

G E S H E K E L S A N G G Y A T S O

The Highest
Yoga Tantra
Practice of
Heruka Body
Mandala



ESSENCE OF VAJRAYANA

M O T I L A L B A N A R S I D A S S

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Buddha Vajradhara, Buddha Shakyamuni, and Buddha Heruka are the same person, differing only in aspect. When Buddha turned the Wheel of Dharma of Sutra he appeared in the form of an ordained person, when he turned the Wheel of Dharma of Tantra in general he appeared in the form of Vajradhara, and when he turned the Wheel of Dharma of Heruka Tantra in particular he appeared in the form of Heruka.

Heruka is Buddha's mind of compassion manifested as form. Only Buddhas have the ability to display their minds as form. We sentient beings are unable to do this because our mind and body are different natures, but a Buddha's mind and body are the same nature and so wherever their mind goes their body goes too. We always perceive a gap between our mind and its object. This is a mistaken perception, or mistaken appearance. Having completely abandoned this mistaken perception, Buddhas have the ability to display their mind as form, such as the forms of living beings and inanimate objects. For this reason it is said that Buddhas' emanations pervade the whole universe.

Buddha's mind of omniscient wisdom has thirty-seven parts, known as his 'thirty-seven realizations conducive to enlightenment'. These thirty-seven realizations appear in the form of the thirty-seven Deities of Heruka's mandala. We normally say that there are sixty-two Deities in Heruka's mandala, but if we count each union of Father and Mother as one Deity there are thirty-seven Deities. The thirty-seven realizations conducive to enlightenment of Bodhisattvas are causal paths and the thirty-seven realizations of Buddhas are resultant paths. A general explanation of these thirty-seven realizations can be found in *Ocean of Nectar*.

THE ORIGIN OF THESE INSTRUCTIONS

These instructions were originally taught by Buddha at the request of Vajrapani and Vajravarahi. Buddha taught three root and five explanatory Tantras of Heruka. The three root Tantras are: the *Extensive Root Tantra*, which has three hundred thousand stanzas; the *Middling Root Tantra*, which has

one hundred thousand stanzas; and the *Condensed Root Tantra*, which has fifty-one chapters. Of these, only the last was translated from Sanskrit into Tibetan. The five explanatory Tantras, which are commentaries to the *Condensed Root Tantra*, are: *Vajradaka Tantra*, *Abhicharya Tantra*, *Mukha Tantra*, *Sarwacharya Tantra*, and *Little Sambara Tantra*.

Later, great Indian Buddhist Masters such as Luyipa, Ghan-tapa, and Krishnapada wrote commentaries to these root and explanatory Tantras, as did many subsequent Tibetan Masters. In particular, Je Tsongkhapa wrote a very blessed and renowned commentary to the root Tantra of Heruka, entitled *Clear Illumination of All Hidden Meanings*, and a commentary to the Heruka sadhana, entitled *Dö jo*, which means 'Wish-fulfilling'. Later, other Lamas including Je Phabongkhapa also wrote special commentaries, based on the previous Indian and Tibetan commentaries. This commentary, *Essence of Vajrayana*, written especially for Western practitioners, is based on the instructions of Je Tsongkhapa and my kind root Guru, Trijang Dorjechang.

Traditionally there are three systems for practising the instructions of Heruka Tantra: the system according to Luyipa, the system according to Krishnapada, and the system according to Ghantapa. Ghantapa's system has two instructions: the instruction on the outer mandala of the five Deities of Heruka, and the instruction on the inner mandala of the sixty-two Deities of Heruka body mandala. This commentary, *Essence of Vajrayana*, is based on the latter. The lineage of these instructions is completely unbroken.

THE BENEFITS OF PRACTISING THESE INSTRUCTIONS

The *Condensed Root Tantra* praises the special qualities of Heruka practitioners. It says that all the Heroes and Heroines residing in the twenty-four places such as Puliramalaya and Dzalandhara enter into the bodies of sincere practitioners, blessing their channels, drops, and winds, and causing them to gain realizations of spontaneous great bliss, the actual quick path to enlightenment. Because these Heroes and Heroines are emanations of Heruka and Vajravarahi their bodies

are the same nature as their minds and can go wherever their minds go, unobstructed by physical objects. Thus countless Heroes and Heroines can actually enter into the body of sincere practitioners and bless their channels, drops, and winds. Indeed, Heruka himself always remains at the heart of sincere practitioners, bestowing upon them great powers of body, speech, and mind.

In the *Condensed Root Tantra* it is said that just by seeing a sincere Heruka practitioner we purify our negativities and attain liberation; just by hearing or being touched by such a practitioner we receive blessings and are cured of sickness; and just by being in the presence of such a practitioner our unhappiness, mental disturbances, delusions, and other obstacles are dispelled. Why is this? It is because the actual Deities of Heruka abide within the body of the practitioner and therefore seeing the practitioner is not so different from seeing Heruka himself. In Tibet there are many sayings to the effect that merely seeing a special Lama or wearing a blessing cord received from such a Lama causes liberation. Je Phabongkhapa said 'I do not know whether or not these sayings are true, but seeing or touching a Heruka practitioner is a real cause of liberation.'

As times become spiritually more degenerate it is harder to receive the blessings of other Tantric Deities such as Yamantaka or Guhyasamaja; and as the number of Gurus in the lineage increases it takes longer to receive attainments. However, the opposite is the case with Heruka. Kyabje Trijang Rinpoche says in his ritual prayer of Heruka:

As times become ever more impure
 Your power and blessings ever increase,
 And you care for us quickly, as swift as thought;
 O Chakrasambara Father and Mother, to you
 I prostrate.

As times become more impure, Heruka's blessings become more powerful and we receive them more easily; and the greater the number of Gurus in the lineage, the more swiftly we receive attainments. Why is this? When Buddha revealed

Splendour, where he gave further extensive teachings on both the Sutras and Tantras, and composed many more texts. These writings, known as the *Collection of Praises*, include such works as *Praise of the Dharmadhatu*, *Praise of the Supramundane*, *Praise of the Inconceivable*, and *Praise of the Ultimate*. These activities are likened to Buddha's third turning of the Wheel of Dharma.

It is not possible in such a brief account even to begin to do justice to Nagarjuna's life and works. Throughout his life he devoted himself entirely to reviving the Mahayana Dharma and to sustaining the Mahayana Sangha. To this end he gave prolific teachings, composed many books, and performed countless other virtuous deeds. In all, Nagarjuna lived for over six hundred years.

SHAWARI

Shawari was a disciple of Nagarjuna. From the point of view of common appearance he was a hunter, but he received empowerment and teachings on Heruka from Nagarjuna and practised them sincerely at Mount Splendour, where he attained enlightenment. It is said that even to this day those with pure karma can see Shawari there.

LUYIPA

Prince Luyipa was Shawari's main disciple. On the tenth day of every month he used to go to a charnel ground to meditate. One day when he arrived there he saw a group of men and women having a picnic. One of the women gave him a piece of meat, and when he ate it his mind was blessed and instantly purified of ordinary appearance. He received a vision of Heruka and Vajrayogini and realized that the men and women were in reality Heroes and Heroines. While in the charnel ground he received teachings directly from Heruka. Because Luyipa was a Heruka practitioner he came under the care of the Heroes and Heroines, and accomplished great results simply from tasting the piece of meat given to him by an emanation of Vajrayogini.

DARIKAPA

King Darikapa received empowerment and teachings on Heruka from Luyipa, who predicted that if Darikapa were to abandon his kingdom and apply great effort in the practice of Heruka and Vajrayogini he would swiftly attain enlightenment. Darikapa immediately left his palace and wandered from place to place as a beggar, practising meditation at every opportunity. In a city in South India he met a wealthy courtesan who was an emanation of Vajrayogini. This woman owned a large mansion in which he worked as her servant for twelve years. During the day he performed menial tasks in and around the house, and at night he practised Luyipa's instructions. After twelve years he attained the fifth stage of completion stage, the union that needs learning. It is said that Darikapa and the courtesan's entire entourage of fourteen thousand all attained the Pure Land of Keajra. This is because Darikapa was a pure Heruka practitioner and so everyone who saw or touched him created the cause to be reborn in Heruka's Pure Land.

DINGKIWA

One of King Darikapa's ministers, Dingkiwa, also received empowerment and teachings on Heruka from Luyipa, who predicted that he would meet a woman wine-seller who was an emanation of Vajrayogini. When he met her, Dingkiwa lived with her and served her for ten years, and as a result of her blessings attained enlightenment in that life. It is said that even the insects living in the place where he attained enlightenment were reborn in Heruka's Pure Land.

GHANTAPA

Ghantapa was another great Mahasiddha. Born as a prince, the son of the king of Nalanda, he later ordained as a monk. He became extremely skilled in practising the stages of Sutra and Tantra and would frequently defeat non-Buddhists in debate. Towards the end of his life he met King Darikapa, from whom he received empowerments and teachings on Heruka,

and who advised him to go to a mountain in Bengal to practise meditation. One day while he was meditating there he heard a voice in space telling him to go to Odiyana where he would meet a female swineherd. Delighted to hear this, he immediately set off for Odiyana, and there, as predicted, he met the female swineherd, whom he immediately recognized as an emanation of Vajrayogini. He received empowerments and teachings on Heruka from this emanation and then went deep into the forest of Odivisha (present-day Orissa), in India, where he engaged in intensive meditation on Heruka and Vajrayogini.

Since he was living in such an isolated place his diet was poor and his body became emaciated. One day the king of Odivisha was out hunting in the forest when he came across Ghantapa. Seeing how thin and weak he was, the king asked Ghantapa why he lived in the forest on such a poor diet, and encouraged him to return to the city where he would give him food and shelter. Ghantapa replied that just as a great elephant could not be led from the forest by a fine thread, so he could not be tempted to leave the forest by the riches of a king. Angered by Ghantapa's refusal, the king returned to his palace threatening revenge.

Such was the king's anger that he summoned a number of women from the city and told them about the arrogant monk in the forest. He offered great wealth to any one of them who could seduce him and force him to break his vows of celibacy. One woman, a wine-seller, boasted that she could do this and she set out for the forest to look for Ghantapa. When eventually she found him she asked if she could become his servant. Ghantapa had no need of a servant but he realized that they had a strong relationship from previous lives and so he allowed her to stay. He gave her spiritual instructions and empowerments, and they engaged sincerely in meditation. After twelve years they both attained the Union of No More Learning, full enlightenment.

One day Ghantapa and the former wine-seller decided to encourage the people of the city to develop a greater interest in Dharma. Accordingly the woman returned to the king and

reported that she had seduced the monk. At first the king doubted the truth of her story but when she explained that she and Ghantapa now had two children, a son and a daughter, the king was delighted with this news and told her to bring Ghantapa to the city on a particular day. He then issued a proclamation disparaging Ghantapa, and ordered his subjects to assemble on the appointed day to insult and humiliate the monk.

When the day came, Ghantapa and the woman left the forest with their children, the son on Ghantapa's right and the daughter on his left. As they entered the city Ghantapa was walking as if he were drunk, holding a bowl into which the woman poured wine. All the people who had gathered laughed and jeered, hurling abuse and insults at him. 'Long ago', they taunted him, 'our king invited you to the city but you arrogantly refused his invitation. Now you come drunk and with a wine-seller. What a bad example of a Buddhist and a monk!' When they had finished, Ghantapa appeared to become angry and threw his bowl to the ground. The bowl sank into the earth, splitting the ground and causing a spring of water to appear. Ghantapa immediately transformed into Heruka and the woman into Vajrayogini. The boy transformed into a vajra which Ghantapa held in his right hand, and the girl into a bell which he held in his left hand. Ghantapa and his consort then embraced and flew into the sky.

The people were astonished and immediately developed deep regret for their disrespect. They prostrated to Ghantapa, begging him and the emanation of Vajrayogini to return. Ghantapa and his consort refused, but told the people that if their regret was sincere they should make confession to Avalokiteshvara, the embodiment of Buddha's great compassion. Through the deep remorse of the people of Odivisha and the force of their prayers a statue of Avalokiteshvara arose from the spring water. The people of Odivisha became very devoted Dharma practitioners and many of them gained realizations. The statue of Avalokiteshvara can still be seen today.

