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On the *Thig le drug pa* and the *sPyi chings*, two of the *Thirteen Later Translations of the rDzogs chen Mind Series*

Karen Liljenberg (SOAS)

In an earlier article¹ I discussed two missing texts from the group known to tradition as the *Thirteen Later Translations*, a sub-set of the *Eighteen Major Statements*² of the rDzogs chen Mind Series. Proposing new identifications of the *sGom pa don sgrub* and the *Yid bzhin nor bu*, I relied for corroboration on matching citations from both texts contained in the ninth-to-tenth century *bSam gtan mig sgron* by gNubs sangs rgyas ye shes.

My doctoral research,³ now concluded, has led to identifications of two further members of this important text group. One, the *sPyi chings*, was previously thought lost, while the other, the *Thig le drug pa*, was only tentatively established. In addition to outlining these discoveries, this paper will also present critical editions and English translations of both texts.

1. The *Thig le drug pa*

Several scholars have considered Tb. 26,⁴ the *Byang chub sems mi 'gyur ba'i thig le tig*, to be the *Thig le drug pa*.⁵ This is presumably because of its similar title, its location in several editions of the *rNying ma'i rgyud 'bum*⁶ among the other *Thirteen Later Translations*,⁷ and because it does indeed list six *thig le*.⁸

Tb. 26 is the same as that in the Rig dzin Tshé dbang nor bu *rNying ma'i rgyud 'bum*⁹ entitled *Mi 'gyur thig le tig* in its final line, but *sKye med ti ka* at its beginning. This fortuitously allows us to identify it with the *sKye med ti la ka'i lung* found in Nyang Ral Nyi ma 'od zer's twelfth-century *Zangs gling ma* list of the *Eighteen Major Scriptural Statements*.¹⁰

¹ Liljenberg, 2009, pp. 51-61.

² In Tibetan: *lung chen po bco brgyad*.

³ I am grateful to the UK Arts and Humanities Research Council for their support for my research.

⁴ That is, text 36 in the *mTshams brag* edition of the *rNying ma'i rgyud 'bum*. The same text is also found in the *gTing skyes* edition (Tk. 33).

⁵ Jim Valby identifies the *Thig le drug pa* as this text. (Personal communication dated 27 September 2007). Also, noting that Klong chen pa in his *Grub mtha' mdzod* refers to the *Thig le drug pa* on p. 370, Stephan Arguillere comments: "Il n'est pas impossible qu'il s'agisse d'un des textes du premier vol. du rNying rgyud, le *Byang chub kyi sems mi 'gyur ba'i thig le tig*." Online index of citations from Klong chen pa <http://www.arguillere.org/article-20779772.html> item 421. Accessed June 2008.

⁶ This text is not in the *sDe dge* NGB. There is, however, an editor's note after text Dg. 158, the *Thugs kyi rgyud rin po che spungs pa'i rgyan*, stating "The *Byang sems mi 'gyur ba'i thig le* should be inserted here." (*'di mtshams byang sems mi 'gyur ba'i thig le 'dzud*).

⁷ In *mTshams brag*, for example, it is situated after the *rJe bstan dam pa* and before the *Srog gi 'khor lo*.

⁸ The list is found in *mTshams brag* p. 597.2-3.

⁹ Rig 'dzin *rNying ma'i rgyud 'bum*, vol. Ka, 34.

¹⁰ Nyang Ral describes the *sKye med ti la ka'i lung* as teaching that "the nature of mind is the single sphere" (*sems nyid (kyi) thig le nyag gcig tu bstan pa'i phyir*). In his later work, the *Me*

Although Tb. 26 does have a list of the six *thig le* (p. 597. 2-3), this text presents related doctrinal elements that one might expect to be later developments. For example, it elaborates the schema of six *thig le* into a further nine, which in turn encompass thirty-six smaller *thig le*.¹¹ In addition, there are various other technical enumerations, such as the Five Certainties, Five Greats, Three Hidden Aspects, and Twenty Five Nails¹², that do not appear in any of the other *Eighteen Major Statements*.¹³ These are all aspects of rDzogs chen doctrine that are likely to post-date the late eighth or early ninth century, when, according to the tradition, the *Thirteen Later Translations* were made.

The principal problem with Tb. 26, apart from these doctrinal issues, is, however, that it lacks the three quotations from the *Thig le drug pa* given in the *bSam gtan mig sgron*.¹⁴ This is the earliest (relatively) well-dated source that cites, with a high degree of accuracy, from all of the texts included in the *Eighteen Major Scriptural Statements*. Nowhere does it refer to a text called *Mi 'gyur ba'i thig le tig*.

If we rule out Tb. 26, another candidate for identification with the *Thig le drug pa* would be chapters six to eleven of Tb. 40/Bg. 25, the *Nyi zla dang mnyam pa dri ma med pa'i rgyud*. The *Thig le drug* is referred to in the list of the titles given in the text's first chapter.¹⁵ Furthermore, since this tantra situates the *Thig le drug* chapters alongside the actual root texts of the *Five Earlier Translations*¹⁶, one would expect these chapters to be of equal status with them, and not just an ancillary work such as a commentary, for example.¹⁷ As in the case of Tb. 26, however, the absence of the three relevant *bSam gtan mig sgron* citations precludes identifying these chapters as the *Thig le drug pa*.

The *Thig le drug pa* is usually included among the *Thirteen Later Translations*. We must ask why, therefore, the *Thig le drug pa* chapters of Tb. 40 are located among the *Five Earlier Translations*, the *sNga 'gyur lnga*? I have found what I believe to be an explanation for this apparent anomaly in a *rNying ma bKa' ma* commentary on the *Rig pa'i khu byug* entitled *Sa gcig pa'i 'grel*, by Dampa bde gshegs (1122-1192).¹⁸ Recounting how Vairocana received the teachings from Sri Simha, this text says: "The *Thig le drug pa*, because of all the sources of the tantras it is extant, although it is a later translation, is included in this [group of five]." (*thig le drug pa ni rgyud kyi khung thams cad nas de nyid yod pas phyi 'gyur yin kyang 'di nyid bcug pa'o*).¹⁹ Most remarkably, it adds: "due to the fact that the *Thig le drug pa* is the head of the later translations, it is also present in Sanskrit" (*thig le drug pa la phyi*

tog snying po, this title is replaced by *Yang tig*, which almost certainly refers to the same text. There is no *Thig le drug pa* in his list.

¹¹ Tb 26, p. 597.3: *thig le drug gi mkha' klong nal thig le dgu yi 'od gsal zhing/ thig phran sum cu rtsa drug gis/ thams cad gsal bar bkra ba yang/*.

¹² The *Rig 'dzin* edition cuts short the ending that mentions the Twenty-five nails.

¹³ In Tibetan: *nges pa lnga, che ba lnga, sbas pa gsum, gzer bu nyi shu rtsa lnga*.

¹⁴ The citations in the *bSam gtan mig sgron* are at 314.3; 347.5; 452.2.

¹⁵ Fol. 348v.3/p.696: *tshig drug rtsal drug don drug ste/ che ba drug dang thig le drug*.

¹⁶ In this case, the *Rig pa'i khu byug*, *rTsal chen*, *sGom pa don drug*, and the *Yangs pa che ba drug*, which I have identified as a partial version of the *Khyung chen lding ba*.

¹⁷ On this point see also Liljenberg, 2009, p. 54 and note 23.

¹⁸ *bKa' ma shin tu rgyas pa*, vol. 103, pp. 757-824.

¹⁹ *bKa' ma shin tu rgyas pa*, vol. 103, p. 764.4.

'gyur gyi dbu yin pa'i dbang gi rgya gar skad kyang yod de).²⁰ According to Dampa bde gshegs, therefore, it appears there was a Sanskrit version of the *Thig le drug pa* extant in the 12th century. It is noteworthy that title lists in the *Bairo 'dra 'bag*²¹, the *mKhas pa'i dga' ston*,²² and the *rNying ma bKa' ma* text entitled *Realizations of the Eighteen Statements*²³ also underline the special eminence of the *Thig le drug pa* by likewise including it among the *sNga 'gyur lnga*.

