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See also our Bibliography to Volume One.

ABBREVIATIONS

These are self-evident if reference is made to the Bibliography above. E.g., Francke, Gergan and Petch are referred to by name and date of publication.

Blue Annals refers to Roerich.
Image of the Buddha to Snellgrove.
Indo-Tibetica to Tucci, etc.
 T.T. = *Tibetan Tripitaka*, Tokyo-Kyoto, 1958, being the Tibetan Canon as reprinted from Peking block prints.
 DGPS Tantra = *Durgatiparisodhana Tantra*.

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Figures in italics are page-references to relevant illustrations. Tibetan names are listed under their first radical letter, always shown as a capital (e.g. bDe-ldan thus appearing under the letter d) and otherwise following the order of the Roman alphabet.

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the existence of very large, well-organised standing armies. It is hard to imagine its use in Ladakh after the collapse of the Tibetan empire in the mid-9th century. After that time the kings and local rulers of Ladakh must have been hard put to it to raise temporary armies of hundreds, let alone thousands of men in their local levies.

The word *rvang-gling* looks like a clan or family name, or one denoting geographical origin. In a document from Mazar Tagh we have 'Bro's *Rong-lings* which Thomas (II, 302) compares with *Rong-lings* in a Tenjur colophon. The equivalence of *rvang* and *rong* is plausible in view of the alternation *bcva/bcvo/bco* which has been discussed by Simon (Simon, 474ff). *Rvang* would be the earlier form. The association of this name with the clan name 'Bro is intriguing in view of that family's connections with Alchi. There is also a syllable *rvang* in a fragmentary list of names from Khotan (Thomas II, 176).

mNen which also looks like a clan name or district name is paralleled by *nen/nyen/nyen(-kar)* in the name of a district in documents from Mazar Tagh (Thomas II, 466); this may be compared with *do-mnyen* (*ibid.*, 371) which combines this syllable with the *do* of the Alchi inscriptions.

The two names *stong-rtisan* and *la-legs* are found complete in the Central Asian texts. *sTong-rtisan* reminds us of the famous minister *mGar sTong(brtisan yul-zung* of the 7th century; it recurs in a Miran document (Thomas II, 374). *La-legs* / *lHa-legs* is paralleled by *La-legs-lod* (?) in a Tun-huang document (*ibid.*, 45) and by *lHa-legs* (*ibid.*, 113f). *Legs* is in fact one of the very commonest syllables in names at Tun-huang.

Another extremely common syllable in Central Asian Tibetan names which does not occur at all in Buddhist names is *slebs* (e.g. Thomas II, 113ff). It is also found in a Tibetan pillar inscription (Richardson b), 30, 33). At Alchi we have 'Phan-slebs. 'phan is also frequent in Central Asia. Apart from being an early clan name associated with the Tibetan royal family in the 7th century it occurs at Tun-huang (Thomas II, 114, 136; also 140 where *brTsan-la-phan* is a name combining three of the syllables found at Alchi).

dPal of the names *dPal-sum*(?) and *Do-dpal* is well attested in Central Asia (Thomas II, 115) while *do*, mentioned above, occurs in a document from Tun-huang (*ibid.*, 362).

Other syllables at Alchi found also in Central Asian texts are *khri* (e.g. Thomas II, 185), *sum* (*ibid.*, 407 – with *btsan*), *sag* (*ibid.*, 407, perhaps a clan name), *khrom* (*ibid.*, 202, 247, 255 with *brtsan*), *stang* (*ibid.*, 202, 203) *rgyal* (*ibid.*, 114f), and 'dron (*dron* *ibid.*, 214). *Tse*, frequent at Tun-huang, may however be Chinese. *Mar* occurs in the name of the 7th century Tibetan princess *Sad-mar-kar*, though this is perhaps out of context.

If *bag dar skyas zhangs e nu* is a name, then *bag* is attested from Miran (Thomas II, 343, 345), likewise *dar* from Tun-huang (*ibid.*, 115, though perhaps Chinese) *skyes* is common (*ibid.*, 113ff) as is *zhang* (Thomas III, 173).

While a few of the above correspondences are doubtless spurious, there can be no doubt that most of them are genuine and that the writers of these inscriptions were recruited from the same milieu as the people named in the Central Asian texts and pillar inscriptions.

Technique

All obviously Buddhist graffiti and inscriptions which I have seen in Ladakh, apart from a few of chötens like those at Alchi, have been produced by one of two techniques. In the first, the rock is fairly deeply incised so as to distinguish the lettering or drawing by relief rather than by contrastive colour. In the second the colour contrast is used as at Alchi but an area around the letters has been scratched away to leave the letters themselves in the dark surface coloration. The Moravian Christian inscription at Khalatse uses this second technique. I conjecture that the simple

scratching technique of the Alchi inscriptions is an older method which later gave way to the two other more laborious methods.

Conclusions

Tibetan power may have first encroached on Ladakh in the 7th century AD when the kingdom of Zhang-zhung, which may have included Ladakh, came under Tibetan suzerainty, apparently as a result of a military campaign led by the Tibetan minister *mGar sTong-rtisan yul-zung*. In the renewed Chinese offensives of the late 7th and early 8th centuries the Tibetans do not seem to have lost their western possessions as they did their northern ones. They regained the latter in the 8th century and held them until the death of Glang-dar-ma in 842. It is generally assumed that the Tibetan documents from Central Asia date from this second Tibetan occupation during the late 8th century and the first half of the 9th. Although some religious and other texts seem to have been written in Tibetan in Central Asia after the Chinese reconquests, as late as the mid 10th century, most of the names we have identified occur in military or administrative documents which were clearly written during the actual occupation.

This period – say from about 760 to 840 – is also the period of the Tibetan pillar inscriptions, which as we have seen bear comparison with the Alchi rock inscriptions. It is within that span of some eighty years that I propose to date these Alchi inscriptions.

The site of the inscriptions, like the sites of apparently similar ones at Nyurla and Khalatse, is of obvious strategic importance. A major invasion route from the west is up the River Indus. Where the valley widens to form river terraces at these three places (and no doubt others), large encampments of troops could be established where there was water (always scarce in this essentially desert terrain) and produce from local settlements. Any invader would face a difficult task in breaking through these successive concentrations of troops. The bridge and the two forts (one by the bridge, one at Saspol) at the Alchi site testify to its continuing strategic value.

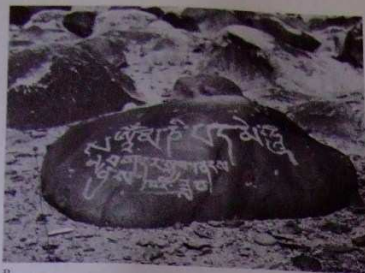
Here the Tibetan authorities must have stationed a large force of troops, indistinguishable in their names from those stationed at Khotan and Tun-huang, and hence probably recruited from the same Tibetan-speaking populations. The presence of the odd Buddhist with a name like *dGe-legs* among them is perfectly to be expected at that time. These soldiers may well have been an alien army of occupation surrounded by a predominantly non-Tibetan population. Petchen puts the cultural 'Tibetanisation' of Ladakh after the mid-9th century when refugees from the central domains moved in led by elements of the aristocracy (as reflected in Inscription No. 7 in the Alchi temples). I see no reason however why Tibetan colonisation or cultural influence should not have started much earlier during the period of military occupation. The soldiers who left these graffiti may have contributed to this process, and among them may have been military officers of the 'Bro, mGar and other clans.

Acknowledgements

I am particularly indebted to Sonam Dorje and his family of Alchi, Ngawang Tsering Shakspo of Leh, and Ricardo Canzio for practical help at Alchi. Helpful advice and suggestions have been received in England from Professor D.L. Snellgrove, Phuntsog Wangyal and Ngawang Thondrup Narkyid.



A



B



C



D



E



F

85. Rock inscriptions 8, 10-14

12 (*dbu-can*) Ill. 85D
khyi'i lo la
la legs bris
'Written by *La-legs* in the dog year.'
[An indistinct mark below the l of *La-*
legs may be a *h*, thus making the name
lHa-legs.]

13 (*dbu-can*) Ills. 85E and F
kar(?) ta el me slebs

14 (*dbu-can*) Ills. 85E and F
bya gag lo la
mnen dge leg
gyis bris
'Written by *mNen dGe-legs* in the bird year.'

The age of the inscriptions

Clues helpful in the dating of these inscriptions are to be found in their orthography, in the names contained in the texts, and in the technique by which the inscriptions have been produced.

Orthography

The orthography is marked by two archaisms: the reversed *i* and *my* before *i*.

In the temple inscriptions discussed above the reversed *i* is rare and its significance not clear. It is mainly reserved for the genitive particle when added to another particle. In the rock inscriptions the reversed *i* is much more frequent, and is used in a very similar way as in some of the 8th and 9th century Tibetan pillar inscriptions: for ornamental effect. This use is especially noticeable in the early 9th century Sang-gye Gompa (Karchung) and Tshur-bu (A and B) inscriptions (see Richardson, (a), 51ff, 59ff). (It is worth noting that the usage of reversed *i* varies even in that period; it is absent from the Sam-ye inscription which dates from between 763 and 789 AD). The 'rule' is that in any line with an even number of *i* vowels, or of *i* and *e* vowels combined, the *is* are reversed as necessary to give an equal number of left-facing and right-facing vowels. Reversed *is* may also be found where the number of such vowels in a line is uneven. In any given corpus or long inscription a few exceptions will be found. Thus in the Alchi rock inscriptions Nos. 1a and 3b break the rule, which is observed in e.g. Nos. 1b, 3a and 12. Likewise in the Tshur-bu (A) inscription the rule is broken in line 21 (Richardson's edition).

The letter *m* before *i* occurs just once (No. 3b), and is there given a subjoined *y*. Against this, a possible *me* in No. 13 has no subjoined *y*.

There is no case of *da-drag* in these inscriptions, but as none of the words on which one would expect it actually occur, its absence is of no significance.

Onomastics

The names in these inscriptions do not have an obviously Buddhist appearance as do those of the temple inscriptions. The only Buddhist name is *dge-legs*; the syllable *dpal* is found in Buddhist names, though not in the combinations occurring here. Nor do the names show any of the Muslim or Indo-Aryan affinities sometimes encountered among Ladakhi names at various historical periods. To find parallels for these names and titles we must look at the ancient Tibetan documents from Central Asia (Tun-huang, Khotan and other oases), supplemented by the pillar inscriptions in Tibet proper. Most of the syllables of which these names are composed occur in suitable positions, often frequently, in the names of these ancient texts; two of the names occur there complete.

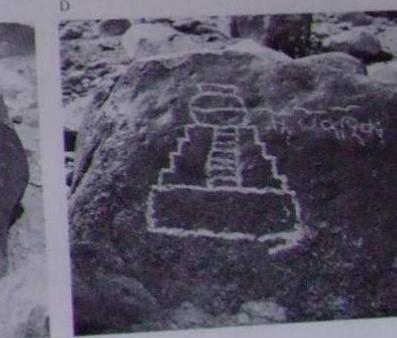
The two designations of rank pertaining to military and civil power respectively, *stong-* (*d)pon* and *blon* are frequent in the Central Asian material (refs. in Thomas III, 139, 161). Although *blon* ('official') is common in all periods of Tibetan history, *stong-(d)pon* ('Commander of a thousand men') is particularly associated with the period of the early kings, implying as it does

Sākyamuni Buddha, particularly the 'many-doored stupa of good fortune' (for a three-dimensional example of which see Vol I p. 142), and the 'stupa of the descent from the gods' with its central ladder-like staircase. The typical 'Tibetan' shape with its large spreading dome is a later form. Probably we shall not be far wrong in dating the older types around the time of the founding of the Alchi temples. (Ill. 83)

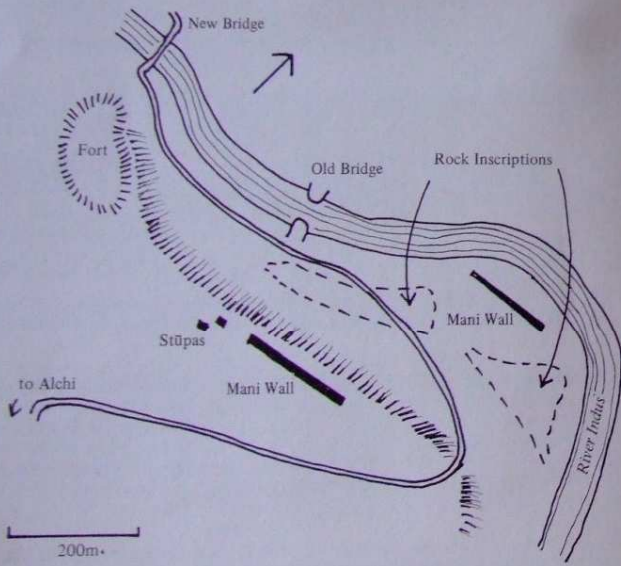
The written inscriptions are essentially graffiti of the type 'So-and-so wrote this'. Short and sometimes only semi-literate, they are scratched out with varying degrees of skill. I have set out the texts of all I could read. My conventions are the same as for the temple inscriptions except that I have, like most of the writers, omitted the intersyllabary points (*tsheg*). I also give photographs of most of them, and attempt a translation of all but two.

Texts and translations

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1(a) (<i>dbu-can</i>) Ill. 84A
bya gag lo la
blon stong rtsan gyis bris
'Written by the Official <i>sTong-rtsan</i> in
the bird year.' | 7 (<i>dbu-med</i>) Ill. 84F
sto pon khrom
'(Written by) <i>sTo(ng)(d)pon Khrom</i> .' |
| 1(b) (<i>dbu-can</i>) Ill. 84A
smer 'dron la rta'i lo la smer x
btsan gyis bris 'phan slebs mnen la tung (?)
smer
' <i>sMer-dron-la</i> in the horse year <i>sMer</i>
written by . . . <i>btsan 'Phan-slebs mNen-la-tung</i>
<i>sMer</i> ' | 8 (<i>dbu-can</i>) Ill. 85A
sbrulo la mdo stang tses(?) bris
'Written by <i>mDo-stang-tse</i> in the snake
year.' |
| [This may be an amalgam of several
graffiti.] | |
| 2 (<i>dbu-med</i>) Ill. 84B
stong pon tsa (?)
'The commander of a thousand <i>Tsa</i> (?)' | 9(a) (<i>dbu-can</i>) Ill. 83H
'brug gi lo la rvang kling legs tru mang
'(Written by ?) <i>Rvang kling Legs-tru-</i>
<i>mang</i> in the dragon year.' |
| 3(a) (<i>dbu-can</i>) Ill. 84C
rvang kljng rgyal khri s bris o
'Written by <i>Rvang-kling rGyal-khri</i> ' | 9(b) (<i>dbu-can</i>) Ill. 83H
rlang lo la
gi
wel la
'(Written by ?) <i>Wel-la</i> in the bull year.' |
| 3(b) (<i>dbu-can</i>) Ill. 84C
rvang kling pril (?) myis bris
'Written by <i>Rvang-kling Pril-myi</i> (?)' | 9(c) (<i>dbu-med</i>) Ill. 83H
'dod da |
| 4 (<i>dbu-can</i>) Ill. 84D
sbrul gyi lo sag mar la bris
'Written (by?) <i>Sag-mar-la</i> in the snake
year.' | 10 (<i>dbu-can</i>) Ill. 85B
ōm ma ni pad me hūm
bag dar skyas zhangs
e nu sa khar zla ba
'Om mani padme hum!
(Written by ?) <i>Bag-dar-skyas-zhangs</i>
<i>e-nu</i> (?) in the fourth month.' |
| 5 (<i>dbu-can</i>) Ill. 84E
spre'u lo la rye shjñ
'(Written by ?) <i>Rye-shin</i> in the monkey
year.' | 11 (<i>dbu-can</i>) Ill. 85C
rvang kljng dpal sum
bris
'Written by <i>Rvang-kling dPal-sum</i> .' |
| 6 (<i>dbu-can</i>)
do dpal
'(Written by) <i>Do-dpal</i> .' | |



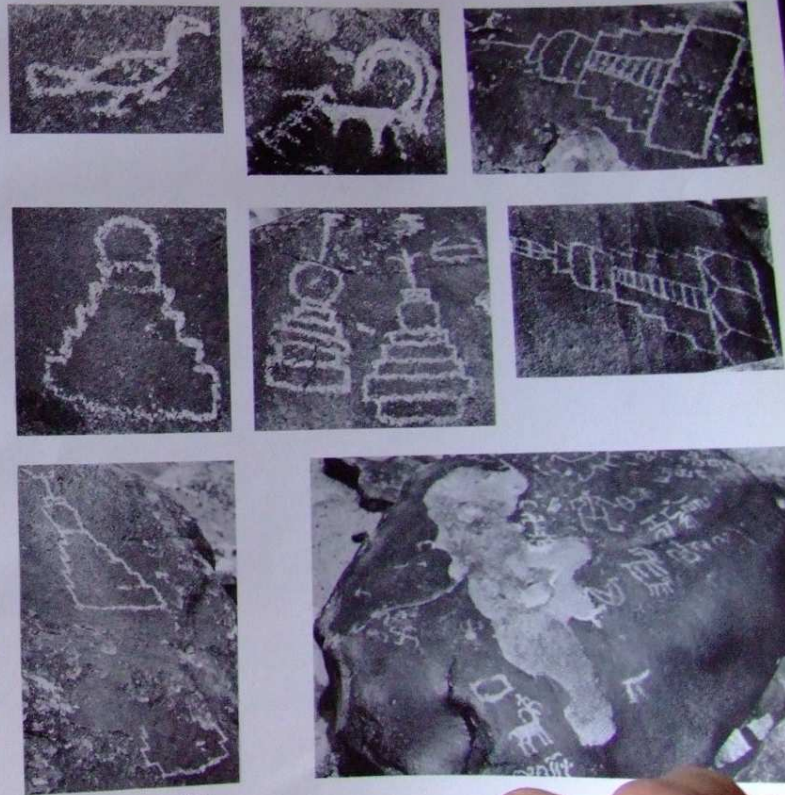
84. Rock inscriptions 1-5, 7.



