

# The Bon po *sMan sgrub* Ritual: Medicinal Materiality of a Universal Healing Ceremony

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he *sman sgrub* ritual performed on a large scale in a monastic setting represents one of the rarest rituals of the contemporary Bon tradition.<sup>1</sup> It also counts as one of the most important and most expensive, and is attributed great power for healing, achieving longevity and spiritual progress. This article researches its performance at the Khri brtan nor bu rtse monastery on the outskirts of Kathmandu, Nepal, conducted in December 2012. This corresponded in the Tibetan calendar with the first half of the eleventh month of the water dragon year 2139.<sup>2</sup>

The rite and term '*sman sgrub*' is explained by the Bon pos themselves in English as a "ceremony for blessing healing medicine".<sup>3</sup> This hints the purpose of the rite to transform medicinal and other ingredients into a matter of superior properties. The transformation is effected by deities conferring their powers and blessings, which is believed to change the nature of the material. This is accomplished through consecration of a meditative *sādhana* practice (*sgrub thabs*).<sup>4</sup> The practitioners, as well as attending public, hereby seek awakening (*byang chub*), healing, rejuvenation and longevity. The term *sman sgrub* can be translated *verbatim* as "accomplishment of medicine" or "medicinal accomplishment", but also as "generating benefit". *sMan* denotes both "medicine, drug" and "benefit, use, good",<sup>5</sup> whereas the verb *sgrub* designates an active

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<sup>1</sup> This article is a preliminary introductory study of the subject accepted for publication in 2014 (based on Sehnalova, 2013); in the meantime several other studies came out (Sehnalova, 2015, 2017, 2019a, 2019c). The most detailed is Sehnalova, 2018; photographic documentation of the ritual in Sehnalova, 2018, 2019b. I apologise for this inconsistency and repetition.

<sup>2</sup> The Tibetan calendar used by the institution, referred to as *Hor lo tho*. Cf. Ramble, 2013, p. 218.

<sup>3</sup> *25th Anniversary of Founding Triten Norbutse Monastery*.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Bentor, 1996a, 1996b, Cantwell, 2015.

<sup>5</sup> Das, 1998, Zhang, 1993.

action effecting it.<sup>6</sup> Another name for this particular example of ritual discussed here is *bDud rtsi 'od zer 'khyil ba*, “The Radiating Light-Rays of Healing Nectar”,<sup>7</sup> or “the Light-Swirled Nectar”. In this article, I would like to focus on the specific material core of the ritual, the so-called ‘medicine’ *sman*, *sman sgrub* medicine (*sman sgrub kyi sman*) or simply *sman sgrub*, its preparation, the processes it undergoes during the course of the ritual, as well as the various approaches to understanding it.

There exists a great diversity of *sman sgrub* rituals in both Tibetan Buddhism and Bon,<sup>8</sup> differing according to the ritual tradition and the tutelary deity (*yi dam*) to which they are dedicated. The one dealt with here comes from the cycle of one of the main Bon po tutelary deities, Khro bo gtso mchog mkha’ ‘gying of the ‘Father tantras’ (*Pha rgyud*). It belongs to the Bru lineage (Bru rgyud, Bru lugs),<sup>9</sup> historically the most successful of the six patrilineal transmissions of the teachings of Bon. Apart from larger *sman sgrub* ceremonies, there are many smaller *sman sgrub* rituals performed, conducted either occasionally or regularly (often yearly), especially in institutions that produce Tibetan medicine.<sup>10</sup> To distinguish the two, the former is, at least in the Bon po context, generally referred to as *sgrub chen*, “great accomplishment”.

### 1. Origin and transmission of the ritual and its medicine

The Bon pos believe that the *sman sgrub* of the Light-Swirled Nectar comes from the deity Kun tu bzang po (Skt. Samantabhadra).<sup>11</sup> In ritual context, Kun tu bzang po is often apprehended as the source of all knowledge. He supposedly bestowed the *sman sgrub* practice on the deity gShen lha 'od dkar.<sup>12</sup> The transmission continued via a teacher-student lineage through the great Bon po master Dran pa nam mkha’, the chief protector of Bon during its alleged suppression

<sup>6</sup> The term *sman sgrub* and its connections to *sgrub thabs* (*sādhana*) are discussed by Garrett, 2009, pp. 209-210.

<sup>7</sup> As translated in *25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Founding Triten Norbutse Monastery*.

<sup>8</sup> The differentiation between Bon and Buddhism applied here reflects the Tibetan distinction between *bon* and *chos*, both of which comprise the category of *nang pa*. Cantwell (2014, 2015) documented a *sman sgrub* ritual of the rNying ma bdud 'joms tradition.

<sup>9</sup> Alternative spellings: 'Bru, Gru, 'Gru.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. Bstan 'dzin rgya mtsho et al., 2007, Donden and Hopkins, 1997, Garrett, 2009, 2010, Craig, 2012, Blaikie, 2014, Cantwell, 2014, 2015, Meyer, 1995, Kind, 2002.

<sup>11</sup> The following paragraphs are mainly based on oral teachings on the ritual during its performance in 2012. Its history in historical sources in Sehnalova, 2017, 2018.

<sup>12</sup> On the deity see Kværne, 1995, pp. 25-26.

in the eighth century A.D. Along with many other scriptures, the text of the practice is also believed to have been concealed by him. Thus, the work itself is a *gter ma*, a treasure hidden in order to be rediscovered at an appropriate future time. The central text, *The Main Text of the Light Swirled Nectar Medicine* (*'Od zer 'khyil ba bdud rtsi sman gyi gzhung*), was revealed in 1108 by the treasure discoverer (*gter ston*) Rig 'dzin chen po gyer mi nyi 'od (11th-12th century) in Dang ra khyung rdzong in northern gTsang.<sup>13</sup> He might have been accompanied in this act by rMa ston srin 'dzin (aka rMa ston srol 'dzin, b. 1092).<sup>14</sup> Already in 1017 gShen chen klu dga' (996-1035)<sup>15</sup> recovered a previous section of the ritual text from 'Brig mtshams mtha' dkar in southern gTsang.<sup>16</sup> Moreover, during the discovery, the written work was accompanied by several objects: nine boxes of medicine together with nine vessels (*bum pa, ga'u*) containing a medicinal mixture that forms the main material of the ritual.

These items were passed down to Nyi ma rgyal mtshan, the fourth abbot of g.Yas ru dben sa kha monastery in gTsang in Central Tibet.<sup>17</sup> It is the first known monastery of the Bon pos which had been established by the Bru lineage in 1072. Hence, the ritual was performed regularly at the monastery and was due to be conducted once in the lifetime of every abbot, i.e. approximately once within sixty years. After its disastrous destruction by a deluge in 1386, the tradition continued in the new monastery of bKra shis sman ri (usually known as *sMan ri*), founded at a nearby location in 1405. Each abbot of the monastery, gradually coming to be regarded as the head of the Bon pos, had to conduct the *sman sgrub* ritual as one of the two major commitments of his office. This obligation was stated even in the main legal code of the monastery, the *bca' yig*: "An abbot was free to retire once he had performed two obligatory acts which confirmed his abbacy: the erection of a *mchod-rten* for his predecessor and the organisation of *sgrub-chen* and *sman-sgrub* prayers."<sup>18</sup> The scarcity of the performances was due to the enormous effort and financial investment put into the prescribed substances, as well as the prestige surrounding the tradition.

<sup>13</sup> Millard and Khenpo Tenpa Yungdrung, unpublished, Kind, 2002, p. 47. Dating in Kværne, 1971, p. 230.

<sup>14</sup> Kværne, 1971, p. 230; cf. the *Katen Catalogue*: Karmay and Nagano (eds.), 2001, pp. 1026 (168-1), 1027 (168-7), 1308 (230-22).

<sup>15</sup> Dates in Kværne, 1971, p. 229.

<sup>16</sup> Millard and Khenpo Tenpa Yungdrung, unpublished, Kind, 2002, p. 47.

<sup>17</sup> Here "abbot" translates both Tibetan terms assigned to the heads of the monastery *ston pa* ("teacher") and *mkhan po* (which mostly stands for "abbot"), only the latter of which implies monastic ordination.

<sup>18</sup> Cech, 1988, pp. 69-70, 85.

The practice of the *Light Swirled Nectar Medicine* has continued until the present. With the influx of Tibetans and their culture into exile after the Chinese invasion of Tibet in 1959, also religious texts and rituals travelled with them. The new sMan ri monastery in Dolanji, India (established in 1969), and Khri brtan nor bu rtse in Kathmandu (initiated in 1986, founded 1992), Nepal, preserve the traditions of the original bKra shis sman ri in Central Tibet. All three share a considerable part of their ritual curricula, including the *sman sgrub* ritual.

## 2. Place and time of the ritual

Khri brtan nor bu rtse monastery is currently one of the most important Bon po establishments, and the second biggest in exile after sMan ri monastery in Dolanji. Khri brtan nor bu rtse was founded by a former preceptor (*slob dpon*) of sMan ri monastery in Central Tibet, Yongs 'dzin bsTan 'dzin rnam dag rin po che (born 1926 in Khyung po, Tibet). He chose the name "Stable Seat of the Jewel Peak"<sup>19</sup> and had remained its spiritual head until the present. The monastery has successfully expanded, and hosts more than two hundred monks (as in 2012). He supervised the *sman sgrub* performance in 2012 together with the incumbent abbot mKhan po bsTan pa g.yung drung (born 1969 in Dhorpatan, Nepal). bsTan 'dzin rnam dag was drawing upon his memory and experience of the ritual at sMan ri in Tibet before the Chinese takeover to insure its proper re-enactment.

