



# A Vision of Shambhala

Khamtrul Rinpochey, Jamyang Dhondup

*On the occasion of His Holiness the Dalai Lama's giving the Kalachakra initiation in New York, 1991, Khamtrul Rinpochey gave the following account of his visionary dream of Shambhala in a public talk. The talk was translated by Lotsawa Tenzin Dorjee.*

I am very happy to have this opportunity to tell of a dream I had in which I had a vision of Shambhala. First of all, I want you to know that we cannot rely too much on the kind of dreams that we usually have, but the dream that I'm going to tell you about was a true dream and I am happy that you are here to hear about it.

Kalachakra Tantra or the Wheel of Time Tantra belongs to Vajrayana Buddhism and comprises the innermost essence of the 84,000 categories of Lord Buddha's teaching. Buddhist Tantra as you know is classified into different categories or divisions. There are father and mother tantra and non-dual tantra. Kalachakra Tantra is considered a non-dual Tantra and is, in fact, the unsurpassable Tantra.

The purpose of the Buddhist Highest Yoga Tantras such as Kalachakra is to help us purify the defilements our body, speech and mind as well as their imprints on our mental continuums. This is because the defilements and imprints on our minds won't just go away by themselves. We need to practise in order to purify our defilements and that is the purpose of Tantra. First of all we need to receive empowerment, ripen our mindstreams and then we must receive an explanation of how to do the Tantric practice, which is called the liberating commentary. Again it's not enough just to receive the initiation and commentary. The most important thing is to put the Tantra into practice, only then will we be able to attain realizations.

We all know that the primordial pristine awareness that we all have is undefiled and uncontaminated, nor has it ever been defiled by any kind of obscuration. It contains the seeds of all kinds of realizations which give rise to the enlightened body, speech and mind, as well as enlightened activities and great compassion. Many people in the past have actualised all these extraordinarily remarkable qualities and many will attain them in our time and in the near future. It is important first to understand that our primordial pristine awareness is really undefiled and very pure in its nature. For us to be able to experience this pristine awareness deep within us, it is essential that we receive a Tantric Empowerment. The Kalachakra Initiation that we are going to receive in a few days is essential for us to ripen our mindstreams and experience this primordial pristine awareness in the near future.

The Kalachakra Tantra is very much related to the Kingdom of Shambhala in the North. Although there are different opinions about when the Buddha taught the Kalachakra Tantra, whether it was one month before he passed into Nirvana or shortly after his enlightenment, there is a consensus that he taught it at Dhanyakataka which is now identified with the stupa of Amaravati in South India.

The main disciple to receive the Kalachakra Tantra

from Shakyamuni Buddha was King Suchandra, who was probably an Indian king, who subsequently took it back to the kingdom of Shambhala, in the North. He built an inestimable mansion for Kalachakra and according to the history there were seven dharma kings after him, and following them Manjushrikirti was the first of the lineage holders or Kulika kings. Up to the present there have been 21 lineage holders.

Some people do not believe that the kingdom of Shambhala exists, many others do believe in it. My own feeling is that Shambhala does exist, otherwise it would be difficult to accept the statement that Shakyamuni Buddha taught that Kalachakra Tantra and that subsequently there have been seven dharma kings and 21 lineage holders.

We are all very fortunate that His Holiness the Dalai Lama is here in New York to confer the Kalachakra empowerment. I consider myself as one of His Holiness's dullest disciples, but here this evening I am going to tell you about the vision I had in a dream of Shambhala when I was 16 years old.

When I was about 15 or 16 years old I had trouble with my mind. It was often upset and unbalanced; I had no equanimity. No one was able to figure out at the time what my problem was. It was just that I wasn't doing very well. So, because my principle spiritual guide, Jamyang Khyentse Chökyi Lodro, was with us at the time, we asked him to do a divination for me. The result of the divination was that I should visit a sacred place called Rawa Gön gi Chak Phurba in Minyak, Eastern Tibet and recite an extensive prayer to Guru Rinpochey, Padmasambhava 400,000 times.

Because I was lazy I wasn't able to complete the number of prayers that my root Guru had recommended. I only managed a little over 200,000. If I had been able to say them all I would have remained a great Lama or teacher, but maybe my luck ran out and I unfortunately couldn't complete the recitations. I was doing my recitations in that holy place where there is a building called Podrang Nga-tseg, the five storeyed palace, but because it is on the border with China we weren't readily able to get *tsampa*, so I had to return home after a couple of months.

If, in the future, any of you are able to visit Tibet, especially the region of Minyak Jeten I mentioned a little while ago, then you might find the beautiful cave where I spent my time and did my practice. Of course, if you can't find it, you might think I'm telling you a lie (laughter). It was while I was in that sacred place that I had an unprecedented dream. So if you give me your full attention I think that it might interest you.

