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The Sadhana Of Mahamudra: Which Quells The Mighty Warring Of The Three Lords Of Materialism And Brings Realization Of The Ocean Of Siddhas Of The Practice Lineage

This is the darkest hour of the dark ages. Disease, famine and warfare are raging like the fierce north wind. The Buddha's teaching has waned in strength. The various schools of the sangha are fighting amongst themselves with sectarian bitterness; and although the Buddha's teaching was perfectly expounded and there have been many reliable teachings since then from other great gurus, yet they pursue intellectual speculations. The sacred mantra has strayed into Pon, and the yogis of tantra are losing the insight of meditation. They spend their whole time going through villages and performing little ceremonies for material gain.

On the whole, no one acts according to the highest code of discipline, meditation and wisdom. The jewel-like teaching of insight is fading day by day. The Buddha's teaching is used merely for political purposes and to draw people together socially. As a result, the blessings of spiritual energy are being lost. Even those with great devotion are beginning to lose heart. If the buddhas of the three times and the great teachers were to comment, they would surely express their disappointment. So to enable individuals to ask for their help and to renew spiritual strength, I have written this sadhana of the embodiment of all the siddhas.

The sadhana is in three parts.

First, let the mind remain uncontaminated by the eight worldly concerns. You must relax and stay in a quiet place with a good atmosphere to rest the mind on the great self-existing mandala of apparent phenomena and to take the refuge.

NAMO

Earth, water, fire and all the elements,
The animate and the inanimate, the trees and the greenery and so on,
All partake of the nature of self-existing equanimity,
Which is quite simply what the Great Wrathful One is.
In the spontaneous wisdom of the trikaya
I take refuge with body, speech and mind.
In order to free those who suffer at the hands of the three lords of
materialism
And are afraid of external phenomena, which are their own projections,
I take this vow in meditation.

[3 times]

Meditate in that great simplicity which is beyond conceptions and see through the complexities of duality, in which apparent phenomena and the self are imagined to be separate. The undercurrent of thoughts with all their pettiness and doubt and fear—all these must be overcome with that great assurance and fearless certainty which is the transcendental element of the voice of Manjushri, Mikyo Dorje. So rouse that insight. Be decisive, know what is, see clearly—these are the three kinds of confidence.

The spontaneous mahamudra mandala is now created from the wisdom of the fourth abhisheka. This will be clarified by the following words:

HUM HUM HUM

In the boundless space of suchness
In the play of the great light,
All the miracles of sight, sound and mind
Are the five wisdoms and the five buddhas.
This is the mandala which is never arranged but is always complete.
It is the great bliss, primeval and all-pervading. HUM
It is boundless equanimity, which has never changed.
It is unified into a single circle beyond confusion.
In its basic character there is no longer any trace
Of ignorance nor of understanding.
Nothing whatever, but everything arises from it,
Yet it reveals the spontaneous play of the mandala.

HUM HUM HUM

My whole being is Dorje Trollo
And my form is Karma Pakshi;
My speech is Mikyo Dorje
And my mind is Rangjung Dorje.

With that unwavering conviction
Fearlessly enjoy the mahamudra
And attain the experience of maha ati.

HUM HUM HUM

In the state of nonmeditation all phenomena subside in that great graveyard in which lie buried the complexities of samsara and nirvana. This is the universal ground of everything; it is the basis of freedom and also the basis of confusion. Within it, the vajra anger, the flame of death, burns fiercely and consumes the fabric of dualistic thoughts. The black river of death, the vajra passion, turbulent with massive waves, destroys the raft of conceptualization to the roaring sound of the immeasurable void. The great poisonous wind of the vajra ignorance blows with all-pervading energy like an autumn storm and sweeps away all thoughts of possessiveness and self like a pile of dust.

Whatever you see partakes of the nature of that wisdom which transcends past, present, and future. From here came the buddhas of the past; here live the buddhas of the present; this is the primeval ground from which the buddhas of the future will come. This is the heavenly realm of the dakinis, the secret charnel ground of the blazing mountain. But you won't find ordinary earth and rocks here, even if you look for them. All the mountains are Buddha Locana, who is the all-pervading wisdom of equanimity and unchanging stillness. This is the realm in which the distinctions between meditation and the postmeditation experience no longer occur. In this fearless state, even if the buddhas of the three times rise against you, you will remain in the indestructible vajra nature. The water which flows here is the Buddha Mamaki, who is the lake of the mirror-like wisdom, clear and pure, as though the sky had melted. Here is the joyous river, which is the transcendent form of the eight kinds of

consciousness. It flows into the great purity, which goes beyond clean and unclean.

In the various parts of the charnel ground can be seen the terrifying trees, which are the protecting mahakalis: Rangjung Gyalmo, Dorje Sogdrubma, Tusolma and Ekajati.. In these trees vultures, ravens, hawks and eagles perch, hungry for meat and thirsting for blood. They represent the concept of good and evil. Until you stop clinging to this concept the mahakalis will continue to manifest as friendly goddesses and harmful demons.