The first great Bon po *sman sgrub* performance outside the Tibetan motherland took place at sMan ri in India in 1988, and then again in 2009. Khri brtan nor bu rtse followed with performances in 1998 and 2012. These *sman sgrub* rituals were of two types, the Light-Swirled Nectar (*bDud rtsi 'od zer 'khyil ba*, 1988, 1998, 2012), and the Light-Blazed Nectar (*bDud rtsi 'od zer 'bar ba*) of the *yi dam* Phurba (Phur ba, 2009). Presently, the first is typical of Khri brtan nor bu rtse, whereas the latter of sMan ri. The modern-day market accessibility, logistics and funding opportunities make it possible to conduct the ritual with a considerably higher frequency than the original sixty-year intervals.

The decision to celebrate the *sman sgrub* for a second time at Khri brtan nor bu rtse was based on two reasons. The year 2012 marked the 25th anniversary of the monastery, and mKhan po bsTan pa g.yung drung and bsTan 'dzin rnam dag chose the *sman sgrub* as

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<sup>19</sup> Translation according to *Triten Norbutse Monastery: 25th Anniversary Celebration*, p. 20.

appropriate for the occasion for its high importance and exclusivity. Secondly, as *sman sgrub* is valued for its healing power extending to creating universal harmony in degenerated times, they viewed its performance as especially urgent in the current state of the world explained as in crisis. In the contemporary globalised aspirations, the authorities deemed the *sman sgrub* ceremony to cure any instability functioning not only as medicine within physical bodies but equally in the overall global environment including its ecological, economic and political spheres. The most pressing problems they pointed out were global warming, natural disasters such as tsunamis, floods and earthquakes, general ecological instability, financial crisis, and political turmoil leading to wars and violence. In particular, they saw the recent wave of self immolations in Tibet (since 2009), the repeatedly worsening political situation in Nepal following the parliamentary elections won by the Maoist Party (2008), and revolutions in the Middle East (since 2011), as further reasons to perform the rite. Despite the monastery's anniversary falling in the middle of summer 2012, they scheduled the celebration period for winter when the people of the Himalayas flock into Kathmandu and the adherents of Bon in the West can take advantage of the Christmas holidays.

### 3. *The ritual medicine recipe*

“[O]btaining the precious medical offering substances, as listed in the texts, poses a great challenge”, states the abbot mKhan po bsTan pa g.yung drung in the monastery's anniversary booklet.<sup>20</sup> Indeed, according to him, gathering the needed material for the composition of the *sman sgrub* medicine has historically been the most demanding part of the whole ritual. The ‘texts’ he refers to is a list of the required ingredients that forms a short part of the main ritual manual – *The Main Text of the Light Swirled Nectar Medicine* (*‘Od zer ‘khyil ba bdud rtsi sman gyi gzhung*), included among the tantras of Khro bo in the *spyi spungs* part of the bKa’ brten.

This recipe list is translated below<sup>21</sup> with the kind permission of the 33rd sMan ri khri ’dzin, the chief authority of sMan ri and Bon in exile. The rendering of the recipe into English is based on its reading by the person assigned the task of assembling and processing the

<sup>20</sup> *Triten Norbutse Monastery: 25th Anniversary Celebration*, p. 11.

<sup>21</sup> Three versions of the text were available to me: the manuscript used at Khri brtan nor bu rtse (MsA) with folio pagination which I follow here, and two manuscripts incorporated into the bKa’ rten: *Sog sde sprul sku bstan pa’i nyi ma*, Lha sa, 1998, vol. 168, text 1, fol. 9-15 (MsB); vol. 230, text 22, fol. 444-449 (MsC).

substances, a practitioner of the Tibetan gSo ba rig pa medical tradition, Am chi Nyi ma bsam 'phel (born 1969, Jharkot, Mustang, Nepal). Am chi Nyi ma comes from a hereditary lineage of ritual and healing specialists (a lay tantric, *sngags pa*) from Jharkot in the Mukhtinath Valley. He received his from both his father and Bon po educational institutions in Nepal and India. Along with the *sman sgrub* recipe, Am chi Nyi ma was entrusted with its oral explanations (*shes rgyun*) from bsTan 'dzin nmam dag. The latter dictated these from memory as he remembered them from the time of his stay at the original sMan ri monastery in Tibet. Hence, Am chi Nyi ma's comprehension of certain terms differs from the standard one. Translating Tibetan medicinal remedies and gSo ba rig pa *materia medica* into English is a very difficult task. Tibetan mineral, plant and animal names and their classification do not correspond with the Western scientific binomical nomenclature and taxonomic system.<sup>22</sup> I restrict myself to *genera* identification, within which one (*sp.*) or more (*spp.*) species were used, according to Am chi Nyi ma. All plants were identified with the help of Am chi Nyi ma either using samples *in situ*, sometimes using photographs, or both. For the sake of convenience, in the case of plants along with the Latin name, I list the Tibetan accompanied by the English when feasible. If a term is incomprehensible, I leave it untranslated in the Tibetan original.

The *sman sgrub* formula follows a firm fivefold pattern of a *maṇḍala* (*dkyil 'khor*) along Bon po spatial organisation rotating anticlockwise through the following: Centre, East, North, West, and South. Each cardinal point by its properties constitutes its units of ingredients, in the recipe individually called 'medicines'.<sup>23</sup> Firstly, human and animal ingredients are enumerated in five units. This frame is filled in with the five causes of the unwished cycle of *samsāra*, the five mental poisons (*dug lnga*),<sup>24</sup> and along with them the matching remedies overcoming them: the five wisdoms (*ye shes lnga*) associated with the five tantric nectars (*bdud rtsi lnga*).<sup>25</sup> Furthermore, the five mental aggregates (*phung po lnga*, Skr. *skandha*) are respectively linked to the five quarters: consciousness (*rnam shes*), form (*gzugs*), mental formations ('*du byed*), feeling (*tshor ba*), and perception ('*du shes*). They should be overcome by the *sman sgrub* practice and its medicine. Secondly, the recipe continues with five *maṇḍalic* units of plant and mineral gSo ba rig pa ingredients. Every

<sup>22</sup> Cf. Boesi, 2007, pp. 6-7, Clark, 2000, Glover, 2005, Van der Valk, 2017.

<sup>23</sup> See the Table in Appendix.

<sup>24</sup> Extended from the initial count of three (*dug gsum*): anger, desire, and ignorance.

<sup>25</sup> Similarly described by Cantwell 2015, pp. 63-64. On the five nectars: Garrett, 2010, Wedemeyer, 2007.

unit has its own name and function in healing the bodily forces of the other cardinal points. The medical concepts of the three bodily forces: wind (*rlung*), bile (*mkhris pa*), phlegm (*bad kan*),<sup>26</sup> are inserted into the *maṇḍala*, as are the prescribed ingredients healing them. Thus, the Centre as the principal point provides ‘assemblies’ of elementary characteristics of medicinal substances in the *gSo ba rig pa*: taste (*ro*), essence (*bcud*), potency (*nus pa*), and aftertaste (*rjes, zhu rjes*).<sup>27</sup> In the East, the medicine is generally purifying and regenerating, in the North the wind creates a light and lifting medicine to counter balance disease caused by heaviness. The heavy fire medicine acquires the heat of the West to tackle cold disorders, and the mixture of the South cools down hot disorders with its element of water.<sup>28</sup> At the end, an eightfold structure reflecting the eight classes of consciousness is employed, of which the first five represent the five senses of sight, hearing, smell, taste, and touch.<sup>29</sup>

Am chi Nyi ma read the whole recipe through his *gSo ba rig pa* understanding. The recipe is translated here as it stands in the scriptures and as Am chi Nyi ma comprehended it. I try to keep its very succinct style (with no proportions of the ingredients indicated). A number of its terms are incomprehensible even for the contemporary Bon po community, thus the formula is subject to reinterpretation at every conduction of the rite. In practice, a large number of the prescribed ingredients had to be omitted, due to their difficult or even impossible accessibility. Am chi Nyi ma collected all herbal and mineral substances he could, and in fact avoided all those of human and animal origin.

#### [SECTION A: ORGANISATION OF A MAṆḌALA]<sup>30</sup>

##### [SECTION Ai: ANIMAL INGREDIENTS ACCORDING TO THE CARDINAL POINTS]

###### [I. CENTRE]

Testicles and semen of unicorns and others to purify pride in consciousness refers to testicles and semen of all [animals with]

<sup>26</sup> Cf. for instance Gerke, 2014.

<sup>27</sup> Further in Gerke, 2014, Finckh, 1978, 1985, Parfionovitch et al., 1992.

<sup>28</sup> Further on this, including plant identifications, see Sehnalova, 2018, 2019a. The recipe is in more detail studied also in Sehnalova, 2013, 2019c.

<sup>29</sup> Cf. Schmithausen, 1987.

<sup>30</sup> The translation of the recipe with more extended comments and the accompanying Table (in Appendix) were published in Sehnalova 2019c, here they are added for the sake of coherence.

undivided hooves, such as dark-coloured, white-eyed unicorns and others.

To purify desire in consciousness refers to various eggs of birds, such as vultures and others.

To purify jealousy in consciousness refers to [various] kinds of flesh and hearts of carnivorous animals, such as hearts of crocodiles and others.

[Ia. CENTRE: ROOT MEDICINE (*rtsa ba'i sman*) OF PLANT INGREDIENTS]

Join this root medicine with chebulic myrobalan (*a ru ra rnam par rgyal ba*), belleric myrobalan (*ba ru ra g.yug 'dral*), emblic myrobalan (*skyu ru ra*), asafoetida (*shing kun*), the six good [substances], and others.

[II. EAST]

The medicine of *sha chen g.yung drung lta me long*<sup>31</sup> refers to flesh of young virgin girls, human flesh of *gsang ba gal chen phyi*,<sup>32</sup> and elephants' heart flesh, and is to purify the ignorance in form.

Purifying anger in form refers to heart flesh of various kinds of carnivorous animals, such as striped tigers and quietly walking foxes and others.

