

*‘Method for Repelling Adverse Conditions’ and
‘Golden [Serkyem] Offering to Accomplish Aims’*
by the 13th Karmapa



Introduction

Today on the new moon, I offer this first translation of two very short recitations by the 13th Karmapa, Dudul Dorje (1733-1797). In these times of pandemic, sickness, anxiety, dark forces and desires overwhelming our planet and lives, particularly those of animals, I hope these two practices will be of benefit to oneself and others.

Invoking protection and repelling unseen beings/spirits

Both of the practices deal with repelling unfavourable situations, conditions and malevolent unseen beings and invoking the protection of compassionate, powerful beings. The idea of unseen beings is not a new one, ghosts, demons and land spirits have been spoken about in many religions and cultures, not just in Buddhism. For those in doubt about the importance of relating to unseen beings, here is a quote from a recent article [On the Importance of Relating to Unseen Beings - Lion's Roar](#):

From the Tibetan point of view, relationships with the unseen world are essential to a full and successful human life. Ignoring one's relationships with the whole world of unseen spirits and spiritual beings is, in fact, as senseless and counterproductive as ignoring the people and conventions of one's own immediate human society. It is simply not possible to live in such a way.

Buddhism is normally thought of as a nontheistic tradition, and this raises the question of how such spirits, gods, and deities are to be understood within the Tibetan Buddhist framework. Certainly in Tibetan life, whether it is a question of the malevolent mamos, the potentially beneficent hearth god, the deities of the god realms, or the dharma protectors or tantric yidams, the nonhuman beings are understood at least on one level as more or less independent, objective entities. They are beings with whom one must be in constant relation, even though they are nonhuman and usually not visible. At the same time, however, from the point of view of the philosophical and meditative tradition, all such nonhuman beings are ultimately seen as aspects of one's own mind and not separate from it. But what does this actually mean? Frequently, particularly in the West, this standard Buddhist assertion is taken to indicate that such spirits and deities, taken as external beings by ordinary Tibetans, are not really external at all; that in fact they are mistaken projections of psychological states. This, then, becomes a justification for treating them as nonexistent and provides a rationale for jettisoning them from Western adaptations of the tradition. The problem with this approach is that it reflects a misunderstanding of what is meant by the statement that such entities are aspects of mind and inseparable from mind.

Indeed. Some 'Buddhist' people (like men who become gender-blind when talking about sexism, and white people become race-blind, when talking about racism) are happy to glibly claim too that demons

and ghosts also do not exist, citing the *ultimate* view and emptiness. Yet often such people are the first to take offence if someone insults or is deemed to have offended them though! The point being that while beings remain in dualistic ways of thinking, then such beings do exist, in the same way that they as human beings exist. Therefore, we cannot (and should not dismiss) their influence and power over us (and if not us, then at least over other beings).

The texts

Both texts are composed by the 13th Karmapa, Dudul Dorje, as I wrote about here¹ before, he certainly led a life of performing miracles including saving the famous Buddha statue in the Jokhang temple from flooding, Tibet and undertaking a restoration project of the sacred site, Swayambunath Stupa in Nepal. At the age of eight, he met his main guru, the great Eight Situpa, Chökyi Jungne, whose long life had spanned all of the twelfth Karmapa's and was to span most of the thirteenth's. Dudul Dorje received the Kagyu transmissions from him and also studied the Nyingma teachings very extensively. He appears to have been like a spiritual Dr. Doolittle, who was very fond of animals and famous for communicating with them². His Collected Works contain many songs referencing animals, as well as songs by the 1st and 2nd Karmapas in particular.

The first text is a very short Lion-Faced *dākinī* recitation entitled '*Method for Repelling Adverse Conditions*'³ and should be practiced by those with the empowerment. As I wrote about here, Lion-faced *dākinī* is renowned for being able to protect beings with good motivations and dispel harmful beings and conditions. The mantra should be recited slowly and not too loudly.

