

Self Liberation in Phenomenology and Dzogchen, Essays

A COMMENTARY ON THE HISTORICAL UNFOLDING OF DZOGCHEN

By Rudolph Bauer, Phd Wed, Oct 23, 2013

Rudolph Bauer Ph.D., Author

Brief Introductory Overview

Although *tantras*, first took root in Tibet during the 7th and 8th centuries C.E., it was during the 11th century C.E. that Indian tantric Buddhism left India and relocated in Tibet. The 11th through 14th centuries was a transition period in which Indian Buddhism took the form of Tibetan Buddhism. Within the Tibetan tradition, there was a re-configuration, both of the experiencing of embodied awareness and of the praxis or process that invoked the realization of the field of awareness and corresponding states of liberation. We might consider that this transitional period was especially focused during the 12th century, for not only were the Indian tantric practices affected by the seminal heart essence tradition, but so too were the Dzogchen praxes or forms of practice similarly affected. Eventually, however, both Tibetan Dzogchen and Atiyoga traditions went beyond the Indian forms of *tantra*.

Dzogchen within the Indian Tantric Traditions

The Dzogchen form of Buddhism began within the frame of the 8th century Indian tantric traditions, and so the 8th century Buddhist masters, such as *Mañjuśrī*, *Jñānasūtra*, *Vimalamitra*, and *Padmashambhava* authored much of the praxis. Praxis is the process by which a skill or a practice is embodied.

Within the sacred mythology of Dzogchen, there is much variation. For some Buddhist traditions, the transmission of Dzogchen begins with *Garab Dorje's* receiving the transmission during his lifetime 300 years after Buddha's death. The Bonpo or Bon Tibetan tradition describes Dzogchen actually beginning deep in pre-history over 40,000 years ago. The

relationship between the Bonpo Tibetan Dzogchen tradition and the Heart Essence Dzogchen teachings – as expressed in the Nyingma tradition – is a great challenge, and *Chögyal Namkhai Norbu*, a great, contemporary, Dzogchen teacher touches on this topic. The book is titled *Drung, Deu and Bon*.

During the 11th and 12th centuries, there began a transformation from an Indian form to a Tibetan form of Dzogchen Buddhism, and this transformation continued into the 14th century. The 17 Dzogchen *tantras* of the esoteric instruction cycle were brought forth during this period. The seminal heart tradition of *Vimalamitra* created a link through which the Indian *tantra* was transformed into the Tibetan tradition of the inner heart essence. There were numerous translation activities during the 11th through the 13th centuries, and during the 11th century in particular, there was a vast, mutual influence between both Indian Buddhist tantrism and Hindu tantric traditions. The influence of the Hindu tantric traditions was mostly from Kashmir Shaivism. As compared to other Indian tantric traditions, the influence of Kashmir Shaivism gave both greater emphasis on the actuality of phenomena and greater emphasis on the vibrational aspects of the luminous, energetic dimension of primordial awareness, which, as source, was located in the human heart.

The Influence of Kashmir Shaivism on Indian Dzogchen Practice

Kashmir Shaivism can be considered to be within the frame of *monism of realism* while traditional Indian Buddhism is, or can be considered to be, within the frame of *idealistic monism*. This ongoing dialectic between Shaivism and Buddhism influenced Dzogchen toward a more *magical realism* frame. By ‘magical realism’ I mean an unfolding understanding of the actuality of phenomena and appearance in the process of the realization of primordial awareness. Shaivism, with its emphasis on appearance and phenomena, further differentiated itself from traditional Hindu idealism as it Hindu idealism de-emphasized the actuality of appearance and phenomena, whereas Shaivism did not.

In Shaivism, *Shiva* was not an entity, but was primordial consciousness as luminous creative void that manifested itself through the *tattvas* to become the world. The non-duality of *Shiva Shakti*, is consciousness manifesting itself in and as human awareness and the world. All human beings participate in the guru function, participate in the transmission of awakened

awareness, and participate in the resonance of awakened awareness between one another. Such resonance would bring forth within one another this function of self-revelation. The guru was the very nature of innermost awareness of all human beings, and this function of innermost awareness or self-revelation could be mirrored through each other. The perfected masters were vast mirrors of this inner luminosity. Transmission or *Shaktipat*, the conferring of spiritual 'awakening upon one person by another, was considered essential in the unfolding of the experience of divine awareness.

