

# Revue d'Etudes Tibétaines

**New Research on the Mi la ras pa Biographical Compendia**

by Kristin Blancke and Etienne Bock



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Edited by Kristin Blancke and Etienne Bock

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## FOREWORD

This special issue of the *Revue d'Etudes Tibétaines* is devoted to Mi la ras pa's biographical compendia, a specific category of elaborated hagiographies gathering numerous episodes and spiritual songs prior to gTsang smyon He ru ka's famous *Life and Songs*. It consists of a twofold study elaborated in concert by the two authors.

The first article by Kristin Blancke, *Life and Songs of the Glorious Laughing Vajra, The "bZhad pa'i rDo rje Compendia,"* presents a general overview and analysis of the at present available compendia introducing a new classification of the various texts based on the comparison of their content.

The second article by Etienne Bock, *Groping in the Dark Treasury*, offers a detailed presentation of a manuscript hosted at the Tibet Museum – Fondation Alain Bordier. In a systematic comparison of the manuscript with the other available versions of the compendia, it explores the entire corpus and questions the present understanding on a variety of topics.

As this is a single work in two parts, the bibliographical references are available at the end of the volume along with the Appendixes.

The authors want to express their sincere gratitude to Cécile Ducher and Marta Sernesi for their valuable advice and for reviewing the articles.

## ABBREVIATIONS

### **RBC**, *Ras pa bu chen bcu gnyis*. **The Twelve Great Ras pa Disciples**

- Ms-Newark, manuscript at Newark museum.
- Ms-Oxford, manuscript at Bodleian library, Oxford.
- RBC-Pt, modern edition, dPal brtsegs Publishing House.
- Ms-Drukpa, manuscript on BDRC.
- Ms-Gansu, facsimile in *In Bod kyi snga rabs dam pa rnams kyi gsung chos phyag bris ma rin chen gser phreng, kan su'u rig gnas dpe skrun khang*, Bam po 19 vols. 22-25.
- Ms-BDRC, untitled *dbu med* manuscript.
- Ms-Bordier, unpublished *dbu med* manuscript in the collection of the Tibet Museum – Fondation Alain Bordier.
- Ms-Lhasa, unpublished *dbu med* manuscript 'Bras spung dkar chag: phyi ra 42, 017082.

### **DNM-RD**, *mDzod nag ma*. **The Dark/Black Treasury In Karma pa rang byung rdo rje'i gsung 'bum**.

- DNM-RD1: 2006. computerised *dbu can* edition, Zi ling version.
- DNM-RD2: 2011. In *rJe btsun mi la ras pa'i gsung 'bum* vol. 2 & 3, dPal brtsegs.
- DNM-RD3: 2013. In *dPal rgyal dbang karma pa sku phreng rim byon gyi gsung 'bum phyogs bsgrigs*. dPal brtsegs vol. 23 (pa).

### **BCG**, *Byin rlabs kyi chu rgyun*. **A River of Blessings**


- Ms-Smith, unpublished *dbu med* manuscript in the collection of E. Gene Smith.
- Ms-India, *dbu med* manuscript published in Dalhousie: Damchoe Sangpo, 1978. 2 vols.
- Ms-Drepung, facsimile In *Bod kyi lo rgyus rnam thar phyogs bsgrigs* (91-120), Zi ling, 2015, vol. 111 & 112.
- BCG-Drikung, *dbu can* handwritten text In *'Bri gung bka' brgyud chos mdzod chen mo*. Lhasa: S.N., 2004, vol. 7 & 8.
- BCG-Si khron, Chengdu: Si khron mi rigs dpes krun khang, 2008, 2 vols.

**Ms-BL**, unpublished *dbu med* manuscript, British Library Or 16756.

# Life and Songs of the Glorious Laughing Vajra The "bZhad pa'i rDo rje Compendia"

Kristin Blancke

## *Introduction*

 Previous scholarship brought to light a rich literary corpus of life-and-song-stories regarding rJe btsun Mi la ras pa that had come into being from the twelfth through the fifteenth centuries – 1488, when gTsang smyon Heruka's *Life and Songs* was created.<sup>1</sup> By comparing the early biographies and gTsang smyon's work, these studies illustrate the gradual build-up of an increasingly detailed narrative of the yogin's career, from his childhood to his search for a teacher, his apprenticeship under Mar pa, his meditative experiences, his teaching career, and finally his death.

Since the publication of Roberts' and Quintman's work, an increasing number of texts has come to light – mainly thanks to BDRC. This allows us to make an in-depth comparative study tracing the new inputs integrated into the texts as time went by.

As a tool for the comparative study of the texts, I created detailed Song Charts in which each song is identified and labelled with the corresponding chapter-and-song number in gTsang smyon's work.<sup>2</sup> In this way, it becomes easy to observe multiple layers of narrative development in the description of the great rJe btsun's life. From the analysis of the short liberation stories compiled in the Golden Rosary

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<sup>1</sup> Tiso 2014; Roberts 2007 and 2010; Quintman 2010, 2012, 2014a and 2014b; Ducher 2017a & b, 2020; Torricelli 1995, 2001 and 2019; Sernesi 2007, 2011 and 2021; Larsson 2012 and 2016.

<sup>2</sup> As these song charts are quite voluminous, they cannot be included in the present article, but they can be consulted on my Academia.edu page, <https://independent.academia.edu/kristinblancke>. For the "Life of Milarepa", the corresponding page is given in Quintman's English translation, and for "The Hundred Thousand Songs", the page in Stagg's English translation is given. The songs are indicated with the chapter number in gTsang smyon's work, followed by the song number in the chapter. (e.g., 1.1 means chapter 1, first song). The outlines of each text studied here can be found in Bock's Appendix A pp. 157-215 in this volume.

collections and the elaborate "biographical compendia"<sup>3</sup> dedicated uniquely to Mi la ras pa's story, we see how life writing was adapted, responding to changes in the approach to the spiritual path, social changes and lineage priorities.

The broader scope of this research is articulated in my forthcoming book *In Search of Mila's Collected Songs. Back to the Basics*. The present article concentrates on the study of a group of biographical compendia here called "The bZhad pa'i rDo rje Compendia."<sup>4</sup> This name, so far not used in academic literature, is here adopted because it is associated with the systematic designation of Mi la ras pa with his secret name bZhad pa'i rdo rje in the colophons of all these compendia. The analysis of the structure, narrative episodes and songs contained in the presently available compendia reveals typical changes manifested over time and allows characterising each compendium according to its specificity.

Before getting there, we need to take a step back to the accounts of Mi la ras pa's life and songs found in the Golden Rosary collections. These life stories – called *rnam thars* – create a framework against which to evaluate further developments. Golden Rosaries contain short biographies of the successive great masters of the lineage to which the compiler of the life stories belongs. In fact, the liberation stories of Mi la ras pa and his disciples vary in content and structure depending on the lineage in which they were transmitted – whether descending from sGam po pa, Ngan rdzong ston pa or Ras chung pa.

In the *rnam thars* in the lineages descending from sGam po pa,<sup>5</sup> different episodes are narrated one after the other, without a particular structure to the text. There are few songs, and the text is not subdivided into "qualities" as would be the case later on.

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<sup>3</sup> For the use of the term "biographical compendia" see Quintman 2014a: 82-83.

<sup>4</sup> My sincere thanks go to Étienne Bock for his intensive collaboration on the article. This study is a joined effort, hence sometimes the plural pronoun 'we' is used.

<sup>5</sup> This topic is discussed in the first chapter of Blancke, *In Search of Mi la's Collected Songs. Back to the basics* (forthcoming). As an example of three translated life stories of Mi la ras pa transmitted in sGam po pa's lineage see Quintman 2014a: 191-98 (sGam po pa/Khyung tshang pa), Khenpo Könchog Gyaltzen 2006: 123-43 (Don mo ri pa) and Tiso 2014: 173-246 (rGyal thang pa).



## Life and Songs of the Glorious Laughing Vajra

Ngan rdzong ston pa's life story of Mi la ras pa<sup>6</sup> – subdivided into twenty "qualities" – is the first example of a liberation story compiled in the Saṃvara Aural Transmission (*bDe mchog snyan brgyud*) tradition. In this tradition, the life stories of the lineage masters are codified as part of the "Wish-fulfilling Gem of the Lineage" (*brgyud pa yid bzhin nor bu*), and aim at the elimination of doubts regarding the lineage and its masters. As Sernesi writes:<sup>7</sup>

The Aural Transmission instructions are grouped into three Wish-fulfilling Gems. (...) The first Gem is called the Lineage Wish-fulfilling Gem (*brgyud pa yid bzhin nor bu*), and is defined as "externally, to cut the doubts, the instructions of the emanation-body" (*phyi sgro 'dogs gcod par byed pa sprul sku'i gdam ngag*). (...) The Gem of the Lineage is defined as "cutting the doubts", because it establishes the authenticity of the revelation and its transmission within a succession of enlightened beings, which assures its preservation and shows its effectiveness. (...) The intimate link between the Aural Transmission's Gem of the Lineage and life-narrative is reflected in the structural device adopted by the main hagiographical tradition of the Aural Transmission.

Also the lineages that consider Ras chung pa as Mi la ras pa's principal disciple belong to the same Saṃvara Aural Transmission tradition. Here, Mi la's life stories are structured in the form of two main chapters – called the quality of overcoming problems at his early age and the qualities resulting from his meditation practice. The second chapter is again divided into seventeen or eighteen sub-chapters.<sup>8</sup> Each of these qualities that brought Mi la ras pa to liberation is illustrated with a short narrative frame and one or two short songs.

Within this same Saṃvara Aural Transmission tradition, presumably starting from the 13<sup>th</sup> century comprehensive "compendia," dedicated exclusively to Mi la ras pa's life and songs, were created. In the present study, the name "bZhad pa'i rDo rje Compendia" indicates a group of

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<sup>6</sup> See the translation of this account in Blancke 2021c, *The Complete Liberation of Mi la Vajra-Victory-Banner*.

<sup>7</sup> Sernesi 2010: 405-6.

<sup>8</sup> Song Charts 4 & 5 on my Academia.edu page give outlines of the chapters and songs included in the main Golden Rosary life stories of Mi la ras pa and Ras chung pa in Ras chung pa's lineage.

voluminous texts explaining the liberation story of rJe btsun Mi la ras pa in terms of 17-18 qualities he developed on the path to realisation.

Nowadays there seems to be a tendency to consider all these compendia as belonging to the same textual family called *Black Treasury* (*mdzod nag ma*). Quintman writes:<sup>9</sup>

As a general title, *The Black Treasury* does not indicate a single text or even multiple editions of a single text. Rather, the name refers to a broad collection of biographical compendia sharing common (if not always identical) sources, structures, and content. In this sense, *The Black Treasury* seems to have been understood as a container into which all known material about Mi la ras pa's life and career might be locked away.

The term *mdzod nag ma* seems to be especially linked to the biographical literary corpus of Mi la ras pa – not only to the "compendia" but also to other texts regarding Mi la ras pa. For example, citing the early nineteenth-century *History of Drakar Taso*, Roberts writes,<sup>10</sup>

The one named Shiché Ripa (*Zhi-byed Ri-pa*) who is famous for having read a hundred and twenty-seven different biographies of the venerable one, composed *A Dark Treasury* and a block print of this previously existed amongst the retreat centres of Chuwar (*Chu-dbar*), as is described in the biography of Gamnyön Chardor Norbu (*sGam-smyon Phyang-rdor Nor-bu*).

According to Roberts,

*A Dark Treasury* (*mdzod-nag-ma*) is a generic title for texts that should not be made available to the public. It refers to that part of the home where precious things not put on display are kept. This room, or closet, has no windows and therefore is in darkness.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Quintman 2014a: 104-107.

<sup>10</sup> Roberts 2007: 32.

<sup>11</sup> Ibidem, 229n128, citing a pers. comm., Khenpo Sonam Tobgyal Rinpoche, Santa Fe, New Mexico, 5 October 2005.

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Thus, in its broadest sense, *The Dark Treasury* in this case could be considered "a collection of rare texts regarding Mi la's life and songs."

From the present research, it will become clear that the texts analysed here indeed belong to the same family as far as their structure is concerned. However, there are two reasons why applying the name *Dark/Black Treasury*<sup>12</sup> to all these texts does not seem appropriate. First, by doing so, some significant differences between the different strata of the texts are overlooked. Second, this designation exclusively links these texts to the Karma bKa' brgyud lineage. As Quintman further explains:

But the tradition is also closely associated with the line of the Karmapas, Kagyu hierarchs famous for their iconic black crowns, for which reason the name might equally be rendered "the treasury of the black." It is now clear that the name refers to a specific chapel – or perhaps a single room in a chapel – in southern Tibet associated with the Karmapas wherein an early version of The Black Treasury was preserved.<sup>13</sup>

By designating all these texts as "*Black Treasury*", the fact that similar texts were transmitted in other lineages – e.g., the 'Brug pa bKa' brgyud, the sTag lung bKa' brgyud, and the dGe lugs – is overshadowed.

For these reasons, we do not agree with Quintman's use of the term "*Black Treasury*" for all the compendia. Instead, we suggest the name "*The bZhad pa'i rDo rje Compendia*" as a more accurate designation, based on the use of the name bZhad pa'i rdo rje present in all of them. Here the expression *Dark/Black Treasury* is used exclusively to refer to the text in Karma pa Rang byung rdo rje's *Collected Works*. The occurrences of this term are analysed in detail in Étienne Bock's article below.

It is noteworthy that in this literary tradition many manuscripts are characterised by a typical pattern of illuminations introducing new episodes.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> In this article, the expression *Dark/Black Treasury* is used for the translation of *mdzod nag ma* respectively by Roberts and Quintman.

<sup>13</sup> Quintman 2014a: 105.

<sup>14</sup> A detailed description of the illuminations is included in Étienne Bock's article in this volume pp. 56-81.

In an attempt to classify the bZhad pa'i rDo rje Compendia based on their content, we have divided them into two main strata: a first stratum, containing a group of texts we call *The Twelve Great Ras pa Disciples* and its variants, and a second stratum, including *A River of Blessings*, *The Dark/Black Treasury*, and an untitled manuscript kept at the British Library.<sup>15</sup>

## List of the studied texts

First stratum bZhad pa'i rDo rje Compendia					
A. Twelve Great Ras pa Disciples <i>Ras pa bu chen bcu gnyis (RBC)</i>			B. Variant versions RBC		
Ms-Oxford / RBC Paltsek	Ms-Newark	Ms-Drukpa / Ms-Gansu	Ms-Bordier	Ms-BDRC	Ms-Lhasa

Second stratum bZhad pa'i rDo rje Compendia						
Dark/Black Treasury <i>mdzod nag ma</i>	A River of Blessings <i>Byin rlabs kyi chu rgyun (BCG)</i>					British Library Manuscript
	Group A		Group B			
DNM-RD	Ms- Smith	Ms-India	Ms- Drepung	BCG- Drikung	BCG Si khron	Ms-BL

Unfortunately, among all the copies available to us, none predates the late 15<sup>th</sup> century. We posit these texts are witnesses of an 'original' work created in the 13<sup>th</sup> /14<sup>th</sup> century, transmitted in time with several later additional narrative developments. The main reason why we presume it was created in the 13<sup>th</sup> /14<sup>th</sup> century is the endorsement by the Third Karma pa Rang byung rdo rje (1284–1339) of *The Twelve Great Ras pa Disciples* as a valid source of Mi la's life and songs and the slightly amended new compilation of the text he supposedly created.

As will be explained in this article, the versions we consider as belonging to the first stratum maintain the core characteristics of the presumed 'original' work. The second-stratum versions contain specific characteristics that distinguish them from all the versions included in the first stratum.

<sup>15</sup> On *The Twelve Great Ras pa Disciples* and *The Dark/Black Treasury* see Roberts 2007: 20-25 and Quintman 2014a: 86-104.

## Life and Songs of the Glorious Laughing Vajra

I. *First-stratum bZhad pa'i rDo rje Compendia*1. *General description of The Twelve Great Ras pa Disciples*

"Life and Songs of the Glorious Laughing Vajra" (*dPal bzhad pa'i rdo rje'i rnam thar 'gur chings dang bcas pa*) is the end title of the first "biographical compendium". This title is mentioned only in the colophon of the text and it is common to all the versions of the first stratum studied here. In academic circles the work is known by its informal title, "The Twelve Great Disciples" – *bu chen bcu gnyis* – referring to the presumed contribution to the composition of the text by Mi la ras pa's twelve most important disciples, such as Ngan rdzong ston pa Bho dhi rā dza and the others. As a matter of fact, the complete Tibetan expression being *ras pa bu chen bcu gnyis*, it seems important to refer to the text as *The Twelve Great Ras pa Disciples*, adding the detail that the sources of the text are said to be the "*ras pa*" disciples, thereby indicating the cotton-clad community, not the monk disciples. Thus, *The Twelve Great Ras pa Disciples* (abbreviated RBC, *ras pa bu chen*) is the name we use to distinguish the compendia in the first stratum from those in the second stratum,

What was the exact contribution of these disciples to the composition of the text is not clear. Some versions claim the work was created by them; others claim it was written according to their words. As will be explained further on, the latter seems to be more likely. The colophon of the text states:<sup>16</sup>

This Life [of Mi la ras pa] has been written down for the benefit of worthy meditators, by /in the words of/ the twelve great *ras pa* sons such as Ngan rdzong ston pa Bho dhi rā dza and the others.

<sup>16</sup> E.g., RBC-Pt 515, *rnam thar 'di skal ldan sgom chen rnams kyi don du/ ngan rdzong ston pa bho dhi rā dza la sogs pa'i ras pa bu chen bcu gnyis kyi yi ger bkod pa'o/*.

Ms-Oxford, Ms-Newark and RBC-Pt share the wording *ras pa bu chen bcu gnyis kyi yi ger bkod do*. Ms-Stockholm, Ms-Drukpa, Ms-Gansu, Ms-Bordier, Ms-BDRC and Ms-Lhasa use the instrumental particle *kyis* instead of the genitive *kyi*, thus attributing the work to the *ras pa* disciples. See Roberts 2007: 21. Although this grammatical difference may be of little significance (see Quintman 2014a: 250n29), it does not take away the other reasons cited below to doubt the authorship of the text.

The attribution of the text to the rJe btsun's twelve *ras pa* disciples headed by Ngan rdzong ston pa does not seem realistic. Although the above colophon is similar in style to other colophons written by Ngan rdzong ston pa,<sup>17</sup> it may have been adapted from another text. The reasons to doubt are the following.

First, various earlier liberation stories of Mi la ras pa and his disciples already existed in the Golden Rosary collections, including the liberation story by Ngan rdzong ston pa himself. These biographies lack the wealth of details introduced in *The Twelve Great Ras pa Disciples*.

Second, in Ngan rdzong ston pa's biography written by his disciple Dam pa ras chen<sup>18</sup> there is no mention of this work, and it surely would be a point of honour for a disciple to include such an important work of his teacher.

The above colophon is followed by a list of Mi la ras pa's male and female disciples, especially the twelve *ras pa* disciples, and a second piece of colophon, repeated in all versions:<sup>19</sup>

This has been written down following the *bla ma's* words  
out of fear that those with lesser intelligence [amongst] the future  
lineage holders of this lineage Wish-fulfilling Gem of the Saṃvara  
Aural Transmission might forget it.

Except for those individuals in later generations  
who are fit vessels [for the teaching] rejoicing in empowerments,  
blessings, *gaṇacakras*,  
and making offerings to *dākas* and *dākinīs*,  
this [text] has been sealed by the Lord guru's command.

<sup>17</sup> See for example the colophons of the Tshe ring ma chapters in Quintman 2014a: 199-202, or the colophon of Ngan rdzong ston pa's *Complete Liberation of Mi la Vajra-Victory-Banner*, Blancke 2021c.

<sup>18</sup> Dam pa Ras chen 1985: 1-17.

<sup>19</sup> E.g. RBC-Pt 516: *snyan rgyud bde mchog 'khor lo yi/ rgyud pa yi bzhin nor bu 'di/ ma 'ongs gdung rgyud 'dzin pa rnams/ blo dman rjed pas 'jigs pa'i phyir/ bla ma'i gsung bzhin yi ger bkod/ bla ma mkha' 'gro'i bzod par gsol/ phyi rabs rten gyi gang zag rnams/ dbang bskur byin rlabs tshogs 'khor dang/dpa' bo dpa' mo mchod la sogs/ dgyes shing ghang ba ma ma gtogs pa/ bla ma rje yi bka' rgyas btab/ gal te bka' las 'das gyur na/ mkha' 'gros ko long dam pas na/ yi ger ma spel gsang bar zhu/ brgyud pa yid bzhin nor bu da ki sa ma ya.*

## Life and Songs of the Glorious Laughing Vajra

If one transgresses that command,  
 the *ḍākinīs* will become extremely angry.  
 Therefore, please do not promulgate these writings, but keep them  
 secret.  
 The lineage Wish-fulfilling Gem, *ḍāki*, samaya.

Accordingly, *The Twelve Great Ras pa Disciples* would be part of the "Lineage Wish-fulfilling Gem" of the Cakrasaṃvara Aural Transmission.

These "Wish-fulfilling Gems" can be traced back to the life story of Tilopa, in particular to the episode in which Tilopa asks instructions from the Gaṇḍola wisdom-*ḍākinī* (*jñāna ḍākinī*), in the land of Oḍḍiyāna. The instructions he requests are called "Three Wish-fulfilling Gems". In the earliest available life story of Tilopa, the first Gem is called the "General/Common/Ordinary Wish-fulfilling Gem" (*thun mongs yid bzhin nor bu*), the second is the "Commitment Wish-fulfilling Gem" (*dam tshig yid bzhin nor bu*), and the third is the "True Nature Wish-fulfilling Gem" (*gnas lugs yid bzhin nor bu*).<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> There are various life stories of Tilopa. The earliest available biography I have seen – included in Byang chub bzang po's *bDe mchog mkha' 'gro sñan rgyud* – is attributed to Mar pa Lo tsā ba (1012–1097/1000–1085). This attribution might be spurious, but the text, although undatable, is anyway old. I wonder whether it could be written by Shangs pa Mar ston Tshul khriṃs 'byung gnas (second half of the 12th century), a disciple of Khyung tshang pa Ye shes bla ma (1115–1176), considering that the lives of Mar pa, Mi la ras pa and Ras chung pa in Byang chub bZang po's collection also could be written by him, as I argue in *In Search of Mila's Collected Songs*, Chapter 1. (About Mar ston Tshul khriṃs-'byung gnas and his biography of Mar pa see Ducher 2017b: 76-78).

This Tilopa life story is recounted and commented upon by the XII Khentin Tai Situpa (1988: 40-69), and translated by Fabrizio Torricelli (1995: 34-60 and 2019: 171-77). Here I follow this earliest version. Among the different life stories of Tilopa mentioned by Torricelli (1995: viii-xi) only Don mo ri pa (13<sup>th</sup> century) follows the same classification of the Wish-fulfilling Gems as the one in this early *rnam thar* (see Khenpo Könchog Gyaltsen 2006: 40). The 13<sup>th</sup>-century *rnam thars* of Tilopa by rGyal thang pa bDe chen rdo rje (dKar bgryud gser 'phreng 1973: 27-28) as well as the one by O rgyan pa (bKa' brgyud yid bzhin nor bu yi 'phreng ba 1972: 20) both classify the Wish-fulfilling Gems as *brgyud pa yid bzhin nor bu*, *smin lam yid bzhin nor bu* and *grol lam yid bzhin nor bu*, as would be the case in later times.

In later times, this very special Aural Transmission, at first transmitted only orally, was written down – probably in the early thirteenth century by Zhang Lo tsā ba (†1237).<sup>21</sup> From then onwards, in all the successive life stories of Tilopa, the first Wish-fulfilling Gem is codified as the "Lineage Wish-fulfilling Gem" (*brgyud pa yid bzhin nor bu*). It contains the basic instructions of this transmission intended to eliminate doubts regarding the emanation bodies – the lineage gurus – as well as the liberation stories of the masters of the past. The second Gem becomes the "Wish-fulfilling Gem of the Path of Ripening" (*smin lam yid bzhin nor bu*). The third, the "Wish-fulfilling Gem of the Path of Liberation" (*grol lam yid bzhin nor bu*), includes the General, the Commitment and the True Nature Wish-fulfilling Gems. Thus, this codification seems to be a later development.

Together with the already stated reasons of doubt regarding the direct authorship of the twelve great *ras pa* disciples, the use of the later codified term "Lineage Wish-fulfilling Gem" in *The Twelve Great Ras pa Disciples* could be another indication that this work should be considered a new creation, in which the words of the *ras pa* disciples are brought together into one great compendium. It was presumably composed by one or more anonymous author/s in the thirteenth century and transmitted over time in different lineages (mostly bKa' brgyud – 'Brug pa, Karma, sTag lung, 'Bri gung – but also dGe lugs ).<sup>22</sup>

*Twelve Great Ras pa Disciples* follows the 17/18 quality structure of the hagiographic tradition in Ras chung pa's lineage – as explained on page 9 – so presumably the work was created within that lineage. In the first half of the thirteenth century, Ras chung pa's lineage was already absorbed in the 'Brug pa bKa' brgyud lineage, and some changes – such as considering sGam po pa as the main disciple of Mi la ras pa instead of Ras chung pa – had already taken place. These were incorporated in

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<sup>21</sup> See Torricelli 2001. The doctrinal aspects of the Aural Transmission are contained in the manuals by gTsang smyon Heruka, (1452–1507), Kun mkhyen Pad ma dkar po (1527–1592), Byang chub bzang po (sixteenth century) and 'Jam mgon kong sprul Blo gros mtha' yas (1813–1899). See also Sernesi 2007 & 2011: 179-209. A detailed outline of Zhang-lo's *thim yig* can be found on page 186 of the latter article. See also Callahan 2023: 173-9. In Blancke 2021g, *Zhijé Ripa. The Illuminating Lamp of Sun and Moon Beams*, I suggest that this "Introduction" may be wrongly attributed to Zhang Lo tsā ba and be datable to a later time.

<sup>22</sup> See a detailed description of the texts below.



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the text, much in the same way as gTsang smyon Heruka would integrate further variations in his work two hundred years later.<sup>23</sup> In the Golden Rosary collections, each lineage considered its founder as Mi la ras pa's main disciple. In contrast, starting with *The Twelve Great Ras pa Disciples*, the rJe btsun's main disciple is stated to be sGam po pa. There are two instances in the text in which this is clarified. To the question of patroness lCam me whether the rJe btsun would have realised disciples, the rJe btsun replied,

According to a prophecy of the *dākinīs* regarding emanation bodies, Dwags po will rise like a sun for the beings, and Ras chung will be a moon-like emanation body.<sup>24</sup>

The next reference to sGam po pa's preeminence in *The Twelve Great Ras pa Disciples* appears in a chapter titled "The episode of the prophecy of Dwags po lha rje's future arrival" (*Dwags po lha rje 'byon pa'i ma 'ongs lung bstan gyis bskor*),

Ras chung pa asked again, "While you were with *bla ma* Mar pa from lHo brag, with his noble heart he chose you to inspire us. Will there be someone to protect the instructions and the community of our Dharma lineage? As I was the first one to meet the *bla ma*, will you give that permission to me? Or do you think there could be someone else?" [The rJe btsun] was slightly displeased. He said, "Ras chung pa, don't talk like this! When lHo brag Mar pa pointed his staff to my heart and said 'I entrust my lineage to you' he also had many other good disciples, and he chose me not because I was his favourite, but because there was an auspicious connection [for me] to uphold the lineage. In a few days from now, the one who will uphold my lineage will arrive."<sup>25</sup>

<sup>23</sup> See the discussion about the demotion of Ras chung pa in Blancke, *In Search of Mi la's Collected Songs*, Chapter 2 (forthcoming).

<sup>24</sup> E.g., RBC-Pt 182, *mkha' 'gro'i lung bstan sprul pa'i sku/ dwags po nyi ma 'gro la shar/ ras chung zla ba sprul pa'i sku*. The same episode is found in gTsang smyon's Chapter 55, song 2, gTsang smyon 1981: 769; Stagg 2017: 648.

<sup>25</sup> E.g., Ms-Oxford 164a. *Yang ras chung pas zhus pas/ bla ma lho brag mar pa'i drung nas/ rang re la sku snyan pa che ba'i thugs rtsis mdzad zin pas/ nged rang gi chos rgyud 'di la/ khrid dang tshogs pa skyong ba e yong/ nga yang bla ma dang mjal snga bas bka' gnang 'dra e yod/ 'o na gzhan 'dra la mehis sam zhus pas/ thugs chad pa cig byung nas/ ras chung pa de skad ma zer/ nga la lho brag mar pas sba ber snying khar gtad nas/ nga'i rgyud pa 'di khyod la gtad pa yin gsungs nas/ gzhan slob ma bzang la mang po yod de/ nga la thugs rtse ba ma yin te/ rgyud pa*

## 2. *Versions of The Twelve Great Ras pa Disciples*

*The Twelve Great Ras pa Disciples* survives in different versions.<sup>26</sup> The following six versions were consulted:

- The Oxford manuscript (Ms-Oxford), an untitled manuscript kept at Oxford University's Bodleian Library. The text ends: *dpal bzhad pa'i rdo rje'i rnam thar/ mgur chings dang bcas pa mdzogs so*, "The life of glorious bZhad pa'i rdo rje, together with his songs, is completed." This closing sentence is common to all extant copies.
- The Newark manuscript (Ms-Newark), titled *rJe btsun chen po mid la ras pa'i rnam thar zab mo*, "The Profound Life Story of the Great rJe btsun Mi la ras pa." Because of the illuminations in the manuscript, it can not be dated earlier than the late seventeenth century.<sup>27</sup> It is a version of *The Twelve Great Ras pa Disciples* transmitted in the dGe lugs lineage. Compared to the Oxford version, especially in the chapter on sGam po pa's stay with rJe btsun Mi la ras pa, many details regarding the differences between the teachings of the bKa' gdams pa-s and those of Mi la ras pa have been left out.<sup>28</sup>
- A recent edition of Ms-Oxford published in book form by the dPal brtsegs Tibetan Rare Texts Research Center in the Ancestral Legacy Series (RBC-Pt),<sup>29</sup> as the first of five volumes of *rJe*

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*'dzin pa'i rten 'brel cig shar ba red/ da nga'i rgyud pa 'dzin mkhan cig zhag mang po mi 'gor bar 'ong bar yod gsung ngo*. The episode is narrated in a much more dramatic way in gTsang smyon 1981: 625, Stagg 2017: 492.

<sup>26</sup> For an outline of the different versions and the songs compiled in them see Blancke 2023a, Song Chart 7.

<sup>27</sup> See Quintman 2014a: 88.

<sup>28</sup> Ms-Newark 213-21; see Blancke 2021d, *Gampopa Sonam Rinchen Meets Jetsun Mi la*, and compare the episode in Sang rgyas 'Bum's biography [identical as in the other *Twelve Great Ras pa Disciples*] with the one in the Newark version. The latter abbreviated version eliminates all forms of criticism by Mi la ras pa versus the bKa' gdams pa-s.

<sup>29</sup> RBC-Pt *dPal rtsegs yig dpe rnying zhib 'jug khang, Mes po'i shul bzag* 2011; the second and third volumes of the *gsung 'bum* contain *The Dark/Black Treasury* included in Karma pa Rang 'byung rdo rje's *Collected Works*. The fourth volume contains the *rdo rje'i mgur drug* – "The Six Vajra Songs" – as well as some doctrinal texts such as the *Phyag rgya chen po ye shes gsal 'byed* – "Mahāmudrā,

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- btsun mi la ras pa'i gsung 'bum*, "The Collected Works of rJe btsun Mi la ras pa." It corresponds to the Oxford version, with fewer scribal errors. It bears the same title as the Newark version.
- Ms-Drukpa,<sup>30</sup> an *dbu can* manuscript in the BDRC database titled *rJe btsun mid la ras pa chen po'i mgur 'bum*, "The Collected Songs of the great rJe btsun Mid la ras pa." Nothing is known about the origin of this text. It contains 20 illuminations of lineage masters, the last of which are gLing ras pa (1128-1188), gTsang pa rgya ras (1161-1211), rGod tshang pa (1189-1258) and Yang dgon pa (1213–1258).<sup>31</sup> This collocates the manuscript in the 'Brug pa bKa' brgyud lineage, hence Ms-Drukpa. Considering that its content is almost identical to Ms-Gansu, it is a late version.
  - Ms-Gansu, an *dbu med* manuscript reproduced in facsimile in a collection printed in Gansu (China), titled *rNal 'byor dbang phyug mi la chen po'i rnam thar bka' 'bum chen mo grub thob ras pa bcu gnyis kyis bsgrigs pa ngo mtshar kun 'dus*, "The Life and the Great Teaching Collection of the Great Mi la, the Powerful Yogin, compiled by the twelve *ras pa* siddhas: a collection of marvels." After the general colophon of *The Twelve Great Ras pa Disciples* – identical to the one cited above – the scribe adds the printer's colophon of the xylographic edition mentioned by Roberts as the "Stockholm version" that belonged to the collection of Toni Schmid and was donated to the Stockholm Folkens Museum Etnografiska, but is now missing.<sup>32</sup> As a Central Tibetan printed edition, that text can not predate the fifteenth century. Consequently, as Ms-Gansu seems to be a handwritten

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Clarifying Primordial Wisdom" – and the *Bar do blo chod* – "Three Profound Instructions Pointing Out the Intermediate States for Reaching the End of the Path with the Mind" (*lam blo nas gcod pa bar do ngo sprod kyi gdams ngag gsum*) (translated in Blancke 2021f). The fifth volume contains four short biographies of Mi la ras pa – the last being the one by Ngan rdzong ston pa (translated in Blancke 2021c) as well as Zhi byed ri pa's *Nyi zla'i 'od zer sgron me* – "Illuminating Lamp of Sun and Moon Beams" – and a prayer to Mi la ras pa.

<sup>30</sup> BDRC W3CN22290, vol. 2 315 fols. We thank Marta Sernesi for kindly providing us with copies of both Ms-Drukpa and Ms-Gansu. These two manuscripts form an important contribution to the hitherto known other versions of *The Twelve Great Ras pa Disciples*.

<sup>31</sup> See Bock's outline of the text in Appendix A pp. 169-172.

<sup>32</sup> Roberts, 2007: 21-22.

reproduction of the xylographical edition, it also can not be dated earlier than the fifteenth century.

Thus, no early witness of the compendium is available, and none of these five copies – except the modern edition RBC-Pt – is exactly datable. As we will see from their content, they all seem to be quite late.

Why, then, could *The Twelve Great Ras pa Disciples* supposedly be dated to the thirteenth century? One reason is that three slightly 'variant' versions of the text have been found, one of which was allegedly compiled by the Third Karma pa Rang byung rdo rje (1284–1339). All three bear the same main colophon as the above versions, and their content is almost identical.<sup>33</sup> Therefore, we posit that these 'variant' versions are based on a late thirteenth–early fourteenth-century version of *The Twelve Great Ras pa Disciples* complemented with some details from sources that have not yet come to light.

- Ms-BDRC. The BDRC database has a manuscript with a damaged title page that is catalogued as *rNal 'byor gyi dbang phyug rje btsun mi la'i rnam thar – ras pa bu chen bcu gnyis kyis bsgrig*, "Liberation Story of rJe btsun Mi la, the Powerful Lord of Yogins, Compiled by the Twelve Great *Ras pa* Disciples."<sup>34</sup> Nothing is known about the origin of the manuscript, except that it came from Central Tibet. For the moment it will be referred to as Ms-BDRC.
- Ms-Bordier. The Bordier manuscript, preserved at the Tibet Museum – Foundation Alain Bordier in Switzerland, bears the title *rJe btsun mi la bzhad pa rdo rje'i 'gur bum rnam thar 'bril ma*, "The Collected Songs of Mi la bZhad pa rdo rje, together with his Liberation Story."<sup>35</sup> The main colophon is the same as the one in *The Twelve Great Ras pa Disciples*. As shown in Étienne Bock's article below,<sup>36</sup> it has an additional colophon,

<sup>33</sup> Blancke 2023a, Song Chart 7.

<sup>34</sup> BDRC W3CN25684, 418 fols. The manuscript's title page is only half readable, with a title referring to a different text ([...] *bcas dbu'i gzigz phyogs legs par bzhugs so*); the last few folios are missing. For a detailed discussion see Bock's article.

<sup>35</sup> 323 fols, in *dbu med*. I thank Étienne Bock and Alain Bordier for allowing me to study this beautiful manuscript.

<sup>36</sup> Bock pp. 53-54 and pp. 94-106.

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"The History of the *Dark Treasury* transmitted by the Karma pa," very similar to a transmission history in the *River of Blessings* versions Ms-Drepung, BCG-D and BCG-Si.

- Ms-Lhasa. This manuscript was kept in the archives of 'Bras spungs monastery, Lhasa.<sup>37</sup> Quintman considers it to be the earliest *mdzod nag ma* text, calling it DNM-Lhasa.<sup>38</sup> On close inspection, there is nothing in this text that refers to a *Black Treasury*: the title page is missing and it is catalogued as *rJe btsun mi la rdo rje rgyal tshan gyi rnam par thar pa*, "The liberation story of rJe btsun Mi la rdo rje rgyal mtshan."<sup>39</sup> The main colophon is the same as the general *Twelve Great Ras pa Disciples'* colophon. It has a second colophon, in which the scribe of the text writes that Rang byung rdo rje endorsed *The Twelve Great Ras pa Disciples* as a valid source of Mi la's life and songs; he somewhat edited the manuscript and had a new copy made.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> 'Bras spung Catalogue: phyi ra 42, 017082. About the texts found in these archives see Ducher 2020. I thank Andrew Quintman for kindly providing me with a photocopy of the text.

<sup>38</sup> Quintman 2014a: 107-9.

<sup>39</sup> Note that this title corresponds to the title of Ngan rdzong ston pa's liberation story of Mi la ras pa! (see Blancke 2021c). However, the title is not mentioned in the text itself, nor is the name rDo rje rgyal mtshan, making it only the cataloguer's choice.

<sup>40</sup> Ms-Lhasa 308b. This interpretation is how I understand Ms-Lhasa's extremely confused colophon. For an elaborate discussion, see Bock, pp. 82-88 in this volume. Without this colophon and its reference to the Karma pa's contribution, it would have been more logical to date *The Twelve Great Ras pa Disciples* to the late 14<sup>th</sup>-early 15<sup>th</sup> centuries, just after or around the same time as the compilation of the *bDe mchog sNyan brgyud Biographies* and Zhi byed ri pa's *Illuminating Lamp of Sun and Moon Beams* (the latter completed in 1381). These two texts are examples of the 18-quality life stories of Mi la ras pa included in the Golden Rosaries of the Saṃvara Aural Transmission. Zhi byed ri pa – who says he had access to 127 of Mi la's life stories – seems not to have known about the existence of *The Twelve Great Ras pa Disciples*, which sounds rather strange. One possible explanation could be that the circulation of *The Twelve Great Ras pa Disciples* was extremely restricted. Zhi byed ri pa mentions a few of its song cycles, which he might have read in the second Zhwa dmar pa mKha' spyod dbang po's *Clouds of Blessings – byin rlabs kyi sprin phung*. mKha' spyod dbang po (1283–1349) also dedicates limited space to the stories in *The Twelve Great Ras pa Disciples*. As a disciple of the fourth Karma pa, he was introduced to texts with limited distribution. In his liberation story of Mi la ras pa, similar to those in sGam po pa's lineage, he does not follow the quality structure: he does not include entire song

The same second colophon was possibly included also in Ms-BDRC, although the last page is not completely readable. In contrast, Ms-Bordier manuscript does not include it. Through this second colophon – referring to a compilation made by the Third Karma pa – *The Twelve Great Ras pa Disciples* is brought into the Kam tshang lineage, and it can be dated to the late 13<sup>th</sup>- early 14<sup>th</sup> centuries.

### 3. Content of *The Twelve Great Ras pa Disciples*

*The Twelve Great Ras pa Disciples* consists of detailed song cycles (*skor*) narrated following the same quality structure as the liberation stories in the Golden Rosaries of the Saṃvara Aural Transmission tradition in Ras chung pa's lineage. Many new songs appear within each chapter, with Mi la granting Dharma teachings and meditation instructions to various disciples and patrons.

Part of the new material in this work is derived from narratives in Ras chung pa's life stories in the Golden Rosaries:<sup>41</sup> Ras chung pa's first meeting with rJe btsun Mi la, his trip to India and Nepal and his relationship with Mi la. In *The Twelve Great Ras pa Disciples*, the stories of the yak horn and the wild asses are introduced. Although in the Golden Rosary biographies of Ras chung pa we find one song included in the yak-horn chapter and two included in the wild-ass

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cycles from *The Twelve Great Ras pa Disciples*, but only parts of their stories. However, that he does mention some of these stories attests to the existence of *The Twelve Great Ras pa Disciples* before his and Zhi byed ri pa's time. See Blancke, K., 2021g. *Zhi byed ri pa – The Illuminating Lamp of Sun and Moon Beams*.

<sup>41</sup> For an overview of Golden Rosary life stories of Ras chung pa see Blancke 2020, Song Chart 5 – *Outline and Songs in The Life of Ras chung pa in Golden Rosaries in Ras chung pa's Lineage*.

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chapter,<sup>42</sup> there the narrative of the tension between Mi la ras pa and Ras chung pa found in *The Twelve Great Ras pa Disciples* is missing.<sup>43</sup>

The chapters of the conversations between Mi la and the Tshe ring ma sisters and the meeting with *ras pa Zhi ba 'od* probably come from Ngan rdzong ston pa's lineage.<sup>44</sup>

Other songs and episodes have been elaborated from narratives transmitted in the lineages descending from sGam po pa, especially from the biographies of Mi la ras pa included in the Golden Rosaries by Don mo ri pa, rGyal thang pa and Sangs rgyas 'bum – for example, the episode at Brag dmar chong lung (Mi la gathers wood) and the journey to La phyi chu bzang.

However, many episodes of encounters with disciples are not found in any of the Golden Rosaries – e.g., the meeting with Se ban ras pa, dPal dar 'bum, 'Bri sgom ras pa, gSal le 'od, to mention but a few. These episodes might have been narrated in a presumed early *Mi la'i mgur 'bum*; some extra content might have come from the oral tradition, or it might have been a later enrichment.

From a quick overview of Song Chart 7<sup>45</sup> we notice a truly remarkable consistency in the content of all versions of *The Twelve Great Ras pa Disciples*. Except for the differences stated below, on the whole, we find the same song cycles and songs included in all of them.

Ms-Oxford, compared to the Newark manuscript as well as to the three 'variant' versions, contains three additional chapters which are also found in the compendia in the second stratum:

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<sup>42</sup> gTsang smyon Chapter 38, second song, Stagg 2017: 447 – song in which Ras chung pa recounts the teachings received in India;  
Chapter 39, 9<sup>th</sup> song, Stagg 2017: 476 – a song about Mi la's hopes and fears regarding Ras chung pa;  
Chapter 39, 10<sup>th</sup> song, Stagg 2017: 478 – Ras chung pa's song about defeating debaters.

<sup>43</sup> For details about the demotion of Ras chung pa to the profit of sGam po pa in *The Twelve Great Disciples*, *The Dark Treasury* and gTsang smyon's work, see Roberts 2007, 179-82 and Blancke, *In Search of Mi la's Collected Songs – Back to the Basics* (forthcoming).

<sup>44</sup> Tshe ring ma Chapters 28-31, Ms-Oxford 124a-145b; Stagg 2017: 307-81. As mentioned in Blancke's forthcoming book, Ngan rdzong ston pa is supposed to have written a text called *Tshe rings skor gsum*.

Zhi ba 'od Chapter 17, e.g., Ms-Oxford 99a-100a; Stagg 2017:159-90.

<sup>45</sup> <https://independent.academia.edu/kristinblancke>. The Song Charts are found scrolling down the page.

- The episode in the bZang rgyud kitchen (*bzang rgyud phyag tshang gi skor*, gTsang smyon's Chapter 24, where Mi la ras pa performs an elaborate Bon ritual for a dying Bon po)<sup>46</sup>
- The episode with the old grandma (*a phyi rgan mo'i skor*, the first song included in gTsang smyon's dPal dar 'bum Chapter 14)<sup>47</sup>
- An episode with minor songs (*mgur phran*, a medley of different songs put together without constituting a particular episode).

The first two additional episodes are shared by both Ms-Drukpa and Ms-Gansu. These two versions also include most of the songs of the *mgur phran* episode, inserted as an extension in another song cycle – *dbus gtad zhal ta'i skor*, the advice to Ras chung pa before his final departure to Central Tibet.<sup>48</sup> At the end of this extension the transmission of the *bDe mchog snyan brgyud* to Ras chung pa is briefly mentioned (in a single sentence), which is not the case in any of the other RBC versions

Besides the three above-mentioned chapters, Ms-Drukpa and Ms-Gansu include two extensions to the Lha rje g.yang nge cycle<sup>49</sup> – both untitled in Ms-Drukpa, in Ms-Gansu titled *sKor la thog gi bskor* (the cycle at the Kora pass) and *La stod rgyal gyi rtsibs ri skor* (the cycle at the rTsib ri mountain in La stod),<sup>50</sup> with songs also included in the second-stratum compendia. Moreover, they both contain the *gSal le 'od kyi zhus lan*, (questions and answers with gSal le 'od)<sup>51</sup> as well as a long

<sup>46</sup> Blancke 2023c, *Life and Songs of the Glorious Laughing Vajra – The Episode at the Zangyü Kitchen*.

<sup>47</sup> Blancke 2023d, *Life and Songs of the Glorious Laughing Vajra –Meeting Paldarbum*.

<sup>48</sup> Ms-Drukpa 277b-294b; Ms-Gansu 25: 20-50.

<sup>49</sup> gTsang smyon's Chapter 56, Stagg 2017: 653-61.

<sup>50</sup> The first cycle (Ms-Drukpa 163a, Ms-Gansu 24: 36) includes the narrative frame of gTsang smyon's Chapter 20, with three songs from that chapter that are also included in the second-stratum compendia. The second episode, at rTsib ri, (Ms-Drukpa 165b, Ms-Gansu 24: 41) narrates Mi la ras pa's meeting with 'Bri sgom ras pa (gTsang smyon's Chapter 16, where rTsib ri is replaced with Śrī ri, Stagg 2017: 155), but it includes songs from his Chapter 44 (Stagg 2017: 542) and part of the episode of the broken clay pot in *The Life of Milarepa* (Quintman 2010:151). Also these songs are included in the second stratum.

<sup>51</sup> Ms-Drukpa 153b, Ms-Gansu 24: 28; from gTsang smyon's Chapter 37, Stagg 2017: 431. Only two songs are included, as in the second-stratum compendia.



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untitled chapter with miracles and songs to Ras chung pa similar to the ones in the *rkyang* episode. However, here, instead of the miraculous view of the wild asses, Ras chung pa explains the marvels he has seen on his trip to India.<sup>52</sup>

To summarise: we see that in contrast to Ms-Newark and the three 'variants', similar content to that of the second stratum is added in Ms-Oxford, Ms-Drukpa and Ms-Gansu. Also, the great number of extra songs regarding Ras chung pa firmly collocate the latter two versions in the 'Brug pa lineage. However, as we will see, none of the typical characteristics of the 'variant' versions nor of the second-stratum compendia are present. This confirms that these three versions belong to group A of texts in the first stratum of the *Twelve Great Ras pa Disciples*. Considering the slight differences between Ms-Oxford and Ms-Drukpa/Ms-Gansu, we tend to think that Ms-Oxford might be dated a little earlier than the latter two.

In group B of the first-stratum compendia – the 'variant' versions of *The Twelve Great Ras pa Disciples* (Ms-Bordier, Ms-BDRC, and Ms-Lhasa) – the following typical characteristics are found, absent in the above-discussed versions.

- The episode of Ras chung pa arriving at Mi la's cremation site. It is missing in the other *Twelve Great Ras pa Disciples* versions as well as in DNM-RD, but it is found in *A River of Blessings* and the British Library manuscript (Ms-BL).<sup>53</sup>
- The *bar do* song included in gTsang smyon's Chapter 41<sup>54</sup> appears here for the first time.
- After the rJe btsun has bestowed all his blessings and empowerments on sGam po pa, suddenly Tārā, who is helping the rJe btsun take care of his texts, exclaims joyfully how marvellous all this is. Mi la ras pa then places a *gtor ma* on sGam po pa's head and tells him that he will be of enormous benefit to sentient beings, more than himself, because of all the clear signs he had

<sup>52</sup> Ms-Drukpa 260a, Ms-Gansu 24: 236.

<sup>53</sup> Ms-Bordier 310b, Ms-Lhasa 237a. (in Ms-BDRC the page is missing). For DNM-RD, *A River of Blessings*, and Ms-BL (British Library) see below.

<sup>54</sup> Ms-Bordier 287b, Ms-BDRC 374a, Ms-Lhasa 275b. (It is also included in Ms-Drukpa 265a and Ms-Gansu 24: 228). Song 41.6, Stagg 2017: 515.

seen before sGam po pa's arrival, and because of a dream in which sGam po pa resulted as the winner in a contest with the rJe btsun.<sup>55</sup>

As these elements are present in all three 'variant' versions, it seems these could belong to an independently circulating later version of *The Twelve Great Ras pa Disciples*.

Ms-Lhasa, a copy of the text said to be compiled by Rang byung rdo rje, contains the following supplementary chapters as compared to the other versions:

- The episode at Brag skya rdo rje rdzong (*brag skya rdo rje rdzong gi skor*, found only in this text and DNM-RD)<sup>56</sup>
- The question-and-answer chapter between the rJe btsun and a beautiful girl (*rje btsun dang bu mo yid phrog ma gnyis kyi zhus lan*, included also in the texts of the second stratum)<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> This episode is not included in DNM-RD, but it comes in the three variant editions of *The Twelve Great Ras pa Disciples* (Ms-Bordier 290a, Ms-BDRC 370b, Ms-Lhasa 278b), in *A River of Blessings* and in Ms-BL: *de yang lcam lhan cig skyes pa'i sgron ma rje btsun gyis phyag dpe'i gnyer mdzad pa yin ste/ bla ma rin po che la de shin tu dgyes pas/ chos kyi nang byan mdzad/ gsang sngags bla med kyis rgyud thams cad dang/ gdam pa lhag lus med par rdzog spa'i mthar/ gtor ma chen po zhig dbu thog tu bzhag nas/ mkha' 'gro chos skyong gi dbang bskur nas/ bu khyod kyis sems chen dpag tu med pa'i don 'grub par 'dug gsungs/ de cir lags zhus pas/ dang po khyod 'ong khar yang rtags mtshan gsal po byung la/ 'di na yod pa'i tshe yang nga dang khyod sang 'gren pas khyod ngon la thal ste/ nga bas khong (?) sems chen gyis don rgya che bar 'dug byas pa cig rmis.*

Whether lCam lhan cig skyes ma'i sgron ma refers to the goddess Tārā or to a female disciple of the rJe btsun with that name is not sure. There are two instances in which she appears in the sky (see below p. 41n99); at least these two cases seem to refer to a supernatural being. The detail of the *gtor ma* and of the rJe btsun saying that sGam po pa would be better than himself appears for the first time in an autobiographical fragment by sGam po pa included in the *Dwags po bKa' 'bum*, in the chapter *Answers to the Questions of Dus gsum mkhyen pa (Dus gsum mkhyen pa'i zhus lan)*. See Blancke 2021d and Kragh 2015: 96-97.

<sup>56</sup> Ms-Lhasa 60a-61a; DNM-RD 2006: 122.

<sup>57</sup> Ms-Lhasa 124b-132a.

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- The extension of the chapter of the hunter Khyi ra ras pa, with songs to his wife (included also in the texts of the second stratum)<sup>58</sup>
- The episode with the goat herder Ra dzi ras pa and the sheep herder Lug dzi ras pa (included also in the texts of the second stratum)<sup>59</sup>

The last two supplementary chapters are also found in Ms-BDRC, while all four are missing in Ms-Bordier.

In the cycle at Brag skya rdo rje rdzong, there is a short episode (only 2 folios) not found in the other *Twelve Great Ras pa Disciples*, in which a rabbit riding a fox appears,<sup>60</sup> following which are two songs by Mi la ras pa, and an interesting definition of the term *mahāmudrā*:

*phyag*: non-dual primordial wisdom;  
*rgya*: uncontaminated by the errors of saṃsāra;  
*chen po*: the union of both;  
 realising this is *phyag rgya chen po*.<sup>61</sup>

This definition of *mahāmudrā* is very close to a quote in the *phyag rgya chen po ye shes gsal byed*, "*Mahāmudrā*, Illuminating Primordial Wisdom," one of the doctrinal texts attributed to Mi la ras pa.<sup>62</sup> That it is later found in some of the second stratum compendia – DNM-RD and group B of *A River of Blessings*, which are based on the text attributed to Rang byung rdo rje – might indicate that this could be one of the contributions of the Third Karma pa Rang byung rdo rje.

<sup>58</sup> Ms-BDRC 189b, Ms-Lhasa 145b.

<sup>59</sup> Ms-BDRC 191b-193b; Ms-Lhasa 147b-149b.

<sup>60</sup> This detail is similar to the monkey riding a rabbit – instead of a rabbit riding a fox – found in gTsang smyon's Chapter 6, *Kyangpen Sky Fortress* (Stagg 2017: 67). The detail cited above is found also in the second-stratum bZhad pa'i rDo rje Compendia. Surprisingly, gTsang smyon Heruka changed this.

<sup>61</sup> Ms-Lhasa 60b; DNM-RD 2006: 123; Ms-Drepung 2: 83: *phyag ni ye shes gnyis med/ rgya ni 'khor ba'i skyon ma gos/ chen po ni zung du 'jugs pa ste/ de rtogs pa phyag rgya chen po yin*.

<sup>62</sup> In the *ye shes gsal byed* we read, *phyag gnyis med kyi ye shes ngos bzung ba/ rgya 'khor ba'i rgya mdud grol ba dang/ chen po zung'jug gi sgron me bltams pa'o* (Byang chub bzang po 1973 vol. 2: 469; Pad ma dkarpo 1982 vol 2: 74).

In summary, both groups of *The Twelve Great Ras pa Disciples* have a distinctive identity based on specific additional material – whether narratives, songs, or cycles – most of it also being found in the second-stratum compendia. Nevertheless, if we take away these supplementary elements from the first-stratum texts, there remains a common ‘core’ identical in all versions. This could hypothetically correspond to the ‘original’ *Twelve Great Ras pa Disciples* from which all these texts derive.