The second text is a short *Golden Drink Offering to Accomplish Aims* recitation [Serkyem] which is often hot tea, but can also be juice or other 'golden' liquid, offered for protectors and spirits⁴. The serkyem receptacle comprises of two pieces, a chalice and a basin for overflowing. The serkyem offering is unique to Vajrayana (as far as am aware) and there is an informative article written about the practice here⁵:

Enlightened Buddhas, *dākinī* s, and Protectors do not need offerings. We make offerings to generate merit — merit necessary to remove the obstacles that cloud our perception and obstruct our practice. To remove these obstacles, both the mundane — such as sickness, doubt, or poverty — we look to the “activity” of the Enlightened Buddhas. Daily “activity” offerings are typically called Serkyem — “Ser” meaning “golden” and “kyem” meaning “drink” — usually offered “hot” to symbolize quick activity or help. All monasteries, and many devout Buddhists, make tea or Golden Nectar offerings daily.

Typically, we offer water, milk, and the sensory offerings to the Enlightened Buddhas, representing peaceful wisdom and compassion. These same Buddhas emanation in wrathful or fierce forms to represent “activity” — the activity of wisdom and the activity of compassion. When we need help, we need fast activity. Serkyem (sometimes spelled Serkym) is all about activity. The offering itself connotes activity: pouring hot tea while reciting praises, allowing it to “overflow abundantly” from one bowl to the next. Overflowing activity and heated golden nectar representing both speed of help (the hotness of the tea) and overflowing compassionate help.

In a nutshell, it is a specific offering to invoke the protection of the three roots, the lamas, yidams, protectors and ḍākinīs, but in particular unseen beings and spirits such as land guardians and so on.

May the translation of these two short recitations be of benefit in repelling all harmful and adverse conditions and beings and provide protection to all those who need it!

Translated and edited by Adele Tomlin, December 2020.

Method to Repel Adverse Conditions

འགལ་རྒྱུན་བརློག་ཐབས་བཞུགས་སོ།།

ལམ་ཞུགས་གཟའ་སྐར་ཚེས་མ་འབྲིག་ཅིང་།། མིས་ལྷས་མཚན་མ་ངན་པ་སོགས།།

lam zhuk zakar tsé ma drik ching mi té tsenma ngenpa sok

In order to be liberated from unsuitable dates and astrological conditions for practicing the path, bad signs and omens in dreams and so on, and

མི་མཐུ་འགལ་རྒྱུན་ལས་གྲོལ་ཕྱིར།། དྲག་མོ་སེང་གའོང་བརློག་པ་བྱ།།

mi thun galkyen lé drol chir drakmo seng dong dokpaja

unharmonious, adverse conditions; perform the repelling of wrathful, lion-faced ḍākinī !

རང་ཉིད་སྐད་ཅིག་དྲན་རྗེས་སུ།། མཁའ་འགྲོ་སེང་གའོང་སྐར་གསལ་བའི།།

rangnyi kechik dren dzok su khandro seng dong kur salwé

In an instant of perfect recollection, oneself becomes the clear form of Lion-faced ḍākinī .

སྐྱགས་ཀར་ཧཱུལ་ལྷགས་ཀྱིས་བསྐོར།། ཉིང་འཛིན་མ་ཡེངས་བརླས་པ་བྱ།།

thukkar hum la ngak kyi kor tingdzin ma yeng depaja

At one’s heart a HUM, surrounded by the mantra. Recite this with unwavering concentration:

ཨཱ་ཀཱ་སཱ་མཱ་རཱ་ཤཱ་དཱ་སཱ་མཱ་རཱ་ཡཱ་ཕཱ་ཎཱ་

ah ka sa ma ra tsa sha da ra sa ma ra ya phat

དེ་ནས་བརློག་པའི་རིག་ཐུགས་མཐར།། ཇཱ་གཱིའི་གཙོ་མོ་སེང་གའོང་གིས།།

dené dokpé rik ngak thar

daki tsomo seng dong gi

རིག་ལྷགས་མི་བཟང་སྟོབས་ཆེན་པོས།།

བདག་ཅག་དཔོན་སྟོབ་འཁོར་བཅས་ལ།།

rik ngak mi zé tobchen pö

dakchak pönlob khor ché la

སྣང་དག་བགགས་སྤང་དུ་སྟོག་བསྐྱར་ཅིག།།

གཞོན་སྤང་དུ་སྟོག་བསྐྱར་ཅིག།།

dang dragek tengdu dok gyur cig

nö tengdu dog gyur chik

Then, having finished the repelling knowledge mantra:

May the chief lion-faced ḍākinī

With the inexhaustible great strength of the knowledge-mantra,

Repel from myself and retinue of students and teachers,

Obstacles, bitter enemies, and transform all harms.

