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CLASS NOTES

Course VI: The Diamond-Cutter Sutra

Class One: Lineage and Overview

Diamond Cutter Sutra (If something is a sutra, it normally means that it was taught by a Buddha.)

Sanskrit: *Vajra* *Chedika*
diamond to cut

Tibetan: **DOR JE CHUPA**
stone lord to cut

Taught by Shakyamuni Buddha ~ 500 B.C., it was the first book ever printed (in China). The Sanskrit commentary was written in India by Master Asanga ~ 350 A.D. and another was written by Kamalashila ~750 A.D. **Chone Drakpa Shedrup** (1675-1748) wrote the only Tibetan commentary, called *Sunlight on the Path to Freedom*, which we are using here.

Prajnya paramita General name of the group of books dealing with wisdom.
"Perfection of Wisdom" The Diamond Cutter Sutra belongs to this group.

The meaning of the perfection of wisdom is to perceive emptiness under the influence of bodhichitta.

Diamond is not mentioned anywhere in the sutra. Why is it used in the title? **Because diamond represents the ultimate truth, emptiness.**

The closest thing to emptiness is a diamond:

- 1.) **You can't see it; it's totally clear.** If there were a wall of diamond around you, you couldn't see it. Similarly, emptiness is all around you and you can't see it.
- 2.) **Physically it's the hardest thing in the universe;** nothing can scratch it - it's an ultimate; so is emptiness.
- 3.) **It's structure is pure;** if you break it into pieces, every piece is totally pure diamond-- there are no more basic elements mixed with it. Emptiness is the same as this.

"Cutter" refers to when you come out of the direct perception of emptiness, you see that every other perception you ever had was mistaken.

This is what Buddhism means by illusory existence: you know your perceptions are wrong or inaccurate, but you can't stop yourself. Diamond is totally insufficient to describe emptiness. The cutter means as if a diamond were placed against wheat; what you see during emptiness compared to what you see outside emptiness is like the hardness of wheat compared to the hardness of a diamond.

The diamond is ultimate, and cutter means that the diamond is totally insufficient to describe emptiness. The direct perception of emptiness is like a diamond, and regular perceptions are like wheat. They can't compare to the diamond perception, and a diamond can't begin to compare to the direct perception of emptiness.

Subhuti (Tib. **Rabjor**) is the monk who requests from the Buddha, "How should a bodhisattva live?" The commentary says that Subhuti is Manjushri.

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Class Two: How a Bodhisattva Should Live

How should a bodhisattva think and act?

To benefit suffering beings with a mind, who are born in any of the four ways:

KYE NE SHI
to be born place four

Four ways to be born in samsara:

- 1.) GONG KYE Sentient beings born from an **egg**
egg born
- 2.) NGEL KYE Sentient beings born from a **womb**
womb born
- 3.) DRU SHERLE KYEWA Sentient beings born from **warmth and moisture**
warmth moisture born from
- 4.) DZU TE KYEWA Sentient beings **born as adults** (eg. Hell-beings)
miraculously born

Another division of all beings to save:

- 1.) SUK CHEN Sentient beings who have a **physical body** (Desire realm beings and Form realm beings)
body possessor
- 2.) SUK CHEN MIN Sentient beings who **don't have a physical body** (Formless realm beings)
body possessor not

Another division of all beings to save:

- 1.) DUSHE CHEN **Those with coarse mental activity** (like desire realm beings). Anyone who has the ability to discriminate or to make a distinction between things (left & right, good & bad, red & blue, etc.)
discrimination possessor
- 2.) DUSHE MEPA **Anyone who can't discriminate between things.** Everyone in the universe with a mind discriminates, by definition of the mind's nature. This refers to someone in very deep meditation whose mind is almost shut down. This is very subtle discrimination; with almost no mental activity.
discrimination without
- 3.) **Those who are in between the above two categories - those not having very coarse or very subtle discrimination.**

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Class Two, continued

What to do with all the sentient beings?

NYA NGEN **LE DEPA** **Take them to full nirvana (beyond grief).**
grief nirvana (gone beyond)

Grief: Includes several components:

- 1.) **Mental afflictions** - anything which disturbs your mind. This leads to negative
- 2.) **karma** - things you did in the past which you are experiencing now. This leads to
- 3.) **suffering**, which is the result of the prior two: mental afflictions and karma.

Grief refers to the bad thoughts you have that cause karma and lead to suffering.

KUNDZOB **SEM KYE** "Deceptive" means appearing to be one way,
false, deceptive bodhichitta which is inaccurate.

DUNDAM **SEM KYE** Refers to the direct perception of emptiness, not to bodhichitta.
ultimate bodhichitta

Dependent Origination means that unless you label something (say as a pen), then it doesn't exist as that for you. This is the ultimate meaning of dependent origination or emptiness according to the highest school.

Emptiness: A common statement is "you're not your parts, you're not something other than your parts, and you're not the whole thing together."

If an eskimo sees an elephant and has never heard of an elephant, he won't know what it is. It doesn't exist for him as an "elephant" even though he is seeing some of its parts or all of its parts. For him, it exists as an elephant only if he can project a label "elephant" onto it.

If there were anything inherently existent about an elephant, the eskimo could see it and say, "it's an elephant" without ever having heard of it or seen it before. Without the eskimo's projection of a label "elephant" onto those parts, it isn't an elephant for him.

- 1.) The elephant is not any one of its parts, individually.
- 2.) The elephant is not something other than its parts (for example something else completely, like a dog).
- 3.) The elephant is not the sum of its parts put together, independent of a projection of an "elephant" labeled onto the sum of those parts.

