

PART 2: FEATURES OF THE TWO TEXTS

CHAPTER 2.I MAHĀYOGA AND THE PHUR PA TANTRAS

Nearly all the NGB's Phur pa texts, including the two we are looking at here, belong to what rNying ma pa doxographers came to call the Mahāyoga class of tantras.¹ This was a type of tantra well attested in India: its most famous modern survival is probably the *Guhyasamājatantra*, which exists both in the NGB and among the Dunhuang collections. A characteristic of much Mahāyoga is that while it retains continuities with the earlier tantras such as the *Mahāvairocana* and the *Sarvatathāgatatattvasaṃgraha*, it also moves decisively further towards the transgressive *kāpālika* style so central to the later tantras (often called Anuttarayogatantras or Yoginītantras) that became the basis of the *gSar ma pa* schools.

Very few of the NGB's Mahāyoga tantras have yet been studied, so it seems premature to make too many comments on their contents. We do know that some NGB texts might be among our most valuable surviving witnesses of Indian texts of this type, since the small core of NGB texts that were most likely translated exclusively from Indian originals unchanged are nearly all famous scriptures within the Mahāyoga section of the NGB (the *Guhyasamāja*, the *Guhyagarbha*, the *Buddhasamāyoga*, the *Candraguhyatilaka*, the *Śrī Paramādyā*, the *Upāyapāśa* etc.).

An interesting feature of Tibetan Mahāyoga is that it is so early – probably appearing north of the Himalayas by the late 8th century – in other words, the genre quite probably travelled to Tibet while still a reasonably new genre in India. It is even possible that some of the Indian tantric masters involved in bringing such Mahāyoga tantras to Tibet, might have been the direct revealers or compilers of some of those tantras (Padmasambhava, for example, is described in a famous Dunhuang text, Pelliot 44, as having made a major addition to the Phur pa tantras while in Nepal, then bringing it direct to Tibet). Some Himalayan developments might even have been re-introduced further south.

Perhaps in part a consequence or sign of this very early origin is that the most popular apologetic or charter myth for *kāpālika* elements within Buddhist Vajrayāna – the story of the taming of Rudra – has a quite disproportionately prominent place in NGB texts. This prominence is much greater than in the slightly earlier Yogatantras where such *kāpālika* elements were less plentiful, or in many of the generally slightly later Yoginītantras, which appeared after *kāpālika* elements had already become more widely accepted. However, the range of meanings of this myth probably became somewhat changed in Tibet, where it seems to have lost its apparent overtones of an ideological subversion of an institutionally dominant and oppressive Śaivism, and became focused more on its core meaning of a profound metaphor of personal transformation. Another important reason for the myth's popularity in Tibetan Mahāyoga probably lies in the indigenous Tibetan requirement for an explicatory myth (*smrang* or *dpe srol*) to make sense of ritual (Karmay 1998: 245ff; 288ff). Par excellence, the taming of Rudra myth served as a *smrang* to make sense of the Phur pa rite of liberative killing, so it usually has a very prominent place in Phur pa tantras.

This rite of 'liberative killing' (Tib: *sgrol ba*; Sanskrit: *mokṣa*) is a central feature of the Tibetan Phur pa tradition, with its most distinctive particular method for achieving the principal Buddhist spiritual goal of realisation of anātman, or freedom from self-clinging. A rite with undoubted Indian antecedents both in Buddhism and non-Buddhist religions, it quickly gained enormous popularity in Tibet, which it retains to this day. Like the narrative of the taming of Rudra, with which it is so closely connected, the Buddhist version of 'liberative killing' also shows signs of having had powerful ideologically subversive connotations in the Indian context, which became redundant in Tibet, to be displaced there more directly by soteriological and exorcistic symbolic meanings. In 'liberative killing', an effigy of Rudra or Śiva (representing ego-fixation) is made out of dough, and it is then sacrificed and offered to the Buddhas in a dramatic performance highly

¹ The important Anuyoga text, the *Khu byug rol pa phur pa'i mdo*, is an exception: a Phur pa text that is not classified within the Mahāyoga section of the NGB.

suggestive of Śaiva sanguinary ritual. Added irony is gained by the detailed and precise iconographic similarity of the main implement of sacrifice – the *kīla* (= Tibetan *phur bu*) – to the ancient Brahmanic sacrificial stake or *yūpa* (sometimes also called a *kīla*). In this way, Śiva is sacrificed at a simulacrum of his own sacrificial stake, in a ritual closely modelled on his own sanguinary rites. The themes parallel those of the taming of Rudra myth, where Śiva is converted to Buddhism by being first slain and then resuscitated by a Buddhist Heruka who mimics and appropriates Śiva's own appearance and style.

Such apparently subversive themes probably meant little to Tibetans, however: for them, the rite was more likely evocative for quite different reasons. Firstly, it provided a non-sanguinary simulacrum that could easily replace the blood sacrifice to the *btsan* mountain deities so popular in indigenous Tibetan religion. It also provided a good bloodless substitute for the practice of human sacrifice to mark the taking of vows of allegiance, as mentioned in the Tang Annals (to this day, the Phur pa deity is closely associated with the keeping of *samaya* or *dam tshig* vows, a function it might already have had in India, although we lack evidence for that so far).

Perhaps even more important for Tibetans was the *kīla*'s normative identification with the cosmic mountain, Meru. Meru was envisaged as the axis mundi, which arranged the world along a vertical three-fold axis, and which had the particular function of establishing proper order in the world. This resonated well with indigenous Tibetan mountain cults in numerous ways, not least with their three-fold vertical cosmology of *gnam sa 'og*. It also had an outstanding resonance with the ideas expressed in the famous hymn found in the *Old Tibetan Chronicles*, where the descent from the heavens of the *gtsug* is described. Here, *gtsug* means the *gtsug lag*, or the ordering of the world. The same word is also used metaphorically in the *Old Tibetan Chronicles* for the world pillar—that which separates heaven and earth. In this respect, and many others, the Indic symbolic meanings of the *kīla* are so close to those of the old Tibetan notions of *gtsug lag* and to many of the categories of the Tibetan mountain cults, that one might wonder if some degree of shared cultural sources once existed for both of them.²

In addition, the Phur pa rites offered advantages during the period of political turbulence following the collapse of the Tibetan Empire, when many of these texts were written. For those clan leaders seeking to re-establish a peaceful social and political order, it might have constituted a pre-eminent method of overcoming aggression and bad faith; and where diplomacy failed, it could have provided a means of exorcism and protection from foes both human and non-human. In addition, for those seeking to establish their own political authority, Phur pa's association with Padmasambhava and his control of local spirits might well have been extremely valuable. In indigenous Tibetan thinking, political power was directly linked to the control of *btsan* deities, and it was Padmasambhava himself, the Dunhuang text Pelliot Tibétain 44 tells us, who chose the Phur pa rites as the most powerful method of bringing under control non-human beings and by implication, geographical spaces.³ What better advocate could the Phur pa rites have had?

Furthermore, concomitant with the interpretation of the taming of Rudra myth as a metaphor of personal transformation was a widespread identification of Rudra with Māra, the ancient adversary of the Buddha. Hence the rite of 'liberative killing' was seen as a powerful rite for destroying Māra, who was nothing more or less than one's own ignorance and afflictions springing from ignorance, the source of all suffering in the round of endless birth and death. And the violent expression with which the practitioner identifies effects the tantric transformation of the most negative of the defilements, that of hatred and aggression. Thus, the key metaphor of the Phur pa tradition is that of "vajra wrath" cutting through and annihilating hatred.

The two texts we are looking at include most of the features we have come to expect in a Tibetan Phur pa tantra.

² See Mayer 1991 for the Indic symbolic meanings of the *kīla*. Thanks to Brandon Dotson for sharing with us his translations of old Tibetan materials.

³ It is not clear to us how and at what stage Padma was first presented as having taken control of the politically sensitive *btsan* deities (as opposed to less specifically political deities such as *nāga* and *māmo* spirits etc.), but Diemberger and Wangdu seem to believe he controls the important *btsan* deity, Thang lha, in *dBa' bzhed* 11a-b (Wangdu and Diemberger 2000: 53, 37).

CHAPTER 2.II SUMMARIES OF THE TWO TEXTS: THE *MYANG 'DAS*

Preamble

These summaries are intended to give the reader some idea of the scope of the material covered by each text, and of the development of the material from chapter to chapter. They represent attempts to summarise the topics covered, but they may therefore give the false impression that the contents of each text would appear to be entirely unproblematic. In fact, in examining each text in detail – and this applies especially to the *Myang 'das* – there are significant sections which appear mysterious or incomprehensible: as we have pointed out elsewhere, not even the most learned rNying ma pa lamas can understand these texts nowadays. Even sections which *appear* relatively straightforward may in fact contain references which are not immediately obvious. This is to be expected in such tantric literature and without active commentarial traditions on the material, much remains hidden, especially where the description is of ritual practice which may not entirely correspond to the rituals maintained by the tradition over time. It is quite possible that we may have missed important aspects of the texts: we make no claim that our summaries are perfect representations of the material!

The Content of the Myang 'das

Introduction: Does the *Myang 'das* hold together as a single work?

In the different genres of Tibetan tantric texts, we find a contrast between the typical style of the commentarial texts and of the root tantras. The commentarial literature is generally well ordered in a clear overall structure, which is often explicitly laid out within the text, while the root tantras can sometimes appear to be less obviously organised. To the untrained eye, they might seem to be collections of miscellaneous materials with little comprehensive structuring, apart from presenting them as chapters on relevant tantric topics such as maṇḍalas, mudrās and so forth. We would suggest that while there is perhaps something of this non-linear quality in the *Myang 'das*, there are also a number of threads which clearly unify the text in this specific case. In particular, there are three reasons why the *Myang 'das* would seem to more obviously represent an integrated text than some other root tantras.

- 1) We find two integrating themes. The first is suggested by the title in Tibetan, corresponding to the short title we have given in translation, the *Kīlaya Nirvāṇa Tantra*,¹ that is, implying a recurring interest in demonstrating how the various topics discussed relate to transcendence and ultimate liberation. The second theme is that of the rite of *sgrol ba* (liberating "killing") in all its aspects: its mythological charter (in a Malinowskian sense), the reasons why it is psychologically and spiritually necessary for liberation, its inner meanings, the prerequisites for its practice, its ritual progress and meditative stages.
- 2) There would appear to be a reasonably clear implicit structure to the text as a whole, especially in terms of the development of the second theme. This is cumulative in that the text thoroughly examines *sgrol ba*'s justification, significance and meditative/spiritual basis in the first part, working up to presenting a full commentary on its ritual performance in the final chapters. Chapters 1 and 28 are respectively the introductory and concluding frames for the text as a whole. Chapters 2 to 4 make up the first main section, supplying a detailed mythological account of the first taming of Rudra. This provides us with a context not only for the "liberating killing" rite as such, but also for the deity's appearance, attributes and important features of the maṇḍala. Such features include the integration of Rudra's retinue, which

¹ Only the sDe dge edition presents the text's Sanskrit title as an exact equivalent to its Tibetan title, and this title may represent an editorial attempt to reconstruct a "correct" Sanskrit title by translating the Tibetan into Sanskrit, rather than an earlier title which was corrupted by all the other lines of textual transmission.

accounts for a significant aspect of the regular *tshogs* (assembled feast offerings) rite through which the practitioners' *samaya* is reaffirmed and infractions purified, in a communion feast involving the assembly of deities and practitioners.² Chapters 5 to 13 build up the basis for the tantric practice, both in terms of the outer requisites (appropriate places, ritual items necessary etc.), and in terms of the nature of the *samayas* and the degenerations which must be combatted, as well as the symbolic significances of the tantric imagery and ritual implements. Chapters 14 to 20 provide detailed exegesis of the maṇḍala of deities, their ultimate nature and their functions in *sgrol ba* rites. Finally, Chapters 21 to 27 map the ritual progress of the *sgrol ba* rite, relating it to the stages found in the short root Phurpa tantra, the *rTsa ba'i dum bu*.³

- 3) There are a number of occasions where we find references back to topics considered in earlier chapters, with reiteration or further elaboration of content discussed earlier.

This need not imply that the text in its entirety represents a single composition produced at one moment. In any case, even if it was a single stage compilation, it draws on many passages made up of lines and verses shared with other Phurpa texts, as we shall see in examining the textual sharing between a chapter of the *Myang 'das* and of the *rDo rje khros pa*. Yet it would suggest that at its earliest formulation as a single text, some attention was given to creating it as a coherent whole.

Summaries of the content of the *Myang 'das*⁴

Chapter 1

This chapter provides the context for the scripture, consisting of an introduction to the maṇḍala of wrathful Samantabhadra, the deity and entourage, emphasising its nature as a pure reflection of primordial wisdom, displayed through compassion in meditative realisation, and activating (Buddha) qualities and activities.

Chapter 2

The deity and consort unite, and the consort praises the deity's ultimate nature, through which everything manifests its true single nature, from which Karma Heruka, the interlocutor, arises. Karma Heruka raises the questions of how the unworthy might be influenced by compassion, and how the unworthy arise, given the true elemental nature of all. A brief reply is then given, in terms of the subtle tendencies to confusion resulting in perverted view, so that the great liberating method is activated in response. Karma Heruka requests further clarification of how this happens. At this point, Vajrakīlaya is introduced, as the one who sends forth an exceedingly wrathful form. A prediction to Enlightenment for worthy practitioners is given, and Vajrakīlaya speaks of how gross negativities result in the birth of a suffering *preta*, maturing with ascetic practice as Rudra, causing destruction which needs to be cut off by the compassionate one.

Chapter 3

The development of the story is continued, with an elaboration of how setting up such a pattern of increasing violence and negativity causes both worldly destruction and destruction of the Buddha's teachings, and in particular, of the (tantric) *samaya*. Thus, the assembly of Buddhas responds wrathfully, using wisdom and means to destroy the destroyer and purify malice towards the *samaya*.

² This is alluded to in the final part of Chapter 4, where Rudra specifies the appropriate role for his circle in the maṇḍala; the offering of "left-overs" to the peripheral deities, integrating them into the maṇḍala, is an important aspect of this rite.

³ It would appear that the *Myang 'das* is basing itself on the *rTsa ba'i dum bu* here, but we cannot be certain. Since the categories are so widely found in Phurpa literature, yet we know so little of the tradition's historical development and which text was earlier than which, it may be mistaken to make hasty assumptions.

⁴ The summary below assumes the correctness of our conclusion on the ordering of the text; that is, that the order found in sDe dge alone is correct throughout (see Chapter 2.VI below). If we are mistaken in this, then the content will not quite conform to the outline in the case of Chapters 4, 17-19 and 23-25.

Chapter 4

The first substantial chapter, we now have the detailed account of the taming of Rudra. Karma Heruka asks Vajrakīlaya how Rudra arises, how he should be understood, and what the effects of subduing him are. The answer begins with reiterating the root cause to be dualistic thought, and the immediate condition, perverse action. Disastrous consequences are said to result from a failure to subdue him, while subduing him leads to liberation and Buddha qualities. This statement inspires Karma Heruka to appeal to Vajrakīlaya to kill/liberate Rudra. Miraculous emanations are sent forth to subdue him, but Rudra mocks and defies them. In response, Hayagrīva and retinue emanate but Rudra continues to hold out. Hayagrīva bites the peak of Mount Malaya, Ral gcig ma and Padma Bṛ gu ta show pleasure, and Padma Gar gyi dbang phyug manifests.⁵ Surrounding Rudra's stronghold, the heruka assembly transform the environmental features reflecting Rudra's emotional poisons, through the emanation and offering of various types of *amṛta*. His daughters and female retinue are ravished, and pig and tiger-headed deities are thus produced. Rudra's consort, Krodhīśvārī herself, is fooled into thinking that Kīlaya, appearing in Rudra's form, is her own lord, and she unites with him. She is impregnated, after which Rudra arrives back and also unites with her. She then gives birth to a son emanation of Kīlaya, who subdues the couple in a form with nine heads and eighteen arms. Rudra resists, transforming into a three-headed, six armed form, and Vajrakīlaya then also transforms from the nine-headed into a three-headed form. The syllables om̐ and hūṃ appropriate Rudra's speech of "ru lu ru lu". Further transformations of Rudra are treated similarly, each time Kīlaya matching the form and appropriating Rudra's speech. As a last resort, Rudra attempts to escape but is prevented by Kīlaya's utterance of, "samaya ho!". This invokes the samaya which Rudra had accepted in former times, and Kīlaya, controlling him with the *khaṭvāṅga*, devours him. This triggers recollection within Rudra, and understanding of the karma of virtue and non-virtue. Having been brought back by Kīlaya, Rudra then petitions Kīlaya to be allowed to become his servant. Offering his womenfolk and the rest of his retinue, he requests that they should occupy the maṇḍala's periphery and receive the left-over foods from offerings, moistened with Kīlaya's spittle. Kīlaya then delivers Rudra's prediction to Buddhahood, brandishing the *khaṭvāṅga*, and proclaiming samaya words. Rudra's retinue are bound under oath and consecrated, placed on the maṇḍala periphery, while Rudra and his consort are made into a throne for the central deity. Similarly, members of Rudra's retinue, such as the tiger and leopard-headed deities are consecrated as thrones for Vajrakīlaya's retinue. Moreover, all kinds of wrathful attributes of Rudra's fortress are taken up and ornament the deity's Immeasurable Palace and his body, while features of Rudra's original circle are incorporated into the appearance of the deity's retinue.

Chapter 5

Karma Heruka now requests Kīlaya to teach about the appropriate places for the practice of yoga, its goals and methods, and in particular, the meditation required for liberating killing, the requisites for the ritual practice and empowerment, and the benefits of the tantric practice. The chapter then embarks on a description of environmental features of the ideal practice locations, followed by a mention of rituals needed to consecrate the site and set up the maṇḍala, and the benefits of practising in such suitable places, so long as the appropriate purpose is maintained.

Chapter 6

This chapter takes up the question above concerning liberating killing, in particular, clarifying the appropriate object for the rite as those embroiled in the seven degenerations. These are elaborated on in turn. Those who degenerate *life* are the murderers of parents or of Dharma teachers, and those who cause

⁵ It is not entirely clear quite what this description is indicating, and indeed, whether our translation of it is correct, although later received tradition seems to reiterate the theme of the biting into the mountain peak: see the '*Bum nag* account of the buddhas instructions to the Vajra Horse assembly, "ru tra 'khor beas ling la song ba'i dus/ ri ma la yar so tshugs shig ces bsgos/ yum bzhi dang beas te so btsugs so/" (bDud 'joms bka' ma edn. 255.3-4). Boord glosses his translation, "'When Rudra and his retinue have all been coerced into the effigy, you must bite it with your teeth, [as if burying it beneath] Malaya Mountain.' And so [Hayagrīva] and his four wives sank their teeth [into the effigy]." (Boord 2002: 132).

dissension amongst the tantric community, bringing about hell rebirths. Degeneration of the *vows* entails the mental attitude which leads to distortions of the tantric master's teaching and the spreading of the secret instructions. To degenerate the (Buddha) *word* is to break the precepts and to lead (others) astray. The correct *purpose* is degenerated by involvement in the emotional poisons, coupled with misconceptions of the correct view, leading to transgression of the tantric commitments and the misuse of specific tantric practices, such as "union" and "liberation". *Action* is degenerated by wrong practice of the tantric rituals, such as attempting to kill/liberate those who are harmless, or expressing violence or hatred. Degeneration of the *signs/characteristics* (of tantric accomplishment) are brought about through giving wrong teachings, grasping substantial characteristics and allowing pride and anger to distort tantric practice. Degenerating through *desire* is to revel in undisciplined tantric activities for worldly pleasures. The expressions of these degenerations are thus appropriate objects for liberating killing.

Chapter 7

The discussion of the correct purposes and meanings concerns combining the ultimate view with the tantric ritual obligations, especially those concerning ritual offerings, activating the messengers, and accomplishing activities. The times for wrathful practice are specified, and the worldly and transcendent benefits for self and others are outlined.

Chapter 8

Chapter 8 deals with the nature of the ritual phurpa, and the appropriate materials for its manufacture and use, and its design and features. It is made clear that the upper knot represents the deity's palace while its other distinctive features should become the abodes of the various maṇḍala deities. Furthermore, other symbolic significances of its parts are mentioned. The need to consecrate the phurpa is emphasised, and its purpose in protecting the samaya.

