

# Revue d'Etudes Tibétaines



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## The *Mi nub rgyal mtshan Nam mkha' che* And the *Mahā Ākāśa Kārikās*:

### Origins and Authenticity

Christopher Wilkinson

airocana Rakṣita is famed for his completion of five early translations (*snga 'gyur lnga*), usually described as including: *Rig pa'i khyu phyug*, *rTsal chen sprugs pa*, *Kyung chen mkha' lding*, *rDo la gser zhun*, and *Mi nub pa'i rgyal mtshan nam mkha' che*. A search for the source text for the *Mi nub pa'i rgyal mtshan Nam mkha' che* leads us to a fascinating set of works, works of both individual and collective interest. To understand the full portent of the *Nam mkha' che* literature a thorough and careful study of these works will be required. This article is intended to open that door. There are three parts: a catalogue of extant works in the *Nam mkha' che* cycle, a brief discussion of authenticity, and a look into a set of fifty five verses that have become an important source for the *Nam mkha' che* teachings, The *Mahā Ākāśa Kārikā*. Observations on how these *Kārikās* move through Tibetan history will shed light on the development of the so-called “Old” (*rNying ma*) and “New” (*gSar ma*) traditions of Buddhism in Tibet, and on the concerns of one early *gSar ma* reformer, Pho brang Zhi ba 'od.

### The Texts of the *rDo rje sems dpa' Nam mkha' che*

A review of the *bKa' 'gyur* and *rNying ma rgyud 'bum* collections reveals a number of texts on the *Nam mkha' che*. There are Tantras, Mula Tantras, Puṣṭi Tantras, and Tantras that unite the *Nam mkha' che* with the *Guhyagarbha*. The catalogues of *Jigs med gling pa* and the lists of *Nyang ral Nyi ma 'od zer* offer titles that we can find in these collections as well as titles that are not presently evidenced. Here is a listing of the titles evidenced:

#### Mula Tantras

#### Mi nub rgyal mtshan rdo rje sems dpa' nam mkha' che rtsa ba'i rgyud<sup>1</sup>

Indian Title: *Vajrasvabhāwamahākarshakārika*.<sup>2</sup>  
Homage: *bcom ldan 'das dpal rdo rje sems dpa'*.  
Location: *bKa' ma shin tu rgyas pa*, vol. 104, pp. 5-20.

<sup>1</sup> *bKa' ma shin tu rgyas pa* (Kaḥ thog). This is the title given on the front cover page (vol. 105, p. 5). The title in the text itself is *rdo rje sems dpa' nam mkha' che zhes bya ba*.

<sup>2</sup> The Indian Language title on the cover page is: *Apakarshasyadhājabajasatvamahānabhāmūlatantranāmastisma*.

Translator: None mentioned.  
 Colophon: This was spoken orally by the glorious Vajrasattva, the personification of every transmission.

*lung thams cad kyi bdag nyid dpal rdo rje sems dpa'i zhal nas gsungs pa rdzogs so.*

Note: This text has a cover page of the exact style used in the gTing skyes *rNying ma rgyud 'bum*, with an Indic title at the top, a Tibetan transliteration in the center, and the Tibetan title below.

### *rDo rje sems dpa'i lta ba*

Indian Title: *Ārya pada Vajrasadva.*  
 Homage: None.  
 Location: Rig 'dzin, vol. 1, pp. 187b.6 – 190b.2.  
 gTing skyes, vol. 1, pp. 424.1 – 430.2.  
 Translator: None.  
 Colophon: This competes the *Nam mkha' che*, which is an insight into the *Byang chub sems mi nub pa'i rgyal mtshan*. The *rDo rje Sems dpa' Nam mkha' che* was proclaimed by the Master of Orgyan, dGa rab rDo rje, in the cave of Asura 'Od ldan.

*rdo rje sems dpa' nam mkha' che 'u rgyan gyi slob dpon dga rab rdo rjes dpal a su ra 'od ldan gyi brag phug tu gsungs pa rdzogs so |*

### *Khyung chen lding ba*

Indian Title: None.  
 Location: *Vairo rgyud 'bum*, vol. 2, p. 357-366.  
 Translator: None.  
 Colophon: These words were spoken by the glorious Vajrasattva, the personification of all the Blessed One's transmissions. It is the *rDo rje sems dpa' nam mkha' che*. The end.

*Bcom ldan 'das lung thams cad kyi bdag nyid dpal rdo rje sems dpas de skad gsungs so | rdo rje sems dpa nam mkha' che | rdzogs so |*

### **rDo rje sems dpa' nam mkha' che rtsa ba'i rgyud skyes ba med pa**

Indian Title: *Vajrakahasamūla Ah.*  
 Homage: bCom ldan 'das rDo rje Sems dpa' Nam mkha' che.  
 Location: mTshams, vol. 3, pp. 81.7 – 119.1.

Translator: Vairo, vol. 1, pp. 291.1 – 314.6.<sup>3</sup>  
 None.  
 Colophon: This Tantra of Root Transmission was taught for the sake of the young Lord. U U U Rakṣika dictated that.

*lung rtsa ba'i rgyud rje'u don du btsan pa yin | U U U*  
*Rakṣika Itu Utu*

### **rDo rje sems dpa' nam mkha' che'i rgyud**

Indian Title: *Vajrasatvagagasamemāhatantranāma*.  
 Homage: dPal rDo rje Sems dpa'.  
 Location: mTshams, vol. 3, pp. 165.3 – 191.  
 'Jigs med gling pa lists a text of the same title,  
 translated by Śrī Siṃha and Vairocana.  
 Chapters: 33.  
 Translator: None.  
 Colophon: None.

### **Byang chub sems rdo rje 'od 'phro ba'i rgyud kyi rim pa**

Indian Title: *Bodhicittavajraprabhatantranāma*.  
 Homage: bcom ldan 'das dpal gyi dpal smra bsam brjod pa las  
 'das pa.  
 Location: gTing skyes, vol. 4, pp. 107 – 121.  
 Vairo, vol. 4, pp. 143 – 157.  
 mTshams, vol. 1, pp. 571 – 586.  
 Chapters: 12.  
 Translators: Śrī Siṃha and Vairocana.<sup>4</sup>  
 Colophon: *rgyud kyi rgyal po mi nub rgyal mtshan rje btsan dam pa*  
*rdo rje 'od phros ba'i rgyud rdzogs so.*

### **Puṣṭi Tantras:**

### **rDo rje sems dpa' nam mkha' che rgyas pa zhes bya ba rgyud**

'Jigs med gLing pa lists this title, with 11 chapters.  
 No corresponding text has been located.

<sup>3</sup> The text abruptly cuts off at the end of p. 314. The following text, titled *Srog gi 'khor lo*, a text common to many versions of the *rNying ma rGyud 'Bum* follows the *rDo rje sems dpa' nam mkha' che rTsa ba'i rgyud skye ba med pa* in the Vairo, but is missing its first part. In can only be deduced that the manuscript used for production of the photo-offset version available to us was missing pages, or that errors were made in the publication process. The Index presented by Tashi Y. Tashigangpa, *Vairo rGyud 'bum*, vol. 1, p. 2 of the *Vairo rGyud 'Bum* photo offset collection) does not note this fact, resulting in a catalogue where five different works are listed as sub-texts of this work.

<sup>4</sup> mTshams brag and Vairo list no translator.

**rDo rje sems dpa' nam mkha' che rgyas pa yi ge med pa'i rgyud**

- Indian Title: None.  
 Homage: None.  
 Chapters: 8.  
 Location: mTshams, vol. 1, pp. 586.6 – 592.6.  
 Vairo, vol. 1, pp. 375.4 – 381.2.  
 gTing skyes, vol. 1, pp. 495.2 – 499.7.  
 sDe dge, vol. 6, pp. 87a.1 – 88b.6.  
 Rig 'dzin, vol. 1, pp. 219b.7 – 222a.4.  
 'Jig med gling pa lists this title with 8 chapters.  
 Translators: The Tibetan monk Vairocana and the Indian master  
 Colophon: Jñanagharbha translated this. It was then edited according to their instructions.

**rDo rje sems dpa' nam mkha' che rgyas pa zhes bya ba rnal 'byor ma'i rgyud**

- Indian Title: *Vajrasatoamahā akashapuṣṭināmayogenītantra*.  
 Homage: bCom ldan 'das dPal rDo rje 'dzin pa.  
 Chapters: 15.  
 Location: mTshams, vol. 2 pp. 595.3 – 646.5.  
 Vairo, vol. 1, pp. 329.5 – 375.4.  
 gTing skyes, vol. 2, pp. 362.3 – 399.1.  
 sDe dge, vol. 6, pp. 199.3 – 215b.5.  
 Rig 'dzin, vol. 2, pp. 173.6 – 192b.6.  
 Colophon: Translated and edited by the Indian master Jñanagarbha and the Tibetan Monk Vairocana. Subsequent revision based on new linguistic standards.  
*phyis skad gsar bcad kyi kyang bcos pa'o.*

'Jigs med gling pa lists a *Nam mkha' che rgyas pa zhes bya ba rnal 'byor ma rgyud* with 13 chapters Translated by Vimalamitra and dPal brtsegs.

**rDo rje sems dpa' nam mkha' che rgyas pa zhes bya ba rnal 'byor pa'i rgyud**

- Indian Title: None.  
 Homage: bCom ldan 'das dPal rDo rje 'dzin pa.  
 Chapters: 11.  
 Location: mTshams, vol. 2, pp. 556.7 – 595.3.<sup>5</sup>  
 gTing skyes, vol. 2, pp. 332.5 – 362.3.  
 sDe dge, vol. 25, pp. 286b.3 – 302b.7.<sup>6</sup>  
 Rig 'dzin, vol. 2, pp. 159a.7 – 173b.6.

<sup>5</sup> mTshams brag lists no translator.

<sup>6</sup> The *rNal 'byor pa'i rgyud* and the *rNal 'byor ma'i rgyud* are identical up to chapter eleven, where the *rNal 'byor pa'i rgyud* abruptly cuts off. The *rNal 'byor ma* goes to chapter 15 and includes translator and colophon information. The *Vairo rgyud 'bum* does not include the *rNal 'byor pa'i rgyud*. The *sDe dge rNying ma rgyud 'bum* version of the *rNal 'byor pa'i rgyud* does have fifteen chapters, but it is a case of importing the last five chapters from the *rNal 'byor ma* to fill in the perceived lacuna.



Translator: Jñānabhadra and Vairo.  
 Colophon: None. Text ends abruptly with conclusion of the eleventh chapter.

*zab mo man ngag bstan pa'i le'u ste bcu gcig pa rdzogs so*

### **rDo rje sems dpa' nam mkha' che bram ze rgyas pa'i rgyud**

Indian Title: *Vajrasatvasamayakhemahādehapuṣṭigaratantra*.  
 Homage: bCom ldan 'das dPal Kun to bzang po.  
 Chapters: 16.  
 Location: Tshams, vol. 2, pp. 529.4 – 556.7.  
 gTing skyes, vol. 1, pp. 628.7.  
 Rig 'dzin Nor bu, vol. 1 pp. 283b.7 – 284a.3.<sup>7</sup>  
 sDe dge, vol. 25 pp. 215a.5 – 224a.2.  
 'Jigs med gling pa's catalogue lists this with 16 chapters.  
 Translator: None  
 Colophon: None

### **rDo rje sems dpa' nam mkha' che rgyal po rgyas pa'i rgyud**

Indian Title: *Vajrasatva Khasemahārādzapuṣṭimtantra*.  
 Homage: bCom ldan 'das Kun tu bzang po bDe ba chen po.  
 Location: mTshams, vol. 3, pp. 119.1 – 165.2.  
 Translator: None.  
 Chapters: 25.  
 Colophon: The rGyal po rGyas rGyud was translated for sNying po.

### **Nam mkha' che Tantras connected to other Tantra Cycles**

#### **rDo rje Sems dpa' Nam mkha' che gsang ba'i snying po rnal ma don gyi rgyud**

Indian Title: *Vajraghuyagarbhasatvamahākhabhyerthatantra*.  
 Homage: dPal rDo rje Sems dpa'.  
 Location: mTshams, vol. 2, pp. 415.6 – 443.2.  
 Vairo, vol. 2, pp. 313.1 – 337.3.<sup>8</sup>  
 sDe dge, vol. 3, pp. 65.7 – 88.1.  
 'Jigs med gling pa lists this with 12 chapters in Vol. 1.  
 Chapters: 12.

<sup>7</sup> Colophon: *ye dharmā hetu prabhava he dun te śanta tha' ga to hya wa da ta | te śnytsa yonirodhe e wam bā di mahā śra ma ṇa | sarva mangalam.*

<sup>8</sup> Indian Title: *Vajraghuyagarbasatvamahākhabhyerthatantra* The mTshams brag version's Sanskrit title includes the word "artha" in the title.

Translator: None.  
Colophon: None.

**rDo rje sems dpa' nam mkha' che kun tu bzang po gsang ba snying po'i rgyud**

Indian Title: *Vajrasatvākhaśyamahā Samantabhadraguhyagarbatantra.*  
Homage: bCom ldan 'das dpa' kun tu bzang po.  
Chapters: 26.  
Location: mTshams, vol. 2, pp. 443.3 – 529.4.  
gTing skyes, vol. 3, pp. 537.3 – 606.6.<sup>9</sup>  
sDe dge, vol. 25, pp. 179b.4 – 205a.7.  
'Jigs med gling pa lists this title.  
Translators: The Tibetan Translator Vairocana and the Indian scholar Śrī Siṃha.

**The Kun byed rgyal po**

Chapter thirty of this work is called *rDo rje sems dpa' nam mkha' che*. The *Kun byed rgyal po* is found in both *bKa' 'gyur* and *rNying ma rgyud 'bum* collections.

Tibetan Title: *Chos thams cad rdzogs pa chen po byang chub kyi sems Kun byed rgyal po.*  
Indian Language: *Sarva dharma mahā sandi bodhi citta kulaya rājā.*  
Homage: bCom ldan 'das byang chub sems kun byed rgyal po la phyag 'tshal lo.  
Colophon: *Byang chub kyi sems kun byed rgyal po rdzogs so |*  
Translator: The Indian Scholar Shri Simhaprabhā and the Tibetan Lotstshaba Bagor Vairocana translated this. Then it was edited and published (*zhus te gtan la phab pa*).<sup>10</sup>

At the end of chapter eighty four:<sup>11</sup> The India Scholar dPal gyi seng ge dgon po and the monk Vairocana translated this. It was edited and published (*zhus te gtan la phab pa'o*).

Location:  
*bKa' 'gyur*

sDe dge, vol. 97, pp. 1 – 171.  
Nar thang, vol. 98, pp. 1 – 173.

<sup>9</sup> The editor of the gTing skyes presents a differential title at the forward of the text: *rdo rje sems dpa' nam mkha' che kun tu bzang po gsang ba'i snying po spu gri padma ral gri 'khor lo'i rgyud*. This title was probably derived from the closing statements of the last chapter, chapter 16.

<sup>10</sup> This the colophon in the *Kun byed rgyal po* proper, at the end of chapter 57.

<sup>11</sup> This is the "Latter *Kun byed rgyal po*".

Lhasa, vol. 97, pp. 1 – 249.  
Urga, vol. 98, pp. 1 – 172.

*rNying ma rgyud 'bum*

mTshams brag, ol. 1, pp. 1 – 192.  
gTeng skyes, vol. 1, pp. 1 – 166.  
bKa' ma rgyas pa, vol. 30, pp. 1 – 288.<sup>12</sup>

### Early Catalogues

#### 'Jigs med gling pa's catalogue

'Jigs med gling pa lived 1729-1798. His catalogue was based on the sMin gling Manuscript of the *rNying ma rGyud 'bum*. The manuscript it catalogues has not yet been found. The *rdo rje sems dpa' nam mkha' che* literature has a major place in the collection.<sup>13</sup>

Volume 1 contained:

1. *rDo rje sems dpa' nam mkha' che bram ze rgyas pa'i rgyud* : 16 chapters.
14. *rDo rje sems dpa' nam mkha' che rgyas pa zhes bya ba rgyud* : 11 chapters.
15. *Nam mkha' che rgyas pa zhes bya ba rnal 'byor ma rgyud* : 13 chapters,  
Translated by Vimalamitra and dPal brtsegs.
20. *rDo rje sems dpa' nam mkha' che gsang ba snying po rnal ma don gyi rgyud* : 12 chapters.

Volume. 2 contained:

35. *rDo rje sems dpa' nam mkha' che* :  
Translated by Śrī Siṃha and Vairocana.
39. *Nam mkha' che rgyas pa yi ge med pa'i rgyud* : 8 chapters.

Volume 3 contained:

55. *rDo rje sems dpa' nam mkha' che kun tu bzang po gsang ba snying po'i rgyud kyi mdo* : 26 chapters,  
Translated by Śrī Siṃha and Vairocana.

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<sup>12</sup> In the *bKa' ma shin tu rgyas pa* edition the title is "*Kun byed rgyal po'i rgyud*".

<sup>13</sup> Achard, "La liste des Tantras du *rNying ma'i rgyud 'bum* selon l'édition établie par Kun mkhyen 'Jigs med gling pa", p. 62.

### Nyang ral Nyi ma 'od zer

The *Chos 'byung me tog snying po sbrang rtsi'i bcud* by Nyang ral Nyi ma 'od zer (1136-1204) lists two titles among seventeen teachings propagated by Vairocana:<sup>14</sup>

- *Mi nub rgyal mtshan nam mkha' che*
- *Nam mkha' che rgyal po*

It also lists six separate *Nam mkha' che* titles in a list of twenty five teachings Vairocana received from Śrī Siṃha:<sup>15</sup>

- *Nam mkha' che rtsa ba can gyi rgyud*
- *Nam mkha' che ye ge med pa'i rgyud*
- *Nam mkha' che dbang gi rgyal po'i rgyud*
- *Nam mkha' che grol ba'i rgyud*
- *Nam mkha' che rgyas pa'i rgyud*
- *Nam mkha' che rgyas pa phyi rta'i rgyud*

## Questions of Authenticity

### General Concerns

In the Tibetan tradition the authenticity of the *Nam mkha' che* literature has been questioned in two basic ways: its authenticity as a Buddhist teaching, and whether an individual text is authentically the same as what Vairocana Rakṣita brought from India to Tibet.

