

Behind the Façade of Tantric Buddhism

PREFACE

Those who practice the Buddha Dharma attain the doctrinal path by entirely relying on and strictly adhering to the Buddha's teachings, which have been compiled into *sūtras* to express His tenets. More specifically, all Buddhist disciples personally attain the Path to Buddhahood only by relying on the Buddha's empowerment to personally realize *prajñā* with sudden insight. Anyone who aspires to cultivate the Buddha Dharma and realize the Path to Buddhahood without following the World-Honored One and who endeavors to attain in this fashion the enlightenment of Buddhahood is just ignorant. By contrast, the views, practices, deeds, and fruitions in Esoteric Buddhism all comply with the guidelines of the yab-yum Buddha established by the leaders of this religion. Indeed, Esoteric Buddhists regard the yab-yum "Buddha" who constantly takes in sexual pleasure while embracing a woman as a reward body Buddha (in fact, this form of reward body Buddha is not a true manifestation of a reward body Buddha, but rather a deceptive appearance of a ghost, deity, or yaksha). Furthermore, these Esoteric Buddhists seek the Path to Buddhahood through the method of the yab-yum sexual union acquired from the non-Buddhist Sect of Shaktism and view this method as the correct way to cultivate the Buddha Dharma. Instead of following the World-Honored One Śākyamuni, the founder of Buddhism, they surprisingly follow Guru Padmasambhava, a mundane common being, and consider him the leader of Esoteric Buddhism in an attempt to rival Exoteric Buddhism without following the Buddha. Such behavior is the opposite of what the correct teachings urge us to do.

Padmasambhava was not a true incarnation of the lotus but was essentially a non-Buddhist ordinary being born from a womb who later married and had children. In order to establish the leader of their religion, Esoteric Buddhist gurus amplified, put together, and disseminated the contrived story that Padmasambhava had incarnated from a lotus. As later generations blindly and mistakenly spread this rumor, Padmasambhava came to be officially recognized within Esoteric Buddhism as an incarnation of the lotus and was therefore called Lotus Born. Not only was the Lotus Born just an ordinary being, but the doctrines that he propagated also entirely consisted of the erroneous path of mundane sexual pleasure drawn from the non-Buddhist Sect of Shaktism. This practice results from the ignorance consisting of the love for the

desire realm, which the Buddha has repeatedly condemned and refuted in the *sūtras*, saying that it should be eliminated by all Buddhist disciples of the Three Vehicles. Surprisingly, Padmasambhava exhorts people to crave the most intense blissful contact among the various forms of sexual desire, which is the complete opposite of what the Buddha has told us to do. How then could Padmasambhava be known as the “leader of the Esoteric Branch of Buddhism”? Therefore, Buddhist learners should rely on Buddha Śākyamuni instead of following Guru Padmasambhava, a non-Buddhist who is just a common being.

Furthermore, after knowing that one should rely on the Buddha instead of a non-Buddhist who is an ordinary being, one should understand the correct principle of following the correct Dharma instead of an individual (the principle of relying on the Dharma instead of an individual). The Dharma taught by the Buddha only comprises the Path to Liberation and the Path to the Enlightenment of Buddhahood. These two doctrines can, in a nutshell, be subsumed under the Path to the Enlightenment of Buddhahood. The practice and realization of the Path to Liberation are attained by eliminating self-view and self-attachment. Self-view consists of insisting that the mind that sees, hears, feels, and cognizes is the “permanent and indestructible self,” firmly believing that this conscious mind has transmigrated from the previous life and can travel to the next life after death, and misapprehending this mind as the foundational consciousness of cyclic existence; such is self-view. This self-view is precisely the scope within which the teachings about the thoughtless mind with lucid awareness imparted by Guru Padmasambhava of Esoteric Buddhism after he “achieved both enlightenment and Buddhahood” have fallen. After establishing Padmasambhava as their leader, those Esoteric Buddhists designated their eternalist non-Buddhist doctrines with Buddhist terms and claimed that these doctrines correspond to the Buddha Dharma. They further elevated these non-Buddhist doctrines above the Dharma of the Exoteric School in Buddhism and called these doctrines the wondrous path that leads to the attainment of Buddhahood with one’s immediate body. In reality, these teachings entirely contradict the Buddha Dharma and are therefore non-Buddhist.