Various animals roam about: tigers, leopards, bears, jackals and dogs, all howling and jumping up and down excitedly. These represent the different kinds of perception. Here too are the chotens of the awakened state of mind, where the great yogis live. They represent the supernormal powers which need not be sought.

In the middle of this heavenly realm is a huge rock mountain, which arose from the corpse of the rudra of ego. It is triangular in shape and it pierces the skies. It is dignified and awe-inspiring and radiates the blue light of Vajrasattva. On top of this mountain is the red triangle which can accommodate all apparent phenomena and the whole of existence. This is the primeval ground where the question of samsara and nirvana does not arise. It is the beginning and the end of everything. The triangle radiates the blazing red light of inner warmth and compassion. Above the triangle is a beautiful flower, a hundred-petalled lotus in full bloom, exuding a delicate scent. It is the lotus of discriminating wisdom. Here is the moon of great bliss and skilful means. And here is the sun of wisdom and shunyata.

HUM: The sonorous voice of silence is heard. From it appears the rainbow body of wisdom. This is the personification of the body, speech and mind of all the buddhas. He is the self-born teacher, the lord of the herukas, Padma Thotreng, the lama whose power extends over all apparent phenomena and the whole of existence.

He is Karma Pakshi, in whom are unified the unchanging mind of the guru, the wisdom of the yidam, beyond waxing and waning, and the protectors—the confused thoughts which have returned to nakedness. He is dark red in colour, symbolizing the oneness of everything within compassion. He is inseparable from peacefulness and yet he acts whenever action is required. He subdues what needs to be subdued, he destroys what needs to be destroyed and he cares for whatever needs his care. His anger, devoid of hatred, is as fierce and terrible as if the three worlds were on fire. His presence is overwhelming. His three eyes of wisdom are bloodshot and stare in all directions. They radiate light, outshining the sun and moon. His expression is wrathful and he bites the lower lip. He has a black triangular beard, shiny and twisted into a point, emitting sparks of fire. In his right hand, raised to the heavens, he holds a nine-pointed dorje of meteoric iron, emitting a storm of red sparks, each in the form of the letter HUM. Thus he subdues spiritual pride. In his left hand he holds a phurba, also of meteoric iron, emitting a shower of sparks in the form of thousands of mahakalas. The phurba pierces through the heart of seductive passion. He wears the three robes of a bhikshu, signifying the accomplishment of discipline, meditation and wisdom. He is the originator and master of all buddha activity. Hence he wears the black crown, bright with gold and blazing with unceasing light, emitting a steady stream of discs of light in five different colours, which are the five buddhas. He stands on a dakini, in the form of a pregnant tigress, with his right leg bent and left leg extended in the heruka posture.

Even the thought of him will destroy the mountain of conceptualizations. The sight of him dries up the ocean of dualistic clings. He is immersed in flames which radiate the intense heat of compassion. In his forehead centre is the unchanging form of Vairochana, who is Tusum Khyenpa, the dharmaraja of the three worlds, clad in bhikshu robes, with his hands in the meditation posture, holding a dorje. He has white

hair and a thin, dark face. His expression is wise and peaceful. He wears the black crown ornamented with a gold dharmachakra, which sends out rays of light. He is seated crosslegged on the back of an elephant.

In the throat centre of Karma Pakshi is Mikyo Dorje, the lord of speech, the unceasing voice of Amitabha. He is of orange colour. He wears a tiger skin around his waist and a shawl of human skin around his shoulders. He wears ornaments of bone and jewels. In his raised right hand he holds the sword of wisdom, which cuts off the root of the universal unconscious. In his left hand, level with his heart, he holds the vessel which contains the treasure of the dharma. His face radiates friendliness. One glimpse of it suffices to open the door of confidence. The thought of him awakens memory. As the lord of the padma family he wears the black crown, ornamented with a golden lotus radiating the red light of Amitabha. He is seated on a white lion.

In the heart centre of the Great Wrathful One is the king of the tathagatas, Rangjung Dorje, the Vajrasattva nature of never-ending awareness. He is blue in colour with serene and friendly face expressing the state which transcends the boundary between meditation and nonmeditation. By a glimpse of his face the wisdom of the mind transmission is established in one's heart. His three eyes gaze into fathomless space. He has achieved the highest state of simplicity and is therefore seen naked, seated cross-legged, with hands in the meditation posture holding a skull cup filled with amrita. He is the king of kings and possessor of the indestructible vajra abhisheka, and therefore wears the black crown, bright with gold and ornamented with the vajra. The blue light of Samantabhadra, the All-Good, shines from the crown in the primordial state in which neither liberation nor confusion has ever arisen.

