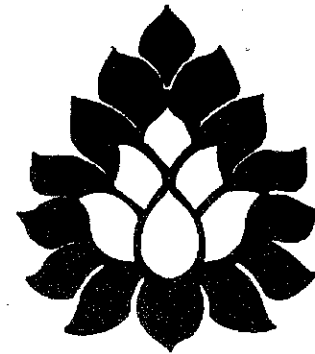

MIND AND LIFE IV



SLEEPING, DREAMING AND DYING

DIALOGUES BETWEEN
BUDDHISM AND
THE SCIENCES

WITH
HIS HOLINESS
THE XIVTH DALAI LAMA

DHARAMSALA, INDIA
OCTOBER 5-9, 1992

MIND AND LIFE IV

SLEEPING, DREAMING, AND DYING

Introduction

The **Mind and Life Dialogues** have provided unique opportunities for small groups of Western scientists to engage in concentrated, private discussions with H. H. the Dalai Lama and other representatives of the Tibetan tradition. The purpose of these meetings is to mutually inform and enrich both traditions about various issues pertaining to life and the mind. A key ingredient in these experiences has been that participants come to present their specialties and to participate in the dialogues in a spirit of truly open and free exchange.

“**Mind and Life I**” held in October, 1987 in Dharamsala, India, was the first attempt in this direction and succeeded in opening up a deeper dialogue than had been possible in less favorable circumstances. It provided the impetus to continue the Mind and Life series into other specific topics. Edited parts of the dialogues from this first meeting have been published as *Gentle Bridges*, J. Hayward and F. Varela (Eds.), Shambala, Boston, 1992

“**Mind and Life II**” was held in Newport Beach, California in October, 1989, in a shorter time span than the previous conference. Its intention was to focus discussion on important current topics in neuroscience with well established North American researchers.

“**Mind and Life III**” was again held in Dharamsala in November, 1990, in its original format. Its intention was to focus on the relationship between mental states and the healing process, as seen from both the Buddhist tradition and Western medical research.

The intention of **Mind and Life IV** is to focus on a far more delicate area including the three topics: sleeping, dreaming and dying. We wish to bring to discussion those "marginal states" in which our habitual, reified sense of personal identity is challenged, and in which concomitantly a host of phenomena of great significance for human existence become intensified or are made manifest. Current knowledge about the strictly neuroscientific correlates of sleeping and dreaming will be presented. However, the multi-dimensional nature of these states requires other approaches of research which will be presented as well.

In particular, we wish to draw on the insights of many years of clinical work in the Western tradition of psychoanalysis concerning dreams and their role in neurosis and health. Further, current studies on lucid dreaming will be introduced, together with the relevant practical applications and technological methods that have developed recently in the West. These presentations will be complemented with a description of the unique Tibetan tradition of dream yoga and "Bardo" teachings (on the intermediate state following death and prior to one's next rebirth). Western clinical studies on so-called near-death states will be discussed in connection with the above Tibetan teachings.

As in past meetings, each of the five days will begin with a full presentation of one of the above themes, followed by extensive discussion in the afternoon.

PARTICIPANTS

Tenzin Gyatso, His Holiness, the XIVth Dalai Lama of Tibet.

Michael Chase, Ph.D., Professor of Neuroscience, UCLA Medical School.

Field: Neurobiology of sleep.

Jerome Engel, M.D., Ph.D., Professor of Neurology, Anatomy and Cell Biology, UCLA Medical School.

Field: Clinical aspects of epilepsies, comas and death.

Jayne Gackenbach, Ph.D., Independent clinical psychologist.

Field: Psychological dimensions of lucid dreaming.

Joyce McDougall, D.Ed., Independent psychoanalyst

Field: Psychoanalytic theory and practice in relation to dreams.

Kenneth Ring, Ph.D., Professor of Psychology, University of Connecticut.

Field: Psychological dimensions of near-death experiences.