Unless you label something, it is not that for you. That's the ultimate meaning of dependent origination.

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Class Two, continued

*If you look for an elephant in its leg, you don't find one.

*If you look for an elephant in a dog, you don't find one.

* If you look for an elephant in all its parts put together, independent of an elephant label projected onto those parts, you don't find one.

That's how you establish or find emptiness. Look at things: one part, other objects, or the collection of parts without a label, as above. Then you find the emptiness of the elephant - the thing onto which you are applying the label.

The label comes from past karma and mental seeds. If you didn't have past karma for certain kinds of lousy objects, they wouldn't exist for you. There's a key there.

Whether or not you will ever be able to take all sentient beings to total enlightenment depends upon your label. If the sentient beings didn't exist through your labels, then you couldn't take them to enlightenment. If they existed independent of your labels, no one could get to nirvana. The Buddha says you must save anyone who was ever called a sentient being. **This is the key to the whole Diamond-Cutter Sutra.** Because you label them a suffering sentient being, they can and must be helped. If you didn't label them as such, you wouldn't have any reason to help them. If you labelled them as enlightened in paradise, there's no need to save them. Your past deeds and karma force you to see the empty data as suffering sentient beings rather than as in paradise.

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Class Three: Bodies of a Buddha

MI NEPAY JANGSEM JINPA JINNA TSE SUNGWAR MILA
doesn't stay bodhichitta giving measurement to take not easy

When a bodhisattva who is not staying (in grasping to self-existence) gives, it is not easy to measure the benefit:

- * When you give (or do any of the other perfections) while seeing things as empty, the merit is immeasurable.
- * Giving as you see the emptiness of the situation is vastly better than regular giving because seeing emptiness can break the circle of suffering.
- * The meaning of wisdom - its purpose - is to restrain you from doing bad deeds because you understand that the bad deed will hurt you. That is its only purpose.

Any virtuous activity is the activity of a Buddha, and is Dharma.

The four Bodies of Buddha:

RUPAKAYA There are two form bodies (parts) which make up the Rupakaya:
form bodies

- 1.) **TRUL KU** (Sanskrit: *Nirmanakaya*)
Emanation body

The body sent out. Can do it without being in very deep meditation. You can see it if you have very good karma. An emanation appears spontaneously whenever circumstances are ripe - when the person's karma and virtue warrant it. It's like the moon, which can reflect on all the water of the world at once, if circumstances are right.

- 2.) **LONG - KU** (Sanskrit: *Sambhogakaya*)
Enjoyment body

The body the Buddha sees when he looks at himself in his paradise. The sambhogakaya stays in his paradise and never leaves it. It has five definite attributes.

Five definite attributes of the enjoyment body:

- 1.) **Place:** It's always in the same place (paradise), called **ok-min** (below none).
- 2.) **Circle:** Its circle of acquaintances only includes arya beings (who have seen emptiness), bodhisattvas, and above - no suffering (samsaric) beings.
- 3.) **Marks:** Thirty-two major signs and eighty minor marks. His body definitely has all the marks.
- 4.) **Dharma:** Its main activity is Mahayana Dharma.
- 5.) **Time:** It doesn't pretend to withdraw that body until samsara ends.

The Rupakaya bodies (form body parts) are **produced mainly from good deeds.** The main purpose of the form body is to work for others and not for oneself.

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Class Three, continued

DHARMAKAYA (The wisdom body is made up of two parts):

- 3.) **NGO WA NYI KU** (Sanskrit: *Svabhavakaya*)
Essence body

The emptiness of the other three bodies. The ultimate nature of the Buddha - His emptiness. It has two parts:

- 1.) **the emptiness of His mind:** the emptiness He's always had, even when He was a plain person like us, and
- 2.) **His cessations:** the end of His bad thoughts and the end of His ignorance.

- 4.) **YESHE CHUKU** (Sanskrit: *Jñanadharmakaya*)
Wisdom body

The **omniscience** (mind) of a Buddha. The Buddha's ability to see all things. The wisdom body.

The deceptive nature of a Buddha's marks:

When the Buddha says that the marks on his body are deceiving, He means they look self-existent, but they are really a projection by the Buddha himself, forced upon Him by his karma. Only because of His emptiness, can He exist as a Buddha.

The Buddha says twice that the physical body of the Buddha has no marks. In the first case, He's talking about the **physical nature** of the Buddha's marks - that they are deceptive, empty. That means that when the Buddha looks down, He has the karma to see a blank screen as an enlightened being.

His **mind** is also a bunch of random mental events, and someone is focusing on that mind and seeing Himself as omniscient. Marks here refer to indications, like the disturbed feeling you get when you're angry, etc. Even the marks by which you identify your mind as confused, etc. are from your own karma. The Buddha's projection of His own mind is total compassion and omniscience, because of His good deeds. He could have had any kind of mind, but because of His karma, He is forced to see His mind as omniscient.

Your projections are responsible not only for the physical world, but also for how you experience your own mind. If you have to suffer your whole life with a jealous or desirous mind, that's because of your past karma. Your mind has its own emptiness. All your experiences have their own emptiness, even your experience of your own thoughts.

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Class Four: The Future of the Buddha's Teachings

TUNPAY DAMCHU NAMNYI TE LUNG DANG TOKPAY DAKNYI DO
the Teacher holy Dharma two types physical Dharma and realizations combination
(books, teachings) of prior two

Dharma can be divided into two forms: the books, the teachings, etc., and the understandings and realizations in people's minds and hearts.

