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CHÖ DHARMA



Stacks of Tibetan Pechas/ Texts. Tibet July 2007.
Texts are considered the repository of dharma or truth.
Photo courtesy of George Chialtis.

Dharma is a Sanskrit word that is translated into Tibetan as *chö*. The term has many meanings, but literally means "carrying" or "holding."

Dharma is a central notion of Buddhism--the second of the Three Jewels of Refuge. In a general way, *chö* refers to the great law of underlying our world, above all the law of karmically determined rebirth. The term existed before the birth of the historical Buddha. *Chö* more specifically refers to the **teaching of the historical Buddha**, who both recognized and reformulated this "law." He expounded the dharma in several cycles of teachings, covering topics such as the Four Noble Truths, the Eightfold Path, Bodhicitta, and tantric subjects and meditations.