After investigating numerous texts,²⁴ I succeeded in locating²⁵ all three of the *bSam gtan mig sgron* quotations from the *Thig le drug pa* in Tb. 124, the *rDzogs pa chen po chos nyid byang chub kyi sems thig le rgya mtsho gnas la 'jug pa zhes bya ba'i rgyud*.²⁶ This tantra has two introductory chapters describing a standard sūtra-style setting. Six of its chapter titles, from chapter three onwards, each contain the main part of the names of the six *thig le* as set out by the *bSam gtan mig sgron*.²⁷

All three *bSam gtan mig sgron* citations from the *Thig le drug pa* are contained in chapter three of Tb. 124.²⁸ Thus this chapter should predate the composition of the *bSam gtan mig sgron*. This naturally begs the question: does the same conclusion apply to the whole text, or did chapter three originally circulate independently of the ten-chapter text we now have? I have established that Chapter three is unmistakably the core of the text; what precedes it serves as an introduction, and what follows expands on it in the manner of a commentary. The complete text is lengthy in comparison with the other *Thirteen Later Translations*, at fourteen folios. This, together with its sūtra-style framework, suggest to me that it could be a slightly later elaboration (although still firmly within *Sems sde*) based on Chapter Three.

It is noteworthy that Chapter Three contains numerous phrases and parts of lines found near the beginning of the *rDo la gser zhun*, a text normally

²⁰ Tb 124 does give a Sanskrit title. When the Tibetanized spelling is corrected this is: *Mahāsandhidharmatābodhicittabīndusamudrasthāvātāraṅtra*.

²¹ *Bairo rgyud 'bum*, vol. Ja, p. 519.

²² The *mKhas pa'i dga' ston* list (vol. 1, p. 221) describes it as "de bzhin du bsam gtan ston pa".

²³ *Sems sde bco bryad kyi dgongs pa rig 'dzin rnam kyis rdo rje'i glur bzhengs pa, rNying ma bka' ma*, vol. Tsa, pp. 298-314.

²⁴ Among the numerous texts that I examined, the *Bang mdzod 'phrul gyi lde'u mig*, Chapter 31 (Tb. 159/Dg. vol. Cha, relevant passage on fol. 158a-b) contains a very concise teaching on the Six *thig le*, which emphasizes how they are all contained or condensed into each other and not separate. The *mTsham brag* version differs slightly, but is basically the same text. This summary takes for granted that the reader is already familiar with the basic teaching on the Six *thig le*. More crucially, it does not contain the relevant *bSam gtan mig sgron* citations. I would like to thank Jean-Luc Achard for kindly drawing my attention to this text.

²⁵ Giuseppe Baroetto, in his recent Italian edition of chapter seven of the *bSam gtan mig sgron*, apparently makes the same identification of the *Thig le drug pa*. See Baroetto, 2011, vol. II, bibliography, p. 380.

²⁶ *mTshams brag rNying ma'i rgyud 'bum*, vol. Ca, fol. 50b.5-64a. This text is also found in Dg. vol. Ra, text 22, pp. 269b-278a; and Tk. vol. 2, text 47, pp. 128 – 148.

²⁷ These are identical except that they omit the actual word *thig le*, which is simply replaced by "chapter: (le'u). The *bSam gtan mig sgron* (STMG 374.6-375.4.) describes the *thig le chen po* as having six types of aspect (*thig le drug pa*), which are enumerated separately in the text as follows: *dbyings kyi thig le/dbyings rnam par dag pa'i thig le/ chos nyid thig le/ye shes thig le/kun tu bzang po'i thig le/lhun gyi(s) grub pa'i thig le*. Karmay, 1988, p. 118, n.55 adds a further reference to a detailed explanation in Rongzom chos kyi bzang po's *Theg pa chen po'i tshul la 'jug pa*, ff. 218-9.

²⁸ Tb. 124, fol. 54a. 2-3 (p.107); fol. 54b.4; fol. 55.a.1.

considered one of the *lnga 'gyur lnga*. Dam pa bde gsheg's statement that the *Thig le drug pa* is the "head" of the rest of the Thirteen Later Translations makes more sense in the light of this link with the early *rDo la gser zhun*. I consider it possible that it began as a short instruction inspired by and elucidating at least part of the *rDo la gser zhun*.²⁹

The colophon of Tb. 124 states that Vimalamitra and g.Yu sgra [snying po] were its translators. In the light of its close relationship with the *rDo la gser zhun*, this attribution is at least feasible.

2. The [rDzogs pa] sPyi chings

This is the fourth of the texts that Klong chen rab 'byams includes³⁰ among the *Thirteen Later Translations* that have until now been thought to be lost. The *Zangs gling ma* lists this under the variant title of *bKa' lung gi spyi chings*, "the epitome of teachings." It describes it as teaching that "the mind (of enlightenment) encompasses all Vehicles".³¹ The *mKhas pa'i dga' ston* describes it as "clearly distinguishing between the vehicles".³² It and the *Bairo'i rgyud 'bum* concur in placing it in their category of four greater or larger texts, together with the *rDo la gser zhun*. The numerous title lists show several variants in their spelling of the title.³³

From its title and from these characterizations, it is clear that the *sPyi chings* discussed the various different *yāna* recognised at the time of its composition. There are several early parallels for such a work. The most well-known is the *Man ngag lta ba'i phreng ba* attributed to Padmasambhava, and of course, the *bSam gtan mig sgron* itself. Such treatments eventually gave rise to the *grub mtha'* literary genre. However, one would expect the *sPyi chings* to give clear precedence to rDzogs chen, judging by Nyang Ral's description.

The *bSam gtan mig sgron* has four citations from the *sPyi chings*,³⁴ all of them located within its seventh chapter, on rDzogs chen.³⁵ The first citation concerns the concept of the *bdag nyid chen po*, literally the "great self". The *bSam gtan mig sgron* describes this as the all-inclusive state of Samantabha-

²⁹ Baroetto indeed characterises this chapter of the *Thig le rgya mtsho gnas la 'jug pa'i rgyud* as an "epitome" of the *rDo la gser zhun* (*op. cit.*, p. 372).

³⁰ *Chos dbyings rin po che'i mdzod kyi 'grel pa lung gi gter mdzod*, fol. 334/p.749; *Grub mtha' mdzod*, fol. 284/p. 1169.

³¹ *Sems kyis theg pa thams cad spyir bcings pa'i phyir*. *Zangs gling ma*, in *Rin chen gter mdzod* Vol. 1, p. 78-9.

³² *Theg pa'i shan 'byed pa spyi chings*. *mKhas pa'i dga' ston*, vol.1, p. 221.

³³ The *Bairo'i rgyud 'bum* precedes *ching* with an *a-chung*; Longchenpa's *Grub mtha' mdzod* adds a postfix -s; the *Me tog snying po* spells *spyi* as *phyir*. Some texts also omit the preceding "rdzogs pa".

³⁴ The STMG spells it *spyi bcings*.

³⁵ There is also one reference (in chapter 6, on Mahāyoga) to a *Man ngag spyi bcings*. After citing a passage from another text concerning the error of not realizing all-inclusive sameness but regarding the absolute and relative truths as being different, gNubs Sang rgyas ye shes states that this point is also clearly made in the "*man ngag spyi bcings*", as he has already set out earlier. STMG 284.3: *man ngag spyi bcings las kyang gsal bar 'byung l de ni sngar yang bkod zin to*.

dra, in which there is no “other”, only “the great selfless self”.³⁶ The next citation is very short, describing how the realization of the insubstantiality of phenomena and consequent release of attachment to such concepts as good and bad leads to the state of natural great bliss.³⁷ The third citation illustrates a discussion of how the ultimate truth cannot be found by the activity of mental analysis or reasoning.³⁸ The final citation³⁹ is in the context of Nub Sang rgyas ye shes' differentiation of the view of rDzogs chen from that of mere emptiness verging on nihilism. While the author himself distinguishes between rDzogs chen and Madhyamaka,⁴⁰ the *sPyi chings* citation refers rather to the Chan school of simultaneous enlightenment, known as *ston mun*.⁴¹ This implies that at the time of composition of the *sPyi chings*, an effort was underway to distinguish rDzogs chen from Chan.⁴²

After examining numerous texts to locate the four *sPyi chings* citations,⁴³ I found them all embedded as *lemmata* in the *bKa' ma* commentary text *sPyi gsang sngags lung gi 'grel pa*.⁴⁴ This commentary is attributed to gNyags Jñānakumara both on the title page and in its colophon.