81. View and sketch map of the site of the rock inscriptions near Alchi



82. Stūpas painted inside an old chöten at Alchi



83. Rock drawings near Alchi

vast merits were refreshing themselves' in Vol. 1. Real uncertainty arises because *grangs* means 'numbers' as well as 'to be cold', and *bsil* (perhaps better *gsil* in the first instance) can mean 'to duplicate or increase' as well as 'to be cool'.

Further uncertainty is caused by the syllable *zhu* which was amended with a question mark in Vol. 1 to *gzbug*. Uncertainty remains although we have sought the opinion of other scholars, especially learned Tibetans. They insist that *zhu* in both cases must refer to a person and see here a mistake for *khu* (= uncle). They were of the opinion too that *rgyal-yum* must refer to a queen and not specifically to a goddess. One of them suggested a meaning of 'completely pure' for *grangs kvis bsil*, though this remains doubtful.

Inscription 9, short though it is, gives us another famous old Tibetan clan name 'Gar, to set alongside the 'Bro. As far as I am aware this is the only mention of the name in Ladakh.

In Volume 1, p. 71, the first verse of Inscription 11 (in the Lotsawa Lhakhang) was seen as referring to Atiṣa and 'Brom-ston (*chos-rje . . . yab-stas*) and to Rin-chen bzang-po (*rin-chen*). All three were of course involved in translation work and so find appropriate mention in a translator's temple. When in verse 2 the unknown author speaks of the 'threefold form' (*sku gsum*) of the Buddhas he may have in mind the three large images of the Sum-tsek, which are related to the three Buddha-Bodies in Inscription 6. Similarly, in verse 4 the author seems to have actual monks in mind: ones who have done great works and are now dead. They can only be sKal-Idan shes-rab and Tshul-khrims 'od. Thus it would seem that in verses 1, 2 and 4 the author is deliberately expressing himself in such a way that his words can be applied either to lamas, Buddhas and monks in general or to the particular ones known to anyone familiar with Alchi.

Inscription 10, from the reign of King Tashi Namgyal, contains several puzzling proper names. Shes-rab chos-bzang(s) is not identifiable. mChog-las rnam-rgyal should no doubt be spelt Phyogs-las rnam-rgyal. The most famous bearer of this name at the time would be Bo-dong Phyogs-las rnam-rgyal, born in Nga-ri and founder of the Bo-dong-pa order of Tibetan Buddhism, although he had been dead for many years at the time this inscription was written. We do know that King Tashi Namgyal was eclectic in his patronage of Tibetan Buddhist orders, but I have come across no other mention of the Bo-dong-pas in Ladakh.

Tashi Namgyal certainly patronised the 'Bri-gung-pa order. Could the expression *a-lek-'bri-gum* indicate that he saw Alchi as a sort of miniature 'Bri-gung monastery? The misspelling would be no worse than many in this inscription. As the known affiliations of Alchi are to the *dGe-lugs-pa* order, this does not seem very likely.

Line 8 of the inscription gives a rough idea of the extent of Tashi Namgyal's territorial conquests.

ROCK INSCRIPTIONS

Nature and location

Illustration 81 is a view photographed in 1975 looking north-westwards down the course of the River Indus from a spot across the river from Saspol. To the right of the river is visible the modern Srinagar-Leh road. In the centre is the bridge carrying the track from Saspol to Alchi. On the rocky outcrop at the bridge's southern end are traces of old fortifications and much surface pottery; the site is locally known as *mikhar-gog* ('ruined fort'). No doubt this is the location of sKal-Idan shes-rab's fort and bridge; the old bridge seems to have been some 200 metres south of the one in the photograph.

The dark line running from the fort towards the bottom right-hand corner of the illustration is an old mani-wall, to the right of which a line of boulders marks the steep edge of a river-terrace. To the right of the track within a loop of the river is another boulder-strewn zone (see sketch map, ill. 81).

The boulders in these two strips of ground are of some hard igneous or metamorphic rock, measure up to about two metres across and have been somewhat rounded by water action to produce a smoothish outer surface which is much darkened by exposure to the weather. The inscriptions and drawings to be described have been made by scratching or bruising away the very thin surface layer to reveal the body of the rock, much lighter in colour.

I photographed some 16 rocks, which were all I could find with reasonably decipherable markings.

I have noticed rocks of the same type marked in a very similar way on other river terraces at Khalatse and Nyurla, also near the modern bridge at Khalatse and near the road at several points between Leh and Nyemo. None of them is included here.

Subject matter

The subject matter is of three types: simple drawings of men and animals; pictures of chöten; and written inscriptions. A given boulder may have any one or two, or all three types of subject.

The simple drawings are of a type widespread throughout Eurasia which in one part of this area or another span the whole range of human history and prehistory from the palaeolithic to the present day. Depicted at Alchi are ibexes, deer, horses, a bird, human beings firing arrows and a curious centaur-like creature (ills. 83-4). One can only conjecture as to the identity of the artists. They might be pre-Tibetan or this could be a tradition which carried on at a popular level even after the introduction of Buddhism. At any rate the practice of making such drawings seems to be extinct today and modern Ladakhis display little or no interest in them.

If the animals and men are pre-Buddhist they may have suggested to early Buddhists in the region the idea of scratching out pictures of chöten. These chöten drawings are not easily dateable; they could go back to an early Kashmir-inspired phase of Buddhism. On the other hand there are some close parallels at the Alchi temples. Inside the old chöten (ill. 82, and Vol. 1 p. 78) are paintings of chöten quite similar to some of those drawn on the boulders. All these chöten are modelled on the early set of eight stūpas which were associated with eight events in the life of

which is from the same author as No. 2, confirms this impression. Because of the small size of the sample these orthographic arguments cannot be decisive; nevertheless they tend to confirm independently the chronological order suggested by the contents of the inscriptions.

Inscriptions 1, 4 and 5, then, are contemporaneous with each other and with the founding of the temple in the mid-11th century or a decade earlier. No. 3 follows not many years later, when sKal-Idan shes-rab was already famous for his good works (perhaps about 1050), and No. 2 some years later still, probably after the deaths of both sKal-Idan shes-rab and 'Brom-ston which took place around 1060. No. 2 is probably not a great deal later than this, as it mentions no successors to sKal-Idan shes-rab.

Observations on the Sum-tsek Inscriptions

Inscriptions 6 and 7 are both in praise of the temple's founder Slob-dpon Tshul-khrims 'od. No. 6 professes to be from the same author as No. 2; this claim is consistent with the orthography used in both the inscriptions. Subjoined *y* and *da-drag* are used similarly, *da-drag* being omitted from *phyir* and *len*. *Dge'* and *dge* are found together; there is no case of reversed *i*. The only oddity is the use of *kund* in No. 6. The structure of No. 6 is similar to that of No. 2, while the acrostic on the name of the person being eulogised is of the same simple type. Thus the Sum-tsek was probably built in the late 11th century.

No. 7, from the pen of a different author, departs from the pattern in being mainly concerned with giving historical information – alas, badly damaged by physical decay – on the 'Bro lineage of which both Tshul-khrims 'od and sKal-Idan shes-rab were scions. Near the end it refers to something which seems to be a complicated acrostic somewhat after the style of the one in inscription 3, but if there is any such acrostic in the text given here I cannot identify it.

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Whereas Nos. 8 and 9 clearly fall together with the 'Du-khang inscriptions and must be of similar date to them, No. 10 differs from all the inscriptions considered so far in its *dbu-can* script and in its date which is during the reign of King Tashi Namgyal (r.c. 1555-1575 according to Petech). In orthography it follows modern conventions with no trace of archaism, although from line 9 onwards the spelling is poor.

Observations on the Lotsawa Lhakhang Inscription (No. 11)

While the script used in this inscription is that of Nos. 1-9, orthographic archaisms are confined to subjoined *y* after *m* and one instance of final *a-chung* (on *mtsho'*), the same word which may retain it in No. 7). There are several cases of *dge'*: none of *dge'*; and no cases of *da-drag*, even on syllables regularly carrying it in the 'Du-khang inscriptions. I would date No. 11 later than Nos. 1-9 in the 12th century, or perhaps in the 13th as suggested in Vol. I, pp. 79-80.

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The general standard of carving and spelling in this inscription is poor; moreover it is rather weathered and damaged in some places. There is one possible instance of reversed *i*, in what seems to be a complicated condensation of four syllables in one. I do not take it to be diag-

nostic of an early date. The long sentences and involved syntax and the particular honorific phraseology suggest on the contrary a late date, for they are typical of the ecclesiastical and administrative style of the 17th-20th centuries. The term 'Precious Protector' (sKyabs-mgon rin-po-che) has normally been reserved for the Dalai Lamas in recent times, although it may have been used for other dignitaries at some time in Ladakh.

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The inscriptions supply us with some welcome information of historical value. Unfortunately part of this information is enigmatic, sometimes because physical damage has fragmented the texts and sometimes because the writers' mode of expression is too oblique for us to understand all the details with the knowledge at our disposal.

No. 7 is the most tantalising. It seems to be outlining the history of the 'Bro clan or a branch of it in Ladakh. According to the Chinese the 'Bro were of Yang-t'ung extraction and thus may conceivably have originated in Western Tibet. They were particularly prominent around the time of the collapse of the empire in the mid-9th century. According to the Chronicles of Ladakh Nyi-ma-mgon, founder of the first Ladakh dynasty (and perhaps the great-grandson of Glang-dar-ma) married a lady of the 'Bro clan. Possibly others of the clan were among the followers of Nyi-ma-mgon in his westward move, which must have taken place in the early to mid-10th century. Petech speculates that it might have been the 'Bro who invited Nyi-ma-mgon to the west.

My translation of parts of Inscription 7 is only tentative, but the text does appear to mention the arrival in Ladakh of one's Tag-bzang of the 'Bro clan from the Gu-ge and Purang direction, and his establishment as some sort of ruler or minister. After a hiatus we are told of some unnamed 'Bro descendant who lived at Nyar-ma and acted as governor (*blon-po*) at Pho-brang dbang-lnga (could this be an old spelling for *Wam-le'*). Then we have a 'teacher from Sumda'. The founder of the 'Du-khang sKal-Idan shes-rab is called "slob-dpon gSum-mda'-ba" in Inscription 2, but the teacher in No. 7 seems to have a name beginning with Byang-chub and to have married. sKal-Idan shes-rab was a fully ordained monk. Byang-chub's eldest son seems to have had a name ending in '-Idan 'od, and he also resided at Sumda. Despite the name, the description of this personage is very reminiscent of sKal-Idan shes-rab with the residence at Sumda, the great wealth and munificence, and the founding of a temple or temples and many paintings. The final character, unnamed, is the nephew of the previous one (who was thus probably a monk); whether this is Tshul-khrims 'od is not clear, but it seems likely.

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INSCRIPTION 11

(verse 1)
 'Lamas who come into the world in succession like the Buddhas of the Good Age,
 The "Lord of Religion", protector of living beings, Father and Son with their great unequalled
 Rin-chen, the Jewel, king of initiations, giving contentment to living beings, love,
 I take refuge in these peerless lamas, the leaders of living beings!

(verse 2)
 Like the very scarce Udumbara flower, whose occurrence is precious and immaculate,
 The Buddhas, like the sky, are the pure infinity of the dharma, spontaneously manifested and
 Of immense intellect, they command supreme knowledge and the advancement of oneself uncompounded
 and others,
 Sources of treasure, threefold in form yet indivisible, I praise the Buddhas!

(verse 3)
 The whole of the teachings, being the Buddha-word and explanatory treatises, are (vast) as
 the land and sea,
 The path of the two levels of truth, they are like an ocean; protective, tranquil and passion-
 less,
 The teachings, which comprehend excellent qualities, are like the tree of paradise,
 I praise these guiding lights, the holy teachings of sacred import!

(verse 4)
 In order to repay favours, let me praise the . . . monks.
 Great beings, they set themselves apart because of the insignificance of life, never to turn
 back.
 They showed the way to deliverance for themselves and others . . .
 I praise the excellent monks, now gathered in their tomb (?).'

INSCRIPTION 12

'Please take notice that, being pleased by the good health of Blo-bzang shes-rab, custodian of Alchi monastery, and by the receipt of forty-two Bashakha fruits as a present with his letter, (we) were happy to the extent that (we) petitioned the "Precious Protector" concerning votive circumambulations of the monastery. (We) received his reply: that it would be suitable to make ten thousand for a "great (circumambulation)", one thousand for a "medium" one and five hundred for a "small" one; each person to make a great, a medium or a small number of circumambulations and confessions according to his ability. On the day, gifts of protective knots, sacred articles, precious medicines, fragrant water, curative pills and offering-scarves were presented from the medical dispensary.

'The relatives Co-mo Byam-pa (?) and Chos-'dzin (?) both offered this quantity of circumambulations and afterwards erected 103 mani-stones. And by these (acts) may the Buddhist religion spread and flourish! Good fortune!

'On this occasion silver was obtained from Tsha'u 'Ang-'dul and A-jo dPal-'dzins.'

Observations on the 'Du-khang Inscriptions

By virtue of their subject-matter, language, orthography and style the inscriptions of the 'Du-khang form a coherent group, bearing witness to the personality and reputation of the temple's founder sKal-Idan shes-rab.

No. 1 is our starting-point: it was written by sKal-Idan shes-rab himself and none of the others can be older than it. The 'Du-khang had obviously just been completed at the time of its writing, complete with woodcarvings and paintings. Inscription 5 seems to be contemporaneous with No. 1 and also written by sKal-Idan shes-rab. It provides a valuable check on the subjects of some of the original paintings in the temple: the mandalas, presumably of Vairocana, the paintings of Akshobhya's heaven and of the goddess Prajñāpāramitā and the thousand Buddhas, all of which are still there. The contents of Inscription 4 corroborate sKal-Idan shes-rab's interest in Akshobhya and his heaven. They can be no doubt that he had it placed there and that it was fitted round No. 1 at the time of painting the temple.

No. 1 after its invocatory section opens with a clear echo of the old poetry of the Tun-huang documents and the early Tibetan kingdom, albeit in the metre of later Buddhist poetry with lines of uneven numbers of syllables. It is evidently not thought out of place to call Ladakh 'sPu-rgyal's Tibet' in sKal-Idan shes-rab's time. Both the literary and the political implications of the line *ri mtho sa gtsang spu rgyal bod kyi yul*, argue for a date well before the Mongol hegemony and Sakyapa rule of Tibet proper in the 13th century.

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Inscriptions 2 and 3 are closely connected with sKal-Idan shes-rab. No. 3 is nothing but a panegyric for the temple's founder. No. 2 flatters partly directly, partly by imitation; its structure is modelled on that of No. 1, with in both cases an invocatory introduction, a set of didactic moral verses, a passage containing an acrostic on sKal-Idan shes-rab's name, and a colophon. No. 3 also imitates the acrostic technique, to produce a composition distinguished only by its technical ingenuity.

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INSCRIPTION 11

(verse 1)
 'Lamas who come into the world in succession like the Buddhas of the Good Age,
 The "Lord of Religion", protector of living beings, Father and Son with their great unequalled
 Rin-chen, the Jewel, king of initiations, giving contentment to living beings, love,
 I take refuge in these peerless lamas, the leaders of living beings!

(verse 2)
 Like the very scarce Udumbara flower, whose occurrence is precious and immaculate,
 The Buddhas, like the sky, are the pure infinity of the dharma, spontaneously manifested and
 Of immense intellect, they command supreme knowledge and the advancement of oneself un-compounded;
 Sources of treasure, threefold in form yet indivisible, I praise the Buddhas! and others;

(verse 3)
 The whole of the teachings, being the Buddha-word and explanatory treatises, are (vast) as
 The path of the two levels of truth, they are like an ocean; protective, tranquil and passion- the land and sea.
 less.
 The teachings, which comprehend excellent qualities, are like the tree of paradise,
 I praise these guiding lights, the holy teachings of sacred import!

(verse 4)
 In order to repay favours, let me praise the . . . monks.
 Great beings, they set themselves apart because of the insignificance of life, never to turn back.
 They showed the way to deliverance for themselves and others . . .
 I praise the excellent monks, now gathered in their tomb (?).

INSCRIPTION 12

'Please take notice that, being pleased by the good health of Blo-bzang shes-rab, custodian of Alchi monastery, and by the receipt of forty-two Bashakha fruits as a present with his letter, (we) were happy to the extent that (we) petitioned the "Precious Protector" concerning votive circumambulations of the monastery. (We) received his reply: that it would be suitable to make ten thousand for a "great (circumambulation)", one thousand for a "medium" one and five hundred for a "small" one; each person to make a great, a medium or a small number of circumambulations and confessions according to his ability. On the day, gifts of protective knots, sacred articles, precious medicines, fragrant water, curative pills and offering-scarves were presented from the medical dispensary.

'The relatives Co-mo Byam-pa (?) and Chos-'dzin (?) both offered this quantity of circumambulations and afterwards erected 103 mani-stones. And by these (acts) may the Buddhist religion spread and flourish! Good fortune!

'On this occasion silver was obtained from Tsha'u 'Ang-'dul and A-jo dPal-'dzins.'

Observations on the 'Du-khang Inscriptions

By virtue of their subject-matter, language, orthography and style the inscriptions of the 'Du-khang form a coherent group, bearing witness to the personality and reputation of the temple's founder sKal-Idan shes-rab.

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INSCRIPTION 7

lamas
Honour is paid to the Buddhas, the dharma and the community, and to the author's

sites
Southern Jambudvīpa is the finest of continents and well-endowed with famous religious

'In the north part of Jambudvīpa is the Land of Snows, the country of sPu-rgyal's Tibet with its high mountains and pure ground, filled with religious practitioners who possess the Thought of Enlightenment. The patron who founded this precious tiered *vihāra* here at Alchi of Ladakh, in Lower Mar-yul of Upper Nga-ri was the teacher Tshul-khrims 'od. He was of the great and aristocratic 'Bro lineage.

'As the sun and moon together ornament the sky, so did the two great 'Bro brothers (?) ornament (?) the earth. Understanding the meaning of emptiness, they did not seek to study it. The 'Bro line being illustrious (?), they did not seek to end it. A member of the 'Bro clan called sTag-bzang who wandered from Gu-ge and sPu-rangs (???) arrived at . . . Vanquishing external enemies and protecting internal subjects, he (?) acted as a true ruler and was established as their overlord . . .