We find that there are statements in the *Nam mkha' che* Tantras themselves that seem to say that it is not the Buddha's teaching while there are other statements that say that it is. It may be the case that there was a difference of opinion in different transmissions of the *Nam mkha' che* or it may be that a central element of this tradition was a spirit of inclusiveness that considered its inspiration to be both what the Buddha taught about and something that was unspeakable, and so beyond even the Buddha's teaching capacity. A thorough study will be required to sort this out. Here is a hint to get started:

The opening words of the *rDo rje sems dpa' nam mkha' che rgyas pa'i yi ge med pa'i rgyud* describe the *Nam mkha' che* as an innovative teaching:

As it says in the King Tantra, when this *Yi ge med pa* was proclaimed, I was not different from anyone else: We had heard something we had not heard before. We were afraid.

*Rgyal po'i rgyud du gsungs pa | yi ge med pa 'di gsungs pa'i tshena | nyid dang tha mi dad pa rnam sngon ma thos pa 'di thos pas srag par gyur to |*<sup>16</sup>

<sup>14</sup> Nyang ral's *Chos 'byung* is not presently available to me. See Norbu and Clemente, pp. 246-247.

<sup>15</sup> Norbu and Clemente, p. 242.

Statements to the effect that the *Nam mkha' che* is not a Buddhist teaching can be found in its own Tantras. The *rDo rje sems dpa' nam mkha' che rgyas pa zhes bya ba rnal 'byor ma'i rgyud* tells us:<sup>17</sup>

This reality is the nature of all things.  
 It must be realized in whole.  
 The method is to develop wisdom.  
 It cannot be seen by looking at things partially.  
 The nature of reality  
 Cannot be seen by anyone.  
 Even the Buddha cannot see it.  
 It is a self-arising wisdom, an illumination without locus.

*kun gyi rang bzhin de bzhin nyid | |*  
*kun gyi bsgrub bar bya ba ste | |*  
*thabs su ye shes bskyed [3] pa la | |*  
*phyogs su bltas pas mthong ba med | |*  
*de bzhin nyid kyi rang bzhin ni | |*  
*sus kyang mthong bar mi nus te | |*  
*sangs rgyas kyis kyang mi gzigs pas | |*  
*rang byung ye shes gnas med snang | |*

There is a quotation in the *Pan sgrub rnams kyi thugs bcud snying gi nyi ma*, to be discussed shortly, of a statement in the *Nam mkha' che* itself regarding the Buddha not having taught this:<sup>18</sup>

There is no meditation that goes beyond  
 The conventions of speech.  
 Conceptions arise in meditation.  
 We do not meditate on or search for  
 The body of self awareness.  
 This is how we place our ordinary nature (*gyin-dhar*)  
 In what is.  
 We place it, but there is no ground we place it on.  
 We place it down on the placing ground  
 Where there is no placement.  
 The thing we place is the heart of Vajrasattva.  
 The Buddha himself does not have teachings that say this.

*brjod pa'i tha snyad las 'das bsgom du med;*  
*bsgoms pa nyid na rtog pa skye ba ste |*  
*mi bsgom mi brtsal rang rig nyid kyi sku |*  
*de bzhin de bzhin gyin dhar gzhag*  
*gzhag du 'ang gzhag sa med pas na |*  
*gzhag du med pa'i gzhag sar gzhag la gzhag |*  
*gzhag pa'i dngos po [6] rdo rje sems dpa'i thugs |*

<sup>16</sup> mTshams brag, vol. 1, p. 586-587. Note that there are three *Nam mkha' che* Tantras translated with the help of Jñānagarbha: the *Yi ge med pa*, the *rNal 'byor ma*, and the *rGyal po rgyas pa*. It may be that this opening of the *Yi ge med pa* refers to the *rGyal po rgyas pa*.

<sup>17</sup> Vairo, vol. 2, p. 334.

<sup>18</sup> Vairo, vol. 1, p. 67. I have not been able to locate the original reference.

*'di zhes bstan du sangs rgyas nyid kyis med |*

These kinds of remarks in the Tantras might be taken to indicate that the *Nam mkha' che* was not a teaching of Śākyamuni, or even a Buddhist teaching. As if to address this very point there is a passage in the *rDo rje sems dpa' rtsa ba'i rgyud skye ba med pa*:

This Root Tantra (*rTsa ba'i rgyud*) is, among transmissions,  
The supreme transmission.  
It was proclaimed by Śākyamuni,  
The protector of living beings,  
The lord of sages,  
The holder of all good knowledge, without exception.  
This great Root Tantra's transmission  
Is a vehicle he proclaimed with his own mouth.  
Those who wish for the Buddha's enlightenment  
Must look into this unsurpassed supreme vehicle.

*lung gi lung mchog rtsa ba'i rgyud |*  
*shākya thub pa 'gro ba'i mgon |*  
*yon tan ma lus kun ldan pa'i |*  
*thub pa'i dbang pos gsungs pa yi |*  
*lung gi rtsa ba'i rgyud chen 'di |*  
*zhal nas gsungs pa'i theg pa ste |*  
*sangs rgyas byang chub gang 'dod pa |*  
*theg mchog bla med 'di la ltos |<sup>19</sup>*

### Authenticity in the Commentarial Tradition

#### The *Paṅ sgrub rnams kyī thugs bcud snying gi nyi ma*

The question of authenticity is more fully developed in the commentarial tradition. The *Paṅ sgrub rnams kyī thugs bcud snying gi nyi ma* is an overview of the significance and practice of the early rDzogs chen translations. It is the premier document in the *Vairo rgyud 'bum*.<sup>20</sup> The text is divided up into chapters which include instructions on meditation and practice as specifically related to six *Sems sde* teachings: the five early translations and the *rMad du byung ba*. There is a chapter on how to meditate on the *Mi nub rgyal mtshan Nam mkha' che* on pages 64-84. There follows a chapter on the meditation for the *rMad du byung ba* from page 84 to 104. Then there is an interesting statement right before the colophon that closes the text:

This has no resemblance to what Universal Monarchs or teachers like Śākyamuni have taught. An investigation that will work out or refute the ocean of Upadeśa on the *Mi nub rgyal mtshan*, which is the heart transmission of Samantabhadra dGa' rab, does not disturb my mind. I hope this will be a lamp for those whose fortune it is to see things partially.

<sup>19</sup> mTshams brag *rNying ma rgyud 'bum*, vol. 3, p. 118.

<sup>20</sup> *Vairo rGyud 'bum*, vol. 1, p. 1-104.

*De ni chos kyi 'khor lo bsgyur ba mdzad mkhan dang | shag thub la  
sogs par brjod pa lta bu ma yin no | kun tu bzang po dga' rab thugs  
brgyud pa'i | mi nub rgyal mtshan man ngag rgyal mtsho' la | bdag  
blo bya gag rtsal gyis mi 'khrugs kyang | phyogs mthong skal ldan  
rnams kyi sgron med shog<sup>21</sup>*

The unnamed author of the *Paṅ sgrub* recognizes that the *Nam mkha' che* teachings do not resemble the teachings of the Buddha Śākyamuni, but nonetheless finds value in them as Buddhist teachings to the extent that he writes a full commentary on how to practice them. He clearly understands Buddhist teachings to include more than what Śākyamuni taught, and has accepted the transmission of *dGa' rab rdo rje* as authentically Buddhist. He recognizes that there is a dispute about the *Nam mkha' che's* authenticity as a Buddhist teaching, and has adopted an understanding of what Buddhism is that includes teachings that Śākyamuni might not have given.

### The Letter of Pho brang Zhi ba 'od

Pho brang Zhi ba 'od, a Tibetan scholar of the 11<sup>th</sup> century C.E., does not share the inclusive view of the *Paṅ sgrub*. He wrote an *Open Letter* in which he denounces a large number of scriptures as forgeries.<sup>22</sup> The only known remaining source for Pho brang Zhi ba 'od's *Letter* is in the *gSang sngags snga 'gyur la bod du rtsod pa snag phyir byung ba rnams kyi lan du brjod pa nges pa don gyi 'brug sgra* by Sog zlog pa Blo gros rgyal mtshan (1552-1624). Of particular interest to us is his interdiction of the *Rig pa'i nyi ma*, a commentary on the *rDzogs pa chen po nam mkha' che* written by gNubs Sangs rgyas ye shes.<sup>23</sup> He also rejects a text called the *rNal 'byor mig gi sgron ma*, which is probably none other than gNubs chen's *bSam gtan mig gi sgron ma*.<sup>24</sup> It is also important to this study that Zhi ba 'od rejects the *Kun byed rgyal po*, for chapter thirty of the *Kun byed rgyal po* purports to contain the text of the *Mi nub rgyal mtshan Nam mkha' che*.

Zhi ba 'od's general concern is that the texts he mentions were fabrications made to resemble the Buddha's own oral instructions (*sangs rgyas kyi bka' ltar bcos*) by Tibetans who put Indian names on them (*rgya gar ma'i ming btags shing bod kyis byas pa*).<sup>25</sup> His specific concern with the *rNal 'byor rig pa'i nyi ma* is that it is referred to as an Upadeśa (*man ngag tu gsol*).<sup>26</sup> His specific complaint against the other works under consideration is as follows:

The Thirteen Latter Translations of the *Sems phyogs* which were translated by Ācārya Vimalamitra include the forty three chapters of the *rMad du byung ba*, the *Byang chub sems bDe 'byams rin po che*, and the *lTa ba bal nag*, their

<sup>21</sup> This transcribes what is actually in the text, orthographical errors inclusive.

<sup>22</sup> Karmay, "An Open Letter of Pho-brang Zhi-ba-'od", *The Tibet Journal*, 1980, vol. 5, no. 3, pp. 1-28.

<sup>23</sup> Karmay, *ibid.*, p. 15.

<sup>24</sup> Samten Karmay is of this view. See Karmay, *ibid.*, p. 24 n. 93.

<sup>25</sup> Sog zlog pa Blo gros rgyal mtshan p. 462.

<sup>26</sup> Sog zlog pa Blo gros rgyal mtshan p. 464.

commentaries, synopsis, and notes. *The Eighteen Sems bDe*, which were fabricated in the snowy mountains of upper Nyang<sup>27</sup> using a technique of rendering [the original works] into excerpts, include the *Kun byed rgyal po*, the *mDo bcu gsang ba*, and the *Ye shes gsang ba*, their commentaries, empowerments, and Upadeśa. These include the Upadeśa of Bha pa, the Upadeśa of *Sems nyams*, and the *Srid pa rgyud lung*.

*Acarya Vimamitras bsgyur ba'i sems phyogs kyi phyis 'gyur bcu gsum la | rmad du byung ba'i le'u bzhi bcu zhe gsum dang. | byang chub sems bde 'byams rin po che dang. | lta ba bal nag la sogs pa'i grel ba dang. | sa bcod dang. | yig chung dang bcas ba dang. | nyang stod khro gangs su drang du shag tshul gyis byas pa'i sems bde bco brgyad kyi rgyud rnams la | kun byed rgyal po dang. | mdo bcu gsang ba dang. | ye shes gsang ba dang. | 'grel pa dang. | dbang bskur gyi man ngag dang. | bha pa'i man ngag dang. | sems nyams kyi man ngag dang. | srid pa rgyud lung la sogs pa |*

Pho brang Zhi ba 'od held that the *Eighteen Sems sde* texts, including the *Kun byed rgyal po*, were produced by taking texts apart, or rendering them, to get excerpts (*drang du shag*<sup>28</sup>). The *Eighteen Sems sde* texts are generally held to be the five early translations of Vairocana and the thirteen latter translations of Vimalamitra.<sup>29</sup> The *Kun byed rgyal po* is not counted among them. Zhi ba 'od does list the *rMad du byung ba* and the rest of the thirteen latter translations of Vimalamitra in the separate category he mentions at the beginning of the passage. It may be that he duplicates his warnings on these works, but his primary concern with the *Thirteen Latter Translations* is that they were put together by Tibetans. His special concern for the *Eighteen Sems sde* texts and the *Kun byed rgyal po* relates to the techniques used to produce them. The first is a question of authorship, the second a question of editorial policy.

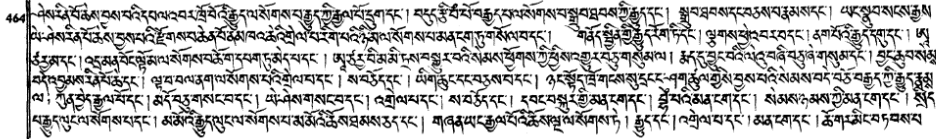
Samten Karmay's transcription does not bring this out fully. I offer an alternate reading to the *Open Letter* below.

<sup>27</sup> The text reads "nyang stod khro gangs," which is not an attested place, see Taranatha's *Myang gi chos 'byung*. I believe the best reading is 'nyang stod khrod gangs," which I follow in my translation. Nyang (Myang) was an important area in the early development of rDzogs chen. Nyang Ting 'dzin bzang po, a student of dPal gyi Seng ge, who was also a student of Vimalamitra, built a temple there.

<sup>28</sup> Sog zlog pa uses "drang" and "drangs" as nominal forms of "'dren." E.g. *ibid.*, p. 467 line 6 (Sog zlog pa Blo gros rgyal mtshan).

<sup>29</sup> Sog zlog pa also points this out, p. 469: "They say that Vairocana's five early translations are piled on top of the *rMad du byung ba* and the rest of Vimala's latter translations, but this is not what is intended" (*rmad byung la sogs pa bi ma la'i phyis 'gyur bcu gsum gyi steng du | bai ro'i snga 'gyur lnga bsnan pa la zer ba de ma dgongs pa'o*).





Page 464 of Sog zlog pa bLo gros rgyal mtshan's  
gSang sngags snga' 'gyur la bod du rtsod pa snga phyir byung ba rnam ki lan du brjod pa  
nges pa don gyi 'brug sgra.<sup>30</sup>

Note that on Line 4 the reading is: nyang stod khro gangs su drang du shag tshul gyis byas pa'i sems bde bco brgyad kyi rgyud rnams.

On line five the reading is: dbang bskur gyi man ngag dang. | bha pa'i man ngag dang. | sems nyams kyī man ngag dang. |

Samten Karmay<sup>31</sup> has read: nyang stod khro gangs su drang nga shag tshul gyis byas pa'i sems sde<sup>32</sup> bco brgyad kyī rgyud rnams la/ kun byed rgyal po dang/ mdo bcu gsang ba dang/ ye shes gsang ba dang/ 'grel ba dang sa bcod dang/ dbang bskur gyi man ngag dang/ sgom pa'i man ngag dang/ sems nyams kyī man ngag dang/.

There is clearly some problem with the reading. While Sog zlog pa copies “drang du shag tshul” in his quotation of Zhi ba ‘od, he comments on the passage saying: “The Dharma Cycles of the *Eighteen Sems sde* that were composed by Drang nga Shak Tshul at Nyang stod khro gangs include the *Kun byed rgyal po*” (*nyang stod khro gangs su drang nga shak tshul gyis brtsams pa'i sems bde bco brgyad kyī chos skor rnams la | kun byed rgyal po*).<sup>33</sup> He also uses this name later on: “They say that the *Kun byed rgyal po* was fabricated by Drang nga Shag Tshul” (*kun byed rgyal po drang nga shag tshul gyis byas zer*).<sup>34</sup> Samten Karmay has noted the unusualness of the name.<sup>35</sup> I can locate no other appropriate reference to this name. It is possible that Sog zlog pa misunderstood Zhi ba ‘od’s statement, either by accident or with deliberation, replacing a description of the editing process with a personal name.

### The Integrity of the Early Translations

It is especially interesting that Zhi ba ‘od does not speak out against the five early translations of Vairocana, the *Nam mkha' che* in particular, even though he does speak out against gNubs chen’s commentary.<sup>36</sup> Can we be sure that

<sup>30</sup> Sog zlog pa Blo gros rgyal mtshan, vol. 1, p. 464.

<sup>31</sup> Karmay, *op. cit.*, p. 19.

<sup>32</sup> Samten Karmay notes that he has read “sde” for “bde”.

<sup>33</sup> Sog bzlog pa Blo gros rgyal mtshan, p. 469.

<sup>34</sup> Sog bzlog pa Blo gros rgyal mtshan, p. 470.

<sup>35</sup> Karmay, “A Discussion on the Doctrinal Position of rDzogs-chen from the 10<sup>th</sup> to the 13<sup>th</sup> Centuries”, *Journal Asiatique*, 1975, Tome CCLXIII, p. 151.

<sup>36</sup> Zhi ba ‘od does speak out against the “rgyal po chos lnga” (S. G. Karmay p. 16). Sog zlog pa comments on this: “They say the Five Dharmas for the King are Vairo’s Five Early Translations, but I believe they are something else. Due to the fact that these books have not been catalogued, there is no reason to categorize them as such” (*rgyal po'i chos lnga ni | bai ro tsa na'i lnga 'gyur lnga po la zer te | gshan shig yin snyam du dgongs pa 'dra'o 'di'i sdebs*

Zhi ba 'od, gNubs chen, and the *Paṅ sgrub* have the same text in mind when they say “*Nam mkha' che*”? Let us have a look at gNubs chen's commentary, the *rNal 'byor rig pa'i nyi ma*.