It was sometimes difficult to distinguish the text of the *sPyi chings* from the commentary. In general, however, I determined that there are four main

³⁶ STMG p.329.4: *des na bdag nyid chen po'i ngang la gzhan pa'i* (329.5) *chos ma bkol bar bdag nyid kyi snubs pa'ol/ de ci'i phyir zhe na/ spyi bcings las/bdag ni yod do/gzhan ni med do/bdag gzhan chen* (329.6) *po lhun gyis grub pas yod do/kun tu bzang po'i ngang du gcig pas gzhan med del zhes bya ba'i don gyis/ bdag* (330.1) *gzhan du snang 'dzin ngang gis dag pa la/ nga med pa'i nga chen po ni bdag nyid chen po'o/*.

³⁷ STMG: *spyi bcings las /ma bkag ci bde byang chub yan du khye /* (453.1).

³⁸ 'O na don nyid re (295.5) *zhig gang gis mtshon zhe na //spyi bcings las kyang /gsang sngags rgya mtsho chen po ni /dpe dang tshad ma gtan tshigs dang /rjes su dpag pa'i shes* (295.6) *rab kyiis /rtogs par nus pa ma yin te /de bas gsang sngags bdag nyid che /dngos grub rlabs chen 'phrags pa can /bsam yas* (296.1) *gting ni dpag dka' bas /lung dang man ngag thob pas 'grub /ces 'byung /*. This passage is translated in Karmay, 1988, p. 110.

³⁹ *De kho na rdzogs* (311.4) *pa chen po yin te / de la ni bya ba dang mthong ba ni med do /zhes smra ba'i gang zag ni / rdzogs chen du khas 'ches nas dbu ma'i bsam gtan la* (311.5) *rten 'cha' ba yin / sbyi bcings las kyang /rdzogs chen bla na med par khas 'ches nas /ston men bsam gtan tsam la rten 'cha' ba /rgyal* (311.6) *po'i sras 'bangs babs pa lung dang 'gal /zhes 'byung ste / des rgyal po'i sras dam pa 'bangs su babs pa dang 'dra ste / lung dang yang 'gal* (312.1) *lo /* This passage is translated in Karmay 1988, p. 112.

⁴⁰ However, Karmay points out that the *Cig car ba* doctrine considered itself to be *bdu ma / Madhyamaka*, referencing Dunhuang texts PT 117 and PT 812. Karmay, 1988, p. 112, n. 27.

⁴¹ On this term see Karmay, 1988, p. 88, n. 13.

⁴² Similarities between the two traditions nevertheless became in later centuries a pretext for criticism of rDzogs chen by proponents of the New Schools of Buddhism in Tibet. See Karmay, 1988, pp. 121-133.

⁴³ These included: in the *Bairo'i rgyud 'bum*, the *Byang chub sems kyi spyi lung chen po rdzogs pa'i rgyud* (Bg 99, Vol.4); Bg 124, Bg 125, (vol. 5); Bg 130, Bg 167 (vol. 6). In *mTshams brag: Sems lung chen moi' mdo gsang ba spyi rgyud* (Tb 126); *rDzogs pa chen po byang chub kyi sems rin po che spung ba gsang ba man ngag gi rgyud* (Tb 101); Tb 115; Tb 132; Tb 159; Tb 160; *Byang chub sems kyi spyi lung chen po rdzogs pa'i rgyud/man ngag gser gyi ru sbal bskum pa'i rgyud* (Tb 175); *A ti rdzogs pa chen po'i rgyud* (Tb 231); *lTa ba shan chen po rin chen sgron ma rtsa ba'i rgyud* (Tb 252). Another text, the *rDzogs pa chen po'i spyi chings*, was authored by gZhan phan mtha' yas 'od zer (18th-19th century CE).

⁴⁴ *bKa' ma shin tu rgyas pa*, vol. 103, p. 439.

ways in which the commentary introduces or demarcates its root-text citations:⁴⁵

1. The previous clause terminates emphatically with the final particle "'o".
2. The previous clause ends with a rhetorical phrase indicating that what follows will address a possible question or objection. E.g. *snyam pa la*.⁴⁶
3. The previous clause ends with the phrase *bstan pa'i phyir*.⁴⁷
4. The citation is followed by an end-quote phrase, e.g. *zhes bya ba*.

Cantwell and Meyer recently encountered similar difficulties in isolating the text of the *Thabs kyi zhags pa*.⁴⁸ The Dunhuang copy of that text⁴⁹ often highlights its *lemmata* with a semi-transparent wash, thus showing that its scribe understood the boundaries between the root text and commentary. However, the *sDe dge* and *bKa' 'gyur* versions of the *Thabs kyi zhags pa* include the commentary undifferentiated from the root text. It is possible that a similar loss of highlighting occurred to the *sPyi chings*.

Another factor in the disappearance of the *sPyi chings* may have been the development of the *grub mtha'* genre itself. The proliferation of later systems of classification and analysis of the various vehicles might have left its treatment of these themes sounding outmoded. In particular, its discussion of the Chan (*ston mun*) school, apparently already altered to Madhyamaka in Nub Sang rgyas ye shes' comment on one passage, supports this hypothesis.

3. Translations and critical editions

The Six Spheres - *Thig le drug pa*

Then all the Buddhas praised [this] and conferred empowerment in all directions, [each] teaching their own secret mantra, uniting infinite Buddha-realms in the supreme maṇḍala, and dispelling the mesh of conceptual thought, the waves of Saṃsāra. Samantabhadra, lord of the maṇḍala of [all] the Buddha-families, gazed in every direction and considered, then [spoke] in the naturally secret unexcelled manner:⁵⁰

"The non-dual meditation on the totally pure, natural mind of enlightenment, the teacher that is praised by all as the light of the world, the

⁴⁵ I include this provisional list, whose criteria will no doubt be obvious to many textual experts, for the convenience of those who may find themselves faced with a similar difficulty in future.

⁴⁶ "To whoever thinks..."

⁴⁷ "In order to show..."

⁴⁸ In a lecture on the *Thabs kyi zhags pa* delivered at SOAS 17/3/2010, Cantwell remarked that there was often a "fuzzy boundary" between this text and its own commentary.

⁴⁹ This is IOL Tib. J 321, 42r-45r.

⁵⁰ This opening passage is a necessary part of the chapter structure of the larger text, but the passage that follows may once have circulated independently before being incorporated into it.

teaching that is the essence of the Dharma, the embodiment of youthful Mañjuśrī, is [this] – one rests in equanimity in the authentic, uncontrived blissful expanse in which nothing need be done.

The basis of the immeasurable⁵¹ activity of ethical discipline and so forth, although its many different aspects are explained as the path⁵², unless the path that is the mother⁵³ of the Sugatas and is equal to all [of them] is present, they will not come about. Therefore this is the path of the supreme yoga.

Hard to travel and to understand, this is the path of all [beings], and transcends both thought [and] non-thought. Non-abiding, non-conceptual, simple and free of thinking, words do not express it. Without shape or colour, it is not the domain of the senses. Difficult to demonstrate⁵⁴ or examine, it is without even a trace of anything that can be put into words.

It is not the path of accomplished sages of the past. Whoever enters onto the path of the sages of the past will end up gripped by the sicknesses of the path - meditation, attachment, and exertion.

As [is taught] in the [oral] statements of the teacher(s), if one views limited verbal analysis⁵⁵ as the path, that is actually [just] continuing the process of conceptual thought, like an animal pursuing a mirage. The ineffable path of total purity cannot be defined by words. Teaching [about] purity and impurity is actually just deluded words. Pure and impure are integral, non-dual, and indivisibly equal. Therefore, [this is] the way without the perception of duality [such as] renouncing and adopting, negating and affirming.

Making no differentiation whatsoever between any aspects, primordial wisdom is a continuum with ignorance. [Just as] a lamp that casts its light without any obstruction is free of all thoughts, the unwavering state presides supreme over [both] dullness and meditative concentration. The very act of seeing [that] there is nothing⁵⁶ to really see is itself the goal to be attained. This is why this is called "the eye of omniscience".

Thus this state of resting transcends the objects of the six senses. This natural spaciousness has no limits or centre, and rests as the sovereign of equality that neither accepts nor rejects. Mind and karmic imprints are not dual, [but] are mixed and equivalent. Because subjective conceptions and phenomena appear as one's own adornment⁵⁷, one should not reject or renounce them. Not thinking about any [specific] aspects whatsoever, one enjoys the bliss⁵⁸ of [skilful] means.

Because [even] things that are disagreeable to all and [normally] completely renounced are pure, the five disturbing emotions and the five

⁵¹ Literally, the ocean of conduct.