Because of Ghantapa's pure practice of Heruka and Vajrayogini in the forest, Vajrayogini saw that it was the right time

for him to receive her blessings and so she manifested as the wine-seller. Through living with her Ghantapa attained the Pure Land of Heruka.

KRISHNAPADA

Krishnapada received empowerment and teachings on Heruka from Mahasiddha Dzalandarapa. He attained enlightenment in the intermediate state after attaining ultimate example clear light during the clear light of death. Before he passed away he attained extraordinary miracle powers by relying upon the generation stage of Heruka. He could cause wild animals or attackers to freeze just by staring at them, and could tame wild animals with a glance. He could cause fruit to fall from trees just by looking at it, and could walk without touching the ground. When he wanted to cross a river he would simply take off his upper garment and float across on it while sitting in the vajra posture.

All the lineage Gurus of these instructions, from Ghantapa up to my root Guru, Kyabje Trijang Dorjechang Losang Yeshe Rinpoche, are actual examples of practitioners who have attained the union of Buddha Heruka through the practice of Heruka body mandala. The instructions in this book are the instructions given to Ghantapa by the emanation of Vajrayogini at Odiyana. If we practise them sincerely we can accomplish all the attainments and become a pure holy being just like Mahasiddha Ghantapa.

THE QUALIFICATIONS OF A SINCERE HERUKA PRACTITIONER

By practising the generation and completion stages of Heruka we can attain enlightenment in one life. However, for this to happen we must be a sincere practitioner with the following five qualifications:

- (1) We have experience of renunciation, bodhichitta, and the correct view of emptiness
- (2) We have received the empowerment of Heruka
- (3) We are keeping our vows and commitments purely

- (4) We have a clear and unmistakable understanding of how to practise both generation stage and completion stage of Heruka
- (5) We have indestructible faith in the Deity Heruka, and in the Spiritual Guide from whom we received the empowerment and commentary to the practice

Anyone possessing these five qualifications who meditates continually on the generation stage and completion stage of Heruka will definitely attain enlightenment in one life. If we do not yet possess these qualifications we should strive gradually to attain them.

Once we have received the empowerment we have a commitment to meditate on the two stages, and if we fail to do so we shall lose the blessing of the empowerment. Furthermore our progress will be hampered if we do not also put effort into attaining the other four qualities. Most importantly, we need to develop deep and unchanging faith in Heruka and our Spiritual Guide. We should try to overcome ordinary appearance of our Spiritual Guide and develop faith in him or her. In this way we shall accomplish great results. Even if we give our Spiritual Guide an expensive present, if we lack faith in him it will have no meaning. On the other hand, if we develop pure faith in our Spiritual Guide we shall be making a great offering to him even if we never give him presents. Without faith we are like a burnt seed; just as a burnt seed cannot produce any fruit, so a Tantric practitioner without faith cannot accomplish any results.

Tantric realizations depend upon faith and imagination. No matter how much we investigate it is difficult to prove that our Spiritual Guide is a Buddha, so rather than developing doubts we should use our powers of imagination to regard our Spiritual Guide as a Buddha and cultivate a pure mind of faith in him or her. Gradually our mind will become purer and purer until eventually we shall directly see our Spiritual Guide as a Buddha.



Vajrayogini

Training in the Basic Practices

THE EXPLANATION OF THE PRACTICE

These instructions are explained under two headings:

- 1 Generation stage
- 2 Completion stage

GENERATION STAGE

The explanation of the generation stage of Heruka body mandala is based on the sadhana *Essence of Vajrayana*, which can be found in Appendix II. This explanation has two parts:

- 1 How to practise during the meditation session
- 2 How to practise during the meditation break

HOW TO PRACTISE DURING THE MEDITATION SESSION

This has three parts:

- 1 The preliminary practices
- 2 The actual practice of generation stage
- 3 The concluding practices

THE PRELIMINARY PRACTICES

Before engaging in the meditation session we prepare offerings in front of our shrine, which should contain statues or pictures of Buddha Shakyamuni, Je Tsongkhapa, Heruka, our root Guru, and Dharmapala Dorje Shugdän. Buddha Shakyamuni is the founder of Mahayana Buddhism. Je Tsongkhapa and Dorje Shugdän are manifestations of the wisdom of all the Buddhas, and Heruka is the manifestation of the compassion of all the Buddhas. Maintaining faith in these holy beings

causes us to increase our wisdom and compassion, which are the most important practices of Mahayana Buddhism. Faith in our Spiritual Guide is the root of all spiritual realizations.

We set out three tormas, which can either be made in the traditional way according to the illustration on page 478, or can consist simply of any clean, fresh food such as honey or cakes. The shapes of the traditional tormas symbolize the development of spiritual realizations. The central torma is for the principal Deities, Heruka Father and Mother and the four Yoginis, who together are known as the 'Deities of the great bliss wheel'. The torma to its left is for the supramundane retinues of Heruka, and the torma to its right is for the mundane retinues of Heruka.

In front of the tormas we set out three rows of offerings. The first row, nearest the shrine, is for the supramundane in-front-generated Deities, and the second row is for the mundane Dakas and Dakinis. Both these rows start from the left side of the shrine, our right, and include water for drinking, water for bathing, flowers, incense, lights, perfume, and food. Nothing is set out for the music offering because music is not a visual object. The third row, which is for the self-generated Deities, starts from the right side of the shrine, our left, and includes water for drinking, water for bathing, water for the mouth, flowers, incense, lights, perfume, and food. On a small table in front of our meditation seat we arrange from left to right our inner offering, vajra, bell, damaru, and mala. In front of these we place our sadhana text. Then with a pure motivation and a happy mind we engage in the preliminary practices.

The preliminary practices are now explained under six headings:

- 1 Going for refuge and generating bodhichitta
- 2 Receiving blessings
- 3 Purifying our own mind, body, and speech
- 4 Purifying other beings, the environment, and enjoyments
- 5 Purifying non-virtues, downfalls, and obstacles
- 6 Guru yoga

GOING FOR REFUGE AND GENERATING BODHICHITTA

This has four parts:

- 1 The causes of going for refuge
- 2 Visualizing the objects of refuge
- 3 The way of going for refuge
- 4 Generating aspiring and engaging bodhichitta

THE CAUSES OF GOING FOR REFUGE

Our final goal is to attain enlightenment, the ultimate refuge, in order to benefit countless mother beings. Right now, however, we need to accomplish a refuge that prevents us from falling into lower rebirths. Without this inner protection, if we simply engage in the meditations of Highest Yoga Tantra expecting to attain enlightenment quickly we are like someone who attempts to climb a high and dangerous mountain without safety equipment.

The time of our death is very uncertain. Perhaps we shall die today, perhaps tomorrow – we have no idea when we shall die. If we die without refuge we shall lose all the spiritual progress we have made. At death we shall forget everything we have learned in our life and lose everything we have built up. After death, without any choice, we shall experience another samsaric rebirth with all its associated sufferings. Remembering nothing from our previous life we shall be unable to maintain the continuum of our spiritual practice. By some miracle we have managed to obtain a precious human life with all the conditions necessary for spiritual practice; but unless we accomplish the inner protection of basic refuge we shall not find another similarly endowed rebirth, and this wonderful opportunity for spiritual development will be lost forever.

To protect ourselves from the danger of a lower rebirth, and to create the special opportunity to maintain the continuum of our spiritual practice in life after life, we need to go for refuge to the Three Jewels, avoid non-virtuous actions, and practise giving, moral discipline, patience, effort, concentration,

THE WAY OF GOING FOR REFUGE

First we recall the feeling of fear of taking rebirth in samsara in general and in the lower realms in particular; and then by realizing that countless mother sentient beings are in exactly the same situation as ourself we generate compassion. Then we develop deep conviction that only the Three Jewels have the power to protect us from these dangers. With these three causes of refuge – fear, compassion, and faith – from the depths of our heart we make a strong determination:

I will always rely upon Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha, and will accomplish them as my ultimate refuge.

While concentrating on this determination we recite the refuge prayer from the sadhana:

**Eternally I shall go for refuge
To Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha.**

These two lines and the two lines on bodhichitta that follow are very blessed and are extracted from Buddha Vajradhara's Tantric scriptures.

GENERATING ASPIRING AND ENGAGING BODHICHITTA

Bodhichitta is a primary mind that spontaneously wishes to attain enlightenment, motivated by compassion and love for all living beings. The way of generating bodhichitta according to Highest Yoga Tantra is superior to the way of generating it according to Sutra. In the practice of Heruka Tantra, for example, bodhichitta is a primary mind, motivated by great compassion, that spontaneously wishes to become Buddha Heruka. This bodhichitta can only be generated by Highest Yoga Tantra practitioners who clearly understand how they can become Buddha Heruka through the practice of the generation and completion stages of Heruka Tantra. When we develop this bodhichitta we enter the path of Highest Yoga Tantra of Heruka.

We should know the difference between entering the gateway of Highest Yoga Tantra and entering the path of Highest

Yoga Tantra. We enter the gateway of Highest Yoga Tantra by receiving empowerment, but to enter the path of Highest Yoga Tantra we need to develop the uncommon bodhichitta of Highest Yoga Tantra. Initially we generate fabricated uncommon bodhichitta, and later, through continuous training, this transforms into spontaneous uncommon bodhichitta. When we received the empowerment of Heruka body mandala we entered the gateway of Highest Yoga Tantra of Heruka body mandala. Only through receiving this empowerment do we have the opportunity to study and practise these instructions.

There are two types of bodhichitta: aspiring bodhichitta and engaging bodhichitta. In the practice of Heruka, aspiring bodhichitta is a bodhichitta that simply aspires to become Buddha Heruka. We can generate this bodhichitta by contemplating the meaning of the following words:

**For the sake of all living beings
I shall become Heruka.**

Engaging bodhichitta is more than the mere aspiration to become Buddha Heruka; it is the sincere determination to engage in the actual path that leads to the state of Buddha Heruka. We can generate this bodhichitta by contemplating the meaning of the following words:

**To lead all mother living beings to the state of
ultimate happiness,
I shall attain as quickly as possible, in this very life,
The state of the Union of Buddha Heruka.
For this purpose I shall practise the stages of
Heruka's path.**

RECEIVING BLESSINGS

The practices explained above include generating the three causes of refuge, visualizing the refuge assembly, going for refuge to the Three Jewels, and generating uncommon bodhichitta – the determination to engage in the actual path that leads to the state of the Union of Buddha Heruka, the union of his Truth Body and Form Body. These practices are powerful

DZALA SHAMBARAM SÖHA. We think that our speech is purified and has transformed into Heruka's mantra, which has the power to fulfil the wishes of all living beings, and we meditate on this special recognition for a while. This meditation is called the 'yoga of the vajra speech'. It acts as a cause to purify our speech and transform it into Heruka's vajra speech.

The practice of the yoga of the three purifications indicates that we should perform all our daily actions with the three recognitions: (1) that our own mind is Heruka's mind of the Dharmakaya, (2) that our own body is Heruka's divine body, and (3) that our own speech is Heruka's mantra. By practising in this way we purify our ordinary appearances and conceptions.

As we fall asleep at night we should try to maintain the first recognition, regarding our mind as Heruka's mind of the Dharmakaya experiencing the union of great bliss and emptiness. As we wake up in the morning we imagine that we arise from the state of great bliss and emptiness as Heruka, we recite the essence mantra, and we then engage in the yoga of experiencing nectar and so forth. The yoga of experiencing nectar is explained in *Guide to Dakini Land*. Apart from the times when we are training in common paths, such as going for refuge and purifying negativities, we should try to maintain the three recognitions throughout the day and night.

PURIFYING OTHER BEINGS, THE ENVIRONMENT, AND ENJOYMENTS

This practice is a powerful method to fulfil our main intention to lead all living beings to enlightenment as quickly as possible. To show that we need to maintain this intention throughout our practice, and to fulfil it as quickly as possible, we now bring the resultant deeds of a Buddha into the path. In this way we create a powerful cause to accomplish our final aim of leading all mother beings to the ultimate happiness of enlightenment.

