

# Teaching 17: Heruka Chakrasamvara Teachings

## with Geshe Sonam Ngodrup

### **Seventeenth Chakrasamvara teaching – 14.12.2024**

**by Geshe Sonam Ngodrup - transl. Ven. Khedrup**

First of all, tashi delek to you all, and Geshe la hopes that your studies, your practice, and indeed that everything is going well and happily.

So then, of course we are extremely fortunate to be able to meet the doctrine of the Buddha, and we are also extremely fortunate to be able to meet a teaching that includes both sutra and tantra, and withing the tantric teachings or the Vajrayana, we are even more fortunate to encounter anuttara, or highest yoga, tantra.

When we speak about tantra, one of the fundamental underpinning factors, and whichever class of tantra we think about actually, is what we call the practice of the four purities.

There are many great lamas, great scholarly and practitioner lamas, who have presented the differences between sutra and tantra using different criteria. Among these, lama Tsongkhapa emphasized the four purities as a practice which distinguishes tantra from sutra. So, lama Tsongkhapa said, “A path endowed with the practice of the four purities is the Vajrayana path. A path not endowed with the practice of the four purities is a sutra path.” Of course we’ve spoken a lot about these four purities, but just to review them we have the pure place or abode, the pure body, the pure enjoyment, and the pure activities. These are the four purities. Geshe la said that regarding the second purity, the pure body, this is where you have some difference in opinion among the various lineages. For example, when we speak about kriya, or action tantra, there is a controversy concerning whether self-generation (as the deity) can be practiced in kriya tantra or not. Although in our tradition it can be practiced, Geshe la says that the Sakyapa tradition argues against this, and holds that there is no self-generation practice within action tantra, the first of the four classes of tantra. Lama Tsongkhapa disagrees with this, and argues that for a path to be that of the Vajrayana, it must be endowed with the four purities. One of these purities is the pure body, and the pure body must be practiced in the aspect of generating oneself as the deity. Another controversy, or difference of opinion, is whether the deity can be generated on the basis of the five aggregates (of the practitioner). This is another point of contention. Some of you may be familiar with the, how to describe it, spicy back-and-forth between lama Gorampa and lama Tsongkhapa. One of their points of contention has to do with this point of how the generation stage is practiced. But there is not a lot of time to delve into some of these differences, so we will return to our focus.

So now, in order for our study and practice to come out well, in order for us to be of benefit to both ourselves and others, first we will make a request to the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas with a single-pointed mind of faith.

### **Preliminary Prayers**

We will begin with the praise to the Buddha. [There follows: Praise to Shakyamuni Buddha, A Brief Praise to Lord Heruka and the Four Deities, Refuge and Bodhicitta, Short Mandala Offering.]

Geshe la says that since there is a lot to cover today, we will only do a brief visualization and motivation meditation.

### **Meditation**

So, let us begin by placing our body and mind in a relaxed and open state.

*The body and mind are open and relaxed, and in the same way, the channels, the chakras, the prana (winds) are upright and relaxed.*

*Remember that our mind is in the nature of pure luminosity. It is clear and knowing, and that it can perfectly comprehend and understand an object.*

*Think, whether we contemplate ourselves, whether we contemplate others, whether we contemplate houses, mountains, forests and so forth, that despite the appearance that it is so, they do not have one atom of true, or inherent existence.*

*In the space in front, understanding that it is actually in fact the guru, the lama, from whom you have received the Heruka Chakrasamvara empowerment, visualize that Heruka father and mother, arise in the space in front of you.*

*And that, as we gaze up toward Chakrasamvara father and mother, imagine that with us, on either side, are our father and mother, and behind, in the human form, are all six types of sentient beings, the inhabitants of samsara.*

*Then, as we gaze upwards, bring forth a mind of refuge, and specifically a kind of tantric motivation of refuge. It is a kind of bodhicitta that thinks, "In this body, in this life, I must reach the state of resultant Vajradhara, I must achieve the state of Heruka Chakrasamvara."*

*Then, think that, pleased with our practice of refuge and bodhicitta, the lama, in the aspect of glorious Heruka (father and mother), comes to the crown of our head, dissolves into light, and merges with the extremely subtle wind and mind in our heart.*

*Then as he is absorbed, imagine that our body is pervaded by great bliss.*

*From that space of bliss, we apprehend the object of emptiness, and we give rise to the mind that is inseparable great bliss/wisdom.*

*Meditate on a feeling of joy, thinking that I have achieved a cause to meaningfully work for the benefit of sentient beings.*

So, in this way we have done a brief activity of motivation.

## **The Generation Stage**

To be able to achieve this resultant state of Chakrasamvara for all sentient beings, we need to train in both the stage of generation and the stage of completion. And we realize that to realize the completion stage, we must have the ripening factor of a correct generation stage practice in place, and that is where we find ourselves – the explanation of the generation stage.