Around Karma Pakshi a great host of the buddhas and the sangha, together with the utterance of the dharma, fills the sky. They are surrounded by the dharmapalas and dakinis. The sound of *hum*

and *ah* and *phat* shakes the sky. It is as though all the musical instruments of the universe were being played simultaneously. Whatever you see is the form of Karma Pakshi run wild; whatever you hear is the voice of Karma Pakshi let loose; whatever you think is the thought of Karma Pakshi unleashed. In the spontaneously existing state where meditation is effortless, all movements are the vajra dance and all sound is the vajra music. It is the great guru mandala.

Note: In this way rest the mind in the mahamudra of devotion with great trust and single-mindedness. One's mind should be free from pettiness and doubt.

Here follows the supplication:

O Karmapa, lord and knower of the three times,
O Padmakara, father and protector of all beings,
You transcend all coming and going.
Understanding this, I call upon you—
Give thought to your only son.
I am a credulous and helpless animal
Who has been fooled by the mirage of duality.
I have been fool enough to think that I possess my own
projections,
So now you, my father, are my only refuge;
You alone can grasp the buddha state.
The glorious copper-coloured mountain is within my heart.
Is not this pure and all-pervading naked mind your dwelling place?
Although I live in the slime and muck of the dark age,
I still aspire to see it.
Although I stumble in the thick, black fog of materialism,
I still aspire to see it.

The joy of spontaneous awareness, which is with me all the time,

Is not this your smiling face, O Karma Padmakara?
Although I live in the slime and muck of the dark age,
I still aspire to see it.
Although I stumble in the thick, black fog of materialism,
I still aspire to see it.

At glorious Taktsang, in the cave
Which can accommodate everything,
Samsara and nirvana both,
The heretics and bandits of hope and fear
Are subdued and all experiences
Are transformed into crazy wisdom.
Is not this your doing, O Dorje Trollo?
Although I live in the slime and muck of the dark age,
I still aspire to see your face.
Although I stumble in the thick, black fog of materialism,
I still aspire to see your face.

The corpse, bloated with the eight worldly concerns,
Is cut into pieces by the knife of detachment
And served up as the feast of the great bliss.
Is not this your doing, O Karma Pakshi?
Although I live in the slime and muck of the dark age,
I still aspire to see your face.
Although I stumble in the thick, black fog of materialism,
I still aspire to see your face.

In the boundless space of nonmeditation
He who performs the great dance of mahamudra
Puts a stop to thoughts
So that all acts become the acts of the guru.
Is not this your doing, O Tusum Khyenpa?
Although I live in the slime and muck of the dark age,
I still aspire to see your face.

Although I stumble in the thick, black fog of materialism,
I still aspire to see your face.
When the current of thoughts is self-liberated
And the essence of dharma is known,
Everything is understood
And apparent phenomena
Are all the books one needs.
Is not this your doing, omniscient Mikyo Dorje?
Although I live in the slime and muck of the dark age,
I still aspire to see your face.
Although I stumble in the thick, black fog of materialism,
I still aspire to see your face.

The kingdom of no-dharma, free from concepts,
Is discovered within the heart.
Here there is no hierarchy of different stages
And the mind returns to its naked state.
Is not this your doing, O Rangjung Dorje?
Although I live in the slime and muck of the dark age,
I still aspire to see your face.
Although I stumble in the thick, black fog of materialism,
I still aspire to see your face.

The father guru, the embodiment of all the siddhas,
Is all-seeing and all-pervading.
Wherever you look, his transparent body is there,
And the power of his blessing can never be diminished.
Although I live in the slime and muck of the dark age,
I still aspire to see his face.
Although I stumble in the thick, black fog of materialism,
I still aspire to see his face.

Living, as I do, in the dark age,
I am calling upon you, because I am trapped
In this prison, without refuge or protector.
The age of the three poisons has dawned
And the three lords of materialism have seized power.
This is the time of hell on earth;
Sadness is always with us
And unceasing depression fills our minds.

The search for an external protector
Has met with no success.
The idea of a deity as an external being
Has deceived us, led us astray.
Counting on friends has brought nothing
But sorrow and insecurity.
So now I have no other refuge
But you, Karma Pakshi, the lotus-born.

Think of us poor, miserable wretches.
With deep devotion and intense longing
I supplicate you.
The time has come for you to arouse yourself and do something.
The tradition of meditation is waning
And intellectual arguments predominate.
We are drunk with spiritual pride
And seduced by passion.

The dharma is used for personal gain
And the river of materialism has burst its banks.
The materialistic outlook dominates everywhere
And the mind is intoxicated with worldly concerns.
Under such circumstances, how can you abandon us?
The time has come when your son needs you.
No material offering will please you
So the only offering I can make
Is to follow your example.

Chant the following as a celebration of identification with the guru:

When the wild and wrathful father approaches
The external world is seen to be transparent and unreal.
The reasoning mind no longer clings and grasps.
It is wonderful to arrive in your domain
In the pure land of the blazing mountain
Where every experience is full of joy.
Hey-ho, the happy yogi!

Every movement of the mind
Becomes bliss and emptiness;
All polarity disappears
When the mind emerges into nakedness.
This is the mandala in which
The six senses are self-liberated.
On seeing your face I am overjoyed.
Now pain and pleasure alike have become
Ornaments which it is pleasant to wear.

