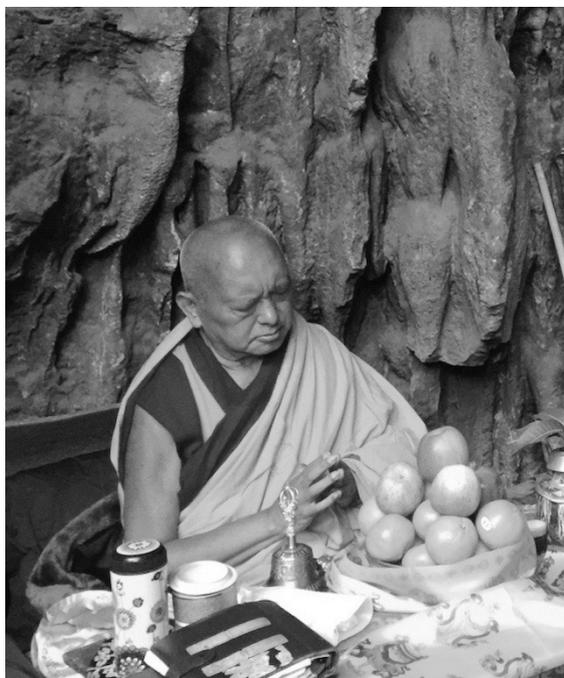


*A Requesting Prayer
to Maratika:
The Source of an Ocean of Siddhís*



*By Gyurme Thegchog Gyaltsen
Translated by Lama Zopa Rinpoche*

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Cover photo of Lama Zopa Rinpoche at Maratika Cave, 2016, and photo of the Maratika Cave on page 12 by Ven. Roger Kunsang.

Editor's Introduction

Maratika, also known by its local name of Halesi, is the site of the caves in Khotang District in eastern Nepal where the great master Padmasambhava (Guru Rinpoche) achieved immortality with the dakini Mandarava. Rich in history and legend, it is a popular pilgrimage destination for both Buddhists and Hindus seeking its powerful blessings through offerings, prayers, practice, and retreat. Not just ordinary people, but even great masters, yogis, and accomplished siddhas from all four traditions of Tibetan Buddhism travel to Maratika to perform long life practices, clear away obstacles, and make prayers for success at the wish-fulfilling long-life vase¹. In recent years, more and more foreign pilgrims from around the world have also been making their way to Maratika.

The prayer translated here, *A Requesting Prayer to Maratika: The Source of an Ocean of Siddhis* (*ma ra ti ka'i gsol 'debs 'chi med siddhi rgya mtsho'i 'byung gnas*), composed by Khenpo Gyurme Thegchog Gyaltsen, is a concise guide to the holy places and holy objects of Maratika in the form of a request. It also tells of the history and origin of the caves, the unique characteristics of the environment, the etymology of the place's name, and the particular practices to be done. The prayer is a condensed version of the *Guidebook to Maratika* compiled by the current Maratika Lama from ancient and modern traditional written and oral sources.

Khenpo Gyurme Thegchog Gyaltsen offered a copy of this prayer to Lama Zopa Rinpoche during a long life retreat in

the main cave in 2016. Due to that auspiciousness, Rinpoche translated the prayer into English and requested that it be made available in Tibetan, English, and Nepali to benefit the many Buddhist pilgrims visiting Maratika's holy places. As Rinpoche explained:

Any fortunate person who wishes to not only liberate themselves from the ocean of samsaric suffering, but also the six types of sentient beings—who have been our mothers equaling the limitless sky—and lead them to buddhahood, which is the total cessation of mistakes and completion of realizations, must first generate devotion as the root of the path to achieve buddhahood.

[In the Maratika] cave where Guru Rinpoche found immortal realization all your prayers can succeed. There is the naturally-arisen long-life vase of the Infinite Life Buddha Amitayus and many other precious holy objects of Maratika. If you wish to have an explanation and know how to pray to them [you will find instruction in this prayer].

Thank you to the Maratika Lama Ngawang Jikdrel Chokyi Wangchuk for compiling the original *Guidebook to Maratika*, Khenpo Gyurme Thegchog Gyaltsen for composing this prayer, and Kyabje Zopa Rinpoche for translating it. Due to this merit may His Holiness the Dalai Lama and all the great masters from all four traditions of Tibetan Buddhism have long lives and all their wishes be fulfilled without hindrance!