Objects of Abandonment in the Generation Stage. We also understand that, within the many practices of the sadhana, when we come to the actual practices, we understand what the practices are attempting to achieve in terms of the objects of abandonment. These objects are three in number: ordinary death, ordinary intermediate state, or bardo, and ordinary rebirth. By transforming ordinary death, intermediate state, and rebirth into the path, we achieve the three resultant bodies of the Buddha: the Dharmakaya (Truth body), the Sambhogakaya (Enjoyment body), and the Nirmanakaya (Emanation body). Of course, to bring ordinary death, bardo and rebirth into the path of the three kayas is not such an easy thing, so as part of the practice, we have the many various preliminary activities that are completed. The eleven preliminary activities are the map we need in our mind for the practice of Chakrasamvara. They are the foundation on which we will build the celestial palace. Also, when we memorize these outlines, it allows us to develop a brief recitation practice that we can do any time, and it also makes the steps of the path clear in our mind.

Preliminary Practices. The first is the praise and request to the root and lineage gurus, followed by the instantaneous self-generation as the deity. Third is blessing the vajra and bell. Fourth is blessing the inner offering. Fifth is blessing the outer offerings and tormas. Sixth is blessing the outer offerings to the self-generation. Geshe la says that setting out and blessing all these offerings is like when you are inviting a guest. You want everything nice for them. And Geshe la also says that in one case, the guest is actually *you*, yourself, not just an external person!

Then the seventh activity is the meditation/recitation of Vajrasattva; eighth is meditating on the four immeasurables; ninth is blessing the various aggregates, constituents and so forth; tenth is meditating on the protection wheel to defeat all hindrances for oneself and others; and eleventh is, through the seven purities, accumulating the two collections of merit and wisdom. All of these are beautiful preliminary practices to set everything in place to go forward.

When we come to the actual practices connected with the accumulation of the collection of wisdom, the first of these is the meditation on taking ordinary death into the path of the Dharmakaya. So, Geshe la is connecting each of the three practices of taking ordinary death, bardo and rebirth into the path with an essential aspect. Let's start from the beginning. First, on the basis of the eight dissolutions, is taking death into the path of the Dharmakaya. Next, on the basis of the mere subtle body and mind, is taking the intermediate state into the path of the Sambhogakaya. Then, on the basis of the five manifest enlightenments, is taking rebirth into the path of the Nirmanakaya.

When we come to the end of the practice of taking rebirth into the path of the Nirmanakaya, the support and supported (meaning the celestial palace and the deities residing in that palace) is established. The thing to understand here is that the support and supported, the mandala of the celestial palace and deities, are generated instantaneously. This instantaneous aspect is important because, when we actually achieve Buddhahood, and we have that celestial abode, this is also going to happen instantaneously. We imagine that it happens instantaneously, and that it is achieved instantaneously upon enlightenment. However, for the purpose of developing our meditation, it is helpful to visualize it in stages. So that is what we find in the sadhana.

So, Geshe la says that as we move along with taking ordinary death, bardo and rebirth into the path (of the three kayas), he is mindful that he has more to share, especially about taking death into the path of the Dharmakaya, but we will go back and revisit this at a later time.

One of the most important things, though, when we talk about taking death, bardo and rebirth into the path of the three kayas, is that the *appearance aspect of the mind apprehending emptiness is what arises as the deity*. There is an analogy that we can use here to understand this. So, our ordinary body you can imagine as a kind of nugget of raw (or unrefined) gold, or silver. What does a gold or silversmith do? They take that gold or silver and heat it to a very high temperature until it becomes molten. This separates the pure gold or silver from any impurities that are present in its unrefined state. As a result, you are then left with pure gold or pure silver. Keeping in mind the purification that occurs in this analogy, we can see the beauty of this aspect of the practice: i.e., that the mind, in thinking about emptiness... that mind, in apprehending emptiness, the lack of inherent existence, the beauty of this is that any *ordinary* appearance will be naturally dispelled. It will be purified.

To make this point clear, let us propose another analogy. You are walking down a path and you encounter a large boulder blocking your way. Upon that boulder is a painting. If you can remove that boulder from the path, you may go on your way. In this analogy, the boulder represents the concept of inherent existence, which is “removed”, or purified, by the meditation on emptiness, and the painting on this boulder is ordinary appearance, which is also purified, or cleared away, by removing the boulder.

