


Unicorns, myrobalans, and eyes: senses in ritual structure and matter in g.Yung drung Bon, a Tibetan tantric tradition

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ibetan ritual is omnipresent in the religious and social lives of Tibetan communities, whether they be on the Tibetan Plateau or in the Himalayas. Some rituals can be very short and happen within minutes, others extend for days and weeks. Some rituals hail from and are practiced in lay spaces by lay practitioners, whereas others have developed in monastic institutions and are principally performed by the religious elites educated in them.

Apart from their undisputably multifaceted value in society and people's lives, the diversity of rituals also shares the fact that they follow a certain internal logic in terms of their own structure and organisation. This feature becomes more apparent in more complex rituals which typically, although by no means exclusively, are also more extensive and come from monastic settings. Rituals acquire various schemes of organisation, according to which ritual action is arranged into parts and sequences following a certain given order. The schemes of organisation are in many instances based on certain imaginary, as for instance an animal body (as in the case of deer in lay, non-monastic, ritual described by Ramble 2013). Very common schemes are numerical sets, such as of three, five, eight, nine, twelve, thirteen, one hundred, etc., often, again, reflecting certain visual images. Among them, the most widespread is the well-known fivefold organisational principle of a *maṇḍala* (*dkyil 'khor*). A *maṇḍala* is a two- or three-dimensional visual representation of the cosmos (and other entities and concepts), revealing its structure as having five main components of the five cardinal points: the Centre and the four quarters of the compass—East, North, West, South (in the Bon po order, see below; cf. Tucci 1969, Snellgrove 1987, Martin 1994, Brauen 1997, Guenther 1999). The maṇḍalic framework has found its way into Tibet from India as an inherent part of the spread of Buddhist tantric teachings, and is frequent in both the different schools of Tibetan

Buddhism and g.Yung drung Bon (see below). It appears in numerous ritual and meditative practices, and figures as a prominent feature in iconography as well as architecture.

The different schemes of the organisation of ritual are apparent in diverse aspects. Various concepts and phenomena crucial for ritual action are inserted into them, either symbolically or physically, such as for instance clusters of divinities, the elements (earth, wind, fire, water), colours, symbols, and so forth. These concepts and phenomena are expressed in ritual practice—visualised in meditations, uttered in recitations, evoked by music and melodies, and materially signified by ritual paraphernalia. As such they can also be smelled, tasted and digested. The five senses thus inevitably play out in the production, adoption and appreciation of ritual practice, regardless of the ritual practice having a certain scheme of organisation or not (cf. Gentry 2017). Yet, the senses can also significantly contribute to the organisational schemes of rituals. This article presents such a case, showing also that the five senses of the human body can be employed as an organisational principle in Tibetan ritual within a maṇḍalic framework, and in the physical composition of ritual objects. The study illustrates an example of the practical application and materialisation of theoretical schemes based on the senses utilised in ritual practice.

The ritual presented here stems from the Bon po monastic tradition known as g.Yung drung Bon ('Eternal Bon', cf. Snellgrove 1967, Kværne 1995, Karmay and Watt 2007), which crystalized in its centres in Central Tibet since about the 11th century CE onwards (Karmay 2007). The g.Yung drung Bon denomination has until now maintained a distinct identity from their Buddhist counterparts (called *chos pa, ban de*). The Bon pos venerate their own founding figure g.Shen rab mi bo, who supposedly preceded the Buddha and Buddhism by a long span of time. Bon has its own recognised religious masters, distinct scriptures, ritual practice, iconography, et cetera. Nonetheless, g.Yung drung Bon also shares so many significant features with Buddhism that it is often counted by contemporary academics among the traditions of Tibetan tantric Buddhism (Kværne 1995: 9–23, Martin 2001: 208–219). Indeed, features and practices adopted by the Bon pos, adherents of Bon, include extensive tantric practices and rituals typical of Tibetan tantric Buddhism and rites of Indian origin.

The focus of this article is one such rite that Bon pos hold in common with Buddhists in Tibet: the rite of 'medical accomplishment', *sman sgrub*. In its elaborated and extended form, *sman sgrub* represents an important celebration in the ritual and social life of the leading monasteries of Bon: bKra shis sman ri and g.Yung drung gling in Central Tibet, and the new sMan ri and Khri brtan nor bu rtse in the

Indian and Nepali Tibetan exile communities, respectively (Sehnalova 2017, 2018).¹ Such a *sman sgrub* performance is centred around the production of a consecrated substance ascribed miraculous properties and usually called simply 'medicine', *sman*. The *sman sgrub* thus represents an "object-oriented" or "object-centered" rite (as indicated by Gentry 2017: 7), in which the *materia sacra* is believed to be of crucial potency and significance to the ritual undertaking as such. The *sman sgrub* medicine is not only a ritual sensory and material object *per se* (cf. Gentry 2017: 7–8) with which the performers and recipients of the ritual interact, but itself is also materially composed following the understanding of the human senses in Buddhism and its Tibetan variation existing also in g.Yung drung Bon, as well as in the Tibetan medical gSo ba rig pa tradition. The study is based on fieldwork carried out during a *sman sgrub* performance and on textual analysis of ritual scriptures used throughout the rite. The performance observed took place in the Bon po exile monastery of Khri brtan nor bu rtse situated on the western edge of the Kathmandu valley in Nepal in December 2012.² An essential part of the study was also to work with the gSo ba rig pa practitioner who was responsible for compounding the *sman sgrub* medicine.

1. Bon po sman sgrub ritual

The general appellation '*sman sgrub*' refers to a great variety of ritual practices in different schools of Tibetan Buddhism, including g.Yung drung Bon.³ Within g.Yung drung Bon only, a number of *sman sgrub* rites exist, of which just a few have been developed into and maintained as actually performed practices. The choice of particular *sman sgrub* rites to pursue depended on historical developments and the preferences of individual religious masters and leaders of respective strands of each religious school; i.e., in the case of Bon, it depended on the preferences of the respective Bon ritual lineages.⁴ In general, the various Tibetan *sman sgrub* ceremonies differ in length and amplification, the divinities to which they are dedicated, cycles of tantric practices to which they are linked, occasions and frequencies of

¹ On the monasteries see Karmay and Nagano 2003.

² For a detailed study of the rite see Sehnalova 2013, 2018.

³ A brief overview of the different *sman sgrub* and related practices in Sehnalova 2018: 9–19, 26–28, related bibliography in Sehnalova, 2017, 2018. Cf. Kind 2002, Blaikie 2013, 2014, Blaikie et al. 2015, Cantwell 2015, 2017, Craig 2011, 2012, Garrett 2009, 2010, Gentry 2017: 316–333.

⁴ Sehnalova 2018: 26–27. On the lineages see Karmay 1998, 2007, rMe'u tsha bstan 'dzin nam rgyal 2014.

performance, and of course in the actual enactment. The feature they share in common is that they all are acts of ‘medicinal accomplishment.’ This means that a ritual procedure is conducted to enhance, or ‘accomplish’ (*sgrub*), a certain substance referred to as ‘medicine’ (*sman*). The act of ‘accomplishing’ or ‘attaining’ is a meditative *sādhana* (*sgrubs thabs*) practice during which the ‘medicine’ substance is ‘consecrated’.⁵ The consecration implies a supposed inner transformation of the substance enhancing its properties to comprise special powers. The *sādhana* implies meditative visualisations of divinities with which the performing adept self-identifies, and thereby also undergoes an inner, spiritual transformation. By this process, in both the consecrated substance and the practitioner, qualities leading to awakening (Sanskrit: *bodhi*, Tibetan: *byang chub*), the highest spiritual aim of Buddhism adopted by g.Yung drung Bon, are supposed to be generated. This power and potency are believed to concern not only humans, but extend to all sentient beings (Sanskrit: *sattva*, Tibetan: *sems can*) and the environment as a whole.⁶ The *sman sgrub* medicine, by featuring in the ritual as its important actor and also its prime product, represents a kind of a ritual ‘power object’, defined by Gentry as: “objects believed to have the power, or capacity to exact transformations in the state of being of persons and environments.” (Gentry 2017: 7).

The specific *sman sgrub* ritual under analysis here belongs to longer and elaborated *sman sgrub* practices carried out in a monastic setting by tantric monastic specialists, in this case Bon po monks. In g.Yung drung Bon, two forms of *sman sgrub* have gained pivotal position in the main seat of Bon po religious power and authority, the sMan ri monastery, both in Tibet and in the exile: the *light-swirled sman sgrub* (*sman sgrub 'od zer 'khyil ba*) dedicated to the tutelary deity (Sanskrit: *iṣṭa-devatā*, Tibetan: *yi dam / yi dam gyi lha*)⁷ Khro bo gtso mchog mkha' 'gying,⁸ and secondly the *light-blazed sman sgrub* (*sman sgrub 'o zer 'bar ba*) of the tutelary deity Phur ba (Sanskrit: *Kīla*). According to written historical evidence, it seems that this practice likely started to take shape with the early formation of the Bon tradition in Central Tibet between the 11th and 13th centuries.⁹ The practice then continued in sMan ri which was established in 1405.¹⁰ Here, the performance of the *sman sgrub* has even been listed among the duties of every abbot of the

⁵ Bentor 1996, 1997, Cantwell 2015, 2017.

⁶ Based on the example of *sman sgrub* studied here (Sehnalova 2013, 2018).

⁷ Further in Snellgrove 1987, Cantwell 2015: 91.

⁸ On the deity see Kværne 1995: 75–77, 88–90.

⁹ Sehnalova 2017.

¹⁰ Karmay and Watt 2007.

monastery in its communal charter (*bca' yig*) as an obligatory act of ritual curriculum.¹¹ After the Chinese occupation of Tibet in 1959, the escaping Tibetan refugees carried their ritual practices and institutions into exile in India and Nepal.