Purifying pride in form refers to heart flesh of various kinds of animals with undivided hooves, such as white-eyed whitish horses and others.

The medicine purifying jealousy in form refers to heart flesh of carnivorous animals living in water, such as otters, good tadpoles; and this is the particular pure root medicine of the East.

[III. NORTH]

The medicine of *dri chen kun 'byung mnyam pa*<sup>33</sup> refers to: In order to purify pride in volitions, stool of all animals with undivided hooves

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<sup>31</sup> This expression serves as an abbreviated title and introduction to the given section by providing a very brief summary of its content. A synopsis of the same style precedes each of the cardinal points' sections in the first half of the recipe. As a complex it does not make sense when translated. This example would be: "great meat (*sha chen*) – swastika (*g.yung drung*) – mirror[-like wisdom] (*lta me long [ye shes]*)". See the Table in Appendix.

<sup>32</sup> An unclear expression to Am chi Nyi ma. Literally can be rendered as 'the outer secret and important, probably denotes a "certain part of heart" (Millard and Khenpo Tenpa Yungdrung, unpublished, p. 8).

dropped while running, such as dark coloured turquoise-maned mares and others [is needed].

In order to purify hatred in volitions, stool of various kinds of carnivorous animals, such as blue swamp lions and wolves, and of *dpnyid tshugs dpung*<sup>33</sup> [is needed].

In order to purify ignorance in volitions, droppings of [animals with] divided hooves, such as white sheep with a spot on the flank, white-eyed white yaks and others [are needed].

In order to purify desire in volitions, stool of various kinds of birds, such as red-crested white birds, cuckoos with harmonious voice and others [is needed].

In order to purify jealousy in volitions, stool of carnivorous animals, such as jackals and cats striped like tigers [is needed].

#### [IV. WEST]

[The medicine of] *khrag ni pad ma sor rtogs* refers to: In order to purify anger in sensation, blood of boys and girls with shining red complexion [is needed].

In order to purify desire in sensation, blood of red birds, such as red *mkha' lding*<sup>35</sup> [is needed].

In order to purify ignorance in sensation, blood of [animals with] divided hooves, such as yellow-headed sheep and others [is needed].

In order to purify pride in sensation, blood of [animals with] undivided hooves, such as vermilion horses with white heels and others [is needed].

In order to purify jealousy in sensation, blood of various kinds of carnivorous animals, such as quietly walking foxes and others, is requested.

#### [V. SOUTH]

[The medicine of] *dri chu las drug bya ba nan tan* refers to urine of glorious brown boys in the South, urine of radiating blue women, and of carnivorous animals with claws, such as dragons *kyus*.

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<sup>33</sup> See footnote 31 and the Table in Appendix. Likewise for the following similar expressions.

<sup>34</sup> The phrase *dpnyid tshugs dpung* is not well understood by the Bon pos at the present. It might indicate a carnivorous animal or a corrupted verse.

<sup>35</sup> The term *mkha' lding* is usually taken to denote different kinds of birds: the mythical *Garuda*, eagles, or other bird species. According to Am chi Nyi ma, *mkha' lding* is synonymous to the Mustangi expression *kre mo* standing for the Alpine chough (*Pyrrhocorax graculus*).

In order to purify ignorance in perception, urine of [animals with] divided hooves, such as blue water *dzos* (*mdzo*)<sup>36</sup> [is needed].

In order to purify pride in perception, urine of [animals with] with hooves, such as young, blue female mules of shiny colour [is needed].

In order to purify desire in perception, blood and urine of birds, such as cuckoos, *gong ngon*<sup>37</sup> and others [is needed]; and this is the particular root [medicine] of the South.

Thus are the aggregates (*phung po*) classified.

[SECTION Aii: PLANT AND MINERAL INGREDIENTS  
ACCORDING TO THE CARDINAL POINTS]

Then, as concerns joining [the medicine], it is classified according to the elements.

[I. CENTRE]

In the Centre the medicine of '*dus pa ldan ba'i nam mkha* refers to: the assembly of tastes—chebulic myrobalan (*a ru ra*), the assembly of essence—the six good [substances], the assembly of potencies—emblic myrobalan (*skyu ru ra*), the assembly of after-taste—belleric myrobalan (*ba ru ra*), and various others are also needed. This is the medicine of the Goddess of Space whose mind is without characteristics.

[II. EAST]

In joining the medicine of the East, the purifying and generating medicine refers to:

Spurge (*mang ther nu*), [also] called *du rum skad phyad*,<sup>38</sup> *Cyananthus* spp. (*du nu phro*), [also] called *sngon bu g.yu sna*, spurge (*mang bu phrum*), [also] called *ther nu zhes chen*, spurge (*skyes bu phrum*), [also] called *thar nu chung ba*. And also others, [as] dandelion (*'khur mang*), ephedra (*mtshe*), juniper (*shug pa*), *chud bu*,<sup>39</sup> mallow (*lcam bur*), geranium (*li do ka*), and others. This is called the immaterial medicine of the Earth Goddess.

<sup>36</sup> Crossed bread of yak and domestic cattle.

<sup>37</sup> A certain bird, probably from the *Tetraonidae* family.

<sup>38</sup> This and the two subsequent couplets are by Am chi Nyi ma viewed as little translation devices in which plants firstly appear under their Zhang zhung name immediately followed by the Tibetan equivalents.

<sup>39</sup> A so far unidentified plant by me.

## [III. NORTH]

In joining the medicine of the North, the lifting and light medicine refers to:

Resin of olibanum tree (*du ru ska na*), *so 'cha'*,<sup>40</sup> strawberry (*'bu ta pa 'dren*), *rtsi snga srin gyi 'bras*,<sup>41</sup> wild indigo (*shing kyi ba'i 'bras bu*), red lac (*rgya skag*), juniper (*spang ma*), honey (*sbrang rtsi*), fritillary (*a ma bi la la len*), and others.

As concerns the aspect of lifting, this is the purifying medicine in the breath of the Wind Goddess.

## [IV. WEST]

From the medicine, the heavy fire medicine refers to:

Three kinds of incenses, three kinds of salt, sugarcane molasses (*bu ram*), *gzhi mo*,<sup>42</sup> *Inula racemosa* (*ma nu*), fennel (*la la phud*), asafoetida (*shing kun*), mercury (*ra sa ya na*), *Morina sp.* (*gzi ma byin tshor*), asparagus (*nyi shing snum can*), rhododendron (*bal bu sur bu*), *Cremanthodium sp.* (*ga sho*), *Inula racemosa* (*ma nu*),<sup>43</sup> mallow (*lcam thod dkar*), garlic (*sgog pa*), sulphur (*mu zi*), and others, these are the purifying medicine of the heat of the Fire Goddess.

## [V. SOUTH]

The cold and cooling water medicine refers to: joining the medicine of the South.

Camphor (*ga pur*), musk okra (*sro ma ra tsa*), malabar nut, birthwort (*ba sha ba le*),<sup>44</sup> tamarisk (*g.yu shing*), wine grapes, juniper, pomegranate (*rgun 'bum sda ru*),<sup>45</sup> *Delphinium sp.* (*gla rtsi*),<sup>46</sup> *Althaea sp.* / mallow<sup>47</sup> (*ha li ka*), saxifrage (*sum cu tig tig*), blackberry (*ka ta ka ri*), moonseed (*sle tre*), bitumen (*brag zhun*), calcite (*cong zi*), and *Aucklandia lappa* (*sho sha rta*), *Meconopsis sp.* (*u dpal*), and others, these are the purifying medicine of the Water Goddess in blood.

<sup>40</sup> A so far unidentified plant by me – not *Sesbania grandiflora* (vegetable hummingbird, as *so 'cha'* usually is), but rather a small plant of Dhorpatan forests.

<sup>41</sup> Not understood by Am chi Nyi ma and omitted.

<sup>42</sup> Not understood and omitted by Am chi Nyi ma.

<sup>43</sup> Repetition, the ingredient already appeared a few verses above.

<sup>44</sup> Read as two ingredients: *ba sha ka*, *ba le ka*.

<sup>45</sup> Am chi Nyi ma read the term *rgun 'bum* to denote both wine grapes and a ground Juniper species, and *sda ru* as pomegranate.

<sup>46</sup> A plant substitution for deer musk (see below).

<sup>47</sup> Only one of the two plants was used, further not identified.

These are particular for the nectar of means and wisdom.

[SECTION B: INGREDIENTS ACCORDING TO THE EIGHT  
CLASSES OF CONSCIOUSNESS]

Classification into eight branches:

[I.]

Various kinds of animals' eyes and the five essences, such as butter.  
 Various kinds of ears and flowers producing sound, such as  
*Incarvillea compacta* (*khug ches*).  
 Animals' noses and five kinds of various incenses.  
 Various kinds of tongues, such as of parrots, five kinds of various  
 medicines, and various kinds of flesh, such as flesh of ferocious  
 tigers.  
 Silk, such as brocade.

[II.]

This is the element of extinguishing strong defilements:  
 Lungs, throats.  
 Various kinds of knots.  
 Various kinds of flowers, such as meconopsis (*mkha' lding u pal*).  
 Various kinds of essences, such as *mang bar*.<sup>48</sup>  
 Five kinds of grains, such as barley and peas.  
 Life channels, flesh and glands.  
 Five kinds of the five precious [substances], such as gold.  
 The medicine of the [eight] branches of consciousness is classified as  
 medicine of the four cardinal directions, according to its particular  
 characteristics and sequence.

[CONCLUDING INSTRUCTIONS]

The medicine containers, their silk covers [and] the strings [should]  
 match the colours of the cardinal directions. This is the explanation of  
 the particular characteristics of the nectar medicine.

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<sup>48</sup> *Mang bar* represents an unclear term, the substance was omitted.