One must abandon one’s self-attachment after eliminating one’s self-view. Those who have eradicated their attachment are known as arhats or solitary realizers worthy of receiving offerings from all humans and celestial beings in the three realms. Such is the correct way to cultivate the Path to Liberation. In contrast, all Esoteric Buddhist gurus—from the leader Padmasambhava at the top level down to all the contemporary gurus and Dharma-kings—regard the

mind with lucid awareness amidst bliss and emptiness as well as the thoughtless mind with lucid awareness as the reality-suchness of the Ground of Buddhahood, thereby falling within the confines of the mental consciousness. Furthermore, those gurus mistakenly believe that the emptiness of shape and form observed in sexual pleasure as well as the emptiness of shape and form observed in the mind of feeling and cognition that takes in bliss correspond to the emptiness-nature, thereby misconstruing the Buddha's thoughts in the *prajñā sūtras*. Due to these two misunderstandings, those gurus are ordinary beings who have yet to abandon their self-view. The doctrines propagated based on such misapprehension are eternalist non-Buddhist doctrines that are no different from the soul-related folk beliefs, with the only distinction being the fact that the former is cultivated thoughtlessly whereas the latter is not. If these eternalist non-Buddhist doctrines were reliable, then all non-Buddhist doctrines could be relied upon as if they were the Buddha Dharma.

Not only do the doctrines taught by ancient and modern Esoteric Buddhist gurus all consist of eternalist non-Buddhist methods, but they also revolve around the core philosophy of the Shaktist yab-yum practice transmitted by ghosts, deities, and yakshas. How could anyone adhere to such doctrines? The wise should observe and ponder carefully and subsequently be able to make the right choice to follow the correct Dharma instead of a guru. The correct way to cultivate the Path to the Enlightenment of Buddhahood is to comply with the following teaching from the Buddha: First, one personally realizes the *tathāgatagarbha*—the eighth consciousness—before proceeding to the personal intake based on the *tathāgatagarbha* that one has realized—one personally and directly takes in the properties of the *tathāgatagarbha* and thereby generates the fundamental knowledge within the wisdom of *prajñā* (the knowledge-of-general-aspect of *prajñā*) and the subsequently-attained knowledge within the wisdom of *prajñā* (the knowledge-of-specific-aspects and the knowledge-of-all-aspects of *prajñā*). It is by realizing this consciousness that one can understand the sign of reality. It is also by realizing this consciousness that one can give rise to a small portion of the knowledge-of-all-aspects within the subsequently-attained knowledge, which is known as the knowledge-of-the-aspects-of-paths, and become a Bodhisattva of the First Ground. This is the only correct way to cultivate the Path to the Enlightenment of Buddhahood.

Esoteric Buddhists, however, have not been able to generate the wisdom of *prajñā* due to their failure to realize the *tathāgatagarbha*—the eighth

consciousness. They have therefore separately invented the existence of drops that appear through visualization in their central channel, have regarded these drops as the *ālaya* consciousness—the *tathāgatagarbha*—set forth by the Buddha, and have been deceiving followers by counterfeiting the *tathāgatagarbha* with these drops and by pretending that the cultivation of these drops corresponds to the practice and realization of the wisdom of *prajñā*. Furthermore, those Esoteric Buddhists have concealed this cultivation to prevent Exoteric Buddhists from knowing that the *ālaya* consciousness—the *tathāgatagarbha*—realized in Esoteric Buddhism is in fact the aforementioned drops. In addition, those Esoteric Buddhists consider the valid knowledge of non-Buddhist doctrines consisting of the penetrative ability to move the drops through the five vertically-aligned cakras in the central channel to be the valid knowledge attained by the Bodhisattvas of the First Ground at the stage of the penetrative understanding of the Buddhist wisdom of *prajñā*, thereby fooling both monastic and lay Bodhisattvas in Exoteric Buddhism as well as novice learners in Esoteric Buddhism and fueling their worship to the extent that they do not dare to question these teachings.