DE DZIN JEPA MAJE DANG DRUPPAR JEPA KONA YIN
preserving it teaching and practicing it properly it is only that
it correctly

If someone is practicing it properly and teaching it correctly, it is preserved. If no one is teaching the books correctly and no one is practicing it properly (attaining the paths and realizations), then the Dharma is no longer in existence on this planet. This is a description of the end of Shakyamuni's teaching in this world. It refers to Shakyamuni's teaching only - not to a new Buddha's future appearance and teaching.

Several different descriptions by the Buddha of how long the Teaching will last:

DO DE KELSANG
sutra the golden age

The golden age of Dharma in its pure form will last 500 years from the Buddha's passing. Then another 1500 years in a form which is a shadow of that.

SORTRENG CHEN GYI TOKJU
1,000 fingered mala of story of his life

In the story of the life of *Angulimala*, the man who made a rosary of 1,000 fingers, the Buddha said the teachings will last 1,000 years.

DAWA NYINGPOY DO
Essence of the moon sutra

In the sutra *The Essence of the Moon*, Buddha says it will last 2,000 years.

NYINGJE PEKAR
Compassion white lotus

In the *White Lotus Sutra*, Buddha says it will last 1,500 years.

The *Sutra of the Goddess of Flawless Light (Vimalaprabha)* states:

HLAMO DRIMA MEPE SHUPA LE, LO NYITONG NGAGYA NA DONG MAR CHEN
GYI YUL DU DAMPAY CHU DAR

2,500 years from the passing of the Buddha, to the people with the red faces, the Dharma will go.

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Class Four, continued

TRIPITAKA
three baskets
(groups)

When it is said that the Dharma is staying in the world, they mean that these three groups are being taught and practiced:

- 1.) **DULWA**: Eight different sets of **vowed morality** (Skt: *Vinaya*) Three for laypeople and five for ordained beings.
- 2.) **DODE: Sutras** (Skt: *Sutra*) Extraordinary training of concentration.
- 3.) **NGUNPA: Wisdom (Skt: Abhidharma)** group of sutras. Extraordinary training of wisdom.

If the individual sutra's main content is on the extraordinary training of morality, than that sutra is in the **vinayapitaka** (vinaya basket/group). If the individual sutra is on the extraordinary training of concentration, than it is in the **sutrapitaka** (sutra basket/group). If it's on wisdom, it goes in **abhidharmapitaka** (abhidharma basket/group).

If you don't perceive the main subject of the Diamond-Cutter sutra (emptiness), then you can't collect the vast merit necessary to experience everything as bliss. Your virtue must be unlimited to see all as bliss; the only way to have unlimited virtue is to see emptiness. Without the wisdom of seeing emptiness, you can't become enlightened. If you don't perform your good deeds with knowledge of the emptiness of the situation, they won't provide enough virtue to experience everything as bliss.

You can't get enlightened without seeing emptiness. You can't see emptiness without **strong concentration** (your mind in the first level of the form realm). **You must meditate daily** for about an hour a day to have this concentrative ability. If you're too busy to do it, then you're too busy to get enlightened. You can't concentrate well enough if there's anything on your mind/conscience, so you must have **perfect morality**, to concentrate well enough to see emptiness, which you must do to gain the virtue to see everything as bliss.

So confess bad deeds and avoid bad deeds very strictly. Avoiding the bad deed perfectly is the best confession, and destroys the power of that karma. Then you can concentrate to see emptiness. **Morality, concentration, and seeing emptiness directly** are cause and effect in this way.

The Buddha's teaching will remain here 5,000 years, divided into ten periods of 500 years each (from Choney Lama Drakpa Shedrup):

The era of results:

- 1.) Lots of people become arhats (attain nirvana)
- 2.) Lots of people become non-returners (don't return to desire realm - born in the form or formless realm)
- 3.) Lots of people become stream enterers (see emptiness directly)

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Class Four, continued

The era of practice (trying):

- 4.) People are training in wisdom.
- 5.) People are training in concentration.
- 6.) People are training in morality.

The era of physical dharma (people talk, but have no practice or attainment):

- 7.) Abhidharma basket exists.
- 8.) Sutra basket exists.
- 9.) Morality basket exists.
- 10.) Era of just a trace - no one understands or practices Dharma.

Now we are in the era of #5 to #7. Not many people or very few people get above #6 or #7 - the training of morality. Now not many people have good training of morality or anything above that level, such as concentration, wisdom, arhats, etc. Some still do, but not many.

The other statements of Dharma lasting 500, 1,000, or 1,500 years only refer to India, or are to scare and motivate students, etc. The 5,000 year estimate above is considered the accurate one.

Those bodhisattvas who understand the Diamond Cutter Sutra in the last 500 years, would not think that the following four things exist. If they thought that these four things did exist, they wouldn't be great Bodhisattvas (defined by Master Kamalashila):

- 1.) **DAK** A self-existent "me" which does not depend upon my projection.
self-nature, me
- 2.) **SEM CHEN** Anyone with a suffering mind. Refers to possessing a self-existent
living being "mine", consisting of my parts and my possessions (my arm, my
house, etc.)
- 3.) **SOK** Life; thing with life. Refers to a self-existent me over the course of my
life whole life.
- 4.) **GANGSAK** Refers to a person who is self-existent moving around and functioning.
persons

Not getting angry is the highest austerity in Buddhism; it's more valued and more difficult than sitting in a cave meditating for five years.

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Class Five: Karma and Emptiness

- 1.) **TONG CHI-PU** A world system made up of 1,000 inhabited planets.
thousand general
- 2.) **TONG BARMA** A system of 1,000,000 inhabited planets.
thousand of the above
 systems
- 3.) **TONG CHENPO** A system of 1,000,000,000 inhabited planets.
thousand

If you filled one billion planets with gold and offered it to a holy being, would the virtue be great? The virtue doesn't even exist (self-existently!).

