

FIVE-PART MAHAMUDRA
BY
JIGTEN SUMGON



BY TONY DUFF

Five-Part Mahamudra by Jigten Sumgon

The Five-Part Mahamudra Practice with Commentary by Jigten Sumgon
and Zhamar Konchog Yanlag



By Tony Duff
• Padma Karpo Translations •
Kindle Edition

Copyright © 2008 Tony Duff. All rights reserved. No portion of this book may be reproduced in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photography, recording, or by any information storage or retrieval system or technologies now known or later developed, without permission in writing from the publisher.

First edition 10th June, 2008

Produced and Published by
Padma Karpo Translation Committee
P.O. Box 4957
Kathmandu
NEPAL

Committee members for this book: translation and composition, Lama Tony Duff; design, Christopher Duff.

Web-site and e-mail contact through:
<http://www.pktc.org/pktc>
or search Padma Karpo Translation Committee on the web.

Contents

1. Preface
2. Introduction
3. The Source: Gampopa's Instruction to Phagmo Drupa That Began the Five-Part Mahāmudrā
4. The Teaching: *A Written Instruction Coming from the Throphu Kagyu on the Five-Part Mahāmudrā* by The Translator from Throphu, Jampay Pal
5. The Teaching: Phagmo Drupa's instructions transmitted by the Drigung Kagyu and Karma Kagyu *The Source of the Jewels of Experience and Realization, The Ocean-Like Instructions on the Five Parts*. The instructions by Jigten Sumgon arranged and commented on by Zhamar Konchog Yanlag
6. Glossary
7. About Padma Karpo Translation Committee, the Author, and supports for study
8. Notes

Preface

Dear Readers,

We are actively engaged in producing Kindle versions of all of our titles. We would like to contact you about new Kindle books and other similar productions, but Amazon does not allow a way for us to communicate with you as a purchaser of our Kindle books. Therefore we encourage you to register with us by [sending an email to us at PKTC](mailto:pktcandtcc@pktc.org) (pktcandtcc@pktc.org) to subscribe to our mailing list. You can also [visit our web-site](#) to see the full range of our publications.

Please note that there are two other Kindle Books on Five-Part Mahamudra that go with this book. They contain commentaries on Five-Part Mahamudra by the eighth Situ Rinpoche of the Karma Kagyu and Jigten Sumgon, founder of the Drigung Kagyu. It will be helpful to read them in conjunction with this book. Each one deals with the topic in an entirely different way. There is also a paper book available from PKTC and its distributors called “Gampopa’s Mahamudra” which not only contains all three of these texts but includes a major commentary on Jigten Sumgon’s text by the late Kagyu master Tenga Rinpoche of Bengchen Monastery; his commentary enhances the matter even further.

Please *do not* purchase our Kindle books, read them, then return them for a refund! The translations in the books take a long time to make and the books are not easy to produce. If you read and return for a refund to suit yourself, you create great difficulties for us which adversely affects our ability to come out with more books. We thank you for your consideration on this point.

Introduction

“Five-Part Mahāmudrā” is a specific way of practising Mahāmudrā that is used in the Kagyu lineage of Tibetan Buddhism. It was first taught by Gampopa to his disciples and since then has become one of the main ways that Mahāmudrā is practised in the Kagyu lineage. This kindle book contains two texts on the subject by masters of the Kagyu lineage, as explained later in the introduction. The main text is by the Zhamar Konchog Yanlag of the Karma Kagyu lineage but is really a commentary on the teaching given by Jigten Sumgon, the founder of the Drigung Kagyu tradition of Tibetan Buddhism, to his disciples. That this is really Jigten Sumgon’s teaching is emphasized here because he received the teaching directly from his guru, Phagmo Drupa, who received it from Gampopa and practised it to completion. In other words, it is a very early presentation of the teaching that tells us how the teaching was originally given and practised.

This book is extracted from a larger book with a complete presentation of the Five-Part Mahāmudrā, including translations of various other texts. The book is readily available on paper under the title “Gampopa’s Five Part Mahāmudrā, The Five-part Mahamudra Practice Taught to Phagmo Drupa By Gampopa”, authored by Tony Duff and published by PKTC June 1008, ISBN 978-9937-2-0607-5.

1. The Source of the Teaching

The Kagyu lineage traces itself back to the Indian siddha Tailopa⁽¹⁾. His instructions on the practice of the vajra vehicle, including the instructions on Mahāmudrā, went successively to Nāropa in India and then to Marpa, Milarepa, and Gampopa in Tibet all of whom are regarded as the early masters of the lineage.

Gampopa [1079-1153 C.E.] represents a pivotal point in the spread of the Kagyu system of teaching and practice. Before him, there had been very little in the way of organized institutions and very little of the teaching had been written down. Starting in his time, institutions developed and the teachings began to be recorded in writing. Gampopa and his gurus in many ways are like the solid trunk of a tree that has not branched out yet. Gampopa is the point on the trunk where myriads of branches appear and the whole turns into a great and luxurious tree.

Gampopa had three heart sons of the secret mantra teachings called “The Three Men from Kham”. One was “Grey-Hair” who later became known as the first Karmapa, Dusum Khyenpa. He became the source of the Karma Kamtsang—also known as Karma Kagyu—lineage, which is one of the four lineages that developed directly from Gampopa called the Four Greater Lineages of the Kagyu. Another one was Khampa Dorgyal who was also known as Phagmo Drupa. He became the source of the Phagdru⁽²⁾ Kagyu lineage, another one of the Four Greater Lineages. Eight of his heart disciples became the sources of nearly all the other Kagyu lineages, called the Eight Lesser Lineages, of the Kagyu. The third one was Saltong Shogom whose incarnations led a recluse’s life for many generations and who was not widely known of in Tibet; he did not give rise to any lineage—his incarnations have become known in recent times as Traleg Rinpoche.

On at least one occasion that is recorded but most likely on many occasions, Gampopa gave instructions on how to practise Mahāmudrā to his heart disciple Phagmo Drupa in a five-part format. Phagmo Drupa used this five-part format as the framework for his successful practice of Mahāmudrā.

Phagmo Drupa [1110–1170] was already famous as a great teacher and highly accomplished yogin before he came to Gampopa. However, after gaining great attainment under Gampopa’s care, he became a very famous teacher, with many disciples. He is well-known for teaching to vast assemblies and in at least one of them, said to contain five thousand practitioners of the vajra vehicle, taught the complete instructions of Mahāmudrā in the five-part format that Gampopa had given him and which he had successfully used for his own practice. This teaching, which was heard, practised, and passed on by his disciples, became a specific method for doing Mahāmudrā practice and over time become known as “Five-Part Mahāmudrā” or simply, “The Five-Parts”.

The Five-Part instructions went to all of Phagdru’s main disciples and so became a central part of the Eight Lesser lineages of the Kagyu—Drigung, Taklung, Throphu, Drukpa, Martshang, Yelpa, Yazang, and Shugseb—that developed because of them. The teaching also went from them into the Four Greater Lineages—Karma, Barom, Tshalpa, and Phagdru. For example, it went from the founder of the Drigung Kagyu, Jigten Sumgon, into the Karma Kagyu where it was transmitted by the lineage holders of that lineage. In this way, this particular teaching called “The Five-Part Mahāmudrā”

became one of the main ways that the Mahāmudrā teaching was transmitted in Kagyu lineages after Gampopa.

2. The Mahamudra Teaching

2.1. The Reality Called Mahamudra

What is Mahamudra? It is the name for reality used by a particular group of tantric practitioners in ancient India. It sounds exotic but means means “reality”, no more and no less.

The word “Mahamudra” is often translated as Great Seal and that is not wrong, but it does not convey the immediate, overarching sense of reality which is conveyed by the original term in Indian language. The *Illuminator Tibetan-English Dictionary* has a clear explanation of the word:

Ultimate reality in the tantric teachings that first came to Tibet was called Mahā Ati. This was translated in Tibetan as “rdzogs pa chen po” and translates into English as Great Completion. In the tantric teachings that came to Tibet in the later spread of dharma, ultimate reality was called Mahamudra. This was translated into Tibetan as “phyag rgya chen po”—in Tibetan, “phyag rgya” is the official translation equivalent for the Sanskrit “mudrā” and “chen po” for the Sanskrit “mahā”—and this is commonly translated into English as “Great Seal”.

The translation “Great Seal” is correct. However, the term really has the sense in Indian language of “The Great Stamp” or even better, “The Great Imprint”. In Tibetan, a “phyag rgya” refers to the kind of seal or stamp that is impressed upon something, like a wax seal used to seal a letter or a postage stamp that will be placed on a letter. These seals are more than just a seal, they are an *imprint* that both exists upon something and conveys some meaning⁽⁷⁾. Phenomena, just by being phenomena, are automatically subject to reality. They are imprinted with that reality. And it is not just one phenomenon or some phenomena that are connected with and hence imprinted with fundamental reality, rather, every phenomenon that there is necessarily is connected with and hence imprinted with that fundamental reality. Therefore the imprint, stamp, or seal of ultimate reality that phenomena bear is not just any imprint but is the one, “great” imprint that stamps itself on everything. So, when the term Mahamudra is used, it actually conveys the meaning “the great imprint, the one that all phenomena bear”. It is the imprint of ultimate reality that everything is stamped with, choicelessly.

The tradition explains the term further. The commentators of the tradition break the term “phyag rgya” down into “phyag” and “rgya” which they connect with “mu” and “drā” respectively of the original Sanskrit “mudrā”. Then the two are explained to mean wisdom and emptiness—and sometimes appearance and emptiness—respectively. The “chen po” is still correlated with “mahā” but is now explained as meaning that the two, wisdom and emptiness or appearance and emptiness are, and have always been, inseparable. However, this detailed explanation has to be kept within the basic meaning of the term, which is, if we say it really in English, “The Great Seal of Reality, which is that all phenomena inevitably are stamped by the fact of wisdom and emptiness inseparable”.

Why is reality equated with wisdom and emptiness inseparable and why is that equated with appearance and emptiness inseparable? At root, the things of the average person's world seem to be solid, permanent, and partless. That is the way that mind⁽⁸⁾ takes them to be. When one looks into this apparent solidity, and so forth, the things that appeared to be that way suddenly disappear. They were just fictions being invented by mind that was working in a mistaken kind of way. Reality does not have these fictions in it, for reality is what is, not a mistaken take on it. The absence of these things in reality is called "emptiness". However, there is still something about our existence that presents itself to us. When all the mistaken perceptions are removed, there is still a mind that knows. This kind of mind does not know in the way that the mistaken mind does; it operates in a fundamentally different way. The Buddha simply called this kind of mind "jñāna" which means "knowing" no more and no less. This is mostly translated as "wisdom" and that is the term used for it in this book. In other words, in reality, any phenomenon that could appear is always empty, absent of the mistaken form, at root. These phenomena do not exist in a vacuum, they are actually the things known by the un-mistaken type of mind, wisdom. So all phenomena are actually the appearances that arise in the wisdom that knows them and, as they arise in that wisdom, always lack the mistaken solidity, and so forth, that mistaken mind sees them to have. It is not that the phenomena arise and are then known by the wisdom, rather, they arise as part of the energy of wisdom itself. Thus all phenomena are, you can say, wisdom and emptiness inseparable or appearance and emptiness inseparable; when understood that way, the meaning is the same.

The yogic tradition of ancient India that understood reality in this way called it Mahamudra, the great stamp of reality with which all phenomena are always stamped, and their teaching was that that reality is wisdom and emptiness in inseparable unity.

2.2. The Practice of Mahamudra

It should be clear from the foregoing that the term Mahāmudrā is a term for reality. Beings need a practice to get back to that reality and the tantric systems that came from India to Tibet contained a number of different practices for that purpose. The tantric teachings that came into the Kagyu tradition included several: the teaching of Mahāmudrā itself, the teachings of deity practices of various sorts, and the yogic teachings summed up by Nāropa into what were called "The Six Teachings of Nāropa"—Fierce Heat, Illusory Body, Dreaming, Luminosity, Transference, and Intermediate State. The Mahāmudrā teaching is directly related to the practice called "Luminosity" contained in the six teachings of Nāropa. The practice of Mahāmudrā is also contained in a teaching called "Sahajayoga" or "Co-emergence Yoga". This latter name is mostly seen in English these days as "Co-emergent Union" but there is a point here: Mahāmudrā is a term for reality whereas Luminosity and Co-emergence Yoga are names of the practice of that reality. Phagmo Drupa once asked Gampopa about the two:

What difference is there, if any, between Mahāmudrā and Co-emergence Yoga?

Gampopa's reply made it very clear⁽⁶⁾:

In other words, Mahāmudrā is a timeless reality that is always present, whereas Co-emergence Yoga is a practice that is done at various times and time after time, of

uniting non-reality with reality, where reality is expressed above as the four different aspects of a buddha's enlightenment.