The experience of joy becomes devotion
And I am drunk with all-pervading blessings.
This is a sign of the merging of mind and guru.
The whole of existence is freed and becomes the guru.

When such blessings descend, your son's depression
Is entirely liberated into blissfulness.
Thank you, great Karmapa! Thank you, father Padmakara!

There is no separation between teacher and disciple;
Father and son are one in the realm of thought.

*Grant your blessings so that my mind may be one with the dharma.
Grant your blessings so that dharma may progress along the path.
Grant your blessings so that the path may clarify confusion.
Grant your blessings so that confusion may dawn as wisdom.*

Repeat these "Four Dharmas of Gampopa" again and again. One should try to give birth to the devotion of mahamudra by having complete trust in the guru. When the sense of devotion becomes very strong, then especially one should realize that the guru is not external. That is to say, when a flash memory of the guru arises, the mind becomes relaxed, loose and opened out; or, when you relax in meditation inseparable from the memory of the guru, the right atmosphere is created and the mind becomes clear and naked.

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय
ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय
ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय
ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय

ॐ नमो

भगवते वासुदेवाय

Sometimes, in order to make desires and attachments part of the path, you may perform the following offering:

To the crazy-wisdom form of the buddhas of the three times,
The unified mandala of all the siddhas, Dorje Trollo Karma Pakshi,
I make this supplication.

Desire, hatred and other hindrances are self-liberated.

To the boundless rainbow body of wisdom, Padmakara Karma Pakshi,

The heruka who, untouched by concepts, pervades all existence, I
make this supplication.

Whatever is seen with the eyes is vividly unreal in emptiness, yet
there is still form:

This is the true image of Tusum Khyenpa, whom now I supplicate.
Whatever is heard with the ears is the echo of emptiness, yet real;
It is the clear and distinct utterance of Mikyo Dorje, whom now I
supplicate.

Good and bad, happy and sad, all thoughts vanish into emptiness
like the imprint of a bird in the sky;

This is the vivid mind of Rangjung Dorje, whom now I supplicate.
The animate and the inanimate are the mandala of the glorious
mahasiddha, which no one can change;
It always remains impressive and colourful. This mandala now I
supplicate.

The hope of attaining buddhahood and the fear of continuing to
wander in samsara,

Doubt that wisdom exists within one and other dualistic thoughts—
all these are my feast offering.

Food, wealth, companionship, fame and sensual attachments—
All these I offer for the elaborate arrangement of the mandala.
Wantingness, desire and passion I offer as the great ocean of
blood which comes from the killing of samsara.

Thoughts of anger and hatred I offer as the amrita which
intoxicates extreme beliefs and renders them inoperative.

All that arises within—wandering thoughts, carelessness and all that is subject to ignorance—

I offer as the great mountain of torma ornamented with the eight kinds of consciousness.

Whatever arises is merely the play of the mind.

All this I offer, filling the whole universe.

I offer knowing that giver and receiver are one;

I offer without expecting anything in return and without hope of gaining merit;

I make these offerings with transcendental generosity in the mahamudra.

Now that I have made these offerings, please grant your blessings so that my mind may be one with the dharma.

Grant your blessings so that dharma may progress along the path.

Grant your blessings so that the path may clarify confusion.

Grant your blessings so that confusion may dawn as wisdom.

*Next comes the special supplication and taking of abhisheka.
(This is composed by Guru Rinpoche himself:)*

HUM HUM HUM

In the cave of Taktsang Sengge Samdrup
He who has subdued the evil forces
And buried treasure in rocks and snow mountains in holy places of
Tibet
Shows kindness to the people of the future dark age.
I supplicate you, Dorje Trollo;
I supplicate you, Ugyen Padmakara.

(The following four lines were composed by Karma Pakshi:)

HUM HUM HUM

You are the lord of yidams and conqueror of the whole of
existence and all apparent phenomena;
You have subdued the viciousness of the Mongol emperor
And overcome the energy of fire, water, poison, weapons and evil
forces:
I supplicate you, O Karma Pakshi.

(The next four lines were written by Shamarpa:)

HUM HUM HUM

You who fulfill all wishes
And are lord of centreless space,
You who shine with kind and luminous light,
I supplicate you, Tsurphupa.

(The next four lines were written by Mikyo Dorje himself:)

HUM HUM HUM

AH! Mikyo Dorje fills the whole of space.

HO! He is the vajra joy which sends out luminous light.

HUM! He is the energy of music and lord of messengers.

OM! He is the wrathful action which cleanses all impurities.

(The next four lines were written by an unknown author:)

HUM HUM HUM

Seeing the bodhisattva Rangjung Dorje

Is like discovering the wish-fulfilling gem.

He removes the poverty of oneself and others;

He is the source of all that is needed.

I supplicate his wisdom body.

