

NO REGRETS: “NEW MELODY”’S REFLECTIONS

Verses by the 8th Karmapa, Mikyo Dorje (Yangchen Sarma)



Translated and edited by Adele Tomlin

Translator's Introduction

Today as my own humble offering for the 8th Karmapa, Mikyo Dorje's Parinirvana Anniversary¹, I offer this short new translation (done spontaneously and quickly in a couple of hours this morning!).

In these short verses written by 8th Karmapa, Mikyo Dorje (who refers to himself as *New Melody/Saraswati* (Yangchen Sarma is one of his names)², he explains how even though outer appearances make him seem worldly and driven by desire and the eight concerns, inwardly he is confident in his pure intentions and acts, and ultimately he maintains the view.

In the verses, the 8th Karmapa speaks about the seemingly outward and inner "contradictions", which when considered internally, and with the definitive view/certainty leaves no doubts and regrets. In that respect, it is like a personal poem/reflection by the 8th Karmapa of the importance of the inner motivation and world. The Karmapa advises those with renunciation and faith to reflect and study his life-story.

I have tried to stay as close as possible to the 8th Karmapa's repetition, and wording, although this can sometimes leave it sounding a little less fluid/poetic in English, but hopefully not too much. As I finished the translation, the words of Edith Piaf's song [*Je Ne Regrette Rien*](#) sprang to mind, and my own recent melodious offering to the Karmapa, [*Playing in the Blissful Lotus-Heart*](#).

For more research, translations and transcripts on the 8th Karmapa, his life and *Collected Works*, see [here](#). For my biographies of two of the 8th Karmapa's main teachers on *Treasury of Lives* see [here](#).

May it be of benefit to the expansion and flourishing of the Karmapas' and Karma Kagyu lineage legacy and teachings. Samaya Dza Dza!

Written, translated and edited by Adele Tomlin, 14th October 2025.

No Regrets: “New Melody”’s Reflections
Verses by the 8th Karmapa, Mikyo Dorje

ཕྱི་ནས་བཟླས་ན་འདོད་ཡོན་གཡང་བས་བྱེད། །
ནང་ནས་གཞིགས་ན་གང་ལའང་ཆགས་པ་བྲལ། །
ངེས་པར་བསམ་ན་སྐྱེ་མའི་ཚུལ་དུ་རྟོགས། །
དབྱངས་ཅན་གསར་མས་སེམས་ལ་བདེ་བ་རྟེན། །

If looking outwardly, it seems carried away with desire-filled distractions,
If reflecting inwardly, it is free from attachment to anything at all.
If thinking with certainty, it is all like an illusion, and
New Melody (Yangchen Sarma) finds bliss in the mind.

ཕྱི་ནས་བཟླས་ན་ཚོས་བརྒྱད་སྐབ་པས་འདའ། །
ནང་ནས་གཞིགས་ན་གཞན་དོན་འབའ་ཞིག་སྐབ། །
ངེས་པར་བསམས་ན་འབྲེལ་ཚད་དོན་དང་ལྡན། །
དབྱངས་ཅན་གསར་མས་བྱས་ཚད་འགྲོད་པ་མེད། །

If looking outwardly, it seems like accomplishing the eight worldly concerns³,
If reflecting inwardly, it is like accomplishing only the benefit of others.
If thinking with certainty, all connections are meaningful, and
Whatever New Melody (Yangchen Sarma) did, I have no regrets.

ཕྱི་ནས་བཟླས་ན་འཇུག་པའི་སྤྱོད་ཀྱིས་འདའ། །
ནང་ནས་གཞིགས་ན་སྡོན་མེད་མང་དུ་སྤྱོད། །
ངེས་པར་བསམས་ན་ཡིད་ལ་འདོད་བཞིན་གྱུབ། །
དབྱངས་ཅན་གསར་མས་ཅི་བྱས་རྗེས་ཡི་རང་། །

If looking outwardly, seems like passing time with deluded behavior,
If reflecting inwardly, it is like unprecedented experience.
If thinking with certainty, it is mentally accomplished as wished, and
Whatever New Melody (Yangchen Sarma) did, I rejoice.

