't work for westerners. Better move along, nothing to see here.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, July 19th, 2014 at 8:18 PM

Title: Re: Dharma wheel, ethics, value & online communities

Content:

Dan74 said:

But more importantly here on fora, there are clearly people seem to spend an inordinate amount of time arguing over the doctrine, which I suspect is detrimental to other aspects of practice, would you agree? So I was simply trying to say that there isn't one uniquely correct way of looking at this. That's all.

Malcolm wrote:

I have found that arguing about things between lineages is not productive, say Chan and Highest Yoga Tantra, or even between Kagyu and Sakya, for example.

Why? Partially it has to do with the way different schools perceive themselves. If you tell a Chan practitioner that Chan is not the apex of buddhadharma, they will think you are crazy. If you tell a Vajrayāna practitioner that one can attain Buddhahood by common Mahāyāna in less than three incalculable eons (and that includes Chan), they will think you are crazy. Similarly, if you tell Theravadins they are following Hinayāna they get all offended and huffy. If you try to insist to Vajrayānists that Theravada does not fall under the criteria of what we define as Hinayāna, you will get blank stares.

On the other hand, if one wants to go and understand why Chan considers itself the apex, or why Vajrayānists consider Theravada Hinayāna, and so on, then one should do so with an open mind.

Then of course there is the issue of conflicting assumptions — a lot of long time Mahāyānists and Vajrayānists, as we know, claim to be unconcerned with the assertion that their texts and so on are not really products of Buddha speech as traditionally defined (that is spoken, by permission, or blessed). This also raises complexities. Then there is the difference of canons -- for example, frequently Chinese Buddhists will cite the Shurangama Samaadhi 2, for the sake of convenience. This sutra, whether authentic or not, simply is not read in the Tibetan Canon and so therefore, will not be felt of much authority by Tibetan Buddhists. It is certain that it existed, but unlike many other sutras, for whatever reason, the Tibetans chose not to translate it into Tibetan because perhaps they doubted its authenticity.

Then of course there is the modern pro-atman interpretation of the Dharma, grounded far more in the Coomaraswamy, Grim, and modern early 20th century authors, than traditional discourse, AFACT, represented by our own Son of the Buddha, and elsewhere, Zenmar (aka Ardent Hollingsworth), who right or wrong, represent a vocal minority on virtually every Buddhist forum I have been on in the past 20 years.

Finally, there are the out and out "Buddhist" skeptics such as the Triratna Order's Jayarava Atwood and Richard Hayes. What possible interest they have in Dharma anymore is totally beyond me, since people like they seem bent on tearing Buddhism down completely, but whatever. They seem to emanated out of the forensic trend of Buddhist historical scholarship, but of what use this is for the practice of Dharma is totally mystifying.

All of this leads to a rather complex maze of issues and assumptions one has to navigate on a heterogeneous forum such as this. And most people do not have the long view I have, since they have not participated on these forums of and on. How many folks remember alt.buddha.short.fat.guy?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, July 19th, 2014 at 8:27 PM

Title: Remember 1988?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Navy Missile Downs Iranian Jetliner

By George C. Wilson

Washington Post Staff Writer

Monday, July 4, 1988; Page A01

A U.S. warship fighting gunboats in the Persian Gulf yesterday mistook an Iranian civilian jetliner for an attacking Iranian F14 fighter plane and blew it out of the hazy sky with a heat-seeking missile, the Pentagon announced. Iran said 290 persons were aboard the European-made A300 Airbus and that all had perished.

"The U.S. government deeply regrets this incident," Adm. William J. Crowe Jr., chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, told a Pentagon news conference.

The disaster occurred at mid-morning over the Strait of Hormuz, when the airliner, Iran Air Flight 655, on what Iran described as a routine 140-mile flight from its coastal city of Bandar Abbas southwest to Dubai in the United Arab Emirates, apparently strayed too close to two U.S. Navy warships that were engaged in a battle with Iranian gunboats.

The USS Vincennes, a cruiser equipped with the most sophisticated radar and electronic battle gear in the Navy's surface arsenal, tracked the oncoming plane electronically, warned it to keep away, and when it did not fired two Standard surface-to-air missiles.

Navy officials said the Vincennes' combat teams believed the airliner to be an Iranian F14 jet fighter. No visual contact was made with the aircraft until it was struck and blew up about six miles from the Vincennes; the plane's wreckage fell in Iranian territorial waters, Navy officials said.

Iranian vessels and helicopters searched for survivors, but there was no indication last night that anyone survived what apparently is the sixth worst aviation disaster. Iranian television broadcast scenes of bodies floating amid scattered debris.

It was the first time any U.S. military unit had shot down a civilian airliner. It occurred almost five years after a Soviet fighter pilot shot down an off-course Korean Air Lines Flight 007, killing 269 people.

Iran accused the United States of a "barbaric massacre" and vowed to "avenge the blood of our martyrs."

President Reagan in a statement said he was "saddened to report" that the Vincennes "in a proper defensive action" had shot down the jetliner. "This is a terrible human tragedy. Our sympathy and condolences go out to the passengers, crew, and their families We deeply regret any loss of life."

Reagan, who was spending the Fourth of July holiday at Camp David, said the Iranian aircraft "was headed directly for the Vincennes" and had "failed to heed repeated warnings." The cruiser, he said, fired "to protect itself against possible attack."

News of the downing of the plane began with sharply conflicting accounts from Iran and from the Defense Department of what had transpired in the Persian Gulf. Early yesterday, Tehran broadcast accusations that the United States had downed an unarmed airliner.

The Pentagon at first denied the Iranian claims, declaring that information from the fleet indicated that the Vincennes, equipped with the Aegis electronic battle management system, had shot down an attacking Iranian F14 jet fighter. But after sifting through more detailed reports and electronic intelligence, Reagan directed the Pentagon to confirm there had been a tragic case of mistaken identity in the war-torn gulf.

Crowe, in his hastily called news conference at the Pentagon, also backed up the skipper of the Vincennes and faulted the Iranian airline pilot. Crowe said the Airbus had flown four miles west of the usual commercial airline route from Bandar Abbas to Dubai and that the pilot ignored repeated radioed warnings from the Vincennes to change course.

Why and how the Vincennes mistook the bulky, wide-bodied Airbus A300 for a sleek, supersonic F14 fighter plane barely a third the transport's size will be the subject of "a full investigation," Reagan promised. A military team under the command of Rear Adm. William N. Fogarty of the U.S. Central Command will leave this week to begin that investigation, Defense Department officials said.

The shootdown of the Airbus represents the biggest loss of life on the strategic waterway since the U.S. warships began escorting Kuwaiti tankers in and out of the Persian Gulf last July. Pentagon officials then said the increased U.S. naval presence would have from a "low to moderate risk" of provoking confrontations with Iran.

But in the past year, although the United States and Iran are not in a formal state of war, there have been a series of brief but fierce sea battles in the gulf between the two countries' military forces. Vigilance and readiness among U.S. forces intensified after the near-sinking of the patrol frigate USS Stark by an Iraqi fighter-bomber on May 17, 1987, in a missile attack that killed 37 sailors.

Yesterday started out as another sea battle, and ended with what the Vincennes commanders misinterpreted as a "Stark profile" attack on the high-tech cruiser. Crowe in his briefing and other Navy and Defense Department officials offered a detailed version of how the shoot-down occurred.

At 2:10 a.m. EDT, the Pentagon said, three Iranian Boghammar gunboats fired on a helicopter that had flown off the Vincennes on a reconnaissance mission. The helicopter flew back to the cruiser unscathed. The Vincennes and a smaller warship, the frigate USS Elmer Montgomery, a half-hour later closed on the gunboats and put them under fire with 5-inch guns, sinking two and damaging the third.

At 2:47 a.m. EDT, the Iranian Airbus with almost a full load of passengers took off from Bandar Abbas, a big Iranian naval base on the northern coastal elbow of the Strait of Hormuz. The field at the base is used by civilian and military aircraft and recently had become the center for Iran's dwindling force of F14s, a twin-engine, two-place fighter that the United States sold to Iran during the rule of the shah.

Two minutes after the Airbus took off, the far-reaching radars of the Vincennes Aegis cruiser saw the plane was coming its way. The skipper of the ship, operating under liberalized rules of engagement that call for U.S. captains in the Persian Gulf to fire before being fired upon to avoid another Stark disaster, warned the approaching aircraft to change course, according to the Pentagon.

The Vincennes and most airliners are equipped with identification of friend or foe (IFF) electronic boxes that query each other across the sky to establish identities. The Vincennes' IFF questioned the Airbus IFF via telemetry, but received no response. A response would come in radio pulses that would be deciphered and displayed as an identifying number on the ship's combat information center consoles.

Failing to raise the Airbus by IFF, the Pentagon said, the Vincennes broadcast its warnings by voice radio, using the emergency UHF and VHF channels that aircraft crews would hear if they followed standard practice of monitoring those frequencies. Crowe said three warnings were sent over the civilian emergency channel and four over the military one, called "Guard." The Pentagon said the Vincennes could have issued the warning over the air traffic control channel but did not.

"The suspect aircraft was outside the prescribed commercial air corridor," Crowe told reporters. Defense Department officials said later that the Airbus was four miles west of commercial air corridor. "More importantly," Crowe continued, "the aircraft headed directly for Vincennes on a constant bearing at high speed, approximately 450 knots."

Without becoming specific, Crowe said there were "electronic indications on Vincennes" that led the U.S. crew to conclude the approaching airliner was an F14. "Given the threatening flight profile and decreasing range, the aircraft was declared 'hostile' " at 2:51 a.m. EDT. The airliner at that crucial moment was on a course of almost due south, 185 degrees, and descending toward the Vincennes from an altitude of 7,800 feet, according to Crowe. Visibility was no more than five miles, Crowe said.

Three minutes later, at 2:54 a.m. EDT, the Vincennes launched two Standard surface-to-air missiles from its deck. The missiles whooshed toward the twin-jet airliner, which was nine miles away and not visible to the naked eye because of the haze hanging over the gulf. The Standard missiles homed in on the heat of the quarry's engines and at least one of them exploded when it pulled abreast of the Airbus. Such a missile hit usually slices an aircraft apart and turns it into a fireball of burning fuel.

"At least one hit at an approximate range of six miles," Crowe said. "We do have some eyewitness reports that saw the vague shape of the aircraft when the missile hit, and it

looked like it disintegrated."

Asked if the Vincennes' skipper had been prudent or impetuous by firing at a plane he could not see, Crowe replied: "The commanding officer conducted himself with circumspection and, considering the information that was available to him, followed his authorities and acted with good judgment at a very trying period and under very trying circumstances Not only was he following this aircraft and concerned about it," but he also "was engaged on the surface with Iranian units."

Crowe said it was "logical" for the skipper to assume an aircraft that was coming down from the sky at high speed and would not respond to radio warnings was putting the Vincennes "in jeopardy."

At another point in the news conference Crowe broadened his defense of the Vincennes skipper, declaring "the No. 1 obligation of the commanding officer of a ship or units are the protection of his own people. We deeply regret the loss of life here, but that commanding officer had a very heavy obligation to protect his ships, his people. We've made that clear throughout the Persian Gulf mission"

Crowe, who used a chart of the Strait of Hormuz that displayed the approximate positions of the vessels and the route of the airliner, said he did not have enough data to explain fully why the multiple kinds of detection gear aboard the Vincennes mistook a wide-bodied jetliner for a fighter.

But he noted that the Vincennes' radar was focused on a plane coming at it head-on, reflecting a smaller dot on the console screens than would be the case from a side view. Also, he said, no Air Force Airborne Warning and Control System (AWACS) or Navy Hawkeye sentry planes were aloft over the Strait of Hormuz to provide additional identification data to the Vincennes at the time of the shootdown.

Navy leaders said Iranian commercial aircraft had flown over U.S. warships in a threatening manner at least eight times before the Stark was hit by two French Exocet missiles fired by an Iraqi jet. Ever since the Stark attack, skippers in the gulf have been less tolerant of such apparent threats.

Asked if the skipper of the Vincennes would have held his fire under the interpretation of the rules of engagement followed before the Stark was attacked, Crowe replied: "I don't know. Certainly the rules of engagement would not have been as specific as the authorities granted him." He said another review of the rules of engagement would be part of the general investigation of the shootdown.

Crowe said there were "fundamental differences" between the actions of United States in this incident and the Soviet Union in the downing of Korean Air Lines Flight 007, which strayed into Soviet airspace on the night of Sept. 1, 1983, during a flight from Alaska to Japan. The Soviet airspace was not a war zone like the Persian Gulf, Crowe said, "and there was not combat in progress" as was the case yesterday. "It was at very high altitude" and no Soviet warnings were issued.

"In the Persian Gulf," Crowe said, there is very little time or maneuver room when ships are put at risk. "We're fighting in a lake."

Staff writer Molly Moore contributed to this report.

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Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, July 19th, 2014 at 8:31 PM

Title: Re: Diet in relation to Rainbow Body

Content:

zenman said:

I read the book Incarnation by Tulku Thondup. Fascinating stuff, a very good book. So many have attained the rainbow body that it kind of surprises.

My question is a specific one: What has been the role and content of the diet of these people who have attained rainbow body? I am especially interested in the changing situation of the need for food. I suppose most if not all of them have been vegetarians. What have they eaten? Does anyone know?

Malcolm wrote:

Probably very few of them were vegetarians. But they all practiced what is known as Chulen or rasāyana, which is an important secondary practice for attaining rainbow body.

And slowly, they would have reduced their dependence on food.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, July 19th, 2014 at 10:19 PM

Title: Re: Recent tragic events and the West vs Russia situation

Content:

Karma Dorje said:

What I find deeply disturbing ...

Malcolm wrote:

Nothing that governments do is disturbing, or rather, it's all disturbing on one level or another.

Karma Dorje said:

Why are you correcting me when I am saying what *I* find disturbing? If you don't find it disturbing, that's up to you.

Malcolm wrote:

it was an observation spurred by your comment, not a correction...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, July 19th, 2014 at 11:34 PM

Title: Re: Why do only very few practitioners attain rainbow body?

Content:

smcj said:

You guys make too much of a big thing about Dzogchen.

Malcolm wrote:

No we don't. Dzogchen is our path. It is not yours, and that's ok.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, July 19th, 2014 at 11:45 PM

Title: Re: Why do only very few practitioners attain rainbow body?

Content:

smcj said:

I think my response to Zoom was better than yours. You are welcome to try it again.

Malcolm wrote:

Are you high?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, July 19th, 2014 at 11:52 PM

Title: Re: Why do only very few practitioners attain rainbow body?

Content:

smcj said:

I think my response to Zoom was better than yours.

Malcolm wrote:

I was being sarcastic because his comment was not serious. In fact, none of his comments have been serious.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, July 19th, 2014 at 11:53 PM

Title: Re: Why do only very few practitioners attain rainbow body?

Content:

smcj said:

I think my response to Zoom was better than yours. You are welcome to try it again.

Malcolm wrote:

Are you high?

smcj said:

No, Gelug/Kagyu.

Malcolm wrote:

Right, and so your interest in the Dzogchen forum is?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, July 19th, 2014 at 11:57 PM

Title: Re: Recent tragic events and the West vs Russia situation

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

MOSCOW (AP) — A top pro-Russia rebel commander in eastern Ukraine has given a bizarre version of events surrounding the Malaysian jetliner crash — suggesting many of the victims may have died days before the plane took off.

The pro-rebel website Russkaya Vesna on Friday quoted Igor Girkin as saying he was told by people at the crash site that "a significant number of the bodies weren't fresh," adding that he was told they were drained of blood and reeked of decomposition.

The Malaysia Airlines Boeing-777 was shot down Thursday, killing all 298 people aboard. The plane was flying 10,000 meters above an area where Ukrainian forces have been fighting separatist rebels. Each side accuses the other of downing the plane.

U.S. intelligence authorities said a surface-to-air missile brought down the plane, and U.S. Ambassador Samantha Power told the U.N. Security Council in New York on Friday that the missile was likely fired from a rebel-held area near the Russian border.

Girkin, also known as Strelkov and allegedly a former Russian military intelligence agent, said he couldn't confirm the information. But it's sure to add to the intense emotions surrounding the crash, with the rebels accused of shooting down the plane.

Girkin said "Ukrainian authorities are capable of any baseness."

He claimed that a large amount of blood serum and medications were found in the wreckage.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, July 20th, 2014 at 12:26 AM

Title: Re: Why do only very few practitioners attain rainbow body?

Content:

Crazywisdom said:

Dzogchen is nothing like the lottery. Dzogchen is not reserved only for the mahasiddhas. If you listen, contemplate and practice the teachers words, you can have that realization in one life.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, July 20th, 2014 at 12:31 AM

Title: Re: Dharma wheel, ethics, value & online communities

Content:

martin123 said:

I can honestly say that of all the forums i have visited(not just Buddhist forums) Dharmawheel is the most heaviest in atmosphere.What is heavy(in a negative sense) about wisdom and compassion?something worth considering.

boda said:

It reeks of self-importance.

Sherab Dorje said:

What reeks of self-importance?

Malcolm wrote:

DW

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, July 20th, 2014 at 1:26 AM

Title: Re: Dharma wheel, ethics, value & online communities

Content:

boda said:

I think this often springs from the notion that newcomers must be protected from wrong views or whatever.

Malcolm wrote:

No, we are just tired of arguing with obstinate materialists about what the Buddha actually taught.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, July 20th, 2014 at 2:00 AM

Title: Re: Dharma wheel, ethics, value & online communities

Content:

boda said:

I think this often springs from the notion that newcomers must be protected from wrong

views or whatever.

Malcolm wrote:

No, we are just tired of arguing with obstinate materialists about what the Buddha actually taught.

boda said:

Who on the forum is a materialist?

Malcolm wrote:

well, lets see, there was A108, etc.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, July 20th, 2014 at 2:01 AM

Title: Re: Why do only very few practitioners attain rainbow body?

Content:

uan said:

Hi Malcolm, I thought this thread would be a better place to follow up on a response you made (just so we don't go off topic on the Western Buddhist thread). I was hoping you could clarify a couple things.

Malcom wrote

uan wrote:

Based on that, is there a reason you would be presently incarnated here, rather than having attained rainbow body in the bardo or in a pure nirmanakāya buddhafiield?

When you wake up in the bardo, you also generate emanations. Maybe I am one of those. In terms of the rainbow body, whether it's attained at death or afterwards in the bardo/a pure nirmanakāya buddhafiield, is that a mark that a practitioner has entered on the Bhumis or is it a mark that one has attained full Buddhahood? Does awaken mean realized or enlightened - and are those two terms describing different things or not? My understanding, which is likely to be incorrect, is that "realized" meant a person was at least on the 1st Bhumi, while "enlightened" would mean full Buddhahood. Your insight would be appreciated.

Malcolm wrote:

Generally, speaking here we mean buddhahood.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, July 20th, 2014 at 2:14 AM

Title: Re: Rainbow body question

Content:

Fa Dao said:

my question is simple..does rainbow body just happen spontaneously when one

reaches the 4th vision as described in Longde/Thogal/Yangti texts? or does one just know what to do when they reach that level? or are there specific practices that one does when they reach that level?

Malcolm wrote:

The fourth vision is described as a gradual process.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, July 20th, 2014 at 2:42 AM

Title: Re: Rainbow body question

Content:

Fa Dao said:

ok..so in that slow dissolution does one just know how to do that? Is it an intrinsic part of the process? or are there specific practices when one does reach that level? I am not asking for any specific details of course, especially in an online forum, just asking for future reference..

Malcolm wrote:

Once you hit the third vision you are an awakened person.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, July 20th, 2014 at 3:13 AM

Title: Re: Rainbow body question

Content:

Fa Dao said:

sorry if am a little dense..just want to make sure I understand you correctly..this is serious shit, ya know?

3rd level=Awakened person=you just know?

Malcolm wrote:

Well, one, if you reach the 3rd vision, this assumes you have had instructions on all four visions. So yeah, once you hit the third vision you also enter the first bhumi and the path of cultivation, and you are guaranteed buddhahood from that point on in the bardo at minimum.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, July 20th, 2014 at 4:53 AM

Title: Re: Why do only very few practitioners attain rainbow body?

Content:

smcj said:

I believe that the points that I was making were entirely in keeping with the traditional Nyingma approach to Dzogchen.

Malcolm wrote:

How would you know? Not all Nyingma teachers teach Dzogchen or have a deep understanding of Dzogchen, much less a deep practice of Dzogchen.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, July 20th, 2014 at 10:38 AM

Title: Re: Why do only very few practitioners attain rainbow body?

Content:

smcj said:

Part of what he was talking about was wishing for validation of the teachings, to make them something more than stories and ideas, to make them something you can know you can rely on.

Malcolm wrote:

The practice of Dzogchen has the ability to eradicate the two coarse obscurations [i.e. the obscurations of affliction and knowledge] even in ordinary practitioners below the path of seeing because it permits ordinary practitioners to encounter their real condition even though they are not what one would be normally considered "enlightened" [i.e. the path of seeing/the first bodhisattva stage and beyond].

The path of Dzogchen is really quite extraordinary precisely because of its benefits for normal, everyday people.

Of course, one still must continue to practice and attain awakening in order to deal with the two subtle obscurations which remain.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, July 20th, 2014 at 10:39 AM

Title: Re: Why do only very few practitioners attain rainbow body?

Content:

smcj said:

Upon sober reflection...

Malcolm wrote:

Well, I did ask you if you were high.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, July 21st, 2014 at 8:12 AM

Title: Re: Uninterrupted motivation to practice mindfulness

Content:

SeekerNo1000003 said:

Hi,

One thing bothers me a lot lately & that is the lack of a continuous motivation to practice mindfulness.
It bothers me that I am distracted most of the day & too lazy to do anything about it.

I imagine that this is normal & motivation becomes more continuous as we continue to practice. On the other hand, I've experienced sudden rises in determination as far as other things are concerned (e.g., finding a solution to a problem that remained unsolved for too long).

In the case of practicing mindfulness more consistently, it feels to me that a simple insight of some sort may be missing...
I'm curious have you ever had any breakthroughs or insights that helped you get into gear in the practice of mindfulness? Could you kindly share with your experience?

Malcolm wrote:
Mindfulness means not forgetting to put your pants on before you step out the door. It is really nothing more profound than this, but it is very useful to have.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Monday, July 21st, 2014 at 2:36 PM
Title: Re: Uninterrupted motivation to practice mindfulness
Content:
TRC said:
I have to disagree with your characterisation of mindfulness as being “nothing more profound” than “not forgetting to put your pants on” Malcolm.

Malcolm wrote:
Mindfulness is simply a mental factor.

Of course there are different objects of mindfulness, but the act of being mindful is the same in so far as it is a mental factor associated with all positive minds. Mindfulness is always beneficial, since it is a kusalacaitta. This does not make mindfulness profound however.

The point here of course is to point out that we are always being mindful of something, unless of course we are distracted by the akusalacaittas,, etc.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Monday, July 21st, 2014 at 5:51 PM
Title: Re: CHNN Shang Shang publications - Password?
Content:
vajraheart said:
Hi,
I just received several download links for restricted items that I ordered from the Shang Shang store of CHNNR. After downloading the files, when attempting to open them I am

prompted for a password, but was never sent one in the email. Where do I get the passwords to open my files? Thanks...

Malcolm wrote:

They will send you one, but it might take a day.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, July 21st, 2014 at 11:14 PM

Title: Re: Uninterrupted motivation to practice mindfulness

Content:

Dan74 said:

A good point. The trouble is, as I see it, that most of the time it is not so much *akusalacittas*, but habitual mental patterns that occupy our minds. The technique of mindfulness is to help us break out of these habits and attend to the matter at hand with complete attention and a fresh seeing.

Malcolm wrote:

Dan,

One, we have to make a distinction between *smṛti* and *smṛtyupasthāna*. The former is a mental factor, the latter is "Close placement of mindfulness", familiar to us as the four foundations of mindfulness.

Secondly, *smṛti* is always accompanied by *saṃprajāna*, i.e. attentiveness. These two always work in a pair.

The point is that we cannot have a mind where *kusalacaittas* and *akusalacaittas* are present at the same time -- it's impossible

This is why even simple exercises of mindfulness, the mundane kind, are useful. For example, mindfulness it is often described by the Buddha means when eating one knows that one is eating, when walking, one knows that one is walking, when wearing pants, one knows that one is wearing pants. Before you can have "right mindfulness" of the kind that TRC is describing, you have to develop mindfulness.

But more to the point, when you have the presence of the mental factor of *smṛti*, the mental factor of *vīrya*, diligence, is automatically present. Why? Because the *kusalacaittas* always work in company, where one is found all the other nine are to be found as well.

Moreover, when the ten *kusalacaittas* are present, it is impossible for the *akusalacaittas* to arise in the mind, including the three afflictions referenced above. So therefore, as long as one is mindful and attentive even in an ordinary way, this eliminates the possibility for the *akusalacaittas* and the afflictive *cittas* to arise.

So the answer to the question is, by understanding how mind and mental factors

function the motivation to practice mindfulness arises merely by understanding how the mind works and taking opportunity of this knowledge. It does not have to be this formal, academic, intellectual trip.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, July 22nd, 2014 at 2:53 AM

Title: Re: ACLU: UN to Confront USA on Persistent Racial Discrimina

Content:

David N. Snyder said:

The U.S. like most countries has a long way to go toward ending discrimination, but in what other country could a half-black, half-white, son of a man from Kenya become president for two terms? I won't mention names of countries, but can you imagine very many other countries electing a man or woman to prime minister or president where they are originally from Turkey, Iran, Congo, etc.?

Malcolm wrote:

Well, there is India.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, July 22nd, 2014 at 2:54 AM

Title: Re: Dorje Gotrab deity picture origin

Content:

heart said:

I have seen it before, there is also a short sadhana. This is what is written in the beginning of the translation: "sngags 'bum rdo rje go khrab Adamantine Armor, mantras for protection and for repelling obstacles, revealed by Dorje Lingpa"

The DC booklet contains a full translation of at least one of the texts by Dorje Lingpa from this terma. So both practices can be correct.

/magnus

Malcolm wrote:

The Dorje Lingpa tradition has no visualization in the main text. The image is from a later terma, Ratna Lingpa, I think.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, July 22nd, 2014 at 3:21 AM

Title: Re: Am awareness itself meditation

Content:

avisitor said:

"Naturally occurring timeless awareness

Malcolm wrote:

What is being described is rang byung ye shes, which can be translated a number of ways such as "naturally occurring timeless awareness", "spontaneous pristine gnosis", "self-originated primordial wisdom" and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, July 22nd, 2014 at 3:26 AM

Title: Re: Am awareness itself meditation

Content:

avisitor said:

"Naturally occurring timeless awareness

Malcolm wrote:

What is being described is rang byung ye shes, which can be translated a number of ways such as "naturally occurring timeless awareness", "spontaneous pristine gnosis", "self-originated primordial wisdom" and so on.

avisitor said:

I am sorry but where does it say it is a state of meditation or in any way related to meditation??

I don't contend the translation.

Malcolm wrote:

It is not a state of meditation. It is a transcendent state, quite beyond meditation and a meditator.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, July 22nd, 2014 at 5:21 AM

Title: Re: Clouded perception

Content:

Qing Tian said:

Question: How can I exercise Right Speech when I cannot anticipate all possible reactions to what I say?

Malcolm wrote:

You are not responsible for other's reactions.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, July 22nd, 2014 at 6:32 AM

Title: Re: Am awareness itself meditation

Content:

avisitor said:

I believe there is no object to attain in meditation.

Malcolm wrote:

That would be the standard Mahāyāna view.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, July 22nd, 2014 at 7:00 AM

Title: Re: Tarot as divination tool

Content:

emptydreams said:

Okay this is going to be a weird question.

I have the ability to use tarot cards to take a peek into decision making situations, the same way how some Lamas use Mo divination.

How do I get the cards 'initialized' in a Buddhist way? I rarely use the cards except when my intuition (which is very strong) starts being muddled. Usually the cards' answers are the same as my intuition. Can i bring them along to tsog or request a Lama to bless/cleanse them?

hope this isnt too weird of a question...

Karma Dorje said:

These are not a Buddhist divination technique. They have their own context in the tradition of Ceremonial Magic that should be respected.

My advice is not to mix up the traditions into a porridge, but rather if you are going to use Tarot do so according to the context that produced it.

Jetavan said:

I believe tarot cards originated as a type of playing card, and were later adopted for divination by occultists in general, not limited to ceremonial magickians. There's a least one set of tarot cards based on <http://www.aeclectic.net/tarot/cards/buddha/>.

Malcolm wrote:

My theory about the origin of playing cards and ultimately Tarot is that they originated in the small initiation cards used central Asia for initiations.

The best deck was and remains the Thoth Tarot of Crowley.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, July 22nd, 2014 at 7:22 AM

Title: Re: Tarot as divination tool

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The best deck was and remains the Thoth Tarot of Crowley.

dzogchungpa said:

Why do you say that?

Malcolm wrote:
Crowley was a genius.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Tuesday, July 22nd, 2014 at 7:27 AM
Title: Re: Tarot as divination tool
Content:
Karma Dorje said:
You know, you could make things easier and just add that to your signature.

dzogchungpa said:
I don't think you can put images in a signature.

Malcolm wrote:
This is veering awfully close to a metadiscussion.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Tuesday, July 22nd, 2014 at 7:46 AM
Title: Re: Tarot as divination tool
Content:
Vajrasvapna said:
It is very difficult to understand how a Buddhist might recommend something from a black magician, known for the practice of animal sacrifice.

Malcolm wrote:
In general I think Tarot and WET is a waste of time for Buddhists.

AC was not a "black magician". He may have on one or two occasions experimented with animal sacrifice (a practice he in general abjured).

In fact, he was one of the few westerners in his day who had any real understanding of Buddhism.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Tuesday, July 22nd, 2014 at 9:19 AM
Title: Re: Hello board and admins
Content:
Malcolm wrote:
Take me to your leaders...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, July 22nd, 2014 at 8:32 PM

Title: Re: Clouded perception

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

You are not responsible for other's reactions.

Sherab Dorje said:

That is not 100% true. If I said to somebody that they should go make love to their mother and the person gets angry and upset, it is quite obvious that I have acted as a cause or condition for their reaction. If, on the other hand, I engage in Right Speech, and the person gets angry or upset, then my responsibility (ie my acting as a cause/condition) for their reaction is reduced drastically (maybe even to zero).

Malcolm wrote:

I don't agree Greg, I also don't care enough about this issue to bother mounting a counter argument.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, July 23rd, 2014 at 12:35 AM

Title: Re: Tarot as divination tool

Content:

Mkoll said:

I agree with Vajrasvapna about Crowley. I've read of others who have lost their minds or come close to it by delving too deep into his work.

Malcolm wrote:

In other words, you don't really know anything about him.

Mkoll said:

And why any Buddhist would admire him is beyond me.

Malcolm wrote:

Well, for starters he wrote any number of very interesting books. For another he was in the employ of the British Secret Service for decades, using his masonic credentials as a cover. Beyond that, he was a world class mountain climber and all around adventurer. Even further, he studied Vipassana in Burma and Yoga in South India., etc.

He is one of the all-around most interesting people of early 20th century.

Having said all that, however, it doesn't mean I think AC taught a valid path, etc. AC was interesting, but still a worldly person in every respect. His "wickedness" however is totally overstated and silly:

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, July 23rd, 2014 at 1:48 AM

Title: Re: Tarot as divination tool

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Well, for starters he wrote any number of very interesting books.

dzogchungpa said:

Any in particular that you recommend? I've always been daunted by the vastness of his output.

Malcolm wrote:

There is a good bio of him called Perdurabo, which makes no attempt to whitewash his career or person at all.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, July 23rd, 2014 at 6:55 AM

Title: Re: Tarot as divination tool

Content:

Karma Dorje said:

Mipham's dice divination practice published as Mo: Tibetan Divination System does not require empowerment or retreat:

https://books.google.ca/books/about/Mo.html?id=c6Z8KqdF6LoC&redir_esc=y " onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;" onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;" onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;" onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;"

The results are quite precise, including what practices one should do in the event of problems. This level of detail is not possible with Tarot.

Motova said:

I have this book! Are you saying I can practice Mo using this book with absolutely no guidance? If so, where is this information coming from?

Malcolm wrote:

You need to do the retreat.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, July 23rd, 2014 at 10:00 PM

Title: Re: Dzogchen & rainbow body

Content:

Jesse said:

How does onerainbow....?

Malcolm wrote:

You received Dzogchen teachings on a complete way from a realized master. Then you practice diligently, devoting yourself to little else in this lifetime.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, July 24th, 2014 at 12:06 AM

Title: Re: Dorje Gotrab deity picture origin

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

rdo rje go khrab, vajra armor, is a generic name for all kinds of practices, not just one practice or lineage of practice.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, July 25th, 2014 at 4:00 AM

Title: Re: Dogen's quote: arhathood or buddhahood?

Content:

asunthatneversets said:

Arhats only have knowledge of "one-fold" emptiness, so they have full knowledge of the emptiness of self but lack (or have incomplete) insight into emptiness of phenomena.

zenman said:

Is that a view that is upheld by all or most buddhist trads? Doesn't onefold emptiness mean the same as that the "I" disappears for good and hence anatta/no-self is realised?

Malcolm wrote:

This is the point of view of Indian Mahāyāna and virtually all its descendants.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, July 25th, 2014 at 4:52 AM

Title: Re: Dogen's quote: arhathood or buddhahood?

Content:

zenman said:

When I get this clear, then I'll get back to the topic.

Malcolm wrote:

Put succinctly there are two kinds of emptiness, the emptiness of persons and the emptiness of phenomena. Hinayāna paths such as Theravada and so forth do not

realize the emptiness of phenomena, only the emptiness of persons.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, July 25th, 2014 at 9:06 AM

Title: Re: Dogen's quote: arhathood or buddhahood?

Content:

Jikan said:

According to Vajrayana. Your mileage may vary in some Mahayana schools.

Malcolm wrote:

There is no common Mahāyāna school, including Chan/Zen, that works with the body method the way it is worked with in Vajrayāna. Further, all common Mahāyāna schools are paths of renunciation.

Tendai is in a sort of bizarre situation, for it is the only school in which distinct elements of Vajrayāna are present, but nevertheless are subordinated to a sutrayāna exegetical framework.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, July 25th, 2014 at 9:22 PM

Title: Re: Dogen's quote: arhathood or buddhahood?

Content:

Vajrasvapna said:

From Nyingmapa point of view, Chan/zen affirmation are correct...

Malcolm wrote:

Well, not so fast, Kiomosabe, for one thing, the type of Chan Tibetans were exposed to was a Northern School variant. It is very hard to make a case that 10th century Tibetan doxologies apply to the Vajrayāna influenced Zen of the Kamakura period, or even Sung Dynasty Chan.

Secondly, Nubchen makes it very, very clear that while Chan (as known in Tibet) follows the definitive Mahāyāna sutras, it is not as direct or efficient as Mahāyoga, and addresses the seeming contradiction here in so far as the fact that Chan is supposedly a "sudden" path, whereas Mahāyoga is gradual. And of course, he clearly places Atiyoga as the pinnacle of all.

Third, the idea that one can "realize" Dharmakāya without achieving full buddhahood is somewhat absurd. Sure, we call the emptiness aspect of the mind "the dharmakāya" of the basis, but this does not mean we have realized the result dharmakāya even though there is no substantial difference between the dharmakāya of the basis and the dharmakāya of the result.

It is very interesting to examine Nubchen's detailed and nuanced arguments. It is true that Thuken wrote about Chan in 18th century China, but he dismisses it as Yogacara in a short summary fashion. While it is true that Longchenpa and Jigme Lingpa comment briefly on Chan, there is no Tibetan whose treatment of the Chan/Gradualist debate is more authoritative than Nubchen's.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, July 25th, 2014 at 9:29 PM

Title: Re: Dogen's quote: arhathood or buddhahood?

Content:

Dan74 said:

I agree with Jikan that it is fraught with danger to use a Kagyu master's teachings in response to a Soto Zen teacher, as they are coming from different initial assumptions and often different terminology. The (apocryphal?) story of Hashang Mahayana, the Ch'an monk who debated with Vajra masters and lost, is a great case in point when two traditions meet but not much contact takes place. Another one is the case of Kalu Rinpoche and Seung Sahn.

Malcolm wrote:

The Samye debate was not a debate between Vajrayāna masters and Hashang. Kamalashila was debating a strictly sutrayāna point of view grounded in standard Indian Mahāyāna. Not all Tibetans agree that Kamalashila won the debate either.

If you want to read a Dzogchen master's treatment of 8th century Northern School Chan, then you need to read Nubchen Sangye Yeshe's "Lamp of the Eye of Dhyāna". One of the interesting things about this text is that it cites scores of Tibetan Chan masters, not just Chinese masters.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, July 25th, 2014 at 9:31 PM

Title: Re: Dogen's quote: arhathood or buddhahood?

Content:

LastLegend said:

I am willing to hear the explanation why Vajra methods can take people to full Buddhahood? What rational explanation behind this?

Malcolm wrote:

A realized master directly introduces a willing and interested student to their own state through different kinds of experiences. Rinse, repeat. This is the shortest explanation. There are many more complicated discussions. The essence of them all is that Vajrayāna has the method of taking the result as the path. Dzogchen is also a little

different than this.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, July 25th, 2014 at 10:57 PM

Title: Re: Dogen's quote: arhathood or buddhahood?

Content:

LastLegend said:

I am willing to hear the explanation why Vajra methods can take people to full Buddhahood? What rational explanation behind this?

Malcolm wrote:

A realized master directly introduces a willing and interested student to their own state through different kinds of experiences. Rinse, repeat. This is the shortest explanation. There are many more complicated discussions. The essence of them all is that Vajrayāna has the method of taking the result as the path. Dzogchen is also a little different than this.

uan said:

That's a great way of stating it. Could you expand a bit on how Dzogchen is a little different?

Malcolm wrote:

Dzogchen takes the result as the basis, and the basis is practiced as the path.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, July 28th, 2014 at 10:29 PM

Title: Re: Zabmo Nangdon to be published by Shambhala

Content:

Anders said:

Maybe those lamas aren't thrilled with the Tibetan situation either and reckon that at least in English, it can be 'done right'...

Malcolm wrote:

The reason why these books are available in Tibetan is because the Tibetan Buddhist Lineage Heads want these books out there so that they won't die. Every book on TBRC has a database entry through which any text can be restricted by tradition of they so choose. There are many books on TBRC that in fact are restricted by tradition.

When Tibetan lineages send books to TBRC they do so knowing full well that they are openly making these texts available.

Now, Sherapa has brought up the point of samaya — and this is a valid point. If you are a practitioner, and take lineage seriously, it is better to get permission to read this or that

text if you are interested in it. This is the proper approach. On the other hand, a text like Zabmo Nangdon is a general text on tantric anatomy, so in fact anyone who has received HYT empowerment is qualified to read it.

Even then, the Shambhala "restriction" pages are kind of ludicrous because anyone can just lie if they want to get the book.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, July 28th, 2014 at 10:47 PM

Title: Re: Melody of Dharma No. 13

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

http://www.hhthesakyatrizin.org/pdfs/Melody_of_Dharma_13.pdf

This volume contains our translation (Khenpo Migmar Tseten and myself) of an important never before translated text by Mahāsiddha Virupa.

Enjoy!

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, July 29th, 2014 at 8:55 PM

Title: Re: Zabmo Nangdon to be published by Shambhala

Content:

yegyal said:

One of the reasons that Sanskrit titles are included at the beginning of Tibetan translations of Indian texts is to remind the reader of the kindness of the translators. This notion seems to be lost in the fray of these discussions about the cost of Dharma books. Elizabeth Callahan has been working on this book for years and people are talking about how much profit can be made selling bound up copies of ink on paper. That shows very little understanding of the value of the work. Of course, none of this would even get to the point of being published if there wasn't a sponsor supporting her. In fact, that's why all those books are available in Tibetan, because sponsors took it upon themselves to have them printed and made available for a nominal price. Even TBRC is funded by sponsors. So all this talk about things being free or available is all because of somebody else footing the bill. So rather than complaining about the costs of books like this, maybe you should appreciate how cheap it really is. What's dinner and a movie cost these days? Is that really worth more to you than being able to read the scriptures of your chosen religion?

Malcolm wrote:

Right, but the issue here is not cost, it is restrictions vs. lack of restrictions, and the reality is that restricting books is a little fatuous.

Personally, making books like khrid ye shes bla ma and so on expensive automatically restricts them. Setting a high price for important tantric texts is a more effective strategy

than making people fill out questionnaires and signing oaths.

Anyway, as I already pointed out, well trained students will not purchase books for which they do not have transmission/permission.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, July 29th, 2014 at 9:29 PM

Title: Re: Restricted Publications-An Effective or Ineffective Tact

Content:

yegyal said:

I was actually referring to SofB's description of book costs more than anything. It seems that this became a thread dedicated to a different topic since my last post.

Malcolm wrote:

I know, and I agree with you %100. As a translator I can tell you we survive solely on sponsorships. There is no money in translating books.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, July 29th, 2014 at 10:57 PM

Title: Re: Re 21 Taras

Content:

pemachophel said:

Narraboth,

Sorry, I can't answer your questions although they are good ones. I hope someone addresses them in a knowledgeable way. In my case, I'm working on a Dakini sadhana (sorry, can't say which one) which includes visualization of the 21 Taras around the periphery of the central Dakini. The text says to visualize the 21 Taras in terms of color, hand implements, expression, etc. clearly and precisely but doesn't say how exactly. When I asked my Teacher Who gave me this practice which of the various versions of the 21 Taras to use, He said to use this one. That's what spurred my OP.

When I did Yumka Dechen Gyalmo, I was not given this lay-jor of the 21 Taras. I hope some day to receive it in the context of Yumka.

Malcolm wrote:

If you received the transmission of Tara from ChNN, you received this.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, July 30th, 2014 at 9:28 PM

Title: Re: Religions vs Communist Party in China

Content:

Will said:

Or is it so closely watched and/or infiltrated that Chinese Buddhism in China is just a sham?

Malcolm wrote:

Very likely.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, July 30th, 2014 at 9:51 PM

Title: Re: Religions vs Communist Party in China

Content:

Will said:

Or is it so closely watched and/or infiltrated that Chinese Buddhism in China is just a sham?

Malcolm wrote:

Very likely.

Will said:

Your 'Very likely' is just a speculation, right? My guess would be the same, but I would like to hear from any Chinese Buddhism followers who know from 1st hand or have heard reliable testimony about the facts. Of course, they may endanger themselves when they share such facts publicly. So silence is 'very likely' too.

Malcolm wrote:

During the 90's, many Vietnamese temples, even in the US, were infiltrated by monastic spies from Vietnam. It became a real problem for them.

The fact is that monks in monasteries in China are little more than museum guards. Their standard of education in Dharma is very poor, and they are forced to spend a lot of time in political education classes. Tibetan Monasteries are also forced to waste time on political education classes. If you want high quality Chinese Dharma you must go to Taiwan.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, July 30th, 2014 at 10:03 PM

Title: Re: Recognising reincarnations

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

A "reincarnation" means the rebirth of someone who has some portion of the two obscurations remaining. An "emanation" is someone who is in fact an expression of the compassion of a fully awakened Buddha who may manifest as an ordinary person externally, but internally has all the full mature qualities of a Buddha. How do you tell the difference? In Vajrayāna it does not really matter, since you are supposed to regard

your guru as an actual buddha in every respect.

zenman said:

These two quotes lead me to consider a subject that I've pondered a few times before: the differences in recognitions of lamas reincarnations. I recall this matter has come by a few times before but I can't remember which cases exactly.

I'm not familiar with what emanations and reincarnations mean, have to do some googling on those, unless someone could easily explain it for me.

Anyway, my main question is, based on these two messages below as well as other similar cases, that there are disagreements on recognitions of the reincarnations. My intention is not to argue about this but to analyse why do these disagreements exist?

Thanks for the input all.

Karma Jinpa said:

... a letter from Namdroling monastery: Kyabjé Drubwang Pema Norbu's reincarnation has been found!!!

All Palyulpas and Nyingmapas in general should rejoice; a great being---an emanation of Vajrasattva and reincarnation of Vimalamitra---has returned to tame beings once more! reincarnation of Vimalamitra

Malcolm wrote:

He can't be a reincarnation of Vimalamitra since Vimalamitra, according to legend, attained 'pho ba chen po, and still lives at Wutai Shan.

He would be an emanation of Vimalamitra. As the legend has it, Vimalamitra returns to Tibet every one hundred years.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, July 30th, 2014 at 11:38 PM

Title: Re: Recognising reincarnations

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

...why do these disagreements exist?

Because there is no clear cut procedure.

zenman said:

Procedure meaning a process done by some or many experienced lamas who investigate and either reject or confirm it? I'd think that this is more a matter of perception, intuition and discrimination (as in the ability to discern the quality of subtle vibration) than procedure, if it means something like I explain here. Yes? No?

Malcolm wrote:

A "reincarnation" means the rebirth of someone who has some portion of the two obscurations remaining. An "emanation" is someone who is in fact an expression of the

compassion of a fully awakened Buddha who may manifest as an ordinary person externally, but internally has all the full mature qualities of a Buddha. How do you tell the difference? In Vajrayāna it does not really matter, since you are supposed to regard your guru as an actual buddha in every respect.

zenman said:

Great! A clear explanation What are the two obscurations of the reincarnations?

Malcolm wrote:

Klesha obscurations and Knowledge obscurations. Bodhisattvas on the bodhisattvas have these.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, July 31st, 2014 at 12:43 AM

Title: Re: Recognising reincarnations

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Klesha obscurations and Knowledge obscurations. Bodhisattvas on the bodhisattvas have these.

zenman said:

Bodhisattvas on the bodhisattvas? A typo?

Malcolm wrote:

yes, on the bodhisattva bhumis, as opposed to ordinary bodhisattvas.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, July 31st, 2014 at 2:44 AM

Title: Re: Recognising reincarnations

Content:

zenman said:

Procedure meaning a process done by some or many experienced lamas who investigate and either reject or confirm it? I'd think that this is more a matter of perception, intuition and discrimination (as in the ability to discern the quality of subtle vibration) than procedure, if it means something like I explain here. Yes? No?

Sherab Dorje said:

Procedure like: This lama is responsible for making the final decision regarding candidates, in the event that this lama is not in the position to make the decision, then the responsibility lies with this lama, etc...

Or: A candidate will be considered valid on the basis of this, this and this criteria, if they do not satisfy the aforementioned criteria then they will not be eligible...

Procedure. You see there is property and wealth involved too, many times, not just a title. Or the future of a lineage may depend on the "right" candidate being found. So, as we all well know quite well, whenever money, wealth and power comes into things then politics arise. Since they are bound to arise, if there is a set procedure (which there isn't) then this acts as a check to the politics. Even if there are politics involved, if there is a procedure in place then at least the politics are executed in a relatively smooth and conflict-free fashion.

But there is no set procedure, and intuition is a little difficult to verify objectively. And anyway, just because two (or more) intuited results conflict, doesn't mean that all of them are incorrect.

Malcolm wrote:

Just admit it Greg, it is all %100 faith based.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, July 31st, 2014 at 2:52 AM

Title: Re: Recognising reincarnations

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Just admit it Greg, it is all %100 faith based.

Sherab Dorje said:

I wouldn't say 100%. Having talked to a tulku and seen and read some accounts it seems to be more than just faith. Some do display specific/extraordinary qualities. Of course there is nepotism and (like I said) politics involved, which means that there it also has a strategic component, thus we are talking about a deviation from the ideal of faith. That in itself means that it is not 100% faith. There is some cunning in there too. Plus, of course, other more objective factors. Maybe even some virtue.

Malcolm wrote:

It is %100 percent faith -- there is no objective way of verifying any of it. So just admit it and be happy.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, July 31st, 2014 at 3:01 AM

Title: Re: Recognising reincarnations

Content:

heart said:

Well, many tulkus seems to be verified by dreams great masters have. I am not really sure I would call that just faith.

/magnus

Malcolm wrote:

%100 percent faith. Why? well, if you accept the testimony of such a master it is based on faith, %100.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, July 31st, 2014 at 3:11 AM

Title: Re: Recognising reincarnations

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

It is %100 percent faith -- there is no objective way of verifying any of it. So just admit it and be happy.

Sherab Dorje said:

Objective? That's a strange term coming from you Malcolm! So I guess that a tulku admitting that they had memories of their past life when they were still a child but that over time the memories faded so that now they have little recollection of their previous life is not objective. So what would be an objective source of evidence then?

Malcolm wrote:

I have always made a distinction between falsifiable phenomena and non-falsifiable phenomena. Frankly, even though, from a Buddhist perspective, all children have some memory of past lives due to the activation of clairvoyance from the eighth month of pregnancy onwards, accepting this idea is based on faith, indeed even rebirth is just something you have to have faith in, %100.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, July 31st, 2014 at 4:45 AM

Title: Re: Recognising reincarnations

Content:

zenman said:

Medieval beliefs. Surely there are no buddhas teaching at every dharma center. It is entirely misleading to spread such beliefs. I've seen the fruit of this when it is realised that the guru isn't a buddha after all.

Malcolm wrote:

You don't need to believe someone else's guru is an actual Buddha, just your own. That is all that matters. If you cannot believe your root Guru is a Buddha, then you have no business taking any kind of Vajrayāna teachings and more to the point, the Vajrayāna teachings you do take will not be effective.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, July 31st, 2014 at 4:48 AM

Title: Re: Recognising reincarnations

Content:

Norwegian said:

Malcolm said there's no way of giving an objective verification, and that it is all 100% faith based. So asking for objective evidence in that case is rather difficult...

Sherab Dorje said:

There is actually no objective verification of anything. All verification is based on a majority of subjective opinion. So why would it be different for tulku? Why do we, in this case, call it faith and in other cases objective verification?

Malcolm wrote:

You can falsify a chemistry experiment, but not a tulku recognition. As for the latter, you either believe it or you don't.

In the case of ChNN, I believe it. In the case of both Karmapas, I don't believe in either one.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, July 31st, 2014 at 9:32 PM

Title: Re: Recognising reincarnations

Content:

JKhedrup said:

I think the point Malcolm makes is a pertinent one. From the Vajrayana POV, it is important to view one's Vajra Master as enlightened. This becomes even more essential with regards to Highest Yoga Tantra.

Sherab Dorje said:

While this is true, at the same time, this does not mean that one does not view other teachers with pure vision too. I can understand if Malcolm considers ChNN a Buddha, but that does not mean he has the right to judge others as false incarnations. Then his view is just reduced to egotistical speculation.

Malcolm wrote:

I did not judge anyone as a false incarnation. In other words, for example, I have no faith in the two Karmapas as incarnations of the 16th Karmapa. But my lack of faith in them as reincarnations has no bearing on whether they are the actual incarnations of the 16th or not. Just to clarify, I have 0 connection with the Karma Kagyu lineage, for whatever reason, just like I have 0 connection with the Gelug lineage.

As far as pure vision goes, if someone has the idea that even one person is not a fully awakened buddha, their vision is not pure. So, if we are going to take about pure vision, we really need to be clear what we mean.

I have no obligation to regard teachers other than my own as Buddhas. I am not even obliged to have pure vision of them (other than the same we try to imagine all sentient

beings are buddhas in the context of the universe as a buddhamandala). I have no obligation to regard people who are not my teachers as anything more than ordinary worldly people with no special qualities worth mentioning.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, July 31st, 2014 at 10:03 PM

Title: Re: Dr. Sanderson: Phowa etc. are directly from Saivism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Lower tantra a) is not effective in this day and age.

sherabpa said:

Wait, is anyone saying lower tantra is not effective because it was originally intended for Shaiva followers, lower castes etc?

I can see how one might conclude that the lower tantras are less effective than the higher tantras, but I cannot see that they are ineffective.

Sonam Tsemo says in the Tantra Sets Presentation that the lower tantras are distinct from paramitayana in that they have blessing and gazing/smiling at the deity, which makes them more similar to the higher tantras than to the paramitas. But nothing is said to be ineffective.

I guess I am asking - what does effectiveness mean here?

Malcolm wrote:

Loppon Rinpoche states:

Therefore, followers of the Pāramitāyāna do not accomplish [awakening] in this degenerate age, but followers of Secret Mantra do accomplish [awakening] in this degenerate age. The Herukābhaya also states:

If one upholds Śrī Heruka,

There will be accomplishment in the decadent age.

There is no Śrī Heruka in lower tantra.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, July 31st, 2014 at 11:50 PM

Title: Re: Recognising reincarnations

Content:

Jikan said:

I can't speak for Malcolm, but I'd argue that if someone has concrete evidence that a recognition was made purely for material or political reasons, and not for the qualities of the one recognized, and that person judges that incarnation to be totally false, then

that person isn't making egotistical speculation. That person is making an informed judgment. Not all judgments are rational, nor are they all speculative-egotistical, nor are they all matters of faith.

Sherab Dorje said:

Consider this though: What sort of karma would lead to one being enthroned, as a child, as a false tulku? What kind of karma is generated by the child after having been thrust into this role?

Malcolm wrote:

What sort of karma causes anyone to have a high position in samsara?

As for the second question, that really depends on whether they behave virtuously or non-virtuously.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, August 1st, 2014 at 12:09 AM

Title: Re: Recognising reincarnations

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

As far as pure vision goes, if someone has the idea that even one person is not a fully awakened buddha, their vision is not pure.

Sherab Dorje said:

Exactly. In which case EVEN if you were to see your teacher as a Buddha then the only thing you are doing is indulging in dualistic egotistical speculation: He is a Buddha, He is not a Buddha. They are real tulku, they are not real tulku.

So what is it going to be? Pure vision or aversion/attraction?

Malcolm wrote:

Honestly, greg, I don't think other teachers much. What I do know is that my primary teachers are Buddhas. YMMV.

Sherab Dorje said:

You are also not obligated to put one up on the pedestal, while burying the other. So why do it?

Malcolm wrote:

I didn't. I used the Karmapas merely as an example. I don't really think about them very much.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, August 1st, 2014 at 12:27 AM

Title: Re: Recognising reincarnations

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

What sort of karma causes anyone to have a high position in samsara?

Sherab Dorje said:

It's not just a high position. It is a high Dharma oriented position. At the very least they will receive a really good Dharma education. That's MUCH more than what most of us will encounter in this lifetime. So it seems to me that even being falsely recognised as a tulku requires craploads of merit.

Malcolm wrote:

It is just a high worldly position.

Whether the person is a Dharma person or not depends on the qualities of the person in the chair, and not the chair itself.

There are a lot people with Dharma in their mouths but not in their hearts. "Dharma" words are not necessarily Dharma.

For example, if we accept that Tibet fell because of the non-virtue of its rulers, for the most part who were they? High tulkus. So you see, these institutional positions are actually quite worldly and there is a huge amount of writing by the people in these position of monastic authority bemoaning the fact that these positions are just worldly fetters that prevent them from practicing.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, August 1st, 2014 at 1:10 AM

Title: Re: Recognising reincarnations

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

PS I tend to agree with Lord Jigten Sumgons analysis of karma where the actual act itself, regardless of intention/motivation etc... produces effects too. So...

Malcolm wrote:

Another opinion, one that is not supported in the classical Indian texts, but whatever.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, August 1st, 2014 at 1:10 AM

Title: Re: Recognising reincarnations

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

Being a tulku is not just a high worldly position.

Malcolm wrote:

It is simply a matter of opinion. In my opinion the whole tulku system is a worldly system. Your opinion is different.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, August 1st, 2014 at 1:19 AM

Title: Re: Zabmo Nangdon to be published by Shambhala

Content:

conebeckham said:

Hard to believe, but perhaps that's not their chief goal...

Son of Buddha said:

Providing Dharma at a reasonable price so all people who are interested in it can learn it should be their chief goal.

Malcolm wrote:

If someone cannot cough up a 100 bucks for a rare text someone has gone through considerable trouble to translate then they don't really need it or want it.

Sutrayāna is different than Vajrayāna on this score. Eventually, whole Kenjur will be online, for free. This does not mean however that all books should be free. Even the Kenjur is not free -- 84000 is paying a lot of money to have those sutras and tantras translated.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, August 1st, 2014 at 1:41 AM

Title: Re: Recognising reincarnations

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

Strangely enough, not being enlightened and all, the only thing we are capable of doing is offering opinions. In my opinion the whole tulku system is a worldly system.

Except when it is being applied to your teacher and his son?

Malcolm wrote:

Yeshe's enthronement at the monastery of his predecessor is a completely worldly affair.

ChNN himself was never in line to head a monastery. He would have wound up being a disaffiliated teacher whether in the East or the West.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, August 1st, 2014 at 1:47 AM

Title: Re: Zabmo Nangdon to be published by Shambhala

Content:

Son of Buddha said:

I wish All dharmic texts were free,that's what the Buddha wanted.

Malcolm wrote:

That is true only of sutra. It is completely not true of tantra.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, August 1st, 2014 at 1:54 AM

Title: Re: Recognising reincarnations

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

They are still both tulku though. Ratified through the tulku system. And earlier you stated that you have no doubt that ChNN is a tulku.

Malcolm wrote:

ChNN did not believe in his own status as a tulku for many years.

He only accepted that he was the tulku of Adzom Drugpa later on in life based on some circumstances.

The reason why I accept that ChNN is an actual reincarnation of Adzom Drugpa has to do with those circumstances — primarily, ChNN wrote a commentary, and later on, when he finally got a copy of Adzom Drugpa's collected works, he found a text identical to the one he had written himself in that collection, the same for over a hundred folios. He explained all this in 1992 at the first SMS retreat at Tsegylgar.

