

Naga Offerings, with Avalokiteshvara Sadhana Practice

Introduced, Compiled and Translated by Zasep Tulku Rinpoche



Left
Nagas emerging from
sacred lake by Russian
painter Nicholas Roerich

Below Right
Kyabje Zong Rinpoche
making ritual offering
(*Photograph*)

Below Left
Nagarjuna receiving
Mahayana text from
Naga King Varuna



Introduction: Offerings to Nagas

The highly respected Gelug master, Tulku Drakpa Gyaltsen, (1619-1657) — an incarnation of Manjushri and Mahasiddha Virupa — advised that we should all practise the sadhanas of Vajrapani, Hayagriva and King Garuda, and make offerings to the Nagas. The Naga offerings are important because our world is suffering through ignorance, greed, politics and lack of respect for the environment. We make offerings to the Nagas to help to heal our water systems which are contaminated; we all suffer from long droughts, abnormal rainfall, and a shortage of good water. There are all kinds of climate problems and the world weather patterns are changing rapidly.

Who are the Nagas?

According to Sutras and Shastras, Nagas are classified as beings of the animal realm. For most Nagas, the upper half of the body is human and the lower half is like a serpent or fish. They have beautiful human faces and wear jewelled crowns and beautiful ornaments such as earrings, necklaces and so on. Male Nagas can be powerful and handsome looking and female Nagas are beautiful and attractive. Some Nagas possess great powers, similar to the gods.

The Naga realm is said to be under the oceans and seas. As well, Nagas can live in lakes, rivers, springs, creeks, or marshland. Nagas also reside in trees called Naga trees. According to the famous Tibetan scholar, Dungkar Losang Thinley Rinpoche's encyclopedia, most of the Nagas are wealthy. They wear the most expensive jewels and ornaments, along with silk scarves; they have a good life. The Nagas are divided into different classes and have various kings and queens and chieftains.

There are eight great Nagas: Blue Thaye sits in the east; Red Jokpo sits in the south; Green Tob Gyu sits in the West; multi-coloured Rigden sits in the north; Norgye sits in the southeast, Pedma sits in the northwest, Dung Kyung sits in the southwest, and Varuna sits in the northeast.

Many Nagas are very intelligent, and are able to practise Dharma; some have obtained Dharma realizations. Some of the Naga kings and queens vowed to the Lord Buddha to provide the right causes and conditions of Dharma practice for human beings. They provide the conditions for the preservation of Dharma so that Dharma can flourish. It is difficult to imagine that the Nagas are classified as beings of the animal realm considering their intelligence and devotion to Buddha, Dharma and Sangha.

When Lord Buddha was practising on the path to enlightenment for six years under the Bodhi tree, the Nagas made snake umbrella hoods above his head to protect him from the sun and rain.

According to Mahayana sutras, when Mahayana Buddhist teachings were declining in India due to Karmic circumstances, the Naga Kings took the teachings and texts to Nagaland to save them until the right teachers emerged who could reveal the teachings on earth again.

Nagarjuna (c.150 – c.250) was a great Indian Buddhist philosopher who composed and taught six major texts on emptiness (Shunyata) and is traditionally regarded as the founder of the Madhyamika (Middle Way) school, an important tradition of Mahayana Buddhist philosophy. He is considered one of the most important of all Buddhist philosophers. According to tradition, he was born in south India, and then travelled to the land of the Nagas and re-introduced Mahayana teachings to humans on earth.

We as human being should support Nagas and help them by protecting the natural environment which is home for humans and Nagas; we are all dependent on each other for our survival. If we harm the environment, and cause pollution due to our greed and ignorance, then Nagas will get sick. They may also become angry. While they won't harm us directly, the harm could come to us because of pollution of water and food sources. It is important we humans respect the environment for the benefit of all beings.

My father told me and my brother that if you find copper or gold nuggets while hiking in the mountains, don't just take them without showing gratitude to the spirits of the earth. You must offer food like grain, as a replacement, and show appreciation to the Zidak mountain spirits and Sadak earth spirits. If you feel you harmed the Nagas then make special offerings called Lu Men - Naga. You can obtain Lu Men - Naga medicine from the traditional sources.