#### 4. *Compounding the medicine*

The preparations of the medicinal mixture for the *sman sgrub* ritual started several months in advance. During the collecting, processing, and substituting (*tshab*) the ingredients, rules of Tibetan *materia medica* production were observed – as if Am chi nyi ma was preparing medicines for his regular patients.

##### 4.1 *Collecting the substances*

At first, the recipe ingredients were assembled from several sources: the Kathmandu medicinal market, bsTan 'dzin rnam dag (as the precious stones' mixture *rin chen lnga*), and others. A great part was collected in the wild by Am chi Nyi ma and his 'Bum bzhi clinic colleagues in different places of the Nepalese Himalayas.

The best locations for picking wild flora were considered *gnas*, 'sacred sites' or 'power places' themselves understood as empowered by residing deities and thus exercising special capacities. If this was not possible, the place must be high and clean or at least clean, and in the worst-case scenario, any spot will suffice. Ideally, material from the three chief sacred sites of the Bon pos should be obtained. These are Kong po Bon ri, Kailash (Gangs ti se), and Ri tse drug (also Ri bo rtse drug, Shel le rgya skar). In this particular *sman sgrub*, the following areas of Nepal were represented: Shel ri bo 'brug skra (Dragon Crystal Mountain), the main holy mountain of Dol po, Mukhtinath (Chu mig brgya rtsa), cave of Dran pa nam mkha' near Lubra (Klu brag) in Lower Mustang, Damdokunda in Upper Mustang, Dhaulagiri (Mu le gangs, Mu li gangs ri), and in the Kathmandu Valley Pharping and its adjacent sites (Pham ting, Yang le shod, A su ra'i phug), Swayambhunath ('Phag pa gshen sku, 'Phag pa shing kun),<sup>49</sup> and Nagarjuna forest (Glang ri lung bstan, Klu sgrub ri bo, Ri bo 'bigs byed) against the slope of which Khri brtan nor bu rtse monastery leans. Following the standards of gSo ba rig pa, cooling plant remedies were picked in cool and shadowed locations and dried in shade, whereas the warming ingredients were collected and dried in the sun.

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<sup>49</sup> The first toponym in brackets is Bon po, the second Buddhist.

#### 4.1.1 Other substances included

Apart from the prescribed list, other substances were included by Am chi Nyi ma following the oral teaching from bsTan 'dzin rnam dag. These were:

Various kinds of water: rain, spring, pond, sea, ocean, mineral, tap water.

Various kinds of alcohol: *chang* (home brewed barley beer), wine, spirits.

Various kinds of oils: sesame, sunflower, mustard, olive.

Various kinds of eggs: hen, goose, partridge.

Three sweet [substances]: crystallised sugar, molasses, and honey.<sup>50</sup>

Three white [substances]: curd, milk, and butter from sheep, 'dri,<sup>51</sup> dzo,<sup>52</sup> cows and goats.<sup>53</sup>

About seventeen more medicinal plants fulfilling the required properties.

#### 4.1.2 Excluded substances

On the other hand, a significant part of the recipe was skipped. Am chi Nyi ma excluded all the ingredients he was not able to understand or obtain (such as *mang bar*), and then all the human and animal substances as a whole. These represent almost half of the list. In the justification of the Khri brtan nor bu rtse authorities, human and animal body parts were not to be collected, as they appear in the recipe rather as symbolic items.<sup>54</sup> Only the herbal and mineral ingredients were fulfilled.<sup>55</sup>

#### 4.1.3 Substituted substances

A second method of dealing with obscure or unavailable *materia* is to substitute (*tshab*) it with another substance sharing the same medicinal qualities according to the gSo ba rig pa medical system. For the *smān sgrub* medicine, deer musk (*gla rtsi*) was substituted by a plant of equal medical effects called *bya rgod spos* (*Delphinium* sp.).

<sup>50</sup> *mNgar gsum: shel ka ra, bu ram, sbrang rtsi*. As in Zhang, 1993, Nebesky-Wojkowitz, 1996, p. 345.

<sup>51</sup> A female of a yak.

<sup>52</sup> A *mdzo* is a cross-breed of a yak bull and a cow.

<sup>53</sup> *dKar gsum: zho, 'o ma, mar*. As in Zhang, 1993, Nebesky-Wojkowitz, 1996, p. 346.

<sup>54</sup> A discussion of this notion in Sehnalova, 2018, pp. 284-287.

<sup>55</sup> The red lac (*rgya skag*), an item of animal origin (from the lac insect *Kerria lacca*), was not perceived as such.

Since the plant is reminiscent of this resemblance and shares the typical smell of musk, it can be also called *ldum gla rtsi* (“plant *gla rtsi*”).<sup>56</sup> The reasons Am chi Nyi ma gave for the substitution were economic, pharmaceutical, and ethical.

#### 4.2 The “yeast” pinch (*phabs gta’*, *phabs rta*)

All the procured materials had to be sorted and cleaned, then ground into powder and mixed. Into this dry mixture, all the liquids of about 200 litres were poured. Then, a very special component was added representing the most important part of the whole *sman sgrub* concoction – it is referred to as ‘yeast’ (*phabs*) and has exactly the same effects are ascribed to it. Its potency inheres in transferring a property contained in a tiny pinch into a great mass, and enhancing the whole with it. The property here is both blessings (*byin brlabs*) and healing power. The ‘yeast’ is the content of the *gter ma* vessel of the revealed *sman sgrub* medicine believed to have been discovered in the 11th century.

This ‘yeast’ is regarded as the crucial ingredient initiating the *sman sgrub* medicine production process. It is usually likened to making *chang* (only rarely to yogurt), including the fermenting phase referred to as *nyal* (“sleeping”).<sup>57</sup> To be certain that the old *gter ma* medicine and its properties are preserved, customarily only less than a half of its volume (one or two small handfuls this time) can be used as the *phabs* and the rest is stored. After the *sman sgrub* ritual has been completed and the new *sman sgrub* medical mixture made, the missing proportion is refilled.

The *gter ma* medicine is believed to embody all the substances prescribed by the text, without exception. This is ascribed either to its supernatural origin, or to the idea that in ancient times gathering them was still attainable for humans.<sup>58</sup> The continuity embraced in the ancient *gter ma* medicine is dual, material and spiritual. *sMan sgrub* medicine is mostly distributed from the hands of a venerated figure along with the master’s blessings.<sup>59</sup> Therefore, as the tradition of this particular *sman sgrub* and its *gter ma* medicine were previously kept at *sMan ri* monastery in Tsang, the *phabs gta’* is taken to be empowered by all its previous abbots (by *phyag dbang*, ‘hand

<sup>56</sup> dGa’ ba’i rdo rje, 1995, p. 274. Cf. Sabernig, 2011, Czaja, 2018.

<sup>57</sup> Alternatively spelled and pronounced causatively as *snyal*, “putting to sleep”. Cf. Kohn, 1998, p. 160, Gayley, 2007, p. 473.

<sup>58</sup> Likewise observed by Cantwell, 2015, p. 63.

<sup>59</sup> Cf. Kind, 2002, on *sman sgrub* in a Dolpo village setting, Kohn, 1988, on Mani Rimdu.

blessing') and as such represents a *byin rlabs kyi tshan kha* ("the potency of blessings"). Also, passed masters' relics are said to have been mixed in over generations. Hence, it functions as a material lineage incorporating all these qualities and reflecting masters' generations and their lineages *rgyud*. Thus, the concept of *rgyud* becomes materially expressed. By sight, touch, smell and taste, the *phabs gta'* does not differ from the compounded *sman sgrub* mixture. Each *sman sgrub* ritual, differentiated according to its *yi dam* and tradition, has such a catalyst of its own. Moreover, *sman sgrub* medicine in general gradually accumulates more and more of the described physical and spiritual constituents. The medicinal product of any *sman sgrub* ceremony conducted within the Bon religious school<sup>60</sup> is very welcomed to be incorporated into other Bon po *sman sgrub* compounds.<sup>61</sup>

#### 4.3 Completing the medicine

After the wet mass had fermented for a few days in a closed chamber, it was kneaded into dough, then left to dry, and turned into powder again. The total weight of the *sman sgrub* medicine exceeded 900 kilograms<sup>62</sup>. A strong fragrance emitted from it. Given the quantity, the medicine was not rolled into pills, as might be done, but left in powder form. Once the mixture was ready, it had to be treated according to certain rules. It could not be stepped upon, kept in an unclean place or otherwise polluted. The whole mixture came in powdered form and was kept in cotton bags and containers used for storing medicine at the 'Bum bzhi clinic.

#### 5. Performance of the ritual

The *sman sgrub* ritual was included in a month long "set of rituals" starting with the monastery's yearly 100,000 offerings ('*bum tshogs*) to Dran pa nam mkha' and closing with the dGe shes examinations with degree ceremony. The *sman sgrub* performance itself lasted fifteen

<sup>60</sup> The "*sman sgrub* denomination" always has to be observed even in areas where Bon to a certain degree mixes with rNying ma, for instance in Dol po.

<sup>61</sup> A detailed discussion on *phabs rta*, including its possible relation to the concepts of *gta' chen*, *sman gta'* and *sman rta*, in Sehnalova, 2018, pp. 265-270.

<sup>62</sup> The total cost of the material was nearly half million Nepali rupees, which at the current exchange rate corresponded to almost 6000 USD (the Gross domestic product *per capite* per year in Nepal in 2012 was 600 USD). [www.inf.com](http://www.inf.com) (International Monetary Fund), [www.nrb.org.np](http://www.nrb.org.np) (Nepal Rastra Bank).

days, from the 14<sup>th</sup> until the 28<sup>th</sup> of December 2012. This corresponded to the Tibetan 1<sup>st</sup> until the 15<sup>th</sup> day of the eleventh month of the water dragon of the year 2139. It culminated with the final empowerment on the full moon. Three main phases of the ritual can be recognized:<sup>63</sup>

### 5.1 Preliminary activities (*sngon 'gro*)

1.1 Outer preliminaries: practices directed towards the lama, practices directed towards the community, selection of a suitable place.