. . . 'resided at Nyar-ma in . . . and acted as governor of Pho-brang dbang-lnga. Between . . . was divided into upper, lower and middle parts. The teacher of Sumda, Byang-chub . . . married and had three sons, the eldest of whom was . . . -ldan 'od, who came to Sumda, that superior and happy place, in order to benefit living beings with his impartial compassion. Possessing both learning and righteousness, his grace was very potent, and he was richly endowed by the god Vaiśravana (?). Very wealthy, he was also munificent, the best friend of all the poor and like father and mother to them. He founded temples and thousands of images.

'His nephew the great teacher, lamp of the doctrine and glory of all beings, was kindly to those beneath him and was appointed as a lama. With the 'three wisdoms' he destroyed false pride and set many of his flock on the road to deliverance. Just when the teachings of that protector of beings the Lion of the Śākyas were in eclipse, he planted the victory-banner of the dharma. A great scholar, he studied the threefold scriptures and was the precious master of the fourfold tantras.'

There are six ways of reading (these ?) eightfold verses, and various ways of dividing up the subject matter.

'The Buddhist monk 'Gar has written this.'

INSCRIPTION 8

' . . . On the speedy attainment of perfect enlightenment by me and all living beings under the sky through the merit of founding this *vihāra* . . .

'This account of how the *vihāra* was founded by the teacher Tshul-khrims . . . called the 'Garland of Butter Lamps', was written by the Teacher-monk dNgos-grub shes-rab; and whatever merit arises out of it . . .'

INSCRIPTION 9

' . . . the monkey-faced 'Gar has written (this). The Buddhist monk 'Gar, the Translator Tshul-khrims g.yung-drung . . .'

INSCRIPTION 10

'Om, good fortune and success!'

(line 1) *Salutations to lamas and to the Great Mother Prajñāpāramitā.*

(line 3) 'From early youth you left the world for the religious life. The three types of teaching have been very dear to you. Famous . . . wearer of the orange robes, mChog-las nam-rgyal, we reverently salute you! *Kye lags!*

(line 4) 'You spread the . . . mandala across the sky of knowledge (?). . . the rays of the doctrine of sūtras and tantras. We bow reverently at the feet of you who bring to fruition hosts of worthy converts, Shes-rab chos-bzang!

(line 5) 'In southern Jambudvīpa, best of continents, this closed relic-casket¹ between heaven and earth, in this high and mighty fortress, both beautiful to see and glorious to hear of, of A-lci-'bri-'gum (?), lightning and thunderbolts struck and you were born with the prowess of a lion! You defeat external enemies and the prowess of your armies increases! A protector and friend of your own people, you are more than loving parents to them! Lord of men and sovereign, Tashi Namgyal, we reverently salute you with body, speech and mind!

(line 7) 'Well-born in Tibet by the power of your merits, manifestation of Avalokiteśvara and appointed as king of us all, you shine as a sun of happiness! May Tashi Namgyal be ever victorious! *E ma ho!*

(line 8) 'You have defeated your enemies of Mon-kha, the Hor and others. From Rudok and Spiti as far as Suru and Dras, up to Nanggong, Nubra and Zangskar, the realm of Nga-ri is under your dominion!

(line 9) ' . . . in carrying out the behest made by me, Shes-rab bsod-nams, in the manner of the lineage of this religious establishment, to gain merit by doing repairs, my son (?) Gon-cog-skyabs had as helpers the two brothers A-lci Chos-don-grub blo-gro lde (?) and Don-grub skyabs (?), & the monks bKra-shis skyabs, Don-grub bkra-shis and Don-grub pal-'byor; they rendered service to this *vihāra*.

(line 12) 'In response to requests for offerings, a household official (?) of the lady 'Od-leam prepared turquoise paint. . .

(line 14) 'From the monk Sod-nam pal-'byor; malt for brewing (?). From the official of Khrig-si; one brass ewer. From the official Lo-zang bde-legs; . . . eight loads of barley, two . . . of beer. From the Governor at Yuru one seventh of a *zho*'s worth of vermilion . . . silver, vermilion and indigo. From the Mul-'be mco-co . . . one sash. . . at Pho-gar . . . cotton . . . iron . . . sash, carpet . . . iron. Service was rendered to . . . the niece Don-'grub dpal (?) and Kon-cog skyab.'

(line 16) *Expressions of satisfaction at the restoration of the temple, etc.*

1. Read Ga'u kha-sbyar for Kha'u khab-sbyor. A known metaphor for a macrocosm.

'Though my knowledge is slight and my understanding poor, I have roughed this out: may learned folk please be indulgent!

(line 9) 'Om, blessings! May there be victory over the four opposing evils! As for this master of all the dharmas, he covers all, unutterable, like the unborn sky. We salute him who is unchanging and teaches in various ways; we salute and praise him who has arranged the doctrines. As stirred curds turn to butter, he is manifest spontaneously in the six spheres of rebirth. Among the dharmas as unreal as dreams, he protects others, being of bodhisattva lineage.

(line 10) 'This virtuous guide sKal-ldan shes-rab entered the religious life while young, and accepted austerities. Being one of the noble ones who seeks deliverance in both Sūtras and Tantras, we salute him, who is active in works unpractised before.

(line 10) 'In the days of his studies, by the favour of the abbot and other wise men at the religious house of Nyar-ma in Mar-yul, he sucked like a bee at the essence of the thoughts of the wise men, who were filled with goodness like a flower with nectar. With the tongue of wisdom he savoured many teachings which were like honey; we salute him!

(line 11) 'This virtuous guide sKal-ldan shes-rab comprehends the meaning of the "Great Symbol", and advantage to living beings is manifest in the ten directions. In essential truth he disposes of the assertions of the unqualified. We praise him who gives the unadulterated truth to worthy men and women. Those whose karma and aspirations are good honour you (?). Like the tree of paradise, your good qualities are overwhelming. Like the excellent vase, you fulfil the desires of all. We praise and salute him who is like a mine of precious stones!

(line 12) 'This virtuous guide of all men, sKal-ldan shes-rab, holds to the very pith of good teaching, and loosens the knot of subject and object. His outpourings of grace change false colours like a dye. We praise him whose work for others is completely spontaneous!

(line 13) 'Having amassed merit in former lives, he is now wealthy. Free from avarice, he is impartially munificent. For favours done to him he does favours in return. In order to help living beings he strove to build a fort and bridge. Again and again he has set up meditation classes and performed disinterested acts of virtue. He has multiplied greatly the (images of) the Royal Mother of infinite merits. In pursuance of the request to the father, he built this great *vihāra* here in Alchi, his faith being the main factor, and his wealth and secondary one.

(line 14) 'In sPu-rgyal's Tibet, of loving disposition; in Nga-ri, source of wise men; in Alchi with all its good qualities, the teacher who is of the 'Bro clan of good lineage and possesses the two wisdoms has given goods of the five valuable kinds unselfishly to craftsmen who are both clever and quick, and has built this exalted temple. May patron, recipients and all around them thereby become perfect in wisdom and merit, and attain the omniscience which is of the three Buddha-bodies and the five wisdoms!

(line 15) 'As for this "Garland of Words of Clear Light" which I, the Tibetan hermit 'Byung-gnas shes-rab have composed just as it came into my mind, relying on the original sources and other teachings; I have essentially no skill, yet why should those who hope for skill blame me? If on examination of the verses you find fault, even omniscient ones confess their mistakes; may your learned folk therefore be reticent and indulgent!

(line 16) 'This "Garland of Words of Clear Light, Yellow Inscription" has been composed by 'Byung-gnas shes-rab. Completed.'

INSCRIPTION 5

The three Precious Ones are invoked and salutation is made to them.

(line 2) [A badly damaged passage concerning various religious transgressions and spiritual imperfections.]

(line 4) '... I have set up assemblages of divinities in their maṇḍalas, representations of Akshobhya, the thousand Buddhas of the good aeon, Maitreya, the 108 representations and so forth, the Mother Prajñāpāramitā and others. Relying on such merit, tangible and intangible, as has been achieved in setting them up, may I and ... all sentient beings attain supreme enlightenment (!)'

(line 5) ... and may we obtain the attributes of Mañjuśrī and other divine beings (!) !
Praise be to Akshobhya !

INSCRIPTION 6

'Om, blessings! Bowing before Mañjuśrī, whose nature is wisdom (?), I shall write about the four stages of life.'

(line 1) *In the first stage, childhood, one is concerned only with simple pleasures and pains, and does not absorb teachings. In the second stage, youth, one is preoccupied with one's livelihood, education and position in society. Acquisition of wealth is legitimate if it is expended on religion and used for spiritual ends. In the third stage, middle age, one should succour the unfortunate, hold to one's lama and manifest one's religious intentions. In the fourth stage, old age, one becomes physically and mentally decrepit. It is too late to gain salvation if one has not already attended to religion when younger.*

(line 13) 'In possession of good qualities he was all that could be desired. Begging on the road of selflessness which is the road to deliverance, and striving with works of merit, he reached paradise. Compassionately, he was generous to those who begged of him. He practised religion correctly and attained enlightenment. Firm in his discipline, he was everyone's friend. Born in the lineage of clear light, his efforts were fruitful in this life.

(line 15) 'That patron and monk, Tshul-khriṃs 'od, in order to emphasise the essentiality of voidness with regard to the non-substantiality of possessions, set up these reliquaries of Body, Speech and Mind. In order to remove bodily impurities and obtain a "human" Buddha-Body, he set up Mañjuśrī as a body-image. In order to remove vocal impurities and obtain a "glorious" Buddha-Body, he set up Avalokiteśvara as a speech-image. In order to remove mental impurities and obtain an "absolute" Buddha-Body, he set up Maitreya as a mind-image.

(line 19) 'Possessing the Buddha-word of infinite renown, he removed obstructions. He was born in the lineage of clear light, of mystical practice.' [These lines serve purely to support an acrostic on the name Grags-ldan 'od.] 'One called Grags-ldan 'od has written this.

(line 20) 'The Buddhist monk Grags-ldan 'od has written this: if there are mistakes, he begs forgiveness. By means of our meritorious works may abbot and teachers and the infinity of sentient beings gain birth in the Eastern Paradise! Completed.'

INSCRIPTION 1

'Om, blessings!

'Having made salutations in all reverence to the Three Precious Ones, to my lamas and to my tutelary divinities, I have composed this "Lamp of Clear Recollection" in order to generate true wisdom in myself and others!

'In that best of continents, southern Jambudvīpa, at this spot, the hermitage of Alchi in sPu-rgyal's Tibet, land of pure ground and high mountains, I have built a precious temple with devoted veneration! To look on the woodcarvings and paintings . . .

(line 2) *In this present aeon of degeneration misfortune and disaster are rife. Besides, the most munificent gifts do not necessarily result in the greatest merit. Nevertheless we should do what we can, for it is certain that if we cannot gain enlightenment when possessed of a human body, we shall never gain it in the three lower spheres, where we are continually in torment. Beings of the six classes wander about in seemingly endless saṃsāra, suffering miseries and delusions. However, a combination of circumstances including the appearance of a lama eventually provides the possibility of release. For the goal of Buddhahood is, by its very nature, all-pervasive all the time, regardless of whether we strive for it or not, and regardless of our way of life.*

(line 10) 'Through whatever merit I have obtained in founding a precious temple and composing this "Lamp of Clear Recollection" may I and the infinity of living beings be born in the excellent pure realm which is called the "Great Bliss of the Lord and blessed one Akshobhya"! May all beings come to the attainment of all the attributes of Akshobhya in full measure!

(line 12) [The acrostic verses which follow are essentially a literary artifice, evoking the associations of the individual syllables of sKal-ldan shes-rab's name. In the second verse we have the definite information that 'I, the monk sKal-ldan shes-rab, have composed (this poem)'. The initial syllables of the verses make up the same sentence.]

[Colophon following the verses:] 'If this poetic composition is not good or correct, may learned folk please be indulgent! If it is free from error and consonant with the truth then how can it not be said, if one's mind is dispassionate, that its merit is good? This so-called "Lamp of Clear Recollection", which explains the equalising (?) of merit, has been composed by the Buddhist monk sKal-ldan shes-rab. Completed.'

INSCRIPTION 2

'Making salutations with devout body, speech and mind to the essence of the three Buddha-bodies, to the holy doctrine consisting of inspired and explanatory teachings, and to the community consisting of śrāvakas, pratyekabuddhas and bodhisattvas, I shall expound the triad of converts, convertors and means of conversion.'

Through false judgement based in ignorance, the beings of the six classes take their rebirth in endless saṃsāra. In order to convert them, the three Buddha-Bodies teach in their different ways. To the three types of potential converts, the teachings appear as three vehicles. The bodhisattva vehicle perceives the two aspects of truth as inseparable, and pursues the advantage of others. The pratyekabuddha vehicle perceives conceptions as having no self-nature; it pursues mainly its own advantage, partly that of others. The śrāvaka vehicle perceives individuals as devoid of selfhood and is acquainted with the 'four truths' and 'sixteen wisdoms'. It pursues its own advantage. The vehicle of the gods and laymen has faith in the dharma, pursues the 'ten virtues' and

observes the 'sixteen precepts'. It reveres merit and builds up the roots of virtue by recitation, circumambulation, building stūpas and so forth.

'As for the sponsor possessed of four names: to name him from his birthplace he is the "Teacher of Sumda (gSum-mda)". To name him from his residence he is the "Teacher of Alchi." To name him from his lineage (rus) he is the "Teacher of the 'Brom" [or, To name him from his time (dus) he is of the time of 'Brom-ston?]. To name him truly he is sKal-ldan shes-rab the "fortune-possessor who is very wise." Fortune-possessing, he obtained a pure human body; possessor of wealth, he was highly munificent. Possessing the quality of being wise he comprehended profound teachings and advanced straightaway through the ten stages of a bodhisattva from the "very joyful" one onwards. The teacher whose true name has been given knew that it is the mark of saṃsāra to be like a mirage. Knowing wealth and possessions to be insubstantial, in order to . . . the essence of voidness he asked to build a temple as a place of meditation and study. To this end he expended wealth and possessions . . .

'Furthermore I shall say a little about Alchi and its inhabitants. There are three upper valleys surrounded by mountains and there is little thieving or banditry. There are three lower valleys cut off by water, and there is no enmity (?). Whatever is sown in the ground ripens and there are no diseases of the precious grains. There are no crags or ravines, so that farmwork is easy.

'As for the character of the inhabitants, the reverend ones are virtuous (?) and observe the holy religion; they are virtuous guides, sources of all good qualities. The upper ranks, lionlike (?), are endowed with conscience and modesty; ancient rulers (?), they are sources of all . . . The young men are brave and handsome (?), and are sources of all prowess and authority. Excellent and endless are the good qualities of all these.

'This great temple and viḥāra has been built with a wealthy patron supplying the means and skilful craftsmen acting as agents; may the purest merit come into being!

'The Buddhist monk Grags-ldan 'od has composed this. If there are any mistakes, may learned folk please be indulgent! Good and virtuous learned ones should speak to people according to the way they are born as children into the three different classes (?) – thus the three vehicles effect conversion with the three types of teaching.

'The "Yellow Inscription of Many Parts" is completed.'

INSCRIPTION 3

'Possessing the good effects of merits accumulated over many aeons, he has obtained the opportunity which is hard to get. An accomplished "virtuous guide", he is endowed with the supreme truth, and because of this excellent knowledge, and in order to make use of his opportunity, he has absorbed the whole of the teachings. Active in comprehending profound meanings, in order to explore all knowledge he provides the . . . of all beings. Entirely filled with zeal (?), he knows the various means of liberating them. Endowed with the excellent holy doctrine, and possessed of the understanding of profound non-duality, he knows the means of converting those who are ready for it, and in this respect surpasses all others.