DE PA	MA	ONG PA	Statement to refute: The past has gone by and the future is yet to come, so good deeds don't even exist.
past (gone by)	not yet	to come	
		the future	

Your good deeds and their results don't exist simultaneously in the present. The cause must be completed (and thus in the past) before a result appears. Therefore, if a cause exists or is happening at present, the result will manifest some time after the cause is complete - in the future. If the cause is happening, the result can't exist simultaneously. The cause and result do exist, but not simultaneously in the present.

Time is empty. We label its parts as past, present, and future, and project its nature. Time can function because it's empty.

As we do a good deed, we must see the emptiness of its three elements.

Three elements of a good deed:

Example: the act of **jinpa** (giving).

For it to be the perfection of giving, one must see the emptiness of three elements of the deed while doing it. You should not see them as existing independent of your projection.

- 1.) **JINPA PO** **The giver**, the one doing the deed. By seeing the one doing the deed as
the giver empty, you realize that you must do only good deeds to have your own
 happiness, because you are empty. Knowledge of emptiness provides
 the method to create causes for your happiness and bliss in the future.
- 2.) **JINPA YUL** **The recipient**. See him as empty. He has created the karma to receive
the recipient the gift, and that's why the giving occurs.
- 3.) **JINPAY JAWA** **The act of giving**. See the act as empty; it's a good deed which will
the act of giving cause a good outcome. It's not just helping the recipient.

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Course VI: The Diamond-Cutter Sutra

Class Five, continued

The Six Perfections:

Tibetan: PA ROL TU CHINPA
 far side to gone
Sanskrit: PARA (M) ITA

The six perfections are:

- 1.) giving
- 2.) morality
- 3.) not getting angry
- 4.) being happy about doing good
- 5.) concentration
- 6.) wisdom

What's the difference between the six perfections and those same six types of deeds as they are usually done, in an imperfect way? **Perfection** means the thing which takes you to nirvana or Buddhahood. **Wisdom** is the factor which causes this.

These six become bodhisattva activities when they are done with bodhichitta, the wish to become enlightened to help all beings. This is what makes these things perfections - doing them with bodhichitta motivation. Seeing the emptiness of these deeds also makes them perfections.

The first five are the things which bring about the sixth, wisdom. We need the first five perfections to see wisdom. We can't see the emptiness of the first five until we get to the sixth.

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Class Six: Direct Perception of Emptiness

You become a **stream enterer** when you attain the path of seeing. This happens when you have your first direct perception of emptiness. At that time you become an Arya. All of these happen at the same instant.

SO SO KYEWO
ordinary being

PAKPA
Arya

Two primary divisions of all beings in existence.

Once you see emptiness, you have a finite number of samsaric rebirths left. Stream enterer means that you move inexorably toward enlightenment - the stream you enter is the one of movement in the definite direction of enlightenment rather than infinite samsaric rebirths.

Once you've seen emptiness, **you become the first two Jewels:** you are the Sangha Jewel, and you have Dharma in your mindstream. People are praying to you for refuge. (Dharma is perception of emptiness in your mind, and Sangha means Arya.)

What you must do to see emptiness directly - three prerequisites:

(You **must have all three** to see emptiness directly, and you must see emptiness directly to become a Buddha.)

1.) Path of Accumulation: (Renunciation - two definitions:)

- a.) **NYEN - JUNG** **Definitely come out of suffering;** refers to Nirvana and
definitely come out Buddhahood. Refers to coming out of samsara and the lower
nirvanas. Nyen jung (nyepa jungwa) is the Tibetan word for
renunciation. Renunciation is reaching the first of the five paths -
accumulation.
- b.) **RABTU JUNGWA** **To leave the home life and the worldly life:**
really left (to give a major part of your time and mind to spiritual life).
Without a major effort of time and energy, you can't see
emptiness. Work, family, and life's routines consume too much
time, and you won't have the necessary mental or physical time
for practice.

2.) The Path of Preparation:

JOR LAM
preparation path

Gain an intellectual understanding of emptiness from study and contemplation, and become very well versed in it in an intellectual (non-experiential) way. One overriding concept defines the path of preparation - practicing with qualities and characteristics.

(note: the third prerequisite is on page 15 of the notes)

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Class Six, continued

CHI **JEDRAK**
quality characteristic

Four ways of looking at mental images:

(four ways (**chis**) of seeing mental images, and how you mistake them for real things.)

- 1.) **TSOK** **CHI** **The whole, which is a collection of its parts**, like a body, which is a collection quality collection of arms, legs, torso, etc. Seeing the parts and assembling them into a conceptual, idealized whole. (This chi, or quality, isn't so important to seeing emptiness.)
- 2.) **RIK** **CHI** **Quality** (sometimes translated as "general"). The opposite of #1 - kind quality **breaking the whole down to concepts and ideas**. This one takes the universe and all that exists and breaks it down into categories, groupings, and concepts to understand it.

Example: Car is a quality (**rik chi**). What is characteristic of car? The characteristic (**jedrak**) is Chevrolet. Chevrolet is a kind of car. Chevrolet is a subset of "cars". Being a car is characteristic of a Chevrolet. Any time you have a Chevrolet, you have a car, but any time you have a car, you don't necessarily have a Chevrolet. Many objects share the quality of car. What makes you identify something as a car?

