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TRANSLATION & TRANSMISSION

ཐུགས་སྐྱོལ་

OCTOBER 2-5, 2014

KEYSTONE, COLORADO, USA

Plenary Session | ROOM: CASTLE PEAK | 2:00pm, October 4, 2014

Scholars, Translators, Practitioners: What is our Role in Transmission?

with Willa Miller, Alex Berzin, Larry Mermelstein, Richard Barron,
Karl Brunnhölzl, Christian Bernert



Willa Miller
(Harvard University)

L. Willa Miller, PhD is a Buddhist teacher, and scholar. She has practiced Buddhism since 1980, eventually training in both monastic and academic contexts. She is the founder and spiritual director of Natural Dharma Fellowship in Boston and its retreat center Wonderwell Mountain Refuge in Springfield, NH, and is also currently Visiting Lecturer on Buddhist Ministry at Harvard Divinity School. She has been an interpreter and translator in Dharma contexts for many years. Her books include *Essence of Ambrosia* (a translation of Taranatha's lam rim), and *The Arts of Contemplative Care* (Wisdom Publications). She has also written for *Buddhadharma*, *Journal of the International Association for Buddhist Studies* and other journals. She has completed two three-year retreats. www.naturaldharma.org

Willa Miller's Presentation

Since Feeling is First

By E.E. Cummings

since feeling is first
who pays any attention
to the syntax of things
will never wholly kiss you;
wholly to be a fool
while Spring is in the world
my blood approves,
and kisses are a better fate than wisdom
lady I swear by all flowers. Don't cry—the best gesture of my bring is less than
your eyelid's flutter which says
we are for each other: then
laugh, leaning back in my arms

for life's not a paragraph
And death I think is no parentheses.

Four “alt” dimensions of meaning
(for translation reflection)

I. Meaning is carried in the gaps (vs. content alone)

Silence plays the irreducible role of that that bears and haunts language, outside and against which alone language can emerge.

--Jacques Derrida

II. Meaning is contingent (vs. independent)

- a. Meaning is contingent on intertextuality
- b. Meaning is contingent on culture
- c. Meaning is contingent on time (meanings evolve)

III. Meaning is experiential (vs. understood)

Analyses forget (which is only normal, since they are hermeneutics based on the exclusive search for the signified) the formidable underside of writing: bliss: Bliss, which can erupt across the centuries out of certain texts that were nonetheless written to the glory of the dreariest, of the most sinister philosophy.

--Roland Barthes, *The Pleasure of the Text*

IV. Meaning is Embodied (vs. solely cognitive)

Meaning is embodied. It arises through embodied organism-environment interactions in which significant patterns are marked within the flow of experience...Meaning involves the blending of the conceptual, structural, and formal dimension on the one hand and the pre-conceptual, non-formal, felt dimensions on the other. Meaning resides in neither of these dimensions of experience alone, but only in their ongoing connectedness and inter-animation.

--Mark Johnson (Philosopher, University of Chicago)

The Meaning of the Body: Aesthetics of Human Understanding

Offering Prayer of the Three Gestures (from
Karma Kam tshang Chod)

Every single form that appears
In all the worlds of the universe
I offer as the gesture of sacred Body.
Grant us the power of eternal Form.

Every single sound that is heard
In all the worlds of the universe
I offer as the gesture of sacred Speech.
Grant us the power of infinite Speech.

Every single thought in the minds
In all the worlds of the universe
I offer as the gesture of sacred Mind.
Grant us the power of wisdom Mind.

All of the pain and happiness
In all the worlds of the universe
I offer as the eight auspicious signs.
If there's joy, I'll give it all away.
If there's pain, I'll gladly take the load.
May joy spread throughout the entire world.
May the world's well of pain run dry.

སྟོང་གསུམ་རབ་འབྱམ་འཇིག་རྟེན་ཐམས་ཅད་དུ
གཟུགས་སུ་སྒྲང་བ་ཐམས་ཅད་ཀུན
ལུས་ཀྱི་ཕུག་རྒྱས་མཚོན་པར་འབྲུལ
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བདེ་ན་བདེ་བ་ཚོགས་སུ་སབསྟོ།
སྐྱལ་ན་སྐྱལ་བསྐྱལ་བདག་གི་བཀྲར།
བདེ་བ་ཚོན་པོ་ནམ་མཁར་ཁྱབ་པར་ཤོག
འཁོར་བ་སྐྱལ་བསྐྱལ་གྱི་རྒྱ་མཚོ་སྐྱེམ་པར་ཤོག