## *II. Second-stratum bZhad pa'i rDo rje Compendia*

*The Dark/Black Treasury, A River of Blessings, and a manuscript at the British Library*

### *1. General description of the second-stratum bZhad pa'i rDo rje Compendia*

As indicated in the introduction, in the present study a clear distinction is made between a first literary stratum consisting of *The Twelve Great Ras pa Disciples* and its variants, and a second stratum gathering different versions of a text called *A River of Blessings*, the so-called *Dark/Black Treasury* contained in Karma pa Rang byung rdo rje's *Collected Works*, and one other similar Life-and-Song Compendium kept at the British Library.

These compendia written throughout the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries further elaborate on the ‘variant’ versions of *The Twelve Great Ras pa Disciples*. In the 14<sup>th</sup> century, other texts had become part of the literary corpus of Mi la ras pa – e.g., *bDe mchog sNyan brgyud Biographies*, Zhi byed ri pa's *Illuminating Lamp of Sun and Moon Beams*, mKha' spyod dbang po's *Clouds of Blessings*, and another unknown text supposedly written at Gung thang dPal gyi gtsug lag khang mentioned as one of the sources of the second-stratum compendia.<sup>63</sup> Some elements from these texts were integrated into the

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<sup>63</sup> For a discussion of these texts see Blancke *In Search of Mi la's Collected Songs. Back to the Basics*; for examples of the impact of these texts in the narrative of the teaching transmission from Mar pa to Mi la ras pa see Blancke 2021a, *The Teaching Transmission from Mar pa to Mi la in the Hagiographies*.

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bZhad pa'i rDo rje Compendia (in both the first- and the second-stratum compendia, as seen above).

However, the compendia classified as second-stratum contain new narratives, in some cases quite different from *The Twelve Great Ras pa Disciples*.

In the present research the designation *Dark/Black Treasury* is applied only to the compendium in the Third Karma pa Rang byung rdo rje's *Collected Works*. In *A River of Blessings*, the name *Dark/Black Treasury* is found in the colophon, but only where Rang byung rdo rje is mentioned as the compiler of one of the sources of the new compilation. Even though a few title pages mention that the compendium was compiled by Karma pa Rang byung rdo rje, this claim does not seem plausible considering the amount of new content found in these later compendia as compared to the above-mentioned Ms-Lhasa. Not only are there several new songs and song cycles, but there are also significant changes in the way of presenting some events. Therefore, these attributions are considered untrustworthy, as explained in detail by Étienne Bock below.

### 2. Versions of the second-stratum bZhad pa'i rDo rje Compendia

In *The Yogin and the Madman* Quintman enumerates five [recognised]<sup>64</sup> versions of *The Black Treasury*, divided into two strata. An earlier stratum, closer to *The Twelve Great Ras pa Disciples*, includes DNM-Lhasa (the already mentioned manuscript found in the Drepung Archives, here Ms-Lhasa) and DNM-RD (published in the *Collected Works* of the Third Karma pa Rang byung rdo rje). As a later stratum, he indicates the following works: DNM-I (a two-volume modern edition published in India); DNM-S (a manuscript in the private collection of E.Gene Smith); and DNM-D (published as part of the extensive collection called *The 'Bri gung bKa' brgyud Great Dharma Treasury*).

As explained earlier, there is no reason to consider the so-called DNM-Lhasa (here Ms-Lhasa) as a *mdzod nag ma* text. Applying the

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<sup>64</sup> Quintman mentions two other copies, unstudied in his work, one in a private collection (Ms-Bordier?) and one at the British Library, so far unstudied. For the British Library manuscript see below.

criteria used in the present study – based upon the differences in content and time – it should rather be considered as a 'variant' version of *The Twelve Great Ras pa Disciples*.

The second-stratum bZhad pa'i rDo rje Compendia at present known to us can be divided as follows: the *Dark/Black Treasury* in Karma pa Rang byung rdo rje's *Collected Works*, the texts identified by their colophon as *A River of Blessings* and the Life-and-Song text kept at the British Library (Ms-BL).<sup>65</sup>

The first *Dark/Black Treasury* text (DNM-RD 1)<sup>66</sup> is a 2006 modern edition with the title *rNal 'byor gyi dbang phyug mi la bzhad pa rdo rje'i gsung mgur mdzod nag ma zhes pa karma pa rang byung rdo rjes phyogs gcig tu bkod pa*, "Songs of the Powerful Lord of Yogins Mi la bZhad pa rdo rje called *The Dark/Black Treasury*, compiled by Karma pa Rang byung rdo rje." The text ends with the sentence *dpa*<sup>67</sup> *bzhad pa rdor je'i rnam thar mgur chos zhal gdams dang bcas pa rdzogs so*, "Herewith the life story of the hero bZhad pa rdo rje, with his songs, teachings and oral instructions, is completed." Then follows a succession of different colophons. All the elements of the colophon in

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<sup>65</sup> For an outline of the different versions of *A River of Blessings* and *The Dark/Black Treasury* and the songs included therein see Blancke 2023b, Song Chart 8.

<sup>66</sup> At the moment 3 editions of this text are known.

(1) A one-volume computerised *dbu can* pecha published in Ziling in 2006, 774 pp.

(2) An edition of the same text in 2 book volumes published by the dPal brtsegs publishing house in 2011, as the second and third volumes of the *rJe btsun mi la ras pa'i gsung 'bum* (BDRC MW1KG14335). The title of the second volume is *rNal 'byor gyi dbang phyug mi la bzhad pa rdo rje'i mgur 'bum mdzod nag ma zhes pa karma pa rang byung rdo rjes phyogs gcig tu bskod pa*; the title of the third volume is identical, except that *mgur 'bum* is replaced by *gsung mgur*. After verifying a sample of this edition I noticed the content is identical to the below 2013 edition; therefore I did not include a detailed analysis of it in Song Chart 8.

(3) A 2013 edition by dPal brtsegs, as the 23rd volume of the *Karma pa sku phreng rim byon gyi gsung 'bum phyogs bsgrigs*, 862 pp, with title *Mi la ras pa'i gsung mgur mdzod nag ma* (BDRC MW3PD1288). One song cycle – the *bzang rgyud phyag tshang gi skor* – as well as a number of songs have been added to the above-mentioned 2006 Ziling edition, to include as many songs as available related to Mi la ras pa. This additional content is included also in the 2011 edition. See Bock's outline of the text in Appendix A: 189 and Blancke's Song Chart 8.

<sup>67</sup> *Sic* in all three the versions.

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Ms-Lhasa are repeated.<sup>68</sup> However, it is noteworthy that the expression *mdzod nag ma* is completely absent from the text and the colophon, and appears only in the title.

According to the colophon, the compendium would be entirely compiled by Karma pa Rang byung rdo rje, an assertion that raises multiple issues. First, this is in direct contradiction with the statement that the text was compiled by the twelve *ras pa* disciples. Second, this very same colophon was already mentioned in Ms-Lhasa, but, as can be seen from Song Charts 7 & 8, many new elements are included that are not present in Ms-Lhasa but are in common with *A River of Blessings* and with Ms-BL, a compendium that is not linked to Rang byung rdo rje. Therefore, it is likely that at least one additional source has been omitted from the colophon.

The *Dark/Black Treasury* has a final colophon explaining that the original manuscript was written down by Blo gros rgya mtsho, main scribe (*dpon yi ge pa*) of the Fourth Zhwa dmar pa Chos grags ye shes, (1453–1526). Therefore, the work can be dated to the last quarter of the fifteenth or the first quarter of the sixteenth century, around or shortly after gTsang smyon Heruka's *Life and Songs*. It is said to have been edited like a beautiful gem – this possibly means that it was an illustrated manuscript. The text was consecrated with empowerment and revised by two experts in scriptures and reasoning.<sup>69</sup>

<sup>68</sup> For a detailed analysis of the colophon see Bock p. 84.

<sup>69</sup> DNM-RD 2006: 772-73: *de lta bu'i skyes bu dam pa de'i rnam par thar pa mdo sngags kyi lam gnad mtha' dag phyogs gcig tu bsdus pa'i glegs bam 'di ni/ de nyid la mi phyed pa'i dad pa'i blo gros gser gi sa gzhi/ 'khor 'bangs rgya mtsho'i dbus su/ rigs rus cho 'brangs kyi mngon par tho ba gtong ba sogs kyi kha bzang gis spras zhing/ yi ge 'bri mchod sogs kyi rol mtshos rnam par brgyan pa/ lha bran srid sde ris bdun gyis gus par 'dud pa/ 'phags nor bdun gyi shing yongs 'dus legs par spud pa'i ri dbang mi dpon bzhed rtsa blo gros rgya mtshos lhag bsam rnam par dag pas yang yang bskul nas/ cha rkyen thams cad phun sum tshogs par byas te/ gar dbang rdo rje chang gi rnam 'phrul/ zhwa dmar cod pan 'dzin pa bzhi pa chos kyi grags pa ye shes dpal bzang po'i dpon yig pa blo gros kyi nyi 'od kyis legs par bshad pa sum rtags gnyis/ dag yig gnyis/ ka la pa sogs sgra yi bstan bcos rgya mtsho lta bu rnam kyi pad tshal/ mkhas pa'i dbang po sākya ku mā ra yi bka' drin la brten nas legs par kha 'byed par gyur pa/ blo gros rgya mtshos sdebs legs nor bu'i rgyan gyis rnam par brgyan te/ lha lam shog bu'i ngo la/ rab gsal dbang zhu ba'i bdud rtsi mkho la snag gis mdzes par bkod de shar ba'o/ zhu dag mkhan ni lung rig smra ba sākya'i dge slong rin chen bzang po dang/ sākya seng ge gnyis kyis mdzad pa'o/.*

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The next group of second-stratum bZhad pa'i rDo rje Compendia, called *A River of Blessings*, is available in multiple versions, out of which five are studied here.

- Ms-Smith, a single volume *dbu med* manuscript with title *rJe rnal 'byor gyi dbang phyug dpal bzhad pa'i rdo rje'i 'gur tshogs tshad phyog gcig tu bsgrigs pa lo rgyus kyis spras pa*, "The Collected Songs of the Powerful Lord of Yogins, the Glorious bZhad pa'i rdo rje; a compilation embellished with historical anecdotes." There is no mention of the Karma pa or *The Black Treasury* on the title page. Considering the illustrations in this manuscript, it seems to have been transmitted in the Upper 'Brug pa bKa' brgyud lineage.<sup>70</sup>
- Ms-India, a two-volume *dbu med* manuscript published in India in 1978, with the same title as the above-mentioned DNM-RD (including the name of the Karma pa Rang byung rdo rje as the compiler and the name *mdzod nag ma*). The English title page states that the text was "reproduced from a rare manuscript from the library of Dbon-sprul Rin-po-che." It seems to be a copy of the above Ms-Smith or of a common source.<sup>71</sup>
- Ms-Drepung,<sup>72</sup> a two-volume *dbu med* manuscript reproduced in facsimile in the *Bod kyi lo rgyus rnam thar phyogs bsgrigs* series of the dPal brtsegs publishing house. This is a very exciting find because it is from this manuscript that the next two editions –

<sup>70</sup> Quintman 2014a: 254n83. BDRC database states that this manuscript was found among the text collections at The Sixteen Arhats Temple (gNas bcu lha khang) in 'Bras spungs monastery. For the importance of these text collections see Ducher 2020.

<sup>71</sup> So far we have not been able to fully access one version of this collection, filmed in Boudhanath by NGMPP, reel number E/2511/12. From a written conversation by Étienne Bock with the Berlin State Library and the inspection of four pages of the text, it results to be a copy of Ms-India.

<sup>72</sup> This manuscript might also have been found in The Sixteen Arhat Temple at 'Bras spungs monastery. It was reproduced in vols. 111 & 112 of *Bod kyi lo rgyus rnam thar phyogs bsgrigs*, dPal brtsegs bod yig dpe snying zhib 'jug khang, mTsho sngon mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 2015.

<https://library.bdrc.io/show/bdr:I4PD3130#open-viewer>

I thank Étienne Bock for pointing out this text to me.



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BCG-D and BCG-Si, see below – seem to be copied. As a matter of fact, BCG-Si, a modern copy of Ms-Drepung, opens with a discrete watermark reproduction of 4 pages of that manuscript's illustrated folios on its flyleaves.<sup>73</sup>

The title page of Ms-Drepung is missing, but the text is catalogued as *rJe btsun mi la ras pa'i rnam thar rdo rje'i glu dang mgur rnams phyogs gcig tu bsdus pa*, "Life of the rJe btsun Mi la ras pa together with his spiritual vajra songs" and it is attributed to Rang byung rdo rje by its cataloguers. The manuscript counts many illustrations. Among these, there are ten lineage masters from the Ri bo che branch of the sTag lung lineage, the last being Chos rje 'Jig rten dbang phyug (1454–1532). This allows us to date the manuscript to *circa* the sixteenth century. It is noteworthy that there is no reference to these masters in the recent editions of the same text.

- BCG-D (Drikung), a 2004 two-volume *dbu can* handwritten edition titled *rJe mi la'i rnam thar mdzod nag ma*, "Lord Mi la's life story [called] The Dark/Black Treasury," included in the '*Bri gung bKa' brgyud chos mdzod chen mo* collection (vols. 7 & 8)<sup>74</sup>
- BCG-Si (Si khron), a 2008 computerised edition of the same text by Si khron mi rigs dpe skrun khang, in two book volumes, with title *rJe rnal 'byor gyi dbang phyug mi la bzhad pa rdo rje'i gsung mgur mdzod nag ma zhes karma pa rang byung rdo rjes phyogs gcig tu bkod pa*, "The Collected Songs of Mi la bZhad pa rdo rje, Lord of Yogins, [called] *The Dark/Black Treasury*, compiled by Karma pa Rang byung rdo rje." The two books contain several colour-printed illustrations and black and white drawings that refer to the song episodes.

These five versions of *A River of Blessings* are similar but not identical. As can be seen from Song Chart 8, they can be subdivided into two

<sup>73</sup> These images are found in Ms-Drepung facsimile vol. 111 on the pages 145, 149, 154 and 168.

<sup>74</sup> Ducher 2020: 15 mentions, "According to the present Che tshang Rinpoche there were around 40 boxes of '*Bri gung bKa' brgyud* texts in the Sixteen Arhats Temple. He personally heard about their presence within '*Bras spungs* in the 1980s and organized the reproduction of several volumes he was interested in. A large part of what is now called the '*Bri gung bKa' brgyud chos mdzod chen mo* comes from there [...] this collection has been completely rewritten by hand."

distinct groups: group A – Ms-Smith & Ms-India – and group B – Ms-Drepung & BCG-D & BCG-Si. All the versions end with the following sentence:

The Collected Songs of the powerful Lord of Yogins, the glorious bZhad pa'i rdo rje; a compilation embellished with historical anecdotes. A River of Blessings relieving the tormenting heat of mental defilements.<sup>75</sup>

Hence, these five versions are referred to as *A River of Blessings*.

At the end of the texts, there is an elaborate list of disciples (different from that in *The Twelve Great Ras pa Disciples*). The original colophon of *The Twelve Great Ras pa Disciples* – and thus the reference to the twelve *ras pas* as well as the claim of the text being the "Lineage Wish-fulfilling Gem" of the Saṃvara Aural Transmission – has been elided. All five versions mention the following three sources.

- "Regarding this life story of the great rJe btsun Mi la ras pa together with his spiritual vajra songs, the Dharma Lord Karma pa has said..."<sup>76</sup> and then follows a slightly modified version of the Ms-Lhasa colophon about Karma pa Rang byung rdo rje writing the text. A major difference though is that the text compiled by Rang byung rdo rje is here clearly identified as *mdzod nag ma*, whereas the colophon in Ms-Lhasa does not mention this designation.
- "[A text] said to be a compilation of seventeen different collected songs excellently completed in the Gungthang Pelkyi Tsuklakhang."<sup>77</sup> So far this source has not been identified, except for the place of the compilation: "Gungthang Pelkyi Tsuklakhang,

<sup>75</sup> Ms-Smith 318a, Ms-India 2: 551, Ms-Drepung 112: 367, BCG-D 2:855, BCG-Si 1133, *rJe rnal 'byor gyi dbang phyug dpal bzhad pa'i rdo rje'i 'gur tshogs tshad phyog gcig tu bsgrigs pa lo rgyus kyis spras pa/ byin rlabs kyi chu rgyun gyis nyon mongs pa'i tsha gdung sel bar byed pa.*

<sup>76</sup> Ms-Smith 318a, Ms-India 2:554, Ms-Drepung 112: 366, BCG-D 2:508, BCG-Si 1033: *rJe btsun chen po mi la ras pa'i rnam thar rdo rje'i glu dang mgur rnam phyogs gcig tu bsdu pa 'di/ chos rje karma pa'i zhal nas...* (see Bock's detailed analysis of the colophon p.85).

<sup>77</sup> *Gung thang dpal gyi gtsug lag khang.* Quintman 2014a: 210 gives the full transcription of the colophon.

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a monastery near Lhasa established by Lama Zhang in 1187 as a seat for the Tselpa Kagyu tradition. The author was likely a member of this lineage, perhaps an abbot or prominent monk, after the fashion of Sangyé Bum."

- "[A text] said to be a compilation [made] having seen one hundred and twenty-seven different biographies of the Jetsun. These [versions] have been compiled and supplemented with as many of the Jetsun's song collections as could be found."<sup>78</sup>

Both Roberts and Quintman suggest this third source could refer to Zhi byed ri pa's *Illuminating Lamp of Sun and Moon Beams*, completed in 1381, as he also mentioned that his text was based on 127 biographies. Zhi byed ri pa's short biography of Mi la ras pa included in the first part of his *Illuminating Lamp of Sun and Moon Beams* is almost identical to the Golden Rosary life story of Mi la ras pa in the *bDe mchog sNyan brgyud Biographies*.<sup>79</sup>

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The British Library has an illustrated manuscript catalogued as *The Life and Songs of the Yogi Milarepa (Mi la'i rnam mgur bris ma)* [Ms-BL].<sup>80</sup> It contains a great number of illuminations with various life scenes.<sup>81</sup> At the end of the text some images of lineage masters are included, collocating the manuscript in the Ri bo che branch of the sTag lung

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<sup>78</sup> Ibidem, 110.

<sup>79</sup> For a description of the content of this text see Blancke 2021g, *Zhi byed ri pa – The Illuminating Lamp of Sun and Moon Beams* and Quintman 2012. Besides the above-mentioned short biography in the Golden Rosary style of the Saṃvara Aural Transmission, this text contains many other details such as lineage histories, conversations between Mi la and his disciples, lists of teachings received by the author, a list of Mi la ras pa's most famous songs, etc.

<sup>80</sup> There was an online sample of this manuscript on the British Library website that is not available for the moment (<https://www.bl.uk/collection-items/the-life-and-songs-of-a-famous-tibetan-yogi>, shelfmark Or 16756). I thank Marco Passavanti for drawing my attention to this online sample. My greatest thanks to Burkhard Quessel and Charles Manson for giving me access to the manuscript.

<sup>81</sup> For a description of the illuminations see Bock's article pp. 56-68 and his Appendix A: 207-215.

bKa' brgyud school.<sup>82</sup> This lineage was founded in 1180 by sTag lung thang pa bKra shis dpal (1142–1210), a disciple of Phag mo gru pa rDo rje rgyal po, direct disciple of sGam po pa (1110–1179). The fourth lineage holder – and the third source for the collection, see below – was Sangs rgyas dbon (1251-1296).

This manuscript does not seem to be another edition of the second-stratum compendia connected with Rang byung rdo rje, for two reasons.

- The main text of the manuscript ends as follows (f. 392a).  
*dpal bzhad pa rdo rje'i rnam thar 'gur ma 'chings dang bcas pa rdzogs so.* This corresponds to the final sentence of *The Twelve Great Ras pa Disciples* – e.g., Ms-Oxford f. 191b.
- There is no mention of the Third Karma pa Rang byung rdo rje as a contributor to the text.

Instead, in the same way as in the case of the different editions of *A River of Blessings*, the compendium also states it is based on multiple sources. Unfortunately, the relevant page is slightly damaged and some words remain difficult to decipher.<sup>83</sup> The mentioned sources are stated as follows:

- First, "Taking as the basis the text of *The Twelve Great Disciples*"<sup>84</sup>

<sup>82</sup> See Bock pp. 75-77 for an illustration of the lineage masters in the text. The last two depicted masters are 'Jig rten dbang phyug (1454-1532) and mChog sprul bKra shis dpal (1461–1508).

<sup>83</sup> Ms-BL 392b: *dpal bzhad pa rdo rje'i rnam thar/ 'gur ma'i chings dang bcas pa rdzogs soha// [rnam thar 'di dad] dang ldan pa dpag tu med pa'i don du/ ngan rdzong ston pa bo de ra dzā la sogs pa bu chen bcu gnyis kyi dpe la dan byas nas/ gzhan yangs rdo rje 'dzin pa 'jam dbyangs (...) khang du/ 'gur 'bum bcu bdun bsags nas/ bsgrigs zin pa'i nang nas thus pa dang/ rje mar pa'i rnam thar nang nas bsdu/ phyogs du ma nas dpe rnyed tshad thams cad btus pa dang phyogs gcig tu mi dbang chen po ratna mangala shri (...) / bzhad pa rdo rje'i rnam thar gsungs sgros rnams/ dad ldan bten pa'i mtha' can bdag cag gis/ gus pa'i sgo nas 'di bzhengs/ dge ba*

<sup>84</sup> *Ngan rdzong ston pa bo de ra dzā la sogs pa'i bu chen bcu gnyis kyi dpe la dan byas nas.* The meaning of *dan* is unclear, but it could be understood as *rten*.

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- Then, "*rDo rje 'dzin pa 'Jam dbyangs...*(Grags pa?), having gathered seventeen song collections, collected their contents and also summarised [elements] from Lord Mar pa's hagiography"<sup>85</sup>
- "A text of the sTag lung master sGrub chen Sangs rgyas dbon rin po che (1251–1296)"
- Finally, the compiler (or the scribe) of the text adds that he has gathered, summarised and arranged in a single [text] other elements from different places, as many as he could find

At the end there is a partially truncated name, *mi dbang chen po ratna mang gha* (...). It seems to indicate Rat na mang gha la.

Although it is not clear who is the final compiler of the British Library manuscript, it is interesting that a life-and-song compendium of Mi la ras pa was transmitted in the sTag lung bKa' brgyud lineage, enriched with new contents – very similar to the new contents in the other second-stratum bZhad pa'i rDo rje Compendia – in the Ri bo che branch of the sTag lung bKa' brgyud lineage instead of the Karma bKa' brgyud lineage.

### 3. Content of the second-stratum bZhad pa'i rDo rje Compendia

All the texts in the second stratum follow the quality structure of *The Twelve Great Ras pa Disciples*, except for the last chapter. In *The Twelve Great Ras pa Disciples* (except Ms-Bordier and RBC-Pt) the seventeenth quality – the quality of introducing *mahāmudrā* (*phyag rgya chen po ngo 'phrod pa'i yon tan*) – is the last chapter and it includes also the death episode, whereas DNM-RD<sup>86</sup> and *A River of Blessings* place the last part of the life in an eighteenth chapter – the quality of

<sup>85</sup> *rDo rje 'dzin pa 'jam dbyangs (...)* [*grags pa?*] '*gur 'bum bcu bdun bsags nas bsgrigs zin pa'i nang nas thus pa dang/ rje mar pa'i rnam thar nang nas bsdus pa*. I have not been able to find out who this master is. Interestingly, the contribution of the manuscript's second source was based on seventeen song collections, as mentioned also in the colophon of *A River of Blessings*. Could this be the same text as the one compiled at Gung thang dPal gyi gtsug lag khang, as well as one the hidden sources in DNM-RD?

<sup>86</sup> In the 2006 Ziling version the 16<sup>th</sup> quality was mistakenly numbered as 17<sup>th</sup>, the 17<sup>th</sup> as 18<sup>th</sup>, and the 18<sup>th</sup> also repeated as 18<sup>th</sup> (see Bock Appendix A pp.190-94).

realising the unified vajra-body in one lifetime and showing how it dissolves in a rainbow body (*tshé gcig gis zung 'jug rdo rje 'i sku 'grub cing 'ja' lus su yal ba'i tshul bstan pa'i yon tan*).<sup>87</sup> Apart from this difference, these texts include all the songs included in *The Twelve Great Ras pa Disciples*, so they are clearly based on that corpus.

A few major differences between all versions of *The Twelve Great Ras pa Disciples* and the second-stratum compendia are found in the first chapter of the text.

For example, on the occasion of the first meeting between Mi la and Mar pa, when the latter is ploughing his land and tells Mi la he should continue digging in his field while he goes to call for the *bla ma*, he pronounces three oral instructions, which Mi la does not understand:

- The essence of the oral instructions of the *bla ma*: when gathering the subtle body elements in the central channel, the defilements are subdued, and the result will quickly ripen.
- With the blessing of a lineage-holding *bla ma*, the mind's nature rests spontaneously in its essence; when the defilements are subdued through mindfulness, the fruits of the autumn harvest will quickly ripen.
- When satisfied with the beer of great bliss – this secret intrinsic reality – the defilements are fully subdued, and the fruit will quickly ripen.

With these, Mar pa had given *mahāmudrā* pointing-out instructions for beings with higher, middle and lower capacities to Mi la ras pa, but he had not understood them.<sup>88</sup>

<sup>87</sup> In Ms-BL neither the 17<sup>th</sup> nor the 18<sup>th</sup> qualities are mentioned as separate chapters, although the text does contain the same content as the other late compendia.

<sup>88</sup> DNM-RD 2006: 10; BCG-D 7: 30, BCG-Si 1: 37; Ms-Smith: 11b; Ms-BL 8b; there are some differences between the versions; the main transliteration is from DNM-RD, between brackets BCG and Ms-BL.

(1) [DNM-RD 2006] *bla ma dam pa'i man ngag gnad* [BCG+MS-BL *bla ma dam pa'i gdams ngag gis/ rtsa khams dbu mas* [BCG *dbu mar*] *bsdus byas ste/nyon mongs thal ba* [BCG+Ms-BL *nyon mongs kyi tha ba*] 'dul lags na/ 'bras bu myur du smin te mchi.

(2) *brgyud ldan bla ma'i byin rlabs kyis/ sems nyid lhug pa ngo bor gnas/ dran pas thal ba* [BCG+MS-BL *dran pa'i tha ba*] 'dul lags na/ ston thog 'bras bu myur du smin.

Further changes in the first chapter are the following:

- At the time of Mi la ras pa's initiation he sees the *maṇḍala* of Cakrasaṃvara in the sky.
- During his retreat, Mi la ras pa has a vision of a *ḍākinī* who tells about the possibility of becoming enlightened by applying a special '*pho ba* practice, without the need to meditate. After Mi la ras pa reports this to Mar pa, his teacher makes a third trip to India to receive the teachings for entering another body (included in *A River of Blessings*, but not in DNM-RD or Ms-BL).<sup>89</sup>
- Mi la ras pa has the dream of the Four Pillars and describes it in a song to Mar pa, whereas in *The Twelve Great Ras pa Disciples* Mar pa has the dream which he then explains in a song.<sup>90</sup>

Some new stories are added in the second-stratum compendia, sometimes with variations between DNM-RD and *A River of Blessings*. Often the contents are switched around in the various song cycles.

The content covered in this group needs further study. Looking at Song Chart 8, we notice that, in contrast to Song Chart 7 where the content was very similar in all versions except for a few added chapters, here each text group uses a different order in presenting the episodes. However, on the whole, the content included is not that different. The following examples are but a few general impressions obtained from the comparisons.

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(3) *bde ba chen po chang gi ngom* [BCG+MS-BL *ngos*]/ *yang dag don chen gsang ba 'di* [BCG+MS-BL *dis*]/ *yang dag gi thal ba* [*tha ba*] '*dul lags na/ 'bras bu myur du smin te mchi* (...) *de'i dus su mar pas mi la ras pa la phyag rgya chen po dbang po rab bring tha ma gsum du ngo sprod par 'dug ste ma go bar 'dug* [BCG *dbang po rab 'bring gi chos khrid byas pa yin/ Ms-BL dbang po rab 'bring gnyis du ngo sprod pa yin par 'dug*] (in both versions ordinary beings are cut from the sentence!).

<sup>89</sup> The first two details appear for the first time in mKha' spyod dbang po's *Clouds of Blessings*. See Blancke 2021a, *The Teaching Transmission from Marpa to Mi la in the Hagiographies* and Zhwa dmar 02 [n.d.]: 23.

<sup>90</sup> More differences in the first chapter can be seen in Blancke 2021a.

- In DNM-RD, the complete chapter recounting Mi la ras pa's meeting with Na ro bon chung and the conquest of the Kailāśa as a holy place for Buddhists is found (identical to gTsang smyon's Chapter 22). This chapter is missing in the early Golden Rosary biographies, in *The Twelve Great Ras pa Disciples* and in Ms-BL. In *A River of Blessings*, there is but a brief mention in prose of a dispute between rJe btsun Mi la and Na ro bon chung, with Mi la's victory through miraculous powers; no songs are included.<sup>91</sup>
- In the second-stratum, part of the story of gSal le 'od is recounted, but only two songs are included.<sup>92</sup> The other four songs constituting this chapter in gTsang smyon's *Songs* are missing. The entire chapter is missing from *The Twelve Great Ras pa Disciples*.<sup>93</sup> In Ms-BL, in addition to the songs in DNM-RD, two extra songs not found anywhere else are included.<sup>94</sup>
- All second-stratum compendia include many songs dealing with details about meditation practice. One example is the song of realisation on the dividing line between happiness and misery.<sup>95</sup> As this song is quite different from the "usual" song style, it might be a later addition. Especially DNM-RD includes several new songs about view, meditation, conduct and fruition.
- In all second-stratum compendia, the entrustment of the bDe mchog sNyan brgyud lineage by Mi la to Ras chung pa is included, while it is missing in *The Twelve Great Ras pa Disciples*, and it is also omitted by gTsang smyon Heruka.<sup>96</sup>

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<sup>91</sup> DNM-RD 2006: 440-48; gTsang smyon 1981: 378-85; Stagg 2017: 224-30. The passage in BCG-D is translated in Quintman 2014a: 257n101. For a detailed discussion see Bock pp. 125-131.

<sup>92</sup> Songs 37.5 and 37.6, DNM-RD 2006: 593-95; BCG-D 8: 67-69; gTsang smyon 1981: 575-76; Stagg 2017: 441-42.

<sup>93</sup> As already mentioned, the cycle is also included in Ms-Drukpa and Ms-Gansu.

<sup>94</sup> Ms-BL 234b-237b.

<sup>95</sup> Song 40.4, DNM-RD 2006: 150; BCG-D 7: 308; gTsang smyon 1981: 616; Stagg 2017: 485. Also this song is included in Ms-Drukpa: 225a and Ms-Gansu vol. 24: 158. The song is missing in Ms-BL.

<sup>96</sup> See Blancke 2021b, *The Entrustment Of The Saṃvara Aural Transmission To Ras chung pa*. As mentioned, in Ms-Drukpa and Ms-Gansu it is shortly mentioned (in a single sentence).



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- DNM-RD includes a list of "fortresses" (*rdzong*) as well as some "special places" (*khyad par gi gnas*).<sup>97</sup> In sub-group A of *A River of Blessings* (Ms-Smith and Ms-India) the fortresses are not mentioned whereas in sub-group B (Ms-Drepung, BCG-D and BCG-Si) they are mentioned in a first addendum.
- The second-stratum compendia contain elaborate lists of disciples. They also mention a special group of followers.
  - In DNM-RD and Ms-BL "three supreme yogins and yoginīs" are mentioned:<sup>98</sup>
    - The supreme one to subdue human beings: sGam po pa;
    - the supreme one to subdue non-human beings: bKra shis Tshe ring ma;
    - the supreme one to subdue *ḍākinīs*: the co-emergent mantra-born Tārā (*sngags skyes lhan cig skyes pa'i sgröl ma/sgron me*).
  - In *A River of Blessings*, the special group of followers consists of four "special great sons":
    - Regarding the four great sons: the local guardian *ḍākinī* Tshe ring ma subdued gods and demons with a mental body; the co-emergent mantra-born Tārā subdued hidden beings of superior capacities; Dwags po Candrakumāra subdued real human beings; Ras chung pa was the being who was the holder of the essence of the oral instructions of the Aural Transmission. These four are the foremost among all the great sons.<sup>99</sup>

<sup>97</sup> DNM-RD 2006: 768.

<sup>98</sup> DNM-RD 2006: 769; Ms-BL 392a. *mchog gi rnal 'byor pho mo gsum ni/ mi rnams 'dul ba' mchog sgam po pa/ mi ma yin rnams 'dul ba'i mchog bkra shis tshe ring ma/ da'ki rnams 'dul ba'i mchog sngags skyes lhan cig skyes pa'i sgröl ma* [in Ms-BL *sgron me*]. This list was first seen in mKha' spyod dbang po's *Clouds of Blessings*, Zhwa dmar 02 1978a: 316.

<sup>99</sup> BCG-D 8: 505-6, *Bu chen bzhi ni/ yid gzugs kyi lha 'dre dbang du sdud pa zhing skyong gi daki tshe ring ma/ lkog gyur dbang po yang rab kyi skye bo dbang du sdud pa sngags skyes lhan cig skyes pa'i sgröl ma/ mngon sum mi'i 'gro ba dbang du sdud pa dwags po zla 'od gzhon nu/ snyan rgyud kyi gdams ngag gi bcud 'dzin pa'i skyes bu ras chung pa ste/ bzhi po 'di bu chen thams cad kyi gtso bo yin no*. The presence of Tārā in this special group is intriguing, as she is not mentioned in gTsang smyon's work. She is found in a few more instances, in some cases in both *The Twelve Great Ras pa Disciples* and the late compendia:

(1) When Mi la, after staying with rNgog, is ready to return to Mar pa, he has nothing to offer. rNgog presents him with a small gift, but he tells Mi la that he should pronounce a dedication prayer when offering it. When Mi la admits

*A River of Blessings* offers the largest compilation of Mi la ras pa stories. These versions are more inclusive and except for the complete Na ro bon chung episode, they seem to collect all the available material about Mi la ras pa, first narrating one version and then another one, as noted by Roberts and Quintman.<sup>100</sup>

- The first chapter about the hardships Mi la ras pa had endured ends with an 'alternative story', clearly inserted from another source, in which elements of Mi la ras pa's later return to his village are included, as well as a later visit to Mar pa and rNgog and a meeting with Mar pa's son mDo sde. This episode is not included in DNM-RD, but it is included in Ms-BL in a different – and more plausible – way.<sup>101</sup>
- The last instruction of the rJe btsun – showing the calluses on his behind – is granted to the two main disciples, Ras chung pa and sGam po pa.<sup>102</sup> In *The Twelve Great Ras pa Disciples*, as in the other liberation stories in Ras chung pa's lineage and DNM-RD, it is granted only to Ras chung pa – although in some cases the page with this compromising detail was removed from the text!<sup>103</sup> Instead, in the narratives in sGam po pa's lineage – and in gTsang smyon's work – this special instruction is given only to sGam po pa.
- Songs regarding two ordained monk-scholars are included, also found in gTsang smyon's *Songs* (Chapters 42 and 44, *Lo ston dge*

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he does not know how to do that, Tārā comes into the sky and makes the dedication prayer, and Mi la becomes very good at it.

- (2) When the patroness lCam me needs to pronounce a dedication prayer, unexpectedly Tārā comes into the sky and sings a dedication song.
- (3) The third instance comes in the question-and-answer episode between Mi la and sGam po pa. (See above, p. 26).

<sup>100</sup> Quintman 2014a: 111; Roberts 2007: 140.

<sup>101</sup> See below p. 44 and Blancke 2021d, *Gampopa Sonam Rinchen Meets Jetsun Mi la*, where the episode in both texts is translated.

<sup>102</sup> Blancke 2023b, Song Chart 8, the episode of q & a between lord Mi la ras pa and the incomparable rin po che from Dwags po (sGam po pa) and the episode of advice before departure to Central Tibet (Ras chung pa).

<sup>103</sup> Blancke 2023a, Song Chart 7, Ms-Oxford and Ms-BDRC.

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'*dun gyi skor* and *Li skor phyra ru ba'i skor*).<sup>104</sup> These chapters are missing in *The Twelve Great Ras pa Disciples*<sup>105</sup> as well as in DNM-RD. This content might be taken from an unknown text in sGam po pa's lineage.

- Sub-group B includes the narrative of Ras chung pa's strange illness and his first trip to India to get cured, which is also mentioned by gTsang smyon Heruka.<sup>106</sup> The episode is missing in DNM-RD, sub-group A and Ms-BL.
- Sub-group B includes three additional pieces of information after the colophons.
  - A list of the dwelling places of Mi la ras pa, identical to that of DNM-RD.
  - A text by 'Ba' rom pa dar ma dbang phyug (1127–1194),<sup>107</sup> in which some visual appearances of gods and demons present in Mi la ras pa's life stories are explained in terms of interconnections with Mi la ras pa's meditation practice on the channels, winds and drops.<sup>108</sup>
  - *The History of the Dark/Black Treasury, the Collected Songs of Mi la ras pa, King of the rJe btsuns, transmitted by the Karma pas.*<sup>109</sup>

<sup>104</sup> E.g., BCG-D 7: 492, Stagg 525-526; BCG-D 7: 139, Stagg 546; BCG-D 8: 78, Stagg 542.

<sup>105</sup> Some of them are found in Ms-Drukpa and Ms-Gansu.

<sup>106</sup> E.g., BCG-D 7:213, Stagg 106-107.

<sup>107</sup> Spelled 'Ba' brom pa in the three copies.

<sup>108</sup> E.g., BCG-D 8:508. For an English translation of this fragment see Blancke 2021e. A sTag lung lineage history called *sTag lung religious history - an ocean of marvels* (*sTag lung chos 'byung ngo mtshar rgya mtso*) compiled in 1609 by sTag lung Ngag dbang rnam rgyal (BDRC W17276) includes a short life story of Mi la ras pa (pp. 145-58) in which the hindrances that Mi la ras pa encountered – such as attacks of demons and the like – are explained in terms of blockages of the channels, winds and drops in a way very similar to this addendum in BCG-D attributed to 'Ba' brom pa.

<sup>109</sup> E.g., BCG-D 8: 513. *rJe btsun gyi rgyal po mi la ras pa'i 'gur 'bum karma pa nas brgyud pa'i mdzod nag ma yi lo rgyus ni*. See Quintman 2014a: 105-6. For a comparison between this lineage history and the one included in the Bordier manuscript, see Bock pp. 94-106.

Regarding Ms-BL, it is interesting to note some significant differences not contained in any of the other second-stratum compendia – a possible indication that it was not depending on these: even though mainly the same sources were used,<sup>110</sup> some specific sTag lung input provides for a slightly alternative account. To give just a few examples:

- In this text, when Mi la ras pa leaves Mar pa, the teacher tells him that he should return once he has obtained some success in his meditation practice. Thus, after going to his village and practising alone, he goes back to meet Mar pa<sup>111</sup> and only at that time does he receive some more instructions, together with the advice to go to India. As mentioned above, this same episode is partly inserted in *A River of Blessings*, as an alternative narrative at the end of the first chapter. Whereas in Ms-BL Mi la ras pa receives his main instructions from Mar pa only during that later visit, in *A River of Blessings* the second visit is merely an account of Mi la ras pa's progress made on the path and Mar pa's acknowledgement of this.<sup>112</sup>
- On f. 83b a short biography of Ngan rdzong ston pa is included, lacking in all other texts.
- Regarding Mi la ras pa's disciples, in Ms-BL Ras chung pa is mentioned as having received most oral instructions, whereas Ngan rdzong ston pa is described as the holder of the Aural Transmission Lineage.<sup>113</sup>

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<sup>110</sup> Strangely enough, although there is no reference in the text to Rang byung rdo rje or the *mDzod nag ma*, all the typical characteristics mentioned in Ms-Lhasa and the other 'variant' versions are also found in this compendium.

<sup>111</sup> The episode comes in the first episode of the third quality chapter, the quality of recognising blissful heat, Ms-BL 34a-42b. A similar return by Mi la ras pa to IHo brag is described also in Zhi byed ri pa's work. In this case, the visits took place after Mar pa's death. (Blancke 2021g)

<sup>112</sup> See Blancke 2021a, *The Teaching Transmission from Marpa to Mila in the Hagiographies*, where the episode in both texts is translated.

<sup>113</sup> Ms-BL 391a, *thugs kyi sras bzhi ni/ gdam pa che bar grags pa gung thang gi ras chung rdo rje grags/ snyan rgyud gdam pa'i rgyud 'dzin lcim lung gi ngam rdons ston pa byang chub rgyal po/ sgrub pa mthar[...].stag mo'i gling kha ba 'bri sgom pa/ bde gsal mi rtog pa la nus gyur pa mdo bkra'i se ban ras pa dang bzhi'o.*

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Surprisingly, Ms-Drepung, also transmitted in the sTag lung lineage – as can be seen from the illustrations of the lineage masters included therein – does not include these alternative elements. This could mean that Ms-Drepung is itself a copy of a text that was transmitted in the Karma Kam tshang lineage, as the colophon mentioning Rang byung rdo rje as the compiler of part of the text seems to indicate. The same may be true also for Ms-Smith: although the masters illustrated in the manuscript belong to the Upper 'Brug pa lineage, the colophon includes the reference to the text compiled by Rang byung rdo rje.

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The numerous copies of the compendia still available show how important they are. These works continue to be reproduced, despite gTsang smyon Heruka's more attractive version from a literary point of view.

Concerning the relationship between the second-stratum compendia and gTsang smyon Heruka's *Life and Songs*, it is difficult to come to precise conclusions regarding dates and narrative developments. One could speculate that the plethora of biographies witnessed in the early sixteenth century might indicate an attempt to protect this particular corpus of the bZhad pa'i rdo rje literary tradition as a reaction against some narrative changes introduced in gTsang smyon Heruka's *Life and Songs*.

Moreover, it is intriguing to notice that a compendium compiled within the Ras chung snyan brgyud tradition in the 'Brug pa bKa' brgyud lineage is later considered almost exclusive to the Karma Kam tshang lineage. This impression is the result of the creation of new titles and colophons that include the designation *Dark/Black Treasury* with the presumed authorship of Karma pa Rang byung rdo rje and the addition of a transmission history of the text in the Kam tshang lineage.<sup>114</sup> On the contrary, the Ras chung snyan brgyud tradition remained part of the 'Brug pa bKa' brgyud lineage, passing on the one hand through gTsang smyon Heruka and his disciples, and on the other

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<sup>114</sup> For details about the transmission line see Quintman 2014a: 105-106 and Bock's article in this volume.

hand through the third 'Brug chen 'Jam dbyangs chos grags (1478–1523) and the fourth 'Brug chen Padma dkar po (1527–1592).<sup>115</sup>

The Fourth Zhwa dmar pa Chos sgrags ye shes seems to have been a key figure in the preservation of this particular literary tradition. In a short biography of the Fourth Zhwa dmar pa hosted on the BDRC database<sup>116</sup> it is said that Chos grags ye shes at some point of his life gave a reading transmission (*bka' lung*) of his predecessor the second Zhwa dmar pa mKha' spyod dbang po's *Collected Works*. mKha' spyod dbang po had written an elaborate life story of Mi la ras pa and sGam po pa, in the episodic style used in the lineage of sGam po pa. Therefore, one could wonder why Chos grags ye shes would have authorised a new compilation based on *The Twelve Great Ras pa Disciples* if his predecessor had not done so.

According to rGod tshang ras pa sNa tshogs ming can (1494–1570, a disciple of gTsang smyon Heruka)<sup>117</sup> gTsang smyon had sent all his written materials to the Fourth Zhwa dmar pa. In the latter's above-mentioned biography, we read that in his fifties – meaning in the early sixteenth century – Chos grags ye shes gave teachings on the *Mi la'i mgur 'bum*. Would this have been gTsang smyon's *Songs* or the work that was compiled under his authority?

Moreover, it is interesting to note that there seemingly was a strong connection between the Fourth Zhwa dmar pa and the Ri bo che branch of the sTag lung lineage. Among the texts included in his *gsung 'bum* we find a praise to Chos rje 'Jig rten dbang phyug – the last sTag lung master mentioned in Ms-Drepung and the second last in Ms-BL – written by the Fourth Zhwa dmar pa.<sup>118</sup> More historical information about this particular period and the relations between the different bKa' brgyud schools at that time could shed some more light on this question.

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<sup>115</sup> For charts regarding these lineage transmissions see Callahan 2023: 891-99. See also Sernesi 2021.

<sup>116</sup> *Zhwa dmar chos grags ye shes kyi rnam thar mdor bsdus*, a recent biography by Mi nyag mgon po (1923–2008) 1: 205-17 (BDRC W25268\_I1PD36334).

<sup>117</sup> See Quintman 2014a:132 and Sernesi 2011 & 2021: 145 and 203n63.

<sup>118</sup> "dPal stag lung thang po'i gdung rgyud ri bo che'i chos rje 'jig rten dbang phyug la bstod pa bzhugs so", *Zhwa dmar* 04 2009c 4:231. (BDRC W1KG4876\_I1KG4881). I thank Étienne Bock for pointing out this text of praise to me.

### *Conclusion*

This article gives an overview of a group of voluminous texts regarding the life and songs of Mi la ras pa here called "bZhad pa'i rDo rje Compendia" – manuscripts dated around the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries and recent editions. All these texts are based on an earlier presumably 13<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century anonymous work known as *The Twelve Great Ras pa Disciples* but actually titled *Life and Songs of the Glorious Laughing Vajra*.

As has been demonstrated, in all the above-discussed versions the same basic structure is maintained, namely a division into two main chapters: Mi la ras pa's difficulties in his early life and the 17 or 18 qualities he developed through meditation. This method of life writing was seen earlier in the Golden Rosary biographies in Ras chung pa's lineage, which suggests that the original *Twelve Great Ras pa Disciples* originated from that lineage. First presented as the words of Ngan rdzong ston pa and the other cotton-clad disciples of Mi la ras pa and connected with the Saṃvara Aural Transmission, in later times a great deal of the authorship was attributed to the Third Karma pa Rang byung rdo rje.

What differentiates all these texts are additional pieces of information consisting of new episodes and new songs. From the study of detailed song charts, it becomes clear that the texts can be divided into two main groups: a first stratum, consisting of different late texts derived from the presumed original but unavailable *Twelve Great Ras pa Disciples* as well as some slightly 'variant' versions; a second stratum, consisting of three types of texts – the so-called *Dark/Black Treasury*, various versions of *A River of Blessings*, and a life-and-song manuscript kept at the British Library.

A major distinction between the two strata lies in some narrative developments, started with the new compilation of *The Twelve Great Ras pa Disciples* attributed to the Third Karma pa Rang byung rdo rje. That new compilation became the basic source for the second-stratum compendia. All the new elements from that compilation were added in the second-stratum, together with new inputs coming mainly from the unknown text in Gung thang dpal gyi gtsug lag khang and other sources mentioned in the colophons, from a later time with respect to *The Twelve Great Ras pa Disciples*.

In my opinion, another point of divergence between the two strata seems to be a shift of this literary tradition coming from the Saṃvara Aural Transmission towards more sGam po pa-oriented lineages (Karma Kam tshang, 'Bri gung, sTag lung) by adding more anecdotes regarding sGam po pa and accentuating the importance of *mahāmudrā* teachings. However, also the entrustment of the Saṃvara Aural Transmission to Ras chung pa, which was absent in the first stratum, was added in the second stratum.

Although less interesting and captivating from a literary point of view than gTsang smyon Heruka's *Life and Songs*, this particular tradition is still vibrant and alive. One cannot but wish that the presumed 'original' version of *The Twelve Great Ras pa Disciples*, the missing source from Gung thang dpal gyi gtsug lag khang and early manuscripts of all these versions could be found!






# Groping in the Dark Treasury. Exploring the Mi la bZhad pa'i rdo rje Compendia in light of a most peculiar manuscript

Etienne Bock

(Tibet Museum – Fondation Alain Bordier)

n 2017, the Tibet Museum – Fondation Alain Bordier in Gruyères, Switzerland, acquired a voluminous and richly illuminated manuscript presented as an “early version of the life of Milarepa”. Along with the book came a thorough introductory study by Andreas Kretschmar dated 2006. This study focused on the colophon of the text and listed the illustrations and their legends. The manuscript was presented as “a version [of the “Black Treasury”] authored by the 3<sup>rd</sup> Karmapa, only with a different title and a very interesting colophon.”<sup>1</sup>

A 2016 email by Matthew Kapstein was also communicated with the manuscript. After comparing its colophon with “the available editions of the same version – the 3<sup>rd</sup> Karmapa’s – of the Milarepa songs”, M. Kapstein concluded: “the manuscript is as close as we are now able to come to the version on which all other known versions are based; it is safe to say that this does establish the importance of the manuscript for any effort to produce a critical edition of the text.”

Based on these comments, it seemed clear that the manuscript was a version of the so-called “*Black Treasury*” by the Third Karma pa Rang byung rdo rje (1284–1339).

In 2021, Mr. Bordier launched the project of a publication presenting his collection and using the manuscript as its core. The research for the book was the occasion to dive into the manuscript. and explore its content.

In order to navigate through the manuscript and to locate the corresponding pages, I used several sources for comparison, mostly a 2008 edition published in Sichuan and a unicode version of the *mDzod nag ma* found within the Third Karma pa’s Collected Works.<sup>2</sup> It soon

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<sup>1</sup> Kretschmar 2006 p. 1.

<sup>2</sup> BCG-Si 2008; DNM-RD 2011b.

became obvious, however, that the three sources were not corresponding. Based on Appendixes 2 & 3 of Quintman's *The Yogin and the Madman*,<sup>3</sup> I used the texts' outlines to try to locate our ms. among the other versions. In parallel, I worked on a diplomatic edition of Ms-Bordier based on the Third Karma pa document, a work still in progress to this day.

Trying to understand the Bordier manuscript it was necessary to analyse the available versions of the compendia and, with the help of Kristin Blancke, we explored this literature. Throughout the detailed presentation of this manuscript and its particularities (title, content, illustrations, colophon...) this article explores the compendia corpus in order to shed some new light and question our present understanding.

### *1. General description*

The manuscript is composed of 321 folios numbered from 1 to 323, with the folio 35 missing, and the folio 41 numbered "41-42". The text is written in *dbu med* script 'bru tsa, in black and red ink. A series of refined coloured illuminations are scattered among the pages, 107 in total, highlighting the content of the text. Every illustration has a 'khyug yig legend describing its subject.<sup>4</sup>

Following the outline of all the compendia, the book is divided into two major sections:

- I. The qualities of hardships experienced related to his family
- II. The qualities of his experience related to his samādhi<sup>5</sup>

This second part is in turn divided into 18 qualities (*yon tan*) containing 62 cycles (*skor*).

The detailed content has been described and compared with Kristin Blancke's tables (Song Charts 7)<sup>6</sup> establishing a close relation between our manuscript and the *Twelve Great Ras pa Disciples*, placing it

<sup>3</sup> Quintman 2014a Appendix 2 pp. 199-206; Appendix 3 pp. 207-224.

<sup>4</sup> The list of all illustrations with the inscriptions is presented in the text outline (see Appendix A pp. 176-80).

<sup>5</sup> *Rigs dang 'brel ba dka' ba spyad pa'i yon tan* and *Ting nge 'dzin dang 'brel ba nyams su myong ba'i yon tan*.

<sup>6</sup> Blancke 2023a.

among the early ‘Variant’ versions, along with Ms-BDRC and Ms-Lhasa. We shall see this matter in detail later.

## 2. Title

The manuscript is titled *rJe btsun mi la bzhad pa rdo rje'i 'gur 'bum rnam thar 'bril ma*, “The compilation (?) of rJe btsun Mi la bZhad pa rdo rje’s Collected Songs and Liberation Story”.

The formulation of the title appears unusual on several levels. First, the expression *'bril ma* is problematic. Since it is absent from dictionaries, one could understand it as a corrupt spelling for *'brel ma* “connected, united, joined”, with the scribe mixing up the *gi gu* and *'greng bu* which can be easily confounded as they share similar written forms between the *dbu can* and *dbu med* scripts. In this case, the title would be *'brel ma*, meaning “the union of Songs and Life”.

Another possibility might be a spelling mistake for a homophonic verb. Yet, it seems improbable for a scribe to ignore such a mistake on the title page without correcting or modifying it. The eventuality of an archaism appears more logical.<sup>7</sup> Two verbs similar in pronunciation, *'dril* and *'gril* convey the meaning of “assembling, collecting.”<sup>8</sup> Therefore, we can reasonably assume our title to mean “compilation”.

No mention of the *mDzod nag ma* or the Karma pa is made within the title, as is the case for most manuscript versions of the compendia.<sup>9</sup> An unusual feature of this title is that it places the word for “Collected Songs” (*'gur 'bum*) before “Liberation story” (*rnam thar*). All in all, this title corresponds to none of the other manuscripts of the compendia.

<sup>7</sup> The same form appears in Pelliot tibétain 37 reinforcing this hypothesis: “[...] *che rabs gyis spyod pa gcig pas ni/ sha dang rus 'bril de nas gcig skyes pa las!*.” All my gratitude to Thomas Kerihuel for indicating me this reference.

<sup>8</sup> Monlam Grand Tibetan Dictionary (2014) *'gril ba* = *dag yig la lar phyogs gcig tu bsdus pa*; *'dril ba* = *phyogs gcig tu sdud pa*.

<sup>9</sup> Ms-BDRC and Ms-Smith. Possibly Ms-Lhasa and Ms-Drepung.