How did Gampopa see the teaching and practice of Mahāmudrā in relation to the other teachings and practices of reality that were handed down to him? His guru, Milarepa, had put strong emphasis on Fierce Heat, so that became a particularly important teaching in the Kagyu from Milarepa's time onwards. The writings in the collected works of Gampopa show that he did teach all of the six teachings of Nāropa but preferred to guide his students with the practice of Fierce Heat mixed with Mahāmudrā where possible and, where not possible, did teach the path of Mahāmudrā alone as his main way of leading disciples. This is very clear from another interchange between Phagmo Drupa and Gampopa⁽⁷⁾. Phagmo Drupa asked,

In terms of practising to gain experience, which is the most profound oral instruction?⁽⁸⁾

Gampopa replied by listing what he had heard other people say to be the most profound instruction for practice. He started with the Kadampa's mind training and went through several others, mentioned deity practice, then arrived at what his guru Milarepa had said. Having mentioned them all, he then answered the question;

... heard Guru Mila say, "The prana practice of Fierce Heat is the profound meditation".

Adding it all up, for any given person, the dharma in which a person develops certainty is the profound one. So, for me, if you devote yourself to the guru and meditate on pairing Fierce Heat with Mahāmudrā and so train your mind in the enlightenment mind⁽⁹⁾, since both your own and others' aims will happen at the same time because of it, this is the profound one.

Phagmo Drupa queried,

Well then, do you prefer to lead people through Fierce Heat to start with or through Mahāmudrā?

The reply came,

It depends on the person's type. Younger people with good physical elements and channels who are instructed in and meditate on Fierce Heat itself will quickly develop the signs of warmth. Then, if they are given Mahāmudrā, experience and realization will quickly dawn. For older people who are in the category of not being able to tune the winds, I prefer to give Mahāmudrā or Co-emergence Yoga, though there is the possibility that, if Mahāmudrā is not produced within the mindstream, they might fall into bad activities and develop a very jaded and problematic character.

These interchanges are from an early, possibly initial, meeting between Gampopa and Phagmo Drupa. Phagmo Drupa asked a lot of questions of Gampopa, obviously to get a sense of Gampopa's style and knowledge. Later, after the required phase of testing the prospective guru, Phagmo Drupa decided to become a disciple of Gampopa.

At one point Phagmo Drupa returned to Gampopa, who was staying in his hermitage in Gampo Valley at the time, and, with some other yogins, asked him for an introduction to the nature of mind⁽¹⁰⁾. This time he was asking for the actual instructions needed for the practice. Gampopa gave a very pithy answer that the reality of mind is none other than the isness of a buddha's mind and went on to say that, if you want to get to that state of being, then you need to go to an isolated place and practice. He then mentioned the things to do in an actual session of practice which came as a sequence of things to do prior to the actual practice of Mahāmudrā and followed that with an extensive explanation of Mahāmudrā practice itself, the Co-emergent Yoga, as passed down through Tailo, Nāro, and so on. In this, he instructed Phagmo Drupa and the others to go to an isolated place suitable for the practice and then explained how to do the sessions of the practice of Mahāmudrā in a number of parts. This interchange is the actual source of the whole Five-Part Mahāmudrā teaching that has become a mainstay of Kagyu practice. Thus it is presented as the opening section of the book on [this page](#).

2.3. The Specific Practice of Mahamudra Done in Five Parts

Luminosity of the Six Teachings of Nāropa and Co-emergence Yoga are distinct teachings of Mahāmudrā that were part of the transmission of the tantric teachings that came from India to Tibet. Five-Part Mahāmudrā was not another teaching that was transmitted with them. Rather, Five-Part Mahāmudrā is Gampopa's instruction on how to do an effective session of Mahāmudrā practice. Gampopa gave an explanation of Mahāmudrā following the co-emergence system that came down through Śhāntipa to Tailopa and thence down to Gampopa as explained before but it could have been any other instruction on Mahāmudrā. He then instructed his disciples to do the practice of Mahāmudrā in sessions with five different parts to them, so that they could conduct a complete and effective session of Mahāmudrā practice.

Although these instructions originated with Gampopa, Phagmo Drupa was the heart disciple who heard and practised the five-part instruction and gained realization through it. Historically, Phagmo Drupa was the one who taught this style of practice to others and who became well known in the Kagyu as the source of this teaching.

Phagmo Drupa summed up the five parts and taught them to one large congregation in these words:

First, meditate on enlightenment mind;
Meditate on the yidam deity;
Meditate on the holy guru;
Meditate on Mahāmudrā;
Afterwards, seal it with dedication.

Thus, a session of Five-Part Mahāmudrā begins with the development of enlightenment mind. This, which necessarily includes taking refuge, means that the essential points of the practice of the Lesser and Great Vehicles are included in a session. It is followed by meditation on oneself as the personal deity, which means that the development stage practice of secret mantra is fully included in the session. That is followed by guru-yoga, unification with the guru's enlightened being, which means that a session includes one the greatest key points of secret mantra, devotion to the guru. It arouses

and intensifies devotion, which is one of the main forces behind actually being able to join with the guru's being and experience the reality of Mahāmudrā because of it. It gives the greatest possibility that the next part, which is the practice of Mahāmudrā itself, will be effective. The fourth part is the main practice, Mahāmudrā. Mahāmudrā corresponds to the completion stage of practice of secret mantra so, by practising Mahāmudrā, both development and completion stages of secret mantra are included in the session. Once that has been done, the session needs to be sealed and closed properly, which is done according to the Buddha's general instructions for all types of meditation, with dedication. In that way, the actual practice of Mahāmudrā, which is one of the core teachings of the Kagyu, is couched within a framework of other practices that create the best environment for doing the practice, which is the point of Five-Part Mahāmudrā.

3. The Texts Presented Here

The book starts out with the exchange between Gampopa and Phagdrup that resulted in the teaching called Five-Part Mahāmudrā. It comes from a text called *The Questions of Phagmo Drupa*, which is one of the texts preserved within Gampopa's Collected Works. The entire text is available in a publication called *Gampopa Teaches Essence Mahamudra* published by Padma Karpo Translation Committee in 2012. That is followed by a very early text on Five-Part Mahamudra written by one of Phagmo Drupa's disciples, the translator from Throphu. And that is followed by followed by the main text in this book, a text on Five-Part Mahamudra by the Jigten Sumgon, who was a direct disciple of Phagmo Drupa and the founder of the Drigung Kagyu tradition. His text is contained within a commentary by the well-known Karma Kagyu author, Zhamar Kongchog Yanlag.

3.1. An Early Text From the Throphu Kagyu

The Translator from Throphu, Nub Jampay Pal [1173–1225] was a direct disciple of Phagmo Drupa whose teachings became the source of the Throphu Kagyu tradition which is one of the Eight Lesser Lineages of the Kagyu.

After Nub Jampay Pal left Phagmo Drupa, he went and settled in Throphu, a place in Tsang, and established a monastery there. His talks were written down and one of them, called *One Hundred Foremost instructions*⁽¹¹⁾, contained the teaching on the Five-Part Mahāmudrā that he had heard directly from Phagmo Drupa.

The Throphu Kagyu was a very small lineage and its teachings mostly ended up in other Kagyu lineages. As time went by, these teachings were either lost or in danger of being lost. In the mid-nineteenth century, Jamgon Kongtrul Lodro Thaye went around Tibet collecting teachings that were in danger of being lost and published them in a major collection called *The Treasury of Oral Instructions*. The Throphu Five-Part Mahāmudrā teaching mentioned above was included under the name “A Written Instruction Coming from the Throphu Kagyu on the Five-Part Mahāmudrā”. The original text was probably just entitled “Five-Part Mahāmudrā” but the name would have been changed to indicate where the text came from, a standard procedure in Tibetan literature.

The original teaching of Nub Jampay Pal was given and recorded nearly one thousand years ago, in the 1100's, right at the beginning of the Kagyu lineage. The text is short, with a very clear statement of the five parts. Importantly, it has the pithy, direct, no-frills presentation of Phagmo Drupa's original teaching which shows the style of the early Kagyu—the energy and flavour of a Kagyu yogin, doing nothing but a Kagyu yogin's practice comes through very clearly.

The text here gives a sense of the pithiness of the instructions that were passed on by Phagmo Drupa to his disciples and the early, very down-to-earth Kagyu style. One message that comes through very clearly is that these are instructions for practice, which is very much a hallmark of the Kagyu lineage. As the centuries went by in Tibet, earlier instructions that were often very simple in content became embellished with the frills of words and explanations. The instructions in this text do not have that

kind of elaboration. Instead, they just show the basic message of what is to be practised.

3.2. A Text Based on the Teachings of the Drigung Kagyu

A stronger lineage of the Five-Part Mahāmudrā teaching came through Phagmo Drupa’s heart-disciple Rinchen Pal [1143–1217] who also became very famous in Tibet for his practice and realization. Rinchen Pal was in the large assembly mentioned earlier that received the five part instruction from Phagmo Drupa. All the stories about him say that he practised these and all the other instructions received from his guru to the point of total proficiency and attained great realization of the Buddha’s teachings. After doing so, he established his seat in the place called Drigung. The lineage that developed from him was thus called the Drigung Kagyu and it is another of the Eight Lesser Lineages of the Kagyu. After attaining realization, he became widely known as Jigten Sumgon “The Guardian of the Three Worlds” and was referred to as the Drigung Kyobpa, “Protector of the Drigung”.

Drigung Kyobpa transmitted Phagmo Drupa’s teaching of the Five-Part Mahāmudrā verbally to others and at that time added further structure to it. Specifically, he added information on the key points associated with each of the five parts which became known as the “Ten Dharmas, Three Dharmas”. The prefatory material of the text included here and based on this transmission, *The Source of the Jewels of Experience and Realization, The Ocean-like Instructions of the Five Parts*, says,

The Drigungpa ... for each [of the five] parts accomplished the [key] points [of the practice] and pacified the obstacles both temporary and ultimate, and obtained, in full, every one of the supreme and ordinary qualities [of accomplishment in the vajra vehicle]. Thus he came to full knowledge of each [of the five] parts. He then showed every one of all the profound and the vast instructions as its meaning and also showed the “Ten Dharmas, Three Dharmas” as its points ...

In other words he transmitted the meaning of all the instructions of his guru as the teaching on the five parts and then, on top of that, since he had personally accomplished the key points associated with the practice, he taught these points of the practice in what became known as “The Ten Dharmas, Three Dharmas”.

The Drigung Kyobpa’s specific way of presenting the Five-Part Mahāmudrā stayed with the Drigung Kagyu but also found its way into the other greater Kagyu lineages. In particular, it became a part of the Karma Kagyu lineage. The fifth Zhamar of that lineage, Konchog Yanlag [1525–1583], who was also known by the epithet “Subject of the Jewels”, composed a text as a commentary to the Five-Part Mahāmudrā as transmitted via the Drigung Kyobpa. His commentary consists of a preface followed by five sections of instructions, one for each of the five parts. The preface quotes Phagmo Drupa’s words as the basis for the teaching. The instructions for each section were sometimes written by himself but in most cases were assembled from the writings of his predecessors Zhamarpa II Kacho Wangpo and Zhamarpa IV Chokyi Drakpa, both of whom were prolific authors. Then these instructions for each section were crowned with a long quote from Drigung Kyobpa that starts with the key points of the topic, called the Ten Dharmas, Three Dharmas, and ends with verses from Phagmo Drupa. As it says in the colophon,

... the one called “Subject of the Jewels” put together this expression of just the important parts of the words of the Protector of Beings, Phagmo Drupa, the words of the Protector of the Three Worlds, Drigungpa, the writings of Glorious Khachopa “Introduction to One’s Own Mind”, and the Chokyi Drakpa Yeshe Palzangpo’s, “Instructions on the Five Parts” ...

This text was also included in *The Treasury of Oral Instructions* compiled by Jamgon Kongtrul.

Drigung Kyobpa’s teaching in this text is very pithy and again reflects the no-nonsense, get-down-to-it style of the early Kagyu. The commentary to it by Zhamarpa is more sophisticated in its presentation, but it still has a strong sense of practice lineage, which is not surprising given that the author, Zhamar Konchog Yanlag, was very well known for his excellent practice.

A complete, modern-day commentary to this text was given by Tenga Rinpoche of Bengchen Monastery. His commentary is available in the book “Gampopa’s Five Part Mahāmudrā, The Five-part Mahamudra Practice Taught to Phagmo Drupa By Gampopa”, authored by Tony Duff and published by PKTC June 1008, ISBN 978-9937-2-0607-5.

Tony Duff,
Swayambunath,
Nepal,
18th May 2008

—...—

The Source:
Gampopa's Instruction to Phagmo Drupa That Began
the Five-part Mahamudra Teaching

—...—



Gampopa



Phagmo Drupa

Excerpt from “The Questions of Phagmo Drupa And Replies of Gampopa”

Phagmo Drupa offered,

Homage to you, precious guru. Guru Jewel, I have fully investigated both saṃsāra and nirvāṇa and request you to give me an introduction to dharmatā⁽¹²⁾.

The guru said,

We say, “The two, buddhas and sentient beings”, so what does that mean? In mind, there are both rigpa and not rigpa⁽¹³⁾; these are present as recognizing rigpa and not recognizing it. If rigpa is recognized, it is called “buddha” so rigpa is to be introduced as the dharmatā⁽¹⁴⁾.”