ལན་གསུམ་བརྗོད་པའི་རྗེས་དག་ཏུ།།

རིག་ལྷགས་བདེན་སྟོབས་བརྗོད་པའི་མཐུས།།

len sum jöpe jé dak tu

rik ngak den tob jöpe tü

After reciting that three times: by the power of the strength of the truth of the knowledge-mantra

གཞོན་བྱེད་མིང་ཡང་མི་གྲགས་ཤིང་།།

བསམ་དོན་ཡིད་བཤིན་ཡོངས་འགྲུབ་ནས།།

nöje ming yang mi drak shing

samdön yi shin yongdrub né

May the names of harm-doers never be renowned! By fulfilling all our wishes and aims,

བཟ་ཤིས་ཕུན་སུམ་ཚོགས་པར་ཤོག།།

ཉེར་མཁོའི་གདམས་པ་འདི་བཞིན་བྲིས་པ་དགོ།།

tashi pünsum tsokpar shok

nyerkhö dampa di shyin dripa gé

May all be abundant and auspicious! May writing this necessary instruction be virtuous!

Golden Drink Offering to Accomplish Aims

གསེར་སྐྱེམས་བསམ་པ་དོན་གྲུབ་ནི།།

ཧྲཱི་རིག་འཛིན་སྐྱ་མ་ཡི་དམ་ཞི་ཁོ་དང་།། མཚོག་གསུམ་མཁའ་འགོ་འོར་ལྷ་ཚོས་བསྐྱུང་སོགས།
hum rigdzin lama yidam zhitro dang chok sum khandro norlha chö sung sok

**HUM! Vidyadhāra Gurus, wrathful and peaceful yidams;
The three supreme ones, ḍākinīs, wealth deities, Dharma Protectors and so on.**

སྐྱབས་ལུལ་ཚོགས་ལ་གསེར་སྐྱེམས་གཙང་མ་འདི།། འབྲུལ་ལོ་བདག་གིས་འདོད་དོན་རྒྱབ་ཏུ་གསོལ།།
kyabyul tsok la serkyem tsangma di bul lo dak gi dödön drub tu sol

**To the assembly of refuge objects, I offer this clean, golden drink [serkyem] and supplicate
to accomplish the desired aims.**

ལྷ་དང་ལྷ་མིན་གཞོན་སྐྱིན་མིའམ་ཅེ།། ཇི་ཟེའི་རྒྱལ་སགས་ཕྱི་ཡིས་ཟླ་བརྒྱད་དང་།།
lha dang lhamin nöjin mi'am chi drizé gyal sak chi yi dé gyé dang

**Deities, Asuras⁶[demi-gods], Yakshas⁷, Centaurs [Kimnaras]⁸, Scent-Eaters [Ghandarvas]⁹
Kings and outer spirits of the eight classes.**

བདུད་བཙན་སྐྱུ་དང་མ་གཟའ་དོར་ལེགས་སོགས།། རང་གི་ཟླ་བརྒྱད་དང་ནི་ལོ་ལྷ་དང་།།
dü tsen lu dang ma za dorlek sok nang gi dé gyé dang ni polha dang

**Demons, violent spirits¹⁰, Nagas¹¹, Vajrasadhu [Dorje Legpa]¹² and so on;
Inner eight classes of spirits¹³ and male deities.**

སྒོས་དབྱ་ཆམ་འབབས་ལྷ་དང་ལོ་ཟླ་ཡིས།། གཟའ་སྐར་ས་བདག་ལྷ་དབང་གཡུལ་སིང་སོགས།།
gö dra cham beb lha dang loda yi za kar sadak tu wang gyung sing sok

**In particular, deities that descend on enemies, controllers of years, months, planets, stars
and earth, with power over land and spirits so on.**

སྟོབས་རྩལ་རྣམས་རྩལ་ལྷན་རྒྱལ་མཚོན་པར་བསྒྲི།། བདག་དེས་འདོད་དོན་ལྷན་གྱིས་གྲུབ་པར་མཛོད།།
tob tsal nü tsalden nam chöpar gyi dak di dödön lhün gyi drubpar dzö