Chapter 9

The text now expands at greater length on the material in Chapter 8, especially giving details for consecrating the phurpa, the offerings and the other ritual implements. The dharmakāya, sambhogakāya and nirmāṇakāya consecrations are described in turn, the dharmakāya consecration pertaining to the ultimate view, the sambhogakāya consecration to the non-duality of the male and female deities, and the nirmāṇakāya consecration to the phurpa deity with the phurpa blade as his lower body. Details are then given of appropriate mantra syllables and mudrās for consecrating, and the appropriate accompanying visualisations, including further description of the maṇḍala deities' associations with the individual parts of the phurpa. The chapter ends with a reference to the act of liberating killing, the purification of consciousness taking place at the heart, with the virtuous and non-virtuous differentiated, defilements conquered and consciousness raised up and absorbed into space.

Chapter 10

Earlier themes are recalled in the opening of this chapter, with the enlightened qualities of the trikāya specified, and how this ultimate nature is mistaken and distorted, thus degenerating samaya and necessitating liberating killing. The nature of samaya degeneration as failing to understand primordial wisdom and the karma effects of breaking the samayas are discussed, along with the value of maintaining samaya, providing the support for realisation. General and specific samayas are then listed.

Chapter 11

Again, the seven degenerations are referred to, and the effects of destroying samaya. To avoid the consequent hell birth, liberating killing is explained to be necessary. Associations are drawn between the various components of the individuality and the different ritual activities, and then the auspicious days for the practice are detailed. It is made clear that the four sections of Approach and Accomplishment are a requisite basis, and that signs of success should manifest, at which point the time for striking has come.

Chapter 12

Chapter 12 concerns the transcendent view, explaining that beings are spontaneously perfected through the bodhicitta phurpa, which strikes with pure awareness. This is elaborated with poetic imagery on various aspects of this ultimate practice of phurpa. This includes a gloss on the word, "phur pa", in which the two parts are metaphorically associated with a series of pairs which together constitute some aspect of the realisation (eg. "phur" is means while "pa" is wisdom), and then further associations are made with the complete word, "phur pa", and we find a summing up of ultimate "generation", "liberating killing" and "union".

Chapter 13

At this stage, the material items needed for the ritual are given. First, the costume of ornaments corresponds to the deity's garb, while different kinds of phurpa are said to be associated with different ritual activities. The many articles for offerings and wrathful rites are enumerated, including the substances needed to make the *liṅga* (effigy), and the chapter ends with the anticipated time-scale for accomplishment of practitioners of differing abilities.

Chapter 14

This chapter begins with a description of emanating and reabsorbing bodhicitta, transforming the maṇḍala, and generating in turn Ratna Kīlaya, Vajra Kīlaya, Karma Kīlaya and Padma Kīlaya at different parts of the body, along with wrathful ones of the five families. Empowerments are bestowed, and elaborate offerings made to the guru. The vajra sons are thus said to be assured of worldly and transcendent benefits if they persist with the practice. On the other hand, if empowerment is not obtained, then the ritual activities will bring birth in the lower realms.

Chapter 15

Chapter 15 concerns the maṇḍalas. We begin with the ultimate nature of all maṇḍalas, and progress to the creative seed syllables, and are introduced to the four immeasurable natures (of the elemental nature, the non-dual yum, the wish-fulfilling deity, and the fearsome blazing nature). These are expanded upon with the stages of the creation of the maṇḍala basis of the transformed elements, and the outer features of the Palace. We then move from the meditative nature of the maṇḍalas to the rituals of consecration, drawing and materially establishing the maṇḍala. The basic shapes needed are briefly referred to in conclusion.

Chapter 16

The subject matter here is the ritual of accomplishing life and ultimate liberating killing practice. Kīlaya manifests as the Eternal Life deity (= Amitāyus) to give these teachings. The maṇḍala abode of the great life empowerment is described, along with the placing of appropriate substances and phurpas. Then the contents to be put into a ritual jewelled vase are specified, and the wheels of the five families (the five Kīlayas) are generated within the vase. We then witness the arising of the ten wrathful deities (ie. the *khro bo bcu*), Ekajaṭā, the retainers of the ten wrathful deities, and further emanations. The contents of the vase are consecrated, and white Amitāyus is depicted, including a reference to his wrathful activities, through which the Approach and Accomplishment stages are accomplished. The Life Empowerment Mistress becomes a white goddess, and the appropriate mantras of seed syllables are listed. The visualisations are of various mudrās and weapons conquering māras and bringing the lives of beings under control. The summoned life force melts into the seeds of the five families, and dissolves into the non-conceptual sphere. The vase is again described, the ritual requisites and offerings, and the numbers of recitations necessary are given. The chapter finishes by outlining the liberating killing ritual and receipt of the siddhis.

Chapter 17

At the outset of this chapter on accomplishing the secret wrathful one, there is a further reiteration of the centrality of the ultimate, here termed the nirvāṇa essence, and of the importance of familiarization with the understanding. On this basis, the master should then enter the wrathful practice, acquiring the phurpa as

described above (its key features are repeated)⁶, consecrating it and performing the wrathful Approach practice. Further ritual offerings and consecrations are mentioned. Then through meditations which appear to correspond to the "three samādhis"⁷, the deity and maṇḍala are generated and a *liṅga* prepared. Sending forth wrathful emanations, hostile forces and obstacles are brought under control, and their bodies consumed. Dissolving, all are transformed into the nature of the wrathful one, so negative beings are all liberated.

Chapter 18

We now return to the theme raised explicitly in Chapter 12, that is, accomplishing the phurbu as bodhicitta. The focus of this chapter is the transformation of the three realms of existence into the ultimate nirvāṇa, through the phurpa practice. The chapter begins with the nature of non-dual mind, which is both the cause and the fruit of Nirvāṇa, and this is the ultimate meaning of the unchanging, uncontrived, phurpa to be accomplished. Through the syllable *hūṃ* arising from this state and dissolving into the three realms of existence, the worlds are brought under control. Immeasurable bodhicitta generates the buddha body assembly and wrathful ones fill the three worlds. The liberated mind which understands this "phurbu of existence" is invoked, constituting the *further striking the three existences* (*srid pa gsum yang thebs*). Through this, the formless all-pervasive bodhicitta phurbu is self-arisen, and the primordial wisdom Phurbu wrathful one with assemblies of wrathful ones, cuts the three worlds at the root. Masses of flames burn up the worlds and the empowerment is accomplished. All become buddha body, speech and mind, consecrated through the radiation and absorption of three seed syllables (*hūṃ aṃ om*) at the heart, tongue and the crown of the head. Through the bodhicitta phurbu, the phenomenal world is spontaneously arisen within the dharmadhātu and unification with the non-dual sphere is accomplished with the four consort consecrations. Then, through further emanations and reabsorption of seed syllables, the phurbu, as Vajrakumāra's body, speech and mind, is rolled, killing and liberating mind objects, transforming defilements into primordial wisdom. The visible world arises as the phurbu, the (buddha) body of thusness is displayed within space, the dharmadhātu clearly manifesting as a creative seed, and this is called, *striking the universal phurpa* (*ma lus phur pa thebs*). The defilements are transformed, and the three worlds of saṃsāra are purified with the syllable, "a", and become nirvāṇa. In the sphere of non-conceptuality, the vast mortar of space, there is unwavering primordial wisdom, in which even a god would be killed and liberated, and this is called, *striking the three existences' phurpa* (*srid gsum phur pa/bu thebs*). The syllable, "hūṃ", is meditated upon, the radiant phurbu and life-force attained, the eight types of consciousness purified. With a visualisation of the pounding of the three worlds by the male wrathful one's pestle within the female mortar, the offerings are made to the carnivorous deities, who rejoice. Further meditations follow on smashing the aggregates, filling the three worlds with flesh and blood, generating bodhicitta and radiating the green seed of activities, the red seed of life and the blue seed of the heruka's heart. Liberating killing with the "passion" of compassion, all is nirvāṇa.

Chapter 19

Chapter 19 concerns the retinue of messengers and their activities. Here again, at the outset, the real nature of the messengers is stressed, and their radiating from the heart of the deity and absorbing into space. The ten wrathful ones (*khro bo bcu*) and their twenty emanations are listed, and their functions of conquering delusion, hatred, desire and jealousy. The text then speaks of the activities of the *gze ma*, most probably here referring to a female protectress – but the text is unclear in all versions.⁸ The objects for liberating killing are

⁶ Presumably, this is referring back to the discussion in Ch.8.

⁷ Here we have, "mi rtog kun snang rgyu", which seem to evoke the three, although the first is not specifically referred to as "de bzhin".

⁸ Possibly, a *gze ma* is a ritual item which simply is not listed in our dictionaries, although it would seem most likely to represent a female protectress. Indeed, in the Bon *dbal mo* cycle, we find a group of nine *gze ma* goddesses of the *dbal mo* class (p.845 of Vol.250 of the zhi-khro and dbal mo cycles), and in the same volume (189-218), a text entitled, *gze ma 'khor lo'i rtsa grel* (thanks to Jean-Luc Achard, personal communication, 13/5/04). Das and Zangkar (and others) agree on identifying *gze ma* as a plant, and while this would not seem appropriate in this case, it may be that some of the imagery is dependent on the plant's

again equated with perverted views, and there is a visualisation of oneself in wrathful deity form, emanating the syllable *hūm*, and meditating on the *gze ma*, around which mantra syllables are placed and hostile forces and obstacles suppressed, and in the centre of which appears the Immeasurable Cemetery Palace. Emanations of the *gze ma* arise, and fill the three thousand-fold world system. The king of the wrathful ones and his consort then burn up negativities, and further *gze ma* emanate, summoning hostile forces and obstacles. Details for making an effigy for the hostile forces follow, and the recitation for binding them into the form. They are berated for their ignorance, and reminded that one is guiding them to liberation. They are ritually separated from any protective spirits, appropriate phurbus (as described above) are prepared and rolled, and with the Approach practice completed, the mantras are to be recited and the striking performed. Again, through radiating and reabsorbing seed syllables, the five defilements are transformed into the five primordial wisdoms. Messengers fill the entire world system, purifying in the state of the unchanging sphere.

Chapter 20

This lengthy chapter concerns the maṇḍala of destructive activities. We begin with a reiteration of the ultimate nature, followed by an associations between the stages of the foundations for the generated maṇḍala and the specific emotional poisons which are destroyed. A description of the maṇḍala and its consecration follows, with some reiteration of the content of Chapter 15. This time, however, the chapter proceeds fairly rapidly to the emanation of the *phra men* deities and the liberating killing of the defilements. Once again, the meditation is focused on the nature of mind, naturally emanating buddha qualities, and the maṇḍala is further elaborated in terms of its radiant wisdom nature and its wrathful appearance, with some apparent allusion to the immeasurable natures referred to in the earlier chapter. The mantras of the ten wrathful ones (*khro bo bcu*) are then given, followed by those of the door protectresses. There is a visualisation of the yab yum deities producing emanations, and we have a description of the ten wrathful ones (the *khro bo bcu*, who were referred to but not described in Ch.16).⁹ Their consorts are then described, and the twenty attendants listed. There is then an extensive section making up the second half of the chapter, discussing in turn the activities of each of the *khro bo bcu* and their retinues, and of the four door protectresses, relating the specific activities to their ultimate nature and particular qualities, especially those invoked by metaphorical associations of their names.¹⁰

qualities. Das has "a thorny plant" and mentions its thorns resemble the horns of a goat. Zangkar also mentions *gze ma ra mgo* as a synonym; his definition focuses on its medicinal uses. Gyurme Dorje, in *Tibetan Medical Paintings* p.334 identifies it as caltrops (*tribulus terrestris*); there is a diagram in the top right hand corner of p.72. From this illustration, it appears to have woody branching curved stems. An American website on Tibetan medicinal plants (<http://www.tibetanherbs.com>) provides a diagram and description. It notes that it is the fruit of the plant which is used and that this is "weapon-wheel" shaped, and the diagram depicts the globular shape covered with a number of sharp thorns or spikes. It may be that this imagery is in some way connected with the imagery of the *gze ma* goddess(es); in modern Tibetan, *gze ma ra mgo* means barbed wire. In the updated Nitartha dictionary, IW and JV also identify it with *tribulus terrestris*; *ra mgo* is mentioned, and IW gives a *gze ma ra mgo* shape as a rhombus (ie a parallelogram with four equal sides), but this further meaning does not seem to provide any further clues to help us here!

⁹ Note that the descriptions of the *khro bo bcu* are not entirely consistent across different Phur pa texts, and even within a single text. While we have a rough equivalence in terms of names and in some cases, their attributes, weapons and colouring, sometimes their appearance appears to relate to their specific functions in the given context. For instance, in the '*Bum nag*', during the Approach, the central faces are east white, south yellow, west red and north green, with the intermediate directions combining the adjacent direction colours, and the above appearing as sky blue, the below manifesting darkness. The right and left faces are like those of the intermediate directions. During the Accomplishment, however, they are all dark blue (Boord: 189). In the *Myang 'das*, the colour schema given in Chapter 20 is quite unlike those found in the '*Bum nag*' or in the Sa skya *Phur chen*, but it has some similarity (although is not identical) with that found in the bDud 'joms *gnams lcags spu gri*.

¹⁰ For instance, dByugs sngon (Blue Staff) and the consort sDer mo (Claw) are evoked with the imagery of non-dual primordial wisdom possessing a blue staff, the great claw of awareness, grasping the essential dharmadhātu (D75r.5), while Mi g.yo (Unmoving) and gTun khung (Mortar) demonstrate the unmoving protector since he is all-pervasive, his characteristic hammer of means, beating in the (ultimate) sphere (D75v.3).

Chapter 21

Chapter 21 begins with an extended version of root Phurpa verses (as found in the *rtsa ba'i dum bu* and innumerable other sources) which are used to request consecration and empowerment, and to activate the emanations and messengers, reminding them of their samaya. The additions and re-phrasings draw attention to the nature of the obstacles preventing the enlightened vision, and add imagery evoking the swift movements and fearsome cries of the emanations. With the appropriate mantra syllables, the negative forces are summoned, overwhelmed and brought under the control of the samaya. The life-force and powers of the negativities are appropriated, empowering one's own mind with the siddhis of life. The chapter is closed with a reminder that one must "strike" with single pointed meditative absorption, killing/liberating in the non-dual sphere, and without this, the wrathful activities would result in lower rebirths.

Chapter 22

Further details are now given on how the hostile forces are to be focused on within the created form. The making of the effigy, the correct ritual treatment of it, the performance of the Approach practice and sending forth the messengers, are all specified as necessary, and at this point, we find a version of the further verses from the *rTsa ba'i dum bu* through which the negativities are seized, bound and struck down. The door protectresses are visualised effecting the descent of the consciousness, and mantras are recited which partly but not wholly correspond to those in the *rTsa ba'i dum bu* at this point. As in the other chapters, as a final note, there is the reminder that through this ritual activity, the consciousness should attain nirvāṇa.

Chapter 23

Following from the chapter above, we find more description of the actual ritual of striking with the phurpa. The phurpa is to be consecrated, and summoning the messengers, the phurpa is taken up while meditating on the king of the wrathful ones and his consort. In striking, the negativities are destroyed and ejected into space. One meditates on the transformation of body, speech and mind into buddha body, speech and mind, and through mindfulness, the defilements are cut off at root and the nature of mind is generated as primordial wisdom. We have a version of the root verse which opens the *rTsa ba'i dum bu*, here beginning, "Vajra wrath cuts through hatred; arising at the place of life...", and mantras and commands to the messengers follow. The final lines of the chapter yet again recall that through these activities the aggregates are really killed/liberated and consciousness brought to nirvāṇa.

Chapter 24

We now examine in further detail the ritual activity of slicing up the effigy. Five aspects are singled out: the messengers, the meditative absorption, the mantras, the means and the objectives. We begin with the imagery of wrathful deities attacking those negativities which evade the samaya, slicing them up so that their body parts, lacking any real substance, are totally destroyed. Again, a re-working of a verse from the *rTsa ba'i dum bu* is integrated. The appropriate mantras are given, further meditation on the theme, with the usual concluding reminder of the objective, in this case, that the five defilements come to the state of the five primordial wisdoms and Nirvāṇa is thus attained.

Chapter 25

This short chapter deals with the appropriation of the powers of the defilements, following their liberating killing. It again draws on the *rTsa ba'i dum bu*, this time slightly re-phrasing the verse on appropriating the inherent and magical powers, and above all, framing it with an opening emphasizing that the activity takes place, "in the action yoga (of) ultimate complete purity". With the further imagery of male and female messengers relishing the appropriation of powers, the mantra is recited. Through light rays, the seed syllables go forth and return, depriving the negativities of their powers and dissolving them into oneself.

Chapter 26

Following the order in the *rTsa ba'i dum bu*, we now find the section on beating the remains of the defilements with the vajra pestle, elevating them as (buddha) form. We again have an expanded and slightly

re-worded version of the *rTsa ba'i dum bu* verse. The verse conjures the imagery of the messengers beating the negativities which have transgressed the samaya, imagining their hearts burning up, and in this case, our text expands on this with the suggestion that since they had formerly been bound by samaya, they have become their own executioners in evading it. Mantras which are very closely parallel to those found at this point in the *rTsa ba'i dum bu* are then given, and further instruction on the nature of the practice as a secret mantra consecration, similarly corresponding to the closing lines of the *rTsa ba'i dum bu*, concludes the chapter.

Chapter 27

Here we have a teaching on the restoration or revival of the form, following its dissolution through the liberating killing practice. The beginning of this chapter once more stresses the disastrous consequences of failing to liberate negative forces, and the beneficial results of the correct performance of destructive activities, in protecting the samaya and attaining the qualities of nirvāṇa. The messengers are again incited to work, and the true nature of the dissolved purified negativities meditated upon. The root Phurpa verse beginning, "the samaya of liberating killing through compassion..."¹¹ is inserted here, consciousness meditated upon as the syllable, hūṃ, the sign of bodhicitta, of the nature of the uncompounded ultimate truth. The fourteen syllable root Phurpa mantra is now given, and the three seeds of (buddha) body, speech and mind emitted into the corpse, which clearly arises in a blazing vajra form, transformed into unchanging (buddha) body.¹²

Chapter 28

The final brief chapter on entrusting the tantra consists of a eulogy of the text's contents and those who understand and impart it. It starts with verses praising the realisation of the essential vajra body, the path to nirvāṇa taming the defilements, the ultimate oral instruction transcending misery in the mahāmudrā. It continues by praising those who understand, express and perfect the tantra, which has arisen from the heart of the definitive truth. In all editions apart from sDe dge, there is a colophon mentioning the master, Bhāṣita,¹³ as the translator and editor.

Postscript

In the Southern Central group of manuscripts, there is a further postscript of a number of poetic verses, suggesting that the teaching is sealed within a casket, which can only be opened with a primordial wisdom

¹¹ It occurs as the second verse of the *rTsa ba'i dum bu*, and in virtually all Phurpa tantras and sādhanas (see Cantwell 1997 115).

¹² It is worth noting that in general terms, we have a rough correspondence between the ritual progress developed in Chapters 21 to 27, and the activities of the six hidden mantras (*gab pa'i sngags drug*) and the cleansing of life force and ritual striking associated with the *smad las* ("subsidiary ritual") category of rites (*'Bum nag*, bDud 'joms bka' ma edition: 387.2, 388.4-5 and the following pages [= Boord: 223ff]; see also Cantwell 1989: "The Ritual which Expels all Negativities", 13-15). The six hidden mantras involve separating the negativities from protective spirits (here discussed earlier in Ch. 19), summoning them, forcing the consciousness into the effigy, tormenting and driving them mad, pounding them to dust, and offering the food of their corpse to the deities. However, there would seem to be one slight difference in emphasis. In both the actual ritual practice, and in the elaboration of the six hidden mantras in commentaries such as the *'Bum nag*, we have the final section on the offering of the corpse. In ritual sources, a great deal is often made of delighting the ravenous messenger deities with the corpse offering in the aftermath of the liberation of the consciousness, and in tshogs rites, the corpse offering becomes the important "final" or "third portion" offering. In this text, this aspect of the rite is given attention in Chapter 18 (D69r.4ff), and offering the "food" to the principal yab yum deity is also mentioned fleetingly in Chapter 21 (D78r.2). However, we find little of this in the final chapters of the *Myang 'das*. Here, instead of the imagery of a physical transformation through being consumed and "digested", we find imagery of revival and re-animation. This is perhaps hinted at in the regular rituals, with the symbolism of the liberated consciousness gaining a buddha body while the corpse transforms into elixir, but the two images are generally not explicitly identified as we seem to find here.