We imagine that from the letter HUM at the heart of ourself generated as Heruka infinite rays of wisdom light emanate

throughout all directions, purifying all worlds and the beings within them. The worlds become Heruka's Pure Land and all beings become Heroes and Heroines. Everything becomes immaculately pure, completely filled with a vast array of offerings, the nature of exalted wisdom and bestowing uncontaminated bliss. We firmly believe that we have fulfilled the two intentions of our bodhichitta, and develop a feeling of joy. We meditate on this feeling for a short while. This meditation acts as a powerful cause to awaken our Buddha nature. Gradually our Buddha nature will transform into actual enlightenment, and we shall then be truly able to lead all living beings to the happiness of enlightenment.

PURIFYING NON-VIRTUES, DOWNFALLS, AND OBSTACLES

This has two parts:

- 1 Why we need to purify non-virtuous actions and downfalls
- 2 The actual practice of purification

WHY WE NEED TO PURIFY NON-VIRTUOUS ACTIONS AND DOWNFALLS

In the *Vinaya Sutras* Buddha says:

Abandoning non-virtuous actions,
Practising virtuous actions,
And controlling the mind;
This is Buddhadharma.

Here 'Buddhadharma' refers to the actual refuge that directly protects living beings from suffering. We accomplish this protection by abandoning non-virtuous actions, practising virtuous actions, and controlling our mind.

First we need to develop the inner realizations that directly protect us from lower rebirth. As mentioned before, without this basic protection we are like someone attempting to climb a treacherous mountain without safety equipment. The main cause of all suffering, including lower rebirth, is non-virtue,

point we need to go for refuge by sincerely relying upon Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. This is the meaning of the power of reliance.

We first visualize the objects of refuge. Above our crown on a lotus and moon seat sits Vajrasattva, who is inseparable from Guru Heruka. He has a white-coloured body, one face, and two hands, holds a vajra and bell, and embraces his consort. His body is the synthesis of all Sangha Jewels, his speech the synthesis of all Dharma Jewels, and his mind the synthesis of all Buddha Jewels. We firmly believe that the living Buddha Heruka is actually present above our crown in the form of Vajrasattva, and with strong faith in the Three Jewels we contemplate:

Through relying upon Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha I will purify all my non-virtuous actions and accomplish the Buddha Jewel so that I can benefit all living beings without exception.

We meditate on this intention for a short while.

THE POWER OF THE OPPONENT FORCE

Whereas the other three opponent powers are like limbs supporting a body, the power of the opponent force is like the body itself because it is the direct opponent to all the negative effects of our non-virtuous actions.

To practise the power of the opponent force according to the sadhana we visualize as follows. At the heart of Vajrasattva above our crown, in the centre of a moon seat, is a white letter HUM, which is the nature of the principal Deity Heruka. Standing in a circle counter-clockwise around the HUM is the white hundred-letter mantra, which is the nature of the one hundred Deities emanated by Heruka to pacify the non-virtues, downfalls, and obstacles of practitioners. At our heart we visualize the potentials of all our negative actions in the form of a dark mass, and with a mind of strong regret we request Vajrasattva:

**O Guru Vajrasattva please listen to me.
There is great danger that I may die before I purify
my negativities.
So with the water of your compassion
Please purify all my non-virtues and downfalls.**

While concentrating on the meaning of this request we recite the hundred-letter mantra of Heruka Vajrasattva as many times as possible. We think:

As a result of making these requests, wisdom lights and nectars flow down from the HUM and mantra rosary at Vajrasattva's heart. These enter my body through my crown, reach my heart, and completely destroy the mass of darkness, the potentials of all my negative karma, just as the light of the sun destroys the darkness of night.

We repeat this recitation and visualization many times in each session.

THE POWER OF PROMISE

The definition of non-virtuous action is any action of body, speech, or mind that is the main cause of suffering. Since we wish to avoid suffering we must stop creating its causes. With this thought we first develop and maintain the intention to refrain from all non-virtuous actions of body, speech, and mind, until eventually we are ready to make a promise to refrain from them completely.

The power of promise depends upon the strength of our determination to refrain from negative actions. If our determination is strong and unchangeable we are ready to make this promise, but if it is weak we cannot yet do so. Therefore we first practise the power of promise by developing the intention not to commit any more non-virtuous actions. We then need to train in this intention until it becomes stable, at which point we shall have accomplished the actual power of promise.

To generate the power of promise we contemplate how every non-virtuous action gives rise to the four types of effect.

If I remain in this state living beings will not be able to see me and so I shall not be able to help them directly. Therefore I will arise in a Form Body for the benefit of all living beings.

For ordinary beings the dream body arises out of the clear light of sleep, and the intermediate state body arises out of the clear light of death. For completion stage practitioners the illusory body arises out of the realization of the mind of clear light; and for Buddhas the Enjoyment Body arises out of the clear light of the Truth Body. Therefore, at this stage in the meditation we imagine that we arise out of the clear light of the Truth Body as Enjoyment Body Heruka.

The Enjoyment Body can take many different forms. For the purposes of this meditation we imagine that it arises in the form of a tiny nada suspended in space. The nada is white with a reddish tint. It has three curves, and its upper tip is extremely fine. The three curves of the nada represent the body, speech, and mind of the intermediate state being. In this meditation it is not necessary to focus on the aspect of the nada; rather we should emphasize developing divine pride, thinking: 'I have purified the body, speech, and mind of the intermediate state. Now I am Enjoyment Body Heruka.' We meditate on this experience for a while. Through this meditation we can transform our experience of the intermediate state into the experience of the illusory body, the quick path of the Enjoyment Body of a Buddha. For this reason this meditation is called 'bringing the intermediate state into the path of the Enjoyment Body'. It indirectly purifies ordinary intermediate state, causes the completion stage realization of illusory body to ripen, and sows in our mind a powerful potential to attain the actual Enjoyment Body of a Buddha in the future.

BRINGING REBIRTH INTO THE PATH OF THE EMANATION BODY

Bringing rebirth into the path of the Emanation Body is a yoga, similar in aspect to the experience of rebirth, that is attained after bringing the intermediate state into the path of the Enjoyment Body, and that has the divine pride of being the Emanation Body.

While in the aspect of the nada in space we should think:

Although I have arisen in a Form Body, the Enjoyment Body, only highly realized beings can see it. If I am going to benefit ordinary beings directly I also need a gross Form Body. Therefore, I will take rebirth as an Emanation Body Heruka.

With this motivation we look down through space and see the place where we shall take rebirth. First we observe the protection circle, which consists of the vajra ground, fence, tent, and canopy. These are composed entirely of indestructible five-pronged vajras, the nature of Heruka's exalted wisdom. The vajra ground is vast, and is surrounded by the vajra fence, which is square in shape, also vast, and very high. On top of the vajra fence is the vajra canopy, which serves as a ceiling. Above this is the vajra tent, which is shaped like a Mongolian tent.

The vajras in the east are dark blue, in the north green, in the west red, and in the south yellow. They are joined together with no intervening space, like the shell of an egg, so that nothing can penetrate them. Around the outside – above, below, and all around – powerful fires of the five wisdoms, white, yellow, red, green, and blue in colour, swirl counter-clockwise. Everything is the nature of the indivisible bliss and emptiness of Heruka. Our mind, the nada, observes the protection circle, regarding it as the Pure Land of Heruka in which we shall take rebirth.

Upon the vajra ground from a letter YAM comes a blue bow-shaped wind mandala; upon this from a letter RAM comes a red triangular fire mandala; upon this from a letter BAM comes a white circular water mandala; and upon this from a letter LAM comes a yellow square earth mandala. The wind mandala covers the entire vajra ground, the fire mandala fits within the bow of the wind mandala, the water mandala fits within the triangle of the fire mandala, and the earth mandala fits within the circle of the water mandala. We visualize the earth mandala as vast because it is the earth upon which stands Heruka's mandala. All four elements are the nature of Heruka's omniscient wisdom.

On top of the earth mandala from a letter SUM comes Mount Meru, which is square in shape, made of jewels, and extremely high. The eastern side is white, the northern yellow, the western red, and the southern blue. When Buddha first emanated the mandala of Heruka he did so on top of Mount Meru, which is why we visualize the mandala on top of Mount Meru.

On top of Mount Meru from a letter PAM comes a sixty-four-petalled lotus, which covers the entire surface of the mountain. The petals in the east are white, in the north green, in the west red, and in the south yellow. Upon the centre of this lotus is a huge crossed five-pronged vajra. The central part of the vajra is blue, square in shape, and forms the vast floor of the mandala. The five prongs in the east are white, in the north green, in the west red, and in the south yellow. The centre of the vajra is completely covered by an eight-petalled lotus. The petals in the four cardinal directions are red, the petals in the south-east and north-west are yellow, the petal in the south-west is green, and the petal in the north-east is black. In the centre of the lotus is a moon mandala, white with a reddish tint, which has arisen from the Sanskrit vowels and consonants. We, in the aspect of the nada in space, observe these developments below us.

The protection circle, the four elements, Mount Meru, and the sixty-four-petalled lotus symbolize the place where we shall take rebirth as an Emanation Body. The vajra symbolizes the mother's body, and the eight-petalled lotus her womb. The white moon with a reddish tint symbolizes the union of the father's sperm and the mother's ovum. Its nature is wisdom but its substance is the white drops of Father Heruka and the red drops of Mother Vajravarahi. The white part of the moon is Heruka's mirror-like wisdom, and the red part is his wisdom of equality.

With the motivation to benefit all living beings, we, the nada in space, develop a strong wish to be reborn inside this union of Father Heruka's sperm and Mother Vajravarahi's ovum. Through the power of this motivation we descend through space to the point just above the moon. Then, gradually, a

drop develops from the nada, a crescent moon from the drop, a horizontal line from the crescent moon, a letter HA from the horizontal line, and a shabkyu from the letter HA. In this way a letter HUM develops in the centre of the moon. It is white with a reddish tint, and is the size of a man.

The nada descending to the centre of the moon symbolizes conception in the mother's womb, and the development of the HUM symbolizes the development of the baby inside the womb. The HUM is the nature of Heruka's wisdom of individual realization. We now think that we are just about to be born.

We visualize five-coloured lights radiating from the letter HUM in all directions, filling the whole of space. At the tips of the light rays are Deities of Heruka's mandala, who come to the crowns of all living beings and grant them empowerment, completely purifying their two obstructions. They all attain the state of Heruka, and their environments transform into Heruka's Pure Land. Then all these beings and their environments melt into light. At the same time all the Heroes and Heroines are invited from all the Buddha Lands throughout the ten directions. They melt into red and white bodhi-chittas, and mix with the beings who have melted into light. This light gathers inwards until it dissolves into the nada of the HUM. As a result our mind, in the aspect of this HUM, becomes the nature of spontaneous great bliss. All worlds and their beings, and all Buddhas in the form of Heroes and Heroines, have dissolved into this HUM. This is Heruka's wisdom of accomplishing activities.

Now the moon, vowels, consonants, and HUM transform into the supporting mandala and supported Deities of Heruka, which appear fully and simultaneously. We imagine that we can see everything – the protection circle, the mandala, and all the Deities – perfectly clearly, and we think 'Now I have been born as Emanation Body Heruka' and meditate on this feeling for a while. The protection circle, mandala, and Deities, appearing fully and simultaneously, are Heruka's wisdom of the Dharmadhatu. Although they appear as forms, in reality they are the nature of Heruka's omniscient wisdom.

Through this meditation we can transform our experience of rebirth into the experience of the gross Deity body, which is the quick path of the Emanation Body of a Buddha. For this reason it is called 'bringing rebirth into the path of the Emanation Body'. It indirectly purifies ordinary rebirth, causes the completion stage realization of the gross Deity body to ripen, and sows in our mind a powerful potential to attain the actual Emanation Body of a Buddha in the future. It is also the principal method for attaining rebirth in Keajra, Heruka's Pure Land.

Checking Meditation on the Mandala and Basis Heruka

Checking meditation on the mandala and basis Heruka has two parts:

- 1 Checking meditation
- 2 The symbolism of Heruka's body

CHECKING MEDITATION

To familiarize ourself with our new environment and new identity we now do analytical meditation on the mandala and on ourself as basis Heruka. At the very edge of our new world, surrounding the protection circle, are the eight great charnel grounds. These are very similar to those described in *Guide to Dakini Land* except that in Vajrayogini practice they are inside the protection circle whereas in Heruka practice they are outside.