### 3. *Content, qualities and cycles*

« Et qui n'est, chaque fois, ni tout à fait la même, ni tout à fait une autre... »<sup>10</sup>

Paul Verlaine, « Mon rêve familial »

As pointed out by Blancke's Song Charts 7 and 8, the bZhad pa'i rdo rje Compendia can be differentiated into two general groups: a first stratum gathering different versions of the *Twelve Great Ras pa Disciples* (*Ras pa bu chen bcu gnyis* - RBC); a second stratum consisting of the so-called *Dark Treasury* (*mDzod nag ma* - DNM-RD) contained in Rang byung rdo rje's Collected Works,<sup>11</sup> *A River of Blessings* (*Byin rlabs kyi chu rgyun* - BCG), and a manuscript at the British Library (Ms-BL). To briefly summarise the findings of Blancke, these two groups can again be divided into different categories:

1a) *The Twelve Great Ras pa Disciples*: Ms-Newark, Ms-Oxford, Ms-Drukpa, Ms-Gansu, RBC-Stockholm,<sup>12</sup> and RBC-Paltsek<sup>13</sup>

1b) Variant versions of the RBC: Ms-Bordier, Ms-BDRC, and Ms-Lhasa, with specific additional content

2a) The so-called *mDzod nag ma* presented in the Collected Works of Rang byung rdo rje: DNM-RD

2b) The British Library manuscript: Ms-BL

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<sup>10</sup> Verlaine 1890 p. 21.

<sup>11</sup> Referring to Roberts' explanation (2007 p. 32n128), the *mdzod nag* being "a room, or closet [that] has no windows and therefore is in the darkness", the expression 'Dark Treasury' appears more logical than 'Black Treasury'.

<sup>12</sup> Concerning this lost edition, see Roberts 2007 pp. 22-23. The translation of the colophon shows the connection with the other RBCs. Thanks to Marta Sernesi we could access Ms-Drukpa and Ms-Gansu, two almost identical texts, the latter sharing a comparable title and the same colophon as the lost xylographic edition.

<sup>13</sup> RBC-Pt is a modern reconstructed edition based upon "two different ancient texts", as explained in the editor's preface (pp. 6-7). It is the sole version of *The Twelve Great Ras pa Disciples* with an extra 18<sup>th</sup> quality. As a modern edition based on two unidentified 'ancient texts' this particularity remains questionable.

2c) *A River of Blessings*: Ms-Smith, Ms-India, Ms-Drepung (and its modern editions BCG-D and BCG-Si)<sup>14</sup>

This differentiation rests upon a series of precise elements: 1) **the structure of the texts**, consisting of the number of “qualities” (*yon tan*), the number of “cycles” (*skor*), and their order of presentation within the qualities; 2) **the content of the text**, in terms of narrative elements and songs; 3) the **titles and colophons**.

A quick look at the Song Charts and the Outlines shows that all the texts consulted share the same generic quality structure (whether 17 or 18) but that none correspond in terms of precise content. For a detailed study of each category, see Blancke’s contribution to this volume.

Ms-Bordier belongs to the group of the Variant versions of the RBC, together with Ms-BDRC and Ms-Lhasa. These three texts share the same structure as the *Ras pa bu chen bcu gnyis*. What identifies them as ‘Variant’ is some specific original content absent in the ‘Regular’ RBCs. This supplementary material consists in two short passages, one concerning sGam po pa and one concerning Ras chung pa, plus an extra song about the *bar do*.<sup>15</sup>

The difference between these three manuscripts lies exclusively in the addition of extra cycles with respect to each other. All three possess the general RBC colophon supplemented with a second colophon, different each time.

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<sup>14</sup> Quintman identifies a ‘DNM-D’ gathering two bibliographical references: a 2004 edition in the *’Bri gung bka’ brgyud chos mdzod chen mo* (here BCG-D) and a 2008 edition published in Chengdu, Sichuan (here BCG-Si). Both are in fact modern reeditions of a manuscript reproduced in facsimile in *Bod kyi lo rgyus rnam thar phyogs bsgrigs* vols. 111-112. Unfortunately, the ms. lacks its title page. Although the editor gives no information regarding its provenance, the fact that it was reproduced in the *’Bri gung bka’ brgyud chos mdzod chen mo* (vol. 7 & 8) points to its origin being the gNas bcu lha khang in ’Bras spung. Cécile Ducher (2020 p. 135) explains that this collection was rewritten by hand from originals allegedly part of around 40 boxes kept in that “archive”, i.e. books that were seized from various libraries shortly after the establishment of the dGa’ ldan pho brang (1642). This manuscript is therefore named Ms-Drepung in the present study.

<sup>15</sup> Concerning sGam po pa and the *bar do* song: quality 17, *rJe ras pa chen po mi la ras pa dang/ mnyam med dags po rin po che yab sras kyis zhu ba dang zhus len gyis skor*. Concerning Ras chungpa: quality 17 for Ms-BDRC and Ms-Lhasa, quality 18 for Ms-Bordier.

Inside this group, Ms-Bordier stands apart due to three details:

- in contrast to all the other RBCs, it has an extra 18<sup>th</sup> quality.
- in contrast to the other two Variant RBCs, it has no colophon mentioning Rang byung rdo rje's role as the compiler of the text.
- in contrast to almost all other compendia, it contains a history of the *Dark Treasury* transmitted by the Karma pas<sup>16</sup> (from now on, *lo rgyus*). A very similar *lo rgyus* is present in one version of *A River of Blessings*, namely Ms-Drepung, and its two modern copies.

Despite the disparities of content, titles, colophons and religious affiliation, all compendia share many common points, and all identify themselves as the 'Life and Songs of bZhad pa'i rdo rje', an expression encountered in every colophon.<sup>17</sup>

The Outline in Appendix A indicates that Ms-Bordier's narrative cycles (*skor*) and their disposition within the qualities are identical to those of the *Ras pa bu chen bcu gnyis*. The only difference in structure lies in the presence of an 18<sup>th</sup> quality, as opposed to all the other *Twelve Great Ras pa Disciples* which all end at #17: "the quality of introducing to Mahāmudrā" (*phyag rgya chen po'i ngo 'phrod pa'i yon tan*).<sup>18</sup> This 18<sup>th</sup> quality of "displaying the achievement of the unified vajra body in a single lifetime and its dissolution into the rainbow body" (*tshé gcig gis zung 'jug rdo rje'i sku 'grub cing 'ja' lus su yal ba'i tshul bstan pa'i yon tan*), is found in RBC-Pt, DNM-RD, and all versions of *A River of Blessings*. Since RBC-Pt is a modern edition, the first of a five-volumes

<sup>16</sup> Ms-Bordier f. 322b.1: *rje btsun gyi rgyal po mi la ras pa'i 'gur 'bum/ chos rje karma pa nas brgyud pa'i mdzod nag ma zhes bya ba 'di'i lo rgyus ni/*

<sup>17</sup> RBC: *dpal bzhad pa'i rdo rje rnam thar mgur chings dang bcas*; DNM-RD: *dpa' bzhad pa'i rdo rje'i rnam thar mgur chos zhal gdams dang bcas pa*; Ms-BL: *dpal bzhad pa'i rdo rje'i rnam thar/ 'gur ma'i chings dang bcas pa*; BCG: *rje rnal 'byor gyi dbang phyug mi la bzhad pa'i rdo rje'i 'gur tshogs lo rgyus kyi spras pa*.

<sup>18</sup> Due to the impossibility of consulting the RBC-St, we cannot ascertain if this version has 17 or 18 qualities.

*Mi la ras pa'i gsung 'bum*, we must remain circumspect and consider the possibility of a later “harmonisation” decided by the editors. In fact, this text collection contains a version of the *mDzod nag ma* attributed to Rang byung rdo rje (DNM-RD 2011) that shows multiple evidences of edition and reconstruction by the editors (orthographic corrections, new cycles and songs added, etc.), a practice also admitted in the editor’s preface to this collection.<sup>19</sup>

When examining the location of this extra ‘quality’ in Ms-Bordier and comparing it with the other RBCs, it appears that the title was simply inserted at the end of the last cycle *Brin gyi smon lam gyi skor* without addition or suppression of narrative. This specific part of the story describing the last years of *Mi la ras pa* and the circumstances of his passing beyond suffering bears no title as a separate cycle. From a symbolic perspective, the addition of this 18<sup>th</sup> section emphasises the importance of this episode as “a quality related to the experience of *samādhī*” (*ting nge 'dzin dang 'brel ba nyams su myong ba'i yon tan*). Stylistically, it also balances the text by reducing the over developed 17<sup>th</sup> section already comprising more than 15 cycles depending on the version.

Beside this extra quality, regarding the cycles, their number and order, with 62 *skor* Ms-Bordier is the closest to the ‘Regular’ *Ras pa bu chen bcu gnyis*. One must be very careful with the analysis of cycles as they often share the same name but can vary in terms of content.

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<sup>19</sup> RBC-Pt pp. 6-7: *rnal 'byor gyi dbang phyug rje btsun mi la bzhad par do rje'i mgur 'bum mdzod nag ma zhes pa ni [...] dpal karma pa thams cad mkhyen pa rang byung rgyal bas rje btsun chen po'i gsung mgur dang rnam thar brgya phrag las brgal ba bsags nas/ de dag gi legs cha bsdus te phyogs gcig tu bsgrigs par mdzad par rje nyid kyi phyag bris kong po rtse lha sgang gi mdzod nag tu bzhugs pa de las bris bshus kyi dpe mang du 'phel ba'i rgyun las **dpe mi 'dra ba lnga tsam nga tsho'i lag par rnyed son byung ba las/** 'di ni dbyin yul nas 'ongs pa'i ma dpe zhig la gzhi bcol te dpe gzhan rnams dang bsdur nas bcos gang thub byas kyang/ tshan pa so so'i mgur chings kyi lo rgyus rgyas bsdus dans brjod bya mi 'dra zhing go rim 'khrugs pa bcas rnyog 'dzing shin tu che bas ma phyi ltar rang sor bzhag ste lta klog bde ba'i ched deb dtod smad gnyis byas yod/.*

As far as the song cycles are concerned, compared to the other *Twelve Great Ras pa Disciples*, Ms-Bordier has no extra or lacking cycle. Therefore, we could consider its structure as a possible model for a 'basic' *Ras pa bu chen bcu gnyis*, except for the three characteristic passages specific to the 'Variant' category: the *bar do* song, the episode of sGam po pa and the great *gtor ma*, and the presence of Ras chung in Lo ro and at the cremation ground.<sup>20</sup> If we eliminate these 3 elements and the 18<sup>th</sup> quality, we could consider Ms-Bordier's core as a hypothetical example of what the 'original' version of *The Twelve Great Ras pa Disciples* must have looked like.

In terms of volume, this additional material represents approximately 3 folios out of 322, less than 1% of the whole text, making Ms-Bordier the closest manuscript to the *Twelve Great Ras pa Disciples* and the most distant from the compendia of the second stratum.

#### 4. Illuminations

Ms-Bordier has numerous images illustrating and highlighting some of the episodes of the life and songs of Mi la ras pa. Ms-Newark, Ms-Drukpa, Ms-Lhasa, Ms-Drepung, Ms-Smith and the British Library manuscript (Ms-BL) are also illustrated, whether exclusively with lineage masters opening the manuscript (Ms-Drukpa, Ms-Smith) or with various life scenes. A quick overview of the Outlines reveals similitudes and differences both in the choice of the episodes illustrated and in the manner of representing them. Ms-Bordier, Ms-Lhasa, Ms-Drepung and Ms-BL have their illustrations separated from the text in little frames on the sides of the pages and sometimes at the center. Ms-Newark has small illustrations inserted within the text, between the words and lines.

The presence of illustrations accompanying the text appears to be a specificity of manuscript versions of the bZhad pa'i rdo rje Compendia, since they are absent from the xylographic prints of

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<sup>20</sup> Respectively located: ff.287b.1-288a.3; ff.290.7-290b.6; ff.310b.5-312b.5.



gTsang smyon's works (except for the lineage masters).<sup>21</sup> Perhaps it was technically too complicated and expensive to carve drawings along the text. This might also be the reason why the Madman commissioned narrative paintings to accompany his editions.<sup>22</sup>

While introducing the Newark manuscript, Quintman gives a description of its illustrations.<sup>23</sup> He observes the “tremendous care [that] was taken in the planning and execution of the illustrations” adding that the drawings often mark the beginning of songs. This last statement is also valid for the other manuscripts where the illustrations are usually located at the beginning of a cycle to indicate the separation between two episodes.<sup>24</sup> The composition of the images is often – but not always – similar, with a great majority of scenes representing Mi la ras pa teaching to one or more disciples, with the different characters facing each other.

The number of illustrations and their aesthetic quality greatly vary depending on the manuscript. Ms-Lhasa has the simplest type of illustrations, closer to sketches, whereas the other four are more artistically elaborated. Ms-Lhasa possesses 79 images, Ms-Bordier 107, the British Library manuscript 175, Ms-Drepung 192, and Ms-Newark 292.<sup>25</sup>

In the following pages I will highlight and compare a selection of episodes illustrated in the compendia as this is relevant to find similarities, disparities, patterns, or possible aesthetic influences between the different manuscripts.

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<sup>21</sup> See Quintman 2023 and Lunardo & Clemente 2021.

<sup>22</sup> Quintman 2014a pp. 133-34; Sernesi 2021 p. 63.

<sup>23</sup> Quintman 2014a p. 87n.13.

<sup>24</sup> See outlines in Appendix A.

<sup>25</sup> This number includes the images exclusively related to the narrative. The other images (eight auspicious symbols, seven Cakravartin possessions...) were not considered.

*The dream of four pillars*



Fig. 1 – The dream of four pillars. Ms-Bordier ff. 18a & 19a



Fig. 2 – The dream of four pillars. Ms-Lhasa, ff. 16a & 16b



Fig. 3 – The dream of four pillars. Ms-BL f. 39b



Fig. 4 – The dream of four pillars. Ms-Drepung vol. 111 p. 68

The variety of representations of this episode shows how differently the artists imagined the scene. Although a major narrative difference exists between Ms-Bordier and Ms-Lhasa versus Ms-Drepung and Ms-BL – Mi la having the dream of the four pillars instead of Mar pa, as was in the *Ras pa bu chen bcu gnyis* – the illustrations often show Mar pa in larger proportions since he explains the dream. Even though the characters in Ms-Bordier and Ms-Drepung are different – the latter adding bDag med ma in the scene – the almost identical stylised shape of the pillars in the two illustrations is puzzling.



Fig. 5 – Ms-Newark f. 13b

Oddly, the Newark manuscript represents this scene in a completely different manner; the four pillars are absent, replaced by an unlabeled scene where Mar pa, portrayed as a *sngags pa* and accompanied by his wife preparing *ganacakra* offerings, takes the hand of Mi la and announces that he is the holder of his lineage as foretold in the dream he had.

*The encounter with the rock ogress and the red man*



Fig. 6 – rJe btsun, a rock ogress and a red man riding a deer. Ms-Bordier f. 63a



Fig. 7 – rJe btsun and a red man riding a deer. Ms-Lhasa f. 61a



Fig. 8 – rJe btsun, a rock ogress and a red man riding a deer. Ms-Drepung vol. 111 p. 226



Fig. 9 – rJe btsun and a woman leading a red man riding a deer. Ms-BL f. 76b



Fig. 10 – rJe btsun, an ogress, a red man and a deer. Ms-Newark f. 77b

As opposed to the previous examples, the representations of Mi la's encounter with a rock ogress and a red man riding a deer drawn from the cycle *Gung thang ling ba'i brag de la mi la ras pa dang brag srin mo gnyis kyi zhu ba zhu len/ ling ba'i skor de skor che ba* are very coherent in style. Some similarities appear in the representation of the red man on his deer in every illustration (almost identical in Ms-Bordier and Ms-Drepung). Surprisingly, the ogress appears dressed in the second stratum whereas she is always naked in the first stratum. Ms-Lhasa stands apart with the rock demoness missing in the image and the legend.

*The yak horn*

Concerning the famous yak horn episode, once again the images are close but not identical, whether showing Mi la inside the horn (Ms-Lhasa, Ms-Drepung), the attempt of Ras chung to get in the horn (Ms-Bordier), or Ras chung singing in front of the horn (Ms-BL). Considering these variations, the exact match of the legends of Ms-Bordier, Ms-Lhasa and Ms-Drepung is surprising: *rje btsun g.yag ru nang du bzhugs/ ras chung ba*.



Fig. 11 – rJe btsun dwelling in a yak horn and Ras chung. Ms-Bordier f. 100a



Fig. 12 – rJe btsun dwelling in a yak horn and Ras chung. Ms-Lhasa f. 96b



Fig. 13 – rJe btsun dwelling in a yak horn and Ras chung. Ms-Drepung vol. 111 p. 312



Fig. 14 – Ras chung pa and the yak horn in thang dpal mo dpal thang du g.yag ru'i skor. Ms-BL f. 128b



Fig. 15 – Ras chung under a cloud and rJe btsun dwelling in a yak horn. Ms-Newark f. 77b



Regardless of the aesthetic considerations, the diversity of this sample of illustrations shows there was no unified visual tradition for representing the episodes of Mi la bZhad pa'i rdo rje's life among the compendia. The artists did not copy from a unique source but created illustrations according to the selected episodes. The illuminations obey the constraints of the manuscript format, usually placing the illustrations on the side (and sometimes in the middle) of the page, except for Ms-Newark where they are scattered between the lines and words.

*Meeting Zhi ba 'od*

Finally, one episode deserves a special mention: the encounter with the future Zhi ba 'od in the *Chu mig dngul'bum* cycle. In this famous story, Mi la asks a rich young man to help him cross a river on his horse. The young man refuses pretexting the risk to injure his horse and leaves to cross the river. Mi la miraculously crosses the river floating above the water arriving at the other shore before the young man. Realising the powers of the yogin, the latter asks for forgiveness and tries to redeem himself by offering all his possessions. Then starts a long exchange of songs between the young man presenting offerings and Mi la refusing. This episode contains a large quantity of images illustrating every offering (horse, boots, cloak, etc. up to a monastery, his sister and finally his trousers). Ms-Bordier and Ms-Drepung have 11 images illustrating every failed transaction. Ms-Lhasa has 'only' 8, and Ms-Newark 17. Strangely, Ms-BL illustrates the chapter with only one image showing Mi la ras pa by a river facing a young man next to his horse and helmet.

In this case, more than any other, it appears how the images are placed according to the different songs, giving tempo to the pages (but also accentuating the feeling of repetition). On the contrary, the modern Sichuan edition of *A River of Blessings*, containing 147 drawings directly inspired by Ms-Drepung's illuminations, chose to ignore these precedents, exclusively reproducing the river crossing scene.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> BCG-Si vol. 2 p. 645, image 103.

*A missing illustration?*

As explained earlier, Ms Bordier misses a single folio, no. 35. This passage corresponds to the *Brag dmar mchong gling* cycle, more precisely the episode where Mar pa appears in the sky riding a lion atop a cloud – a famous motif often represented elsewhere. One could assume that this episode was illustrated in the manuscript, as it is in Ms-BL and Ms-Drepung. If so, the total number of illustrations in Ms-Bordier would then be 108, a number of high significance and symbolism in the Buddhist culture.



Fig. 16 – Mi la ras pa and Lord Mar pa riding a lion. Ms-Drepung vol. 111 p. 145



Fig. 17 – Mar pa appears before Mi la ras pa gathering wood. Ms-BL f. 44a



Fig. 18 – *rJe btsun* and *Mar pa lo tstha*, Ms-Newark f. 27b

Ms-Bordier has an illustration on f. 34a representing *Mi la ras pa* in front of a tree. Ms-Drepung has the same image on p. 145 immediately preceding *Mar pa*'s apparition. A similar image of *Mi la* next to a tree is also visible in Ms-Lhasa on f. 33a. In this case, the image is simply labelled *brag dmar 'chong gling* referring to the cycle, but it is not followed by *Mar pa* on his lion. On the contrary, Ms-BL represents only the visionary apparition scene, without the tree, but the image legend describes *Mi la* as gathering wood (*rje btsun mi las shing btus pa*). As Ms-Bordier illumination describes the scene (*shing | rje btsun*) instead of naming the cycle (*brag dmar mchong gling*), one could reasonably believe a second illustration was following on the next folio.

One can imagine that this folio might have been lost or removed for aesthetic reasons: perhaps an unscrupulous reader took this page out of the manuscript to keep it for himself.



Fig. 19 – rJe tsun and a tree. Ms-Bordier f. 35a



Fig. 20 – Mi la gathering wood near a tree. Ms-Drepung vol. 111 p. 145



Fig. 21 – Mi la near a tree. Ms-Lhasa f. 33a

A. The opening lineage

The first ten folios of the Bordier manuscript contain the images of lineage masters and deities organised as follows:

1b	Vajradhara	Tilopa
2a	Nāropa	Mar pa
3a	Mi la ras pa	Dwags po rin po che
4a	Dus gsum mkhyen pa (1110–1193)	bDe gshegs rin po che aka Phag mo gru pa (1110–1170)
5a	'Jig rten mgon po (1143–1217)	Gling rje ras pa (1128–1188)
6a	gTsang pa rgya ras (1161–1211)	rGod tshang pa (1189–1258)
7a	Yang dgon pa (1213–1258)	'Gar dam pa (1180–?)
8a	mKha' spyod dbang po (1350–1405)	rGya ston chos bzang (15 <sup>th</sup> c.)
9a	'Khor lo bde mchog	rDo rje phag mo
10a	Śākya thub	'phags mchog sPyan ras gzigs dbang



Fig. 22 – Ms-Bordier ff. 1b, 2a, and 3a

From ff. 1b to 8a, we see a line of masters belonging to various bKa' brgyud sub-lineages. There is no clear designation of a particular school, but rather a mix of the Dwags po bKa' brgyud lineages: Karma kam tshang through Dus gsum mkhyen pa, mKha' spyod dbang po and rGya ston chos bzang; Phags mo gru with bDe gsheg rin po che; 'Bri gung with 'Jig rten mgon po and 'Gar dam pa, and 'Brug pa with Gling rje ras pa, gTsang pa rgya ras, rGod tshang pa and Yang dgon pa. Even though the 'Brug pa masters appear in majority, the line ends with two Kam tshang masters, bringing the succession back to this school. The last master rGya ston chos bzang is a 15<sup>th</sup> century disciple of 4<sup>th</sup> Karma pa Rol pa'i rdo rje and constitutes a first marker in time when trying to date the manuscript.

The images of Saṃvara and Vajravārāhī appear to be directly connected to the sNyan brgyud practice, and Śākyamuni and Avalokiteśvara are both universal Buddhist figures without any specific implication.

One detail can also draw the attention of the reader. All the characters are displayed on the left and right end of each page, represented in three-quarter facing each other except for three of them: Vajradhara, Mi la ras pa and mKha' spyod dbang po. These three are all in full-face, with an extra detail in the case of mKha' spyod dbang po who is accompanied by a female deity holding an umbrella. This frontal position is usually that of Buddhas and deities. Is this just a random choice or must it be interpreted as a will of the artist or the commissioner to emphasise these characters? Whatever the reason, mKha' spyod dbang po appears to have a preferential treatment, reinforcing the theory of a Kam tshang affiliation.



Fig. 23 – Details of *Vajradhara*, *Mi la ras pa* and *mKha' spyod dbang po*. Ms-Bordier ff. 1b, 3a, and 8a

This set of masters is completely different from the transmission lineage presented after the colophon in the *mDzod nag ma lo rgyus* at the end of the text (see below). In that case, the lineage starts with Ras chung pa and ends after the 6<sup>th</sup> Karma pa mThong ba don ldan (1416-1453) with his disciple Drung rin chen rdo rje (d.u.). Only Dus gsum mkhyen pa and mKha' spyod dbang po belong to both lists.

### *Ms-Drukpa*

Among the available versions of the compendia only four have a comparable set of lineage masters: Ms-Drukpa, Ms-Smith, Ms-

Drepung, and Ms-BL.<sup>27</sup> The opening lineage of Ms-Drukpa presents a series of twenty masters composed of the bKa' brgyud forefathers from Vajradhara to Mi la ras pa, followed by seven *ras pa* disciples, sGam po pa, Phag mo gru, and the early 'Brug pa teachers down to Yang dgon pa. The group of *ras pa* consists of the “four heart-sons” plus three extra *ras pa* apparently not forming a coherent ensemble: Zhi ba 'od, Rong chung ras pa and Khyi ra ras pa. The reason of this choice remains unclear, as this selection does not correspond to any of the groups present in the compendia literature.<sup>28</sup> Concerning the disposition of the characters, all but two are represented facing each other in three-quarters: Vajradhara and gTsang pa rgya ras, founder of the 'Brug pa school.

1b	chos sku rDor rje chang chen	rDo rje rnal 'byor ma
2a	Te lo pa	Nā ro pa
2b	Mai tri pa	Mar pa lo tstsha
3a	rje Mid la	Ras chung pa
3b	Ngan sdzong ras pa	'Bri bsgom ras pa
4a	Se ban ras pa	ras pa Zhi ba 'od
4b	Rong chung ras pa	Khyi ra ras pa
5a	rje Dags po rin po che	rje Phag mo gru pa
5b	rje Gling ras pa	gTsang pa rgya ras
6a	rje rGod tshang ba	rje Yang dgon pa

### *Ms-Smith*

Regarding Ms-Smith, Quintman mentions “twenty-four pages of illustrations, half devoted to Mi la ras pa's disciples and half depicting a lineage of masters passing through Sgam po pa, Phag mo gru pa, and the early masters of the Upper 'Brug pa lineage.”<sup>29</sup> The content, the extent and the organisation of that text altogether differ from Ms-Bordier, showing a greater coherence with the 'Brug pa school.

<sup>27</sup> Unlike the other texts, Ms-BL has portraits of masters at the end of the text inside the colophon (ff. 392a & 393b).

<sup>28</sup> For a detailed list of disciples see below p. 89 and Appendix B.

<sup>29</sup> Quintman 2014a p. 254n83.



The half illustrating Mi la’s disciples (marked with a \* in the table below) closely follows the list given in the colophon,<sup>30</sup> gathering the “four heart-sons” and the “eight close disciples” (forming together the famous twelve great *ras pa* disciples) plus three out of six “accepted disciples” (*thugs zin*), the five Tshe ring sisters, and Mi la’s own sister, Pre ta. Interestingly, as often with the lists of disciples in the colophons, one of the four heart-sons was forgotten – here *Se ban ras pa* – and this omission appears in the representation with Ras chung pa appearing twice in the illuminations, under his own name (f. 3a) and under the epithet “[*gung thang gi*] *gnyen ras*” (f. 3b).

The other illustrations devoted to the ’Brug pa masters include various names of which a great number remain difficult to identify. It is interesting to note that the last three masters (ff. 10b to 11b) appear bare foot and wearing a yellow *paṇḍita* hat instead of the *bka’ brgyud sgom zhwa* worn by the other monastic masters. As for Ms-Bordier, all the masters are represented in profile except for two characters: Chos kyi bzang po on f. 8a and a disciple of Mi la ras pa Kyo ston śākya ’bum on f. 10a, without any apparent logic.

1b	rdo rje ’chang	ti lo pa
2a	na ro pa	mar pa
2b	mi la	dag po
3a	phag mo grub ( <i>sic</i> ) pa	*ras chang [chung] pa
3b	skyobs pa	*gnyan [gnyen?] ras <sup>31</sup>
4a	gling ras pa	*ngan sdzong ras pa
4b	tsang pa rgya ras (1161–1211)	*’bri sgom ras pa
5a	rgod tshang pa (1182/89–1258)	*zhi ba ’od
5b	yang ’gon pa [rgyal mtshan dpal] (1213–1258) <sup>32</sup>	*rong chung ras pa
6a	spang rgang pa [dgra bcom yon tan blo gros?] <sup>33</sup>	*gnyan sgom ras pa

<sup>30</sup> For the lists of disciples, see Appendix B.

<sup>31</sup> Ms-Smith f. 317b5 *gung thang gi gnyen ras*, another name of Ras chung pa. Replacing the missing *Se ban*.

<sup>32</sup> Roerich 1976 p. 688; (P5262);

<sup>33</sup> *sPang khang pa?* (P3830); *sPang sgang pa grags pa dpal?* (P0RK410); *rGang pa’i mkhan po dgra bcom yon tan blo gros?* (P4010).

6b	byang chub bzang po [bodhibhadra?] <sup>34</sup>	*ras pa sangs rgyas rkyab
7a	rje bcan [sryan] nga' rine [rin chen ldan] (b.1202) <sup>35</sup>	*'bri rkom [sgom] ras pa
7b	zur phug pa [rin chen dpal bzang (b.1263)] <sup>36</sup>	*ras pa rdo dbyug [rdo rje dbang phyug]
8a	chos kyi bzang po <sup>37</sup>	*'khar chung ras pa
8b	nam mkha' rdo rje	*ras pa tsha g.yu ba
9a	nam mkha' dbang phyug	*le kor phyar bu pa
9b	nam mkha' sing ge	*kyo ['or] rton [ston] dge 'dun
10a	byang chub rdo rje	*kyo rton [ston] śakya 'bum
10b	rje btsun kun dga' rgyal mtshan <sup>38</sup>	*bkra shis tshe rings ma
11a	bla ma tsoms (?) dpal ba	*'thing ga zhal bzang ma
11b	dge 'dun bzang	*mi [g.]yo blo gzangs ma
12a	grub thob slob dpon chen po	*cod pan 'grin bzang ma
12b	rdo rje phag mo	*rta skar 'gron bzang ma
13a	khro bo rta mgrin	*bsring mo pre ta

### *Ms-Drepung*

Ms-Drepung begins with a lineage, from page 2 to 19, grouping nineteen masters (the image of Nāropa is missing in the reproduction). The lineage starts with the historical Buddha and Padmasambhava and ends with Chos rje 'Jig rten dbang phyug (1454-1532), an important sTag lung master from Ri bo che, placing the manuscript at the earliest during or after this master's life. Surprisingly, none of the modern

<sup>34</sup> Roerich 1976 p. 382: "Later Mal-gyo himself went to Nepāl and thoroughly heard the Cycle of Saṃvara from Pham-mthiñ-pa and (his) brother Bodhibhadra (Byang-čhub bzañ-po), a disciple of Nā-ro-pa [...]" (P3820).

<sup>35</sup> sPyan nga rin chen ldan (P2455) disciple of Yang dgon pa. Roerich 1976 p. 691.

<sup>36</sup> (P6180).

<sup>37</sup> dPyal lot sa ba? (P3939); Roerich 1976 p. 797 "The Kha che pañ čhen (Śākyaśrī) bestowed on the lo-tsa-ba dPyal Čhos kyi bzañ po the Commentary on the Hevajra-Tantra (brTag gñis), composed by Nā-ro-pa".

<sup>38</sup> Roerich 1976 p. 716: "The Rin-po-čhe gSer-khañ-steñs-pa **Kun-dga' rgyal-mtshan** was born in the year Water-Female Sheep (čhu-mo-lug – 1223 A.D.). At the age of thirty-eight, he was appointed to the abbot's chair, and occupied the chair for thirty-three years. He passed away at the age of seventy in the year Water Dragon (čhu-'brug – 1292 A.D.)."

editions of this text (BCG-D and BCG-Si) reproduced this lineage, although the latter extensively used the illustrations of Ms-Drepung as an inspiration for its own modern drawings. Not only were the sTag lung masters erased from the picture, but also the text was identified as part of the *mDzod nag ma*.

2	[Śākyamuni]	O rgyan padma 'byung gnas
3	rDo rje 'chang chen po	grub chen Te lo pa
5	[Nāropa] <sup>39</sup>	rje Mar pa lo tsa
7	rJe btsun mi la ras pa	chos rje Dwags po
9	chos rje Phag mo gru pa (1110–1170)	chos rje sTag lung thang pa (1142–1209/10)
11	sKu yal rin po che (1191–1236)	Sangs rgyas yar byon (1203–1272)
13	rje Sangs rgyas dbon rin po che (1251–1296)	O rgyan mgon po (1293–1366) <sup>40</sup>
15	rGyal ba'i mtshan can	Ratna kā ra (1300–1361)
17	Grags pa rgyal mtshan <sup>41</sup>	rje Mi g.yo mgon po
19	Kun spang rin po che	chos rje 'Jig rten dbang phyug (1454–1532)

In this lineage, only Vajradhara, Mi la ras pa and sTag lung thang pa are represented in full face. Through this line of masters, Ms-Drepung appears affiliated to the sTag lung of Ri bo che, and not to the Karma bka' brgyud nor the 'Bri gung as the two modern editions could have suggested.

#### *Ms-BL*

Ms-BL has lineage masters illustrated in the colophon ff. 392a and 393b representing sTag lung teachers. The first group gathers six teachers in chronological order. The left end of the page being severely damaged, the first character and the legend have disappeared but according to the order of succession, it was most probably sGam po pa.

<sup>39</sup> Image missing.

<sup>40</sup> From O rgyan mgon po to Mi g.yo mgon po, the names appear in rTa tshag tshe dbang rgyal 2010 pp. 192-312.

<sup>41</sup> Based on the same source, could this be Grags pa dpal bkra shis rgyal mtshan?



Fig. 24 – Ms-BL f. 392a

392a	Ø	bde gshegs rin po che	stag lung thang pa	sku yal rin po che	sangs rgyas yar byon	rje btsun sangs rgyas dbon
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The second group on f. 393b consists of three masters displayed in a different order, possibly going from left to right and finally at the center or simply from left to right.



Fig. 25 – Ms-BL f. 393b

393b	<i>chos sku o rgyan mgon po</i> (1293–1366)	<i>'jig rten dbang phyug</i> (1454–1532)	<i>mchog sprul bkra shis dpa</i> <sup>42</sup> (1461–1508)
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These teachers along with the sources mentioned in the colophon associate the manuscript with the sTag lung of Ri bo che. It is interesting that, despite their profound differences, this manuscript and Ms-Drepung both contain a representation of 'Jig rten dbang phyug as the last master supposing a connection with Ri bo che, possibly during the same period. Again, three characters are in full face: sTag lung

<sup>42</sup> Casey 2023 p.19: the 13<sup>th</sup> interim abbot of sTag lung is named bKra shis dpal ba (1461-1508)

thang pa, Sangs rgyas yar byon and 'Jig rten dbang phyug. Could this emphasise a symbolic affiliation between them?

*B. The hand-to-ear posture*

A characteristic representation of Mi la ras pa depicts him seated with one hand raised to his ear. This now omnipresent iconography is absent from ancient representations and seems to have appeared and spread at the turn of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, shortly after the diffusion of gTsang smyon's work.<sup>43</sup> Zhi byed ri khrod pa's description of the proper way to visualise the yogin focuses on Mi la's appearance but mentions no specific posture.<sup>44</sup> This gesture has been interpreted in various ways: "perhaps the better to hear the inspiration of his masters and the Dakinis";<sup>45</sup> to "signify his listening to the sounds of nature or refer to his use of secret, oral doctrines that were not written down but passed verbally from master to disciple"<sup>46</sup>; to "hear the voice of the Dharma in the solitude of the mountains to which he has retreated";<sup>47</sup> "as if listening to the voice of inspiration";<sup>48</sup> "listening to the *dākiṇīs*".<sup>49</sup>

Explaining the iconometric instructions devoted to Mi la ras pa, Gega Lama in his *Principles of Tibetan Art* does not describe the posture.<sup>50</sup> Some authors – sometimes the same as the ones mentioned before – also interpret this hand position as a singing posture: "his right hand cups his right ear or is placed near it. This is a gesture that singers commonly make both in the Himalayas and in India while singing to sharpen their hearing and block extraneous noise";<sup>51</sup> "[...] souvent il porte la main derrière l'oreille à la manière des bardes afin de mieux

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<sup>43</sup> See for instance HAR 65121 and images below or Mi la ras pa's numerous representations among the lineage masters of early paintings.

<sup>44</sup> Quintman 2012 p. 17; Zhi byed ri pa 2012 p. 432.4.

<sup>45</sup> Rhie & Thurman 1991 no. 79.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.* no. 80.

<sup>47</sup> Essen & Thingo 1989 II-236 p. 109.

<sup>48</sup> Chandra 2003 vol. 8 p. 2302.

<sup>49</sup> Lunardo & Clemente 2021 p. 162.

<sup>50</sup> Gega Lama 1983 vol. I p. 122.

<sup>51</sup> Pal 2003 p. 246.

placer sa voix, chantant l'un de ses cent mille poèmes mystiques”;<sup>52</sup>  
 “Mi la, or his disciple, is frequently depicted in singing posture.”<sup>53</sup>

Among the Tibetan sources – mainly ritual texts – one describes the posture without commenting on it “the right hand to the ear” (*phyag g.yas snyan gyis thad kar bstan*).<sup>54</sup> The most detailed description comes from 'Jam mgon Kong sprul blo gros mtha' yas: “The right hand to the ear, singing clearly the melody of a vajra song” (*phyag g.yas snyan la brten cing rdo rje mgur dbyangs lhang lhang sgrog pa*).<sup>55</sup> To my knowledge, this late source is the only one to clearly establish a connection between singing and the posture.

Nevertheless, most of the modern scholars' interpretations appear to be based on a specific context, namely Mi la ras pa represented alone (whether on paintings or sculptures), often in a natural landscape. It is possible that this configuration, associated with an absence of textual references, led to the interpretations mentioned above. A solitary yogin seated alone in a mountain cave might be listening to the sound of nature, the *dākinīs* or his inner inspiration. It is also possible that this identification rested upon the association of Mi la with the mKha' 'gro or bDe mchog snyan brgyud tradition, often translated Whispered Transmission, and where the hearing plays a major role. However, when considered in the context of the manuscripts' illuminations, this cannot apply. Many scenes represent Mi la addressing one or more characters in that posture or protagonists facing each other with the hand to the ear. Since the dialogues and teachings are almost systematically expressed through songs, this posture can only appear as a singing posture.

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<sup>52</sup> Beguin 1977 p. 177.

<sup>53</sup> Quintman 2014a p. 248.

<sup>54</sup> “rJe btsun mi la bzhad pa rdo rje'i bla sgrub rgyun khyer” in 'Jam mgon Kong sprul *rJe btsun mi la bzhad pa rdo rje la brten pa'i bla ma'i rnal 'byor* (BDRC W3CN26750) p. 103.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid* pp. 47-48.



Fig. 26 – rJe btsun, Ras chung and five girls. Ms-Bordier f. 238a



Fig. 27 – rJe btsun and Ras chung ba. Ms-Bordier f. 94a



Fig. 28 – rJe btsun, a deer, a dog, and the hunter. Ms-BL f. 171a



Fig. 29 – The great rJe btsun offering a song to the five rock ogres, chief and servants. Ms-Lhasa f. 67b

In his 2023 article, Quintman reproduces two ancient print editions of gTsang smyon's *Songs*. He states:

The Drakkar Taso print edition of the *Hundred Thousand Songs* depicts Milarepa in a new way, forming what would become the yogin's most recognizable posture: legs loosely crossed, left hand in his lap holding a skull cup, and holding his right hand to his ear in a gesture of singing (fig. 7). [...] Depictions of this classic hand-to-ear gesture are not witnessed prior to Tsangnyon Heruka's publication, and the Madman likely played a role in disseminating it for the first time.

The role of gTsang smyon in the dissemination of this type of representations cannot be denied. However, the origin of this gesture could also be related to the bZhad pa'i rdo rje Compendia: as presented above, several of these manuscripts are illustrated and numerous scenes show Mi la ras pa and other protagonists in the singing posture. Besides, even though he did not make any clear reference to the compendia, there is no doubt that gTsang smyon used this material to write his work, especially for his *Hundred Thousand Songs*.

Most of the illustrated manuscripts appear to date from after the publication of the *Life and Songs* (Ms-Drepung, Ms-BL, Ms-Newark and possibly Ms-Bordier). Ms-Lhasa also has similar representations, but we have no elements allowing a precise dating. Could it be the earliest representation of Mi la ras pa singing? Nevertheless, the Smith manuscript, possibly dating from the 15<sup>th</sup> century<sup>56</sup> possesses a series

<sup>56</sup> Quintman 2006 p. 170.



of *ras pa* disciples in various postures, some with their hand to their ear: gNyan [gNyen] ras (Ras chung pa), Zhi ba 'od, gNyan [gNyen] sgom ras pa, 'Bri rkom [sgom] ras pa, and Ras pa tshag yu ba.<sup>57</sup> Although Mi la himself is not represented in that particular way in this series of lineage masters – as in Ms-Bordier or Ms-Drepung – the posture is nonetheless attested.



Fig. 30 – gNyan ras (Ras chung) and Zhi ba 'od. Ms-Smith f. 3b & 6a (courtesy of the BDRC)

Moreover, it appears logical and plausible that the first extended corpus of songs could be at the origin of the representation of a singing Mi la. We know that the xylographic print of the *Life and Songs* were not illustrated except for the ‘portraits’ of the opening pages. We also know that biographical paintings were commissioned by gTsang smyon<sup>58</sup> to accompany his books.

That this type of representation flourished only after gTsang smyon is not contradictory since the bZhad pa'i rdo rje Compendia as manuscripts had a limited circulation prior to the literary success of the Madman, in large part due to the spread of xylography. The multiple copies of such texts dating from around or after 1500 (Ms-Drepung, Ms-BL, RBC-Stockholm, Ms-Newark, Ms-Oxford, Ms-Drukpa, Ms-Gansu, and possibly Ms-Bordier) prove that far from eclipsing this literature, gTsang smyon's success appears to have triggered an appetite for more Mi la ras pa literature.

<sup>57</sup> Ms-Smith ff. 3b, 5a, 6a, 7a, 8b.

<sup>58</sup> Quintman 2014a p. 182; Sernesi 2021 p. 63.

### 5. Colophons

The colophons of the bZhad pa'i rdo rje Compendia reflect the nature of the corpus: they share comparable information and overall structures combined differently and varying from one text to the other. Here again, the differences depend on the type of texts, as classified by Blancke.

As explained earlier, the 'Variant' forms of *Ras pa bu chen bcu gnyis* combine the RBC colophon verbatim with supplementary material connected with Rang byung rdo rje and/or the *mDzod nag*. Ms-Bordier is no exception. After the list of Mi la ras pa's disciples come the verses connecting the ms. to the (*b*)*rgyud pa yid bzhin nor bu*, as in all RBCs.<sup>59</sup>

The second part of the colophon is the *lo rgyus* of the *mDzod nag ma* which will be analysed below. This *lo rgyus* is the only element connecting this ms. to the Karma bka' brgyud and, unlike the two other Variant RBCs, there is no mention of Rang byung rdo rje or any other compiler.

On the contrary, the Third Karma pa appears in similar contexts in the colophons of many other bZhad pa'i rdo rje Compendia: Ms-BDRC and Ms-Lhasa for the first stratum and DNM-RD and *A River of Blessings* for the second. The only compendia without mention of Rang byung rdo rje are the 'Regular' RBCs (Ms-Newark, Ms-Oxford, Ms-Drukpa, Ms-Gansu, RBC-Stockholm) and Ms-BL.

#### *Ms-BDRC*

Ms-BDRC is an interesting example. The content of the text perfectly corresponds to the 'Variant' *Ras pa bu chen bcu gnyis* with a few additional cycles as compared to the 'Regular' RBCs. Its title and colophon pages are greatly damaged, preventing a complete understanding. Nevertheless, the readable part of the last page gives compelling information:<sup>60</sup>

<sup>59</sup> Ms-Bordier f. 321b.6. For a translation and presentation of the generic RBC colophon, see Blancke's article in this volume pp. 13-15.

<sup>60</sup> Ms-BDRC f. 418a: *pas na/ yi ger ma spel gsang bar zhu/ yid bzhin nor bu gu ru dhākki sa ma ya/ chos kyi rje rang byung rdo rjes rje btsun gyi 'gur 'bum la [...]* *gcig gzigs shing [...]* *nang nas ras pa bu chen bcu gnyis kyi bsgrigs pa 'di\* mdzod nag nas gdan drangs pa 'di yin no/ mangalam/ bha wantu/.*

[...] Do not spread these words and keep them secret. Wishfulfilling Gem *guru dhākki samaya*.

The Dharma Lord Rang byung rdo rje has seen one [hundred] of the rJe btsun's Collected Songs. Among them, this one was compiled by the twelve great *ras pa* disciples. This\* [text] has been retrieved from the dark treasury. Auspiciousness and happiness!

\*Having looked at it thoroughly, it was compiled and written by his hand.

The first line corresponds to the end of the Lineage Wish-fulfilling Gem's verses. The second part mentions Rang byung rdo rje in an unusual manner but says the text was compiled by the twelve great *ras pa* disciples and retrieved from the dark treasury. The last line is in a different script and seems to be a missing passage included at the beginning of the previous sentence (marked here with a \*). This later addition is possibly by the same hand. This colophon is the only one to mention the *mdzod nag* as a place and, interestingly, the role of Rang byung rdo rje as an author is absent from the main text and precised only in an addendum.

### *Ms-Lhasa*

As briefly mentioned in Blancke's article Ms-Lhasa possesses a second colophon directly connecting the text with the Third Karma pa.<sup>61</sup>

The Dharma Lord Mi pham mgon po said, "It seems there is an infinite number of song collections of the great rJe btsun. Among the nearly hundred collections that I have seen, this is the most extensive. It is said to be of an authentic source as it is scribed by Lord Rang byung rdo rje himself." Therefore, he [Mi pham mgon po] extremely treasures it. This volume is that widely renowned [text].

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\*[...] *shin tu gzigs nas kho rang gi phyags bris m[dzad?] cing bsgrigs pa 'di*.  
<sup>61</sup> Ms-Lhasa f. 308b.4: *chos kyi rje mi phams mgon po 'i zhal nas/ rje btsun chen po 'i 'gur 'bum mtha' med pa cig yod pa 'dra zhing phyogs gcigs du sgrigs pa brgya tsams mthong ba 'i nang nas mang shos su 'dug cing/ rje rang byung rdo rje nyid kyi phyag bris mdzad pa yin pas/ khung btsun gsung nas thugs rtsis shin tu legs mdzad 'dug zhes yongs su grags pa 'i glegs bam 'di yin no/*. All my gratitude to Rinchen Dorje for his precious help in translating this obscure passage.

The formulation of this colophon is ambiguous and mentions an unknown character, Mi pham mgon po. At the moment, no corresponding historical figure could be identified. Mi pham mgon po is probably an epithet for a very important person since he is qualified as “Dharma Lord” (*chos kyi rje*) and, as we will see further, it might be an epithet of Rang byung rdo rje himself. The colophon contains no mention of the *mdzod nag* as a place or a text title.

#### *DNM-RD*

The colophon in DNM-RD contains much additional information. After concluding the text with an unusual formula, *dpa' bzhad pa'i rdo rje'i rnam thar mgur chos zhal gdams dang bcas pa rdzogs so* – instead of the regular *dpal bzhad pa'i rdo rje'i rnam thar 'gur ching dang bcas pa* of all RBCs – the colophon starts with the usual sentence attributing the composition of the text to the twelve great *ras pa* disciples. It is followed by a list of meditation places (*rdzong* and *phug*) then by the RBC list of disciples, and alternative lists (see below). Then come the RBC *brgyud pa yi bzhin nor bu* verses and the Mi pham mgon po colophon in exactly the same wording as Ms-Lhasa. After a series of prayers, there is a second colophon related to the Fourth Zhwa dmar pa (1453–1524) and his entourage, providing us with information regarding the approximate period of redaction, between the last quarter of the 15<sup>th</sup> century and the beginning of the 16<sup>th</sup> century.

This part explains that the volume was requested repeatedly and financed by one Ri dbang mi dpon bzhed rtsa Blo gros rgya mtsho. Blo gros nyi ma 'od, scribe of the fourth holder of the red hat Chos kyis grags pa ye shes dpal bzang po, who was trained in literature and Sanskrit by the scholar Śākya Kumāra, gave the oral teaching. One Blo gros rgya mtsho (apparently different from the solicitant) served as a scribe and the monks Rin chen bzang po and Śākya seng ge worked as correctors.<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>62</sup> DNM-RD 2006 p. 773.1. See the full colophon in Blancke, p. 31n69.

*A River of Blessings*

The colophon of *A River of Blessings* appears in two different forms. Ms-Smith and Ms-India present a more condensed version common also to Ms-Drepung. The colophon starts with a list of Mi la ras pa disciples proper to the text, which is followed by the various sources consulted to compile the volume, called *rJe btsun chen po mi la ras pa'i rnam thar rdo rje'i glu dang mgur rnams phyogs gcig tu bsdus pa*. The first source is mentioned by including a slightly modified version of Ms-Lhasa and DNM-RD colophons. In this version, the Dharma lord Mi pham mgon po has disappeared, replaced by *chos rje karma pa*, and the text compiled by Rang byung rdo rje is given a name: the *mDzod nag ma*. Roberts and Quintman each give a full translation of this “final colophon” in their works.<sup>63</sup>

Concerning this compilation of the hagiography together with vajra songs and spiritual songs of the great rje btsun Mi la ras pa, the Dharma Lord Karma pa has said ‘Among the nearly one hundred of spiritual songs that I have seen, this is the most extensive.’ Dharma Lord Rang byung rdo rje wrote this authoritative and highly esteemed *Dark Treasury*.<sup>64</sup>

This last sentence is the first identification of Rang byung rdo rje’s work as the *mDzod nag ma*. As seen in the colophons of Ms-Lhasa and DNM-RD, there this ‘work’ was not given a title and the volume was identified as “this very text” (*glegs bam 'di yin no*). This last formulation is absent here in *A River of Blessings* since the colophon continues with the other sources used for the elaboration of the text:

[There is also a text] said to be a compilation of seventeen different Collected Songs excellently completed in the Gung thang dpal gyi gtsug lag khang; [There is also a text] said to be a compilation from

<sup>63</sup> Roberts 2007 p. 32; Quintman 2014a Appendix 2 pp. 204-205.

<sup>64</sup> Ms-Smith f. 318a.3: *rje btsun chen po mi la ras pa'i rnam thar rdo rje'i glu dang mgur rnams phyogs gcig tu bsdus pa 'di/ chos rje karmāḥ pa'i zhal nas rje btsun chen po'i gsung mgur phyogs gcig tu bsgrigs pa brgya rtsa gzigs pa'i nang nas kyang/ 'di mang shol [shos] du gsung te/ chos rje rang byung rdo rje nyid kyi phyag bris mdzad pa khung btsun zhing thugs rtsis shin tu che ba'i mdzod nag ma zhes bya ba dang/.*

having seen one hundred and twenty-seven different biographies of the rJe btsun. These [versions] have been compiled and supplemented with as many of the rJe btsun's song collections as could be found. Through the merit of completing this well, may the precious teachings of the Practice Lineage flourish and expand in every direction and during all periods, and may it endure for a long time."<sup>65</sup>

The author(s) emphasize the use of multiple sources for the work. These appear as a token of the completeness of the work gathering “as many of the songs collections as could be found”.

Ms-Drepung possesses a longer colophon with more additional material. Starting with the list of disciples, it continues with the usual colophon listing the sources. Then comes a list of the meditation places comparable to that of DNM-RD, and a long passage by 'Ba' rom pa associating Mi la ras pa's demonic encounters with his practices on the channels, winds, and drops.<sup>66</sup> This is followed by the *lo rgyus* of the *mDzod nag ma*, and finally some concluding auspicious prayers. In addition to the presence of 'Jig rten dbang phyug in the opening lineage masters, these supplementary elements, including those shared with DNM-RD, could indicate that Ms-Drepung is posterior to DNM-RD as well as to Ms-Smith.

#### *Ms-BL*

Kristin Blancke already described the British Library manuscript's colophon.<sup>67</sup> Although this text – in the same way as *A River of Blessings* – acknowledges the use of multiple sources, it starts with the *Twelve Great Ras pa Disciples* as the first source (a reference completely absent from *A River of Blessings*). The other sources are: a text compiled from 17 song collections by a certain rDo rje 'dzin pa 'Jam

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<sup>65</sup> Ms-Smith f. 318a.4: 'gur 'bum rigs mi cig pa bcu bdun bsags nas gung thang dpal gyi gtsug lags khang chen por legs par bsgrub zer ba dang/ rje bisun gyi rnam thar rig mi cig pa brgya dang bnyis shu tsha bdun gzigs te phyogs gcig du sgrigs pa yin zer ba dang/ de rnam phyogs cig du bsod pa la/ gzhan yang rje btsun gyi 'gur ma'i tshogs rnyed tshad kyi kha bskang te legs par bsgrubs pa 'di'i bsod nams kyi/ sgrub rgyud kyi bstan pa rin po che phyogs dus gnas skabs thams cad du dar zhing rgyas la yun ring du gnas par gyur cig//

<sup>66</sup> See Blancke 2021e.

<sup>67</sup> Ms-BL f. 392b. See Blancke's article pp. 35-37.

dbyangs (grags pa?) (the version compiled at the *Gung thang dpal gyi gtsug lag khang?*), Mar pa's hagiography, a text by Sangs rgyas dbon rin po che and "as many elements as could be found". The absence of any reference to Rang byung rdo rje or the Karma pa proves the existence of a late bZhad pa'i rdo rje Compendium free from the Kam tshang sphere of influence.

*Chos rje Mi pham mgon po / Karma pa*

As explained above, the modified version of Ms-Lhasa and DNM-RD colophons presented in *A River of Blessings* transforms the mysterious Mi pham mgon po into an unidentified Karma pa. This shift implies that the author(s) of BCG knew that this epithet designated a black hat hierarch without clearly naming Rang byung rdo rje. Searching for the identity of this Mi pham mgon po, a 16<sup>th</sup> century statue representing the Third Karma pa of the Tibet Museum, Gruyères, has an interesting inscription. The back of the lotus base is inscribed with the following formula:

*mi pham chos rje rang byung mtshos skyes rdoe [rdo rje] la na mo/*



Fig. 31 – Karmapa 03 Rangjung Dorje (ABS 075). Gilt copper, 16<sup>th</sup> century, Central Tibet

31.4 x 20.9 x 15.7 cm



Fig. 32 – Karmapa 03 Rangjung Dorje (ABS 075). Gilt copper, 16<sup>th</sup> century, Central Tibet  
31.4 x 20.9 x 15.7 cm

Unusual as this formulation may be, the identity of the subject is beyond doubt, the iconography corresponding to the general representations of this master. This association of the epithet *mi pham chos rje* with Rang byung rdo rje reinforces the hypothesis that, in the colophons, Chos rje Mi pham mgon po and Rang byung rdo rje are in fact the same person. This appears to be the understanding of the editors of the 2011 *Mi la ras pa'i gsung 'bum*. In their introduction, they rephrased the DNM-RD colophon, dropping the reference to Mi pham mgon po and attributing to Rang byung rdo rje the statement about “the hundreds of rJe btsun’s spiritual songs and biographies.” The mention of the text being kept in rTse lha sgang’s dark treasury proves that they also added information provided by the *lo rgyus*, as will be demonstrated below.<sup>68</sup>

<sup>68</sup> RBC-Pt pp. 6-7: *dpal karma pa thams cad mkhyen pa rang byung rgyal bas rje bisun chen po'i gsung mgur dang rnam thar brgya phrag las brgal ba bsags nas/de dag gi legs cha bsdus te phyogs gcig tu bsgrigs par mdzad par rje nyid kyi phyag bris kong po rtse lha sgang gi mdzod nag tu bzhugs pa de las bris bshus kyi dpe mang du 'phel ba'i rgyun las*. It is noteworthy to specify that the *lo rgyus* is absent from this five-volume collection, although obviously referred to in this passage through the rTse lha sgang *mdzod nag* and the later diffusion of the text.