Ven. Sarah Thresher
May 2017

A Requesting Prayer to Maratika: The Source of an Ocean of Siddhis²

OM SVASTI

This pleasing well-decorated devas' park, a joyful sublime place,
Was blessed by the dharmakaya Vairochana, the sambhogakaya
Amitayus,
And the nirmanakaya of the three types, the Lotus-Born
Guru Padmasambhava;
The mind-sealed deities Hayagriva and Vajravarahi; and
the dakini Perfect Tara;
The Dharma protectors Mahadeva,³ Lion-Faced Dakini, Gesar,
and so forth,
Together with infinite bodhisattvas and victorious ones.
To Maratika, the wonderful supreme holy place, I request:
Please pacify the obstacles of hindering conditions,
And grant your blessings and the siddhi of immortality.⁴

In particular, the sole refuge object of transmigratory beings
of this degenerate time,
The Second Buddha Ogyen, father-mother in union,
Accomplished the realization of immortal life in three months
At this holy place for the sake of the teachings and
transmigratory beings.
They saw the Buddha of Infinite Life, Great Compassionate
Avalokiteshvara, Tara, and so forth,

Who offered them many profound methods of attainment.
To Maratika, the wonderful supreme holy place, I request:
Please pacify the obstacles of hindering conditions,
And grant your blessings and the siddhi of immortality.

At the center, on the side of the holy mountain of
Avalokiteshvara,⁵ is the splendid first door of the holy place.
Inside the cave⁶ is the wish-granting jewel and the long-life vase
that fulfills all prayers.
To the right of that is the magnificent imprint of the holy body
of Amitayus, Infinite Life,
And to its left, the self-arisen Mahaguru was born,⁷
Unceasingly granting auspicious wishes of whatever is desired.
To Maratika, the wonderful supreme holy place, I request:
Please pacify the obstacles of hindering conditions,
And grant your blessings and the siddhi of immortality.

There is a self-arisen canopy, umbrella, and banner, and
below that a fortune-wealth stone⁸
That grants any desired siddhi of wealth and sons to pitiful
transmigratory beings.
There are the holy objects of the Great Deva, the Four
Guardians, Hayagriva father-mother, self-arisen Tara,
and so forth,
Making it an especially exalted merit field for the devoted
to collect merit.
To Maratika, the wonderful supreme holy place, I request:
Please pacify the obstacles of hindering conditions,
And grant your blessings and the siddhi of immortality.

The four paths of secrecy gradually purify the obscurations
of the hells,
Liberate from the difficult path of the intermediate state and
the pollution of the womb,

And enable confession of degenerated vows and samayas
and so forth.

By differentiating between virtue and nonvirtue, these are
a wonderful sublime method persuading to virtue,
And, due to the extremely powerful prayers of the one father,
the Lotus-Born,

These bring relief to fortunate capable beings.⁹

To Maratika, the wonderful supreme holy place, I request:
Please pacify the obstacles of hindering conditions,
And grant your blessings and the siddhi of immortality.

The second door of the holy place, the cave where Mara was
completely controlled and subdued,

Is a hollow in the rock that can hold five hundred arhats.

Whoever hears the sound of the self-arisen turquoise conch
shell will be liberated from samsara.

Anyone who experiences the attainment-water on their
tongue¹⁰ will have a long life,¹¹

Purify obscurations and the five negative karmas without
break,¹²

And ultimately become a direct disciple of Guru
Padmasambhava.

To Maratika, the wonderful supreme holy place, I request:
Please pacify the obstacles of hindering conditions,
And grant your blessings and the siddhi of immortality.

The Lotus-Born father-mother in union, who encompass all
Three Roots,

Attained the Eight Deities Who Are Under Orders.¹³

There is the sign of the miraculous act of their having gone
straight up [through the roof of the cave],¹⁴

And the imprint of the holy body and two footprints of
the Guru.

There is a self-arisen phurba and dakini script.
The [marks of] Mara's head and hand having been immediately
separated are very glorious.
To Maratika, the wonderful supreme holy place, I request:
Please pacify the obstacles of hindering conditions,
And grant your blessings and the siddhi of immortality.