¹³ According to Dudjom Rinpoche (1991: 446-7), Bhāṣita was an Indian ṛṣi (seer) who received teachings on the *Guhyasamāja* from King Ja and Kukkurāja, transmitting them to King Prabhāhasti of Sahor. Kukkurāja is attributed with creating the eighteen tantra classification of Mahāyoga tantras (Dudjom Rinpoche 1991: 460).

key. The vajra paternal ancestors opened the door and extracted the treasure, intended for the supremely worthy. Finally, the postscript ends with a second colophon, repeating the text title, and saying that it was first transmitted in 'Chims-phu by Padma 'byung gnas (ie. Padmasambhava) with ICe Ku ku ra tsa, and later by the paṇḍita Vimalamitra and the translator Zhang Jñāna.¹⁴

It is possible that this postscript might in fact have been incorrectly appended to the text by an ancestor of the Southern Central editions! It would appear to hint at a *gter ma* classification for this text, and there is no suggestion of such an identification elsewhere. Moreover, the colophon might seem to contradict the colophon at the end of the final chapter.¹⁵ At this stage, we must remain cautious. If the postscript really belongs to another text, then at some stage, editor(s) added in the text title, which appears before the colophon.

¹⁴ The implication seems to be in both cases that the second individual mentioned, ie. ICe ku ku ra tsa and Zhang Jñāna, was the one to request the teaching, but also helped in the translation and codification of it.

¹⁵ If ICe ku ku ra tsa is to be identified with Kukkurāja (see note 13 above), then those transmitting our text would have little problem in associating both Kukkurāja and Bhāṣita, as master and pupil, with translating and codifying the text. However, the identification seems unlikely; ICe ku ku ra tsa appears to be considered a Tibetan student who worked with Padmasambhava, perhaps merely the namesake of the Indian master.

CHAPTER 2.III SUMMARIES OF THE TWO TEXTS: THE *RDO RJE KHROS PA RTSA BA'I RGYUD*

Chapter 1

The text begins with "the introductory chapter from the viewpoint of sameness and realisation." All phenomena are emphasised as being unborn and unceasing, dwelling in sameness, spontaneously accomplished as the mind of enlightenment, inexpressible and with no difference between saṃsāra and nirvāṇa, since unmodified and uncontaminated, saṃsāra is nirvāṇa. Unawareness is not arisen from anywhere, and thus, does not go anywhere; abiding vajra-like, all phenomena are realised as like insubstantial reflections. The Buddha Bodies do not move from the enlightened state, yet they are clearly seen. The supreme teaching is not taught; the supreme meditation is not meditated upon; the samaya is spontaneously accomplished without being guarded. From the uncontrived expanse, the primordial immeasurable bodhicitta is unobstructed, like the spray of water in an ocean; both saṃsāra and nirvāṇa arise and are reabsorbed. If the truth of the inexpressible utterance is not understood, meditation will only itself become a cause for bondage. Then in the natural cemetery of Akaniṣṭha, without centre or circumference, were dwelling the hosts of tathāgatas, the Lord of the Cemetery, his consort and retinue, resting in the basic nature. The Lord of the Cemetery speaks, describing the Cemetery as naturally existent, appearing like the moon in water, unstained by defilement. Within it, dharmas are not demonstrated by Buddha speech, but revealed through the symbols of Buddha mind.

Chapter 2

The chapter on, "initiating the dialogue" consists of a conversation between this Great Joyful One and his consort. He teaches that purity is the method for accomplishing enlightenment, while in union with the consort. She replies that she embraces the non-dual truth. He reiterates that the sugata is the chief guide of all beings, abiding in non-duality with his consort. The two enter into an unmoving samādhi, and she teaches that the sugata of the vajra family, defeating obscurations with the light of wisdom, is destined to cleanse the defilements of beings. Thus, she requests his presence. He then utters a vajra verse, calling for the accomplishment of the benefit of beings, through beating the great lotus and generating retinues. The female consort responds, asking him to let fall a rain of the great secret, and reciting mantra syllables invoking the samaya. Through their non-dual union, male and female wrathful ones are emanated, and mantra syllables associated with Vajrakīlaya resound, terrorizing worldly deities.

Chapter 3

Chapter 3, on, "taming the fierce arrogant one" presents the justification for and a concise version of the mythical account of the taming of Rudra. Rudra is said to have arisen through attachment to the delusion of things as "self", along with ignorance regarding cause and effect, and misunderstanding of the secret teachings. His hell rebirths and subjugation of the gods are briefly mentioned, while some verses are devoted to the emanation of Vajrakumāra as the heart son of the sugatas, sent forth to tame Rudra. From a form with three heads, six arms and four legs, he manifests in a hundred-headed form, and gathers the retinue. The fourteen syllable root Vajrakīlaya mantra is then given, along with a description of the iconography of the three-headed form, and this is followed by a version of the root verse which famously begins the *rTsa ba'i dum bu* (here beginning, "rdo rje khros pas zhe sdang gcod..."). This results in the emanation of the full assembly of the ten Wrathful Ones (*khro bo bcu*), with their consorts and attendants, and these are listed in turn, along with their mantras. The universe then quakes and Rudra attempts to flee, but Vajrakumāra emanates the six Supreme Sons, uttering the mantras for their activities. This begins the process of liberating killing, and we have versions of the second and next few verses of the *rTsa ba'i dum bu*, along with the verse which follows the listing of the ten Wrathful Ones and their retinues in the *rTsa ba'i dum bu*. With these verses, consecration is requested, and after this, the mantra beginning, "oṃ lam hūṃ lam...", which occurs further down in the *rTsa ba'i dum bu*, is given. Again, the universe quakes, the phurbu is rolled and Maheśvara falls unconscious, and is caught on the spikes of the *khaṭvāṅga*. We then have

another verse found also in the *rTsa ba'i dum bu*, this time inciting the destructive activities towards those who obstruct the practitioners, and the previous mantra ("om lam hūm lam..."), which is placed in this position in the *rTsa ba'i dum bu*, is repeated. Rudra is then dismembered, his flesh eaten, his blood drunk and his bones gnawed at, and with further mantras, he is revived, shows remorse, and his body becomes the seat of the deity and the cemetery adornments of the maṇḍala. The chapter ends with a version of one of the *rTsa ba'i dum bu*'s final verses.

Chapter 4

The fourth chapter has a deceptively similar title to that of Chapter 3; instead of "taming the fierce arrogant one(s)", the given title is simply on, "taming the arrogant one(s)". Here, the focus appears to have moved from Rudra himself and the process of taming, to his retinue and its integration into the maṇḍala in a servile status. Various female deities of the retinue show obeisance to the wrathful deity who has subdued them. They offer their life essences and inner mantras, request that he should bestow upon them the leftover offerings which he has allocated for them, and they promise to obey the samaya and accomplish appropriate activities. In response, he warns them of the dire consequences which will result should they evade their role, and the closing verses of the chapter include a version of the famous lines given in the *rTsa ba'i dum bu*, announcing that the time has come for the various wrathful emanations and protectresses, and for accomplishing the samaya.

Chapter 5

We now have yet another chapter relating a ritual taming scenario, this time on, "taming the obstacle(s)". Here, the focus is the vicious king of the obstacles, Vināyaka, who resists integration into the maṇḍala. Vajrakumāra therefore effects ritual activities to bring him under control, such as separating him from his allies, summoning, binding and maddening him. There are a series of mantras which have parallels with those found for seizing and binding the negative forces in the *rTsa ba'i dum bu*, followed by a version of a verse which is also found in this context in the *rTsa ba'i dum bu*. The king of the obstacles faints, and the deity again utters mantras of summoning and binding. There is then a version of another *rTsa ba'i dum bu* verse, for inciting the messengers to the activities of destruction, and further mantras parallel to those found in this context in the *rTsa ba'i dum bu*. The chapter closes with yet more parallel verses and mantras to those in the *rTsa ba'i dum bu*, which are found as the culmination of that text, with meditation on the burning up and pounding of the obstacles by the male deity's vajra pestle and the female deity's mortar.

Chapter 6

The focus of this chapter, called, "establishing samādhi", is the transformation of the three realms of existence into the ultimate nirvāṇa, through the phurpa practice. The chapter begins with the uncontrived sphere, immeasurable bodhicitta, bringing the three realms under control. Thus transformed, the Buddha form is generated, and the three worlds filled with wrathful ones. The liberated mind which understands this "phurbu of existence" is invoked, *further striking the three existences (srid pa gsum yang thebs)*. Masses of flames burn up the worlds and the empowerment is accomplished. All become buddha body, speech and mind. The phurbu is raised and rotated, and the four consort consecrations effected. Purifying with the syllable, "a", the three worlds of saṃsāra become nirvāṇa. In the vast mortar of space, even a god would be killed and liberated, and this is called, *striking the phurpa/phurbu of existence (srid pa'i phur pas/bu thebs)*. With the pounding of the three worlds by the male wrathful one's pestle within the female mortar, bodhicitta radiates and is absorbed, and the bodhicitta phurbu is spontaneously arisen. The offerings are made to the devouring deities, who rejoice. The phurpa is rolled, clinging and attachment liberated, and through the radiations and reabsorptions from the bodhicitta, the (buddha) body of thusness is displayed within space, and this is called, *striking the universal phurpa (ma lus phur pas/bu thebs)*. The eight types of consciousness are purified; the aggregates are smashed, filling the three worlds with flesh and blood. Through the syllable, "hūm", the aggregates become radiant, and are meditated on as the great concentrated creative seed. The three worlds become bodhicitta, and radiating, the red life of (buddha) mind, the green seed of activities and

the blue heruka's heart are totally accomplished. Liberating killing with passionate compassion, the three realms are brought under control. All is nirvāṇa. The chapter ends with eulogies of the realisation attained.

Chapter 7

After the interlude of Chapter 6, we return to the theme of taming, in this case, we have, "the teaching on the methods of taming with wrathful (rites)". The chapter begins with Vajrakumāra entering into a samādhi for taming all negative beings simultaneously. The qualities of the place for the ritual maṇḍala are outlined, including the deities at the directions and the spiritual and environmental features. The reader is advised to perform the Approach and Accomplishment practices, as well as the stages for protecting the site through the involvement of the direction protectors and the four great kings. The maṇḍala should then be made. At this point, we have an explicit reference to three of the standard set of four phur pas, and what is possibly an implicit reference to the first (the *rig pa ye shes kyi phur pa*). This phur pa is associated with the unborn sphere and skilful means, in sameness. The compassion phur pa is said to strike those wandering in error, the secret bodhicitta phur pa strikes in the consort's "sky", while the material phur pa strikes the ten fields for liberating killing. With this necessary meditation, we then move to ritual description. The appropriate physical features of phur pas for specific activities are given, such as the different materials they are made from, their colouring etc. Phur pas for the ten Wrathful Ones are mentioned, and then instructions for preparing ritual equipment, such as a skull cup vessel. How to prepare suitable hearths for the homa rite in different directions is then explained, focusing on the types of wood, how it should be arranged, the shapes made, and the appropriate way to represent the object of the rite, such as the need to write the personal and family name. Various substances for making weapons are listed, and more is said on the preparation of the effigy, for example, the placing of seed syllables on different limbs. Finally, the establishment of phur pas symbolising the different maṇḍala deities is mentioned, along with a number of other ritual requisites.

Chapter 8

Chapter 8 is described as, "the teaching on the (deities') body colours and hand implements". In fact, it begins by summarising some of the key features of the Immeasurable Palace, and when the main deity is referred to, the text simply notes that he is to be visualised in accordance with the description given earlier. The appearances of the consort and the ten wrathful deities are outlined, and those of their emanations and further emanations. The Supreme Sons are mentioned briefly at the end of the chapter.

Chapter 9

"On teaching intention", this chapter ranges over a number of meditations, stressing the necessary state of mind for successful practice. The chapter starts with a short review of earlier themes in the text, emphasising the need for pure understanding, diligent practice and protection of samaya. The bodhicitta phur pa is mentioned; here, apparently in the sense we met in Chapter 6 rather than in the sense of the "secret bodhicitta phur pa" referred to in Chapter 7. There are some eulogies of the functions of Vajrakīlaya and the results of practice. There is a reference to four types of ultimate phur pa(s), but these do not seem to be the four-fold standard set (as listed in Chapter 6). They are elaborated upon through 4 sets of poetic similes, in which the two parts of the word "phur pa" are equated with paradoxically contrasting features, such as "phur" expressing the unborn nature, while "pa" is unceasing display.¹ The final lines of the chapter mention various ritual actions or meditative visualisations, reiterating the necessity for practice at appropriate times and subtle and pure understanding.

Chapter 10

Chapter 10 concerns the "liberating killing of the ten fields" (*zhing bcu*). The ten fields which are the appropriate objects for liberating killing are listed. Here, the first two appear similar to those of the 'Bum

¹ These analogies are similar but not identical to those found in the *Myang 'das*'s Chapter 12. See also the Chapter 2.V below, in which citations of the *Myang 'das* passage are discussed.

nag, consisting of those who destroy the sacred teachings and who violate the continuity (of samaya), while the next five are those under the influence of the five emotional poisons, which are mentioned in turn. The final three comprise the perverse, who distort the ultimate meaning, those who ignorantly correct (the tradition), and those who renege on monastic vows.² The ritual activities for summoning, binding, and attacking them are outlined, and the universe is said to be filled with Phur pa wrathful ones. The chapter concludes with a collection of mantras, starting with a long mantra parallel to that given in the *rTsa ba'i dum bu* in the context of summoning and destroying negative forces, beginning with, "om lam hūm lam...", and continuing with mantras which have some similarities with the further destructive mantras in the *rTsa ba'i dum bu*.

Chapter 11

The eleventh chapter, on "accomplishing the five Supreme Sons", tells us that the Supreme Sons arise miraculously from the uncreated dharmadhātu, like bubbles upon water. Mantras for the set are given, and there follows a brief description, noting that their upper bodies are wrathful ones, while their lower bodies are three-sided blades.

Chapter 12

Rather than enumerating the samayas, this chapter, "the teaching on samaya", concentrates on the importance and value of protecting the samayas, along with the detrimental effects of neglecting them. It begins with the comment that the Buddhas of past, present and future became accomplished through relying on samaya, and this explains why later generations of mantra holders guard it. The samayas are then explained as the basis for the generation of enlightened forms; protecting them will make one a buddha, while transgressing them, one will remain a sentient being. A summary of the most problematic types of infraction, such as slandering the master's teaching, demonstrating the secrets to outsiders, or coercing gods and demons to negative acts, follows. One's fate in being reborn in the hell realms is graphically described, and then also the contrasting marvellous results of protecting samaya, including the yi dam deity's siddhi, the attracting of a retinue of *dākinīs*, the increase of lifespan, the respect of gods and demons. Finally, a few of the root samayas are referred to: the necessity to venerate the master and his consort, to love one's vajra siblings, to keep the continuity of the tantric practice intact, to exert oneself in practice, and not to speak (of it) to outsiders and vow breakers.

Chapter 13

Chapter 13, "empowerment", gives details of the empowerment rituals. The preliminaries of offerings to the lama, the master's contemplations and the procuring of ritual implements are mentioned, followed by the signs indicating that the practice has been successful, and the ritual preparation of the student(s). Then, the words requesting empowerment to be used by the student(s) and the master's replies are given. These are elaborated in full for the vase empowerment, and then other empowerments are listed. A version of a verse in the *rTsa ba'i dum bu* for the requesting of empowerment and attainments is then inserted. Finally, there is some discussion of the secret empowerments, including a description of the female consort's qualities, and the mantras to be recited for the bestowal of bodhicitta.

Chapter 14

The final four chapters are all short. Chapter 14 on "the *tshogs* practice" concerns the methods for making *tshogs* (assembled feast) offerings. In particular, the techniques of transforming the offerings into

² These objects of liberation vary from source to source, although they usually add up to ten in number. Hence it is unsurprising the ones given here do not entirely correspond with their identification in other sources, such as the *'Bum nag* (Boord: 223; bdud 'joms bka' ma edition 387-388), which cites the *phur pa khrag 'thung rtsa ba'i rgyud*, and mentions the extensive commentary in the *phur pa gsang rgyud*.

elixir and offering through meditation on seed syllables and light rays is specified. The various ritual sections are then briefly listed.

Chapter 15

The chapter, on "accomplishing the sole hero" concerns the rites to follow after the dissolution of the visualised maṇḍala. The material maṇḍala is marked with the seed syllable hūṃ, a ritual phur pa is established in its centre and then also a gtor ma. The full ritual practices are again to be performed, along with rites of offering, burning, casting and burying.

Chapter 16

Chapter 16, "on the practice substances", provides a brief description of a further ritual to be performed with white mustard, frankincense and rakta, placed within a skull cup. The appropriate meditation and mantra are referred to, as well as various signs to be expected.

Chapter 17

The final chapter, on "entrusting" the tantra, begins by stating that the tantra was taught in the ten directions and four times, from out of the unborn elemental state, for the sake of liberating those who have gone astray. It is then entrusted to intelligent, worthy and diligent recipients, who have purified their thoughts and gained realisation in the great vehicle.

Colophon

The colophon credits the Indian master Padmākara and the Tibetan translator Ngam 'bres, as those responsible for translating and codifying the text, at bSam yas mChims phu.

CHAPTER 2.IV A SPECIAL FORM OF TEXTUAL SHARING BETWEEN THE TWO TEXTS

A rare form of textual sharing occurs between our two texts. Chapter 6 of the *rDo rje khros pa*, which contains 150 lines of verse in seven syllables, and Chapter 18 of the *Myang 'das*, which contains 198 lines of verse in seven syllables, are very closely related. In fact, they are largely composed out of exactly the same phrases: if one excludes its three opening lines and its closing paragraph, a version of all but seven of the 150 lines of the *rDo rje khros pa*'s Chapter 6 also occur within the *Myang 'das*'s Chapter 18. Shared text between two separate Tantric scriptures is not unusual, so this much is unremarkable. What is unusual in this case are two things. Firstly, the two texts reproduce the shared phrases in a completely different order from one another; secondly, there is no discernable rational patterning to explain the different orders. It looks as though at some stage the text was broken up into small fragments, which were subsequently reassembled into two quite different orderings to render two quite different texts composed out of the same phrases and thus broadly dealing with the same topics, but in different ways. In fact, as we shall suggest later, this is quite possibly what happened.

But first let us look more closely at the passages in question. Chapter 6 of the *rDo rje khros pa* is called the chapter on establishing the samādhis (*ting nge 'dzin gtan la phab*), while Chapter 18 of the *Myang 'das* is called the chapter on accomplishing the phur bu as bodhicitta (*phur bu byang chub sems su bsgrub pa*). Despite the different names, essentially, on closer analysis, one can see that both of them deal with the broadly similar topic of the bodhicitta phur pa/phur bu, a well-known category of inner yoga that is widespread within Vajrakīlaya literature, although the usage of the term in these chapters is rather different from the standard exegesis of this practice.¹ The best way to present the manner in which the two chapters share their text is to number each line in each text, and then compare the sequences. We have numbered each line in each text, in the normal ascending sequence of 1, 2, 3, and so on. Taking Chapter 6 of the *rDo rje khros pa* as our base text, and comparing the sequences of lines, the shared passages, comprising lines 4 to 135 of the *rDo rje khros pa*'s chapter 6, correspond to the following sequence of lines in the *Myang 'das* Chapter 18:

15-16, not found, 17, 26-27, 40, 42 (which also corresponds to 7), 22-25, 43, 28-32, 47, 33-35, 46, 36-39, 52, 54, 56, 59, 61, 63-64, 66, 103, not found, 83, no exact match but close to 31 and 52, 82, 109-110, 114, not found, 104, 49, 51, 115, 117, 119-120, 122-123, 142-143, 154, 145, 71, 73, 76, 78, 147, 146, not found, 148-52, 91, 93, 106, 95-96, not found, 97, close to 154, 99, 101, 138, 137, 139, 140, 153-60, 154, 126-31, not found, 161-162, 166, close to 164, 163, 165, 167-72, not found, 20-21, 181, 184-185, not found, 182-183, 179-180, no exact match, 173-8, 186-8.