ཕྱི་ནས་བཟླས་ན་ཐ་སྐད་འཚོལ་བ་འདྲ། །

ནང་ནས་གཞིགས་ན་རོ་ཆེན་འཛིབས་པ་འདྲ།
ངེས་པར་བསམས་ན་ཅི་བཞིན་འབྱེད་པ་འདྲ།
དབྱངས་ཅན་གསར་མས་རང་ལ་མ་བསྐྱུས་སྟམ།

If looking outwardly, it is like searching for labels.
If reflecting inwardly, it is like sucking a great taste.
If thinking with certainty, it is like distinguishing reality as it is, and
New Melody (Yangchen Sarma) has no self-deception.

ཕྱི་ནས་བཟླས་ན་སྐྱེ་བོའི་ཐིག་རྟེན་བྱེད།
ནང་ནས་གཞིགས་ན་སྐལ་ལྷན་དད་པའི་རྟེན།
ངེས་པར་བསམས་ན་སྐྱུལ་སྐྱུ་ཚོད་པ་མེད།
དབྱངས་ཅན་གསར་མས་གཏུལ་བྱ་མ་སྐྱུས་(བསྐྱུས་)སྟམ།

If looking outwardly, it is like a support for negativities of ordinary beings.
If reflecting inwardly, it is a support for the faith of fortunate beings.
If thinking with certainty, there is no dispute about the manifestations, and
New Melody (Yangchen Sarma) has not deceived disciples.

ཕྱི་ནས་བཟླས་ན་སློ་གསུམ་ཅི་ཡང་བྱེད།
ནང་ནས་གཞིགས་ན་དགོས་པ་དུ་མ་ཅན།
ངེས་པར་བསམས་ན་འབྲེལ་པ་སྣ་ཚོགས་འཛོག།
དབྱངས་ཅན་གསར་མའི་ཚུལ་ལ་ཅི་ཡང་སྲིད།

If looking outwardly, it is all done with the three doors⁴.
If reflecting inwardly, it has various purposes.
If thinking with certainty, all kinds of connections are planted.
In the ways of New Melody (Yangchen Sarma), anything is possible.

ཕྱི་ནས་བཟླས་ན་མི་བྱ་ཅི་ཡང་མེད།
ནང་ནས་གཞིགས་ན་ཅི་ཡང་བྱེད་པ་བྲལ།
ངེས་པར་བསམས་ན་སློ་ཡི་ཡུལ་མ་ཡིན།
དབྱངས་ཅན་གསར་མའི་རང་བཞིན་སུ་ཡིས་དཔོགས།

If looking outwardly, there is nothing that cannot be done.
If reflecting inwardly, there is nothing that lacks being done.
If thinking with certainty, it is not a realm of intellect⁵.
The nature of New Melody (Yangchen Sarma), who can fathom that?

ཚོན་བསགས་བསོད་ནམས་ལུས་ལ་ཡོངས་འཛོལ་བསྟེན།

སངས་རྒྱལ་སྐྱབ་པའི་ཐབས་ལ་རྫོངས་པ་བྲལ།
ངེས་འབྱུང་ཅན་འགས་བསྐྱེན་ན་དགོས་འདོད་འབྱུང་།།
ཐར་འདོད་རྣམས་ཀྱིས་ང་ཡི་རྣམ་ཐར་སོམས།།

The prior accumulation of merit is in the body, having relied on the teacher.
In the method of attaining Buddhahood, it is free from confusion.
If those with renunciation rely on it, their purposes and wishes will arise.
All those who desire liberation, contemplate my life-story⁶.