You go to mountainous areas and so on, congenial places where disenchantment can be produced and experience can develop. There you arouse the mind⁽¹⁵⁾ thinking, “For the purposes of sentient beings, I will attain buddhahood”. You meditate on your body as the deity⁽¹⁶⁾. You meditate on the guru over your crown⁽¹⁷⁾. Then, not letting your mind be spoiled with thoughts, not altering this mind—because it is nothing whatsoever—in any way at all, set yourself in clarity which is pure, vividly present, clean-clear, wide-awake! ...⁽¹⁸⁾

—...—

The Teaching:

The Instructions of Phagmo Drupa as Transmitted by The Translator of Throphu, Jampay Pal

—...—

A Written Instruction Coming from the Throphu Kagyu on the Five-Part Mahamudra

I prostrate to the holy gurus⁽¹⁹⁾.

The introduction to the Mahāmudrā, the core of the enlightened mind of the great guru Nāropa, in five parts is as follows:

1. Arousing the mind for supreme enlightenment.
2. Meditating on guru-yoga.
3. Meditating on the pride of the yidam deity.
4. Introducing⁽²⁰⁾ mindness⁽²¹⁾ as buddha.
5. Dedicating the roots of merit to complete enlightenment.

1) With very strong loving kindness and compassion, you should meditate while repeating from your heart three times the arousing of both aspiring and entering enlightenment mind⁽²²⁾.

2) During the daytime at the crown of your head and during the night-time in your heart, visualise on a three-fold seat of lion throne, lotus, and moon one atop the other your root guru with his hands in equipoise mudrā and arouse the recognition that he is buddha. Supplicate him intensely.

3) Arouse the pride of your body with its maṇḍala of channels being the yidam deity. You should do one hundred and eight or so recitations⁽²³⁾.

4) i) Introducing the un-fabricated as the innate. Set the body in the postures of meditation and then your mind, put together with that, should be left unfabricated⁽²⁴⁾. Rest at ease, rest in stillness, rest in open evenness. Remove the obstacles of the four points of straying and the three deviations. Sinking, agitation, and mental doings put like that into dawning of appearances is the removal, via the condition of visual forms and sounds, of obstructions to wisdom waking itself up⁽²⁵⁾.

ii) Introducing discursive thought as luminosity. Within that state⁽²⁶⁾, some thought will arise⁽²⁷⁾. Whatever arises, you look at it directly and by doing so see that is nothing to be looked at, and in just that, it becomes self-liberated. Thereby, the thought itself put into dawning of appearances by the conditions of various objects is the activity, via the condition of visual forms and sounds, of wisdom waking itself up. The discovery by looking directly that there is nothing to be looked at is the functioning of the activity of wisdom itself looking at itself to know its own face.

5) The three preliminary parts are the accumulation of merit. The fourth, main part is the accumulation of wisdom. Thus there are the two accumulations giving rise to the two fruitions of wakefulness and expansion, buddhahood⁽²⁸⁾. Thus dedication is to be done⁽²⁸⁾ according to that, the way in which they

arise⁽²⁹⁾, saying this three times,

By these roots of merit of mine,

May buddhahood be accomplished for the sake of migrators⁽³⁰⁾.

That completes the verbal instructions of the Precious One, the Jetsun from Dvagpo.

The above comes from the One Hundred Foremost instructions, drawn from the Collection of Written Talks given by the Lotsawa from Throphu, Nub Jampa'i Pal.

—...—

The Teaching:

The Instructions of Phagmo Drupa as Transmitted by The Drigung Kyobpa, Jigten Sumgon

—...—



Jigten Sumgon
Founder of the Drigung Kagyu

The Source of the Jewels of Experience and Realization, The Ocean-Like Instructions on the Five Parts⁽³¹⁾

At the feet of the precious guru, the essence of every one of the buddhas of the three times, I respectfully prostrate and take refuge; grant your blessings!

Now, for what is known as the “Five-Part Mahāmudrā”. The Protector of Beings, Phagmo Drupa, summed up the meanings of the three baskets⁽³²⁾ and the four tantra sections into five systems of practice then taught them to a five-thousand strong assembly of the saṅgha of perfection⁽³³⁾. Based on this and for others who had not found certainty in the profound meaning, the Protector of the World, the Drigungpa⁽³⁴⁾, who understood the meaning just like a vase filled by the transfer of liquid into it⁽³⁵⁾, practised, and through practice, for each part, accomplished the points and pacified the obstacles both temporary and ultimate, and obtained, in full, every one of the supreme and ordinary qualities. Thus he came to full knowledge of each part. He then showed every one of all the profound and the vast instructions as its meaning and also showed the “Ten Dharmas, Three Dharmas” as its points; it is a great treasury of the speech of the Dharma-Lord Guru concerning the five parts⁽³⁶⁾.

Concerning this, the precious guru said,

First, meditate on enlightenment mind;
Meditate on the yidam deity;
Meditate on the holy guru;
Meditate on Mahāmudrā;
Afterwards, seal it with dedication.

In that way, he spoke of five things. Of them, the first and last belong to the ordinary vehicle, so the middle three are the practice of the extraordinary secret mantra.

Part One, The Arousal of the Enlightenment Mind

The text called *The Rites of Meditating on the Five-Part Group* which comes from the words spoken by the Lord of Conquerors, Mikyo Dorje⁽³⁷⁾ says,

The body is positioned in the seven dharmas of Vairochana

The gentle air is held and inserted⁽³⁸⁾.

Following on from those words, for the meditation on the three things of loving kindness, compassion, and the enlightenment mind, think as follows. “Throughout my lives without beginning and for an inconceivable number of times, every one of the sentient beings has been mother to me and helped me; they are very kind. These very kind mothers should have their kindness returned. They should be helped. They should be brought to happiness.” Making the mind certain of that is loving kindness.

Think as follows: “When I look at these motherly beings to see whether they have happiness or not right now, I discover that they do not. They live with the causes of unsatisfactoriness, are experiencing the results of that, and do not have the conditions for happiness. These beings ignorant of the authentic meaning are like a blind man separated from a guide; how I feel for them! Compassion for each of them!” Meditating that way until you cannot bear it is compassion.

In order to free these motherly beings from unsatisfactoriness and set them in happiness, the mind that wants to attain buddhahood dons the great armour then truly and properly takes up the vows of the bodhisatva⁽³⁹⁾. It does not entertain thoughts of its own peace and happiness even for a moment. Every application of thought is made for the purpose of others.

For this enlightenment mind, you train in the fictional level in the illusion-like mode⁽⁴⁰⁾ and in the superfactual level⁽⁴¹⁾ by meditating that you, and sentient beings, and unsatisfactoriness, and purposeful activity, and so on do not exist as a self-continuity but are, from the first, free of the three, production, cessation, and abiding.

Engage in meditation on that for three sessions or more, until a deep-seated certainty is produced.

Arousing⁽⁴²⁾ enlightenment mind like that gets to the point concerning anger, will pacify the negative forces of rgyal 'gong⁽⁴³⁾, will bring angry states under control, will fulfill others' purposes, and causes mirror-like wisdom to dawn. Therefore, it is important to work assiduously at it; he said,

If, on the stead of loving kindness and compassion,

Others' benefit does not cut the central thread,

In the marketplace, the kind one of men and gods will not arise,

So you must be assiduous at this enlightenment mind⁽⁴⁴⁾.

Part Two, Development Stage, Meditation on the Yidam Deity

Body, skandhas, dhātus, āyatanas all are the maṇḍala of the deity; the container world is the immeasurable mansion; the contained sentient beings are the devas and devīs; and all of them have been present primordially as their unification. You recognize that to be so. Now, having done so, certainty of it is to be generated and finalized.

Utter the svabhāva mantra then meditate on all phenomena as empty. Within that state, from paṃ comes a multi-coloured lotus, from raṃ a sun disk, and on top of it from hūṃ comes a crossed vajra with a hūṃ letter seated on a sun disk at its navel. The hūṃ's light rays become a ground, tent, and canopy of vajras outside of which a mass of fire blazes. In the centre of the pervasive protection circle just made, that seed-syllable turns into a five-pointed vajra marked at the navel with a hūṃ from which light radiates. The light performs the two purposes then is gathered back after which I appear as co-emergent Chakrasaṃvara with one face, three eyes, fangs slightly clenched, and, with bent eyebrows, a wrathful grimace. His body dark-blue like the colour of sapphire blazes with light. His long hair is bound up into a top-knot and at its tip is a wish-fulfilling jewel and crossed vajra. The left side is adorned with a crescent moon. He has a crown of five dried skulls and a long necklace of fifty fresh ones hanging down. The right of his two hands holds a nine-pointed vajra and the left inside that holds a bell, both of which embrace his consort. He has a tiger-skin skirt. He is ornamented with the five bone ornaments and the ash—the six symbols. The right leg extended stands between the breasts of red Kālarātri who is lying on her back with hands in añjali. The left leg bent presses down on and squeezes the head of black Bharaiṃva who has his hands in añjali. In his lap is the consort Vajravārāhī, red, with one face, two arms, and three eyes. Her hair is loosed and dry skulls form a crown and a long necklace. Her right hand brandishes a hooked knife. Her left hand holding a skull-cup of blood embraces the male consort around his neck. She is adorned with the five symbolic ornaments. Her two shanks are over the bhagavat's thighs; entwining him⁽⁴⁵⁾.

The male is marked in the three places with the three letters. The bhagavat's heart centre is marked with a white om ha, his head with a yellow nama hi, his crown with a red sva haṃ hūṃ, his two shoulders with black vaṣṭaḥ he, his two eyes with orange hūṃ hūṃ hoḥ, and all the limbs with a green phaḥ haṃ; these are the six armours⁽⁴⁶⁾ of the hero. The female consort's navel is marked with a red om vaṃ, her heart centre with a blue haṃ yom, her mouth with a white hrīm mam, her head with a yellow hrīm hrīm, her crown with a green hūṃ hūṃ, and between her brows with a smoke-coloured phaḥ phaḥ; these are the six armours of the heroine.

Light from the seed-syllable at the heart centre of the male invites sixteen jñānasatvas like the deity being meditated on and the heroes and yoginīs surround them. The sixteen female vidyas make the offerings with arghaṃ up to śhabda. By saying jaḥ hūṃ baṃ hoḥ the samayas and jñānas are made inseparable. Once again light from the seed-syllable at the heart centre invites the wisdom beings like the one being meditated on and these heroes and yoginīs make offerings.

Supplicate with om sarva tathāgata abhiṣiñcha maṃ, whereupon the devīs holding jewelled vases perform abhiṣheka through which the bhagavat is crowned over his head with Akṣhobya and Vajravārāhī with Vairochana.

Think that, which is the complete clarity of the visualization. Firmly establish the pride of certainty that body, speech, and mind are the heruka's body, speech, and mind. Recall the purities, that because of the union of emptiness and compassion, they appear as male and female in consort, and so on.

If you become weary of the meditation, produce a mantra garland from the hūṃ at the heart centre. Visualize that it goes from your mouth into the mouth of the female consort and, cycling through the secret places, dissolves into the seed-syllable. Saying om hrīḥ ha ha huṃ hūṃ phaṭ recite whatever is needed of the close-to-heart, heart⁽⁴⁷⁾, and so on.

When it is time to close the session, the protective circle is gathered into the female consort, the female into the male, and then into the hūṃ at the heart centre of the male. That itself absorbs by steps into the flame of the nāda. Then rest in non-reference.

In that way, both the fixation on contained and container⁽⁴⁸⁾, the ordinary appearances which are grasping at one's own mind-stream, and the fixation on a magnificent deity which is grasping for the sake just of development stage are abandoned. Thus there is the certainty of a form⁽⁴⁹⁾ of unification that is appearance without nature, a water-moon and that is the finalization of development stage.

Meditating on development stage like that gets to the point concerning desire, will pacify the negative forces of senmo⁽⁵⁰⁾, will bring desire under control, will overpower appearances, and causes individually discriminating wisdom to dawn. In brief, it is important to be assiduous at development stage; he said,

One's own body is the king of deity forms,
But if not taken to the firm stage of changeless foundation,
The ḍākinīs will not assemble into a retinue around it,
So you must be assiduous at this body, the yidam deity.

Part Three, Guru Yoga

The guru is a being inseparable with the wisdom that resides in every one of the buddhas so one has the attitude of certainty that he is the three kāyas and five wisdoms embodied of buddha whose inexhaustible sphere of ornamentation of body, speech, mind performs the ripening and liberating of every sentient being until cyclic existence ends. And, you have the attitude that your own mindness is inseparable with the guru because of which all the dharmas of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa are the nature of appearance and emptiness⁽⁵¹⁾; that attitude is dharmakāya devotion.

