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Machig Labdron And The Foundations Of Chod



Synopsis

Machig Labdron is popularly considered to be both a dakini and a deity, an emanation of Yum Chenmo, or Prajnaparamita, the embodiment of the wisdom of the buddhas. Historically, this Tibetan woman, a contemporary of Milarepa, was an adept and outstanding teacher, a mother, and a founder of a unique transmission lineage known as the ChÄŸd of Mahamudra. This translation of the most famous biography of Machig Labdron, founder of the unique Mahamudra ChÄŸd tradition, is presented together with a comprehensive overview of ChÄŸd's historical and doctrinal origins in Indian Buddhism and its subsequent transmission to Tibet. ChÄŸd refers to cutting through the grasping at a self and its attendant emotional afflictions. Most famous for its teaching on transforming the aggregates into an offering of food for demons as a compassionate act of self-sacrifice, ChÄŸd aims to free the mind from all fear and to arouse realization of its true nature, primordially clear bliss and emptiness.

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Customer Reviews

"Provides some wonderful material on the ChÄŸd lineage, Machig Labdron's biography, and the origins of Mahamudra ChÄŸdWith its publication we come a little bit closer to feeling the spirit and incisive wisdom of this great yogini."â "Tsultrim Allione, author of Women of Wisdom "Consider reading this book as a spiritual investment."â "Dr. Elizabeth Benard, author of Chinnamasta: The Aweful Buddhist and Hindu Tantric Goddess

"[Jerome Edou] skillfully balances the historical and hagiographical, and deftly expounds her great teaching of the Mahamudra Chod....Consider reading this book as a spiritual investment."

Here is the text that is often quoted authoritatively on the life of Machig Labdron. First published in 1996, it stood the test of time and delivers on its title, laying out the life of Machig Labdron and the foundations of Chod. What it isn't is a practice book, nor does it, other than incidentally, lay out the teachings of Chod. Only Machig's last instructions are detailed in a final chapter, but they are six pages of poetic beauty. For that best on practice and teachings turn to Chod Practice Manual and Commentary or Chod in the Garden Tradition and the more recent Machig's Complete Explanation or perhaps Feeding Your Demons. The numbers of books in this area isn't extensive, but the coverage is excellent.

I practice Tsok for many years without fully understanding the ceremonies - this book is a wonderful and clear explanation of Chod and a must for all western practitioners of Tibetan Buddhism. It is also good reading for shamanic practitioners who have adopted the Chod ceremony into their practice.

Weird book. But interesting.

Excellent service and book. Thank you

This is a wonderful book, clearly written and well researched yet able to impart the mystery of Chod. This book taught me more about emptiness than any other book I have read, including the *Mulamadyamika* by Nagarjuna. Not for beginners but a fabulous book.

If you do not know what Chod is, better find other book. I wonder why it is still difficult to write books about Chod and other Tibetan acknowledgements...

I'm loving this. I know very little about Buddhism or Chod, and I'm finding out a lot here. I don't know whether this is a definitive book, but it contains everything I need to know at this point (so far). It's a bit scholarly and boggy, but is holding my interest, too.

This is a great book on Chöd. It explains 3 levels of practice with the most famous, the offering of

one's body to the demons, as the lowest level and Mahamudra approach as the highest. It provides the context for understanding (i.e. knowledge vs. mere information). It also describes the many varied sources used in this study. Lineages are described in both words and diagrams. It includes not only historical/biographical data but also the hagiographical/miraculous/mythical tradition. The latter is expertly explained via pithy, concise endnotes. Most importantly are the explanations of the relationships among ChÃ¶d, Mahamudra, and the Perfection of Wisdom (Prajnaparamita Sutras of various lengths--see Conze's translations--including the Heart Sutra). Perhaps the most key concept is the definition of demon (there's an interesting analysis of 4 types provided by Machig). Some great illustrative quotes:p. 67-9: quoting Machig: `The origin of all demons is in the mind itself. When awareness holds on and embraces any outer object, it is in the hold of a demon. Likewise, mind is stained when a [mental image] is wrongly taken to be a real object. In this way, all outer and inner objects grasped by mind as if they were real which thereby generate desire, aversion, or arrogance, should be viewed as demons because they prevent the realization of the clear light emptiness nature of mind, Mahamudra...Since mistaken grasping to reality comes from material objects, I have explained this as tangible demons...The intangible demons...are the positive or negative thoughts that arise in the mind...the intangible demons ...are the emotions such as suffering and so forth...they all derive from arrogance, the faulty grasping onto a self. They are the demons of mistaken attachment to reality.'pp. 73-4: quoting Machig: `whatever miraculous displays of gods and demons appear, recognize them as the miraculous display of your own mind.'p. 76: quoting Machig: `Attachment to any phenomenon whatsoever, from coarse form to omniscience, should be understood as the play of a demon.'pp. 76-7: The main function of ChÃ¶d: to serve as a link between the highest metaphysical vision and the popular religion.I'd also recommend Tsultrim Allione's cassette entitled: "Feeding the Demons: Relaxing Dualism." You can also read Lama Zopa's pamphlet on ChÃ¶d for a description of the practice. For extensive descriptions with minute details of the lowest level practices see "Machik's Complete Explanation Clarifying the Meaning of ChÃ¶d" by Sarah Harding.

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