Divine awareness pervades and manifests everything and everyone and is within everything and everyone. The guru function or the arising of self-revelation within oneself as oneself was the nature of *Shiva*, the very nature of primordial awareness. This process of becoming aware of awareness within one's self and within the world is the guru function of self-revelation. As the contemporary Shaivite master, Swami Muktananda, so often said, "God dwells within you as you, and see God in each other." God was not an entity, but was non-dual creative awareness that pervades all beings and manifests all beings. The nature of this awareness was not only spaciousness or void, but also light or luminosity. This light is 'knowingness'. The nature of this awareness was also energy, or *Shakti*, the creative moving force of consciousness. And the nature of this awareness was also love or *karuna*, which is the great compassion.

We can learn much about Kashmir Shaivism through the writings and teachings of *Abhinavagupta*, who was the great 9th century master of Kashmir Shaivism. Of course, this Shaivite framing contains the very same qualities of primordial awareness that are understood from within the Dzogchen tradition. For in both the Shaivite and Dzogchen traditions, the source of this consciousness within human beings is the *hrdyam*, or the heart as psyche. Also, just as the Dzogchen tradition does, so too does the Shaivite tradition make the distinction between the mind and primordial awareness; Shaivite masters repeatedly made the differentiation between the mind and awareness. The mind has both the functions of thinking, feeling, sensation, memory and the innate awareness, which was vast, infinite, and multidimensional. This distinction also greatly influenced Dzogchen *Upadesha*, or instructions, in its the *Upadesha's* becoming such an effective and direct process of realization of the divinity of awareness.

The various methods of transmission of awakened awareness were through words and symbols, through action, and ultimately through intentionality. For the Shaivite master, knowledge was action, and the bliss of *Samadhi* [the bliss of luminous mind] is the bliss of the

world. There was the understanding that a person needs to go beyond 'judgmentalness': To get beyond good and evil, right and wrong, and truth and falsity, in order to live in the non-duality of awareness and phenomena. One's experiencing the non-duality of awareness and phenomena was the process of self-liberation. Nonetheless, there was within the Shaivite tradition, the acknowledgement that the character of phenomena required discrimination.

In Kashmir Shaivism, sexuality was considered, just as was all of human experience, as necessary to be or as needing to be integrated into the sacred life of awareness. The Hindu preoccupation with Brahmic purity or purity of the priestly class and the caste system was deconstructed by Shaivite masters who had the understanding of the essential divinity, purity, and equality of *all* phenomena and of *all* human beings.

Language and *mantra* were essential to Shaivite practice and understanding. Shaivite masters understood not only that there was the logical speech of the mind, but also that there was the profound speech of the vibrational sounds and elements that become words and sentences. The practice of *mantra* and syllables was of the essence of the secret mantric practice of Shaivism. Shaivism was the naturalistic unfolding of human awareness as the divine incarnation of primordial awareness as sound and light. The great similarities between Buddhist Dzogchen and Hindu Shaivism are completely obvious to anyone who has some knowledge of each one of these traditions.

The Dissolving and Disappearance of Indian Buddhist *Tantra* in India

Indian Buddhist *tantra* began to disappear in India during the 11th and 12th centuries. This disappearance was greatly due to the destructive attacks of Muslim invaders into India. These relentless attacks in Northern India destroyed Buddhist monastic centers of learning and knowledge. Of course, there is the silly [anecdotal and prejudicial] Hindu story that says that the sage, *Shankaracharia*, defeated the Buddhist masters in debate, and so all of the Buddhists left India. Actually, this silly polemic is without any foundation whatsoever. The actual disappearance of Indian Buddhist *tantra* from India took place a number of centuries *after* the death of *Shankaracharia*. The actual teachings of *Shankaracharia* and Indian Buddhist *tantra* are remarkably similar, but this similarity is another discussion for another time.

Seminal Heart Tradition's Growth in Tibet and its Intimate Connection with Dzogchen

The seminal heart tradition, the *synig thig* in Tibetan, emerged in Tibet and went beyond both the tantric practices of deity yoga and the sum of the framing of the traditional Indian tantric methods. There were 11th century revelations that came to be known as “*the Seventeen Tantras*” that claimed to be translations of 8th century originals. There was the text, “*The Seminal Heart of Vimalamitra and the Seminal Heart of the Sky Dancer*,” attributed to *Padmasambhava*. There was the great work, “*The Divinity of Appearance*” by *Rongzom Chozang* (1012-1131) of the 11th century. Then there came the work of the great *Longchenpa* (1308 to 1363) of the 14th century.