In December 2012, Khri brtan nor bu rtse monastery performed the the *sman sgrub* ritual the *light-swirled sman sgrub*. The celebration lasted for fifteen days, and along with other adjoining ritual practices demanded participation of virtually everyone in the monastery, which at that time hosted about two hundred monks. A select group of advanced practitioners was trained by the leading authority of the monastery, Yongs 'dzin bsTan 'dzin rnam dag rin po che (b. 1926, Khyung po, Tibet), to be able to perform the complex task of consecrating the *sman sgrub* medicine. Their recitation resonated uninterrupted for the whole duration of the performance over the fortnight, and was accompanied by hand gestures (Sanskrit: *mudrā*, Tibetan: *phyag rgya*), dancing steps (*zhabs bro*), and embedded in musical melodies (*dbyangs*) specific for the *light-swirled sman sgrub*. The key ritual formula, the *mantra* (*sngags*) of the rite, resounded literally thousands and thousands of times.¹² The event attracted crowds of Bon po pilgrims from the Nepali and Indian Himalayas, as well as from further away.¹³

Throughout the performance, the *sman sgrub* medicine was the focal point of the ritual undertaking, arranged in the centre of the monastery's assembly hall, with the performers seated around it. The medicine rested upon, around, and below a sand *maṇḍala*. All the ritual action centred on the *maṇḍala*, the essential device for the consecration. The *maṇḍala* represented the palace of the deity Khro bo gtso mchog mkha' 'gying and his supernatural entourage, who were invoked to bestow blessings and powers on the medicine to enhance its transformation.¹⁴ Similarly, the practitioners visualised Khro bo gtso mchog mkha' 'gying and his attendants to acquire a level of spiritual realisation through self-identification with them. Through powers transferring from the divinities upon the *maṇḍala* and into the practitioners concentrating on the *maṇḍala* and the medicine, the medicine also supposedly gained these powers. Hereby the medicine was believed to turn into a miraculous substance for diverse usage:

¹¹ Cech 1988.

¹² For a detailed description of the rite and translations of its main texts: Sehnalova 2013, 2017, 2018.

¹³ Apart from the Bon pos, members of other religious groups also took part, see Sehnalova 2018: 101–104.

¹⁴ Four sand *maṇḍala* diagrams were used in total during the performance, their depictions in dPon slob Rin po che tshangs pa bstan 'dzin et al. 2014. The concluding one in Namdak et al. 2000: 101.

healing of ailments and diseases, any mental or physical disorders, protection in the form of amulets, gaining extraordinary faculties, support for a better rebirth and finally awakening, a powerful object of veneration placed on domestic altars, et cetera.¹⁵ The medicine was by the practitioners usually succinctly referred to as ‘medicine’ (*sman*), or more expressively as ‘*sman sgrub* medicine’ (*sman sgrub kyi sman*), or also simply *sman sgrub*.¹⁶ The last term can thus apply to either the whole *sman sgrub* rite or in certain contexts only to its product. In this article, I accordingly use the term ‘medicine’ for the consecrated substance.

The *maṇḍala* served as the main organising principle of the whole ritual and also its consecrated medicine. The fivefold maṇḍalic structure governed the ritual practice: the scriptures were divided into clusters of five;¹⁷ thus also the ritual recitations and invocations based on the scriptures; further patterns and repetitions of melodies hummed, sung, and played by ritual instruments; the practitioners’ visualisations and meditations structured into divisions of fifths; their subsequent ritual acts and usage of ritual paraphernalia; as well as the visual aesthetics of the rite, in which the individual cardinal points of the *maṇḍala* were associated with special directions in the place of the performance.¹⁸ Likewise in the compounding of the medicine, the pattern of the *maṇḍala* acquired the principal role, accompanied by another adjoining pattern of an eightfold format. The medicine was internally arranged based on the *maṇḍala* and then on this second form. In both forms, the five senses informed the pattern.

2. Formula of the *sman sgrub* medicine

First, I would like to present the recipe for compounding the consecrated substance called ‘medicine’ of the Bon po *light-swirled sman sgrub* variety, as it is used by ritual practitioners. Below I offer a translation of the formula extracted from the scriptures of the ritual, concretely found in their main part entitled *The Main Text of the Light-Swirled Nectar Medicine* (*‘Od zer ‘khyil pa bdud rtsi sman gyi gzhung bzhugs lags s+ho*).¹⁹ The formula itself is not recited during the

¹⁵ Kind 2002, Cantwell 2015, 2017, Sehnalova 2013, 2017, 2018.

¹⁶ Other appellations of the medicine in Sehnalova 2017: 145.

¹⁷ See the manuscripts in note 19; translations of selected parts in Millard, Colin and Khenpo Tenpa Yungdrung, unpublished, Sehnalova 2018.

¹⁸ Visual documentation of the *maṇḍala* and the whole performance in Sehnalova, forthcoming b.

¹⁹ I found three versions of the text: *‘Od zer ‘khyil ba bdud rtsi sman gyi gzhung bzhugs lags s+ho* (manuscript used at Triten Norbutse monastery during the *sman sgrub*

performance but is closely studied by the person chosen to assemble the *smān sgrub* medicine. In the celebration observed in Khri brtan nor bu rtse monastery in 2012, it was a young practitioner of the Tibetan medical *gSo ba rig pa* tradition and also the head teacher of the monastery's medical school, called Am chi Nyi ma (b. 1969, Mustang, Nepal).²⁰ Having received oral instructions from Yongs 'dzin bsTan 'dzin rnam dag rin po che, Am chi Nyi ma relied on his own medical education and pharmacological practice to interpret the recipe, and then put it into practice in mixing the medicine. The translation below is based on his reading of the text.²¹ An analysis of the recipe will follow afterwards. In the translation, I try to deliver its condensed and succinct style, and also graphically indicate the distinct verses of the original. In practice, Am chi Nyi ma had to omit many of the ingredients listed—all human and animal body parts (apart from red lack, see below), and all the ingredients he could not identify. On the other hand, he included great quantities of botanical material, according to every line of the herbal section of the recipe. The medicine produced amounted to almost one tonne(!). For the given *smān sgrub* celebration, Bon po authorities have taken the human and animal matter to be rather symbolic with no need for its actual application (see further below). All the ingredients also serve to structure the practice of producing and consecrating the medicine, which becomes perhaps more evident for those ingredients not actually physically included. Thus, this is the recipe Am chi Nyi ma had to deal with:

performance); 'Od zer 'khyil ba bdud rtsi smān gyi gzhung bzhugs pa lags sho (dKar ru Grub dbang sprul sku bstan pa'i nyi ma 1998, vol. 168, text 1); 'Od zer 'khyil ba bdud rtsi smān gyi gzhung bzhugs pa'i dbus phyogs legs sho (dKar ru Grub dbang sprul sku bstan pa'i nyi ma 1998, vol. 230, text 22). A diplomatic edition taking into account all versions in Wylie transcription is in the Appendix. Rendering of some parts of the recipe into English appears in Millard, Colin and Khenpo Tenpa Yungdrung, unpublished.

²⁰ By civil name Nyima Gurung. Further on Am chi Nyi ma see Millard 2002, 2015.

²¹ For a detailed analysis of the respective items see Sehnalova 2013, 2018. Detailed identifications of the Tibetan botanical and zoological terms with Latin Genera and species of the Western Linnean scientific binominal system of nomenclature and taxonomy in Sehnalova 2013, 2018, forthcoming a. The Tibetan and Western classificatory systems do not correspond to each other. The identifications here are based on Am chi Nyi ma's understanding (conveyed orally and in his written commentary on the recipe Nyima Gurung 2012). English names are given only where possible. Where not, Latin names are given.

[SECTION A]

[SECTION Ai]

[I. Centre]²²

Testicles and semen of unicorns and others to purify²³ pride in consciousness refers to testicles and semen of all [animals with] 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]

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],²⁴ and others.

[II. East]

The medicine of *sha chen g.yung drung lta*²⁵ *me long*²⁶ refers to flesh of young virgin girls, human flesh of *gsang ba gal chen phyi*,²⁷ 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.

²² Due to a likely corruption of the text, the first two verses were lost. They can be reconstructed based on a 14th century commentary on the *smam sgrub* ritual and text translated in Millard and Khenpo Tenpa Yungdrung, unpublished, 7–8. This suggests that the recipe should open with: “sperm of a young white boy with bright eyes” and “of a sengye togal, a kind of lion”.

²³ On the term *gnas su dag pa* literally meaning ‘purify in [its own] place’ or ‘purify in [its own] state’ see further below.

²⁴ Am chi Nyi ma included kaolin, saffron, safflower, clove, nutmeg, cardamom, and greater (or black) cardamom. Further see Sehnalova 2018: 191-193, forthcoming a. Corrected from *rta*, see the original in the Appendix.

²⁵ Appellation of the particular part of the medicine, see below.

²⁷ The 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, 8).

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*²⁸ refers to: In order to purify pride in volitions, stool of all animals with undivided hooves 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 *dpyid tshugs dpung*²⁹ [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*³⁰ 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*³¹ [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 vermillion 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.

²⁸ Appellation of the particular unit of the medicine, see below.

²⁹ An unclear term, according to Am chi Nyi ma likely referring to a carnivorous animal.

³⁰ Appellation of the particular unit of the medicine, see below.

³¹ A bird appellation which can denote multiple Genera and species in the Linnean taxonomy, according to Am chi Nyi ma. See the discussion in Sehnalova 2018: 188–189.

[V. South]

[The medicine of] *dri chu las drug bya ba nan tan*³² 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*³³.

In order to purify ignorance in perception, urine of [animals with] divided hooves, such as blue water *dzos (mdzo)*³⁴ [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*³⁵ and others [is needed]; and this is the particular root [medicine] of the South.

Thus are the aggregates [(Tibetan: *phung po*, Sanskrit: *skandha*)] classified.

[SECTION Aii]

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*³⁶ 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*,³⁷

Cyananthus spp. (*du nu phro*), [also] called *sngon bu g.yu sna*,

³² Appellation of the particular unit of the medicine, see below.