(The next six lines were composed by Guru Rinpoche:)

HUM HUM HUM

Whatever occurs in the realm of the mind

(Such as thoughts of the five poisons)

One should neither lead nor follow.

Just let it remain in its true state

And reach the liberation of dharmakaya:

I supplicate the guru of self-liberated, perfect insight.

Chant the triple HUM as mantra over and over again. Then, by uniting your mind with the thoughts of the ocean of siddhas, their overwhelming presence and blessings are felt in great joy and emptiness. The visualization becomes just a mixture of colours. The dazzling rays of the five wisdoms are bright red, deep green, clear blue, pure yellow and bright white. They are not static but oscillating all the time, and they fill the whole of heaven and earth. They are so

bright that they are hard to look at. At the same time, you can see a rain of amrita and many-coloured flowers and you lose the clear-cut concept of "here" and "there" and become dizzy. Now you become the lord of the trikaya realm and receive the simple and ultimate abhisheka. You become one with the body, speech and mind of the siddhas.

Next recite the following verse (composed by Mikyo Dorje:)

HUM HUM HUM

When the precious guru approaches
The whole of space is filled with rainbow light.
He sends out his emanations as messengers
And a roaring flame of blessings shoots into the sky.
Various meditation experiences and flashes of insight occur.
Oh, the great guru!
I follow your example;
Please approach and grant your blessings.
Bless this place!
Give us the four abhishekas
And clear all obstacles.
Grant us the ultimate and relative siddhis.
HUM HUM HUM

Next follow the verses of the great leap into the void of panoramic awareness.

HUM HUM HUM

In the mandala of mahamudra
Shines moonlight, pure and all-pervading.
All apparent phenomena are the play of the mind.
All qualities are complete within the mind.
I, the yogi, am fearless and free from occupations;
Hopes and fears of achieving and abstaining are all used up.

I awaken into the wisdom with which I was born
And compassionate energy arises, without pretense.
Hey-ho, the self-existing rishi!
The siddha enjoys himself with great simplicity.
A A A

End by chanting these auspicious verses:

The wisdom flame sends out a brilliant light—
May the goodness of Dorje Trollo be present!
Karma Pakshi, lord of mantra, king of insight—
May his goodness, too, be present!
Tusum Khyenpa, the primeval buddha—
Beyond all partiality—may his goodness be present!
Mikyo Dorje, lord of boundless speech—
May his goodness be present here!
Rangjung Dorje, faultless single eye of wisdom—
May his goodness be present!
The Kagyu guru, the light of whose wisdom is a torch
For all beings—may his goodness be present!
The ocean of wish-fulfilling yidams who accomplish all actions—
May their goodness be present!
The protectors who plant firm the victorious banner
Of dharma—may their goodness be present!
May the goodness of the great mind mandala of mahamudra be
present!

*After practicing this sadhana, enjoy the presence of the guru and the
energy of compassion and devotion.*



It is hoped that this sadhana will be practiced by those who are prepared to see the living dharma within. The sadhana will help to purify the present degenerate state of philosophy and meditation practice. It will help to bring peace in the warfare waged by materialism.

In the copper-mountain cave of Taktsang,
The mandala created by the guru,
Padma's blessing entered in my heart.
I am the happy young man from Tibet!
I see the dawn of mahamudra
And awaken into true devotion:
The guru's smiling face is ever-present.
On the pregnant dakini-tigress
Takes place the crazy-wisdom dance
Of Karma Pakshi Padmakara,
Uttering the sacred sound of HUM.
His flow of thunder-energy is impressive.

The dorje and phurba are the weapons of self-liberation:
With penetrating accuracy they pierce
Through the heart of spiritual pride.
One's faults are so skilfully exposed
That no mask can hide the ego
And one can no longer conceal
The antidharma which pretends to be dharma.
Through all my lives may I continue
To be the messenger of dharma
And listen to the song of the king of yanas.
May I lead the life of a bodhisattva.

This sadhana was written in 1968 by Chogyam Trungpa Rinpoche at Taktsang in Bhutan, where, about eleven hundred years ago, Guru Rinpoche meditated and manifested the wrathful form known as Dorje Trollo..

The sadhana was completed on the auspicious full-moon day of September 6, 1968. It was translated into English at Thimphu by Chogyam Trungpa Rinpoche and Kunga Dawa September 7, 1968.

Joining Energy and Space

COMMENTS ON *THE SADHANA OF MAHAMUDRA*

THIS IS A VERY CONFUSED WORLD, a corrupt world at many levels. I'm not particularly talking about the Orient versus the Occident but about the world in general. Materialism and the technological outlook no longer come from the West alone; they are universal. The Japanese make the best cameras. Indians make atomic bombs. So we can talk in terms of materialism and spirituality in the world at large.

We need to look into how we can overcome spiritual materialism, not just brushing it off as an undesirable but inevitable consequence of modern life. How can we actually work with the tendencies toward spiritual and psychological materialism in the world today, so that we can transmute them into living, workable, enlightened basic sanity?