As David Germano, a contemporary Tibetan and Buddhist Studies scholar, describes so excellently, the seminal heart traditions were innovations, and these innovations were influential in Tibet. In particular, they came to influence the practice of Atiyoga and Dzogchen, for the contemplative practices of the seminal heart tradition developed beyond the classical Buddhist tantric methods and rituals. The central tantric practice of *deity yoga* with its focused visualization in great detail of one’s own embodiment as that of the Buddha, or as that of the deity, was no longer the singular focus. The focus was no longer only the archetypical imagery becoming the source of identification and realization. There was less emphasis on the ‘interiorization’ of the archetypical experience, both of the divine energies and of archetypical apparitions. The subtle body energy practices, with their somatic preoccupations and with their focus on the sexual energy and sexual centers, were *not* the preoccupations of the heart essence yogi. The focus of the seminal heart traditions was within the innermost heart of awareness, for in this tradition, the source of primordial awareness within the human being was the heart, the cave of the heart, the *hrdyam*.

Although the internalization, or ‘interiorization,’ of the archetypical energies was still a part of the emerging heart essence tradition, there was less emphasis on deity visualizations of the mind and less emphasis on mind memorization of the infinite range of preparation stages. The emphasis now was not to be located in the mind, but rather to be located in awareness of awareness itself. There was a great expansion into the relational aspects of an embodied awareness field, and there was the transmission of the essence of awareness into the single cosmos of the human *and* of the Divine. While there still was *deity yoga*, *guru yoga*, dakini practices, *Vajrasattva* practices, and *Vajrakilaya* practices, among others, the emphasis shifted now to the invocation of these dimensions of awareness and to the iconic functions of these practices. In other words, these practices, in the heart essence tradition, became doorways to

entering into the divinity of awareness, both within oneself and within the field of Being itself. These practices were doorways, or portals, into the multidimensional spheres of divinity.

There arose the contemplative practice of breaking through, or cutting through, or opening up, or opening into, and this practice was *t'hreg-chhod* literally 'cutting through solidity'. There also emerged the practices of direct transcendence, or the leaping-over practices, that involved various forms of gazing practices or *t'hod-rgal*, which was the gazing of awareness – through all forms and through all formlessness – into the infinite sea of awareness. This heart essence tradition is a tradition of spaciousness and radiance, of the indivisibility of phenomena and of emptiness or of openness; it is the indivisibility of appearance and potentiality. This tradition is one of gazing into phenomena and of an opening of phenomena, so that light and spaciousness become experienced; the heart essence tradition is the tradition of the extension of *bodhicitta* into present, past and future time. The capacity to transmit awareness is both the skill of the master as well as the praxis of the student. As *Bodhidharma* in the 6th century said, "Beyond words and letters, there is a transmission that does not belong to any tradition; this is the nature of human awareness; this is Buddha."

The 'cutting through' praxis is the use of awareness to penetrate and to cut through awareness as configurations of phenomena. These 'cutting through' methods cut through the configurations of awareness as phenomena and open up the configurations so that awareness manifests directly. As you become aware of your own awareness and as you become awareness, you are able to experience the field of awareness within and through phenomena as the essence of phenomena. The cutting through of awareness cuts through configurations of mind and cuts through both configurations of phenomena and configurations of appearance so that the spaciousness of radiance is revealed and experienced. Through the doorway of phenomena, the non-duality of the field is experienced as is the very manifestation of the field.

The gazing practices allow for the light of the innermost awareness field to be manifested through the eyes and through the body so that the sphere of the light of awareness is directly experienced. The four phases of apparition, defined in the following paragraph, manifest into the point of dissolution of the light and into the state of non-manifest enlightenment of completeness. The vortextual, luminous qualities of primordial awareness manifest into the singular experience of completeness.