1.2 Inner preliminaries: collecting the ritual objects (*rdzas*) (including the *sman sgrub* medicine substances), offerings to local deities and obstructers (includes *sa len* or *sa'i cho ga*, ransom *glud* rituals), water purification (*chu gtor*), making *tshwa tshwa*, placing the ritual spears (deities' ornaments and weapons above the *maṅḍala*), rites of Namdag and Longyas (rNam dag and Klong rgyas, abbreviated as rNam klong).

1.3 Preliminary activities: setting up the ritual boundaries with the help of the four principal protectors (rGyal po bzhi, *mtshams bcad*), constructing the *maṅḍala*, opening its doors, taking vows and commitments.

### 5.2 The main activities

2.1 Blessing the raw medicine (*sman*): blessings of the peaceful deities (*zhi ba'i khrol sgrub*), blessings of the wrathful deities (*khro ba'i khrol sgrub*).

2.2 Blessing the powdered medicine (*sman phye*): blessings of the peaceful deities (*zhi ba'i khrol sgrub*), blessings of the wrathful deities (*khro ba'i khrol sgrub*).

2.3 Blessing the accomplishments (*dngos grub*).

### 5.3 Bestowing the empowerment (*dbang*) and distributing the *sman sgrub* medicine

The medicine occupies literally the cardinal place of the whole ritual. On the day preceding the onset it was carried into the main assembly hall of the monastery (*'du khang*), and loaded in piles in its centre

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<sup>63</sup> Based on fieldwork and Millard and Khenpo Tenpa Yungdrung, unpublished, p. 4.

beneath a four-pillared metal structure of the *gzhi* ("base"). *gZhi* as a general term in the Bon po context designates the locus of rituals on which the act focuses and where all the most important implements are installed.<sup>64</sup> In the case of the *smān sgrub*, the individual glass shelves of the *gzhi* contained, in downward succession: 1. nine medicine containers (*bum pa* or *ga'u*), deities' ornaments (*rgyan rdzas*), sacrificial cakes (*gtor ma*), 2. a sand *maṇḍala*,<sup>65</sup> and, 3. the *smān sgrub* medicine lying on the floor. The cardinal points of the *maṇḍala* roughly corresponded to the actual ones. Furthermore, one of the most important elements of the ritual was prepared. Reminiscent of the original nine *gter ma* vases (*bum pa*, *ga'u*), eight vessels full of medicine were arranged. In the ritual they were to be completed by the surviving *gter ma* piece. The *gter ma* vessel would be put in the middle of the upper shelf, and the newly prepared containers would occupy the eight remaining directions. Those placed in the four cardinal points were covered with cloth and bound with strings of the corresponding colours. On top, they bore the direction's particular symbol (*rtags*).<sup>66</sup> For the sake of time, they contained the powdered mixture, exactly the same as in the bags on the floor. The four intermediate directions were of yellow colour and contained raw ungrounded medicine.

The vessels were installed into the *gzhi* on the very first day of the main *smān sgrub* activities (17.12. / 5.11. Tibetan calendar) in a short ceremony called "Inviting medicine" (*smān gyi spyān 'dren*), immediately following the ritual demarcation of the borders of the four protectors (*rGyal po bzhi*, *mtshams bcad*). Eight small monks impersonating eight offering goddesses (*mchod bu lha mo brgyad*) carried the vases in a procession while dancing three circuits (*skor ba*), around the *gzhi* (i.e. the 'inner circuit', *nang skor*). They were preceded by a spear (*gar mdung*) with ribbons in the five colours of the five main directions, and the *gter ma* medicine vessel carried by the offering master (*mchod dpon*). The order of the eight vessels in the procession was random. Every goddess, with dancing steps, placed the *bumpa* inside the *gzhi* on the shelf above the *maṇḍala*. Once all had been installed, the *gzhi* was covered by curtains of the cardinal points' colours set around the four pillars, and then sealed. After this, entering and looking inside was forbidden, and only permitted to the

<sup>64</sup> Kohn (1988, p. 167) records the term *dkyil 'khor (maṇḍala)* for a similar object, for which this term is always employed by the Nyingma, as Cathy Cantwell confirms (personal communication). Cf. Blaikie, 2014. A detailed description of a Nyingma *smān sgrub* ceremony in Cantwell, 2015.

<sup>65</sup> Subsequently four *maṇḍalas* were used. The main and concluding one can be seen in Namdak, Tenzin at al., 2000, p. 101.

<sup>66</sup> See the Table in Appendix.

appointed *mchod dpon*.<sup>67</sup> A five-coloured thread ‘spell cord’ (*byang thag*, *gzungs thag*) lead from the *maṇḍala* to two Bon po sceptres (*phyag shing*, *chag shing*) placed on the thrones of the two leading monks on each side of the ‘*du khang*.<sup>68</sup> The thread aids to concentrate the powers of the deities on the *maṇḍala* and the medicine.

Another turning point in handling the *sman sgrub* medicine came after the raw material blessing stage was finished, and the medicine needed to be grounded (21.12. / 9.11.).<sup>69</sup> Again, in the procession of the eight goddesses, the vessels and the bags were taken out of the temple into the courtyard. The content of the four cardinal *bumpas* was poured out and in sequence ritually ground (*sman brdung*, “beating the medicine”) by pestle and mortar. Each participant beat the medicine a minimum of three times, starting with the abbot, the *mchod dpon*, and the eight goddesses. The monks performing the *sman sgrub* chanted prayers of mixing, purifying and grinding medicine as the congregation chanted the medicine mantra (see below), while Am chi Nyi ma was supervising the process. After the beating, the crowd, including many pilgrims, moved in a procession headed by the *gter ma* vessel and the eight goddesses. Each of the goddesses bore a vessel of refilled ground medicine in sequence of the Bon po cardinal order: East, North, West, South. *sMan sgrub* sponsors toted the medicine bags. The procession circumambulated once around the monastery (the ‘outer circuit’, *gling skor*). Afterwards, the medicine was placed back into the *gzhi* beneath the *maṇḍala*, and its vessels above.

Most of the *sman sgrub* ritual took place in the main assembly hall with the medicine in its centre. Some of the dances (*chams*) took place around a large coniferous tree, functionally replacing a flag pole (*phyar dar*, *cha dar*), in the courtyard in front. The empowerments were conducted on a spacious platform next to the monastery enclosure. In addition, three circuits encompassing the monastery (*gling skor*) over the course of the ritual were performed. The central performers of the ritual consisted of twenty-four monks seated in rows of twelve on both sides of the hall. The settled number derived from doubling the original count of twelve in the Bru *drubchen* tradition, therefore the performers were still referred to as the “the twelve performing priests” (*a mchod bcu gnyis*). The performance included many specific mudras, mantras, and dancing steps which

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<sup>67</sup> Cf. Kohn, 1988, p. 168.

<sup>68</sup> Cf. Cantwell, 2015.

<sup>69</sup> Similarly observed by Cantwell, 2015, pp. 61, 69. Originally, the whole medicinal mixture was grounded to powder at this stage, but at the present due to electric appliances, the medicine is processed beforehand.

the *a mchod bcu gnyis* learned in advance from the head master bsTan 'dzin rnam dag. The sound of recitation could not be interrupted for the whole duration of the performance. Therefore, during interludes or when the twenty-four monks deserved a break for meals or rest, the main *smān sgrub* mantra (*smān 'dzab*) was chanted by appointed young monks in daily shifts of triplets.<sup>70</sup> The melody of the mantra is characteristic of the Bru lineage and said to go back to Yeru Wensaka monastery. The lyrics read: “*bSvo ḡM ba bā de na ra sa ya na g.yu 'brang bdud rtsi bsvo thā'*.”<sup>71</sup>

Apart from the selected *a mchod bcu gnyis* responsible for the *smān sgrub* ritual, the rest of the monks, as well as visiting tantrics (*ngags pa*), were engaged in conducting other rituals to support the main one. A great number of lay people was coming day and night to perform circumambulations inside and around the main temple (the ‘inner circuit’, *nang skor*, and the ‘middle circuit’, *bar skor*) reciting and singing the mantra.

## 6. Taking the medicine

The envelopes of the *smān sgrub* medicine packages read (in English):

“*sPyi spungs zhi khro'i sgrub smān 'od zer 'khyil ba bzhugs / /*”<sup>72</sup>

### Mendrub (Blessed nectar)

This envelope contains a blessed herbal medicine, considered as *negya menchik* (one medicine for 100 diseases).<sup>73</sup> It is composed of over 100 ingredients and blessed through an extensive ritual called *dutsi öser khyilwa* (radiating light rays of healing nectar),<sup>74</sup> which transforms the medicine, giving it the power to heal on more than just a biological level as it infuses it with spiritual energy. Without any side effects, it can be used by anyone at anytime and as often as

<sup>70</sup> Cf. Blaikie, 2014, p. 6.

<sup>71</sup> Translation and analysis of the mantra in Sehnalova, 2018, pp. 161-166.

<sup>72</sup> “This contains the light swirled medicine of the accomplishment of the peaceful and wrathful deities of the *spyi spungs* cycle.”

<sup>73</sup> Transliteration: *nad brgyad smān gcig*.

<sup>74</sup> Transliteration: *bdud rtsi 'od zer 'khyil ba*.

needed to heal and prevent all kinds of diseases as well as purify any internal of (\*or)<sup>75</sup> external pollution.

Indications: Place a small amount in a glass of hot water, cover the glass and wait for it to dissolve. Stir the solution and drink it when it is warm. Swallow any remains at the bottom of the glass. Wait at least half an hour before eating any meat.”

