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**The Bonpo Mendrup (*sMan sgrub*) Ritual: Its Medicine,
Texts, Traceable History, and Current Practice**

**Rituál Mändub (*sMan sgrub*) Tradice Bön: v Lékařství,
Písemných Pramenech a Současné Praxi**

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Declaration:

I hereby declare that this dissertation is the result of my own work and that I wrote it independently, using only duly listed and properly cited sources and references; and that it has not been submitted in connection with any other university course or in fulfilment of the requirements of the same degree or of any other.

Prague, 23th June 2018

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Abstract

This thesis studies the mendrup (*smān sgrub*) ritual of the Tibetan Bon religious tradition. The mendrup rite comprises a specific tantric meditative practice and consecration rite, which is ascribed great efficacy for both physical and mental healing and spiritual progress. The mendrup practice is conducted for curing ailments, rejuvenation, longevity, as well as general general well-being and prosperity. When performed on a large scale, the Bonpo mendrup ritual represents one of the most elaborate healing rituals of present Tibetan milieu, and likely one of the rarest, special, most demanding and expensive Tibetan rituals performed. This work is concerned with one particular conduction of the ritual, which took place in the Bonpo exile monastery of Triten Norbutse in Kathmandu, Nepal, in December 2012. The thesis is based on both textual sources and ethnographic observation, and examines this Bonpo mendrup performance from various aspects. Firstly, it traces and compares the oral and written histories of the ritual, showing that the practice has probably emerged in the twelfth and thirteenth century in Central Tibet. Historical accounts on the practice are put into context with its current performance in the exile, which is described in detail. The studied sequence of the ritual is supplemented by translations of its specific and most characteristic texts. Further, the work examines the strong medical aspect of the ritual. Throughout the work, special attention is paid to the product of the ritual, the “medicine”, its formulary and physical compounding, contemporary understandings and applications. The thesis also aims to entangle the various spheres of knowledge encompassed by the ritual, such as presumed Tibetan indigenous notions, the Indo-Tibetan Buddhist Doctrine and tantric teachings, and the Tibetan Sowa rikpa medical tradition and botanical knowledge.

Keywords: Mendrup (*smān sgrub*) ritual, Bon, healing, ritual medicine, Sowa rikpa

Abstrakt

Disertační práce se zabývá rituálem mändub (*sman sgrub*) tibetské náboženské tradice Bön. Rituál mändub je specifická meditační praxe a rituál posvěcující mocné substance, jimž oběma je přikládána značná důležitost a účinnost pro fyzické i duševní léčení, jakož i při dosahování náboženských duchovních cílů. Rituál mändub bývá prováděn jako léčebná praxe, pro omládnutí a získávání dlouhověkosti, i pro obecné zdraví a prospěch. V prostředí velkých klášterních institucí nabývá rituál mändub značných rozměrů a pompy, a představuje tak jeden z nejpropracovanějších, nejnáročnějších a nejdražších, a také jeden z nejvzácnějších léčebných rituálů současného tibetského prostředí. Tato práce je založena na zúčastněném pozorování provedení rituálu v exilovém klášteře Titän Norbuce v Káthmándú, Nepál, v prosinci 2012, na práci s danými rituálními texty a dále historickými prameny. Rituálu mändub se tak věnuje z různých aspektů: jeho ústně předávané historii a současně záznamům o něm v písemných pramenech dokládající pravděpodobné počátky praxe do 12. a 13. století a středního Tibetu; jeho současnému provedení v nepálském exilu v porovnání s historickými záznamy; a jeho charakteristických recitacím, které jsou v práci částečně přeloženy. Studie se zaměřuje na výrazný prvek tibetských lékařských tradic *sowa rigpa* obsažených v rituálu, a na jeho substanci „medicíny“, její recept a výrobu, různá porozumění a výklady, a praktickou aplikaci. Disertační práce tak usiluje i o poodhalení spletitého pozadí a původu rituálu, který v sebe zahrnul jak předpokládané tibetské autochtonní kulturní představy, indické tantrické nauky a doktrínu buddhismu, tak i tibetské lékařství a botaniku.

Klíčová slova: Rituál mändub (*sman sgrub*), Bön, léčení, lékařská tradice *sowa rigpa*

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INTRODUCTION

This thesis studies the mendrup (*sman sgrub*)¹ ritual of Bon (Bon). The religious tradition called Bon can be characterised as a denomination of Tibetan tantric Buddhism, particularly in its monasticised form called “Eternal Bon” (Yungdrung, g.Yung drung Bon). The tradition is in various aspects distinct from Buddhism, particularly in acclaimed independent origin and history, own venerated masters and scriptures, certain practices, incorporation of a significant extent of Tibetan indigenous and pre-Buddhist notions, and, above all, identity. Yet, Bon shares many concepts and practices of Buddhism stemming from India, which began to significantly influence the Tibetan Plateau in the seventh century A.D. The Bonpo Mendrup ritual presented here epitomises such a monastic setting of Yungdrung Bon. The Mendrup ritual of Yungdrung Bon is a tantric *sādhana* (Tib. *sgrub thabs*, *sgrub pa*) meditative practice and consecration rite of transforming various substances into a product ascribed extraordinary effects. The ritual process itself and the produced medicine, *men* (*sman*), are applied for healing, rejuvenation, longevity, as well as for great spiritual enhancement. The rite encompasses a variety of overlapping spheres of knowledge and religion, such as tantra and ritual, Buddhist soteriology and philosophy, the Tibetan Sowa rikpa (*gso ba rig pa*) medical tradition, and Tibetan indigenous notions. The Bonpo mendrup ritual when performed on a large scale represents one of the most elaborate healing rituals we can find in the present Tibetan milieu. It is also probably one of the rarest, special, most demanding and expensive Tibetan rituals still practised. By the Bonpo community it is believed to be extremely powerful, an event one should witness at least once in a lifetime.

This study follows one particular example of the Bonpo mendrup tradition called the Light-Swirled Mendrup (*sMan sgrub ’o zer ’khyil ba*) as it was performed in the exile Bonpo monastery of Triten Norbutse (Khri brtan nor bu rtse) near Kathmandu, Nepal, in December

¹ I use Wylie transliteration and the “Tibetan and Himalayan Library Simplified Phonetic Transcription of Standard Tibetan” (or *THL Phonetic Transcription*, <http://www.thlib.org/reference/transliteration/phconverter.php>) for rendering Tibetan words. Usually both Wylie transliteration and phonetic transcription are provided at the first occurrence of a term (as well as sometimes at later occurrences if considered necessary). In case of translations into English often only the Wylie is viewed sufficient. Similarly, Wylie only is used for names of Mendrup medicinal substances (apart from the list at the beginning of Chapter 4 to which reader is referred for their phonetic transcription), further for transcriptions of mantras (which include a combination of Tibetan and Sanskrit) and verbal onomatopoeic expressions (Chapter 3), then usually in Tables and in discussions of translations (Chapter 3, 4). In certain instances, the phonetic transcription is replaced by anglicised forms, such as in names of institutions: Tashi Menri (instead of Trashī Menri), Triten Norbutse (not Triten Norbutsé); personal names and titles: Geshe Monlam (Géshé Mönlam), Geshe Sonam (Géshé Sōnam), Menri Trindzin (not Menri Tridzin); also in general terms: Bonpo (instead of Bönpo), geshe (*gëshé*); and names of written works: *Kanjur* (not *Kagyur*). Sanskrit terms are in the standard transliteration.

2012. I distinguish this specific celebration of the rite by capitalising the initial letter, as in Mendrup, from other performances of the mendrup practice in the Bonpo or general Tibetan environment (i.e. mendrup). The term is not italicised. By this case study, I aim to introduce the Tibetan mendrup practice in a more thorough detail that has been done so far (see Literature Review below) by an ethnographic account of one actual instantiation and its articulated objectives, translations of the main texts and recitations employed during the ceremony, analyses of several of the fundamental concepts constituting the ritual, and also a short historiographic summary on the perceived history of the Bonpo mendrup ritual. Throughout the work, I particularly focus on the specific substance of the so called mendrup medicine, the material core and produce of the ritual. I examine the different understandings of the mendrup medicine in various contexts within the ritual itself: (1) In the current Bonpo oral narratives on its origin and transmission accompanying the performance of the ritual; (2) In the textual tradition of Bonpo historical documents, where the medicine appears as an important ritual practice passed down via several Bonpo lineages of teachings; (3) In the textual tradition of the Mendrup ritual, in which the medicine plays a rather symbolic role framed by Buddhist Doctrinal philosophical and cosmological ideas, and is, moreover, likely influenced by Tibetan indigenous conceptions; (4) The materiality of the prepared physical mendrup medicine provided for consumption and practically compounded following the standards of Sowa rikpa, the Tibetan medical tradition; (5) The current apprehension and administration of the medicine which reflects all these dimensions. The Mendrup is also shown as an important social event of the Bonpo community and along with its medicine a significant financial investment. I pay attention to the different emic explanations of the ritual and its medicine in these discourses and provide their etic analyses.

The work is based on several different sources of data: (1) Observation of the ritual as it was celebrated at the monastery of Triten Norbutse, Kathmandu, Nepal, in 2012; (2) Translations and analyses of the scriptures of the ritual; (3) Close work with the main practitioner of the Sowa rikpa tradition in charge of the ritual's produced medicine; (4) Interviews with members of the Bonpo community; and, (5) Translations and analyses of Bonpo historical writings. The methodology used is described in a separate section below.

Seven main parts constitute this thesis. After the Introduction, which also includes Literature Review, and Methodology and Acknowledgements, five chapters form the core of the thesis, and are then closed by Conclusion followed by several Appendices. The Introduction delimitates the aims of the thesis, its methodological approaches, and contextualises the work within existing academic research. (1) The first chapter opens with a

more extended introduction to the studied Bonpo Mendrup and its present celebration within the context of Tibetan mendrup, and then more specifically Bonpo mendrup, practices. It also shares a short etymological analysis of the “mendrup” appellation of the ritual. This is followed by the currently presented oral accounts on the origin and transmission of the ritual and its medicine, which are then put into relation to the traceable history of their origin and transmission in Bonpo historical evidence. All these emic narratives, oral and written, are compared and analysed. (2) The second chapter brings a detailed ethnographic description of the contemporary Bonpo Mendrup performance, of its preparations and accompanying arguments justifying the event, of the ritual’s practical execution presented by individual days, as well as of its conclusion and distribution of the Mendrup medicine. The chapter shows the processes the Mendrup medicine undergoes during the ritual and how it is handled afterwards. A supplemented table and chart serve as a more comprehensive tool to better understand the individual chronological parts of the Mendrup ritual and adjoint rituals and events. Based on these data, the structure of the composition of the ritual is analysed. Further the chapter presents the diverse Bonpo community participating in the given ceremony, and the economic aspect of the performance in which the participants play an important role as sponsors. Thus, sponsorship and financing of the ritual are described with a particular attention to the medicine. (3) The third chapter offers an introduction to the main texts used and recited during the Mendrup ritual. Among them, the central *Main Text of the Light-Swirled Nectar Medicine* furnishes the most characteristic invocations of the Mendrup and also those most elaborating on the Mendrup medicine. These excerpts, along with the key mantras of the ritual, are translated and analysed with a focus on the apprehension of the Mendrup medicine conveyed in them. The conceptualisation of the medicine is explained via its divergent appellations reoccurring in the texts. Through this scope of the Mendrup medicine, the various cultural layers and influences likely constituting the Mendrup ritual are suggested. (4) The next, forth, chapter is dedicated to the material aspect of the Mendrup medicine. It ethnographically observes the physical preparation and composition of the medicine in its multiple stages. The recipe prescribing the medicine is translated firstly literally, and secondly based on its practical reading for the occasion of the Mendrup celebration in 2012. Botanical and zoological identifications of the required items are provided based on work with the main practitioner of Sowa rikpa responsible for the medicine’s production. This aims to show the intricacies of interpreting the recipe and the argumentation behind the identification and choice of the individual substances. The special component of the fermenting agent of the mixture is also described and analysed. The

medicinal recipe is then analysed to reveal a *mandalic* cosmological scheme encompassing precepts of Sowa rikpa and Buddhist philosophy, as well as a classification of *material medica* (based on the principles of Sowa rikpa and its categorisation of diseases) and animals (rather based on tantric and cosmological principles). (5) The final, fifth, chapter delivers an exposition on the current emic understandings and usage of the Mendrup medicine founded on two sources: oral explanations of members of the exile Bonpo community and participants in the ritual, and contemporary primary sources produced by Triten Norbutse monastery. After a passage on the general apprehension of the medicine, the chapter is organised into five sections according to the major themes emerging in connection to the comprehension of the medicine. These are: the medicine as a drug for practical administration by consumption; the medicine as a symbolic support of spiritual practice, especially on the path to a better rebirth and awakening; the relation of the medicine to animals and concerns of vegetarianism; the medicine as a device for environmental enhancement and prosperity; the medicine as an amulet for protection. Finally, the conclusion summarises the main findings of the thesis.

Lastly, I would like to explain the initial impetus for writing this thesis. The idea of research on the topic of the Bonpo mendrup occurred to me a long time ago, and, as it happens, has been a product of various planned and unplanned consequences. While studying Tibetan in Prague and later in Oxford, I found myself with a number of Bonpo friends. My attention to the Bonpo mendrup ritual was firstly drawn by a monk friend of mine from the Triten Norbutse monastery residing in the United Kingdom, when I learnt that “a big thing is going to take place at Triten Norbutse”. Sometime later, in summer 2012, I was hiking in Mustang and Dolpo and heard about the wonderful event to happen, again and again, from many people on the way. It seemed that the whole region was preparing to set off for a pilgrimage to Kathmandu to attend, and return with a powerful substance miraculous in all sorts of respects, at that time still unknown and unimaginable to me. Many times was I invited to participate. My growing curiosity, as much as encouragement by my teacher Charles Ramble, did not permit me to resist and not to return. In December 2012, I was again in Nepal and among the Bonpos.

Literature Review

Tibetan healing practices of the intriguing overlap of medicine and religion have gained academic attention, especially in recent years. The Tibetan religions, both Buddhism and Bon, accommodate a whole range of ritualised healing practices. The mendrup ritual in general, both Buddhist and Bonpo, stands within the wide scope of tantric procedures of Indo-Tibetan origin aimed at acquiring extraordinary powers (such as Tib. *dngos sgrub*, Skt. *siddhi*), great spiritual progress leading to realisation and awakening, and on the more mundane level attaining such benefits as bodily and mental health, longevity, and even immortality. The process comprises of the adept's inner transformation during his or her yogic endeavour, accompanied by consumption of ritually empowered substances by the ritual. These material essences can consist of standard Sowa rikpa *materia medica*, substances used in ritual, or other natural materials, or, as is commonly the case, of a combination of all. The emphasis is put on both, the mental procedure of the practice and the materials involved.

A close group of such practices is in Tibetan represented by the terms *rinchen rilbu* (*rin chen ril bu*), “precious pills”,² *chülen* (*bcud len*), “essence extraction”,³ mendrup, “medicinal accomplishment”,⁴ and *rasayana* (Tib. *ra sa ya na*, Skt. *rasāyana*, which acquires different meanings according to context: symbolically denoting a certain practice, and materially meaning a ritual tonic).⁵ The earliest substantial study falling into this cluster was, to my knowledge, Jay Kohn's Ph.D. dissertation *Mani Rimdu: Text and Tradition in a Tibetan Ritual* submitted in 1988, which provided a detailed ethnography and texts' translations of the extensive ritual of a certain type of precious pills, here called *mani rilbu* (*ma ñi ril bu*, “*ma ñi* pills”),⁶ production. Kohn paid attention to various aspects of the ritual: its setting in the Sherpa communities of the Solo Khumbu area in the Nepalese Himalayas, the individual phases of the rite, their ascribed meanings and actual conduction, the composition of the pills produced and their applications. His work stands as one of the most detailed, coherent, and comprehensive studies of rituals in the Tibetan cultural environment we have. Kohn's focus on Nepal reflected the closure or difficulty of access to Tibetan areas in China or elsewhere in

² A common translation in Western academic literature, for example Czaja, 2013, 2015, Gerke, 2012a, 2013c, 2017, Hofer, 2008, etc.

³ Translation according to Gerke, 2012a, 2013a, Gerke, 2017.

⁴ For other possible translations see below.

⁵ Cantwell, 2017.

⁶ The syllables *ma ñi* represent the opening of the main mantra of the very popular and widespread Buddhist deity Chenrézik (Tib. sPyan ras gzigs, Skt. Avalokiteśvara). The Kohn's rendering as *rimdu* is due to the local pronunciation of *rilbu* (*ril bu*).

the Himalayas, such as to some parts of India or Bhutan. His ethnography and translations of related ritual texts showed that particular healing practices have in the Tibetan environment adopted the form of elaborate Buddhist tantric rites of the Indo-Tibetan *sādhana* type dedicated to enlightened tantric deities, and can constitute central monastic events. They thus gain a very important social role and present one of the most eminent happenings in a monastery and its community. Kohn described the Mani Rimdu ritual as an act of consecration of specific ritual substances which are then consumed for the acquisition of health and spiritual enhancement. The ritual demanded substantial procedures and concluded with the final empowerment granted on a full moon day. All this is true for the Bonpo Mendrup studied here as well, as will be shown below. In the case of this Mani Rimdu, the substances used were not based on the Sowa rikpa medical tradition, but comprised of a few general food ingredients common in Tibetan ritual, such as flour.

A few years earlier, in 1976, William Stablein in his Ph.D. thesis entitled *The Mahākālatantra: A Theory of Ritual Blessings and Tantric Medicine* examined the ritual healing of the tantric Tibetan and Indo-Tibetan tradition by analysing the *Mahākālatantra*. He too showed the centrality of yogic *sādhana*, and that the procedures of healing and attaining supernatural powers were centred on an inner transformation of the practitioner, comprising an inner generation of “nectar” (Tib. *dütsi*, *bdud rtsi*, Skt. *amṛta*). This was complemented by an extensive *materia medica*. He proved this particular tradition to be a continuation of Indian practices, and dated its earliest scriptures to originate before 1135.⁷ His work was based on texts and did not try to find out whether such practices would still be somewhere actively surviving. Similarly, in 1979, Edward Todd Fenner in his Ph.D. work *Rasayana Siddhi: Medicine and Alchemy in the Buddhist Tantras*, described some of the practices of Tibetan Buddhist tantras as “inner alchemy” (as he translates *nang gi bcud len*)⁸ of transformation to achieve high levels of spiritual practice. Again, his work followed texts only.

Hailing from a shared strand are other tantric practices of similar preoccupation, such as Tibetan longevity practices as long life rituals (*tshe sgrub*) and long life empowerments (*tshe dbang*) discussed for example in Beyer, 1973, Cantwell and Mayer, 2008, 2010, Gerke, 2012a, 2012c, Samuel 1989, 1993, 2001, 2008, 2010a, 2010b, 2010c, 2012, and Samuel and Cantwell, forthcoming. These rites are centred on healing via the means of a *sādhana* to a certain divinity, often the deity of healing *par excellence*, the Medicine Buddha (Tib. sMen lha, sMen lha sang rgyas, Skt. Bhaiṣajyaguru). Many of them can be related to the *Yuthok*

⁷ Stablein, 1976, p. 92.

⁸ Fenner, 1979, p. 27.

Heart Essence (Yutok Nyintik, g. Yu thog snying thig) text collection, which has been dated to the twelfth to thirteenth century (Ehrhard, 2007, Garrett, 2009). For instance, Gyurme Dorje (2015) has examined two Buddhist healing *sādhana* rituals of the Medicine Buddha, one of which is supposed to come from the eleventh century, and Kurtis Schaeffer (2002) has shared a study of Indo-Tibetan practices for attaining immortality (*amṛtasiddhi*) dating them again to the period of the twelfth and thirteenth century. Most of the studies were carried out through textual research, an exception of an ethnographic work, conducted in the exile Tibetan community in India, was presented by Barbara Gerke, 2012a, 2012c.

The mendrup ritual has been gaining academic attention along with these other topics of the Tibetan medico-ritual nexus. Chronologically, its earliest recognition is accredited to Krystyna Cech and her extensive study on the exile Bonpo Menri monastery in Himachal Pradesh, India (Cech, 1987, also mentioned in Cech, 1988). Thus, her example belonged to the Bonpo, and not the much more widespread Buddhist, practice of mendrup. In 1985 she witnessed the seven days' long "sMra-seng bsnyen-sgrub" ritual, which she described as "*sgrub-chen* medicine prayers" and "[a] major festival".⁹ The sMra seng bsnyen sgrub comprises a smaller rite, but at that time was of great importance, as it represented the very first celebration of a mendrup type in the new exile Menri monastery and Bonpo community as such. It was orchestrated by Menri Trindzin (sMan ri Khri 'dzin), the chief Bonpo authority, himself as soon as the first geshe (*dge bshes*) graduated and could take care of the performance. Before this conduction, he had seen the ritual done three times in Tibet. Cech noted that the reason for the organisation was the high demand for the ritual's empowered medicine back in Tibet, to where it was then occasionally carried by people visiting their relatives. She also briefly described the composition and processing of this medicinal substance: "a large number of medicinal herbs and condiments have to be pounded into powder, then boiled in a solution of water, milk, etc. and then ground again".¹⁰ She mentioned the continuous recitation of the mendrup mantra and paid relevant attention to the extend sponsorship involved.¹¹ However, Cech restricted her rendition of the rite to a page and half of her thesis. She relied solely on ethnography and did not deal with any written sources. Her account is thus a very precious piece of information on, apparently, one of the first mendrup rituals conducted in the exile both for the Buddhists and the Bonpos, and also probably the first one ever witnessed and described by a foreigner and/or a scholar. Cech demonstrated that

⁹ Nevertheless, it was not the mendrup that would be in Menri usually referred to as *drupchen*, which was by the institution for the first time conducted only in 1988 (see below, Chapter 1). Cech, 1987, p. 272.

¹⁰ Cech, 1987, p. 272.

¹¹ Cech, 1987, pp. 272-273.

the practice was a large celebration of a *drupchen* (*sgrub chen*) type involving a number of monastics; was regarded of high importance by the exile Bonpo community; was transmitted by both its texts and orally; and included the production of a particular medicinal substance ascribed great efficacy, which attracted significant voluntary funding. The substance was then disseminated among both the Bonpos in exile and in Tibet. Cech described the mendrup as a special and occasional large monastic celebration with an own medicinal produce. We shall see that the Mendrup studied here fully complies with this description.

During the following years, the mendrup was briefly mentioned in another context – in its second form of a less splendid, more common, and regular ritual for enhancing the efficacy of standard Sowa rikpa drugs. Such mendrup celebrations are of a shorter duration and often take place in institutions compounding Sowa rikpa mixtures. They are not a matter of monasteries, nor big events, can be performed by lay practitioners, and in fact by practice concern only the engaged Sowa rikpa institutions and practitioners. Their purpose is considered to be blessings and increased efficacy for drugs already produced that are then prescribed to ordinary patients in clinical practice for treating specific diagnosed health issues. The first mention of such a mendrup was in an entirely Sowa rikpa context by Meyer (1995). The ritual was then in the same context briefly addressed by a contemporary practitioner of Sowa rikpa in Donden and Hopkins (1997), and also in interviews with His Holiness the Fourteenth Dalai Lama, who stressed the importance and efficacy of the practice (Bstan 'dzin rgya mtsho et al., 2007, pp. 253-266).¹² The brevity of the information does not allow to say whether such minor mendrup rites were of the *sādhana* type or not. Clearly, all these works referred to Buddhist mendrup traditions and only by short mentions. Also, all of them hailed from the situation of Tibetan exile. As translated works are concerned, a few mendrup ritual manuals composed by the Thirteenth Dalai Lama have been rendered into English in Thub bstan rgya mtsho, Mullin and Cox (1988, pp. 331-354).¹³

Interestingly, the following and first more substantial study of the mendrup again focused on a Bonpo mendrup organised outside of Tibet. Marietta Kind observed a Bonpo mendrup ritual in a very different setting, conducted in a village in the remote area of Dolpo in north-western Nepal in 1996 (Kind, 2002). She provided a longer ethnographic account, and oral histories and explanations of the practice. The occasion marked the very first mendrup performance in the village of Tsho (mTsho) in southern Dolpo. Yet, the initial one in

¹² For even briefer mentions of the mendrup in Tibetological literature see references in Garrett, 2009, pp. 209-201.

¹³ I have not been able to get hold of the book, and thus rely on information about it shared in Garrett, 2009.

Dolpo took place in the 1960s in the important Samling (bSam gling) monastery (in northern Dolpo) and was, by no surprise, directed by the young monk Sangye Tendzin (Sangs rgyas bstan 'dzin), the future Menri Trindzin, and his companion, the abbot of the Yungdrung Ling (g.Yung drung ling) monastery in Central Tibet. Both of them were fresh refugees searching for Bonpo scriptures. Afterwards was the event repeated twice at Samling and once in Tarap (rTa rab) in central Dolpo. Therefore, even though the event was not of a large scale in a big monastery, it was orchestrated according to monastic knowledge brought from the main institutions of Bon in Tibet into historical Bonpo communities in the Himalayas, to now influence their practices. Kind described the mendrup primarily as a social event, paying attention to its organisation, attending celebrating masters and guests, and supplied an overview of the daily rites. She also wrote on the arrangements of its *maṇḍala* (Tib. *dkyil 'khor*) and offerings, the mendrup medicine's composition, briefly discussed the ritual's history (based on oral sources), in which she actually mentioned the mendrup at Tritten Norbutse in Kathmandu in 1998 (see below). The celebration she observed took seven days and was dedicated the deity called Rindzin Düpa (Rig 'dzin 'dus pa). Thus, the ritual is of a different history and transmission than the one addressed by this thesis, although Kind noted the same main medicinal mantra recited, which should, however, according to my data not be possible (see Chapter 3). Kind succeeded in nicely rendering the festive atmosphere of the happenings. She also observed the application of the produced mendrup medicine for both physical and mental healing and for spiritual progress, and supposed such a divide between the apprehension of the medicine by lay people (adherent to the former notion) and monastics (adherent to the latter). Her work was purely based on ethnography and interviews with the religious authorities performing the mendrup, and did not focus on any of the ritual texts or the mendrup medicinal recipe. The recipe was presented following oral explanations given to Kind, and seems to be rather patchy. Kind's description of the ritual itself is also mostly brief with not much attempt to provide the structure and individual phases of the ritual. Still, this book stands out as the first longer presentation of mendrup in academic writing.

Another ground-breaking contribution on mendrup appeared in 2009 authored by Frances Garrett, relying mostly on written sources. In her article, Garrett examined the historical and contemporary connections between the Tibetan Buddhist and medical traditions through a Nyingma mendrup practice, or the “Accomplishing Medicine”, as she translated, and the *Yuthok Heart Essence* anthology. She defined the mendrup practice as follows:

“[W]hile the Accomplishing Medicine ceremonies are in part focused on the empowerment of medicinal substances, in the ordinary sense that they are said simply to make medicines work better, there is much more to the practice than this. A long contextual history of Accomplishing Medicine links it intimately with esoteric Buddhist yogic and contemplative exercises that are heavily focused on the “alchemical” transformation of human waste products into purified sacramental substances in a process that unites practitioners with deities and that aims for supermundane results, such as the attainment of immortality and other paranormal powers.”¹⁴

As Garrett reminded, the *Yuthok Heart Essence* corpus is by the Tibetan tradition ascribed to the acknowledged founding figure of the Sowa rikpa teachings and author of its central *Gyüzhî* (*rGyud bzhi*) scripture, Yutok Yönten the Elder (G.yu thog yon tan mgon po, 1112-1203).¹⁵ Garrett attributed the corpus to a likely Indian origin, finding its way into Tibet at about this time, i.e. in the twelfth or thirteenth century. In her argument, Garrett stressed the close relationship between medicine and the Buddhist Nyingma tradition in particular: this “link is not a marginal feature of Tibetan medicine but rather one that has had a significant shaping factor on each tradition throughout history”.¹⁶ Bearing this in mind, Garrett traced the Buddhist mendrup in Tibetan history, observing that it was known and performed in the tenth, eleventh, and twelfth centuries, since the practice prominently featured among the earliest so called “treasure texts” (*terma*, *gter ma*, see below) revelations.¹⁷ She detected a similar importance of the practice in the Buddhist Kagyü (bKa’ brgyud) school, and concluded that mendrup was a “Buddhist practice most centrally”,¹⁸ rather than a medical issue. Subsequently, it has developed into a common Buddhist practice conducted primarily by monasteries. For the adherents of the Nyingma, the practice has been “generally seen to be a Mahāyoga sādhanā cycle focused on a personal meditation deity, aimed ultimately at liberation from saṃsāra”.¹⁹ We shall later see that the Bonpo mendrup is very close to this. Garrett further contextualised the historical sources with a contemporary (2001) mendrup celebration in the Géluk Lhasa Mentsikhang (sMan rtsi khang), the Tibet’s chief institution of Sowa rikpa drug production. Here, the mendrup ritual has been held yearly since its revival in 1987 (being previously forbidden in 1955), and is perceived as a tool to enhance the efficacy

¹⁴ Garrett, 2009, pp. 208-209.

¹⁵ Dating in Garrett, 2009.

¹⁶ Garrett, 2009, p. 209.

¹⁷ Garrett, 2009, p. 217.

¹⁸ Garrett, 2009, p. 218.

¹⁹ Garrett, 2009, p. 215.

of the factory's medicines. Likewise, the present Fourteenth Dalai Lama in the exile hosts a yearly performance of mendrup dedicated to the wrathful Dorjé Purwa (rDo rje phur ba, Skt. Vajrakīlaya) deity, following in the footsteps of his predecessor the Thirteenth Dalai Lama, who argued that “whoever relies upon this ambrosial nectar gains power over every siddhi of both samsara and beyond”.²⁰ Garrett's study was the first one to deal with any mendrup practice extensively relying on written documents. She defined the fundamental characteristics of the practice: its supposed source in India and then in Tibetan treasure traditions linked to the Nyingma school and typical of the period of the second diffusion of Buddhism in Tibet; its form of a yogic *sādhana* meditational practice of enlightened deities of tantric Buddhism, which is performed by monastics at special occasions, and in which potent substances are consecrated; the conduction of the rite and consumption of its special substances for both healing and spiritual aims; the conduction of the rite of the same name for both enhancement of the efficacy of Sowa rikpa drugs, as well as an extent ritual of its own and producing own substance; its founding in both Buddhist tantric traditions and Sowa rikpa. Moreover, Garrett brought two new perspectives into the emerging scholarship on mendrup: she combined own ethnographic observation, albeit rather limited, with textual sources; and she dealt with the practice conducted in Central Tibet, from where she also acquired data first-hand. Still, most of her material presented was based on texts. She did not get the chance to include more ethnography apart from a short general description of the course of the mendrup ritual, nor to provide translations of any of the ritual's texts, or to pay attention to the ethnobotanical aspect of the practice and practical compounding of the mendrup medicine. By this paper, Garrett succeeded to define the practice and present the first substantial textual-based academic work on mendrup.

Garrett then proceeded (in 2010) with a study discussing the five tantric nectars of human waste products (faeces, urine, blood, semen, and flesh) within the tantric and medicinal meditational transformative practices. She focused on their supposed digestion and inner alchemical transformation, handling the phenomenon as a type of “gastronomy”. In her view, such “nectar-oriented writings in both medical and religious circles in Tibet” flourished in the thirteenth century, shaping both the tantric and medical traditions. As she promptly added, the fundamental *Gyūzhi* treatise hailed from the same period and geographical area of Central Tibet. This configuration produced “Tibetan nectar practices in ways that are markedly distinct from their manifestations in Indian Tantra”.²¹ By this study, Garrett placed

²⁰ Garrett, 2009, p. 221, after Thub bstan rgya mtsho et al., 1998, p. 352.

²¹ Garrett, 2010, p. 302.

the origin of the Buddhist mendrup practice into the rich intellectual milieu of Central Tibet around the twelfth and thirteenth century. There, the knowledge of various disciplines, such as tantra, medical knowledge (represented primarily by the *Gyüzhü*), and alchemy all prospered, and in her opinion produced the mendrup practice.

Sienna Craig followed in Garrett's footsteps. She too gave a testimony of the current mendrup practice (in 2004) in the Lhasa Mentsikhang conducted for ensuring the efficacy of regular Sowa rikpa drugs (Craig, 2011, 2012, pp. 308-317). In contrast to Garrett, Craig's ethnographic account was significantly longer but, as Kind, did not look at any primary written material related to the ritual. The ritual came from the *Yuthok Heart Essence* cycle as the one conveyed by Garrett, was carried out by an important monastic master, invoked the Medicine Buddha, and lasted three hours. Craig paid particular attention to the changing setting of the ritual, compared to the traditional one described by Garrett. In Craig's case, the circumstances of the performance of the ritual were quite unusual – the occasion of a biomedical randomised controlled trial (the first ever to be carried out in the TAR, and sponsored by an USA agency) of a rare Sowa rikpa drug applied to women giving birth. The purpose was to enhance the efficacy of the drug before the trial, and clear its possible impurities and defilements. Craig observed the interplay of Western biomedicine and mendrup Buddhist spiritual practices at the core Sowa rikpa institution. Her work did not aim at disclosing the structure or conceptual contents of the ritual, but to show its flexibility to act in new and globalised environments and contexts.

Four more studies emerged in the next years, from the pen of Calum Blaikie and Laurent Pordié. A different scope of attention was turned to mendrup by Blaikie based on his ethnography collected over a long-term fieldwork in Ladakh. Blaikie (2013, 2014) masterly analysed the yearly mendrup practice conducted in a village in north-eastern Ladakh as a social and epistemological “nexus of overlapping networks of [medical] practitioners through which knowledge and *materia medica* flow, identity and legitimacy are claimed, and continuity and change are negotiated”.²² He also examined the development and lineage transmission of the practice of the particular mendrup in Ladakh as a relatively new occurrence (since the late 1960s). Blaikie explained that the ritual was organised for two aims: 1. To clean the impurities and imperfections of medicines manufactured by the practitioners taking part; and, 2. To produce “*smansdrup dudsü chos sman*, an especially rare and potent preparation”²³ to be included into medicinal remedies as an enhancer of their potency (*phabs*

²² Blaikie, 2013, pp. 432-433.

²³ Blaikie, 2013, p. 432.

rgyun, see Chapter 4). We should add for complexity that the same event was witnessed several years prior (in 2008) by Pordié, who commented on the globalisation of the practice (Pordié, 2008b). Another example of mendrup was described by Blaikie et al. (2015): a brief and spontaneous, the first such case described, mendrup ritual conducted for enhancing the efficacy of just produced batches of medicines. The ritual occurred at a unique constellation of a workshop on pharmaceuticals of Sowa rikpa organised by Western anthropologists in Kathmandu in 2011, which hosted a number of practitioners from Nepal, India, and Tibet in the People's Republic of China. The mendrup ritual was lead by the seniors among the gathered *amchis* (*am chi*, practitioner of the Sowa rikpa medical tradition), and consisted of a collective recitation of a *Yuthok Heart Essence* empowerment text.

The first research on mendrup cautiously combining fieldwork with textual analysis comes from Cathy Cantwell (2014, 2015, 2017). She documented a mendrup ritual of the Nyingma Dūjom (rNying ma bdud 'joms) tradition performed in a monastery in Southern Bhutan in 2013 and dedicated to the wrathful Dorjé Purwa (Skt. Vajrakīlaya) of the “Meteoric Iron Razor” (gNam lcags spu gri) tradition. The final redaction of the text was done by Dūjom Rinpoche (bDud 'joms rin po che, 1904-1987), a prominent Nyingma scholar of the twentieth century. Cantwell primarily focused on “the Buddhist meditative framework of the practice”²⁴ and the fluent boundaries of Tibetan medicine and Buddhism. She observed that “in rNying ma pa Buddhist monasteries, the production of medicinal pills is an addition to the principal tantric ritual, which is the Major Practice session or Drupchen (*sgrub chen*) focused on attaining realisation. A Medicinal Accomplishment text does not constitute a self-sufficient rite, but rather a practice to be integrated within the ritual sequences of intensive practice of the main Ritual Manual”.²⁵ Cantwell explained that the “Major Practice sessions are the most elaborate and important periodic rituals performed in rNying ma pa monasteries of any size”²⁶ involving intensive communal ritual meditation. The practice is ascribed significant spiritual benefits. The mendrup “may be seen as a sub-type of Buddhist consecration practices”.²⁷ Cantwell also assessed the ingredients of the produced mendrup substance, reflecting upon their types and in some cases suggesting their botanical identification. She then drew attention to the potentially very strong ritual aspect of healing and Tibetan medicine in general in the past. Cantwell's work is quite detailed, managed to show the structure of the ritual by both ethnographic observation and its comparison to ritual texts used, the meditational stages and

²⁴ Cantwell, 2015, p. 50.

²⁵ Cantwell, 2015, p. 51.

²⁶ Cantwell, 2015, p. 51.

²⁷ Cantwell, 2015, p. 52.

visualisations of deities via the means of a *sādhana*, the layout of the mendrup medicine according to the *maṅḍala* of the ritual, and she also very well defined the basic terminology related to the practice.

In summary, our knowledge of the Tibetan mendrup practices is considerably sketchy. There does not exist an in-depth study examining the practice as such. Rather, we depend on several case studies of significant divergence, as they: (1) were conducted in different locations, mostly outside of Tibet proper among exiled Tibetans in Nepal and India (Blaikie et al., 2015, Cech, 1987, 1988), in previously existing communities in the Nepalese and Indian Himalayas influenced (Kind, 2002) or at least seemingly uninfluenced (Blaikie, 2013, 2014, Pordié, 2008b) by the exile situation, or in Bhutan (Cantwell, 2014, 2015, 2017), only restricted data were available from Tibet in the People's Republic of China from only one location – the Mentsikhang in Lhasa (Garrett, 2009, Craig, 2011, 2012); (2) covered mendrup rituals ranging from grand and exclusive monastic celebrations (Cantwell 2014, 2015, 2017, Cech 1987, 1988), to smaller but still extraordinary conceptions in village settings (Kind, 2002), to regular or irregular mendrup procedures in institutions or gatherings compounding medicines (Blaikie, 2013, 2014, Blaikie et al., 2015, Craig, 2011, 2012, Garrett, 2009, 2010, Pordié, 2008b); (3) ranged from mendrup rituals perceived as both a spiritual practice and for general healing (Cantwell, 2014, 2015, 2017, Cech, 1987, 1988, Kind, 2002), to those more or less purely conducted for enhancing Sowa rikpa medicines in regular healing of patients (Blaikie, 2013, 2014, Blaikie et al., 2015, Craig, 2011, 2012, Garrett, 2009, 2010, Pordié, 2008b); (4) focused on mendrup rituals of varied provenience and religious traditions: Bonpo (Cech, 1987, Kind, 2002), Buddhist of the Géluk school (Craig, 2011, 2012, Garrett, 2009), of the Nyingma school (Cantwell 2014, 2015, 2017, Garrett, 2009, 2010), or unspecified (Blaikie, 2013, 2014, Blaikie et al., 2015, Pordié, 2008b); (5) employed different methodological approaches: some relied entirely on texts (Garrett, 2009), other on fieldwork bringing a descriptive ethnography (Cech, 1987, Kind, 2002) or ethnography with theory (Blaikie, 2013, 2014, Blaikie et al., 2015, Craig, 2011, 2012, Garrett, 2009, Pordié, 2008b), and only two authors aimed to combine both (Cantwell 2014, 2015, 2017; to a lesser extend Garrett, 2009). Thus, the studies have shown a great existing variety of rituals acquiring the designation “mendrup”. Even though all of them share the defining characteristics of a tantric rite for the production of empowered substances or empowerment of already produced substances, they do also considerably differ. For these reasons, I do not approach the diverse mendrup practices to represent a coherent unit. Rather I view them as distinct instantiations drawing upon a presumed shared tradition and origin, which research has placed into the

twelfth to thirteenth century in Central Tibet and related it to the emergence of Sowa rikpa, the treasure traditions, the compendium of *Yuthok Heart Essence*, and the evolution of Buddhist tantric practices (Garrett, 2009). We do lack more information on the history, development and diffusion of the practice, its transmission, on the relationship of the practice as conducted in the past and at the present, on the variability of the practice among different religious schools, and an examination of its medico-ritual nexus – to name but a few limitations of the current research. On the other hand, we do have a certain idea about the general basic structure of the practice and its practical conduction, about the production and application of its medicine, and about the ascribed importance to the practice.

This thesis intends to contribute to this debate, and focuses on so far uncovered or less covered areas. It provides an ethnography of a contemporary very exclusive Bonpo monastic mendrup celebration combined with a translation and analysis of its main texts. It shows the structure of the ritual accompanied by a quite detailed description, revealing the modern adaptations of the ritual. The work gives particular attention to the mendrup medicine during the ritual, and to the medicinal recipe, its interpretation and employment in practice. Moreover, it also tries to trace the history of the Bonpo mendrup tradition in Bonpo historical sources, and how it is related to the contemporary practice. The thesis also aims at illustrating some of the fundamental principles upon which the mendrup practice is based, again via its medicine.

Methodology and Acknowledgements

The presented work is based on two main methodological approaches: 1. Philological: translations and analyses of ritual texts used during the Mendrup practice, and of Tibetan historical works; and 2. Ethnographic: observation of the ritual's performance *in situ* as organised by Triten Norbutse monastery in December 2012. The latter approach might be rendered as “anthropological fieldwork” relying on anthropological methods, such as structured and unstructured, formal and informal, interviews of varying length, and participant observation, constituting a detailed ethnography. I also continued conducting interviewees and collecting data in the field at various locations over the following years (2013-2017), as I was gaining access to different Bonpo masters, practitioners, institutions, and areas. Nevertheless, this thesis does not aim to be “anthropological” by the sense of the established

academic disciplines of Social and Cultural or Medical (or any other) Anthropology of Social Sciences, as it does not provide a deeper anthropological theoretical analysis of a certain concept or concepts. The thesis rather remains within the scope of the field of Oriental Studies of Humanities, which tend to rely on textual sources and be rather descriptive as the rendering of ethnography is concerned. In this case, the written sources have been heavily supplemented by and confronted with their present lived reality and practice. The studied material drawn from fieldwork and from the texts each form about half of the length of the thesis.

The texts I have worked with were for the most part acquired at the Triten Norbutse monastery during the ritual performance and first fieldwork in 2012. These texts obtained at the monastery were always, if possible, taken as the basis for the translations throughout the thesis. For comparison, they were supplemented by Bonpo scriptures available in the West in libraries and digital form as facsimile of manuscripts (as the Bonpo Katen: dKar ru Grub dbang sprul sku bstan pa'i nyi ma, 1998), and other digitalised texts kindly provided to me by my Bonpo friends. The Western libraries used were mainly the Bodleian Library of the University of Oxford and the library of the Shenten Dargye Ling (gShen brtan dar rgyas gling) monastery in Blou, France. I also relied on photographic evidence taken during fieldwork. Generally, I did not record interviews, but took detailed notes during them (with the interviewees often taking active part in the writing) or immediately after them in case of shorter casual dialogues.

The main fieldwork was undertaken in Triten Norbutse monastery during the Mendrup performance, and took the whole month of December 2012. My contacts and access within the institution were facilitated through a few links: my teacher and friend at Charles University, Prague, Geshe Nyima Woser Choekhortsang, his brother Geshe Yungdrung Gyamtso, then Geshe Monlam, Geshe Sonam, and others who had previously visited Prague (in 2011), Geshe Takla Tarwa having spent time with the Tibetan Studies at Oxford, their relatives, and others, like Lama Shenrab Tenzin from Dolpo known to me from my summer trip in 2012, and, last but not least, the personal introduction to Khenpo Tenpa Yungdrung and Amchi Nyima Samphel by Charles Ramble. For me this time spent there was great, a very intense, nice fieldwork, during which I received the honour to work with the highest Bonpo authorities, found new friends, explored Tibetan medicine and how a monastery functioned from the inside, and somehow became a part of the whole thing, a place and a congregation which will never come together the same again. One of the best things I could do was just to sit on a visible spot, and people would come to me to chat, or call me to show things, remind me of the beginnings of ceremonies, or sacrificial cakes *tormas* (*gtor ma*) prepared, being one

of the few foreigners in the monastery to know Tibetan. I became called “translator” (*skad sgyur ba*, also *lo tsā ba*), a Bonpo practitioner (and also Charles Ramble’s daughter).

The fieldwork and interviewing continued occasionally until the summer of 2017. My stay at Triten Norbutse in the winter of 2012/13 was followed by time spent with Amchi Nyima in Oxford in spring 2013, later over skype, and in Shenten Dargye Ling in summer 2014. Meeting Geshe Yungdrung Gyamtso and Lama Shenrab Tenzin in Vienna in February 2013 also proved very helpful. During the period of 2012-2014, I did most of the work on the Mendrup recipe, and read the other Mendrup scriptures with Khenpo Tenpa Yungdrung, Geshe Nyima Woser Choekhortsang, Geshe Takla Tarwa and Geshe Namdak Nyima in Kathmandu, Prague, Shenten Dargye Ling and Oxford. I spent the academic year of 2014/15 in Tibet, thanks to which I had the opportunity to visit the chief Bonpo monasteries located in gTsang (Tsang), Central Tibet: the original Menri Monastery and the later Yungdrung Ling monastery, and subsequently the leading Bonpo monasteries of Eastern Tibet: Nangzhik (sNang zhig) in Ngawa (rNga ba), and Böngya (Bon rgya) in Repkong (Reb kong; also Repong, Reb gong). I was able to meet their authorities, as well as several scholars of Bon at various places, and collect both published and unpublished material. My fieldwork search for the Mendrup was, for the time being, concluded at the exile Menri monastery in Dolanji, Himachal Pradesh, India, in summer 2016. I conducted occasional interviews until 2017: with Tri Yungdrung in the spring in Oxford, and with Geshe Nyima Woser Choekhortsang in the summer in Prague. In the thesis, I refer to the respective parts of fieldwork and interviews by the names of respondents and locations, which then also suggest the time of the acquisition of the given information. The only exception is Amchi Nyima with whom I worked closely throughout the years discussing the material of the thesis repeatedly, and thus referring to specific locations and times of information shared by him is impossible.

The respondents selected for the work included the Bonpo monastic elite educated in monasteries, Bonpo *ngakpa* (*sngag pa*) lay tantrics educated in their family lineages and by personal teachers, practitioners of Tibetan medicine (both Bonpo and Buddhist) – from them above all Amchi Nyima, himself a *ngakpa*, and then several dozens of lay respondents, men and women of varying ages, backgrounds, and regional origins. To the Tibetan folk, foreigners from the West and East were added. Basically, all the groups of attendants at the ritual described in Chapter 2 became my respondents. The social groups not covered would be Bonpo nuns and female *ngakma* (*sngag ma*) practitioners, who were almost not present at the performance, apart from the one well visible, but not accessible, *ngakma* from Khyungpo (Khyung po) (Chapter 2). Profiles of the main interviewees are in Appendix 2. The main

languages of the interviews were Tibetan and English. Knowledge of other languages spoken in Triten Norbutse (Chinese, French, Hebrew, German, Spanish, Polish, Czech, and my very little of Nepali), and French in Shenten Dargye Ling, was useful as well.

The core of this Ph.D. thesis formed a Master (M.Phil.) dissertation entitled *The Bon sman sgrub ritual* submitted at the University of Oxford in 2013 (see Bibliography). The amount of material collected encouraged me to develop the work further into a Ph.D. thesis. It has been substantially rewritten and extended, with new chapters added, Tibetan texts translated (the M.Phil. dissertation contained only the translation of the Mendrup medicinal recipe), errors amended, etc. No chapter has remained the same. The first work comprised 27 556 words (or 168 803 characters, including Appendices), this thesis has 139 273 words (847 807 characters). Parts of both have been published and accepted for publishing in journals and one book (see Bibliography).

Here, I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to all those who have made such an opportunity possible. I am very grateful to Triten Norbutse for receiving me so nicely, to Yongdzin Tenzin Namdak Rinpoche, then to Khenpo Tenpa Yungdrung and other monks for their great support and patient help. To those mentioned above, others have to be added: Geshe Dangsang Namgyal, Geshe Gelek, Geshe Kalsang, Geshe Chömpel from Triten Norbutse, Geshe Tharchin from Menri, and the *ngakpas* headed by Lama Shenrab Tenzin. Special thanks are addressed to Amchi Nyima for his kind openness that developed into friendship. His colleagues Amchi Namse, Amchi Padma and other students, were so nice to open their clinic to me, and Olga Ryznar, Jitka Polanská and Anne Benesch to help with some data collection at Triten Norbutse. At Menri monastery in India, I was very happy to be able to spend time with His Holiness Menri Trindzin, Tri Yungdrung, and Amchi Geshe Yungdrung Tashi.

This thesis has been developing thanks to feedback and discussions with my dear supervisors (in chronological order): Ulrike Roesler, Charles Ramble, and Daniel Berounský. Other mentors and friends were also very important and influential (in alphabetical order): Cathy Cantwell, Mingji Cuomu, Calum Blaikie, Barbara Gerke, Per Kværne, Dan Martin, Colin Millard, Robert Mayer, and Jan van der Valk. I thank Cameron Bailie, Rachael Griffiths, Suzanne Newcombe, and others for improving my bad English.

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CHAPTER ONE

The Bonpo Mendrup Ritual and its Historical Background

Introducing the Bonpo Mendrup Ritual

The Bonpo mendrup ritual can be in short defined as a means to generate “blessing medicine”.²⁸ The “main purpose of mendrup is the production of blessed medicine”, as expressed by Yongdzin Tenzin Namdak Rinpoche (Yongs ’dzin bsTan ’dzin rnam dag rin po che), the leading authority of the Triten Norbutse monastery, an acknowledged great scholar of Bon, and one of the main venerated masters of the contemporary Bonpos.²⁹ Another emic explanation summarises the mendrup in English as a “ceremony for blessing healing medicine”,³⁰ or as the “Grand Medicinal Healing Ceremony”.³¹

The somehow tangible purpose of the mendrup is thus the transformation of medicinal drugs and other ingredients into a powerful substance and most effective healing mixture. This is achieved through a ritual act by which deities’ powers and blessings are bestowed upon it, through a rite of consecration of the medicine within a meditative *sādhana* (Tib. *sgrub thabs, sgrub pa*) practice.³² *Sādhana* implies a basic tantric exercise of visualising and self-identifying with a tantric deity in order to achieve meditative accomplishment.³³ An inner transformation and spiritual progress of the adept is to be attained, along with the transformation of material ingredients into an empowered and consecrated substance. Such substance is then believed to behold special virtues, powers, and qualities of awakening (Tib. *byang chub*, Skt. *bodhi*).³⁴ The ritual is thus centred on such inner personal transformation, accompanied by a production and consumption of specially empowered substances – these are called “medicine”, *men (sman)*, and are compounded following rules of Tibetan medicinal drugs and of Tibetan ritual knowledge. Both the mendrup ritual process and the “medicine” produced are considered extremely efficacious for healing, rejuvenation, longevity, as well as for promoting spiritual enhancement leading to awakening. The practitioners, as well as attending public, hereby seek these qualities, and also environmental prosperity and world equilibrium.

The appellation “mendrup” (*sman sgrub*), is a compound of two words. The first, *men (sman)*, denotes both “medicine, drug”, a healing substance, and “benefit, use, good”, or in

²⁸ YR (Triten Norbutse), KTY (Triten Norbutse).

²⁹ YR (Shenten Dargyeling Ling).

³⁰ 25th Anniversary of Founding Triten Norbutse Monastery.

³¹ Poster displayed at Triten Norbutse monastery during the ritual.

³² Cf. Bentor, 1996a, 1996b, Cantwell, 2015.

³³ On the meditative and spiritual element of mendrup in the Nyingma (rNying ma) context see Cantwell 2015, 2017, Garrett, 2009, 2010.

³⁴ Bentor, 1996, 1997.

general something beneficial as a synonym to *pen (phan)*, “benefit”.³⁵ Garrett in her etymological excursus explained the word as follows:

“The term *smān*, most commonly taken as ‘medicine,’ has a wider semantic range than the English word: it may refer to individual substances used to make medicinal compounds, or to the compounds themselves, as well as to substances we may not consider medicinal, such as poisons, pesticides or other chemical compounds. The meaning may therefore range broadly from indicating substances that are somehow especially powerful, such as chemicals, on the one hand, to any sort of ‘ingredients,’ in a most general sense, on the other.”³⁶

The second word, the verb *drup (sgrub)*, comprising the causative superscribed *s* and meaning “to achieve, attain, accomplish”, designates an active action effecting the former, i.e. *men* or “medicine”.³⁷ *Drup (sgrub, or druppa, sgrub pa)* is also a term for the yogic and tantric practice of *sādhana*. Garrett also noted the possible non-causative spelling *drup (grub)* in *mendrup*,³⁸ which is, however, perceived as a mistake in the Bonpo context dealt with here. Within it, the name of the ritual and the “medicine” produced often merge, and thus both can be referred to as “mendrup”, particularly in colloquial expressions.³⁹ To distinguish the two, the latter is called “*mendrup gyi men*” (*smān sgrub gyi smān*), “mendrup medicine”, or in an unambiguous context simply “*men*” (*smān*), “medicine”.

Hence, the name of the ritual can be translated as “medicinal accomplishment”, or “achievement of medicine”, “medicinal practice”, “practice of medicine”, “medicinal *sādhana*”, but also as “generating benefit”.⁴⁰ Another name for the particular example of the *mendrup* ritual discussed here is “The Radiating Light-Rays of Healing Nectar”,⁴¹ or the

³⁵ Cardi, 2005-06, p. 91, Das, BGTC.

³⁶ Garrett, 2009, p. 209.

³⁷ On the contrary, regular compounding of Tibetan medicinal remedies is called *menjor (smān sbyor)*, “composing” or “joining medicine”.

³⁸ Garrett, 2009, p. 209. Also used by Kind, 2002. Garrett also provided an overview of the various translations of the ritual’s name in the West: “power medicine”, i.e. “medicine that gives one supernatural powers (*siddhi*)” (Stablein, 1976, p. 243), “dharma medicine” (Buddhist centers in North America), “sacred medicine” (Tulku Urgyen Rinpoche et al., 2005, p. 416), “mystical realization with the aid of medicinal herbs” (Tucci, 1980, p. 122), “the ritual of medicine” (Karmay, 1998a), “the making of medicinal elixir” (Gyurme Dorje, undated), “medicinal consecration” (Thub bstan rgya mtsho, Mullin, and Cox, 1988, p. 342), “medicine empowerments” (Craig, 2011), “medicine making rituals” (Gayley, 2007, p. 469). To them, we can add Dan Martin’s “Medicine practices” (Martin, 2001, pp. 77-78).

³⁹ Also in English Programme, p. 5.

⁴⁰ For more suggestions see Garrett, 2009, p. 209.

⁴¹ As translated in 25th Anniversary of Founding Triten Norbutse Monastery.

Light-Swirled Nectar (bDud rtsi 'od zer 'khyil ba).⁴² The produced medicine acquires epithets such as “the nectar of immortality” (*'chi med bdud rtsi*), “the medicine conquering poison” (*dug 'joms pa'i sman*), “the precious nectar” (*bdud rtsi rin po che*), “the great nectar” (*bdud rtsi chen po*), “the secret nectar” (*bdud rtsi gsang ba*), “the nectar of wisdom” (*ye shes bdud rtsi*), etc.⁴³ Garrett also discussed the other appellation given to the practice in Buddhist context, *dütsi mendrup* (*bdud rtsi sman sgrub*), “the nectar medicinal accomplishment”,⁴⁴ which was not employed by the Bonpos in the case studied here. Yet, her definition of the concept of *dütsi*, “nectar”, fully applies to the Bonpo context as well:

“Translating the Sanskrit *amṛta*, it is typically rendered in English as ‘nectar’ or ‘ambrosia,’ and thus *bdud rtsi sman* sometimes refers to a rarefied sort of ‘nectar medicine’ or ‘ambrosial medicine’ that results from the act of ‘empowering’ or ‘accomplishing’ (*sgrub*) those substances during the course of the *bdud rtsi sman sgrub* ritual process. In alchemical contexts the resulting ‘nectar medicine’ may be considered an elixir of immortality.”⁴⁵

There exists a great diversity of mendrup rituals in both Tibetan Buddhism and Bon, as has been shown above. Within Bon, they differ firstly according to the tutelary deity (Tib. *yidam*, *yi dam*, Skt. *iṣṭa-devatā*) to which they are dedicated.⁴⁶ Enlightened tutelary deities are invoked during personal meditative practice of visualisation, here embedded into a ritual performance, for the purpose of transformation through self-identification with the deity (Tib. *sgrub thabs*, *sgrub pa*, Skt. *sādhana*). In Bon every *yidam* has a wrathful and a peaceful aspect (*zhi tro*, *zhi khro*; rarely *zhi tro*), and thus a double facet potential, and every *yidam* is said to have his own mendrup ritual in the scriptures.⁴⁷ Secondly, the mendrup variations have evolved depending on different ritual traditions. Each of the historical six family lineages (*gdung brgyud*, *gdung rgyud*) carrying the teachings of Bon is said to have developed their own main mendrup ritual typical of the lineage. These are referred to as the “different mendrup cycles in Bon”.⁴⁸ For the prevailing Dru (also spelled: 'Bru, Gru, 'Gru)⁴⁹

⁴² A Buddhist wrathful deity of the same name, Swirling Nectar (Bdud rtsi 'khyil ba, Skt. *Âmṛtakundalī* or *Âmṛtadhara*) features in the Nyingma mendrup ritual whose text is likewise called *Swirling Nectar's Immortality Tantra* (*Bdud rtsi 'khyil ba 'chi med tsh'e'i rgyud*) and incorporated into the Buddhist Kanjur (*Bka' 'gyur*). Garrett, 2009, pp. 215-216 (her translations of the names). Also noted by Cantwell, 2015, pp. 66-67.

⁴³ 'Od zer 'khyil pa bdud rtsi sman gyi gzhung bzhugs lags s+ho, DTOZ. See also Chapters 3, 4.

⁴⁴ Garrett, 2009, p. 210.

⁴⁵ Garrett, 2009, p. 210.

⁴⁶ Cf. Kind, 2002, p. 46.

⁴⁷ YR (Triten Norbutse, Shenten Dargyeling Ling).

⁴⁸ YR (Shenten Dargyeling Ling).

⁴⁹ On the lineage see Karmay, 2007, rMe'u tsha bstan 'dzin rnam rgyal, 2014.

denomination it has been the Light-Swirled Mendrup (sMan sgrub 'o zer 'khyil ba) of the *yidam* and wrathful deity Trowo Tsochok Khagying (Khro bo gtso mchog mkha' 'gying).⁵⁰ A certain part of the Dru have practiced the Light-Blazed Mendrup (sMan sgrub 'o zer 'bar ba) of the *yidam* Purwa (Phur ba), as the Yungdrung Ling monastery in Central Tibet and lately the exile Menri monastery in India.⁵¹ The Zhu lineage (Zhu tshang) had the mendrup of Yungdrung Chukmo (g.Yung drung phyug mo), and the Shen family (gShen tshang) elaborated the mendrup called Amaraya (A ma ra ya, the name likely translates Skt. *amṛta*, nectar of immortality).⁵²

Triten Norbutse monastery, as a stronghold of the Dru lineage or tradition (Bru rgyud, Bru lugs), has embraced the Light-Swirled Mendrup, also called the Light-Swirled Nectar (bDud rtsi 'od zer 'khyil ba), of Trowo Tsochok Khagying. The deity represents one of the main *yidams* of Bon, and one of the five *yidam* deities (*yi dam mchog lnga*, *gsas mkhar mchog lnga*) of the *Father tantras* (*Pha rgyud*).⁵³ His name can be translated into English as the “Wrathful One, Supreme Lord Towering the Sky”,⁵⁴ and by the Bonpos themselves is conveyed as the “Excellent chief, voice of heaven”,⁵⁵ or as “The Supreme Lord Poised with Majestic Splendour in Space”.⁵⁶ The lengthy title is often altered to Wangchen, “The Great Powerful One” (dBang chen), or more commonly shortened to Trowo, “The Wrathful One” (Khro bo), a general denotation of wrathful deities who Trowo Tsochok Khagying epitomises. In the Mendrup ritual Trowo Tsochok Khagying appears in his dual wrathful and peaceful aspect (*zhi tro*), which is taken to be typical for this Mendrup tradition.⁵⁷ The texts of the Light-Swirled Mendrup come from Trowo Tsochok Khagying’s cycles. This particular Mendrup forms the subject of this thesis.

Within the Bonpo tradition, the big monastic conceptions of mendrup have become synonymous to the designation *drupchen* (*sgrub chen*) generally denoting “a Major Practice session or intensive communal tantric practice focused on attaining realisation, held over a number of days, and typically requiring a large team of lamas⁵⁸ and ritualists as the principal practitioners”.⁵⁹ The *drupchen* practice can function without a mendrup,⁶⁰ but for the main

⁵⁰ On the deity see Kværne, 1995, pp. 75-77. The deity called Swirling Nectar in the Buddhist Nyingma mendrup analysed by Garrett is also of a wrathful aspect. Garrett, 2009, p. 215.

⁵¹ A study on the history and development of the monastery by Cech, 1987.

⁵² NW (Prague 2017), YR (Shenten Dargyeling Ling), also DTOZ, pp. 3-4.

⁵³ TY (Oxford 2017), Kværne, 2001, p. 75.

⁵⁴ Kværne 1995, pp. 75-77, 88-90. Depiction of the deity including his retinue in DTOZ, p. 3.

⁵⁵ KTY (Triten Norbutse).

⁵⁶ Translation of Triten Norbutse: <http://himalayanbon.org/2012/12/02/25th-anniversary-of-triten-norbutse>

⁵⁷ On *zhi tro* divinities see Blezer, 1997.

⁵⁸ Lama (*bla ma*) is a honorary title for esteemed Tibetan monks.

⁵⁹ Cantwell, 2015, p. 90.

monasteries of Bon the two have become to a certain extent conflated. The word *drupchen* is thus by the Bonpos and especially in colloquial speech usually understood to refer to elaborate mendrup monastic celebrations, and differentiates them from minor mendrup rites conducted yearly or at another higher frequency, or in village settings. The Bumzhi Medical Clinic (Sorig Bumzhi School, full title: 'Bum bzhi'i sman khang, by its official name: School of Four Medical Science of Early Tradition, aka sNgar srol gso rig 'bum bzhi'i slob grwa)⁶¹ of Tritten Norbutse every year organises its small Maseng (sMra sengs) mendrup, addressed to the Maseng divinity.⁶² In daily parlance, this is the event meant by referencing to “mendrup” at the monasteries of Tritten Norbutse and Menri. If one intends to refer to the “great accomplishment”, the term *drupchen*, the *drupchen* of the Light-Swirled Necter (bDud rtsi 'o zer 'khyil ba'i sgrub chen), the Light-Swirled Mendrup (sMan sgrub 'o zer 'khyil ba) or alternatively Light-Blazed Mendrup (sMan sgrub 'o zer 'bar ba), has to be stressed, but after clarifying the ambiguity the simple world mendrup would be used. I follow this pattern also throughout the thesis.

Overall, we might assume dozens of mendrup rituals to exist just in Bon, most of which are rarely performed or likely remain unperformed. The mendrup as *drupchen*, an example of which is presented by this thesis, most probably constitutes one of the most complex, complicated and embellished healing rituals to be performed in the current Tibetan cultural world. Furthermore, it also probably stands as one of the rarest, special, most demanding and expensive Tibetan rituals still conducted. By the Bonpo tradition, the mendrup has been ascribed great powers, and refined into a grand performance exemplifying monastic Yungdrung Bon and expressing the prestige, political power, and economic potential of its leading institutions.⁶³

⁶⁰ As Cantwell, 2015, 2017, observed for the Nyingma school, the *drupchen* principally exists without the mendrup, and the later is a possible addition to the former.

⁶¹ The clinic is called after the main Bonpo medical treatise, the *Bumzhi* (in its content very close to *Gyüzhü*).

⁶² AN (Tritten Norbutse), YR (Menri). This mendrup was witnessed by Cech in 1985 in the Menri monastery in India, and described in her D.Phil. thesis, Cech, 1987, pp. 272-273. Tritten Norbutse's yearly performance has been modelled upon Menri.

⁶³ Precious empowered medicines as a marker of social status are discussed by Blaikie, 2015.

Oral History of the Mendrup Ritual, its Origin and Transmission

The members of the present Bonpo monastic community, as can be testified at least in the exile, maintain and impart a coherent oral narrative on the origin and historical transmission of the Light-Swirled Mendrup ritual. Similarly, other Bonpo mendrup rituals, both those conducted on a large and small scale, have their own oral histories.⁶⁴ The oral narrative tracing the Light-Swirled Mendrup presented in this chapter follows the presently transmitted normative oral knowledge on the ritual among the Bonpos in exile. The later parts of the chapter study the ritual in historical documents, which, however, are not commonly read and cannot be taken as a representation of the current Bonpo general knowledge on the mendrup. Both the oral and written accounts are then consulted in an attempt to reconstruct the possible origin and development of the Bonpo mendrup ritual in general, and the Light-Swirled Mendrup in particular.

The oral knowledge in general is constructed mainly by the understanding of the mendrup ritual conveyed by Yongdzin Tenzin Namdak Rinpoche, who is in the Bonpo exile regarded as the main authority on the mendrup tradition and its practical conduction. Yongdzin Rinpoche witnessed and learnt the ritual in its original setting in Menri monastery in Central Tibet (Figure 1), where he also acquired the accompanying explanations and narratives (*shes rgyun*, see below). Rinpoche is thus the actual recognised carrier of the Bonpo mendrup, as well as the specific Light-Swirled Mendrup. This oral knowledge, and within it the mendrup's historical narrative, is recalled at each exile performance of the mendrup ritual, and forms a part of the obligatory training of the Main Mendrup Practitioners (*a mchod bcu gnyis*, see Chapter 2). Among the educated elite of Triten Norbutse monastery, i.e. the geshe from whom these Main Mendrup Practitioners were recruited, the account defined their general apprehension of the mendrup ritual's history. Whereas the Main Mendrup Practitioners and a number of other geshe were familiarised with the narrative well in advance of the ritual, the rest of the monks and attending public received it during public teachings (see Chapter 2) granted by Yongdzin Rinpoche before and during the Mendrup performance at Triten Norbutse in December 2012. The teachings were arranged before the start of almost all of the ritual's preliminary activities (*sngon 'gro*) to provide an introduction to the practice and a clear justification and authorisation of the lineage of its transmission (*brgyud pa*). The pattern of introducing a ritual practice by a rendition of its origin, typically

⁶⁴ Kind, 2002, YR (Triten Norbutse).

preceded by an exposition on the origin of the given main deity, is a convention of tantric ritual traditions. The big Bonpo mendrup ritual has adopted this framework, and itself is a tantric rite. As for the Light-Swirled Mendrup, the emergence of the practice is recalled but not that of the deity Trowo Tsochok Khagying. Yongdzin Rinpoche's authority is very obvious in the process. Even afterwards throughout my fieldwork, when I inquired to the Main Mendrup Practitioners, other geshes, or the medical practitioner in charge (Amchi Nyima, Am chi Nyi ma, see below), about the history of the mendrup or any other related oral knowledge, I was in fact in all instances addressed to Yongdzin Rinpoche.

It remains unanswered to which extent the oral narration has been, at any point of time, informed by written sources. The account is believed to have been passed on in an unbroken lineage from past masters for a very long time, since the appearance of the mendrup practice. Naturally, the account might have been changing in the course of its transmission, to finally formulate the current normative version. There is no instrument of testifying its historicity or accuracy. In the current oral narrative, the Mendrup's origination and lineage of transmission are rendered as follows: The Light-Swirled Mendrup of Trowo Tsochok Khagying is believed to go back to primordial times and the deity Küntu Zangpo (Kun tu bzang po, Skt. Samantabhadra), in the ritual context often apprehended as the fount of all knowledge.⁶⁵ He bestowed the Mendrup ritual's practice and expertise to the deity Shenlha Ökar (gShen lha 'od dkar). The transmission then continued through a teacher-student lineage to the great Bonpo master Drenpa Namkha (Dran pa nam mkha', 8th century),⁶⁶ the chief protector of Bon during its assumed suppression in Central Tibet in the eighth century. Drenpa Namkha is credited with concealing the text, along with many other, as a treasure (*terma*, *gter ma*) to be rediscovered in more favourable times yet to come. These came in the eleventh and twelfth century. The cardinal text (*The Main Text of the Light-Swirled Nectar Medicine*, 'Od zer 'khyil ba bdud rtsi sman gyi gzhung bzhugs lags s+ho, Figure 2a, 2b) is understood to have been revealed in 1108 by the treasure discoverer (*tertön*, *gter ston*) Rindzin Chenpo Gyermi Nyiö (Rig 'dzin chen po gyermi nyi 'od, 11th-12th century) in Dangra Khyungdzong (Dang ra khyung rdzong) in northern Tsang,⁶⁷ who might have been accompanied in his act by Matön Sindzin (rMa ston srin 'dzin, aka Matön Söldzin, rMa ston

⁶⁵ Kværne, 2001.

⁶⁶ Dating according to Karmay and Watt, 2007, p. 213.

⁶⁷ Also NyTshGy – this source is likely to be influenced by the contemporary exile oral narrative on the Mendrup. Also in Kind, 2002, p. 47. Dating in Kværne, 1971.

srol 'dzin, b. 1092).⁶⁸ Another section of the ritual's sacred texts is supposed to have been recovered beforehand, in 1017, by Shenchen Luga (gShen chen klu dga', 996-1035)⁶⁹ from Drigtsam Takar ('Brig mtshams mtha' dkar) in southern Tsang.⁷⁰ Moreover, the written work was accompanied by several precious objects, nine vessels of medicine (*bum pa, ga'u*) containing a medicinal mixture, the *papta* (*phabs gta'*) "fermenting agent", that forms the material core of the ritual (see Chapter 2, Figure 3).

Upon the discovery, these items were passed down to the fourth abbot Nyima Gyeltsen (Nyi ma rgyal mtshan)⁷¹ of the Yéru Wensaka (g.Yas ru dben sa kha) monastery in Tsang, the first known monastery of the Bonpos which had been established by the Dru lineage in 1072 and which formed its centre. Hence the ritual was performed regularly at the monastery once in the lifetime of every abbot, which meant once in about sixty years. After its disastrous destruction by a deluge in 1386, the tradition was to continue in the new monastery Tashi Menri (bKra shis sman ri, known simply as Menri), founded at a nearby location in 1405 by the famous Bonpo scholar Nyammé Shérap Gyeltsen (mNyam med Shes rab rgyal mtshan, 1356-1415).⁷² Each abbot of the monastery, gradually coming to be regarded as the head of all Bonpos, had to conduct the mendrup ritual as one of the two major commitments of his office. This obligation was even stated in the main legal code of the monastery, the *chayik* (*bca' yig*): "An abbot was free to retire once he had performed two obligatory acts which confirmed his abbacy: the erection of a *mčhod-rten* for his predecessor and the organisation of *sgrub-chen* and *sman-sgrub* prayers."⁷³ This custom was unique to Menri, only after that the abbots had the time and permission to pass the rest of their lives in retreat in meditation. The knowledge of the proper conduction of the ritual was passed from the abbot, the head of the monastery, to his successor. The scarcity of the performances was due to the enormous effort and financial

⁶⁸ Yongdzin Rinpoche did not mention Matön Sindzin in the main normative lineage of the oral transmission, but he was mentioned by Khenpo Tenpa Yungdrung. Matön Sindzin likely stands apart from the main transmission, for more details see the next chapter. Matön Sindzin at this occasion was also mentioned in Kværne, 1971. Cf. the *Katen Catalogue*: Karmay and Nagano, 2001, pp. 1026 (168-1), 1027 (168-7), 1308 (230-22). Dates are based on Kværne, 1971. The accounts of the discovery differ. According to Kværne 1971, p. 230, Gyermi Nyiö and Matön Sindzin found the treasure together in 1108. Tenpa Yungdrung and Millard in NyTshGy describe a transmission of the former's discovery to the latter. This version accords with the one by Khud spungs pa dBra ston Ngag dbang skal bzang bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan, 2017, fol. 42, p. 72, fol. 234. A third narrative states that Matön Sindzin made the discovery upon Gyermi Nyiö's prophecy. DOTZ, p. 2. A more detailed lineage of transmission appears in NyTshGy. Gyermi Nyiö's bibliography by Skyang 'phags does not contain an explicit mention of the discovery (dKar ru Grub dbang sprul sku bstan pa'i nyi ma, 1998, vol. 200, text 1). Cf. Martin, <https://sites.google.com/site/tiblical/prop-names-biblio-key>.

⁶⁹ Dates in Kværne, 1971.

⁷⁰ Also NyTshGy, Kind, 2002, p. 47.

⁷¹ Here "abbot" translates both Tibetan terms assigned to the heads of the monastery *tönpa* (*ston pa*, "teacher") and *khenpo* (*mkhan po*, which mostly stands for "abbot"), only the latter of which implies monastic ordination.

⁷² Dating in Karmay and Watt, 2007.

⁷³ Cech, 1988, pp. 69-70, 85. Also YR and KTY in their oral teachings (Triten Norbutse).

investment put into the prescribed substances, as well as the secrecy and prestige surrounding the tradition. The mendrup ritual was also adopted by the nearby and much later Yungdrung Ling monastery (founded in 1834),⁷⁴ where the practice actively continues until today. The last performance took place in 2013.⁷⁵ With the flight of Tibetan refugees since the 1950s, their rituals travelled with them in their memories and in textual form on their backs. The mendrup of Menri has thus switched its main location into the exile of Nepal and India.

This officially presented oral history of the Light-Swirled Mendrup has its secret and not usually shared counterpart. A prominent geshe of the exile Menri monastery, who has to remain anonymous here, has confided to me the complicated fate of the ritual's *terma papta* medicine, which seems to have sparked a bitter dispute over religious items within the Dru community. The *papta*, or "yeast agent", presents the core ingredient of the ritual. It expresses the mendrup ritual's lineage of transmission, maintains its efficacy,⁷⁶ and is absolutely essential for the ritual's performance (see Chapter 2, Figure 3). The *papta* of the Light-Swirled Mendrup is believed to be one of the original nine vessels unearthed as a treasure by the revealers of the ritual. The oral clandestine story recounts that this vessel, as the only one of the nine, survived and was cautiously kept in Menri monastery in Central Tibet. However, later, and to the protest of the institution, the precious container was transported to Takdrosa (sTag bro sa)⁷⁷ at the most sacred Bonpo mountain, Bonri (Bön ri) in Kongpo (Kong po) in Southern Tibet. The causal happenings were reconstructed to me as follows: A Menri abbot, probably the tenth bearing the name Mönlam Trashi (sMon lam bkra shis),⁷⁸ embarked on a meditative retreat of an announced period of three months. He extended the duration to three years without letting anyone know, and this lack of information created the controversy. In the interim, the confused monastery leadership, who were waiting for their head in vain, appointed a new abbot. After returning, the disappointed Mönlam Trashi had no chance of reclaiming his former position and thus angrily decided to leave. He did not abandon his former seat with empty hands, but tried to collect as many precious objects as possible. Some of them could not be moved due to a miraculous intervention of deities, for example the funeral *stūpa* (Tib. *sku gdung*) of Nyammé Shérab Gyeltsen, which Mönlam

⁷⁴ Date based on Karmay and Nagano, 2003, p. 33.

⁷⁵ A dpal bzang, 2013a, 2013b.

⁷⁶ For a discussion on the cultural construction of "efficacy" in healing, see for instance Sivin, 2015, in Tibetan context see Adams, 2010-11, Samuel, 1990, 2011. An analysis of the multiple layers of efficacy of mendrup is in Cantwell, 2015, p. 88, of Tibetan precious pills and empowered medicine in general in Blaikie, 2013, 2014, 2015, Craig, 2011, Gerke, 2017.

⁷⁷ Karmay and Nagano, 2003, pp. 227-228.

⁷⁸ The issue supposedly led to erasing Mönlan Trashi's name from the list of Menri abbots, therefore dating his life is problematic. NW (Prague 2013).

Trashī also wished to seize. Yet, he managed to take the master's hat along with other objects. Among them was also the remaining mendrup medicinal vessel. The magical container came to light again after the Chinese expulsion in the mid-twentieth, having been carried into the exile by a teacher from Takdrosa, and was probably stored in secrecy in the new Menri monastery in Dolanji, Himachal Pradesh, India (founded 1969),⁷⁹ which became the chief Bonpo establishment in the exile and beyond. Subsequently, when the owner moved to the second most important Bonpo exile monastery, Triten Norbutse in Kathmandu, the vessel accompanied him. The result is that Triten Norbutse presently holds the vessel, still filled with the *terma* medicine and kept at the monastery's Rinpoche's seat, the Labrang (*bla brang*). Thus, Menri does not possess the item, although it is the leading institution of Bon.

According to a different narrative, shared by another leading geshe of the exile Menri monastery, the *papta* medicine of the Light-Swirled Mendrup used in the exile has a different provenience. The story states that the coming refugees carried with them bits of mendrup medicinal powders distributed during mendrup celebrations in the Menri and Yungdrung Ling monasteries in Tibet. What they brought was then mixed together to produce the mendrup *papta* medicine. This blend was divided between both Menri in India and Triten Norbutse in Nepal to handle in their mendrup rituals.⁸⁰ Nevertheless, this explanation seems unlikely given the reverence and secrecy that just the *papta* vessel, not even speaking about its contents, held by Triten Norbutse receives, and, more importantly, the presentation of the vessel by Triten Norbutse authorities to the public. Such a practice of creating a *terma papta* medicine anew would go against the main concept of the *papta* medicine, that is to transfer the blessings and powers of the specific Mendrup in an uninterrupted lineage (see Chapter 4). Further, the same *papta* medicine could not be used in the varied mendrup performances of the exile Menri and Triten Norbutse (Chapters 2, 4). To me, this story seems to rather represent an elaboration to cover up the controversial background of the Mendrup practice. May it be as it is, the mere fact of contestation of the *papta* substance, inherently linked to the Mendrup's transmission, illustrates the importance the substance and its imparting are ascribed.

⁷⁹ On the monastery see Karmay and Nagano, 2003, pp. 736-738. Currently, it houses about four hundred monks.

⁸⁰ Oral account shared by Geshe Monlam Tharchin (Triten Norbutse).

The Mendrup Ritual in Bonpo Historical Works

This chapter presents the traceable history of the Tibetan Bonpo Mendrup ritual in textual sources. It aims to embrace the relevant Bonpo historical material accessible, which covers texts dating from the eleventh or twelfth century onwards until the early twentieth century.

I have attempted to collect any evidence of Bonpo mendrup practices in general, while paying particular attention to the Light-Swirled Mendrup. There is no single work presenting the ritual's history. The Bonpo historical texts consulted were mainly found in two larger volumes of hagiographies and Bon histories collected and reproduced in Menri monastery in India (Tenzin Namdak, 1972, *Three sources for a history of Bon*, 1974).⁸¹ The first collection contains thirteen individual compositions, the latter three historical chronicles. Two other texts included came from the so called *New Collection of Bonpo Katen Texts* (dKar ru Grub dbang sprul sku bstan pa'i nyi ma, 1998). Other consisted of three recent historical studies (rMe'u tsha bstan 'dzin rnam rgyal, 1989, 2013, 2014), one hagiography (Tshe ring bkra shis, 2004), and five other historical works (sTong skor Tshe ring thar et al., 2010). Two sources were available in English translations, apart from the Tibetan originals (Karmay, 1972, Martin, 2001). From these twenty-eight texts studied, references to the mendrup ritual were found in eleven of them. In most cases, these proved to consist of various scattered and brief mentions incorporated into accounts on different topics, typically for instance the lineages of teachings' transmissions and lists of religious treasures' discoveries. However, sometimes a longer narrative appeared. The several implications of and direct references to the mendrup ritual's performance in the writings were interpreted in relation to its present form, as conducted in Triten Norbutse in 2012 (the description of the ritual in Chapter 2). Without the knowledge of the ritual's practical conduction, the often condensed language and rendering of the sources would in some instances be hardly understandable.

Concerning the dating of the sources, several issues have to be considered. I rely on the widespread practice in Tibetan Studies to recognise the dates of the supposed treasure revelations as an approximate (and sometimes the latest possible) dating for the time of the composition of the given texts. Secondly, following the established standards, I take stated authorship of the texts (for instance in colophons) to likely present the actual composers, some of whom can be dated based on other sources. In most cases, there is no academic

⁸¹ The publication Tenzin Namdak, 1972, presents facsimile of manuscripts of the Samling monastery in Dolpo. A third publication of such collected works prepared by Menri, Lopon Tenzin Namdak, 1981, which was also considered, is mainly a reproduction of Tenzin Namdak, 1972.

method yet developed to testify the time of origin of the written works, therefore I have adopted this common approach. Moreover, especially in the case of ritual scriptures, their anonymous copying by scribes over a long span of time, during which the contents was likely extended, altered, corrupted, etc., can be assumed. The exact dating of the sources used thus awaits further treatment.

In the Bonpo historical textual corpus, various kinds of documents feature: myths and rituals, recordings of visions, accounts on the origin of Bonpo teachings (*bstan 'byung*),⁸² prophecies (*lung bstan*), biographies and hagiographies (*rnam thar*). Some dates can be established on the basis of chronological works (*bstan rtsis*).⁸³ We shall see how the Bonpo mendrup, and particularly the Light-Swirled Mendrup of Trowo Tsochok Khagying, has been reflected in them, and how its emic textual history can be reconstructed.

Sources from the Eleventh to Thirteenth Century

The Bonpos themselves believe that the authoritative scripture for the mendrup ritual of Trowo Tsochok Khagying, *The Main Text of the Light-Swirled Nectar Medicine* (*'Od zer 'khyil pa bdud rtsi sman gyi gzhung bzhugs lags s+ho*),⁸⁴ was found as a treasure in the eleventh to twelfth century. Contemporary leading scholars on the Tibetan treasure literature use the dates of such supposed discoveries as an approximate (and sometimes the latest possible) dating for the time of the given texts' composition. The language of this text also indicates the likely origin in this period.

This dating is also supported by another treasure text discovered in the twelfth century. This scripture, *The Transmission of Knowledge of Family Holders* (*Rigs 'dzin rig pa'i thugs rgyud*),⁸⁵ contains myths about the origin of the world, deities, Bonpo teachings, and ritual instructions. As such, it is neither a healing practice, nor a tantric *sādhana* text. Like the mendrup text and ritual, the work is again attributed to the deity Küntu Zangpo as its original source, then to Drenpa Namkha as its supposed receiver, and finally to a master of the Ma (rMa) family dated to the twelfth century, Matön Shérap Senggé, possibly Matön Sindzin's grandson, as its discoverer.⁸⁶ Further, other close similarities to the mendrup can be observed.

⁸² Bonpo term and genre analogous to the Buddhist *chö jung* (*chos 'byung*).

⁸³ Kvärne, 1971, Martin, 2017.

⁸⁴ *'Od zer 'khyil ba bdud rtsi sman gyi gzhung lags s+ho*, MS Kathmandu, Triten Norbutse monastery, no number, *'Od zer 'khyil ba bdud rtsi sman gyi gzhung bzhugs pa lags s+ho*, 1998, vol. 168, text 1, *'Od zer 'khyil ba bdud rtsi sman gyi gzhung bzhugs pa'i dbus phyogs legs s+ho*, 1998, vol. 230, text 22.

⁸⁵ The standard spelling of the beginning would be *rig 'dzin*. *Rigs 'dzin rig pa'i thugs rgyud*, 1972, fol. 186-237.

⁸⁶ Martin, 2017, and Karmay, 1972, pp. 170-171.

The same classes of deities are important here – the *zhi tro*, the 45 peaceful and 86 wrathful deities, and among them Trowo Tsochok Khagying. Throughout the work more categories corresponding to the mendrup occur, as the opposition of harmful poison (*duk, dug*) and beneficial medicine (*men, sman*) or nectar (*dütsi, bdud rtsi*), and the notion of possible transformation of the former into the later by the power of certain divinities (*dug sman du bsgyur*).⁸⁷ The former is linked to the five mental poisons of afflictions (*nyon mongs dug lnga*).⁸⁸ This contrast and the intended conversion into the five wisdoms (*ye shes lnga*),⁸⁹ which are also mentioned, form the key element of the mendrup. The text also touches upon *rasayana* medicine (*ra sa ya na sman*),⁹⁰ possibly mercury,⁹¹ which plays a role in the mendrup ritual as well. Thus, both the *The Main Text of the Light-Swirled Nectar Medicine* of the Mendrup and *The Transmission of Knowledge of Family Holders* at the least partly derive from a shared body of knowledge and traditions, and likely reflect the Bonpo intellectual environment of the twelfth century.

A much stronger support for this possible dating of the mendrup ritual and text is found in *The Biography of Lama Shen (Bla ma gshen gyi rnam thar)* dated to the thirteenth century.⁹² This relatively short composition presents the history of the famous Shen family lineage and its transmissions of teachings.⁹³ The title evokes the family’s most prominent character, master Shenchen Luga, who is by the Bonpo tradition strongly associated with the mendrup.⁹⁴ Here, we find the earliest historical account of the Bonpo mendrup I am aware of. Pönsé Dzamling (dPon gsas ’dzam gling, b. 1259/1271),⁹⁵ a direct descendant of Shenchen Luga after a few generations, figures in the following account (translation by Dan Martin):

“He [Pönsé Dzamling]⁹⁶ obtained the essential scriptures, blessings and empowerments of the past masters, including ‘uncle and nephew’ (*khu dbon*) lamas. He performed the *Zhi-khro* (‘Peaceful Wrathful’) and Medicine

⁸⁷ *Rigs ’dzin rig pa’i thugs rgyud*, 1972, fol. 201-202, 209. Further in Sehnalova, 2017.

⁸⁸ *Rigs ’dzin rig pa’i thugs rgyud*, 1972, fol. 192.

⁸⁹ *Rigs ’dzin rig pa’i thugs rgyud*, 1972, fol. 188.

⁹⁰ *Rigs ’dzin rig pa’i thugs rgyud*, 1972, fol. 215.

⁹¹ The exact meaning of the term remains a speculation: actual mercury, a mercury-based medicine, another substance, or a certain healing or other practice. The *men (sman, “medicine”)* syllable here is likely to indicate a material substance. Cantwell, 2017, elaborates on the complexity of the word *rasayana (ra sa ya na, Skt. rasāyana)*.

⁹² *Bla ma gshen gyi rnam thar*, 1972, fol. 238-244, dated by Martin, 2001.

⁹³ Further on the lineage see Karmay, 2007, and rMe’u tshang bstan ’dzin rnam rgyal, 2014.

⁹⁴ Moreover, he is associated with both main mendrup rituals of the Dru lineage, of both the deities Trowo Tsochok Khagying and Purwa.

⁹⁵ Dating in Martin, 2001, p. 77.

⁹⁶ My insertion.

practices (*sman sgrub*)⁹⁷ and became a great master in the transmission of blessings.⁹⁸ His mental continuum was thoroughly tamed and his thoughts were immaculately pure. He was completely free of erroneous conceptions of the subjective and objective and devoid of attachment to partial perspectives that come from holding on to the ‘self’ and one’s own special qualities. Therefore he could overpower and control other peoples’ experience of the phenomenal world. Because of his blessings and compassion he could overpower all hindrances and injuries.”⁹⁹

The mendrup appears as a powerful ritual knowledge, which is continued from the past and transmitted by the Shen lineage as one of their main practices. It is explicitly listed as one of the chief achievements of master Pönsé Dzamling. As the text indicates, Pönsé Dzamling was granted the practice, performed it, excelled in it, was entitled to hand it over, and is believed to have gained extraordinary skills from the practice. The necessity of acquiring the given text and empowerment, along with the previous masters’ blessings, for performing and further bestowing the practice, are stressed as they are today. In addition, the connection of the mendrup practice with the *zhi tro*, peaceful and wrathful deities, is clearly visible.

Relying on the examined sources and their plausible dating, it can be stated that the Bonpo mendrup ritual and its scriptures very likely existed before the thirteenth century, and probably originated between the eleventh and thirteenth century. This dating would correspond to the emergence of the Nyingma mendrup rituals.¹⁰⁰

Sources from the Fourteenth to Seventeenth Century

The evidence for the existence of the Bonpo mendrup ritual by the thirteenth century is further strengthened by the only known commentary on the ritual and its *Main Text of the Light-Swirled Nectar Medicine*. The commentary comes from the pen of the eminent Bonpo master Nyö Tsültrim Gyeltsen (gNyos Tshul khrim rgyal mtshan) active in Yéru Wensaka

⁹⁷ My insertion.

⁹⁸ I suggest an alternation of the translation: “He became a great master of the lineage of blessings of [the practices of] the peaceful and wrathful deities and the mendrup [associated with them], and others.” (*zhi khro dang sman sgrub la swogs pa/ bying brlabs rgyud pa’i dpon gsas chen por gyur cig/*). *Bla ma gshen gyi rnam thar*, 1972, fol. 243.

⁹⁹ *Bla ma gshen gyi rnam thar*, 1972, fol. 243. Translation in Martin, 2001, pp. 77-78.

¹⁰⁰ Cantwell, 2017, and Garrett, 2009, 2010.

monastery in the fourteenth century. The work is entitled *The Mirror Illuminating the Practice of Good Qualities of the Light-Swirled Nectar* ('*Od zer 'khyil pa bdud rtsi yon tan gyi phyag bzhes gsal byed me long bzhugs so*).¹⁰¹ Apart from the mendrup text itself, this writing constitutes the first extensive historical evidence of the Bonpo mendrup ritual in general, and of the Mendrup of Trowo Tsochok Khagying in particular. It gives detailed instructions on the ritual's performance, is very technical and prescriptive, and is considered very authoritative. The work has codified the practice of the ritual and is still referred to for contemporary performances. It is regarded as the main work on the ritual within the Bonpo tradition. The commentary frames the ritual into a very formalised structure of a Buddhist *sādhana* and organised, large-scale monastic ritual practices of many stages and substages, elaborated preliminary activities, various sequences of the main activities, etc. Moreover, it imposes a clearer Buddhist cosmological and ritual framework to create the whole as an extended and coherent unit. The manual gives accurate guidance throughout the rite, which suggest that the mendrup ritual's practice might have not significantly changed since the time of Nyö Tsültrim Gyeltsen. The individual stages of the ritual as we know it today might have been expanded, elaborated, etc., but not created anew, and still follow Nyö Tsültrim Gyeltsen's writing.

From a slightly later period, from between the fourteenth to sixteenth centuries,¹⁰² come two short mentions of the mendrup in the historical work *The Lamp Illuminating the Explanations and Developments of the Teachings* (*bsTan pa 'i rnam bshad dar rgyas gsal ba 'i sgron ma zhes bya ba bzhugs*)¹⁰³ written by the famous scholar Patön Tengyel Zangpo (sPa ston bsTan rgyal bzang po, probably 15th century).¹⁰⁴ The work enumerates transmitted teachings and practices of Bon and organises them into lists of groups and subgroups. The mendrup here appears under its common epithet as “the nectar medicine” (*bdud rtsi sman*) and is listed among cycles of the tantras of the *zhi tro*, the peaceful and wrathful divinities.¹⁰⁵

Similarly, a biography of Nyammé Shérap Gyeltsen (mNyam med Shes rab rgyal mtshan, 1356-1415),¹⁰⁶ one of the chief leading figures of Bon in the history, has mendrup in a list of various practices performed. Nyammé Shérap Gyeltsen was an extremely influential

¹⁰¹ gNyos tshul khriims rgyal mtshan. '*Od zer 'khyil pa bdud rtsi yon tan gyi phyag bshes gsal byed me long bzhug so*, MS Kathmandu, Triten Norbutse monastery, no number (attribution of the work in its colophon); NyTshGy provides an English translation.

¹⁰² Discussion on its time of composition in Martin, 1997, pp. 78-79.

¹⁰³ Spa-ston Bstan-rgyal-bzang-po, 1972, fol. 498-769, sPa ston bsTan rgyal bzang po, 2010, pp. 187-364. Cf. Martin, 1997, pp. 78-79.

¹⁰⁴ Dating in Martin, 1997, pp. 78-79, Karmay, 2007, p. 72.

¹⁰⁵ Spa-ston Bstan-rgyal-bzang-po, 1972, fol. 519-525, sPa ston bsTan rgyal bzang po, 2010, pp. 204-205.

¹⁰⁶ Dating in Karmay and Watt, 2007.

Bonpo scholar, who is credited with establishing the principal Bonpo Tashi Menri monastery in Central Tibet in 1405, and with transforming Bon into its current institutionalised monastic form. In *The Splendorous Lotus Rosary Biography of the Omniscient Precious Lord, the Great One-eyed Master* (*rJe rin po che thams cad mkhyen pa slob dpon spyan gcig pa chen po'i rnam thar ngo mtshar pad mo'i phreng ba*),¹⁰⁷ one of the several accounts of his life,¹⁰⁸ the empowerment of Trowo Tsochok Khagying and “medicinal ritual arrangements” (*sman gyi chog khrigs*) feature among the recorded activities master Nyammé Shéráp Gyeltsen engaged in.¹⁰⁹ The account is supposed to have been composed by Drakpa Gyeltsen (Grags pa rgyal mtshan), a disciple of the master’s spiritual son Gyeltsap Rinchen Gyeltsen (rGyal tshab Rin chen rgyal mtshan, b. 1360/4),¹¹⁰ and hence can be presumably dated to the late fourteenth or fifteenth century.

The dating of two other writings significant to the endeavour of tracing the Bonpo mendrup ritual remains very problematic. In my estimation, they might be included into this period of the fourteenth to seventeenth century, or eventually into slightly later times. Both compositions deal with important Bonpo historical figures who at least are datable. The first is Druchen Namkha Yungdrung (Dru chen Nam mkha' g.yung drung, 994/999-1054),¹¹¹ one of the most prominent masters of the Dru lineage, and the second the abovementioned treasure revealer Matön Shéráp Senggé (twelfth century) who figures in both works. Beginning with the earlier personage, Namkha Yungdrung, aka Druchen, “the Great Dru [lineage master]”, the alleged founder of the Yéru Wensaka monastery, is the central figure of the explicitly entitled *The Biography of Lama Druchen* (*Bla ma gru chen po'i rnam thar bzhugs so*),¹¹² authored by a certain Tazhi Dülwa Senggé (Mtha' bzhi 'Dul ba seng ge), who is difficult to trace. The work presents Namkha Yungdrung’s life story, and within it records the very first performance of the mendrup ritual. From young age the master travelled, was meeting teachers, and requesting teachings from them.¹¹³ Having acquired diverse education and experience of practice, he himself became a teacher followed by a number of disciples. Among them was also Matön Shéráp Senggé. In a group with two other students, Darma Drogön Azha (Dar ma 'Gro 'gon 'a zha) and Pönsé (dPon gsas), he approached the master

¹⁰⁷ Tshe ring bkra shis, 2004, pp. 20-69.

¹⁰⁸ Cf. Tshe ring bkra shis, 2004.

¹⁰⁹ Tshe ring bkra shis, 2004, p. 40.

¹¹⁰ Tshe ring bkra shis, 2004, pp. 3-4. The birth year 1364 in Tshe ring bkra shis, 2004, but 1360 in Achard, 2004, p. 256, Kvaerne, 1971, p. 232. See also Karmay, 1972, pp. 143-144.

¹¹¹ Kvaerne, 1971, p. 229, lists the wood Horse year of 994, whereas *The Biography* itself (Mtha'-bzhi-'Dul-seng, 1972, fol. 439) places the birth into a pig year, which would be 999 (Vostrikov, 1970, pp. 238-239).

¹¹² Mtha'-bzhi-'Dul-seng, 1972, fol. 438-457.

¹¹³ Mtha'-bzhi-'Dul-seng, 1972, fol. 440.

and requested the outer, inner, and secret empowerments and transmissions of *damkar* (*bdam skar*).¹¹⁴ The text remains silent about the possible inclusion of the mendrup among them. Reading further, the transmission of this specific practice seems to have been confined to a single chosen disciple. In a section of the biography recording the master's bestowed practices and empowerments, their recipients, and eventually the payments made for them, the transmission of mendrup is explicitly registered as granted to student Pönsé:

“In [the place of] Zhikha (bZhis kha),¹¹⁵ the past¹¹⁶ Biri Agom (Bi ri a sgom) offered a part of a nomadic estate [to master Druchen]. At that great place, [master Druchen] practised the familiarisation and accomplishment (*snyen* (*bsnyen*) *sgrub*) and concentrated practice (*nyams len*). According to the prophecy of Sipé Gyelmo (Srid pa'i rgyal mo),¹¹⁷ he gave the instructions (*lung nos*) of the nectar medicinal accomplishment (*bdud rtsi sman grub* [sic]) to master Pönsé.”¹¹⁸

Then again, Pönsé was honoured by receiving practice from the master at another location:

“In [the place of] Chi (sPyi) [master Druchen] offered the nectar medicinal accomplishment (*bdud rtsi sman bsgrub* [sic]) to master Pönsé, and [the rites] of the earth demons and sky demons, as well as many other selected practices, to Rikdzin khandro (Rigs 'dzin mkha' 'gro) and others.”¹¹⁹

Yet, the most interesting is the reference to the very first celebration of the mendrup ritual, with which master Druchen is credited:

¹¹⁴ The word *bdam skar* remains unclear, it might refer to a certain name (possibly derived from a star constellation, as *skar* means star). *de dus bla ma dar ma 'gro 'gon 'a zha/ bla ma rma sher seng* (*shes rab seng ge*)/ *bla ma dpon gsas dang bzhi bar 'dzom pa la/ phyi nang gsang ba 'i dbang lung dang/ bdam skar mtha' dag zhus/ Mtha'-bzhi-'Dul-seng*, 1972, fol. 441.

¹¹⁵ Probably in Central Tibet.

¹¹⁶ Indicated that the person has been already mentioned in the given text.

¹¹⁷ One of the main protectors of Bon. Kværne, 1995, pp. 107-108, 113.

¹¹⁸ *bzhis kha la snga ba bi ri a sgom gyis 'brog bzhis* (*gzhis*) *dum cig phul/ gnas chen der snyen* (*bsnyen*) *sgrub dang/ nyams len grims par mdzad pas/ srid rgyal gyis* (*srid pa rgyal mos*) *lung stan* (*bstan*) *nas/ bla ma dpon gsas la bdud rtsi sman grub* [sic] *gi* (*kyi*) *lung nos gsung/ Mtha'-bzhi-'Dul-seng*, 1972, fol. 442.

¹¹⁹ *spyi ru bla ma 'i* (*ma*) *dpon gsas la bdud rtsi sman bsgrub* [sic] *dang/ rigs 'dzin mkha' 'gro la swogs pa/ sa gdon dang gnam gdon/ gzhan yang bdams pa 'i bzhug rnam mang du zhus/ Mtha'-bzhi-'Dul-seng*, 1972, fol. 444.

“[Master Druchen] lead the first mendrup ritual (*sman sgrub* [sic]). Having conducted it five times,¹²⁰ he collected the various medicines (*sman rnams*), and many good signs appeared. The welfare of beings spread and increased, and [all] the four lands were blessed. In Shubar (Shu bar), close to the teacher Śrī Vajrapāṇi, he enslaved (tamed) demons [hindering] men and eliminated those [demons] who opposed. In Wensaka and Chi, offerings were presented [to the master] several times. [Also] the Bonpos of the pastoralist lands invited [the master] in order to tame [the harmful demons there]. [By this the master] showed kindness to all. [Master Druchen then] performed the familiarisation and accomplishment of the peaceful and wrathful deities (*zhi khro'i snyen (bsnyen) sgrub*), and the accomplishment of liberation by eating nectar (*bdud rtsi zos grol sgrub pa*). [Subsequently,] the big violent spirits together with their retainers, the to-be-tamed rock demoness Dakpa Shago (bDag pa sha 'go, 'The deer-headed one'), the lords of the land (*gzhi bdag*) of Droshong (Gro shong), and others, were truly and completely bound by oath to the Doctrine (*bka'*).”¹²¹

This passage esteems Druchen through describing the performance of the first mendrup, which the source ascribe to his orchestration. It emphasizes that there are a number of different medicines which must be acquired before the ritual can commence. The ritual is depicted as bringing universal prosperity and blessings; this is also the way it is understood by the contemporary Bonpo community (see Chapter 5). Druchen performs the ritual to lay communities in response to their request and offerings, in this case along with other ritual services. In this context, Druchen also pacifies malevolent forces of the environment, and tames them into the protectors of the Doctrine, suggesting that the mendrup performance itself might have been perceived as effecting these actions. It is now difficult to prove such claims, yet the capability of the mendrup ritual to balance and pacify the whole environment is overtly stressed by the Bonpos during contemporary performances (Chapters 2, 5).

¹²⁰ Literally translation. The source does not provide any details of the mentioned five performances of the mendrup ritual.

