

Tilopa's Mahamudra Upadesha: The Gangama Instructions with Commentary

By Sangyes Nyenpa

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All lineages of Mahamudra meditation have their source in a verse teaching—a "song of realization"—sung by the Mahasiddha Tilopa to his disciple Naropa on the banks of the Ganges River more than a thousand years ago. Since that time, the meaning of Tilopa’s instructions has been passed directly from master to disciple in a continuous stream that exists unbroken to this day. This book offers the reader a rare glimpse into the Mahamudra oral transmission, given in a traditional Tibetan context by one of the lineage’s most learned and accomplished contemporary masters.

Mahamudra meditation, while highly advanced, is yet simple, practical, and accessible for anyone, because what is identified and meditated upon is the very nature of one’s own mind. In Sangyes Nyenpa Rinpoche’s words, "The distinction between deception and liberation lies in whether we understand the ever-present nature of our own mind or not. Knowing our own face is liberation; not knowing our own face is samsara. This is not something far distant from us." The instructions are ideal for Westerners because the root text is manageable and Rinpoche has provided an outline of his own composition that makes it easily understandable. He explains terminology with frequent comparisons between Dzogchen and Mahamudra, quotes prolifically from scripture, gives clear examples, and generally cajoles, admonishes, and encourages his listeners to be true to their own spiritual path.

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Editorial Review

About the Author
The Tenth SANGYES NYENPA RINPOCHE was born into a family of practitioners at the temple of Paro Taktsang in Bhutan. Recognized by His Holiness the Sixteenth Karmapa and educated at Rumtek, Sikkim, Sangyes Nyenpa Rinpoche is one of the Kagyu lineage's most accomplished and respected reincarnated teachers (tulkus). He is based in Kathmandu, Nepal, directs centers in Europe and Asia, and teaches worldwide.

DAVID MOLK studied Tibetan language at Venerable Geshe Rabten's Institute for Higher Tibetan Studies in Mont-Pèlerin, Switzerland. Since 1987 he has interpreted and translated for many Tibetan lamas. He lives in Big Sur, California.

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