### A. Listing the disciples

Among the information included in the colophons of the compendia there is an enumeration of Mi la ras pa's disciples. They are listed and organised into groups and presented according to their rank. The same model prevails between the first and second strata of the compendia with some variations inside the distinct groups and a few additional categories according to the text.<sup>69</sup>

#### *The twelve great ras pa disciples*

Starting with *Ras pa bu chen bcu gnyis*, the disciples appear in four groups, namely the “four heart-sons” (*thugs kyi sras bzhi*) and the “eight close sons” (*nye ba'i sras brgyad*) which, put together, form the twelve great *ras pa* disciples to whom the text is attributed, followed by the “six disciples just before Mi la ras pa's death” (*sku gshegs kha'i slob ma*) and the “four sisters” (*sring bzhi*).

This pattern of groups of four, eight and six is present in all versions of *The Twelve Great Ras pa Disciples*, in DNM-RD, and in *A River of Blessings*. The latter does not present the “four sisters” but replaces them with a larger group of “twenty-five women who obtained supreme accomplishment” (*bu med mchog thob pa nyi shu rtsa lnga*).

Without analysing the content of these groups in detail, some specific points deserve attention.

- The first group of “four heart-sons” is the same in all texts, gathering Ras chung, Se ban, Ngan rdzong and 'Bri sgom.
- The second group of “eight close sons”, although always present, has some variation in its composition. Ms-BL is the only compendium replacing it with a unique group called the “four close sons” (*nye ba'i sras bzhi*) that will be analysed later.
- The third group, the “six disciples just before Mi la ras pa's death”, is rather homogeneous except for one of its members. The original list from the first stratum gives the following names: Dwags po lha rje, Li skor phyag ru pa, Lo ston dge 'dun,

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<sup>69</sup> For the complete lists of disciples source by source, see Appendix B.

sKyo ston Śāk gu, Dam pa rgyag phu pa, and 'Bri ban bkra shis. The fact that in the *Twelve Great Ras pa Disciples* sGam po pa was thereby marginalised as a disciple of the later days was problematic for later readers. In fact, it was changed in DNM-RD, Ms-BL and *A River of Blessings*, where sGam po pa was 'restored' in his foremost position as the heir of Mi la ras pa.

Being part of the *Ras pa bu chen bcu gnyis* type of compendia, Ms-Bordier shares its colophon. Yet, a double particularity appears in the passage devoted to the group of disciples. The scribe forgot the name Ngan rdzong ston pa in the list of the “four heart-sons.”<sup>70</sup> Another hand, probably a later reader, made a clumsy attempt to correct this. Writing in a different alphabet (*dbu can*) he put “*dags po lha rje*” before Ras chung (!), filling in the blank and trying to promote sGam po pa as the first heart disciple. This modification does not consider the redundancy of his presence among the “six pupils before Mi la ras pa’s death” two lines below, nor the nonsense of including a fully ordained monk as the first of the twelve *ras pas*.

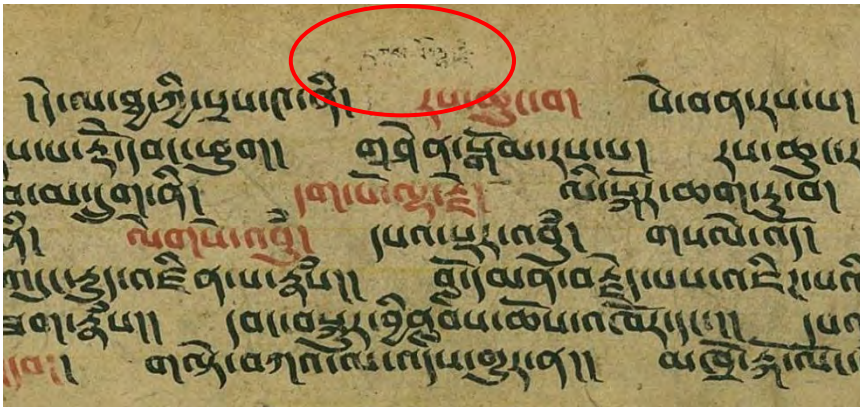


Fig. 33 – Ms-Bordier f. 322a

To overcome this problem of rank, the second stratum removed *Dwags po lha rje* from this group of six and promoted him into a newly created group: in DNM-RD and Ms-BL he appears among the “three supreme yogins and yoginīs” (*mchog gi rnal 'byor pho mo gsum*) together with Tshe ring ma and Tārā, in *A River of Blessings* he is one of “four famous

<sup>70</sup> See above for the omission of the *thugs sras* Se ban ras pa in Ms-Smith (f. 317b.5).

great disciples, first among all great sons” (*yong su grags pa'i bu chen bzhi/ bu chen thams cad kyi gtso bo*) including the above three with the addition of Ras chung as the holder of the sNyan brgyud.

These later texts, starting with DNM-RD and Ms-BL, multiplied the categories of pupils, thereby revealing influence from other sources. Ms-BL and *A River of Blessings* clearly acknowledge in their colophons the use of multiple texts for their compilation, whereas DNM-RD simply combines the RBC colophon connected to the *brgyud pa yid bzhin nor bu* with the ambiguous statement concerning the contribution of Rang byung rdo rje to the composition, without any reference to other sources. After providing the usual RBC list of disciples, DNM-RD adds alternative versions introduced by the expression *yang lo rgyus gcig la...* showing the influence of other sources.

In a very repetitive and inaccurate statement, it mentions a group of “eight ras pa brothers” (*ras pa mched brgyad*), and “four heart-sons” without specifying who they are. Then it lists “eight close sons” (giving only seven names), “seven yogins and yoginīs who reached Khechara” (*mkha' spyod du bzhugs pa rnal 'byor pho mo bdun*) and “three supreme yogins and yoginīs” (*mchog gi rnal 'byor pho mo gsum*) including sGam po pa, Tshe ring ma and Tārā. Then follows another series comprising the “four heart-sons” – without details –, an alternate “eight close sons” and “six late disciples” (*sku bgres khar 'khrungs pa'i ston drug*) with only five names mentioned. This plethora of groups, encountered nowhere else in the compendia, clearly demonstrates external influences.

In fact, the tradition of listing the disciples of Mi la ras pa is not restricted to the bZhad pa'i rdo rje Compendia, since it is found in other hagiographies of the yogin. The classification in 4 + 8 + 6 disciples also appears in two early texts, attributed to Don mo ri pa and Zhi byed ri khrod pa. Both sources share the same repartition as the *Twelve Great Ras pa Disciples*, except for the “eight close sons”, replacing gNyen sgom ras pa and Khyi ra ras pa with Glan sgom ras pa and rTsang/Tsa yu ba. If Zhi byed ri pa also provides lists of disciples of a different kind,<sup>71</sup> Don mo ri pa completes his by mentioning sGam po pa a second time, in a laudatory and dithyrambic formula concluding the list:

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<sup>71</sup> Zhi byed ri pa 2012 p. 355.1.

Among all these is the especially noble, unmatched and unrivaled unique son, holder of the lineage, the most precious and unequalled Dharma Lord sGam po pa.<sup>72</sup>

This difference of treatment of sGam po pa in *the Twelve Great Ras pa Disciples* and in Don mo ri pa's text – two sources dating from approximately the same period, e.g., the 13<sup>th</sup> century – can be explained as some influence from Ras chung pa's lineage in the first case whereas the second clearly belongs to the lineage originating from Dwags po lha rje. This is even more surprising when considering the passages devoted to sGam po pa in the *Ras pa bu chen bcu gnyis* where he is clearly presented as the “sun like disciple” or the “unequaled one from Dwags po”.<sup>73</sup>

### *The eight ras pa brothers*

Later sources such as *Clouds of Blessings* by Zhwa dmar pa mKha' spyod dbang po (1350–1405) and the *Lho rong chos 'byung* (1451) have a different way of classifying the disciples. Before the “four heart-sons” and “eight close disciples” comes a new category: the “eight ras pa brothers” (*ras pa mched brgyad*). This list is also present in the *Blue Annals* (1478). Its earliest mention seems to be in a short statement in *Bu ston chos 'byung* in 1322,<sup>74</sup> then in *Clouds of Blessings* where this disciple category is simply named, without details. The text also names other groups without specification,<sup>75</sup> headed by three characters: “the dākinī bKra shis tshe ring ma, *lokapāla* subduing gods and demons of mental form; the mantra-born innate sGron me,<sup>76</sup> subduing hidden

<sup>72</sup> Don mo ri pa p. 215: *de rnams kyi nang nas khyad par du 'phags pa 'gran gyi do zla dang bral ba rgyud pa 'dzin pa'i sras gcig ni/ chos rje sgam po pa mnyam myed rin po che yin no.*

<sup>73</sup> Ms-Bordier ff. 122b.4 *dag po nyi ma 'gro la 'char*; 285b.6 *mnyam med dag po rin po che.*

<sup>74</sup> Bu ston 1988 p. 203.

<sup>75</sup> Zhwa dmar 02 2010 p. 316.2: *bu chen dgu/ rnal 'byor ma mched bcu.*

<sup>76</sup> In the early sources, the character is named *lhan cig skyes pa'i sgron me* (Ms-Smith) or *sgron ma* (Ms-India). DNM-RD and Ms-Drepung changed it into *sgrol ma.*

beings with superior faculties; Zla 'od gzhon nu, the protector subduing all manifest human beings.”<sup>77</sup>

The first complete list of “eight *ras pa* brothers” appears in the *Lho rong chos 'byung* and it includes the following disciples:

Ras pa mched brgyad
Ras chung rdo rje grags
Ngam rdzong ras pa
'Bri sgom ras pa
Se ban ras pa
Ras pa zhi ba 'od
bDe ba skyobs
Khyi ra ras pa
Ra rdzi ras pa

After presenting this group, the *Lho rong chos 'byung* names other categories, namely the “seven yogins and yoginīs who reached Khechara” (*mkha' spyod du bzhugs pa'i rnal 'byor pho mo bdun*) and the “three supreme yogins and yoginīs” (*mchog gi rnal 'byor pho mo gsum*), a group similar to that in *Clouds of Blessings* but formulated differently:

The supreme sGam po pa subduing human beings, the supreme Tshe ring ma subduing non-humans, the supreme innate mantra-born sGron me subduing *dākinīs*.<sup>78</sup>

This definition is reproduced almost verbatim in DNM-RD, along with the preceding category, proving that its editorial team had access to the *Lho rong chos 'byung*. The alternate list of “eight close sons” (*nye ba'i sras brgyad*) of DNM-RD proves to be an erroneous replica of the “eight *ras pa* brothers” of the *Lho rong chos 'byung*. The latter

<sup>77</sup> Zhwa dmar 02 2010 p. 316.2: *yid gzugs kyi lha 'dre dbang du sdud pa la zhing skyong gi dā ki ma bkra shis tshe rings ma/ lkog gyur dbang po yang rab skye bo dbang tu sdud pa la sngags skyes lhan cig skyes pa'i sgron me/ mngon sum mi'i 'gro ba thams cad dbang du sdud pa la mgon po zla 'od gzhon nu/.*

<sup>78</sup> *Lho rong chos 'byung* p. 107: *mi rnams 'dul ba'i mchog sgam po ba/ mi ma yin 'dul ba'i mchog tshe ring ma/ dā ki ma rnams 'dul ba'i mchog sngags skyes lhan cig skyes pa'i sgron me.*

identifies “four heart-sons” as being the first four of this group of eight.<sup>79</sup> Interestingly, the four remaining *ras pa* correspond to the “four close sons” (*nye ba'i sras bzhi*) of Ms-BL, indicating a possible connection between this text and the *Chos 'byung*.

Two authors present original groups of eight disciples including sGam po pa. In his *Deb ther dmar po* dated 1346, Tshal pa Kun dga' rdo rje lists three groups with unusual denominations: “eight disciples” (*slob ma brgyad*), “four great sons” (*che ba'i sras bzhi*) and “eight close sons”, with only the first category being detailed.<sup>80</sup> In his *Life of Mi la ras pa*,<sup>81</sup> gTsang smyon describes a group of “eight heart-sons” (*thugs kyi sras brgyad*) starting without surprise with sGam po pa, followed by Ras chung. This group does not match the “eight *ras pa* brothers” because it replaces bDe ba skyong with Sangs rgyas skyabs. This list is followed by a new group of “thirteen close sons” (*nye ba'i sras bcu gsum*) and “four sisters” (*sras rnams kyi sring bzhi*), very probably a reorganization by the Madman.

This brief overview establishes the deep connection between the bZhad pa'i rdo rje Compendia and the group of twelve great *ras pa* disciples inherited from Ras chung pa's lineage. Interestingly, this group persisted in the second stratum even after the introduction of new categories and the progressive abandonment of the reference to *The Twelve Great Ras pa Disciples'* text and the *brgyud pa yid bzhin nor bu* (Ms-BL, *A River of Blessings*).

### B. *The History of the transmission line of the Dark Treasury*

Directly following the first RBC colophon, Ms-Bordier has a second part, narrating “The History of the Collected Songs of Mi la ras pa, king of rJe btsun-s, called *mDzod nag ma* and transmitted by the Dharma Lord Karma pa.”<sup>82</sup> Quintman already translated and commented this history of the *mDzod nag ma*.<sup>83</sup> He introduced the text as “a brief

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*: *thugs kyi sras bzhi ni/ dang po bzhi yin no.*

<sup>80</sup> *Deb ther dmar po* 1981 p. 80. For details, see Appendix B.

<sup>81</sup> gTsang smyon 1981 p. 241.

<sup>82</sup> Ms-Bordier f. 322b.1: *rje btsun gyi rgyal po mi la ras pa'i 'gur 'bum/ chos rje karma pa nas brgyud pa'i mdzod nag ma zhes bya ba 'di'i lo rgyus ni/.*

<sup>83</sup> Quintman 2014a pp. 105-106.

unsigned history found in several *Black Treasury* colophons” but gave only one reference.<sup>84</sup> After close examination, this history appears exclusively at the end of two ancient manuscripts of different nature and in different contexts: Ms-Drepung – later reproduced in its two modern reeditions (BCG-D and BCG-Si) – and Ms-Bordier. Surprisingly, it is absent from all the other compendia, starting with DNM-RD.

Both versions begin with the origins of the text compiled by the *ras pa* disciples and amended by Mi la ras pa himself.<sup>85</sup>

In the female water-ox year (1133) when the Jetsün was eighty-two—after the *repa* disciples led by Ngamdzung Repa and Repa Zhiwa O had repeatedly asked to assemble his biography and collected songs—the Jetsün said, “I will consider its propitiousness.” He covered his head with his robe and sat still for a moment. Then he promised to do as they had requested, saying, “You should go to the places where I previously meditated. I have written bits and pieces on tree bark and leaves. Tseringma knows much of it, and much is already clear to Ngamdzung Repa and the rest of you.” The *repas* then gathered stories from all directions. Before offering a ritual feast, they asked Tashi Tseringma. The Jetsün himself then supplemented [the details] that the senior *repa* disciples had heard and added those that were missing. After the biography was arranged, the Jetsün gave its oral transmission and said, “Hold on to this dearly. In a year or two, when I die, everyone will have an auspicious connection of faith and devotion in my teachings.” Then he offered prayers of aspiration and good fortune.

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<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.* p. 253n66 “DNM-D, 513.3 ff.”

<sup>85</sup> Quintman 2014a p. 105; Ms-Bordier f. 322b.2; Ms-Drepung vol. 112 p. 372.2.



Fig. 34 – Ngan rdzong, Zhi ba 'od, Ras chung pa and Tshe ring ma receive a lung from the precious bla ma rJe btsun. Ms-Drepung vol. 112 p. 373

Up to this point, Ms-Bordier and Ms-Drepung are virtually identical. Differences occur later during the description of the transmission lineage of this manuscript. Ms-Bordier states:

Then, Ras chung ba took the book to Lo ro. Then the Dharma Lord Dus gsum mkhyen pa came to Lo ro [and] he received it from Ras chung ba. Having made a copy of the book, he took it to Tshur phu. Then 'Gro mgon ras pa received it, then sPom rag pa, then Karmā pag shi (*sic*). Then he took it to Kong po and put it in rTse bla sgang's dark treasury. Then gNyen ras dge 'dun 'bum received it from Karmā pag shi, then Rang byung rdo rje, rGyal ba g.yung ston pa, Rol pa'i rdo rje, mKha' spyod dbang po, De bzhin gshegs pa, Ka bzhi rig pa'i ral gri, mThong ba don ldan, and then Drung rin chen rdo rje received it. Up to this point, it was a single transmission tradition. In the presence of mThong ba don ldan, Nang so Kun dga' rgyal mtshan took this 'Gur 'bum from Kong po and brought it southward. From this original copy, devotees made many copies. [End of ms.]<sup>86</sup>

<sup>86</sup> Ms-Bordier f. 322b.7: *De nas dpe de nyid ras chung [323a] bas lo ro gdan drangs/ de nas chos rje dusum [dus gsum] mkhyen pa lo ro na byon nas/ ras chung ba la lung gsan cing/ phyag dpe bshus nas mtshur phu na gdan drangs/ de la 'gro mgon ras pa chen pos gsan/ de la pom rag pas gsan/ de la karmā pag shis gsan/ de pas rkong po na gdan drangs nas rtse bla sgang gi mdzod nag nang du bzhung pa la/ karmā pag shi ba la gnyen ras dge 'dun 'bum pas gsan/ des rang byung rdoe [rdo rje]/ rgyal ba g.yung ston pa/ rol pa'i rdoe [rdo rje]/ mkha' spyod dbang po/ de 4n [bzhin] gshegs pa/ dka' 4 [bzhi] rig pa'i ral gri/ mthong ba don ldan/ de la drung rin chen rdoe [rdo rje] bas gsan/ de yan chad 1 [gcig] rgyud [brgyud] kyi lugsu [lugs su] gda' mthong ba don ldan pa'i sku drung nas/ nang so kun dga' rgyisan [rgyal mtshan] gyi[s] 'gur [mgur] 'bum 'di rkong po nas gdan drangs nas*





Fig. 35 – Chos rje Dus gsum mkhyen pa hears the transmission [of the text] from Ras chung pa.  
Ms-Drepung vol. 112 p. 374

This section of the colophon presents many differences compared to the version of Ms-Drepung and its two reeditions.<sup>87</sup>

- First, the journey of the manuscript from Tshur phu to rTse bla sgang is incorporated **within** the transmission line whereas in Ms-Drepung it is described **later**.
- Second, the moving of the ms. to Kong po is assigned to Karma pag shi and not to Rang byung rdo rje. Moreover, the latter is not credited with compiling/editing the text as he is in Ms-BDRC, Ms-Lhasa, DNM-RD and *A Rivers of Blessings*.<sup>88</sup>
- Third, the transmission lineage varies: O rgyan pa is replaced by gNyen ras dge 'dun 'bum (the other main disciple of Karma pag shi), De bzhin gshegs pa is placed between mKha' spyod dbang po and bKa' bzhi rig pa'i ral gri, and the single transmission line ends with Drung Rin chen rdo rje, a generation earlier than Ms-Drepung, with the absence of “lama rinpoche Rasmri Bhadra” (*'Od zer bzang po?*).<sup>89</sup>

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*lho rgyud 'dir phebs] de la ma phyi byas nas dad pa can rnam[s] [rnam[s] kyi mang du bzhengs pas snang ngo//.*

<sup>87</sup> Ms-Drepung vol. 112 p. 372.2; Drikung 2004, vol. 8 p. 513.3; Si khron 2008 vol. II, p. 1037.

<sup>88</sup> Ms-BDRC f. 418.3; Ms-Lhasa f. 308b.5; DNM-RD p. 770.5; Ms-Smith f. 318.4; Ms-Drepung vol. 112 p. 366.2; Ms-India vol. 2 p. 553.4. Quintman 2014a p. 106: “Here the Third Karmapa, Rangjung Dorje, is credited with stashing the text within the actual Black Treasury; all versions of The Black Treasury identify him as one of its principal editors.”

<sup>89</sup> Both masters remain unidentified.

Altogether, these differences cannot be simply considered omissions and/or scribal errors. Are they the proof of an alternative tradition diverging from Ms-Drepung? Has the emphasis on gNyen ras dge 'dun 'bum instead of O rgyan pa a specific meaning? Most of all, why is the role of Rang byung rdo rje so diminished?

The presence of De bzhin gshegs pa between mKha' spyod dbang po and bKa' bzhi rig pa'i ral gri in Ms-Bordier appears logical and his absence in Ms-Drepung must certainly be an omission. In fact, the *Blue Annals* mentions a "bKa' bzhi rig pa'i ral gri whose name was Rin chen bzang po" among the disciples of the 5<sup>th</sup> Karma pa.<sup>90</sup> Although in his dictionary *Dung dkar Blo bzang 'phrin las* mentions bKa' bzhi rig pa'i ral gri rin chen bzang po as a disciple of mKha' spyod dbang po, and not of De bzhin gshegs pa,<sup>91</sup> Ms-Drepung's list without the latter seems strange. How could the Fifth Karma pa not be part of the transmission of this 'mDzod nag ma' text since every other black hat hierarch and holder of the lineage was?

There are other reasons to consider the absence of De bzhin gshegs pa from the lineage masters surprising if we consider the bZhad pa'i rdo rje Compendia as part of the sNyan brgyud tradition – as suggested by the emphasis on these teachings in the compendia as well as the *Ras pa bu chen bcu gnyis* colophon in Ms-Bordier. In fact, 'Gos Lo tsa ba explains, De bzhin shegs pa entrusted his mahāsiddha disciple Drung rMa se with "oral precepts which he did not bestow on others. Even to day these are known as the 'Oral Precepts of Zur-maṅs pa' [...]."<sup>92</sup> Even though the author does not define these oral precepts, many centuries later, Kong sprul Blo gros mtha' yas identified them as the Cakrasaṃvara Hearing lineage.<sup>93</sup> In this logic, it seems contradictory for a leader of the Karma Kam tshang school to be holder of the 'bDe mchog snyan brgyud' and not of the so-called single transmission of this *Life and Song of bZhad pa'i rdo rje* related to it. Later on, in the same text, Kong sprul further explains that: "The special transmission of the profound and vast instructions of ripening and liberation of the Dakpo Hearing Lineage fell to the Zurmang Kagyu and it continues

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<sup>90</sup> Roerich 1976 p. 544.

<sup>91</sup> *Dung dkar* 2002 p. 1786.

<sup>92</sup> Roerich 1976 p. 511.

<sup>93</sup> Jamgön Kongtrül 2007 p. 140.

unbroken up to the present.”<sup>94</sup> The matter of the different lines of transmission of the sNyan brgyud among Mi la ras pa’s disciples has already been studied by Marta Sernesi who questions the possibility of a Dwags po snyan brgyud tradition with a lineage of transmission of the Cakrasaṃvara practice descending from sGam po pa.<sup>95</sup>

The line of masters described in the *lo rgyus* corresponds with the general succession of the Kam tshang hierarchs but has no apparent connection with the traditional transmission lineages of the sNyan brgyud.<sup>96</sup>

Nevertheless, in the *Zur mang bka’ brgyud chos ’byung*,<sup>97</sup> a recent undated publication gathering texts from this branch of the bKa’ brgyud school, one of the sources is named *bDe mchog mkha’ ’gro snyan brgyud kyi chos ’byung chen mo grub pa’i rna rgyan* presents a group of hagiographies according to the ‘lineages’ of the sNyan brgyud which is very similar to our *lo rgyus*. Although no author’s name appears in the colophon, in the table of contents of the book this text is attributed to the 4<sup>th</sup> Drung rin po che Kun dga’ rnam rgyal (1567–1629). Three different lineages of transmission coming from Mi la ras pa are presented: one from Ras chung, one from Ngom rdzong (*sic*) and one from sGam po pa<sup>98</sup>. This division, repeated and detailed on many occasions inside Mi la ras pa’s short *rnam thar* presented in this *Chos ’byung*, names this last lineage “sGam po snyan brgyud or Karma snyan brgyud”, a name encountered nowhere else.<sup>99</sup> Up to De bzhin gshegs pa, the masters belonging to this third lineage perfectly match those of the *mDzod nag ma lo rgyus*. Although they are separate lineages with, on the one hand, a Ras chung pa transmission for the *mDzod nag ma* and, on the other hand, a sGam po pa transmission for the ‘sGam po snyan brgyud’, both lineages present a comparable structure designating the Kam tshang as the heir of Mi la’s original life story and essential tradition.

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<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.* p. 230.

<sup>95</sup> Sernesi 2004 pp. 258-62.

<sup>96</sup> See for instance the *bDe mchog snyan brgyud Biographies* or Sernesi 2006 pp. 258-62 and 2008 p. 180.

<sup>97</sup> *Zur mang chos ’byung* (n.d.).

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 207, 210 and 222.

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.* p. 207: *rJe dwags po la sgam po snyan brgyud dam karma snyan brgyud du’ang grags so/*.

Zur mang chos 'byung	Ms-Drepung	Ms-Bordier
sGam po pa	Ras chung pa	Ras chung pa
Dus gsum mkhyen pa	Dus gsum mkhyen pa	Dus gsum mkhyen pa
Gru gu ras pa	'Gro mgon ras chen	'Gro mgon ras chen
sPom grags pa	sPom grags pa	sPom grags pa
Karma pakshi	Karma pag shi	Karma pag shi
O rgyan pa	O rgyan pa	gNyen ras dge 'dun 'bum
Rang byung rdo rje	Rang byung rdo rje	Rang byung rdo rje
g.Yung ston pa	g.Yung ston pa	g.Yung ston pa
Rol pa'i rdo rje	Rol pa'i rdo rje	Rol pa'i rdo rje
mKha' spyod dbang po	mKha' spyod dbang po	mKha' spyod dbang po
De bzhin gshegs pa	Ø	De bzhin gshegs pa
Drung rma se	Ka bzhi rig pa'i ral gri	Ka bzhi rig pa'i ral gri
	mThong ba don ldan	mThong ba don ldan
	Drung rin chen rdo rje	Drung rin chen rdo rje
	Rasmri bha dra	

*Nang so Kun dga' rgyal mtshan*

Both versions of the *lo rgyus* mention a certain Nang so Kun dga' rgyal mtshan responsible for the withdrawal of the manuscript from rTse lha sgang's dark treasury and its dissemination 'far and wide'. A Nang so Kun dga' rgyal mtshan is mentioned in the sixteenth chapter of *gNyags ston pa'i gdung rabs dang gdan rabs* concerning the line of succession of Sa snag mda' nang.<sup>100</sup> Presented in a brief passage as a devout ruler, supporter of the saṅgha, he could appear as a potential candidate.<sup>101</sup> Unfortunately, the text gives scarce information and no date. Yet, the next paragraph in the same text deals with his brother (?) Chos kyi rje sangs rgyas lhun grub rgya mtshan dpal bzang po (d.u.) who is said to have taken ordination from Ngor chen Sangs rgyas Seng ge (1504–1569), placing him a good century after mThong ba don ldan (1416–

<sup>100</sup> All my gratitude to M. Kapstein for indicating this reference to me.

<sup>101</sup> Mus chen chos nyid ye shes 1997 p. 219: *Nang so kun dga' rgyal mtshan ni/ chos la shin tu dkar bas bla ma dkon mchog rnams la sri zhu la brtson pa dang/ dge 'dun la bsnyen bkur/ ngan slong la sbyin gtong rnams la rtag 'grus su mdzad pa dang/ mda' kha dpa' rtsal che zhing mkhyen stobs kyi pha rol pa zhid yin par grags so//.*

1553). For an obvious reason of chronology, this candidate cannot correspond to our character.

Focusing only on the name Kun dga' rgyal mthsan, one could imagine a correspondence with the first Zur mang drung pa Rin po che (d.u.) who must have died before 1464 since the second incarnation was born that year.<sup>102</sup> This identification would be convenient but the title *nang so* usually implies a political rank, hardly suitable for the First Zur mang drung pa. This hypothesis is therefore unlikely, and one must hope for new information to emerge and allow his precise identification.

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In a more general way, after translating the end of this *lo rgyus*, Quintman states:<sup>103</sup>

Here the Third Karmapa Rangjung Dorje is credited with stashing the text within the actual Black Treasury; all versions of *The Black Treasury* identify him as one of the principal editors. But once the treasury has been opened and the restriction of the individual transmission line was loosened, copies of the text began to proliferate and spread, leading to the great variety of manuscripts witnessed today.

This vision, though attractive and opportune, remains questionable. It raises again the issue of identifying the famous text stashed in rTse lha sgang's dark treasury.

The history of the transmission of the *Dark Treasury* is problematic on several levels. It refers to actual places and people in a rather coherent manner. In her article about the gNas bcu lha khang in 'Bras spung, Cécile Ducher explains that rTse lha sgang's library was supposedly plundered during the 17<sup>th</sup> century, with its content transferred to the dGe lugs monastery.<sup>104</sup> Later, she describes rTse lha sgang as having a renowned library:

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<sup>102</sup> BDRC: <https://library.bdrc.io/show/P9701>

<sup>103</sup> Quintman 2014a p. 106.

<sup>104</sup> Ducher 2020 p. 133.

Although an extensive listing of the monasteries seized is not provided in the 'Bras spungs Catalogue, it mentions three libraries contained in the Sixteen Arhats Temple, albeit without specifying its source for such claim. The three are the library of the Sne gdong Palace built by the Phag gru rulers (14th–15th c.), that of the Bsam grub rtse Palace built by the Gtsang pa rulers, and that of Rtse lha sgang, related to the Karma Bka' brgyud school and its head, the Karma pas.

[...] The Karma Bka' brgyud Library of Rtse lha sgang in Kong po housed a renowned library established by the 1st Karma pa (1110–1193). In it there was a treasure room called the “Black Treasury” (Mdzod nag ma), containing *inter alia* a large biography of Mi la ras pa. It is likely that most Bka' brgyud collections published by Paltsek mentioned earlier come from Rtse lha sgang. As said, the name of 'Bras spungs' Sixteen Arhats Temple derives from the statues of the 16 *arhats* taken from Rtse lha sgang when the monastery was seized. The reason why this monastery in particular was targeted is that its landlord, Rtse lha sgang pa, spearheaded the rebellion against the Central Tibetan forces in 1643. The battle was fierce and the Central Tibetan forces, assisted by Gushri Khan's army, annihilated the resistance, killing “some five or six thousand pro-Karma Kagyü troops from Kongpo.” In all likelihood, the whole library, together with the statues, etc., were brought to 'Bras spungs. The fate of the monastery after that date is not clear, but it definitely lost most of its assets.

Some of the manuscripts re-emerging recently from the gNas bcu lha khang such as Ms-Lhasa, Ms-Smith and Ms-Drepung could have originated from rTse lha sgang's library. Although Ms-Smith appears affiliated to the 'Brug pa and Ms-Drepung to the sTag lung of Ri bo che, this monastery's dark treasury room probably sheltered a great number of texts and possibly many versions of Mi la bzhad pa'i rdo rje's life and songs. Yet, instead of describing a library gathering a host of different versions, the *lo rgyus* tells another story. It describes a single text, an early copy of an original by Mi la ras pa and his yogin disciples, being withdrawn from the library around the mid 15<sup>th</sup> century **then** taken southward, being copied, and spreading far and wide.

One must remain cautious and not project the reality of a library in rTse lha sgang over the *lo rgyus* narrative. As a rich library, rTse lha sgang certainly accumulated the available literature concerning Mi la ras pa, and this corpus was possibly used for the elaboration of more developed versions such as DNM-RD and *A River of Blessings*.

Nevertheless, except for Ms-Drepung, none of the other late compendia mentions a connection with rTse lha sgang. Moreover, this does not correspond to the *lo rgyus*, whose unique purpose is to present a hypothetical *mDzod nag ma* text as the source of all other versions.

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For the analysis of this *lo rgyus* we also need to consider its location inside the two manuscripts in which it appears. In Ms-Drepung, it comes second last in the colophon after a long accumulation of various elements:

- the list of Mi la's disciples;
- the colophon *per se*, listing the different sources (mentioning the name *A River of Blessings*);
- a list of meditation sites (close to but shorter than that of DNM-RD);
- a long passage attributed to 'Ba' brom pa connecting Mi la's supernatural encounters with his meditative practices on channels, winds, and drops;
- the *lo rgyus*;
- a group of aspiration and auspicious prayers.

This shows the succession of two opposite statements regarding the origin of the text. First, the colophon cites a text called *mDzod nag ma* composed by Rang byung rdo rje after having examined "a hundred of different versions." Later, the *lo rgyus* mentions an original text compiled by the twelve great *ras pa* disciples with the supernatural help of Tshe ring ma and amended by Mi la ras pa himself. This was transmitted to Ras chung pa and then to the first Karma pa in a secret single line, and stashed by the same Rang byung rdo rje in rTse lha sgang's dark treasury.

These two stories appear in contradiction. How can a text be at the same time an original 'autobiography' from the 12<sup>th</sup> century and a compilation made nearly two centuries later? Did Rang byung rdo rje compile various versions to enhance the original text corrected by Mi la ras pa in person? If his compilation is a separate work from this 'original' text, why are they both named *mDzod nag ma*? When the

original manuscript was taken out of rTse lha sgang by mThong ba don ldan, why did multiple copies spawn so different in content?

The extremely composite colophon of Ms-Drepung appears more like an accumulation of texts and traditions of different nature, gathering every available information and detail, thus reflecting the same compound structure of the compendium itself. The addition of this *lo rgyus* at the end of the colophon could therefore be the result of such a process.

When looking at the colophon of Ms-Bordier, the *lo rgyus* takes a completely different aspect. The final section starts with the *Ras pa bu chen bcu gnyis*' traditional colophon: the text was composed by the twelve great *ras pa* disciples such as Ngan rdzong ston pa for the sake of the great meditators. Then comes the list of the disciples (naming the twelve great *ras pas*) followed by the Lineage Wish-fulfilling Gem's verses. Directly following this part is the *lo rgyus* of the *mDzod nag ma* transmitted by the Karma pas: again, the text is said to have been "compiled by the great disciples from all directions" on the initiative of Ngan rdzong ston pa and Zhi ba 'od and amended by Mi la ras pa himself. The rest of the story is the same, with the text being secretly transmitted in a single line until the 6<sup>th</sup> Karma pa's disciple. After he retrieved it from rTse lha sgang's dark treasury, Nang so Kun dga' rgyal mtshan took it southward and many copies were made.

This version appears more coherent, presenting the manuscript as a copy of the original text transmitted faithfully – unaltered – by the Karma pas. This feeling is reinforced by the absence of any mention of Rang byung rdo rje's compilation work that modifies the entire logic of Ms-Drepung colophon. Would Ms-Bordier be the only surviving testimony of the bZhad pa'i rdo rje early compendia, this rhetoric might be convincing. Yet, through comparison with the other sources, mainly the 'Regular' *Ras pa bu chen bcu gnyis*, we know this is impossible. Despite the baffling similarity of content nearly identical to the RBCs, the presence of the three characteristic additional elements proper to the Variant versions (*bar do* song, passages on sGam po pa and Ras chung pa), plus the 18<sup>th</sup> quality, make it unbelievable since the Variant RBCs are necessarily based upon the *Twelve Great Ras pa Disciples* and therefore of a later date.



This leads us to the question of where and when this *lo rgyus* appeared. So far, the two available versions – in Ms-Bordier and Ms-Drepung – seem to point to a period after 1488, possibly the first half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. The reason of its absence from DNM-RD may be that it is possibly older than the two manuscripts (Ms-Bordier and Ms-Drepung) and the *lo rgyus* is a later addition. As for the why, following the adage *Cui bono?* this story must have appeared within the Karma kam tshang lineage, presenting this school as the direct heir of Mi la ras pa's tradition. This raises many questions among which the almost complete absence of Kam tshang masters among the sNyan brgyud lineages.<sup>105</sup> The short passage concerning De bzhin gshegs pa and Drung rma se<sup>106</sup> and the Zur mang literature are, so far, the only known connections. The role of Rang byung rdo rje in the colophons, sometimes neighbouring the Lineage Wish-fulfilling Gem verses (Ms-BDRC, Ms-Lhasa) could be interpreted as a connection. Yet the silence regarding the sNyan brgyud in the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Karma pas' hagiographies does not reinforce this hypothesis.<sup>107</sup> Traditionally, the sNyan brgyud is principally associated with the 'Brug pa and sTag lung lineages<sup>108</sup> and when reviewing the lines of transmission,<sup>109</sup> no Kam tshang master appears.

As for the supposed single transmission (*chig brgyud*) of the *mDzod nag ma* mentioned in the *lo rgyus*, another single transmission comes in mind, that of the sNyan brgyud tradition itself. The Aural Transmission was said to be under the seal of secrecy and single line until the thirteenth generation.<sup>110</sup> Instead, starting with gTsang smyon's literary tradition, a narrative in which the miraculous intervention of Vajrayoginī authorises loosening the seal of secrecy and the exceptional transmission to more than one disciple of Mi la ras pa. The same episode is narrated in a more detailed way in rGod tshang pa's *rnam thar* of Ras chung pa where the celestial authorisation ignites a triple tradition of Ras chung, Ngan rdzong, and Dwags po snyan

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<sup>105</sup> Sernesi 2004 pp. 261-2.

<sup>106</sup> Roerich 1976 p. 511; Kongtrul 2007 p. 140.

<sup>107</sup> See Manson 2022; Gamble 2020.

<sup>108</sup> Sernesi 2004 p. 252; Roberts 2007 p. 3.

<sup>109</sup> bDe mchog snyan brgyud biographies 1983; Sernesi 2021 p. 29 table 1.

<sup>110</sup> Sernesi 2004 p. 255.

brgyud.<sup>111</sup> Without entering any further in this matter, the thematic of a single line of transmission also regarding the 'original' compendium provides prestige and credit to the text. The secrecy attached to it is enhanced by the Lineage Wish-fulfilling Gem's verses, thus placing it on the same level as the pith instructions of the sNyan brgyud tradition.

Considering all this information, one might wonder whether this *lo rgyus* should be completely disregarded. Many elements seem credible, starting with the chronology. At present, the only available versions of this *lo rgyus* belong to manuscripts possibly produced around the first half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, a time that saw a multiplication of compendia after gTsang smyon's publications. This could make this *History* look like an attempt to incorporate the bZhad pa'i rdo rje Compendia tradition within the Karma kam tshang lineage. In fact, the multiplication of texts following the publication of the Madman's works at the beginning of the 16<sup>th</sup> century corresponds to a period of progressive takeover of gTsang smyon's meditation centres by the ever-growing Kam tshang tradition.<sup>112</sup>

#### 6. Dating Ms-Bordier

After this overview of the characteristics of the Bordier manuscript comes the question of its location in time. The text alone appears insufficient to draw a definitive conclusion. The archaic spelling ('*gur*, *bsnyen rgyud*, *rog*...), the confusion between genitive and instrumental forms plead for an early date. Furthermore, the absence of the *mid la* spelling cannot rule out an ancient date. Although this archaic form is present in older texts (Don mo ri pa, Zhi byed ri khrod pa, mKha' spyod dbang po, 'Gos lo tsha ba...), it also appears in later texts such as RBC-Stockholm or Ms-Newark, the latter dating from the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>113</sup> On the contrary, the spelling *Mi la* encountered in gTsang smyon's work, in DNM-RD and *A River of Blessings* goes back as far as the *bDe mchog snyan brgyud biographies* proving this cannot be considered as a relevant marker of the time of origin.

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<sup>111</sup> *Ibid.* 2004 p. 259; 2021 pp. 27-28.

<sup>112</sup> Sernesi 2021 pp. 221-45, 258-76, 293-4.

<sup>113</sup> Quintman 2014a p. 89. This estimation is connected to the presence of a portrait of the *dge lugs pa* master sKal ldan rgya mtsho (1607-1677) on Ms-Newark f. 162b.

On the one hand, the limited number of cycles and the absence of influence from gTsang smyon's *Life and Songs* would point in the direction of an early date. The historical figures whether painted (rGya ston chos bzang) or mentioned (mThong ba don ldan, Drung rin chen rdo rje) never go any later than the mid-15<sup>th</sup> century. The style of the illuminations also appears insufficient to draw a definitive conclusion.

On the other hand, the division in 18 qualities appears discordant with the first stratum and could imply an influence of the later literature. Must it be understood as some effect of DNM-RD or *A River of Blessings*? Quintman places the production of DNM-RD “shortly after the individual-transmission mandate was lifted, and perhaps within decades of Tsangnyon Heruka’s own work on the standard edition.”<sup>114</sup> As will be seen below, many elements suggest a production later than 1488. Regarding *A River of Blessings*, he “[...] suggests a date of composition between the last quarter of the fourteenth and the mid-fifteenth century.”<sup>115</sup> Roberts, who did not have access to DNM-RD, thinks *A River of Blessings* “may have been written in the second half of the fifteenth century by a contemporary of Tsangnyön Heruka”, “for it seems unlikely that the compiler of *A River of Blessings* would have ignored Tsangnyön Heruka’s work, as he had a predilection for compiling variants of the same incident.”<sup>116</sup> Considering the possibility of an influence of DNM-RD or *A River of Blessings* on Ms-Bordier for this 18<sup>th</sup> quality, it could be dated to the second half of the 15<sup>th</sup> century.

A similar problem concerns the presence of the *lo rgyus*, exclusively encountered in Ms-Drepung, possibly dating from the first half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Regarding this *lo rgyus*, considering the possible context of its production as a legitimising narrative, it could have appeared after the publication and success of gTsang smyon's *Life and Songs*. The multiplication of manuscripts and versions of the compendia at the turn of the 16<sup>th</sup> century with apparent affiliation to different schools (sTag lung, 'Brug pa, Kam tshang, and later dGe lugs) points in that direction.

Looking for material arguments, in May 23, the Tibet Museum proceeded to a C14 dating of the manuscript's paper with a sample

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<sup>114</sup> Quintman 2014a p. 109.

<sup>115</sup> *Ibid.* p. 110.

<sup>116</sup> Roberts 2007 p. 36.

taken from the first pages. The results explained in the report<sup>117</sup> showed two possible periods:

- 1453–1529 (49%)
- 1547–1635 (46,4%)

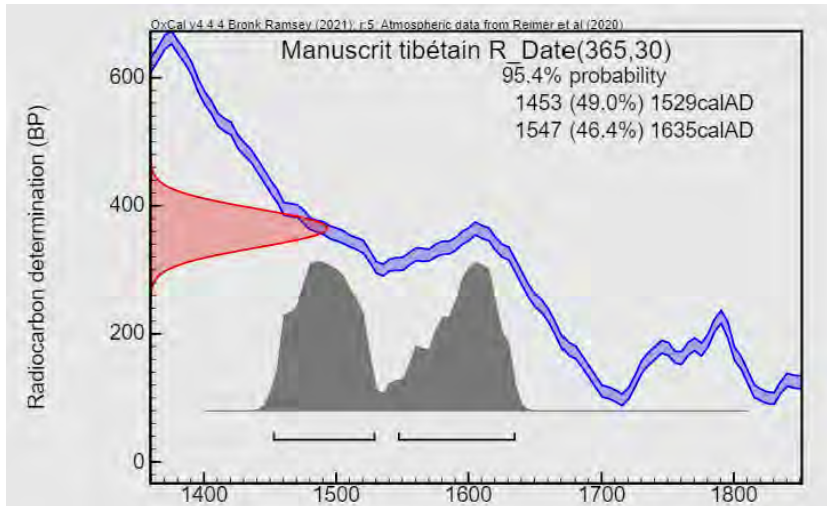


Fig. 36 – (LMC-14 : n° SacA 70331)

The report explains that the manuscript could only date from either of these two periods but not from the gap between 1529 and 1547. Although the first interval appears more likely due to the aforementioned arguments, it remains too vague to assert that the text was produced before, during or after gTsang smyon's *Life and Songs*.

<sup>117</sup> Art in Lab 2023 *Rapport d'analyse 2023-0603*.

7. *A thangka illustrating bZhad pa'i rdo rje's Life and Songs*



Fig. 37 – Milarepa. Tibet 17th c. Pigments on cloth. Rubin Museum of Art. C2002.24.4 (HAR 65120)

The Rubin Museum possesses a refined and detailed painting (acc. #C2002.24.4) directly connected with our topic. The image is so dense and rich in detail that its full analysis goes beyond the scope of this article and it will deserve a study of its own. Nevertheless, some elements correspond to our study of the compendia corpus.

Mi la ras pa of greyish-purple complexion sits in royal ease posture upon a cushion and an antelope skin supported by a multi-coloured lotus. He is dressed in a cotton shawl and a meditation belt crosses his chest. His right hand is lifted to his ear and the left rests before his knee. Directly surrounding Mi la ras pa are four *ras pa* yogins. All of them, wearing the cotton robe and a hat, hold a cane and play *damaru*. Above their heads are six small monk-like miniature figures split into two groups. Finally, beneath Mi la ras pa's lotus seat are eight seated miniature *ras pa*.



Fig. 38 – Mi la and his disciples

These three groups clearly refer to the list of disciples presented in the bZhad pa'i rdo rje Compendia.<sup>118</sup> The four main *ras pa* are the “Four heart-sons” (*thugs kyi sras bzhi*) Ras chung, Se ban, Ngan rdzong and 'Bri sgom. The eight smaller *ras pa* correspond to the “Eight close sons” (*nyes ba'i sras brgyad*). Together, these two groups constitute the famous twelve great *ras pa* disciples. The six monk-like figures must therefore stand for the six disciples of Mi la ras pa's old days. The fact that sGam po pa is not represented directly next to Mi la ras pa in the same proportions as the closest disciples is exceptional! There are other paintings representing Mi la ras pa surrounded by *ras pa* disciples, but these will be analysed later.

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The central figures of the painting dwell in a cave surrounded by stylised multi-coloured rocks under a five-peaked snowy mountain whose summit is surrounded with stormy clouds. The upper part of the cave hosts five terrifying beings symbolising the first encounter with the five Long-Life Sisters (*tshe ring mched lnga*) under their demonic appearance. The same deities are figured in their glorious form riding their mount atop the snowy mountains.

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<sup>118</sup> See above “Listing the disciples” and Appendix B.



Fig. 39 – Lineage masters (detail)

Inside the stormy clouds rest the lineage masters: deep blue Vajradhara surrounded by two Indian *mahāsiddhas* (e.g. Tilopa and Nāropa). Beneath them is a broad-shouldered Tibetan figure dressed in white with a red cloak and apparently performing the teaching gesture. Comparing this figure to those in the narrative scenes of the painting, he can be safely identified as Mar pa.

Most unusual is a second, younger Tibetan figure placed between Mar pa and Mi la ras pa. Based upon the narrative scenes as well as the compendia texts, he can only be rNgog Chos sku rdo rje, Mar pa's disciple from whom Mi la Thos pa dga' received teachings. Although this episode appears diminished in gTsang smyon's *Life* so as to emphasise Mar pa's primacy, in the compendia rNgog's role remains more important. This highly unusual – unique? – representation of the bKa' brgyud forefathers seems to illustrate the vision of Mi la ras pa following Mar pa's song of the four pillars and closing the first part of the *Twelve Great Ras pa Disciples*:



Then after obtaining the unwavering faith that both masters Mar pa and rNgog were manifestations of Buddhas, seizing the foot of the master, he formulated an auspicious aspiration prayer.<sup>119</sup>

The opening sentence of Bla ma Zhang's *rnam thar* of Mi la ras pa reflects the same idea: "rJe btsun Mi la, son both of Mar pa and rNgog."<sup>120</sup>

Another statement from *The instruction on the Blazing of Supreme Caṅḍali* reinforces this connection:<sup>121</sup>

[...] that the lineage began with Tilopā and Nāropā, and continued with Mar-pa and Rngog, who transmitted it to Mila-ras-pa. Tilopā is said to have obtained supreme *siddhis*, Nāropā to have obtained ordinary *siddhis*, and Mi-la-ras-pa to have been blessed by the *ḍākinīs*.

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In order to try to identify on which compendium the painting is based, we must look for specific episodes, characteristic of the various versions of this literature.



Fig. 40



Fig. 41

<sup>119</sup> Ms-Bordier ff. 20b-21a: *de nas bla ma mar pa dang/ rngog gnyis la sangs rgyas kyi 'du shes skyes pa'i dad pa brtan po thob cing bla ma'i zhabs la 'dzus te smon lam bzang po btab/.*

<sup>120</sup> Bla ma Zhang vol. 1 p. 146.2: *mar rngog gnyis kyi sras rje btsun mi la lags/.*

<sup>121</sup> Ducher 2017b p. 58.

Fig. 40 represents Mi la crossing a river with a book on top of his bag and his boots mistakenly laid above the book. The episode, typical of the compendia, is absent from gTsang smyon's version.<sup>122</sup>

A small scene (Fig. 41) placed in the middle right side register illustrates Mi la's encounter with a rabbit riding a fox. This episode belongs to the cycle *Brag rgya rdo rje rdzong* which is absent in all versions of the *Ras pa bu chen bcu gnyis*, except for Ms-Lhasa. It is also present in DNM-RD, and in *A River of Blessings* (as part of *Brag dmar chong gling sogs gyi skor*), but not in Ms-BL. Since the scene is set amongst other demon scenes and before the encounter with Ras chung pa, it must belong to Quality no.3 (and not to no.7 as in Ms-Lhasa and DNM-RD). This strongly suggests that the painting was based on a version of *A River of Blessings*.

Although the famous 'yak horn' episode appears in the painting, Mi la ras pa is not represented sitting under a flower, as described in *A River of Blessings*. However, after the *rKyang mgur gyi skor*, a scene seems to depict the encounter between Mi la and Dam pa sangs rgyas. This episode occurs in *Thog la'i skor*, which in *A River of Blessings* appears in Quality 11, whereas in the *Twelve Great Ras pa Diciples* and DNM-RD comes later, in Quality 13.

Altogether, these few elements plead for a painting based upon *A River of Blessings*. Further study would be necessary to identify the other scenes of this unique work of art.

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There are examples of other *thang kas* representing Mi la ras pa surrounded by his *ras pa* disciples. Here is a comparison of a variety of possibilities.

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<sup>122</sup> See for example Ms-Bordier f. 6a.2; DNM-RD 2006 p. 9.3; Ms-Smith f. 11a.3.



*Fig. 42 – The Life of Milarepa (1040-1123) Western Tibet, a Kagyupa Monastery, circa 1500. Mineral pigments and gold on cotton cloth 51 1/2 x 41 1/2 in. (130.8 x 105.4 cm) From the Nasli and Alice Heeramanek Collection, purchased with funds provided by the Jane and Justin Dart Foundation (M.81.90.2). LACMA*



Fig. 43 – Milarepa and his disciples (detail)

This painting from the LACMA collection represents the master surrounded by eight of his disciples and scenes from his life. Some of the characters are identified by inscriptions:

Ø | Ø | Ø | *sgam po rin po che* | [*mi la ras pa*] | [*ras chung*] | '*bri sgom* | *se ban* | *ngan rdzong*

The central figure and the first *ras pa* to the right have no inscriptions. Yet there is no doubt that the latter is Ras chung pa. If this set corresponds to gTsang smyon's list of *thugs kyi sras brgyad*, the three *ras pa* without inscription on the left should be Zhi ba 'od, Khyi ra ras pa and Sans rgyas skyabs. This group of "eight heart-sons" is described in gTsang smyon's *Life* and is also visible on an 18<sup>th</sup> century painting from the Rubin Museum.<sup>123</sup> In both cases, sGam po pa is clearly identified as an ordained monk and stands close to Mi la ras pa as one of his main disciples.

<sup>123</sup> HAR acc.# P1999.2.1, Item 803 <https://www.himalayanart.org/items/803>



Fig. 44 – Milarepa on Mount Kailash. Tibet, 1400–1500. Pigment and gold on cotton, 45.5 × 30 cm (17 7/8 × 11 13/16 in.) Asian Purchase Campaign Endowment and Robert Ross Fund. Art Institute of Chicago. Reference Number 1995.277

The Chicago Art Institute painting shows Mi la ras pa surrounded by six of his disciples identified by inscriptions: *'bri sgom | ras chung | dwags po | dpal bzhad pa 'i rdo rje | ngam rdzong | zhi ba 'od | khyi ra*. Four of them are represented as *ras pa* dressed in white, whereas the two characters closest to the master are in gold.

Although this group does not correspond to any of those listed in the colophons, the four heart-sons are present, as is sGam po pa. It is interesting to note that Ngan rdzong is represented closer to Mi la and in the same golden style as sGam po pa, inducing a superiority *vis-à-vis* Ras chung.

Based on the extensive dedication prayer on the rear of the *thang ka*, Amy Heller places this painting *c.*1500, after the publication of gTsang smyon's *Life*.<sup>124</sup> Quintman reevaluates this statement<sup>125</sup> pushing the date back “at least several decades”. In fact, the age and date of Mi la's death mentioned in the inscription – “In his eighty-eighth [year] on the nineteenth [day] of the tiger [month]” (*brgya cu rtsa brgyad sta (rect. stag) zla 'i bcu dgu la*)” – correspond to that provided in the compendia and not that found in gTsang smyon's *Life and Songs*. However, the narrative elements of Mi la receiving the name rDo rje rgyal mtshan when taking the lay precepts (stanza #4) is not found in the compendia. The name appears exclusively in *A River of Blessings* but in a very unusual alternative *rnam thar*.<sup>126</sup> In this version, Mi la has already left Mar pa to go and meditate. After obtaining some realisation, he comes back to Mar pa who gives him the name rDo rje rgyal mtshan.<sup>127</sup> The scene described in the consecration prayer seems to be closer to gTsang smyon's version.<sup>128</sup> Moreover, stanza #20 states that “Bodhirāja requested four lines on the symbolism of the staff and then became one of your four son-disciples”, and this association between Ngan rdzong ston pa and the *sBa mgur gyi skor* is also proper to gTsang smyon, missing in all the compendia. Albeit the date and the age of Mi la at his death correspond to the compendia, these two examples could be interpreted as an influence of gTsang smyon, making it reasonable to date this painting after 1488.