¹²¹ In the Bonpo context, the term *ka (bka')*, “Word”, refers to the teachings of the supposed founder of the religious tradition of Bon, Tönpa Shenrap Mibo (sTon pa gShen rab mi bo). In the Buddhist context, the “Word” signifies the teachings of Buddha Shakyamuni. Cf. Kværne, 1995.
sman sgrub [sic] *dang po'i sna drangs nas/ thengs lnga mdzad pas/ sman rnams slongs (slong) cing bzang rtags du ma byung/ 'gro don rgyas par 'phel cing sa bzhi byin gyis rlabs/ shu bar du bha vadzra pa ni stan pa'i dra ru lang pa la/ mi bdud bran du bkol nas 'gal byed cham la phab/ dben tsha kha dang spyi ru 'bul ba rnams gzhag thengs 'ga' mdzad/ 'brog phyogs bon pos tul gyur spyan drangs kun la bka' drin gnang/ zhi khro'o snyen (bsnyen) sgrub dang/ bdud rtsi zos grol sgrub pa mdzad nas/ che btsun sde 'khor dang/ tul kyu'i brag srin bdag pa sha (shwa) 'go la swogs/ gro shod kyi bzhi bdag rnams dngos su yongs nas bka' dang dam la btags/ Mtha'-bzhi-'Dul-seng, 1972, fol. 446.*

Throughout the quotes the mendrup ritual is referred to as the “nectar medicinal accomplishment” or the “practice of the nectar medicine” (*bdud rtsi sman sgrub*). In the last example, the rite is attributed the capacity of liberating, i.e. achieving awakening, through digestion, which refers to the Tibetan practice of liberation by the sense of taste (*myong grol*). The mendrup practice is again connected to the peaceful and wrathful deities. Both master Druchen Namkha Yungdrung and the mendrup are placed into the area of the first known Bonpo monastery Yéru Wensaka in Central Tibet. This locality of the initial mendrup performances, as well as their link to the Dru lineage, are similarly accentuated by the contemporary oral histories of the Bonpos. The supposed dating of Druchen (994/999-1054) and Shenchen Luga (996-1035), the alleged discoverer of a part of the mendrup practice, make them contemporary and thus this story possible. However, the two other discoverers of other bits of the mendrup, Rindzin Chenpo Gyermi Nyiö (11th-12th century) and Matön Sindzin (b. 1092), post-date Druchen. This indicates that parts of the mendrup practice might be of different periods and origin (authorship), or simply that its precise dating remains difficult. Alternatively, in this case we might be dealing with two distinct mendrup rituals each having its own history of discovery and transmission. Nevertheless, this does not seem likely in the context of the other sources presented below.

Another hard-to-date text relevant for the understanding of the history of the Bonpo mendrup are the *Visions of Matön Shéráp Senggé* (*rMa ston shes rab seng gi gzigs snang lags so*)¹²² by Zhötön Sönam Drakpa (gZhod ston bSod nams grags pa). As the straightforward title indicates, the tractate deals with various visions received by the master and treasure revealer Matön Shéráp Senggé (12th century) in dreams and during his spiritual practice at varied locations. The narration is presented in the first person and reads as a succinct diary or autobiography. Matön Shéráp Senggé, and not his grandfather Matön Sindzin, acts here as the acquirer of the mendrup text. Matön Shéráp Senggé recounts his procurement of the text, as well as of the practical knowledge to perform the ritual, in detail:

“Then, [I] stayed at the rock in Goklung (sGog lung). One day, while entering a narrow passage [of the rock], [I] experienced a vision. That time, the previous[ly encountered] master was there, all dressed in cotton robes. He had returned again and come to his companion (i.e. myself) and said: ‘[Where] the mouth of the rock cave faces East, inside [of the cave] there is an opening. In the middle [of its inside], there

¹²² Gzhod-ston Bsod-nams-grags-pa, 1972, fol. 310-324, gZhod ston bSod nams grags pa, 1981, pp. 162-175, gZhod ston bSod nams grags pa, 1998, fol. 310-324, exactly the same as the first edition.

is a *maṇḍala*. Nine vessels are spread [on it]. To the central vessel there are eight vessels on the edges [of the *maṇḍala*], [all] joined by a spell cord (*bzungs thag*). In the four cardinal points and in the four corners of the *maṇḍala* there are eight men coming forth. Stretching the spell cord, they stand in a row. On the crowns of their heads they have a tied plaited tuft of hair. They stand facing [the *maṇḍala*].¹²³ In the four corners of the *maṇḍala*, silk ribbons in the four [colours of] white, yellow, red, and blue, are tied to the neck (i.e. upper part) of the four vultures' victory banners.¹²⁴ The *sé*¹²⁵ vessel in the centre is wrapped in fine silk. Many offerings are arranged [there]. In the West there is a big throne, the master is on its top. Also plenty of *chang*¹²⁶ is [arranged] there.' [Then,] the master said: 'This place is a garden of the jewel of turquoise, and this rock is a *sé* rock of heaped jewels. The cave and the rock are in union [like] the sun and the moon. Here, the nectar medicine will be accomplished (*bdud rtsi sman du bsgrub*). It is a practice (*sgrub*) in order to [be] without (i.e. overcome) birth and death', he said.

[Upon that,] I requested: 'How should the place [of the practice] be accomplished (i.e. established, *sgrub*)? As for the accomplishment of nectar medicine, what are the root (i.e. main) and the branch (i.e. minor) [ingredients of the practice]? How to master the general meaning of the practice? How to accomplish the manual of the main text [of the practice] (*sgrub bzhung lag khrigs*)? How to accomplish the main purpose [of the practice]? What is the [actual] practice (*lag len*) of the [ritual] activities? [How] to observe the particular kinds of the medicines? How [to accomplish] the *siddhi* of the medicinal empowerment (*sman dbang*)? How to gather the three ways of accumulation?'¹²⁷ To that [the master] said: 'This place is a garden of the spontaneously achieved turquoise realm [to] accomplish the nectar without birth and death. As for the accomplishment of the nectar medicine, there are five root (i.e. main) and eight branch (i.e. minor) [ingredients]. I have collected them. The general meaning is to accomplish [the state] without birth and death.' He explained all the methods of the practice (*lag len bya thabs*) of the lower door (i.e. esoteric instructions of the lower gate of the body), and the means of accumulating *siddhi* of the medicinal

¹²³ A tentative translation.

¹²⁴ Refers to the arrangement of paraphernalia on the *maṇḍala*.

¹²⁵ The *sé* (*bse*) material can denote rhinoceros or other animal horn, a type of stone or copper, or leather. BGTC, Das, Jäschke, 2007.

¹²⁶ *Chang* (*chang*) is barley beer or another alcoholic beverage as an offering to the deities.

¹²⁷ The three ways likely refer to the following methods proposed by the master.

empowerment (*sman dbang*). It was explained in the *Key of Medicine* (i.e. of medicinal practice) (*sman gyi lde mig*).

‘Who are these eight men? Don’t you have any helpers?’ [I asked.] [After the master] explained how to prepare the vessels, and how to tame (*btul*) the medicine, the eight men acted as the eight *vidyādhara*s (*rig ’dzin brgyad*) pressing the ground as a swastika.¹²⁸ The one in the East performed the peaceful medicinal accomplishment (*sman sgrub*) of meditation on deities. The one in the North accomplished the medicine of life without dying (*ma dur tshe sman sgrub pa*).¹²⁹ The one in the West accomplished the medicine of the empowerment of Dawa Gyeltsen (*Zla ba rgyal mtshan*). The one in the South accomplished the life empowerment (*tshe’i dbang*) of activities illuminating the meaning of eternity (*g.yung drung don gsal phrin las*). The one in the South-east accomplished the spontaneous accomplishment of the earth medicine of [the deity] Mupung Seldang (*Mu spungs gsal dangs* [dwangs]). The one in the North-east accomplished the lifting action of the lifting hollowness of the wind of Zarang Mébar (*Za rang me ’bar*). The one in the North-west accomplished the ripening of the medicinal heat (*sman drod smin pa*) of Mutsa Gyemé (*dMu tsha gyer med*). The one in the South-west accomplished the water medicine of Mugyel Tsukpü (*dMu rgyal rtsug phud*). Their purpose was the accomplishment of space (*dbyings sgrub*). [The action of] increasing (*rgyas pa*) was explained in the *Key*. [The master] also bestowed the medicinal yeast (*sman phabs*). [I] also attained the medicinal empowerment (*sman dbang*). Thus is the sixth false word of a beggar.”¹³⁰

¹²⁸ Probably refers to the pattern of their distribution in the four cardinal and the four intermediate points, by which they form the shape of a swastika.

¹²⁹ Literally “not burying” (*ma dur*).

¹³⁰ Due to likely misspellings in the original the translation remains tentative. Gzhod-ston Bsod-nams-grags-pa, 1972, fol. 318-320, gZhod ston bSod nams grags pa, 1981, pp. 171-173, gZhod ston bSod nams grags pa, 1998, fol. 310-324 (exactly the same as the first edition). The transliteration is based on the first edition, supplemented by corrections according to the second marked by a small cross.

(318/171) *de nas sgog lung gi brang la yod tsa na// nang cig bseb* ^{*(gseb)} *du phyin tsa na// snang ba phyed yengs nas* ^{’dug/ de dus sngon gyi bla ma de// ras kyi na bza’ kun ka} ^{’dug/ yang yongs zla la} ^{’deng dang gsung// brag phug kha shar du ltas pa nang phye ba cig} ^{’dug/ dkyil na dkyil} (319) ^{’khor cig} ^{’dug/ bum pa dgu spram} ^{*(skram) nas} ^{’dug/ dkyil gyi bum pa’i mtha’ bum pa rgyad} (*brgyad*) ^{kyi bzungs} ^{*(bzung) thag sbrel nas} ^{’dug/ dkyil} ^{’khor phyogs bzhi zur bzhi na/ mi brgyad rtsog ge bzhugs nas/ zungs thag} ^{’phyan} ^{*(thin) na} ^{’grangs} ^{*(bgrangs) nas} ^{’dug/ spyi bo na thor cog bcings} ^{*(bcing) nas} ^{’dug/ bdong} ^{*(gdong) pa} ^{’phyan na bcug nas} ^{’dug/ dkyil} ^{’khor zur bzhi na/ bya rgod rgyal mtshan} (172) ^{bzhi la/ skye} (*ske*) ^{na dar dkar ser dmar sngo bzhi btags nas} ^{’dug/ dkyil na bse’i ga} ^{’u} ^{*(ga’u) la dar} ^{*(der) zab kyis bril nas} ^{’dug/ mchod rdzas mang bar bshams nas} ^{’dug/ nub phyogs na khri che ba cig} ^{’dug/ de’i kha na bla ma de brda} ^{*(gda’)// chang yang mang bar brda} ^{*(gda’)/ bla ma de’i zhal nas/ gnas} ^{’di rin chen g.yu sdings kyi} ^{*(sding gi) ’tshal} ^{*(tshal)/ brag} ^{’di bse brag rin chen spungs pa yin// brag phug nyi zla kha sbyor yin//} ^{’di na bdud rtsi sman du bsgrub// skye shi med pa’i don sgrub yin gsung// bdag gis zhus pa/ gnas ji ltar sgrub pa’i don lags/ bdud rtsi sman du sgrub pa ni/ rtsa ba yan lag gang lags/ sgrub pa’i spyi gang la bdags} ^{*(bdag)// sgrub bzhung lag khrigs gang la sgrub// de’i rgyu mtshan ci la sgrub// bya ba’i lag len gang ltar lags// sman gyi bye brag du} ^{*(tu) yis srung// sman dbang dngos grub ci}

In this vision, Matön Shéráp Senggé met a master and interacted with him in a dialogue. The master revealed the mendrup *maṅḍala* to him, all the medicinal vessels on top of it, and their layout together with the spell cord (cf. the present Mendrup performance described in Chapter 2). He gave advice on how to compose the ritual's complex medicinal mixture. As in the mendrup text itself, the various ingredients are referred to as root and branch, major and minor, ingredients. The structure of the mendrup medicine recipe is alluded as well, as in it the ingredients are divided into the main fivefold cluster organised according to the five elements, and a minor second cluster of an eightfold pattern reflecting the eight classes of consciousness in the current explanation (Tib. *rnam shes brgyad*, Skt. *aṣṭavijñāna*, see Chapter 4).¹³¹ Importantly, the master also granted the medicinal yeast (*smān phabs*) and the medicinal empowerment (*smān dbang*) crucial for the success of the ritual (see Chapters 2, 4). Shéráp Senggé received complex instructions upon his multiple questions. He was also rewarded by seeing the firm arrangement of the *maṅḍala* based on the four elements, along with their respective properties and medicines in each cardinal point.¹³² This organisation is typical for Bon: the element of earth and the medicine of earth in the East, wind in the North, fire in the West, and water for the East (Chapter 4). In this text, the elements have slightly moved to cover the intermediate directions as well. The complementing fifth element, space, is placed into the middle of the *maṅḍala*, as in the current performance.¹³³ The cardinal points are personified by eight divinities referred to as *vidyādharas*, “holders of magical power”,¹³⁴ of whom each is responsible for accomplishing a given ritual action and medicine of the

ltar lags// sdu (bsdu) thabs rnam gsum gang la sdu// de la yang gsungs pa/ gnas 'di lhun grub g.yu sdings
**(sding) 'tshal (tshal)// skye shi med pa 'i bdud rtsi sgrub// bdud rtsi sman du bsgrub pa la// rtsa ba lnga la yan*
lag rgyad// nying (nyid) lag stod du sog pa yin// spyi ni skye shi med par sgrub// 'og sgo la lag len bya thabs
*(320) sman dbang dngos grub sdu thabs kun gsungs te/ sman gyi lde mig na bsal *(gsal)/ mi brgyad po 'di gang*
*lags/ khyed la las 'khan *(mkhan) mi (173) *(mi) bdog gam/ ga 'u 'cha' na ji ltar 'cha'// sman gyi btul thabs ji*
*ltar btul gsungs pas/ mi brgyad po 'di g.yung drung sa non rigs 'dzin *(rig 'dzin) brgyad bya ba yin/ shar na*
'dug pa 'di lha sgom zhi ba 'i sman sgrub bya ba yin// byang na 'dug pa 'di ma dur tshe sman sgrub pa yin/ nub
na 'dug pa 'di zla ba rgyal mtshan dbang gi sman sgrub pa yin/ lho na 'dug pa 'di g.yung drung don gsal phrin
*las tshe 'i dbang sgrub pa yin/ lho shar na 'dug pa 'di/ mu spungs gsal dangs *(dwangs) sa sman sgrub lhun grub*
tu sgrub pa yin/ byang shar 'dug pa 'di/ za rang me 'bar rlung 'degs pa 'i sbubs 'degs bya ba byed pa las su
sgrub pa yin// byang nub na 'dug pa 'di/ dmu tsha gyer med sman drod smin par grub pa yin/ lho nub na 'dug pa
'di/ dmu rgyal rtsug phud chu sman du sgrub pa yin// 'di rnams kyi don la dbyings sgrub pa yin// rgyas pa lde
*mig na gsal/ sman phabs yang gnang/ sman dbang yang thob/ sprang po 'i rdzun tshig drug pa pa *(pa) yin//*

¹³¹ 'Od zer 'khyil ba bdud rtsi sman gyi gzhung lags s+ho, MS Kathmandu, Triten Norbutse monastery, no number, 'Od zer 'khyil ba bdud rtsi sman gyi gzhung bzhugs pa lags s+ho, 1998, vol. 168, text 1, 'Od zer 'khyil ba bdud rtsi sman gyi gzhung bzhugs pa 'i dbus phyogs legs s+ho, 1998, vol. 230, text 22.

¹³² The role of elements in Tibetan medical tradition for example in Gerke, 2014, and Hofer, 2014.

¹³³ The same in the main Mendrup text 'Od zer 'khyil ba bdud rtsi sman gyi gzhung lags s+ho, MS Kathmandu, Triten Norbutse monastery, no number, 'Od zer 'khyil ba bdud rtsi sman gyi gzhung bzhugs pa lags s+ho, 1998, vol. 168, text 1, 'Od zer 'khyil ba bdud rtsi sman gyi gzhung bzhugs pa 'i dbus phyogs legs s+ho, 1998, vol. 230, text 22. Further in Sehnalova, 2013, 2017.

¹³⁴ Snellgrove, 1987, p. 135.

direction.¹³⁵ The story closes declaring the event to be a “false word of a beggar”, by which master Shéráp Senggé is depicted as adhering to the social code of modesty, actually conveying his greatness.

The comprehensiveness of this account suggests that its author was very familiar with the mendrup rite. The Zhötön Sönam Drakpa’s text, as yet undated, accords in the key features, ritual arrangement and paraphernalia of the mendrup practice rendered in *The Main Text of the Light-Swirled Nectar Medicine* (*’Od zer ’khyil pa bdud rtsi sman gyi gzhung bzhugs lags s+ho*) and still performed today.

The mendrup ritual is also mentioned in later historical works which are easier to date with certainty:

Mendrup in the Eighteenth Century

There are several relevant passages in *The Treasury of Wish-fulfilling Jewels Yielding all Desired on the General Origin of the Buddha’s Teachings* (*Sangs rgyas bstan pa spyi yi ’byung khung yid bzhin nor bu ’dod pa ’jo ba’i gter mdzod*) by Kündröl Drakpa (Kun grol grags pa, b. 1700), which is likely to have been written in 1766.¹³⁶ This text presents the gradual development of the world, the Bonpo Doctrine and its spread. The chronicle mentions several mendrup treasure discoveries by different adepts, likely referring to the mendrup rituals specific to individual Bonpo lineages.¹³⁷ Thus, the text seems to capture a rare piece of information on the diversification of the practice within Bon.

It contains a section on treasure traditions which consists of short passages, listing the name of each discoverer and the texts and teaching cycles which the individual revealed. A certain Dranga Rinchen Dampa (Dra nga Rin chen dam pa) from Samyé (bSam yas) is attributed to introducing the practice of “amaraya nectar medicine” (*a ma ra ya bdud rtsi sman*).¹³⁸ The term *amaraya*¹³⁹ is usually understood to refer to the mendrup ritual specific to the Bonpo Shen lineage. The individual ritual lineages of Bon had the tendency to develop their own mendrup practices, as has the main Dru lineage cultivated the so called Light-

¹³⁵ In the Nyingma mendrup analysed by Cantwell, 2015, 2017, the *vidyādhara*s play a similar role.

¹³⁶ Kun-grol-grags-pa, 1974, fol. 197-552. The dates are also based on this publication and the work’s colophon.

¹³⁷ Kun-grol-grags-pa, 1974, fol. 325, 326-7, 338, 356, 400-401. On the lineages see Karmay, 1998, 2007, rMe’u tshang bstan ’dzin rnam rgyal, 2014.

¹³⁸ Kun-grol-grags-pa, 1974, fol. 320.

¹³⁹ The word is by the Bonpos explained to likely derive from the Sanskrit *amṛta*, and thus as synonymous to *dütsi* (*bdud rtsi*), “nectar”.

Swirled Mendrup coined for the mendrup of the deity Trowo Tsochok Khagying. The source thus witnesses the diversity of the mendrup within Bon.

In this chronicle, Matön Söldzin, already known to us as Matön Sindzin (the grandfather of Matön Shérap Senggé) and the discoverer of the Light-Swirled Mendrup, is recorded as the revealer of a treasure containing scriptures of the accomplishment of peaceful and wrathful deities (*zhi sgrub khro sgrub*).¹⁴⁰ These are likely to involve the mendrup as well, although no mendrup practices are explicitly attributed to him in this document.

Also, someone called Butso Sipé Gyelpo (Bu mtsho srid pa'i rgyal po) is recorded to have found the “nine lineages of nectar medicine” (*bdud rtsi sman gyi rgyud dgu*).¹⁴¹ It is possible that various traditions of the mendrup are being referred to by this phrase, but it could (perhaps more likely) refer to the organisation within the mendrup ritual itself, namely the nine distinct medicinal containers to be placed on the *maṇḍala*. The writer mentions the nine vessels and also describes the pattern of the mendrup based on the division of space into the Centre and eight cardinal points – this is a very common practice in Tibetan (and tantric) ritual, as has been described for mendrup above.

Mendrup in the Twentieth Century

The next known textual accounts of mendrup are found in early twentieth century writing. The same story is detailed in two important historical works of this period. The first is the *Ketaka* chronicle by Lungtok Gyatso (Lung rtogs rgya mtsho), a distinguished master of the Yungdrung Ling monastery. The work has been dated to 1917, and holds the elaborate title *The Necklace of Ketaka Jewels Distinguishing the Knowledge on the Origin of the Teachings* (*bsTan 'byung rig pa'i shan 'byed nor bu ke ta ka'i do shal zhas bya ba bzugs*).¹⁴² The second is the well-known *Treasury of Good Sayings* authored by Shardza Trashi Gyeltsen (Shar rdza bKra shis rgyal mtshan, 1859-1933), one of the main Bonpo scholars of modern times¹⁴³ and translated into English by Samten Karmay. According to Karmay, Gyeltsen's compilation was begun in 1922. The full name of the work reads *The Precious Treasury of Good Sayings, Pleasant Rain for the Wise* (*Legs bshad rin po che'i mdzod dpyod ldan dga'*

¹⁴⁰ Kun-grol-grags-pa, 1974, fol. 322.

¹⁴¹ Kun-grol-grags-pa, 1974, fol. 325, the same story is found in Karmay, 1972, p. 170.

¹⁴² mKhas grub Lung rtogs rgya mtsho, 2010, pp. 449-557. Cf. Martin, 1997, p. 175. The word *ketaka* (*ke ta ka*) is likely of Indian origin and denotes “a gem which has the property of purifying water”, alternatively “a great mountain situated north of the great forest plain”. BGTC, Das.

¹⁴³ Cf. Achard, 2008.

ba'i char).¹⁴⁴ As both scripts come from approximately the same time, it is unclear if one copied the other or if both used a third (so far unknown) source.

The *Ketaka* chronicle reads:

“From the [Pa, sPa] lineage, Patön Pelchok [(sPa ston dpal mchog, b. 1014)]¹⁴⁵ appeared at the same time as Shenchen Luga (i.e. they were contemporaries). After Patön Pelchok heard that Shenchen Luga had discovered a treasure, he went to Driktsam (’Brig mtshams) to see him. When he arrived and met him, the master [Shenchen Luga] was of poor health. Having proclaimed him [Patön Pelchok] a master of tantric teachings destined by his karma, he [Shenchen Luga] bestowed the empowerment of Trowo [Tsochok Khagying] on him. He instructed him in detail how to obtain the blessed objects, the texts with their treatises and supplements from Dzibön Wanggyel (’Dzi bon dbang rgyal, aka ’Dzi ston, Dzitön).”¹⁴⁶

In the *Treasury* the same account is in Karmay’s translation worded as follows:

“How the Tantric Teachings were commissioned. ’Dzi-bon ’Phan-rgyal entreated the Teacher [Shenchen Luga]¹⁴⁷ to impart the *Khro-bo dbang-chen*¹⁴⁸ to him. The Teacher gave even the (master) copy to him. He also gave him the cup containing the lees of the elixirs (*bdud rtsi ga’u dang ru ma*).¹⁴⁹ He gave him the name of dBang-gi rGyal-mtshan. Some have said that since sPa-ston dPal-mchog (Patön Pelchok)¹⁵⁰ did not meet gShen-sgur [i.e. Shenchen Luga],¹⁵¹ he got in touch with ’Dzi-bon and Me-nyag. But (in fact) when gShen-sgur was ill he bestowed the consecration of the *Khro-bo dbang-chen* to him. He proclaimed him a worthy master of Tantric teachings and

¹⁴⁴ Karmay’s translation in Karmay, 1972.

¹⁴⁵ Dating in Karmay, 2007, p. 60.

¹⁴⁶ *de’i gdung las spa ston dpal mchog byon pa dang gshen chen klu dga’ byon pa dus mnyam ste/ spa ston nyid gshen chen gyis gter thon pa thos nas ’brig mtshams su mjal du byon skabs/ bla ma sku bsnnyungs bzhes pa dang thug/ las can gsang sngags kyi bdag po zhig ’dug gi gsungs nas khro bo’i dbang bskur/ byin rlabs kyi rdzas rnams dang/ dpe dang cha lag bkrol byang rnams zhib par ’dzi bon dbang rgyal la mnos shig gsung nas lung bstan/ mKhas grub Lung rtogs rgya mtsho, 2010, p. 520, cf. Martin, 2001, pp. 67-69.*

¹⁴⁷ The bracketed insertion is mine.

¹⁴⁸ The word *Khro-bo dbang-chen* (Khro bo dbang chen), Trowo Wangchen, can denote both, an epithet of the deity Trowo Tsochok Khagying (meaning “The Great Wrathful Powerful One”) and referring to the linked practices, or the great empowerment (*dbang chen*) of Trowo Tsochok Khagying.

¹⁴⁹ My insertion.

¹⁵⁰ My insertion.

¹⁵¹ My insertion.

instructed him in detail to receive the sacred objects, the copy of the text and its supplementary texts; and the treatises on them from 'Dzi-bon."¹⁵²

The section immediately following the above text accords almost word-for-word in both the *Ketaka* and the *Treasury*.¹⁵³ Hence, I cite the Karmay's translation of the *Treasury* to continue the above cited extracts of both works:

“Then, dPal-mchog (Patön Pelchok)¹⁵⁴ met 'Dzi-bon and requested the texts, the medical specimen of the ‘pledge’ (*phud gta' sman phab*)¹⁵⁵ which had been used (by the teachers) from 'Chi-med gTug-phud up to the ‘Four scholars’. 'Dzi-bon also gave dPal-mchog the ‘Dance-spear’ and the cup (*gar mdung dang bsve'i ga'u*) and appointed him to be in charge of the Tantric Teachings. Then he [sPa ston dpal mchog / Patön Pelchok]¹⁵⁶ practised the *Khro-bo dbang-chen* in the solitude of Yang-dban¹⁵⁷ and beheld the countenance of Srid-rgyal¹⁵⁸ according (to the representation of) the basic liturgy. Once he saw her face with lighting issuing from her eyes, whirlwinds from her nose, roaring thunder from her ears, her hair being like masses of clouds. (212b) She was adorned with ornaments of cemetery-bones; her eyes were upturned, her nose was wrinkled up and her mouth was wide open. As she tore her chest with her hands he saw distinctly without any obstruction the body of gTso-mchog (Trowo Tsochok Khagying)¹⁵⁹ in the centre of the wheel of her heart which is one of the six wheels of the three vital channels in her body. While he performed the medicinal rite of the *Phur-bu dgu* drops of nectar descended (into his mystic circle) (*phur bu dgu'i sman sgrub la bdud rtsi'i zil thigs babs/*).”¹⁶⁰

¹⁵² Karmay, 1972, p. 135, transliteration of the Tibetan original.

¹⁵³ Apart from very few syllable and letter alternations, the *Treasury* omits three syllable clusters within its verses that appear in the *Ketaka*, whereas the *Ketaka* skips few syllables of the *Treasury*.

¹⁵⁴ My insertion.

¹⁵⁵ Insertions of the Tibetan original are mine.

¹⁵⁶ My insertion.

¹⁵⁷ More likely: in the Wensaka monastery (*de nas yang dben dgon par*). Karmay, 1972, p. 297, mKhas grub Lung rtogs rgya mtsho, 2010, p. 520.

¹⁵⁸ See above.

¹⁵⁹ My insertion.

¹⁶⁰ My insertion. Karmay, 1972, pp. 135-136, 297 (Tibetan original).

I propose to amend the translation of the last sentence to: “The drops of nectar then descended into the medicinal accomplishment of the nine vessels.”¹⁶¹ The passages record the transmission of the Mendrup of Trowo Tsochok Khagying within the Pa lineage directly from its revealer Shenchen Luga.¹⁶² Besides the scriptures, special attention is paid to describing the essential material objects of the ritual. Master Patön Pelchok procured the crucial “yeast”, *papta*, here translated as “medical specimen of the ‘pledge’”, along with its cup container, and a “spear”. Such a ritual spear with ribbons in five colours is used in circumambulating the mendrup medicine during the ritual still today, and the *papta* is the ritual’s crucial component (see Chapter 2). In both versions Patön Pelchok was also given the commission to continue the mendrup practice by an empowerment from Shenchen Luga himself. Later in Wensaka, he had a vision of Trowo Tsochok Khagying, in which the medicinal nectar of mendrup descended into its nine vessels. This has fully authorised Patön Pelchok to become the bearer and transmitter of the Mendrup of Trowo Tsochok Khagying.

After the hagiographic genealogies of the Pa lineage, the *Ketaka* continues with the history of the Meu (rMe’u) family. Their members are recorded to have travelled around Central Tibet in the search of teachings, including the Trowo Tsochok Khagying’s Mendrup:

“When Denpakpa Zigompa (Dan ’phags pa zi sgom pa) requested the great empowerment of Trowo [Tsochok Khagying] (Khro bo dbang chen),¹⁶³ for a few moments he saw the master (not identified) having the complete appearance, ornaments and attributes, of Trowo Tsochok Khagying. When he came with his request to the master to the cave of Kyikharngo (sKyid mkhar sngo), he crossed the Yéru (g.Yas ru) river¹⁶⁴ without any boat. When he performed the accomplishment of the nectar medicine (*bdud rtsi sman sgrub*) in Sébao (Se ba ’o), one [of the performers] was seated on a throne. One led the recitation of the main mendrup mantra (*sman ’dzab*), while performing a circumambulation [around the medicinal *maṇḍala*].

¹⁶¹ Based on the spelling in mKhas grub Lung rtogs rgya mtsho, 2010, p. 520: *bum dgu’i sman sgrub la bdud rtsi’i zil thigs babs/*.

¹⁶² The same story also in Karmay, 1972, p. 10, Karmay, 2007, pp. 60-61, 70, Martin, 2001, pp. 68-70.

¹⁶³ See above.

¹⁶⁴ Might refer to the famous Bonpo meditation caves of mKhar sna (*skyid* as an attribute would mean “of happiness”) close to Menri, Yungdrung Ling, and former Wensaka monasteries, as well as the Yéru river.

One went to a tavern, offered a libation, and seen by all became inspired realising that he was a *trülku* (*sprul sku*, a reincarnated master).”¹⁶⁵

As can be seen, the *Ketaka* chronicle recorded the practice of the mendrup ritual itself and the related miracles happening. The author Lungtok Gyatso paid attention to various aspects of the act. He mentioned the required unceasing recitation of the main mendrup mantra and texts during the performance. He also noted some of the accompanying offerings (libation) and the elevated throne of the principal master during the ritual, as is done today (Chapter 2). The auspicious rite of the mendrup is concluded by probably a fellow monk realising himself to be a reincarnated master. Again, the writer must have been well acquainted with the practice, and possibly have himself taken part in it.

In 1929 the mendrup found another expression in a few lines of the chronological work *The Lineage Succession* (by full title: *The Immaculate Crystal Rosary of the Lineage Succession of the Collected Precious Kangyur, the Teachings of the Teacher of the Three Bodies, Transmissions*)¹⁶⁶ written by Khüpfungpa Ratön Ngakwang Kelzang Tenpé Gyeltsen (Khud spungs pa dBra ston Ngag dbang skal bzang bstan pa’i rgyal mtshan). Once again, the mendrup is described as among important practices at Bonpo monasteries. Ten types of mendrup are suggested, and the text describes auspicious signs occurring during the performances, as rainbows appearing in the sky and a diffusing fragrant smell.¹⁶⁷

Among the scriptures of medical knowledge cited in this chronicle, the recovery of a treasure of nine precious vessels (*rin chen bum pa gdu*) by Butso Sipé Gyelpo is recorded, as in the above discussed work from the eighteenth century. These then gave origin to the nine lineages of the nectar medicine (*bdud rtsi sman gyi rgyud dgu*),¹⁶⁸ i.e. mendrup. Again, the quote sounds like alluring diverse mendrup rituals, but more plausibly is describing one ritual and its nine prescribed containers of nectar medicine.

By the early twentieth century, the mendrup is clearly presented as an integral component of the Bonpo teachings and practices.

¹⁶⁵ *dan 'phag ba zi sgom pas khro bo'i dbang chen zhig zhus skabs bla ma'i sku gtso mchog mkha' 'gying rgyan dang cha lugs rdzogs pa zhig skad cig gsum gyi yun du mthong/ skyid mkhar sngo phug tu bla ma zhu yi mdun du phebs dus/ g.yas ru gtsang po'i kha nas gru gzings gang la'ang ma brten nas chu yi pha kir phebs/ se ba 'o ru bdud rtsi sman sgrub mdzad dus sku cig bzhugs khrir bzhugs/ gcig gis sman 'dzab kyi sna drangs nas bskor ba mdzad/ gcig chang tshang du phebs nas skyems gsol ba kun gyis mthong bas mos pa tshud cing sprul sku yin par shes so/ mKhas grub Lung rtogs rgya mtsho, 2010, p. 523.*

¹⁶⁶ Khud spungs pa dBra ston Ngag dbang skal bzang bstan pa’i rgyal mtshan, 2017. I am indebted to Dan Martin for kindly sharing his introduction and laborious transcription of the work.

¹⁶⁷ Khud spungs pa dBra ston Ngag dbang skal bzang bstan pa’i rgyal mtshan, 2017, fol. 25, 27.

¹⁶⁸ Khud spungs pa dBra ston Ngag dbang skal bzang bstan pa’i rgyal mtshan, 2017, fol. 98.

Outline of the Mendrup's Possible Transmission and Development

If we accept the presumption that the studied Bonpo sources were to form one coherent narrative, despite the intricacies of their dating, a tentative chronological reconstruction of the development and transmission of the Bonpo mendrup ritual practice is possible. This is then compared to the contemporary oral rendering.

Shenchen Luga (996-1035) found the mendrup ritual's text and paraphernalia, which appears as a clear statement already in one of the earliest documents. However, we do not learn any details, as primarily the lineage and the teachings themselves are stressed. As the much later twentieth century's chronicles build on this story, Shenchen Luga passed all his gain directly to Dzibön Wanggyel, who in turn had to give everything off to Patön Pelchok (b. 1014) actually empowered by Shenchen Luga as the holder of the mendrup practice. Patön Pelchok followed the master's assignment and performed the practice, during which he received a detailly described vision of the *yidam* Trowo Tsochok Khagying (Khro bo gtsomchog mkha' 'gying). About a little later, his contemporary Druchen Namkha Yungdrung (994/999-1054) conducted the very first mendrup performance. For that he would have had to receive the ritual's transmission including the oral explanations, and would have also been entitled to hand it over again. Druchen Namkha Yungdrung bestowed secret teachings to a student group, including Matön Shérap Senggé (12th century). From the students a certain Pönsé, and not, at least explicitly, Matön Shérap Senggé, was entrusted the mendrup practice. Here the chronology assumed by the sources might not accord with our contemporary dating of the figures concerned, according to which Druchen and Shérap Senggé could not have met. In any case, the succession of the mendrup practice holders can be reconstructed as follows: Shenchen Luga – Dzibön Wanggyel – Patön Pelchok – Druchen Namkha Yungdrung – Pönsé. Interestingly, Master Druchen was recorded as active and performing the ritual in the area of the future first Bonpo monastery of Yéru Wensaka (founded 1072), where the mendrup is said to have then flourished. Moreover, Druchen Namkha Yungdrung is credited for initiating or establishing Yéru Wensaka to become its first abbot, as well as launching the mendrup's very first performance. Hence, in these accounts, Master Druchen clearly embedded the mendrup ritual into the traditions of the Dru lineage and its main seat and institution.

Nevertheless, another lineage of the mendrup transmission can be followed in the sources. Matön Sindzin (b. 1092) was in the eighteenth century recorded as a revealer of scriptures of the peaceful and wrathful deities, among which the mendrup might have been

included. Again, the sources are not specific on this. Chronologically, his grandson Matön Shéráp Senggé then had a vision through which he was assigned the mendrup practice by an unnamed master. His so far undated account might have served as a legitimisation of the given form of the ritual's realisation. Its detailed authoritative description could have coined the mendrup performance and its arrangements. The case exemplifies the importance ascribed to visionary experiences as a way of legitimisation of ritual practice, here apparently gaining the same authority as instructions directly passed from a venerated master within a certain master-student lineage. A master, who is not even named or specified, appeared in the vision as well, by which the notion of a lineage was actually implied. Yet, in a standard master-student line of ritual transmission, all members are to be known. The vision thus illustrates the potency of the medium to modify existing, or invent new, religious practices. Here, this tool might have historically challenged the above-presented straightforward narrative of passing the mendrup ritual. This particular vision has enabled Matön Shéráp Senggé to explicitly step into the transmission. This ambiguity also explains the unclear incorporation of Matön Sindzin, but not yet Matön Shéráp Senggé, into the present normative oral narrative on the mendrup's origin.

If Matön Sindzin and Matön Shéráp Senggé were part of the mendrup's transmission line, the very early on mentioned Pönsé Dzamling (b. 1259/1271), a direct descendant of Shenchen Luga after several generations, would have come after them as the mendrup holder and practitioner. This Pönsé Dzamling and the above mentioned Pönsé may in theory refer to the same figure, but the imprecise dating (and particularly the idea of Druchen Namkha Yungdrung, Matön Shéráp Senggé, and Pönsé all meeting) makes a conclusion on this too difficult. In any case, the fourteenth century commentary by Nyö Tsültrim Gyeltsen would then have codified and further institutionalised the practice into an elaborate, demanding, and very complex monastic performance. The shortly coming master Nyammé Shéráp Gyeltsen (1356-1415) propagating the Buddhicised and monastic form of Bon likely engaged in the mendrup practice. He would have embraced it in this extended elaboration of Nyö Tsültrim Gyeltsen, and celebrated it in the new Tashi Menri monastery he established in Central Tibet. Menri was bound to the Dru lineage and gradually became the principal institution of Bon, a status it maintains until the present. Correspondingly, Tsültrim Gyeltsen's form of the mendrup ritual has been observed presumably from the fourteenth century until now, and has made its way into the modern Indian and Nepalese exile.

The striking feature of the texts observed is the overall exclusion of Rindzin Chenpo Gyermi Nyiö (11th-12th century), one of the presumed discoverers of the mendrup by current

Bonpos. As they say, the mendrup scriptures and their accompanying objects were enclosed by both Shenchen Luga and Rindzin Chenpo Gyermi Nyiö, the latter of which then could have passed them to Matön Sindzin. However, according to these sources, it was Shenchen Luga and then rather Matön Sindzin and his grandson Matön Shéráp Senggé who acted as the revealers. The latter notion is further supported by the ascription of the key mendrup texts to Matön Sindzin by the Katen catalogue, partly based on some of the texts' colophons.¹⁶⁹ Thus, the discovery itself remains quite unclear. In either case, both in the discussed documents and in the contemporary oral tradition, which is likely to a certain degree based on the former, two apparent paths of the mendrup are traceable. The earlier one is that of Shenchen Luga, whose discovery, however, did not include the core text of the ritual itself, *The Main Text of the Light-Swirled Nectar Medicine* ('*Od zer 'khyil pa bdud rtsi sman gyi gzhungbzhus lags s+ho*). The later discovery belongs to either Rindzin Chenpo Gyermi Nyiö or Matön Sindzin, which would then have been supplemented by Matön Shéráp Senggé. Here, we find both the main text of the ritual, and importantly, its material core, the *papta*, as well as the later prescriptive visual manual for its conduction in the form of a vision. It remains a question whether historically the two practices were distinct at the beginning, and then conflated into one, or if the ritual discovered in two parts functioned only when put together. It may also be the case that the bit unearthed by Shenchen Luga was practiced on its own, and afterwards got expanded by Rindzin Chenpo Gyermi Nyiö or Matön Sindzin and Matön Shéráp Senggé, or all of them. The generally accepted understanding of Tibetan treasure texts' revealers as their composers would indicate the authorship of Shenchen Luga, and a later elaboration by Matön Sindzin on the basis of a new discovery, and by Matön Shéráp Senggé justified by a vision. Matön Sindzin figures in the colophons of the mentioned texts, in contrast to Rindzin Chenpo Gyermi Nyiö.

In regard to the Bonpo hereditary ritual lineages, a high degree of transmission and sharing of the mendrup practice, along with other practices, can be observed among them in the textual sources. Shenchen Luga discovered it as the first, and thereupon at least for a certain period the mendrup was imparted within the Shen lineage. Still several generations and about two hundred years later, Pönsé Dzamling (b. 1259/1271) of the Shen held the practice. Yet towards the end of Shenchen Luga's life, Patön Pelchok, who is remembered as the founder of the Pa lineage, went to see the frail master at his home in Driktsam ('Brig mtshams). He too was entrusted the rite and teachings, to bring it into the Pa family. Slightly

¹⁶⁹ Karmay and Nagano, 2001, pp. 1026 (text 168-1), 1027 (168-7), 1308 (230-22).

later, the very first mendrup performance should have taken place organised by Druchen Namkha Yungdrung at the Yéru Wensaka monastery, thus by the Dru lineage at their very own institution and seat. The sources do not reveal by whom and when the practice was passed on to the Dru. Also the Meu family were in an active search for new powerful practices. One of their members went, quite surprisingly, to a master in Kyikharngo (sKyid mkhar sngo), the main seat of the Zhu lineage, rather to someone from the Shen, Pa, or Dru. This remarkably suggests that the mendrup ritual could have been adopted by all the main Bonpo lineages, namely by the Shen, Pa, Dru, Meu, and maybe also by the Zhu. All of them were active in Central Tibet, where also the mendrup flourished and was transmitted.¹⁷⁰

Nevertheless, the sources do not reveal in all instances which particular type of the mendrup practice features in individual encounters. Unless indicated, as it often is, it cannot be stated whether the varied mentions of mendrup refer to the same Light-Swirled Mendrup of Trowo Tsochok Khagying, or other forms of mendrup diverging according to the individual lineages of Bon. Yet, a number of the narratives do indicate this denomination of the mendrup, and most of the transmission line just reconstructed should speak to the Light-Swirled Mendrup. Notably, in the sources examined, the Light-Swirled Mendrup seems to predominate upon the other potentially different mendrup rites, which upholds to the outstanding status of this particular practice side by side with other Bonpo mendrup traditions.

Compared to the current standardised oral tradition publicly recalled before Mendrup performances, the historical written evidence suggests a much less coherent image. The oral narrative at Triten Norbutse presents the Mendrup as an ancient practice stemming from the deity Küntu Zangpo, subsequently passed on via quite a smooth succession of prominent figures. However, the potential inclusion of Matön Sindzin and Matön Shéráp Senggé is still unsettled. The main line of transmission is clear: Küntu Zangpo – Shenlha Ökar – Drenpa Namkha (8th century) – Shenchen Luga and Rindzin Chenpo Gyermi Nyiö (the latter eventually accompanied by Matön Sindzin) – then all passed down to Nyima Gyeltsen, the fourth abbot of Yéru Wensaka – and afterwards to Nyammé Shéráp Gyeltsen and the new Tashi Menri monastery. Obviously, the oral narrative conveys the Mendrup practice as of a more ancient and divine origin than the textual sources. The transmission line is articulated in a more straightforward manner. Also, within the Dru context of Triten Norbutse and the exile Menri monastery, the imparting of the mendrup practice among other lineages of Bon is not, and in fact cannot, be taken into account. Both the textual and oral traditions distinctly place

¹⁷⁰ On the lineages cf. Karmay, 2007, Lhagyal, 2000, rMe'u tsha bstan 'dzin mam rgyal, 2014.

the mendrup practice from its beginnings until the twentieth century into Central Tibet, and as connected to the centres of the Dru.

CHAPTER TWO

Performance of the Mendrup Ritual in 2012

Preparations of the Ritual, Negotiating its Time and Space

The Triten Norbutse monastery at the western edge of the Kathmandu valley is currently one of the most important Bonpo establishments, and the second biggest in exile after the Menri monastery in India. Triten Norbutse was founded upon the initiation of a former preceptor (*slob dpon*) of Menri monastery in Central Tibet Yongdzin Tenzin Namdak Rinpoche in 1992 (initiated in 1986),¹⁷¹ who also chose the name “Stable Seat of the Jewel Peak”¹⁷² and remains its spiritual head at the present. Built out of scratch, the monastery has successfully expanded and now (as in 2012/13) hosts more than two hundred monks.¹⁷³ The incumbent abbot Khenpo Tenpa Yungdrung (mKhan po bsTan pa g.yung drung), elected in 2001, comes from the Rinpoche’s main disciples. Both supervised the Mendrup ritual, Yongdzin Rinpoche drawing upon his memory and learning on the mendrup organised at Menri in Tibet before the Chinese takeover. Yongdzin Rinpoche is the main recognised authority on Bonpo mendrup in the exile, apart from its oral history (Chapter 1) also on its practical conduction (see below).

The ritual and educational curriculum of the institution is based on the original Menri monastery, following the Dru denomination. The first large-scale mendrup performance outside the Tibetan motherland took place at Menri in India in 1988¹⁷⁴ and again in 2009.¹⁷⁵ Triten Norbutse succeeded in 1998¹⁷⁶ and 2012. The performances were of two types, the Light-Swirled Mendrup (sMan sgrub ’o zer ’khyil ba, also bDud rtsi ’od zer ’khyil ba) of the *yidam* Trowo Tsochok Khagying in years 1988, 1998, and 2012, and Light-Blazed Mendrup (sMan sgrub ’o zer ’bar ba, also bDud rtsi ’od zer ’bar ba) of the *yidam* Purwa in 2009. Presently, the first is typical of Triten Norbutse, whereas the latter of Menri.¹⁷⁷ The Triten Norbutse’s celebration in 2012 became officially called “the second great ceremony of the Light-Swirled Mendrup” (*thengs gnyis pa’i bdud rtsi ’od zer ’khyil ba’i sman sgrub chen mo’i mdzad sgo*), reminding of the monastery’s first one. The modern-day market accessibility,

¹⁷¹ Karmay and Nagano, 2003, p. 731.

¹⁷² Translation according to *Triten Norbutse Monastery: 25th Anniversary Celebration*, p. 20. The institution does not represent a continuation of the monastery of the same name in Central Tibet near Shigatse, which belonged to the Shen lineage or tradition (gShen rgyud, gShen lugs). Geshe Yungdrung Gyamtso (Triten Norbutse).

¹⁷³ Further see Karmay and Nagano, 2003.

¹⁷⁴ This event was reported by Bla khri dge shes Nyi ma grags pa, 1988.

¹⁷⁵ The whole performance was filmed by the monastery. The footage is currently stored on an old hard drive deposited in the library of the monastery, but is inaccessible due to lack of technological equipment. I was not able to get the footage despite several efforts and sending the connecting cable needed from Europe. Personal visit to Menri monastery in 2016.

¹⁷⁶ Reported by Tsetan, 1998, and mentioned by Kind, 2002.

¹⁷⁷ Their standardising impact on smaller mendrup performances in Bonpo settlements in the Himalayas is discussed by Kind, 2002.

logistics and funding opportunities make it possible to conduct the ritual with a considerably higher frequency than the original supposed sixty-year intervals.

The decision to celebrate the mendrup for a second time at Triten Norbutse was based on two reasons. Firstly, the year 2012 marked the twenty-fifth anniversary (*nyer lnga'i dus ston*)¹⁷⁸ of the monastery and the mendrup was chosen as appropriate for the occasion for its high importance and exclusivity. The Rinpoche and Khenpo sought a way to express their thanks and gratitude to all those who had contributed to the monastery's development. The mendrup festival sometimes features at such important events, as was the planned mendrup for the 90th birthday of Menri Trindzin, the highest authority of contemporary Bon residing in Menri in India, for April 2018. (Sadly, His Holiness Menri Trindzin, aka Lungtok Tenpa Nyima, passed away in September 2017. Still in spring 2018, the Menri monastery was not decided whether to carry out a mendrup in the near future or not.)

Secondly, as mendrup is valued for its healing power extending to creating universal harmony in degenerated times, its performance was viewed as especially urgent in the current state of the world explained as a crisis by Triten Norbutse's authorities. In the contemporary globalised aspirations, the mendrup ceremony is deemed to cure any instability functioning not only as medicine within physical bodies but equally in the overall global environment including its ecological, economic, and political spheres. The most pressing problems pointed out were global warming, natural disasters such as tsunamis, floods and earthquakes, general ecological instability, financial crisis, political turmoil leading to wars and violence: particularly the then recent wave of self-immolations in Tibet (since 2009), the repeatedly worsening political situation in Nepal following the parliamentary elections won by the Maoist Party (2008), and revolutions in the Middle East (since 2011).¹⁷⁹ Another reason articulated, although marginally, was the need of occasional mendrup conduction for the sake of its preservation and continuity, as one of the geshes in charge put it: "If we didn't do the mendrup, the tradition would be interrupted".¹⁸⁰ The articulated aim of the mendrup ritual to generate "universal harmony" is a standard objective of tantric as well as Mahāyāna Buddhist rituals in general.¹⁸¹ In the case of this specific Mendrup, this purpose of the ritual action has

¹⁷⁸ Other variations of the name of the jubilee: *dPal ldan Khri brtan nor bu rtse'i nyer lnga'i dus dran, dbu brnyes nas bgrang bya 25 'khor ba'i dus ston, dbu brnyes nas mi lo nyer lnga 'khor ba* (festive banners displayed at the monastery), *mi lo nyer lnga, gdan sa 'di nyid phyag btab nas mi lo nyer lnga hril por 'khor ba'i dus chen* (DZO).

¹⁷⁹ The paragraph is based on interviews with KTY (Triten Norbutse).

¹⁸⁰ Geshe Takla Tarwa (Triten Norbutse).

¹⁸¹ For a Bonpo example in the context of a public *cham* ('chams) ritual see Schrempf, 1997.

been contextualised within the current Bonpo exile situation, and moreover, set into the globalised world the Bonpos have become a part of.

Despite the monastery's anniversary falling in the middle of summer 2012, the celebration period was scheduled on practical arrangements. Summer is a period of intense agricultural and husbandry labour for many inhabitants of the Himalayas, from where most Bonpo adherents in Nepal come. On the other hand, winter regularly draws their significant numbers to Kathmandu. Another important group counted with were the adherents of Bon in the West and their preferences, as the secured Christmas holidays. The term of the Mendrup ritual was thus planned from 9th December 2012 to 2nd January 2013, corresponding to the 26th of the tenth month until the 20th day of the eleventh month, water dragon year 2139 of the Tibetan Hor calendar used at Triten Norbutse.¹⁸² Furthermore, the festivities were designed to be auspiciously concluded on the New Year day of 2013, thus in this case the Western Gregorian calendar was followed. Several propitious events were clustered into the almost one month of celebrating, such as an international conference on Bon, and final public Geshe examinations and degree ceremony. The climax of the Mendrup ritual in the form of an empowerment of the peaceful and wrathful deities and the medicine practice (*zhi khro gnyis dang sman bcas kyi dbang*) was planned to auspiciously fall on a full moon day.

Having negotiated the time of the Mendrup ritual, the place was also to be justified. As the monastery's publication on the Mendrup stated in a section entitled *Finding a place with [suitable] characteristics (rigs ldan gnas la bsnyen ba)*, the site of Triten Norbutse fulfilled the conditions of a pure and favourable place prescribed by the ritual's main text.¹⁸³ A partial translation of the requirements listed is in Chapter 3. Both adequate timing and venue of the ritual, as well as its prestigious religious lineage and social environment involved, are perceived to contribute to the ritual's and its medicine's efficacy.¹⁸⁴

Preparations for the ritual started about two years in advance.¹⁸⁵ Khenpo was appointed to be the main person in charge, authorised by Yongdzin Rinpoche. Yongdzin Rinpoche still kept the leading role. The performance highly depended on him, as he was the only person to have witnessed (*dngos mthong*) the mendrup practice at the original Menri

¹⁸² Based on interviews with KTY (Triten Norbutse). Kind, 2002, pp. 49-50, also discusses the complexities lying behind choosing the right date of the mendrup ritual.

¹⁸³ DTOZ, pp. 6-7. The publication is entitled *The Practice of the Light-Swirled Nectar (bDud rtsi 'od zer 'khyil ba'i lag len skor)*.

¹⁸⁴ Based on interviews with KTY (Triten Norbutse). The timing of medicines' production and consumption in relation to their efficacy are discussed by Gerke, 2017.

¹⁸⁵ KTY (Triten Norbutse). Lengthy preparations of mendrup were also observed by Cech, 1987, p. 272, Kind, 2002, p. 55, although in both cases lasted only several months.

monastery in Tibet,¹⁸⁶ and also had the same role at Triten Norbutse in 1998. Yongdzin Rinpoche currently holds the empowerment (*dbang lung*) and oral instructions (Tib. *man ngag*, Skt. *upadesha*) of the practice (in full: *sgrub sman 'od zer 'khyil ba'i dbang lung man ngag*), succeeding the previous late scholars of Menri, namely Khenchen Nyima Wanggyel (mKhan chen Nyi ma dbang rgyal) and particularly his own teacher Yongdzin Sanggyé Tendzin (Yongs 'dzin Sang rgyas bstan 'dzin), in becoming the main authority on the Mendrup texts (*gzhung 'di'i bstan pa'i bdag por gyus*, see Chapter 3).¹⁸⁷ He is thus seen as the main carrier of the tradition, even as concerns the Menri monastery in India, which specially delegated monks to consult him before their mendrup in 2009. The lineage of the Mendrup transmission has thus not been interrupted: Yongdzin Rinpoche learnt the practice from Yongdzin Sanggyé Tendzin in Tibet, and now teaches Khenpo Tenpa Yungdrung and colleagues from Menri. He was also instrumental in rescuing the Mendrup text, and likely brought it himself from his homeland in Khyungpo to Nepal.¹⁸⁸ Yongdzin Rinpoche selected the type of mendrup to perform at Triten Norbutse in 2012, all the texts needed, and the additional rituals. About one year prior to the event, he bestowed oral instructions (*zhal rgyun*) accompanying the scriptures to the twenty-four Main Mendrup Practitioners (*a mchod bcu gnyis*, often shortened to *a mchod*) chosen from among learned monks and geshe. Yongdzin Rinpoche explained the *zinri* (*zin ris*, also *zindri / zin bris*, see Chapter 3), the preliminary practices (*sngon 'gro*), the establishing of the outer support and the materials needed (*phyi rten skos kyi rdzas*), the succession of ritual activities (*'phrin las go rim*), chanting and dances (*gyer dbyangs*, the specific dances were: *gshen rab dgu 'cham*, *sman 'cham*, *lu gu rgyud 'cham*),¹⁸⁹ and the multiple specific mudras (Tib. *phyag rgya*, Skt. *mudrā*). The performers were then tested orally and practically in the chanting and mudras.¹⁹⁰ Their training intensified about one month before the Mendrup, when special brochures were produced for them by the monastery. The settled number of twenty-four Main Mendrup Practitioners had derived from doubling the original count of twelve in the Dru *drupchen* tradition, therefore the performers are still literally referred to as “the twelve practitioners” (*a*

¹⁸⁶ DTOZ, p. 8.

¹⁸⁷ DTOZ, p. 7.

¹⁸⁸ KTY (Triten Norbutse). *The Main Text of the Light-Swirled Nectar Medicine* (*'Od zer 'khyil ba bdud rtsi sman gyi gzhung bzugs lags s+ho*, see Chapter 3) is therefore said to come from Khyungpo.

¹⁸⁹ DTOZ, p. 8.

¹⁹⁰ DTOZ, pp. 8, 10. In the Triten Norbutse's book on the Mendrup it was also Yongdzin Rinpoche presenting all the mudras in photographs.

mchod bcu gnyis). Such a custom of doubling the prescribed number of ritualists is common in large monastic establishments with enough manpower.¹⁹¹

A special Mendrup Committee (as titled in English, in Tibetan: *sGrub chen go sgrig tshogs chung ba*) was established in the monastery. Among other tasks, it took care of inviting guests and scholars, planning sponsorship, calculating the number of attendants (estimated to one thousand) and the volume of Mendrup medicine needed, producing the ritual's bilingual Programme (in Tibetan and English), finances, and commissioning cameramen. One was part of a crew of two Nepali filmmakers, that was hired and professional, and captured all the key events of the Mendrup ritual, such as the opening and the empowerments (see below). The second cameraman was Kemi Gurung, a young man from the Bonpo Lubra (Klu brag) village of Lower Mustang, who has often taken part in similar documentation.¹⁹²

Overview of the Performance of the Mendrup Ritual

The Light-Swirled Mendrup in Triten Norbutse in 2012 was included in a one-month long “set of rituals” starting with the monastery's yearly One Hundred Thousand Offerings (*'Bum tshogs*, by the monastery called in Sanskrit and rendered into English as *gaṇapūja*)¹⁹³ to Drenpa Namkha (full name of the ritual: *Bla chen dran pa'i 'bum tshogs / One Hundred Thousand Offerings to the Great Master Drenpa*, also *Bla chen dran pa'i sgrub pa / The Accomplishment of the Great Master Drenpa*),¹⁹⁴ and ending with Geshe examinations and degrees' ceremony (*dge bshes mdzad sgo*). An academic conference on Bon, in which mostly Western scholars presented, took place before the very beginning. After the end, His Holiness Menri Trindzin Longtok Tenpa Nyima (Khri 'dzin Lung rtogs bstan pa'i nyi ma), the head of the exile Menri monastery and the Bon school, arrived to meet the Mendrup pilgrims and give an empowerment.¹⁹⁵

¹⁹¹ Geshe Monlam Tharchin (Triten Norbutse).

¹⁹² Kemi's choice of events filmed was less rigid, and often depended on the immediate request of the Khenpo. He was also asked to film when the Nepali crew was not available. The material filmed by the two cameras thus differed. Despite my repeated attempts and promises received, I did not get access to any footage. All the footage should, however, be presently stored in Triten Norbutse monastery.

¹⁹³ Spelled as *ganapuja* in the English programme. See the following footnote.

¹⁹⁴ The Sanskrit term *gaṇapūja* denoting a tantric ritual feast corresponds to Tibetan *tsokchō* (*tshogs mchod*). However, in the given context of monastic Bon, the rite has conflated with the rite of celebrating and presenting offerings to own spiritual master, who here is Drenpa Namkha. On the tradition of master veneration, *lama chōpa* (*bla ma mchod pa*), in Tibetan Buddhist context see Lopez, 1997.

¹⁹⁵ Similarly, both Garrett, 2009, and Kind, 2002, observed the tendency to cluster various special events and rituals together with the mendrup.

The Mendrup ritual itself lasted fifteen days and was conducted from the 14th until 28th December 2012, corresponding to the 1st to 15th day of the eleventh month of the water dragon year 2139 in the Tibetan Hor calendar used at Triten Norbutse. The ritual culminated with the final empowerment on a full moon day.¹⁹⁶ The total period was referred to as the “duration of the ([medicinal]) accomplishment” (*sgrub yun*).¹⁹⁷ According to the Dru tradition, the rites of the Namdak and Longyé (rNam dag and Klong rgyas, abbreviated as Namlong, rNam klong) cycles are included in the preliminary practices of all large-scale rituals to pacify the space, and thus are always done also for the mendrup in both Menri and Triten Norbutse monasteries.¹⁹⁸ The Drenpa Namkha rites were added as a support to the Mendrup ritual this year (but not to the previous mendrup performance in 1998). The preliminaries included a whole series of rites lasting for days. All the ritual components of the Mendrup were based on the instructions in the ritual’s *zinri* texts (see Chapter 3), the other “attached”, as the Drenpa Namkha’s One Hundred Thousand Offerings, depended upon the decision of the monastery. The overall structure of the Mendrup ritual adopted from the Tibetan tantric Buddhist tradition is discussed in the following Chapter 3, as it is best demonstrated through the texts of the ritual translated in this Chapter.

Three main phases of the Mendrup ritual are recognised, their individual parts are then called *las rim* (“stages of the [ritual] activity”). The second phase entitled “The main activities” represents the Mendrup performance itself:¹⁹⁹

1. Preliminary activities (*sngon ’gro*)

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

1.2 Inner preliminaries: collecting the ritual objects (*rdzas*) (including the Mendrup medicine substances), offerings to local deities and obstructers (includes *sa len* or *sa’i cho ga*, ransom

¹⁹⁶ Kohn, 1998, p. 238, observed exactly the same duration for the *mani rilbu* ritual, whereas Blaikie, 2013, p. 432, 2014, p. 6, Cech, 1987, p. 272, Garrett, 2009, p. 207, and Kind, 2002, p. 66, a shorter one (seven days) for the respective mendrup rituals they observed.

¹⁹⁷ DTOZ, p. 75.

¹⁹⁸ The Longyé (“extended vastness”, Karmay, 1985, p. 12) and related rituals as “general merit-making rituals” are performed at various occasions, including post-mortals rites for liberation of the consciousness (*rnam shes*) of the deceased. Karmay, 1985, p. 12.

¹⁹⁹ Based on own observation of the ritual in 2012 and NyTshGy, p. 4. Explanations in brackets are mine. English translation partly follows the monastery’s programme of the ritual. English Programme. The Triten Norbutse institution preferred to translate *drub* (*sgrub*) as “blessings” rather than “accomplishment”. Similarly observed by Cantwell, 2015.

Cf. Kohn 1988, p. 200: “For Tibetans a ritual should have preparatory practices, the ritual itself, a concluding ceremony.” Similarly in ritual tantric healing described by Stablein, 1976.

glud rituals), water purification (*chu gtor*), making *tsatsa* (*tshwa tshwa*), placing the ritual spears (deities' ornaments and weapons above the *maṇḍala*), the rites of Namdak and Longyé.

1.3 Preliminary activities:²⁰⁰ setting up the ritual for the Four Protector Kings (rGyal chen sde bzhi, rGyal po bzhi, *mtshams bcad*), constructing the *maṇḍala* (Tib. *dkyil 'khor*), opening its doors, taking vows and commitments.

2. The main activities

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

2.2 Blessing the powdered, ground medicine (*sman phye*): blessings (accomplishments) of the forty-five peaceful deities (*zhi ba'i phye sgrub*), blessings (accomplishments) of the eighty-five wrathful deities (*khro ba'i phye sgrub*).

2.3 Blessing the *siddhis* (*dngos grub*).

3. Bestowing the empowerment (*dbang*) and distributing the Mendrup medicine

“The main activities” can be also understood to differentiate not according to the type of Mendrup medicine being empowered (raw versus powdered), but according to the deities invoked at the particular stages. The differentiated parts then are:²⁰¹

1. Blessings (accomplishments) of the wrathful deities (*khro bsgrub*). (Equivalent to the second half of 2.1, and the second half of 2.2 above)
2. Blessings (accomplishments) of the peaceful deities (*zhi bsgrub*). (Equivalent to the first half of 2.1, and the first half of 2.2)
3. Blessings (accomplishments) of both the peaceful and wrathful deities on the medicine (*sman bsgrub*), accomplishment of *siddhis*. (Equivalent to 2.3)

The whole ritual plan seemed quite complex to everyone, including the monastery's monks, due to the Mendrup ritual's rarity. A detailed Programme of the events was issued by the monastery in both Tibetan and English to guide all participants. The title read in English:

²⁰⁰ The third part of the preliminary activities is again called “Preliminary activities” (NyTshGy, p. 4, English Programme.) without an own specific name.

²⁰¹ Based on YR (Triten Norbutse), KTY (Triten Norbutse), English Programme, Tibetan Programme, NyTshGy.

Celebrating the 25th Anniversary of Triten Norbutse Monastery Dec. 09, 2012 – Jan. 2, 2013, and in Tibetan: *The Programme of Celebrations of Twenty-five Years since the Establishment of the Glorious Triten Norbutse (dPal ldan Khri brtan nor bu rtse dbu brnyes nas mi lo nyer lnga 'khor bar rten 'brel zhu ba'i mdzad rim rags zin)*.²⁰² The leaflet primarily used Western Gregorian calendar dates, supplemented by Tibetan dates, a form which I also follow in this chapter.

The English version of the Programme intended for the visiting foreigners, the so called “Western sangha” (Skt. *saṅgha*, see below), slightly differed from the Tibetan one. It included explanations and directions what to do during the ritual, which parts are obligatory for serious practitioners to attend, and which can be skipped and replaced by sight-seeing in Kathmandu, for instance. Such days were by the present Tibetan public (see below) used for pilgrimage to the sacred sites of the valley, such as Swayambhunath and Boudhanath. On the other hand, the Tibetan original provided more details in terms of full names of ceremonies and sometimes even titles of the ritual texts recited. In addition, an extra page was included listing all the empowerments bestowed (in total four, on the 1st, 4th, 5th, and 15th day of the eleventh month of the Tibetan Hor calendar), along with the exposition of their meaning and the vows, or commitments (*dam tshig*),²⁰³ to be taken during them.

The whole monastery was very decorated and festively set up for the one month of celebrations. A new spacious platform of beaten soil (venue IX) was created to form a relevant venue for the most splendid events and accommodate the expected crowds. Banners honouring the monastery’s main authorities, the anniversary (occasionally labelled “Silver Jubilee”), and the Mendrup ritual, were hung up there and around the monastery. Five-coloured window curtains were hanged and flags were flown on the buildings (*dar tshon sna lnga'i yol ba dang 'phur mas rgyan*).²⁰⁴ During the highlight events, such as the empowerments, the image of the main action was transmitted to television screens to enable everyone to watch.

The twenty-four appointed and especially trained Main Mendrup Practitioners performed the Mendrup ritual in the main assembly hall (*'du khang, lha khang, tshogs khang, gtsug lag khang*). The rest of the monastery’s monks, as well as the visiting tantrics (*ngakpa, sngags pa*), performed other rituals to support the main one – see the description below. All

²⁰² English Programme, Tibetan Programme.

²⁰³ On *damtsik* (*dam tshig*) vows (Skt. *samaya*) in tantric ritual see Snellgrove, 2002. In Buddhist mendrup and *drupchen* context in Cantwell, 2015, pp. 51, 90.

²⁰⁴ DTOZ, p. 78. Similar ornamentations of the temple were noted by Cantwell, 2015, p. 57, as a preparation for the mendrup she documented.

the rites included recitations and chanting of very long texts, ritual music, specific mantras and mudras, and big amounts of various offerings (*tormas*, *gtor ma*, accompanied by *rak ta*, *smān chang*, and tea, biscuits, fruits, etc.) burnt in fire or thrown outside to the pleasure of flocks of pigeons. Towards the end of each day, usually between 5-6pm, the tantric communal feast *tsok* (*tshogs*)²⁰⁵ produced and blessed that day was distributed to everyone.²⁰⁶

Each day in the monastery followed a strict schedule. The “conch shell alarm” (*dung brgyab*) resonated from the main temple’s roof every morning at 7am signifying to all monks that they had to be present at their given venues. However, their rituals often started earlier, at 5am, and ended at around 4 or 5pm. The main Mendrup practice in the assembly hall usually proceeded from 5 or 7am, lasting up to 7, 9, or even 11,30pm. Three meals a day and tea with snacks were served to the monks and public for free (generously financed by sponsors, see below): breakfast at 7am, tea at 10am, lunch at 12,30pm (with a lunch break usually until 2pm), sweet tea or milk tea (*chai, ja mngar mo dang ’o ja*) at 3pm, another tea at 5pm, dinner at 6pm. At the most festive occasions communal tea (*mang ja*) was distributed by appointed monks (*ja mchod*). The meals provided welcomed short breaks from the demanding performances, and also attracted occasional Nepali beggars very happy to be fed.

Lay people and practitioners were encouraged to participate in the rituals as much as possible. At most instances, all the three circumambulations (*skor ba*, *bskor ba*) of the monastery were performed by them: 1. The smallest “inner circuit” (*nang skor*) around the inside of the assembly hall, and thus around the Mendrup medicine; 2. The “middle circuit” (*bar skor*, also called *zhabs skor*),²⁰⁷ which was the most popular with laymen; and, 3. The longest outer or “monastery circuit” (*gling skor*). These and other locations of the respective Mendrup ritual acts indicated below by Arabic numbers and Roman numerals are shown in the Plan of the monastery, Appendix 1. Photographs of the performance are in Appendix 5 (see the List of Figures).

²⁰⁵ On *tsok* in Buddhist mendrup context see Cantwell, 2015, pp. 68, 90.

²⁰⁶ Similarly observed by Cantwell, 2015, p. 68.

²⁰⁷ The word *zhab* (*zhabs*) functions as a honorific prefix.

The Daily Practice of the Mendrup Ritual

This section presents the performance of the Mendrup and other adjoining ritual practices by individual days. Particular attention is dedicated to the Mendrup rite itself, its medicine, and its different ritual components, which are described in greater detail. Similarly, in the case of public teachings for Tibetans and foreigners (i.e. the so called Western sangha), their content is rendered here as long as it touched upon the Mendrup ritual. Other, and usually general topics, covered by the teachings are not conveyed.

Friday 7th December 2012 / 24th day of the 10th month of Water Dragon Year 2139

A significant day of tidying up the monastery and preparations.

The monks and lay people together cleaned everything: windows, courtyards, brushed and splashed the *Ōṃ matri* stones,²⁰⁸ the place for butter lamps' offerings (*me mchod khang*), adorned the main assembly hall by colourful electric lights, and attached a loudspeaker to resonate the sound from the inside of the hall outwards on the premises. Lay people together with their children collected black soil in the monastery's vicinity for *tsatsa* and *tormas* preparations. The Western sangha welcomed the opportunity to practice such "work yoga".

Saturday 8th December / 25th day of the 10th month

Final touches to the great cleaning, then final planning, and relaxation.

Sunday 9th December / 26th day of the 10th month

Morning, 9am-1pm: Opening ceremony.

Crowds gathered at the platforms of beaten soil (venue X, map in Appendix 1) beneath a huge baldachin festively decorated with ornaments, written auspicious wishes, and images of the Rinpoche and Khenpo. Sponsoring villages, associations, and groups presented themselves by banners and posters.

The first half of the day was spent by a pompous event with speeches by the highest representatives of the monastery, a representative of the Menri monastery in India, the Tibetan Government in Exile in Dharamsala,²⁰⁹ and Nepali politicians.²¹⁰ The festival was inaugurated

²⁰⁸ Stones inscribed with the main Bonpo mantra: *Ōṃ ma tri mu ye sa le 'du*.

²⁰⁹ For occasions like this one the image of His Holiness the Fourteenth Dalai Lama had to be displayed in the reception and higher monks' dining hall of the monastery, along with the last Nepalese royal couple.

²¹⁰ The importance of inviting the right guests for the mendrup ritual was also discussed by Kind, 2002, p. 52.

by Yongdzin Rinpoche, addressed as “Lord of Refuge” (*skyabs rje*)²¹¹ and honoured for establishing the monastery, and by the Nepali Minister of Social Welfare Bhadri Prasad Neupane, lighting together a candle “marking the dawning of peace and happiness in the world”,²¹² during which prayers to Tönpa Shenrap Mibo (sTon pa gShen rab mi bo) were recited by the congregation.

Afternoon, 2-5pm: Yongdzin Rinpoche’s teachings on the Mendrup practice (its origin, transmission, and Bonpo *yidams*) in Tibetan, translated into English by Khenpo Tenpa Yungdrung. The first from a set of teachings on the Mendrup for both the Tibetan and Western public. The Western sangha quickly predominated, and the following teachings were conveyed only in English.

Monday 10th December / 27th day of the 10th month

Morning, 9am-1pm: International Symposium on Bon (*rGyal spyi'i bon gyi bgro gleng tshogs 'du*) “presented by a group of prominent scholars from various countries and institutions”.²¹³

Organised jointly by Khenpo Tenpa Yungdrung and Charles Ramble. The event was opened by an auspicious prayer and a butter lamp offering in a room dominated by a festive altar set up for the later rituals (venue II). The conference was explicitly defined as “academic”, and was included into the schedule of the Mendrup festivities. Chronologically, it merged with the ritual’s preliminary practices (*sngon 'gro*).

Speakers: Marietta Kind, Yasuhiko Nagano, Geshe Dangsang Namgyal, Françoise Pommaret.

Afternoon 3-5,30pm: Yongdzin Rinpoche’s teachings on the Mendrup practice in English: on the meaning of the empowerments to be bestowed, the importance of proper knowledge, determination to prepare for both by purifying oneself and realising suffering, and on the development of *bodhicitta* mind oriented towards compassion and awakening. Afterwards summarised by Khenpo in Tibetan.

Tuesday 11th December / 28th day of the 10th month

Morning, 9am-1pm: International Symposium on Bon. Continued at the same venue.

Speakers: Ricardo Canzió, Samten Karmay, Charles Ramble, John Reynolds.

²¹¹ English Programme, p. 1, Tibetan Programme, p. 1.

²¹² English Programme, p. 1.

²¹³ English Programme, p. 1.

Afternoon 3-5,30pm: Yongdzin Rinpoche's teachings on the Mendrup practice in English: on the empowerments, related *samaya* (Tib. *dam tshig*) commitments, three *samādhi* (Tib. *ting 'dzin*) contemplations, and spontaneous compassion with all sentient beings.

Wednesday 12th December / 29th day of the 10th month

Preliminary rituals (*sngon 'gro*), another cleaning day in the monastery. Quite a calmed, relaxed day dedicated to preparations and gathering strength.

The preliminary rites included more *tsatsa* made (*tshwa tshwa btab*, from black soil collected around the monastery, rice, red lentils, and oil), Tibetan laymen followed the Westerners in joining the monks to make them. Everyone was by the Programme and during the teachings recommended to take part in the designated Mendrup ritual's preliminaries, even if only by washing the venue's floor. However, it was stressed that these did not form an obligatory component of the ritual (as for instance the empowerments). The Western sangha took part with vigour. In the main assembly hall a great altar was prepared, the *zhi* (*gzhi*, see below) constructed, Menri Trindzin's empty throne with a photograph was neat and ready, along with lower thrones of Yongdzin Rinpoche, and then of Khenpo presiding over the Mendrup ceremony.

Thursday 13th December / 30th day of the 10th month

Preliminary rituals continued throughout the day. The second relaxed day in the monastery, the last for the next two weeks.

Morning, 9-11am: Amchi Nyima, the main practitioner of the Tibetan medical tradition of Triten Norbutse monastery, was joined by his colleagues Amchi Namse, Amchi Padma (see Chapter 4), and their small team of students, to handle the prepared Mendrup medicine. The heap of the medicine was still resting in the small roof-top chamber (*gnas khang, lha khang*), concrete and otherwise completely empty, of the main assembly hall (preparation of the medicine is discussed in Chapter 4). Fifty-three big, over ten medium-sized, and one hundred and three small bags were stuffed with the Mendrup medicine, which had been poured through a shovel. The bags were then stamped by an image of a medicinal vessel *bumpa* (*bum pa*; also *ga'u, sman gyi ga'u*, in written form also *sman phor*)²¹⁴ and a label denoting "the

²¹⁴ DTOZ.

type of medicine prepared for this mendrup”²¹⁵ (*spyi spungs zhi khro'i sgrub sman 'od zer 'khyil ba bzhugs*).²¹⁶ Especially the bags planned to be given to sponsors were imprinted. All was then returned into the chamber again, placed on the medicine's supporting plastic sheet. The medicine as a sacred object should not touch the ground, and the storage room was to be entered only with shoes off. Also the ransom offering for the afternoon was prepared.

Afternoon, 4-5pm: Cleansing ritual of purification (*khros gsol gnang*) and ransom offering (*sku glud gtang ba, glud bkar ba*).

Two effigies (*sku glud*) made of *tsampa* (*rtsam pa*)²¹⁷ and butter, with added artificial colouring and decorated by the five desirable objects pleasing the senses (*'dod yon sna lngas brgyan pa*),²¹⁸ were ready in two containers. One figure represented a member of the Bon monastic community in monk's robes featuring a typical Bonpo blue vest and a yellow hat. The second, a smaller one, was a lay person on horseback of red colour. The gathered public presented to them money offerings and precious cloths (plastic brocades). Each participant took a handful of dough prepared in a bucket to rub it against own body. Then, having squeezed it in a fist to imprint all the four fingers (apart from the thumb) and blown own breath upon it, the bit was thrown into the vessel of the bigger figure. This practice is performed for healing, good health and prosperity, and getting rid of obstacles. It is believed to carry away the demons of the year “into all directions” (*lo bdud phyogs su bskyal*).²¹⁹ Piles of dough and money (up to 100 NPR banknotes) accumulated at the effigy. (Figure 8).

A ritual of saving life (*tshe thar*) followed, in which a white goat was released.²²⁰ The animal had been blessed by a *khatak* (*kha btags*)²²¹ and butter marks on its forehead and horns, and embellished by a ribbon round its neck. Corresponding prayers and recitations were delivered by the congregation headed by Khenpo and geshe. The goat was confused and refused to leave, so one of the monks carried it a bit afar where the creature then hesitantly walked bleating.

Afterwards, water purification was performed upon the smaller effigy. Khenpo gradually poured saffron water onto the hand of the each participant, who then sipped it, spat it out on the figurine, and poured the rest of the handful on its head. The second

²¹⁵ Amchi Nyima's explanation.

²¹⁶ “This contains the light-swirled medicine of the accomplishment of the peaceful and wrathful deities of the *Chipung* (*spyi spungs*) cycle.” On the *Chipung* see Chapter 3, text 0.

²¹⁷ Roasted barley flour and the staple diet of Tibet.

²¹⁸ DTOZ, p. 80.

²¹⁹ DTOZ, p. 80.

²²⁰ Any animals, including fish, can be set free to perform the rite. DTOZ, p. 79.

²²¹ White ceremonial scarf.

handful of saffron water received was then drunk. The third portion of water was targeted by the Khenpo at the devotee's head. The concrete courtyard in front of the assembly became all wet. The organised order of participation in the purification expressed the social hierarchy employed during the whole Mendrup ritual: the abbot Khenpo, the head teacher Pönlop (*dpon slob*),²²² the Main Mendrup Practitioners, geshe, monks (*ser skya, grwa pa, grwa mang, dge 'dun rnams pa*) – older monks first and younger ones later, the very few Bonpo nuns present, lay tantrics (*ngakpas*), Western sangha, and finally lay people (referred to as *ser khyim pa*, or *mi mang, mi mang rnams pa*).²²³ Some Tibetans caught the saffron water into plastic bags to carry it home, the remaining was then distributed into the public's plastic bottles. Gathered Chinese practitioners (from both Taiwan and the People's Republic of China) gave the liquid to drink also to their baby, whereas the Westerners were concerned about the safety of the water for themselves. The rite was accompanied by recitations of confessions (*phyi bshags, nang bshags*), taking refuge (*skyabs 'gro*), generations of mind aspiring towards awakening (*sems bskyed*), and confessions of misdeeds (*sdig bshags*).²²⁴ In conclusion, both dough effigies were disposed by monks at the nearest crossroad, a three-road crossroad, beneath the monastery. Communal sweet milk tea (*chai*) was served.

The main assembly hall had some more preparations done: offerings of incenses, butter lamps (*mar mchod*), *tormas*, saffron water, and barley, were arranged, and ornaments, such as electric lights, the eight auspicious symbols (Tib. *bkra shis rtags brgyad*), and artificial flower pots around the *zhi* (see below), placed.

Friday 14th December / 1st day of the 11th month (new moon, *bod tshes gcig*)

Preliminaries culminated (water offering, *chu gtor*, fumigation, *bsangs*, earth ritual, *sa len / sa'i cho ga*) to initiate the rituals supporting to Mendrup, the Namdak and Longyé cycles, and the Drenpa Namkha's One Hundred Thousand Offerings, on the auspicious day of a new moon, and thus the first day of a new month of the Tibetan calendar used. The first very busy day at the monastery.

Early morning: Fumigation (*bsangs*) offerings and preliminary rituals in the protectors' chapel (*sgrub khang*).

²²² The head teacher leads the monastery's School of Logic and Philosophy (bShad grwa).

²²³ Monastics and laymen together were called *skya ser*, or *ser skya mi mang*. Further on the attendants see Chapter 2, below.

²²⁴ DTOZ, p. 12.

Morning, 8,00am: Water offering (*chu gtor*) as part of the preliminary rites.

Morning, 9,00am: A festive procession of monks and lay tantrics (*ngakpas*) headed by the Khenpo and other monastery's dignitaries made their way to the venue of the Opening ceremony (IX) and the soil platforms above. The Khenpo was honoured by a baldachin. He, most monks and *ngakpas* wore the Bonpo specific white and blue hat (*dkar mo khyung gshog*). Most geshees featured the Bonpo blue "lotus hat" (*pad zhwa*). Incenses, banners, butter lamp offerings, a huge plastic sunflower, and musical instruments resounded (including a *shang* flat bell, also *gshang* and *zhang*, see below) and accompanied the train. All participants took seats at the venue on chairs, large plastic sheets and carpets spread out. Yongdzin Rinpoche was then the main leader of the assembly seated on a throne with microphone and a table, with the Khenpo next to him at another festive table, both covered by a textile roof. A strict seating order was kept by the others reflecting social hierarchy: geshees in a row next to the Rinpoche and Khenpo, elder monks seated opposite, younger behind, etc. Communal tea (*gsol ja*) and "ceremonial rice" (*'bras sil*) were served, cash donations by sponsors offered.

Then the important earth ritual (*sa len, sa'i cho ga*) took place.²²⁵ The monks' congregation chanted prayers for earth-breaking (*sa brko rdung sbyang gi tshigs*). The act of digging into the soil was performed by Yongdzin Rinpoche himself. The spot was carefully designated following astrological (*nag rtsis*) texts (namely *Nag rtsis snang srid gsal ba'i me long*), a modern compass, and with the help of an astrological grid chart of eight squares drawn on the ground (Figure 9). The "Earth Lord" (*sa bdag*) called Toché (gTo phye, also lTo 'phye)²²⁶ is believed to be moving around inside the earth in an anticlockwise direction according to the seasons. If humans need to excavate soil, they have to know his actual location, as only from the fat of his stomach it is allowed to dig. A small square of surface was chosen as the location for extraction. Mixture of precious stones (*rin chen lnga*) was concealed underground, and a *torma* with the five grains' compound (*gro lnga*, in this case: rice, corn, wheat, peas, red beans, and green mungo) placed higher up as offerings for the *sa bdag* (*sa bdag la mchod yon phul*) for the taken ground. "[A] boy with auspicious conditions" (*lo dar skyes bu*),²²⁷ i.e. a selected young monk, was then allowed to take out some soil (*sa bslang*) under Rinpoche's supervision. Subsequently, the monastics and lay public each picked up a handful of the soil (*sa spar ba*, the men with their right hand, women with the

²²⁵ On the ritual in general and in a Buddhist Nyingma context (although quite different from the Bonpo one here) see Cantwell, 2001, 2005. The ritual as a mendrup's preliminary practice was also observed by Cantwell, 2015.

²²⁶ As in DTOZ, p. 11. See the same source for the creature's image and rotation chart.

²²⁷ English Programme, p. 2, Tibetan Programme, p. 1. The boy had to have both parents and be of a good name. DTOZ, p. 12.

left), and the ceremonial procession continued as before, lead by the Khenpo. One great circumambulation (*gling skor*, map in Appendix 1) around the monastery was accomplished with all the congregation gathered taking part in hierarchical order (as indicated above). The soil was then collected, and in standard ways would have been used for making the sand *maṅḍalas* for the Mendrup ritual. These are now made from bought coloured sands, so the earth was made into *tsatsa*.

Morning, ca. 11am: After the earth ritual, the main rituals of the Namdak and Longyé cycles (abbreviated as Namlong, venue II), and Drenpa Namkha's One Hundred Thousand Offerings (Dran pa nam mkha'i 'bum tshogs, venue II) could begin. The lay tantrics performed own Drenpa Namkha's One Hundred Thousand Offerings (venue VI). Great quantities of offerings, including *tormas* and alcohol, and a big chunk of the communal *tsok* feast were ready. Main Mendrup Practitioners (*a mchod bcu gnyis*) in the main assembly hall (venue I) also started with the Namdak and Longyé cycles.

These procedures were chosen to precede the Mendrup ritual itself, since they are thought to be of peaceful effects (*zhi*), and expected to pacify the environment and any forces before the major celebration. All these practices were to support the Mendrup.²²⁸ The Namdak and Longyé cycles of one thousand buddhas (*sangs rgyas*), and especially of the four emanations of Shenlha Ökar, Sangpo Bumtri (Sang po 'bum khri),²²⁹ Satrik Ersang (Sa trig er sangs),²³⁰ and Tönpa Shenrap Mibo, were aimed to “make all peace before the Mendrup”,²³¹ and are obligatory for the grand mendrup of the Dru tradition. These four deities represent a very important group of the “Four Main Blessed Ones” (Dershek Tsozhi, bDer gshegs gtso bzhi), essential deities of Bon, who are invoked at various rituals.²³² On the other hand, the Drenpa Namkha's One Hundred Thousand Offerings was described as “not obligatory, but it's good”.²³³ One thousand *tormas* (made of *tsampa*, butter, oil, and red dye *smug rtsi*), were offered a day for the Drenpa Namkha's rit (Figure 19). Many offerings (*tormas*, food, alcohol) were used up each day, being thrown outside and into fire. The requested count of one

²²⁸ Cantwell observed the recitation of the *Prajñāpāramitā* in one hundred thousand verses for the same purpose, i.e. in her words “to generate virtue to support the practice and remove obstacles”, before the mendrup practice she observed. Cantwell, 2015, p. 57.

²²⁹ On the deity see Kværne, 1995, pp. 26-27, 44-47.

²³⁰ On the deity see Kværne, 1995, pp. 25, 38-41.

²³¹ Geshe Gelek (Triten Norbutse).

²³² Post-mortal rituals are also included. Kværne, 1985, p. 22. Translation of the name Dershek Tsozhi according to the same source. The term *dershek* (*bder gshegs* in full *bde bar gshegs pa*), literally “departed into bliss”, corresponds to Sanskrit *sugata* and is an epithet of the Buddha denoting his awakening and passing into *nirvāṇa*.

²³³ Geshe Gelek (Triten Norbutse).

hundred thousand recitations of a certain page of the Drenpa Namkha's rite's script was divided among all the performing monks and *ngakpas* (see below) together. The Chant Master (*dbu mdzad*) had to carefully calculate the number of active performers each day, as well as the number of remaining days for the recitation, to make sure the required count will be covered. Therefore, all the monks of the monastery had to attend and perform, and the *ngakpas* were asked to do the same.

The communal *tsok* feast from the different venues of the rituals was distributed to the public around 5pm, as also on the subsequent days.

Afternoon, 2pm: Preliminary empowerment of Namdak and Longyé (*rnam klong gnyis kyi sngon 'gro'i dbang*) by Yongdzin Rinpoche (IX).

The event attracted a mass of people. Rinpoche was seated on a very high throne, at his feet Khenpo, and then other dignitaries. The empowerment included a divination of the affiliated personal goddess of each individual by throwing a plastic flower upon a *maṇḍala*. Each cardinal point was associated with one goddess. The adepts were treated as connected to the particular goddess, and were advised to recite her essence mantra as a personal mantra also during the Mendrup ritual. The goddesses' names and mantras were posted in English at the main hall for the foreign practitioners.²³⁴

Saturday 15th December / 2nd day of the 11th month

The practices begun the preceding day continued all day long. Namdak and Longyé cycles continued in the main assembly hall presided by the Khenpo (I). Drenpa Namkha's One Hundred Thousand Offerings continued (venue II) and begun (in VI). One part of the rites was performed by monks (in II, 1F), one part by *ngakpas* (in VI, 1F, 21).

The group of the about fifteen lay tantric specialists, the *ngakpas* coming from Dolpo, Dhorpatan, and Mustang, had their own regime within the monastery (Figure 20). They followed instructions of the Khenpo, and themselves were led by their member, the known Lama Shenrab Tenzin (Bla ma gShen rab bstan 'dzin) assisted by Amchi Nyima. According to their own words, their performance included features of local ritual customs (*yul lugs*) of the Bonpo Yangel (Ya ngal) lineage spread in Mustang and Dolpo.²³⁵ They differed from the Dru tradition (Bru lugs) of the monastery, which was observed during the One Hundred

²³⁴ This particular empowerment (*dbang*) ritual corresponds to the first (called Bum pa'i dbang) of total four types of empowerment, which are shared by both Tibetan Buddhism and Bon. In Buddhist context cf. Snellgrove, 2002, in Bonpo cf. Seng ge sprul sku rig 'dzin nyi ma, undated, pp. 216-218.

²³⁵ Cf. Ramble, 1985, Ramble and Kind, 2003, Choekhortsang, 2017.

Thousand Offerings simultaneously performed by monks at venue II. The atmosphere in the *ngakpa* group and their small room, a bit aside from the main course of events, was much more relaxed.

Sunday 16th December / 4th day of the 11th month²³⁶

Morning: The main empowerment of Namdak and Longyé (*rnam klong gnyis kyi dngos gzhi'i dbang*) by Yongdzin Rinpoche (IX). Drenpa Namkha's One Hundred Thousand Offerings continued (II, VI) all day.

Morning, 9am-12pm: At all venues the yesterday's rituals continued from early morning. They were interrupted by the main empowerment of the Namdak and Longyé cycles, following the preliminary empowerment of Namdak and Longyé bestowed two days earlier. Yongdzin Rinpoche was again seated on his high throne, wearing his turquoise Bonpo "lotus hat" (*'dul ba'i pad zhu*) and bearing a *shang* flat bell (Figure 25). The Longgyé part was initiated by taking vows necessary for the empowerment, followed by the practice of confessions (*bshags pa*) and purification, imagination of *maṇḍala* offerings of the whole universe. The consequent Namdak cycle's part comprised visualisations and transformations of own internal evil into wisdom leading to awakening. *Tsakli (tsag li)* cards illustrating the transmission lineage were used during its recitation. The blessings and powers were from the Rinpoche transferred by *khataks* stretched from his throne to reach everyone in the congregation.

After the empowerment's conclusion, the crowd queued to receive Rinpoche's blessings. People bowed by forehead to the throne. Many tried to throw *khataks* and envelopes of money offerings on the huge seat which then became flooded, and monks regularly had to make space for more offerings to come.

Afternoon, 3-5pm: The practice of the Namdak and Longyé cycles were completed and the sand *maṇḍala* dissolved. By this the preliminaries of the Mendrup came to an end.

Immediately afterwards, the packages of the Mendrup medicine were carried down from the roof chamber into the main assembly hall by the Main Mendrup Practitioners, other monks, Amchi Nyima and his students. The Main Mendrup Practitioners took part in the following work, otherwise the hall became empty and silent. Amchi Nyima had the task of preparing the Mendrup medicinal vessels to later become the centre of the Mendrup activity (Figure 4).

²³⁶ The third day of the month was omitted in the Tibetan Hor calendar used.

Eight containers of varying materials (glass, metal, plastic) had been collected and partly bought. Amchi Nyima closely read the instructions in the ritual's chief text, the *Menzhung* (*sman gzhung*, see Chapter 3). Five of the vessels were filled with the ground Mendrup medicine, each vessel bearing the characteristics of one of the cardinal points and each prescribed to be made of a certain material:

Direction <i>phyogs</i>	Centre <i>dbus</i>	East <i>shar</i>	North <i>byang</i>	West <i>nub</i>	South <i>lho</i>
Colour <i>tshon mdog</i>	White <i>dkar po</i>	Yellow <i>ser po</i>	Green <i>ljang khu</i>	Red <i>dmar po</i>	Blue <i>sngon po</i>
Sign of the Buddha family	<i>A ma</i> syllables	Swastika <i>g.yung drung</i>	Dharma wheel <i>'khor lo</i>	Lotus <i>pad ma</i>	Jewel <i>nor bu</i>
Medicine pot material	Glass / Crystal <i>shel</i>	Gold <i>gser</i>	Turquoise <i>g.yu</i>	Copper <i>zangs</i>	Iron <i>lcags</i>

The bowls were thus covered with cloth in corresponding colours, and the emblems of the respective Buddha families were drawn on their tops (*zhal khebs*, see Figure 6). The cloth lids were then tied by strings of matching colours, in accordance with the text (see the translation in Chapter 3). The required materials of the containers were rather ignored and not taken as important.

The four remaining vessels were poured in unground medicinal plant substances from Amchi Nyima's big cotton bags of medicines. The different ingredients of dried plants and spices were randomly allocated into the four bowls, some were contained by all of them (Figure 5). These four vessels were designated to cover the four intermediate points (*mtshams bzhi*), and were chosen to feature yellow covers.²³⁷ What did not fit into them was put into an additional plastic bucket, which was to be included into the ritual as well. This actual practice did not entirely obey the main text of the Mendrup ritual, the *Menzhung*, according to which each point of the compass should be represented by a specifically mixed medicine (Chapters 3, 4). For the sake of practicality, the vessels and their signs were taken to symbolise the desired contents.

As a highlight, the *terma papta* medicine was brought, in its turquoise coloured cloisonné vessel of a flowery pattern, which is also understood to be a discovered treasure. It

²³⁷ The selected colour seemed random, as the monastery's publication stated that these four vessels can be "striped", or "variously coloured / ornamented" (*mtshams bzhi khra men phor pa*). DTOZ, p. 24.

was wrapped in a white *khatak*, rewrapped again, and hidden away. Amchi Nyima himself saw the precious vessel for the first time in his life.

Other preparations were done: the *zhi* structure and the external supports for protective deities and the Mendrup practice constructed (for both see below). Everything was ready for the following important day.

Monday 17th December / 5th day of the 11th month

The Mendrup ritual proper started in the morning. Drenpa Namkha's One Hundred Thousand Offerings continued the whole day (II, VI).

Morning, 6am: The day started with a short consecration of the external supports for protective deities of the eight directions, also called the “prayers of consecration of the five external supports of Mendrup rituals”²³⁸ (*dbal mdung sogs phyi rten skos lnga gsol, dbal mdung sogs phyi rten, phyi rten skos kyi rdzas*,²³⁹ colloquially shortened to *mdung*, “spears”), performed by the Main Mendrup Practitioners lead by Khenpo. No one else was present, as it was not considered a public event. For the ritual, a great installation named the “external support” (*phyi rten*) and occupying the whole roof-top chamber (*gnas khang, lha khang*, where the Mendrup medicine used to be stored) in all directions and dimensions had been erected. The construction consisted of a number of planted (*gtsugs*) huge wooden and metal spears (*mdung*) pointing into all cardinal points, between which strings with over one hundred attached depictions of birds (*bya khra*, “various birds”) were pulled. Paper images of the animals of the respective cardinal and intermediate points were placed into their directions along with colourful victory banners (*rgyal mtshan*). The protective deities invoked were supposed to descend on the structure using it as their support (*lha rten*, “deities’ support”).²⁴⁰ Additional nine arrows (*gsas mda’ dgu*) were planted (*gtsugs*) outside of this construction to act as a support of the divinities of the three classes (*gshen gsas lha yi rten*) to avert demons. In the South was a support for the *gösé* (*rgod gsas; rgod gsas gyi rten*), in the West for the *namsé* (*gnam gsas; gnam gsas gyi rten*), and in the North for the *garsé* (*gar gsas; gar gsas gyi rten*).²⁴¹

²³⁸ English Programme, p. 3.

²³⁹ Tibetan Programme, DTOZ, p. 8.

²⁴⁰ Its depiction and description in DTOZ, pp. 18-20.

²⁴¹ DTOZ, pp. 18-20. For these categories of divinities see Chapter 3.

Morning 7-9am: Wrapped up crowds gathered slightly after 7am in chilly cold. The dance of the Four Protector Kings (rGyal chen sde bzhi, rGyal po bzhi, Figure 13) of the cardinal points started.²⁴² Young monks wearing big papier-maché masks and gowns (*zhal sbag dang 'cham gos*) enacted the deities. They gradually encircled the monastery performing the great circumambulation (*gling skor*) in procession, accompanied by music and dancing among curious onlookers. The Four Kings' procession stopped at each of their respective four cairns (*phyogs kyi tho bzhi*, locations 25E-25S) placed in the four directions on the boundaries of the monastery. Each King performed a *cham* dance (*gar 'cham*) at his cairn. Prayers for his protection of the monastery's space from the given direction during the Mendrup ritual were recited, offerings of rice thrown into the air, a libation of saffron water (*gser skyems*) and a *torma* put inside the cairn, along with an image of the king (*rgyal chen sde bzhi'i gzugs ris*) on a wooden board (*shing gi byang bu bzhi*), his invocation (*bka' bsgo*) and essence mantra (*snying po*).²⁴³ The Main Mendrup Practitioners in their white and blue hats (*dkar mo khyung gshog*) conducted the recitations and played the music, and Khenpo orchestrated the event. The procession was very festive, carrying similar attributes as for the earth ritual and circumambulation (see above).

The Four Protector Kings appeared in the following order:²⁴⁴

East – Eastern Lion-Headed White Man (Shar mi dkar seng ge'i mgo can),²⁴⁵ has a white human body with a white head of a snow lion, and holds a sword in his right hand, and a *kapāla* in his left.

North – Northern Wild Boar-Red Man (Byang mi dmar phag rgod can)²⁴⁶, of a red human body with a red pig's head, and attributed a lasso into his right hand, and a *kapāla* into the left.

²⁴² The ritual as a mendrup's preliminary practice was also observed by Cantwell, 2015.

²⁴³ Alternative renderings: "seed mantra", "heart mantra". DTOZ, p. 20.

²⁴⁴ The first two names are listed as they appear in Tibetan Programme, p. 2, the latter two (missing in the Tibetan Programme) as in NyTshGy, p. 13. All the names are created according to the same pattern describing the appearance of the Four Kings. Each King is characterised by a certain colour and head of a certain animal. All the four names express these features, but the latter two in an abbreviated form.

²⁴⁵ Alternative (abbreviated) name: Eastern Lion-White Man (Shar mi dkar seng ge). NyTshGy, p. 13.

²⁴⁶ Alternative names: Wild Boar-Headed Red Man (Mi dmar phag rgod mgo can, Tibetan Programme, p. 2), Northern Boar-Red Man (Byang mi dmar phag, NyTshGy, p. 13).

West – Western Dragon-Blue Man (Nub mi sngon ’brug), with a blue human body and a blue dragon’s head, brandishing weapon in his right hand, and again a *kapāla* in his left.

South – Southern Bear-Black Man (Lho mi nag dom), of a black human body with a black bear’s head, bearing a five pointed red star in his right hand, and also a *kapāla* in his left.

Thus were the ritual outer boundaries (*phyi mtshams*) for the Mendrup ritual established (*mtshams gcod*) in order to be protected against evil influences. The congregation then reconvened into the main hall where the procession had started, and where the floor was now covered with freshly picked flowers to celebrate the Mendrup’s beginning.

Morning 9,15-10,30am, 1-11pm: The awaited Mendrup ritual itself started! The initiation constituted of a celebratory performance of the rite entitled Inviting Medicine (sMan gyi spyen ’dren, sMan spyen drangs, see translation in Chapter 3).

The monastery’s main assembly hall was specially arranged for the Mendrup. Its centre was dominated by a big unusual structure occupying the whole space among the temple’s central four pillars. These were covered by curtains in the four colours of the cardinal points wrapped around them (Figures 10, 12). Exactly in the middle, hidden to the sight of the public, stood a four-legged square metal structure of the *zhi* (*gzhi*, “basis, base”), reaching less than two metres in height. *Zhi* as a general term in the Bonpo context designates the locus of rituals on which the act focuses and where all the most important implements are installed.²⁴⁷ In the case of the Mendrup, the individual glass shelves of the *zhi* contained, in downward succession: 1. The medicinal containers, deities’ ornaments (*rgyan rdzas*), sacrificial cakes (*gtor ma*); 2. A sand *maṇḍala* (*dkyil ’khor*, subsequently four *maṇḍalas* were used);²⁴⁸ and, 3. The mendrup medicine piled around and beneath on the floor (placed on a plastic sheet) (Figures 11, 16). The cardinal points of the *maṇḍala* roughly corresponded to the actual geographical ones.

The principle performers of the Mendrup ritual consisted of the Main Mendrup Practitioners seated in rows of twelve at both sides of the assembly hall. Each of them had an

²⁴⁷ Kohn, 1988, p. 167, recorded the term *kyinkhor* (Tib. *dkyil ’khor*, Skt. *maṇḍala*) for the same object. According to Cathy Cantwell (personal communication, Oxford 2013), this is usually the case in the Nyingma tradition. Other observations of healing and medicine empowering practices have also described a *maṇḍala* in the centre of the ritual action, for the case of mendrup: Blaikie, 2013, 2014, Cantwell, 2015 (at this Nyingma event the whole central construction was called *menkhang* (*sman khang*), “medicinal mansion” in Cantwell’s rendering), Craig, 2011, Garrett, 2009, 2010.

²⁴⁸ The main and concluding *maṇḍala* can be seen in Namdak, Tenzin et al., 2000, p. 101.

appointed musical instrument to play during the ritual (in order from the hall's altar towards the door): 1. *shang* (the Bonpo flat bell, also described as one-hand cymbal), 2.-4. drum (*rnga*) and *shang*, 5.-6. cymbals, 7.-8. right side: trumpet (*ljags gling*, also *rgya gling*), left side: curved trumpet, 9. cymbals (*sbubs cha*), 10.-12. long trumpet (*dung chen*). Furthermore, the ritual texts, and a bell (*dril bu*) and *vajra* (*rdo rje*), were placed in front of each on a small table. Both “halves” of the twelve Main Mendrup Practitioners corresponded to each other, revealing the pattern of doubling the original count of twelve to twenty-four (see above). The two groups kept distinct, and in a way separated, during the whole Mendrup ritual. The congregation was preceded by Khenpo seated on one of the high thrones at the head of each row, i.e. close to the main altar. The right throne was occupied by the Khenpo, the left by Pönlop. Both were connected to the *zhi* by a special implement, a woven five-coloured thread called “spell cord” (*byang thag*, *gzungs thag*)²⁴⁹ leading from two Bonpo sceptres (*phyag shing*, also *'chag shing*, *chag shing*) on the respective thrones to the *maṇḍala* inside the *zhi* (Figure 18).²⁵⁰ Upon the *maṇḍala* the cord divided into five, so that each of its five colours reached the corresponding cardinal point: the white thread was led into the Centre of the *maṇḍala*, the yellow into its East, the green into the North, the red was attached to the West, and the blue one to the South (see translation in Chapter 3, Figure 16). Khenpo and Pönlop held the sceptres of the spell cord at their heart places (*thugs ka*) during the Mendrup meditations and visualisations to concentrate the powers of the deities acquired onto the *maṇḍala* and the Mendrup medicine.