In each charnel ground there is a tree, at the foot of which there sits a directional guardian. Each directional guardian has four arms. With their first two hands they embrace their consort, and with their second two hands they hold aloft various objects and a skullcup. They each sit on a different mount and wear a silken scarf. Except for the guardians in the south and south-west, who wear a crown of three skulls, they all wear a golden five-lineage crown. At the top of each tree there is a regional guardian with the upper half of his body emerging from the branches. They each have the same face as the mounts of the directional guardians at the foot of their tree, and they hold a tormo and a skullcup.

In each charnel ground there is a lake, in which there lives a naga holding a jewel. The nagas have half-human, half-serpent



Dingkiwa

bodies, with a canopy of snakes behind their head. They are of different colours, wear silken garments, and are adorned with jewelled ornaments. Above each lake there is a cloud. There is a mountain, at the summit of which there is a white stupa, and at the foot of which a wisdom fire blazes.

Throughout the charnel grounds are corpses in varying states of decay. Some are lying down, some standing up, some walking, and some crouching. Some are headless, some being eaten by animals, some impaled on stakes, some hanging by their hair from trees, and some half-consumed by fire. Wild birds and animals such as ravens, owls, vultures; wolves, jackals, and snakes inhabit the charnel grounds. Spirits, such as yellow givers of harm in tiger skins holding clubs, zombies, and terrifying naked cannibals wander around uttering the sound 'Kili Kili'. Tantric practitioners such as Siddhas, Knowledge Holders, Yogis, and Yoginis also abide in the charnel grounds, keeping their commitments purely and single-pointedly practising Heruka's path. They are naked, with freely hanging hair, and are adorned with five mudras. They hold hand-drums, skullcups, and khatangas, and their crowns are adorned with skulls.

The eight directional guardians are: Indra, Vaishravana, Varuna, Yama, Agni, Kardava, Vayuni, and Ishvara. In addition to these there are two other directional guardians – Brahma, who protects the upper regions, and Bhumi, who protects the lower regions. We can sometimes include another five directional guardians – Surya, Chandra, Bhadra, Ganesh, and Vishnu – making fifteen in all. All fifteen directional guardians residing in the charnel grounds are emanations of Heruka appearing in mundane aspects; and whenever we offer the tormas to the mundane Dakas and Dakinis we invite these guardians together with their retinues from the eight charnel grounds to receive it. All the beings abiding in the charnel grounds face the central Deity and instil the place with a sense of wonder.

The charnel grounds have great meaning. They are the nature of Heruka's omniscient wisdom, and all their features are emanated by Heruka to teach us how to practise the stages

of the path of Sutra and Tantra. The corpses symbolize impermanence and the faults of samsara, particularly sickness, ageing, and death. The lake symbolizes conventional bodhi-chitta, the naga the six perfections and the ten perfections, and the jewel held by the naga the four ways of gathering disciples. Because corpses are ownerless they also symbolize selflessness.

These features remind us to practise renunciation, bodhi-chitta, profound view, and the six perfections. The wild animals symbolize generation stage realizations, and their eating the corpses teaches us to destroy our ordinary appearances and ordinary conceptions through the power of our generation stage practice.

The tree symbolizes the central channel, which is the basic object of completion stage meditation. The directional guardian at the foot of the tree symbolizes the downward-voiding wind just below the navel, and the regional guardian at the top of the tree symbolizes the life-supporting wind at the heart. The fire at the base of the mountain symbolizes the inner fire of tummo at the navel, and the cloud symbolizes the white bodhichittas in the crown chakra. The eight charnel grounds themselves, four in the cardinal directions and four in the intermediate directions, symbolize the four joys of serial and reverse order. The mountain symbolizes the immovable equipoise of spontaneous great bliss mixed with emptiness, and the stupa at the top of the mountain symbolizes the three bodies of a Buddha.

Completion stage meditation on tummo, or inner fire, causes the downward-voiding wind below our navel to reverse and flow up through the central channel, which in turn causes all our inner winds to gather into the central channel and dissolve into the life-supporting wind at our heart. This causes the white bodhichitta in our crown chakra to melt and descend through our central channel, giving rise to the four joys of serial and reverse order. The final joy, the mind of spontaneous great bliss, then mixes inseparably with emptiness and gradually abandons the two obstructions. When our mind is completely purified in this way we attain the three resultant bodies

of a Buddha – the Truth Body, Enjoyment Body, and Emanation Body. Thus, these aspects of the charnel grounds teach us how to attain full enlightenment by training in the yogas of completion stage. Milarepa once said ‘I have no need of books because everything around me teaches me Dharma.’ In the same way, through simply contemplating the features of the charnel grounds, sincere Heruka practitioners develop a deep understanding of the phenomena of the basis, path, and result, and strong enthusiasm for practising the stages of the path of Sutra and Tantra.

Inside the circle of eight great charnel grounds is the protection circle of the vajra ground, fence, tent, and canopy, surrounded by five-coloured wisdom fires swirling counter-clockwise. In the centre of these are the four elements, Mount Meru, the lotus, and the crossed vajra, all of which have been described previously.

Standing on the centre of the huge crossed vajra is the celestial mansion, which is constructed like a large square house with an elaborate entrance on each side. It is approached from the four directions by stairways that lead up through the prongs of the vajra to its ground floor. The jewelled walls have five layers, which from the outside in are coloured white, yellow, red, green, and blue. Around the top of the wall and overhanging it is a red jewelled moulding studded with rectangular, triangular, circular, and half-moon-shaped jewels. Upon this are four layers of golden bands, each separated by a series of supports made from six precious substances. Upon these, and extending beyond, are parallel rafters whose ends form the shape of sea-monsters, with full-length and half-length strings of pearls hanging from their mouths. Overhanging these are ‘sharpu’, special jewelled decorations, suspended from the eaves. Around the edge of the roof runs a white parapet in the shape of half lotus petals. This is adorned with eight victory banners embellished with beautiful creatures, and eight other banners, all set in golden vases. At all four corners of the roof monkeys sit on the parapet, holding parasols adorned at the top with a jewel, crescent moon, and blue half-vajra.

Around the outer foot of the wall runs a red ledge upon which stand sixteen offering goddesses of various colours and postures, each with three eyes and four arms. Each of the four entrances has an open porch leading into a short hallway, with a high double door leading into the main chamber. At the outer corners of the doorways and hallways, as well as at the four outer and four inner corners of the mansion, stand half-moons, upon which rest red jewels adorned at the top by vajras.

At the front of each entrance, upon square pedestals, four pillars set in vases support an eleven-tiered archway. Above each archway is a Dharma Wheel flanked right and left by a male and a female deer. Each archway is adorned with both types of banner, and with monkeys holding parasols. The eastern archway is decorated with white Dharma Wheels, the southern archway with yellow jewels, the western archway with red lotuses, and the northern archway with green swords. To the right and left of each archway, set in golden vases, are wish-granting trees bearing the seven precious possessions of a king. In the space around the celestial mansion are Siddhas, two on each side; and emerging from clouds are offering gods and goddesses holding garlands of flowers, making everything exquisitely beautiful.

Inside the celestial mansion are four concentric rings of eight pillars, which support the circular vajra beams underneath a four-stepped ceiling. On the very top of the mansion is a square lantern adorned with a golden roof and surmounted by an eight-faceted jewel and a five-pronged vajra. Inside this is a precious jewelled case containing the scriptures of the Heruka root Tantra.

The ceiling and floor of the mansion are white in the east, green in the north, red in the west, yellow in the south, and blue in the centre. On the floor is a four-tiered circular platform, each tier smaller than the one below it. Each of the three lower platforms is in the shape of a large wheel with eight petal-shaped spokes. On the lowest platform are the sixteen Deities of the body wheel, on the second platform are the sixteen Deities of the speech wheel, and on the third platform are the sixteen Deities of the heart wheel.

four sets of four fangs are bared and terrifying. I display nine moods. The three physical moods of majesty, heroism, and menace are expressed by my body maintaining an air of majesty, my feet treading on Bhairawa and Kalarati, and the frown at the centre of my brow. The three verbal moods of laughter, wrath, and ferocity are expressed by the slight smile on my lips, my bared fangs, and my tongue curled back. The three mental moods of compassion, attentiveness, and serenity are expressed by my long almond-shaped eyes, my wide-open eyes, and my looking at the Mother from the corner of my eyes.

I wear a lower garment of a tiger skin, and a long necklace of fifty shrunk moist human heads strung together with human entrails. I am adorned with six bone ornaments: a crown ornament, ear ornaments, a necklace, bracelets and anklets, a heart ornament, and ashes of human bone smeared over my entire body. My hair is woven through the eight spokes of the crown ornament and gathered into a topknot which is surmounted by a nine-faceted jewel. The necklace, bracelets, and anklets are made of fragments of human bone embossed with vajras. I wear my heart ornament, the seraka, just below my Brahmin's thread, a three-knotted string hanging over my left shoulder. The front and back of the seraka consist of bone squares embossed with vajras, which are connected by strings of bone that go over the shoulders and under the arms.

The Father is embracing the Blessed Mother Vajravarahi, who has a red-coloured body, one face, two hands, and three eyes. She is naked with freely hanging hair and wears a lower garment made from fragments of skull. Her left hand, embracing the Father's neck, holds a skullcup brimming with the blood of the four maras. Her right hand in the threatening mudra brandishes a curved knife, opposing the malignant forces of the ten directions. Her body shines with a brilliance like that of the fire at the end of the aeon. Her two legs are clasped around the Father's thighs. She is the nature of blissful great compassion. Adorned with five mudras, she wears a crown of five shrunk human skulls and a necklace of fifty shrunk human skulls. Father and Mother abide in the centre of a fiercely blazing fire of exalted wisdom.

THE SYMBOLISM OF HERUKA'S BODY

Heruka's body, a manifestation of his omniscient wisdom, reveals all the phenomena of the basis that we need to abandon, the path that we need to practise, and the result that we need to accomplish. The dark-blue colour of his body symbolizes the Wisdom Truth Body, the head of Brahma the Nature Body, the skulls the Enjoyment Body, and the crossed vajra of various colours the Emanation Body. Thus, these features of Heruka's body teach the phenomena of the result, showing that Heruka has attained the four bodies of a Buddha and that we should strive to do the same. For this we need to abandon all objects to be abandoned, the phenomena of the basis, and practise all the stages of the path to enlightenment, the phenomena of the path.

Heruka's twelve arms teach us to abandon the cycle of twelve dependent-related links, samsara; the elephant skin to abandon the ignorance of self-grasping; and the lower garment of a tiger skin to abandon hatred. The axe teaches us to abandon all faults of body, speech, and mind; the curved knife to abandon conceptions grasping at extremes; and the three-pointed spear to abandon all imprints of the delusions of the three realms. The long necklace of fifty human heads teaches us to abandon ordinary appearances and conceptions by purifying the fifty inner winds; and the bared fangs teach us to overcome the four maras. Heruka's changing facial expressions teach us to turn away from wrong views and adopt correct views; and his treading on Bhairawa and Kalaraṭi teaches us to abandon the two extremes of existence and non-existence, and the two extremes of samsara and solitary peace. Encouraging us to abandon the extreme of solitary peace implicitly teaches us to attain great compassion and practise the stages of the Mahayana path. Indeed, Heruka himself is the embodiment of Buddha's compassion. His six mudra-ornaments teach us to train in the six perfections, and his four faces teach us to realize emptiness by meditating on the four doors of perfect liberation – emptiness, signlessness, wishlessness, and non-production. Emptiness, in this context, refers to the emptiness of the nature of all functioning



Ghantapa

Generating the Mandala and Deities of the Body Mandala

Generating the mandala and Deities of the body mandala has two parts:

- 1 A preliminary explanation
- 2 The explanation of the actual practice

A PRELIMINARY EXPLANATION

In general, 'mandala' means 'celestial mansion', but it sometimes also refers to the assembly of Deities, who are known as the 'supported mandala'. When we visualize and meditate on a mandala and Deities in front of us we are accomplishing the in-front-generation; and when we generate and meditate on ourself as the Deity and our environment as the Deity's environment we are accomplishing the self-generation.

