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# Vajravārāhī

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In Tibetan Buddhism, **Vajravārāhī** ("The Diamond Sow", Tibetan: རྡོ་རྗེ་ཕག་མོ་, Wylie: *rdo rje phag mo* **Dorje Pakmo**),<sup>[1]</sup> is a wrathful form of Vajrayogini associated particularly with the *Cakrasaṃvara Tantra*, where she is paired in Yab-Yum with a heruka god. "Vajravārāhī's iconography is very similar to that of Vajrayoginī, but she often has more prominent fangs and a more wrathful expression, and she prominently displays a sow's head above her right ear."<sup>[2]</sup>

Although there are practices of Vajravārāhī in all traditions of Tibetan Buddhism, she is particularly associated with the Kagyu tradition and is one of the main *iṣṭadevatā* practices of that school. Her tulkus are associated with the Bodongpa, a little-known school of Tibetan Buddhism.



Dakini Vajravārāhī

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## Iconography

Vajravārāhī is one of the most popular female Tantric deities in all traditions of Tibetan Buddhism. Although there are several forms, the basic iconography is that she has one face, (usually) two hands and two legs, is usually red in colour, and standing in a dancing posture on a human corpse. The distinguishing iconographic attribute is a sow head (*varahi*) placed either on the right side of her head or on the top of her head. Because of this sow's head, sometimes she is called the 'two-faced' Vajrayogini (*shal nyi ma*).<sup>[3]</sup>

## Incarnation lineages

### Samding Dorje Phagmo

The tulku lineage associated with Vajravarahi is that of Samding Dorje Phagmo, who first manifested at

Samding Monastery in 1717 in order to tame Yamdrok Lake, a sacred lake as well as a dangerous flashpoint for massive flooding events in Tibet.

However, her effects were more practical: as abbess of Samding, she stopped the invasion of the Dzungars, who were reportedly terrified of her great siddhi powers. When faced with her anger - reputedly by turning the 80 śrāmaṇerīs under her care into furious wild sows - they left the goods and valuables they had plundered as offerings at her monastery and fled the region.<sup>[2]</sup>

## Other incarnation lineages

There also is a Dorje Phagmo tulku in Bhutan recognized by the Sakya lama Rikey Jatrel, considered an incarnation of Thang Tong Gyalpo, who was a close associate of Chökyi Drönma despite his political tensions with the Bodongpa lineage heads of the time. She is currently a member of the monastic community of Thangtong Dewachen Dupthop Nunnery at Zilingkha in Thimphu, which follows the Nyingma and the Shangpa Kagyu traditions.<sup>[4][5]</sup>



Vajravārāhī mandala

## See also

- Vajrayogini

## Footnotes

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- Jeff Watt. "Vajravārāhī Main Page" (<http://www.himalayanart.org/search/set.cfm?setid=142&page=1>). *Himalayan Art*. New York: Rubin Museum. Retrieved 2014-11-08.
- Diemberger, Hildegard (2007). *When a Woman Becomes a Religious Dynasty: The Samding Dorje Phagmo of Tibet*. Columbia University Press. ISBN 978-0-231-14320-2.; see page 334, note 4 of chapter 3, Part I of the book
- DEADLINK ([http://www.high-light-travel.de/html/bhutan\\_2009\\_.html](http://www.high-light-travel.de/html/bhutan_2009_.html))

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- English, Elizabeth (2002). *Vajrayogini: Her Visualizations, Rituals, & Forms*. Boston: Wisdom Publications. ISBN 0-86171-329-X.

## External links

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