For the purpose of making a visualization of the guru, do this. Above the crown of yourself clearly seen as the deity, in space, on a lion throne, on a seat of lotus and moon, the root guru appears in the form which is the embodiment of the Jewels, the summation of the families, Vajradhara. He has a blue body, one face, and two arms, and holds a vajra and bell crossed at his heart. He is adorned with various jewelled ornaments and wears the silken pantaloons. His feet are crossed in vajrāsana. He has a peaceful mood and is surrounded by the lineage gurus, the deity assemblies of the yidam maṇḍalas, and the dharmapālas and guards.

Giving your attention to that, worship with the seven branches—extensively or abridged, whatever—and at that time offer a maṇḍala, including your body and your possessions in their entirety. Then, supplicate: “Glorious guru great Vajradhara, please bless my body, speech, and mind, all three.”

Thereby, white, red, and blue light spring one after the other from the crown, throat, and heart-centre of Vajradhara. In sequence, they dissolve into your own three places, purifying the obscurations of the three doors. Meditate on the thought that you have been made into a fortunate one whose ordinary body, speech, and mind have been manifested as the vajras of enlightened body, speech, and mind. At the close of the session, the retinue dissolves into guru Vajradhara. Then he dissolves into you and your ordinary person now becomes the guru’s enlightened body, speech, and mind inseparable with your own body, speech, and mind.

⁽⁵²⁾Meditating on guru-yoga like that gets to the point concerning pride, will pacify the negative force of devapūtra⁽⁵³⁾, will bring prideful states under control, will give you the ability to bless others, and causes the wisdom of equality to dawn. In brief, it is important to be assiduous at guru-yoga; he said,

If the sun of devotion does not shine
On the snow mountain of the guru’s four kāyas,
The stream of blessings will not descend,
So be assiduous at devotion for mind.

Part Four, Mahamudra

The way that mindness is present within you is not known by the rational mind of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa⁽⁵⁴⁾. It is not known through the exaggerations of appearance and emptiness⁽⁵⁵⁾. It is not the experience of appearance. It is not the experience of emptiness. It is not the experience of existence. It is not the experience of non-existence. It is not the experience of confusion⁽⁵⁶⁾. It is not the experience of liberation. It is beyond every one of these biased positions, all of which cut to one side or another. It is not made by Buddha. It is not created by sentient beings. It is not purified by the path. It is not a change of colour. It is primordially free from extremes. It is the fruition, the three kāyas, inherent within you. It is the perfection of discard and realization. It is the immediate brilliance having the two knowledges⁽⁵⁷⁾. It is the thing which is primordially spontaneously-present.

The actuality⁽⁵⁸⁾ that is the way that your inner disposition is present is called “Ground Mahāmudrā”. It is introduced by means of the blessings of the guru and the method of time⁽⁵⁹⁾, then the student rests in the actuality just introduced, then there is recognition that actuality is like that. Right on the basis of that and without fabricating anything, by just resting in what that is untainted by rational mind, the core⁽⁶⁰⁾ is allowed to go its own way, the way of concepts stopping themselves and shutting up, and then the essence is known nakedly as clarity⁽⁶¹⁾ that is empty. This awareness, which is not caught up in the clarity that has been freed of concepts of good, concepts of bad, and indeterminate concepts, does not give any recital at all⁽⁶²⁾. This staying in a state freed of names and their references is mindness, the functioning of Mahāmudrā⁽⁶³⁾. When you have gone to the point that, no matter what circumstance arises, you never pass from that state into dwelling in one of the extremes of peace or existence, then that is called “Fruition Mahāmudrā”⁽⁶⁴⁾.

In brief, if the guru does not teach it, the student will not understand it. It is the great meaning beyond rational mind, the meaning that cannot be experienced by rational means, that which is free from every “it is this, it is that” made by rational mind, the common awareness⁽⁶⁵⁾ not constructed by anyone which is the innate, self-settled state; that is called “Mahāmudrā”.

The way of meditating on it has two parts⁽⁶⁶⁾:

- calm-abiding
- insight.

A. Calm Abiding

There are three parts to this: 1) holding where there is no holding; 2) steadying of the holding; and 3) ways of improving the steadiness.⁽⁶⁷⁾

1) The legs are placed into a posture. With the hands in the equipoise mudrā, the shoulders are stretched. The spine is straightened. The chin is hooked in a little. The lips and teeth are left to sit in their own way. The gaze is directed down the tip of the nose, directly ahead into space. Having done

that, the mind is left to rest self-settled. If the mind will not abide when that is done, then, as is explained in the *King of Samādhis Sūtra*,

The body like the colour of gold,
The protector of the world, more beautiful than all—
Whatever mental placement is done with that as the support
The bodhisatva calls “equipoise”.

Accordingly, visualize in front of you, on a lion throne, on a seat of lotus and moon, the truly complete buddha’s⁽⁶⁸⁾ form and, setting the mind one-pointedly on it, do not be distracted from that object of visualization to something else. When doing that, if sinking-dullness⁽⁶⁹⁾ occurs, move your mental focus to the topknot and if agitation-excitement⁽⁷⁰⁾ occurs, move your mental focus to the seat. Also, move the gaze up or down in conjunction with that. If you do that, it will clear the problem.

Should there be great distraction of mind, then focus the mind on the in and out movement of breath and just by that the stream of abiding will become lengthened and thereby the abiding aspect will become steady.

2) Once the production of abiding has begun, visualize a white lotus at the heart centre and that a drop is produced from it which exits from the crown point and is ejected into space. Similarly, there is a black lotus that is facing downward and from the centre of it a black drop is produced that exits from the urethra and sits on the boundary of the seat. The mind should be held on each as they are emitted. For the former, the gaze should be raised and, when a lot of dead winds have been extracted and removed, the awareness will have been invigorated and you should rest in that. For the latter, the gaze should be lowered and, when you have been persistent at the object of visualization, the mind can be left to self-settle, etc., and the awareness will be as before.

3) Whatever discursive thought comes up in mind because of some object—sight, sound, smell, taste, or touch—there is, so as to prevent it from continuing on to a second thought, the instruction to rest right on that thought itself. When that is done, there is an enhancement to the equipoise. In the beginning, the style of mind wandering from its object is that there are a lot of thoughts being produced and capturing it again with mindfulness-alertness⁽⁷¹⁾ is difficult, however, despite the difficulty, you shouldn’t procrastinate! When, compared to that, the wandering has been reduced in intensity, gross discursive thoughts will have been calmed and the movement of subtle ones will be noticed. In the end, the style of the wandering is that discursive thoughts are not able to propel the mind at all and there is a calm-abiding in which the actual abiding and a following moment⁽⁷²⁾ is the same kind of thing. In that way, a calm-abiding gradually happens.

B. Insight; the Introduction⁽⁷³⁾

When you are abiding one-pointedly in samādhi, just exactly how is it with this mind that is abiding? What kind of colour does it have while abiding? What kind of shape does it have while abiding? “Well, if I don’t see how it is when abiding, then I should look at it when it is proliferating”. That

thought itself also is proliferation; therefore, what kind of colour does it have while proliferating? What kind of shape does it have while proliferating? What kind of essence does the proliferation have? Is it visual form, sound, smell, taste, touch? How is it with this dharma, the opposite of abiding?

If you do not discover that, then do the following. Where does it arise to begin with? Where does it stay in the interim? Where does it go at the end? You should make a real search for all of these inside and out.

If it becomes difficult to see, offer a maṇḍala to the guru and supplicate. Think strongly, “If I do not recognize the essence of mind, I will not be liberated from existence. If I am not liberated from that, the unsatisfactoriness of birth, old age, sickness, and death will be unbearable. Therefore, I will work only at gaining certainty in the recognition of mind”. At all times exert yourself only at staring unwaveringly⁽⁷⁴⁾ at your own mind; if you do, then you will definitely see it, whatever it is.

There is no introduction without one’s own mind seeing one’s own mind; for example, if you don’t see letters? how will you be instructed in letters If you see just a portion of it, then you have just that much of an introduction to it! Having looked at it, if you think it didn’t appear to you, then please look at the looker itself! Just not seeing it does not make it non-existent, as with treasure hidden below the ground

Therefore, not seeing it anywhere is the supreme seeing! Henceforth, now that you understand lack of knowing as knowing, lack of consciousness as consciousness, lack of minding as minding, lack of mentation as mentation, lack of comprehending as comprehending, you will understand that as complete distraction!

Son of the family, your mind, like the horn of a rabbit, has no basis, has no nature, has no occurrence, has no arising, has no staying, has no disappearance. Your own essence being uncompounded, it is not seen even by the All-Knowing One⁽⁷⁵⁾. This certain fact sits nicely in your heart, therefore please rest in the state of this lack of mind itself! Please rest in the state of lack of minding! Again, son of the family, whether your mind is female or male, it is just knowing, vividly apparent and comprehending various things; isn’t this amazing? Therefore, no matter how things appear to you, rest in just this itself as it is. Rest in it relaxed. Rest in it nakedly. Son of the family, if you hold to the idea that there is something wrong with appearance and something good about emptiness or something wrong with emptiness and something good about appearance, that is childish: appearance itself is empty, emptiness itself is apparent, so you must see appearance-emptiness as one taste. In short, you should stay in the flatness⁽⁷⁶⁾ of not grasping at whatever dawns and frolic in the unreality of whatever appears. Everything falls apart into liberation! Agreeable in the non-duality of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa! Misty in the indefiniteness of rigpa! Vivid in coming and going without trace! Brilliant in the non-duality of confusion and liberation! Please nurture the time that you can stay in this, the absence of grasping at realism.

This kind of essence of mind is called “uncontrived common awareness”⁽⁷⁷⁾, “the essence innate to your own mind”, “the actuality that is the innate character of phenomena”, “the way that superfact⁽⁷⁸⁾,

the dharmakāya, sits”.

Isn't your present mind there as something clear, wide-awake, brilliant? Just that is called “the self-arising rigpa essence”. Don't you have the confidence that “it is just like that”? That is called “wisdom that realizes insight”. In that state, isn't there something that is unquestionably present? That is called “the door of appearance of calm-abiding samādhi”.

Thus, this very saṃsāra is brilliantly evident as nirvāṇa. These sentient beings move about as buddhas. This very confusion falls to pieces in self-liberation. This very affliction is right there as wisdom. This, which has been understood with the name “introduction to the innate dharmakāya” or “communicated” or “finding certainty” or “mastery of expanse” or “the definitive meaning of the authentic”, should be kept in your heart always. And please, for this which needs no habituation to it; please habituate yourself to it! For this meaning that does not need to be preserved; please always preserve it! Because of it, abandon attachment to this life, keep impermanence in mind, always generate a mind of disenchantment, supplicate the lord, whatever he says do as a command, continually wander in mountain places, goad yourself on with perseverance, look at the innate's own face, keep the introduction in your heart.

Give an introduction to the disciples with those or other words that suit the level of their minds.

Meditating on Mahāmudrā like that gets to the point concerning ignorance, will pacify the negative forces of nāgas, will bring delusion under control, will liberate from saṃsāra, and causes the wisdom of dharmadhātu to dawn. Therefore, it is important to be assiduous at it; he said,

In the vast open space of mindness,
If there is no assurance of the assembled clouds of discursive thought,
The planets and stars of the two knowledges⁽⁷⁹⁾ will not twinkle,
So be assiduous at this non-conceptual mind.

Part Five, Dedication

What is to be dedicated is included in merit and wisdom. Dedication is done on account of non-abiding nirvāṇa, for the purposes of sentient beings. The way of making such dedication is that the dedication is done via prajñā that sees the emptiness of what is to be dedicated, the dedication, and the dedicator.

Dedication like that gets to the point concerning jealousy, will pacify the negative forces of nāga tsan⁽⁸⁰⁾, will bring jealous states under control, will prevent loss of roots of merit, and causes all-accomplishing wisdom to dawn. Therefore, it is important to work assiduously at that; he said,

If the wish-fulfilling jewel of the two accumulations,
Is not polished with prayers of aspiration,
The fruit of your wishes will not appear
So be assiduous at the concluding dedication.

At the point when these things are finalized, all five topics become Mahāmudrā. They become: non-referencing enlightenment mind; the deity’s body of inseparable appearance-emptiness; the play of the guru, saṃsāra-nirvāṇa; the great mudrā of inseparable rigpa-emptiness; and the dedication of the encompassing purity of the three-fold sphere; and so on. And these are respectively called enlightenment-mind Mahāmudrā, deity’s body Mahāmudrā, devotion Mahāmudrā, actuality Mahāmudrā, dedication Mahāmudrā, and so on. And, in terms of what that is equivalent to, they are universally known as “Five-Part Mahāmudrā”. And also, viewed as preparation, main part, and conclusion, they can be taken as the practice to be done in one session and on one seat.

Urged for a long time by the great Śhākya Elder Yungja Drelwa Rinchen Gon, the one called “Subject of the Jewels” put together this expression of just the important parts of the words of the Protector of Beings, Phagmo Drupa, the words of the Protector of the Three Worlds, Drigungpa, the writings of Glorious Khachopa “Introduction to One’s Own Mind”, and Chokyi Drakpa Yeshe Palzangpo’s “Instructions on the Five Parts”; may the virtue of doing so set all migrators into meditative equilibrium on Mahāmudrā!