When you look at a person, what makes you recognize him as a person? It happens instinctually. How is that done? How do you create those categories? You are forced by your karma to see things in a certain way - in a category, group, pattern, etc. How does this happen? Understanding how this happens - how your mind creates these categories, groups, etc., i.e. quality and characteristic - leads to seeing emptiness. **Analyzing and understanding this way of mentally imaging things is extremely important for seeing emptiness.**

(#3 and #4 are specific ways that you do #2 - ways of seeing existing things.)

- 3.) **DUN** **CHI**
actual object mental image Here, **chi** refers to a **mental picture** (or idealization) that comes up in your mind when someone names something you've seen with your eyes or apprehended with logic. For example, if someone talks about Rusty (the dog), you get a picture of him in your mind.

You're mentally recreating what you've actually seen with your eyes or apprehended with logic.

- 4.) **DRA** **CHI**
word mental image **Mentally creating what you haven't seen**. For example, when someone talks about the Eiffel Tower, you form a picture in your mind, even though you've never seen it (you have only heard about it).

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Class Six, continued

Your mind images and creates things in the four different ways described above and then you take those mental images to be self-existent out there.

If you ever attain true renunciation and enter the path of accumulation, you still have another mountain to get over - the **path of preparation**. You must grasp what is going on with quality and characteristic (**chi** and **jedrak**). You have to grasp that when you look at a pot on the stove, **there is no pot out there**. Your mind takes the silver color, the roundness, the black handle, etc, puts these pieces together, and **idealizes it into a thing called pot** in your mind. You then mistakenly think there's a self-existent pot out there and interact based upon that. All you ever see is that mental picture. You are constantly mistaking that mental image for a self-existent thing out there. You never perceive a whole, perfect pot, but just some clues and the mental picture or **dun chi**. How you perceive and interpret the clues depends on your karma.

Example of how this all fits together: Master Dharmakirti, in his *Commentary on Valid Perception*, spends almost 25% of the book trying to investigate why you know something is a car. What is there about that collection of parts that suggests "car" to you. Why, if something is a Chevrolet, is it already a car? And how do you ever know that?

The non-Buddhist schools that he's debating with say there's a varnish, a covering on the Chevrolet called "carness", and it's all over the car, and it's a separate thing. It's got it's own reality; it's all glued to the car. When you see a car, you subconsciously pick up on this coating; then you know it's a car. Their example is a cow, of course; they say when you see this big double chin, and the big bump on an Indian cow, you know it's a cow. "Cowness" is a separate quality of those things, and it's coating the cow, and when you see a cow, you know it because of that coating.

How do we explain it - it has to do with quality. The thing about **tsok chi** (assembling the parts) is not the main point. The main thing which we're really interested in is the **rik chi** (divisions of all existence), and the **dun chi** (the way we mentally image our experiences). The **dun chi** meaning when I say Pancho (the dog) and you get a mental picture of him, that's a **dun chi**. And ultimately when you look at him peeing on your shoes, you're not seeing Pancho the dog; you're seeing your **dun chi**. The **dun chi** is peeing on your shoes. The **dun chi** is one kind of **rik chi**. Concentrate on those two: **rik chi** and **dun chi** is the car and Chevrolet - set and subset.

Example: Two candles on the altar. There are two possible approaches to the **chi**. One is taking the parts and adding them up to the whole "candle". That one is not so interesting. The other **chi** is the one where we take everything that exists and conceptualize it and categorize it and somehow in our mind creates all these categories, and then work from the totality downward. The way we do that is by memory, based upon if we've had a direct perception of it or seen it before, or through mentally imaging it from someone's description.

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Class Six, continued

But why is it that when you look at this particular candle out of all the candles in the universe, you know it's a candle? You haven't seen all the candles in the world. This is **rik chi** (the division of all existence), and that's the main thing. This is what **rik chi** means: why is it that you're not seeing all the candles in the world - you're just seeing a few candles - then you suddenly know what candle is? Candle; I didn't say a candle, because when I say candle, you know what candle is. That's a **chi** in your own mind. You know candle.

It's your karmic *bakchaks* (seeds or imprints) which have caused you to assemble candle in a certain way. It's valid, and it's reasonable that you assemble candle in that way, based upon everything you know and mainly based upon your own karmic propensities.

The main thing you should know is how do I know the quality (**chi**); how do I know it's a candle? Where is candle? Where did candle come from?

CHU CHOK

Dharma supreme

The final stage of the path of preparation happens in the last few moments before seeing emptiness directly. This is when you see what you are doing with those **dun chis**, that there is no object out there, but that you are looking at a mental picture of it put together from some indications. It's the highest state you will ever be in as an ordinary (non-Arya) person, because right after that you see emptiness directly. For the first time you directly perceive yourself creating and projecting deceptive reality and dependent origination itself. At the last few moments of the path of preparation, you catch yourself creating relative truth, you realize directly what it is to be projecting, for the first time. You have perceived deceptive reality for the first time.

For example, you're pouring tea and suddenly you see the teapot, etc. this way. You see that there's no pot on the stove, that it's all your idealization. You've just perceived the truth of deceptive reality. Then you sit down and go into deep meditation, and your mind goes up to a deep state of concentration which is the first level of the form realm, where you have a direct perception of emptiness. To do this, you need strong concentration.

This is the third prerequisite for seeing emptiness directly:

3.) **Your mind must be able to concentrate well enough to leave this realm.** You must meditate for at least one hour per day to accomplish this (deep meditation on any virtuous object, not prayers). Unbroken concentration for an hour isn't necessary - 7 min. on and 3 min. off is O.K.

