

Doha of Tilopa

*In Sanskrit, doha kosha nama
In Tibetan doha mdzod ces bya ba*

To noble Vajrasattva, I pay homage!
To unchanging self-knowing Mahamudra, I pay homage!

1. In-depth explanation

a) On the view

The aggregates, the elements, the sources of perception—
All these [without exception] arise from the innate nature of Mahamudra,
And merge back into it.

But don't look for meaning
In non-fabrication—substantial and insubstantial—
Or in mental inactivity.

As for the nature of all things, unreal as it is,
Forget about a beginning, forget about an end.
That which becomes the domain of the intellect
Is a partial imputation, not the natural state.

Thatness does not come about from the lama, nor from the student.
Don't take it as mind or non-mind:
Understand it as the one that cancels out the many,
Though clinging to the one would fetter you.

(b) On meditation

I, Tilo[pa] haven't taught a thing!
The place is not solitary, the place is not un-solitary.
The eyes are not open, the eyes are not closed.
The mind is not modulated, the mind is not un-modulated.
Get this: There's no object to the naked mind.

There are no fabrications in reality itself [the dharmata].
Experiences, memories – such fleeting illusions...
Do you understand? Let them go free.

As for success or failure, what's gained or what's lost:
There's truly nothing there. Nothing at all.

c) On action

Devout asceticism in solitude isn't reliable.
Cleansing and purification don't lead to happiness.
Not even offerings to the deities could give you liberation.
Relaxed and open, be free of *dos* and *don'ts*.

d) On fruition

(i) *Temporary Fruition*

My own awareness, that's the fruition:
In the synchronicity of getting there while being there, there's no concern for the 'path.'
The deluded of this world are searching here and there,
Yet should they stop betting on hope and fear: bliss is here!

(ii) *Ultimate Fruition*

If the mind's restless grasping can be quietened,
The dualistic display will also come to rest.

2. The teaching in brief

Don't think, don't ponder, don't examine.
And don't practice, don't meditate, don't hope but don't fear.
Don't! Then your mental patterns will dissolve of themselves—naturally,
And you'll come to primordial intrinsic reality.

This completes the Doha of Tilopa, translated into Tibetan by Berotsana.

This doha is part of the "Doha Treasury: Eight Mahamudra Songs" (T: *do ha mdzod brgyad*) found in the Tengyur. The Tibetan text used for this translation was made in Rumtek under the 16th Karmapa.

Translated into English by Nicole Riggs, whose latest work is the book "Milarepa: Songs on the Spot."
© 2004 Nicole Riggs. Reproduction welcome if not for profit and with full acknowledgement.