In other words, the gazing practice uses light as source in order to generate spontaneous flows of light and configurations of light, which take shape in the field of vision, or in the field of awareness, and manifest as mandalas...such as swirling, 'vortexing,' luminous chains of light, or as becoming deities. There are four visionary or apparitional phases of light manifesting as mandalas. The first three phases are the light gaining in complexity, intensity, and patterning of symbolic experience, and the fourth phase involves the dissolution of the light into a state of non-manifest enlightenment or completeness. Swirling manifests into the single response!

Moreover, by our living in awareness as awareness, the very events of unfolding life become method and are doorways to natural liberation. The practice is one of learning to be in the awareness field and then extending the time of being in the field, extending the time into the ongoing continuity of Being. By our living within the field of awareness and by our extending the field into situations of infinite variety, the very variety of situations gives us mastery of awareness and gives us the oneness and non-duality of awareness and phenomena. Everything is integrated into the state of awareness, and everything is metabolized into the experience of the light of awareness and into the purity of awareness and into the equality of all phenomena.

The gaze of embodied awareness becomes the unbound path of liberation. This gaze is within the eyes and within the lived embodiment of the body of light, embodied awareness.

There is a natural dissolution of the winds, or energies, into the central channel, and apparitional phenomena manifest, such as smoke, mirages, fireflies, the flame of butter lamps, bright suns and dark eclipses, lightning, and the 'blue nucleus' or 'blue *bindu*'. There can be apparitions of deities and dakinis that express and manifest the primordial qualities of the nature of awareness.

The Heart to Eye Connection in Inner Heart Essence

The seminal heart tradition describes the traditional Buddhist *subtle body* as having three channels, four chakras, and a standard range of winds, energy, and vortexual nuclei. The important addition for this tradition is the thin channel of pure light that runs from the heart up to and into and through and out of our two eyes. This thin channel of light is the frame of the subtle body of light that is the luminous template within the body of flesh. In the seminal heart

tradition, the body itself becomes the experiential embodiment of luminous flesh: Primordial archetypical energies and light, both as deities and as dakinis, are within the human heart and head. The self-arising awareness manifests as this vast network of Luminosity the light of Being.

The radiance of luminosity is the Buddha nature of primordial awareness, and the embodiment [of this nature] as source is the human heart as psyche. This luminous energy creates ordinary psychosomatic existence from *within* the being rather than its being created from external sources. Thus, the indestructible nucleus of awareness and of gnosis in the heart is the actual presence of Buddha nature, and this nature is the active agency or the luminosity that pervades the entire body. This innermost awareness allows the individual's inner heart, or intimate heart, to be in oneness with external fields of perception. In other words, in the heart essence tradition, who one is remains inseparable from what one perceives.

The embodied field of light, of radiant light, infuses both the mind and body of the individual, as well as extends into the field (*dbyings dhatu*) of experience, where the internal light undergoes transformations externally within the field of awareness. In the past, in earlier traditions, the navel and sexual centers had been the source and focus of skillful means. Now, in the heart essence tradition, the connection between the heart and the eyes is the source and focus of skillful means. With the heart as focus, compassion becomes the source of all manifestation and activity.

Sexual Practice

The heart essence tradition contrasts sexual yogic practices with the heart essence's embodied gazing praxis in which there are luminous visions and apparitions of direct perception and where there is gnosis available in all situations and in all times and in all circumstances. Ritualized sexuality as the source of realization is de-emphasized, and from the heart essence tradition, there is ongoing criticism of sexually-based yoga. This criticism challenged the increasing importance in the history of Buddhist *tantra*, such as the yogini *tantras* in which there is the enhancement in status of sexual yoga. *Longchenpa* in his text, *Treasury of Words and Meaning*, criticizes sexual yoga as being useful for the 'yogically-disabled' and for those suffering from sexual addiction.

The tantric sexual practice were criticized by many Tibetan Masters such as Atista, Longchenpa, Tsongkhapa to name a few. Especially criticized by many great masters of Tibetan Buddhism were the tantric group sexual practices. These group sexual practices did not reflect the equality consciousness and individualism of the dzogchen heart essence tradition. These tantric group sexual practices are described in various tantric text. The role of the tantric vajra master as guru further heightened the sense of the guru being a singular person alone rather than the guru being pervasive awareness itself. For the Dzogchen heart essence tradition the guru is pervasive awareness self manifesting in everyone.