To the east of this holy place is the Peaceful Assembly Hall.
To the south is the imprint of the holy body of Ogyen and
the Assembly Hall of One Hundred Thousand Dakinis.
To the west is Vajrayogini.
The north is beautified by the signs of attainment of
the Three Types of Savior.¹⁵
In the four directions, from the centers of lotuses, medicinal
trees are born as a cause,
And the resultant flowers blossom in all four seasons.
To Maratika, the wonderful supreme holy place, I request:
Please pacify the obstacles of hindering conditions,
And grant your blessings and the siddhi of immortality.

At the top of the holy place is the self-arisen hat of the Guru,
The secret water, and the self-arisen thighbone.
Around it is Manjushri mountain and the mountain of
the Lord of Secrets.¹⁶
There is the Secret Cave of the Guru, the holy place where
the wisdom mother was hidden,
The holy place of Lhacham Mandarava's attainment, and
so forth.
These are beautifully decorated by the principal and entourage
and possess blessings.
To Maratika, the wonderful supreme holy place, I request:
Please pacify the obstacles of hindering conditions,
And grant your blessings and the siddhi of immortality.

In the past, when the Possessor of the Victorious Ones,
Padmakara,
And Lhacham Mandarava were practicing vajra life,
The [protectors] to whom the order was given to guard
those who practice the Dharma in this holy place were:
Outwardly, Lion-Face Dakini; inwardly, Four-Arm Mahakala;
Secretly, Mahadeva father-mother, and so forth—
The oceans of the oath-bound who always guide without
distraction.
To Maratika, the wonderful supreme holy place, I request:
Please pacify the obstacles of hindering conditions,
And grant your blessings and the siddhi of immortality.

Mara means “killing” and tika means “essence.”
“Killing” literally means “not existing by nature.”
The actual meaning can be interpreted as “having achieved
liberation from death.”

Even those whose religions have no levels¹⁷ endeavor to liberate
animals there.

It was called “Haleshe” because the Tibetan Dharma ministers
were so astonished by this holy place,¹⁸
And still to this day it is called that.¹⁹

To Maratika, the wonderful supreme holy place, I request:
Please pacify the obstacles of hindering conditions,
And grant your blessings and the siddhi of immortality.

At this cave,²⁰ which is nondual with the Potala,
It is said that the highest, most intelligent ones should do
the practice of long life,
The middling ones should offer a wheel of tsog,
And the least should make prostrations, offerings,
and requests.²¹

As was the compassionate advice of the one father,
the Lotus-Born:

In later times, for those sons of the lineage devoted to
the Lotus-Born,²²
Maratika will be preeminent among the fields for collecting
merit.
To Maratika, the wonderful supreme holy place, I request:
Please pacify the obstacles of hindering conditions,
And grant your blessings and the siddhi of immortality.

In this way, by the virtue of having made requests by relating
an explanation of this holy place,
May those who preserve the teachings, headed by the Savior
of the Snow Land, [His Holiness the Fourteenth Dalai Lama,]
have a stable life.
May the Buddha's teachings of explanations and practice
spread.
I pray that all transmigratory beings, while abiding in happiness,
may never be separated from bodhichitta and live long.

Colophons

Original Colophon:

The one who holds the name of scholar (*khenpo*) from Mindrolling Monastery, Gyurme Thegchog Gyaltsen, wrote this long life practice during the break time of a long life attainment ritual, on the anniversary of the passing of the perfect lama, on the third day of the water month of the Fire Monkey Year.

MAṄGALAM.

Editor's Colophon:

Due to the auspicious connection of receiving this prayer, *A Requesting Prayer to Maratika: The Source of an Ocean of Siddhis (ma ra ti ka'i gsol 'debs 'chi med siddhi rgya mtsho'i 'byung gnas)*, from the composer while visiting Maratika in 2016, Lama Zopa Rinpoche undertook the work of translating it in order to make it freely available as a concise guide for pilgrims visiting the holy places of Maratika. The original translations were scribed by Ven. Yeshe Khadro at Amitabha Buddhist Centre, Singapore, February 2016, and Ven. Sarah Thresher

at Losang Dragpa Centre, Malaysia, March 2016. This translation is a combined edit of the two dictations by Ven. Sarah Thresher, May 2016 and April 2017.