Torma offerings for the Nagas

There are two kinds of Tormas: regular Tormas you place on the altar like the one below. The second kind of offerings are dough balls you can arrange on the table in front of you. The Naga Tormas are made with Tibetan tsampa (roasted barley flour) with the addition of the three whites: yogurt (curds), milk and butter. Then add the three sweets: honey, sugar, molasses or brown sugar.

Do not use any animal flesh or meat products, and don't use spices such as chilli or garlic.



The special Torma dough balls are placed in a small bowl on a tripod placed inside a larger bowl. Fill the bottom of the larger bowl with water. Offer water by pouring it onto the dough balls in the small bowl. The overflow will remain in the large bowl.

Left: Torma for the Nagas made by Candace Cole, photograph by Zasep Tulku Rinpoche.

See Page 1 for a photograph of Kyabje Zong Rinpoche making dough ball Torma offerings with water.

Requirements for the Naga Puja offering

Torma offering and dough balls made with pure water, three whites and three sweets, as explained above.

A tripod on which is placed a plate or a small bowl.

A pitcher to fill the water bowls.

Two sets of seven offering bowls for the altar.

Action vase - Bumpha - with saffron water, (*blessings should be concentrated by reciting Amrita Kundali Mantra seven times*)

OM VAJRA AMTRITA KUNDALI HANA HANA HUM PHAT
(x7)

Five-coloured cloths of silk or cotton as a decoration

Tingsha (small cymbals) for the music offering

Torma Offering to the Nagas - Lutor

By First Panchen Lama

Translated and adapted by Zasep Tulku Losang Tenzin Gyatsen

Firstly, we practise the sadhana of Avalokiteshvara, guardian and patron Buddha of the six realms, the most compassionate Buddha.

Namo Guru Avalokiteshvara

Offerings to Avalokiteshvara should be placed on the altar, Torma and two sets of seven bowls, cakes, fruits and flowers, incense and so on.

Special Torma offering for the Nagas should include two sets of offering bowls, and offerings such as three whites (curds, milk, butter) and three sweets (molasses, honey and sugar) as well as five different colours of silk, jewels, grains, medicine for the Nagas inside a tray, set up on a nice altar.

Preparatory Practice:

Sadhana of Avalokiteshvara

Taking Refuge and generating Bodhichitta

I take refuge in the Buddhas, the Dharma and the Supreme Sangha,
Until I attain Enlightenment.

By the merit I accumulate from practising generosity and the other perfections,
May I attain Buddhahood in order to benefit all beings.

The Four Immeasurable Attitudes

May all beings have happiness and its causes

May all beings be free from suffering and its causes

May all beings never be separated from the joy transcending sorrow

May all beings dwell in equal love for those both close and distant. [x3]

OM SVABHAVA SUDDHA SARVA DHARMA SVABHAVA SHUDDHO
HAM

Everything becomes empty.

Self-generation as Avalokiteshvara

Within the sphere of Emptiness appears the letter PAM. It transforms into a white lotus upon which is the letter AH. AH becomes a moon-disc. At its centre is my own mind in the form of a white letter HRIH.

HRIH emits light-rays, which work for the benefit of living beings, transforming them to the state of Arya Bodhisattvas.

The light-rays return into the letter HRIH. The HRIH transforms, and I arise from it as the Arya Avalokiteshvara. I have a snow-white body, one face and four arms. My front pair of hands is clasped together at my heart. My second right hand holds a crystal jewel mala of one hundred and eight beads. My second left hand holds a lotus which blooms beside my left ear.

I sit in full lotus posture. I am adorned with eight precious ornaments on my head, ears, throat, hands, and feet. I wear silk garments and have an entrancing, serene smile. A white OM syllable marks the crown of my head, a red AH my throat, and a blue HUM my heart. Also a white HRIH syllable sits at the centre of a moon-disc in my heart.

DZA HUM BAM HOH

Inviting and Absorbing the Wisdom Beings into Oneself

The HRIH radiates lights, inviting the mighty Arya Avalokiteshvara and his retinue of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas from their southerly abode.