### *The rNal 'byor rig pa'i nyi ma*

The *rNal 'byor rig pa'i nyi ma* is a commentary on the *Byang chub kyi sems mi nub pa'i rgyal mtshan rdo rje sems dpa' nam mkha' che*. It can be found at present in the *bKa' ma shin tu rgyas pa* collection.<sup>37</sup> The text's colophon does not explicitly state that gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye she is its author. The title *Rig pa'i nyi ma* is directly associated with gNubs chen in Zhi ba 'od's *Open Letter*. The style of writing and vocabulary usage are consistent with that in gNubs chen's *bSam gtan mig sgron*.<sup>38</sup> I do not doubt that this is gNubs chen's writing.

### The Fifty Five Verses

The text gNubs chen comments on is a fifty five verse monologue. It is substantially the same text we have in Chapter 30 of the *Kun byed rgyal po*. These same fifty five verses also appear in three other texts found in the *rNying ma rgyud 'bum* collections: the *Mi nub rgyal mtshan rdo rje sems dpa' nam mkha' che rtsa ba'i rgyud*, the *rDo rje sems dpa'i lta ba*, and the so-called *Khyung chen lding ba*.

I offer a critical edition of these fifty five verses in Appendix A which takes into account the versions from the *Rig pa'i nyi ma*, the three texts just mentioned, and the following editions of the *Kun byed rgyal po*: the *bKa' 'gyur* collections from sDe dge, Nar thang, Lhasa, and Urga along with the *rNying ma rgyud 'bum* collections from mTshams brag, gTing skyes, and the *bKa' ma rgyas pa*. This edition also references quotations of these fifty five verses as found in the *bSam gtan mig sgron* and the *Paṅ sgrub rnams kyi thugs bcud snying gi nyi ma*.

To gain a better understanding of why Zhi ba 'od made warnings about these documents let us examine similarities and differences in the extant versions of the Fifty Five Verses: the introductions, closings, and important differentials in content.

### Differentials in the versions

#### *The Rig pa'i nyi ma*

gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes tells us that the text he is commenting on is called *Byang chub kyi sems mi nub pa'i rgyal mtshan rdo rje sems dpa' nam mkha' che*. He describes the content of the work as follows:

---

*rnam la yang rnam gzhas ma yin pa'i gtan tshigs 'god rgyu ma byung bar 'dug l*, Sog zlog pa Blo gros rgyal mtshan, p. 471).

<sup>37</sup> *bKa' ma shin tu rgyas pa*, vol. 103, pp. 51-112. This copy of the collection of manuscripts is a personal possession of Dr. David Germano, who has kindly made it available to scholars and translators through Gene Smith's TBRC project. Special thanks are in order.

<sup>38</sup> This is an intuitive statement I make, based on 27 years of familiarity with the *bSam gtan mig sgron*.

A proper explanation of the versification of words is that a few words are used to carry a vast significance. There are fifty five ślokas,<sup>39</sup> they are suitably arranged so that twenty seven topics (*skabs*) are subsumed into six headings (*thig le*).<sup>40</sup>

*tshig sdeb sbyor legs pas bshad pa ni | tshig nyung la don rgya che  
ba'i phyir sho lo ka lnga bcu rtsa phyed dang lnga | skabs nyi shu  
rtsa bdun | thig le drug rim par tshig don bsdu legs su bkoā pa  
rnams so |*

The text *gNubs chen* describes begins with the words: “Homage to the Blessed One Vajrasattva” (*bCom ldan 'das dpal rdo rje sems dpa' la phyag 'tshal lo*). His text has no preamble. It does have a colophon, where we find the title of the text presented in the Indian language at the commentary's end:

These words were proclaimed by the glorious Vajrasattva, the personification of all the Blessed One's transmissions. The significance of the title has been explained to be *Mahā Ākāśa Kārikā*.

The *rNal 'byor rig pa'i nyi ma* is an illuminator,  
An extract of the significant roots  
From a vast mental transmission.  
This is only for mature vow keepers.  
May it not come into contact with degenerates  
Who use its words to deceive.  
This ends the commentary on the *Nam mkha' che*.

*de skad ces bcom ldan 'das lung thams cad kyi bdag nyid dpal rdo  
rje sems dpas gsungs pa | ma haa a ka sha ka ri ka zhes mtshan don  
bstan pa'o | don gyi rtsa ba lung sems yongs kyi bcud | rnal 'byor  
rig pa'i nyi ma snang byed pa | dam can spu rgyu can las ma gtogs  
pa | nyams pa bka' slu rnams dang ma phrad cig | nam mkha che'i  
'grel pa rdzogs sto | |*

The *Rig pa'i nyi ma* presents the text of each verse written out in full. The heading and topic titles are also written into the commentary as quotations from the Tantra. The fifty five verses it contains are dissimilar from all other available versions of these verses in two ways: between verse 21 and 22 of all other versions *gNubs chen* has a verse that is otherwise unattested:<sup>41</sup>

*lus dang ngag gi bya brtsal med  
ting 'dzin sems kyi rims gsal med*

<sup>39</sup> Four lined verses with seven syllables each.

<sup>40</sup> The *Thig le drug* is a known rubric in *rDzogs chen* teaching. See Karmay, *The Great Perfection (rDzogs chen): A Philosophical and Meditative Teaching of Tibetan Buddhism*, Brill's Tibetan Studies Library, vol. 11, Leiden, 2007, p. 118. Rong zom Chos kyi bzang po (1042-1136) presents a discussion of this grouping in his *Theg pa chen po'i tshul la 'jug pa*. See *Rong zom bka' 'bum*, Reproduced from a manuscript copy of an incomplete print from the Ze-chen blocks with the detailed *dkar-chag* of 'Jam-mgon Mi-pham rin-po-che. Published by Kusang Topgay, Thimphu, Bhutan, 1976, pp. 217-219.

<sup>41</sup> *bKa' ma shin tu rgyas pa* (kaH thog), vol. 104, p. 80.

*ma nor lam gyi sa stegs med*  
*mthar phyin gzhan nas 'dod pa med*

gNubs chen achieves fifty five verses by leaving out verse number thirty eight.

A number of important *Sems sde* texts are cross referenced in the commentary. These include the *Khu byug*,<sup>42</sup> the *Khyung chen*,<sup>43</sup> the *rMad byung ba*,<sup>44</sup> the *bDe 'byams*,<sup>45</sup> and the *sPyi gcod*.<sup>46</sup>

### *The Kun byed rgyal po*

The *Kun byed rgyal po* has at present become the *locus classicus* for Vairocana's five early translations.<sup>47</sup> It contains these renditions of the Five Early translations:

- Chapter 31: *rDo rje tshig drug* a.k.a. *Rig pa'i khyu phyug*.
- Chapter 22: *Khyung chen lding ba*.
- Chapter 26: *rDo la gser zhun*.
- Chapter 27: *rTsal chen sprugs pa*.
- Chapter 30: *rDo rje sems dpa'i rang bzhin mi nub pa'i rgyal mtshan*.

Chapter 30 consists of fifty five verses, the same verses we have in the *Mahā Akaśa Kārikas*, excepting the above mentioned differences in verses 22 and 38 and the addition of a preamble at the beginning. Since the fourteenth century C.E. the *Kun byed rgyal po* has been included in the *bKa' 'gyur*, a widely distributed and universally recognized source of authenticated Buddhist literature in Tibet. This was not the case at Zhi ba 'od's time, as the *bKa' 'gyur* had not yet been compiled.<sup>48</sup>

The *Kun byed rgyal po* is currently available in versions from both the *bKa' 'gyur* and from *rNying ma rgyud 'bum* collections. The text of chapter 30, the *Mi nub rgyal mtshan Nam mkha' che*, is basically the same in all of them. The opening to chapter 30 of the *Kun byed rgyal po* sets the stage for the presentation by Kun byed to Vajrasattva:

Then the Bodhicitta, Kun byed rgyal po, proclaimed this *Mi nub rgyal mtshan*, the transmission of being perfect without doing [anything], to Sems dpa' rdo rje, his own essential character, for it is Sems dpa' rdo rje's true nature:

<sup>42</sup> *bKa' ma shin tu rgyas pa* (kaH thog), vol. 104, p. 88.

<sup>43</sup> *bKa' ma shin tu rgyas pa* (kaH thog), vol. 104, p. 66.

<sup>44</sup> *bKa' ma shin tu rgyas pa* (kaH thog), vol. 104, p. 62.

<sup>45</sup> *bKa' ma shin tu rgyas pa* (kaH thog), vol. 104, p. 92.

<sup>46</sup> *bKa' ma shin tu rgyas pa* (kaH thog), vol. 104, p. 69.

<sup>47</sup> Ngag dbang blo bzang rgya mtsho, the Fifth Dalai Lama (1617-1682), considered the five early translations to have come from the *Kun byed rgyal po*. See Karmay, *The Great Perfection*, p. 207 n. 7.

<sup>48</sup> The early compilation of the *bKa' 'gyur* was done by Bu ston Rin chen grub (1290-1364). Bu ston did not include the *Kun byed rgyal po*, but it was added soon after. For a detailed discussion see Neumeier-Dargyay *The Sovereign All-Creating Mind The Motherly Buddha* p. 23-26.

O Sems dpa' rdo rje! You! Listen!  
Sems dpa' rdo rje,  
I must teach you your own true nature.  
You are Kun byed. That is me.  
I have always been the Bodhicitta.  
The Bodhicitta is as follows:

Then the Bodhicitta, Kun byed rgyal po, proclaimed this Mi nub pa'i rgyal mtshan Nam mkha' che:

*De nas byang chub kyi sems kun byed rgyal po des nyid kyi snying po sems dpa' rdo rje la sems dpa' rdo rje nyid kyi rang bzhin bya med rdzogs pa'i lung mi nub pa'i rgyal mtshan 'di gsungs so*

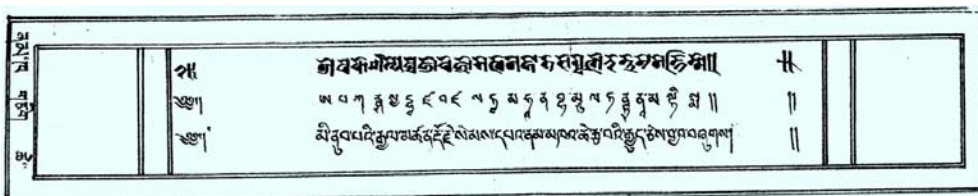
*kye sems dpa' rdo rje khyod nyon cig  
sems dpa' rdo rje khyod nyid la  
nyid kyi rang bzhin bstan par bya  
nyid ni kun byed nga yin te  
nga ni ye nas byang chub sems  
byang chub sems ni 'di lta'o*

*des na byang chub kyi sems kun byed rgyal po des mi nub pa'i rgyal mtshan nam mkha' che 'di gsungs so*

At the end of the fifty five verses we read:

This ends the thirtieth chapter of the *Byang chub kyi sems kun byed rgyal po*: *Mi nub pa'i rgyal mtshan*, the true nature of Vajrasattva.

*byang chub kyi sems kun byed rgyal po las rdo rje sems dpa'i rang bzhin mi nub pa'i rgyal mtshan gyi le'u ste sum chu pa'o*



Cover Page of *Mi nub pa'i rgyal mtshan rdo rje sems dpa' nam mkha' che rtsa ba'i rgyud*<sup>49</sup>

<sup>49</sup> bKa' ma shin tu rgyas pa (kaH thog), vol. 104, p. 5.

*Mi nub pa'i rgyal mtshan  
rdo rje sems dpa' nam mkha' che rtsa ba'i rgyud*

In the *bKa' ma shin tu rgyas pa* collection we find a text which has a cover page with the title *Mi nub pa'i rgyal mtshan rdo rje sems dpa' nam mkha' che rtsa ba'i rgyud*. The title at the beginning of the text itself is *rdo rje sems dpa' nam mkha' che*. Its Indian language title is *Vajra Svabhāwa Mahākarśa Kārika*. The text contains the same set of fifty five verses as that found in the *Kun byed rgyal po*, but is missing verse thirty eight. It begins with the words: "Homage to the Blessed One Vajrasattva" (*bCom ldan 'das dpal rdo rje sems dpa' la phyag 'tshal lo*). Without further ado, the fifty five verses are presented. The verses are divided into topics (*skabs*) and headings (*thig le*).

The text does have a colophon:

This ends the oral proclamation by the glorious Vajrasattva, the personification of all transmissions, of the *rDo rje sems dpa' nam mkha' che*. At the second heading, that of Samantabhadra,<sup>50</sup> just after the words "mthong ba med," there follows:

*nyon mongs pa yi dbang gis na |  
tā la'i mgo bo bcad pa dang |  
sa bon me yis bsregs pa dang |  
de yi dbang du mi 'gyur ston*

After that "rNam grangs" and the rest [of verse thirty nine] is proclaimed. This verse about the Bodhicitta not being controlled by karma or emotions is in the *Kun byed*.

*rdo rje sems dpa' nam mkha' che | lung thams cad kyi bdag nyid  
dpal rdo rje sems dpa'i zhal nas gsungs pa rdzogs so | | 'di la kun  
tu bzang po'i thig le'i skabs gnyis par | mthong ba med | ces pa'i  
'phror | nyon mongs pa yi dbang gis na | tā la'i mgo bo bcad pa  
dang. | sa bon me yis bsregs pa dang. | de yi dbang du mi 'gyur  
ston | de nas rnam grangs sogs gsung te | byang chub kyi sems las  
dang nyon mongs pa'i dbang du mi 'gyur ba'i don gi tshigs bcas 'di  
kun byed na bzhugs |*

*rDo rje sems dpa'i lta ba*

The gTing skyes and Rig 'dzin nor bu<sup>51</sup> editions of the *rNying ma rgyud 'bum* contain a text called *rDo rje sems dpa'i lta ba*. The Indian language title is *Āryapada Vajrasattva*. The text starts right out, without homage or preamble, on the first of the fifty five verses: "rDo rje sems dpa' nam mkha che..."

<sup>50</sup> According to the *rNal 'byor rig pa'i nyi ma*, the *Mi nub rgyal mtshan rdo rje sems dpa' nam mkha' che zhes rtsa ba'i rgyud*, and the so-called *Khyung chen lding ba*, the *kun tu bzang po'i thig le* begins with verse 48.

<sup>51</sup> My discussion is based on the gTing skyes edition. I have not yet examined the Rig 'dzin nor bu edition.

The fifty five verses are given in the same order as in the *Kun byed rgyal po*, and are not divided into headings (*thig le*) and topics (*skabs*). At the end of the text there is this colophon:

This ends the *Byang chub sems mi nub pa'i rgyal mtshan lta ba nam mkha' che*. The *rDo rje sems dpa' nam mkha' che* was proclaimed in the cave of Asura 'Od ldan by the master from Urgyan, dGa' rab rdo rje.

*Byang chub sems mi nub pa'i rgyal mtshan lta ba nam mkha' che rdzogs so | rdo rje sems dpa' nam mkha' che 'u rgyan gyi slob dpon dga' rab rdo rjes dpal a su ra 'od ldan gyi brag phug tu gsungs pa rdzogs so |*<sup>52</sup>

### **The So-called *Kyung chen lding ba***

In Volume 2 of the *Vairo rgyud 'bum* there is a cover page with the title *Khyung chen lding ba*. The text following it is catalogued under this title. The text given is exactly that we find in the *Mahā Akāśa Kārika* except that verse number thirty eight is included. It presents no Indian or Tibetan title, and no preamble. It starts right out with "Homage to the Blessed One Vajrasattva" (*bCom ldan 'das dpal rdo rje sems dpa' la phyag 'tshal lo*). The text starts out with "The topic of reality" (*chos nyid kyi skabs*). There follow the fifty five verses, beginning with "rDo rje sems dpa' nam mkha' che." The verses are divided up into headings (*thig le*) and topics (*skabs*). At the end there is a colophon:

These words were proclaimed by the glorious Vajrasattva, the personification of all the Blessed One's transmissions. This is the *rDo rje sems dpa' nam mkha' che*. The end.

*Bcom ldan 'das lung thams cad kyi bdag nyid dpal rdo rje sems dpas de skad gsungs so | rdo rje sems dpa nam mkha' che | rdzogs so |*

### **Distinctions**

There are five remarkable distinctions to be noted between these renditions of the fifty five verses: the title, the speaker, added and missing verses, headers and topics, and the five lined verse.

### **The Title**

The *Rig pa'i nyi ma* purports to comment on a text with the title of *Byang chub sems mi nub pa'i rgyal mtshan rdo rje sems dpa' nam mkha' che*. At the very end of the text gNubs chen tells us that the significance of the title is *Mahā Akāśa Kārika*.

The text with a cover page where we find the title *Mi nub pa'i rgyal mtshan rdo rje sems dpa' nam mkha' che rtsa ba'i rgyud* has a title at the beginning of the

<sup>52</sup> gTing skyes, vol. 1, p. 430.

text itself: *rDo rje sems dpa' nam mkha' che*. It's Indian language title is *Vajra Svabhāwa Mahā Akarsha Kārika*. The sMin gling manuscript of the *rNying ma rgyud 'bum* catalogued by 'Jigs med gling pa, which has not yet been recovered, has a text titled *rDo rje sems dpa' nam mkha' che* translated by Śrī Simha and Vairocana. It is likely the same text.

The *rDo rje sems dpa'i lta ba* has a title in the colophon: *Byang chub sems mi nub pa'i rgyal mtshan lta ba nam mkha' che*.

The So-called *Khyung chen lding ba* also has a title in the colophon: *rDo rje sems dpa' nam mkha' che*.

The *Kun byed rgyal po's* chapter thirty ends with a colophon: *Byang chub kyi sems kun byed rgyal po las rDo rje sems dpa'i rang bzhin mi nub pa'i rgyal mtshan gyi le'u ste sum chu pa'o*.