By this merit may our most kind and precious guru, Kyabje Thubten Zopa Rinpoche, live long!

Publisher's Colophon:

Translation checked against the Tibetan by Joona Repo, FPMT Translation Services, April 2017.



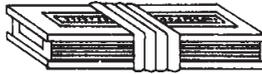
The cave at Maratika.

Notes

1. The long-life vase (Tib. *tshe bum*) is the most precious of all the naturally-arisen (Tib. *rang byung*) holy objects at Maratika, where any prayer that is made will be fulfilled.
2. The Sanskrit term *siddhi* is often translated into English as “attainment” or “realization.”
3. This is Mahasura who was subdued (i.e. enlightened) by Avalokiteshvara, just as Vishnu was subdued by Heruka Chakrasamvara.
4. When emptiness is actualized directly, the seed of delusion is completely eliminated, and since there is no more delusion, there is no more death. This is what is called the “the *siddhi* of immortality” or, as Lama Zopa Rinpoche refers to it, “the immortal realization” or “the undying realization” (Tib. *‘chi med dngos grub*).
5. Tib. *‘jig rten mgon*, or Skt. *Lokanatha*, more commonly known as “Avalokiteshvara” or “Chenrezig.”
6. Tib. *ke’u tshang*.
7. This term (Tib. *rang byung*) means “self-arisen” or “naturally-arisen.” There are many self-arisen images in Maratika that were not carved or created by human beings but were formed naturally or miraculously.
8. Tib. *ga’u nor*.
9. Tib. *dbugs dbyung*, lit. “freeing the breath.”
10. Water, known as “attainment-water” (Tib. *grub chu*), drips from certain parts of this cave and can be tasted.
11. This is the temporary benefit.
12. These five extreme negative karmas (Tib. *mtshams med lnga*) are: killing one’s father, killing one’s mother, killing an arhat, causing disunity among the sangha, and causing blood to flow from a buddha. These negative karmas are called “uninterrupted” or “without break” because if they are accumulated and not purified, they cause an immediate rebirth in the eighth and hottest hell, Inexhaustible Hell, “without interruption” or “without break” of another life in between.
13. Tib. *bka’ brgyad*.
14. Tib. *zangs thal gshegs pa*.
15. The Three Types of Savior (Tib. *rigs gsum mgon po*) are: Avalokiteshvara—all the buddhas’ compassion, Manjushri—all the buddhas’ wisdom, and Vajrapani—all the buddhas’ power.

16. I.e. Vajrapani.
17. Lama Zopa Rinpoche explains that *mutegpa* (Tib. *mu stegs pa*) literally means “not having levels.” This distinguishes the non-Buddhist “outsider” (Tib. *phyi pa*) tenets from the Buddhist “insider” (Tib. *nang pa*) tenets, which do have levels. These “levels” include the four schools of Buddhist philosophy and the three vehicles, where the lower ones act as stepping stones to the higher ones.
18. The current name for this place is Halesi.
19. The Tibetan term *hale* (Tib. *ha las*) means “to be astonished.”
20. Tib. *ke’u tshang*.
21. These three types of beings are categorized in terms of merit.
22. Here “sons” refers to both males and females.

Care of Dharma Books



Dharma books contain the teachings of the Buddha and thus they have the power to protect against lower rebirth and to point the way to enlightenment. Therefore, they should be treated with respect. They should be kept off the floor and places where people sit or walk and not stepped over. They should be covered or protected for transporting and kept in a high, clean place separate from more mundane materials. Other objects should not be placed on top of Dharma books and materials. Licking one's fingers and using saliva to turn pages creates negative karma.

If it is necessary to dispose of written Dharma materials, they should be burned rather than thrown in the trash. When burning Dharma texts, visualize that the letters of the texts to be burned transform into an AH ^ṁ, and the AH absorbs into your heart. Imagine burning blank paper. As you burn, you can recite OM AH HUM or the *Heart Sutra* while meditating on emptiness.

Lama Zopa Rinpoche has recommended that photos or images of holy beings, deities, and holy objects not be burned. Instead, they should be cut out of texts and, if possible, put in a stupa. Otherwise, put them high up in a tree inside a small, completely sealed structure, something like a bird house, so that the images do not end up on the ground.



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