The medicine was invited. The twenty-four Main Mendrup Practitioners invoked the Eight Goddesses (Lha mo brgyad, also mChod bu lha mo brgyad)²⁵¹ to deliver the Mendrup medicine on the *maṇḍala*. The Goddesses descended, impersonated by eight small monks (referred to as *mchod bu lha mo brgyad*, “the offering boys of the Eight Goddesses”, Figure 14) in tantric crowns (*rigs lnga*) and brocade garments, vividly encircling the *zhi* by dance. They carried the Mendrup medicinal vessels and performed three processional dancing circles around the *zhi* (*nang skor*) (Figure 15). They were preceded by a spear (*gar mdung*) with

²⁴⁹ Both names are used in the Bonpo context. Their etymological explanation might be as follows: *Tak* (*thag*) means “rope, cord” (Das). *Jang* (*byang*) denotes “to purify”, and *zung* (*gzungs*) “a spell” (Das, NW, Prague 2013). The literally translation would thus be a “purificatory cord” or a “spell cord”.

²⁵⁰ A similar arrangement described by Cantwell, 2015, pp. 53, 59, 62, 67.

²⁵¹ I follow the current preference of Triten Norbutse monastery (KTY, Triten Norbutse) and further refer to them in English as the “Eight Goddesses”. By the Bonpos they are interpreted as the eight offering goddesses. KTY (Triten Norbutse). They are also common in Tibetan Buddhist context, cf. Sangs rgyas and Rin chen don drub, 2014, pp. 1167-1170. Interestingly, eight goddesses are also invited during the healing rites of the *Mahākālatantra* studied by Stablein, 1976, p. 210, and together with the Medicine Buddha feature also during the mendrup studied by Garrett, 2009, p. 213. Cantwell, 2017, observed a very similar pattern of eight *vidyādhara*s in the Nyingma mendrup she studied.

ribbons in five colours and the *terma* medicinal vessel held by the Ceremonial Master (*mchod dpon*) responsible for the organisation of the rite. The order of the eight vessels in the procession was rather random. Then, every Goddess in dancing steps deposited her *bumpa* inside the *zhi* in the fixed Bonpo order: the white central one was the first, the yellow of the East the second, the green the third, the red the forth, and the blue the last one. Only after were the four remaining yellow-clad bowls added, all at once. All the nine vessels occupied the corners (*zur*)²⁵² of the *maṇḍala* (specifically of its upper shelf): The five containers of ground medicine bearing the symbols and colours of the five cardinal points were in the particular points, whereas the four yellow bowls with unground raw ingredients went into the intermediate directions. The central white one was further joined by the surviving *terma bumpa* kept at the monastery (Figure 3, Diagram in Chapter 4).²⁵³ Throughout the Mendrup ritual whenever the Eight Goddesses appeared to handle the nine medicinal vessels, they were helped by an appointed monk, usually the Ceremonial Master, to handle the ninth (not particularly settled which one) vessel. The Eight Goddesses managed eight bowls (called in this context *rnams brgyad*, “the eight”). Once all the containers had been installed, the *zhi* was closed and ritually sealed by a rope.²⁵⁴ The line of the curtains delimiting the inner and outer sphere was referred to as *tsam* (*'tshams*), “borders”. Entering and looking inside was permitted only to the appointed Ceremonial Master, and forbidden to others.²⁵⁵ The performance demanded from the Main Mendrup Practitioners, apart from the text’s recitation, also many specific mudras, mantras, chants, invocations, musical parts, and dancing steps. *Tormas* and other offerings were offered. Blessings of the peaceful deities on the raw medicine begun (*zhi ba’i khrol sgrub*),²⁵⁶ their ornaments and offerings (*zhi ba’i rgyan ’god*) had occupied the top of the *maṇḍala*.

Once the Mendrup celebration was launched, the sound of recitation could not be interrupted for the whole duration of the ritual. Therefore, during interludes, or when the twenty-four monks needed a break for meals and scarce sleep, the main Mendrup mantra called *mendzap* (*smān ’dzab*) was chanted by appointed young monks in daily shifts of triplets.²⁵⁷ The melody of the mantra is characteristic for the Dru lineage and said to go back

²⁵² Tibetan Programme, p. 2.

²⁵³ A very similar arrangement of the medicinal bowls, including the *papta* container in the middle, was described by Cantwell, 2015, p. 62, with the difference of a skull-cup holding the central ingredients.

²⁵⁴ Ritual sealing of medicinal containers was also noted by Cantwell, 2015, p. 76.

²⁵⁵ Similarly Kohn, 1988, p. 168.

²⁵⁶ The same word for the raw, unground medicinal substances (*smān khrol bu*) was used in the Nyingma mendrup ritual Cantwell, 2015, observed.

²⁵⁷ Cech, 1987, p. 273, observed a similar scheme distributing the shifts of the mendrup mantra recitation among lay villagers during the mendrup she witnessed in 1985 in Menri, India.

to Yéru Wensaka monastery.²⁵⁸ The lyrics read: “*bSvo ōm ba bā de na ra sa ya na g.yu 'brang bdud rtsi bsvo tha*”.²⁵⁹ Almost the whole Mendrup performance took place in the main hall literally around the medicine in its centre. Some of the dances (called simply *'chams*) were enacted around a big coniferous tree functionally replacing a flag pole (*phya dar, cha dar*)²⁶⁰ in the main courtyard in front.

The Mendrup action attracted great numbers of lay people to come day and night to perform circumambulations inside and around the main temple (*nang skor, bar skor*), and thus around the generated medicine, reciting and sometimes beautifully singing the Mendrup mantra, and also prostrating to the sealed *zhi*. Monks showed up over lunch breaks and in night hours, which was their only free time due to their obligatory engagement in the other rituals supplementing the Mendrup. At those times, it became a common practice for the monks to engage in the circumambulation inside around the *zhi* (the inner circuit, *nang skor*), and for the laymen to walk it outside encompassing the assembly hall (the middle circuit, *bar skor*).

With the break for the subsequent empowerment, the Mendrup performance continued into the night (until 11pm), to start again in the early morning of the following day. Small desk lamps were distributed to the Main Mendrup Practitioners so that they could see the text in the night, the open door of the hall was covered with a thick veil to prevent cold, and the monks put on extra two layers of robes. Their recitations resonated via a loudspeaker throughout the night far and wide, and the hall festively lit sparkled into the darkness.

10,30am: Break, preparations for the empowerment.

10,40am – 12,30pm: Preliminary empowerment of the peaceful and wrathful deities (*zhi khro gnyis kyi sngon 'gro'i dbang*) by Yongdzin Rinpoche (IX).

The empowerment was organised at the same location (IX) as the previous time. Rinpoche was seated on his high throne in his turquoise “lotus hat” (*'dul ba'i pad zhu*), and Khenpo a bit lower. The mendrup’s main performers, the Main Mendrup Practitioners, also occupied a prominent position among the monastery’s dignitaries and geshe on the stage around the throne. Yongdzin Rinpoche taught in Tibetan on the precious human existence, real trust and deep devotion into the three jewels as the basis of understanding the deeds of cause and effect

²⁵⁸ KTY (Triten Norbutse), YR (Triten Norbutse). On local mantra melodies (*yul glu*) Kind, 2002, pp. 55, 80.

²⁵⁹ For an explanation of the mantra’s perceived meaning see Chapter 3.

²⁶⁰ Kohn, 1988, pp. 232-233; Nebesky-Wojkowitz, 1976, p. 67.

(Tib. *las*, Skt. *karma*), the importance of generating a strong sense of *bodhicitta*, and observing *samaya* (Tib. *dam tshig*) vows. Purification prayers were repeated by monks to purify the negativities of the members of the congregation. Then the empowerment itself took place initiated by taking refuge, generation of *bodhicitta*, and confessions (*bshags pa*). In the following practice own body, speech and mind was to be integrated with the Body, Speech and Mind of divinities and masters, brothers and sisters in Dharma, and a non-conceptual mind developed. Each participant divined own personal *yidam* deity by throwing a plastic flower on a paper *maṇḍala*, the cardinal point struck determined the deity. The name of the *yidam* was then given to everyone not be forgotten, nor shared with others. The congregation were advised to recite the *yidam*'s mantra and remember the deity in order to be helped during the *bardo* (*bar do*) state between death and the following rebirth (see Chapter 5). The empowerment was to be completed by the final empowerment of the peaceful and wrathful deities on 28th December. Bar do

Afternoon: Drenpa Namkha's One Hundred Thousand Offerings continued (II, VI) after the empowerment.

Afternoon, 2,30pm: Teaching for foreigners.

Tuesday 18th December / 6th day of the 11th month

Blessings of the peaceful deities on the raw medicine concluded (*zhi ba'i khrol sgrub pa tshar*) (I). Drenpa Namkha's One Hundred Thousand Offerings continued (II, VI). All the rituals continued from the preceding day.

Wednesday 19th December / 7th day of the 11th month

Blessings of the wrathful deities (*khro bo'i khrol sgrub*) on the raw medicine begun (I). Drenpa Namkha's One Hundred Thousand Offerings continued (II, VI).

As the rites of blessings of the peaceful deities on the raw, unground Mendrup medicine were completed the previous day, the rites of blessings of the wrathful deities on the raw medicine started, accompanied by a change of their required objects and offerings (*khro bo'i rgyan 'god*) upon the *maṇḍala*.

Afternoon: Teaching for foreigners by Khenpo on the Mendrup, on its links to the *bardo* state and its phases. The Mendrup mantra was recommended to be used in personal practice. The necessity of own practice in order to apprehend the Mendrup ritual was stressed.

Secret names of the main deities of the peaceful and wrathful were posted around the monastery in relation to the Mendrup practice and the empowerment bestowed. The participants were emphasised that having a link to the deities and knowing their names facilitated the transition of the *bardo* state. The deities of the particular five directions were:²⁶¹

Direction <i>phyogs</i>	Centre <i>dbus</i>	East <i>shar</i>	North <i>byang</i>	West <i>nub</i>	South <i>lho</i>
Secret name	Yungdrung Trülmétsel (G.yung drung 'Khrul med rtsal)	Yungdrung Gyurmétsel (G.yung drung 'Gyur med rtsal)	Yungdrung Lekjungtsel (G.yung drung Legs 'byung rtsal)	Yungdrung Gakmétsel (G.yung drung 'Gag med rtsal)	Yungdrung Lhündruptsel (G.yung drung Lhun sgrub rtsal)
External nang ba	Künnang Khyappa (Kun snang khyab pa)	Selwa Rangjung (gSal ba rang 'byung)	Gélha Garchuk (dGe lha gar phyug)	Jédrak Ngömé (Bye brag dngos med)	Gawa Döndrup (dGa' ba don 'grub)
Internal phyi ba	Tsochok Khagying (gTso mchog mkha' 'gying)	Trosé Khagying (Khro gsas mkha' 'gying)	Ngamsé Khagying (rNgam gsas mkha' 'gying)	Welsé Khagying (dBal gsas mkha' 'gying)	Tumsé Khagying (gTum gsas mkha' 'gying)
Wisdom ye shes	Wisdom of emptiness <i>stong nyid ye shes</i>	Mirror-like wisdom <i>me long ye shes</i>	Equalising wisdom <i>mnyams nyid ye shes</i>	Discriminating wisdom <i>sor rtogs ye shes</i>	Accomplishing wisdom <i>bya grub ye shes</i>
Poison dug	Anger <i>zhe sdang</i>	Ignorance <i>gti mug</i>	Pride <i>nga rgyal</i>	Desire <i>'dod chags</i>	Jealousy <i>'phrag dog</i>

Thursday 20th December / 8th day of the 11th month

Blessings of the wrathful deities on the raw medicine concluded (*khro ba'i khrol sgrub pa tshar*) (I), thus the part of the accomplishment on the raw, unground medicine (*khrol bu'i sgrub pa*) was completed. Drenpa Namkha's One Hundred Thousand Offerings continued (II, VI).

²⁶¹ They also appear in the Mendrup ritual texts translated below (Chapter 3).

Afternoon: Teaching for foreigners by Pönlop in Tibetan interpreted into English. The Pönlop analysed the meaning of the Mendrup ritual and its medicine as an external support for the adept's inner transformation of the five mental poisons into the five wisdoms (see Chapter 5).

Friday 21st December / 9th day of the 11th month

Ritual grinding of the medicine (*sman brdung*), the great outer circumambulation (*gling skor*) procession with the medicine. Blessings of the peaceful deities on the powdered medicine (*zhi ba'i phye sgrub*, also *phye ma'i sgrub pa*)²⁶² began (I). Drenpa Namkha's One Hundred Thousand Offerings continued (II, VI).

Morning, 8-10am: Another turning point of handling the Mendrup medicinal matter came after the raw medicine blessings stage had been finished, and the medicine needed to be ground.²⁶³ The *zhi* structure had to be ritually opened, for which “the ritual of removing the seal” (*bdud rtsi rgya bkrol byed*)²⁶⁴ was performed. Only then the Mendrup medicine could have been taken out from the top and beneath the *maṇḍala*. A festive procession very similar to the train for the earth ritual or of the Four Protector Kings few days earlier, formed to carry the medicine outside. In succession, the Khenpo, his helpers and the Main Mendrup Practitioners with paraphernalia, the *terma* medicine, again the Eight Goddesses carrying a medicinal vessel each, geshe, monks, sponsors, and volunteering laymen, lined up. The Mendrup medicine was brought to the assembly hall's courtyard (Figure 21). The Eight Goddesses performed a dance with the medicinal vessels around the dominant cypress tree, having the Main Mendrup Practitioners playing and chanting as their back row.

Afterwards, they placed the containers on a decorated table prepared below the tree, while the bags of medicine had been laid on a nearby second table. Amchi Nyima and Amchi Namse were ready to take over the work. They poured the content of the four yellow (i.e. of the intermediate points) Mendrup bowls containing unground ingredients all together into metal lavabos embellished by *khataks* tied around. The ground volume of the five other vessels was also mixed in another pot. Texts of blessings were recited by the congregation, and saffron water was sprung on the Mendrup medicine. Then the ritual grinding of the medicine (*sman brdung*, “beating the medicine”) begun (Figures 22, 23). Amchi Nyima put a bit of the unground and a bit of the ground Mendrup medicine into a big metal mortar with a

²⁶² Very similar term (*bdud rtsi phye mar sgrub pa*) noted by Cantwell, 2015, p. 76.

²⁶³ The same observed by Cantwell, 2015, pp. 69-70.

²⁶⁴ Tibetan Programme, p. 4.

pestle, both of which were again wrapped in white *khataks*. A little bit of the precious *papta* “yeast” medicinal powder (see Chapter 4) was added. Slowly, watched by crowds and with the prayers of blessings on his lips, Amchi started to crush the substance. The Main Mendrup Practitioners practitioners chanted prayers of mixing, purifying, and grinding the medicines (*smān gyi bsre ba dang tshan bsang, rdul sbyang gi tshig*). During the process, the congregation recited the Mendrup’s specific medicinal mantra *mendzap* (see Chapter 3), and then all the participants one by one in turn took part in the blending and crushing. Everyone was supposed to beat the mixture by the pestle three times. The sequence of access was again governed by rules of social hierarchy: Khenpo was the first one beneath a carried baldachin, followed by the Ceremonial Master and the Eight Goddesses, after came the monks, and then lay participants. Amchi Nyima supervised the grinding, and also cautiously sieved the obtained powder. It took a long time for all the gathered people to take their turn. The whole time the Mendrup mantra was chanted.

The crowd formed into a procession headed by a row of monks bearing various paraphernalia as in the previous processions, the treasure medicinal vessel of the *papta*, and followed by the Eight Goddesses. Each of the goddesses carried a vessel of already ground medicine (*smān phye*), for the sake of time partly refilled from the medicine in bags ground beforehand. Their sequence reflected the Bonpo order of the cardinal points: first came the white vessel of the Centre, then the yellow one of the East, the green of the North, the red of the West, the blue one of the South, and finally the four yellow bowls of the intermediate directions. In their train the Mendrup sponsors (see Chapter 2), mostly Westerners, carried all the Mendrup Medicinal bags. In stories told later they recollected the heat radiating out of the medicine they could feel. The procession circumambulated one time the great circumambulation (*gling skor*) encircling the monastery (Figure 24).

Having returned back to the assembly hall, a new *maṇḍala* was installed marking the turning point of the Mendrup ritual. By this, the practice of both the peaceful and wrathful deities on the unground medicine was accomplished, and the practice of the peaceful and wrathful deities on the ground medicine begun. First the peaceful practice was to be done, and the given ornaments and offerings (*zhi ba’i rgyan ’god*) installed on the new *maṇḍala*. The Eight Goddesses performed a dance around the *zhi* placing the *bumpas* inside upon the *maṇḍala* again. The Mendrup recitation continued, while Amchi Nyima and Amchi Namse were still grinding by hand the remainder of the raw ingredients. The hard work lasted for hours, a bucket of six or seven kilograms took three to four hours to turn into fine powder. This part of the Mendrup medicine underwent the obligatory great circumambulation being

carried by the Amchis, to be added into the *zhi* in the later afternoon. The Mendrup practice in the assembly hall continued until late evening, as on the other days.

Originally, the whole Mendrup medicinal mixture was ground at this stage of the ritual. At the present, electric appliances are being incorporated into the practice, and thus the medicine is processed in advance for the benefit of time and the big amount produced.²⁶⁵ Amchi Nyima estimated that in the past about one hundred kilograms of Mendrup medicine were feasible to make given the manpower required for the grinding. The ritual rules still have to be observed “in accordance with the ancient customs” (*sngon byon gong ma'i phyag srol 'dzin pa'i ched du*),²⁶⁶ so at least part of the medicine of the principle points is still powdered by hand.

Afternoon: Teaching for foreigners by Geshe Gelek.

Saturday 22nd December / 10th day of the 11th month

Blessings of the peaceful deities on the powdered medicine concluded (*zhi ba'i phye sgrub pa tshar*) (I). Drenpa Namkha's One Hundred Thousand Offerings continued (II, VI).

Sunday 23rd December / 11th day of the 11th month

Blessings of the wrathful deities (*khro bo'i phye sgrub*) on the powdered medicine begun (I). Drenpa Namkha's One Hundred Thousand Offerings continued (II, VI).

After the practice of the peaceful deities on the ground medicine had been accomplished the previous day, the practice of the wrathful deities on the ground medicine followed. Again, their distinct paraphernalia had to be arranged (*khro bo'i rgyan 'god*) upon the *maṇḍala*.

Afternoon: Teaching for foreigners by Geshe Kalsang in Tibetan, translated into English.

Monday 24th December / 12th day of the 11th month

Blessings of the wrathful deities on the powdered medicine concluded (*khro ba'i phye sgrub pa tshar*) (I). Drenpa Namkha's One Hundred Thousand Offerings concluded (II), and continued (VI). Preparations for Geshe candidates' presentations, cleaning, later Namlong (rNam klong) cycle started again (II).

²⁶⁵ Similarly described by Cantwell, 2015, p. 62.

²⁶⁶ DTOZ, p. 72.

The practices progressed as usual, with preparations for the geshe debates and a second initiation of the Namlong cycle. Khenpo decided that the lay tantrics, *ngakpas*, would recite for another five days instead of finishing their Drenpa Namkha's One Hundred Thousand Offerings soon (VI).

Tuesday 25th December / 13th day of the 11th month (the first 13th day, *bod tshes bcu gsum snga ma*)²⁶⁷

Morning: Practice of accomplishments (*dngos grub kyi sgrub pa*), rituals of both the peaceful and wrathful deities (*zhi khro gnyis ka'i gzhung bsrang*) begun (I). First batch of Geshe candidates' presentations (II).

Afternoon: Namlong cycle continued (II). Drenpa Namkha's One Hundred Thousand Offerings concluded (VI).

Morning 8,30-10,15am: Preparations for the Geshe examinations' ceremonies.

In general, the Geshe examinations followed by a celebrated graduation take place regularly, usually every two years, at Triten Norbutse. In 2012 the event was organised for the seventh time (*skabs bdun pa'i dge bshes mdzad sgo*) in the history of the monastery, and there were nine candidates. They presented themselves, three at each time, during the mornings of three subsequent days towards the culmination of the Mendrup ritual. The public presentation and subsequent examination is of a ceremonial nature, as the candidates have typically already fulfilled all the requirements, and for the final trial are expected to demonstrate them and to pass. The occasion is taken as special and auspicious, this time making the venue fully packed and turning the public's attention entirely to the geshe (despite the ongoing Mendrup performance).

Morning 10,15-11,45am: Geshe candidates' presentations. The event was ceremoniously initiated by Yongdzin Rinpoche, arriving in a festive procession from his seat (*bla brang*). Both Rinpoche and Khenpo preceded the procedures, flanked by the other monastery's authorities, as Pönlop, Drupdré Khenpo (*sgrub grwa'i mkhan po*),²⁶⁸ and the already graduated geshe. A huge altar loaded with offerings and decorated empty thrones bearing

²⁶⁷ The thirteenth day of the eleventh month was doubled in the Tibetan Hor calendar used, reminiscent of the auspiciousness the number thirteen acquires in Tibet.

²⁶⁸ Drupdra Khenpo (*sgrub grwa'i mkhan po*, also *sgom grwa'i mkhan po*) is the head of the School of Meditation (sGom grwa) of the monastery.

large photographs of Menri Trindzin and the Dalai Lama dominated the scene. Monks, the *ngakpas*, and the public, including the Western sangha, were watching quietly. Communal tea and ceremonial rice were served. The three Geshe candidates (*bka' rams pa*) bowed to the altar, the hierarchs, presented them offerings, and gave “their presentation by chanting from root texts, and recite[d] auspicious and aspirational prayers” (*sngon 'gro'i bshad*).²⁶⁹ At this occasion, the ceremony was shortened to cover only half a day, but in the following days took its full shape to last one day.

Afternoon: Teachings for foreigners by Geshe Gelek. The Western sangha regularly gathered after 2pm in expectations of teachings, which then were set up to be delivered by someone. Geshe Gelek spoke on *ḍākinīs* (*mkha' 'gro ma*) and Drenpa Namkha. His talk started and concluded with a prayer recitation, and was by individuals interpreted into Spanish (for the Mexican group) and Chinese.²⁷⁰

Wednesday 26th December / 13th day of the 11th month (the second 13th day, *bod tshes bcu gsum phyi ma*)

The practice of accomplishments (*dnagos grub kyi sgrub pa*) of both the peaceful and wrathful deities continued (I). Second batch of Geshe candidates' presentations (II). Rituals of Shenrap Mibo (*sNgon rtogs rig pa'i rtse 'bum*, VI).

In the main assembly hall, the Main Mendrup Practitioners proceeded with the Mendrup and its accomplishments from both the peaceful and wrathful deities. The presentations of the next three Geshe aspirants repeated the structure of the previous day in a prolonged form to cover both the morning (10 – ca. 12am) and afternoon (3 – ca. 5pm). As the group of the *ngakpas* had concluded the Drenpa Namkha's One Hundred Thousand Offerings, they were given another text to continue with, the story of Shenrap Mibo (from *sNgon rtogs rig pa'i rtse 'bum*, vol. 10).²⁷¹ They finished its recitation in late afternoon.

Thursday 27th December / 14th day of the 11th month

²⁶⁹ English Programme, p. 4, Tibetan Programme, p. 3.

²⁷⁰ On the Western sangha see below in Chapter 2.

²⁷¹ The text comes from the ten volumes of the section of the Bon Kanjur entitled *rTse 'bum* (cf. Martin et al., 2003, pp. 241-246.). The whole *rTse 'bum* section is a part of the larger *'Bum* section, and is dedicated to Shenrap Mibo.

The practice of accomplishments (*dnegos grub kyi sgrub pa*) continued, accompanied by a long life practice of the wrathful deities (*khro bo'i tshe sgrub*) (I). Rituals of long life (*tshe sgrub*, VI). Third batch of Geshe candidates' presentations (II).

For the Mendrup practice, the Main Mendrup Practitioners continued with the accomplishments and a long life practice, in which long life pills (*tshe ril*) were produced to be distributed during the empowerment the following day. The pills were made of *tsampa*, butter and sugar, and, especially for this occasion, a bit of the Mendrup medicine was included too. Some pills were painted red, some were left in their brownish colour.

The Geshe candidates' presentations followed the pattern of the previous day. The *ngakpas* were allocated a new text for recitation by Khenpo, a long life practice to last for two days, after which they were promised to receive another text, or to be finally freed.

Friday 28th December / 15th day of the 11th month (full moon)

Conclusion of the Mendrup ritual by the final empowerment of the peaceful and wrathful deities and the medicinal practice (*zhi khro gnyis dang sman bcas kyi dbang*), i.e. the medicinal accomplishment (*sman sgrub*), of the accomplishments of the peaceful and wrathful (*dnegos gzhi'i dbang*), and for long life (*tshe sgrub gyi dbang*),²⁷² by Yongdzin Rinpoche (IX). The *terma papta* medicine and long life pills (*tshe ril*) were distributed. Afterwards, the Mendrup medicine was packed into packages for distribution, and its first samples were eaten.

Morning 9,15am-12,30pm: Yongdzin Rinpoche bestowed the final empowerment which involved the peaceful and wrathful deities in relation to the Mendrup practice. The Rinpoche again accommodated himself on his high throne, wearing his turquoise Bonpo “lotus hat” (*'dul ba'i pad zhu*). The event took place at the previous venue (IX). A strict seating order dividing the space by ropes and inscriptions into boxes of social hierarchy was observed: the dignitaries of the monastery, the Main Mendrup Practitioners and geshe, monks, nuns, Western sangha, and general public. About one thousand people arrived.²⁷³ The opening included taking refuge and generating a strong sense of devotion and a strong trust in the

²⁷² An empowerment with a long life practice as a completion of mendrup was also described by Cech, 1987, p. 273, in Menri in 1985, then by Blaikie, 2013, 2014, Cantwell, 2015, Craig, 2011, Garrett, 2009, 2010, Kind, 2002.

²⁷³ The last day of the mendrup practice as a well attended event was also described by Cantwell, 2015, Kind, 2002.

buddhas, especially in Shenrab Mibo, in the attendants. *Bodhicitta* vows were then taken by the practitioners not to ever lose the endeavour to generate *bodhicitta* and the refuge in Shenrap Mibo. A purificatory practice of confession (*bshags pa*), cleansing obscurities gathered over the countless past lives, followed. The empowerment itself was signified by its lineage transmission recitation by the Rinpoche, with the help of *tsakli* cards illustrating the old masters. The power was then transmitted from the Rinpoche upon the congregation, manifested by white *khataks* led from his throne across the crowds for everyone to hold.

Towards the end, everyone tried to push to reach Rinpoche's throne with their *khataks* and envelopes of money offerings. The order of admittance was again controlled by social hierarchy, allowing the meritorious monks and geshes to come first. The queue to the throne took about one hour for the Tibetan laymen at its end. Everyone was amply rewarded by several precious items received and digested (in the given order): 1. Knots empowered (*mdud pa*, *phyag bdud*) by Rinpoche were presented from the foot of his throne by the Pönlop; 2. Blessed four-coloured cloth (*dbang rtags*) as a sign of the given empowerment was granted by Drupdré Khenpo; 3. The precious Mendrup *papta* powder was by a small spoon from its unique vessel poured into people's palms by the Khenpo;²⁷⁴ 4. Alcohol (*'bri mgo*); 5. The communal *tsok* feast of red coloured *tsampa*, sugar, oil, dried nuts and fruits; 6. One long life pill (*tshe ril*) empowered during a ritual for long life (*tshe sgrub*) of the wrathful deities (*khro bo'i tshe sgrub*) on the previous day; 7. Fruits (tangerines, oranges, and bananas); and, 8. Biscuits (Figure 26). Geshes from among the Main Mendrup Practitioners were in charge of distributing the second half (from number 4. onwards). The eatables received were to be eaten at once, or eventually taken to relatives and friends to share.

Afternoon, after 2pm: The completion of the Mendrup ritual indicated the moment from which the Mendrup medicine could have been handled again. The *zhi* was accessed by the Ceremonial Master, and the Main Mendrup Practitioners were given a bit to taste.²⁷⁵ They were the first to do so.

Thereupon, the so awaited Mendrup medicine was taken out to be packed. Amchi Nyima and his team again took over. The content of the nine medicinal vessels on the *maṇḍala* was mixed with the other powder. Almost everyone put on rubber gloves and a

²⁷⁴ As taken from the upper part of the vessel, the powder distributed probably came from the last replenishment during this mendrup ritual. In any case, the *papta* substance looked and tasted the same as the Mendrup medicine.

²⁷⁵ The very quick act of tasting did not seem to be evaluating the medicine's accomplished quality and efficacy, as was the case of tasting observed by Blaikie et al., 2015, p. 190, after a completion of a mendrup ritual for enhancing regular drugs.

mouth cover not to potentially defile the fine substance. The medicine and its packaging had to be placed on the plastic blue sheet (used previously during the medicine's production) not to touch the floor. Every package was individually weighted, into either fifty grams or three hundred grams. About one thousand paper envelopes and bags had to be prepared, as that was the estimated number of people to come to receive one. The rest of the medicine was left for later distribution and returned into the *zhi*. Amchi Nyima was also partly responsible for keeping a share of the medicine and not giving it all away, which represents an important feature of the mendrup practice (see Chapter 4). The very first unofficial distribution and tasting of the Mendrup medicine happened in later afternoon, when about sixty to seventy people gathered in the (then) packaging room above the assembly hall.

The accessible *zhi* attracted many people bringing their own blessed cords with knots (*mdud pa*, *phyag bdud*), rosaries and other possessions to be further blessed and empowered by being placed onto the *maṅḍala* by the Ceremonial Master. The *maṅḍala* was opened to public eyes only for the Concluding ceremony four days later.

Saturday 29th December / 16th day of the 11th month

The first day of Geshe debates' examinations and vows (*dge bshes dam bca' nyin dang po*) (II). A free day after a long time, no special rituals were going on, almost everyone seemed to be free and seeking relaxation. The monastery was mostly calm and quiet, the assembly hall stayed closed.

The Geshe examinations began in the morning. The first three candidates again prostrated to the thrones. Very long recitations by the Pönlop and then the candidates followed. The popular debates pursued in the afternoon (1,30-5pm). The candidates were one by one questioned by all the geshes of the monastery, who had to prepare questions on different topics in advance. The contest followed the rules and style of Tibetan monastic debates. The event was well organised with the convenors bearing labels indicating their roles, the monastery's twenty-fifth anniversary logo, a designated seating order, volunteers, and a filming crew.

Sunday 30th December / 17th day of the 11th month

The second day of Geshe debates' examinations and vows (*dge bshes dam bca' nyin gnyis pa*) (II).

Monday 31st December / 18th day of the 11th month

The third day of Geshe debates' examinations and vows (*dge bshes dam bca' nyin gsum pa*) (II).

Tuesday 1st January 2013 (*phyi lo 2012 gsar tshes nyin*) / 19th day of the 11th month²⁷⁶

Morning: Concluding ceremony: distribution of the Mendrup medicine (*sman 'gyed*) and Geshe degree certificates (*dge shes sku 'gyed*).

Morning 8,30am: The merry day of celebrations started with a procession led by Yongdzin Rinpoche and the Pönlop, followed by the nine fresh geshes and their relatives, and then by the main sponsors of the Mendrup ritual carrying the Mendrup medicine. They brought the medicine to the staged venue of the empowerments and the opening of the ritual (IX). Again, an exact seating order was employed, prayers offered by monks, and tea served to everyone. The new geshes received auspicious words (*bkra shis dam bca'*) from fellow monks and the public, and recited offerings (*mchod tshig*). Pönlop chanted the bestowal of the geshe degree (*dge bshes mtshan rtags*). The distribution of the degree certificate (*dge bshes mtshan rtags*) was accompanied by many best wishes of all. In conclusion, the geshes uttered the closing auspicious words (*bkra shis tshigs*), and the monks and all participants recited the “auspicious prayers of the wrathful, peaceful, and medicine deities” (*zhi khro sman bcas kyi bkra shis gsol ba and smon lam*).²⁷⁷ The geshes were ceremoniously granted the Mendrup medicine. After them also the public waiting in a very long queue received the precious substance (Figure 27). The medicine was not eaten at once, but carefully preserved.

Afternoon, 2pm: The Main Mendrup Practitioners “perform[ed] the ritual of conclusion and dissolution of the Mandala” (*dbye bsdu gngang ste cho ga*)²⁷⁸ in the assembly hall. All the new geshes together with the participants performed water purification (*khru gsol*), and walked a circumambulation around the main hall reciting prayers. Yongdzin Rinpoche gave an address of auspicious words to the new geshes (*bka' rab 'byams pa dge ba'i bshes gnyen chen mo*),

²⁷⁶ Unfortunately, I could not be present at the Mendrup celebration from 1st January onwards. Therefore, the following description is based on the Tibetan and English Programme, interviews with KTY (Vienna), and Skype calls with two participants of the Western sangha (Jitka Polanská, Olga Ryznar) later in January 2013. The latter two interviewees were in advance given lists of topics on which to concentrate during their participation in the programme between 1st and 4th January.

²⁷⁷ English Programme, p. 5, Tibetan Programme, p. 3.

²⁷⁸ English Programme, p. 5, Tibetan Programme, p. 3.

and people congratulated them again (*skal bzang gi rten 'brel 'bod tshigs*). The whole Mendrup event was concluded.

Wednesday 2nd January 2013 / 20th day of the 11th month

Thanksgiving and festivities (mainly Tibetan songs and dances), conclusion, banquet.

Friday 4th January 2013 / 22nd day of the 11th month - Monday 14th January 2013 / 3rd day of the 12th month

Visit of His Holiness Menri Trindzin, included one empowerment (*dbang*, II).

Menri Trindzin was originally supposed to take part in the Mendrup celebration to add to its glory, festivity, and auspiciousness. However, his visit was delayed, and hence he was at least asked to bestow an empowerment to those Mendrup participants who had waited for his visit. The empowerment did not form a part of the Mendrup practice, but was a separate event.

The Ritual's Conclusion and Distribution of its Medicine

The Mendrup ritual was festively concluded by the final empowerment (*dbang*) bestowed by Yongdzin Rinpoche (Figure 26). This was several days later followed by the so awaited distribution of the completed Mendrup medicine to the public (Figure 27). The latter event was auspiciously scheduled for the New Year Day of 2013, whereas the precedent empowerment had to happen on a full moon day, which was four days earlier. The two acts were thus not combined, as would be the usual practice,²⁷⁹ but separated for the sake of incorporating more festivities together following the Western Gregorian calendar. The New Year Day thus combined various ritualised activities. The empowerment and the Mendrup medicine distribution to the monks and lay people entailed seeing (*mjal*) Rinpoche and Khenpo, and receiving their blessings (*byin brlabs*) along with the material medicine. Also the graduation of the Geshe candidates, who had just passed their exams, was incorporated into this grant festive day. Thus the day represented the most sought and attended component of the whole Mendrup ritual. The usual number of three hundred of pilgrims and attendants rose to eight hundred. Together with the two hundred monks of the monastery the crowd counted around one thousand.

²⁷⁹ As observed by Cantwell, 2015, Kohn, 1988, p. 215, and similarly by Kind, 2002, p. 71.

The celebrations took place at the stage (IX) erected for the Mendrup occasion, and adorned by ornaments and a high elaborate throne for Rinpoche. The Rinpoche was throughout the event assisted mainly by the Khenpo and the twelve Main Mendrup Practitioners. The Mendrup medicine was prepared on the stage assorted into packages of three different sizes. The powerful substance was on its envelopes introduced as follows (the original subsequently in Tibetan and English):

“*spyi spungs zhi khro 'i sgrub sman 'od zer 'khyil ba bzhugs/*”²⁸⁰

Mendrup
(Blessed nectar)

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

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

The Mendrup medicine was given from the hands of Khenpo.²⁸¹ People’s social status as well as financial participation in the ritual determined the amount received. Prominent guests, important figures of the monastery and sponsors of the ritual were given packages of three hundred grams. Others obtained fifty grams.²⁸² Apart from those present, then Mendrup medicine was carried and dispatched to individuals and institutions around the world, officially by the monastery’s office and by the pilgrims themselves.²⁸³ The Menri monastery

²⁸⁰ “This contains the light-swirled medicine of the accomplishment of the peaceful and wrathful deities of the *Chipung (spyi spungs)* cycle.” On the *Chipung* cf. Chapter 3.

²⁸¹ Blessing of a venerated teacher often accompanies powerful medicine distribution, cf. Lo Bue, 1981, p. 95.

²⁸² On sponsorship of the ritual see below, Chapter 2.

²⁸³ Cf. Kind, 2002, p. 42.

in India, Bonpo monasteries in Tibet (as for example the original Menri and Yungdrung Ling in Central Tibet, in Eastern Tibet institutions in Khyungpo, Nangzhik monastery in Ngawa and Böngya in Repkong),²⁸⁴ and Shenten Dargye Ling monastery in France, all received big bags for further distribution to their devotees and supporters. The sent batches were also meant to reward the sponsorship of the ritual coming from these communities.

In accordance with the *papta* concept (Chapter 4), a hint of the mixture would be added to other mendrup ceremonies happening at various places. At the present, the only large scale mendrup celebrations take place in Menri in India and in Yungdrung Ling in Tibet, both of which were for this reason especially kept in mind during the dispatching of the Mendrup medicine. However, other, smaller, Bonpo mendrup arrangements will very happily welcome such an addition as well. Also keeping the medicine was considered of high importance. Some always has to remain at Triten Norbutse monastery to be preserved over a long period of time, practically until the next mendrup performance, which will again produce a new stock of mendrup medicine.²⁸⁵ The frequency of performance currently is about twenty years, which is the period the mendrup medicine should hopefully last. Thus this time about ten big bags were put aside, and stored on the first floor of the monastery's main assembly hall. The reserve was to be used slowly and cautiously, to be given to pilgrims seeing the Rinpoche, new sponsors, prominent visitors to the monastery, etc. A visitor to the monastery should be generally granted a small amount upon request, at Triten Norbutse and at Shenten Dargye Ling in France. Indeed, in the following years from 2013 onwards, people were arriving to both institutions with this particular request. The usage of the mendrup medicine and the different notions applied to the substance are discussed in Chapter 5.

²⁸⁴ Cech, 1987, p. 272, noticed a great demand for the mendrup medicine produced by Menri in India in 1985 especially in Tibet, where it was carried by the refugees occasionally visiting their families.

²⁸⁵ On the contrary, the storage period of usual medicinal remedies ideally should not exceed one year. TMPI, p. 13, Saxer, 2010, p. 103.

Table 3: Calendar of the Mendrup Ritual, Adjoint Rituals and Events ²⁸⁶			
West. date	Tib. date	Day time ²⁸⁷	Rituals and Events
7.12.	24.10.		Cleaning the monastery, preparing <i>tormas</i> and <i>maṇḍalas</i> .
8.12.	25.10.		Cleaning finishes, relaxing day.
9.12.	26.10.	M	Opening ceremony: a big festive event with speeches by the highest representatives of the monastery, a representative of Menri monastery in India, and Tibetan (Government in Exile) and Nepali politicians.
		A	Mendrup teaching for Tibetans and foreigners by Yongdzin Rinpoche.
10.12.	27.10.	M	International Symposium on Bon.
		A	Mendrup teaching for Tibetans and foreigners by Yongdzin Rinpoche.
11.12.	28.10.	M	International Symposium on Bon.
		A	Mendrup teaching for foreigners by Yongdzin Rinpoche.
12.12.	29.10.		Big cleaning day of the whole monastery, making <i>tsatsa</i> . Preliminary practice of Mendrup (<i>sman sgrub kyi sngon 'gro</i>) begins.
13.12.	30.10.	M	Mendrup medicine packed.
		A	Purifications and ransom offering (<i>glud</i>).
14.12.	1.11. (new moon)	M	Water (<i>chu gtor</i>) and fumigation (<i>bsangs</i>) offerings, earth ritual (<i>sa len / sa'i cho ga</i> , X) which includes one procession of the great circumambulation (<i>gling skor</i>) with soil. Main rituals of Namdak and Longyé (rNam dag and Klong rgyas) cycles begin (I). Drenpa Namkha's One Hundred Thousand Offerings begin (<i>Dran pa nam mkha'i 'bum tshogs</i> , II).
		A	Preliminary empowerment of Namdak and Longyé (<i>rNam klong gnyis kyi sngon 'gro'i dbang</i>) by Yongdzin Rinpoche (IX).
15.12.	2.11.		Namdak and Longyé cycles continues (I). Drenpa Namkha's One Hundred Thousand Offerings continue (II) and begin (VI). ²⁸⁸
16.12.	4.11. ²⁸⁹	M	Main empowerment of Namdak and Longyé (<i>rnam klong gnyis kyi dngos gzhi'i dbang</i>) by Yongdzin Rinpoche (IX). Drenpa Namkha's One Hundred Thousand Offerings continue (II, VI).
		A	Preliminary practice of the Mendrup concluded. Mendrup medicine prepared into the vessels, and packages placed into the <i>zhi</i> (I). Drenpa Namkha's One Hundred Thousand Offerings continue (II, VI).
17.12.	5.11.	M	Consecration of the external supports for protective deities (<i>dbal mdung sogs phyi rten</i>), Four Protector Kings' (rGyal chen sde bzhi,

²⁸⁶ Partly based on the programme of the ceremony issued by the monastery (English Programme, Tibetan Programme), then on personal observation. The bracketed Roman numerals and Arabic numbers indicate the place of the individual events (See the Plan in Appendix 1).

²⁸⁷ Abbreviations: M = morning, A = afternoon. Absence of a letter indicates that the activities listed concern the whole day.

²⁸⁸ One part of the rites was performed by monks (in II, 1F), one part by *ngakpas* (in VI, 1F, 21).

²⁸⁹ The third day of this month was omitted in the Tibetan Hor calendar used by Triten Norbutse.

			rGyal po bzhi) ritual of establishing boundaries (<i>mtshams gcod</i>) in which their four cairns (<i>phyogs kyi tho bzhi</i> , 25E-25S) are visited in a great circumambulation (<i>gling skor</i>) procession, at each a dance (<i>'chams</i>) is performed, a libation (<i>gser skyems</i>) and <i>torma</i> offered. Inviting Medicine (sMan spyān 'dren, sMan gyi spyān 'dren): medicine vessels placed in the <i>zhi</i> . Blessings of the peaceful deities (<i>zhi ba'i khrol sgrub</i>) on the raw medicine begin (I). Preliminary empowerment of peaceful and wrathful deities (<i>zhi khro gnyis kyi sngon 'gro'i dbang</i>) by Yongdzin Rinpoche (IX). Drenpa Namkha's One Hundred Thousand Offerings continue (II, VI).
		A	Teaching for foreigners. Drenpa Namkha's One Hundred Thousand Offerings continue (II, VI).
18.12.	6.11.		Blessings of the peaceful deities on the raw medicine concluded (<i>zhi ba'i khrol sgrub pa tshar</i>) (I). Drenpa Namkha's One Hundred Thousand Offerings continue (II, VI).
19.12.	7.11.		Blessings of the wrathful deities (<i>khro ba'i khrol sgrub</i>) on the raw medicine begin (I). Drenpa Namkha's One Hundred Thousand Offerings continue (II, VI).
		A	Teaching for foreigners by Khenpo.
20.12.	8.11.		Blessings of the wrathful deities on the raw medicine concluded (<i>khro ba'i khrol sgrub pa tshar</i>) (I). Drenpa Namkha's One Hundred Thousand Offerings continue (II, VI).
		A	Teaching for foreigners.
21.12.	9.11.	M	Ritual grinding of the medicine (<i>sman brdung</i>), one great circumambulation (<i>gling skor</i>) procession with the medicine. Blessings of the peaceful deities (<i>zhi ba'i khrol sgrub</i>) on the powdered medicine begin (I). Drenpa Namkha's One Hundred Thousand Offerings continue (II, VI).
		A	Teaching for foreigners by Geshe Gelek.
22.12.	10.11.		Blessings of the peaceful deities on the powdered medicine concluded (<i>zhi ba'i khrol sgrub pa tshar</i>) (I). Drenpa Namkha's One Hundred Thousand Offerings continue (II, VI).
23.12.	11.11.		Blessings of the wrathful deities (<i>khro ba'i khrol sgrub</i>) on the powdered medicine begin (I). Drenpa Namkha's One Hundred Thousand Offerings and continue (II, VI).
		A	Teaching for foreigners by Geshe Kalsang.
24.12.	12.11.		Blessings of the wrathful deities on the powdered medicine concluded (<i>khro ba'i khrol sgrub pa tshar</i>) (I). Drenpa Namkha's One Hundred Thousand Offerings concluded (II) and continued (VI). Preparations for Geshe candidates' presentations, cleaning (II).

25.12.	13.11.	M	Practice of accomplishments (<i>dnegos grub kyi sgrub pa</i>), rituals of both peaceful and wrathful deities, begins (I). Geshe candidates' presentations (II).
		A	Teaching for foreigners by Geshe Gelek. Namlong cycle continues (II). Drenpa Namkha's One Hundred Thousand Offerings concluded (VI).
26.12.	13.11. ²⁹⁰		Practice of accomplishments continues (I). Geshe candidates' presentations (II). Story and ritual of Shenrap Mibo (from <i>sNgon rtogs rig pa'i rtse 'bum</i> , VI).
27.12.	14.11.		Practice of accomplishments continues (I). Rituals of long life (<i>tshe sgrub</i>) (VI).
28.12.	15.11. (full moon)	M	Conclusion of the Mendrup ritual by the final empowerment of the peaceful and wrathful deities and the medicinal practice (<i>zhi khro gnyis dang sman bcas kyi dbang</i>) by Yongdzin Rinpoche (IX). The <i>terma</i> medicine and long life pills (<i>tshe ril</i>) were distributed.
29.12.	16.11.		Geshe debate exams (II). A free day after a long time, no special rituals going on.
30.12.	17.11.		Geshe debate exams (II). Medicine is packed into packages for distribution.
31.12.	18.11.		Geshe debate exams (II).
1.1. 2013	19.11.	M	Concluding ceremony: distribution of the medicine and Geshe degree certificates.
2.1.	20.11.		Thanksgiving and festivities (mainly Tibetan songs and dances), conclusion.
4.- 14.1.	22.11.- 3.12.		Visit of His Holiness Menri Trindzin, includes one empowerment (II).

Remarks on the Composition of the Ritual Performance

It is abundantly clear that the whole month of the “set of rituals” encompassing the Mendrup is a very complex composition of multiple items. The very core is the Mendrup ritual, itself a very complex whole. The Mendrup on its own is composed of various elements following certain rules – it has to comprise its different parts based on the threefold scheme of preliminaries, main activities, and the final empowerment. The first two of the three fundamental units are further divided into three ritual parts. Within them, a certain variation is allowed, nevertheless quite restrictively and mainly only as concerns the length and possible smaller or greater elaboration and extension of the individual components.

²⁹⁰ The thirteenth day was doubled in the Tibetan Hor calendar used in Triten Norbutse.

On the other hand, which ritual elaboration and extension is added to the Mendrup ritual itself on top of that, presenting adjoint (and potentially disjoint) separate ritual units, is a matter of several factors. Firstly and most visibly, this depends on the agreed custom of the religious tradition, in this case the Bonpo Dru lineage and its Menri (both in Tibet and in the exile) and Triten Norbutse monasteries. This custom is part of the transmission of the Mendrup ritual within the lineage, and thus its pattern is obligatorily repeated at each great Mendrup performance, although it does not form a part of the Mendrup and does function independently at other occasions – the Namdak and Longyé cycles here. In the past, there was likely a moment when the Namdak and Longyé started to inevitably accompany the Mendrup as such an addition.

Secondly, further potential expansion of ritual actions surrounding the Mendrup is subjected to the decision of the organising institution. The decision-making process is driven by both demands of the religious tradition unconditioned by the place of the particular ritual performance, as well as by aspects of accommodation to the actual setting of the ritual. The former is exemplified by the attachment of the Drenpa Namkha rites to the Mendrup celebration in 2012, even though it is usually not the case for other grand exile Bonpo mendrup rituals. The Drenpa Namkha rites were moreover performed in a twofold way, by both monastics and lay tantrics, and thus in two different ritual traditions (*Bru lugs* versus *yul lugs*), which itself is an amplification, as only one would suffice to fulfil the purpose. Also the tantrics' recitation of the story of Shenrap Mibo (*sNgon rtogs rig pa'i rtse 'bum*) text presented such an optional extension. Similarly, the Geshe examinations and the concluding festivities, as well as the subsequent and delayed visit of His Holiness Menri Trindzin leading to an independent empowerment bestowed, were added to even more enhance the main Mendrup celebration.

The latter means of accommodation to the environment of the ritual, in the example studied revealed the adaptations of the Mendrup to the new situation of the Bonpos in the exile in Nepal and India and the current Tibetan world-wide diaspora. Already the opening ceremony, as an extra addition to the Mendrup, was designed to express gratitude to and strengthen bounds with several political Nepalese and Tibetan exile authorities. High representatives were invited to give speeches, and the event had quite a civic feeling. The global context of the exile Bonpos was also felt. The teachings on the Mendrup ritual initially conveyed in Tibetan to the Tibetan Bonpo exile and Himalayan community were translated into English, and very quickly entirely switched into English only. The teachings were a response to the high demand for oral teachings on any aspect of Bon expressed by the

attending and very active so called Western sangha, i.e. followers of Bon from all over the world, foreigners from the West, Latin America, and different parts of Asia (see below). The International Symposium on Bon too was a reaction to encounters of the Bonpos with the West and the global academia interested in them. Again, these scholars have mainly worked on Bon in the exile (and domestic Bonpo communities in the Himalayas) due to the much easier accessibility than to the Bonpos in Tibet proper. Such an arrangement of an international conference organised by a monastery would be most likely impossible in the current People's Republic of China due to political reasons. Interestingly, in Triten Norbutse in 2012, the opening ceremony and the conference somehow merged with the preliminaries of the Mendrup ritual, and thus appeared as its part. The new reality of the Mendrup ritual transferred from its place of origin and repeatedly conducted performances over a long period of time, is also reflected in the higher frequency of the ritual in the exile and its financing (see below). The Mendrup ritual coming from an entirely Tibetan environment has been set up for global public.

The composition of the ritual performance surrounding the Mendrup shows a high degree of flexibility of the ritual and of Tibetan monastic ritual in general. Planning and negotiations of the monastic authorities stand behind the particular ritual conduction, which changes with each performance of the Mendrup.

The Community Present

The Mendrup ritual without doubt attracted an unusual crowd to the Triten Norbutse monastery. For many, both monastics and laymen, the so valued and awaited occasion represented a very good incentive to pay a visit to Rinpoche, Khenpo and the monastery, as well as Kathmandu, and for some Nepal. The monastery used the opportunity to invite respected guests, strengthen ties with their followers and supporters, and offer their spiritual services. The Mendrup was intended to be an extraordinary event inviting as many attendants as possible.

During the ritual performance, the two hundred monks of the monastery were on a daily basis joined by about two hundred visitors from the Bonpo communities of the Nepalese and Indian Himalayas, and by about one hundred foreigners. The total number of regular participants was thus about five hundred. More people arrived for the opening event and the

individual empowerments, and the number doubled to one thousand for the concluding ceremony of the Mendrup medicine distribution. Compared to the previous mendrup in 1998, the turn up has risen considerably. In 2012 many more Himalayan pilgrims were able to come due to improved infrastructure in Nepal and India, and many more foreigners have found their way to Bon since then.

Among the Tibetan attendants, all the main social groups were represented: monastics, household priests, tantrics, laity. About half of the two hundred daily-comers were from Dolpo, mainly from the area of Bicher in Upper Dolpo and from Pho in Lower Dolpo. Due to complicated transport from Dolpo some of them arrived late. The second predominant region was Mustang and its Bonpo village of Lubra and individual houses in Jharkot, Jomson, and surroundings. Kathmandu, and especially the Tibetan settlements in Boudhanath and Swayambhunath, supplemented another number of pilgrims. Several monks, few nuns, and lay people, including a few official representatives, arrived from the Menri monastery in Dolanji, India. Other locations of the pilgrims' origin in India were Manali, Dharamsala, Dehradun, Varanasi, and the community of the small Bonpo monastery in Sikkim.²⁹¹ A few came to witness the Mendrup from overseas (France). One Bonpo monk from Bhutan was present to show the starting group of the monastic Bon (g.Yung drung Bon) there.

Interestingly, a remarkable part of the two hundred lay Tibetans came from outside the Bonpo community, mostly from the Nyingma school, but also from Kagyü (bKa' brgyud). To my knowledge, there were two reasons for this: The Bonpo mendrup ritual and medicine enjoy fame and are viewed as very powerful also by Tibetans of other denominations. Secondly, the Bon and Nyingma traditions closely co-exist in Dolpo, where Bon has been historically strong, and the Bonpos and Buddhists (Nyingma, Sakya / Sa skya) are close also in Mustang. Among the frequent visitors was also a Drigung Kagyü ('Bri gung bKa' brgyud) lama from a nearby small monastery motivated to attend because the "basics [of teachings] are the same".²⁹²

Moreover, the Bonpos in Tibet in the People's Republic of China too followed the Mendrup happening. Whereas in 1998 Tibetan pilgrims from China were officially permitted to come to Triten Norbutse for the Mendrup celebration, in 2012 this was no longer possible due to the worsening situation in Tibet and strengthening ties between the Chinese and Nepalese governments. Still, one important figure was allowed, the *Dākinī* of Kongpo (Kong po'i mkha' 'gro ma), popularly called "goddess" (*lha mo*). The middle-aged women of a

²⁹¹ Cf. Karmay and Nagano, 2003.

²⁹² *Basics gcig pa red.*

strong stature, bright complexion and long hair, was dressed in a white and dark red lay tantrics' (*ngakpa*) attire. She was believed to possess extraordinary powers, and treated as a guest bringing spiritual support to the ritual practice. The *Dākinī* was in fact the only prominent woman in the Mendrup practitioners' congregation.

A few other Tibetan individuals made it to the Mendrup with a Nepalese visa in their Chinese passports – a group of four Buddhist businessmen from North-eastern Tibet (Amdo, Amdo). They were said to sponsor monasteries in Tibet, and at the moment were staying in Nepal engaged in “many kinds of business”, such as selling Patan bronze statues and Nepali Tibetan-like handicrafts to Tibet, Tibetan *tsampa* to Nepal, Chinese clothes and other goods to Nepal, and managing a restaurant in Boudhanath.

A significant group of pilgrims was formed by the so titled “Western sangha”, an appellation coined for them by the monastery's leadership, although several of their members did not come from the West. The group counted around one hundred people, with one third formed by Mexicans. The other countries included, roughly in order reflecting the numbers of their members: France (the second biggest group counting about ten people), the United States of America, Canada, Belgium, the Netherlands, Spain, the United Kingdom, Italy, Germany, Austria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Russia, Israel, Japan, China, Taiwan, and Malaysia. The majority were serious practitioners from Bonpo congregations somewhere in the world (mainly Europe, USA, and Mexico), or based in India in Menri or in Nepal in Triten Norbutse. Some had already taken their *ngakpa* vows. The main objective to come to the Mendrup was largely articulated as further progress in spiritual practice. The Bonpo centres of Shenten Dargye Ling in France, near Boulder in Colorado, USA, and in Mexico, had been the most influential in spreading the Bonpo Doctrine in the West, and in informing about the Mendrup and inviting people. From these establishments also comes regular sponsorship of the monastery, its school, and the Bumzhi Medical Clinic. The Western sangha became a very visible and integral part of the Mendrup ritual. Its associates were very devoted, diligent and engaged, sometimes brought into tears by the emotional exertion experienced during the ritual. Their eagerness was appreciated by the Tibetan community and taken as a good example that was actually followed, as Amchi Padma put it: “foreigners make me practise”. They attended teachings in high numbers, took notes and recordings, some translated into other languages to their friends not comfortable with English. For some reason, most members of the Western sangha were women. In addition, China and Chinese exile communities (Taiwan, Malaysia) were represented by a few pilgrims, which reflected the growing popularity of Tibetan Buddhism and Bon there.

Likewise, individuals of various religious and ethnic communities in Nepal and India arrived to see the Mendrup ritual and, most importantly, to obtain the medicine: Gurungs, Tamangs, Sherpas, and Magars. From those adherent to Tibetan Buddhism, only the families of Nyingma and Kagyü schools were interested. The Triten Norbutse monastery's ties with local Newars and Nepalis became explicit as well. The former were represented by the metal craftsmen Buddhist *Śākya* caste of Patan supplying statues to the monastery, and by members of the highest Buddhist *Vajrācārya* caste who felt close enough to the Tibetan tantric religion. The latter, Nepalis, comprised of the publishers of the monastery's Beltam magazine, a Brahman family of Mustang Bonpo origin, and personal friends. Also an Indian middle class family appeared performing circumambulations with their three children.

Tibetologists and researchers could be counted as a separate cluster of the Mendrup participants. These were speakers invited for the colloquium, as well as for example a Chinese researcher from the China Tibetology Centre in Beijing interviewing monks who had escaped China and were still fluent in Mandarin. The scholar was at the Mendrup to publish already a second book on Bon, without any knowledge of another language apart from Chinese.

The Mendrup Committee of the monastery divided the participants into “sangha” (monastics), “Western sangha” (everyone not from Nepal, India, or Tibet in China), and “public” (the rest, i.e. Tibetan lay communities). The three groups were approached separately during the Mendrup, and each enjoyed a certain level of social status: monks and nuns the highest one, foreigners the middle, and Tibetan laymen the lowest.

The Ritual's Economics: Sponsors, Donations, Aspirations, and Expenses

In Tibetan culture sponsorship of religious institutions and rituals receives special attention and importance. Donations provided by devotees are rewarded by religious services supplied by institutions (monasteries) and individuals (monastics, and other ritual specialists). In both Buddhist and Bonpo contexts, sponsorship represents an act of religious devotion and social prestige, and is recognised to bring merit (*bsod nams*) to the giver.²⁹³

Auspicious days and festivities provide an excellent occasion for religious sponsorship. The mendrup ritual counts as the most expensive Bonpo ritual performed, and

²⁹³ This Chapter is mostly based on interviews with Khenpo Tenpa Yungdrung (Triten Norbutse, Vienna) and Geshe Yungdrung Gyamtso (Triten Norbutse, Vienna), who was in charge of the ritual's accounting.

likely as one of the most expensive existing Tibetan rituals. It thus exemplifies such an event on both sides: for the monastery to receive finances, and for the lay populace to offer them. The Mendrup performance in 2012 provided the best opportunity for sponsoring for Triten Norbutse and the Bonpo communities of Nepal since the previous mendrup in 1998. The issue of funding was considered very important by, again, both sides: the monastery had been preparing for receiving and well-managing the gifts, as were the devotees to present them.²⁹⁴

Sponsors, Donors, and their Aspirations

Funding *drupchen* has traditionally been regarded by both monastics and laity as extraordinarily beneficial for generating merit. Apart from the power of the ritual itself, the event is considered especially auspicious since it is rare and people have to await it. Therefore, many of the pilgrims had been saving money for this occasion for a long time, usually for about two years. All the community present at the ritual was concerned. Collecting the resources at Triten Norbutse started as soon as the event and the date were decided, which was two years in advance. The monastery did not make many plans on how to finance the ritual, but was hoping that Bon followers would help. In case only little is gathered, the strategy was to primarily cover the medicinal ingredients and the ritual performance itself, and save money on food for the monks and pilgrims. However, the response for the call for funding was answered with much greater generosity than anticipated. In the end, all the ritual was successfully covered by donations.²⁹⁵ Finances for the Drenpa Namkha's One Hundred Thousand Offerings and the Geshe exams and graduation ceremony were collected separately.

There were two categories of contributors differentiated: sponsors (*sbyin bdag*) and donors (*dad ldan*, "faithful"). A sponsor was someone either inscribing money to the monastery on a regular basis or at least once donating a significant amount, which was for the Mendrup set to be the price of catering for the congregation (usually around five hundred people) for one day, 106 395 NPR (see below). For the Mendrup, he or she was called "drupchen sponsor" (*sgrub chen gyi sbyin bdag*).²⁹⁶ A donor was anyone contributing by any smaller benefaction. A "day sponsor" was a person either providing the one day meals, or a

²⁹⁴ Likewise, Cech, 1987, pp. 272-273, devoted a significant part of her Bonpo mendrup description to matters of finances and sponsoring.

²⁹⁵ Apart from the construction of three ramps on the northern side of the monastery, dug into the hill slope. The plateaux were used for the earth ritual, the empowerments, and some of the accompanying festivities (venue IX, X in the Plan in Appendix 1). The area was intended for new buildings of the monastery.

²⁹⁶ Cech, 1987, p. 272, noted the name *nying gyang* (*nying 'gyangs*), who was expected to pay the full amount of 2000 IRS to cover the cost of all the monks' performance of one day, and not the daily meals.

certain other amount of own decision to be distributed among all monks at the conclusion of the given day (see below).²⁹⁷

Virtually every participant at the Mendrup ritual wanted to donate, less or more.²⁹⁸ A potential contributor could choose from several commodities to support: the Mendrup medicine ingredients, every day donations to monks, or meals and tea (*mang ja*) distributed throughout the day for the 106 395 NPR. The amounts requested could not be in round numbers, as a numeral ending in zero would be regarded inauspicious in Central Tibet, where Bon and Triten Norbutse also had its followers. Yet, the sum offered finally depended on the giver, as did its allocation. The benefactor's donation ascribed, by his or her choice, to a particular day of the ritual had to be spent on that day. The investment was intended to support the ritual process, and not to be saved for later times and other purposes. This eventually meant an instant accumulation of resources that had to be paid out quickly as well.

Both the sponsors and donors were rewarded by great religious merit they were believed to receive. In more overt terms, the sponsors enjoyed special addresses and privileges throughout the ritual performance.²⁹⁹ Their names were enumerated at several occasions, as the ritual's opening and closing ceremonies. The most notable benefactors of a particular day, typically the "day sponsors" providing all the daily meals, were listed every morning on blackboards visibly displayed at the monastery.³⁰⁰ Their names were presented in a hierarchised order marked by colour and highlighting, depending on the scale of their contribution. This method of honouring sponsors by publicly revealing their names is common in Tibetan communities, and practised during major festivals. It is also the custom at the exile Menri monastery in India.³⁰¹ More importantly, the Chant Master of the Main Mendrup Practitioners was uttering short prayers for the individual sponsors mentioning their names. The Mendrup Chant Master fulfilled this task every day, particularly for the actual "day sponsors", whenever he had time between the Mendrup practice, for instance over the lunch break.

²⁹⁷ The scheme of such donations called *gyé* ('*gyed*) by individuals to monks in the context of post-1980 revival of the Géluk (dGe lugs) Drépfung ('Bras spungs) monastery in Central Tibet was described by Goldstein, 1998, p. 37, to take place during "a prayer chanting session" as "a traditional Tibetan custom that re-emerged when Drépfung revived the collective prayer chanting sessions".

²⁹⁸ The same observed by Cech, 1987, pp. 272-273, in Menri: "It is not difficult to persuade people to donate money because everybody wishes to receive some of the medicine."

²⁹⁹ Very similar dynamics of monastics, sponsoring laymen, religious merit and social prestige in a ritual setting were described by Schrempf, 2000, in a case study on Bonpo *cham* dance in Eastern Tibet.

³⁰⁰ The same observed by Schrempf, 2000.

³⁰¹ Exactly the same practice was observed by Cech, 1987, pp. 272-273.

The sponsors were furthermore honoured by a personal participation in the ritual's performance. They were asked to carry the Mendrup medicine packages in the great circumambulation (*gling skor*) during the Mendrup ritual (21.12. / 9.11.), and later to deliver the accomplished Mendrup medicine from the assembly hall to the place of distribution (1.1.2013 / 19.11.).³⁰² As the weight of some packages was close to twenty kilograms, the task was not easy for everyone, and the received merit was sometimes compensated by back pains. Asking the monastery's authorities about this innovative custom, I was told: "we need them to feel like they do something". At the festive concluding event, the sponsors were treated by bigger sachets of the Mendrup medicine than the general public.³⁰³ They enjoyed designated seats in first rows during empowerments and other parts of the ritual. The "day sponsors" were allowed to publicly offer *khataks* to Rinpoche, Khenpo, Pönlop, and Drupdré Khenpo in front of the assembly, just before their money was ceremoniously distributed among the monks (see below). The highly regarded role of the sponsors was also reflected in the monastery's Mendrup publication's preface, in which the authors apologised for not having enough space in the book to publicly thank everyone.³⁰⁴

The givers, both sponsors and donors, in principle articulated four main reasons for their sponsorship of the Mendrup ritual: accumulation of merit, purification of bad deeds (Tib. *las*, Skt. *karma*), a good rebirth, and helping a deceased relative. The Mendrup's connection to death (see Chapter 5) was significantly manifested in the economics. A common practice for a deceased's family was to dedicate money in the person's name. This act was believed to improve both the deceased's and the donor's accumulated bad deeds and hence the subsequent rebirth.³⁰⁵ Most families had waited two to three years to make such an offering, some donated money in the name of a family member who had passed away even eight years ago.³⁰⁶ These offerings also represented one of the few occasions when names of deceased people could be uttered. Such practice is at least in some of the Himalayan Bonpo

³⁰² See Chapter 2.

³⁰³ See Chapter 2. During the mendrup Cech described the "daily sponsors: (in her case paying all the monks, and not the food, for one day) were "given special recognition for doing so on the final day when they are allowed to hold a trayful of the medicine in front of everybody else." Cech, 1987, p. 272.

³⁰⁴ DTOZ.

³⁰⁵ A very common and historical Buddhist practice testified already in early Indian Buddhist communities (Schopen, 1997), and adopted by Mahāyāna Buddhism.

³⁰⁶ No one seemed surprised that during such a long time the consciousness (*rnam shes*) would have had taken another rebirth anyway. The period between death and the new rebirth was counted to be two to three years, which still is in conflict with the doctrinal notion of only forty-nine days needed (cf. Gouin, 2012) for the consciousness to find a new rebirth.

communities (as Dolpo) forbidden to the laity,³⁰⁷ and allowed to monks only for the sake of post-mortual rites. The Mendrup too served this purpose, and the Mendrup Chant Master conducted prayers on the deceased's behalf calling them by names. Mendrup sponsorship is regarded as the proper help to someone passed away, instead of mourning, which can, in contrast, harm the person's consciousness (*rnam shes*) by attaching it to its former beloved ones and preventing it from seeking another rebirth. Estimated sixty percent (!) of the Mendrup funding was offered with this intention.³⁰⁸

In 2012, the Mendrup funding came from all the groups of devotees associated with Triten Norbutse and attending the ceremony, thus it has become globalised.³⁰⁹ Tibetan Bonpo communities contributed from Nepal, India, Tibet in China, Bhutan, Europe, and the USA. Even poor families sought to find financial resources, by selling their yak for example.³¹⁰ A great portion of the Mendrup finances came from the monastery's monks' families, from Nepal, India, or Tibet, as the monastery hosts a considerable number of refugees. Relatives of the new Geshe candidates were especially active, donating money particularly for the day of their son's final examination. Social prestige is linked to the degree, for its bearer, but also for his family – the more if the family sponsored the whole monastery for the day, and their names were ornamentally displayed on the boards near the main assembly hall. It was estimated that each family of a Geshe candidate granted about 100 000 NPR (which partially explained why the food during the Geshe exams was so good).

Most resources arrived from Bonpo settlements in Eastern Tibet, primarily from: Khyungpo, the home of Yongdzin Rinpoches and many other monks following him into exile, from Drachen (sBra chen), another place of many monks' origin, and then from Ngawa and the Nangzhik monastery's community from where a number of monks came as well. Among other locations were for instance Nyakrong (Nyag rong), Gyalrong (rGyal rong), Derge (sDe dge), Chengdu, Lhasa (Lha sa) and Central Tibet. Counted regionally, Geshe Gyamtso said that the biggest contribution came from Kham (Khams, i.e. Khyungpo, Drachen, Nyakrong, Gyelrong, Derge, Chengdu). In his explanation, several reasons lied behind this fact. The contemporary political situation in China does not allow Tibetan monasteries to conduct such great rituals, making the lay populations to "order [the rituals for them from] here [, the

³⁰⁷ Even names within the family which are the same as the one of those passed away have to be changed, so that the name in question is never pronounced again. Individuals can thus have their name changed several times in life.

³⁰⁸ Estimation by Geshe Yungdrung Gyamtso in charge of the monastery's accounting office.

³⁰⁹ Globalisation of sponsorship of a mendrup ritual in Ladakh was observed by Blaikie, 2013.

³¹⁰ In 2012 and 2013 a yak made around 40 000 NPR.

exile]”.³¹¹ They send money, receive the blessings and merit, and also the Mendrup medicinal product. Moreover, in 2012 three Geshes candidates came from Kham, which encouraged their families and communities to donate. In the region of Amdo, Geshe Yungdrung Gyamtso recounted, Bon was also strongly present and people had money, some lay Bonpos were even said to be very rich, but not such a stable tradition of sponsoring ceremonies on a large scale had developed there. Within the People’s Republic of China, the donations were collected by local monasteries and then sent to Kathmandu via money transfers. The growing trade of *yartsa gumbu* (*dbyar rtsa dgum bu*) in Eastern Tibet³¹² was guessed to be the source of a significant part of the Mendrup’s sponsorship.

The members of the Western sangha, represented by Europe, the USA, Mexico, China, Taiwan, and South-east Asia, usually had more general objectives for providing finances. As they attended the ritual performance in order to deepen their achievements in spiritual practice, they also donated to support the institution of Bon as such, rather than seeking one concrete interest. For example, from their point of view, a good rebirth depended mainly on practice anyway, which was not to be compensated by money. Nevertheless, I was told that some foreigners did donate for their dead, and a German female practitioner confided to me that she by her gift intended to cleanse the consequences of a bad dream. Both new-comers and long-time members, who had been sponsoring Bon for decades and worldwide, contributed. The financial involvement of the Western sangha was overall very visible.

According to Geshe Yungdrung Gyamtso and the monastery’s accounting office, different groups of Bon adherents essentially hold different preferences for allocating their donations. Tibetans expect to receive religious merit, and therefore mainly donate money for rituals and constructions of primarily religious objects, such as temples and stupas, *maṭi* stones, etc. “Tibetans need only *pūjas*”,³¹³ the Geshe explained. In contrast, foreigners usually do not care how their money will be used and, according to the Geshe, do not require to check the receipts. They entrust the decision to the establishment, although they prefer to hear that the monastery is planning to enlarge their school, or otherwise promote education of its members and especially of children from a poor background. An interesting case are the Chinese (both from Taiwan and the People’s Republic of China) who, as I was told, like things being visibly done and built, and therefore support constructions of buildings which do not necessarily have to serve a religious purpose. Finances of the foreigners are also often

³¹¹ YG (Triten Norbutse).

³¹² See for example Sulek, 2011.

³¹³ *Pūja* is a general Sanskrit term for a religious ceremony adopted by modern Indian languages and the Tibetan exile community in colloquial speech.

used for the same purpose, since they are not allocated for a particular goal, and the monastery needs constructions and reconstructions. The community of Chinese adherents of Bon was still considered to be in its development, and therefore, in total, not big donations were expected or received from the Chinese.

The monastery was very pleased with the financial backing provided by their lay community. Their demand for sponsorship had overcome the Khenpo's and the Mendrup planning committee's expectations, and much more money than anticipated was collected in the end. As a result, the ritual went smoothly, and catering received a surplus subsidy.³¹⁴

Calculating the Donations

The “day sponsoring” was considered the most adequate and appreciated. As has been described, it consisted either of the price of daily meals and tea during the ritual calculated by the monastery, 106 395 NPR, or by a financial offering of any amount favored by the sponsor to each monk. Both methods worked on a daily basis. As the Drenpa Namkha's One Hundred Thousand Offerings and the Namdak and Longyé cycles' rites accompanied the Mendrup, every monk was employed in a ritual activity for the whole two weeks' period of the Mendrup. The offerings of money were supposed to reward their work. Besides the monks of Triten Norbutse, also visiting monks from other Bonpo monasteries (mostly from Menri, a few in total), and lay tantrics and householder priests (*ngakpas*, including Amchi Nyima, about ten to fifteen in total) taking part in the rituals were eligible to receive them. In the following lines, I am going to address all the ritual specialists as “monks”.

The funding of daily meals was straightforward and easy to manage. Extended families usually collected the money and presented it together. On the other hand, the daily donations to the monks were more complicated and subjected to a specific calculation, as some ritual roles were planned to deserve a better reward. The Main Mendrup Practitioners and the Dance Master (*'chams dpon*) conducting the Mendrup ritual dances had to receive at least double the amount than other monks. To illustrate it by an example, let us suppose a sponsor intended to give 10 NPR to every monk on a day with no dance. The figure of 10 NPR was multiplied by 200 (the rounded number of all monks), plus the twenty-four mendrup performers were counted separately to receive double, i.e. 20 NPR each. We then come to: $(10 \times 200) + (20 \times 24) = 2480$ NPR, which the sponsor had to donate in such case.

³¹⁴ I can confirm that the monastery was definitely the best catering monastery I have ever eaten in, having a monk chef from Kham combining Tibetan, Chinese and South Asian cuisines.

For instance, on the day of the earth ritual (*sa len*, 14.12. / 1.11.), each monk received 1700 NPR, and the Main Mendrup Practitioners each 4000 NPR. The sum of 1700 NPR was a combination of two donations: 1400 from a monk's family in Tibet, and 300 NPR from a Bonpo family living in Boudhanath, Kathmandu. For the Main Mendrup Practitioners the amount was raised even more than twice, to 4000 NPR. Supposing this increase was paid by the second sponsor, the figure of the first one, the family from Tibet, was calculated: $(1400 \times 200) + (2800 \times 24) = 347\,200$ NPR. The second sponsor, from Boudhanath, would then have got to: $(300 \times 200) + (1200 \times 24) = 88\,800$ NPR.

The money granted to monks was often accompanied by a *khatak* for each monk. The donations were put in the charge of one appointed monk who distributed them at the end of the main ceremonies every day, usually in the evening. If no funding was received for a particular day, nothing would be distributed, which, however, during the Mendrup did not happen, as far as I know. Small children monks, who receive preliminary monastic education in a school adjoint to the monastery and counted about thirty, had to entrust their financial rewards to their elder monk-teachers. The Triten Norbutse's accountants concluded: "For the monks Mendrup is hard work, but [good] money and food."

Cost of the Mendrup Medicine

For any conduction of a grand mendrup ceremony, acquiring the required medicinal and ritual substances for the composition of the Mendrup medicine (see Chapter 4) is viewed to be very demanding both by organisation and financial terms. Preparation of the Mendrup medicine has to begin months in advance, and the monastic institution has to allocate sufficient funds for the purchase the necessary items that have to be bought and cannot be collected for free. Only during the performance of the ritual, the monastery receives donations and can compensate for these expenses.

The cost of the Mendrup medicine was by Amchi Nyima summed as follows:³¹⁵

416 630 (ingredients) + 20 000 (grinding) = 436 630 NPR (5019 USD)

³¹⁵ Based on an accounting list in Amchi Nyima's Commentary (Nyima Gurung, 2012), pp. 7-12.

The figure shows the price of those ingredients prescribed by the recipe that were bought at the Kathmandu medical market, and does not count with the additional items, such as the oil, alcohol, water, butter, etc. The amount would slightly rise if these were included.³¹⁶ To the purchased substances, many other were added by collection in the wild. The cost of the mechanical grinding is based on the cost of the standard medicinal ingredients' grinding by machine available at the Kathmandu medical market: in 2012 one kilogram cost 20 NPR, for the Mendrup almost one thousand kilograms were powdered (20 x 1000 = 20 000 NPR).

The following Tables give an idea of the price and the amount acquired of some of the bought ingredients: the “root medicine” (*rtsa ba'i sman*) in the first table, and several other in the second table. The much higher sum and physical quantity designated for the “root medicine” attests to its centrality in the Mendrup medicinal compound. Nevertheless, the listings in Amchi Nyima's Commentary are not always in accordance with the information given to me orally, as that the plants *spang spos*, *ma nu*, *nyer shing*, and *ba sha ka*, were picked up and not obtained from the market. Further investigation is required to illuminate these contradictions. In any case, I believe that most records in the Tables are correct.

Name	Cost per kilogram (NPR)	Weight included (kg)	Weight proportion (percentage)	Price (NPR)
<i>A ru ra</i>	80	131		10 480
<i>Ba ru ra</i>	65	95		6175
<i>sKyu ru ra</i>	125	75		9375
<i>Shing kun</i>	1500	0,5		750
<i>Chu gang</i>	250	7		1750
<i>Gur gum</i>	per gram 325	0,5		162 500
<i>Bal gur gum</i>	900	20		18 000
<i>Li shi</i>	1400	12		16 800
<i>Dzā ti</i>	1600	12		19 200
<i>Sug smel</i>	1300	12		15 600
<i>Ka ko la</i>	1400	12		16 800
		Total 377		Total <u>277 430</u> (3189 USD)

³¹⁶ However, there exists no evidence of the money spent on them.

<i>Li ga dur</i>	75	7		525
<i>rGya skags</i>	850	9		7 650
<i>rGya spos</i>	200	7		1 400
<i>sPang spos</i>	600	7		4 200
<i>rGya tshwa</i>	100	1		100
<i>rGyam tshwa</i>	30	1		30
<i>Kha ru tshwa</i>	45	1		45
<i>Ma nu</i>	600	15		9 000
<i>La la phud</i>	250	4		1 000
<i>Shing kun</i>	1500	0,5		750
<i>Nyer shing</i>	600	5		3 000
<i>Ga pur</i>	800	2		1 600
<i>So ma ra dza</i>	550	9		4 950
<i>Ba sha ka</i>	75	15		1 125
<i>Ba le ka</i>	125	10		1 250
<i>Kan dha ka ri</i>	500	3		1 500
<i>Sle tre</i>	75	15		1 125
		Total 111,5		Total <u>39 250</u> (451 USD)

Mendrup Sponsorship in Numbers

The Table below lists the total amounts donated by the individual groups of benefactors of the Mendrup ritual (see above, Chapter 2). The division into the three groups reflect that applied by the monastery. The first one entitled “Tibetans” denotes Tibetans in the exile from both Tritten Norbutse and Menri, and their adjunct communities, then indigenous Bonpo settlements in the Himalayas, and also Bonpos in the People’s Republic of China. These three subgroups of the Tibetan group were customarily not distinguished during the Mendrup event by the monastery, and similarly not in the records on the financing of the event. The second group comprised the very diverse members of the so called Western sangha, which also incorporated Bonpo followers from China and other Asian countries. The third group, the “Nepalis” involved Nepalis and Newaris, thus all inhabitants of Nepal of no Tibetan cultural background. The donations were offered in six different currencies, their total sums appear in the far right column.³¹⁷

³¹⁷ The accounting is based on the monastery’s official final list of sponsors and donors. One person was missing in the list, I was told. In 2012 the nominal Gross domestic product per capita in Nepal was 626 USD, the Gross domestic product per Purchasing power parity was 1308 USD (according to the International Monetary Fund). Exchange rate: USD was bought for 86,90 NPR, sold for 87,50 NPR (Nepal Rastra Bank, 1.12.2012). The rates of the other currencies were based on <http://www.x-rates.com/historical/?from=USD&amount=1&date=2012->

	Sponsors / Donors				
Currency	Tibetans	Western sangha³¹⁸	Nepalis	Total	Total in USD
NPR	7 511 714	508 871	11 710	8 032 295	92 325
USD	1405	3656		5061	5061
EUR	200	3240	1000	4440	5766
INR	2250			2250	41
CAD	50			50	50
CNY		6400		6400	1028
					104 271

	Sponsors / Donors			
	Tibetans	Western sangha	Nepalis	
Total in USD and percentage share of each sponsor group	88 096 (84,488%)	14 741 (14,137%)	1 434 (1,375%)	
Total in USD	104 271 (100%)			

Total number of donations and donating bodies (individuals, families, monasteries, other institutions): 622.³¹⁹

In total, there were forty-three “day sponsors”, donating the meals and tea of one day.³²⁰ The biggest donation was 191 770 NPR (from a family of a geshe), the others contributed more or less the stated sum of 106 395 NPR. Among them were only three Westerners: one gave 1000 Euro, one 100 005 NPR, one joined a Nepali offering the amount

12-01. For the easiness of calculation, I counted with the exchange rate of 87 NPR per 1 USD, and in the Tables provide rounded figures.

³¹⁸ Including scholars presenting at the International Symposium on Bon.

³¹⁹ A few bodies donated twice, so were counted twice into the number of donations.

³²⁰ The sum divided by the average number of people present (five hundred) shows the average cost of food per person a day: 212,79 NPR.

of 106 395 NPR together (in the Table above the money is counted into the Western sangha). One “day sponsor” was Nepali (giving 1000 Euro).

The funding raised during the two empowerments given by Yongdzin Rinpoche is not included here. Usually, a grand empowerment makes in average around two lakhs (200 000 NPR, i.e. ca. 2299 USD). Furthermore, after the Mendrup, a third empowerment was bestowed by His Holiness Menri Trindzin visiting from India in January 2013.

All donations had to be paid to the monastery’s accounting office. For each a receipt was issued in three copies: one for the sponsor, one to be kept by the office, and one to be given to the Chant Master in case of sponsors to dedicate a prayer in their name.

The sponsors and donors have thus successfully covered both the expenses of the Mendrup medicine, as the conduction of the Mendrup ritual and hosting all its attendants. The whole financing therefore fully relied on voluntary donations, and in the end came in in larger proportions than initially estimated and expected by the monastic authorities during the planning of the Mendrup. It is clear that the sponsorship has become globalised as have the participants at the ritual performance and adherents of Bon in general. The financing relied on exiled Bonpos from Tibet in China, Bonpos from the Himalayas, Bonpos in their original homes in China, then on Bonpo practitioners coming from all over the world, their accompanying friends and partners, and on Nepali and Newari friends of the exile Bonpos. Nevertheless, by far the greatest proportion of contributions was from the “Tibetans”, and amounted to almost eighty-five per cent of the whole donations. The financial participation of the foreigners, the Western sangha, was also noticeable forming almost fifteen per cent. The members of the Western sangha counted, of course, much less people than the “Tibetans”, and also on average donated smaller sums than the “Tibetans”. It was apparent that the “Tibetans” were definitely the keenest supporters. The “Nepalis” contributed by over one per cent, which, however, is quite significant given their position as outsiders of the Bonpo and Tibetan community.

Despite the commonly articulated concern that it is the mendrup medicine which makes the mendrup ritual so expensive and prevents its more frequent celebration, the data have shown that at least in the case of the conduction of the ritual at Triten Norbutse in 2012, it was the Mendrup performance itself, the daily donations to individual monks, and the determination of the monastery to constantly host and feed all participants, which required and consumed most of the finances. The acquisition of the Mendrup medicine ingredients cost over 3 600 USD (3 640 USD according to the calculation available, to which a few

uncalculated items should be added), whereas the sum of all donations collected amounted to 104 271 USD. The Mendrup medicine thus accounted only to about three and half per cent (3,491%) of the whole benefice accepted by the monastery.

The great engagement of the Bonpo worldwide community in the sponsorship of the ritual confirms the perceived importance of the Mendrup ritual, as well as the significant economic capacity the community beholds and exerts.

CHAPTER THREE
Texts of the Mendrup Ritual

Translations of the Ritual's Main Texts

Texts of the Mendrup Ritual

This chapter presents an overview of the major texts of the Mendrup ritual, followed by translations of excerpts of the most significant and characteristic recitations, and an exposition on their main mantras. After, I offer an analysis of the nature of the texts. I pay special attention to the reoccurring crucial concepts of *men* (*sman*), medicine, and *dütsi* (*bdud rtsi*), nectar, which define the Mendrup medicine. In this chapter, the medicine is thus illuminated via the avenue of the key Mendrup scriptures. The Mendrup ritual practice encompasses a very extend textual material comprising both scripts for chanting and recitations, and practical instructions on the conduction of the ritual. Typically, both forms are intertwined and alternate within individual texts. All the texts come from the Bonpo *Mother tantras* (*Ma rgyud*).³²¹

As in Bon ritual in general, also the mendrup's central scriptures and guidelines are referred to as *zinri* (*zin ris*, also *zindri* / *zin bris*), “notes” or “records”. In this case, they are distinguished from other as the mendrup *zinri* or *drupchen zinri*, and are understood to be a key element of the mendrup ritual. The given Mendrup *zinri* constitute of four texts, to which a fifth one is added as a kind of supplement (below marked by 0.). Within the *zinri*, the real Mendrup core represents the last part, text number 4., simply called the *zhung* (*gzhung*), or specifically the *Menzhung* (*sman gzhung*), “the medicinal *gzhung*”, *mendrup kyi zhung* (*sman sgrub kyi gzhung*) or *drupchen kyi zhung* (*sgrub chen gyi gzhung*). *Zhung*, literally meaning “the main, central [text]”,³²² is again a general term of Bon, and certain Buddhist, ritual, and denotes the main authoritative text of a certain ritual's practice. All the five texts of the given *zinri* here serve as manuals listing the tasks to be done. The principal of this body of texts is the *Menzhung*. It contains the longest passages for recitation from all the *zinri*, rather than guidelines.

For the Mendrup ritual's individual acts, these are then extensively complemented by a wide range of other texts of various origin and purpose. The heap of the books in the traditional Tibetan format (*dpe cha*) and photocopies used reaches not far from one meter in height, as it has to cover the full two weeks of recitations, and still many sections are repeated. To provide an example how such a complementing process works: For instance, the

³²¹ YR (Triten Norbutse).

³²² Das.

zinri manuals list a certain ritual part to perform, as the earth ritual (*sa len, sa'i cho ga*) or the Four Protector Kings' (rGyal chen sde bzhi, rGyal po bzhi) establishment of boundaries (*mtshams gcod*).³²³ Both have to be drawn from other ritual texts focusing on the respective topics, as astrology in the case of the earth ritual. Since the Mendrup ritual is very complex, many of its parts are components from elsewhere. There exists a degree of flexibility in the choice of which particular texts will complement for the specific mendrup performance. For example, longer or shorter variations can be considered, depending on time, given conditions, funding, etc.

All the Mendrup's *zinri* texts are manuscripts written in cursive script (*'khyug yig*) in a rather distinctive Bonpo hand-writing, and contain many compounded word forms (*bsdus yig*), again typical of Bon. The literary style is irregular verse. The scriptures were brought by Bonpo refugees from the Menri monastery in Tibet.³²⁴ The performing monks of the Mendrup in 2012, the Main Mendrup Practitioners, as well as others in charge, were given a photocopy of the rescued original. Amchi Nyima obtained only the medicinal recipe with its concluding instructions extracted from the *zhung* (see the translation of the recipe in Chapter 4).

Thus, the five main texts of the whole Mendrup procedure are:

0. The Practice of the Regular One Hundred Thousand Offerings of the Three Essences of Empowerment to Khösung Drenpa Namkha at Triten Norbutse. (Khri brtan nor bu'i tser dus mchod khod srungs dren pa [gnam mkha'i] yang dbang snying gsum³²⁵ gyi 'bum tshogs 'bul skabs kyi phyag bzhes bzhugs.) (pp. 1-23 in the manuscript photocopy)³²⁶

The title is colloquially shortened to *One Hundred Thousand Offerings to Drenpa [Namkha] (Dren pa'i 'bum tshogs)*.³²⁷ As it explicitly states, the work contains directions on the monastery's yearly rite and largest offering, the Drenpa Namkha's One Hundred Thousand Offerings (full name of the ritual: Bla chen dran pa'i 'bum tshogs / One Hundred Thousand Offerings to the Great Master Drenpa, also Bla chen dran pa'i sgrub pa / The Accomplishment of the Great Master Drenpa, see Chapter 2). The practice consists of preliminary, main and concluding activities, a *maṇḍala* offering with many vessels (*bum pa*) and ornaments (*rgyan rdzas*) prepared, and many various offerings presented.

³²³ See Table 3.

³²⁴ KTY (Triten Norbutse), YR (Triten Norbutse).

³²⁵ The expression *yang dbang snying gsum* is synonymous to *dbang snying po gsum*, “the three empowerment essences”, or “the three essences of empowerment” (TY Oxford 2016).

³²⁶ In the photocopy the manuscript folios were numbered as pages, see below.

³²⁷ The usually employed name for the text and practice during the ritual in Triten Norbutse in 2012.

Although the tradition is *de facto* independent on the Mendrup, being celebrated at the monastery every year in autumn or winter,³²⁸ it shares common features with the core Mendrup practice: the scriptures of both come from the *Chipung* (*sPyi spungs*) group of teachings, both exercise a *samādhi* (Tib. *ting 'dzin*) meditation visualising the light of the five wisdoms (*ye shes lnga yi 'od zer*) generating the five nectar wisdoms (*bdud rtsi ye shes lnga*) to conquer the five mental afflictions (Tib. *nyon mongs*, Skt. *kleśa*). The heart mantras of the peaceful and wrathful deities are invoked. Medicine is offered, the Mendrup's main medicinal mantra *mendzap* (*sman 'dzab*) recited, and medicinal *siddhis* (*sman gyi dngos grub*), as well as the *siddhis* of the peaceful and wrathful deities, accomplished. A long life (*tshe sgrub*) practice concludes the rite in this text. The *Chipung* represent a Bonpo cycle of teachings as well as the related group of divinities.

The only copy available to me was that of Triten Norbutse.

1. Instructions on the Stages of [ritual] activities of both the rNam [dag and] Klong [rgyas cycles] from the Method of Accomplishment, the Place of Jewels. (sGrub thabs rin chen 'byung gnas las rnam klong gnyis kyi las rim tshigs kyi lag khrid gzugs.) (pp. 1-11 in the manuscript photocopy)

The work comes from the Namdak and Longyé (rNam dag and Klong rgyas) cycles of tantric teachings, and, in the strict sense of the word, is not a part of the Mendrup ritual itself but rather has been added to it. It constitutes a practical manual of the Namdak and Longyé practice together, providing a list of its fifteen stages. The manuscript's writing is very small, with more numerous abbreviated and contracted forms than in texts intended for recitation. The practice includes a *sādhana* and a *maṇḍala* offering to the deities of the cycle. I have not found any special reference to Mendrup ritual in the text.

The only copy available was from Triten Norbutse.

2. The Nectar Drop of Instructions on the Peaceful and Wrathful [Deities] and the Medicine from the Method of Accomplishment, the Place of Jewels. (sGrub thabs rin chen 'byung gnas las zhi khro sman gsum gyi lag khrid bdud rtsi thig pa bzhugs so.) (pp. 11-40 in the manuscript photocopy)

Another manual written in small letters, listing the individual parts of the Mendrup ritual and sometimes referring to Mendrup's key text, the *Menzhung* (number 4., below). The work is a

³²⁸ Geshe Takla Tarwa (Triten Norbutse), KTY (Triten Norbutse).

detailed guide (*lag khrid*) to the Mendrup performance, carefully organising its parts by numbers and subnumbers, categories and subcategories. The practice of the peaceful and wrathful deities and the medicine (*zhi khro sman gsum gyi las rim*) develops in three stages: 1. Listening to the preliminaries (*sngon 'gro bsnyan pa*); 2. Accomplishing the main practice (*dngos gzhi bsgrub pa*); and, 3. The Fruits and purpose of the practice (*'bras bu dogs don*)³²⁹ on apprehending the meaning of the practice's effects. The same structuring and similar naming of the Mendrup appears in the subsequent work number 3.

To the copy of Triten Norbutse another one is available in dKar ru Grub dbang sprul sku bstan pa'i nyi ma, Lha sa, 1998, vol. 230, text 17.

3. The Mirror Illuminating the Practice of Good Qualities of the Light-Swirled Nectar ('Od zer 'khyil pa bdud rtsi yon tan gyi phyag bzhes gsal byed me long bzhugs so/) (pp. 41-72 in the manuscript photocopy)

A commentary on the Light-Swirled Mendrup ritual written by the master Nyö Tsültrim Gyeltsen (14th century). The work has the nature of a technical manual: it prescribes detailed instructions on the ritual's performance, divides the rite into structured parts, and clearly places it into a very formalised structure of a Buddhist *sādhana*. (Further see Chapter 1.)

A recent unpublished English translation exists by Khenpo Tenpa Yungdrung and Colin Millard (see NyTshGy or gNyos tshul khrim rgyal mtshan in Bibliography). The only copy of the Tibetan original available was from Triten Norbutse.

4. The Main Text of the Light-Swirled Nectar Medicine ('Od zer 'khyil pa bdud rtsi sman gyi gzhung bzhugs lags s+ho/). (pp. 73-181 in the manuscript photocopy)

The core text of the Mendrup ritual, the *Menzhung*, coming from the tantras of the Trowo is included in the *Chipung* (*spyi spungs*) part of the Katen, as listed by Kværne.³³⁰ Within its *sādhana* framework, it encompasses *maṇḍala* offerings to Trowo Tsochok Khagying and other deities of the peaceful and wrathful, presentations of offerings including the Mendrup medicine, *samādhi* meditations and visualisations of the five nectar wisdoms entering the adept in the form of light rays of various colours radiating from the deities. The Mendrup medicinal mantra *mendzap* resonates in diverse alternations, along many other mantras and mudras. Medicinal *siddhis* and *siddhis* of the peaceful and wrathful are achieved.

³²⁹ The last English translation follows Khenpo and Millard's rendering in NyTshGy.

³³⁰ Kværne, 1974, p. 113.

The whole text is “performed”, thus recited, sung, manifested by gestures, dancing steps, etc., by the Main Mendrup Practitioners. In contrast to the other *zinri* parts,³³¹ this text is confined to them and performed only by them to exemplify the Mendrup practice itself. In 2012 in Triten Norbutse, this was hence allotted to the main assembly hall (venue I) of the monastery.

Due to the importance and centrality of the text to the ritual, I have concentrated mainly on this text from the *zinri*. I present translations of several of its passages selected to be the most characteristic of the Mendrup practice below.

Translations of *The Main Text of the Light-Swirled Nectar Medicine*

Three versions of *The Main Text of the Light-Swirled Nectar Medicine*, one manuscript and two as facsimile of manuscripts, were available to me. The first one was the copy used at Triten Norbutse throughout the Mendrup ritual practice (MsA), brought from Khyungpo in Tibet.³³² The folios of the whole *zhung* were numbered as pages, and I thus follow this system below. The second (MsB) and third (MsC) copies accessible had been incorporated along other mendrup texts into the *Katen* as edited by dKar ru Grub dbang sprul sku bstan pa'i nyi ma in Lhasa (1998), and catalogued by Karmay and Nagano (2001):

MsA: *'Od zer 'khyil ba bdud rtsi sman gyi gzhung bzhugs lags s+ho*. Manuscript in possession of Triten Norbutse monastery. (pp. 73-181 in the manuscript photocopy)

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

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

I have used all the three manuscripts, and provide their diplomatic edition below. As concerns the graphic form, the folios of MsA and MsB have five lines, MsC six lines. As for

³³¹ The allocation of the individual performances among the monks of the monastery and visiting tantrics is described in Chapter 2.

³³² AN (Triten Norbutse), KTY (Triten Norbutse).

the content, in most cases, there are only minor differences between the three versions, noted in the translation. Generally, MsB contains a slightly lower number of contracted forms, but the usage of abbreviated or full spellings of the same words is irregular, in contrast to MsA. Where these forms appear in MsB, they are exactly the same abbreviations as in MsA. MsB also contains the same misspellings as MsA. Furthermore, in MsB more recent forms of spelling of some words are encountered, as for instance 'dab (in 'dab chags, "birds") instead of 'dabs in MsA. The punctuation (*shad*, double *shad*) is the same in both texts. MsC differs from the former two in several aspects speaking to its at least slightly different origin: it makes use of different abbreviations and own punctuation, sometimes interestingly provides a little bit different verses or a divergent deity name, and even its own distinct variations of mantra formulas of the ritual shared by MsA, MsB and the contemporary practice (at least as observed at Triten Norbutse in 2012). Therefore, MsA and MsB seem to be based on the same version or copy of the ritual's text, but MsC seems to represent a fairly separate branch of the Light-Swirled Mendrup tradition. On the other hand, the three manuscripts share the same irregularities in terms of the overall pattern of the text, which suggests their equal corruption (see Chapter 4).

In the translations, I use the punctuation of MsA and MsB, as its comparison is not my focus here. In long passages of recitations, smaller letters (font 10) indicate smaller script in the original and thus verses of instructions that are not recited. My proposed emendations of misspellings and word additions are marked by an asterisk. The text does not often distinguish the different spelling forms of verbal tenses and of suffixes and post-suffixes, such as the final *-s* or *-d*. For example, the genitive and instrumental cases merge, some words have a double spelling (as *grogs* and *grog* for "friend, companion", similarly *rigs* and *rig*, *gdangs* and *gdang*), and some unclear spellings can lead to confusion (as *rgyu*, "cause", written as *rgyud*, "lineage"). In the Wylie transliteration I correct only the necessary cases, i.e. not the switching of the genitive and instrumental. Names of deities are translated into English only when possible and appropriate. A short introduction precedes each translated excerpt. The Tibetan original texts in Wylie transliteration are in Appendix 4.

1. Opening: Descriptive Invocation of the Mendrup Medicine

The Main Text of the Light-Swirled Nectar Medicine opens with a direct reference to the Mendrup by stating that "[This] is the spontaneous accomplishment without birth and death". Paying homage to the peaceful and wrathful deities of the practice follows. These two lines

are recited to initiate the main Mendrup practice (cf. Chapter). The subsequent verses, which are not pronounced aloud, function as an introduction to the Mendrup practice. They constitute an elaborate depiction of the Mendrup medicine by the manner of attributes. The medicine acquires epithets, such as “the pure nectar medicine”, “the nectar of wisdom”, etc. These reveal the main concepts of the Mendrup ritual: the notion of the five poisons purified into five wisdoms by their ritual transformation, the five medicines of the *maṅḍala* representing the five elements and standing for the five wisdoms,³³³ and so on (see Chapters 4, 5). The second half of the passage turns the medicine into a “demon conquering” the five aggregates (Tib. *phung po*, Skt. *skandha*). Here, the medicine again employs the five wisdoms associated with the five elements, which are further personified by female divinities. The work and the whole ritual play with the semiotic opposition of *dü* (*bdud*), “demon”, and *dütsi* (*bdud rtsi*), “nectar” (see below). The text implies a meditative state of the practitioners and addresses them by the first person (*bdag*).

[This] is the spontaneous accomplishment without birth and death,³³⁴

I pay homage to the deities of boundless manifestation!

The completely pure nectar medicine without birth and death,
 The nectar of wisdom without joining and parting,
 The nectar medicine of self-liberation from the four demons,
 The nectar of wisdom completely purified of the five poisons,
 The nectar medicine completely purified of the five elements,
 The inexhaustible nectar of wisdom,
 The nectar medicine completely purified of the [five] aggregates,
 The nectar of wisdom of the essence of the object and subject,
 The nectar medicine completely purified of the branches [of discrimination],
 The nectar of wisdom of realising the four seasons in their natural state,
 The nectar medicine completely purified of the three poisons,
 The nectar of wisdom completing the Body, Speech, and Mind,
 The completely pure nectar of wisdom for all beings,
 The completely pure nectar of wisdom without birth,

³³³ Similarly, *chülen* (*bcud len*) “essence extraction” can be done based on the five elements. Gerke, 2012a, p. 201, Gerke, 2017, Oliphant, 2016.

³³⁴ I.e. overcoming birth and death.

The nectar of wisdom completely purified of all phenomenal existence,
The nectar of knowing the wisdom, completely purified of the object and subject,
The completely pure nectar of wisdom without duality,
The nectar of wisdom curing the beings of all six realms,
The nectar of wisdom of great compassion.

The demon conquering the five aggregates,
The nectar of [the wisdom of] emptiness with complexion and perfection,
Drips into the expanse of the Goddess of space.

The demon conquering the illusion of the aggregate of Form,
The purifying and cooling Mirror [wisdom] like nectar,
Drips into the expanse of the Goddess of earth.

The demon subduing by method and wisdom the aggregate of Feeling,
The burning and flashing nectar of the Discriminating [wisdom],
Drips into the expanse of the Goddess of fire.

The demon subduing by method the aggregate of Perception,
The cooling and flowing nectar of the Accomplishing [wisdom],
Drips into the expanse of the Goddess of water.

The demon subduing by method the aggregate of Mental formations,
The light and stirring nectar of the Equalising [wisdom],
Drips into the expanse of the Goddess of wind.

The demon of pure method subduing the five causes,
The nectar of wisdom and method in the clear space,
Drips into the expanse of self-purification.

The nectar of realising the non-duality of the eight gates³³⁵ and [their respective] objects,
The light of [pure] dimension³³⁶ and wisdom, swirls to myself.

³³⁵ The eight classes of consciousness are meant. KTY (Shenten Dargye Ling).

The demon subduing the [twelve] branches of the *samsāric* dependent origination.

The nectar of realising the mudra (i.e. the natural state) of the six causes,³³⁷

Drips from the spacious expanse³³⁸ of the four seasons (i.e. of all times).

2. Prescriptions for the Mendrup Practice

More elucidations for the practitioners follow giving the requirements for the place, master, offerings, and other elements of the practice. Prior to the Mendrup performance in 2012, the place and highest monastic authorities, upon others Yongdzin Rinpoche, of the Triten Norbutse monastery were argued to fulfil the conditions prescribed in this section. This recognition formed a part of the process of negotiating and justifying the space of the Mendrup ritual practice (see Chapter 2).³³⁹

Attractive and joyous is the place where the light swirls,

Of a kind and peaceful nature is the master of the swirling light,

Of a mind of great devotion is the friend of the swirling light,

Living beings and the elements are the substances of the swirling light,

The splendour of the ornamentation (i.e. sacred objects used)³⁴⁰ is the support of the swirling light,

The six activities of the six periods are the activities of the swirling light,³⁴¹

The good qualities of the swirling light are spontaneously accomplished,

I request the explanations [and instructions for the practice] of the swirling light!