The tantric preoccupation of the realization of divinity only through sexuality is redundantly fixating and strangely narrow in perspective. The confining of the path of realization to the moment of sexual union is contracting of the vast and unbound view of dzogchen. The idea of achieving divine states only through sexual experience distorted the view of the vast path of realization of dzogchen tradition which is the natural path of awareness of awareness within which there is the unfolding of all the karmic circumstances of a person's life.

The dzogchen heart essence view is completely vast and unbound. The strange contrivance of a path of realization depending upon a person's spiritual initiation beginning by a sexual initiation is beyond the dzogchen praxis of natural awareness and spontaneous presence. Dzogchen practice is beyond the confusing fusion of royalty and spirituality. Dzogchen praxis does not support the royalty spirituality fusion..

Royalty Spirituality fusion reflects the limitations of medieval *Lamaism*. The Dali Lama spoke brilliantly and courageously about the unhappy limitations of *Lamaism* during the 2011 *Kalachakra* empowerment given in Washington, D.C. Whenever religion and royalty are fused the dynamics of political domination manifest. Whenever religion and royalty are fused the praxis of equality consciousness is easily fragmented.

Relational Path

In the text attributed to *Padmasambhava*, *The Seminal Heart of the Sky Dancer*, the relational practices of cutting-through and gazing that are focal in the heart essence tradition go beyond the 'over-interiorization' and self- preoccupation present in Buddhist *tantra*. By contrast, the 'over-interiorization' of earlier Buddhist practices, had a hyper-attendant focus with the consequent arising of a spiritual solipsism and self-absorption that can easily take place from

such internal preoccupation. In such tantric practice, there is or can be an easily awakened, obsessive concern with what happens within one's self and within one's own body. The philosophy may express non-self, but the practices can foster the opposite concerns. Too often, the very practices of visualization can keep the practitioner located in the mind alone or in the body alone. The excessive concentration on the energies within one's own body can locate the practitioner in an existential position from which the practitioner may never escape: Circular loops of self as deity and deity as self cut-off the practitioner from living fully in the outside world, in the world at large. Hence, the world is foreclosed to the practitioner; ironically, the world is foreclosed by these very practices of liberation. With such an internal and introspective, perceptual frame, the world truly becomes a delusion, or an illusion, and all phenomena are experienced as having no value. By these introspective practices of this solipsistic form of self-liberation, subjectivity becomes locked within its own sphere, with the corresponding devaluation of the phenomena of 'existingness'.

In the heart essence tradition, however, there emerges a direct undercutting of these ingrained, solipsistic practices. Rather than keeping with the older tantric tendency towards ever increasing 'interiority,' the heart essence tradition instead focuses on the radiance of radiating awareness, *rig pai gdangs*. In this tradition, in the heart essence tradition, the focus is no longer on the singular vision within the body alone, but instead is on the radiance of awareness not only moving through the eyes and body, but also there is a corresponding radiance of embodiment, both into the world and into the cosmos. Here, within the seminal heart essence, we see the unfolding value of inter-subjectivity and of relational manifestations of Buddha nature. This inter-subjectivity goes beyond the solipsistic self, for its fields the fields of the heart essence tradition unfold out and into the world. This radiant extension illuminates the world and is the light of the world. The world too is field. As is said in the great handbook of Dzogchen, *Yeshe Lama*, "The inner *Ying* meets the outer *Ying*." And so, as the Shaivite master declares in the *Shiva Sutras*, "The Bliss of the world is the bliss of *Samadhi*."

The inner heart essence tradition provides great emphasis on compassion as being the capacity of extending *bodichitta* into the present and into the past and into the future. The capacity of extension into everyone and everything is the essence of *bodhichitta*. This emphasis was recently stated by the great Dzogchen heart essence master *Yangthang Tulku Rinpoché* when he was giving a series of empowerments near Washington, D.C. in 2013.

Similar to the earlier Mahayana practices, deity yoga of the older tantric traditions constituted or framed one's encounter of the deity as occurring, quite literally, in front of the practitioner. For the Mahayana practitioner, Buddha, in the realm of the pure lands, was framed as a gnostic force not only appearing from outside of the practitioner, but also arising from a source without, that is, arising from a source that was itself held as also being outside of the practitioner. The Mahayana practice was one of the descent of gnosis, that is, knowing came from above and from outside of the Mahayana practitioner. In the heart essence tradition, however, the arising of gnosis is from within to without, or even from within to within. The heart essence practitioner is *not* subordinated, and there is a traversing, or extension, between interior and exterior spaces that creates non-dual space, or one singular space. Internal awareness, or *rigpa*, is interlaced with and is in the expanse of external space, or *dhyings*.