Glossary

Actuality, gnas lugs: A key term in the Vajra Vehicle in general. It is one of a pair of terms, the other being snang lugs. This term means how any given situation actually is and its counterpart means how something appears. In short, something could appear in many different ways, depending on the circumstances at the time and on the being perceiving it. However, regardless of circumstances, it will always have its own actuality, its own situation of how it really is. You could also think of this pair of terms as meaning “a thing’s reality and its surface appearance”. Note that this term also gets special use in Great Completion. In that case there is less sense of it being part of the pair and a much stronger sense of it talking about a reality that is present and which actually is that way.

Affliction, nyon mongs: this term is usually translated as emotion or disturbing emotion etcetera. However, the Buddha was much more specific about the meaning of this word. The Buddha said that passion, aggression, ignorance, and so on, are afflictions, that is, they were something that afflicted you. Buddha did not talk about “emotion” meaning a movement of mind but specifically used the term “affliction”. This is one of many terms that has lost most of its meaning by its common mistranslation.

Alaya, kun gzhi: this term, if translated, is usually translated as all-base or thereabouts. It means a range that underlies something else; an underlying basis for something else. It is used in several different ways in the Buddhist teaching and changes to a different meaning in case. All in all, it means a space of mind that underlies many other minds that come from it.

Alteration, altered, same as contrivance q.v.

Assurance, gdeng: often translated as confidence, this term means more than confidence. This term has the full meaning of assurance with the extra meaning that that contains compared to confidence. A bird, as it flies in space, has the assurance that it will not fall to the ground because of knowing that it has wings and the training it obtained in how to fly as a fledgling; the person who can liberate the afflictions because of his direct perceptions of the essence of mind has the assurance of liberation.

Bliss, clarity, and no-thought, bde gsal mi rtog pa: mentioned in this text as three temporary experiences that practitioners invariably meet in meditation. Bliss is ease of the body and/or mind, clarity is the experience of extraordinary clarity of mind, and no-thought is the experience literally of no thoughts happening in the mind. There is another understanding of these three not as temporary experiences to be eschewed but final experiences of realization.

Clarity, gsal ba: when you see this term, it should be understood as an abbreviation of ’od gsal ba, luminosity. It is not another factor of mind distinct from luminosity but is merely a convenient abbreviation in both Indian and Tibetan dharma language for the longer term, luminosity. See “Luminosity” in this glossary for more.

Clinging, zhen pa: dualistic mind that takes things that are not true, not pure, as being true, pure, etcetera and then, because of seeing them as highly desirable attaches itself or clings to those things. It acts as a kind of glue that keeps you with the things of cyclic existence, such as thoughts.

Complexion, mdangs: a special term of Great Completion. It is related to the more general term “output” used in both Mahāmudrā and Great Completion q.v. However, it is a refined term of Great Completion alone. It conveys not just the sense of what is given off by the emptiness factor of mind but adds the sense of the complexion of the emptiness or, you could also say, its lustre.

Confusion, 'khrul pa: the Tibetan term means fundamental delusion's confusion of taking things the wrong way. This is not the other meaning in English of having lots of thoughts and being confused about it. It is much more fundamental than that. The definition in Tibetan is “confusion is the appearance to rational mind of something being present when it is not” and refers for example to seeing any object, such as a table, as being truly present when in fact it is present only as mere appearance which has occurred in a process of interdependent arising.

Contrivance, contrived, bcos pa: something which has been altered from its native state or the process of making that alteration.

Cyclic existence, Skt. saṃsāra, Tib. 'khor ba: the type of existence that sentient beings have which is that they continue on from one existence to another, always within the enclosure of births that are produced by ignorance and experienced as unsatisfactory.

Dharmakaya, chos sku: the mind aspect of a buddha which, in the Thorough Cut system, is the fruition level of the direct perception of the essence of mind.

Dharmata, chos nyid: literally dharma-ness. A dharma is a phenomenon so, what it is at core, its actual reality, is its dharma-ness, or its isness.

Discursive thought, rnam rtog: this means more than just the superficial thought that is heard as a voice in the head. It includes the entirety of conceptual process that arises due to mind contacting any object of any of the senses. Discursive thought here translates from the Sanskrit original where the meaning is “conceptual thought that arises from the mind wandering among the various superficialities perceived in the doors of the senses”.

Elaboration, spro ba: to be producing thoughts.

Enlightenment Mind, Skt. bodhicitta, Tib. byang chub sems: A key term of the Great Vehicle. The term refers to the mind connected with the enlightenment of a truly complete buddha (as opposed to an arhat). As such, it is a mind that is concerned with bringing all sentient beings to that same level of buddhahood. It refers both to the mind of a person on the path and to the mind of a buddha who has completed the path, therefore it is not “mind striving for enlightenment” as is so often translated but enlightenment mind, that kind of mind which is connected with the full enlightenment of a truly complete buddha. The term is used in the conventional Great Vehicle and also in the Vajra Vehicle.

Entity, ngo bo: see under Essence in this glossary.

Equipoise and post-attainment, mnyam bzhag and rjes thob: often mis-translated as meditation and post-meditation, “equipoise and post-attainment” is a correct rendering. There is great meaning in the words and that meaning is lost by the looser translation. Note that equipoise and post-attainment are used throughout the three vehicles and that they have a very different meaning in Great Completion than in lower vehicles.

Essence, ngo bo: a key term used throughout Buddhist theory. The original in Sanskrit and the term in Tibetan, too, has both meanings of “essence” and “entity”. In some situations the term has more the first meaning and in others, the second. For example, when speaking of mind and mind’s essence, it is referring to the core or essential part within mind. On the other hand, when speaking of fire or some other thing, there is the entity, fire, and so on, and its characteristics, such as heat, and so on; in this case, it is not an essence but an entity.

Expanse, Skt. dhātu, Tib. dbyings: A Sanskrit term with over twenty meanings in Sanskrit and many of those meanings also in the Tibetan. In this book, it is used in one specific sense of the Vajra Vehicle teachings where it is the practical term for the experience of emptiness. In this sense, it means a whole “range” the whole extent of possible experience because that entire extent is covered by emptiness. Where emptiness is a very dry term, this term gives the sense of the full extent of experience that is known as the basic space within which all phenomena appear.

Fictional Truth, kun rdzob bden pa: one of a pair of terms; the other is Superfactual Truth, q.v. The usual translation as “relative truth” is not the meaning at all of this key term. The term means the level of reality (*truth*) made up by the obscuration of an ordinary person’s mind. Because this is an obscured version of actual truth it is *fictional*. However, it is true for the beings who make it up, so it is still called *truth*. There is a good discussion of fictional and superfactual truth in [note 41](#).

Fictional Truth Enlightenment Mind, kun rdzob bden pa’i byang chub sems: One of a pair of terms; the other is Superfactual Truth Enlightenment Mind. See under Fictional and Superfactual truth for information about those terms. Enlightenment mind is defined as two types. The fictional type is the conventional type. It is explained as consisting of love and great compassion within the framework of an intention to obtain truly complete enlightenment for the sake of all sentient beings. The superfactual truth type is the ultimate type. It is explained as the enlightenment mind that is directly perceiving emptiness. These explanations belong to the conventional Great Vehicle.

Great Vehicle, Skt. mahāyāna, Tib. theg pa chen po: The Buddha’s teachings as a whole can be summed up into three vehicles where a vehicle is defined as that which can carry you to a certain destination. The first vehicle, called the Lesser Vehicle, contains the teachings designed to get an individual moving on the spiritual path through showing the unsatisfactory state of cyclic existence and an emancipation from that. The path shown though is only concerned with a personal emancipation and fails to take account of all of the beings that there are in existence. There used to be eighteen schools of Lesser Vehicle in India but the only one surviving these days is the Theravada of south-east Asia. The Greater Vehicle is a step up

from that. The Buddha explained that it was great in comparison to the Lesser Vehicle for seven reasons. The first of those is that it is concerned with truly complete enlightenment of a truly complete buddha for the sake of every sentient being where the Lesser Vehicle is only concerned with a personal liberation that is not truly complete enlightenment and which is only achieved for the sake of that practitioner. The Great Vehicle has two divisions. There is a conventional Great Vehicle in which the path is taught in a logical, conventional way. There is also an unconventional Great Vehicle in which the path is taught in an unconventional and very direct way. This latter vehicle is called the Vajra Vehicle because it relies on showing the innermost, indestructible (vajra) fact of reality of one's own mind. The teachings in this book, while they do go through the Lesser and conventional Great Vehicles are principally concerned with the Vajra Vehicle.

Ground, gzhi: the first member of the formulation of ground, path, and fruition. Ground, path, and fruition is the way that the teachings of the path of oral instruction belonging to the Vajra Vehicle are presented to students. Ground refers to the basic situation as it is.

Introduction and To Introduce; ngos sprad and ngos sprod pa respectively: This pair of terms is usually translated in the U.S.A. these days as “pointing out” “and “to point out” but this is yet another common mistake that has become, unfortunately, entrenched. The terms are the standard terms used in day to day life for the situation in which one person introduces another person to someone or something. They are the exact same words as our English “introduction” and “to introduce”. In the Vajra Vehicle, these terms are specifically used for the situation in which one person introduces another to the nature of the person's own mind. As a matter of interest, there is another term in Tibetan for “pointing out”. That term is never used for the purpose here because here, no-one points out anything. Rather, a person is introduced by another to a part of that person that he has forgotten about. There is a further problem here which is that, if “pointing out” is used for this term, when the actual Tibetan term for “pointing out” is used, there will be confusion over the terms.

Isness: a translation of dharmatā, q.v.

Key points, gnad: it is not apparent from the wording but a “key point” is not a point of understanding that you have conceptually in your mind and take to meditation practice but is an issue belonging to the actual process of meditation itself. Meditation as a process has key points or issues within it and instructions such as the “Three Lines” are given so that the practitioner can connect a correct understanding which is derived from those instructions with those issues as they are actually present in the meditation itself. This is worth thinking over because the common understanding in English of “key point” is an instruction to be applied but that is quite incorrect; the instructions are applied to your meditation in order to work the key points that are present as issues in the meditation itself. They are the buttons existing in the meditation for you to be press using the instructions, such as the Three Lines, that allow you to hit the buttons.

Lesser Vehicle, Skt. Hīnayāna, Tib. theg pa dman pa: see under Great Vehicle.

Liveliness, rtsal: another key term in Mahāmudrā and Great Completion. The term means the potential that something contains for it to produce or display some kind of expression. For

example, a baby horse has the innate ability that will later come out as its liveliness of galloping and prancing as a steed. However, the term also is used in situations where the energy is actually happening, that is, it is not mere potential any more but is the energy at the time of its expression. The term that seems to fit correctly in English is “spunk”, unfortunately not many people know this word well. It is the potential and the expression of dynamic display that something has within it.

Luminosity, 'od gsal ba: the core of mind, called mind's essence, has two aspects, parts, or factors as they are called. One is emptiness and the other is knowing. Luminosity is a metaphor for the fundamental knowing quality of the essence of mind. It is sometimes translated as “clear light” but that is a mistake that comes from not understanding how the words of the Tibetan go together. It does not refer to a light that is clear but refers to the illuminative property which is the hallmark of mind. Mind knows, that is what it does. Thus, it has the property of luminosity which knows its own content. Both in Sanskrit and Tibetan Buddhist literature, the term is frequently abbreviated just to gsal ba, “clarity”, with the same meaning.

Mind, sems: conventional minding which occurs because there is ignorance.

Mindfulness, dran pa: the ability to keep mind on an object of the senses. With alertness, it is one of the two causes of developing śhamatha.

Output, gdangs: A general Tibetan term meaning that which is given off by something else, for example, the sound that comes from a loudspeaker. In Mahāmudrā and Great Completion, it the general term used to refer to what is given off by the emptiness factor of the essence of mind. Emptiness is the empty condition of the essence of mind, like space. However, that emptiness has liveliness and liveliness comes off it as compassion, and all the other qualities of enlightened mind, and, equally, all the apparatus of dualistic mind. All of this is called its output. Note that the Great Completion teachings have a special word that is a more refined version of this term. See “complexion” for that.

Post-attainment: see equipoise.

Prajña, shes rab: a name for a state of mind that makes precise distinctions between this and that. Although it is sometimes translated as “wisdom”, that is not correct because it is, generally speaking, a mental event belonging to dualistic mind.

Preserve, skyong ba: an important term in Thorough Cut. It means to keep something as it is, to nurture something in the sense of keeping it just so and not losing it. In the case of Thorough Cut, it specifically means that you are not using any rational process or effort to keep it in place, rather you are following the instructions received from your guru on allowing it to be as it is. This is also always applied to the state, q.v. and the phrase “preserve the state” is a key oral instruction in the Thorough Cut system.

Rational mind, blo: the Kagyu and Nyingma traditions use this term pejoratively for the most part. In the Great Completion tradition, blo is the dualistic mind and hence is the villain so to speak which needs to be removed from the equation in order to obtain enlightenment. This term is consistently translated as rational mind throughout this text since merely translating it as mind,

which is the common approach these days, utterly loses the importance of the word. This is not just mind but this is the mind that creates the situation of this and that (ratio in Latin) and which is always at the root of all sentient beings problems and which is the very opposite of the essence of mind. This is a key term and it should be noted and not just glossed over as “mind”.