⁵² If the Dg/Tk reading here is adopted, the translation would read "...distinctions of liberation on the path are explained as the path..."

⁵³ The Tk reading (*yul* rather than *yum*) translates as "the object/goal of the Sugatas".

⁵⁴ Amending the reading *brtan* to *bstan*, in accord with the elaboration on this passage on fol. 58b

⁵⁵ Amending *mtha' spyod* to *mtha' dpyod*.

⁵⁶ Amending *mthong bas* to *mthong med*, in agreement with the commentary on this passage on fol. 60a.

⁵⁷ If the alternative reading is adopted, "appear through [their?] own conditions".

⁵⁸ Amending the phrase *thabs kyi de la rol* to *thabs kyi bde la rol*.

inexpiable actions have no actual substance. By entering this path of total purity one attains [the state] of the sovereign of equality.

No mental formations and so on are renounced, adopted or rejected. Placing [reliance] on past narratives, information and valid cognition, and then wishing for the signs of accomplishment of the three meditative *samādhis*, and so on,⁵⁹ goes against the statements regarding effortlessness, and is a delusion.

Resting without anything that needs to be done in the blissful domain of spontaneous perfection is the very essence of total self-arising primordial wisdom, unwavering, immutable, and free of all narratives.

The nectar that is [already] attained conquers the suffering of effort; one rests without needing to do anything in the state of total authenticity. The unaltered state is free of all the limitations of conceptualizing thoughts, [and] its unimpeded qualities are forever undiminished. Without renouncing [them], shortcomings and mental objects are pure. Everywhere, inner and outer, is the unobscured *locus* of great, primordial wisdom.

Samantabhadra Buddha, transcending the limitations of effort and accomplishment, naturally manifests, himself, the tantras of the⁶⁰ pristine, primordially arranged spontaneously present Dharma. [All] Dharmas are without elaboration in the great sphere;⁶¹ they are of the nature of bodhicitta, [and that] nature clearly manifests its essence [and] all objects.⁶²

They are all, through the natural condition, free from creeds of actor and action,⁶³ and constructed [concepts] of birth and cessation; they are the embodiment of primordial wisdom that transcends conventional terms of subject and object, and all conceptual thought."

[So] he spoke. [This concludes] the third chapter, establishing the meaning of the ultimate reality, of the Tantra that Enters into the Ocean-like State of the Essential Sphere of Bodhicitta, the true nature of reality that is Great Perfection.

Thig le drug pa critical edition

(Source: Chapter 3 of Tb. 124, entitled
rDzogs pa chen po chos nyid byang chub kyi sems thig le rgya mtsho gnas la 'jug pa'i rgyud)

Passages cited in the *bSam gtan mig sgron* (where they are attributed to the *Thig le drug pa*) are shown in italics.

⁵⁹ Adopting the Tk reading *sogs* in place of *tshogs* here.

⁶⁰ The reading here (*de dag de rgyud*) appears corrupt, and I have amended it to *de dag gi rgyud*, in order to offer a tentative translation.

⁶¹ In Tibetan, *thig le chen po*.

⁶² My translation of this terse passage is tentative. In common with other *sems sde* texts, it reverses the order, that would become standard in *rDzogs chen* doctrines, of the first two aspects of the triad of *ngo bo*, *rang bzhin*, [*thugs rje*].

⁶³ That is, dualistic notions of subject and object.

de nas sangs rgyas kun gyis bstod byas shing/ phyogs rnam⁶⁴ dbang bskur
rang gi gsang sngags ston/ zhing khams mtha' klas mchog gi⁶⁵ dkyil 'khor
sbyor/ mya ngan rba glong⁶⁶ rnam rtog dra ba sel/ kun tu bzang po rigs kyi
'khor lo dag/ phyogs rnam kun tu gzigs shing dgongs mdzad de/ rang gi
gsang ba bla na med pa'i tshul/ (fol. 54a) ston pa 'jig rten sgron mar gyur pa
kun gyis⁶⁷ rab bsngags⁶⁸ pa/ chos la chos kyi snying por gyur ba 'jam dpal
gzhon nu nyid/ rnam dag byang chub sems kyi rang bzhin gnyis med sgom
pa ni/ bya bral bde ba'i klong du ma bcos ji bzhin btang snyom gnas/ tshul
khrims la sogs spyod pa rgya mtsho⁶⁹ gzhir gyur pa/ tha dad ji snyed⁷⁰ lam
du bshad pa yang/ bde gshegs yum⁷¹ du⁷² gyur cing kun gyis mtshungs pa'i lam/ de
med mi 'byung de phyir de ni rnal 'byor mchog gi lam/ 'gro zhing shes dka' kun
gyi lam ste mi rtog rtog las 'das/ mi gnas mi dmigs spros med bsam dang
bral/ tshig gis mi theg dbyibs dang kha dog⁷³ dbang po'i spyod yul med/
bstan⁷⁴ zhing rtag⁷⁵ par dka' la brjod du rdul tsam med/ sngon gyi drang
srong rnam kyi lam du med/ sngon gyi drang srong rnam kyi⁷⁶ lam du
gang 'jug pa/ sgom chags rtsol ba⁷⁷ lam gyi nad⁷⁸ kyis zin ta re/ ston pa'i
lung bzhin tshig gi mtha' dpyod⁷⁹ lam du de mthong na/ de nyid rtog⁸⁰ pa'i
rgyun 'brang ri dvags⁸¹ smig rgyu snyegs pa 'dra/ brjod med rnam⁸² dag lam
ni tshig gis mtshon du med/ dag dang ma dag⁸³ bstan pa⁸⁴ tshig nyid tsam
ste 'khrul/ dag dang ma dag gnyis med 'dres shing dbyer med mtshungs⁸⁵/
de bas gnyis snang spang blang dgag (fol. 54b) sgrub med pa'i tshul/ rnam
pa cir yang mi 'byed ye shes gti mug ngang⁸⁶/ thogs⁸⁷ med gsal ba'i mar
mer⁸⁸ bsam pa kun dang bral/ ngang gi⁸⁹ mi⁹⁰ g.yo rmugs⁹¹ shing ting 'dzin
rgyal por gnas/ mngon du mthong med⁹² mthong byed de nyid thob pa'i

⁶⁴ Tk omits *rnam*.

⁶⁵ Tk *gis*.

⁶⁶ Dg and Tk *klong*.

⁶⁷ Tk *gyi*.

⁶⁸ Tk *sngags*.

⁶⁹ Tk *mtsho* 'i.

⁷⁰ Dg and Tk insert: *lam grol*.

⁷¹ Tk *yul*.

⁷² Tk omits *du*.

⁷³ Tk (*mi theg*) *kha dog dbyibs dang*.

⁷⁴ Emending *brtan* to *bstan*, in accord with the explanation of this passage on fol. 58 b.

⁷⁵ Dg *brtag*.

⁷⁶ Tk *kyis*.

⁷⁷ Dg *ba* 'i.

⁷⁸ Tk *gnad*.

⁷⁹ Emending *spyod* to *dpyod*.

⁸⁰ Tk *rtog*; Tb *rtogs*.

⁸¹ Tk and Dg (?) *dvags*; Tb *dags*.

⁸² Dg and Tk *yang*.

⁸³ Dg *yang dag* (*bstan pa*).

⁸⁴ Tk *pa* 'i.

⁸⁵ Tk *mtshud*.

⁸⁶ Dg and Tk *dang* (?).

⁸⁷ Tk *thog*.

⁸⁸ Dg and Tk *me*.

⁸⁹ Tk *gis*.

⁹⁰ Dg omits *mi*.

⁹¹ Dg inserts *dangs*.