The distribution of this powerful substance, along with the final empowerment, receiving blessings (*byin brlabs*) and seeing (*mjal*) the Rin po che bsTan 'dzin rnam dag and the abbot, represented the climax of the *sman sgrub*. It was the most anticipated and well-attended part of the ritual. The produced *sman sgrub* medicine was conferred from the hands of the abbot to the monks and public during a lengthy festive event on New Year's Day of 2013 (1<sup>st</sup> January 2013). dGe shes degree certificates were also awarded to the recent successful candidates. In order to incorporate more festivities into this one, the *sman sgrub* medicine was not distributed on the full moon accompanying the concluding empowerment of the ritual four days earlier.<sup>76</sup> Usually, the number of pilgrims and attendants at the ritual totalled around three hundred, however, for the conclusion it rose to as many as eight hundred. Therefore, together with the monks in attendance, there was a crowd of about one thousand. Apart from those present, the *sman sgrub* medicine was carried and dispatched to individuals and institutions around the world by the monastery's office and the pilgrims.

The Bon pos view the medicine generated by the *sman sgrub* ritual as a kind of universal drug for humans and animals, the environment, and the universe as a whole. They understand its power to be both curing and preventative. Its potency emerges from the medicinal components, as well as the deities' and masters' blessings, and thus the substance represents “blessing and medicine in one”.<sup>77</sup> It is mostly consumed as a basic general drug for any bodily discomforts, diseases and illnesses, both mental and physical. The “100 diseases” advertised in the monastery's prescription roughly reflect the number of ingredients included, and also allusively the number of illnesses recognised by the Tibetan medical tradition, which are supposed to count four times one hundred and one, i.e. four hundred and four. The *sman sgrub* medicine is usually applied for minor ailments, such as cold and influenza, and body pains, headache, stomach ache, and digestion problems. It also helps “if you

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<sup>75</sup> My correction.

<sup>76</sup> As observed by Kohn, 1988, p. 215, and similarly by Kind, 2002, p. 71.

<sup>77</sup> *Byin brlabs dang sman gnyis ka yod red*. See also Sehnalova, 2019a.

don't feel well for any reason"<sup>78</sup> by bringing back strength and abilities (*nus pa*). In remote areas where no other medicaments are available, Bon po take *sman sgrub* to cure anything and view it universally, similarly to how Paracetamol or Aspirin are perceived in the West. It always has to be taken orally, ideally in the morning on an empty stomach with boiled water, but not boiling water, as the heat would damage its healing properties. Just a very small bit is utilized every time, thus a packet lasts for a long time, often over decades until the next opportunity to receive a new one. The storage place must be unpolluted, "clean and nice", for example the home altar.

Yet the comprehension of the *sman sgrub* ritual and its medicine is more complex and far-reaching. In the view of the monastic elite, philosophy and individual soteriology are employed. The whole rite serves solely as an external support on the way to the highest spiritual aim of every being, awakening (*byang chub*), and is of no use to anyone without the right motivation for pursuing it. The substance that requires real transformation is our mind. Those caught in the *samsāra* are patients infected by the five poisons of anger (*zhe sdang*), ignorance (*gti mug*), pride (*nga rgyal*), desire (*'dod chags*), and jealousy (*'phrag dog*),<sup>79</sup> which need to be cured. Such benefits of the *sman sgrub* and its medicinal material for spiritual practice have long been celebrated. According to present Bon po narratives in the exile, some of the ancient Bon po masters are remembered for having refrained from food subsisting solely on *sman sgrub* medicine. Apart from physical strength and health, they achieved spiritual qualities, such as the rainbow body (*'ja' lus*). *sMan sgrub* is also likened to *rtsa rlung* and *bcud len* practices. Furthermore, it is associated with dying, and believed to ease the passage through the intermediate state after death (*bar do*) and help for a favourable rebirth. *sMan sgrub* medicine is given to humans during their last breath, as well as to animals before slaughter. With these assumptions are linked the medicine's effects of rejuvenation. During a teaching, the abbot suggested that everyone taking it would become ten years younger – to the great joy of the audience, needless to say!<sup>80</sup> By protecting one's body, slowing down the aging process, and sharpening the senses, the *sman sgrub* medicine is viewed as allowing the individual to make a better use of the precious human existence.

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<sup>78</sup> A commonly held and expressed view by both lay people and monastics of the Bon po community.

<sup>79</sup> See the Table in Appendix.

<sup>80</sup> See the connection of *sman sgrub* to alchemy and its quest for immortality in Garrett, 2009.

7. *The complex interplay of the ritual*

The *sman sgrub* rite is composed of several discourses intertwined with each other forming a whole: Buddhist philosophy, soteriology and cosmology, tantra and *sādhana* practices, Tibetan medical principles and alchemical knowledge, and Tibetan indigenous cultural concepts. The fivefold *maṇḍalising* cosmological framework, so common in Tibetan ritual, and producing the universal connotations and implications of the *sman sgrub* or other practice, is employed in the Bon po order as stated before.

At each instance, the listed *sman sgrub* medicine constituents are chosen to fit into the fivefold cosmological pattern, or into the scheme of the eight classes of consciousness. The formula of a particular cardinal point acquires various attributes and represents pharmacological concepts in accordance with the characteristics of the point in question. For example, in the West we find the hot *mkhris pa* bodily constituent, from the animal ingredients blood of red birds, and among the plants warming remedies. The qualities of the medicine of each cardinal point are directed to healing the mental poison of the point, and to balance the opposing qualities of another point or points. All the substances are in accordance with all the characteristics of that direction. The notion of collecting them is very universalistic, the more representatives of a prescribed category are involved, the better. Thus, Am chi Nyi ma aimed at assembling the highest possible number of various kinds of water, oils, eggs, different plants of the same name, etc. These different discourses are expressed by the ritual's material product, the *sman sgrub* medicine. Many of the over one hundred components come from tantric rituals and serve as offerings to deities, as the offerings of the five senses, et cetera.<sup>81</sup> Also, some medicinal plant species are used for the same purpose, such as *Ephedra* (*mtshe*).

*sMan sgrub* and its medicine (*sman*) are perceived to transform poison (*dug*) into nectar (*bdud rtsi*) by purifying (*dag, gsal*) it. The word *sman* denotes anything beneficial, not purely 'medicine' as generally translated, and can be synonymous to *phan*, 'benefit'.<sup>82</sup> The direct opposite of *sman* is *dug*, poison. *Dug* in a broad sense means anything harmful to sentient beings, for instance the mental poisons and physical poisonous substances. Actually, it is poison which arises from initial ignorance (*ma rig pa*) and through which this ignorance

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<sup>81</sup> Such as the five sweet and white substances, five kinds of medicines, five kinds of incense, five kinds of essences, grains, precious gems, fine silks, animal blood, different kinds of flesh, and various liquids.

<sup>82</sup> Cf. Das, 1998, Zhang, 1993.

causes *saṃsāra* and disease. A similar opposition emerges in the anticipated *bdud*, usually translated as 'demon', and *bdud rtsi*, mostly rendered as 'nectar' or 'ambrosia'. The latter etymologically encompasses the former and denotes a substance overcoming the *bdud*.<sup>83</sup> The two pairs seem to draw upon a third relation of antagonistic poles, *bdud* and *smān* indigenous to Tibet. *bdud* is a name of harmful and evil supernatural beings, whereas *smān* refers to a class of female deities. The word *bdud* was also chosen by Tibetan translators for the Indian name of the chief demons' representative Māra,<sup>84</sup> the main tempter and enemy of the Buddha. These sets of oppositions are incorporated into the *smān sgrub* ritual, each consisting of a problem and a remedy. The antagonism of poison and a remedy, with the aim of transformation of the former into the latter, is prominent in tantric practices in general.<sup>85</sup> Poison might be epitomized for example by material poisonous substances and demons, Māra, as well as by the five afflictions (*nyon mongs*, Skt. *kleśa*) or the five aggregates,<sup>86</sup> the second by *materia medica*, deities, the five wisdoms and Teachings propagated by the Buddha or the alleged founder of Bon, sTon pa gShen rab mi bo. The *smān sgrub* practice of the the Light-Swirled Nectar builds on these precepts.

The *smān sgrub*'s play of interlocking medicine and philosophy or religion is made possible by their close relationship in Tibetan culture. The primary cause of *saṃsāra* giving rise to the five mental poisons is the initial ignorance, *ma rig pa*. Exactly the same cause is identified in the medical tradition for all diseases and illnesses.<sup>87</sup> Based on these precepts, treatment "requires somatic, psychiatric and religious approaches"<sup>88</sup> employed at once, and this is exactly what *smān sgrub* does. Having developed in a non-dualistic discourse of not separating the entities of body and mind, the *smān sgrub* medicine is apprehended as a substance curing the individual as a whole – to be translated into Western terms: physically, mentally and, moreover, on the spiritual level by helping pursue religious goals. Applying the universal *maṇḍalic* device, this healing power is perceived to extend to the universe.

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<sup>83</sup> Cf. Zhang, 1993, Karmay, 1975, p. 145, Kohn, 1988, p. 159. The term *rtsi* itself stands for liquid substances, close to English 'juice' or 'extract'.

<sup>84</sup> Māra's Sanskrit name derives from the word root denoting 'death'. Cf. *amṛta* ('nectar overcoming death'), the Sanskrit for Tibetan *bdud rtsi*.

<sup>85</sup> Cf. Snellgrove, 1967, p. 149, Wayman, 1973, p. 156.

<sup>86</sup> Cf. Zhang, 1993.

<sup>87</sup> For instance *rGyud bzhi* (2. book, 8. chapter), '*Bum bzhi* (2. book, 8. chapter).

<sup>88</sup> Vargas, 2010, p. 385.

### 8. Conclusion

The *sgrub chen* or great *sman sgrub* of the Bon pos represents a universal healing ritual. As such, it is a well-attended, long-awaited and a key event of the Bon po community. This extensive and elaborate ceremony centres upon producing 'medicine', a substance to which miraculous effects are ascribed.