<sup>124</sup> Heller 2003; Pal 2003 p. 249.

<sup>125</sup> Quintman 2013 pp. 487, 500n9.

<sup>126</sup> Ms-Smith f. 28a.3; Ms-India vol.1 p. 93.2; Ms-Drepung vol. 111 p. 81.4.

<sup>127</sup> Ms-Smith f. 33a.3; Ms-India vol.1 p. 113.4; Ms-Drepung vol. 111 p. 97.1.

<sup>128</sup> gTsang smyon 1981 p. 96.

Furthermore, in contrast to its current identification, it seems more likely that the painting represents *Mi la ras pa* on Gaurishankar instead of Mount Kailāsa. First, the Kailāsa is a single mountain whereas the painting represents a five-summit mountain range, and second, the *Tshe ring mched lnga* represented all around the painting have no connection to the Kailāsa.<sup>129</sup> As explained in the chapters devoted to them and attributed to *Ngan rdzong ston pa* and *Zhi ba 'od*,<sup>130</sup> the encounter took place in Gaurishankar. Of course, the modern name Gaurishankar is not mentioned in the Tibetan sources, the action taking place in *sMan lung chu bar*,<sup>131</sup> but the association between the peak today known as Gaurishankar and the Five Sisters of Long Life is ancient. So it is clear that the painting is not *Mi la* at the Kailāsa but *Mi la* at the five-peaked mountain where the *Tshe ring* sisters reside, which can be identified with Gaurishankar.

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<sup>129</sup> De Nebesky-Wojkowitz 1996 pp. 196-97: “The *Tshe ring mched lnga* are mountain-goddesses, whose residence is supposed to be the *Jo mo gangs dkar* or *La phyi gangs*. At the foot of this mountain are supposed to be five glacial lakes with water in different colours, which are consecrated to this group of goddesses. Usually the Tibetan works only mention that the residence of these five goddesses lies “on the border of Nepal and Tibet”.”

<sup>130</sup> Tsangnyön 2017 chap. 28n3; Quintman 2014a p. 264n.60.

<sup>131</sup> Ms-Bordier f. 196b.4; DNM-RD 2006 p. 497.3; Ms-Smith f. 230a.6.



Fig. 45 – Milarepa, Tibet, c. 1550<sup>132</sup>, Pigment on cotton, 30 × 37.5 cm (11 13/16 × 14 3/4 in.). (Private Collection. Photograph courtesy of John Eskenazi Ltd.)

Another painting from the Eskenazi collection represents the Cotton-clad yogin surrounded by eight of his disciples all wearing cotton shawls.<sup>133</sup> The upper range contains the lineage masters Tilopa, Nāropa and Mar pa surrounded by small representations of Vajradhara and Akṣobhya. The lower range has the five Long-Life Sisters riding their respective mounts. The snowy peaks of the mountain range present a strong similarity with the previous painting from the Art Institute of Chicago. Seven of the eight characters surrounding Mi la ras pa are identified by inscriptions:

<sup>132</sup> Casey 2023 vol.1 p.595 no.93

<sup>133</sup> All my gratitude to Marta Sernesi for indicating this painting to me.



Ø	<i>Ngan rdzong ras pa</i>
<i>Ras chung pa</i>	<i>Se ban ras pa</i>
<i>'Bri sgom</i>	<i>Khyi ra ras pa</i>
<i>Ra rdzi ras pa</i>	<i>Ras pa rDo rje dbang phyug</i>

Unfortunately, no inscription identifies the first disciple facing Mi la. Compared to the lists of disciples from the various literary sources consulted, this group of eight could correspond to two different sets: the *ras pa mched bgryad* as described in *Lho rong chos 'byung*<sup>134</sup> and the *Blue Annals*, and mentioned in *Clouds of Blessings*, or the *thugs kyi sras brgyad* mentioned by gTsang smyon He ru ka. Since the painting appears to be related to the Ri bo che tradition<sup>135</sup> – as is the British Library manuscript – one could imagine a combination of the first two groups of four, the *thugs kyi sras bzhi* and the *nye ba 'i sras bzhi*, proper to this manuscript. The problem is none of these possibilities matches the names given on the painting.

If the *thang ka* illustrates the “eight *ras pa* brothers” then the first character should be Zhi ba 'od (but rDo rje dbang phyug should be replaced by bDe ba skyong/skyobs). The same is true for the combination of the “four heart-sons” and the “four close sons” of Ms-BL. On the other hand, if the group represents gTsang smyon's “eight heart-sons” the first character would be sGam po pa, and Zhi ba 'od and Sangs rgyas skyabs would replace Ra rdzi ras pa and rDo rje dbang phyug. Of course, it would also be possible that the artist was not referring to any of these groups.

Nevertheless, considering the general hierarchy among the disciples and since the “four heart-sons” are placed in the upper range, the unidentified first character facing Mi la ras pa would most probably be sGam po pa. It is also of interest to note that half of the disciples are represented wearing monk's robes under their white shawl (the first character, Ngan rdzong, Ras chung and rDo rje dbang phyug).

This brief overview of the paintings representing Mi la ras pa surrounded by his *ras pa* disciples shows how varied the combination

<sup>134</sup> *Lho rong chos 'byung* p. 107.

<sup>135</sup> Heller 2003 p. 4; Quintman 2013 p. 485; Casey 2023 p. 595.

can be. It also proves the Rubin Museum *thang ka* to be unique since it is the only example representing the Cotton-clad yogin surrounded by the twelve great *ras pa* disciples and without sGam po pa figured as a major pupil. Not only are the “four heart-sons” and the “eight close sons” represented along with the “six disciples of Mi la ras pa’s old days” – as described in the compendia – but the inclusion of rNgog chos sku rdo rje among the bKa’ brgyud lineage masters between Mar pa and Mi la shows a deep connection with the compendia literature and independence in regards to the other *rnam thar* tradition and gTsang smyon’s work.

### 8. Reflections about the *mDzod nag ma*

When exploring the compendia of the life and songs of Mi la bZhad pa’i rdo rje, one character in particular comes to the foreground, inseparably associated with a mysterious and poetic expression: the *mDzod nag ma*. This is the Third Karma pa Rang byung rdo rje (1284–1339), who appears in multiple colophons and titles as a compiler or as the author of a text deeply connected to the *Twelve Great Ras pa Disciples*. This authorship as well as the identification(s) of that work is a complex matter with multiple levels of involvement.

#### *Rang byung rdo rje appearances in the texts*

The available corpus of compendia consists of thirteen texts<sup>136</sup> ranging from the *Twelve Great Ras pa Disciples* to *A River of Blessings*. Six of these never mention the Karma pa: the ‘Regular’ *Ras pa bu chen bcu gnyis* (Ms-Newark, Ms-Oxford, Ms-Drukpa, Ms-Gansu, RBC-Stockholm) and Ms-BL. In the other compendia, Rang byung rdo rje appears seven times in colophons (Ms-Bordier, Ms-BDRC, Ms-Lhasa, DNM-RD, Ms-Smith, Ms-India and Ms-Drepung): thrice as the author/compiler (Ms-BDRC, Ms-Lhasa and DNM-RD), and thrice as the compiler of the *mDzod nag ma* (Ms-Smith, Ms-India, and Ms-Drepung).<sup>137</sup> It is surprising that the association between Rang byung rdo rje and the *mDzod nag ma* is not systematic, and even more that the

<sup>136</sup> As modern reeditions, RBC-Pt, BCG-D and BCG-Si are not considered here.

<sup>137</sup> In Ms-Bordier, he appears exclusively in the *lo rgyus* as a member of the transmission lineage.

expression is completely absent from two of the most prominent sources: Ms-Lhasa and DNM-RD! In fact, the identification of the Third Karma pa's text as the *mDzod nag ma* appears exclusively in the colophon of *A River of Blessings*, as explained earlier. Ms-BDRC is the only first stratum source to mention the expression *mdzod nag* but in a different context, as a location and not as a title: *'di mdzod nag nas gdan drangs pa 'di yin no* "this [text] was retrieved from the dark treasury."

Concerning the titles, Rang byung rdo rje appears twice (DNM-RD and Ms-India) in the same formula: *rNal 'byor gyi dbang phyug mi la bzhad pa rdo rje 'i gsung mgur ma mdzod nag ma zhes pa karma pa rang byung rdo rjes phyog gcig tu bkod pa*. Of the two modern reeditions of Ms-Drepung, BCG-Si is named identically, and BCG-D is titled *rJe mi la'i rnam thar mdzod nag ma*. Although no original version of DNM-RD was accessible for this study, there is no reason to doubt the authenticity of the title.

Out of the thirteen compendia, Ms-Oxford, Ms-Lhasa, Ms-Drepung and Ms-BL have no title, because of a missing title page or because of an empty page in the case of Ms-BL. As Quintman explained,<sup>138</sup> Ms-Lhasa was catalogued under the name *rJe btsun mi la rdo rje rgyal mtshan gyi rnam par thar pa'i dbu phyogs lags* by the 'Bras spung archives, but this is most certainly a mistake since the religious name rDo rje rgyal mtshan never appears in the text except for a caption written in *dbu can* "*rje btsun mi la bzhad pa rdo rje rgyal mtshan*" on f. 149a. As the whole text and legends are written in *dbu med*, this caption appears to be a latter addition.

Therefore, only two versions of the second stratum bear the title identifying the text as "*mDzod nag ma* composed by the Karma pa Rang byung rdo rje" (*mdzod nag ma zhes pa karma pa rang byung rdo rjes phyogs gcig tu bkod pa*): DNM-RD and Ms-India. This very descriptive formulation identifying the author in the title appears distant from the titles of the Variant *Ras pa bu chen bcu gnyis* and Ms-Smith, which contain no reference to *mDzod nag ma* or to the author. In the first stratum, the Stockholm xylographic print (and its apparent copy Ms-Gansu) is the only version with a comparable title mentioning an author, in this case "the twelve great accomplished *ras pa* disciples":

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<sup>138</sup> Quintman 2014a p. 108n76.

*rJe btsun mid la ras chen gyi rnam thar bka' 'bum chen mo grub thob ras pa bcu gnyis kyis bsgrigs pa*.<sup>139</sup> These elaborate titles mentioning author(s) seem to belong to a later tradition. The fact that this *mDzod nag ma/Rang byung rdo rje* title first appears in DNM-RD, a rather late, heavily edited version compared to a text allegedly composed or compiled by the Third Karma pa in the 14<sup>th</sup> century, pleads for an invention proper to the later versions of the compendia.

#### *Ms-Lhasa vs. DNM-RD*

Among the texts attributed to Rang byung rdo rje, two are closely related: Ms-Lhasa and DNM-RD. Apart from their identical obscure colophon, they also share a comparable structure, the narrative cycles: *Brag skya rdo rje rdzong gi skor*, *rJe btsun mi la ras pa dang bu mo yid 'phrog ma gnyis kyi zhush len mgur du gsungs pa'i skor*, *Khyi ra ras pa*, *Ra rdzi ras pa* and *Lug rdzi ras pa* are distributed similarly in the same qualities. However, this is where the resemblance ends and, as observed on many occasions, the texts have more differences than common elements. Even if DNM-RD remains silent about the influence of other sources, the changes and the additional material must have come from a hitherto unknown source.

Most perplexing is the absence of two of the three extra passages of the Variant RBCs, passages found again in *A River of Blessings*. Conceiving DNM-RD as an enlarged and modified Ms-Lhasa would appear logical, but the absence of these two passages disrupts an apparent continuity in narrative development. Why would the editor remove passages otherwise present in all the texts connected to Rang byung rdo rje? The fact that the *bar do* song and the passage of Ras chung in Lo ro and at the cremation site appear verbatim in mKha' spyod dbang po's *Clouds of Blessings* should attest for their validity, especially among the Karma bka' brgyud.<sup>140</sup>

What was Rang byung rdo rje's input to the *Ras pa bu chen bcu gnyis*? The additional material of the Variant versions appeared as a potential answer, but if this were the case, why was it removed from DNM-RD? Moreover, since these three episodes are found in Ms-BL

<sup>139</sup> Roberts 2007 p. 22; Ms-Gansu vol. 22 p. 225.

<sup>140</sup> Zhwa dmar 02 2010 pp. 464.6 & 476.2.

along with an illustration of Mi la appearing to Ras chung,<sup>141</sup> and since this manuscript never mentions Rang byung rdo rje as one of its sources, this theory appears invalid. If Rang byung rdo rje's input is connected to the supplementary cycles found in Ms-Lhasa, why are the *Brag skya rdo rje rdzong* and the *Bu mo yid 'phrog ma* cycles absent from Ms-BDRC? What to say about Ms-Bordier which contains none of these extra cycles?

*The Na ro bon chung affair*

One of the most famous episodes in Mi la ras pa's life is the contest of miracles between the Cotton-clad yogin and a *Bon po* named Na ro bon chung, competing for the spiritual authority over mount Kailāsa. Unexpectedly, this emblematic episode often represented on paintings is absent from the first stratum compendia as well as from Ms-BL, and it appears differently among the remaining texts of the second stratum.

The episode, recounted at length in gTsang smyon's *Songs*, appears in a synthetic version as part of the cycle *Gangs ti tse'i skor* (Quality 14) in *A River of Blessings*, and in full in DNM-RD in the cycle *Gangs ti se na ro bon chung btul ba'i skor* (Quality 15). This last version corresponds verbatim to gTsang smyon's chapter.

Quintman<sup>142</sup> gives a translation of the version in *A River of Blessings*, presenting it as “the first records of [Mila's] activities in this geographic area.”<sup>143</sup>

Mi la reached the snows of Ti tse and, having opened the entrance gate to the sacred site, thereby had a visionary encounter with Cakrasamvara and his divine assembly on the Ti tse snows. Previously, Bon pos ruled over this sacred site, but the Rje btsun said, “This sacred site is a Buddhist location. It is the place where the Blessed One, accompanied with an assembly of five hundred arhats, once came and taught Dharma. These snows are Cakrasamvara's palace.”

An accomplished [Bon po] master called Na ro bon chung who lived there said, “This sacred site is a place blessed by the Bon po teacher Gshen rab and its snows, the divine face of Ge god. You yogin, don't

<sup>141</sup> Ms-BL ff. 342a.5, 345a.4, 377b.6 and illustration 379a.

<sup>142</sup> Quintman 2014a pp. 116 and 256n101.

<sup>143</sup> *Idem* p. 257n101. The text corresponds to Ms-Smith 181a.4, Ms-India II-88.4, and Ms-Drepung 506.2.

stay around here.” He then laid down a wager on the site (*gnas skug*) and drew the Rje btsun into a contest of miracles. But due to the power of [Mi la’s] mastery of miraculous display, [Na ro bon chung] was not able to [defeat him] and offered the site to the Rje btsun.

Considering that *A River of Blessings* is either prior to, or from the same period as, gTsang smyon, one can surmise that the Madman either invented his developed version of the chapter or copied it from an unknown source. The absence of songs in any known version, apart from DNM-RD, leans towards the first option. On the other hand, if such a developed version existed, one may wonder why *A River of Blessings*, the most complete compendium, did not include it despite its numerous repetitions of songs and narratives.

When looking at the Mi la ras pa literature in general, and more specifically at the earlier *rnam thars*, the episode is conspicuous by its absence. The first mention of the yogin visiting the area seems to appear in rGyal thang pa’s life story of Mi la ras pa in a very short statement:

Then, he went to the famous three, *gangs*, *ri* and *mtsho*; Ti se, king of glaciers, Ma pham, king of lakes, and the hundred (*rgya?*) summits, king of mountains. He established the teachings of the practice lineage, expanded the experience born in him, and accomplished great benefit for all beings [living] in this place.<sup>144</sup>

A short mention of Mi la visiting Ti se appears in Zhwa dmar mKha’ spyod dbang po’s *Clouds of Blessings*:<sup>145</sup> “When [Mi la] thought about going to Ti se, sTon pa Shag gu requested a *gaṇacakra* [...]”. After that follow two songs abstracts drawn from different chapters: a song addressed to Ras chung in *Te pu pa’i skor* and another from *Ti se la sogs pa’i skor*, a chapter absent from the first stratum compendia.<sup>146</sup>

<sup>144</sup> rGyal thang pa 1973 p. 256: *de yang gangs ri mtsho 3 la byon te/ gangs kyi rgyal po ti se/ mtsho’i rgyal po ma pham/ ri rgyal po rse rgya lows [la sogs pa] rnam su [rnam su] byon cing/ sgrub bryud kyi bstan pa rtsud [\*rtsugs = btsug] te/ nyams dang skyo [skye?] pa rgyas/ gnas de rnam la gnas pa’i semn [sems can] tshed [tshad?] pa’i don yangs mang du mdzado [mdzad do]/.*

<sup>145</sup> Zhwa dmar 02 2010 pp. 438-439: *yang ti se la ’byon par dgongs pa’i tshe ston pa shag gus tshogs kyi ’khor lo bskor te zhus pa la [...].*

<sup>146</sup> Although the song appears in Ms-Oxford’s extra chapter *mGur phran*: f. 123a.6.

As can be seen, both sources remain silent about the encounter with a *Bon po* or a miracle contest. The earliest mention of such a matter known to us at present comes from Zhi byed ri pa. In his text, dated 1373 and revised in 1381,<sup>147</sup> he mentions on three occasions the story of the encounter with Na ro bon chung. The episode is described as follows:

At the time when he went to chase the *Bon po* from mount Ti se, the rJe btsun was accompanied by bShen sgom ras pa, Li khor phyra ru ba, 'Dzang mo ras ma from Cung pa'i kre phyag, and four *dge bshes* Za ras ma from upper Gung thang; they were eight [in total], master and disciples. Li khor ba and 'Dzang mo were sent down to Blo bo, and six of them went up. With a battle of miraculous powers, the *Bon po* was driven away. The story of stealing Ti se is explained separately.<sup>148</sup>

By naming the episode “stealing Ti se” (*ti se phrogs pa*), Zhi byed ri pa presents it in a very negative way. Later in the text, he analyses and questions the veracity of this story.<sup>149</sup>

In a 1448 prayer to Mi la ras pa by the 15<sup>th</sup> century master Nam mkha' bsam grub, the miracle contest is mentioned in verse:

On snowy Ti se you had a contest of miracles with Na ro bon chung.  
Having overpowered him, you established the teachings of the practice lineage on this snowy range. To the feet of the lamp of the teachings, I bow.<sup>150</sup>

<sup>147</sup> Quintman 2012 p. 13

<sup>148</sup> Zhi byed ri pa 2012 p. 339.5: *gangs ti se na bon po bton pa la byon dus rje btsun la sku 'khor ni/ bshen sgom ras pa dang/ li khor phyra ru ba dang/ cung pa'i kre phyag gi 'dzang mo ras ma cig dang/ gung thang byen lang gi dge bshes za ras ma bzhi dang/ dpon slob bryad byon pa la/ li khor ba dang mdzangs mo gnyis blo bo na mar btang nas/ dpon slob drug yar byon nas/ rdzu 'phrul sna tshogs kyis rtsod pa mdzad nas bon po bton nas/ ti se phrogs pa'i lo rgyus zur na gsal/.*

<sup>149</sup> *Idem* pp. 346.5. For more details, see Blancke 2021 g.

<sup>150</sup> Nam mkha' bsam grub f. 4b: *ti se'i gangs la na ro bon chung dang/ rdzu 'phrul 'gran zhing zil gyis mnan nas kyang/ gangs can khrod 'dir sgrub bryud bstan pa btsugs/ bstan pa'i sgron me'i zhabs la gsol ba 'debs/.*

Finally, the *Blue Annals*<sup>151</sup> dated 1478, gives a more detailed account, confirming the existence of such a narrative tradition a decade before gTsang smyon:

After nine years had passed, he realized the trance of self realization, and in order to labour for the benefit of the crowds of nomads, he went towards ti se (Kailāsa).

There was a bon po adept who had mounted a drum, and was about to proceed to the snowy summit. The Venerable One reached the snowy summit within a single moment, and then having spread his linen garment, he sent the bon po adept down with his drum, and showed many other similar miracles. After that, he came down (from the summit) and numerous supporters, such as rdor mo and others attended on him.

Since the story has two protagonists, one could wonder if a version can be found in Bon sources. In his translation and presentation of the *Treasury of Good Sayings*, Samten Karmay only mentions the anecdote in a footnote but the main text remains silent about it.<sup>152</sup>

In “The Politics of Sacred Space in Bon and Tibetan Popular Tradition”, Charles Ramble mentions two *Bon po dkar chags* about Ti se in which the episode is described.<sup>153</sup> The earliest text, authored by one Ye shes rgyal mtshan, is presented as a thirteenth century source.<sup>154</sup> Although Bellezza identifies the author with a 14<sup>th</sup> century homonymous character named Ka gdams Ye shes rgyal mtshan,<sup>155</sup> the information granted by the text points towards a third possible figure: Ba ye Ye shes rgyal mtshan from the 15<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>156</sup>

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<sup>151</sup> Roerich 1976 p. 434.

<sup>152</sup> Karmay 2001 xxixn.2.

<sup>153</sup> Ramble 1999 p. 17.

<sup>154</sup> Ramble identifies the author with rTogs ldan dbon po Ye shes rgyal mtshan, a master of the Southern transmission line of the Zhang zhung snyan bryud.

<sup>155</sup> Bellezza 2008 p. 247n136, a master of the Ma bryud line of transmission.

<sup>156</sup> Ye shes rgyal mtshan pp. 449-450. The introduction of the *dKar chag* mentions the Zhang zhung snyan bryud and the Me ri practice. None of the two previous candidate are connected to this specific lineage. Ba ye Ye shes rgyal mtshan appears in the transmission line of Me ri, following sPa bstan rgyal bzang po identified as a 14<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> century master. See Karmay 2001 p. 112 and TPNI “sPa ston bsTan rgyal bzang po.” Moreover, the colophon indicates that the text was commissioned by one Yon bdag bSam ’grub, a name also found in a prayer



While reviewing all the sacred sites and caves of mount Ti se, the author states:

The great-accomplished Na ro bon chung and rje btsun Mi la ras pa stayed in the “Unchanging Miracle Cave”, [where] each of them left his changeless foot print. In the “Cave [where] the Secret *yid dam* is realised”, unborn syllables appeared spontaneously. Riding his drum, he flew into the sky, leaving his unchanging seal in the stone. Thus, the qualities are inconceivable.<sup>157</sup>

This passage, lacking the mention of a contest, and apparently devoid of rivalry, is the first one to describe the “drum flight,” a detail reproduced in the *Blue Annals*, gTsang smyon’s *Life and Songs*, and DNM-RD.

As pointed out by Ramble, the absence of polemic in this passage indicates a composition before gTsang smyon’s offending version. The presence of such a story in a Bon po *dkar chag* establishes its fame even for non-Buddhists, and testifies of its integration within the sacred geography of mount Ti se.

Nevertheless, this story seems to have had a special status in the Mi la ras pa literature, appearing randomly and under various aspects. As pointed out by the examples above, the crucial period of development of this narrative in the *rnam thars* seems to have started during the second half of the fifteenth century.

When refocusing on the compendia corpus, this story appears mysterious in many ways. How could such a developed account including multiple songs have existed with so few and undeveloped occurrences in the previous literature? Why exclusively in two sources? If, as Roberts believes, *A River of Blessings* is earlier or contemporaneous with gTsang smyon’s *Life and Songs*,<sup>158</sup> this could

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composed by the Sa skya master dKon mchog yon tan rgyal mtshan also dated to the 15<sup>th</sup> century. All my gratitude to Dan Martin for this information.

<sup>157</sup> Ye shes rgyal mtshan pp. 480-81: *grub thob na ro bon chung dang/ rje btsun mi la ras pa yis/ mi 'gyur rdzu 'phrul phug pa zhag/ mi 'gyur rdzu 'phrul zhabs rjes so sor zhas/ yid dam gsang ba' i grub phug na/ skye med yi ge rang byon yod/ rnga gshang phyibs nas mkha' la 'phur/ mi 'gyur bka' rtags [481] rdo la bzhag / de ltar yon tan bsam mi khyab/.*

<sup>158</sup> Roberts 2007 p. 36.

explain the absence of the extended version of the episode from it. However, why was the full version not reproduced in Ms-Drepung, possibly dated decades after the release and success of Tsang smyon's standard version? Moreover, why is the Na ro bon chung cycle present at length in DNM-RD? Was it copied from gTsang smyon or the other way around? If it pre-existed in DNM-RD, its absence in *A River of Blessings*, which cites "Rang byung rdo rje's *Dark Treasury*" as its first source in its colophon, would prove that the author(s) of *A River of Blessings* was or were not referring to that version of the text attributed to the Karma pa. Likewise, if the full episode appeared first in gTsang smyon's *Songs*, then it would necessarily place DNM-RD after 1488, and not after the Sixth Karma pa lifted the single-transmission mandate, as proposed by Quintman.<sup>159</sup>

As an argument to present gTsang smyon as the author of this chapter, it is of common knowledge that the Madman reorganised, edited, and sometimes rewrote many passages of his *Life and Songs*. In this perspective, Quintman's article on Yolmo's Tiger Cave Lion Fortress<sup>160</sup> is of double interest: it establishes the editing and redacting activities of gTsang smyon as well as his role in reorganising the sacred geography related to Mi la ras pa. From the above we know the story was not completely forged, as it existed before him, but the songs and the polemical tone seems to be proper to the Madman's version.

Considering DNM-RD to be the original source appears less evident since no other compendia shares this version of the story. Since its colophon does not mention any other source, we cannot know where it could have originated or have been lifted from.

One final observation: as seen earlier, according to its colophon DNM-RD was produced under the auspices of the Fourth Zhwa dmar, although he is not explicitly described as having been directly involved in the project. It is noteworthy that in two of his personal productions – a double prayer to Mi la ras pa, and a pilgrimage guide to Ti se dated 1504<sup>161</sup> – the episode is absent. These omissions, even in a text produced more than twenty years after the standard version of the *Life and Songs* by gTsang smyon, and possibly also of DNM-RD, tend to

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<sup>159</sup> Quintman 2014a p. 109.

<sup>160</sup> Quintman 2014b p. 69.

<sup>161</sup> Zhwa dmar 04 2009a vol. 4 pp. 194-96 & 2009b vol. 6 p. 426.

indicate that the episode was still not fully integrated in the narrative tradition.

Although no definitive conclusion can be reached regarding the origin of the extended Na ro bon chung chapter – whether invented by gTsang smyon, created for DNM-RD, or copied from an unknown outer source – its presence in DNM-RD contributes to setting this compendium apart from the rest of the corpus.

### *Reconsidering A River of Blessings*

Reflecting on the compendia, one cannot but share the observations made by previous scholars on the matter, especially P.A. Roberts, A. Quintman, and M. Sernesi.

Before 2014, there was a consensus regarding the identity of *A River of Blessings* as a separate group, gathering what we call Ms-India and Ms-Smith. The arguments used to distinguish this entity from the other compendia were its composite nature, the multiple sources mentioned in the colophon and the titles of these texts.

Describing the 1978 Dalhousie edition, Roberts states:<sup>162</sup>

[...] However, the scribe, in his addendum, refers to this text as *A Dark Treasury* (*mDzod nag ma*), and the title of the edition, clearly based on that in the colophon, is *A Dark Treasury of the Songs of the Lord of Yogins, Mila Shepay Dorje, compiled by Karmapa Rangjung Dorje* (*rNal-'byor gyi dbang-phyug mi-la bzhad-pa'i rdo-rje'i [gsung] 'gur mdzod nag-ma zhes-pa karma-pa Rang-byung rDo-rjes phyogs gcig tu bkod-pa*). [...] Perhaps the scribe of the existing manuscript of *A River of Blessings* misunderstood the syntactically clumsy and ambiguous colophon, which is open to interpretation.

In his 2006 thesis, Quintman observes:<sup>163</sup>

An Indian publication in 1978 reproduced a two-volume manuscript under the title *The Black Treasury Compiled by Karma pa Rang byung rdo rje* (*Mdzod nag ma zhes karma pa rang byung rdo rjes phyogs gcig tu bkod pa*). The ambiguity of this title has led to some confusion regarding the text's identification and its history. In that case, however,

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<sup>162</sup> Roberts 2007 pp. 31-2.

<sup>163</sup> Quintman 2006 p. 161.

both title and attribution appear to have been based on a mistaken reading of the work's somewhat ambiguous colophon. The text — actually titled *A River of Blessings* and analyzed in the next section— is instead a later compendium, and lists among its sources a compilation referred to as *The Black Treasury*, written by Rang byung rdo rje and based upon his “valid sources and his personal research” (*khung btsun shing thugs rtsis*). The text was thus confused for one of its sources.

Finally, Sernesi notes:<sup>164</sup>

*The River of Blessing (Byin rlabs kyis chu rgyun gyis nyon mongs pa'i tsha gdung sel bar byed pa)* was mistaken for the earlier work and published as *Rnal 'byor gyi dbang phyug mi la bzhad pa rdo rje'i gsung mgur ma mdzod nag ma zhes pa karma pa rang byung rdo rjes phyogs gcig tu bkod pa*, Damchoe Sangpo, Dalhousie 1978.

The publication of Quintman's *The Yogin and the Madman* in 2014 constitutes a turning point in the understanding and classification of the sources. This is especially true of '*A River of Blessings*', which was absorbed into a larger group, associated with other texts, called by Quintman '*The Black Treasury*' organised in 'early' and 'later' strata. This denomination is defined as followed:

As a general title, *The Black Treasury* does not indicate a single text or even multiple editions of a single text. Rather, the name refers to a broad collection of biographical compendia sharing common (if not always identical) sources, structures, and content. In this sense, *The Black Treasury* seems to have been understood as a container into which all known material about Milarepa's life and career might be locked away.<sup>165</sup>

The main difference between his earlier statements and that of *The Yogin and the Madman* is the access to the so-called 'DNM- D',<sup>166</sup> which appears to have played a major role in modifying Quintman's perception of the corpus. This was probably due to the titles of these texts: *rJe mi la'i rnam thar mdzod nag ma* for the 2004 Drikung edition

<sup>164</sup> Sernesi 2010 p. 418n167.

<sup>165</sup> Quintman 2014a p. 105.

<sup>166</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 110, 276. The 'Bri gung version of 2004 and the Si khron version of 2008 are gathered under the name DNM-D without indicating the difference in the titles.

and *rNal 'byor gyi dbang phyug mi la bzhad pa rdo rje'i gsung mgur mdzod nag ma zhes kar ma pa rang byung rdo rjes phyogs gcig tu bkod pa* for the 2008 Si khron edition. Whereas before Ms-India was the only text to contain the expression *mDzod nag ma* in its title, three sources out of four now had the same reference. The other key element must have been the *lo rgyus* of the *mDzod nag ma* present at the end of these two texts forming the so-called 'DNM-D'. Through the combination of these elements, *A River of Blessings* disappeared as an autonomous group.

However, our recent access to Ms-Drepung somehow turns the tables. Unfortunately, as often with this literature, this manuscript's original title page is missing. The manuscript was reproduced as facsimile and published as *rJe btsun mi la ras pa'i rnam thar rdo rje'i glu dang mgur rnams phyogs gcig tu bsdus pa*, a sentence opening the text's colophon. This proves that the titles of its recent reeditions BCG-D and BCG-Si were creations and deliberate choices made by the editors. The fact that dPal brtsegs did not choose to use *mdzod nag ma* in the title of the facsimile of Ms-Drepung, although still cataloguing the text as authored by Rang byung rdo rje, proves that the association between this text and the *mDzod nag ma* is far from being systematic.

Text	Title	Date/period
Ms-Smith	<i>rJe rnal sbyor gyi dbang phyug dpal bzhad pa'i rdo rje'i 'gur 'tshogs tshad phyogs gcig du bsgrig pa lo rgyus kyis sbas pa zhes bya ba bzhugs so</i>	Mid-15th?
Ms-Drepung	Ø	16 <sup>th</sup> century?
Ms-India	<i>rNal 'byor gyi dbang phyug mi la bzhad pa rdo rje'i gsung mgur ma mdzod nag ma zhes pa karma pa rang byung rdo rjes phyog gcig tu bkod pa</i>	18 <sup>th</sup> -19 <sup>th</sup> c.?

Regarding Ms-India, based on the scribe's colophon Roberts<sup>167</sup> posits that "the dates for this particular manuscript [are] 1722–3, 1782–3, 1842–3 and 1902–3, with the latter two dates being more likely."

<sup>167</sup> Roberts 2007 p. 34.

In the colophon of the manuscript, the expression *mdzod nag ma* appears twice: first among the list of sources used for the text, in the modified colophon shared with Ms-Lhasa and DNM-RD; second at the very end of the scribe's colophon, in an aspiration prayer where the expression *rnam 'gur mdzod nag ma* designates the text.<sup>168</sup>

This formula proves that the scribe did consider the whole text as a *mDzod nag ma*, despite the evident contradiction with its own colophon and poetic title *A River of Blessings*. Nevertheless, using the same title for texts of different nature (DNM-RD, Ms-India and BCG-Si) generates confusion.<sup>169</sup> A detailed study of the structures and content clearly demonstrates a distinction between these sources. For all these reasons, it appears of foremost importance to continue to keep *A River of Blessings* as a separate category.

### *In search of the mDzod nag ma*

This fact of considering Ms-India as a *mDzod nag ma* “composed by Rang byung rdo rje” betrays a wider tendency.

Regarding *A River of Blessings*, if Ms-Drepung unfortunately lost its title page, luckily, Ms-Smith still has its original title showing no reference nor association with the Third Karma pa or the *Dark Treasury*. This confused assimilation must have evolved through time.

The Variant *Twelve Great Ras pa Disciples*, the earliest sources to mention Rang byung rdo rje, are not self-identified as *mDzod nag ma*, as proved by their titles and colophons. It seems this identification of the compendium attributed to Rang byung rdo rje as the *Dark Treasury* started on the one hand with the modified colophon of *A River of Blessings* and, on the other hand, in the title of DNM-RD, although the expression is absent from its colophon. Due to the uncertain dating of these texts, we cannot ascertain which text influenced the other or how the tendency began. It seems that later, perhaps reinforced by the influence of the *lo rgyus*, when the original manuscript reproduced in Ms-India was written, the expression had already expanded to include

<sup>168</sup> Ms-India vol. 2 p. 557.4: *rje de nyid kyi rnam 'gur mdzod nag ma 'di nyid mkha' 'gro'i zhal rlung kyi drod ma yal gdam ngag phal pa'i slad ma zhugs...*

<sup>169</sup> See for instance the results of a ‘mdzod nag ma’ search in BDRC database showing BCG-Si, Ms-India, DNM-RD 2006, DNM-RD 2013, BCG-D, Ms-Smith, a reference from the NGMPP (corresponding to Ms-India) but not Ms-Drepung.

other texts containing the reference to that text attributed to the Third Karma pa.

Starting with the modern edition of Ms-India in 1978 followed by the progressive rediscovery of the compendia literature,<sup>170</sup> the tendency to identify the new editions as *mDzod nag ma* intensified (see e.g. the 'Bri gung bka' brgyud chos mdzod chen mo and Si khron editions), aggravating the confusion.

In 2014, with *The Yogin and the Madman*, the tendency moved up a notch with the incorporation of all texts connected to Rang byung rdo rje under the category *mDzod nag ma* without a clear definition of the term; the texts were only defined as “closely associated with the line of Karmapas”.

The propensity to assimilate the entire bZhad pa'i rdo rje Compendia with the 'Black Treasury' literature reached its peak in 2023, when Quintman described the Newark edition of the *Ras pa bu chen bcu gnyis* as:

A manuscript copy of the so-called *Twelve Great Disciples*, among the earliest Black Treasury texts, takes a different approach to illustrating Milarepa's life.<sup>171</sup>

This last statement appears problematic when connected to the following definition of the 'Black Treasury':<sup>172</sup>

But the tradition of *The Black Treasury* is also closely associated with the line of Karmapas, Kagyu hierarchs famous for their iconic black crowns, for which reason the name might equally be rendered “the treasury of the black.” It is now clear that the name refers to a specific chapel—or perhaps a single room in a chapel—in southern Tibet associated with the Karmapas wherein an early version of *The Black Treasury* was preserved.

This paragraph, intertwining different levels of information, establishes a direct connection between the *mDzod nag ma* and the Karma pas. The first sentence which associates the 'colour' of the 'Black Treasury' *mdzod nag* with the Karma pas' black hat *zhwa nag*, is unprecedented

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<sup>170</sup> Quintman 2014a pp. 107-10.

<sup>171</sup> Quintman 2023.

<sup>172</sup> Quintman 2014a p. 105.

and absent from all the sources consulted. The reference to the Karma pa is related to the frequent mention of Rang byung rdo rje in many of the colophons of the different texts. The second sentence refers to the *lo rgyus* – the ‘brief unsigned history found in several *Black Treasury* colophons’<sup>173</sup> – where the *mdzod nag* is identified as rTse lha sgang’s library in Kong po.<sup>174</sup>

Including Ms-Newark as part of the *mDzod nag mas* creates much confusion. First, how could the Newark manuscript, which never mentions *mdzod nag ma* nor Rang byung rdo rje – or any other Karma pa – be considered as such? On the contrary, the illustrations prove that the ms. originated from a dGe lugs milieu.<sup>175</sup> Second, as established by Blancke’s Song Charts, the *Twelve Great Ras pa Disciples* constitutes the oldest stratum of this literature that was later slightly modified/edited by the Karma pas. As explained earlier in Blancke’s article, the existence of a text originating from Mi la ras pa’s disciples called the *Twelve Great Ras pa Disciples* cannot be taken at face value. The same is true of the *lo rgyus*, which imitates the colophons of the Tshe ring ma chapters and that of the *Ras pa bu chen bcu gnyis*, with the extra details of Mi la ras pa’s personal intervention on the text. Adding the element of the single lineage transmission through the Karma masters, it suggests a Kam tshang origin of the compendia, which is far from reflecting the historical truth.

This conflation might lead to an erroneous understanding of the compendia, taking the form of a syllogism: All compendia are *mDzod nag ma*. All *mDzod nag ma* are connected to Rang byung rdo rje. Therefore, all compendia are connected to Rang byung rdo rje.

One cannot deny the literary evidence proving that the Third Karma pa must have played a role in the transmission history of the compendia, although this role still needs to be determined. In the meantime, the existence of texts completely independent from his influence is undisputable.<sup>176</sup> The systematic reference to Rang byung rdo rje’s *mDzod nag ma* as the first source of *A River of Blessings*, replacing the reference to the *Ras pa bu chen bcu gnyis* and its

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<sup>173</sup> *Ibid.* p. 105.

<sup>174</sup> Ms-Drepung vol. 112 p. 372, Ms-Bordier f. 322b.

<sup>175</sup> See the representations of Tsong kha pa and sKal ldan rgya mtsho on ff. 153b and 162b.

<sup>176</sup> Ms-Newark, Ms-Oxford, Ms-Drukpa, Ms-Gansu, RBC-Stockholm and Ms-BL.



colophon, could indicate a direct connection to the Karma kam tshang lineage. Nevertheless, how to understand the transmission lineages connecting the manuscripts to the 'Brug pa and sTag lung lineages? All these contradictions must not be overlooked.

Finally, the choice of *mDzod nag ma* as a general designation for the compendia appears inadequate since it is also used to designate other works of different nature. As Roberts explains, the *History of Drakar Taso* identifies Zhi byed ri pa's work as "*A Dark Treasury*."<sup>177</sup>

The one named Shiché Ripa (*Zhi-byed Ri-pa*) who is famous for having read a hundred and twenty-seven different biographies of the venerable one, composed *A Dark Treasury* and a block print of this previously existed amongst the retreat centres of Chuwar (*Chu-dbar*), as is described in the biography of Gamnyön Chardor Norbu (*sGam-smyon Phyag-rdor Nor-bu*).

Moreover, Quintman quotes a personal communication with Dezhung Rinpoche who claimed that "he had never heard of *The Black Treasury* written by Rang byung rdo rje", which is telling of the very recent importance of this designation.<sup>178</sup>

For all these reasons, as practical and attractive as it may seem, the expression *mdzod nag ma* seems too inaccurate and connoted to designate a group of texts that, while sharing common features of content and structure, maintain many differences and original traits that must be kept in mind. Quintman's designation of these texts as 'compendia' perfectly fit this corpus. Because of the systematic designation of Mi la ras pa under his secret name in all the colophons, "bZhad pa'i rdo rje Compendia" appears as an even more accurate and appropriate designation.

Through this exploration of the compendia literature, numerous interrogations were raised. The systematic comparison of these texts revealed interesting elements but could not always bring answers, and many questions remain.

If on the one hand, these texts present multiple similarities, conveying a sense of homogeneity, on the other hand, numerous

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<sup>177</sup> Roberts 2007 p. 33. See also in this volume Blancke p. 10.

<sup>178</sup> Roberts 2007 p. 32; Quintman 2014a p. 253n74.

differences between them persist, in their structure as well as in their content. Unfortunately, they provide almost no information concerning their date and place of production, making it complicated to establish a clear chronology. The lineage masters' illuminations could indicate a religious affiliation, but there is no apparent consistency between these illustrations and the colophons.

All these elements make it difficult to elaborate hypotheses and it appears that the corpus of compendia available today cannot bring definitive answers. One could hope for the reemergence of new versions of the compendia or currently unknown sources such as that from Gung thang dpal gyi gtsug lag khang to help us progress.

### Conclusion

The detailed examination of Ms-Bordier has been an occasion to compare and analyse it in the context of the entire corpus of the *bZhad pa'i rdo rje* Compendia. In the end, this study raises more questions than it answers. The lineage masters illustrated at the beginning of the text do not point to a specific school, although they might indicate the Karma kam tshang tradition. Nothing is said about its commissioner, although he must have been a rich and important figure – whether religious or not – to be able to afford such a lavishly adorned work of art. Thanks to the C14 dating, we know for sure that this luxurious and expensive copy of an early version of the *Life and Songs of bZhad pa'i rdo rje* was commissioned at the latest in 1529 or 1635. It was still considered as part of the *Lineage Wish-fulfilling Gem* and had hardly any connections with the *Dark Treasury* tradition, except for the transmission history presented in the *lo rgyus*. The abrupt ending of its colophon without any mention of Rang byung rdo rje or any other author seems to build a narrative emphasising its value as a copy of the original text attributed to the *ras pa* disciples and supposedly compiled with the help of the great rJe btsun himself. We now know this story to be unrealistic, since the comparison with the other available texts proves that Ms-Bordier, as a 'Variant' version, was at least 'second generation' compared to the 'Regular' *Twelve Great Ras pa Disciples* to which it is so close.

The systematic comparison of this manuscript with the other texts from the compendia corpus was also the occasion to address the

question of the illuminations and the visual tradition connected to the bZhad pa'i rdo rje literature.

In addition to the value of having an almost complete manuscript presenting some of the most refined images known to this day of the *Life and songs of bZhad pa'i rdo rje*, the Bordier manuscript, along with Ms-Newark, proves that the ancient versions of the this work, almost stripped of every later addition and identified as part of the bDe mchog snyan brgyud transmission lineage was still valued even after the unrivalled success of gTsang smyon He ru ka's *magnum opus*.

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#### Ms-Oxford

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#### Ms-Drukpa

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#### Ms-Gansu

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## APPENDIX A<sup>1</sup>

### The Twelve Great Ras pa Disciples (*Ras pa bu chen bcu gnyis*)

#### Ms-Newark

*rJe btsun mid la ras pa'i nam thar zab mo*

RBC = *Ras pa bu chen bcu gnyis / Twelve great repa disciples*

DNM-RD = *mDzod nag ma Rang byung rdo rje*

BCG = *Byin rlabs gyi chu rgyun / A River of Blessings*

Ms-BL = British Library manuscript

Image legends are in italics.<sup>2</sup> Texts into () are descriptions. || separates the legends of a same page. Song cycles lacking in other versions or significantly changed are in small capitals.

1b	<i>thar pa'i lam ston mid la ras chen no    'gro gmon rdo rje sems dpa' la phyag 'tshal lo    ras ba'i mchog gyur ras chung rdo rje grags</i>
2a.3	<b>I. rigs dang 'brel ba dka' ba sbyad pa'i von tan</b>
2a	<i>grub thob chen po lha rje rin po che    slob dpon chen po mar pa lotstsha ba</i>
3a	<i>phur bu (Mi la's santal dagger)</i>
10a	<i>(Mi la's copper pot)</i>
12a	<i>(Mi la singing (song to Mar pa))</i>
13b	<i>(Mi la, Mar pa, and bDag med ma? (4 pillars song))</i>
15a.2	<b>II. ting nge 'dzin dang 'brel ba nyams su myong ba'i von tan</b>
15a.4	<b>i. 'khor ba la snying po med pa'i von tan</b>
15a.4	(1) <i>snga ma bar ma gnyen 'dun gyi skor</i>
16b	<i>rje btsun / ber rga / a ne</i>
17b.2	<b>ii. rmi lam brdar shar ba'i von tan</b>
17b.2	(2) <i>snga la snga ma'i skor gsum</i>
20a	<i>rdor mo? (an old man offers rJe btsun tsampa)</i>
21a	<i>rje / sring mo (rJe btsun sings to his sister)</i>
23b.4	<b>iii. bde drod ngo 'phrod pa'i von tan</b>
23b.4	(3) <i>spo ri spos thon gyi skor</i>
26a.3	(4) <i>brag dmar mchongs gling gi skor</i>

<sup>1</sup> These Outlines are inspired from Quintman 2014 Appendix 3.

<sup>2</sup> This list contains exclusively the narrative images, not the ornamentation.

26b	<i>rje btsun / rdo rje 'chang</i>
27b	<i>rje btsun / Mar pa lo tstsha (Mar pa riding a lion)</i>
29a.5	(5) la phyi chu bzang gi skor
29b	<i>(a Tibetan man making offerings)</i>
30a	<i>rje btsun / srin mo</i>
31a	<i>rje btsun</i>
32a.3	(6) gshin rdor mo'i skor
32a	<i>gshin rdor mo / rje btsun / ston pa shag dgu</i>
33b.2	<b>iv. zas gos 'dun pa bral ba'i yon tan</b>
33b.2	(7) gangs 'gur gyi skor
33b	<i>rdor mo / shag dgu / rje btsun</i>
35a	<i>rje btsun</i>
36b	<i>(gShin rdor mo and Shag dgu present offerings to rJe btsun)</i>
37b.2	<b>v. nyams myong bde bar shar ba'i yon tan</b>
37b.2	(8) ras chung zhal mjal gyi skor
37b	<i>(Mil a singing)    ras chung / rje btsun (first encounter)</i>
38b	<i>tshongs gnyis yin    ras chung / rje btsun</i>
39a	<i>dpon g.yog gnyis    dpon g.yog gnyis</i>
40a.2	<b>vi. rtogs pa lam lam shar ba'i yon tan</b>
40a.2	(9) mon gyi shing ri'i skor
40a	<i>(rJe btsun and Ras chung)</i>
40b	<i>(rJe btsun and Ras chung)</i>
41a	<i>(rJe btsun and Ras chung)</i>
42b.1	(10) sing ga la nag gseb kyi skor
42b	<i>(rJe btsun, Ras chung, gShin rdor mo and Shag dgu)</i>
44a.6	(11) dpa' 'gro stag tshangs gi skor
44a	<i>sdong po</i>
44b	<i>(rJe btsun and five monks)</i>
46a	<i>(rJe btsun and Ras chung)</i>
46b.4	<b>vii. snang ba mthun rkyen tu shar ba'i yon tan</b>
46b.4	(12) skyid phug nyi ma'i skor
46b	<i>(cave)    (rJe btsun and Ras chung sing the praise of nyi ma rdzong)</i>
48a	<i>yon bdag ma/ yon bdag</i>
48b.3	(13) gung thang ling bas mid la ras pa dang/ brag srin mo gnyis kyi zhus lan ling ba'i ba'i skor te skor chen po'o
48b	<i>(mountain)    slob ma gsum yin</i>
49a	<i>gla ba / mi dmar / rje btsun / srin mo</i>
49b	<i>bud med khyi mo sprul pa / rje btsun la na mo</i>
50a	<i>khyi mo / rje btsun</i>
52a	<i>brag / rlung dmar / rje btsun</i>

53b	<i>srin mo / rje btsun</i>
54a	<i>tshe ring mched lnga yin / rje btsun la na mo</i>
54b	<i>tshe rang mched lnga / rje btsun</i>
56a.1	<b>viii. chos brgyad rang grol du shar ba'i yon tan</b>
56a.1	(14) gnyen 'dun rang sar grol ba'i skor
56a	<i>(mountain)    yon bdag / sring mo / rje btsun / yon bdag</i>
56b	<i>sring mo / rje btsun / a ne yon</i>
58a.2	(15) chos brgyad rang grol snye nams grod phu'i skor
58b	<i>mdzo mo / yon bdag / rje btsun / ? / yon bdag / mdzo mo</i>
59a	<i>(rJe btsun, Ras chung? and three disciples)</i>
59b.6	<b>ix. rtsod pa mi rdzi bas yon tan</b>
59b.6	(16) dar lo'i skor
60b	<i>ras pa tsho / rje btsun / mtshan nyid pa</i>
62b	<i>ston pa dar lo / mtshan nyid pa / lo ston / rje btsun</i>
63a	<i>lo ston / rje btsun / ras chung (with a stick)</i>
65a.6	(17) ti pu'i skor
65a	<i>sdong po</i>
65b	<i>rje btsun / gser / ras chung ba la gtan</i>
66a	<i>rje btsun / ras chung (throwing gold)</i>
68a	<i>ras chung / gsang sngags ti pu pa</i>
70a	<i>ras chung ba / 'dod 'jod ba mo / tsan tan gyi sdong po</i>
70b	<i>ras chung ba / ti pu pa</i>
71b	<i>ras chung ba / sba / ti pu pa    ras chung ba sba / ti pu pa</i>
72a	<i>rdo rje phag mo    mkha' 'gro ma    ras chung ba</i>
72b	<i>ba ri ma / glegs bam / ras chung ba</i>
73a.5	(18) zhal lta yo bde'i skor
73a	<i>ras chung shel gyi mchod rten du 'dug pa    rlung dmar tshub mar gyur ba</i>
73b	<i>rje btsun bsu ba la byon pa / ras chung ba</i>
75b	<i>rje btsun bros song ba    ras chung bas phyi mchod pa</i>
76b	<i>rje btsun ras chung ba la bsgug pa</i>
77a.1	(19) g.yag ru'i skor
77a	<i>ra gyog (yak horn)</i>
77b	<i>sba / ras chung / glegs bam    ra gyog    sprin / ras chung / rje btsun ra nang na bzhugs pa</i>
78a	<i>ras chung bar a nang du 'dzul ba</i>
78b	<i>rnyi ma tsha lhag ge shar ba / rje btsun ra nang du byon pa / ras chung bas ras gos bskas pa    rba ba / rgan mo / rje btsun / ras chung</i>

79a	<i>rgan mo shi / rje btsun la zho dang ba    ras chung bas rgan mo'i ro khur ba / rje btsun    rgan mo spang ? tu bskur nas snying khar bswa ber gtad / ras chung</i>
80b	<i>rje btsun / ras chung ba mthu ba la 'dzus</i>
81a.5	(20) rkyang 'gur gyi skor
81a	<i>rje btsun / ras chung ba chu la 'gro ba</i>
81b	<i>rje btsun gyi ngan sngags me la bsreg / glegs bam    ras chung bas rkyang ma bu spyang la ldar po lta ba</i>
82a	<i>ras chung bas khros pa / rje btsun gyi sprul la bstan pa    ras chung / rje btsun gyi gsung gi grub rtag</i>
82b	<i>ras chung / rje btsun gyi thugs kyi grub rtag</i>
83a	<i>ras chung / rje btsun 'phur ba    lcag gi 'pha' 'od zur brgyad / rje btsun / gnam mtsho phyug mo 'o ma kha</i>
83b	<i>rje btsun brag dmar mchong gling rtse? la 'phur ba / ras chung bas bltas pa    rje btsun pyi ma byon pa</i>
84b	<i>ras chung ba / ras pa gsum du bsgyur ba</i>
85a	<i>ras pa dbus ma la 'dzus pa</i>
85b	<i>ras chung bas ? lus med mkha' 'gro'i chos bab pa</i>
85b.6	(21) mkha' 'gro lung bstan gyi skor
86a	<i>ras chung / rje btsun / 'bri sgom / se ban</i>
86b	<i>dpon g.yog gnyis kyi sgom la</i>
87a.5	<b>x. drin lan bsabs pa'i yon tan</b>
87a.5	(22) pha ma'i drin lan bsab pa'i skor
87b	<i>bon po shi ba    rje btsun dpon g.yog gnyis kyi bon po'i smon lam btap pa 'bul pa rnam 'bul ba yin</i>
88a	<i>bon po'i rnam shes bkug pa 'ja' 'od bkug la</i>
88b	<i>ras chung / brje btsun / sring mo ngus pa</i>
89a	<i>tsha tsha</i>
89b	<i>sring mo kha ? du 'gyel ba</i>
90a	<i>sring mo sangs rgyas pa</i>
90b.2	<b>xi. spyod pa che bas yon tan</b>
90b.2	(23) sgyu 'phrul rig pa'i skor
91a	<i>(Ras chung ba and rJe btsun)</i>
91b	<i>(rJe btsun, Ras chung, a disciple and a maṇḍala)</i>
92a	<i>(rJe btsun and Ras chung)</i>
92b	<i>(rJe btsun and Ras chung)</i>
93a	<i>(rJe btsun and Ras chung)</i>
93b	<i>(rJe btsun and Ras chung)    (rJe btsun and Ras chung)</i>
94a	<i>(rJe btsun and Ras chung)</i>
94b.3	(24) lcam me'i skor
94b	<i>tsha tsha / yon chab / mar me / ras chung / rje btsun / rlung / spos dang</i>