The way seeing emptiness works is this: you've left the world a long time ago and so made time for study and practice. You've been studying qualities and characteristics intensely to understand emptiness intellectually, and you've been meditating an hour per day and so have single-pointed (shamata) concentration to enable the mind to go to the formless realm. You go into the kitchen for a tea and looking down, you realize there's no pot out there, and

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that it's an idealization that you're making up by seeing certain parts of the pot. At that moment, you perceive relative truth - you know what you're doing now and that you have been doing it all along and that there never was anything out there. This isn't seeing emptiness; it's seeing dependent origination.

Then you go and sit down in meditation and your mind goes up to the form realm (you have a sensation of rising up). You see emptiness there directly. This experience can't be described.

CHU LA CHU SHAKPA

water into water pouring

While you are seeing emptiness, you can't frame a thought - that would be experiencing relative reality. So you can't and don't even think "I'm seeing emptiness now." Seeing emptiness directly is like pouring water into water - you (the subject) and emptiness (the object) are water poured together.

Non-duality

Two definitions:

- 1.) **NYINANG** **NUPPA** The appearance of two things disappears: **the awareness of you and the awareness of the emptiness that you are seeing directly at that moment, disappears.**
two things appearing disappears

This is often translated by western scholars as non-duality. Non-duality does **not** mean that you and the object become one - that you mix with the object and merge with it. You exist as a positive changing thing and emptiness is a negative unchanging thing. Your natures are totally different. It doesn't mean that you go home to your essence or that you melt into one. **Non-duality means that because you are focused on perceiving emptiness, which is a different type of reality, you can't perceive yourself with your mind** - your perception of yourself is a different reality, which requires your senses to be focused and engaged. When perceiving emptiness, you have withdrawn from your senses, so you can't perceive you or any relative truth objects. **There is a division between subject and object, but you just can't be aware of it.** You can't be aware of your hair or your ear or your breathing. You can't see anything from your old reality at that moment, because you're perceiving a higher reality.

The second meaning of non-duality is:

- 2.) **NYAM** **NYI** You are totally equal to all other objects that exist, in one sense only, **that you have an emptiness, and all other objects have emptiness, and those emptinesses are equal to yours.**
equal totally

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Some of the things that you realize after seeing emptiness:

JETOP that you get afterwards	YESHE wisdom	Knowledge that you get after seeing emptiness. If you see emptiness in the morning, then for the rest of the day you continue having insights and realizations.
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Below are some of the things that you realize after seeing emptiness:

1.) **Arya truth of suffering:**

- a.) You know your death and for the first time understand that death is real.
- b.) For the rest of the day, you can read suffering beings' minds directly - you can see and hear their thoughts and mental afflictions.

2.) **Arya truth of the cause of suffering:**

- a.) You understand that you have had no previous correct perception in your entire life or lives.
- b.) You understand that you've never undertaken any action in your whole life that wasn't aimed at getting something for yourself (this is called the truth of utility).

3.) **Arya truth of cessation of suffering:**

- a.) You realize that you have seen the Buddha directly. You have seen his essence body - his emptiness - which is his main body.
- b.) You see your future Buddhahood and know how many future lives you have.
- c.) You know that when you are a Buddha, you won't be called by your old name anymore.

4.) **Arya truth of the path to the cessation of suffering:**

- a.) You have a clear strong sensation of bodhichitta. You feel a kind of energy like light coming out of your heart and you realize that you will spend the rest of your life dedicated to helping other beings.
- b.) You understand the need to prostrate and when you get up from your meditation, you throw yourself down on your face out of awe.
- c.) You make for the first time in your life a real offering. You spend every last cent to make it, and you don't care if anyone else knows, and you offer a diamond, because you understand at that time the meaning of a diamond as a metaphor for emptiness. A diamond is the only thing that comes anywhere near what you saw.
- d.) You understand that images of the Buddha are really what those beings look like. It occurs to you that someone saw Tara, and painted her, and the paintings are a lineage going back to the first one. Buddhist images aren't allowed to be changed, because someone really saw her, and that's what she looked like.

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- e.) You understand that all of the books of Buddhism are true and enlightenment is real and possible. You know that Buddhism is the true religion, that emptiness is true and that if you perceive emptiness, you will become enlightened. You must preserve those books because they contain the information that people need to become enlightened.
- f.) You know that you're not crazy. You have the perception that everything you're seeing that day is true, that it's tse-ma.

Illusion:

GYUMA TABU This is the true meaning of "like an illusion." **Your perception of things as being self-existent reasserts itself when you come down from seeing emptiness.** But now you know that perception is wrong, inaccurate, and screwed-up. *You can't stop those wrong self-existent perceptions which you know are inaccurate.* This is the only meaning of illusion in Buddhism - it has no other meaning.

After seeing emptiness, **you still suffer and have bad thoughts.** There are only two bad thoughts you lose forever after seeing it: you lose an intellectual belief in self existence and you lose doubt in the path. No one can ever convince you again that your self-existent perceptions are correct. Generally speaking, your next lives will be spent in perfect conditions. You will meet the Dharma, you will never be hungry, you will come from a good family, etc.

After seeing emptiness, you are on the **path of habituation.** You use your understanding of emptiness to remove all your mental afflictions - your bad emotions - on a day to day basis. You begin the process of overcoming your bad emotions forever. On the day that you do overcome them all, you've reached Nirvana. Without seeing emptiness directly, you don't have powerful enough ammunition to get rid of all bad emotions. In addition to removing mental afflictions, you must **remove obstacles to omniscience.** When you lose your inborn tendency to see things as self-existent, then you are enlightened - Buddha.