Ancient and modern Esoteric Buddhist gurus have strived to realize the Buddha Dharma in this fashion by following the non-Buddhist Padmasambhava and by adhering to the non-Buddhist method of visualizing the central channel and the drops. These endeavors, which are as futile as one's efforts to obtain cooked rice by boiling sand, are in fact disconnected from the Buddha Dharma and are the opposite of what the correct teachings urge us to do. Therefore, all Buddhist learners should, for their cultivation of the Buddha Dharma, follow the World-Honored One Śākyamuni instead of the non-Buddhist Padmasambhava; they should abide by the correct Buddhist Dharma instead of the non-Buddhist tantric doctrines; and they should follow the Buddhist sangha instead of the non-Buddhist gurus—lamas—of Esoteric Buddhism; otherwise, their thoughts and practices will stand in complete opposition to the correct teachings.

Furthermore, Esoteric Buddhists consider the method of the yab-yum sexual union between a male and a female to be the correct way to practice the Buddha Dharma. They equate the state of one-pointedness without distracting thoughts in orgasm with the state of meditative absorption and regard sexual intercourse as the correct way to cultivate meditative concentration. These views contradict the Buddha's teachings about the four concentrations and four formless absorptions cultivated and attained by non-Buddhists and Bodhisattvas. They also contradict the contents of the Path to Liberation set forth by the Buddha and completely oppose and veer in the opposite direction

of the teachings about the Path to the Enlightenment of Buddhahood imparted by the Buddha. Esoteric Buddhists have elevated these methods of mundane sexual pleasure preached by the non-Buddhists of the Hindu Sect of Shaktism to the status of supreme doctrines that exceed Buddhist teachings. In fact, those who practice according to these tantric methods will definitely end up transmigrating endlessly and suffer immeasurable agony in the three evil paths for long kalpas during their future lives. How then could the cultivation of these methods be considered the correct way to cultivate the Buddha Dharma? Therefore, all those who practice the Buddha Dharma should abide by the doctrines taught by the Buddha instead of the non-Buddhist methods set forth by Esoteric Buddhist gurus.

The concurrent rise of Esoteric Buddhism and demise of Buddhism constitute a historical event that transpired in ancient India. The flourishing of Esoteric Buddhism inevitably triggers the downfall of the Buddha Dharma. In other words, Esoteric Buddhism will definitely annihilate Buddhism once it completely supplants Exoteric Buddhism at the culmination of its expansion. The reason is that Esoteric Buddhist doctrines do not correspond to the true Buddha Dharma. Despite their Buddhist veneer, they are essentially eternalist non-Buddhist mundane methods related to the enjoyment of sexual union, which demonstrates that Esoteric Buddhism is a religion whose monastics perform laic methods. Therefore, Buddhism will be extinguished once Esoteric Buddhism has completely replaced Exoteric Buddhism. There will be nothing left of Buddhism other than Buddhist monasteries and monastics and Buddhism will essentially be turned into a non-Buddhist faith that revolves around and depends on ghosts and deities.

Esoteric Buddhist gurus and Dharma-kings concur on the fact that all individuals entirely rely on the Buddha's empowerment for their cultivation of Esoteric Buddhist doctrines. However, those gurus also unanimously advocate that "one must principally follow the guru and secondarily the Buddha." Furthermore, they assert that "one must abide by the tantras composed by the gurus instead of the *sūtras* taught by Buddha Śākyamuni given that the tantras are superior to the Exoteric Buddhist *sūtras*." Similarly, Tsongkhapa advocates that "one must base one's practice on the great craving aroused through the yab-yum method and that the abandonment of this craving constitutes an infraction of the Samaya vows." In fact, the cultivation and attainments of ancient and contemporary Dharma-kings and gurus have all fallen within the confines of eternalist non-Buddhist doctrines. Moreover, all the *sūtras* and tantras among esoteric texts are the collective works of Esoteric Buddhist

leaders compiled over a long period and their contents were not taught by the Buddha. The doctrines preached in those tantric texts are furthermore non-Buddhist. How can those gurus realize the Buddha Dharma when they claim in this fashion that one should follow the gurus instead of the Exoteric Buddhist *sūtras* and that one should rely on the yab-yum Buddhas, who are manifestations of the ghosts and deities worshipped in Esoteric Buddhism, instead of the authentic Buddha in Exoteric Buddhism? This demonstrates that the contents stated by those Esoteric Buddhist gurus and set forth in the tantras are the opposite of the correct teachings.