95a	<i>lcam me / rje btsun la na mo / ras chung pa la na mo</i>
95b	<i>(rJe btsun and three ras pa disciple)</i>
95b.6	<b>xii. lha'i lhar gyur ba'i yon tan</b>
95b.6	(25) 'om chung nags 'dab ma'i skor
96a	<i>yon bdag tshos chu brtsad pa    rje btsun / ?</i>
96b	<i>(rJe btsun in a cave)    yon bdag tshos rta phul ba</i>
97b.6	(26) bal yul nags ma'i skor
98a	<i>dharma bodhi la na mo / shi la bharmo la na mo / mid la ras chen la na mo / rgya gar nag chung pa la na mo / gu ru ma tshe ma la na mo    (rJe btsun and Ras chung)</i>
98b	<i>(rJe btsun and Ras chung)    (rJe btsun and Ras chung)</i>
99a	<i>rje btsun 'khor ba nas / dharma bodhi / yon bdag tsho</i>
99b	<i>dharma bodhi    (Dharma bodhi, rJe btsun and Ras chung)</i>
100a	<i>(Dharma bodhi, rJe btsun and Ras chung)    dharma bodhi phar byon    rje btsun 'khor bcas tshur byon / yon bdag</i>
100b.3	(27) phug ron sngon mo'i skor
100b	<i>rje btsun drung du phug ron? yong ba / phug ron    phug ron 'di la 'phur ba / 'bras / brag</i>
101a	<i>phug ron gcig brgyad du song ba</i>
101b	<i>phug ron brgyad lha mo brgyad du song ba / lha mo brgyad    (rJe btsun and a goddess)</i>
102a	<i>(rJe btsun and a goddess)</i>
102b	<i>phug ron brgyad pa 'phur song ba</i>
102b.3	<b>xiii. ye shes sgron me bltam pa'i yon tan</b>
102b.3	(28) brag steng rta sga'i skor
102b	<i>(rJe btsun sings to Ras chung)</i>
103a	<i>(rJe btsun sings to Ras chung)</i>
103b	<i>(Ras chung sings to rJe btsun)    (rJe btsun sings to Ras chung)</i>
104a	<i>(Ras chung sings to rJe btsun)</i>
104b	<i>(rJe btsun sings to Ras chung)</i>
105a.1	(29) ngom lung brag gseb kyis skor
105a	<i>(rJe btsun sings to Ras chung)</i>
105b	<i>(rJe btsun sings to Ras chung)</i>
106a	<i>ras chung / 'bri sgom / rje btsun</i>
106b	<i>ras chung / 'bri sgom</i>
106b.6	(30) brag dkar rta so'i skor
107a	<i>ras par do rje dbang phyug / yon bdag</i>
107b	<i>(rJe btsun, two ras pa and a yon bdag)</i>
108b.2	(31) thog la'i skor
108b	<i>dam pa rgya gar dang rje btsun gnyis mjal ba    dam pa rgya gar gyi mthu ba la ? pa</i>

109b	<i>rje btsun / dam pa rgya gar</i>
110a	<i>rje btsun / dam pa rgya gar</i>
110b	<i>rtsa 'jag ma gcig du 'das pa / 'jag ma gcig tshal pa brgyad gyi gcig du bsdas</i>
110b.3	(32) <i>khyi gra ras pa'i skor</i>
110b	<i>rje btsun    sha ba</i>
111a	<i>sha ba    khyi mo</i>
111b	<i>sha ba / khyi mo    khyi gra ba</i>
112a	<i>sha ba / khyi mo    khyi gra bas mda' 'phen pa</i>
112b	<i>khyi gra 'khor ba'i dad skyes pa</i>
114b	<i>khyi gra 'khor bas sangs rgyas pa    khyi gra ba'i tsing khog mda' chag gzhu chag</i>
114b.4	(33) <i>rtsang g.yag ru'i 'gron khang gi skor</i>
115a	<i>yon bdag / g.yag ru thang ba / yon bdag / rje btsun</i>
115b	<i>khri bab / g.yag ru bas dad pa skyes    rje btsun gzim    gra ba tsho</i>
116a	<i>gra ba dang yon bdag</i>
117a.2	<b>xiv. nus pa che ba'i yon tan</b>
117a.2	(34) <i>bring gi la so'i skor</i>
117a	<i>(rJe btsun meditating)    rje btsun dpon g.yog / 'dre mo    rje btsun dpon slob    'dre dmag 'ong ba</i>
117b	<i>'dre dmags</i>
118a	<i>'dre dmags</i>
118b	<i>'dre rnam gyi dam bcas pa    gra ba dang yon bdag tsho</i>
119a	<i>gra ba dang yon bdag la dbang bskur    thang sku rab gnas rgyas pa / yon bdag</i>
119a.4	(35) <i>a phyi snang ma'i skor</i>
119a	<i>khong mkhar sgo nas byon nas chu len la thugs pa</i>
119b	<i>rgan mo'i gdang drangs pa</i>
120b	<i>(rJe btsun and rgan mo)</i>
121a	<i>(rJe btsun and rgan mo)</i>
121a.4	<b>xv. byin brlab che ba'i yon tan</b>
121a.4	(36) <i>chu mig dngul bum gyi skor</i>
121a	<i>rje btsun rmang lam du bud med gcig gi bu tsha 'thul? ba</i>
121b	<i>nang mo bu tsha dang 'phrad pa    bu tsha bres song    rje btsun sngong la 'phur ba    bu tsha bab nas zhab la bltas pa</i>
122a	<i>bu tsha rta 'bul ba    rta ma bzhes pa</i>
122b	<i>lham 'bul ba</i>
123b	<i>lham ma bzhes pa    gos thog ma phur nas 'bul ba</i>
124a	<i>ma bzhes pa    gos 'ob sa phur nas 'bul ba</i>
124b	<i>ma bzhes pa    zha phur nas phul ba</i>
125a	<i>g.yu 'bul ba</i>

126a	<i>'khor gsum grol nas phul ba</i>
126b	<i>ske rag bkrol nas phul ba</i>
127a	<i>dgon pa 'bul ba</i>
127b	<i>sring mo 'bul ba</i>
128a	<i>yang gis cig pur nas 'bul ba</i>
129a	<i>dgun brgyag cig 'bul ba zer</i>
130b	<i>thugs rje bzung pa</i>
131b.2	(37) <i>zhi ba 'od kyi skor</i>
131b	<i>zhing bo / zhi ba 'od / rje btsun</i>
132b	<i>zhi ba 'od / gra pa</i>
132b.5	(38) <i>gung thang lho sgo'i skor</i>
132b	<i>rje btsun mkhar mgo nas byon / bu mo cig / rtsed mo rtses</i>
133b	<i>bu mo dad pa skyes pa</i>
134b	<i>(rJe btsun and a woman)</i>
135a	<i>bu mo sangs rgyas pa</i>
135b	<i>(rJe btsun and a woman)</i>
136a.3	(39) <i>legs se 'bum mes skor</i>
136a	<i>rje btsun / ? bu mo cig / tshong byed pa rtsed mo rtses</i>
136b	<i>tshar rkor ? / tsha tsha / phor / sder / bu chung / lag se 'bum me    phor sder / rel lug sug po bcag / legs se 'bum me bu dang ma gnyis</i>
137a	<i>lags se 'bum me / zhab la 'dzus pa / rje btsun 'phur song ba</i>
138a	<i>g.yu phul ba</i>
138b	<i>lags se 'bum me sangs rgyas pa</i>
139a.3	(40) <i>skyid rong rab chad rgan rgon gyi skor</i>
139a	<i>rab chad rgan rgon gnyis dang sprad pa</i>
139b	<i>rgan rgog gnyis dad pa</i>
140a	<i>(rJe btsun, Ras chung and two desperate old people)</i>
140b	<i>sangs rgyas pa</i>
140b.4	(41) <i>gshin rdor mo'i skor</i>
140b	<i>gshing rdor mo dang 'phrad pa</i>
141a	<i>gshing rdor mo la skye dga' na 'chi'i chos gsung ba</i>
141b	<i>(rJe btsun and gShing rdor mo)</i>
142a	<i>(rJe btsun and gShing rdor mo)</i>
142b.6	(42) <i>mang yul gung thang gi skor</i>
144a.1	(43) <i>sba 'gur gyi skor</i>
144a	<i>yon bdag    ngan rdzon byang chub zhing rmo bar 'dug</i>
144b	<i>sba ber gyi don gsungs pa</i>
145b	<i>yon bdag da dpa</i>
147a.3	(44) <i>lha rje g.yang nge'i skor</i>
147a	<i>rje btsun 'khor bcas / lug rdzi / lug    phyug po yang nge</i>

148a	<i>(rJe btsun, two disciples and two patrons)</i>
149b.1	(45) gcong rong bring gi skor
149b	<i>gcong rong bu mo spun tsha red</i>
150a	<i>dung rdog spun gshags pa phul ba</i>
150b	<i>yon bdag / bu mo tsho</i>
151a.4	<b>xvi. ting nge 'dzin gyi rtsal rdzogs pa'i yon tan</b>
151a.4	(46) snye nams lung chung gi skor
151a	<i>(rJe btsun sleeps surrounded by disciples)    rje btsun 'khor bcas</i>
151b	<i>(rJe btsun sleeps surrounded by disciples)    mjal ba red</i>
152a	<i>mjal ba red    'dra</i>
153a.5	<b>xvii. phyag rgya chen po ngo sprod pa'i yon tan</b>
153a.6	(47a) [Tshe ring ma 1] mu tig gi 'phreng ba
153b	<i>*rje tsong kha pa<sup>3</sup></i>
154a	<i>'dre dmag mang po yong ba</i>
157b	<i>(rJe btsun and two demoness)</i>
159b	<i>brag srin mo</i>
161b	<i>'dre dmag yong ba</i>
162b	<i>*skal ldan rgya mtsho la na mo<sup>4</sup></i>
163a.6	(47b) [Tshe ring ma 2] bdud rtsi 'od kyi phreng ba
164a	<i>brag srin mo 'i tsho 'phrul</i>
166a	<i>brag srin mo</i>
170b	<i>'dra</i>
174b.6	(47c) [Tshe ring ma 3] bar do 'phrang sgröl
174b	<i>tshe ring mched lnga red</i>
178a	<i>(rJe btsun and Tshe ring ma? as a disciple)</i>
179b	<i>(rJe btsun, Tshe ring ma? and a gtor ma)</i>
182a	<i>(rJe btsun, Tshe ring ma? and a gtor ma)</i>
184a	<i>(rJe btsun, Tshe ring ma? and a maṇḍala offering)</i>
185a	<i>(rJe btsun giving instruction to Tshe ring ma?)</i>
188a.2	(47d) [Tshe ring ma 4] bde stong ye shes sprin gyi phreng ba
188a	<i>(rJe btsun facing a giant bowl?)<sup>5</sup></i>
188b	<i>tshe ring mched lnga 'i mchod la 'bul ba</i>
190a.1	(48) jo bo bon ri'i skor
190a	<i>ston pa</i>
192b	<i>(rJe btsun and a ras pa)</i>
193b	<i>(rJe btsun, a tormā with incense and a ras pa)</i>
193b.5	(49) bring gi lha grong gi skor <sup>6</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Illustration unrelated to the story.

<sup>4</sup> Illustration unrelated to the story.

<sup>5</sup> Sketch without legend

<sup>6</sup> Shorter version than the other RBCs.

194a	<i>(rJe btsun singing to a ras pa)</i>
194b	<i>(rJe btsun a gtor ma and a ras pa)</i>
195a.2	(50) ras chung dbus bzhud kyi skor
195b	<i>ras chung ba dbus la 'gro ba red    rje btsun dbu gtum nas bzhugs pa</i>
196a	<i>(rJe btsun singing to Ras chung)</i>
196b	<i>(rJe btsun and Ras chung)</i>
197b	<i>(rJe btsun and Ras chung)</i>
198a	<i>(rJe btsun, a conch shell and Ras chung)</i>
198b	<i>(rJe btsun, a gtor ma and Ras chung)</i>
200a.3	(51) dbus gtad par pa'i skor
200b	<i>ras chung ba la rje btsun gyi mnyam tshad ba    ras pa bdun du sprul ba / ras chung ba</i>
201b.5	(52) dbus gtad 'og ma te nya ma'i skor
201b	<i>gcong rong bu mo spun gsum / rje btsun</i>
202b	<i>bu mo tsho / rje btsun</i>
203a	<i>(rJe btsun and a gtor ma)</i>
204b.4	(53) lha cig ldem bu dang/ rong sogs tse'i skor dang skor gnyis
206a	<i>lha cig / ras chung ba</i>
208a	<i>lha cig ma / ras chung</i>
209a	<i>lha cig / rje btsun / ras chung</i>
210a.6	(54) mchod khang zhal mjal gyis skor
212a.3	(55) dag po lha rje 'byon pa'i ma 'ongs lung bstan gyi skor
213a.6	(56) RJE RAS PA CHEN PO MI LA DANG/ MNYAM MED DAG PO RIN PO CHES YAB SRAS GNYIS KYI ZHUS DANG LAN GYI SKOR <sup>7</sup>
213b	<i>dag po lha rje / rje btsun 'khor bcas</i>
216a	<i>dag po lha rje</i>
218b	<i>dag po lha rje</i>
219b	<i>(Dwags po lha rje, rJe btsun and a ras pa)</i>
221a.3	(57) lha cig lcam me'i bsngo ba'i skor
222a.6	(58) snyen chung tsar ma'i skor
223b.6	(59) dbus gtad zhal lta'i skor
226a	<i>ras chung ba dbus la 'gro ba</i>
226b.2	(60) bring gi smon lam gyi skor
227a	<i>bu nya bas nya rgya phul ba</i>

<sup>7</sup> The cycle *Dags po zhal mjal gyi skor* is absent and its content has been seriously edited and reduced. Some parts are gathered and merged with the chapter *rJe ras pa chen po*.... The usual following cycle *dBus gtad zhal lta dang/ dags pod dbus bzhud kyi skor* is entirely missing, as in Ms-Drukpa.

231b.2	[passing into nirvana]
236a	<i>khye'u chung gi lung bstan pa / rje btsun mya ngan la 'das pa / yon bdag / ras pa tsho</i>
236b	<i>mkha' 'gro ma lnga / rje btsun gdung bzhus pa</i>
240b	<i>[dākinī taking away a crystal stupa]<sup>8</sup></i>
243b.2	[list of disciples/final verses]
243b	<i>*sbyin dag rnam yin / dzam bha lha la na mo<sup>9</sup></i>
244a	<i>*bdud bgegs 'joms mdam? rta mgrin la na mo    mthu thobs bdag po phyag rdor la na mo</i>

### Ms-Oxford

Song cycles lacking in other versions or significantly changed are in small capitals.

2a.3	<b>I. rigs dang 'brel pa dka' ba spyad pa'i von tan</b>
12b.6	<b>II. ting nge 'dzin dang 'brel pa nyams su myong ba'i von tan</b>
13a.1	<b>i. 'khor ba la snying po med pa'i von tan</b>
13a.2	(1) lnga la gong ma gnyen 'dun gyi skor
14b.6	<b>ii. rmi lam brda' shar ba'i von tan</b>
14b.6	(2) lnga lnga bskor gsum
19b.1	<b>iii. bde drod ngo phrod pa'i von tan</b>
19b.1	(3) spo ri spo thon gyi bskor
21a.3	(4) brag dmar mchong gling gi bskor
23b.1	(5) la phyi chu bzang gi bskor
25b.4	(6) gshin dor mo'i skor
26b.6	<b>iv. zas gos kyi mdun ba bral ba'i von tan</b>
26b.6	(7) gangs 'gur gyi bskor
29b.7	<b>v. nyams myong bde ba shar ba'i von tan</b>
30a.1	(8) ras chung zhal 'jal gyi skor
31b.7	<b>vi. rtog pa lam la shar ba'i von tan</b>
31b.7	(9) mon gyi shing ri'i bskor
33b.6	(10) sing ga la'i nags gseb kyi bskor
35a.7	(11) dpal gro stag tshang gi bskor
37a.3	<b>vii. snang ba 'thun rkyen du shar ba'i von tan</b>
37a.3	(12) skyid phug nyi ma'i rdzong gi bskor

<sup>8</sup> Sketch without legend.

<sup>9</sup> Illustration unrelated to the story.

38b.5	(13) gung thang ling ba'i brag de la/ ras pa dang/ brag srin mo gnyis kyi zhu ba zhu lan/ ling ba'i bskor de bskor che ba
44a.2	<b>viii. chos rgyad rang grol ba'i yon tan</b>
44a.2	(14) gnye 'dun rang sar grol ba'i skor
45b.3	(15) chos brgyad rang grol ba/ snye nam grod phug gi bskor
46b.7	<b>ix. rtsod pas mi rdzi ba'i yon tan</b>
46b.7	(16) dar lo'i skor
50b.6	(17) te pu'i bskor
56b.2	(18) zhal lta yo bde'i bskor
59a.4	(19) g.yag ru'i bskor
62a.6	(20) rkyang mgur gyi skor
66b.6	(21) mchong lung gi bskor
67a.1	<b>x. drin lan bsab pa'i yon tan</b>
67a.1	(22) pha ma'i drin lan bsab pa'i skor
69a.7	<b>xi. spyod pa che ba'i yon tan</b>
69a.7	(23) sgyu 'phrul rig pa'i bskor
72b.2	(24) lcam me'i bskor
73a.7	<b>xii. lha'i lhar gyur pa'i yon tan</b>
73a.7	(25) 'om chung nags 'dabs ma'i bskor
74b.4	(26) bal yul nags ma'i bskor
76b.3	(27) phug ron sngon mo'i bskor
78a.4	<b>xiii. ye shes sgron me lta bu'i yon tan</b>
78a.4	(28) brag steng rta sga'i skor
79b.7	(29) dom lung brag seb kyi bskor
81a.7	(30) brag dkar rta so'i skor
82b.3	(31) thog la'i skor
84a.4	(32) khyi ra ras pa'i skor
87a.3	(33) gtsang g.yag ru 'gron khang gi bskor
88b.4	<b>xiv. nus pa che ba'i yon tan</b>
88b.4	(34) bring gi la so'i skor
90a.5	(35) a phyi snang ma'i bskor
91b.6	<b>xv. byin rlabs che ba'i yon tan</b>
91b.6	(36) chu mig dngul 'bum gyi bskor
99a.4	(37) zhi ba 'od kyi bskor
100a.4	(38) gung thang lho sgo'i skor
102b.4	(39) legs se 'bum me'i bskor
104b.6	(40) skyid rong rab chad rgan rgon gyi bskor
105b.6	(41) gshen rdor mo'i bskor
107a.6	(42) mang yul gung thang gi skor
108a.3	(43) sba mgur gyi bskor

110a.6	(44) lha rje yang nge'i skor
111b.7	(45) geong rong bring gi ksor
112b.7	<b>xvi. ting nge 'dzin gyis rtsal rdzogs pa'i yon tan</b>
112b.7	(46) snye nam lung chung gi bskor
114a.3	(47) BZANG RGYUD PHYAG TSHANG GI BSKOR <sup>10</sup>
118b.5	(48) A PHYI RGAN MO'I SKOR <sup>11</sup>
119b.4	(49) MGUR PHRAN <sup>12</sup>
124b.7	<b>xvii. phyag rgya chen po ngo 'phrod pa'i yon tan</b>
124b.7	(50a) [Tshe ring ma 1] snyan ngag gi glu mu tig gi phreng ba
129b.4	(50b) [Tshe ring ma 2] bdud rtsi 'od kyi phreng ba
136b.4	(50c) [Tshe ring ma 3] [bar do 'phrang sgröl]
144b.1	(50d) [Tshe ring ma 4] bde stong ye shes phrin gyis phreng ba
145b.3	(51) jo bo bon ri'i bskor
150a.2	(52) bring gi lha grong bskor
150b.7	(53) ras chung dbus bzhud kyi bskor
155a.6	(54) dbus gtad bar ma'i skor
156b.1	(55) dbus 'og ma ste nya ma'i bskor
158b.1	(56) lha lcam ldem bu'i skor dang/ rong sogs rtse gong gi skor dang gnyis
162b.5	(57) chod khang zhal 'jal gyi bskor
164a.1	(58) dags po 'byon pa'i ma 'ongs lung bstan gyis bskor
164b.7	(59) dags po zhal mjal gyi bskor
173a.4	(60) rje ras pa chen po mi la dang / mnyam med dags po rin po che yab sras kyi zhus pa dang lan gyis bskor
175b.1	(61) dbus gtad zhal lta dang / dags po dbus bzhud kyi bskor
176a.7	(62) lcam me'i bsngo ba'i bskor
177a.4	(63) snye nam rtsar ma'i skor
178a.2	(64) [dbus gtad zhal lta'i skor] <sup>13</sup>
180b.1	(65) brin gyi smon lam gyi bskor <sup>14</sup>
182b.6	[passing into nirvana]
191b.4	[list of disciples]
192b.1	[concluding verses]

<sup>10</sup> Lacking in almost all RBCs, DNM-RD 2006 and all BCGs. Present only in Ms-Drukpa, Ms-Gansu, DNM-RD 2013 and Ms-Drepung.

<sup>11</sup> Lacking in almost all RBCs, DNM-RD 2006 and all BCGs. Present only in Ms-Drukpa and Ms-Gansu.

<sup>12</sup> Lacking in all compendia. Ms-Drukpa, Ms-Gansu and the BCGs share some of its songs.

<sup>13</sup> Missing final folio.

<sup>14</sup> Missing beginning folio.



**Ms-Drukpa***rJe btsun mid la ras pa chen po'i mgur 'bum*

Song cycles lacking in other versions or significantly changed are in small capitals. \* indicates page numbering issue.

2a.3	<b>I. rigs dang 'brel pa dka' ba spyad pa'i yon tan</b>
2a.3	lnga la gong ma'i bskor
18a.1	<b>II. ting nge 'dzin dang 'brel pa nyams su myong ba'i yon tan</b>
18a.4	<b>i. 'khor ba la snying po med pa'i yon tan</b>
18a.4	(1) snga ma bar ma gnyen 'dun gyi bskor
21a.2	<b>ii. rmi lam brdar shar ba'i yon tan</b>
21a.2	(2) snga ma snga ma bskor gsum
28b.1	<b>iii. bde drod ngo 'phrod pa'i yon tan</b>
28b.1	(3) spo ri spo 'thon gyi bskor
31a.3	(4) brag dmar mchong gling gi bskor
34b.6	(5) la phyi chu zangs kyi bskor
38a.6	(6) gshen rdor mo'i bskor
40a.3	<b>iv. zas gos kyi 'dun pa bral ba'i yon tan</b>
40a.4	(7) gangs mgur gyi bskor
45a.2	<b>v. nyams myong bde bar shar ba'i yon tan</b>
45a.2	(8) ras chung zhal mjal gyi bskor
48a.2	<b>vi. rtogs pa lam la shar ba'i yon tan</b>
48a.2	(9) mon gyi shing ri'i bskor
50b.3	(10) sing gha la'i nags gseb kyi bskor
52b.3	(11) dpal gro stag tshang gi bskor
54b.7	<b>vii. snang ba 'thun rkyen du shar ba'i yon tan</b>
55a.1	(12) skyid phug nyi ma'i bskor
57a.4	(13) gung thang gi mid la ras pa dang brag srin mo gnyis kyi zhu ba zhus lan ling ba'i bskor de skor che ba
64b.5	<b>viii. chos rgyad rang grol ba'i yon tan</b>
64b.5	(14) gnye 'dun rang sar grol ba'i bskor
67a.1	(15) chos brgyad rang grol ba ste snya nam grod phug gi bskor
68b.7	<b>ix. rtsod pas mi rdzi ba'i yon tan</b>
68b.7	(16) dar lo'i bskor
74b.2	(17) ti pu'i bskor
82b.6	(18) zhal lta yo bde'i bskor
86b.3	(19) g.yag ru'i bskor
91a.1	(20) rkyang mgur gyi bskor

95b.4	(21) mkha' 'gros lung bstan gyi bskor <sup>15</sup>
97a.4	<b>x. drin lan gsab pa'i yon tan</b>
97a.4	(22) pha ma'i drin lan bsab pa'i bskor
100b.1	<b>xi. spyod pa che ba'i yon tan</b>
100b.1	(23) sgyu 'phrul rig pa'i bskor
104b.4	(24) leam me'i bskor
106a.1	<b>xii. lha'i lhar gyur ba'i yon tan</b>
106a.1	(25) 'om chung nags ma'i bskor
107b.6	(26) bal yul nags ma'i bskor
110b.5	(27) phug ron sngon mo'i bskor
112b.7	<b>xiii. ye shes sgron me bltams pa'i yon tan</b>
113a.1	(28) brag rta lga'i bskor
115b.1	(29) dom lung brag gseb kyi bskor
117b.5	(30) brag dkar rta so'i bskor
119b.2	(31) thog la'i bskor
121b.2	(32) khyi ra ras pa'i bskor
126b.3	(33) gtsang g.yag ru mgron khang gi bskor
129a.1	<b>xiv. nus pa che ba'i yon tan</b>
129a.1	(34) bring gi la so'i bskor
131a.4	(35) a phyi snang ma'i bskor
132a.6	<b>xv. byin brlabs che ba'i yon tan</b>
132a.6	(36) ZHI BA 'OD KYI BSKOR <sup>16</sup>
146b.3	(37) gung thang lho sgo'i bskor
150a.6	(38) legs se 'bum me'i bskor
153b.1	[GSAL LE 'OD KYI ZHUS LAN] <sup>17</sup>
155a.4	(39) skyid rong rabs chad rgan rgon gyi bskor
156b.5	(40) gshen rdor mo'i bskor
158b.6	(41) mang yul gung thang gi bskor
160a.1	(42) sba mgur gyi bskor
163a.6	[KO RA LA THOG TU] <sup>18</sup>
165a.7	[SHRINE EPISODE] <sup>19</sup>
166a.3	[LAS BSTOD RGYAL GYI RTSIB RI] <sup>20</sup>
167.7	(43) lha rje g.yang nge'i bskor

<sup>15</sup> Cycle named *mChong lung gi bskor* in the other RBCs except Ms-Gansu.

<sup>16</sup> The title *Chu mig dngul 'bum gyi bskor* is absent, its content has been merged with *Zhi ba 'od kyi bskor* (normally starting at f. 144b.4). Same case in Ms-Gansu.

<sup>17</sup> Additional content. Present in Ms-Gansu. Absent in all other RBCs.

<sup>18</sup> Absent in all RBCs except Ms-Gansu. Also present in DNM-RD and Ms-BL.

<sup>19</sup> Untitled episode. Absent in all RBCs, DNM-RD, Ms-Smith/India. Present in Ms-Gansu and Ms-Drepung.

<sup>20</sup> Absent in all RBCs except Ms-Gansu. Present in DNM-RD, Ms-BL.

169b.3	(44) cong rong bring gi bskor
171a.2	<b>xvi. ting nge 'dzin gyis rtsal sdzogs pa'i yon tan</b>
171a.3	(45) snya nam lung chung gi bskor
172b.6	(46) BZANG BRGYUD PHYAG 'TSHANG GI BSKOR <sup>21</sup>
*170a.6 <sup>22</sup>	(47) A PHYI RGAN MO'I SKOR <sup>23</sup>
*173a.1	<b>xvii. phyag rgya chen po ngo 'phrod pa'i yon tan</b>
*173a.1	(48a) [Tshe ring ma 1] snyan ngag gi glu/ mu tig gi phreng ba
182b.7	(48b) [Tshe ring ma 2] bdud rtsi 'od kyi phreng ba
196b.1	(48c) [Tshe ring ma 3] [bar do 'phrang sgröl]
212a.1	(48d) [Tshe ring ma 4] bde stong ye shes phrin gyis phreng ba
214a.3	(49) TI RTSE'I BSKOR <sup>24</sup>
*219a.6 <sup>25</sup>	(50) jo bo bon ri'i bskor
223a.3	(51) BRING GI LHA GRONG BSKOR <sup>26</sup>
[f.226?]	(52) ras chung dbus bzhud kyi bskor
232a.5	(53) dbus gtad bar ma'i skor
233b.7	(54) dbus gtad 'og ma ste nya ma'i bskor
238a.	[DRY MEAT EPISODE] <sup>27</sup>
238a.4	(55) lha cig ldem bu'i skor dang/ rong sog rtse'i skor dang skor gnyis
244a.7	(56) chod khang zhal 'jal gyi skor
246b.2	(57) dags po 'byon pa'i ma 'ongs lung bstan gyis bskor
248a.1	(58) RJE BSTUN CHEN PO DANG MNYAM MED SGAM PO PA BA GNYIS KYI ZHUS LAN BSKOR <sup>28</sup>

<sup>21</sup> Absent in all RBCs, DNM-RD 2006 and all BCGs. Present only in Ms-Oxford, Ms-Gansu, DNM-RD 2013 and Ms-Drepung.

<sup>22</sup> Problem in the numbering of pages. Ms. has two series of folios numbered 170's.

<sup>23</sup> Absent in RBCs except Ms-Oxford and Ms-Gansu. Chapter ends with sentence "sngon gyi sbyangs pa mthar bya (?)". The cycle *mGur phran* present in Ms-Oxford is here absent. Most of its songs are present in the untitled part before *lHa cig lcam me'i bsngo ba'i bskor*. Same thing in Ms-Gansu.

<sup>24</sup> Cycle missing in all RBCs except Ms-Gansu. Corresponds to *mTsho rnga del chung gi skor* in DNM-RD, *Cong rong byin dang/ mchong gling brag gis skor* in Ms-BL, *gCog ro 'bri 'tshams kyi mtsho snga sde chung gi skor* in Ms-Smith and Ms-India, and is part of *Jo bo bon ri'i skor* in Ms-Drepung.

<sup>25</sup> Problem in numbering, says 219 but is 218.

<sup>26</sup> Final title missing plus contains four additional songs compared to the RBCs. Same as Ms-Gansu.

<sup>27</sup> Extra text added between cycles, written in the margins. Dry meat episode from Ras chung tradition. Common to Ms-Gansu.

<sup>28</sup> The title *Dags po zhal mjal gyi bskor* is absent, its content merged with *rJe ras pa chen po mi la dang...* which starts at f. 261b.6. The cycle *dBus gtad zhal lta dang/ dags po dbus bzhud kyi bskor* usually following is entirely missing, like in Ms-Newark.

266a.2	[RAS CHUNG SONGS] <sup>29</sup>
274b.6	(59) lha cig lcam me'i bsngo ba'i bskor
276a.3	(60) snyen chung tsar ma'i bskor
277b.4	(61) DBUS GTAD ZHAL LTA'I BSKOR <sup>30</sup>
297b.4	(62) brin gyi smon lam gyi bskor
302a.6	[passing into nirvana]
314b.7	[colophon]
315a.2	[list of disciples]

**Ms-Gansu**

*rNal 'byor dbang phyug mi la chen po'i rnam thar bka' 'bum chen mo grub thob ras pa bcu gnyis kyis bsgrigs pa ngo mtshar kun 'dus*

Song cycles lacking in other versions or significantly changed are in small capitals. Pages with \* indicates numbering issues.

## Vol.22

226.3	<b><u>I. rigs dang 'brel pa dka' ba spyad pa'i yon tan</u></b>
226.3	snga la gong ma'i skor

## Vol.23

8.5	<b><u>II. ting nge 'dzin dang 'brel pa nyams su myong ba'i yon tan</u></b>
9.2	<b>i. 'khor ba snying po med par shes pa'i yon tan</b>
9.2	(1) snga la bar ma'i gnyen 'dun gyi skor
14.3	<b>ii. rmi lam brdar shar ba'i yon tan</b>
14.3	(2) snga la skor gsum
26.6	<b>iii. bde drod ngo 'phrod pa'i yon tan</b>
26.7	(3) spo ri spo mthon gyi bskor
31.5	(4) brag dmar mchong lding gi bskor
39.3	(5) la phyi chu bzang gi skor
45.3	(6) gshen rdor mo'i skor
49.3	<b>iv. zas gos kyi 'dun pa bral ba'i yon tan</b>
49.3	(7) gangs mgur gyi bskor
57.4	<b>v. nyams myong bde bar shar ba'i yon tan</b>
57.5	(8) ras chung zhal mjal gyi skor

<sup>29</sup> Additional songs concerning Ras chung pa. Copy of songs from *rKyang mgur*, etc.

<sup>30</sup> Cycle begins with many additional songs from various *skor* including *mGur 'phran* (Ms-Oxford). Regular cycle begins at f. 295b.1.

62.6	<b>vi. rtog pa lam du shar ba'i yon tan</b>
62.6	(9) mon gyi shing ri'i skor
67.5	(10) sing gha la nags ma'i skor
71.6	(11) dpal gro stag tshang gi skor
76.5	<b>vii. snang ba mthun rkyen du shar ba'i yon tan</b>
76.5	(12) skyid phug nyi ma'i skor
81.1	(13) gung thang gi mid la ras pa dang brag srin mo gnyis kyi zhu ba zhus lan ling ba'i skor te skor che ba
95.6	<b>viii. chos rgyad rang grol ba'i yon tan</b>
95.6	(14) gnye 'dun rang grol ba'i skor
100.2	(15) chos brgyad rang grol te gnye nam grod phug gi skor
103.7	<b>ix. rtsod pas mi rdzi ba'i yon tan</b>
103.7	(16) dar blo'i skor
114.7	(17) ti phu'i bskor
129.7	(18) zhal ta yo bde'i skor
137.1	(19) g.yag ru'i skor
145.2	(20) rkyang mgur gyi skor
154.2	(21) mkha' 'gros lung bstan gyi skor <sup>31</sup>
157.1	<b>x. drin lan gsab pa'i yon tan</b>
157.2	(22) pha ma drin lan bsab pa'i skor
165.6	<b>xi. spyod pas che ba'i yon tan</b>
165.7	(23) sgyu 'phrul rig pa'i skor
174.4	(24) lcam me'i skor
177.2	<b>xii. lha'i lhar gyur pa'i yon tan</b>
177.2	(25) 'om chung nags ma'i skor
181.1	(26) bal yul nags ma'i skor
186.6	(27) phu ron sngon mo'i skor
190.7	<b>xiii. ye shes sgron me bltams pa'i yon tan</b>
191.1	(28) brag rta sga'i skor
195.6	(29) dom lung brag gseb kyi skor
*159.6 <sup>32</sup>	(30) brag dkar stag so'i skor
202.3	(31) thog la'i skor
206.4	(32) khyi ra ras pa'i skor
213.7	(33) gtsang ga ra kha ru mgron khang gi skor
218.5	<b>xiv. nus pa che ba'i yon tan</b>
218.5	(34) brin gi la so'i skor
222.7	(35) a phyi snang ma'i skor
227.1	<b>xv. byin rlabs che ba'i yon tan</b>

<sup>31</sup> Cycle named *mchong lung gi bskor* in the other RBCs except Ms-Drukpa.

<sup>32</sup> pp. 159 and 160 of the edition are misplaced.

227.1	(36) RAS PA ZHI BA 'OD KYI SKOR <sup>33</sup>
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## Vol.24

16.1	(37) gung thang lho sgo'i skor
22.7	(38) legs se 'bum me'i skor
28.6	(39) GSAL LE 'OD KYI ZHU LAN GYI SKOR <sup>34</sup>
32.1	(40) [skyid rong rab chad rgan rgon gyi bskor] <sup>35</sup>
[??] <sup>36</sup>	(41) sba mgur gyi bskor
36.4	(42) SKOR LA THOG GI BSKOR <sup>37</sup>
41.4	[SHRINE EPISODE] <sup>38</sup>
43.5	(43) LA STOD RGYAL GYI RTSIBS RI'I BSKOR <sup>39</sup>
46.4	(44) lha rje g.yang nge'i bskor
52.1	(45) cong rong bring gi bksor
55.2	<b>xvi. ting nge 'dzin gyis rtsal rdzogs pa'i yon tan</b>
55.3	(46) gnye nam lung chung gi bskor
59.5	(47) BZANG RGYUD PHYAG TSHANG GI SKOR <sup>40</sup>
74.3	(48) LEGS SE 'BUM BYA BA A PHYI RGAN MO'I SKOR <sup>41</sup>
76.7	<b>xvii. phyag rgya chen po ngo 'phrod pa'i yon tan</b>
77.1	(49a) [Tshe ring ma 1] snyan ngag gi glu mu tig brgyan gyi phreng ba
92.7	(49b) [Tshe ring ma 2] bdud rtsi 'od kyi phreng ba
113.1	(49c) [Tshe ring ma 3] [bar do drin lan]
135.6	(49d) [Tshe ring ma 4] bde stong ye shes phrin gyis phreng ba
139.5	(50) GANGS TI SE'I SKOR <sup>42</sup>

<sup>33</sup> The title *Chu mig dngul 'bum gyi bskor* is absent, its content has been merged with *Zhi ba 'od kyi bskor* (normally starting at vol. 24 p. 12.2). Same case in Ms-Drukpa.

<sup>34</sup> Additional content. Present in Ms-Drukpa. Absent in all other RBCs.

<sup>35</sup> End title missing

<sup>36</sup> Missing folio with *sKyid rong rab chad rgan rgon gyi bskor* end title and the beginning of *sBa mgur gyi skor*.

<sup>37</sup> Absent in all RBCs except Ms-Drukpa. Also present in DNM-RD and Ms-BL.

<sup>38</sup> Untitled episode. Absent in all RBCs, DNM-RD, Ms-Smith/India. Present in Ms-Drukpa and Ms-Drepung.

<sup>39</sup> Absent in all RBCs except Ms-Drukpa. Present in DNM-RD and Ms-BL.

<sup>40</sup> Absent in all RBCs, DNM-RD 2006 and all BCGs. Present only in Ms-Oxford, Ms-Drukpa, DNM-RD 2013 and Ms-Drepung.

<sup>41</sup> Corresponds to *A phyi rgan mo'i skor*. Absent in RBCs except Ms-Oxford and Ms-Drukpa, and Ms-Smith/India: *A phyi snang ma dang mgon mo lcam la sogs kyi skor*. The cycle *mGur phran* present in Ms-Oxford is here absent. Most of its songs are present in the untitled part before *lHa cig lcam me'i bsngo ba'i bskor*. Same thing in Ms-Drukpa.

<sup>42</sup> Cycle missing in all RBCs except Ms-Drukpa. Corresponds to *mTsho rnga del chung gi skor* in DNM-RD, *Cong rong byin dang/ mchong gling brag gis skor* in Ms-BL, *gCog ro*

147.2	(51) jo bo bon ri'i skor
154.5	(52) BRING GI LHA GRONG SKOR <sup>43</sup>
162.2	(53) ras chung dbus bzhud kyi skor
173.1	(54) dbus gtad bar ma'i skor
175.7	(55) dbus gtad 'og ma ste nya ma'i bskor
183.4	DRY MEAT EPISODE <sup>44</sup>
184.2	(56) lha cig ldem bu'i skor dang rong sog rtse'i skor gnyis
193.7	(57) chod mkhar zhal mjal gyi skor
197.2	(58) dags po 'byon pa'i ma 'ongs lung stan gyis bskor
199.5	(59) DAGS PO ZHU LAN GYI SKOR <sup>45</sup>
236.6	[RAS CHUNG SONGS] <sup>46</sup>

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15.6	(60) lha cig lcam me'i bsngo ba'i bskor
17.7	(61) snyen chung tsar ma'i skor
20.5	(62) DBUS GTAD ZHAL LTA'I SKOR <sup>47</sup>
54.5	(63) brin gyi smon lam gyi bskor
61.6	[passing into nirvana]
81.2	[colophon RBC]
81.3	[list of disciples]
82.2	[colophon 2]

'bri 'tshams kyi mtsho snga sde chung gi skor in Ms-Smith and Ms-India, and is part of *Jo bo bon ri'i skor* in Ms-Drepung.

<sup>43</sup> Contains four additional songs compared to the RBCs. Similar to Ms-Drukpa.

<sup>44</sup> Extra text added between cycles. Dry meat episode from Ras chung tradition. Common to Ms-Drukpa.

<sup>45</sup> Corresponds to *Dags po zhal mjal gyi bskor*, *rJe ras pa chen po mi la dang/ mnyam med dags po rin po che yab sras kyi zhus pa dang lan gyis skor* (p. 222.6), and *dBus gtad zhal lta dang / dags po dbus bzhud kyi bskor* (p. 229.3) merged together.

<sup>46</sup> Additional songs concerning Ras chung pa. Copy of songs from *rKyang mgur*, etc.

<sup>47</sup> Cycle begins with many additional songs from various *skor* including *mGur 'phran*. Regular cycle begins at p. 51.1.

‘Variant’ *Ras pa bu chen bcu gnyis***Ms-Bordier**

*rJe btsun mi la bzhad pa'i rdo rje'i 'gur 'bum rnam thar 'bril ma zhugs so*

Legends are in italics. [] indicates corrections. || separates the legends of a same page.

	<i>1b</i>	<i>rdoe [rdo rje] 'chang chen    te lo pa</i>
02a		<b>I. rigs dang 'brel ba dka' ba spyad pa'i yon tan</b>
02a		<i>lnga ma gong ma'i skor</i>
	<i>2a</i>	<i>na ro pa    mar pa</i>
	<i>3a</i>	<i>rje btsun mi la    dag po rine [rin po che]</i>
	<i>4a</i>	<i>chose [chos rje] dus 3 mkhyen pa    bdeed rine [bde gshegs rin po che]</i>
	<i>5a</i>	<i>'jien mgoon [(jig rten mgon po)    gling rje ras pa</i>
	<i>6a</i>	<i>rtsang pa rgya ras    rgod tshang ba</i>
	<i>7a</i>	<i>yang dgon pa    rje mar pa / mi la    'gar dam pa</i>
	<i>8a</i>	<i>mkha' spyod dbang po   mkhar brtseg pa / mi la rdo khur    rgya ston chos bzang</i>
	<i>9a</i>	<i>'khor bdeog ['khor lo bde mchog]    rdoe [rdo rje] phag mo</i>
	<i>10a</i>	<i>shāg thub    'phad ['phags] mchog spyan ras gzid [gzigs] dbang</i>
	<i>11a</i>	<i>rngog ston pa / mi la</i>
	<i>12b</i>	<i>mar pa / bdag med ma / rngog / mi la</i>
	<i>17a</i>	<i>mar pa / bdag med ma / mi la</i>
	<i>18a</i>	<i>shar du ka tog tu sing ge   rje mar pa / mi la ras pa    lhor stag mo</i>
	<i>19a</i>	<i>nub tu khyung    byang du rgod</i>
20a.7		<b>II. ting nge 'dzin dang 'brel ba nvams su myong ba'i yon tan</b>
20b		<b>i. 'khor ba la snying po med par rtogs pa'i yon tan</b>
20b		<i>(1) lnga la gong ma gnyen 'dun gyis skor</i>
	<i>21a</i>	<i>mkhar / rje btsun mi la</i>
	<i>22b</i>	<i>sbra / a nes kyi bkyes pa / rje btsun ko mgo nang du 'gyel ba</i>
23b		<b>ii. rmi lam brdar shar ba'i yon tan</b>
23b		<i>(2) snga ba la gong ma ste / de thams cad snga ma skor gsum</i>
	<i>28b</i>	<i>rje btsun / pre ta ma</i>
31a		<b>iii. bde drong ngo 'phrod pa'i yon tan</b>
31a		<i>(3) spo ri spo mthon gyis skor</i>
33b		<i>(4) brag dmar mchong gling gis skor</i>
	<i>34a</i>	<i>shing / rje btsun</i>
	<i>36a</i>	<i>rje btsun / a tsa ra bdun gyis las sna tshogs pa'i cho 'phrul bstan pa</i>



37b	(5) la phyi chu bzang gis skor
42a	(6) gshen rdor mo'i skor
44a	<b>iv. zas gos kyi 'dun pas dang bral ba'i yon tan</b>
44a	(7) gangs 'gur gyi skor
44b	<i>rje btsun / ston pa shag 'gu dang yon bdag rnams</i>
48a	<i>rje btsun / ston pa shag 'gu</i>
49a	<b>v. nyams myong bde bar shar ba'i yon tan</b>
49a	(8) ras chung zhal mjal gyi skor
49a	<i>rje btsun ras chung ba</i>
52a	<b>vi. rtogs pa lam du shar ba'i yon tan</b>
52a	(9) mon gyi shing ri'i skor
54b	(10) sing gha la yi nags gseb kyi skor
57a	(11) dpal gros tag tsang gi skor
60a	<b>vii. snang ba mthun rkyen du shar ba'i yon tan</b>
60a	(12) skyid phug nyi ma rdzong gi skor
62b	(13) gung thang ling ba'i brag de la rje btsun dang brag srin mo gnyis kyi zhus len / ling ba'i skor te skor che ba'o
63	<i>rje btsun / brag srin mo / mi dmar po gla ba la zhon pa</i>
71b	<b>viii. chos brgyad rang grol du shar ba'i yon tan</b>
71b	(14) gnyen 'dun rang sar grol ba'i skor
74b	(15) chos brgyad rang grol ba snye nam drod phug gi skor
76a	<i>rje btsun / ras chung ba</i>
76b	<b>ix. rtsod pas mi brzi pa'i yon tan</b>
76b	(16) dar lo'i skor
77b	<i>rje btsun / ston pa 3</i>
80a	<i>rje btsun / ston pa</i>
83b	(17) te pu pa'i skor
85a	<i>rje btsun / ras chung ba</i>
87a	<i>te pu pa / ras chung ba</i>
94a	(18) zhal lta yo bde'i skor
94a	<i>rje btsun / ras chung ba</i>
99a	(19) g.yag ru'i skor
100a	<i>rje btsun g.yag ru nang du bzhugs pa / ras chung ba</i>
102a	<i>rje btsun / rgan mo'i ro / ras chung ba</i>
105a	(20) rkyang 'gur gyi skor
105b	<i>rje btsun / rkyang ma bu / spyang ku ma bu / ras chung ba</i>
110a	<i>rje btsun 3 / ras chung ba</i>
111a	(21) mchong lung gi skor
113a	<b>x. drin len bsab pa'i yon tan</b>
113a	(22) pha ma'i drin len bsab pa'i skor
116b	<b>xi. spyod pa che ba'i yon tan</b>

116b	(23) sgyu 'phrul rig pa'i skor
118a	<i>rje btsun / ras chung ba</i>
122a	(24) lcam me'i skor
123b	<b>xii. lha yi lhar gyur pa'i yon tan</b>
123b	(25) 'om chung nags 'dab ma yi skor
124b	<i>rje btsun / ras chung ba</i>
125b	(26) bal yul nags ma'i skor
127a	<i>rje btsun / dharma bodhi / ras chung ba</i>
129a	(27) phug ron sngon mo'i skor
129a	<i>rje btsun / phug ron 8</i>
131b	<b>xiii. ye shes sgron me bltams pa'i yon tan</b>
131b	(28) brag steng rta sgo'i skor
131b	<i>rje btsun / ras chung ba</i>
133b	(29) dom lung grab gseb ma'i skor
136b	(30) brag dkar rta so'i skor
139a	(31) thog la'i skor
141a	(32) khyi ra ras pa'i skor
142a	<i>sha ba / rje btsun / khyi / khyi ra ba</i>
146a	(33) g.yag ru'i sgron khang gi skor
146b	<i>rje btsun / dge shes g.yag ru thang pa / tshong dpon zla ba nor bu</i>
149a	<b>xiv. nus pa che ba'i yon tan</b>
149a	(34) bring gi la so'i skor
149a	<i>rje btsun / ras chung ba</i>
149b	<i>'dre dmag rnams / rje btsun</i>
152a	(35) a phyi snang ma'i skor
152a	<i>rje btsun gyis slob ma rnams la dbang bskur ba</i>
153	<i>rje btsun / a phyi rgan mo</i>
156a	<b>xv. byin brlabs che ba'i yon tan</b>
156a	(36) chu mig dngul 'bum gyi skor
156a	<i>rje btsun / chu / khye'u chung gi rta phul ba</i>
157a	<i>rje btsun / khye'u chung gi rta phul ba</i>
158a	<i>rje btsun / khye'u chung gi lham phul ba</i>
158b	<i>rje btsun / khye'u chung gi ber phul ba</i>
159a	<i>rje btsun / khye'u chung gi ras 'phrug phul ba</i>
160a	<i>khye'u chung / byang thod / mi la</i>
161a	<i>rje btsun / g.yu / khyel chung</i>
161b	<i>rje btsun / 'khor gsum / khye'u chung</i>
162b	<i>rje btsun / ske rag gri sag / khye'u chung</i>
163a	<i>rje btsun / dgon pa / khye'u chung</i>
164a	<i>rje btsun / sring mo / khyel chung</i>
164b	<i>rje btsun / byang rkyang / khyel chung</i>

167a	<i>rje btsun / khye chung lceb chis byas pa</i>
169a	(37) zhi ba 'od kyi skor
169b	<i>rje btsun / zhi ba 'od</i>
170b	(38) gung thang lho sgo'i skor
170b	<i>rje btsun / nya ma dpa' dar 'bum</i>
175a	(39) legs se 'bum me'i skor
175b	<i>rje btsun / legs se 'bum</i>
178b	(40) skyid rong rab chad rgan rgog gi skor
178b	<i>rje btsun / rab chad rgan rgog 2</i>
180b	(41) gshin rdor mo'i skor
180b	<i>rje btsun / gshin rdor mo</i>
183a	(42) mang yul gung thang gi skor
183a	<i>rje btsun / mkhar len byed mi rnams</i>
184b	(43) sba 'gur gyi skor
184b	<i>rje btsun / phyag mkhar / sngan rdzong byub [byang chub] 'bar zhing rmo ba</i>
189b	(44) lha rje yang nge'i skor
189b	<i>se ban / rje btsun / ras chung ba / lha rje yang nge / mkhar</i>
192a	(45) lcong rong bring gis skor
192b	<i>rje btsun dpon slob 3 / bu mo 3</i>
193a	<b>xvi. ting nge 'dzin gyis rtsal rdzogs pa'i yon tan</b>
193a	(46) snye nam lung chung gi skor
194a	<i>rje btsun / slob ma rnams</i>
196a	<b>xvii. phyag rgya chen po ngo 'phrod pa'i yon tan</b>
196a	(47) [Tshe ring ma 01]
197a	<i>rje btsun / keng rus bzhad pa'i bu mo / dmar mo khrag 'dzag spyang gdong / rab 'jigs gshin rje'i gzugs can ma / sol ba'i bu med gad rgyang can / shin tu bsgegs pa lha mo'i gzugs</i>
205b	(47b) [Tshe ring ma 02]
207b	<i>rje btsun / tshe ring mched lnga</i>
214b	<i>rje btsun / mchod rdzas / bkra shis tshe ring ma</i>
219b	(47c) [Tshe ring ma 03]
221a	<i>rje btsun / mkha' 'gro ma 1</i>
222a	<i>mi g.yo blo bzang ma / bkra shis tshe ring ma / rje btsun / cod pan mgrin bzang ma / gtad dkar 'gros bzang ma / mthing gi zhal bzang ma</i>
224a	<i>rje btsun / tshe ring mched lnga</i>
235a	(47d) [Tshe ring ma 04]
235b	<i>rje btsun / tshe ring mched lnga</i>
237b	(48) jo bo bon ri'i skor
238a	<i>ras chung ba / rje btsun / bu mo lnga</i>

241b	<i>rje btsun / ras pa brgyad</i>
245b	(49) brin gyis lha grangs gi skor
246a	<i>rje btsun / yon bdag dkon mchog brtsegs</i>
247b	(50) ras chung dbus bzhud kyi skor
248a	<i>rje btsun / ras chung ba</i>
253a	(51) dbus gtad bar ma'i skor
254a	<i>rje btsun / ras chung ba</i>
255a	(52) dbus gtad 'og ma ste nya ma'i skor
258b	(53) lha lcam ldem bu'i skor dang / rang sog rtse gong gi skor gnyis
259a	<i>ras chung ba / lha 1 / mkhar</i>
260a	<i>ras chung ba / rin chen grags / lha 1</i>
266a	(54) mchod khang zhal mjal gyi skor
266b	<i>rje btsun / mañdal steng du g.yu / ras chung ba</i>
268b	(55) dags po 'byon pa'i ma 'ongs lung bstan gyi skor
270a	(56) dags po zhal mjal gyi skor
274a	<i>se ban / rje btsun / ras chung ba / dbus pa ston pa</i>
281a	<i>rje btsun / dag po rin po che</i>
286b	(57) rje btsun chen po mi la ras pa dang / mnyam med dags po rin po che yab sras kyi zhus pa dang zhus lan gyi skor
291a	<i>rje btsun / dag po rin po che</i>
293a	(58) dbus gtad zhal lta dang/ dags po dbus bzhud kyi skor
295a	(59) lcam me'i skor
296a	<i>sgrol ma / rje btsun</i>
296b	(60) snye nam rtsar ma'i skor
298b	(61) dbus gtad zhal lta'i skor
300a	<i>rje btsun / ras chung ba</i>
301b	(62) brin gyi smon lam gyi skor
306b	<b>xviii. tshe gcig gis zung 'jug rdo rje'i sku 'grub cing 'ja' lus su yal ba'i tshul bstan pa'i yon tan<sup>48</sup></b>
310a	<i>se ban ras pa / rje btsun bsnyung ba'i tshul / 'bri sgom</i>
310b	<i>sku mya ngan las 'das pa'i tshul</i>
311a	<i>rje btsun / ras chung ba</i>
313b	<i>ras chung ba / zhi ba 'od / gdung gzhu tshul / 'bri sgom / se ban ras pa</i>
321b	[colophon]
322b	[lo rgyus] <sup>49</sup>

<sup>48</sup> The 18th quality division is absent from all RBCs (Ms-Newark, Ms-Oxford, Ms-Drukpa, Ms-Gansu, Ms-BDRC, Ms-Lhasa) and Ms-BL. It is present in DNM-RD and *A River of Blessings*.

<sup>49</sup> The *lo rgyus* of the *mdzod nag ma* is absent from all other compendia except Ms-Drepung.

**Ms-BDRC**

Song cycles lacking in other versions or significantly changed are in small capitals.

