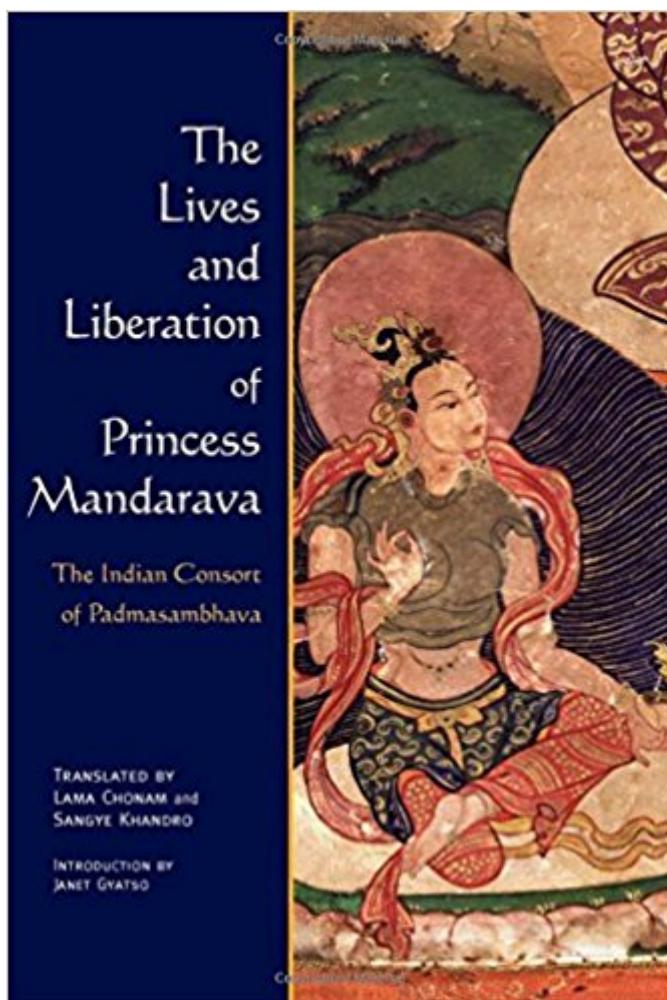


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The Lives And Liberation Of Princess Mandarava: The Indian Consort Of Padmasambhava



Synopsis

This lucid translation of a rare Tibetan text makes available for the first time to Western readers the remarkable life story of Princess Mandarava. As the principal consort of the eighth century Indian master Padmasambhava before he introduced tantric Buddhism to Tibet, Mandarava is the Indian counterpart of the Tibetan consort Yeshe Tsogyal. Lives and Liberation recounts her struggles and triumphs as a Buddhist adept throughout her many lives and is an authentic deliverance story of a female Buddhist master. Those who read this book will gain inspiration and encouragement on the path to liberation.

Book Information

Paperback: 256 pages

Publisher: Wisdom Publications (June 15, 1998)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0861711440

ISBN-13: 978-0861711444

Product Dimensions: 6 x 0.5 x 8.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 13.4 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 3.9 out of 5 stars 6 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #667,274 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #196 in Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Philosophy > Eastern > Buddhism > History #268 in Books > History > World > Religious > Buddhism #731 in Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Philosophy > Eastern > Buddhism > Tibetan

Customer Reviews

"An extraordinary story from the heart of Tibetan religious culture... replete with messages of encouragement... Her story presents its readers with a complex image of a woman engaged in the difficult process of self-realization. What would have been most striking to its 'traditional' readers is the strength of its resolutely feminine heroine, who carved out a distinctive way to travel on the classical tantric path." (Janet Gyatso, Harvard University)"The work is extraordinarily important, for its chief character is a woman who becomes a Buddha. It is, in fact, a proto-feminist document that reads right back into the very foundations of Indian and Tibetan Buddhism a very anti-patriarchal, liberating feminist dharma... Its real message is that women can be enlightened just as fully as men and that everyone should recognize the potency of feminine spiritual accomplishment. Surely this is a work which many American Buddhists will cherish. Perhaps it is a vision of what Buddhism in the

twenty-first century will become. Admirably translated." (The Quest)

Text: English (translation) Original Language: Tibetan

This is a biography worth reading whether you have faith in Buddhism or not. The remarkable accomplishments of Princess Mandarava pre and post Guru Rinpoche's (Padmasambhava's) meeting are inspiring to read. If you are looking for an inspirational view of what it means to have mastered skillful means, wisdom and compassion then look no further. There is also a section in the back of the book that lists all of the benefits of reading this book or keeping it in your house or carrying it with you when you travel etc. I own many Buddhist Dharma books and this is one of my favorite ones to read again and again.

it was a gift that I haven't given yet

This is a nam-thar, which means "Complete Liberation". Nam-thars are hagiographies and they do not necessarily describe historical facts. These kind of texts are stories of miraculous events, presenting buddhist tantric teachings in a metaphorical way, framed in time and places different from ours. About the text, from chapter one to twelve is described Mandarava's previous lives and her enlightened activity, which I found very tedious and unimportant. The actual biography starts from chapter 13, page 76, and the story becomes a little more realistic and understandable from the human historical perspective. In general, because of the "fantastic" elements of the text, these nam-thars are not entertaining or stimulating reading, so it depends on you to decide if this book is going to help you in your spiritual Dharma practice.

I am still giving this book 5 stars. It is a worthwhile read about Mandarava and describes both her process or realization and her service to sentient beings to relieve their sorrow and become enlightened. I have one reservation about the book and that is that many of the chapters are almost like written summaries and outlines. For instance, there is a section where she and Padmasambhava conquer aging and death at Maratiki Cave. This shows that there is a Buddhist tradition of physical immortality and light translation. The rituals that she and Padmasambhava used to accomplish this are covered. They practiced extensively quite a large number of practices which are only named. You would have to go elsewhere to find out about these and cannot learn much about them from this book. This kind of summarization is common in a number of medium to

advanced Buddhist books. I have found some books which explain the practices in more detail and some Buddhist glossaries that help define many terms that are undefined in some of these books. With the internet it is getting easier to search for these missing elements. A reader would need to do this with this book if one were to try to understand everything that it is saying. But even without this, you do get a flavor of her process and her enlightenment.

This book is an excellent insight into the life and times of both Princess Mandharava and the great Guru Padmasambhava, as told by Padmasambhava himself and recorded by his Tibetan consort Yeshe Tsogyal. This book is a terma (a teaching which was written down and then hidden for this present time). Also, it has a blessing prophecy attached to it, making it very beneficial to read or even be near a copy of this text. The terma itself is very easy to read and follows Mandharava's extraordinary life, in a most interesting progression. It's a very inspiring story!

A great account on the Life of a realized being. Shows how a female can overcome the cultural limitations placed on her and progress on the spiritual path, attain realization and then lead countless beings on that same path. Wonderful.

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