³³ An obscure word to Am chi Nyi ma, see possible explanations in Sehnalova 2018: 198–199.

³⁴ Crossed bread of yak and domestic cattle.

³⁵ A certain type of bird, perhaps of the *Tetraonidae* family. See discussion in Sehnalova 2018: 199–200.

³⁶ Appellation of the particular unit of the medicine, see below.

³⁷ According to Am chi Nyi ma, the first four lines here serve as a bilingual glossary of synonyms: a plant is introduced by its name and then by a synonym of the name. The synonyms provided are understood to be in the anticipated Bon po ancient Zhang zhung language (cf. Karmay 2007; Kværne 1995).

spurge³⁸ (*mang bu phrum*), [also] called *ther nu zhes chen*,
 spurge³⁹ (*skyes bu phrum*), [also] called *thar nu chung ba*,
 And also others, [as] dandelion (*'khur mang*),
 ephedra (*mtshe*), juniper (*shug pa*),
chud bu,⁴⁰
 mallow (*lcam bur*), geranium (*li do ka*), and others.
 This is called the immaterial medicine of the Earth Goddess.

[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*',⁴¹

strawberry (*'bu ta pa 'dren*),

rtsi snga srin gyi 'bras,⁴²

wild indigo (*shing kyi ba'i 'bras bu*),

red lac (*rgya skag*),

juniper (*spang ma*),⁴³

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,⁴⁴

Inula racemosa (*ma nu*),

fennel (*la la phud*),

asafoetida (*shing kun*),

mercury (*ra sa ya na*),

Morina sp. (*gzi ma byin tshor*),

³⁸ Another kind of spurge is meant than above, the Tibetan appellations differ. See Sehnalova 2018: 201–202.

³⁹ See the note just above.

⁴⁰ An unidentified plant by me based on Am chi Nyi ma's description.

⁴¹ An unidentified plant by me. Possible identifications discussed in Sehnalova 2018: 205.

⁴² The ingredient was not understood by Am chi Nyi ma and thus omitted in compounding the medicine.

⁴³ The identification is discussed in Sehnalova 2018: 207.

⁴⁴ Not understood by Am chi Nyi ma and omitted in the medicine.

asparagus (*nyi shing snum can*),
 rhododendron (*bal bu sur bu*),
Cremanthodium sp. (*ga sho*),
Inula racemosa (*ma nu*),⁴⁵
 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*),⁴⁶
 tamarisk (*g.yu shing*),
 wine grapes, juniper, pomegranate (*rgun 'bum sda ru*),⁴⁷
Delphinium sp. (*gla rtsi*),⁴⁸
Althaea sp. / mallow⁴⁹ (*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.

These are particular for the nectar of means and wisdom.

[SECTION B]

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.

⁴⁵ The same item features for a second time.

⁴⁶ Read as two ingredients: *ba sha ka*, *ba le ka*.

⁴⁷ Am chi Nyi ma took the verse as follows: *rgun 'bum* as both wine grapes and a certain kind of juniper tree, and *sda ru* as pomegranate.

⁴⁸ A plant substitution for deer musk. Further in Sehnalova 2018: 217–218. Cf. Czaja 2018.

⁴⁹ Only one of the two plants was used, further not identified.

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*.⁵⁰

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.

3. Scheme of the *smān sgrub* medicinal formula

The *smān sgrub* medicinal formula clearly contains a large number of ingredients that are to be collected for the ritual. The formula is composed from several distinct segments. The most elementary division can be drawn into two sections according to the numerical patterns of organisation employed: the first is fivefold, the second eightfold. Each section then comprises different parts, each of which can again contain several units. Within these units, the individual ingredients required for the composition of the *smān sgrub* medicine are listed. The recipe follows a very thorough logic and frame of organisation and in fact no component has been listed by chance. The *smān sgrub* recipe text breaks up into the following segments, expressed in the text itself:

⁵⁰ Un unclear term, according to Am chi Nyi ma likely meaning 'heart'. Further see Sehnalova 2018: 225.

SECTION A: Fivefold scheme of organisation

SECTION Ai: Fivefold scheme of organisation according to the five aggregates (Sanskrit: *skandha*, Tibetan: *phung po*)

I. Centre, the root medicine (*rtsa ba'i sman*), aggregate of consciousness: [human and]⁵¹ animal ingredients (testicles and semen, eggs, flesh, hearts)

Ia. Centre, the root medicine: plant ingredients (the three myrobalan nuts and asafoetida)

II. East, the medicine of *sha chen g.yung drung rta me long*, aggregate of form: human and animal ingredients (heart flesh)

III. North, the medicine of *dri chen kun 'byung mnyam pa*, aggregate of volitions: animal ingredients (stool)

IV. West, the medicine of *khrag ni pad ma sor rtogs*, aggregate of sensation: human and animal ingredients (blood)

V. South, the medicine of *dri chu las drug bya ba nan tan*, aggregate of perception: human and animal ingredients (urine, blood)

SECTION Aii: Fivefold scheme of organisation according to the five elements (Sanskrit: *pañcabhūta*, Tibetan: *'byung ba*)

I. Centre, the medicine of the Goddess of Space: plant ingredients (the three myrobalan nuts and the six good [substances])

II. East, the purifying and generating medicine of the Earth Goddess: plant ingredients

III. North, the lifting and light medicine of the Wind Goddess: plant ingredients⁵²

IV. West, the heavy fire medicine of the Fire Goddess: plant and mineral ingredients

V. South, the cold and cooling water medicine of the Water Goddess: plant and mineral ingredients

SECTION B: Eightfold scheme of organisation according to the eight branches of consciousness (Sanskrit: *aṣṭāvijñānakāya*, Tibetan: *rnam shes yan lag brgyad*, *rnam shes tshogs brgyad*)⁵³

⁵¹ Added following the amendment of the text, see note 22.

⁵² The exception is red lac (*rgya skag*) of animal origin, extracted from the lac insect (*Kerria lacca*). However, the ingredient is not usually perceived as such during the ritual.

⁵³ The *sman sgrub* formula explicitly mentions 'eight branches' (*yan lag brgyad*) at the beginning of Section B, and 'branches of consciousness' (*rnam shes yan lag*) at the end of Section B. The appointed *sman sgrub* performers apprehended the section to relate to the 'eight branches of consciousness' (*rnam shes yan lag brgyad*).

I. The five senses

1. Sight: eyes and the five essences
2. Hearing: ears and flowers producing sound
3. Smell: noses and five kinds of various incenses
4. Taste: tongues, five kinds of various medicines, and various kinds of flesh
5. Touch: silk

II. '[T]he element of extinguishing strong defilements'

1. lungs, throats
2. knots
3. flowers
4. essences
5. five kinds of grains
6. life channels, flesh and glands
7. five kinds of the five precious [substances]

As can be seen, the overall scheme of the *smān sgrub* formula is quite complex. As a whole, the mixture that is to be compounded accordingly is called 'medicine'. Yet, the different parts (numbered by Roman numerals) within the two main sections (A and B) are also introduced in the formula as particular 'medicines'. Each such 'medicine' has a certain purpose and title hinting at this purpose, which is most apparent in Section A. Both the meanings and titles of the specific 'medicines' of the respective parts make the best sense once viewed as parts of the complete framework. This will also reveal the different conceptions of the senses underlying them.

4. Maṅḍala of aggregates (skandha, phung po) and sensual organs (indriya, dbang po)

The larger portion of the formula is governed by the arrangement of a *maṅḍala*, which divides into fifths. In Sections Ai and Aii we see the gradual progress of the recipe in the Bon po counterclockwise direction starting in the Centre, moving on to the East, then to the North, West, and South.⁵⁴ In this order the whole act of consecration is conducted; this order also governs the whole *smān sgrub* rite. In Section Ai the cardinal points may not be openly expressed in the text, but are apparent from its layout and content.

The *smān sgrub* maṅḍalic framework is filled in with an array of philosophical, epistemological, medical, and cosmological notions.

⁵⁴ The Bon po way of circumambulation as well as ritual succession of cardinal points is a reverse form of the Buddhist clockwise order: Centre, East, South, West, North.

The maṇḍalic model itself is a classificatory system by principle, employed in ritual to encompass, represent, and structure the cosmos.⁵⁵ In the *smān sgrub maṇḍala*, we find multiple classifications of various concepts and phenomena. The first Section Ai presents the Buddhist notions of the five root causes (Sanskrit: *kleśas*, Tibetan: *nyon mongs*) of the unwished for cycle of rebirth (Sanskrit: *saṃsāra*, Tibetan: *'khor ba*); the five mental poisons (*dug lnga*)⁵⁶ that give rise to the five aggregates, along with the matching remedies overcoming them; the five wisdoms (Sanskrit: *pañcajñāna*, Tibetan: *ye shes lnga*) associated with the five tantric nectars (Sanskrit: *pañcāmṛta*, Tibetan: *bdud rtsi lnga*; see below).⁵⁷ Bringing to an end this cycle of rebirth, with the ultimate soteriological goal of awakening, is the main preoccupation of Buddhist and g.Yung drung Bon practice. The five mental poisons of anger (*zhe sdang*), ignorance (*gti mug*), pride (*nga rgyal*), desire (*'dod chags*), and jealousy (*'phrag dog*) draw sentient beings into this cycle. Our misinterpretation of reality perceived through our senses constructs the false notion of our own “personality”, and the five poisons make this “personality” cling to itself and the outside world, thus preventing us from realising this and bringing the cycle to an end. The perceived “personality” of sentient beings does not exist on the level of ultimate reality and is only a construct of our or other beings’ misconceptions. In Buddhist epistemology, the senses also include the mind (Sanskrit: *citta*, also *manas*, *vijñāna*, Tibetan: *sems*) as the sixth sense capable of its own perception, as well as processing. Buddhist philosophers⁵⁸ have argued that in fact the “personality” is a mere conglomerate of five impermanent components, the five aggregates: consciousness (*rnam shes*), form (*gzugs*), volitions (or mental formations, *'du byed*), sensation (*tshor ba*), and perception (*'du shes*) (further see below). This apprehension is inserted into the *maṇḍala*, and each specialised unit of medicine in Section Ai of the recipe is therefore directed at one of the five aggregates.