There is an evident interchange between *rDo rje sems dpa'i rang bzhin* and *rDo rje sems dpa'i lta ba*. There is also an interchange between *rDo rje sems dpa' Nam mkha' che* and *Mi nub rgyal mtshan Nam mkha' che*. The presence of an Indian Language title in only the *rTsa ba'i rgyud*, it appearing to be a Prakrit form of the title's translation in the colophon of Nubs chen's *Rig pa'i Nyi ma*, which appears to be pure Sanskrit, is noteworthy.

### The Speaker

The speaker of the fifty five verses in the *Kun byed rgyal po* is Kun byed rgyal po. In the *Mi nub pa'i rgyal mtshan rdo rje sems dpa' nam mkha' che rtsa ba'i rgyud* and the *So-called Khyung chen lding ba* they are spoken by Vajrasattva. In the *rDo rje sems dpa'i lta ba* they come to us from dGa' rab rdo rje.<sup>53</sup>

It is not necessary to look for a contradiction in this. Chapter thirty of the *Kun byed rgyal po* starts right out by telling us that the speaker, Kun byed rgyal po, is none other than Vajrasattva, who is the listener. It sounds almost as if Kun byed rgyal po is talking to himself in a mirror. This accommodates the larger structure of the text, where Kun byed rgyal po is the overarching character. In the *rDo rje sems dpa'i lta ba* dGa' rab rdo rje delivers these verses at a geographical location on earth. We might take this to explain how these lofty teachings became available in our world. It is possible to understand Vajrasattva as the originator of these words in any case, but this understanding will have been informed by the greater tradition. It is not immediately evident in the texts.

### Added and Missing Verses

gNubs chen's *Rig pa'i nyi ma* has an otherwise unattested verse between verses 21 and 22. He achieves fifty five verses by leaving out verse 38.

The *Mi nub pa'i rgyal mtshan rdo rje sems dpa' nam mkha' che rtsa ba'i rgyud* also lacks verse 38, although it does not add a verse, as gNubs chen's text does. The resulting text has only 54 verses. The scribe notes this in the colophon and supplies us with verse 38, taking it from the *Kun byed rgyal po*. We may speculate that the scribe was working with a manuscript representing

<sup>53</sup> According to the *Vairo 'dra bag*, an early biography of Vairocana, the very first thing dGa' rab rdo rje did when he was born was to recite the *rDo rje sems dpa' Nam mkha' che*. See Karmay, *The Great Perfection*, p. 19.



the same lineage that gNubs chen had used for his commentary. It is possible that the scribe lifted the verses out of gNubs chen's *Rig pa'i nyi ma* to build his text. Differentials in details such as the wording of the Indian language title make it preferable to posit that this was not so. In any case a thorough knowledge of the content of the *Kun byed rgyal po* preceded the copying of this manuscript. We cannot guess whether this scribe left out the verse between 21 and 22, believing it to be extraneous due to its absence from the *Kun byed rgyal po*, or it was left out by an earlier scribe in the same lineage. We know for sure that this scribe took the text in the *Kun byed rgyal po* as the *locus classicus* and prepared his manuscript in conformity with it. His integrity is remarkable: he notes the omitted verse and provides his source for the correction, rather than correcting it silently.

### Headers and Topics

gNubs chen tells us that the text has six headers (*thig le*) to divide twenty seven topics (*skabs*). In the actual commentary he gives twenty six topics. This is how he explains the difference:<sup>54</sup>

Under the “Heading on *dByings*” the first three topics teach that reflexive awareness is effectively the source of everything, which ascertains the titles. The last one joins the presentation on *dByings kyi mtshan nyid* with the *Ngo bo* into a fourth topic, so there is certainly no contradiction.

*dByings kyi thig le | zhes pa | Skabs dang po gsum gyis don gyis  
rang rig pa ni kun gyi 'byungs par bstan pas nges tshig 'grub ste |  
tha ma ni dbyings mtshan nyid dang ngo bo ston pas skabs bzhi  
bsdu ba'ang mi 'gal bar nges pa'o |*

The *Mi nub pa'i rgyal mtshan rdo rje sems dpa' nam mkha' che rtsa ba'i rgyud* and the so-called *Khyung chen lding ba* present the same headings and topics, indicating a reliable textual tradition where the index is included with the verses as the text of the *Kārikās*. On the other hand, the *rDo rje sems dpa'i lta ba* and the *Kun byed rgyal po* both lack these headers and topics, indicating a very strong textual tradition without this internal indexing.

### The Five Lined Verse

The text gNubs chen comments on in his *Rig pa'i nyi ma* has fifty five verses. Fifty four of them are normal *ślokas* with four *padas* or lines. Verse number four is different. It has five lines:

*'byung ba chen po bcom ldan 'das  
chub par gnas pas bcom ldan 'das  
'gro ba kun la rang bzhin gnas  
phyin ci log tu rnam brtags kyang*

<sup>54</sup> *bKa' ma shin tu rgyas pa* (kaH thog), vol. 104, p. 67. This information tends to disprove any hypothesis that gNubs chen himself wrote the *Mahā Ākaśa Kārikās*.

*grol ba rang byung gzhan las min*

The *rDo rje sems dpa'i lta ba* also has five lines:

*'byung ba chen po bcom ldan 'das  
chub par gnas pas bcom ldan 'das  
grol ba kun la rang bzhin gnas  
phyin ci log tu rnam rtogs kyang  
grol ba rang byung gzhan las min*

The only difference is in the first syllable of the third *pada*, the preferred reading being gNubs chen's version. In all other versions the verse reads:

*'byung ba chen po bcom ldan 'das  
'gro ba kun la rang bzhin gnas  
phyin ci log tu rnam brtags kyang  
grol<sup>55</sup> ba rang byung gzhan las min<sup>56</sup>*

The second line is missing.

#### *Verse Number Four in Other Nam mkha' Che Tantras*

This same verse is found outside of the Fifty Five Verses in a number of *Nam mkha' che* Tantras. The *rDo rje sems dpa' nam mkha' che rtsa ba'i rgyud skye ba med pa* reads:<sup>57</sup>

*'byung ba chen po bcom ldan 'das  
chub par gnas pas bcom ldan 'das  
'gro ba kun la rang bzhin gnas  
phyin ci log tu rnam brtags kyang  
grol ba rang byung gzhan las med*

The *rDo rje sems dpa' nam mkha' che'i rgyud* reads:<sup>58</sup>

*'byung ba chen po bcom ldan 'das  
chub par gnas pas bcom ldan 'das  
'gro ba kun la rang bzhin gnas  
ye nas rgyal ba'i dkyil 'khor nyid  
phyin ci log tu rnam brags kyang  
grol ba rang byung gzhan las min*

The *rDo rje sems dpa' nam mkha' che rgyas pa zhes bya ba rnal 'byor ma'i rgyud* reads:<sup>59</sup>

*'byung ba la stsogs bcom ldan 'das | |*

<sup>55</sup> The So-called *Khyung chen lding ba* has "gro".

<sup>56</sup> The *Urga bKa' 'gyur's Kun byed rgyal po* has "med".  
mTshams brag rNying ma rgyud 'bum, vol. 3, p. 114.

<sup>57</sup> mTshams brag rNying ma rgyud 'bum, vol. 3, p. 171.

<sup>58</sup> mTshams brag rNying ma rgyud 'bum, vol. 3, p. 171.

<sup>59</sup> *Vairo rGyud 'bum*, vol. 1, p. 337.

*chub par gnas pas bcom ldan 'das | |*  
*'gro ba kun la rang bzhin gnas | |*  
*sangs rgyas kun gyis rgyud nyid las | |*  
*'gro ba rang byung gzhan las min | |*

### Transmissions and Commentaries

Dudjom Rinpoche tells us that the transmission of Vairocana's teachings has three main branches: one through the Sogdian dPal gyi Ye shes to Gra dPal gyi snying po, one through the Sogdian dPal gyi Seng ge to gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes, and a third through gTsang Shak rdor on down to the Zur.<sup>60</sup>

dPal gyi Seng ge is mentioned as the translator of the *Latter Kun byed rgyal po* along with Vairocana. He is also the teacher of gNubs chen, who wrote the *bSam gtan mig sgron*. According to Zhi ba 'od, gNubs chen also wrote the *rNal 'byor rig pa'i nyi ma*.<sup>61</sup> This shows the close relationship between the transmission through dPal gyi seng ge dgon po with three of the texts interdicted by Zhi ba 'od.

The *Pañ sgrub rnams kyi thugs bcud snying gi nyi ma* consists of meditation and practice instructions related to each of six *Sems sde* texts. At its end we find the following statement:

This *Heart Sun* is bequeathed  
 To dPal gyi Ye shes,  
 Seer of the significance of glory.  
 Hold on to it as if it were your heart.  
 The End.<sup>62</sup>

*dpal gyi don mthong dpal gyi ye shes la*  
*snying gi nyi gtad do snying ltar chongs*  
*rdzogs sho*  
*I thi*

The connection with the transmission through dPal gyi ye shes is clear. We might even wonder whether Vairocana himself wrote this book for his student.

The Blue Annals tells us that Zhig po bdud rtsi, who lived from 1143 to 1199,<sup>63</sup> studied "the twenty four Tantras of the "Mental" Class, including the ten *mDo* of *Kun byed*. The basic text of the "Mental Class" (*Sems sde*). . . . Among the great treatises on mind-concentration according to the method of Rong, belonging to the "Great Achievement" (rDzogs chen), he heard the

<sup>60</sup> Dudjom Rinpoche Jikdrel Yeshe Dorje, vol. 1, p. 540.

<sup>61</sup> The text we have in the *bKa' ma shin to rgyas pa* does not mention an author.

<sup>62</sup> *Vairo rgyud 'bum*, vol. 1, p. 104. According to my reading this colophon closes the *Pañ sgrub rnams kyi thugs bcud snying gi nyi ma*. The index to the *Vairo rGyud 'bum* and Kapstein ("The Sun of the Heart and the *Bai-ro-rgyud-'bum*") list the *sNying gi nyi ma* as ending on p. 172, where the colophon reads: "This is the teaching on effortlessly acquiring the entirety of all the Buddha's deeds and wonderful qualities (*sangs rgyas kyi mdzad pa thams cad dang | yon tan 'bad med lhun grub du bstan pa'i thi | |*)."

<sup>63</sup> See Kapstein, "The Sun of the Heart and the *Bai-ro-rgyud-'bum*", *Revue d'Etudes Tibétaines* (2008, no. 12), p. 276.

exposition of the *rNal 'byor rigs pa'i nyi ma*, the *bSam gtan mig gi sgron ma*, the *bSam gtan snying gi nyi ma*, the *gDar shar*, the *gZer bu*, the *Zhus lan khungs kyi gdab pa*, the *rDo rje sems dpa'i zhu lan*, and others."<sup>64</sup> Dudjom Rinpoche presents an almost identical clause.<sup>65</sup> Matthew Kapstein presents the case that our *Paṅ sgrub rnams kyi thugs bcud snying gi nyi ma* may well be the *bSam gtan snying gi nyi ma* mentioned by Dudjom Rinpoche.<sup>66</sup> At present we note that by the twelfth century the *Kun byed rgyal po*, the *rNal 'byor rig pa'i nyi ma*, the *bSam gtan mig gi sgron ma*, and this *Paṅ sgrub rnams kyi thugs bcud snying gi nyi ma* were considered closely related works.

Now the *bSam gtan mig sgron* contains twenty four direct quotations from the *Nam mkha' che*, and all of them refer to text found in the fifty five verses.<sup>67</sup> The *Rig pa'i nyi ma* comments on this precise set of fifty five verses. The *Paṅ sgrub rnams kyi thugs bcud snying gi nyi ma's* chapter on the *Nam mkha' che*, on the other hand, has thirty eight quotations; only twenty of them correspond with the Fifty Five Verses, indicating that he found more to the *Nam mkha' che* than what is in the *Kun byed rgyal po*.<sup>68</sup>

It is evident that the verses that comprise the Fifty Five Verses were available to both dPal gyi seng ge and dPal gyi ye she's transmissions. It is also evident that gNubs chen has taken the text of the *Kārikās* to represent the entire *Nam mkha' che* teaching, while the author of the *Paṅ sgrub* did not. A larger investigation of all the *Nam mkha' che* literature will be required to determine if there was a difference of opinion in the different transmissions of Vairocana's teachings.

### A Difference of Opinion

The *Rig pa'i nyi ma* calls the Fifty Five Verses "*Mahā Ākāśa Kārikā*." It does not say they are the exact text delivered by dGa' rab rdo rje. A careful reading of the colophons tells us that Vajrasattva, who is the personification of all the transmissions, spoke the words. This might be taken to mean that all the verses were originally inspired by Vajrasattva, or it might be taken to mean that Vajrasattva delivered this exact set of fifty five verses as a single text. The scribe who copied the *Mi nub pa'i rgyal mtshan rdo rje sems dpa' nam mkha' che rtsa ba'i rgyud* clearly accepted the latter, as did the scribe who copied the *rDo rje sems dpa'i lta ba*, attributing the entire text to a proclamation by dGa' rab rdo rje.<sup>69</sup>

The reality is that verses we find in the Fifty Five Verses are to be found throughout the corpus of the *Nam mkha' che* literature, catalogued at the beginning of this article. The preponderance of evidence is that the Fifty Five Verses, referred to hereafter as the *Mahā Ākāśa Kārikā*, were brought together from throughout the oceanic teachings on the *Nam mkha' che* with a specific

<sup>64</sup> Roerich p. 137.

<sup>65</sup> Dudjom Rinpoche Jikdrel Yeshe Dorje p. 654. He also lists the ten *mDo* and the *Kun byed rgyal po* as separate works.

<sup>66</sup> Dudjom Rinpoche Jikdrel Yeshe Dorje, vol. 2, p. 269 and Kapstein p. 276.

<sup>67</sup> All are transcribed in Appendix B.

<sup>68</sup> My transcription of the *Nam mkha' che* verses found in the *Thugs kyi Nyi ma* is in Appendix C.

<sup>69</sup> Ka thog mkhan chen Nus ldan mKhyen brtse'i blo gros supported this view in the early part of the twentieth century.

didactic purpose. This will be documented by a comprehensive study of all these texts.

The *rDo rje sems dpa' nam mkha che rtsa ba'i rgyud skyes ba med pa* describes a setting where dGa' rab rdo rje requested the teachings of the *Nam mkha' che* from the Bhagavan dPal bDe ba chen po.<sup>70</sup> Some, not all, of these *Kārikās* are found in the body of that text.<sup>71</sup> It might be argued that these *Kārikās* were the original teaching of Vajrasattva as given to dGa' rab rdo rje, who then passed them down the lineage, but due to turbulent circumstances the verses got scattered into a miscellaneous collection of texts, only to be brought together again by Vairocana's students. This is not a position to be argued with. The present study is merely a study of textual tradition, not a study of the inspiration behind it.

### Problems with Designating the Fifty Five Verses as a Root Tantra

Not even one of the versions of the fifty five verses has a colophon stating that Vairocana is the translator. In fact, none of them has a recorded translator at all.

The only text of Fifty Five Verses with the word "Tantra" in its title is the cover page for the *Mi nub pa'i rgyal mtshan rdo rje sems dpa' nam mkha' che rtsa ba'i rgyud*, and this is not the actual title in the text.

We have ten texts that are Tantras (*rgyud*) with "*rDo rje sems dpa' Nam mkha' che*" in their titles that do not present this sequence of fifty five verses, though they do contain verses found in the Fifty Five Verses scattered throughout.

### The Hypothesis

The following hypothesis offers a solution. It will be borne out by a careful study of the entire body of *Nam mkha' che* literature along with the *Sems sde* literature in general.<sup>72</sup>

dPal gyi Seng ge mgon po was a close student of Vairocana and had available to him a number of Tantras concerned with the *Nam mkha' che*. It was he or one of his peers that extracted their outstanding verses, sorting them out with headers and topic titles for a specific presentation, coalescing them into a *Kārikā*. He was involved in the compilation of the *Kun byed rgyal po* materials and was instrumental in the inclusion of the *Mahā Akāśa Kārikās* as chapter thirty. He was a primary teacher of gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes, who wrote the *Rig pa'i nyi ma* as a commentary on this work.

These *Kārikās* were both copied as an individual document and included in the *Kun byed rgyal po* as chapter thirty of that work. Two extant versions of the *Kārikās* retain the original heading and topic titles while they have been

<sup>70</sup> mTshams brag *rNying ma rgyud 'bum*, vol. 3, p. 87.1.

<sup>71</sup> Those lines and verses common to both the *Kārikās* and the *rTsa ba'i rgyud skye ba med pa* have been noted in the present annotated transcription. I have completed a transcript and rudimentary translation of the *rTsa ba'i rgyud skye ba med pa*, and hope to offer it in an upcoming study.

<sup>72</sup> The development of a comprehensive database of colophon information is needed. This will allow us to determine to the extent possible who was working on what, with whom, when, where, and under what conditions.

removed from the third one. The original *Kārikās* have five lines in verse number four. The surviving copy that does not have the header and topic titles in the text retains this anomaly, while the *Kārikās* incorporated into the *Kun byed rgyal po* truncate verse number four to four lines, conforming to the format of that text.

The *Kun byed rgyal po* gradually became the *locus classicus* for *Sems sde* Tantras and the *Nam mkha' che* teachings, and came to be accepted as their original source. The so-called *Mi nub pa'i rgyal mtshan rdo rje sems dpa' nam mkha' che rtsa ba'i rgyud* reflects this with a cover that uses the title *rTsa ba'i rgyud*, even though the true title is "*rDo rje sems dpa nam mkha' che*," simply the first line of the *Kārikās'* first verse. The text is not a *rGyud* at all.