The medicine of the the Light-Swirled Nectar *sman sgrub* is presently composed mainly of Tibetan medicinal substances. This medicine is blended following a complex formula and demands a preparation procedure in many stages. Collecting the ingredients is a lengthy, demanding, and expensive enterprise, the more challenging by the occasional incomprehensibility of the recipe to the contemporary Bon po community. The recipe is subject to reinterpretation of the medical practitioner in charge for each celebration of the ritual. The treatment of the ingredients follows standard procedures of the *gSo ba rig pa* medical tradition for drug production, thus the whole *sman sgrub* mixture is powdered.

The recipe intrinsically follows principles of the Tibetan medical tradition, as well as conventions of tantric ritual. The core of this healing medicinal substance, the *phabs gta'* or 'yeast' embodies the particular Bon po lineage of masters, teachings and knowledge transmission. The practice of this ritual come from treasure-texts uncovered in the early 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> century. Since then, the practice has been passed down in a supposedly unceasing succession of Bon po masters associated with the main Bon po monasteries in Central Tibet.<sup>89</sup> It now flourishes among the Indian and Nepalese Bon po communities in exile. Both the performance and the resulting medicine are perceived as a remedy restoring the ideal balance of sentient beings with the cosmos, which at the present extends to globalised rationale for organising the ritual. On the worldly level, restoring the balance is articulated as health and peace. On the soteriological, as awakening.

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<sup>89</sup> Millard and Khenpo Tenpa Yungdrung, unpublished, p. 1, Sehnalova, 2017.

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### Appendix

#### The maṅḍalic fivefold division of the *sman sgrub* recipe

Direction <i>Phyogs</i>	Centre <i>dbus</i>	East <i>shar</i>	North <i>byang</i>	West <i>Nub</i>	South <i>lho</i>
<b>Buddha</b> ( <i>rGyal ba rigs lnga</i> )	Kun snang khyab pa	gSal ba rang byung	dGe lha gar phyug	Bye brag dgos med	dGa' ba don grub
<b>Element</b> * <sup>90</sup> <i>'byung ba</i>	Space <i>nam mkha'</i>	Earth <i>sa</i>	Wind / Air <i>rlung</i>	Fire <i>me</i>	Water <i>chu</i>
<b>Colour</b> * <i>tshon mdog</i>	White <i>dkar po</i>	Yellow <i>ser po</i>	Green <i>ljang khu</i>	Red <i>dmар po</i>	Blue <i>sngon po</i>
<b>Poison</b> * <i>Dug</i>	Anger <i>zhe sdang</i>	Ignorance <i>gti mug</i>	Pride <i>nga rgyal</i>	Desire <i>'dod chags</i>	Jealousy <i>'phrag dog</i>
<b>Aggregate</b> * <i>phung po</i>	Consciousness <i>rnam shes</i>	Form <i>gzugs</i>	Mental formations <i>'du byed</i>	Feeling <i>tshor ba</i>	Perception <i>'du shes</i>
<b>Nectar</b> * <i>bdud rtsi lnga</i>	Semen <i>thig le</i>	Flesh <i>sha</i>	Stool <i>dri chen</i>	Blood <i>khrag</i>	Urine <i>dri chung</i>
<b>Secret names of special medicine</b> <sup>91</sup>	"Thought of awakening" <i>byang sems gab pa</i>	"Secret flesh" <i>gsang sha gal chen</i>	"Incense of great smell" <i>zhim phod dri chen</i>	"Lotus blood" <i>pad ma rak ta</i>	"Scent of sameness" <i>mnyam nyid dri chu</i>

<sup>90</sup> The asterisk (\*) indicates categories found in the main *sman sgrub* ritual text: 'Od zer khyil ba bdud rtsi sman gyi gzhung.

<sup>91</sup> According to Snellgrove, 1967, pp. 178-179.

<b>Wisdom *</b> <i>ye shes</i>	Wisdom of emptiness <i>stong nyid ye shes</i>	Mirror-like wisdom <i>me long ye shes</i>	Equalizing wisdom <i>mnyams nyid ye shes</i>	Discriminating wisdom <i>sor rtogs ye shes</i>	Accomplishing wisdom <i>bya grub ye shes</i>
<b>Sign *</b> <i>rtags</i>	<i>A dang ma</i> A and ma syllables	Swastika <i>g.yung drung</i>	Dharma wheel <i>'khor lo</i>	Lotus <i>pad ma</i>	Jewel <i>nor bu</i>
<b>Animal *</b> <i>ris rtags</i>	Lion <i>seng ge</i>	Elephant <i>glang chen</i>	Horse <i>rta</i>	<i>Khyung</i> (Garuḍa) <sup>92</sup>	Dragon <i>'brug</i>
<b>Medicine vessel material *</b>	Crystal <i>shel</i>	Gold <i>gser</i>	Turquoise <i>g.yu</i>	Copper <i>zangs</i>	Iron <i>lcags</i>
<b>Body functions and parts</b>	Mind <i>thugs</i>	Flesh and bones <i>sha rus</i>	Breath <i>rlung</i>	Heat <i>drod</i>	Blood <i>khrag</i>
<b>Bodily force</b> <i>nyes pa</i>		Phlegm <sup>93</sup> <i>bad kan</i>	Wind <i>rlung</i>	Bile <i>mkhris pa</i>	Phlegm <i>bad kan</i>
<b>Characteristics of the medicine *</b>	Root medicine <i>rtsa ba'i sman</i>	Generating and purifying <i>bskyed cing dag</i>	Light and Lifting <i>'degs shing yangs</i>	Warming: Heavy fire medicine <i>lci ba me'i sman</i>	Cooling: Cold and cooling water medicine <i>grang shing bsil ba chu yi sman</i>
<b>Title of the medicine *</b>	<i>'dus pa ldan pa'i nam mkha'i sman</i>	<i>sha chen g.yung drung lta me long</i>	<i>dri chen kun 'byung mnyam pa'i sman</i>	<i>khrag sna pad ma sor rtogs</i>	<i>dri chu las drug bya ba nan tan</i>

<sup>92</sup> The Garuḍa understanding of *Khyung* is rather Buddhist. The position of *Khyung* and dragon is sometimes switched in the Bon tradition.

<sup>93</sup> In the gSo ba rig pa tradition, the three bodily forces correspond to the mental poisons differently than here: anger is representative of *mkhris pa*, ignorance of *bad kan*, and desire of *rlung*.

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*dPal ldan khri brtan nor bu rtse dbu brnyes nas mi lo nyer lnga 'khor ba'i dus chen dang 'brel bdud rtsi 'od zer khyil ba'i sgrub pa chen mor sbyin bdag dang mchod 'bul zhal 'debs byung ba gsham gsal.* (A statement of account on funding the ritual.)

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### Tibetan text

The three versions of the text compared in a diplomatic edition, all in manuscript form (the latter two as facsimile), are:

1) MsA: 'Od zer 'khyil ba bdud rtsi sman gyi gzhung bzhugs lags s+ho. Manuscript used at Triten Norbutse monastery during the *sman sgrub* performance. MsA was taken as the main version, the other two were compared with it.

2) MsB: 'Od zer 'khyil ba bdud rtsi sman gyi gzhung bzhugs pa lags sho. In: dKar ru Grub dbang sprul sku bstan pa'i nyi ma 1998, vol. 168, text 1.

3) MsC: 'Od zer 'khyil ba bdud rtsi sman gyi gzhung bzhugs pa'i dbus phyogs legs sho. In: dKar ru Grub dbang sprul sku bstan pa'i nyi ma 1998, vol. 230, text 22.

(82)<sup>94</sup> glang chen dung gi gtsug phud can la sogs tel/ 'bras bu dang/ thig le dang rnam shes la nga rgyal gnas su dag par zhes bya ste/ rta gro bo shel  
 (83) mig la sogs ste/ rmig zlum mtha' dag gi 'bras bu dang thig le dang/ rnam shes la 'dod chags gnas su dag par zhes bya ste/ lha bya rgod pa la sogs ste/ 'dabs<sup>95</sup> \*(dab) chags kyi sgong nga sna tshogs dang/ rnam shes la 'phrog (\*phrag) gnas su dag par zhes bya ste/ chu srin ma ha'i snying po la sogs tel/ gcan gzan gyi sha sna snying rnams so/ de rtsa ba'i sman de yi 'phrad a ru ra<sup>96</sup> rnam par rgyal ba dang/ ba ru ra g.yug 'dral dang/ skyu ru ra shing kun dang/ bzang po drug la sogs gsal lo/ sha chen g.yung drung rta (\*lta)<sup>97</sup> me long sman zhes bya ste/ lang tsho dri ma ma phog<sup>98</sup> pa'i sha chen dang/ [gsang ba gal chen phyi yi sha chen/]<sup>99</sup> glang po che'i snying sha dang/ gzugs la gti mug gnas su dag pa'o/ gzugs la zhe spang gnas su dag par zhes bya ste/ rgya stag khra'o/ wa chen ldang 'gyu la sogs tel/ gcan gzan sna tshogs gyi snying sha dang/ (shar phyogs rtsa ba dag/)<sup>100</sup> gzugs la nga rgyal gnas su dag par zhes bya ste/ (84) rta ngang pa shel gi mig la sogs rmig zlum sna tshogs gyi snying sha dang/ (gzugs la nga gyal gnas su dag pa'i phyir/)<sup>101</sup> gzugs las 'phrog (\*phrag) gnas su dag pa'i sman ches bya ste/ chu sram lco

<sup>94</sup> MsB: starts on fol. 9, MsC: starts on fol. 444.

<sup>95</sup> MsB: 'dab.

<sup>96</sup> MsB: a ru.