Taklung Tsetrul Rinpoche

Field: Tibetan Buddhist dream yoga

Charles Taylor, Ph.D., Professor of Philosophy, McGill University.

Field: Contemporary notions of self and mind

THE ORGANIZATION

General Coordinator: Adam Engle, J.D., M.B.A. (Boulder, Colorado)

Scientific Coordinator: Francisco Varela, Ph.D. (Ecole Polytechnique, Paris)

Consultant and Interpreter: Alan Wallace, (Stanford University, California)

Interpreter: Geshe Thubten Jinpa, (Cambridge University, UK)

PROGRAM

MONDAY, OCTOBER 5

Morning Session

Overview: Experiencing the Mind Undone
Francisco Varela

Presentation: Neurobiology of Sleep
Michael Chase

This presentation is an introduction to the current understanding of sleeping and dreaming from the point of view of the underlying human biology and physiology. In fact, the physiology of sleep has been one of the oldest and most active fields of research in modern neuroscience. New phenomena such as paradoxical sleep, the circadian organization of sleeping cycles, and major mechanisms at the neurochemical and single neuron level have been elucidated in detail. Such material will constitute the scientific background for the ensuing discussion.

Afternoon Session

Discussion: Relationship between the neuroscience of sleep and the experience of falling asleep and dreaming. Methodological issues. Further exposition of specific sleep and dream physiological phenomena.

Additional Evening Session for Western Participants

Presentation: The Tibetan Tradition of Dream Yoga
Taklung Tsetrul Rinpoche

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 6

Morning Session

Philosophical Orientation : Western Views of the Self
Charles Taylor

Western science is grounded on fundamental notions about the nature of the self and its mental faculties. These notions are historical in nature and have encountered important challenges in recent times. Some basic guidelines to this philosophical background are essential for enriching the dialogue concerning the marginal states that are the theme of this conference.

Presentation: Psychoanalysis and Dreaming
Joyce McDougall

This presentation will introduce the point of view and extensive experience of a unique Western tradition of understanding the mind, which started with Freudian psychoanalysis and has continued to evolve to this day. At the center of this tradition is the discovery of the unconscious and the fragmentary nature of human experience. In this context, dreams have constituted from the very beginning a royal path to psychoanalytic theory and practice.

Afternoon Session

Discussion: Comparison of Tibetan Buddhist and psychoanalytic views of the mind and of the pragmatics of their respective practices. Introduction to the place of dreams and their role in the Tibetan tradition.

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 7

Morning Session

Presentation: Lucid Dreaming
Jayne Gackenbach

Recently there has been a resurgence of Western interest in the entire range of phenomena associated with lucid dreaming. While some of these studies examine the physiological correlates of lucid dreaming, the majority are concerned with its psychological, therapeutic and transpersonal dimensions. This presentation will introduce the basic ideas of lucid dreaming research.

Afternoon Session

Discussion: Comparative views of dream yoga and Western views on lucid dreaming. Comparative views on training and methods for lucid dreamers.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 8

Morning Session

Philosophical Orientation: Western Views of Death
Charles Taylor

Western culture is pervaded by fundamental attitudes towards death and the possibility of transcendence. Basic guidelines for this philosophical background are essential for the second main topic of the dialogue.

Presentation: Near-Death Experiences
Kenneth Ring

The experiences of coming close to death due to organic dysfunction and then being revived are characterized by a plethora of universal events which seem to address a deep-seated connection with a sense of transcendence and personal survival. The psychological and social studies on these discoveries will be introduced in this presentation.

Afternoon Session

Discussion: Tibetan views on dying and the tradition of Bardo teachings. Cross-cultural comparisons. Therapeutic values of near-death and dying teachings.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 9

Morning Session

Presentation: Clinical Studies on Comas and Epilepsies
Jerome Engel

In Western medicine, the condition known as epilepsy is often accompanied by exceptional physical and mental states which have been studied in great detail. Similarly, there is wealth of observations of patients suffering from coma, for example due to insulin deprivation. These observations are a relevant complement to the discussion of near-death and death.