So you must do all three preliminaries to see emptiness. You must leave this world. You must gain a deep intellectual understanding of emptiness by studying quality and characteristic (chi and jedrak). You must develop the ability to meditate deeply. If you don't, you will never see emptiness directly. You must come to see how you're not seeing anything that you thought you were -- you're only seeing your mental picture of it. You have to contemplate that. Then you can reach nirvana.

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Class Seven: Destroying Mental Afflictions

DRA CHOMPA = Arhat = someone who destroys the enemy of mental afflictions, enemy destroyer and is therefore worthy of the prostrations of the entire world.

The first bodhisattva level occurs when you directly perceive emptiness with bodhichitta in your heart.

The eighth bodhisattva level is called the level of great mastery over things that will never grow. This refers to two things:

- 1.) **emptiness**, which never grows because it is uncaused, (emptiness goes in and out of existence, but it doesn't grow - this is the subtle meaning of impermanence), and
- 2.) you've overcome your **mental afflictions**, the bakchaks won't grow.

At this stage your thoughts are no longer influenced or polluted by plain ignorance, so you have no more mental afflictions. However, you still have subtle seeds of ignorance, and your mind is affected by them, but they will never grow.

When you get to the eighth bodhisattva level, something neat happens. Buddha gives the word that you will definitely become enlightened, and names the time, place, etc.

LUNG TENPA **The word is given**
the word to give

Three meanings of Lung Tenpa:

- 1.) Buddha specified (gave the word) as to **whether something is karmically active** (either positive or negative).
- 2.) Buddha chose **to respond or not to respond to a question**.
- 3.) The "final prediction" that a Buddha gives as to **when and where a person will be enlightened**.

When you attain nirvana, you permanently end your mental afflictions, because you saw emptiness directly, and had those four realizations afterwards. **The purpose of seeing emptiness is to end your bad thoughts** (the six main bad thoughts are pride, anger, jealousy, hatred, ignorance, and wrong view).

KALINGKAY GYALPO
(The king of Kalingka)

The king of Kalingka cut off a high bodhisattva's limbs, etc. At that time, the bodhisattva (who was the future Buddha) didn't feel anger, because he saw the emptiness of the doer, himself, and the action. Still, he felt lots of pain. Just because you see emptiness, it doesn't mean that you no longer have pain or problems. The bodhisattva recognized that he was

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projecting onto the event. The event was valid - there was blood, pain, etc. He recognized that valid perception of pain and being cut up. He also recognized that the event was dependent upon his projections, which were forced upon him by his past karma. So the last thing he wanted to do was to be angry at the king and cause himself more future suffering from that anger. This is an example of **the purpose of seeing emptiness directly -- to take on suffering willingly because you recognize that it comes from your past actions, and not to respond in a way to create more suffering for yourself.** If you understand emptiness, you can not get angry about such things. The mind cannot hold two thoughts at once. If understanding emptiness is in your mind, anger at someone else can't be there at that time, simultaneously. *That's how seeing emptiness leads to nirvana and paradise.*

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Class Eight: Emptiness, Purification, and Paradise

Creating paradise:

DAKPAY SHING KAM General name for Buddhist paradise. There are many specific pure realm names for paradises. **DAK SHING:** short for the above.

How Maitreya gets to his paradise: (generally applies to all Buddhas)

There are two descriptions from different sources:

1. **SIPA TAMAY JANGSEM** He is a Bodhisattva at the final moment of his
samsara final bodhisattva non-Buddha existence (at the end of his samsara).
2. **GANDEN LA SHUK** He's staying in Ganden - the heaven of bliss.
heaven of bliss staying
3. **DER TRULPA SHAK** He leaves an emanation of himself in Ganden
in Ganden emanation leaves paradise.
4. **OKMIN LA CHUK NGONDU DZE** He manifests his dharmakaya
in highest paradise dharmakaya makes manifest (wisdom essence) in Okmin
(the highest paradise).
5. He re-enters the emanation he left at Ganden and enters his mother's womb.
6. He acts out the other eleven deeds of a Buddha.

Another description of how to get to paradise:

1. **DO SHING DAK JORWA** There is a list of physical things one does to create Okmin
paradise.
2. Directly perceive the totality (quantity) of knowable things.
3. Reach the final limit -- stop the third suffering, in this case aging and death.
4. Bring forth your Dharmakaya.
5. See the quality of all objects -- see everything in its conventional and ultimate nature.
6. The physical body of the bodhisattva turns into the enjoyment body - it becomes a
rainbow body.
7. He attains the cause to emanate many bodies. (the Dharmakaya seems to be the cause,
which he has to attain before attaining the result of many emanation bodies.)

Mental afflictions cause you to collect negative karma. Negative karma causes suffering. By eliminating past negative karma and present mental afflictions (which create present bad deeds) you create a paradise. Your paradise is wherever you happen to be once you do this, because everything is empty. Each person creates their own paradise. All of the various paradises have the same flavor; basically they're the same.

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Class Eight, continued

Studying emptiness is the direct antidote to bad karma. It purifies bad karma for that reason.

(The final step of purifying karma is restraint, which results from understanding the relationship between karma and emptiness.)

Four forces to purify karma:

- 1.) **Basis force:** Generating **refuge and bodhichitta**. This is the ground you press against as you get back up on your feet. You reassert your principles.
- 2.) **Intelligent regret:** Realizing that you have planted a seed for your own future suffering.
- 3.) **Restraining yourself in the future:** Don't do it again.
- 4.) **Some action to make up for what you did:** The highest one is to study emptiness with bodhichitta.