I composed this book for many different reasons. Esoteric Buddhist learners are generally unaware of the essence of their religion and have therefore been deceived and misled. Furthermore, a great number of renowned Exoteric Buddhist masters in Taiwan have in recent years scrambled to cozy up to the Esoteric Buddhist Dalai Lama, hoping to use his widespread fame to raise their own status. Such behavior has caused many within the two groups of monastics (translation note: *bhikṣus* and *bhikṣuṇīs*) in Exoteric Buddhism, who do not know that the intention of the reputable masters who pander to Esoteric Buddhism is to build themselves up, to mistakenly believe that Esoteric Buddhism truly corresponds to Buddhism. Furthermore, given the extreme difficulty to realize *prajñā*, as evidenced by the fact that many people have been unable to personally realize it despite practicing Buddhism for a long time, and given that the Esoteric Buddhist gurus whom they come across all have “valid knowledge”—those lamas all boast “an extremely high level” of valid knowledge, easily reaching the First Ground or Buddhahood—those two groups of monastics have turned to Esoteric Buddhism to seek the Dharma as they do not know its background. Lastly, as the general public is largely unaware that Esoteric Buddhism does not correspond to Buddhism, it has concluded that the sex scandals that erupted at the cultivation centers that propagate esoteric teachings were instances of sexual misconduct committed by masters of Buddhist cultivation centers and has accused Buddhism for these misdeeds, frequently dragging it through the mud and harming it on myriad occasions. Due to the above reasons, I had to compose this book to rectify the erroneous knowledge and protect Buddhism.

In fact, the first and foremost reason that led to the writing of this book is my observation that Esoteric Buddhists have substituted Buddhist doctrines with non-Buddhist ones and have claimed that the latter exceeds the Exoteric Buddhist Dharma-gate of the ultimate attainment of Buddhahood in all respects. Esoteric Buddhists have thus counterfeited the Buddha Dharma with

non-Buddhist doctrines. In addition, the lamas have, in their capacity as non-Buddhists, disguised themselves as Buddhist monastics. Furthermore, they have been gnawing and devouring Buddhist resources through the tactic of exalting Esotericism and suppressing Exotericism, thereby gradually and peacefully exterminating Buddhism without Buddhist disciples realizing it. We will then see a historical recurrence of the eradication of Buddhism in ancient India at the hands of Tantric followers. In the modern age, the most prominent exponents of Esoteric Buddhist doctrines are the Dalai Lama and Master Yinshun. The former openly propagates the view of “dependent arising coupled with an empty nature”—the Theory of Uncausedness—and negates the *viññaptimātra sūtras* of the third turning of the Dharma wheel by labeling the doctrines taught therein as non-definitive based on Tsongkhapa’s assertions. Furthermore, the Dalai Lama secretly disseminates the yab-yum practice, asserting that it is a method that leads to the ultimate attainment of Buddhahood. As for Master Yinshun, he willingly took over the erroneous Esoteric Buddhist doctrines in his capacity as an Exoteric Buddhist master and vigorously propagates the view of Prāsaṅgika Madhyamaka—the Theory of Uncausedness—preached by the Gelug School in Tantric Buddhism. He is openly against Esoteric Buddhism (he has denounced and refuted the yab-yum practice in this religion), but in reality defends and supports Esoteric Buddhism by widely disseminating the Theory of Uncausedness—the view of Prāsaṅgika Madhyamaka—thereby negating the wondrous doctrine of the *tathāgatagarbha* set forth by the Buddha in the *sūtras* of the third turning of the Dharma wheel and granting the yab-yum method in Esoteric Buddhism room for survival. Thus, the current dissemination of the fallacious Esoteric Buddhist doctrines by two prominent masters of Esoteric and Exoteric Buddhism—one overtly and the other covertly—has allowed Esoteric Buddhism to expand its power and caused Buddhist learners to mistakenly believe that Esoteric Buddhism truly is Buddhism. In view of the detrimental and far-reaching influences of these deeds, I have no choice but to reveal the truth as it is.