¹ The bodhicitta phurpa is one of the set of four phur bus (or phur pas), discussed widely in the commentarial literature. In the *'Bum nag* (and sources following the *'Bum nag*), they are given as the *rig pa ye shes*, the *thugs rje sprul pa'i*, *gsang ba byang sems* and *mtshan ma rdzas kyi phur bu*. The *'Bum nag* cites the authority of the *Phur bu ngan sngags gtsug lag gi rgyud* on the list (bDud 'joms bKa' ma edition: 435ff and 467ff; Boord: 259ff, 282ff). A myes zhabs notes (142.4) *tshad med snying rje'i* as an alternative for *thugs rje sprul pa'i*, and cites the *rTsa rgyud rdo rje khros pa* (142.6-143.1) on the categories. In some sources, (eg. Khenpo Namdrol [45-7], Gyatrul Rinpoche [254-260]), the ordering of the second and third of the categories is reversed. This ordering would seem to correspond with the usual ordering of the trikāya, since the *byang sems* relates to the sambhogakāya and the *thugs rje sprul pa* to the nirmāṇakāya in Shechen Gyaltsap's [n.d.13] and similarly in Khenpo Namdrol's explanations. In the *Myang 'das*, there is a good deal of development of the notion of the "bodhicitta phur pa" in Chapters 8, 12 and 18, yet this would not seem quite to correspond to the notion of the standard category of "secret bodhicitta", which is associated with anuyoga meditations involving the consort, the channels and winds, and completion practice. In the *Myang 'das*, especially in Chapter 18, the bodhicitta phur pa is rather linked with transforming the three worlds of existence into nirvāṇa, and it thus has much in common with the *thugs rje sprul pa'i phur pa*. An extensively discussed *Phur bu ngan sngags gtsug lag gi rgyud* citation precisely identifies its function as striking the sentient beings of the three worlds (*'Bum nag* bDud 'joms bKa' ma edition: 435.5: /kham s gsum sems can la gdab bo/). In Chapter 12, this function is linked to realising the pure awareness ultimate nature, and thus, it would also seem to have something in common with the first of the four phur bus (eg. D60v.1-2: /byang chub sems kyi phur pa yis/ /srid gsum 'gro ba'i gdar sha bcad/ /byang chub sems kyi phur pa yis/ /ma gdab bzhin du lhun gyis rdzogs/ /mnyam pa'i rgyal po rig pas gdab/).

As one can see, there are some cases of several lines remaining in sequence in both texts, but generally where we have a number of sequential lines from the *Myang 'das* in common with the *rDo rje khros pa*, a more typical pattern is for consecutive lines to be interspersed in the *Myang 'das* with other lines not found in the *rDo rje khros pa*, for the sequence to omit several lines, and to reorder others slightly. The same is true when we consider the pattern from the viewpoint of the ordering of the *rDo rje khros pa*, except for the fact that in this case, the *rDo rje khros pa* chapter has very little apart from its opening and closing lines which are not found at all in the *Myang 'das* chapter. Furthermore, a sequence of lines rarely lasts for more than a few yig rkang, after which we jump, often to a quite different part of the chapter. Occasionally, two quite separate sections in one text are mixed in together with another.

Do both versions read well?

The question naturally arises, are both versions coherent? Given the dramatic reordering of the lines, can they both make sense? We think they can, although neither reads as an altogether logically clear sequence (see Chapters 2.I and 2.II above for translated summaries of the contents of these two chapters).²

Above all, the text sharing here is not simply a matter of reordering sections of text, but of changing the context of nearly every individual line. Hence although the subject matter of each chapter is essentially similar, the specific details of the meditations described necessarily differ significantly. This is a salutary antidote to any assumption that a particular ritual term or category is likely to be understood in a consistent way even across texts of the same tradition or genre! Even if either or both of the texts was once the result of a muddle, it has become established and has been accepted in the form we now have it for at least some hundreds of years.

To give an example, where we have a description of "*striking the universal phurpa*", the *Myang 'das*'s version could be translated as follows:

"Since the visible world arises as the phurbu,
(it is) the (buddha) body of manifest thusness within space.
Since the dharmadhātu clearly manifests as the creative seed,
this is called, *striking the universal phurpa*."

On the other hand, the *rDo rje khros pa* gives:

"Through light radiating out of the bodhicitta,
the (buddha) body of manifest thusness [arises] within space. (D: The three worlds [become] the (buddha) body of manifest thusness.)

This is called, *striking the universal phurpa*. (D: *striking with the universal phurpa*.)"

The first and third lines of the *Myang 'das*'s passage are not found in the *rDo rje khros pa*, while a similar line to *rDo rje khros pa*'s first line is found further down in the *Myang 'das*.

Taking a slightly longer passage with a series of consecutive lines from the *Myang 'das*, found in roughly the same order in the *rDo rje khros pa* yet mingled in with some lines from another section of the *Myang 'das*, we have in the *rDo rje khros pa*:

"Primordially, immeasurable bodhicitta,
(is) the cause and fruit (of) dharma(s which are) unceasing.
From this, the bodhicitta phurbu (D phurbu bodhicitta),
(arises as) both cause and fruit, nirvāṇa.
Then (MGTRNK Then certainly), one's own bodhicitta,

² Across the three branches of its transmission, the extant versions of the *Myang 'das* chapter have more problems than the *rDo rje khros pa* in terms of scribal lapses, including omissions, folio misplacement and so forth, and there are more pronounced differences between these three groups than is the case with the *rDo rje khros pa* chapter. However, once obvious scribal lapses have been corrected, it is not at all clear that the *Myang 'das*'s order of the lines makes less sense than that of the *rDo rje khros pa*.

brings the three existences under control.
 (At) one with the destiny (of) the Victorious One(s),
 the bodhicitta is manifestly (D at first) displayed.
 In order to generate the three worlds as primordial wisdom,
 the complete (D completing the) colour(s) [RK symbol(s)] (of) the accomplished primordial wisdoms,
 are generated with the secret mantra,
 endowed with the (buddha) form, fully adorned (D supremely generated),
 causing the three worlds to be filled (MGTRNK: and the three worlds should be filled) with wrathful one(s)."

An equivalent for every line of these verses is found in the *Myang 'das*, but not in a single place! The third, fourth and ninth lines are found together, while the other lines are found earlier, in a slightly rearranged order. Thus, we find two passages containing these lines:

(1) "Then, one's own bodhicitta,
 brings the three existences under control.
 (At) one with the destiny (of) the Victorious One(s),
 the bodhicitta is manifestly displayed.
 Primordially, immeasurable bodhicitta,
 (is) the (MG its) cause and fruit, (of) dharma(s which are) unceasing,
 the complete colour(s) [MGTRN symbol(s)] (of) the accomplished primordial wisdoms.
 Having generated (it) with the secret mantra,
 endowed with the (buddha) form, fully adorned,
 (it) fills (MGTRN should fill) the three worlds with wrathful one(s)."

(2) A little further down the page we find the other lines, following a description of, "*further striking the three existences*" (which is found below in the *rDo rje khros pa rtsa ba'i rgyud!*).
 "From this [further striking the three existences], the bodhicitta phurbu,
 self-arisen, formless, all-pervasive (MGTRN since [it] pervades everything),
 (it is) the non-dual cause and fruit (MGTRN from both the cause and fruit), nirvāṇa.
 Having generated the three worlds (as) primordial wisdom,
 the sign of luminous (MG great) self-arisen primordial wisdom,
 as the primordial wisdom phurbu wrathful one,
 (has) sun, moon, (and) mount meru phurbu ornaments."

The first, third and fourth lines of this extract are integrated into the above passage in the *rDo rje khros pa*, while the second, fifth and sixth lines are not in the *rDo rje khros pa*, and the final line is found further down in a quite different context.

Possible philological explanations

We can see that both arrangements of the lines can make sense. But as philologists, how do we account for this phenomenon of variously ordered lines of text? Clearly, the two chapters have some kind of relationship of dependency, which might possibly be a direct dependence of one of our sources on the other,³ but perhaps just as likely, either or both may be dependent on a third (so far) unidentified source.

The explanation might be material – the outcome of the physical nature of an original document – or it might be intellectual – the outcome of editorial and authorial activity, probably of a mystical or ritual kind. The explanation might also concern both.

If we are to speculate along codicological lines, one of the strongest suggestions is that these verses are very old and started their literary life on birch bark, or some similarly fragile material. As these became

³ If this is so, we cannot be certain which direction the movement of text was taking. Even on the rare occasions where we might have reasonable certainty that readings in one source are probably incorrect scribal errors for coherent readings found in our other chapter, the error might have postdated the movement of text between the two chapters.

increasingly fragmented, and as the fragments became increasingly disordered, the correct sequence of text became increasingly unclear to would-be readers. Subsequently, they were reconstituted in different orderings on different occasions by persons trying to make sense of them. Our two texts might represent two such different attempts. Birch bark is of course usually associated with rather ancient texts, but, as we have suggested above, we do have some reasons to believe the text could be very old. It is also possible of course that some other material, like paper, might have fragmented. For instance, the text might have been written on very small sheets of paper, as we find with some Dunhuang manuscripts. It might have come from the inside of a statue or reliquary. However, whatever the actual material, there is an important caveat to the hypothesis that the text might have been preserved in small sections, which were then further fragmented: The unit of text which essentially remained intact is in all cases the *yig rkang*. We find no cases where a jump is made from the middle of a *yig rkang* to the second half of another *yig rkang*, followed by its next sequential *yig rkang*. Even where the text apparently changes one, two or three syllables at the end of a line, this is never followed by a different section of text which follows a version of those final syllables. Thus, if the text was on small sheets which became disordered or fragmented, then the original scribe is most likely to have originally written each *yig rkang* on its own line, and not broken the *yig rkang* across lines or sheets. If material such as birch bark was involved, it is possible that breakages mainly took place horizontally along the grain, thus preserving the individual *yig rkang* or breaking them short, without the second half attaching to the following line.

The possibility that the verses might once have been ordered differently from either of these chapters is strengthened by the arrangement of three categories discussed in both versions. In the *Myang 'das*, we have a sequence of (1) further striking the three existences; (2) striking the universal *phur pa*; and (3) striking the three existences' *phur pa*, while in the *rDo rje khros pa*, the order runs, (1) further striking the three existences; (2) striking the *phur pa/phur bu* of existence; and (3) striking the universal *phur pa* (see above summaries). On reflection, it seems that one should expect the category of *further* striking the three existences, the category which comes first in both of our texts, to more correctly come *below* the category of the three existences' *phur pa/ phur bu* of existence. In other words, it is quite possible that both of our chapters may have drawn on a common source which might once have had a more obviously logical sequence than either of our extant texts!

The birchbark or other fragmented material theory is a theory with many drawbacks, as we have seen; it might not be correct. If we speculate along intellectual lines, another, perhaps stronger possibility, is that one or several visionary lamas deliberately reordered an otherwise stable text in the process of creating a new scripture. Such a process is probably well within the remit of scriptural text revealers, even if evidence for it of this particular type is not so commonplace. In the fully-developed *gter ma* tradition, a Buddhist text revealer finds a small fragment of text deemed particularly sacred and as having divine symbolic qualities; meditates on it; and out of the resulting visionary experiences, creates a full-length discursive text that usually utilises various pre-existent blocks of text with some slight addition, subtraction, or other minor modification. Furthermore, a text revealer may quite explicitly edit, re-order and clarify textual revelations of previous revealers: the late Dudjom Rinpoche, for instance, is as renowned for his contribution to the texts of his predecessors as he is for his own *gter ma*.⁴ We know the *gter ma* system has ancient antecedents. It is

⁴ The late Dudjom Rinpoche devoted much attention to editing and producing new versions of the cycles revealed by bDud 'joms Gling pa, of whom Dudjom Rinpoche was considered the immediate reincarnation. But more than this, much of Dudjom Rinpoche's Collected Works focuses on the treasures of earlier treasure revealers. Moreover, he is attributed with re-working, clarifying and making accessible the revelations of a number of previous masters (Lama Tharchin Rinpoche, 2002 talk at a Dakini Heart Essence trek-chod retreat, audio file available at <http://www.jnanasukha.org/resources.htm>). This aspect of Dudjom Rinpoche's role seems to be particularly emphasised by lamas of the tradition; it is said that Dudjom Rinpoche focused to such an extent on his work on previously revealed texts, that Ye shes mtsho rgyal appeared to him on a number of occasions to remind him of the importance of revealing his own treasures also (oral teachings of Lopen P Ogyan Tenzin Rinpoche, Kent, 10/11/2004). One example of this feature of the bDud 'joms lineage, in this case a revelation originating with bDud 'joms Gling pa, is that of the bDud 'joms *bla sgrub* practice tradition. This is said to derive from an earth treasure (*sa gter*) which nonetheless fully accords with the intentions and the words of the *bla sgrub* practices of six named previous

only a comparatively small step from this to utilising a pre-existent block of text after rather more radically rearranging its verses, as we find here.

Whether the birchbark or other fragmented materials theory, or the idea of visionary lamas rearranging or reworking already existent units of text is correct, what does that tell us about the life of these texts?

First of all, it confirms our general impression that NGB texts are composed by the welding together of already existing sections of tantric materials, many of them extremely old. We find this pattern repeated many times over in NGB material, with shared sections of text cropping up in Dunhuang materials, across different NGB texts, and even in commentarial and *sādhana* texts.

This in turn raises a philologically important consideration for those engaged in editing NGB texts: if they are composed to a significant degree out of pre-existent blocks in this way, which certainly seems to be the case, then how correct or pristine were the NGB texts at their points of origin? If they were compiled from the start using pre-existent blocks of text, then might not any orthographical or grammatical or other imperfections within those blocks have been imported wholesale into the new text that they were being used to construct? In other words, we have definite reason to believe that at least some NGB texts were partially or occasionally imperfect, ungrammatical, badly spelled and perhaps, on rare occasions, not even entirely coherent in all their parts, from the outset. It follows that any editors, Tibetan or Western, who set themselves the task of creating a perfect, grammatical, orthographically correct and entirely coherent text out of a NGB tantra was (or is) quite possibly attempting to create an artifact that never existed originally. We can also say with certainty that to some degree at least, the life of the NGB as a whole has been exactly such a process of ongoing correction and hypercorrection over time. The sDe dge edition, for example, is quite often supremely well edited, but for that very reason, might represent in some proportion of its parts a greater deviation from the original texts, than do the less-well edited Bhutanese and Southern Central *rNying ma'i rgyud 'bum* editions. In other respects, of course, the sDe dge editors might well have returned a proportion of text back to its original reading, where the other, less well-edited versions have preserved errors that have genuinely gone astray from the original.

A final point from the philological viewpoint is that in studying the production of esoteric Buddhist Tantric texts in the early years of post-Imperial Tibet, roughly between the start of the ninth century and the end of the tenth century, we are quite possibly also gaining at least a few useful insights into the way in which Buddhist Tantric texts were produced in India. It would not be surprising if the Indian pre-history of the famous Sanskritic tantras of the gSar ma pa period turned out to share at least some similar features with the origins of the Tibetan-composed *rNying ma pa* tantras. The two traditions were after all contemporaneous, and the Tibetans clearly took the Indians as their revered role models in every respect. But while the Indian historical record is comparatively thin, much more evidence survives in Tibet.

How might the tradition see it?

If philologists might see the relation of these two chapters to be the result of fragmented materials such as birchbark or of visionary lamas reordering texts to achieve new revelations, how might the tradition see the situation? It is quite likely that, on having their attention drawn to the complex relations of these two chapters, many *rNying ma pa* lamas would see no problem at all. According to traditional theories of the ontology of written tantric scriptures, such patterns of shared text as these would not necessarily require any particular explanation. Within traditional theories, Tantric scriptures are envisaged as the spontaneously arising expressions of the self-existent transcendent maṇḍalas of the deities that they describe. Closely linked to the notion of divine spontaneous expression is the notion of divine play. Such play is seen as the very essence of many a Tantric deity's activities at every level, and playfulness is very particularly described as an essential part of Vajrakīlaya's nature throughout the literature. If that is the case, then it follows that the

treasure revealers, and it represents the, "merging into one stream" (*chu bo gcig 'dres*) of these seven treasures. (*bDud 'joms gsung 'bum*, Volume Ca: 2-3; see also Cantwell 1989: 161-2.)

maṇḍala of Vajrakīlaya is perfectly likely to enjoy the expression of a few spontaneously-arising text-games, and playfully produce two different versions of the profound teachings on bodhicitta phur pa that use all the same words and lines, but in two very different orderings. Consideration of their unique notions of play can often provide useful perspectives when studying the world of the esoteric Buddhist tantras.

Summary of the occurrences of parallel lines in the Myang 'das Chapter 18 and the rDo rje khros pa Chapter 6⁵

Ordering of *rDo rje khros pa 6* in terms of the yig rkang of *Myang 'das 18*:

1-3	not found
4-7	15-16, not found, 17
8-9	26-27
10-11	40, 42 (also = 7)
12-15	22-25
16	43
17-21	28-32
22	47
23-25	33-35
26	46
27-30	36-39
31-38	52, 54, 56, 59, 61, 63-4, 66
39	103
40	not found
41	83
42	no exact match
43	82
44-5	109-110
46	114
47	not found
48	104
49	49
50	51
51-56	115, 117, 119-120, 122-3
57-60	142-3
59	154?
60	145
61-4	71, 73, 76, 78
65-73	147, 146, not found, 148-150, not found, 151-2
74-75	91, 93
76	106
77-80	95-6, not found, 97
81	154?
82-3	99, 101
84-87	138, 137, 139-140
88-95	153-160
96-101	126-131
102	not found
103-114	161-2, 166, 164, 163, 165, 167-172
115	not found

⁵ Note that we put a question mark where the match is quite close but there are significant differences. Given the repetition of important themes, in some cases, a line may have a more or less exact match, and a couple of other lines which are close matches as well.

116-7 20-21
 118-135 181, 184-5, not found, 182-3, 179-180, not found, 173-178, 186-188
 136-151 not found

Ordering of *Myang 'das* 18 in terms of the *yig rkang* of *rDo rje khros pa* 6:

1-6 not found
 7 11 [also parallel of *Myang 'das* line 42 below]
 8-14 not found
 15-17 4-5, 7
 18-19 not found
 20-21 116-117
 22-25 12-15
 26-7 8-9
 28-39 17-21, 23-25, 27-30
 40 10
 41 not found
 42 11 [repeat of *Myang 'das* line 7 above]
 43 16
 44-45 not found
 46 26
 47 22
 48 not found
 49-51 49, not found, 50
 52-66 31, not found, 32, not found, 33, not found x 2, 34, not found, 35, not found, 36-7, not found, 38
 67-70 not found
 71-78 61, not found, 62, not found x 2, 63, not found, 64
 79-81 not found
 82-3 43, 41
 84-90 not found
 91-101 74, not found, 75, not found, 77-8, 80, not found, 82, not found, 83
 102 not found
 103-4 39, 48
 105 not found
 106 76
 107-8 not found
 109-123 44-5, not found x 3, 46, 51, not found, 52, not found, 53-4, not found, 55-6
 124-5 not found
 126-131 96-101
 132-136 not found
 137-140 85, 84, 86-87
 141 not found
 142-145 57-58, not found, 60
 146-152 66, 65, 68-70, 72-3
 153-160 88-95
 161-172 103-4, 107, 106, 108, 105, 109-114
 173-178 127-132
 179-180 124-5
 181-185 118, 122-3, 119-120
 186-188 133-135
 189-199 not found

CHAPTER 2.V THE LEMMATA: QUOTATIONS FROM THE *MYANG 'DAS*

Introduction

Lemmata are often extremely useful sources for editing the texts they are drawn from. Unfortunately, in this case they have had only limited editorial usage. This is for two reasons: firstly, the frequent citations from the *Myang 'das* contain no passages where the versions found in the canonical collections present any textual problems; secondly, the lemmata often summarise or paraphrase the text, rather than reproduce it verbatim. For these reasons, the lemmata have played a smaller role in our edition than we might have hoped, but where they do, we mention them in the apparatus.