(line 5) 'There are three ways of reading this description: reading round the four edges; reading in the conventional way; and reading in separate parts. The first way reveals his four names; the second, his merits in general, . . . ; the third, the good qualities of his deeds; and the fourth, his individual good qualities.

yid.gsum.gus.pas.phyag.'tshal.lo // bod.yul.bsod.nams.stobs.
 las.legs. (8) 'khrungs.pa'i // apyan.ras.gzigs.dbang.
 sbrul.pa'i.rgyal.po.khyed // kun.gyi.gtsug.tu.khur.bas.
 skyid.pa'i.nyi.ma.shar // bkra.shis.rnam.rgyal.rtag.tu.
 rgyal.'gyur.cig // e.ma.ho // mon.kha. (9) hor.la.sogs.
 ba.dgra.rnam.tul // ru.'dog.sbi.ti.man.cad. // su.ru.hem.
 'pab.kyen.cad // nang.'gong.nub.ra.bzang.skar.tshun.cad.nga.
 ris.nga.yog // cas // drung.pa.kun.brkangs(?) .rtse.cas.
 chos.skor. (10) rgyud.pa'i.lugs.la // shes(?) .rab.bsod.
 nams.bdag.gis.bu(?) .gon.cog.skyaba.zhig.bsob.ca.ba.la.dge.
 ba'i.skul.ma.bye(?) .dpe.groga.la / a.lci.chos.don.dgrub.
 blo.gro.lde.don.'grub.skyaba.ba.sbyun(?) .nyis / (11) bkra.
 shis.skyabs.don.'grub.bkra.shis.don.'grub.pal.'byor.tsun.pa.
 rnama.kyi.rtsug.lha.ga.'khang.'di.la.zhabs.tog.phul // (12)
 'pul.kul.la.bdag.mo.'ed.lcam.kyi.drung(?) .x.yu.'tshal.bca'. /
 (13) bkrud.pa.lags.'byor.ris.x.yu.byung.cig.x.thong(?) .cig /
 dge.elong.sod.nam.pal.'byer.'i.thing(?) .sbang.ma.khrig.si.drung.
 bas.rag.'bum.cig. (14) drung.pa.lo.nang.bde.legs.kyi.nad.de(?) .
 la(?) .nas.khal.rgyad(?) .chang.2 // yu.ru.na.sde.pas.tshal.zho.
 bdun.kag.1 // shal.li.cos.rngul.tshal.rgya.rams.byung // mul.
 'be.moo(?) .co.je.mas.kag. (15) pheng.skye.rag.1 / pho.gar.na.
 'tsho.bsos.ras.lcags.nag.cig / skye.rags.'dan.na.pa.lcags.cig
 / 'byung / dbon.mo.cha(?) .don.'grub.dpal // kon.cog.skyab /
 'gang.'gang. (16) rnam.la.zhabs.tog.cas / chos.skor.ras.
 bzang.ston.par.bston.bcas / ngon(?) .x.x.x.x.bsod.nam.bkra.
 shis.x.x.x. (17) yul.pa.sa.mi.rnams.sgye.si.ka.ru.dpon.rnam.
 tshin.rab.byas // dge.o.legs.so. / bkra.shis.par.'gyur.cig
 // on.su.bva.ti.badzra.ye.svahā: (18) // omsvastisiddhambo.
 mo.na.cung.rnams.kyis.lob.bzang.dra.ba.bzhengs // (19) dpon.
 rnams.shes.pa'i.zhab.tog.legs.phul. // dkra.shis.par.'gyur.
 cig // (20) dpon.rnams.sha.chang.kyis.tshim.par.byas.nas.
 bzahengs // hehehe //

INSCRIPTION 11

// bla.ma.bka'.rgyud.sangs.rgyas.skal.bzangs.dang.mtshungs.'dzam.gling.byon. //
 chos.rje.'gro.'gon.yab.sras.mnyam.myed.rtse.ba.chen.po.yis. //
 rin.cen.nor.bu.dbang.gi.rgyal.pos.'gro.rnams.tshim.par.mdzad. //
 bla.ma.mtshungs.myed.'gro.ba'i.ded.dpon.rnams.la.bskyabs.su.mchi'. //

 dkon.mchog.dri.myed.'byung.ba.rab.dkon.u.du.'bar.ba.ltar. //
 rgyal.ba.mkha'.ltar.chos.dbyings.dag.pa.lhun.grub.'dus.ma.byas. //
 blo.gros.mtha'.yas.mkhyen.rtse.nus.dang.don.nyis.ltan.pa.po. //
 rin.po.cha'i.'byungs.khungs.sku.gsum.dbyer.myed.sangs.rgyas.rnams.la.bstod. //

 bka'.dang.bstan.chos.la.sogs.ldang(?) .gi.chos.rnams.dbang.chen.sa.gzhi.'dra. //
 'gon.'dzad.zhi.ba.chags.bral.rgya.mtsho'.dang.mtshungs.bden.nyis.lam. //
 yon.tan.phun.'tshogs.stogs.pa'i.chos.ni.dpag.sam.shing.dang.tshungs. //
 dam.pa'i.don.ban(?) .dam.chos.rin.chen.sgron.ma.rnams.la.bstod. //

 drin.lan.gsob.phyir.x.pa'i.dge.'dun.rnams.la.rab.bstod.na. //
 gi.na'i.'bras.bus.dben.gyur.myi.log.sems.dpa'.chen.po.rnams. //
 bdag.gzhan.thar.phyin.bstan.pa'i.x.x.x.x.x.x. //
 gdung.khang.'tshogs.kyi.x.x.phags.pa'i.dge.'dun.rnams.la.bstod. //

INSCRIPTION 12

(1) / al.lci.mgon.gyi.sku.gnyer.blo.bzang.shes.rab.sku.'tsho.bzang.
 ba. (2) x.x.gsung.'bris.rten.shing.'bras.ba.shag.kha(?) .bzhi(?) .
 bcis(?) .'byor.bas.yid.spro.'dir (3) yang.bde.bar.mchis.tshad.'bul.
 rtsa(?) .de.kha.gtsug.lag.khang.gi.bskor.skor.skyabs.mgon. (4) rin.
 po.cher.snyan.'bul.zhus.par.rgyas.pa.la.khri.phrag.cig.dang. /
 'bring.pa.la.stong.phrag.cig.mtha'.ma. (5) lnga.rgya.rgyas.'bring.
 sdus.gsum.gyi.bskor.tshad.dang.kha.skong.'gro.ba.rang.rang.gyi.blo.
 nus.dang.stun.pa.byas. (6) chog(?) .phebs.byung.bas.dgongs.'jags.
 zhu / rten.phyag.bdud.byin.rten.bdu.rtsi.skye.bdun. (7) bsang.
 chab.ril.bu.dang.ha.kha.gtag.dang.bcas.tshes.la.sman.khang.nas.phul.
 (8) co.mo.byam.pa.chos.'dzin.spun.gnyis.kyis.skor.tshad.'di.zhus.
 nas. (9) rjes(?) .su.ma.ri.rgya.rtsa.gsum.zheng.'grub.pas / 'dis.
 kyang.rgyal.ba'i. (10) bstan.pa.dar.shing.rgyas.par.'gyur.cig /
 bkris (11) 'di.skabsu.tsha'u.'ang.'dul(?) .dang.a.jo.dpal.'dzins.
 dngul.re.'byung.

INSCRIPTION 8

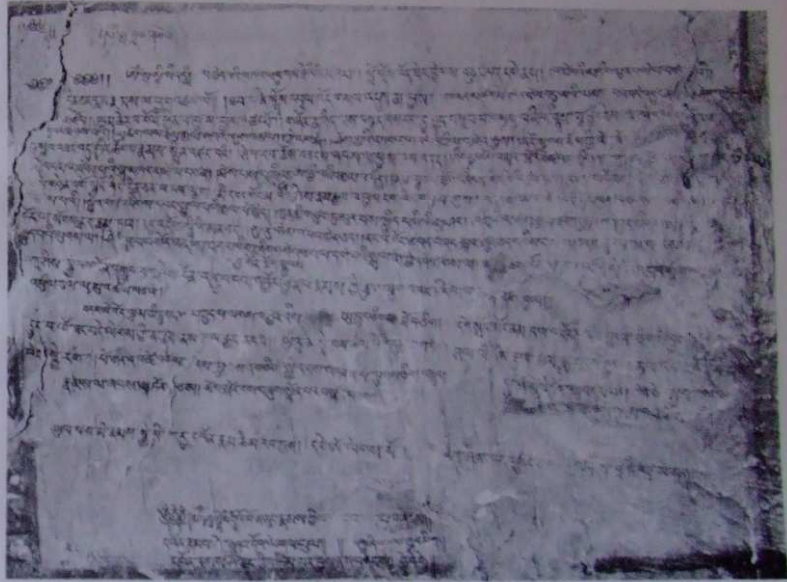
rtsug.lag.khang.'di.zhengs.pa'i.bsod.nams.kyis. // bdag.dang.
nam.kha'.dms'i(?).sems.can.rnams. // myurd.du.rdzogs.pa'i.
hyang.chub.thob.na.ni. // x.x.x.x.x.x.x.x.x.x.x.bo.ban(?).
slob.dpon.tshul.khrims.x.x.x.x.x.x.x.x.rtsug.lag.khang.bahengs.
pa'i.tshul.myi.bstond.cos(?).mar.me'i.phreng.ba.zhes.bya.ba. //
stond.pa.shag.kya'i.dge.slong.dngos.grub.shes.rab.gyis. // bris.
pa.las.byung.bsod.nams.ci.mchis.pa. //

INSCRIPTION 9

spre'i.gdong.can.'gar.gyis.rab.tu.bkod. // sha.kya'i.dge.slong.
'gar.lo(?).tsha.tshul.khrims.g-yung.drung

INSCRIPTION 10

(1) // om.sva.sti.sid.dham / mkhyen.pa'i.mkha'.la.thugs.
rje'i.nyi.ma.shar. // blo.gros.'od.zer.phyogs.bcur.rab.dge.
nas // 'gro.ba'i.ma.rig.mun.pa.sel.mdzad(?).pa'i(?). //
(2) drin.can.bla.ma.rnams.la.phyag.'tshal.lo // zab.bzhi.
spros.'bral.'od.gsal.'dus.ma.byas // rtag.chad.mtshan.mar.
rang.grol.dbu.ma'i.lam // phan.bde.'byung.nas.ye.shes.
'byor.dpe'i(?) (3) mdzod // yum.chen.pha.rol.phyin.la.
gus.phyag.'tshalo. // gzhon.nu.nyid.las.bstan.las.rab.du.
byung.bslab.pa.gsum.la.mig.'bras.lta.bur.ces // ngur(?).
mig.'dzin.pa'i.mche(?) (4) tu.bar.grags.pa'i // mchog.
las.rnam.rgyal.zhabs.gus.'tshal // kye.lags // shes.bya'i.
mkha'.la.rab(?) dkyil.'khor.rgyas // mdo.sngags.chos.kyl.
'od.zer.x.x.x (5) bska'.bzang.'du.bya'i.tshogs.rnams.ezin.
mdzad.ba'i // shes.rab.chos.bzangs.zhabs.la.gus.bas.'dud //
kling.gi(?) mchog.'gyur.lho'i.'dzam.bu.gling. // kha.'u.
khab(?) sbyor.nam.sa.gnyis.kyi.bar // (6) mthong.ngam.
mdzes.pa'i.skum.khar.mtho.la.btsan // thos.pas.bzil.non.a.
lci.'bri.'gum.'dir // nam.lcags.thog.'bebs.sing.ge.'i.rtsal.
dang.'khrungs // pha.rol.gra.sde.'joms.x.dpur.rtsal.rgya(?)
// (7) rang.sde.gnyen.'go.skyong.zhing.drin.can.pha.bas.
lhag // mi.dbang.gong.ma.bkra.shis.rnam.rgyal.la.lus.ngag.



80. Temple Inscription No. 10 at Achi

tied down to a historical period, namely the reign of King Tashi Namgyal (r.c. 1555-75) (see Vol. I, p. 82). It falls into the following sections:

- (i) A salutation to lamas. (lines 1-2)
- (ii) A salutation to the goddess Prajñāpāramitā. (lines 2-3)
- (iii) A salutation to mChog-las rnam-rgyal. (lines 3-4)
- (iv) A salutation to King Tashi Namgyal. (lines 4-8)
- (v) A record of repairs undertaken on the Sum-tsek temple. (lines 8-20)

No author is named in this inscription, from which however it seems clear that the temple was extensively restored in the reign of Tashi Namgyal.

(c) The Lotsawa Lhakhang

What remains of the only inscription in this small temple (No. 11) occupies a strip across the top of a single panel, amounting to about a quarter of the whole panel. It comprises the heads of four columns of mostly thirteen-syllabled lines, the inscription reading across the columns, and falling into four-lined verses. The first is a verse of refuge in the lamas of the writer's tradition, and the other three are verses of praise to the buddhas, the dharma and the sangha respectively (see Vol. I, p. 71). There is no historical or other information on the temples, the surviving part being presumably a preamble of conventional type to the rest of the inscription which is totally obliterated.

(d) Outside the temples

Inscription No. 12 is carved into a piece of stone forming a loose part of a wall outside the south entrance to the temple-compound which includes the Lotsawa Lhakhang and the Mañ-jusri Lhakhang. It commemorates the performance of ritual circumambulations of the temple, apparently during the time when a *Blo-bzang shes-rab* was the custodian (*sku-gnyer*), and it records the names of donors who took part in the ceremonies and erected mani-stones.

The texts

Because of the difficult conditions under which the inscriptions were copied I often find it impossible to be certain whether a given 'mistake' is my own or is to be laid at the door of the author or scribe. I have therefore not attempted to emend the texts. Those familiar with Tibetan will be able to suggest a host of emendations. Some of these will be due to mistakes in copying, some to 'mistakes' of the authors or scribes, and the remainder to the usages of the times when the inscriptions were written.

Reversed *i* is indicated by *i*. An *x* alongside another letter indicates approximately one letter which is illegible. An *x* alone represents approximately one whole syllable which is illegible. A question mark between brackets casts a query over the whole of the preceding syllable. Numbers in brackets refer to lines of the text. Underlining of letters and syllables indicates that they are written in red rather than black.

The translations

I have aimed to translate the parts of the texts which are of any historical interest. Translation is printed in roman and enclosed within single inverted commas. The rest is given in résumé, printed in italic. No translation or résumé is given for No. 4. Notes and comments are enclosed in square brackets.

INSCRIPTION I

(1) // ōm.kra.shis.par.gyurd.cig / / dkon.mchog.bla(?).ma.yid.
dam.lhar.bcas.la / / kun.nas.dang.pas.gus.par.phyag.btsal.nas /
/ rang.gzhan.nges(?).shes.skyed.phyir.gsal.'debs.rtsams / / kling.
gyi.kling.mchog.lho'i.'dzam.bu.gling / / ri.mtho.sa.rtsang.spu.
rgyal.bod.kyi.yul / / sa(?).x.phyogs.gcig.al.lci'.dgon.gnas.su /
/ dad.gus.mos.pas.rin.cen.rtsug.lag.bzhengs / / shing.dang.ri.mo.
bzo'.rnams.myi.x.blts / / gzhan(?).dbang.gyurd(?).pas(?).x.x.
x.x.x.x.dka' // : // x.x.dus.kyi.snyigs.ma.x.x.tshe(?).dang.longgs(?).
spyod.bsod.nams. (2) x / / sog.du.gnyis.kyi.'go'.lo.god / /
thab.rtsod.'khrugs.long.shin.tu.mang / / sa.bon.ci.btab.legs.pa.
nyung / / char.chu.dus.su.phebs.pa.dka' / / ston.thog.'bras.bu.
thob.par.dka' / / rkyen.dang.lhags.pa.shin.tu.mang / / kha.drag.
yin.na.phrog.tu.'ong / / khan.man.yin.na.slong.du.'ong / / flags.
la.bab.na.su.yang.sgu / / khrel.dang.ngo.tsha.su.la'ang(?).myed/
tug.gis.zhug.na.su(?).yang.mtshong / / sdug(?).srin.mangs.na.
yod.pa'i.khor.x.spros(?) / / blo(?).x.bstod(?).x.su.la'ang.myed /
/ de.'dra'i.dus.x.snyigs.ma.la / / (3) dge'.ba.byed.pa.shin.tu.
dka' / / de.ltar.dka'.bar.gyurd.na.yang / / ston.dka.zan.gong.
byin.pa.pas / / dbyar.ka.skul.ma.myi.dga'.'am / / 'drangs.la.sha.
'chang.byin.pa.pas / / ltogs(?).x.kho.lag.myi.dga'.'am / / de.
bzhin.dus.kyi.snyigs.ma.la / / sbyin.pa.chung.ngu.btang.na.yang /
/ bsod.nams.chen.po.yod.par.dka' / / sbyin.pa.chung.yang.btang.
bar.byā // : // myi(?).gdam(?).thob.nas.byang.chub.ma(?).sgrubs.
na / / ngan.song.gsum.du(?).sgrub.pa'i.gnas.skabs.myed / / tsha(?).
grang(?).sdug(?).bsngal(?).shin.tu.bzod.thag.'chad / / kres(?).
skom.gnyis.kyis.'dus.kyang.shin.tu.dub / / sha.bzhud(?).gnyis.
(4) kyis.bekad.kyang.ngar.zhing.'dar / / gcig.gyis.gcig.gcod.
rgyug.cing.bros.pa.las / / byang.chub.sgrub.pa'i.dal.khom.ga.la.
yod / / sti.mug.gyurd.pas.gar.'gro.myi.shes.na / / thard.pa'i
lam.la.'dzeg.pa.ga.la.shes / / da.lta.'di.ru.mthar.lam.ma.btsal(?).
na / / phyi.dus.'debs.pa.sbrin.la.mtshond.pa.'dzugs / / dpyid.
kyi.myi.lam.bzhin.du.sna.tshogs.'khrul / / mtha'.myed.'khor.bar.
shin.tu.yun.rings.khyams / / 'khor.ba'i.sdug.bsngal.dpag.myed.rab.
tu.myong / / phyi.ma'i.rgyags.phye.'di.ru.ma.bsrong.na / / phyi.
ma'i.shul.thag.ring.po.ci.yis.'grod / / phyi.ma'i.gos.lham.'di.ru.
ma.srong (5) na / / shul.thag.ring.po'i.gos.lham.su.yis.sbyor /
/ phyi.ma'i.rgyags.phye.bsrong.du.yod.pa.la / / myi.bsrong.badug.

Authorship and subject matter

(a) the 'Du-khang

Three of the five inscriptions copied in the 'Du-khang, Nos. 1, 2, and 3, concern in whole or in part the Buddhist monk sKal-Idan shes-rab who, as is evident from the inscriptions themselves, was the founder of this temple (see Vol. I, p. 30).

Inscription No. 1, the longest of all, shares a panel with No. 4 but is clearly separated from it by dividing lines which cut up the panel into compartments. The inscription, a part of which or more probably the whole bears a title, the *gsal-'debs sgron-ma* or 'Lamp of Clear Recollection', is explicitly stated to have been composed by sKal-Idan shes-rab, founder of the 'Du-khang. It falls into the following sections:

- (i) A brief introduction, with the customary salutations and the statements that the 'Lamp of Clear Recollection' has been composed in order to arouse true wisdom in its author and others, and that a 'precious temple' has been founded. (line 1)
- (ii) A passage of didactic verse in seven-syllabled lines, drawing attention to the difficulty of accumulating merit in the aeon of degeneration. (lines 2-3)
- (iii) A passage of verse in nine-syllabled lines, dwelling on the miseries of phenomenal existence and on the necessity to practise what religion one can while there is a chance. (lines 3-8)
- (iv) A verse passage in nine-syllabled lines, apparently a eulogy of the state reached after the successful practice of religion. (lines 8-10)
- (v) A verse passage in nine-syllabled lines, praying that the merits of founding the temple and composing the verse may result in the rebirth of living beings in Akshobhya's heaven, along with other benefits. (lines 10-12)
- (vi) An acrostic of nine-syllabled lines, the first syllables of which form the sentence *dGe-slong sKal-Idan shes-rab bdag-gyis brtsams*: 'I, the monk sKal-Idan shes-rab, have composed (this)'.
- (vii) A colophon stating that the 'Lamp of Clear Recollection' was composed by sKal-Idan shes-rab.

From this inscription we get an idea of sKal-Idan shes-rab's religious preoccupations and literary bent, but no other biographical or historical information.

