



THE DALAI LAMA

A SPECIAL MESSAGE FOR VAJRA SKY OVER TIBET

Tibetan civilisation has a long history, in the course of which it has assimilated many influences. It forms a distinct part of the world's precious common heritage. Humanity would be the poorer if it were to be lost.

For more than a thousand years Tibetans have been custodians of the full range of the Buddha's teachings. These have been analysed, refined and, most important of all, put into practice, becoming the mainstay of Tibetan culture. In due course, the influence of Tibetan culture spread throughout Central Asia and the Himalayan regions. Temples and monasteries were established in these places and a constant stream of monks were made welcome in Tibet's religious and medical institutions. Many of these people, having completed their studies, would return to their homelands to teach and share what they had learned.

Over the last five decades and more, since the Communist Chinese took control of our country, the old ways have changed. Our religion and ancient cultural traditions have become targets for destruction. Our institutions, literature, artifacts and even individual proponents of our culture have come under attack. Those of us in exile, therefore, have had a responsibility to preserve what we could, not only for the benefit of our brothers and sisters who remain in Tibet, but also for the world at large.

John Bush, who has taken a long interest in our traditions, has created this full length documentary of pilgrimage to Central Tibet, bearing witness to the enduring faith there, that he has entitled *Vajra Sky - Over Tibet*. I am grateful to him for his dedication to this project to raise awareness of the Vajrayana Buddhist tradition of Tibet as well as the current restraints on religious freedom there. I firmly believe that as people become more aware of the reality of the situation in Tibet, they will naturally lend their support to our efforts to resume a dialogue with the Chinese authorities aimed at improving the lot of Tibetans in their homeland. I wish this film every success.

THE DALAI LAMA
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