From among the precious *Chipung* (*sPyi spung*) of the castle,

Having opened the accomplishment of the good qualities of the light-swirled nectar,

I pay homage to the emanated gathering of the peaceful and wrathful [deities]!

³³⁶ Translated according to KTY (Shenten Dargye Ling). The term *ying* (*dbyings*) translated as “[pure] dimension” here is taken to express the “dimension of emptiness” or “emptiness”, as it has been translated in the lines above.

³³⁷ Translation according to KTY (Shenten Dargye Ling).

³³⁸ Literally “expanse of the womb”. As Khenpo explains, *ba ga* (womb) denotes “space / place of origination”. KTY (Shenten Dargye Ling).

³³⁹ The paragraph is based on KTY (Triten Norbutse).

³⁴⁰ Translation of the term *phying dpa’ brjid* as “ornamentation” or “sacred objects offered” according to KTY (Triten Norbutse, Shenten Dargye Ling).

³⁴¹ Refers to the division of one day, twenty-four hours, into six parts.

3. The First Mendrup *Maṇḍala* Offering

After a few more guidelines (untranslated here), the Mendrup ritual itself starts by the offering of its first *maṇḍala*. Here the Mendrup recitation itself begins. Many deities of the respective cardinal points of the *maṇḍala* are invoked by visualisation, and asked to accomplish the medicine. Trowo Tsochok Khagying appears among them as the main one. The divine beings often bear the characteristics of their cardinal quarters, which become reflected by their names and actions. For example, some deities in the West of the *maṇḍala* have heating capacities, are associated with the red colour, etc. Similarly, the five respective medicines of the Mendrup are differentiated by their names and properties in a manner close to that in the Mendrup recipe (see Chapter 4). Each is directed to purify one of the five mental poisons. Also, the five senses and the Buddhist concepts of the Body, Speech and Mind, and of the tantric four activities of arising, increasing, ripening, and collecting (*bskyed rgyas smin bstus*) become employed. The medicinal mantra (*bSvo ōm ba bā de na ra sa ya na g.yu 'brang bdud rtsi bsvo thā*/, see below) is performed in different variations. The text again playfully exploits the semiotic and ritual opposition of the *dü* (*bdud*) and *dütsi* (*bdud rtsi*).

E ma ho!

In the Centre of the blissful *maṇḍala*,
The medicine purifying the root of consciousness,
The *jangsem déchen tongpa nyi* (*byang sems bde chen stong pa nyid*),³⁴²
The medicine dissolving into the dimension of expansion and contraction,
Drips to the Mother of cognition and separation.

The cause arose from the five elements,
The arising is arisen from the Queen of spring,
The increasing is increased from the Queen of summer,
The ripening is ripen from the Queen of autumn,
The collection is collected from the Queen of winter,
The emanation is emanated from the wisdom and method,

³⁴² Literally could be translated as the “emptiness of the great bliss of the mind of enlightenment itself”, meaning the “emptiness itself”. However, the expression serves as a title of the medicine of the Centre, describing the qualities and characteristics of the medicine – see Table 8, translation of the recipe in Chapter 4.

The accomplishment is accomplished [to be] without birth and death.³⁴³

In this palace of the Centre of the *maṇḍala*,
Offerings of the deities and gods are offered.
Enter to the enemies and obstructing demons,
Settle in the nectar of the Bon and the *shen* (*gshen*),
Settle [there] to completely heal the sentient beings,
[As] the medicine of compassion purifying anger,
I request [you] to settle as the great nectar [overcoming demons].
bSvō ōm ba bā de na ra sa ya na g.yu 'brang bdud rtsi rten du trun trun!

Thus is the Centre established.

Taking the medicine of the golden vessel, [utter] these words:

In the East of the changeless *maṇḍala*,
The medicine purifying the root of the aggregate of Form,
The *shachen yungdrung mélong ö* (*sha chen g.yung drung me long 'od*),³⁴⁴
The medicine purifying the dimension of solidity and firmness,
Drips to the Mother of solidity and firmness.

The cause arose from the five elements,
The arising is arisen from the Queen of spring,
The increasing is increased from the Queen of summer,
The ripening is ripen from the Queen of autumn,
The collection is collected from the Queen of winter,
The emanation is emanated from the wisdom and method,
The accomplishment is accomplished [to be] without any change.

In this palace of the East of the *maṇḍala*,
Offerings of the deities and gods are offered.
Enter to the enemies and obstructing demons,

³⁴³ I.e. to overcome birth and death.

³⁴⁴ The appellation of the medicine of the East, see Table 8, translation of the recipe in Chapter 4.

Settle in the nectar of the Bon and the *shen*,
Settle [there] to completely heal the sentient beings,
[As] the medicine of wisdom purifying ignorance,
I request [you] to settle as the great nectar.

bSvō ōm ba bā de na ra sa ya na g.yu 'brang bdud rtsi brtan du trun trun!

Then, taking the medicine of the turquoise vessel, [utter] these words:

In the North of the *maṇḍala* of origination,
The medicine purifying the root of the [aggregate of] Perception,
The *dri chen rin chen nyampa nyi* (*dri chen rin chen mnyam pa nyid*),³⁴⁵
The lifting medicine abiding in breath,
Drips to the Mother of all-liberation.

The cause arose from the five elements,
The arising is arisen from the Queen of spring,
The increasing is increased from the Queen of summer,
The ripening is ripen from the Queen of autumn,
The collection is collected from the Queen of winter,
The emanation is emanated from the wisdom and method,
The accomplishment is accomplished [to be] without birth and death.

In the palace of the North of the *maṇḍala*,
Offerings of the deities and gods are offered.
Enter to the enemies and obstructing demons,
Settle in the nectar of the Bon and the *shen*,
Settle [there] to completely heal the sentient beings,
[As] the nectar of peacefulness purifying ignorance,
I request [you] to settle as the great nectar.
bSvō ōm ba bā de na ra sa ya na g.yu 'brang bdud rtsi brtan du trun trun!

Thus are in the North [the deities] requested to settle.

³⁴⁵ The name of the medicine of the North, see Table 8, translation of the recipe in Chapter 4.

Then, taking the medicine of the copper vessel, [utter] these words:

In the West of the renowned *maṇḍala*,
The medicine purifying the root of the [aggregate of] Feeling,
The *rakta péma sosor tok* (*rag ta pad ma so sor rtogs*),³⁴⁶
The liberating medicine abiding heat,
Drips to the flaming Mother.

The cause arose from the five elements,
The arising is arisen from the Queen of spring,
The increasing is increased from the Queen of summer,
The ripening is ripen from the Queen of autumn,
The collection is collected from the Queen of winter,
The emanation is emanated from the wisdom and method,
The accomplishment is accomplished [to be] without birth and death.

In this palace of the West of the *maṇḍala*,
Offerings of the deities and gods are offered.
Enter to the enemies and obstructing demons,
Settle in the nectar of the Bon and the *shen*,
Settle [there] to completely heal the sentient beings,
[As] the nectar of generosity purifying desire
bSvō ōm ba bā de na ra sa ya na g.yu 'brang bdud rtsi brtan du trun trun!

Thus are in the West [the deities] requested to settle.

Then, taking the medicine of the iron vessel, [utter] these words:

In the South of the accomplished *maṇḍala*,
The medicine purifying the root of the [aggregate of] Feeling,
The *dri chu khorlam janen ten* (*dri chu 'khor lam bya nan tan*),³⁴⁷
The purifying medicine abiding in blood,

³⁴⁶ The name of the medicine of the West, see Table 8, translation of the recipe in Chapter 4.

³⁴⁷ The name of the medicine of the South, see Table 8, translation of the recipe in Chapter 4.

Drips to the Mother of all-healing.

The cause arose from the five elements,
The arising is arisen from the Queen of spring,
The increasing is increased from the Queen of summer,
The ripening is ripen from the Queen of autumn,
The collection is collected from the Queen of winter,
The emanation is emanated from the wisdom and method,
The accomplishment is accomplished spontaneously.

In the palace of the South of the *maṇḍala*,
Offerings of the deities and gods are offered.
Enter to the enemies and obstructing demons,
Settle in the nectar of the Bon and the *shen*,
Settle [there] to completely heal the sentient beings,
[As] the nectar of accomplishment purifying jealousy,
I request [you] to settle as the great nectar.
bSvō ōm ba bā de na ra sa ya na g.yu 'brang bdud rtsi brtan du trun trun!

Thus are in the South [the deities] requested to settle.

Then, taking the iron ladles, [utter] these words:

In the *maṇḍala* arisen from all the four directions,
The medicine completing the root of the eight [classes of] consciousness,
The nectar of the eight drops realising self-purification,³⁴⁸
Drips [to] the desirable objects of the Goddess of the eight objects [of the eight classes of consciousness].

The cause arose from the five elements,
The arising is arisen from the Queen of spring,
The increasing is increased from the Queen of summer,
The ripening is ripen from the Queen of autumn,

³⁴⁸ The term *rang dag* can be also redered as “natural purity” (*rang bzhin gyi dag pa*).

The collection is collected from the Queen of winter,
The emanation is emanated from the wisdom and method,
The accomplishment is accomplished like an inexhaustible treasure.

In the palace of the [four] directions of the *maṇḍala*,
Offerings of the deities and gods are offered.
Enter to the enemies and obstructing demons,
Settle in the nectar of the Bon and the *shen*,
Settle [there] to completely heal the sentient beings,
[As] the nectar medicine purifying the consciousnesses,
I request [you] to settle as the great nectar.

bSvō ōm ba bā de na ra sa ya na g.yu 'brang bdud rtsi brtan du trun trun!

Thus is the nectar settled in the four directions.
[By this] the settling of the nectar in the palace is explained.

Upon the establishment of the *maṇḍala*, other ritual paraphernalia are arranged (*yo byed bshams*, pp. 100-102). Then, the Main Mendrup Practitioners' meditation and visualisation continue:

Ah ōm hūm!

Thus [uttering], think of [the five lights emanating from the master's heart place] striking onto the nectars, [and] of hither assembling [them] into the medicine of the Centre. Then, say these words of the ritual activities.

E ma ho!

The nectar medicine healing (*gso*) all the phenomenal existence,
The light of the five wisdoms respective to [the five nectars],
The various distinct [and] spreading nectars,
Collect as the nectar into the great wisdom,
Blended blissfully as the equalised non-duality.
Also the nectar medicines of the celestial mountains and earthly rocks,

Blended without substance as the spontaneous sky.
The nectar medicine of the three realms of the living sentient beings,
Blended blissfully as the Mind itself without birth.
The nectars appearing with Bon characteristics,
Blended as the great bliss of the Bon itself.
The medicine of the respective nectars of the roots and the branches,³⁴⁹
Blended with as the great bliss of the completely pure nectar.
Come, into the great nectar without birth and death!

Thus is the medicine of the Centre blended.

Then, offer the various *tšen* (*tshan*) purifications.³⁵⁰

The purifying nectar medicine of the *tšen* purification of the deities and gods.
The completely purified medicine has no stain.³⁵¹
The defected unclean and stained composite phenomena,³⁵²
May they be purified by the clean *tšen* offerings!
bSvo ōm tshangs la gu dun g.yu 'brang bdud rtsi sa le ye bsvo thā!

Thus is purified.

Then, the [purification of] cleansing and taming [should] be done.
To the washing in the water left from the previous *tšen* purification,
[Having] the medicines divided into five, [utter] these words:

E ma ho!

The *sāmsāric* objects of the demons appearing as the five poisons,
In the mortar of the inexhaustible elements,
With the hammer of the wisdom and method without birth,
Beating the nectar of wisdom purifying the four demons,
Come to accomplish the Eternal Body without demons!

³⁴⁹ I.e. the root and branch ingredients (see Chapter 4).

³⁵⁰ *Tšen* refers to a kind of purification. ZZ.

³⁵¹ I.e. does not need further purification. Explanation by NW (Prague 2017).

³⁵² I.e. the medicines that are impure need purification. Explanation by NW (Prague 2017).

bSvo ōm ba bā de na ra sa ya na g.yu 'brang bdud rtsi ge ge dub dub mu ye ha ra bsvo thā!

Thus beat [the medicine in the] the radiating and assembling light.

Then, having prepared the vessels,
[Perform] the dexterity of the nectar of the precious vessels,
And in addition, the mudras of the [various] types are established.

Having made the covers in correspondence with the seasons,
The white and yellow spell cord is drawn in the East,
The white and green spell cord is drawn in the North,
The white and red spell cord is drawn in the West,
The white and blue spell cord is drawn in the South,
[And then] all are joint and drawn in the Centre.

To them in the Centre perform [according to] the method.
As for the opening of the *maṇḍala* of the nectar medicine:

At this point, the the spell cord (*byang thag*, *gzungs thag*, Chapter 2, Figure 16) threads are drawn upon the *maṇḍala* from the respective cardinal points into the Centre. Subsequently, on pp. 105-106, follows a description of the *maṇḍala*. Then the *maṇḍala* opening by the Main Mendrup Practitioners itself continues (p. 107):

bSvo ōm ba bā de na ra sa ya na g.yu 'brang bdud rtsi bsvo thā!

In the Centre of the *maṇḍala* of the extense of the sky,
Künnang Khyappa (Kun snang khyab pa), the king of the deities of the primordial existence,³⁵³
[And] the Goddess of space, the Mother without characteristics,
[To this] emanated union gone beyond the *samsāra*,
The radiating and assembling offering of the essence mantra³⁵⁴ is offered.
I request [you] to accept [them] joyfully by compassion.
By the radiating and assembling of enjoyment of the method and wisdom in union,³⁵⁵

³⁵³ Cf. ZZ.

³⁵⁴ Alternatively “heart mantra” or “seed mantra”.

[Please] bless the nectar medicine,
Take with compassion the Bon and the *shen*,
Clear the obstacles of the enemies and obstructors,
Accomplish the nectar without birth and death.

E ma ho!

I pay homage to the deities of the secret nectar!

bSvo ōm ba bā de na ra sa ya na g.yu 'brang bdud rtsi bsvo thā!

In the flaming of the Great Powerful one,³⁵⁶

The compassionate Tsochok Trogyel Khagyingkha (gTso mchog Khro rgyal mkha 'gying kha),³⁵⁷

Khala Dukmo (mKha' la gdug mo, The Fiercious one in the sky), the Mother of all space,³⁵⁸

[To this] emanated union gone beyond the *samsāra*,

The radiating and assembling offering of the essence mantra is offered.

I request [you] to accept [them] joyfully by compassion.

By the radiating and assembling of enjoyment of the method and wisdom in union,³⁵⁹

[Please] bless the nectar medicine,

Take with compassion the Bon and the *shen*,

Clear the obstacles of the enemies and obstructors,

Accomplish the nectar without birth and death.

E ma ho!

I pay homage to the deities of the secret nectar!

Thus is offered.

bSvo ōm ba bā de na ra sa ya na g.yu 'brang bdud rtsi a ōm hūm sa le lhen ne bsvo thā!

bSvo ōm ba bā de na ra sa ya na g.yu 'brang bdud rtsi sa le khri le bsvo thā!

bSvo ōm ba bā de na ra sa ya na g.yu 'brang bdud rtsi sa le lhang nge bsvo thā!

³⁵⁵ Alternatively: By the radiating and assembling of enjoyment of the Father and Mother of the method and wisdom.

³⁵⁶ I.e. Trowo Tsochok Khagying.

³⁵⁷ Trowo Tsochok Khagying.

³⁵⁸ See above: *ba ga* literally means “the expanse of the womb”. As Khenpo explains, here *ba ga* (womb) denotes “space / place of origination”. KTY (Shenten Dargye Ling).

³⁵⁹ As above, alternatively: By the radiating and assembling of enjoyment of the Father and Mother of the method and wisdom.

bSvo ōm ba bā de na ra sa ya na g.yu 'brang bdud rtsi sa le sang nge bsvo thā!
bSvo ōm ba bā de na ra sa ya na g.yu 'brang bdud rtsi sa le 'od de ya le bsvo thā!
bSvo ōm ba bā de na ra sa ya na g.yu 'brang bdud rtsi sa le ma le lham me bsvo thā!
bSvo ōm ba bā de na hūm ra sa ya na g.yu 'brang bdud rtsi bsvo thā!

Thus [is uttered], and [then]:

E ma ho!

Künnang Khyappa (Kun snang khyab pa), the deity of the Mind of the nectar,
Turn the three thousand radiatings and assemblings of the Mind into medicine,
The Goddess of space, the Mother of the realising³⁶⁰ nectar,
The deity of awareness of the nectar of the bodhisattva wisdom,
Semma Yésang (Sems ma ye sangs), the Mother of the nectar offering,
The *shen* of the accomplished nectar taming the living beings,
Accomplish the nectar medicine of the method and wisdom.
The Body of medicine of all [the aggregates of] Form,
The changeless firm Body of wisdom,
The Speech of medicine of all fame,
The Body of wisdom of unceasing realisation,
The Mind of medicine of all the mindful awareness,
The Body of wisdom of the immaterial primordial lineage,
The excellent medicine of all the good qualities,
The Body of wisdom of lifting origination,
The action of medicine of all composite phenomena,
The Body of the spontaneously all-healing wisdom.
Thus accomplish everything into medicine,
[Please] bless the nectar medicine.

E ma ho!

I pay homage to the deities of the completely pure nectar!

Thus is praised.

Again recite the previous six essence [mantras] one hundred and eight times, [and then utter] these words:

³⁶⁰ Also in the sense of “clearing nectar”.

E ma ho!

Selwa Rangjung (gSal ba rang 'byung), the deity of the Body of the nectar,
Turn the three thousand Dharmic emanations of the Body into medicine.
The Goddess of solidity and firmness, the Mother giving rise to the nectar,
The deity of awareness of the nectar of the bodhisattva wisdom,
Semma Yésang, the Mother of the nectar offering,
The *shen* of the accomplished nectar taming the living beings,
Accomplish the nectar medicine of the method and wisdom.
The Body of medicine of all [the aggregates of] Form,
The changeless firm Body of wisdom,
The Speech of medicine of all fame,
The Body of wisdom of unceasing realisation,
The Mind of medicine of all the mindful awareness,
The Body of wisdom of the immaterial primordial lineage,
The excellent medicine of all the good qualities,
The Body of wisdom of lifting origination,
The action of medicine of all composite phenomena,
The Body of the spontaneously all-healing wisdom.
Thus accomplish everything into medicine,
[Please] bless the nectar medicine.

E ma ho!

I pay homage to the deities of the changeless nectar!

Cite the [previous six] essence [mantras].

E ma ho!

Gélha Garchuk (dGe lha gar phyug), the deity of the good qualities of the nectar,
Turn the three thousand radiatings and assemblings of the good qualities into medicine.
The Goddess of the primordial rise, the Mother giving rise to the nectar,
The deity of awareness of the nectar of the bodhisattva wisdom,
Semma Yésang, the Mother of the nectar offering,
The *shen* of the accomplished nectar taming the living beings,
Accomplish the nectar medicine of the method and wisdom.

The Body of medicine of all [the aggregates of] Form,
The changeless firm Body of wisdom,
The Speech of medicine of all fame,
The Body of wisdom of unceasing realisation,
The Mind of medicine of all the mindful awareness,
The Body of wisdom of the immaterial primordial lineage,
The excellent medicine of all the good qualities,
The Body of wisdom of lifting origination,
The action of medicine of all composite phenomena,
The Body of the spontaneously all-healing wisdom.
Thus accomplish everything into medicine,
[Please] bless the nectar medicine.

E ma ho!

I pay homage to the deities of the changeless nectar!

Cite the [previous six] essence [mantras].

E ma ho!

Jédrak Ngömé (Bye brag dngos med), the deity of the Speech of the nectar,
Turn the three thousand radiatings and assemblings of fame into medicine.
The Goddess of realising flame, the Mother heating the nectar,³⁶¹
The deity of awareness of the nectar of the bodhisattva wisdom,
Semma Yésang, the Mother of the nectar offering,
The *shen* of the accomplished nectar taming the living beings,
Accomplish the nectar medicine of the method and wisdom.
The Body of medicine of all [the aggregates of] Form,
The changeless firm Body of wisdom,
The Speech of medicine of all fame,
The Body of wisdom of unceasing realisation,
The Mind of medicine of all the mindful awareness,
The Body of wisdom of the immaterial primordial lineage,
The excellent medicine of all the good qualities,
The Body of wisdom of lifting origination,

³⁶¹ Literally: “casting the heat of the nectar”.

The action of medicine of all composite phenomena,
The Body of the spontaneously all-healing wisdom.
Thus accomplish everything into medicine,
[Please] bless the nectar medicine.

E ma ho!

I pay homage to the deities of the nectar without obstructions!

Cite the [previous six] essence [mantras].

E ma ho!

Gawa Döndrup (dGa' ba don 'grub), the deity of the ritual activities of the nectar,
Turn the three thousand radiatings and assemblings of the ritual activities the medicine.
The all-healing Goddess, the Mother moisturing the nectar,³⁶²
The deity of awareness of the nectar of the bodhisattva wisdom,
Semma Yésang, the Mother of the nectar offering,
The *shen* of the accomplished nectar taming the living beings,
Accomplish the nectar medicine of the method and wisdom.
The Body of medicine of all [the aggregates of] Form,
The changeless firm Body of wisdom,
The Speech of medicine of all fame,
The Body of wisdom of unceasing realisation,
The Mind of medicine of all the mindful awareness,
The Body of wisdom of the immaterial primordial lineage,
The excellent medicine of all the good qualities,
The Body of wisdom of lifting origination,
The action of medicine of all composite phenomena,
The Body of the spontaneously all-healing wisdom.
Thus accomplish everything into medicine,
[Please] bless the nectar medicine.

E ma ho!

I pay homage to the deities [spontaneously] accomplishing the nectar!

Cite the [previous six] essence [mantras].

³⁶² Literally: “casting the moisture of the nectar”.

E ma ho!

Baram Lingzhi (Ba ram gling bzhi), the deity accomplishing the earth medicine,
The Queen of spring, the Mother giving rise to the nectar,
The deity of awareness of the nectar of the bodhisattva wisdom,
Semma Yésang, the Mother of the nectar offering,
The *shen* of the accomplished nectar taming the living beings,
Accomplish the nectar medicine of the method and wisdom.
The Body of medicine of all [the aggregates of] Form,
The changeless firm Body of wisdom,
The Speech of medicine of all fame,
The Body of wisdom of unceasing realisation,
The Mind of medicine of all the mindful awareness,
The Body of wisdom of the immaterial primordial lineage,
The excellent medicine of all the good qualities,
The Body of wisdom of lifting origination,
The action of medicine of all composite phenomena,
The Body of the spontaneously all-healing wisdom.
Thus accomplish everything into medicine,
[Please] bless the nectar medicine.

E ma ho!

I pay homage to the deities of the nectar of arising!

Cite the [previous six] essence [mantras].

E ma ho!

Baram Lingsöl (Ba ram gling rtsol), the deity accomplishing the wind medicine,
The Queen of summer, the Mother increasing the nectar,
The deity of awareness of the nectar of the bodhisattva wisdom,
Semma Yésang, the Mother of the nectar offering,
The *shen* of the accomplished nectar taming the living beings,
Accomplish the nectar medicine of the method and wisdom.
The Body of medicine of all [the aggregates of] Form,
The changeless firm Body of wisdom,

The Speech of medicine of all fame,
The Body of wisdom of unceasing realisation,
The Mind of medicine of all the mindful awareness,
The Body of wisdom of the immaterial primordial lineage,
The excellent medicine of all the good qualities,
The Body of wisdom of lifting origination,
The action of medicine of all composite phenomena,
The Body of the spontaneously all-healing wisdom.
Thus accomplish everything into medicine,
[Please] bless the nectar medicine.

E ma ho!

I pay homage to the deities of the nectar of lifting!

Cite the [previous six] essence [mantras].

E ma ho!

Trimang Shenchén (Khri mang gshen chen), the deity accomplishing the fire medicine,
The Queen of autumn, the Mother ripening the nectar,
The deity of awareness of the nectar of the bodhisattva wisdom,
Semma Yésang, the Mother of the nectar offering,
The *shen* of the accomplished nectar taming the living beings,
Accomplish the nectar medicine of the method and wisdom.
The Body of medicine of all [the aggregates of] Form,
The changeless firm Body of wisdom,
The Speech of medicine of all fame,
The Body of wisdom of unceasing realisation,
The Mind of medicine of all the mindful awareness,
The Body of wisdom of the immaterial primordial lineage,
The excellent medicine of all the good qualities,
The Body of wisdom of lifting origination,
The action of medicine of all composite phenomena,
The Body of the spontaneously all-healing wisdom.
Thus accomplish everything into medicine,
[Please] bless the nectar medicine.

E ma ho!

I pay homage to the deities of the nectar of ripening!

Cite the [previous six] essence [mantras].

E ma ho!

Débo Sungchen (lDe bo gsung chen),³⁶³ the deity accomplishing the water medicine,
The Queen of winter, the Mother collecting the power of the nectar,
The deity of awareness of the nectar of the bodhisattva wisdom,
Semma Yésang, the Mother of the nectar offering,
The *shen* of the accomplished nectar taming the living beings,
Accomplish the nectar medicine of the method and wisdom.
The Body of medicine of all [the aggregates of] Form,
The changeless firm Body of wisdom,
The Speech of medicine of all fame,
The Body of wisdom of unceasing realisation,
The Mind of medicine of all the mindful awareness,
The Body of wisdom of the immaterial primordial lineage,
The excellent medicine of all the good qualities,
The Body of wisdom of lifting origination,
The action of medicine of all composite phenomena,
The Body of the spontaneously all-healing wisdom.
Thus accomplish everything into medicine,
[Please] bless the nectar medicine.

E ma ho!

I pay homage to the deities of the nectar of collecting!

bSvo ōm ba bā de hūm! Ra sa ya na g.yu 'brang bdud rtsi sprung so ram mo bsvo thā!
bSvo ōm ba bā de na ra sa ya na g.yu 'brang bdud rtsi hūm cha la 'dar shag ye bsvo thā!
bSvo ōm ba bā de na ra sa ya na g.yu 'brang bdud rtsi hūm ha la tho ye bsvo thā!

E ma ho!

³⁶³ According to the Zhangzhung dictionary, *lde* means: 1. “conscience or mind”; 2. “the name of a Bon po clan or family”; or 3. “a place name”. ZZ.

In the flaming of the Great Powerful one,³⁶⁴
 In the emanating wrathful assembly of compassion,
 The miracle of the Body, the eternal Body of firmness and stability,
 The tone of the Speech, the flaming Supreme One of the Wrathful,
 The miracle of the Mind, the Powerful One born without death,
 Ten million³⁶⁵ of emanations, the great wisdom itself,
 The deity accomplishing the nectar by the method of compassion.
 By inciting attention through the essence [mantra],
 [Please] bless the nectar of the radiating and assembling of the Mind.
 Take with compassion the *shen* companions (*gshen grogs*) of the boundless radiating and
 assembling,
 Liberate at this place (?)³⁶⁶ by the power of magical emanation,
 Bless the nectar medicine by Mind.
E ma ho!
 I pay homage to the deities of the flaming nectar!

*bSvo ōm ba bā de na ra sa ya na rko phung ting 'byung tha tshan ha ra sad g.yu 'brang bdud
 rtsi bsvo thā!*

Having thus recited one hundred times, [utter] these words:

E ma ho!
 In the castle³⁶⁷ flaming like the fire of the eon,
 Tsochok Khagying (gTso mchog mkha' 'gying), the deity of the Mind of the nectar,
 Turn the three thousand radiatings and assemblings of the Mind into medicine.
 Dukmo Yumchen (gDug mo yum chen, The Great Mother of Poison), the protectress of the
 nectar medicine,
 Rejoices in union with the Father³⁶⁸ by the method of non-duality.
 From the radiating and assembling of the enjoyment of the method and wisdom [in union],

³⁶⁴ I.e. Trowo Tsochok Khagying. Various epithets of his follow in the next lines.

³⁶⁵ Meaning “countless”.

³⁶⁶ Unclear expression: *dgregs gnas su*.

³⁶⁷ *gSas mkhar* is a term used in Bon referring to the abode of a deity, may it be a celestial palace, castle, or a mound or shrine in the case of local deities. Cf. ZZ: “a fortress”, “a divine fortress, that is the abode of a god”.

³⁶⁸ The term *yab* in tantric texts refers to the male tantric deity (especially in *yi dam* groups), whereas *yum*, mother, to the female deity.

The deity of the Body of the nectar of all perception,³⁶⁹
 [Performs] the mudra of the nectar, *log ge log*.
 The deity of the Speech of the nectar of all fame,³⁷⁰
 [Resonates] the melody of the nectar mantra, *'u ru ru*.³⁷¹
 The deity of the Mind of the nectar of all mindful awareness,
 [Drops] the drops of the nectar, *sha ra ra*.³⁷²
 The deity of the good qualities of the nectar of all excellence,
 [Swirls] the ocean of the nectar, *kyi li li*.³⁷³
 The deity of the ritual activities of the nectar of all actions,
 [Makes] the water of the medicine flow, *zu lu lu*.³⁷⁴
 Thus accomplish everything into medicine.
 I request to receive the siddhi.³⁷⁵
E ma ho!
 I pay homage to the deities of the nectar without birth!

Like this is praised.

*bSvo ōm ba bā de na ra sa ya na rko phung ting 'byung tha tshan ha ra sad! g.Yu 'brang
 bdud rtsi bsvo thā!*

E ma ho!

In the castle of the earth of changeless firmness and stability,
 Trosé Khagyng (Khro gsas mkha' 'gying),³⁷⁶ the deity of the Body of the nectar,
 Turn the three thousand emanations of the Body into medicine.
 Nélé Saten (Ne slas sra brtan),³⁷⁷ the protecting goddess of the nectar medicine,

³⁶⁹ The term spelled *snang yor* is in ZZ explained as “*gdos bcas kyi dngos po*”, i.e. “matter, substantial matter, coarse from, all perceivable objects”.

³⁷⁰ “Fame”, *grags pa*, means also “resonation”. Both meaning invoke the spread of sound or word.

³⁷¹ The onomatopoeic evokes a continuous uninterrupted sound (NW, Prague 2017), or, alternatively, a loud or resounding sound (Zlos).

³⁷² Evokes a continuous, and regularly interrupted and ceasing sound, coming as “one after one”. NW (Prague 2017). The phrase is derived from the verb *shar*, “to repeatedly come, appear”. NW (Prague 2017). According to Zlos, the expression evokes the sound of descending rain drops or hail.

³⁷³ Evokes a circling sound, also overflowing (NW, Prague 2017), or something so overwhelming in strength and quantity to be imperceivable by sight (Zlos).

³⁷⁴ Evokes a sound of overflowing. NW (Prague 2017).

³⁷⁵ Literally: “become united with the siddhi”.

³⁷⁶ In this passage different aspects of Trowo Tsochok Khagyng appear in the respective places of the *maṇḍala*. The names of the deities often evoke their characters. According to ZZ, *khro gsas* is synonymous to *khro bo'i lha*, “a fierce, wrathful, awesome, ferocious, terrible, or angry deity”.

Rejoices in union with the Father by the method of non-duality.
 From the radiating and assembling of the enjoyment of the method and wisdom [in union],
 The deity of the Body of the nectar of all perception,
 [Performs] the mudra of the nectar, *log ge log*.
 The deity of the Speech of the nectar of all fame,
 [Resonates] the melody of the nectar mantra, *'u ru ru*.
 The deity of the Mind of the nectar of all mindful awareness,
 [Drops] the drops of the nectar, *sha ra ra*.
 The deity of the good qualities of the nectar of all excellence,
 [Swirls] the ocean of the nectar, *kyi li li*.
 The deity of the ritual activities of the nectar of all actions,
 [Makes] the water of the medicine flow, *zu lu lu*.
 Thus accomplish everything into medicine.
 I request to receive the siddhi.
E ma ho!
 I pay homage to the deities of the changeless nectar!

Thus is praised.

*bSvo ōm ba bā de na ra sa ya na rko phung ting 'byung tha tshan ha ra sad! g.Yu 'brang
 bdud rtsi bsvo thā!*

E ma ho!

In the castle of the light and moving wind,
 Ngamsé Khagying (rNgam gsas mkha' 'gying),³⁷⁸ the deity of the good qualities of the nectar,
 Turn the three thousand excellent good qualities into medicine.
 Ngammo Yumchen (rNgam mo yum chen),³⁷⁹ the protectress of the nectar medicine,
 Rejoices in union with the Father by the method of non-duality.
 From the radiating and assembling of the enjoyment of the method and wisdom [in union],
 The deity of the Body of the nectar of all perception,

³⁷⁷ *Ne slas* means “earth”, whereas *na* is a common first syllable in deities’ and proper names, in the anticipated Zhangzhung language. ZZ.

³⁷⁸ *rNgam gsas* denotes “a deity with a ferocious or angry or wrathful aspect”. ZZ.

³⁷⁹ Literally: “the Great mother rNgams mo”. *rNgam* means “ferocious, angry, wrathful”, *rngam mo* represents the word’s female form. ZZ.

[Performs] the mudra of the nectar, *log ge log*.
 The deity of the Speech of the nectar of all fame,
 [Resonates] the melody of the nectar mantra, *'u ru ru*.
 The deity of the Mind of the nectar of all mindful awareness,
 [Drops] the drops of the nectar, *sha ra ra*.
 The deity of the good qualities of the nectar of all excellence,
 [Swirls] the ocean of the nectar, *kyi li li*.
 The deity of the ritual activities of the nectar of all actions,
 [Makes] the water of the medicine flow, *zu lu lu*.
 Thus accomplish everything into medicine.
 I request to receive the siddhi.
E ma ho!
 I pay homage to the deities of the nectar of origination!

Thus is praised.

*bSvo ōm ba bā de na ra sa ya na rko phung ting 'byung tha tshan ha ra sad! g.Yu 'brang
 bdud rtsi bsvo thā!*

E ma ho!
 In the castle of the flaming fire of realisation,
 Welsé Khagying (dBal gsas mkha' 'gying),³⁸⁰ the deity of the Speech of the nectar,
 Turn the three thousand renown *samsāras* into medicine.
 Tsangtang Welmo (Tshangs tang dbal mo),³⁸¹ the protectress of the nectar medicine,
 Rejoices in union with the Father by the method of non-duality.
 From the radiating and assembling of the enjoyment of the method and wisdom [in union],
 The deity of the Body of the nectar of all perception,
 [Performs] the mudra of the nectar, *log ge log*.
 The deity of the Speech of the nectar of all fame,
 [Resonates] the melody of the nectar mantra, *'u ru ru*.
 The deity of the Mind of the nectar of all mindful awareness,

³⁸⁰ *dBal gsas* denotes a “a fierce deity” and also “one of the five excellent gSas fortresses”. ZZ.

³⁸¹ The expression, also spelled as *tshang stang* (as in MsC), denotes “fire”. NW (Prague 2017), ZZ. The name of the deity can thus mean “the Powerful one of Fire”.

[Drops] the drops of the nectar, *sha ra ra*.

The deity of the good qualities of the nectar of all excellence,

[Swirls] the ocean of the nectar, *kyi li li*.

The deity of the ritual activities of the nectar of all actions,

[Makes] the water of the medicine flow, *zu lu lu*.

Thus accomplish everything into medicine.

I request to receive the siddhi.

E ma ho!

I pay homage to the deities of the famous nectar!

Thus is praised.

*bSvo ōm ba bā de na ra sa ya na rko phung ting 'byung tha tshan ha ra sad! g.Yu 'brang
bdud rtsi bsvo thā!*

E ma ho!

In the castle of the all-healing and moistening water,

Tumsé Khagying (gTum gzas mkha' 'gying), the deity of the ritual activities of the nectar,

Turn three thousand emanations of the ritual activities into medicine.

Tingnam Gyelmo (Ting nam rgyal mo, The Queen of water),³⁸² the protectress of the nectar
medicine,

Rejoices in union with the Father by the method of non-duality.

From the radiating and assembling of the enjoyment of the method and wisdom [in union],

The deity of the Body of the nectar of all perception,

[Performs] the mudra of the nectar, *log ge log*.

The deity of the Speech of the nectar of all fame,

[Resonates] the melody of the nectar mantra, *'u ru ru*.

The deity of the Mind of the nectar of all mindful awareness,

[Drops] the drops of the nectar, *sha ra ra*.

The deity of the good qualities of the nectar of all excellence,

[Swirls] the ocean of the nectar, *kyi li li*.

The deity of the ritual activities of the nectar of all actions,

³⁸² *Ting nam* denotes water. TGS. *Ting nam* can be synonymous to *ting cu*, “moisture or liquid, water”. *Ting* alone denotes “water”, but also “blue” (among other meanings). ZZ.

[Makes] the water of the medicine flow, *zu lu lu*.

Thus accomplish everything into medicine.

I request to receive the siddhi.

E ma ho!

I pay homage to the deities of the spontaneous nectar!

Thus is praised.

bSvo ōm ba bā de na ra sa ya na zur nam tha tshan ha ra sad! g.Yu 'brang bdud rtsi bsvo thā!

E ma ho!

In the castle of the illuminating lamp of no darkness,³⁸³

Tongsé Drönmé (mThong gsas sgron me, The Lamp of the “Seeing *sé*”), the deity of the awareness of the nectar,

Lishak Marmo (Li shag dmar mo),³⁸⁴ the Mother enjoying the nectar, In an instant unites with the Father by the method of non-duality.

By the radiating and assembling of the secret method and wisdom [in union],

Accomplish all the objects and [their] senses into the nectar medicine. The divine Body of medicine, *ldems se ldem*,

The pleasant song of the medicine [resonates], *skyu ru ru*.

The smell of the burnt offerings of the medicine [difuses], *kyi li li*.

The delicious taste of the nectar [ripens], *khri li li*.³⁸⁵

The medicine of great power spreads, *'u ru ru*.

The pleasant voice of the Bon of medicine [resounds], *lhangs se lhang*.³⁸⁶

The light of radiating and assembling [burns], *ta la la*.³⁸⁷

The assembly of light of the drop [swirls], *kyi li li*.

Thus accomplish the nectar medicine.

I request to receive the siddhi.

³⁸³ *Sa le* means “clear, lucid, bright”, a synonym to *gsal ba*. ZZ.

³⁸⁴ *Li shag* in the supposed Zhangzhung language means “fire”, like *li mur*, *lig sha*, and *li nam*. NW (Prague 2017). It also indicates the “goddess of form” (*gzugs kyi lha mo*). The syllable *li* by itself means “wind, vital energy, breath”, as in *li mun*, “wind, vital energy”. *Shag* denotes “woman, wife”, or a clan name and a component of the names of goddesses. ZZ.

³⁸⁵ Delivers the sound of fruit or grain ripening. Zlos.

³⁸⁶ Can also mean “The pleasant voice of the medicinal priest”, which would refer to the performers of the Mendrup. The likely related figure of speech *lhang lhang* denotes a clearly resounding sound. Zlos.

³⁸⁷ Presents the sound of burning, for example of a clearly burning butter lamp. NW (Prague 2017).

E ma ho!

I pay homage to the deities of the nectar of awareness!

Thus is praised.

bSvo ōm ba bā de na ra sa ya na zur nam tha tshan ha ra sad g.yu 'brang bdud rtsi bsvo thā!

E ma ho!

In the castle of the sound of the drum³⁸⁸ and *shang* of emanation.

Nyenlha Hosang (sNyan lha ho sangs),³⁸⁹ the deity of the awareness of the nectar,
Khashak Mukmo (Kha shag smug mo, The Dark Brown Goddess of Sound),³⁹⁰ the Mother
sending the nectar medicine,

In an instant unites with the Father by the method of non-duality.

By the radiating and assembling of the secret method and wisdom [in union],

Accomplish all the objects and [their] senses into the nectar medicine. The divine Body of
medicine, *ldems se ldem*,

The pleasant song of the medicine [resonates], *skyu ru ru*.

The smell of the burnt offerings of the medicine [difuses], *kyi li li*.

The delicious taste of the nectar [ripens], *khri li li*.

The medicine of great power spreads, *'u ru ru*.

The pleasant voice of the Bon of medicine [resounds], *lhangs se lhang*.

The light of radiating and assembling [burns], *ta la la*.

The assembly of light of the drop [swirls], *kyi li li*.

Thus accomplish the nectar medicine.

I request to receive the siddhi.

E ma ho!

I pay homage to the deities of the nectar of awareness!

bSvo ōm ba bā de na ra sa ya na zur nam tha tshan ha ra sad! g.Yu 'brang bdud rtsi bsvo thā!

³⁸⁸ Throughout the ritual text, the two-sided *damaru* drum is meant by “drum”, *rnga*. KTY (Shenten Dargye Ling).

³⁸⁹ The syllable *snyan* denotes the act of hearing.

³⁹⁰ *Kha shag* denotes the “goddess of sound” (*sgra yi lha mo*). *Shag*, as shown above, is “woman, wife”, or a clan name and a component of the names of goddesses. *ZZ*. The word *smug mo* describes a dark color of a warming tone: dark red, maroon, brown, grey, purple, maroon, or reddish brown.

In the castle of the drifting wind³⁹¹ of a fragrant smell.

Shanglha Rumpo (Shang lha rum po, The Deity of the crooked nose), the deity of the awareness of the nectar,

Gyumshak Ngönpo (lGyum shag sngon po, The Blue Goddess of the nose),³⁹² the Mother ripening the nectar,

In an instant unites with the Father by the method of non-duality.

By the radiating and assembling of the secret method and wisdom [in union],

Accomplish all the objects and [their] senses into the nectar medicine. The divine Body of medicine, *ldems se ldem*,

The pleasant song of the medicine [resonates], *skyu ru ru*.

The smell of the burnt offerings of the medicine [difuses], *kyi li li*.

The delicious taste of the nectar [ripens], *khri li li*.

The medicine of great power spreads, *'u ru ru*.

The pleasant voice of the Bon of medicine [resounds], *lhangs se lhang*.

The light of radiating and assembling [burns], *ta la la*.

The assembly of light of the drop [swirls], *kyi li li*.

Thus accomplish the nectar medicine.

I request to receive the siddhi.

E ma ho!

I pay homage to the deities of the nectar of awareness!

bSvo ōm ba bā de na ra sa ya na zur nam tha tshan ha ra sad! g.Yu 'brang bdud rtsi bsvo thā!

In the liberating castle of the all-liberating nectar,

Gurlha Jangyuk (mGur lha byang yug, The *gur* Deity of eloquency),³⁹³ the deity of the awareness of the nectar,

Réshak Nakmo (Re shag nag mo, The Black Goddess of Taste),³⁹⁴ the Mother ripening the nectar,

In an instant unites with the Father by the method of non-duality.

By the radiating and assembling of the secret method and wisdom [in union],

³⁹¹ Literally: “the castle of the windy wind”, since *g.yu bun* designates “wind” as a synonym to *rlung*. ZZ. The word appears in a different (and unclear) meaning in Blondeau, 2000, p. 262.

³⁹² *lGyum* stands for “nose”, being of the same meaning as *sna*. ZZ. For the meaning of *shag* see above.

³⁹³ *Byang yug* denotes “eloquent, fluent, oratorical, rapid in speech” in the assumed Zhangzhung language. ZZ.

³⁹⁴ *Re* is “taste”, as *ro*, in the assumed Zhangzhung language. ZZ.

Accomplish all the objects and [their] senses into the nectar medicine. The divine Body of medicine, *ldems se ldem*,

The pleasant song of the medicine [resonates], *skyu ru ru*.

The smell of the burnt offerings of the medicine [difuses], *kyi li li*.

The delicious taste of the nectar [ripens], *khri li li*.

The medicine of great power spreads, *'u ru ru*.

The pleasant voice of the Bon of medicine [resounds], *lhangs se lhang*.

The light of radiating and assembling [burns], *ta la la*.

The assembly of light of the drop [swirls], *kyi li li*.

Thus accomplish the nectar medicine.

I request to receive the siddhi.

E ma ho!

I pay homage to the deities of the nectar of awareness!

bSvo ōm ba bā de na ra sa ya na zur nam tha tshan ha ra sad! g.Yu 'brang bdud rtsi bsvo thā!

In the castle of the blessed³⁹⁵ Mt Tise,

Tsiklha Gyurbu (Tshigs lha gyur bu),³⁹⁶ the deity of the awareness of the nectar,

Tsülshak Karmo (Tshul shag dkar mo, The White Goddess of Touch),³⁹⁷ the Mother ripening the nectar,

In an instant unites with the Father by the method of non-duality.

By the radiating and assembling of the secret method and wisdom [in union],

Accomplish all the objects and [their] senses into the nectar medicine. The divine Body of medicine, *ldems se ldem*,

The pleasant song of the medicine [resonates], *skyu ru ru*.

The smell of the burnt offerings of the medicine [difuses], *kyi li li*.

The delicious taste of the nectar [ripens], *khri li li*.

The medicine of great power spreads, *'u ru ru*.

The pleasant voice of the Bon of medicine [resounds], *lhangs se lhang*.

The light of radiating and assembling [burns], *ta la la*.

The assembly of light of the drop [swirls], *kyi li li*.

³⁹⁵ Alternatively, *byin po che ba* can mean "important" (synonymous to *gal che ba*). ZZ.

³⁹⁶ According to Dan Martin, *gyur bu* is a synonym to *btsan lha* denoting a strong and ferocious deity. (Dan Martin's dictionary accessible via <http://www.thlib.org/reference/dictionaries/tibetan-dictionary/translate.php>)

³⁹⁷ The term *tshul shag* signifies the "goddess of touch, sensation" (*reg bya 'i lha mo*). ZZ.

Thus accomplish the nectar medicine.

I request to receive the siddhi.

E ma ho!

I pay homage to the deities of the nectar of awareness!

bSvo ōm ba bā de na ra sa ya na zur nam tha tshan ha ra sad! g.Yu 'brang bdud rtsi bsvo thā!

In the castle of the strong god of pure speech in the sky,³⁹⁸

Namdrak Ngarché (gNam grags ngar chen, The Strong and famous one of the sky), the deity of the awareness of the nectar,

Gyashak Sermo (rGya shag ser mo, The Yellow Goddess of Names),³⁹⁹ the Mother ripening the nectar,

In an instant unites with the Father by the method of non-duality.

By the radiating and assembling of the secret method and wisdom [in union],

Accomplish all the objects and [their] senses into the nectar medicine. The divine Body of medicine, *ldems se ldem*,

The pleasant song of the medicine [resonates], *skyu ru ru*.

The smell of the burnt offerings of the medicine [difuses], *kyi li li*.

The delicious taste of the nectar [ripens], *khri li li*.

The medicine of great power spreads, *'u ru ru*.

The pleasant voice of the Bon of medicine [resounds], *lhangs se lhang*.

The light of radiating and assembling [burns], *ta la la*.

The assembly of light of the drop [swirls], *kyi li li*.

Thus accomplish the nectar medicine.

I request to receive the siddhi.

E ma ho!

I pay homage to the deities of the nectar of awareness!

bSvo ōm ba bā de na ra sa ya na zur nam tha tshan ha ra sad! g.Yu 'brang bdud rtsi bsvo thā!

In the castle of the activities of the unhindered emanations,

³⁹⁸ According to the Zhangzhung dictionary, *kha sgrom* means “perfectly pure speech, the god of pure speech” (*dag pa gsung gi lha*) ZZ.

³⁹⁹ *rGya shag* is the “goddesses of names and designations”. ZZ.

Mapang Lhachen (Ma pang lha chen, The Great god Ma pang),⁴⁰⁰ the deity of the awareness of the nectar,

Kyelshak Jangnak (sKyel shag ljang nag, The Dark Green Goddess of Essence),⁴⁰¹ the Mother of the awareness of the nectar,

In an instant unites with the Father by the method of non-duality.

By the radiating and assembling of the secret method and wisdom [in union],

Accomplish all the objects and [their] senses into the nectar medicine. The divine Body of medicine, *ldems se ldem*,

The pleasant song of the medicine [resonates], *skyu ru ru*.

The smell of the burnt offerings of the medicine [difuses], *kyi li li*.

The delicious taste of the nectar [ripens], *khri li li*.

The medicine of great power spreads, *'u ru ru*.

The pleasant voice of the Bon of medicine [resounds], *lhangs se lhang*.

The light of radiating and assembling [burns], *ta la la*.

The assembly of light of the drop [swirls], *kyi li li*.

Thus accomplish the nectar medicine.

I request to receive the siddhi.

E ma ho!

I pay homage to the deities of the nectar of awareness!

bSvo ōm ba bā de na ra sa ya na zur nam tha tshan ha ra sad! g.Yu 'brang bdud rtsi bsvo thā!

In the castle of the eternal essence of the light,

Karpo Nédzin (dKar po gnas 'dzin, The White holder of the place), the deity of the awareness of the nectar,

Shéshak Karjang (She shag dkar ljang, The Light Green Goddess of the Mind),⁴⁰² the deity of the awareness of the nectar,

In an instant unites with the Father by the method of non-duality.

By the radiating and assembling of the secret method and wisdom [in union],

⁴⁰⁰ Haarh notes *ma pang* as “something offered in funerary rite”. Haarh, 1969, p. 369. The peaceful deity called Zhilha Mapangying (Zhi lha Ma pangs dbyings, Mapang Great Primordial Space) is mentioned in ZZ.

⁴⁰¹ The first syllable *skyel* appears in names of the *phywa* non-human spirits. *sKyel sad* is synonymous to *bcud* denoting “essence, juice”. ZZ.

⁴⁰² *Sheg shag* denotes “a goddess of the mind” (*vid kyi lha mo*). ZZ.

Accomplish all the objects and [their] senses into the nectar medicine. The divine Body of medicine, *ldems se ldem*,

The pleasant song of the medicine [resonates], *skyu ru ru*.

The smell of the burnt offerings of the medicine [difuses], *kyi li li*.

The delicious taste of the nectar [ripens], *khri li li*.

The medicine of great power spreads, *'u ru ru*.

The pleasant voice of the Bon of medicine [resounds], *lhangs se lhang*.

The light of radiating and assembling [burns], *ta la la*.

The assembly of light of the drop [swirls], *kyi li li*.

Thus accomplish the nectar medicine.

I request to receive the siddhi.

E ma ho!

I pay homage to the deities of the nectar of awareness!

bSvo ōm ba bā de na ra sa ya na drung mu sangs te e ma ho! g.Yu 'brang bdud rtsi bsvo thā!

E ma ho!

In the castle conquering the three realms,

Welgyi Gyelpo (dBal gyi rgyal po, The King of the dBal),⁴⁰³ the deity of the method of the nectar,

Trotum Nakmo (Khro gtum nag mo, The Black Wrathful One), the Mother giving rise to the nectar,

Settle in the union by the method of non-duality.

By the radiating and assembling of the secret method and wisdom [in union],

Accomplish the nectar medicine of the four seasons (i.e. all times) and the four places (i.e. all places).

The steam of the medicine [dispers], *phu ru ru*,⁴⁰⁴

The rain of the medicine [descends], *sha ra ra*,⁴⁰⁵

The fruit of the medicine [ripens], *si li li*,⁴⁰⁶

The smell of the nectar medicine, *ngad de ngad*.

⁴⁰³ The *dbal* are “a class of non-human being, or spirit”, *dbal mo* being their female companions, ZZ. The word itself means “sharp, coarse, rough, strong, awesome, terrible, wrathful, heat”.

⁴⁰⁴ Invokes the sound and activity of flight, movement in the air (*'phur*). Zlos.

⁴⁰⁵ Denotes a regularly interrupted continuity. See above.

⁴⁰⁶ Denotes multiple tiny pieces appearing, cf. the word *sil ma* (meaning “small, minute, money change”, etc.). NW (Prague 2017).

I request to receive the siddhi.

E ma ho!

I pay homage to the deities of the powerful nectar!

bSvo ōm ba bā de na ra sa ya na drung mu sangs te e ma ho! g.Yu 'brang bdud rtsi bsvo thā!

In the castle surpassing the ten stages (Skt. *bhūmi*),

Takdrö Gyelpo (rTag 'gros rgyal po, The King of the *takdrö* auspicious star constellation),⁴⁰⁷
the deity of the method of the nectar,

Langra Ngönmo (Glang ra sngon mo, The Blue Goddess of the *shang*),⁴⁰⁸ the Mother ripening
the nectar,

Settle in the union by the method of non-duality.

By the radiating and assembling of the secret method and wisdom [in union],

Accomplish the nectar medicine of the four seasons (i.e. all times) and the four places (i.e. all
places).

The steam of the medicine [dispers], *phu ru ru*,

The rain of the medicine [descends], *sha ra ra*,

The fruit of the medicine [ripens], *si li li*,

The smell of the nectar medicine, *ngad de ngad*.

I request to receive the siddhi.

E ma ho!

I pay homage to the deities of the powerful nectar!

bSvo ōm ba bā de na ra sa ya na drung mu sangs te e ma ho! g.Yu 'brang bdud rtsi bsvo thā!

In the castle of purified meteoric iron of the ocular channel,

Kyindang Mipü (sKyin 'dang mi phud),⁴⁰⁹ the deity of the method of the nectar,

Libar Marmo (Li bar dmar mo),⁴¹⁰ the Mother ripening the nectar,

Settle in the union by the method of non-duality.

By the radiating and assembling of the secret method and wisdom [in union],

⁴⁰⁷ *rTag 'gros* is a certain star constellation in the West. BGTC.

⁴⁰⁸ *gLang ra* or *glang re* are other names of the Bonpo flat bell musical instrument usually called *gshang*. ZZ. Alternatively, the word *glang ra* can serve as a synonym of *ko ra* denoting takin (*Budorcas taxicolor*), the big ungulate mammal of the Himalayas. NW (Prague 2017).

⁴⁰⁹ *sKyin 'dang* denotes “water, hail”. ZZ.

⁴¹⁰ The syllable *li* is supposed to mean “wind, vital energy, breath”. ZZ.

Accomplish the nectar medicine of the four seasons (i.e. all times) and the four places (i.e. all places).

The steam of the medicine [dispers], *phu ru ru*,

The rain of the medicine [descends], *sha ra ra*,

The fruit of the medicine [ripens], *si li li*,

The smell of the nectar medicine, *ngad de ngad*.

I request to receive the siddhi.

E ma ho!

I pay homage to the deities of the powerful nectar!

bSvo ōm ba bā de na ra sa ya na drung mu sangs te e ma ho! g.Yu 'brang bdud rtsi bsvo thā!

In the castle giving rise to the *samsāric* existence,

Ngampa Topchen (rNgam pa stobs chen, The Fearful powerful one), the deity of the method of the nectar,

Khala Khyakdor (mKha' la 'khyag 'dor, The One scattering ice in the sky), the Mother ripening the nectar,

Settle in the union by the method of non-duality.

By the radiating and assembling of the secret method and wisdom [in union],

Accomplish the nectar medicine of the four seasons (i.e. all times) and the four places (i.e. all places).

The steam of the medicine [dispers], *phu ru ru*,

The rain of the medicine [descends], *sha ra ra*,

The fruit of the medicine [ripens], *si li li*,

The smell of the nectar medicine, *ngad de ngad*.

I request to receive the siddhi.

E ma ho!

I pay homage to the deities of the powerful nectar!

bSvo ōm ba bā de na ra sa ya na ba ma dza bhyo ha ram wer sad g.yu 'brang bdud rtsi bsvo thā!

Recite strongly twenty eight times.

E ma ho!

In the castle of the Fire mountain⁴¹¹ of the method and wisdom,
The splendorous *zégyé* (*gze gyad*), the generals,⁴¹² the great kings, and others,
By the radiating and assembling of the method and wisdom of magical emanation [in union],
Accomplish the medicine subduing ignorance and misconception.
The assembly of light of the nectar [shimmers], *thibs se thib*.⁴¹³
The light of the medicine [burns], *ta la la*.
The assembly of light of the drop, *kyi li li*.
Thus accomplish the nectar into medicine.
I request to receive the *siddhi*.

E ma ho!

I pay homage to the deities of the powerful nectar!

Thus is praised.

Then, as for the accomplishment of the *siddhi*,
Recite during the day one thousand and eight times:

*bSvo ōm ba bā de na ra sa ya na a ōm hūm ram ja g.yu 'brang bdud rtsi sa le sang nge bsvo
thā!*

E ma ho!

Then, the accomplishment of the *siddhi* follows.

4. Inviting Medicine (sMan spyen drangs)

The invocation *Inviting Medicine* of the Mendrup represents the initiating peak of the practice. The recitation is sung after the establishment of the *maṇḍala*, and commences the lengthy and repetitive passages to come, which are dedicated respectively to the peaceful and wrathful deities invoked to bless and generate the unground and then the ground medicine. These

⁴¹¹ Unclear expression *me ri phur 'debs gsas mkhar*.

⁴¹² The word *gze ma* denotes “a class of female protector deities“, “sharp”, or “attribute of a deity hold in hand”, among other meanings. *Gyad* stands for “powerful, strong, army general”, and the female form *gyad mo* for “a type of female religious protector”. ZZ.

⁴¹³ Likely related to *thib thib* invoking shimmering and flashing. Zlos.

subsequent passage resemble those translated above and the visualisations of the *Inviting Medicine* text just below. The passage of *Inviting Medicine* forms the major part of the *Menzhung*, and explicitly expresses the Mendrup ritual itself. Its performance brings the Eight Goddesses (Lha mo brgyad, mChod bu lha mo brgyad) to circumambulate the *maṇḍala* and ceremoniously place the medicinal vessels on its top. The goddesses are impersonated by eight young monks, by the text prescribed as “clean boys and girls” (*khye’u dang bu mo gtsang ma*). For a description of the rite see Chapter 2.

(*mantra*)⁴¹⁴

Then, [as for] inviting the nectar,
Let the clean boys and girls take the nectar cups,
The medicinal *shen* (*gshen*)⁴¹⁵ [take] the ritual arrow,⁴¹⁶
[And] resonating the drum and the *shang*, [they utter] these words:

Kye! In the naturally and perfectly pure divine castle,
Having developed the expanse of medicine of generosity and non-attachment,
I invite the nectar that liberates by yogic powers to tame the demons of afflictions of the *samsāra* of attachment.

In the perfectly pure divine castle of primordial awareness,
Having developed the expanse of medicine of flawless awareness,
I invite the nectar medicine of discernment to tame the demons mistaken by ignorance.

In the completely pure unborn divine castle,
Having moved beyond [joining and parting] as the nectar without joining and parting,
I invite [you] as the medicine without birth and death to tame the forceful demons of the Lord of Death.

In the divine castle of flawless wisdom,

⁴¹⁴ In an intelligible script, said to be of Zhangzhung origin. NW (Prague 2013).

⁴¹⁵ *Shen* (*gshen*) can mean a “protector and guardian” deity, and also a ritualist or priest, as is the case here according to the Khenpo. In the mendrup, the Main Mendrup Practitioners are counted as the *shen*.

⁴¹⁶ A specially arranged arrow adorned with ribbons of the five colours of the elements and cardinal points. For its usage in the ritual see Chapter 2.

Having moved beyond [acceptance and rejection] as the medicine without acceptance and rejection,

I invite the eternal unchanging nectar to conquer the demons of the body aggregates.

Also, in the expanse of the mother of the three realms,

Having moved beyond the Goddesses of the four seasons,

I invite the Goddess of the nectar of essence, who develops, ripens, increases and seals, to tame the demons of the illusory body.

Thus is [the medicine] invited.

Then, [the medicine is to be] offered in all the directions.

Then, having purified the respective gates of the unground medicine, [utter] these words:

Ōṃ a hum, from the medicinal heart place of the *shen* divine [priest],

Shines the letter A without birth (i.e. unoriginated),

[And] into the Central cup of the nectar medicine,

Descends like a great bright star.

[In] the centre of three thousand essences of realisation,

Everything turns into nectar medicine.

Collecting the essence [of the medicine] collected in the Centre,

[It] melts into a glittering white light,

[And] swirls into the ocean of the nectar medicine,

Clarifying the light-swirled medicine.

bSvo ōm ba bā de na ra sa ya na g.yu 'brang bdud rtsi aḥ ōm hūm bsvo thā!

Thus thinking, also perform the following:

From the medicinal heart place of the Lord of the *sé* (gSas rje),⁴¹⁷

Shines the unchangeable letter A,

[And] into the Eastern cup of the nectar medicine,

Descends like a great bright star.

[In] the centre of three thousand essences of realisation,

⁴¹⁷ The *sé* (*gsas*) represent “a class of gods”, a synonym to *lha*. ZZ.

Everything turns into nectar medicine.
Collecting the essence [of the medicine] collected in the East,
[It] melts into a glittering white light,
[And] swirls into the ocean of the nectar medicine,
Clarifying the light-swirled medicine.

bSvo ōm ba bā de na hūm ra sa ya na g.yu 'brang bdud rtsi aḥ ōm hūm bsvo thā!

From the medicinal heart place of the *garsé* (*gar gsas*),⁴¹⁸
Shines the letter A without birth,
[And] into the Northern cup of the nectar medicine,
Descends like a great bright star.
[In] the centre of three thousand essences of realisation,
Everything turns into nectar medicine.
Collecting the essence [of the medicine] collected in the North,
[It] melts into a glittering white light,
[And] swirls into the ocean of the nectar medicine,
Clarifying the light-swirled medicine.

bSvo ōm ba bā de na hūm ra sa ya na g.yu 'brang bdud rtsi aḥ ōm hūm bsvo thā!

From the medicinal heart place of the Heavenly *sé* (*gnam gsas*),⁴¹⁹
Shines the letter A without birth,
[And] into the Western cup of the nectar medicine,
Descends like a great bright star.
[In] the centre of three thousand essences of realisation,
Everything turns into nectar medicine.
Collecting the essence [of the medicine] collected in the West,
[It] melts into a glittering white light,
[And] swirls into the ocean of the nectar medicine,
Clarifying the light-swirled medicine.

⁴¹⁸ The *gar* are “a class of non-human spirits” (*mi ma yin gyi rigs shig*). Similarly, the *garsé* are described as “a type of deity or non-human spirit” (*lha dang mi ma yin gyi rigs shig*). ZZ.

⁴¹⁹ Presumably a heavenly class of the *gsas* (see above).

bSvo ōm ba bā de na hūm ra sa ya na g.yu 'brang bdud rtsi aḥ ōm hūm bsvo thā!

From the medicinal heart place of the Wild *sé* (*rgod gsas*),⁴²⁰

Shines the letter A without birth,

[And] into the Southern cup of the nectar medicine,

Descends like a great bright star.

[In] the centre of three thousand essences of realisation,

Everything turns into nectar medicine.

Collecting the essence [of the medicine] collected in the South,

[It] melts into a glittering white light,

[And] swirls into the ocean of the nectar medicine,

Clarifying the light-swirled medicine.

bSvo ōm ba bā de na hūm ra sa ya na g.yu 'brang bdud rtsi aḥ ōm hūm bsvo thā!

Perform like this.

Mantras of the Mendrup Ritual

As is clear from the texts just translated and the description of the ritual in Chapter 2, the Mendrup rite incorporates some very specific mantras, and within them special sounds and notations not found elsewhere in at least the Bonpo repertoire of ritual music. The intonation of the mantras (*'don pa'i skad kyi dbyangs*, also called musical notation, *gdangs yig*) is typical of the Bru lineage, and is believed to go back to Nyammé Shérap Gyeltsen and his times at the Menri monastery in Tibet.⁴²¹ The main mantras of the ritual are perceived to be the following three:⁴²²

The root mantra of the peaceful deities (*zhi ba'i spyi 'dzab*):

⁴²⁰ Another class of the *sé* (*gsas*, see above).

⁴²¹ KTY (Triten Norbutse), YR (Triten Norbutse), DTOZ, p. 8. On regional variations of mantras' melodies, and especially of the one discussed below, see Kind, 2002, pp. 55, 80. Kind noted that each village of Dolpo chanted the same medicinal mantra with a different melody (*yul glu*).

⁴²² KTY (Triten Norbutse), YR (Triten Norbutse). The mantras are spelled according to the *zinri* texts leaflets distributed and signs posted by the Triten Norbutse monastery.

A ṁm hūm pus pa li dha dha ye swa hā/

The root mantra of wrathful deities (*khro bo 'i rtsa bsnyen*):

bSvo thun nye lo yo thun spungs so thad do thun/ A ma ma ha ram dza thun byo thun byo/

The mantra of blessing the Mendrup medicine *mendzap* (*sman 'dzab*, literally “the medicine mantra”, “medicinal mantra”, or “the medicine melody”, “medicinal melody”):

bSvo ṁm ba bā de na ra sa ya na g.yu 'brang bdud rtsi bsvo thā/

Of particular attention and importance is the last one, repeated countless times over the whole duration of the ritual by the Main Mendrup Practitioners, other monks, as well as lay people. It is also the one prominently present, in many variations, in the translated excerpts. The entire space of the monastery resonated with the mantra for the fifteen days of the duration of the ritual, and virtually everyone got to know it by heart. The mantra can be also shortened to *bSvo ṁm*, especially when it has to be chanted one or several thousands of times.⁴²³ The Triten Norbutse’s publication on Mendrup, *The Practice of the Light-Swirled Nectar*, adds that the medicinal mantra is invoked to generate blessings by the *yidam* invoked, hence for the Light-Swirled Mendrup by the *yidam* Trowo Tsochok Khagying, as well as the special essence (*chü, bcud*),⁴²⁴ and medicinal properties and therapeutic effects (*nüpa, nus pa*)⁴²⁵ of the Mendrup medicine. These two latter should come from all the five elements (*'byung ba lnga yi bcud dam nus pa*).⁴²⁶ Interestingly, precisely the same mantra features in the repertoire of mantras recited during rituals to the Medicine Buddha (sMen lha, sMen lha sang rgyas, Skt. Bhaiṣajyaguru) in the Bon tradition. As in the *Menzhung* presented here, the mantra can function in variations in which additional syllables are inserted before the concluding *bsvo thā*.⁴²⁷

In the Bonpo tradition, every *yidam* deity is said to have own *mendzap*, own medicinal mantra, listed in the deity’s *zhung* text, as each *yidam* has own mendrup ritual. The medicinal mantra can be used only for the particular ritual and no other occasions. Moreover, in each

⁴²³ DTOZ, p. 75.

⁴²⁴ Also “nourishment”. On the complex term *chü (bcud)* in alchemical and ritual context see Cantwell, 2017, Garrett, 2009, Gerke, 2012, 2013, Oliphant, 2015, 2016.

⁴²⁵ See the definition of *nüpa* in Chapter 4.

⁴²⁶ DTOZ, p. 75. A similar importance ascribed to mantra recitation during a healing process is in the context of a Buddhist White Tāra long life practice was described by Samuel, 2001, p. 78. Similarly in Cantwell, 2015, Garrett, 2009, Kind, 2002, in relation to mendrup, and in Gerke, 2017, and Czaja, 2015, in relation to precious pills.

⁴²⁷ *sMan lha bsgrub pa 'i 'phrin las nyung bsdus bzhugs so*, 2007, pp. 102, 104.

case of a *yidam* and his mendrup, we in fact deal with several medicinal mantras in the *yidam*'s *Menzhung*. As for the Light-Swirled Mendrup discussed here, it includes many short and long medicinal mantras, however, the essential and absolutely predominant is this one.⁴²⁸

Apart from the most common and both textual and colloquial expression *mendzap* (*sman 'dzab*), the mantra has other appellations as well: *dütsi men gyi dzap*, “the nectar medicine *dzap*” (*bdud rtsi sman gyi 'dzab*);⁴²⁹ *dütsi men gyi nyingpo*, “the nectar medicine essence” (*bdud rtsi sman gyi snying po*);⁴³⁰ *nyingpo*, “the essence [mantra]” (*snying po*);⁴³¹ *dütsi rinchen gyi nyingpo*, “the precious nectar essence” (*bdud rtsi rin chen gyi snying po*);⁴³² *zhimen gyi chidzap*, “the universal *dzap* of the pacifying medicine” (*zhi sman gyi spyi 'dzab*);⁴³³ *dütsi küngyen gyi nyingpo*, “the essence of the nectar of all ornaments” (*bdud rtsi kun rgyan gyi snying po*).⁴³⁴ The verb “to chant [the medicinal mantra]” is simply *dzap* (*'dzab*),⁴³⁵ with the object for instance *nyingpo dzap*, “chant the essence [mantra]” (*snying po 'dzab*).⁴³⁶ Its notation is called *mendzap yang*, “the *mendzap* melody” (*sman 'dzab dbyangs*), and also *mendzap ba bā de na yang*, “the melody of the *ba bā de na mendzap*” (*sman 'dzab ba bā de na dbyangs*). The word *dzap* itself denotes ritual chanting both as a noun and as a verb.⁴³⁷

The individual syllables of the medicinal mantra are ascribed meanings. Below, I firstly present these meanings according to dictionaries (in practice found only in one, the Zhangzhung language dictionary)⁴³⁸ and the monastery's publication *The Practice of the Light-Swirled Nectar* (section I.), secondly I provide the oral explanations by Pönlop (section II.). Both explanations offered are thus emic and come from the contemporary Bonpo exile community. The first is found in written form in current publications prepared by Bonpo scholars and in the second case Triten Norbutse monastery. The second exposition is also emic, and was conveyed orally during public teachings on the Mendrup ritual that took place at the same time as the performance in Triten Norbutse in 2012 (see Chapter 2).

⁴²⁸ DTOZ, p. 75, TY (Menri).

⁴²⁹ DTOZ, p. 75.

⁴³⁰ DTOZ, p. 75.

⁴³¹ Text number 2. (*sGrub thabs rin chen 'byung gnas las zhi khro sman gsum gyi lag khrid bdud rtsi thig pa bzhus so*), *in passim*.

⁴³² Text number 2., p. 29.

⁴³³ Text number 2., p. 29.

⁴³⁴ Text number 2., p. 30.

⁴³⁵ Text number 4. (*sMan gzhung*, aka *'Od zer 'khyil pa bdud rtsi yon tan gyi phyag bzhes gsal byed me long bzhus so*), p. 92.

⁴³⁶ Text number 4., p. 108, *in passim*.

⁴³⁷ Das.

⁴³⁸ ZZ.

I. Textual Explanation of the Medicinal Mantra

bsvo = 1. “a seed syllable or seed mantra from the texts or sources on the practice of Secret Teachings” (*gsang sngangs*); 2. “an exclamation used to invoke the gods”; 3. the first syllable of a mantra, the leading syllable”.⁴³⁹

ba ba de = “nectar”, a synonym to *bdud rtsi*.⁴⁴⁰ In this reading, the attached syllable *na* seems to have been incorporated for the sake of rhythm, forming a parallel structure to *ra sa ya na*. Another reading has also been suggested:

ba bā de na = the name of the medicine for the eight thousand *tsa* (*rtsa*) channels (*rtsa brgyad stong la sbyar ba'i sman*),⁴⁴¹ corresponding to “the eight roots of medicine” (*rtsa ba brgyad*), which is composed of eight ingredients: sandalwood (*tsan dan*), frankincense such as pine resin (*thang chu*), camphor (*ga pur*), moonseed (*sle tres*), areca nut (*pa tras, go yu*), cloves (*li shi*), saffron (*gur gum*), nutmeg (*dzā ti*),⁴⁴² and perceived as comprising the essence (*bcud*) of all trees (*'di ni shing rnams kun kyi bcud*).⁴⁴³

ra sa ya na = in the context of the Bonpo mendrup, at least in the present understanding, mercury is meant. Another explanation of the term is that it denotes “[a substance] possessing essence” (*bcud ldan*) of a “healing and a reviving potency” (*nag so shi slong go nus pa ldan pa*).⁴⁴⁴

g.yu 'brang = “nectar, ambrosia”, a synonym to *bdud rtsi*.⁴⁴⁵ It can be also taken to stand for *siddhi* accomplishments accomplished in the Crystal cave of the Blue Turquoise valley (*sngon g.yu lung shel phug tu bsgrub pa'i dngos grub*).⁴⁴⁶

⁴³⁹ ZZ.

⁴⁴⁰ ZZ.

⁴⁴¹ On the *tsa* channels see for example Samuel, 2013a, 2013b, 2014.

⁴⁴² For a more detailed determination of the substances see the translation of the recipe in Chapter 4.

⁴⁴³ DTOZ, p. 75. Discussion of “essence” (*bcud*) and its extraction from different materials in Cantwell, 2017.

⁴⁴⁴ DTOZ, p. 75. Cf. Cantwell, 2017.

⁴⁴⁵ ZZ. The word also appears in this meaning in conflated expressions such as *g.yu 'brang bdud rtsi a mrl ta* and *g.yu 'brang a mrl ta* in ritual recitations of *maṇḍala* offerings to the Medicine Buddha in Bon. For instance in *mDo dri med kun gsal nas sman lha'i dkyil 'khor cho ga bzhugs so*, 2007, p. 10; also *sMan lha'i cho ga nyung bsdus nor bu'i dpal phreng bzhugs so*, 2007, p. 105. Compound *g.yu 'brang bdud rtsi'i sman* in *sMan lha bsgrub pa'i 'phrin las nyung bsdus bzhugs so*, 2007, p. 102.

⁴⁴⁶ DTOZ, p. 75. It is not certain which accomplishments and place are meant. It is tempting to draw an allusion to the “a garden of the jewel of turquoise” where Matön Shéráp Senggé was supposed to have received the practice and accomplishment of mendrup as recorded in *rMa ston shes rab seng gi gzigs snang lags so* by Zhötön Sönam Drakpa. See Chapter 1.

bdud rtsi = “nectar, ambrosia”, which overcomes the five demons by the five wisdoms.⁴⁴⁷

bsvo thā = the offering of medicine (*sman gyi mchod pa*) melting in the place of Body, Speech, and Mind.⁴⁴⁸

II. Oral Explanation of the Medicinal Mantra by Pönlop

bsvo = the female mantra of the Mendrup’s main deity, Trowo Tsochok Khagying, which stands for wisdom and self-awareness,

ōm = the male mantra of the Mendrup’s main deity, Trowo Tsochok Khagying, which stands for method and self-arising wisdom,

ba bā de na – corresponds to “the eight roots of medicine” (*rtsa ba brgyad*), correlating to the eight consciousnesses,

ra sa ya na – perceived to be a Zhangzhung word denoting “a disease that should be cured”, the word is used to increase the practitioner’s positive mind and enhance the quality of his or her practice,

g.yu ’brang – denotes an aspect of immortality,

bdud rtsi – denotes inner demons and antidotes overcoming them,

bsvo thā = “to send away into the space all problems and suffering”.

It is clear that the exposition of the Mendrup medicinal mantra differs in present Bonpo textual and oral sources. The first, textual rendering, is rather based on other written sources and communicates the meaning of individual syllables and words as they would be understood in other contexts. In contrast, the oral interpretation presented during official teachings on the Mendrup ritual in Triten Norbutse seems to seek to distinctly locate the particular medicinal mantra into the given Mendrup ritual. It shows the syllables and words as exclusively related to the Mendrup, without trying to place them into wider semiotics of Bon ritual. The oral clarification also aims to provide a standardised doctrinal view of the monastic authorities, which undeniably links the Mendrup ritual to soteriological goals, stressing its philosophical content. This approach appears here for instance in the concept of the eight consciousnesses explaining the meaning of *ba bā de na*, opposed to the textual exposition of *ba bā de na* as “nectar” and a synonym to *dütsi* (*bdud rtsi*, which can be understood both

⁴⁴⁷ DTOZ, p. 75.

⁴⁴⁸ DTOZ, p. 75.

materially and mentally associated to spiritual goals, see below). Likewise, for example, the term *dütsi*, “nectar”, as a part of the mantra was in the oral teachings inferred as mental demons and their antidotes, whereas the textual sources allow a material apprehension of the term as a powerful physical substance.

In both the oral and written tradition, the Mendrup mantras reveal a perceived rather composite nature. Some of their parts are by the Bonpos presented to be of Zhangzhung origin and hence exclusively Bonpo,⁴⁴⁹ while other parts are exposed as denoting concepts shared with Tibetan Buddhist philosophy, such as the eight consciousnesses. From an etic perspective, certain bits can be traced to Indian and Sanskrit sources, such as the word *rasayana* (Tib. *ra sa ya na*, Skt. *rasāyana*),⁴⁵⁰ but other semantic units within the mantras speak to a Tibetan etymological origin, such as the word *dütsi* (on the term see below).

Conclusions on the Texts, Conceptualisation of the Mendrup Medicine

The translated excerpts of *The Main Text of the Light-Swirled Nectar Medicine* reveal some of the different religious and cultural components of the Mendrup ritual, as well as its main structure.

Clearly, the overall framework belongs to tantric Buddhism and is very common in Tibetan monastic ritual practice, both in the tradition of Yungdrung Bon and of all Buddhist schools. General Buddhist categories are frequently expressed by the text, such as compassion, emptiness, equalised non-duality (*gnyis med mnyam pa*), *saṃsāra* (Tib. *'khor ba*), the ten stages on the bodhisattva's path (Tib. *sa bcu*, Skt. *bhūmi*), the eight objects [of the eight classes of consciousness] (*yul brgyad*, based on the Yogācāra Buddhist philosophical school),⁴⁵¹ the Body, Speech, and Mind representing the main aspects of Buddhahood manifested in the phenomenal world,⁴⁵² etc. These appear within the tantric practice based on meditations and visualisations of the *sādhana* form and the *maṇḍala* offering. Within the tantric discourse, the main concepts of the Mendrup ritual are articulated, such as the five

⁴⁴⁹ The perceived historical kingdom of Zhangzhung is for the Bonpos taken as a point of reference of own identity, supposed ancient language and culture. The powerful Zhangzhung kingdom supposedly existed in Western Tibet and gave rise to Bon religion. Nevertheless, its historical existence as an important cultural centre has not been testified by academic research. Cf. Karmay and Watt, 2007.

⁴⁵⁰ Cf. Cantwell, 2017, Mass, 2017. Also see Mass, 2017, for the complexities of the meaning of the Sanskrit term *rasāyana*.

⁴⁵¹ Cf. Snellgrove, 2002, p. 105.

⁴⁵² Cf. Snellgrove, 2002, p. 208.

mental poisons (*dug lnga*) purified and transformed into the five wisdoms (*ye shes lnga*) by the generated spiritual accomplishments and the Mendrup medicine. These features and complete scheme are very typical and characteristic also for Buddhist mendrup rituals.⁴⁵³

On the other hand, *The Main Text of the Light-Swirled Nectar Medicine* does speak to its Bonpo religious and linguistic heritage as well. Such signs come from the monastic school of the Yungdrung Bon, or “Eternal Bon”, and at least some have likely been adopted from the assumed pre-Buddhist and pre-monastic indigenous religious traditions of Tibet. To provide a few examples, the Main Mendrup Practitioners are referred to as the “medicinal *shen*” (*sman gshen*), thus by a specific Bonpo term, *shen*, denoting a category of Bonpo deities, or priests responsible for performing rituals.⁴⁵⁴ In the *maṅḍala* offering text, the *shen* stand as the initiators and possessors of the Mendrup practice and the produced “nectar medicine”. Similarly, the various enumerated classes of the *sé* (*gsas*) divinities typify the scripture as Bonpo, and can be at least in some instances read as synonymous to *lha*, the general Tibetan and Buddhist appellation for deities.⁴⁵⁵ Likewise, the *tsen* (*tshan*) purification plays a role in the ritual, supplementing the major rites, which would, again, most probably not be the case in Buddhist practice. Also the mantras vocalised throughout the text explicitly incorporate vocabulary and concepts of Bon. The musical instruments resounded are the drum (*rnga*) and the *shang*, i.e. the Bonpo one-hand cymbal or flat bell, instead of a drum (*rnga*) and bell (*dril bu*) as it would be in a Buddhist ritual. Another apparent divergence from standard *sādhana* compositions is the employment of onomatopoeic figures of speech invoking verbal action and movement. These are common in Tibetan written and oral traditions, especially those influenced by popular language, but are not usual literary devices of tantric ritual scriptures.

Another layer within the text is represented by the Tibetan Sowa rikpa medical tradition. The five respective medicines of the ritual are differentiated by their names and properties as in the Mendrup recipe (see Chapter 4), and are based on the fundamental tenets of Sowa rikpa (Chapter 4). Common terminology of Sowa rikpa is used, for instance, to refer to the process of healing (*gso*) that the ritual and its medicine initiate. Further, more concrete examples include the mentions of medical implements used during the Mendrup practice to process the medicine, as they would be used in standard Sowa rikpa drugs’ compounding, i.e. the mortar and pestle, the latter of which is in the text called “hammer” (*thu lum*). Interestingly, these too are allegorically incorporated into the tantric practice by “beating the

⁴⁵³ Cantwell, 2015, 2017, Garrett, 2009, 2010.

⁴⁵⁴ ZZ.

⁴⁵⁵ ZZ.

nectar of wisdom purifying the four demons” (*bdud bzhi dag pa'i ye shes bdud rtsi brdung*). The “nectar” here is the Mendrup medicine, and “the four demons” stand for mental obscurities. Buddhist mendrup rituals do also draw on the Sowa rikpa, however, this link does not seem to be so strong as in the Bonpo Mendrup studied here.⁴⁵⁶

As can be seen, the principal Mendrup ritual text clearly frames the practice as a tantric *sādhana* of Tibetan Buddhism. Yet, it is interspersed with expressions and notions that can be understood as Bonpo, and also with references to the Sowa rikpa medical tradition. These are very well integrated into the *sādhana*. Both the ritual text and Mendrup mantras disclose such a conglomerate character of the Bonpo mendrup tradition. This character can be also demonstrated by analysing the apprehension and meaning of the core concept of the ritual, its medicine *men*, as it appears in the main text of the Mendrup ritual just presented. The expressions *men (sman)*, “medicine”, and *dütsi (bdud rtsi)*, “nectar”, act as synonyms throughout the composition. Their analogy is equally expressed in the current Bonpo oral tradition surrounding the Mendrup ritual.⁴⁵⁷ Moreover, both words do also function together as *dütsi men (bdud rtsi sman)*, “nectar medicine”, forming another synonym to both *men* and *dütsi*, which is by far much more frequent in written sources than in oral phrasing.

As is very clearly apparent in the excerpts presented (as well as commonly verbally explained), the notion of both *men* and *dütsi* is expressively built around several reoccurring sets of oppositions:

men (sman) X dü (bdud)

dütsi (bdud rtsi) X dü (bdud)

men (sman) X duk (dug)

In literally English translation:

medicine X demon

nectar X demon

medicine X poison

⁴⁵⁶ Only further research can uncover this. Cf. the Buddhist mendrup rites studied in Cantwell, 2015, 2017, Garrett, 2009, 2010.

⁴⁵⁷ As delivered during public teachings accompanying the ritual performance in Tritten Norbutse in 2012, as well as during several interviews. YR (Tritten Norbutse), KTY (Tritten Norbutse), Geshe Gelek (Tritten Norbutse).

Let us now try to observe the different cultural layers standing out of the Mendrup ritual's text following these oppositional couples. Generally defined, the three antagonistic pairs all represent the same synonymous relationship of opposition, the first and second members of each pair are respectively interchangeable among the individual pairs.⁴⁵⁸ The first element, *men* or *dütsi*, stands for beneficial and positive phenomena, whereas its counterpart on the second position, *dü* or *duk*, represents harmful and negative phenomena.⁴⁵⁹ Yet, in the semiotic and conceptual interplay employed by the Mendrup text, the situation is more complex, as will be shown below.

In Tibetan indigenous religious and ritual traditions, which are customarily embedded in mythological accounts of assumed autochthonous origin, both actors of the first couple, *men* and *dü*, are encountered.⁴⁶⁰ In these, the word *men* refers to a class of female deities, alternatively also called *menmo* (*sman mo*), *menma* (*sman ma*), or *mentsün* (*sman btsun*). Of these appellations, the three latter terms explicitly convey the female characteristic of the *men* beings. The *men* can either be counted into the general broad category of “deities, divinities, gods”, etc., labelled *lha* in Tibetan, or they can act as consorts to male *lha* deities.⁴⁶¹ The *men* are sometimes more specifically distinguished according to their habitats.⁴⁶² On the other hand, *dü* is a general Tibetan term denoting harmful and evil supernatural entities, which, as shown above, usually translates as “demons”. The *dü* beings, or “demons”, represent an antagonist element to divine forces and characters, and thus a negative antipole to beneficial and positive supernaturals typically referred to as *lha*, “deities” or “divinities”, or other similar groups of divine beings, such as the *men*. The *dü* are opposed to Tibetan indigenous divine actors and acts, as well as “to Buddhist practice and will do their best to block it.”⁴⁶³ Nebesky-Wojkowitz presents several of their classes, one categorised according to the elements and five cardinal points: *sadü*, “the earth *dü*” (*sa bdud*); *lungdü*, “the wind *dü*” (*rlung bdud*); *medü*, “the fire *dü*” (*me bdud*); *chudü*, “the water *dü*” (*chu bdud*); *lhadü*, “the god *dü*” (*lha bdud*).⁴⁶⁴ Even though categorisation based on the five points of the *maṇḍala* linked to the five elements is very prominent in the Mendrup text, the concept of *dü* here remains rather coherent and is not structured. An exception to this are the five capacities in the *positive* role of the *dü*, which will be elaborated upon below. For now, let us perceive the

⁴⁵⁸ Cf. NWB, p. 149; Sonam Dolma, 2013, Wayman, 1973, p. 156.

⁴⁵⁹ KTY (Triten Norbutse, Shenten Dargye Ling).

⁴⁶⁰ On the assumed autochthonous origin see Karmay, 2010.

⁴⁶¹ Nebesky-Wojkowitz, 1996, ZZ.

⁴⁶² *Nammen*, “Heavenly *men*” (*gNam sman*), *tsomen*, “Lake *men*” (*mtsho sman*), *samen*, “Earth *men*” (*sa sman*), *tsemen*, “Peak *men*” (*rtse sman*). Nebesky-Wojkowitz, 1996, pp. 198-201, ZZ.

⁴⁶³ Samuel, 1993, p. 174.

⁴⁶⁴ Nebesky-Wojkowitz, 1996, pp. 273-277.

men and *dü*, and similarly *lha* and *dü*, as functional oppositions. Typically in Tibetan religious narratives, in this relationship to overcome the negativities of the *dü* beings, they have to be subjugated or subdued (*'dul*). Only then they can turn into positive and beneficial entities, and even acquire the divine status of *lha*. Hence, we then find many deities still bearing their former main designation *dü* in their names, reminiscent of their adversary state before their subjugation.⁴⁶⁵

As the demons *dü* can thus be turned into deities in Tibetan indigenous myths and narratives,⁴⁶⁶ in the same way diseases and illnesses believed to be caused by demons can be healed. The Sowa rikpa medical tradition, as well as Tibetan popular healing, maintains the idea of spirits as causers of ill-being, when different kinds of evil spirits are responsible for different illnesses and diseases.⁴⁶⁷ As *dü*, the “demons”, epitomising such malevolent spirits, also illnesses can be subdued and exorcised.⁴⁶⁸ Similarly, suppressing demons and the ability of appropriately dealing with poison, a substance associated with demons and illness, are listed among the skills characteristic of advanced religious practitioners, by whom both abilities are employed as a means of subjugation and destruction of enemies, who typically endanger the Doctrine (*chos, bon*).⁴⁶⁹ In *The Main Text of the Light-Swirled Nectar Medicine*, the forces called *dü* appear as “the enemies and obstructing demons” to the nectar medicine. The Mendrup rite can be perceived as such a tool of transforming and subduing the *dü*, demons as negative creators of health disorders and general ill-being, within an act of healing.

A similar opposition as between *men* and *dü* emerges in the *dütsi* and *dü* antagonistic couple, the former of which is mostly rendered as “nectar” or “ambrosia”. The *dütsi* and *dü* pair is etymologically complex, as the first member encompasses the latter. As has been explained, *dü* usually denotes harmful and negative forces and translates as “demon”. The word *dütsi* literally reads as “demon juice”, “demonic juice”, “demon + juice”,⁴⁷⁰ or “juice [of the] demons”. The word *tsi* (*rtsi*) itself stands in different cultural contexts for liquid or nectarous matters, close to English “juice” or “extract”, and in the Sowa rikpa context for extremely powerful medicines⁴⁷¹ The term *dütsi* has been, based on its etymology and related

⁴⁶⁵ NW (Prague 2013), Nebesky-Wojkowitz, 1996.

⁴⁶⁶ NW (Prague 2013).

⁴⁶⁷ Meyer, 2007, pp. 75-76; Samuel, 2007, pp. 213-224.

⁴⁶⁸ Cf. NWB, p. 73.

⁴⁶⁹ TGS, pp. 47-48, 56. See also formulations as “destroyed the bodies of his antagonists with a ‘bomb of poison’; he would eat poison as food” (*dug zas ltar gsol ba dang*); “he made the *ma*, *bdud* and *bstan* to serve him”. Cf. Snellgrove, 2002, p. 163.

⁴⁷⁰ Translation suggested by Kohn, 1988, p. 159.

⁴⁷¹ Cardi, 2005-06, Das.

narratives, interpreted as a substance overcoming the *dü*.⁴⁷² Drawing on indigenous mythological accounts found in ritual manuals, Karmay explained the perceived origin of the *dütsi* substance as follows: “The term *bdud rtsi* [*dütsi*]⁴⁷³ seems to convey the notion of the poison which grew in the land of demons. As an antidote to this, the goddess produced medicinal substances, thus the demon’s crop.”⁴⁷⁴ Therefore, the term *dütsi* might be interpreted as the *tsi* of the *dü*, originating from the *dü* to defeat them. In the myth presented by Karmay, the *dütsi* appears in a striking parallel to the Mendrup ritual. In Karmay’s rendering, the concept of *dütsi* goes back to a powerful poisonous substance from the demons. This dangerous substance is overcome by a medicinal substance brought by a goddess, and hence became to be called *dütsi*, “the demon’s crop”, as an allusion to its initiators and provenance. Mendrup medicine itself is called *dütsi* and also *dütsi men*, and is believed to have the capacity to overcome demons and other negativities (see Chapter 5).

Nevertheless, in *The Main Text of the Light-Swirled Nectar Medicine*, the concept of *dütsi* seems to be more complex and far-reaching. In the Mendrup recitation just translated, both the components of the term, *dü* and *tsi*, occasionally also suggest a synonymous meaning. Right in the opening verses of the invocation of the Mendrup medicine, the *dü* forms a counterpart to the *tsi*, both comprising the resulting *dütsi*:

The demon conquering the five aggregates,
 The nectar of [the wisdom of] emptiness with complexion and perfection,
 Drips into the expanse of the Goddess of space.

The demon conquering the illusion of the aggregate of Form,
 The purifying and cooling Mirror [wisdom] like nectar,
 Drips into the expanse of the Goddess of earth.

The demon subduing by method and wisdom the aggregate of Feeling,
 The burning and flashing nectar of the Discriminating [wisdom],
 Drips into the expanse of the Goddess of fire.

The demon subduing by method the aggregate of Perception,

⁴⁷² Cf. BGTC, Garrett, 2009, pp. 209-201, Karmay, 1975, p. 145.

⁴⁷³ Bracketed insertion is mine.

⁴⁷⁴ Karmay, 1975, p. 145. Cf. the alchemic connotations: Garrett, 2009, p. 211.

The cooling and flowing nectar of the Accomplishing [wisdom],
Drips into the expanse of the Goddess of water.

The demon subduing by method the aggregate of Mental formations,
The light and stirring nectar of the Equalising [wisdom],
Drips into the expanse of the Goddess of wind.

The demon of pure method subduing the five causes,
The nectar of wisdom and method in the clear space,
Drips into the expanse of self-purification.

The initial line of each stanza refers to *dü*, “demon”, as an active destroyer of one of the aggregates (Tib. *phung po*, Skt. *skandha*). The notion of aggregates derives from Buddhist philosophy as constituents of one’s mental and physical existence, and here refers to the Buddhist soteriological dimension and efficiency assigned to the Mendrup ritual and medicine (see Chapter 5).⁴⁷⁵ The aggregates are in the verses organised in the fivefold pattern of the Mendrup text’s structure and *maṇḍala*. Thus each cardinal point is associated with a certain aggregate (Chapters 4, 5, Table 8), and hence here with a particular *dü*, “demon”, defeating it. The second lines of the stanzas bring in nectars, *tsi*, which again follow the scheme of five types of the five directions. Every nectar represents one of the five wisdoms through which realisation is achieved and which reflect the composition of the Mendrup medicine according to the cardinal points (Chapter 4). In the closing, third, lines of the stanzas, the given elements of the points are personified and depicted in the form of goddesses. Therefore, in summary, the respective demons and nectars in the first five stanzas relate to the points of the *maṇḍala*, whereas the last stanza provides a conclusion to the section.

Interestingly, both the *dü* and *tsi* exercise the same function and value here, both are powerful forces in gaining wanted results by overcoming those unwanted on the path to awakening, such as the five aggregates. The concept of *dü* is employed in a positive manner to transform sought negative states into positive ones. The rendition of the term might be more exact as a “powerful one”, or “capable one”, rather than “demon”. However, this possible ambiguity supports the extreme force attributed to the Mendrup medicine. As, according to the interpretation of Khenpo Tenpa Yungdrung, in this passage, the *dü* and *tsi* are

⁴⁷⁵ Cf. Snellgrove, 2002.

both synonymous and denote the Mendrup medicine. The medicine acquires such strength and capacity that it is likened even to the force of a demon.⁴⁷⁶ The Mendrup medicine needs such strength in order to subdue and conquer all negativities, both physical and mental, and thus be able to heal. The simile of a “demon” symbolises a great potential of destruction, which the medicine then exercises towards negative phenomena.⁴⁷⁷ The *dü* so signify a positive entity here. Moreover, the excerpt translated presents a very nice word play, in which the first lines of the stanzas are modelled around the term *dü*, the second lines around the term *tsi*, eventually in the utterance of the text producing the full form *dütsi*.

Although the just discussed notions of powerful entities of *dü* and *tsi* are likely based on Tibetan indigenous traditions, the stanzas shared contain a great deal of Indo-Tibetan material and Buddhist philosophical ideas. It is the aggregates that the Mendrup medicine is supposed to overcome, and it is the five wisdoms which are to be developed during this process to guide the adept to correct realisation and then awakening (see Chapter 5). This layer of Buddhist understanding and vocabulary is very apparent throughout the Mendrup text, and is also apparent in the handling of the term *dü*. In certain instances of the text, the word *dü* occurs in a solely negative sense alluding the Indian personage of the demon Māra, the well-known tempter and enemy of the Buddha and typifying character of negative and anti-Buddhist forces. The word *dü* was also chosen by Tibetan translators for the Sanskrit name of Māra, the Indian chief demons’ representative.⁴⁷⁸ Yet, Māra is said to have been tamed by the Buddha, upon which occasion the Buddha received the epithet, “the enemy of demons” (*bdud kyi dgra*).⁴⁷⁹ In the translated parts of *The Main Text of the Light-Swirled Nectar Medicine*, the *dü* as Māra features in the standard Indian set of four Māras:

Beating the nectar of wisdom purifying the four demons,
Come to accomplish the Eternal Body without demons!

Clearly, here the nectar, aka the Mendrup medicine, is directed towards getting rid of the *dü*, the Māras. In the Buddhist Doctrinal interpretation, the Mendrup and its medicine are perceived to have the potency to heal wrong mental perception associated with and called the five mental poisons (*dug lnga*) and demons (see Chapter 5). In general, *duk* (*dug*), “poison”, is

⁴⁷⁶ KTY (Shenten Dargye Ling).

⁴⁷⁷ KTY (Shenten Dargye Ling).

⁴⁷⁸ Māra’s Sanskrit name derives from the word root denoting “death”. Cf. *amṛta* (“nectar overcoming death”), the Sanskrit word for Tibetan *dütsi*.

⁴⁷⁹ BGTC.

taken as the direct opposite of *men*. *Duk* in a broad sense means anything harmful to sentient beings, for instance the mental poisons, but also physical poisonous substances. In Tibetan Buddhist and the Sowa rikpa reckoning, it is poison which arises from the initial ignorance (*ma rig pa*) and through which this ignorance causes the *samsāra* (*'khor ba*), as well as disease.

In conclusion, the set pairs of oppositions incorporated into the Mendrup ritual each consist of a remedy and a problem to which it is applied. The first members of the pairs, *smān* and *dütsi*, can be epitomized by *materia medica*, deities, the five wisdoms and Teachings propagated by the Buddha or the alleged founder of Bon, Tönpa Shenrap Mibo. The second members, *dü* and *duk*, can stand for example for material poisonous substances and demons, the Indian demon Māra, as well as for the five afflictions (Tib. *nyon mongs*, Skt. *kleśa*) or the five aggregates.⁴⁸⁰

The poles of the oppositional pairs are not isolated one from another. On the contrary, they transform each into the other, and represent two possible outcomes of one and the same process, as is for instance expressed by the colloquial sayings: “a goddess descends as a wrathful [demon] causing evil”, or “medicine turns into poison” (both are possible translations of *smān dug la 'babs*),⁴⁸¹ or further, “will not come out as medicine, but as poison” (*smān du mi 'gro/ dug du 'gro*).⁴⁸² Analogous explanations are found in scriptures, such as: “The (five) Evils and the (five) Wisdoms exchange place.”⁴⁸³ *Men* may also appear as a euphemism for *duk*: “decided by means of powerful drugs”, i.e. a test or ordeal of poison (*smān chen pos thag bcad*).⁴⁸⁴ The notion of transformation is also incorporated already in the names of tantric substances: “the five ‘impure’ tantric substances” are called “the five nectars” (*bdud rtsi lnga*).⁴⁸⁵ This process of transforming is very common in tantric contexts in general. Similarly, it is the very aim of the Mendrup ritual, applicable to any of the oppositional pairs. In Tibetan ritual context, the means by which the first state is produced from the second, is purification (*dag, gsal*), taming or subjugation (*'dul*),⁴⁸⁶ conquest or

⁴⁸⁰ Cf. BGTC.

⁴⁸¹ NW (Prague 2013).

⁴⁸² NWB, p. 41: “If your skill and cleverness of method have not been perfected by practice, you will not produce medicine, but poison.”

⁴⁸³ NWB, pp. 173-183. Cf. Samuel, 2007, p. 222.

⁴⁸⁴ Das.

⁴⁸⁵ Similarly Fenner, 1979, pp. 138-139, Garrett, 2009, 2010, Stablein, 1976. Garrett, 2010, analysed the five nectars’ role in the Nyingma mendrup tradition. Wedemeyer, 2007, propagated their symbolic and connotative semiotic, rather than actual material, meaning.

⁴⁸⁶ The term is also used for purifying mercury. Millard, draft paper.

destruction (*joms*), and exorcism (different terms).⁴⁸⁷ Mendrup employs all techniques apart from the last one. Mendrup is perceived to transform *dü* and *duk* into *men* and *dütsi* on all the levels of their significance as expounded above.

Upon this textual and theoretical evaluation of the Mendrup medicine, the following chapter will explore its physical aspects and actual material composition.

⁴⁸⁷ Cf. Des Jardins, 2010, pp. 194-197. This relates to the Tibetan idea of spirits as causers of ill-being. As *dü* and other spirits, including illnesses, can be subdued and exorcised. Cf. NWB, p. 73.

CHAPTER FOUR
The Mendrup Medicine

The Ritual's Recipe and its Medicine

This chapter presents the actual recipe, physical composition and preparation of the central substance of the Mendrup ritual, its medicine. The substance is referred to simply as *men* (*sman*), “medicine”, or *mendrup kyi men* (*sman sgrub kyi sman*), “mendrup medicine”, but sometimes, especially in colloquial expression, its matter becomes synonymous to the name of the ritual and is called mendrup (*sman sgrub*). This chapter exposes how the Mendrup recipe is currently read and put into practice for the occasion of the ritual, which often involves complex negotiations and decision-making. For the sake of comprehension, firstly a bare translation of the recipe is presented, followed by a more explicit translation accompanied by the explanation why each item is understood and translated in a particular way. At the end, an analysis of the recipe is offered. I elaborate on the overall structure of the Mendrup ritual, i.e. its *maṅḍalic* organisation and cosmological connotations, as they are observed in the recipe and composition of the medicine. Similarly, the principles of the Sowa rikpa tradition embedded in the ritual and visible through its recipe, are analysed. Based on both, the cosmological scheme and Sowa rikpa precepts, classifications of the natural world, of *materia medica* and animals, incorporated into the ritual and its recipe become apparent. The chapter thus reveals the physicality of the Mendrup medicine, its practical, pharmacological, and material medicinal aspect, as well as the fundamental rules upon which this materiality is created and argued.

“[O]btaining the precious medical offering substances, as listed in the texts, poses a great challenge”, states Khenpo in the introduction to the monastery’s anniversary booklet.⁴⁸⁸ Indeed, gathering the required substances has traditionally been seen as the most demanding part of the whole Mendrup ritual, at least as it is presently argued by the community. The text Khenpo refers to is specifically a list of the required ingredients for the Mendrup ritual which forms a short part of *The Main Text of the Light-Swirled Nectar Medicine* (*'Od zer 'khyil ba bdud rtsi sman gyi gzhung bzhugs lags sho//*, see above, Chapter 3). A translation of the list is presented below.

