

## **Rgya nag skag bzlog: The “Chinese Way of Repelling Disaster” or “Repelling Chinese Disasters”**

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*This article examines the central element, skag, in Tibetan disaster rituals, and introduces its symbolic significance and role within the framework of disaster beliefs. It traces its origins in prominent Tibetan ritual texts and delves into the integration of Chinese Five Elements astrology and the theoretical underpinnings that led to the gradual metamorphosis of skag into a distinct ritual domain. The article focuses on the ritual domain's predominant concerns, ranging from adversities affecting individual lives based on astrological diagnoses to collective adversities such as natural calamities, moral decay, and disruptions in social order. Furthermore, it explores the historical context of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and suggests that significant regional political challenges posed by China to Mongolia and Tibet led to an innovation within one strand of this ritual tradition whereby the “Chinese method” for repelling disasters became a Tibetan and Mongolian method for repelling disasters that emanated from China. This historical transformation illustrates the adaptive nature of Tibetan disaster rituals in response to changing sociopolitical contexts.*