Inscription No. 2 is the work of the Buddhist monk *Gragy-Idan 'od* (see Vol. I, p. 46), who is also the author of No. 6 in the Sum-tsek temple. It too bears a name, the *dum-dum khriḡs-kyi stan-chos*: 'The Teaching (or, Śāstra?) of Many Parts', or *dum-dum khriḡs-kyi byang-ser*: 'The Yellow Inscription of Many Parts'. Apart from the colophon it is entirely in verse of nine-syllabled lines, falling into sections as follows:

- (i) An explanation of the three *jānas* or 'vehicles' of the Buddhist religion. (Unfortunately I have no record of the division into lines of this inscription)
- (ii) A eulogy of sKal-Idan shes-rab which includes an acrostic based on his name.
- (iii) A eulogy of Alchi and its inhabitants.
- (iv) A short colophon giving the author's name.

This inscription gives a few biographical details about sKal-Idan shes-rab: his birthplace, possibly his clan name, and the fact that he was wealthy.

Inscription No. 3 includes the names of its author, the Tibetan hermit 'Byang-gnar shes-rab, and of the inscription itself, the *'od-zer gsal-ba'i tshig-gi phreng-bu* or 'Garland of Words of Clear Light'. It consists of the following parts:

- (i) A eulogy of sKal-Idan shes-rab in form of a complicated acrostic in seven-syllabled verse. (lines 1-8)
- (ii) Another eulogy of sKal-Idan shes-rab in seven- and nine-syllabled verse. (lines 9-14)

(iii) A brief verse of seven-syllabled lines celebrating the foundation of the temple. (lines 14-15)

(iv) A colophon in seven- and nine-syllabled verse giving the author's name. (lines 15-16)

This inscription, of which several crucial passages are difficult of interpretation, is particularly concerned with the founding of the temple.

Inscription No. 4 bears no author's name. This, together with the fact that it is in a *sūtra*-like style, suggests that it is an extract from a canonical *sūtra*, and it might therefore have interest as a pre-Kanjur version. The subject matter is a description of Akshobhya's heaven and its delights, which would connect it with sKal-Idan shes-rab who in inscription No. 1 refers at some length to Akshobhya and his heaven. The inscription is appropriately sited in that a series of scenes of Akshobhya's heaven form a frieze right across the lower part of the same wall.

Inscription No. 5 is badly damaged and difficult to read. It is evidently continued in a lower panel, as it breaks off with the sign *kam*, a device used for that purpose in inscription No. 4. Had I realised this at the time I would have made greater efforts to decipher the even more fragmentary continuation, as it is here that any colophon would be found. The inscription begins with salutations to the three precious ones, apparently in eleven-syllabled lines for the most part (line 1). The rest is predominantly religious, but includes a passage (line 4) where the writer refers to his or her setting up various images and paintings in the temple. The author must have been either sKal-Idan shes-rab or someone associated with him.

(b) The Sum-tsek

Of the five items in the Sum-tsek temple (three complete inscriptions and two fragments), three mention that temple's founder, *Slob-dpon Tshul-khrims 'od*. One of these three, No. 6, was written by *Gragy-Idan 'od*, author of No. 2. It is in three parts:

- (i) A passage of verse in nine-syllabled lines on the 'four stages of life', pointing the moral that one should take up the practice of religion as soon as one has the chance. (lines 1-13)
- (ii) A eulogy of Tshul-khrims 'od, beginning with an acrostic using the syllables of his name, in nine-syllabled verse. (lines 13-18)
- (iii) A colophon, mentioning the author's name. (lines 19-21)

From inscription No. 6 we learn that the Sum-tsek or at least its main images were set up by Tshul-khrims 'od.

Inscription No. 7 was written by the Buddhist monk 'Gar and is in three parts, all but the colophon in nine-syllabled verse:

- (i) A salutation. (no line division is available for this inscription)
- (ii) A eulogy of Alchi, of Tshul-khrims 'od and others of his family.
- (iii) A colophon, giving the author's name.

This inscription gives some evidence, fragmentary and difficult to read, relating to the family of Tshul-khrims 'od, as well as the positive statement that he was the founder of the Sum-tsek.

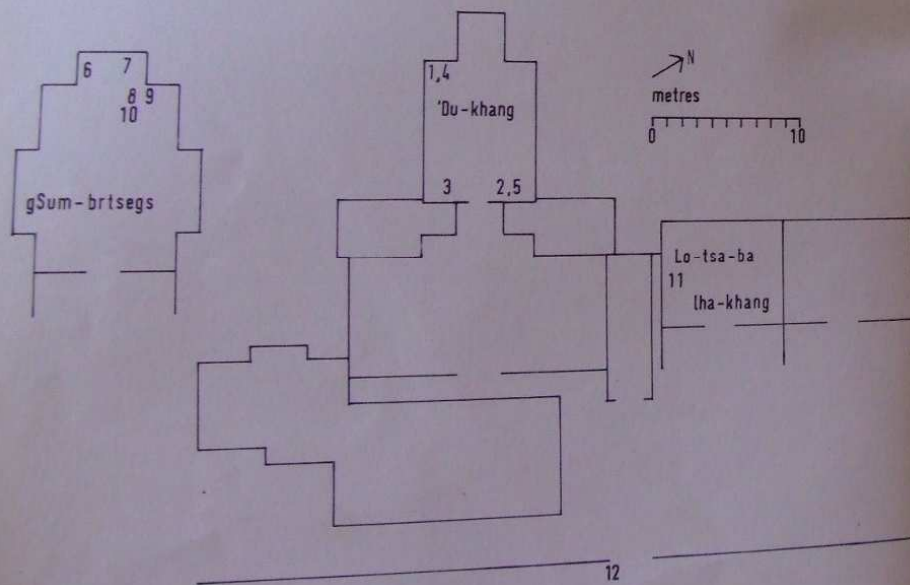
Inscription No. 8 is a mere fragment, part of a composition called the *mar-nci'i phreng-bu*: 'Garland of Butter Lamps', from the hand of the Buddhist monk *dNgos-grub shes-rab*, but it does mention the foundation of the temple by one whose name begins (*slob-dpon*) Tshul-khrims.

Inscription No. 9 is also a fragment, written by the monk 'Gar, author of No. 7.

Inscription No. 10 differs from the rest in that it is written in *sho-can* script and can be



77. sKal-lan shes-rab, founder of the 'Du-khang at Alchi, showing part of Temple Inscription No. 2



78. Plan of the temple inscriptions at Alchi

TEMPLE INSCRIPTIONS

Nature and location

The temples at Alchi have been described in Volume I and previously in a more cursory manner by Francke. Tucci also visited the temples and has occasionally referred to them. In July and August 1975 I visited them at the suggestion of Professor Snellgrove for the purpose of collecting inscriptions, and have marked on the diagram the locations of twelve more or less readable inscriptions which I found.

Apart from Nos. 10 and 12, the inscriptions are all written in a uniform *dbu-med* script in black paint or ink on rectangular panels of buff-coloured paint located among the all-enveloping painting and decoration of the plastered internal walls of the temples, most of them at a height convenient for reading. No. 10 is the same, except that it is written in *dbu-can* script, while No. 12 is incised in *dbu-can* script into a piece of stone. Most of the inscriptions relate in some way to the particular buildings in which they are found, while some can be related to nearby paintings; otherwise there seems to be no particular logic in their arrangement. Their condition varies greatly, from some very legible ones to others which are only partly decipherable because of flaking paint, cracking plaster, splashes of extraneous substances, and rainwater stains. I am told by recent visitors to the temples that the wear and tear of the now considerable tourist traffic has led to the rubbing and obliteration of parts of some of the inscriptions. There are traces of several other inscriptions, not marked on the diagram, which I judged not worth the effort of trying to decipher. They include one in an Indian script to the left of the feet of Avalokitesvara in the Sum-tsek temple.¹ There are also many blank panels at various points on the walls evidently intended for inscriptions which were either never written, may have completely flaked away, or, more likely, which have been deliberately obliterated. Some sophisticated technique of cleaning or photography might conceivably bring inscriptions to light on some of these panels.

I now learn from Professor Petech's *The Kingdom of Ladakh c. 950-1842 AD* that Professor Tucci photographed inscriptions at Alchi during his visit in 1930. It is likely that some of the inscriptions were in better condition at that date, and that Professor Tucci's photographs might be useful in improving the texts offered here.

Problems of decipherment

Despite the freely given practical help and friendly interest of those concerned with the custody of the temples, and despite the sterling work of my assistants (see acknowledgements, below), the recording of the inscriptions proved difficult, laborious and fatiguing. The gloom of the temple chambers, particularly deep in the 'Du-khang, could be relieved only by the light of a few candles and butter-lamps. Flash photography was not always successful because of the shiny surface of the plastered walls. Although each inscription was copied by hand and rechecked, and then compared with photographs, I do not claim that my texts are completely faithful to the originals. However, I have tried to reproduce what I saw, or thought I saw, rather than to emend what appear to be aberrant spellings. Like the authors of several of the inscriptions, I beg the indulgence of all learned readers, and ask them not to hasten to condemn the authors for spelling errors which may turn out to be my own misreadings.

1. David Snellgrove, who was in Alchi again in the summer of 1979, noticed that such brief inscriptions in Indian script occur more or less illegibly in many places between the mural paintings in the Sum-tsek temple. In every case where the lettering was identifiable he recognised the well known Buddhist Sanskrit formula beginning *ye dharmā hetuprabhavaḥ*, namely 'The Tathagata has told the cause of the dharmas which are born of a cause, and of their stoppage too the Great Ascetic has spoken.'

- 3-4: A (111⁴ f): B: *bu khyod kyi khor gnyis tu go ma chod / sems can gyi basd nam las ma grub pa yin / de gnom na geig tu / thon na grong khyim begya thag nam yong ba yin / da zed mizho ngom bakams pa / yui las mi yong gung so / (1185-1962); C: 'to bu khyod kyi ten gnyis tu go ma chod ste / sems can gyi basd nam la yang ma grub pa yin par / dug / de min te geig / ge nges zhom na / grong khyim begya thag nam zhang pa yin te / da bzod ontsho ngas zhang pa / shul las mi yong gung / (2684-4). A is not altogether satisfactory. Our only editorial change has been to amend *de geig* to *de geig ge*. A2 remains identical with A. B would appear to represent the best version, especially if we recall that B alone offered to three snakes at the start of the story. 'Boys, you have been in error twice. Nothing has been gained in meritorious karma for living beings. If the three had come out at the one place, there would have been a town of some hundred houses. Now there will only be a village here with a wretched dried-up lake.' We have left the phrase *da miug ge bzad* just as it occurs on MS A and A2. Comparison with B & C might suggest that the first and last syllables represent somehow *da gzod* = 'from now on'. Jäschke (p.416) gives a term *muge* 'famine' which suits the context, and slight re-editing of the MS to read *da miug-ba zad* would give the satisfactory meaning of 'nothing but (zad) a deprived place'.*
- 5: A (112²): B and C retain more or less the same spellings of the place names as their previous lists. B: *pu rangs kyi bzhegs wer man chod / ho su la yan chod du* (188³); C: *pu hrangs kyi bzhegs zher man chod / hu bu lang ka yan chod du* (2691).
- 6-7: A (112³⁻⁴): *khyab shug tu* (A²: *gyam shug tu* - -) - - *thang ma yin skad*. This is a troublesome sentence. See note to *par dhu rgyam shor du bzhegs dus su / pu hrangs kyi kha char nas bdan chung ten no / dgon par tshod ma khoi ba la slob ma thang ma yin skad* (2691-2).
- 8: A (112⁵) onwards up to line 27 (A 117³) omitted by B and C who read thus: B: *jo bo rje lha geig pho brag btan pas gan drangs nas pu rangs kyi bzhegs wer du mjal ba / jo bo l'zhal nas etc.* (186⁵-1871); C: *lha cig pho drag btan pas gan drangs nis (for nas) / pu hrangs kyi bzhegs wer du zhal mjal nas / jo bo l'zhal nas etc.* (2693-4).
- 9: A (113²): *zha 'dri*.
- 12-13: A (113⁵-1141): *bka 'sde snod dang mdo bgyud thams cad kyi dri has mdzad pas /* This is quoted as typical of the carelessness shown by MS A in the matter of prefix *b-* and suffix *-s*.
- 26: A (117²): *rtags dam dog nan ltar mdzad pa lags so /* Hereafter B and C rejoin A.
- 27-30: A (117³-118²): B and C have a variant version, identical except for MS petty errors. C: *nga l' totatsha bya dgos gang / bla ma lo tashu ba zhus pa / bdag na no rgas pas / totatsha rdo* (B correctly: *ado*) *mi thogs / sgra mi dug pas chos set du 'yoo gnung* (B: *gnung*) *nas ma bzhad do / jo bo chen po l' zhal nas / kho bo* (B: *kho bo la*) *nying yod kyang lee med gang* (B: *gnung*) *nas rtogs omag pa ltar mdzad de* (B: *do*) / (C 2691-2702 and B 1872-4).
- 31-2: A (118³⁻⁵) from: *yang jo bo l' zhal nas* missing in B & C. A reads *ratna pha la*, corrected to *Ratnabhadrā*.

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- 1-7: A (118⁵-120²): B and C here have versions almost identical with that of A, but they start with variant phrases. B (187⁵ ff): *de nas lo chen nyid pu rangs kyi bzhegs wer sku mtshams mdzad de / sgo phyl ma la etc.* C (270² ff): *de nas pu hrangs kyi bzhegs gyi gtsug lag khang du / lo geig khyud 'khor dam bca' mdzad de / sgo yi phyl rim pa la etc.*
- 7: Here B (189²⁻⁴) and C (271⁴-2721) insert the list of donations to the disciples. See note to p. 000, line 18.
- 8: A (120⁴); B (189⁵) reads: *yon tan kun tshang la mdzad pa l' don yin* = 'the meaning is that he would be beautiful in all qualities quite complete'. C (272²): *sku mdzes shing tshad med pa l' don do* = 'the meaning is that physically he was handsome immeasurably', thus corresponding close enough to A. B is probably a later attempted improvement on the phrase.
- 10: C (272⁴-273²) inserts after *don yin no* a slightly variant version corresponding to lines 27-30 below, q.v. B omits this passage altogether as well as the following one about fleet-footedness. C (273²⁻⁴) has a different version for this: *yang bla ma lo tashu ba de kha che ru rkang mgyogs bsam 'phel gyi dngos grub brnyes nas / kha che nas yab kyi lhu rten kha che* (for *kha tse*) *go khar du shing rta la spyan drangs pas / zla ba gsom 'gor rang / bla ma rang gi yin na zhang ma drug drug la 'phebs pa lags so /*
- 12: A (121³); B (190²⁻⁴): *lo tsa chen po 'di nyid gnas gang nas mkha' spyod du gshogs snyam na / kha cig ldi ma l' chu lha l' rdzing nas sgrub pa mdzad de rdo l' kha nas phung po lhas med du gshogs zer te /* C (273⁴⁻⁵) for which this is Chapter 10, reads *lhi ma l' chu mig*. See note 45 to the Translation.
- 13: A (121⁵ f): *kha tse l' re wing go ru*; B (190⁵): *wing gong du*; C (274¹): *kha che l' re wing go ru*. See note 46 to the Translation.
- 15: A (122²⁻³); B (191¹⁻²): *pu rangs kyi sdo mi c'i brag phug dang / sri wang g. yang skur dang / kho su rtse gong dang / mkhar rtse ci gong nas gshan don la gshogs pa sogs tshul - ;* C (274³⁻⁴): *pu hrangs kyi lhi mi yi ca se brag phug dang / shi war g. yang skur phug dang / kha che go khar gyi ri wer go nas mkha' spyod du gshogs pa l' tshul -.*
- 19: A (123²); B (192²): *gnyal gyi mi ma yin*; C (275²): *omits yul gyi*.
- 26: A (124⁵): B omits the last phrase and ends: - *bzhugs nges par can du brag go / lo tsa ba chen po 'di l' rgyus thor bu ba yongs su grags pa rnam dang mi mthun pa 'ga 'snang yang / 'di ni lo chen de nyid kyi zhal slob gu ge khri thang pa dzha na sri mdzad pa l' nam thar tshang mar byas nas bris pa yin pas yid ches pa l' gnas su zung du drang by yin no /* (193⁵-194⁵).
- 27-30: A (125¹-1261): These lines are missing from B and appear in C in a variant wording and placed earlier in the text after the interpretation of the birds associated with his birth (= page 10, line 10). C (272⁴-273²): *de ltu bu l' skyes su khyed par can gyi dkor la phyl rabs kyi mi rnam kyi ma 'dzem na / dbul zhing 'phongs pa dang / mi rgyud rnam rabs chad kyi dogs yod do / de ci ste zhes na / lo tashu ba chen po de ni sangs rgyas sakya thub pa l' nam sprul yin cing / gang zag grub thob cig ni ma yin gyi / de nas shin tu yang dkor la 'dzem pa gal che'o /* See note 51 to the Translation.

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- 3-4: A (128³⁻⁵): the same verses, missing from B, occur in almost identical form in C (277¹⁻³). In both MSS they are followed by a very corrupt Sanskrit phrase. A: SRI DHE BA PRA BHA DURTA GABHA TI
C: SRIR DHE MA SA BHA SU STAG BHA STI

PART IV

TEMPLE AND ROCK
INSCRIPTIONS AT ALCHI

TEXTUAL NOTES

Numbers refer to lines on the pages indicated. Numbers in brackets with superscript numbers refer to folio numbers as numbered throughout the Collected Biographical Material with line references added as the superscript numbers.

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- 6. A: anying xu akong pu (242);
7. A: gong xiyun (252) and similarly elsewhere (262, 272, 282 etc.);
8. All MSS: gang dai 'Xiangpu pu' = 'when he was born'. But see line 21 below.
15. Passage missing in B & C from pu qin lu qian (1502 & 2241) to line 21.
17. ... zhi xia he for zhi xia he (274) and similarly throughout the MS.
21. Only C reads Rad cu consistently.
22. A omits ma in the name lutan-ma (282); B: 282, C: 2342.
23. A: shang lai chung qin le gong (292) is awkward; C: shang lai chung qin le huiqin (232).