02b.1	<b><u>I. rigs dang 'brel ba dka' ba spyad pa'i yon tan</u></b>
23b.5	<b><u>II. ting nge 'dzin dang 'brel ba nyams su myong ba'i yon tan</u></b>
24a.3	<b>i. 'khor ba la snying po med par rtogs pa'i yon tan</b>
24a.3	(1) lnga las gong ma gnyan 'dun gyis skor
28a.4	<b>ii. rmi lam brdar shar ba'i yon tan</b>
28a.4	(2) snga ba la gong ma ste / de thams cad snga ma skor gsum <sup>50</sup>
38a.5	<b>iii. bde drong ngo 'phrod pa'i yon tan<sup>51</sup></b>
38a.5	(3) spo ri spo mthon gyis skor
42a.1	(4) brag dmar mchong gling gis skor
46b.7	(5) la phyi chu bzang gis skor
51b.7	(6) gshen rdor mo'i skor
54b.1	<b>iv. zas gos kyi 'dun pas dang bral ba'i yon tan</b>
54b.1	(7) gangs 'gur gyi skor
61a.6	<b>v. nyams myong bde bar shar ba'i yon tan</b>
61a.6	(8) ras chung zhal mjal gyi skor
65b.5	<b>vi. rtogs pa lam du shar ba'i yon tan</b>
65b.5	(9) mon gyi shing ri'i skor
69b.6	(10) sing gha la yi nags gseb kyi skor
73a.4	(11) dpal gros stag tshang gi skor
77a.1	<b>vii. snang ba mthun rkyen du shar ba'i yon tan</b>
77a.1	(12) skyid phug nyi ma rdzong gi skor
80b.3	(13) gung thang ling ba'i brag de la rje btsun dang brag srin mo gnyis kyi zhus len / ling ba'i skor te skor che ba'o
92b.5	<b>viii. chos brgyad rang grol du shar ba'i yon tan</b>
92b.5	(14) gnyen 'dun rang sar grol ba'i skor
96a.6	(15) chos brgyad rang grol ba snye nam drod phug gi skor

<sup>50</sup> Folios 33-34 missing.

<sup>51</sup> The text mistakenly reads iii.

99a.6	<b>ix. rtsod pas mi brzi pa'i yon tan</b>
99a.6	(16) dar lo'i skor
108a.5	(17) te pu pa'i skor
121a.1	(18) zhal lta yo bde'i skor
127a.6	(19) g.yag ru'i skor
134b.1	(20) rkyang 'gur gyi skor
142a.6	(21) mchong lung gi skor
144b.4	<b>x. drin len bsam pa'i yon tan</b>
144b.4	(22) pha ma'i drin len bsab pa'i skor
149b.4	<b>xi. spyod pa che ba'i yon tan</b>
149b.4	(23) sgyu 'phrul rig pa'i skor
156b.2	(24) lcam me'i skor
159a.7	<b>xii. lha yi lhar gyur pa'i yon tan</b>
159a.7	(25) 'om chung nags 'dab ma yi skor <sup>52</sup>
161a.4	(26) bal yul nags ma'i skor
165b.2	(27) phug ron sngon mo'i skor
168b.7	<b>xiii. ye shes sgron me bltams pa'i yon tan</b>
168b.7	(28) brag steng rta sgo'i skor
172b.3	(29) dom lung grab gseb ma'i skor
176a.2	(30) [brag dkar rta so'i skor] <sup>53</sup>
[178?]	(31) thog la'i skor <sup>54</sup>
182a.4	(32) khyi ra ras pa'i skor
189a.4	(32b) YANG LO RGYUS GCIG LAS ... [KHYI RA RAS PA VERSION 2] <sup>55</sup>
191b.3	(33) [RA RDZI RAS PA] <sup>56</sup>
192b.4	(34) [LUG RDZI RAS PA] <sup>57</sup>
193b.4	(35) g.yag ru'i sgron khang gi skor
198a.3	<b>xiv. nus pa che ba'i yon tan</b>
198a.3	(36) bring gi la so'i skor

<sup>52</sup> Folio 160 missing.

<sup>53</sup> End title missing.

<sup>54</sup> Folio 178 missing.

<sup>55</sup> Alternative story. Absent from RBCs and Ms-BL. Present in Ms-Lhasa, DNM-RD and *A River of Blessings*.

<sup>56</sup> Missing title. Newly added, present in Ms-Lhasa, DNM-RD, Ms-BL, and *A River of Blessings*.

<sup>57</sup> Missing title. Newly added, present in Ms-Lhasa, DNM-RD and *A River of Blessings*.

201a.4	(37) a phyi snang ma'i skor <sup>58</sup>
205a.5	<b>xv. byin brlabs che ba'i yon tan</b>
205a.5	(38) chu mig dngul 'bum gyi skor
223b.2	(39) zhi ba 'od kyi skor
225b.3	(40) gung thang lho sgo'i skor
230b.5	(41) legs se 'bum me'i skor <sup>59</sup>
235a.4	(42) skyid rong rab chad rgan rgog gi skor
237b.1	(43) gshen rdor mo'i skor
240b.3	(44) mang yul gung thang gi skor
242a.4	(45) sba 'gur gyi skor
248a.5	(46) lha rje yang nge'i skor
251a.4	(47) lcong rong bring gis skor
253b.7	<b>xvi. ting nge 'dzin gyis rtsal rdzogs pa'i yon tan</b>
253b.7	(48) snye nam lung chung gi skor
256b.5	<b>xvii. phyag rgya chen po ngo 'phrod pa'i yon tan</b>
256b.5	(49a) [Tshe ring ma 01] zhus lan gong ma'i skor
269a.2	(49b) [Tshe ring ma 02] bdud rtsi 'od kyi phreng ba
285b.5	(49c) [Tshe ring ma 03] bar do 'phrang sgrol
305a.5	(49d) [bkra shis tshe ring ma'i skor 04] bde stong ye shes sprin gyi phreng ba
308a.4	(50) jo bo bon ri'i skor <sup>60</sup>
[317-18?]	(51) brin gyis lha grangs gi skor <sup>61</sup>
320b.4	(52) ras chung dbus bzhud kyi skor <sup>62</sup>
329a.6	(53) dbus gtad bar ma'i skor
331b.6	(54) dbus 'og ma ste nya ma'i skor
336a.7	(55) lha lcam ldem bu'i skor dang/ rang sog rtse gong gi skor gnyis
346a.5	(56) mchod khang zhal mjal gyi skor
349a.2	(57) dags po 'byon pa'i ma 'ongs lung bstan gyi skor
351a.5	(58) dags po zhal mjal gyi skor

<sup>58</sup> Folio 203 missing.

<sup>59</sup> Folio 233 missing.

<sup>60</sup> Folio 314 missing.

<sup>61</sup> Folios 317-318 missing

<sup>62</sup> Folio 322 missing.

372b.5	(59) rje ras pa chen po mi la ras pa dang/ mnyam med dwags po rin po che yab sras kyi zhus pa dang lan gyi skor
381b.4	(60) dbus gtad zhal lta dang/ dags po dbus bzhud kyi skor
384a.4	(61) lcam me'i skor
386a.3	(62) snye nam rtsar ma'i skor
388b.2	(63) dbus gtad zhal lta'i skor
[390-92?]	(64) brin gyi smon lam gyi skor <sup>63</sup>
398b.7	[end of life] <sup>64</sup>
418a	[colophon] <sup>65</sup>

### Ms-Lhasa

Song cycles lacking in other versions or significantly changed are in small capitals.

Legends are in italics. [] indicates corrections. || separates the legends of a same page.

2a.1	<b><u>I. rigs dang 'brel ba dka' ba sbvad pa'i yon tan</u></b>
2a.	dka' ba spyad pa'i yon tan ni
	<i>16a mar pa lo tstsha ba / mi la ras pa</i>
	<i>16b seng / stag / khyung / rgod po</i>
17b.4	<b><u>II. ting nge 'dzin dang 'brel ba nyams su myong ba'i yon tan</u></b>
18a.1	<b><u>i. 'khor ba la snying po med pa'i yon tan</u></b>
18a.1	(1) snga mas gong ma gnyen 'dun gyi skor
20b.7	<b><u>ii. rmi lam brdar shar ba'i yon tan</u></b>
20b.7	(2) snga snga ba la skor gsum
	<i>21a a ne tsha ba / rje btsun</i>
	<i>21b rag ma cub? gling</i>
	<i>22b brag dkar rta so</i>
	<i>23b spo ri spo mthon</i>
	<i>26b [rje btsun / sring mo pre ta]</i>
30a.6	<b><u>iii. bde drod ngo 'phrod pa'i yon tan</u></b>
30a.6	(3) spo ri spo mthon gyis skor

<sup>63</sup> Folios 390-392 missing.

<sup>64</sup> Folios 403-405 missing.

<sup>65</sup> Folios 413-417 missing.



33a.2	(4) brag dmar mchang gling gis skor
33a	<i>brag dmar mchong gling</i>
36b.5	(5) la phyi chu bzang gis skor
37a	<i>la phyi</i>
40a.5	(6) gshen rdor mo'i skor
42a.1	<b>iv. zas gos kyi 'dun pa dang bral ba'i yon tan</b>
42a.1	(7) gang 'gur gyis skor
42b	<i>dug dug phug mo che la</i>
44b.6	<b>v. nyams myong bde bar shar ba'i yon tan</b>
44b.6	(8) ras chung zhal mjal gyis skor
45b	<i>ras chung zhal mjal bris</i>
50a.1	<b>vi. rtogs pa lam du shar ba'i yon tan</b>
50a.1	(9) mon gyi shing ri'i skor
50a	<i>shing phug 1 na ras chen pa bzhugs    ras chung ba</i>
52b.6	(10) sing gha'i nag gseb gyis skor
55a.3	(11) dpal gro stag tshangs gis skor
57a	<i>rje btsun dpal gro stag tshang sengge phug du bsgom mo</i>
57b.3	<b>vii. snang ba mthun rkyen du shar ba'i yon tan</b>
57b.3	(12) skyid phug nyi ma rdzong gis skor
58a	<i>skyid phug nyi ma rdzongs</i>
60a.4	(13) BRAG SKYA RDO RJE RDZONG GIS SKOR <sup>66</sup>
60a	<i>brag skya rdo rje sga steng du rje btsun ri bong gi wa la zhon ma</i>
61a.1	(14) gung thang leng ba'i brag de la ras pa dang/ brag srin gnyis kyis zhus len/ ling ba'i skor ro / skor che ba//
61a	<i>ling ba brag / mi dmar po gla ba la zhon ba</i>
67b	<i>rje btsun chen po / brag srin mo dpon g.yog lnga yi 'gur dang mchod pa</i>
69b.3	<b>viii. chos brgyad rang grol ba'i yon tan</b>
69b.3	(15) gnyan 'dun rang grol ba'i skor
71a	<i>mi la dang / a ne 2 zhus len</i>
72a.4	(16) chos brgyad rang grol ba'i snyen nam grod phug gis skor
74a.7	<b>ix. rtsod pa mi brdzi ba'i yon tan</b>
74b.1	(17) dar lo'i skor
81a.3	(18) ti pu'i skor
90b.4	(19) zhal lta yo bde'i skor
91a	<i>rje btsun / ras chung zhal mjal</i>

<sup>66</sup> Newly added, present only in DNM-RD. Episode integrated in *A River of Blessings* in *Brag dmar mchong gling sogs kyi skor*.

95a.3	(20) g.yag ru'i skor
95b	<i>rje btsun g.yag ru nang du bzhugs / ras chung ba</i>
98b	<i>rje btsun / rgan mo / ras chung ba</i>
100a.6	(21) rkyong 'gur gyis skor
100a	<i>rje btsun / ras chung ba</i>
104b	<i>rje btsun gsum</i>
105b.3	(22) mchang lung gi lungs bstan gyis skor
107a.4	<b>x. drin len bsab pa'i yon tan</b>
107a.4	(23) phā mā la drin len bsab pa'i skor
110b.6	<b>xi. spyod pa che ba'i yon tan</b>
110b.7	(24) sgyu 'phrul rig pa'i skor
112a	<i>rig drugs gnas tshad bris</i>
115b.3	(25) lcām me'i skor
117a.2	<b>xii. lha'i lhar gyur pa'i yon tan</b>
117a.2	(26) 'om chung nag 'dabs ma'i skor
117b	<i>rje btsun gtso bo mi bdun gyi zhus pa</i>
119a.3	(27) bal yul nag gseb ma'i skor
120a	<i>rje btsun / bho ti grub thob</i>
122a.5	(28) phug ron sngon mo'i skor
122b	<i>rje btsun / phug ran</i>
123a	<i>rje btsun / phug ron brgyad</i>
124b.4	(29) RJE MI LA RAS PA DANG BU MO YID PHROG MA GNYIS KYIS ZHUS LEN 'GUR DU GSUNG PA'I SKOR <sup>67</sup>
124b	<i>rje btsun / yid phrog ma</i>
132a.3	<b>xiii. ye shes sgron me lta bu'i yon tan</b>
132a.3	(30) brag steng rta sga'i skor
132b	<i>rje btsun / ras chung / ras pa 2</i>
134b.3	(31) ngom lung brag gseb gyis skor
134b	<i>rje btsun / ras chung ba</i>
136b.6	(32) brag dkar rta so'i skor
138b.4	(33) [thog la'i skor] <sup>68</sup>
139a	<i>dam pa / mi la</i>
[140–143]	(34a) khyi ra ras pa'i skor <sup>69</sup>
145a.3	(34b) YANG LO RGYUS GCIG LAS... [KHYI RA RAS PA VERSION 2] <sup>70</sup>

<sup>67</sup> Newly added. Absent in all RBCs, present in DNM-RD and all *River of Blessings* and Ms-BL.

<sup>68</sup> Folios 140 to 143 and the end of the chapter are missing with the title.

<sup>69</sup> Beginning of the chapter missing.

<sup>70</sup> Alternative story. Absent from RBCs and Ms-Bordier. Present in Ms-BDRC, DNM-RD and *A River of Blessings*.

	145a	<i>rje btsun / khyi ra ba / khyi ra ba'i chung mo</i>
147b.4		(35) RA RDZI'I SKOR <sup>71</sup>
	147b	<i>rje btsun / ra rdzi</i>
148b.5		(36) LUG RDZI'I SKOR <sup>72</sup>
	149a	<i>rje btsun mi la bzhad par do rje rgyal mtshan / lugs sdzi la 'gur gsung pa</i> <sup>73</sup>
149b.3		(37) gtsang g.yag ru mgron khong gis skor
	150b	<i>rje btsun g.yag ru thang pa'i dge bshes</i>
152a.2		<b>xiv. nus pa che ba'i yon tan</b>
152a.2		(38) bring gis la so'i skor
	152b	<i>rje btsun / ras chung ba / rgyal 'dre 'dre dmag bring gi phug</i>
154b.2		(39) a phyi snang ma'i skor
	155a	<i>mi la / rgan mos chang drangs</i>
156b.5		<b>xv. byin brlabs che ba'i yon tan</b>
156b.5		(40) chu migs dngul 'bum gyis skor
	157a	<i>rje btsun / 'ang chu / rkya mi</i>
	161a	<i>mi la / byang (?)</i>
	161b	<i>rje btsun / g.yu phul</i>
	163a	<i>rje btsun / 'khor 3 zhi ba 'od kyi (?)</i>
	163b	<i>ske rag gri sags</i>
	164a	<i>dgon phul lo</i>
	164b	<i>sring mo phul lo</i>
	165a	<i>byang rkyang phul</i>
	166a	<i>mi la ras pa / zhi ba 'od</i>
	167a	<i>mi la / zhi ba 'od</i>
169a.4		(41) [zhi ba 'od kyi skor] <sup>74</sup>
[170]		(42) gung thong lho sgo'i skor
174a.7		(43) legs se 'bum me'i skor
	176a	<i>mi la / legs se</i>
177b.6		(44) skyi rang rab chad rgan rgog gis skor
	179a	<i>mi la / rab chad rgan rgog gnyis</i>
179b.2		(45) gshen rdor mo'i skor
	180a	<i>mi la / gshen rdor mo rgas nas</i>
181b.5		(46) mang yul gang thong gis skor
	182b	<i>mi la / mkhar len byed pa</i>
183a.1		(47) sba 'gur gyis skor
	183a	<i>rje btsun / ras chung / se ban / ngan rdzong phyug po</i>

<sup>71</sup> Newly added, present in Ms-BDRC, DNM-RD, Ms-BL, and *A River of Blessings*.

<sup>72</sup> Newly added, present in Ms-BDRC, DNM-RD and *A River of Blessings*.

<sup>73</sup> dBu can script & spelling mistakes, later addition.

<sup>74</sup> Folio 170 and the end of the chapter with title missing.

187a.7	(48) lha rje yang nge'i skor
187b	<i>mi la ras pa / lha rje yang nge'</i> <sup>75</sup>
189b.7	(49) ljang rang bring gis skor
190a	<i>mi la / bu mo 2 kyi / dung rdog gdams sngags'</i> <sup>76</sup>
191b.2	<b>xvi. ting nge 'dzin gyis rtsal rdzogs pa'i yon tan</b>
191b.2	(50) snyen nams lung chung gis skor
192b	<i>rje btsun gzim bu slob 2</i>
193b.1	<b>xvii. phyag rgya chen po'i ngo sprod 'phrod pa'i yon tan</b>
193b.1	(51a) [Tshe ring ma 1] zhus lan gong ma'i skor
194a	<i>mi la / sprul pa'i bud med lnga</i>
202b.4	(51b) [Tshe ring ma 2] bdud rtsi 'od kyi phreng ba
203b	<i>[no inscription]</i>
209b	<i>mi la ras pa / tshe ring mched lnga zas phul</i>
214a.5	(51c) [Tshe ring ma 3] bar do 'phrang sgröl
219a	<i>rje btsun la thse ring spun lngas 'tsho ba drangs so</i>
227b.5	(51d) [Tshe ring ma 4] bde stong ye shes sprin gyi phreng ba
229a	<i>mi la tshe ring mched lnga 'bral ba? ngang las? phul lo'</i> <sup>77</sup>
229b.5	(52) jo bo bon ri'i skor ro
230b	<i>rje btsun / nya ma lnga</i>
233a	<i>ras pa dpon slob brgyad yin no</i>
237a.3	(53) brin lha grang gyis skor <sup>78</sup>
237b	<i>rje btsun / dkon mchog brtseg pa mgo byas 3</i>
238b.4	(54) ras chung dbus bzhud kyis skor
239a	<i>sha rid rdang ba?</i>
240a	<i>mi la / ras chung / nya ma rnams / 4 tsam bris</i>
244a.4	(55) dbus gtad bar ma'i skor
244b	<i>[illegible]</i>
245b	<i>mi la / ras chung ba</i>
246a.3	(56) [dbus gtad 'og ma te nya ma'i skor] <sup>79</sup>
[249–257]	(57) [lha cig ldem bu dang/ rong sogs tse'i skor dang skor gnyis so?] <sup>80</sup>
[249–257]	(58) mchang [mchod] khang zhal mjal gyis skor
258a.1	(59) dags po 'byon pa'i ma 'ung lung bsten gyis skor
259b.1	(60) dags po zhal mjal gyi skor

<sup>75</sup> dBu can script.

<sup>76</sup> Inscription but no image!

<sup>77</sup> dBu can script.

<sup>78</sup> Quintman: "Extended introductory section. BC version begins at 233a.1."

<sup>79</sup> End of the chapter missing with the title.

<sup>80</sup> Folios 249–257 missing.

263a	<i>rje btsun / se ban ras pa / bsod nams rin chen</i>
274b.6	(61) <i>rje ras pa chen po mi la ras pa dang/ mnyam med dags po rin po che yab sras kyis zhu ba dang/ zhus len gyis skor ro</i>
279b	<i>mi la dags po la skyil (ma) mdzad pa red 'dug</i>
281a.5	(62) <i>dbus gtad zhal lta dang/ dags po dbus bzhud kyis skor</i>
283a.1	(63) <i>lcam me'i skor</i>
283a	<i>[no inscription]</i>
284a	<i>sgron mas bsngo mdzad do / mi la'i sku yin / yon bdag mo lcam mes<sup>81</sup></i>
284b.1	(64) <i>snyen nam rtsar ma'i skor</i>
284b	<i>rje btsun / bag ma?</i>
286a.3	(65) <i>dbus gtad zhal da'i [lta'i] skor</i>
286b	<i>rje btsun / ras chung ba</i>
288b.6	(66) <i>brin gyis smon lam kyis skor</i>
293b.2	<i>[passing in to nirvana]</i>
296a	<i>rje btsun dug gis bsnyung ba / se ban ras pa / 'bri sgom ras pa</i>
299b	<i>rje btsun gdung gzhu? / ras pa mang po</i>
302a	<i>rje btsun gdung khang steng / ? / nam chos? / ? nyan no</i>
303b	<i>rje btsun? mchod rten la sku rgyab gtags? nas</i>
305a	<i>mkha 'gro? [illegible]</i>
308a.1	<i>[colophon]</i>
308b.4	<i>[colophon RD]</i>

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<sup>81</sup> dBu can script

“The Dark Treasury” in Rang byung rdo rje’s Complete Works

**DNM-RD**

*rNal ’byor gyi dbang phyug mi la bzhad pa rdo rje’i gsung mgur mdzod nag ma zhes pa kar ma pa rang byung rdo rjes phyogs gcig tu bkod pa bzhugs so*

Song cycles lacking in other versions or significantly changed are in small capitals.

DNM-RD 2006 = Ziling

DNM-RD 2011 = dPal brtsegs (book)

DNM-RD 2013 = dPal brtsegs (dpe cha)

2006	2011	2013	Qualities and cycles
3.2	2	3.1	<b><u>I. rigs dang ’brel ba dka’ ba sbyad pa’i yon tan</u></b>
43.2	35	46.2	<b><u>II. ting nge ’dzin dang ’brel ba nyams su myong ba’i yon tan</u></b>
43.6	36	47.1	<b>i. ’khor ba la snying po med par rtogs pa’i yon tan</b>
43.6	36	47.1	(1) snga ma las gong ma gnyen ’dun gyi skor
49.4	41	53.1	<b>ii. rmi lam brdar shar ba’i yon tan</b>
49.4	41	53.1	(2) snga ma’i skor gsum
63.6	53	68.4	<b>iii. bde drod ngo ’phrod pa’i yon tan</b>
63.6	53	68.4	(3) SPO RI SPO MTHON GYIS SKOR <sup>82</sup>
69.4	72	93.3	(4) brag dmar mchong gling gis skor
77.1	78	101.3	(5) la phyi chu bzang gis skor
83.5	84	108.3	(6) gshen rdor mo’i skor
86.6	87	111.5	<b>iv. zas gos kyi ’dun pa dang bral ba’i yon tan</b>
86.6	87	111.6	(7) gangs mgur gyi skor
96.1	94	121.3	<b>v. nyams myong bde bar shar ba’i yon tan</b>
96.1	94	121.4	(8) ras chung zhal mjal gyi skor
101.5	99	127.4	<b>vi. rtogs pa lam du shar ba’i yon tan</b>
101.5	99	127.4	(9) mon gyi shing ri’i skor
106.6	103	133.2	(10) sing gha la yi nags gseb kyi skor
111.4	107	138.1	(11) dpal gro stag tshang gi skor

<sup>82</sup> Zi ling (p. 65) has 11 pages of the original ms. missing. dPal brtsegs has a full version different from RBC and *A River of Blessings*.

117.2	112	144.1	<b>vii. snang ba mthun rkyen du shar ba'i yon tan</b>
117.2	112	144.2	(12) skyid phug nyi ma rdzong gi skor
122.1	116	149.3	(13) BRAG SKYA RDO RJE RDZONG GI SKOR <sup>83</sup>
123.4	117	150.5	(14) gung thang lung pa'i brag de la mi la ras pa dang brag srin mo gnyis kyi zhu ba shus len ling ba'i skor te skor che ba
140.3	132	168.5	<b>viii. chos brgyad rang sar grol ba'i yon tan</b>
140.3	132	168.5	(15) gnyen 'dun rang sar grol ba'i skor
145.3	136	173.6	(16) chos brgyad rang sar grol ba snyen nam drod phug gi skor
153.4	142	182.4	<b>ix. rtsod pas mi rdzi ba'i yon tan</b>
153.4	142	182.4	(17) dar lo'i skor <sup>84</sup>
168.1	155	198.1	(18) te pu pa'i skor <sup>85</sup>
186.4	170	217.5	(19) zhal ta yo bde'i skor
195.2	177	226.5	(20) g.yag ru'i skor
204.6	185	237.1	(21) rkyang mgur gyi skor
218.6	197	251.5	(22) mchong lung gi skor
222.2	200	255.3	<b>x. drin len bsab pa'i yon tan</b>
222.2	200	255.3	(23) pha ma'i drin len bsab pa'i skor
229.6	207	263.3	<b>xi. spyod pa che ba'i yon tan</b>
229.6	207	263.3	(24) sgyu 'phrul rig pa'i skor
239.3	215	273.5	(25) lcam me'i skor
245.4	220	280.1	<b>xii. lha yi lhar gyur pa'i yon tan</b>
245.5	220	280.2	(26) 'om chung nags 'dab ma yi skor
249.6	224	284.4	(27) bal yul nags ma'i skor
256.3	229	291.4	(28) DPAL MO DPAL THANG LA SOGS PA'I SKOR <sup>86</sup>
263.4	235	299.2	(29) phug ron sngon mo'i skor
268.2	239	304.2	(30) RJE BTSUN MI LA RAS PA DANG BU MO YID 'PHROG MA GNYIS KYI SHUS LEN MGUR DU GSUNGS PA'I SKOR <sup>87</sup>
282.6	252	320.4	<b>xiii. ye shes sgron me bltams pa'i yon tan</b>
283.1	252	320.4	(31) brag steng rta sgo la sogs pa'i skor
294.3	262	332.5	(32) dom lung brag gseb kyi skor

<sup>83</sup> Present in Ms-Lhasa. Absent in other RBC. In *A River of Blessings* a passage is integrated in quality iii "Brag dmar mchong gling sogs kyi skor."

<sup>84</sup> Pt 2011 has *rtsod pa las rgyal te dar lo rjes su bzung ba*.

<sup>85</sup> Pt 2011 has *ras chung te pu pa dang mjal ba'i skor*.

<sup>86</sup> Newly added. Absent from all RBC and *A River of Blessings*.

<sup>87</sup> Present in Ms-Lhasa. Absent from RBC. Present in *A River of Blessings*.

302.5	269	341.4	(33) brag dkar rta so'i skor
308.1	273	346.6	(34) THONG LA'I SKOR <sup>88</sup>
315.5	279	354.6	(35) KO RA LA THOG GI SKOR <sup>89</sup>
321.1	284	360.4	(36) KHU BYUG DBEN PA RDZONG GI SKOR <sup>90</sup>
325.4	288	365.2	(37a) khyi ra ras pa'i skor
334.1	295	374.2	(37b) [YANG LO RGYUS GCIG LA...] <sup>91</sup>
338.6	299	379.3	(38) RA RDZI RAS PA'I SKOR <sup>92</sup>
341.1	301	381.4	(39) LUG RDZI RAS PA'I SKOR <sup>93</sup>
342.5	302	383.2	(40) gtsang g.yas ru'i skor
347.4	306	388.3	<b>xiv. [nus pa] che ba'i yon tan</b>
347.5	306	388.4	(41) bring gi la so'i skor
351.4	310	392.6	(42) BRING GI LO STONG DGON PA'I SKOR <sup>94</sup>
356.1	313	397.4	(43) a phyi snang ma la sogs pa'i skor
365.3	321	407.3	(44) sba mgur skor <sup>95</sup>
375.3	330	418.1	(44b) PRAISE TO RTSIBS RI <sup>96</sup>
376.2	1	419.1	<b>xv. byin rlabs che ba'i yon tan</b>
376.2	1	419.1	(45) chu mig dngul 'bum gyi skor <sup>97</sup>
403.6	24	448.4	(46) zhi ba 'od kyi skor
406.6	27	451.5	(47) gung thang lho sgo'i skor
415.4	35	460.6	(48) GUNG THANG GI SKOR <sup>98</sup>
417.6	37	463.3	(49) legs se 'bum me'i skor
424.4	42	470.4	(50) 'BUM ME'I SKOR <sup>99</sup>
428.6	46	474.6	(51) mang yul gyi skor <sup>100</sup>
434.3	51	480.5	(52) gshin rdor mo'i skor

<sup>88</sup> Corresponds to *Thog la'i skor* in RBC but with additional content. Moved to § 25 *Thog la'i skor* in Quality xi. in Ms-Smith, Ms-India & Ms-Drepung.

<sup>89</sup> Absent from all RBCs except Ms-Drukpa, Ms-Gansu. Present in Ms-BL and BCG.

<sup>90</sup> Newly added. Contains common songs with *A River of Blessings: Ras chung pa la gdam pa'i skor*.

<sup>91</sup> Alternative story. Absent from RBCs and Ms-Bordier. Present in Ms-BDRC, Ms-Lhasa and *A River of Blessings*.

<sup>92</sup> Present in Ms-BDRC, Ms-Lhasa, Ms-BL, and *A River of Blessings*.

<sup>93</sup> *A River of Blessings* combines *Ra rdzi ras pa* and *Lug rdzi ras pa* into a single cycle.

<sup>94</sup> Newly added. Absent from all sources.

<sup>95</sup> Placed in quality xv in RBC & BCG.

<sup>96</sup> Untitled paragraph. Absent in RBC. Correspond to the intro of *Khyi ra ras pa* in BCGs.

<sup>97</sup> Erroneously considered misplaced in Quintman's outline.

<sup>98</sup> Absent from all RBC. Present in *A River of Blessings*.

<sup>99</sup> Absent from all RBC. Present in *A River of Blessings*.

<sup>100</sup> Correspond to *sKyi rang rab chad rgan rgog gis skor* in the RBC.



439.1	55	485.5	(53) GANGS TI SE NA RO BON CHUNG BTUL BA'I SKOR <sup>101</sup>
450.4	65	498.1	(54) TI SE LA SOGS PA'I SKOR
463.4	76	511.6	(55) BRAG DMAR SPO MTHO'I SKOR
470.3	81	519.1	(56) STON PA SHĀKYA GU LA SOGS PA'I SKOR
477.6	88	527.1	(57) SBYIN GTONG DRUG MA DANG LHA RJE G.YANG NGE LA SOGS PA'I SKOR <sup>102</sup>
485.2	94	534.5	(58) gcong rong brin gyi skor
491.1	99	540.6	<b>xvi.<sup>103</sup> ting nge 'dzin gyi rtsal rdzogs pa'i yon tan<sup>104</sup></b>
491.1		540.6	(59) [snye] nam lung chung gi skor
∅	104	546.5	(**) BZANG RGYUD PHYAG TSHANG GI SKOR <sup>105</sup>
496.4	116	563.2	<b>xvii.<sup>106</sup> phyag rgya chen po ngo 'phrod pa'i yon tan</b>
496.4	116	563.3	(60a) [Tsheringma 1] mu tig gi phreng
515.2	132	582.6	(60b) [Tsheringma 2] bdud rtsi 'od kyi phreng ba
539.4	152	609.1	(60c) [Tsheringma 3] 'phrang sgrol gnad kyi bar do la dris pa lan
568.1	176	639.2	(60d) [Tsheringma 4] bkra shis tshe ring ma'i skor
572.1	180	643.4	(61) MTSHO RNGA DEL CHUNG GI SKOR <sup>107</sup>
584.6	190	657.2	(62) jo bo bon ri'i skor
591.1	197	666.1	(63) brin gi lha grong gi skor
602.4	207	678.2	(64) RAS CHUNG PA'I RMI LAM LUNG BSTAN GYI SKOR <sup>108</sup>
606.1	210	682.1	(65) ras chung dbus bzhus kyi skor
616.6	219	693.4	(66) dbus gtad bar ma'i skor
620.4	222	697.3	(67) dbus gtad 'og ma dang nya ma'i skor

<sup>101</sup> Newly added. Absent from all texts. Summary version in *A River of Blessings* in “*Gang ti tse'i skor*.” Corresponds verbatim to gTsang smyon's chapter in the *Songs*.

<sup>102</sup> Enhanced version of *IHa rje g.yang nge'i skor* in RBC. Missing in DNM-RD Unicode.

<sup>103</sup> The text mistakenly reads xvii (Zi ling).

<sup>104</sup> The heading for section xvii appears to be missing (Zi ling).

<sup>105</sup> Absent from Zi ling. Present only in dPal brtsegs editions. Absent from all sources except Ms-Oxford, Ms-Drukpa, Ms-Gansu, and Ms-Drepung.

<sup>106</sup> The text mistakenly reads xviii (Zi ling).

<sup>107</sup> Cycle missing in all RBCs except Ms-Drukpa and Ms-Gansu (*Gangs ti se'i skor*). Corresponds to *Cong rong byin dang/ mchong gling brag gis skor* in Ms-BL, *gCog ro 'bri 'tshams kyi mtsho snga sde chung gi skor* in Ms-Smith and Ms-India, and is part of *Jo bo bon ri'i skor* in Ms-Drepung.

<sup>108</sup> Absent from RBC and DNM-RD Unicode.

629.6	230	707.3	(68) lcam ldem bu'i skor
651.1	248	730.1	(69) mchod khang zhal mjal gyi skor
655.2	252	734.3	(70) dwags po 'byon pa'i ma 'ongs lung bstan gyi skor
658.2	254	737.5	(71) dwags po zhal mjal gyi skor
687.6	279	769.3	(72) rje btsun chen po mi la ras pa dang mnyam med dwags po rin po che yab sras kyi zhus pa dang lan gyi skor
703.3	293	786.3	(73) dbus gtad zhal lta dang/ dwags po dbus bzhud kyi skor
706.6	296	790.2	(74) CHU BAR GYI SKOR <sup>109</sup>
716.3	304	800.4	(75) lcam me'i shol bgos ba'i skor <sup>110</sup>
717.4	305	801.4	(76) snye nam rtsar ma'i skor <sup>111</sup>
724.2	311	806.6	(77) dbus gtad zhal ta'i skor
730.2	316	815.2	(78) RONG SOG RTSE GONG GI SKOR <sup>112</sup>
733.5	319	818.6	(79) brin gyi smon lam gyi skor
743.3	350	829.1	<b>xviii. tshe gcig gis zungs jug rdo rje'i sku 'grub cing lus su yal ba'i tshul bstan pa'i yon tan</b>
767.3	348	829.2	[list of rdzong]
768.4	349	856.3	[list of disciples]
769.1	349	857.1	[list of disciples (alt.)]
770.1	350	858.1	[Colophon RBC]
770.4	350	858.4	[Colophon Mi pham mgon po]
770.6	351	858.6	[prayers]
772.5	352	859.1	[colophon Zhwa dmar]

<sup>109</sup> Newly added. Contains part of *lCam me'i skor* (RBC). Absent from *A River of Blessings*.

<sup>110</sup> Corresponds to a part of *lCam me'i skor* (RBC). 2011 has *lCam me'i bsngo ba zhus pa'i skor*.

<sup>111</sup> Enhanced version compared to RBC.

<sup>112</sup> Newly added. Absent from all RBC. Present in *A River of Blessings*.

A River of Blessings (*Byin rlabs gyi chu rgyun*)**Ms-Smith**

*rJe rnal sbyor gyi dbang phyug dpal bzhad pa' i rdo rje'i 'gur 'tshogs tshad phyogs gcig du bsgrig pa lo rgyus kyis sbas pa zhes bya ba bzhugs so.*

**Ms-India**

*rNal 'byor gyi dbang phyug mi la bzhad pa rdo rje'i gsung mgur ma mdzod nag ma zhes pa ka rma pa rang byung rdo rjes phyog gcig tu bkod pa*

Song cycles lacking in earlier versions or significantly changed are in small capitals.

Smith	India	Titles
1b 2	I - 2.1	Introductory verses
2a.2	6.2	<b>I. rigs dang 'brel pa dka' ba spyad pa'i yon tan</b>
28a.3	93.2	YANG RNAM THAR GCIG LA... (alt. version) <sup>113</sup>
33b.3	115.6	<b>II. ting nge 'dzin dang 'brel ba nyams su myong ba'i yon tan</b>
33b.6	115.7	<b>i. 'khor ba la snying po med pa'i yon tan</b>
33b.6	115.7	(1) snga ma bar ma gnyen bdun gyi skor
37a.2	126.5	<b>ii. rmi lam brtar shar ba'i yon tan</b>
37a.2	126.5	(2) snga ma skor gsum
47a.4	161.6	<b>iii. bde drod ngo phrod pa'i yon tan</b>
47a.4	161.6	(3) spo ri spo thon gyi skor
49b.4	161.6	(4) brag dmar chong gling sogs gyi skor
53a.8	182.2	(5) la phyi chu bzang gyis skor
55b.2	190.1	(6) gshen rdor mo'i skor
56b.2	193.7	<b>iv. zas gos kyis 'dun pa dang bral ba'i yon tan</b>
56b.2	193.7	(7) S: la phyi gangs 'gur gyi skor; I: gongs 'gur gyi bskor
61a.5	211.1	<b>v. nyams myong bde bar shar ba'i yon tan</b>
61a.5	211.1	(8) ras chung zhal 'jal gyi skor
63b.1	219.6	(9) mon shing ri'i skor <sup>114</sup>
65a.5	225.7	(10) RAS CHUNG PA LA GDAM PA'I SKOR <sup>115</sup>
66b.1	229.7	<b>vi. rtogs pa lam tu shar ba'i yon tan</b>

<sup>113</sup> Absent from all RBC & DNM-RD. A comparable alternative version is present in Ms-BL

<sup>114</sup> Placed in Quality vi in all RBC, DNM-RD and Ms-BL.

<sup>115</sup> Newly added. Absent in all RBC, DNM-RD and Ms-BL. Contains common songs with DNM-RD *Khu byug dben pa rdzong gi skor*.

66b.1	229.7	(11) S: sing ga la'i nag gseb kyi skor; I: sing ga la'i skor
68a.4	235.4	(12) dpal gro stag tshang gi skor
74b.7	256.3	<b>vii. snang ba 'thun skyen tu shar ba'i yon tan</b>
74b.7	256.3	(13) skyid phug nyi ma'i rdzong gi skor
76b.4	262.1	(14) rje ras pa chen po [S: dpal bzhed pa rdo rje] dang/brag srin mo gnyis kyi zhu ba zhus pa len [I: ling] ba'i skor de bskor chen po'o
82b.8	281.7	<b>viii. chos brgyad rang grol tu shar ba'i yon tan</b>
82b.8	281.7	(15) gnyen bdun rang sar grol ba'i skor
85a.3	288.5	(16) chos brgyad rang grol ba snye nam drod phug sogs kyi skor
88 <sup>2</sup> a.5	301.7	<b>ix. btsod pas mi rdzi ba'i yon tan</b>
88 <sup>2</sup> a.5	301.7	(17) ston pa dar lo'i skor
97a.3	331.1	(18) te pu ba'i skor
104a.8	354.6	(19) zhal lta yo bde'i skor
107b.8	365.6	(20) g.yag ru'i bskor
113a.1	382.2	(21) rkyang 'gur gyi skor
119b.3	404.2	(22) S: mchong lung gi skor; I: brag dmar chong lung gis bskor
120b.5	407.7	<b>x. drin lan bsabs pa'i yon tan</b> <sup>116</sup>
120b.5	407.7	(23) pha ma la drin len bsab pa'i bskor
123b.8	417.7	<b>xi. spyod pa che ba'i yon tan</b>
123b.8	417.7	(24) sgyu 'phrul rigs pa'i skor
128a.1	431.1	(25) THOG LA'I SKOR <sup>117</sup>
131b.8	444.2	(26) lca me'i skor
132b.7	447.3	<b>xii. lha'i lhar gyur pa'i yon tan</b>
132b.7	447.3	(27) 'om chung nag 'dab kyi skor
134a.7	452.4	(28) bal yul nags ma'i skor
137b.4	464.3	(29) phug ron [S: phu ron] sngon mo'i skor
139a.5	469.5	(30) S: RJE RAS PA CHEN PO DPAL BZHED PA'I RDO RJE DANG/ BU MO YID 'PHROG MA GNYIS KYI ZHU BA ZHUS LEN DE YID 'PHROG BA'I BSKOR; I: RJE RAS PA CHEN PO DPAL GZHED PA'I RDO RJE'I DANG/ YID PHROG MA GNYIS KYI ZHUS LEN GYIS BSKOR
144a.6	486.4	<b>xiii. ye shes sgron me bltam pa'i yon tan</b>
144a.6	486.4	(31) brag steng rta sga'i sogs kyi skor
150a.7	508.4	(32) dom lung brag gseb kyi skor

<sup>116</sup> Ms-Smith mistakenly labels it number 11.

<sup>117</sup> Moved from its position in Ms-Lhasa *Thong la'i skor* in Quality xiii. §32.

151b.7	513.6	(33) brag dkar rta so'i skor
153a.5	518.2	(34a) khyi ra ras pa la gsung tshul ma'i 'dra gnyis kyi skor
159b.8	II-15.7	(34b) YANG LO RGYUS GCIG LA... [alt. version] <sup>118</sup>
162b.8	26.5	(35) RA RDZI RAS PA DANG LUG RDZI RAS PA GNYIS KYI SKOR <sup>119</sup>
164a.5	30.7	(36) gtsang gi g.yag ru mkhron khang gi skor
166b.3	39.6	<b>xiv. nus pa che ba'i yon tan</b>
166b.3	39.6	(37) brin gyi la sogs kyi skor
169b.7	51.1	(38) S: [title missing]; I: a phyi snang ma'i skor
172b.7	61.6	(39) JO MO GSAL LE SGRON GYI SKOR <sup>120</sup>
174b.4	65.5	(40) A PHYI SNANG MA DANG MGON MO LCAM LA SOGS KYI SKOR <sup>121</sup>
178a.2	77.5	(41) GANG TI TSE'I SKOR <sup>122</sup>
182a.8	92.5	(42) S: [title missing]; RGYU STON KYI SKOR <sup>123</sup>
184a.7	100.1	(43) NUS PA CHE BA'I SKOR <sup>124</sup>
189b.6	118.6	<b>xv. byin brlab che ba'i yon tan</b>
189b.6	118.6	(44) chu mig dngul 'bum gi skor
198b.7	149.6	(45) zhi ba 'od gyi skor
200a.3	153.7	(46) NYA MA DPAL DAR 'BUM GYIS ZHU BA ZHUS LEN GUNG THANG GI SKOR <sup>125</sup>
205a.3	171.3	(47) legs se 'bum me'i skor
207a.6	179.4	(48) skyid rang [I: rong] rab chad rgan gnyis [I: rgan rgon] kyi bskor
208a.8	183.6	(49) gshen rdor mo'i skor
210a.1	189.6	(50) mang yul gung thang gis bskor
210b.5	192.7	(51) ngan rdzong phug [I: phyug] 'bar la gsung pa'i sba 'gur gyis bskor
214a.3 <sup>126</sup>	204.5	(52) lha rje yang nge la gsung pa'i skor
217a.2	214.6	(53) [S: title missing]; lcong ngo phring gis bskor
218a.3	218.6	<b>xvi. ting nge 'dzin gyis rtsal rdzogs pa'i yon tan</b>
218a.4	218.6	(54) snye nam lung chung gis bskor

<sup>118</sup> Alternative story. Absent from all RBCs and Ms-BL. Present in Ms-BDRC, MS-Lhasa, DNM-RD, and *A River of Blessings*.

<sup>119</sup> Absent in all RBCs except Ms-BDRC, Ms-Lhasa, and Ms-BL. Present in DNM-RD.

<sup>120</sup> Newly added. Absent in Ms-Drepung

<sup>121</sup> Newly added. Absent in Ms-Drepung. Corresponds to Ms-Oxford *a phyi rgan mo'i skor*

<sup>122</sup> Newly added.

<sup>123</sup> Newly added. Absent in Ms-Drepung. M-Smith missing final few lines and chapter title.

<sup>124</sup> Newly added. Ms-Smith missing final few lines and chapter title.

<sup>125</sup> Corresponds to *gung thang lho sgo'i skor* in all other compendia.

<sup>126</sup> Ms-India missing pages 211–16.

219a.6	222.6	(55) LO RGYUS YOD MED 'THOR BU'I SKOR <sup>127</sup>
230a.2	260.6	<b>xvii. phyag rgya chen po ngo sprod pa'i yon tan</b>
230a.2	260.6	(56a) [Tshe ring ma 1] <sup>128</sup>
235b.8	281.3	(56b) [Tshe ring ma 2] bdud rtsi 'od kyis phreng ba
243a.6	307.2	(56c) [Tshe ring ma 3] rje ras pa chen pod pal bzhad pa'i rdo rje dang 'jig rten mig bsgyur gyis mkha' 'gro lnga'i 'phrang xxx gnad kyis xxx la dri sa chen dang bcas pa'i xxx glu ru blang sa snams so/
251b.7	337.5	(56d) [Tshe ring ma 4] bkra shis tshe ring ma'i bskor ste bskor che ba/ <sup>129</sup>
253a.5	342.5	(57) [S: title missing]; GCOG RO 'BRI 'TSHAMS KYI MTSO SNGA SDE CHUNG GI SKOR <sup>130</sup>
257b.3	357.4	(58) jo bo bon ri'i skor
260a.8	367.4	(59) brin gyi lha brong gyi skor
261b.1	370.7	(60) ras chung dbus gzhud kyis skor
266a.3	386.6	(61) dbus gtad bar ma'i skor
267a.7	390.4	(62) dbus gtad 'og ma snye nya ma'i skor
271a.6	403.5	(63) lha lcam ldem bu'i skor
275b.1	416.3	(64) mchod khang zhal mjal gyi skor
276b.6	421.1	(65) dag po 'byon pa'i ma 'ongs lung bstan gyi skor
278.4	427.1	(66) dag po zhal mjal gyi skor
288b.5	453.4	(67) rje ras pa chen po dang mnyam med dag po rin po che yab sras kyis zhus pa dang len gyi skor
295a.1	478.2	(68) dbus gtad zhal da dang dag po dbus gzhud kyis skor
296a.5	481.7	(69) SNYE NAM TSER [I: RTSED] MA'I SKOR <sup>131</sup>
299b.1	491.5	(70) dbus gtad zhal da'i skor
301a.5	497.2	(71) RANG [I: RA] SOGS RTSE GANG GI SKOR <sup>132</sup>
303a.3	502.6	(72) lcam me'i bsngo ba'i bskor
303b.1	504.1	(73) [S: title missing]; brin gyis smon lam bkra shis kyis bskor

<sup>127</sup> Newly added. Contains many songs from Ms-Oxford *mGur phran*.

<sup>128</sup> The Ms-Smith/Ms-India version of the first two Tshe ring ma episodes diverges slightly from the RBC and Ms-Lhasa in that it combines the first two accounts into a single song cycle, eliding the colophon to the first episode

<sup>129</sup> Ms-Smith has some repeats.

<sup>130</sup> Cycle missing in all RBCs. Corresponds to *Ti rtse'i skor* in Ms-Drukpa and Ms-Gansu, *mTsho rnga del chung gi skor* in DNM-RD, *Cong rong byin dang/ mchong gling brag gis skor* in Ms-BL, and is part of *Jo bo bon ri'i skor* in Ms-Drepung.

<sup>131</sup> Chapter enhanced and displaced compared to RBC.

<sup>132</sup> Separated from Ms-Lhasa §57.

307a.7	517.1	<b>xviii. tshe gcig gis zung 'jug rdo rje'i sku 'grub cing 'ja' lus su yal ba'i tshul bstan pa'i yon tan</b>
317b3	551.4	[list of disciples]
318a.3	553.2	[colophon]
Ø	554.7	[I: scribal colophon]

## Ms-Drepung

Song cycles lacking in earlier versions or significantly changed are in small capitals.

Legends are in italics. || separates the legends of a same page.

Due to the poor quality of the reproduction of the ms. some legends were reconstructed based on the text and translated in English.

### Volume 111

2.1	[Introductory verses]
	2 [ <i>Śākyamuni</i> ]    <i>O rgyan padma 'byung gnas</i>
	3 <i>rDo rje 'chang chen po</i>    <i>grub chen Te lo pa</i>
4.1	<b>L. dka' ba spyad pa'i von tan</b>
	5 [ <i>missing</i> ]    <i>rje Mar pa lo tstsha ba</i>
	7 <i>rje btsun Mi la ras pa</i>    <i>chos rje Dwags po</i>
	9 <i>chos rje Phag mo gru pa</i>    <i>chos rje sTag lung thang pa</i>
	10 <i>Thos pa dga' and a master (g.Yung ston pa?)</i>
	11 <i>sKu yal rin po che</i>    <i>Thos pa dga' and Lha rje gnub chung</i>    <i>Sangs rgyas yar byon</i>
	13 <i>rje Sangs rgyas dbon rin po che</i>    <i>O rgyan mgon po</i>
	15 <i>rGyal ba'i mtshan can</i>    <i>Ratna kā ra</i>
	16 <i>Thos pa dga', a master and his wife (?)</i>
	17 <i>Grags pa rgyal mtshan</i>    <i>rje Mi g.yo mgon po</i>
	18 <i>Thos pa dga' and his master (g.Yung ston?) casting hail</i>
	19 <i>Kun spang rin po che</i>    <i>chos rje 'Jig rten dbang phyug</i>
	23 <i>Thos pa dga' and two masters</i>
	25 <i>Thos pa dga' and Rong ston lha dga'</i>
	27 <i>Thos pa dga' plough the field for Marpa</i>
	30 <i>Thos pa dga', Marpa and bDag med ma</i>
	35 <i>Marpa asks Thos pa dga' to build towers</i>
	46 <i>rJe btsun gives a letter to rNgog (?)</i>
	52 <i>rJe btsun receives teachings from rNgog (?)</i>

	55	<i>Marpa with bDag med ma gives a dbang to rNgog, Mes, Dol and rJe btsun</i>
	61	<i>Marpa blesses rJe btsun by touching his head</i>
	68	<i>Marpa, bDag med ma, rJe btsun and the four pillars dream</i>
	72	<i>Marpa gives rJe btsun instructions before retreat</i>
	80	<i>rJe btsun prostrates before Marpa before leaving</i>
81.4		<b>YANG RNAM THAR GCIG LA... [alternative story]<sup>133</sup></b>
	82	<i>rJe btsun takes his leave from Marpa</i>
	87	<i>rJe btsun meditating in a cave</i>
	89	<i>rJe btsun with hunters (?)</i>
	90	<i>rJe btsun and his sister Preta</i>
	91	<i>rJe btsun chased by his aunt</i>
	93	<i>rJe btsun receiving offerings from his aunt and sister</i>
	96	<i>rJe btsun, Marpa and bDag med ma</i>
	97	<i>rJe btsun receives his name rDo rje rGyal mtshan from Marpa, accompanied by bDag med ma and rNgog (?)</i>
98.2		<b>II. ting nge 'dzin dang 'brel ba nvams su mvong ba'i yon tan</b>
99.1		<b>i. 'khor ba la snying po med pa'i yon tan</b>
99.1		(1) snga ma bar ma gnyen bdun gyi skor
	99	<i>rJe btsun meditating</i>
	103	<i>The aunt beats rJe btsun</i>
107.4		<b>ii. rmi lam brtar shar ba'i yon tan</b>
107.4		(2) snga ma skor gsum
	108	<i>rJe btsun</i>
	111	<i>rJe btsun and gShen rdor mo</i>
	113	<i>rJe btsun and his sister</i>
	116	<i>rJe btsun and his sister</i>
	123	<i>rJe btsun, his sister and (?)</i>
	127	<i>The sister and the aunt visit rJe btsun in retreat</i>
	131	<i>rJe btsun and his sister</i>
	134	<i>rJe btsun and his sister Nyi shar sgron me</i>
137.6		<b>iii. bde drod ngo phrod pa'i yon tan</b>
138.1		(3) spo ri spo thon gyi skor
	139	<i>rJe btsun sings naked before his sister and aunt</i>
	143	<i>rJe btsun and gShen rdor mo (?)</i>
144.4		(4) brag dmar chong gling sogs gyi skor
	145	<i>rJe btsun gathers wood    rJe btsun and Marpa riding a lion</i>
	149	<i>rJe btsun and seven atsara</i>
	154	<i>rJe btsun facing a rabbit riding a fox</i>
154.6		(5) la phyi chu bzang gyis skor

<sup>133</sup> Absent from all RBCs & DNM-RD. A comparable alternative version is present in Ms-BL



154b	<i>rJe btsun facing demons</i>
160.4	(6) gshin rdor mo'i skor
160	<i>rJe btsun, gShen rdor mo and sTon pa Shag gu</i>
163.3	<b>iv. zas gos kyis 'dun pa bral ba'i yon tan</b>
163.4	(7) gangs mgur skyi skor
164	<i>rJe btsun, gShen rdor mo and a monk</i>
168	<i>rJe btsun sings to sTon pa shag dgu and gShen rdor mo</i>
174	<i>rJe btsun and lCam lhan chig skyes pa'i sgron ma</i>
176.6	<b>v. nyams myong bde bar shar ba'i yon tan</b>
176.6	(8) ras chung zhal mjal gyi skor
180	<i>rJe btsun and Ras chung</i>
185.1	(9) mon shing ri'i skor <sup>134</sup>
186	<i>rJe btsun and Ras chung</i>
189.6	(10) RAS CHUNG PA LA GDAM PA'I SKOR <sup>135</sup>
194	<i>rJe btsun and Ras chung</i>
195.4	<b>vi. rtogs pa lam tu shar ba'i yon tan</b>
195.4	(11) sing ga la'i nag gseb kyi skor
200.1	(12) dpal gro stag tshang sogs kyi skor
200	<i>rJe btsun and five monks asking for instructions</i>
215	<i>rJe btsun and a patroness</i>
218	<i>rJe btsun and patroness 'Bum me</i>
221.1	<b>vii. snang ba mthun rkyen du shar ba'i yon tan</b>
221.1	(13) skyid phug nyi ma'i rdzong gi skor
221	<i>rJe btsun and gShin rdor mo</i>
225.4	(14) rje ras pa chen po dang/ brag srin mo gnyis kyis zhu ba zhus len ba'i skor che ba'o
226	<i>rJe btsun and a rock demoness leading a red man riding a deer</i>
242.2	<b>viii. chos brgyad rang grol tu shar ba'i yon tan</b>
242.2	(15) gnyen bdun rang sar grol ba'i skor
242	<i>rJe btsun and his sister</i>
247.5	(16) chos brgyad rang grol ba snye nam drod phug sogs kyi skor
256.4	<b>ix. btsod pas mi rdzi ba'i yon tan</b>
256.4	(17) ston pa dar lo'i skor
260	<i>rJe btsun, Ras chung (?) and three monks</i>
266	<i>Ras chung, and rJe btsun facing three teachers</i>
271	<i>Ras chung threatens Lo ston in front of rJe btsun and Dar lo</i>

<sup>134</sup> Placed in Quality vi in all RBCs, DNM-RD and Ms-BL.

<sup>135</sup> Newly added. Absent in all RBCs, DNM-RD and Ms-BL. Contains common songs with DNM-RD *Khu byug dben pa rdzong gi skor*.