In the inner heart essence tradition, the guru is not only without or beyond one's self, but also within one's self as one's own innermost awareness. And so, the lama is not alone or is not the only one considered to be the Buddha. Such insistence on the lama alone as capable of being the Buddha reflects the older tantric tradition's injunction to see the lama, and only the lama, as the Buddha. By contrast, in the heart essence tradition, the student is given the injunction to see oneself as primordial awareness as Buddha. In this way, equality consciousness is valued, and the asymmetrical, caste-like status of guru and disciple, or of teacher and student, is dismantled.

The seminal heart tradition presents a more body-based sensation of the indwelling source of the apparitions or *Samboghakaya* manifestations that goes beyond attributions of the mind's own projective capacity. The projection of the mind and the extension of awareness are distinct and must be differentiated. This differentiation is the important instruction in the heart essence tradition as expressed by *Longchenpa*.

The seminal heart tradition considers itself to be a movement beyond an intensification of interiority with a self-as-Buddha focus, for through the extension and expansion of the light, of the field of light, this tradition extends deity yoga and subtle body practice into the relational world. The heart essence practitioner is in the relational fields of the world and is also of the universal 'I' field(s) of awareness. Rather than thinking of oneself as a singular Buddha, or rather than thinking of even the teacher as the singular Buddha, the heart essence practitioner

surrenders to the vast, pervasive fields of awareness beyond mind and body; this practitioner is not reduced to be within tiny spheres within the body.

David Germano notes that just as *Je Tsongkhapa*, [a 14th century Tibetan Buddhist teacher,] defined deity yoga as the defining mark of *tantra*, so too can you easily understand how the seminal heart essence goes beyond these bounds. One goes beyond one's form as the Buddha, or goes even beyond one's teachers' form as the Buddha alone. In the heart essence tradition, there is no 'Buddha alone'. In this tradition, the emphasis is on the column of light within the body and on the effortless expansion of the light, both vertically and horizontally. This configuration of the light expresses that realization is not only an ascendant state, but also a way of being in the world. The profound realization of the light is Buddhahood.

The Arising of the New Translation Schools

The new translation schools were attempts to re-organize and to bring forth the Indian *tantras* in new language and practices. There was great emphasis on the archetypal dimension of Buddhism and interior focused practices. Much of the focus was on the archetypal energies becoming internalized through skillful means practice. The New Translation Schools arose through the creative manifestations of the Siddha Masters revealing skillful means practices and transmissions of direct understanding. Meditation practice in the new translation schools was focused on the *Mahamudra*. The gazing and cutting-through methods were less focused on, and actually, some of the Dzogchen *tantras* and Nyingma texts were challenged as not being authentic. A major challenge to the old translation school as well as to the seminal heart essence tradition came from the perceived influence by Kashmir Shaivism and of Chinese Chan philosophy.

Both Kashmir Shaivism and Chinese Chan Buddhism re-introduced the actuality of phenomena into spiritual and meditative practice. In many ways, the focus of the new translation schools was an attempt to sustain the life and the vitality of the great Buddhist tantric scriptures and practices. Some of the Nyingma traditions' focus was around the actuality of appearance and phenomena. The seminal heart essence tradition, for example, took very seriously the path of appearance and emptiness, or the indivisibility of phenomena and awareness. The old translation school (Nyingma) focused on the path of indivisibility of appearance and emptiness.

With the old schools' focus on the path of indivisibleness of emptiness and phenomena, the placement of and the introducing of phenomena into actual practice, created challenges to the new translation schools of the 11th century.

A source text of Dzogchen that was of particular concern to the new translation schools was the radical Dzogchen text, which was the source of the mind tradition of Atiyoga. This tantric text was *The Sovereign All-Creating Mind –The Motherly Buddha*. The *Guhyagarbha tantra* can be considered the other major source tantric text of the Great Perfection tradition. The Guhyagarbha tantra was also attacked as not being authentic by some of the new translation schools.