So, when we self-generate as the deity, these are the types of reflections we should have as part of the practice. When we have dissolved ordinary appearances in this meditation on lack of inherent existence, then that mind apprehending emptiness of inherent existence has an aspect of appearance that arises as the deity. This is a very important meaning that is being described here, and there are also other important points that support or are underpinnings of this, and these we will come to in the future. Some scholars say that it is actually the mind itself meditating on the lack of inherent existence that arises as the deity. You will find different presentations or interpretations of this. And, in fact that would be the majority opinion (i.e., that it is the mind itself meditating on the lack of inherent existence which arises as the deity). So, of course you can think about both of those presentations to see which one works better for you. Also, Geshe la is going to comment on this more as we move along.

So, then, we have kind of burned off all of the impurities originally mixed with the silver or gold, and now the molten silver or gold, what do we need to do? We need to arise this as the deity. Consequently, this practice of taking the three bodies into the path is one of the most important points we need to consider.

Details of the Generation of the Deity. In terms of where we are in the sadhana, we are now in the generation of the deity, and as we said, the visualizations here are divided into the support and the supported, or the residence (the celestial palace), and the residents (Heruka father and mother. The support is the palace, and the supported is the main deity, together with the retinue deities (of the five wheels).

In terms of where we are in the discussion of the supported, the deities, we have talked extensively about the generation of the father, and now we are speaking about the generation of the mother.

So, we are on p. 44 of the Berzin translation:

*Facing me as the Vanquishing Master Surpassing All is the  
Vanquishing Lady Surpassing All, Vajra-varahi, with her body  
red and having one face.  
She has two arms, three eyes, is naked and her hair hangs loose.*

Embracing the father in that sort of meditation posture, all of you are familiar with this image. And so, the red colour of the divine lady, we have spoken about there being various reasons for this, one being that she has ignited the inner fire, tummo (Tib. *gtum mo*) or kundalini. Another understanding of this is that the great bliss, which is apprehending emptiness, this has a feeling of great joy or bliss, and the red colour represents this as well.

Also, she is naked, and that nakedness is directed toward the necessity of bringing forth great bliss.

*She wears an apron adorned with fragments of a (human) skull.*

And so, she has an apron adorned with fragments of human skull, but Geshe la says that what you can understand about this is that this apron is like a belt that goes around her holy waist and then hanging from this are bone ornaments which are like a skirt, rather than an apron, falling in front of her body. When you have various deities, especially female deities, with this kind of bone ornament, it might be embellished with damarus, vajras bells, and these sorts of things, but here it is adorned with fragments of human skull. You'll notice that the bone is in a dried form, and also the skulls (i.e., "garland of skulls") that adorn Vajravarahi's body are in a dried form. This represents in intense inner heat of tummo, the inner fire.

*She embraces me, her fatherly partner, around my neck with her left hand,  
in which she holds a skullcup filled with the blood of the four demonic mara forces and the like,  
and serves it up to my mouth, her fatherly partner;*

Actually, in the skull cup filled with nectar she is holding up and offering to the father, it is said that there is not only blood in that skull cup, but also a bit of intestines mixed in with that as well. The blood represents great bliss wisdom and the intestines represent the illusory body. So, this is the union of great bliss emptiness, or

great bliss wisdom and the illusory body, we could say. So “union”, or *zung jug* in Tibetan, this is a very important word, and we will explore more about the significance of this later as well. So, the skullcup filled with the blood of the four demonic forces, we have gone over this many times, this represents the defeat of those maras. The Tibetan word for amrit, or nectar, this is “*bdud rtsi*” in Tibetan. Here, “bdud” actually refers to demon, and “rtsi” is the substance which overcomes demons, so here nectar can be understood as something like “demon-overcoming substance”.

*With her right hand she threatens with the threatening mudra,  
as well as with a vajra, all malevolent beings in the ten directions.*

So, with her right hand she threatens all the malevolent beings in the ten directions, so it is a very commanding type of gesture to clear away the demons.

*Because she realizes the equality in voidness of all wandering beings, She possesses  
the brilliance of sunlight  
Through having an appearance of totally pure deep awareness That is like  
the fires at the time of the eons of destruction.*

We can also think that, because of this wisdom that recognizes the lack of inherent existence of all things, it burns like the fire at the end of the eon because it is able to completely burn away the ignorance grasping at the self. Because she has that perfection of wisdom, the intensity of her brilliance is greater than the sun.

*She delights in blood and drips out blood,*

This is from the secret place, so it refers to great bliss. Not only has she generated great bliss necessary to realize great wisdom herself, but she is able to guide beings as well to their generation of great bliss/wisdom, so that is what is signified by the dripping blood.

*As she nicely wraps her two calves around me, her fatherly partner, above my  
thighs.*

*Since she works for the benefit of wandering beings  
Even though remaining in the great blissful awareness  
That's the functional nature of an exceptionally perceptive  
mind of vipashyana,*

So, at the same time she is in this profound equipoise of great bliss/wisdom, she engages in activities for the benefit of sentient beings, while in equipoise. We always talk about the periods within meditative equipoise, and without meditative equipoise, but it is only for a Buddha that there is not difference between those two, because within or without being in meditative equipoise, they can still accomplish the welfare of sentient beings.