The *smān sgrub* practice and medicine aim at overcoming the five mental poisons by turning them into the five wisdoms, which is overtly expressed in Section Ai. The rise of five wisdoms, or

⁵⁵ Brauen 1997, Guenther 1995, Martin 1994.

⁵⁶ Extended from the initial count of three poisons (*dug gsum*): anger, desire and ignorance. Similarly in g.Yu thog yon tan mgon po 2006: 103. Cf. Snellgrove 1967: 260, note 48, Dorje and Kapstein, II 1991: 118.

⁵⁷ Similarly described in rNying ma *smān sgrub* by Cantwell, 2015, 63–64; in a *sādhana* performed for healing and attaining special powers of the *Mahākālatantra* by Stablein, 1976, *in passim*; in another Bon po ritual context by Snellgrove 1967: 173–183.

⁵⁸ See Holba in this volume, also Williams 2000: 58–60.

alternatively five awarenesses,⁵⁹ signifies awakening (see below). They are the wisdom of emptiness (*stong nyid ye shes*), mirror-like wisdom (*me long ye shes*), equalising wisdom (*mnyams nyid ye shes*), discriminating wisdom (*sor rtogs ye shes*), and the accomplishing wisdom (*bya grub ye shes*).⁶⁰ Each wisdom is associated with a certain cardinal point and in the recipe a certain medicinal unit.⁶¹ The wisdoms are in the recipe indicated in a very subtle manner only by the seemingly uncomprehensive names of the specific 'medicines'. Taking the example of the medicine of the East, we can decipher its confusing title *sha chen g.yung drung lta me long* as follows: The first two syllables are a separate word, *sha chen*, literally 'great flesh', denoting human flesh which also appears as the first ingredient of this particular unit of the medicine. The second two syllables also form a word, *g.yung drung*, 'swastika', or alternatively 'eternal'. 'Swastika' is not only the symbol of the g.Yung drung Bon tradition, which has also derived its name from it, but also the sign (*rtags*) of the direction of the East and of the buddha family of the East⁶² in Bon po cosmology. The second meaning is implied here, and the title of the specific medicine thus refers to the eastern quarter. The concluding three syllables *lta me long* are likely the least comprehensive. They can be translated as 'like mirror', and this is also what they refer to—the Mirror-like wisdom (*me long ye shes*), one of the five wisdoms. Hence, we learn from the title that this medicine contains human flesh, is related to the eastern point of the *maṇḍala* and therefore, also of the cosmos, and its purpose is to generate the Mirror-like wisdom. The medicinal substance composed according to Part II. of Section Ai is therefore supposed to eliminate the mental poisons and transform them into this specified wisdom. This Part is aimed at the aggregate of form and purifying (further see below) the five poisons in this aggregate.⁶³ The titles of the subsequent units of medicine in Section Ai work in the same way. Each in a rather abbreviated form suggests the principle elements of the medicinal unit it stands for. The opening part I. (Section Ai) of the recipe lacks such an introductory label, likely due to a corruption in the text. From a commentary on the *sman sgrub* ritual and recipe attributed to the Bon po scholar gNyo Tshul khriims rgyal mtshan

⁵⁹ Keown 2004: 209.

⁶⁰ Further in Buswell and Lopez 2014, in tantric context Snellgrove 1987: 280–281.

⁶¹ See the Table in the Appendix.

⁶² Explanation of the Buddhist concept of the five buddha families of the cardinal points in Snellgrove 1987: 195–198.

⁶³ In the part actually only four out of the five poisons are mentioned, which is possibly due to a corruption of the text. Cf. note 22.

(14th century)⁶⁴ we learn that the recipe was supposed to begin with sperm of humans and lions.⁶⁵ The label of the medicine for this part has also probably gone missing. Yet, its full contents and meaning can be reconstructed thanks to the preserved commentary.

The Section Ai of the formula is clearly built upon the concept of the five tantric nectars. The five 'nectars' or 'ambrosias' are a common principle in tantric texts and practices where they are sometimes acknowledged to have intrinsic power.⁶⁶ They constitute five bodily extracts, either (usually) human or animal: semen, flesh (alternatively marrow),⁶⁷ blood, faeces, and urine. In the Bon po *smān sgrub*, their application, at least in the present, is like in many other such practices probably understood as symbolic rather than actual. The five nectars are to symbolically form the respective medicines of the Ai Section of the recipe.⁶⁸ They are to be gathered to purify the mental poisons in the five aggregates. The five nectars in the text are linked to the specific points of the compass: semen to the Centre, flesh to the East, stool to the North, blood to the West, and urine to the South (see the underscored terms in the scheme above, and also in the Table in the Appendix). The nectars are to be assembled from different groups of animals: carnivores, birds, animals with divided hooves, and with undivided hooves; and from humans. Each group of animals circulates throughout the maṇḍalic scheme in a given pattern, in which every group is repeated within every cardinal point of the recipe in a certain order and according to the characteristics of the point. It is hence also linked to a specific mental poison.⁶⁹ For instance, the West is associated with the colour red, heat, the poison of anger, the element of fire, the buddha figure mounted on a bird, and the group of birds in the second position in the list right after the human group which takes the primary position in all cardinal points apart from one (North). The maṇḍalic scheme also provides a means of animal classification. As the analysis of such patterns is not the concern here, I further refer to the Table in Appendix and elsewhere.⁷⁰

⁶⁴ gNyoṣ tshul khriṃs rgyal mtshan, Millard and Khenpo Tenpa Yungdrung, unpublished, briefly on the commentary in Sehnalova 2017: 157–158.

⁶⁵ See note 22.

⁶⁶ Cf. Wedemeyer 2007, 2013, Garrett 2010, Gentry 2017: 301–303; in a maṇḍalic classificatory scheme Martin 1994: 89.

⁶⁷ Wedemeyer 2013: 106.

⁶⁸ Their symbolic aspect is stressed by the current Bon po authorities. A discussion of this issue, and the possibility of their actual physical meaning, in Sehnalova 2018: 284–287.

⁶⁹ Cf. Snellgrove 1967: 207.

⁷⁰ Sehnalova 2018: 227–230, 243–249.

However, what principally informs the overall composition of the first part (Ai) of the *smān sgrub* formula? The main principle here is the five aggregates, as they fit within the fivefold maṇḍalic scheme.⁷¹ Each of the five aggregates is “a complex class of phenomena that is continuously arising and falling away into processes of consciousness (*vijñāna*; *rnam shes*) based on the six spheres of sense.”⁷² According to Buddhist philosophy, the aggregates comprise every individual. Once they disperse, the individual, whether human or another sentient being, ceases to exist. They can again reassemble for a different rebirth and form another individual. The aggregates arise interdependently and do not ultimately exist; neither does the individual nor any “personality”. Any individual is thus “a flowing, still changing, but uninterrupted causal continuum.”⁷³ The aim of the *smān sgrub* is awakening; this requires overcoming grasping and the elimination of mental poisons. The *smān sgrub* addresses these given conceptions of senses, aggregates, and mental poisons.

The *smān sgrub* recipe begins with cleansing the aggregate of ‘consciousness’ or ‘awareness’ and its mental poisons.⁷⁴ According to Buddhist philosopher Vasubandhu (fl. 4–5th century CE), the aggregate of ‘consciousness’ is the “impression” or “bare grasping” “of each object”.⁷⁵ It develops based on the contact of our senses with the reality around us.⁷⁶ The Yōgācāra school of philosophy, elaborating on this concept, distinguished eight kinds of consciousness (see below), six of which are based in the six senses: visual consciousness, auditory consciousness, olfactory consciousness, consciousness of taste, consciousness of touch, and mental consciousness.⁷⁷ In the Bon po *smān sgrub* medicinal compound, the tantric nectar of semen accompanied by testicles, eggs, flesh, and hearts, i.e. all inner-most parts of humans and animals, is believed to have the capacity to purify them.

The following aggregate is ‘form’ in the eastern portion (Section Ai, Part II) of the *smān sgrub* prescription. Form constitutes the five sense organs and their objects, i.e. eye and visual matter, ear and sound, nose and odour, tongue and taste, and body and tangible matter. It is also

⁷¹ The same observation by Snellgrove 1987: 19.

⁷² Gethin 1986: 49, following Holba, this volume, also Williams 2000: 69–70.

⁷³ Holba, this volume. Also Buswell 2004, Keown 2004.

⁷⁴ Only three instead of five poisons are enumerated due to distortion of the text. See note 22.

⁷⁵ Holba, this volume.

⁷⁶ According to Vasubandhu, “objects of awareness do not exist as causally significant entities distinct from consciousness; rather, consciousness is *caused* by its apparent objects, from which it takes on a particular shape (*ākāra*).” Gold 2018.