Further, the master that recognized him as the tulku of Adzom Drugpa was his own uncle, the one who attained rainbow body, not Yeshe's predecessor.

But the tulku system is just religious politics, completely and totally worldly in my opinion.

Sherab Dorje said:

So, really: You want to have your cake or do you want to eat it? Make up your mind.

Malcolm wrote:

Accepting that ChNN is the reincarnation of Adzom Drugpa does not entail that I must accept all or even any other recognitions of reincarnations.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, August 1st, 2014 at 2:48 AM

Title: Re: Zabmo Nangdon to be published by Shambhala

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The entire (reliable) translation of Longchenpa's commentary on Guhyagarbha is available for free on the internet. It is ludicrous therefore for anyone to restrict commentaries on it.

Jikan said:

I'm interested in finding this one, but it seems my google skills aren't up to the task. If anyone could please point me in the right direction, I'd appreciate it very much. Thank you.

Malcolm wrote:

<http://vajrayana.faithweb.com/guhyagarbhatantra.pdf>

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, August 1st, 2014 at 3:12 AM

Title: Re: Recognising reincarnations

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

For example, if we accept that Tibet fell because of the non-virtue of its rulers, for the most part who were they? High tulkus.

ReasonAndRhyme said:

So Tibet was a theocracy then?

Malcolm wrote:

No.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, August 1st, 2014 at 5:12 AM

Title: Re: Recognising reincarnations

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Accepting that ChNN is the reincarnation of Adzom Drugpa does not entail that I must accept all or even any other recognitions of reincarnations.

Jikan said:

following this to its conclusion: one may well have reason to believe someone is a reincarnation of someone else, but this has nothing to do with the question of the political institution of reincarnation-recognition. I think this distinction is getting lost in the shuffle of this conversation for some parties.

if you have a precious human rebirth now, it follows that at some time in lives previous you'd done something right. Is it necessary to have an enthronement ceremony for each of you in order to take this at face value? Accepting this premise but rejecting the

"tulku system" as a social construct are not contradictory positions.

Malcolm wrote:

Thank you.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, August 1st, 2014 at 9:57 PM

Title: Re: Recognising reincarnations

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

And, yes, doubting the veracity of the recognition of the Karmapa tulkus(or any other tulku teacher other than your own) is a condemnation of their capacities.

Malcolm wrote:

Therefore, according to your own reasoning, you yourself must accept that HH Karmapa, Orgyen Thrinly Dorje, is the real Karmapa. And if you don't, you are condemning him. Moreover, you are asserting that the late Shamarpa was wrong in not accepting Tai Situ's candidate. Not only that, but you are equally asserting that Tai Situ is wrong not to accept HH Karmapa, Thrinly Thaye Dorje, as being the real Karmapa.

The only solution for you then is that you must regard both Karmapas as the same and take teachings from them both.

Basically what you are saying is that we all must accept all tulku recognitions on faith without question.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, August 1st, 2014 at 9:59 PM

Title: Re: Recognising reincarnations

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

at least we should refrain from cultivating aversion.

Malcolm wrote:

You do realize that now we are going to comb your every post for examples of aversion?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, August 1st, 2014 at 10:05 PM

Title: Re: Dzogchen & rainbow body

Content:

Tod said:

Hi, friends,

after the very detailed explanation of Gyurme Kundrol, I have a question as to what is considered a teaching from the Upadesha cycle.

All the Longsal teachings of Namkhai Norbu are called "upadesha" in their name, although they display many different methods. Not to name all, but there are very different ones, like Mandarava with it's Tsa Lung, not a Dzogchen teaching in itself maybe; Saltong, combining Tsa Lung, Semdzins etc; Todgal, and so on.

And what about a teaching like "The Upadesha of Introduction to the State of Ati", which has a method from Semde, but then explains also Tregchod?

Thanks for clarifying.

Tod

Malcolm wrote:

Longsal Khandro Nyinthig contains teachings from Anuyoga such as Jñāna Dakini and Mandarava (which are really all part of one cycle) as well as the three series of ati yoga.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, August 1st, 2014 at 10:36 PM

Title: Re: What is considered a teaching from the Upadesha cycle?

Content:

bryandavis said:

So a revealed cycle can have maya, anu, ati ect. as part of its corpus but upadesha would only refer to the ati aspect of the practices?

Is upadesha then direct personal experience of any of these paths given in pith to students who have the capacity to get it in a less unelaborated way?

Or is upadesha the method that points directly to rigpa without any secondary methods?

Malcolm wrote:

Upadesha just means "intimate instruction" from upa, meaning "close", and desha, meaning "to instruct". The inference is that these are instructions one hears at the feet of one's guru in an intimate setting. There are all kinds of upadeshas.

Also upadesha is translated two ways into Tibetan gdams ngag and man ngag. The former meaning oral advice, that latter means secret advice.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, August 2nd, 2014 at 1:09 AM

Title: Re: Recognising reincarnations

Content:

conebeckham said:

Tulkus are GREAT!

The Tulku System sucks.

Malcolm wrote:

it seems our friend Greg does not want to distinguish between the two. I for one think nirmanakāyas are excellent. But developing a whole bureaucracy predicated in the principle of "recognitions", as we have seen throughout Tibetan history is fraught with manipulation, fraud and abuse.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, August 2nd, 2014 at 1:16 AM

Title: Re: Recognising reincarnations

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

This is yet another clumsy attempt by you to deflect the conversation away from the real subject, in order to cover up your own logical flaws and egocentric concerns.

Malcolm wrote:

If there is a flaw in my logic, prove it. Otherwise, your comments are baseless ad hominem remarks with no substance (countdown to thread meltdown begins now...)

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, August 2nd, 2014 at 2:24 AM

Title: Re: Recognising reincarnations

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

This is yet another clumsy attempt by you to deflect the conversation away from the real subject, in order to cover up your own logical flaws and egocentric concerns.

Malcolm wrote:

If there is a flaw in my logic, prove it. Otherwise, your comments are baseless ad hominem remarks with no substance.

Sherab Dorje said:

I have, you are unwilling to admit them and that is why this conversation continues to drag on for no reason at all. I have pointed out what pure view entails and how preferring "one" over "another" has nothing to do with pure view and everything to do with egotistical concern and dualising (like, dislike, believe, don't believe, is tulku, is not tulku, etc...).

I have admitted that the tulku system is flawed and shown how the idea of tulku cannot (unfortunately, and as much as I personally would like it to be able to) be separated from the system that recognises tulku.

You have responded by trying to start a bun fight over a certain controversy (notice how I did not take the bait?). Now whilst the example does highlight some of the flaws in the system, at the same time it also shows how the system can, does and has worked in a

positive manner, for over 800 years.

Malcolm wrote:

Hi Greg:

Well, you have not shown any such flaws, and moreover, you have only succeeded in proving that tulku system is inane by referring to pure vision. The tulku system only works in a world where there is higher and lower, pure and impure. Once you have decided that you are going to trot down the path of "pure vision", well, now you have no reason to ban <redacted> and NKT here at all. According to "pure vision", the pope is as much a Buddha as the HHDL or the HHK, etc.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, August 2nd, 2014 at 2:31 AM

Title: Re: Recognising reincarnations

Content:

conebeckham said:

I am not certain we can infer that all those things are the result of the Tulku system. Sometimes, in fact, I think they exist despite it.

Sherab Dorje said:

Maybe, maybe not. Personally I would prefer an overhaul of the tulku system rather than its being scrapped just because it has some flaws. Like I said earlier: this is samsara, it is flawed by its very nature (Kongtrul's opinion, in his autobio, is worth a look.....)

Thank you. I will track it down and read it.

Is this the one you mean: "Enthronement: The Recognition Of The Reincarnate Masters Of Tibet And The Himalayas" or is it this one: "The Autobiography of Jamgon Kongtrul: A Gem of Many Colors"?

Malcolm wrote:

The real problem with tulku system is that it is a Tibetan cultural artifact, and not something which can be found in sutra or tantra.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, August 2nd, 2014 at 2:32 AM

Title: Re: Recognising reincarnations

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

The tantric texts do not call for abolishing of the tulku system though, do they? They are all situated within the same framework: Tibetan Vajrayana.

Malcolm wrote:

Considering that the tulku system does not come from tantras, why would they even

mention it?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, August 2nd, 2014 at 2:43 AM

Title: Re: Recognising reincarnations

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

The tantric texts do not call for abolishing of the tulku system though, do they? They are all situated within the same framework: Tibetan Vajrayana.

Malcolm wrote:

Considering that the tulku system does not come from tantras, why would they even mention it?

Sherab Dorje said:

They are all situated within the same framework: Tibetan Vajrayana. Please don't cherry pick.

Malcolm wrote:

First, my authority is not Tibet, my authority is sutra and tantra. I do not have to accept Tibetan cultural practices as authoritative, I don't eat Tsampa, drink Chang, or herd yaks.

Greg, the tulku system started in Kagyu, than spread to other schools. It is not a universal thing in Buddhism, it never existed in India, and it does not need to exist in the West. I can understand your attachment to it, but it really is something which is a cultural practice of Tibetans and not really something which has a strong foundation in sutra and tantra.

This does not mean that there are no reincarnations, or that no one can recognize a reincarnation with accuracy. But the point is that there is a sufficient amount of corruption in the system to call the whole system into question. As long as there is no clearly defined criteria by which a tulku may be recognized, then I am afraid it is just a matter of faith whether one accepts someone as a reincarnation of a master or not.

This is why I bring up the examples of NKT. For example, according to them, <redacted> is Sakya Pandita's reincarnation. According to your logic, since this is the opinion of Trijang Rinpoche, I should accept it, or at least not dispute it. Can't you see how crazy your point of view is? according to your point of view, I should accept that a worldly spirit is the reincarnation of one of the most important Sakya masters.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, August 2nd, 2014 at 4:47 AM

Title: Re: Recognising reincarnations

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

First, my authority is not Tibet, my authority is sutra and tantra. I do not have to accept Tibetan cultural practices as authoritative, I don't eat Tsampa, drink Chang, or herd yaks.

Sherab Dorje said:

So the tulku system is on par with eating tsampa and herding yaks...

Malcolm wrote:

My point is that it is a cultural practice.

Sherab Dorje said:

Greg, the tulku system started in Kagyu, than spread to other schools. It is not a universal thing in Buddhism, it never existed in India, and it does not need to exist in the West.

Neither did/is Dzogchen, you reckon we should get rid of that too?

Malcolm wrote:

Dzogchen existed in India, and is found in the tantras, unlike the tulku system.

Sherab Dorje said:

I can understand your attachment to it...

I am not attached to it. If I was attached to it I would not be calling for its reformation. I am just not averse to it.

Malcolm wrote:

I am not averse to it. If Tibetans want to continue the tulku system, they are free to. Some of their reincarnations might even be real ones, like ChNN — but most will be chosen and "blessed" as tulkus.

Sherab Dorje said:

But the point is that there is a sufficient amount of corruption in the system to call the whole system into question.

This is our fundamental point of disagreement.

Malcolm wrote:

Yup, we disagree on this point.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, August 2nd, 2014 at 5:53 AM

Title: Re: Recognising reincarnations

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Dzogchen existed in India, and is found in the tantras, unlike the tulku system.

Sherab Dorje said:

If I remember correctly, a certain tulku whose teachings I have been following the past few weeks, stated quite clearly, a number of times that the Dzogchen teachings/method did not originate from India, but from one of the current day -stans: Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan...

So...

But now we digress.

Malcolm wrote:

Dzogchen was brought to Tibet from India by way of Vajrāsana. This is clearly stated in the early Dzogchen annals.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, August 2nd, 2014 at 10:44 PM

Title: Re: Teacher as Buddha?

Content:

Mkoll said:

1) Is this belief common to all the Tibetan schools? Is it part of Shingon? I don't know much more about Mahayana than Vajrayana but I don't think it is part of the beliefs of any of their schools, is it?

Malcolm wrote:

It is not common to Shingon, because it is a practice restricted to the highest tantras.

Mkoll said:

2) How does one believe that one's teacher is a Buddha? What is the correct mindset? For example, does one believe they are fully enlightened like the historical Buddha was? Or is there some other approach?

Malcolm wrote:

You understand that the impure appearance of one's root guru as an ordinary person is due to one's own flaws and afflictions, but that in their real nature, they are actually Samyaksambuddhas and you accept their words as such.

Actually, it is very unlikely that any one of us meeting Gotama Buddha today would be able to see him as being a Samyaksambuddha. We would see an old North Indian guy dressed in ragged robes followed around by people of similar mien.

Anyway, this practice only applies to qualified people from whom one has received empowerment into a highest yoga tantra mandala. If you have not received such an empowerment, then there is no reason to follow this practice.

Mkoll said:

3) This one is kind of unrelated, but: Are all Tibetan schools Vajrayana Buddhism?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, August 2nd, 2014 at 10:52 PM

Title: Re: Recognising reincarnations

Content:

Jikan said:

I think Sherab Dorje raised an interesting issue some time back that I'd like to bring us back to: the question of whether or to what degree the tulku system as developed in Tibet offers an efficient way to identify and train teachers and leaders when resources are scarce. Thoughts on this?

Malcolm wrote:

Not necessarily. Two major schools of Tibetan Buddhism do not operate this way: the largest, Gelugpa and as well as Sakya.

The Gelugpas appoint their leaders and teachers through education, not tulku lineages, with the notable exception of the Panchen Lama, who is the head of Tashi Lhunpo monastery. The Dalai Lamas are not monastic heads, but actually part of the Drepung Monastic system.

The leadership of Sakyapas is held in the Kohn family lineage. The abbacy of Ngor (a subsect of Sakya) is circulated among the scions of four families. It is only in the smallest of the Sakya subsects, Tshar, and Eastern Tibetan Sakya monasteries where tulkus play a significant role in the leadership of monasteries.

The leadership of Mindroling likewise is held in an old family, and is not tulku based.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, August 3rd, 2014 at 2:30 AM

Title: Re: Recognising reincarnations

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

So you believe that hereditary religious leadership is better than the tulku system? Or do you prefer the Gelug model?

PS The Dalai Lamas are tulku, are they not?

Malcolm wrote:

I think the Gelug model is best for the West.

HHDL is a tulku, however, the Fifth Dalai Lama's recognition was fraudulent, according to his autobiography, and every one from the 8th to the 13th was selected by a lottery operated by the Qing dynasty Ambans.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, August 3rd, 2014 at 3:26 AM

Title: Re: What is Blessing?

Content:

Astus said:

What is the definition of blessing (any and all types)? What dharma is it? What are its qualities and conditions?

Malcolm wrote:

Byin rlabs means quite literally "conferral [rlabs] of power [byin]."

Byin is defined in Tibetan as "the ability or power to transform the minds and vision/appearances of another."

The word Byin rlabs is defined in Tibetan as "the power to remain in any subject of the Dharma of the Noble Path."

So that is your answer.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, August 3rd, 2014 at 6:15 AM

Title: Re: The limit of compounded phenomena

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

I am interested to hear peoples opinions and especially to see some scriptural quotes that verify/contradict this.

Malcolm wrote:

He is perfectly correct. Since particles cannot be established since they do not bear ultimate analysis, there comes a time when under analysis they cannot be found at all. The chapter refuting permanent functioning phenomena in the 400 Verses demonstrates this very well.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, August 3rd, 2014 at 9:39 AM

Title: Re: Dr. Sanderson: Phowa etc. are directly from Saivism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Loppon Rinpoche states:

Therefore, followers of the Pāramitāyāna do not accomplish [awakening] in this degenerate age, but followers of Secret Mantra do accomplish [awakening] in this degenerate age. The Herukābhyadaya also states:

If one upholds Śrī Heruka,

There will be accomplishment in the decadent age.

There is no Śrī Heruka in lower tantra.

sherabpa said:

The lower tantras belong to Secret Mantra, and hence siddhis are attained. As Sapan says in *sdom gsum* 3.262:

Nonetheless, on the level of action tantra

accomplishment may be obtained

by meditating on a painted image of the deity:

pleased by one's observance of austerity and cleanliness

the Buddha will bestow his attainments.

Now I believe it is said somewhere that only through anuttaratantra will one attain mahamudra siddhi in a single lifetime. Supposing that is true, this is quite different to saying the lower tantras are ineffective, or pointless.

Malcolm wrote:

The Samputa states:

None of the eighty four thousand Dharmaskandhas

have any result since the true state of the body is not understood.

Since the true state of the body is not taught outside of highest yoga tantra, etc., well then, I leave you to your own conclusions.

Now then, Ngorchen does clarify in his commentary on kriya tantra that the most a person can aspire to with kriya tantra practice is the tenth bhumi:

"The result accomplished in one life of anuttaratantra is only the perfect Buddhahood of the three inseparable kāyas; here, having relied on the three paths, one can manifest the tenth stage in this [life] and with that support, Buddhahood can be accomplished."

He also explains that even so, the path of kriya tantra is quite slow:

But in kriya tantra, because there is no teaching of taking siddhis apart from (40/a) inviting and creating the deity in front, the speed with which the result is accomplished is slight. The difference with Pāramitāyāna is very important, in that in [Pāramitāyāna] not even taking siddhis from a deity invited in front is ever taught.

Further, the difficulty with kriya tantra is that it is very precise and requires absolute adherence to ritual purity and so on. This is quite difficult to maintain unless you are in a

place like Koyasan, etc. For all of these reasons then it is safe to say that for the most part we can consider kriya tantra ineffective in this day and age (which was my point), which also explains why outside of Shingon and Tendai, no one practices it anymore. There is also the consideration of which yuga a given teaching is most effective or needed, and in this yuga, the kali yuga, annuttarayoga tantra is a desiderata.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, August 3rd, 2014 at 7:35 PM

Title: Re: The limit of compounded phenomena

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

I am interested to hear peoples opinions and especially to see some scriptural quotes that verify/contradict this.

Malcolm wrote:

He is perfectly correct. Since particles cannot be established since they do not bear ultimate analysis, there comes a time when under analysis they cannot be found at all. The chapter refuting permanent functioning phenomena in the 400 Verses demonstrates this very well.

Sherab Dorje said:

I wasn't doubting that he was correct, he is a khenpo after all, I was just looking for scriptural verification/contradiction. I imagine there would be other schools/traditions, that may care to disagree.

Thanks for the info.

Malcolm wrote:

Not in Mahāyāna.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, August 3rd, 2014 at 8:42 PM

Title: Re: Dr. Sanderson: Phowa etc. are directly from Saivism

Content:

Sherlock said:

But Shingon has yogatantra too which is said to bring Buddhahood in one life?

Malcolm wrote:

Indeed. But unless you are a priest, your practice is mainly confined to the liturgical practice of reciting a few mantras and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, August 3rd, 2014 at 11:22 PM

Title: Re: Teacher as Buddha?

Content:

Will said:

Mahayana also posits the guru as Buddha, as in this quote from Avatamsaka Sutra, ch. 39:

As for the good spiritual guide, he is just the Tathāgata himself.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, while it is true that in Mahāyāna and even in Hinayāna, the idea of a guru is to be found, nevertheless, it is only in secret mantra that one is to regard one's (qualified) teacher as an actual Samyaksambuddha.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, August 3rd, 2014 at 11:45 PM

Title: Re: Teacher as Buddha?

Content:

Will said:

If one has confidence in the buddhadharma and cultivates according to what is there taught - such as 'guru is the Tathāgata himself', then one does so. It has nothing to do with being 'in secret mantra'.

Malcolm wrote:

Will, you can either choose to understand special emphasis and necessity of a guru as explained in secret mantra, or you can argue with it. It's up to you.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, August 4th, 2014 at 12:53 AM

Title: Re: Teacher as Buddha?

Content:

Will said:

If one has confidence in the buddhadharma and cultivates according to what is there taught - such as 'guru is the Tathāgata himself', then one does so. It has nothing to do with being 'in secret mantra'.

Malcolm wrote:

Will, you can either choose to understand special emphasis and necessity of a guru as explained in secret mantra, or you can argue with it. It's up to you.

Will said:

I prefer to choose a third way; ignore secret mantra and 'understand special emphasis and necessity of a guru' as taught in Mahayana.

Malcolm wrote:

Well, you can if you like, but the fact is that the relationship with a guru is different in secret mantra than it is in Mahāyāna. It is a much more potent relationship.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, August 4th, 2014 at 2:18 AM

Title: Re: Dr. Sanderson: Phowa etc. are directly from Saivism

Content:

sherabpa said:

When he says that only Guyhamantra is appropriate for the present times...

Malcolm wrote:

Here, Guhyamantra does not mean lower tantra.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, August 4th, 2014 at 2:20 AM

Title: Re: Dr. Sanderson: Phowa etc. are directly from Saivism

Content:

sherabpa said:

Yet nobody says the lower tantra path is as easy as the higher tantra path. Lack of difficulties is precisely one of four superiorities of tantra over paramitayana, and by implication of the higher over the lower paths. There is superior and inferior, but not effective and ineffective, and superior means the four superiorities.

Malcolm wrote:

superior = more effective

inferior = less effective

higher = more effective

lower = less effective

easy = more effective

difficult = less effective.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, August 4th, 2014 at 8:59 PM

Title: Re: What is Blessing?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Byin rlabs means quite literally "conferral [rlabs] of power [byin]."

Byin is defined in Tibetan as "the ability or power to transform the minds and vision/appearances of another."

The word Byin rlabs is defined in Tibetan as "the power to remain in any subject of the Dharma of the Noble Path."

Astus said:

Thank you. Does that mean then that a blessing is inducing insight/realisation/enlightenment in another being directly (instead of through giving instructions)? If so, what is being communicated/transferred between one being/thing to another? What connection exists at the time of receiving a blessing?

Malcolm wrote:

"Blessing" here just means the power of one person to inspire another to follow the path in some way. That's all. There is no Dharma called "blessing", no magical force called "blessing". If there was, the Buddha, being compassionate, would have blessed us all into nirvana long ago.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, August 4th, 2014 at 9:58 PM

Title: Re: What is Blessing?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

"Blessing" here just means the power of one person to inspire another to follow the path in some way. That's all. There is no Dharma called "blessing", no magical force called "blessing". If there was, the Buddha, being compassionate, would have blessed us all into nirvana long ago.

Astus said:

That makes sense. Thank you.

Malcolm wrote:

I should add, it can also be the power of an object such as a statue, book, incense, stupa, etc., to induce the same effect. But again, there is no Dharma called "blessing", no magical force called "blessing".

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, August 4th, 2014 at 9:59 PM

Title: Re: Commentary on the 51 Mental Factors?

Content:

Concordiadiscordi said:

Greetings.

I am currently seeking a decent commentary on the 51 mental factors listed within the yogācāra abhidharma. Even better would be a commentary on the 100 dharmas of Vasubandhu. I am currently in possession of three fine works on the subject (viz, "Know Your Mind" by Sangharakshita, "Living Yogacara" by Tagawa Shun'ei, and "Shastra on the Door to Understanding the Hundred Dharmas" by Master Hua), but I am wondering

whether there might not be a single volume containing a balanced, comprehensive, systematic exposition of the 51 mental factors (or the 100 dharmas) which is neither too abstruse and pedantic nor too vague and simplistic. Scholarly tomes such as "Buddhist Phenomenology" are certainly not what I am looking for in this case, and neither are watered-down introductory texts intended for general audiences. On the contrary, what I am looking for is a penetratingly detailed analysis crafted specifically for the serious practitioner, preferably authored by a seasoned practitioner.

All in all, I am looking for something thorough, rigorous, detailed, comprehensive, systematic, and genuinely insightful... yet pragmatically geared and practically informed.

Critical but real.

I might be asking too much, but it is worth a shot.

I am hoping that somebody might be able to point me in a promising direction!

Thanks.

Malcolm wrote:

Abhidharmakoshaḥ by Vasubandhu, Why settle for anything less?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, August 4th, 2014 at 10:48 PM

Title: Re: The limit of compounded phenomena

Content:

anjali said:

As best I can make out, here is what Khenpo said from 37:29-39:16...

But this is not your mind, this is your cut finger. So, eventually become empty. Do you understand that? Ok. If you understand that, that is emptiness.

This analysis doesn't seem right.

Malcolm wrote:

Fundamental to the analysis of the two truths is that when an object is subject to ultimate analysis, it does not remain as an object of cognition. What he is saying, perhaps not so well, is that at a certain point there remains no object at all which can be identified as a finger, no finger remains before the mind to be apprehended as such. That objectless state of mind is called "recognizing emptiness".

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, August 4th, 2014 at 10:54 PM

Title: Re: Commentary on the 51 Mental Factors?

Content:

Concordiadiscordi said:

Thank you, Malcom.

I have located a beautiful translation of the work suggested by you. Naturally, you are quite correct in recommending a direct return to the original beast, for what could be more rewarding than to cultivate one's own unique mode of understanding by grappling with the very source itself? However, I still wish it were possible to locate a manuscript in which most of the grappling had been done for me - a highly delusive notion, but a notion nonetheless!

Malcolm wrote:

It is really not that difficult a subject: there basically four groups of mental factors; universal, positive, afflicted and negative.

10 you cannot be without. All positive minds in samsara consist of 22 mental factors (10 universal, ten positive, plus vitarka and vicara), the minimum number of mental factors and afflictive mental state can have is eighteen, and so on.

The mental factors operate in groups, not individually.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, August 4th, 2014 at 11:49 PM

Title: Re: The limit of compounded phenomena

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

In the video he is explaining the statement: form is emptiness, emptiness is form. He seems to be talking only in regards to physical phenomena having a limit, at another point he explains that mind can be reduced indefinitely.

Malcolm wrote:

What precisely does he say?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, August 5th, 2014 at 4:15 AM

Title: Re: The limit of compounded phenomena

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

It is around the same point as the statements that anjali transcribed. Maybe anjali remembers the time mark?

Malcolm wrote:

The mind is not a material thing, so it cannot be divided in the same way as a finger.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, August 5th, 2014 at 7:36 PM

Title: Re: Recognising reincarnations

Content:

Jikan said:

I think Sherab Dorje raised an interesting issue some time back that I'd like to bring us back to: the question of whether or to what degree the tulku system as developed in Tibet offers an efficient way to identify and train teachers and leaders when resources are scarce. Thoughts on this?

Malcolm wrote:

Not necessarily. Two major schools of Tibetan Buddhism do not operate this way: the largest, Gelugpa and as well as Sakya.

kirtu said:

You are on thin ice here as both Gelug and Sakya recognize and train tulkus. Neither are completely devoid of tulkus although the relationship with the recognition can be different. You in fact note this wrt Sakya sub-sects. Your example wrt the office of the Dalai Lama is strained at best. In fact Gelug tulkus can indeed be sought (other than the Dalai and Panchen lamas).

Kirt

Malcolm wrote:

Most so called "Sakya" tulkus are Nyingma reincarnations trained in Sakya through circumstances of region. The Zimog tulkus of Nalendra are a notable exception to this. As I said most of the Sakya tulkus come from East Tibet, which is very removed from Central Tibet. Even here, Sakya in Derge belongs to Ngor, not Tshar, and Sakya monasteries in east Tibet were under the administration of Ngor. Of all four schools, Sakya has the least number of tulkus.

AFA Gelug is concerned — there may be an effort to find Tulkus, but the administration of Gelug is in the hands of educated geshe, not reincarnations, for the most part.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, August 5th, 2014 at 7:39 PM

Title: Re: The limit of compounded phenomena

Content:

anjali said:

Which leaves us in an infinite regress situation.

Malcolm wrote:

There is a limit to how far you can decompose a particle. The point is that Madhyamaka and Yogacara reject the limit proposed by Sautrantika, i.e. partless particles. The point

which I mentioned holds true: when the particle one is decomposing ceases to be perceived through analysis, that perceived absence is the emptiness of that particle.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, August 5th, 2014 at 9:39 PM

Title: Re: Sectarianism is a poison.

Content:

Jikan said:

This is how I've been taught, and the limited experience I've had has borne this position out.

Am I wrong on this? Is there a time and a place for sectarian polemic?

for reference, see:

<http://dharmawheel.net/viewtopic.php?f=59&t=17254> "

onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;" onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;

Malcolm wrote:

There is never a place for blind bias. There is always a place for reasoned analysis and critique.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, August 6th, 2014 at 12:58 AM

Title: Re: The Sin of Slandering the Dharma by Jacqueline Stone

Content:

nichirenista said:

I've read several sources where Nichiren says only his practice is the valid practice in the age of Mappo.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, but it is obviously nonsense, the product of a febrile imagination.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, August 6th, 2014 at 1:14 AM

Title: Re: The Sin of Slandering the Dharma by Jacqueline Stone

Content:

nichirenista said:

I politely disagree.

Malcolm wrote:

Sure, you are a committed sectarian, you have to disagree.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, August 6th, 2014 at 1:32 AM

Title: Re: Recognising reincarnations

Content:

kirtu said:

I was startled when a Sakya lama said to me flat out that tulkus were nirmanakayas.

Malcolm wrote:

He can believe whatever he wants. I'll do the same.

kirtu said:

The Red Book (history of the Nyingma, Dudjom Rinpoche) talks about the purposes of tulkus in several places.

Malcolm wrote:

This is not talking about the purpose of Tibetan reincarnations.

kirtu said:

The basic job of a tulku is to benefit beings.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes of course. I don't really believe most of the people recognized as tulkus are emanations of the Sambhogakāya. You can if you like, it is up to you, not me.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, August 6th, 2014 at 1:57 AM

Title: Re: Recognising reincarnations

Content:

kirtu said:

I quoted the relevant sections to you when we had this discussion on eSangha.

Malcolm wrote:

That was years ago.

kirtu said:

Ok. Although I think using the verb "believe" misses the point.

Kirt

Malcolm wrote:

So you think Steven Segal is a true blue Nirmanakāya?

Author: Malcolm
Date: Wednesday, August 6th, 2014 at 2:08 AM
Title: Re: Recognising reincarnations
Content:

kirtu said:

As I said, using the verb "believe" (or in this form "think" in this context) is not relevant. I have no idea why HHPR recognized him.

Malcolm wrote:

Maybe HHPR was hoping that Segal would remember where his past incarnation found all that terma paint.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Wednesday, August 6th, 2014 at 2:18 AM
Title: Re: The Sin of Slandering the Dharma by Jacqueline Stone
Content:

nichirenista said:

No. I choose to follow the only correct Buddhist path. No one forces it on me.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, a committed sectarian, as I said.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Wednesday, August 6th, 2014 at 2:27 AM
Title: Re: The limit of compounded phenomena
Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The point which I mentioned holds true: when the particle one is decomposing ceases to be perceived through analysis, that perceived absence is the emptiness of that particle.

anjali said:

Agreed. As practitioners we only need to analytically decompose a particular form into enough parts such that the original form is no longer perceived.

Still, wouldn't you also agree that we can shift the level of analysis from the original form to its parts, and demonstrate that they too are empty through further decomposition? And that we can, at least theoretically, continue to do that indefinitely? Otherwise we would eventually arrive at partless parts, no?

Malcolm wrote:

well, we break pots into shards, shards into gross particles, gross particles into subtle particles, and then subtle particles disappear under analysis, because it turns out they

are impossible since they are defined as partless. What are particles composed of? Nothing, as far as anyone can tell. So they are either real or unreal. Madhyamaka suggests that in the end they are unreal.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, August 6th, 2014 at 3:07 AM

Title: Re: The limit of compounded phenomena

Content:

anjali said:

...therefore, none of the upper level stuff exists either.

Malcolm wrote:

Other than conventionally. In Vajrayāna, it is understood that everything that appears is an appearance of pure consciousness [jñāna, ye shes].

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, August 6th, 2014 at 4:37 AM

Title: Re: The limit of compounded phenomena

Content:

anjali said:

...therefore, none of the upper level stuff exists either.

Malcolm wrote:

Other than conventionally. In Vajrayāna, it is understood that everything that appears is an appearance of pure consciousness [jñāna, ye shes].

anjali said:

As a practitioner, I totally get that everything that appears is an appearance of pure consciousness, and that that pure consciousness is empty. In terms of analysis, though, this issue of indefinite decomposition is still left unresolved. In doing a little research, the view that,

Malcolm wrote:

...we break pots into shards, shards into gross particles, gross particles into subtle particles

anjali said:

seems to be a Vaibhasika view. From p. 53 of Buddhist Philosophy: Losang Gonchok's Short Commentary to Jamyang Shayba's Root Text on Tenets, By Daniel Cozort According to the Vaibhasikas and perhaps some Sautrantikas, the basic elements that comprise gross objects are so-called "indivisible particles. " These tiny or "subtle" particles are for them the principal units of impermanent physical entities, the "building blocks" for gross objects. Hypothetically, these particles are indivisible because they are too minute to be physically subdivided. They are too small to have directions, so that we could not say they have sides to the north, south, east, or west.

Vasubandha (and others) demonstrated that gross objects can't be made up of subtle particles. Essentially, the classical argument is that spacial objects must be composed of spacial parts. And because spacial parts are always extensive, they can always be further divided.

Malcolm wrote:

Vasubandhu's analysis ends at mind. Candra's ends at the impossibility of establishing even mind.

But it not the case that any Buddhist analysis of particles is carried out ad infinitum

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, August 6th, 2014 at 9:23 PM

Title: Re: The Sin of Slandering the Dharma by Jacqueline Stone

Content:

rory said:

Well it turns out the Vinaya is a later fabrication...

Sherab Dorje said:

Source?

Malcolm wrote:

She has fallen for Jeff's arguments about Vinaya. She has no idea that thousands of lines of teachings of the Buddha are contained within Vinaya, that it is not just a collection of 200 some odd rules.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, August 6th, 2014 at 10:41 PM

Title: Re: Ley Lines

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

is there evidence that they are aligned or arranged in lines or patterns from site to site.

Malcolm wrote:

108 stupas were erected in Tibet on the pattern of the body of a giant ogress.

tellyontellyon said:

Also, do you think that some places are just more 'spiritual' or somehow more conducive to spiritual practice than others?

Malcolm wrote:

Some places are clearly more powerful than others. For example, once Oḍḍiyāna and Shambhala (modern day Pakistan and Afghanistan) were major sites of Buddhadharma, boasting a high civilization. Now they are places of incredible violence.

Power places are places where both positive influences as well as evil influences can be heightened.

Similarly, one cannot but be moved by visiting the Yarlung Valley in central Tibet.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, August 7th, 2014 at 12:46 AM

Title: Re: Music time

Content:

tellyontellyon 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]
```

Malcolm wrote:

Joe Strummer bought me a pint once.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, August 7th, 2014 at 1:19 AM

Title: Re: Ley Lines

Content:

tellyontellyon said:

Similarly, one cannot but be moved by visiting the Yarlung Valley in central Tibet.

Thanks Malcolm, would you say that pilgrimage can be of particular benefit for Buddhists?

Malcolm wrote:

Absolutely.

tellyontellyon said:

I'm interested in what you said about 'power places', what is the Buddhist understanding of what makes these places powerful?

Malcolm wrote:

Just as there are places in the body which have more functions than others, there are also places on the earth where there is more "function" than others.

tellyontellyon said:

Do you think that practicing in a power place is better, or could it also be a place to encounter obstacles/demons etc? Is it a good idea to meditate/practice in non-Buddhist spiritual centres/power places? e.g. some of the neolithic sites?

Malcolm wrote:

Practicing in ancient sacred sites has plusses and minuses. Sometimes local guardians in these places can be very heavy and strong, hard to placate. But the plus side is that one can have deeper experience. Also places where great siddhas have meditated have power. For example, Chogyal Namkhai Norbu stated to me personally in 1992 that if one does six days of good quality practice at Khandroling (located in Western Massachusetts) this is equivalent to doing six months of retreat in other places.

tellyontellyon said:

I know there are guardian and protector deities that we often see statues of in monasteries etc. are these particularly needed in the power places?

Malcolm wrote:

We have to distinguish between local guardians and Dharmapalas. Usually, some guardians one sees will be representations of powerful worldly Guardians like Nyenchen Thangla, the Tenma, and so on., as well as the four directional Kings and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, August 7th, 2014 at 1:46 AM

Title: Re: Recognising reincarnations

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

So you believe that hereditary religious leadership is better than the tulku system? Or do you prefer the Gelug model?

PS The Dalai Lamas are tulku, are they not?

Malcolm wrote:

I think the Gelug model is best for the West.

HHDL is a tulku, however, the Fifth Dalai Lama's recognition was fraudulent, according to his autobiography, and every one from the 8th to the 13th was selected by a lottery operated by the Qing dynasty Ambans.

M

Sherlock said:

Well, the 5th didn't pick the belongings of the 4th correctly. Maybe it was the 4th's recognition that was politically motivated to cement relations with the Mongols and the 5th really was a continuation of the 1st, 2nd and 3rd.

Malcolm wrote:

Who knows? Why speculate? What we know is that despite the fact that the 5th's recognition was fraudulent, he was a great master, one of the most important in Tibetan history.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, August 7th, 2014 at 2:50 AM

Title: Re: The Sin of Slandering the Dharma by Jacqueline Stone

Content:

rory said:

Well it turns out the Vinaya is a later fabrication...

Sherab Dorje said:

Source?

rory said:

here you go: This is Ven. Indrajala's blog, duly footnoted with the latest scholarship

[https://huayanzang.blogspot.com/2014/08/anachronisms-in-buddhist-](https://huayanzang.blogspot.com/2014/08/anachronisms-in-buddhist-sravakayana.html)

[sravakayana.html](https://huayanzang.blogspot.com/2014/08/anachronisms-in-buddhist-sravakayana.html) " onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;"

onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;" onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;" onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;"

"Again, [Gregory] Schopen remarks that the "earliest 'monasteries' that are known in India – and none of these are pre-Aśoka – are not 'monasteries' at all. They are either only barely improved, unorganized, natural caverns or caves, or poorly constructed and ill-organized shelters built of rubble and other cheap materials."8 This would therefore mean that any mention of the Buddha or his contemporaries residing in any vihāra of notable scale would be anachronistic. In fact, Bronkhorst quoting Schopen points out that the earliest references to a vihāra system appear "only in Kharoṣṭhī records of a little before and a little after the Common Era, about the same time that the first indications of permanent monastic residential quarters begin to appear in the archaeological record for the Northwest, and this is not likely to be mere coincidence."9

Most vinaya literature providing complex rules and regulations for running monastic institutions can be understood as a much later development by clergy with quite different lifestyles from their predecessors. Consider for example how the Buddha is quoted in sūtra suggesting a śramaṇa does not sleep under the same tree twice¹⁰ with the clearly later vinaya literature which regulates living arrangements in large monasteries with slaves and taxed peasants (the vinaya recognizes the institution of slavery, which is why slaves cannot join the sangha).

Malcolm wrote:

Schopen's scholarship is not at all definitive when it comes to these issues for many reasons. He just happens to be Jeff's latest scholastic infatuation.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, August 7th, 2014 at 3:04 AM

Title: Re: The Sin of Slandering the Dharma by Jacqueline Stone

Content:

rory said:
Well it turns out the Vinaya is a later fabrication...

Sherab Dorje said:
Source?

rory said:
Malcolm: Just as I was rightly chastised for not calling Ven.Khedrup by 'Venerable' ; you need to address Ven. Indrajala as 'Venerable, calling him 'Jeff' is gross disrespect.'

Malcolm wrote:
I have to do no such thing.

Whoever chastised you for not calling Khedrup "Venerable" is wrong.

In the blog article you quote, Jeff states:
This effectively undermines any claim by living Buddhist traditions to having the true tradition of the historical Buddha. This is unlikely to be easily accepted, but nevertheless it is increasingly the consensus of specialist scholars in the field of Buddhology, like Bronkhorst as quoted above. Secular scholarship in any case is effective at challenging Buddhist beliefs about their own textual and lineage histories, though few Buddhists seem to really appreciate and accept this.
I do not understand sentiments such as these to be anything other than harmful to the Dharma.

M

Author: Malcolm
Date: Thursday, August 7th, 2014 at 4:56 AM
Title: Re: Vinaya is a later fabrication
Content:

JKhedrup said:
My suspicion is that many who dismiss the entire Vinaya Pitaka haven't even read it.

Malcolm wrote:
For example, Gregory Schopen.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Thursday, August 7th, 2014 at 4:58 AM
Title: Re: The Sin of Slandering the Dharma by Jacqueline Stone
Content:
nichirenista said:
In today's world, particularly the West, the image of a Buddhist monk being militant, and

of some being "armed to the teeth" and ready to attack rivals, is unimaginable, if not shocking.

Malcolm wrote:

I am not so sure about that:

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, August 7th, 2014 at 10:39 AM

Title: Re: Vinaya is a later fabrication

Content:

rory said:

I have no interest sitting around swapping personal opinions.

Malcolm wrote:

That is all academic scholarship is, a bunch of personal opinions.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, August 7th, 2014 at 7:24 PM

Title: Re: Vinaya is a later fabrication

Content:

JKhedrup said:

My suspicion is that many who dismiss the entire Vinaya Pitaka haven't even read it.

Malcolm wrote:

For example, Gregory Schopen.

Indrajala said:

How silly. Read his papers. He's clearly read the Vinaya literature in great detail.

Gregory Schopen. Indian Monastic Buddhism Collected Papers on Textual, Inscriptional and Archaeological Evidence. New Delhi, India: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers Private Limited.

Schopen's work contains much that is interesting and informative, but little that could be called inspiring. His writing is characterized by wit, scandal, and good yarns.

Unfortunately, it is not always characterized by consistency, and we should examine some of his fracture lines. He rests his arguments heavily on the authority of the Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya, a text he cheerfully admits to not having fully read.

Malcolm wrote:

<http://sujato.wordpress.com/2011/01/22/the-ironic-assumptions-of-gregory-schopen/>
" onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, August 7th, 2014 at 7:28 PM

Title: Re: Vinaya is a later fabrication

Content:

rory said:

I have no interest sitting around swapping personal opinions.

Malcolm wrote:

That is all academic scholarship is, a bunch of personal opinions.

Indrajala said:

When it comes to scholarship, the evidence based approach is a lot more reliable than the faith-based one.

Malcolm wrote:

Depends on your goals: if your goal is to get a job as an academic writer and teacher, you have to kowtow to the Spinozaists in Buddhists studies. If you wish to understand the Dharma itself, then a faith-based approach is a desideratum.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, August 7th, 2014 at 7:31 PM

Title: Re: Vinaya is a later fabrication

Content:

rory said:

libel.

Malcolm wrote:

Libel is very hard to prove in the United States.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, August 7th, 2014 at 7:31 PM

Title: Re: Vinaya is a later fabrication

Content:

JKhedrup said:

I also do not dismiss V. Indralajala's ideas without considering them. He knows well that I bought Schopen's book in India and read it. I don't quote from it because it was too heavy to carry back in the plane. Some points were interesting, but hardly definitive. I'd rather read the Vinaya itself than his work to form an opinion.

Indrajala said:

Ideally one reads both the original material alongside text critical works by modern

scholars. The results can be disenchanting for some (like seeing how banking procedures were introduced by rich monks in India and then attributed to the Buddha), but nevertheless the historical truth is desirable.

Malcolm wrote:

Debt is a concept one finds even in the Rig Veda and so on. It is highly unlikely that "banking", much like writing, is a post "Buddha" institution.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, August 7th, 2014 at 7:36 PM

Title: Re: The Sin of Slandering the Dharma by Jacqueline Stone

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

I do not understand sentiments such as these to be anything other than harmful to the Dharma.

M

Indrajala said:

Better that sympathetic Buddhists start addressing such questions than hostile outsiders seeking to undermine Buddhism.

Malcolm wrote:

Tirthikas cannot undermine Buddhadharma, Buddha made it plain only we can do that.

Giving into the Western Academic forensic narrative of Buddhist History is simply buying into a version of Buddhism that never existed anywhere on the ground.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, August 7th, 2014 at 7:38 PM

Title: Re: Vinaya is a later fabrication

Content:

JKhedrup said:

Similarly, much of the Vinaya commentarial literature, at least that I have read, is extremely practical and plausible with regard as to how these systems developed back to the Buddha's time.

Indrajala said:

This is an emotional argument and not one based on historical evidence.

Malcolm wrote:

No, it is based on historical evidence, the text itself.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, August 7th, 2014 at 7:45 PM

Title: Re: Vinaya is a later fabrication

Content:

Indrajala said:

This observation is actually applicable to Buddhist sanghas. The orthodox ideal is subverted to acquisition and retention of internal power, which is not merely for personal status, but actual real life acquisition of resources and funds from the laity. The vinaya literature constantly illustrates an obsession with maintaining outward purity to keep the offerings rolling in, whereas internally these same authors of the literature were drafting sangha-banking regulations for their own gain. Archaeology and history also reveal they were hardly following the śramaṇa model, where you wander the world, learn, teach and try to gain wisdom in the process..

Malcolm wrote:

Considering that Schopen bases all of his opinions about such things in the Vinaya as preserved in Tibetan, do you have sufficient skills in Tibetan to read what he read to ascertain what he says? Because I will tell you, I frequently check the opinions of Western academics, as well as their Tibetan translations, and quite frankly they often perform rather poorly and suffer from inadequate exposure and experience both with the language (since many of their published pieces are graduate level work) and with the subject matter itself. Graduates programs train Western students of Buddhist studies to prioritize the opinions of western professors over traditional sources, much as you do. Indeed, Buddhist Studies in the West has largely become a game of reading the work of Westerners in reference to their often superficial forensic analysis of this corpus of texts. Really, it's a pity.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, August 7th, 2014 at 7:53 PM

Title: Re: Illuminating Quotes by Malcolm Namdrol-la

Content:

WuMing said:

So it's not a title, it's his name? Or is it some kind of species of which Malcolm is the only member?

Now I'm more confused.

Namdrol is his Dharmaname and la is a Tibetan honorific to show respect.

Mkoll said:

Ah, much clearer now, thanks.

So Malcolm, how did you get your Dharma name?

Malcolm wrote:

I received my refuge name from HH Sakya Trizin, Kunga Namdrol aka Vimuktānanda.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, August 7th, 2014 at 7:54 PM

Title: Re: Illuminating Quotes by Malcolm Namdrol-la

Content:

Mkoll said:

So it's not a title:

Malcolm wrote:

I have two Tibetan titles, loppon (ācharya) and sman pa (doctor).

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, August 7th, 2014 at 10:01 PM

Title: Re: Vinaya is a later fabrication

Content:

Indrajala said:

Do you realize how enormous the Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya literature is?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, I look at it frequently in my job as a scholar and translator of Tibetan texts. It is very difficult and has lots of obscure terms.

In other words, Sujato's point, one I fully agree with, is that it is hasty to make assumptions about a body of literature one has not thoroughly examined.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, August 7th, 2014 at 10:15 PM

Title: Re: Vinaya is a later fabrication

Content:

Indrajala said:

They are full of fictional stories.

Malcolm wrote:

And you divined these accounts are fictional based on what supernatural faculty?

Or, as is so often the case, is this merely an expression of your opinion on the matter?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, August 7th, 2014 at 10:22 PM

Title: Re: Vinaya is a later fabrication

Content:

JKhedrup said:

I don't have Schopen's work as I left it behind due to flight weight but if I did I'd check the Bibliography and body of work to see if he quotes Kunkyen Tsonawa's Vinaya commentary "Rays of the Sun".

Indrajala said:

Schopen's point is to reconstruct the chronological development of Vinaya literature in India, not propound the practical and useful qualities of the monastic system as understood by Tibetans.

Malcolm wrote:

Hard to do if you haven't read it all.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, August 7th, 2014 at 10:27 PM

Title: Re: Vinaya is a later fabrication

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

In other words, Sujato's point, one I fully agree with, is that it is hasty to make assumptions about a body of literature one has not thoroughly examined.

Indrajala said:

You can extract what you need from it to prove your point: like the development of banking protocols by the sangha administration, etc.

If you're going to attack Schopen, actually cite his work and something you disagree with.

Malcolm wrote:

As to your first point — like economics, much of what passes for fact in the Academy follows from the kinds of assumptions one makes. In the case of Schopen, his assumptions largely stem from a materialist view of history.

There is no need — qualms about Schopen's approach to Buddhist history have frequently been voiced by his colleagues in the Academy, largely due to his limiting insistence that everything must be tied to some archaeological find.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, August 7th, 2014 at 10:42 PM

Title: Re: Vinaya is a later fabrication

Content:

Indrajala said:

You really have no argument against my assertions.

Malcolm wrote:

I have many, actually, but I have better things to do with my time.

If you wish to be a disciple of Spinoza, that is fine with me, but it is not Buddhadharma.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, August 7th, 2014 at 10:47 PM

Title: Re: Vinaya is a later fabrication

Content:

Indrajala said:

[They're not historical documents and should not be understood as such.

Malcolm wrote:

They are indeed historical documents. For example, you can read many conflicting accounts of the Second World War, does this mean that those documents are not "historical"?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, August 7th, 2014 at 10:52 PM

Title: Re: Vinaya is a later fabrication

Content:

Indrajala said:

My view of history is likewise secular, simply because the evidence based approach works best in the study of history. It doesn't explain everything, but produces a solid working model upon which you can build on. Mystical experiences and magic, which I don't actually deny, are difficult to fit into an evidence based approach to history as they're too subjective.

Malcolm wrote:

One has to understand that Dharma history and secular history do not have the same aims. The point of the latter to explain the sources of living lineages; the point of the latter is strictly forensic analysis, like examining a corpse.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, August 7th, 2014 at 10:59 PM

Title: Re: Vinaya is a later fabrication

Content:

Indrajala said:

[

Historical is in written with the intention of constituting accounts of events that actually took place.

Malcolm wrote:

Then the documents in question fit your definition of "historical document".

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, August 7th, 2014 at 11:03 PM

Title: Re: Vinaya is a later fabrication

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

One has to understand that Dharma history and secular history do not have the same aims. The point of the latter to explain the sources of living lineages; the point of the latter is strictly forensic analysis, like examining a corpse.

Indrajala said:

In any case, I prefer the evidence based approach. Call me a heretic, but it just strikes me as truer than religious understandings of history.

Malcolm wrote:

I don't think you are a heretic, but I don't think there is any wisdom or truth in your quest for secular "historical" knowledge.

I think that the scholars like Schopen could really care less if Dharma survives as a living tradition or not. In my view, this negates the value of their contributions completely.

You really do need to read Spinoza's Tractatus. In it you will find the root of your present enterprise, and you will understand it has nothing to with the survival of Dharma.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, August 7th, 2014 at 11:16 PM

Title: Re: Vinaya is a later fabrication

Content:

Indrajala said:

The intention behind Buddhist scriptures was to convey truths and ideas, not describe historical events. They might be loosely based on earlier true events at best.

Malcolm wrote:

Nonsense, Jeff. The intent of Buddhist scriptures is precisely to communicate historical events, as well as truths and ideas.

Indrajala said:

Assuming the author had the same stūpa in mind, the historical Buddha is positioned in

what is now modern northern Pakistan near the Afghanistan border, which is far from Magadha in what is now largely Bihar state in India. Kaniṣka was famous and influential enough to merit having a prophecy about him on the part of the Buddha in canonical literature (recall that the Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya was in use in Nālandā). Again, this just illustrates the fact that Śrāvakayāna literature is full of anachronisms which demonstrate it to be ahistorical and fictional.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, a few weeks on foot. Totally possible.

And why do you imagine that it is impossible that Buddha cannot know the future nor predict such and such a person will be born here or there?

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, August 7th, 2014 at 11:17 PM

Title: Re: Vinaya is a later fabrication

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

I don't think you are a heretic, but I don't think there is any wisdom or truth in your quest for secular "historical" knowledge.

Indrajala said:

I find it quite edifying and rewarding. It might not work for everyone of course.

Pursuit of the truth is, in my opinion, a worthy path.

Malcolm wrote:

In the end, you will just sit around with other scholars over the gutted corpse of what you imagine to be "Buddhist History", sucking its bones and licking your chops, satisfied with a job well done. Then you will die having wasted your life in pursuit of "truth" that is useful to no one.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, August 7th, 2014 at 11:19 PM

Title: Re: Vinaya is a later fabrication

Content:

JKhedrup said:

And why do you imagine that it is impossible that Buddha cannot know the future nor predict such and such a person will be born here or there?

This is a characteristic of the fully enlightened Buddha. The ability to penetrate perfectly past and future lives, and individual karmas of each and every sentient being. I am sure V.I. knows this.

Malcolm wrote:

Then obviously Jeff does not accept the Buddha is omniscient or has the capacity to have such special knowledge.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, August 7th, 2014 at 11:34 PM

Title: Re: Vinaya is a later fabrication

Content:

JKhedrup said:

I am not so sure. Because if one was a Buddhist (Mahayana particularly) one would accept this.

If one does not accept this, then one has to dismiss HUGE portions of the Pali and Sanskrit canons as utter fakery. It is a slippery slope.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, it is a problem. This is why I suggested to Jeff that the roots of his present line of inquiry were to be found in the secularism of Spinoza.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, August 7th, 2014 at 11:45 PM

Title: Re: Vinaya is a later fabrication

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Then obviously Jeff does not accept the Buddha is omniscient or has the capacity to have such special knowledge.

Indrajala said:

Is there a third option? Like later individuals put words in the mouth of the Buddha?

Malcolm wrote:

You can't have it both ways, i.e. that the Buddha has the capacity to know the future, including future actors, but arbitrarily decide that this and that is an example of a later author's interpolation.

In other words, if you are going to be a secularist, you will have to go the whole way, following in the path of people like Jayarava Atwood, Richard Hayes and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, August 7th, 2014 at 11:47 PM

Title: Re: Vinaya is a later fabrication

Content:

JKhedrup said:

I am not so sure. Because if one was a Buddhist (Mahayana particularly) one would

accept this.

If one does not accept this, then one has to dismiss HUGE portions of the Pali and Sanskrit canons as utter fakery. It is a slippery slope.

Indrajala said:

There's another option: read it as religious literature meant to convey truths, ideas, values and so forth.

That's what I do.

Malcolm wrote:

Then clearly you are not reading these texts as they were intended (regardless of who you think authored them), and are repurposing them for your own use. This is fine, but just be clear with people what you are up to.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, August 8th, 2014 at 1:27 AM

Title: Re: Vinaya is a later fabrication

Content:

Indrajala said:

Such binary thinking I find problematic.

Malcolm wrote:

You think now that you can have your cake and eat it too, but you will find out that it is not so easy. In the end I predict that you will settle for secularist interpretation of Dharma (Buddhism lite tm) that rules out all "supernatural" elements, including rebirth and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, August 8th, 2014 at 2:04 AM

Title: Re: Vinaya is a later fabrication

Content:

Indrajala said:

So, it isn't so binary, Malcolm. There's a lot of middle ground between being a secularist materialist, and completely accepting as literal truth everything your Buddhist scriptures of choice say.

Malcolm wrote:

The point is that the assumptions upon which you base your research are founded on the naive secular materialism of the late 17th and early 18th century Enlightenment thinkers such as Spinoza.

You are suggesting for example, by invoking scientists like Stevenson and Sheldrake that "Science" is the arbiter of truth for Buddhists.

This, in my opinion, is the wrong way to go about it.

For example, one might conclude from archaeology that Indians had no temples prior to meeting the Greeks. But in fact we know that they did because 1) such structures get mentioned 2) when Indians first tried to work stone (perhaps under Greek influence) with engineering principles based on wood construction, with obvious limitations on heights and sizes of structures. But this shows of course that Indians were quite used to building large wooden structures.

As for Schopen's contention that monastic communities are all post-Ashoka, he hasn't a shred of proof for this. We know that by the time of Ashoka there were so many people representing themselves as Buddhist monks that he felt compelled to disrobe many many thousands of mendicants. Moving camps do not leave much trace. It is like asserting that there are no communities on the high plains of Tibet because the nomads there live in tents. But in fact there is a sophisticated culture there, complete with economic standards, trade, large mobile monasteries and so on.

There is no reason to assume that Ananda, for example, never experienced frostbite in the Himalayas and that this story is necessarily a fabrication. The world was colder then. India was cooler and wetter at that time than it is now, especially after five centuries of increasing deforestation.

But the problem with the approach you have decided to follow is that it is cynical, and assumes that everything is a fabricated lie.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, August 8th, 2014 at 2:23 AM

Title: Re: Vinaya is a later fabrication

Content:

JKhedrup said:

I'd rather read the Vinaya itself than his work to form an opinion.

Malcolm wrote:

This is indeed strikes the heart of the issue. Much of modern opinion in Buddhology is formed and preserved by people who read other people's opinions and then repeat them. For example, Jeff often repeats the opinions of Bronkhorst and Schopen as if they were gospel truths.

People really need to understand the Buddhology is not the study of Dharma. It is the study of something invented by Buddhologists themselves.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, August 8th, 2014 at 2:32 AM

Title: Re: Vinaya is a later fabrication

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The point is that the assumptions upon which you base your research are founded on the naive secular materialism of the late 17th and early 18th century Enlightenment thinkers such as Spinoza.

Indrajala said:

My personal approach is not materialist. I'm comfortable accepting the reality of mysticism and supermundane experiences having their roles to play in the development of history, especially in the case of Buddhism where visions and religious experiences are quite common, even expected. That being said, modern academic work demands an evidence based approach, so attributing historical processes to subjective unseen forces, or deferring to the testimonies of prophets and mystics just doesn't cut it. I'm sure you understand why.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, because Buddhology is materialist in its viewpoint and methodology.

Indrajala said:

The evidence approach yields a lot of results. It isn't conclusive, but nevertheless it is a productive approach. Believing in rebirth because there is evidence for the phenomena is probably more reliable than believing in the testimony of someone you have developed faith in.

Malcolm wrote:

There is no scientific evidence for the phenomena. Stevenson's "science" was not at all rigorous.

Indrajala said:

As for Schopen's contention that monastic communities are all post-Ashoka, he hasn't a shred of proof for this.

He's basing his arguments on literary evidence and archaeological developments. There might have been small communities, but not the well-developed monastic systems we see described in middle-period vinaya literature.

Malcolm wrote:

Just how many bhikṣus ordained under the Buddha?

Indrajala said:

There is no reason to assume that Ananda, for example, never experienced frostbite in the Himalayas and that this story is necessarily a fabrication. The world was colder then. India was cooler and wetter at that time than it is now, especially after five centuries of

increasing deforestation.

If you want to believe in the story, go for it.

Malcolm wrote:

We have no reason not to believe it.

Indrajala said:

But the problem with the approach you have decided to follow is that it is cynical, and assumes that everything is a fabricated lie.

I've never framed it in those terms. It is more a matter of "fiction". Buddhist literature is largely fictional...

Malcolm wrote:

fiction |'fikSHən|

noun

literature in the form of prose, esp. short stories and novels, that describes imaginary events and people.

- invention or fabrication as opposed to fact: he dismissed the allegation as absolute fiction.

- [in sing.] a belief or statement that is false, but that is often held to be true because it is expedient to do so: the notion of that country being a democracy is a polite fiction.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, August 8th, 2014 at 2:42 AM

Title: Re: Chokgyur Dechen Lingpa's short prayer

Content:

Konchog1 said:

I'm comparing the Lotsawa House and FPMT versions of The Prayer to Guru Rinpoche for Removing Obstacles and Fulfilling Wishes

Which do you think is the better translation?

Particularly the first line, དུས་གསུམ་སངས་རྒྱལ་གྱི་བུ་མེད་པོ་ཆེ།

The Buddha of past, present and future vs. The embodiment of all buddhas of the three times

Seems it could go either way.

I want to start doing this prayer regularly but I want to be sure I recite a correct version.

Thank you.

Lotsawa House: <http://www.lotsawahouse.org/tibetan-masters/chokgyur-dechen->

lingpa/removing-obstacles-and-fulfilling-wishes "
onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;" onclick="window.open(this.href);return
false;" onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;"
onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;" onclick="window.open(this.href);return
false;
FPMT: <http://www.lamayeshe.com/index.php?sect=article&id=299&chid=1362> "
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onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;" onclick="window.open(this.href);return
false;

Malcolm wrote:

This is my rendition:

དུས་གསུམ་སངས་རྒྱལ་གྱི་ཕ་ཆེ་།

dü sum sangye guru rinpoche

To the Buddha of the three times, Guru Rinpoche,

དངོས་གྲུབ་ཀུན་དཀར་པ་ཆེན་པོའི་ཞབས་།

ngödrub kün dak dewa chenpö shyab

to the lord of all siddhis, venerable Great Bliss

བར་ཆད་ཀུན་སེལ་བདུད་འདུལ་བླ་མ་།

barché kün sel düdul drakpo tsal

to the one who removes all obstacles, Powerful Fierce Tamer of Māra,

གསོལ་བ་འདེབས་སོ་བྱིན་གྱིས་བརྒྱབ་ཏུ་གསོལ་།

solwa deb so jingyi lab tu sol

I offer a supplication, please grant your blessings.

ཕྱི་ནང་གསང་བའི་བར་ཆད་ཞི་བ་དང་།

chi nang sangwé barché shyiwa dang

Pacify all outer, inner and secret obstacles.

བསམ་པ་ལྷན་གྱིས་འགྲུབ་པར་བྱིན་གྱིས་ཞོབས་།

sampa lhün gyi drubpar jingyi lob

and bless me so that my wishes are effortlessly accomplished.

Reciting the Tibetan is better, then you are reciting Guru Rinpoche's words, the actual words of the Sambhogakāya, not the paltry words of some translator like me.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, August 8th, 2014 at 2:57 AM

Title: Re: Chokgyur Dechen Lingpa's short prayer

Content:

Konchog1 said:

Okay, I'll give it a try. I recite the Migtsema in Tibetan for that reason.

I like your translation the best too. So the mara is singular? Tamer of the mara, not tamer of the maras?

Malcolm wrote:

The name in Tibetan is singular, bdud 'dul means "Māra Tamer, or Demon Tamer. But it can be construed as plural, just as a Lion Tamer tames lions. A Demon Tamer tames demons.

Glad you like it.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, August 8th, 2014 at 3:34 AM

Title: Re: Vinaya is a later fabrication

Content:

Indrajala said:

Perhaps you feel threatened by secular scholarship.

Malcolm wrote:

Not at all. I simply recognize that Buddhology has severe limits and is basically useless for practitioners. As practitioners, we have our own sense of history and it is more important than what Buddhologists think or believe.

Indrajala said:

This isn't for everyone of course, but then academic literature is not that widely read. I would guess that less than one or two percent of Buddhists in the world know about Schopen, Nakamura, Hu Shi or Lamotte, nor would most really care if you gave them their papers to read. Secular scholarship really only appeals to intellectuals, be they professionals or otherwise.

Malcolm wrote:

The problem, quite frankly, is that their ideas are in the air, and a lot of Western Buddhists teachers, for example, Rita Gross comes to mind, who teach a version of Buddhist history derived primarily from Buddhology to people who are primarily practitioners (in this case Vajrayāna) for whom such a view of history is at odds with their practice.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, August 8th, 2014 at 3:51 AM

Title: Re: Vinaya is a later fabrication

Content:

rory said:

Well said Ven. Indrajala but this entire conversation reminds me of Harnack in the 19th century and the development of the historical-critical method! Pretty astounding this needs to be replayed for educated Buddhists in the 21st century

gassho

Rory

Malcolm wrote:

The development of the historical critical method begins with Baruch Spinoza's Tractatus theologico-politicus.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, August 8th, 2014 at 5:26 AM

Title: Re: Vinaya is a later fabrication

Content:

Jikan said:

Spinoza's an early materialist, sure, but his claims on history are limited to very particular texts and histories in the Tractatus, which is primarily a philosophical document.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, but that is not the point -- he is making a broader claim about any scripture and all "supernatural" explanations, as well as an argument for the primacy of secular history.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, August 8th, 2014 at 6:19 AM

Title: Re: Vinaya is a later fabrication

Content:

rory said:

Actually the ancient Greeks and Roman intellectuals scoffed at the thought of taking their myths literally and they were the great innovators of Stoicism, Pyrrhoism, Pythagoreanism, Platonism, Aristotelianism, Epicureanism (which indeed is the ancient basis for materialism) etc These currents travelled to India, but you all seem entirely unaware!

Malcolm wrote:

Standard Western bias at work here again...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, August 8th, 2014 at 6:21 AM

Title: Re: Vinaya is a later fabrication

Content:

rory said:

Blood Bowl hell

Malcolm wrote:

This is a Chinese invention. There is no such hell listed among the eighteen classic hells mentioned in Indian sutras and shastras.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, August 8th, 2014 at 8:21 AM

Title: Re: Vinaya is a later fabrication

Content:

Zhen Li said:

As for Santideva, if you would kindly provide a quotation as to what you are referring to, I would appreciate that, but I am unsure what value in practice he held for [non-householder] monasticism at large, considering the fact that by all accounts he became a householder in his later life.

Malcolm wrote:

By no account is this true. You have either erred or been misled.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, August 8th, 2014 at 7:46 PM

Title: Re: Vinaya is a later fabrication

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

By no account is this true. You have either erred or been misled.

Zhen Li said:

Sorry, not all accounts. But it is among the various legends about Santideva - some he has a wife, others he lives with Nagarjuna.

Malcolm wrote:

No. All accounts hold that Shantideva vanished into the sky while reciting the wisdom chapter of the Bodhicaryāvatara.

I think you've confused Shantideva with some other siddha.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, August 8th, 2014 at 7:56 PM

Title: Re: Does Arhat w/o remainder have any existence in Cittamatr

Content:

zed said:

But since the dharmadhatu (= buddha-gotra) pervades all that exists, then Shakya Chogden seems to be saying that in Cittamatra an arhat without remainder has no

existence whatsoever.?

Malcolm wrote:

What he is saying is that according to this presentation, such an arhat is effectively an icchantika, and has severed their natural gotra by entering into parinirvana.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, August 8th, 2014 at 8:51 PM

Title: Re: Vinaya is a later fabrication

Content:

tingdzin said:

Again in my opinion, someone who is truly intellectually supple and does not have an ego-investment in one side or the other should be able to argue both sides. And anyone who has the capability to do that but has not come to some supra-intellectual understanding of the Buddha's teaching already has probably missed the boat.

Malcolm wrote:

As I pointed out once, there is no consensus about anything in Buddhology, it's just a stew of conflicting opinions by scholars in disagreement with each other for a hundred years.

This one says this, that one says that, etc. Vast and confident inferences are made on the basis of a few surviving inscriptions, or the absence thereof.

Schopen, and Jeff, make one of the most basic faults described in archaeology — to whit — pots are not people. Moreover, in a climate like India's, wood structures do not survive much less kütis. The whole argument that there was no organized monastic Sangha prior to Ashoka must be laughed at, since we clearly have evidence in the Vinaya.

For example, as to the charge of anachronism, let it be pointed out that the Illiad contains many, many anachronisms. Nevertheless, it also contains a record of a war that was actually fought in the place where the text says the war at Troy was fought.

It is well known everywhere, and in all traditions, that Buddha's teachings were not written down until a very late date. Many people assume that this is due to the absence of writing in India at that time, but the discovery recent find of Tamil-Brahmi, possibly dating the 600-500 BCE, casts considerable doubt on the common assumption among Buddhologists that writing did not exist in India during the time of the Buddha.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, August 8th, 2014 at 9:47 PM

Title: Re: Does Arhat w/o remainder have any existence in Cittamatr

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

What he is saying is that according to this presentation, such an arhat is effectively an icchantika, and has severed their natural gotra by entering into parinirvana.

zed said:

Which I take to be utter non-existence and consistent with the standard Cittamatra presentation of nirvana without remainder. Right?

I guess it makes sense, given that the natural gotra is held to be the special feature of the six ayatanas. If there are no more ayatanas, then there can no longer be a natural gotra.

Am I right in thinking that only False Aspectarian Cittamatrins assert that all beings possess buddha-essence, which is the truly existent natural purity of the mind?

If so, what do True Aspectarians assert is the buddha-essence? Obviously (?) it cannot be something that is possessed by all beings.

Thanks, Malcolm, for your input.

Malcolm wrote:

I think it is better to put it in terms of classical Yogacara. For example, Dharmamitra states in his Prasphuṭapadā commentary on the Abhisamayālaṃkāra:

This one the Mahāyāna Madhyamikas describes as difficult to have realization, but the Yogacarin assertion that the icchantika (rigs chad pa) 'burns the seed' slanders tathagātagarbha.

If you run a search on the term rigs med pa, rather than rigs chad pa, you will find very ample discussion of the concept in the Yogacarin section on the Tengyur.

For example, Muncandra's Sūtrālaṃkāravṛttibhāṣya states:

If one lacking gotra generates [bodhi]citta, the seed will not "take".

But it is important to keep in mind that the concept of agotra and icchantika comes from the Tathagatagarbha and Yogacarin stream of sutra, specifically the Lanka and the Nirvana. They are a little different from each other. But they are both rejected by Madhyamaka.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, August 8th, 2014 at 9:57 PM

Title: Re: Vinaya is a later fabrication

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

the discovery recent find of Tamil-Brahmi, possibly dating the 600-500 BCE, casts considerable doubt on the common assumption among Buddhologists that writing did not exist in India during the time of the Buddha.

daverupa said:

3rd or 2nd Century BCE, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tamil-Brahmi#The_script, so what is that, about 300-100 BCE? I heard about <http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/tamil-nadu/article2408091.ece>, but... Mr. Mahadevan described the dating as “interesting” but said “multiple carbon-dates are needed” for confirmation. “If there are several such cases, history has to be re-written because up to now, the scientifically proved earliest date is from Tissamaharama in southern Sri Lanka, where a Tamil-Brahmi script is dated to 200 BCE.” If there is scientific evidence that the paddy is dated to 490 BCE, “we have to sit up and take notice, and wait for confirmation,” Mr. Mahadevan said. “It is premature to revise the Tamil-Brahmi dating on the basis of a single carbon date, which is governed by complicated statistical probabilities,” Dr. Subbarayalu said. And, why no records of writing tools and their proper use and care, among the various allowables, at the early strata?

Malcolm wrote:

Writing does not spread over a whole continent for different languages in a single generation. It is a process that takes centuries.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, August 8th, 2014 at 11:45 PM

Title: Re: Does Arhat w/o remainder have any existence in Cittamatr

Content:

zed said:

As I understand, he is saying that in Cittamatra, the dharmadhatu of the meditator's own continuums, i.e., the pole of experience that is luminous and aware, is taken as a the support for meditation (dmigs rten), so when that continuum is severed, as in the case of nirvana without remainder, there is no more gotra. But bodhisattvas never sever their continuums; they transform (or gradually reveal) the gotra as the dharmakaya.

In Madhyamaka, on the other hand, it is asserted that an arhat's continuum at the time of nirvana without remainder is not severed. Although the delusional obscurations (nyon bsgrib) have been eliminated, some (or all) knowledge obscurations remain embedded in the alaya.

Reasonable interpretation? Or am I all screwed up?

Malcolm wrote:

I would understand it to mean that according to some Yogacarins when arhats enter the final samadhi of nirvana, they are done. There is no possibility for them to enter Mahāyāna and achieve Buddhahood.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, August 9th, 2014 at 1:13 AM

Title: Re: Vinaya is a later fabrication

Content:

Indrajala said:

With respect to specimens of pre-Aśoka writing, there are no reliably dated items available.

Educate yourself:

<http://indology.info/papers/salomon/> " onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;"
onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;" onclick="window.open(this.href);return
false;" onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;"
onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, so what? Really, it is quite impossible that Indians did not have writing at the time of the Buddha.

Apart from the fact that this paper is the usual collection of conflicting opinions that Buddhologists are so fond of reciting, your cited paper states:

Can we believe that these dynasties with their legendary riches, and the remarkable intellectual and cultural life of India in the time of the Buddha and Mahāvīra, existed in a totally illiterate sphere?

...Even given the very different cultural role of writing in India as compared to many other ancient civilizations, it is hard to conceive that practical affairs such as the keeping of records and accounts in a fabulously wealthy empire like that of the Nandas could have been kept in order without any form of writing at all, or at least without some alternative system of memory-aids like the Inca quipu . Thus one is tempted to think along the lines of William Bright (cited by Falk, p.290) of some type of writing that was "perhaps used for commercial purposes, but not for religious or legal texts."
My answer is no. The simplest explanation, of course is that Indians used writing only for business, and that even these records vanished easily because of the dampness of the climate.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, August 9th, 2014 at 1:21 AM

Title: Re: Does Arhat w/o remainder have any existence in Cittamatr

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

I would understand it to mean that according to some Yogacarins when arhats enter the final samadhi of nirvana, they are done. There is no possibility for them to enter Mahāyāna and achieve Buddhahood.

uan said:

Is that a bad thing?

Separate from the above question, is there a point where the arhat consciously makes that choice, or is it a result of a wrong view they are unaware of?

Malcolm wrote:

According to the promulgators of this view, it is an inferior awakening. Hence the term "hinayāna".

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, August 9th, 2014 at 2:00 AM

Title: Re: Does Arhat w/o remainder have any existence in Cittamatr

Content:

uan said:

I don't have a reference handy, but I thought according to the Mahayana view, that eventually the (a) Buddha will go and awaken the Arhats and lead them to Buddhahood. But from what is just being discussed, that won't happen, ever. Or is it only for some Arhats and not others. I could be totally wrong in my understanding as well.

Malcolm wrote:

That is one Mahāyāna view, Madhyamaka.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, August 9th, 2014 at 2:06 AM

Title: Re: Vinaya is a later fabrication

Content:

Indrajala said:

The basic reality at the moment is that there's no evidence that Magahda in the fifth century BCE had writing. The Buddha's sangha was illiterate.

Malcolm wrote:

That is not a reality, that is a groundless supposition concocted from your imagination.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, August 9th, 2014 at 2:08 AM

Title: Re: Vinaya is a later fabrication

Content:

Indrajala said:

Academia does not strictly equal secular materialism.

Malcolm wrote:

It's method is informed by it and largely caters to it.

For this reason, Buddhology is basically useless for Buddhists.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, August 9th, 2014 at 2:14 AM

Title: Re: Vinaya is a later fabrication

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

For this reason, Buddhology is basically useless for Buddhists.

Indrajala said:

Naw. I'm into Buddhology, a Buddhist monk and I find the methodologies useful.

I've written a ton of stuff for my blogs and site on all manner of Buddhist subjects for the purposes of edification and so forth (using Buddhological methods).

Malcolm wrote:

It doesn't edify anyone. It is a lot of wasted talent better put towards translating sūtra, śāstra and commentaries. And a lot of it is just you pontificating about the opinions of other scholars. In other words, it is largely discursive and intellectual, but it has no value for the path. Moreover, it does not help anyone at all.

But you are still young and have (some) time to waste of youthful pursuits. However as Candragomin points out:

Just like the flame of a lamp that is stirred by a strong wind,
there is no certainty this life remains for an instant longer.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, August 9th, 2014 at 2:21 AM

Title: Re: Vinaya is a later fabrication

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

For this reason, Buddhology is basically useless for Buddhists.

Indrajala said:

Naw. I'm into Buddhology, a Buddhist monk and I find the methodologies useful.

I've written a ton of stuff for my blogs and site on all manner of Buddhist subjects for the purposes of edification and so forth (using Buddhological methods).

Sherlock said:

Useful how?

Does it help you complete any of the 6 paramitas?

Malcolm wrote:

Well, it might not have any value for the perfections, but certainly Buddhological will definitely help one gather the six imperfections.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, August 9th, 2014 at 2:35 AM

Title: Re: Vinaya is a later fabrication

Content:

Sherlock said:

Useful how?

Does it help you complete any of the 6 paramitas?

Indrajala said:

Is that the only measure in which something can be useful?

Discernment of reality as it was or is is a useful aspect of wisdom in my reckoning.

The study of history is a lot of fun and quite enlightening. You get to see how Buddhism actually worked out in real life in the past for real life people.

Malcolm wrote:

As to your question, since the six perfections included pretty much everything meaningful there is to practice and cultivate as a Dharma person, yes.

Your statement presumes there is some objective external historical reality out there waiting to be verified by scholars.

You mean the sūtras, śāstras and Dharma histories are not sufficient evidence of this?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, August 9th, 2014 at 2:37 AM

Title: Re: Vinaya is a later fabrication

Content:

Sherlock said:

...going on Jayarava's course.

Malcolm wrote:

Oh right, the reincarnation of the "Buddha was a solar myth" theory of some in the nineteenth century.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, August 9th, 2014 at 2:45 AM

Title: Re: Vinaya is a later fabrication

Content:

Indrajala said:

I think studying Buddhist societies which purportedly cultivate the pāramitās, yet evidently do the opposite at times or a lot of the time, is quite instructive. If one does not study the past, then one is doomed to repeat the mistakes of one's predecessors.

Malcolm wrote:

Oh nonsense. If you study the rnam thars of siddhas and bodhisattvas and emulate their examples you cannot possibly go wrong. And since you cannot control the acts of afflicted people, what society does, any society, is largely outside the control of any individual member.

Quite frankly, the Schopens and the Bronkhorsts of the world will just be footnotes in someone else's fashionable academic book in a hundred years. Meanwhile, people who have no idea about anything these sorts of academics wrote or said will still be gaining siddhi and waking up without the dubious benefit of any of their scholarship.

You have to recognize at some point that your academic interest in history is not a path. There is no subject called "history" in the pañcavidyāsthana.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, August 9th, 2014 at 2:52 AM

Title: Re: Vinaya is a later fabrication

Content:

Indrajala said:

Your statement presumes there is some objective external historical reality out there waiting to be verified by scholars.

Malcolm wrote:

There is a conventional reality.[/quote]

Which is predicated on deluded cognitions.

Indrajala said:

You mean the sūtras, śāstras and Dharma histories are not sufficient evidence of this? There's more to the study of history than religious texts.

Malcolm wrote:

[/quote]

Sure, but that has nothing to do with the Dharma. For example, the title of this thread (not created by you) is "Vinaya is a later fabrication", but this statement is obviously nonsense. Trying to prove that Vinaya for example does not date back to the Buddha because of the insertion of some anachronisms in this or that text no more proves that Vinaya is a "fabrication" than the now disproven contention that Troy in the Illiad never existed. And quite frankly, none of your so called anachronisms have been proven to be

such.

All you have really succeeded in showing is what I have maintained in the past, i.e.,
Buddhology is a tangled ball of conflicting and ever-shifting opinions.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, August 9th, 2014 at 2:57 AM

Title: Re: Vinaya is a later fabrication

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Oh nonsense. If you study the rnam thars of siddhas and bodhisattvas and emulate their examples you cannot possibly go wrong.

Indrajala said:

If only life were so simple and straightforward as that.

Malcolm wrote:

It is, actually. The only thing that prevents it from being so is affliction.

Indrajala said:

Quite frankly, the Schopens and the Bronkhorsts of the world will just be footnotes in someone else's fashionable academic book in a hundred years. Meanwhile, people who have no idea about anything these sorts of academics wrote or said will still be gaining siddhi and waking up without the dubious benefit of any of their scholarship. Just because you don't find any benefit in their works doesn't mean the rest of us will not.

Malcolm wrote:

In the end, you will not. Someday you will wake up from the slumber of Buddhology and devote yourself to what is important.

Indrajala said:

You have to recognize at some point that your academic interest in history is not a path. There is no subject called "history" in the pañcavidyāsthana. That's probably due to cultural reasons. Indian scholars never really valued history so much, which is why they seem to have produced so little of it in the classical periods.

Malcolm wrote:

[/quote]

They produced a great deal of it actually, Ramayāna, Mahābharata, Puranas, etc. But their tradition of history did not grow out of the very Mediterranean anxieties of the Greeks and Romans. Their historiographical sense is quite removed from that of Greco-Roman culture.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, August 9th, 2014 at 3:04 AM

Title: Re: Vinaya is a later fabrication

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Which is predicated on deluded cognitions.

Indrajala said:

Conventional reality and ultimate reality are two sides of the same coin.

Malcolm wrote:

This is a misunderstanding.

Indrajala said:

Without understanding the former, the latter is not understood.

Malcolm wrote:

One understands the latter by understanding how it is the former is false. After all, didn't

Nāgārjuna quip:

Since the Jinas have proclaimed Nirvana alone to be true,

what wise person does not imagine the rest to be false?

Indrajala said:

There's more to life than Dharma.

Malcolm wrote:

No, there isn't. Not for a serious practitioner. And certainly not for a real bhikṣu.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, August 9th, 2014 at 3:06 AM

Title: Re: Does Arhat w/o remainder have any existence in Cittamatr

Content:

uan said:

I don't have a reference handy, but I thought according to the Mahayana view, that eventually the (a) Buddha will go and awaken the Arhats and lead them to Buddhahood.

But from what is just being discussed, that won't happen, ever. Or is it only for some Arhats and not others. I could be totally wrong in my understanding as well.

Malcolm wrote:

That is one Mahāyāna view, Madhyamaka.

uan said:

What would the Dzogchen perspective be?

Malcolm wrote:

Same as the Madhyamaka view, there are no icchantikas.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, August 9th, 2014 at 3:38 AM

Title: Re: Vinaya is a later fabrication

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

It is, actually. The only thing that prevents it from being so is affliction.

Indrajala said:

If only life were so simple we could remove all afflictions within a few hours of practice.

Malcolm wrote:

It is simple, but it is not easy.

Indrajala said:

That's all just fiction based on loosely real events. Not history.

Malcolm wrote:

It is history, not "just fiction".

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, August 9th, 2014 at 3:42 AM

Title: Re: Vinaya is a later fabrication

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

One understands the latter by understanding how it is the former is false. After all, didn't Nāgārjuna quip:

Indrajala said:

And yet the ultimate is understood, i.e., dependently originated, on the conventional. Emptiness is likewise empty, as Nagarjuna explained. To remain attached to the ultimate is as problematic as to be attached to the conventional.

Malcolm wrote:

The conventional only persists as an object of cognition until it has been analyzed. According to your understanding, the conventional is capable with withstanding analysis. It isn't since it is merely the result of mistaken cognitions.

Indrajala said:

No, there isn't. Not for a serious practitioner. And certainly not for a real bhikṣu. A bodhisattva, as I said, needs to understand reality and operate within it so as to benefit others. This is the purpose behind acquisition of the the pañca-vidyā.

Malcolm wrote:

[/quote]

As has been pointed out, Buddhology is not part of the pañcavidyāsthana — and further, bodhisattvas do not expend their energy destroying people's faith in Mahāyāna etc. You cannot be a bodhisattva and a Buddhologist. It simply cannot be.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, August 9th, 2014 at 3:43 AM

Title: Re: Vinaya is a later fabrication

Content:

Indrajala said:

I'll exit this discussion now.

Malcolm wrote:

Good idea.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, August 9th, 2014 at 7:39 AM

Title: Re: Poll: Kalacakra war prophecy

Content:

Will said:

Around 300 years from now, forces from Central Asia will destroy an Islamic army and thus usher in an era of peace.

Malcolm wrote:

I have ascertained an important point about this. The passage that clarifies everything about this is as follows:

Also the illusory form will war on the Barbarians in the land of Mecca.

Taktsang Lotsawa's states:

[T]hough it appears that life is taken and so on, the passage is saying that there is no war involving the misdeeds of taking life and so on.

My footnote to this passage states:

This passage, wrongly interpreted, could damage interfaith exchanges between Buddhists and Muslims. This passage has been understood by earlier scholars up to the present as indicating that the “war” with the Barbarians in Mecca will be fought in a concrete external sense (See Wallace, 2004, pg. 61), in addition to its inner sense

without clarifying the non-violent nature of this war. However, PN, pg. 50, states, annotations in italics, “(For the most part, the four divisions of the Cakrin’s army is an emanation), Also the illusory form (the Cakrin) will war on the Barbarians (in the manner of establishing them in the Dharma through intimidation) in the external land of Mecca; but there is no war (in the manner of taking the lives of Barbarians).” Waldo, pg. 56, 2005, erroneously translates ma kha, i.e.Mecca, as mkha’, i.e. space. So yes, there is a war, but no lives will be taken.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, August 9th, 2014 at 7:42 AM

Title: Re: Does Arhat w/o remainder have any existence in Cittamatr

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

I would understand it to mean that according to some Yogacarins when arhats enter the final samadhi of nirvana, they are done. There is no possibility for them to enter Mahāyāna and achieve Buddhahood.

zed said:

But it can't be because they have utterly ceased to exist. (?)

Shakya Chogden is saying that Cittamatrins accept that the buddha-essence exists at the time of no remainder. So there must be something there.

Just the bare alaya, perhaps, purified of all the contaminated seeds that cause rebirth in samsara, but lacking any of a buddha's positive qualities as well as any means by which that they could be manifested ?

I am aware that Shakya Chogden holds some unconventional views on Yogacara, but I really don't know whether this is one of them or not.

Malcolm wrote:

No they don't utterly cease, but they remain in a non-afflictive samadhi of cessation forever...and never aid anyone...[according to this idea]

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, August 9th, 2014 at 8:42 AM

Title: Re: Poll: Kalacakra war prophecy

Content:

Will said:

At present I do not see how the barbarians would be intimidated, other than through dying.

Of course, Shambhala super weaponry of 300 years hence could produce a non-lethal, but profoundly painful weapon. Something like that is being developed now. So paralysis or sleep or total confusion could be effective in rendering the barbarian war

machine ineffective. Let it come to be!

Malcolm wrote:

My statement above is based directly on the relevant passage from the Kalacakra root tantra, as well as the Vimalaprabha commentary which are both translated above,

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, August 9th, 2014 at 10:12 AM

Title: Re: Poll: Kalacakra war prophecy

Content:

Will said:

At present I do not see how the barbarians would be intimidated, other than through dying.

Of course, Shambhala super weaponry of 300 years hence could produce a non-lethal, but profoundly painful weapon. Something like that is being developed now. So paralysis or sleep or total confusion could be effective in rendering the barbarian war machine ineffective. Let it come to be!

Malcolm wrote:

My statement above is based directly on the relevant passage from the Kalacakra root tantra, as well as the Vimalaprabha commentary which are both translated above,

Will said:

So does my notion of non-lethal weaponry not fit your idea of the war? Or do you mean some sort of Shambhala siddhis will produce scarifying illusory visions and dreams that will cause the barbarians to forgo war? Clarify please.

Malcolm wrote:

The passage is pretty clear, intimidation will happen through illusions.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, August 9th, 2014 at 11:14 AM

Title: Re: Poll: Kalacakra war prophecy

Content:

Will said:

Malcom: intimidation will happen through illusions.

Dates differ, so it could be 400 years away.

It could happen through mind made illusions. I recall a story about a Tibetan siddha who, as some of the Chinese soldiers approached, made them see something fearsome (I forgot what) and they turned and ran. So if scores of future bodhisattva siddhas have this power, then it could work, if focused on the leadership of the barbarian military.

Malcolm wrote:

The war with the barbarians happens 1800 years after the conquest of mecca.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, August 9th, 2014 at 7:31 PM

Title: Re: Vinaya is a later fabrication

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

No. All accounts hold that Shantideva vanished into the sky while reciting the wisdom chapter of the Bodhicaryāvatara.

Zhen Li said:

Well, for instance, there is an account in Arts of Asia, Volume 36, p. 127. But I believe I heard the account first by word of mouth from a Kagyu Lama. But like I said, there are multiple accounts, i.e. that after he disappeared he was seen with a wife, or with Nagarjuna, etc. But if textual sources are all that matter to you, then I'm afraid I'm out of luck.

Malcolm wrote:

Sorry, there really aren't multiple accounts. And there is no account of Santideva hanging out with Nāgārjuna. I think you must have him confused with another siddha.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, August 9th, 2014 at 7:43 PM

Title: Re: Vinaya is a later fabrication

Content:

JKhedrup said:

I also mentioned other Nalanda luminaries in this thread such as Shantideva, Gunaprabha and Shakyaprabha. Would you consider their influence similarly limited?

Zhen Li said:

There simply isn't evidence that any individual writer (or simply text, since many, including Shantideva, are possibly the product of multiple authors and redactors) had the sort of influence in Indian Buddhism that they did in Tibetan Buddhism. We simply aren't privy to that data - and to what extent eminent scholars were respected in India in the second half of the first millennium may be questioned as well, it may also be questioned as to what extent the pantheonisation of eminent scholars in Tibetan Buddhism is a later development also, but thankfully we have a relatively clear picture of the influence of Atisha in Tibet.

Malcolm wrote:

Well, Nāgārjuna comes to mind, as does Maitryeanatha. These two writers were

extremely influential on Indian Mahāyāna. Vasubandhu's Kośa more or less eclipsed the study of other Abhidharma texts on the continent. The texts Indian translators chose to encourage their Tibetan and Chinese protégés is a very clear indices of what texts they though important and influential. So for example, Atiśa was an avid enthusiast of Candrakīrti, and within 70 years of Atisha's death in 1052, everything that was attributed to Candrakirti, whether sūtra or tantra, was translated into Tibetan.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, August 11th, 2014 at 2:14 AM

Title: Re: How Tibetans feel about the occupation of Tibet

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: Monday, August 11th, 2014 at 6:18 AM

Title: Re: Vinaya is a later fabrication

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

That's almost 500 years AFTER the original formation of the historiographical approach proposed by Herodotus.

Malcolm wrote:

And Herodotus, as we know, was largely regarded as a fraud.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, August 11th, 2014 at 7:36 PM

Title: Re: Mind, Clear Light and the Five Aggregates

Content:

whitetiger said:

Greetings,

I hope I'm posting this question to the proper forum. I have a question about what's often translated as "Clear Light," "Radiant Light" or "Inner Radiance" in Tibetan Buddhism, particularly in the Bardo Thodol. The Clear Light is the subtlest level of mind and purest awareness, and the "meeting of mother and child lights" results in Buddhahood. Correct? But is the Clear Light distinct from and beyond the five aggregates, or is it part of them? If it's distinct from the five aggregates, does this mean it never incarnates and only new aggregates are born in each life (with the Clear Light untouched by any of it)? If that is the case, does that explain why the idea of

"reincarnation" (as in, same self born again and again) is a fallacy and yet there is a pure awareness that is nevertheless present?

Finally, is the Clear Light the same as "universal mind" which is indivisible and one with all (i.e. no "your clear light," "my clear light," etc. I know it's crude but I don't know how else to put it)? Does it appear to be divided only when obscured by or tied to an individual consciousness (e.g. an individual person, a Bodhisattva, immortal, god, Buddha, etc.)?

Hope someone can help me understand.

Malcolm wrote:

First of all, you must understand that all four schools, Sakya, Kagyu, Nyingma and Gelug treat the notion of "clear light" rather differently.

You are mixing two presentations in your post above, Gelug and Nyingma.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, August 11th, 2014 at 11:55 PM

Title: Re: Vinaya is a later fabrication

Content:

JKhedrup said:

Do you mean gomi genyens? A person observing the eight vows of a layperson for extended periods (beyond a day) or also for life

Yes, and in the specific case that comes to mind, it was for life. It was given by (the late) Geshe Jampa Gyatso in Italy to, I believe, a group of several European students.

kirtu said:

So the gomi genyen tradition has already been revived and there is some expression of it in Europe?

irt

Malcolm wrote:

The Gomin Upāsaka ordination does not exist in Tibetan Buddhism. It is not part of the Mulasarvastivada tradition.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, August 12th, 2014 at 3:09 AM

Title: Re: Vinaya is a later fabrication

Content:

JKhedrup said:

The Gomin Upāsaka ordination does not exist in Tibetan Buddhism. It is not part of the Mulasarvastivada tradition.

Sorry, I thought Kirt was giving me Gomi Genyen as his rendition of "full Genyen". Our

director, who received this, used this term "full Genyen", so I am assuming it is what the translator used when Geshe Jampa Gyatso transmitted it. He does not remember the name in Tibetan though I think I could look it up.

From what he told me today when I inquired it is a lifelong celibacy vow in addition to the normal Upasaka vows.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, sometimes the upāsaka ordination is given as a kind of probationary vow with the understanding that one will try to behave like a dge tshul.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, August 12th, 2014 at 7:01 AM

Title: Re: Wagner and Buddhism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Wagner....

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, August 12th, 2014 at 7:58 PM

Title: Re: Vinaya is a later fabrication

Content:

kirtu said:

So the gomi genyen tradition has already been revived and there is some expression of it in Europe?

Malcolm wrote:

The Gomin Upāsaka ordination does not exist in Tibetan Buddhism. It is not part of the Mulasarvastivada tradition.

kirtu said:

Okay - but to me this is a bit of wiggling (wobble to the left, wobble to the right) Kongtrul *does* discuss it in his Encyclopedia (Buddhist Ethics) and it was practiced in India (and you are always pointing back to Indian Vajrayana).

And anyway it *does* exist in the form of the 8 vows taken for a 24 hr period (so not gomi genyen per se because that would be for a longer period esp. to include for life).

Kirt

Malcolm wrote:

The gomin ordination simply does not exist in our lineage. It does exist in the Theravada. It may have been practiced in India, but it was never part of the Mulasarvastivadin school, to which we (all Tibetan Buddhists) belong.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, August 13th, 2014 at 12:25 AM

Title: Re: Vinaya is a later fabrication

Content:

kirtu said:

The 24 hr vow tradition does exist. One could then extend that by oneself by taking the vow daily for a period. There are people who do this - this much is not an innovation.

Malcolm wrote:

That is called upavaśaka and the vow is taken only for a day and a night. But this is not the gomin ordination.

kirtu said:

Gomin ordination: Chod did not exist before Machig nor was nyungnye practiced before Bhikkshuni Palmo created it.

Malcolm wrote:

Depends on what you mean by Chö. If you mean the practice of the offering the body, then this certainly existed prior to Machigma, and is found in such Tantras as Hevajra and so on. What is unique about Chö is primarily Machig's introduction of the use of melody and the Chö damaru, and her explanation of the four māras. And you forget that father lineage Chö does not have these things and comes from Padampa.

As far as the the nyungnye (smyung gnas), there are various kinds of fast rites connected with deities one can find in the Tengyur.

kirtu said:

Gomin ordination may not be introduced to the Mulasarvastivadin vinaya but it may still become a common practice.

Malcolm wrote:

It can't. We do not have that ordination. We cannot rewrite Vinaya to include it.

There are basically eight kinds of ordained people in Mulasarvastivada: lay men and women, lay fast day participants (male and female), male and female novices, and male and female fully ordained persons. However, since there was never any fully ordained bhikṣunis to ordain women with the special probationary vows in Tibet, the Mulasarvastivadin bhikṣuni ordination was never introduced to Tibet and this is why there are no fully ordained Mulasarvastivadin bhikṣunis today, nor has there been any for a thousand years.

Of course, if someone wishes to take the Gomin ordination in Theravada, there is nothing to stop them. But they cannot receive it in Tibetan Buddhism, they must go to

Theravada.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, August 13th, 2014 at 3:35 AM

Title: Re: Vinaya is a later fabrication

Content:

Zhen Li said:

Sorry, I am not familiar with this terminology. Is this gomin as in cowherd? Or is it a Tibetan term?

Malcolm wrote:

As in Candragomin.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, August 13th, 2014 at 9:46 AM

Title: Re: Vinaya is a later fabrication

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The gomin ordination simply does not exist in our lineage. It does exist in the Theravada. It may have been practiced in India, but it was never part of the Mulasarvastivadin school, to which we (all Tibetan Buddhists) belong.

Mkoll said:

Hi Malcolm,

Can you describe what this gomin ordination is in Theravada? I've never heard that term used. Perhaps there's another name for it?

Malcolm wrote:

Anagarika. I believe gomin is what they call this ordination in Mahāsamghika.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, August 13th, 2014 at 9:47 AM

Title: Re: reading recommendations on sound, light, rays

Content:

anjali said:

Hello all,

I'm looking for any English reading recommendations discussing the energy of awareness and it's manifestation as sound, light and rays. Recommendations can be anywhere from detailed scholarly expositions to pith instructions.

Thanks!

Malcolm wrote:

You will find this primarily in descriptions of the bardo. The Bonpos have extensive explanations.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, August 14th, 2014 at 2:41 AM

Title: Re: Vinaya is a later fabrication

Content:

kirtu said:

We don't have to. For vinaya purists we can borrow it from the Theravada which you mention later yourself ...

Malcolm wrote:

The Anagarika ordination can only be received from a Theravadin bhikku. It cannot be received from a Mulasarvastivadin bhikṣu. So we can't really "borrow" it because that ordination does not exist in our lineage.

Further, you cannot specify that you are taking the fast day vows "for life", those vows last one day and one night, i.e. dawn to dawn. You can retake it everyday if you want, but...most people are not going to do this. Especially considering that the Mahāyāna fast day vows are more important in our tradition and further, pratimokṣa vows are not as important as bodhisattva vows.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, August 14th, 2014 at 2:42 AM

Title: Re: Has your memory deteriorated since practicing Buddhism?

Content:

januarysprings said:

As thoughts lesson, one merges into awareness etc has your memory deteriorated or anything else?

What to do?

Malcolm wrote:

Actually, one's memory improves as a result of practicing Dharma.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, August 14th, 2014 at 3:01 AM

Title: Re: Vinaya is a later fabrication

Content:

kirtu said:

Ah - you possess vinaya identity.

Malcolm wrote:

Of course, I am a full Mulasarvastivada upāsaka, having received that ordination from Luding Khenpo Sr. in 1996.

kirtu said:

Sorry, my lamas are Mulasarvastivada monks. The lineage follows the Mulasarvastivada tradition (primarily). Just for me though I have no such restrictions on maintaining practices or vows strictly from within one lineage and will accept whatever is offered by whatever tradition freely.

Malcolm wrote:

I never said one could not do this. I wouldn't bother since there is no need to add anything to our lineage. If someone wants to be celibate, they can simply take the full upāsaka ordination with the intention to follow brahmacarya. If they wish to wear robes or follow the vows of a dge tshul, they may. If they later change their minds about being celibate, they also may, without needing to change anything. If you become a dge tshul however, it is a different matter, and deciding to become non-celibate requires relinquishing one's status as part of the ordained sangha.

kirtu said:

Slipping in the Theravada insinuation is complete nonsense.

Malcolm wrote:

Huh? I was referring to the fact that Mulasarvastivada fast day vows (upavastha) are different than Mahāyāna fast day vows.

kirtu said:

The only fast vows I have taken and can retake freely are the Mahayana fast vows.

People are different and some people find these vows to be necessary. What others do is not so relevant.

Malcolm wrote:

There is nothing wrong with taking fast day vows, but there is no tradition of taking them "for life". They only last a day and a night, whether they are based on the pratimokṣa or bodhisattva vow system. There is also no celibate ordination in the Tibetan tradition of Mahāyāna. Celibate ordinations are strictly the domain of Vinaya.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, August 14th, 2014 at 7:49 PM

Title: Re: Vinaya is a later fabrication

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

There is also no celibate ordination in the Tibetan tradition of Mahāyāna. Celibate ordinations are strictly the domain of Vinaya.

Mkoll said:

Really? I had no idea!

So lamas, geshe, tulku, etc. don't have to be celibate?

Are their bhikkhus in Tibetan Buddhism or do they go under a different name? They don't have to be celibate either?

Malcolm wrote:

Lamas and tulku can be bhikṣus, or novices, or upāsakas. Geshe are generally always bhikṣus.

In other words, in the Mahāyāna tradition of India and Tibet there is no separate celibate ordination. The celibate Mahāyāna ordination is an innovation of the Japanese Tendai school.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, August 14th, 2014 at 7:52 PM

Title: Re: reading recommendations on sound, light, rays

Content:

Mother's Lap said:

The out-of-print Sacred Tibetan Teachings on Death and Liberation by Giacomella Orofino contains extracts from the Union of Sun and Moon Tantra and the Bon The Oral Transmission of Zhang Zhung.

<http://www.scribd.com/doc/168469738/Giacomella-Orofino-Sacred-Tibetan-Teachings-on-Death-and-Liberation> " onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;" onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;" onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;

Malcolm wrote:

This tantra (nyi zla kha sbyor) has very little on sounds lights and rays. Indeed, the 17 tantras as a whole have very little on the subject. There are texts in the Zhang Zhung snyan rgyud however that have extensive teachings on the subject, and some of the terma cycles also have a bit more on the subject.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, August 14th, 2014 at 8:04 PM

Title: Re: Teacher as Buddha?

Content:

Johnny Dangerous said:

I'm a little confused about this in practical sense. As far as I know, I have received no HYT empowerments (two Chenrezig initiations), and yet at least one of my practices has guru yoga as preliminary practice as part of the sadhana..additionally, unless i'm mistaken in what I was told, guru yoga is supposed to be a part of deity sadhana practice period it was there in the initiations themselves...unless I'm not understanding what "guru yoga" actually is, but I think I am. If this is inappropriate to answer publicly, no problem.

Malcolm wrote:

If you are practicing Avalokiteśvara and Mahāmudra indeed, the sadhana has a kind of guru yoga worked in it. If you are practicing Tsembupa Avaokiteśvara, this is actually an HYT practice and presumes that prior to receiving the instruction you have received both a major empowerment of some kind as well as at least a jenang into Avalokiteśvara. The King's tradition Avalokiteśvara major empowerment is often used by HH Sakya Trizen for giving this instruction.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, August 14th, 2014 at 8:06 PM

Title: Re: Teacher as Buddha?

Content:

tle said:

I think the requisite of seeing the empowerment lama as a Buddha is different depending on your level of accomplishment.

A regular person would see them as a truly existent Buddha.

A seasoned person might see them as a Buddha dependent on factors.

Perhaps there's other meanings to this also. It's not uncommon for tantric rules and teachings to have multiple levels of meaning.

Personally I see the empowerment lama, the teaching, the deity, the Buddha, the vows, the views, the effort I make, etc. all being aspects of the same karmas or on a deeper level the potential of all beings to become a Buddha. I like my current view of things because it allows me to retain my independent thinking so if it turns out I joined a bad cult I can back out without feeling I've broken my relationship to the Triple Gem. That is the really the only issue with seeing a teacher as a Buddha after all.

Malcolm wrote:

If you find you are taking teachings from a Lama who is not qualified, you can simply leave them and move on. There is no fault.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, August 14th, 2014 at 8:49 PM

Title: Re: Vinaya is a later fabrication

Content:

Zhen Li said:

Anagarika is a fairly recent phenomenon, popularised by Anagarika Dharmapala, so the idea that there's a continuity between that and Gomins (which aren't actually described anywhere as requiring eight vows) is very unlikely in my opinion.

Malcolm wrote:

This is not true. I just have not had time to pull the reference because I am on the road. The anagarika ordination is ancient, not modern.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, August 15th, 2014 at 7:26 AM

Title: Re: Vinaya is a later fabrication

Content:

Zhen Li said:

The anagarika ordination is ancient, not modern.

As far as I know, it's a modernist invention, but the term is used to refer to a renunciant in general. Like gomin, the name doesn't tell us anything...

Malcolm wrote:

Sakya Pandita, writing in the mid-13th century, states in his famous summary of Mahāyāna, Clarifying the Muni's Intent (thub pa'i dgongs gsal):

Further the Ārya Sthaviravādīns assert a so-called “gomin upāsaka” since it was stated that “It has been heard from a oral tradition of the Ārya Sthaviravādīns that “A lay person who has accepted the eight limbs for as long as they live is called a gomin upāsaka”... Since the Vinaya Sūtra is a text of the Mūlasarvāstivādīns, neither the brahmacārī nor the gomi [upāsaka] are mentioned. Therefore, that is the reason these two rites do not occur.

So, the tradition is not a modernist invention, and Sakya Pandita [educated by 30 Indian Panditas and fluent in both written and spoken Sanskrit] was clearly familiar with the term in the usage I have supplied.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, August 15th, 2014 at 11:06 PM

Title: Re: Dharma should not have a price on it

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

This is the principle we should employ, as Kenpo Ngalo states in his commentary on

Ngondro:

Never arriving with empty hands is a critical point of dependent origination. In particular, when that guru confers empowerment and explains Dharmas, since all the compassion and blessings of all the buddhas of the three times and ten directions along with all the bodhisattvas exist in that sublime guru, the guru is inseparable with all the buddhas. Even bringing him a morsel of food has greater merit than making many hundred of thousands of offerings to others.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, August 16th, 2014 at 3:59 AM

Title: Re: Dharma should not have a price on it

Content:

LastLegend said:

I can only speak for Vietnamese Mahayana.

Dharma should be free always.

Malcolm wrote:

In Vajrayāna stated in the tantras themselves that a fee for the initiation and teachings should be set.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, August 16th, 2014 at 4:09 AM

Title: Re: Dharma should not have a price on it

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

Haven't we had this argument before? If somebody can remind me of the thread we had it in, then we won't need to repeat it (again).

Malcolm wrote:

Of course, it is a Buddhist board, and all our discussion take rebirth again and again, and will until they exhaust their karma...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, August 16th, 2014 at 5:40 AM

Title: Re: Dharma should not have a price on it

Content:

LastLegend said:

I can only speak for Vietnamese Mahayana.

Dharma should be free always.

Malcolm wrote:

In Vajrayāna stated in the tantras themselves that a fee for the initiation and teachings should be set.

LastLegend said:

In form of money? Or other offering?

Malcolm wrote:

Gold, usually.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, August 18th, 2014 at 8:29 PM

Title: Re: Lamas and Gifts

Content:

twiz said:

Does a Lama only accept gifts when they are filled with good intentions and from the heart?

Are they able to determine when one is just doing it because they are suppose to/want merit, and reject it (in a polite manner)?

Curious as to how much they may understand one's intentions.

Malcolm wrote:

No.

No.

As to your third question, it depends on how well they know you.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, August 18th, 2014 at 9:25 PM

Title: Re: Appropriateness of openly discussing sunyata

Content:

Johnny Dangerous said:

It's Sutra stuff, there are no limitations on discussing it as far as I know.

Malcolm wrote:

In fact it is a breach of bodhisattva vows to discuss emptiness with those who are not mature enough to handle it or who object to the idea.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, August 18th, 2014 at 10:11 PM

Title: Re: Help Choosing a School

Content:

Gnosis984 said:

Any suggestions, ideas, any help at all would be most appreciated.

Malcolm wrote:

A teacher is more important than a school. Find a teacher you trust.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, August 19th, 2014 at 2:00 AM

Title: Re: Appropriateness of openly discussing sunyata

Content:

Johnny Dangerous said:

It's Sutra stuff, there are no limitations on discussing it as far as I know.

Malcolm wrote:

In fact it is a breach of bodhisattva vows to discuss emptiness with those who are not mature enough to handle it or who object to the idea.

Johnny Dangerous said:

Thanks for educating me.

I wonder though, how does this apply to public teachings? I've been to public teachings where emptiness is the subject, and a few people in the audience really do not like it, or find it uncomfortable somehow, find it unacceptable...does this mean teachers are at constant risk of breaking their Bodhisattva vows, unless they somehow vet people who come to teachings?

Malcolm wrote:

I remember HHDL saying that Christians for example, should mind their own business when it comes to emptiness, it is not their school. I think basically, unless some one shows up to a teaching, one does not discuss the Mahāyāna view of reality, but instead one emphasizes dependent origination.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, August 19th, 2014 at 8:20 PM

Title: Re: How Tibetans feel about the occupation of Tibet

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

"Tibetan Buddhism designed by the CCP"

By Woesser

Not long ago, several important incidents took place in succession: 1) Because of a minor explosion at the end of October 2011, of the originally over 300 monks only 6 are

now left in Karma Monastery in Chamdo County, Kham, TAR. 2) At the end of 2012, Drongna Monastery in Driru County, Nagchu Prefecture, TAR was closed down, all monk residences were sealed and many monks arrested; subsequently, the Tarmoe and Rabten monasteries of Driru County were also closed down. 3) In December 2013, an official government notice was issued to the famous Labrang Monastery in Sangchu County, Gannan Autonomous Prefecture, Gansu Province, requesting to expel all non-local monks studying at the monastery within a three months period.

At the end of 2008, I wrote several essays: “Patriotic Education’ in Tibet”, “Another Cultural Revolution is Quietly Sweeping across Tibet’s Monasteries”, “Behind the Curtain of ‘Legal Education’”, “The Intentions Behind Transforming Monasteries into Tourist Attractions”, “The ‘Clean Up’ of Lhasa that is Hidden from the Outside World”. It is evident that the encircling and annihilation of Tibet’s monasteries is continuously moving forward, becoming more and more far-reaching. Just as I wrote at the end of 2008, “the local Party authorities are currently launching the cruelest and most bitter clean up of Tibetan monasteries since the Cultural Revolution. In the Chinese media, none of these “black box operations” are ever mentioned. Another Cultural Revolution is currently sweeping across Tibet. In 1966, Buddhist temples and statues were smashed and monks and nuns expelled, leaving behind a forlorn field of ruins. Now this second Cultural Revolution will completely eradicate any genuine monks and nuns, leaving behind nothing but the shell of monasteries and monks and nuns who are bound to lose their courage and conscience.”

If we have not already forgotten, we must remember how on October 4, 2008, the three main monasteries in Lhasa – Drepung monastery, Sera monastery and Ganden monastery – were attacked by military police in the middle of the night, monks – almost entirely students of Buddhism coming from Gansu, Qinghai, Sichuan, or Yunnan provinces (officially called “the four Tibetan provinces”) – were arrested at their residences. They were sent to Gormo military prison and repatriated to their hometowns after the Beijing Olympics; none of them were allowed to ever return to the monasteries.

It has always been true that more than half of the monks in Lhasa’s three main monasteries were not locals. This is a 500-year-old tradition, existing ever since the establishment of these three main monasteries, and it is the tradition of 2000 years of Buddhism. This, indeed, also includes monasteries of Chinese Buddhism that have always been inhabited by monks from all across the country. Today, Chinese monasteries have remained the same, monks from different counties and provinces reside there to study, but the monks of Lhasa’s three main monasteries have been expelled and imprisoned by military force. This has hardly ever happened in the history of Tibetan Buddhism, it only started occurring frequently in modern times under the rule of the CCP.

If we have not already forgotten, we must remember the official Tibetan document that appeared on the website of the local authorities at the end of 2008; it was a decision issued by the head of the Kardze Autonomous Prefecture targeting all 18 counties of Kardze Prefecture, stating that the local authorities will carry out the following steps

against 10-30% of the monasteries whose nuns and monks participated in the protests: any religious events will be forbidden, the movement and actions of nuns and monks will be strictly controlled; all nuns and monks inside monasteries must once again “officially enrol”, all monks and nuns who do not pass the “patriotic education” examination will be expelled, all monks residences will be demolished. As for those who participated in the protests, in minor cases they will be sent back to their hometowns, in severe cases they will be imprisoned.

Starting from 2011, work groups have been stationed inside over 1700 monasteries in the TAR, employing over 7000 members of staff. Altogether, the official number of registered monks and nuns is 46,000; does this mean that each official stationed in a monastery is responsible for 6-7 monks? The problem is that in Karma Monastery, the birthplace of the Kagyu school of Tibetan Buddhism, for example, officials currently outnumber monks. So does this mean that the goal of this movement, launched by Chen Quanguo and now already experiencing the third change of shifts, is to step-by-step decrease the amount of monks and eventually close down all monasteries?

Meanwhile, the authorities of “the four Tibetan provinces” are equally encircling and attacking the over 150,000 monks and their monasteries. It is impossible that all these local cadres are simply imitating what officials in the TAR do; no, these are clearly the hard-liner policies coming from the highest level. In fact, it is the continuation and implementation of Mao Zedong’s “Tibet Policies”. Mao once said: “We must also reform all monasteries. After successful reform, there will be a time when the number of lamas is greatly reduced... how should we reform monasteries, you should think of a solution.” (May 7, 1959, Guidelines After Putting Down Tibet’s Revolt). This so-called solution seems to be the model that we can observe in today’s Karma and Drongna monasteries and also in Lhasa’s three main monasteries, it is a model of Tibetan Buddhism designed by the CCP.

Lhasa, January 2014

<http://highpeakspureearth.com/2014/tibetan-buddhism-designed-by-the-ccp-by-woeser/>

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, August 19th, 2014 at 10:27 PM

Title: Re: Quick Question Regarding Tibetan Buddhism.

Content:

RickThunderclees said:

Good morning everyone! Had a quick question:

I'm taking a break from reading up on teachings and am exploring the history of different Buddhist traditions. Each tradition is equally beautiful in its own accord and completely fascinating to me. I've been practicing now for over 10 years and it's been nice just objectively reading about each form and tradition. But I've come to the Tibetan form to ask this specific question because I know someone will know the answer.

I've discovered that the first appearance of Avalokiteśvara is in the Lotus Sutra. I questioned this, and did some digging and haven't found otherwise. I assumed the Lotus Sutra was written way after the Tibetan tradition, but this isn't the case. Supposedly the sutra was finished by 200 AD. How did this sutra not make it into Tibetan Buddhism? Is it studied at all within the tradition? You'll have to explain this to me like I'm 5 years old because I really am ignorant of most of Buddhist history, outside of the story of Shakyamuni.

Thanks!

Malcolm wrote:

The Lotus Sutra is indeed in the Tibetan tradition. It is not a subject of independent study however and there are no schools formed around it.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, August 19th, 2014 at 11:48 PM

Title: Re: Towards a resolution in Israel and Palestine

Content:

Sherab said:

One's world view is very important. It informs and directs one's motivation, attitude and behaviour. Buddhism recognizes this and that is why the eightfold noble path starts with right view.

The worldview of Christianity/Judaism in my opinion has in general been more subdued than in the historical past because of the progress of science and the liberalization of thoughts. So to an important extent, the worldview of these religions have been forced into a retreat. The same however cannot be said of Islam. It has yet to go through the same process. Perhaps given time, it will. Meanwhile, the worldview of Islam in its current form presents a huge obstacle to the resolution of the Middle East problem.

Malcolm wrote:

Indeed, the Islamic world never had an intellectual movement comparable with the Enlightenment, no Spinoza, no Locke, etc. The fact of the matter is that a crypto-atheism lies at the heart of enlightenment thought. There is quite a good book on this called Nature's God: The Heretical Origins of the American Republic.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, August 20th, 2014 at 12:16 AM

Title: Re: Towards a resolution in Israel and Palestine

Content:

Sherab said:

One's world view is very important. It informs and directs one's motivation, attitude and behaviour. Buddhism recognizes this and that is why the eightfold noble path starts with right view.

The worldview of Christianity/Judaism in my opinion has in general been more subdued than in the historical past because of the progress of science and the liberalization of thoughts. So to an important extent, the worldview of these religions have been forced into a retreat. The same however cannot be said of Islam. It has yet to go through the same process. Perhaps given time, it will. Meanwhile, the worldview of Islam in its current form presents a huge obstacle to the resolution of the Middle East problem.

Malcolm wrote:

Indeed, the Islamic world never had an intellectual movement comparable with the Enlightenment, no Spinoza, no Locke, etc. The fact of the matter is that a crypto-atheism lies at the heart of enlightenment thought. There is quite a good book on this called Nature's God: The Heretical Origins of the American Republic.

Dan74 said:

I am not sure this is a fair assessment (and btw I don't recall a Buddhist equivalent of Enlightenment either).

The Islamic world produced advances in science (eg Alhazen), mathematics (eg Omar Khayyam), arts , architecture and technology which in their time completely eclipsed any parallel developments in Europe. Not just the zero, but words as familiar to us as algorithm and algebra are Islamic imports. If anything, there hasn't been a sociopolitical development akin to Western democracies with responsible government, but we can see it function pretty well in Indonesia and sort of Turkey, while Buddhist countries aren't doing so well (Thailand, Sri Lanka, Vietnam, etc).

Note that many countries adopted representational participatory democracies without developing them by themselves, like Japan, for instance.

Malcolm wrote:

Algebra and algorithms were imported from India by way of the Arab world.

Dan74 said:

If anything, there hasn't been a sociopolitical development akin to Western democracies

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, this is because of the Enlightenment, especially the Scottish Enlightenment, and it's atheist impulse drove it. Such a movement could only happen because of the Reformation.

I never said that Buddhist countries had comparable developments; they could not without abandoning key features of our religion. In fact, most of the conflicts between so called Buddhist modernists and traditionalists has exactly to do with whether people place more value on Enlightenment values or Awakening values.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Wednesday, August 20th, 2014 at 12:37 AM
Title: Re: Towards a resolution in Israel and Palestine
Content:

Dan74 said:
Algebra and algorithms were imported from India by way of the Arab world.
I don't think so, Malcolm. Both words come from Al-Khwarizmi's massive treatise.
Conner and Robertson in their Mactutor History of Mathematics archive describe the contribution the following way:

Malcolm wrote:
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Indian_mathematics#Jain_Mathematics_.28400_BCE_.E2.80.93_200_CE.29

Dan74 said:
Cool, but lets be fair to Islam, hard as it is, in the current climate. Until very recent history it actually had a better track record than Christianity in many many ways.

Malcolm wrote:
Oh nonsense. All these Abrahamic religions are predicated on ethnic cleansing. As far as I know, Islam is the only religion in the world where it is an incumbent duty for the faithful to kill apostates.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Wednesday, August 20th, 2014 at 12:44 AM
Title: Re: Towards a resolution in Israel and Palestine
Content:

Dan74 said:
a better track record than Christianity

Hieros Gamos said:
That's hardly a ringing endorsement.

Dan74 said:
Well, we've all had our ups and downs. But I find the increasingly common criticism and sometimes even wholesale dismissal of everything Islamic facile at best and ignorant at worst. So many people are simply clueless about the fundamental contributions Islamic cultures have made.

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: Wednesday, August 20th, 2014 at 1:03 AM

Title: Re: Towards a resolution in Israel and Palestine

Content:

Dan74 said:

Ok, you are shifting the argument, Malcolm. So you accept that Islam has made fundamental contributions including algebra? Yes, the Jains had mathematics but the Islamic mathematicians didn't 'steal' Jain work, but developed and advanced their own.

Malcolm wrote:

But they did so on the basis of the numerical system, etc., developed in India. So called "arabic numerals" come from India. Further, most of the contributions of Islamic culture, apart from their own poetry, music and so on, lay in the area of transmitting the knowledge of the Hellenistic world to Europe. Even the Islamic system of medicine is called Unani, which is a corruption of Yavana, i.e. Ionian — Greek.

Dan74 said:

As for killing the apostate, it was a rule much more honoured in the breach, if you check Islamic jurisprudence. Medieval Islamic literature and poetry was indeed much more rich and free than its European counterpart perhaps because apostasy and heresy laws were not applied anywhere near as zealously as the Church and its Inquisition applied theirs.

Malcolm wrote:

That really depends on where you were in the Islamic hegemony, and at what period of history. Georges Bataille has a good analysis of the economic biases that drove the Islamic expansion. In fact they are very nearly the same biases which drove the spread of Christianity and later, corporate capitalism. And your assertion is fallacious — the Zoroastrians were driven from Persia where they were not slain:

Until the Jihad, in the mid 7th century Persia (modern-day Iran) was a politically independent state, spanning from the Aegean Sea to the Indus River[3] and dominated by a Zoroastrian majority.

[h\[url\]ttp://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Persecution_of_Zoroastrians\[/url\]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Persecution_of_Zoroastrians)

People should remember the vanished Zoroastrian civilization of Persia before claiming that Islam "treated" non-Muslims better than Christians treated pagans.

In fact, all three Abrahamic religions are fundamentally pernicious which is why the site of their origin is such a total mess and has been for millennia, ever since one band, the Hebrews exterminated another band, the Canaanites.

As far as I am concerned, if Islam and its "contributions" were lost to history like the Zoroastrians, it would be no great loss for humanity.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, August 20th, 2014 at 1:34 AM

Title: Re: Towards a resolution in Israel and Palestine

Content:

Dan74 said:

Ok, your post started informative and ended... well, disappointingly, to be polite. If Islamic contributions disappeared we would likely be set back scientifically, mathematically in terms of the arts, etc by centuries. Nevermind the barbaric hubris behind the nonchalant dismissal of an entire culture.

Malcolm wrote:

My point is really simple — Islam is not your friend, regardless of whether you have Muslim friends or not. At best, under an Islamic govt., you will be forced to pay a substantial tax just to live in your home as non-Muslim. As a Buddhist, you will probably be killed.

Dan74 said:

Hebrews and Canaanites? So you take the Bible as a historical account of what actually happened? But if you do, you would know that Hebrew prophets condemned their people for not killing the Canaanites and intermarrying with them and accepting their gods.

Malcolm wrote:

Indeed. Just as modern radical Islamic leaders condemn the faint of heart among the "faithful" for not bring Jihad to our doorsteps.

Dan74 said:

We, as humanity, are heirs to all of our culture, with its sublime beauty, sweeping achievements as well as its excesses and horrors.

Malcolm wrote:

I don't agree.

Basically, the best thing the American Revolution brought about was a form of government in which people were protected from religion. There may be disadvantages to our secular Western society, but our freedom from religion is our greatest strength as a culture. Cultures that are wholly grounded on a religious or ethnic basis are destined for obsolescence.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, August 20th, 2014 at 2:50 AM

Title: Re: Towards a resolution in Israel and Palestine

Content:

Will said:

While I have no sympathy for and am hostile to the Jihadists, the choice of a homeland by the Jews is odd. They had other offers and there was even a small counter-Zionist group working for a non-Jerusalem centered nation.

It is curious that Islam has sacred turf - Mecca - as do the Jews of Israel. Revering a sacred site is normal in all religions, but Buddhists have not, for example, made the Bodhi Tree into a site for nation building.

The priority of sacred dirt for the two groups, to the point of armed conflict, is sad and ridiculous. So I see no peaceful resolution at all - for now and the next century - at least.

Malcolm wrote:

Ever, that place is going to be the the site of the first use of nuclear weapons since WWII, you mark my words. It's all going down in flames.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, August 20th, 2014 at 5:25 AM

Title: Re: How Tibetans feel about the occupation of Tibet

Content:

Unknown said:

Three more Tibetans have died of untreated gunshot wounds after Chinese authorities fired on peaceful protesters last week in Sichuan Province and refused to treat the dozens who were injured and detained, according to sources Tuesday.

The bodies of the three, all members of the same household, were returned to their families on Monday after they succumbed to their injuries at the detention center in Loshu township in the Kardze (Ganzi) Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture.

Two protesters had previously died at the detention center on Sunday, one committing suicide in protest against "torture" at the hands of Chinese authorities and another dying of untreated wounds, exile sources had said.

Malcolm wrote:

http://www.rfa.org/english/news/tibet/wounds-08192014131944.html#.U_OqTwfWFTU.facebook

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, August 20th, 2014 at 8:14 PM

Title: Re: Towards a resolution in Israel and Palestine

Content:

Dan74 said:

The Islamic world produced advances in science (eg Alhazen), mathematics (eg Omar

Khayyam), arts , architecture and technology which in their time completely eclipsed any parallel developments in Europe. Not just the zero, but words as familiar to us as algorithm and algebra are Islamic imports.

Sherab said:

Adherents to a religion normally do not have problems with science as long as there is no conflict with their religious teachings. It is when there are conflicts that we see the true colour of a religion and its adherents. In this regard, I think Buddhism and Buddhists are much more open.

Malcolm wrote:

Islam is actually very science-positive. They regard scientific advances as evidence of God's hand.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, August 20th, 2014 at 8:59 PM

Title: Re: Towards a resolution in Israel and Palestine

Content:

M.G. said:

@Malcolm (or any other knowledgeable person) - Tibet had a sizable Muslim population. Are there recorded instances of Tibetan Buddhists converting to Islam or Tibetan Muslims converting to Buddhism or of there having been cultural norms, rules, reactions, or stereotypes regarding such conversions?

Malcolm wrote:

There was a small group of Muslim butchers in Lhasa, but that is about it. And no, there was not much conversion either way. Muslims never convert to other religions, or very rarely so, because they can be killed for doing so by any other Muslim.

There is a fair amount of forced conversion in Lhadak, mainly in the form of bride theft.

In a Muslim world, everyone but Muslims are second class citizens at best.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, August 20th, 2014 at 9:39 PM

Title: Re: Towards a resolution in Israel and Palestine

Content:

Sherab said:

Like certain Christians, Muslims do not accept the evolution of man. As mentioned before, they have no problems with science as long as there is no conflict with their religious teachings.

Malcolm wrote:

But they accept the evolution of everything else.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, August 20th, 2014 at 9:57 PM

Title: Re: Towards a resolution in Israel and Palestine

Content:

Sherab said:

Like certain Christians, Muslims do not accept the evolution of man. As mentioned before, they have no problems with science as long as there is no conflict with their religious teachings.

Malcolm wrote:

But they accept the evolution of everything else.

Sherab said:

That is beside the point. I mentioned that the true colour of an adherent to a religion will show when science conflicts with its religious teaching.

Malcolm wrote:

So in your case, are you a materialist? I ask because there are any number of Buddhist teachings which are in conflict with science.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, August 20th, 2014 at 10:36 PM

Title: Re: Towards a resolution in Israel and Palestine

Content:

Sherab said:

I am perfectly fine when the evidence presented by science contradicts Buddhist teachings, I just accept it. I don't see how that necessarily will make me a materialist.

Malcolm wrote:

It means you accept science as your ultimate arbiter of what is true or not. This is fine, but it means you accept science as ultimate truth.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, August 21st, 2014 at 1:14 AM

Title: Re: Heart Sutra -- why study it?

Content:

Lazy_eye said:

The Heart Sutra is a beautiful, profound text, conveying the highest wisdom. But that wisdom is far beyond the attainment of most ordinary practitioners...

Malcolm wrote:

No, it is not. It is easily attainable if you have the right teacher and the right path.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, August 21st, 2014 at 1:46 AM

Title: Re: Towards a resolution in Israel and Palestine

Content:

Will said:

While I have no sympathy for and am hostile to the Jihadists, the choice of a homeland by the Jews is odd. They had other offers and there was even a small counter-Zionist group working for a non-Jerusalem centered nation.

It is curious that Islam has sacred turf - Mecca - as do the Jews of Israel. Revering a sacred site is normal in all religions, but Buddhists have not, for example, made the Bodhi Tree into a site for nation building.

The priority of sacred dirt for the two groups, to the point of armed conflict, is sad and ridiculous. So I see no peaceful resolution at all - for now and the next century - at least.

Malcolm wrote:

Ever, that place is going to be the the site of the first use of nuclear weapons since WWII, you mark my words. It's all going down in flames.

AlexanderS said:

What place will be nuked? Mecca, Jerusalem or Bodhgaya?

Malcolm wrote:

Jerusalem.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, August 21st, 2014 at 1:50 AM

Title: Re: Heart Sutra -- why study it?

Content:

Lazy_eye said:

Are you referring specifically to Vajrayana, or is this also true in the sutra schools?

Malcolm wrote:

Both.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, August 21st, 2014 at 2:14 AM

Title: Re: Towards a resolution in Israel and Palestine

Content:

AlexanderS said:
What makes you say that?

Malcolm wrote:
It is the most sacred place to all three religions, ergo, it is the one that will most likely be the object of a terrorist attack.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Thursday, August 21st, 2014 at 2:24 AM
Title: Re: Heart Sutra -- why study it?
Content:

Lazy_eye said:
Could you elaborate a little? I don't have much expertise, but my impression was that most Mahayana paths are spread out over aeons and the ten stages must be completed. And even the first stage is out of reach unless one has renounced the worldly life.

Malcolm wrote:
The Heart Sutra leads to the first bhumi, which was rather common in India, actually.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Thursday, August 21st, 2014 at 2:24 AM
Title: Re: Towards a resolution in Israel and Palestine
Content:
AlexanderS said:
What makes you say that?

Malcolm wrote:
It is the most sacred place to all three religions, ergo, it is the one that will most likely be the object of a terrorist attack.

AlexanderS said:
For me it makes less sense that anyone would nuke a place that is sacred to them. I can't see anyone other than religious nutcases being mental enough to use nuclear weapons in the modern world.

Without being that knowledgeable about Islam, I was under the impression that their most sacred place is Mecca.

Malcolm wrote:
The dome of the rock is in Jerusalem.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, August 21st, 2014 at 2:34 AM

Title: Re: Practices "for" ISIL

Content:

aparajita said:

This might be an odd question, but does anyone know of any practices that would be effective in helping to rid the world of the group that calls itself ISIL?

Malcolm wrote:

Dorje Drollo.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, August 21st, 2014 at 9:30 PM

Title: Re: Heart Sutra -- why study it?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

... the first bhumi ... was rather common in India, actually.

dzogchungpa said:

How do you know that?

Malcolm wrote:

Oral communication from various lamas.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, August 22nd, 2014 at 8:57 PM

Title: Re: Israel, Palestine, Antisemitism

Content:

Jikan said:

It's true that there is no consensus among contemporary Jews on many aspects of the topic of Israel. This is in evidence in the writings of such well-regarded thinkers as Judith Butler, for instance--it's not necessary to go to the whackaloon fringes of the interwebz to support this claim.

That said, given that this is a discussion board committed to Mahayana and Vajrayana Buddhism, it's not at all clear why or how this thread is relevant. Let's find a way to swing the discussion out of the gutter and back to the Dharma, or it'll be locked for good.

Malcolm wrote:

Kill this thread. Despite my complete lack of enchantment for Abrahamic religions, such conversations are worse than useless because apart from expressions of compassion for all involved, what is there really for Buddhists to discuss?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, August 22nd, 2014 at 9:24 PM

Title: Re: The Genre of the Western Buddhist Advice Book

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Dharma Lite™

Jikan said:

As part of a research project, I'm working my way through a number of advice books, particularly having to do with meditation and mindfulness (think Kornfield, Kabat-Zinn, et al). I've noticed that many of them share a set of formal characteristics, as though no nominally Buddhist meditation manual can make it into print without hitting a certain number of these marks:

- *short sentences, paragraphs, and chapters; extensive use of familiar quotation; minimal use of literary or technical diction; "easy reading"

- *encouraging, hand-holding tone; pitched to beginners (all of them, pitched to beginners)

- *appeal to science and/or clinical psychology

- *simultaneous appeal to "modernity" and to ancient precedents (ancient sages across traditions agree...)

- *quotations from Castaneda, Thoreau, Jung, the Christian desert fathers... appeal to a kind of universalism (attention is trans-cultural, the breath is trans-cultural)

- *appeal to simplicity, as defined against ritual practice

- *contradiction: relies on Buddhism as a source of authority or legitimacy, while simultaneously distancing itself from Buddhist traditions and practices beyond a select few

I'd like to know if others are familiar with these texts and might like to offer more particulars, or correctives to what I've put together here.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, August 22nd, 2014 at 11:40 PM

Title: Re: Death at Tibetan Buddhist meditation retreat in Arizona

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

What does anyone expect? Paltrul Rinpoche said:

These days have become a time when charlatans are more marketable than the

sublime.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, August 23rd, 2014 at 2:39 AM

Title: Re: Appropriateness of openly discussing sunyata

Content:

Gyurme Kundrol said:

...because either you are a fully qualified Guru who can teach the profound teachings to people totally accurately, gauge their readiness, and lead them to realization or you are not.

Malcolm wrote:

I guess there aren't any shades of grey in your world view.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, August 23rd, 2014 at 3:01 AM

Title: Re: Death at Tibetan Buddhist meditation retreat in Arizona

Content:

bryandavis said:

I also think the more "strict" a retreat the better.

Malcolm wrote:

Why? Are you speaking from personal experience?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, August 23rd, 2014 at 8:42 AM

Title: Re: Death at Tibetan Buddhist meditation retreat in Arizona

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

What does anyone expect? Paltrul Rinpoche said:

These days have become a time when charlatans are more marketable than the sublime.

Crazywisdom said:

Rinchen Dorje was the drupon in Arizona. He did a six year. Neither he nor Garchen are charlatans. I don't think any drupons are charlatans. I think they have become lax about who they let in. Maybe they need the money.

Malcolm wrote:

There is nothing in my post which could have led you to infer that I was talking about anyone in Drigung.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, August 23rd, 2014 at 9:56 PM

Title: Re: Accepting Yourself

Content:

Jesse said:

I think we all have aspects of ourselves we dislike. For a long while I have been trying to accept parts of myself that I truly hate. Things like anger, conceit, sexual impulses, greed, etc.

Malcolm wrote:

Why would you accept afflictive emotions? They are afflictive and are the root cause of suffering.

Either you renounce them, transform them or self-liberate them. But you certainly don't accept them. That way just leads to further rebirth in samsara.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, August 23rd, 2014 at 11:04 PM

Title: Re: Accepting Yourself

Content:

Jesse said:

I think we all have aspects of ourselves we dislike. For a long while I have been trying to accept parts of myself that I truly hate. Things like anger, conceit, sexual impulses, greed, etc.

Malcolm wrote:

Why would you accept afflictive emotions? They are afflictive and are the root cause of suffering.

Either you renounce them, transform them or self-liberate them. But you certainly don't accept them. That way just leads to further rebirth in samsara.

M

Jesse said:

I think mainly because we all have a tendency to think we're bad people because we have these afflictions, when that's not really the case. What I meant is to accept that they are a part of me, without feeling like they define me.

Malcolm wrote:

We do bad things, non-virtuous things, because we are afflicted. Afflictions are never a part of oneself but they do define us as sentient beings. If you want to stop being a

sentient being and start being an awakening being you have to deal with your afflictions via one of three paths I mentioned.

Why am I a sentient being and not a Buddha? Because I am subject to afflictions. How do I become a Buddha? By overcoming afflictions and attaining omniscience. How do I begin? By setting out on one of the three paths, depending on my capacity.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, August 24th, 2014 at 12:06 AM

Title: Re: Accepting Yourself

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

By overcoming afflictions and attaining omniscience.

dzogchungpa said:

Where can one buy these overcoming afflictions and attaining omniscience of which you speak?

Malcolm wrote:

Coming soon to Walmart, steeply discounted.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, August 24th, 2014 at 1:53 AM

Title: Re: The Genre of the Western Buddhist Advice Book

Content:

Konchog1 said:

Kalama Sutra. Kalama Sutra everywhere.

Like dude, even the Buddha said to like, you know, do your own thing and believe whatever you want man.

Malcolm wrote:

Right man, (toke), unless you know like someone else is telling you to, then you better not believe it man, cause (toke) you shouldn't believe anything (this s#it is awesome, cough).

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, August 24th, 2014 at 10:20 PM

Title: Re: Mixing Buddhist and non-Buddhist Practices?

Content:

Dan74 said:

I've seen these sort of discussions get a little heated in the past, because some people feel strongly that our practice should be kept pure and focused under the guidance of a realised master rather than shopping around spiritual materialism style. This view

certainly has some validity but I'd add that this is a false dichotomy.

Malcolm wrote:

How can something "have some validity" and yet be "a false dichotomy?"

Dan74 said:

At the end of the day, whatever inspires us and guides us to relinquish all that is unwholesome and to cultivate all that is wholesome, to grow in clarity and wisdom is Dharma, regardless what label it comes with.

Malcolm wrote:

Some Dharma is the Dharma of gods and humans, it isn't liberating, but it certainly can cause people to take higher rebirth in samsara because in general it encourages people to avoid the ten non-virtues.

Unfortunately, non-Buddhist Dharmas (and here we really are only talking about religions in which rebirth is accepted) also are contaminated with incorrect views, so whatever wisdom they lead to will only be mundane and contaminated. As the Buddha pointed out, there is no liberation outside of his Dharma and Vinaya. Someone might point out that there so called independent Buddhas (pratyekabuddhas) but it is held that they do not teach, remaining silent about their realization, hence the Buddha's statement, repeated by him in many sūtras through out his life remains true.

In terms of mixing practices, there is not much point. Someone might respond that Tibetan Buddhism is a mixture of Buddhism and Bon, but this is really a huge overstatement, while it is true that Buddhists adapted some worldly rituals into a Buddhist framework, such as smoke offerings, and various mundane rites to appease spirits and so on, by no means do they form an essential core of Tibetan Buddhism, since they are palliative rites designed to relieve temporary problems. Buddhism has never had a problem with people continuing to use such practices within the framework of Dharma — we can see this when Buddha instructs Ānanda to rely on brahmins to conduct the Buddha's funerary rites. However, just as you cannot be a citizen of two countries, you cannot have two refuges. One cannot, for example, take refuge in Buddha and Jesus. In other words, there is no reason for a Buddhist who is a former Catholic to take communion since a Buddhist understands that a) there is no such thing as original sin and b) that sins in general cannot be eliminated by washing with water, eating a wafer, etc.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, August 24th, 2014 at 11:01 PM

Title: Re: Mixing Buddhist and non-Buddhist Practices?

Content:

Dan74 said:

Malcolm,

It has validity because in practice many of us are contaminated by spiritual materialism,

lack of patience and perseverance. It is a false dichotomy because it doesn't always apply.

As for worldly dharmas, have you transcended worldly Dharmas, Malcolm? Are you sorted, free of neuroses, joyful, resourceful, disciplined, reliable, kind and forgiving, humble, hard-working and undemanding? These are just a few qualities I've observed in some followers of other religions that I could do well to improve in.

Of course we have the Paramitas and wonderful teachings on them. But for some people other teachings may actually resonate better, work better, because of their karma, their strong affinity with another wisdom tradition. I don't think you or I can honestly say that this is wrong, that this cannot be productive and conducive to liberation.

Malcolm wrote:

"Are you sorted, free of neuroses, joyful, resourceful, disciplined, reliable, kind and forgiving, humble, hard-working and undemanding."

Yes, for the most part. Though like any ordinary person I have my strongly afflicted moments.

Those "some people" are not followers of Buddhadharma. They follow other paths.

I can say that other paths are not conducive to the "liberation" we practitioners of Buddhadharma hold to be liberation since this liberation is very clearly defined by the Buddha. Liberation or freedom means being free from afflictive emotions which cause rebirth in samsara. That freedom cannot arise through other paths which encourage a view of soul or a self, or through philosophies which negate the truth of rebirth and karma.

It is true that people have their karmic propensities and are more attracted to this or that religion — it is not our job to interfere with their lives; but the sorrow of samsara is that sentient beings are confused about what will bring them ultimate happiness.

I would suggest strongly that anyone who feels that liberation, as defined in Buddhadharma, can be attained by any other means than realizing the nature of dependent origination and emptiness has not really understood the meaning of the Buddha's teachings on any level.

In other words Dan, other "wisdom" traditions are mundane paths that are not conducive to liberation. They are paths of samsara.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, August 24th, 2014 at 11:04 PM

Title: Re: Mixing Buddhist and non-Buddhist Practices?

Content:

M.G. said:

@Malcolm - That was a very informative answer.

Are there historical evidences of practitioners studying under, say, both Vajrayana and Hindu gurus?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, of course. The Natha tradition grew out of Hindu-Buddhist syncretism and many Nathas followed Buddhist gurus even though they may have begun as Hindus, such as the Indian Buddhaguptanatha, Tārānatha's teacher.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, August 24th, 2014 at 11:09 PM

Title: Re: Mixing Buddhist and non-Buddhist Practices?

Content:

Unknown said:

These are just a few qualities I've observed in some followers of other religions that I could do well to improve in.

Malcolm wrote:

BTW Dan, there are decent people everywhere. That does not take a religion.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, August 24th, 2014 at 11:55 PM

Title: Re: Mixing Buddhist and non-Buddhist Practices?

Content:

Dan74 said:

So let me get this straight - a Buddhist who is inspired by stories about Jesus's life and some teachings which help him cultivate kindness, forbearance and compassion, is wasting his time and getting further away from liberation?

I see plenty of potential for people to be inspired by all sorts of stories, teachings, day-to-day occurrences. There is Dharma in all sorts of places if one knows how to see.

Malcolm wrote:

Dan, what is the topic of the thread? "Mixing Buddhist and non-Buddhist Practices", right?

So, essentially, we are not talking about whether Jesus is an inspiring character for someone, our warm feelings about St., Francis of Assisi and so on.

We are talking about a technical issues, e.g, for example, whether one ought to sincerely attend a Catholic Mass, looking for redemption, as a Buddhist. In other words, we are discussing the appropriateness of someone who claims to follow Buddhadharma who also asserts that Jesus Christ is their lord and savior.

Someone who has taken refuge in the Three Jewels cannot at the same time take Jesus Christ as their lord and savior. They may imagine that they can, but all they succeed in doing is ignorantly destroying their refuge in the Three Jewels.

This is also the case with teachings such as emptiness and dependent origination. For example, I heard HH Dalai Lama, that bastion of ecumenicalism, state in 2005 in Tucson, AZ, that emptiness was not the business of Christians and that he generally felt that Christians ought to mind their own business. Emptiness, he said, was the business of followers of Buddhadharma, and that it was inappropriate for Christians to be interested in it. Why? Because Christians believe in ex nihilo creation, souls, and so on. Ex nihilo creation and dependent origination are mutually incompatible. One does not need to be a Buddhist to see this, as Lucretius said, ex nihilo nihil fit, "nothing comes from nothing" (but we leave all similarity with epicurean materialism here).

It's a little different with Hinduism and Buddhadharma. There are many mundane rites Buddhists can avail themselves of from Hinduism, and have done so for millennia. Even so, it is inappropriate for those who have taken refuge in the Three Jewels to take refuge in Brahma, Shiva or Vishnu and so on because the latter are mundane gods who have not realized the nature of reality and are themselves trapped in samsara, like Jesus, Allah, Jehovah, etc.

We cannot allow our warm and fuzzy feelings obscure the fact that Buddhadharma is something very precise and specific. It is not a method of "becoming a better person", nor is it a method of "resolving our unresolved issues", nor is it a practice of "mindfulness", nor is it a method of "becoming more compassionate", and so on. All of these things reduce Buddhadharma to the level of pop self-help manuals.

If someone from outside the Dharma wants to enter the Dharma he or she must leave their previous refuge behind. You cannot have two feet in two boats (try it, it is really, really difficult), you cannot serve two masters, etc.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, August 25th, 2014 at 12:22 AM

Title: Re: Mixing Buddhist and non-Buddhist Practices?

Content:

duckfiasco said:

We cannot allow our warm and fuzzy feelings obscure the fact that Buddhadharma is something very precise and specific. It is not a method of "becoming a better person", nor is it a method of "resolving our unresolved issues", nor is it a practice of "mindfulness", nor is it a method of "becoming more compassionate", and so on. All of these things reduce Buddhadharma to the level of pop self-help manuals. Nor should we negate the very real benefits Buddhism has for ordinary beings to be happy in this world, which can engender faith in them to pursue the path to its completion.

Malcolm wrote:

We don't negate it, but we don't use mundane benefits to to sell the Dharma. If our motivation for practicing Dharma is merely to be happier in this life, then we are not practicing Dharma at all.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, August 25th, 2014 at 12:28 AM

Title: Re: Bug in "The Practice of Dzogchen"

Content:

Sönam said:

Yes, it seems they are unequipped to answer ... we have asked the right for a publication they hold the copyright, and it tooks months before they contact their agency in Paris for they contact us.

Sönam

Malcolm wrote:

Snow Lion was sold to Shambhala in May 11, 2012. But I am sure they were in negotiations for a long while before hand. Hence, their lack of response, I imagine.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, August 25th, 2014 at 12:44 AM

Title: Re: Mixing Buddhist and non-Buddhist Practices?

Content:

Sönam said:

The fact is that there is more buddhists than follower of buddhadharma ...

Sönam

Malcolm wrote:

Ironic.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, August 25th, 2014 at 1:32 AM

Title: Re: Mixing Buddhist and non-Buddhist Practices?

Content:

kirtu said:

I personally have denied that one could benefit from the dharma of gods and men but I

was wrong. Some/most people can benefit as long as they are secure in refuge in the Buddhadharma. So Hindu mantras and some practices, for example, can have a place. See Mipham's Verses to the Eight Noble Auspicious One's for example. This includes a constrained invocation of Shiva and Ishvara.

Kirt

Malcolm wrote:

Who ever said there was no benefit in the Dharma of gods and humans? It assures birth in higher realms, as mentioned above.

If you bothered to read the thread carefully you will note that we addressed the issue of mundane practices from Hinduism already.

Weak countries may let you have citizenship in two nations, but if you are a US citizen, you cannot be a citizen of another country, unless you are a minor, but at some point you have to choose.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, August 25th, 2014 at 2:08 AM

Title: Re: Mixing Buddhist and non-Buddhist Practices?

Content:

kirtu said:

Not so. The US went all in on dual citizenship in the late 70's. Many nations permit dual citizenship like those weaklings the UK, Sweden, France and Switzerland. Ironically Holland and Germany stepped back from dual citizenship during the 70's although Germany now permits some forms of dual citizenship (technically Holland does too again but it's more restricted certainly than Germany or the US). The weak/strong country concept you are advancing is nonsense.

Malcolm wrote:

The UK does not permit you to be a dual citizen. They simply don't recognize that you have abandoned your citizenship unless you make a specific declaration to a British authority even if you for example renounced your allegiance to Britain by becoming a US citizen. Anyway, Kirt, this is off topic.

Traditionally, as you know, you cannot serve two kings, as the metaphor goes, and that was the point. You cannot have refuge in Dharma and also have refuge in Christianity.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, August 25th, 2014 at 4:50 AM

Title: Re: Mixing Buddhist and non-Buddhist Practices?

Content:

M.G. said:

@Malcolm - That was a very informative answer.

Are there historical evidences of practitioners studying under, say, both Vajrayana and Hindu gurus?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, of course. The Natha tradition grew out of Hindu-Buddhist syncretism and many Nathas followed Buddhist gurus even though they may have begun as Hindus, such as the Indian Buddhaguptanatha, Tārānatha's teacher.

M.G. said:

Interesting. Were aspects of Hindu yogic practice actually adopted by Buddhists and seen as conducive to liberation? Or was it more along the lines of learning worldly rites?

Malcolm wrote:

It is not really possible to explore this in a simple post. However, the long and short of it is that the highest Buddhist tantric systems present the body in a way entirely different than lower Buddhist schools such as Theravada and general Mahāyāna, or even lower tantra. In lower schools, things like the three kāyas and so on are exteriorized, but in the highest tantric systems they are understood to be implicit in the very structure of the body itself. The way the body is understood in Hindu systems is really not the same, so no, I do not think one can say that aspects of yoga as understood by Hindus were adopted by Buddhists.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, August 25th, 2014 at 4:56 AM

Title: Re: Dual citizenship

Content:

David N. Snyder said:

The U.S. allows her citizens to have dual-citizenship (if they so choose) with about 60 different nations:

<http://www.immihelp.com/citizenship/dual-citizenship-recognize-countries.html> " onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;" onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;

I knew about Israel because I have some family members that have done that, but didn't know that Iran was allowed.

Malcolm wrote:

sort of, this is what the State Department says:

Also, a person who is automatically granted another nationality does not risk losing U.S. nationality. However, a person who acquires a foreign nationality by applying for it may lose U.S. nationality. In order to lose U.S. nationality, the law requires that the person

must apply for the foreign nationality voluntarily, by free choice, and with the intention to give up U.S. nationality.

So in a case where another state grants one citizenship through marriage and so on, one can be a "dual citizen", but the website also stipulates that such a person when traveling must enter and leave using their US passport.

It also says:

The U.S. Government recognizes that dual nationality exists but does not encourage it as a matter of policy because of the problems it may cause.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, August 25th, 2014 at 4:58 AM

Title: Re: Dual citizenship

Content:

David N. Snyder said:

The U.S. allows her citizens to have dual-citizenship (if they so choose) with about 60 different nations:

Mkoll said:

I've heard that a US citizen who leaves still has to pay taxes to the US gov't, no matter where one goes. Is that true?

Malcolm wrote:

Not exactly. They have to pay taxes to the US when their income in that foreign country exceeds a certain amount, which is fairly high.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, August 25th, 2014 at 5:02 AM

Title: Re: Dual citizenship

Content:

kirtu said:

Not so. The US went all in on dual citizenship in the late 70's. Many nations permit dual citizenship like those weaklings the UK, Sweden, France and Switzerland. Ironically Holland and Germany stepped back from dual citizenship during the 70's although Germany now permits some forms of dual citizenship (technically Holland does too again but it's more restricted certainly than Germany or the US). The weak/strong country concept you are advancing is nonsense.

Malcolm wrote:

The UK does not permit you to be a dual citizen. They simply don't recognize that you have abandoned your citizenship unless you make a specific declaration to a British authority even if you for example renounced your allegiance to Britain by becoming a US citizen.

kirtu said:

That's not what the Her Majesty's

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/261499/bn18.pdf says:

THE LAW IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

1. A person is a dual national if he or she holds more than one nationality or citizenship at the same time. There are normally no restrictions, in United Kingdom law, on British nationals having the citizenship of one or more other countries as well. So you will not need to give up any other nationality if you become British (but see paragraphs 2 - 4 below). Similarly, if you are a British national and you acquire another nationality, you will not normally lose your British nationality. However, special rules apply to British protected persons and certain British subjects (see Note 1).

Kirt

Malcolm wrote:

Note one says:

If you are a British subject, you will lose that status automatically if you acquire any other nationality or citizenship (unless you are a British subject by connection with Ireland). If you are a British protected person, you will lose that status on acquiring any other nationality or citizenship.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, August 25th, 2014 at 6:41 AM

Title: Re: Dual citizenship

Content:

Seishin said:

I think that is a bit of confusion with terminology. UK does allow dual nationality (my wife and several friends and family members have dual nationality). A "British Subject" isn't the same as "British citizen" https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/British_subject " onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;" onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;

Gassho,

Seishin

Malcolm wrote:

Interesting.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, August 25th, 2014 at 7:20 PM

Title: Re: Practices "for" ISIL

Content:

aparajita said:

I've been thinking of starting a gofundme to raise funds for sponsoring 1,000,000 Dorje

Drollo mantras (or maybe Guru Drakphur,) 1,000,000 Vajrakilaya mantras, and 1,000,000 Singhamukha mantras (with the appropriate number of activity mantras too), and a large number of protector offerings. Maybe Palden Lhamo? I'm just guessing here, but it seems like the mamos would be particularly effective in dealing with people who follow a harsh, paternalistic religion (maybe?).

Malcolm wrote:

Not Magzorma, rather Rahula is the appropriate dharmapala for this purpose.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, August 26th, 2014 at 3:34 AM

Title: Re: Practices "for" ISIL

Content:

aparajita said:

I've been thinking of starting a gofundme to raise funds for sponsoring 1,000,000 Dorje Drollo mantras (or maybe Guru Drakphur,) 1,000,000 Vajrakilaya mantras, and 1,000,000 Singhamukha mantras (with the appropriate number of activity mantras too), and a large number of protector offerings. Maybe Palden Lhamo? I'm just guessing here, but it seems like the mamos would be particularly effective in dealing with people who follow a harsh, paternalistic religion (maybe?).

Malcolm wrote:

Not Magzorma, rather Rahula is the appropriate dharmapala for this purpose.

aparajita said:

I'm curious as to why. PM me if that's a better option than replying on here.

Malcolm wrote:

Because Rahula is the Dharmapala for destroying enemies of the Dharma, and IS certainly fits the bill.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, August 26th, 2014 at 6:50 AM

Title: Re: Practices "for" ISIL

Content:

aparajita said:

So, moving right along, does anyone have any suggestions about who might be most effective in performing these practices?

Malcolm wrote:

HH Sakya Trizen, Chatral Sangye Dorje, HH Taklung Tsetrul, etc.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, August 26th, 2014 at 11:20 PM

Title: Re: Practices "for" ISIL

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

And that is why the wrathful practices will fail, because (in this case) they are motivated by selfish egotistical concern. By hope and fear. That is why you don't hear anybody asking for practices to overcome the slaughter of innocent Palestinians, or the genocidal actions of Ukrainian nationalists, etc... because they don't feel that these are a threat to their own personal well-being. Well, sorry to be the one to inform you but protectors are not in the business of fortifying ego.

Malcolm wrote:

IS has threatened to destroy a major Buddhist heritage site. They are self-proclaimed enemies of Dharma.

Ukrainian and Israeli nationalists have declared no such program, therefore, there is no reason to petition Dharmapalas to defeat them.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, August 26th, 2014 at 11:48 PM

Title: Re: Practices "for" ISIL

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

IS has threatened to destroy a major Buddhist heritage site. They are self-proclaimed enemies of Dharma.

Ukrainian and Israeli nationalists have declared no such program, therefore, there is no reason to petition Dharmapalas to defeat them.

Will said:

What about many Muslims being active now in destroying, opposing and being hostile to Buddhism everywhere? Why confine the Dharmapalas work to just one group?

Malcolm wrote:

They are under surveillance

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, August 27th, 2014 at 12:13 AM

Title: Re: Practices "for" ISIL

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

IS has threatened to destroy a major Buddhist heritage site. They are self-proclaimed

enemies of Dharma.

Ukrainian and Israeli nationalists have declared no such program, therefore, there is no reason to petition Dharmapalas to defeat them.

Will said:

What about many Muslims being active now in destroying, opposing and being hostile to Buddhism everywhere? Why confine the Dharmapalas work to just one group?

Jikan said:

I've found the Muslims in my neighborhood and workplace to be supportive of my Buddhist activities--quite the opposite of destroying, opposing, and being hostile to them. The only opposition I've had has been from the most conservative corners of the "megachurch" movement, and from (weirdly enough!) the author of a recent book on "contemplative pedagogy." not sure what that was about.

I bring it up because it's important to be very careful indeed with the blanket generalizations.

Malcolm wrote:

I would imagine Will was talking about Talibans in Afghanistan and so on. But nevertheless, we will always be kaffirs...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, August 27th, 2014 at 12:31 AM

Title: Re: Vajradhara-title

Content:

zenman said:

What is the meaning of the title Vajradhara as in Vajradhara Chogyam Trungpa? Thanks.

Malcolm wrote:

It is Vidyādhara and it means "bearer of knowledge".

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, August 27th, 2014 at 12:43 AM

Title: Re: Practices "for" ISIL

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

IS has threatened to destroy a major Buddhist heritage site. They are self-proclaimed enemies of Dharma.

Ukrainian and Israeli nationalists have declared no such program, therefore, there is no reason to petition Dharmapalas to defeat them.

Sherab Dorje said:

Exactly. So because some here see it as a personal threat to their illusory sense of self, they react panic stricken wanting to lash out at a perceived enemy, but since the others (Ukrainian and Israeli nationalists) are not a personal threat, they don't care: self-centred egotistical motivation.

Malcolm wrote:

Threatening the Dharma threatens all sentient beings since the Dharma is the only source of refuge in samsara. Sponsoring wrathful pujas to counter the power of demonic human beings bent on destroying the Dharma is nothing but compassionate and benefits all sentient beings, including the demonic humans who are the object of such pujas.

Ordinary aggressors simply do not warrant such rites since they are no threat to the Dharma.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, August 27th, 2014 at 1:04 AM

Title: Re: Practices "for" ISIL

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

Please note: if people do not want this thread to end up locked and deleted (like almost every thread that even remotely touches on the subject of Islam) due to sweeping Islamophobic prejudicial remarks then they would do well to refrain from them.

Malcolm wrote:

While Muslims are not ipso facto bad people (quite the contrary), it must be recognized that Buddhism and Islam can barely coexist on the same planet — not because of Buddhist intolerance, but because of the systematic Islamic intolerance of other religions, specially the Salafis. The Saudis have been exporting Salafism for years.

Please keep in mind that Muslims wiped Persia clean of Zoroastrians within the space of 250 years, systematically forcing conversions and so on.

"Allah commanded us, by the mouth of His Prophet, to extend the dominion of Islam over all nations."

— History of the Parsis: including their manners, customs, religion, pg. 15; Dosabhai Framji Karaka, 1884.

Thus far, I see nothing to indicate that this fundamental mission statement has changed.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, August 27th, 2014 at 1:24 AM

Title: Re: Practices "for" ISIL

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Ordinary aggressors simply do not warrant such rites since they are no threat to the Dharma.

Sherab Dorje said:

All ignorant aggression is a threat to Dharma. An attack on any sentient being, is an attack on that beings enlightened nature. An attack on the Triple Gem.

Malcolm wrote:

Greg, the requisites for being considered a subject worthy of being the object of a wrathful rite are pretty specific. Attacking an ant mound just does not qualify that anteater for being the object of such a rite.

Further, the point is that such rites, conducted by people such as H Sakya Trizin and so on, have the power to liberate the consciousness of those demonic beings into the dharmadhātu. This is why we have so many such rites in Tibetan Buddhism in all four schools. They are not there merely for their symbolic value.

Sherab Dorje said:

Again though, what people are failing to see, and what I have been talking about from the very beginning, is that with an ego-centred motivation (and here you were just trying to justify an ego-centred motivation by camouflaging it with the term Dharma) the protector practice is bound to fail.

Malcolm wrote:

You may believe as you wish.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, August 27th, 2014 at 1:37 AM

Title: Re: Practices "for" ISIL

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

I mean they (Christians) are continuing their mission of trying to destroy Islam in Afghanistan and Iraq, for example, and are currently re-establishing their mission to destroy Judaism in Europe (again). Actually the Jews had an infinitely better time under the rule of the Muslim Ottoman Empire than they ever did under a Christian Empire. But this is an aside, since they are not attacking Buddhists I shouldn't care right?

Malcolm wrote:

You can care if you choose to, but such people are not included in the zhing bcu tshang ba'i bstan dgra, so it would be inappropriate to apply wrathful rites to such people. What is a zhing bcu tshang ba'i bstan dgra, an enemy of the doctrine in whom ten domains are

complete? They are someone who would

- 1) Harm the teachings
- 2) Despise the Three Jewels, Buddha, Dharma and Sangha
- 3) Plunder the Sangha
- 4) Despise Mahāyāna
- 5) Harm the person of the Guru.
- 6) Attack Vajra siblings
- 7) Cause obstacles in practice
- 8) Has total lack of love and compassion
- 9) Lacks samaya
- 10) Has false views about the result of karma.

I think it is fair to say that the extremists in IS fit the bill. It's not about Islam per se. It is about these kinds of people in general no matter what tīrthika religious group they belong to. That worldly protector some Gelugpas are fond of also fits the bill for such wrathful actions.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, August 27th, 2014 at 1:41 AM

Title: Re: Practices "for" ISIL

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

You may believe as you wish.

Sherab Dorje said:

There are two separate points being made here, which one are you responding to?

Malcolm wrote:

Both.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, August 27th, 2014 at 1:52 AM

Title: Re: Practices "for" ISIL

Content:

ngodrup said:

Therefore, the original post is reasonable.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, of course it is.

ngodrup said:

Every day at dusk, without fail, Jamdrak would perform a short subjugation ritual and throw a torma-an offering cake, which symbolized a weapon-toward the east.

"Rinpoche, why do you do this every day?" Jokiyab asked him.

"Oh dear!" the master explained. "From a country in the east, an evil force will rise up. It will utterly and completely destroy the Buddha's teachings in this snowy land of Tibet and leave the country in pitch-black darkness. This force cannot be stopped, but merely trying to stop it brings more benefit than if I were to chant the ritual for the peaceful and wrathful deities one hundred times and light ten thousand butter lamps. When I throw this torma, I imagine hitting the demon square in the head. It won't help, though; no one can repel this demon. Nevertheless, simply by trying, I will accumulate great merit and purify obscurations on the path to enlightenment."

Malcolm wrote:

— Blazing Splendor, pg. 178

We already know from the Kalacakra that at some point the mlecchas will take over the most of the world. Then we know what happens when Rudracakravartin magically defeats them in 2430.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, August 27th, 2014 at 2:31 AM

Title: Re: Practices "for" ISIL

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

irrelevancies snipped

Malcolm wrote:

I disagree with your assumptions about people's motivations.

Edited out personal remarks.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, August 27th, 2014 at 2:45 AM

Title: Re: Practices "for" ISIL

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

irrelevancies snipped

Malcolm wrote:

I disagree with your assumptions about people's motivations. But usual, you must have some magic crystal you examine which allows you to know with certainty what other

people are thinking.

Sherab Dorje said:

Yes, well, I already explained my hypothesis, but you did not answer my question. The question is (maybe I didn't phrase it clearly): Do you believe that ego-centred motivation destroys the efficacy of a practice?

Malcolm wrote:

It depends on what you mean by "ego-centered".

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, August 27th, 2014 at 2:50 AM

Title: Re: Dzogchen: Query Regarding the 'Guru'

Content:

Concordiadiscordi said:

Do you deem it absolutely necessary to establish a direct relationship with a living guru of explicitly human form in order to engage the Way of Dzogchen?

Malcolm wrote:

Of course. You cannot receive transmission from a book.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, August 27th, 2014 at 3:50 AM

Title: Re: Practices "for" ISIL

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

Yes, well, I think I'm about finished here.

Mkoll said:

Maybe if you were arguing in a different sub-forum, you'd have a good case. But coming from a relatively less biased observer (less biased since I don't practice Tibetan Buddhism though that also means more ignorant of it), it seems as though Malcolm's list confirms the opposing argument.

Sherab Dorje said:

Even if one has the qualities in the list then... But STILL one needs the correct motivation on behalf of the practitioner. Somebody may qualify based on the listed qualities, but I may "target" them because their dog crapped on my lawn rather than... in which case...

I fail to see how my reasoning is incorrect and instead of answers I am given smoke screens, so I'm finished here, mainly coz there is nothing left to learn.

Malcolm wrote:

Your point was irrelevant, actually.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, August 27th, 2014 at 4:04 AM

Title: Re: Practices "for" ISIL

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Your point was irrelevant, actually.

Sherab Dorje said:

I'm not interested in having to wring complete answers out of you Malcolm. The show is all yours.

Malcolm wrote:

The point greg, is that you entered the thread with a patronizing:

Sherab Dorje said:

Instead of looking to subjugate the negativity of others, one would probably be better off in trying to overcome their own mental poisons.

Malcolm wrote:

Then, we spent three pages trying to keep the page on topic.

Edited out personal remarks.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, August 27th, 2014 at 4:05 AM

Title: Re: Dzogchen: Query Regarding the 'Guru'

Content:

Concordiadiscordi said:

The myriad things surely cannot be exhausted by books and humans alone?

Malcolm wrote:

"gcig shes kun grol"

Knowing one thing liberates all things.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, August 27th, 2014 at 4:54 AM

Title: Re: Practices "for" ISIL

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The point greg, is that you entered the thread with a patronizing:

Sherab Dorje said:

Instead of looking to subjugate the negativity of others, one would probably be better off in trying to overcome their own mental poisons.

Really? And here is me thinking that was the whole point of Mahayana Buddhist practice: identifying and dealing with ones own flaws. Then, we spent three pages trying to keep the page on topic.

Checking ones motivation before engaging in (especially wrathful subjugation) practices is not off-topic in the slightest.

Malcolm wrote:

Actually, Greg, we were discussing a Vajrayāna practice.

Edited out personal remarks.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, August 27th, 2014 at 10:24 PM

Title: Re: Dzogchen: Query Regarding the 'Guru'

Content:

Concordiadiscordi said:

My personal conviction is that no single tradition, school, lineage, or method may lay claim to an exclusive monopoly on the Great Perfection.

Malcolm wrote:

Dzogchen is the name of the result of a specific path, just as Prajñāpāramita is the name of the result of a different specific path, and Mahāmudra the name of the result of yet another path.

If you want to realize Buddhahood under the name of Dzogchen, you need to receive teachings on it and practice that path. Dzogchen is something very specific and very precise and the instructions to realize its path is not found in other schools. It is not a question of whether the Buddhahood in Dzogchen is the same or different than Buddhahood realized in sutra or tantra, it isn't. But the path is quite different.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, August 27th, 2014 at 10:45 PM

Title: Re: Dzogchen: Query Regarding the 'Guru'

Content:

Konch said:

Well.. According to Dzogchen history if Im not mistaken, Garab Dorje first received the dzogchen teachings not from a human teacher.

Malcolm wrote:

Garab Dorje was a nirmanakāya, awakened from birth.

Konch said:

Dudjom Lingpa also comes to mind in this case due to the colourful nature in which he received the dzogchen teachings.

Malcolm wrote:

Dudjom Lingpa has many gurus when he was young.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, August 27th, 2014 at 10:46 PM

Title: Re: Sadhana of Mahamudra (Trungpa)

Content:

Jikan said:

Some time ago I paid a visit to a local Shambhala center, and joined in the practice of the Sadhana of Mahamudra. There was a brief instruction prior. It seems to me that there's a lot going on in this sadhana that no introduction can cover. I'd like to understand this practice better so that next time I have the opportunity to join in, I'll be able to participate more fully.

Does anyone have any audio materials available on this practice that are unrestricted they may wish to make available to me?

Many thanks.

Malcolm wrote:

It's an anuyoga Hūṃ sgrub. Apart from details, that is the main point.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, August 28th, 2014 at 12:43 AM

Title: Re: Keeping Precepts your experience

Content:

duckfiasco said:

Precepts are very difficult for some people.

Malcolm wrote:

Most people can refrain from taking life, lying and stealing.

Sexual misconduct and drinking alcohol, that is a little harder.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, August 28th, 2014 at 12:51 AM

Title: Re: Dzogchen: Query Regarding the 'Guru'

Content:

Jikan said:

"Buddhahood is the goal" is the theme in common between Ekayana teachings and Dzogchen.

Malcolm wrote:

In general, Tibetan Buddhism has a whole subscribes the Ekayāna ideal since there is but one result to attain.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, August 28th, 2014 at 1:09 AM

Title: Re: Dzogchen: Query Regarding the 'Guru'

Content:

LastLegend said:

Dzogchen has a unique way to access it?

Jikan said:

This one.

Dharmakaya is Dharmakaya, realization is realization in whatever school you might practice in.

Dzogchenpas claim that the difference is in the time it takes someone to realize it by different means (Dzogchen being the fastest). And yes, different schools disagree.

Malcolm wrote:

The only people who disagree that Dzogchen is the most direct path are people who honestly have no idea what Dzogchen is.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, August 28th, 2014 at 2:08 AM

Title: Re: Dzogchen: Query Regarding the 'Guru'

Content:

Will said:

Concord paraphrased: What I question is whether such a teacher or guide would necessarily have to be flesh and blood?

No, but the realms of the non-physical are chock full of bad entities that delight in impersonating Sages and great Gurus. An 'ordinary' human guru has a lineage and disciples that can attest to his qualifications, in addition to your own impressions. The non-physical 'guide' has only your unenlightened self and the assertions from it to help you appraise him.

Malcolm wrote:

This is based upon the fact that ordinary people can only interact on the nirmanakāya level. Therefore, coarse physical contact with a human guru is a necessity for all of us who were not born high bodhisattvas on the stages.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, August 28th, 2014 at 3:52 AM

Title: Re: Dzogchen: Query Regarding the 'Guru'

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The only people who disagree that Dzogchen is the most direct path are people who honestly have no idea what Dzogchen is.

dzogchungpa said:

What do you mean by direct in this context?

Malcolm wrote:

immediate, direct, personal experience of your real state, etc.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, August 28th, 2014 at 3:57 AM

Title: Re: Dzogchen: Query Regarding the 'Guru'

Content:

Will said:

Concord paraphrased: What I question is whether such a teacher or guide would necessarily have to be flesh and blood?

Paul said:

Interestingly, in the Zhang Zhung Nyengyud lineage, the first master of the lineage was a deva called Lhabon Yongsu Dagpa and the second was a naga, Lubon Banam. Everyone after that was a human.

Malcolm wrote:

well, depending on how the lineage is counted, also prior to Dzogchen spreading in human dimensions, there were vidyādhara for the nāgas and so on as well.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, August 28th, 2014 at 8:34 PM

Title: Re: Mixing Buddhist and non-Buddhist Practices?

Content:

Dan74 said:

OK, for me this thread was about using non-Buddhist methods in with Buddhist methods, not following two religions. I gave some examples of folks who did follow Buddhism as well as Christianity and it might be worth giving them a look, but this is not

something I identify with, nor have I given it any attention so far.

Malcolm wrote:

It is axiomatically impossible to be both a Christian, in the sense of accepting Jesus as your lord and savior, and a Buddhist.

Dan74 said:

On the other hand, what I've said in this thread is simply that various aspects of other traditions (and for that matter psychology, etc) can be helpful on our path to liberation.

Malcolm wrote:

For example?

Dan74 said:

Whether or not one attends the mass, taking to heart Jesus's teachings and being inspired by his example, is following aspects of Christianity, though one may not call oneself a Christian, nor accept Jesus as lord and saviour.

Malcolm wrote:

That's a stretch.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, August 28th, 2014 at 8:51 PM

Title: Re: 13 Bhumi model?

Content:

zenman said:

Which school uses the 13 bhumi model? Any good sources/books on this?

Malcolm wrote:

It comes from the mother tantras. In general the path section of Kongtrul's Buddhist Encyclopedia should have something on it.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, August 28th, 2014 at 11:28 PM

Title: Re: Mixing Buddhist and non-Buddhist Practices?

Content:

Sönam said:

As far as Buddha's teaching is about cessation of suffering, it is the only dharma doing so ... and it cannot be compared to any other dharma. Doing so is a fallacy.

Karma Dorje said:

I think much too much is made of doctrine. Any symbol system can be used by a siddha to wake people up, including Christianity. It's just that some are more direct than others and some (like Christianity) put a lot of unnecessary doctrinal obstacles in the way.

It is certainly not a fallacy to compare Buddhist dharma with other very similar systems like ajātivāda advaita vedanta, or better yet to practice either or both. Everyone likes to think they have a monopoly on Truth. It creates a lot of unnecessary division.

Malcolm wrote:

Ajātivāda was borrowed from Mahdyamaka into Advaita by Gaudapada.

But since it is not grounded in dependent origination, even Gaudapada's presentation misses the point.

Anyway, as you and I have discussed before, I do not think that the various liberations bandied about by this and that school are even commensurate with one another. That is to say, I don't think non-Buddhists and so on are necessarily in the same mountain range as Buddhadharma, much less climbing the same mountain.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, August 28th, 2014 at 11:35 PM

Title: Re: A small victory, still more questions than answers

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

You finished the full 111,111 repetitions of the 100 syllable mantra?

Challenge23 said:

My teacher stated that he only wanted 100,000 but other than that, yes.

Malcolm wrote:

Considering that you have had countless past lifetimes, it is a bit much to expect that 100,00 mantras is going to remove the negativity of all of that. However, there are specific signs of accomplishing the practice. If you have those signs, then you have really accomplished the goals of the practice. Counting a number is really not the point.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, August 29th, 2014 at 12:51 AM

Title: Re: Mixing Buddhist and non-Buddhist Practices?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Ajātivāda was borrowed from Mahdyamaka into Advaita by Gaudapada.

But since it is not grounded in dependent origination, even Gaudapada's presentation misses the point.

Anyway, as you and I have discussed before, I do not think that the various liberations bandied about by this and that school are even commensurate with one another. That is to say, I don't think non-Buddhists and so on are necessarily in the same mountain

range as Buddhadharma, much less climbing the same mountain.

Karma Dorje said:

Yes, it all hinges on how much the ideas about liberation matter compared with the realization that arises from contemplation. From what my guru taught and what I have seen in my own experience, the conceptual structures really don't need to be compared with a view to a single correct doctrinal viewpoint, as correct doctrine for each being is a factor of his or her own traces and predisposition.

I think one needs to receive the Mahavakyas from a lineage teacher and practice them to realization before one can comment on their topography relative to Buddhist dharma. I don't think that treating advaita strictly as an intellectual position is of much use.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, and I don't agree since this assumes that one cannot examine a map to understand the layout of two distinct geographical regions.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, August 29th, 2014 at 1:14 AM

Title: Re: Mixing Buddhist and non-Buddhist Practices?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, and I don't agree since this assumes that one cannot examine a map to understand the layout of two distinct geographical regions.

Karma Dorje said:

Except that in this case you are talking about two maps that use different landmarks to portray a single territory, not a single map of two regions. Unless one has actually walked the terrain by both routes, it seems pointless to me to merely use one map to invalidate the other. But this is obviously not a discussion that we can resolve one way or another.

Malcolm wrote:

Don't think I agree, the basis and result posited are different, despite that what may at first glance appear to similar terrain.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, August 29th, 2014 at 1:21 AM

Title: Re: Mixing Buddhist and non-Buddhist Practices?

Content:

Anders said:

In either case, the territory is your own mind.

Malcolm wrote:

Not necessarily so. Take Samkhya for example. Your own mind [manas] is regarded as being inert and non-sentient. The whole Buddhist project, according to a Yoga-Samkhya perspective is just involvement in prakṛiti, at the expense of realizing puruṣa, etc.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, August 29th, 2014 at 1:46 AM

Title: Re: Mixing Buddhist and non-Buddhist Practices?

Content:

Karma Dorje said:

I am not saying it appears similar on first glance. I am saying that after years of practicing advaita vedanta and Shakta tantra with a guru, it's clear to me that there is little substantive difference between the resultant contemplations while the symbologies can diverge widely. Equally, it is clear that there are considerably more methods to work with in Buddhist dharma and it is in general more direct.

Malcolm wrote:

It is not the contemplations that are important, it is the view brought to contemplation that makes the difference. For example, there is no actual difference between the Hindu Nirvikalpa samadhi and Vajropama samadhi in terms of its content, but the fact that one is accompanied by insight and the other is not makes the difference between whether it is mundane or liberative.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, August 29th, 2014 at 2:07 AM

Title: Re: Mixing Buddhist and non-Buddhist Practices?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

It is not the contemplations that are important, it is the view brought to contemplation that makes the difference

dzogchungpa said:

How do you know that?

Malcolm wrote:

buddha said so.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, August 29th, 2014 at 4:10 AM

Title: Re: Mixing Buddhist and non-Buddhist Practices?

Content:

Karma Dorje said:

I am not saying it appears similar on first glance. I am saying that after years of practicing advaita vedanta and Shakta tantra with a guru, it's clear to me that there is little substantive difference between the resultant contemplations while the symbologies can diverge widely. Equally, it is clear that there are considerably more methods to work with in Buddhist dharma and it is in general more direct.

Malcolm wrote:

It is not the contemplations that are important, it is the view brought to contemplation that makes the difference. For example, there is no actual difference between the Hindu Nirvikalpa samadhi and Vajropama samadhi in terms of its content, but the fact that one is accompanied by insight and the other is not makes the difference between whether it is mundane or liberative.

Karma Dorje said:

Have you experienced the Hindu nirvikalpa or sahaja samadhi and compared the two or are you speculating based on texts?

Malcolm wrote:

I am not speculating, I am reporting what it is stated in the authoritative texts of the Buddhist tradition. Now, you may not feel that these texts are authoritative, but for me they are and that is the end of it.

When we talk about "insight" we are talking very specifically about the Buddha's experience of Vajropama samadhi and what he reports and teaches. This kind of non-conceptual samadhi, the samadhi of cessation merely creates causes for rebirth in this or that loka, like all mundane samadhis and dhyanas unless one has attained the path of seeing.

Now in turn, unless you can assure us that in fact you are speaking from detailed knowledge of having experienced and realized both paths, how can your perspective be anything other than a speculation based on your own suppositions or someone else's opinion?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, August 29th, 2014 at 6:35 AM

Title: Re: Mixing Buddhist and non-Buddhist Practices?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Now in turn, unless you can assure us that in fact you are speaking from detailed knowledge of having experienced and realized both paths, how can your perspective be anything other than a speculation based on your own suppositions or someone else's opinion?