The recipe itself comprises of seven folios, in its version used at Triten Norbutse. Its rendering provided here follows the one employed by the Triten Norbutse institution for this particular Mendrup performance. Thus, in fact it is based on the reading of the Mendrup

⁴⁸⁸ *Triten Norbutse Monastery: 25th Anniversary Celebration*, p. 11.

recipe text by the person assigned the task of assembling and processing the substances required, a practitioner of Tibetan medicine, Amchi Nyima Samphel (born 1969, Jharkot, Mustang, Nepal, Am chi Nyi ma bsam 'phel), by his civil name Amchi Nyima Gurung. Amchi Nyima comes from a hereditary lineage of ritual and healing specialists (a lay tantric, *ngakpa, sngags pa*) in Jharkot of the Mukhtinath Valley in Lower Mustang. Having studied with his father since childhood, he received further education at the Menri Monastery in India, and with the famous Bonpo exile medical practitioner Amchi Gege (Am chi Ge ge) at the Bonpo medical school in Dhorpatan in the Himalayas of Western Nepal⁴⁸⁹ and at the Bumzhi Medical Clinic of Triten Norbutse. Amchi Nyima became the main disciple of the venerated teacher Amchi Gege. After the teacher's passing in late 2000s, Amchi Nyima was appointed the head of the Bumzhi Medical Clinic. In 2012 he taught about fifteen pupils, and in his medical practice was often assisted by the two male senior students, Amchi Namse (A mchi gNam gas/sras)⁴⁹⁰ and Amchi Padma (A mchi Pad+ma, both from Upper Dolpo).

For the purpose of the Mendrup medicine composition, Amchi Nyima was not only given the written recipe, but also entrusted its oral explanation (*shes rgyun*) by Yongdzin Rinpoche. Yongdzin Rinpoche dictated it from memory as learnt in Tibet when the ritual was still performed at the original Menri monastery. Traditionally, the knowledge of the proper performance of the ritual, including instructions on its medicinal composition, has been passed from the head of the monastery to his successor. Hence, also the actual rendering of the recipe text is confined to the Bonpo community and only the three Bonpo monasteries involved in the Mendrup practice. Therefore, Amchi Nyima's comprehension of certain terms is specific and differs from the standard one (in Sowa rikpa, etc.). He approached the recipe list according to the guidelines obtained, and then mainly from his medical as well as ritual expertise, as if it was a prescription for his patients, or at times an ordinary manual to compound a ritual substance. I present how Amchi Nyima understands the recipe. His apprehension of both flora and fauna names is naturally based on the areas of Mustang and secondly Dhorpatan he is most familiar with. Thus, the translation in many cases reveals the local ethnobotanical and ethnozoological understandings of Lower Mustang and particularly of the Jharkot village and surroundings. All the staff and students, including several females, of the Bumzhi Medical Clinic had to take part in the Mendrup preparations, sometimes helped

⁴⁸⁹ For a study of the school see Millard, 2002, where he also writes about Amchi Nyima. The school and Amchi Gege are also mentioned in Millard, draft paper. Amchi Nyima's father had the major role in a Bonpo healing ritual conducted in Mustang described by Millard, 2015.

⁴⁹⁰ Both spellings are possible, as I was explained by Amchi Namse himself. The first form, reminiscent of the Bonpo *sé (gsas)* divinities, emphasises more his Bonpo origin, whereas the second would make his name to translate as the "Heavenly Prince".

by monks. Also, a wide network of relatives and acquaintances participated in searching for the items. Amchi Nyima had the responsibility to organise them, be present at every processing stage of the medicine, and also most of the matter was acquired by him. Everyone referred to him as the only person who understood what had to be done. His position was further strengthened by the fact that he had been granted the explanations from the Rinpoche.

The translation is presented by verses or clusters of verses. For the ease of reference to Tibetan terms, the original is included as well. The translation is, when appropriate, followed by extracts from a written commentary (Comm., in smaller letters) on the recipe text by Amchi Nyima titled plainly *The Main Text of the Accomplishment of the Light-Swirled Medicine* (*sMan sgrub 'od zer 'khyil ba'i gzhung*), and consisting of twelve pages.⁴⁹¹ Amchi Nyima wrote it to shed light on the problematic terms, mainly for himself to be able to read the recipe and tackle the task of its compounding. He worked on the Commentary in the course of several months before the Mendrup, after he had been presented the ingredients' list and started collecting them. My explanations (again in small letters) follow the commentary, and then are based on oral explanations given to me by Amchi Nyima, the *The Flawless Crystal Mirror* (*'Khrungs dpe dri med shel gyi me long*) medicinal field guide and manual⁴⁹² frequently consulted by him. I aim to show the complex process lying behind negotiating each of the substances prescribed, which then leads to the selection of a certain article: the various possible readings of the list's items, the rationality and argumentation in each case, and the following decision making. Especially when confronted with other *amchis* and dictionaries, it seems that the medical vocabulary of the text is rather of an unstandard or possibly older layer of Tibetan medicinal nomenclature, and in many cases is not understandable to contemporary standard Tibetan medical practitioners inside and notably outside the Bonpo community. This suggests that both the Bonpo written and oral medical tradition at least in this case exerts such a specific *materia medica* vocabulary. A caveat has to be added here: Tibetan classifications and thence derived nomenclatures of the natural world, including the Tibetan Sowa rikpa system, does not correspond to the Western scientific and modern Linnaean binomial system. Thus, linking a certain Tibetan name, here typically of a Sowa rikpa substance, to an entity, i.e. usually an animal or plant species, defined by a Latin binomial term proves very

⁴⁹¹ The commentary was available to me in Pdf. In Bibliography as: Nyima Gurung, 2012.

⁴⁹² dGa' ba'i rdo rje, 1995. The work represents the most commonly used and widespread modern Tibetan medical simples' work. Glover, 1995, pp. 191-194, 197-217, Hofer 2014, p. 244. Amchi Nyima was partly educated following this manual, and values it for its extent comprehensiveness and "universalistic" nomenclature and classification enabling the work to be used in different parts of Tibet and the Himalayas. However, the work contains numerous errors in its aim to find Latin scientific binomial equivalents to the Tibetan names, and in its pictorial depictions. The translation of the title into English follows Millard, 2013, p. 367.

problematic, if not impossible.⁴⁹³ Certain distinctive Sowa rikpa *pharmaca* have direct equivalents in the Linnaean binomial system, such as the three species of the myrobalan tree (see below). Besides such examples, the identification of a Sowa rikpa substance is determined very often regionally by distinct flora or fauna, varies across dialects and individual usage, and according to education.⁴⁹⁴ Different Sowa rikpa practitioners would thus identify some *pharmaca* differently from the point of view of the Western system. Moreover, an appellation can refer to several natural phenomena sharing the same medicinal properties, which then define the category of sameness,⁴⁹⁵ eventually along with visual similarities or other features that can be verified by senses. Also, a number of terms might relate to one and the same plant referring to its different parts, whereas also one plant itself might be known under a number of names. From the perspective of Western taxonomy, a Tibetan term would frequently include several biological species of one genus, but not infrequently also two or more species across genera. This system grants both medical and ritual practitioners a high degree of flexibility in collecting remedies for (ritual) medicine compounding.

The rendering of the Mendrup recipe presented below reflects its instantiation by Amchi Nyima for the Light-Swirled Mendrup performance in 2012. The items have been identified by Linnaean names mostly by *genera* together with Amchi Nyima, either by samples *in situ* or later by photographs, and often by both.⁴⁹⁶ Cases in which Amchi Nyima explicitly expressed the inclusion of potentially more species, as collection of the given plant at more locations and not a batch of the same specimen, are marked by *spp.* This does not apply for examples of alternative readings based on dictionaries (such as *Gentiana spp.*, *Pterocephalus spp.* below). The example of several Tibetan plant names: *mang ther nu*, *du nu phro*, *mang bu phrum*, and *skyes bu phrum*, all rendered here as *Euphorbia sp.* aka spurge, i.e. all as certain species of the *Euphorbia* genus, only exemplifies the complexities of linking the Tibetan and Linnaean systems. In cases of certain well established medicinal remedies coming from one species of a plant (for example the three myrobalans), or of a clear

⁴⁹³ Clark, 2000, Glover, 2005, Van der Valk, 2017.

⁴⁹⁴ Boesi, 2007, pp. 6-7.

⁴⁹⁵ Cf. Czaja, forthcoming.

⁴⁹⁶ For the identification, other works and dictionaries were also consulted for reference: Das; DR; DTMA; DTMM; FM; MPD; TED; TMP; TMPa; TMPIG; PM. The identification itself was based on Amchi Nyima showing me the plants he used and then the main Western botanical field guide for the Himalayas (FH); a Western binomial ethnobotanical field guide focused on local Mustangi knowledge, in whose preparation Amchi Nyima took a significant part (TMPI); further on my botanical knowledge (based on training for university students of Biology in the Czech Republic); a few cases were also consulted (with the help of photographs) with a botanist, Magdalena Kubešová from the Czech Academy of Sciences & Charles University, Prague. The English names provided are based on the Latin renditions on <http://www.biolib.cz> (Czech Academic Flora and Fauna taxonomy database), in some cases on <http://www.ipni.org> (International Plant Names Index).

identification (for example if the given genus produces only one species in Asia), the species specification is provided as well. The identification of animals was much easier even as species are concerned, and was done together with Amchi Nyima mainly by photographs and depictions in field guides. Amchi Nyima's nomenclature and classification of substances, most prominently plants, corresponds to that of Sowa rikpa: natural substances typically acquire a "basic name" to which one or rarely two "attributes" are added in case of further necessary specification.⁴⁹⁷ For the sake of convenience, the translation lists the Tibetan and Latin scientific names accompanied by the English if feasible (where possible and if no ambiguity is caused). If a term was treated as incomprehensible, I leave it untranslated in the Tibetan original. I provide variant spellings of the plant and animal names if they appear in Amchi Nyima's Commentary, or in some cases elsewhere. I also supply the part or form (P) of each plant or substance included, along with the location (L) of its collection or purchase. In many instances, as the acquisition on the Kathmandu medical market, its actual origin is virtually untraceable.

The formula of the Mendrup recipe follows a firm fivefold pattern of cosmological organisation of a *maṇḍala*, complemented by a few verses of an eightfold arrangement reflecting the eight classes of consciousness (Tib. *rnam shes brgyad*, Skt. *aṣṭavijñāna*).⁴⁹⁸ All the over one hundred items are thus listed as belonging to a certain cardinal point or class of consciousness. The vast majority of the ingredients is found in the extensive fivefold section of the recipe, whereas a much smaller final eightfold section provides only several items. The fivefold section consists of two parts: (1) firstly, human and animal ingredients derived from the tantric concept of the five nectars (*bdud rtsi lnga*), i.e. semen, flesh, stool, blood, and urine,⁴⁹⁹ and (2) secondly, plant ingredients containing also a few minerals and animal body parts, most of which are usual Sowa rikpa *materia medica*. Both the animal and plant divisions of the recipe are organised into five groups assigned to the five directions of the *maṇḍala*, starting in the Centre and gradually proceeding through the East, North, and West, to the South. Each of the five directions is associated with a mental poison, an aggregate, a tantric nectar, a type of wisdom, an element, a colour, a sign, an animal, etc.⁵⁰⁰ The pattern is the most noticeable in the first part, the human and animal required substances.

⁴⁹⁷ The attributes are usually descriptive revealing the plants' blossom colour, size, environment of growth, perceived gender (male, female, or neutral), therapeutic properties, etc. Boesi, 2006, pp. 88-93, 2007.

⁴⁹⁸ The concept of the eight classes of consciousness constituting individual's consciousness derives from the Indian Buddhist Yogācāra philosophical school. Bowker et al., 1997, Snellgrove, 2002, Williams and Tribe, 2000.

⁴⁹⁹ Their role in Buddhist mendrup was studied by Garrett 2010.

⁵⁰⁰ See Table 8.

Translation of the Recipe

Firstly, I present a simple and seemingly straightforward translation of the Mendrup recipe, to better convey the character of the Tibetan original. At this occasion, the names of Tibetan plants and other substances remain in the original, as is the common practice in academic works on Tibetan medicine and ethnobotany.⁵⁰¹ Secondly, a full translation of the recipe follows, along with Wylie transliteration and a diplomatic edition based on the three consulted manuscripts – MsA, MsB, MsC (see above, Chapter 3). The full translation reveals the intrinsic difficulties for the Bonpo tradition itself when it comes to reading the Mendrup, likely old, ritual text and putting it into practice.

Only the first simple translation of the recipe presents the names of substances in the English phonetic transcription. The second full translation of the recipe works with Wylie transliteration only, as it requires an extensive usage of Tibetan terms and is rather intended for specialists. For a more comprehensive rendition of the Mendrup recipe into English (and Latin), see the Table 12 and Diagram below).

I. Simple Translation of the Mendrup Recipe

Testicles and semen of unicorns and others to purify the pride in consciousness refers to testicles and semen of all [animals with] undivided hooves, such as dark-coloured, white-eyed unicorns and others.

To purify the desire in consciousness refers to various eggs of birds, such as vultures and others [are needed].

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

Join this root medicine with *arura nampar gyelwa* (*a ru ra rnam par rgyal ba*),
barura yukdrel (*ba ru ra g.yug 'dral*),
kyurura (*skyu ru ra*), *shingkün* (*shing kun*),
the six good [substances], and others.

⁵⁰¹ For instance Boesi, 2007, Gerke, 2014, Glover, 2005, Van der Valk, 2016.

The medicine of *shachen yungdrung ta mélong* (*sha chen g.yung drung rta me long*)⁵⁰² refers to flesh of young virgin girls, human flesh of *sangwa gelchen chi* (*sang ba gal chen phyi*), and elephants' heart flesh, and is to purify the ignorance in the form.

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

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

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

The medicine of *dri chen künjung nyampa* (*dri chen kun 'byung mnyam pa*)⁵⁰³ refers to: In order to purify the pride in perception, stool of all animals with undivided hooves dropped out in run, such as dark coloured turquoise-maned mares and others [is needed].

In order to purify the hatred in perception, stool of various kinds of carnivorous animals, such as blue swamp lions and wolves, and of *chi tsuk pung* (*dpwid tshugs dpung*) [is needed].

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

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

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

[The medicine of] *trak ni péma sortok* (*khrag ni pad ma sor rtogs*)⁵⁰⁴ refers to: In order to purify the anger in sensation, blood of boys and girls with shining red complexion [is needed].

In order to purify the desire in sensation, blood of red birds, such as red *khading* (*mkha' lding*) [is needed].

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

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

⁵⁰² Appellation of the particular medicine, see below.

⁵⁰³ Appellation of the particular medicine, see below.

⁵⁰⁴ Appellation of the particular medicine, see below.

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

[The medicine of] *dri chu lé druk jawa nenten (dri chu las drug bya ba nan tan)*⁵⁰⁵ refers to urine of glorious brown boys in the South, urine of radiating blue women, and of carnivorous animals with claws, such as dragons *kyü (kyus)*.

In order to purify the ignorance in perception, urine of [animals with] divided hooves, such as blue water *dzos* [is needed].

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

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

Then, the aggregates (Tib. *phung po*, Skt. *skandha*) are classified.

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

In the Centre the medicine of *düpa denbé namkha ('dus pa ldan ba 'i nam kha)*⁵⁰⁶ refers to: the assembly of tastes – *arura (a ru ra)*, the assembly of essence – the six good [substances], the assembly of potencies – *kyurura (skyu ru ra)*, the assembly of after-tastes – *barura (ba ru ra)*, and various others are also needed. This is the medicine of the Goddess of Space whose mind is without characteristics.

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

mangternu (mang ther nu), [also] called *durum kéché (du rum skad phyad)*,

dunutro (du nu phro), [also] called *ngönbu yuna (sngon bu g.yu sna)*,

mangbu trum (mang bu phrum), [also] called *ternu zhéchen (ther nu zhes chen)*,

kyébu trum (skyes bu phrum), [also] called *tarnu chungwa (thar nu chung ba)*,

And also others, [as] *khurmang ('khur mang)*,

tsé (mtshe), *shukpa (shug pa)*,

chübu (chud bu),

⁵⁰⁵ Appellation of the particular medicine, see below.

⁵⁰⁶ Appellation of the particular medicine, see below.

chambur (lcam bur), lidoka (li do ka), and others.

This is called the immaterial medicine of the Earth Goddess.

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

durukana (du ru ska na),

socha (so 'cha'),

butapadren ('bu ta pa 'dren),

tsingasin gyi dré (rtsi snga srin gyi 'bras),

shingkyibé drébu (shing kyi ba 'i 'bras bu),

gyakak (rgya skag),

pangma (spang ma),

drangtsi (sbrang rtsi),

amabilalalen (a ma bi la la len), and others.

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

From the medicine, the heavy fire medicine refers to:

Three kinds of incenses,

Three kinds of salt,

buram (bu ram),

zhimo (gzhi mo),

manu (ma nu),

lalapü (la la phud),

shingkün (shing kun),

rasayana (ra sa ya na),

zima jintsor (gzi ma byin tshor),

nyishing numchen (nyi shing snum can),

belbu surbu (bal bu sur bu),

gasho (ga sho),

manu (ma nu),

chamtö kar (lcam thod dkar),

gokpa (sgog pa),

muzi (mu zi), and others, these are

the purifying medicine of the heat of the Fire Goddess.

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

gapur (ga pur),

somaratsa (sro ma ra tsa),

basha balé (ba sha ba le),

yushing (g.yu shing),

günbum daru (rgun 'bum sda ru),

latsi (gla rtsi),

halika (ha li ka),

sumchutiktik (sum cu tig tig),

katakari (ka ta ka ri),

létré (sle tre),

drakzhün (brag zhun), chongzi (cong zi), and shoshata (sho sha rta),

upel (u dpal), and others, these are

the purifying medicine of the Water Goddess in blood.

These are particular for the nectar of means and wisdom.

Classification into eight branches:

Various kinds of animals' eyes and the five essences, such as butter.

Various kinds of ears and flowers producing sound, such as *khukché (khug ches)*.

Animals' noses and five kinds of various incenses.

Various kinds of tongues, such as of parrots, five kinds of various medicines, and various kinds of flesh, such as flesh of ferocious tigers.

Silk, such as brocade.

This is the element of extinguishing strong defilements:

Lungs, throats.

Various kinds of knots.

Various kinds of flowers, such as *khading upel (mkha' lding u pal)*.

Various kinds of essences, such as *mangwar (mang bar)*.

Five kinds of grains, such as barley and peas.

Life channels, flesh and glands.

Five kinds of the five precious [substances], such as gold.

The medicine of the [eight] branches of consciousness is classified as medicine of the four cardinal directions, according to its particular characteristics and sequence.

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

II. Full Translation of the Mendrup Recipe

[I. ANIMAL INGREDIENTS ACCORDING TO THE CARDINAL POINTS]

[Ia. CENTRE]

(82)⁵⁰⁷ glang chen dung gi gtsug phud can la sogs te/ 'bras bu dang/ thig le dang rnam shes la nga rgyal gnas su dag par zhes bya ste/ rta gro bo shel (83) mig la sogs ste/ rmig zlum mtha' dag gi 'bras bu dang thig le dang/

Testicles and semen of unicorns and others to purify the pride in consciousness refers to testicles and semen of all [animals with] undivided hooves, such as dark-coloured, white-eyed unicorns and others.

Comm.: Amchi Nyima takes this whole section as root medicine (*rtsa ba'i sman*) together with the following one, which contradicts NyTshGy. Amchi gives examples which “all animals” fulfilling the given characteristics are meant: “dark-coloured white-eyed unicorns, donkeys, mules, kiangs, striped horses or zebras (*rta khra khra 'am dzeb ra*), etc.” He enumerates all the odd-toed ungulates that come to this mind of those he is familiar with. Apart from members of the horse family (*Equidae*) encountered in the Tibetan world, also zebras are mentioned. As Amchi Nyima explained, he had listed a horse with stripes, but was told by someone that the proper name would be “zebra”. He had encountered the animal in a ZOO in India or Nepal.

rMig zlum (“round hoof”, *i.e.* undivided) designates all animals characterised by this feature, Odd-toed ungulates (*Perissodactyla*), of which only *Equidae* are known in Tibet and thus in fact, according to the Western taxonomy, become synonymous to the whole Order.⁵⁰⁸ This reading of the term allows us to exclude another possible interpretation of *glang chen dung gi gtsug phud can* as “elephants with white tusks”. Given the corruption of the text the two groups might have also merged in this verse, which is however quite unlikely as the verse looks compact.

There exist different understandings of the colour designation *gro bo*: a dark colour,⁵⁰⁹ bluish grey,⁵¹⁰ reddish grey,⁵¹¹ or combined white and black (*spu kha dkar nag*).⁵¹²

⁵⁰⁷ MsB: starts on fol. 9, MsC: starts on fol. 444.

⁵⁰⁸ BGTC.

⁵⁰⁹ AN, NW (Oxford 2013).

⁵¹⁰ AN.

⁵¹¹ NyTshGy, Martin, 2001.

Shel means “crystal”, in an attributive position functions to describe whitish and glassy colour of eyes (note that *thig le* is of the same colour), sometimes in the more adjectival expression *shel skya*. The word also has the same meaning as *dung* referring to “conch of white colour” and used for “white”. To continue on the etymological note, the colour *shel* can thus in certain contexts be shared by both the entities *thig le* and *snying po*. The sclera and white colour of the eye can in the Sowa rikpa medical context be referred to as *snying shel*.⁵¹³

***rnam shes la 'dod chags gnas su dag par zhes bya ste/ lha bya rgod pa la sogs ste/ 'dabs*⁵¹⁴
 *('dab) chags kyi sgong nga sna tshogs dang/**

To purify the desire in consciousness refers to various eggs of birds, such as vultures and others [are needed].

Comm.: Examples of the sought birds: vultures (*bya rgod*), Tibetan Snowcocks (*sgong mo*, *Tetraogallus tibetanus*), peacocks (*rma bya*), Bearded Vultures (*go bo*), poultry (*khyim bya*), partridges (*srag pa*, in the Mustang context can refer to: Chukar, *Alectoris chukar*; Tibetan Partridge, *Perdix hodxoniae*; Hill Partridge *Arborophila torqueola*; Black Francolin, *Francolinus francolinus*), Red-billed Chough (*Pyrhacorax pyrrhacorax*, *kyung ka*), Alpine Chough (*Pyrhacorax graculus*, *mkha' lding*), larks (*co ga*), Black Kites (*Milvus migrans*, *'o le*), cranes (*khruṅg khruṅg*, in Tibet and the Himalayas: Black-necked Crane, *Grus nigricollis*), Eagle Owls (*Bubo bubo*, *'ug pa*), Little Owls (*Athene noctua*, *srin bya*), cuckoos (*bya rgyal khu byug*), parrots (*ne rtso*), pigeons (*phug ron*), and others.⁵¹⁵

The designation *sgong mo* applies to members of the *Tetraonidae* family living in Tibet in general, and thus often also to *Lerwa lerwa*, *Tetraogallus tibetanus*). Here Amchi Nyima means *Tetraogallus tibetanus*, which is known to him from Mustang.⁵¹⁶

As is seen, the term *srag pa* accommodates several bird species of the Western nomenclature. Amchi Nyima divides the *srag pa* birds into two groups, based on their habitat altitude and easily recognisable characteristic visual features, i.e. size and colour: 1. *srag pa* birds of high places, which “are bigger”; 2. *srag pa* birds of low places, which are “small and brown”. The former mostly denotes Chukar (*Alectoris chukar*), which are plentiful at higher spots of the mountain slopes of Mustang. The latter group, to Amchi Nyima’s knowledge, comprises of *Perdix hodxoniae*.⁵¹⁷

As Amchi Nyima explains, *kyung ka* in the Mustangi and his understanding, refers to Chough, and not a jackdaw (in this case the Eurasian Jackdaw, *Corvus monedula*),⁵¹⁸ as is often interpreted and translated into English.

The term *mkha' lding* is usually understood as denoting different kinds of birds: the mythical *Garuḍa*, eagle, or other bird species. However, this assumption seems to be based rather on epithets occurring in written works or oral forms of poetry. In daily parlance, according to Amchi Nyima, *mkha' lding* is synonymous to Mustangi *kre*

⁵¹² BGTC.

⁵¹³ ShM, p. 354.

⁵¹⁴ MsB: 'dab.

⁵¹⁵ AN, ShM, Grimmett et al., 1999, MacKinnon et al., 2000.

⁵¹⁶ AN, Grimmett et al., 1999, MacKinnon et al., 2000.

⁵¹⁷ AN, Corresponds to *sreg pa* in ShM, where *srag pa* is not listed. Grimmett et al., 1999, MacKinnon et al., 2000.

⁵¹⁸ AN, in accordance with ShM. The Eurasian Jackdaw does not live in Nepal. Grimmett et al., 1999.

mo standing for the Alpine Chough (*Pyrrhocorax graculus*, see just above). Whereas *mkha' lding dkar po*, “the white *mkha' lding*”, and *mkha' lding dmar po*, “the red *mkha' lding*”, refer to two other distinct birds which I was not able to identify based on Amchi Nyima’s description.

As for owls, the differentiating tool of size is again applied: bigger owls are in general called *'ug pa*, smaller *srin bya*. The *'ug pa* intended by Amchi Nyima in this context is the Eurasian Eagle-owl (*Bubo bubo*) found in Mustang and the hills. However, as he adds, also Barn Owl (*Tyto alba*), roaming the night streets of Old Kathmandu, can be meant by the same name. The former of these two is specified as *'ug pa nag po*, whereas the latter as *'ug pa dkar po*. *Srin bya* refers to Little Owl (*Athene noctua*).⁵¹⁹

Lha, “god, deity” in *lha bya rgod pa* here, serves as an honorific attribute added to names of birds. *'Dabs chags* literally means “winged beings”.

rnam shes la 'phrog (*'phrag) gnas su dag par zhes bya ste/ chu srin ma ha'i snying po la sogs te/ gcan gzan gyi sha sna snying rnam so/

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

Comm.: Examples of the animals: tigers (*stag*), Tibetan Black Bears (*Ursus thibetanus thibetanus, dom*), Himalayan Brown Bears (*Ursus arctos isabellinus, 'dre mong*), Lynxes (*Lynx lynx, gzig*), Snow Leopards (*Panthera uncia, gsa'*), wolves (*spyang ki*), jackals (*khyi spang*), lions (*'dam seng*).

The phrasing of the sentence denotes that hearts and various kinds of flesh, which all can be understood as coming from the same animal, should be used.

Chu srin also designates the mythical *makara* water creature.

'Dre mong is often translated as “yeti”, nevertheless in many parts of Tibet implies a subspecies of Brown Bear, as in Amchi Nyima’s commentary.

Both the terms *gzig* and *gsa'* are usually taken as synonyms for Snow Leopard. Amchi Nyima understands the former as Snow Leopard, and the latter as a different animal, the “lowland leopard” living in forests. The distinction is based on the altitude and their habitat, however the design of their fur is said to be the same. The designation of the carnivore *gzig* as *Lynx* remains my rendering based on Amchi Nyima’s description. *'Dam seng* is understood by Amchi Nyima to denote the “lowland lion” (see the discussion on *'dam seng* below).

[II. ROOT MEDICINE (*rtsa ba'i sman*) (PLANT INGREDIENTS)]

de rtsa ba'i sman de yi 'phrad a ru ra*⁵²⁰ *rnam par rgyal ba dang/

Join this root medicine with *Terminalia chebula* (chebulic myrobalan),⁵²¹

⁵¹⁹ AN, Grimmett et al., 1999.

⁵²⁰ MsB: *a ru*.

⁵²¹ AN, Das, DTMA, DTMM, TMPa.

The attribute *rnam par rgyal ba* or *rnam rgyal* (“superior, excellent”) can be quite ambiguous, as it can denote both *a ru ra*, the myrobalan fruit of *Terminalia chebula*, in general, or more specifically the most important of its five or six distinguished types.⁵²²

A ru ra is the most fundamental and universal remedy of Tibetan medicine, and as such receives particular attention, hence the glorifying epithet. It has been used as a powerful and central substance already in Indian medical traditions. In Tibet, *a ru ra* is also labelled “the supreme king of medicine” (*sman gyi mchog rgyal po*).⁵²³ Its unusual effects are ascribed to its characteristics of all the six tastes (salty, hot, astringent, sweet, sour, bitter), and therefore its potential cure disorders of all three bodily forces and thus all diseases (see below).⁵²⁴

Its five or six kinds are differentiated on the basis of the tree’s growing location, the level of the maturity of the fruit, the season of its collection, its appearance and medicinal properties.⁵²⁵ Amchi Nyima explains that the *a ru ra* fruit called *rnam par rgyal ba* should be a big one. Such a produce can be also called *zur brgyad log brgyad*, “the eight-cornered and eight-reversed one”.⁵²⁶ According to him, it is the most valued kind of *a ru ra*. The *a ru ra rnam par rgyal ba* acquires the shape of a vessel’s (*bum pa*) neck.⁵²⁷ The *a ru ra*’s epithet in the Mendrup recipe is not to be mistaken with the name of another plant *rnam par*.⁵²⁸

By virtue of its extraordinary properties, the *a ru ra* fruit has become the attribute held by the Medicine Buddha (sMan lha, Sangs rgyas sman lha) in both Bon and Tibetan Buddhism.⁵²⁹ *The Flawless Crystal Mirror* recounts the remedy’s celestial origin.⁵³⁰

Similarly, the abundance of *a ru ra*’s various epithets is quite remarkable. To name a few which evoke some of the main principles of the Mendrup ritual: *rnam par rgyal ba*, *’chi med* (“without death, immortal”), *bdud rtsi* (“nectar”), *sha chen* (“big meat”, a secret term referring to human flesh, also included in the Mendrup recipe), *ra sa ya na* (probably “mercury”, features in the Mendrup recipe), *bcud len* (“extracting essence”, for the related practices see references above), *lha rdzas* (“divine ornaments”), *dug ’joms* (“conquering poison”), *dug sel* (“cleansing poison”).⁵³¹

P: Fruit.

To meet this requirement, Amchi Nyima bought a mixture of several myrobalan types: *a ru ra gser mdog*, *a ru ’phel byed*, *a ru skem po*, *a ru ’jigs med* (out of the six types *a ru ra rnam rgyal* and *a ru ra mchu snyung* were missing).⁵³² Such mixture is called *a ru sha chen*, the “big meat of *a ru*” alluding the tantric secret name for human flesh.

L: Kathmandu medical market.

ba ru ra g.yug ’dral dang/

⁵²² AN, BGTC, DTMM, MC (Oxford 2013), ShM.

⁵²³ BGTC, ShM, p.168.

⁵²⁴ Cf. Gerke 2014, ShM, p. 168.

⁵²⁵ AN, GyZh, ch. 1-3, ShM, p. 167.

⁵²⁶ AN.

⁵²⁷ ShM, p. 167.

⁵²⁸ Cf. TMPa, DTMM.

⁵²⁹ DTMM, MC (Oxford 2013), ShM.

⁵³⁰ ShM, p. 168.

⁵³¹ ShM, p. 168.

⁵³² ShM, p. 168.

Terminalia bellerica (belleric myrobalan),⁵³³

The puzzling word *g.yug 'dral* is an epithet of *ba ru ra*, *Terminalia bellerica* (Belleric Myrobalan).⁵³⁴ Less likely, and as a parallel to the following verse, the two syllables might suggest a name of a separate medicinal plant, which we are no more able to identify.⁵³⁵

P: Fruit.

L: Kathmandu medical market.

skyu ru ra shing kun dang/

Phyllanthus emblica (emblic myrobalan),⁵³⁶ resin of *Ferula asafoetida* (asafoetida),⁵³⁷

Comm.: In the commentary the word *shing kun* occurs as spelt here, but later on alternates with a spelling variant *shing kha*.

The verse structure repeats as in the verse above, and its second half is similarly ambiguous. The word *shing kun* might again refer as an epithet to the preceding word *skyu ru ra*, *Phyllanthus emblica* (emblic myrobalan), or denote a separate ingredient. In the second case, the term applies to resin of asafoetida.⁵³⁸ As Amchi Nyima clarifies, there exist two or three different types of *shing kun*, of which the Mendrup ritual deserved the best one. NyTshGy (p. 7) quotes *skyu ru ra shing dkar*, the second half verbatim “white wood”. *Shing dkar* is an alternative name of another plant, *stab seng* (in dictionaries either *Fraxinus suareolans*,⁵³⁹ or *Encommia ulmoides*⁵⁴⁰). The term *shing kun* itself might be of older layers of Tibetan language, and in the anticipated Zhangzhung language denotes “devil’s dung, food of the gods”.⁵⁴¹ Interestingly, “devil’s dung” has been the popular English name of asafoetida as well.

P: Fruit.

L: Kathmandu medical market.

P: Resin.

L: Kathmandu medical market.

bzang po drug la sogs gsal lo/

the six good [substances], and others.

⁵³³ AN, Das, DTMA, DTMM.

⁵³⁴ AN. NyTshGy, p. 7, cites the name in a different spelling (*g.yug 'dril*) which might be due to a spelling mistake or a different text version used by the author.

⁵³⁵ LST (Vienna 2013), NW (Oxford 2013), MC (Oxford 2013).

⁵³⁶ AN, DTMA, DTMM, ShM, TMPa.

⁵³⁷ DTMA, DTMM, ShM, TMPa.

⁵³⁸ DTMA, DTMM, FM, ShM, TMPa.

⁵³⁹ DTMA, DTMM, ShM.

⁵⁴⁰ DTMA.

⁵⁴¹ ZZ.

Comm.: Also *sman bzang po drug*, “the six good medicines”.

bZang po drug is a mixture of six components commonly used in ritual, and usually rendered in the following order: *Bambusoideae* (bamboo pith, *cu gang*), *Crocus sativus* (saffron, *gur gum*), *Syzygium aromaticum* (clove, *li shi*), *Myristica fragrans* (nutmeg, *dzā ti*), *Amomum compactum* (smaller cardamon, *sug smel*), *Amomum subulatum* (greater cardamon or black cardamon, *ka ko la*).⁵⁴²

The prescription was by Amchi Nyima fulfilled as follows: kaolin (*cu gang*), *Crocus sativus* (?) (saffron, *gur gum*), *Carthamus tinctorius* (?) (safflower, *bal gur gum*), clove (*Syzygium aromaticum*, *li shi*), nutmeg (*Myristica fragrans*, *dzā ti*), *Amomum compactum* (smaller cardamon, *sug smel*), *Amomum subulatum* (greater cardamon or black cardamon, *ka ko la*). The first component was by the Amchi understood diversely from the usual reading.

Amchi Nyima recounts that three types of *cu gang* exist, all having the same medicinal properties and effects (*nus pa*). Of these, he is familiar with two: bamboo pith and kaolin (which he knows as “white mud inside caves”). As a spelling variation of both, *chu gang*, “full of water”, is sometimes encountered. This makes nice sense especially for the bamboo inner part resembling a liquid receptacle. However, Amchi Nyima stresses that *chu gang* should not be taken to denote bamboo, and clearly distinguishes it from *cu gang*. If Amchi Nyima was to distinguish the bamboo from the kaolin, he would call the bamboo *chu cu gang* (“water *cu gang*”) or *bod cu gang* (“Tibetan *cu gang*”). On the other hand, Amchi Nyima is ready to read *cu gang* as “kaolin” also in the context of the *bzang po drug*, which is rather unstandard. Here, his understanding of the ingredient listed comes from the medical Sowa rikpa discourse, as a usual ritual practitioner would in most cases mix the bamboo pith into the *bzang po drug*.

L: For the Mendrup, Amchi Nyima, collected some kaolin from caves in the Himalayas.

The Tibetan medical tradition distinguishes five types of the substance called *gur gum*, which is most commonly translated as saffron. However, the term *gur gum* in practice in most cases does not refer to saffron but to the much cheaper and more widely available safflower (*Carthamus tinctorius*). Saffron (*Crocus sativus*) is usually specified as *kha che gur gum* (literally “the Muslims’ *gur gum*”).⁵⁴³ Amchi Nyima included two of the five *gur gum*: *gur gum* and *bal gur gum*. He explained that the five types develop different appearances and qualities as they grow in different regions and conditions.⁵⁴⁴ He acquired one of good quality, *gur gum*, and one of inferior quality, *bal gur gum*. The *gur gum* represented the most expensive purchased ingredient of the Mendrup, and its price⁵⁴⁵ suggests that it could have been real saffron (*Crocus sativus*). The *bal gur gum* was then likely safflower (*Carthamus tinctorius*).

P: The inner content of the blossom – vivid crimson stigmas and styles.

L: Kathmandu medical market.

Clove (*Syzygium aromaticum*, *li shi*) and nutmeg (*Myristica fragrans*, *dzā ti*).

⁵⁴² BGTC, Das, DTMA, DTMM, DK, MPD, NyTshGy.

⁵⁴³ Boesi, 2007, Czaja, forthcoming.

⁵⁴⁴ Also LST (Vienna 2013), ShM.

⁵⁴⁵ 325 NPR/3,76 USD per gram (rate in December 2012). See the price list of the Mendrup substances in Chapter 2.

P: Blossom buds.

L: Kathmandu medical market.

Amchi Nyima distinguishes two types of the *sug smel* cardamon: the bigger *sug smel*, and the smaller *sug smel chung ba*, as in *The Flawless Crystal Mirror*.⁵⁴⁶ They share the same medicinal properties. As Amchi explains, the bigger *sug smel* is found in China, whereas the smaller *sug smel chung ba* in India. The later was included into the Mendrup, the only available on the Kathmandu market.

P: Pods.

L: Kathmandu medical market.

On the other hand, Amchi Nyima, draws a strict line between these cardamons and *ka ko la*, in English greater cardamon or black cardamon (*Amomum subulatum*). As he says, *ka ko la* is of different properties and effects.

P: Pods.

L: Kathmandu medical market.

[Ib. EAST]⁵⁴⁷

***sha chen g.yung drung rta (*lta)*⁵⁴⁸ *me long sman zhes bya ste/ lang tsho dri ma ma phog*⁵⁴⁹
*pa'i sha chen dang/ [gsang ba gal chen phyi yi sha chen/]*⁵⁵⁰ *glang po che'i snying sha*
*dang/ gzugs la gti mug gnas su dag pa'o/***

The medicine of *sha chen g.yung drung rta me long* refers to flesh of young virgin girls, human flesh of *sang ba gal chen phyi*, and elephants' heart flesh, and is to purify the ignorance in the form.

Comm.: *gSang sha gal phyi ba'i sha* meaning “flesh of virgin boys and girls”.

The expression *sha chen g.yung drung rta me long* in the first verse serves as kind of abbreviated title and introduction to the following section of the text, by providing a very brief summary of its content. A synopsis of the same style precedes each of the text sections of its first half.

An obscure term is the *gsang ba gal chen phyi*, which might be very literally put as “the outer secret and important”. NyTshGy cites the phrase as *gsang sha phyi ba'i sha* and explains “There are different views about what it is. Some say a certain part of heart.”⁵⁵¹

Similarly unclear might be the designation *sha chen*. In ritual and tantric context, *sha chen*, “the great meat”, denotes human flesh, as *rus chen*, “the great bone”, denotes human bones.⁵⁵² However, closer to the medical

⁵⁴⁶ The *The Flawless Crystal Mirror* (ShM) even lists them as two different species in the Western nomenclature: *Amomum compactum* for *sug smel*, and *Elettaria cardamonum* for *sug smel chung ba*. ShM, p. 112.

⁵⁴⁷ Section I continues.

⁵⁴⁸ Corrected according to NyTshGy (p. 8), denoting *me long lta bi'i ye she* (Mirror-like wisdom).

⁵⁴⁹ MsC: *phogs*.

⁵⁵⁰ The phrase is added following MsB, MsC (the latter adds *dang* to the end of the phrase).

⁵⁵¹ NyTshGy, p. 8.

context, *sha chen* can read as human flesh, donkey flesh, horse flesh, and also marmot flesh.⁵⁵³ It also figures as a Bonpo precious pill ingredient.⁵⁵⁴

gzugs la zhe spang gnas su dag par zhes bya ste/ rgya stag khra'o/ wa chen ldang 'gyu la sogs te/ gcan gzan sna tshogs gyi snying sha dang/

Purifying the anger in form refers to heart flesh of various kinds of carnivorous animals, such as striped tigers and quietly walking⁵⁵⁵ foxes and others.

Comm.: *Wa chen ldang 'gyu* as “a pair of foxes, a male and a female” (*wa pho mo gnyis ming*). The commentary follows the dual spelling occurring in the manuscript (below as *ldang 'gyur*).

lDang 'gyu, spelled as *ldang 'gyur* at its second place in the text (below), is perceived by the Bonpos to be an old Bonpo term. As Khenpo explained, it described the very gentle walking style of foxes, and in the case big foxes are implied.⁵⁵⁶

Tigers' stripes often feature in epithets,⁵⁵⁷ and, the other way round, tiger acquire various epithets also in the medical context, for instance the designation *gcan gzan khra bo*, “the striped carnivore”.⁵⁵⁸

(shar phyogs rtsa ba dag/)⁵⁵⁹

Homoio teleuton, bracketed in the text.

gzugs la nga rgyal gnas su dag par zhes bya ste/ (84) rta ngang pa shel gi mig la sogs rmig zlum sna tshogs gyi snying sha dang/

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

Comm.: White-eyed whitish horses, donkeys, mules, kiangs (*rta ngang pa/ bung bu ngang/ 'dre'u ngang/ rkyang ngang shel mig bcas*).

Ngang pa is another example of Tibetan terms denoting colouration reserved exclusively for animals. It implies white with a tint of another colour: of blue, or in the case of horses of yellow, orange, red or brown. Generally, these dye attributes refer to horses, most of them also to yaks, but only rarely to wild animals. Other examples of animal colour terms are: *kyang pa* “white” (without any tint), *rag pa* “red”, *gzags pa* “brownish”, *gro bo* (see

⁵⁵² Geshe Dawa Namgyal (Menri). Geshe adds that for instance the *Magyü* tantras state that “Lice eat but *sha chen*.”

⁵⁵³ YT (Menri).

⁵⁵⁴ Millard, draft paper.

⁵⁵⁵ Translated according to KTY (Shenten Dargye Ling) and NyTshGy.

⁵⁵⁶ KTY (Shenten Dargye Ling).

⁵⁵⁷ Cf. Nebesky-Wojkowitz, 1996, p. 185.

⁵⁵⁸ ShM, p. 339.

⁵⁵⁹ Not in MsB, MsC.

above in the recipe), *rgya bo* (see below in the recipe), *rog po* “black”. The last is often used to describe wild birds, such as ravens, crows, jackdaws, etc.⁵⁶⁰

(gzugs la nga gyal gnas su dag pa'i phyir/)⁵⁶¹

Homoio teleuton, bracketed in the text.

gzugs las 'phrog (*'phrag) gnas su dag pa'i sman ches bya ste/ chu sram lco (*lcong) bzang la sogs ste/ gcan gzan chu la gnas pa rnams kyi snying sha dang rnams ni/ shar phyog rtsa ba dag sman gyi bye byag go//

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

Comm.: Fish, “water mice” (*chu byi*), tadpoles (*lcong mo*), frogs, crocodiles, hippos (*chu phag*). *Chu sram* refers to crocodiles rather than *makāras* here, as Amchi Nyima lists animals of which existence he knows, first or second hand. Again, he includes a non-native animal to the Himalayas and lowlands below, a hippopotamus. As the zebra mentioned above, it comes from Africa.

Amchi Nyima’s *chu byi* applies to small rodents (*Rodentia*) living near water. The Tibetan name can refer to several zoological species.

Interestingly, tadpoles are listed here among carnivorous animals, although the *gcan gzan* class is usually apart from its diet defined by claws. Tadpoles could fit into the category as predators, as some of them are predatory, and some herbivore.

[Ic. NORTH]

dri chen kun 'byung mnyams (*mnyam) pa'i sman ches bya ste/ 'du byed las nga rgyal gnas su dag pa'i phyir/ rta gro mo g.yu rngog la sogs ste/ rmig zlun mtha' dag gi dri chen rgyug 'phro la byung ba dang//

The medicine of *dri chen kun 'byung mnyam pa* refers to: In order to purify the pride in perception, stool of all animals with undivided hooves dropped out in run, such as dark coloured turquoise-maned mares and others [is needed].

Again, the title *dri chen kun 'byung mnyam pa* serves as an abbreviated summary of the following section.

NyTshGy cites *rta gro bo g.yu rngog*, which is translated “a horse with a body that is reddish grey with blue tail and main”.⁵⁶² Amchi understands the *g.yu rngog* colour as “grey” or “blue”.

⁵⁶⁰ AN, NW (Oxford 2013), BGTC. Blondeau in her study on Tibetan hippology, 1972, pp. 67-69, 158, cites different colour terms used for horses, which in most cases consist of regular vocabulary.

⁵⁶¹ Not is MsB, MsC.

'du byed las zhe sdang gnas su dag pa'i phyir/ 'dam seng sngon po dang ri khyi sngon po dang/ dpyad⁵⁶³ (*dpyid) tshugs dpung pa la sogs ste/ gcan gzan sna tshogs kyi sbrun dang/

In order to purify the hatred in perception, stool of various kinds of carnivorous animals, such as blue swamp lions and wolves, and of *dpyid tshugs dpung* [is needed].

Comm.: 'Dam seng sngon po understood as "blue lion" (*seng ge mdog sngon po bcas*).

According to a certain Tibetan classification of animals, there are three types of lions: the mythical "snow lion" (*gang seng, seng dkar*), "forest lion" living in dry lowland forests (*nags seng*), and "swamp lion" of wet lowlands (*dam seng*, literally "mud lion").⁵⁶⁴ This classification does not reflect the natural reality from the perspective of Western zoology, according to which there has been only one species of lion spread across Eurasia (*Panthera leo*).⁵⁶⁵ The "mud lion" can also denote a frog, but frogs are generally not counted as *gcan gzan*, as they have no fangs,⁵⁶⁶ although they feed on a meat diet as well. In this text frog tadpoles have already appeared among carnivores, *gcan gzan* (see above in the recipe), thus the possible involvement of frogs as well would only fit into the scheme adopted here.

For "wolf" the idiom "blue mountain dog" is used. The "swamp lion" is also blue. The colour, *sngon po* covering a spectrum of tones ranging from blue to green, would be more appropriate for the "frog" alternative, which is however not understood here by Amchi Nyima.

The phrase *dpyid tshugs dpung* is not understood at the present. It is expected to indicate either a certain carnivorous animal, or a currently intelligible term, or a corrupted verse.

'du byed la gti mug gnas su dag pa'i phyir/ lug dkar po bang mig dang/ g.yag dkar po shel mig la sogs ste/ rmig pa kha brag rnam kyi lce (*lci) ril dang/

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

Comm.: Amchi Nyima is not certain about the term *bang mig* and explains it as "eyes of *rgya bo* colour". To his knowledge, *rgya bo* is a dark blackish colour, often of dogs' eyes for instance. Nevertheless, *rgya bo* colour may denote another tone, such as "yellow hair with black base".⁵⁶⁷

As can be seen, different groups of animals require specific appellations for their distinct kinds of stool: *sbrun* (a general designation), *lci ril* (droppings), *lci ba* (dung). The last term refers to animal stool usable as fuel.⁵⁶⁸

⁵⁶² NyTshGy, p. 9.

⁵⁶³ MsB, MsC: *dpyid*.

⁵⁶⁴ NW (Oxford 2013), BGTC.

⁵⁶⁵ Menon, 2014.

⁵⁶⁶ NW (Oxford 2013), DTMM.

⁵⁶⁷ BGTC.

⁵⁶⁸ BGTC.

'du byed [la] 'dod chags gnas su dag pa'i phyir/ bya dkar (85) ze dmar dang/ khu byug gsung snyan la sogs te/ 'dabs chags sna tshogs kyi sbrun dang/

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

Comm.: Red-crested white poultry, cuckoos, peacocks, parrots, snowcocks, jackdaws (*skyung ka*), Alpine Choughs (*mkha' lding*),⁵⁶⁹ partridges (*srag pa*), sparrows (*mchil ba*), swallows (*khug rta*), magpies (*skya ka*), pigeons.⁵⁷⁰

In general, Amchi Nyima does not take most of the ritual recipe's substances of animal origin as medicinal ingredients to apply to patients. In comparison, Tibetan medicine makes use of meat and throat of cuckoos, but not of stool. Eating the throat cures throat diseases, stammering, and enhances a pleasant voice.⁵⁷¹

'du byed la 'phrog (*'phrag) gnas su dag pa'i phyir/ ci spyang dang byi la stag ril dod pa la sogs te/ gcan gzan rnams kyi gzugs sbrun rnams so//

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

Only the cats are understood to be described as striped, not the jackals. *Bi la* or *byi la* stands in older language and still in some spoken dialects for *zhi mi*. Yet, the understanding is quite surprising, as domestic cats are generally not recognised to belong to the Tibetan category of *gcan gcan* embracing wild carnivores.⁵⁷² When questioned, Amchi Nyima was not sure if the cats meant here should be wild or domesticated.

[Id. WEST]

khrag na (*ni) ⁵⁷³ pad ma sor rtogs zhes bya te/ tshor ba las zhe sdang gnas su dag pa'i phyir/ khye'u dang bu mo mdangs dmar gyi khrag dang/

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

Again, the title *khrag ni pad ma sor rtogs* functions as an abbreviated summary of the section to come.

tshor ba la 'dod chags gnas su dag pa'i phyir/ mkha' lding dmar po rnams kyi khrag dang/

⁵⁶⁹ See the discussion of the name *mkha' lding* above at the beginning of the recipe.

⁵⁷⁰ See the list of birds above.

⁵⁷¹ ShM, p. 359.

⁵⁷² AN, NW (Oxford 2013).

⁵⁷³ As in MsB, MsC.

In order to purify the desire in sensation, blood of red birds, such as red *mkha' lding*⁵⁷⁴ [is needed].

tshor ba la gti mug gnas su dag pa'i phyir/ lug mgo ser la sogs ste/ rmig pa kha brag gi khrag dang/

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

Comm.: Yellow-headed sheep, yaks, *dzos*,⁵⁷⁵ cattle and goats.

tshor ba la nga gyal gnas su dag pa'i phyir/ rta mtshal bu rting dkar la sogs te/ rmig pa zlum po'i khrag dang/

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

Comm.: Vermillion white-heeled donkeys, mules, etc.

mTshal is a vermilion dye of mineral origin. It may also, as in this case, indicate a reddish body colour which would however usually be rather *rag pa* or, as Amchi Nyima corrects this verse, *gzags pa*.

tshor ba la 'dod chags (*'phrag)⁵⁷⁶ gnas su dag pa'i phyir/ wa chen ldang 'gyur la sogs te/ gcan gzan sna tshogs kyis (*kyi) khrag gsol/

In order to purify the jealousy in sensation, blood of various kinds of carnivorous animals, such as quietly walking foxes⁵⁷⁷ and others, is requested.

[Ie. SOUTH]

dri⁵⁷⁸ chu las drug bya ba nan tan ches bya te/ lho ru khye'u smug la gzi byin chags pa dang/ bud med sngo (86) las gzi mdangs chags pa'i dri chu dang/ 'brug kyus pa'i chu la sogs te/ gcan gzan sdir (*sder) chags kyi chu dang/

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

⁵⁷⁴ For the discussion of the name *mkha' lding*, including *mkha' lding dmar po*, see above at the beginning of the recipe.

⁵⁷⁵ A crossed bread of yak and domestic cattle.

⁵⁷⁶ Emended according to the text pattern (see below).

⁵⁷⁷ For the discussion of the term *ldang 'gyu* see above in the recipe.

⁵⁷⁸ MsC: *dra*.

Comm.: Amchi Nyima reads *kyus* as *skyugs*, vomit of a dragon. Alternatively, in another line of the commentary, he suggests to understand the whole phrase *'brug kyus pa'i chu* as “meat of tigers, domestic cats, and other carnivorous animals (*gcan gzan*).”

The title *dri chu las drug bya ba nan tan* functions as an abbreviated summary of the following section.

Kyus is a problematic word. It can be understood in both an ordinate or subordinate (*i.e.* as an attribute) position. Amchi Nyima employs the first option, NyTshGy the second one. In NyTshGy the three ingredients are translated as “1. The urine of a bright brown boy, 2. The urine of a bright blue girl, 3. The urine of a mute (*lkugs*) dragon.” The only translation of *kyus* I have found was in a compound *kyus bur* with the meaning “treacle of interior quality”, which would indeed fit with the comprehension of Amchi Nyima well.⁵⁷⁹

sNgo could be also rendered as “flawless, faultless”,⁵⁸⁰ but as we are dealing with the Southern direction connected to the colour blue, the dye description is more likely here.

'du shes las gti mug gnas su dag pa'i phyir/ chu mdzo sngon po la sogs te/ rmig pa khe (*kha) brag gi chu dang/

In order to purify the ignorance in perception, urine of [animals with] divided hooves, such as blue water *dzos*⁵⁸¹ [is needed].

The “blue water *dzo*” is a mythical animal which, together with a horse, is believed to dwell under the sea.⁵⁸²

'du shes la nga gyal gnas su dag pa'i phyir/ dre'u ngon po ldang tsher (*gdang 'tsher)⁵⁸³ la sogs te/ rmig pa zlum pa'i chu dang/

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

'du shes las 'dod chags gnas su dag pa'i phyir/ g.yu bya gong ngon la sogs te/ 'dod (*'dab) chags kyi khrag chu dang/ lho rtsa ba'i phyir⁵⁸⁴ (*bye) brag go//

In order to purify the desire in perception, blood and urine⁵⁸⁵ of birds, such as cuckoos, *gong ngon* and others [is needed]; and this is the particular root [medicine] of the South.

⁵⁷⁹ ML.

⁵⁸⁰ BGTC, TED.

⁵⁸¹ A crossed bread of yak and domestic cattle.

⁵⁸² NW (Oxford 2013). Nebesky-Wojkowitz, 1996, pp. 13, 185, mentions “blue water-horse” (*chu rta ngon po*), the horse of the *klu* (*klu rta*) that lives in water sources and the underground. The horse is mentioned as a mount in TGS, p. 49.

⁵⁸³ Alternatively, might be also *mdang tsher*. NW (Oxford 2013).

⁵⁸⁴ MsB: *phyi*.

⁵⁸⁵ *Chu* as a synonym to *dri chu*, *gcin pa* (urine). BGTC.

g.Yu bya is a common epithet for the cuckoo bird. Alternatively *g.yu bya gong ngon* might be understood as “blue-collared cuckoos”, but this is probably not plausible here. The name *gong ngon* is not well understood here, and might refer to members of the *Tetraonidae* bird family (see above in the recipe).

***de nas*⁵⁸⁶ *phung po rigs su phye ba'o*//**

Then, the aggregates (*phung po*) are classified.

[III. NON-ANIMAL, i.e. PLANT AND MINERAL, INGREDIENTS ACCORDING TO THE CARDINAL POINTS]

[IIIa. CENTRE]

***de nas*⁵⁸⁷ *gros*⁵⁸⁸ (**grog*s) *su bstan* (**bsten*) *pa ni* 'byung *ba las dbye ste*/**

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

***dbus su 'dus pa ldan ba'i nam mkha'i sman ces bya ste/ ro 'dus pa a ru ra*⁵⁸⁹ *dang/ bcud 'dus pa bzang drug dang/ nus pa 'dus pa'i skyu ru ra dang/ rjes 'dus pa ba ru ra*⁵⁹⁰ *dang/ gzhan yang sna tshogs par dgos te/ de ni nam kha'i lha mo sems can* (**sems*) *mtshan ma*⁵⁹¹ *dang bral sman bya'o*/**

In the Centre the medicine of *'dus pa ldan ba'i nam kha* refers to: the assembly of tastes – *a ru ra*, the assembly of essence – the six good [substances], the assembly of potencies – *skyu ru ra*, the assembly of after-tastes – *ba ru ra*, and various others are also needed. This is the medicine of the Goddess of Space whose mind is without characteristics.⁵⁹²

The title *'dus pa ldan ba'i nam kha* functions as an abbreviated summary of the following section.

The verse enumerates the four main characterising categories of Tibetan medicinal remedies: *ro* taste, *bcud* essence, *nus pa* potency, *zhu rjes* after-taste (see below). Each of them is perceived as concentrated in one of the four root medicine flora ingredients.

[IIIb. EAST]

(87) *shar gyi sman gyi grogs su/ bskyed cing dag pa'i sman ces bya ste*/

⁵⁸⁶ MsC: The first two words omitted.

⁵⁸⁷ MsB: *yi*.

⁵⁸⁸ MsB: *grog*s.

⁵⁸⁹ MsB: *a ru*.

⁵⁹⁰ MsB: *rje 'dus pa bstun*. This reading would change the phrase: “in accordance with the assembly of after-tastes”.

⁵⁹¹ MsB: *mtsan*.

⁵⁹² Association of certain body parts with goddesses in tantric ritual healing (of the *Mahākālatantra*) was also noted by Stablein, 1976, pp. 191-192.

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

mang ther nu zhes bya ste/ du rum skad phyad dang/

Euphorbia sp. (spurge),

In the present and the subsequent two couplets, it is understood by Amchi Nyima that plants are first indicated by their Zhangzhung name, which is then translated into Tibetan by the immediately following verse. Generally speaking, many plant substances used in Tibetan medicine are said by the Bonpos to bear a Zhangzhung designation.⁵⁹³

Neither the anticipated Zhuangzhung name, nor its anticipated Tibetan translation, represent clear terms. According to Amchi Nyima, *mang ther nu* might be understood as a phonetic variant of or an alternative name for the plant *thar nu* (in the supposed Zhangzhung language *mang* means “red”, or “meat, flesh”).⁵⁹⁴ As he explains, Tibetan Sowa rikpa distinguishes two types of *thar nu*: *thar nu che ba* or *thar chen*, “big *thar nu*”, and *thar nu chung ba* or *thar chung*, “small *thar nu*”, each denoting a group of different species of *Euphorbia spp.* sharing certain characteristics.⁵⁹⁵ When the shorter form *thar nu* appears, it is usually taken as standing for the more efficient *thar nu che ba*.⁵⁹⁶ The name can be thus understood as a synonym to *thar nu che ba*, “big *thar nu*”, appearing in the second line below, followed by *thar nu chung ba*. This assumption could be further supported by the medical appellation *du ru ka*, an alternative name of *thar nu*, resembling the word *du rum skad phyad* in the second half of the verse.⁵⁹⁷ In that case, the *thar nu* term of Tibetan medicine would be here taken as of Zhangzhung origin, whereas its synonym *du ru ka* as derived from Tibetan language. The *thar nu* group is to be distinguished from another group of *Euphorbia* species, with different medical properties and usage, called *dur bjid*.⁵⁹⁸ The assumed Tibetan alternative *du rum skad phyad* was by Amchi Nyima taken as incomprehensible.

As both *thar nu che ba* and *thar nu chung ba* were to be included into the Mendrup mixture anyway based on the following verses, the ingredient here was omitted.

du nu phro ces ste*⁵⁹⁹/*sngon bu g.yu sna dang/

Cyananthus spp.,⁶⁰⁰

The ingredient *sngon bu g.yu sna*, translating the preceding presumed Zhangzhung appellation, was read as *sngon bu* denoting species of the *Cyananthus* genus. Amchi Nyima distinguishes two types of *sngon bu*: “the

⁵⁹³ AN, MC (Oxford 2013).

⁵⁹⁴ ZB, ZZ.

⁵⁹⁵ AN, not differentiated in ShM.

⁵⁹⁶ AN, also in ShM.

⁵⁹⁷ Cf. DTMM. Alternatively, *du ru ka* denotes a tree resin incense usually called *spos dkar*, which can be either amber or resin distilled from the olibanum tree (*Boswellia carterii / sacra / papyrifera*) domestic to the Near East where it has also served as a frankincense. AN, BGTC, Das, ShM, p. 139.

⁵⁹⁸ For instance MDP, ShM.

⁵⁹⁹ MsC adds: *dang*.

⁶⁰⁰ AN, DTMM, MPD, ShM. TMPa understands *sngon bu* differently (*Lactuca lessertiana*). This understanding has been probably taken from FM, and subsequently from TMPa.

superior one” or *sngon bu mchog*, and “the lesser one”, *sngon bu dman pa*.⁶⁰¹ For the Mendrup medicine, both were collected, and according to Amchi Nyima, these were respectively: *Cyananthus microphyllus* and *Cyananthus lobatus*. The former is in Jharkot referred to as *sngon bu mchog* or *sngon bu g.yu shing*,⁶⁰² actually resembling the term *sngon bu g.yu sna* in the manuscript verse.⁶⁰³

P: Root.

L: Jharkot and surroundings, Mustang.

mang bu phrum ces bya te/ ther nu zhes chen dang/

Euphorbia sp. (spurge),⁶⁰⁴

Comm.: *Thar nu che ba*.

The term in the manuscript *ther nu zhes chen* is again viewed as a Tibetan translation of the Zhangzhung name in the immediately preceding verse, and is rendered as *thar nu che ba*. On *thar nu che ba* see few verses above.

P: Root.

L: Dhorpatan.

skyes bu phrum zhes chen dang/ thar nu chung ba dang/

Euphorbia sp. (spurge),⁶⁰⁵

Comm.: *Thar nu chung ba*.

Repeatedly, a pair understood as Zhangzhung and Tibetan synonyms.

P: Root.

L: Dhorpatan.

gzhan yang 'khur mang dang/

And also others, [as] *Taraxacum sp.* (dandelion),⁶⁰⁶

Comm.: *Khur mang*.

The Tibetan term *khur mang* involves a variety of the *Taraxacum* genus species, all sharing the same medical properties. These can be further specified by different attributes, such as the two fundamental *wa khur* and *rgya*

⁶⁰¹ The same subdivisions of *ngon bu* were described in the surroundings of Jharkot by TMPI, but is not found in ShM.

⁶⁰² AN, TMPI.

⁶⁰³ In contrast to TMPI, where *Cyananthus lobatus* is cited as *sngon bu mchog*.

⁶⁰⁴ AN, DTMA, DTMM, ShM, TMPIG, TMPa.

⁶⁰⁵ AN, DTMM, MPD.

⁶⁰⁶ AN, DTMA, DTMM, MPD, TMPI, TMPa.

khur, each respectively of a light and a dark colour variation. Another division of the *khur mang* represents the quaternion of *wa khur dkar po*, *wa khur nag po* and *rgya khur dkar po*, and *rgya khur nag po*.⁶⁰⁷ Nevertheless, all would still be in this case of the *Taraxacum* very vague labels, extensively varying over the Tibetan-inhabited space. Interestingly, this vagueness and flexibility reflects the present situation in the Western biological binomial taxonomy, where there exists a broad debate on the further parting of the *Taraxacum* genus, which has by recent genetic research been proven to encompass around two and half thousand of hardly distinguishable species.⁶⁰⁸

P: Root and leaves (although in Tibetan medicine, according to Amchi Nyima, usually only root is used).⁶⁰⁹

L: Jharkot and surroundings.

mtshe dang shug pa dang/

Ephedra sp. (ephedra),⁶¹⁰ *Juniperus* sp. (juniper),

Comm.: *mTshe ldum*.

1. The term *mtshe*, or *mtshe ldum* (“plant mtshe”), refers to a cluster of plants of the *Ephedra* and *Equisetum* (equisetum) genera. The word *mtshe* in general seems to denote plants of a hollow stem with thin circular leaves growing from its regularly distributed joints. The *mtshe* plants are differentiated into three main types according to the habitat or location of growth: *brag mtshe* or “rock *mtshe*”, two types of *spang mtshe* or “meadow *mtshe*” deriving their respective further names from domestic animals: *lug mtshe*, “sheep *mtshe*”, and *ra mtshe*, “goat *mtshe*” (both *Ephedra* spp.), and *chu mtshe*, “water *mtshe*” (*Equisetum* spp.).⁶¹¹ The types are likely to reflect the Western botanical species’ division, although they vary in different regions and locations.

The *Ephedra* plant put into the Mendrup medicine was *spang mtshe / lug mtshe*.

P: Stem.

L: Jharkot and surroundings, Mustang.

2. Tibetan medical tradition as well as popular knowledge distinguishes several types of *shug pa*, usually three or four, belonging to the *Cupressaceae* family,⁶¹² genera *Juniperus* and *Sabina* (alternatively, *Sabina* might be counted into the *Juniperus* genus).⁶¹³ *The Flawless Crystal Mirror* (ShM) based on the altitude of its location, tree height, shape and the overall habitus differentiates these kinds: *rgya shug*, *shug rgan*, *spa ma* (all *Sabina* spp.) and *shug mtsher* (*Juniperus* spp.).⁶¹⁴ For the sake of easier comprehensibility and following my chosen

⁶⁰⁷ AN, ShM.

⁶⁰⁸ I am grateful to the botanist Magdalena Kubešová for consulting this issue with me.

⁶⁰⁹ Similarly, Gy takes the plant name as its root only, quoting the remedy as *khur rtsa*. Whereas ShM178 states that all the plant’s parts above the earth are used: leaves, stem, flower and seeds.

⁶¹⁰ DTMA, DTMM, MPD, TMPa. Its usage in rituals cf. NWB, p. 37, Nebesky-Wojkowitz, 1996, p. 346.

⁶¹¹ AN; ShM.

⁶¹² AN, ShM.

⁶¹³ <http://www.biolib.cz>.

⁶¹⁴ AN, DTMM, ShM.

sources consulted with scholars of Biology (<http://biolib.cz>), I take here *Sabina* as being of *Juniperus spp.* Amchi Nyima usually distinguishes two kinds of *shug pa*: *shug pa* which corresponds to *rgya shug* of ShM and relates to juniper grown-up trees (as opposed to the ground creeping *spa ma*, *spang ma*, or *shug pa spang ma*, of higher altitudes), and secondly, the more thorny prickling *shug tsher*.⁶¹⁵ Amchi Nyima thus provides a division different from that of ShM: he understands *shug pa* to be a high juniper tree, if it has thorns, then it is *shug tsher*. Outside of this are the ground creeping *Juniperus spp.* which he calls *spa ma*, *spang ma*, or eventually (and rarely) *shug pa spa ma* or *shug pa spang ma*. Both *shug pa* distinguished by Amchi Nyima, i.e. *shug pa* and *shug tsher*, were included into the Mendrup medicine. The latter one is, as Amchi says, used for healing more often, however, all *shug pa* plants share the same medical characteristics and effects (*nus pa*).

P: Leaves.

L: Jharkot and surroundings, Mustang.

chud bu dang/

A so far unidentified plant by me.

lcam bur li do ka la sogs pa ni/

Malva sp. (mallow),⁶¹⁶ *Geranium sp.* (geranium),⁶¹⁷ and others.

Comm.: *lCam bur, li ga dur*.

1. *lCam bur* was by Amchi Nyima taken as a synonym for the more common *lcam pa*. In *The Flawless Crystal Mirror* three types are described based on habitus and altitude: *rgya lcam* “Chinese *lcam*”, *bod lcam* “Tibetan *lcam*”, and *mo lcam* “female *lcam*”. Amchi Nyima distinguishes four types, adding *lcam pa ha lo*. For the Mendrup medicine he chose the one widespread in Tibet and most often applied in medical practice, *bod lcam*.

P: Seed.

L: Jharkot and surroundings, Mustang.

2. *Li do ka* was read by Amchi Nyima as the common name *ga dur*, or sometimes *li ga dur*.⁶¹⁸ The term receives many apprehensions. The one of Amchi Nyima, as an appellation for plant species belonging to the *Geranium* genus, corresponds with most dictionaries,⁶¹⁹ although in terms of naming disaccords with *The Flawless Crystal Mirror*.⁶²⁰ Amchi Nyima distinguishes two types of *ga dur*: simply *ga dur* and *ga dur mchog*, “superior *ga*

⁶¹⁵ The same division appears in GyPyBM: *shug pa rgya shug* and *shug pa tsher can*.

⁶¹⁶ DTMA, DTMM, ShM, TMPa, TMPIG.

⁶¹⁷ DTMA, MPD, TMPI, TMPIG. Only TMPa takes *ga dur* differently (*Coleus amboinicus* / *Rhodiola wallichiana*).

⁶¹⁸ Corresponds to TMPI.

⁶¹⁹ DTMA, MPD, TMPI, TMPIG.

⁶²⁰ ShM lists two different genera under two types of *ga dur*: *ga dur* and *ga dur dman pa*, identified respectively as *Bergenia sp.* and *Rhodiola sp.* For *Geranium spp.* ShM allocates the name *gla sgang* which is shared also with *Polygonum spp.* Nevertheless, all of these enumerated plant groups share the same medical properties (taste and

dur”,⁶²¹ recognisable by their size but sharing the same medicinal properties and effects (*nus pa*). Only the “superior” was found at the medical market in Kathmandu, and thus was the one included into the Mendrup medicine.

P: Root.

L: Kathmandu medical market.

de ni sa’i lha mo sha gdos pa bral pa’i sman ces bya’o//

This is called the immaterial medicine of the Earth Goddess.

[IIIc. NORTH]

byang gi sman gyi grogs su btang pa ni/ ’deg (*’degs) shing yangs (*yang) pa rlung gi sman ces ste/

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

du ru ska na dang/

Resin of *Boswellia sp.* (olibanum tree),⁶²²

Comm.: *Du ru ka*.

P: Resin.

L: Kathmandu medical market.

so ’cha’⁶²³ dang/

A so far unidentified plant by me.

Comm.: *Po so ’cha’*.

As Amchi Nyima explains, there exist two types of *so ’cha’* or *po so ’cha’*: 1. Fruit (long thin legumen) of *Sesbania grandiflora* (vegetable hummingbird), a tree growing in hot places of lowland South Asia,⁶²⁴ 2. Root or tuber of a small parasitic plant of dark blue colour growing in South Himalayan mountain forests. Amchi Nyima himself collected the latter to include into the Mendrup mixture.

P: Root.

L: Dhorpatan.

after-taste), thus these variable understandings of particular names do not contradict each other, nor create a confusion.

⁶²¹ For example, *Geranium pratense* (meadow crane’s bill) would fall into the first term. AN.

⁶²² AN, also ShM. See above.

⁶²³ MsB: *so ’chal*.

⁶²⁴ Cf. Das, DTMA, DTMM, ML, TMPa.

'bu ta pa 'dren*⁶²⁵ *dang/

Fragaria sp. (strawberry) and *Lagotis brachystachya* (?),⁶²⁶

Comm.: *dri rta sa 'dzin*.

This term was difficult for Amchi Nyima. He viewed it as one of either Zhangzhung or other ancient origin, or derived from a local dialect (*yul skad*). The expression is unusual, and also for other Tibetan medicine practitioners consulted obscure. For its identification Amchi Nyima had to make a phone call to Tibet, Khyungpo, to consult his late teacher's cousin. Amchi Nyima then took the term as *bu ta sa 'dren* or *dri rta sa 'dzin*. Read in the obtained explanation, the term becomes a synonym to *'bri (r)ta sa 'dzin* or *sa 'dzin*,⁶²⁷ literally “grasping the ground”, denoting different kinds of small creeping plants sharing certain properties and effects (*nus pa*): various species of wild strawberries,⁶²⁸ *Lagotis brachystachya*,⁶²⁹ and thirdly also *Polygonum sibiricum* referred to as *tshi tshi sa 'dzin*,⁶³⁰ the last of which is, however, not understood by the same name by Amchi Nyima. For the Mendrup medicinal mixture, Amchi Nyima gathered the first two.

1a. P: Leaves and stem.

L: Mustang.

1b. P: Leaves and stem.

L: Tibet (supplied by an *amchi*, and friend of Amchi Nyima, from Nangchen, Nang chen, near Khyungpo).

rtsi snga srin gyi 'bras dang/

Not understood by Amchi Nyima and omitted.

shing kyi ba'i 'bras bu dang/

Sophora davidii (wild indigo),⁶³¹

Comm.: *nang gser sgong*.

The seeds of wild indigo are usually called *skyi ba'i 'bras bu*, with an alternative name *nang pa gser sgong* (“golden goose’s eggs” or “the goose [that laid] golden eggs”),⁶³² or *ngang pa chig thub* (“the all-powerful goose”).⁶³³

⁶²⁵ MsC: *'dran*.

⁶²⁶ The latter is identified following ShM, image no. 548, to which Amchi Nyima pointed. The scientific name has not been further confirmed.

⁶²⁷ DTMA, MPD, ShM.

⁶²⁸ DTMA, FM, MPD, ShM, TMPa.

⁶²⁹ ShM, TMPa.

⁶³⁰ ShM.

⁶³¹ DTMA, DTMM, ShM, TMPa.

⁶³² Also in ShM.

⁶³³ DTMA.

P: Seeds.

L: Mustang.

rgya skag dang/

red lac,⁶³⁴

Comm.: *rgya skags*.

rGya skag is a corruption of *rgya skyegs*. Red lac or shellac is extracted from an insect (*Kerria lacca*, lac insect) living on the trunks of ficus trees (*Ficus spp.*). This means that even the flora compounds of the Mendrup medicine are not vegetarian in a biological sense. Nevertheless, they are vegetarian from the perspective of the Tibetan medical tradition and its classification of medicines. By it *rgya skyegs* is counted into the category of woody plants, *shing*, reflecting rather the whole from which it is taken, i.e. insects collected from a tree. The parasitic insects are regarded as the tree's part, although the crucial presence of the separable insects is fully recognised.⁶³⁵ As Amchi Nyima adds, the substance is a favourite one in compounding present drugs.

L: Kathmandu medical market.

spang ma dang/

Juniperus sp. (juniper),

Amchi Nyima recognises two types of *spang ma*: 1. a *shug pa* labelled *spa ma*, and thus called *shug pa spa ma* or *shug pa spang ma* (*Juniperus spp.*, according to some classifications *Sabina spp.*, I adhere to the former here); and 2. *spang ma* as malachite.⁶³⁶ Again, to achieve the right identification, the *amchi* in Khyungpo, Tibet, was consulted. Upon his advice, *shug pa* was used. This selection fits into the properties of the substances listed for this particular cardinal point, as *spang ma* as juniper is of bitter taste (for the analysis of the recipe see below). See the discussion on *shug pa* differentiation above.

P: Leaves.

L: Mustang.

sbrang rtsi dang/

honey,

L: Kathmandu.

⁶³⁴ BGTC, TMPa, Das, ShM, p. 114.

⁶³⁵ For example ShM, p. 123.

⁶³⁶ As malachite in DTMA, ShM, TMPa. On the contrary, *spang ma*, also as *spang rgyan*, is in several dictionaries understood as *Gentiana sp.* (DTMM, MPD).

a ma bi la la len la sogs/

Fritillaria spp. (fritillary),⁶³⁷ and others.

According to Amchi Nyima, *a ma bi la la len* represents a local name (*yul skad*) synonymous to *a bi ka* or *a bi kha*, mostly *a bi sha* or *a bi Sha*, denoting *Fritillaria* spp. Moreover, Amchi includes within the name also *a'u rtsi*, another *Fritillaria* sp. In both cases roots are used in medicine. *The Flawless Crystal Mirror* accords with Amchi's understanding, however, also lists *a'u rtsi* as a separate remedy distinct from *a bi Sha*, both having similar medical properties (taste and cooling effect).⁶³⁸ Both were included into the Mendrup medicine.

P: Root.

L: Jharkot and surroundings, Mustang.

'deg (*'degs) pa'i rnams (*rnam) pa ni/ rlung gi lha mo dbug (*dbugs) la gnas su dag pa'i sman ces bya'o/

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

[IIIId. WEST]

(88) *sman las lce*⁶³⁹ (*lci) ba me'i sman bya ste//

From the medicine, the heavy fire medicine refers to:

spos snag gsum dang/

three kinds of incenses: *Valeriana officinalis* (valerian), *Nardostachys grandiflora* (valerian), *Lepisorus soulieanus*,

Comm.: *rGya spos*, *spang spos*, *brag spos*.⁶⁴⁰

1. *rGya spos* is in Amchi Nyima's understanding *Valeriana officinalis* (valerian), which he included into the Mendrup matter. This is in the medical tradition mostly further specified as *rgya spos dkar po* in order to be distinguished from the other usually called *rgya spos*, *rgya spos gser po*, *Melilotus suaveolens* (sweet clover).⁶⁴¹ Both share the same characteristics from the perspective of Tibetan medicine, but are separated into divergent genera by Western botany.

⁶³⁷ DTMA, ShM.

⁶³⁸ ShM, p. 318, also TMPIG.

⁶³⁹ MsB, MsC: *lci*.

⁶⁴⁰ The same set and order in Das.

⁶⁴¹ Dictionaries read both substances as *rgya spos*. DTMM, TMPa.

P: Root.

L: Kathmandu medical market, although the plant grows in Mustang (most accessibly near Narukot), from where it would be preferably picked if it was not so difficult to find.

2. *Spang spos* was together with Amchi Nyima identified as *Nardostachys grandiflora* (valerian).⁶⁴²

P: Whole plant.

L: Mustang.

3. Amchi Nyima distinguishes three types of *brag spos*, the one he collected was according to him *Lepisorus soulieanus*.⁶⁴³

P: Root and leaves, which in the case of the *Polypodiophyta* class (Ferns) means the whole plant.

L: Valley of Kali Gandaki river, slightly lower and south of Mustang.

tshwa snag gsum dang/

three kinds of salt: Sal ammoniac, rock salt (halite), black salt (natural halite, *Halitum violaceum*),

Comm.: *rGya tshwa*, *rgyam tshwa*, *kha ru tshwa*.⁶⁴⁴

1. *rGya tshwa* or *tshwa rgyal*, Sal ammoniac.⁶⁴⁵ Amchi Nyima explains, that this kind of salt has to be white. He further recognises its two types according to the shape of its flakes: square and round.

2. *rgyam tshwa*, rock salt (halite).⁶⁴⁶

3. *kha ru tshwa* black salt (natural halite, *Halitum violaceum*)⁶⁴⁷

1.-3. L: Kathmandu medical market.

bu ram dang/

sugarcane molasses (*Saccharum officinarum*),

Amchi Nyima recognises three types of *bu ram*, sugarcane molasses: 1. Dry brown sugar used in medicine; 2. Dark brown sugar not used in medicine, but used for *chang* fermentation; 3. Pale brown sugar used both in

⁶⁴² In agreement up to the species with DTMM, up to the genus with TMPa.

⁶⁴³ In agreement with DTMM, ShM.

⁶⁴⁴ The same set and order in DTMM.

⁶⁴⁵ DTMM, TMPa.

⁶⁴⁶ DTMM, TMPa.

⁶⁴⁷ DTMM, TMPa. Das translates as “black salt”.

medicine and in *chang* fermentation. The first and the third type were included into the Mendrup mixture, following the medical tradition.

L: Kathmandu medical market.

gzhi mo dang/

Not understood and omitted.

ma nu dang/

Inula racemosa,⁶⁴⁸

Comm.: *Ma nu ru rta*.

Although there are several plant names beginning with the syllables *ma nu*, and *ma nu* can also denote a medicinal stone,⁶⁴⁹ Amchi Nyima unambiguously understands *ma nu* as standing for *ma nu ru ta* or *ma nu pa tra*, *Inula racemosa*, in which he corresponds to *The Flawless Crystal Mirror*. The difference between the two appellations is that the latter, involving *pa tra*, may denote only the plant's leaves.⁶⁵⁰ Both have to be distinguished from *ru ta*, *sha bu ru ta* or *sha pho ru ta* (*Aucklandia lappa*, *Vladimiri souliei*, and similar others) appearing below.⁶⁵¹

P: Root.

L: Jharkot village, Mustang.

la la phud dang/

Foeniculum vulgare (fennel),

Amchi Nyima recounts that *la la phud* has got five types, of which he knows three. The usually used are two: *Foeniculum vulgare* (fennel)⁶⁵² and *Trachyspermum copticum* (ajowan caraway)⁶⁵³ of the same family (*Apiaceae*). All five types can be obtained in Kathmandu, from which Amchi decided to buy one, the fennel seeds.

P: Seeds.

L: Kathmandu medical market.

⁶⁴⁸ AN, FH, MC (Oxford 2013), ShM.

⁶⁴⁹ See for instance DTMM.

⁶⁵⁰ AN. In accordance with ShM, but not completely with other dictionaries (DTMA, p. 324: *ma nu ru rta* as *Saussurea lappa*, *ma nu se shing* as *Dendrobium noble*; also: *ma nu ru rta* as *Saussurea lappa*, *ma nu pa tra* as *Inula racemosa*; *ma nu / ma nu pa ta* as *Inula racemosa*, TMP presents different *ma nu* plants).

⁶⁵¹ AN, ShM.

⁶⁵² As in DTMA, DTMM, TMPIG, ShM.

⁶⁵³ TMPI, similarly TMPa. TMPa distinguishes three types of *la la phud*.

shing kun dang/

Ferula asafoetida (asafoetida),

This same term has occurred above as probably an attribute. If it was taken there as a separate ingredients item, then the text repeats it here.

P: Resin.

L: Kathmandu medical market.

ra sa ya na dang/

mercury,

In Tibetan religion and ritual the term *ra sa ya na* has got broad connotations.⁶⁵⁴ Within the context of Tibetan medicine, it mostly serves as a synonym for *dngul chu*, mercury, or alternatively for *brag spos* or *a ru ra*.⁶⁵⁵ The latter two have appeared in this ingredients' list above. Mercury is a highly valued substance in Tibetan religious, alchemical and medicinal compounding, and is ascribed extraordinary properties.⁶⁵⁶ Amchi Nyima took the term to denote mercury.

To meet the requirement, processed and detoxified mercury ash called *brtso bkru* (or *btso bkru*)⁶⁵⁷ sent from Tibet was included. The detoxification is a very complex and rather secret lengthy ritual,⁶⁵⁸ and in this case took place in 2008 at a Bonpo establishment in Khyungpo for the production of a Bonpo precious pill *rin chen brtso bkru* (*bkru*).⁶⁵⁹ The pill reflects the involvement of mercury already by its name, and is further known to contain other metals such as gold, silver, copper, and turquoise. The mercury ash *brtso bkru* was as a special item sent to Amchi Nyima's teacher Amchi Gege. From the batch Amchi Nyima received a part. This came very handy once the Mendrup was to be prepared, and Amchi Nyima included about one hundred grams. In general, mercury in its detoxified powder form (as well as other empowered substances, such as precious pills)⁶⁶⁰ is sometimes added into exclusive and specially prepared medicines in Tibetan communities as an enhancer of their efficacy.⁶⁶¹

P: Detoxified mercury ash *brtso bkru*.

L: Khyungpo, Tibet.

⁶⁵⁴ Gerke, 2012a, Cantwell, 2017, Fenner, 1979, pp. 73-83. Fenner, p. 83, describes: "Rasayana, then, in the tantras and in its Tibetan interpretation, is extremely multi-faceted, covering medicine, transmutation of metals, magic ointments, general chemistry, and tantric techniques leading to enlightenment." On mercury in Tibetan medicine see also Gerke 2013d, 2016.

⁶⁵⁵ Das, DTMA, ShM.

⁶⁵⁶ Czaja, 2013, Gerke, 2013c. On the power attributed to mercury in tantric healing Fenner, 1979, Cantwell, 2017, Stablein, 1976, pp. 78-79.

⁶⁵⁷ The second spelling as in ShM.

⁶⁵⁸ Cf. Gerke, 2013c, Sonam Dolma, 2013. On its history see Czaja, 2013.

⁶⁵⁹ A certain Bonpo production of *brtso bkru* was shortly described by Gerke, 2013c, p. 132, and at length by its production manual translation by Millard, draft paper.

⁶⁶⁰ Blaikie, 2015, p. 9.

⁶⁶¹ Gerke 2013c, pp. 125-126.

gzi ma byin tshor dang/

Morina sp.,⁶⁶²

Comm.: *gZi ma byin tsher*.

Amchi Nyima reckons that the term *gzi ma byin tshor* stands for *byi thur*, pines of porcupines. The animal is called *gzugs mo* or *gzugs mo byi dur*, the same name can also denote a hedgehog.⁶⁶³ In medical context the pines are called *sgro*, “feathers”. As it was difficult to get porcupine’s pines, the plant *byi tsher* was chosen as a substitution. Amchi Nyima differentiates two types of *byi tsher*: *byi tsher kar po*, “the white *byi tsher*” and *byi tsher nag po*, “the black *byi tsher*”. The white variant grows in higher and colder places, whereas the black one is typical of lower and hot places. The latter can be by the Tibetan medical tradition called simply *byis tsher* and associated with a lowland species of *Xanthium* (cocklebur).⁶⁶⁴ Both share the same basic name and also the same medicinal properties. Since Amchi Nyima was collecting the Mendrup *materia* mainly in Mustang, *byi tsher dkar po* found in its high altitude was included. Another spelling of *byi tsher* is *spyang tsher* identified in dictionaries as *Morina sp.* The species might be *Morina alba*.⁶⁶⁵

The manuscript reading *gzi ma byin tshor* raises a question whether the ingredient intended could not be *gze ma*, *Tribulus terrestris*,⁶⁶⁶ which would correspond with the medical characteristics sought in remedies of the cardinal point in question. Nevertheless, this is not how Amchi Nyima understood the text.

P: Whole plant.

L: Mustang, high mountain locations.

nyi shing snum can dang/

Asparagus sp. (asparagus),⁶⁶⁷

Comm.: *Nyer shing*.

The second half of the verse again seems to provide an epithet to the plant name, read as *nyer shing* or *nye shing*. The epithet translates as “oily, possessing oil”. This how the phrases was interpreted.

Amchi Nyima recognises four types of *nyer shing*, based on their habitus, location altitude, and size of the root which is the part sought. The one included into the Mendrup medicine was quite explicitly called *nyer shing rtsa ba* and collected in Mustang.

P: Root.

L: Mustang.

⁶⁶² AN, ShM.

⁶⁶³ AN. (In ShM hedgehog is *rgang*.)

⁶⁶⁴ AN, DTMA, DTMM, TMPIG, ShM. Some dictionaries do, however, also locate *byis tsher* into higher altitudes.

⁶⁶⁵ DTMA, ShM, TMPa.

⁶⁶⁶ BGTC, DTMA, TMPIG, TMPa.

⁶⁶⁷ AN, DTMA, DTMM, TMPI, TMPa, TMPIG, MPD.

bal bu sur bu dang/

Rhododendron sp. (rhododendron),⁶⁶⁸

The *Rhododendron* genus has been divided into two groups of different medical effects by the Tibetan medical tradition. The first comprises of names as *sur pu*, *ba lu*, *bal bu*, *bal dkar* and *bal nag*, *su lu*, *su*, etc., the second is represented by *stag ma* or *stag ma'i me tog*.⁶⁶⁹ As for the first group, Amchi Nyima is used to appellations *ba lu*, *da lis* or *da li*, and *bu lu*. The one picked up for the Mendrup was *ba lu dkar po* aka *da lis dkar po* with white blossoms, depicted for instance, as Amchi recognises, in FH as *Rhododendron anthopogon*.⁶⁷⁰

P: Blossom, branches, leaves.

L: Mustang.

ga sho dang/

Cremanthodium sp.,⁶⁷¹

Ga sho was taken as *sga sho*, species of the *Cremanthodium* genus, which can be further divided into *sga sho*, *sga sho ring ba* and *sha la yu ring*.⁶⁷² Furthermore, species from another genus, *Senecio spp.*, are included into the *sga sho* plant category under the specified name *sngo sga chung ba*, based on their habitus resemblance and same medical characteristics.⁶⁷³ For the Mendrup celebration, *sga sho* was picked up, a *Cremanthodium* species.

P: Blossom, root, stem, leaves.

L: Mustang.

ma nu dang/

Inula racemosa,

Repetition.

lcam thod dkar dang/

Malva sp. (mallow),⁶⁷⁴

⁶⁶⁸ AN, DTMM, MC (Oxford 2013), MPD.

⁶⁶⁹ AN.

⁶⁷⁰ FH, Plate 76, Image 804. An example of the *stag ma* rhododendron is *Rhododendron cowanianum*, Plate 75, Image 816. AN.

⁶⁷¹ AN, ShM.

⁶⁷² AN.

⁶⁷³ AN, ShM.

⁶⁷⁴ AN, DTMA, DTMM.

lCam thod was taken as *lcam pa*, which has been already listed as an ingredient above. Thus, the verse here was read as a repetition and no additional substance was added.

sgog pa dang/

Allium sativum (garlic),⁶⁷⁵

Although wild garlic, *Allium spp.*, might have been collected, which would have provided a more suitable Mendrup substance, preference was given to garlic from an ordinary Kathmandu grocery shop.

P: Bulb (*rtsa ba*).

L: Kathmandu market.

mu zi la sogs pa rnams ni/

sulphur,⁶⁷⁶ and others, these are

Similarly as mercury (see above), processed sulphur was insured by the precious pill *rin chen brtso bkru* received from Tibet. Mercury and sulphur represent the two main constituents of the *brtso bkru* powder from which the pill is made.⁶⁷⁷ In addition, more and this time unprocessed sulphur was bought in Kathmandu.

P: Precious pill *rin chen brtso bkru*.

L: Khyungpo, Tibet; Kathmandu.

me yi lha mo drod gnas su dag pa'i sman ces bya'o/

the purifying medicine of the heat of the Fire Goddess.

[IIIe. SOUTH]

drang zhing bsil ba chu yi sman ces byas ste// lho yi sman gyi grogs ni//

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

ga pur dang/

Camphor,

Three types of *ga pur*, usually spelled *ga bur*, or camphor are recognized. They are extracted from different trees of different geographic regions in South and Southeast Asia, and share the same or similar properties and

⁶⁷⁵ AN, DTMA, DTMM, TMPa, MPD.

⁶⁷⁶ AN, DTMA, DTMM, TMPa.

⁶⁷⁷ Gerke 2013c, Millard, draft paper (also discusses detoxification of sulphur in Bonpo context), ShM, p. 73.

medical applications (especially for treating fever, as they are of cooling effects): *mang ga bur*, *stag zil ga bur*, *shel ga bur*.⁶⁷⁸ In medical practice, as Amchi Nyima says, *mang ga bur* is generally used. This one was also the one put into the Mendrup medicine, together with *stag zil ga bur*. The third, *shel ga bur* is too difficult to be obtained from the market, otherwise it would have been included as well.

P: Tree resin.

L: Kathmandu medical market.

sro ma ra tsa dang/

Abelmoschus moschatus (musk okra),⁶⁷⁹

Comm.: *So ma ra dza*.

Amchi Nyima knows two different substances with different medical properties which can be called *so ma ra dza*: *so ma ra dza* itself, *Abelmoschus moschatus* (musk okra), and secondly *sro ma nag po* or *so ma nag po*, *Cannabis sativa* (hemp).⁶⁸⁰ The first was included and bought at the market, despite the fact that both plants grow in the wild in Nepal.

P: Seeds.

L: Kathmandu medical market.

ba sha ba le⁶⁸¹ dang/

Justicia adhatoda (malabar nut),⁶⁸² *Aristolochia sp.* (birthwort),⁶⁸³

Comm.: Two plants are understood: *ba sha ka* and *ba le ka*.

1. Amchi Nyima explains that *ba sha ka* is of two main types sharing the same medical characteristics: one is a tree (*shing*) and one is a plant (*ldum bu*). The tree *ba sha ka* further splits into two: a tree blossoming with white flowers, and a tree with red flowers.⁶⁸⁴ All three are appropriate for the Mendrup. Of these the white *ba sha ka*, which is a widely used remedy in India, was gathered for the Mendrup. The red variety was not accessible.

The plant *ba sha ka* (referred to as *ldum ba sha ka*) denotes species of the *Corydalis* genus and is also found at Amchi Nyima's residence in Jharkot, where the term stands for *Corydalis hookeri*.⁶⁸⁵ Nevertheless, even in the area of Mustang the name applies to several *Corydalis* species, changing according to the biotopes. On the other

⁶⁷⁸ AN, ShM.

⁶⁷⁹ AN, DTMM, TMPa.

⁶⁸⁰ In accordance with DTMM, ShM, TMPa. *So ma ra dza* as a third plant, *Psoralea corylifolia*, occurs in DTMA, TMPIG.

⁶⁸¹ MsB, MsC: *ba sha ba le ka*.

⁶⁸² AN, DTMA, DTMM, TMPa, TMPIG.

⁶⁸³ AN, DTMA, DTMM, ShM, TMPa.

⁶⁸⁴ In contrast, ShM does not list the possibility of a red blossoming *ba sha ka*.

⁶⁸⁵ AN, TMPI. MPD assembled in Dolpo, thus not far from Jharkot in Mustang, gives another species native to the Himalayas: *Lagotis kunawurensis* / *Gymnandra kunawurensis*.

hand, some of *Corydalis* species have got another Tibetan name, based on their visual and medicinal characteristics.⁶⁸⁶

In contrast to both trees, the plant is native to Tibet. Thus, we deal with several plants of the same name and medical characteristics, not resembling each other and from different families in the Western nomenclature, one Tibetan and one Indian or, broadly speaking, South Asian.

P: Blossoms, leaves, small branches.

L: Kathmandu medical market.

2. *Ba le ka* represents a creeping plant.

P: Stem.

L: Kathmandu medical market.

g.yu shing dang/

Myricaria sp. (tamarisk),

Amchi Nyima reads *g.yu shing* as 'om bu, and thus as denoting several species of the *Tamaricaceae* family.⁶⁸⁷ According to *The Flawless Crystal Mirror*, the appellation *g.yu shing* may refer to three different plants: 'om bu, *sngon bu* (*Cyananthus spp.*, appearing in the recipe list above), and *stab seng* (*Fraxinus spp.*).⁶⁸⁸ Of these *sngon bu* would not fit into the characteristics of the Southern cardinal point (as the plant is warming by nature, and not cooling), whereas *stab seng* would.

P: Blossoms, leaves, small branches.⁶⁸⁹

L: Mustang.

rgun 'bum sda ru dang/

Vitis vinifera (wine grapes), *Juniperus sp.* (juniper), *Punica granatum* (pomegranate),

Comm.: *rGun 'brum sda ru*.

The verse was read as listing two ingredients: *rgun 'brum* and *sda ru*.

Surprisingly, the first item was not perceived as clear enough as it may seem, and therefore had to be consulted with the *amchi* in Tibet. The answer received ordered to use both wine grapes (*Vitis vinifera*, 1a.), to which the

⁶⁸⁶ For instance, taking the example of *Corydalis* species pictured in FH, Plate 14, Amchi Nyima recognises the yellow blossoming *Corydalis govaniana* (Image No. 120) and *Corydalis juncea* (No. 121) as *ba sha ka*, the blue blossoming *Corydalis cashmeriana* (No. 112) as *de ba*, and the different-leaved yellow and orange blossoming *Corydalis meifolia* (No. 116) and *Corydalis thysiflora* (No. 118) as *stong ri zil pa*.

⁶⁸⁷ AN, DTMM, ShM, TMPa, TMPiG. Not to be confused with *g.yu gu shing* denoting *Sambucus spp.*, *Verbascum spp.* and other, as in TMPa, MPD.

⁶⁸⁸ ShM.

⁶⁸⁹ By contrast, for medicine compounding only bark is collected.

expression usually applies,⁶⁹⁰ and also a synonymously called ground juniper growing at very high mountain places (1b.).⁶⁹¹ Since juniper had already been included, twice under the names *shug pa* and *spang ma*, it was not included again at this instance. The two earlier instances were taken to cover this one as well.

Wine grapes are according to Amchi Nyima divided into two types of the same medical properties: white grapes (*rgun 'brum dkar po*), and black or dark grapes (*rgun 'brum nag po*), which refers to purple colour.⁶⁹² Into the Mendrup medicine, white grapes were included, as purple grapes were at that time not available on the market.

The second name, *sda ru*, was interpreted by Amchi Nyima as *se 'bru*, seeds of *Punica granatum* or pomegranate.⁶⁹³ However, pomegranate does not usually fulfil the medicinal properties required for the Southern direction (as it is warming instead of cooling), but that was not viewed as problematic. Pomegranate has got two types: sweet (*mngar*) and sour (*skyur*),⁶⁹⁴ of these the first is more of a cooling effect. In medicine the latter is commonly used, and this one was also bought for the Mendrup.

1a. Wine grapes.

P: Fruit.

L: Kathmandu market.

1b. Repetition (see above).

2. Pomegranate.

P: Seeds.

L: Kathmandu market.

gla rtsi dang/

Delphinium sp.,⁶⁹⁵

The verse was understood as it would usually be, as deer musk (musk of *Moschus moschiferus*).⁶⁹⁶ However, it was decided to substitute the originally intended substance by a plant of the same name referred to as *ldum gla rtsi*. The appellation *ldum gla rtsi* represents one of the various names of *bya rgod spos*, *Delphinium sp.* The name of the plant alluding deer musk derives from its characteristic smell reminiscent of the musk, with which it also shares its medical properties (bitter taste and cooling effects). *The Flawless Crystal Mirror* lists another synonym of the plant's name, *gla tsi'i dri chen.*, "the great musk smell".⁶⁹⁷

⁶⁹⁰ DTMA, DTMM, TMPa.

⁶⁹¹ I was not able to find this understanding in any dictionary.

⁶⁹² The same two types described by ShM.

⁶⁹³ I have not found *sda ru* in any dictionary.

⁶⁹⁴ This division is also, though indirectly, described in ShM.

⁶⁹⁵ AN, ShM.

⁶⁹⁶ ShM, TMPIG, TMPa.

⁶⁹⁷ ShM, p. 247.

Thus, we deal here with two interchangeable medicinal substances, one of animal and one of herbal provenience. The reasons for the deer musk substitution were three, enumerated in the order of reference as proposed by Amchi Nyima: 1. Economic – due to the declining number of musk deers, musk is very expensive at the present;⁶⁹⁸ 2. Medical – when purchased, the musk is likely to be old and have lost its odour along with its medical properties and healing power; 3. Ethnic – a sentient being would have to be killed or at least to suffer.

Amchi Nyima recognises three types of *bya rgod spos*, all characterised by the typical deer musk smell and the same medical properties, but differing according to their habitus and the altitude they grow at: 1. *Bya rgod spos* plants at high places, with many blossoms on one stem, grow in Dhorpatan, not in Mustang; 2. Of high and slightly dry places, grow in Mustang; 3. Of lower and warmer locations receiving an abundance of rain, also in Dhorpatan. The second kind was collected and put into the Mendrup medicine.

As a botanical remark and demonstration of the incompatibility of Tibetan medicinal remedies classification and naming system with the binomial categories recognised by modern Western botany, I would like to add that the Tibetan plant category *bya rgod* does further include *bya rgod sug pa* referring to plants of the *Saussurea* genus which again share the same medical characteristics. On the other hand, the genus *Delphinium* of Western biology comprises several different Tibetan medicinal plants: apart from *bya rgod spos* also *ga bur tis lo*, *ti mu sa* and *lo btsan pa*, *spyang dug ma*. However, also all these have the same medical characteristics (bitter taste and cooling effects).⁶⁹⁹

P: Blossom, leaves, stem.

L: Jharkot, Dhorpatan.

ha li ka dang/

Althaea sp. / Malva sp. (mallow),

The name *ha li ka* taken by Amchi Nyima as *ha lo* or *ha lo lcam pa*,⁷⁰⁰ also called *me tog ha lo* and *ha lo ldum bu*, a species of *Malvaceae*. As he explains, the *ha lo* plant occurs in two variations: “the white *ha lo*”, *ha lo dkar po*, and the “black *ha lo*”, *ha lo nag po*. I am not sure which one of the two was used for the Mendrup.

P: Seeds, leaves.

L: Jharkot, Mustang.

sum cu⁷⁰¹ tig tig dang/

Saxifraga sp. (saxifrage),⁷⁰²

⁶⁹⁸ High price and endangerment of species as reasons for substituting ingredients in Sowa rikpa, as well as the common substitution of deer musk with *bya rgod spos* aka *Delphinium sp.*, were noted by Saberning, 2011, pp. 90-92. Similarly Czaja, forthcoming, who particularly emphasised taste, smell and medicinal properties as the determining factors for substitution.

⁶⁹⁹ ShM.

⁷⁰⁰ In accord with ShM.

⁷⁰¹ MsC: *bcu*.

⁷⁰² AN, DTMA, DTMM, ShM, TMPa.

Comm.: *Sum cu tig ta*.

Amchi Nyima differentiates in total nine types of *tig ta*: *tig ta*, *bal tig*, *gur tig*, *dngul tig* (“the silver *tig ta*”), *lcags tig* (“the iron *tig ta*”), *lcags tig dkar po* (“the white iron *tig ta*”), *zangs tig* (“the copper *tig ta*”), *sum cu tig ta* and its smaller variation *sum tig chung ba* counted as one (both *Saxifraga spp.*), and lastly *gser tig* (“the gold *tig ta*”).⁷⁰³ All nine *tig ta* are characterised by the same medical qualities (bitter taste and cooling effects). From the perspective of Western botany they spread across several genera. From these, Amchi Nyima considers the two kinds of the one before the last as required. The higher-grown *sum cu tig ta* was used. It was again sent from Tibet in a dried form, and ground in Kathmandu before the Mendrup together with the other ingredients.

P: Blossom, leaves.

L: Tibet.

ka ta ka ri*⁷⁰⁴ *dang/

Rubus sp. (blackberry),⁷⁰⁵

Comm.: *Kan d+ha ka ri*.

Amchi Nyima discriminates between two types of *Kan d+ha ka ri*: *Kan d+ha ka ri* itself with white bark, and its coloured variation of red or brown bark, called *ga bra*.⁷⁰⁶ The first one was used for the Mendrup.

P: Phloem beneath skin.

L: Mustang.

sle tre dang/

Tinospora sinensis (moonseed),⁷⁰⁷

This plant name is said to go back to the Zhangzhung language, the common Tibetan spelling is *sle tres*. Amchi Nyima uses the same spelling as in the manuscript.