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- 2. A: gang mai (262); A2: gang mai mai; B: dai (152); C: zhang bu' gang mai (232).
4. ... mei shi which we have assumed to read as 'dreamed' (61).
9. A: shan ma (262); B: shan ma (222); C: shan ma (227).
11. A: shan ma (262); B: shan ma (262); C: xiao shi (227).
19. A: shan ma (262); B & C: do shan (252 and 292).
21. All MSS read kha-ma 'lip'.

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- 1. A & C: gong bu (272 and 242); B: gong bu (252).
7. Ibid. (282, 242, 252).
10. shi shiyi appears thus in A & B (691 and 1602).
16. shag gi (262) omitted by B & C.
18. A: shu ku qin na mai byun pu (252); C: ... mai byun pu (242); B: ... mai byun pu (262).
19. A: shiyi shi de (71); B: shiyi shi de (262); C: shiyi shi de (262).
20. ... also in line 18 above; A: ... mai mai mai; B: ... mai mai mai; C: ... mai mai mai.
21. ... next day or a day after; i.e. sometimes it is our reconstruction of A: ... and C: ...
22. All MSS: xiang pu for amended qin pu.
23. A: ... dpu (72); B: ... dpu (262); C: ... dpu (262).
25. A: ... B: ... C: ...
29. A: ... B: ... C: ...

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- 9. A: ... and similarly elsewhere below.
11. A: ... from line (272 and 252) MSS B & C omit most of the material up to the end of Chapter 5.
19. A: ... (762).
20. A: ... and thus elsewhere (762, 792).

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- 16. A (252 ff); C (252 ff); ...
18. A: ... B: ... C: ...
20. A: ... B: ... C: ...
21. A: ... B: ... C: ...
22. A: ... B: ... C: ...

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- 5. A: ... B: ... C: ...
9. A: ... B & C omit.
10. A: ... B: ... C: ...
11. A: ... B: ... C: ...

pu / gan wang ... dang ... dang ... dang ...

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- 2. A: ... B: ... C: ...
5. A: ... B: ... C: ...
11. A: ... B: ... C: ...
12. A: ... B: ... C: ...
13. A: ... B: ... C: ...
15. A: ... B: ... C: ...
20. A: ... B: ... C: ...
21. A: ... B: ... C: ...

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- 2. A: ... B: ... C: ...
3. A: ... B: ... C: ...
4. A: ... B: ... C: ...
10. A: ... B: ... C: ...
14. A: ... B: ... C: ...
20. A: ... B: ... C: ...

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- 1. A: ... B: ... C: ...

བྲང་རྒྱུ་སྐྱོན་སྐྱོན་པའི་ལོ་རྒྱུ་བཞི་ཚེ་བཅེས་བཅེད་པའི་འབྲུང་སྐྱོན་པ་དཀའ་བླུང་སྐྱོན་སེ། རྣམ་ཐོས་ལོ་རྒྱུ་རྒྱུ་རྒྱུ་དེ་ལོ་རྒྱུ་བ་་་
 འདྲོ། ལྷ་གི་བྱི་རང་རྣམ་རྒྱུ་ལི་གེར་བཞོད་པ་ཚོ་གས་སོ།།

གུ་ཤ་པའི་བཞུར་པ་རི་རྩེ་རྩེ་སྐྱེ་བའི་ལྗོ་རེ་ཚེ་ཚེ་ལོང་།། འབྲིན་ལས་བཅེད་པའི་འོད་ཟེར་ཕྱེགས་བརྒྱུར་འགྱིད་ལ་ཡི།།
 རྒྱལ་སྐྱོན་པའི་བ་དག་གི་སྐྱོན་པ་ལྗོ་བྱུར་ཏེ།། རྩེ་བཙམ་གྱར་ཏེ་ལྗོ་བཙམ་གྱི་བརྒྱ་ལེ་ཆེད་བྱེད་ཤིག།།

5 ལྷ་གི་བྱི་བྲང་པ་དཔལ་ལི་ཤིས་ཀྱིས་བསྐྱེད་ཏེ་བྱིས་པའི་རྩེ་ཐར་འབྲུང་བེ་ཡིར་ནི། མཁར་པོ་དང་པརྩེ་ཏེ་འདྲི་རྣམ་ཚེས་འདྲི་་་
 རྒྱས་དང་། ཚེས་གཉེན། རྣམ་གཉེན། ཤིང་རྩེ་གཉེན། ལོ་རྒྱུས་པའི་ལྷ་གི་ལྷོ་སྐྱེས་རྩེ་རྩེ་ཐར་ཚེར་སེར་གསལ་ལོ།
 ལྷོ་བ་མ་ ཀ་ བ་བཞི་ནི། ལྷ་ལོ་བཞི་རྩེ་ལྷ་གི་ལྷ་པའི་སྐྱེ་བྱིས་པའི་དཔལ་ལི་ ལྷ་གི་བྲང་པ་ལི་ཤིས་དཔལ་ རྣམ་པོ་བ་་་
 བྲང་རྒྱུ་སྐྱོན་པོ་ལོ།། ལྷ་ཏེ་སྐྱེ་བརྒྱུ་དེ་ལྷ་ལྷོ་སྐྱེ་བའི་རྣམ་གཉེན་ལས་ལྷ་བྱེད་ལོ་རྒྱུ་བཅེད་ཚེ་གཏེ། ལྷ་གི་ཤིང་པ་བཙམ་རྣམ་
 འབྲས་རྒྱལ་མཚན། མ་རེ་པ་རྣམ་ལྷོ་སྐྱེས་སྐྱོང་ཡི། དགེ་བྲང་པ་དཔལ་གྱི་བྲང་རྒྱུ་ མཁར་པོ་གསེར་བཅེད་། ལྷ་གི་པ་ལོ་རྣམ་ཏེ་རྣམ་

10 ཤིས་དཔལ་ སེད་དགར་བ་བསོད་རྣམས་ཤིས་དཔལ་དང་བརྒྱད་ཡིར་ནི།། མཁར་ལྷོ་ལས། དགེ་ལོ།།



75. Rin-chen bZang-po, from a mural in an old chöten at Alchi

on the 15th, the full-moon day, there appeared a rainbow and a shower of flowers at the place of cremation, and from that time on the sad laments of the non-human beings ceased. The Great Lord Atiṣa was asked the reason, and he said: "This Bodhisattva Translator has compassion on non-human beings and he was preaching the doctrine of impermanence from the celestial spheres to devils and demons, thus establishing these non-human beings in religious ways, and so from now on their sorrow has ceased. But nowadays the Great Translator has been led to the Realm of Sukhāvati by the Dākini Golden-Rayed, and there he sits at the feet of the Lord Amitābha", he said as he joined his palms in respect.

Such a great man as this is an incarnation of the Buddha Śākyamuni; he is not just some person who has achieved perfection. Those who are unpleasant concerning him will not be happy and their line of salvation will be cut off. It is important to be very careful about it.⁵¹

These Symbols of Body, Speech and Mind, ceremonial items and possessions, the lineage of this great translator, his biography in its three versions, long, medium and short, the collection of his works and the list thereof, may those who have authority in our villages protect all these small places! May they guard the temples and their possessions and the ceremonial items! [p. 111].

This illumination of the origins and strivings of the Bodhisattva the Translator Rin-chen bzang-po, this 'tale of salvation' entitled 'The Saving Cord of the Crystal Rosary' composed by Ye-shes-dpal (Jñānaśrī) of Khyi-thang in Gu-ge, is finished.

Throughout the series of my rebirths may I honour those lotus-feet,
Making respectful salutation to that son of the Buddhas,
That one who has laid hold of the Sage's Teaching, that Precious Law,
Who spreads it in all directions with the rays of his excellent works!

This is the medium-length biography written in mTho-gling by dPal-ye-shes of Khyi-thang in Gu-ge.

The teachings which he asked from scholars and paṇḍitas, the treasures of religion, the treasures of wealth, the treasures of wood, these and other detailed treasures are made clear in the long biography.

51. This small passage is missing from Text B and occurs in C at the end of the previous chapter (no: 9 according to C, but 10 to A) between ' — — meant that he would translate Sanskrit and Tibetan' and 'having obtained mastery of fleet-footedness etc'. It is worded differently: "If outsiders (*phyi-nabs kyi mi-mams*) are not careful in regard to such an extraordinary man, there is fear of their becoming poor and wretched and their lineage cut off. If you ask why this is, (it is because) this great Translator is an incarnation of Śākyamuni and is not an ordinary person who has gained perfection. So it is important to be very careful in what pertains to him". See textual note. The following admonitions to those in authority occur only in Text A and appear to be clumsily worded.

Appendix

Extracted from the history of the *Gur-mGon* ('Canopy-God') Practice preserved at the Sa-skya Monastery of Evam Chos-Idan. This short story follows closely upon version B of Rin-chen bzang-po's biography as included in the same work. [Tibetan Text pp. 112-3 below]

On the last occasion when the Great Translator went to Kashmir, the Royal Lama Ye-shes-'od, King of Upper Ngari, proclaimed Ye-shes-'od of royal lineage in the Kingdom of Snow-Mountains, of the tradition of (the Bodhisattva) Mañjuśrī, and his royal nephew Byang-chub-'od, who are famed as the Royal Uncle and Nephew, (these two) had given him the command to bring a special guardian of the doctrine. Adhering to this command, when he was about to set out from India for Tibet, he besought the Lord Śraddhā (karavarman) saying 'You must please give me a special guardian of the doctrine'. He replied: 'Prepare a circle of offerings by the Guardian Temple by the northern entrance to Vajrāsana (the main Bodhgayā temple). Recite again and again the three-verse praises which begin: "HUM – Fierce Goddess of hobgoblin form", and watch out for any auspicious sign. With the manifestation of the sign I will give you the (necessary) instructions'.

The Translator did all this, but no sign became manifest, so he asked his Lama again, who said: 'Make the praises in the form of a pleasing chant'. He did this and at dawn on the seventh day a black man appeared by his couch and said: 'Go to the cemetery in the south-western direction and take as your example the fearful sound there and (then) make your praises.' He went to the cemetery to the south-west of Bodhgayā, prepared a circle of offerings and prayed. He heard a fearful sound as though two tigers had leapt on a large human corpse and were devouring it. Then he returned to the Guardian Temple at Bodhgayā, and taking as his model the sound of the tigers eating the corpse, he praised the Goddess of Hobgoblin Form (Srin-gzugs-ma) with the fierce intonation of a tigress. Thus at twilight on the third day he beheld the form of Mahākāla in the act of trampling upon a dwarf and holding a knife and a skull, one above the other, level with his heart and a *ganṭi*⁵² held central in his hands. He fell momentarily unconscious. Recovering himself he looked and saw that innumerable tantric figures such as Hevajra and Cakrasaṃvara were streaming forth from the figure, and thinking that they could be absorbed into his own body, he experienced many stages of delightful contemplation, and thus he remained until dawn on the third day in this state of contemplation.

When he emerged from this, Mahākāla himself was visible there and Mahākāla made an undertaking saying: 'Obtain the instructions (from your lama) and then we shall go to Tibet together in order to protect the doctrine'.

As for his seeing Mahākāla's defiant form at that time, it is said that the eulogy composed by Mahābrahma was in earlier times set to that defiant chant of the Guardian of the Blessed Lady (Sugatī),⁵³ and that there were two versions of the chant, a long and a short one, but the long one which was known as 'Raising the sound of music'⁵⁴ and was suitable as a chant for yoga, was lost and so is non-existent, and the one available nowadays is the short one.

From that time onwards he used to see the Guardian continually, it is said. Then he asked his lama again, (and he said): 'Do for the goddess as you did previously'. He did so and a black woman appeared and made a pronouncement saying: 'Go to the Gandhola⁵⁵ (Temple) at Mahābodhi (= Bodhgayā). Take as your model the violent sound of the wind as it strikes there. Take as your model the swaggering motion of the branches of the *pasaka* trees at the shelter on the track that goes around Vajrāsana ('Adamantine Seat', viz. the main Bodhgayā temple marking the site where Śākyamuni sat under the Bodhi Tree). Then call out at *Res-'jog* where the serpent divinity is'.⁵⁶

52. A *ganṭi* is a short length of wood which can be used for producing sound when struck. As described this form of Mahākāla represents *Gur-mgon*, the 'Canopy-God'. See the drawing on p. 113.

53. The 'Blessed Lady' (*bDe-gshogs-ma = Sugatī*) suggests a divinity of Buddha rank, and may be the Perfection of Wisdom (*Prajñāpāramitā*).

54. This translates the text as it stands, viz. *rol langs ma*. This may be a textual error for *rol langs ma = 'The resuscitated corpse'*.

55. This was a well known temple at Bodhgayā, meaning in Sanskrit 'The Place of Perfumes' (*gandhālaya*).

56. *Res-'jog* appears to be a place-name here, but it should be noticed that 'jog is the name of a serpent-divinity (*sakakaya*).

The king invited Atiṣa to his castle,⁴⁰ and the Lama Translator who was then residing at Ma-nam thought to himself: "Although I am not acquainted with the Lord Atiṣa, he is an Indian *śiddha* and a great man, but I too am famed as a great translator and am a great man in Tibet. He will honour me greatly", he thought. So he invited the Lord Atiṣa to his place known as sKyin-ri-gling and paid him great respects. It was then the Lord Atiṣa said to him: "O Great Translator, do you know this, and this, and this?" and thus questioning him about the Tripitaka and all the sūtras and tantras. "These I know", he replied. "When then", said Atiṣa, "there was no need for me to come here".

When they retired that night, they were in a three-storey temple. On the ground floor there was the circle of divinities of the Guhyasamāja, on the next floor the circle of divinities of Hevajra, and on the top floor the circle of Cakrasamvara divinities. At twilight the Translator practised meditation on the ground floor, at midnight on the next floor and at dawn on the top floor. The following morning when they were having a meal, Atiṣa asked: "O Great Translator, how was it that you practised meditation yesterday at twilight on the ground floor, at midnight on the next floor and at dawn on the top floor?" The Translator replied: "In that way I can produce separately and reabsorb the different sets of divinities". Atiṣa's face darkened as he said: "There was indeed need for me to come". The Translator then asked: "How do you understand it?", and Atiṣa replied: "I don't understand it like that. Even if one practises all these religious ways with one thoughts quite subdued, yet fundamentally they all have the same single flavour. It is quite sufficient to experience in one single spot all production and reabsorption". Then the Lama Translator prepared a very large set of offerings, twelve ounces of gold, thirty bushels of barley and many good things besides, which he offered asking for scriptures and for teachings. Atiṣa gave him the Saṃvara cycle, the names of Tārā and the invocation of Avalokiteśvara according to Atiṣa's own custom,⁴¹ he practised all three and saw the three divinities face to face. He experienced the supreme, free of all self-expression, and a perfect and unbounded state (of blissfulness) came about. Our Lama Translator had faith in Atiṣa's teachings, and he was zealous for words as (expressions of) absolute truth.

Afterwards he met Atiṣa at Zher in Purang, and Atiṣa said: "Great Translator, you are a skillful and famous translator; I need to translate." The Translator replied: "O worthy Lama, I have now reached eighty-eight years. My hair too has turned to such a state of whiteness, and my tongue being no longer clear forms impurely the words of the scriptures. Excuse me for not doing this linguistic work". Atiṣa replied: "Your thoughts are despairing if you say 'Although I have the power to think, I do not have a tongue to speak with'", and he looked displeased. Then Tshul-khriṃs rgyal-ba, the Translator of Nag-mtsho did the translating.

Again Atiṣa said: "O Great Translator Ratnabhadrā,⁴² you know many scriptures and you have met holy lamas of spiritual insight. You have possessions with which to live. Now make effort to translate." [p. 110]

Then in the temple at Zher-pa in Purang he made a vow, pronouncing it threefold. Outside by the door he wrote these words in white (conch-coloured) lettering: "If by a year from tomorrow a turbulent thought has for one moment grown in me, may the dākinis punish me!". In the inner corridor he wrote these words in silver lettering: "If by a year from tomorrow the Thought of Enlightenment has left me for one moment, may the dākinis punish me!". Inside the temple he wrote in golden lettering: "If by a year from tomorrow a divergent thought should spring up for one moment, may the dākinis punish me!"⁴³ Thus writing this vow in three parts, one by one, he practised meditation one-pointedly, completed his threefold vow and obtained that state of profundity of the Vajra, the Body of the Absolute which is free from all self-expression. Thus in exceptional places like this he practised much meditation.⁴⁴ The peacock descending onto his mother's right shoulder at the time that such an exceptional man was born meant that he would be handsome as long as he lived. The cuckoo descending onto her left shoulder referred to the pleasing sound of his religious discourse. The parrot descending on the top of her head meant that he would translate Sanskrit and Tibetan. Having obtained the mastery of fleet-footedness known as 'Wish-Fulfiller', he went in six days and returned in six days, while it had taken him previously three months to travel from Tibet to Kashmir.