Afternoon Session

Discussion: Comparison of Tibetan views of dying and the Bardo with Western clinical experience. The place of epilepsy in the Tibetan tradition. Concluding discussions and remarks.

ABOUT THE PARTICIPANTS

His Holiness the Dalai Lama

His Holiness the XIVth Dalai Lama, Tenzin Gyatso, is the spiritual and temporal leader of the Tibetan people. He was born on July 6, 1935 in a small village called Taktser in northeastern Tibet. Born to a peasant family, His Holiness was recognized at the age of two, in accordance with Tibetan tradition, as the reincarnation of his predecessor, the XIIIth Dalai Lama. The Dalai Lamas are manifestations of the Buddha of Compassion, who chose to reincarnate for the purpose of serving human beings. His Holiness has traveled extensively, speaking on subjects including universal responsibility, love, compassion and kindness. In 1989, His Holiness received the Nobel Peace Prize.

Michael H. Chase (USA, 1937) received his Ph.D. in Physiology from the University of California at Berkeley in 1966. He is a Professor of Neuroscience at the UCLA Medical School, and Director of Basic Sleep Research at the UCLA Brain Research Institute. Dr. Chase is President of the World Federation of Sleep Research Societies, and is on the editorial board of many professional journals such as *Sleep Research*. By the end of 1991, Dr. Chase had authored over 232 published research papers in professional journals such as *The Journal of Neuroscience*, *Sleep Research*, and *Brain Research*, covering many aspects of brain physiology, single cell recordings, and behavioral, anatomical, and psychopharmacological studies.

Jerome Engel Jr. (USA, 1938) received his M.D. in 1965 and his Ph.D. in Physiology in 1966, both from Stanford University. He is Professor of Neurology, Anatomy and Cell Biology at the UCLA Medical School and a member of the UCLA Brain Research Institute. He has been active in a number of professional societies, including President of the American Epilepsy Society and the

American EEG Society, as well as the editor of several professional journals such as *Advances in the Neurobiology of Epilepsy*, and *Journal of Clinical Neurophysiology*. He is editor of several volumes on epilepsy and clinical neuroscience, and recently authored *Seizures and Epilepsy* (Davis, 1989). Dr. Engel has contributed over 125 papers in professional journals such as *Epilepsy Research*, *Journal of Neurosurgery*, *Neurology*, *Electroencephalography and Clinical Neurophysiology*, and *Annals of Neurology*.

Jayne Gackenbach (USA, 1946) received her Ph.D. in Experimental Psychology from Virginia Commonwealth University in 1978. She spent over a decade as an Assistant and Associate Professor, primarily at the Department of Psychology, University of Northern Iowa. Dr. Gackenbach currently works independently in Edmonton, Alberta and is the managing director of the Lucidity Association. Dr. Gackenbach has edited several books including *Conscious Mind, Sleeping Brain: Perspectives on Lucid Dreaming* (Plenum Press, 1988), and the forthcoming *Higher States of Consciousness* (Plenum Press), and is the author of the popular *Control your Dreams* (Harper-Collins). She is the author of several dozen articles in professional journals such as *Journal of Social Psychology*, *Lucidity Letter*, *Journal of Mental Imagery*, and *Sleep Research*.

Joyce McDougall (New Zealand) received her D.Ed. from Otago University (New Zealand). She was trained in psychoanalysis in London and Paris. Since 1954, she has lived and practiced in Paris, where she is now the supervising and training analyst to the Paris Psychoanalytic Society and the Institute of Psychoanalysis. Dr. McDougall is a frequent contributor to a number of psychoanalytic books and journals in European languages, and the author of several books including *Plea for a Measure of Abnormality* (I.U.P., New York, 1980), *Theaters of the Mind* (Basic Books, 1985), and *Theaters of the Body: A Psychoanalytic View of Psychosomatic Phenomena* (W. Norton, 1989), all translated into many languages.