Amchi Nyima distinguishes two types of *sle tres*: 1. The usual lowland *sle tres*, *Tinospora sinensis*; and 2. Highland *sle tres* growing for instance in Western Tibet near Kailash called *bra ma* or *mtshe sle tres*, which is in *The Flawless Crystal Mirror* treated as a separate remedy of the name *bra ma*. Both share most of their medical characteristics. For the Mendrup the first one was acquired.

P: Stem.

L: Kathmandu medical market.

⁷⁰³ In accordance with ShM.

⁷⁰⁴ MsC: *ra*.

⁷⁰⁵ AN, DTMA, DTMM, MPD, ShM, TMPIG, TMPa. Often spelled as *kaṇḍa ka ri*.

⁷⁰⁶ In accordance with ShM114.

⁷⁰⁷ DTMA, DTMM, TMPa, TMPIG.

brag zhun dang cong zi dang sho sha rta dang/

bitumen and calcite, *Aucklandia lappa*,⁷⁰⁸

Comm.: spellings *cong zhi*, *sha pho ru rta*.

In ritual context bitumen and calcite often come in pair.⁷⁰⁹

Both Amchi Nyima and *The Flawless Crystal Mirror* recognise nearly thirty types of calcite, based on shape, colour and texture, as well as slightly different medical properties and effects (*nus pa*). Into the Mendrup mixture any can be included. Amchi Nyima gathered two: *cong zhi pho chung* from Jharkot,⁷¹⁰ and *pho cong tha* from Dhorpatan.⁷¹¹

Sho sha rta was by Amchi Nyima read as *ru ta*, a name synonymous to *sha bu ru ta* or most commonly *sha pho ru ta*. Amchi Nyima divides *ru ta* into a light and dark variety: *ru ta dkar po*, “white *ru ta*” (often referred to as just *ru ta*) and *ru ta nag po*, “black *ru ta*” (usually referred to as *sha pho ru ta*).⁷¹² The latter denotes *Aucklandia lappa* and was the one used in the Mendrup.

1. Bitumen.

L: Kathmandu medical market.

2. Calcite.

L: Jharkot, Dhorpatan.

3. *Aucklandia lappa*.

P: Root.

L: Kathmandu medical market.

u dpal la sogs pa ni/

Meconopsis sp. (meconopsis),⁷¹³ *Asteraceae sp.*,⁷¹⁴ and others, these are

According to Amchi Nyima, there are five types of the *u dpal*, *ut pal*, *ut+pal*, *ut pa la* or *ut phal* plant, most of which form a group of species within the *Meconopsis* genus of the Western botanical classification. The *Meconopsis* genus itself is in the Tibetan medical tradition split into three clusters: 1. plants with no thorns – for

⁷⁰⁸ AN, Das, DTMM, ShM.

⁷⁰⁹ DTMA, DTMM.

⁷¹⁰ Cf. ShM, p. 59, image no. 81, here called *pho cong mchog*.

⁷¹¹ Cf. ShM, p. 59, image no. 84.

⁷¹² AN. The same division is found in ShM.

⁷¹³ AN, DTMA, DTMM, MPD, TMPI, TMPIG, TMPa.

⁷¹⁴ AN, ShM.

example *smug chung 'den yon*;⁷¹⁵ 2. plants with some tiny itching thorns – *utpal*; 3. plants with many thorns – *tsher sngon*. The last *tsher sngon* cluster again splits into two groups: one of plants with only a single blossom on the stem (for ex. *M. horidula*);⁷¹⁶ and one of plants with many blossoms on the stem, which is also called a *byag*.⁷¹⁷

The *utpal* types of the *Meconopsis* are: 1. Of a blue blossom called *utpal* or *utpal sngon po* (for ex. *M. grandis*);⁷¹⁸ 2. Of a yellow blossom called *utpal gser po* (for ex. *M. paniculata*);⁷¹⁹ 3. Of a red blossom called *utpal dmar po* (for ex. *Meconopsis tibetica*);⁷²⁰ and, 4. Of a white blossom, *utpal dkar po*.

Less commonly, Amchi Nyima recounts, *u dpal* denotes *Asteraceae* species with prominent single purple blossoms. Such are usually called *lug mig* or *me tog lug mig* (“the flower of a sheep’s eye”, “the sheep-eye flower”, reminiscent of the big blossom), or by a Sanscritised name *nī la u dpal* (“blue *u dpal*” reminiscent of its colour).⁷²¹

In Amchi Nyima’s view, all *utpal* plants share the same power (*nus pa*).⁷²² Two were collected by the Amchi – *Meconopsis sp.* and *Asteraceae sp.*

In this case, the Indian name of a token Hindu and Buddhist plant has come to designate an indigenous emblematic species of the Himalayas.⁷²³ The blossom of *Meconopsis spp.* is mostly of blue colour, as that of the Indian water lily (*utpala*).

P: Blossom, stem.

L: Mustang.

P: Blossom, stem.

L: Dhorpatan.

chu'i*⁷²⁴ *lha mo khrag las*⁷²⁵ (**la*) *gnas su dag pa'i sman ces bya'o

the purifying medicine of the Water Goddess in blood.

***de rnams na*⁷²⁶ (**ni*) *thabs she rab rtsi ba'i bye brag go*//**

These are particular for the nectar of means and wisdom.

⁷¹⁵ ShM, image no. 570.

⁷¹⁶ AN, FH (Plate 12, No. 101), ShM, image no. 581.

⁷¹⁷ AN, ShM, image no. 580.

⁷¹⁸ AN, FH (Plate 13, No. 103), MDP.

⁷¹⁹ AN, FH (Plate 12, No. 94), MDP.

⁷²⁰ <http://meconopsisworld.blogspot.cz/2013/01/meconopsis-tibetica.html>.

⁷²¹ AN, DTMA, ShM, TMPa. The identification of *u dpal* as *Asteraceae sp.* is typical for the northern Byang school, and has been recorded also for the region of Dhorpatan (Boesi, 2006, p. 93), where Amchi Nyima studied Sowa rikpa at the Bonpo exile medical school.

⁷²² According to ShM, it is slightly different.

⁷²³ Cf. Lo Bue, 1981, p. 94: “The Sanskrit names of Indian medicinal plants were kept for reasons of prestige and sometimes used to indicate local medicinal plants altogether different from the original Indian ones.”

⁷²⁴ MsC: *chu yi*.

⁷²⁵ MsC: *la*.

⁷²⁶ MsC: *nas*.

[IV. INGREDIENTS ACCORDING TO THE EIGHT CLASSES OF CONSCIOUSNESS]⁷²⁷

yan lag brgyad ni rnams la dbye ste/

Classification into eight branches:

(89) sems can gyi mig sna tshogs pa dang/ mar la sogs snying po lnga dang/

Various kinds of animals' eyes and the five essences, such as butter.

The five essences identified by Amchi Nyima for the Mendrup ritual were: molasses (*bu ram*), melted butter (*zhun mar*), honey (*sbrang rtsi*), sesame oil (*til mar*), salt (*lan tshwa*).⁷²⁸

Amchi Nyima suggests that the concept of a group of "essences", *snying po*, is to be found not only in the ritual, but also in the medical tradition. In medicine the group comes up as a set of maximum three members, and never as the whole of five. The number of five is typical of the ritual context.

L: Kathmandu market.

rna ba sna tshogs pa dang/ khug ches la sogs sgra byung ba'i me tog dang/

Various kinds of ears and [trumpet] flowers producing sound, such as *Incarvillea compacta*.⁷²⁹

The blossom of *Incarvillea compacta* (usually spelled *ug chos*) is a popular children's toy, producing noise when blown. As such it is nowadays utilised at least in Dolpo, but grows also in other parts of Tibet and the Himalayas.⁷³⁰ Amchi Nyima assumes the designation *khug ches* to be "an ancient name".

P: Blossom.

L: Dhorpatan.

sems can gyi sna dang/ spos sna tshogs rnam pa lnga dang/

Animals' noses and five kinds of various incenses.

The five incenses included were: the three kinds of incenses (*spos snag gsum*: *Valeriana officinalis* – valerian, *Nardostachys grandiflora* – valerian, *Lepisorus soulieanus*), white sandalwood (*Santalum sp.*, *tsan dan dkar po*),

⁷²⁷ This eightfold concept of organisation in the Mendrup recipe was identified and explained by KTY (Shenten Dargye Ling). The concept of the eight classes of consciousness constituting individual's consciousness derives from the Indian Buddhist Yogācāra philosophical school. Bowker et al., 1997, Snellgrove, 2002, Williams and Tribe, 2000.

⁷²⁸ Cf. BGTC, TED. Beyer, 1987, p. 290, gives a slight variation of the list: sesame, salt, butter, molasses, honey.

⁷²⁹ NW (Oxford 2013), DTMA, DTMM, MPD, TMPa.

⁷³⁰ AN, FH, NW (Oxford 2013).

and red sandalwood (*Santalum sp.*, *tsan dan mar po*).⁷³¹ As some of the substances had already been cited above, to cover this line of the recipe only the two missing kinds of sandalwood were added.

Similarly to the case of the five “essences” just briefly discussed, Amchi Nyima explains that also the group of incenses is known to the medical tradition. All the components represent medicinal remedies. Even the set of five, *spos lnga*, appears in medicine, medical treatises and manuals. However, the penta-group is, again, much more common in ritual.

4., 5. Sandalwood.

L: Kathmandu medical market.

ne rtsa la sogs lce sna tshogs/ sman sna tshogs pa lnga dang/ rngam pa'i stag sha la sogs sha sna tshogs/

Various kinds of tongues, such as of parrots, five kinds of various medicines, and various kinds of flesh, such as flesh of ferocious tigers.

The components of the five medicines (*sman lnga*, *sman sna lnga*) slightly vary according to source. Those included in the Mendrup were:⁷³² *Orchidaceae sp.* (*dbang lag*, orchid),⁷³³ *Rubus sp.* (*kan da kā ri*, blackberry), *Tinospora sinensis* (*sle tres*, moonseed), kaolin (one of *bzang po drug*), *Acorus gramineus* (*shu dag dkar po*, sweetflag) and *Acorus sp.* (*shu dag nag po*).⁷³⁴ Some of them have appeared above.

As Amchi Nyima explains, this unit again consisting of five plays an important role in ritual. The *sman lnga*, “the five medicines” for instance occupy a place in rituals and *maṅḍalas* performed for attaining long life. Yet, to his knowledge, the group does not occur in the medical tradition.

Amchi Nyima knows two types of *dbang lag*, two groups of wild orchids (*Orchidaceae spp.*) distinguished based on the colour of their blossoms – white or red.⁷³⁵ The tuberous roots are collected in winter when the “energy” of the plant is perceived to be accumulated there. Only a very small number of roots was collected for the Mendrup, as Orchidaceae are protected by law and Amchi Nyima is aware of the ecological impact overharvesting can have. For this reason, a few supplementing roots were bought in Kathmandu and not harvested in the wild.⁷³⁶

P: Tuberous roots (*rtsa ba*).

L: Jharkot, Mustang; Kathmandu medical market.

⁷³¹ Beyer, 1987, p. 290, lists: white and red sandalwood, camphor, saffron, and musk, the last three of which have already been represented in the Mendrup concoction.

⁷³² In accordance with DK. For variant lists cf. BGTC, Beyer, 1987, p. 290.

⁷³³ *Gymnadenia sp.* (DTMA, ShM), *Orchis sp.* (MPD, Meyer, 2007).

⁷³⁴ AN, DTMA, DTMM, TMPa, TMPIG, ShM.

⁷³⁵ As in ShM.

⁷³⁶ Interestingly, some other languages also imagine the *dbang lag* orchid bulb to resemble a human hand (*lag* in Tibetan): cf. the Latin *Dactylorhiza*, and the derived Czech *prstnatec* (*prst* meaning “finger”).

For these see above, already included:

Rubus sp. (*kan ḍa kā ri*)

Tinospora sinensis (*sle tres*)

kaolin (*cu gang*, one of *bzang po drug*)

Amchi Nyima again distinguishes two types of *shu dag*: *shu dag dkar po* (*Acorus gramineus*) and *shu dag nag po* (*Acorus sp.*, often presented as *Acorus calamus*).⁷³⁷ Both are very similar, differentiated according to their root: the rhizome joints of *shu dag dkar po* are close to each other, whereas that of *shu dag nag po* are further apart. If *shu dag dkar po* cannot be got, *shu dag nag po* is acquired, and is actually used in medicine more often. Both were included into the Mendrup. Although growing in Lower Mustang, they were bought.

P: Rhizome.

L: Kathmandu medical market.

shi shon la sogs dar ba dang/

Silk, such as brocade.⁷³⁸

To cover this item, a small piece of cloth coming from Bonpo monks' *gos chen* garment used in the past was inserted. This piece represented a special cloth brought from Tibet and kept by Yongdzin Rinpoche, who then donated it to Amchi Nyima to use it for the Mendrup ritual.

Shi shon is an anticipated Zhangzhung word implying "cloth, clothing" in general, but specifically "silk brocade".⁷³⁹ Although *shi shon* can be synonymous to *dar ba*, *dar zab* or *zab* denoting a fine silk cloth and often silk brocade, the textile included into the Mendrup was not made of silk, so the term here was rather taken as a fine and special cloth.

P: A small piece of *gos chen* garment cloth.

L: Tibet.

drag bo'i (*po'i) sgri (*sgrib) na snubs la 'byung ba zhe bya ste/

This is the element of extinguishing strong defilements:

glo ba dang/ 'og ma dang/

Lungs, throats.

⁷³⁷ In correspondence with DTMA, ShM.

⁷³⁸ ZZ, ZB.

⁷³⁹ ZZ.

As Amchi Nyima explains, all possible various kinds of lungs and throats, both animal and human, can be included.

mdud sna tshogs dang/

Various kinds of knots.

Amchi Nyima reckons that various kinds of knotted threads are meant.

mkha' lding u pal la sogs me tog sna tshogs dang/

Various kinds of flowers, such as *Meconopsis sp.* (meconopsis).

The appellation indicates a variety of *u pal*. As the attribute literally means “soaring in the sky”, its colour should be blue.⁷⁴⁰ There exist several blue species of *Meconopsis*. The substance was skipped here, as *u pal* had occurred previously.

mang bar la sogs snying po sna tshogs dang/

Various kinds of essences, such as *mang bar*.

According to Amchi Nyima, *mang bar* is a Zhangzhung word probably of the meaning “heart”, and the whole phrase implies hearts of animals and humans. Both “heart” and “essence” are encompassed in the term *snying po*, which designates the inner core or kernel of ideas, organisms and things: heart for animals, pith for plants, yolk for eggs, seed syllable for divinities, essence for intellectual concepts and materials.⁷⁴¹

Amchi Nyima does not understand the “various essences” (*snying po sna tshogs*) as linked to the above “five essences” (*snying po lnga*).

nas dang khye'u la sogs 'bru lnga dang/

Five kinds of grains, such as barley and peas.

The five grains to Amchi Nyima’s knowledge refer to these: barley (*nas*), rice (*'bras*), unhusked barley (*so ba*), sesame (*til*), and wheat (*gro*) or peas (*mon sran*).⁷⁴²

Nonetheless, as Amchi Nyima stresses, the more types of grain included, the merrier. Therefore, he supplemented these five with maize (*a shom*) and two types of millet (*khre* and *'khre'u*).

As Amchi Nyima points out, from the generally used grains here only buckwheat is excluded, which also was not put into the Mendrup medicine. Amchi Nyima has no explanation for that. The reasons might be that

⁷⁴⁰ AN, LST (Vienna 2013).

⁷⁴¹ BGTC, Boesi, 2007, p. 8, TED, ZZ.

⁷⁴² A variant list in Beyer, 1987, p. 290: husked and unhusked barley, rice, wheat, and peas.

buckwheat is not wheat in the sense of grain of a cereal grass, the Tibetan observation would then match that of Western biology. However, peas is not a cereal either.

For this fivefold compound, grains of white and black colour should be gathered: peas (generally occurring in a variety of colours) should be white, whereas sesame can be both white and black.

As concerns barley, also the barley beverage *chang* was included as one of the alcohols (see below) into the Mendrup mixture. However, as such it counts among the liquids added, and not into the five grains.

P: About one kilogram of each.

L: Mainly Kathmandu market, barley from Jharkot, Mustang.

srog rtsa dang sha shan*⁷⁴³ *sman bu dang/

Life channels,⁷⁴⁴ flesh and glands.

Amchi explains that these body parts of animals and humans are meant.

gser la sogs rin chen lnga sna lnga dang/

Five kinds of the “five precious [substances]”, such as gold.

Again, there exists a variety of quintuples which can make the unit. The listed gold always appears as the first component: 1. Gold, silver, copper, coral, pearl,⁷⁴⁵ 2. Gold, silver, copper, iron, tin,⁷⁴⁶ 3. Gold, silver, turquoise, coral, pearl;⁷⁴⁷ 4. Gold, silver, copper, brass, iron.⁷⁴⁸

The numeral appellative is, as before, understood rather universally and symbolically, and the mixture can contain an unspecified and unlimited number of precious stones. The mixture mostly comes already ground, and thus its ingredients are unrecognizable. The one put into the Mendrup medicine was donated by the Rinpoche and originally brought from Tibet, with no one knowing its specific components.

P: About two hundred to three hundred grams of a *rin chen lnga* mixture.

L: Tibet.

***rnam shes yan lag gi sman zhes bya ste/ mtshams bzhi sman gyi bye brag go/ bye brag dang
go rim gyis dbye ba'o//***

⁷⁴³ MsC: *dang* inserted.

⁷⁴⁴ Translation according to AN and DTMA, literally “life-roots” (Das, Nebesky-Wojkowitz). From the medical point of view, the term implies “blood vessels of the central nervous and circulatory system” (DTMA). In the anticipated Zhangzhung language *sha shan* means “memory, one-pointedness, concentration” (ZZ) involving the term *shan* “consciousness”, *rnam shes* in Tibetan.

⁷⁴⁵ DK.

⁷⁴⁶ DK, BGTC.

⁷⁴⁷ BGTC, Beyer, 1987, p. 290.

⁷⁴⁸ Kohn, 1988, p. 158.

The medicine of the [eight] branches of consciousness is classified as medicine of the four cardinal directions, according to its particular characteristics and sequence.

[V. CONCLUDING INSTRUCTIONS]

sman snod dang/ dar kheb dang/ gzungs thag ni/ phyogs kyi kha dog dang sbyar ro/

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

gZung thag or *byang thag* denotes spell cord, the five-coloured thread encompassing all the colours of the five directions (weaved from five threads), and believed to be transmitting the powers and blessings of deities accumulated by the ritual practitioners onto the *maṅḍala* and the Mendrup medicine. Firstly, a single thread of the matching colour is placed into each direction on its medicine vessel. These are then joined to form the spell cord (see Chapter 2, Figures 16, 18). According to Amchi Nyima *dar theb* does not necessarily refer to silk, but as one word designates any cloth cover.

bdud rtsi sman gyi bye brag bstan pa'o/

This is the explanation of the particular characteristics of the nectar medicine.

The Cosmological Scheme of the Mendrup Recipe

In the recipe just translated, the fivefold *maṅḍalising* cosmological framework is very prominent and governs the main structure of the recipe with the exception of the concluding items based on the eight classes of consciousness. The *maṅḍalic* model itself is a classificatory system by principle, employed in ritual to encompass, represent, and structure the cosmos.⁷⁴⁹ This *maṅḍalic* fivefold framework is very common in Tibetan ritual and other tantric undertakings mirroring Indian and particularly Indian Buddhist patterns. The scheme produces the universal connotations and implications of the Mendrup and other practices.⁷⁵⁰ Here it is employed in the Bonpo order. Starting in the Centre, and succeeded by the East (as also the Buddhist one would), it moves towards the North, bound by the anticlockwise direction to the West and the South. As becomes especially visible in the list of the animal ingredients, this frame is filled in with the Buddhist notions of the five causes of the unwished

⁷⁴⁹ Brauen, 1997, Martin, 1994.

⁷⁵⁰ Cf. Martin, 1994.

cycle of *samsāra* (*'khor ba*), the five mental poisons (*dug lnga*),⁷⁵¹ and along with them the matching remedies overcoming them: the five wisdoms (*ye shes lnga*) associated with the five tantric nectars (*bdud rtsi lnga*, also see Chapter 5).⁷⁵² Furthermore, the five mental aggregates (Tib. *phung po lnga*, Skt. *skandha*) are respectively linked to them, as is the medical concept of the three bodily forces (*nyes pa gsum*): wind *lung* (*rlung*), bile *tripa* (*mkhris pa*), and pflgm *béken* (*bad kan*),⁷⁵³ and their derived body parts and functions (also see below). The pattern can be also taken to represent a classification of prevalently botanical *material medica* as well as a zoological classification (see below).⁷⁵⁴ Then, various other characteristics linked to each of the cardinal points complement the scheme. This is demonstrated by the following table:

Direction <i>Phyogs</i>	Centre <i>dbus</i>	East <i>shar</i>	North <i>byang</i>	West <i>Nub</i>	South <i>lho</i>
Buddha (rGyal ba rigs lnga)	Künnang Khyappa (Kun snang khyab pa)	Selwa Rangjung (gSal ba rang byung)	Gélha Garchuk (dGe lha gar phyug)	Jédrak Gömé (Bye brag dgos med)	Gawa Döndrup (dGa' ba don grub)
Element * ⁷⁵⁵ <i>'byung ba</i>	Space <i>nam mkha'</i>	Earth <i>sa</i>	Wind / Air <i>rlung</i>	Fire <i>me</i>	Water <i>chu</i>
Colour * <i>tshon mdog</i>	White <i>dkar po</i>	Yellow <i>ser po</i>	Green <i>ljang khu</i>	Red <i>dmar po</i>	Blue <i>sngon po</i>
Poison * <i>Dug</i>	Anger <i>zhe sdang</i>	Ignorance <i>gti mug</i>	Pride <i>nga rgyal</i>	Desire <i>'dod chags</i>	Jealousy <i>'phrag dog</i>
Aggregate * <i>phung po</i>	Consciousness <i>rnam shes</i>	Form <i>gzugs</i>	Mental formations <i>'du byed</i>	Feeling <i>tshor ba</i>	Perception <i>'du shes</i>
Nectar * <i>bdud rtsi lnga</i>	Semen <i>thig le</i>	Flesh <i>sha</i>	Stool <i>dri chen</i>	Blood <i>khrag</i>	Urine <i>dri chung</i>
Secret names of special medicine ⁷⁵⁶	“Thought of awakening” <i>byang sems gab pa</i>	“Secret flesh” <i>gsang sha gal chen</i>	“Incense of great smell” <i>zhim phod dri chen</i>	“Lotus blood” <i>pad ma rak ta</i>	“Scent of sameness” <i>mnyam nyid dri chu</i>
Wisdom * <i>ye shes</i>	Wisdom of emptiness <i>stong nyid</i>	Mirror-like wisdom <i>me long</i>	Equalising wisdom <i>mnyams</i>	Discriminating wisdom <i>sor rtogs</i>	Accomplishing wisdom <i>bya grub</i>

⁷⁵¹ Extended from the initial count of three poisons (*dug gsum*): anger, desire and ignorance, which is also found in Sowa rikpa.

⁷⁵² Similarly described by Cantwell, 2015, pp. 63-64, Stablein, 1976, *in passim*. On the five nectars: Garrett, 2010, Wedemeyer, 2007, in a *maṇḍalic* classificatory scheme Martin, 1994, p. 89.

⁷⁵³ As the English translations are only approximate renderings of the Tibetan terms, I prefer the Tibetan later on. Similarly Gerke, 2014, Hofer, 2014. On the three bodily forces see Gerke, 2014, Finckh 1978, 1985. In the translation as “bodily force” I follow the current academic practice (for instance Gerke, 2014, Hofer, 2014).

⁷⁵⁴ On *maṇḍala* as a classificatory scheme see Martin, 1994.

⁷⁵⁵ The asterisk (*) indicates categories found in *The Main Text of the Light-Swirled Nectar Medicine*.

⁷⁵⁶ According to NWB, 1967, pp. 178-179.

	<i>ye shes</i>	<i>ye shes</i>	<i>nyid ye shes</i>	<i>ye shes</i>	<i>ye shes</i>
Sign * <i>rtags</i> ⁷⁵⁷	<i>A dang ma</i> <i>A and ma</i> syllables	Swastika <i>g.yung</i> <i>drung</i>	Dharma wheel <i>'khor lo</i>	Lotus <i>pad ma</i>	Jewel <i>nor bu</i>
Animal * <i>ris rtags</i>	Lion <i>seng ge</i>	Elephant <i>glang chen</i>	Horse <i>rta</i>	<i>Khyung</i> (Garuda) ⁷⁵⁸	Dragon <i>'brug</i>
Medicine vessel material *	Crystal <i>shel</i>	Gold <i>gser</i>	Turquoise <i>g.yu</i>	Copper <i>zangs</i>	Iron <i>lcags</i>
Body functions and parts	Mind <i>thugs</i>	Flesh and bones <i>sha rus</i>	Breath <i>rlung</i>	Heat <i>drod</i>	Blood <i>khrag</i>
Force/ Humour <i>nyes pa</i>		Phlegm <i>bad kan</i>	Wind <i>rlung</i>	Bile <i>mkhris pa</i>	Phlegm <i>bad kan</i>
Characteristics of the medicine *	Root medicine <i>rtsa ba'i sman</i>	Generating and purifying <i>bskyed cing dag</i>	Light and Lifting <i>'degs shing yangs</i>	Warming: Heavy fire medicine <i>lci ba me'i sman</i>	Cooling: Cold and cooling water medicine <i>grang shing bsil ba chu yi sman</i>
Title of the medicine *	<i>'dus pa ldan pa'i nam mkha'i sman</i>	<i>sha chen g.yung drung lta me long</i>	<i>dri chen kun 'byung mnyam pa'i sman</i>	<i>khrag sna pad ma sor rtogs</i>	<i>dri chu las drug bya ba nan tan</i>

This organisation stretches throughout the whole ritual, and directs its texts, recitations, esthetics (see description of the ritual in Chapter 2), as well as the material composition of the Mendrup medicine. Each cardinal point forms a separate unit of items, of which each has its place. As the recipe proposes, each point, and its Mendrup medicine, is oriented towards purifying (*dag*) the given mental poison by turning it into a certain wisdom (each of the five wisdoms has its own title and function) by the means of one of the tantric nectars and the specific Mendrup medicinal ingredients of the point.

At every instant, the listed Mendrup medicine constituents are chosen to fit into the fivefold cosmological pattern, or into the scheme of the eight classes of consciousness. The formula of a particular cardinal point acquires various attributes and represents pharmacological concepts in accordance with the characteristics of the point in question. For example, in the West we find the hot *tripa* bodily constituent, from the animal ingredients blood of red birds, and among the plants warming remedies. The qualities of the medicine of each cardinal point are directed to healing the mental poison of the point, and to balance the opposing qualities of other points. All the substances are in accordance with all the

⁷⁵⁷ The same arrangements of the symbols in the respective directions within Bonpo context in Martin, 1994, p. 59.

⁷⁵⁸ The Garuḍa understanding of *Khyung* is rather Buddhist. The position of *Khyung* and dragon is sometimes switched in the Bon tradition.

characteristics of that direction. The actual application of the recipe has shown that the notion of collecting them is very universalistic, the more representatives of a prescribed category are involved, the better. Thus, Amchi Nyima, following the oral transmission received from Yongdzin Rinpoche, and aimed at assembling the highest possible number of various representatives of the individual items.

Medical Principles and *Materia Medica* Classification

The principles of the Sowa rikpa medical tradition within the Mendrup ritual might be less obvious, but a closer analysis of the recipe will disclose them. Primarily, the fundamentals of Sowa have to be addressed here. In Sowa rikpa, every matter is characterised by its properties which then determine its potency:⁷⁵⁹

“The term "potency" [*nüpa*] (*nus pa*) points out to the action that a substance may originate by means of its features and qualities. In Tibetan medicine this expression designates both particular qualities of medicinal substances, which constitute their therapeutic properties (the eight *nus pa*, [see below]⁷⁶⁰), and their therapeutic effect.”

Hence the term potency, *nüpa*, refers to both medicinal properties of substances as well as therapeutic effects of substances. Any material in the world can be used for healing, or, on the contrary, for harming someone's condition, be it of organic or inorganic provenience, of human, animal, plant, or mineral origin. The fundamental property examined by Sowa rikpa medical practitioners is taste (*ro*), from which all the other characteristics evolve. Six different tastes are distinguished (for the tastes and all following categories see Tables 9-11). Based on the specific taste combination of the ingredient, its potencies are calculated. The medicinal potencies *nüpa* are eight in total, represented by four oppositional pairs. Along with the potencies, the post-digestive taste (*zhu rjes*) is counted following a simple consequential scheme. The post-digestive taste reveals the effects of the material during its digestion. The scheme, however, in practice faces a number of exceptions of ingredients that do not conform

⁷⁵⁹ Boesi, 2004, pp. 48-50, Boesi 2006, p. 68, n. 4.

⁷⁶⁰ Bracketed additions are mine.

to it.⁷⁶¹ Finally, based on the previous categories, the overall medicinal character (*rang bzhin*, also called nature or essence, *ngo bo*) of the material is evaluated. Every material exercises such a character, which is expressed by thermic quality: cooling (*bsil*), warming (*drod*), or neutral (*snyoms*). Moreover, the constitution of all phenomena, including any material and pharmaceuticals, is understood to be formed by the five elements (*'byung lnga*): space (*nam mkha'*), earth (*sa*), wind / air (*rlung*), fire (*me*), and water (*chu*). In practice, the first element of space is perceived as all-pervasive and does not play a determining role in pharmacology. Each combination of two elements out of the latter four composes a certain taste, from which then the pharmacological medicinal properties evolve. The eight medicinal potencies *nüpa* also derive from the elements. Further, each of the tastes and derived characteristics of pharmaceuticals have influence on the three bodily forces called *nyépa* (*nyépa sum*, *nyes pa gsum*), which constitute the organism: *lung* – wind, *tripa* – bile, *béken* – pflgm. Each bodily force represents certain categories and influences in the body, creating the body's respective parts and functions. For instance, *lung* is responsible for any movement and breath, *tripa* and the element of fire for bodily warmth, good digestion, eyesight, and (together with water) blood formation. The water of *béken* produces bodily liquids, the moisture of joints and stomach, whereas the earth of *béken* guarantees the firmness of bones and stability of mind. These are just a few examples provided. The ideal of Sowa rikpa is the balance of all the entities, the elements within and outside the body, and the three bodily forces within the body. This state is considered as health. As everything, also the three bodily forces are formed by the four (or five) elements and their characteristics (Table 11).⁷⁶²

⁷⁶¹ In the list of the Mendrup ingredients these are: *sbrang rtsi* (honey), *gze ma* (*Tribulus terrestris*), *nyi shing snum can* / *nyer shing* (*Asparagus sp.*, asparagus), *bal bu sur bu* (*Rhododendron sp.*, rhododendron), *mu zi* (sulphur).

⁷⁶² Based on GyZh (exact references in Sehnalova, 2017b), Finckh, 1978, 1985, Meyer, 1995, 2007, Gerke, 2014, Hofer, 2014. For an explanation of the three bodily forces see Finckh, 1978, 1985, Parfionovitch, 1992, Meyer, 2007, Gerke, 2014.

	Elements	Taste	Post-digestive taste	Enhances <i>nyépa</i> (created by elements)	Suppresses <i>nyépa</i> (created by elements)
1.	earth, water	sweet (<i>mngar</i>)	sweet	<i>béken</i> (earth, water)	<i>lung</i> (wind), <i>tripa</i> (fire)
2.	earth, fire	sour (<i>skyur ba</i>)	sour	<i>tripa</i> (fire)	<i>lung</i> (wind), <i>béken</i> (earth, water)
3.	water, fire	salty (<i>lan tshwa</i>)	sweet	<i>tripa</i> (fire)	<i>lung</i> (wind), <i>béken</i> (earth, water)
4.	water, wind	bitter (<i>kha ba</i>)	bitter	<i>lung</i> (wind), <i>béken</i> (earth, water)	<i>tripa</i> (fire)
5.	fire, wind	hot (<i>tsha ba</i>)	bitter	<i>tripa</i> (fire)	<i>béken</i> (earth, water)
6.	earth, wind	astringent (<i>bska ba</i>)	bitter	<i>lung</i> (wind), <i>béken</i> (earth, water)	<i>tripa</i> (fire)

	Medicinal Potency <i>Nüpa</i>	Opposite <i>Nüpa</i>	Enhances <i>nyépa</i>	Suppresses <i>nyépa</i>
1.	heavy (<i>lci</i>)	light	<i>béken</i>	<i>lung</i>
2.	light (<i>yang</i>)	heavy	<i>lung</i>	<i>béken</i>
3.	oily (<i>snum</i>)	rough	<i>tripa</i> , <i>béken</i>	<i>lung</i>
4.	rough (<i>rtsub</i>)	oily	<i>lung</i>	<i>béken</i>
5.	hot (<i>tsha</i>)	cool	<i>tripa</i>	<i>béken</i>
6.	cool (<i>bsil</i>)	hot	<i>lung</i> , <i>béken</i>	<i>tripa</i>
7.	sharp (<i>rno</i>)	blunt	<i>béken</i>	<i>béken</i>
8.	blunt (<i>rtul</i>)	sharp	<i>béken</i>	<i>tripa</i>

	Element	Qualities	Enhances <i>nyépa</i>	Suppresses <i>nyépa</i>	Opposite element
1.	earth	heavy (<i>lci</i>), stable (<i>bstan</i>), blunt (<i>rtul</i>), smooth (<i>'jam</i>), oily (<i>snum</i>), dry (<i>skam</i>)	<i>béken</i>	<i>lung</i>	wind
2.	water	fluid (<i>sla</i>), cool (<i>bsil</i>), heavy, blunt, oily, flexible (<i>mnyen</i>)	<i>béken</i>	<i>tripa</i>	fire
3.	fire	hot (<i>tsha</i>), sharp (<i>rno</i>), dry, rough (<i>rtsub</i>), light (<i>yang</i>), oily, mobile (<i>g.yo</i>)	<i>tripa</i>	<i>béken</i>	water
4.	wind	light, mobile, cold (<i>grang</i>), rough, non-oily (<i>skya</i>), dry	<i>lung</i>	<i>béken</i>	earth

Drugs of the Sowa rikpa tradition are always compounded as multi-ingredient mixtures of properties and effects balancing the problematic prevailing *nyépa* and on the other hand enhancing the diminished *nyépa* in the body in question. For instance, a disorder hot by nature caused by the element of fire and excessive *tripa* (bile), such as headache, inflammation, or fever, requires cooling remedies bearing the qualities of the other elements. In the same way, malfunctions of cold nature, such as a cold sensation in the body or problems with digestion, have to be treated with warming applications. Diagnosis of patients based on the opposition of hot and cold, and pharmacological evaluation of substances according to the categories above, lie at the heart of Sowa rikpa healing and clinical practice.⁷⁶³ The above parameters of pharmacology and therapeutic application also complement a Sowa rikpa classification of medicinal substances based on taste, potency, the resulting effect of cooling or warming, and the disease (*nad*) cured and *nyépa* suppressed.⁷⁶⁴ The principal categorisation of medicaments is into two groups: those curing hot diseases (*tsha nad*), and those tackling cold diseases (*grang nad*).⁷⁶⁵

This is in the Mendrup articulated also practically by a close observance of pharmacological precepts of the Sowa rikpa in the ritual's recipe and during the actual compounding of the ritual's medicine. About a half of the ingredients of the recipe are Tibetan Sowa rikpa *materia medica*, and as in medical practice consist of animal (such as *glartsi*, deer musk), plant, and mineral substances. As the above and following passages show, the collecting, processing, and substituting (*tshab*), of the Mendrup ingredients almost always observed the rules of Tibetan *materia medica* production. Amchi Nyima approached the prescription as if it was a medicament for treating his patients, and therefore applied the same selection criteria and processing for the ingredients as for Sowa rikpa remedies. Cooling plant remedies were picked in cool and shadowed locations and dried in shade, whereas the warming ingredients were collected and dried in the sun. All the substances, except for the liquids, were desiccated and ground into powder in advance. The whole mixture came in a powdered form and was kept in cotton bags and containers used for storing medicine at the Bumzhi Medical Clinic of Triten Norbutse monastery. Within the categories of Sowa rikpa medications, the Mendrup medicine would belong to compound medicines (*sman sbyor gyi rigs*) called precious pills (*rin chen ril bu*), and can be produced either in the form of pills (*ril bu*), or alternatively powder (*phye ma*) in case of mass production or time constraints as was

⁷⁶³ See for example Finckh, 1978, 1985, Cardi, 2005-06, p. 103, Meyer, 2007, Gerke, 2014, Hofer, 2014.

⁷⁶⁴ Glover, 2005, Boesi, 2007.

⁷⁶⁵ Glover, 2005.

done in Tritten Norbutse.⁷⁶⁶ Thus also the form of the Mendrup preparation respects Sowa rikpa conventions.

Yet, in very few points the practice diverted from that of Sowa rikpa. Solely the contents of the four vessels ground at one third of the Mendrup performance was crushed as a blend at once, according to the standard medical practice, but most components were ground separately. However, this practice is spreading nowadays due to mechanisation of institutions producing Sowa rikpa remedies.⁷⁶⁷ The second difference derives from the great power ascribed to the Mendrup. The Mendrup drug's efficacy is supposed to last *de facto* forever, whereas standard Sowa rikpa medicaments are usually recommended to be stored for no more than a year. Thirdly, the three bodily forces are assigned by the Mendrup medicinal recipe and ritual to the particular mental poisons divergently from the medical tradition in which anger is representative of bile, ignorance of phlegm, and desire of wind.⁷⁶⁸

Classification of *Materia Medica*

In order to untangle the Sowa rikpa intricacies of the Mendrup recipe, I have listed the medicinal properties and therapeutic effects of its ingredients within the *maṅḍalic* fivefold section of the recipe containing *material medica* of plants, several minerals and animal substances (section 2 described above). They are presented by Table 12. I have omitted here the few ingredients added based on the eight consciousnesses, which do not conform to the *maṅḍalic* framework. The first human and animal section of the recipe will be dealt with further below.

The epithets characterising each of the five cardinal quarters and their respective Mendrup medicinal ingredients have been included as they appear in the recipe (the third line of the Table) at the head of each quarter.⁷⁶⁹ Similarly, the order of the ingredients is as in the recipe. In cases when one ingredient acquires several distinctive appellations either in the Mendrup text, or in Amchi Nyima's reading, all have been listed. The appellations provided in Amchi Nyima's commentary on the recipe are below marked by (Comm.).⁷⁷⁰ Alternative names conferred by Amchi orally are indicated by (oral). Each ingredient is followed by numbers (1.–4.) indicating one of the four Sowa rikpa medicinal characteristics identified by

⁷⁶⁶ On the categories see Cardi, 2005-06, p. 92.

⁷⁶⁷ Saxer, 2013.

⁷⁶⁸ Cf. , Gerke, 2014, Finckh, 1978, 1985.

⁷⁶⁹ The only exception is the part of the recipe associated with the Centre, where its characteristic follows, and not precedes, the ingredients. However, in the Table 12 have inserted it at the head of the column of the Centre.

⁷⁷⁰ Nyima Gurung, 2012.

Amchi Nyima and his favoured medical simples' work, *The Flawless Crystal Mirror*. Apart from the case of *a ru ra* (chebulic myrobalan), in all instances the two categories of taste (*ro*) and character (*rang bzhin*) were considered sufficient to demonstrate the determining medicinal properties. The capital letter “A” indicates substances added by Amchi Nyima by interpreting one listed item by two substances, even though one substance would be sufficient to cover the requirement. The capital “S” stands for substitution.⁷⁷¹ Potential alternative understandings of substances on the basis of literature hinting which other substances might be intended by the text not in accordance with with Amchi's reading, are marked by the abbreviation “Alt.”. In Table 12, each box of the Table is equivalent to one item listed in the recipe. The item can cover multiple substances, such as the six good [substances] (*bzang po drug*), the three kinds of incenses (*spos snag gsum*), or the three kinds of salt (*tshwa snag gsum*); or can be by the Amchi in practice fulfilled by several substances, as for instance *'bu ta pa 'dren* or *a ma bi la la len*.

The Mendrup medicinal formulary clearly employs a very precise inner structure of the compound organised by five functional units. Each unit itself is titled “medicine” and exercises specific characteristics and potencies. It is in full accordance with the particular element and properties of the cardinal point it is associated with, and is *de facto* their produce. The five elements constitute the cosmological framework of the *maṇḍala*, and at the same time determine the main potencies of its ritual *materia medica*. Each of the five units respectively contains substances of similar therapeutic effects aimed at balancing certain element or elements and the ensuing *nyépa* in the body, and thus has one particular target.⁷⁷² Furthermore, in the soteriological discourse of the Mendrup ritual, the medicine of each point is also supposed to eliminate one of the five mental poisons drawing the sentient beings into the cycle of rebirth, *samsāra* (Tib. *'khor ba*). As the recipe explicitly states, the central medicine removes anger (*zhe sdang*), the eastern ignorance (*gti mug*), the northern pride (*nga rgyal*), the western desire (*'dod chags*), and the southern jealousy (*'phrag dog*).

The “root medicine” of the all-pervasive element of space in the Centre exercises the supreme and fundamental ingredients of Sowa rikpa, the three myrobalan nuts commonly

⁷⁷¹ During the Mendrup medicine preparation the Sowa rikpa principles of substitution were observed (cf. Czaja, forthcoming, Sabernig, 2011).

⁷⁷² The same arrangement of several specified units in standard Sowa rikpa remedies was analysed by Cardi, 2005-06.

called “the three fruits” (*'bras bu gsum*).⁷⁷³ All three are used in many medicinal formulas, are regarded as extremely efficacious, and as an active unit of its own understood to equilibrate all the three *nyépa*.⁷⁷⁴ Among them, the most valued is *a ru ra* (chebulic myrobalan), the tradition’s panacea, taken to embody all the possible properties of all existing substances and medicines. In the Mendrup text, it represents together with *ba ru ra* (belleric myrobalan), *skyu ru ra* (emblic myrobalan), and the six good substances, all the central Sowa rikpa pharmacological parameters: taste, post-digestive taste, medicinal potencies, as well as “essence” or “nourishment” (*chü, bcud*). Therefore, the group also suggests all desirable therapeutic effects elicited by them. In strictly pharmacological sense, the three myrobalan fruits joined balance mainly the bodily forces of *tripa* and *béken*, blood and lymph disorders, so basically everything with the exception of *lung*, which is then in the recipe covered by *shing kun* (*Ferula asafoetida*, asafoetida), a typical medicine for increased element of wind, and particularly “heart wind” (*snying rlung*). The six good substances are in clinical practice typically applied to treat the five vital organs: *cu gang*, at this occasion read as kaolin, for lung; *gur gum*, here likely saffron and safflower, for liver; nutmeg for heart; cardamon for kidney; and greater cardamom for spleen. The sixth, clove, is included to support blood vessels and nerves.⁷⁷⁵ If the medicinal properties of the six substances are taken into account, half of them is sweet and cooling, the other half hot and warming, by which they comprise a balanced whole similarly as the “the three fruits”. Thus, the central space-element *materia medica* of the Mendrup is fundamental and covers all major disease categories and vital organs. This is revealed also by the hierarchy within the internal organisation of the Mendrup formula, in which the central space and its “root medicine” appear at the primary position. The position is further accentuated by the ritual *maṅḍalic* pattern, in which the Centre is always principle and initial. This key part of the recipe has to be always fulfilled and cannot be omitted or substituted. It is perceived to guarantee the efficacy of the whole Mendrup medicinal mixture.⁷⁷⁶

The *maṅḍalic* direction of the East boasts its “purifying and generating medicine” of predominantly bitter and sweet, and thus cooling and neutral ingredients, to treat the imbalance of the heating bodily force of *tripa* invoked by the element of fire. The three types of *thar nu* (*Euphorbia sp.*, spurge) become very strong once combined, causing diarrhoea and

⁷⁷³ Fenner, 1979, p. 84, noted the same for the tantric alchemical *ra sa ya na* practices, also Cantwell, 2015, p. 64, for the Nyingma mendrup described.

⁷⁷⁴ Cardi, 2005-06, p. 104.

⁷⁷⁵ Cardi, 2005-06, p. 104.

⁷⁷⁶ In its centrality the “root medicine” in some aspects corresponds to the role of the chief functional unit of Sowa rikpa remedies called “King”. Cardi, 2005-06, p. 102.

cleansing the organism.⁷⁷⁷ Purgation is also a cleansing technique for the excess of *tripa*, as is '*khur mang* (*Taraxacum sp.*, dandelion) a good medicine for the same.⁷⁷⁸ The element of the East is earth, and its associated *nyépa* is therefore *béken* composed of earth and water. The eastern medicine of the Mendrup bears their cold characteristics, and hence can overcome disorders of hot nature caused by fire and *tripa*.

The “lifting and light medicine” of the North is similar to that of the East by being mostly sweet and bitter by taste and cooling or neutral by character. But it is also close to warming. The medicine of the East associated with *béken* is cold, whereas the medicine of the North linked to the wind, *lung*, is a bit warmed up reflecting the *lung*'s neutral nature being both cool and warm, with a prevalence of coolness. By its light and cooling qualities the northern Mendrup *lung* medicine treats the disequilibrium of the hot *tripa* caused by fire, as well as of the heavy *béken* generated by earth and water.⁷⁷⁹ Honey and the additional *a'u rtsi* (*Fritillaria spp.*, fritillary) are moreover understood to overcome poison (*dug*),⁷⁸⁰ which is also one of the generally articulated effects of the Mendrup medicine.

In the West, the element of fire ignites “the heavy fire medicine” related to the hotness of *tripa*. The medicine is mainly of salty and hot taste and thus of a warming character healing the forces of *lung* and *béken*, stabilising the elements of wind, earth, and water, and enforcing the “digestional heat” (*me drod*, literally “fire heat”).⁷⁸¹ The several cooling ingredients in the list imply another interpretation of their presence. Virtually all of them are perceived to cleanse poison: the *spang spos* valerian (*Nardostachys grandiflora*),⁷⁸² mercury (*ra sa ya na*),⁷⁸³ *gzi ma byin tshor* when read as *byi tsher* (*Morina alba*; however, once read as *gze ma*, *Tribulus terrestris*, the ingredient is warming, see Alt. above),⁷⁸⁴ and *ga sho* (*Cremanthodium sp.*).⁷⁸⁵ To these substances, warming garlic (*sgog pa*, *Allium sp.*) is added, also supposed to help overcome poisoning.⁷⁸⁶ The three kinds of incenses bearing a cooling character can be also read as inserted to represent the element of space in the West, to comply to the inner organisation of the remedy (see below). The western field of the *maṅḍala* hosts a larger number of ingredients than the preceding points.

⁷⁷⁷ AN.

⁷⁷⁸ Jan van der Valk (email communication, March 2017).

⁷⁷⁹ AN, ShM.

⁷⁸⁰ ShM.

⁷⁸¹ AN, ShM.

⁷⁸² ShM.

⁷⁸³ ShM, p. 43.

⁷⁸⁴ GyPyBM, ShM.

⁷⁸⁵ ShM, pp. 193-194.

⁷⁸⁶ ShM, p. 194.

The South arises from the element of water, and hence is chilling. It produces “the cold and cooling water medicine” related to *béken* and its qualities. The Mendrup substances here are clearly prevalently cooling in nature, as exemplified by camphor (*ga bur*). They primarily balance the hot *tripa* and fire, and also the light *lung* bodily force and wind element.⁷⁸⁷ The included pomegranate (*sda ru*, *Punica granatum*) is warming mainly for the desirably strong “digestional heat”, and not for the body as such,⁷⁸⁸ which might explain its presence in this quarter. It is considered a very important and effective medicine for this particular application, and thus its inclusion into the Mendrup comes as no surprise. The two possible alternative readings of two items (*sro ma ra tsa*, *g.yu shing*) proposing the involvement of *Cannabis sativa* (hemp) and *Cyananthus spp.*, do not accord with the southern cardinal point and its cooling properties, so are likely inaccurate. The South displays the highest count of ingredients among the points. In this respect, the West and the South seem to act as the strongest forces in harmonising the overall character of the Mendrup medicine as a whole: the West brings in warmth and the South coolness.

The association of the five directions of the Mendrup *maṇḍala* with the five elements distinctly determines the properties of their five medicines,⁷⁸⁹ and at the same time the relevant bodily force similarly formed by the element. Therefore, for instance the fire in the West provokes both a warming remedy and the hot *tripa* force. In this case, the medicine associated with *tripa*, which is in the given context colloquially referred to as simply “*tripa* medicine”, does not denote a cooling medicine for the treatment of *tripa* as in the standard Sowa rikpa discourse, but *materia medica* sharing the properties of *tripa*. In the Mendrup, the five medicines of cardinal points become called after the *nyépa* they share properties with and not those which they should heal. This wording seems to be specific to the Mendrup, and causes confusion among Sowa rikpa practitioners not familiar with it. For instance, in order to balance excessive *tripa*, the medicines of the cardinal points bearing opposite properties have to be applied: the cooling medicine of the South and East connected to *béken*, and of the North derived from *lung*.⁷⁹⁰

Interestingly, the element of space fundamental to the Mendrup *maṇḍala* and medicine is not practically reflected in the conventional Sowa rikpa pharmacology. In the Mendrup it acquires its important position due to the ritual’s fivefold pattern in which it finds its place

⁷⁸⁷ ShM.

⁷⁸⁸ ShM.

⁷⁸⁹ Cantwell, 2015, pp. 64-65, also noted the association of tastes with particular cardinal points in the mendrup she studied. In the Buddhist context their distribution differs from the one here.

⁷⁹⁰ AN, YT (Menri).

along with the four elements crucial to Sowa rikpa, and, moreover, due to its centrality in the ritual pattern – the space occupies the Centre of the *maṇḍala*. Further, its substances are crucial to the ritual and embody all its potencies. They also constitute a balanced unit of its own that can work independently without additions, for example in case that any other mendrup ingredients cannot be acquired. In Sowa rikpa the space element is perceived as all-pervasive, infusing the body and thought.⁷⁹¹ It similarly appears in the Mendrup being placed into the Centre and pervading the other cardinal points, of which each even has certain *materia medica* of the space element placed among its other ingredients. This feature is not explicitly stated in the Mendrup text, but is presented in the chief commentary on the ritual composed by Nyö Tsültrim Gyeltsen in the fourteenth century (see above, Chapter 1).⁷⁹² According to this work, the respective spatial ingredients are: *a ru ra* (chebulic myrobalan) in the Centre, *du rum skad phyad* (spurge) in the East, *du ru ka* and *po so 'cha'* in the North, the three incenses (*spos sna gsum*) in the West, and *ga pur* (camphor) for the South. As the unit of the medicine of space is principal to the Mendrup mixture, thus these substances of space occupy the primary position within their clusters (the third line in Table 12). This hierarchical distribution further strengthens the significance of the element of space.

The Bonpo Light-Swirled Mendrup organises phenomena, such as the five elements, into the structuring cosmological fivefold device of its *maṇḍala*. Correspondingly, based on the five elements, Sowa rikpa concepts and pharmacological parameters, as tastes, potencies of substances, which are associated to three bodily forces *nyépa*, and therapeutic effects, are allocated into the respective five areas of the *maṇḍala*. The groupings of the Mendrup substances within the *maṇḍala* imply a certain classification of ritual *materia medica*. Classifications of the natural world depend on cultural, social and environmental context,⁷⁹³ as well as the utility of the recognised entities.⁷⁹⁴ In the case of Mendrup, the context is ritual, religious and cosmological, that of structuring the universe. The distinguishing criteria of categorisation in the Mendrup are the initial five elements from which the whole universe and inevitably also the distinct five units of medicine are perceived to originate, along with their resulting tastes, properties, and healing potentials determined by the elements. The groupings are therefore based on their medicinal effect and potency *nüpa*. The Mendrup categorisation is

⁷⁹¹ Finckh, 1978, 1985, Gerke, 2014, Hofer, 2014, Meyer, 2007.

⁷⁹² NyTshGy. gNyos tshul khriims rgyal mtshan, *'Od zer 'khyil pa bdud rtsi yon tan gyi phyag bshes gsal byed me long bzhus so*, MS Kathmandu, Triten Norbutse monastery, no number.

⁷⁹³ Berlin, 1992, Boesi, 2007, Ellen, 1986, Glover, 2005.

⁷⁹⁴ Ellen 1993, Glover 2005, Hunn 1982, Morris 1984.

a functional division.⁷⁹⁵ The Mendrup classificatory organisation follows the Sowa rikpa categorisation of diseases inherently derived from the elements and the three *nyépa*. The individual *nyépa*, evolving from the elements, in the state of imbalance give rise to distinct diseases, according to which remedies are then grouped.⁷⁹⁶ Likewise, the Mendrup ritual forms units or classes of medicines applicable to treating disorders induced by the elements. The medicinal units of the Mendrup stabilise the elements and subsequent disorders opposed to the element of its own. The central medicinal unit then exerts all potencies. The classification of *materia medica* according to their potency is the most common in current Sowa rikpa practice,⁷⁹⁷ yet also likely the eldest among other possible classifications and occurs already in the major Tibetan medicinal treatise, the *Gyüzhi*, from the twelfth century.⁷⁹⁸ The Light-Swirled Mendrup can be dated to roughly the same period, and interestingly shares this aspect with the *Gyüzhi*.⁷⁹⁹

In contrast to Sowa rikpa practice, in the Mendrup ritual the categories of pharmacological properties, their medicinal potencies *nüpa*, and hence medicines, are also spatially visualised and defined. The aspect of spatiality is preeminent in the ritual and the organisation of its medicinal blend. The whole ritual action is focused on the *maṅḍala* and the medicine it contains. The core of the *maṅḍala* is its Centre associated with the all-extending element of space bearing all the medicinal potencies and therapeutic effects, with the potential to heal all disorders. The central unit of the Mendrup medicine is the hierarchically highest and holds the primary place in the formula. The precious treasure vessel carrying the *papta* fermenting agent occupies the Centre too. Both the central medicine and the *papta* are absolutely crucial for the conduction of the ritual and guarantee its efficacy. In the ritual *maṅḍalic* scheme the Centre is the axis of the universe, in the Mendrup medicine it is its pivotal constituent. The Centre and the element of space maintain their ritual importance and leading role also by pervading into the four lateral cardinal points and their medicines. The lateral points and their mixtures in the same manner respectively stem from the elements of earth, wind, fire, and water, firmly distributed into the points. The pharmacological properties and healing effects of the substances in all points therefore depend on their spatial arrangement within the ritual. Such spatial representation of *materia medica* seems to be unique to the Mendrup ritual. The *maṅḍalic* model in the case studied follows the Bonpo

⁷⁹⁵ Cf. Glover, 2005.

⁷⁹⁶ Glover, 2005.

⁷⁹⁷ Glover 2005, p. 173.

⁷⁹⁸ Boesi 2006, p. 70, Glover, 2005, p. 189, 205.

⁷⁹⁹ The Bonpos have their own close equivalent to the treatise called *Bumzhi* ('*Bum bzhi*, see *gSo rig 'bum bzhi*, 2006), whose contents is very close to *Gyüzhi*. Millard, 2002.

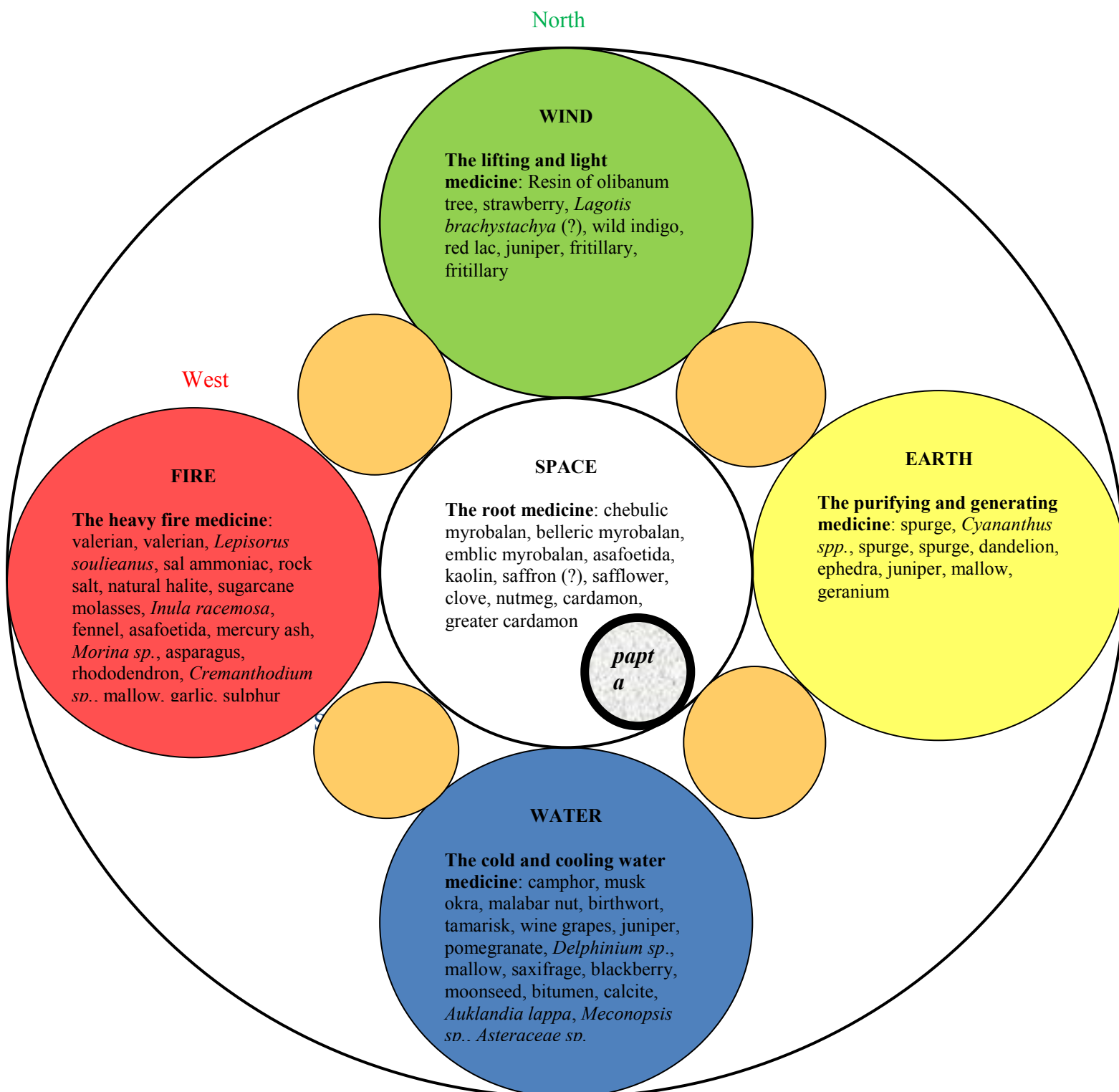
ordination of the cardinal points. An alluding spatial *maṇḍalic* scheme of medicinal remedies dominates the well-known opening chapter of the *Gyūzhi*. Here the Medicine Buddha is depicted in the central position surrounded by his marvellous paradise realm of Tanaduk (ITa na sdug, “Magnificent to Behold”) abundant with medicinal plants and other healing substances. Each quarter furnishes remedies of a certain property, or specific ingredients – in the given order: after venerating the Medicine Buddha in the Centre, the text proceeds to the South that produces warming substances, then the North providing ingredients of cooling character, the subsequent East brings *a ru ra*, and the West the six good substances.⁸⁰⁰ Contrarily, the equivalent Bonpo *Bumzhi* treatise⁸⁰¹ in its first chapter or elsewhere, to my knowledge, does not postulate such a geographical division of *materia medica*. Neither of the works does contain such an exact and universalistic spatial visualisation and classification of *materia medica* as the Mendrup achieves. The Mendrup seems to have constructed this structure by its fivefold *maṇḍalic* scheme typical of tantric ritual. The ritual space of the *maṇḍala* hereby produces the spiritual and healing potency of the Mendrup medicine. The mixture acts as a whole, as a total of the *nīpa* and their actions exerted by the particular units of the five directions.

⁸⁰⁰ GyZh, ch. 1.

⁸⁰¹ *gSo rig 'bum bzhi*, 2006.

Diagram: The Mendrup Medicinal Maṇḍala

The major encompassing circle symbolises the *maṇḍala* of the Light-Swirled Mendrup ritual. The smaller circles represent the medicinal vessels of the respective cardinal points of the *maṇḍala*. The vessels in the five main points bear the colours of the points and their associated elements: the white vessel is in the Centre, the yellow in the East, the green in the North, the red in the West, and the blue occupies the South. The medicinal containers in the four intermediate directions are of yellow colour. Each vessel accommodates its prescribed substances according to the Mendrup recipe text. Only those understood and included into the observed Mendrup ritual are listed here, for more details see Table 12. Double or triple listings indicate involvement of two substances rendered into English by the same name. The receptacle of the *papta* fermenting agent is also placed into the Centre.



Classification of Animals

The *maṇḍalic* framework of the Mendrup recipe extensively works not only with *materia medica* and prevalently the realm of flora, but also with that of fauna. As has been shown, in the first fivefold section of the recipe, the cardinal directions of the *maṇḍala* encompass several specific groups of animals, linked to the five tantric nectars, as functional units oriented at overcoming the respective five mental poisons. The animal groups represent the iconic mounts (Skt. *vāhana*) of the buddhas of the respective points (see Table 8). I would like to argue that the Mendrup text and ritual by its fivefold cosmological ordering also serve as a tool of animal classification.

If we analyse the Mendrup animal ingredients' list, we come to the following structure:⁸⁰²

Table 13: Animal Ingredients of the Cardinal Points					
The points as in the recipe →	Centre	East	North	West	South
↓Repeating clusters within the points					
Centre (C)	*C: Human Lion (C)	E: Human(C) Elephant (E)	N: Undivided	W:Human(C)	S: Human(C) Carniv.(S)
East (E)	*E: Divided	C: Carniv.(S)	C: Carniv.(S)	C: Birds (W)	*C:Carniv.(S)
North (N)	N: Undivided	N: Undivided	E: Divided	E: Divided	E: Divided
West (W)	W: Birds	*W: Birds	W: Birds	N: Undivided	N: Undivided + Divided(E)
South (S)	S: Carniv.	S: Carniv.	S: Carniv.	S: Carniv.	W: Birds

It is clear that the seemingly random groupings of the diverse and at times bizarre animals and humans in the Mendrup recipe follow a very regular and thought through pattern. The overall organisation of the text appears in the Bonpo anticlockwise order: C–E–N–W–S. The animal and human ingredients of each point form a separate unit, which can be further divided into five parts, or in cases of a likely text corruption in the sections on the Centre, East and South (see the asterisks) into three or four parts. Each part within the cardinal point then again reflects the general division of the cardinal points and their animal groups. Each of the five parts stands for one of the five points, hence all the five points are repeated within

⁸⁰² The asterisk marks the reconstructed missing parts of the text.

each point. To put it another way, every cardinal point of animal ingredients of the recipe encompasses all the other points in a certain order. The order creates a hierarchy of the points and determines the point in question.

For instance, the animal recipe for the direction of the West opens with human body parts followed by birds. Humans, as will be shown shortly, represent the Centre, and birds the West. The passage could also start directly with the birds. In any case, we immediately know that here the prescription for the western quarter begins. If it was for the Centre, it would have been followed by animals typical for the East (first column of the table), as the general pattern is Centre – East. In the West, after the humans (Centre) and birds (West), the other points succeed in the anticlockwise sequence: East – North – South, in the animal terms employed: [animals with] divided hooves (as yellow-headed sheep) – [animals with] undivided hooves (as vermilion horses with white heels) – carnivorous animals (as quietly walking foxes). Thus, the western point is in the recipe formed from its five parts as follows: C–W–E–N–S. It could have been also formed as W–C–E–N–S (if the positions of the human and bird parts were switched, as is in the above table visible for the East, North and South). The general principle of the C–E–N–W–S order has been adopted for the western direction by prepositioning the animal symbolic of the West (bird) at the head of the cluster: C–W–E–N–S. However, in the case of the West the animal did not jump even in front of the Central ingredients (human), as it has done in the East, North, and South. Equally, all the cardinal points' units of human and animal substances repeat and alter the main C–E–N–W–S format, accustoming it to the given arrangement of the point.

As can be seen, each of the cardinal points is linked not only to a particular animal, but to a whole classificatory group the animal represents:⁸⁰³

C: Human, variant appellations: “great flesh” (*sha chen*), boys (*khye'u*), women (*bud med*), girls (*bu mo*), youth (*lang tsho*)

E: Divided hooves (*rmig pa kha brag*)

N: Undivided hooves (*rmig zlum*)

W: Birds (*'dab chags*)

S: Carnivores (*gcan gzan*)

⁸⁰³ Martin observed the same organisational scheme applied to animals in a Bonpo context, although with a differing linking of the animal groups to the respective cardinal points. Martin, 1994, p. 60.

Leaving the humans aside, the animals are perceived through four categories: Hoofed: 1. Of divided hoof; and 2. Of undivided hoof; 3. Carnivores; and, 4. Birds. Further subclasses are: aquatic carnivores, carnivores with claws, and aquatic animals with divided hooves. The distinguishing criteria employed are the animal's typical living space (air, ground, or water), its diet, and lastly the type of the terminal portion of its limb. As the fifth category, human is added. The dividing structure is in accordance with modern Western science. The two can be juxtaposed as follows:⁸⁰⁴

Table 14: Classes of Animals in the Mendrup Recipe		
Western biological classification		Mendrup classification
Class	Order	
Mammals (<i>Mammalia</i>)	Even-toed ungulate (<i>Artiodactyla</i>)	<i>rmig pa kha brag</i>
	Odd-toed ungulate (<i>Perissodactyla</i>)	<i>rmig zlum</i>
	Carnivores (<i>Carnivora</i>)	<i>gcan gzan</i>
	Primates (<i>Primates</i>) - Human	various names
Birds (<i>Aves</i>)		<i>'dab chags</i>

We receive a nice fivefold structure in both systems obviously representing the animals that humans mostly come into contact with and that are the easiest and most needed to be conceptualized. Fishes, reptiles, insects and all Invertebrates (*Invertebrata*) are omitted in the Mendrup text. There are striking parallels between the two systems of categorisation, the modern Linnaean binomial and that of the Mendrup recipe. For example, as in the Western scientific taxonomy, Herbivores are anticipated as opposed to Carnivores in the Mendrup. The Western system does not provide a special taxonomic class for them, nor does the Mendrup, and both agree on directly dividing them into the Odd-toed ungulates and Even-toed ungulates.

The human from the point of view of Western classification presents the fourth Order of the Mammals, the Primates (*Primates*). However, in the Mendrup, he does not figure in a group, and rather just depicts humanity, the human alone. The human stands in the Centre of the Mendrup model, and, as the animals, guarantees the required substances of the five tantric nectars commonly occurring in tantric texts as prerequisite human: sperm, flesh, stool, blood, and urine. It remains a question if the human forms an intended part of the classification or not. In the first case, he would form one independent class of the five conceptualised animal or sentient beings' classes, in the second he would function as a kind of

⁸⁰⁴ Menon, 2014.

supplement to the four animal classes. In either instance, the human is conceptualised as an outstanding element occupying the central position.

The human's role in the Mendrup text can be read as an interplay with the animal realm, in which he figures as both its part and as a detached factor. The first ingredient position of each cardinal point comprises of body parts of either 1. Humans (W); or of 2. The representative animal group (N); or in most cases, 3. Of both (C, E, S). The last option seems to be the pattern. The animal group representative of the direction in question occupies within the direction the main position, along with the human who is associated with the Centre. This underlines the special position ascribed to the human and human body parts by the text. (The addition of the Divided-hooved animals to the Undivided group in the southern point seems to be an aberration from the pattern.)

If we take the human not as a separate class but as a distinct element and provider of the necessary tantric substances, each cardinal point would be represented by its animal at the first position, and the human simply added to it (with the exception of the West where Birds occupy the second place). Secondly, lion and thus again Carnivores, would stand for the Centre. This understanding would explain the frequency of Carnivores on the second position, and the omission of the human in the northern point. The fivefold pattern would then be:

C: Carnivores (*gcan gzan*)

E: Divided hooves (*rmig pa kha brag*)

N: Undivided hooves (*rmig zlum*)

W: Birds (*'dab chags*)

S: Carnivores (*gcan gzan*)

Within each of the cardinal quarters the sought humans and animals acquire characteristics of the particular direction: for example, we see blue women, turquoise cuckoos, blue mules, and *dzo* in the South associated with the blue colour and the element of water. On the contrary, in the red West represented by blood, we find girls of radiating skin, red mountain birds, vermillion horses, and foxes of presumably reddish fur.

The respective animal groups are also linked to the five mental poisons (*dug lnga*), as each of the poisons is associated with a certain direction and thus also its fauna group (see

Table 8).⁸⁰⁵ Within the Mendrup recipe, the five mental poisons rotate in each quarter together with the animal groups they are joined to. The links of the two are as follows:

- C:** Human – Anger (*zhe sdang*)
- E:** Divided hooves – Ignorance (*gti mug*)
- N:** Undivided hooves – Pride (*nga rgyal*)
- W:** Birds – Desire (*'dod chags*)
- S:** Carnivores – Jealousy (*'phrag dog*)

Hence the rotation scheme of the five mental poisons copies that of the animal groups:

The points as in the recipe →	Centre	East	North	West	South
↓ Repeating clusters within the points					
Centre (C)	*C: Anger	E: Ignorance	N: Pride	W: Anger(C)	*S: Jealousy
East (E)	*E: Ignorance	C: Anger	C: Anger	C: Desire(W)	*C: Anger
North (N)	N: Pride	N: Pride	E: Ignorance	E: Ignorance	E: Ignorance
West (W)	W: Desire	*W: Desire	W: Desire	N: Pride	N: Pride
South (S)	S: Jealousy	S: Jealousy	S: Jealousy	S: Jealousy	W: Desire

Within each cardinal point, each of the five animal or human clusters provide a remedy, or a literally “purifying” (*dag pa*) substance, for the given mental poison typical of the particular cluster within the direction. All the remedies in every cardinal point consist of the tantric nectar related to the point:

- C:** semen (*thig le*), testicles (*'bras bu*)
- E:** flesh (*sha*), heart flesh (*snying sha*)
- N:** stool (*dri chen*)
- W:** blood (*khrag*)
- S:** urine (*dri chung*)

⁸⁰⁵ Cf. Animals as removers of the five poisons in NWB, p. 207.

Thus for example in the West, from the regular five animal (or more precisely: four animal and one human) clusters, each offers several substances healing the mental poison representative of the cluster (and the cardinal point it stands for). The complex of the five mental poisons here are perceived as coming from the mental aggregate (*phung po*) related to the West, which is sensation (Table 8). The healing substances are again derived from the West, specifically from the tantric nectar of blood, and therefore all represent various bloods from the human and animals to cure the five mental poisons of sensation. The poison of anger is treated with human blood, the poison of desire with bird blood, ignorance with blood of [animals with] divided hooves, pride with blood of [animals with] undivided hooves, and jealousy with blood of various kinds of carnivores. The carriers of the different kinds of blood also bear other signs of the West, such as red colour.

Despite the very consistent pattern of the Mendrup recipe, few irregularities can be witnessed. However, as I propose, the text's strict framework enables us to estimate its missing parts, as shown in the Tables by asterisks. Likewise, we can see the characteristics of the Mendrup ingredients which have disappeared from the list due to these corruptions. For instance, the text opens with a corruption, starting with the attributes of the cluster of the North instead of of the Centre, as would be appropriate, as the text itself sets off from the Centre. This hypothesis is supported by Nyö Tsültrim Gyeltsen's commentary in which he lists: "1. The sperm of a young white boy with bright eyes, 2. The sperm of a sengye togal, a kind of lion"⁸⁰⁶ as the special medicine of the central direction, which should have been the first ingredients appearing in *The Main Text of the Light-Swirled Nectar Medicine* (Cf. Chapters 1, 4). Nyö Tsültrim Gyeltsen commented upon the text in the fourteenth century when, apparently, it has not been distorted yet.

The notion of categorisation of the animal realm might have been determined already by the Indian tradition of the animals of the five buddhas' families. In any case, in Tibet the animals have been seen as categories structuring the fauna and filled in with Tibetan material, i.e. indigenous Tibetan genera and species. These stand beside a few Indian species as well as mythological creatures. Interestingly, the Indian elephant (associated with the East) has been in Tibet included among the "Divided hooves" (*rmig pa kha brag*). Indeed, an elephant distributes its weight on three toes of each limb and therefore its foot is in a way split, and thus it has not got a round hoof (verbatim *rmig zlum*). Therefore, in Tibet the elephant within the class it represents has been joined by yaks, sheep, *dzos*, etc. In the Western system the

⁸⁰⁶ Translation by Millard and Khenpo in NyTsGy, pp. 7-8.

elephant does not belong to either of the hoofed groups, but forms a separate Order of Elephants (*Proboscidea*) of the Mammals.

It should be added that the animal classification of the Mendrup text and ritual is not to be found in such a written tradition only, but is commonly used in popular discourse at least in some parts of the Tibetan cultural world.⁸⁰⁷ For reference, a different Bonpo categorisation of animals appears a fourteenth century *Encyclopedia of Bon po Doxography*.⁸⁰⁸ In this case, it does not evolve from the fivefold *maṅḍalic* organisation, but from the sixfold structure of the six realms of existence of living beings. This structure is, again, based on Indian precedents. In the top rank are the deities (Tib. *lha*, Skt. *deva*) among the animals: dragon, lion, Garuḍa, horse, and the wish-fulfilling cow. The realm of demigods (Tib. *lha ma yin pa*, Skt. *asura*) is represented by carnivorous creatures. The best off are perceived to be the domesticated animals, by their own nature dependent on humans, and here indeed stand for the human realm (Tib. *mi*, Skt. *manuṣya*). The sphere of animals (Tib. *dud 'gro*, Skt. *tiryagyoni*) as such is filled in with those abiding in obscurity. Then, domesticated animals appear again, but represented only by dogs and poultry, to form the low class of the hungry ghosts (*yi dwags*, Skt. *preta*). Finally, the least desirable realm of hells (Tib. *dmyal*, Skt. *naraka*) is occupied by ocean animals.⁸⁰⁹

As has been illustrated, the Mendrup provides a rich tool of the Tibetan Bonpo communities to conceptualise and classify the natural world around them. The first *maṅḍalic* fivefold section presents a classification of animals in relation to the five tantric nectars, whereas the second *maṅḍalic* fivefold section reveals a classification of *materia medica* based on the categorisation of diseases in Sowa rikpa. The next subchapter will discover the processing of the Mendrup medicine ingredients collected based on these principles.

Stages of Making the Mendrup Medicine

The above presented translation of the Mendrup recipe comprises exactly the text Amchi Nyima was given to follow well in advance before the Mendrup celebration. His reading of the recipe was very practical, and thus pharmacological, based on his experience and clinical practice as a practitioner of the Sowa rikpa tradition. This has been shown in the full

⁸⁰⁷ NW (Oxford 2013). A little similar classification in a ritual text is found by Blondeau, 2000, pp. 259, 271.

⁸⁰⁸ Mimaki and Karmay, 1997.

⁸⁰⁹ The “Six categories of the animals” (*byol song rigs drug*) in Mimaki and Karmay, 1997, pp. xv, 12 (A12a1), 63 (B46b4).

translation of the recipe. The following analysis of the recipe disclosed the fundamental organisational scheme of a *maṇḍala*, encompassing the elemental notions of Sowa rikpa, suggesting a categorisation of *pharmaca*, as well as an animal realm categorisation, which lie behind the structure of the recipe and the composition of its mixture. This Chapter describes the procedure of compounding the Mendrup medicine – what happened once Amchi Nyima read and interpreted the recipe, how the ingredients were gathered according to the recipe, and how they were processed. It also focuses on the specific Mendrup fermenting agent called *papta*.

For Amchi Nyima, the main work load came over the summer and autumn of 2012, when he and his students had to collect a great part of the required ingredients, and then before the Mendrup performance itself. Also the Mendrup publication by Triten Norbutse, *The Practice of the Light-Swirled Nectar*, stresses the importance of planning and a long-term collection of the substances, as well as the impossibility to obtain them from one place.⁸¹⁰ This Chapter illustrates their collection and processing by the particular stages.

I. Gathering the Ingredients

The ingredients came from various sources, as has been indicated in the commentary above. Here a more detailed description follows.

a) Wild flora collected by the Bumzhi Medical Clinic.

The clinic staff members were sent to bring plants from different parts of the Nepalese Himalayas. Amchi Nyima was collecting at his home place in Lower Mustang, as well as, with the help of others, in the regions of Upper Mustang, Dolpo, Dhorpatan, Dhaulagiri, and other parts of Western Nepal.

Picking the plants is bound by a set of rules ensuring the sought medical properties for the particular substance, but also more subtle ritual rules reflecting Tibetan notions of special power of sacred places and aesthetic or geomantic criteria. Firstly, following the standard Sowa rikpa conventions, remedies with cooling effects (*bsil sman*) should come from cold places, as shadowed locations and northern slopes of mountains, and likewise be dried in shadow. On the contrary, warming effects of substances (*drod sman*) are enhanced by the opposite, collecting at hot and sunny spots and drying in the sun.

⁸¹⁰ DTOZ, pp. 44-45.

The best locations to collect the substances are considered to be *né* (*gnas*), “holy sites” or “power places”, which are themselves believed to be empowered by deities residing in them, and thus any material acquired there exercises special properties. In the Mendrup the most sacred places of the Bonpos, as well as some of the local, and usually also relatively easily accessible, sites were represented. Naturally, from some sites the matter had to be sent from the People’s Republic of China. Plants were collected from the three most important Bonpo religious territories:⁸¹¹ Kongpo Bönri (Kong po bon ri), the most sacred mountain of the Bonpos, in Southern Tibet, Mt Kailash (Gangs ti se) in Western Tibet, Ritsédruk (Ri tse drug, Ri bo rtse drug, also Shel le rgya skar) in Eastern Tibet;⁸¹² further from locations in Nepal: Shelribo Druktra (Shel ri bo ’brug skra), the most sacred mountain of Dolpo, Mukhtinath (Chu mig brgya rtsa) and Drenpa Namkha’s cave near Lubra in Lower Mustang, Damdokunda in Upper Mustang,⁸¹³ Dhaulagiri (Mu le gangs, Mu li gangs ri), then in the Kathmandu Valley at Pharping (Yang le shod, A su ra’i phug, Pham ting),⁸¹⁴ Swayambhunath (’Phag pa gshen sku, ’Phag pa shing kun),⁸¹⁵ and Nagarjuna forest (Glang ri lung bstan, Klu sgrub ri bo, Ri bo ’bigs byed) near the monastery. Furthermore, whether at a holy place or not, the best spot for picking is high and clean, and such from which the triad of a mountain, forest, and river (*mthong ba gsum ldan*) is seen.⁸¹⁶ Amchi Nyima stressed the preference for collection at sacred sites, and in general in the wild and at “pure” places. This is perceived to enhance the ingredients with special powers, and also to insure their ritual purity and lack of actual or ritual pollution. Similarly, modern fertilisers are taken as a polluting agent. Such a good condition of the *materia medica* cannot be guaranteed without personal collection, which was therefore sought by the Amchi whenever possible. The Triten Norbutse monastery’s publication on the Mendrup added that the collectors should be “pure boys and girls of auspicious names” (*bkra shis pa’i ming can gyi khye’u dang bu mo gtsang ma*), and the following procedures should take place at a suitable location and in suitable seasons.⁸¹⁷

⁸¹¹ At the first place I use names under which the locations are mostly known.

⁸¹² Cf. Cech, 1987, pp. 41-46, Ramble, 1999, p. 14.

⁸¹³ I have not been able to find out the Tibetan name. To reach the location a demanding three-day journey across unpopulated land has to be undertaken from Lower Mustang. Amchi Nyima’s collecting group had to carry all their provisions and stay in tents on this trip.

⁸¹⁴ The first two denote two different locations near the Newari village concerned, for which itself the Tibetan spelling is the third bracketed word.

⁸¹⁵ The first toponym is Bonpo, the second Buddhist.

⁸¹⁶ AN. Similar conventions apply to usual medicinal remedies, TMPI, p. 12, which is, however, not that often put into practice. Kind, 2002, p. 57, lists also other criteria: places of peoples’ harmony with local deities and spirits.

⁸¹⁷ DTOZ, pp. 44-45.

Thus, to conclude, the order of preference of picking locations was: 1. Holy place; 2. High and clean place; 3. Clean place; 4. Any place.

b) Substances bought at the local market.

The substances bought on the Kathmandu market primarily represented those originally of Indian *pharmaca*. As such, in the vast majority of cases they do not occur in Tibet and historically have been traded from the South. A second group represented various other substances added into the mixture following ritual rules, mainly the “Other included substances” shown below. These came from general grocery shops.

The market for Indian and Tibetan *materia medica* in Kathmandu is found in the quarter of Idambal near Indra Chowk, not far off the Old Kathmandu Durbar Square in the northern direction.⁸¹⁸ At the market, medicinal substances are sold by Newari and Nepali traders, themselves usually not understanding the subject. As Amchi Nyima admits, here it is impossible to check whether the medicine contains fertilisers and has been kept in appropriate conditions for the purpose of the ritual.

The monastery’s Mendrup publication also emphasises the aspect of purity of the required substances. The medicines bought from shops should be checked for quality, their general condition, freshness, and cleanliness “because the traders do not think about cleanliness”. Everything acquired should be of the highest possible quality.⁸¹⁹ Also, all medicines, collected or bought, should be carefully checked not to be confused with others.

c) Substances passed on by the Rinpoche.

Yongdzin Namdak Rinpoche himself contributed to the Mendrup mixture by several valued items. The one economically more priced was the ground mixture of various precious stones (*rin chen lnga*). Its name indicates a composition of five kinds of precious stones, but their number is in practise higher (see the commentary on the substance in the translation above). The mixture was brought from Tibet personally by the Rinpoche, two to three hundred grams were used for the Mendrup. Alike for the mendrup performance at Triten Norbutse in 1998, the mixture was supplied by Amchi Gege and brought from Tibet. Secondly, a piece of cloth from the Bonpo monks’ *göchen* (*gos chen*) garment was donated by the Rinpoche (also see above).

⁸¹⁸ Kind, 2002, p. 57, mentions a different place in Kathmandu (Chetrapati) for the acquisition of the mendrup medicine she described.

⁸¹⁹ DTOZ, p. 45.

d) Substances gathered by others at various places.

During the process of search and acquisition of the substances, a number of friends, relatives, and acquaintances were asked for help. They were involved in obtaining, purchasing, sending, donating, etc., several of the Mendrup ingredients, some of which were dispatched from China. Likewise, the mendrup performance in 1998 received “many things”, as Amchi Nyima noted, from Tibet in China. In 2012 such examples of items collected from afar included sea water brought from India (see below) and plants from the Bonpo holy sites in China mentioned above.

Other Included Substances

Apart from the prescribed list, other substances were included by Amchi Nyima himself, according to the oral teaching from Yongdzin Rinpoche and further his own medical and ritual knowledge. These were:

Various kinds of water: rain, spring, pond, sea, ocean, mineral, tap water.⁸²⁰

Amchi Nyima collected samples of water from sources situated in the four directions around the monastery: In the East from a spring at Swayambhunath and a small pond below the monastery; North: from a spring at Nagarjuna forest; West: from a small reservoir at the back side of the monastery; South: from a small reservoir southwards of the monastery. A few bottles of sea and ocean water were carried from India. Tap water was drawn from the Kathmandu water supply network.

Mineral water was considered very important and beneficial for the Mendrup by Amchi Nyima, since he regarded it to be bestowed with different properties, or “energies”. As Amchi put it, various kinds of mineral water were “good to use, [as] with different energy they come”. This addition to the Mendrup was his personal invention. Hence he went around a number of shops in Kathmandu and bought all types of mineral water he was able to find, which due to the current global market came from different places around the world. The higher their number, the better.⁸²¹

⁸²⁰ With other liquids, including alcohol, these can also be presented as offerings. Nebesky-Wojkowitz, 1996, p. 344. The production of precious pills also pays special attention to its water ingredient. Czaja, 2015, p. 42.

⁸²¹ Similarly, different kinds of water constitute one of the thirteen divisions of Tibetan *materia medica*. DTMM. The medium of water is in pharmaceutical applications also used as one of the possible carrier of medicines, *menta* (*sman rta*, see below). ShM, p. 391.

Various kinds of alcohol: wine 6-7 litres, spirits 2-3 litres (“Western expensive”,⁸²² as for example the Indian whiskey Royal Stag).

Any types of wine and spirits can be used according to Amchi Nyima. These were mainly both in Kathmandu, and some supplied by friends.

Various kinds of oils: sesame, sunflower, mustard, olive; in total 25 litres.

Neither dictionaries nor Amchi Nyima gave a particular set of oils (*snum*), any sorts available were welcomed. Again bought in Kathmandu.

Various kinds of eggs: hen, goose, partridge.

Similarly to oils, no specific set is meant. The eggs were always added without shell, and again bought in Kathmandu.

mNgar gsum, “three sweet [substances]”: crystallised sugar (*shel ka ra*), molasses (*bu ram*), honey (*sbrang rtsi*);⁸²³ 3 x 2 kilograms.

Bought in Kathmandu.

dKar gsum, “three white [substances]”: curd (*zho*), milk (*'o ma*), butter (*mar*).⁸²⁴

Different kinds of milk and butter were included, all sorts found: sheep, yak, cow, goat; 2-3 litres of milk from each, in total 25 kilograms of butter. Bought in Kathmandu and collected among family of Amchi Nyima in Lower Mustang. About sixteen to seventeen medicinal plants not listed in the recipe, but fulfilling the sought properties, were added by Amchi Nyima based on his knowledge of the Sowa rikpa *materia medica*. The Yongdzin Rinpoche’s instruction followed in this case was that any plants without poison (*dug med*), as opposed to those poisonous (*dug can*), can be and are recommended to be included. Here they comprised of medicinal plants personally selected and collected by Amchi Nyima in Mustang.

The monastery’s Mendrup publication *The Practice of the Light-Swirled Nectar* recommended additions as follows: well ground cheese (*zhib rdung byas pa'i phyur ba*); from

⁸²² AN.

⁸²³ AN. In accordance with BGTC, TED, Nebesky-Wojkowitz, p. 345.

⁸²⁴ AN. In accordance with BGTC, TED, Nebesky-Wojkowitz, p. 346.

sweets: sugar, molasses, honey, etc.; various waters: glacier water, slate water, lake water, etc. (*gangs chu rzda chu mtsho chu la sogs*).⁸²⁵

Excluded Substances

On the other hand, a great part of the prescribed ingredients was excluded. Amchi Nyima skipped all those which he was not able to find.⁸²⁶ This in practice means he omitted several plant and mineral ingredients which he could not collect for impossible access or high price, appellations of which were unknown to him or he did not understand them as written in the text. Secondly, all the tantric substances of the “five nectars”, bloods, sperm, flesh, excrement, and urine, as a whole, and then textiles and knots, were omitted although some of them would not had been that difficult to gather. The substances excluded in total represented almost half of the recipe list.

Substituted Substances

A second method of dealing with obscure or hardly obtainable *materia* was substitution (*tshab*). As in the Sowa rikpa tradition, a substance can be replaced by another one sharing certain characteristics, either internal and natural, or external and attributed to it by humans. The substitution can be done on the basis of two main criteria: the same medicinal properties and effects (*nus pa*) according to the Sowa rikpa system, and secondly also the preferred phonetic accordance or similarity of the name.⁸²⁷ Both principles came in play in the case of the substitution of deer musk (*gla rtsi*), thus an animal part, by a plant of the *Delphinium* genus and the same medical properties, and moreover, of the derived and *de facto* same name (*ldum gla tsi*). The second rule was called upon in the case of the ingredient *gzi ma byin tshor* read as porcupine pines (*byi thur*), and substituted by the similarly called plant *byi tsher* (here *Morina alba*). Such substitution is very common in the practice of Sowa rikpa, especially in exchanging animal ingredients for plants or minerals. The Mendrup situation actually reflects the one of Sowa rikpa: “[T]he cost of the ingredients is the most important factor in substitution, although these days the question of animal protection or saving natural resources is also taken into consideration. Costly substances, which cannot be substituted, are omitted or

⁸²⁵ DTOZ, pp. 72-73.

⁸²⁶ Similarly noted by Blaikie, 2015, pp. 7-8, in preparations of precious pills, and by Saberning, 2011, p. 94, in preparations of Sowa rikpa drugs.

⁸²⁷ Both methods of substitution described and discussed by Saberning, 2011.

their amount reduced to a small dosage.”⁸²⁸ Composition of precious pills does in practice also follow these premises.⁸²⁹

The rationality of substitution is paid special attention to in order to prevent the possible deterioration of the ritual by including an inappropriate material. Also the monastery’s Mendrup publication gives instructions on substitution. If the required animal ingredients cannot be acquired, the possibility to substitute them is mentioned, in fact in contrast to the actual composition of the Mendrup medicine in 2012 when no substitutions were sought for the animal parts. As the book informs, the substitution should take place on the basis of the corresponding form (*dbyibs mthun*) and medicinal properties, and also the potential similarity or overlap of the name. The following list of recommended substitutions is presented:⁸³⁰

Deer musk (*gla rtsi*) – substitution: *ldom (*ldum) gla rtsi* (*Delphinium sp.*),

bear bile (*dom mkhris*) – plant called *ldum nag dom mkhris* (according to *The Flawless Crystal Mirror*, *ldum mkhris* is a synonymous name to *kon pa gab skyes*, *Saussurea sp.*), or *kha che sha skam* (same as *kha ce gur gum*, the “Muslims’ saffron”, a high quality saffron, *Crocus sativus*),⁸³¹

heart (*snying*) – fruit of the tree *snying zho sha* (ShM: *Choerospondias sp.*),⁸³² or avocado fruit (*a bho kha dro*, *Persea americana*),

kidneys (*mkhal ma*) – beans of *mkhal ma zho sha* (ShM: *Canavalia sp.*, family *Fabaceae*), the beans resemble kidneys by shape and colour, and heal kidneys,⁸³³

spleen (*mtsher pa*) – beans of *mtsher pa zho sha* (ShM: *mcher pa zho sha*, *Entada sp.*, family *Fabaceae*), of the shape and appearance of spleen,⁸³⁴

liver (*mchin pa*) – beans of *mchin pa zho sha* (ShM: *Entada sp.*, family *Fabaceae*), the beans are of the colour of liver and have the potency to eliminate poison in the liver,⁸³⁵

human flesh (*sha chen*) – vulture flesh (*bya rgod sha*).

⁸²⁸ Saberning, 2011, p. 94.

⁸²⁹ Blaikie, 2015, pp. 7-8.

⁸³⁰ DTOZ, p. 71.

⁸³¹ AN, ShM. Common substitution of deer musk, bear bile, and other animal body parts, noted by Saberning, 2011.

⁸³² Cf. Czaja, forthcoming.

⁸³³ BGTC, ShM.

⁸³⁴ ShM.

⁸³⁵ BGTC, ShM.

Especially the animal and human five root medicines (*rtsa ba lnga*) are difficult to collect, and are to be substituted:

Bodhicitta (*byang sems*) – *ju gang* (not identified)

blood (*rag ta*) – *sid+hu ra*, i.e. minium (ShM: *sin+d+hu ra*, a synonymous name to *li khri*), or saffron (*gur gum*, discussion on types of *gur gum* above), again, the similarity of both substances to blood and its colour is noticeable,

stool (*dri chen*) – nutmeg (*dzā ti*) or white sandalwood (*tsan dan dkar po*),

urine (*dri chu*) – amber (*spos dkar*),

secret [human] flesh (*gsang sha*) – golden coloured chebulic myrobalam (*a ru gser mdog*).

As can be seen, different human and animal body parts are enumerated than in the actual Mendrup recipe. The text is taken as a general overview and recommendation on substitution of living beings' body parts.

Zho sha by itself denotes “strength, power”, also “potency”, in this context potency as medical properties and effects (*nus pa*).⁸³⁶ Thus the tree and plant names embedding the word suggest that they are particularly powerful in treating the body part in question, which is also apparent in their respective names. In this manner, the name *snying zho sha* can be literally translated as “the potency for heart”, the name *mkhal ma zho sha* as “the potency for kidneys”, etc. The same way of substitution hinted here was to me explained by Amchi Geshe Yungdrung Tashi, the principal *amchi* of the Menri monastery in India. In his view, meat and incomprehensible ingredients did not need to be substituted as such (also see Chapter 5), and he was very surprised to see the avocado recommended as a meat replacement by the book published in Triten Norbutse. I was also asked to explain to him what an avocado was. Geshe Yungdrung Tashi proposed to add substances that enhance the given part or organ within the body, instead of including the part itself. Thus for the required hearts he would add a substance known to Sowa rikpa to be prosperous for hearts. Similarly he approached the requirement of urine, faeces, etc. He did not mean a single prescribed substance beneficial for the body part in each case, but rather any medicinal substance of that effect. Hence, his interpretation partly overlaps with the one presented by the Triten Norbutse manual. Geshe puts this understanding of mendrup recipes into practice each year during the Menri's regular Maseng (*sMra sengs*) mendrup, a much smaller event than the Mendrup discussed here. Also the compounded medicine is much less complicated.

⁸³⁶ BGTC.

Thus, animal and human body parts can be during the preparation either skipped, as Amchi Nyima mostly did, or substituted by a plant or mineral ingredient, or also by a more easily obtainable flesh (here vulture instead of human), as advised by the manual and in two cases dealt with by Amchi Nyima. The substances receive recommended substitutes on the basis of their therapeutic effects, appearance, and colour. The process can be also articulated as reinforcing or healing the bodily part in question by a certain included substance, rather than obtaining the bodily part or its substitute.

In contrast, ingredients that can never be substituted are the medicinal and ritual yeast *papta* (see below) and the plant root medicine (*rtsa ba'i sman*). These are perceived to constitute the core of the Mendrup medicine, and without them it cannot function and acquire its properties.

Proportions of the Ingredients

Neither the ratio, nor the volume or weight, of the components seemed to be prescribed during the Mendrup medicine composition at Triten Norbutse in 2012. As is the common feature of Sowa rikpa recipes,⁸³⁷ similarly the Mendrup does not provide proportions of its ingredients. Therefore, these were to be decided by Amchi Nyima based on his consultations with the Rinpoche, Khenpo, and the Bonpo *amchi* in Tibet. Some of the Indian ingredients were bought in large quantities. The wild plants were collected in rather small numbers to be represented in the mixture, depending on the amount found and convenience of transporting them down the mountains. But actually, the ratio was considered important and followed certain rules. The volume and weight of individual components were roughly estimated in advance according to the overall anticipated weight of the whole Mendrup medicinal mixture. At first, it was decided by Khenpo to produce five hundred kilograms of the Mendrup medicine. Later on, this amount was doubled after a recalculation showing that it would not suffice to meet the requirements of all devotees, pilgrims, sponsors, and affiliated Bonpo institutions, expected to be interested. Hence, the plan subsequently counted with almost one thousand kilograms (!). Accordingly, Amchi Nyima doubled the figures on his shopping list of medicinal remedies.

The Triten Norbutse's Mendrup publication prescribes a few principles for the percentile proportions of some of the ingredients (*sman gyi brgya cha bgo stangs*).⁸³⁸ The herbal root medicine (*rtsa ba'i sman*), as the crucial component of the mixture, should form a

⁸³⁷ Discussed in Craig, 2006.

⁸³⁸ Amchi Nyima must have taken part in writing the passage. DTOZ, p. 71.

substantial proportion, maintains the balance of the total.⁸³⁹ All the three myrobalan fruits (*a ru ra*, *ba ru ra*, *skyu ru ra*) are known for having balancing properties, and were inserted into the Mendrup medicine in large quantities.

Proportions of the dry ingredients given by *The Practice of the Light-Swirled Nectar* (*sman rdzas skam rigs spyi yongs brgya cha brgya ru brtsis pa'i nang gses brgya cha bgo tshul*):⁸⁴⁰

The root medicine *a ru* / chebulic myrobalan (*Terminalia chebula*, *rtsa ba'i sman a ru*) – 45%,

the root medicine *ba ru* / beleric myrobalan (*Terminalia belerica*, *rtsa ba'i sman ba ru*) – 22%,

the root medicine *skyu ru* / emblic myrobalan (*Phyllanthus emblica*, *rtsa ba'i sman skyu ru*) – 13%,

saffron of the six good [substances] of the root medicine (*rtsa ba'i sman bzang drug las gur gum*) – 3%,

other [substances] of the six good [substances] (*bzang drug gzhan*) – 7%,

[various] kinds of branch medicines (*yan lag gi sman rdzas rigs*) – 10%,

The count gives 100%. The proportions were likely observed approximately for the 2012 performance.

Proportions of the wet ingredients as in *The Practice of the Light-Swirled Nectar* (*rlan rigs sman rdzas brgya cha bgo tshul*):⁸⁴¹

Saffron solution (*gur gum gyi lde gu*) – 16%,

alcoholic beverages (*chang rag*) – 9% ,

butter (*mar*) – 5%,

milk (*'o ma*) – 3%,

papta solution (*phab gta'i chu*) – 1%,

molasses and honey solution (*bu ram dang sbrang rtsi'i chu*) – 1%.

These form 35%. They are meant to be added to the composition above to form about one fourth of the whole.⁸⁴²

⁸³⁹ AN.

⁸⁴⁰ DTOZ, p. 71.

⁸⁴¹ DTOZ, p. 73.

⁸⁴² AN.

Clearly, the root medicine formed the largest proportion of the Mendrup mixture, and also created its typical bitter taste.⁸⁴³ Also the monastery's publication puts emphasis on the usage of ingredients in suitable quantities. For instance, too much *shing kun* (asafoetida, *Ferula asafoetida*) would overcome (*bcoms*) the scent of other ingredients. Excess of *thal nu* (**thar nu*) and *sngon bu* would cause diarrhoea ("the stomach to purge", *grod khog bshal ba*), and excess of *ga pur* would incite a too strong element of wind (*rlung*) in the body.⁸⁴⁴

The liquids deserve special attention too. Their overabundance would prevent the Mendrup medicinal mixture to dry, and could cause it to become rotten. Too much butter and milk make the medicine to clod (*ri lur 'gro*), whereas too much of buttery and oily substances (*mar sogs snum rtsi*) turn it hard and solid, and also bitter.⁸⁴⁵

II. Cleaning

All *materia medica* had to be properly sorted and cleaned from unwanted particles. This was done by the members of the Bumzhi Medical Clinic at the monastery. Amchi Nyima estimated it would take one person about seven months to accomplish this task alone. The monastery's Mendrup publication stresses that cleaning the substances from impurities and spoiled parts is especially important if they were purchased and not personally collected.⁸⁴⁶ The main Mendrup mantra, *mendzap* (*sman 'dzab*, see Chapter 3), should be recited during the washing and cleaning.⁸⁴⁷ Thus was also observed.

III. Grinding

Grinding of the Mendrup ingredients was completed at the Kathmandu medical market in Idambal at a big mechanical grinding machine for medicines and incense. It took three days. The powdered substances were packed into bags by sorts, still unmixed, and transported back to the monastery.

Originally, preceding the modern technologies, the Mendrup medicine was crushed and ground by *amchis* by hand with a pestle in a mortar. According to the conventions of Tibetan

⁸⁴³ The same was observed by Cantwell, 2015, p. 64.

⁸⁴⁴ DTOZ, p. 71.

⁸⁴⁵ DTOZ, pp. 72-73.

⁸⁴⁶ DTOZ, p. 45.

⁸⁴⁷ DTOZ, pp. 44-45.

medicine, a drug comprises of several components and the whole mixture is powdered at once.⁸⁴⁸ Furthermore, the mechanisation has enabled the production of a previously unimaginable amount of the Mendrup medicine, on this occasion approximating to one thousand kilograms. Similarly, it has lead to a new ritualistic arrangement: instead of grinding the whole Mendrup medical mixture at a certain stage of the ritual one third through and not beforehand (Chapter 2), at the present only a little is left unground to symbolically undergo the prescribed stage of the ritual. This volume measured about two kilograms in 2012, and ten kilograms in 1998.⁸⁴⁹

Before the ritual, the bags of ground assorted substances were kept in a roof-top chamber (referred to as *gnas khang*,⁸⁵⁰ “room”, or *lha khang*, “shrine”, about 3 x 5 metres), embellished by *makaras (chu srin)* and a Dharma wheel on its roof, and placed on the top of the main assembly hall of the monastery. The chamber was built in 2011, thus previously in 1998 the mendrup medicine was packed in the dining hall of the monastery, and later stored at the Bumzhi Medical Clinic.

IV. Mixing (*bsres*)

The mixing of all the ingredients itself consisted of several phases. All took place in the small roof-top chamber. This prominent place, one of the highest of the whole monastery, was rather set by coincidence than by a seemingly sacredness-holding intention of hierarchical organisation. Activities also took place on the roof around.⁸⁵¹

The monastery’s book describes that the place of mixing the Mendrup medicine has to be clean (*gtsang ma*) and not obstructing a path used by humans. Those to mix it have to wash their faces and hands, and wear mouth masks (*kha ras*).⁸⁵² The first requirement here derives from a ritual code of purity for dealing with ritual or sacred material. Similarly, before offering to deities and (important) social interactions one should wash his or her face.

a) Dry ingredients (*sman rdzas skam rigs*)⁸⁵³

The whole powdered medicine was spread on a big plastic sheet (*ras gzhi*)⁸⁵⁴ covering the floor of the chamber. The sheet was then repeatedly lifted and folded from the sides, while the

⁸⁴⁸ TMPI, p. 13. On this matter, including a discussion on shortcomings of the new methods of mechanical grinding, see Saxer, 2010, pp. 118-123.