*She has an identity-nature of compassion.  
She is bedecked with the mudra-seal of the five bone-ornaments,*



At this point, if you are observant, you will notice that the father has six mudra born ornaments, and the mother has only five bone ornaments. So, which one does she not have? She does not have the ornament of the ash of human bone smeared on her body. That particular kind of ash (white, of human bone) represents the white constituent of the semen. Since the father is said to be more related to that, he has this ornament and the mother does not. And another way of understanding these other five bone ornaments is that they represent the first five paramitas, or perfections, and Vajravarahi's holy body itself represents the final paramita, the perfection of wisdom. Continuing,

*(She) has as a crown of five dried human skulls,  
And wears a long hanging necklace of fifty dried human skulls.*

So, the meaning of the symbolism here, is that a complete practice must necessarily have all six of these paramitas, or perfections. The five human skulls, and the skullcup being of this kind of dried, white bone, represents the intensity of her blazing tummo, her inner fire.

Regarding the long hanging necklace of fifty dried human skulls in the sadhana text, Phabonka Rinpoche has mentioned that some lama practitioners visualize the mother with five human skulls, and he said that he wasn't sure why they do this, but that there must be a reason for it. Geshe la thinks that one of the scholars who speaks about the mother with the (necklace of) wet human heads rather than the dried skulls might be Akhu Sherab Gyatso.

In this way we have completed the visualization of the holy mother, so that the visualization of the holy father and mother is completed.

Next we have the "ennobling consecration", which is how Berzin reads "blessing" here: so, this next section is "Ennobling Consecration of the Private Places (of the father and mother), and the Generation of Great Bliss". Geshe la is explaining that in the Tibetan, "Ennobling Consecration of the Private Places and Generation of Great Bliss" is actually given as "blessing of the space and secret". Geshe la says that "space" refers to the father's vajra and "secret" refers to the mother's lotus. Geshe la says that you should know what the meaning of space and secret is here, but since Berzin hasn't mentioned this in his translation, you might want to make a note of this, i.e., that we talk about the blessing of space and secret, with space referring to the father's vajra, and secret to the mother's lotus.

*Within a non-objectifying state (of voidness), [i.e., a state of emptiness of inherent existence, Geshe la says]*

*My private place as the father, from a white HUM, transforms into a white five-spoked vajra.*

*At its tip, transforming from a red BYA, comes a red gem, marked with a yellow BYA.*

Geshe la says that the tip of the father's vajra is a ruby-coloured gem marked with a yellow BYA. What we want to think is that outside it may have the form of the male organ, but within it actually has the form of the five spoked vajra, and the yellow BYA is blocking the exit door of the male organ. This represents the holding off of the downward moving wind, and the fact that the yellow letter BYA is there, also represents the fact that the white

constituent is blocked from exiting the organ.

*Within a non-objectifying state (of voidness), the private place of my motherly partner, from a (red) A transforms into a red three-petaled lotus.*

So, the three-petaled lotus (representing the mother's secret place) has two petals on the sides (i.e. one petal to right side, another to the left side), and the third petal in the middle. This is representing the door to the mother's organ, or secret place.

*Transforming from a white DYA, it has a white stamen, representing bodhichitta and marked at its tip with a yellow DYA.*

So this visualization is actually the consecration, or blessing, of space and secret. So, remember that the blessing of space is the blessing of the father's vajra, and blessing of secrets is the blessing of the mother's lotus. And so on the basis of this, the four joys are going to arise and the arising of the four joys is what clears away any obstacles for the generation of great bliss. That's how it all fits together. Regarding the next part of the visualization, Geshe la says there is a visualization of putting on the armor, which actually is explicitly stated later in the sadhana, but this section here you can also see as like wearing the armor. This type of armor is worn by both the father and mother in this section is, starting from the navel, the heart, the throat and then the forehead. Each of these places has a sun disc and a moon disc, but rather than lying flat, they are standing vertically. It's actually a vertical sun and moon disc facing each other at each of the four places mentioned (navel, heart, throat and forehead).<sup>1</sup> So, we know there are these four sets of (vertical) sun/moon discs facing each other, and on each disc there is a particular mantra, from which red light radiates out. Visualizing this we could view as putting on the armor, or blessing the four places. It's good to understand the meaning of the section heading to include, "blessing the four places, or putting on the armor", because it is not mentioned explicitly.