Karma Dorje said:

Actually, relying on the words of an enlightened guru is not merely someone else's opinion-- it is buddhavacana.

Malcolm wrote:

In other words, someone else's opinion. Further, a guru's words are only buddhavacana to the extent that they correspond with the Dharma, as Sakya Pandita makes very clear.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, August 29th, 2014 at 8:29 PM

Title: Re: Dzogchen: Query Regarding the 'Guru'

Content:

Concordiadiscordi said:

Transmission may be necessary, but the cult of the guru is sorely mistaken in assuming that their preferred methodology is the only viable mode of transmission for attaining the Way, or Great Perfection.

Malcolm wrote:

The Dzogchen tradition itself asserts a Guru is necessary:

The virtuous mentor is like a precious jewel which produces everything.

— Soaring Great Garuda

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.

— The Inner Potentiality

The commentary to this runs:

For example, like applying ferrous sulfate to gold, a guru obtains the empowerment and agamas of the authentic lineage. The guru moistened by the experience of realization and who is diligent in the meaning possesses the qualities that are praised in the collections of the teachings. If one should meet a guru who is devoted to compassion and is diligent with teaching, he should be seen as teacher who is a great treasure. Make a request that corresponds with the collection of the teachings and please him with a positive attitude. Request the teachings, and thoroughly ascertain the view. One must understand the deviations and obscurations from beginning to end, and one must comprehend what is the point of the meaning.

It is thus axiomatic that in order to practice Dzogchen, one must find a qualified guru and follow that person until one has realized the goals of the path. There is really nothing to discuss with regard to this. People who express opinions contrary to what is stated in the tantras and agamas of Dzogchen about the absolute necessity of following a qualified master are merely expressing their ignorance. By persisting in such opinions, they merely widen the gulf between themselves and the possibility of finding such a

qualified master.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, August 29th, 2014 at 9:14 PM

Title: Re: Karma in Buddhism

Content:

Vajrasvapna said:

I believe Tibetan interpretation of Yogacara is incorrect...

Malcolm wrote:

It is not a Tibetan interpretation. It is the presentation of Yogacara which is found in the Yogacara section of the Tarkajvala of Bhavya.

Vajrasvapna said:

Khenchen Palden Sherab Rinpoche and Khenpo Tsewang Dongyal Rinpoche also have similar view with my "As Mipham Rinpoche states, to believe that tathagatagarbha is a substantially existent thing would contradict the teachings of both Nagarjuna and the Prajnaparamita Sutras. From Mipham's perspective, there is no contradiction between tathagatagarbha and Nagarjuna's teachings

Malcolm wrote:

Now you are conflating the Tathāgatagarbha and Yogacara schools.

Vajrasvapna said:

nor is there any contradiction between the teachings of Asanga and Nagarjuna; nor is there a contradiction between Rangtong and Shentong schools of thought.

Malcolm wrote:

Karl B identifies two kinds of presentations of the three natures. The one presented by Bhavya he terms type 1. The one presented in gzhan stong and in a couple of very late Indian texts he labels type 2. He admits that all the so called classical Yogachara authors, Asanga, Vasubandhu, etc., use the type 1 scheme.

Vajrasvapna said:

In my perception, Yogacara is a psychological view of the teachings of Prajnaparamita, together with the teachings of Maitreya. It is not a contradiction of the teachings of Nagarjuna.

Malcolm wrote:

Yogacara is a realist school. Their position forces them to assert that jñāna is real.

Vajrasvapna said:

It is curious that despite the Tibetans claim that prasangika represent the view of Dzogchen, Manjusrimitra states that logic is not really satisfactory:

Malcolm wrote:

You are not really understanding what it is about "Prasanga" that Longchenpa, for example, claims to be consistent with Dzogchen. It is not that the means of analysis that is the same, it is the conclusion, i.e., freedom from extremes.

Vajrasvapna said:

Some writers, like Namkhai Norbu, say Manjusrimitra was a scholar of Yogacara and so he used the terminology of this school to explain Dzogchen. I found no Manjusrimitra's biography, except this

one: <http://www.dharmafellowship.org/biographies/historicalsaints/manjusrimitra.htm>.

It says he was not a scholar of Yogacara, but an anti-Yogacara: "The Mahapandit Manjusrimitra represented the classical, scholastic tradition of Madhyamaka. He was the uncontested head of the great monastic University of Nalanda, and thus representative of a long historical scholarly line that considered itself the pinnacle of orthodoxy. He viewed anything to do with Yogacara as a false doctrine". If true, then it makes nonsense to say that he was just using the term from a school that he advocated earlier.

Malcolm wrote:

Everything on that website should be viewed with suspicion.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, August 29th, 2014 at 9:32 PM

Title: Re: Dzogchen: Query Regarding the 'Guru'

Content:

Concordiadiscordi said:

"All authority of any kind, especially in the field of thought and understanding, is the most destructive, evil thing. Leaders destroy the followers and followers destroy the leaders. You have to be your own teacher and your own disciple. You have to question everything that man has accepted as valuable, as necessary. [...] To be free of all authority, of your own and that of another, is to die to everything of yesterday, so that your mind is always fresh, always young, innocent, full of vigor and passion. It is only in that state that one learns and observes. And for this a great deal of awareness is required, actual awareness of what is going on inside yourself, without correcting it or telling it what it should or should not be, because the moment you correct it you have established another authority, a censor."

— J. Krishnamurti

Malcolm wrote:

Krishnamurti is not an authority on Dzogchen, or even Buddhadharma. His opinion is completely irrelevant to the topic at hand.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, August 29th, 2014 at 10:08 PM

Title: Re: Mixing Buddhist and non-Buddhist Practices?

Content:

Karma Dorje said:

What we are talking about is whether realization is possible without having the specific conceptual frameworks of Buddhist dharma. I think that Buddhism provides a particularly clear conceptual framework and corpus of methods to discover the natural state. However, I don't believe those conceptual frameworks to deal with our confusion are of themselves a necessary precursor to realization.

You are free to choose whose opinions you value. I will continue to follow the words of my guru, as they accord with my experience after putting them into practice. Anyway, I know there is little chance of common ground on this issue at this time.

Malcolm wrote:

Your Guru was a Buddhist monk correct? A Nyingmapa correct? Someone who spent some time as a Hindu renunciate and then moved on to become a Buddhist practitioner?

This is hardly a ringing endorsement for your view that liberation, freedom from rebirth in samsara, is something your teacher held was possible outside of Buddhadharma.

Some people think realization can come about through meditation alone [this is the Hindu view in general]. But this is definitely not the Buddha's teaching. The Buddha's teaching is that view informs meditation.

Right view is at the head of the path.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, August 29th, 2014 at 10:16 PM

Title: Re: Practices "for" ISIL

Content:

Ivo said:

The Dharmapalas can not be made to act on behalf of selfish intentions, but they will respond to someone with pure samaya who has legitimate concerns, even if this practitioner is still a samsaric being (and thus have a mixed motivation). If that was not the case, then only Buddhas would have been able to invoke them (absurd), and there would have been no point in any dharmapala practices, actually. The motivation of a practitioner on the path is always flawed, since there is still samsaric vision. But the intention to subdue gross violence through wrathful means is a legitimate one in Vajrayana, especially when we are requesting the Dharmapalas for help and not trying to liberate beings ourselves without the proper capacity or qualifications.

Malcolm is right that Dza Rahula should be invoked by all means necessary. As for

wrathful yidam practices, these will work only if those doing them are qualified. I have my doubts that requesting a monastery to do that could be effective. At this point in time there are not many such practitioners, H.H. Sakya Trisin is certainly one of them, Chatral Rinpoche most definitely. Making a formal request to Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche about this however is the easiest option, IMHO, although I am pretty sure that he is already doing something about it. A real master performing Kilaya lower activity or something similar can do more than a thousand monastics mumbling mantras and waiting for the tea break.

My personal opinion is that ISIS is a very valid threat to the Dharma, in every possible sense. However this should not be an "us vs. them" situation, although I admit that it can very easily become just that. That's why there is a lot of merit in Greg's posts too.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, August 29th, 2014 at 10:58 PM

Title: Re: Dzogchen: Query Regarding the 'Guru'

Content:

Concordiadiscordi said:

"All authority of any kind, especially in the field of thought and understanding, is the most destructive, evil thing. Leaders destroy the followers and followers destroy the leaders."

Paul said:

That's dumb. These are not 'destructive, evil' people...

Malcolm wrote:

Well, the poor guy has no idea what he is waffling on about.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, August 29th, 2014 at 11:00 PM

Title: Re: Mixing Buddhist and non-Buddhist Practices?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Some people think realization can come about through meditation alone [this is the Hindu view in general].

dzogchungpa said:

Really? That's the Hindu view in general? Did you take a survey or something?

Malcolm wrote:

Well, there are some Advaitans who think you can just intellectualize your way to liberation...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, August 29th, 2014 at 11:33 PM

Title: Re: Mixing Buddhist and non-Buddhist Practices?

Content:

conebeckham said:

...and there are some Buddhists, apparently, who think the intellect is sufficient for an experiential understanding of emptiness.

Just sayin'...

Malcolm wrote:

The point of course is that in Dharma, a correct conceptual understanding of emptiness is required to realize emptiness.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, August 30th, 2014 at 12:14 AM

Title: Re: Mixing Buddhist and non-Buddhist Practices?

Content:

Karma Dorje said:

That's not the general Hindu view, if one can even say such a thing exists with the plethora of viewpoints comprised under the rubric "Hindu". Vicara is not intellectualization.

Malcolm wrote:

Well, provide your account of what liberation is in Hinduism as you understand it, and how it is attained. Then we will stack it up against what the Buddha taught and see how it measures up.

One of the difficulties here of course is that even the Buddhist idea of what constitutes rebirth is complete different than the Hindu idea. Ideas about whether karma are also totally different. The notion of a self of course has to be addressed, since this concept is refuted in Buddhadharma (apart from those modern perverts who think that Buddha taught a self and what pertains to a self), and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, August 30th, 2014 at 12:27 AM

Title: Re: Mixing Buddhist and non-Buddhist Practices?

Content:

Karma Dorje said:

Absolutely *any* symbol system can be used by a realized teacher to wake their students up.

Nonsense. You have absolutely no evidence that this is the case. In order to prove this, you would have to produce someone who achieved at minimum stream entry through a

non-Buddhist "symbol system". Such a person never existed.

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.

Mahāparinibbana sutta.

The Buddha repeated this statement many times in earlier sutras.

Right view proceeding from yogi pratyaksha can inform any approach.

How are you defining yogic pratyakṣa?

As I have said repeatedly, Buddhist dharma is more explicit and has more methods than any other system I have seen/practiced. However, not everyone has a karmic connection to it. If we can use the traces of sentient beings to hook them into their own awakening, we should. This is the point of infusing other systems with the energy of practice and realization.

Malcolm wrote:

There is no awakening outside of Buddhadharma. The best we can hope for those following the yānas of devas and humans is a higher rebirth and eventual contact with the Buddhadharma.

Does this mean we should stop teaching Yoga Sutras, etc.? No, of course not. But after a certain point it has to become clear to any practitioner where they have confidence and faith. If someone is really a Shaivaite, Vaishnava or even a follower of Franklin Jones, what need would they have to follow Buddhadharma? They've chosen their refuge. It is not our job to change that. But we should not, in a rush to ecumenicism, erase the distinction between Buddhadharma and Sanatanadharma. They do not point to the same reality, they do not have the same assumptions about karma, rebirth and liberation, and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, August 30th, 2014 at 12:28 AM

Title: Re: Mixing Buddhist and non-Buddhist Practices?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

...those modern perverts who think that Buddha taught a self and what pertains to a self...

dzogchungpa said:

Such as?

Malcolm wrote:

Its a pretty inclusive statement.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, August 30th, 2014 at 12:35 AM

Title: Re: Dzogchen: Query Regarding the 'Guru'

Content:

monktastic said:

I'll share a crazy idea.

If a tradition claims that realization simply cannot be had without a connection to its lineage, then perhaps those who were destined to attain a little realization anyway will not be bothered by this claim that seemingly contradicts their own experience.

Malcolm wrote:

That is not the claim that is being advanced. The claim that is being advanced is that Dzogchen refers to the result brought about through a specific path, the Dzogchen path. Mahamudra is a path brought about through its path [principally the two stages]; and Prajñāpāramita through its path [the six perfections].

These three results may be the same in essence, but the reason for the difference in name is that the paths used to reach this result are different.

On the other hand, Buddhism does claim that outside its purview there is no liberation at all.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, August 30th, 2014 at 12:56 AM

Title: Re: Mixing Buddhist and non-Buddhist Practices?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

There is no awakening outside of Buddhadharma. The best we can hope for those following the yānas of devas and humans is a higher rebirth and eventual contact with the Buddhadharma.

Karma Dorje said:

If there is one thing you like to do, it is to make sweeping and emphatic claims. After watching several of your volte-face, I can't help but wonder why you don't take a more aporetic stance.

However, you have your disposition and I have mine. As I said, there is precious little chance of either of us convincing the other of our respective positions.

Malcolm wrote:

There were some things which I hold as deep convictions: dependent origination, emptiness, rebirth and karma. I also deeply hold the conviction that apart from the Buddha and his followers, liberation as understood and taught by the Buddha is not

achievable outside of his path. You can examine my posts for the past 20 years, and you will see that I never vary from these points. People like to make a big deal out of some superficial "volte faces" I have shared with you all, but in reality the core of what I understand to be unique about Buddhadharma has not changed in 20 years and will not change since it arises out of my experience of the teachings, as an examination of my posts will show.

The reason why I do not express doubt about whether there can be realization of the same ultimate truths by those who do not follow Buddhadharma is that if such people did have the same realization as the Buddha and his followers, they would teach exactly what Buddha and his followers taught, i.e. dependent origination, emptiness and so on. Since they don't teach Buddhadharma, I question the claim that they have realized what the Buddha realized. I don't think there has ever been anyone on this globe who has ever had realization superior to the Buddha's total perfect awakening, not in any Hindu sects, not in any Jain sects, much less traditional Chinese religion, Islam, Christianity, or Judaism. I do not think they even have partial realization.

Of course there is mundane wisdom in all of these non-Buddhist traditions, no one denies that. But when it comes right down to realizing the nature of reality, as the Rig pa rang shar points out:

As such, also the three hundred and sixty views
can be gathered into four categories.

Further those can be included
in eternalism and annihilationism.

Those also can be included in meaningless nihilism.

This is the extent of the worldly views.

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.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, August 30th, 2014 at 1:14 AM

Title: Re: Mixing Buddhist and non-Buddhist Practices?

Content:

Karma Dorje said:

He taught according to the needs, desires and predispositions of his students. This included having many Hindu students in India right up until his poor health prevented travel.

Malcolm wrote:

Allow me to illustrate a point. For example, I studied Yoga and Samkhya with Ramaswami. If someone should ask me to teach a course on the Yoga Sutras, then I would. I would present its point of view to those students who were interested in it.

When pressed, would I claim that I followed the version of liberation presented in that text? No, of course not, no more than Ramaswami, when pressed, admitted that he was an Advaitan, even though his guru, Krishnamācārya was a Vaiśṇava in the Ramanuja tradition (Viśtādvaita).

If I am teachings Ayurveda, I teach Samkhya; when teaching Tibetan Medicine, I teach Buddhadharma. I think that the latter is more profound than the former. But Samkhya has its uses, even if its ultimate view is a problem.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, August 30th, 2014 at 1:25 AM

Title: Re: Mixing Buddhist and non-Buddhist Practices?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The reason why I do not express doubt about whether there can be realization of the same ultimate truths by those who do not follow Buddhadharma is that if such people did have the same realization as the Buddha and his followers, they would teach exactly what Buddha and his followers taught, i.e. dependent origination, emptiness and so on.

dzogchungpa said:

So if you decided that the Buddha did not in fact teach emptiness, which I believe was actually your position at one point, then you would hold that his realization was necessarily inferior in some way?

Malcolm wrote:

I never held that Buddha did not teach emptiness. He clearly did teach emptiness even if you only accept Hinayāna sutras as being valid. The emptiness he taught is the emptiness of dependent origination. He also taught freedom from extremes in the Hinayāna sutras even if the full ramifications of that were only fully explicated in the Prajñāpāramita.

Regardless of my past doubts about the authorship of Mahāyāna sūtras, I have always held them as being exemplars of Buddha's intention.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, August 30th, 2014 at 1:43 AM

Title: Re: Mixing Buddhist and non-Buddhist Practices?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Anyway, as you and I have discussed before, I do not think that the various liberations bandied about by this and that school are even commensurate with one another. That is to say, I don't think non-Buddhists and so on are necessarily in the same mountain range as Buddhadharma, much less climbing the same mountain.

Anders said:

Clarifying assumptions of commensurability would probably go a long way in a lot of these comparative discussions.

I am curious as to how you square off such incommensurability with pronouncements like Samantabhadra claiming even the worldly paths as his vehicles.

Malcolm wrote:

Amazing, wielder of the vajra,
though my vehicles are inconceivable,
they are included in two categories:
samsara and nirvana.
Further, samasara is as follows:
false view and eternalist view.

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.

While the actual content of different non-buddhist vehicles is mistaken, one can understand that impulse to follow them is an impulse towards liberation from the same tantra:

[S]ince a person living in a nirmanakāya buddhafiield of a buddha has set lamps he sees a Buddha from the five lights of wisdom through a slight clairvoyance and experiences five fires.

But since they have no idea what they are experiencing:

He then prepares a log of sandalwood with sesame oil and sets five heaps of fire; and even burns his own body.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, August 30th, 2014 at 3:11 AM

Title: Re: Mixing Buddhist and non-Buddhist Practices?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The emptiness he taught is the emptiness of dependent origination.

dzogchungpa said:

From Bronkhorst's "Buddhist Teaching in India": The main conclusion to be drawn is that we are not likely to learn much about the teaching of the Buddha from the doctrine of conditioned origination. In its classical form it is not part of the original teaching of the Buddha.

Don't get mad.

Malcolm wrote:

He is presenting his opinion. I don't agree with his opinion. It is unfounded.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, August 30th, 2014 at 3:42 AM

Title: Re: Mixing Buddhist and non-Buddhist Practices?

Content:

Anders said:

The certainty with which he pronounces his conclusion bears no correlation at all to the flimsiness of his argumentation.

Malcolm wrote:

Perhaps it is because his argument is so flimsy. Anyway, why would any regard Bronkhorst a greater authority on the Buddha's intent than Nāgārjuna?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, August 30th, 2014 at 4:00 AM

Title: Re: Karma in Buddhism

Content:

Vajrasvapna said:

Now you are conflating the Tathāgatagarbha and Yogacara schools.

To me, without the Tathāgatagarbha teachings Buddhism become a nihilistic philosophy.

Malcolm wrote:

Nevertheless, tathāgatagarbha was a minor school in India, and it was not taken up with any vigor by so called Yogacarins.

In my perception, Yogacara is a psychological view of the teachings of Prajnaparamita, together with the teachings of Maitreya. It is not a contradiction of the teachings of Nagarjuna.

Yogacara is a realist school. Their position forces them to assert that jñāna is real.

The qualities of wisdom are also mere perception. Some people cling to that experience believing they are real, but they are like illusion also.

It has to do with the question of how the dependent nature shifts from being conditioned to being unconditioned [i.e. the absence of the imagined in the dependent is the perfected: see Mahāyānasamgraha by Asanga]. In short, there is an unresolved inner contradiction in the way the Yogacara three natures is presented that forces them to be a realist school.

In fact, you misunderstand what I said, let me explain more clearly: I said that the logical method used by Madhyamikas are not compatible with Dzogchen; but depending on how you interpret the different schools, they vision may or may not be compatible with Dzogchen.

It is not the method they are referring to; they are referring the conclusion.

The method of Dzogchen is the direct introduction to mind, one example is how Patrul Rinpoche was introduced by Do Khyentse Yeshe Dorje to the nature of his mind. And its language is similar to Yogacara. In same way, Mahamudra language is similar to Madhyamaka.

Mahāmudra and Dzogchen both make equal use of terminology from Yogacara. Your distinction is dubious at best.

Why you think that so? Could you give me any proof that what they says is wrong?
[/quote]

All kinds of things, from the fake Sanskrit equivalents they supply to incorrect translations.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, August 30th, 2014 at 4:07 AM

Title: Re: Karma in Buddhism

Content:

Vajrasvapna said:

Why you think that so? Could you give me any proof that what they says is wrong?

Malcolm wrote:

Just take this spurious etymology:

buddha, from the root "buddh", to know, and "dha", absolute, infinite.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, August 31st, 2014 at 4:16 AM

Title: Re: Mahamudra, dzogchen, & nibbana!

Content:

Christopherxx said:

So recently there has been a lot of information that seems to be going around the same area.

Ajahn Amaro has been describing nibbana as "Awareness" and that seems to be how a lot of masters describe dzogchen's rigpa with Buddhahood being omniscience applied to that?

Malcolm wrote:

It's really not the same thing.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, August 31st, 2014 at 5:41 AM

Title: Re: Mahamudra, dzogchen, & nibbana!

Content:

Christopherxx said:

Hi Malcom,

Can you elaborate a bit? I am sure there will be many people that will view this post

either now in the present or in the future. Maybe some just for one moment of their Buddhist exposure. And who knows maybe a good description will help them in their path.

I am sure many will not go out and buy books, etc. So there is something to be said for giving an effort to help in a skillful way.

Your both obviously quite well read and intelligent. Time to share and help others with what you've been shared and helped with?

Malcolm wrote:

You need to receive teachings from a teacher who is qualified. Only then will you understand.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, August 31st, 2014 at 11:52 PM

Title: Re: Mixing Buddhist and non-Buddhist Practices?

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

Anybody know what exactly is meant by the term ordinariness?

Thanks!

PS According to this quote any practice this is based in the hope of gaining happiness, or on the fear of continued suffering, is Black Dharma.

Malcolm wrote:

No, not at all. "If any teaching you study, reflect upon, or expound becomes an effective remedy against your disturbing emotions..."

Here, there is a clear reference to afflictions. All suffering comes ultimately from afflictions.

What it means is that if you are practicing Dharma out of the eight worldly Dharmas, this is not really Dharma practice at all and will not liberate you from afflictions.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, August 31st, 2014 at 11:59 PM

Title: Re: Karma in Buddhism

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Nevertheless, tathāgatagarbha was a minor school in India, and it was not taken up with any vigor by so called Yogacarins.

Vajrasvapna said:

The Buddha taught the teachings about no-self and emptiness as an antidote to the tendency of people to cling to an illusory conditioned self.

In the 3rd turning teachings, the Buddha taught about a no-conditioned self, that is birthless, deathless and eternal.

Malcolm wrote:

No he didn't. The only place in sutra where a "third turning" is mentioned is the Samdhinirmocana sūtra, which has no mention of such an unconditioned self — the idea that Buddha taught such a self just Hinduism in drag.

The three turnings of the wheel are also mentioned by Maitreya in the Sūtrālamkāra, but he asserts they were all turned at the same time, not one here, then one there, then another one later on.

Though many generations of scholars in Tibet have concluded that the tathagatagarbha sūtras are part of the "third turning" there is certainly no evidence in the Indian canon that this is so at all. There are actually very, very few references to "a third turning".

It has to do with the question of how the dependent nature shifts from being conditioned to being unconditioned [i.e. the absence of the imagined in the dependent is the perfected: see Mahāyānasamgraha by Asanga]. In short, there is an unresolved inner contradiction in the way the Yogacara three natures is presented that forces them to be a realist school.

Your statements do not make logical sense to me.

Blame Asanga.

buddha, from the root "buddh", to know, and "dha", absolute, infinite.

Some Tibetan lamas like that kind of logic. If you have in mind the teachings on interdependence, this etymological logic makes some sense.

It is complete nonsense. It cannot be defended in any way. The way most Tibetans etymologize "sangs rgyas" is that "sangs" means to cleanse or purify, additionally "sangs" also means to wake up; and rgyas means "to expand" or "fully". So it means to remove or cleanse afflictions and to expand wisdom, or more simply, "fully awaken".

Budh simply means to awaken; dha means that possessor of that, hence Buddha simply means "the one who has awakened".

Sorry if you were offended, but I tend to call things as I see them.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, September 1st, 2014 at 12:22 AM

Title: Re: Mixing Buddhist and non-Buddhist Practices?

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

Anybody know what exactly is meant by the term ordinariness?

Thanks!

PS According to this quote any practice this is based in the hope of gaining happiness, or on the fear of continued suffering, is Black Dharma.

Malcolm wrote:

No, not at all. "If any teaching you study, reflect upon, or expound becomes an effective remedy against your disturbing emotions..."

Here, there is a clear reference to afflictions. All suffering comes ultimately from afflictions.

What it means is that if you are practicing Dharma out of the eight worldly Dharmas, this is not really Dharma practice at all and will not liberate you from afflictions.

Sherab Dorje said:

Hmmmm... seems to be a fine line we are drawing here. The eight worldly include the fear of suffering and the hope of happiness. Are you saying that what makes it definitive is the fact that it starts with the aim of overcoming the afflictive emotions, rather than the aim to overcome suffering? That overcoming suffering is a consequence, and not an aim?

Malcolm wrote:

First, the translation is a little off: it is not happiness and suffering, it is bde ba and mi bde ba. Here we can understand it is not sukha and dukha, but more like sparśa and asparśa, things we want to have contact with and things we want to avoid contact with.

The whole point of the Buddhist path is to attain permanent sukha, which is the absence of dukha.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, September 2nd, 2014 at 7:53 PM

Title: Re: Dzogchen: Query Regarding the 'Guru'

Content:

Mkoll said:

That's a great passage. for sharing.

Malcolm wrote:

But it has nothing to do with Dzogchen.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, September 3rd, 2014 at 5:46 AM

Title: Re: Dzogchen: Query Regarding the 'Guru'

Content:

Mkoll said:

That's a great passage. for sharing.

Malcolm wrote:

But it has nothing to do with Dzogchen.

Mkoll said:

True. Nonetheless, it's a great passage and I'm glad he shared it.

Malcolm wrote:

The user in question seems to have some issues with authority. Thus, he misunderstands the role of a guru in Dzogchen teachings.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, September 3rd, 2014 at 6:55 AM

Title: Re: Dzogchen: Query Regarding the 'Guru'

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

he misunderstands the role of a guru in Dzogchen teachings.

Mkoll said:

That seems to be correct. I hadn't spent much time on Dharma Wheel before I figured that the guru (I prefer "teacher") was an essential component of the Vajrayana tradition.

Malcolm wrote:

The word is guru, actually, i.e. one who is heavy with qualities.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, September 3rd, 2014 at 10:00 PM

Title: Re: buddhist authority structures

Content:

Dan74 said:

You want to tear it down? First turn towards your own aversion, Indrajala. Then tell us again.

Malcolm wrote:

He can't very well make a career in a modern academia (which has proven itself hostile to any version of Buddhist history which does not match the narrative they wish to push in Western colleges) without tearing Buddhadharma down, now can he?

If someone wants to make a career as a Buddhist academic, there are a number of things which are not allowed. First and foremost, one is not allowed to actually give traditional narratives any credit whatsoever.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, September 3rd, 2014 at 11:36 PM

Title: Re: Kayas

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

]Well, if your teacher explained these passages and texts in this way (ie that Great Bliss refers to sexual union), then who am I to question it?

conebeckham said:

Great Bliss does not refer to "Tantric Sexual Union." .

Malcolm wrote:

Of course not, it refers to nirvana.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, September 3rd, 2014 at 11:48 PM

Title: Re: buddhist authority structures

Content:

conebeckham said:

There are problems with any institutions, and any authority structures.

Malcolm wrote:

Indeed, as one will find when burdened with the mundane tasks of running a religion department.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, September 4th, 2014 at 8:26 PM

Title: Re: buddhist authority structures

Content:

Dan74 said:

Sure for an academic paper to get some traction, it should be evidence-based. But evidence can come from a variety of sources. Suttras, commentaries, biographies and other traditional narratives are also possible sources of evidence, if what is studied is how the tradition sees itself. In any case, it is important to distill one's core inquiry - what truly matters to me and why?

Indrajala said:

There are two primary approaches in the field: emic and etic. The former accommodates the traditional perspective quite fine.

Malcolm wrote:

These two approaches exist if you are cultural anthropologist or a linguist.

But they are largely irrelevant to a Dharma person who is not really concerned with what outsiders think. The terms themselves are biased in so far as the so called "etic" approach is considered "scientific" blah blah blah.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, September 5th, 2014 at 1:07 AM

Title: Re: buddhist authority structures

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

But they are largely irrelevant to a Dharma person who is not really concerned with what outsiders think.

Indrajala said:

Speak for yourself.

The great thinkers of Indian Buddhism clearly cared a lot about how others thought, especially figures like Dharmakirti.

Malcolm wrote:

He was primarily concerned with proving that the Buddha was an authority. Everything in his intellectual project was subordinated to that aim. I doubt much if he cared what Hindus thought at all, actually.

In practice, polemics, like propaganda, is usually constructed for one's followers.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, September 5th, 2014 at 1:17 AM

Title: Re: buddhist authority structures

Content:

Indrajala said:

If your religious authority is founded on false premises (like the Vinaya being the historical decrees of the Buddha), and modern scholars have demonstrated such premises to in fact be false, then the academy is ignored at one's own peril.

Malcolm wrote:

It has not been demonstrated by anyone that the pratimokṣa was not actually taught by the Buddha. The most one can say is that various different schools present slightly different versions of it.

What one can say is that specific procedures of ordination were not necessarily established by the Buddha directly since they in fact vary from sect to sect — but this fact does not require modern scholarship to recognize since this has been recognized for a long, long time within the tradition by people well studied in the traditional histories of Buddhist schools.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, September 5th, 2014 at 1:22 AM

Title: Re: buddhist authority structures

Content:

Indrajala said:

I try to remain unattached to views...

Malcolm wrote:

On the contrary, you have very strong views, which you present to anyone who will listen.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, September 5th, 2014 at 8:13 PM

Title: Re: buddhist authority structures

Content:

daverupa said:

The historical Buddha

Malcolm wrote:

Which one?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, September 5th, 2014 at 8:26 PM

Title: Re: buddhist authority structures

Content:

daverupa said:

The historical Buddha

Malcolm wrote:

Which one?

Mkoll said:

I'm quite certain daverupa is talking about Gotama/Shakyamuni/Siddhartha.

Malcolm wrote:

Which one of those?

My point of course being that there really does not exist one sole authoritative narrative by which we may pretend we have found the "true" Buddha.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, September 5th, 2014 at 9:09 PM

Title: Re: buddhist authority structures

Content:

Lazy_eye said:

Many of the Mahayana sutras do not. Their mode is ahistorical and atemporal, in effect unifying the "three times". I've been delving into the Avatamsaka this week, for instance, and the idea of coming at it the way one would approach an historical record is simply ludicrous; it's an altogether different kind of text.

Malcolm wrote:

This is merely your interpretive overlay predicated on view of history based largely on an unconscious Western materialist outlook.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, September 5th, 2014 at 9:20 PM

Title: Re: buddhist authority structures

Content:

Mkoll said:

This one: the "Lord Buddha" that Emperor Asoka was referring to when he had his edicts carved into solid rock in the 3rd century BCE. One of those edicts reads:

Malcolm wrote:

I see, so your "Lord Buddha" has to have his title carved on a pillar, in other word, he must be grounded in some impermanent plastic artifact.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, September 5th, 2014 at 9:38 PM

Title: Re: buddhist authority structures

Content:

Lazy_eye said:

Not at all. I'm not interpreting anything here, just pointing to obvious differences in narrative mode.

Large parts of the Avatamsaka sutra are not "going on" at any definable time and place. They are happening, in effect, in all times and places, with innumerable Buddhas giving teachings to innumerable sentient beings. This is quite different from the typical nikayan text in which a specific person, Shakyamuni Buddha, went on his alms round on a particular day, met so and so, and delivered this or that teaching.

Malcolm wrote:

The Avatamsaka Sūtra was taught by the Buddha at a very specific time and place,

under the bodhitree, after he woke up. It is the first sutra he taught.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, September 5th, 2014 at 10:24 PM

Title: Re: buddhist authority structures

Content:

Lazy_eye said:

[then there's the section about the pilgrimage of Sudhana who cannot be regarded as a historical figure according to Western methodology.

Malcolm wrote:

But he is a historical figure from a Mahāyāna buddhist pov.

Lazy_eye said:

To come at this text with the goal of seeking historical details about the life and times of the Buddha would be patently absurd.

Malcolm wrote:

No, not at all.

Lazy_eye said:

My point is that a reader with a historicist outlook is most likely going to be mystified or put off by a text like this, which operates on such a large, multidimensional plane; such a person will more likely find the nikayas appealing.

Malcolm wrote:

In other words, you mean that people whose framework is based on a largely materialist outlook on history will find the nikayas more appealing...but they won't in fact since the Nikayas also contain much material which cannot be accounted for in such a materialist framework, such as Buddha having discussions with Indra, Brahma and so on.

Lazy_eye said:

The ahistorical elements that I'm referring to in the sutras

<http://www.urbandharma.org/pdf/AggannaSutta.pdf>, but to a far lesser extent, whereas Mahayana really brings them out in an big way.

Malcolm wrote:

All that is clear here is that westerners apparently need to alter Buddhist history to make it fit their largely materialist historical worldview.

Of course now we have largely veered off topic because of the suggestion that our structures of authority in Buddhism are predicated on false historical claims.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, September 5th, 2014 at 11:44 PM

Title: Re: buddhist authority structures

Content:

rory said:

I really don't understand the rationale here against scholarship. I think everyone here would be laughing if they read a forum where Christians denied the need for biblical scholarship and they didn't need to understand that the gospels were not literally written by John, Mark, Luke etc..

gad rgyangs said:

how DARE you compare Buddhist fundamentalists with Christian fundamentalists! Christian fundamentalists are confused retards, while Buddhist fundamentalists are fundamental because they know their religion is the One True Faith. Sheesh, its like apples and oranges. Only an idiot would believe that the bible is the unedited word of god, whereas everybody knows that every sutra was spoken verbatim by the Buddha exactly when and where it says he did!

Malcolm wrote:

Sure, because it so much better to be slaves to an ever evolving academic fundamentalism...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, September 5th, 2014 at 11:57 PM

Title: Re: buddhist authority structures

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Sure, because it so much better to be slaves to an ever evolving academic fundamentalism...

gad rgyangs said:

you don't have to be an academic to wake up and smell the coffee.

and even within the buddhist traditional world-view, logic is valued as well as is the ability to correctly perceive transactional reality. There is no way to apply logic and correct perception of conventional reality and still believe that the sutras are accurate transcripts made in real time of someone preaching, except willful stubbornness.

Malcolm wrote:

Whoever said they were made in real time? That is not even an assertion of traditional Buddhist accounts. The sutras were written down, all of them, at a much later time.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, September 6th, 2014 at 12:22 AM

Title: Re: buddhist authority structures

Content:

gad rgyangs said:

...logic is valued as well as is the ability to correctly perceive transactional reality.

Malcolm wrote:

The only thing about "transactional reality" we need to perceive is that it is fundamentally predicated on delusion.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, September 6th, 2014 at 12:42 AM

Title: Re: buddhist authority structures

Content:

gad rgyangs said:

...logic is valued as well as is the ability to correctly perceive transactional reality.

Malcolm wrote:

The only thing about "transactional reality" we need to perceive is that it is fundamentally predicated on delusion.

gad rgyangs said:

but your claim for the veracity of the sutras is a claim made in transactional reality, so it too must be predication on delusion, no?

Malcolm wrote:

Of course. The only value relative truth bears is whether it can be adventitiously employed for the purpose of [an imputed] liberation or not. Otherwise, it is of no interest nor bearing on the path.

For this reason and this reason alone do we take interest in "logic", the two truths and so on., "history", etc. History, as we can all see, is a completely malleable subject. People who take it very seriously will find in the end that it is about as satisfying as candy in a dream.

For this reason it is far better for people who are practicing a given path to just accept the narrative proper to that path and to ignore others. Since western academic research on Buddhist "history" has no bearing on the path, it is a subject that should be treated with pointed disdain by serious practitioners.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, September 6th, 2014 at 12:43 AM

Title: Re: buddhist authority structures

Content:

Lazy_eye said:

Do you believe that historical methods tell us anything that is reliable and worth knowing?

Malcolm wrote:

Histories are like kaleidoscopes — they present only a distorted and necessarily limited view of any given subject. There is no such thing as a comprehensive history, much less a true one.

Lo rgyus on the other hand, narrative accounts, serve a contextual purpose for a practitioner to orient themselves within a given stream of practice, and present the origin of a transmission.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, September 6th, 2014 at 2:16 AM

Title: Re: English Tantric Texts

Content:

Christopherxx said:

So a while ago I started the post "English Mahayana Sutras" and Sherab Dorje did an absolutely incredible post listing all the major Mahayana sutras and links to them for download in English.

I was hoping I could get some kind of similar amazing posts for tantras and the like. I am really trying to dig in here

Malcolm wrote:

If you want to study Tantras, you must first find a master, receive the required empowerments, only then should you look at tantric texts. And only then after a sufficient amount of training under a qualified master.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, September 6th, 2014 at 3:20 AM

Title: Re: English Tantric Texts

Content:

Christopherxx said:

Here in the west we want to study, see the merits of something.

Malcolm wrote:

Vajrayāna cannot be approached this way.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, September 6th, 2014 at 3:28 AM

Title: Re: English Tantric Texts

Content:

Christopherxx said:

Malcom do you mind me asking why that is.

How does it avoid the trap of just staying in samsara and not progressing?

Malcolm wrote:

The proper way to enter Vajrayāna is through receiving empowerment. There is no other way. You can read this or that book, but without having taken proper empowerment, Vajrayāna texts will not benefit you and can actually give rise to wrong views that will cause you much problem.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, September 6th, 2014 at 5:17 AM

Title: Re: buddhist authority structures

Content:

gad rgyangs said:

critical thinking, discernment and intellectual honesty are also a path, the difference being that the narrative is always evolving to include new insights and information.

Malcolm wrote:

Intellectual honesty, critical thinking and discernment? That's what you think the academic study of Buddhism is predicated upon? I sure don't.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, September 6th, 2014 at 6:30 AM

Title: Re: buddhist authority structures

Content:

Mkoll said:

This one: the "Lord Buddha" that Emperor Asoka was referring to when he had his edicts carved into solid rock in the 3rd century BCE. One of those edicts reads:

Malcolm wrote:

I see, so your "Lord Buddha" has to have his title carved on a pillar, in other word, he must be grounded in some impermanent plastic artifact.

Mkoll said:

What is that supposed to mean?

Malcolm wrote:

Just what it says, i.e., your Buddha must be established by a stone pillar with his name carved in it.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Saturday, September 6th, 2014 at 6:45 AM
Title: Re: buddhist authority structures
Content:

Mkoll said:
That's a strawman.

Malcolm wrote:
No, honestly, that's what seems to pass muster these days — if it isn't carved on a rock or a pillar somewhere, it is not counted as historically valid in the Buddhist studies world.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Saturday, September 6th, 2014 at 9:24 PM
Title: Re: buddhist authority structures
Content:
Mkoll said:
You seem to believe that you must valiantly defend Buddhism against "academic fundamentalism."

Malcolm wrote:
I am not defending Buddhism, I am criticizing the belief that the meaning and value of Buddhadharma can be accessed through an academic tradition largely devoted to forensic dissection.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Saturday, September 6th, 2014 at 9:29 PM
Title: Re: Purpose of Monkhood/Nunhood and the Monastic Sangha
Content:
kirtu said:
However his comments regarding monasticism, aspects of which were often stated in various threads seemed to me to be off. In particular he seems to think that the main purpose of monasticism is social.

Malcolm wrote:
A warning tale to people who take Buddhology more seriously than Buddhadharma.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Saturday, September 6th, 2014 at 9:47 PM
Title: Re: buddhist authority structures
Content:

Mkoll said:

You seem to believe that you must valiantly defend Buddhism against "academic fundamentalism."

Malcolm wrote:

I am not defending Buddhism, I am criticizing the belief that the meaning and value of Buddhadharma can be accessed through an academic tradition largely devoted to forensic dissection.

Mkoll said:

Of course that's a foolish belief. And I think few people hold it, including academics. Even someone with a mediocre knowledge of Buddhism should be able to understand that it's a living path of practice.

But that doesn't mean academic study is something that should be treated with "pointed disdain." Some of it can be quite useful if you aren't on a crusade against it.

Malcolm wrote:

To the extent that translations are produced, and that is about the extent of it. And unfortunately, here, many of those translations are marred by the imperfect understanding of the scholars who produce them.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, September 6th, 2014 at 9:49 PM

Title: Re: buddhist authority structures

Content:

Indrajala said:

The very fabric of the Vinaya, for example, is stained with the eight worldly dharmas: an obsessive preoccupation with presenting a pure image to the laity so as to secure material and social resources.

kirtu said:

This is of course one of your two fundamental theses (the other being that Westerners are culturally incurable of understanding concepts outside of their primary cultural core [a sort of deeply misguided Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis]).

You have fundamentally misunderstood monasticism and the sangha. Furthermore you have transferred themes from your culture dealing with scarcity and acquisition of resources (the whole economic obsession) onto the sangha. These are apples and oranges issues.

.... have empowered people politically, financially and socially,

See - this is what I'm talking about. These are all primarily English language cultural obsessions. Even the French and Germans don't have quite the same obsessions.

Even the Dutch present this stuff differently. They just don't have the same focus (and you would expect the French to come pretty close in fact). Power structures, resources - you have reduced the sangha to a cargo cult.

It would be one thing if you came from a 2nd or 3rd world culture with definite scarcity and extreme secularism (Americans born and raised in the US will never see this about themselves although 3rd culture Americans raise these issues almost whenever we meet one another - and America is at the top of the heap of the unfortunate societies burdened by actual economic scarcity and occasional life-threatening uncertainty) but you come from a very mild social democracy where true scarcity hasn't been an issue since the great Tommy Douglas began the transition of Canada to a modern nation. Perhaps these issues really reflect your intense focus on the common issues discussed in English speaking academia? This is not a personal attack. Each of our fundamental orientations need to be examined in the light of Buddhadharma because they are all relative truth at best (until we can transform our minds into true wisdom).

Kirt

Malcolm wrote:

Buddhologists could care less about personal transformation or awakening — this is extremely clear. Instead, they obsess about contracts and inscriptions carved in stone, etc.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, September 6th, 2014 at 10:43 PM

Title: Re: buddhist authority structures

Content:

Mkoll said:

And unfortunately, here, many of those translations are marred by the imperfect understanding of the scholars who produce them.

That can be true. However, perhaps what you call "imperfect" may often have less to do with the technical skill of the translator and more to do with their colored interpretation. The only way around it is to learn the source language for oneself. Nonetheless, it is still useful to have other translations and perspectives for comparison.

Malcolm wrote:

Imperfect includes both lack of skill in the source language as well as "interpretation".

In the world of Tibetan studies, I am often amazed at the slipshod work for which people receive PhDs.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, September 6th, 2014 at 10:45 PM

Title: Re: buddhist authority structures

Content:

dzogchungpa said:

He denies that he cares about personal transformation and awakening, or that personal transformation and awakening are possible? I haven't seen that, but I haven't read

everything he's written. From what I have seen, he seems sincere in his Buddhist aspirations.

Malcolm wrote:

There are many ex-Buddhist Buddhologists, Tibetologists and so on — it is a common pattern. In actuality, someone becomes interested in Dharma, decides academia is the best place to learn about it, and over the course of time, as their expertise in and appreciation for the opinions of other Buddhologists increases, their faith in Dharma decreases.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, September 6th, 2014 at 11:26 PM

Title: Re: buddhist authority structures

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

In actuality, someone becomes interested in Dharma, decides academia is the best place to learn about it, and over the course of time, as their expertise in and appreciation for the opinions of other Buddhologists increases, their faith in Dharma decreases.

dzogchungpa said:

What, in every case? I'd have to see some actual evidence before I accept that that is in fact typical.

Malcolm wrote:

I said it was a common pattern, I did not say it was universal — though it is more likely to be found among those who originally were interested in Mahāyāna or Vajrayāna.

Add this to the fact that Buddhology these days is dominated by people like Gombrich, Schöpen, Bronkhorst and so on with no practical interest in the subject at all...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, September 6th, 2014 at 11:51 PM

Title: Re: Purpose of Monkhood/Nunhood and the Monastic Sangha

Content:

Crazywisdom said:

This is the perfect time for a master like HH to establish as Samye in America.

Malcolm wrote:

I think Tarthang Tulku has already done that:

<http://www.odiyen.org> " onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, September 6th, 2014 at 11:56 PM

Title: Historical Buddha

Content:

daverupa said:

Malcolm wrote: daverupa wrote:

The historical Buddha

Which one?

There's only the one, Malcolm.

Malcolm wrote:

I see, so you don't consider Vipassi, Sikhin, Kanakamuni, etc. to be "historical buddhas"?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, September 7th, 2014 at 1:20 AM

Title: Re: Historical Buddha

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

I see, so you don't consider Vipassi, Sikhin, Kanakamuni, etc. to be "historical buddhas"?

daverupa said:

Nope.

Malcolm wrote:

Then we really have no common basis for a discussion.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, September 7th, 2014 at 1:34 AM

Title: Re: Historical Buddha

Content:

daverupa said:

One can easily see the "seventh sage" references in the early materials as being an Indian colloquialism for 'the best'...

Malcolm wrote:

Honestly, this is one of the most far-fetched theories I have yet seen.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, September 7th, 2014 at 1:35 AM

Title: Re: Historical Buddha

Content:

daverupa said:
None?

Malcolm wrote:
Not really, no.

Mediterranean history is not really relevant to our aborted discussion, AFIC, that is why I did not respond to Lazy Eye's query.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Sunday, September 7th, 2014 at 2:18 AM
Title: Re: Historical Buddha
Content:

daverupa said:
The point is whether historical methods render any accurate information, because it is on this basis that the phrase 'historical Buddha' has meaning in the first place - the OP, here, and thus directly to the point.

Now, I consider that historical methods do render accurate information. You seem to think otherwise, calling it a flawed materialist enterprise. So, it seems you must - to avoid hypocrisy - conclude that historical methods in general are flawed, their conclusions are thereby flawed, and therefore that e.g. history is a mere materialist hypothesis.

Malcolm wrote:
I think that there is a certain approach to history which is rooted in such materialism, and I think modern Buddhology more or less has fallen into that ideological perspective, pretending, as it does, that it will present us with a more objective account of Buddhadharma than has already been presented in traditional accounts like the Buddhavasmsa, for example.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Sunday, September 7th, 2014 at 3:08 AM
Title: Re: Historical Buddha
Content:

daverupa said:
The problem is that traditional accounts show historical development, including the Buddhavamsa, including even the Nikayas & Agamas. Your suggested approach seems to require that this be ignored altogether, with blinders and earplugs if necessary.

Malcolm wrote:
It's not a problem at all. Further, attempts at forming a chronology for this or that text are completely speculative.

We only know this as a historical fact: some three hundreds years after the Buddha's

parinirvana, his teachings were written down. This included both Mahāyāna and Hinayāna scriptures.

The reason they were written down, according to all traditional accounts, is that there was some fear that future generations would be unable to maintain them as oral transmissions and so they were committed to text.

It's entirely natural for narratives to be edited and otherwise subjected to some kind of organization, but that organizational activity tells us almost nothing about the contents of the information being organized or how old it might be.

When it comes to such things as the four or seven Buddhas prior to Śākyamuni, while it is true in the MN of Nāṇamoli/Bodhi, isisattamassa is read as "best of seers" at M i.386, it cannot be denied that DN 14 presents a coherent account of the seven past Buddhas. So if I understand what you are saying, we are to understand DN 14 as a later interpolation that does not represent the voice of the Buddha in any way shape or form, that this sutta is entirely a fabrication?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, September 7th, 2014 at 3:24 AM

Title: Re: Heart Sutra -- why study it?

Content:

Vajrasvapna said:

In the 3th turning teachings, the Buddha taught about a no-conditioned self...

Malcolm wrote:

No, actually he didn't. For example, in the Y ogācārabhūmi viniścayasaṃgrahānī, Āryāśaṅga considers that the three vehicles being discussed by the three turnings are really śrāvakayāna, pratyekabuddhayāna and the mahāyāna, he then quotes the relevant section of the Samdhinirmocana that is the sole mention of a three turnings of the wheel in all the sūtras of the bka' 'gyur.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, September 7th, 2014 at 4:29 AM

Title: Re: Historical Buddha

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

So if I understand what you are saying, we are to understand DN 14 as a later interpolation that does not represent the voice of the Buddha in any way shape or form, that this sutta is entirely a fabrication?

daverupa said:

The earliest texts are stratified, and reflect ~150+ years of permutation; the "all-or-nothing" approach is of course untenable, but that's a strawman built on a false dichotomy.

Malcolm wrote:

That begs the question, a text is one thing, information another. What I am saying is that we cannot deduce from some inferred sedimentation that DN 14, for example, is a spurious sutra and that therefore, the six past buddhas to which it refers are not historical. Either the Buddha taught on the existence of six past Buddhas (and many more actually, such as Dipamkara) or he did not. If he did not, the sutra and all reference to six past Buddhas must be regarded as interpolations as you have already suggested. But the fact is that you cannot give a rational account for the sophisticated and exhaustive presentation of the six past buddhas apart from your rather tepid suggestion that some author or authors within 150 years of the Buddha entirely fabricated the six past buddhas based on a misunderstanding of their own language and cultural references. Seems rather far fetched to me.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, September 7th, 2014 at 4:32 AM

Title: Re: Historical Buddha

Content:

daverupa said:

Make a thread about DN 14; we can discuss it's use of the term 'bodhisatta' and how this use seems to have additional layers of meaning that are missing from the term elsewhere in the Canon.

Malcolm wrote:

This is all completely speculative.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, September 7th, 2014 at 4:34 AM

Title: Re: Historical Buddha

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

What I am saying is that we cannot deduce from some inferred sedimentation that DN 14, for example, is a spurious sutra and that therefore, the six past buddhas to which it refers are not historical.

daverupa said:

We sure can.

Malcolm wrote:

You can speculate all you like, but speculations are not facts. The fact is that we have a text, and a wide tradition that holds that the Buddha taught on the existence of six prior Buddhas. We can consider these earlier Buddhas historical in just the same we we consider the Buddha historical.

Otherwise, the consequence is that we cannot trust any of the information in the sutras at all, or worse, we must place ourselves in the hands of modern self-appointed "experts" upon whose speculations it will be decided for us what sutras are to be considered valid and what are to be considered spurious.

It is exactly this kind of "scholarship" which is basically harmful to Dharma.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, September 7th, 2014 at 5:25 AM

Title: Re: Historical Buddha

Content:

daverupa said:

I'm not going to provide a bulwark to the whole field of history and textual criticism in the face of fundamentalist incredulity, Malcolm.

I know historical facts are threatening to the whole endeavor of Mahayana/Vajrayana simply because they demonstrate the lack of historicity vis-a-vis the historical Buddha, but while the M-V-Dharma experiences this threat, and Traditional Theravadan Commentary does as well, the Dhamma remains unmolested.

In any event, your "all or nothing" strawman is fallacious, as I already mentioned. Parsing stratification is not as simplistic or random as you want to portray it.

Malcolm wrote:

Your historical "facts" are merely a bunch of suppositions supported on nothing.

Texts are not like sedimentary layers of rock, though many imagine that is how it is.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, September 7th, 2014 at 9:53 PM

Title: Re: Historical Buddha

Content:

Indrajala said:

Basically, we have no accurate records of the historical Buddha.

Malcolm wrote:

And hence for modern scholars, there is no historical Buddha, not even Shakyamuni, which is why some folks (J. Atwood, for example) seriously propose his non-existence.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, September 7th, 2014 at 9:57 PM

Title: Re: Heart Sutra -- why study it?

Content:

longjie said:

Pratyekabuddhas do not seem to have their own turning in the Samdhinirmocana Sutra. According to the relevant sutra passage, the first turning is for the sravakas, the second turning is for the bodhisattvas, and the third turning is for all vehicles.

Malcolm wrote:

Indeed, which is why it is surprising that Asanga makes the equation that he does, which was my point — the paltry sources in the Indian canon that do treat the subject of the three turnings do not do so with anything approaching doctrinal consistency. It therefore really too much to claim that the idea of the three turnings of the wheel really was an important doctrine in the Indian Mahāyāna scene since there are fewer references to it than there is to the idea of tathāgatagarbha.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, September 7th, 2014 at 10:12 PM

Title: Re: Historical Buddha

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

And hence for modern scholars, there is no historical Buddha, not even Shakyamuni, which is why some folks (J. Atwood, for example) seriously propose his non-existence.

Indrajala said:

We can assume he existed, but say nothing beyond that given the lack of evidence from that period. Once you understand the evidence-based chronology of Buddhism, you see the earliest possible reference to Buddhism in history is Aśoka's (r. 268–232 BCE) edicts, and even this is contested by some.

Malcolm wrote:

Thanks Jeff, I have understood the "evidence" based approaches to Buddhist history for many years. I understand all the arguments and so on.

I think that the methodology of the Schopens and Bronkhorsts of the world is inadequate, and because they are not practitioners, of little value to those practicing Buddhadharma. It is precisely this "contested by some" that reinforces my conviction that Buddhology just a collection of conflicting opinions. Of some idle interest occasionally, but not worth talking seriously — a means of distraction for professors who earn a living from teaching survey courses on religion to undergrads.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, September 7th, 2014 at 10:17 PM

Title: Re: Historical Buddha

Content:

plwk said:

Basically, we have no accurate records of the historical Buddha.

Not even from the Jains' and Brahmins' sides huh...

Malcolm wrote:

It's pure academic nihilism.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, September 7th, 2014 at 10:34 PM

Title: Re: Historical Buddha

Content:

plwk said:

Basically, we have no accurate records of the historical Buddha.

Not even from the Jains' and Brahmins' sides huh...

Indrajala said:

We need to first establish the textual chronology.

Malcolm wrote:

One cannot do that without some serious conjectural speculation.

Even more to the point, one cannot date the accuracy of information merely based on when it seems to appear in some written form. Allow me to give you an example — the first collection of Appalachian old world ballads compiled in the 1920's. It turns out that the orally transmitted Appalachian versions of many ballads are in fact earlier than the versions of the same ballads as recorded by Sir Walter Scott, published in 1803. For example, Barbara Allen.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, September 7th, 2014 at 10:59 PM

Title: Re: Historical Buddha

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

One cannot do that without some serious conjectural speculation.

Indrajala said:

The chronology of Buddhism is largely established based on historical and literary evidence.

Malcolm wrote:

And very little of that conflicts with traditional accounts of the chronology of Buddhadharma, until we come to guys like Schopen, etc.

Indrajala said:

Sometimes it is pretty straightforward to make time frames given purported prophetic references to historical figures, such as Kaniṣka (c.78-144) of the Kuṣāṇa dynasty in

northern India.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, sometimes it is.

Indrajala said:

The early history of Buddhism is problematic of course.

Malcolm wrote:

That is the subject at hand.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, September 7th, 2014 at 11:14 PM

Title: Re: Historical Buddha

Content:

Indrajala said:

He complains that the consensus is, as Schopen has argued, that we cannot know anything with certainty about early Buddhism given the sheer lack of evidence

Malcolm wrote:

But Schopen's perspective is really nonsensical since there is plenty of evidence in Sutra as well as Vinaya to paint a portrait of what life was like during the time of the Buddha. There simply is no good and valid reason to discount it.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, September 8th, 2014 at 12:08 AM

Title: Re: Historical Buddha

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

But Schopen's perspective is really nonsensical since there is plenty of evidence in Sutra as well as Vinaya to paint a portrait of what life was like during the time of the Buddha. There simply is no good and valid reason to discount it.

Indrajala said:

It doesn't necessarily correspond well with archaeological evidence.

Malcolm wrote:

According to Schopen, there is no evidence, so your statement is rather meaningless.

Look, when it is reported in Vinaya that monks can use leather shoes if they travel to the Himalayan regions, we do not need to have a sample of carbon-dated leather shoes found in Magadha or somewhere else to understand that some monks wore leather sandals even during the time of the Buddha.

Deciding that every detail of what is in Vinaya and Sutra must be corroborated with some plastic artifact is absurd, really absurd.

There are some very serious self-imposed limitations when one decides that archaeology is what we are going to base our understanding of the life and time of the Buddha.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, September 8th, 2014 at 1:01 AM

Title: Re: Historical Buddha

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

According to Schopen, there is no evidence, so your statement is rather meaningless.

Indrajala said:

To clarify, the earliest evidence for monasteries we have is late. Schopen:

The earliest “monasteries” that are known in India – and none of these are pre-Aśoka – are not “monasteries” at all. They are either only barely improved, unorganized, natural caverns or caves, or poorly constructed and ill-organized shelters built of rubble and other cheap materials. Communities living in these environments could not have produced our elaborate vinayas, nor would they have had any use for them. Since such communities had no steam rooms (jentāka), for example, how could they possibly have generated elaborate rules governing their construction and use?

Gregory Schopen, “The Good Monk and His Money in Monasticism of 'the Mahāyāna Period'” in *Indian Monastic Buddhism Collected Papers on Textual, Inscriptional and Archaeological Evidence* (New Delhi, India: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers Private Limited), 1-2.

Malcolm wrote:

Again, this is entirely speculative. For example, the Vinaya-kṣudraka-vastu clarifies that jentākas [bsro khang] are to be built by lay people for monks. Jentākas are not hard to construct. They are round. They are built by lay people. They do not need to be permanent structures. They are part of Indian health culture. They are mentioned in Ayurvedic texts such as the Caraka Samhita, the Jivasūtra, and so on. So I put it to you that when he claims the early Sangha had no access to jentākas he is full of it, and is ignoring the evidence in front of his face. A stream bath does not have to be built of marble to be effective.

Indrajala said:

Look, when it is reported in Vinaya that monks can use leather shoes if they travel to the Himalayan regions, we do not need to have a sample of carbon-dated leather shoes found in Magadha or somewhere else to understand that some monks wore leather sandals even during the time of the Buddha.

That's not what scholars are really looking for. They're wondering about the monastic steam rooms and legal financial contracts as outlined in Vinaya literature when there is no evidence monks, in the Buddha's time at least, had such bathing facilities or the Magadha economy was mature and literate enough to merit the use of ecclesiastical financial contracts.

Malcolm wrote:

Of course monks has access to bathing facilities. They bathed, just like other human beings. Honestly, this kind of thing really lacks common sense.

I have already voiced by objection to the specious notion that there was no literacy in India during the time of the Buddha.

Indrajala said:

There are some very serious self-imposed limitations when one decides that archaeology is what we are going to base our understanding of the life and time of the Buddha.

As I'm sure you understand, the concern is really that the literature as we have it seems to reflect a post-Buddha time period, especially with respect to financial transactions, literacy, complex monastic facilities (steam rooms, etc.) and so forth. We might speculate that some of it really goes back to the Buddha's time, but who knows.

Malcolm wrote:

[/quote]

Given that we do not really have much archaeological evidence at all from the post-Harrappan, pre-stone working era of Indian civilization [roughly 1500 BCE to around 250 BCE, it is little facile to claim what primitive Viharas were like and what facilities were provided by their lay hosts.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, September 8th, 2014 at 1:08 AM

Title: Re: Historical Buddha

Content:

Indrajala said:

Malati J. Shendge,...

Malcolm wrote:

...has very little mainstream academic support for her theories.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, September 8th, 2014 at 1:14 AM

Title: Re: Historical Buddha

Content:

Indrajala said:
Malati J. Shendge,...

Malcolm wrote:
...has very little mainstream academic support for her theories.

Indrajala said:
Indian academia is a rough place.

Malcolm wrote:
And then there are people like Witzel who are better scholars.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Monday, September 8th, 2014 at 2:05 AM
Title: Re: Historical Buddha
Content:
Malcolm wrote:
And then there are people like Witzel who are better scholars.

Indrajala said:
The relations between Mesopotamia and the Indus Valley Civilization are difficult to ascertain and clarify.

One good book in part addressing the subject is The Shape of Ancient Thought by Thomas McEvilley.

Malcolm wrote:
We can understand that they engaged in a great deal of trade, like all ancient peoples.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Monday, September 8th, 2014 at 4:02 AM
Title: Re: Inequality
Content:
Malcolm wrote:
Inequality comes from one's karma, and that's the end of it.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Monday, September 8th, 2014 at 6:03 AM
Title: Re: Inequality
Content:
Malcolm wrote:
Inequality comes from one's karma, and that's the end of it.

Sherab Dorje said:

And it is sustained by karma, and that's the end of that.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, one's own and no one else's.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, September 8th, 2014 at 8:06 PM

Title: Re: Inequality

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

In all these arguments people continually forget about the influence of current karma in order to justify the status quo (ie samsara). karmic outcomes are not fixed, they can be changed, otherwise our view of karma does not differ from the largely fatalistic "Hindu" view.

Malcolm wrote:

It depends on what kind of outcome, i.e., ripened results we are talking about. For example, we cannot fix the outcomes of some dominant results, i.e., being born in a place frequently afflicted by famine. We cannot alter our lifespan, we have limited control over our health (we all age, sicken and die). If we are born with defective sense organs, there is nothing we can do about this. If we are born as an animal, hell being or a preta, there is nothing to be done about it until we have exhausted that karma.

If one is a born as a deva or an asura, there is little motive to practice virtue.

If you are a human being, you can do something about the circumstances of your life, up to a point.

But most humans , ignorant of the force of karma, just continue to spiral into lower realms. So, it may not be the case that karmic outcomes are "fixed", but they might as well be considering the very little that people do to change such results by practicing virtue in this lifetime.

BTW, even hearing the name Bhaisajyaguru Buddha comes about as a result of past karma...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, September 8th, 2014 at 8:29 PM

Title: Re: Historical Buddha

Content:

daverupa said:

So your view is that there is no way to parse stratification? It seems, despite academic opinion in general, that academic work nevertheless is making inroads here.

Indrajala said:

In this case are we talking about actual early Buddhism or how the early sangha was portrayed and understood by well-developed Buddhist sects centuries after the Buddha's death?

Malcolm wrote:

He feels that we can analyze the Pali Canon/Agamas and ferret out an accurate representation of early Buddhist life. So do you actually, which is why you spend so much time railing against contracts and saunas.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, September 8th, 2014 at 9:27 PM

Title: Re: Inequality

Content:

Zhen Li said:

...there's no levelling impulse in it naturally outside of the equality of everyone in Buddha Nature.

Sherab Dorje said:

Gee, is that all? I have to disagree though, there are countless examples of oaths taken by Buddhas and Bodhisattvas to place everybody on the same level of enlightenment. It doesn't get more "leveling" than that.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, but that is not a "social" leveling.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, September 8th, 2014 at 9:48 PM

Title: Re: Inequality

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

Of course it is. Somehow I find it difficult to believe that a world full of Buddhas would have social inequality.

Malcolm wrote:

Do you see a world full of Buddhas? It is easy to make an aspiration, far more difficult to carry it out effectively.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, September 8th, 2014 at 11:13 PM

Title: Re: Inequality

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

Actually , I just remembered that Buddhism proposes the most radical form of social and economic levelling: the monastic sangha.

Malcolm wrote:

It is actually a meritocracy: your place and authority are determined by your years in. And, it also depends on on the laity having a subordinate and supporting position since the Sangha is not self-supporting and never was.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, September 8th, 2014 at 11:22 PM

Title: Re: Vinaya is a later fabrication

Content:

kirtu said:

It was quite successful in the Western world for some 1700 or so years...

Malcolm wrote:

It never went over so well in the US, the Calvinist roots of American culture had little use for it.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, September 8th, 2014 at 11:37 PM

Title: Re: Inequality

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

And, it also depends on on the laity having a subordinate and supporting position since the Sangha is not self-supporting and never was.

Sherab Dorje said:

Subordinate? Are you sure about that? It seems to me that when you are dependent on somebody for your survival, then they are not subordinate to you, quite the opposite actually. They have power over you.

Malcolm wrote:

Lay people are "subordinate" because their highest merit depends on their support of the Sangha without whom they do not enjoy the same chance for higher rebirth and so on.

Buddha makes it very, very clear, that the ideal is to become ordained and that lay people are inferior.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, September 8th, 2014 at 11:53 PM

Title: Re: Inequality

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Lay people are "subordinate" because their highest merit depends on their support of the Sangha without whom they do not enjoy the same chance for higher rebirth and so on.

Buddha makes it very, very clear, that the ideal is to become ordained and that lay people are inferior.

Sherab Dorje said:

You completely missed my point.

Malcolm wrote:

No, actually I did not. I chose not to address it because I could care less about leftist interpretations of Buddhist social structures.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, September 9th, 2014 at 12:11 AM

Title: Re: Inequality

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

And I could care less about rightist interpretations of Buddhist social structures.

Malcolm wrote:

The relationship of the monastic Sangha is not the same as the political relationship between a ruler and the people.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, September 9th, 2014 at 12:40 AM

Title: Re: Inequality

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

And I could care less about rightist interpretations of Buddhist social structures.

Malcolm wrote:

The relationship of the monastic Sangha is not the same as the political relationship between a ruler and the people.

Sherab Dorje said:

Yes Malcolm, you're right!

Malcolm wrote:

The point being that the notions of power in political analysis do not actually apply the relationship of the monastic Sangha and the laity.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, September 9th, 2014 at 1:24 AM

Title: Re: Tantric and late Indian Buddhist philosophy

Content:

Greg said:

I'd be interested to hear what people think about the idea that a general survey of "Indian Buddhist Philosophy" can dispense with vajrayāna thought completely.

Malcolm wrote:

A bad one.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, September 9th, 2014 at 1:43 AM

Title: Re: Tantric and late Indian Buddhist philosophy

Content:

Greg said:

I'd be interested to hear what people think about the idea that a general survey of "Indian Buddhist Philosophy" can dispense with vajrayāna thought completely.

Malcolm wrote:

A bad one.

Greg said:

What would you include, at a minimum?

Malcolm wrote:

All kinds of things, Vajrayāna treatment of embodiment, the impact of the Indian medical tradition on meditation and yoga practices, etc.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, September 9th, 2014 at 4:14 AM

Title: Re: Tantric and late Indian Buddhist philosophy

Content:

Mother's Lap said:

Rongzompa:

Now then, in the sravaka system, phenomena do not have the nature of a self. Since is also asserted there is no identity existing in any phenomena, all phenomena are established to be empty and without self, but nevertheless since [all phenomena] are asserted as the nature of subject and object, the category "natureless" is not understood.

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.

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, [67/b] emptiness and selflessness. Nevertheless, since they assert a true relative truth, the category of “established as homogenous” is not understood.

Since in 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.

Because the system of dzogchen understands four things for all phenomena—understanding what is to be abandoned; understanding what is to be taken up; understanding what can be left in equanimity; and understanding what can never be actualized, it establishes all phenomena as non-dual. At that time there is no difference between non-duality, homogeneity, [68/a] non-arising, naturelessness, emptiness and selflessness. Since that is so, because this establishment of all phenomena as non-dual is the heart of all intimate instructions, therefore, [dzogchen] is “the heart of all intimate instructions”

Malcolm wrote:

When you cite my translations, you should credit me with them.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, September 9th, 2014 at 4:37 AM

Title: Re: Tantric and late Indian Buddhist philosophy

Content:

Mother's Lap said:

Sorry, I couldn't remember if it was your translation or not.

Malcolm wrote:

It's good to keep track of these things.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, September 9th, 2014 at 4:42 AM

Title: Re: Historical Buddha

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

Which is why I (a non-academic) asked daverupa this question back on page 2.....is valid and interesting, especially for those that emphasise the practice of Dharma, rather than its scholastic study. I would be interested in knowing how you reconcile the two poles of scholarship and practice, when they come to the point of conflicting. ...and never got an answer. Anybody else supporting an academic standpoint can also feel free to answer.

Malcolm wrote:

Academics don't take practicing Buddhists seriously, especially Tibetan Buddhists.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, September 9th, 2014 at 6:16 AM

Title: Re: Historical Buddha

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Academics don't take practicing Buddhists seriously, especially Tibetan Buddhists.