Due to the above reasons, it is necessary to fully demonstrate the secrets related to Esoteric Buddhist doctrines and thoroughly distinguish the right and wrong of these doctrines so that all Buddhist disciples and the general public can be aware of these secrets and errors—hence the composition and publication of this book. The purpose is to protect authentic Buddhism by informing the public about the non-Buddhist essence of Esoteric Buddhism and its discrepancies with authentic Buddhism.

My rectification of Esoteric Buddhist doctrines aims to cause their followers to revert to Exoteric Buddhist doctrines and to expulse the non-Buddhist erroneous methods worshipped by those followers from Buddhism. I, therefore, wrote this book in the hope of helping Buddhist doctrines recover the purity that they had at the time of the Buddha, when they were not interspersed with the non-Buddhist doctrines of Esoteric Buddhism. May all learners and renowned masters of Buddhism understand the true colors of Esoteric Buddhism, so that Esoteric Buddhism can dissociate itself from non-Buddhist doctrines and revert to the correct Dharma set forth by the Buddha in the Exoteric Buddhist *sūtras* and so that Buddhism can grow purer every day. The objective is to prolong the wisdom-life of the Buddha Dharma until the arrival of Bodhisattva Candraprabha in this world. If Esoteric Buddhists refuse to correct their non-Buddhist doctrines, then Esoteric Buddhism should be detached from Buddhism so that the two religions become unrelated. Only then will the World-Honored One's exalted teachings be able to live on in peace without being perturbed again by the non-Buddhist doctrines of Esoteric Buddhism.

Despite witnessing my rectification of the Esoteric Buddhist doctrines, tantric gurus have refused to correct their erroneous doctrines. Instead, they want to maintain their mistaken methods in order to save these non-Buddhist tantric doctrines from the brink of extinction and ensure the longevity of these fallacious tantric methods. To achieve this goal, they deliberately assumed the identities of Exoteric Buddhist learners on the Internet and used fake names to vilify me as a non-Buddhist who leeches off the Buddha Dharma. Their objective is to confuse and mislead the public—to cause people to mistakenly believe that the criticism against me originates from Exoteric Buddhist learners. This lowly and undignified behavior is no different from that of a thief who yells: "Catch the thief!" Despite being furious with me, as evidenced by the fact that they impudently defamed me as a non-Buddhist, those tantric gurus can only tell their disciples the following excuse in private: "The lay Buddhist Pinghi is an amateur when it comes to esoteric doctrines; we do not want to condescend to him either for discussions or debates." However, in the face of my statements, they neither have the courage nor the ability to propose a Buddhist doctrinal debate by disclosing their real names and addresses and can only make evasive statements as well as assertions that conceal the truth.

The reason behind this attitude is that the lamas—gurus—who have practiced Esoteric Buddhism for over thirty years are in fact aware that tantric doctrines merely result from the designation of mundane methods that their

leaders have learned from non-Buddhists with the terminology of the Buddha Dharma, while these methods are in essence absolutely non-Buddhist. Those gurus are indeed also aware that they have never attained *prajñā*, have not realized the *tathāgatagarbha*, and have yet to enter the Dharma of Bodhisattvas. However, if they told the truth, they would inevitably be assailed by hordes of Esoteric Buddhists, and therefore none of them are willing to speak truthfully. In addition, as those lamas are reluctant to relinquish fame and material welfare, they continue to rely on Esoteric Buddhist doctrines to receive offerings, refuse to break out of their old habits, and just live on. Due to these reasons, Esoteric Buddhist gurus have been heavily silent in response to my statements about the contents of their doctrines. They neither dare to defend their views openly under their real names nor have the courage to come forward to debate the doctrines with me in private. They are all aware that Esoteric Buddhist doctrines are just non-Buddhist mundane methods coated with various terms of the Buddha Dharma and are not presentable in any formal context.