11. As for his leaving for the celestial spheres, some say that he took his departure from a rock in the sacred pool at the 'Om-lo spring, but it is not true that he spent a year in meditation there and then went to the celestial spheres.⁴⁵ As for his going, it was from Ri-ving-go of Kha-tse⁴⁶ in the (Wood Female) Sheep Year (= 1055) when he was 98 years old and it was on the 17th day of the last winter month under the constellation Aśvini⁴⁷ that he took his departure for the benefit of others. He displayed different forms of departure from the 'Om-lo cave in Purang, from the Crooked Gorge (gYang-sgur) of Shing-vang and from Ri-ving-go of Kha-tse. Then the 'four pillars' and the eight beams⁴⁸ performed the rites, and when his disciples cleared the funerary kiln,⁴⁹ the substance of his relics did not amount even to a mustard-seed, but according to popular belief the relics consisted of three little red berries⁵⁰ and these disappeared into space with sounds of thunder-like drumming. Then for about a month the non-human beings who were well-disposed to religion and who were bound under oath wailed profusely every night at the place of cremation. Then one day under the Aśvini constellation

40. On the meaning of the name or rather title of Atiṣa see Helmut Eimer, *Berichte Über das Leben des Dipankarāśrījāna, eine Untersuchung der Quellen* Bonn 1974, pp. 23-8. Atiṣa's arrival in Tibet at the royal court, Tsaparang in Gu-ge, in 1042 is a famous event in Tibetan religious history. B & C omit the first story, continuing where the two great ones met at Zher in Purang. The story of Rin-chen bzang-po's overt concern for individual texts and the consequent rebuke received from Atiṣa, is recounted in briefer form in the *Blue Annals*, p. 249, and repeated in my *Buddhist Himalaya*, pp. 192-3 with comment. One may well ask how a skilled translator could be otherwise than pre-occupied with details and differences, and the inclusion of this story, the declared intention of which is the only have been to glorify Atiṣa at the expense of Rin-chen bzang-po, in this biography, the declared intention of which is the glorification of the Great Translator, illustrates better than anything else perhaps the heterodox nature of the materials which the early redactor compiled for this biography. For the same story in Atiṣa's biography see Eimer, ref. n. 16 above, pt. 1, p. 233f. The text is presumably corrupt here, as it reads: *bde mchog lhan rgyas (= Saṃvara and company) sGrol-ma (= Tārā) abhidhara* (? for *abhisamaya*) *jo bo lugs kyiis* (= according to the manner of the lord) *thugs rje chen po pos dang gsam gyis dbang bkar* (= the consecration of all three including the Great Compassionate One, viz. Avalokiteśvara); we read *po for por* and *gyl for gylis*. See the *Blue Annals*, pp. 250-1: 'The Master composed the *Abhisamaya* of the Guhyasamāja in which Lokeśvara (= Avalokiteśvara) was the chief deity of the mandala of Guhyasamāja according to the system of Jñānapada in which one had to recite the Ma-ṅi-padme with the addition of three letters representing the mantra of the above, and a hymn to this mandala'. Our text is likely to be referring to this composite work.

42. Text A reads Ratnaphala, presumably for Ratnabhadrā (= Rin-chen bzang-po). The name is missing in B & C.

43. This story also occurs in the *Blue Annals*, p. 250, although the wording of the three vows is rather different, the first being directed against 'desire for the samāra' ('khu-ba la zhen-pa), the second against 'thought of self-interest' (*rang don yid byed kyi blo*), and the third against 'ordinary concepts' (*tha mal gyi nam rtog*). Our translation 'divergent thought' for the last vow does not present fully the Tibetan, which, as often, is difficult to render succinctly into English. Literally it means 'a mental disposition which has not been ordained for me' (*lung ma btan kyi sem*).

44. At this point Texts B & C insert quite inconsequentially details of the bequests to the three disciples, which they omitted above. See note 35.

45. Again the place-names cause problems. For 'Om-lo spring (*ohu-mig*) C reads: Lhi-ma spring (*lhi-ma' chu-mig*) and for the whole phrase B reads: *lhi ma' chu lha' rdsig-our* = maybe 'From the sacred pool of the Lhi-ma water', but *mig* is probably missing after *chu*. The same intended names occur just below, but here A refers to the 'Om-lo cave (*brag-phug*), not spring; C reads: *lhi-mi yi ca-se brag-phug* = the Cave cave of Lhi-mi (not Lhi-ma this time); B reads: *sdo mi ci' drag-phug* = translatable as 'the cave of sdo-mi-ci'. We have quoted this particular example in detail as an example of the utter impossibility of fixing names without precise local knowledge of the area, and even so, names current in the 11th century may not be identifiable in the 20th.

46. Here again there is the problem of the actual place of his death. Text A: at Ri-ving-go of Kha-tse; Text B: at Ving-gong; C: at Ri-ving-go of Kha-tse. The *Blue Annals* reads: Ving-git of Khva-tse (p. 69); Tibetan text *kha*, folio 4a, line 3). Tucci has accepted Ving-git as a suitable spelling (*Indo-Tibetica* II, p. 56). A & C are the more reliable of our MSS, and by accepting *ri* (= hill or mountain) one can interpret as 'Mount Ving-go'. The *Blue Annals* has no especial authority in the matter.

47. This is the 27th of the 28 lunar mansions (*nakṣatra*) in the MHV list as adopted by the Tibetans from Indian tradition. All our MSS read (or intend) *rta-pa*, meaning the 'horseman' which is an adequate rendering for *Aśvini*, although the regular form as listed in the MVP is *tha-shar*.

48. The 'four pillars' and the 'eight beams', being his firmest group of followers, are conveniently listed at the end of Text A, almost as though they had given their sanction to this early attempt at a biography. They are: the 'four pillars', namely Rin-chen shes-rab of Kha-tse, Ses-rab dam-pa of sKyen-ver, Ye-shes dpal of Khyi-thang and Byang-chub snying-po of Du-po; the 'eight beams', namely Yon-tan legs-pa of Va-zan, bZang-mchog Translator from sNu-bu, brTson-'grug rgyal-mtshan of Gur-shing, Tshul-khriṃs snying-po of Ma-nam, dPal-gyi byang-chub of dGe-thang, gSer-brang of Sas, Yon-tan shes-rab of Va-go and bSod-nams shes-rab of Sed-dkar.

49. The Tibetan term used here is simply *gdung* and it refers to the chōten-like edifice in which the bodies of leading people were (and still are) incinerated. The full term is *gdung-khang*. See p. 34. In Ladakh the term *ro-khang* (pronounced *rong-khang*) = 'corpse-house' is used.

50. These berries are specified as the 'paternoster pea', the seed of *Abrus precatorius*, used as beads for rosaries. See Jäschke's Dictionary, p. 501, under 'o-ma-zī-zī'. Our MSS read (A) 'o-ma-zī, (B) 'o-ma-zī, (C) 'o-ma-zī.

Avalokiteśvara, a full cubit,³² which one never tired of gazing upon. Then there was a wonderful image of Hevajra set against the Tree of Enlightenment. Then there was the text of the Guhyasamāja in Sanskrit written on palm-leaf in the style of an Indian book. As for these three items, if anyone takes them out of the temple, it will be bad for that man. As for the images of copper, of brass and so on, the complete inventory came to forty-nine items. As for the books [p. 108] there was a complete Canon, all the Perfection of Wisdom texts in their full and medium-length versions, and over and above these eighteen sets of originals and copies, there were two copies of the version in 18,000 verses and five of the version of 8,000 verses. In short there were 468 volumes in the complete inventory.³³

Especially when the Great Translator made his second visit to Kashmir and the Royal Lama Ye-shes-'od sent with him fifteen disciples, five intelligent ones, five to administer to him and five of great faith, for it was at the time when he gave him as an offering eight kinds of precious bones, the Junior Translator Legs-pa'i Shes-rab was very helpful and quite reliable, and in recognition of his zeal and the services he rendered with body and speech, there was presented to him with the seal of the Royal Lamas, Uncle and Nephew, and with the impress of the Translator the land of Cog-ro,³⁴ bounded on its higher side by Ku-shu of Gu-ge, and below at Ti-ma by the water-fall of gSum-kha-dar, bounded on the east by plains, on the south by snow-mountains, on the west by sNga-ma-myong and on the north by the gTsang-po, together with its fine villages and fields and pastures. No one great or small might seize possession; no one might claim it; no one might damage it.

Of the five intelligent youths two died of fever and the other three who were his great disciples are Byang-chub shes-rab of Mang-wer, dGe-ba'i Blo-gros of rMa and Rin-chen gzhon-nu of 'Dzang-lo.³⁵ To these he gave Ti-vag (to the Mang-wer Translator), Ri-khri (to the rMa Translator) and Tshang-med (to the 'Dzang-lo Translator), bounded below by grass-lands, above by wood-lands, and to the sides by escarpments, together with pastures and hills, such did he give them. As items required for rites of the guardian divinity at Radnis they had to provide half a bushel of meal, a ration of curds, a measure of butter and the paw of a wild ass. Members of the Great Translator's lineage, whether masters or servants, whoever came must always give something good.

Furthermore as for attendance at the twenty-one smaller places,³⁶ namely

- | | | | |
|-------|------------------------------|--------|-------------------|
| i. | Zher-pa (Zher-wer) in Purang | xi. | rGyu-lang, |
| ii. | Go-khar (in Kha-tse), | xii. | Ro-pag, |
| iii. | Pur-khar (in Kha-tse), | xiii. | Cog-ro, |
| iv. | Bo-ri, | xiv. | Ri-khri (Ri-hri), |
| v. | gYang-skur, | xv. | Hrang-trang, |
| vi. | Ti-yag (Ti-vag), | xvi. | La-ri, |
| vii. | Tsang-med, | xvii. | Ta-pho, |
| viii. | sNe'u, | xviii. | Shangs |
| ix. | Nye-wang, | xix. | rTsa-rang, |
| x. | Zho-ling, | xx. | Dril-chung, |

in all the temples in these small places there were complete sets of ceremonial articles. In short from Kha-char and Zher in Purang up to Hobulangka he founded 108 temples, for when he had already founded 107, he founded at the end the small temple in Dril-chung and so completed 108. If you count them, the number will be complete.³⁷ Furthermore as for temples in boundary areas, at De-gar in Lho, at dPag, Drug-phag-gi-mon, Ka-nam in Nga-ra, and sPu of Rong-chung, all the temples as many as were founded in Rong-chung, they were founded by the Great Lama Translator. Every day too there were continual ceremonial attendances. He also founded innumerable chöten.

Such a great man as this brought a water-snake from Ho-pu.³⁸ He placed it in a leather box and said to his disciples as he handed it to them: "Don't open this until you reach the upper part of the valley at Kyu-wang". But his disciples opened it at Dra-ti by Sum-nam and a blue water-snake [p. 109] came out and went into the water there. Catching it again, he said: "Don't do as you did yesterday and don't open it until you reach the upper part of the valley at Kyu-wang". But the snake twisted their thoughts, and they opened it as they reached sPu, and so it escaped. The Great Lama Translator said: "Now you have been in error twice, and so nothing has been gained in merit for living beings. If you had opened it but once, there would have sprung up here a town of a hundred houses and more. Now all is spoiled and from now on there will be only a village here with a wretched dried up pool".

10. As for his exceptional meditational practice, although in general he practised to an unlimited extent from Zher in Purang as far away as Hobulangka, yet he remained mostly at Gyam-shug. When he was staying at Gyam-shug he sent away his disciples and used to get his daily pittance from Kha-char in Purang. He went at day-break and reached the monastery without strain as the vegetable-broth was prepared, it is said.³⁹ This is how matters were when he was eighty-eight years old.

32. A & C both read *khyud gang ba* to which we can give no sense. We are translating as though for *khru gang ba*. B omits. *khyud* may be cognate with *dkyas*; thus the phrase could mean 'full length', but it would indeed be an unusual image if all made of ivory.

33. There now follows a list of the ceremonial articles kept in the temple. This list is omitted from Texts B & C and it is the only section of A omitted from our translation (103⁴ to 105³).

34. The account of this donation to Legs-pa'i Shes-rab occurs in Text A only, and as we have no immediate means of checking unfamiliar or maybe misspelt place-names, the translation remains uncertain to the end of this paragraph so far as place-names are concerned. Thus our translation 'the land of Cog-ro bounded on its higher side by Ku-shu of Gu-ge' is derived from *cog ro go ger ku shu yar bcad pa*. The following phrase 'below at Ti-ma by the water-fall of gSum-kha-dar' may seem even more doubtful. Apart from the last few syllables, clearly meaning literally 'possessed of the water-fall', the first part of the line could be broken in a variety of ways. Thus it could translate as 'the waterfall of Kha-dar of Ti-ma-la and its three lower parts. Knowledge of these minor place-names, mostly non-Tibetan written corruptly in Tibetan, would be essential for accurate interpretation, and it is unlikely that anyone nowadays has the means of checking them. See following notes.

35. The names of these three disciples are listed also in Texts B & C, which insert them, however, just before the story of the water-snake, and after the statement "He founded innumerable chöten. In short every day there were continuous ceremonial attendances", which as will be noted, are reversed in B & C. Texts B & C continue to order their materials in the same manner almost to the end of the work. See note 14. The list of the donations to the three disciples occurs here in Text A only, and we have the same problem with minor place-names as mentioned above. Texts B & C insert them out of place later on. See note 44.

36. Texts B & C resume at this point having passed straight from a corrupted version of the warning: "If anyone takes them out of the temple, it will be bad for that man" and adding the phrase "The water-sprite Dzalamati was appointed guardian", to "Furthermore Zher-wer in Purang" continuing with much shorter lists of names. However, they both end with Hobulangka (with variant spellings) and if this is added to the Text A list of twenty names, we reach the full complement of 21. Many of the spellings are very corrupt. See textual notes for complete lists. The first name occurs often in the texts and Zher or Zher-pa (maybe for Zher-sa) and Zher-ver are all tolerable. However at this point B reads *bZeng-ver* and C *bZhes-ver*. Tucci's list of 17 names occurs on pp. 71-2 of *Indo-Tibetica* II.

37. The argument is surely confused here. It is the number 21 and not the auspicious number of 108 which is completed by counting the places from Zher to Dril-chung and including, as the text now makes clear, also Hobulangka. The redactor can only mean that if we add the temples in boundary areas, some of which he lists, then there were many more than 21, which by pious fiction is rounded up to 108.

38. This is an odd little story which occurs in all the texts with differing spellings of place-names. Text B also says that there were 3 snakes and that they were put into a golden box. Compare note 30 which draws attention to his changing a leather bowl into a golden one. He reads *Ho-ma* for *Ho-pu*. Is this the same as Hobulangka? As for A: Dra-ti by Sum-nam, B reads 'at the rock-mountains of sPa-nam' and C: 'at Sra-ti of Sum-nam'. See textual note.

39. This small passage seems to have been troublesome to the redactors of Texts B & C. Their versions are given in the textual notes. B: 'Mostly he stayed at rGyam-shur and his pittance at Kha-cher of Purang was cut off for a long time'. (We retain B's spellings of the place-names). C reads: 'Especially when he was staying at rGyam-shor, he used to get his daily pittance from Kha-char of Purang. At the monastery the pupil was without strain as the vegetable-broth was prepared. B & C have rejected the word *stet-ba* (also *rtel-ba*), a West Tibetan term for 'to arrive, to reach'. C may have changed it into the more usual word *steb-pa* 'to reach', which has been corrupted into *steb-ma* 'pupil'. This in turn led to the omission of the earlier phrase 'He sent away his pupils'. Confirmation of our interpretation comes from the *Lo-tzshu ba'i bstod-pa*, 'Praises of the Translator' included in the *Collected Biographical Material* 140-41: *gyam shug rste gcig sgrub pa mdzad pa'i tshu // khya tshar gyam blang mod la stel la 'dud //* 'We bow to him who when practising meditation one-pointedly at Gyam-shug, got his pittance from Kha-tshar and arrived there in a moment!

Afterwards the people of Purang said: "The Great Lama Translator was here and founded our temple and consecrated it", while the Gu-ge people said that he was there and the Mar-yul people said that he was there. The Lama Translator was asked, and he said: "It is true that I was at all three".

Then to our Great Lama Translator the Royal Lama Ye-shes-'od addressed these words: "Great Lama Translator, I wish you to get those books (left) in Kashmir and to go and bring here some skillful artists". He agreed to go. Then the Royal Bodhisattva said: "Great Lama Translator, although I give you as a parting-gift horses and oxen, these will not carry you over the broken tracks and bridges of India. Although I give you gold and intelligent youths as disciples. The king gave him as an offering the eight kinds of precious bones²³ and he set out again for Kashmir. Then our Lama Translator thought to himself: My knowing many scriptures and my acting on behalf of living beings is due to graciousness of my two parents, so I should have made in Kashmir an exceptional memorial of my father, so he took with him about twenty ounces of gold. Having begged for brass in Kashmir, he obtained a good deal, and so he asked an image-maker named Bhidhaka to make as substitute for his father an image of Avalokiteśvara to his father's size.²⁴ Lama Śraddhākaravarman consecrated it, and of the twenty ounces of gold that he had brought from home, he made the lama happy with five of them. Five went in payment for the consecration and unveiling ceremony. Five went on the image-makers' materials and he gave one as wages. When they were bringing the image in a cart from Kashmir, one of its hands struck against a rock on the track at the Mahāsaṅgala Bridge and the tip of the ring-finger was broken off.²⁵ It was thirteen months since he first left the village, when he arrived there again with the image. Thinking that Kyu-wang was not then a suitable place for doing it honour, he brought the image to Go-khar in Kha-tse, and offered it to the community of sixty monks there. He also gave the means for worship at the right times. The Lama Translator passed six years in guiding his disciples in Kashmir and in obtaining the last of his teachings. After six years he returned together with thirty-two artists. Then thinking that he should pay his respects to the Mighty One, the Lama Ye-shes-'od, he journeyed to mTho-lding, and since he had invited so many scholars and brought them together, the Royal Lama said: "It is you Translator Rin-chen bzang-po who has found the means for these invitations. You are welcome indeed! Now you should train as a translator here this monk from sPang-khyud." When he had learned translating and become skilled in grammar, he was known as the sPang-khyud Translator. The two of them, master and pupil translated many scriptures with the help of those paṇḍitas.

Then his mother died and so he went to Kyu-wang and consecrated three *Durgatipariśodhana* maṇḍalas. For the sake of his mother he founded a temple, consecrating and initiating it. The Royal Lama Ye-shes-'od was lying ill, so he went to see him quickly, [p. 107] but he had been seized by a terrible illness and so he did not meet him. As funeral rites the Translator himself performed the *Durgatipariśodhana* and others. As for the (royal) gifts, the Mighty One Lha-lde and the Mighty One the Bodhisattva gave him twenty-one sites and these are the twenty-one places dedicated to worship, and he made limitless offerings, three general tea-ceremonies for readings of the sūtras every year to the communities in the twenty-one places, seven readings of the Perfection of Wisdom in 100,000 verses, and so on, as well as images, books and chōtens.²⁶

23. Used as currency just as cowries were used. See Sarat Chandra Das, Tibetan Dictionary under *rus-pa'i zong = mgon-bu* (*paṇḍita*), cowries, bones or shells of exchange.
24. The MS available to Guiseppe Tucci seems to have omitted the all essential phrase referring to Avalokiteśvara, for he expresses understandable surprise the Rin-chen bzang-po should have had made an actual image of his father, a most unlikely proceeding in this Tibetan context. See *Indo-Tibetica* II, p. 66.
25. The incident of the damage is absent from texts B & C. Also from B is missing the time factor of thirteen months. In none of the versions, A included, do the ounces of gold distributed add up to twenty. According to B Śraddhākaravarman received five hundred for the consecration, five went to the craftsmen and five to the transporters, while according to C five went on the consecration, five to the craftsmen and one to the transporters. For the Tibetan versions see the textual note.
26. These last three categories of images, books and chōtens are the symbols of the Body, Speech and Mind of the Buddhas, an expression which is translated literally below.