⁷⁷ Further Holba, this volume, Gethin 1986: 46–47.

made of and further linked to the four elements of earth, water, fire, and wind,⁷⁸ which are essential in the *maṇḍala*, too. The *smān sgrub* ritual employs various types of heart flesh to cleanse the aggregate and overcome the five mental poisons it might provoke. The subsequent three aggregates of ‘volitions’, ‘sensation’, and ‘perception’, are closely linked to the activities of the senses as well. ‘Volitions’ contain six categories of volitional states related to the objects of the six senses: visual objects, sounds, smells, tastes, bodily impressions, and mental objects. The *smān sgrub* proposes to purify them by the tantric nectar of a combination of faeces. Miscellaneous kinds of blood are then used to overcome the aggregate of ‘sensation’ and its mental poisons. ‘Sensation’ or ‘feelings’ result from the contact of sense organs, including the mind, with their sensed objects. They are either “corporeal” for the five senses, or “mental” for the mind. The final aggregate, ‘perception’, grasps, recognises, classifies, and interprets⁷⁹ specific characteristics of phenomenal objects and unites the sensations of all senses into a representation of the object.⁸⁰ The *smān sgrub* formular prescribes different urines to collect and include in its mixture to purify perception. Vasubandhu’s elaboration on the five aggregates in some cases deals with the fivefold count of senses, and in some cases with the sixfold, inclusive of the mind. The mind is perceived as a sense and sense organ in its own right, focused on mental objects. Moreover, the mind is capable of capturing “its objects and the objects of the other five senses, as well as these senses themselves.”⁸¹

g.Yung drung Bon has adopted these notions from Buddhism and even built them into the *smān sgrub* medicinal remedy. Alternatively, and perhaps plausibly, g.Yung drung Bon might have adopted the philosophical-medical-ritual nexus into its traditions as already applied in tantric Buddhism or even earlier Indian traditions.⁸² Such fabrications of ritual devices are common in Tibetan tantric Buddhism. David Snellgrove has described similar examples of meditative ritual practices based on *maṇḍala* consecrations in which the five aggregates represent the microcosm of “personality” and the five elements

⁷⁸ Further *ibid.*, Buswell 2004.

⁷⁹ Based on Holba, this volume.

⁸⁰ For more details on the aggregates see Holba, this volume, Gethin 1986, Boisvert 1995.

⁸¹ Holba, this volume.

⁸² The interconnection of religion, philosophy, and medicine, as well as the expression of this interconnection in ritual practice and its developments in Tibet are still subject to research. Cf. Cantwell 2015, 2017, Garrett 2009, 2010, Gyatso 2015, Sehnalova 2017.

represent the macrocosm.⁸³ In the *sman sgrub*, the five elements become most apparent in the next Section Aii. In Buddhist as well as Bon po cosmology each element is associated with one of the five cardinal points of the cosmos reflected in the *maṇḍala* (see below and the Table in the Appendix). In Snellgrove's rendering, "the maṇḍala represents the self-identification of the microcosm (the human person) with the macrocosm, which has the nature of *saṃsāra* for the unenlightened mind; conversely, it reveals itself as the perfect expression of Buddhahood when all misleading distinctions disappear in the enlightened state of nonduality."⁸⁴ The five or six senses, five aggregates, and four elements, do appear in this context in ritual conduct and schemes, typically *maṇḍalas*, which function as a support on the path to awakening.⁸⁵ The Bon po *sman sgrub* fully falls into this discourse.

5. Maṇḍala of tastes and their medicinal effects

Another manifestation of the human senses is engaged in the maṇḍalic scheme in the next Section Aii. The organising principle is again closely modelled upon sensual perception. However, in contrast to the above, only one sense comes into the predominant position here: taste. And, again in contrast, the discipline determining the arrangement differs—it is not Buddhist philosophy but the Tibetan medical *gSo ba rig pa*, 'science of healing',⁸⁶ tradition. The taste in the *maṇḍala* features as the distinguishing characteristics based on its major role in *gSo ba rig pa* pharmaceutical and therapeutical practice.

The *gSo ba rig pa* medical tradition shares with the Buddhist (and some earlier Indian) cosmological and religious teachings the fundamental understanding of the cosmos as composed of the five elements: (*'byung lnga*): space (*nam mkha'*), earth (*sa*), wind (*rlung*), fire (*me*), and water (*chu*). The five elements constitute all phenomena. Thus they also constitute the bodies of all sentient beings, including humans. Within the body, they become represented through the three bodily forces called *nyes pa* (*nyes pa gsum*): wind (*lung*), bile (*mkhris pa*), and phlegm (*bad kan*). Wind naturally arises from the element of air or wind, bile from the element of fire, and lastly, phlegm from the joint elements of earth and water.⁸⁷ The three forces are conceptualised not

⁸³ Snellgrove 1987: 201.

⁸⁴ Snellgrove 1987: 200.

⁸⁵ Snellgrove 1987: 200–201, 243–244, 458.

⁸⁶ Translated following Hofer 2014a.

⁸⁷ Further see Finckh 1978, 1985, Gerke 2014, following the *rGyud bzhi* treatise (g.Yu thog yon tan mgon po 2006). For the Bon pos, the fundamental medical text is the

so much as actual physical entities but rather as powers and influences felt in the body. Their impacts and outcomes are both physical and mental, as these two spheres are not separated in the general Tibetan and gSo ba rig pa apprehension. The prevalence, or, on the other hand, reduction of a certain element and therefore of the associated *nyes pa* reveals itself on both physical and mental levels. They form our bodies, yet their misplacement or improper proportions cause harm, illness and disease.⁸⁸

For such unwished conditions, gSo ba rig pa practitioners, commonly and honorifically titled '*am chi*' ('physician'), aim to counter-balance the bodily force or forces in question and restore its or their desired state. The ideal state of both body and mind is equilibrium of all the elements and thus also all bodily forces. Just like the bodily forces, the procedures for healing are also based on elemental theory. The key concept is taste (*ro*). The gSo ba rig pa tradition distinguishes six tastes: sweet (*mngar*), sour (*skyur ba*), salty (*lan tshwa*), bitter (*kha ba*), hot (*tsha ba*), and astringent (*bska ba*).⁸⁹ Each taste emerges from a specific combination of two elements. Earth and water comprise the sweet taste, earth and fire the sour taste, water and fire produce the salty flavour, water and wind the bitter taste, fire and wind the hot taste, and earth and wind the astringent taste.⁹⁰ Each taste than enhances its related element(s) and bodily force, and diminishes the other.⁹¹ For instance, hot taste originating from the element of fire supports the force of bile also derived from fire. On the contrary, sweet and bitter tastes arising from the elements other than fire, suppress fire and thus also the bile in our bodies. Taste is the primary parameter for evaluating medicinal substances, and the tongue is the physician's primary pharmacological tool. For this particular *smān sgrub*, Am chi Nyi ma was testing with his taste buds which *materia medica* to include, as he usually does in his pharmacological practice. Based on such a taste assessment, he produces medicines, and likewise the *smān sgrub* medicine.

This medical theory and practice is reflected in the *smān sgrub* formula. The whole Section Aii is preoccupied with taste. It is again divided into five units according to the five directions of the compass

'Bum bzhi (gSo rig 'bum bzhi 2006, cf. Millard 2002). Due to its great similarity with the main and most widespread Tibetan and Buddhist gSo ba rig pa text, the *rGyud bzhi*, I refer only to the later.

⁸⁸ Further in Finckh 1978, 1985, Parfionovitch et al. 1992, Meyer 1995, 2007, Gerke 2014.

⁸⁹ The English translations follow the common practice of research on gSo ba rig pa (for ex. Gerke 2014: 26, Hofer 2014b: 49).

⁹⁰ g.Yu thog yon tan mgon po 2006: 62–63. Also Gerke 2014.

⁹¹ See tables in Sehnalova, forthcoming a.

in the Bon po counterclockwise sequence, into which the different tastes are inserted. The Section enumerates quite typical *materia medica* of gSo ba rig pa plant, mineral, and a few animal ingredients.⁹² Every unit is referred to as 'medicine', has its own name and special purpose, and is dedicated to the matching element of the *maṇḍala* and to a certain taste or tastes and other medical properties determined by the element and the taste. The Centre of the element of space (Section Aii, Part I.) starts with naming the taste and other medicinal properties, presenting them as accumulated in the paramount gSo ba rig pa ingredients. The taste as the main factor occupies the primary position. The fruit of chebolic myrobalan (*Terminalia chebula*) is shown as 'the assembly of tastes'. Being the panacea of gSo ba rig pa, chebolic myrobalan is recognised to hold all the potential tastes, and thus also all other derived medicinal properties, of all existing substances.⁹³ Am chi Nyi ma regarded these qualities ascribed to the chebolic myrobalan as essential for the composition of the *sman sgrub* medicine. Similarly appear the other ingredients of the Centre, each embodying a certain characterising category of medicinal remedies determined by the taste (essence *bcud*, potency *nus pa*, after-taste *zhu rjes*).⁹⁴ The appellation of the Central medicine '*dus pa ldan ba'i nam mkha* again summarises its content: the title literally translates as 'the space possessing assemblies'. It shows that the medicine of this unit belongs to the element of space and contains 'assemblies' of all tastes and all medicinal properties, and hence can heal all health problems, all imbalances of the three bodily forces. The medicine is further linked to the personification of its element—the Goddess of Space, and its associated body part generated by that element—the mind. In this section the mind does not feature as the sixth sense but rather as a literal 'central' bodily constituent, since the discourse here is not philosophical but medical. This Central medicine is also added to the Central medicine of Section Ai, and at least in the present practice is understood to be the most essential component of the *sman sgrub* concoction.

The other four cardinal medicines of Section Aii are more expressive in medical terms. Am chi Nyi ma assessed the taste of all ingredients during their acquisition to be sure they can be included. Tastes ascribed to particular substances are also listed in pharmacological manuals and field guides widely used by Tibetan

⁹² Cf. Hofer 2014b, compendia of gSo ba rig pa *materia medica*, such as dGa' ba'i rdo rje 1995, also g.Yu thog yon tan mgon po 2006.

⁹³ Cf. dGa' ba'i rdo rje 1995.