Rigpa, rig pa: the key words of key words in the system of the Thorough Cut. The equivalent in the Mahāmudrā system is “Tha mal gyi shaypa” q.v. Rigpa literally means to know in the sense of “I see!”. It is used at all levels of meaning from the coarsest everyday sense of knowing something to the deepest sense of knowing something as presented in the system of Thorough Cut. The system of Thorough Cut uses this term in a very special sense, though it still retains its basic meaning of “to know”. To translate it as “awareness” which is common practice these days is a poor practice; there are many kinds of awareness but there is only one rigpa and besides, rigpa is substantially more than just awareness. Since this is such an important term and since it lacks an equivalent in English, I choose not to translate it. However, it will be helpful in reading the text to understanding the meaning as just given.

Secret Mantra, gsang sngags: the name for the second of the two parts of the Mahāyāna school, that is, the vajrayāna.

Seven Dharmas of Vairochana, rnam par snang mdzad chos bdun: are the seven aspects of Vairochana’s posture which used for formal meditation practice. The posture for the legs is the one called “vajra posture” or vajrāsana. In it, the legs are crossed one on top of the other, right on top of left. The advantage of this posture is that, of the five basic winds of the subtle body, the downward-clearing wind is caused to enter the central channel. The posture for the hands is called the equipoise mudrā. The right palm is placed on top of the left palm and the two thumbs are just touching, raised up over the palms. The advantage of this posture is that the Fire-Accompanying Wind is caused to enter the central channel. The posture for the spine is that the spine should be held straight. The advantage of this posture is that the Pervader Wind is caused to enter the central channel. The posture for the shoulders is one in which the shoulders are held up slightly in a particular way. The advantage of this posture is that Upward-Moving Wind is caused to enter the central channel. The neck and chin are held in a particular posture: the neck is drawn up a little and the chin slightly hooked in towards the throat. The advantage of this posture is that the Life-Holder Wind is caused to enter the central channel. The tip of the tongue is joined with the forward part of the palate and the jaws are relaxed, with the teeth and lips allowed to sit normally. The eyes are directed down past the tip of the nose, into space. Placing the gaze in this way keeps the clarity of mind and prevents sinking, agitation, and so on.

Shamatha, gzhi gnas: one of the two main practices of meditation required in the Buddhist system for gaining insight into reality. It develops one-pointedness of mind. The completion of the practice is a mind that sits stably on its object without any effort. Essentially, it allows the other practice, vipaśhyānā, to focus on its object unwaveringly.

State, ngang: this is a key term in Mahāmudrā and Great Completion. Unfortunately it is often not translated and in so doing much meaning is lost. Alternatively, it is often translated as “within”

which also is incorrect. The term means a “state”. A state is an ongoing situation and that is exactly what the Tibetan is referring to. It has the full sense of “a particular state that the practitioner is in”. There are many states on the path. In Great Completion, the word is often used in the Thorough Cut without adjective to refer to the all-important experience of the essence of mind, whatever that might be at the time. Hence “the state”, “preserving the state”, etc. See also “Preserve”.

Stoppageless, ’gag pa med pa: A key term of Mahāmudrā and Great Completion that is usually mistranslated. It is usually translated as “unceasing”. However, this is a different verb. It refers to the situation in which one thing is not being stopped by another thing. It means “not stopped”, “without stoppage”, “not blocked and prevented by something else” that is, stoppageless. The verb form associated with it is “not stopped” q.v.

Superfactual Truth, don dam bden pa: one of a pair of terms; the other is Fictional Truth, q.v. The usual translation as “absolute truth” is not the meaning at all of this key term. The term means the level of reality(*truth*) which is *superior* to the ordinary person’s mistaken kind of reality and which is *factual* compared to the fictional reality of the ordinary person.

Superfice, superficialities, rnam pa: in discussions of mind, a distinction is made between the entity of mind which is a mere knower and the superficial things that appear on its surface and which are known by it. In other words, the superficialities are the various things which pass over the surface of mind but which are not mind. Superficies are all the specifics that constitute appearance, for example, the colour white within a moment of visual consciousness, the vroom of a motorbike within an ear consciousness, and so on.

Temporary experience, nyams: when one practises meditation, various experiences occur which are simply part of the path and are not realizations, per se. These experiences are thus temporary experiences.

Tha mal gyi shaypa, tha mal gyi shes pa: the path term used in the Mahāmudrā tradition to indicate mind’s essence. In Dzogchen, the equivalent term is “rigpa”. Both words are used by practitioners as a sort of code word for their own, personal experience of the essence of mind. These words are secret because of the power they are connected and should be kept that way.

Tha mal gyi shaypa is often referred to as “ordinary mind”, a term that was established by Chogyam Trungpa Rinpoche for his students. However, there are two problems with that word. Firstly, “tha mal” does not mean “ordinary”. It means “common”, something that is common to everyone. This is well attested to in the writings of the Kagyu forefathers. Secondly, this is not mind, given that mind is used throughout this book to mean the dualistic mind of beings in cyclic existence. Rather this is “shes pa”, the most general term for all kinds of awareness or knower. In short, it is the kind of non-dualistic knower that is common to everyone.

From a practitioner’s perspective, there is little difference between the two terms. However, as Tsoknyi Rinpoche points out,

There is a deep point concerning what is explained in the extraordinary levels of Dzogchen as the complexion aspect of the rigpa⁽⁸¹⁾ and what is explained in Mahāmudrā as the luminosity aspect⁽⁸²⁾. Dzogchen says that real rigpa is to bring forth the deep state which is the luminosity part without the slightest bit of compartmentalizing—the actual original, naked dharmakāya—and there is a slight point of discussion over that.

There is that sort of discussion when these things are being explained but, from the perspective of an individual receiving the instructions and meditating, the instructions on Mahāmudrā could become the accomplishment of Dzogchen and vice-versa. That difference is explained in the texts but in fact it depends on the individual.

Thorough Cut, khregs chod: one of the two practices of the innermost level of Great Completion practice. The other is Direct Crossing. Thorough Cut is a practice in which the main point is to cut decisively through to Alpha Purity.

Transparency, zang thal: perhaps this term would be better not translated. The term is a special term of experience used in both Mahāmudrā and Dzogchen. It means that, because expanse and the knower—described as rigpa in Dzogchen—are unified, there is the experience of total unimpededness. The practitioner is outside the normal constraints of impure appearances and experiences this as a totally open transparency of what is experienced.

Unaltered or uncontrived, ma bcos pa: the opposite of “altered” and “contrived”. Something which has not been altered from its native state; something which has been left just as it is.

Vajra Vehicle, Skt. vajrayāna, Tib. rdo rje'i theg pa: see under Great Vehicle.

Vipashyana, lhag mthong: one of the two main practices of meditation required in the Buddhist system for gaining insight into reality. It is the insight that directly sees reality. It is aided by śhamatha which keeps it focussed on the reality.

Wisdom, ye shes: this term translates the original Sanskrit, jñāna. Jñāna has many meanings but overall has the sense of just knowing. In the Buddhist usage it is very literal, meaning the most basic sense we have of knowing which is the knowing that is there from the beginning in the core of mind. Because of this meaning, the Tibetans translated it as “the particular awareness which has been there from the beginning”. This has been translated into English in various ways but, as long as the meaning just mentioned is understood, that will be enough.

In the tantras, there are many methods for bringing the students to this primordial awareness. Some of them bring the student first to something which is similar to the wisdom so there is the term, simile wisdom⁽⁸³⁾; this is often translated as example wisdom but that is being literal to the extent of losing the meaning. The simile wisdom is a similitude of the real wisdom, the actual wisdom which is shown in various ways, including by the fourth empowerment. Real wisdom⁽⁸⁴⁾ is the opposite of simile wisdom; it is wisdom in fact, not the one which is just a similitude of the real wisdom.

About Padma Karpo Translation Committee, The Author Tony Duff, And Supports for Study

I have been encouraged over the years by all of my teachers to pass on the knowledge I have accumulated in a lifetime dedicated to study and practice, primarily in the Tibetan tradition of Buddhism. On the one hand, they have encouraged me to teach. On the other, they are concerned that, while many general books on Buddhism have been and are being published, there are few books that present the actual texts of the tradition. Therefore they, together with a number of major figures in the Buddhist book publishing world, have also encouraged me to translate and publish high quality translations of individual texts of the tradition.

My teachers always remark with great appreciation on the extraordinary amount of teaching that I have heard in this life. It allows for highly informed, accurate translations of a sort not usually seen. Briefly, I spent the 1970's studying, practising, then teaching the Gelugpa system at Chenrezig Institute, Australia, where I was a founding member and also the first Australian to be ordained as a monk in the Tibetan Buddhist tradition. In 1980, I moved to the United States to study at the feet of the Vidyadhara Chogyam Trungpa Rinpoche. I stayed in his Vajradhatu community, now called Shambhala, where I studied and practised all the Karma Kagyu, Nyingma, and Shambhala teachings being presented there and was a senior member of the Nalanda Translation Committee. After the vidyadhara's nirvana, I moved in 1992 to Nepal, where I have been continuously involved with the study, practise, translation, and teaching of the Kagyu system and especially of the Nyingma system of Great Completion. In recent years, I have spent extended times in Tibet with the greatest living Tibetan masters of Great Completion, receiving very pure transmissions of the ultimate levels of this teaching directly in Tibetan and practising them there in retreat. In that way, I have studied and practised extensively not in one Tibetan tradition as is usually done, but in three of the four Tibetan traditions—Gelug, Kagyu, and Nyingma—and also in the Theravada tradition, too.

With that as a basis, I have taken a comprehensive and long term approach to the work of translation. For any language, one first must have the lettering needed to write the language. Therefore, as a member of the Nalanda Translation Committee, I spent some years in the 1980's making Tibetan word-processing software and high-quality Tibetan fonts. After that, reliable lexical works are needed. Therefore, during the 1990's I spent some years writing the *Illuminator Tibetan-English Dictionary* and a set of treatises on Tibetan grammar, preparing a variety of key Tibetan reference works needed for the study and translation of Tibetan Buddhist texts, and giving our Tibetan software the tools needed to translate and research Tibetan texts. During this time, I also translated full-time for various Tibetan gurus and ran the Drukpa Kagyu Heritage Project—at the time the largest project in Asia for the preservation of Tibetan Buddhist texts. With the dictionaries, grammar texts, and specialized software in place, and a wealth of knowledge, I turned my attention in the year 2000 to the translation and publication of important texts of Tibetan Buddhist literature.

Padma Karpo Translation Committee (PKTC) was set up to provide a home for the translation and publication work. The committee focusses on producing books containing the best of Tibetan literature, and, especially, books that meet the needs of practitioners. At the time of writing, PKTC has published a wide range of books that, collectively, make a complete program of study for those practising Tibetan Buddhism, and especially for those interested in the higher tantras. All in all, you will find many books both free and for sale on the PKTC web-site. Most are available both as paper editions and e-books.

It would take up too much space here to present an extensive guide to our books and how they can be used as the basis for a study program. However, a guide of that sort is available on the PKTC web-site, whose address is on the copyright page of this book and we recommend that you read it to see how this book fits into the overall scheme of PKTC publications. In short, given that this book is about Kagyu Mahamudra, other books of interest would be:

1. *A Juggernaut of the Non-Dual View, Ultimate Teachings of the Second Drukchen Gyalwang Je*, a set of sixty-six teachings on the ultimate view by one of the early masters of the Drukpa Kagyu;
2. *Gampopa's Mahāmudrā, The Five-Part Mahāmudrā of the Kagyus*, a set of several texts showing the view of Mahāmudrā and how to practise it;
3. *Gampopa Teaches Essence Mahāmudrā, Interviews with his Heart Disciples, Dusum Khyenpa, and Others*, a complete set of teachings on Mahāmudrā given in personal interviews with great yogins, which repeatedly clarify the non-dual view;
4. *The Bodyless Dakini Dharma: The Dakini Hearing Lineage of the Kagyus*, with several very early teachings on the view;
5. *Maitrīpa's Writings on the View*, several teachings on the view from the “father of other emptiness”;
6. *Theory and Practice of Other Emptiness Taught Through Milarepa's Songs*, a complete explanation of the view of other emptiness given through two songs of Milarepa which are famous for their expositions of the non-dual view;
7. *Dusum Khyenpa's Songs and Teachings*.

We make a point of including, where possible, the relevant Tibetan texts in Tibetan script in our books. We also make them available in electronic editions that can be downloaded free from our web-site, as discussed below. The Tibetan texts for this book are included at the back of the book and are available for download from the PKTC web-site.

Electronic Resources

PKTC has developed a complete range of electronic tools to facilitate the study and translation of Tibetan texts. For many years now, this software has been a prime resource for Tibetan Buddhist centres throughout the world, including in Tibet itself. It is available through the PKTC web-site.