We cannot know what Zhi ba 'od was actually thinking when he wrote his interdictions. The evidence is that the *Mahā Ākāśa Kārikās* were drawn from extant volumes of *Nam mkha' che* Tantras, then put together in a specific order for pedagogical reasons. A Tibetan Language title was created, using the first line of the first verse: *rdo rje sems dpa' nam mkha' che*. gNubs chen appears to have translated "*Nam mkha' che*" as "*mahā ākāśa*", adding the word "*kārikā*" to describe the type of document it represents. He did not claim that the text had an Indian title. A version of this text does survive that is presented as a Tantra and formatted with an Indian and Tibetan title, the *Mi nub rgyal mtshan rdo rje sems dpa' nam mkha che rtsa ba'i rgyud*. So Pho brang Zhi ba 'od's concern that texts were being created from excerpts and given Indian titles is therefore validated by the evidence. His claim that the *Rig pa'i nyi ma* was presented as an Upadeśa (*man ngag*), however, cannot be substantiated with the available evidence. One explanation for his disgruntlement might be that these *Kārikās* had been incorporated into the *Kun byed rgyal po* as if they represented the entire body of Vairocana's fifth early translation, and that many believed this to be so. This view is supported by Zhig po bdud rtsi's apparent assumption that gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes's works, the *Rig pa'i nyi ma* and the *bSam gtan mig sgron*, were source works on rDzogs chen. If the *Kun byed rgyal po* contained a *Kārikā* in the guise of an authentic Tantra this might also be symptomatic of a general discrepancy between the *Kun byed rgyal po's* recognized status as a Root Tantra for the *Sems sde* teachings and the reality that it was a compendium of these teachings. The *bSam gtan mig sgron* seems to support this misunderstanding by quoting the *Kārikās* as if they were a Mūla Tantra. If this is symptomatic of a larger methodology, Zhi ba 'od may have had reason to be unhappy with the *bSam gtan mig sgron*, along with the *Kun byed rgyal po*.

The *bSam gtan mig sgron* and the *Kun byed rgyal po* are both monumental works that demonstrate the highest understanding. Their brilliance in laying out their topics is inconceivable. They are not, however, Root Tantras, but represent a curriculum for rDzogs chen study.

There is no evidence that gNubs chen acted deceptively in any way. To the contrary, he clearly states that he has extracted his information from other sources. It would seem that by Pho brang Zhi ba 'od's time (the 11th century C.E.) gNubs chen's works and the *Kun byed rgyal po* were believed to be Root Tantras in and of themselves.

We may conclude, then, that a great undertaking toward establishing a curriculum for the study of rDzogs chen, represented by the *Kun byed rgyal po*, was most likely being used in consort with the comprehensive overview

of the great meditation traditions that is the *bSam gtan mig sgron*, these being supplemented by writings such as gNubs chen's *Rig pa'i nyi ma* and the *Paṅ sgrub Nying gi nyi ma*. dPal gi Seng ge and gNubs chen formed a powerful team and no doubt had the blessings of both Vairocana and Vimalamitra. The volumes in question, suitable for a curriculum of advanced study, were produced at the very dawn of the Tibetan assimilation of Buddhism. There was no deception or forgery involved in this great work, but in the course of time these great manuals superceded the original works they had been based upon. The original Tantras were rarely copied, while these manuals became more widely available. It appears that in some cases the manuals were mistakenly presumed to be the original works. Some of them were brought into conformity with standards for the Buddha's teachings and given Indian names by the Tibetans who copied and studied them. Pho brang Zhi ba 'od was not, apparently, speaking out to ridicule the early transmission of the teaching or the message presented in the *Nam mkha' che* literature, but rather to point out that these great manuals represented abridged versions edited by Tibetans rather than original Tantras. His warnings appear to have been motivated by the imperative to separate the Buddha's own words (*bka'*), Sūtra and Tantra, from derivative or commentarial works, Śāstra (*bstan bcos*). This is the reason, then, for his statement that Tibetans were fabricating or developing on (*bcos*) the Buddha's words (*sangs rgyas kyi bka' ltar bcos*).

### The Need for Further Research

A true understanding of the *Nam mkha' che* literature will require the development of a critical edition of the body of texts in this cycle. The present annotated transcription of the *Mahā Ākāśa Kārikās* is a start. Concerns of intertextuality will be addressed by locating content different texts share in common, exemplified in this study by differential versions of verse number four. A comprehensive study of intertextual references will facilitate an understanding of which content is common to the *Nam mkha' che* cycle as a whole and which is peculiar to a particular sub-set of its transmission.

The three texts that purport to be root tantras of the *Nam mkha' che*, the *rDo rje sems dpa' nam mkha' che rtsa ba'i rgyud skye ba med pa*, the *rDo rje sems dpa' nam mkha' che'i rgyud*, and the *Byang chub sems rdo rje 'od 'phro ba'i rgyud kyi rim pa* must be examined for their content as root sources for this teaching.

The three works translated by Vairocana with the assistance of Jñānagarbha, the *rDo rje sems dpa' nam mkha' che rgyas pa yi ge med pa'i rgyud*, the *rDo rje sems dpa' nam mkha' che rgyas pa zhes bya ba rnal 'byor ma'i rgyud*, and the *rDo rje sems dpa' nam mkha' che rgyal po rgyas pa's rgyud* should be studied as a special sub-class. The *rDo rje sems dpa' nam mkha' che rgyas pa yi ge med pa'i rgyud* and the *rDo rje sems dpa' nam mkha' che rgyas pa zhes bya ba rnal 'byor ma'i rgyud* are attested in virtually every manuscript collection of rNying ma Tantras. Preponderance of instantiation is an important criterion for identifying the most commonly accepted renditions of the teaching. Both of these texts refer to the *rGyal po rgyas pa* internally. Its survival in a single manuscript provides a unique opportunity for research.

The *rDo rje sems dpa' nam mkha' che rgyas pa zhes bya ba rnal 'byor ma'i rgyud* and the *rDo rje sems dpa' nam mkha' che rgyas pa zhes bya ba rnal 'byor pa'i rgyud* appear to be the same text, the *rNal 'byor ma* having a full fifteen chapters while the *rNal 'byor pa* cuts off abruptly at the end of chapter eleven. The *rNal 'byor ma* mentioned by 'Jigs med gling pa was translated by Vimalamitra and dPal brtsegs and had thirteen chapters. This text has not yet been found. A study of how these documents relate to each other and the wider body of *Nam mkha' che* literature is indicated.

The role of Vajrasattva as a cleanser of karmic filth is common to all branches of Tibetan Vajrayana. In the *Byang chub sems rdo rje 'od 'phro ba'i rgyud* there are many verses found in the *Kārikās*, indicating its character as a rDzogs chen document, yet where his function as a cleanser of samaya downfalls is dominant. One important section of the *rDo rje sems dpa' nam mkha' che rtsa ba'i rgyud skye ba med pa* is devoted to behavioral concerns: students killing teachers, teachers killing students, general prohibitions, etc. Morals and discipline as they apply to rDzogs chen in general and the *Nam mkha' che* in particular deserve inquiry.

The classes of *Nam mkha' che* literature that are basic (*rTsa ba*), expanded (*rGyas pa*), and associated with other Tantric cycles should be analyzed for any distinctions they may have as to literary structure and content.

References to non-Buddhist, Buddhist, and amalgamated traditions within the *Nam mkha' che* literature should be identified. A particular starting point might be the reference in verse thirteen of the *Kārikās*, which is attested in the *rTsa ba'i rgyud skye ba med pa*, the *bSam gtan mig sgron*, and the *Pañ sgrub*, that mentions a "dGon pa'i rgyud" (*Aranyaka Tantra*). The prologue to Chapter thirty of the *Kun byed rgyal po* has Kun byed rgyal po telling Vajrasattva "You are me." Possibilities of some form of Vedanta type thought within the Vajrayana of this period are worth investigation.

The early period this literature represents may give valuable insights into the histories of these traditions. One interesting aspect of this is that there are distinct titles related to Yoginis (*rNal 'byor ma*), Yogis (*rNal 'byor pa*), Kings (*rGyal po*), and Brahmins (*Bram ze*). An inquiry into the ways the *Nam mkha' che* was presented to differing sectors of society will give us a better understanding of rDzogs chen anthropology.

The need for a special study of the relationships between the *Nam mkha' che* cycle and the traditions of Guhyagarbha is indicated by the *rDo rje sems dpa' nam mkha' che gsang ba'i snying po rnal ma don gyi rgyud* and the *rDo rje sems dpa' nam mkha' che kun to bzang po gsang ba snying po'i rgyud*.

The antiquity of the *Nam mkha' che* literature will provide scholars of language with ample opportunity to look into early Tibetan language and usages. A comparative study of how the different *Nam mkha' che* texts render identical and similar passages will provide valuable insights into the early translation period.





**Appendix A**

**Mahā Ākāśa Kārikā**

**Annotated Transcript**

**Legend**

**Chapter Thirty of the Kun byed rgyal po:**

- AA mTshams brag *rNying ma rgyud 'bum*, vol. 1, pp. 108-113.  
BB sDe dGe *bKa' 'gyur*, vol. 1, pp. 71-76.  
CC Nar thang *bKa' 'gyur*, vol. 98, pp. 98-105.  
DD Lhasa *bKa' 'gyur*, vol. 97, pp. 100-108.  
EE Urga *bKa' 'gyur*, vol. 98, pp. 71-76.  
FF gTing skyes *rNying ma rgyud 'bum*, vol. 1, pp. 90-96.  
GG *bKa' ma shin tu rgyas pa*, vol. 30, pp. 119-127.

**rNying ma rgyud 'bum texts:**

- HH *rDo rje sems dpa'i lta ba*  
gTing skyes *rNying ma rgyud 'bum*, vol. 1, pp. 424-430.  
II *Khyung chen lding ba*  
*Vairo rGyud 'bum*, vol. 2, pp. 357-366.  
JJ *Mi nub rgyal mtshan rdo rje sems dpa' nam mkha' che zhes rtsa ba'i rgyud*  
*bKa' ma shin tu rgyas pa*, vol. 104, p. 5-20.

**Commentarial Texts**

- RR *rNal 'byor rig pa'i nyi ma*  
*bKa' ma shin tu rgyas pa*, vol. 104, pp. 51-112.

BGMS *bSam gtan mig gi sgron ma*

Text found in both the Fifty Five Verses and the BGMS is underlined.

**Pañ** *Pañ sgrub rnam's kyi thugs bcud snying gi nyi ma*

*Vairo rgyud 'bum*, vol. 1, pp. 65-104.

**Text found in both the Fifty Five Verses and the Pan sgrub is bolded.**

**sKye** *rDo rJe sems dpa' nam mkha' che rtsa ba'i rgyud skye ba med pa*

*mTshams brag rNying ma rgyud 'bum*, vol. 3, pp. 81-119.

**Text found in both the Fifty Five Verses and the Tantra are in red, annotated to the side.**

Headings (*thig le*) and Topics (*skabs*) throughout the transcript are contained only in *Mi nub rgyal mtshan rdo rje sems dpa' nam mkha' che rtsa ba'i rgyud*, *Khyung chen lding ba*, and *rNal 'byor rig pa'i nyi ma*.

### Opening Statements

**RR** *Rig pa'i nyi ma:*

bcom ldan 'das dpal rdo rje sems dpa' la phyag 'tshal lo

**JJ** *Mi nub rgyal mtshan rdo rje sems dpa' nam mkha' che rtsa ba'i rgyud:*

rgya gar skad du | vajrasvabhaawamahaakarshakaarika Bod skad du | rdo rje sems dpa' nam mkha' che zhes bya ba | | bcom ldan 'das dpal rdo rje sems dpa' la phyag 'tshal lo | | | chos nyid kyi skabs | rdo rje sems dpa' nam mkha' che. . .

**FF** *rDo rje sems dpa'i lta ba:*

rgya gar skad du Āryapada Vajrasadva Bod skad du rdo rje sems dpa'i lta ba rdo rje sems dpa' nam mkha' che. . . .

**II** *Khyung chen lding ba:*

bcom ldan 'das dpal rdo rje sems dpa' la phyag 'tshal lo | chos nyid kyi skabs | rdo rje sems dpa' nam mkha' che. . . .

**Kun byed rgyal po:**

De nas byang chub kyi sems kun byed rgyal po des nyid kyi snying  
po sems dpa' rdo rje<sup>73</sup> la sems dpa' rdo rje nyid kyi rang bzhin bya  
med rdzogs pa'i lung mi nub pa'i rgyal mtshan 'di gsungs so

kye sems dpa'<sup>74</sup> rdo rje khyod nyon cig

sems dpa' rdo rje khyod nyid la  
nyid kyi rang bzhin bstan par bya  
nyid ni kun byed nga yin te  
nga ni ye nas byang chub sems  
byang chub sems ni 'di lta'o'<sup>75</sup>

des na byang chub kyi sems kun byed rgyal po des mi nub pa'i rgyal  
mtshan nam mkha' che 'di gsungs so

**The Fifty Five Verses****chos nyid thig le<sup>76</sup>****chos nyid kyi skabs<sup>77</sup>**

1

rdo rje sems dpa' nam mkha' che ----- sKye 113.5  
kun bzang<sup>78</sup> yangs pa chos kyi dbyings  
rnam dag lam chen kun sgrol<sup>79</sup> phyir  
mi<sup>80</sup> skye mi 'gags<sup>81</sup> cir mi dgongs

2

byams pas<sup>82</sup> don nyid<sup>83</sup> rnam spyangs<sup>84</sup> phyir ---sKye 113.6  
snying rje chen po<sup>85</sup> cir mi mdzad  
che bas che ba'i<sup>86</sup> zab mo yi<sup>87</sup>  
yon tan cir yang bsngags<sup>88</sup> pa med

---

<sup>73</sup> AA "rdo rje sems dpa'".

<sup>74</sup> FF "kye sems dpa' chen po rdo rje kyod".

<sup>75</sup> AA FF "'di lta ste".

<sup>76</sup> II JJ RR.

<sup>77</sup> Only in RR II JJ.

<sup>78</sup> II Bzangs.

<sup>79</sup> HH JJ "grol".

<sup>80</sup> JJ "ma".

<sup>81</sup> CC DD FF GG HH JJ RR "'gag".

<sup>82</sup> FF "pa".

<sup>83</sup> JJ "ni".

<sup>84</sup> HH "sbyong" II "dbyangs" RR "sbyang".

<sup>85</sup> HH "pos".

<sup>86</sup> HH JJ "ba".

<sup>87</sup> CC DD "yis" II "mo'I".

<sup>88</sup> JJ "sngags".

3

don rnam ji bzhin mi<sup>89</sup> bskyod de<sup>90</sup> ----- BGMS 295.3 – sKye 113.7  
bya ba med pas<sup>91</sup> grol bas<sup>92</sup> grol  
rang<sup>93</sup> byung ye shes btsal<sup>94</sup> med pas  
grol na<sup>95</sup> grol ba'i lam yang ston

rang bzhin gyis gnas pa'i skabs<sup>96</sup>

4

'byung ba chen po bcom ldan 'das<sup>97</sup>  
'gro ba kun la rang bzhin gnas  
**phyin ci log tu [7] rnam brtags kyang --- Pan 82.2 – sKye 114.1 (line order)**  
**grol<sup>98</sup> ba rang byung gzhan las min<sup>99</sup>**

rang bzhin gyis che ba la gnas pa'i skabs<sup>100</sup>

5

che ba'i ye shes rnyed dka<sup>101</sup> ba<sup>102</sup>  
shes<sup>103</sup> rab thabs la brten pas<sup>104</sup> 'grub<sup>105</sup> ----- BGMS 27.3  
ming tsam gzhan la<sup>106</sup> rten<sup>107</sup> 'dra yang

<sup>89</sup> BGMS "ming".

<sup>90</sup> FF "te" BGMS "do".

<sup>91</sup> A "par" RR "las".

<sup>92</sup> JJ "ba'ang".

<sup>93</sup> CC DD "nges 'byung ye shes".

<sup>94</sup> FF "brtsol" RR "brtsal".

<sup>95</sup> AA FF HH JJ BGMS RR "nas".

<sup>96</sup> II "rang bzhin lhun gyis gnas pa'i skabs" JJ RR "rang bzhin gyis gnas pa'i skabs"

<sup>97</sup> HH

'byung ba chen po bcom ldan 'das

chub par gnas pas bcom ldan 'das

grol ba kun la rang bzhin gnas

phyin ci log tu rnam rtogs kyang

grol ba rang byung gzhan las min.

RR

'byung ba chen po bcom ldan 'das

chub par gnas pas bcom ldan 'das

'gro ba kun la rang bzhin gnas

phyin ci log tu rnam brtags kyang

grol ba rang byung gzhan las min.

Note that II follows KBG while RR follows HH. The *rTsa ba'i rgyud skye ba med pa* p. 114 has:

'byung ba chen po bcom ldan 'das |

| chub par gnas pas bcom ldan [2] 'das;

| 'gro ba kun la rang bzhin gnas |

| phyin ci log tu rnam brtags kyang. |

| grol ba rang byung gzhan las med |.

<sup>98</sup> II "'gro".

<sup>99</sup> EE "med".

<sup>100</sup> II gsum pa.

<sup>101</sup> BGMS "'dga'".

<sup>102</sup> II "bas".

<sup>103</sup> BGMS "sher".

<sup>104</sup> II RR "rten".

<sup>105</sup> II "grub".

<sup>106</sup> HH "las".

<sup>107</sup> BB DD EE GG HH JJ "brten".