In this chapter therefore, we examine how the commentarial tradition has drawn on the *Myang 'das* and what we can learn from this. The *Myang 'das* is frequently cited, but we find that some particular sections are quoted repeatedly, while others receive less or no attention. Part of the reason for this is that a famous early commentary on the Phur pa tradition, the *Phur pa 'Bum nag*,¹ is widely depended upon by later commentators, and although this is not explicitly acknowledged, a significant proportion of subsequent citations from the *Myang 'das* follow the ones found in the *'Bum nag*. Thus, in various sources, we may find general discussion of the *Myang 'das* or sections of it which are quoted at length in the *'Bum nag*,² and over three-quarters of the actual citations we have found so far occur in the *'Bum nag*. Hence, we give most focus to the *'Bum nag*'s treatment of the *Myang 'das*, adding a relatively brief discussion of citations which do not appear to be found in the *'Bum nag*.

The Phur pa 'Bum nag's citations from the Myang 'das

The *'Bum nag* quotes twelve passages from the *Myang 'das*. In the case of one of these twelve passages, a substantial citation is first given, but then various elements of it are repeated on four further occasions in the text. The *'Bum nag*, then, relies on the *Myang 'das* for specific points (which we shall examine), but not for others, and later commentators appear to pick up on exactly these same points. Indeed, it seems most likely – at least in the commentaries by Kong sprul, bDud 'joms and A myes Zhabs, which we have looked at – that for these passages, they were using the *'Bum nag* (or another source which shares the commentarial tradition of the *'Bum nag*). In the case of a number of these later commentarial citations, they all follow minor variants given in the two editions of the *'Bum nag* which are presently available, rather than the text given in any of our extant *Myang 'das* editions.³ Where we find such quotations in which there are no

¹ The *'Bum nag* version cited below is the Gangtok edition, with the bDud 'joms bKa' ma Vol. Tha variants in square brackets. See Bibliography: Editions of the *'Bum nag*.

² For example, Khenpo Namdak (1999: 32 note 26, 55 note 90) refers to its account (in Chapter 4) of the subjugation of Rudra, and to the deity form found in that chapter. Nonetheless, although the *'Bum nag* does not cite the *Myang 'das*'s Chapter 4 at length, it does prominently introduce its section on the subjugation of Rudra with a quotation from the opening lines of *Myang 'das*'s Chapter 4, as we shall see below.

³ For instance, the citation given in bDud 'joms 78.2-3 concerning the place for wrathful practice is virtually identical to that given in the *'Bum nag* (41.5-6) [277.1-2] and different from the *Myang 'das* versions (D51v; M124r; G110v; T150v; R120v; N53v). Both bDud 'joms and the *'Bum nag* omit three yig rkang, and also share small variants from the *Myang 'das*, eg. ni for ru, lam for dang. Exactly the same applies to this same citation found in A myes Zhabs (149.4-5), which only differs from the *'Bum nag* and bDud 'joms in a single reading (lam for srang) not shared by any other text presently at our disposal. Kong sprul (69.3-4), discussing suitable sites for general tantric practice, cites a passage for which the *Myang 'das* (D51v; G110v; M124r; T150v; R120v; N53v) and *'Bum nag* (40.2-3) [274.6-265.1] versions are extremely close, but Kong sprul does share the *'Bum nag*'s bzhi against the *Myang 'das*'s bzhi'o. A similar situation is found in the case of the citation used by Kong sprul (69.2) and by A myes Zhabs (147.1-2) in discussing the qualities of the tantric master, which in both cases is virtually identical to that given in the *'Bum nag* (39 line 6) [274.2-3]. All these citations are very close to the passage in the *Myang 'das* (D66v;

substantial variants between the versions in the *'Bum nag* and in the *Myang 'das*, it is difficult to prove *conclusively* that the *'Bum nag* (or the commentarial tradition it represents) was followed. The evidence is stronger, however, in the case of three passages, where citations in Kong sprul⁴ follow almost exactly the wording of the *'Bum nag*, which re-orders and paraphrases the *Myang 'das* original. It is hardly conceivable that Kong sprul (or an earlier commentator he may be following) should have independently re-written these passages in exactly the same manner that we find in the *'Bum nag*.

What, then, does the commentarial tradition, exemplified by the *'Bum nag*, take from the *Myang 'das*? First, while we find numerous sources in rNying ma literature on the subjugation of Rudra,⁵ the *Myang 'das*'s Chapter 4 is one of the more significant. The *'Bum nag* quotes from a substantial passage at the beginning of this chapter, and in the *'Bum nag*, just as in the *Myang 'das* itself, the context for this citation is the introduction to the account of Rudra's subjugation. What we have here is a statement of how and why Rudra arose, the advantages of taming him and the disadvantages of not doing so. The *'Bum nag*'s version is not a direct quotation throughout,⁶ it paraphrases the opening lines and to a lesser extent some of the other points, and we also find selectivity and omission.⁷ A particularly interesting point about this quotation is that the *'Bum nag* re-writes the *Myang 'das*'s lines on the question of the causes from which Rudra arose. The *Myang 'das* says that he arose from evil causes and conditions, elaborating that the cause is mental grasping at substantiality, while the condition is acting in a perverted way.⁸ The *'Bum nag*'s citation is more explicit, in effect interpreting this, specifying the degeneration of samaya as the cause, and renunciation of the lama as the condition.⁹ Neither of these are mentioned in the *Myang 'das*.¹⁰

The next passages in the *Myang 'das* which are quoted in the *'Bum nag* (and elsewhere) concern the qualities of the appropriate places for tantric practice, given in the opening section of the *Myang 'das*'s Chapter 5. In the case of the first verse cited,¹¹ which relates to the attributes of a suitable place for general tantric practice, the quotation is almost identical to the original (see above, note 3) but in the second passage on the specific requirements for the place in which wrathful rituals are performed,¹² we again find some

M147r; G131v; T173v; R140v; N77v). However, in the single minor variant we do find (*'Bum nag* la for *Myang 'das* nas), the *'Bum nag*, Kong sprul and A myes Zhabs are in agreement against all the *Myang 'das* editions. See also below.

⁴ The first citation (Kong sprul 44.1-4) quotes the *Myang 'das* Chapter 4's discussion of Rudra (D48r; M118v; G105v; T145r; R116r; N:48r), following the distinctive readings (see below and note 7) in the *'Bum nag* (26 line 1-4 [250.1-5]). The second citation (Kong sprul 130.5-6, from the *Myang 'das* D57r-v; M132v; G118r-v; T158v-159r; R127v; N61v) also closely follows the *'Bum nag*, which again has re-phrasing and which integrates lines separated by fifteen intervening yig rkang in the *Myang 'das* (see below and note 24). We find a very similar situation of selection from a longer passage together with re-wording in the case of the third citation (Kong sprul 129.5-130.1, corresponding to the *'Bum nag* 101.6-102.2 [359.4-6], quoting from the *Myang 'das* Chapter 12 (D60v-61r; M137v-138r; G123r; T163v; R131v; N66v-67r) (see also below and note 36).

⁵ See Mayer 1996, 116-128, and 1998, Cantwell 1997.

⁶ The possibility remains that it *might* be a direct quotation from an older edition of the *Myang 'das* differing from all our extant versions, but given that we find significantly different wording which has left no trace on any of the five editions examined, this would seem an unlikely scenario.

⁷ Generally, this is a matter of simply shortening the passage, but a few points are omitted entirely, such as the consideration of Rudra's family or lineage (*rigs*). Kong sprul's citation of the passage (44, line 1-4) is virtually word-for-word the same as the *'Bum nag*'s.

⁸ log pa'i sems can chen po de/ /legs pa'i rgyu rkyen las ma byung./ /nyes pa'i rgyu rkyen las byung ste/ / rgyu ni gzung [TN bzung] 'dzin rtog [N rtogs MG insert ngan] las byung [MG insert ngo]/ /rkyen kyang [TRN yang MG ni] log par spyad [MGTRN spyod] pa las byung./ [TRN omits byung MG insert ngo] *Myang 'das* sDe dge base text [variants in square brackets] (D48r; M118v; G105v; T145v; R116v N48r)

⁹ log pa'i semn cheno [sems can chen po] 'di/ dam tshig nyams [nyams] pa'i rgyu las byung./ /rkyen ni bla ma spangs pa'o/ *'Bum nag* 26 [250], Boord 129.

¹⁰ It is, however, true that in the broader context of the *Myang 'das* as a whole, there is certainly a good deal on the link between Rudra and samaya degeneration.

¹¹ /gnas kyi dam pa bstan [N stan] pa la/ /gzhung ldan bkra shis byin can dang./ /nyams dga' ba yi [MGTRN ba'i] gnas dang bzhi'o (D51v; M124r; G110v; T150v; R120v; N53v; *'Bum nag* equivalent: 40.2-3 [274.6-265.1]; Kong sprul 69.3-4).

¹² The cited yig rkang are as follows: drag po'i [TRN po] gnas kyi dam pa ru/ /dur khrod shing gcig [TRN cig Rc gcig] rgya gram dang/ /gcan gzan [TRN zan] mang po [MG po'i] rgyu srang dang/ [MG drangs nas] /gnam [R gnan Rc gnas] ni gri 'dra sa gru gsum/ /logs la tsher ma can gyi shing/..... /de ni drag po bsgrub pa'i [TRN po'i sgrub, MG po'i bsgrub for po bsgrub pa'i]

selectivity (three yig rkang are omitted). In this case, however, the main points, given first, are all included in their original order, and in terms of sense, the only innovation is to clarify *rgya gram* (cross) into *rgya gram lam* (crossroads), although this might be inferred from the context.

A substantial passage from the *Myang 'das*'s Chapter 7 on the yoga of ultimate meaning¹³ is cited in the '*Bum nag*' in introducing a section on tantric conduct, in particular, that of its basis in a non-dual perspective. This part of the text refers to performing activities with compassion, the liberating killing of the afflictions, progressive practice through the nine vehicles, the importance of the samayas and tantric requisites for practice. It is emphasised that the mind should abide in the dharmatā, meditating on the aggregates as illusory in the maṇḍala of deities. The first part of the '*Bum nag*'s quotation is close to the NGB versions of the *Myang 'das*', but again, there is some paraphrasing,¹⁴ and in one case, what might be a scribal error.¹⁵ As the passage continues, a number of yig rkang are omitted, and the final three yig rkang given in the quotation are in fact found separately further on in the chapter, in the same order but each embedded within quite different text. Nonetheless, the original sense of the cited lines is essentially preserved.

The next two cited passages are found in the *Myang 'das*'s Chapter 8, in the context of a discussion of the nature and types of phur pa/phur bu. The first¹⁶ specifies the woods or metals needed to make appropriate phur pa for different ritual purposes, while the second¹⁷ lists five types of metals from which a phur pa may be manufactured. In the *Myang 'das*', the two are immediately consecutive, although they are cited at different points in the '*Bum nag*'.¹⁸ In the case of the first passage, the '*Bum nag*' rearranges the order of the *Myang 'das*' text to bring it into line with the standard conventional order for the four activities, which is shared in the list given just above in the *Myang 'das*' (ie. *zhi rgyas dbang drag phur pa bya*). But in this actual verse in the *Myang 'das* we have the order given as *drag rgyas dbang zhi*. In other respects, this quotation is very close to the *Myang 'das*.¹⁹ We have no real variation in meaning in the second passage cited, but again there is some reordering²⁰ and slight changes in wording.²¹ Kong sprul also quotes this passage, exactly following the '*Bum nag*'s reading against that in the *Myang 'das*.²²

In the '*Bum nag*', we have a section on the symbolism of the material phur pa, following directly after the quote on the types of metal, and this consists almost exclusively of another quotation (102.6 [360.5]) which occurs in the *Myang 'das*'s Chapter 9 (D57r-v; M132v; G118r-v; T158v-159r; R127v; N61v). Again we have some reverse positioning: an association between the three Buddha bodies and three parts of the phur pa, put first in the '*Bum nag*' (perhaps for emphasis?), follows fifteen yig rkang after the general statement on its perfect three-sided form in the *Myang 'das*. We also have the omission of a yig rkang in the middle of two cited lines, and there is a little paraphrasing, with one slight change in sense.²³ Given these re-workings

gnas so/ D51v; M124r; G110v; T150v-151r; R120v-121r; N53v; '*Bum nag*' equivalent: 41.5-6 [277.1-2]; bDud 'joms' *gnam lcags spu gri*: 78.2-3; A myes Zhabs: 149.4-5.

¹³ The full title of the chapter (sDe dge edition 54r, variants in square brackets) is: ye nas yin pa'i don de [MG omit de] la/ [TRN omit ye nas yin pa'i don de la] /yang dag pa'i don la [MG par for pa'i don la] sbyor [MGRN 'byor Rc sbyor] ba'i [MGN pa'i] rnal 'byor pa [MGTRN gyi] lta ba'i [MGTRN ba] nges pa [MGTRN par] bstan pa'i le'u ste bdun pa'o// The cited passage begins from D53r; M126v; G113r; T153r; R122v; N55v. In the '*Bum nag*', the citation is 211.3-6 [529.6-530.3].

¹⁴ rjes su bsgrub for dems/dems su 'dzin; sngags cha for lag cha

¹⁵ la byang for sgrub/bsgrub pa'i lam

¹⁶ D54r-v; M128r; G114r-v; T154v; R123v-124r; N57r

¹⁷ D54v; M128r; G114v; T154v; R124r; N57r-v

¹⁸ 158.5-6 [444.2-3]; 102 .5 [360.4]

¹⁹ There is an exception in the comment on the phur pa for pacifying: chos kyi is given for chos nyid, thus omitting the association between the dharmatā and this phur pa.

²⁰ eg. lcags sam gnam lcaṭ [or: sa lcags gnam lcags] for gnam lcags sa lcags

²¹ eg. dang for gsum

²² Kong sprul (130.4-5) follows the same readings that are found in the bDud 'joms bKa' ma edition of the '*Bum nag*' in its first variant (sa lcags for lcags sam), and the Gangtok edition in its second variant. (bzhi for dang). It is possible that Kong sprul consulted different editions of the '*Bum nag*', but it is equally possible that he followed a source – either a copy of the '*Bum nag*' or another commentary relying upon it – which shared some variants with both the '*Bum nag*' editions we now have available.

²³ rgya mdud gong ma for dbu yi /dbu'i rgya mdud

of the *Myang 'das*, Kong sprul's dependence on the *'Bum nag* tradition is clear in his quotation of these lines, which, as in the *'Bum nag*, follows immediately after the citation above.²⁴

Two parts of the *Myang 'das*'s Chapter 10 on the samayas are quoted in the *'Bum nag*, also in the context of the section on samaya. The first²⁵ consists of a rather poetic list of similes: the general samayas are likened to the ground of the earth, supporting all, fulfilling wishes like a wish-fulfilling jewel, and subduing like a lion. The list is basically the same in our two texts, although we find the yig rkang introducing the list in the *Myang 'das* is moved to its conclusion in the *'Bum nag*. The second more substantial passage is not in fact presented as a direct quotation in the *'Bum nag*: rather, at the end of a detailed commentary on twenty tantric vows (213 [532-3]), the *'Bum nag* attributes its explanation to the *Myang 'das*.²⁶ Each point in the *'Bum nag* is given in ordinary sized writing, while a comment on it is given in small print, clearly distinguished from the main text.²⁷ Now, in fact, while we do find the twenty points in the *Myang 'das*, the glosses are not included there. Essentially, the list itself is very similar, with few meaningful discrepancies.²⁸ We again witness some reversal.²⁹ All the points are given in the same order, although the final two yig rkang are elided.

The *Myang 'das*'s Chapter 12 on the dharmatā view of nirvāṇa³⁰ is drawn on in several places in the *'Bum nag*, but these various citations are from only two passages in the *Myang 'das*, the second of which is quoted from five times. The first of these³¹ concerns the nature of the ultimate "bodhicitta phur pa" (*byang chub sems kyi phur pa*). Again, we do not have an exact word-for-word copy; besides slight variations, the quotation is a selection of lines, missing out several yig rkang and eliding 2 yig rkang into one.³² The overall sense of the passage is kept intact, although there is one rather dramatic change of meaning: the *'Bum nag* says that the ultimate meaning can be realised if the phur pa strikes either sentient beings (in the Gangtok edition) or primordial wisdom (in the bDud 'joms bka' ma edition). All versions of the *Myang 'das* speak of it striking the mind.³³

Directly after this passage in the *Myang 'das*, we find the section which is repeatedly quoted (D60v-61r; M137v-138r; G123r-v; T163v; R131v; N66v-67r). It concerns the symbolic associations of the phur pa, metaphorically associating the two parts of the word phur pa with meditative understandings. This type of discussion on the elements of a deity's name or ritual implement etc. occurs frequently in root tantras and commentaries, and in the case of "phur pa" we have found a similar section in Ch.9 of the *rdo rje khros pa rtsa ba'i rgyud*³⁴. The first citation of this *Myang 'das* passage in the *'Bum nag* (101.6 – 102.2 [359.4-6])

²⁴ Kong sprul (130.5-6) is word-for-word the same as the *'Bum nag*'s citation, apart from rgyu for rgya (but the zhabs kyu is marked, and deletion is probably intended) and bzhog for gzhog.

²⁵ D58v; M134v; G120r; T160v; R129r; N63v; *'Bum nag* equivalent: 213 line 1 [532.1-2].

²⁶ zhes myang 'das las bshad do/ (213 [533])

²⁷ In the bDud 'joms bka' ma edition, the glosses are on the same lines as the text, but they are attached by a curving line of dots to the points they clarify, generally breaking up the yig rkang in the middle. In the Gangtok edition, the glosses are given beneath the line.

²⁸ In the *Myang 'das*, we find the list on D58v-59r; M134v-135r; G120r-v; T160v-161r; R129r-v; N63v-64r. There is one slightly different sense. The *Myang 'das* gives: rdo rje ra bas bskor ba'i go mi hral/dral (the space which is encircled by the vajra enclosure is not broken into, or: do not cut out gaps in the surrounding vajra enclosure); the *'Bum nag* has: rdo rje ra bas bskor ba'i tho mi dbral (Boord 325 gives: One does not omit stones from the circle of a vajra wall).

²⁹ zas dang nor for nor dang zas

³⁰ The full title is: lta ba chos nyid [TRN inserts du] mya ngan las [N omits las] 'das pa'i rgyud [MGTRN par for pa'i rgyud] bstan [N stan] pa'i le'u ste bcu gnyis pa'o (D61r; M138r; G123v; T164r; R132r; N67r)

³¹ D60v; M137v; G122v-123r; T163r-v; R131r-v; N66v; *'Bum nag* equivalent: 215.1-3 [535.6-536.3]

³² skyes [skye] med gdab pa'i [gdal ba'i] phur pa de/ for /phur pa skye ba med pa'i don/ /ma skyes brdal [TRN bdal] ba'i phur pa yis/

³³ *'Bum nag*: semn la btab na don dam rtot/ [/ye shes la gdab na don dam rtogs/] for *Myang 'das*: /sems la btab pas [MG las gtab pa'i] don dam [N ma] rtogs/

³⁴ We find (D180r; M201r; G180r; T77v; R72r; N86v; K95r): /phur ni thams cad byang chub sems/ /pa ni thams cad kun la [MGTRNK tu] khyab/ /phur ni thams cad [R thamd] gtso bo'i mchog/ pa ni thams cad 'khor gyi tshul/ /phur ni thams cad skye ba med/ /pa ni rol pa 'gag [MG 'gags] pa med/ /phur ni byang chub sems su [R semsu] gcig/ /pa ni thams cad de ru sgrub [MG bsgrub; TRNK bsgrubs]/

gives twelve yig rkang from it, which are said to constitute a commentary on the meanings of the word (*nges tshig* =Skt. *nirukta*), which is one of a number of sub-sections relating to the material symbolic phur pa (*mtshan ma rdzas kyi phur pa*). As in our previous quotations, we find reversal of ordering in some of the yig rkang, and omission of lines, although since we are dealing with a number of "self-contained" associations, which are not broken up but only re-arranged, this does not have a significant impact on the sense of the components. In the final lines, the re-arrangement means that the comments on *bsgral ba* and *sbyor ba* are reversed, conforming to the conventional ordering of "*sbyor sgrol*". The few slight re-wordings also do not change the meaning in any very significant way.³⁵ This citation is also found in Kong sprul, again, virtually word-for-word the same as the passage in the *'Bum nag*.³⁶

The second and third quotations are shorter. The second (158.5 [444.1]), which consists of three yig rkang, follows the order given in the first quotation rather than that found in the *Myang 'das*. In the *'Bum nag*, the quote is given in the context of illustrating that the substance of the absolute phur pa is the nature of mind (*sems nyid*).