This next part of the visualization, if you are new to the deity practice, is not going to be easy, because you are visualizing these sun/moon discs with different mantras facing each other on behalf of the father and mother. The details of the visualization begin on p. 45:

*At my navel as the father, on a (vertical) moon-disc (is the mother's heart mantra): OM VAJRA VAIROCHANYE HUM HUM PHAT SVAHA*

*(Similarly) at my heart, on a moon-disc (the mother's auxiliary heart mantra): OM SARVA BUDDHA DAKINIYE  
VAJRA VARNANIYE HUM HUM PHAT SVAHA*

*At my throat, on a sun-disc (the father's heart mantra):  
OM SHRI VAJRA HE-HE RU-RU KAM HUM HUM PHAT  
DAKINI JALA SHAMVARAM SVAHA*

*At my forehead, on a sun-disc (the father's auxiliary heart mantra):  
OM HRIH HA HA HUM HUM PHAT*

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<sup>1</sup> Geshe la expands further on this visualization: "These (moon and sun discs with adorning mantras) are all visualized inside the deity's holy body. It is like the crystal glass images they have where an image of HH Dalai Lama is visible as a hologram within the crystal. It is like that, almost like an image in a mirror."



So, this describes the visualization of the discs at the four places of the father. Just remember that some of these are on sun discs, and some are on moon discs. Geshe la says it is important to note that whether on the father this disc at a particular place is a sun or a moon, at the mother's corresponding place, the disc will be the opposite. So, for example, at the father's navel is a moon disc, but at the mother's navel is a sun disc.

Now, for the four places of the mother, beginning with the navel:

*At the navel of the mother, on a (vertical) sun-disc (is the father's heart mantra): OM SHRI VAJRA HE-HE RU-RU KAM HUM HUM PHAT DAKINI JALA SHAMVARAM SVAHA*

*(Similarly) at her heart, on a sun-disc (the father's auxiliary heart mantra): OM HRIH HA HA HUM HUM PHAT*

*At her throat, on a moon-disc (the mother's heart mantra):*

*OM VAJRA VAIROCHANYE HUM HUM PHAT SVAHA*

*At her forehead, on a moon-disc (the mother's auxiliary heart mantra):*

*OM SARVA BUDDHA DAKINIYE VAJRA VARNANIYE HUM HUM PHAT SVAHA*

So, what happens is that, at the four places we have a sun and a moon facing each other, and each of those discs has a mantra associated with it.<sup>2</sup> Then light rays emanate from the letters of each of these mantras, and these light rays sort of dance together (or, intertwine). So, this practice is actually a profound way of purifying the winds and chakras, to remove any obstacles to using those.

This is the visualization described by the following:

*All those mantras are red in color, emanate (red) rays of light,*

*And (stick out) erect, coiled counter-clockwise (ringing their discs).*

*Moreover, the mantras face one another*

*And have taken on the aspect of their light-rays embracing.*

This is where we come to a very important part of the sadhana. We are coming to the point of generating great bliss in the generation stage. We know that within our tradition one does not generally take on a physical partner. Therefore, it is very important to generate the wisdom mother, and then on that basis to imagine experiencing the four joys. This is what is unfolding here.

How this happens is that one visualizes in the manner explained above, and then imagines experiencing the four joys. From experiencing the four joys, one is able to arise great bliss, placing that great bliss on its objective focus of emptiness (of inherent existence). On the basis of this experience of the union of great bliss and wisdom experiencing emptiness, then one contemplates that the supported, which is the mandala (of the deities), and the support, the celestial palace, are empty of inherent existence. In some commentaries it is said that this is, in fact, *the very essence of the generation stage*. To this point, this section of the sadhana concludes with:

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<sup>2</sup> See appendix for a depiction of the sun and moon discs with the various mantras arranged counterclockwise on their surfaces.

## OM AH HUM

*By our going into union, my bodhichitta melts. Arriving from the crown of my head to my throat – joy; Arriving from my throat to my heart – supreme joy; Arriving from my heart to my navel – distinguished joy; Arriving from my navel to the tip of my gem, There arises deep awareness of simultaneously arising joy, Whereby, both the supporting and supported mandalas*

(i.e., the support of the mandala palace and the supported deities)

*take on the essential nature of inseparable blissful awareness and voidness.*

(Khedrup la notes that “where Berzin has ‘inseparable blissful awareness and emptiness’, this is what I would translate as “inseparable great bliss/wisdom.”)

Another really important point here is that when we meditate on the four joys, we understand that there is both a forward and a reverse progression of the four joys.