སངས་རྒྱལ་ཐམས་ཅད་ཀྱི་སྣང་པོ་བསྐྱེད་པ་བྱེ་བ་དུ་མར་དགེ་བའི་ལས་འདུས་བྱས་པས་ཀྱང་མཚན་ཙམ་ཡང་ཐོས་པར་
དགའ་བ་དོ་རྗེ་འཆང་དཔལ་ཀམ་པ་མི་བསྐྱོད་བཟང་པོ་དོ་རྗེ་དགའ་བའི་ཞལ་ལྷན་གྱི་གསུང་གི་བདུད་རྩི་ཚིགས་སུ་
བཅད་པ་ཐོར་བུའི་ཕྱེང་བ་རི་མའི་སྲད་བུའི་རྒྱན་གཅིག་ཏུ་བྱས་པ་ངོ་མཚར་གྱི་སྒྲེགས་བམ་ཡིད་བཞིན་གྱི་ཟ་མ་ཉོག་ཆེན་
པོ་བཞུགས་སོ།། ཞེས་པ་ལས་དྲངས།

The essence of all Buddhas, even if one accumulates virtuous deeds for millions of eons, it is difficult to even hear the name of Vajradhara, the excellent Karmapa Mikyö Dorje.

This is drawn from the nectar of the speech in Dorje Gawa's presence, a collection of scattered verses extracted and made into a single thread of a painted garland, a wondrous volume, a great wish-fulfilling treasure chest.

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¹ Also, today the [17th Gyalwang Karmapa, Ogyen Trinley Dorje gave a live talk](#) (of about half an hour) on why it is so important to remember the parinirvana of the gurus, giving the example of the Buddha's parinirvana. Also, during Tibet, at the time of Gampopa and 1st Karmapa they held monthly and annual observances of parinirvanas, which can be clearly seen in their biographies. He cited the six benefits listed in a text by Trophu Lotsawa Jamphel (1172-1236) in remembering the anniversaries of the gurus. The 17th Karmapa also described the ways in which the 8th Karmapa was significant not only for Karma Kagyu but for Tibetan Buddhism in general, in particular for his commentaries on the Middle Way/Madhyamaka, Prajnaparamita, Vinaya and Treasury of Abhidharma (which were the most significant in Karma Kagyu but also in all the Kagyu lineages). The speech is worth listening to in its entirety for an explanation on the practice tradition of Karma Kagyu and how the development of study and shedras began from the 6th Karmapa onwards.

The Karmapa highlighted in particular, the 8th Karmapa's non-sectarianism, and how he was admired and praised by other important lineage masters in Tibetan Buddhism. The 17th Karmapa announced how a complete new edition of the [Collected Works of the 8th Karmapa](#) is now freely available online on the website Adarshah,

as well as a new collection of 8th Karmapa's writings in Tibetan. The 17th Karmapa also led Karma Kagyu monasteries and nunneries online in a sadhana of Kagyu songs written by the 8th Karmapa.

Interestingly, the 17th Karmapa mentioned that the 2nd Dalai Lama, Gedun Gyatso, also praised the 8th Karmapa for his non-sectarian activity without bias. Yet as Tibet historians know, the Dalai Lama institution (and its sectarian power over Tibet) began from the 5th Dalai Lama as a political appointment by the Mongolian military and Gelugpa sectarians. The lineage was then backdated to include other people from that time. Nonetheless, if only the 5th Dalai Lama onwards (and his Gelug followers) had followed that attitude, Tibet, the Karma Kagyu, Jonang, Nyingma and other Kagyu lineages would be in a very different situation to the one it is in now!

² The 8th Karmapa is also known as *Yangchen Gawa*, which means Joyful or Delightful Melody. I have translated Yangchen here as Melody because I am not sure if it refers to Saraswati or not.

³ The eight worldly preoccupations or samsaric dharmas (འཇིག་རྟེན་ཚོས་བརྒྱད་, *jikten chö gyé*,) are where all one's actions are governed by:

- hope for happiness and fear of suffering,
- hope for fame and fear of insignificance,
- hope for praise and fear of blame,
- hope for gain and fear of loss;

basically attachment and aversion.

⁴ *Three Doors* (སློ་གསུམ་ *Go Sum*) here means body, speech and mind on a worldly level.

⁵ The Tibetan here is ལྷོ, *lo*, which normally means intellect, more than mind.

⁶ Here the Tibetan word is *Namthar* ལྷོ་མཚན་, which means liberation-story.