They absorb into me and thus we become one.

DZA HUM BAM HOH

Requesting and Receiving Empowerment

Again lights go forth from the HRIH at my heart, inviting the Empowering Deities. I request them: 'Please grant me empowerment'.

Thus requested, they raise aloft vases of wisdom nectar. Saying

OM SARVA TATHAGATA ABHISHEKATA SAMAYA SHRIYE AH HUM

They initiate me with their nectars. The nectar fills my body, purifying all my defilements. The excess nectar overflowing on the crown of my head transforms into Amitabha Buddha, who becomes my crown ornament.

Now make outer offerings to oneself as Avalokiteshvara which clears interferences, purifies, and invokes blessings:

Presenting Outer Offerings to Oneself as Self-generated Avalokiteshvara

OM ARYA LOKESHVARA SAPARIVARA ARGHAM PRATICHA HUM SVAHA	water for drinking
OM ARYA LOKESHVARA SAPARIVARA PADYAM PRATICHA HUM SVAHA	water for washing
OM ARYA LOKESHVARA SAPARIVARA PUSHPE PRATICHA HUM SVAHA	flowers
OM ARYA LOKESHVARA SAPARIVARA DHUPE PRATICHA HUM SVAHA	incense
OM ARYA LOKESHVARA SAPARIVARA ALOKE PRATICHA HUM SVAHA	light
OM ARYA LOKESHVARA SAPARIVARA GANDHE PRATICHA HUM SVAHA	perfume
OM ARYA LOKESHVARA SAPARIVARA NAIVIDYE PRATICHA HUM SVAHA	food
OM ARYA LOKESHVARA SAPARIVARA SHABDA PRATICHA HUM SVAHA	music

Praise to Oneself as Avalokiteshvara

White in colour, untarnished by faults,
Amitabha Buddha embellishing the crown of your head,
You look upon living beings with overwhelming compassion,
To Chenrezig I humbly bow down.

Mantra recitation and meditation

OM MANI PADME HUM x108

Visualising myself as Avalokiteshvara , at my heart appears a circular white moon-disc, upon which is my own mind in the form of a white HRIH syllable. At the edge of the moon-disc stand the six syllables of the mantra OM MANI PADME HUM. They are resplendently white like the rays of the rising sun. Light comes forth from the mantra syllables, filling my whole body, purifying all my negativities and obscurations. The light-rays then leave through the pores of my body and purify the negativities and obscurations of all living beings. They are transformed into mighty Arya Avalokiteshvara.

My threefold manner of perception involves seeing all external appearances as rainbow-deity forms of the mighty Arya Avalokiteshvara; all sound is heard as the six syllable mantra; and mind is imbued with essence of method conjoined with wisdom, which is the great compassion focused on all living beings and the wisdom understanding Emptiness, the wisdom which clearly perceives that all phenomena in and beyond cyclic existence lack even a particle of inherent existence and are mere imputations.

Thus visualising oneself as Avalokiteshvara, melded within this threefold perception, one recites the MANI mantra. From the energy of the practice, living beings of the six realms of samsara obtain the Enlightened form of Arya Avalokiteshvara. Moreover, in the manner of a full sesame pod, the entire earth, air, and sky are filled with the form of Avalokiteshvara. Their combined chanting of OM MANI PADME HUM releases the sound of the MANI mantra like a crescendo of thunder.

Yet just OM, having the threefold aggregate of A-U-M, signifies the three indivisible adamantines of my body, speech, and mind. This mantra is called The Jewel Holder, for a single recitation with such understanding is meritorious. Thus OM begins the mantra.

MANI means jewel. PADMA means lotus, whereas PADME denotes supplication. So with my heartfelt entreaty to Avalokiteshvara, the Jewel in the Lotus, I recite the mantra while dwelling on contemplations such as the fusion of the mighty Arya Avalokiteshvara's qualities within me. Furthermore, the respective six syllables cut off the doorways to rebirth in the six realms of samsara. The six syllables are also the consummation of the six perfections. Thus the MANI mantra, having these and other excellent qualities, is held to be of endless advantage and significance. Moreover the mighty Arya Avalokiteshvara is said to be in general the quintessence of all the Buddhas' compassion, and in particular, the patron Buddha of Tibet. Therefore one should strive with enthusiasm in the recitation, cultivating Avalokiteshvara as a most excellent meditational deity with these special characteristics.