**mngon sum<sup>108</sup> bde ba rang las 'byung --- Pan 104.3 - sKye 114.3**

**rtsol<sup>109</sup> ba dang bral ba'i skabs**

6

**cho 'phrul chen po dka' ba min-----Pan 78.6**

**yon tan kun dang<sup>110</sup> stobs kyi rnams<sup>111</sup> --- sKye 300.2**

**ji bzhin rtogs<sup>112</sup> pa<sup>113</sup> phra<sup>114</sup> ba yis<sup>115</sup> --sKye 299.2**

**de ma thag tu rang las 'byung<sup>116</sup>**

7

**snang ba med pa'i chos nyid ni<sup>117</sup> ----- Pan sgrub 67.1**

**ma brtsal<sup>118</sup> gzha<sup>119</sup> pas<sup>120</sup> bsgoms<sup>121</sup> pa yin ----BGMS 414. - sKye 116.6**

**de dang der ni rnam btsal<sup>122</sup> na ---- BGMS 352.4 Pan sgrub 66.5**

**de las de bzhin de mi<sup>123</sup> 'byung<sup>124</sup>**

**brjod pa dang bral ba'i skabs<sup>125</sup>**

8

**mchog tu gsang ba'i chos nyid ni ----- BGMS 383.4**

**rna dbang gzhan las<sup>126</sup> thos<sup>127</sup> mi 'gyur**

**de bzhin lce yi<sup>128</sup> dbang pos<sup>129</sup> kyang**

**de la brjod du rdul tsam med - sKye 85.6**

### dbyings kyi thig le

**'gro ba las kyis mi 'khol ba'i skabs<sup>130</sup>**

9

**'gro ba'i sdug bsngal byang chub sems**

**kun tu chub pas<sup>131</sup> rnam par rol<sup>132</sup>**

<sup>108</sup> Pan RR "gsum".

<sup>109</sup> JJ RR "brtsal".

<sup>110</sup> JJ "ldan".

<sup>111</sup> AA FF "stobs rnams kyi".

<sup>112</sup> RR "brtags".

<sup>113</sup> HH II "pa'i".

<sup>114</sup> II Pan "'phra".

<sup>115</sup> II Pan RR "las".

<sup>116</sup> HH "de ma thag tu 'byung bar 'gyur".

<sup>117</sup> AA FF "'di".

<sup>118</sup> FF GG II "btsal" HH "rtsal" BGMS "bcol".

<sup>119</sup> FF GG II BGMS "bzha<sup>g</sup>" HH "gzhan".

<sup>120</sup> JJ "na".

<sup>121</sup> AA FF II BGMS "bsgom" HH JJ "sgom".

<sup>122</sup> HH "rnams brtsal" BGMS "brtsal".

<sup>123</sup> II "de las de bzhin de 'byung".

<sup>124</sup> EE 'gyur" FF adds a symbol that looks like ";;" at the end of the line.

<sup>125</sup> II adds "lnga pa".

<sup>126</sup> AA II RR "la".

<sup>127</sup> HH "thob" BGMS "thong".

<sup>128</sup> CC HH II RR "lce'i" BSMG "ltse'i".

<sup>129</sup> BGMS "po".

<sup>130</sup> RR "thig le gsum pa'i don bstan pa'i phyir 'gro ba las kyis mi 'khol ba'i skabs".

<sup>131</sup> JJ "pa".

de la bskyod pa<sup>133</sup> med bzhin du  
nam mkha'i mtha' ltar mnyam par gnas

10

khyad par cir yang mtshungs pa la ----- BGMS 424.1  
las so zhes ni<sup>134</sup> rnam par brtags<sup>135</sup>  
ci ste las<sup>136</sup> kyi<sup>137</sup> dbang 'gyur<sup>138</sup> na  
rang byung ye shes yod ma yin

11

rgyu nyid rdo rje rkyen dang 'dra ----- BGMS 342.4  
ma skyes pas na 'jig pa med<sup>139</sup> ----- BGMS 284.3  
gdod<sup>140</sup> nas snying po byang chub la ----- sKye 95.3  
btsal<sup>141</sup> ba'i bsam pas dbyings mi<sup>142</sup> bskyod ----- sKye 110.1

**btsal<sup>143</sup> sems dang bral ba'i skabs**

12<sup>144</sup>

yon tan chen po'i<sup>145</sup> bsam gtan ni  
bsam gtan nyid pas<sup>146</sup> bsam du med -Pan 67.1 - BGMS 412.6  
ma bsam<sup>147</sup> ma sbyangs<sup>148</sup> chos bzhin du – sKye 115.7 different translation?  
rnam rtog nyid las ye shes<sup>149</sup> skye -- Pan 82.2 – sKye 114.5

13

phra<sup>150</sup> ba'i sgo mor ming btags<sup>151</sup> te<sup>152</sup> -- BGMS 434.4 Pan 66.5

<sup>132</sup> CC “rnam par grog” DD “rnam par grol”.

<sup>133</sup> FF “bskyo ba”.

<sup>134</sup> HH “pa”.

<sup>135</sup> FF “brtags”.

<sup>136</sup> HH “de’I dbang gyur na”

<sup>137</sup> JJ “kyis”

<sup>138</sup> BGMS RR “gyur”

<sup>139</sup> This line is quoted at the end of BGMS 342.4 (2 lines) and at the beginning of BGMS 284.3 (3 lines)

<sup>140</sup> CC “gdon”

<sup>141</sup> HH “brtsol” JJ “brtsam pa’i” RR “brtsal”

<sup>142</sup> BB “dbyings mir bskyod”

<sup>143</sup> RR “brtsal”

<sup>144</sup> Compare skye ba med pa 115.7:

| thams cad ma lus kun rdzogs pas |

| yon tan bsam gtan bsam du med |

| ma bsam ma byangs chos su gnas |

| mi rtog rtog [116.1] las ‘das pa na |

| rnam rtog nyid kyang ye shes sku |

| rgyu ‘bras mi ‘byed lhun grub pas |

| phra mo theg pra gdags dang bral |

| chos dbyings dben pa’i [2] dgon rgyud du |

| ‘du mched bcu gnyis gtod mnan pas |.

<sup>145</sup> HH “che ba’i”.

<sup>146</sup> II “las”.

<sup>147</sup> BB EE FF GG HH JJ BGMS “bsams”.

<sup>148</sup> II “dbyangs”.

<sup>149</sup> BGMS is lacking “ye shes” “rnam rtog nyid las skye”.

<sup>150</sup> RR “phra”.

<sup>151</sup> GG “brtags” Pan “dogs”.

<sup>152</sup> HH “nas” JJ Pan “shing” BGMS “pas”.

sems kyis<sup>153</sup> dben pa<sup>154</sup> lam tshol<sup>155</sup> zhing  
dgon pa'i rgyud<sup>156</sup> du dben 'dzin zhing<sup>157</sup>  
brtags na rnam par rtog<sup>158</sup> 'gyur bsgom<sup>159</sup> -- sKye 114.6

14

rgyu dang 'bras bur ming btags<sup>160</sup> te<sup>161</sup>  
 dge sdig gnyis ka<sup>162</sup> rnam par sel<sup>163</sup>  
 'jig rten 'di las<sup>164</sup> 'byung ngo zhes  
 blang dor brod<sup>165</sup> pa mchog tu bskyed – sKye 115.1 line order different

gnyis su med pa<sup>166</sup> skyon dang bral ba'i skabs

15

chags dang ma chags tshig gi<sup>167</sup> lam  
 dbu ma bzhin te<sup>168</sup> brag cha 'dra  
 bde dang sdug bsngal rgyu<sup>169</sup> mthun<sup>170</sup> zhes<sup>171</sup>  
 'gro ba'i mgon po sems dpas<sup>172</sup> gsungs

ye shes rang las byung pa'i skabs

16

'dod chags zhe sdang gti mug kyang  
 byang chub chen po'i<sup>173</sup> lam las byung  
 kun spyod yon tan rnam lnga yang  
 chos nyid dbyings kyi rgyan zhes gsungs -- sKye 86.3

17

nam mkha'<sup>174</sup> rtog pa skye med cing<sup>175</sup> --- Pan 82.2

<sup>153</sup> II JJ "kyi".

<sup>154</sup> AA FF JJ "pa'i" HH BGMS RR "pas".

<sup>155</sup> II JJ "'tshol" BGMS "rtsal".

<sup>156</sup> II "rgyun tu".

<sup>157</sup> HH II Pan RR "te" JJ "na" BGMS "pa".

<sup>158</sup> HH "rtogs".

<sup>159</sup> II "bsgoms" JJ "sgom".

<sup>160</sup> FF "brtags" HH II RR "'dogs".

<sup>161</sup> HH II RR "shing" JJ "nas".

<sup>162</sup> FF HH "gnyi ga".

<sup>163</sup> Compare skye ba med pa 116.3:

l dge sdig rgyu [3] 'bras gdags su med l

l 'jig rten snga phyi gnyis med cing. l

l thams cad ma lus sangs rgyas pas l

l blang dor brjod pa'i tshig las 'das l.

<sup>164</sup> BB CC EE GG "'jig rten 'di la 'byung".

<sup>165</sup> DD EE "phrod".

<sup>166</sup> RR "pa'i".

<sup>167</sup> JJ "chags dang ma chags tshig lam".

<sup>168</sup> II "du".

<sup>169</sup> EE "bde dang sdug bsngal mthun zhes" There is a marking between bsngal and mthun; there is a similar marking on the bottom of the wood block page; next to it the word "rgyun" is inscribed.

<sup>170</sup> CC FF "'thun".

<sup>171</sup> RR "pas".

<sup>172</sup> CC "sems pas".

<sup>173</sup> GG "byang chub sems dpa'i".

**rtog pa de nyid nam mkha' 'dra**  
 mi chags nam mkha'i<sup>176</sup> bsngo<sup>177</sup> ba las  
 rang don chen po nam mkha'<sup>178</sup> 'byung

**dbyings rnam par dag pa'i thig le**

**gzungs kyi sbyor thabs kyi skabs<sup>179</sup>**

18  
 rtog med mnyam nyid chos kyi sku  
 gzung bas mi zin chu zla 'dra  
 kun tu bzang po'i rol pa yis<sup>180</sup>  
 Aa li Kaa li<sup>181</sup> zab tu bstan -----BGMS 27.4

19  
 'di<sup>182</sup> ni A dang mdzes<sup>183</sup> pa'i ta  
 pa<sup>184</sup> dang yan lag spros<sup>185</sup> pa bzhin  
 'jig rten yongs kyi spyod yul la  
 sangs rgyas gsung gi zab mo 'byung

20  
 e ma'o<sup>186</sup> sangs rgyas spyod yul 'di  
 btsal<sup>187</sup> bas rnyed pa'i gnas med de  
 drug gi chos bzhin yul med pas  
 mdongs<sup>188</sup> pas nam mkha' bsnyags<sup>189</sup> pa bzhin

21  
 gong nas gong du tshangs pa'i lam<sup>190</sup> -----BGMS 319.4  
 bya bral chos dang mthun<sup>191</sup> pa min<sup>192</sup>  
 ci ste lam la<sup>193</sup> bgrad gyur<sup>194</sup> na  
 nam mkha'i<sup>195</sup> mtha' bzhin thob<sup>196</sup> pa med

<sup>174</sup> AA FF HH JJ "mkha'i".

<sup>175</sup> HH "pa".

<sup>176</sup> II RR "mkhar".

<sup>177</sup> DD "sngo ba" JJ "nam mkha'i dngos po la".

<sup>178</sup> II "mkhar".

<sup>179</sup> RR "thig le bzhi pa'I don sbstan pa'i phyir gzungs kyi sbyor thabs kyi skabs".

<sup>180</sup> HH "yi".

<sup>181</sup> FF HH II RR "a li ka li" JJ "a li kaa li".

<sup>182</sup> HH BGMS RR "de".

<sup>183</sup> JJ "mjes".

<sup>184</sup> CC "ba".

<sup>185</sup> HH "spro ba".

<sup>186</sup> II JJ "e ma".

<sup>187</sup> RR "brtsal".

<sup>188</sup> BB GG "ldongs" EE 'sdongs".

<sup>189</sup> BB DD EE GG RR "bsnyabs" CC "brlabs pa" FF "bsnyag" HH "rnyabs" II "rnyag" JJ "bsnyams".

<sup>190</sup> BGMS "las".

<sup>191</sup> FF "'thun".

<sup>192</sup> AA FF II JJ "med" HH "bzhin".

<sup>193</sup> BGMS "gyi".

<sup>194</sup> RR "'gyur".

<sup>195</sup> HH "mkha'".

<sup>196</sup> HH II JJ BGMS RR "thug".



RR: At this point gNubs chen includes one verse that is not attested in other sources:<sup>197</sup>

lus dang ngag gi bya brtsal med  
ting 'dzin sems kyi rims gsal med  
ma nor lam gyi sa stegs med  
mthar phyin gzhan nas 'dod pa med

### yongs su rdzogs pa'i skabs

22  
de<sup>198</sup> ltar de bzhin de yi<sup>199</sup> phyir  
de la<sup>200</sup> de bstan de<sup>201</sup> yang thob  
de ni snying po de bas na  
de las<sup>202</sup> de byung<sup>203</sup> ngo mtshar<sup>204</sup> che

23  
sngon gyi de dang da<sup>205</sup> ltar de  
de bzhin de yi<sup>206</sup> gnas su che  
de ltar de yi<sup>207</sup> lam 'dra ba<sup>208</sup>  
de ni de yi<sup>209</sup> rang bzhin no

24  
de dang 'dra ba yongs kyi lam<sup>210</sup>  
zla ba las byung rten dang bcas  
kun gyi mnyam nyid yin pa la<sup>211</sup> ----- BGMS 368.4  
phyogs su bltas<sup>212</sup> pas 'grub<sup>213</sup> pa med

### chags pa dang bral ba'i skabs

25  
da<sup>214</sup> ltar<sup>215</sup> bde dang phyi mar<sup>216</sup> bde

<sup>197</sup> *bKa' me rgyas pa*, vol. 104, p. 80.

<sup>198</sup> FF "da".

<sup>199</sup> II RR "de'i".

<sup>200</sup> HH "lta".

<sup>201</sup> CC "da".

<sup>202</sup> RR "bas".

<sup>203</sup> JJ "'byung".

<sup>204</sup> EE "tshar".

<sup>205</sup> HH "de".

<sup>206</sup> HH "ni" II RR "de'i".

<sup>207</sup> HH II RR "de'i".

<sup>208</sup> AA FF HH RR "bar".

II: sngon gyi de dang da ltar de

de bzhin de'i gnas su che

de ltar de'i rang bzhin no

Apparently the scribe lost a line.

<sup>209</sup> HH "de'i".

<sup>210</sup> AA "la".

<sup>211</sup> HH "kun gyi mnyam pa de nyid yin" II "las".

<sup>212</sup> BGMS "lta bas".

<sup>213</sup> HH II BGMS "grub".

mngon sum<sup>217</sup> pa dang rgyab nas byung<sup>218</sup> --- BGMS 433.3 -- sKye 114.5  
de yang rnam pa'i skyon yin pas  
de la brten<sup>219</sup> par mi bya'o

**gdod ma nas phye ba'i snying po nyid kyi skabs<sup>220</sup>**

26

dus gsum gcig ste khyad par med  
 sngon med phyis<sup>221</sup> med gdod nas 'byung<sup>222</sup>  
chos skus<sup>223</sup> khyab pas<sup>224</sup> gcig pa'i phyir ----- BGMS 370.4  
che ba'i<sup>225</sup> chen por<sup>226</sup> rang bzhin gnas

**kun tu smon<sup>227</sup> dang bral ba'i skabs**

27

srid pa gsum na sbyor<sup>228</sup> ba<sup>229</sup> yang ----- BGMS 435.6  
 ming tsam sgyu mar snang ba ste  
'khor los<sup>230</sup> sgyur ba'i gnas chen yang  
sgyu ma<sup>231</sup> sbyong<sup>232</sup> ba'i bsti<sup>233</sup> gnas yin

28

**rnam spyod<sup>234</sup> dus la ltos pa<sup>235</sup> rnams -----Pan 80.6**  
**dus der<sup>236</sup> 'byung bar mi<sup>237</sup> 'gyur te**  
**ma bral smon pas<sup>238</sup> spyod<sup>239</sup> pas na**  
**stong pa'i mtshan nyid gsung<sup>240</sup> pa bzhin**

---

214 CC "de".  
 215 HH JJ RR "lta'i".  
 216 HH JJ RR "ma'i".  
 217 RR "gsum".  
 218 BB EE II JJ "'byung".  
 219 II "rten".  
 220 RR "gdod ma nas che ba nyid kyi snying po la rang bzhin gyis gnas pa'i skabs".  
 221 HH "phyir".  
 222 HH RR "byung".  
 223 HH "sku".  
 224 JJ "par" BGMS "pa'i".  
 225 HH BGMS RR "bas".  
 226 BGMS RR "po'i".  
 227 RR "smon lam".  
 228 AA FF II JJ RR "sbyong".  
 229 HH "srid pa gsum na sbyor yang".  
 230 AA FF HH II BGMS RR "lo".  
 231 JJ "mar" BGMS RR "mas".  
 232 EE "spyod" HH BGMS "sbyor".  
 233 II "gti".  
 234 HH "dpyod".  
 235 HH "pa'i".  
 236 CC GG HH "de".  
 237 EE "ma".  
 238 AA GG "pa'i" JJ RR "pa".  
 239 HH "ma bral smon pa med pas na" Pan "par".  
 240 BB EE FF GG HH II JJ "gsungs".