I wrote *The Sadhana of Mahamudra*, a tantric liturgy, in Bhutan in 1968 in Tibetan, and then it was translated into English. My situation at that time was unusual in that I was in a position to see both the English and the Bhutanese cultures together, which was seeing the West and the East together as well. I have been in the United Kingdom for about five years, and I had experienced that world fully. When I returned to Asia, Bhutan in this case, I rediscovered characteristics that were quite familiar to me from my earlier life in Tibet. At the same time, the contrast between East and West was very powerful.

I asked the Queen of Bhutan, who was my hostess, whether I could do a short retreat at the Taktsang Retreat Center, at the site of the cave where the great Indian teacher Padmasambhava—who brought Buddhism to Tibet—meditated and manifested in his crazy-wisdom form, which is called Dorje Trolö. Being at Taktsang was not particularly impressive at the beginning. In fact, the first few days were rather disap-

pointing. “What is this place?” I wondered. “Maybe this is the wrong place. Maybe there is another Taktsang somewhere else, the *real* Taktsang.”

As I spent more time there, however, I realized that the place had a very powerful nature. Once you began to click into the atmosphere there, it had a feeling of profound empty-heart. The influence of the Kagyü tradition, the practice lineage, was very strong there. At the same time, there was a feeling at Taktsang of austerity and pride and the wildness from the Nyingma tradition. When I started to feel that, the sadhana came through without any problems. I felt the presence of Dorje Trolö from the Nyingma tradition combined with Karma Pakshi from the Kagyü lineage. At first, I told myself, “You must be joking. Nothing is happening.” But still, there was immense energy and power.

The first line of the sadhana came into my head about five days before I wrote the sadhana itself. It kept coming back into my mind with a ringing sound: “Earth, water, fire, and all the elements . . .” Finally I decided to write that passage down, and once I started writing, it took me about five hours to compose the whole thing.

The basic vision of the sadhana is based on two main principles: space and energy. Space here refers to maha ati, or dzogchen, the highest level of Buddhist tantra in the Nyingma tradition. The energy principle, or mahamudra, is also a high level of experience in the Kagyü tradition. *The Sadhana of Mahamudra* strives to bring space and energy together, and through that, to bring about understanding and realization in the world. Even the wording of this sadhana, how each sentence is structured, is based on trying to bring together the mahamudra language with the ati language in a harmonious way.

Underlying both mahamudra and maha ati is the practice of surrendering, renunciation, and devotion. You have to surrender; you actually have to develop devotion. Without that, you can’t experience the real teachings. However, in the Buddhist tradition, devotion is not admiring somebody because he or she has great talent and therefore would be a good person to put on your list of heroes. Ordinarily, we may admire people purely because they seem to be better at something than we are. We think we should worship all the great football players or great presidents or great spiritual teachers. That approach, in this case, is starting out on the wrong footing.

Real devotion or dedication comes from personal experience and

connection. The closest analogy to devotion that I can think of would be the way you feel about your lover, who may not be a great musician or a great football player or a great singer. He may not even be all that great at keeping his domestic life together. But there is something about the person, even though he doesn't fit any of the usual categories of heroes. He is just a good person, a lovable person who has some powerful qualities in himself.

Love seems to be the closest analogy. At the same time, with real devotion, there is something more to it than that. As we said, the object of devotion, the guru, is not so much an object of admiration, not a superman. You don't expect everything to be perfect. You simply realize that a love affair is taking place, not at the level of hero worship or even at the wife or husband level. Something else is taking place, at ground level, a very fundamental level that involves relating with your mind and your whole being. That something else is difficult to describe, yet that something else has immense clarity and power.

Another aspect of the sadhana is crazy wisdom, which is an unusual term. How can craziness and wisdom exist together? The expression "crazy wisdom" is not correct, in fact. It is purely a linguistic convention. Wisdom comes first, and craziness comes afterward, so "wisdom crazy" would be more accurate. Wisdom is an all-pervasive, all-encompassing vision or perspective. It is powerful, clear, and precise. You have no bias at all, so you are able to see things as they are, without any question. Out of that, the craziness develops, which is not paying attention to all the little wars, the little resistances, that might be created by the world of reference points, the world of duality. That is craziness. "Wisdom crazy" involves a sense of tremendous control, vision, and relaxation occurring simultaneously in your mind.

The lineage of *The Sadhana of Mahamudra* is the two traditions of immense crazy wisdom and immense dedication and devotion put together. The Kagyü, or mahamudra tradition, is the devotion lineage. The Nyingma, or ati tradition, is the lineage of crazy wisdom. The sadhana brings these two traditions together as a prototype of how emotion and wisdom, energy and space, can work together.

The Tibetan master Jamgön Kongtrül the Great first brought these two traditions together about two hundred years ago. He developed a deep understanding of both the ati and the mahamudra principles, and

he became a lineage holder in both traditions. He developed what is called the Ri-me school, which literally means “unbiased.”