A ritual that is a method for accomplishing either the in-front-generation or the self-generation is called a 'sadhana' (Tib. *drub thab*), which literally means 'method for attainment'. There are many different Tantric sadhanas. Those that contain body mandala practices are more profound than those that do not, and among those that contain body mandala practices it is said that the body mandala practice of Heruka Father and Mother is the most profound. As Je Tsongkhapa says in his commentary to the Heruka sadhana (Tib. *Dö jo*), the profound realizations of completion stage depend upon the channels and drops being blessed by the Heroes and Heroines. Whereas in other body mandala practices it is the gross parts of our body that are generated as Deities, in the practice of Heruka body mandala the channels and drops are generated as Deities. In this way our channels and drops directly receive the blessings of the Heroes and Heroines. Therefore,

meaning clear light, our imagined Heruka body mandala is completely purified through being dissolved into meaning clear light. Due to this, when we arise from meaning clear light we become an actual divine being with a divine body, the pure illusory body, similar in aspect to Heruka; and with a divine celestial mansion, similar in aspect to Heruka's actual mandala. This Heruka body mandala is superior to the imagined Heruka body mandala. It is called the 'nature Heruka body mandala of the path' because it arises naturally from meaning clear light, is not created by imagination, and is the main path to the resultant Heruka body mandala.

On the basis of attaining the nature Heruka body mandala of the path, when we completely abandon our subtle dualistic appearances through the force of the vajra-like concentration of meaning clear light we attain the resultant, or actual, Heruka body mandala. We become an actual Buddha Heruka, surrounded by the body mandala Deities, celestial mansion, protection circle, and charnel grounds, all of which are manifestations of omniscient wisdom. These all arise naturally and simultaneously from the vajra-like concentration of meaning clear light, which is our last mind as a sentient being. This is our final accomplishment. We lay the foundation for this accomplishment by engaging in generation stage meditation, and we complete it by engaging in the completion stage meditation of meaning clear light.

There are two ways to generate and meditate on Heruka body mandala: according to the common instructions, and according to the uncommon oral instructions. In this present commentary the way we generate and meditate on the in-front-generation of the sixty-two Deities of Heruka body mandala when visualizing the Field of Merit in the practice of Guru yoga is explained according to the common instructions, but the way we generate and meditate on the self-generation of Heruka body mandala is explained according to the uncommon instructions. Kyabje Trijang Dorjechang, the lineage holder of the Heruka body mandala instructions, says that this is the main intention of Mahasiddha Ghanapa. This second way is most profound and blessed.

THE EXPLANATION OF THE ACTUAL PRACTICE

This has two parts:

- 1 Simultaneous generation of the entire supporting and supported Heruka body mandala
- 2 Checking meditation on this generation

**SIMULTANEOUS GENERATION OF THE ENTIRE SUPPORTING
AND SUPPORTED HERUKA BODY MANDALA**

We concentrate on the meaning of the following words from the sadhana:

The gross parts of my body – the purified body of basis Heruka, and the subtle parts of my purified body – my channels and drops, appear in the form of seed-letters. These transform fully and all at once into the entire supporting and supported body mandala. Thus, I am Heruka Father and Mother, the nature of my white and red indestructible drop. I am surrounded by the Heroes and Heroines of the five wheels, the nature of my channels and drops. I reside at the centre of the celestial mansion, the nature of the gross parts of my body.

CHECKING MEDITATION ON THIS GENERATION

This has two parts:

- 1 Checking meditation on the gross parts of our body generated as Heruka's mandala
- 2 Checking meditation on the subtle parts of our body, the channels and drops, generated as the Deities

**CHECKING MEDITATION ON THE GROSS PARTS OF OUR
BODY GENERATED AS HERUKA'S MANDALA**

The basis for accomplishing the celestial mansion of Heruka body mandala is the gross parts of the body of ourself generated as basis Heruka. We remember in detail as follows. Our two legs forming the shape of a bow transformed into the letter YAM, the seed of the wind mandala; the triangle at our secret place transformed into the letter RAM, the seed of the

transformed into the Blessed One Glorious Heruka, with four faces, twelve arms, and so forth. At our navel the red tummo fire in the form of a red drop assumed the aspect of a letter BAM, which then transformed into the Blessed Mother Vajravarahi. As the nature of the red and white drops Heruka and Vajrayogini met at the very centre of the celestial mansion and entered into embrace.

The four channel petals of the heart channel wheel in the cardinal directions, which are the paths for the winds of the four elements, appeared in the aspect of the letters LAM, MAM, PAM, and TAM beginning clockwise in the east. These transformed beginning counter-clockwise in the east (in front of us) into dark-blue Dakini, in the north (to our left) into green Lama, in the west (behind us) into red Khandarohi, and in the south (to our right) into yellow Rupini. They each have one face with three eyes and bared fangs, and are naked with freely hanging hair. They each have two hands, the right holding a curved knife and the left a skullcup, with a khatanga held in the crook of their left elbow. They stand with their right leg outstretched and are adorned with five mudras. They wear a crown of five human skulls and a long necklace of fifty human skulls. The four channel petals of the heart channel wheel in the intermediate directions appeared in the aspect of four skullcups brimming with five nectars.

The four Yoginis in the cardinal directions are sometimes called the 'goddesses of the four elements' because they arise from the paths for the winds of the four elements. The visualized skullcups in the intermediate directions symbolize the goddesses of the four offerings: Rupavajra Goddess, Gāndhavajra Goddess, Rasavajra Goddess, and Parshavajra Goddess. These offering goddesses in the form of the four skullcups brimming with five nectars arose from the four intermediate channel petals of the heart channel wheel. These channels are called the 'four channel petals of the offerings' because they are the paths for the winds of the four offering substances: form, smell, taste, and touch. As we purify the paths for the winds of the four elements and the paths for the winds of the four offering substances through meditation and recitation

We should strongly believe that the purified twenty-four places of our own body are appearing as the twenty-four holy places of Heruka. The channels of the twenty-four places of our body, each in the aspect of a letter BAM, transformed into the twenty-four Heroines, and the drops inside the twenty-four channels, each in the aspect of a letter HUM, transformed into the twenty-four Heroes.

We contemplate as follows. Thus, in the heart wheel, at the eastern spoke, Puliramalaya, the nature of my hairline, are Khandakapala and Partzandi. At the northern spoke, Dza-landhara, the nature of the place of my crown, are Mahakan-kala and Tzändriakiya. At the western spoke, Odiyana, the nature of the place of my right ear, are Kankala and Parbhawatiya. At the southern spoke, Arbuta, the nature of the place of the back of my neck, are Vikatadamshtri and Mahanasa. At the south-eastern spoke, Godawari, the nature of the place of my left ear, are Suraberi and Biramatiya. At the south-western spoke, Rameshöri, the nature of the place of the point between my eyebrows, are Amitabha and Karwariya. At the north-western spoke, Dewikoti, the nature of the place of my two eyes, are Vajraprabha and Lamkeshöriya. At the north-eastern spoke, Malawa, the nature of the place of my two shoulders, are Vajradeha and Drumatzaya. All the Deities of the heart wheel have blue-coloured bodies and are known as the 'Heroes and Heroines of the vajra mind family'.

In the speech wheel, at the eastern spoke, Kamarupa, the nature of the place of my two armpits, are Ankuraka and Airawatiya. At the northern spoke, Ote, the nature of the place of my two breasts, are Vajrajatila and Mahabhairawi. At the western spoke, Trishakune, the nature of the place of my navel, are Mahavira and Bayubega. At the southern spoke, Kosala, the nature of the place of the tip of my nose, are Vajrahumkara and Surabhakiya. At the south-eastern spoke, Kalinga, the nature of the place of my mouth, are Subhadra and Shamadewi. At the south-western spoke, Lampaka, the nature of the place of my throat, are Vajrabhadra and Suwatre. At the north-western spoke, Kancha, the nature of the place of my heart, are Mahabhairawa and Hayakarna. At the



Dzalandharapa

the form of yellow HRIM HRIM. On a sun mandala at her crown appears Heroine Samtrasani, the wrathful aspect of Mamaki, the consort of Buddha Ratnasambhava, in the form of green HUM HUM. On a sun mandala at her forehead appears Heroine Chandika, the wrathful aspect of Tara, the consort of Buddha Amoghasiddhi, in the form of smoke-coloured PHAT PHAT. From all these seed-letters, or Deities, infinite rays of light radiate throughout her body. Without even the smallest gap, her entire body between the skin and flesh is pervaded by the six-coloured rays of light, in nature the six Heroine armour Deities.

By visualizing the mantras of these Deities we are also visualizing the Deities themselves because they are the same nature. We should remember this in order to receive their protection. The armour Deities are specially emanated by Buddha Vajradhara to protect practitioners from hindrances and obstacles. They are described in detail in the burning offering sadhana, which can be found in Appendix II.

INVITING THE WISDOM BEINGS, DISSOLVING THEM INTO THE COMMITMENT BEINGS, AND RECEIVING THE EMPOWERMENT

At this point we should have a rough generic image of the supporting mandala, by nature our purified gross body. We are standing in the very centre of the mandala in the form of Father Mother Heruka, the nature of our purified white and red indestructible drop, and are surrounded by the Heroes and Heroines of the five wheels, the nature of our purified channels and drops. Outside the mandala is the protection circle surrounded by the eight charnel grounds. Together the Deities, mandala, protection circle, and charnel grounds constitute the commitment beings – so called because it is our commitment to generate ourself in this aspect every day. We now need to invite the wisdom beings together with the empowering Deities, dissolve the wisdom beings into the commitment beings, and receive the empowerment.

A wisdom being is an actual living Buddha whose body is the nature of omniscient wisdom. In this practice we invite

LONG MANTRA RECITATION

The visualization for the recitation of the root mantras, the essence mantras, and the close essence mantras of the Father and Mother is as follows. We begin by focusing on the letter HUM at our heart and recognizing it as the nature of Heruka's wisdom of great bliss and emptiness, the source of all the mantras of the Deities of Heruka body mandala. As we recite the root mantra of Heruka we imagine that from the lower tip of the letter HUM comes a rosary of mantra letters, blue in colour, the nature of wisdom light. This descends through our central channel, leaves through the tip of our vajra, enters the consort's bhaga, ascends through her central channel, leaves through her mouth, enters our mouth, descends, and dissolves back into the HUM at our heart. We then repeat this process, observing the mantra circling through the central channels of ourself and Vajravarahi. While focusing on this visualization we verbally or mentally recite the mantra as a request to Heruka to bestow profound realizations and pacify outer and inner obstacles. We focus on a similar visualization while reciting the root mantra of Vajravarahi, and the essence and close essence mantras of the Father and Mother.

This visualization is very special. It helps us to maintain divine pride and clear appearance, and causes us to generate great bliss. If our concentration is clear and strong it also causes the inner winds to gather into and dissolve within the central channel. Without forgetting this visualization we recite the mantras as a request to pacify obstacles and to bestow attainments.

If we take the words of the root mantras of the Father and Mother literally, it may appear that we are requesting Heruka and Vajravarahi to hook, catch, kill, eat, or destroy someone! In reality however we are requesting Heruka Father and Mother to pacify our outer and inner obstacles and destroy the enemy of the delusions.

The way to recite the mantras of the armour Deities has already been explained. The visualization for reciting the mantras of the sixty retinue Deities is as follows:



Je Tsongkhapa

of attainment manifests. We engage in a close retreat of time when we do a retreat for a definite period of time, such as six months; or alternatively when we do either a long or short close retreat every year at the same time.

There are two types of close retreat of numbers: a close retreat of actions, and a great close retreat. There are also two types of close retreat of actions: a long close retreat of actions, and a short close retreat of actions. On a long close retreat of actions of Heruka we recite the essence mantras of the Father and Mother three hundred thousand times, the close essence mantras of the Father and Mother ten thousand times, and the essence mantras of the sixty retinues ten thousand times each. On a short close retreat of actions of Heruka we recite the essence mantras of the Father and Mother one hundred thousand times, the close essence mantras of the Father and Mother ten thousand times, and the condensed essence mantra of the sixty retinues ten thousand times. For a close retreat of actions it is not necessary to count the root mantras of the Father and Mother or the mantras of the armour Deities.