**By my offering this, may those with courage, strength and talents,
Help me spontaneously accomplish desired aims and wishes!**

མངལ་ལོ་སི་རྣེ་ཇ་ཡུ།།

manghalam siddhi dza yantu

¹ [‘Actually Realising’ White Tārā Daily Practice by 13th Karmapa – Dakini Translations and Publications](#)

[མཁའ་འགྲོ་མཐེ་ལོ་ལོ་བའི་འགྲུར་དང་འགྲུམས་སྒྲུ།](#)

² During the time of the 13th Karmapa, the 8th Shamarpa only lived for eight years, precipitating another controversy. Subsequently, Karmapa Dudul Dorje and Situ Chokyi Jungnay, once again helped by Katog Rigdzin Tsewang Norbu, recognised Shamarpa’s reincarnation as a younger brother of the fourth Panchen Lama, Palden Yeshe. The seventh Gyaltsab Rinpoche (1699-1765), however, had already installed a son of the wealthy Ger Namsayling family as the reincarnation, with the approval of Shamarpa’s monks at Yangpachen monastery, his principal seat in Tibet. The dispute eventually reached the courts, where it was decided that the Karmapa had indeed located the true incarnation, Shamarpa Mipam Chodrub Gyamtso, who became the principal disciple of both Karmapa Dudul Dorje and Situ Chokyi Jungnay, and the next lineage holder.

³ "gal rkyen bzlog thabs/." In karma pa sku phreng rim byon gyi gsung 'bum phyogs bsgrigs/. TBRC W3PD1288. 92: 475 - 475. lha sa/: dpal brtsegs bod yig dpe nying zhib 'jug khang /, 2013?.

⁴ "gtum po dom nag gser skyems bsam pa don 'grub/ ." In karma pa sku phreng rim byon gyi gsung 'bum phyogs bsgrigs/. TBRC W3PD1288. 92: 530 - 530. lha sa/: dpal brtsegs bod yig dpe nying zhib 'jug khang /, 2013?.

⁵ [Tea Serkyem offering: Generating the merit for Compassionate Activities — especially for protection from sickness and other obstacles - Buddha Weekly: Buddhist Practices, Mindfulness, Meditation](#)

⁶ The demigods (lha min) live from the water-line of Mount Sumeru's interior cavities down to its golden base. Listing them from uppermost to nether regions, they reside in the Abodes of the Four Kings called Rahu, White Garland, Necklace and Splendid Fabric.

⁷ Yaksha is one of the eight kind of gods and spirits (lha srin sde brgyad). A class of semi divine beings, generally benevolent but sometimes wicked. Many are powerful local divinities, others live on Mount Sumeru, guarding the realm of the gods.

⁸ Kimnara is "a mythical being with a human body and the head of a horse" or vice versa.

⁹ Ghandharva is the name for *yid kyi lus*, spirit class who live on odors, eaters of smells, class of demi-gods, type of lha, scent eaters, gandarvas

¹⁰ Tsen are one of the eight kinds of gods and spirits (lha srin sde brgyad)

¹¹ Naga is a powerful, serpent-like being who inhabits bodies of water and often guards great treasure. Nagas belong half to the animal realm and half to the god realm. They generally live in the form of snakes, but many can change into human form.

¹² Vajrasadhu was the god of gambling and war when he was subdued and samaya-bound by Padmasambhava to be a protector of the teachings. Often referred to as “samaya-bound Vajrasadhu,” he can be depicted in two ways. In the Kagyu tradition, he is black, holding a hammer in his right hand and a bellows in his left, the accoutrements of a blacksmith, riding a brown he-goat. In the Nyingma tradition, he is red, holding a vajra in his right hand and a heart in his left, riding a lion.

¹³ The eight inner classes of demons and spirits are: {yab gcig bdud rje nag po}, {btsan rgyal yam shud dmar po}, {yul lha phyva sang klu sras}, {srog bdag rgyal po snying 'byin}, {chos skyong gnod sbyin dmar po}, {lha mo 'jigs pa'i glog 'byin}, {dge bsnyen rdo rje legs pa}, {dkar mo nyi zla'i thod 'phreng}.