The context for the third quotation (159.2-3 [445.1-2]) is again that of an exegesis of the word (*nges tshig*), phur pa, although here it is particularly specified that it is the ultimate meaning (*don dam*) which is being addressed. Now, the four yig rkang selected are in the same order as we find in the *Myang 'das*, although the content is virtually identical to that given in the first *'Bum nag* citation, which is close to but not exactly the same as the *Myang 'das* version.

We have the same situation in the case of the fourth quotation (159.4 [445.3-4]), which is of the final four yig rkang of the passage: that is, unlike when the passage was cited at length on the first occasion, we now again conform to the *Myang 'das*'s original ordering of the yig rkang. Again, also, the actual content of the yig rkang is virtually identical to that given in the first *'Bum nag* citation. We find this citation a few yig rkang after the third quotation, now illustrating the ultimate result, that of attaining the dharmakāya.

The fifth citation of this passage in the *'Bum nag* (215.4-5 [536.5]) occurs soon after the section on the ultimate "bodhicitta phur pa", which cites the passage preceding this in the *Myang 'das* (see above). In this case, the ordering of the yig rkang neither conforms to that given in the first long quotation from this passage in the *'Bum nag*, nor to that in the *Myang 'das*! It is also interesting that the first yig rkang given is here closer to its version in the *Myang 'das* than it is to the previously mentioned citation of it.³⁷

The final passage which is cited in the *'Bum nag* is given in the *Myang 'das* at the beginning of Chapter 17 in the sDe dge, mTshams brag and sGang steng editions, and near the beginning of Chapter 18 in the gTing skyes, Rig 'dzin and Nubri editions.³⁸ The lines preceding it are quite different in the *Myang 'das* and *'Bum nag* versions, although the following text discusses wrathful ritual practice in both cases. However, the three yig rkang themselves straightforwardly concern the tantric master (*slob dpon*), and in the context of the *'Bum nag* (39.6 [274.2-3]) and similarly in Kong sprul (69.2) and A myes Zhabs (147.1-2), who also cite these lines, the quote is given to illustrate the qualities necessary for a tantric master, in a discussion of the first of the five "perfections" (*phun sum tshogs pa*).³⁹ In the case of this short citation, the wording is virtually identical in every case, that of the different editions of the *Myang 'das*, the *'Bum nag*, A myes Zhabs, and the Kong sprul *rgyud 'grel*.

³⁵ For example, we find *chos kyi dbyings nyid* rather than *chos kyi chos nyid*, but note in this case that the fifth citation of the passage does give the "correct" *chos nyid*.

³⁶ Kong sprul (129.5 - 130.1) repeats exactly the same twelve yig rkang and in the same order as that found in the passage in the *'Bum nag*, sharing all its readings. In the minor variants between the two editions of the *'Bum nag* (see comment on Kong sprul's source in note 22 above), in some cases it shares one and in some cases, the other edition's readings. Only in one case does it have a variant which is different from either of our two *'Bum nag* editions: merely, *kyis for kyi* [or: *gis*].

³⁷ In the *Myang 'das* (D60v; M138r; G123r; T163v; R131v; N67r), we find: /chos kyi chos nyid phur pa yin/. In the first *'Bum nag* citation of it, we have: *chos kyi dbyings nyid phur pa yin/*, but in this final citation we have /chos kyi chos nyid phur pa yin/. We find both variants in the second citation of it given in the *'Bum nag*: *chos kyi chod* [dbyings nyid for chod] phur pa yin/.

³⁸ D66v; M147r; G131v; T173v; R140v; N77v. We believe the different placement to be due to the shuffling of folios which is discussed in the next chapter, and hence, that the correct placement should be within Chapter 17.

³⁹ The perfected practitioner, place, circle, time and material requisites are all needed as a basis for accomplishment.

Is it possible to make any text critical comment on which *Myang 'das* tradition(s) the *'Bum nag* has drawn on in its citations? There are no instances of the sharing of errors between the *'Bum nag*'s quotations and one or more of our *Myang 'das* editions: on the contrary, all the readings which the *'Bum nag* shares with one *Myang 'das* tradition against another are either "correct" readings against scribal errors, or are at least plausible variant readings. Furthermore, we do not seem to have a consistent pattern of shared readings either. In a number of cases, the *'Bum nag* editions follow mTshams brag and sGang steng's readings.⁴⁰ But we also witness some instances where the *'Bum nag* supports readings of the gTing skyes, Rig 'dzin and Nubri group.⁴¹ There are also a couple of cases where the *'Bum nag* seems to favour sDe dge's single readings, although these instances could readily be attributed to conjecture or coincidence.⁴² We also witness occasions where the *'Bum nag* follows mTshams brag, sGang steng and sDe dge against gTing skyes, Rig 'dzin and Nubri,⁴³ and other patterns.⁴⁴ It would seem that all we can conclude is that there is not an obvious linkage between the *Myang 'das* citations found in the *'Bum nag* and any of our extant editions to the exclusion of others.

Citations from the Myang 'das which are not found in the Phur pa 'Bum nag

It is, of course, not possible to be exhaustive in a discussion of further citations of the *Myang 'das*, found in commentaries other than the *'Bum nag*: extensive reading of the literature would be necessary to ensure that a representative picture emerges. Here, then, we only supplement the above discussion of the *'Bum nag* citations – which would seem to dominate the commentarial tradition⁴⁵ – with consideration of the few other passages cited by Kong sprul.

It is possible that these quotations too derive from another commentarial tradition rather than directly from the *Myang 'das*. However, in this case it would seem quite likely that Kong sprul used the *Myang 'das* itself as his source. According to his biography (Barron 2003: 286), he kept a copy of the *rNying ma'i rgyud 'bum* in his room. This would not be sufficient to prove that he consulted the *Myang 'das*: indeed, it seems probable that he did not trouble to locate the original of the quotations he takes from the *'Bum nag* tradition.⁴⁶ It is worth remembering, however, that such checking would not have been swift, since the *'Bum nag* does not tell us even the *Myang 'das* chapter it is citing, and it would have taken some time to find the passages concerned (and this is especially so given the paraphrasing and re-ordering we witness in some of these

⁴⁰ For instance, the *'Bum nag* (26 [250]) supports MG's med de/ against DTRN's tu med/ (D48r; M118v; G106r; T145v; R116v; N48v), (211 [530]) MG's mkhas against DTRN's gsal (D53v; M126v; G113r; T153r; R122v; N56r), (213 [532]) MG's bsrungs against DTRN's srang/bsrangs (D58v; M134v; G120r; T160v; R129r; N63v), (213 [532]) MG's spyod against TRN's spyo and D's blug (D58v; M134v; G120r; T160v; R129r; N63v), and in giving rdzong (213 [533]), it seems to follow MG's rdzongs against D's bzang and TRN's gzhong (D59r; M135r; G120v; T161r; R129r; N64r).

⁴¹ For example, the *'Bum nag* (215 [536]) follows TRN's la gdag rather than DMG's las 'das (D60v; M137v; G122v; T163r; R131r; N66v), (102 [359], 159 [445]) TRN's pa ni against DMG's phur pa (D60v; M137v; G123r; T163v; R131v; N66v) and TRN's bskyed pa against D's bkye ba and MG's skye ba (D61r; M138r; G123r; T163v; R131v; N67r).

⁴² For instance, the *'Bum nag* (211 [530]) supports D's 'byed against TRN's byed and MG's phyed (D53v; M127r; G113v; T153v; R123r; N56r), and (101 [359]) D's phur against MG's sku and TRN's bu (D60v; M137v; G123r; T163v; R131v; N66v). In the first case, phyed could have been amended to 'byed, while in the second case, MGTRN's readings appear to be corrupt or inappropriate, and phur could have been conjectured as appropriate.

⁴³ We find the *'Bum nag* (211 [530]) following DMG's dmigs pa against TRN's bya ba (D53v; M127r; G113v; T153v; R123r; N56v); (102 [360]) DMG's la bya against TRN's pa la (D54v; M128r; G114v; T154v; R124r; N57v); and (213 [532]) DMG's bya yi against TRN's 'dab chags (D58v; M134v; G120v; T160v; R129r; N64r).

⁴⁴ For example, we have an instance where the *'Bum nag* (102 [360]) follows DMGN's mgo against TR's 'go (D57r; M132v; G118r; T158v; R127v; N61v), and two instances (102 [359], 159 [445]) where it follows DTR's thebs against MG's theg and N's thob (D61r; M138r; G123v; T163v; R131v; N67r). As we might expect, there are also many occasions where one or the other edition's single readings are not followed.

⁴⁵ We have only found one citation of the *Myang 'das* in bDud 'joms which is not given in the *'Bum nag* and discussed above, and this is shared with Kong sprul (see below). Although Kong sprul does cite a few further passages, most of his quotations would appear to be dependent on the *'Bum nag* tradition (as we have seen above).

⁴⁶ If he did, no evidence is left of this since as we have seen, he follows the *'Bum nag* against all the *Myang 'das* editions.

citations). On the other hand, browsing the *Myang 'das* himself for further elaborations would not have been such an onerous task, so it would seem more probable that he would have done it. It might also be significant that three of his additional citations are from the openings of chapters – perhaps the most obvious places to look while browsing – while all the further citations are from the remainder of Chapter 27, a citation from the opening of which he gives earlier.

In some respects, these additional quotations are quite different from those Kong sprul shares with the *'Bum nag*. Even the very lengthy passages which Kong sprul cites from the *Myang 'das*'s Chapter 27 are extremely close to the original, lacking the re-formulations we find in the *'Bum nag* citations. Moreover, unlike the situation described above of no clear pattern of textual affiliation between the *'Bum nag* quotations with any of our three major NGB traditions, Kong sprul would appear to be following the readings of the sDe dge edition of the NGB. This would hardly be surprising if he had consulted his own copy, since he is most likely to have possessed the sDe dge printed edition, and this would seem to be confirmed by the mention in his biography (Barron 2003: 286), where he includes the NGB in a list of block print texts.⁴⁷

To review the quotations, the first, four yig rkang in length, is taken from the beginning of the *Myang 'das*'s Chapter 6 and it consists of a list of seven samaya infractions which bring about appropriate objects for "liberating killing". It is extremely close to all versions of the *Myang 'das*.⁴⁸

The second citation, from the opening of the *Myang 'das*'s Chapter 13, is another four yig rkang verse, on the symbolic ornaments required by the mantra practitioner, which correspond to the deity's characteristic wrathful adornments. In this case, Kong sprul's quotation is exactly the same as that given in the sDe dge edition of the *Myang 'das*.⁴⁹

The other citations consist of direct quotations of substantial passages from the *Myang 'das*'s Chapter 27. The first, from the chapter's introduction, specifies the deleterious consequences resulting from the failure to kill/liberate the most vicious negativities.⁵⁰ The second, on the benefits of liberating killing, follows immediately afterwards in the *Myang 'das*, while in Kong sprul, it follows after Kong sprul's elaboration of the first quotation.⁵¹ In both citations, the emphasis is not only on the positive and negative effects as such, but as much on the crucial importance of the maintenance of the samaya and the preservation of the tantric maṇḍala. Together, the two quotations are thirty yig rkang in length, they are in exactly the same order in the *Myang 'das* and in Kong sprul, and virtually the only difference between Kong sprul and all the *Myang 'das* editions are a few very minor spelling errors.⁵² Although we do not have a pattern of shared errors between the sDe dge *Myang 'das* and Kong sprul, it is quite clear that Kong sprul is following the sDe dge readings in this passage.⁵³

The next cited passage occurs immediately after the above sections in the *Myang 'das*, and a little further down in Kong sprul.⁵⁴ It reiterates the ultimate understanding of the activities of liberating killing, its association with compassion and Buddhist practice, and its ability to cleanse and liberate the five aggregates

⁴⁷ sDe dge was the only printed edition of the *rNying ma'i rgyud 'bum*: all our other editions are manuscripts.

⁴⁸ Kong sprul 145.4-5, corresponds to a verse found in the *Myang 'das*, D52r; M125r(249); G111v; T151v; R121v; N54r. We find two instances of 'gyur for gyur, and the other very minor variants (such as kyis for kyi) are all witnessed in at least one of the *Myang 'das* editions.

⁴⁹ Kong sprul 153.3-4 (corresponding to D61r; M138r-v(275-6); G123v; T164r(327); R132r; N67r): Kong sprul is not very different here from any of the other *Myang 'das* editions, although it does share D's rgyan against MGTR's chun (and N's tshun). Either reading could make good sense in the context.

⁵⁰ Kong sprul 163.1-3; *Myang 'das* D81r; M169r(337); G151v-152r; T190v(380); R154r; N94v-95r.

⁵¹ Kong sprul 164.3-165.1; *Myang 'das* D81r-v; M169r-v(337-8); G152r; T190v-191r (380-381); R154r-v; N95r.

⁵² Apart from minor spelling errors, the only difference between Kong sprul and all editions of the *Myang 'das* is a single instance of dang for nyan/gnyan in the second passage, but even this makes little difference to the meaning.

⁵³ In significant variants, such as nges for ngan, bsgrib/sgrib for grims, ngan for nyams, Kong sprul follows single readings of sDe dge against all the other editions, while in others, Kong sprul follows DMG against TRN (such as ldan for dam, 'khol for 'khor), or DTRN against MG (such as including a yig rkang omitted in MG). The same tendency to follow D's readings applies to many of the minor variants also.

⁵⁴ Kong sprul 166.6-167.3; *Myang 'das* D81v; M169v(338); G152r-v; T191r(381); R154v; N95r-v.

of the objects of the ritual. Again, Kong sprul's citation is an exact copy of the *Myang 'das*, and closer to sDe dge than any of the other editions.⁵⁵

The final short extract from the *Myang 'das*, on the ultimate realisation, is given immediately after the previous citation in Kong sprul, while it occurs two yig rkang further down in the *Myang 'das*.⁵⁶ Kong sprul is word-for-word the same as the sDe dge edition of the *Myang 'das*.⁵⁷

These same two quotations also occur in the *smad las man ngag* section of the bDud 'joms *gnam lcags spu gri* cycle (Volume Da: 210-211). Exactly as we found with the later commentators' use of the *'Bum nag*, bDud 'joms' citation almost certainly derives either from Kong sprul or from a shared source rather than the root text itself. In both bDud 'joms and Kong sprul, the passage begins and ends in exactly the same place and omits the two yig rkang which are found between them in the *Myang 'das*. There are few textual variants between our sources here, but nothing to suggest that an alternative tradition had any bearing on the text given in bDud 'joms.⁵⁸

Conclusion

To summarise the overall picture with the use of these passages, we see that there are some differences between the *'Bum nag* citations, which have had a major impact on the commentarial tradition, and the additional citations added in the Kong sprul commentary. The *'Bum nag* commentarial tradition has not only been highly selective in its citations of the *Myang 'das*, but it has in some cases rather freely re-ordered and re-worded passages to suit the context in which the quotations are given. This freedom taken with the ordering of wording is especially clear in the case of the *Myang 'das* passage which is quoted from on five separate occasions in the *'Bum nag*. In this case, we can be fairly sure that this is not a matter of the *'Bum nag* relying on an earlier no longer extant edition of the *Myang 'das*,⁵⁹ since while the *'Bum nag* re-orders the yig rkang on some occasions, it then cites the same yig rkang in "correct" order on others. As a general comment on the selectivity of the quotations, most are either fairly straightforward comments on the phur pa or the basics of tantric practice and commitments, or they relate to the *Myang 'das*'s interest in the ultimate view engendered by the phur pa practice. Other contents of the *Myang 'das* are neglected, such as certain lengthy and complex descriptions of ritual practices (some of which may have even become forgotten as actual practices in later times), which we find in a number of sections, such as in Chapter 19.

The picture is rather different with the additional citations given by Kong sprul, in that we do not in this instance find that the passages have been re-written or re-ordered, and they are on the contrary, carefully reproduced exactly. Thus, while our examination of the commentarial tradition's use of quotations would suggest that we should be cautious in assuming that citations of texts will represent direct quotations taken from the credited source, the converse does not necessarily follow. In some instances, as our additional citations in Kong sprul would seem to show, citations may in fact be exactly what they claim to be.

⁵⁵ In this case, Kong sprul shares MG sngon against DTRN mngon, and MGTRN de against D da, but otherwise, follows D's readings.

⁵⁶ Kong sprul 167.3; *Myang 'das* D81v; M169v(338); G152v; T191r(381); R154v; N95v.

⁵⁷ TRN share one slightly variant reading (gnyis su med kyis/kyi for DMG and Kong sprul, gnyis med don gyi/gyis) but otherwise, the lines are essentially the same in all editions.

⁵⁸ bDud 'joms shares TRN's btang, where Kong sprul has MG's gtang and D gives gtong; bDud 'joms has one single reading, and gives gtams where Kong sprul in error gives gtab, but almost certainly intended gtams (D gives gtam, MG bstams, and TRN stams).

⁵⁹ I say, *fairly* sure, since it is possible that the differently ordered citations might have been copied from a number of earlier commentaries, which might have each relied on *different* editions of the *Myang 'das*. Thus, it is *possible* that the quotations with different ordering from all the present versions of the *Myang 'das* might once have stemmed from a now lost *Myang 'das* text ordered differently from our present versions. However, even if that were the case, editors of the *'Bum nag* must have been aware of these discrepancies between the citations in different parts of the text, but it would seem that the discrepancies did not worry them. At the very least, they were content to maintain the different orderings even if they had not themselves re-arranged the yig rkang concerned.

On the other hand, bDud 'joms' citation of one of the same passages as Kong sprul, omitting exactly the same lines, would seem to conform to the pattern we found with the *'Bum nag* of the author drawing on previous commentators. Moreover, in terms of the content chosen, Kong sprul's further citations are not dissimilar from the picture of a fairly narrow selectivity in drawing on the *Myang 'das*. The quotations are not drawn from the sections on specific rituals, but reiterate themes which have become of perennial interest to the practice tradition, such as the details of samaya vows, the ultimate view of the "liberating killing" practice, and its relationship to the tantric commitments.

CHAPTER 2.VI THE CASE OF THE DISPLACED FOLIOS: FIRST STEPS IN CRITICALLY EDITING THE *MYANG 'DAS*

Introduction to the problem of placement of text in the Myang 'das

Despite the obvious significance of the *Myang 'das* for the rNying ma and Sa skya Phur pa traditions, an examination of its extant versions soon revealed such major variation that it was unclear whether this text might survive in two or more recensions. In the end, we decided this was not the case (see Chapter 3.1 below), since it seems more likely that transmissional factors alone account for the differences.

In this chapter, we analyse the ordering of the contents of the text: this is necessary because large portions of text shift position from one edition to the next, (see Appendix) and in making our critical edition we had to ascertain the most probable earlier or original ordering. Moreover, the discrepancies have implications for the coherency or otherwise of our individual editions: in Chapter 4, there are two quite different versions of the narrative sequence of the taming of Rudra account, while later in the text, the contents of Chapters 17-19 and 23 vary markedly, and two further chapters after Chapter 23 in some editions are altogether omitted in others, resulting in a different number of chapters and a rather different sense of the development of the text as a whole.

The ordering of text in the different editions of the Myang 'das: a summary of the case

In accounting for the discrepancies between the ordering of material in the different versions of the *Myang 'das* (see Appendix), we are faced with two possible scenarios. Firstly, we might be faced with genuinely alternative versions. Such alternative versions may have stemmed from different editions in the distant past, perhaps even before the early versions of the NGB were compiled. Or, one version may reflect deliberate editorial intervention, and where we find added material, this might even represent an expanded version of an earlier shorter text.¹

On the other hand, the second scenario is that rather than the differing arrangements pointing to genuinely independent recensions of the text, the ordering varies because at some stage in the past,² folios have been displaced and in one case or the other, the textual arrangement has been muddled. On the basis of the evidence found in our extant editions, it is this second scenario which is the more likely one: we have a case of displaced folios. Furthermore, we suggest that the text found in sDe dge and the two Bhutanese

¹ Of course, we witness instances of the expansion of canonical texts in Indian Mahāyāna sūtras, and given that the rNying ma tradition tended towards a dynamic understanding of scriptural revelation (see Mayer 1996: 51-55), such a scenario might not be altogether unexpected in this genre of scripture. Pho brang zhi ba'i 'od talks of a long and short version of the *Myang 'das* in his polemic (Karmay 1980:15).