To conclude both long and short close retreats of actions we recite ten thousand wisdom-descending mantras. This mantra is: OM SHRI VAJRA HE HE RU RU KAM HUM HUM PHAT DAKINI DZALA SHAMBARAM VAJRA BEROTZANIYE HUM HUM PHAT HUM HA ADZE SÖHA. While reciting this mantra we visualize countless rays of blue light radiating from our heart to the ten directions and inviting all the Buddhas in the form of Heruka. These dissolve into our body like a heavy shower of rain falling into an ocean. With strong conviction we think that we have received the blessings of all the Buddhas, and we imagine that our mind and body transform into the nature of omniscient wisdom.

To complete a successful close retreat of actions we need to do four things:

- 1 The preparations
- 2 The preliminary practices
- 3 The actual retreat
- 4 The fire puja

THE PREPARATIONS

There are two types of preparation: inner and outer. The most important inner preparation is to understand clearly how to meditate on the three bringings and the actual generation stage, how to practise the mantra recitations, and how to begin, progress on, and complete the whole retreat. We do this by studying the commentary and receiving advice from Teachers or other qualified practitioners. In particular, we need to cultivate and maintain a pure motivation and strong faith in this holy Dharma and in our Spiritual Teacher from whom we received the empowerments and instructions.

Once we have made these inner preparations we make the outer preparations. If the place where we are living is quiet, peaceful, and free from specific obstacles we do not need to look elsewhere; but if this is not the case we need to find a suitable location and meditation room for our retreat that is free from obstacles and where it is easy to find the necessary conditions. We then clean our meditation room, and prepare our shrine and meditation seat, or cushion. This should be very comfortable and stable because on a close retreat of actions we need to recite all the mantra recitations on the same seat without moving it. If possible it should face the shrine. If for any reason we find it difficult to sit on the floor we can use a chair as our meditation seat.

THE PRELIMINARY PRACTICES

On the morning of the day that our retreat begins we once again clean our meditation room and the area around it. In front of a shrine containing statues or pictures of our Spiritual Guide, Buddha Shakyamuni, Je Tsongkhapa, Heruka, and Dharmapala Dorje Shugdän, we set out tormas, outer offerings, and tsog offerings. On a small table in front of our meditation seat we arrange our inner offering, vajra, bell, damaru, mala, and sadhana. Then in the afternoon, before supper, we engage in the actual preliminary practices. We sit on our meditation seat and first practise the *Heart Jewel* sadhana with Lamrim meditation, especially the meditation on bodhichitta,

to pacify obstacles, receive blessings, and generate a pure motivation. Then, while concentrating on its meaning, we practise the Heruka retreat sadhana, *Heruka Retreat Preliminary Jewel*, which can be found in Appendix II.

THE ACTUAL RETREAT

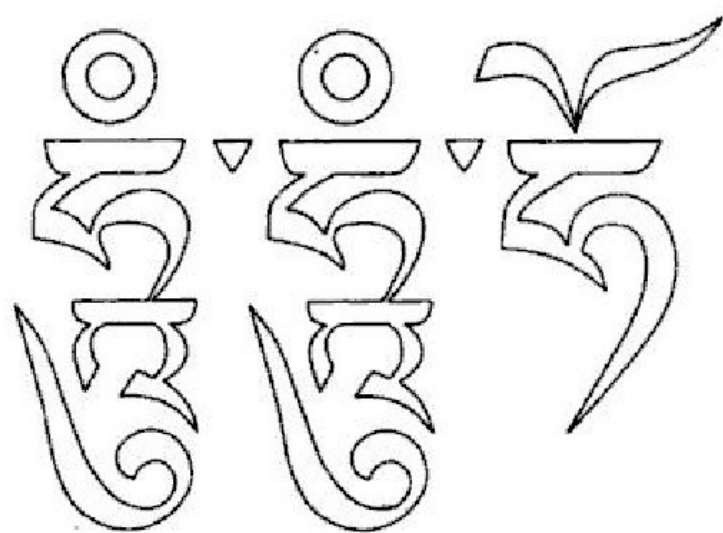
After finishing the preliminary practices we relax until the evening when, with a happy mind, we start the first session of our retreat. We recite the *Essence of Vajrayana* sadhana from going for refuge up to the auspicious prayers, including the tsog offering, while concentrating on its meaning; and afterwards we practise the yoga of sleep. The following morning we practise the yoga of rising and the yoga of experiencing nectar, and then we do the first session of the day. If we do four sessions each day, the first session should be finished before breakfast, the second before lunch, the third before supper, and the fourth before we go to bed. In the first three sessions we do not need to offer the tormas or recite the extensive dedication prayers, and in the last three sessions we do not need to do the meditation and recitation of Vajrasattva or bless the inner offering.

During every session it is most important to prevent our mind from being distracted to other objects such as our normal activities, friends, and enjoyments; and also to prevent ourselves from falling asleep. We should do our sessions with a joyful mind, having strong faith in the supreme Buddha, Guru Heruka Father and Mother, the holy Dharma of these profound Heruka body mandala instructions, and the supreme Sangha, the assembly of Heroes and Heroines.

Between sessions we should improve our experience of renunciation, bodhichitta, and the profound view of emptiness by reading, contemplating, and meditating on the precious practices of Lamrim and Lojong. Without doing this it will be very difficult for us to maintain a pure motivation and so our Tantric meditation will become powerless. We should also read again and again the commentary to the practice of Heruka body mandala until we gain a deep understanding of the entire meaning of the sadhana.



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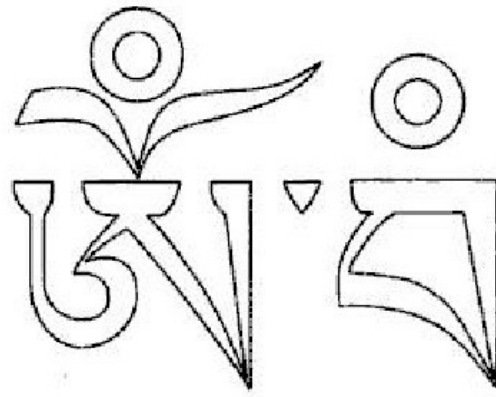


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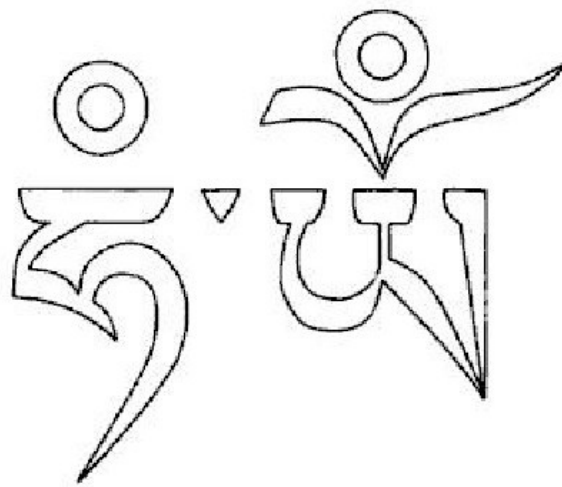


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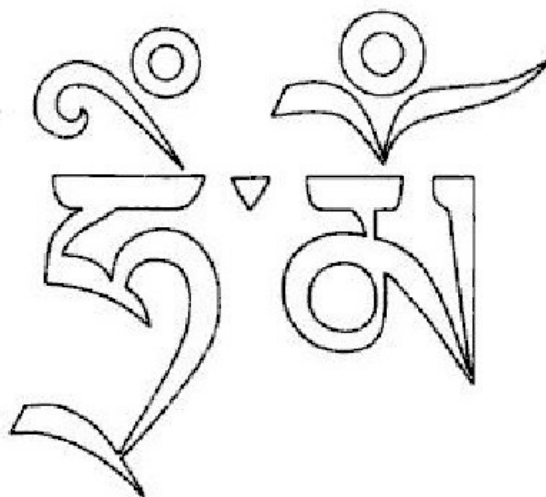
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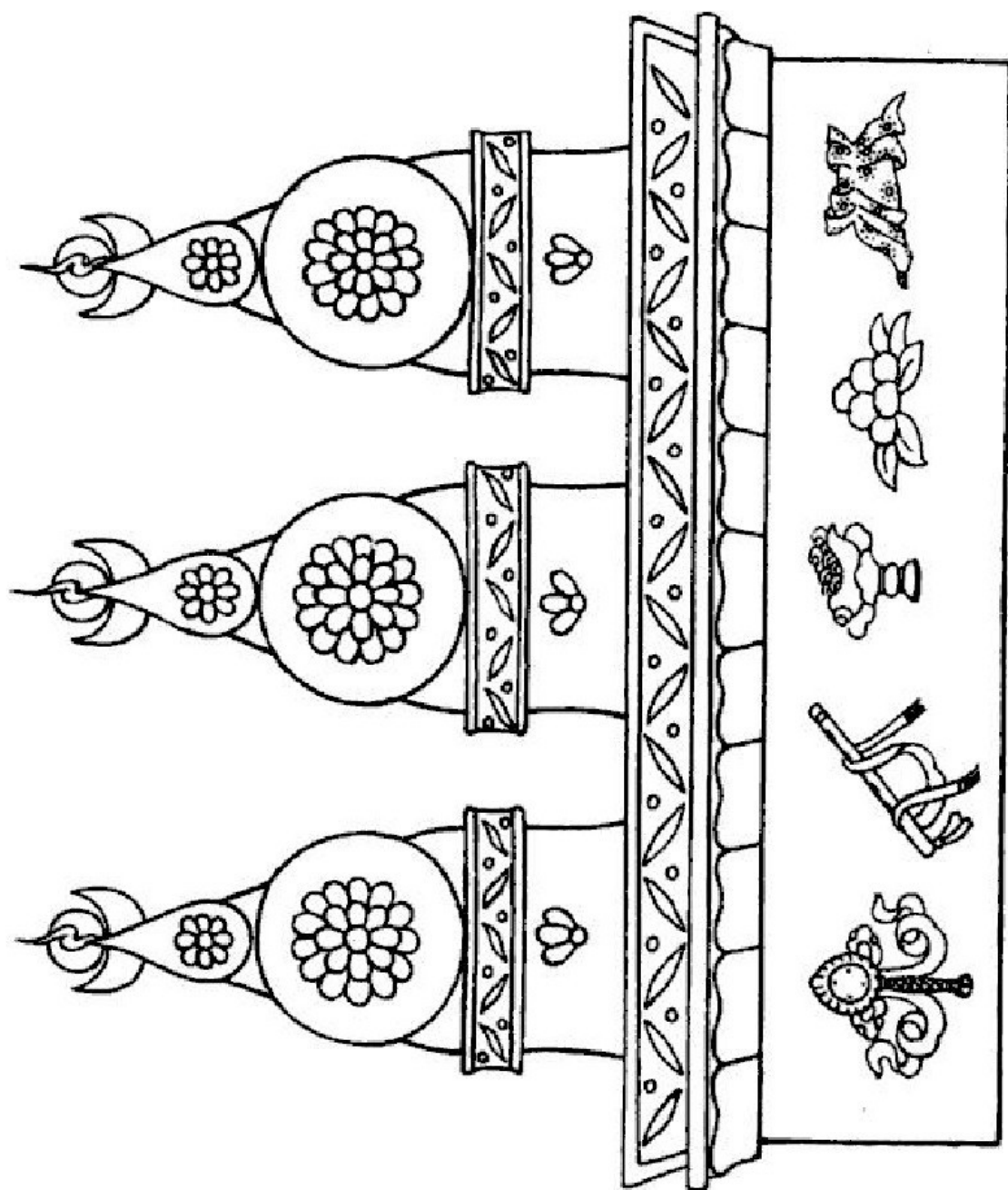
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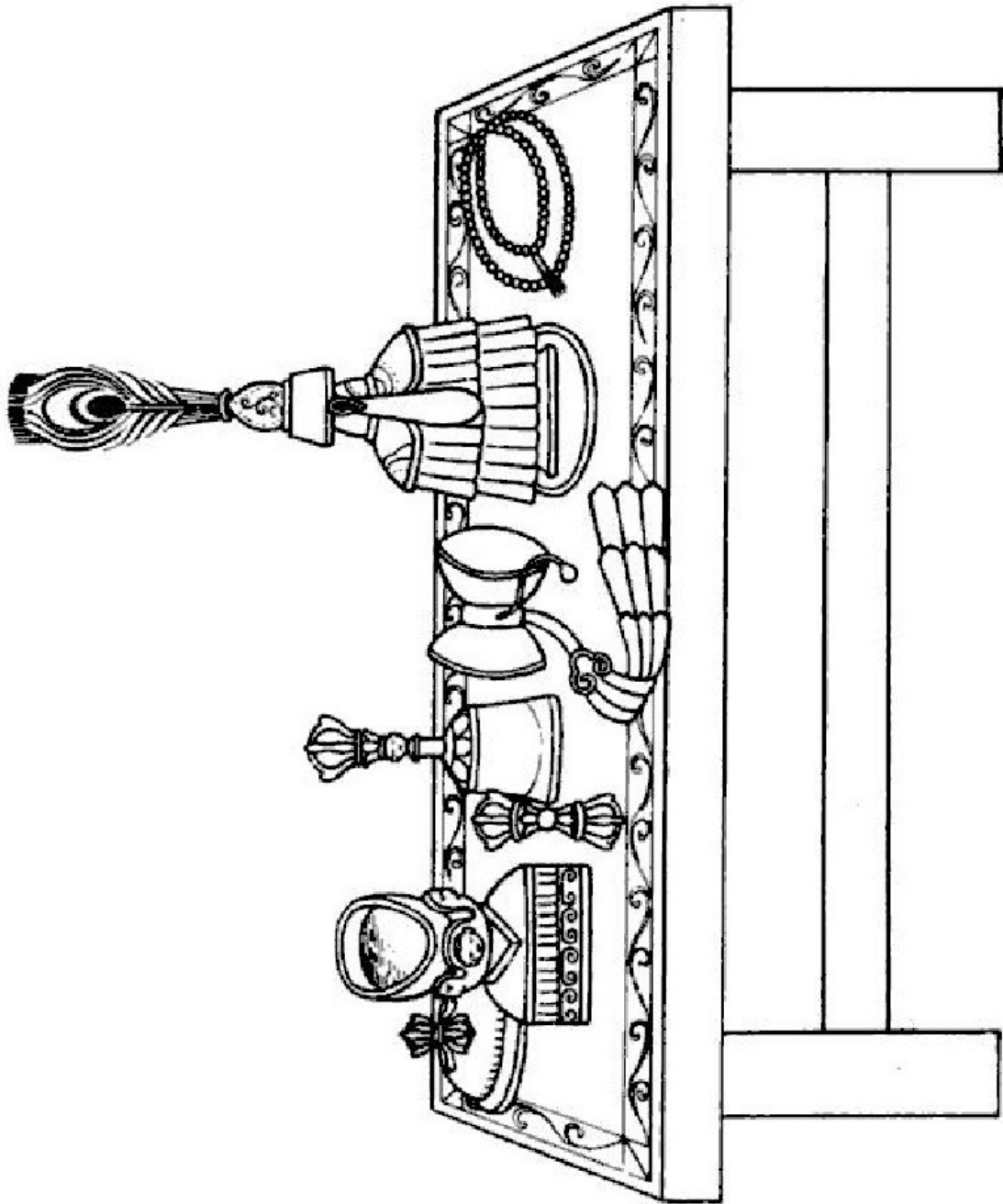
HAM YOM