281.5	(18) te pu ba'i skor
282	<i>Ras chung and rJe btsun before his departure for India</i>
288	<i>Vajravārāhī, Ras chung and a Nepalese king on top of his roof</i>
291	<i>Ras chung and Te pu pa</i>
295	<i>A paṇḍit dancing, Ma gcig sgrub pa'i rgyal mo (?) bestowing a life abhiṣeka (?) to Ras chung</i>
302.2	(19) zhal lta yo bde'i skor
303	<i>rJe btsun welcomes Ras chung</i>
311.4	(20) g.yag ru'i bskor
312	<i>rJe btsun stays inside a yak horn with Ras chung watching</i>
316	<i>rJe btsun sits under a flower alongside Ras chung</i>
319	<i>old woman's corpse 1</i>
320	<i>old woman's corpse 2</i>
325.2	(21) rkyang 'gur gyi skor
325	<i>rJe btsun hides texts</i>
326	<i>Ras chung watches kyangs</i>
329	<i>sad Ras chung #1</i>
332	<i>sad Ras chung #2</i>
337	<i>miracle #1 flying</i>
338	<i>miracle #2 triple rJe btsun</i>
343.4	(22) mchong lung gi skor
344	<i>rJe btsun, Ras chung, 'Bri sgom and Se ban</i>
346.4	<b>x. drin lan bsabs pa'i yon tan</b>
346.4	(23) pha ma'i drin lan bsab pa'i bskor
349	<i>rJe btsun and his sister</i>
354.3	<b>xi. spyod pa che ba'i yon tan</b>
354.3	(24) sgyu 'phrul rig pa'i skor
355	<i>rJe btsun and Ras chung</i>
363.1	(25) THOG LA'I SKOR <sup>136</sup>
363	<i>rJe btsun and Pha dam pa</i>
373.5	(26) lca me'i skor
374	<i>rJe btsun and Ras chung</i>
376.6	<b>xii. lha'i lhar gyur pa'i yon tan</b>
377.1	(27) 'om chung nags 'dab kyi skor
379	<i>rJe btsun and Ras chung</i>
380.5	(28) bal yul nags ma'i skor
382	<i>rJe btsun and Ras chung</i>
384	<i>rJe btsun, Ras chung, Dharma Bodhi &amp; two disciples</i>
389.6	(29) phug ron sngon mo'i skor

<sup>136</sup> Moved from its position in Ms-Lhasa *Thong la'i skor* quality xiii, cycle #33.

	391	<i>rJe btsun with eight pigeons</i>
394.1		(30) YID 'PHROG MA 'I SKOR <sup>137</sup>
	395	<i>rJe btsun answering to a handsome maid</i>
407.6		<b>xiii. ye shes sgron me bltam pa'i yon tan</b>
407.6		(31) brag steng rta sga sogs kyi skor
	409	<i>rJe btsun and Ras chung</i>
422.6		(32) dom lung brag gseb kyi skor
	423	<i>rJe btsun and Ras chung</i>
	427	<i>rJe btsun, Ras chung and 'Bri sgom</i>
429.2		(33) brag dkar rta so'i skor
433.1		(34a) khyi ra ras pa la gsung tshul mi 'dra ba gnyis kyi skor
	437	<i>rJe btsun, a deer, a dog, and a hunter</i>
	447	<i>rJe btsun, a deer, a dog, a hunter, and his wife</i>
452.2		(34b) [KHYI RA RAS PA VERSION II] <sup>138</sup>
	452	<i>rJe btsun, a deer, a dog, and a hunter</i>
460.6		(35) RA RDZI RAS PA DANG LUG RDZI RAS PA GNYIS KYI SKOR <sup>139</sup>
	461	<i>rJe btsun, a shepherd and his goats</i>
464.4		(36) gtsang gi g.yag ru mkhron khang gi skor
	467	<i>rJe btsun, the dge bshes from g.Yag ru and Zla ba nor bu</i>
471.4		<b>xiv. nus pa che ba'i yon tan</b>
471.4		(37) brin gyi la so'i skor
	472	<i>rJe btsun, Ras chung, two rgyal po and a woman</i>
477.3		(38) a phyi snang ba sogs kyi skor
	478	<i>rJe btsun and old lady</i>
	482	<i>rJe btsun, Ras chung and the rich lady bSod nams 'bum</i>
486.1		(39) BZANG RGYUD PHYAG TSHANG GI SKOR <sup>140</sup>
	488	<i>rJe btsun and sTong rje ma mo mkhan</i>
498.3		(40) GANG TI TSE 'I SKOR <sup>141</sup>
	502	<i>rJe btsun, Ras chung and sTon pa shag dgu</i>
509.3		(41) NUS PA CHE BA 'I MGUR SOGS KYI SKOR <sup>142</sup>
	511	<i>rJe btsun, Se ras and sPyan snga ba 'i slob ma</i>

<sup>137</sup> Absent in all RBCs. Corresponds to the cycle *rJe mi la ras pa dang bu mo yid 'phrog ma...* in Ms-Lhasa, DNM-RD and *A River of Blessings*.

<sup>138</sup> Alternative story. Absent in RBCs and Ms-BL. Present in Ms-BDRC, Ms-Lhasa, DNM-RD and *A River of Blessings*.

<sup>139</sup> Absent in RBCs except Ms-BDRC and Ms-Lhasa. Present in DNM-RD, *A River of Blessings* and MS-BL.

<sup>140</sup> Absent in all RBCs, DNM-RD 2006, Ms-Smith & Ms-India. Present only in Ms-Oxford, Ms-Drukpa, Ms-Gansu, and DNM-RD 2013.

<sup>141</sup> Newly added. Absent in all RBCs and DNM-RD.

<sup>142</sup> Newly added. Absent in all RBCs and DNM-RD.

515	<i>rJe btsun and a patroness</i>
525	<i>rJe btsun and gSal le sgron</i>
528	<i>rJe btsun, Ras chung and two women</i>

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1.5	<b>xv. byin rlabs che ba'i yon tan</b>
1.5	(42) chu mig dngul 'bum gi skor
2	<i>rJe btsun and youngster riding a horse crossing a river</i>
4	<i>rJe btsun and youngster offering a horse</i>
6	<i>...offering boots</i>
7	<i>...offering coat</i>
9	<i>...offering shirt</i>
10	<i>...offering helmet</i>
11	<i>...offering turquoise</i>
12	<i>...offering bow, quiver and sword</i>
14	<i>...offering sash</i>
15	<i>...offering monastery</i>
17	<i>...offering sister</i>
18	<i>...offering trousers</i>
22	<i>rJe btsun and youngster threatening to commit suicide</i>
25.4	(43) zhi ba 'od kyi skor
26	<i>rJe btsun, Dar ma dbang phyug and Zhi ba 'od</i>
28.5	(44) gung thang lho sgo'i skor
36	<i>rJe btsun and dPal dar 'bum</i>
42.1	(45) legs se 'bum me'i skor
42	<i>rJe btsun and Legs se 'bum</i>
47.5	(46) skyi rong rab chad rgan rgog gi skor
48	<i>rJe btsun, Ras chung and a despaired elderly couple</i>
50.4	(47) gshen rdor mo'i skor
51	<i>rJe btsun and gShin rdor mo</i>
54.4	(48) mang yul gung thang gis bskor
55	<i>rJe btsun, Ras chung and people repairing a house</i>
56.5	(49) sba mgur gyi skor
57	<i>rJe btsun, Se ban, cows and Byang chub 'bar (?)</i>
65.5	(50) lha rje yang nge'i skor
66	<i>rJe btsun with two disciples and a patron (?) in front of a house</i>
73.2	(51) cong rong brin gyi skor
73	<i>rJe btsun, a disciple and two girls</i>
76.1	<b>xvi. ting nge 'dzin gyis rtsal rdzogs pa'i yon tan</b>
76.2	(52) snye nam lung chung gi skor ro

	76	<i>rJe btsun and Ras chung</i>
79.4		(53) 'THOR BU'I SKOR <sup>143</sup>
	81	<i>rJe btsun, [Ngan rdzong] Bodhi Radza, Zhi ba 'od, and bKra shis brtsegs</i>
114.5		<b>xvii. phyag rgya chen po ngo sprod pa'i yon tan</b>
114.6		(54) [Tshe ring ma 1] zhu lan mang ngag mu tig gi phreng ba
	116	<i>rJe btsun and the five demonesses</i>
131.4		(54b) [Tshe ring ma 2] drin lan bdud rtsi 'od kyi phreng ba
	133	<i>rJe btsun and the Tshe ring mched lnga</i>
	145	<i>rJe btsun and the five bKra shis tshe ring sisters</i>
154.6		(54c) [Tshe ring ma 3] mu tig gi rgyan phreng
	156	<i>A woman guiding rJe btsun standing on her long piece of cloth</i>
	158	<i>rJe btsun bestowing abhiṣeka to Tshe ring ma</i>
	162	<i>rJe btsun and the Tshe ring mched lnga</i>
180.6		(54d) [Tshe ring ma 4] bde stong ye shes sprin gyi phreng ba bkra shis tshe ring ma'i skor che ba'o
	181	<i>rJe btsun and the bKra shis tshe ring mched lnga</i>
185.2		(55) jo bo bon ri'i skor
	185	<i>rJe btsun and a woman presenting a child</i>
	189	<i>rJe btsun, Ras chung and five girls</i>
	202	<i>rJe btsun with (?), 'Bri sgom, Zhi ba 'od, (?), Ras chung, Se ban, Ra rdzi ras pa</i>
209.5		(56) brin gyi lha grang gi skor
212.4		(57) ras chung dbus bzhud kyi skor
	214	<i>rJe btsun and Ras chung</i>
225.3		(58) dbus gtad bar ma'i skor
	226	<i>Ras chung and an unknown ras pa</i>
	227	<i>rJe btsun and Ras chung</i>
229.2		(59) dbus gtad 'og ma ste nya ma'i skor
	229	<i>rJe btsun and people from Nya ma bringing provisions</i>
239.4		(60) lha lcam ldem bu'i skor
	240	<i>Ras chung rdo rje grags and lHa lcam</i>
	243	<i>Ras chung and lHa lcam</i>
251.5		(61) mchod khang zhal mjal gyi skor
	252	<i>rJe btsun [bestowing abhiṣeka to] Ras chung</i>
255.4		(62) dwags po 'byon pa'i ma 'ongs lung bstan gyi skor
	256	<i>rJe btsun and Ras chung</i>
259.6		(63) dwags po zhal mjal gyi skor ro

<sup>143</sup> Newly added. Corresponds to *Lo rgyus yod med 'thor bu'i skor* in Ms-Smith and Ms-India. Contains many songs from Ms-Oxford *mGur phran*.

261	<i>dGe bshes Sha ba gling pa and bhikṣu bSod nams rin chen</i>
266	<i>Ras chung, Se ban, rJe btsun and Dwags po</i>
269	<i>rJe btsun rin po che and Dwags po rin po che</i>
274	<i>rJe btsun rin po che and Dwags po rin po che</i>
278	<i>rJe btsun rin po che and Dwags po rin po che</i>
285.1	(64) rje ras pa chen po dang / mnyam med dwags po rin po che yab sras kyis zhus lan gyi skor
288	<i>rJe btsun, Dwags po and Ras chung</i>
297	<i>rJe btsun chen po and Dwags po rin po che</i>
304.2	(65) dbus gtad zhal lta dang/ dwags po dbus bzhud kyis skor
301 <sup>144</sup>	<i>Dwags po, with two merchants, receives a cane and a cotton cloth from rJe btsun (?)</i>
305.2	(66) snye nam tsar ma'i skor
314.1	(67) dbus gtad zhal lta'i skor
316	<i>rJe btsun and Ras chung</i>
319.1	(68) rong sogs rtse gong gi skor
320	<i>Ras chung, lHa lcam ldem bu and dGa' le of Zhang afflicted with leper</i>
323.4	(69) lcam me'i bsngo ba'i skor
324	<i>rJe Mi la and rje btsun Tārā</i>
326	<i>rJe btsun rin po che and a fisherman offering his net</i>
335.1	(70) brin gyi smon lam dang bkra shis kyis skor
335.1	<b>xviii. tshe gcig gis zung 'jug rdo rje'i sku 'grub cing 'ja' lus su yal ba'i tshul bstan pa'i yon tan</b>
336	<i>rJe btsun, 'Bri sgom, and Se ban</i>
341	<i>rJe btsun receives poisoned yogurt from a leper</i>
344	<i>rJe btsun [appears to] Ras chung [in Loro]</i>
348	<i>People perceiving [the rJe btsun's] body, Heruka, sPyan ras gzigs, a stupa, etc.</i>
353	<i>rJe btsun's funeral pyre between ras pa making offerings and benefactors</i>
356	<i>Se ban, Zhi ba 'od, and 'Bri sgom</i>
357	<i>rJe btsun appears in a stupa before Zhi ba 'od, Se ban and 'Bri sgom</i>
364.3	[list of disciples]
366.1	[colophon]
367.3	[list of places]
367.6	['ba' brom pa quote]
372.2	[lo rgyus]

<sup>144</sup> Pages 301 and 302 are misplaced. They come between 304 and 305.

373	<i>Ngan rdzong, Zhi ba 'od, Ras chung pa and Tshe ring ma receive a lung from rJe btsun</i>
374	<i>Chos rje Dus gsum mkhyen pa hear the transmission [of the text] from Ras chung</i>
374.3	[ending prayers]

## Ms-British Library

Song cycles lacking in earlier versions or significantly changed are in small capitals.

Legends are in italics. [] indicates corrections. || separates the legends of a same page

2a.3	<b>I. dka' ba spyad pa'i yon tan ni</b>
3a	<i>(?) thos pa dga' (?) rta phul ba</i>
3b	<i>[illegible]</i>
4a	<i>pha spun (?) mkhar brgyal ba (?)</i>
6b	<i>[rong] ston lha dga' / thos pa dga'</i>
8b	<i>mar pa dang mjal nas phru rko ba</i>
9a	<i>(?) mar pa nas chos zhus pa</i>
10a	<i>mar pa / [illegible] / thos pa dga'    [illegible]</i>
10b	<i>gser mkhar dgu thog bzhengs / thos pa dga'    mar pa / [bdag?]</i>
11a	<i>[mar pa] lotstsha / mthu chen / bdag med ma</i>
11b	<i>rngog ston / mthu chen    mthu chen / rngog ston</i>
13a	<i>mar pa / mthu chen</i>
13b	<i>mar pa / bu slob rnams la dbang bskur</i>
14b	<i>mar pa / mes rngog la sogs bu chen rnams</i>
15a	<i>[illegible]</i>
16b	<i>rngog ston gyi 'bul ba / mthu chen gyi zang phul ba / mar pa</i>
19a	<i>mar pa / mthu chen</i>
21a	<i>bdag med ma / mar pa / mthu chen    mar pa / mthu chen</i>
21b.2	<b>II. ting nge 'dzin dang 'brel ba'i yon tan bcu bdun</b>
21b.5	<b>i. 'khor ba la snying po med pa'i yon tan</b>
21b.5	<i>(1) snga mas gong ma gnyen lugs gyis skor</i>
22a	<i>mar pa / mthu chen</i>
24a	<i>a ne (?) khyi (?) / thos pa dga'</i>
24b.5	<b>ii. rmi lam brdar shar ba'i yon tan</b>
24b.5	<i>(2) snga ma snga ba skor</i>
26b	<i>mi la de nyid</i>
32a.5	<b>iii. bde drod ngo 'phrod pa'i yon tan</b>

32a.5	(3) [spo ri spo mthon gyi skor] <sup>145</sup>
43b.2	(4) BRAG DMAR MCHONG GLING GI SKOR <sup>146</sup>
37a	<i>mar pa / mi la ras pa    mi la ras pa / mar pa</i>
38b	<i>rngog / klog ston (?) / mdo sde (?) / mar pa / mi la / me ston (?) / mgo yag</i>
39b	<i>mar pa / rje btsun / ka bzhi (?) chen</i>
42b	<i>rje btsun / yul snye nam gyis (?) dpon g.yog</i>
44a	<i>brag dmar mchong gling / rje btsun mi las shing btus pa / mar pa</i>
46a	<i>(?) kyi a tsa ra rnams / rje btsun</i>
47a.7	(5) LA STOD RGYAL GYI RTSIB RI YI SKOR <sup>147</sup>
48b.3	(6) la phyi chu bzang gi skor
48b	<i>chu bzang gi 'dre dmag tshogs</i>
52a.4	(7) gshen rdor mo'i skor
52a	<i>rje btsun / la phyi chu bzang gi 'dre dmag gi zas sna phul ba    rje btsun / ston pa shak 'gu / gshan rdor mo</i>
54a.1	<b>iv. zas gos kyi 'dun pa dang bral ba'i yon tan</b>
54a.2	(8) gangs 'gur gyi skor
55b	<i>rje btsun / rje btsun gsa' ru sprul pa / yon bdag rnams</i>
57a	<i>yon bdag nams dang 'grogs nas byon pa / mi la ras pas nang 'gur ring mo gsung pa</i>
60a.6	<b>v. nyam myong bde bar shar ba'i yon tan</b>
60a.6	(9) ras chung zhal mjal gyis skor
62b	<i>yul snye nam gyi tshangs 'dus / rnams dmar tshangs pa rnams</i>
64a.2	<b>vi. rtogs pa lam du shar ba'i yon tan</b>
64a.2	(10) mon gyis shing ri'i skor
64b	<i>rje btsun / klo mon gyi ri khrod / ras chung pa</i>
67a.1	(11) seng ga'i nag gseb kyi skor
67a	<i>rje btsun / ras chung pa / ka ti shel phug nam mkha' rdzong / gshen rdor mo sogs yon bdag rnams</i>
69a.7	(12) dpal gros tag tshang gi skor
69b	<i>ras chung pa / rje btsun / gnas dpal gro stag tshangs / yul gyi bhande rnams</i>
71a	<i>ras chung pa / rje btsun / skyid phug nyi ma rdzongs / gshen rdor mo'i sogs</i>
72a.3	<b>vii. mthun rkyen du shar ba'i yon tan</b>
72a.3	(13) skyid phug nyi ma rdzong gi skor

<sup>145</sup> End title missing.

<sup>146</sup> Edited cycle. Contains an alternate story corresponding more or less to *A River of Blessings Yang lo rgyus gcig la...* in part I.

<sup>147</sup> Absent from any other source except Ms-Drukpa and Ms-Gansu.



73b	<i>dpal gro stag tshangs seng phug / ras chung pa / rje btsun / 'bri sgom</i>
74b.5	(14) <i>gung thang ling ba'i brag de la mi la ras pa dang brag srin mo gnyis kyi zhu ba zhu len/ ling ba'i skor de skor che ba</i>
75a	<i>gshin rdor mo / rje btsun / ras chung pa</i>
76b	<i>ling ba'i brag la brag srin mo'i [?] bstan pa / rje btsun / bud med mi dmar po gla ba la zhon pa</i>
77b	<i>rje btsun gyis zhabs la khyi mo 'dzus (?) pa</i>
81b	<i>rje btsun la brag srin mo dpon g.yog gi zas sna phul ba</i>
83b.3	(15) [NGAM RDZONGS STON PA BO DHI RA DZA NI] <sup>148</sup>
84a	<i>gtsang la stod kyi sa cha / 'bri bhee (?) / ras chung pa / rje btsun / tshongs pa rnams</i>
84a.2	(16) <i>g.yag ru mgron khang gi skor</i>
84a	<i>ras chung pa / rje btsun / brag dmar ling ba</i>
84b	<i>rje btsun / [illegible] / g.yag ru ba / dge shes g.yag ru [illegible]</i>
87a.3	(17) <i>brin gyi sring te phugs su bzhugs pa'i skor</i>
87b	<i>rje btsun / zla ba'i nor rgyun (?) / yul gtsang ga g.yag ru mgron khang</i>
88b	<i>rje btsun / se ban ras pa</i>
89a	<i>rje btsun la / ras chung pas sman dang 'o ma bslang</i>
89a.2	(18) [SNYE NAM RTSAR MA] <sup>149</sup>
90b	<i>rje btsun [?] phebs mi [?] mo byed pa    rje btsun / mgron pa</i>
91b.3	(19) <i>RJE MI LA RAS PA DANG BU MO YID 'PHROG MA GNYIS KYI ZHUS LEN 'GUR DU GSUNG PA</i> <sup>150</sup>
92b	<i>rje btsun mi la ras pa bu mo yid 'phrog ma gcig gi zhus len</i>
100a.5	<b>viii. chos brgyad rang grol gyi yon tan</b>
100a.5	(20) <i>gnyen 'dun rang sar grol ba'i skor</i>
101a	<i>rje btsun / gnas snye nam drod phug / sring mo pre ta ma / a ne</i>
101b	<i>rje btsun gyi nyi zer la na bza' bka' zhing chu bo kyen du 'dren pa bu tshogs (?) kyi ngo mtshar gyis nas rtsad mo sna tshogs byed pa'o</i>
102b.5	(21) <i>chos brgyad rang sar grol ba snye nam drod phug gis skor</i>
103a	<i>glang btsun ras pa / rje btsun / 'geg btsun ras pa / gnas nye snam drod phug</i>
105a.1	<b>ix. rtsod pa'smi rdzi ba'i yon tan</b>
105a.1	(22) <i>ston pa dar lo'i skor</i>

<sup>148</sup> End title missing. Absent from all other sources.

<sup>149</sup> End title missing. Absent from all other sources.

<sup>150</sup> Absent in all RBCs. Present in Ms-Lhasa, DNM-RD, and *A River of Blessings*.

106a	<i>ras chung pa / rje btsun / ston pa gsum</i>
108b	<i>ras chung pa / rje btsun / lo ston</i>
110a	<i>ras chung pa / rje btsun / dar lo</i>
111b.5	(23) <i>te pu pa'i skor</i>
112a	<i>rje btsun / yul snye nam drod phug / ras chung</i>
114b	<i>ras chung pa / bal po rgyal po la phyag rten phul ba</i>
118a	<i>grub pa'i rgyal mo ras chung pa tshe dbang bskur</i>
118b	<i>'dod 'jo ba / (?) sdong po / ye shes gyi mkha' 'gro ma (?) / ras chung pa / zla ba'i (?)</i>
122a	<i>te pu gsangs sngags sdong po / ras chung pa    ras chung pa / ba ri ma</i>
122a.5	(24) <i>zhal ta yo bde'i skor</i>
125b	<i>ras chung pa / rje btsun gyis ras chung pa'i khres po khur ba</i>
128a.2	(25) <i>g.yag ru'i skor</i>
128b	<i>g.yag ru / ras chung pa / thang dpal mo dpal thang du g.yag ru'i skor</i>
131a	<i>ras chung pa / rje btsun / rgan mo'i ro / 'pho ba 'jon ma'i skor ces pa</i>
133a.6	(26) <i>rkyang 'gur gyi skor</i>
133b	<i>[illegible]    rkyang ma rnams / ras chung pa chu bslang ba spyang ku (?)</i>
134a	<i>rje btsun / ras chung pa</i>
134b	<i>rje btsun / ras chung pa    rje btsun / ras chung pa</i>
135a	<i>rje btsun / ras chung pa / rje btsun gyi rdzu 'phrul sku (?) ston spris (?) rnams bstan</i>
135b	<i>ras chung pa / rje btsun / [illegible]</i>
136a	<i>rje btsun 'dra 'dra gsum dang / ras chung pa</i>
138a	<i>rje btsun mi la ras pa la ras chung pa dpe cha phyag du phul</i>
139a.3	(27) <i>mchong lung gi skor</i>
140b.7	<b>x. drin len bsab pa'i yon tan</b>
140b.7	(28) <i>pha ma drin la bsab pa'i skor</i>
145a.3	<b>xi. spyod pa che ba'i yon tan</b>
145a.4	(29) <i>sgyu 'phrul rig pa'i skor</i>
146a	<i>rje btsun / rje btsun la grwa pa rnams kyi mandal phul ba</i>
150b.2	(30) <i>leam me'i skor</i>
150b	<i>bu slob rnams mthong snang rje btsun ras chung pa</i>
152a.2	<b>xii. lha'i lhar gyur pa'i yon tan</b>
152a.2	(31) <i>'om chung nag 'dab ma'i skor</i>
152a	<i>bon pa'i bu mo yon bdag rnams    rje btsun mi la ras pa / 'om chung gi gtso bon rnams kyi mdun zhus nas / drin len zhus (?)</i>
153a	<i>rje btsun / rgyal pos ras dang a ru ra phul ba</i>

154a.2	(32) bal phug nag ma'i kor
155b	<i>dharma bodhi dpon slob / mi la ras pa dpon slob</i>
156a	<i>dharma bodhi la sogs gra dpon slob lnga / rje btsun chen po</i>
159a.3	(33) phug ron sngon mo'i skor
159b	<i>rje btsun la / 'bras phul phug ron sngon mo</i>
160b	<i>rje btsun / lha'i bu mo brgyad</i>
161b.3	<b>xiii. ye shes sgron me bltam pa'i yon tan</b>
161b.4	(34) brag steng rta sga'i skor
161b	<i>rje btsun / ras chung pa ci 'dul (?) / brag rta sga bgyi skor ro</i>
164b.3	(35) dom lung brag gseb kyi skor
166a	<i>ngam rdzong / ras chung pa / rje btsun / 'bri sgom / khyi ra ras pa</i>
166b.5	(36) brag dkar rta gso'i skor
167a	<i>rje btsun / ras par do rje dbang phyug / yon bdag rnams</i>
168b.7	(37) thog la'i skor
169a	<i>thog la dam pa / mi la / dam pa dang rje btsun gnyis rtsa 'jags du bzhugs</i>
171a.2	(38) khyi ra ba'i skor
171a	<i>sha wa / rje btsun / khyi mo / khyi ra ba</i>
175a.4	(39) [MISSING TITLE] <sup>151</sup>
175b	<i>rje btsun / nya ma dang yon bdag rnams</i>
178a	<i>ras chung pa / rje btsun / bsgre po ba dang yon bdag rnams</i>
178b	<i>rong chung ras pa dang gra pa rnams / rje btsun / ras chung pa</i>
180a	<i>rje btsun / yon bdag rnams</i>
181a.4	<b>xiv. nus pa che ba'i yon tan</b>
181a.4	(40) brin gyis la so'i skor
181a	<i>rje btsun / rdzing bu rgyan gyi bu rnams kyi rje btsun brdung (?) ba</i>
181b	<i>rje btsun / rje btsun chu'i ting nge 'dzin / 'dre mo / chu'i ting nge 'dzin / ras chung pa / 'dre'i cho 'phrul sna tshogs /</i>
182b	<i>ras chung pa / rje btsun / brin pa'i yon bdag rnams</i>
183a	<i>[text missing]</i>
183b.1	(41) a phyi snang ma'i skor
183b	<i>rje btsun / yon bdag rgan mo chang drang</i>
186a.2	<b>xv. byin brlabs che ba'i yon tan</b>
186a.2	(42) chu mig dngul 'bum gyi skor
188a	<i>rje btsun / [...] ba 'od kyi rta la sogs pa phul</i>
199b.1	(43) zhi ba 'od kyi skor

<sup>151</sup> The chapter corresponds to Ms-Drukpa and Ms-Gansu *Ko ra la thog gi skor*. Also to DNM-RD *Ko ra la thog gi skor* and *Khu byug dben par rdzong gi skor* with supplementary materials and a different ending.

200a	<i>rje btsun / zhi ba 'od / tsha bo    ba ri lotstsha ba / zhi ba 'od la sogs</i>
201b.5	(44) [RA RDZI RAS PA'I SKOR] <sup>152</sup>
201b	<i>zhi ba 'od / rje btsun / sngar grogs    ding ma brin gyi ra rdzi ma<sup>153</sup> / rje btsun</i>
203a.1	(45) gung thang lho sgo'i skor
203a	<i>bu chang tsho / snya ma spa sdar 'bum</i>
207a.6	(46) legs se 'bum me'i skor
207b	<i>rje btsun / ras chung pa / legs se 'bum me / rje btsun / ras chung pa</i>
211a.1	(47) skyid rong rab chad rgan rgog gyi skor
211a	<i>ras chung pa / rje btsun / gshen rdor mo</i>
212b.6	(48) gshin rdor mo'i skor
212b	<i>rje btsun / ras chung pa / yang pa (?) byi kyang brdung ba rnams</i>
215b.1	(49) mang yul gung thang gi skor
215b	<i>ras chung pa / rje btsun / gyang brdung mi rnams</i>
216b.5	(50) sba 'gur gyi skor
216b	<i>rje btsun / se ban ras pa / yul ljim lung byang chub 'bar gyi zhing rmo ba</i>
221b.2	(51) lha rje'i ya nge'i skor
224a.4	(52) ti tse'i skor
224b	<i>rje btsun dpon slob / ras chung pa / ngan rdzong phyug po / ston pa shag 'gul rnams</i>
227a	<i>se ban / rje btsun / 'bri sgom la sogs / ras chung pa</i>
228a.5	(53) lcong rong gi 'bri 'tshams kyis skor
228b	<i>ras chung pa / rje btsun / tshongs pa rnams</i>
230a	<i>rje btsun / ras chung pa / bu mo gnyis</i>
232b	<i>ras chung pa / rje btsun dpon slob / cong rong bu mo (?)</i>
234b.1	(54) [GSAL LE SGRON] <sup>154</sup>
234b	<i>se ban ras pa / rje btsun / nya skyes pho mo rnams</i>
235b	<i>zhi ba 'od / rje btsun / rgan mo</i>
236a	<i>rje btsun / gsal le sgron</i>
237b.4	<b>xvi. ting nge 'dzin rtsal rdzogs pa'i yon tan</b>
237b.4	(55) snye nam lung chung gis skor

<sup>152</sup> End title missing. Absent in all RBCs except Ms-BDRC, Ms-Lhasa. Present in DNM-RD and *A River of Blessings*.

<sup>153</sup> Unlike the text, the image and legend represent a female goat herder.

<sup>154</sup> End title missing.

238a	<i>rje btsun / ras chung pa / zhi ba 'od / brin pa'i yon bdag rnam</i>    <i>rje btsun / ras chung pa / zhi ba 'od / yang [illegible]</i>
240a.1	[xvii. <b>phyag rgya chen po'i ngo 'phrod pa'i yon tan</b> ] <sup>155</sup>
240a.1	(56a) [Tshe ring ma 1]
240a	<i>la phyi chu bzang skor ro / rje btsun la bkra shis tshe ring gi cho 'phrul sna tshogs bstan pa</i>
249a.3	(56b) [Tshe ring ma 2]
250b	<i>rje btsun la bkra shis tshe ring mched lngas ba man gyi zho drangs pa</i>
256b	<i>gtso chen bkra shis tshe ring / mi g.yo blo bzang / mthing gi zhal bzang / gtad dkar 'gro bzang ma / cod pan mgrin bzang</i>    <i>khro bo'i lnga thab (?) sna tshogs bstan / rje btsun / lha mo'i cha byed dang /</i>
262b	<i>cod pan mgrin bzang ma rje btsun dar lam du gdan drangs pa</i>
263a	<i>dar gur nang du rje btsun gyis dbang bskur mdzad pa'o</i>
261b.1	(56b) [Tshe ring ma 3]
275a.7	(56d) [Tshe ring ma 4] <sup>156</sup>
276a	<i>rje btsun la tshe ring mched lnga mchod pas na tshogs phul ba'o</i>
277b.4	(57) CONG RONG BYIN DANG/ MCHONG GLING BRAG GIS SKOR <sup>157</sup>
278a	<i>lo ro ras chung / rje btsun / mtsho lnga dril chung nya ma rnam</i>
282b	<i>rje btsun / 'bri sgom / gra pa rnam</i>    <i>rje btsun / mnga' ri rgyu ston / btsun mo / btsad po khu dbon rnam gsum</i>
284b.4	(58) [MANG YUL GYI SKOR] <sup>158</sup>
285b.7	(59) jo bo bon ri'i skor ro <sup>159</sup>
285a	<i>rje btsun / bu mo</i>
286a	<i>ra rdzi ras pa / ron chung ba / 'bri sgom / zhi ba 'od / rje btsun / bde ba skyong ba / se ban / ngam rdzong / bshen sgom / khye ra ba</i>
288b	<i>rje btsun dpon slob kyi tshes bcu mdzad / bu slob ras pa rnam</i>
291a.1	(60) brin gyi lha grong gis skor ro
291b	<i>rje btsun / ras chung ba / kun 'debs mi (?)</i>
293a	<i>rje btsun / ras chung ba</i>

<sup>155</sup> Quality title missing although mentioned in the quality list f. 21b.5.

<sup>156</sup> End title missing.

<sup>157</sup> Corresponds to the beginning of *Jo bo bon ri'i skor* in Ms-Drepung, *gCog ro 'bri 'tshams kyi mtsho snga sde chung gi skor* in Ms-Smith and Ms-India, *Gangs ti se'i skor* in Ms-Drukpa and Ms-Gansu, and *mTsho rnga del chung gi skor* in DNM-RD.

<sup>158</sup> End title missing. Corresponds to the first half of *Mang yul gyi skor* (DNM-RD).

<sup>159</sup> Corresponds to the second half of *Jo bo bon ri'i skor* (BCG).

296a	<i>rje btsun dpon slob / yon bdag mo / ba mo</i>
298a	<i>rje btsun / dkon brtsegs la sogs yon bdag rnams</i>
299a.2	(61) ras chung dbus bzhud kyi skor ro
299b	<i>rje btsun / ras chung ba / nya ma'i tshogs sogs drangs pa</i>
305a.5	(62) bka' gtad bar ma'i skor
305a	<i>ras chung pa / rje btsun sbur rgog du sprul pa / khram pa mi bdun rje btsun sprul pa mdzad</i>
305b	<i>ras chung pa / ras pa bdun so rje btsun mi las sprul</i>
306a	<i>ras chung pa la bkra shis dgu brtsegs gsungs</i>
307a.7	(63) dbus 'gro 'og ma ste/ nya ma'i skor
308a	<i>rje btsun / nya ma rnams</i>
310a	<i>wa spre/ rje btsun / nya ma rnams</i>
311a.2	(64) chu bar gyi skor
312b.2	(65) lha lcam ldem bu'i skor
315a	<i>rgyal po'i g.yu byin pa ras chung pa / sprang po rje btsun / lha gcig</i>
315b	<i>ras chung pa / lha gcig mchod pa phul ba ma bzhed brdung ba</i>
316b	<i>ras chung / rin chen grags</i>
319b	<i>lha gcig ma / ras chung ba</i>
321b.2	(66) mchod khang zhal mjal gyi skor
321b	<i>rje btsun / ras chung pa / ras pa rnams</i>
323b.3	(67) dags po lha rje 'byon pa'i ma 'ong lung bstan gyis skor
325a.5	(68) dwags po zhal mjal gyi skor
329a	<i>se ban / ras chung pa / rje btsun / dwags po rin po che</i>
335a	<i>dwags po rin po che'i rmang (rmi?) lam du byung ba rnams</i>
335b	<i>rje btsun / dwags po / dwags po rin po che ting gne 'dzin bhee</i>
341a.6	(69) rje ras pa chen po mi la ras pa dang/ mnyam med dwags po rin po che/ yab sras kyi zhus pa dang len gyi skor
346a	<i>dwags po la rje btsun rin po che'i phreng bsgo mdzad</i>
348a.2	(70) dbus gtad zhal da dang/ dwags pod bus bzhud kyi skor
349b	<i>dwags po lha rje de nyid rje btsun zhing du phebs pa'i gla bo / tshangs dus pa dad phrad pa'o</i>
349b.7	(71) lcam me'i bsngo bo'i skor
350b	<i>dwags po / ra bsgom ras pa / mkha' 'gro ma</i>
351a	<i>rje btsun / bkra shis brtsegs dang yon bdag rnams</i>
352a	<i>rje btsun dpon slob ma / yon bdag lcam me sogs kyi [illegible]</i>
352b.7	(72) snye nam rtsar ma'i skor
352b	<i>rje btsun dpon slob / yon bdag pho mo rnams dang bu med kha (?) ma</i>

354b.3	(73) BRAG DMAR SPO MTHON DANG/ LCAM LHAN CIG SKYES PA'I SGRON MA'I SKOR <sup>160</sup>
354b	<i>rje btsun dpon slob</i>
362b.1	(74) dbus gtad zhal da'i skor
365a.5	(75) rang so rtse gong gi skor
365a	<i>rje btsun gyis / ras chung pa la bka' gtad dbang bskur mdzad</i>
365b	<i>ras chung ba / rin chen grags / lha gcig / zhang ku ru</i>
367a.4	(76) CHU BAR GYI SKOR <sup>161</sup>
369b	<i>rje btsun dpon slob / yon bdag rab gnas khros gsol (?) rnam la mi rnam</i>
370a.4	(77) brin gyi smon lam gyi skor
370b	<i>rje btsun gra pa (?) bu chen yon bdag [...] la tsha (?) mdzad</i>
371a	<i>rje btsun la / nya mas nya dra phul ba</i>
375a.2	[last years and parinirvana]
379a	<i>rje btsun / mkha' 'gro ma gnyis kyi phyag rten khyer ba / ras chung pa</i>
380a	<i>ras chung pa / grwa pa bu slob rnam / [illegible]</i>
381b	<i>rje btsun sku chung gcig ma ston la sku rgyab gtad pa / 'bri sgom / se ban / ras chung / zhi ba 'od</i>
385a	<i>mkha' 'gro ma rnam / rong chung ras pa / se ban / gshin sgom la sogs ras pa bu slob rnam</i>
389a	<i>snang rdo rje 'chang / rin 'byung rdo rje 'chang / snang mtha' rdo rje 'chang    don grub rdo rje 'chang / spyang ras gzigs / seng gdong ma</i>
391a.7	[List of places]
391b.6	[List of disciples]
392a	<i>[...] bde gshegs rin po che / stag lung thang pa    sku yal rin po che / sangs rgyas yar byon / rje btsun sangs rgyas dbon</i>
392b.3	[colophon]
393b	<i>chos sku o rgyan mgon po    'jig rten dbang phyug    mchog sprul bkra shis dpal</i>



<sup>160</sup> Not found in other collections as separate chapter.

<sup>161</sup> Second occurrence of the title but different content.

## APPENDIX B

### Listing the Disciples

#### **- Ras pa bu chen bcu gnyis<sup>1</sup> [13<sup>th</sup> c.?] ]**

Thugs sras bzhi = ras chung | se ban ras pa | ngan rdzong ras pa<sup>2</sup> | 'bri sgom ras pa

Nye ba'i sras brgyad = ras pa zhi ba 'od | ras pa sangs rgyas skyabs | ras pa rdo rje dbang phyug | gshin sgom ras pa | rong chung ras pa | mkhar chung ras pa | gnyen sgom ras pa | khyi ra ras pa

sKu gshegs kha'i slob ma drug = dwags po lha rje | li skor phyag ru pa | lo ston dge 'dun | skyo ston sāk gu | dam pa rgyag phu pa | 'bri ban bkra shis

String bzhi = legs se 'bum | dpa' dar 'bum | gsal le 'od | ras chung ma

#### **- Don mo ri pa<sup>3</sup> [1245?] ]**

Thugs kyi sras bzhi ni = gung thang gi gnyan chung ras pa | 'dob sra'i se ban ras pa | lcim lung gi ngam rdzong ras pa | ta mo'i 'bri sgom ras pa

Nye ba'i sras brgyad = ras pa bzhi ba 'od | ras pa sangs rgyas skyabs | ras pa rtsang yu ba | ras par do rje dbang | gshen sgom ras pa | rong chung ras pa | 'khar chung ras pa | glan sgom ras pa

sKu bgres kar 'khrungs pa'i thugs zin kyi sras drug = mnyam myed rin po che | lo khor phyag ru ba | 'ur ston dge 'dun | skyi ston shag ghu | dam pa rgyags bu ba | 'bre phan bkra shis

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<sup>1</sup> Ms-Newark f. 243b.2, Ms-Oxford f. 191b.4, Ms-Drukpa f. 315a.2, Ms-Gansu vol. 25 p. 81.3. This category also includes the Variant RBCs: Ms-Bordier f. 322a.1 and Ms-Lhasa f. 308a.3 (Ms-BDRC does not contain a list due to missing folios).

<sup>2</sup> In Ms-Bordier *ngan rdzong ston pa* is missing.

<sup>3</sup> Don mo ri pa 1985 pp. 215-16.



de rnams kyi nang nas khyad par du 'phags pa 'gran gyi do zla dang bral ba rgyud pa 'dzin pa'i sras gcig ni = chos rje sgam po pa mnyam myed rin po che yin no

**- *Bu ston*<sup>4</sup> [1322]**

Mi la ras pa'i mched brgyad dang dwags po bsod nams rin chen sogs 'byung

**- *Deb ther dmar po*<sup>5</sup> [1346]**

Slob ma brgyad = dgung thang gi snyan chung ras pa | lcen lung gi ngan rdzong ras pa | nya ma'i 'bri sgom ras pa | mdo sgra'i se ban ras pa | sni shangs kyi khyi tsha ras pa | ras pa zhi ba 'od | bde ba skyong | mnyam med dwags pol ha rje

Dang por che ba'i sras bzhi = [no name]

Nye ba'i sras brgyad = [no name]

**- *Zhi byed ri pa*<sup>6</sup> [1373]**

Thugs kyi sras bzhi = khab gung thang ra ba'i gnyan chung ras pa rdo rje grags pa | lceim lung gi ngam rdzong ras pa | mdo bkra'i se ban ras pa | sta mo gling kha'i 'bri sgom ras pa

Nye ba'i sras brgyad = ras chung bzhi ba 'od | ras chung sangs rgyas skyabs | ras chung rdo rje dbang phyug | ras chung tsa yu ba | rong chung ras pa | glan sgom ras pa | bshen sgom ras pa | mkhar chung ras pa

sKu bgres kha'i sras drug = dam pa rgyags chung ba | li khor phyag ru ba | dwags po lha rje pa | skyo ston shag 'gu | 'on ston dge 'dun | 'dre ban bkra shis

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<sup>4</sup> *Bu ston chos 'byung* 1988 p. 203.

<sup>5</sup> *Deb ther dmar po* 1981 p. 80.

<sup>6</sup> *Zhi byed ri pa* 2012 p. 427.6.

**- *mKha' spyod dbang po*<sup>7</sup> [1350-1405]**

Ras pa mched brgyad = [no name]

Bu chen dgu = [no name]

rNal 'byor ma mched bcu = [no name]

Thams cad kyi gtso bor gyur pa = yid gzugs kyi lha 'dre dbang du sdud pa la zhing skyong gi dā ki ma bkra shis tshe rings ma | lkog gyur dbang po yang rab skye bo dbang tu sdud pa la sngags skyes lhan cig skyes pa'i sgron me | mngong sum mi'i 'gro ba thams cad dbang du sdud pa la mgon po zla 'od gzhon nu

**- *Lho rong chos 'byung*<sup>8</sup> [1451]**

Ras pa mched brgyad = ras chung rdo rje grags | ngam rdzong ras pa | 'bri sgom ras pa | se ban ras pa | ras pa zhi ba 'od (rgya khrod ras pa) | bde ba skyobs (sangs rgyas skyabs) | khyi ra ras pa | ra rdzi ras pa

mKha' spyod du bzhugs pa'i rnal 'byor pho mo bdun = zhi ba 'od | sangs rgyas skyabs | rong chung ras pa | pe ta | mdzes se | chos kyi byang chub | 'bri mtshams kyi ba tsab bza'

mChog gi rnal 'byor pho mo gsum = mi rnams 'dul ba'i mchog sgam po ba | mi ma yin 'dul ba'i mchog tshe ring ma | dā ki ma rnams 'dul ba'i mchog sngags skyes lhan cig skyes pa'i sgron me

Thugs kyi sras bzhi ni = dang po bzhi yin no [ras chung rdo rje grags | ngam rdzong ras pa | 'bri sgom ras pa | se ban ras pa]

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<sup>7</sup> Zhwa dmar 02 2010 p. 483.2

<sup>8</sup> *Lho rong chos 'byung* pp. 106-107

Nye ba'i sras brgyad = ras pa tsa phu ba | rlung btsan ras pa | ras pa rdo rje dbang phyug | gshen sgom ras pa | mkhar chung ras pa | glan sgom ras pa | 'gan btsun ras pa | rkong skur

sKu bgres khar 'khrungs pa'i ston pa drug = skyo ston shak gu | 'ong ston dge 'dun | dam pa rgyags phu ba | 'bro ban bkra shis | li gong phyar chung | se ban ston chung | me sgom rnam s gsum (?)

**- *Blue Annals*<sup>9</sup> [1478]**

Ras pa mched brgyad = gung thang gi gnyan chung ras pa | lcem lung gin gam rdzong ras pa | rta mo'i 'bri sgom ras pa | 'od khra'i se ban ras pa | sni shang gi khyi ra ras pa | ras pa zhi ba 'od | bde ba skyong | ra rdzi ras pa

**- *A River of Blessings* [mid-15th c.?] <sup>10</sup>**

Yong su grags pa'i bu chen bzhi | bu chen thams cad kyi gtso bo = yid gzugs kyi lha 'dre dbang du sdud pa zhing skyong dāki tshe ring ma | lkog gyur dbang po yang rab skye bo dbang sdud pa sngags kyis lhan cig skyes pa'i sgron/sgrol ma | mngon sum mi'i 'gro ba dbang du sdud pa dags po zla 'od gzhon nu | snyan rgyud kyi gdams bcud 'dzin pa skyes bu ras chung ba

[Bu chen nyi shu rtsa drug:] = [no name]

Thugs kyi sras bzhi = gung thang gi gnyen ras | [mdo bkra'i se ban ras pa]<sup>11</sup> | lcim lung gi ngan rdzong ras pa | rta mo'i 'bri sgom

Nye ba'i sras brgyad = rang byung gi bde drod shar zhing shes rab phyogs med du rgyas pa ras pa zhi ba 'od | sgom sran rmad du byung ba rong chung ras pa | da dpa dang mos gus mthar phyin pa 'bri sgom ras pa | rtogs pa mngon du gyur pa ras pa rdo rje dbang phyug | nyams myong bzang ba

<sup>9</sup> *Deb ther sngon po* 1984 p. 521.

<sup>10</sup> Ms-Smith f. 317b.3; Ms-India vol. 2 p. 551.4; Ms-Drepung vol. 112 p. 364.3.

<sup>11</sup> In **Ms-Smith** Se ban ras pa is missing.

gnyen sgom ras pa | gzhan don la brtson pa ras pa sangs rgyas skyabs | mngon shes dang ldan pa mkhar chung ras pa | brtul zhugs can ras pa tshag yu ba

Thugs zin gyi sras drug = li kor phyar phu ba | 'or ston dge 'dun | skyo ston shak 'bum | ras pa rgyang phu ba | 'bre ban bkra shis | khyi ra ras pa

gCes pa'i bu bzhi = glan sgom ras pa | dge tshul [rin chen mgon] | ston pa shag 'gu | ras pad bang ye (dbang ye)

Bu med mchog thob pa nyi shu rtsa lnga (20) = yon bdag rdor mo | nya ma dpal dar 'bum | jo mo legs se | bkra shis mtsho | jo mo hor mo | dar ma mtsho | khu byug sman | legs se 'bum | zhig mo 'bum | btsun cung sman | rdo rje sman | zhi ba mtsho | padma lcam | ras chung ma | gsal le | pre ta | mdzes se | chos kyi byang chub | 'bri mtshams ma | pa tshab za | etc.

mKha' spyod du bzhud pa = pre ta | mdzes se | chos kyi byang chub | 'bri mtshams ma | pa tshab za

Lus ma spangs bar mkha' spyod du bzhud pa = zhi ba 'od | sangs rgyas skyabs | rong chung ras pa

### **- DNM-RD<sup>12</sup> [c.1500?]**

Thugs sras bzhi = ras chung | se ban ras pa | ngan rdzong ras pa | 'bri sgom ras pa

Nye ba'i sras brgyad = ras pa zhi ba 'od | ras pa sangs rgyas skyabs | ras pa rdo rje dbang phyug | gshin sgom ras pa | rong chung ras pa | mkhar chung ras pa | gnyen sgom ras pa | khyi ra ras pa

sKu gshegs kha'i slob ma drug = dwags po lha rje | li skor phyag ru pa | lo ston dge 'dun | skyo ston śāk gu | dam pa rgyag phu pa | 'bri ban bkra shis

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<sup>12</sup> DNM-RD 2006 p. 768.4.

String bzhi = legs se 'bum | dpa' dar 'bum | gsal le 'od | ras chung ma

\*\*\*yang lo rgyus gcig la\*\*\*<sup>13</sup>

Ras pa mched brgyad = [no name]

Thugs gi sras bzhi = [no name]<sup>14</sup>

Nye ba'i sras brgyad = ras chung rdo rje grags | ngam rdzong ras pa | 'bri sgom ras pa | ras pa zhi ba 'od | bde ba skyong | khyi ra ras pa | ra rdzi ras pa

mKha' spyod du bzhugs pa'i rnal 'byor pho mo bdun = zhi ba 'od | sangs rgyas skyabs | rong chung ras pa | pe ta | mdzes se | chos kyi byang chub | 'bri tshams

mChog gi rnal 'byor pho mo gsum = mi rnams 'dul ba'i mchog sgam po pa | mi ma yin rnams 'dul ba'i mchog bkra shis tshe ring ma | ḍāki rnams 'dul ba'i mchog sngags skyes lhan cig sgrol ma

Thugs gi sras bzhi = [no name]

Nye ba'i sras brgyad = gung thang gi gnyan chung ras pa<sup>15</sup> | ras pa tsa phu pa | glang btsun ras pa | ras pa rdo rje dbang phyug | gshin sgom ras pa | mkhar chung ras pa | glen sgom ras pa | 'gon btsun ras pa

sKu bgres khar 'khrungs pa'i ston drug<sup>16</sup> = skye ston śākya gu | 'or ston dge 'dun | dam pa rgyag phu | 'bro ban bkra shis | lam gong phyar chung

Grub thob pho mo nyi shu rtsa lnga = 'bri sgom | jo dar | sgom stag | etc.

Ras pa nyer gcig = [no name]

<sup>13</sup> Appears to be drawn from *Lho rong chos 'byung* p. 107.

<sup>14</sup> *Lho rong chos 'byung* p. 107 says “*dang po bzhi yin no*” referring to the first four names of the group *ras pa mched brgyad*.

<sup>15</sup> The presence of Rechung as the first of the ‘alternate’ eight close sons differs from *Lho rong chos 'byung* which has him replaced by rKong skur.

<sup>16</sup> The sixth character is missing.

sTon pa bcu = [no name]

Ras pa bcu gnyis = [no name]

Khyim pa'i tshul 'dzin pa'i grub thob pho mo drug = [no name]

**- Ms-British Library<sup>17</sup> [c.1500?]**

Thugs kyi sras bzhi ni = gnam pa che bar grags pa gung thang gi ras chung rdo rje grags | snyan rgyud gdam pa'i 'dzin lcim lung gi ngan rdzong ston pa byang chub rgyal po | sgrub pa mthar [...] ba'i stag mo gling kha pa 'bri sgom pa | bde gsal mi rtogs pa rnams su gyur pa mdo bkra'i se ban ras pa

Nye ba'i sras bzhi = lus ma spangs bar nam mkhar gshegs pa'i rgya phrom gyis [392a] ras pa zhi ba 'od | rkyen ngan lam du slong ba'i rtsang la stod kyi shing gams khyi ra pa rdo rje mgon po | rang byung lhan skyes mngon du gyur pa'i dngos ma ba'i ra rdzi ras pa bla ma grags | [...] bar shar ba'i ras pa bde ba skyong

mChog gi rnal 'byor pho mo gsum = mi rnams 'dus ba'i mchog sku sgam po pa | mi ma yin nam 'dus pa'i mchog tshe ring ma | dāki 'dus pa'i [...] mchog sngags skyes lhan gcig skyes pa'i sgron me |

gZhan yang<sup>18</sup> = sgom stag | jo dar | ras par do rje dbang phyug | [...] phyug | ras pa sangs rgyas skyabs | ras pa tsha yu ba | glang btsun ras pa | gshin bsgom ras pa | rong chung ras pa | mkhar chung ras pa | snyan bsgom ras pa | glen sgom ras pa | 'gon btsun ras pa | zhang nag ras pa | 'ol ka lung [...] skam ras pa | mi sgom ras pa | rkang sgur ras pa | lug rdzi ras pa (dang bcu bdun no)

mKa' spyod du bzhugs pa'i [...] rnams 'byor ma bzhi ni = pre ta ma | mdzes se | 'bri 'tshams kyi sa tshas za | chos kyi byang chub ma

<sup>17</sup> Ms-BL f. 391b.6.

<sup>18</sup> Ends with "... dang bcu bdun no" but there are more than 17 names.

[???]<sup>19</sup> = legs se 'bum | dpa' sdar 'bum | gsal le 'bul | ras chung ma

sTon pa drug = ston pa chos rdor | skye ston shag 'gu | lo ston dge 'dun | dam pa rgya phu ba | li skor chags ru pa | 'bro ban

[392b] Khyim 'dzin pa = gshin rdor mo | ro gong bkra shis brtsegs | 'brog chos bzang | tshongs dpon zla ba nor bu | ngam rdzong phyug po | yon bdag lcam me sgron

**- gTsang smyon<sup>20</sup> [1488]**

Thugs kyi sras brgyad = nyi ma lta bu mnyam med dwags po rin po che | zla bal ta bu'i gung thang gi ras chung rdo rje grags pa | rgyu skar lta bu'i lcim lung gi ngan rdzong ston pa byang chub rgyal po | rgyal khrom smad kyi ras pa zhi ba 'od | mdo bkra'i se ban ras pa | gnyi shang gi khyi ra ras pa | mus kyi 'bri sgom ras pa | rag ma'i ras pa sangs rgyas skyabs

Nye ba'i sras bcu gsum = gshen sgom ras pa | glan sgom ras pa | mes sgom ras pa | rtsa phu ras pa | mkhar chung ras pa | rong chung ras pa | stag sgom ras par do rje dbang phyug | jo sgom ras pa dar ma dbang phyug | dam pa rgyag phu pa | li skor phyu ru pa | los ton dge 'dun | skyo ston shakya gu na | 'bre ston bkra shis 'bar

Sras nmams kyi sring bzhi<sup>21</sup> = mtsho lnga'i ras chung ma | gnya' nang gi gsal le 'od | gcung gi dpal dar 'bum | lcam mo pe ta ma




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<sup>19</sup> The name of the group is missing.

<sup>20</sup> gTsang smyon 1981 p. 241.

<sup>21</sup> Legs se 'bum is absent from gTsang smyon.