

directorship of TOT. This had happened in a rather odd way: when the Naropa Institute catalogue appeared I was inadvertently listed in it as "Director of Tail of the Tiger." Neither Carl nor I were directors at that point and the listing was simply a mistake. When Carl saw this he showed it to Rinpoche, who immediately replied, "All right, you and Jeremy will be the directors." Rinpoche would often take advantage of such seeming accidents—nothing was pure coincidence in his view.

In February, while there was a dathün going on at Karne Chöling, I completed the prostration practice in my cabin up on the hill among the maple trees. During the dathün, Rinpoche telephoned me from Boulder to say that he wanted me to move there and take on a full-time role at Naropa Institute. He explained that he needed me there because there were difficulties, particularly in the leadership. In April, there was to be a major showing of Tibetan art at the Hayden Gallery of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, organized by Vajradhatu and MIT together, which I was supposed to help with. So I told him this and asked if I should come to Boulder after the exhibition, but to my surprise he told me to come out as soon as possible. Accordingly, soon after the dathün was over, I moved to Boulder.

ON THE THREE KAYAS

Very soon after I arrived in Boulder, Rinpoche gave a public seminar on the three *kayas* (a Sanskrit word meaning "bodies"): dharmakaya, sambhogakaya, and nirmanakaya.⁴³ The three kayas correspond to the three awakened aspects of our being, which can have an ordinary, mundane, and neurotic level as well as the enlightened, awakened level. Both of these aspects are always occurring in us. In an ordinary person these three levels of being manifest as the mind, speech (emotions, the communicative level), and body.

Rinpoche had spoken about the kayas briefly several times previously, but this was the first time that he spent a whole seminar on the topic. This seminar, like so many others, was atmospheric, experiential, and mind-blowing. When the three kayas are taught in the traditional

way, they seem very abstract and far removed from the experience of ordinary beings such as myself—a description of the Buddha's way of being in his enlightened body, speech, and mind. However, as usual with such traditional topics, Rinpoche taught them in a way that seemed very much accessible. He showed us that the three kayas are indeed an aspect of the experience we all have, though this experience is usually veiled by our small minds and hearts. The three kayas are an important topic for understanding much of Rinpoche's teaching, and indeed much of his life itself.

The three kayas are the awakened version of mind, speech/emotion, and body. *Dharmakaya*, as the awakened state of mind, is the realm that is beyond concept altogether, beyond existence and non-existence. It is the very space of our mind, even beyond awareness or non-awareness; yet at the same time it is bright, clear, open space, with some kind of *knowingness*. It is the vast open space of mind within which all appearances arise. It is a space that is empty of all concept, at the same time that it is full—full of potential, of possibilities, of potential forms, of potential laws. *Dharmakaya* is another view of *shunyata*—it is empty of all concept, yet full of all possibilities.

Shunryu Suzuki Roshi, the much-loved Zen teacher, describes the *dharmakaya* thus:

I discovered that it is necessary, absolutely necessary, to believe in nothing. That is, we have to believe in something which has no form and no color—something which exists before all forms and colors appear. This is a very important point. ... It is absolutely necessary to believe in nothing. But I do not mean voidness. There is something, but that something is something which is always prepared for taking some particular form, and it has some rules, or theory or truth in its activity. ... This is not just theory. This is not just the teaching of Buddhism. This is the absolutely necessary understanding of our life.



The awakened level corresponding to speech, or emotion, is known as *sambhogakaya*, or "body of enjoyment." At this level there is pure

energy, which is undistorted by "me" / "I." The energy normally experienced as the unawakened or negative emotions—passion/lust, anger, ignorance, jealousy, pride—are felt from the perspective of awake mind as energies at play in the sambhogakaya, and as wisdoms of the five Buddha families, five expressions of that basic non-ego-oriented energy. The sambhogakaya is the level of feeling, at which body and mind are completely joined and in harmony. There is a sense of dance, of play, of celebration, and of natural humór at this level, a "self-existing grin," as Rinpoche called it. It is the brilliant whiteness of the paper that is left when you erase the writing, as Rinpoche had described it in our first encounter.

The body level, from the awake point of view, is known as *nirmanakaya*. It is the entire world of the five sense perceptions, which includes our own physical body as well as the environment. At this point, because there is no dwelling on "me"—on "this, here"—there is really no distinction between "this" and "that," between "my body" and the world around.

Once, when Rinpoche was ill, one of his close students was concerned about his health and asked him to take more care of it. Rinpoche said, "Why is everyone so concerned about my health?" The student replied, "Because we care about you, we care about your body." Rinpoche responded, "My body is the whole world." That is the point of view of a being who has fully accomplished the realization of the *nirmanakaya*. This brings with it tremendous compassion because there is no hang-up, there is no "me"; so compassion, love for our world and for others, radiates naturally. Compassion has expressed itself, at the *nirmanakaya* level, in all of the physical manifestations of dharma, texts, statues, and great dharma teachers.

When I returned to Boulder in March of 1975 these were the teachings I heard. Although they were so profound, Rinpoche somehow managed to touch us with them and show us a dimension to human existence that we had never heard of before. We learned that the three kayas are part of our own make-up that we can open to right now, at least in brief glimpses.

"THE KEY TO WARRIORSHIP AND THE FIRST PRINCIPLE OF SHAMBHALA VISION IS NOT BEING AFRAID OF WHO YOU ARE. SHAMBHALA VISION TEACHES THAT, IN THE FACE OF THE WORLD'S PROBLEMS, WE CAN BE HEROIC AND KIND AT THE SAME TIME. SHAMBHALA VISION IS THE OPPOSITE OF SELFISHNESS."

CHÖGYAM TRUNGPA RINPOCHE,
FROM *SHAMBHALA: THE SACRED PATH OF THE WARRIOR*

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WHEN I ARRIVED in Boulder to take up my post as Vice President of Naropa Institute, I heard that there was a lot of confusion in the community about Naropa Institute. What was it for? Why did we have to do it? These questions were even being asked among the small staff of Naropa. Until that time Rinpoche's students had comprised a fairly small community of a few hundred people, scattered about the States and Canada, many of whom felt they were able to know and be known by Rinpoche quite intimately. Many of the older community members were disturbed and upset by this sudden increase in the number of students gathering around Rinpoche, afraid perhaps that this would cause them to lose access to him and the close family feeling they had with him and each other. As well, many of these first students had come to Rinpoche out of burn-out and disaffection with the dry, intellectual, irrelevant studies forced on them in high school or university, so why engage this world again? Rinpoche was quite unhappy about this attitude and gave a very sharp talk to the community expressing puzzlement that people would be asking such a question as "Why Naropa Institute?" at all.