⁸⁴⁹ AN.

⁸⁵⁰ DTOZ, pp. 72-73.

⁸⁵¹ The Bumzhi Medical Clinic where the mendrup medicine was kept in 1998 is situated in the lowest part of the monastery’s area. See the Plan of the monastery in Appendix 1.

⁸⁵² DTOZ, pp. 72-73.

⁸⁵³ DTOZ, p. 71.

Bumzhi Medical Clinic staff with the help of a few monks mixed with their hands as far as they could reach from the edges of the sheet.

All the dry ingredients were mixed together as such apart from saffron (*gur gum*, and likely safflower, *bal gur gum*), which was firstly dissolved in water (*chu la phab*), and then poured into the dry mixture to give it a nice colour (*mdog*). Likewise, elephant bile (*g+hi wang*) can be dissolved in water and then added to enhance the colour. Juniper (*shug pa*) and *mkhan pa* (involves several genera and species, for example sagebrush, *Artemisia sp.*)⁸⁵⁵ are advised if a green colour of the mixture is desired.⁸⁵⁶ The two last plants are used as incense in smoke offerings.

b) Wet ingredients (*sman chang*)⁸⁵⁷

To the mass of powder, having been mixed through and through, liquid ingredients were added.⁸⁵⁸ These were all poured together into a big container and constituted in total approximately two hundred litres. Also butter was mixed in melted and liquid form. About twenty-five kilograms of the medicine were added into this pool and stirred. Subsequently, the fusion was gradually poured into the whole medicinal mixture laid out on the floor. About thirty monks then rubbed (*lag pas 'phur*)⁸⁵⁹ the mixture to distribute the liquids equally. This step is very important to prevent the medicinal powder from rotting and clodding. It required one day of work.⁸⁶⁰

c) “Yeast” *papta (phabs gta', phabs rta)*

Into the liquids also a very special component was added which in fact represented the most important bit of the whole mixture. It was firstly mixed into the various kinds of water, and then into the rest of the liquids. On it see below.

⁸⁵⁴ DTOZ, p. 74.

⁸⁵⁵ ShM.

⁸⁵⁶ DTOZ, p. 72.

⁸⁵⁷ DTOZ, p. 71.

⁸⁵⁸ Also in DTOZ, pp. 72-73.

⁸⁵⁹ DTOZ, p. 74.

⁸⁶⁰ In contrast, Cech, 1987, p. 272, described a different procedure during the Bonpo mendrup she witnessed: “a large number of medicinal herbs and condiments have to be pounded into powder, then boiled in a solution of water, milk, etc. and then ground again.” Kind, 2002, pp. 57-59, also described the process of making the medicine, similar to the one in Triten Norbutse in 2012, and noted the list of ingredients based on an oral explanation.

d) Fermentation (*nyal* / *snyal*)

For the next five days the mixture was kept “very wet”,⁸⁶¹ and left without any interventions in the roof-top chamber completely closed. Amchi then assessed the material with his sense of smell.

As in the case of “yeast”, the nomenclature of the processing stage conforms with *chang* preparation. The word *nyel* (*nyal*), “sleeping”, implies the act of resting of the mixture, whereas the causative verb *nyel* (*snyal*), “putting to sleep”, emphasises its passivity in being put to rest. Both spellings are possible and used, but according to Amchi Nyima, the latter is more precise.

Also the Triten Norbutse’s publication describes the fermentation process. The medicinal mixture should be wrapped into a sheet and closed, and the whole kept in suitable conditions, as temperature, moisture, etc., for five to seven days.⁸⁶² It is recommended to start the fermentation process about two weeks before the ritual.⁸⁶³ In 2012 Amchi Nyima decided to do so much more in advance.

e) “Kneading” (*’phyur*)

When a delicate smell started coming out (*dri thul thul ’phyur*)⁸⁶⁴ from the fermenting matter, it indicated the right time to continue. The sheet was opened (*kha pyes*).⁸⁶⁵ The material was then kneaded by a number of people into a dough-like consistence,⁸⁶⁶ the work lasted four days. The dough was to be evenly mixed, with all solid lumps (*sman rdog rdog*) broken, of a fine and regular constitution (*khod snyom po dang zhib tshags*), and then dried in shadow on the sheet wide open.⁸⁶⁷

f) Drying (*bskam*)

The mass was still wet. This preparation stage was considered critical, and attentive care had to be taken to prevent the possible rotting of the mixture (called “the big danger of rotting”, *tul nyen chen po*),⁸⁶⁸ and thus spoiling the whole ritual. It is important to mix the medicine up

⁸⁶¹ AN.

⁸⁶² DTOZ, p. 74.

⁸⁶³ DTOZ, p. 72.

⁸⁶⁴ DTOZ, p. 74.

⁸⁶⁵ DTOZ, p. 74.

⁸⁶⁶ Similarly described by Cantwell, 2015, p. 73, although in the middle of the mendrup ritual and not beforehand.

⁸⁶⁷ DTOZ, p. 74.

⁸⁶⁸ DTOZ, p. 74.

side down (*steng 'og brjes*).⁸⁶⁹ The medicinal heap was regularly raked and moved around the sheet, and air circulation by opening windows was necessary. The drying lasted one month. The mixture was checked by Amchi Nyima every day.

V. Treating the Mixture

In 2012, the total Mendrup medicine weight exceeded nine hundred kilograms,⁸⁷⁰ and cost slightly over 436 630 NRP.⁸⁷¹ A strong, nice smell was coming out of the roof-top store room. Given the quantity, the medicine was not made into pills, as might be done,⁸⁷² but left in the powder form. The mixture was stored in large cotton bags used for keeping and transporting medicines for the monastery's clinic. It filled fifty-three big, over ten medium-sized, and one hundred and three small bags.

Once the mixture was ready, it had to be treated according to certain rules. It could not be stepped on, kept in an unclean place, or otherwise polluted. If for some reason the medicine had to be thrown away, it was disposed of at a nice clean place, which at the monastery was a spot a few metres behind and above the main temple. For example, the medicine “dust” left on the ground of the store room after packing was eaten by those handling it, and the very tiny swept bits (mixed with actual dust and dirt) carried to this place and left there for “insects to eat”. Another suitable disposition of Mendrup medicine would be to “burn it nicely” as an offering.

The monastery's *The Practice of the Light-Swirled Nectar* stresses the qualities a proper Mendrup medicine storage place should have: a dry place where the mixture would not rot, protected from direct sunshine which would spoil its medical properties and effects (*nus pa 'joms*, literally “conquering the *nus pa*”), and from wind which would decrease the *nüpa* (*nus pa*) and the smell (*dri*) indicating it.⁸⁷³

As can be seen, the processing the Mendrup medicinal mixture requires quite demanding physical labour. Monks of the monastery were ready to help Amchi Nyima and the Bumzhi Medical Clinic staff. Anyone interested could have taken part, with no restrictions to lay

⁸⁶⁹ DTOZ, p. 74.

⁸⁷⁰ Cech, 1987, p. 272, noted “twenty sacks”, and Kind, 2002, p. 57, about ninety-five kilograms, of the mendrup medicine made during the respective Bonpo mendrup rituals they observed. During a Buddhist mendrup at the Sogyal Rinpoche's Dharma centre of Lerab Ling in France in 2000, five hundred kilograms were produced. Garrett, 2009, p. 220.

⁸⁷¹ See the accounting in Chapter 2.

⁸⁷² As also Kind, 2002, p. 58, described.

⁸⁷³ DTOZ, p. 74.

people or women. The aspect of purity and ritual unpollutedness was stressed during the whole process. As Amchi Geshe Yungdrung Tashi explained, everything had to be clean for the mendrup: the substances used, the packagings, all containers and implements, the site, as well as the human actors engaged. They should have their faces and hands washed, and wear clean clothes.

The Medicinal and Ritual Yeast Ingredient *Papta* (*phabs gta*)

The *papta* (*phabs gta*), or “yeast”, represents the most important ingredient of the whole Mendrup. This “essence” is referred to as “yeast”, generally called *pap* (*phabs*) in Tibetan, and exactly the same effects are ascribed to it. Concretely, its potency inheres in transferring a property it contains in a tiny pinch into a great mass, and enhancing the whole with it. The property here are both blessings (*byin brlabs*) and healing power, and the “yeast” is the content of the *terma* vessel of the revealed Mendrup medicine.⁸⁷⁴ This is believed to have been “drawn from the treasure” (*gter las drangs*) by venerated ancient Bonpo masters (see Chapter 1). Similar *papta* fermenting agents are also found in material preparations of other empowered substances, such as *chülen* (*bcud len*).⁸⁷⁵

The “yeast” is regarded as the crucial ingredient initiating the Mendrup medicine production process, which is usually likened to making *chang* (*chang*, only rarely to yogurt or bread), including the following fermenting phase referred to as “sleeping” (*nyel, nyal*) or “putting to sleep” (*nyel, snyal*, see above).⁸⁷⁶ Indeed, the process is *de facto* the same. The “yeast” is firstly soaked with the various kinds of water, then mixed into their volume, further with the other liquids, and finally poured into the Mendrup medicinal powder.⁸⁷⁷ Amchi Nyima described the *papta* with some water added to resemble *tsampa* or bread dough (*phags*), but just “a little bit [more] rough”. To be sure that the old *terma* medicine and its properties are preserved, customarily only less than a half of its volume (one or two small

⁸⁷⁴ Photographs of both *papta* and the *terma* vessel in DTOZ, pp. 3, 71, also in Appendix 5.

⁸⁷⁵ Gerke, 2012a, p. 220, speaks in this context about the “ongoing fermenting substance’ (*phab rta rgyun ldan*), sometimes called ‘mother pill’”. Cf. the mendrup described by Cantwell, 2015, pp. 63-64.

⁸⁷⁶ The same parable was recorded by Kohn, 1998, p. 160, during a Mani Rimdu (*ma ni ril bu*) ritual, although directed towards the transformation process of the material during the ritual itself and not initiated by one added component: “The grain itself has no power to make you drunk, but after the work of brewing is done, it does.” Das lists the spellings *phab* and *phabs*, and a synonym *chang rtsi*. The term might be related to the verb *phab pa*, to “bring down”. Cf. Gayley, 2007, p. 473: *phabs* as “catalyst” referring to a “mother” or other previously consecrated pill.

⁸⁷⁷ AN; DTOZ, pp. 72-73.

handfuls this time) can be used as the *pap*, and the rest is stored. After the Mendrup ritual has finished and the new Mendrup medical mixture made, the missing proportion is refilled. The qualities of the *papta* hint at the concepts of positive “rising” and “increasement” connected to general prosperity. The Mendrup medicine is celebrated should it increase in volume.⁸⁷⁸ I was often explained the effects of the Mendrup *papta* in a yogurt and *chang* simily: Neither yogurt nor *chang* would “be what they are”, would not have the characteristic properties they are know for, without their fermenting agents. Similarly, Mendrup medicine is a powder of ingredients, but without the *papta* it does not acquire its main characteristic properties and effects.

The Mendrup *terma* medicine is believed to embody all the substances prescribed by the text, without any exception. This is either ascribed to its supernatural origin, or to the idea that in ancient times gathering them was still attainable for humans.⁸⁷⁹ The continuity embraced in the ancient *terma* medicine is dual, material and spiritual. Mendrup medicine is mostly distributed from the hands of a venerated figure along with the master’s blessings.⁸⁸⁰ Therefore, as the tradition of this particular Mendrup and its *terma* medicine were previously kept at Menri monastery in Tsang, the *papta* is taken to be empowered by all its previous abbots (by *phyag dbang*, “hand blessing”), and as such represents “the potency of blessings” (*byin rlabs kyi tshan kha*). Also passed masters’ relics are said to have been mixed in over the generations. Hence, it functions as a material lineage incorporating all these qualities and reflecting masters’ generations’ and teachings’ lineages, *gyü* (*rgyud*). Thus, the concept of *gyü* becomes materially expressed. By sight, touch, smell, and taste the *papta* did not differ from the compounded Mendrup mixture. Each mendrup ritual, differentiated according to its *yidam* and tradition, has its own special catalyst.⁸⁸¹

⁸⁷⁸ Cantwell, 2015, recorded mendrup medicine being counted by *kāpala* skull vessels to investigate whether its volume has increased over the ritual. A positive answer was interpreted as a very auspicious sign.

⁸⁷⁹ Similarly observed by Cantwell 2015, p. 63. From the epoch prior to the disruption of the primordial state of harmony, due to which poisons (*dug*) spread. Cf. TGS, p. 61, Vargas, 2010, p. 379. Is the initial state of harmony recalled by the ritual through its substance? Cf. Karmay, 2010, p. 56.

⁸⁸⁰ Cf. Cantwell, 2015, Kind, 2002, Kohn, 1988. The same for precious pills Czaja, 2015, Gerke, 2017.

⁸⁸¹ Kohn described a material similar to the *pap* (*phabs*) added into *drupril* (*sgrub ril*) and called *jinlap* (*byin brlab*). “‘Blessing’ (*byin brlab*) here refers to the hard dark brown granular substance that lamas regularly give to those who seek audience with them. Each lama compounds his own blessings. They are also called ambrosia (*bdud rtsi*), or ambrosial religious medicine (*bdud rtsi chos sman*).” In contrast to the mendrup medicine, the *sgrub ril* studied here did not compound of medicinal substances. Kohn, 1988, p. 158-159. Kohn’s description accords with that of Blaikie 2013, 2014. A similar substance called “dharma medicine” (*chos sman*) or “nectar dharma medicine” (*bdud rtsis chos sman*), as a very complex (of over a hundred ingredients) compound produced by Mentsikhang in Dharamsala and consecrated at the Dalai Lama’s temple to be added into other medicines as “blessings” (*byin brlab*), was mentioned by Gerke, 2017 (the first two translations here are hers). On the contrary, Kind does not mention any “yeast” material.

Moreover, mendrup medicine in general gradually accumulates more and more of the described material and spiritual constituents, the higher the count of both the better. The medicinal product of any mendrup ceremony conducted within the Bon religious school is very welcomed to be incorporated into other Bonpo mendrup medicines.⁸⁸² Menri monastery in India and Triten Norbutse regularly exchange sachets of the medicine after every *drupchen*, pilgrims bring bits of medicinal powder from mendrup rituals organised at other Bonpo communities, and also distribute the mixture obtained at Triten Norbutse far and wide into other mendrup compounds.⁸⁸³ Medical mixtures produced at small yearly mendrup ceremonies at Sorig Bumzhi clinic were also added. Therefore, there exists an idea of interconnectedness between Bonpo mendrup rites, which all create a link to each other and to venerated ancient masters.⁸⁸⁴

The concept of *papta* is more complex. The second syllable *ta* (*gta'*), probably best translated as “pledge, pawn”, is in this context understood to derive from the term *tachen* (*gta' chen*, “great pledge”), originally by the Bonpos said to come from *tama* (*gta' ma*), a general term for “pawn, pledge”.⁸⁸⁵ *Tachen* (*gta' chen*), sometimes also called *tama* (*gta' ma*), is a substance figuring in every large ritual in which it functions as a separate offering.⁸⁸⁶ It is included into some specific *maṇḍala* offerings and rites as well. The matter is specific for its ritual, and even its appellation can vary according to the ritual. In the context of some rituals, the name *tachen* (*gta' chen*) can have a synonym *men* (*sman*), “medicine”. Within all *yidam* ritual it is, however, called *tachen*.⁸⁸⁷ The idea lying behind is that the offering serves as a kind of pledge for the deities to come.⁸⁸⁸

Such ritual mixtures are kept in small bags by individuals and institutions, and always only a small amount is used. In this sense *tachen* (*gta' chen*) is synonymous to *ruma* (*ru ma*), which can also denote the specific ritual substance, but is borrowed from the process of

⁸⁸² The “mendrup denomination” always has to be observed even in areas where Bon to a certain degree mixes with Nyingma, for instance in Dolpo. Blaikie, 2013, 2014, 2015, p. 9, describes this practice, known as *papgyün* (*phabs rgyun*), in Ladakhi Buddhist context. Moreover, in the case he observed (Blaikie 2013, 2014), produced mendrup medicine functioned as a *papgyün* enhancer added to standard Sowa rikpa drugs.

⁸⁸³ Cf. Kind, 2002, p. 74. On its additions into regular medicinal compounds within the Buddhist context see Blaikie, 2014, pp.7, 293-298, Kloos, 2010, pp. 115-116.

⁸⁸⁴ Cf. Blaikie, 2014, p. 8.

⁸⁸⁵ BGTC, also NWB, pp. 34-35, 110-111.

⁸⁸⁶ NW (Prague 2013), TY (Oxford 2017). Cf. Snellgrove’s explanation of *gta'* and *gta' chen*: “a ritual bowl made from a skull and called ‘the great pledge’.” NWB, pp. 212-213, 266.

⁸⁸⁷ TY (Oxford 2017).

⁸⁸⁸ TY (Oxford 2017). The word *gta' ma* meaning “pledge” is used in colloquial language as well. For instance: *Nga khyo la gta' ma ga re bzhags kyi red/ sgor mo bzhags kyi red/* translates as “Which pledge am I going to give you? Money is to be given [as the pledge].”

making yogurt. Other synonyms are *mazhi* (*ma gzhi*, “base, basis”, “subject matter”),⁸⁸⁹ *zhima* (*gzhi ma*, “base, basis”, or “substratum, abode, residence”),⁸⁹⁰ or *ruta* (*ru rta*, likely related to the above *ru ma*), the last of which comes from *chang* and bread making (also labelled *skyur*, the “sour”, and for bread *ku ri yi ru rta*, or *ku ri yi skyur*). In association with the mendrup, the substance can be called more specifically *men gyi ruta*, “medicinal *ru rta*” (*sman gyi ru rta*), or *men gyi zhima*, “medicinal *gzhi ma*” (*sman gyi gzhi ma*). The one of the mendrup of Trowo Tsochok Khagying typical of the Menri monastery, has been known as *menri yi ruta*, the “*ru rta* of Menri” (*sman ri yi ru rta*).⁸⁹¹

Moreover, the same concept called *papta* also exists in the medical Sowa rikpa practice. The hereditary lineage of the family of Amchi Nyima and his father still maintains dozens of small packets of medicinal mixtures, each specific for a certain remedy prepared by them for their patients. Each drug mixture has its *papta*, which ensures the efficacy and power of the remedy. Thus, as new medicinal compounds are prepared anew, every time a bit of the given *papta* is added, to be again refilled to its volume from the just prepared medicinal batch. The small *papta* bags represent an important part of the transmission of medical practice and knowledge within the lineage, and are strictly confined to the one hereditary line. Therefore, the *papta* mixtures always belong to a certain medical practitioner, his (or, in rare cases, her) ancestors and descendants, and cannot be shared with other doctors, their families, and their remedies and healing powers. The practice of the *papta* medicinal mixtures was in the past, according to both Amchi Nyima and Amchi Geshe Yungdrung Tashi, likely the widespread norm for Sowa rikpa drugs.⁸⁹² The custom has gradually vanished from most part of Tibet, due to the progressing institutionalisation of the medical tradition in settings as monasteries where no clearly defined hereditary lineages (even not the one of a teacher-student) had place.⁸⁹³ Geshe Yungdrung Tashi accented that medicine prepared with a *papta* is of a “great benefit” (*phan thog chen po*) and more efficacious than medicine without it.

Secondly, the meaning of *papta* can be equal to *püta* (*phud gta'*), “sacramental pledge”,⁸⁹⁴ encompassing *pü* (*phud*) as the first portion selected for offerings to deities, or to *püta menpap* (*phud gta' sman phab*) including all the terms discussed.⁸⁹⁵ Furthermore, the alternative and less frequent spelling *papta* (*phabs rta*) is connected to the medical term

⁸⁸⁹ BGTC, Das.

⁸⁹⁰ BGTC, Das.

⁸⁹¹ TY (Oxford 2017).

⁸⁹² Similarly recorded from present Ladakh by Blaikie, 2014.

⁸⁹³ Nevertheless, the practice was, although unnamed, witnessed by Kloos, 2010, p. 115-116, in the exile Mentsikhang institution in Dharamsala.

⁸⁹⁴ NWB, pp. 213, 278, TGS, p. 135.

⁸⁹⁵ TGS, pp. 135, 297.

menta (*sman rta*, rarely *sman gta'*) denoting a “vehicle in which medicine is taken”,⁸⁹⁶ a solution of hot water and honey, sugar, or molasses in drug mixtures. Such solutions are for regular Sowa rikpa applications of medicines dissolved in water, as is the *papta* dissolved in the various kinds of water specially collected for the mendrup ritual. The term *menta* (*sman rta*) can be also applied to “the fluid used in the preparation of the jewel pills as a type of vehicle for the pills”.⁸⁹⁷ The idea of a horse as a mount or carrier of the healing substance is implied.⁸⁹⁸

To conclude, all these terms refer to the same “yeast” quality in a broad sense applicable to food fermenting processes, as well as medical remedies and ritual items, of which Mendrup represents the last two.⁸⁹⁹ Might the term be etymologically related to the rituals of the *to* (*gto*) category, translated by Snellgrove as “pledge rituals”?⁹⁰⁰

<i>phabs</i>	yeast, ritual catalyst
<i>sman phab</i>	ritual catalyst in mendrup rituals
<i>gta'</i>	probably best translated as “pledge, pawn”
<i>gta' chen</i>	“great pledge” (derived from <i>gta' ma</i> , a general term for “pawn, pledge”), a separate offering specific for every ritual
<i>phud gta'</i>	“sacramental pledge” (Snellgrove)
<i>gto</i>	“pledge rituals” (Snellgrove)
<i>phud</i>	the first portion selected for offerings
<i>phud gta' sman phab</i>	a composite of <i>phud gta'</i> and <i>sman phab</i>
<i>phabs rta</i> ~ <i>sman rta</i> / rarely <i>sman gta'</i>	“vehicle in which medicine is taken” (i.e. solution of hot water and honey, sugar or molasses)
<i>sman, ru ma,</i> <i>ma gzhi, gzhi ma,</i> <i>ru rta</i>	in specific context synonymous to <i>gta' chen</i>
<i>sman gyi ru rta,</i> <i>sman gyi gzhi ma</i>	the <i>gta' chen</i> of mendrup
<i>sman ri yi ru rta</i>	the <i>gta' chen</i> of the Light-Swirled Mendrup of Trowo Tsochok Khagyung

All the terms in the Table refer to the “fermentation” and “transmission” quality applicable to food, as well as medical remedies and ritual items.

⁸⁹⁶ AN.

⁸⁹⁷ Czaja, 2015, p. 57, also pp. 65-68.

⁸⁹⁸ AN, BGTC, Meyer, 2007, pp. 185-186. “The diseases are compared to a battlefield where the medications act as the fighting army. The carrier which transports the medications to the disease is therefore called the medicinal horse.” TMPI, p. 354.

⁸⁹⁹ Cf. BGTC, Martin, 1994, p. 301, describes “yeast starters”, *papgyün* (*phab rgyun*), containing “hair, tooth, bone and clothing relics of an impressive array of saints.” The process of transformation of substances into powerful healing remedies paralleled to food, and explicitly boiling, processing is discussed by Kohn, 1988, Stablein, 1976.

⁹⁰⁰ NWB.

The publication of Triten Norbutse explains the *papta* as the main means to strengthen and “rise” the efficacy of the mendrup medicine (*smān gyi nus pa rtsal ’don, smān gyi nus pa lang*s). The *papta* is to be dissolved into the “essence juice” of the “nectarous solution” (*bdud rtsi chang gyi nying khu*, i.e. the liquids of the nectar medicine). To them also milk of the wish fulfilling cow (*’dod ’jo ba yi ’o ma*), milk of a small-maned female yak (*ze chung ’bri yi ’o ma*), and milk of white sheep bringing prosperity (*g.yang dkar*),⁹⁰¹ should be added.⁹⁰² The *papta* thus deserves to be embraced by powerful and mythological substances. The transmission of the *papta* for this particular Mendrup can be traced also in several Bonpo historical works, which record passing down the Mendrup text along with its paraphernalia (see Chapter 2). Also the contemporary oral knowledge and history of the Bonpos vividly remember the *papta* (Chapter 2).

Conclusions on the Mendrup Recipe

In the Mendrup recipe and compounding of its medicine, the different discourses and layers employed by the ritual become apparent. These discourses comprise the Tibetan indigenous ideas, medical Sowa rikpa elements, and the Indo-Tibetan Buddhist tantric framework. They have been illustrated via an analysis of the terms *men* (*smān*) and *dütsi* (*bdud rtsi*) in the preceding Chapter (3) based on an examination of the main Mendrup ritual texts translated. The Mendrup recipe again builds with these bricks. It is cosmologically organised in a *maṇḍalic* pattern typical of Buddhist tantric rituals and particularly of *sādhana* meditational practices, into which the Sowa rikpa understanding of a human (or of any other sentient being’s body), healing properties and effects of substances, as well as their classification, are placed. Buddhist philosophical ideas complement the *maṇḍalic* fivefold scheme, and constitute the grounds of a Buddhist Doctrinal interpretation of the Mendrup rite and its medicine (see the following Chapter 5). In the recipe of the Mendrup medicine, the Buddhist frame of reference is represented by the proclaimed purpose of the individual parts of the medicine to purify (*dag*) the five mental poisons (*dug lnga*) of anger, ignorance, pride, desire, and jealousy, within the five aggregates (*phung po*) of consciousness, form, mental formations, feeling, and perception (Table 8). The poisons are thereby supposed to transform

⁹⁰¹ The *yang* (*g.yang*) concept of prosperity has been linked to sheep and white colour. Cf. Ramble, 2013.

⁹⁰² DTOZ, p. 72.

into the five wisdoms (*ye shes lnga*), whose names also explicitly feature in the recipe. The tantric discourse has also added the concept of the five nectars (*bdud rtsi lnga*), semen, flesh, stool, blood, and urine, which, again, stand for certain parts of the Mendrup medicine. The concluding eightfold set of ingredients summoned according to the eight classes of consciousness (Tib. *rnam shes brgyad*, Skt. *aṣṭavijñāna*), drawn from the Buddhist Mahāyāna philosophical school of Yogācāra,⁹⁰³ supplements the fivefold cluster of the *maṇḍalic* ingredients. In this group, each of the five senses, i.e. sight, hearing, smell, taste, and touch, is signified by a particular item in the recipe, to which a few others are adjoined. Interestingly, as the *maṇḍalic* part of the recipe clearly has the layout of five cardinal directions, the closing short part of the recipe modelled upon the eight consciousnesses expressly proposes only four cardinal points. Even so, the concrete and firm *maṇḍala* of five sections and the five elements creates the major structure of the recipe, as well as of the ritual (Cf. the main Mendrup recitations presented in Chapter 3, and the description of the ritual in Chapter 2). As the individual ingredients of the Mendrup recipe are concerned, they too derive from both tantric ritual traditions and Sowa rikpa *pharmacopoeia*. The Sowa rikpa medicinal material has been mostly dealt with in translation of the recipe and the section on *materia medica* classification (above). Here, let us state that many of the over one hundred components of the Mendrup medicine come from tantric ritual and often serve as offerings to deities, and are again organised in the fivefold pattern: the offerings of the five senses, the five sweet and white substances, the six good [substances], five kinds of medicines, five kinds of incense, five kinds of essences; similarly: grains, precious gems, fine silks, animal blood, different kinds of flesh, and various liquids. Also, some medicinal plant species are not uncommonly used in ritual, such as *mtshe* (*Ephedra*). The Mendrup medicine and rite itself are perceived as an offering to the invoked deities.

I hope that I have indicated the multiple cultural influences comprising the Mendrup ritual and its medical practice, by rendering and analysing both the fundamental Mendrup texts and the list of the Mendrup recipe accompanied by an extensive commentary. I have also shown how the recipe is handled in practice, and what a fluid process this can be. The next Chapter will demonstrate the different understandings and usage of the Mendrup medicine in the contemporary Bonpo exile community.

⁹⁰³ Bowker et al., 1997, Snellgrove, 2002, Williams and Tribe, 2000.

CHAPTER FIVE
Comprehension of the Mendrup Ritual and Medicine

Comprehension of the Mendrup Ritual and Medicine

This chapter examines the emic understanding of the Mendrup medicine – how the substance is perceived and used by current Bonpos.⁹⁰⁴ The material presented derives from the Light-Swirled Mendrup performance at Triten Norbutse monastery in 2012, which has been described in Chapter Two. The subsequent Chapters Three and Four hopefully clarified the textual apprehension and then the physical composition of the Mendrup medicine, as well as the various cultural strata forming the Mendrup ritual. The analyses at the end of these Chapters looked into the standardly non-articulated cosmological, religious, philosophical, ritual, tantric, and medical concepts upon which the Mendrup ritual is established. In contrast, this Chapter shares views on the Mendrup medicine explicitly articulated by the Tibetan Bonpo community. It aims to show what the Mendrup medicine is actually taken to be produced for and good for. The apprehension of the Mendrup medicine often overlaps with that of the ritual, as both are usually taken as one unity.

The exposition in this Chapter is based on two sources: (1) Mainly interviews with members of the exile Bonpo community: monastics of both high education and recognition (Triten Norbutse's leading authorities and geshe) and common monks, practitioners of the Sowa rikpa medical tradition, *ngakpas*, and laymen;⁹⁰⁵ (2) Contemporary primary sources produced by the institution of Triten Norbutse, primarily the publication on the Light-Swirled Mendrup of 2012, entitled *The Practice of the Light-Swirled Nectar (bDud rtsi 'od zer 'khyil ba'i lag len skor)*, which was especially prepared to present and celebrate this particular Mendrup performance.⁹⁰⁶ Different discourses and interests projected into the Mendrup rite and its medicine can be followed within the different sources. The educated monastic elite and primary Tibetan works composed and published by them tend to almost exclusively present the standardised Doctrinal explanation of the Mendrup ritual. This is firmly positioned into soteriological and philosophical teachings forming part of the monastery's curriculum and adopted worldview, and also delivered during public teachings adjoint to the Mendrup performance (Chapter 2). On the other hand, the lay populace do confer a popular understanding and application of the Mendrup ritual and its medicine in the practicalities of their daily lives. Both the *ngakpas* and medical practitioners seem to bridge these two

⁹⁰⁴ Kind, 2002, pp. 38, 59, also provides emic explanations of the mendrup medicine in the Bonpo community she studied in Dolpo.

⁹⁰⁵ The respondents and participants in the ritual were defined in Chapter 2.

⁹⁰⁶ DTOZ.

approaches, as they are well aware of the soteriological Buddhist Doctrine, yet still are actively engaged in civil happenings and live in lay settlements. The roles of *ngakpas* and medical practitioners are in the reality of the Bonpo communities of the Himalayas, such as Mustang and Dolpo, often conflated, as can be exemplified by the figures of Amchi Nyima and the below mentioned Lama Shenrab Tenzin. Thus, their understanding of the Mendrup and its medicine encompasses all the aspects tied to these social roles and related education. Furthermore, it is also influenced by their clinical practice of treating patients. The members of the so called Western sangha (see Chapter 2) do not figure in the survey. They follow the interpretation of the monastic authorities and themselves have to learn how to understand the Mendrup medicinal substance, and how to treat it, as relative newcomers to the tradition. Even though these different discourses can be traced in the perception of the Mendrup ritual and medicine, I would like to add that by any means they should not be recognised as separate from each other or contradictory to each other. On the contrary, they do inform each other and act in interaction. I do not aim to portray an image of polarised paradoxical views on a certain aspect of Tibetan cultural, i.e. the Mendrup,⁹⁰⁷ within its own community, but would like to state that these views differ according to the background, education, interests, and practical daily experience of the participants, as these elements do construct them. Each group of respondents perceives the Mendrup rite and substance according to own needs and experience, and thus in at least some instances the divergent social groups engaged in the Mendrup *have* to differ in their comprehension.

Although the data presented below were collected in the exile, I believe that they mirror the apprehension of the mendrup ritual and its produce in Tibet as well. Many of the respondents coame from Tibet, where, moreover, many of them havd been educated and spent considerable parts of their lives. Furthermore, the official explication of the Mendrup ritual articulated by Triten Norbutse monastery was based on the associated oral traditions brought from the original Menri monastery in Tibet by Yongdzin Rinpoche (see Chapter 1). Himself regarded the principal authority on Bonpo mendrup ritual in general, Yongdzin Rinpoche was also the main communicant of the Triten Norbutse's teachings on the Mendrup, and was instrumental in the preparations of the special publication prepared by the monastery to commemorate and present the ritual.⁹⁰⁸ I also assume that the articulated understandings and applications of the Mendrup medicine shown below are essentially representative of large-scale Bonpos mendrup performances, i.e. those referred to as *drupchen* (*sgrub chen*, see

⁹⁰⁷ As has been for instance criticised by Gerke, 2004.

⁹⁰⁸ DTOZ.

Chapter 1), and are not specific to the Light-Swirled Mendrup only. Therefore, in this Chapter at relevant instances, I refer to mendrup, or mendrup medicine, in general rather than to the concrete Mendrup and Mendrup medicine.

In the usual perception applicable to all groups of participants, the Mendrup ritual and its medicine are viewed as one unit and of the same effects. The individual events of the ritual all count, with a particular emphasis on the empowerments (*dbang*). All the various components: blessings by the religious authorities, notably by Yongdzin Rinpoche and Khenpo, empowerments bestowed by the Rinpoche, the Mendrup practice itself, are considered as creating its potency *nüpa (nus pa)*,⁹⁰⁹ the potency of both the ritual and the medicinal compound, as well as bringing general prosperity, progress on the spiritual path, and especially healing, rejuvenation, extending life span, and averting death.⁹¹⁰ The physical digestion of the Mendrup medicine is believed to accompany and enhance these aims, and is particularly welcomed by the lay community.

The potency of both the Mendrup ritual and the medicine is believed to emerge from both its medicinal components, and the accumulated deities' and masters' powers and blessings. The substance was commonly described to me as “blessings and medicine in one” (*byin brlabs dang sman gnyis ka yod red*).⁹¹¹ The ritual is defined by its medicine, and the Mendrup medicine by its ritual. Both support each other and ensure the other's efficacy. To achieve the full benefit, one should take part in the ritual's practice and also consume its medicine. The pilgrims were keen to combine attendance of at least one of the empowerments with receiving the medicinal mixture. By the monastery of Triten Norbutse, the ritual and its efficacy themselves were justified by the assumed antiquity and divine origin of the ritual. They are believed to be secured by the uninterrupted transmission by the deities, the great priests of the past (*sgrub gshen*), the superior knowledge-holders (Tib. *rig 'dzin*, Skt. *vidyādhara*),⁹¹² and other masters. Thanks to these venerated figures, the power and efficacy have been gathered (*mthu nus gnyis 'dzoms*), and blessings and auspiciousness of the practice (*bsgrubs pa'i byin rlabs rten 'brel*) accomplished.⁹¹³

⁹⁰⁹ An overview of the complex “layers” of potency of Tibetan ritually empowered medicines, including mendrup medicine, in Blaikie, 2015, p. 9.

⁹¹⁰ *na ba gso/ shi ba bslang/ DTOZ*, p. 5. Also noted by Garrett, 2009. On similar notions of the precious pills see Gerke, 2013c, Gerke, 2017, Czaja, 2013, Czaja, 2015, Millard, draft paper, and of tantric healing see Stablein, 1976.

⁹¹¹ The same perception of “empowered [medical] substances” (*byin rten*) is recorded by Samuel, 2007, p. 217.

⁹¹² “Holders of magical power”, Snellgrove 1987, p. 135. Cf. translations in Chapter 1.

⁹¹³ *DTOZ*, p. 76.

The mendrup medicine is perceived to exercise supernatural properties, and various marvellous and auspicious signs are said to accompany its ritual accomplishment. These are supposed to arise towards the end of the ritual. In *The Practice of the Light-Swirled Nectar* these are described to manifest in the medicine itself to testify the proper completion of the substance (*bsgrubs pa'i rtags*). As the booklet states, they can be represented by: (1) An increase of the volume of the medicine (*sman sngar las mang du 'phel ba*);⁹¹⁴ (2) Certain physical relics arising (*sku gdung dang ring srel 'khrungs pa*) from the medicine, which can also be small solid clods formed; then (3) Light radiating (*'od 'bar ba*); (4) Sound resounding (*sgra grags pa*); or (5) Pleasant scent diffusing (*dri bzang po 'thul ba*), from the medicine. Also, (6) Smoke in the shape of a goddess fuming into the sky (*du ba lha mo'i gzugs can 'phur ba*); and (7) Shapes of auspicious symbols arising in the medicine, such as of a *stūpa*, water waves, or a lotus flower (*mchod rten gyi gzugs can, chu'i gnyer ma, me tog ud 'bar*), count.⁹¹⁵ The mendrup ritual should last until some of the signs are witnessed (*bsgrubs pa'i rtags ma thon bar du bsgrub dgos*), only then the medicine is duly completed (see Chapter 2 for a description of the ritual).⁹¹⁶

Certain rules apply to keeping and handling the mendrup medicine once it has been accomplished by the ritual.⁹¹⁷ The storage place has to be “clean and nice”,⁹¹⁸ preferably the home altar.⁹¹⁹ Bags used for preserving standard Sowa rikpa remedies were recommended by the monastery,⁹²⁰ but in practice any clean container was utilised. Explicitly, the mendrup medicine can never be traded or sold, it can only be donated for the benefit of other beings. Preferably, the act of giving should happen from the hands of a master along with his blessings. The receiver is supposed to have belief in the master and in the practice. It is beheld that the mendrup medicine is an integral part of its practice, hence it cannot be efficacious without a proper transmission lineage, also articulated by the empowerments and Rinpoche’s teachings, or without the right state of mind and understanding. These cannot exist in a commercial setting, which, moreover, often becomes deindividualised and detached from the original masters and institutions. This aspect of non-commercialisation was often stressed in Triten Norbutse during the Mendrup ceremony and accompanying public teachings. The

⁹¹⁴ Also recorded by Cantwell, 2015, p. 83.

⁹¹⁵ *Me tog ud 'bar* can refer to lotus, water lily, or *Meconopsis sp.*

⁹¹⁶ DTOZ, p. 75

⁹¹⁷ Rules that apply to the medicine after its compounding but before the ritual are described in Chapter 4.

⁹¹⁸ Geshe Takla Tarwa (Triten Norbutse).

⁹¹⁹ Precious pills are also treated as sacred objects. Czaja, 2015, pp. 72-74, Gerke, 2017.

⁹²⁰ DTOZ, p. 77. Such bags at the Bumzhi Medical Clinic are now made of white cotton. Until recently they were of leather, which is the best material for preserving the medicine’s fragrance, properties and effects (*nus pa*), as Amchi Nyima explained.

presumption stands in sharp contrast to the ongoing sheer commodification of ritual medicines, as precious pills, in Tibet,⁹²¹ which might also be the reason of Triten Norbutse paying attention to the issue.⁹²²

Medical and Healing Properties

The element of healing, both physical and mental, is the one most commonly stressed and sought in relation to the Mendrup ritual and its generated medicinal mixture. For the lay populace it is also sometimes the main or only objective of the entire undertaking.⁹²³ Thus particularly the popular discourse is driven by very practical and daily needs. The mendrup medicine, produced by any grand mendrup performance, is viewed as a kind of universal drug for humans and animals, the environment and the universe as a whole. The lay understanding stays closer to actual physical applications to patients in need, whereas the monastic one stresses the universal healing impacts of the ritual and its medicine.⁹²⁴

Amchi Nyima explained that the mendrup medicine would heal any disease or illness, especially certain types of fevers and health problems caused by spirits (*gdon*). The substance is by Amchi Nyima, as well as very generally by virtually all respondents, understood as a basic drug for any bodily discomforts, diseases and illnesses, mental and physical.⁹²⁵ By far the most commonly expressed usage was for minor ailments, as cold and influenza, and body pains, headache, stomach ache, and digestion problems. Many respondents confirmed that mendrup medicine was particularly effective for easing the pulmonary airway and nasal cavity.⁹²⁶ Some praised its positive effects on the digestion system due to its bitter taste caused by the myrobalan nuts, and notably the appreciated *a ru ra* (*Terminalia chebula*, chebulic myrobalan) panacea. The mendrup medicine was also said to help “if you don’t feel well for any reason”⁹²⁷ by bringing strength and potency *nüpa* (*nus pa*). In remote areas where no other medicaments are available, mendrup medicine is taken to cure anything, and is viewed universally as Paracetamol or Aspirin is in the West.⁹²⁸ In 2012, people did not

⁹²¹ Cf. Blaikie, 2015, Gerke, 2017, Hofer, 2008.

⁹²² DTOZ, p. 77.

⁹²³ Similarly observed by Kind, 2002, Stablein, 1976, p. 2.

⁹²⁴ On the common notion of universality of tantric rituals see Chapter 1.

⁹²⁵ Similarly Cantwell, 2015, p. 87.

⁹²⁶ Similarly Kind, 2002, p. 57.

⁹²⁷ Geshe Takla Tarwa (Triten Norbutse).

⁹²⁸ Pönlop (Triten Norbutse). This usage is also noted for example by MPD, p. 3.

hesitate to come to Triten Norbutse from far and wide to receive the medicine, because “it is good medicine, [and] very strong”.⁹²⁹

Most commonly, the medicine is especially recommended to be digested every morning on an empty stomach, by a small lick dissolved in a glass of warm water. This application was also advised by the prescription accompanying the Mendrup medicine when it was distributed in Triten Norbutse upon the completion of the ritual (see Chapter 2). Alternatively, some respondents recommended its application after every meal. The water in which the mendrup medicine is dissolved may also be cold, but never boiling, as the heat would damage its medicinal properties. Some people preferred to simply throw a hint of the powder directly into the mouth. Basically, mendrup medicine can be taken any time, either with water or without. It can never cause any harm. It always has to be taken orally. It can be consumed in times of illness, or everyday, or occasionally for prevention.⁹³⁰ To both the monastic and lay community, the mendrup medicine is known for both its curing and preventative powers. As such it is regularly given to small children, for example, to protect them from ailments, any harmful forces, and insure their healthy growth.

The monastery’s publication promised the Mendrup medicine to bring body strength (*lus kyi stobs*) and radiating lustre (*gzi brjid bkrag mdangs*).⁹³¹ “Lustre” or “radiance” (*mdangs*) of skin and the whole body is a central concept of the Sowa rikpa medical tradition. It is the main indicator of well-being and proper metabolism, as it reflects the energy of the digestional heat (*me drod*, literally “fire heat”).⁹³² This heat is understood to warm up the stomach to enable the transformation of food and nutrients into bodily tissues. On the elemental level, the five elements as the components of the eatables change into components of the organism. The Mendrup medicine is recognised to support this process by enhancing the digestional heat. As the brochure says, a strong fire of digestion slows down ageing, gives youth and rejuvenation (*rgas pa sra ba*), long age (*tshe ring ba*), clears the senses (*dbang po gsal ba*) and arouses strength (*stobs bskyed*).⁹³³ The Mendrup’s effects of rejuvenation were touched upon by the Khenpo as well. In a teaching to the Western sangha, he suggested that every participant would become about ten years younger, to the great joy of the audience.⁹³⁴

The monastery’s prescription of the Mendrup medicine (in Chapter 2) indicated the mixture to be applied to “100 diseases”. This noticeably contradicts the Sowa rikpa notion of

⁹²⁹ Anonymous lay person (Triten Norbutse).

⁹³⁰ Similarly precious pills. Czaja, 2015.

⁹³¹ DTOZ, p. 76.

⁹³² Cf. Gerke, 2014.

⁹³³ DTOZ, p. 76.

⁹³⁴ See the connection of mendrup to alchemy and its quest for immortality in Garrett, 2009.

existing four hundred and four, i.e. four times one hundred and one, illnesses and diseases. The symbolic number of one hundred in the Mendrup context might have been chosen to represent the “all kinds of diseases”⁹³⁵ mentioned in the prescription, also to reflect the number of the Mendrup medicine ingredients, and simply stand for “many” or “countless”. The high number of ingredients marks the Mendrup medicine’s exclusiveness and assigned extreme efficacy.⁹³⁶ The monastery’s brochure also advised on the application of the Mendrup medicine. One should drink it every morning dissolved in water (*chu la sbangs*) to stay unharmed by daily obstacles. The consumption acquired some ritualised rules emphasising aspects of purity: One should take the medicine soon after getting up, having washed one’s face and eventually finished any other personal hygiene. The Mendrup mantra *mendzap (sman ’dzab)* is to be recited, and a clean vessel used for the medicine.⁹³⁷

The attending pilgrims at Triten Norbutse were aware of the rareness of the Mendrup medicine. They often stressed that it was to be taken always by very small bits, so that a packet in a family would last for a very long time, often over decades until the next opportunity to receive a new one.⁹³⁸ Some preferred to make use of the substance only during illness, in order not to finish it before the due time. Many people that I met at the Mendrup celebration were returning pilgrims from 1998 satisfied with the mendrup medicine received then, and now coming for a second batch. The Bonpos living in exile have nowadays got used to quite regularly obtaining supplies of mendrup medicine, as the two monasteries of Menri and Triten Norbutse take turns in its production (Chapter 1).

The Bonpos also like to express that the usage of their mendrup medicine for practical healing overcomes the boundaries of religious denominations. They take pride in the fact that also the Buddhists acknowledge its powers, and that the substance is said to be well-known in some regions, as for instance in Dolpo, where Bon is strong but Buddhism holds the majority. As the Bonpos of the Nepalese Himalayas and Triten Norbutse say, for them the mendrup medicine is the basic healing substance, whereas for the Buddhists it is not. Thus they are happy to see that the ritual and substance are being acknowledged and used by others outside of the Bonpo community as well (Chapter 2).

⁹³⁵ The same notion of healing all diseases expressed by the traditional symbolic number of 404 in relation to precious pills was mentioned by Czaja, 2015, pp. 60, 75.

⁹³⁶ In contrast, standard Sowa rikpa remedies contain between three and thirty-five ingredients. Similarly described for the case of precious pills by Blaikie, 2015, p. 3.

⁹³⁷ DTOZ, p. 77.

⁹³⁸ This stands in contrast to *rildrup (ril sgrub)* described by Kohn, 1988, p. 251: The pills are eaten immediately or later, but do not function as a long-term stock. In Triten Norbutse, the Mendrup medicine was not eaten instantly after its distribution.

Philosophical and Spiritual Aspects

The monastic community offers a Doctrinal philosophical interpretation of the Mendrup rite and the medicine as an aid to achieve spiritual realisation, awakening, and in broader terms also universal harmony. Even so, all questioned monks admitted, sometimes rather reluctantly, taking the Mendrup medicine when ill as any lay person would do. Nevertheless, the view of the educated elite significantly differs from that of the general public.⁹³⁹ According to them, the right motivation accompanied by the necessary empowerment (*dbang*) of the peaceful and wrathful deities are the most important, and prepare the practitioner to “be a good vessel” for absorbing teachings.⁹⁴⁰ The actual medicine represents only an external material support (*rten*) on the way to the highest spiritual goal, the awakening.⁹⁴¹ The substances that require real transformation are not those of the Mendrup recipe list, but our mind and body – and the Mendrup medicine functions as a help for this change. We resemble patients infected by the five mental poisons, by anger, ignorance, pride, desire, and jealousy, who need to be cured. Especially the five root medicines work as the external support, and represent a means of “illuminating, purifying, [and] transforming negative emotions” into wisdom nectar.⁹⁴² “[E]ach herb [of the recipe] represents an emotion” that is to be transformed.⁹⁴³ The mendrup ritual and its medicine, *men (sman)*, are perceived to transform the five mental poisons (*dug lnga*, see Chapter 3, 4, Table 8), as well as any poison (*duk, dug*), into nectar (*dütsi, bdud rtsi*) by purifying (*dak, dag, sel, gsal*) it.⁹⁴⁴ Mendrup is of no use to people who are not prepared, who have not gone far enough in their practice, and have not gained a prior understanding. Firstly, they do not comprehend the concepts behind the ritual performance, secondly they are not ready to take another step on their spiritual path. A necessary preparation for taking part in the Mendrup ritual is realising one’s suffering and its causes, and the determination to abandon them. One should study texts and attend teachings in advance to fully benefit from the practice. Despite of profound preparations, both internal and external obstacles are likely to continue, but they can be overcome by the ritual, as it

⁹³⁹ A similar “division” is observed by Kind, 2002, pp. 79-81. It might be interesting to note that the perception of the “Western sangha” (see Chapter 2) was close to that of the monks.

⁹⁴⁰ YR (Triten Norbutse).

⁹⁴¹ This element of the mendrup practice was in the Buddhist context discussed at length by Cantwell, 2015, also by Garrett, 2009.

⁹⁴² YR (Triten Norbutse).

⁹⁴³ YR (Triten Norbutse).

⁹⁴⁴ YR (Triten Norbutse). The same concept in the context of mercury purification (in which the process of transformation is called *'dul*, “taming”) has been described by Sonam Dolma, 2013. Similar notions in tantric ritual healing in Stablein, 1976.

functions as a purificatory act.⁹⁴⁵ Those who are not advanced enough to heal their ignorance, by attending the Mendrup ritual at least sow a seed into their consciousness for the future. Those who are, should ideally take part in the full Mendrup practice by meditation and visualisations.⁹⁴⁶

In this philosophical discourse, it is stressed by the monastic teachers and authorities that the word *men* (*sman*) denotes anything beneficial, including its abstract sense, not purely material “medicine” for digestion as is generally understood within the Tibetan lay community. It is proposed as synonymous to *pen* (*phan*), “benefit”.⁹⁴⁷ Mendrup and its medicine are explained as extraordinarily beneficial on the individuals’ spiritual path, and essentially as a “benefit to mind and body, to everything”.⁹⁴⁸ This extends to the whole environment and universe. Mendrup is an act of great purification inciting such a change of the universe.⁹⁴⁹

The interlocking relationship between philosophical and Sowa rikpa medical concepts also becomes apparent in this exposition of the Mendrup and its medicine. The monastics can draw on the shared precepts of both, namely on the idea of the initial ignorance, *marikpa* (*ma rig pa*), as the primary cause of *samsāra* (in Tib. *'khor ba*) giving rise to the five mental poisons but also to all diseases and illnesses.⁹⁵⁰ The mendrup medicine is then apprehended as a substance curing the individual as a whole – to be translated into Western terms: physically, mentally, and, moreover, on the spiritual level by helping pursue religious goals. As I was explained by Geshe Dangsang Namgyal (dGe shes Drang srong mam rgyal):

“Mendrup medicine (*sman*) has got a big usage. It is medicine both for mind and body (*bsam blo yi sman, lus kyi sman*), it is of great potency (*nus pa*). Ignorance is a disease (*ma rig pa 'di na tsha red*). Therefore, mendrup is similar to *sūtras* (*mdo*), as it leads to awakening. The material of the medicine (*sman*) itself is not that important.”

⁹⁴⁵ YR (Triten Norbutse).

⁹⁴⁶ DTOZ, p. 76.

⁹⁴⁷ KTY (Triten Norbutse), YR (Triten Norbutse). Cf. Das, BGTC. Also see Chapter 1 and Garrett, 2009.

⁹⁴⁸ Geshe Gelek (Triten Norbutse).

⁹⁴⁹ Geshe Gelek (Triten Norbutse), Geshe Dangsang Namgyal (Triten Norbutse), YR (Triten Norbutse).

⁹⁵⁰ Expressed for instance in Millard, 2007, p. 270: “The ‘root cause’ (*rgyu*) of disease is the fundamental ignorance which leads to the three mental poisons and the three humours in the psychophysical continuum of the human constitution.” Cf. GyZh (2. book, 8. ch.), *gSo rig 'bum bzhi* (2.8), Cuomu, 2012, p. 10, also in NWB, p. 117:

“Things of flesh, linked in a series of birth and death, in their ignorance their affliction take the form of disease. They are distressed with the suffering of 404 types of disease.”

The notion of spiritual, mental, and physical healing becomes conflated, and in fact is not divided in Tibetan perception. Again, in the Geshe's explanation, the spiritual practice of the Mendrup ritual is considered crucial, whereas the material Mendrup medicine is not.

Likewise, some practitioners of the Sowa rikpa medical tradition stressed the spiritual dimension of any healing, be it in a clinic or during the Mendrup. For them, the Mendrup was a specific substantiation of the elementary Buddhist precepts of the Sowa rikpa postulating the origin of health problems as a consequence of ignorance, for whose remediation religious means have to be employed. By them the Mendrup ritual tended to be perceived as such a practice of Sowa rikpa, in which religious faith and belief play the key role. A student of the Sowa rikpa degree at the Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies in Varanasi, originally from Dolpo, explained the Mendrup from within the Sowa rikpa view as follows:

“It is about belief. Tibetan medicine is about belief. Both patient and doctor have to have a deep belief. That is mendrup.”

Despite the expressed hesitance of educated monastics to accept the material produce of the Mendrup as an essential substance, the mendrup medicine features in accounts on and recommendations of religious practices leading to awakening. Legends shared in Triten Norbutse during the Mendrup performance remember ancient Bonpo masters who did not have to eat usual food, since instead they nurtured themselves on mendrup medicine.⁹⁵¹ By doing so, they achieved physical strength and health, and spiritual qualities such as the rainbow body (*'ja' lus*).⁹⁵² Mendrup and its medicine are also likened to *tsalung* (*rtsa rlung*) practices, as they are claimed to affect the subtle bodily channels: to open wisdom channels and to block poison channels, in order to approach the awakening.⁹⁵³ The publication of Triten Norbutse elucidates the process as follows: By balancing the constitution of the inner channels (*lus kyi rtsa khams snyoms*), the bodily force of the wind (*rlung*) in their hollow space (*rtsa yi sbubs*) is balanced (*rlung cha snyo por rgyu*). Thus the relying (*brten*) of the organism on the wind is balanced to the happiness of both body and mind (*lus dang sems kyi bde ba*). Further, the potency (*nus pa*) of the mendrup medicine closes the channels of the five mental poisons (*sman kyi nus pas dug lnga'i rtsa rnam kha zum*), which had arisen from

⁹⁵¹ KTY (Triten Norbutse).

⁹⁵² KTY (Triten Norbutse). The same for *chülen* (*bcud len*) practices was noted by Garrett, 2009, pp. 211-212, 223. Masters consuming precious pills achieving the *vajra* (*do rje*) body are mentioned by Czaja, 2015, p. 49.

⁹⁵³ Geshe Gelek (Triten Norbutse), KTY (Triten Norbutse), YR (Triten Norbutse). An idea frequently repeated in the teachings for the Western sangha. On the *tsalung* practices see Samuel, 2013a, 2013b, 2014.

disturbances of the mind stream (*sems rgyud 'khrug*). By this, the channels of malicious and evil thoughts (*ma rabs bsam ngan gyi blo rnams*) are closed, and the wisdom channels (*ye shes dang shes rab kyi rtsa rnams*) are opened.⁹⁵⁴ The wisdom channels' potency is additionally increased by the mendrup medicine. Such a state of the body and mind enables the awareness of apprehending emptiness to expand (*stong nyid 'jal byed kyi rig pa 'phel ba*). Wisdom arises, accompanied by a character as fine as gold (*rang gshis bzang po gser lta bu sgyur byed*), and a mind of kindness and compassion oriented to the prosperity of others. Hence, the mendrup medicine has potency to create a happy state of mind (*nang sems kyi bde skyid*), and to bring the adept closer to the awakening.⁹⁵⁵ Taking mendrup medicine for attaining a clear mind and wisdom is also said to be recommended by scriptures.⁹⁵⁶ Apart from such a direct potential of apprehending emptiness, the mendrup medicine allows the individual to make a better use of the precious human existence by protecting the body, slowing down the aging process and sharpening the senses.⁹⁵⁷

A noteworthy issue is the asserted connection of the mendrup practice to death, dying, and rebirth. Even though some of these ideas may seem to be a popular reflection of the philosophical dimension of the mendrup ritual and medicine, they actually represent understandings shared with me by monastic intellectuals.⁹⁵⁸ This only exemplifies the non-existing boundaries among the different perceptions of ritual practices in Tibetan and Bonpo communities, and the lines below contradict any such clear division. In practice, the mendrup medicine is not only given to the sick for healing and to the healthy as prophylaxis, both also to any sentient beings before they depart their current existence – to humans on their death bed,⁹⁵⁹ and to animals before slaughter, in places where members of the Tibetan population have to perform this otherwise morally condemned act, as for instance in Dolpo. The medicine is believed to be powerful on the spiritual path, and thus is considered especially appropriate for the moment before entering the *bardo* (*bar do*), the intermediate state of consciousness between death and new rebirth, be it humans or animals. Furthermore, the mendrup ritual evokes peaceful and wrathful deities which are to be encountered in the *bardo* state. Knowing them in advance and establishing a connection with them is said to facilitate the passage. If the mendrup medicine is digested at the right moment before the last breath,

⁹⁵⁴ Similarly precious pills, Czaja, 2015, pp. 42, 52-55, and detoxified mercury, Millard, draft paper.

⁹⁵⁵ DTOZ, p. 76.

⁹⁵⁶ Amchi Padma (Triten Norbutse).

⁹⁵⁷ KTY (Triten Norbutse).

⁹⁵⁸ The paragraph is mainly based on an interview with Geshe Yungdrung Gyamtso (Triten Norbutse, Vienna), and then on DTOZ when cited.

⁹⁵⁹ Similarly precious pills. Czaja, 2015, p. 37.

the medicine is believed to effect the person's thoughts in the process of dying (*'chi kha'i bsam sbyor*), and helps to reach the desirable realm of humans again, or that of the gods (*lhami'i go 'phang bzang po*), in the next rebirth.⁹⁶⁰ The medicine does not allow one to fall into an impure or lethargic state (*btsog nyob gral du g.yug mi rung*). To increase the impact, an amulet of the mendrup medicine is advised to be fastened around the dying person's neck.⁹⁶¹ The mendrup ritual and its medicinal matter is sometimes even paralleled to the *bardo*. This belief is also expressed in economic terms. It can be estimated that about sixty percent of the mendrup sponsorship was donated to help a deceased relative (see Chapter 2). In this way, the deceased person is believed to accumulate merit for the future rebirth and also to become linked to the *bardo* deities. Nevertheless, nobody mentioned to me the notion that even big sinners if eating mendrup medicine escape a low rebirth, as was noted by Kind.⁹⁶²

Animals and Vegetarianism

As has been indicated, the Mendrup ritual and medicine are perceived to apply to all sentient beings. Non-humans are not excluded from their benefits, both healing and spiritual, exposed in the passages above. The medicine is often given to domestic animals, especially to cattle, so vital to people's survival, in the same indications as to humans: for prevention of illness, for healing during illness, or for a good rebirth before death. These practices were especially expressed to me by laymen and *ngakpas*, including medical practitioners, all of whom, as inhabitants of Himalayan village settlements (particularly in Mustang and Dolpo), deal with domestic animals in their daily lives.

The notion can be illustrated by an expression of Amchi Nyima, a *ngakpa* and medical practitioner. He shared his very universalistic comprehension of the mendrup medicine relating it to all living entities and the environment. He explained:

“The medicine (*sman*) works for all sentient beings without any difference. It brings blessing, peace, happiness. For instance, insects also need peace. No, no, it's not only for humans. If a tiny bit is thrown into the ocean, all the creatures inside will receive it.”

⁹⁶⁰ Similarly precious pills. Czaja, 2015, p. 49.

⁹⁶¹ DTOZ, p. 77.

⁹⁶² Kind, 2002, p. 59. Cf. Garrett, 2009, p. 220. The liberation through tasting (*myong grol*) in Gayley, 2007, p. 460, Stablein, 1976.

On the other hand, another aspect comes into play somewhat limiting this suggested universal application of the mendrup medicine. Lama Shenrab Tenzin, also a *ngakpa* and medical practitioner well-known in Dolpo, answering my question to which animals the medicine may be given, warned me:

“All people who receive the medicine will eat it in time of disease and pain, and also give it to animals, it is good for all animals, but not to give it to carnivores. When you get it, don’t give it to a dog, because a dog eats a lot of meat and has got sharp teeth. Maybe, [you can give it] to a cat. Humans eat meat just a little bit.”

Lama Shenrab Tenzin here hints to the concern of mixing the mendrup medicine with meat, which was commonly indicated to me by both monastic and lay practitioners. Similarly, the prescription granted by Triten Norbutse accompanying the mendrup medicine during its distribution unequivocally excluded digesting it with meat (Chapter 2). This guidance was also given by the monastic authorities to the Mendrup participants in public teachings concurrent with the ritual. Within Triten Norbutse monastery, this instruction was not difficult to observe, as the institution itself is vegetarian, typically for Tibetan exile monasteries. Generally speaking, in Tibetan communities a vegetarian diet is understood to be a way of causing less suffering to sentient beings. The propagation of a meat-free diet for serious spiritual practitioners, as well as to some extent among general public, has a long history in Tibetan religious traditions. In recent years, it has gained a wider support both in Tibet, particularly in Eastern Tibet where Bon holds some of its most important monasteries, and in the Tibetan exile communities in general.⁹⁶³ The administration of the mendrup medicine seem to reflect these ideas.

Essentially, the mendrup medicine is recognised as a substance too pure to come into contact with such a morally bad deed and source of ritual pollution (*sdig pa*) as killing. As can be seen from the account shared by Lama Shenrab Tenzin, this notion affects both its human and animal consumers. Such a vegetarian aspect was witnessed to be equivalently strong in the current Nyingma mendrup tradition of the Nyingma Dūjom (rNying ma bdud ’joms) lineage studied by Cantwell.⁹⁶⁴ Likewise, the various precious pills (*ril chen*) and other ritual

⁹⁶³ Cf. Barstow, 2017, Buffetrille, 2014, Huber, 1997.

⁹⁶⁴ Cathy Cantwell (Oxford 2013).

medicinal pills (*ril bu*) of the Tibetan cultural sphere are commonly indicated not to be eaten with meat and other substances considered polluting, such as alcohol and onions.⁹⁶⁵

Nevertheless, as has been demonstrated, the Mendrup medicinal recipe does contain considerably large varieties and quantities of flesh, of both human and animal provenience. These are not collected nowadays, and are taken to be guaranteed by the *papta* yeast component (Chapter 4). These meaty substances are perceived as purified, a condition qualifying them to be used for the Mendrup and included into its medicine. The purification is thought to have happened in ancient times, from when the *papta* emerged.

A strikingly different opinion was provided to me by the chief Sowa rikpa medical practitioner of the exile Menri monastery, Amchi Geshe Yungdrung Tashi. Exceptionally, his reading of the Mendrup recipe was literal, including all the various kinds of flesh listed. Amchi Geshe Yungdrung Tashi contemplated that all the substances requested should be really collected for the composition of the medicine. In his thinking, in the past when compared to the present, lot more meat was eaten, including in the Sowa rikpa clinical and pharmacological practice. In his understanding, meat has occupied an important place in the *materia medica* of Sowa rikpa, but has been overlooked and downplayed in recent times. He recounted that meat ingredients in medicinal applications or daily diet were of a great benefit (*phan pa chen po zhig*), which would, however, not be recognised nowadays. Thus, in his apprehension, many ingredients of the Mendrup recipe in the recent preparation had to be simply skipped for this reason. Here, Amchi alluded the spreading preference of vegetarianism in Tibetan monastic and lay communities, and the way it affects their contemporary ritual practices.

Interpreting the Mendrup recipe, Amchi Geshe Yungdrung Tashi suggested that the prescribed ingredients built on the Sowa rikpa notion that digesting the “essence” or “core” (*snying po*) of practically any animal or plant was very beneficial (*phan thogs chen po*). As Amchi said, the individual “essences” requested in the Mendrup recipe, as well as in general, were in a direct relation (*rten 'brel*) to the respective “essences” of the human body, again as they featured in the recipe. For instance, if heart flesh was eaten, the consumer’s heart was supported, eating veins (*rtsa*) reinforced one’s veins and channels (*rtsa*), and the like. Equivalently, body parts not necessarily referred to as *nyingpo* (*snying po*) benefited the corresponding body parts, as blood enhanced blood, urine supported urine, etc. In Amchi’s reading, this sympathetic causality was meant by the Mendrup text.⁹⁶⁶ Such an apprehension

⁹⁶⁵ Cantwell, 2015, 2017, Czaja, 2015, Gerke, 2012a.

⁹⁶⁶ YR (Triten Norbutse), YT (Menri). Similarly in substitution, cf. Czaja, forthcoming.

suggests the question if and in which ways has the emic understanding of the Mendrup changed throughout the history, and if there has eventually a certain degree of tension or contradiction existed on interpreting the scripture within the Bonpo tradition. Has the perception of the text really changed in the light of assimilation of the currents of vegetarianism? Did old masters of Bon collect meat and blood for the Mendrup?

In stark contrast, the explanation of the Mendrup text and practice rendered by the present leaders of Bonpo monastic institutions propagates a completely symbolic reading of the recipe. All the fleshy substances were to me repeatedly and explicitly proposed to behold a symbolic value comprehensible only to accomplished practitioners. The recipe was thus regarded to be of a great potential danger to anyone without an adequate spiritual capacity, and was rather kept in secrecy.⁹⁶⁷ This allegorical approach played out in the preparation of the Mendrup medicinal compound, for which virtually all the animal and human body parts, apart from the substituted deer musk, were ignored. The deer musk was in the recipe listed among the standard Sowa rikpa ingredients rather than in the section of the “five nectars”, and hence was taken as an actual ingredient needed and counted with. This exclusion of animal and human body parts in the “five nectars” of the Mendrup formula led to the omission of about half of the items instructed by the text (Chapter 4).

Environmental Enhancement and Prosperity

Besides healing and supporting spiritual aims, the mendrup and its medicine acquire various other uses. Its power and efficacy are apprehended to extend to the ecological environment and the whole universe.⁹⁶⁸ Bringing equilibrium to the world, including ecological and political dimensions, such as pacification of disasters and conflicts, was among the main expressed objectives of Triten Norbutse for the ritual’s organisation in 2012 (Chapter 2). These ideas were communicated to the public during teaching sessions at Triten Norbutse, and to me in interviews, at several occasions. Their proponents came from the leading scholars of the monastery, geshe, and other monks, and from the group of the *ngakpas*. I

⁹⁶⁷ For this reason, I was also initially forbidden to publish the full translation of the Mendrup recipe. Luckily, the prohibition was lifted during a personal encounter with the late Menri Trindzin, a keen supporter of Western academic studies of Bon. I regard the concern about the danger of the recipe to be a late development for the sake of a good image of Bon in the Western sangha.

⁹⁶⁸ Gerke notes similar notions on the effects of the purified mercury *tsotel* (*btso thal*) powder. Gerke, 2013c, p. 131.

have never been given such an explanation by any lay participant. Yet, I do believe that the views proposed by the monastery that are summarised below, do reflect more general notions likely to be found among the lay populace as well.

The notions of universal harmony and equilibrium tied to the Mendrup ritual and medicine are by the Triten Norbutse monastery articulated to find an expression in concrete practices as well. The mendrup medicine is by the monastery's book described to be used for environmental protection (*khör yug srung skyobs*),⁹⁶⁹ general environmental enhancement and prosperity. It is recommended to conceal mendrup medicine into earth as a treasure (*gter du bzhang*), pour it into water, or spread its fragrance (*sman dri*) by wind. Likewise, the medicine can be thrown into fire in a fire offering ritual (Tib. *sbyin sreg*, Skt. *homa*). All these actions represent offering the medicine to the four elements (*byung ba bzhi*).⁹⁷⁰ In addition, as the publication states, the medicinal substance would also delight the supernatural inhabitants of the environment, such as the *sadak* (*sa bdag*), *lu* (*klu*), *nyen* (*gnyan*), and *tö* (*gtod*), who are believed to govern the elements. In this manner, in the outer environment (*phyi yi khör yug*) the mendrup medicine pacifies (*zhi*) the imbalances of the four elements, and helps to prevent natural disasters caused by such imbalances: earthquakes, draught, strong winds and windstorms, fires, hails and thunderstorms.⁹⁷¹ Moreover, the mendrup medicine sustains all the essence of soil and the essence of land in the environment (*khör yug gi sa bcud yul bcud thams cad*).⁹⁷² If mendrup medicine is hidden as “essence” (*bcud du sbas*) into the land, in fields, in a fortress, or in a house, it supports and increases its “essence” (*bcud*) and prosperity. The essence of the earth (*sa bcud*) becomes very strong, the essence or enhancing agent of prosperity swirls (*phywa g.yang gi ru ma 'khyil*), rain falls in time, and malicious sings and influences of the land are pacified (*zhi*). The place flourishes, good harvest and prosperity come, and the land becomes happy and peaceful. Many other benefits occur.⁹⁷³ Thus is the mendrup medicine exposed to benefit the environment in its physical application by the scholars of Triten Norbutse.

⁹⁶⁹ DTOZ, p. 76.

⁹⁷⁰ The count of the elements varies between four and five in the given paragraph of the original text, presumably by an oversight. As only four elements are enumerated, I stick to the number four here. DTOZ, p. 76.

⁹⁷¹ On the other hand, in the inner body-mind (*nang gi lus sems*) it is believed to pacify the elements within the body. DTOZ, p. 76.

⁹⁷² DTOZ, p. 76.

⁹⁷³ DTOZ, pp. 76-77.

Protection and Magic

The Practice of the Light-Swirled Nectar also advised to apply the Mendrup ritual and medicine for personal protection (*srung ba*) from malevolent forces and any ill-being potentially caused by them, including illness and disease.⁹⁷⁴

In the monastery's exposition, the mendrup medicine was recommended to be digested or worn as an amulet to enhance the life-force (*tshe srog*), for protection against harmful spirits (*gdon bgegs*) and other obstructions (*gdon srung*), against the diseases of head (*'go ba'i nad rigs srung byed kyi nad srung*) arousing from anger and excessive heat (*drod*),⁹⁷⁵ and against defilements and impurities (*btsog grib mnol 'bag*) by cleansing them (*sel, grib srung*).⁹⁷⁶ As the Triten Norbutse brochure concluded, "it is a medicinal offering of blessings overcoming all negativities" (*ngan pa kun thub kyi sman mchog bying rlabs can zhig yin*). It is believed to bring well-being of the body (*lus khams bde thang*) to whoever and wherever.⁹⁷⁷

As an amulet, the mendrup medicine was in the booklet described to be worn either placed somewhere on the body, or tied around the neck. The first application was especially recommended for curing diseases of the head, whereas the second for dispersing witches (*dbal mo*). In any case, the mendrup powder is expected to facilitate seeing gods and goddesses.⁹⁷⁸ A particular efficacy is attributed to the mendrup medicine at the moment of dying (see above). As the monastery's publication stated, a bit of the substance should be tied around the passing person's neck to help to overcome obstacles arising at the verge of death (*shi kha*), and ensure a desirable rebirth.⁹⁷⁹

In practice, I have not come across anyone expressing his or her usage of the mendrup medicine in this way. However, people questioned, both monks and laymen, often articulated the natural strong potency of the mendrup medicine for anything one might wish for in terms of general well-being, into which own protection from unwanted forces and influences could be counted. People from the different social groups participating in the Mendrup ritual definitely took the mendrup medicine as an object enhanced by special powers to be kept on

⁹⁷⁴ On similar notions of the precious pills see Gerke, 2013c, 2017, Czaja, 2013, 2015, Millard, draft paper, and more generally in the tantric ritual healing in Fenner, 1979.

⁹⁷⁵ Excess of heat or fire in the body, as well as head, is a manifestation of the disturbed bodily force *tripa* linked to anger. Cf. for instance Gerke, 2014.

⁹⁷⁶ DTOZ, p. 76.

⁹⁷⁷ DTOZ, p. 76.

⁹⁷⁸ DTOZ, p. 77.

⁹⁷⁹ DTOZ, p. 77.

an altar and regarded as sacred. As such objects acquire protective function on Tibetan culture, it comes by no surprise that the same notions are associated with the mendrup medicine as well.

This Chapter has aimed to convey the meanings ascribed to the mendrup medicine by the present Bonpos, and the derived practical aspects of its application. The themes covered: medical applications for healing purposes, the philosophical explanation coined by the organising monastic institution, the discussed vegetarian aspect related to the mendrup medicine, and its usage for environmental prosperity and one's own protection, reflected the notions reoccurring in the data gathered. It is to be added that the first three themes were a part of vivid engagement of people with the mendrup ritual practice, whereas the latter two did not seem to be really put that much into practice by the participants. The latter two have also emerged only in the monastery's written material published, which still suggests that they should be a reflection of people's lived reality. Only probably they are less prominent and important in people's application and understanding of the mendrup medicine than the main proposed administration for curing and spiritual goals.

CONCLUSION

The Light-Swirled Mendrup ritual of the Bonpos represents a very elaborate and extensive healing ritual of a tantric meditative nature, and likely of Indian and Buddhist origin. The practice is ascribed great powers and centred upon both an inner transformation of the practitioners, as well as on an empowered substance production. The meditations and visualisations of tantric deities, and in the case studied particularly of the Bonpo tutelary deity Trowo Tsochok Khagying and his retinue, fall into the category of tantric *sādhana* practices. Here the *sādhana* meditative texts and recitations acquire specific vocabulary typical of the Mendrup ritual and its generated substance called “medicine”. This thesis has traced the current practice of The Light-Swirled Mendrup of Trowo Tsochok Khagying, as it is conducted by the exile Bonpo community. The observed performance was the so far last conducted, and took place at the Triten Norbutse monastery in Kathmandu, Nepal, in December 2012. The ethnographic description has been supplemented by translations of the ritual texts recited, and by a search for the practice in Bonpo historical writings. I have also attempted to analyse some of the principles on which the Mendrup practice is established. Throughout the thesis, the particular focus has been on the produced mendrup medicine in its different contexts and understandings.

The first chapter introduced and defined the Mendrup ritual as an extent meditative *sādhana* practice that includes production and consumption of a consecrated and empowered substance referred to as “medicine” (*men*). It also provided an etymological explanation of the name of the ritual, and the various possible meanings of the “medicine” in Tibetan ritual context ranging to the general significance of “benefit”. Within the varied Tibetan mendrup rites, The Light-Swirled Mendrup stands as a major monastic practice of *drupchen* type, contrasted to smaller and more frequent mendrup conceptions for the sake of enhancement of standard Sowa rikpa medicinal drugs. It also stands as one of the two main great mendrup celebrations of the leading monasteries of Bon, regarded as very powerful and prestigious, which in the past have presumably taken place only once in about sixty years.

Then, the chapter focused on the perceived transmission of the Mendrup ritual and its medicine. According to the present oral narratives, the practice and the medicine are believed to come from the deities, and the scriptures to be treasures uncovered in the early eleventh and twelfth century. Since then, the practice and medicine is supposed to have been passed down in an unceasing succession of Bonpo masters, associated with the main Bonpo monasteries in

Central Tibet, and then eventually made it into India and Nepal after the half of the twentieth century. The practice relies on the ritual's scriptures, as well as on the accompanying oral explanations, which are in traditional Tibet said to have passed down among the highest authorities of the Menri monastery.

A survey of Bonpo historical documents followed, showing that the Bonpo mendrup practice seems probable to be traced back to the twelfth, or at least the thirteenth, century in Central Tibet. The twelfth and thirteenth century was also a crucial time for the establishment of the Sowa rikpa.⁹⁸⁰ The Mendrup ritual presents an example of the then contemporary intellectual milieu in Central Tibet, in which the spheres of tantra, medicine, alchemy, Buddhist philosophy and soteriology, and indigenous concepts, merged and mixed to produce new complex structures. The mendrup ritual combines the knowledge and practices of all these elements, and is very likely to have developed in this milieu. Thus, in the dating it accords with Buddhist mendrup rites, the Nyingma treasure and *Yutok Nyingtik* traditions. It is likely that more written documents mentioning the Bonpo mendrup will be discovered as research in the field of Tibetan studies progresses. Therefore, the dating presented should be understood as tentative, based on the sources currently available. The aim to trace the history of Tibetan Buddhist and Bonpo practices to a possibly shared source, such as the treasure traditions of the twelfth and thirteenth century, or even earlier times, represents an avenue for potential future research.

In contrast with the Tibetan Buddhist school of Nyingma, the Bonpos do not seem to have needed to create an elaborate historiography which precisely traces the evolution of certain ritual practices. Such search thus remains rather fragmentary and might suggest not a linear development of the ritual, or, perhaps more likely, not a traceable linear development. Different versions of the discovery and transmission of The Light-Swirled Mendrup of Trowo Tsochok Khagying can be tracked in the texts studied. Shenchen Luga of the Shen family and Matön Shéráp Senggé of the Ma repeatedly figure as the ritual's revealers and tradents. Similarly, Matön Sindzin is credited with revealing a certain part of the cycle to which the Mendrup belongs. Interestingly, Rindzin Chenpo Gyermi Nyiö, who is ascribed the same role by the present Bonpos, does not explicitly appear in it in the presented sources. The scattered reference to the mendrup practice indicates that it has been transmitted by Bonpo teacher-student lineages mainly in Central Tibet, where it has been also preserved until modern times. The sources attest a certain existing variety of the mendrup ritual in general, likely reflecting

⁹⁸⁰ Cf. Emmerick 1977, Erhard 2007, Fenner 1996.

the multiple existing lineages of Bon. The texts suggest that over the centuries specific lineage traditions developed their own traditions of mendrup, but also that even the transmission of the specific Light-Swirled Mendrup dedicated to Trowo Tsochok Khagying was not confined to the single Dru family line which preserves the practices today. Textual evidence suggests that this practice was transferred by and to other lineages as well, as the Shen, the Pa, and the Meu. A certain development of the recording of the practice can be observed, ranging from a short mention in the thirteenth century to the most extend justification of the practice's lineage in the twentieth century. We have also seen that even in such an important case as the given Mendrup, as far as the community is presently concerned, the Bonpos have relied only on one commentary from the fourteenth century. Oral knowledge and personal transmission are obviously important for the imparting of ritual knowledge. However, the textual tradition also presents remarkable details of the mendrup practice and performance, proving the authors' close apprehension of and likely own experience with the ritual, and thus the execution of the practice throughout the history.

The evidence available demonstrates that the Mendrup has been an important healing ritual practice for the Bonpos for the last seven or eight hundred years. It remains a question to which extent and in which dimensions the practice has been alternating over the centuries, but we can assume quite a high degree of continuity. The commentary by Nyö Tsültrim Gyeltsen from the fourteenth century gives accurate guidance throughout the rite, which suggests that the Mendrup ritual's practice probably has not significantly changed since his times. The individual stages of the ritual as we know it today might have been expanded, elaborated, etc., but not created anew, and still have to follow Nyö Tsültrim Gyeltsen's writing as the Bonpos did in Triten Norbutse in 2012.

The second chapter conveyed a detailed ethnographic description of the contemporary Bonpo Mendrup preparations and ceremonial performance. To my knowledge, this is the so far most extent ethnography on Tibetan mendrup rituals, as well as the most comprehensive description of a mendrup, presented in research. Even though, given the complexity and duration of a mendrup rite of the *drupchen* type and the length of its scriptures, much more space would be needed to provide a really precise rendering of the conduction, which could, in fact, produce another Ph.D. thesis. Similarly, the individual ritual and liturgical parts, and procedures followed in the tantric *sādhana*, such as the specific empowerments, as well as the ritual's consecrational aspect, would deserve further attention in a separate study. This chapter rather stayed within manageable margins to disclose the actual celebration, its progression, and the main parts of the ritual: the preliminary activities, the main activities comprising

blessings and accomplishments of the invoked peaceful and wrathful deities of the Trowo Tsochok Khagying's cycle, and the concluding empowerment. Upon the festive completion, the mendrup medicine was distributed along with blessings of the main masters of Tritten Norbutse monastery, Yongdzin Rinpoche and Khenpo Tenpa Yungdrung. Throughout the ritual, the medicine formed the centre and focus of the ritual action arranged on and around the *maṇḍala* of the ritual. It underwent two main stages: at first, the medicine was blessed by the peaceful and wrathful deities in its rough and unground form, and only afterwards in its ground, powdered form. In this particular Mendrup performance, modern technology was employed to powder most of the medicine in advance, due to its accessibility, the enlarged dimensions of the ritual and of the volume of the medicine made. A comparison with other *drupchen* and minor mendrup rituals of the Bonpos, as well as with Buddhist mendrup rituals, would be an topic for future research as a complement to this account.

Stemming from the Menri monastery in Central Tibet, in the exile, even such an authoritative practice as the Mendrup of Trowo Tsochok Khagying exercises a high degree of flexibility, and is capable to adapt to different conditions, as in the example of grinding the medicine. Both the texts and oral instructions kept by memory cope with the new setting. Before each performance, the actual organisation of the mendrup, incorporating other concomitant ritual practices, is renegotiated anew. Now it reflects the globalised environment and modern challenges of the exile, such as contemporary global phenomena recognised as negative for which the mendrup is organised to overcome and balance. The universalistic apprehension of mendrup and its medicine is applied to tangible happenings worldwide. Similarly, the performance of the ritual itself exercises many contemporary adaptations. The fundamental three parts of the ritual were for the celebration in 2012 set into a month of adjoining rituals and festivities. The whole was thus composed of different ritual “bricks”, the core of which constituted the Mendrup itself, another part were complementary rites, but obligatory to accompany the Mendrup according to the Dru ritual tradition of Menri and Tritten Norbutse monasteries, and lastly, a significant part was formed by voluntary additions of other rituals and events. The purpose of such clustering of ritual and ritualised activities was expressed to be the rare and auspicious occasion of a great Mendrup celebration, whose auspiciousness would, furthermore, increase with more ritual extensions. This perception of a possible augmentation of effects of a ritual is quite conventional in Tibetan religious environment. Nevertheless, the Mendrup ceremony of 2012 also attracted new and unconventional additions, such as an international academic symposium on Bon, English teachings on the ritual and the general Doctrine of Bon organised for the visiting members of

the so called Western sangha, as well as celebrations of the New Year of 2013 according to the Western Gregorian calendar. The ascribed importance to the rite and its medicine by the Bonpo community was reflected also by their social and economic dimensions, both of which, again, spoke to the globalised acceptance of the practice.

Chapter Three has outlined the chief scriptures of the Mendrup ritual, which compose the ritual's so called *zhung*. The four compositions of the *zhung*, along with a fifth supplement, list the obligatory parts of the Mendrup and contain its main recitations. Of these the most significant and characteristic constitute the core Mendrup text entitled *The Main Text of the Light/Swirled Nectar Medicine*. The Chapter presented their excerpts in English translation based on a diplomatic edition of three available versions of the Mendrup scriptures: one manuscript used in Triten Norbutse during the ritual, and two facsimile of manuscripts in published works. The translation represents the first longer rendition of a mendrup text into a Western, or any non-Tibetan, language, as far as I am concerned. It revealed the arrangement of the ritual according to the frequent *maṇḍalic* organisational principle of tantric rituals, in this case centred around the deity of Trowo Tsochok Khagying. Upon this pattern, the meditations and visualisations of the *sādhana* exercise are established. Such overall ritual framework clearly belongs to tantric Buddhism and is very common in Tibetan ritual practice. In the Mendrup recitation, it was filled in by general Buddhist categories of Doctrinal philosophical and cosmological tenets. Moreover, it also contained vocabulary and mentions of rites that can be taken as specifically Bonpo, i.e. belonging to the Bonpo monastic, or in some cases even non-monastic, religious and ritual traditions – such as the *shen* divinities and the *tsen* purification. The texts also exercised an obvious incorporation of elemental principles of the Tibetan Sowa rikpa medical tradition, which, too, were fitted into the *maṇḍalic* scheme of five cardinal points. In addition, the rendered major mantras of the Mendrup also hinted such a conglomerate character of the practice. Given the scope and space delimited by this thesis, a visual analysis of the four *maṇḍalas* used throughout the ritual, in which the individual deities of the retinue of Trowo Tsochok Khagying figuring in the text would be associated with the different symbols and elements of the *maṇḍalas*, was not incorporated. Such material could form another study manifesting the Bonpo ephemeral ritual art of sand *maṇḍalas*.

The following analysis of the translated excerpts then focused on the different conceptualisations of the Mendrup medicine, taking as its basis the divergent appellations of the medicine reoccurring in the texts and the set pairs of oppositions into which the medicine is placed. Therefore, the expressions *men*, “medicine”, and *dütsi*, “nectar”, in contrast to their

antipoles, *dü*, “demon”, and *duk*, “poison”, were scrutinised. The terms showed a rather complicated and multi-layered nature indicating all the aspects of the Bonpo Mendrup just enumerated above. Via an exposition of the emic apprehensions of the Mendrup medicine communicated by the texts, the hidden complex interplay between Buddhist Doctrinal philosophical precepts adopted by monastic Bon, and, on the other hand, Tibetan indigenous ideas, became apparent. In the first context, the Mendrup medicine gains a rather symbolic role representing these standard and forecast precepts, whereas in the latter it alludes concrete divinities of Tibetan non-Buddhist pantheon and the powerful substances associated with them, be it beneficial beings with healing elixirs or demons linked to poison. Along with these lines, the ambivalent character of the concept of *dü*, “demon”, or more appropriately, the “powerful one” or “capable one”, was shown. Likewise, the antagonism between *men* and *dütsi*, and then *dü* and *duk* was shown in a frame of possible transformation of one pole into the opposite one. In the same manner, the Mendrup ritual initiates a transformation of both symbolic or concrete negative entities into positive ones.

The most part of the following Chapter Four was dedicated to the prescription of the Mendrup medicine, its concrete physical preparation and compounding, presenting first such a description in English and, as far as I know, in academic writing. A bare translation of the recipe was followed by a more explicit rendition showing how the recipe was actually put into practice for the identification of the substances listed. In the exile situation for the Mendrup performance in Triten Norbutse in 2012, the medicinal recipe was read by the eyes of a Mustangi lay and *ngakpa* medical practitioner called Amchi Nyima. As the principle teacher and practitioner of Sowa rikpa in the monastery, he was appointed to take responsibility for gathering the substances and the preparation of the medicine. Amchi Nyima comes from a hereditary lineage of household priests and practitioners of Sowa rikpa. He received his medical education within both his family and following a more standardised Sowa rikpa curriculum at the exile Bonpo medical school in Dhorpatan in Nepal. Based on this funding and own extent pharmacological and clinical expertise, he interpreted the Mendrup recipe according to own understanding and in some cases localised, i.e. Mustangi and of the Nepalese Western Himalayas, botanical and zoological knowledge. He paid great attention to follow the complex formula of over one hundred items as closely as possible, and in instances of difficult identification consulted other specialists. His reading was also informed by oral traditions accompanying the written text and transmitted within the Dru lineage. The final compounding and processing of the Mendrup medicine depended upon his decisions. Moreover, after the reading, practicalities and given circumstances came into play, and, again,

some components had to be renegotiated. Given the high number of potential variables and hardly understandable items, it is very likely that the same recipe receives a quite different materialisation at each time the Mendrup is organised. A closer ethnobotanical look at the arranging principles of the flora employed by Amchi Nyima when approaching the recipe would call for another study, and was not the focus of this thesis.

The medicine of The Light-Swirled Mendrup demanded a preparation procedure of many stages and many months. The core of this healing medicinal substance, the *papta* fermenting component, embodies the particular Bonpo lineage's generations of masters, teachings, and knowledge transmission. It can be said that it materially expresses the lineage, which is believed to span from ancient times to the monasteries in Tibet and then those in the exile, and to guarantee the ritual's efficacy. Most ingredients in the prescription come from the repertoire of Tibetan medicinal drug mixing, but some reflect the notion of the five tantric nectars, i.e. semen, flesh, stool, blood, and urine. The organisational principle of the medicine is fivefold, again that of a *maṇḍala*, and also in a much smaller extend eightfold reflecting the eight classes of consciousness. In this *maṇḍalic* composition of the medicine, each cardinal point is ascribed certain properties and healing effects, which then determine the pharmacological characteristics of substances required for each quarter. The *maṇḍalic* scheme and the medicine again combine the different discourses of the Mendrup ritual, namely Indo-Tibetan tantric and ritual, Buddhist philosophical, and medical of Sowa rikpa. As the pattern of a *maṇḍala* generally serves as a device of classification of phenomena within a ritual,⁹⁸¹ in the Mendrup studied it provides a classification of the *materia medica*, and the realm of and animals. The first fivefold part of the Mendrup recipe conveyed animal classification based on tantric and cosmological principles. The second half of the recipe can be shown as comprising a classification of plants, or, more precisely, Sowa rikpa medicinal substances, great majority of which are plants, based on the principles of Sowa rikpa and its categorisation of bodily forces and derived categorisation of illnesses. This capacity of categorisation of the Mendrup rite and the recipe is not surprising, and corresponds to the usual *maṇḍalising* arrangements of any phenomena in ritual and tantric visualisation practices.

The concluding and shorter fifth chapter demonstrated the various emic interpretations and administrations of the mendrup medicine. Both the performance and the mendrup medicine were shown to be perceived as a remedy restoring the ideal balance of all sentient beings inside their bodies and minds, as well as of the cosmos. On the worldly level this was

⁹⁸¹ Cf. Martin, 1994.

articulated as health, longevity, rejuvenation, death prevention, etc., on the soteriological as a subsidy to the awakening. The mendrup medicine was assigned miraculous effects and utilised in various ways: granted to divinities as an offering, consumed as a universal drug, prophylaxis, or a tonic boosting physical and mental strength, taken as a relief and spiritual support before death, disposed into the environment to establish peace, hidden into the ground to bring fertility and prosperity, and prevent natural disasters, and worn as an amulet for protection and a better rebirth. Interestingly, the benefits of the ritual and administration of its medicine was shown to extend to all sentient beings, in practice often domestic animals. The understandings of the mendrup medicine differed among the groups of the Bonpo community, their education, daily experience and needs: The monastics perceived the mendrup medicine as a figurative support accompanying a ritual practice aimed at the highest spiritual goal of awakening; Lay participants took the digestion of the mendrup mixture of more practical application in physical and mental healing; Whereas practitioners of Sowa rikpa considered the substance within the Sowa rikpa tradition. Nonetheless, these views overlapped, as it was especially exemplified in the comprehensions of the lay tantric practitioners, the *ngakpas*. The supposed balancing effects of the rite and its medicine were often stressed by the Bonpo community as extending to the universe, and also into our worldly political and ecological spheres. As a postscript to this thesis, it should be added that after the conduction of the Mendrup in 2012, the Nepalese Congress Party came as a winner from the new Parliamentary elections in Nepal in November 2013. From the emic perspective, this was accredited to the Mendrup ritual, and the goal of stabilising the Nepalese political scene by overcoming the Maoist political parties was one of those adopted before the Mendrup. Nevertheless, the great earthquake in Nepal in April 2015 worked somehow against the acclaimed results of the Mendrup.

Several more points should be made here. It is within the global context and funding that the Bonpo Mendrup and mendrup are nowadays conducted much more often than they are said to have used to be. In the past, the Bonpo grand monastic mendrup celebration was confined to a single performance in the life of each abbot of the Menri monastery in Tibet, supposedly at an interval of approximately sixty years. The current Bonpo exile monasteries, Menri in India and Triten Norbutse in Nepal, have promoted the mendrup practice, and institutionalised it as a relatively frequent event taking place every ten, or even less, years. The rising frequency of the mendrup performances reflects the social dimensions the practice holds. It is the greater Bonpo community of laymen enabling this development. The mendrup has been traditionally, as far as can be understood, taken as a rare event of extraordinary

powers. As such, it is a well-attended, and a long-awaited and important happening of the believers' life. It functions as a social bound for the Bonpos, in the present complicated political situation also stretching across the well-guarded international borders of Nepal and India, and the People's Republic of China. The practice re-establishes ties between the monastic institutions and their lay adherents, as well as between different geographical regions and sometimes very far-away Bonpo settlements. In the modern context, the mendrup practice adopts elements of globalisation. The preparation of the mendrup medicine incorporates globalised goods, is sponsored from various places around the world, and upon its completion is again globally distributed. Modernity also diverts some parts of the practice from its original form, i.e. the mechanical grinding of the medicine before the ritual, which, moreover, enables a massive production of the mendrup medicine at a time, and then its widespread distribution. The argument justifying the former scarcity of the mendrup performances by the immense cost of the required ingredients for the mendrup medicine, cannot be beheld any more. At the present, the much larger share of expenditures for the ritual goes towards its organisation, the daily offerings to the deities invoked, hosting of all participants and visitors, and financial rewards granted to performing monks. Neither the argument of difficult access to or acquisitions of some of the required substances does find any ground in the global society of interlinked market and flow of goods.

The sponsorship conditioning the ritual's practice represents a very important dimension of the whole undertaking. The generally increasing income and standard of living in Asia and elsewhere generates better funding opportunities, and thus better opportunities to conduct expensive rituals such as the mendrup. As the mendrup celebration has been embraced by the main Bonpo monasteries to be their major elaborate public affair, it is this practice that particularly attracts attention and a special status. At such occasions, this Bonpo transnational social, economic, and religious network reaffirms the leadership of the organising institutions and masters, and the devotion and support of their followers worldwide. This cohesion is materially expressed through the dissemination of the mendrup medicine. The mendrup ritual and its medicine therefore also serve as an overt expression of Bonpo identity, and justification of its leading monasteries and the Dru lineage, and their sacred religious knowledge and power transmitted. At the present we do witness a growing frequency and popularity of the practice. The future will reveal if this will continue to be the trend.

List of Abbreviations

Skt. Sanskrit

Tib. Tibetan

Personal Names of Respondents

AN	Amchi Nyima
KTY	Khenpo Tenpa Yungdrung
LST	Lama Shenrab Tenzin
MC	Mingji Cuomu
NW	Geshe Nyima Woser Choekhortsang
TY	Geshe Tri Yungdrung
YG	Geshe Yungdrung Gyamtso
YR	Yongdzin Tenzin Namdak Rinpoche
YT	Amchi Geshe Yungdrung Tashi

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Das

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DK

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DTMA

Tsering Thakchoe Drungtso and Tsering Dolma Drungtso. *Bod lugs sman rtsi kyi tshig mdzod bod dbyin shan sbyar: Tibetan-English Dictionary of Tibetan Medicine and Astrology*. Dharamsala, Drungtso Publications, 2005.

DTMM

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DTOZ

dPon slob Rin po che tshangs pa bstan 'dzin, dGe shes bSam gtan gtsug phud, Shes rab mthar phyin and Khri gtsug bstan pa (eds.). *bDud rtsi 'od zer 'khyil ba'i lag len skor: gYung drung bon gyi gdan sa chen mo dpal ldam khri brtan nor bu rtse'i thengs gnyis pa'i sman sgrub chen mo*. Kathmandu, dPal ldam khri brtan nor bu rtse (Triten Norbutse Monastery), 2014.

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FM

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GyPyBM

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GyZh

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NyTshGy

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NWB

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ShM

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TMPIG

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TMPI

Kletter, Christa and Monika Kriechbaum. *Tibetan Medicinal Plants*. Stuttgart, Medpharm, 2001.

ZB

dGe bshes blo gros ran gsal (ed.). *gNa' bo'i zhang bod tshig mdzod*. Lan kru, Kan su'u mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 2010.

Zlos

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Currency

CAD	Canadian dollar
CNY	Chinese yuan
EUR	Euro
INR	Indian rupee
NPR	Nepalese rupee
USD	United States dollar

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1

Plan of Triten Norbutse Monastery⁹⁸²

Legend:⁹⁸³

I.

0F. Storage room (*mdzod khang*, 1)

1F. Main temple (*lha khang*, *'du khang*, *tshogs khang*, *gtsug lag khang*), a small temple (*bka' gyur lha khang*, 2), Protectors' chapel (*sgrub khang*, 3)

2F. Meditation room (*sgrub khang gsar pa*)

3F. Roof-top chamber (*gnas khang*, *lha khang*, 4)

5. Bells / gongs (*dril bu*)

6. Big coniferous tree (functions as *phya dar*, *cha dar*)

7. Four stūpas (*mchod rten bzhi*), and another single stūpa

8. Fumigation place (*bsangs sa*)

9. Main butter lamp house (*rgyal mtshan khang*, *mar me khang*)

10. *Matri* stones (inscribed with the main Bon mantra: *Ōṃ ma tri mu ye sa le 'du*)

11. Rinpoche's residence (*bla brang*)

12. Khenpo's residence (*mkhan po 'i bla brang*), Library (*dpe mdzod khang*)

II. "New Dwelling of Happiness" (*bkra shis shag gsar*)

0F, 3F, 4F. Monks' accommodation

1F. New temple (*tshogs khang gsar pa*)

2F. School of Logic and Philosophy (*bShad grwa*)

5F, 6F. Monks' residence (*bla brang gsar pa*)

⁹⁸² The plan reflects the situation as of 2012/13, and is based on a cartographic survey of the monastery, which was for the first time carried out in detail in March 2013. An earlier plan and drawing in Yamaguchi, 2000.

⁹⁸³ Roman numbers indicate buildings consisting of several parts. They are ordered in the Bonpo anticlockwise direction. The English terms used are either translations, or English names of the buildings (which might differ from a literally translation), or rather descriptive. Abbreviation: F = floor.

- 13. Monks' accommodation (called "the Corner House", *mtshams khang*)
- 14. School of Logic and Philosophy (bShad grwa), monks' accommodation
- 15. Butter lamp house (*mar me khang*)
- 16. Flagpoles with prayer flags (*dar lcog*)
- 17. Meditation cells (*sgom rgyab sa*)
- 18. Big prayer wheel (*'khor lo khang*)

III.

- 0F. Editor's house of the Beltam magazine (*rtsom sgrig khang*)
- 1F. School of Meditation (sGom grwa)

IV.

- 0F. Office (*las khung*, 19)
- 1F. Geshes' dining hall (*dge shes kyi mchod sa*)

- 20. Kitchen (*thab tshang*)

V.

- 0F. Monastery's shop (*tshong khang*, 26), Storage room (*mdzod khang*)
- 1F. Guests' dining hall (*mgron khang*)
- 2F. Kitchen (*thab tshang*)

VI.

- 0F. Monks' accommodation
- 1F. Monks' accommodation, Old Library (*dpe mdzod khang rnying pa*, 21), Bonpo Foundation office (22)
- 2F. Monks' accommodation

- VII. Bumzhi Medical Clinic (Sorig Bumzhi School, *sman khang*, 'bum bzhi'i sman khang)

VIII.

- 0F. Restaurant (*za khang*)
- 1F-3F. Guesthouse (*mgron khang*)

23. Main gate (*sgo chen*)

(24. A Sakya stūpa, *sa skya 'imchod rten*)

IX., X. Platforms in the hill slope

25. Cairns of the Four Protector Kings (*phyogs kyi mtho bzhi*):

25E (East), 25N (North), 25W (West), 25S (South)

Circumambulations of the monastery:

Inner circle (*nang skor*)

Middle circle (*bar skor*, also called *zhabs skor*)

Outer circle (*gling skor*)

Appendix 2

Profiles of the Main Informants⁹⁸⁴

Menri Trindzin Rinpoche, aka **Lungtok Tenpa Nyima**, by personal name **Sangye Tendzin**(1927, Sharkhog, Tibet, China – 2017, Menri monastery, India)

Until his sad passing in September last year, Lungtok Tenpa Nyima, titled His Holiness Menri Trindzin Rinpoche, was the most recognised living Bonpo scholar and authority. He assumed the office of the 33rd Menri Trindzin, “the Throne Holder of Menri”, in 1969. Lungtok Tenpa Nyima was very supportive of academic research on Bon, worked with David Snellgrove, Per Kværne, and others.

Yongdzin Tenzin Namdak Rinpoche (born 1926, Khyungpo, Tibet, China)

One of the most important authorities and scholars of present Bon, and the main authority in exile. One of the main scholars of the contemporary Tibetan world who has taken part in many research projects and himself is author of many valued works. For the West firstly discovered by David Snellgrove.

Khenpo Tenpa Yungdrung (1969, Dhorpatan, Nepal)

Present abbot (Khenpo) of Triten Norbutse monastery since 2001, is one of Yongdzin Tenzin Namdak Rinpoche’s main disciples. Also, a renowned scholar working with researchers on Bon.

Amchi Nyima Gurung (1969, Jharkot, Mustang, Nepal)

Practitioner of the Sowa rikpa medical tradition. Born into a family of hereditary householder priests who have also functioned as medicine practitioners. Trained by his father and later at medical schools at Menri and Triten Norbutse monasteries, and mainly in Dhorpatan in Nepalese Western Himalayas. Currently the main *amchi* of Triten Norbutse leading the Bumzhi Clinic.

Geshe Nyima Woser Choekhortsang (1976, Tra, Dolpo, Nepal)

⁹⁸⁴ The informants are listed in order of their significance (for the Bonpos and for research), not alphabetically. I mention years of birth only in cases I know.

Geshe of Menri monastery, one of the most renowned Bonpo scholars, former chief editor of the Bonpo Bongo magazine and assistant to His Holiness Menri Trindzin. Recently has completed Ph.D. studies in Dolpo history at Charles University, Prague.

Geshe Yungdrung Gyamtso (Tra, Dolpo, Nepal)

Geshe of Triten Norbutse monastery, chief editor of the Bonpo Beltam magazine, employed in the finance office of the monastery during the time of research.

Geshe Takla Tarwa (1984, Bicher, Dolpo, Nepal)

Geshe of Triten Norbutse monastery.

Geshe Tri Yungdrung (by name Tenzin Gyamtso, 1985, Mangra, Eastern Tibet, China)

Geshe of Menri monastery, India, personal assistant to Menri Trindzin (until his passing in 2017).

Amchi Geshe Yungdrung Tashi (Nagchu, Tibet, China)

Practitioner of the Sowa rikpa medical tradition, one of the two current main *amchis* in Menri monastery, India.