In my dream I saw a girl more beautiful than any I had ever seen before. She was about 15 or 16 years old, the same age as me, and in the very bloom of youth. She was wearing ornaments and clothes very, very different from a traditional Tibetan girl's dress. When I saw her I was intensely attracted and the atoms of my body and my mind started to dance. It wasn't just that I was attracted,

but that she was also behaving seductively towards me. I was so overwhelmed to be in her presence that I don't remember what I said - I must have said all sorts of things. After a while, when I recovered, so to speak, I smiled at her. She responded, saying, 'Brother we should visit the Kingdom of Shambhala.' When she said that she would lead me there, my first thought was 'Wow', but then the second thought in my mind was that she had addressed me as 'brother' and I wanted to make a connection with her in a different way - so she had stopped me from doing that. Because she called me 'brother' I wasn't able to tell her what I felt. But to myself I thought 'Oh well, I'll take a little time and slowly find a way to tell her what I feel.'

As you can see, when I was young, I was a naughty boy. Then I smiled at her again and instead of calling her 'Sister', I said, 'My friend, I very much want to go to Shambala with you, but I have to tell you that I have no idea how to get there.'

She scolded me a little, saying, 'Brother, you don't have to worry about that, I'm here to guide you.'

So I gathered up my courage and asked 'You call me your brother, how do you know who I am?'

She laughed, 'You fool, don't you recognise me? Just look straight into my eyes.'

'What's in your eyes, I have the same eyes too?'

'You blockhead, how can you compare your ordinary eyes to my eyes of wisdom.'

And she showed me her eyes, seven of them altogether. Two in the usual place, one between the brows, two on the soles of her feet and two in the palms of her hands. She showed them all to me and said, 'Now do you see the difference?'

This was how she showed me that she was, in fact, White Tara. She then insisted that I should look straight into her eyes, explaining that it would create conditions

for a long life. My predecessors lived only until they were 48 or 56 years old, but I'm already 64 and I've still got some years to live. She told me I wouldn't maintain my celibacy, but would give it up and marry a woman called Dolma or Dolka. My wife is called Tawang Dolka. In some ways it was a shame that I had to give up my celibacy, but in another sense there was something of great significance behind my getting married. We Nyingmapas are especially fond of auspicious signs and I think my dream indicated something very auspicious.

The beautiful girl said, 'Let's go to Shambhala'. When I was 16 I had heard about aeroplanes although I had never seen one. She asked me to sit on a white cloth, but it definitely wasn't an aeroplane. She sat next to me which filled me with bliss. I developed so much confidence in her that I was completely free of doubt. I experienced these different states of mind as if they were competing with each other.

I experienced such bliss without the slightest disturbing conception in my mind. I had a kind of experience that was beyond any ordinary explanation. Those were the circumstances in which our flight to Shambhala started. If I compare my flight to New York to the flight in the dream, the dream flight was probably nine times as fast. If I could always go that fast, I would be able to visit New York from India three times a day.

As we were flying she pointed out a magnificent snow mountain that looked as if a snow lion was climbing on it. 'Look, there's the Dergey Printing Press, the main publishing house in Eastern Tibet. At the time of your predecessor, Pema Lhundrup, who was popularly known as Akhyab Lama, I was your auntie Tsewang Lhamo and I carved some of the woodblocks, the printing blocks there and if you look they are still there.'

As we were on our way to Shambhala we looked down



on many other regions. She pointed out Chamdo, Lhasa, Tashi Lhunpo, Kailash and so on, but there's no need to go into the details of all those places now. When we had passed Mount Kailash we saw another magnificent region of snow mountains, rocky mountains and mountains covered with grass. The region was very sparsely populated. We also saw a place which looked as if a snake was about to catch a frog. And then we saw a desert which looked like a tiger's skin laid flat on the ground.

Then there was another place which wasn't exactly round, but was the shape of a drum. We reached a very great desert, a barren land. As we were flying over it I had the feeling that there was no form of life there at all. As we continued to fly northwards we came across a region beautifully encircled by mountains. It's difficult to describe the geography of the place, but I felt it looked like an open lotus with 32 petals. In a thanka painting you normally see eight or sixteen petals. It was very spacious it looked huge, but excuse me for not being more precise. My companion told me that there were as many as 32 great cities on each petal and each city was as big as New York city. Altogether there were 1034 great cities in that region. She told me that each city was surrounded by up to 900 towns or small cities and I felt that they were also as great as New York. She told me altogether there were 921,600 small cities.

We might feel our world is marvellous and full of wonderful things. It doesn't even approach the cities of Shambhala. Their architectural style was similar to the Nepalese and Chinese. There were a number of magnificent buildings in each city, with golden roofs and parapets. They looked like the inestimable mansions of deities, decorated with the heads of crocodiles, garudas and other ornaments. Each house looked so tremendous that I felt that this must be where the big shots in Shambhala lived. (laughter) They were magnificent palaces, decorated with sparkling jewels, tinkling bells and beautiful rainbows. I felt such ecstasy and bliss just looking at them. As I remember there were multi-storeyed houses, but with single roofs very similar to ours.