<sup>97</sup> Corrected according to gNyoos tshul khriims rgyal mtshan (Millard and Khenpo Tenpa Yungdrung, unpublished, p. 8) denoting *me long lta bi'i ye she* (Mirror-like wisdom).

<sup>98</sup> MsC: phogs.

<sup>99</sup> The phrase is added following MsB, MsC (the latter adds *dang* to the end of the phrase).

<sup>100</sup> Not in MsB, MsC. *Homoio teleuton*, bracketed in MsA.

<sup>101</sup> Not in MsB, MsC. *Homoio teleuton*, bracketed in MsA.

(\*lcong) bzang la sog's ste/ gcan gzan chu la gnas pa rnams kyi snying sha dang rnams ni/ shar phyog rtsa ba dag sman gyi bye byag go// dri chen kun 'byung mnyams (\*mnyam) pa'i sman ches bya ste/ 'du byed las nga rgyal gnas su dag pa'i phyir/ rta gro mo g.yu rngog la sog's ste/ rmig zlun mtha' dag gi dri chen rgyug 'phro la byung ba dang// 'du byed las zhe sdang gnas su dag pa'i phyir/ 'dam seng sngon po dang ri khyi sngon po dang/ dpyad<sup>102</sup> (\*dpyid) tshugs dpung pa la sog's ste/ gcan gzan sna tshogs kyi sbrun dang/ 'du byed la gti mug gnas su dag pa'i phyir/ lug dkar po bang mig dang/ g.yag dkar po shel mig la sog's ste/ rmig pa kha brag rnams kyi lce (\*lci) ril dang/ 'du byed [la] 'dod chags gnas su dag pa'i phyir/ bya dkar (85) ze dmar dang/ khu byug gsung snyan la sog's te/ 'dabs chags sna tshogs kyi sbrun dang/ 'du byed la 'phrog (\*phrag) gnas su dag pa'i phyir/ ci spyang dang byi la stag ril dod pa la sog's te/ gcan gzan rnams kyi gzugs sbrun rnams soll khrag na (\*ni)<sup>103</sup> pad ma sor rtogs zhes bya te/ tshor ba las zhe sdang gnas su dag pa'i phyir/ khye'u dang bu mo mdangs dmar gyi khrag dang/ tshor ba la 'dod chags gnas su dag pa'i phyir/ mkha' lding dmar po rnams kyi khrag dang/ tshor ba la gti mug gnas su dag pa'i phyir/ lug mgo ser la sog's ste/ rmig pa kha brag gi khrag dang/ tshor ba la nga gyal gnas su dag pa'i phyir/ rta mtshal bu rting dkar la sog's te/ rmig pa zlum po'i khrag dang/ tshor ba la 'dod chags (\*phrag)<sup>104</sup> gnas su dag pa'i phyir/ wa chen ldang 'gyur la sog's te/ gcan gzan sna tshogs kyis (\*kyi) khrag gsol/ dri<sup>105</sup> chu las drug bya ba nan tan ches bya te/ lho ru khye'u smug la gzi byin chags pa dang/ bud med sngo (86) las gzi mdangs chags pa'i dri chu dang/ 'brug kyus pa'i chu la sog's te/ gcan gzan sdir (\*sder) chags kyi chu dang/ 'du shes las gti mug gnas su dag pa'i phyir/ chu mdzo sngon po la sog's te/ rmig pa khe (\*kha) brag gi chu dang/ 'du shes la nga gyal gnas su dag pa'i phyir/ dre'u ngon po ldang tsher (\*gdang 'tsher)<sup>106</sup> la sog's te/ rmig pa zlum pa'i chu dang/ 'du shes las 'dod chags gnas su dag pa'i phyir/ g.yu bya gong ngon la sog's te/ 'dod (\*dab) chags kyi khrag chu dang/ lho rtsa ba'i phyir<sup>107</sup> (\*bye) brag go// de nas<sup>108</sup> phung po rigs su phye ba'ol/ de nas<sup>109</sup> gros<sup>110</sup> (\*grogs) su bstan (\*bsten) pa nil 'byung ba las dbye ste/ dbus su 'dus pa ldan ba'i nam mkha'i sman ces bya ste/ ro 'dus pa a ru ra<sup>111</sup> dang/ bcud 'dus pa bzang drug dang/ nus pa 'dus

<sup>102</sup> MsB, MsC: *dpyid*.

<sup>103</sup> As in MsB, MsC.

<sup>104</sup> Emended according to the text pattern (see below).

<sup>105</sup> MsC: *dra*.

<sup>106</sup> Alternatively, might be also *mdang tsher*. dGe shes Nyi ma 'od zer chos 'khor tshang, personal communication (Oxford, February 2013).

<sup>107</sup> MsB: *phyi*.

<sup>108</sup> MsC: The first two words omitted.

<sup>109</sup> MsB: *yi*.

<sup>110</sup> MsB: *grogs*.

<sup>111</sup> MsB: *a ru*.

pa'i skyu ru ra dang/ rjes 'dus pa ba ru ra<sup>112</sup> dang/ gzhan yang sna tshogs par dgos te/ de ni nam mkha'i lha mo sems can (\*sems) mtshan ma<sup>113</sup> dang bral sman bya'o/ (87) shar gyi sman gyi grogs su/ bskyed cing dag pa'i sman ces bya ste/ mang ther nu zhes bya ste/ du rum skad phyad dang/ du nu phro ces ste<sup>114</sup>/ sngon bu g.yu sna dang/ mang bu phrum ces bya te/ ther nu zhes chen dang/ skyes bu phrum zhes chen dang/ thar nu chung ba dang/ gzhan yang 'khur mang dang/ mtshe dang shug pa dang/mchud bu dang/ lcam bur li do ka la sogs pa ni/ de ni sa'i lha mo sha gdos pa bral pa'i sman ces bya'o// byang gi sman gyi grogs su btang pa ni/ 'deg (\*'degs) shing yangs (\*yang) pa rlung gi sman ces ste/ du ru ska na dang/ so 'cha'<sup>115</sup> dang/ 'bu ta pa 'dren<sup>116</sup> dang/ rtsi snga srin gyi 'bras dang/ shing kyi ba'i 'bras bu dang/ rgya skag dang/ spang ma dang/ sbrang rtsi dang/ a ma bi la la len la sogs/ 'deg (\*'degs) pa'i rnams (\*rnam) pa ni/ rlung gi lha mo dbug (\*dbugs) la gnas su dag pa'i sman ces bya'o/ (88) sman las lce<sup>117</sup> (\*lci) ba me'i sman bya ste// spos snag gsum dang/ tshwa snag gsum dang/ bu ram dang/ gzhi mo dang/ ma nu dang/ la la phud dang/ shing kun dang/ ra sa ya na dang/ gzi ma byin tshor dang/ nyi shing snum can dang/ bal bu sur bu dang/ ga sho dang/ ma nu dang/ lcam thod dkar dang/ sgog pa dang/ mu zi la sogs pa rnams ni/ me yi lha mo drod gnas su dag pa'i sman ces bya'o/ drang zhing bsil ba chu yi sman ces byas ste// lho yi sman gyi grogs ni// ga pur dang/ sro ma ra tsa dang/ ba sha ba le<sup>118</sup> dang/ g.yu shing dang/ rgun 'bum sda ru dang/ gla rtsi dang/ ha li ka dang/ sum cu<sup>119</sup> tig tig dang/ ka ta ka ri<sup>120</sup> dang/ sle tre dang/ brag zhun dang cong zi dang sho sha rta dang/ u dpal la sogs pa ni/ chu'i<sup>121</sup> lha mo khrag las<sup>122</sup> (\*la) gnas su dag pa'i sman ces bya'o/ de rnams na<sup>123</sup> (\*ni) thabs she rab rtsi ba'i bye brag gol/ yan lag brgyad ni rnams la dbye ste/ (89) sems can gyi mig sna tshogs pa dang/ mar la sogs snying po lnga dang/ rna ba sna tshogs pa dang/ khug ches la sogs sgra byung ba'i me tog dang/ sems can gyi sna dang/ spos sna tshogs rnam pa lnga dang/ ne rtsa la sogs lce sna tshogs/ sman sna tshogs pa lnga dang/ rngam pa'i stag sha la sogs sha sna tshogs/ shi shon la sogs dar ba dang/ drag bo'i (\*po'i) sgri (\*sgrib) na snubs la 'byung ba zhe bya ste/ glo ba dang/ 'og ma dang/ mdud sna

<sup>112</sup> MsB: rje 'dus pa bstun. This reading would change the phrase: "in accordance with the assembly of after-tastes".

<sup>113</sup> MsB: mtsan.

<sup>114</sup> MsC adds: dang.

<sup>115</sup> MsB: so 'chal.

<sup>116</sup> MsC: 'dran.

<sup>117</sup> MsB, MsC: lci.

<sup>118</sup> MsB, MsC: ba sha ba le ka.

<sup>119</sup> MsC: bcu.

<sup>120</sup> MsC: ra.

<sup>121</sup> MsC: chu yi.

<sup>122</sup> MsC: la.

<sup>123</sup> MsC: nas.

*tshogs dang/ mkha' lding u pal la sogs me tog sna tshogs dang/ mang bar la  
 sogs snying po sna tshogs dang/ nas dang khye'u la sogs 'bru lnga dang/  
 srog rtsa dang sha shan<sup>124</sup> sman bu dang/ gser la sogs rin chen lnga sna lnga  
 dang/ rnam shes yan lag gi sman zhes bya ste/ mtshams bzhi sman gyi bye  
 brag go/ bye brag dang go rim gyis dbye ba'o// sman snod dang/ dar kheb  
 dang/ gzungs thag ni/ phyogs kyi kha dog dang sbyar ro/ bdud rtsi sman gyi  
 bye brag bstan pa'o/*




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<sup>124</sup> MsC: *dang* inserted.