Lama Shenrab Tenzin (Samling, Dolpo, Nepal)

Yangal lineage lama of the famous Bonpo monastery in Samling, Dolpo, also an *amchi*.

Mingji Cuomu (Lhasa, Tibet, China)

Practitioner of Sowa rikpa active in both Tibet and the West, a D.Phil. graduate in Medical Anthropology at the University of Oxford.

Appendix 3

Vocabulary of the Mendrup Ritual

This Appendix provides a small glossary of selected terms specific for the Light-Swirled Mendrup (*sMan sgrub 'o zer 'khyil ba*) of Trowo Tsochok Khagying, and especially of the most common of the varied names and epithets the Mendrup and its medicine acquire.⁹⁸⁵ Many of them would also apply to other Bonpo and Buddhist mendrup rituals. Terms with no reference indicated are part of colloquial expression, others are found in the texts cited (the references given provide only a few examples of many more occurrences). Some expressions are presented in pairs of opposition to better convey their meaning.

sman sgrub = ritual accomplishment, or accomplishing, of medicine⁹⁸⁶

X

sman sbyor = physical compounding of a medicinal mixture for both Sowa rikpa drugs and the mendrup medicine (a parallel and antithetical expression represents *dug sbyor* = compounding of poison)

sgrub = actively accomplish via ritual by ritual practitioners

X

grub = to be spontaneously accomplished, usually by the activity of divinities

*sman*⁹⁸⁷ = the mendrup medicine (colloquial, textual)

*sman sgrub*⁹⁸⁸ = the ritual, also its material medicine (the later in colloquial speech, sometimes textual in contemporary writing)

sgrub sman, shortened from *sman sgrub gyi sman*⁹⁸⁹ = the mendrup medicine (textual, the later also colloquial)

⁹⁸⁵ For more names of the medicine in the Mendrup texts see translations in Chapter 3.

⁹⁸⁶ The authorities of Triten Notbutse usually translate “blessings”. English Program, NyTshGy, oral teachings of YR (Triten Notbutse), KTY (Triten Notbutse), and others. For more possible meanings of the ritual’s names see Chapter 1 and Garrett, 2009.

⁹⁸⁷ Texts number 2. (*sGrub thabs rin chen 'byung gnas las zhi khro sman gsum gyi lag khrid bdud rtsi thig pa bzhugs so*), 3. (*'Od zer 'khyil pa bdud rtsi yon tan gyi phyag bzhes gsal byed me long bzhugs so*), 4. (*sMan gzhung*, aka *'Od zer 'khyil pa bdud rtsi yon tan gyi phyag bzhes gsal byed me long bzhugs so*), as numbered in Chapter 3. *In passim*.

⁹⁸⁸ Tibetan Program, p. 3.

⁹⁸⁹ DTOZ, p. 71.

Textual Epithets of the Mendrup Medicine:

*bdud rtsi sman*⁹⁹⁰ = “the nectar medicine” (the most common appellation)

*bdud rtsi chen po*⁹⁹¹ = “the great nectar”

*bdud rtsi gsang ba*⁹⁹² = “the secret nectar”

*bdud rtsi rin po che*⁹⁹³ = “the precious nectar”, also “the jewel nectar”

*bdud rtsi sgrub sman rin po che*⁹⁹⁴ = “the accomplished precious nectar medicine”, also “the jewel of the accomplished nectar medicine”

*'od zer 'khyil ba 'i bdud rtsi*⁹⁹⁵ = “the light-swirled nectar”

*gshen gyi bdud rtsi sman*⁹⁹⁶ = “the nectar medicine of the *shen* (*gshen*)”⁹⁹⁷

*thabs dang shes rabs bdud rtsi sman*⁹⁹⁸ = “the nectar medicine of the method and wisdom”

*yon tan thams cad legs pa 'i sman*⁹⁹⁹ = “the excellent medicine of all good qualities”

*'od gsal gzha' tshon byung ba 'i sman*¹⁰⁰⁰ = “medicine arising from the shining rainbow light”

*rgya rkyen kun 'dzom pa 'i g.yu 'brang bdud rtsi 'i sman*¹⁰⁰¹ = “the ambrosia nectar medicine gathering all great conditions”¹⁰⁰²

*rgyu rkyen kun 'joms g.yung drung bdud rtsi sman*¹⁰⁰³ = “the eternal nectar medicine gathering all great conditions”

*g.yu 'brang bdud rtsi khyad par 'bar ba 'i sman*¹⁰⁰⁴ = “the specially-blazed ambrosia nectar medicine”

*dug gra 'joms pa ye shes chen po 'i sman*¹⁰⁰⁵ = “the medicine of great wisdom conquering poisons and enemies”

Names of the Mendrup Ritual:

*'od zer 'khyil ba 'i sgrub pa*¹⁰⁰⁶ = “the light-swirled accomplishment”, “the light-swirled *sādhana*”

⁹⁹⁰ DTOZ, *in passim*, Texts numbered 2., 3., 4. (as in Chapter 3), *in passim*.

⁹⁹¹ Text number 4., pp. 79, 94.

⁹⁹² Text number 4., p. 90.

⁹⁹³ Text number 3., p. 68.

⁹⁹⁴ DTOZ, p. 76.

⁹⁹⁵ Text number 3., p. 71.

⁹⁹⁶ Text number 3., p. 68, Text number 2., p. 34, Text number 4., p. 135.

⁹⁹⁷ Explanation of *shen* (*gshen*) in Chapter 3.

⁹⁹⁸ Text number 4., p. 109.

⁹⁹⁹ Text number 4., pp. 110-118.

¹⁰⁰⁰ DTOZ, p. 77.

¹⁰⁰¹ Text number 2., p. 29.

¹⁰⁰² *g.Yu 'brang* and *bdud rtsi* represent synonyms denoting “nectar” (see Chapter 3 and ZZ), hence the translation as “ambrosia nectar”.

¹⁰⁰³ Text number 3., p. 64.

¹⁰⁰⁴ Text number 2., p. 37.

¹⁰⁰⁵ Text number 3., p. 70.

*sman sgrub 'od zer 'khyil ba'i sgrub chen*¹⁰⁰⁷ = “the great accomplishment of the light-swirled medicine” (literally “the great accomplishment of the light-swirled medicinal accomplishment”)

*sman sgrub chen mo*¹⁰⁰⁸ = “the great medicinal accomplishment”

sgrub chen, shortened from *sgrub pa chen mo*¹⁰⁰⁹ = “the great accomplishment”

*bdud rtsi sman gyi sgrub pa byed*¹⁰¹⁰ = “to perform the accomplishment of the nectar medicine”

*bdud rtsi sman gyi mchod pa*¹⁰¹¹ = “the offering of the nectar medicine”

*'od zer 'khyil ba'i bdud rtsi yon tan gyi sgrub pa*¹⁰¹² = “the accomplishment of the good qualities of the light-swirled nectar”

*sman gyi lag len*¹⁰¹³ = “the medicinal practice”

Other:

*sman sgrub bzhes stangs*¹⁰¹⁴ = ways of application, consumption of the mendrup medicine

*sman sgrub za*¹⁰¹⁵ = consume the mendrup medicine

*sman la rol*¹⁰¹⁶ = consume, literally “enjoy”, the medicine

*sman dbang*¹⁰¹⁷ = the final medicinal empowerment

¹⁰⁰⁶ DTOZ, p. 3.

¹⁰⁰⁷ DTOZ, p. 3.

¹⁰⁰⁸ DTOZ, preface.

¹⁰⁰⁹ DTOZ, preface.

¹⁰¹⁰ DTOZ, p. 76.

¹⁰¹¹ Texts numbered 2., 3., 4., *in passim*.

¹⁰¹² Text number 3., p. 71.

¹⁰¹³ DTOZ, preface.

¹⁰¹⁴ DTOZ, preface, p. 77.

¹⁰¹⁵ DTOZ, p. 77.

¹⁰¹⁶ DTOZ, p. 77.

¹⁰¹⁷ Text number 3., p. 68.

Appendix 4

Transliteration of the Translated Texts

Wylie transliteration of the Tibetan original texts of the Mendrup ritual translated from *The Main Text of the Light-Swirled Nectar Medicine* (*'Od zer 'khyil ba bdud rtsi sman gyi gzhung bzhugs lags s+ho*) in Chapter 3. Script of standard size (font 10) indicates passages for recited during the ritual. Smaller letters (font 10) indicate smaller writing in the original conveying instructions for the practitioners.

The manuscripts referred to are:

MsA: *'Od zer 'khyil ba bdud rtsi sman gyi gzhung bzhugs lags s+ho*// Manuscript in possession of Triten Norbutse monastery. (pp. 73-181 in the manuscript photocopy)

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

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

1. Opening: Descriptive Invocation of the Mendrup Medicine

(74)¹⁰¹⁸ *skye shi med par lhun gyis grub pa yin*¹⁰¹⁹// *tshad med sgyu 'phrul lha la phyag 'tshal lo// skye shi*¹⁰²⁰ *rnam dag bdud rtsi sman/ 'du 'bral med pa'i ye shes rtsi/ bdud bzhi rang grol bdud rtsi sman/ dug lnga rnam dag ye shes rtsi/ 'byung bzhi rnam dag bdud rtsi sman/ zad pa med pa'i ye shes rtsi/ phung po rnam dag bdud rtsi sman/ yul shes*¹⁰²¹ *thig le ye shes rtsi/ yan lag rnam dag bdud rtsi sman/ dus bzhi gnas gsal ye shes rtsi/ dug gsum rnam dag bdud rtsi sman/ sku gsung thugs rdzogs ye shes rtsi/ skye dgu rnam dag ye shes rtsi/ skye med rnam dag ye shes rtsi/ snang srid rnam dag ye shes rtsi/ yul shes rnam dag ye shes rtsi/ gnyis med rnam dag ye shes rtsi/ 'gro drug gso ba ye shes rtsi/ (75) thugs rje chen po ye shes rtsi/ rnam shes rnam rtog 'joms pa'i bdud/ thams cad bskong pa'i dbyings kyi rtsi/ phung po lnga po 'joms*

¹⁰¹⁸ MsB: starts on fol. 2, MsC: starts on fol. 438.

¹⁰¹⁹ MsC: *yis*.

¹⁰²⁰ MsC: *shing*.

¹⁰²¹ MsC: *phung pho yul shes*.

pa'i bdud/ 'dus la tshangs grongs nyid kyi rtsi/ rnam mkha'i lha mo'i klong du zil par 'thig/ gzugs kyi phung po snang yor 'joms¹⁰²² pa'i bdud/ dag cing bsil byed me long lta bu'i rtsi/ sa yi lha mo'i klong du zil par 'thig/ tshor ba'i phung po thabs shes 'dul ba'i bdud/ ne ram sam phud so sor rtogs pa'i rtsi/ me yi lha mo'i klong du zil par 'thig/ 'du shes phung po thabs kyis 'dul ba'i bdud/ grang la 'gred ('brengr) pa'i bya ba grub pa'i rtsi/ chu yi lha mo'i klong du zil par 'thig/ 'du byed phung po thabs kyis 'dul ba'i bdud/ yang shing bskyed (*bskyod)¹⁰²³ pa (76) mnyam pa nyid kyi rtsi/ rlung gi lha mo'i klong du zil par 'thig/ rgyu lnga 'dul ba'i rnam dag thabs kyi bdud/ mkha' la gsal ba'i ye shes thabs kyi rtsi/ rang dag klong du zil par 'thig/ sgo brgyad dmigs pa'i gnyis med gsal ba'i rtsi/ dbyings dang ye shes bdag¹⁰²⁴ ba (*la) 'od zer 'khyil / yan lag rten 'brel 'khor ba 'dul ba'i bdud/ rgyun drug zangs yungs phyag rgya gsal ba'i rtsi/ dus bzhi ba ga'i klong nas zil bar 'thig/*

2. Prescriptions for the Mendrup Practice

*(76) yid 'ong nyams dga' 'od zer 'khyil ba'i yul/ zhi dal ngang ldan 'od zer 'khyil ba'i dpon/ dad che sems can ldan 'od zer 'khyil ba'i grog (*grog)/ skye 'gro 'byung ba 'od zer 'khyil ba'i rdzas/ phying dpa' brjid 'od zer 'khyil ba'i rten/ dus drug las drug 'od zer 'khyil ba'i las/ 'od zer 'khyil ba'i yon tan ston lhun gyi grub/ 'od zer 'khyil ba'i don du bka' gsal lo// gasas mkhar rin po che spyi spungs kyi nang nas/ 'od zer 'khyil ba'i bdub rtsi yon tan (77) gyi sgrub pa zhal phyas nas/ zhi khro sprul ba'i tshogs la phyag 'tshal lo//*

3. The First Mendrup Mandala offering

*(93) e ma ho//¹⁰²⁵ dbus phyogs lte ba'i (*bde ba'i)¹⁰²⁶ dkyil 'khor du/ (94) rnam shes rtsa ba dag pa'i sman/ byang sems bde chen stong pa nyid/ 'phro 'du dbyings su thim¹⁰²⁷ pa'i sman/ rtogs bral yum du zil par 'thig/ rgyud (*rgyu)¹⁰²⁸ ni 'byung ba lnga las bskyed/ bskyed ni dpyad (*dpyid)¹⁰²⁹ kyi rgyal mo las bskyed/ rgyas ni dbyar gyi rgyal mo las rgyas/ smin ni ston gyi rgyal mo las smin/ bstus ni dgun gyi rgyal mo las bstus/ sprul ba ni shes rab thabs las sprul/ bsgrub ni skye shi med par bsgrub/ dkyil 'khor dbus kyis pho brang 'dir/ lha dang gasas kyi mchod pa 'bul/ dgra dang bgegs bdud du zhugs/¹⁰³⁰ bon dang gshen gyi rtsi ru bzhugs/*

¹⁰²² MsB: 'dzes.

¹⁰²³ MsB, MsC: bskyod.

¹⁰²⁴ MsC: bdal.

¹⁰²⁵ MsB: starts on fol. 18, MsC: starts on fol. 452.

¹⁰²⁶ Corrected following MsB, MsC.

¹⁰²⁷ MsC: thims.

¹⁰²⁸ Emended according to the following verses, although all MsA, MsB and MsC, have rgyud.

¹⁰²⁹ Corrected based on MsB, MsC.

¹⁰³⁰ MsC: dgra dang bgegs kyi bdud du zhug/.

sems can yongs kyi gsos su bzhugs/ zhe ldang dag pa thugs rje'i sman/ bdud rtsi chen por
 bzhugs su gsol/ bsvō ōm ba bā de na ra sa ya na g.yu 'brang bdud rtsi rten du trun trun/ (95)
 zhes dbus su bkod do/ gser phor gyis sman blang la 'di skad do// shar phyogs 'gyur med dkyil 'khor du/
 gzugs phung rtsa ba dag pa'i sman/ sha chen g.yung drung me long 'od/ sra brtan dbyings su
 dag pa'i sman/ sra brtan yum du zil par 'thig/ rgyu ni 'byung ba lnga las bskyed/ bskyed ni
 dpyad (*dpyid)¹⁰³¹ kyi rgyal mo las bskyed/ rgyas ni dbyar gyi rgyal mo las rgyas/ smin ni
 ston gyi rgyal mo las smin/ bstus ni dgun¹⁰³² gyi rgyal mo las bstus/ sprul ni shes rab thabs
 las sprul/ bsgrub ni 'gyur ba med par bsgrub/ dkyil 'khor shar gyi pho brang 'dir/ lha dang
 gsas kyi mchod par 'bul/ dgra dang bgegs kyi bdud du zhugs/ bon dang gshen gyi rtsi ru
 bzhugs/ sems can yongs kyi gsos su (96) bzhugs/ gti mug gnas dag ye shes sman/ bdud rtsi
 chen por bzhugs su gsol/ bsvō ōm ba bā de na ra sa ya na g.yu 'brang bdud rtsi brtan du trun
 trun/ de nas g.yu phor gyis sman blang la// byang phogs kun 'byung dkyil 'khor du/ 'du byed rtsa ba
 dag pa'i sman/ dri chen rin chen mnyam pa nyid/
 dbugs la gnas su 'degs pa'i sman/ kun grol yum du zil par 'thig/ rgyu ni 'byung ba¹⁰³³ lnga
 las bskyed/ bskyed ni dpyad (*dpyid)¹⁰³⁴ kyi rgyal mo las bskyed/ rgyas ni dbyar gyi rgyal mo
 las rgyas/ smin¹⁰³⁵ ni ston gyi rgyal mo las smin/ bstus ni dgun gyi rgyal mo las bstus/ sprul ni
 shes rab thabs las sprul/ bsgrub ni skye shi med [par]¹⁰³⁶ bsgrub/ dkyil 'khor byang gi pho
 brang du/ lha dang gsas kyi mchod pa 'bul/ dgra dang bgegs kyi (97) bdud du zhugs/ bon
 dang gshen gyi rtsi ru bzhugs/ sems can yongs kyi gsos su bzhugs/ nga rgyal gnas dag zhi ba'i
 rtsi/ bdud rtsi chen por bzhugs su gsol/ bsvō ōm ba bā de na ra sa ya na g.yu 'brang bdud rtsi
 brtan du trun trun/ ces byang du bzhugs su gsol/ de nas zangs phor gyi¹⁰³⁷ sman blang la// nub
 phyogs kun grags dkyil 'khor du/ tshor ba rtsa bar dag pa'i sman/ rag ta pad ma so sor rtogs/
 drod las gnas su srol ba'i sman/ 'bar ba'i yum du zil par 'thig/ gyu¹⁰³⁸ ni 'byung ba lnga las
 bskyed/ bskyed ni dpyad (*dpyid)¹⁰³⁹ kyi rgyal mo las bskyed/ rgyas ni dbyar gyi rgyal mo las
 rgyas/ smin ni stong [ston] gyi rgyal mo las smin/ bstus ni dgun gyi rgyal mo las bstus/ sprul
 ni shes rab thabs las sprul/ bsgrub (98) ni skye shi med par bsgrub/ dkyil 'khor nub kyi pho
 brang 'dir/ lha dang gsas kyi mchod pa 'bul/ dgra dang bgegs bdud du zhugs (*bzhugs)¹⁰⁴⁰/

¹⁰³¹ Corrected based on MsB, MsC.

¹⁰³² MsC: rgun.

¹⁰³³ MsB: 'byung ma.

¹⁰³⁴ Corrected based on the above, and MsB, MsC.

¹⁰³⁵ MsC: sman.

¹⁰³⁶ The syllable added based on MsB, MsC.

¹⁰³⁷ MsC: gyis.

¹⁰³⁸ MsC: rgyud.

¹⁰³⁹ Corrected based on MsB, MsC.

¹⁰⁴⁰ MsB: bzhugs.

*bon dang gshen gyis rtsi ru bzhugs/ sems can yongs kyi gsos su bzhugs/ 'dod chags gnas dag sbyin pa'i rtsi/ bdud rtsi chen por bzhugs su gsol/ bsvō ōm ba bā de na ra sa ya na g.yu 'brang bdud rtsi brtan du trun trun/ ces nub tu bzhugs su gsol/ de nas lcags phor gyi sman blang la 'di skad do//¹⁰⁴¹ lho phyogs grub pa'i dkyil 'khor du/ 'du shes rtsa bar dag pa'i sman/ dri chu 'khor lam bya nan tan/ khrag la gnas su dag pa'i¹⁰⁴² sman/ kun gso yum du zal (*zil)¹⁰⁴³ par 'thig/ rgyu ni 'byung ba lnga las bskyed/ bskyed ni dpyad (*dpyid)¹⁰⁴⁴ kyi rgyal mo las bskyed/ rgyas ni dbyar gyi rgyal mo las rgyas/ smin ni ston gyi rgyal mo las (99) smin/ bstus ni dgun gyi rgyal mo las bstus/ sprul ni shes rab thabs las sprul/ bsgrub ni lhun gyis grub par bsgrub/ dkyil 'khor lho yi pho brang du/ lha dang gsas kyi mchod pa 'bul/ dgra dang bgegs kyi bdud du zhugs (*bzhugs)/ bon dang gshen gyi rtsi ru bzhugs/¹⁰⁴⁵ sems can yongs kyi gsos su bzhugs/ 'phrag dog gnas dag grub pa'i rtsi/ bdud rtsi chen por bzhugs su gsol/ bsvō ōm ba bā de na ra sa ya na g.yu 'brang bdud rtsi brtan du trun trun/ zhes lho ru bzhugs su gsol/ de nas 'phra men¹⁰⁴⁶ gyis¹⁰⁴⁷ skyogs rnam blang la 'di skad do// mtshams bzhi kun nas bskyed pa'i dkyil 'khor (*du)¹⁰⁴⁸/ rnam shes brgyad kyi rtsa bar bskong ba'i sman/¹⁰⁴⁹ rang dag gsal ba'i thig le brgyad kyi rtsi/ yul brgyad lha mo 'dod yon zil par 'thig/ rgyud (*rgyu)¹⁰⁵⁰ (100) ni 'byung ba lnga las bskyed/ bskyed ni dpyad (*dpyid)¹⁰⁵¹ kyi rgyal mo las bskyed/ rgyas ni dbyar gyi rgyal mo las rgyas/ smin ni ston gyi rgyal mo las smin/ bstus ni dgun¹⁰⁵² gyi rgyal mo las bstus/ sprul ni shes rab thabs las sprul/ bsgrub ni zad med gter ltar bsgrub/ dkyil 'khor mtshams kyis¹⁰⁵³ pho brang du/ lha dang gsas kyi mchod pa 'bul/ dgra dang bgegs kyi bdud du zhugs [bzhugs]/ bon dang gshen gyi rtsi ru bzhugs/ sems can yongs kyi gsos su bzhugs/ rnam shes rnam dag bdud rtsi sman/ bdud rtsi chen por bzhugs su gsol/ bsvō ōm ba bā de na ra sa ya na g.yu 'brang bdud rtsi brtan du trun trun/ ces bdud rtsi mtshams bzhi bzhugs so/ bdud rtsi pho brang du bzhugs ba (*pa)¹⁰⁵⁴ bstan pa'o//*

¹⁰⁴¹ MsC: *de nas lcags phor gyis sman blang la//*.

¹⁰⁴² MsC: *bsil pa'i*.

¹⁰⁴³ As above, below, in MsB and MsC.

¹⁰⁴⁴ Corrected based on MsB, MsC.

¹⁰⁴⁵ MsC: *bzhug*.

¹⁰⁴⁶ A kind of iron. BGTC. In medical discourse the word can also denote a coloured precious stone, such as onyx. ShM. Here the expression refers to a certain ritual ladle. NW (Oxford 2013).

¹⁰⁴⁷ MsC: *gyi*.

¹⁰⁴⁸ Inserted based on MsB, MsC.

¹⁰⁴⁹ MsB, MsC: *mtshams bzhi kun nas bskyed pa'i dkyil 'khor du/ rnam shes brgyad kyi rtsa bar bskong ba'i sman/*

¹⁰⁵⁰ In MsB and MsC also *rgyud*.

¹⁰⁵¹ Corrected based on MsB, MsC.

¹⁰⁵² MsC: *rgun*.

¹⁰⁵³ MsC: *kyi*.

¹⁰⁵⁴ MsC: *pa*.

(102)¹⁰⁵⁵ *Ah ōm hūm/* (103) *ces pa*¹⁰⁵⁶ *bdud rtsi rnams la phog de tshur dbus kyis sman la 'dus par bsam/*
de nas 'phrin las kyi 'di skad do gsungs so// e ma ho/ snang srid thams cad bdud rtsi gso ba'i sman/
*so sor *bye*¹⁰⁵⁷ *brag ye shes lnga yi 'od/ tha dad spros pa'i bdud rtsi rna tshogs dang/ ye shes*
*chen por bdud rtsi ngang la bstu/ gnyis med mnyam pa bde ba'i ngang la bsres*¹⁰⁵⁸ */ gnam ri*
*sa brag bdud rtsi sman rnams yang/ lhun sgrub gnam mkha'i dngos med ngang la bsres*¹⁰⁵⁹ */*
*skya (skye)*¹⁰⁶⁰ *'gro sems can khams gsum*¹⁰⁶¹ *bdud rtsi sman/ sems nyid skye med bde ba'i*
*ngang du bsres*¹⁰⁶² */ bon can mtshan mar snang ba'i bdud rtsi rnams/ bon nyid bde ba chen*
*po'i ngang du bsres*¹⁰⁶³ */ rtsa ba yan lag bdud rtsi so so'i sman/ rnam dag bdud rtsi bde chen*
*ngang du bsres*¹⁰⁶⁴ */ skye shi med pa'i bdud rtsi chen por shog/* (104) *ces bdus kyis sman la bsre'o/ de*
nas mtshan [tshan] sna tshogs kyis bsang ste// lha tshan gsas tshan bdud rtsi dag pa'i sman/ rnam
*dag sman la *dri*¹⁰⁶⁵ *ma ma mchis te/ 'dus byas mi gtsang skyon gyis dri ma can/ gtsang ma*
*tshan gyis*¹⁰⁶⁶ *bsang bar dag 'gyur zhig/ bsvo ōm tshangs la gu dun g.yu 'brang bdud rtsi sa le*
*ye bsvo thā/ zhes bsang ngo/ de nas gdul sbyang ste/ gong gi tshan chu brten 'dung rnams (*chu lhag ma rten*
*'dus rnams)*¹⁰⁶⁷ *bkrus la/ sman rnams tsho lngar bead la 'di skad do// e ma ho// dug lnga snang ba'i*
bdud rnams 'khor ba'i rdzas/ zad med 'byung ba'i gtun khung du/ skyed med ye shes thabs kyi
*thu lum gyis/ bdud bzhi dag pa'i ye shes bdud rtsi brdung*¹⁰⁶⁸ *bdud med g.yung drung sku ru*
grub ('grub)*¹⁰⁶⁹ *par shog/ bsvo ōm ba bā de na ra sa ya na g.yu 'brang bdud rtsi ge ge dub*
(105) *dub mu ye ha ra bsvo thā/ zhes 'od zer 'phro 'du brdung/ de nas ga bu bcas ste/ rin po che'i ga*
*bu*¹⁰⁷⁰ *bdud rtsi rtsal/ steng du rigs kyi phyag rgya bkod/ nam zla dang sbyar ba'i zhal khebs byas/ gzungs thag*
dkar ser shar du drangs/ dkar ljang byang du drangs/ dkar dmar nub tu drangs/ dkar sngon lho ru drangs/ de
*rnams tshogs pa'i rnams dbus su drangs/ de rnams dbus su thabs la gyos*¹⁰⁷¹ *bdud rtsi sman gyi dkyil 'khor zhal*
phye ba ni//

¹⁰⁵⁵ MsB: starts on fol. 25, MsC: starts on fol. 458.

¹⁰⁵⁶ MsB: *ces pas/*.

¹⁰⁵⁷ Insertion based on MsB, MsC.

¹⁰⁵⁸ MsC: *bsre*.

¹⁰⁵⁹ MsC: *bsre*.

¹⁰⁶⁰ Corrected based on MsB, MsC.

¹⁰⁶¹ MsC: *khams su*.

¹⁰⁶² MsB, MsC: *bsre*.

¹⁰⁶³ MsB, MsC: *bsre*.

¹⁰⁶⁴ MsC: *bsre*.

¹⁰⁶⁵ Inserted based on MsB, MsC.

¹⁰⁶⁶ MsB, MsC: *gyi*.

¹⁰⁶⁷ MsB, MsC: *chu lhag ma rten 'dus rnams*.

¹⁰⁶⁸ The act of grinding (literally “beating”, *brdung*) the medicine during the mendrup ritual is meant.

Throughout the act itself, a different recitation is cited (see Chapter 3).

¹⁰⁶⁹ As in MsB, MsC.

¹⁰⁷⁰ MsC: *ga'u*.

¹⁰⁷¹ MsC: *gyos/*.

(107)¹⁰⁷² *bsvo ōm ba bā de na ra sa ya na g.yu 'brang bdud rtsi bsvo thā¹⁰⁷³// dbus phyogs nam mkha'i¹⁰⁷⁴ yangs pa'i dkyil 'khor nas¹⁰⁷⁵/ kun snang khyab pa ye srid lha yi rgyal/ nam mkha'i lha mo mtshan ma rtogs bral yum/ yab yum sprul pa 'khor nas 'das pa la/ snying po 'dzab¹⁰⁷⁶ kyi 'phro 'du'i¹⁰⁷⁷ mchod pa 'bul/ thugs rjes dgyes pa'i tshul gyis bzhes su gsol/ yab yum thabs dang shes rab rol pa'i 'phro 'du yis¹⁰⁷⁸/ bdud rtsi sman la byin gyis rlobs¹⁰⁷⁹/ bon dang gshen la thugs rjes bzungs/ dgra dang bgegs kyi bar chad sel/ skye shi med pa'i bdud rtsi bsgrub/ e ma ho/ bdud rtsi gsang ba'i lha la phyag 'tshal lo/ bsvo ōm ba bā de na ra sa ya na g.yu 'brang bdud rtsi bsvo thā¹⁰⁸⁰// dbang chen gzhal las 'bar ba na/ thugs rje gtso mchog khro rgyal mkha 'gying kha/ mkha' la gdug mo (108) ba ga kun gyi yum/ yab yum sprul pa 'khor dang bcas pa la/ snying po 'dzab kyi 'phro 'du'i mchod pa 'bul/ thugs rjes dgyes pa'i tshul gyis bzhes¹⁰⁸¹ su gsol/ yab yum thabs dang shes rab rol pa'i 'phro 'du yis¹⁰⁸²/ bdud rtsi sman la byin gyis rlobs¹⁰⁸³/ bon dang gshen la thugs rjes bzungs¹⁰⁸⁴/ dgra dang bgegs kyi bar chad sel/ skye shi med pa'i bdud rtsi sgrubs/ e¹⁰⁸⁵ ma ho/ bdud rtsi gsang ba'i lha la phyag 'tshal lo/ zhes dbul lo// bsvo ōm ba bā de na ra sa ya na g.yu 'brang¹⁰⁸⁶ bdud rtsi a ōm hūm sa le lhen ne¹⁰⁸⁷ bsvo thā¹⁰⁸⁸/ bsvo ōm ba bā de na ra sa ya na g.yu 'brang¹⁰⁸⁹ bdud rtsi sa le khri le bsvo thā¹⁰⁹⁰/ bsvo ōm ba bā de na ra sa ya na g.yu 'brang¹⁰⁹¹ bdud rtsi sa le lhang nge bsvo thā¹⁰⁹²/ bsvo ōm ba bā de na ra sa ya na g.yu 'brang¹⁰⁹³ bdud rtsi sa le sang nge¹⁰⁹⁴ (109) bsvo thā¹⁰⁹⁵/ bsvo ōm ba bā de na ra sa ya na g.yu 'brang¹⁰⁹⁶ bdud rtsi sa le 'od de ya*

¹⁰⁷² MsB: starts on fol. 29, MsC: starts on fol. 461.

¹⁰⁷³ MsC: *tha*.

¹⁰⁷⁴ MsB: *nam mkha'*.

¹⁰⁷⁵ MsC: *na*.

¹⁰⁷⁶ MsC: *'dzabs*.

¹⁰⁷⁷ MsC: *'phro 'dus*.

¹⁰⁷⁸ MsB: *shes rab rol pa yis*, MsC: *yi*.

¹⁰⁷⁹ MsC: *brlobs*.

¹⁰⁸⁰ MsC: *tha*.

¹⁰⁸¹ MsC: *'zhes*.

¹⁰⁸² MsC: *yi*.

¹⁰⁸³ MsB, MsC: *brlobs*.

¹⁰⁸⁴ MsC: *bzung*.

¹⁰⁸⁵ MsC: *ē*.

¹⁰⁸⁶ MsC: *g.yung drung*.

¹⁰⁸⁷ MsB: *lheng nge*.

¹⁰⁸⁸ MsC: *tha*.

¹⁰⁸⁹ MsC: *g.yung drung*.

¹⁰⁹⁰ MsC: *tha*.

¹⁰⁹¹ MsC: *g.yung drung*.

¹⁰⁹² MsC: *tha*.

¹⁰⁹³ MsC: *g.yung drung*.

¹⁰⁹⁴ *Sang nge* skipped in MsC.

¹⁰⁹⁵ MsC: *tha*.

¹⁰⁹⁶ MsC: *g.yung drung*.

*le bsvo thā¹⁰⁹⁷/ bsvo ōm ba bā de na ra sa ya na g.yu 'brang¹⁰⁹⁸ bdud rtsi sa le ma le¹⁰⁹⁹ lham
me bsvo thā¹¹⁰⁰/ bsvo ōm ba bā de na hūm¹¹⁰¹ ra sa ya na g.yu 'brang¹¹⁰² bdud rtsi bsvo
thā¹¹⁰³/ ces pa dang// e ma ho// kun snang khyab pa bdud rtsi thugs kyi lha/ thugs kyi 'phro 'du
stong gsum sman du sgyur/ nam mkha'i lha mo bdud rtsi gsal ba'i yum/ sems dpa' ye shes
bdud rtsi rig pa'i lha/ sems ma ye sangs bdud rtsi mchod pa'i yum/ 'gro drug 'dul ba bdud
rtsi bsgrubs pa'i gshen/ thabs dang shes rab bdud rtsi sman du bsgrubs/ gzugs rnam thams
cad sman gyi sku/ 'gyur med sra brtan ye shes sku/ grags pa thams cad sman gyi gsung/ 'gag
med gsal ba'i ye shes sku/ dran rig (110) thams cad sman gyi thugs/ ye rigs gdos bral ye shes
sku/ yon tan thams cad legs pa'i sman/ kun 'byung 'deg pa'i ye shes sku/ 'dus byas thams cad
sman gyi las/ lhun grub kun gso ye shes sku/ 'di ltar thams cad sman du bsgrubs¹¹⁰⁴/ bdud rtsi
sman la byin gyis rlobs¹¹⁰⁵/ e ma ho/ bdud rtsi yang dag lha la phyag 'tshal lo/ zhes bstod do//
yang gong gi snying po drug po de brgya rtsa brgyad tsam bzlas la¹¹⁰⁶ 'di skad do// e ma ho// gsal ba rang
'byung bdud rtsi sku yi lha/ sku yi chos sprul stong gsum sman du bsgyur/ sra brtan lha mo
bdud rtsi skyed pa'i¹¹⁰⁷ yum/ sems dpa' ye shes bdud rtsi rig pa'i lha/ sems ma ye sangs bdud
rtsi mchod pa'i yum/ 'gro drug 'dul ba bdud rtsi bsgrub pa'i gshen/ thabs dang shes rab bdud
rtsi sman (111) du bsgrub/ gzugs rnam thams cad sman gyi sku¹¹⁰⁸/ 'gyur med sra brtan ye
shes sku/ grags pa¹¹⁰⁹ thams cad sman gyi gsung/ 'gag med gsal ba¹¹¹⁰ ye shes sku/ dran rigs
thams cad sman gyi thugs/ ye rigs gdos bral ye shes sku/ yon tan thams cad legs pa'i sman/
kun 'byung 'deg pa'i ye shes sku/ 'dus byas thams cad sman gyi las¹¹¹¹/ lhun grub kun gso ye
shes sku/ 'dir (*'di)¹¹¹² ltar thams cad sman du bsgrubs/ bdud rtsi sman la byin gyis¹¹¹³
rlobs¹¹¹⁴/ e ma ho/ bdud rtsi 'gyur med¹¹¹⁵ lha la phyag 'tshal lo/ snying po drongs¹¹¹⁶// e ma ho//
dge lha gar phyug bdud rtsi yon tan lha/ yon tan 'phro 'du'i stong gsum sman du bsgyur/ ye*

¹⁰⁹⁷ MsC: *tha*.

¹⁰⁹⁸ MsC: *g.yung drung*.

¹⁰⁹⁹ *Ma le* skipped in MsC.

¹¹⁰⁰ MsC: *tha*.

¹¹⁰¹ The syllable skipped in MsC.

¹¹⁰² MsC: *g.yung drung*.

¹¹⁰³ MsC: *tha*.

¹¹⁰⁴ MsC: *bsgrub*.

¹¹⁰⁵ MsC: *brlobs*.

¹¹⁰⁶ MsC: *las*.

¹¹⁰⁷ MsC: *skyed pa*.

¹¹⁰⁸ MsB: *sman du bsgrub/ gzugs gyi sku/ (Homoio teleuton)*.

¹¹⁰⁹ MsB: *grags*.

¹¹¹⁰ MsB, MsC: *gsal ba'i*.

¹¹¹¹ MsB: *lha*.

¹¹¹² As in MsB, MsC.

¹¹¹³ MsC: *gyi*.

¹¹¹⁴ MsC: *brlobs*.

¹¹¹⁵ MsC: *'gyur med* skipped.

¹¹¹⁶ MsB, MsC: *drangs so*.

'deg lha mo bdud rtsi bskyed pa'i yun (*yum)¹¹¹⁷/ sems dpa' ye gshen (*shes)¹¹¹⁸ bdud rtsi rig pa'i lha/ sems ma ye sangs (112) (*bdud rtsi mchod pa'i yum/) (*'gro drug 'dul ba) bdud rtsi bsgrub pa'i gshen/¹¹¹⁹ thabs dang shes rab bdud rtsi sman du bsgrub/ gzugs rnam thams cad sman gyi sku/ 'gyur med sra brtan ye shes sku/ grags pa thams cad sman gyi gsung/ 'gag med gsal ba'i ye shes sku/ dran rig thams cad sman gyi thugs/ ye rigs gdos bral ye shes sku/ yon tan thams cad legs¹¹²⁰ pa'i sman/ kun 'byung 'degs¹¹²¹ pa'i ye shes sku/ 'dus byas thams cad sman gyi la (*las)/¹¹²² lhun grub kun gso ye shes sku/ 'di ltar thams cad sman du bsgrub/ bdud rtsi sman la byin gyis rlobs¹¹²³/ e ma ho/ bdud rtsi 'gyur med¹¹²⁴ lha la phyag 'tshal lo/ snying po drangs (*drongs)¹¹²⁵// e ma ho// bye brag dngos med bdud rtsi gsung gi lha/ brag pa'i 'phro 'dus¹¹²⁶ stong gsum sman du bsgrubs/ gsal 'bar lha mo bdud rtsi drod 'bebs yum/ sems dpa' ye gshen (*shes)¹¹²⁷ bdud rtsi rig pa'i lha/ sems ma ye sangs bdud rtsi mchod pa'i yum/ 'gro drug 'dul ba bdud rtsi sgrub pa'i gshen/ thabs shes (*thabs)¹¹²⁸ dang shes rab bdud rtsi sman du bsgrub/ gzugs rnam thams cad sman gyi sku/ (113) 'gyur med sra brtan ye shes sku/ grags pa thams cad sman gyi gsung/ 'gag med gsal ba'i ye shes sku/ dran rig thams cad sman gyi thugs/ ye rigs gdos bral ye shes sku/ yon tan thams cad legs pa'i sman/ kun 'byung 'deg pa'i ye shes sku/ 'dus byas thams cad sman gyi las/ lhun grub kun gso ye shes sku/ 'di ltar thams cad sman du bsgrubs/ bdud rtsi sman la byin gyis rlobs¹¹²⁹/ e ma ho/ bdud rtsi 'geg med lha la phyag 'tshal lo/ snying po drangs¹¹³⁰// e ma ho// dga' ba don 'grub bdud rtsi 'phrin las lha/ 'phrin las phro 'du stong gsum sman du bsgyur/ kun gso lha mo bdud rtsi rlan 'bebs yum/ sems dpa' ye shes bdud rtsi rig¹¹³¹ pa'i lha/ sems ma ye sangs bdud rtsi mchod pa'i yum/ (114) 'gro drug 'dul ba bdud rtsi bsgrub pa'i gshen/ thabs dang shes rab bdud rtsi sman du bsgrub/ gzugs rnam thams cad sman gyi sku/ 'gyur med sra brtan ye shes sku/ grags pa thams cad sman gyi gsung/ 'gag med gsal ba'i ye shes sku/ dran rigs thams cad sman gyi thugs/ ye rigs gdos bral ye shes sku/ yon tan thams cad legs pa'i sman/ kun 'byung 'deg pa'i ye shes

¹¹¹⁷ MsB: yum.

¹¹¹⁸ As in MsC, and the preceding verses. MsA and MsB has: ye gshen.

¹¹¹⁹ Emended according to the preceding and following verses. In all MsA, MsB, and MsC, bdud rtsi mchod pa'i yum/ 'gro drug 'dul ba skipped.

¹¹²⁰ MsC: leg.

¹¹²¹ MsC: 'deg.

¹¹²² MsB: lha, MsC: las.

¹¹²³ MsC: probably byin gyi brlobs.

¹¹²⁴ MsC: kun 'byung.

¹¹²⁵ Corrected based on the previous and following. MsB, MsC: drangs so.

¹¹²⁶ MsC: 'du.

¹¹²⁷ As in MsC. MsA and MsB has: ye gshen.

¹¹²⁸ Corrected based on MsB.

¹¹²⁹ MsC: byin gyi brlobs.

¹¹³⁰ MsB, MsC: drangs so.

¹¹³¹ MsB: rigs.

*sku/ 'dus byas thams cad sman gyi las/ lhun grub kun gso ye shes sku/ 'di ltar thams cad sman
 du bsgrubs/ bdud rtsi sman la byin gyis rlobs^{1132/} e ma ho/ bdud rtsi grub pa'i lha la phyag
 'tshal lo/ snying po drongs^{1133//} e ma ho// ba ram gling bzhi sa sman grub pa'i lha/ dpyid kyi
 rgyal mo bdud rtsi bskyed pa'i yum/ sems dpa' ye gshen (*shes)¹¹³⁴ bdud rtsi rigs (115) pa'i
 lha/ sems ma ye sangs bdud rtsi mchod pa'i yum/ 'gro drug 'dul ba¹¹³⁵ bdud rtsi bsgrub pa'i
 gshen/ thabs dang shes rab bdud rtsi sman du bsgrubs/ gzugs rnam thams cad sman gyi sku/
 'gyur med sra brtan ye shes sku/ grags pa thams cad sman gyi gsung/ 'gag med gsal ba'i ye
 shes sku/ dran rigs thams cad sman gyi thugs/ ye rigs gdos bral ye shes sku/ yon tan thams
 cad legs pa'i sman/ kun 'byung 'deg pa'i ye shes sku/ 'dus¹¹³⁶ byas thams cad sman gyi las/
 lhun grub kun gso ye shes sku/ 'di ltar thams cad sman du bsgrub/ bdud rtsi sman la byin gyis
 rlobs^{1137/} e ma ho/ bskyed byed bdud rtsi lha la phyag 'tshal lo/ snying po drongs^{1138//} e ma ho//
 ba ram gling rtsol rlung sman grub pa'i lha/ (116) dbyar gyi rgyal mo bdud rtsi rgyas pa'i
 yum/ sems dpa' ye shes bdud rtsi rig pa'i lha/ sems ma¹¹³⁹ ye sangs bdud rtsi mchod pa'i yum/
 'gro¹¹⁴⁰ drug 'dul ba bdud rtsi bsgrub pa'i gshen/ thabs dang shes rab bdud rtsi sman du
 bsgrubs/ gzugs rnam thams cad sman gyi sku/ 'gyur med sra brtan ye shes sku/ grags pa
 thams cad sman gyi gsung/ 'gag med gsal ba'i ye shes sku/ dran rigs thams cad sman gyi
 thugs/ ye rigs gdos bral ye shes sku/ yon tan thams cad legs pa'i sman/ kun 'byung 'deg pa'i
 ye shes sku/¹¹⁴¹ 'dus¹¹⁴² byas thams cad sman gyi las/ lhun grub kun gso ye shes sku/ 'di ltar
 thams cad sman du bsgrubs^{1143/} bdud rtsi sman la byin gyis rlobs^{1144/} e ma ho/ 'deg byed
 bdud rtsi lha la phyag 'tshal lo/ snying po drongs^{1145//} e ma ho/ khri mang gshen chen me sman
 grub pa'i lha/ ston gyis rgyal mo bdud rtsi sman (*smin)¹¹⁴⁶ gyi¹¹⁴⁷ yum/ sems dpa' ye gshen
 (*shes)¹¹⁴⁸ bdud rtsi rig pa'i lha/ sems ma ye sangs bdud rtsi mchod pa'i yum/ 'gro drug 'dul
 ba bdud rtsi bsgrub pa'i gshen/ (117) thabs *dang¹¹⁴⁹ shes rab bdud rtsi sman du bsgrubs/*

¹¹³² MsC: *brlobs*.

¹¹³³ MsB, MsC: *drangs so*.

¹¹³⁴ As in MsC. MsA and MsB has: *ye gshen*.

¹¹³⁵ MsB: *'dul ba'i*.

¹¹³⁶ MsC: *'du*.

¹¹³⁷ MsC: *brlobs*.

¹¹³⁸ MsB, MsC: *drangs so*.

¹¹³⁹ MsC: the syllable omitted.

¹¹⁴⁰ MsC: *'gra*.

¹¹⁴¹ MsB: *yon tan thams cad kun 'byung 'deg pa'i ye shes sku/* (The two verses merged into one).

¹¹⁴² MsC: *'du*.

¹¹⁴³ MsC: *bsgrub*.

¹¹⁴⁴ MsC: *brlobs*.

¹¹⁴⁵ MsB, MsC: *drangs so*.

¹¹⁴⁶ Emended according to the preceding and following verses. In all MsA, MsB, and MsC, *sman*.

¹¹⁴⁷ MsC: *gyis*.

¹¹⁴⁸ As in MsC. MsA and MsB has: *ye gshen*.

¹¹⁴⁹ As above, below, and in MsC.

gzugs rnam thams cad sman gyi sku/ 'gyur med sra brtan ye shes sku/ grags pa thams cad sman gyi gsung/ 'gag med gsal ba'i ye shes sku/ dran rigs thams cad sman gyi thugs/ ye rigs gdos bral ye shes sku/ yon tan thams cad legs pa'i sman/ kun 'byung 'degs pa'i ye shes sku/ 'dus¹¹⁵⁰ byas thams cad sman gyi las/ lhun grub kun gso ye shes sku/ 'di ltar thams cad sman du bsgrub/ bdud rtsi sman la byin gyis rlobs/ e ma ho/ smin byed bdud rtsi lha la phyag 'tshal lo/ snying po drongs¹¹⁵¹// e ma ho/ lde bo gsung chen¹¹⁵² chu sman grub pa'i lha/ dgun gyi rgyal mo bdud rtsi dbang bsdud (*sdud)¹¹⁵³ yum/ sems dpa' ye shes bdud rtsi rig pa'i lha/ sems ma ye sangs bdud rtsi mchod pa'i yum/ 'gro drug 'dul ba bdud rtsi bsgrubs pa'i gshen/ thabs dang shes rab bdud rtsi sman du bsgrubs/ gzugs rnam thams cad sman gyi sku/ (118) 'gyur med sra brtan ye shes sku/ grags pa thams cad sman gyi gsung/ 'gag med gsal ba'i ye shes sku/ dran rigs thams cad sman gyi thugs/ ye rigs gdos bral ye shes sku/ yon tan thams cad legs pa'i sman/ kun 'byung 'deg pa'i ye shes sku/ 'dus byas thams cad sman gyi las/ lhun grub kun gso ye shes sku/ 'di ltar thams cad sman du bsgrubs/ bdud rtsi sman la byin gyis rlobs¹¹⁵⁴/ e ma ho/ sdud¹¹⁵⁵ byed bdud rtsi¹¹⁵⁶ lha la phyag 'tshal lo/ svo ōm ba bā de hūm/ ra sa ya na g.yu 'brang bdud¹¹⁵⁷ rtsi sprung so ram mo bsvo thā^{1158/1159} bsvo ōm ba bā de na ra sa ya na g.yu 'brang bdud rtsi¹¹⁶⁰ hūm cha la 'dar shag ye bsvo thā/ bsvo ōm ba bā de na ra sa ya na g.yu 'brang bdud rtsi hūm ha la tho ye bsvo thā/¹¹⁶¹ e ma ho/ dbang chen gzhal las 'bar ba na/ thugs rjes sprul ba'i khro tshogs na¹¹⁶²/ sku yi cho 'phrul sra brtan g.yung drung sku/ gsung¹¹⁶³ gi gdang (*gdangs)¹¹⁶⁴ skad 'bar ba khro bo'i mchog/ thugs kyi cho phrul 'chi med skyes nas btsan/ sprul pa bye ba ye shes chen po nyid/ thugs rje'i thabs kyis bdud rtsi grub pa'i (119) lha/ snying po 'dzab kyis¹¹⁶⁵ thugs dam rgyud bskul gyis/ thugs kyi¹¹⁶⁶ 'phro 'du'i bdud rtsi byin gyis rlobs¹¹⁶⁷/ tshad med 'phro 'dus (*'du)¹¹⁶⁸ gshen grogs thugs rjes zungs/

¹¹⁵⁰ MsC: 'du.

¹¹⁵¹ MsB, MsC: drangs so.

¹¹⁵² The name of teh deity is distinctively different in MsC: *thang la me sgron*.

¹¹⁵³ As in MsC.

¹¹⁵⁴ MsC: *byin gyi brlobs*.

¹¹⁵⁵ MsC: *bdud*.

¹¹⁵⁶ MsC: *bdud rtsi'i*.

¹¹⁵⁷ MsC: *g.yung drung*.

¹¹⁵⁸ MsC: *tha*.

¹¹⁵⁹ MsC: The two verses merged into one.

¹¹⁶⁰ MsC: *ra sa ya na g.yu 'brang bdud rtsi* skipped.

¹¹⁶¹ The verse skipped in MsC.

¹¹⁶² MsB, MsC: *ni*.

¹¹⁶³ MsC: *g.yung drung*.

¹¹⁶⁴ Both forms mean the same, according to NW (Prague 2017).

¹¹⁶⁵ MsC: *kyi*.

¹¹⁶⁶ MsC: *kyis*.

¹¹⁶⁷ MsC: *brlobs*.

¹¹⁶⁸ MsC: 'du.

(rdza) rdzu 'phrul¹¹⁶⁹ stobs kyis dgregs gnas su bsgrol/ bdud rtsi sman la thugs kyis byin phob cig/ e ma ho/ bdud rtsi 'bar ba'i lha la phyag 'tshal lo/ bsvo òm ba bā de na ra sa ya na rko phung ting 'byung tha tshan ha ra sad g.yu 'brang bdud rtsi bsvo thā¹¹⁷⁰ ces brgya drang pa dang 'di skad do// e ma ho/ bskal pa *me¹¹⁷¹ ltar 'bar ba'i gsas mkhar na/ gtso mchog mkha' 'gying bdud rtsi thugs kyi¹¹⁷² lha/ thugs kyi 'phro 'du stong gsum sman du bsgyur/ gdug mo yum chen bdud rtsi sman skyong ma/ gnyis med thabs kyi dgyis (*dgyes)¹¹⁷³ par yab la 'khril/ thabs dang shes rab rol pa'i 'phro 'du las/ snang g.yor thams cad bdud rtsi sku yi lha/ bdud rtsi phyag rgya log ge log/ (120) grags pa thams cad bdud rtsi gsung gi lha/ bdud rtsi 'dzab dbyangs 'u ru ru/ dran rigs thams cad bdud rtsi thugs kyi lha/ bdud rtsi thig pa sha ra ra/ legs¹¹⁷⁴ pa thams cad bdud rtsi yon tan lha/ bdud rtsi mtsho mo kyi li li/ mdzad spyod thams cad bdud rtsi 'phrin las lha/ sman gyi chu 'babs zu lu lu/ 'di ltar thams cad sman du bsgrub/ dngos grub bdag dang gnyis med gsol/ e ma ho/ bdud rtsi skye med lha la phyag 'tshal lo/ 'di ltar zhes bstod do// bsvo òm ba bā de na ra sa ya na rko phung ting 'byung tha tshan ha ra sad/ g.yu 'brang bdud rtsi bsvo thā¹¹⁷⁵/ e ma ho// sra brtan mi 'gyur sa yi gsas mkhar na/ khro gsas mkha' 'gying bdud rtsi sku yi lha/ sku yi sprul pa stang (*stong)¹¹⁷⁶ gsum sman du bsgyur/ na (*ne)¹¹⁷⁷ slas sra brtan bdud rtsi sman skyong lha/ gnyis med thabs kyi dgyis (*dgyes)¹¹⁷⁸ par yab la 'khril/ thabs dang shes rab rol pa'i 'phro 'du las/ (121) snang g.yor thams cad bdud rtsi sku yi lha/ bdud rtsi 'i¹¹⁷⁹ phyag rgya log ge log/ grags pa thams cad bdud rtsi gsung gi lha/ bdud rtsi 'i 'dzab dbyangs 'u ru ru/ dran rig thams cad bdud rtsi thugs kyi¹¹⁸⁰ lha/ bdud rtsi 'i¹¹⁸¹ thig pa sha ra ra/ legs pa thams cad bdud rtsi yon tan lha/ bdud rtsi 'i mtsho mo kyi li li/ mdzad spyod thams cad bdud rtsi 'phrin las lha/ sman gyi chu 'babs zu lu lu/ 'di ltar thams cad sman du bsgrub/ dngos grub bdag dang gnyis med gsol/ e ma ho/ bdud rtsi 'gyur med lha la phyag 'tshal lo/ zhes bstod do// bsvo òm ba bā de na ra sa ya na rko phung ting 'byung tha tshan ha ra sad/¹¹⁸² g.yu 'brang bdud rtsi bsvo thā¹¹⁸³//¹¹⁸⁴ e ma ho/

¹¹⁶⁹ Corrected based on MsB, MsC.

¹¹⁷⁰ The mantra omitted in MsC.

¹¹⁷¹ Inserted based on MsB, MsC.

¹¹⁷² MsC: *kyis*.

¹¹⁷³ Emended based on MsB, MsC.

¹¹⁷⁴ MsC: *leg*.

¹¹⁷⁵ MsC: *tha*.

¹¹⁷⁶ As in MsB, MsC.

¹¹⁷⁷ Emended based on MsB, MsC.

¹¹⁷⁸ As in MsB, MsC.

¹¹⁷⁹ MsC: *bdud rtsi*.

¹¹⁸⁰ MsC: *kyis*.

¹¹⁸¹ MsC: *bdud rtsi*.

¹¹⁸² MsB: *bsvo òm ba bā de na ra sa ya na g.yung drung rko phung ting 'byung tha tshan ha ra sad/*. (The word *g.yung drung* inserted in addition, probably by mistake.)

¹¹⁸³ MsC: *tha*.

yang byed g.yo ba rlung gi gsas mkhar na/ rngam gsas mkha' 'gying bdud rtsi yon tan lha/
 legs pa'i yon tan stong gsum sman du bsgyur/ rngam mo yum chen bdud rtsi sman skyong ma/
 gnyis med thabs kyi (122) dgyis (*dgyes)¹¹⁸⁵ par yab la 'khril/ thabs dang shes rab rol pa'i
 'phro 'du las¹¹⁸⁶/ snang g.yor thams cad bdud rtsi sku yi lha/¹¹⁸⁷ bdud rtsi'i phyag rgya log ge
 log/ grags pa thams cad bdud rtsi gsung gi lha/ bdud rtsi'i¹¹⁸⁸ 'dzab dbyangs 'u ru ru/ dran
 rig thams cad bdud rtsi¹¹⁸⁹ thugs kyi¹¹⁹⁰ lha/ bdud rtsi'i thig pa sha ra ra/ legs pa thams cad
 bdud rtsi yon tan lha/ bdud rtsi'i mtsho mo kyi li li/ mdzad spyod thams cad bdud rtsi 'phrin
 las lha/ sman gyi chu 'babs zu lu lu/ 'di ltar thams cad sman du bsgrub/ dngos grub bdag
 dang gnyis med gsol/ e ma ho/ bdud rtsi kun 'byung lha la phyag 'tshal lo/ zhes bstod do// bsvo
 om ba bā de na ra sa ya na rko phung ting 'byung tha tshan ha ra sad/ g.yu 'brang bdud rtsi
 bsvo thā^{1191/1192} e ma ho// gsal byed 'bar ba me¹¹⁹³ ya (*yi)¹¹⁹⁴ gsas mkhar na/ dbal gsas
 mkha' 'gying bdud rtsi gsung gi lha/ grags pa'i 'khor lo stong gsum sman du bsgyur/ tshangs
 tang¹¹⁹⁵ dbal mo bdud rtsi sman skyong ma/ gnyis med thabs kyi dgyes par yab la 'khril/ thabs
 dang shes rab rol pa'i 'phro 'du las¹¹⁹⁶/ snang g.yor thams cad bdud rtsi sku (123) yi lha/
 bdud rtsi'i¹¹⁹⁷ phyag rgya log ge log/ grags pa thams cad bdud rtsi'i¹¹⁹⁸ gsung gi lha/ bdud
 rtsi'i¹¹⁹⁹ 'dzab dbyangs 'u ru ru/ dran rigs thams cad bdud rtsi thugs kyi¹²⁰⁰ lha/ bdud
 rtsi'i¹²⁰¹ thig pa sha ra ra/ legs pa¹²⁰² thams cad bdud rtsi'i¹²⁰³ yon tan lha/ bdud rtsi'i mtsho
 mo kyi li li/ mdzad spyod thams cad bdud rtsi'i¹²⁰⁴ 'phrin las lha/ *sman gyi chu 'babs zu lu
 lu/¹²⁰⁵ 'di ltar sman la bsgrub/¹²⁰⁶ dngos grub bdag dang gnyis med gsol/ e¹²⁰⁷ ma ho/ bdud

¹¹⁸⁴ Both verses merged in one in MsC.

¹¹⁸⁵ As in MsB, MsC.

¹¹⁸⁶ MsC: *la*.

¹¹⁸⁷ MsC: *snang g.yor thams cad thugs kyi lha*. Again a big diversion in MsC.

¹¹⁸⁸ MsC: *bdud rtsi*.

¹¹⁸⁹ MsC: *bdud rtsi* omitted.

¹¹⁹⁰ MsC: *kyis*.

¹¹⁹¹ MsC: *tha*.

¹¹⁹² MsC: The two verses merged in one.

¹¹⁹³ MsC: *me'i*.

¹¹⁹⁴ As in MsB, MsC.

¹¹⁹⁵ MsC: *tshang stang*.

¹¹⁹⁶ MsC: *la*.

¹¹⁹⁷ MsC: *bdud rtsi*.

¹¹⁹⁸ MsC: *bdud rtsi*.

¹¹⁹⁹ MsC: *bdud rtsi*.

¹²⁰⁰ MsC: *kyis*.

¹²⁰¹ MsC: *bdud rtsi*.

¹²⁰² MsB: *legs pa'i*.

¹²⁰³ MsC: *bdud rtsi*.

¹²⁰⁴ MsC: *bdud rtsi*.

¹²⁰⁵ The verse is skipped in MsA.

¹²⁰⁶ MsC: *'di ltar thams cad sman du bsgrub*. The MsC again significantly diverts from both MsA and MsB.

¹²⁰⁷ MsC: *ē*.

*rtsi grags pa'i*¹²⁰⁸ *lha la phyag 'tshal lo/ zhes bstod do// bsvo òm ba bā de na ra sa ya na rko
 phung ting 'byung tha tshan ha ra sad/ g.yu 'brang bdud rtsi bsvo thā*¹²⁰⁹ *e ma ho/ kun gso
 rlan byed chu yi*¹²¹⁰ *gsas mkhar na/ gtum gsas mkha' 'gying bdud rtsi 'phrin las lha/ 'phrin
 las sprul ba stong gsum sman du bsgyur/ ting nam rgyal mo bdud rtsi sman skyong ma/ gnyis
 med thabs kyi dgyis (*dgyes)*¹²¹¹ *par yab la 'khril/ thabs dang shes rab rol pa'i 'phro 'du las/
 *snang g.yor thams cad bdud rtsi sku yi lha*¹²¹² *bdud rtsi*¹²¹³ *phyag rgya log ge log/ grags pa
 thams cad bdud rtsi gsung gi lha/ bdud rtsi'i*¹²¹⁴ *'dzab dbyangs 'u ru ru/ dran rigs thams cad
 bdud rtsi thugs kyi*¹²¹⁵ *lha/ bdud rtsi'i thig pa sha ra ra/ (124) legs pa thams cad bdud
 rtsi'i*¹²¹⁶ *yon tan lha/ bdud rtsi'i mtsho mo kyi li li/ mdzad spyod thams cad bdud rtsi'i*¹²¹⁷
*'phrin las lha/ sman gyi chu 'bab zu lu lu/ 'di ltar thams cad sman du bsgrub/ dngos grub
 bdag dang gnyis med gsol/ e ma ho/ bdud rtsi lhun grub*¹²¹⁸ *lha la phyag 'tshal lo/ zhes bstod
 do// bsvo òm ba bā de na ra sa ya na zur nam tha tshan ha ra sad/ g.yu 'brang bdud rtsi bsvo
 thā*¹²¹⁹ *e ma ho// mun med sa le sgron me'i gsas mkhar na/ mthong gsas sgron me bdud rtsi
 rig pa'i lha/ li shag dmar mo bdud rtsi rol pa'i yum/ gnyis med thabs kyi*¹²²⁰ *yud tsam yab la
 'khril/ gsang ba thabs dang shes rab 'phro 'du yis/ yul dang dbang po thams cad bdud rtsi
 sman du bsgrub/ sman gyi lha sku ldems se ldem/ snyan pa'i sman glu skyu ru ru/ sman gyi
 dri gsur kyi li li/ bdud rtsi'i*¹²²¹ *ro mchog khri li li/ stobs chen sman dar 'u ru ru/ (125) sman
 bon gsung snyan lhangs se lhang/ 'du 'phro'i 'od zer ta la la/ thig le'i 'od spungs kyi li li/ 'di
 ltar bdud rtsi sman du bsgrub/ dngos grub bdag dang gnyis med gsol/ e ma ho/ bdud rtsi rig
 pa'i lha la phyag 'tshal lo/ zhes bstod do// bsvo òm ba bā de na ra sa ya na zur nam tha tshan ha
 ra sad g.yu 'brang bdud rtsi bsvo thā*¹²²²/¹²²³ *e ma ho// 'phrul kyi rnga gshang sgra yi gsas
 mkhar na*¹²²⁴ *snyan lha ho sangs bdud rtsi rig pa'i lha/ kha shag smug mo bdud rtsi sman
 'beb*¹²²⁵ *ma/ gnyis med thabs kyi yud tsam yab la 'khril/ gsang ba thabs dang shes rab 'phro*

¹²⁰⁸ MsC: *lhun grub*.

¹²⁰⁹ The mantra skipped in MsC. The MsC again significantly diverts from MsA and MsB.

¹²¹⁰ MsC: *chu 'i*.

¹²¹¹ As in MsB.

¹²¹² The verse is skipped in MsA, MsC: *yi lha* omitted.

¹²¹³ MsB: *bdud rtsi 'i*.

¹²¹⁴ MsC: *bdud rtsi*.

¹²¹⁵ MsC: *kyis*.

¹²¹⁶ MsC: *bdud rtsi*.

¹²¹⁷ MsC: *bdud rtsi*.

¹²¹⁸ MsC: *grub pa 'i*.

¹²¹⁹ The mantra skipped in MsC.

¹²²⁰ MsB, MsC: *kyi*.

¹²²¹ MsC: *bdud rtsi*.

¹²²² MsC: *tha*.

¹²²³ In both MsA and MsB the two verses merged into one.

¹²²⁴ MsC: *nas*.

¹²²⁵ MsB: *'bebs*.

'du yis/ yul dang dbang po thams cad bdud rtsi sman du bsgrub/ sman gyi lha sku ldems se ldem/ snyan pa'i sman glu skyu ru ru/ sman gyi dri gsur kyi li li/ bdud rtsi'i¹²²⁶ ro mchog khri li li/ stobs chen sman dar 'u ru ru/ sman bon gsung¹²²⁷ snyan lhangs se lhang/¹²²⁸ (126) 'du 'phro'i 'od zer ta la la/ thig le'i 'od spungs kyi li li/ 'di ltar bdud rtsi sman du bsgrub¹²²⁹/ dngos grub bdag dang gnyis med gsol/ e ma ho/ bdud rtsi rig pa'i¹²³⁰ lha la phyag 'tshal lo/ bsvo òm ba bā de na ra sa ya na zur nam tha tshan ha ra sad/ g.yu 'brang bdud rtsi bsvo thā/¹²³¹ dri zhim g.yu bu (*bun)¹²³² rlung gi gsas mkhar na/ shang (*shangs) lha rum po bdud rtsi rig pa'i lha/ lgyum shag sngon mo bdud rtsi smin pi'i yum/ gnyis med thabs kyis yud tsam yab la¹²³³ 'khril/ gsang ba thabs dang shes rab 'phro 'du yis¹²³⁴/ yul dang dbang po thams cad bdud rtsi sman du grub (*bsgrub)¹²³⁵/ sman gyi lha sku ldems se ldem/ snyan pa'i sman glu skyu¹²³⁶ ru ru/ sman gyi dri gsur kyi li li/ bdud rtsi'i ro mchog khri li li/ stobs chen sman dar 'u ru ru/ sman bon gsung snyan lhangs se lhang/¹²³⁷ 'du 'phro'i 'od zer ta la la/thig le'i 'od spungs kyi li li/ 'di ltar bdud rtsi sman du sgru (*sgrub)¹²³⁸/ dngos grub bdag dang gnyis med gsol/ e ma ho/ bdud rtsi rig pa'i lha la phyag 'tshal lo/ bsvo òm ba bā de na ra sa ya na zur nam tha tshan ha ra sad/ g.yu 'brang bdud rtsi bsvo thā/¹²³⁹ kun grol¹²⁴⁰ bdud rtsi grol pa'i gsas mkhar na/ mgur lha (127) byang yug bdud rtsi rig pa'i lha/ re shag nag mo bdud rtsi smin pa'i yum/ gnyis med thabs kyis yud tsam yab la 'khril/ gsang ba thabs dang shes rab 'phro 'du yis¹²⁴¹/ yul dang dbang po thams cad bdud rtsi *sman¹²⁴² du sgrub¹²⁴³/ sman gyi lha sku ldems se ldem/¹²⁴⁴ snyan pa'i sman glu kyu ru ru/ sman gyi dri gsur kyi li li/ bdud rtsi'i¹²⁴⁵ ro mchog khri li li/ stobs chen sman dar 'u ru ru/ sman bon gsung snyan lhangs se lhang/ 'du 'phro'i 'od zer ta la la/ thig le'i 'od spungs kyi li li/ 'di ltar bdud rtsi sman du bsgrub/ dngos

¹²²⁶ MsB: *bdud rtsi*.

¹²²⁷ The word omitted in MsB.

¹²²⁸ MsB: *lhengs se lheng*.

¹²²⁹ MsC: *sgrub*.

¹²³⁰ MsC: *stobs kyi*. The MsC is again different from MsA and MsB.

¹²³¹ MsC: *bsvo òm ba bā de na ra sa ya na drung mu sangs te ē ma ho/ g.yung drung (?) bdud rtsi bsvo tha/*. The MsC significantly diverts from MsA and MsB.

¹²³² Emended based on MsB, MsC.

¹²³³ MsC: *yab la* appears twice by mistake.

¹²³⁴ MsC: *'phro 'du'i*.

¹²³⁵ Emended as above and in MsB, MsC.

¹²³⁶ MsA further repeats the syllable spelled *kyu*. MsB: *skyu*, and MsC: *kyu*.

¹²³⁷ MsB: *lhengs se lheng*.

¹²³⁸ As in MsB, MsC.

¹²³⁹ MsC, mantra as above: *bsvo òm ba bā de na ra sa ya na drung mu sangs te ē ma ho g.yung drung bdud rtsi bsvo tha/*.

¹²⁴⁰ MsC: *kun brag*.

¹²⁴¹ MsC: *yi*.

¹²⁴² Inserted based on previous and following verses and MsB.

¹²⁴³ MsC: *bsgrub*.

¹²⁴⁴ MsB: The verses repeated (*Homoio teleuton*).

¹²⁴⁵ MsC: *bdud rtsi*.

grub bdag dang gnyis med gsol/ e ma ho/ bdud rtsi rig pa'i lha la phyag 'tshal lo/ bsvo ōm ba
 bā de na ra sa ya na zur nam tha tshan ha ra sad/ g.yu 'brang bdud rtsi bsvo thā/¹²⁴⁶ byin
 chen ri rgyal lhun po'i gsas mkhar na/ tshigs lha gyur bu bdud rtsi rig pa'i lha/ tshul shag
 dkar mo bdud rtsi smin pa'i yum/ gnyis med thabs kyi yud tsam yab la 'khril/ gsang ba thabs
 dang shes rab 'phro 'du yis/ yul dang dbang po thams cad bdud rtsi *sman¹²⁴⁷ du sgrub¹²⁴⁸/
 sman gyi lha sku ldems se ldem/ snyan pa'i sman glu kyu ru ru/ (128) sman gyi dri gsur kyi li
 li/ bdud rtsi'i¹²⁴⁹ ro mchog khri li li/ stobs chen sman dar 'u ru ru/ sman bon gsung snyan
 lhangs se lhang/ 'du 'phro'i 'od zer ta la la/ thig le'i 'od spungs¹²⁵⁰ kyi li li/ 'di ltar bdud rtsi
 sman du sgrubs¹²⁵¹/ dngos grub bdag dang gnyis med gsol/ e ma ho/ bdud rtsi rig pa'i lha la
 phyag 'tshal lo/ bsvo ōm ba bā de na ra sa ya na zur nam tha tshan ha ra sad/ g.yu 'brang
 bdud rtsi bsvo thā/¹²⁵² nam mkha' kha sgrom ngar gyi gsas mkhar na/ gnam grags ngar chen
 bdud rtsi rig pa'i lha/ rgya shag ser mo bdud rtsi smin pa'i yum/ gnyis med thabs kyis yud
 tsam yab la 'khril/ gsang ba thabs dang shes rab 'phro 'du yis/ yul dang dbang po thams cad
 bdud rtsi sman du grubs¹²⁵³/ sman gyi lha sku ldems se ldem/ snyan pa'i sman glu kyu ru ru/
 sman gyi dri gsur kyi li li/ bdud rtsi'i¹²⁵⁴ ro mchog khri li li/ stobs chen sman dar 'u ru ru/
 sman bon gsung snyan lhangs se lhang/ 'du 'phro'i 'od zer ta la la/ thig le'i 'od spungs kyi li
 li/ 'di ltar (129) bdud rtsi sman du bsgrub/ dngos grub bdag dang gnyis med gsol/ e ma ho/
 bdud rtsi rig pa'i lha la phyag 'tshal lo/ bsvo ōm ba bā de na ra sa ya na zur nam tha tshan
 ha ra sad/ g.yu 'brang bdud rtsi bsvo thā/¹²⁵⁵ sprul pa thogs med las kyi gsas mkhar na/ ma
 pang lha chen bdud rtsi rig pa'i lha/ skyel shag ljang nag bdud rtsi rig pa'i yum/ gnyis med
 thabs kyis¹²⁵⁶ yud tsam yab la 'khril/ gsang ba thabs dang shes rab 'phro 'du yis¹²⁵⁷/ yul dang
 dbang po thams cad bdud rtsi sman du bsgrub/ sman gyi lha sku ldems se ldem/ snyan pa'i
 sman glu kyu ru ru/ sman gyi dri gsur kyi li li/ bdud rtsi'i ro mchog khri li li/ stobs chen sman
 dar 'u ru ru/ sman bon gsung snyan lhangs se lhang/ 'du 'phro'i 'od zer ta la la/ thig le'i 'od
 spungs kyi li li/ 'di ltar bdud rtsi sman du bsgrub/ dngos grub bdag dang gnyis med gsol/ e

¹²⁴⁶ MsC, mantra as above: bsvo ōm ba bā de na ra sa ya na drung mu sangs te ē ma ho g.yung drung bdud rtsi bsvo tha/.

¹²⁴⁷ Inserted based on previous and following verses and MsB.

¹²⁴⁸ MsB, MsC: bsgrubs.

¹²⁴⁹ MsC: bdud rtsi.

¹²⁵⁰ MsB: 'od dpung spungs.

¹²⁵¹ MsC: bsgrub.

¹²⁵² MsC, mantra as above: bsvo ōm ba bā de na ra sa ya na drung mu sangs te ē ma ho/ g.yung drung bdud rtsi bsvo tha/.

¹²⁵³ MsC: grub.

¹²⁵⁴ MsC: bdud rtsi.

¹²⁵⁵ MsC, mantra as above: bsvo ōm ba bā de na ra sa ya na drung mu sangs te ē ma ho g.yung drung bdud rtsi bsvo tha/.

¹²⁵⁶ MsC: kyi.

¹²⁵⁷ MsC: yi.

ma ho/ bdud rtsi rig pa'i lha la phyag 'tshal lo/ bsvo ōm ba bā de na ra sa ya na zur nam tha
tshan ha ra sad/ g.yu 'brang bdud rtsi bsvo thā/¹²⁵⁸ g.yung drung thig le 'od kyi gsas mkhar
na/ dkar po gnas 'dzin bdud rtsi rig (*pa'i)¹²⁵⁹ lha/ she shag dkar ljang bdud rtsi rig
(*rigs)¹²⁶⁰ kyi lha/ (130) gnyis med thabs kyi¹²⁶¹ yud tsam yab la 'khril/ gsang ba thabs dang
shes rab 'phro 'du yis/ yul dang dbang po thams cad bdud rtsi sman du bsgrub¹²⁶²/ sman gyi
lha sku ldems se ldem/ snyan pa'i sman glu kyu ru ru/ sman gyi dri gsur kyi li li/ bdud
rtsi'i¹²⁶³ ro mchog khri li li/¹²⁶⁴ stobs chen sman dar 'u ru ru/ sman bon gsung snyan lhangs
se lhang/ 'du 'phro'i 'od zer ta la la/ thig le'i 'od spungs kyi li li/ 'di ltar bdud rtsi sman du
bsgrub/ dngos grub bdag dang gnyis med gsol/ e ma ho/ bdud rtsi rig pa'i lha la phyag 'tshal
lo/ bsvo ōm ba bā de na ra sa ya na drung mu sangs te e ma ho/ g.yu 'brang bdud rtsi bsvo
thā/¹²⁶⁵ e ma ho// khams gsum¹²⁶⁶ dbang du sdud pa'i gsas mkhar na/ dbal gyi rgyal po bdud
rtsi thabs kyi lha/¹²⁶⁷ khro gtum¹²⁶⁸ nag mo bdud rtsi bskyed pa'i yum/ gnyis med thabs kyi
yab yum 'khril bar bzhugs/ gsang ba thabs dang shes rab 'du 'phro yi (*yis)¹²⁶⁹/ gnas bzhi
dus (131) bzhi bdud rtsi sman du bsgrub/ sman gyi rlangs *pa¹²⁷⁰ phu ru ru/ bdud rtsi'i char
pa sha ra ra/ sman gyi 'bras bu si li li/ bdud rtsi'i sman dri ngad de ngad/ dngos grub bdag
dang gnyis med gsol/ e ma ho/ bdud rtsi stobs kyi lha la phyag 'tshal lo/ bsvo ōm ba bā de na
ra sa ya na drung mu sangs te e ma ho/ g.yu 'brang bdud rtsi bsvo thā/¹²⁷¹ sa bcu zil gyis
gnon pa'i gsas mkhar na/ rtag 'gros rgyal po bdud rtsi thabs¹²⁷² kyi lha/ glang ra sngon mo
bdud rtsi sman pa'i yum/ gnyis med thabs kyi yab yum 'khril bar bzhugs/ gsang ba thabs dang
shes rab 'du 'phro yis/ gnas bzhi dus bzhi bdud rtsi sman du bsgrub/ sman gyi rlangs pa phu
ru ru/ bdud rtsi'i char pa sha ra ra/ sman gyi 'bras bu si li li/ bdud rtsi'i sman dri ngad de
ngad/ dngos grub bdag dang gnyis med gsol/ (132) e ma ho/ bdud rtsi stobs kyi lha la phyag
'tshal lo/ bsvo ōm ba bā de na ra sa ya na drung mu sangs te e ma ho/ g.yu 'brang bdud rtsi

¹²⁵⁸ MsC, mantra as above: bsvo ōm ba bā de na ra sa ya na drung mu sangs te e ma ho/ g.yung drung bdud rtsi
(missing: bsvo tha/).

¹²⁵⁹ As in MsB.

¹²⁶⁰ As in MsB.

¹²⁶¹ MsC: kyi.

¹²⁶² MsC: grub.

¹²⁶³ MsC: bdud rtsi.

¹²⁶⁴ Verses inserted by mistake (*Homoio teleuton*) in MsB: gnyis med thabs kyi yud tsam yab la 'khril/ gsang ba
thabs dang shes rab 'phro 'du yis/ yul dang dbang po thams cad bdud rtsi sman du bsgrub/.

¹²⁶⁵ MsC, mantra as above: bsvo ōm ba bā de na ra sa ya na drung mu sangs te e ma ho g.yung drung bdud rtsi
bsvo tha//.

¹²⁶⁶ MsC: The first two words missing by mistake.

¹²⁶⁷ MsC: Apart from the first two words all verse missing by mistake.

¹²⁶⁸ MsC: The first two words missing by mistake.

¹²⁶⁹ As in MsB.

¹²⁷⁰ Inserted based on the following verses and MsB, MsC.

¹²⁷¹ MsC: mantra as above.

¹²⁷² MsC: thab.

*bsvo thā//¹²⁷³ pur long (*lang)¹²⁷⁴ gnam lcags zhun ma'i gsas mkhar na/ skyin 'dang mi phud
bdud rtsi thabs kyi¹²⁷⁵ lha/ li bar dmar mo bdud rtsi smin pa'i yum/ gnyis med thabs kyi yab
yum 'khril bar bzhugs/ gsang ba thabs dang shes rab 'du 'phro yis/ gnas bzhi dus bzhi bdud
rtsi sman du bsgrub/ sman gyi rlang (*rlangs)¹²⁷⁶ pa phu ru ru/ bdud rtsi'i¹²⁷⁷ char pa sha ra
ra/ sman gyi 'brus bu si li li/ bdud rtsi'i¹²⁷⁸ sman dri ngad de ngad/ dngos grub bdag dang
gnyis med gsol/ e ma ho/ bdud rtsi stobs kyi lha la phyag 'tshal lo/ bsvo ōm ba bā de na ra sa
ya na drung mu sangs te e ma ho/ g.yu 'brang bdud rtsi bsvo thā//¹²⁷⁹ 'khor srid pa skyed pa'i
gsas mkhar na/ rngam pa stabs (*stobs)¹²⁸⁰ kyi (*chen)¹²⁸¹ bdud rtsi thabs kyi¹²⁸² lha/ mkha'
la 'khyag 'dor bdud rtsi smin pa'i yum/ gnyis med thabs kyi yab yum 'khril bar bzhugs¹²⁸³/
gsang ba thabs dang shes rab 'du 'phro yis/ gnas bzhi dus bzhi bdud rtsi sman du bsgrub/
sman gyi rlang (*rlangs)¹²⁸⁴ pa phu ru ru/ bdud rtsi'i¹²⁸⁵ char pa sha ra ra/ sman gyi 'brus bu
si li li/ bdud rtsi sman dri ngad de ngad/ dngos grub bdag dang gnyis med gsol/ e ma ho/
bdud rtsi stobs¹²⁸⁶ kyi lha la phyag 'tshal lo/ bsvo ōm ba bā (133) de na ra sa ya na ba ma dza
bhyo ha ram wer sad g.yu 'brang¹²⁸⁷ bdud rtsi bsvo thā¹²⁸⁸// nyis shu rtsa brgyad drag po'i stobs
kyis drongs¹²⁸⁹/ e ma ho/ thabs shes me ri phur 'debs gsas mkhar na/ gze gyad¹²⁹⁰ byin te gyad
dmag rgyal chen sog/ rdzu 'phrul thabs dang shes rab 'du 'phro yis¹²⁹¹/ ma rig log rtog 'dul
ba'i sman du grub/ bdud rtsi'i 'od spungs thibs se thib/ sman gyi 'od zer ta la la/ thig le'i 'od
spungs kyi li li/ 'di ltar bdud rtsi sman du grub¹²⁹²/ dngos grub bdag dang gnyis med gsol/
e¹²⁹³ ma ho/ bdud rtsi drags po'i lha la phyag 'tshal lo/ ces bstod do// de nas dngos grub¹²⁹⁴ kyi*

¹²⁷³ MsC mantra, different from the above: *bsvo ōm ba bā de na ra sa ya na ma dza byo ha ram wer sad g.yung
drung bdud rtsi bsvo tha/.*

¹²⁷⁴ As in MsB, MsC.

¹²⁷⁵ MsC: *rig pa'i.*

¹²⁷⁶ As above and in MsB.

¹²⁷⁷ MsC: *bdud rtsi.*

¹²⁷⁸ MsC: *bdud rtsi.*

¹²⁷⁹ MsC: mantra as above.

¹²⁸⁰ Corrected based on MsB, MsC.

¹²⁸¹ Corrected based on MsB, MsC.

¹²⁸² MsC: *rig pa'i.*

¹²⁸³ MsC: *bzhug.*

¹²⁸⁴ As above and in MsB, MsC.

¹²⁸⁵ MsC: *bdud rtsi.*

¹²⁸⁶ MsC: *stob.*

¹²⁸⁷ MsC: *g.yung drung.*

¹²⁸⁸ MsC: *tha.*

¹²⁸⁹ MsB, MsC: *drangs so.*

¹²⁹⁰ MsC: *gyed.*

¹²⁹¹ MsC: *yi.*

¹²⁹² MsC: *bsgrub.*

¹²⁹³ MsC: *ē.*

¹²⁹⁴ MsC: *sgrubs.*

*sgrub pa ni/ stong rtsa brgyad nyin par drang la// bsvo ōm ba bā de na ra sa ya na a ōm hūm ram ja
g.yu 'brang bdud rtsi sa le¹²⁹⁵ sang nge bsvo thā// e ma ho//*

4. Inviting Medicine (sMan spyang drangs)

(143)¹²⁹⁶//mantra¹²⁹⁷

*de nas 'dud rtsi sbyan drangs ste// khye'u dang bu mo gtsang ma'i lag tu blang bdud rtsi zhal bu rnams
bskul¹²⁹⁸ la/ sman gshen rnams kyi mda' dar dang/ rnga gshang gi sgra phyung la 'di skad do// kye rang
bzhin rnam par dag pa'i gsas mkhar na/ chags med sbyin *pa¹²⁹⁹ sman pa'i (*gyi) klong
bskyed nas¹³⁰⁰/ chags 'khor nyon mongs bdud rnams 'dul slad du/ rtul shags (*shugs)¹³⁰¹ thar
byed 'dud rtsi gshegs su gsol/ ye rig rnam par dag pa'i gsas mkhar na/ dri med rig pa sman
gyi klong bskyed nas¹³⁰²/ ma rig 'khrul ba'i bdud rnams 'dul (144) slad du/ shes rab 'dud rtsi
sman du gshegs su gsol/ yang dag skye ba med pa'i gsas mkhar nas¹³⁰³/ 'du 'bral med pa'i
rtsi ru g.yos nas kyang/ 'chi bdag las btsan bdud rnams¹³⁰⁴ 'dul slad du/ skye shi med pa'i
sman du gshegs su gsol/ ye shes dri ma med pa'i gsas mkhar nas/ blang dor med pa'i sman du
g.yos nas kyang/ phung po lus kyi bdud rnams gzhom slad du/ mi 'gyur g.yung drung bdud
rtsi gshegs su gsol/ khams gsum ba ga yum gyi klong yang nas/ dbyar dgun¹³⁰⁵ ston dpyid
rgyal mos g.yos nas kyang/ skye sman (*smin) rgyas dang phyag rgya 'dabs (*'debs)¹³⁰⁶ pa yi
(*yis)/ rgyu ma'i gzugs brnyen (*brnyan) bdud rnams 'dul slad du/ snying po bdud rtsi lha mo
gshegs su gsol// (145) ces spyang drang¹³⁰⁷/ de nas phyogs phyogs su mchod do/ de nas khrol bu'i sgo so sor
sbyang ste 'di skad do// ōm¹³⁰⁸ a hum gshen lha sman gyi thugs ka na (*nas)¹³⁰⁹/ skye med yi ge a
spros pas¹³¹⁰/ bdud rtsi dbus kyi sman zhal du/ skar chen bzhin du gsal babs¹³¹¹ nas/ gsal ba'i
snying po stong gsum dbus/ thams cad bdud rtsi sman du 'gyur/ slar 'dus dbus kyi bcud bsdud
nas/ dkar snum 'tsher ba'i 'od du zhu/ bdud rtsi sman gyi mtsho ru 'khyil/ 'od zer 'khyil ba'i*

¹²⁹⁵ MsC: *sa le* omitted.

¹²⁹⁶ MsB: starts on fol. 137, MsC: starts on fol. 488.

¹²⁹⁷ In an intelligible script, said to be of Zhangzhung origin. NW (Prague 2013).

¹²⁹⁸ MsC: *bskur*.

¹²⁹⁹ Inserted based on MsB.

¹³⁰⁰ MsC: *na*.

¹³⁰¹ Emended based on MsB, MsC.

¹³⁰² MsC: *na*.

¹³⁰³ MsC: *na*.

¹³⁰⁴ MsC: *rnams* omitted.

¹³⁰⁵ MsC: *rgun*.

¹³⁰⁶ As in MsC.

¹³⁰⁷ MsC: *spyang drangs* or *spyang drang nas*.

¹³⁰⁸ MsB: *lde mig* inserted, MsC: *le mig* inserted.

¹³⁰⁹ As in MsB.

¹³¹⁰ MsC: *pa*.

¹³¹¹ MsC: *bab*.

*sman du gsal/ bsvo om ba ba de na ra sa ya na g.yu 'brang bdud rtsi ah om hum bsvo tha*¹³¹²//
*ces dgongs pa*¹³¹³ *kyang de ltar sbyang*¹³¹⁴ *ngo// gsas rje sman gyi thugs ka nas*¹³¹⁵/ 'gyur med ye
 (*yi) *ge a spros pa/ bdud rtsi (146) shar gyi sman zhal du/ skar chen bzhin du gsal babs*¹³¹⁶
*nas*¹³¹⁷/ *gsal ba'i snying po stong gsum shar/ thams cad bdud rtsi sman du 'gyur/ slar 'dus*
*shar gyi*¹³¹⁸ *bcud bsdud nas*¹³¹⁹/ *dkar snum 'tsher ba'i 'od du zhu/ bdud rtsi sman gyi mtsho ru*
'khyil/ 'od zer 'khyil ba'i sman du gsal/ bsvo om ba ba de na hum ra sa ya na g.yu 'brang
*bdud rtsi ah om hum bsvo tha*¹³²⁰// *gar*¹³²¹ *gsas sman gyi thugs ka na (*nas)/ skye med yi ge a*
*spros pa*¹³²²/ *bdud rtsi byang gi sman zhal du/ skar chen bzhin du gsal babs*¹³²³ *nas*¹³²⁴/ *gsal*
*ba'i snying po stong gsum byang/ thams cad bdud rtsi sman du gyur*¹³²⁵ (*'gyur)¹³²⁶/ *slar 'dus*
*byang gi bcud bsdud nas*¹³²⁷/ *dkar snam (*snum)*¹³²⁸ *'tsher ba'i 'od du zhu/ (147) bdud rtsi*
*sman gyi*¹³²⁹ *mtsho ru 'khyil/ 'od zer 'khyil ba'i sman du gsal/ bsvo om ba ba de na hum ra sa*
*ya na g.yu 'brang bdud rtsi ah om hum bsvo tha*¹³³⁰// *gnam gsas sman gyi thugs ka nas*¹³³¹/
*skye med yi ge a spros pas*¹³³²/ *bdud rtsi nub kyi sman zhal du/ skar chen bzhin du gsal*
*babs*¹³³³ *nas/ gsal ba'i snying po stong gsum nub/ thams cad bdud rtsi sman du 'gyur/ slar*
*'dus nub kyi bcud bsdud nas*¹³³⁴/ *dkar snum 'tsher ba'i 'od du zhu/ bdud rtsi sman gyi mtsho*
ru 'khyil/ 'od zer 'khyil ba'i sman du gsal/ bsvo om ba ba de na hum ra sa ya na g.yu 'brang
*bdud rtsi ah om hum bsvo tha*¹³³⁵// *rgod gsas sman (148) gyi thugs ka nas*¹³³⁶/ *skye med yi ge*
*a spros pa/ bdud rtsi lho yi sman zhal du/ skar chen bzhin du gsal babs*¹³³⁷ *nas*¹³³⁸/ *gsal ba'i*

¹³¹² MsC: *tha*.

¹³¹³ MsC: *dgos pas*.

¹³¹⁴ MsC: *sbyangs*.

¹³¹⁵ MsC: *na*.

¹³¹⁶ MsC: *bab*.

¹³¹⁷ MsC: *na*.

¹³¹⁸ MsC, by mistake: *dbus kyi*.

¹³¹⁹ MsC: *na*.

¹³²⁰ MsC: *tha*.

¹³²¹ MsC: The first syllable missing.

¹³²² MsC: *pas*.

¹³²³ MsC: *bab*.

¹³²⁴ MsC: *na*.

¹³²⁵ Also in MsB.

¹³²⁶ As in MsC.

¹³²⁷ MsC: *na*.

¹³²⁸ As in MsC.

¹³²⁹ MsC: *gyis*.

¹³³⁰ MsC: *tha*.

¹³³¹ MsC: *na*.

¹³³² MsC: *pa*.

¹³³³ MsC: *bab*.

¹³³⁴ MsC: *na*.

¹³³⁵ MsC: *tha*.

¹³³⁶ MsC: *na*.

¹³³⁷ MsC: *bab*.

¹³³⁸ MsC: *na*.

snying po stong gsum lho/ thams cad bdud rtsi sman du gyur¹³³⁹ ('gyur)¹³⁴⁰/ slar 'dus lho yi
bcud bsdud nas¹³⁴¹/ dkar snum 'tsher ba'i 'od du zhu/ bdud rtsi sman gyi mtsho ru 'khyil/ 'od
zer 'khyil ba'i sman du gsal/ bsvo ōm ba bā de na hūm ra sa ya na g.yu 'brang bdud rtsi aḥ
ōm hūm bsvo thā¹³⁴²/ ces de ltar sbyang pa/*

¹³³⁹ Also in MsB.

¹³⁴⁰ As in MsC.

¹³⁴¹ MsC: *na*.

¹³⁴² MsC: *tha*.

Appendix 5

Photographs of the Mendrup Performance

All photographs were taken by the author during the Mendrup celebration in Triten Norbutse monastery, Kathmandu, Nepal, in December 2012, if not stated otherwise. In the Appendix they are organised chronologically following the events of the ritual.



Figure 1: Tashi Menri monastery in Central Tibet. The leading establishment of Bon was founded in 1405 by Nyammé Shéráp Gyeltsen as a successive institution of Yéru Wensaka monastery. The Light-Swirled Mendrup of Trowo Tsochok Khagying is believed to have passed from Yéru Wensaka to be practiced in Tashi Menri. Only in the mid-twentieth century the ritual has found its way into the Indian and Nepalese exile. (Photo: Author, December 2014)

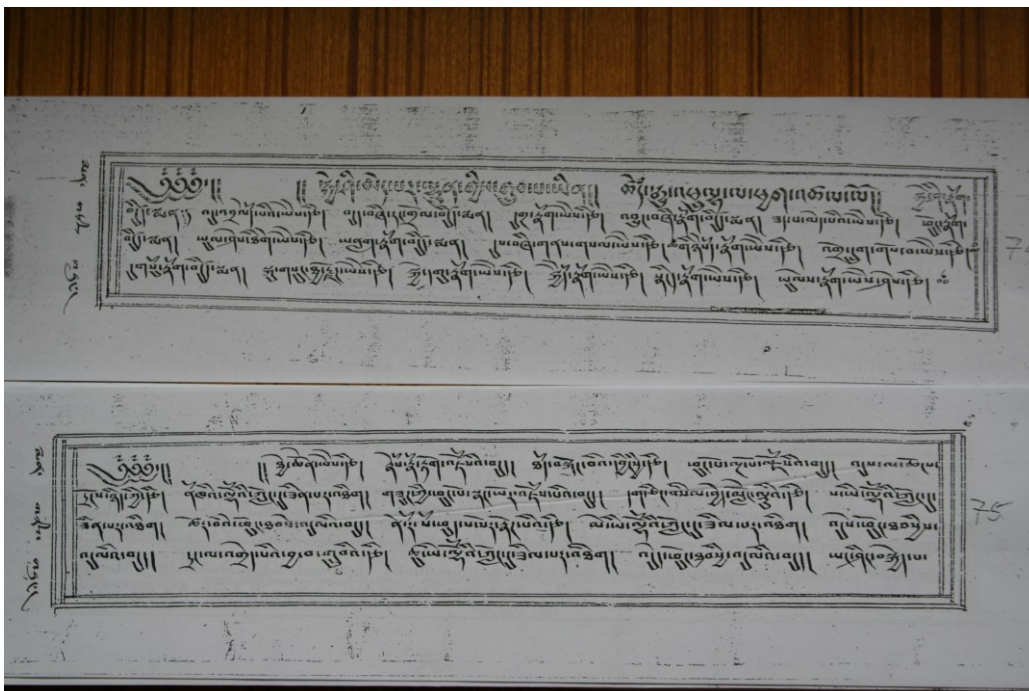
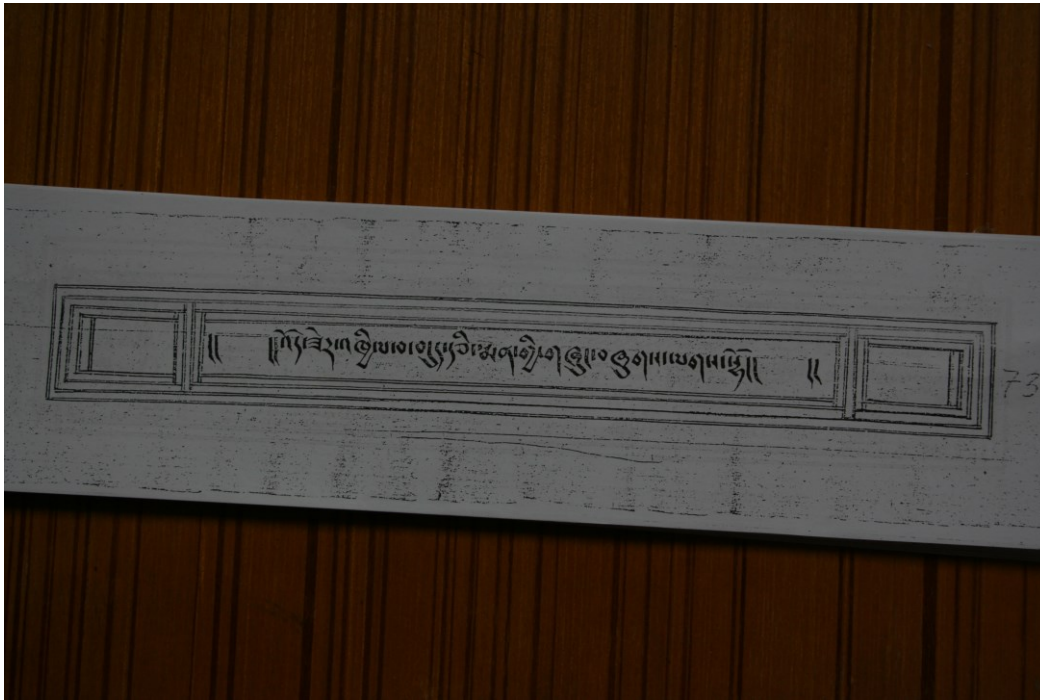


Figure 2a, 2b: Opening pages of the principal scripture of the ritual, *The Main Text of the Light-Swirled Nectar Medicine*. The manuscript was physically carried by the Bonpos into the exile over the Himalayas. In Triten Norbutse in 2012, the text was for the purpose of the performance distributed to the Main Mendrup Practitioners in Xerox photocopies.



Figure 3: The very precious medicinal and ritual yeast ingredient *papta*, the fermenting agent of the Mendrup ritual and its medicine. Both the container and its content are believed to have originated from the deities, and later have been rediscovered as treasures by venerated Bonpo masters.



Figure 4: Amchi Nyima mixing the raw ingredients for the cardinal medicinal vessels to be distributed upon the mendrup *maṇḍala*. He closely follows the prescription of the Mendrup recipe placed on the table in front of him. A ceremonial ladle bears the spell cord of the ritual wrapped around.



Figure 5: The vessels of the cardinal points filled with medicine. White sugar, kaolin, saffron or safflower, and cardamom are visible.



Figure 6: The medicinal vessels of the five points covered with their respective lids of the signs and colours: the white with a swastika will occupy the Centre, the green with a dharma wheel the North, the red embellished by a lotus flower will stand for the West, and the blue with a flaming jewel for the South. The yellow bowl of the East is missing in the photograph.



Figure 7: Most of the Mendrup medicine was powered beforehand by an electric mechanical machine. The heap of the weight of almost one tone was stored in a specially allocated chamber on the roof of the monastery's main assembly hall before it was packed into cotton bags.



Figure 8: The rite of the ransom offering and purifications performed for healing, good health, prosperity, and getting rid of obstacles.



Figure 9: The earth ritual involving ceremonial and properly measured breaking of earth. Yongdzin Rinpoche performs the act following astrological scriptures. The right and precise choice of the spot allows him to dig and extract soil that will be circumambulated around the monastery and subsequently used in the Mendrup practices.



Figure 10: The structure of the *zhi* occupied the centre of the whole ritual and the main assembly hall, holding the *maṇḍala*, the Mendrup medicinal vessels, and other offerings. The rest of the Mendrup medicine is then arranged around and below. The *zhi* is of yellow colour and its sides of the colours of the compass points, here the blue of the South and red of the West are seen. Monks are still organising the large and small bags of the Mendrup medicine.



Figure 11: The main Mendrup *maṇḍala* being prepared from sand on a wooden board. Its cardinal points of the distinctive colours are clearly visible.



Figure 12: Once the *maṇḍala* is installed into the centre of the main assembly hall of the monastery, the *zhi* structure is sealed and forbidden to open.



Figure 13: The dance of the Four Protector Kings.



Figure 14: The Eight Goddesses getting ready for their part.



Figure 15: The rite of Inviting Medicine: The Eight Goddesses perform a vivid dance in the Bonpo anticlockwise direction around the *zhi* structure, by which they place the mendrup medicinal receptacles on the *maṇḍala*. In the front comes the Goddess seizing the white vessel of the Centre.



Figure 16: All the Mendrup medicinal vessels are set upon the *maṇḍala* accompanied by various offerings to the deities invoked. In the photograph, the white vessel of the Centre and the yellow vessels of the intermediate points can be seen. The spell cord strings lead from the *maṇḍala* to the throne of the presiding performer of the ritual, the abbot of the monastery. (Photo: Anja Benesch and Olga Ryznar, December 2012)



Figure 17: Triten Norbutse monastery during the Light-Swirled Mendrup celebration. A ceremonial procession of monks leads to one of the venues within the monastic compound where the individual parts of the ritual were performed.



Figure 18: The Mendrup congregation of the twenty-four monks is presided by Khenpo, the abbot, seated on a throne. The five-coloured thread of the spell cord leads from the *maṅḍala* inside the *zhi* to his throne. The cord transmits the powers and blessings of the deities summoned by the practitioners on the Mendrup *maṅḍala* and medicine.



Figure 19: The daily count of a thousand *torma* cakes is being prepared for the One Hundred Thousand Offerings to Drenpa Namkha.



Figure 20: The lay tantrics, *ngakpas*, celebrate their own practice accompanying the monastic supporting practices to the main Mendrup rite.



Figure 21: In one third the Mendrup fifteen days' ritual action, the Eight Goddesses carry the Mendrup medicine vessels out of the *maṅḍala* and the assembly hall to perform the grinding of the medicine. The train is lead by the precious container of the *papta* fermenting agent wrapped in yellow cloth and the white vessel of the Centre. The vessels of the East, North, West, and South, in the Bonpo anticlockwise order, and then the vessels of the intermediate directions follow. The large metal container visible in the front is ready for the grinding.



Figure 22: The scene of the ritual grinding of the Mendrup medicine. Amchi Nyima and his main disciple Amchi Namse stand in the centre and pour the contents of the medicinal vessels into a mortar. All members of the congregation symbolically take parts in the task and beat the substances three times by a pestle. Despite the high number of participants, most of the hard work remains to be done by Amchi Nyima and Amchi Namse.



Figure 23: The medicinal vessels containing ground and unground ingredients are laid out on the table in front of Amchi Nyima and Amchi Namse standing to the right. Monks accompany the act by music and recitations.



Figure 24: Afterwards, the nine Mendrup medicinal vessels are ceremoniously circumambulated in procession around the main assembly hall and the whole monastic compound in the Bonpo anticlockwise direction. The great circumambulation is performed in a precisely given hierarchical order.



Figure 25: For the community the empowerments bestowed by Yongdzin Tenzin Namdak Rinpoche represent the highlights of the Mendrup ritual. Crowds of hundreds and up to one thousand arrive to take part.



Figure 26: Conclusion of the Mendrup ritual by the final empowerment of the peaceful and wrathful deities and the medicinal practice by Yongdzin Rinpoche. The treasure *papta* medicine and long life pills are distributed. Afterwards, the Mendrup medicine is to be packed into packages for distribution, and its first samples tasted.



Figure 27: The completed Mendrup medicine packed into small sachets is ready for distribution by Yongdzin Rinpoche and Khenpo Tenpa Yungdrung. (Photo: Anja Benesch and Olga Ryznar, December 2012)