Furthermore, Esoteric Buddhist doctrines are associated from beginning to end with the method of the fourth joy—the yab-yum sexual pleasure—the cultivation of which is displayed as the ultimate objective of the practice that leads to the attainment of Buddhahood. Therefore, all the obscure terms in the Tibetan Esoteric Buddhist tantras unequivocally allude to this method. To explicate each and every tantra of the various tantric schools individually would inevitably entail repeating the same discussions throughout this book, which would make this writing tedious to read and would have no practical significance. Consequently, I have only cited representative tantras of tantric schools and have provided just sufficient annotations in brackets to help readers understand the meanings of those tantras.

Furthermore, the wording in this book must be simple and clear; common and colloquial terms and proverbs are even used instead of formal ones for reasons that should also be explained here. Esoteric Buddhist doctrines do involve sexual misconduct and are indeed preposterous. This fact must be kept from the knowledge of outsiders and therefore these doctrines are propagated with evasive and opaque terms—hence the extensive use of obscure words in the tantras. If these obscure terms are not explained plainly, then learners will not be able to understand their meanings upon reading them. If they do not comprehend these meanings, then they will not be able to distinguish the right and wrong of the tantric doctrines. This will enable Esoteric Buddhist gurus to continue to divert people’s attention and conceal their mistakes with evasive

statements, which means that my endeavors to protect and uphold the correct Buddhist Dharma will come up short. Therefore, the wording in this book must be simple and unambiguous so that all readers can grasp the meanings of the obscure terms and Esoteric Buddhist gurus will not be able to distort these meanings and conceal their mistakes. Furthermore, given that novice practitioners of Tantric Buddhism are **mostly** less educated, the wording in this book must be plain and the use of uncommon vocabulary must be avoided as much as possible so that these practitioners can truly understand the meanings highlighted in my book upon reading them.

Furthermore, the terms from the Sūtra and Tantra Divisions of Esoteric Buddhism cited in this book have mostly been annotated in parentheses behind those words. The reasons are as follows: To explain every single paragraph individually would lengthen the book significantly. Therefore, I have adopted the simpler and more convenient method of providing annotations in parentheses to avoid lengthening the book. Readers will understand those annotations upon reading them and will be able to analyze according to the truth and understand the right and wrong of Esoteric Buddhist doctrines. They will then be able to return to the right path and abandon those incorrect doctrines, which means that my objective will be achieved. Therefore, I have provided annotations through this simpler and more convenient method.

Furthermore, the original plan was for each volume of this book to be approximately 400 pages long. However, since Esoteric Buddhist doctrines **completely** deviate from the truth and are **entirely** erroneous, a critique of these doctrines requires a massive and irreducible word count. Given the final book length of over 550,000 words, three extra lines have been added to each page of the body text, bringing the total number of lines per page to 17. Even by fitting in this fashion as many lines as possible to every page, this book still needs to be divided into four volumes in order to be entirely printed. Therefore, the more cluttered layout may make it harder for elderly readers to peruse this writing, which actually goes against my will, and I hereby present my apologies.

Furthermore, in order to prevent some blind followers of Tantric Buddhism from gathering and burning this publication in large quantities—in the same way that some people in the past collected and incinerated *Treasury of the Correct Dharma Seen by the Wisdom-Eye: Collection of Protecting the Dharma*—this publication will not be disseminated in the form of free printed material, but will instead be distributed as a payable publication. However, given that our goal is not to make a profit, this book will be distributed below

cost—at a token “cost price.” The related losses will be covered by the profits made from the other writings published by our company. The purpose is to protect the correct Buddhist Dharma by widely disseminating this writing and extensively benefiting learners.

Right before the publication of this book, I have described the reasons for its composition and the general idea of the editing as above. May all Exoteric and Esoteric Buddhist practitioners read this book carefully and distinguish right from wrong by verifying each of my statements in order to protect themselves and save others. May everyone avoid the grievous misdeed of destroying the correct Buddhist Dharma and refrain from perfunctorily following the erroneous tantric doctrines deep down a devious path.

Buddhist disciple and holder of the Bodhisattva Precepts

Lay Buddhist Pingshi

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At the Residence of Clamor