⁹² Emending *bas* to *med*, in accord with the explanation of this passage on fol. 60 a.

dmigs⁹³/ de phyir thams cad mkhyen pa'i spyan zhes de la bya/ de bzhin dbang po drug gi yul gnas de nyid 'das/ mtha' dang dbus med yangs pa'i rang bzhin te/ mi len mi spong mnyam pa'i rgyal por gnas/ sems dang bag chags gnyis med 'dres shing mtshungs/ 'dzin pas brtags⁹⁴ shing snang ba'i chos rnam ni/ rang gi rgyan du snang bas mi 'dor spong⁹⁵ mi byed/ rnam par cir⁹⁶ yang mi dgongs thabs kyis⁹⁷ bde⁹⁸ la rol/ kun dang mi mthun yongs kyis spong ba'i⁹⁹ chos dag pas/ nyon mongs lnga dang mtshams med lnga yi¹⁰⁰ dngos nyid med/ rnam dag lam¹⁰¹ der zhugs pas mnyam pa'i rgyal po thob/ 'du byed la sogs kun kyang spang blang dor mi byed/ lo rgyus don nyid tshad¹⁰² ma'i blor bzhags¹⁰³ nas/ ting 'dzin gsum sogs¹⁰⁴ rtags rnam grub 'dod pas/ rtsol bral lung las gol te 'khrul pa yin/ bya bral lhun rdzogs bde ba'i yul la gnas/ ye shes rang byung che ba'i snying po nyid/ mi g.yo mi 'gyur bsnyad¹⁰⁵ pa kun (fol. 55a) dang bral/ zin pa'i bdud rtsis rtsol ba'i sdug bsngal 'joms/ bya bral yul la¹⁰⁶ kun tu ji bzhin gnas/ ma bcos mtshan ma'i rtog¹⁰⁷ tshogs mtha' rnam kun dang bral/ ¹⁰⁸ma 'gags yon tan dus gsum 'grib pa¹⁰⁹ med/ ma spangs nyes tshogs rtog¹¹⁰ pa'i yul rnam dag/ sgrib med phyi nang kun tu ye shes chen po¹¹¹ gnas/ rtsol sgrub mtha' 'das sangs rgyas kun tu bzang/ ye nas rnam bkod lhun gyis grub pa'i chos/ de dag de rgyud rang gi rnam dag ston/ thig le chen por chos rnam spros pa med/ de dag byang chub sems kyir rang bzhin la/ rang bzhin ngo bo yul kun gsal bar ston/ thams cad byed dang bya ba'i chos rgyud las/ skye 'gag rnam brtags¹¹² rang bzhin don gyis¹¹³ bral/ yul dang yul can mtshan ma'i tha snyad¹¹⁴ de/ bsam rtog kun las 'das pa'i ye shes nyid/ ces gsungs so/ rdzogs pa chen po chos nyid byang chub kyir sems thig le rgya mtsho gnas la 'jug pa'i rgyud las/ de kho na nyid kyir don gtan¹¹⁵ la 'bebs¹¹⁶ pa'i le'u ste gsum pa'o/

*

93 Dg mig.
 94 Dg brtags; Tb/Tk rtags.
 95 Dg and Tk spang.
 96 Dg spyir.
 97 Tk kyir.
 98 Emending de to bde.
 99 Tk yongs pa'i.
 100 Tk yis.
 101 Tk las.
 102 Tk mtshan.
 103 Dg and Tk bzhags; Tb gzhags.
 104 Tk sogs, Tb/Dg tshogs.
 105 Tk snyed.
 106 Tk las.
 107 Tk rtogs.
 108 Dg inserts: zin pa'i.
 109 Tk 'gre ba.
 110 Tk rtogs.
 111 Dg po'i.
 112 Tk dag.
 113 Tk gyi.
 114 Tk snyed.
 115 Tk bstan.
 116 Tk phab.

The Universal Inclusiveness [of Perfection] - *Spyi bcings*

Homage to glorious Samantabhadra!¹¹⁷

[This] is the clarification, without confusion, of the all-inclusive Mantra[yāna] scriptural transmissions.

The self exists. There is no other. Spontaneous perfection exists, as the Great Self. Because it is one with the state of Samantabhadra, there is no other. In [the notion of] no-self, one falls into the error of nihilism.

As sentient beings' conceptual thoughts increase, [those] thoughts spin [them in Saṃsāra]. Once concepts have left their karmic imprint, [they] become [caught] in the conceptual state.

The Sūtra section and treatises that are provisional in meaning explain [phenomena] as empty. Moreover, they explain them as non-existent. Even more than that, emptiness [itself] is explained as non-self. This, unless comprehended by scriptural transmission, is not proper, and is the non-Buddhist view of nihilism, which is difficult to alter, and a serious misdeed. Therefore it is taught that a conceptual view, which is easier to alter, is less dangerous.

Even meditation on non-thought is a mental process, with a great risk of leading to [a view of] mere nothingness, which is difficult to correct. Therefore, grasping at a visualized swift¹¹⁸ cause¹¹⁹ is easier to correct, because grasping arises from obtaining.¹²⁰

What shows this?

Just as grasping a snake is bad, so is a mistaken approach [to] knowledge mantras. Emptiness is hard to censure, [but] conceptual thoughts are basically easy.

But if so, [you] may say, doesn't [this] become a concept? In this sense it is not a concept: because permanence does not exist, therefore [the concept of] "other" is negated. Because nothingness does not exist, therefore the self is included; and so both eternalism and nihilism are purified.

Since there is no production or cessation, they are also negated, and because there is no self or duality, there is also purity. The whole universe in its identity with the self is the spontaneous accomplishment of Great Perfection in oneself.

When the great perpetuity [that is] Vairocana, Sattvavajra [and] supreme Akṣobhya¹²¹ clearly manifests in this way, since one is completely free of any

¹¹⁷ There is no end-quote particle after the homage, but even so I take it to be part of the root text.

¹¹⁸ *drag dal* appears in the *Man ngag lta ba'i 'phreng ba* as part of a longer phrase *drag dal du 'gro ba* "to go with firm steps", which Karmay (1988, p. 161, n. 99) notes is explained as "to go with fast steps means to go simultaneously and not gradually".

¹¹⁹ The word "*rgyu*" here could simply mean "cause", but it is also the name of the second of the three *samādhi* of Mahāyoga, the causal *samādhi*.

¹²⁰ The word "obtaining" (*lon*) may have a special technical meaning here as found perhaps in the title of the Chan text "*sems lon*" that is frequently referred to in the *bSam gtan mig sgron*. It also occurs in Dunhuang text PT 117, in the title of the *bSam gtan gyi lon*, a work attributed by Sa skya Paṇḍita to Hva-shang Mahāyāna. See Karmay, 1975, p. 153.

¹²¹ Vajrasattva is Akṣobhya's *sambhogakāya* form, and Vairocana is his *nirmanakāya* aspect, so we have here the three *kāya*.

ground for doubt after thoroughly investigating the Mahāyāna Sūtra Section Middle Way and so forth, for that reason one is vividly cognizant of everything, without concepts. After gaining certainty through this view, there is only a slight mention [here] of the lower Secret *Yānas*.¹²²

Concerning the actual explanation: although those [lower vehicles] are said not to explain the distinctions in the context of the fruition, in the context of the cause they do not go wrong. However, they do stray from the [oral] statements. How do they go astray [from] the Mantra[yāna]? The [*samādhi* of] Suchness [encompasses] the Causal and the [All]-illuminating [*samādhis*]. As for those who state that Suchness [is] the deity meditation: in the view of those who have not studied¹²³ the great [oral] statements and are not learned, although the Suchness that they describe [as] the stage of meditating on the deity may seem to correspond to *samādhi*, the mantra[yāna] precepts [teach that it] leads to the Meditation of the Gods, and that *samādhi* hinders [future] rebirths. Although one may cleanse the mind-stream through the absence of thought and by remaining in the three isolations¹²⁴, [there is] apprehension¹²⁵ of even the slightest thought arising.

The method of entry, the explanation of the View, and each of the different types of actions, from the basics, and also the Mantra[yāna *samādhi* of] Suchness, unless comprehended through the [oral] statements, are inappropriate. How is that? If you just practice one [*samādhi*], you will not succeed, but since [practicing] the three [*samādhis*] one by one is an [even] graver error, although there are precepts for beginners that just teach each of these three individually, they should all be practiced simultaneously.

In that case, [you may] object that, because [the *samādhi* of] Suchness is without any [visualized] object, but the Causal [*samādhi*] has an object, it seems difficult if [not] impossible to practice them [both] at the same time. But through the [oral] statements, it is easy to progress.

This is illustrated, for example, by the [reflection of] the moon in water, [or] a mirror, [or] an ocean wave - the cause that arises from within shines out from its own depths. There is no fault of becoming fixated.

Meditation on the human body endowed with mind¹²⁶ as the body of a Buddha, and the radiation and reabsorption from a¹²⁷ single self of the many deities of the maṇḍala and an unimaginable [number] of emanations, are purified by the clear visualization itself.

The pleasure and suffering of dreams, when one awakes, are exactly the same in nature; and similarly, conceptual thought and non-thought, too, when [one has] pristine awareness, are equal in their essential nature.¹²⁸ In [their] non-fabricated [nature] they¹²⁹ are primordial, spontaneously-accomplished perfection.