The Main Sadhana of Naga Torma offerings

Blessing the Torma and offerings to the Nagas

OM VAJRA AMRITA KUNDALI HANA HANA HUM PHAT

OM SVABHAVA SHUDDHA SARVA DHARMA SVABHAVA SHUDDHO
HAM .

While in the sphere of voidness, from BHRUM syllables arise vast and deep vessels made of precious materials, within which are the eight offerings, the Torma, and all conducive sacred ingredients, along with the syllable OM and a syllable formed by the initial syllables. They all transform into wisdom nectar. They become medicine that purifies pain and suffering. Also multitudes of wish-fulfilling jewels provide us whatever we wish for—a marvellous secret landscape of palaces. In short whatever sublime enjoyments the Naga Kings and queens and their children and attendants desire.

OM SVABHAVA VISHUDDHE DHARMATE VAJRA SIDDHI HUM
 NAMAH SARVA TATHAGATE BHYOVISHVA MUKSHEBHIAH /
 SARVA TAD KHAM UDGATE SPHARANAHI MAM GAGANA KHAM
 SVAHA

OM AMRITE HUM PHAT

OM AKARO MUKHAM SARVA DHARMAH NAM ADYANUDPANNE
 HA TA

NAMAH SARVA TATHAGATA AVALOKITE OM SAMBHARA
 SAMBHARA HUM

OM RURU SPHURU JVALATIKSHTHA SIDDHI LOCHANI SARVA
 ARTHAM SADHANI SVAHA

OM VAJRA ARGHAM AH HUM
 OM VAJRA PADYUM AH HUM
 OM VAJRA PUSHPE AH HUM
 OM VAJRA DHUPE AH HUM
 OM VAJRA ALOKE AH HUM
 OM VAJRA GANDHE AH HUM
 OM VAJRA NAIVIDYA AH HUM
 OM VAJRA SHAPTA AH HUM

Invitation for general guests

In the space in front of me, visualize a natural stone made of jewels with large or small golden-coloured caves, below which are Naga palaces and Naga pleasure groves, lakes, ponds, pools, meadows adorned with flowers, springs, wells, waterfalls, flowing water in the lakes, and grassy plains and

beautifully. Inside is the Naga king Varuna, their chief, the eight Great Naga Kings, and Queens, the entire assembly of Nagas and Bumi Putras and Putiris of the earth lords and earth caretakers, along with their retinue.

Bless the Tingsha-cymbals by reciting

OM PADMO USHNISHA VIMALE HUM PHAT (7x)

Then play cymbals three times

Now make invocation to the Naga Kings by emanating lights from HRIH syllable from my heart

The light rays shine,
From your fabulous jewelled hood,
Dispelling all the darkness of the underworld;
You who delight in the Teaching of Lord Buddha, incomparably powerful ones,
Naga kings without exception, come here with your retinue!

Actual offerings

OM NAGA RAJA SAPARIVARA EH HYE HI SAMAYA JAH JAH / JAH
HUM BAM HO / PADMA KAMALA E STVAM

NAGA RAJA SAPARIVARA ARGHAM /PADYUM /PUSHPE / DHUPE /
ALOEKE /GANDHE /NAIVIDYA /SHAPTA) PRATICCHA HUM SVAHA

Make the Torma ball and water offering to the Nagas while chanting the following paragraph:

While I am self-generated as Avalokiteshvara, from the palm of my hand, nectar merged with milk flows continuously like a stream transformed into the Torma materials and precious holy substances of various medicines, generated by transcendental wisdom like a great ocean of desirable objects visualized in front of me. The guest Nagas enjoy this. The effect of the healing is tremendous, it renews limbs, and organs are healed. Pain and suffering are eliminated, and minds experience fulfilment with uncontaminated bliss.