The wordprocessor TibetDoc has the only complete set of tools for creating, correcting, and formatting Tibetan text according to the norms of the Tibetan language. It can also be used to make texts with mixed Tibetan and English or other languages. Extremely high quality Tibetan fonts, based on the forms of Tibetan calligraphy learned from old masters from pre-Communist Chinese Tibet, are also available. Because of their excellence, these typefaces have achieved a legendary status amongst Tibetans.

TibetDoc is used to prepare electronic editions of Tibetan texts in the PKTC text input office in Asia. Tibetan texts are often corrupt so the input texts are carefully corrected prior to distribution. After that, they are made available through the PKTC web-site. These electronic texts are not careless productions like so many of the Tibetan texts found on the web, but are highly reliable editions useful to non-scholars and scholars alike. Some of the larger collections of these texts are for purchase, but most are available for free download.

The electronic texts can be read, searched, and even made into an electronic library using either TibetDoc or our other software, TibetD Reader. Like TibetDoc, TibetD Reader is advanced software with many capabilities made specifically to meet the needs of reading and researching Tibetan texts. PKTC software is for purchase but we make a free version of TibetD Reader available for free download on the PKTC web-site.

A key feature of TibetDoc and Tibet Reader is that Tibetan terms in texts can be looked up on the spot using PKTC's electronic dictionaries. PKTC also has several electronic dictionaries—some Tibetan-Tibetan and some Tibetan-English—and a number of other reference works. The *Illuminator Tibetan-English Dictionary* is renowned for its completeness and accuracy.

This combination of software, texts, reference works, and dictionaries that work together seamlessly has become famous over the years. It has been the basis of many, large publishing projects within the Tibetan Buddhist community around the world for over thirty years and is popular amongst all those needing to work with Tibetan language or deepen their understanding of Buddhism through Tibetan texts.

Notes

1. He is also known as Tilo, Telo, Tailo and each also with a “pa” on the end in Tibetan. In earlier Tibetan literature at least, he is usually called Tailopa not Tilopa.
2. Phagdrü is the common abbreviation for Phagmo Drupa.
3. See the section [supports for study](#).
4. This is exactly the meaning of the original Sanskrit. “mudrā” in this case—a sign that is displayed and by being displayed conveys meaning.
5. Throughout this book “mind” translates the Tibetan term “sems” and the Sanskrit “chitta”. It specifically means the type of mind that beings in saṃsāra—cyclic existence—have. Mind is a complex process based on ignorance. It has a lot of paraphernalia that goes with it; the conceptual baggage of dualism. However, mind also has a core that is not ignorant of reality. This core has many names: a few used in this book are “mindness”, “essence of mind”, “nature of mind”, and so on. Mindness is the working basis of the tantric path. Its very existence is the reason it is possible to shed the excess baggage of mind and return to wisdom which is the type of mind that buddhas have and which is mindness in its purest form.
6. This is from the text *The Questions of Phagmo Drupa* in Gampopa’s *Collected Works*. The European system of quoting page numbers and volumes of a source does not fit well with the Tibetan system of publishing texts. There are often different printings of the same edition, each with its own pagination and, since it is impossible to predict which version a reader might obtain, there is no point in quoting page and volume numbers. Tibetans themselves simply quote the source and that is what I have done.
7. From the same text as the previous quotation.
8. Tib. gdams ngag. There are several types of oral instruction used in Buddhism. What is meant here is oral instruction in general. It should not be confused with the very special oral instruction called foremost instruction.
9. Skt. bodhichitta, Tib. byang chub sems. The term does not merely mean “mind for enlightenment” or “enlightened attitude” as it is sometimes translated; in some contexts it also means “mind of enlightenment”. Thus enlightenment mind, which translates the Sanskrit and Tibetan exactly, is correct.
10. Tib. ngo sprod (transitive verb and noun) and ngo ’phrod (intransitive verb). A common term in Tibetan language meaning “to give / be given an introduction”. It is the standard term used when one person introduces another person to a third person or thing that they have not met before or do not remember.

The term is used in the vajra vehicle in exactly the same way it is used in ordinary life but in a

specific context. In the vajra vehicle it is used to indicate that the guru gives the disciple an introduction to the core of his or her own conventional mind. In this case, the guru *introduces* a person, quite literally, to the essence of his own mind.

It is popular these days to translate the vajra vehicle usage as “pointing out” but that is not what the term says. The term does mean and is used to mean “an introduction given so that, once introduced, you now know the thing or person introduced”. Furthermore, there is another phrase in Tibetan used for different purposes which does exactly mean “pointing out” and the two can conflict, thus it really is an error to translate this term as “pointing out”. A proper understanding and use of this term is crucial to a proper understanding of the vajra vehicle system, so the mistaken “pointing out” has not been used in this book.

11. Skt. Foremost instruction, Tib. man ngag. One of several types of oral instruction. The term literally means “prime” or “foremost” type of “instruction” and conveys the sense of the best way of all possible ways of instruction for conveying a meaning to another person. This type of instruction comes out of direct personal experience and has great power to transform the mind of the listener, much more so than any other type of instruction. It is of crucial in the tantras. For example, the highest system of tantra, Great Completion, is also known as “the Foremost instruction section” because at the highest level, foremost instruction is the most direct way to get the student to realize things as they are.

The importance of this type of oral instruction, and hence why its name needs to be clearly distinguished from the names of the many other types of oral instruction, can be understood from Situ Chokyi Jungnay’s text. He says that the instructions used to impart the realization of Mahāmudrā to students cannot be just any type of oral instruction but must be the type that is “an experiential kind of instruction ... which are not mere ornaments to the word of the Conqueror”. With this, he is saying that foremost instruction are not the usual type of oral instruction used to clarify the words of the Buddha (and other great teachers) that operate simply by adding more to the meaning till it is clear; they are much more than that. Foremost instruction are a special type of instruction that incorporate the power of personal experience and realization of either the teacher himself or the teacher’s teachers. These words are usually kept very private and, because of that, have a lot of power when they are used, much more so than ordinary types of oral instruction.

Unfortunately, this term is usually translated in a way that does not allow the reader to distinguish it from the several other types of oral instruction, causing a serious loss of meaning. For this reason, I have kept the Sanskrit term.

12. Introduction has the meaning of introduction as described in note 10. Dharmatā in this case is not very technical, it is a way of saying “reality”.

13. Sanskrit vidya, Tib. rig pa. One of the most important terms of Buddhism and especially of the tantras, it is often translated as “awareness” these days but that fails to convey the meaning. The Sanskrit, which becomes the root of English words like “video”, “vision”, and the like, implies an active knowing, in which things are clearly seen. It has a sense of “sight of”, “the seeing of”, and in some cases “insight into”.

In Sanskrit and Tibetan it is has both noun and verb forms and both are frequently used. Unfortunately the verb usage has been lost on translators and it is usually translated as a noun, often with loss of key meaning. For example, the “ignorance” we usually speak of in English when talking about Buddhist view actually means “not rig-ing”; it is a loss of sight, failure to see reality—and that meaning is very evident in Sanskrit and Tibetan. The opposite of ignorance is “to rig” the reality, in which case one is either reversing out of loss of sight of reality or has gained full insight into it, and has become a buddha.

As Gampopa says, there are only two sides to existence. The side of those who have sight of reality—that is, the side in which there is “rigging” of reality or there is possession of rigpa of the reality—and the side of those who do not have sight of reality—that is, the side in which there is “no rigging” of reality or there is possession of “not having rigpa”.

English equivalent. Therefore, I am sticking my neck out and using the Tibetan term both as a noun (rigpa) and as a verb (to rig). Sanskrit usually works better than Tibetan for English audiences because Sanskrit has more ties with English. However, “rigpa” and “to rig” seem easier than variations on the Sanskrit “vid-” at the moment. Let us see what happens. Whatever else happens, we have to come up with a unique term in English for this term of terms in Buddhist thought. The word “awareness” that is so often used as the translation for rigpa is totally inadequate.

14. Gampopa’s expression sounds much more like a Dzogchen presentation than a Mahamudra presentation and it is noteworthy that, in his collected works, he frequently uses this kind of expression.

Here, he is saying to his disciples that you either have sight of reality or not and, if you do, that is where buddhahood lies, so he is going to give the requested introduction to buddhahood on the basis of rigpa. I will publish more from Gampopa’s collected works in the near future and explore his ways of presentation.

15. “Arouse the mind” is the term used in Mahāyanā literature to mean “arouse enlightenment mind”. This is the first instruction of the five parts.

16. The second of the five parts.

17. The third of the five parts.

18. The fourth of the five parts. From here, Gampopa continued on to give Phagmo Drupa and the other yogins present a lengthy instruction on the main practice, Mahāmudrā. The fifth the five parts is not mentioned explicitly in this interchange but Gampopa makes it clear in other places that dedication is the fifth part.

19. Of the Kagyu lineage.

20. “Introducing” here refers to giving the introduction as described in note 10.

21. Skt. chittata, Tib. sems nyid. Mindness is a specific term of the tantras. It is one of many terms meaning the essence of mind or the nature of mind. It conveys the sense of “what mind is at its very core”. It has sometimes been translated as “mind itself” but that is a misunderstanding of the Tibetan

word “nyid”. The term does not mean “that thing mind” where mind, as already explained refers to dualistic mind. Rather, it means the very core of dualistic mind, what mind is at root, without all of the dualistic baggage.

A further point in choosing “mindness” for the translation is that it is an unmistakable term. This corresponds to the situation in both Sanskrit and Tibetan literature where the term stands out and cannot be mistaken for anything else. This should be compared with translations used up to now, such as “mind itself” which do not immediately signal a special term with specific meaning. Readers usually think that “mind itself” is just another reference to mind.

“Actuality of mind” is a ground term. It is used to describe the ground situation. It refers to the reality which is the inner core of mind as it actually is, regardless of whether you are a practitioner or not, a buddha or not. “Mindness” on the other hand is a path term. It refers to exactly the same thing as actuality of mind but does so from the practitioner’s perspective. It conveys the sense to a practitioner that he might still have baggage of dualistic mind that has not been purified yet but there is a core to that mind that he can work with.

Here, the guru gives the disciple an introduction to the actuality of mind. That actuality of mind is the inner nature of dualistic mind that will, when fully uncovered, become the mind of a buddha. The disciple experiences that as mindness and that gives the disciple the basis needed for proceeding with the practice. The practice is to purify all the obscurations so that mindness becomes fully uncovered. When it is fully uncovered, the disciple has reached the end of the path. At that time, the previously covered-over mindness is completely uncovered and is the mind of a buddha. At that point it is called “dharmakāya” where “dharmakāya” is one of several fruition terms that correspond to the ground and path terms indicated above.

22. That is, repeating one of the many prayers that arouses the two types of enlightenment mind, aspiring and entering.

23. Of the deity’s mantra.

24. The actuality of mind can be introduced at the more superficial level of the innate mind without fabrication of thoughts. This corresponds in essence to the practice of calm-abiding taught in the sūtras. Unfabricated in this case means that mind is just left alone, without any modification or alteration to its nature. It does not refer to the term meaning “unelaborated” (Tib. spros bral) which unfortunately is also sometimes translated as un-fabricated but which refers to putting an end to conceptual views altogether.

25. The last three sentences go together. Coming to rest completely requires that all states opposite to calm-abiding, which are summed up in the sūtras as sinking and agitation, are removed. In the Mahāmudrā way of doing things, it also requires the removal of certain wrong ideas, the doings of rational mind, which are summed up in the Mahāmudrā teachings in what are called the four points of straying and the three deviations. The removal of these in this way is the removal of the obstacles to wisdom waking itself up, not the actual waking up.

In other words, the instruction here is saying that appearances are usually manifestations of dualistic mind however, if used properly, they can become the means for removing the energy that tends to

make them manifestations of dualistic mind. Once that has happened, appearances can be further introduced as the innate reality itself manifesting. From that kind of introduction, appearances can be practised as the innate reality of mahāmudrā itself. When that has been accomplished, even appearances become the innate reality. One of the key points here is that the Mahāmudrā approach to reality uses appearances of the five senses—sights, sounds, and so on—as the doorway to the reality called Mahāmudrā. This differs from the approach of the other main teaching on reality, Mahāti, in which appearances are not the gateway to reality, rather, the luminosity of the innate mind itself is the gateway. In the end, the two systems come to the same point, though there is this subtle but crucial distinction between the two approaches. Mahāmudrā instructions do not discuss this because the whole system just depends on the use of appearances as the gateway. These instructions are very pithy and sum up a very large body of teaching. More of the meaning is contained in the other texts and explanations presented here. Full clarification must be obtained from a teacher, in person.

26. The state is a technical term of very great significance in Mahāmudrā. The term is used throughout the book, mainly with this specific meaning. See the glossary entries “state” and “preserving the state”.