dharmagoat said:

Understandable really. Devotion and objectivity are poles apart.

Malcolm wrote:

The real problem is that non-practicing academics do not really understand the meaning of Dharma.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, September 9th, 2014 at 7:27 AM

Title: Re: Difference between Sakya & Gelug Vajrayogini

Content:

Wayne Verrill said:

I apologize for the long delay in responding to the last post under this topic, but the matter has just come to my attention. The actual title of Sonam Tsemo's book appears on Volume 3, page 146, line 3 in the Sa-skya bKa'-'bum edition and on Volume 1, page 574, line 3 of the Lam-'bras Tshogs-bshad edition. The translation of this section is in the Epilogue on page 531. The actual Tibetan term is rnal-'byor mig, which literally translates as Yoga Eye. The fact that this is the title is confirmed by many commentators who refer to the root text by this name. Since Yoga Eye is a bit awkward in English, I took the liberty of changing it to Yogini's Eye, justified on the basis of the Hevajra Tantra being identified as a Yogini Tantra (see pages 290-297 in the translation). This issue was actually referred to on page 5 of the Translator's Introduction. .

Malcolm wrote:

It's "eye of yoga" as the Tibetan bears out, and it is not the common title of the text, rgyud sde spyi rnam is the common title. The full title of course is rgyud sde spyi'i rnam par gzahag pa bzhugs so.

The line in question says "rgyud sde spyi'i rnam par gzhag pa rnal 'byor mig", i.e. " The General Presentation of the Divisions of Tantra is the eye of yoga...", etc.

So I have to disagree with your contention that "Eye of Yoga" is the title in that line, rather, it is a descriptive of what the text is supposed to do, i.e. provide an eye on yoga.

Further, Jetsun Dragpa Gyaltsen refers to this text simply by the name rgyud sde spyi'i rnam par gzhag pa in the the rgyud sde spyi'i rnam par gzhag pa dang rgyud kyi mngon par rtogs pa'i stong thun sa bcad.

The Hevajra Tantra is not merely an Yogini Tantra, it is also a yogatantra, for this reason Loppon Rinpoche explains that Hevajra is non-dual tantra based on this passage from Vajrapañjara:

The Hevajra yogatantra
was explained by the Victor first.

Later the yoginītantra
similarly is for the conversion of women.

Loppon Rinpoche adds:

True, it may be called “dākinītantra”. That does not contradict a nondual method and discriminating wisdom tantra because discriminating wisdom tantra is necessary in nondual tantra.

When Lowo Khenchen [rgyud sde spyi rnam gsal byed sogs, pg. 18], defines the reason for the name rgyud sde spyi'i rnam par gzhag pa, he states, " Loppon Sonam Tsemo's composition has four synonyms: 1) The tantra division 2) the general presentation 3) an introduction to all tantras 4) the eye of yoga."

However, that does not justify "the yogini's eye" as a title. In fact, the formal title given in the colophon is actually, The General Presentation of the Tantra Divisions, an Introduction to all Tantras.

If you were to retitle the book, The Eye of Yoga would be a better choice, in my opinion.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, September 9th, 2014 at 8:43 PM

Title: Re: Historical Buddha

Content:

Mkoll said:

Kamma is intentional action

(<http://www.accesstoinight.org/tipitaka/an/an06/an06.063.than.html#part-5>:

"Intention, I tell you, is kamma. Intending, one does kamma by way of body, speech, & intellect."). You could have chosen to follow Zen or Chan Buddhism. You could have waited until you found a Theravada or Nyingma teacher. You could have even chosen to not find a Buddhist sect at all. But you didn't. You made a series of choices and acted (intentional actions) on them and that led to you following Kagyu.

What you've written so far here gives me the impression of being overly deterministic.

Malcolm wrote:

He means karma-vipāka, and it is not overly deterministic — if he had the karma to follow Theravada, etc., he would have met them first, etc. It's about connections, tendrel.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, September 9th, 2014 at 8:46 PM

Title: Re: Historical Buddha

Content:

daverupa said:

The historical Buddha is a communal fact (else e.g. the Etruscans are apparently just a hypothesis, since all ancient history is just speculation, at that point). It is the historical guy.

Malcolm wrote:

So is Guru Rinpoche (a communal fact), just not in your community. He is also a "historical" guy, a Buddha, etc.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, September 9th, 2014 at 8:50 PM

Title: Re: Historical Buddha

Content:

Indrajala said:

There's more to life than religious pursuits.

Malcolm wrote:

Now that you are no longer a bhikṣu, indeed. But for a bhikṣu, there is nothing beyond religious pursuits.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, September 9th, 2014 at 11:12 PM

Title: Re: Historical Buddha

Content:

daverupa said:

I must have been confused.

Malcolm wrote:

People who follow Wiki to the exclusion of other sources usually are.

daverupa said:

So actually, I accept your term "historical", but the scare quotes must be included.

Malcolm wrote:

Padmasambhava was a historical person.

His name appears in the colophon of many texts in the collection of ancient tantras.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, September 9th, 2014 at 11:34 PM

Title: Re: Historical Buddha

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

To tell you the truth, personal preferences are based on habit, which is based on karma anyway, which ultimately arises from ignorance, so...

Malcolm wrote:

Only negative karma arises from ignorance.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, September 10th, 2014 at 4:27 AM

Title: Re: Vinaya schools & Precept Schools

Content:

Christopherxx said:

From what I have been able to gather the Tibetan monks ordain under and follow a version of the vinaya.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, the Mulasarvastivada vinaya.

Christopherxx said:

Chinese monks (Although I am not sure which schools) ordain under and follow the vinaya. If someone could fill us in on which Chinese schools that would be cool.

Malcolm wrote:

Dharmaguptaka.

There are two traditions of bodhisattva vows followed in Tibet, Madhyamaka and

Yogacara.

There are also two general systems of tantric commitments as well.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, September 10th, 2014 at 4:46 AM

Title: Re: Vinaya schools & Precept Schools

Content:

Christopherxx said:

Thanks Malcolm

I know you are really knowledgeable about dzogchen and probably the other traditions within vajrayana.

Do these vehicles/traditions ordain under the vinaya of their regions or do they have precepts or vows or?

You mentioned two systems of commitments

I am guessing the two sets of bodhisattva vows are the brahma net sutra and the asange set?

Malcolm wrote:

No, the Bhramajala sutra system is largely the as Asanga's and it does not exist in Tibet.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, September 10th, 2014 at 11:11 AM

Title: Re: time for a long sleep.

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Don't waste this precious human birth now that you met the Dharma.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, September 10th, 2014 at 9:09 PM

Title: Re: time for a long sleep.

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Don't waste this precious human birth now that you met the Dharma.

Jesse said:

Often times it doesn't feel very precious, more like a curse, after a curse after a curse.. That's how depression is though.

Malcolm wrote:

It is the most precious possession you have, not easily gained, and easily lost. Use it

well.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, September 10th, 2014 at 9:14 PM

Title: Re: Inequality

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

We make this world, not God, not chance, not fate. We make it, through our actions. We can make it somewhat better, we can make it somewhat worse or we can transform it into a Pure Land. It is 100% up to us.

Malcolm wrote:

In order for the world to be a pure land, we do not have to do anything except realize it as such. But there is no way to create an outer material utopia.

If you really want to create such a place, then you have to convince every person to strictly avoid the ten nonvirtues. Since you cannot force others to avoid the ten nonvirtues, all you can do is start with yourself.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, September 10th, 2014 at 9:35 PM

Title: Re: Inequality

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

In order for the world to be a pure land, we do not have to do anything except realize it as such. But there is no way to create an outer material utopia.

Sherab Dorje said:

I do not think that ending starvation and malnutrition is utopian in the slightest. We have ample resources to do so. Utopian would be to believe that every single person on this globe can live an American middle class lifestyle. This is just not going to happen. Anyway, I did not talk about a utopian situation, I specifically stated "somewhat better". Ending starvation and malnutrition (something that is 100% possible) will make the world "somewhat better". If you really want to create such a place, then you have to convince every person to strictly avoid the ten nonvirtues. Since you cannot force others to avoid the ten nonvirtues, all you can do is start with yourself. You won't see me disagreeing.

Malcolm wrote:

Greg, there are a number of obstacles to this happening: 7 billion in fact.

There is no way to effect such an outcome without establishing a command economy, and we know where that leads:

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, September 11th, 2014 at 2:40 AM

Title: Re: Inequality

Content:

Jikan said:

Further, we should avoid rejoicing in the works and accomplishments of those who make their business on the ten nonvirtues

Malcolm wrote:

I guess we start with Hollywood then...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, September 11th, 2014 at 4:09 AM

Title: Re: Inequality

Content:

Jikan said:

Further, we should avoid rejoicing in the works and accomplishments of those who make their business on the ten nonvirtues

Malcolm wrote:

I guess we start with Hollywood then...

Sherab Dorje said:

Or ourselves.

Malcolm wrote:

Is there an echo in here...?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, September 11th, 2014 at 4:56 AM

Title: Re: Turning water into wine(Chogyam Trungpa)

Content:

boda said:

In my experience there is not even a consensus on what "the Buddhist Dharma produces,"

Malcolm wrote:

Of course there is such a consensus — Buddhadharma, practiced properly, leads to the reduction and elimination of afflictions which cause birth in samsara, i.e. freedom.

In Mahāyāna, one can also traverse the path to omniscience.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Thursday, September 11th, 2014 at 4:59 AM
Title: Re: Turning water into wine(Chogyam Trungpa)
Content:

boda said:
What do you mean in saying that Trungpa "uses the methods he does"? Are you suggesting that his drinking and womanizing was a method in his teaching?

Malcolm wrote:
Yes, most definitely.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Thursday, September 11th, 2014 at 5:38 AM
Title: Re: Turning water into wine(Chogyam Trungpa)
Content:

boda said:
What do you mean in saying that Trungpa "uses the methods he does"? Are you suggesting that his drinking and womanizing was a method in his teaching?

Malcolm wrote:
Yes, most definitely.

boda said:
How do you know? Please explain yourself, if, you can.

Malcolm wrote:
I know because I know many of his students. For them, his womanizing and drinking helped them go beyond the limitations of spiritual materialism and concretely understand the meaning of Dharma. His students are some of the best Dharma practitioners there are in Tibetan Buddhism. A great many of them have a concrete understanding of Dzogchen and Mahamudra.

The quality of a tree should be known by its fruit, not by the appearance of its bark.

M

Author: Malcolm
Date: Thursday, September 11th, 2014 at 6:46 AM
Title: Re: Turning water into wine(Chogyam Trungpa)
Content:
Malcolm wrote:

The quality of a tree should be known by its fruit, not by the appearance of its bark.

TRC said:

Perhaps the quality of a tree should be known by all its characteristics, not just the ones we have a preference for.

Malcolm wrote:

I don't know about you, but when I eat fruit, I don't care much about the appearance of the tree as long as the fruit tastes good.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, September 11th, 2014 at 6:48 AM

Title: Re: Turning water into wine(Chogyam Trungpa)

Content:

boda said:

You're answering a different question, Malcolm, which is your prerogative.

I asked how you knew that it was a "teaching method." If you know what a teaching method is, and you know that Chogyam Trungpa used alcoholism and womanizing as a teaching method, explain how you know this. Or you can answer a different question if that's easier for you.

Malcolm wrote:

I explained this to you — I know many, many of his direct students. He would often times use sexual situations as a teaching method, as well as alcohol. He even used LSD etc.

Trungpa used any method he could to reach people who were hard to reach. He also used these to create situations so that people could go beyond their limitations, which after all is the job of a real teacher of Dzogchen and Mahamudra.

For example, sometimes he would randomly have his driver pull into a stranger's driveway, and have the student get out and knock on the door, he did many things like this all the time. He would burst into people's rooms in the middle of the night at his seminars, and if you were sleeping alone, without a partner, he would demand to know why and then fix you up with someone.

In any case, it hardly matters now what he did. He has passed on, and a teacher like him will not be seen again for a long while.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, September 11th, 2014 at 7:38 AM

Title: Re: Turning water into wine(Chogyam Trungpa)

Content:

boda said:
then why did he never say so himself?

Malcolm wrote:
He did say so himself, many times, just read any of his discourses on the role of the guru.

boda said:
Trust on this level means one cannot maintain one's ego. One cannot maintain one's basic existence as "myself." This self has become completely dedicated, it has completely opened up in surrendering to the world created by the guru. The world that the guru creates is not particularly a pleasant one. It might be very unpleasant, horrific. It might also be beautiful at the same time. The reason the world created by the guru tends to be an irritating one is that the guru goes beyond the role of spiritual friend at this point and begins to act as a dictator. He minds your business completely; he minds every inch of your life. Your guru has the ability to do such a thing, because he knows every inch of your life, of your state of consciousness. He knows the tiniest fragments of your subconscious gossip, he knows all the little freckles in your mental functions. The guru has a complete understanding of all this. Therefore you are highly exposed, fully exposed. For this reason, the tantric tradition is considered very dangerous. The traditional format is that you can either make love to your guru as a divine being or kill him. The analogy is that of a snake in a bamboo tube. When you put a snake in a bamboo tube, the snake has to face either up or down. Relating with the guru is very powerful, too powerful. It is too much having somebody mind your business in that fashion. From that point of view, it is extremely

Malcolm wrote:
Trungpa, Chogyam (2010-09-28). The Lion's Roar: An Introduction to Tantra (Dharma Ocean Series) (Kindle Locations 930-940). Shambhala Publications. Kindle Edition.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Thursday, September 11th, 2014 at 9:02 AM
Title: Re: Turning water into wine(Chogyam Trungpa)

Content:
boda said:
People do a lot of things for reasons other than teaching, and with no methodology whatsoever.

TRC said:
Yes this is the point that people get confused about. Because they can't reconcile the paradox of Trungpa's more profound teachings with his obvious fallibility and (self-) destructive behaviour, they prefer to characterise this behaviour as a skilful and premeditated teaching method, to help ameliorate their dissonance.

Malcolm wrote:
The perhaps the dissonance belongs to you, and not to them. Have you bothered to consider this?

TRC said:

Obviously Trungpa was suffering. His alcohol addiction was an overt manifestation of craving/clinging, which is of course the immediate cause of suffering.

Malcolm wrote:

He would never have denied that he was an ordinary, suffering person:

The guru is immediate. For one thing, he is a human being like yourself. He has to eat food and wear clothes like you do, so it's a direct relationship. And the fact that the guru has basic human survival needs makes the situation more threatening. Do you see what I mean? It is more threatening because you can't dismiss the guru as being outside of our thing, someone who can survive without our human trips. The guru does thrive on human trips. If we need food, the guru also needs food. If we need a love affair, the guru also needs a love affair. A guru is an ordinary human being, but still powerful. We begin to feel personally undetermined, because the guru minds our trips too closely and too hard.

Trungpa, Chogyam (2010-09-28). The Lion's Roar: An Introduction to Tantra (Dharma Ocean Series) (Kindle Locations 3136-3140). Shambhala Publications. Kindle Edition.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, September 11th, 2014 at 9:03 AM

Title: Re: Turning water into wine(Chogyam Trungpa)

Content:

boda said:

then why did he never say so himself?

Malcolm wrote:

He did say so himself, many times, just read any of his discourses on the role of the guru.

boda said:

Trust on this level means one cannot maintain one's ego. One cannot maintain one's basic existence as "myself." This self has become completely dedicated, it has completely opened up in surrendering to the world created by the guru. The world that the guru creates is not particularly a pleasant one. It might be very unpleasant, horrific. It might also be beautiful at the same time. The reason the world created by the guru tends to be an irritating one is that the guru goes beyond the role of spiritual friend at this point and begins to act as a dictator. He minds your business completely; he minds every inch of your life. Your guru has the ability to do such a thing, because he knows every inch of your life, of your state of consciousness. He knows the tiniest fragments of your subconscious gossip, he knows all the little freckles in your mental functions. The guru has a complete understanding of all this. Therefore you are highly exposed, fully exposed. For this reason, the tantric tradition is considered very dangerous. The traditional format is that you can either make love to your guru as a divine being or kill him. The analogy is that of a snake in a bamboo tube. When you put a snake in a bamboo tube, the snake has to face either up or down. Relating with the guru is very

powerful, too powerful. It is too much having somebody mind your business in that fashion. From that point of view, it is extremely

Malcolm wrote:

Trungpa, Chogyam (2010-09-28). The Lion's Roar: An Introduction to Tantra (Dharma Ocean Series) (Kindle Locations 930-940). Shambhala Publications. Kindle Edition.

boda said:

Maybe I need reading glasses but I don't see where it says he used his drinking or womanizing as a teaching method.

Malcolm wrote:

I give up.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, September 11th, 2014 at 9:29 AM

Title: Re: Turning water into wine(Chogyam Trungpa)

Content:

boda said:

A requisite of giving up is having first tried.

Malcolm wrote:

What you seem to be looking for is a quote by CTR along the lines of "I use womanizing and drinking as Dharma methods..."

Of course, you will not find such a quote. But you can certainly find many statements by him which indicate that like his teacher, Khenpo Gangshar, he was interested in pushing his students beyond their limitations. For example, we know that Khenpo Gangshar actively encouraged monks and nuns to leave retreat, have sex, and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, September 11th, 2014 at 9:31 AM

Title: Re: Turning water into wine(Chogyam Trungpa)

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The perhaps the dissonance belongs to you, and not to them. Have you bothered to consider this?

TRC said:

I have no dissonance about Trungpa, that's the point. I don't need to reconcile the paradoxes that exist which others seem to need to. He gave some profoundly deep teachings, which had good results in certain circumstances. His addictions and proclivities led to less than good results in other circumstances. I can accept both dimensions without having to shoehorn it all into being a skilful teaching method, and that all his outcomes were positive - as they clearly weren't. It's others that need to do

that.

Malcolm wrote:

Whether or not all his interactions with people were positive is hardly the point. He was a realized person. He cannot be judged on the same standard as everyone else.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, September 11th, 2014 at 9:37 AM

Title: Re: Turning water into wine(Chogyam Trungpa)

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Whether or not all his interactions with people were positive is hardly the point. He was a realized person. He cannot be judged on the same standard as everyone else.

TRC said:

Well I happen to think he can. And in fact I'm going to set a higher standard of judgment if he claimed to be realised.

Malcolm wrote:

He, as far as I know, never made any such claim at all. But other high Lamas such as Dudjom Rinpoche, Dilgo Khyentse, and so on have made such claims on his behalf.

Then of course there is Drugpa Kunley, Do Khyentse, etc., many Tibetan masters that would hardly externally match your standards of moral conduct for that matter Virupa, Tilopa, Padmasambhava and so on also wouldn't.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, September 11th, 2014 at 9:49 AM

Title: Re: Turning water into wine(Chogyam Trungpa)

Content:

TRC said:

Well my response would remain the same regardless of who made the claims.

Malcolm wrote:

I think we already established the Vajrayāna is not your cup of tea.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, September 11th, 2014 at 8:27 PM

Title: Re: Turning water into wine(Chogyam Trungpa)

Content:

boda said:

You are not following Mr. Dangerous. Alcoholism is not necessarily a moral issue. It is classified as a disease.

The question is not about morality but consensus. Is there a consensus among Buddhist practitioners that a realized person may be an alcoholic? I will venture to guess that there is not. How about you?

Malcolm wrote:

There is a consensus among Vajrayāna practitioners that mere appearances, alcoholism included, may not bear any relation to a person's actual realization. We don't really care what other Buddhists might think. Given that this is the case, there is really no common basis for a discussion.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, September 11th, 2014 at 8:40 PM

Title: Re: Turning water into wine(Chogyam Trungpa)

Content:

TRC said:

Well my response would remain the same regardless of who made the claims.

Malcolm wrote:

I think we already established the Vajrayāna is not your cup of tea.

TRC said:

What has that got to do with it?

Malcolm wrote:

Everything.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, September 11th, 2014 at 9:02 PM

Title: Re: Turning water into wine(Chogyam Trungpa)

Content:

Motova said:

Alcohol and sex is trumped by picking a successor who spread aids around the sangha and raped a person. Why would a realized person pick someone as number two who would do such things? Speaking as someone who is totally new to Buddhism and Tibetan Buddhism, after reading about number two I totally avoid any of Chogyam Trungpa's material because I have zero confidence in who he was.

Malcolm wrote:

CTR is not responsible for Thomas Rich's actions.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, September 11th, 2014 at 11:43 PM

Title: Re: Turning water into wine(Chogyam Trungpa)

Content:

Motova said:

Alcohol and sex is trumped by picking a successor who spread aids around the sangha and raped a person. Why would a realized person pick someone as number two who would do such things? Speaking as someone who is totally new to Buddhism and Tibetan Buddhism, after reading about number two I totally avoid any of Chogyam Trungpa's material because I have zero confidence in who he was.

Malcolm wrote:

CTR is not responsible for Thomas Rich's actions.

Motova said:

He is responsible for putting a severely deranged person in a seat of authority who was capable of many gross actions. If you don't have any ability to stop this, then you shouldn't be put on a throne and be called a guru. If he was supposedly enlightened enough to frak, drink alcohol, and snort coke without any attachment then you'd think he'd be able to appoint a virtuous regent. Number two is where it all comes down to; it's the highlight of his dharma career. If Thomas Rich was his best student, then that says a lot about CTR's abilities and teachings.

Malcolm wrote:

Dylan, it is a long complex story. What matters is this:

According to Diana Mukpo, wife and widow of Trungpa, he ultimately became disillusioned with Tendzin as his heir, and during his final illness he called Tendzin "terrible" and "dreadful", and indicated that he would have gotten rid of Tendzin had he a suitable candidate with which to replace him.[24] Rick Fields, the editor of Vajradhatu's publication the Vajradhatu Sun, wrote that he resigned from his editorial position after Ösel Tendzin and the Board of Directors stopped him from publishing news of the events.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/\" onclick=\"window.open\(this.href\);return false;\" data-bbox="114 657 731 691">Ösel_Tendzin](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/\)

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, September 12th, 2014 at 12:22 AM

Title: Re: Bodhisattva's remorse

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

Any practice we engage in has to be premised on spontaneity, and not based in feelings/thoughts of hope and fear.

Malcolm wrote:

Any practice we do should be based on the motivation of attaining awakening for the

benefit of others. Only Buddhas truly act spontaneously, we are not capable of that.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, September 12th, 2014 at 1:55 AM

Title: Re: Turning water into wine(Chogyam Trungpa)

Content:

boda said:

But I do know the role of the guru.

Malcolm wrote:

Well please explain it to us then, so we can see where you are coming from, shel.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, September 13th, 2014 at 2:41 AM

Title: Re: Dudjom Lineage Rigdzin Dupa: First English Translation

Content:

miranda said:

@ Pema Tsultrim

I am based in France, and would like to order a copy of the Dudjom RD , for which I received wang and lung from Tulku Teglo. I send several mail on your website with no answer. I suggest to add 20\$ for the shipping charge (which is usually around 15\$) please let me know if it is ok for you and I shall send the 40\$ as donation on your website.

Waiting to read from you soon, PM or here...

Jean-Marc B

Tsultrim T. said:

Jean-Marc,

If you dont hear anything soon let me know and I might be able to arrange for a copy to be sent to you.

Malcolm wrote:

I also paid for a copy, but no copy was forthcoming...anyway, it is not a big deal.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, September 18th, 2014 at 3:40 AM

Title: Re: the great vegetarian debate

Content:

gad rgyangs said:

if you eat meat as a regular part of your diet, it might be a good exercise to ask yourself why.

Malcolm wrote:

Because I become ill if I don't, having tried to to refrain from eating meat countless times, including eating a so called "balanced" vegetarian diet, I simple get ill. I am more susceptible to infections, colds, etc.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, September 18th, 2014 at 10:27 PM

Title: Re: the great vegetarian debate

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Sorry, as I said, I have followed a well-planned, nutritionally balanced vegetarian diet (for years), and it is not good for my health. I just happen to be one of those persons who need some amount of animal protein my diet.

gad rgyangs said:

<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/19562864>

It is the position of the American Dietetic Association that appropriately planned vegetarian diets, including total vegetarian or vegan diets, are healthful, nutritionally adequate, and may provide health benefits in the prevention and treatment of certain diseases. Well-planned vegetarian diets are appropriate for individuals during all stages of the life cycle, including pregnancy, lactation, infancy, childhood, and adolescence, and for athletes. A vegetarian diet is defined as one that does not include meat (including fowl) or seafood, or products containing those foods. This article reviews the current data related to key nutrients for vegetarians including protein, n-3 fatty acids, iron, zinc, iodine, calcium, and vitamins D and B-12. A vegetarian diet can meet current recommendations for all of these nutrients. In some cases, supplements or fortified foods can provide useful amounts of important nutrients. An evidence- based review showed that vegetarian diets can be nutritionally adequate in pregnancy and result in positive maternal and infant health outcomes. The results of an evidence-based review showed that a vegetarian diet is associated with a lower risk of death from ischemic heart disease. Vegetarians also appear to have lower low-density lipoprotein cholesterol levels, lower blood pressure, and lower rates of hypertension and type 2 diabetes than nonvegetarians. Furthermore, vegetarians tend to have a lower body mass index and lower overall cancer rates. Features of a vegetarian diet that may reduce risk of chronic disease include lower intakes of saturated fat and cholesterol and higher intakes of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, nuts, soy products, fiber, and phytochemicals. The variability of dietary practices among vegetarians makes individual assessment of dietary adequacy essential. In addition to assessing dietary adequacy, food and nutrition professionals can also play key roles in educating vegetarians about sources of specific nutrients, food purchase and preparation, and dietary modifications to meet their needs.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, September 20th, 2014 at 6:22 AM

Title: Re: Is Tibetan Buddhism world-denying?

Content:

Jikan said:

So, what do you think? Fair assessment or no?

Malcolm wrote:

Utterly clueless when it comes to Tibetan Buddhism...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, September 21st, 2014 at 8:19 AM

Title: Re: Name of the practice associated with the Guhyagarbha Tan

Content:

Bakmoon said:

What is the name of the practice associated with the Guhyagarbha Tantra? For example, the Chakrasamvara Tantra is associated Chakrasamvara, the Hevajra Tantra is associated with Hevajra, so what is the practice that goes with the Guhyagarbha Tantra? I know that Zhitro is based on the same Mandala but I sort of have the impression that Zhitro is a body mandala rather than a self generation practice? Or does the Guhyagarbha Tantra not have a self generation deity yoga practice associated with it?

Malcolm wrote:

Zhitro.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, September 21st, 2014 at 8:26 PM

Title: Re: Historical Buddha

Content:

Bakmoon said:

I already mentioned this in my first post, but I think it really is a good example so I'll use it again. I think that the Prajnaparamita Sutras and the Madhyamaka Shastras are very much in accordance with the early scriptures. They don't contradict any doctrines of the Nikayas/Agamas and they fit very nicely with the underlying worldview of the scriptures.

Malcolm wrote:

The Śrāvaka canon is not the standard by which Mahāyāna is to be judged, if anything, it is actually quite the opposite. Those teachings in the Śrāvaka canon which are contradicted by the Buddha in Mahāyāna are to be set aside.

Otherwise, as Nāgārjuna notes in the Ratnavali, the Śrāvaka canon is incomplete and one cannot realize buddhahood through following its teachings since there is no presentation of the bodhisattva path, two-fold emptiness and so on.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, September 21st, 2014 at 11:17 PM

Title: Re: Historical Buddha

Content:

daverupa said:

So, this is what I mean, Bakmoon. Do you see the difference?

Malcolm wrote:

Different history, different facts.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, September 22nd, 2014 at 1:42 AM

Title: Re: Historical Buddha

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The Śrāvaka canon is not the standard by which Mahāyāna is to be judged, if anything, it is actually quite the opposite. Those teachings in the Śrāvaka canon which are contradicted by the Buddha in Mahāyāna are to be set aside.

Bakmoon said:

That's only true for someone who has already accepted the validity of the Mahayana scriptures. For someone who has not yet accepted their validity and is still examining them such an argument is a bare assertion.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, as is accepting Buddhadharma in general as valid compared with say the claims of Islam.

Bakmoon said:

Just because something is incomplete doesn't mean that it can't be used as a standard of teaching and interpretation. In Vajrayana the Sutra path in general is seen as being an incomplete system for the attainment of Buddhahood as well. What would the response be if someone came into a shedra and refused to study the Bodhicharyavatara or any of the other Sutra level Shastras claiming that it is wrong to take Sutric texts as the basis of understanding because Sutra is incomplete? I have the sense it wouldn't go over well.

Malcolm wrote:

They would tell you you are in the wrong place, not that your assertion is necessarily false. Shedras are for training teachers, they are not places where everyone must go. If you are a teacher, you must have a broad understanding. If you are a tantric practitioner you only need to understand the system you are practicing.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, September 22nd, 2014 at 1:43 AM

Title: Re: Historical Buddha

Content:

Bakmoon said:

But Mahayana Buddhism treats the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas very differently than how a theist thinks about God

Berry said:

As far as I'm aware, there are Mahayana Buddhists who pray to deities, Buddha's & Bodhisattvas to protect them & look upon them favorably in times of difficulty. How is this different to the prayers of a theist ?

Malcolm wrote:

How is it different from the Theravadins who pray the to four kings and so on for protection?

In fact, asking someone to protect you is not necessarily theistic.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, September 22nd, 2014 at 2:38 AM

Title: Re: Historical Buddha

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

How is it different from the Theravadins who pray the to four kings and so on for protection?

Berry said:

Do they ? Which prayer is that, then ?

Malcolm wrote:

<http://www.accesstosight.org/tipitaka/dn/dn.32.0.piya.html>

Berry said:

In fact, asking someone to protect you is not necessarily theistic.

Mmm, maybe not if one asks another human being for protection from an angry husband - but its theistic if you're asking an invisible deity.

Malcolm wrote:

Then even Theravada is theistic:

<http://www.accesstoinight.org/tipitaka/dn/dn.32.0.piya.html>

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, September 22nd, 2014 at 3:44 AM

Title: Re: Historical Buddha

Content:

Bakmoon said:

Since both Dāverupa and I accept historical methodology,

Malcolm wrote:

I also accept historical methodology, it just happens to be a different history and a different method.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, September 22nd, 2014 at 3:47 AM

Title: Re: Historical Buddha

Content:

Bakmoon said:

Do you mean to say that according to Tantra, it is wrong to learn Sutra as the basis of one's understanding because it is complete? I always thought that in those schools which teach that Tantra has a distinct view that it is a modification and an expansion of the teachings of Sutra, not a simple rejection and replacement.

Malcolm wrote:

It is not wrong to learn sutra, but since each Vajrayāna system is complete within itself, a practitioner does not necessarily need to become expert in the MMK, Cittamātra, Abhidharma and so on.

Someone who plans to be a teacher on the other hand needs to learn all these things.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, September 22nd, 2014 at 4:40 AM

Title: Re: Historical Buddha

Content:

Bakmoon said:

Since both Dāverupa and I accept historical methodology,

Malcolm wrote:

I also accept historical methodology, it just happens to be a different history and a different method.

Bakmoon said:

I'm sorry, I think I phrased that rather sloppily. I didn't mean to imply that you reject historical methodology. By historical methodology there I meant the use of comparative and internal textual analysis to date texts.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, I simply operate with a different understanding of history than what is accepted by people like daverupa, who basically default to a western materialist read of history.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, September 22nd, 2014 at 5:09 AM

Title: Re: Historical Buddha

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, I simply operate with a different understanding of history than what is accepted by people like daverupa, who basically default to a western materialist read of history.

Bakmoon said:

How is it materialism to use comparative and internal analysis to date texts? I think a lot of it is plain common sense.

Malcolm wrote:

Let me ask you, do you think Abhidhamma was taught by the Buddha. If not, why?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, September 22nd, 2014 at 8:27 PM

Title: Re: Historical Buddha

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Let me ask you, do you think Abhidhamma was taught by the Buddha. If not, why?

Bakmoon said:

Do I believe that the Abhidhamma Pitika was spoken by the Buddha? No. The clearest reason for this lies in comparative analysis of the different early canons. There are large differences in content in the canonical Abhidharmic literature of the various early schools. If you look to the portions that actually do match up with one another you find that much of the material in the Vibhanga and its analogues is held in common between the different traditions, and that material is simply a collection of several of the more comprehensive suttas from the Nikayas and Agamas fleshed out with more stock passages, lists of synonyms, and definitions.

As you get further away from this common core material in Abhidharmic literature, the level of textual differences increase between the different versions in different canons. The common sense explanation for this is that the Vibhanga and its analogues are earlier than the other material in the Abhidhamma. And also, if the earliest material is simply a modification of already existing Suttas, it stands to reason that it was composed after these Suttas. From plain common sense, it seems that the Abhidharmic literature developed over time as a systematization and a refinement of earlier material, so no, I don't think it goes back to the Buddha himself.

Malcolm wrote:

You are making a fundamental error that most people grounded in TEXT make, i.e, assuming that we can analyze what were orally transmitted teachings that were organized before they were written down into bodies of knowledge as if they were TEXTS.

The second thing that is telling is that you reject the account of the origin of ABHIDHAMMA because its origin legend (i.e. Buddha taught to the devas and summarized it for Śāruputra) is not shared with Saravastivadins and so on, who have a very different Abhidharma tradition. This rejection is grounded on a tradition of materialist text criticism that originates with Baruch Spinoza, more or less, which generally rejects all so called "supernatural" accounts.

Moreover, you contradict yourself here: "if the earliest material is simply a modification of already existing Suttas" and "I don't think it goes back to the Buddha himself".

Even if Abhidhamma is a compendium of passages from sutta, an interpretive scheme, if you hold those suttas were taught by the Buddha, then Abhidhamma goes back to the Buddha. And further, there is no reason to imagine that Buddha did not himself indicate what sort of interpretive scheme should be applied since we have a clear tradition that Buddha taught three pitikas, not merely two.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, September 22nd, 2014 at 9:47 PM

Title: Re: Historical Buddha

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

You are making a fundamental error that most people grounded in TEXT make, i.e, assuming that we can analyze what were orally transmitted teachings that were organized before they were written down into bodies of knowledge as if they were TEXTS.

Bakmoon said:

First of all, just because something is transmitted orally doesn't mean that it is not a text. It's just an oral text rather than a written text. It's a strange use of terminology for most people, but especially in India which has a long tradition oral memorized transmission

they work very much like written texts.

Can you back up your claim that orally transmitted texts cannot be analyzed? The principles of textual analysis are rather basic postulates such as "If two textual transmissions have material in common, it is most likely derived either from a common source" or "If text A is commenting on text B, then B is older and A is younger". Sure, they are used most often in written texts, but can you demonstrate that there is a fundamental difference between oral texts and written texts that renders this inapplicable? You have asserted this claim and done nothing to back it up.

Malcolm wrote:

You are missing my general point, there is really no effective way to layer date oral transmissions. We have an event in Buddhist history (as far as the Pali canon is concerned), i.e. it was committed to writing in the first century BCE. We can speculate many things about the written texts we find there, but it is all speculative conjecture. It is not "history".

Bakmoon said:

The underlined part doesn't make sense to me. It is true that the Vibhanga and its analogues is based on the Suttas taught by the Buddha combined with explanations and definitions, but that just means that the Vibhanga and its analogues is based on what the Buddha said. It doesn't mean that the Vibhanga and its analogues were spoken by the Buddha, much less the entire Abhidhamma pitika.

Malcolm wrote:

Your assumption is based on a materialist approach to text criticism. Other [i.e. traditional] historical approaches fully accept that Buddha taught the Vibhanga and so on in toto.

Bakmoon said:

That's an argument from silence.

Malcolm wrote:

No, it is clearly described in the canon that there are three pitikas, not merely two. But according to the modern approach, the third pitika does not exist.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, September 22nd, 2014 at 11:51 PM

Title: Re: Historical Buddha

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

You are missing my general point, there is really no effective way to layer date oral transmissions. We have an event in Buddhist history (as far as the Pali canon is concerned), i.e. it was committed to writing in the first century BCE. We can speculate many things about the written texts we find there, but it is all speculative conjecture. It

is not "history".

Bakmoon said:

You have stated the underline portion several times but you have failed to make an argument in favor of it. It is a bare assertion. Can you make an argument to back up this point? Why do the principles of textual analysis not work for oral texts?

Malcolm wrote:

Simply put, there is nothing to which a date may be assigned.

Bakmoon said:

And it was not just the Pali canon that was written down. The Sarvastivadin, Dharmaguptaka, and many other canons survive in large fragments. These schools separated prior to when these were written down, and when we compare these texts, they have material in common. From this we can deduce that the material held in common must date prior to the separation.

Malcolm wrote:

There were many groups of monks, we cannot assume they did not hold different oral transmissions. This accounts for differences as well as similarities.

Bakmoon said:

And there is also internal evidence we can use. Different parts of the Pali canon have different dialectical variants, some of which are very similar to the colloquial speech found in the area of Maghadha, and others with a distinct influence from Sanskrit.

Malcolm wrote:

This only tells us about this body of texts in the 1st century CE, it tells us nothing about a putative "original" canon.

Bakmoon said:

We can see different parts of the Canon with different features, and some texts seem to reference or comment on others. Furthermore, these internal correspondences can be line up with the comparative analysis and we find that the chronologies match. It may not be as certain as digging up manuscripts complete with dates, but we can have reasonable certainty about some of the dating.

Malcolm wrote:

No, we really can't, not beyond conjectural speculation.

Bakmoon said:

Also a matter to consider is to see how the material in the texts matches up with what we know archaeologically from the period. The Nikayas/Agamas give a clear depiction of what life was like back then. It depicts India as being a collection of various states vying for power with one another, a barter economy, and many other such things.

Remember that the Buddha passed into Parinirvana at a transitional time in the history of India when things were undergoing great social change. The fact that the texts aren't filled with anachronistic portrayals of daily life also can be used to establish validity. Just because we don't have absolute certainty about absolutely everything we say doesn't mean that the entire thing is baseless speculation. There is such a thing as reasonable inference.

Malcolm wrote:

According to people like Schopen, the texts are filled with anachronisms.

But this all avoids the point I am making, we are really not in a position to say which portion of the body of texts first written down in the first century BCE is older or which is younger. Of course, you can use conjecture, and you can claim it is reasonable, but your reasonable conjecture is easily negated by someone else's reasonable conjecture. If nothing else, the history of Buddhology is nothing more than the story of one reasonable conjecture being negated by another reasonable conjecture.

Your assumption is based on a materialist approach to text criticism. Other [i.e. traditional] historical approaches fully accept that Buddha taught the Vibhanga and so on in toto.

How is it materialism? I gave a carefully presented argument with premises and conclusions as why the Abhidhamma doesn't date back to the time of the Buddha himself, and instead of criticizing the initial premises or finding a flaw in the deduction from them, the response is "Your argument comes from materialism."

The fundamental principle upon which you base your argument is material texts, none of which materially date earlier than the first century BCE, and were all written down at the same time, so you have nothing more and a series of conjectures you have formed which stands in contradiction to the traditionally asserted origin of the texts themselves. If there is a flaw in my initial premises, then let it be pointed out. If there is an error in my deductions from said premises, then let my reasoning be refuted. But if neither the premises nor the deductions are flawed, then my argument ought to be accepted. You have basically claimed that your argument stands solely on inference, what is "reasonable", but those reasonable inferences are also predicated on a series of judgments about Indian history that are themselves conjectures.

And since we are examining the validity of comparative and internal textual analysis, let's examine the validity of these traditional historical approaches. I have explained how comparative and internal textual analysis works and its methodology. What is the methodology of the historical approach you are using?

I accept the traditional accounts as they stand and operate from those sets of premises. The Theravada tradition puts the Abhidhamma back to the time of the Buddha, but I think the Sarvastivadin tradition says it was composed by latter disciples, not the Buddha himself. If your approach is to simply follow a chronology passed down by tradition the issue becomes "Do we follow the Sarvastivadin account, the Theravada account, the Dharmaguptaka account, etc..."

[/quote]

The Abhidharma and the Abhidhamma Pitika cannot be equated. They are separate traditions coming from separate schools.

If you are a Theravadin, you follow the Theravadin account of the origin of Abhidhamma, if not then not. It is really quite straight forward and involves no conjecture at all.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, September 23rd, 2014 at 2:08 AM

Title: Re: Historical Buddha

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

There were many groups of monks, we cannot assume they did not hold different oral transmissions. This accounts for differences as well as similarities.

Bakmoon said:

Of course they had different oral transmissions. That's the whole basis of comparative methodology. But the point is if you trace the oral transmissions back, they cross and have a common source, and you can conclude that material which is found in several different oral transmissions must be from before the different oral transmissions divided.

Malcolm wrote:

Or, you can conclude that different groups of monks preserved different sets of sutras, some of which match, and some of which don't. There is no reason, for example, to presume that agamic sutras describing the bardo are not as ancient as other sutras merely because they are not found in the Pali canon — indeed, there is no reason to suppose that Buddha did not teach the antarabhāva merely because the antarabhāva is not well described in the Pali canon. This is merely one example.

Bakmoon said:

If you look at the Pali Nikayas and the Chinese Agamas, the similarities are literally undeniable. Just look at how they are organized for example: There is a Digha Nikaya, Majjhima Nikaya, Samyutta Nikaya, and an Anguttara Nikaya, and in the Agamas there is a Dirgha Agama, Madhyama Agama, three Chinese translations of the Samyuktagama, and two translations of the Ekottara Agama. The titles are literally translations of each other.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, of course, but this does not mean that every single text spoken by the Buddha was preserved at the first council. What I am suggesting is that there has always been so called "extra-canonical" teachings, i.e., sutras that for one reason or another were not collated during the first council but which were variously preserved by differing groups of monks in different geographical locations. When emissaries returned from the first council, monks merely added their own traditions their canon and this accounts for differences in the various Sravaka canons. Further, other differences may be accounted for by differences in memory, and so on.

Bakmoon said:

If you actually look inside of them you find that the individual Suttas and Sutras match up in terms of content. I highly urge interested readers to take a look at Suttacentral.net for themselves. They've listed all of the parallels and such that you can see for yourself.

Malcolm wrote:

This is not a point of contention.

Bakmoon said:

One of these is from the Pali Majjhima Nikaya, and the other is from the Chinese translation of the Madhyama Agama. Do you really mean to tell me that it is mere "conjectural speculation" to say that these two texts are almost identical because they stem from a "putative original" text?

Malcolm wrote:

No, what I mean to tell you is that it is entirely conjectural to imagine that the Sutta Nipatta is "early" and that various suttas in the Digha Nikaya are "late", and so on.

Of course, we one can try to conjecture which suttas were taught early in the Buddha's career, and which were taught later in his life, but this is also a difficult thing. A lot of suttas have no location given, and we only have a general idea of where Buddha went and at what time in his career.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, September 23rd, 2014 at 5:02 AM

Title: Re: Historical Buddha

Content:

Malcom said:

Or, you can conclude that different groups of monks preserved different sets of sutras, some of which match, and some of which don't. There is no reason, for example, to presume that agamic sutras describing the bardo are not as ancient as other sutras merely because they are not found in the Pali canon — indeed, there is no reason to suppose that Buddha did not teach the antarabhāva merely because the antarabhāva is not well described in the Pali canon. This is merely one example.

Bakmoon said:

I have two point to make in response to this.

Malcolm wrote:

You are objecting to something I am not claiming. My assertion is that you cannot claim that this set of suttas is earlier than some other. I am asserting you cannot layer date these canons successfully.

Bakmoon said:

2) Nowhere have I claimed that the Pali Canon is somehow privileged vis a vis the other early canons. It is merely one of the Canons that has been passed down to today. If something seems to be a later addition into the Pali Canon as demonstrated by comparative analysis with the other early Canons then I personally don't regard it as being Buddhavaṇṇa. Similarly I do not automatically reject things only found in the Sūtras from the Āgamas. Since you brought up the convenient example of the antarabhāva, I might as well mention my take on it.

I have no problem with an antarabhāva. I think that a lot of these kind of distinctions are just about how you write up your definitions, so what one group might call the antarabhāva another might classify as just being part of the life it comes after. A lot of it is semantics. I personally think there is something like an antarabhāva whatever way you want to classify it or call it just from how rebirth is described, near death experiences, etc... I honestly don't know if the Āgamas have anything to say on it, but if they do and there is evidence to indicate that it is of sufficient antiquity, then I would be willing to treat the antarabhāva as being buddhavaṇṇa.

Malcolm wrote:

When it comes to the Śrāvaka canons, my main point that we have very little reason to reject this part of the canon in favor of that part of the canon [as does daverupa for example] on the basis of some supposed antiquity that we can only conjecture about.

These texts are rooted in oral transmission, as you mention, they were recited by professionals who selected portions of sūtra, abhidharma and vinaya to recite. They were written down. We do not have any proof or evidence of when the Āgamas were written down Sanskrit for example, but it was definitely post-Ashoka. The unique conditions of the Pali canon meant that it was preserved to modern times in a more or less complete way, and we can clearly identify those parts that were committed to writing in the first century BCE and those parts that were added later. Because of the desolation of Indian Buddhism first by Turks, later by Hindus and Muslims, we have a much less complete record of the canon as it stood, also hampered by the fact that Tibetan Imperial policy decreed that there was little point in further translating Hinayāna texts beyond those sūtras that had been translated already --thus the vast majority of Hinayāna material in Sanskrit that was translated into Tibetan is the Mulasarvastivādin Vinaya. China lucked out in so far as much that was translated into Chinese was translated fifth century and earlier, when India was still largely dominated by Buddhists politically.

For example, the Sarvastivadins considered the Abhidharmapitika was something embedded with the Sūtra pitika, being the focus of advanced discussions of the Dharma by the Buddha. In this respect, then, Abhidharma was something to be extracted, a basket with a basket, there are other organization schemes as well. Its expression was the treatises attributed to Arhats concerning various topics. In other words, for whatever reason, different sets of vinaya lineages preserved different traditions about the origin, content and authorship of Abhidharma traditions. We have very little

evidence apart from similar and dissimilar texts, and we cannot now understand the precise conditions that lead to the various discrepancies we find in origination legends and so on.

People imagine they can nail down Mahāyāna and Vajrayāna too, but this is equally fraught. I have been studying Buddhist texts, both in the western academic tradition for nearly thirty years and as a practitioner of Vajrayāna for 25. I have decided for myself, based on reading many thousands of books and articles that at this point, that the academic tradition in the west about Buddhism (the burgeoning hermeneutic around that so influential on people like daverupa) largely consists of western academics who spout opinions as unfounded certainties, when in fact their work largely consists of conjectural reconstructions which cannot be grounded in anything anyone truly can regard as factual.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, September 23rd, 2014 at 5:06 AM

Title: Re: Historical Buddha

Content:

Bakmoon said:

The only reasonable conclusion to draw from this is that a substantial number of such variant Sutras are not different Sutras spoken by the Buddha at different times, but in fact variants of an original Sutra which has undergone editing, either through memory, interpolation, or through expanded explanation (like you mentioned, these began as oral texts, and a distinctive feature of oral texts is that they remain open and flexible to change over time).

Malcolm wrote:

Actually, the reality is that oral transmissions tend to resist change more readily than texts. Case in point, the Vedas.

As for the differences, who is to say that Buddha did not teach this in one way to one group of folks, and another way to another group of folks?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, September 23rd, 2014 at 6:58 AM

Title: Re: Historical Buddha

Content:

Bakmoon said:

In the early years when the stories and teachings were just passed down through plain speech rather than chanted texts and the Sutras were first being composed, the texts could very well have been open to including new material for a time before becoming

set.

Malcolm wrote:

This is conjecture.

Bakmoon said:

At any rate, you still haven't given me how your traditional understanding can give a parsimonious explanation of texts that have been transmitted with significant variances.

Malcolm wrote:

Different students understand different things and repeat them accordingly.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, September 23rd, 2014 at 7:02 AM

Title: Re: Historical Buddha

Content:

Bakmoon said:

the Illiad, and the Odessey...

Malcolm wrote:

are not oral traditions and never were. They are written accounts.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, September 23rd, 2014 at 9:59 PM

Title: Re: Name of the practice associated with the Guhyagarbha Tan

Content:

kirtu said:

There is also a 100-deity practice. I mention it because as I have seen it introduced, the practice is not obviously associated with Shitro (i.e. one could practice it without doing what most people associate with Shitro practices).

Kirt

Bakmoon said:

Could you explain the distinction please? I always thought that Shitro refers to the use of the 100 deities as a body mandala, but from what Malcom said it is also a Deity Yoga practice with the 100 deities as the mandala. What's the difference between Shitro and the 100 deity practice?

Thank you for your time.

Malcolm wrote:

Shitro is not necessarily a body mandala, for example, the Shitro practice connected with the Gongpa Zangthal cycle of teachings. Two mandalas are taught in Guhyagarbha,

the peaceful mandala, which is very similar to Guhyasamaja, and a wrathful mandala. They can be practiced together or separately. In the Guhyagarbha major empowerment, they are granted on two separate days and are separate empowerments. In tantra systems, they are generally granted on the same day.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, September 24th, 2014 at 2:25 AM

Title: Re: Historical Buddha

Content:

Bakmoon said:

That's moving the goal posts. I never claimed that it is possible to make a detailed non-speculative layering of the entire canon. You made the claim that all we can know about the Pali Canon is that it dates to about the first century BCE, and everything beyond that is "...[S]peculative conjecture.":

Malcolm wrote:

You have been asserting from the start that some parts of the tripitaka are definitely the Buddha's own words and some parts are not.

Bakmoon said:

We can reasonably know a lot about the texts prior to the first century BCE. By comparative analysis, we know that those Suttas which have parallels in the Agamas must date at the very latest to the point which the two transmission diverged.

Malcolm wrote:

No, we cannot really know this. For example, it is possible that at one point or another one group borrowed the terminology for their canon from another group and included different sets of texts. There is no reason to assume a common origin for each canon at all — that is a conjecture, which however reasonable it may seem, cannot be proven.

Bakmoon said:

Since the Theravada, Dharmaguptaka, and Sarvastivadin texts have so much overlap, we must conclude that the common core must date at the very latest to the time before these three schools separated, and that is significantly earlier than 100 BCE.

Malcolm wrote:

I am not sure we can theorize there is a common core, as above. The common theory is that there was the first council, and all Hināyāna sutras were compiled there. In general, one does not dispute this account. However, did this really happen in this way? We simply don't know beyond the assertion that it happened.

Bakmoon said:

The different Vinayas of these three schools disagree about exactly who split from who in what order, but it is quite clear that the point when all three were one was much earlier than 100 BCE.

Malcolm wrote:

Not all, the ordination lineages all sprang from different people, Mulasarvastivada from Rahula, Theravada from Upali, and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, September 24th, 2014 at 7:43 AM

Title: Re: Historical Buddha

Content:

Bakmoon said:

Where have I claimed that? I think that we can use comparative methodology to say that some parts are older than others, but I never claimed to be able to definitively put anything back all the way to the time of the Buddha.

Malcolm wrote:

Going to play that card, eh? That simply means you don't think anything reported in the Pali Canon was said by the Buddha.

Bakmoon said:

Like I mentioned before, about 80% of the Suttas in the Majjhima Nikaya are also found in the Madhyama Agama. Are you claiming that it is reasonable to suppose this is because the collection that became the Madhyama Agama simply copied texts from the Majjhima Nikaya?

Malcolm wrote:

It is reasonable to suppose that when one group of redactors decided to give this and that name to sections of their canon, other groups of redactors chose to model their redaction likewise.

Bakmoon said:

If so, then why aren't the texts the same as in the Majjhima Nikaya? They are the same in terms of substantive content, but textually many of them are quite different.

Malcolm wrote:

Because what was borrowed could merely have been an organizational scheme, not

every text within that scheme.

Bakmoon said:

I suppose it is possible that just before the Canons were written down in Sri Lanka and the surviving Gandhari texts were penned that there was a massive borrowing of texts between them and then both the Sri Lankans and the Gandhari's decided to add and subtract a good amount of material all at once from their borrowed texts, but that sounds a lot more speculative and conjectural than saying that the reason why the texts have both strong similarities and significant textual differences is that they are descendents from a common source.

Malcolm wrote:

If you follow Salmond's reasoning, the notion that there was one ur-canon creates more questions than it answers.

Bakmoon said:

2) Like it or not, there is a very large difference between propositions which reasonably inferred from the evidence at hand and propositions which are not. If just after hearing a gunshot person A is found shot in a room with a gun with the fingerprints of person B who was found near by, unless there is some evidence to the contrary, we reasonably can infer that person B shot person A, and this certainty is sufficient to sentence a person to prison.

Malcolm wrote:

This kind of reasoning has put quite a large number of innocent people on death row. Whoops! There are clear limits to inferential reasoning.

Malcom said:

Not all, the ordination lineages all sprang from different people, Mulasarvastivada from Rahula, Theravada from Upali, and so on.

That's true of the ordination lineages of individual persons, but there were several different schools of Buddhism in India, each associated with their own canon. The Vinaya Pitikas of these schools indicate that it took time for them to split up. The Vinayas and the Dipavamsa (which is basically just an addendum to the historical material in the Theravada Vinaya) agree that there were different schools and they split up over time, although they disagree about which groups split from which and in what order.

Malcolm wrote:

[/quote]

Why accept any of these accounts as veridical, since they, like the speculations of western scholars, are all contradictory?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, September 24th, 2014 at 7:56 PM

Title: Re: Historical Buddha

Content:

Bakmoon said:

The copy model is just contradicted by the textual evidence in front of us.

Malcolm wrote:

Not if the copy was a copy of a canonical taxonomy rather than content, this would lend the illusion of an ur-canon from which there was deviation, when in fact no ur-canon ever existed, contrary to legend.

Bakmoon said:

Of course there are limits to inference, that's why there's a difference between reasonable inferences and unreasonable ones. To reject the use of reasonable inference based on evidence in accepting a position on the grounds that it isn't a definitive proof is to me a very radical skepticism which in any case isn't the point. For most things in life isn't sensible to demand absolute incontrovertible proof, but that doesn't mean that we therefore know almost nothing. Is the common source model absolutely 100% certain? No, but that's where all the evidence points, and it certainly makes the common source model a very sensible and reasonable conclusion based firmly on the evidence, and certainly not mere "...[S]peculative conjecture."

Malcolm wrote:

But instead, here we see that in the case of the origin of the Hināyāna canons, there is very little evidence. So what you are left with a sort of forensic analysis that in the end can tell you nothing at all about the decomposing corpse on the ground in front of you, except perhaps how it died.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, September 24th, 2014 at 7:58 PM

Title: Re: Historical Buddha

Content:

Bakmoon said:

In my personal experience some kinds of Buddhist communities there really isn't nearly as clear of a line dividing the traditional Buddhists and secular Buddhists.

Malcolm wrote:

Sure there is: the line is rebirth and its acceptance.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, September 25th, 2014 at 2:06 AM

Title: Re: Historical Buddha

Content:

Bakmoon said:

That would be true if it were only the structure that is parallel. But in fact the contents are in fact parallel.

Malcolm wrote:

No, the content is similar, but not parallel. Which suggests different communities collected different traditions of what the Buddha said, and organized them later on.

Bakmoon said:

The bulk of Sutras found in each Agama and Nikaya have a parallel Sutra in that collection's counterpart, many of these parallel Sutras have significant textual differences,

Malcolm wrote:

Exactly...

Bakmoon said:

The available evidence points towards the common ancestor model

Malcolm wrote:

No, I don't think so:

Interestingly, built into the traditional account of the First Council is the story of one monk who arrived late. He asked the others what he had missed. When they told him how they had formalized the Buddha's teachings, he objected. He insisted that he himself had heard the Buddha's discourses and would continue to remember them as he had heard them.

http://www.lindaheuman.com/stories/Tricycle_Magazine_Whose_Buddhism_is_Truest.pdf

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, September 25th, 2014 at 3:27 AM

Title: Re: Historical Buddha

Content:

daverupa said:

either we're using the historical Buddha and that Dhamma which was preserved by the early Sangha as our foundation for learning & practice & assessment of teachings, or we're not.

Malcolm wrote:

We're not, since the Dharma they [the monastics] preserved from the Buddha was not complete.

daverupa said:

we can nevertheless say what isn't early enough to be considered a candidate for inclusion in the earliest historical strata...

Malcolm wrote:

Nonsense, Mahāyāna sutras began to be written down around the same time as Hinayāna sutras, i.e. during the first century BCE and probably earlier.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, September 25th, 2014 at 7:28 AM

Title: Re: Historical Buddha

Content:

daverupa said:

We're not using the historical Buddha and that Dhamma which was preserved by the early Sangha as our foundation for learning & practice & assessment of teachings since the Dharma they [the monastics] preserved from the Buddha was not complete.

Ah, well then. How has this been assessed?

Malcolm wrote:

By our tradition, which asserts the Mahāyāna canon is a teaching which is contemporaneous with the Hinayāna canon.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, September 25th, 2014 at 8:30 AM

Title: Re: Historical Buddha

Content:

daverupa said:

But only one is incomplete? That's the assessment I'm asking about, not contemporaneity.

Malcolm wrote:

Mahāyāna teaches the entire path of full awakening, profound emptiness, and so on, features lacking in all Hinayāna canons (which teach only the awakening of an arhat, superficial emptiness, and so on and so forth) blah blah blah, things you don't believe anyway.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, September 25th, 2014 at 9:59 AM

Title: Re: Historical Buddha

Content:

Johnny Dangerous said:

I hope you are not asking someone to justify the Mahayana view on what constitutes "Hinayana" on a Mahayana site.

daverupa said:

Certainly not. It simply needed clear saying, which Malcolm has accomplished. Please remember this thread is his creation; the discussion has played out in relatively short order, and is now a handy reference going forward.

Malcolm wrote:

At least we dont slaughter each other like the Shiites and Sunnis.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, September 25th, 2014 at 8:17 PM

Title: Re: Inequality

Content:

treehuggingoctopus said:

Well, I'm happy to have you share your views on the matter. However, what you wrote doesn't in the least mean that socialism/comunism are unavoidably materialist.

Malcolm wrote:

Communism/Marxist Socialism is based on the theory of dialectical materialism.

Communalism and non-Marxist species of socialism are not necessarily so, but the willingness of Marxists to resort of violence generally supplants other non-aggressive socialisms unless those socialisms are supported by a healthy market economy.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, September 25th, 2014 at 10:16 PM

Title: Re: Historical Buddha

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Nonsense, Mahāyāna sutras began to be written down around the same time as Hinayāna sutras, i.e. during the first century BCE and probably earlier.

Bakmoon said:

What about the fact that the Mahayana Sutras often talk about matters in the Sravakayana texts but the converse is never happens? If all the texts are records of the same person teaching that seems rather odd coincidence to me. .

Malcolm wrote:

As it says in the Guhyasamaja, the single vajra word is heard variously by different disciples.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, September 25th, 2014 at 10:19 PM

Title: Re: Historical Buddha
Content:
Bakmoon said:
but in a debate context it does

Malcolm wrote:
Not really, but anyway, if your goal is to become a samyaksambuddha, you will not find any path to realize that result in any Hinayāna canon.

The reasonings supporting this position may be found in Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra, chapter 1.

M

Author: Malcolm
Date: Thursday, September 25th, 2014 at 11:16 PM
Title: Re: Bodhisattva's remorse
Content:

Sherab Dorje said:
Any practice we engage in has to be premised on spontaneity, and not based in feelings/thoughts of hope and fear.

Malcolm wrote:
Any practice we do should be based on the motivation of attaining awakening for the benefit of others. Only Buddhas truly act spontaneously, we are not capable of that.

Sherab Dorje said:
I believe that we are capable of spontaneous acts of love, generosity, compassion, etc... Our enlightened nature sees to that. Now it is, of course, true that our negative habitual tendencies can override this natural display, and that cultivating the right motivation helps us habituate our behaviour in a positive direction, but to say that only Buddhas truly act spontaneously is a gross exaggeration.

Malcolm wrote:
In this respect "spontaneous" means free from objects. We are not capable of that, not even a bodhisattva on the stages is capable of that, since they have a very subtle obscuration that causes them to have dualistic perception, albeit on a very subtle level.

Our compassion, etc., no matter how "spontaneous" it is, is always tainted with objectification.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Friday, September 26th, 2014 at 12:14 AM
Title: Re: Contesting constant non-dual awareness of Shakyamuni
Content:

garudha said:

Now this is a big problem for me because you're implicating that sentient beings -- whose minds are NOT in a state of constant non-dual awareness---...cannot achieve effortlessness until they attain this mythical "non-dual awareness".

Malcolm wrote:

Correct, they cannot. Why? Because they are conditioned by affliction.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, September 26th, 2014 at 12:42 AM

Title: Re: Dudjom Lineage Rigdzin Dupa: First English Translation

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

still wondering why no one ever sent me a copy of this since I made a donation for it...anyway, NBD.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, September 26th, 2014 at 1:52 AM

Title: Re: Contesting constant non-dual awareness of Shakyamuni

Content:

garudha said:

Therefore: there is no enlightenment that could be attained by samsaric beings because (i) there are no differentiated samsaric beings (ii) there are no differentiated Buddhas (iii) there are no defilements to cleanse.

Malcolm wrote:

From the point of view of Buddha (nondual), yes; from the point of view of sentient being (dual), no.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, September 26th, 2014 at 2:54 AM

Title: Re: Inequality

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Communalism and non-Marxist species of socialism are not necessarily so, but the willingness of Marxists to resort to violence generally supplants other non-aggressive socialisms unless those socialisms are supported by a healthy market economy.

kirtu said:

Which is the actual case in all social democracies. However your skepticism regarding

religious communism is excessive. In fact your skepticism regarding all forms of communism is also. Otherwise the Indian state of Kerala would not exist (indeed, by American standards it is not supposed to exist but nevertheless does [admittedly a friend of mine from Kerala dismisses the local Communist party there as just another political party like the Democrats ...]).

Kirt

Malcolm wrote:

Having been to Kerala, yes, the Communist Party there is mainly regarded as a nuisance. They are just as corrupt as any other party in India.

As far as religious Communism goes, Communism is sort of a religion.

What I skeptic of is that notion that economies can be planned. Many have tried, all have failed.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, September 26th, 2014 at 3:44 AM

Title: Re: Inequality

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

There is a difference between a regulated market and planned economies. The former fail when regulations fail, as in the 2007 debacle; the latter always fail.

Markets require proper regulation.

What I skeptic of is that notion that economies can be planned. Many have tried, all have failed.

kirtu said:

French mixed market economy has been through many changes but France is still around. 5th largest economy last time I looked. China still does *not* have an unconstrained market economy and is 2nd. The US with the 1st largest nominal economy and close to unconstrained markets (certainly the worship of that) failed in November 2007 resulting in a substantial loss of wealth, millions of people lost everything as a result (including me) and the de facto slave class in American, a class with virtually no economic opportunity, swelled. I personally will be voting with my feet when I recover.

While Marxism did fail, the Marxist criticism of capitalism is basically valid. Capitalism can only lead to cycles of boom and bust *a fact acknowledged by all economists I know). The difference is that capitalist economists since the Keynes Revolution have articulated a philosophy and method to contain that damage and manage the cycles. This was overturned by Chicago School fanatics who are essentially running the economy of the US at the behest of Ayn Randian fanatics in Congress and in the Fed.

More recently Nassim Nicholas Taleb has demonstrated the weakness of impotence of statically driven economics under the condition of an unusual event. Taleb is a student of Mandelbrot (who was also one of the teacher's of many of the Chicago School and who was certainly associated with the Chicago School through the 60's) and was a very successful mathematical financier who focuses on unusual or Black-Swan events in his speculation.

You could respond that modern finance has used (Taleb would say overused) statistics to minimize risk but they have used other mathematical models as well (causing the infamous Black-Scholes collapse in the 90's). While professors Merton and Scholes rightly won the Nobel Prize for their achievement in pricing, most people using their tools and other tools in financial mathematics don't know what they are doing and are just turning a crank (called sausage machine mathematics). Market economies are also open to collapses which is one reason that social democracies keep it under control.

Kirt

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, September 26th, 2014 at 3:58 AM

Title: Re: Inequality

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Markets require proper regulation.

kirtu said:

The Nov 2007 collapse proved that regulators generally don't know what they are doing. Other incidents (Madoff for example) have demonstrated this as well.

Kirt

Malcolm wrote:

I see, so you prefer always failing planned economies then? Because you can't show me one that has not catastrophically failed.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, September 26th, 2014 at 4:03 AM

Title: Re: Contesting constant non-dual awareness of Shakyamuni

Content:

garudha said:

According to Doctrine of Buddhism such feelings are non-existent and cannot be apprehended.

asunthatneversets said:

That should say: "According to Doctrine of Buddhism such feelings are ultimately non-existent and cannot be apprehended."

However if we grasp at the ultimate then all we end up doing is advocating for a nihilist view.

Jigme Lingpa calls this type of view 'being sealed by a definitive view of emptiness', it can potentially be a major deviation if uncorrected.

garudha said:

Ahhh! You found the perfect book for me. Thanks so much

Malcolm wrote:

You have to understand, the dharmakāya is the mind of the Buddha, that is nondual by definition. As it says in the Avatamska:

The owner of the pure nondual dharmakāya
tames all migrating beings who abide in dualism
with the thunderous clouds of emanations.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, September 26th, 2014 at 4:29 AM

Title: Re: Inequality

Content:

kirtu said:

I absolutely can: Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Finland, the Netherlands, Germany, Austria and Switzerland. There are other nations as well. Since WW2 the economies of these nations have not failed. They have been through difficult times but haven't collapsed. They keep capitalism under control rather than let it run rampant.

Kirt

Malcolm wrote:

These are not planned economies by any standard. They are well-regulated free market economies. Venezuela, Cuba, Pre-capitalist Russia, China, former Soviet Bloc countries etc. are what I have in mind when I mention "planned economies" When talking about planned economies, I am not sure we are discussing or mean the same thing.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, September 26th, 2014 at 8:12 AM

Title: Re: Inequality

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

I see, so you prefer always failing planned economies then? Because you can't show me one that has not catastrophically failed.

kirtu said:

I absolutely can: Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Finland, the Netherlands, Germany, Austria and Switzerland. There are other nations as well. Since WW2 the economies of these nations have not failed. They have been through difficult times but haven't collapsed. They keep capitalism under control rather than let it run rampant.

Malcolm wrote:

I never said that they were planned economies.

Ummmm yes you did, the above statement was in response to this statement of mine:

I see, so you prefer always failing planned economies then? Because you can't show me one that has not catastrophically failed.

"Free" does not mean "unregulated".

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, September 26th, 2014 at 9:05 AM

Title: Re: Inequality

Content:

kirtu said:

That's a juvenile response. You introduced the incorrect strawman "so you prefer" etc. Your assertion is nonsense.

Kirt

Malcolm wrote:

Kirt, I don't include the economies you mention under the rubric of "planned" economies. Now, there is no need for you to get all hostile about the fact that I consider all the economies you mentioned to be free market economies. As I said, "free" does not mean "unregulated".

A genuine Socialist economy will be planned to the teeth — and history shows these economies are abject failures.

An unfortunate fact of Social Democracies (and the US is no exception here) is that they permit corporations to externalize many social costs of running their business onto the public sector, which appears to keep prices low, but in reality just cause a mess to be cleaned up later.

Now, I understand you have a deep hatred for the country in which you live, and I feel sorry for you in this respect — it must be painful to be so unhappy, feeling forced to live in a country you despise so deeply. I wish you the speediest possible exit to the country of your choice, where you may enjoy the kind of prosperity everyone deserves, merit permitting.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, September 26th, 2014 at 9:08 AM

Title: Re: Inequality

Content:

kirtu said:

The list of countries I provided are successful social democracies. They have bottled and harnessed the capitalist genie in order to keep it working for the people rather than creating a tyrannical economic system where lower classes are deprived of opportunity and in some cases the bare necessities of life (as we see in North Korea on the one hand and in the US currently).

Malcolm wrote:

All boats rise in a high tide. When the oil economy that is propping up the world economy tanks, it will be a different story for everyone...

BTW, I know people in Norway, and all other countries you mention, it is not the cup of tea you imagine.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, September 26th, 2014 at 8:21 PM

Title: Re: Dancing with Women in Buddhist Temple

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]
```