## lung ston pa'i skabs

29

gcig ste rnam pa yongs kyis med ----- BGMS 364.5  
 rnal 'byor nam mkha'i<sup>241</sup> bya lam gnas  
 ma byung ma skyes snying po la  
 sgros<sup>242</sup> btags chos kun<sup>243</sup> ga la yod

30

phyi nang gnyis ka<sup>244</sup> phyi nyid nang<sup>245</sup>  
 zab mo<sup>246</sup> cha shas rtogs<sup>247</sup> yul med  
 srid pa<sup>248</sup> ming tsam log pa'i stobs  
 de bas ting 'dzin mnyam dang bral

31

de la tha tshig<sup>249</sup> phyi dang nang  
 rang<sup>250</sup> bzhin phung po kham bzhin gnas  
 dus gsum 'di dang mi 'bral bas  
 tha tshig<sup>251</sup> ming<sup>252</sup> du btags<sup>253</sup> pa med

## ye shes chen po'i thig le

mnyam pa nyid kyi skabs<sup>254</sup>

32

mi gyo ba ni<sup>255</sup> sku yi<sup>256</sup> rgya<sup>257</sup>  
 mi bskyod pa<sup>258</sup> ni<sup>259</sup> ye shes te<sup>260</sup>  
 mi len pa ni<sup>261</sup> bdag med<sup>262</sup> cing  
 mi 'dor tshig bral<sup>263</sup> mnyam nyid do

---

241 HH "mkha".

242 JJ "sgro".

243 HH "su".

244 II "gnyi ga" BGMS RR "gnyis ga".

245 HH RR "na".

246 AA FF BGMS "mo'i".

247 JJ "rtog".

248 FF II "pa'i".

249 CC II RR "tshigs".

250 HH "de".

251 CC II RR "tshigs".

252 RR "ngang".

253 FF "brtags".

254 RR "thig le lnga pa'i don bstan pa'i phyir | mnyam pa nyid kyi skabs".

255 RR "bas na".

256 HH II RR "sku'i".

257 HH "brgya".

258 EE GG "pas".

259 RR "pas na".

260 HH II "che".

261 AA FF HH II JJ RR "mi len pas na".

262 HH "nyid".

263 AA "dang".

33

gang dang gang gi<sup>264</sup> gang du yang<sup>265</sup> ----- BGMS 331.2  
 kun 'khol<sup>266</sup> kun<sup>267</sup> spyod bdag las<sup>268</sup> byung  
 'di la skyes pa<sup>269</sup> bud med ces  
 mnyam pa'i rgyal pos<sup>270</sup> yongs<sup>271</sup> ma gsungs

**dnegos grub bde<sup>272</sup> la chags pa spong pa'i skabs**

34

'di la brtul zhugs drag shul gyis --- BGMS 435.3, Paṅ 78.1  
 gnas su bya ba'i ming med de  
 a dang<sup>273</sup> par ni rnam ldan na --- Paṅ 81.3<sup>274</sup>  
 sgyu ma'i<sup>275</sup> bde ba 'byung<sup>276</sup> bar 'dod

35

rang bzhin gcig tu<sup>277</sup> ma nges pas<sup>278</sup> ----- BGMS 385.1  
 ji ltar bstas<sup>279</sup> pa<sup>280</sup> de ltar snang<sup>281</sup>  
 snang 'dod<sup>282</sup> rtsol sems<sup>283</sup> bde ba yang<sup>284</sup> ----- Paṅ 81.1  
 de<sup>285</sup> ni de sgrib skyon chen yin<sup>286</sup>

36

byang chub yan lag kun gyi<sup>287</sup> sgo ----- BGMS 64.2  
 cha lugs<sup>288</sup> bsgoms<sup>289</sup> pas chu zla bzhin  
 ma gos ma chags 'byung 'gyur yang  
 bsgoms<sup>290</sup> pas byis ba'i<sup>291</sup> spyod yul bzhin

<sup>264</sup> FF HH JJ "gis".

<sup>265</sup> RR "du'ang".

<sup>266</sup> AA II "'khor" HH "bkol".

<sup>267</sup> BGMS "dun".

<sup>268</sup> BGMS "la".

<sup>269</sup> AA "ba".

<sup>270</sup> II "po".

<sup>271</sup> DD RR "yong" EE GG "yod".

<sup>272</sup> JJ "dnegos grub chen po'i bde ba" RR "dnegos grub chen po bde ba la chags pa spong pa'i skabs".

<sup>273</sup> II "yang dag par".

<sup>274</sup> Paṅ puts the last two lines of 34 with the last line of 35:

A dang par ni rnam ldan na  
 Sgyu ma'I bde ba 'byung bar 'dod  
 De 'dzin pa'i skyon yin te.

<sup>275</sup> BGMS "rgyu ba'i".

<sup>276</sup> HH "skye" BGMS RR "bskyed".

<sup>277</sup> RR "du".

<sup>278</sup> This line is in BGMS at 64.2 and 385.1.

<sup>279</sup> BGMS "brtags".

<sup>280</sup> EE "pas".

<sup>281</sup> HH "ci ltar ltas pa der snang ste".

<sup>282</sup> RR "'os".

<sup>283</sup> RR "ba'i".

<sup>284</sup> AA FF "la".

<sup>285</sup> Paṅ "di".

<sup>286</sup> II "de ni sgrib skyon chen po yin".

<sup>287</sup> HH "gyi" BGMS "thi".

<sup>288</sup> HH "ma chags".

<sup>289</sup> JJ "sgom pa".

<sup>290</sup> JJ "sgom pa" BGMS "bsgom pas".

37

dkiyl 'khor ghro<sup>292</sup> gnyer cha lugs kyis<sup>293</sup>  
khro bdag chen po'i lus<sup>294</sup> bzung nas  
yi ge mngon du phyung<sup>295</sup> na<sup>296</sup> yang  
zhi ba<sup>297</sup> de nyid mthong ba min<sup>298</sup>

38<sup>299</sup>

nyon mongs pa yi<sup>300</sup> dbang gis na<sup>301</sup> ---- verse missing from JJ & RR  
 ta la'i mgo bo<sup>302</sup> bcad pa dang  
 sa bon me yis bsregs<sup>303</sup> pa dang<sup>304</sup>  
 de yi dbang du mi 'gyur ston

39

rnam grangs brgya stong phrag yas<sup>305</sup> pa<sup>306</sup>  
**gang ltar spyad<sup>307</sup> kyang me tog<sup>308</sup> skye ----- Paṅ 77.4**  
 mtshan ma med pa'i dbang gis na<sup>309</sup>  
 bsti<sup>310</sup> gnas de<sup>311</sup> las<sup>312</sup> 'byung mi 'gyur

**stsol sems<sup>313</sup> dang bral ba'i skabs**

40

gleng bral 'di la gnas pa ni<sup>314</sup>  
 rnal 'byor de<sup>315</sup> ni skal<sup>316</sup> ba bzang  
**bdag dang gzhan don mi 'byed<sup>317</sup> pas ----- Paṅ 78.1**  
 sgyu ma<sup>318</sup> lhun grub yul la<sup>319</sup> rol

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<sup>291</sup> RR "pa'i".

<sup>292</sup> BGMS "khra".

<sup>293</sup> HH "kyi".

<sup>294</sup> HH "cha" BGMS "yul".

<sup>295</sup> CC EE GG HH "byung" BGMS "gyur".

<sup>296</sup> II RR "ba".

<sup>297</sup> RR "ba'i".

<sup>298</sup> JJ "med".

<sup>299</sup> JJ Verse no. 38 is entirely missing from JJ & RR. There is a comment about this in the colophon of JJ.

<sup>300</sup> II "pa'i"

<sup>301</sup> AA FF HH "ni"

<sup>302</sup> CC "ba"

<sup>303</sup> HH "sregs" II "tshig"

<sup>304</sup> AA FF "yang" HH II "bzhin"

<sup>305</sup> HH "yangs"

<sup>306</sup> HH II JJ "pas"

<sup>307</sup> HH "skyod"

<sup>308</sup> FF "mi rtog"

<sup>309</sup> CC DD "ni"

<sup>310</sup> HH "sti" II "sti"

<sup>311</sup> HH II "'di"

<sup>312</sup> AA "la"

<sup>313</sup> JJ RR "rtsol ba dang bral ba'i skabs"

<sup>314</sup> AA FF "di la gang gnas pa'i" HH "gleng bral 'di la gnas pa yi" II JJ glens bral 'di la gang gnas pa" RR "gleng bral 'di la gnas pa na".

<sup>315</sup> JJ "'di".

<sup>316</sup> II "bskal".

<sup>317</sup> HH "byed".

<sup>318</sup> HH "ma'l".

<sup>319</sup> HH "las".

## chos nyid kun tu mi 'gyur ba'i skabs

41

lhag ma med pas<sup>320</sup> yongs su rdzogs  
 'gyur ba ma yin drang<sup>321</sup> por gnas  
 nam mkha' bzhin du<sup>322</sup> mtha' mnyam zhing  
 gzhan la<sup>323</sup> ltos<sup>324</sup> 'gyur chos ma yin

42

lhun gyis grub<sup>325</sup> pa'i<sup>326</sup> bde chen de<sup>327</sup>  
 mtshungs ba<sup>328</sup> med pa'i ye shes<sup>329</sup> kyi<sup>330</sup>  
 rang gi mthu yis<sup>331</sup> rig pa las  
 chos ni bzhin nas<sup>332</sup> 'byung mi 'gyur<sup>333</sup>

43

sla zhing dka' la<sup>334</sup> sla phyir dka'<sup>335</sup>  
 mngon sum<sup>336</sup> mi gnas kun tu<sup>337</sup> khyab  
 ming tsam<sup>338</sup> 'di zhes bstan par<sup>339</sup> ni --- Paṅ 83.5  
 rdo rje sems dpas<sup>340</sup> mtshon du med

rgyu rkyen las mi grub<sup>341</sup> pa'i skabs

44

ngo mtshar rmad byung<sup>342</sup> rol<sup>343</sup> pa 'di -----Paṅ 78.1  
 bya bral nam mkha' bzhin du gnas<sup>344</sup>  
 cir<sup>345</sup> yang mi dmigs gti mug las -----Paṅ 104.3  
 de ma thag tu rang<sup>346</sup> las 'byung<sup>347</sup>

---

<sup>320</sup> AA FF JJ "par".

<sup>321</sup> HH "dang".

<sup>322</sup> BB HH "de" EE GG RR "te".

<sup>323</sup> JJ "las".

<sup>324</sup> HH "stobs".

<sup>325</sup> II JJ RR "gnas".

<sup>326</sup> JJ "pas".

<sup>327</sup> HH RR "te".

<sup>328</sup> FF GG RR "pa".

<sup>329</sup> HH "chos nyid".

<sup>330</sup> DD EE GG HH II JJ RR "kyis".

<sup>331</sup> CC EE GG HH II "yi" RR "mthu'i".

<sup>332</sup> II "las".

<sup>333</sup> HH "chos ni 'byung bar mi 'gyur ro".

<sup>334</sup> II "ba".

<sup>335</sup> JJ "dka' phyir sla".

<sup>336</sup> RR "gsum".

<sup>337</sup> JJ "la".

<sup>338</sup> HH "mngon sum 'di zhes".

<sup>339</sup> JJ RR "pa".

<sup>340</sup> HH Paṅ RR "dpa".

<sup>341</sup> JJ "'grub" RR "'gyur ba'i skabs".

<sup>342</sup> Paṅ "'byung".

<sup>343</sup> RR "rim pa".

<sup>344</sup> HH II Paṅ RR "ji bzhin te" JJ "je bzhin du".

<sup>345</sup> HH II "ci".

<sup>346</sup> HH "nga"

<sup>347</sup> HH RR "byung"

45

'di ni thams cad mtshungs pa'i lam  
 'gro ba kun la<sup>348</sup> rang bzhin gnas  
**bus<sup>349</sup> pas bslad pas 'khrul ba'i phyir<sup>350</sup> -----Pan 81.1**  
**smam nyid smam pa tshol<sup>351</sup> ba bzhin**

**'gro ba yongs la sangs rgyas<sup>352</sup> pa'i skabs**

46

go ba'i yul na bde ba che -----BGMS 50.2 and 353.5  
 'di ni<sup>353</sup> rnam dag 'jig rten yin  
**de la phyogs kyi 'od 'dus pas -----Pan 72.3**  
**phyogs bzhi mtshams<sup>354</sup> dang bla 'og 'grub**

47

ma nges<sup>355</sup> 'ja<sup>356</sup> tshon kha dog<sup>357</sup> las<sup>358</sup>  
**rigs kyi khyad par mngon<sup>359</sup> par snang**  
 de bzhin gyo rdul<sup>360</sup> mi gyo ba  
 'byung ba lnga bas<sup>361</sup> gtso<sup>362</sup> chen yin

**kun tu bzang po'i thig le**

**tshogs 'bul<sup>363</sup> ba'i skabs**

48

'das dang ma 'ongs<sup>364</sup> da ltar gyi<sup>365</sup>  
 tha snyad ming la<sup>366</sup> mi gnas te  
 skye 'gag med par rnam<sup>367</sup> brtags<sup>368</sup> shing  
 de<sup>369</sup> nyid dus gsum chen por sbyor<sup>370</sup>

49

mnyam pas<sup>371</sup> rim par bkod pa med

<sup>348</sup> EE GG HH "gyi".

<sup>349</sup> JJ "byis".

<sup>350</sup> HH "thabs mkhas pa'i spyod yul yin". II: "byis pa 'khrul pas bslad pa'i phyir". RR 'bus pas 'khrul pa bslad pa'i phyir".

<sup>351</sup> JJ "'tshol".

<sup>352</sup> JJ RR "'gro ba yongs la sangs rgyas par bstan pa'i skabs".

<sup>353</sup> BGMS RR "nyid".

<sup>354</sup> FF Pan "'tshams".

<sup>355</sup> JJ "des".

<sup>356</sup> HH "gzha".

<sup>357</sup> Pan "dong".

<sup>358</sup> HH "gsal".

<sup>359</sup> RR "med".

<sup>360</sup> RR "dru".

<sup>361</sup> HH II "las". JJ "po". RR "pas".

<sup>362</sup> HH "rtso".

<sup>363</sup> RR "dbul".

<sup>364</sup> HH II "byon".

<sup>365</sup> HH "gyis".

<sup>366</sup> II "las".

<sup>367</sup> HH "nas".

<sup>368</sup> HH "gtogs". JJ "brtags".

<sup>369</sup> II "'di".

<sup>370</sup> FF "gnas".

gcig pas phyogs bcu<sup>372</sup> bsno<sup>373</sup> dang bral  
 tshogs<sup>374</sup> kyī rgyan rnams<sup>375</sup> bkram pa yang  
 rang bzhin gnas pas 'grim<sup>376</sup> pa med

50

lhun gyis gnas<sup>377</sup> pas mi bsngo<sup>378</sup> zhing  
 gdod nas dag pas<sup>379</sup> bdud rtsi yin<sup>380</sup>  
 'du mched<sup>381</sup> bcu gnyis khyad par du<sup>382</sup>  
 lhag pa'i bsam pas gzung ba med

**chos<sup>383</sup> kyī rgyan rnams rang bzhin<sup>384</sup> lhun gyis grub pa'i skabs<sup>385</sup>**

51

yid kyis<sup>386</sup> bsams pas<sup>387</sup> yon bdag<sup>388</sup> ste ----- BGMS 323.5  
 bltas pas<sup>389</sup> tshogs<sup>390</sup> ni<sup>391</sup> bkram pa'o<sup>392</sup>  
 mthong bar gyur pas<sup>393</sup> dngos grub la  
 de nyid mnyam gzhag rdzogs<sup>394</sup> pa'o

**lhun gyis gnas pa'i skabs**

52

yud tsam gzung<sup>395</sup> bas<sup>396</sup> sbyor ba yin  
 dga' bar 'gyur<sup>397</sup> bas<sup>398</sup> dam tshig ste  
 thabs kyis<sup>399</sup> gar thabs bskyod<sup>400</sup> pa yis<sup>401</sup>

- 
- 371 II RR "par".  
 372 AA FF HH JJ "su".  
 373 HH "sngo". II "gcig pas phyogs su dang bral".  
 374 HH "chos".  
 375 RR "dang".  
 376 II "'grem". RR "'drim".  
 377 FF HH JJ RR "grub".  
 378 HH II "sngo".  
 379 JJ "pa".  
 380 RR "la".  
 381 AA "bched". HH "phyed".  
 382 JJ "las".  
 383 RR "tshogs".  
 384 RR "rang bzhin gyis".  
 385 JJ reads "rang bzhin gyis lhun gyis grub pa'i skabs".  
 386 RR "kyi".  
 387 JJ "Pa".  
 388 DD "gdags".  
 389 HH "pa'l".  
 390 HH II BGMS RR "stobs".  
 391 II "kyis".  
 392 JJ "bkram pa yin".  
 393 HH BGMS "pa".  
 394 II "de nyid mnyam bzhag yongs rdzogs pa'o".  
 395 HH "bzung".  
 396 HH "bar".  
 397 II "gyur pas". JJ "gyur pa".  
 398 HH "ba".  
 399 AA FF II "kyi".  
 400 BB "bskyad". HH "sbyong". RR "spyod".  
 401 HH "yang".



gnyis med<sup>402</sup> sbyor ba phul<sup>403</sup> ba yin

las rgya mtsho'i skabs

53

mi gzung gtong<sup>404</sup> bas gtor<sup>405</sup> ma yin  
 bya<sup>406</sup> ba med pa'i<sup>407</sup> las rnams te<sup>408</sup>  
 mi rtog ye shes bgegs<sup>409</sup> bsal<sup>410</sup> nas  
 mi<sup>411</sup> gsung<sup>412</sup> mnyam gzha<sup>413</sup> sngags tshig go

bdag dang bcas pa gtong ba<sup>414</sup> 'ching bar bstan pa'i skabs<sup>415</sup>

54

bla ma mchod dang gtong ba dang  
 de bzhin bsod nams thams cad kyang  
 ma chags mi gyo'i<sup>416</sup> stobs med na  
 byas na 'ching ba chen por 'gyur

lus grel pa brdar stan pa'i<sup>417</sup> skabs<sup>418</sup>

55

de bas de lung de nyid<sup>419</sup> la<sup>420</sup> -----Paṅ 81.3  
 de la<sup>421</sup> de sbyar<sup>422</sup> sgrib par 'gyur  
 de ltar de la de rtog<sup>423</sup> na  
 de la de nyid grub<sup>424</sup> pa med