¹²² Concerning these "lower secret *yānas*" the KSG commentary specifies "the Mahāyoga and so on".

¹²³ Literally, "not heard" (*ma thos*).

¹²⁴ I assume that *dgon pa gsum* here is equivalent to *dben pa gsum*, that is, isolation of body, speech and mind.

¹²⁵ Literally, "two fears" (*dogs pa gnyis*).

¹²⁶ I have tentatively emended the phrase *sems can mi las* to *mi lus*.

¹²⁷ The phrase *bdag gcig su las* is difficult to construe and my translation here is provisional.

¹²⁸ Although explicated in the commentary, this passage may possibly be quoted from a different source, rather than the *sPyi bcings*, as it ends with *zhes gsungs pa*.

¹²⁹ The commentary explains this as referring to "the Three *Samādhis* and so on."

In that case, if they are perfect from the beginning, one may wonder whether meditation is now pointless. It is not pointless. From the non-existing cause existence manifests: the supreme maṇḍala of familiarization with what was [previously] not seen. If there is a cause that at first is non-existent, what substance does it have [to create] conceptual thought?

These are the teachings on the Great Activity.

The clarification of the [oral] statement of the Mantra [...] ¹³⁰ monks [and?] *sthāviras* ¹³¹ will be blind. ¹³²

This wonderful vajra [and] lotus of the totally-pure self is the father, [and at the same time] his own child. ¹³³ This lineage is the primordial view.

This great ocean of the Secret Mantra [*yāna*] can not be realized through comparisons, logical reasoning, inference, or superior knowledge. ¹³⁴ Therefore, the great Self ¹³⁵ of the Secret Mantra [*yāna*] that abounds in a great wave of accomplishments, whose unimaginable depth is hard to fathom, is accomplished by obtaining the statements and esoteric instructions.

¹³⁶ For example, after barley and buckwheat have been mixed up, though they are poured together, they show up individually, [and] similarly, although mantra [*yāna*] and meditative absorption may be mixed up, from the point of view of the wise, the greater special qualities of the mantra [*yāna*] manifest distinctly.

That which abides in great bliss, [is] the great perpetuity, the perfect Sambhogakāya. Precious enlightenment that transcends the Three Realms - since it is empty, where will it be found by searching for it? The essence of primordial wisdom is no different from the beings that are primordially present in the fluid of the great sphere. ¹³⁷

¹³⁸ The person who, individually elucidating these inner and outer teachings, without mixing them up, combines the provisional meaning,

¹³⁰ Part of the source text seems to be omitted here.

¹³¹ I have not so far found a convincing explanation for the reading "*ban thangs mi phyed*" that would corroborate the interpretation given in the commentary. See following note.

¹³² This passage resists meaningful translation and is very probably incomplete. The commentary on it makes no specific mention of monks (*ban*). It states that mixing up the explanations of Mantrayāna with those of other vehicles, in particular the sūtra vehicle, leads to the foundation of erroneous scriptural systems, causes obscurations in those who confuse them, and blindfolds the vision of others.

¹³³ The commentary explains that the Basis and Essence of enlightenment act as mutual cause and result: "*gzhi dang ngo bo nyid kyi phyir / rtogs nas snang bar 'gyur ba'i phyir / phan tshun rgyu dang 'bras bur gyur pas*".

¹³⁴ This passage beginning "This great ocean..." is quoted in the STMG at fol. 295.5.

¹³⁵ In Tibetan *bdag nyid che*.

¹³⁶ Two lines that occur here may also be part of the root text. They translate as: "In terms of analysis, even what is to be actually accomplished is explained without being mixed up, as well as not mixing up the experiences that follow."

¹³⁷ The "Great sphere" (*thig le chen po*) is a synonym in rDzogs chen for the all-encompassing state of enlightenment.

¹³⁸ There is a passage preceding this which could also be part of the root text: - "When the supreme vehicle that teaches in this way and the samādhi of the sūtra section are mixed, the meditation and conduct [are like this] - they destroy the power of the mantra [*yāna*] and have the fault of seeking the view and conduct of the sūtra section. If gum is mixed into butter, as well as the gum's strength being damaged, the butter's colour is also damaged, so it is wrong for both." This passage ends with the phrase *zhes gsungs so*, indicating the end of a citation, but less often found here than *zhes bya ba* after root text citations. Moreover, it is not itself commented on, which would also suggest that it is not part of the root text. However, the passage is important for doctrinal history as it stresses

without abandoning anything, with the state of great equality, the Dharmadhātu, understands all the Buddha's teachings without exception and remains within the great oral precepts, though his body is human, his mind is a Buddha. [Such a] teacher is called "the light of the world",¹³⁹ and even the Victorious ones of the three times pay him homage,¹⁴⁰ and all of the inner and outer oath-bound [guardians] also pay him heed and carry out whatever he commands.

Someone who does not have such realization, who does not have the statements, in his extreme ignorance [will be] seized by arrogance, and his speech will also be extremely deluded and contradictory [to the Dharma]. Claiming that it is the unsurpassed Great Perfection, sons of the Victorious ones who rely merely on the samādhi of the instantaneous approach¹⁴¹ violate the statements by assuming the role¹⁴² of commoners.¹⁴³

¹⁴⁴ Therefore, this non-waning lamp of the teachings is the province of those persons who have thoroughly purified their minds through an unimaginably [long] series of lives, placed their minds in the natural state over and over again, and paid reverence to the Victorious ones. But for those who only know how to mouth the meaning of their samaya, who mix up inner and outer teachings as a casual concoction, and lack the esoteric precepts of the Mantra[yāna], considering¹⁴⁵ the risks [of it] entering their hearts, it is secret.

If an unsuitable recipient should hear it, it will become a great burden, and he will wander continually. There are three statements of esoteric precepts¹⁴⁶, therefore,¹⁴⁷ because of the great danger and the difficult burden. [Of] the Precepts [in] Three Statements, the first gives a clear idea, the second gives understanding, and through the third, the meaning has been properly understood.¹⁴⁸

If they have not heard these three [precepts] or have not understood their meaning, some people will talk [of] emptiness, and others of permanence,

the distinction between "the supreme vehicle", which here is Mahāyoga but with a very pronounced rDzogs chen flavour, and "sūtra section samādhi" - a reference to Chan.

¹³⁹ This phrase occurs in the *rDo la gser zhun*, (1.4) where it may also be a quotation.

¹⁴⁰ Literally, "place him on the crown of their heads".

¹⁴¹ That is, Chan.

¹⁴² STMG "falling to the role of commoners."

¹⁴³ This passage, from "Claiming that it is the unsurpassed Great Perfection ..." is quoted in the STMG at fol. 311.5-6.

¹⁴⁴ Between the end of the previous passage and the start of this one there are two quotations, but they are not commented upon, and do not seem to be part of the root text.

¹⁴⁵ Amending *bstos* to *bltos*.

¹⁴⁶ There is an intriguing echo here of the famous three-line teaching known to the tradition as "*Tshig gsum gnad brdegs*", "Hitting the essential point in three statements", said to be the last testament of the eighth century rDzogs chen master dGa' rab rdo rje.

¹⁴⁷ There is a row of dots between "therefore" and the rest of this sentence, possibly indicating a lacuna in the source text. This hypothesis is supported by the commentary on this line: "Because there is a very great risk in not knowing the chosen recipient, it is hard [for him] to hold it in mind."

¹⁴⁸ The commentary (fol. 20 r.4-20 v. 3) elaborates on these esoteric precepts. It includes a reference to the Peaceful and Wrathful (*zhi khro*) deities. Its explanation includes the term *kun rtags pa*, the first of the Three Natures or Three Aspects (*trisvabhāva*) of Cittamātra. The Three Precepts may therefore have consisted of an explanation of the Three Samādhi of Mahāyoga, with perhaps some influence from Cittamātra doctrine.

and these will be signs of their having only understood just a few words, and also expose [the fact] that they lack the three precepts.

Moreover, that which remains without contriving in the single state of these three is the spontaneously-accomplished Great Perfection. Apart from this, there is no other state beyond concepts. Because he remains in the unitary state of Samantabhadra, the bhagavān is ornamented with emptiness.