Joining mahamudra and maha ati is like making tea. You boil water, and you add a pinch of tea leaves. The two together make a good cup of tea. It makes a beautiful blend, an ideal situation. Quite possibly it’s the best thing that has happened to Tibetan Buddhism. It’s a magnificent display of total sanity, of basic enlightenment. It displays the ruggedness and openness, the expansiveness and craziness of both traditions together. My personal teacher, Jamgön Kongtrül of Sechen, was the embodiment of both traditions, and he handed down the teachings to me.

The language used in the sadhana reflects both the highest level of devotion and the highest level of wisdom combined. Karma Pakshi, who is the main figure in the sadhana, was one of the Karmapas, the head of the Kagyü lineage. He was also a crazy-wisdom teacher within his lineage. In *The Sadhana of Mahamudra* he is regarded as the same as Padmasambhava, who was the founder of the Nyingma lineage, the oldest Buddhist lineage in Tibet. It was Padmasambhava, also called Padmakara, who introduced the Buddhist teachings to Tibet, and he was also a tantric master. My purpose in writing the sadhana was to build a bridge between their two contemplative traditions.

The sadhana is composed of various sections. At the beginning is taking refuge, committing yourself to the Buddhist teachings and taking the bodhisattva vow to help others. The first section also creates an atmosphere of self-realization or basic potentiality, which is an ongoing theme in the sadhana. In tantric language, it is called “vajra pride.” Your basic existence, your basic makeup, is part of enlightened being. You are already enlightened, so you need only recognize and understand that. The next part of the sadhana is the creation of the mandala, or the world, of Karma Pakshi and Padmasambhava, who are embodied together. Several of the other great teachers in the Kagyü lineage are also included in this visualization.

Next is the supplication section, which describes our own condition, which is “wretched” and “miserable.” We are surrounded by a “thick, black fog of materialism,” and we are bogged down in the “slime and muck of the dark age.” It’s like the description of an urban slum. There is so much pollution, dirtiness, and greasiness, not only in cities but throughout the country. “The slime and muck of the dark age” also has a metaphysical meaning. It has the connotation of an overwhelming

environment that we are unable to control. We sense the world's hostility and aggression, as well as its passion. Everything is beginning to eat us up. "The thick, black fog of materialism" refers to the basic or fundamental problems with that environment.

The next passage is about our disillusionment with that world of spiritual materialism. It reads, "The search for an external protector has met with no success. The idea of a deity as an external being has deceived us, led us astray." There are all kinds of spiritual materialism, but theism seems to be the heart of spiritual materialism. In the sadhana, we are trying to reintroduce the style of the early Buddhists, the purity of the Buddhism which first came to Tibet. We are trying to turn back history, to purify ourselves, to reform Buddhism.

Theistic beliefs have been seeping into the Buddhist mentality, which should be nontheistic, and that has been a source of corruption and other problems. There has been so much worship and admiration of deities that people can't experience the awakened state of mind; they can't experience their own sanity properly. In fact, I wrote *The Sadhana of Mahamudra* because such problems exist both within and outside of the Buddhist tradition. Indeed, the spiritual scene all over the world is going through that kind of corruption. The whole world is into fabricating its spiritual mommies and daddies. So the purpose of the supplication is to awaken people from such "trips." At that point, inner experience can arise.

The last theme is the idea of merging one's mind with the guru's mind. It's not that the guru is a deity that you bring into your heart, with whom you become one. It's not like artificial insemination. It is very personal and spontaneous. You are what you are, and you realize that your own inspiration exists in the teacher's intelligence and clarity. With that encouragement, you begin to wake up. You begin to associate yourself completely with the dharma; you identify completely with the dharma; you become one with the dharma. As it says in the sadhana, "Grant your blessings so that my mind may be one with the dharma." You no longer depend on any external agent to save you from your misery; you can do it yourself. That is just basic Buddhism. It could be called the tantric approach, but it's just basic Buddhism.

HUM

AN APPROACH TO MANTRA

Homage to the guru, yidams, and dakinis!

When I hear the profound music of HUM
It inspires the dance of direct vision of insight.
At the same time my guru presents the weapon
 which cuts the life of ego,
Just like the performance of a miracle.
I pay homage to the Incomparable One!

One must understand the basic usage of mantra in the teachings of Buddha. Whether it is in the form of mantra, dharani, or a single syllable, it is not at all a magical spell used in order to gain psychic powers for selfish purposes, such as accumulation of wealth, power over others, and destruction of enemies. According to the Buddhist tantra, all mantras and other practices, such as visualizations, hatha yoga, or any other yogic practices, must be based on the fundamental teaching of Buddha, which is the understanding of the four marks of existence: impermanence (anitya), suffering (duhkha), void (shunyata), and egolessness (anatman.)