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Cass Nine: Emptiness and the Two Extremes

SHERAB KYI PAROL TU CHIMBA

wisdom of paramita (perfection)

Four different kinds of Perfection of Wisdom:

1.) **Natural perfection of wisdom** (=natural nirvana). Refers to ultimate reality -- emptiness. It's a negative, uncaused, unchanging quality. Anyone who has ever seen it directly has never had a bad thought as a result, or from it, or in connection to seeing it.

2.) **Textual perfection of wisdom.** Any verbal or written teaching which unerringly presents the Mahayana path and its result. This is a positive, changing, caused destroyable thing which is physical or verbal.

3.) **Path perfection of wisdom.** The wisdom of a bodhisattva imbued with wisdom and method (correct view and bodhichitta). This is a mental, positive, changing thing, which perishes and is created each moment when the mind changes.

4.) **Result perfection of wisdom.** The omniscience of a Buddha. This is mental, positive, changing thing, which perishes and is created each moment with the mind.

In effect, #4 is the literal meaning of the perfection of wisdom (which means gone to the other side).

MADHYA MIKA The middle way path which goes between the two extremes (meaning middle way two cliffs - one on each side of the path. If you fall off, you are wasted, and it is a great loss). If you go off the path and over the cliff, you are likely to waste thousands of lives, so it's worse than physically falling off a cliff.

The two sides of the cliff:

YU - TA **Things exist the way they look.** This is called the extreme of existence.
edge cliff

ME - TA **If things don't exist the way they look to me now, they couldn't exist at all.** If everything is just my projection, then they don't exist at all. (This is generally a reaction to a poor teaching on emptiness.) Nothing really matters; I can do anything that I want. It requires intelligence and bad emptiness teaching to have this view.
exist cliff

Yu-ta and **me-ta** don't even exist. The object of these viewpoints, what the viewpoints are focused on, doesn't exist. The belief in these viewpoints exists (that is, your perceptions or projections of them exist, but they don't exist from their own side.) These two concepts aren't self-existent.

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Class Nine, continued

How to prevent grasping to these extremes (by Je Tsongkapa):

NANGWE	YUTA	SEL
by understanding dependent origination		illuminate, dispel, clear away

By understanding dependent origination (how projections work), **you can get rid of thinking things are the way they appear.**

TONGPE	META	SEL
understanding of emptiness		dispels

Understanding of emptiness dispels the idea that nothing matters. Because things are empty, everything does matter; things can change according to your karma. You can see yourself become a Buddha. Because things are empty, you can create paradise. When you understand emptiness, you will understand that you must be virtuous.

Four great facts: Two "do exists" and two "don't exists"

The two "don't exists":

RANGSHIN	GYI	ME	KYANG	TENNE	MEPA	MA YIN
Naturally		nothing	but	at all	nothing	it's not that

Nothing exists naturally (from its own side), **but it's not true that nothing exists at all.** It's true that nothing exists the way it seems, but that doesn't mean that nothing exists at all.

The two "do exists":

TANYE	TSAMDU	YU	KYANG	RANGSHIN	GYI	YUPA	MA YIN
In name (idea) only		exists	but	naturally		everything	it's not that
						exists	

Everything exists in name (projection) **only, but it's not that everything exists naturally** (from its own side).

If you make these four distinctions, then you will never lose the middle way, and will never fall off the cliffs of the two extremes.

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Class Ten: How Empty Things Function

CHU NAM **TONG** **KYANG** **JAJE** **TOPA**
all existing things empty even though the way things work correct, proper

Even though all objects are empty, things still work.

The way things in the world interact and function are also empty. For example, medicine. It is empty, and so is its healing effect. It works for some people and not for others. It's empty and the person's karma causes them to project that they are cured or not. There's no self-existent curing. It has no healing properties from its own side, independent of your projections. The foundation of the medicine is empty. If you are healed, it is because you are forced to project that by your karma.

When you see anything change or move or shift or cause anything, the thing out there isn't moving, changing, shifting, or causing - only your projection is fluctuating. When you see the sun come up, the sun isn't moving; your projection is shifting. This applies to everything. Nothing out there is moving, your projections are just constantly shifting. The things out there aren't changing, you are changing your projections toward everything.

YANG DAK PAY **KUNDZOB**
correct deceptive reality

LOKPAY **KUNDZOB**
incorrect deceptive reality

Seeing a lake of water.

This is accurate deceptive reality.

Seeing a mirage of water.

This is inaccurate (conventional) deceptive reality.

Lower Madhyamika schools believed there are conventional (deceptive) reality perceptions that are right because they work the way you expect them to conventionally (like a lake), or are wrong because they don't work the way you expect (like a mirage).

Madhyamika Prasangika says both are wrong because you're not seeing anything out there except your own projections. You're not swimming in anything except your own projections. You're not drowning in anything except your own projections. Everything you experience, every activity is your own mental image or projection. You could drown in a mirage if you had the karmic result pattern to do so - this is how miracles can happen.

The lower schools all pretty much accept that objects are projections. But understanding that a seed growing into a tree, or why an airplane flies, or why a good deed brings a good result, or why the sun comes up, all of these are harder to see and accept as projections, and the lower schools don't. The highest school sees everything as a projection.

Cause and effect (karma) is a projection also. It is possible for something to be a projection and to still follow a law.

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Class Eleven: Course Review

Four Schools:

<u>Functionalist schools</u>	Hinayana	1.) Abhidharma or Vaibhashika school (higher knowledge)
	Hinayana	2.) Sautranitka or Sutrism school (logic)
	Mahayana	3.) Chittamatra or Yogachara (mind-only)
<u>Independent school</u>		4.) Madhyamika (middle-way)
	Mahayana	a.) Svatantrika (independents)
<u>Implication school</u>	Mahayana	b.) Prasangika (consequence)