



THE *Ganges*
MAHAMUDRA
by the GREAT MAHASIDDHA TELOPA

KAGYU  MONLAM INTERNATIONAL



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THE GANGES MAHAMUDRA

BY THE GREAT MAHASIDDHA TELOPA

Translated by Khenpo David Karma Choephel



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In the Indian language: *Mahāmudrā Upadeśa*

In the Tibetan language: *Phyag rgya chen po'i man ngag gang gā ma*

In the English language: *The Pith Instructions Called "The Ganges Mahamudra"*

I prostrate to the glorious Vajra Dakini.

Intelligent Naropa, who endures hardship,
Respects the guru, and bears suffering,
You who are fortunate, take this to heart.

Mahamudra cannot be shown.

Just as who can show space to whom?

Likewise, there's nothing to show in the nature, mahamudra.

Relax and rest in the unaltered basic nature.

If the bonds are loosed, there's no doubt you'll be freed.

Just as when you look in the center of space, seeing stops,

Likewise, when the mind looks at mind,

Thoughts cease and unexcelled enlightenment is achieved.

Just as clouds of mist dissipate in the expanse of the sky,

Not going anywhere, not staying anywhere,

So is it with the thoughts arising from your mind.

Seeing your own mind purifies the waves of thought.

The nature of space transcends color and shape,

Neither stained nor changed by black or white.

Likewise, the essence of your mind transcends color and shape,

Unpolluted by black or white qualities, misdeeds or virtues.

Just as the bright, clear essence of the sun
Cannot be obscured by the murk of a thousand aeons,
Likewise, the luminous essence of your mind
Can't be obscured by aeons of samsara.

Though space is given the appellation "empty,"
There's nothing in space that can be described as such.
Likewise, though mind is described as luminous,
There's nothing to give a name, saying it's like this.

Therefore, the nature of mind has always been like space.
There are no phenomena at all not contained within it.

Let go of all bodily acts; sit naturally at ease.
Not speaking, your speech is empty sounding, like an echo.
Don't think of anything with your mind;
Look at the dharma that gets straight to the point.
The body has no essence, like a bamboo stalk.
The mind, like the center of space, transcends conception.
Neither taking nor leaving, rest relaxed in its nature.

When mind has no aim, that is mahamudra.
When you are habituated to that, you will achieve enlightenment.

You will not see luminous mahamudra
Through recitation of mantras, the paramitas,
The vinaya, sutras, or other baskets of scriptures
Or through your own texts and philosophical schools.

When wishes arise, luminosity is unseen, obscured.
Keeping vows and samaya conceptually violates the actual.

Not engaging mentally, free of all wishes,
Self-arising, self-subsiding, like ripples in water—
If you don't transgress the nonabiding, unobservable meaning,
You will not transgress samaya. This is the lamp in darkness.

If, free of all wishes, you do not dwell in extremes,
You will see the dharmas of all the scriptures.
Settling into this meaning, you're freed from the prison of samsara.
Resting evenly in this meaning incinerates all misdeeds and obscurations.
This is taught to be the lamp of the teachings.

Fools who take no interest in this meaning
Are always swept away by the river of samsara.
The sufferings of the lower realms are inexhaustible—pity the fools!
You who want to be freed from inexhaustible suffering, follow a wise guru.
When blessings enter your heart, your mind will be freed.

Kye ho! These samsaric dharmas are causes of pointless suffering.
The things you've done are pointless, so look at the meaningful essence.

Transcending all object and subject is the king of views.
Having no distraction is the king of meditation.
Lacking effort is the king of conduct.
Having no hope or fear reveals the result.
Beyond objects of focus, the nature of mind is clear.
With no path to traverse, you've embarked on the path to buddhahood.
There's nothing to be used to. When used to that,

You have achieved the unsurpassable.

Alas! Examine worldly phenomena well.

They cannot withstand analysis, like dreams and illusions.

Dreams and illusions do not exist in actuality.

Therefore, rouse weariness and give up worldly affairs.

Sever all ties of greed and hatred for samsaric objects.

Meditate alone in forest or mountain retreats.

Dwell in the nature of nonmeditation.

When you attain the unattainable, you attain mahamudra.

When branches and leaves grow from a tree,

If you sever the single trunk, the millions of branches wither.

Likewise, if you cut the root of mind, the leaves of samsara wither.

Even if darkness has collected for a thousand aeons,

A single lamp dispels the gathered darkness.

Likewise, your luminous mind instantly dispels

The ignorance, misdeeds, and obscurations accumulated over aeons.

Kye ho! The meaning beyond mind is not seen with mental dharmas.

The uncreated meaning is not realized through created dharmas.

If you wish to attain that meaning beyond mind and uncreated,

Sever your own mind's root and rest in naked awareness.

Let the water polluted with thought clear.

Do not negate or prove appearances; let them alone.

If you do not adopt or reject,

Appearance and existence are liberated as a mudra.

The alaya is nonarising, so the veil of imprints is removed.

Do not get conceited or judge; rest in the unborn essence.

Appearances appear; let intellectual dharmas exhaust themselves.

Complete liberation from extremes is the supreme king of views.

Boundless deep spaciousness is the supreme king of meditation.

Freedom from bias and setting limits is the supreme king of conduct.

Remaining without hopes is the supreme king of results.

Like water in a gorge in the beginning,

Flowing slowly like the Ganges in the middle,

In the end, the waters meet like mother and child.

If people with lesser minds cannot rest in the nature,

Hold the points of the winds; let awareness go.

With multiple gazes and techniques for holding the mind,

Direct awareness till it rests within the nature.

When you practice with a karmamudra,

The wisdom of bliss and emptiness will appear.

Be absorbed in the blessings of means and wisdom.

Bring it down slowly, retain, reverse, and spread it.

Guide it to its place, and saturate the body.

If there is no lust or attachment, the wisdom of bliss and emptiness will
arise.

You will live long with no white hair, waxing like the moon.

You will be clear and radiant and as strong as a lion.

Swiftly gaining the ordinary siddhis, you will dwell in the supreme.

May these instructions on the pith of mahamudra

Remain in the hearts of fortunate beings.



This completes the twenty-nine vajra verses of mahamudra composed by the master who had accomplished mahamudra, the glorious Telopa. Telopa taught them on the banks of the river Ganges to the learned and accomplished Naropa, the Kashmiri pandita, after he had completed the twelve trials. The great Tibetan translator Marpa Chökyi Lodrö, translated, edited, and finalized this at Phullahari in the north in the presence of the great Naropa.

Kagy Monlam Kagyupa International Monlam Trust Sujata Bypass Bodhgaya, 823231
Gaya, Bihar, India



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