The [oral] statements of the Great Perfection [explain that] the sphere of the secret moon¹⁴⁹ perfects birth [and] cessation in the self; the cause that perpetually shines forth in the mind of great beings, [and that] all Buddhas [are] non-existent.¹⁵⁰ The enlightened [state] roams freely and without impediment.¹⁵¹ "Therefore, whatever [their] thoughts and deeds may be like, do not give [this teaching] to anyone who is fixated on attaining [this] goal" is the advice.¹⁵²

Having lucidly drawn out all the coiled words of Universal Inclusiveness, it should be listened to¹⁵³ by [only] one or two. Glorious Hayagrīva, having grasped the stacked entrance to the maṇḍala of the heart, will reside [there]. If this is violated, since the Buddha has said in numerous scriptures that this will cause many evils to occur to the author in this and future lives, just as a magnet attracts iron, this should be borne in mind.

Spyi bcings Critical edition

Based on the version contained in the KSG commentary text *sPyi gsang sngags lung gi 'grel pa gnyags dza nya ku ma ras mdzad pa* (Vol. 103 p.439)¹⁵⁴

Dpal kun tu bzang po la phyag 'tshal lo/
 spyi bcings sngags kyi lung / ma 'dres gsal ba'o / *bdag ni yod do/gzhan ni med do/ bdag nyid*¹⁵⁵ *chen por lhun gyis rdzogs*¹⁵⁶ *pas yod do/ kun tu bzang po'i ngang*

¹⁴⁹ The commentary explains (fol. 20 v.3/p. 480.3) that the "Sphere of the secret moon" (*zla gsang thig le*) signifies primordial wisdom. This is also the title of an extant Mahāyoga tantra.

¹⁵⁰ This line is extremely terse and challenging to translate. I have relied for my interpretation on the commentary (fol. 22r.1-3), which states that the true nature of all conventionally-designated things is insubstantial, without color or desire, and that to be free of thoughts of such things is to enter the definitive oral precepts.

¹⁵¹ See previous note. The line *ma bkag ci bder byang chub yan du khye* is cited in the STMG at fol. 453.1

¹⁵² This passage ending with the "is the advice" (*ces gdams pa'o*) indicates the end of a citation that could be from elsewhere, but it is also possible that the *sPyi bcings* itself concluded here, as what follows begins with the text's title and refers to how it should be transmitted, and appears to be supplemental in character. It does however, receive some commentarial explanation

¹⁵³ Literally, "grasped in the ear".

¹⁵⁴ Verified by cross-checking with the quotations from the *sPyi bcings* in the *bSam gtan mig sgron*, which all match. The passages cited in the *bSam gtan mig sgron* (STMG) are shown in italics in this edition.

¹⁵⁵ STMG fol. 329.5 (*bdag*) *gzhan*.

¹⁵⁶ STMG fol. 329.6 *grub*.

*du gcig pas gzhan med do*¹⁵⁷ / bdag med par chad par ltung ngo¹⁵⁸ / sems can rtog pa che ches la / rtog pas 'khor / rtog pa'i bag chags rtas nas rtog pa'i ngang du 'gyur / mdo sde dang bstan chos bkrid¹⁵⁹ drang gi don gyis ni stong par bshad / de bas kyang med par bshad / de bas kyang stong pa bdag med par bshad / 'di yang lung gis ma zin na mi rung ste / mu stegs chad par lta ba ni bsgyur dka' la sdig che / de bas rtog par lta ba bsgyur sla la nyen chung bar gsungs te / rnam par mi rtog pa sgom pa'ang sems 'grod¹⁶⁰ de phyang chad par song ba ni bcos dka' la nyen che / de bas dmigs pa'i rgyu drag dal la 'dzin pa bcos sla bar 'dzin pas lon las 'byung ste / de yang cis mngon zhe na / ji ltar sbrul la bzung nyes na / rigs sngags log par bsgrubs pa bzhin / stong pa ni klan dka'o / rtog pa gzhi la sla'o / 'o na rtog par mi 'gyur ram zhe na / rtog par mi 'gyur ba'i don ni / rtag pa med pas na gzhan bsal / chad pa med pas ni bdag du bsdus pa ste / rtag chad gnyis dag go / skye 'gag med pas kyang bshig la / bdag dang gnyis su ma gyur pas kyang dag ste / thams cad nas thams cad du ril bdag du gcig par rang la rdzogs pa chen po lhun gyis grub pa'o / rtag pa chen po rnam snang mdzad / sems dpa' rdo rje mi bskyod mchog / 'di ltar gsal ba'i dus na / 'di ni theg pa chen po mdo sde dbu ma la sogs pas gdar bcad nas / the tshom gyi gleng gzhi ril dang bral bas na / rnam rtog mi mnga' cir yang sa le mkhyen¹⁶¹ / lta ba 'dis thag bcad nas gsang ba'i theg pa 'og ma dag la zur tsam yang ma brjod do / bshad pa nyid ni 'bras bu'i gnas skabs kyis phye ba ste / de dag ma bshad par zer ba yang rgyu'i skabs kyis 'gal ba med do / yang lung las gol te / sngags gol ba ni gang zhe na / de bzhin nyid ni rgyu dang snang / lha bsgom pa'i rim pa smos pa'i de bzhin nyid ni / lung chen po ma thos zhing / mi mkhas pas bltas na / bsam gtan dang cha mthun par 'dra na yang / de ni sngags kyis lung lha'i ting nge 'dzin du 'gro ba dang / bsam gtan ni tshe rabs kyis bgags / rnam par mi rtog pas rgyud sbyang zhing dgon pa gsum la gnas te / cung zad kyang rtog pa 'byung du dogs pa gnyis / 'jug pa'i sgo dang / lta ba'i bzhed dang / phrin las kyis khyad par gzhi nas so so ste / sngags kyis de bzhin nyid kyang lung gis ma zin na mi rung ste / ji ltar zhe na¹⁶² / gcig bsgoms na gcig mi btub ste / gsum so so pa nyid gol tshabs che bas / 'di gsum yang gsar bu rnam la so sor bstan pa'i lung yin par zad kyis / kun gyis ni dus cig du bsgom dgos so¹⁶³ 'o na de bzhin nyid ni mi dmigs pas / rgyu ni dmigs pa can te / 'di gcig du bsgom par dka' 'am / mi btub 'dra na yang / lung gis bgrod dang sla'o / de la dper na chu zla dang me long dang mtsho rlabs kyis mtshon pa ni / khong nas 'byung ba'i rgyu rang las gsal to / zin chags kyis

¹⁵⁷ The *rNying ma bKa' ma shin tu rgyas pa* (KSG) vol. 103 commentary entitled *sGom don drug 'grel* at p.162.6 quotes this passage as follows: (*spyi bcings las*) / *bdag nyid chen po lhun gyis rdzogs pas / bdag ni yod do / kun tu bzang po'i ngang du gcig pas gzhan med do*.

¹⁵⁸ This line is followed by the formula *zhes gsungs te*, whereas the most usual one for quotations from the root text is: *zhes bya ba ni*. It is possible that it is not part of the root text, but on balance I think it is, as the commentary does explain it.

¹⁵⁹ Emending *bkri drang* to *bkrid drang*.

¹⁶⁰ Emending *grod* to *'grod*.

¹⁶¹ This line is probably part of the root text, as it is followed by the short comment "*go sla'o*". However, its end-quote phrase (*zhes gsungs te*) is not the one most commonly found in this text (cf. note 5 above).

¹⁶² This rhetorical phrase may not be part of the root text.