² If folios *have* been misplaced as we believe, this must have happened *before* the extant editions were made, because our page and chapter numbering follow in all editions in correct sequence, and the "jumps" in the text do not correspond to where the text moves from one folio to another. If we are correct in the suggestion that the Southern Central group (see following note) have lost two chapter endings, it is likely that the process was in at least two stages: the first, in which, say, a folio of text was omitted and other folios misplaced, and the second in which an editor or scribe noticed the omission of chapter titles for Chapters 23 and 24 and the reverse ordering of chapter titles for Chapters 17 and 18, and thus renumbered Chapters 17 and 18, numbered Chapter 25 as 23, and the subsequent chapters accordingly. An alternative, perhaps less likely, possibility is that earlier versions of the text might have only given chapter titles and no numbers (this is not uncommon in NGB texts, eg. the *Byang chub kyi sems bsgom pa yi ge med pa'i rgyud* [<http://ngb.csac.anthropology.ac.uk/csac/NGB/kha/2>] or the *rDo rje gsang ba chen po'i sku rin po che dbyig gi sgron ma shes rab chen po'i mdo* [<http://ngb.csac.anthropology.ac.uk/csac/NGB/ca/5>]), so that an ancestor of the Southern Central group might have inserted chapter numbering throughout, *after* the folio misplacements had taken place.)

manuscripts but absent from the Southern Central witnesses³ is not added or alternative text, but text which was once integral to the *Myang 'das*, which has been mistakenly omitted from an ancestor of our gTing skyes, Rig 'dzin and Nubri editions.

Accidental folio displacements rather than deliberate re-writing

One feature of the kind of religious texts we find in the NGB is that they contain much ritual and symbolic material which is not always presented in an immutably logical or sequential order, and there may be alternative ways of ordering the material which would be equally valid. We find such a considered and deliberate reordering of materials in the shared passages between the NGB's *Phur pa bcu gnyis*, and the Dunhuang text IOL Tib J 331.III, for example.⁴

However, in the cases we have in the *Myang 'das*, there is nothing to suggest that any of the re-ordering was a deliberate editorial act. If it had been, it seems unlikely that the breaks would come – as they do in some instances – in the middle of lines of verse or prose.⁵ Moreover, if such editorial intervention had taken place, we might expect to find at least some other evidence in terms of added or amended material at key points, clarifying the new context for the placement of text. But this is not the case apart from the additional text found in one place in mTshams brag/sGang steng-b and sDe dge, and this text does not seem self-consciously to comment on or to make sense of the arrangement of the other material which is ordered differently from the corresponding sections in the Southern Central group of manuscripts. Thus, the accidental displacement of folios is the most likely explanation for the different ordering of the material, and this is borne out by a close examination of the text, which does indeed seem to indicate that we have misplacements.

The evidence shows that we do not have a single incident of textual displacement. Instead, we have at least two independent movements, one in which an ancestor of mTshams brag and sGang steng-b misplaced a single folio in Chapter 4 [=Block **B**], and one (or possibly more) case(s) where an ancestor of the Southern Central group inserted perhaps two folios originally from Chapters 18 and 19 in between folios of Chapter 17 [=Block **F**], and (on the same or a separate occasion) misplaced two or three folios of text from Chapter 19 into Chapter 23 [=Block **H**], at the same time losing a folio of text which had originally been placed at this point and which gave the titles for Chapters 23 and 24 [=Block **J**].⁶ Thus, while we seem to have some problems with the ordering of both the Southern Central group and the Bhutanese editions, sDe dge alone, which resembles the Southern Central group in its ordering of Chapter 4, and the Bhutanese manuscripts elsewhere, appears to retain the "correct" ordering throughout. We will comment on the implications of this later.

³ The volume in the Kathmandu edition in which the *Myang 'das* almost certainly occurs is missing, so in this instance, we have three rather than four witnesses of this group.

⁴ There is a substantial sharing of a lengthy passage found in the section on the Perfection of Activities (*phrin las phun sum tshogs pa*) in IOL Tib J 331.III, and the *Phur pa bcu gnyis*'s Chapter 14, on mudrās. While the textual description of the mudrās and their accompanying mantras are found together in IOL Tib J 331.III, in the *Phur pa bcu gnyis* the mantras are not integrated with the description, but are found in the correct order, in Chapter 13, on mantras.

⁵ For example, we have breaks in the middle of yig rkang in M120v.1/G107v.1, which move directly from the passage corresponding to D49r.7 to the section found at D50r.3. Similarly, where this moved passage ends in mTshams brag/sGang steng-b (M121v.4; D50v.6) and mTshams brag/sGang steng-b move back to the text found from D49r.7, and again, when mTshams brag/sGang steng-b (M122v.5) move forward to the passage found from D50v.6, we do not find neat breaks at the end of sentences or verses, or even at the end of yig rkang.

⁶ It is also conceivable that rather than representing two separate accidental folio displacements in comparatively lower reaches of the *Myang 'das*'s descent, the misplacements might have occurred at a very high stage, perhaps even an archetypal stage, through separate copyings of one old and renowned exemplar, which might perhaps have lost some of the edges of its pages giving folio numbering.

A detailed examination of the evidence: the first discrepancy in the text order

To consider each case in turn, we begin with Chapter 4. At first sight it might seem straightforward to make an assessment of which version is "correctly" ordered: Chapter 4 relates the myth of the subjugation of Rudra, and one might expect it to follow an obvious sequence. However, matters are not quite so simple; what we witness is a series of incidents in which Rudra and his retinue show resistance which is overcome, and the movement of text rearranges these. The opening of the chapter outlines the problem which Rudra poses and the need to subdue him, while the end of the chapter relates the completion of the subjugation, how all Rudra's attributes and realm are purified and integrated into the Kīlaya maṇḍala, and it gives the prediction of Rudra's Buddhahood. It is during the main account of the subjugation process that one folio of text [Block B] given in sDe dge, 49r.7-50r.3,⁷ is moved down in mTshams brag/sGang steng-b, and inserted between the yig rkang which we find in sDe dge's 50v line 6.

It is also not entirely clear from the language where we shift places that one version is more incoherent than the other. In the case of the sDe dge version, the Tibetan seems coherent at the place where mTshams brag/sGang steng-b part company from sDe dge,⁸ but where the section which is moved further down in mTshams brag/sGang steng-b comes to an end, the language does not seem to run *entirely* smoothly into the passage following.⁹ However, where sDe dge and mTshams brag/sGang steng-b join up and run parallel again to the end of the chapter, the sDe dge version appears to make good sense.¹⁰

In terms of the language, there does not appear to be any particular problems where mTshams brag/sGang steng-b first depart from sDe dge,¹¹ and the same applies to the places where mTshams brag/sGang steng-b begin the passage which is higher up in sDe dge,¹² and where the passage ends and mTshams brag/sGang steng-b join sDe dge for the end of the chapter.¹³

Nonetheless, a closer examination of the chapter as a whole does seem to indicate that the sDe dge/gTing skyes/Rig 'dzin/Nubri version in this case fits together more naturally and indeed, that the mTshams brag/sGang steng-b version has problems of coherency. In the first part of the account, the King of Vajra Horses emanates to Rudra's realm and begins the transformation process, which includes the transmutation of the environmental features of Rudra's stronghold which reflect the emotional defilements. Rudra's daughters and female retinue are ravished, generating pig and tiger headed sons. Then the Glorious Kīlaya emanates in Rudra's form to meet Rudra's consort, Krodhīśvarī. At this point the versions diverge. In sDe dge, it seems that Krodhīśvarī¹⁴ makes offerings to and unites with Kīlaya, believing him to be her lord, and she is impregnated by Kīlaya. When Rudra returns, he finds a changed environment, with pig and tiger headed

⁷ Here, we are using sDe dge to illustrate the ordering found also in this case in gTing skyes, Rig 'dzin and Nubri.

⁸ We have (italics marking where the jump is made in mTshams brag/sGang steng-b) D49r.6-7: *srin mo kro dhī shwa rī nyid ni/ 'khor ba smin pa'i dung phor du/ nyon mongs pa smin pa'i chang gis bkang ste/ longs spyod cing gnas pa las/ 'jigs byed kyi rgyal po dpal kī la yas/ /srin po'i gzugs su sprul nas/ e ma ho/ /bdag gi gtso bo ni phyin to zhes te/ bam chen gyis khri las bab ste/ rje la dung phor gyi mtsho zhal du bstabs pas/ kī la yas rol to/*

⁹ D50r.3-4: *yab lha'i sprul pa de la/ yum gyi sprul pa bstan pa'i tshul du/ srin mo kro dhī bshwa rīr gyur bas/ mtshan yang rdo rje srin mo zhes bya bar gsol to/ /de nas srin pos kyang rang gi sems bltas nas/ /nga rgyal gyi dka' thub skyes nas/ srin po bskul ba byas te/*

¹⁰ D50v.6-7: *de nas cung zad cig nas bcom ldan 'das kyi snam du bton pa las/ shin tu mi dga' ba'i gdung ba skyes nas dus te zhus pa/ e ma ho dpa' bo thugs rje chung/ /shin tu bde ba'i gnas shig nas/ /snam du bton pa thugs rje chung/*

¹¹ M120v.1-2: *'jigs byed dpal kī lā yas /srin po'i gzugs su sprul nas byon/ bya bar gsol to/ /de nas srin pos kyang rang gi sems ltas nas/ /nga rgyal gyi dka' thub skyes nas/ srin pos bskul ba byas te/*

¹² M121v.3-4: *bcom ldan 'das kyi snams su ru dra bsdan pa las/ shin tu mi dga' ba'i sa la/ e ma ho bdag gi gtso bo ni byon to zhes te/ bam chen po'i khri las babs te/ rje la dung phor gyi mtsho zhal bstabs pas/ ki la yas rol to/*

¹³ M122v.4-5: */yab lha'i sprul pa sten pa'i tshul du/ ma mo kro ti sho rir gyur pas/ mtshan yang rdo rje srin mo zhes gdung ba skyes nas bsdus te zhus pa/ e ma ho dpa' bo thugs rje chung/*

¹⁴ It is not entirely clear that the subject is Krodhīśvarī, although this might seem implied by the context. It is also suggested by a similar account in the 'Bum nag (Boord 132; Gonpo Tseten edn. 29-30; bDud 'joms bKa' ma edn. 255-6). Since the 'Bum nag account is prefaced by an explicit quotation from our *Myang 'das*, which cites the section opening our Chapter 4 (Boord 131; Gonpo Tseten edn. 28; bDud 'joms bKa' ma edn. 253), we can be fairly confident that the two stories are likely at least to be related, even though they also seem to have marked differences.

ones in the retinue. A son emanation of Kīlaya is born from Krodhīśvarī, appearing as Rudra, in a form with nine heads and eighteen arms. mTshams brag/sGang steng-b, having omitted the section above, re-join sDe dge and the other editions at this juncture. The furious Rudra invokes the sound, "ru lu ru lu", and takes a three headed, six armed form. From Kīlaya with nine heads and eighteen arms, three headed, six armed wrathful ones come forth, wrapping the ru lu ru lu with om̐ and hūṃ, and weakening Rudra's speech. Rudra responds by taking a nine headed and eighteen armed form, and again further emanations follow, each time with Kīlaya appropriating Rudra's forms and speech, until finally Rudra attempts to escape, but Kīlaya forces him to recognise his former samaya. This is the point where mTshams brag/sGang steng-b insert the omitted section above, after which the two versions conclude together with the description of the place of Rudra and his retinue in the maṇḍala.

Now, while the sDe dge/Southern Central group version as presented above seems to have a fairly clear story line, the mTshams brag/sGang steng-b version is more problematic: it gives the emanation of Kīlaya with nine heads and eighteen arms *after* the arising of three headed, six armed wrathful ones from the nine headed, eighteen armed form. In sDe dge, Kīlaya's invocation of Rudra's former samaya is followed very naturally by a description of Rudra's integration into the maṇḍala. On the other hand, in mTshams brag/sGang steng-b, the apparent victory is followed at first by offerings to Kīlaya (in this version, it would seem that these are made by Rudra), and then by further episodes in which Kīlaya unites with and impregnates the consort, Rudra discovers the pig and tiger headed ones and questions the consort, and the emanation of Kīlaya is born. Since this is religious mythology with symbolic connotations, repetition of themes is not necessarily unexpected, and some sense *can* be made of the mTshams brag/sGang steng-b account. Yet it would certainly seem that the sDe dge/Southern Central group version is rather more coherent and straightforward, and our hypothesis is that it was an exemplar or ancestor of the mTshams brag/sGang steng edition which misplaced a folio at this place.

The second discrepancy in the text order

In examining the ordering in Chapters 17 to 19 to assess the second movement of text outlined in the Appendix, we find that certainty is even more elusive. Both the versions in the Southern Central group on one hand and the sDe dge and mTshams brag/sGang steng-b editions on the other *can* make reasonable sense; neither *entirely* fail to be coherent when we jump passages. In terms of content, Chapters 17 to 19 range backwards and forwards between the two themes of the ultimate nature of the enlightened mind revealed by the teaching, and wrathful activities for subduing negativities and transforming them into the enlightened vision. Thus, in this case, there is no sequential story-line which can be used to judge the coherency of the alternative versions, and ascertaining which version is incorrect is not in the least straightforward.

In the sDe dge/mTshams brag/sGang steng-b editions, in the first two places marking the change in content (D66v.3 and D68r.5),¹⁵ the text appears to flow without any apparent problem although there is not a strikingly obvious flow of ideas in the few lines concerned.¹⁶ The final passage (D70r.1),¹⁷ however, runs very smoothly with a clear connection in the content. In the gTing skyes edition, the text marking the first

¹⁵ We use sDe dge to illustrate the ordering it shares in these cases with the Bhutanese edition, and gTing skyes as representative of the Southern Central group as a whole.

¹⁶ D66v.3-4 (italics mark where the transition occurs): /drag po gtum po bsgrub pa ni/ /gnod gdug nam gnyis bsgral ba'i *phyir/* /gzhung dang mthun pa'i gnas dag tu/ /phun sum tshogs pa'i slob dpon gyis/ /byams dang snying rje sngon btang nas/ /srid pa'i phur bu bsgrub par bya'o/

D68r.5-6: /nyes byed gsum gyi kham *bsreg nas/* /ye shes 'bar ba'i phrin las bskul/ /kham gsum dus gcig dbang bskur bas/ /rang byung sku ru nam dag cing/

¹⁷ D69v.7-70r.1: /hūṃ chen sgra 'byin phag dang smig bur *bcas/* /rnam rgyal snyems ma stag dang bya rgod mgo/ /dbyug sngon sber mo g.yag dang bya rog *bcas/* /gshin rje dur khrod sha ba 'ug par *bcas/* /mi g.yo gtun khung gzig dang khwa ta'i mgo/ [...and so on through the list of the khro bo bcu.]

place where the ordering changes from that in sDe dge [moving from Block **D** to **F**] (T171v.2)¹⁸ does not appear problematic, although in the second instance [where it moves from Block **F** to **E**] (T173v.6),¹⁹ neither the text nor the ideas it expresses appear to flow smoothly, but nonetheless, they do not represent total incoherencies. The third passage affected [the end of Block **E** and the beginning of **G**] (T176r.2)²⁰ seems to make fairly good sense in its *immediate* context – the language follows smoothly and there is some repetition of the theme of overcoming wicked deeds (*nyes byed*).

Nonetheless, while the ordering in both versions *can* make sense, the sDe dge/mTshams brag/sGang steng-b ordering does seem clearer. In particular, the final place where sDe dge (D70r.1) moves from gTing skyes's 173v.6 to its 176r.2 [from Block **F** to **G**], the ordering seems much more natural in sDe dge, because we have the list of the *khro bo bcu*, their consorts and emanations. In the Southern Central group, the list is broken after the first of the *khro bo bcu* given (T173v), and resumed with the second and subsequent deities on T176r. It seems most unlikely that this would have been intended. Secondly, we have identified parallels between the *Myang 'das*'s Chapter 18 and the *rDo rje khros pa*'s Chapter 6 (see Chapter 2.IV above). In the case of the earlier movement between passages in the *Myang 'das*, where sDe dge (D68r.5) moves from gTing skyes's 176r.2 to its 171v.2 [from Block **E** to **F**], one of these examples of parallel text occurs before and after the break [at the end of Block **E** and the beginning of Block **F**]. Eight yig rkang running in sequence in the *rDo rje khros pa* are thus found in sDe dge's ordering of the *Myang 'das*, four before the break and four after it. gTing skyes's ordering, on the other hand, breaks off after the first four of the parallel yig rkang. Although not in itself conclusive (given the radically changed ordering between the text in the two chapters as a whole), this would seem to strengthen our case that sDe dge's ordering is more likely. Thirdly, although the three chapters cannot be definitely distinguished from each other in terms of subject matter, the opening phrases introducing the content of Ch. 18²¹ and Ch. 19²² in sDe dge/mTshams brag/sGang steng-b seem to fit neatly with their chapter titles, which concern "Phur bu bodhicitta" and the activities of messengers respectively.²³ This is not the case in the Southern Central group editions, where the opening of Ch.19²⁴ would seem to fit more naturally with their title for Ch.17,²⁵ and the opening of Ch.18²⁶ seems close to their title for Ch.19.²⁷ This is most striking in the case of Ch.19, where although (as noted above) the lines where we have the "jump" in content (T176r.2) seem to flow on without problem, the wider context of the chapter as a whole does not cohere very well, beginning with the nature and features of the bodhicitta phur bu and concluding with the theme of the messengers and their activities.