Geshe la says that at this point in the sadhana, we have completed the meditation on the main deities and the meditations related to this, and now we are going to begin the meditations related to the retinue deities. The generation of the meditation on these retinue deities is accomplished on the basis of a meditation on the “five wheels”. The first is known as the great bliss wheel, then the mind, speech and body wheels, and finally the commitment wheel. So the sixty-two deities of this (Luipa) tradition of Chakrasamvara can also be referred to as the deities of the five wheels. How do we get to this number of sixty-two? Let’s take an easy approach. So, for the mind, speech and body wheels, there are “eight” deities in each, for a total of twenty-four. When we speak about the eight deities, Geshe la notes, this refers to the eight mother deities which are counted for a total of twenty-four. We understand that each of these twenty-four mothers (yum) is the main deity, but she has a male consort (yab) who is the father. So, for each of the eight female deities of the mind, speech and body wheels, we need eight male deity consorts,. So you have the twenty-four principal mother deities, together with the twenty-four male consorts, which brings you to a total, for the mind, speech and body wheels, of forty-eight. Counting the two main deities, Chakrasamvara father and mother, this brings the total to fifty. Then you have the commitment wheel, here you have eight solitary female deities known as the guardians of the eight doors (in the eight directions), which brings the total to fifty-eight. Then, how do you get to sixty-two from that? We add the four female deities (of the wheel of great bliss), known as the four heart dakinis. This is how we get to sixty-two.

There are additional points to mention regarding these sixty-two deities. First, most of these deities are positioned so that they are facing inward toward the father and mother. However, the eight deities of the commitment wheel, the guardians of the doors, face outward in a mode of protection. Secondly, regarding the four very important heart dakinis (in the wheel of great bliss), these four female deities are sometimes also referred to as the four vajra mothers.

Continuing now with the sadhana section “Clarifying the Visualization of the Great Bliss Wheel” on p. 46,

*On the lotus petals, in the east is black Dakini; In the north, green Lama;*

*In the west, red Khandarohi; And in the south, yellow Rupini.*

*They have one face, three eyes, with mouths having fangs bared and a slight smile; They are naked and their hair hangs loose.*

*They have four arms: the first right hand is holding a cleaver and the first left one a skullcup –*

*They hold them at their hearts in a manner as if they were embracing;*

*Their lower right hand holds up a damaru-drum and the lower left a khatvanga-staff.*

*They stand with their right legs outstretched,*

*Are bedecked with the mudra-seal of the five bone-ornaments, have a crown of five dried human skulls*

*And wear a long hanging necklace of fifty dried human skulls.*

*In the four intermediate directions, on moon-discs, sit four human skullcups brimming with five nectars.*

*This is the great bliss wheel.*

Geshe la says this is important: in the four cardinal directions you have the four heart dakinis, and in the four intermediate directions you have four skullcups filled with nectar. These four skullcups filled with nectar represent four of the five objects of sense enjoyment. Leaving aside sound, we have the four objects of sight, of touch, of smell, and of touch.

Geshela also points out that these four heart dakinis in the wheel of great bliss are in close proximity to the two main deities. With Heruka Chakrasamvara father and mother, together with the four heart dakinis, you have the mandala of the five-deity practice of Chakrasamvara (counting Heruka mother/father as one).

So now the visualization of the deities of the mind wheel:

*On the eastern spoke of the mind wheel, Pullira-malaya, are Khanda-kapala and Prachanda. On the northern spoke, Jalandhara, are Maha-kankala and Chandakshi.*

*On the western spoke, Oddiyana, are Kankala and Prabhavati.*

*On the southern spoke, Arbuda, are Vikata-damstri and Maha-nasa.*

*On the “fire” (southeastern) spoke, Gaudavari, are Sura-vairina and Viramati.*

*On the “truthless” (southwestern) spoke, Rameshvari, are Amitabha and Kharvari. On the*

*“wind” (northwestern) spoke, Devikoti, are Vajra-prabha and Lankeshvari. On the “powerful” (northeastern) spoke, Malava, are Vajra-deha and Drumacchaya.*

*The deities of the mind wheel stand in the manner of those who act in the sky, and all have bodies blue in color.*

Geshe la says that you may have noticed here the phrase, “deities who stand in the manner of those who act in the sky”. Where does this description originate? You may remember in the origination story of the Chakrasamvara Tantra, Chakrasamvara arose to subdue Ishvara and all the retinue gods causing problems. So, in this retinue there were those who had the name of “those who act in the sky.” When we are talking about all the worldly deities that Chakrasamvara subdued, there were the eight deities of the sky who came down and pledged themselves to Ishvara. So, because these eight came from the sky and bowed down (to Ishvara), that is why we have this descriptive phrase here, “stand(ing) in the manner of those who act in the sky.”

So, Ishvara, having had those eight deities come from the sky to pledge allegiance to him, he assigned each of the eight, to eight different realms where they would subjugate beings and cause all sorts of problems for them. Then, when Chakrasamvara arose to subdue the various deities of Ishvara, he would naturally subdue these eight. So, when those eight were defeated by Chakrasamvara, they arose then, transformed into an enlightened aspect of these eight deities. So, the appearance of these deities is the same as the original deities of Ishvara, but having been subdued, they are now in their enlightened aspect.