402 HH "min".  
 403 DD II "phul".  
 404 HH "rtong". II "stong".

405 GG "gtong".

406 HH "byed".

407 HH "pas".

408 HH "yin". II "zin".

409 HH gags".

410 HH "gsal".

411 BB DD EE GG "ma".

412 BB DD EE GG HH JJ "gsungs".

413 HH "pas". II "bzhag". JJ "nyid".

414 RR "bdag dang bcas pa gtor ma 'ching ba'i skabs".

415 JJ "bdag dang bcas pas gtor ma 'ching ba'i skabs".

416 RR "gyo".

417 JJ "lung 'grel ba ming tsam brdar bstan pa'i skabs".

418 RR "lung 'grel pa ming tsam brdar bstan pa'i skabs".

419 FF "snyed".

420 HH  
 "De bas de bya sgrib par 'gyur  
 De ltar de la de rtog na".  
 JJ "las".

421 AA FF II "las".

422 JJ Paṅ "byar". RR "byas".

423 GG Paṅ "rtogs".

424 JJ Paṅ "grub".

### Closing Remarks

#### Mi nub rgyal mtshan rdo rje sems dpa' nam mkha' che rtsa ba'i rgyud:

rdo rje sems dpa' nam mkha' che | lung thams cad kyi bdag nyid  
dpal rdo rje sems dpa'i zhal nas gsungs pa rdzogs so | |

'di la kun tu bzang po'i thig le'i skabs gnyis par | mthong ba med |  
ces pa'i 'phror | nyon mongs pa yi dbang gis na | ta la'i mgo bo bcad  
pa dang. | sa bon me yis bsregs pa dang. | de yi dbang du mi 'gyur  
ston | de nas rnam grangs sogs gsungs te | byang chub kyi sems las  
dang nyon mongs pa'i dbang du mi 'gyur ba'i don gyi tshigs bcas 'di  
kun byed na bzhugs | |

#### Khyung chen lding ba:

lhun gyis grub pa'i thig le'o | bcom ldan 'das lung thams cad kyi  
bdag nyid dpal rdo rje sems dpa' de skad gsungs so | rdo rje sems  
dpa' nam mkha' che | rdzogs so | |

#### Do rje sems dpa'i lta ba:

byang chub sems mi nub pa'i rgyal mtshan lta ba nam mkha' che  
rdzogs so | | rdo rje sems dpa' nam mkha' che u rgyan gyi slob dpon  
dga' rab rdo rjes dpal a su ra 'od ldan gyi brag phug tu gsungs pa  
rdzogs so | | ces gsungs so

#### Kun byed rgyal po:

byang chub kyi sems kun byed rgyal po las rdo rje sems dpa'i<sup>425</sup> rang  
bzhin mi nub pa'i rgyal mtshan gyi le'u ste sum chu pa'o



### Appendix B

#### bSam gtan mig sgron references to Nam mkha' che

There are 24 quotations<sup>426</sup>

1.  
27.3  
de ni nam mkha' che las kyang //

'che ba'i ye shes rnyid dga' ba //  
sher rab thabs la brten pas 'grub //

<sup>425</sup> FF “dpa”.

<sup>426</sup> gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes. Special thanks to Bun-ei OTOKAWA for excellent transcription.

2.  
27.4

'a li k'a li zab tu bstan //  
de ni a dang mdzes pa'i ta //  
pa dang yan lag spros pa bzhin //  
'jig rten yongs kyi spyod yul la //  
sangs rgyas (27.5) bsungs gi zab mo 'byung //

ces gsungs so //

3.  
50.2  
nam mkha' che las

go ba'i yul na bde ba che //  
de nyid rnam dag (50.3) 'jig rten yin //

4.  
64.1  
nam mkha' che las /

(64.2) byang chub yan lag kun thi sgo //  
cha lugs bsgom pas chu zla bzhin //  
ma gos ma chags 'byung 'gyur yang //  
bsgom pas byis pa'i spyod yul bzhin //  
(64.3) dkyil 'khor khra gnyer cha lugs kyis //  
khro bdag chen po'i yul bzung nas //  
yi de mngon du gyur na yang //  
zhi ba de nyid mthong ba min //

ces gsungs pas / (64.4)

5.  
294.3  
rdo rje sems dpa' nam (294.4) mkha' che las /

ma skyes <ngo bo /> pas na 'jig <gnyin tshig /> pa med //  
gdod nas snying po byang chub la //  
rtsal ba'i bsam pas dbyings mi (294.5) bskyod //

6.  
295.3  
de yang rdo rje sems dpa' nam mkha' che las /

don rnams ji bzhin ming skyod do //  
bya ba med pas grol bas grol /  
rang byung ye shes btsal med (295.4) pas //  
grol nas grol ba'i lam yang ston //

zhes gsungs te

7.  
319.4

nam mkha' che las /

gong nas gong du tshangs pa'i las /  
bya bral chos dang mthun pa min //  
ci ste lam gyi (319.5) bgrod gyur na /  
nam mkha'i mtha' bzhin thug pa med /

ces 'byung pas / bza' zhing bgrod pa 'khrul lo //

8.  
323.5

nam mkha' che las /

yid kyi bsam pas yon bdag ste //  
bltas pas (323.6) stobs ni bkram pa'o //  
mthong bar gyur pa dngos grub la //  
de nyid mnyam bzhag rdzogs pa'o //

9.  
331.2

nam mkha' che las kyang /

gang dang gang gi gang du yang //  
kun (331.3) 'khol dun spyod bdag la 'byung //

10.  
(342.4)

nam mkha' che <lung gi /> las /

rgyu nyid rdo rje <bas /> rkyen dang <kyang de /> 'dra <o /> /  
ma skyes pas na 'jigs pa med //

zhes gsungs so //

11.  
352.4

nam mkha' che las /

de dang der ni rnam (352.5) brtsal na //  
de las de bzhin de mi 'byung //

12.  
353.5

nam mkha' che las /

go ba'i yul (353.6) na bde ba che //  
de nyid rnam dag 'jig rten yin /

zhes gsungs so /

13.

364.5

nam mkha' che las /

gcig ste rnam pa yongs kyis med //  
rnal 'byor nam mkha'i bya lam gnas //  
ma byung ma skes snying po la //  
(364.6) sgros btags chos kun ga la yod //  
phyi nang gnyis ga phyi nyid nang //  
zab mo'i cha shas rtogs yul med //

ces 'byung

14.

368.4

nam mkha' che las /

kun gyi mnyam nyid yin pa la /  
phyogs su lta bas grub pa med /

ces (368.5) 'byung bas /

15.

370.4

gtan tshigs nam mkha' <rang bzhin gnyan tshigs kyi lung /> che las /

(370.5) chos skus khyab pa'i gcig pa'i phyir //  
che bas chen po'i rang bzhin gnas /

zhes dang /

16.

383.4

nam mkha' che las /

mchog tu gsang ba'i chos nyid ni //  
rna dbang gzhan las thong mi 'gyur //  
de bzhin ltse'i dbang po kyang //  
de la brjod du rdul tsam med //

(383.5) ces 'byung /

17.

385.1

nam mkha' che las /

rang bzhin gcig tu ma nges pas //  
ji ltar brtags pa de ltar snang //

zhes gsungs so //

18.  
412.6

nam mkha' che las /

bsam gtan nyid pas (413.1) bsam du med //  
ma bsams ma sbyangs chos bzhin du //  
rnam rtog nyid las skye //

zhes pa'i don dang sbyar /

19.  
414.1

nam mkha' che las /

ma bcol bzhag pas (414.2) bsgom pa yin //

zhes 'byung ba dang sbyar na //

20.  
424.1

nam mkh' che las //

khyad par cir yang mtshungs pa la //  
las so (424.2) zhes ni rnam par brtags //  
ci ste las kyi dbang gyur na //  
rang byung ye shes yod ma yin //

zhes 'byung //

21.  
433.3

nam mkha' che las /

mngon sum (433.4) pa dang rgyab nas byung //  
de yang snang ba'i skyon yin te //

zhes 'byung bas mngon te

22.  
(434.4)

nam mkha' che las /

'phra ba'i sgo mor ming btags pas //  
sems kyis dben pas lam tshol zhing //  
dgon pa'i rgyud du dben 'dzin pa //  
brtags na <de nyid /> rnam par (434.5) rtog <por /> 'gyur  
<re dog > bsgom <mo /> /zhes 'byung ngo //

23.

435.3  
nam mkha' che las /

'di la brtul zhugs drag shul kyis //  
gnas su bya ba'i ming med de /  
(435.4) a dang par ni rnam ldan na //  
rgyu ba'i bde ba bskyed par 'dod //

de yang 'dzin pa'i skyon yin te //

24.

435.6  
de yang / nam mkha' che las /

srid pa (436.1) gsum na sbyor ba yang //  
ming tsam sgyu mar snang ba ste //  
'khor lo bsgyur ba'i gnas chen yang //  
sgyu mas sbyor ba'i bsti gnas yin //

zhes pa dang /



### Appendix C: Paṅ sgrub quotes on Nam mkha' che

Those with a \* by the number are attested in the Maha Akasha Kārikās.

1.

65.2

'di skad du

dam du bcas pa'i yul rang gdod nas med  
dam du bca' med don rtogs na  
dam du bcas kyang skyon med nam mkha' 'dra (Not Attested in Kārikās)  
zhes 'byung bas

2.

65.3

zab mor 'jug [3] pa'i sngon logs su  
the tsom pyang<sup>427</sup> mo thag bca'de  
dge ba'i rtsa ba ci nus bsam  
'brel pa'i yul nams thag bca'de  
lus dang bsam gtan cha rkyen bsdu  
dbang dang gdam ngag rdzogs bya ste  
yid 'ong dben pa'i sa brtsal la [4]  
sngags pa seng ge bzhin nu gnas  
de nas rang sems me long blta

<sup>427</sup> Sic. "phyang" ?

de ni dgongs pa yongs su rdzogs (Not Attested in Kārikās)  
zhes pa bzhin bya ste

\*3.

66.1

rgyud nyid las  
brtsal med nam mkha' ji bzin du  
mi brtsal mi bsgrub mi yengs par  
bsgoms tshul [2] zad bya spyod yul gzhom  
zhes 'byung bas

\*4.

66.4

de dang der ni rnam [5] brtsal na  
de las de bzhin de mi 'byung  
zhes pa dang.

\*5.

66.5

rgyud las

de dang der ni rnam brtsal na  
de las de bzhin de mi 'byung.

\*6.

66.6

yang dag sangs rgyas lam rang 'gyur zhes pa dang. yang

7.

\*66.7

phra ba'i sgo mor ming 'dogs shing.  
sems kyi dben pa'i [6] lam tshom zhing.  
dgon pa'i rgyud du dben 'dzin te  
brtags na rnam par rtog 'gyur bsgom  
zhe pa dang.

\*8.

67.1

snang ba med pa'i chos nyid ni  
ma brtsal bzhag na bsgom pa yin  
zhes pa dang [2]

\*9.

67.2

bsam gtan nyid las bsam du med  
zhes 'byung bas

10.

67.3

rgyud las



mi bsam mi bsgom mi dmigs par  
de bzhin [4] snying po 'di la dmigs su yod min pas  
'dzin pas mi bzung de bzhin gzhag (Not Attested in Kārikās)  
zhes pa dang.

11.

67.4

de gzhin rnal 'byor don la 'jug pa rnams kyis kyang  
'de la mi bsgom mi brtsal rang gzhin gzhag (Not Attested in Kārikās)  
shes pa dang.

12.

67.5

brjod pa'i that snyad las 'das bsgom du med  
bsgoms pa nyid na rtog pa skye ba ste  
mi bsgom mi brtsal rang rig nyid kyi sku  
de bzhin de bzhin *gyin dhar* gzhag  
gzhag du 'ang gzhag sa med pas na  
gzhag du med pa'i gzhag sar gzhag la gzhag  
gzhag pa'i dngos po [6] rdo rje sems dpa'i thugs  
'di zhes bstan du sangs rgyas nyid kyis med<sup>428</sup> (Not Attested in Kārikās)  
zhes pa dag las sogs pa 'byung bas

13.

68.2

rgyud las

bsgom mo mnyam pa'i blo byung na  
stong nyid bsgom med zhi gnas pa  
'du shes med par mnyam bzhag bas  
yid kyi rnam shes mi rtog pas  
tha mal 'du shes spangs tsam las  
mnyam rtog mnyam par sbyar ba min (Not Attested in Kārikās)  
zhes 'byung mod kyang.

14.

72.1

'ja dang nam mkha' lta bu ste (Not Attested in Kārikās)  
ma 'dres mkha' la gza' skar [2] bkram  
yongs su rdzogs pa mkha' khyab brdal  
mkha' dan snang 'ja'ji bzhin no  
zhes 'byung ste

\*15.

72.3

'di nyid las  
de la phyogs kyi 'od 'dus pas  
phyogs bzhi 'tshams dang bla 'og 'grub  
ma nges 'ja' tshon kha dong las

<sup>428</sup> This teaching was not given by even the Buddha! (It is the heart of Vajrasattva).

rigs kyi khyad par mngon par snang  
zhes gsungs

16.

73.5

rgyud las

thams cad ye nas mnyam gnas rnam dag cing (Not Attested in Kārikās)

mi rtogs sa ler gnas la rtog par gnas

zhes 'byung

17.

74.3

bsgoms pa'i gnas med dag du rab rtogs na

ji ltar bsgoms kyang skyon med namkha' 'dra (Not Attested in Kārikās)

zhes 'byung . . .

\*18.

77.4

gang ltar spyad kyang me tog skye zhes 'byung ste

\*19.

78.1

bdag dang gzhan don mi byed pas

ces pa gnyis dang

'di la brtul shugs drag shul kyi

ces pa gnyis dang

no mtshar rmad 'byung rol pa 'di

bya bral namkha' ji bzhin te

ces 'byung ngo

\*20.

78.6

namkha' che nyid las

cho 'phrul chen po dka ba men

yon tan kun dang stobs kyi rnam

ji bzhin rtogs pa 'phra ba las

de ma thag tu rang las 'byung

shes 'byung bas

\*21.

79.1

de yang rtsa ba las

rnam sbyod dus la ltos pa rnam

dus der 'byung bar mi 'gyur te

ma bral smon par sbyod pas na <81>

stong pa'i mtshan nyid gsungs pa bzhin

zhes pa dang

\*22.

81.1

snang 'dod rtsol sems bde ba yang  
'di ni de sgrib skyon chen yin  
zhes pa dang

\*23.

81.2

jus pas bslad pas 'khrul pa'i phyir  
sman nyid sman pa tshol ba bzhin  
zhes pa dang

\*24.

81.2

de bas de lung de nyid la  
de la de byar sgrib par 'gyur  
de ltar de la de rtogs na  
de la de nyid 'grub pa med  
zhes gsungs so

\*25

81.4

rgyud las  
a dang par ni rnam ldan na  
sgyu ma'i bde ba 'byung bar 'dod  
de 'dzin pa'i skyon yin te (variant reading)  
zhes pa dang

26.

81.5

Zhi ba'i ye shes bying rmugs kyis  
Ting 'dzin ro la chags pa dag  
Nyan thos 'gog par ltung bar 'gyur (Not Attested in *Kārikās*)

27.

81.6

zhes gsungs so  
yang drang srong bsgom mkhan spyod pa'i rjes su 'breng  
tha snyad tshig la lta ba'i mchog du 'dzin pa yin  
zhes gsungs pa na rtsol ba'i don la 'jug zhes 'byung ngo (Not Attested in *Kārikās*)

\*28.

82.2

de yang rnam rtog nyid las ye shes skyes  
zhes pa dang

\*29.

82.2

phyin ci log du rnam brtags kyang  
grol ba rang byung gzhan las min  
zhes pa dang

\*30.

82.3

nam mkha' rtog pa skye med cing  
 rtog pa de nyid namkha' 'dra  
 zhes ba dag 'byung ngo

31.

82.4

rgyud nyid las  
 rang 'byung rang zhir ci dgar gzhag (Not Attested in Kārikās)  
 ces pa dang

32.

82.4

byung tshor rjes su sems gtong zhing  
 ting 'dzin ro la chags 'gyur na (Not Attested in Kārikās)  
 rtag cad mu gnyis mtha' me sel  
 ma rabs bus pa tha ma'i sems  
 'du shes med pa'i khrod du skye  
 de dogs sems la mi gnas pas  
 yang dag dmigs med don bsgom ste  
 ci la'ang sems ni mi dmigs shing  
 gang yang mi 'chos mnyam bzhag nas  
 rdul tsam 'dzin pa'i sems med na  
 des kyang chos dbyings dam pa ni  
 skye med ma bcos shes rab klung  
 zhes pa dang

33.

83.1

kun tu ye shes rgyal po ni  
 mthong mi snyam tu rung ma yin (Not Attested in Kārikās)  
 log rtogs mtshan ma thams cad la  
 'du shes mtshan ma mi 'byung zhing  
 rtse gcig don la mi yengs par  
 cha mnyams kun mnyam mu mnyam na  
 zhi gnas tshul ni de na yod  
 zhes gsung te

\*34.

83.5

de yang  
 ming tsam 'di zhes bstan par ni  
 rdo rje sems dpa' mtshon du med  
 zhes gsungs

35.

83.6

rgyud nyid las  
 sgra ming tshig las 'das pas na (Not Attested in Kārikās)

rang gi ngo bo bstan du med  
yang

36.

83.6

dam pa nyid ni 'di 'drar bstan du med (Not Attested in Kārikās)  
gti mug tshul du shin tu gsal rig med  
yang

37.

84.2

chos nyid ro la nyam phag bstan par dka' ste smra yang med (Not Attested in  
Kārikās)  
zhes 'byung bas

38.

84.4

byang chub kyi sems rmad du byung ba'i don zab mo snyan khung du  
brgyud de bsgom pa'i man ngag bstan pa ni

\*39.

104.3

mngon gsum bde ba rang las 'byung  
zhes pa dang

\*40.

104.3

cir yang mi dmigs gti mug las

\*41.

104.5

de ma thag du rang las 'byung zhes pas



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