Each family owned a beautiful park containing ponds of scented water. They also possessed the wishfulfilling jewel and the wishfulfilling cow and great wealth. These people didn't have to work to acquire wealth by engaging in business or cheating others, because whatever they wanted just happened spontaneously. So, there was no business management in Shambhala. The entire population of Shambhala enjoyed physical and mental bliss, they were rich, healthy and experienced no sickness or war. I felt that they were all born miraculously - not like us from a mother's womb. Perhaps the most extraordinary quality of that kingdom was that there was no sense of you and I. People wouldn't talk in those terms, which means there was no jealousy or competition between them. There was complete and perfect peace there.

Nevertheless, I felt that in Shambhala there weren't only human beings but also celestial beings, nagas and yakshas and so forth. The reason I felt there were other forms of life there is that I remember seeing many transparent, light buildings - not solid like ours, but just transparent buildings of the nature of light and I imagine they were the dwellings of these other forms of beings. At the heart of the kingdom of Shambhala, surrounded by the great cities, was the inestimable celestial mansion of the deity Kalachakra which had been constructed by King Suchandra.

Now I was thinking that I should talk a little about



King Suchandra

Kalachakra's celestial mansion, but because we are all going to receive the Kalachakra initiation we will have the opportunity afterwards to see the coloured sand mandala which represents it. So let's make a point of examining it in detail then and I won't spend any more time on it now.

To the east of Kalachakra's mansion is the great palace of the king of Shambhala. When I had this dream, Shambhala had been ruled since the time of King Suchandra by a line of dharma kings and Kulika or lineage holder kings. The current Kulika king whose name is Chögyal Magagpa or Aniruddha had already ascended the throne and my companion told me he was 17 years old at the time. As each Kulika king reigns for 100 years, I am 64 now so he must be 65. As I told those of you who were at St. John the Divine, as I understand it the Kulika Pundarika or Pema Karpo is the same as His Holiness the Dalai Lama now. My companion told me that the last Kulika king will be called Rudra with a Wheel, 'the powerful and ferocious king who holds an iron wheel in his hand' is what his name literally means, and he will be none other than His Holiness the Dalai Lama, who will subdue everything evil in the universe.

Another important thing I want to tell you is that at the time I had the dream, my elders had spoken of their worries about the thousands of people being killed in the Second World War. So I took the opportunity of asking the girl who took me to Shambhala about the prediction in the texts that when the last Kulika king comes to subdue all evil he will do so with bows and arrows, spears, sticks and so on. I asked her how he would overcome powerful modern weapons with bows and arrows. She told me not to worry about that because, due to the power of karma, whatever destructive weapons we produce in this world appropriate counter-agents will automatically come into existence in the Kingdom of Shambhala. She said, 'The weapons you create in your world are created out of experiments with different kinds of materials, but the anti-missile systems of Shambhala have the nature of exalted wisdom and are much more powerful'.



Chögyal Magagpa

She assured me again that I need not worry about the destructive weapons produced in our world because when at the coming of the last Kulika king, he will be ready with anti-missiles to combat them due just to the karmic power of Shambhala.

Then we went to see the Kulika who reigned in Shambhala at the time. At the gate of his palace a strong person took us in and presented us before the king, who was in deep meditation. He looked so radiant that I wasn't able to look directly into his face. Afterwards it seemed as though he dissolved into light and transformed himself into a lama who gave me a number of Avalokiteshvara empowerments. After the initiations, everything disappeared like a rainbow, but still the girl and I were there. As I had hoped at the beginning we began to express our love for each other. She predicted that in this life I wouldn't be able to remain a monk (laughter), but she said that even if I could not do that I would still be able to benefit many people. Then, I saw in my dream that I had returned to my cave. When I awoke it was dawn and that is how my dream ended.

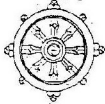
Generally speaking we should not rely too much on our dreams, but we still have a right to dream, you have the right to dream and so do I. So, although I've told you about it, I don't want you to think you have to believe what I dreamt was true or real, but for me at least it was a totally vivid experience.

Kulika Pundarika



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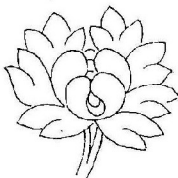
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*Editors*

Pedron Yeshi & Jeremy Russell

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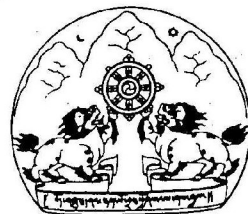
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For enquiries about Chö-Yang or any other of the Department's activities, please write to: Department of Religion and Culture, Gangchen Kyishong, Dharamsala 176215, H.P., India. Tel: (+91 1892) 22685.

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