



INNER SCIENCE

*Questions to Tarab Tulku Rinpoche
about the common basis of eastern wisdom tradition and
western science, about their future collaboration,
as well as about globalization and
the consequences of an application of universal knowledge to personal development*

Question: What is your aim for the outcome of this conference?

Tarab Tulku (TT): In dialogue with leading scientists the Dalai Lama has been trying to establish a connection between the old eastern wisdom and modern science for many years. I consider the *UNITY IN DUALITY-TENDREL* conference to be a continuation of this dialogue. It is my special aim to introduce to western scientists the *essence* of eastern wisdom in the particular form of *UNITY IN DUALITY*, i.e. beyond its cultural or religious conditioning. In that way I am hoping to create a broader base for communication and for deepening mutual understanding. However, *UNITY IN DUALITY* is not just abstract philosophical theory, and I would also like to show how the philosophical / science of mind knowledge of the deepest nature of human beings and of the world can be used directly for personal and spiritual development. I come from a tradition where ancient knowledge has been applied to inner development for many thousand years. Fundamentally speaking ancient knowledge and modern science reach the same point and I hope this becomes evident through the way in which it is presented in *UNITY IN DUALITY*. With this conference I would like to inspire and open up a dialogue leading in that direction.

Question: How can the dialogue between eastern wisdom tradition and western science continue?

TT: In Munich we have a pre-conference, where the scientists will exchange their views, and then we have the conference itself with lectures about the universal wisdom of *UNITY IN DUALITY - TENDREL* from the point of view of the different scientific disciplines. I am planning to bring out a book with these contributions and discussions, so that people, who haven't been able to attend the conference, can learn about this exchange and benefit from it as well. It is especially important to me that people in the West can really see that the insights of western science are connected with the ancient eastern wisdom, and that it is possible to implement this universal knowledge in the humanities for the sake of the inner development of the individual and of mankind. In this way the first step consists in recognizing that the eastern knowledge about human beings and the world is nothing foreign or alien, but actually coincides in many points with the insights of modern western science. The second step consists in actually applying this universal knowledge to personal and spiritual development. How that can be done is the choice of the individual - the insights of western science can be used for inner development just as well as the eastern knowledge, they just need to be applied in that field. In other words, if we really want to change something in ourselves and thereby in our life, the universal understanding of the interdependent nature of all that exists concretely needs to be applied to personal transformation.

Question: How can we really use universal knowledge in personal development?

TT: The understanding of the philosophy / 'science of mind' within the eastern tradition in comparison to the western approach contains a fundamental difference: In the West, scientific research is in general conducted through the conceptual mind and therefore the application of this knowledge stays within the conceptual realm as well, in as much as it is confined to some form of outer, material development. In the East however, philosophical knowledge does not just imply a conceptual understanding but is considered simultaneously under the aspect of personal transformation. In this way, the applications of the philosophical insights in the East are also not confined to conceptual goals, but are immediately applied to the subject's inner exploration and development. Ultimately we could call the eastern approach to philosophy / science of mind an *integral* philosophical knowledge or understanding.

Nowadays many people in the West are interested in psychology and meditation, which indicates that a need is felt for inner transformation. This is why I believe it could be very useful to apply the universal knowledge that is there both in the East and in the West concretely towards personal and spiritual development. *UNITY IN DUALITY* is not the only way to do that, it is just one way of introducing that it is actually possible to make such a transfer of universal knowledge to the personal level

Question: What would be the consequences on the level of society if we were to really apply universal knowledge?

TT: Many people are very concerned about the very one-sided orientation of western industrial civilization towards outer, strictly material development. However, what we don't see is that we are all really involved in that, and that our body, mind and energy are sucked into this development. The purpose of outer development should be to get more inner peace, both in our body and in our mind. Instead, the activities of our body and mind are drawn into the material development at the cost of our relationship with nature, as well as with our deeper inner nature. The whole structure of modern western civilization is highly un-relaxed. Actually the whole world is more and more functioning in that way and there just seems to be no limit to that development. The side effect of this is that our fundamental human nature gets more and more 'polluted'. We are moving away from inner and outer nature all the time in a very unhealthy way. If we continue like that for a few centuries, we will destroy ourselves completely.

The problem is also that we can't just get away from it. Even though individuals might try to withdraw from this global development, ultimately it doesn't help, because the whole thing still goes on. It is as if we were driving a car on the motorway, oneself is driving fast, everybody else is driving fast, so you cannot just stop in the middle of the motorway. Even though we might come more and more to the conclusion that we are all driving way too fast and that we can hardly control our vehicles, here and now we are in a situation where we need to drive, where we have to go forward. We want to stop, but we don't know how. So what can we do?

We always have the possibility to look inside, to find out how to change inside, every single one of us can do that. And indeed more and more people are realizing, that they have to do something differently; go into another direction. If we bring our attention inside, we will automatically slow down and if everyone is doing that, in general the speed will go down and the whole situation will change. We can learn from this universal knowledge, in which eastern wisdom tradition and western science are meeting, how to direct our attention inside.