What do you think people?

Malcolm wrote:

It is clearly a dance during what is known as a feast offering, in which singing and dancing are encouraged at a certain point in the ritual.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, September 26th, 2014 at 9:28 PM

Title: Re: What is "hinayana"? What is it not?

Content:

Jikan said:

I'm not comfortable with the habit of using the term "hinayana" to describe the practice & doctrine of Theravadin practitioners, because it doesn't always correspond. It's not adequate. This has been discussed a bit already in this thread.

Malcolm wrote:

Mahāyāna describes a motivation behind one's wish for awakening. Simply put, if your actual motivation for awakening does not include the desire to become a Buddha for the benefit of all sentient beings, that motivation is hina, inferior. Not only this, it also describes a view of emptiness, an attitude towards śīla that prioritizes the benefit of others over concern for the "purity" of one's discipline, and so on.

Now, just as a Mulasarvastivadin (like all Tibetan Buddhist, upasakas to bhikṣus) can be a Mahāyānist, so can a Theravadin.

But Theravada proper is still a Hinayāna school, as is Mulasarvastivada, because one cannot obtain buddhahood through that school's teachings and because the bodhicitta to become a buddha does not exist in its canon. Yes, it is true that there is an extracanonial approach to the Bodhisattva path borrowed from Mahāyāna, but even here it is constrained by a variety of concepts such as the idea that one can only be a bodhisattva if one is predicted by a Buddha and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, September 26th, 2014 at 9:31 PM

Title: Re: What is "hinayana"? What is it not?

Content:

Jikan said:

Am I alone in thinking that contemporary Mahayana Buddhism makes a much bigger deal out of the distinctions among vehicles than earlier Buddhists did? and maybe a bigger deal than it need be?

I think Shakyamuni was on the right track in the Lotus Sutra, when he taught that while there appears to be a multiplicity of vehicles to suit the needs of deluded beings, there's really only one vehicle: the Buddha vehicle

Malcolm wrote:

The ekayāna teaching is taught from the the point of view of Mahāyāna; but it does not address the individual bodhicittas of śravakas, and so on. It may be the case that in the end that arhats are woken up from the samadhi of cessation and set on the bodhisattva path, but it does not mean that there are those who think the path of the bodhisattva is too difficult, egotistical, and so on., and who therefore select a lesser awakening.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, September 26th, 2014 at 10:10 PM

Title: Re: What is "hinayana"? What is it not?

Content:

Jikan said:

...which is to say that, in the end, there is no "hinayana," just slower and faster practitioners, or rather practitioners with more or less capacity in this lifetime. That may sound triumphalist, but there it is.

Malcolm wrote:

No, as I explained, there is a Hinayāna, because it has to do with the motivations of the practitioner.

Without intercession, there is no way an arhat will enter Mahāyāna, for example. It is not like an arhat enters cessation and then suddenly realizes his or her path is incomplete.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, September 27th, 2014 at 1:04 AM

Title: Re: Contesting constant non-dual awareness of Shakyamuni

Content:

garudha said:

So (indirectly) this sutra states that there is a possible enlightenment which does not involve seeing the Tathagatagarbha. What do you make of these "Self-Enlightened" ones who have not seen and what could their attainment be like ?

Malcolm wrote:

These are pratyekabuddhas, and they do not realize complete buddhahood.

garudha said:

"Lord, the Tathagatagarbha is neither self nor sentient being, nor soul, nor personality. The Tathagatagarbha is not the domain of beings who fall into the belief in a real personality, who adhere to wayward views, whose thoughts are distracted by voidness. Lord, this Tathagatagarbha is the embryo of the Illustrious Dharmadhatu, the embryo of the Dharmakaya, the embryo of supramundane dharma, the embryo of the intrinsically pure dharma.

Malcolm wrote:

So it seems, to me, that Tathagatagarbha refers to Eternal Buddha.

[/quote]

Tathāgatagarbha is a synonym for the unrealized dharmakāya, etc. As I said, the mind of all buddhas is the dharmakāya. They have no other mind.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, September 27th, 2014 at 1:05 AM

Title: Re: Dancing with Women in Buddhist Temple

Content:

plwk said:

It is clearly a dance during what is known as a feast offering, in which singing and dancing are encouraged at a certain point in the ritual.

Ah...is this standard for all feast offerings to use such music & dancing or upon discretion of the presiding umze or lamas?

Malcolm wrote:

It is at the discretion of whoever is in charge.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, September 27th, 2014 at 1:26 AM

Title: Re: Contesting constant non-dual awareness of Shakyamuni

Content:

garudha said:

Do you find significant fault with the statement "The Mind if all Buddhas is Eternal Buddha" ?

Malcolm wrote:

It is not as it Śakyamuni were one thing and dharmakāya was another. All three kāyas are inseparable.

But the The Lion's Roar of Queen Srimala sutra mentions Arhats and Pratyekabuddhas are in the incomparable rightly completed enlightenment which is the absoluteness of the One Vehicle.

garudha said:

"Lord, the Arhats and Pratyekabuddhas ...

Malcolm wrote:

This passage does not mean what you think it means. It is stating that arhats and so on mistake their realization for a final realization, but that nevertheless, their path is included in the "ekayāna". It is basically the same sentiment as in my signature. All Dharmas are included in the Dzogchen Teachings, but Dzogchen is the supreme teaching which surpasses them all.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, September 27th, 2014 at 2:00 AM

Title: Re: What is "hinayana"? What is it not?

Content:

Mkoll said:

A tactless term with pejorative connotations that those who know better shouldn't use publicly, unless their goal is to increase sectarianism and division between people.

Wikipedia said:

The word Hīnayāna is formed of hīna (हीन):[5] "little," "poor," "inferior," "abandoned," "deficient," "defective;" and yāna (यान):[6] "vehicle", where "vehicle" means "a way of going to enlightenment". The Pali Text Society's Pali-English Dictionary (1921–25) defines hīna in even stronger terms, with a semantic field that includes "poor, miserable; vile, base, abject, contemptible," and "despicable."

...

According to Jan Nattier, it is most likely that the term Hīnayāna post-dates the term Mahāyāna, and was only added at a later date due to antagonism and conflict between bodhisattvas and śrāvakas. The sequence of terms then began with Bodhisattvayāna, which was given the epithet Mahāyāna ("Great Vehicle"). It was only later, after attitudes toward the bodhisattvas and their teachings had become more critical, that the term Hīnayāna was created as a back-formation, contrasting with the already-established term Mahāyāna.[11] The earliest Mahāyāna texts often use the term Mahāyāna as an epithet and synonym for Bodhisattvayāna, but the term Hīnayāna is comparatively rare in early texts, and is usually not found at all in the earliest translations. Therefore, the often-perceived symmetry between Mahāyāna and Hīnayāna can be deceptive, as the terms were not actually coined in relation to one another in the same era.[12]

According to Paul Williams, "the deep-rooted misconception concerning an unfailing, ubiquitous fierce criticism of the Lesser Vehicle by the [Mahāyāna] is not supported by our texts." [13] Williams states that while evidence of conflict is present in some cases, there is also substantial evidence demonstrating peaceful coexistence between the two traditions.[13]

Mkoll said:

I like Mr. Williams' idea of "peaceful coexistence." Using the term "hinayana" in public does not move towards that end.

Malcolm wrote:

This all presumes that these speculations by Nattier have any merit.

The term hinayāna is used over and over again in the Mahāyāna canon to describe pejoratively the goals, motivations and practices of those who aspire to the awakening of śravakas and pratyekabuddhas. It occurs in the PP Sutra in 8000 lines, repeatedly in the Ratnakuta collection, in the general sutra section of the bka' 'gyur, as well as many tantras.

Contrary to popular PC sentiment, the term is used over and over again in Indian Mahāyāna commentarial literature.

In order to understand Indian Mahāyāna you have to understand the use of the term hinayāna and how it is universally used.

If you are a not a Mahāyāna practitioner, you don't need to pay the term any heed. If someone is interested to read Mahāyāna, they are simply going to have to deal with the presence of this term in our canon.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, September 27th, 2014 at 3:00 AM

Title: Re: What is "hinayana"? What is it not?

Content:

Mkoll said:

Notice how I use the words "publicly" and "public"?

Malcolm wrote:

This is a Mahāyāna forum, correct? The term is used pervasively by the Buddha in Mahāyāna texts, correct? So you would prefer us to use euphemisms?

Basically, the terms śravakayāna and pratyekabuddha yāna are equated by the Buddha again and again with hinayāna.

We can use the term "mainstream" if you like, but this is still just a euphemism for the term hinayāna.

Basically, "hinayāna" is the Buddha's term for śravakayāna and pratyekabuddhayāna. So take it up with him.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, September 27th, 2014 at 3:41 AM

Title: Re: What is "hinayana"? What is it not?

Content:

Mkoll said:

Notice how I use the words "publicly" and "public"?

Malcolm wrote:

This is a Mahāyāna forum, correct? The term is used pervasively by the Buddha in Mahāyāna texts, correct? So you would prefer us to use euphemisms?

Basically, the terms śravakayāna and pratyekabuddha yāna are equated by the Buddha again and again with hinayāna.

We can use the term "mainstream" if you like, but this is still just a euphemism for the term hinayāna.

Basically, "hinayāna" is the Buddha's term for śravakayāna and pratyekabuddhayāna. So take it up with him.

Mkoll said:

Saying "mainstream" or "śravakayāna" instead of "hinayāna" would be more tactful.

Malcolm wrote:

Well, you tell the Buddha to be more tactful in his Mahāyāna texts. What was he thinking?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, September 27th, 2014 at 4:00 AM

Title: Re: Contesting constant non-dual awareness of Shakyamuni

Content:

garudha said:

If Arhats, Pratyekabuddhas, and the Bodhisattvas are in the "incomparable rightly completed enlightenment",

Malcolm wrote:

The citation does not say that. You are not reading it correctly.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, September 27th, 2014 at 4:31 AM

Title: Re: What is "hinayana"? What is it not?

Content:

Mkoll said:

You believe the Buddha wrote those texts?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, I believe that the Buddha spoke the Mahāyāna, like all sutras, however, they were written down much later.

Mkoll said:

That's a red herring anyway. I'm not talking about the tactfulness of words used in ancient texts, I'm talking about the tactfulness of words used actively by modern people now, in 2014.

Malcolm wrote:

Not a red herring, it is actually very much to the point — the point being is the division of teachings into Hinayāna and Mahāyāna is very much a mainstream part of how Buddhism is explained in Mahāyāna, where the aspiration to awaken without including

the aspiration to achieve full Buddhahood for the benefit of all sentient beings is considered inferior [hina]. There is really no way around it. We can say "śravakayāna" and "pratyekabuddhayāna", but in this case what is the difference? In śravakayāna and pratyekabuddhayāna there is no motivation to awaken beyond considering only one's own benefit. When we compare the two, the śravakayāna and pratyekabuddhayāna motivations are inferior to the motivation of the bodhisattvayāna, hence śravakayāna and pratyekabuddhayāna constitute the hinayāna, and that is all there really is to it. One try and explain it all away with speculations about textual history, but in reality, those of us with commitment to Mahāyāna understand things in this way.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, September 27th, 2014 at 5:02 AM

Title: Re: What is "hinayana"? What is it not?

Content:

Jikan said:

Yes, precisely: and who (or what) intercedes in this case? (still referring to the same parable): Buddhahood, in one way or another.

Malcolm wrote:

A buddha, not an abstract principle, "buddhahood".

Jikan said:

The doctrine that Buddha is leading all beings to the state of Buddhahood saturates East Asian Dharma. It's not so uncommon to see it in Indo-Tibetan Buddhism either.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, arhats, etc. Also. The criticism is two fold; one hinayāna practitioners have an inferior motivation; two, the Hinayāna canon does not teach the Mahāyāna path.

Jikan said:

That's why I say that the distinctions among the yanas, which vary by tradition, are just provisional or conventional distinctions.

Malcolm wrote:

Well, knowing that the canon of the Śravakas will not lead to complete awakening, who would follow it? This is why the distinction is extremely important and should be emphasized. Who wants to hang out in the cessation of samadhi for incalculable eons?

Jikan said:

Sure, but what do you make of the parable of the magic city in the same sutra?

Malcolm wrote:

I addressed by pointing out the fact that arhats need to being roused from samadhi to

enter Mahāyāna.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, September 27th, 2014 at 5:04 AM

Title: Re: What is "hinayana"? What is it not?

Content:

Jikan said:

That's an interesting passage, but it doesn't necessarily speak for itself. How does it rebut (does it rebut?) what I have been arguing? How is it warranted as evidence for this purpose? Help me understand what you're trying to say here.

Malcolm wrote:

It's obvious what dave is saying: following the Mahāyāna path is the wrong way to get to Rajagriha, and the Buddha does not approve that Mahāyāna message, but he is not responsible for us wayward Mahāyānists.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, September 27th, 2014 at 5:19 AM

Title: Re: Contesting constant non-dual awareness of Shakyamuni

Content:

garudha said:

If Arhats, Pratyekabuddhas, and the Bodhisattvas are in the "incomparable rightly completed enlightenment",

Malcolm wrote:

The citation does not say that. You are not reading it correctly.

garudha said:

Yes I was taking bits out of context. Thanks for your statement. I have now gone over it again...

1a. I tried to read the Sutra from my own preconception of what it's trying to convey.

1b. I then find, within the text, contradictions which tell me my preconception is incorrect.

2a. I tried to read the Sutra from my how I imagine it would read if my preconception is incorrect.

2b. I then find, within the text, contradictions which tell me my preconception is correct.

Yes, I comprehend that Arhats & Pratyekabuddhas must contemplate the "nescience entrenchment" which should be eliminated, purified or to become nonexistent.

The purification of this "central channel" results in Buddha-hood, as I have heard, so I

do not deny that Shakyamuni Buddha's true-state is inconceivable to me.

Therefore I must defer judgement. However; I personally doubt that this "central channel" can be cleansed via mind-only learning alone. I think the whole-body-including-brain must be in a healthy condition for real progress to occur. I therefore view any experience of non-duality - which does not take into account the whole being of a person - as much a head trick for all the good striving for it would do.

I sincerely believe that cleaning the floor is as decent a meditation, on the road of progress towards "non-duality", as cleaning out ones karma.

Malcolm wrote:

The knowledge obscuration is necessary for buddhahood, since dharmakayā means omniscience.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, September 27th, 2014 at 10:02 AM

Title: Re: What is "hinayana"? What is it not?

Content:

plwk said:

<http://www.tbsa.org/arahant.htm>

Jikan said:

From that article:

In brief, a Theravada Buddhist can become a Buddha, or a Pacceka-Buddha, or an Arahant according to his choice. So Theravada Buddhism is for all three paths and not for the path to Arahantship only.

According to at least one contemporary Theravada source, there are some who indeed aspire to Buddhahood among those who identify as Theravada Buddhists. It's for this reason that I stated above that the term "hinayana" doesn't correspond directly to contemporary Theravadin practitioners, regardless of what the doctrine has had to say in the past. (what this means for the direction of Theravada doctrine and practice is a separate issue--perhaps a good topic for a thread at our sister site, DhammaWheel.)

Malcolm wrote:

I already addressed this issue. Theravada is a Hinayana school, despite fact Theravadins can choose to become Mahayanists if they like.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, September 27th, 2014 at 10:03 AM

Title: Re: What is "hinayana"? What is it not?

Content:

plwk said:

<http://www.tbsa.org/arahant.htm>

Jikan said:

From that article:

In brief, a Theravada Buddhist can become a Buddha, or a Pacceka-Buddha, or an Arahant according to his choice. So Theravada Buddhism is for all three paths and not for the path to Arahantship only.

According to at least one contemporary Theravada source, there are some who indeed aspire to Buddhahood among those who identify as Theravada Buddhists. It's for this reason that I stated above that the term "hinayana" doesn't correspond directly to contemporary Theravadin practitioners, regardless of what the doctrine has had to say in the past. (what this means for the direction of Theravada doctrine and practice is a separate issue--perhaps a good topic for a thread at our sister site, DhammaWheel.)

Malcolm wrote:

I already addressed this issue. Theravada is a Hinayana school, despite the fact Theravadins can choose to become Mahayanists if they like.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, September 27th, 2014 at 8:21 PM

Title: Re: Contesting constant non-dual awareness of Shakyamuni

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The knowledge obscuration is necessary for buddhahood, since dharmakayā means omniscience.

garudha said:

Not clear. Do you mean something like "Enlightenment can only occur in the context of ignorance", perhaps you're simply (perhaps justifiably) glorifying dharmakayā, or are you saying that a Buddha is personally not Omniscient?

Malcolm wrote:

No, what I mean is that in order to attain buddhahood, one must remove two obscurations, the kleśa-avarana and the jñeya-avarana, respectively, the obscuration of affliction and the obscuration of knowledge. Arhats and Pratyekabuddhas, as well as seventh stage bodhisattvas, have completely removed the former; only Buddhas are completely free of the latter.

I think that most of the confusion you are expressing in this thread is a result of not having properly studied the nature of three kāyas. There are any number of resources you can consult to further educate yourself.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, September 27th, 2014 at 8:23 PM

Title: Re: Understanding why ISIL beheads

Content:

TRC said:

keeping their war economy ticking along as well as more covertly and surreptitiously realising their larger geopolitical agendas.

Malcolm wrote:

War economies only work if you have someone to sell arms to (France and Britain in the two World Wars, for example). In this case, our government has no buyers in the region, apart from Israel. Iraq "buys" weapons from us, but we will never see a penny from those arms that we've "sold" them. All this costs the US Taxpayer billions.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, September 27th, 2014 at 9:05 PM

Title: Re: Understanding why ISIL beheads

Content:

Karma Dorje said:

It's not an assumption. It's a matter of public record. The US trained the fighters that would later become ISIS in Jordan.

Malcolm wrote:

That is a bit of an exaggeration — yes, a few dozen men trained in 2012 by the US in Jordan later joined the Islamic State, but you make it sound as if the whole command structure of IS was trained by the US and that is not true. Actually, the command structure of the IS is composed mostly of former Baathist officers.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, September 27th, 2014 at 9:36 PM

Title: Re: Understanding why ISIL beheads

Content:

TRC said:

I don't mean the production of arms necessarily for profit, but the huge permanent industrial military complex that the US is now dependent on, and which is fact one of the driving factors keeping America engaged in conflict. That's the war economy I'm referring to.

But yeah you're right, it is a massive cost to the tax payer, and that's the paradox that this dependency has become (as all dependencies are). It's the monkey on America's back that has its roots back in the cold war 1950s and is now hugely detrimental to the US nation (and the world) on so many levels. That's greed, hatred and delusion for you though.

Malcolm wrote:

The US is engaged in conflicts for many reasons, and a lot of them go back to the failed policies of the breakup of the British Empire, like this one.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, September 27th, 2014 at 9:44 PM

Title: Re: What is "hinayana"? What is it not?

Content:

daverupa said:

And, for what it's worth, a comparison of motive appears: "Save All Beings" <--> "A Shower Of The Way" } similar, and yet different. Maybe some hay is to made here, ecumenically.

Malcolm wrote:

You misunderstand then — "becoming a buddha to benefit all sentient beings" means becoming a buddha in order to show all sentient beings the way to buddhahood. It does not mean "saving" sentient beings in any sort of Christian sense. An arhat entering cessation can inspire by example, but cannot benefit beings beyond his or her lifespan. A buddha on the other hand can always emanate nirmanakāyas.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, September 27th, 2014 at 11:03 PM

Title: Re: Contesting constant non-dual awareness of Shakyamuni

Content:

Jesse said:

I've always felt when saying Buddhas are omniscient, it makes it feel like an un-attainable goal. (enlightenment.) because seriously, omniscience is in the realms of a god, not normal people. It just makes Buddhism feel pretty pointless eh?

kirtu said:

Omniscience isn't attained until after the 10th bhumi.

So we can develop compassion, lovingkindness, generosity, patience, ethical discipline, etc. to a maximum in this body. That is doable and certainly not pointless.

Kirt

Malcolm wrote:

Factually, tenth stage bodhisattvas are basically omniscient, despite having a slight obscuration. This is why Maitreya states that the wisdom beyond the ninth bhumi is a stage of buddhahood.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, September 27th, 2014 at 11:33 PM

Title: Re: Understanding why ISIL beheads

Content:

TRC said:

keeping their war economy ticking along as well as more covertly and surreptitiously realising their larger geopolitical agendas.

Malcolm wrote:

War economies only work if you have someone to sell arms to (France and Britain in the two World Wars, for example). In this case, our government has no buyers in the region, apart from Israel. Iraq "buys" weapons from us, but we will never see a penny from those arms that we've "sold" them. All this costs the US Taxpayer billions.

Karma Dorje said:

Yes, but the people in power obviously don't care about the US taxpayer. One can't understand what is happening there by thinking that the American oligarchs have the best interests of the American people at heart. The war economy is a way of transferring wealth from the middle class to the wealthy. The US doesn't need to export to accomplish this. They simply need to use all the weaponry they have been producing and replace what they have expended.

Malcolm wrote:

It not all a conspiracy, contrary to popular belief.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, September 28th, 2014 at 9:55 PM

Title: Re: Tantric and late Indian Buddhist philosophy

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Vajrayāna treatment of embodiment.

Anders said:

Could you give a quick rundown on this?

Malcolm wrote:

It means that in Vajrayāna, the key to awakening lies in human anatomy, not in philosophical speculation. It means that all the qualities of the basis, path and result are complete in the human body, and do not need to be gathered elsewhere. It means that, according to Vajrayāna, that the mind is a function of the body and its anatomy. It means that the classic dualism of namarūpa does not mean that nama and rūpa are inherently different, as philosopher's like Dharmakīrti would have it, but rather than there is no state in mind is dissociated from matter. In this respect, Vajrayāna is monistic, though of course in practical discussion, the substance dualism of sūtra dominates even Vajrayāna discussion, obscuring this point for the most part. But when you read texts like the Khandro Nyinthig, or the rdo rje lus sbas bshad by Yanggongpa, it becomes clear that the dualistic approach to mind/body in sūtra and abhidharma is abandoned by Vajrayāna in so far as it explains all of samsara and nirvana are present in

the body.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, September 28th, 2014 at 11:12 PM

Title: Re: Sroglung?

Content:

Katharina108 said:

Two years ago I suffered a terrible shock trauma related to violence. Since then I have often panic attacks at night or during daytime. It is so terrible, I can not even move. It is a huge pressure and tightness in my chest. In particular, sound is a very big trigger. When I hear a loud noise, such as the banging of a door or people yelling, suddenly I can suffer from immense fear and panic attacks. I can relive my source experience I had and I don't feel frightened. It is not that I try to suppress my memories at all. Now I have this kind of physical condition of these panic attacks. They can have all kinds of objects: Noise, bad news etc and they are very irrational. Even though I know this, it is like a terrible condition, that I can't stop and just 'happens'. Before my traumatic experience I did not have any problems and I never experienced these sensations. I don't want to take western drugs. I think it may be a heavy lung condition. I read this article: <http://www.rinpoche.com/teachings/causes.htm> "onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;" onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;" and the symptoms I have are described as 'srog-dzin lung'.

What is the common treatment for this? Is it the same as what people sometimes call lung disease or is it another kind of disorder?

I am thankful for every input,
Kath

Malcolm wrote:

Common treatments include massage, herbs such as Agar 35, and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, September 29th, 2014 at 12:59 AM

Title: Re: Tantric and late Indian Buddhist philosophy

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

It means that in Vajrayāna,...

Indrajala said:

That is rather essentialist and not really nuanced, as if "Vajrayāna" is a single entity.

Malcolm wrote:

I am not including Shingon, nor lower tantra. However, you will find that among all the four main Tibetan Buddhist schools, in general this is view that is understood.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, September 29th, 2014 at 1:46 AM

Title: Re: What is "hinayana"? What is it not?

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

Personally i believe that the important distinction is not the reference to Theravada vs non-Theravada traditions but that concerning motivation. There are plenty of people following Mahayana traditions with a hinayana motivation and there are plenty of Theravadins following their path yet holding a Mahayana motivation.

Malcolm wrote:

One cannot have a Mahāyāna motivation if one has not generated it. That means, for Theravadins, permanently eliminating their chances for stream entry, according to their own concepts. If one is someone who is genuinely generated the Mahāyāna intent for awakening, one won't be interested very much in Theravada naturally.

Sherab Dorje said:

Personally i don't buy the whole "taking refuge as a guarantee against rebirth in the three lower realms" schtick.

Malcolm wrote:

You consider the Buddha's teachings "schtick"?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, September 29th, 2014 at 1:52 AM

Title: Re: Tantric and late Indian Buddhist philosophy

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

I am not including Shingon, nor lower tantra. However, you will find that among all the four main Tibetan Buddhist schools, in general this is view that is understood.

Indrajala said:

You should state such things as otherwise your blanket statements are highly problematic.

Malcolm wrote:

Conventionally, Vajrayāna is usually understood to indicate HYT, whereas guhyamantra includes lower tantra.

The term vajrayāna primarily shows up only in niruttarayogatantras. So actually, my statement is perfectly accurate and not at all a blanket term, it is highly focused and precise.

Go ahead, do a word search for rdo rje theg pa here and see what titles emerge:

<https://www.istb.univie.ac.at/kanjur/xml3/xml/> "
onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, September 29th, 2014 at 2:15 AM

Title: Re: Tantric and late Indian Buddhist philosophy

Content:

Anders said:

Thanks a lot. Is the principle basically similar then to how the lotus position facilitates firmness of mind, or how one can regulate the mind by regulating the breath? That is to say, basically re-arranging bodily energies to effect the mind. Emphasis on principle, as I imagine the permutations, both theoretical and practical, go a lot further than this.

Malcolm wrote:

The Vajrayāna view is that vāyus of the body are the mind, basically.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, September 29th, 2014 at 2:42 AM

Title: Re: Tantric and late Indian Buddhist philosophy

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Conventionally, Vajrayāna is usually understood to indicate HYT, whereas guhyamantra includes lower tantra.

Indrajala said:

You said, "However, you will find that among all the four main Tibetan Buddhist schools, in general this is view that is understood."

Does this equally apply to all Indian forms of Vajrayāna as they existed in India?

Malcolm wrote:

You mean amongst all followers of the niruttaratantras?

Yes, I think so. For example, commentary tantra of the Guhyasamāja, the Sandhivākyāraṇa states:

Bodhicitta becomes vāyu,
its form exists in space,
it is the life of all sentient beings,
it is the nature of the five with ten names,
renowned as the twelve links,
its nature becomes three,

the bodhicitta called “vāyu”
this is the chief of consciousness.

Further, another commentary tantra, the Vajramālā, makes it very clear that even between the births, the all-basis consciousness is also inseparable with the mahāprāṇavāyu.

In other words, Vajrayāna texts treat our consciousness in terms of its embodiment in a manner very distinct from lower tantra and sutra.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Monday, September 29th, 2014 at 3:37 AM
Title: Re: Tantric and late Indian Buddhist philosophy
Content:

Anders said:

Thanks a lot. Is the principle basically similar then to how the lotus position facilitates firmness of mind, or how one can regulate the mind by regulating the breath? That is to say, basically re-arranging bodily energies to effect the mind. Emphasis on principle, as I imagine the permutations, both theoretical and practical, go a lot further than this.

Malcolm wrote:

The Vajrayāna view is that vāyus of the body are the mind, basically.

kirtu said:

And what are vāyus?

Kirt

Malcolm wrote:

Literally, vāyu means wind in the trio of nāḍī, vāyu and bindu.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Monday, September 29th, 2014 at 5:46 AM
Title: Re: Tantric and late Indian Buddhist philosophy
Content:

Jikan said:

Very banal historical question that may be relevant: when did the word "vajrayana" actually come into use? What did it describe when it did come into use?

Malcolm wrote:

mid-8th century, highest yoga tantra practice.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, September 29th, 2014 at 8:12 PM

Title: Re: Tantric and late Indian Buddhist philosophy

Content:

Astus said:

Didn't what could be called Sahajayana, i.e. Mahamudra teachings, come later, as a further development from Vajrayana? Because it seems to me that it's distanced itself from the energy system established in HYT, and moved closer to established sutra teachings. Well, at least some teachers taught that way ((Saraha), Maitripa, Jnanakirti, Sahajavajra).

Malcolm wrote:

No, Astus. First, there is no such thing as a "sahajayāna" — this is fabricated term. Maitripa taught standard Vajrayāna, as did these other masters, complete with creation stage and completion stage.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, September 29th, 2014 at 8:16 PM

Title: Re: Understanding why ISIL beheads

Content:

Sherab said:

The doctrines of radical Muslims are actually mainstream.

Malcolm wrote:

No, I don't think so.

<http://lettertobaghdadi.com>

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, September 29th, 2014 at 8:19 PM

Title: Re: What is "hinayana"? What is it not?

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

Why would stream entry be an obstacle to Mahayana motivation?

Malcolm wrote:

The point is that if you make the bodhisattva aspiration, according to conventional Theravadin doctrine, you are denied stream entry, and must remain a normal afflicted person. In their system, a bodhisattva can only become a realized person in their last lifetime, when they become a sammāsambuddha.

Sherab Dorje said:

Quite the contrary. I believe that habituation of the mind stream via intentional action overrides the effect of a five minute ritual and cutting a couple strands of hair.

Malcolm wrote:

The rite is merely symbolic, refuge is in the heart. The intent to go for refuge indeed can shut the door to lower realms, especially Mahāyāna refuge.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, September 29th, 2014 at 8:53 PM

Title: Re: Tantric and late Indian Buddhist philosophy

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

No, Astus. First, there is no such thing as a "sahajayāna" — this is fabricated term.

Maitripa taught standard Vajrayāna, as did these other masters, complete with creation stage and completion stage.

Astus said:

A number of teachings by the mentioned Indian masters show something else. See for instance:

http://www.academia.edu/5614409/Mathes_2006_Blending_the_Sutras_with_the_Tantra_as_The_Influence_of_Maitripa_and_his_Circle_on_the_Formation_of_Sutra_Mahamudra_in_the_Kagyu_Schools

Malcolm wrote:

This is how Kagyus want to understand things, attempting to justify their "sutra mahāmudra".

But the fact of the matter is that Maitripa promulgated a cycle of Vajrayogini teachings which is preserved to this day in both Kagyu and Sakya. Saraha wrote a famous commentary on the Buddhakapala tantra, and is credited with being the first master to promulgate the Cakrasamvara tantra and so on. Maitripa also bestowed many empowerments and teachings on Marpa.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, September 29th, 2014 at 10:09 PM

Title: Re: Tantric and late Indian Buddhist philosophy

Content:

Jikan said:

I've heard the esoteric practices of Japan referred to as Vajrayana in everyday speech more than once.

Malcolm wrote:

But it is not accurate and the term never once occurs in any tantras considered Yoga tantra on down; whereas the term guhyamantra occurs in all kinds of tantras down to the Susiddhikara, generally considered to be the root tantra of the kriya tantras. It even occurs in Vinaya texts, PP in 8000 lines, Avatamska, Ratnakuta collection, and so on. The term guhyamantra, like vidyāmantra, is found in texts much earlier than what Western academics consider to be the "tantric" phase of Indian Buddhism (post 8th century).

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, September 29th, 2014 at 10:17 PM

Title: Re: Tantric and late Indian Buddhist philosophy

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

But the fact of the matter is that Maitripa promulgated a cycle of Vajrayogini teachings which is preserved to this day in both Kagyu and Sakya. Saraha wrote a famous commentary on the Buddhakapala tantra, and is credited with being the first master to promulgate the Cakrasamvara tantra and so on. Maitripa also bestowed many empowerments and teachings on Marpa.

Astus said:

They don't exclude each other. Kagyu has a large number of Tantric teachings besides Mahamudra, just as Gampopa taught both path of means and path of liberation. What the mentioned article attempts to show is that "not-specifically-Tantric" Mahamudra existed already in India, and those who taught it considered it beyond both Sutra and Tantra like Gampopa.

Malcolm wrote:

Right, and since everyone he cites was already a well schooled Vajrayāna master, his argument is quite weak.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, September 29th, 2014 at 10:55 PM

Title: Re: Tantric and late Indian Buddhist philosophy

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

since everyone he cites was already a well schooled Vajrayāna master, his argument is quite weak.

Astus said:

If they were competent Sutra and Tantra teachers, wouldn't that rather strengthen the validity of their assessment of the direct Mahamudra path?

Malcolm wrote:

First of all, what do you mean by a "direct" Mahāmudra path? What are its

characteristics, and so on. Then we will see whether or not it is part of Vajrayāna or not.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, September 29th, 2014 at 11:08 PM

Title: Re: Tantric and late Indian Buddhist philosophy

Content:

conebeckham said:

Just guessing but I assume Astus refers to what Kagyupas call the Thar Lam path of Mahamudra, from Saraha, Savari, and Maitripa....that of, for example, the Gangama Upadesa, etc.

Malcolm wrote:

Sure, perhaps. But I wanted to see what Astus thought. Thar lam Mahamudra is still Vajrayāna since it involves Vajrasattva, Mandala offerings, Guruyoga and so on., all of which are unique Vajrayāna practices which are indispensable to that path.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, September 30th, 2014 at 12:03 AM

Title: Re: Tantric and late Indian Buddhist philosophy

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

First of all, what do you mean by a "direct" Mahāmudra path? What are its characteristics, and so on. Then we will see whether or not it is part of Vajrayāna or not.

Astus said:

Direct in the sense that it does not require empowerments or other practices, only the instructions of the teacher pointing out the nature of mind.

Malcolm wrote:

Yeah, this is not just not true Astus, the basic practice of this approach to Mahāmudra is guru yoga. It may not involve the two stages per se, but it does involve practices such as Vajrasattva, mandala offerings and so on which are characteristic of Vajrayāna practice, i.e., there is still purification and gathering accumulations. And more importantly, there is the practicing of integrating one's mind with the mind of the Guru based upon so called "direct introduction."