In this connection, it should be pointed out that in contrast to Hindu tantra, Buddhist tantra is based on shunyata and anata. The concept of shunyata is quite easy to relate to the whole content of tantra, as in mahamudra experience, and that of anata is most essential. Some Western scholars mistakenly identify the preparation of mandalas and the countless divinities with the Hindu tradition, as if it were an umbrella under

which all other Indian religions might be found. Although some Vedantic mystics might claim their experiences to be the same as mahamudra, there is an essential difference, for the herukas and all the other divinities in Buddhism are not external. In other words, they are aspects of the awakened state of mind, such as Avalokiteshvara representing the compassionate aspect of buddha nature.

There are various mantras connected with these bodhisattvas and herukas which help to achieve, for example, the essence of compassion, wisdom, or energy. In this essay we are discussing the single syllable HUM. HUM is the sound connected with energy, and is most profound and penetrating. This mantra was used by Guru Padmasambhava in his wrathful aspect in order to subdue the force of the negative environment created by minds poisoned with passion, aggression, and ignorance. HUM is often the ending of certain mantras used to arouse the life energy.

Before chanting the sacred music of HUM, it is necessary to consider the relationship of teacher and pupil. There must be oral transmission. The pupil should not choose a teacher at random, for unless the teacher belongs to a spiritual lineage, he may be able to give a mantra but he will not be able to transmit its power. With a strong karmic bond between teacher and pupil, the pupil should be inspired with an unwavering conviction of trust in the teacher's spiritual quality. Whatever difficulties the pupil might continually have to undergo and whatever sacrifices he might have to make, his devotion must remain constant until he is able to surrender his ego. If he fails to do this, he will not be able to experience the sacred music of HUM, he will not be able to develop understanding of its profound meaning, and he will not be able to develop the transcendental siddhi.

When a beginner chants the sacred music of HUM, he might find some temporary benefits; for example, his mind might become quiet and irritating thoughts might be eased. This is because HUM is composed of HA, ॐ, U, ॐ, and M ॐ. HA expels the impure air from the lungs, U releases the most irritating thoughts through the mouth, and M clears the remaining thoughts through the nose.

As mentioned in yogic texts, prana (breath) is like a horse, the nadis (channels) are like roads, and the mind is the rider. In this way, using prana, tension is released and any psychological disturbance may be relieved, but only as a temporary measure.

For advanced meditators, the syllable HUM is a means of developing the five wisdoms. H ॥ is the mirrorlike wisdom, clear and continuous. A ॐ is the wisdom of equanimity, panoramic awareness. U ॐ is the wisdom of discriminating awareness, awareness of details. M ॐ is all-accomplishing wisdom, effortless accomplishment of all actions. A ॐ is the wisdom of all-encompassing space (dharmadhatu), the ground from which all things originate and to which they return.

The meditator will not find these wisdoms in an external source but, rather like the spark which bursts into flame when fanned by the wind, he discovers them within himself.

HUM is the seed syllable of all herukas in the four orders of tantra (kriya, upa, yoga, and anuttara which includes ati). The herukas originated with the subjugation and transformation of the Rudra of ego. The absence of ego is shunyata. In the vajrayana, shunyata or voidness is expressed in terms of fullness, as in the line of the *Heart Sutra* which says “form is emptiness, and the very emptiness is form.” Therefore this form has tremendous energy which is simply what the five wisdoms are.

HUM is referred to in many texts as the sonorous sound of silence. HUM represents that state of meditation when awareness breaks out of the limits of ego. It was by that force of HUM that the fortress of Rudra was reduced to dust. HUM may be regarded as the fearless utterance of a warrior shooting his arrow in the battlefield. HUM is sometimes referred to as the mantra of the Vajrakilaya Mandala of the high tantra school. First, it is the dagger of beyond-thought, which stabs with deadly accuracy into the heart of dualistic thoughts. Second, it is the dagger of luminous transcendental insight, which pierces the heart of confused darkness. Third, it is the dagger of the state of nonmeditation, which pierces the heart of thought-formed meditation, so that the meditator is delivered from subject matter. Fourth, it is the dagger of complete devotion to the all-pervading guru, which stabs to the heart of hopes and fears so that the teacher and pupil become inseparable. These four penetrations of HUM are described in the text of the anuyogatantra.

Guru Padmasambhava said that when you sing the crescendo music of HUM and let go of all thoughts, the ultimate meditation experiences are the echo of this music. Also, HUM is referred to as the concentration of all blessings and energy. Etymologically speaking, the Sanskrit word HUM means “gathering together.” HUM is not a magic spell to increase the power of ego, but it is concentrated power devoid of ego. HUM

combined with complete devotion is like an arrow piercing the heart—it takes the form of the memory of the guru. Also the abrupt experience of cutting through all thoughts is the action of HUM. Therefore HUM is the energy of universal force which transcends the limitations of ego, or rather, pierces through the wall of ego.

I hope that the people who practice *The Sadhana of the Embodiment of All the Siddhas* [*The Sadhana of Mahamudra*] will study this essay very closely. May we all unite in the crescendo of HUM and liberate all sentient beings into the oneness of HUM.