Thus while visualizing my self as most compassionate Arya Avalokiteshvara pour the holy water from the vase onto the offering Torma balls inside the bowl with the right hand at the same time snap with the fingers of my left hand once for each mantra recitation, total recitation a minimum of 21.

Mantra to bless the Mala

OM RUCHI RAMANI PRAVATAYA HUM [x7]

Main Mantra

ॐ | ॐ वसुकि मम स्वाहा ॥

OM VASUKI MAM SVAHA [x 108]

You are the lord of the assembly of Nagas
Light shines from your jewel hood
Bestow the supreme siddhi of everything desirable
I bow down to you, Varuna.

Ananta and Takshaka (Thaye and Jokpo)
Karkotaka and Kulika (Tob Gyu and Rigden)
Vasuki and Shankhapala (Norgye and Dung Kyung)
Padma and Varuni (Pedma and Chu Lha)
Nanda and Delight (Gawo and Nyer Gawo)
Ocean and Great Ocean,
Glorious light and Great Radiance,
Great Bodied One, good serpent Mahabala,
Naga Kings and your retinue,
Come here to enjoy this decorated Torma.

The offering of the exquisite three whites and
The three sweets, a swirling ocean of milk,
And beautiful jewelled stairs.

May this become whichever conducive substance
Protects for the suffering of the nagas.

Enjoy the offering gifts and Torma,
Practitioners, benefactors and retinues.

All four hundred and twenty four diseases and
The diseases of Nagas due to their own Karma,
Visible poison and touchable poison,
Poison caused by bad thoughts and of vapours arising from the mouth,
Intentionally caused by humans, and so forth,

I offer these treasured substances from us:
 Cause and condition of all Naga disease to be eliminated,
 The four-siddhi actions of enlightenment,
 Increased wealth and prosperity.

If you wish to practise this sadhana on a daily basis for the healing of sick people then visualize an ocean-like medicinal nectar arising to cure all the diseases of Nagas and earth lords and earth owners. In this way it will be providing healing modalities for human beings and the Nagas at the same time.

May injury of the inner organs, stomach, flesh, and blood
 Be healed by the King of Medicines, the six fabulous
 medicines for maintenance of the body (nutmeg, clove
 cubeb, cardamon, saffron, and bamboo pith).

May deteriorated teeth, bones, and tongue
 Be healed by using cowrie shells and red silk.
 May our bones' lustre be restored

By magnificent peacock feathers with the eye design,
 Also five-coloured silks used as part of the ritual,
 Fruit of Kyema Shosha will purify and
 Heal disease of heart, kidneys, and lungs.

May damage of the limbs and other parts of the body be healed
 By herbs of Latifolia like Oxalis, Ulmus minor and Vitisvinifera,
 Powerful hand-claws of fresh water or salt water Crocodile.

May impaired arteries, nerves, tendons, and muscles
 Be healed by using powerful herbs and minerals like
 The fragrant root of andropogon muricatus, and
 Medicinal stones such as gray antimony.

Incense made with sage and juniper and so on,
 Polygonum aviculture, Ji-thangka medicinal fruit (*effective against worms*)
 The three fruits and assortment of medicines, and
 Bubbles from the ocean waves, will restore skandhas and dhatus.

By the five precious minerals and varieties of grains,
 Your treasure house will be restored.
 The three whites (*curds, milk, and butter*) and the three sweets

(molasses, honey and sugar) will restore bad complexions.

In short, may the power of conducive medicinal substances
Heal the sickness and sorrow of Naga and earth owners.
May their sense faculties be clear and properties increase,
And love and compassion fill their minds.

May their crops and livestock increase
Perfect rain fall annually, and
May the essence of fruitful nectars
Increase in this troubled world of ours.

*Then, in order to purify the wrongdoings and obscurations of all the Nagas,
recite the following:*

Mantra of Akshobhya

*NAMO RATNA TRAYAYA / OM KAMKANI KAMKANI / ROCHANI
ROCHANI / TROTANI TROTANI / TRASANI TRASANI / PRATIHANANA
PRATIHANANA / SARVA KARMA PARAM PARA NI ME SARVA SATTVA
NANCHA SVAHA [7x or more]*

Offering of Dharma

All phenomena arise from a cause,
The Tathagata taught those causes.
What is it that stops the cause and action:
The Great Monk Buddha did explain this.