¹⁸ T171v.2: /drag po gtum po bsgrub pa ni/ /gnod gdug nam gnyis bsgral bas phyir/ /ye shes 'bar ba'i 'phrin las bsgull/

¹⁹ T173v.6-7: /hūm chen sgra 'byin phag dang dmigs par bcas/ /gzhung dang 'thun pa'i gnas dag tu/ / phun sum tshogs pa'i slob dpon gyis/ /byams dang snying rje sngon btang nas/ /srid pa'i phur bu bsgrub par bya'o/

²⁰ T176r.1-4: /nyes byed gsum gyi kham bsregs nas/ /rnam rgyal bsnnyems ma stag dang bya dgod bcas/ /g.yug sngon sder mo g.yag dang bya rog bcas/ /gshin rje dur khrod sha ba 'ub par bcas/ / mi g.yo tun khung gzig dang khwa ru bcas/ /rta mgrin gtum mo byi la pu shud bcas/ /gzhan gyis mi thub 'da' snyems spyang khu khra mgo bcas/ /bdud rtsi rlung 'byin seng ge phang bang bcas/ / kham gsum gsod byed dred dang sre mo bcas/ /ma hā pa la skyod ma dom dang byi ba bcas/ /nyes byed ma lus mkha' la 'don/

²¹ D67v.3-4: //de nas yang kī la yas/ lta ba byang chub sems kyi chos nyid/ /byang chub sems kyi phur bu mya ngan las 'das shing/ rang bzhin byang chub sems su bsgrub par bya ba'i phyir/ 'di skad brjod do/

²² D69v.5: //de nas badzra kī la yas/ grub pa'i don yod par bya ba'i phyir/ /mngags pa las kyi pho nya 'di dag gsungs so/

²³ D69v.4-5: /phur bu byang chub sems su bsgrub pa'i le'u ste bco brgyad pa'o//

D72v.1: /pho nyas nam shes ye shes su sbyongs shing/ mngags par bya ba'i thabs bstan pa'i le'u ste bcu dgu pa'o//

²⁴ T175r.4-5: //de nas yang kī lā yas/ lta ba byang chub sems kyi chos nyid/ byang chub sems kyi phur bu mya ngan las 'das shing/ rang bzhin byang chub sems su bsgrub par bya ba'i phyir/ 'di skad brjod do/

²⁵ T173v.2: /phur bu byang chub sems su sgrub pa'i le'u ste bcu bdun pa'o//

²⁶ T173v.2-3: //de nas yang badzra ki la yas/ grub pa'i don yod par bya ba'i phyir/ /mngag pa las kyi pho nya 'di dag gsungs so/

²⁷ T177r.4-5: /pho nyas nam shes ye shes su sbyangs zhing mngag par bya ba'i thabs bstan pa'i le'u ste bcu dgu pa'o//

The third and fourth discrepancies in the text order

A similar picture emerges when we examine the more complex shifting of passages found in Chapters 19, 23 and in the case of sDe dge and the Bhutanese edition, Chapters 24 and 25. In Chapter 19, not only do we have the different openings mentioned above, but a long passage further down in the sDe dge/mTshams brag/sGang steng-b editions of this chapter is omitted in gTing skyes²⁸ and inserted below in its Ch. 23. Where this passage begins in sDe dge's Chapter 19 [with Block **H**],²⁹ the Tibetan does not seem to follow in a strikingly obvious way, but there is some continuity of content across the opening of the chapter and the passage omitted in gTing skyes, since we find similar description of ritual activities in both. A more convincing piece of evidence suggesting that the ordering is correct is that where the passage ends [at the end of Block **H** and beginning of **I**], it fits well with the final section of the chapter.³⁰ Furthermore, as noted above in discussing the earlier movement of text, the subject matter of the chapter coheres as a whole. On the other hand, where gTing skyes jumps in omitting the passage [moving from Block **G** to **I**], the Tibetan does not seem very coherent at all, and we seem also to have "jumped" in topic.³¹

gTing skyes's³² inclusion of the passage in Ch.23 seems to provide further evidence that it does indeed belong to Ch.19. Again, matters are not altogether clear where the insertion begins [at the end of Block **I** and beginning of **H**], since we have a mantra which seems to fit, beginning and ending each side of the changeover.³³ However, it is not at all clear that the following section with its ritual description makes good sense in the context of this chapter, and at the end of the passage [moving from Block **H** to **K**], the lines immediately after it do not appear to follow, nor do they make any clear sense.³⁴

In place of this passage [Block **H**] which appears likely to have been erroneously moved from Chapter 19 to 23 in gTing skyes, sDe dge³⁵ inserts text altogether missing in gTing skyes [Block **J**]. This amounts only to about a single folio in length, but it includes two chapter titles and this accounts for the discrepancy between the Southern Central group's twenty-six chapters and sDe dge/mTshams brag/sGang steng-b's twenty-eight. The title given for Chapter 23 in gTing skyes³⁶ corresponds to sDe dge's Chapter 25 title, occurring after the extra text. Now, in gTing skyes, the subject matter of the opening and the close of this Chapter 23 together with its title do not seem to coincide closely.³⁷ On the other hand, the title fits exactly with the opening lines of sDe dge's Ch. 25.³⁸ On examining the place where the extra text begins in Chapter

²⁸ Again, we take gTing skyes as representative of the Southern Central group witnesses, and sDe dge as illustrative of the ordering which it shares with our Bhutanese edition, the mTshams brag and sGang steng-b manuscripts.

²⁹ D70v.4-5: /hūm/ /lcags kyi gze ma mgo dgu pa/ /mgo dgu rkang gsum stong gsum gang/ /shin tu mi bzad 'jigs su rung/ /khrugs byed 'bar ba'i nga ro sgrogs/ /zhal mdog gcig tu ma nges te/ /khro rgyal 'jigs byed hūm sgra can/ /phyag mtshan 'jigs pa'i char phab nas/ /ha la phaṭ kyi sgra 'byin cing/

³⁰ D72r.6-72v.1: /phyogs ris sa mtshams dbyings su dag pho nya mang pos stong gsum bkang/ /ma spros sems su ye nas dag /'gugs byed mang po gcig tu dril/ /'gyur med dbyings kyi ngang du 'dres/ /zhes brjod pas/ /pho nya'i tshogs de dag mya ngan las 'das pa'i ngang du/ /ye nas gnas pa'i don de bzhin du mya ngan las 'das so/

³¹ T177r.2-4: /hūm lcags kyi bze ma mgo dgu po/ /mgo dgu rkang gsum stong gsum gang/ /shin du mi bzang 'jigs su rung/ /khrugs byed 'bar ba'i nga ro sgrogs/ /zhal 'dog cig du ma des te/ /'gyur med dbyings kyi ngang du dril/ / ces brjod pas/ pho nya'i tshogs de dag mya ngan las 'das pa'i ngang du ye nas yin pa'i don de bzhin du mya ngan las 'daso/

³² As above, the comments here on gTing skyes apply to the Rig 'dzin and Nubri editions also.

³³ T187r.5-6: /sngon chad ji 'zhin dam bcas bzhin/ /mngon spyod 'phrin las myur du mdzod/ /ghri na ghri na hūm phaṭ/ ban dha ban dha hūm phaṭ/ khro rgyal 'jigs byed hūm sgra can/ /phyag mtshan 'jigs pa'i char phab nas/ /ha la phaṭ kyi sgra 'byin cing/ /khams su gdug pa ma lus sreg

³⁴ T189v.2-4: /phyogs ris sa 'tshams dbyings su dag /pho nya mang pos stong gsum bkang/ /ma spros sems su ye nas gang/ /'gugs byed mang pos cig tu dril/ /phaṭ gis gtor la hūm gis bsdu/ /bdag po de'i 'od dus pas/ /mthu dang rdzu 'phrul ldan pas thams/ /thabs kyi 'phro 'du mang po las/ /bdag la thabs kyi rgyud yod pas/ /de'i mthu dang rdzu 'phrul nams/ /ston mi nus par dgos pa'o/

³⁵ Again, mTshams brag and sGang steng-b's ordering here is exactly the same as that in sDe dge.

³⁶ T189v.5: /mthu dang rdzu 'phrul phyis mi nus par bya ba'i le'u ste nyi shu rtsa gsum pa'o//

³⁷ The chapter opens T186r.6-186v.1: de nas kī lā yas drag po'i sngags dang khro tshogs kyis phur pas gdab cing bsgral ba'i phyir/ sdang ba zhe la bzhas rjes nyon mongs pa'i zhe sdang ting nas g.yos nas/ shin du gdug pa'i nga ro dang gang sgras drag po'i 'phrin las kyi tum tshig tu 'di skad brjod do//

³⁸ D80r.5: //de nas yang kī la yas/ de'i mthu dang rdzu 'phrul mi 'byung bar bya ba'i phyir 'di skad brjod do/

23, the language seems to flow smoothly: it is a section of mantras which follows seemingly quite logically from the beginning of the chapter.³⁹ While it is not totally obvious that Chapter 23 coheres well as a whole – for instance, we do not on this occasion have an exact match of topic mentioned at the outset and in the title – it is certainly the case that the section following the mantras in sDe dge seems to fit much more readily than the alternative passage given in gTing skyes at this point (see above).

It is difficult to be absolutely certain regarding the placement of the text constituting sDe dge/mTshams brag/sGang steng-b's Chapter 24 since it is not found in the Southern Central group editions. Yet, while its inclusion might not seem entirely necessary to the text as a whole, its theme of ritually slicing up the remains of the negative forces whose consciousnesses have been killed/liberated in the previous chapter would certainly seem appropriate here.

Finally, sDe dge/mTshams brag/sGang steng-b's Chapter 25 not only coheres well as a chapter with a single topic as mentioned above, but where the extra text finishes and we begin to again run parallel with gTing skyes, the two parts of the verse fit together well,⁴⁰ unlike the situation where this chapter end in gTing skyes was seemingly inappropriately attached to the earlier text in Chapter 23 (see above).

Concluding Reflections

The evidence therefore suggests that the Southern Central editions have displaced a few folios located within Chapters 17 to 19, and 23 to 25, in the process losing one folio entirely, while an ancestor of the Bhutanese edition has displaced one folio within Chapter 4. Only sDe dge appears to have all its folios in accordance with the "correct" and presumably original ordering of the text. There are two possible explanations for this. The first, perhaps most likely explanation, is that the exemplars used by sDe dge did not share the muddles which our other now extant editions all have. The second is that one or more of sDe dge's exemplars *did* share some folio misplacement(s), but that the learned editors of sDe dge sorted out and corrected the errors. We are not at this stage in a position to choose between these two possibilities.⁴¹ In either case, the investigation would seem to confirm the reliability of the sDe dge edition which Tibetan scholars have ascribed to it.⁴² Equally, it might suggest that – at least in the case of this text, which admittedly seems to be more muddled in its ordering than many NGB texts – the editors of the other extant editions are unlikely to have used a range of exemplars when making their editions. Had they done so, they could hardly have missed the discrepancies in the ordering. Indeed, it seems likely that an editor of the ancestor of the Southern Central group *did* notice the problem with chapter numbering and emended it to make the text internally consistent.⁴³ Had such an editor had alternative editions available, he would surely have consulted them, and discovered the fate of the missing and mis-ordered chapter titles. This is a sobering reflection on the state of the NGB heritage today, when we remember, as Thub bstan chos dar (2000: 4-16) informs us, that historically, several of the major past editions of the NGB were said to have consulted a number of renowned previous editions.

³⁹ D79v.4-5: /mngon spyod phrin las myur du mdzod/ /ghrḥṇa ghrḥṇa badzra/ bhandha bhandha badzra/ ma tha ma tha badzra/ ha na ha na badzra/ dzwa la dzwa la badzra/ ma ra pra ma rda na ye hūṃ phaṭ/ pa ra bidya na mu ru mu ru hūṃ phaṭ/ ghrḥṇā pā ya ghrḥṇā pā ya hūṃ phaṭ/ su ru su ru badzra/ bhindha bhindha badzra/ pa tsa pa tsa badzra/ rim gyis 'jug la de bzhin te/ /gnyis med mkha' la bsgral ba yin/

⁴⁰ D80v.1: de yi 'od zer bsam yas pas/ /de yi mthu dang rdzu 'phrul rñams/ /phaṭ kyis gtor la hūṃ gis bsdus/

⁴¹ This may change if further surviving NGB editions come to light in Tibet, and we are able to form a clearer idea of the exemplars which sDe dge relied upon.

⁴² Of course, although the sDe dge edition may represent the most readable and carefully edited edition, this is not to say that it is in itself an adequate source for studying NGB traditions. It too has its errors, even if they may not often be on the kind of scale of folio movements which we discuss in this paper, and clearly, only a study of multiple editions can shed light on historical developments from earlier editions. sDe dge's active editorial interventions might, in some cases, have obscured rather than recovered earlier readings. In our edition of the *Myang 'das*, we have attempted to draw attention to such possibly earlier readings.

⁴³ See note 2 above.

There is also a puzzle concerning the additional postscript and colophon at the end of the text in the Southern Central group witnesses, which is missing in both sDe dge and our Bhutanese editions. It is possible that it was once shared by an ancestor of all our editions, and lost by an ancestor of sDe dge, mTshams brag and sGang steng-b. It is also conceivable that it may be a clue indicating that we might in fact be dealing with different recensions of the text, and that the ancestors of sDe dge, mTshams brag and sGang steng-b never had this postscript and colophon. However, since it does not appear to be entirely consistent with the colophon shared by all the editions, which is at the end of the final chapter, it might have been appended erroneously by an ancestor of the Southern Central editions (see Chapter 2.II above). This would seem the most likely explanation, but we cannot be certain.

APPENDIX

A Comparison of the ordering of contents found in the sDe dge, mTshams brag/sGang steng-b, and gTing skyes/Rig 'dzin/Nubri *rNying ma'i rgyud 'bum* Editions of the *Myang ngan las 'das pa'i rgyud chen po*

Discursive summary

There are three sequences, one of which is represented by gTing skyes, Rig 'dzin and Nubri, one which is represented by the mTshams brag and sGang steng-b copies of the Bhutanese edition, and one by the sDe dge xylograph edition alone. Most of sDe dge's overall structure is exactly the same as mTshams brag and sGang steng-b but it agrees with gTing skyes, Rig 'dzin and Nubri in the first of the placements of text outlined below. The following comparison, phrased in terms of text moving up or down, is purely descriptive of the ordering in different editions. For ease of reference, we have divided the passages into text blocks, which are labelled in accordance with the sequence found in sDe dge, which we believe most likely to be correct.

1st difference: about one folio of text corresponding with sDe dge 49r.7-50r.3 [Block **B**], is moved down in mTshams brag/sGang steng-b, and inserted between the yig rkang which we find in sDe dge 's 50v.6. gTing skyes, Rig 'dzin and Nubri follow sDe dge in this placement.

2nd difference: about two folios of text corresponding with sDe dge 68r.5-70r.1 [Block **F**], including sDe dge's Chapter 18 title, are moved up in gTing skyes/Rig 'dzin/Nubri, and inserted between the yig rkang which we find in sDe dge's 66v.3. mTshams brag/sGang steng-b follow sDe dge in this placement.

3rd difference: about two and a half folios of text corresponding with sDe dge 70v.5-72r.7 in [Block **H**] are moved down in gTing skyes/Rig 'dzin/Nubri (187r-189v), inserted before the text commencing at sDe dge's 79v.4. mTshams brag/sGang steng-b follow sDe dge in this placement.

4th difference: gTing skyes/Rig 'dzin/Nubri omit about one folio of text found in sDe dge/mTshams brag/sGang steng-b [Block **J**], including two chapter headings. This additional text is found in sDe dge 79v.4-80v.1, at exactly the place where gTing skyes/Rig 'dzin/Nubri give passage three [Block **H**], which is found higher up in sDe dge/mTshams brag/sGang steng-b.

5th difference: gTing skyes, Rig 'dzin and Nubri share about one side of extra postscripts and colophons at the end of the text [Block **L**], which is omitted in sDe dge, mTshams brag and sGang steng-b.

In terms of **the ordering of text blocks**, the different editions are ordered as follows:

sDe dge: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, J, K

mTshams brag:) A, C, B, D, E, F, G, H, I, J, K

sGang steng-b:)

gTing skyes:)

Nubri:) A, B, C, D, F, E, G, I, H, K, L

Rig 'dzin:)

In terms of **chapter title and content differences**,

- 1) The first movement [ordering of Blocks **B** and **C**] does not make any difference to the chapters – the section is moved within Chapter 4.
- 2) The chapter titles run parallel up to and including ch. 16 (D: 66v.2; T: 171r.7). Then the second text block corresponding with sDe dge's 68r.5-70r.1 [Block **F**] (including Chapter 18 title, /phur bu byang chub sems su bsgrub pa'i le'u ste bco bryad pa'o// D: 69v.4-5) moves up in gTing skyes/Rig 'dzin/Nubri, above sDe dge/mTshams brag/sGang steng-b's Chapter 17 title (given in D: phur bu mya ngan las 'das pa'i rgyud chen po las/ khro bo gsang ba nye bar bsgrub pa'i le'u ste bcu bdun pa'o// 67v.3). Thus, we find that

gTing skyes/Rig 'dzin/Nubri's Chapter 17 and 18 titles correspond to those in sDe dge/mTshams brag/sGang steng-b but are placed and numbered in reverse order (T: /phur bu byang chub sems su sgrub pa'i le'u ste bcu bdun pa'o// 173v.2; /khro bo gsang ba nye bar bsgrub pa'i le'u ste bcwo brgyad pa'o// 175r.3-4).

- 3) No chapter titles occur in the third passage [Block H], which is moved down, although this section which is within gTing skyes/Rig 'dzin/Nubri's Chapter 23 (T: /mthu dang rdzu 'phrul physis mi nus par bya ba'i le'u ste nyi shu rtsa gsum pa'o// 189v.5), is found within the earlier Chapter 19 in sDe dge/mTshams brag/sGang steng-b. Thus, gTing skyes/Rig 'dzin/Nubri's Chapter 19 only runs from gTing skyes 175r to 177r, while sDe dge's Chapter 19 runs from its 69v to 72v.
- 4) Chapters 20 to 22 run parallel. Then after the shared opening to Chapter 23, sDe dge/mTshams brag/sGang steng-b include extra text not found in gTing skyes/Rig 'dzin/Nubri [Block J], but lose much of the text in gTing skyes/Rig 'dzin/Nubri's Chapter 23 which is found higher up. The additional text includes two extra chapter titles, sDe dge/mTshams brag/sGang steng-b's Chapter titles 23 and 24. Finally, their Chapter 25 title occurs just after they resume parallelling gTing skyes/Rig 'dzin/Nubri, and it corresponds to gTing skyes/Rig 'dzin/Nubri's Chapter 23 title. The following chapters correspond, but sDe dge/mTshams brag/sGang steng-b's numbering continues to run ahead. Thus, gTing skyes, Rig 'dzin and Nubri end with Chapter 26, and sDe dge, mTshams brag and sGang steng-b end with Chapter 28.

Table

Text Blocks	sDe dge Volume Zha	mTshams brag Volume Chi	sGang steng-b Volume Chi	gTing skyes Volume Sa	Rig 'dzin Volume Sa	Nubri Volume Sha
Block A	46r line 1	115r(229) line 5	102v line 5	141v(282) line 1	113v line 1	44r (title page)
	up to 49r line 7	up to 120v(240) line 1	up to 107v line 1	up to 147r(293) line 5	up to 118r line 1	up to 50r line 2
Block B	from 49r line 7	from 121v(242) line 4	from 108v line 2	from 147r(293) line 5	from 118r line 1	from 50r line 2
	up to 50r line 3	up to 122v(244) line 5	up to 109v line 1	up to 148r(295) line 5	up to 118v line 7	up to 51r line 2
Block C	from 50r line 3	from 120v(240) line 1	from 107v line 1	from 148r(295) line 5	from 118v line 7	from 51r line 2
	up to 50v line 6	up to 121v(242) line 4	up to 108v line 2	up to 149r(297) line 6	up to 119v line 5	up to 52r line 3
Block D	from 50v line 6	from 122v(244) line 5	from 109v line 1	from 149r(297) line 6	from 119v line 5	from 52r line 3
	up to 66v line 3	up to 147r(293) line 1	up to 131r line 7	up to 171v(342) line 2	up to 138v line 3	up to 75r line 2

Text Blocks	sDe dge Volume Zha	mTshams brag Volume Chi	sGang steng-b Volume Chi	gTing skyes Volume Sa	Rig 'dzin Volume Sa	Nubri Volume Sha
Block E	from 66v line 3	from 147r(293) line 1	from 131r line 7	from 173v(346) line 6	from 140v line 3	from 77v line 2
	up to 68r line 5	up to 149v(298) line 1	up to 133v line 3	up to 176r(351) line 2	up to 142v line 2	up to 80r line 1
Block F	from 68r line 5	from 149v(298) line 1	from 133v line 3	from 171v(342) line 2	from 138v line 3	from 75r line 2
	up to 70r line 1	up to 152r(303) line 2	up to 136r line 2	up to 173v(346) line 6	up to 140v line 3	up to 77v line 2
Block G	from 70r line 1	from 152r(303) line 3	from 136r line 2	from 176r(351) line 2	from 142v line 2	from 80r line 1
	up to 70v line 5	up to 153r(305) line 7	up to 137r line 4	up to 177r(353) line 3	up to 143v line 2	up to 81r line 3
Block H	from 70v line 5	from 153r(305) line 7	from 137r line 4	from 187r(373) line 5	from 151r line 5	from 91v line 3
	up to 72r line 7	up to 155v(310) line 6	up to 139v line 2	up to 189v(378) line 3	up to 153r line 5	up to 93v line 6
Block I	from 72r line 7	from 155v(310) line 6	from 139v line 2	from 177r(353) line 3	from 143v line 2	from 81r line 4
	up to 79v line 4	up to 166v(332) line 5	up to 149v line 6	up to 187r(373) line 5	up to 151r line 5	up to 91v line 3
Block J	79v line 4 - 80v line 1	166v(332) line 5 - 167v(334) line 7	149v line 6 - 150v line 7	Not found in gTing skyes	Not found in Rig 'dzin	Not found in Nubri
Block K	from 80v line 1	from 167v(334) line 7	from 150v line 7	from 189v(378) line 3	from 153r line 5	from 93v line 6
	to 82r line 5	to 170v(340) line 3	to 153r line 7	to 191v line 7	to 155r line 7	to 96r line 6
Block L	Not found in sDe dge	Not found in mTshams brag	Not found in sGang steng-b	192r line 1 - 192r line 7	155r line 7 - 155v line 6	96v line 1 - 96v line 6