HRIM MOM



Offering tormas for the assembly of Heruka



Practitioner's table for Heruka burning offering

Glossary

Attachment A deluded mental factor that observes a contaminated object, regards it as a cause of happiness, and wishes for it. See *Joyful Path of Good Fortune*.

Behar A type of malevolent spirit. See *Heart Jewel*.

Bhaga Sanskrit word for the female sex organ.

Blessing (Tib. jin gyi lab pa) The transformation of our mind from a negative state to a positive state, from an unhappy state to a happy state, or from a state of weakness to a state of strength, through the inspiration of holy beings such as our Spiritual Guide, Buddhas, and Bodhisattvas.

Brahma A worldly god. See *Ocean of Nectar*.

Brahmin's thread The Tibetan term for Brahmin's thread is 'tsang pi kupa', where 'tsang pa' means 'purity' and 'kupa' means 'thread'. Thus, a Brahmin's thread is a ritual thread symbolizing non-conceptual omniscient wisdom that is complete purity.

Buddha family There are five main Buddha families: the families of Vairochana, Ratnasambhava, Amitabha, Amoghasiddhi, and Akshobya. They are the five purified aggregates – the aggregates of form, feeling, discrimination, compositional factors, and consciousness, respectively; and the five exalted wisdoms – the exalted mirror-like wisdom, the exalted wisdom of equality, the exalted wisdom of individual realization, the exalted wisdom of accomplishing activities, and the exalted wisdom of the Dharmadhatu, respectively. See *Great Treasury of Merit*.

Buddha nature The root mind of a sentient being, and its ultimate nature. Buddha nature, Buddha seed, and Buddha lineage are synonyms. All sentient beings have Buddha nature and therefore have the potential to attain Buddhahood.

Buddha's bodies A Buddha has four bodies – the Wisdom Truth Body, the Nature Body, the Enjoyment Body, and the Emanation Body. The first is Buddha's omniscient mind; the second is the

emptiness, or ultimate nature, of his mind; the third is his subtle Form Body; and the fourth, of which each Buddha manifests a countless number, are gross Form Bodies that are visible to ordinary beings. The Wisdom Truth Body and the Nature Body are both included within the Truth Body, and the Enjoyment Body and the Emanation Body are both included within the Form Body. See *Joyful Path of Good Fortune* and *Ocean of Nectar*.

Central channel The principal channel at the very centre of the body along which the channel wheels are located. See *Clear Light of Bliss*.

Chakra See *Channel wheel*.

Channels Subtle inner passageways of the body through which flow subtle drops moved by inner winds. See *Clear Light of Bliss*.

Channel wheel (Skt. chakra) A focal centre where secondary channels branch out from the central channel. Meditating on these points can cause the inner winds to enter the central channel. See *Clear Light of Bliss*.

Clear light A manifest very subtle mind that perceives an appearance like clear, empty space. See *Clear Light of Bliss* and *Tantric Grounds and Paths*.

Collection of merit A virtuous action motivated by bodhichitta that is a main cause of attaining the Form Body of a Buddha. Examples are making offerings and prostrations to holy beings with bodhichitta motivation, and the practice of the perfections of giving, moral discipline, and patience.

Collection of wisdom A virtuous mental action motivated by bodhichitta that is a main cause of attaining the Truth Body of a Buddha. Examples are listening to, contemplating, and meditating on emptiness with bodhichitta motivation.

Commitments Promises and pledges taken when engaging in certain spiritual practices.

Compassion A mind that cannot bear the suffering of others and wishes them to be free from it. See *Joyful Path of Good Fortune*.

Concentration A mental factor that makes its primary mind remain on its object single-pointedly. See *Joyful Path of Good Fortune* and *Understanding the Mind*.

Contaminated aggregate Any of the aggregates of form, feeling, discrimination, compositional factors, and consciousness of a samsaric being. See *Heart of Wisdom*.

Dakini Land The Pure Land of Heruka and Vajrayogini. In Sanskrit it is called 'Keajra' and in Tibetan 'Dagpa Khachö'. See *Guide to Dakini Land*.

Dakinis Female Tantric Buddhas and those women who have attained the realization of meaning clear light. Dakas are the male equivalent. See *Guide to Dakini Land*.

Damaru A small hand-drum used in Tantric rituals. Playing the damaru symbolizes the gathering of the outer Dakinis into our body. It is also used as a music offering to the Buddhas.

Deity (Skt. Yidam) A Tantric enlightened being.

Deity body Divine body. When a practitioner attains an illusory body he or she attains an actual divine body, or Deity body, but not a Deity's body. A Deity's body is necessarily a body of a Tantric enlightened being. See also *Divine body*. See *Tantric Grounds and Paths*.

Delusion A mental factor that arises from inappropriate attention and that functions to make the mind unpeaceful and uncontrolled. There are three main delusions: ignorance, desirous attachment, and anger. From these arise all the other delusions, such as jealousy, pride, and deluded doubt. See *Understanding the Mind*.

Demon (Skt. mara) Anything that obstructs the attainment of liberation or enlightenment. There are four principal types of demon: the demon of the delusions, the demon of contaminated aggregates, the demon of uncontrolled death, and the Devaputra demons. Of these, only the last are actual sentient beings. The principal Devaputra demon is wrathful Ishvara, the highest of the desire realm gods, who inhabits Land of Controlling Emanations. Buddha is called a 'Conqueror' because he or she has conquered all four types of demon. See *Heart of Wisdom*.

Dependent-related links Dependent-related ignorance, compositional actions, consciousness, name and form, six sources, contact, feeling, craving, grasping, existence, birth, and ageing and death. These twelve links are causes and effects that keep ordinary beings bound within samsara. See *Joyful Path of Good Fortune* and *Heart of Wisdom*.

Dharmadhatu The ultimate truth of phenomena.

Dharmakaya Sanskrit word for the Truth Body of a Buddha.

Dharma Protector A manifestation of a Buddha or Bodhisattva, whose main function is to eliminate obstacles and gather all necessary

conditions for pure Dharma practitioners. Also called 'Dharmapala'. See *Heart Jewel*.

Dharma Wheel A collection of Buddha's teachings. Sometimes 'Dharma Wheel' is used to refer to the heart channel wheel because this is the place where we visualize the Dharmakaya, which is the source of the Dharma Wheel.

Divine body A subtle body arising from the mounted wind of ultimate example clear light or meaning clear light. See also *Deity body*. See *Tantric Grounds and Paths*.

Dorje Shugdän A Dharma Protector who is an emanation of the Wisdom Buddha Manjushri. See *Heart Jewel*.

Drops The essence of blood and sperm. When the drops melt and flow through the inner channels they give rise to an experience of bliss. See *Clear Light of Bliss*.

Dualistic appearance The appearance to mind of an object together with the inherent existence of that object. See *Heart of Wisdom*.

Eight signs of dissolution Internal signs that the inner winds are dissolving within the central channel. See *Clear Light of Bliss*.

Element The nature of any phenomenon. All phenomena hold their own natures, which are all included within the eighteen elements. See *Heart of Wisdom* and *Ocean of Nectar*.

Emanation Animate or inanimate form manifested by Buddhas or high Bodhisattvas to benefit others.

Empowerment A special potential power to attain any of the four Buddha bodies that is received by a Tantric practitioner from his or her Guru, or from other holy beings, by means of Tantric ritual. It is the gateway to the Vajrayana.

Emptiness Lack of inherent existence, the ultimate nature of phenomena. See *Heart of Wisdom* and *Ocean of Nectar*.

Energy winds See *Inner winds*.

Field for Accumulating Merit The Three Jewels. Just as external seeds grow in a field of soil, so the virtuous internal seeds produced by virtuous actions grow in dependence upon Buddha Jewel, Dharma Jewel, and Sangha Jewel. Also known as 'Field of Merit'.

Fire Deity The Deity to whom we make the burning offering, for example in the practice of Heruka. A Fire Deity can be either mundane or supramundane. Mundane Fire Deities are not real mundane beings but appear in the aspect of mundane beings.

Five exalted wisdoms Buddha's omniscient wisdom has five parts: (1) the exalted mirror-like wisdom, which perceives all phenomena simultaneously, as a mirror reflects objects; (2) the exalted wisdom of equality, which realizes that all phenomena are equal in emptiness; (3) the exalted wisdom of individual realization, which realizes all individual phenomena directly; (4) the exalted wisdom of accomplishing activities, whose function is to accomplish all the activities of a Buddha; and (5) the exalted wisdom of the Dharmadhatu, which realizes the Dharmadhatu, the ultimate nature of all phenomena.

Five stages of completion stage In general, this refers to isolated speech, isolated mind, illusory body, clear light, and union. Sometimes it is used to refer to the five stages of blessing the self and so forth. See *Tantric Grounds and Paths*.