¹⁶³ I have assigned the lines that follow (up to and including *mi btub 'dra na yang*) to the root text because they are explicated by the commentary, even though they do not terminate with the usual end-quote phrase *zhes bya ba ni*, but with *zhes brgal ba ste* – "it may be objected".

skyon med do/¹⁶⁴ sems can mi lus¹⁶⁵ sangs rgyas kyi skur bsgom pa dang/
bdag gcig su las dkyil 'khor kyi lha mang po dang/ sprul pa bsam gyis mi
khyab pa'i 'phro 'du gsal ba nyid kyis dag go/ rmi lam dag gi bde dang
sdug bsngal yang/ sad pa'i dus na rang bzhin yong gis mnyam/ de bzhin
rnam par rtog dang mi rtog kyang/ rig pa'i dus na rang bzhin ngo bos
mnyam/ ma bcos par ye nas lhun gyis rdzogs pa yin no/ 'o na gdod nas
rdzogs na da bsgom pa 'di ni don med do bar dogs pa la/ don med pa ni ma
yin te/med pa'i rgyu las yod gsal ba/ ma mthong 'dris pa'i dkyil 'khor
mchog/ dang po med pa'i rgyu yin na/ de la rtog pa'i rdzas ci yod/ 'di dag
ni spyod pa chen po'i bzhed do/ sngags kyi lung gsal ba/ ban thangs mi
phyed de mdongs so/¹⁶⁶ e ma'o rab du dag pa'i/ bdag gi rdo rje pad mo
'di/pha yin te ni bdag gi bu/ rigs 'di ye nas lta ba'o/ *gsangs sngags rgya
mtsho chen po 'di*¹⁶⁷/ *dpe dang tshad ma gtan tshigs dang/ rjes su dpog dang shes
rab kyis/ rtogs par nus pa ma yin te/ de bas gsang sngags bdag nyid che/ dngos grub
rlabs chen 'khrigs pa can/ bsam yas gting ni dpag dka' ba*¹⁶⁸/ *lung dang man ngag
thob pas 'grub*¹⁶⁹/ ¹⁷⁰*dper na nas dang bra bo bsres nas gcig du blugs kyang so
sor gsal ba dang 'dra bar/ sngags dang gsam gtan bsres kyang/ mkhas pas
bltas nas sngags che ba'i khyad par ma 'dres par gsal lo/ bde ba chen po
gang gnas pa/ rtag pa chen po longs spyod rdzogs pa'i sku/ khams gsum
las 'das byang chub rin po che/ stong pas brtsal bas rnyed par ga la 'gyur/
thig le chen por ye gnas chu gnas pa/ ye shes snying po de las gud na med/
¹⁷¹phyi dang ngang gi chos 'di dag ma 'dres par so sor gsal la/ bkri drang gi
don gang yang ma spang par mnyam pa chen po'i ngang chos kyi dbyings
su bzlums pa de/ sangs rgyas kyi bstan pa ma lus par mkhyen cing/ lung
chen po la gnas pa'i skyes bu ni/ lus mi yin yang sems sangs rgyas so/ ston
pa po 'jig rten gyi sgron ma zhes bya ste¹⁷²/ dus gsum gyi rgyal ba rnam
kyang spyi gtsug gi len pa/ phyi nang gi dam can thams cad kyang bka'
nyan te ci bsgo ba'i las byed do/ 'di ltar ni ma rtogs/ lung ni med/ ma rig
pa'i mu nga rgyal gyis bzung nas smra ba ni shin tu yang 'khrul par 'gyur te*

¹⁶⁴ The commentary elucidates the previous passage with a quotation from the *Kun 'dus* (as found in the KSG version), as follows: *bsgom pa'i gnas med dag du rab rtogs na/ bsgoms kyang skyon med chos dbyings nam mkha' 'dra zhes gsungs so.*

¹⁶⁵ I have tentatively emended the reading *mi las* to *mi lus* here, in the light of the commentary on this passage which reads: *'byung ba'i lus nyid sems kho na las mi gzhan par ma skyes par gsal ba ni ye shes kyi phyag rgya ste.*

¹⁶⁶ Here the full passage in the commentary reads: *sngags kyi lung gsal ba zhes bya ba nas ban thangs mi phyed de mdongs so zhes bya ba'i bar du ni*, i.e. "from....to....", implying that it has not quoted the entire passage from the root text.

¹⁶⁷ This passage (beginning *gsangs sngags rgya mtsho...*) is cited in STMG 295.5 and following. There is one variant in this line: STMG [...*rgya mtsho chen po*] *ni*.

¹⁶⁸ STMG 296.1 (*dka'*) *bas*.

¹⁶⁹ The citation in the STMG ends here, at STMG 296.1.

¹⁷⁰ Two lines that follow here may also be part of the root text: *gtan tshig kyi sgo nas bsgrub bya nyid kyang ma 'dres par bshad la/ rjes su 'jug pa'i nyams kyang ma 'dres so zhes 'go yang drang ngo.*

¹⁷¹ There are several lines here which could be part of the root text, but as they are not commented on in the usual way, I am inclined to think that they are quoting a different source. They read: *mar dang spyin du brses pas/ spyin gyi stobs kyang nyams la/ mar gyi mdog kyang nyams te gnyis ka ma rung ngo/ zhes gsung so.* This imagery is explained as referring to confusing the teachings of the supreme vehicle and the samādhi of the sūtra section, in preceding lines which could also conceivably be part of the root text, but are less likely to be so.

¹⁷² This quotation is from the *Gold refined from ore* (*rDo la gser zhun*), one of the *Five Earlier Translations*. See the edition by Norbu and Lipman, 1985, p. 115.5.

'gal lo/ ¹⁷³rdzogs chen bla na med par khas 'ches nas/ ton mun¹⁷⁴ bsam gtan tsam la rten 'cha ba/ rgyal ba'i sras 'bangs bcas pas¹⁷⁵ lung dang 'gal /¹⁷⁶ de bas na/ bstan pa mi nub pa'i sgron me 'di/ tshe rabs bsam gyis mi khyab pa nas shin tu blo sbyangs te/ sems rnal du 'jog 'jog pa/ rgyal ba rnams bsnyen bkur byas pa'i skyes bu dag gi spyod yul yin gyi/ dam tshig tsam kha don shes pa dang/ phyi nang gi chos lod pa'i thug pa bzhin du bsres pa dang/ sngags kyi man ngag med pa rnams la snying sgor byung ba'i nyen dang bstos¹⁷⁷ te gsang ngo/ snod ma yin pas thos na skur pa chen por 'gyur te/ gtan du 'khyams so/ de bas na¹⁷⁸ nyen che zhing bkur dka' ba/ man ngag gi tshig gsum mo/ man ngag tshig gsum pa gcig gis ni 'phrigs/ gnyis kyis ni go/ gsum gyis ni legs par brda¹⁷⁹ phrad/ 'di gsum ma thos sam brda' ma phrad dang/ la la ni stong zer/ la la ni rtag zer te/ 'di dag tshig 'ga' tsam la go ba'i rtags yin la/ gsum med pa yang des mngon no/ 'di gsum yang gcig gi ngang ste/ ma bcos par bzhugs pa yi/ lhun gyis rdzogs pa chen po'o/ de las la bzlar med do/ kun tu bzang po'i ngang la gcig bzhug pas/ bcom ldan 'das la stong pa nyid kyis brgyan/ zla gsang thig le skye 'gag bdag du rdzogs/ skyes chen thugs la rtag du gsal ba'i rgyu/ thams cad sangs rgyas med par rdzogs pa chen po'i lung/ ma bkag ci bder¹⁸⁰ byang chub yan du khye¹⁸¹/ de bas na bsam pa dang spyod pa gang yang 'dra ste/ ched du gdod 'dzin gar yang ma byed cig ces gdam pa'o/ ¹⁸²spyi bcings kyi tshig 'khyil pa ril gsal bar phyung nas/ gcig gnyis kyi rna bar zung la/ tsi tta'i dkyil 'khor brtsegs pa'i sgo/ dpal rta mgrin gyis bzung nas gnas so/ gal te 'das na sangs rgyas ni/ byed pa po nyid kyi phyir na de nyid kyis/ 'di dang phyi ma'i nyes pa mang po khab len la lcags 'du ba ltar/ 'byung bar gzhung du ma las gsungs pas de nyid rjes su dran par bya'o/

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¹⁷³ The three lines that follow are cited in the STMG at fol. 311.5-6.

¹⁷⁴ STMG *ston men*.

¹⁷⁵ STMG (*sras 'bangs*) *babs pa*.

¹⁷⁶ Two quotations follow at this point which are not commented upon, and do not seem to be from the root text. The passage reads: *sangs rgyas sems can so so na/ ye shes chen pos yod ma zin/ ces pa dang/ ci ste las kyi dbang brtsan na/ rang byung ye shes yod ma yin/ zhes kyang gsungs pas de dag bzhad pa bzhin du thog ma'i lung nyid nas khyad par du gsung/*.

¹⁷⁷ Emending *bstos* to *bltos*.

¹⁷⁸ There is a line of dots here in the text before the next word. This probably signifies a lacuna in the source text. The commentary on this line reads as follows: *snod 'dam ma shes pa'i nyen shin du che ba'i phyir bcang dka'o*.

¹⁷⁹ Emending *brdab* to *brda'*.

¹⁸⁰ STMG *bde*.

¹⁸¹ This line is cited in the STMG at 453.1.

¹⁸² It is possible that the original text concluded here. The reference to Hayagrīva, unusual for early Mind Series texts, would tend to support this hypothesis.

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