

Chapter Twenty-Four: Faculties and Capacities

THE NATURAL EMANATION BODY FIELDS AND LIBERATION THROUGH RECOGNITION

Placement: Volume 2, Chapter 24 (Pages 367-376)

Tibetan Title: དབང་པོ་ཐ་མ་ནམས་རང་བཞིན་སྤྱུལ་པ་སྐྱུའི་ཞིང་དུ་དབྱུགས་དབྱུང་བ།

English Title: Sending Those of Final Faculties to the Natural Emanation Body Fields

The Purpose of This Chapter

You have journeyed through the vast architecture of the Treasury—from perfect Teacher to primordial Ground, through presentations of delusion's arising, subtle body's channels and winds, four lamps of visionary experience, recognition of awareness. You have traversed Trekchö and Thögal paths, practiced bardo instructions, trained in consciousness transference. Now arrives the crucial turning point: destination toward which all practices lead—the natural emanation-body fields where refined faculties take birth, swiftly attain Buddhahood.

This chapter addresses those "of final faculties" (*dbang po tha ma'i tha ma*)—beings most refined, or lesser who yet failed to recognize truth when dharma-nature bardo arose. For these, becoming bardo presents dreamlike; through recognition power and previous practice blessings, they direct consciousness toward pure fields of spontaneous emanation.

What You Will Encounter Here

The Structure of Liberation: Longchenpa organizes this chapter into a systematic presentation that moves from recognition to destination, from practice to result. The chapter contains one extensive section (02-24-01-01) that unfolds across ten pages of profound instruction.

The Recognition of the Bardo State: The chapter begins with critical recognition—when path appears within becoming bardo, practitioner recognizes: "I have died." This lucidity, cultivated through daytime and nighttime practices, becomes liberation's doorway. Recalling guru and instructions, resolving "Now I go unto the field of natural emanation,"

through exhaustion of self-grasping propensities, miraculously arises upon lotus in that pure field.

The Two Natures: Longchenpa distinguishes "nature of abiding" (*gnas pa'i rang bzhin*)—fields existing primordially as spontaneous ground-appearance display—and "nature of enumeration" (*bgrangs pa'i rang bzhin*)—progressive grounds traversed through perfections. This clarifies: fields are not merely practice rewards but natural expression of awareness itself.

The Five Emanation Body Fields: The chapter provides an elaborate description of the five emanation body fields corresponding to the five Buddha families:

- **Eastern Manifest Joy** (*mngon par dga' ba*): The field of Vajra Unshakable, white in color, where bodhisattvas are miraculously born and move through the sky
- **Southern Glorious Possessing** (*dpal dang ldan pa*): The field of Jewel Source, golden in color, possessing immeasurable excellence
- **Western Lotus Piled** (*padma brtsegs pa*): The field of Infinite Light, red in color, radiant with the light of wisdom
- **Northern Action Fully Completed** (*las rab rdzogs pa*): The field of Meaning Accomplished, green in color, where all action is spontaneously accomplished
- **Central Wrathful Field** (*khro bo'i zhing*): The great charnel-ground of Blazing Mountain, where even those who bewilder and fear can find liberation through merely seeing

The Characteristics of Pure Fields: Longchenpa describes these fields with exquisite detail—the celestial palaces made of crystal, gold, and precious gems; the healing waters possessing eight limbs; the birds with sweet voices proclaiming Dharma; the bodhisattvas bound by only one birth; the absence of disease, hunger, and the three poisons. These are not merely poetic descriptions but precise instructions on what to recognize and where to direct the mind.

The Preliminary Practices: The chapter includes practical instructions for preparing for this transition: habituating oneself during the daytime to direct perception of self-appearance, habituating the five lights within the heart at nighttime, training in transference during the intervals, and at the moment of death, establishing clear focus and projecting consciousness with the syllable HIG.

The Ultimate Liberation: The chapter concludes establishing ultimate liberation place—twofold purity, non-dual space and wisdom of Dharma Body, primordially pure jewel secret recess. Even describing magnificent emanation-body fields in elaborate detail, it points beyond them to the ground from which they arise, to which they ultimately return.

Why This Chapter Matters

This chapter represents culmination of path presented in Treasury. Having established ground of primordial purity, explained delusion's arising, detailed path practices, Longchenpa now reveals fruition—not as abstract philosophical concept, but as concrete, experiential destination with precise characteristics, accessible entry points.

For practitioners, this chapter serves multiple functions:

1. **It provides a destination for the mind**—a clear, positive vision of the result of practice that counters nihilism and despair
2. **It demonstrates the continuity of practice**—showing how the habits cultivated in this life (direct perception of self-appearance, recognition of the five lights) become the means of liberation in the next
3. **It reveals the natural purity of result**—emphasizing that these fields are not created by effort but are the spontaneous expression of awareness's own nature
4. **It accommodates different capacities**—describing how both those of refined faculties and those who initially miss recognition can find liberation through these fields

How to Read This Chapter

As you read, recognize that Longchenpa is describing your own mind's potential—not as a distant fantasy, but as the natural expression of awareness when freed from adventitious stains. The elaborate descriptions of celestial palaces, jewel trees, and divine assemblies are not mere mythology; they are skillful means pointing to the intrinsic purity of experience when the limitations of ordinary perception are transcended.

The verses cited from the Sun-Moon Conjunction Tantra and the Self-Arising Awareness Great Tantra are not decorative flourishes but precise transmissions of how recognition occurs and where it leads. The detailed enumeration of the fields' characteristics—their colors, their inhabitants, their qualities—serves to familiarize the mind with what to expect and how to navigate.

Most importantly, this chapter bridges the gap between the profound view of primordial purity and the practical needs of practitioners still working within a framework of path and result. It demonstrates that Dzogchen is not a nihilistic denial of appearances but a recognition of their ultimate purity—a purity that is not different from the magnificent displays described here.

Connection to What Follows

Having established the natural emanation body fields as the destination for those of final faculties, Longchenpa will next turn (in Chapter 25) to the final presentation of the spontaneous results—the ultimate fruit of the Great Perfection. There he will establish how the ground, path, and fruition are ultimately inseparable, how the twofold purity is already accomplished, and how all Buddhas and sentient beings are unified in the single sphere of primordial awareness.

This chapter, therefore, serves as the bridge between the detailed path instructions that have dominated the text thus far and the ultimate presentation of result that will complete the Treasury. It shows that even the most elaborate displays of the path lead inexorably to the simplicity of the ground recognized as fruition.

A Word to the Practitioner

Do not read this chapter as travel brochure for distant paradise. These fields are natural expression of your own awareness when obscurations of grasping, fixation are exhausted. "Final faculties" are not special endowment reserved for elect; they are your own capacity for recognition, refined through practice, blessing. Recognition that "I have died" is available every moment when fixations of self, world dissolve. Lotus upon which you arise is seat of your own innate wisdom.

As you study these descriptions, let them familiarize mind with purity always present, obscured only by habits of deluded perception. Remember: ultimate destination is not these magnificent fields themselves, but recognition from which they arise—the primordially pure jewel secret recess that is your own true nature.

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Sections: 1

Primary Doctrinal Themes: Bardo recognition, emanation body fields, transference practice, five Buddha families, spontaneous purity