⁹⁴ For limitations of space here, I refer to Finckh 1978, 1985, Parfionovitch et al. 1992., Meyer 1995, 2007, Gerke 2014. Analysed in more detail in Sehnalova 2018: 230–242; forthcoming a.

physicians.⁹⁵ Continuing with the East, we find herbal ingredients of mostly sweet and bitter taste.⁹⁶ The label of this particular medicinal unit, ‘purifying and generating medicine’, reveals the strong combination of several types of spurge to purge impurities from the body.⁹⁷ This effect, as well as the sweet and bitter taste, counterbalances particularly the hot and salty tastes of the opposite western quarter of the *maṇḍala* generated by fire. The sweet and bitter flavours of the East support the *nyes pa* of phlegm formed by earth, the element in the East. For these attributes, the eastern unit is ascribed to the Earth Goddess. The North of section Aii too exercises sweet and bitter tastes. Yet, as it is derived from the element of wind and called ‘lifting and light medicine’, it is much lighter and also less cooling⁹⁸ than the mixture of the East. The linked bodily force is wind which the medicine enhances. In contrast, it subdues the forces of bile and phlegm caused by fire, earth, and water, and harmonises the tastes associated with these opposite elements. The Goddess of wind governs here. The next unit is supervised by the Fire Goddess and due to the hot fire element principally boasts warming hot and salty tastes that give rise to bile. The concluding southern medicine brings in the element of water and ‘the cold and cooling water medicine’ of the Water Goddess. The tastes found here are predominantly sweet and bitter as the water determines. The related bodily force is phlegm. In this manner, the medicinal components proposed in each point of the *maṇḍala* act to balance the elements, tastes, and bodily forces of the other cardinal points.⁹⁹ Similarly to Section A for the case of animals, Section Aii can serve as a tool of classification and organisation of *materia medica* of the *gSo ba rig pa*. Medicinal substances are divided based on their association with the five elements and tastes they exert on human bodies, and also on the capacity of the tastes to treat specific health disorders.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁵ For ex. dGa’ ba’i rdo rje 1995, Blo bzang rdo rje 2007.

⁹⁶ List of the recognised tastes of the ingredients in Sehnalova 2018: 230–242; forthcoming a. The same applies for the ingredients of the following cardinal points.

⁹⁷ The same usage of spurge for healing in Europe is reflected in its English name: ‘spurge’ derives from ‘purge’. Hoad, 1993.

⁹⁸ For the aspects of ‘hot’ and ‘cool’ (or ‘warming’ and ‘cooling’), and ‘heavy’ and ‘light’, in *gSo ba rig pa* and the *sman sgrub* formula see Sehnalova 2018; forthcoming a.

⁹⁹ More detailed analysis in Sehnalova 2018; forthcoming a.

¹⁰⁰ Cf. Glover 2005, Boesi 2007.

6. Eightfold scheme of senses and consciousnesses

The third Section (Section B) of the *smān sgrub* formula abandons the fivefold maṇḍalic format, as the only section. Instead, it relies on an eightfold scheme of organisation of ritual *materia* adopted from Buddhist philosophical concepts. It thus returns to epistemology as in Section Ai. The sensual organs and their objects explicitly feature, and also inform the concept of the scheme as such.

The *smān sgrub* text marks these ingredients as the 'classification into eight branches', i.e. 'branches of consciousness'. The 'consciousness' intended is not the aggregate of 'consciousness' or 'awareness' (Sanskrit: *vijñāna*, Tibetan: *rnam shes*, abbreviated from *rnam par shes pa*), one of the five components of assumed "personality" in Vasubandhu's exposition implemented earlier (Section Ai), but another epistemological concept of 'consciousness' (Sanskrit: *vijñāna*, Tibetan: *rnam shes*), derived from the Buddhist Yogācāra or Cittamātra philosophical school.¹⁰¹ Yogācāra scholars apprehended 'consciousness' as a constituent of eight parts, of eight distinct branches of consciousness: visual, auditory, olfactory, gustatory, tactile, mental, afflicted, and finally, the foundational or storehouse consciousness (Sanskrit: *ālayavijñāna*, Tibetan: *kun gzhi'i rnam shes*).¹⁰² The first six branches, a notion shared with other schools of Buddhist thought, are established on the six senses of vision, hearing, smell, taste, touch, and mind. We encounter the same list of senses, in the same order, as in Section Ai of the recipe. The sense of sight again holds the prime position. These five sensory and one mental consciousnesses (Sanskrit: *manovijñāna*, Tibetan: *yiḍ kyi rnam par shes pa*) occur as a consequence of grasping and join "together the external spheres of sensory activity with the internal spheres of perception".¹⁰³ They result from a connection of sensory organs, their activities, and their respective objects, and enable the mental perception of these objects. Yogācāra has added to this theory the seventh, afflicted, and the eighth, foundational, consciousness. The afflicted consciousness, or "tainted mind" (Sanskrit: *kliṣṭamānas*, Tibetan: *nyon yiḍ*) generates the mistaken notion of a self. The foundational consciousness stores all the residue of past actions (Sanskrit: *karman*, Tibetan: *las*) which will bear consequences in the future. It gives rise to all the other consciousnesses and "serves as an operative basis"¹⁰⁴ of theirs. In its "purified or

¹⁰¹ The consciousness as an aggregate can be also called 'bare consciousness' to distinguish it from the concept of consciousness in Yogācāra. Buswell 2004: 175.

¹⁰² Based on Snellgrove 1987: 105, Dorje and Kapstein, II 1998: 156, Buswell and Lopez 2014. Further see Schmithausen 1987, Buswell 2004.

¹⁰³ Snellgrove 1987: 99.

¹⁰⁴ Snellgrove 1987: 105.

perfected form”¹⁰⁵ it does not induce the other consciousnesses, and equals awakening.

The *smān sgrub* ritual adds tantric means to the epistemological apprehension and application by yogic practitioners. It proposes to construct these concepts as a material essence; thereby the material acquires doctrinal valences. Section B of the *smān sgrub* formula is divided into two Parts (Part I. and II.). The first enumerates the five sensual organs (the mind is excluded) along with examples of their objects. Both are prescribed to be physically collected and mixed in. The five senses, all apart from one, are represented by body parts, the actual sense organs: eyes in the first position, followed by ears, noses, and tongues. They are to be obtained in “various kinds”, and in two cases specifically from animals. As for the sensual objects, each type of sensory organ acquires a representative external category on which the organ can focus and which it can perceive. Within these categories, the recipe adds specific examples of such possible objects. Eyes receive “five essences”, implying material objects, of which the example of butter is given. The numeral five can either be read literally, or it can function as a symbolic representation of the category in question,¹⁰⁶ in this case the category of material objects. In the *smān sgrub* recipe, eyes can then focus on butter, whereas ears perceive the sound of flowers, such as of *Incarvillea compacta*.¹⁰⁷ The plant of *Incarvillea* displays prominent colourful trumpet blossoms, which at least in some parts of Tibet and the Himalayas make a popular children’s toy to produce noise when blown. The third sensual organ, noses, gets “five kinds of various incenses”¹⁰⁸ as their object of smelling. Tongues govern two categories of objects to perceive by tasting: “five kinds of various medicines, and various kinds of flesh, such as flesh of ferocious tigers”. Both, especially once juxtaposed, allude to the ingredients of the above sections, particularly to the five tantric nectars (Section Ai) and the medicinal herbs and other g. So ba rig pa substances (Section Aii). Only the fifth sense, touch, finds expression solely by the sensual object and not an organ, i.e. for instance no hand or other body part signifying touch is listed. Touch is embodied by “silk, such as brocade”. The plan of this Section of the recipe corresponds to the Yogācāra notion of consciousness—it represents the linking of respective sensual organs

¹⁰⁵ Snellgrove 1987: 104.

¹⁰⁶ Am chi Nyi ma, personal communication (Kathmandu, December 2012).

¹⁰⁷ The specific species of *khug ches* (more commonly spelled *ug chos*) was together identified with Am chi Nyima and according to the picking location. Cf. especially Lama 2001, also Arya 1998, Parfionovitch et al. 1992, Tsering Thakchoe Drungtso and Tsering Dolma Drungtso 2005.

¹⁰⁸ The phrasing itself suggests that the number five can stand for a larger number, “various”, of representatives of the given category.

with their objects. Here in the recipe (Section B, Part I.), we have the first five types of the eight types of consciousness.

This layout repeats in Part II., yet in a different manifestation. Here seven items are introduced as “the element of extinguishing strong defilements”. According to the recipe, these items stand for the eight branches of consciousness, although it is not clear which denotes which, and why there are seven instead of presumably the more reasoned count of eight. Still, we can assume the standard sequence of the eight classes of consciousness, starting with the visual, progressing through the other consciousnesses derived from senses including mind, to the seventh afflicted consciousness, and finally the main, eighth, foundational consciousness. “Lungs, throats” in the initial line would therefore signify the visual consciousness based on the sense of sight, and so forth. This association might sound a bit awkward, but it fits well into the overall scheme. The closing “[f]ive kinds of the five precious [substances], such as gold” makes for a nice representation of the pivotal foundational consciousness. A hint of the maṇḍalic scheme also comes up in this Section in the statement that its medicine complements the four cardinal directions. However, it is not stated how exactly, and it seems to be a general assertion placing this medicine into the *maṇḍala*. “[T]he element of extinguishing strong defilements” hence refers to the medicine of this unit which is to purify the strong defilements in the eight consciousnesses.

The recipe then concludes with instructions for how the whole of the *sman sgrub* medicine is to be organised on the *maṇḍala*. It is to be put into “medicine containers”, covered with silk and placed in the individual cardinal points. Four medicinal containers should occupy the East, North, West, and South, respectively, and the fifth the Centre. Each vessel should hold the ingredients prescribed for the given quarter. For instance, the medicine of the Centre, based on the three myrobalans (Parts Ai, Ia.; Aii, I.), will be in the central vessel in the middle of the *maṇḍala*.¹⁰⁹ Each vessel, its cover and string fastening the cover, should bear the colour matching its cardinal point. The central container should be white, the eastern yellow, the northern green, the western red, and the southern blue. The colours express the elements associated with the quarters: space is linked to white, earth to yellow, wind to green, fire is represented by red colour, and water by blue (see the Table in Appendix).

¹⁰⁹ In practice the placement of certain ingredients only into a certain vessel on the *maṇḍala* was not followed. In 2012 the mixture was treated as a whole.

7. sMan sgrub recipe in practice: senses materialised

The medicinal formula of the *light-swirled sman sgrub* serves as a practical manual intended to be put into practice. All the ritual scriptures of the *sman sgrub*, listing the necessary ritual procedures, recitations, et cetera, are quite extensive and regarded as highly authoritative. So is their part containing the recipe. The *sman sgrub* medicinal mixture must be physically compounded for each performance of the practice.