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, September 30th, 2014 at 2:51 AM

Title: Re: What is "hinayana"? What is it not?

Content:

Mkoll said:

I think the issue is the term itself. You wouldn't like to see people call Mahayana/Vajrayana "The Apocryphic Vehicle". And I wouldn't like to see people calling Theravada "The Inferior Vehicle".

They're both bad terms because in reality, there are very few of us who even live perfectly up to the ideal of Buddha's teaching that is shared in common between Theravada, Mahayana, or Vajrayana. Moreover, neither term is true. So belittling any other school via giving it a derisive label really has no place anywhere but sectarian rivalry.

Malcolm wrote:

Unfortunately, when asked the question why it is preferable to desire to be a buddha over an arhat or a pratyekabuddha, the answer is that the awakening of an arhat or a pratyekabuddha is inferior to that of a buddha and so is their path. Likewise, when answering the question of why one would choose Vajrayāna over Mahāyāna even though the result and motivation is the same, again the answer is that the Mahāyāna path is inferior to the Vajrayāna path.

And from the perspective of Dzogchen, all the eight lower yānas are inferior, mostly in terms of lack of directness in the time it takes a beginner to realize complete buddhahood.

So there you have it.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, September 30th, 2014 at 3:28 AM

Title: Re: What is "hinayana"? What is it not?

Content:

Mkoll said:

TBH, it really doesn't bother me much. I understand the context in which the term is used and I'm used to seeing it.

I'm just saying I think it'd be better off for Buddhists as a whole not to use the term.

But clearly I'm in the minority here.

Malcolm wrote:

You will likely convince most followers of common Mahāyāna not to use that term. But the term Hinayāna is very much built into the way Tibetan Buddhists talk about Buddhism in general.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, September 30th, 2014 at 9:49 AM

Title: Re: Tantric and late Indian Buddhist philosophy

Content:

conebeckham said:

There most certainly CAN be the use of channels and winds in Mahamudra, is some way, even in a path that does not utilize deity yoga or the stages of creation and completion.

Astus said:

The only point I wanted to bring to this topic with mentioning Mahamudra was about the development of Buddhist philosophy in India. The gradual integration of Vajrayana to a monastic environment resulted, among other things, in the "blending of Sutra with Tantra". It also seems to me a natural evolution of things that there appeared some who were critical of Vajrayana and, according to their claim, they superseded even HYT.

Malcolm wrote:

This is a claim made by some Tibetans only.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, October 1st, 2014 at 12:28 AM

Title: Re: What is "hinayana"? What is it not?

Content:

TRC said:

I don't know of any Theravadin who would say that the Buddha did not teach compassion and wisdom. It's absolutely fundamental. If they are Theravadins, then they have not been within a mile of the Pali discourses. They simply could not form this view if they had. Are you sure that this is not a misunderstood view from the Mahayana that you are projecting onto Theravada practitioners? I have seen similar comments before from Mahayana quarters, which could only be described as ill-informed.

Malcolm wrote:

Indeed, Buddha universally teaches love and compassion.

TRC said:

I think there is another myth that should be dispelled pronto too: Mahayana practitioners do not have a monopoly on motivation for the liberation of other beings (Dan74 has already alluded to this). I know all the rhetoric that gets plastered around about the superior motivation of Mahayana, but it has absolutely no bearing to the reality on the ground. It is just not borne out on a day to day basis, and this is really the ultimate test. Quite simply the proof is in the pudding, and I see no evidence of this. If anyone has actual evidence, in the here and now, of the results of the superior motivation of Mahayana practitioners over and above those who are being referred to as Hinayana practitioners, please present it. If you can't, then it just remains in the rhetoric and sectarian posturing basket IMHO.

Malcolm wrote:

The difference lies in the understanding of the motivation for practice, and the consequences which follow the achievement of final nirvana. In short, it is generally held in the Hīnayāna schools that once someone enters parinirvana, their stream ceases. They simply are not there.

There is the second issue, already raised, that if someone attains stream entry, within seven lifetimes they will achieve nirvana, permanent cessation.

TRC said:

So to tie this back into the discussion, the term/label Hinayana (toward Theravada) is simply incorrect. And because it is incorrect it is therefore a pejorative term. This is where the offense is because it does not apply to the Theravada tradition.

Malcolm wrote:

No, it is not incorrect because the aspiration to the path of arhatship or pratyekabuddhahood satisfies all of the criteria by which a given path is labeled hīnayāna. In short, if your goal is to become an arhat, you are a hīnayāna practitioner.

TRC said:

The words of a mature Vajrayana practitioner support this view:

"... 'Hīnayāna' refers to a critical but strictly limited set of views, practices, and results. The pre-Mahāyāna historical traditions such as the Theravāda are far richer, more complex, and more profound than the definition of 'Hīnayāna' would allow. ...The term 'Hīnayāna' is thus a stereotype that is useful in talking about a particular stage on the Tibetan Buddhist path, but it is really not appropriate to assume that the Tibetan definition of Hīnayāna identifies a venerable living tradition as the Theravāda or any other historical school ..."

Ray, Reginald A (2000) Indestructible Truth: The Living Spirituality of Tibetan Buddhism, p.240

Malcolm wrote:

Ray is quite simply wrong — no ifs, ands or buts. All "eighteen" śrāvaka schools are routinely termed "hīnayāna" in Indian Mahāyāna texts. These descriptions have very little to do with criteria established by Tibetans (unlike, for example, the distinction between so called prasanga and svatantra, gzhan stong/rang stong, etc. in Madhyamaka). Tibetans are merely following Indian Mahayānistas in their taxonomies.

Even the presentation of the bodhisattva path amongst the śrāvaka schools is presented from a hīnayāna perspective, with a goal to discourage people from forming that aspiration, with a view that the path of the arhat is more practical, more attainable, and involves less suffering for the practitioner.

To put it plainly, all Tibetan Buddhists belong to a hīnayāna, or śrāvakayāna school, Mulasarvastivāda. If their practice is based solely on Vinaya, or Abhidharmakośa, etc., and their goal is to become an arhat or a pratyekabuddha, they are hīnayāna practitioners.

To make it even more plain — it is the aspiration or bodhicitta to become an arhat or a pratyekabuddha which is labeled "hinayāna," that and various schools which present that as the ideal path. It is considered especially negative for bodhisattvas to abandon Mahāyāna bodhicitta out of depression or defeatism and turn towards the bodhicitta of arhats or a pratyekabuddhas. But it does happen, as in the case of people who take bodhisattva vows, but then give up Mahāyāna for this reason or that and enter Theravada.

The day that someone can show me that the primary aspiration of Theravada and most Theravadins is to become a fully awakened buddhas with thirty major and eighty minor marks, with all the ten powers, four fearlessnesses and the eighteen unique qualities of a Buddha, then at that time I will cease to consider Theravada a hinayāna school like the Mulasarvastivadins, Dharmaguptakas, and such extinct schools as the Mahasamghikas, and so on.

But thus far, no one has ever demonstrated to me that Mahāyāna bodhicitta exists in Theravada in general. The issue is not really about love and compassion — we understand that Arhats have limitless love and compassion for sentient beings for as long as they are not in a state of cessation. But when they enter cessation, they abandon sentient beings and that is their primary flaw, among other flaws well described even by such authors as Vasubandhu in the Kośa, such as the possession of non-afflictive ignorance and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, October 1st, 2014 at 2:37 AM

Title: Re: What is "hinayana"? What is it not?

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

Are stream enterers "bound" to be liberated within seven lifetimes? If so, what "binds" them to this fate?

Malcolm wrote:

The Buddha stated it so in several suttas:

http://www.accesstoinight.org/lib/study/into_the_stream.html

Sherab Dorje said:

Can a stream enterer not develop a Bodhisattva motivation after entering the stream? If not, why not?

Malcolm wrote:

This is an interesting question and is a subject of some debate. The general Theravadin view is that once you have gained stream entry, nothing can turn you aside from the liberation of an arhat within seven lifetimes.

Sherab Dorje said:

Is there any evidence of a Bodhsattva choosing to achieve personal liberation at some point during their "career"?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, because of the harsh castigation of such people in Mahāyāna sutras.

Sherab Dorje said:

Is there any evidence that shows that a stream enterer cannot divert from the Arhat path onto the Bodhisattva path?

Malcolm wrote:

As I said, this is a subject of much discussion.

Sherab Dorje said:

We hear of Arhats being "turned on to" the Bodhisattva Path, so it seems their fate is not written in stone.

Malcolm wrote:

This is only after they enter the samadhi of cessation.

Sherab Dorje said:

Isn't the awakening of an Arhat congruent with one of the Bodhisattva stages anyway?

Malcolm wrote:

Only in terms of the elimination of the klesha-avarana. No accumulation of merit is required for the awakening of stream entrants — arhats. Gathering merit in Hinayāna is primarily a job of lay people to attain higher rebirth in samsara. There is no sense one accumulates merit to attain awakening, but the attainment of stream entry itself is considered in Theravada to be the highest merit.

In Mahāyāna merit is accumulated in order to attain the rūpakāya of a buddha. Wisdom is accumulated in order to realize the dharmakāya of a buddha.

Further, while arhats and seventh stage bodhisattvas are equal in terms of elimination of kleśas, they are not equivalent in merit; a seventh stage bodhisattva not only surpasses an arhat in merit, but also in realization. However, even someone who newly has entered Mahāyāna surpasses an arhat in merit, merely for having the actual wish to attain complete buddhahood in order to liberate all sentient beings.

Moreover, there are clear differences in the content of awakening of the Hinayāna path of the seeing and the Mahāyāna path of seeing — this in fact is the subject of the Abhisamaya-alāṃkara, which details the hidden intent of the Prajñāpāramita sūtras.

Sherab Dorje said:

So who here can say, based on experience, that the Sravakayana is not just another stage on the Mahayana path anyway?

Malcolm wrote:

If you want to contextualize the Hinayāna path in relation to the Mahāyāna path, that is fine with me, but I don't think that sits well with Theravadins who generally argue that the awakening in Theravada is every bit as profound and deep as awakening in Mahāyāna. Mahāyānists of course, disagree.

Sherab Dorje said:

I guess that's why the Vajrayana talks about not denigrating followers of the Shravaka and Pratyekabuddha Yana. Right?

Malcolm wrote:

[/quote][quote]

The sixth root samaya, not to criticize the yānas means that one should not engage in criticizing any of the yānas with hostility, even non-Buddhist teachings. It basically means saying "this or that yāna is not Dharma," this or that is not the teaching of the Teacher, this is not Vinaya, this is not the word of the Buddha, etc. It means that Vajrayānists must accept all of the Hinayāna, Mahāyāna and Secret Mantra canon as our own [it also means that those who have taken Vajrayāna samaya and nevertheless maintain that Mahāyāna sūtra and tantras are not actually the teaching of the Buddha have completely broken their samaya]. It does not however mean that we are forbidden from distinguishing higher paths from lower paths and so on. Even here, however, when this fault is committed if one criticizes Vajrayāna with hostility the fault is great; if one criticizes Mahāyāna with hostility the fault is medium; if one criticizes the śrāvakayā, the fault is minor. And of course, any Vajrayāna practitioner should recite Vajrasattva daily in case she or he makes some mistake without realizing it.

As long as we never make the claim that Hinayāna is not capable of liberating a person, we are free from samaya fault of criticizing Hinayāna, even if the term itself means "inferior" vehicle. But if someone says to someone "You will not be able to become liberated through following a Hinayāna school such as Theravada, etc." this indeed is samaya downfall.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, October 1st, 2014 at 7:11 AM

Title: Re: What is "hinayana"? What is it not?

Content:

Crazywisdom said:

You know some Mahayanists say the Arhat is 10th not 6th Bhumi.

Malcolm wrote:

No one says this.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, October 1st, 2014 at 4:56 PM

Title: Re: Historical Buddha

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

No, the content is similar, but not parallel. Which suggests different communities collected different traditions of what the Buddha said, and organized them later on.

Bakmoon said:

Just to be clear, you are making the point here that the corresponding texts could have been composed by two different disciples hearing a discourse by the Buddha, correct? I don't want to misrepresent your position.

Malcolm wrote:

The corresponding texts could have been recorded by different disciples hearing a discourse by the Buddha; further more, disciples can even hear completely different discourses being spoken by the Buddha at the same time with the same tongue. Hence, the single vajra word is heard differently by different disciples, as the Guhyasamaja tantra states.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, October 1st, 2014 at 4:58 PM

Title: Re: What is "hinayana"? What is it not?

Content:

Johnny Dangerous said:

There are also a few seemingly Theravada -leaning folks...

daverupa said:

Well, I labored for a long time under misapprehensions of common ground. Don't worry, Malcolm and others have seen to it. It's a linguistic happenstance, apparently.

Malcolm wrote:

There is a common ground, four noble truths, dependent origination, rebirth, karma and so on. Mahāyāna has all of this, and in addition, it also details the bodhisattva path, profound emptiness, and so on.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, October 2nd, 2014 at 1:21 AM

Title: Re: What is "hinayana"? What is it not?

Content:

Crazywisdom said:

You know some Mahayanists say the Arhat is 10th not 6th Bhumi.

Malcolm wrote:
No one says this.

Crazywisdom said:
You yourself said there was a Sakya lama who Put Arhats at 10th Bhumi

Malcolm wrote:
I never said this, and there is no Sakya master who makes such a claim.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Thursday, October 2nd, 2014 at 1:26 AM
Title: Re: What is "hinayana"? What is it not?
Content:

Crazywisdom said:
The search doesn't go back far enough. So I can't find it. So I ask what makes this a concrete thing that Arhats are sixth Bhumi. There are lamas who say this, but based on what?

According to this Arhats are 8th Bhumi. <https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bh> "
onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;" onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;" onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;ūmi_(Buddhism)

Malcolm wrote:
Both Arhats and 8th stage bodhisattvas are free from the klesha obsuration, but similarity ends there. They are not equivalent in terms of qualities, merit and many other factors, not to mention the fact that Arhats do not realize emptiness free from extremes, as Gorampa clearly explains.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Thursday, October 2nd, 2014 at 1:28 AM
Title: Re: What is "hinayana"? What is it not?
Content:
daverupa said:
I'm basically framing Mahayana as an Abhidhamma, now, or rather heap of various Abhidhammas. Why not?

Malcolm wrote:
That is simply not an accurate portrayal of Mahayana.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Thursday, October 2nd, 2014 at 1:57 AM
Title: Re: What is "hinayana"? What is it not?
Content:
Crazywisdom said:

The search doesn't go back far enough. So I can't find it. So I ask what makes this a concrete thing that Arhats are sixth Bhumi. There are lamas who say this, but based on what?

According to this Arhats are 8th Bhumi. [https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bhumi_\(Buddhism\)](https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bhumi_(Buddhism)) "onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;" onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;" onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;" onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;" onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;" onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;"

Malcolm wrote:

Both Arhats and 8th stage bodhisattvas are free from the klesha obscuration, but similarity ends there. They are not equivalent in terms of qualities, merit and many other factors, not to mention the fact that Arhats do not realize emptiness free from extremes, as Gorampa clearly explains.

Crazywisdom said:

That's what I mean. So says, Gorampa or some other Tibetan guy. Is there a sutra or Maitreya book that says how far Arhats go? So far we have the Mahayana scholars pinning the tail on the donkey. And there's nothing in the Suttas that indicates they don't realize emptiness free from extremes. This is a Mahayanist fiat based on a debate with a subject that posited permanent bits in the ether. As far as qualities, Buddha was a big proponent of Mahamoggallana's qualities for example.

Malcolm wrote:

The Buddha, in the Pali Canon, demonstrated Moggallana's abhijna was quite limited compared to his own, Moggallana asked Buddha where his mother had taken rebirth.

The simple fact is that profound emptiness is not taught anywhere in the shravaka texts.

Btw, it is the Buddha who explains the differences in the awakening of Arhats and bodhisattvas on the stages, not merely Mahayana scholars like Nagarjuna, though that should be sufficient for those who practice Mahayana.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, October 2nd, 2014 at 2:39 AM

Title: Re: What is "hinayana"? What is it not?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, Buddha actually demonstrated to Moggallana how limited Moggallana's abhijna was.

Emptiness as presented in the nikayas and agamas is not as in depth as Buddha's teaching of emptiness in the Perfection of Wisdom. Not only does the Buddha explain this in Mahayana, he also explains this in the Hevajra tantra, the Samputa tantra and

Kakacakra, what need to mention Dzogchen?

The Buddha discusses the nature of an Arhats awakening in many Mahayana sutras.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Thursday, October 2nd, 2014 at 6:27 AM

Title: Re: What is "hinayana"? What is it not?

Content:

Crazywisdom said:

For dZogchen two accumulation happens at time of initiation. When luminosity is introduced. Then this is whole path. Suttas have this.

Malcolm wrote:

No, there is not even a mention of the two accumulations in the agamas And nikayas. Why? Because in Hinayana, the Bodhisattva is held to be an ordinary sentient being, lacking all qualities of wisdom until he attains buddhahood under the bodhitree.

So, in fact your contention is simply incorrect.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, October 3rd, 2014 at 4:44 AM

Title: Re: What is "hinayana"? What is it not?

Content:

TRC said:

No, quite simply you disagree with Ray, is all this amounts to.

Malcolm wrote:

The Buddha's statements about Hināyāna in Mahāyāna sutra can be read by all who care to learn Sanskrit, Chinese or Tibetan. The same goes for Indian Mahāyāna masters who wrote about the issue extensively.

TRC said:

He as a Vajrayana practitioner has a different view point and clearly he does not believe that the eighteen early schools are Hinayana.

Malcolm wrote:

In his persona as a western scholar, Ray also does not believe that either Mahāyāna or Vajrayāna are Buddha's word in general (what he actually believes I have no idea). His academic writings clearly show that he accepts the Western academic consensus that Buddha did not teach Mahāyāna, Secret Mantra or Vajrayāna irrespective of his personal adherence to these traditions in his own practice.

TRC said:

Furthermore, to think that when Ray wrote his publication that he was not aware the

early Indian Mahayana texts claimed the early schools were Hinayana, would be negligible to nil.

Malcolm wrote:

He is certainly aware of these things, that he chooses to ignore them renders his opinion very fanciful.

TRC said:

Therefore, Ray is quite deliberately making a strong statement by disagreeing with them. Why would he do that? Perhaps with the benefit of hindsight, he is seeing through the sectarian rivalry that gave birth to the 'Hinayana' term. Seeing it for what it is – sectarian rivalry and the subsequent incorrect evaluation of Theravada being equivalent to Hinayana.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, and so therefore, Ray is wrong, no ifs and ands or buts. He might be attempting to redefine the term, but to claim that the Buddha of the Mahāyāna canon did not use the term hinayāna to refer to those schools who eschewed the bodhisattva path is clearly an exaggeration at best.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, October 3rd, 2014 at 5:09 AM

Title: Re: Historical Buddha

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The corresponding texts could have been recorded by different disciples hearing a discourse by the Buddha; further more, disciples can even hear completely different discourses being spoken by the Buddha at the same time with the same tongue. Hence, the single vajra word is heard differently by different disciples, as the Guhyasamaja tantra states.

Bakmoon said:

I'm willing to accept the possibility of corresponding texts being independent recollections of the same event. I've been open to it since the beginning which is why I prefer to use the term common source rather than proto-text, to leave the door open to such a scenario.

My major point is this: Even in this case, there is still a common source between these two corresponding texts, and that common source is the Buddha himself rather than a proto-text.

If the corresponding texts are the result of a proto-text dating prior to sectarian division then one can conclude that the proto-text dates back prior to the split, but if the corresponding texts are independent compositions referring to a single event then one can make the much stronger and more solid conclusion that the texts actually date from the time when the Buddha was still in living memory. In both of these cases ,that of

independent texts and that of descent from a proto-text, the final conclusion is that the source of these texts, whether it be a proto-text or the Buddha himself, can be conclusively dated prior to the splitting between the sects.

Comparative methodology uses the split between the sects as the boundary of the absolute latest the common source between texts must date to, leaving the possibility of them being composed well before that, which in any case, allows one to date a large portion of common material in the Nikayas/Agamas to significantly prior to 100 BCE.

Malcolm wrote:

Buddha could emanate a hundred different emanations and teach a hundred different people a hundred different things at the same time. For this reason, the attempt to confine Buddhist agamic/nikaya sutras to single events in history is fraught with all kinds of problems. Not to mention that fact that like any teacher, the Buddha, I am sure, would teach the same general thing again and again to different groups of students (or even the same group) in the same place. The notion that two similar texts in the nikayas which clear differences necessarily begin in a single historical event is hugely speculative.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, October 3rd, 2014 at 5:11 AM

Title: Re: What is "hinayana"? What is it not?

Content:

Crazywisdom said:

For dZogchen two accumulation happens at time of initiation. When luminosity is introduced. Then this is whole path. Suttas have this.

Malcolm wrote:

No, there is not even a mention of the two accumulations in the agamas And nikayas. Why? Because in Hinayana, the Bodhisattva is held to be an ordinary sentient being, lacking all qualities of wisdom until he attains buddhahood under the bodhitree.

So, in fact your contention is simply incorrect.

Crazywisdom said:

One doesn't need two know about any of that at time of intro.

Malcolm wrote:

That is completely irrelevant to the present conversation.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, October 3rd, 2014 at 6:53 AM

Title: Re: What is "hinayana"? What is it not?

Content:

Crazywisdom said:

It's obviously relevant. Why? Because Suttas have discussions about luminosity and discussions about all sorts of stages or accumulations. So does Dzogchen, a Mahayana thing. So from a method standpoint, all this Mahayana bluster about bhumis and accumulations is dispensable. If Dzogchen points out luminosity as innate and away from two accumulations and so do Suttas, then buddha qualities are accounted for not via accumulations but via the innate. Thus, Moggallana and Sariputta's having fallen short of Buddha's level is nothing to do with Mahayana and only to do with their failure to grasp the import of luminosity. In fact, Mahayana also fails to understand this import which is why Dzogchen goes higher in bhumis. This is the most important area for a Buddhist to scrutinize. It's the deepest topic in Buddhism.

Malcolm wrote:

The clarity of the mind is certainly important, but don't mistake the clarity of the mind discussed in the suttas for the luminosity of Mahāyāna.

All the suttas say about luminosity is that the clarity of the mind is not affected by afflictions, nothing more and nothing less.

Even the suttas however maintain that Buddha qualities arise as a result of the merit of length of eons of the Buddha's career as a bodhisattva.

All you have done here is support the fact that Mahāyāna has a more profound analysis of emptiness as well the luminous nature of the mind, none of which are required for stream entry — the only requirement for which is the understanding and realization of the selflessness of the person, not even an understanding of the selflessness of phenomena is required for stream entry in Hināyāna, whereas for Mahāyāna stream entrants, aka first stage bodhisattvas, it is indispensable to realize two-fold emptiness. Even if a hināyāna stream entrant realizes twofold emptiness, this still does not equate with a bodhisattva's realization of the same because a hināyāna stream entrant by definition lacks bodhicitta.

In short, CW, you are confusing and conflating many things, and are creating a kind of goulash out of the teachings.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, October 3rd, 2014 at 6:55 AM

Title: Re: What is "hinayana"? What is it not?

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Even here, however, when this fault is committed if one criticizes Vajrayāna with hostility the fault is great; if one criticizes Mahāyāna with hostility the fault is medium; if one criticizes the śravakayā, the fault is minor.

TRC said:

I really don't think most contemporary Mahayana/Vajrayana practitioners would buy the double-standard prescribed here.

Malcolm wrote:

They [Vajrayāna practitioners] would had they properly studied the commentaries on Vajrayāna samaya written by our lineage masters. These criteria are not my invention.

As far as Mahāyānists go, had they properly studied Buddha's Mahāyāna Sutras they would have seen in such texts as the Bodhisattva Vinaya that it is a downfall to study Hinayāna texts at the expense of Mahāyāna studies, for example.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, October 3rd, 2014 at 1:41 PM

Title: Re: What is "hinayana"? What is it not?

Content:

retrofuturist said:

Greetings Malcolm,

Malcolm wrote:

...it is a downfall to study Hinayāna texts at the expense of Mahāyāna studies, for example.

retrofuturist said:

What is a "hinayana text"? How is that defined?

Is it the suttas/agamas, or is it the works of authors of particular schools? Or both? etc.

Maitri,

Retro.

Malcolm wrote:

It means the sutras in the agamas.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Friday, October 3rd, 2014 at 9:06 PM

Title: Re: Understanding Buddhism without Western Materialism

Content:

Hickory Mountain said:

Or, taking a different angle on my inquiry, what aspects (as specifically as possible) of a Buddhist worldview come into conflict with a Western materialist worldview?

Malcolm wrote:
Rebirth, rebirth, rebirth.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Saturday, October 4th, 2014 at 12:27 PM
Title: Re: What is "hinayana"? What is it not?
Content:

Crazywisdom said:
You are skipping the point I made. These levels and stages, realizations however many folds are beside the point. Buddha has cut a path beyond this from the start. The sangha is not the whole story there are several stories of yogis who got enlightened from one instruction. So doctrines and stages has its place but it's not of universal application.

Malcolm wrote:
The Buddha was the one who taught the paths and stages to begin with, both in Hinayāna and Mahāyāna.

There are many levels to awakening, awakening, bodhi. There are also very important differences between the awakening of hinayāna practitioners and mahāyāna practitioners, but you seem to want to erase all of this. Well, that is a mistake.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Saturday, October 4th, 2014 at 12:57 PM
Title: Re: What is "hinayana"? What is it not?
Content:

Malcolm wrote:
There are also very important differences between the awakening of hinayāna practitioners and mahāyāna practitioners, but you seem to want to erase all of this. Well, that is a mistake.

Mkoll said:
Do you know that via personal experience?

Malcolm wrote:
Personal experience (direct perception) is not the only criteria of valid knowledge. There is also inference and valid testimony. In this case I am basing myself on valid testimony of the Buddha's statements.

M

Author: Malcolm
Date: Saturday, October 4th, 2014 at 9:20 PM
Title: Re: What is "hinayana"? What is it not?
Content:

Mkoll said:

So you're absolutely, 100% certain?

Malcolm wrote:

I have verified to the best of my ability that the statements made the Buddha in Mahāyāna sutras actually apply to śravakayāna texts, otherwise, I would not waste my time defending Mahāyāna. I have done so using inference and textual study, as well as having been a practitioner for half of my life [I am 52, I started practicing Dharma, not just studying it, when I was 26]. Thus I am as certain that Buddha taught Mahāyāna as you are that he didn't.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, October 11th, 2014 at 10:28 PM

Title: Re: Understanding why ISIL beheads

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

Which all points to the fact that, here on planet earth, the US is doing everything possible to destabilise the Middle East in order to (ultimately) grab its oil reserves and achieve global hegemony.

Malcolm wrote:

As for the first item, no. US energy policy is aimed at freeing ourselves from dependence on any foreign oil. Hence fracking.

As for the second, again, no. We are not interested in global hegemony, our nation collectively is basically interested only in maintaining our own materialist living standard. The US is selfish, but unlike what people who have no experience with our nation or people think, we are not proactive in our policy, but reactive. 200 years of US Foreign Policy shows this.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Saturday, October 11th, 2014 at 11:50 PM

Title: Re: Understanding why ISIL beheads

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

Once they own the oil then it is no longer foreign, cf Iraq.

Malcolm wrote:

There is not enough oil in the ground there to make it worth it. The notion that we went to war (twice) in Iraq for oil is basically ludicrous.

Sherab Dorje said:

As for the second, again, no. We are not interested in global hegemony, our nation collectively is basically interested only in maintaining our own materialist living

standard.

And the only way to guarantee this is through global hegemony.

Malcolm wrote:

People in the US, unlike say the British Empire or Rome, do not think of ourselves in imperial terms. Rightly or wrongly, we make think we are the best country in the world, but in reality, we, as a nation, have no interest in empire building.

Sherab Dorje said:

The US is selfish, but unlike what people who have no experience with our nation or people think, we are not proactive in our policy, but reactive. 200 years of US Foreign Policy shows this.

I disagree. I think that US foreign policy has been very proactive, especially from the closing term of WWII and onwards.

Malcolm wrote:

[/quote]

Again, our foreign policy was motivated in reaction to the spread of Communism, that is all. Our present global position is an artifact of that. Since the fall of the Soviet Union, US policy has been floundering in a cesspool of indecision and bad decisions. The red threat gave us a focus. In its absence, we don't know what to do.

In reality, the true "imperialism" coming from the US is corporate hegemony, but actually, the corporations owe now more allegiance to the US than any other nation.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, October 12th, 2014 at 1:25 AM

Title: Re: Understanding why ISIL beheads

Content:

Karma Dorje said:

The fifth largest proven reserves at 140 Billion barrels? Easily accessed and easily processed light sweet crude unlike offshore and tarsands oil? Dismissing this component of the calculus for war is curious but not serious.

Malcolm wrote:

Iraq, pre war, produced 2 million barrels a day. Now it is producing 2.8 per day roughly, earning Iraq \$89 billion dollars last year.

US investment in the war? Well, the first one sanctioned Iraqi Oil on behalf of Kuwaitis — so that was money tossed away.

The second one? The DOD spend 757.8 billion. Brown University reported that the war cost 1.1 trillion. Well, as you can see, Iraq does not pump enough oil to pay for the US adventure there.

Karma Dorje said:

The policies are very much predicated on Pax Americana which of course hearkens to the Pax Romana. I don't understand why you would argue this uncontroversial point.

Malcolm wrote:

I contest it because I do not think this point of view about the goals of American foreign policy is correct.

Karma Dorje said:

The USSR was an ally during the war and Stalin wanted friendly relations with the West that were rejected by the UK and US after the war as they thought they could better expand their spheres of influence by an adversarial relationship.

Malcolm wrote:

That is one reading of history, there are others.

Karma Dorje said:

The same thing played out after Castro's revolution in Cuba. The US has had a policy of perpetual war preparation and war since WWII.

Malcolm wrote:

Sorry, this is too much like conspiracy theory thinking to me. I don't believe this. There is no US policy of perpetual war.

Karma Dorje said:

I would argue that there have been few things as foolish and wasteful in humankind than a cold war that need not have been, but for the imperial impulse and the greed and power hunger of a few American and British men.

Malcolm wrote:

As if there was no imperial impulse and greed on the part of Stalin and Mao...

Karma Dorje said:

And so it goes in samsara, the rapacity and aggression that the US has advanced its cause by all these years have now hollowed out its middle class, offshored its jobs and left it heavily in debt. Quel dommage.

Malcolm wrote:

Or, the partition of the global economy caused by the cold war created a climate where the US was the main player, since everyone owed us money and we had the infrastructure to meet the world's industrial needs until the '70's.

There are a lot of ways to look at these historical events.

I still maintain that our foreign policy is and has been reactive for the most part, rather

than proactive, unlike communist countries like UUSR and PRC, etc.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, October 12th, 2014 at 3:47 AM

Title: Re: Understanding why ISIL beheads

Content:

Karma Dorje said:

One doesn't need a clearance to analyze why an organization operates the way it does. Particularly when you can look at steering documents like the a Project for a New American Century penned by the very people driving US policy. Outside of the bubble of the US education system and the media echo chamber it is pretty clear what is going on. The question is really whether one agrees with it or not.

Personally, I don't agree with it and hence I have remained an expat for forty plus years.

Malcolm wrote:

Kristol and so on may have driven the Bush administration's policies, but they hardly have been driving American policy for the past forty years.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, October 12th, 2014 at 3:58 AM

Title: Re: Understanding why ISIL beheads

Content:

Karma Dorje said:

One doesn't need a clearance to analyze why an organization operates the way it does. Particularly when you can look at steering documents like the a Project for a New American Century penned by the very people driving US policy. Outside of the bubble of the US education system and the media echo chamber it is pretty clear what is going on. The question is really whether one agrees with it or not.

Personally, I don't agree with it and hence I have remained an expat for forty plus years.

Mkoll said:

Sure, one can analyze and speculate all one wants.

Sherab Dorje said:

Or one can just go with the hook, bait and sinker option.

Malcolm wrote:

This is what one side always says of the other. Hardly a position born of equanimity.

In reality, while the ISIS folks are pernicious and should be stopped dead in their tracks by an international coalition, there really are more pressing issues at stake, such as climate change and so on. What is required all around is a perspective grounded in what is good for the biosphere as a whole, not merely we human beings who inhabit it.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, October 12th, 2014 at 4:16 AM

Title: Re: Understanding why ISIL beheads

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

In reality, while the ISIS folks are pernicious and should be stopped dead in their tracks by an international coalition, there really are more pressing issues at stake, such as climate change and so on. What is required all around is a perspective grounded in what is good for the biosphere as a whole, not merely we human beings who inhabit it.

Sherab Dorje said:

All these issues are related.

Malcolm wrote:

Indeed, but it won't be solved by coddling or ignoring petroleum-poor Iraqi Sunni militants who want to relieve Shiites and Kurds of the reserves they hold. In fact, it will just make things worse all around, as far as I can see.

Given that oil in addition to deforestation and coal are three main causes of climate instability, it strikes me that we need a world wide hydrocarbon policy that works to every country's advantage.

On the other hand, it should be noted that most of the countries where there is intense political instability are in regions of the world where animal sacrifice is still deeply ingrained in the culture.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, October 12th, 2014 at 4:50 AM

Title: Re: Understanding why ISIL beheads

Content:

Karma Dorje said:

If it was just Kristol, it would be of little consequence. You need to look at the important players:

Malcolm wrote:

All you have done is pointed out a Republican set of policies. Republicans do not represent all of us. Therefore, once again I reject your claim that these policies are US policies in toto. They represent a portion of thinking in the right wing of our political spectrum.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, October 12th, 2014 at 4:54 AM

Title: Re: Understanding why ISIL beheads

Content:

Karma Dorje said:

It was never the point to pay for the war with oil. Why do that when you can simply tax the middle class and/or print money? They weren't looking to steal the reserves outright. They wanted a non-OPEC oil producer with sufficient reserves to keep the taps on and smooth out oil shocks. When you measure cost, it is a zero sum game. If the US gov't is out USD \$1.1 trillion then someone else has it on their balance sheet. So who is this? It's a simple matter of cui bono to understand the war rationale. As the 'Rebuilding America's Defenses' paper lays out, 9/11 provided the pretext for a muscular expansion of hard power into a region important for access to petroleum.

Malcolm wrote:

More conspiracy theories. I don't it.

Sorry, this is too much like conspiracy theory thinking to me. I don't believe this. There is no US policy of perpetual war.

Surely you can distinguish de facto policy from stated aims. The US arms budget dwarfs the rest of the world many times over and has since WW2. It has constantly been in use.

<http://www.infoplease.com/timelines/militaryoperations.html> "

onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;" onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;" onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;

The military budget was vastly reduced under Clinton. Yes, there are hawks in the US government, but there after the cold war ended, we began to wind down our military until 9/11.

When you are talking about control of the world's resources, you don't just sort of bumble along and react.

Yes, often we do. We have bumbled along without clear planning and foresight and have done exactly what you suggest, from Iran/Contra to 9/11.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, October 12th, 2014 at 4:55 AM

Title: Re: Understanding why ISIL beheads

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

On the other hand, it should be noted that most of the countries where there is intense political instability are in regions of the world where animal sacrifice is still deeply ingrained in the culture.

Sherab Dorje said:

They still practice animal sacrifice here in Greece, just with a Christian veneer. Here on Lesbos the main one is held in honour of a local form of the Archangel Michael (in his role as general [Taxiarchis] of the heavenly forces) who is considered the protector of the island.

Taxiarchis.jpg

It is a unique icon as Orthodox Christians do not use statues or sculptures at all (unlike the Catholics). It is said to be moulded from clay mixed with the blood of the monks that were slaughtered in the monastery by pirates during the period of the Ottoman occupation of Greece.

Malcolm wrote:

There is a lot of political instability in Greece.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, October 12th, 2014 at 5:47 AM

Title: Re: Understanding why ISIL beheads

Content:

Karma Dorje said:

How is it a conspiracy theory to point out that some people are getting extraordinarily wealthy from the constant war preparation?? Where is the money going?

Malcolm wrote:

If you imagine that it is an intentional plan by some nefarious cabal, that is a conspiracy theory.

Karma Dorje said:

How is it a conspiracy theory to point out that the Iraq War was waged with 9/11 as a pretext despite Iraq having no connection with the attack nor any WMD??

Malcolm wrote:

I agree with you of course that the Al Qaeda connection and WMD threat was a pretext, and a shallow one at that. This why I opposed the Iraq war (both of them).

It was Bush family personal business waged on a global scale. We ought to make it illegal for two members of the same family to serve as president in the same generation.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, October 12th, 2014 at 9:13 PM

Title: Re: Understanding why ISIL beheads

Content:

Nemo said:

Did you also notice that both the sources Karma Dorje is quoting are former soldiers

Malcolm?

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, I am very familiar with both citations, for years.

As far as I can tell, you and Geoff are advocating "hands off," just allow ISIS to do their thing.

Greg: do you want the US to put troops on the ground?

It seems to me the US will be criticized for whatever it does.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, October 12th, 2014 at 10:31 PM

Title: Re: Understanding why ISIL beheads

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Greg: do you want the US to put troops on the ground?

Sherab Dorje said:

Are you asking me if I want the US to invade Syria too?

Malcolm wrote:

There are a couple of approaches — the pacifist approach, advocated by Geoff and Nemo, which will allow ISIS to murder lots of people without any restraint; the interventionist approach in which ISIS is stopped but there of course will be more killing or ???

At this point, national boundaries are a little besides the point since at one time the Ba'athists were intent on uniting Iraq and Syria anyway.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, October 12th, 2014 at 10:42 PM

Title: Re: Understanding why ISIL beheads

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

At this point, national boundaries are a little besides the point since at one time the Ba'athists were intent on uniting Iraq and Syria anyway.

Sherab Dorje said:

Under American rule?

Malcolm wrote:

Huh? Again, the real question is what should be done?

The Obama administration has mounted an ineffective campaign of arial bombardment because there really is no will on the part of the American people to be entrenched in another war in Iraq.

On the other hand, the hawks in the Pentagon, Panetta, and others insist that we have no choice.

The Saudis and Turks seem happy to sit idly by.

The Israelis cannot get involved because it will ignite WWIII.

So, again, anyone have any solutions other than merely flogging the dead horse of US Governmental turpitude?

Author: Malcolm

Date: Sunday, October 12th, 2014 at 11:28 PM

Title: Re: Understanding why ISIL beheads

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

On the basis of this, it would mean that Iraq and Syria would be united with the common denominator being occupation and administration by the US (military).

I suggest you examine the history of the Ba'ath party in Iraq and Syria and their (failed) attempt at creating a Pan-Arabic state. That is what I was referring to.

Of course, if the US had offered air support and anti-tank weapons to the only secular force in the region (apart from Assad): the Kurds of Kobane,

We did, do and will do — the main problem in Kobane is the Turks refusing to allow Kurds into Syria to fight ISIS, as far as I understand. Airstrikes are out of the question now because ISIS is in the town.

But, obviously, the US wouldn't want to be seen supporting democratically minded, autonomous, secular forces, would they? That would be completely out of character.

Malcolm wrote:

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/oct/09/turkey-isis-syria-kobani-control-jack-kirby> " onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;"

onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;"

The main problem is that the Turks want Assad deposed, etc., and refuse to get involved without such assurances. In short, it is a political clusterf, not really a military problem.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, October 13th, 2014 at 12:06 AM

Title: Re: Understanding why ISIL beheads

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

Turkish Kurds are claiming that the Turkish state supports ISIL. Thing is that Turkey's

unwillingness to support the Kurds in Kobane will open a new chapter in their civil war. "Funny" thing is that Kemalists, that tried so hard to crush Kurdish Nationalism as personified by the PKK, will now become friends with the PKK, united against their common enemy the (until now liberal Islamicist) Justice and Development Party.

Malcolm wrote:

Yes, that is what they claim. Pretty much of a CF all around. This, frankly, is why at this point the UN really needs to get involved. NATO ought not try to handle this alone.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, October 13th, 2014 at 2:15 AM

Title: Re: Understanding why ISIL beheads

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

But anyway, it is quite obvious that the US wants Syria for two reasons:

1. Oil

Malcolm wrote:

I have already rebutted this objection.

Sherab Dorje said:

2. Sea access to the Middle East via the Mediterranean (without having to ask for favors/permission from anybody). It is much easier and cheaper for them, plus they don't run the hazard of being flanked by Iran.

Malcolm wrote:

We already do not have to ask any one permission to sail in the Mediterranean. It is part of international waters.

Sherab Dorje said:

Coz really, all of this (plus the bases in Turkmenistan) seems to me to just be part of the grand plan to encircle and destroy Iran.

And you reckon that American foreign policy is not pro-active?

Malcolm wrote:

As I said, American foreign policy is hapless and bumbling. There is no grand design. But vilifying the US is the favorite pastime amongst armchair radicals...

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, October 13th, 2014 at 2:19 AM

Title: Re: Understanding why ISIL beheads

Content:

Nemo said:

The Kurds will be very reluctant to accept our help. When I was in we were spending huge amounts of resources to assassinate their commanders.

Malcolm wrote:

Honestly, I don't know what planet you live on.

Nemo said:

Eventually more murder is not the answer Malcolm. Americans were always the most blood thirsty. Body counts were more important than strategy. 22 American soldiers are committing suicide daily. Drowning in guilt from all the murder. It has to stop. More of the same failed policies is evil.

Malcolm wrote:

Allowing ISIS to continue unchecked is also evil. So what do you suggest? Passivity?

BTW, the suicide rate for US soldiers was 20 a day until 1999. However, suicide rates amongst soldiers who never deployed to Iraq is higher than those who did deploy.

Nemo said:

Among key findings: while suicide rates for soldiers who served in Iraq and Afghanistan more than doubled from 2004 to 2009 to more than 30-per-100,000, the trend among those who never deployed nearly tripled to between 25- and 30-per-100,000.

Malcolm wrote:

<http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2014/03/03/suicide-army-rate-soldiers-institute-health/5983545/>

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, October 13th, 2014 at 2:39 AM

Title: Re: Understanding why ISIL beheads

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

And supporting US foreign policy is the favorite pastime of armchair conservatives...

Malcolm wrote:

I am not a conservative, I am not a republican, I am not a democrat. I am a registered Green.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, October 13th, 2014 at 2:50 AM

Title: Re: Understanding why ISIL beheads

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

Actually you do, for military vessels. That's why you don't see Russia (for example) cruising around the Mediterranean with aircraft carriers. They limit their outings to the Black Sea.

Malcolm wrote:

This is because they require Turkey's permission to pass through the Bosphorus Straights.

But the US does not need to ask any one for permission to sail the Mediterranean Sea. Landing in ports is a different matter.

Sherab Dorje said:

Etc... So, you see, my armchair is situated uncomfortably close to the reality of ISIL. A 45 minute boat trip away, to be exact.

Malcolm wrote:

Right, so you really think that without NATO you are safe? Greece and Balkans have been on the front line of the conflict between the West and the Middle East for centuries. If the shit really hits the fan, it is back to NZ for you.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, October 13th, 2014 at 2:58 AM

Title: Re: Understanding why ISIL beheads

Content:

Nemo said:

That is a nice story, but I was a medic.

In the Canadian Armed Forces, not the US Armed Forces.

In regards to ISIS doubling down on failed policies is not a way out. Bringing only murder by aerial bombardment to the table is ludicrously simplistic. And as you see with the Turks completely ineffective. I am in favour of not releasing the dogs of war until there is a real plan. Murder first ask questions later has only created more problems. Destroying grain storage facilities is sick. We will starve more kids than ISIS will behead.

Malcolm wrote:

Well, I am not in favor of continuing the US policies w/regards to the Middle East of the past 70 years either.

I have also agreed that arial bombardment is ineffective and have pointed out that Americans generally do not want to be involved in another war in Iraq, hence the Obama Administration's "strategy".

But I also recognize that NATO/UN should not allow these folks free reign.

Incidentally, your strategy of isolating ISIS hoping they will run out of food, armaments

and spare parts will also result in famine, etc. You think they will feed children first? Unlikely.

As far as there being a US program to assassinate Iraqi Kurdish commanders, I won't believe it until I see some proof.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, October 13th, 2014 at 3:07 AM

Title: Re: Understanding why ISIL beheads

Content:

Nemo said:

We needed Turkish bases for Iraq. We had to do some favours. Just like how right now Canadian special forces are on the ground spotting for American airstrikes. What happens and what is in the news are different things Malcolm.

Malcolm wrote:

You did not clarify whether you were talking about Turkish Kurds or Iraqi Kurds. Nevertheless, this is merely hearsay at this point.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, October 13th, 2014 at 3:13 AM

Title: Re: Understanding why ISIL beheads

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

I traveled to Turkish Kurdistan during the peak of the Turkish military crackdown on the PKK. It was not a pretty sight.

Malcolm wrote:

The PKK are Marxist-Leninists. No wonder the US would not help them, and giving credence to Nemo's contention, may even have organized black ops against their commanders.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, October 13th, 2014 at 3:27 AM

Title: Re: Understanding why ISIL beheads

Content:

Sherab Dorje said:

I traveled to Turkish Kurdistan during the peak of the Turkish military crackdown on the PKK. It was not a pretty sight.

Malcolm wrote:

The PKK are Marxist-Leninists. No wonder the US would not help them, and giving credence to Nemo's contention, may even have organized black ops against their commanders.

Sherab Dorje said:

Were Marxist-Leninists. Read the ROAR articles I linked to <http://dharmawheel.net/viewtopic.php?f=47&t=17682&start=60#p256992>. Haven't been Marxist-Leninists for a long time now. You may even be pleasantly surprised to see what they have become (vibra-massage model armchair).

Malcolm wrote:

Such distinctions are lost on most people who have not made a special study of the ecology movement.

The very fact that Murray Bookchin was an old left radical has crippled the growth of the Green Party in the US, since most of his followers are in control of it, and they talk more about labor rights than the environment.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, October 13th, 2014 at 3:40 AM

Title: Re: Understanding why ISIL beheads

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Such distinctions are lost on most people who have not made a special study of the ecology movement.

The very fact that Murray Bookchin was an old left radical has crippled the growth of the Green Party in the US, since most of his followers are in control of it, and they talk more about labor rights than the environment.

Sherab Dorje said:

Like I said: armchair conservative.

Malcolm wrote:

Nope, just a follower of Naess, but as Naess said "The front is long...", meaning that there is a lot of room for different points of view in the ecology movement.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, October 13th, 2014 at 5:54 AM

Title: Re: Understanding why ISIL beheads

Content:

Nemo said:
I'm so tired of wars...

Malcolm wrote:
Me too...

Author: Malcolm
Date: Monday, October 13th, 2014 at 6:09 AM
Title: Re: Buddha Sakyamuni's Negative Karma
Content:
haha said:
@ Queen Elizabeth II
Thank you for the link.

Towards the end of the commentary it is indeed stated emphatically:

Kammapiṭṭikam nāma Buddhāpi na muñcati.
The Buddha was surely not free from the connection with that deed.

Kammapiṭṭikam evarūpaṃ Lokattayasārambhaṃ na vijahati.
The Lord of the Three Worlds surely could not abandon the connection with that deed.

And the moral is, of course, that neither can we, so we had better be careful about the deeds we choose to perform.

Malcolm wrote:
That's one point of view, but it is not the Mahāyāna point of view.

Author: Malcolm
Date: Monday, October 13th, 2014 at 7:11 AM
Title: Re: Buddha Sakyamuni's Negative Karma
Content:

Mkoll said:
That's one point of view, but it is not the Mahāyāna point of view.

Malcolm wrote:
Don't leave us hanging in suspense! What is the Mahayana POV?[/quote]

The Mahāyāna POV is that a Buddha is completely free from karmāvarana, the obscuration of karma. In the Ārya-upāyakauśalya-nāma-mahāyāna-sūtra, The Buddha explains that even though tathāgatas have no karmic obscurations which can be

karmavipaka, they demonstrate karmavipaka otherwise sentient beings will not be able to relate to them. He says:
Because of causes and conditions, an acacia thorn pierced the Tathāgata's foot. That too is the Tathāgata's skillful means, but is not the ripening of karma.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, October 13th, 2014 at 7:19 AM

Title: Re: Understanding why ISIL beheads

Content:

Nemo said:

I'm so tired of wars...

Malcolm wrote:

Me too...

Karma Dorje said:

Then perhaps it is best not to promote it on a public board, no matter how well-intentioned you may be. You don't influence policy posting here, but your authority as a Buddhist expert may confuse some/many who read your point of view but don't understand the nuance. Worse it can bring out negativity or give cover to negativity in others who do not have as firm a grasp on their own emotions. It's hard to see anything positive come out of promoting military action on a Buddhist forum even if you are correct in your estimation of what is necessary to do.

Malcolm wrote:

I don't think positing a pacifist stance in regards to the present mideast situation is skillful. It is easy to say "No war!!!"

But when people are being killed by truly evil people, who have nothing but evil intentions in their hearts even towards their own, well, what can we do? Throw up our hands and claim it is not our problem?

The problem is really a political one, not a military one. If NATO chose to, they could douse these people with overwhelming force. However, it would cause WWII because inevitably NATO troops would clash with the 100,000+ Iranian troops that are already in Iraq.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, October 13th, 2014 at 7:41 AM

Title: Re: Understanding why ISIL beheads

Content:

Nemo said:

Allowing war profiteers to subvert your good intentions into meaningless mass murder is not skillful either.

You are letting a man with a hammer fix your car. There will be lots of banging and it will sound like something is getting done. But if you know anything about cars it's dumb.

Malcolm wrote:

There are always war profiteers, there always has been, there always will be — it is the nature of the chaos of armed conflict itself.

I am not letting anyone do anything — I voted for Obama the first time because he promised us a reasonable exit from Iraq — but he blew it, and this is the price we are paying now.

Anyway, I vote Green and will continue too for the foreseeable future.

Still, we have no solutions for a situation that is growing increasingly worse by the day.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, October 13th, 2014 at 7:49 AM

Title: Re: Understanding why ISIL beheads

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

The problem is really a political one, not a military one. If NATO chose to, they could douse these people with overwhelming force. However, it would cause WWII because inevitably NATO troops would clash with the 100,000+ Iranian troops that are already in Iraq.

kirtu said:

Where are you getting 100,000 Iranian troops in Iraq? The BBC and Guardian are reporting 2000 troop specifically to fight IS. This may be the revenge of Saddam Hussein (Saddam Hussein may have been correct that Iran wants to end Iraq as a political entity). However if Iranian troops are there only to combat IS then there is no reason why this would inevitably cause a confrontation with NATO troops.

Kirt

Malcolm wrote:

I mispoke — I mean on the border. However, there are clear Iranian interests at stake because the Shiites control most of the oil in Iraq. If anyone has a stake in oil in Iraq, it is Iran.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, October 13th, 2014 at 7:52 PM

Title: Re: Understanding why ISIL beheads

Content:

Son of Buddha said:

A reasonable exit from Iraq was given and he didn't blow it, Iraq was stable for many years and they were properly set up to take care of themselves..... the fact is the blame rests solely on the Iraqi Gov, which has a 250,000 standing Army with tanks, heavy armored vehicles and airforce, and yet they lost half their country to 5000 invaders with pickup trucks.

Malcolm wrote:

Obama did blow it, he did not listen to his advisors for political reasons (responding to the American populace's war fatigue); the Iraqi Govt. was and is a joke, and the proof of this is that the Iraqis let go of half of Iraq to a brigade of bandits in pickup trucks.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, October 13th, 2014 at 7:53 PM

Title: Re: Understanding why ISIL beheads

Content:

Son of Buddha said:

Geographically the Sunnis control most of the oil in Iraq (baji).

Malcolm wrote:

No, the Sunnis are mostly located away from the oil regions.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Monday, October 13th, 2014 at 8:01 PM

Title: Re: Understanding why ISIL beheads

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

BTW, there is a solution after all...fielding an all-women army:

A women fighter explained "This is not a myth but reality. I personally met IS fighters face-to-face. Women fighters infringe on their psyche. They believe they won't go to paradise if they are killed by women. That is why they flee when they see women. I saw that personally at the Celaga front. We monitor their radio calls. When they hear a woman's voice on the air, they become hysterical."

<http://www.ibtimes.com/syria-kurdish-women-protection-units-wage-battle-against-isis-kobani-1703501> " onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;

<http://www.ibtimes.co.uk/syria-isis-jihadis-terrified-fanatical-kurdish-women-soldiers-who-will-deny-them-place-paradise-1468887>

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, October 14th, 2014 at 2:10 AM

Title: Re: Buddha Sakyamuni's Negative Karma

Content:

haha said:

No doubt Buddha does not have any negative karma.

But

Even though there is no negative karma (in relation to Sakyamuni Buddha's mental continuum), other people to whom he interacted in his past and present lives were not free from negative emotions. It seemed that those people to whom he had not positive relation they suffered from jealous, hatred, anger with him. How could that be the skillful means? Many people at the time of Sakyamuni Buddha became envious with his fame and because of that they tried to defame him. Even tried to hurt him physically. How could it be the skillful means?

Karma related with his own mental continuum

Karma related with other people's mental continuum

Malcolm wrote:

The sutra above actually discusses how Devadatta's actions are related to the Buddha's skillful means.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, October 14th, 2014 at 7:09 AM

Title: Re: Appropriateness of openly discussing sunyata

Content:

Bakmoon said:

I think it would be very inappropriate to talk about the teachings of emptiness with someone who doesn't have the correct background to understand it correctly. One should understand dependent origination first. I also think that to begin learning Madhyamaka one of the first things to go over and establish very clearly is the meaning of prajñapti, meaning provisional designation or imputation. I think that explaining emptiness in terms of prajñapti is the best way to lay it out for a beginner because it allows you to lay out the meaning of different teachings in a very explicit way, and it is easy to use prajñapti to describe emptiness in a way that is clearly distinct from both absolutism and nihilism, even to a beginner.

Malcolm wrote:

It depends, I learned about emptiness (via the "Heart Sutra") before I knew what dependent origination was, and it filled me with tremendous joy. In, fact, experiencing joy upon hearing of emptiness is a sign described the Prajñāpāramitā sūtras of someone who has previously entered the Mahāyāna.

M

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, October 14th, 2014 at 11:33 PM

Title: Re: Understanding why ISIL beheads

Content:

Son of Buddha said:

Geographically the sunnis control most the oil in Iraq(baji).

Malcolm wrote:

No, the Sunni are mostly located away from the oil regions.

Son of Buddha said:

The vast majority of the oil fields are the northern sunni triangle, the southern oil fields in the shiite areas have their oil ran trough pipelines that must be sent to the northern refineries for processing.....hence the largest oil refinery in Iraq is the Sunni controlled Bajji oil refinery on route cherry near what was FOB Summeral.

Malcolm wrote:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oil_reserves_in_Iraq "

onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;" onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;

Most of oil in Iraq is controlled by Kurds or Shiites, that is all there is to it.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Tuesday, October 14th, 2014 at 11:37 PM

Title: Re: Understanding why ISIL beheads

Content:

Son of Buddha said:

A reasonable exit from Iraq was given and he didnt blow it, Iraq was stable for many years and they were properly set up to take care of themselves..... the fact is the blame rests solely on the Iraqi Gov, which has a 250,000 standing Army with tanks, heavy armored vehicles and airforce, and yet they lost half their country to 5000 invaders with pick up trucks.

Malcolm wrote:

Obama did blow it, he did not listen to his advisors for political reasons (responding to the American populace's war fatigue); the Iraqi Gvt. was and is a joke, and the proof of this is that the Iraqi's let go of half of Iraq to a brigade of bandits in pickup trucks.

Son of Buddha said:

Your joking right?

It doesnt matter what advisors told Obama cause Mr Obama was only responding to the

Iraq government demand that all American troops be out of their country by 2011, only thing Obama did was accept the Iraqi governments demands for FULL sovereignty and the end of all US occupation of Iraq..... of course this also worked out for Obama cause he got to play it off as if he was the one who caused all of the american troops to be brought home. When in fact it was the Iraqi govs demands.

Yes the Iraqi gov is weak..... But they are a sovereign nation and it was about time the US treated them like one..... THEIR elected gov as a sovereign nation voted and said we want all american troops out of our country by 2011..... it doesnt matter if it was right or wrong choice....it was their choice....and it was about time for their choice to be honored

Malcolm wrote:

It was a short sighted decision, Obama blew it.

Author: Malcolm

Date: Wednesday, October 15th, 2014 at 6:20 AM

Title: Re: Understanding why ISIL beheads

Content:

Malcolm wrote:

Dude....

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oil_reserves_in_Iraq "
onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;" onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;" onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;"
onclick="window.open(this.href);return false;

Most of oil in Iraq is controlled by Kurds or Shiites, that is all there is to it.

Son of Buddha said:

Even the oil fields in shiite area DO NOT BELONG to the shiites, the oil is ran through a PIPELINE, to oil refineries to be processed from benzine for commercial use these refineries are almost exclusivly under sunni control.. Saddam set it up this way to keep the Sunnis in control of everything.

The actual refined product never touches shiite hands.....even the crude oil never touches shiite hands cause it goes down the pipeline to the Sunnis.

Which is why the largest oil refinery in Iraq is the Bajji oil refinery in Sunni control.

Malcolm wrote:

The Shiites control that oil, and that is a fact. It is how the Iraqi Gvt. (Shiite) makes its money. The refinery you mention? Also controlled by Iraqi Gvt. until a few months ago.