Kenneth Ring (USA, 1935) received his Ph.D. in Psychology from the University of Minnesota in 1963. Since then he has been an Assistant/Associate/Full Professor at the University of Connecticut. He is the founder and first President of the International Association for Near-death Studies. He is the author of widely read books such as *Life at Death* (Cowan and McCann, 1980), and *Heading toward Omega* (Morrow, 1984). He is also the author of several dozen articles in journals such as *Journal of Consulting Psychology*, *Theta*, *Anabiosis*, and *Journal of Transpersonal Psychology*.

Charles Taylor (Canada, 1931) received his Ph.D. in Philosophy from Oxford in 1961. Since then he has been an Assistant/Associate/Full Professor at McGill University, with various additional appointments such as Ecole Normale Supérieure (Paris), Princeton, Oxford and U.C. Berkeley. Author of several well-known books such as *The Explanation of Behaviour* (Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1964), *Hegel* (Cambridge, 1975), and *Sources of the Self* (Harvard, 1989). He is also a frequent contributor to several professional philosophical journals.

SCIENTIFIC COORDINATOR

Francisco J. Varela (Chile, 1946) received his Ph.D. in Biology from Harvard in 1970. Since then he has taught and conducted research in various universities such as the University of Colorado (Boulder), New York University, University of Chile and Max Planck Institute for Brain Research (Germany). He is currently Director of Research at CNRS in Paris. He is the author of over 120 articles on neuroscience and cognitive science in scientific periodicals as *Journal of Cell Biology*, *Journal of Theoretical Biology*, *Perception*, *Vision Research*, *Experimental Brain Research*, *Biological Cybernetics*, *Philosophy of Science*, *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* (USA) and *Nature*. He is the author of ten books, the most recent one being *The Embodied Mind: Cognitive Science and Human Experience* (with E. Thompson and E. Rosch, MIT Press, 1991, translated into eight languages).

INTERPRETERS

Thubten Jinpa (Tibet, 1959) received his monastic training at Zongkar Choede Monastery and at Ganden Monastic University in India, leading to his degree as Lharam Geshe in 1989, equivalent, in the Tibetan Monastic tradition, to a Doctorate in Divinity. Since 1986, he has been the principal translator to H.H. the Dalai Lama on philosophy and religion. In 1989, he joined Kings College of Cambridge University to study Western philosophy, and received his honors in 1992. His published works include translations of the Dalai Lama's texts on Buddhist thought and practice, and papers on topics such as Buddhist perspectives on the nature of philosophy, a comparative study of Nietzschean perspectivism and the philosophy of emptiness, and the role of subjectivity in Tibetan Vajrayana art.

B. Alan Wallace (USA, 1950) is a Ph.D. candidate in the Dept. of Religious Studies at Stanford. He received his B.A. from Amherst in 1987 in Physics and Philosophy. From 1971 to 1979 he trained intensively in Dharamsala and Switzerland in the Tibetan Buddhist tradition. Mr. Wallace is the author of various articles on the epistemology of science and religion and the author of *Choosing Reality: A Contemplative View of Physics and the Mind* (New Science Library, Shambhala Publications, Boston, 1989). He has other books in print on Tibetan Buddhism, and is also the translator/commentator of several Tibetan works such as *Transcendent Wisdom: A Commentary on the Ninth Chapter of Shantideva's Guide to the Bodhisattva Way of Life*, H.H. The Dalai Lama (Snow Lion Publications, Ithaca, 1988).

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Clifford Saron, Sausalito

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*"This is my simple religion.
There is no need for temples; no need for complicated philosophy.
Our own brain, our own heart is our temple;
the philosophy is kindness."*

His Holiness The Dalai Lama