Radical Dzogchen

The source text, *The Sovereign All-Creating Mind –The Motherly Buddha*, or “*The All Creating Sovereign*” as it is referred to here, deconstructs the Mind of Perfect Purity and is a radical Dzogchen scripture. This great text is focused on the understanding that being is the center and depth of existence and is accessible in and to or through everyday experience. The divine reality cannot be experienced through conceptual thinking or through conceptual mind. The doctrinal structure of Buddhism is questioned and deconstructed. Being, as such, is Buddhahood. The world itself, in its manifold variety, is the manifestation of primordial awareness. Primordial awareness gives intelligibility to all that exists. This text opens the powerful and universal dimension of Buddhist thought. The text is a meditation focusing on both awareness as intelligence and the all-pervasive ground of the universe as gnosis.

The history of the *All Creating Sovereign* cannot be traced back historically beyond the 8th century C.E. This text was part of the Indian Buddhist text that reached Tibet during the 8th and 9th centuries. Some teachers say this text was transmitted to *Garab Dorje*, and [then] he in turn transmitted this text to his students.

The connections between Kashmir and Tibet were very close during the 8th and 11th centuries C.E. Giuseppe Tucci, a 20th century Italian scholar specializing in Tibet and the history of Buddhism, expressed the opinion that the Tibetan Form of Chan was a predecessor of the Great Perfection teachings. He thought that the *All Creating Sovereign* was translated from the Indian language into Tibetan by the end of the 8th century. Some of the early masters of

Dzogchen, such as *Śrī Simha*, who received the teaching from *Garab Dorje*, were early masters of Dzogchen in China. The thinking and understanding of Kashmir Shaivism has many understandings that are in common with the *All Creating Sovereign*. [n Kashmir Shaivism, *Shiva* is the inner self of all beings and is very much like the *All Creating Sovereign* who is primordial awareness and who is present in all that exists. *Shiva* of Kashmir Shaivism is not an entity, but rather is the very nature of awareness or consciousness itself.

The Indian text that is closest to the *All Creating Sovereign* is the *Ratnagotravibhāga*, or the *Uttaratantra*, of Mahayana Buddhism. This canonical Indian text says that being cannot be polluted by anything and that, in this respect, it is similar to the all-pervading sky. The *Uttaratantra* describes the mind as space, and this space is innate awareness. This awareness knows no beginning or end. Its nature is brilliant and immutable, like space. The date of this text is after the 2nd century C.E. and before 433 C.E.

The Sovereign All Creating Mind – The Motherly Buddha or *Kunjed Gyalpo*

This text is repetitive and focuses on awareness, both as the all-pervasive ground of the universe and as gnosis. The text constitutes the main scriptural source of the *sem de*, or the mind class, of the Great Perfection. The text declares I am the nature of all phenomena. I am the root of existence. This pervasiveness is your true state. I am the sublime source of all manifestation. My own being is the mind of perfect purity. Pure is taught to be my nature. The nature of what is called awareness is taught as being ceaseless, all encompassing, and all creating. Everything is made and generated from my mind of perfect purity. I am the core of all the Buddhas of the three times. I am the father and the mother to all sentient beings of the three-fold worlds *Nirmanakaya*, *Samboghakaya*, and *Dharmakaya*. I am the cause for all that exists, both animate and inanimate. Not one thing is that does not emanate from me. I am known through direct experience where there is no attempt to reify this pure experience of awareness. My pristine awareness permeates the universe and is manifested as the universe and is known through beauty. I gaze into everything and into everyone as my own being. My pristine awareness presents itself in every aspect of existence, and I am not a punishing ruler; my pristine awareness cannot be anthropomorphized.

The world of phenomena is nothing else than the manifested forms of my awakened awareness. I am the all-creating one. I am the awareness of perfect purity. The multiplicity of all emanates from my awareness. The multiplicity of things appears in individuality. I rejoice in the way sentient beings appear to us as form, appearance, and color. This rejoicing reveals the innate, compassionate nature of my pristine awareness. All that appears is my reality.

These words are the expression of the seminal heart essence in its purest form. In this way, as *Namkhai Norbu*, the great Dzogchen master, says, “Dzogchen teachings are neither a philosophy, nor a religious doctrine, nor a cultural tradition.” Understanding the message of the teachings means discovering one’s own true condition.

Written by: Rudolph Bauer, Ph.D. A.B.P.P.

Edited by: Erin Johannesen, M.A., M.D.