Form Body See *Buddha's bodies*.

Four elements Earth, water, fire, and wind. There are four inner elements (those that are conjoined with the continuum of a person), and four outer elements (those that are not conjoined with the continuum of a person). There are different ways in which matter can be considered to be composed of parts or ingredients. Among scientists, matter is presently considered to be composed of atomic elements, these elements being classified in terms of nuclear charge. We can also consider matter to be composed of the elements of earth, water, fire, and wind. These four elements are not the same as the earth of a field, the water of a river, and so forth. Rather, the elements of earth, water, fire, and wind in broad terms are the properties of solidity, liquidity, heat, and movement respectively. All matter can be said to be composed of a combination of these elements.

Four joys Four stages of bliss that are generated in the generation and completion stages of Highest Yoga Tantra. See *Clear Light of Bliss*.

Four maras See *Demon*.

Four ways of gathering disciples The four ways of gathering disciples practised by Bodhisattvas are: (1) pleasing others by giving them material gifts or whatever they need; (2) teaching Dharma to lead others to liberation; (3) helping others in their Dharma practice by giving them encouragement; and (4) showing others a good example by always practising what we teach.

Generic image The appearing object of a conceptual mind. The conceptual mind mistakes the generic image for the object itself.

For example, if we think about our mother an image of our mother appears to our conceptual mind, and it seems to that mind as if our mother herself is appearing. However, the object that principally appears to that mind is the generic image of our mother. This generic image appears to our mind through the mental exclusion of all objects that are not our mother. It is therefore the appearance of a non-non-mother. See *Understanding the Mind*.

God A being of the god realm. There are many different types of god. Some are desire realm gods, while others are form or formless realm gods.

Goddesses of the doorways The four Goddesses of the doorways are Kakase, literally 'crow-faced one'; Ulukase, 'owl-faced one'; Shönase, 'dog-faced one'; and Shukarase, 'pig-faced one'. Although they have human-shaped heads and ears, their names reflect the appearances of their faces, which are like a crow, like an owl, and so on, rather like they are wearing masks.

Great compassion A mind wishing to protect all sentient beings from suffering. See *Ocean of Nectar*.

Guhyasamaja A Highest Yoga Tantra Deity. See *Great Treasury of Merit*.

Hell realm The lowest of the three lower realms. See *Joyful Path of Good Fortune*.

Hero and Heroine A Hero is a male Tantric Deity generally embodying method. A Heroine is a female Tantric Deity generally embodying wisdom. See *Guide to Dakini Land*.

Highest Yoga Tantra A Tantric instruction that includes the method for transforming sexual bliss into the spiritual path. See *Tantric Grounds and Paths*.

Hinayana Sanskrit word for 'Lesser Vehicle'. The Hinayana goal is to attain merely one's own liberation from suffering by completely abandoning delusions. See *Joyful Path of Good Fortune*.

Ignorance A mental factor that is confused about the ultimate nature of phenomena. See *Understanding the Mind*.

Illusory body The subtle divine body that is principally developed from the indestructible wind. When a practitioner of Highest Yoga Tantra rises from the meditation of the isolated mind of ultimate example clear light he or she attains a body that is not the same as his or her ordinary physical body. This new body is the illusory body. It has the same appearance as the body of the personal Deity

of generation stage except that it is white in colour, and it can be perceived only by those who have already attained an illusory body. See *Clear Light of Bliss* and *Tantric Grounds and Paths*.

Imputation, mere According to the Madhyamika-Prasangika school, all phenomena are merely imputed by conception in dependence upon their basis of imputation. Therefore, they are mere imputation and do not exist from their own side in the least.* See *Heart of Wisdom* and *Ocean of Nectar*.

Indestructible drop The most subtle drop, which is located at the heart. It is formed from the essence of the white and red drops received from our parents at conception. It does not separate until the time of death, when it opens and allows the very subtle mind and its mounted wind to travel to the next life. See *Tantric Grounds and Paths* and *Clear Light of Bliss*.

Inner fire (Tib. tummo) An inner heat located at the centre of the navel channel wheel. See *Clear Light of Bliss*.

Inner winds Special winds related to the mind that flow through the channels of our body. Our body and mind cannot function without these winds. See *Clear Light of Bliss*.

Intermediate state (Tib. bardo) The state between death and rebirth. It begins the moment the consciousness leaves the body, and ceases the moment the consciousness enters the body of the next life. See *Joyful Path of Good Fortune* and *Clear Light of Bliss*.

Je Tsongkhapa (AD 1357-1419) An emanation of the Wisdom Buddha Manjushri whose appearance in fourteenth-century Tibet as a monk was predicted by Buddha. He restored the purity of Buddha's doctrine and demonstrated how to practise pure Dharma during degenerate times. His tradition later became known as the 'Gelug', or 'Ganden Tradition'. See *Heart Jewel* and *Great Treasury of Merit*.

Kadampa Buddhism 'Kadampa' is a Tibetan word in which 'Ka' means all Buddha's teachings, 'dam' the special arrangement of Lamrim presented by Atisha, and 'pa' a person who practises these teachings.

Karma Sanskrit word referring to actions. Through the force of intention we perform actions with our body, speech, and mind, and all of these actions produce effects. The effect of virtuous actions is happiness and the effect of negative actions is suffering. See *Joyful Path of Good Fortune*.

Khatanga A ritual object symbolizing the sixty-two Deities of Heruka.

Lamrim Literally, 'stages of the path'. A special arrangement of all Buddha's teachings that is easy to understand and put into practice. It reveals all the stages of the path to enlightenment. See *Joyful Path of Good Fortune*.

Lineage A line of instruction that has been passed down from Teacher to disciple, with each Guru in the line having gained personal experience of the instruction before passing it on to others.

Lojong Literally, 'training the mind'. A special lineage of instructions deriving from Manjushri and passed down through Shantideva, Atisha, and the Kadampa Geshes that emphasizes the generation of bodhichitta through the practices of equalizing and exchanging self with others combined with taking and giving. See *Universal Compassion*.

Mahasiddha Sanskrit word for 'greatly accomplished one', which is used to refer to Yogis or Yoginis with high attainments.

Mahayana Sanskrit word for 'Great Vehicle', the spiritual path to great enlightenment. The Mahayana goal is to attain Buddhahood for the benefit of all sentient beings by completely abandoning delusions and their imprints. See *Joyful Path of Good Fortune* and *Meaningful to Behold*.

Mandala Usually the celestial mansion in which a Tantric Deity abides, or the environment or Deities of a Buddha's Pure Land. Sometimes it is used to refer to the essence of an element, for example 'wind mandala'.

Mara See *Demon*.

Meaning clear light A mind of clear light that realizes emptiness directly without a generic image. Synonymous with inner Dakini Land. See *Clear Light of Bliss*.

Mental awareness An awareness that is developed in dependence upon its uncommon dominant condition, a mental power. See *Understanding the Mind*.

Merit The good fortune created by virtuous actions. It is the potential power to increase our good qualities and produce happiness.

Mindfulness A mental factor that functions not to forget the object realized by the primary mind. See *Understanding the Mind* and *Clear Light of Bliss*.

Mount Meru According to Buddhist cosmology, a divine mountain that stands at the centre of the universe.

Mudra Generally, the Sanskrit word for 'seal', as in 'Mahamudra', the 'great seal'. More specifically, 'mudra' is used to refer to a consort, as in 'action mudra' or 'wisdom mudra'; and to hand gestures used in Tantric rituals.

Nada A three-curved line that appears above certain seed-letters.

Naga A non-human being not normally visible to humans. Their upper half is said to be human, their lower half serpent. Nagas usually live in the oceans of the world but they sometimes inhabit land in the region of rocks and trees. They are very powerful, some being benevolent and some malevolent. Many diseases, known as 'naga diseases', are caused by nagas and can only be cured through performing certain naga rituals.

Non-virtuous actions The ten non-virtuous actions are: killing, stealing, sexual misconduct, lying, divisive speech, hurtful speech, idle gossip, covetousness, malice, and holding wrong views. See *Joyful Path of Good Fortune*.

Obstructions to liberation Obstructions that prevent the attainment of liberation. All delusions, such as ignorance, attachment, and anger, together with their seeds, are obstructions to liberation. Also called 'delusion-obstructions'.

Obstructions to omniscience The imprints of delusions that prevent simultaneous and direct realization of all phenomena. Only Buddhas have overcome these obstructions.

Oral transmission The granting of blessings through verbal instruction. Receiving these blessings is essential for gaining authentic realizations.

Ordinary being Anyone who has not realized emptiness directly.

Perfection of wisdom Any wisdom maintained by bodhichitta motivation. See *Heart of Wisdom*.

Phenomena source A phenomenon that appears only to mental awareness. It is also the name given to Vajrayogini's mandala, which is shaped like a double tetrahedron.

Preliminary guide Altogether there are nine preliminary guides, so called because by engaging in them we are guided to the actual spiritual paths of Secret Mantra. The four main ones are: (1) the guide of going for refuge and generating bodhichitta, (2) the guide

Spontaneous great bliss A special bliss that is produced through the drops melting inside the central channel. It is attained by gaining control over the inner winds. See *Clear Light of Bliss* and *Tantric Grounds and Paths*.

Stages of the path See *Lamrim*.

Subsequent attainment The period between meditation sessions.

Sutra The teachings of Buddha that are open to everyone to practise without the need for empowerment. These include Buddha's teachings of the three turnings of the Wheel of Dharma.

Ten directions The four cardinal directions, the four intermediate directions, and the directions above and below.

Ten perfections The six perfections as well as the perfections of skilful means, prayer, force, and exalted awareness. See *Ocean of Nectar*.

Training the mind See *Lojong*.

Tranquil abiding A concentration that possesses the special bliss of physical and mental suppleness that is attained in dependence upon completing the nine mental abidings. See *Joyful Path of Good Fortune* and *Meaningful to Behold*.

Transference of consciousness (Tib. *powa*) A practice for transferring the consciousness to a Pure Land at the time of death. See *Great Treasury of Merit*.

Truth Body See *Buddha's bodies*.

Tsog offering An offering made by an assembly of Heroes and Heroines. See *Guide to Dakini Land* and *Great Treasury of Merit*.

Tummo See *Inner fire*.

Ultimate nature All phenomena have two natures, a conventional nature and an ultimate nature. In the case of a table, for example, the table itself, and its shape, colour, and so forth are all the conventional nature of the table. The ultimate nature of the table is the table's lack of inherent existence. The conventional nature of a phenomenon is a conventional truth, and its ultimate nature is an ultimate truth. See *Heart of Wisdom* and *Ocean of Nectar*.

Vajra Generally the Sanskrit word 'vajra' means indestructible, like a diamond, and powerful, like a thunderbolt. In the context of Secret Mantra it can mean the indivisibility of method and wisdom, omniscient great wisdom, or spontaneous great bliss. It is also the name given to a metal ritual object. See *Tantric Grounds and Paths*.

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Essence of Vajrayana

*The Highest Yoga Tantra practice of
Heruka Body Mandala*

- *The first complete explanation in English to the Highest Yoga Tantra practice of Heruka body mandala*
- *Sublime methods for transcending our ordinary minds and attaining pure selfless joy*
- *The actual method to accomplish the supreme bliss of full enlightenment in this lifetime*

Essence of Vajrayana is the first complete explanation in English to the uncommon generation stage practice of Heruka body mandala. Buddha Heruka is a manifestation of all the Buddhas' enlightened compassion, and by relying upon him we can swiftly attain a pure selfless joy and bring true happiness to others. In Part One Geshe Kelsang explains with characteristic clarity and precision how we can practise the sublime visualizations of Heruka body mandala and thereby gradually transform our ordinary world and experiences into the transcendental reality of a Buddha. Then, in Part Two, he provides definitive instructions on the completion stage practices that lead to the supreme bliss of full enlightenment in this one lifetime.

Geshe Kelsang Gyatso was born in Tibet and is a fully accomplished Tantric master and internationally renowned teacher of Buddhism. Living in the West since 1977, he is the author of a series of highly acclaimed books that transmit perfectly the ancient wisdom of Buddhism to our modern world.

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