From the *UNITY IN DUALITY* point of view one can see that many of the problems we seemingly experience on the outside, are problems we create on the inside. This is why ultimately one has to work with oneself, develop oneself from inside; the outer development won't make that change for us. We need to come back to a fundamental feeling of ourselves, which is expressed in our natural connectedness to nature and to other human beings. It is about *beingness*, about existing in a more authentic way, which is rooted deeper than the conceptual level. This will give people in our society and in the world the peace and freedom in body and mind we have been trying to reach through focusing on material development.

Question: In this context, how do you view the problem of increasing globalisation?

TT: One of the main causes for globalisation has to do with our highly developed technological culture. Because modern means of global communication and travelling have become so fast and are so easily accessible, influences are carried faster and faster around the globe and cultures are changing more and more quickly. But already in 8th century Tibet, the king Trisong Detsen was wearing a turban, which clearly denotes a Persian influence. The principle is the same: through contact with other cultures comes an influence and one's own culture changes. I can see that nowadays also in young Tibetans, who are quickly interested in everything that comes from the West, such as clothes and music.

In this way on an outer level the world moves closer together and there seems to be almost no way to stop that. Another aspect however is the *inner value* of a culture, which cannot be found on an outer, material level, but more on an experience level. By this I understand the particular music, poetry or art of a culture, in which something really unique to that culture can express itself. This inner value we need to keep, otherwise we run the risk of everything becoming the same. In general, however, I am not sharing the concern of everything truly becoming ONE global culture one day. I am teaching in many different European countries and I have observed, that people of different nations really *are* different on an inner, or we might say on a mental level. It is this, which expresses itself in the particular “taste” which a culture conveys.

So how can we keep the inner value of our culture? Of course, the awareness for one’s own culture has to do with oneself. We have to ask ourselves what is more important. The outer value of a culture is just a kind of tool, whereas a culture’s inner value, its inner experience of itself, is the main thing. This basic inner experiencing should continue. To come back to the young Tibetans. Even when they grow up in India, they are brought up and educated in a western style. The problem is however, that they don’t have a fundamental understanding of western culture, they cannot even *see* the inner value of western culture, because they are not from that culture. They only see the outer, material value of western culture, which expresses itself in certain clothes or in the striving for certain material things, and this is what they identify with. In this way they cannot experience the inner value of western culture, yet at the same time they are not interested in or have lost the ancient inner value of their own culture. This is in general a big problem in Asia as well as in all other countries that are poorly developed on a material level. In order not to lose the inner value that is needed as the ‘food for the mind’, it is very important that people both in the West and in the East are familiar with own inner culture.

In the case of the Tibetans this inner cultural value has developed through thousands of years as an integral result of their specific nature, language and way of living. Therefore the Tibetan people need the Tibetan inner cultural value. If Tibetans in Tibet and outside Tibet were to understand their culture not only in its outer expressions, i.e. in the form of mysticism and a belief system, but more from the perspective of the inner value, if they were to understand that it is ultimately in their own power to decide what they experience, they could consciously keep their own inner culture, and get the food their mind needs despite the circumstances.

People in the West has recognised that material development alone does not give them the experience they long for, which is why many people nowadays try to go beyond the material level doing yoga, meditation etc. But in doing this they seem to believe in some kind of “magic”, i.e. they trust that one day, out of nowhere, they themselves and their world will change. But what is lacking is fundamental understanding of how everything is interconnected. Our experience of reality has to do with *how we are*; if that changes, our reality will change as well.

This is also true on the global level. If as human beings we approach life only through material beliefs, this implies a great danger. If on the contrary we see, that there is the material level, but beyond that there is an inner value, which is connected to one’s inner culture, then outer globalisation cannot become a real threat.

Question: Do you plan to make another *UNITY IN DUALITY-TENDREL* conference in the future?

TT: It depends on the general response of the western scientists to the paradigm of a universal knowledge that is common to the East and the West, and if there is really a meeting and an exchange. It is important to me that also the audience of the conference sees the connection between ancient eastern knowledge and modern science. I hope people will realize, that the *integral approach* of *UNITY IN DUALITY*, i.e. the application of universal knowledge to personal development, is truly a possibility for bringing about transformation both on a personal level, as well as on a more global level.

If we succeed in communicating these points, I can envision another conference in the near future, which deepens the meeting and collaboration between western science and ancient eastern wisdom.

There are a lot of people who have been interested in the eastern wisdom tradition for quite some time and are now trying to integrate this knowledge, for example, into western psychology and psychotherapy. A conference that doesn’t just focus on the philosophical foundations, but also and especially, on the concrete application of this knowledge to personal development and transformation, could be of great benefit to such people.

However, what is important now, is to see first of all that eastern and western knowledge really have a common base and that this universal knowledge can be applied towards personal development with great benefit both for the individual and for the whole of society. This understanding I call *UNITY IN DUALITY*.