Geshe la also says that sometimes in the sadhana only the mother deity (yum) is mentioned, because that is the main deity, but here (in the case of the mind wheel, for example) you will see that this is not the case. However, it will be the case when it comes to the point in the sadhana where we discuss the deities related to the thirty-seven factors of enlightenment.

*The deities of the mind wheel stand in the manner of those who act in the sky, and all have bodies blue in color.*

As in the case of the visualization of Vajravarahi above (p.44) this visualization also represents the “possession of all (nine) moods of stilled and settled shamatha, and exceptionally perceptive vipashyana.”

Now we come to the visualization of the deities of the speech wheel. They have a similar description, namely those who “stand in the manner of those who act on the ground.” The reason for this description is analogous to that explained above for the mind wheel.

From the sadhana, p. 47:

*On the eastern spoke of the speech wheel, Kamarupa, are Ankuraka and Iravati. On the northern spoke, Ote, are Vajra-jatila and Maha-bhairava.  
On the western spoke, Trishakuni, are Maha-vira and Vayu-vega.  
On the southern spoke, Kosala, are Vajra-humkara and Sura-bhakshi.  
On the “fire” (southeastern) spoke, Kalinga, are Subhadra and Shyama-devi.  
On the “truthless” (southwestern) spoke, Lampaka, are Vajra-bhadra and Subhadra. On the “wind” (northwestern) spoke, Kanchira, are Maha-bhairava and Haya-karna. On the “powerful” (northeastern) spoke, Himalaya, are Viru-paksha and Kha-ganana.  
The deities of the speech wheel stand in the manner of those  
who act on the ground,  
And all have bodies red in color.*

Now the section Clarifying the Visualization of the Body Wheel:

*On the eastern spoke of the body wheel, Preta-puri, are Mahabala and Chakra-vega. On the northern spoke, Griha-devata, are Ratna-vajra and Khandarohi.  
On the western spoke, Saurashtra, are Hayagriva and Shaundini.  
On the southern spoke, Suvarna-dvipa, are Akasha-garbha and Chakra-varmini. On the “fire” (southeastern) spoke, Nagara, are Shri Heruka and Suvira.  
On the “truthless” (southwestern) spoke, Sendhu, are Padma-narteshvara and Maha-bala. On the “wind” (northwestern) spoke, Maru, are Vairochana and Chakra-vartini.*

*On the “powerful” (northeastern) spoke, Kuluta, are Vajrasattoa and Maha-virya.  
The deities of the body wheel stand in the manner of those  
who act beneath the ground,  
And all have bodies white in color.*

*Moreover, all twenty-four heroic viras have one face and three eyes, Their hair  
in a (two-leveled) top-knot,  
And fastened around their forehead, the silk head-band of a vira (with vajra  
designs).  
They have four arms: the first two hands, holding a vajra and a bell, are  
embracing their motherly partner.  
The remaining right holds a damaru-drum and the left a khatvanga-staff. They are  
bedecked with the mudra-seal of the six bone-ornaments,  
Have a crown of five dried human skulls,  
Wear a long hanging necklace of fifty moist human heads, And stand  
with their right leg outstretched.  
All twenty-four heroic lady virinis have one face, two arms, and three eyes. Embracing  
their fatherly partner with both arms,  
Their right hand holds a cleaver, while threatening with the threatening mudra all  
malevolent beings in the ten directions.  
Their left holds a skullcup filled with blood and serves it up (to the  
mouths of their fatherly partners).  
They are naked, with the bodily form of ferocious women,  
Beautified by having their hair hanging loose,  
They are bedecked with the mudra-seal of the five bone-ornaments, Have a  
crown of five dried human skulls,  
And wear a long hanging necklace of fifty dried human skulls And an apron  
(with tiny bells) making the tinkling sound “sil-sil.”*

So, what should you take from here? The mind wheel deities are all blue in colour; the speech wheel deities are all red in colour; and, the body wheel deities are all white in colour. However, when we come to the eight deities of the commitment wheel, also known as the guardians of the eight doors, it is more complicated. The bodies of the deities in the cardinal directions are: black in the east, green in the north, red in the west, and yellow in the south. But the bodies of the deities in the intermediate direction are half one colour, and half another. In the southeast, the left half of the body of the deity is yellow and right half blue; in the southwest, the left half of the body of the deity is red and right half yellow; in the northwest, the left half of the body of the deity is green and right red; and in the northeast, the left half of the body of the deity is blue and right half green.