Ideally, every listed ingredient should be acquired and mixed in. Yet, in practice, many obstacles occur, as many of the items are very difficult or impossible to obtain. In Khri brtan nor bu rtse monastery in 2012, Am chi Nyi ma, the gSo ba rig pa practitioner in charge of the ritual medicine, did his best to promptly follow the recipe. He was advised by the head of the monastery Yongs 'dzin bsTan 'dzin rnam dag rin po che to omit all the tantric nectars, meaning the whole Section Ai. Thus he did not have to deal with the intricacies of unicorns, elephants, tigers, and so forth. On the other hand, he was told to strictly observe the prevalently herbal list of Section Aii, which is grounded in gSo ba rig pa, Am chi Nyi ma's main field of expertise. Am chi Nyi ma collected and processed almost all of these ingredients, with the exception of a few he could not understand, and in cases he could not find anyone who could understand. The translation of the recipe above reveals Am chi Nyi ma's practical apprehension of the recipe. The three myrobalan fruits were of special importance, as they appear at the head of the list and comprise the central medicine. For all the substances, the sense of taste was the determining aspect of Am chi Nyi ma's practice.

Similarly, the last section (B) received close attention, and also necessitated detailed explanations by the Rin po che. Again, the animal and potentially also human body parts, here the sensual organs (Section B, Part I.) and internal parts (Section B, Part II.) were omitted. However, the others were collected. The "five essences" as the object of the sense of sight were represented by the given group of molasses, melted butter, honey, sesame oil, and salt.¹¹⁰ The sound as the object of the ear was included in the form of a trumpet flower. Five kinds of incenses¹¹¹ stood as the object for the nose organ and the sense of smell. For the next sense, taste, the prescribed flesh was not used, but the "five kinds of various medicines" were. They were interpreted as orchid, blackberry, moonseed, kaolin, and sweetflag.¹¹² The sense of

¹¹⁰ Further in Sehnalova 2018: 222. Also Beyer 1987: 290, Zhang 1993, Skorupski 2001.

¹¹¹ Further in Sehnalova 2018: 222–223. Also Beyer 1987: 290.

¹¹² Further in Sehnalova 2018: 223. A variant list in Beyer 1987: 290.

touch and its object of silk was included in the form of a small precious piece of cloth said to come from a monk's garment, which was brought from Tibet by Yongs 'dzin bsTan 'dzin rnam dag. The article was regarded to be of special value and power. From the following seven ingredients, different knotted threads were put in, to stand for the "various kinds of knots", presumably signifying one of the eight classes of consciousness. Further, meconopsis flowers, "[f]ive kinds of grains" (barley, rice, unhusked barley, sesame, wheat, peas, two types of millet),¹¹³ and "[f]ive kinds of the five precious [substances]" were inserted. The "precious [substances]" came as a powdered mixture of precious stones and metals from Tibet.

The incorporated substances are perceived to behold great inner power. Those passed on from previous and current religious masters, like the small piece of cloth, convey their blessings and authority. The medicinal ingredients coming from the gSo ba rig pa tradition boast their ascribed medicinal effects. Together with the *smān sgrub* ritual action of consecration and powers of deities bestowed, they construct the efficacy of the ritual and its medicine.¹¹⁴

Conclusions

In the example of the Bon po *light-swirled smān sgrub*, the senses of the human body play a complex role in organising ritual structure and in the composition of physical ritual paraphernalia. Philosophical, doctrinal, and medical concepts derived from the senses are embedded in tantric practices and become materially expressed. The senses therefore manifest on conceptual, symbolic, practical, and material levels.

We have observed three different notions of the senses employed: 1. Vasubandhu's treatment of the epistemological concept of five aggregates, into which the activities of the senses are crucially included; 2. gSo ba rig pa preoccupation with taste as the main characteristic of pharmaceutical substances and drugs; and 3. Epistemological teachings of the Yogācāra school of the eight consciousnesses, which are also informed by the senses. The aspects of the senses revolved around the human senses in particular—their sensual organs, their objects of perception, and sensual perception as the interaction between the organs and their objects. In the case of the gSo ba rig pa medical application, it was the sense of taste involved in

¹¹³ As the number of five can be taken symbolically, more items of the category were used.

¹¹⁴ Cf. Sehnalova, forthcoming a,b.

material evaluation and its direct impact in clinical practice. Both the epistemological concepts are developed from the classification of *dharma*s (Tibetan: *chos*) as ultimate ontological qualities and constituents of our reality in early Buddhist philosophy. Among them, the five aggregates feature, as well as the idea of the twelve bases (Sanskrit: *āyatana*, Tibetan: *skye mched*) elaborated into the eighteen elements (Sanskrit: *dhātu*, Tibetan: *khams*) unfolding into the eight classes of consciousness (Cf. Holba, in this volume, Gethin, 2004). Both the philosophical and gSo ba rig pa theory is based on the postulation of cosmos constituted from the elements in their physical forms and also their manifested fundamental qualities. The fivefold structuring scheme of the *maṇḍala* applied for the first two theoretical frameworks (1. and 2.) has cosmological connotations, and as a device can serve to figuratively structure the cosmos. In the same way, the consecrated *smān sgrub* medicine becomes aligned to the cosmos, both by its composition and treatment during the ritual.

The aim of the *smān sgrub* practice and its medicine is healing, protection, and most importantly, awakening. Human senses, including mind, have been an important subject of Buddhist philosophy, in the aspiration to interpret perceived reality and ourselves as entities with no essential existence and as constructs based on misconception of sensually (including mentally) delivered experience. Hence, it comes as no surprise that these themes have been influential also in ritual practices like the *smān sgrub*. The *light-swirled smān sgrub* addresses these conceptions of senses, aggregates and mental poisons. Moreover, it adds conceptualisations of (human) body and mind of the gSo ba rig pa. In gSo ba rig pa teachings, which heavily draw on Buddhism, the ultimate goal of all healing too is the eventual awakening. The mind and body are not perceived to be divided one from the other, and putting the whole constitution into balance generates awakening.

In both these discourses in the *smān sgrub*, the objective is ritual and spiritual purification (*dag*): purification of the mental poisons within the aggregates, of the elements and bodily forces within ourselves, and of the senses. The term '*gnas su dag pa*' so frequently used in Section A, literally translates as 'purify in [its own] place' or 'purify in [its own] state.' It denotes a return to the original pure nature of the practitioner's mind.¹¹⁵ Such a profound realisation overcomes the mental poisons and the five aggregates. Thereby, the practitioner achieves awakening. According to gSo ba rig pa, if the elements and forces of the body are completely purified, a state of complete equilibrium arises. This state too equals awakening. The third part

¹¹⁵ Cf. *The Illuminator Dictionary*, accessible online: <http://www.pktc.org/dictionary/>

(Section B) addresses purification of the foundational consciousness, again leading to awakening.¹¹⁶ During the *smān sgrub* practice, both the mental poisons and the eight consciousnesses turn into the five wisdoms, likewise the five elements and the five aggregates turn into the wisdoms.¹¹⁷ The practitioner realises the pure essence of the five elements and the five aggregates, and of the senses. Thereby he or she is able to depart from the bonds of *saṃsāra* and achieve liberation. The origin of these conceptions probably goes back to the Yogācāra school, a source of influence on the *smān sgrub* too.¹¹⁸ The *smān sgrub* has the same agenda of attaining awakening via such purification.

Yet, the *smān sgrub* adds a consecrated 'medicine' to accomplish this. All these concepts the practitioner has to work with during meditative practice are materialised in the *smān sgrub* medicine, to act as a physical support for the spiritual exercise. Every crucial point of the exercise receives a specific material ingredient to be incorporated into the medicine, be it body parts of unicorns, myrobalan fruits, or eyes collected from animals. The ingredients are to be mixed, consecrated, and digested. The intended purification thus happens on two levels, in spiritual practice and in physical engagement. The two levels support each other. According to the esoteric traditions of tantrism, awakening is possible in this life. The *smān sgrub* ritual offers the means, in both spiritual and physical terms. The means are articulated in the prescription of the *materia medica* of the rite. The prescription and the practitioners' spiritual practice mirror each other. The practitioner, representing a microcosmos, aligns himself to the macrocosmos represented by the *maṇḍala*. He experiences an inner transformation and purification, while the medicine likewise undergoes a transformation and purification as his outer support. The *smān sgrub* ritual epitomises a nexus of spiritual and physical healing and practice, which are inseparable, and all ultimately lead to awakening. The tantric discourse of the *smān sgrub* masterly blends all these understandings together.

The *smān sgrub* practice and its theoretical frameworks exhibit possible schemes of organisation for ritual practices. These in varying forms appear in countless Tibetan (and other) tantric practices. In the case of the *light-swirled smān sgrub*, several different spheres of knowledge had to come together to produce its complex whole, in all of which the senses serve as basis. Philosophical and pharmacological concepts determined by the senses inform the ritual structure of organisation in both theory and practice, including the compounding

¹¹⁶ Cf. Snellgrove 1987: 104–106.

¹¹⁷ Cf. Snellgrove 1967: 203.

¹¹⁸ Snellgrove 1987: 125.

of ritual 'power objects'. The *light-swirled sman sgrub* of g.Yung drung Bon can be placed among Tibetan Buddhist tantric traditions embedded in Buddhist philosophical discourses coming from India, embracing also its treatment and references to senses. The teachings of Yogācāra are especially prominent. In the ritual this combines with gSo ba rig pa. The *sman sgrub* provides a nice example of handling these conglomerate concepts in one organised whole and in actual performed tantric practice. The *sman sgrub* rite seems to represent a typical example of the intellectual blossoming in Central Tibet in the 12th and 13th century during which various influences produced new units within tantric, Buddhist and crystallising g.Yung drung Bon formats, and specifically also within ritual practice. This article hopes to have demonstrated the many functions the human senses may have served in such ritual arrangements.