Like stars, distorted vision (of hair), butter lamps
Mirages, dew and bubbles,
Dreams, lightning and clouds:
Thus one should see compounded things.

Final requests

Nagas and owners of the earth, with your entire retinue,
Your own bodies as an example,

Please do not cause harm for others.

The result of beneficial acts toward others is happiness,
And the result of harmful actions towards to others is suffering.
For example, all pungent seeds produce pungent fruits,
And from all sweet seeds, sweet fruit will arise.

Likewise, by remembering your Samaya vows,
Abandon the mind of anger and wrath,
Spread the minds of Metta-Karuna.

The objects of experience of the five senses,
All desirable, enjoyment, perfection and excellence,
Having healed all diseases of Nagas,
And liberated from all suffering,

May we able to see the holy face of Vajrapani and his blessings,
Garudas and Nagas protected from the heat waves of desert,
May we be liberated and released from the lower realms,
And achieve the longevity of Vajrasattva.

SARVA NAGA RAJA SAPARIVARA GATSSHA

The Naga kings and their retinue return to their natural abode in the Naga realms.

Mantra and Requests Purifying Mistakes and Omissions

OM PADMASATTVA, SAMAYA MANU-PALAYA. PADMASATTVA
TVENO- PATISHTA, DRID-HO ME BHAVA, SUTO-SHYO ME BHAVA,
SUPO-SHYO ME BHAVA, ANURAKTO ME BHAVA, SARVA SIDDHI
ME PRA-YACCHA, SARVA KARMA SUCCHA ME CHITTAM SHRI-
YAM KURU HUM, HA HA HA HA HOH, BHAGAVAN SARVA
TATHAGATA PADMA, MA ME MUNCHI, PADMA BHAVA, MAHA-
SAMAYA-SATTVA AH HUM PHAT.

Whichever aspects of this practice I have neither carried out
Nor completed because of my ignorant mind,
I request your forgiveness.
Please help me and all sentient beings
To cultivate the supreme realizations

And experience the results of all contemplations.

OM VAJRA MU

Request the departure of the Nagas to their own Abodes

Dissolution

The entire visualized universe and its inhabitants, who are in the form of Arya Avalokiteshvara, dissolve into me. I dissolve into the HRIH at my heart. HRIH dissolves into HA. This vanishes like a rainbow vanishing in the sky.

Contemplate this with conviction

Once more, within the sphere of Emptiness, I instantly arise in the form of Arya Avalokiteshvara, possessing the threefold attitude described, and at once engage in extensive deeds to benefit others.

Dedication of Merit

May I develop the peerless Bodhichitta mind which is latent within me, and

May that which I have already generated go from strength to strength.

May I enjoy success, both spiritual and otherwise, and

Never be parted from my perfect Guru in all of my lives,

By comprehensively amassing the qualities of the paths and levels,

May I attain speedily the state of Arya Avalokiteshvara.

Verses of Auspiciousness

May the heavens and earth be filled

With hosts of Noble Goddesses reciting benedictions,

And flowers raining through the skies,

As oceans of auspicious signs fill all three worlds.

Through the presence of the countless Dakas and Dakinis,

And the assembly of the Sangha community,

The holders of this tradition of practice,

May all virtues and goodness reign,

Let all be auspicious.

Final dedication from Zasep Tulku Rinpoche

I dedicate the composition of this Sadhana of Avalokiteshvara and my translation of First Panchen Lama Losang Chokyi Gyaltsen's beautiful Naga Puja text, for the eight Kings of Nagas and their attendants, to repay his great kindness.

I dedicate the merit and virtues I have obtained from being able to compile and make adaptations of this text, for the preservation of pure water systems, oceans, lakes and rivers: may they always remain pure, and provide the source of goodness, for the benefit of all sentient beings.

Love and Blessings for all Nagas

(Thank you to Amanda Buckley for editing this beautiful sadhana and thanks to Tandar Lama of Mongolia for the Torma below, and Tharchen Lama of Mongolia for the Torma on the following page.)