27. At this point, the practitioner has developed some ability to rest in the state of the innate nature without fabrications. While the practitioner is resting in that state, thoughts will flash forth. Direct recognition of the nature of the thoughts is the direct recognition of the dharmakāya, as Gampopa taught. In that kind of process, dharmakāya liberates itself with no other antidote needed, thus, the thoughts, produced on the basis of the various doors of consciousness, are now turned into wisdom waking itself up. The practitioner habituates himself to this and, by doing so, his mindness is increasingly cleared of obscurations until it eventually becomes the dharmakāya of a buddha. This section corresponds to what is called vipaśhyanā, meaning the practice of insight, in the sūtra system.

28. Here he is making a play on the Tibetan way of glossing the Tibetan word for buddha which consists of two parts. The first, “wakefulness” refers to the fruition of the dharmakāya, and the second, “expansion” to the fruition of the form kāyas.

29. In other words, the five parts include both practices that accumulate merit and practices that accumulate wisdom. Since there are both types of accumulation in the practice, there are, correspondingly, two types of dedication to be made. Each type of accumulation has to be dedicated according to its own way of being produced, which is that merit is dedicated within a conceptual framework and wisdom is dedicated within a non-conceptual framework. The next text and its commentary give more information about this.

30. Tib. ’gro ba. “Migrator” is one of several common terms meaning “sentient being”. Sentient beings are constantly forced to go here and there from one rebirth to another by the power of their karma. They are like flies caught in a jar, constantly buzzing back and forth.

31. The name has some poetry included. In the Indian literary tradition and the Tibetan literary tradition copying it, the ocean is regarded as the source of jewels because it is the dwelling place of the nāgas who hoard jewels. These ocean-like instructions are a source of the jewels of experience and realization. Experience means the experiences of the path which come from practice but are temporary in nature. As the path is practised, experience increases and eventually becomes realization which is final and does not change.

32. The three baskets of the sūtra teachings of the Buddha.
33. An assembly of the Vajra Vehicle saṅgha.
34. The founder of the Drigung Kagyu, Jigten Sumgon.
35. A Tibetan phrase used to indicate that a disciple has attained the entire realization of his guru as though the disciple was an empty vase into which the whole realization of the guru was just poured in, filling the disciple totally.
36. This explains how Jigten Sumgon laid out the text. He showed each of the five parts, one by one. This explanation overall includes all the instructions of the Great Vehicle—that is, contains all the key points of both pāramitā and vajra vehicles. In addition he added a teaching called the Ten Dharmas, Three Dharmas to the basic five-part instructions. He did this by adding a summation containing the relevant portion of the Ten Dharmas, Three dharmas, teaching at the end of each of the five parts. These two aspects can be seen further on in this text. Thus the text is a great treasury of the speech of his guru, the Dharma Lord Phagmo Drupa, in the style of a text on the five parts.
37. Karmapa Mikyo Dorje.
38. The first line instructs the practitioner which meditation posture to assume for the practice. The second line instructs the practitioner to develop enlightened mind through the uncommon yogic practices of wind and channels. The five part system does not use these esoteric instructions but transmits the exoteric instructions which immediately follow. The author uses this quote, even though it might not seem fitting, because he is giving his readers, assumed to be Kagyu practitioners, a hint about inner possibilities.
39. According to all texts of the Tibetan tradition, the correct spelling is bodhisatva, with a single “t”. This is seen as far back as the ninth century, such as in the writings of the greatest translator of the time, Kawa Paltsheg. The previous incarnation of Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche verified that this was correct and explained why there is a difference between satva and sattva.
40. The texts of Prajñāpāramitā, which is where enlightenment mind is explained by the Buddha, say that the training in fictional enlightenment mind is done in the manner of seeing all things as illusory. See next note for the explanation of fictional.
41. “Fictional” and “superfactual” are much better translations of a key pair of Buddhist terms that have usually been translated mostly as “relative” and “absolute” respectively.

The Sanskrit term behind “fictional”, *saṃvṛiti*, is a common word that was used in ordinary language. It means “a fiction”, “a deliberate coverup”. This word was used in a variety of Indian religions, including Buddhism, to refer to the reality of ordinary beings, ones who are not spiritually advanced. The reality that these beings experience is a trumped up one, a big fiction, made up by their delusion.

The term fictional was paired with another term that was also widely used amongst Indian religions. This other term was used for talking about the reality of beings who are spiritually advanced enough to see things as they really are. The term, “paramārtha”, means “the spiritually superior (parama) fact

known by mind (artha)”. This is the fact of how things are. In other words, it refers to the superior level of reality to the fictional one made up by sentient beings, a level which is known by spiritually advanced beings, and which is simply a fact—reality without any fictions. There is no equivalent for this in English so I have coined the new term “superfactual”, which is not only a very accurate translation of both the Sanskrit and Tibetan terms but also conveys the meaning correctly, as shown in this paragraph.

The two terms “fictional” and “superfactual” are used in any discussion of the two levels of reality that exist for beings as a whole: the fictional level of reality that sentient beings create for themselves by means of their delusion and the superior, factual level of reality that undeluded beings know as a fact. The terms “relative” and “absolute” sound nice but do not convey either the meanings of the original words nor the meanings that the Buddha gave to them when explaining these two levels of reality. The terms fictional and superfactual not only translate the original terms accurately but also convey the sense of the terms as used by the Buddha. Note the difference in feeling that you get when you use “fictional” and “superfactual” as opposed to relative and absolute.

42. Each of the five sections ends first with a statement like this about the how the particular practice gets to the points of the practice and then with a quoted verse. The statement is the relevant part of Jigten Sumgon’s additional Ten Dharmas, Three dharmas material and the verse quotes what Jigten Sumgon heard from Phagmo Drupa when he heard the instructions on the Five Parts.

43. Tib. rgyal ’gong. A type of male, negative force (Tib. gdon) always connected with anger.

44. The central thread is our normal, selfish mind, which is the backbone of an ordinary person’s being. If you cut this thread using love and compassion, then you will become famous amongst all the rest of the people, gods and men, for your kindness. If you do not, then you remain an ordinary person who is nothing special.

45. This is the special instruction from the Hearing Lineage, not the normal, outer instruction.

46. “Armours” is shorthand for armour deities.

47. These are two of the various mantras of Chakrasaṃvara.

48. The container worlds and the sentient beings contained within them.

49. Deity’s form.

50. Tib. bsen mo. A type of female, negative force (Tib. gdon) always connected with desire.

51. This is a second kind of devotion, the one that results in direct perception of the dharmakāya for the practitioner.

52. See note 42.

53. Devaputra is one of the four māras. It is the personification of evil forces which cause attraction to sense objects.

54. Skt. buddhi, Tib. blo. Rational mind is a specific aspect of dualistic mind. It is that part of mind

that deals in the rational thought of this as opposed to that. It is a pejorative term in this kind of literature. You will see it used throughout the texts translated here to refer to the agent that keeps a person in duality. Here, “the rational mind of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa” means the rational type of mind that keeps up the dichotomy of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa. This mind, as with all other things, sees saṃsāra and nirvāṇa as a pair of opposites instead of directly knowing their equality.

55. The exaggerations of appearance and emptiness are the concepts of appearance and emptiness produced by the rational mind. They are exaggerations because they add more than what is actually there.

56. Tib. ’khrul pa. This term specifically means the confusion of taking what is not as what is. It is the mis-take of taking deluded reality as reality. It is paired here with its opposite, liberation.

57. Tib. mkhyen pa gnyis. The two all-knowing knowledges of a buddha: the knowledge of things as they are, and things in their extent.

58. Tib. gnas lugs. The actuality of anything is the way it really is. The actuality of mind is found in its innermost nature. That actuality is reality, one word for which is Mahāmudrā. This term is often translated as “natural state” which is far removed from what it actually means. The term simply means how something actually sits, how it actually is as opposed to other mistaken possibilities. Thus, there is mind, which is a mistaken possibility and there is mindness, which is the actuality of mind, and that in turn is none other than reality, which is also called Mahāmudrā.

59. Tib. dus thabs. Method of time is a specific style of introducing actuality. It does not mean “timely method” as is often translated.

60. That is, the core of mind, which is called “tathāgatagarbha” in the sūtras and “mindness” or “nature of mind” or “essence of mind” in the tantras.

61. Tib. gsal ba. The Tibetan term “gsal ba” and its Sanskrit equivalent “vara” here translated as “clarity” are actually simply abbreviations of the Tibetan ’od gsal and its Sanskrit equivalent “prabhasvara”, meaning “luminosity”. The abbreviation in every case carries exactly the same meaning as the full word and does not represent another meaning or nuance. This is an important point because these days, it seems, people do not realize that one is no more than an abbreviation of the other and then come to the conclusion that there are two similar but slightly different things in the core of mind, one called clarity and one called luminosity. Luminosity and its abbreviation clarity are simply metaphors for the fundamental knowing quality of mind.

62. That is, there will none of the dualistic process whereby mind conducts its own recital, using the voice of concepts and the names that go with it, saying, “This is this, this is that, this is what is happening”, and so on.

63. That is, the mindness experienced by the practitioner is the actual functioning of Mahāmudrā on the path. In other words, it is path Mahāmudrā.

64. This paragraph presents ground, path, and fruition Mahāmudrā in sequence. It defines ground Mahāmudrā, which is the basis upon which an introduction to one’s own mind is made. It then states how the introduction is done. Introduction by a guru depends on two things: the blessings of the guru

which can convey his own realization of Mahāmudrā, and the method of time mentioned in note 59. The paragraph explains how the introduction is done and how the disciple recognizes and thus has certainty in what has been introduced. After that, the disciple nurtures the state that has been recognized. At that point, the disciple is established on the path of Mahāmudrā. Path Mahāmudrā is the functioning of mindness as it is actually known to the practitioner. When that is brought to finality, there is only Mahāmudrā, which is the fruition state.

65. Tib. tha mal gyi shes pa. This is often translated as “ordinary mind” but that is not the meaning. Padma Karpo clearly explains that “tha mal” does not mean ordinary in the sense of common, nothing special, but means common to all, that everyone has it. It is another path term for the essence of mind.

66. Skt. śhamatha and vipaśhyānā. Tib. gzhi gnas and lhag mthong.

67. In other words, the practice of calm abiding at first when there is no abiding of mind, then after that when there is some abiding, and then methods for enhancing the abiding.

68. Skt. samyaksambuddha. A buddha who is a truly complete buddha as opposed to an arhat type of buddha, who is not a truly complete buddha.

69. A pair of terms in Tibetan which are related but each of which has its own meaning. These are the two enemies of concentration on the side of mind being under-active.

70. A pair of terms in Tibetan which are related but each of which has its own meaning. These are the two enemies of concentration on the side of mind being over-active.

71. A pair of terms in Tibetan which are related but each of which has its own meaning. These are the two factors of mind needed for the development of any state of concentration.

72. ... which was heading towards being a discursive thought. That would normally mean that the abiding was lost but, in this case, the discursive thought gets captured by the abiding as it was starting to pop up, hence the moment following the abiding also becomes a moment of abiding, rather than a moment of distraction into discursive thought.

73. When a person is introduced to the actuality of mind, if the introduction works, then vipaśhyānā or insight, automatically occurs.

74. Tib. cher cher. A specific term for how to look. It means to look directly, intently, and unwaveringly at something. In this context, practice it means staring intently right at the mind.

75. The Buddha.

76. An experiential term for emptiness that means a blank, unending, even space.

77. Tib. ma bcos pa'i tha mal gyi shes pa.

78. See note 41 on fictional and superfactual truth.

79. See note 57 on two knowledges of a buddha.

80. Tib. klu btsan. A nāga-type troublesome spirit connected with jealousy and hoarding.

81. Tib. rig pa'i mdangs cha.

82. Tib. gsal cha.

83. Tib. dpe'i ye shes.

84. Tib. don gyi ye shes.

Contents

Contents

Preface

Introduction

1. The Source of the Teaching

2. The Mahamudra Teaching

2.1. The Reality Called Mahamudra

2.2. The Practice of Mahamudra

2.3. The Specific Practice of Mahamudra Done in Five Parts

3. The Texts Presented Here

3.1. An Early Text From the Throphu Kagyu

3.2. A Text Based on the Teachings of the Drigung Kagyu

— • • • — The Source: Gampopa's Instruction to Phagmo Drupa That Began the Five-part Mahamudra Teaching— • • • —

Excerpt from "The Questions of Phagmo Drupa And Replies of Gampopa"

— • • • — The Teaching: The Instructions of Phagmo Drupa as Transmitted by The Translator of Throphu, Jampay Pal— • • • —

A Written Instruction Coming from the Throphu Kagyu on the Five-Part Mahamudra

— • • • — The Teaching: The Instructions of Phagmo Drupa as Transmitted by The Drigung Kyobpa, Jigten Sumgon— • • • —

The Source of the Jewels of Experience and Realization, The Ocean-Like Instructions on the Five Parts(31)

Part One, The Arousal of the Enlightenment Mind

Part Two, Development Stage, Meditation on the Yidam Deity

Part Three, Guru Yoga

Part Four, Mahamudra

A. Calm Abiding

B. Insight; the Introduction(73)

Glossary

About Padma Karpo Translation Committee, The Author Tony Duff, And Supports for Study
Electronic Resources

Notes