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Appendix

| The Maṇḍalic Scheme of the <i>sMan sgrub</i> Recipe ¹¹⁹ | | | | | |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|
| Direction <i>Phyogs</i> | Centre <i>dbus</i> | East <i>shar</i> | North <i>byang</i> | West <i>Nub</i> | South <i>lho</i> |
| Buddha (rGyal ba rigs lnga) | Kun snang khyab pa | gSal ba rang byung | dGe lha gar phyug | Bye brag dgos med | dGa' ba don grub |

¹¹⁹ The Table has been previously published in Sehnalova 2014.

| | | | | | |
|---|---|--|---|--|---|
| Element * ¹²⁰ <i>'byung ba</i> | Space <i>nam mkha'</i> | Earth <i>sa</i> | Wind <i>rlung</i> | Fire <i>me</i> | Water <i>chu</i> |
| Colour * <i>tshon mdog</i> | White <i>dkar po</i> | Yellow <i>ser po</i> | Green <i>ljang khu</i> | Red <i>dmar po</i> | Blue <i>sngon po</i> |
| Poison * <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> |
| Aggregate * <i>phung po</i> | Consciousness <i>rnam shes</i> | Form <i>gzugs</i> | Volitions <i>'du byed</i> | Feeling <i>tshor ba</i> | Perception <i>'du shes</i> |
| Nectar * <i>bdud rtsi lnga</i> Secret names of special medicine ¹²¹ | Semen <i>thig le</i> "Thought of awakening" <i>byang sems gab pa</i> | Flesh <i>sha</i> "Secret flesh" <i>gsang sha gal chen</i> | Stool <i>dri chen</i> "Incense of great smell" <i>zhim phod dri chen</i> | Blood <i>khrag</i> "Lotus blood" <i>pad ma rak ta</i> | Urine <i>dri chung</i> "Scent of sameness" <i>mnyam nyid dri chu</i> |
| Wisdom * <i>ye shes</i> | Wisdom of emptiness <i>stong nyid ye shes</i> | Mirror-like wisdom <i>me long ye shes</i> | Equalising wisdom <i>mnyams nyid ye shes</i> | Discriminating wisdom <i>sor rtogs ye shes</i> | Accomplishing wisdom <i>bya grub ye shes</i> |
| Sign * <i>rtags</i> ¹²² | <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> |
| Animal * <i>ris rtags</i> | Lion <i>seng ge</i> | Elephant <i>glang chen</i> | Horse <i>rta</i> | <i>Khyung</i> | Dragon <i>'brug</i> |

¹²⁰ The asterisk (*) indicates categories found in *The Main Text of the Light-Swirled Nectar Medicine*. See note 19.

¹²¹ Added according to Snellgrove 1967: 178–179.

¹²² The same arrangements of the symbols in the respective directions within Bon po context in Martin 1994: 59.

| | | | | | |
|--|--|--|---|---|--|
| | | | | (Garuḍa) 123 | |
| Medicine vessel material * | Crystal <i>shel</i> | Gold <i>gser</i> | Turquoise <i>g.yu</i> | Copper <i>zangs</i> | Iron <i>lcags</i> |
| Body functions and parts | Mind <i>thugs</i> | Flesh and bones <i>sha rus</i> | Breath <i>rlung</i> | Heat <i>drod</i> | Blood <i>khrag</i> |
| Bodily force <i>nyes pa</i> | | Phlegm <i>bad kan</i> | Wind <i>rlung</i> | Bile <i>mkhris pa</i> | Phlegm <i>bad kan</i> |
| Characteristics of the medicine * | 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> |
| Title of the medicine * | <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> |

Tibetan Original of the Translated Excerpt

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.

¹²³ The Garuḍa understanding of *Khyung* is rather Buddhist. The position of *Khyung* and dragon is sometimes switched in the Bon tradition.

- 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)¹²⁴ glang chen dung gi gtsug phud can la sogs te/ '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/ 'dabs¹²⁵ *(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 te/ gcan gzan gyi sha sna snying rnams so/ de rtsa ba'i sman de yi 'phrad a ru ra¹²⁶ 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)¹²⁷ me long sman zhes bya ste/ lang tsho dri ma ma phog¹²⁸ pa'i sha chen dang/ [gsang ba gal chen phyi yi sha chen/]¹²⁹ 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 te/ gcan gzan sna tshogs gyi snying sha dang/ (shar phyogs rtsa ba dag/)¹³⁰ 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/)¹³¹ gzugs las 'phrog (*phrag) gnas su dag pa'i sman ches bya ste/ chu sram lco (*lcong) bzang la sogs 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 sogs ste/ rmig zlum 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/ dpyad¹³² (*dpyid) tshugs dpung pa la sogs 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 sogs ste/ rmig pa kha brag rnams kyi lce (*lci) ril dang/ 'du byed [la]

¹²⁴ MsB: starts on fol. 9, MsC: starts on fol. 444.

¹²⁵ MsB: 'dab.

¹²⁶ MsB: a ru.

¹²⁷ Corrected according to gNyos tshul khriims rgyal mtshan, Millard, Colin and Khenpo Tenpa Yungdrung, unpublished, p. 8, denoting *me long lta bi'i ye she* (Mirror-like wisdom).

¹²⁸ MsC: phogs.

¹²⁹ The phrase is added following MsB, MsC (the latter adds *dang* to the end of the phrase).

¹³⁰ Not in MsB, MsC. *Homoio teleuton*, bracketed in MsA.

¹³¹ Not in MsB, MsC. *Homoio teleuton*, bracketed in MsA.

¹³² MsB, MsC: dpyid.

'dod chags gnas su dag pa'i phyir/ bya dkar (85) ze dmar dang/ khu byug gsung snyan la sogs tel/ '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 sogs tel/ gcan gzan rnams kyi gzugs sbrun rnams so// khrag na (*ni)¹³³ pad ma sor rtogs zhes bya tel/ 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 sogs 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 sogs tel/ rmig pa zlum po'i khrag dang/ tshor ba la 'dod chags (*'phrag)¹³⁴ gnas su dag pa'i phyir/ wa chen ldang 'gyur la sogs tel/ gcan gzan sna tshogs kyi (*kyi) khrag gsol/ dri¹³⁵ chu las drug bya ba nan tan ches bya tel/ 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 sogs tel/ gcan gzan sdir (*sder) chags kyi chu dang/ 'du shes las gti mug gnas su dag pa'i phyir/ chu mdzo sngon po la sogs tel/ 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)¹³⁶ la sogs tel/ rmig pa zlum pa'i chu dang/ 'du shes las 'dod chags gnas su dag pa'i phyir/ g.yu bya gong ngon la sogs tel/ 'dod (*'dab) chags kyi khrag chu dang/ lho rtsa ba'i phyir¹³⁷ (*bye) brag go// de nas¹³⁸ phung po rigs su phye ba'o// de nas¹³⁹ gros¹⁴⁰ (*gros) su bstan (*bsten) pa ni/ 'byung ba las dbye ste/ dbus su 'dus pa ldan ba'i nam mkha'i sman ces bya ste/ ro 'dus pa a ru ra¹⁴¹ dang/ bcud 'dus pa bzang drug dang/ nus pa 'dus pa'i skyu ru ra dang/ rjes 'dus pa ba ru ra¹⁴² dang/ gzhan yang sna tshogs par dgos tel/ de ni nam mkha'i lha mo sems can (*sems) mtshan ma¹⁴³ dang bral sman bya'o/ (87) shar gyi sman gyi gros 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 ste¹⁴⁴/ sngon bu g.yu sna dang/ mang bu phrum ces bya tel/ 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

¹³³ As in MsB, MsC.

¹³⁴ Emended according to the text pattern (see below).

¹³⁵ MsC: *dra*.

¹³⁶ Alternatively, might be also *mdang tsher*. dGe shes Nyi ma 'od zer chos 'khor tshang, personal communication (Oxford, February 2013).

¹³⁷ MsB: *phyi*.

¹³⁸ MsC: The first two words omitted.

¹³⁹ MsB: *yi*.

¹⁴⁰ MsB: *gros*.

¹⁴¹ MsB: *a ru*.

¹⁴² MsB: *rje 'dus pa bstun*. This reading would change the phrase: "in accordance with the assembly of after-tastes".

¹⁴³ MsB: *mtsan*.

¹⁴⁴ MsC adds: *dang*.

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'¹⁴⁵ dang/ 'bu ta pa 'dren¹⁴⁶ 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 lce¹⁴⁷ (*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 le¹⁴⁸ dang/ g.yu shing dang/ rgun 'bum sda ru
 dang/ gla rtsi dang/ ha li ka dang/ sum cu¹⁴⁹ tig tig dang/ ka ta ka ri¹⁵⁰ dang/
 sle tre dang/ brag zhun dang cong zi dang sho sha rta dang/ u dpal la sogs pa
 ni/ chu'i¹⁵¹ lha mo khrag las¹⁵² (*la) gnas su dag pa'i sman ces bya'o/ de rnams
 na¹⁵³ (*ni) thabs she rab rtsi ba'i bye brag go// 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) sgrī (*sgrib)
 na snubs la 'byung ba zhe bya ste/ glo ba dang/ 'og ma dang/ mdud sna 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 shan¹⁵⁴ 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 khep dang/ gzungs
 thag ni/ phyogs kyi kha dog dang sbyar ro/ bdud rtsi sman gyi bye brag bstan
 pa'o/

¹⁴⁵ MsB: so 'chal.

¹⁴⁶ MsC: 'dran.

¹⁴⁷ MsB, MsC: lci.

¹⁴⁸ MsB, MsC: ba sha ba le ka.

¹⁴⁹ MsC: bcu.

¹⁵⁰ MsC: ra.

¹⁵¹ MsC: chu yi.

¹⁵² MsC: la.

¹⁵³ MsC: nas.

¹⁵⁴ MsC: dang inserted.

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