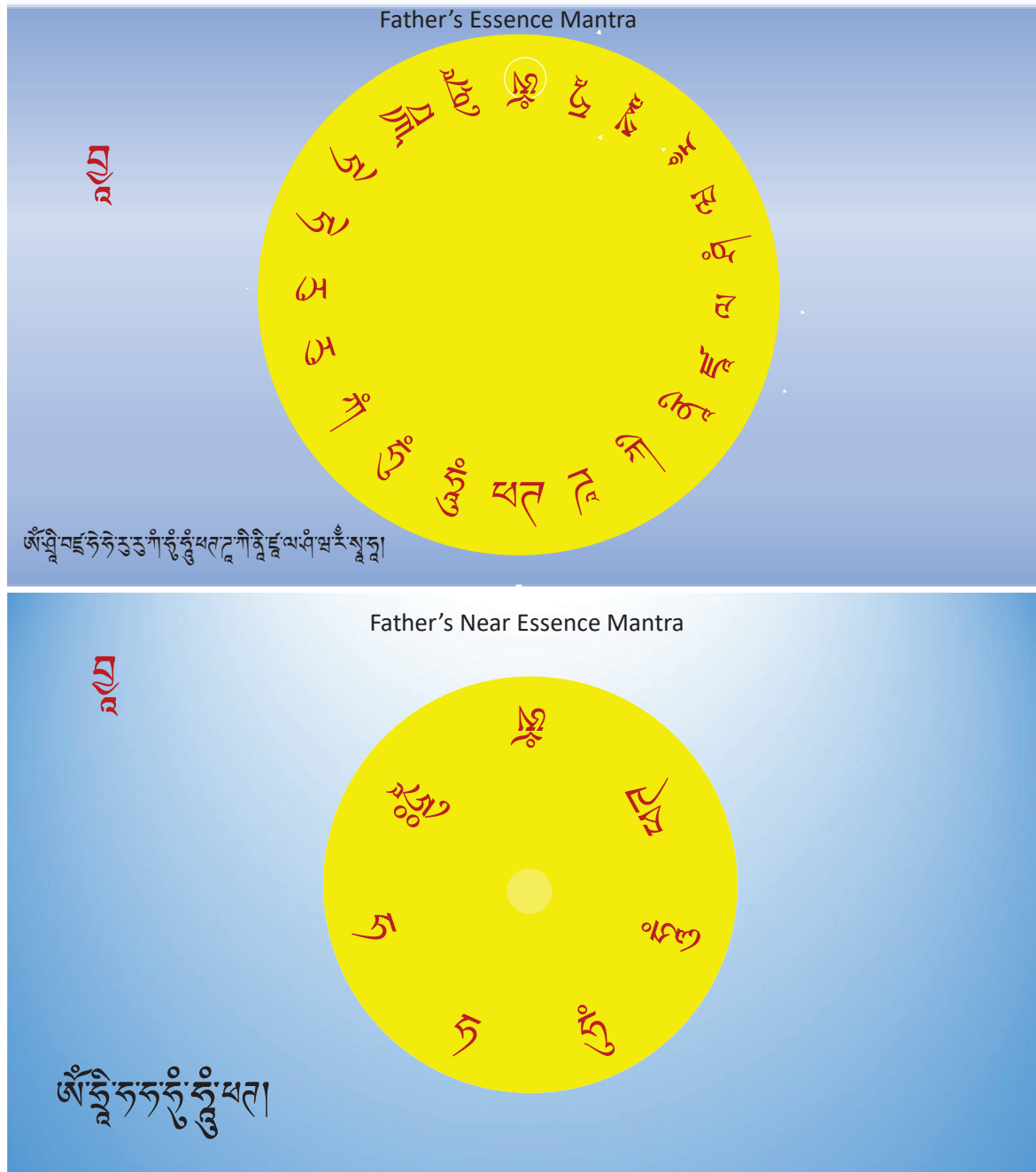
At this point we have (only) briefly gone over some of the details of the sixty-two deities. Geshe la says not to worry, we will revisit this again in more detail when we talk about how they are to be meditated on as a body mandala, and also when we discuss a different way of counting the deities as they relate to the thirty-seven factors of enlightenment. All of this is going to come next time.

So, thank you very much. Let us dedicate the merit.

*Through the power of our merit, may all of those who are possessed of negative thoughts and conduct, give rise to  
all that is good, to thoughts of loving kindness and compassion.*

***NOTE: Appendix follows on pp. 15, 16***





<sup>3</sup> These depictions are described in Kyabje Ling Rinpoche's Commentary "The Ecstatic Dance of Chakrasamvara", p. 247 (Dechen Ling Press 2013 Edition of the translation by David Gonzalez) in the section on "The Method for Meditating on the Corresponding Purity" of the deities in the body mandala. Note also that the Tibetan letters corresponding to BYA (in the case of the father) and DYA (mother) in Berzins's text are shown in the upper left of the figures.

Mother's Essence Mantra

ॐ ध धी धि धी धि धी धि धी धि धी धि

[illegible]