9.

The thirteen branches of his family made plans to found thirteen temples,²⁷ and they planned to complete the foundations in one day, but the Great Translator thought: "If I complete the foundations of a temple first, then afterwards all the temples will be regular", so in the course of a day he laid the foundations first. But his relatives were jealous and so they constructed their temples higher than the Translator's temple. Then dividing the artists amongst themselves, they had the work done in different ways. The Lama Translator performed all the consecration and opening ceremonies.

He had the intention of founding a high-roofed temple²⁸ at Rad-nis of Kyu-wang, as this was his birth-place, but a local water-spirit named Dzalamati and her three sisters were jealous.²⁹ There were eight village-elders at Radnis, and the eight of them were seized by a painful illness. During the winter he practised coercive rites at Gyam-shug, and then in the spring he arranged a *Guhyasamāja* maṇḍala at Kyu-wang in a field of the size which takes three measures of grain (for planting), and in the centre of the maṇḍala he constructed a large *homa* hearth, where he performed the rite of burnt offerings and as a result Dzalamati and her three sisters appeared before him. Then the Translator called to all his disciples: "Don't beat your drums for a moment, but stay where you are!", and he went to the head of the field, where the spirits offered their lives to him and he bound them on oath, and they made a firm promise to protect the Buddhist religion. In particular this sprite Dzalamati cut off her front locks of hair and as they came to about four yards in length, they filled a leather vessel three spans across as well as a smaller one,³⁰ and these were placed as hidden valuables under the temple at Radnis. Having offered her life-force, she was known by the secret name of Heavenly Immaculate. She was appointed guardian divinity of the Wondrous Lotus Temple of Radnis and the whole matter was finalized with a coercive rite. Furthermore it was arranged for the whole circle of divinities of the *Guhyasamāja* to be inside the temple.

As for the four Dzalamati sisters, the eldest, the wild spirit Zar-na-ma of Kha-tse, this one was appointed guardian of the temples of Kha-tse. The next one, the wild spirit Dro-mur-ma, was appointed guardian of the Red Temple of rGyu-lang. The next one the wild devil Srog-mur-ma was appointed guardian of the temple of Sum-nam. The evil water-spirit Dzalamati was the youngest of the four. Putting the Oblate Goat-Skin-Clad³¹ under oath, he made him work as personal attendant and made him responsible for guarding the possessions of all the temples of Rong-chung. This one is master of the demons and is named Byi-na-ya-ga. Also known as the Goat-Skin-Clad, as Pe-har, as Dro and as ICags-ber, they are all one. He performed tranquillizing coercive rites against the set of evil water-spirits who showed themselves with bodies of a light yellow colour.

As for listing the Body, Speech and Mind Symbols and ceremonial equipment of the Wondrous Lotus Temple at Radnis, in particular there was an ivory image of

27. The thirteen ancestral branches are referred to in Chapter 2. Here A, B and C all use differing terms, but the sense is clear: A: *pha-go*; B: *mtshan-go*; C: *pha-spuṅ*. This is again an odd story, and the notion of laying all the foundations of different places in one day appears again. See note 21 above.
28. Text A reads: 'a temple like Mount Meru', presumably therefore a tiered-roof temple, or maybe with the meaning of a very imposing one. Instead of *ri rab tsam*, 'like Mount Meru', B reads: *bre-tsam*, which according to Jäschke's Dictionary p. 381, would mean a miniature temple. C reads: *pa ru tsam*, which Jäschke (p. 322) lists as *pa ri* or *pa ru* with the meaning of 'box, cylindrical or oval, high or flat, of wood or metal'. However 'a box-like temple' is not an attractive proposition.
29. Texts B & C refer briefly to this ill-disposed Dzalamati and they tell nothing of her sisters. B simply refers to *smān dza la ma ti bya ba'i tha'bre* (for *dre*) *gdug pa can* = an evil demon, named the Water Sprite (*smān*) Dzalamati. C has the same omitting *gdug pa can* = evil.
Text A refers to them as: *klu 'brog smān dza la ma ti spuṅ bchi*. For *smān* see Jäschke under *klu*. They are all named below and we deduce from the forms of their names that they are understood to be feminine.
30. This is perhaps rather doubtful, the reading being *hse mtho gum ma bu gang byung ba*. Text B says that 'a golden bowl filled with jewels was offered'. Text C omits. See textual note.
31. Text A reads: *dge bñen ya slag can*. *dge-bñen* translates Sanskrit *upāsaka* = a religious layman, which for neatness of translation we have termed as 'oblate'. One wonders if the writer has in mind the monk (*dge-bñen*) who had proved to be a manifestation of Pe-har in the story as told above. This would seem to be so from the definition that follows. *Byi-na-ya-ga*, chief of demons (*dgegs*) is listed by Nebesky-Wojkowitz, p. 268, 285, etc. Our text refers to him mistakenly as 'queen' of demons (*dgegs-kyi rgyal-mo*). None of this passage occurs in B & C. The 'Goat-Skin-Clad' also appears just below as one of another set of four.

Phullahari.¹⁶ He soon met the Lord Nāropa, and begged him to give consecrations and instructions, which he gave. He received many instructions and graces in the exceptional precepts of 'thus-ness', that profound and spontaneous state which is free of all self-expression. Then when the instructions and the graces were completed, he bid farewell to the Lama Nāropa, and on his way back he met the Pandita Kamalagupta. He learned many teachings, and since this Pandita knew the profound coercive rite (*sādhana*) of the Dakini Golden Rayed according to that Indian book which he had once seen in his village, he now learned it. This is the Dakini who prophesied to him previously, and from that time on she was close to him like mother and sister. If we then calculate how many years he was in Kashmir, it amounts to seven years.

Then thinking that he should go to see his parents, he wrote what he had learned on yellowish birch-bark, and making an Indian-style book he made up his mind to go, but then he remembered what had been said early on at the time of that prophesy in his village about (the holy scriptures) spreading like a flood over India from east to west, and he left his books with Śraddhākara (-varman) and went to eastern India. Such is the account of how he lived in Kashmir, asked for teachings and made translations.

As for his journeying to eastern India, he travelled thererapidly by means of his mastery of swift-footedness and asked teachings of many scholars and paṇḍitas, Indian paṇḍitas such as Jñānamitra, Jñānaśri and Silendrabodhi, and he made translations of limitless number, from the *Vinaya*, the *Abhidharma*, the *Pratimokṣa*, the Three Hundred Verses, the Perfection of Wisdom (Mother) literature in its full-length form and its medium-length form in 20,000,¹⁷ 18,000 and 8,000 verses and many mnemonic verses (*dhāraṇī*), these he translated and arranged in good order. Furthermore he asked for sūtras and tantras and innumerable works of instruction, and translated many cycles of texts concerned with Avalokiteśvara, but fearing that it would be excessively wordy in this case I have not written that he asked this text of this scholar, and that one of that scholar and so on.

In eastern India our Great Lama Translator was known as the Venerable Ratnasena. Then he returned from India to Kashmir and receiving his books from the hands of Śraddhākara varman, he went on his way carrying as many of these doctrinal works as he could and leaving what he could not carry with Śraddhākara varman. Up till now thirteen years had been passed in India and Kashmir. Travelling swift-footedly from Kashmir to Kyu-wang, he reached there in six days. There was word that his father had already died and was no more there. Reflecting that he had not returned direct from Kashmir, he felt terrible remorse, he said. For the benefit of his father he arranged for seven *Durgatiparīśodhana* maṇḍalas to be done.¹⁸

Just at the time that he went to Purang there was a monk there who appeared sitting crossed-legged on a seat of coarse grass and everyone was paying him respects and there was general wonderment, but our Lama Translator gave thought to the matter and knowing that it was a delusive manifestation of Pe-har,¹⁹ he sat for a month in profound coercive rites. Then he went to him and pointed his finger at him, and the monk turned head over heels, fell to the ground and went. From then on our Lama Translator was treated with great respect.

Then the Mighty One King Lha-lde invited many noble scholars such as the Paṇḍita Prajñākara Śrimitra and the Paṇḍita Subhāsita and they translated the Perfection of Wisdom in its long and medium form. In short he translated and studied many religious works together with seventy-five paṇḍitas [p. 106].

8. The Mighty One Lha-lde made him Chief Priest and *Vajracarya* and gave him sites in Purang, and as for the manner of his using these sites to the greater honour of the Blessed Ones, he undertook to found 108 temples from Zher in Purang as far as Hobulangka.²⁰ Then Lha-lde asked him to found the temple of Kha-char, and in Gu-gu where he went, the Royal Lama Ye-shes-'od founded (with him) the 'Twelve Isles' of mTho-lding, and in Mar-yul (Ladakh) he founded Nyar-ma, and the foundations of all three were laid in one day.²¹ Thus his activity was unbounded in founding so many temples and in translating so many scriptures. Thus our great Lama Translator operated from Purang upwards and the Junior Translator Legs-pa'i Shes-rab did translation work down as far as Sa-skya.²² Then in order to avert an illness of his mother and to prolong her years he had seven Amitāyus maṇḍalas done. There upon his mother's life was extended by eighteen years. Then the consecration and formal opening of Kha-char in Purang, mTho-lding in Gu-gu and Nyar-ma in Mar-yul, of all these three temples were performed on a great scale.

16. The visit to Nāropa at Phullahari seems to be deliberately separated from the subsequent visit to eastern India (modern Bihar and Bengal) by suggesting that this place is somewhere in the north of Kashmir. Yet Phullahari certainly seems to have been in eastern India and it was well known to the Translator Marpa. See for example Snelgrove and Richardson *A Cultural History of Tibet*, pp. 118-120, where Marpa's praises of this famous hermitage are translated. Whether a meeting between Rin-chen bzang-po and Nāropa was possible chronologically depends upon Nāropa's dates. H.V. Guenther in *The Life and Teaching of Nāropa* (London 1963) gives his life-span as 1016-1100 with 1026 as the date of his first visit to Kashmir, when he went as a student, and 1040 as the date of a later visit. That Rin-chen bzang-po should have approached him as his religious master would then be scarcely possible. However, an article by Birešwar Prasad Singh, 'Nāropa, his life and activities', published in the *Journal of the Bihar Research Society*, vol. LIII (1967) pp. 117-129, adduces reasons for moving Nāropa's life-span to sixty years (one Tibetan cycle) back, namely 956-1040. These earlier dates are more likely to be correct. A crucial one is that of Nāropa's death, which according to Atiśa's biography occurred at the time the latter left for Tibet, and this would confirm the year 1040. An admirable German edition of Atiśa's biography has just appeared, namely the *Atiśa-thar rGyas-po* produced by Helmut Eimer of Bonn and published in two parts as Vol. 67 of *Asiatische Forschungen* (Wiesbaden 1979). For the reference to Nāropa's death see part 1, p. 225. If these earlier dates for Nāropa are correct, then he could have been in Kashmir in 980 when he was 24 years old. Since Rin-chen bzang-po left his home for Kashmir in 975 and stayed there seven years, a meeting would certainly have been possible. It is also possible that Nāropa's resort in Kashmir was likewise named Phullahari after the main one in eastern India. Texts B and C follow at this point, except that B refers to Phullahari as a 'town' instead of the famous hermitage that it once was.

17. Only Text A lists the various versions of the Perfection of Wisdom (prajñāpāramitā) literature. For the version in 20,000 verses the one in 25,000 is probably intended.

18. Presumably he paid for the painting of murals of these maṇḍalas. Text A, followed by C, reads *mdzad-do*, 'he did or made'; B reads *bzhegs-to*, the usual term used of a benefactor who has a religious work done. The *Durgatiparīśodhana*, 'Eliminating Evil Rebirths' is an important tantra of the Yoga-tantra class, as edited by Tadeusz Skorupski for early publication.

19. Concerning Pe-har, originally an Indian Buddhist protective divinity, who when transferred to Tibet was regarded as a kind of usually benevolent demon, see Nebesky-Wojtkowicz, *Oracles and Demons*, pp. 95-108. Text B says that the monk was a manifestation of a water-spirit demon (*ku-dbud*).

20. Zher, presumably indicating the extreme eastern extent of Rin-chen bzang-po's building activities, occurs often in our texts (as Zher, Zher-wet and Zher-pa or Zher-sa). It remains unidentified. For Hobulangka, also mentioned several times, G. Tucci (*Indo-Tibetica* II, p. 63) suggests the identity of a present-day village, known as Lang-ka 'near Khapulu to the north-west of Ladakh'. This is the kind of situation required by the context. mTho-lding is well known and has been fully described by G. Tucci in *Indo-Tibetica*, III, 2. For Nyar-ma see Vol. I, p. 19.

21. The strange persistence of the number three here and in the rest of this passage suggests when combined with evidence from an inscription at gSum-mda' Monastery in Zangkar (see p. 41) that the original reading was more likely to have been: 'he founded Nyar-ma in Ladakh and he laid the foundations of gSum-mda' in one day. It would be quite possible to translate the passage just below as: 'Then the consecration and formal opening of Kha-char in Purang, mTho-lding in Gu-gu and of the temples of Nyar-ma and gSum-mda' in Mar-yul were performed on a great scale.' However, Text A, followed by B & C, in its present state clearly understands gSum not as a place-name, but as meaning 'three'. It is conceivable that this was an early textual misunderstanding, leading to the rather odd tradition that Rin-chen bzang-po founded three monasteries, all distant from one another, on a single day with the suggestion that he was somehow magically present in all three places at once. The biography of Rin-chen bzang-po composed in 1976 by *blong-bzang btsod-pa* to which reference is made above on page 84 mentions the grant of Zher in Purang to the Great Translator and then continues: 'The Translator built monasteries (*grug-lag-khang*) there too. He founded many sites (*gnas-gzhi*), monasteries and chōtens, the monastery of Kha-che'i yul, the monasteries of Rod (maybe for rong) and of Nyar-ma, the monastery of Alchi and so on. The Translator came to Ladakh when he was 55 years old. As for the founding of the monastery of Nyar-ma of Tiktsa (*Khri-ga-rtse*) there are eight temples large and small. As for the length and breadth of the large temples they are 25 yards (*gom-khu*) respectively. The width of the temple-walls is three feet (*lag-khu*). The height of the walls is thirteen feet. The surrounding walls on the mountain side are each 250 yards (in length). Their width is one and a half feet. The surrounding walls on the mountain side are each 250 yards (in length), small and large. Up to the year 1976 from the founding of the monastery 965 years have passed. - having founded Nyar-ma just about ten years later the Translator founded Alchi Monastery with its wonderful image of Omniscient Vairocana which one never tires of seeing' (extracted from folios 13-19). The date of 1011 for the founding of Nyar-ma is quite acceptable. What is meant by Kha-che'i yul we are left to guess. Kha-tse may be intended or the writer may even be referring mistakenly to Kashmir. Rod does not occur as a place-name in the other versions of the biography, and the writer may intend rong (= the lower valleys), as indeed the word is clearly written in an excerpt from Sum-pa mKhan-po's history included in the same volume (folio 55). The reference to Alchi is mistaken. No mention is made either of Rin-chen bzang-po's famous foundations at Tabo and mTho-lding.

22. Text C (258²⁻³) says: 'So the Great Lama Translator did not go beyond (literally: from) Purang, and the Junior Translator Legs-pa'i Shes-rab did translation work from Sa-skya upwards'. This comes to the same in effect, and thus delineates their respective areas of activity. Text B has a complete rewording: 'He laid the foundations of the three in one day. Then ten years had passed since he came from India to Tibet and together with the Junior Translator Legs-pa'i Shes-rab and other disciples, a great company of them, he arranged seven *Durgatiparīśodhana* maṇḍalas for his father's benefit at sKyung-wang as has been explained before. In order to lengthen his mother's life etc.' (175¹⁻³). This has the appearance of being a deliberate alteration made at some early period by a redactor who did not wish to see Legs-pa'i Shes-rab placed on equal terms with Rin-chen bzang-po.

her daughter appeared as substitutes for his mother and sister. So he thought that he should get a hundred and eight (**miniature**) **chötens**¹⁰ made soon in return for their kindness. Thus he made signs to the woman (with the meaning): "I beg a piece from the ends of your hair". The woman was very innocent and made a return sign: "If you want it, cut a long piece and take it". Then the Translator showed her an Avalokitesvara (image) of ivory, the size of a finger, which was in his wallet, thus indicating the size of the chötens that were to be made, and he made a sign meaning: "We mix it (the hair) together." The woman was delighted and cutting off as much as two thirds of her hair, gave it to him. She made a gesture of greeting, and then sticking out her tongue and taking hold of it, she made a sign meaning: "If this is cut off, I shall be left with nothing".¹¹ Then she cried and went away. At that I too felt compassion and wept, he said. Afterwards when he reached Kashmir, he burned the piece of hair for the woman and made many chötens, a hundred and more.

5. Then in about half a day's journey they reached the border of the land of Kashmir and came to a Brahman village of seven houses. There they stayed about a month learning a little of the local dialect.¹² Then after a day's journey they encountered at the foot of a tree a naked yogin who was blowing a trumpet made of a human thigh-bone. The yogin twirled the trumpet three times round the lama's head and then went into the forest. According to what we heard afterwards, this was the perfected yogin Ratnasiddhi, [p.104] and on that occasion he came to give me a blessing, and I regretted greatly not having recognised him, he said. Then going a little further we met a fully grown tiger, and there was the sound of human feet in the forest as that tiger turned aside and went. Knowing this to be a blessing by some kind of sign, I had feelings of great awe, he said. Then travelling on, they met a large number of traders, and begging for alms, they got a lot of rice. That evening they slept at the traders' (halting-) place, and the next day, having asked the lay-out of the district, they travelled until midday and arrived at a town called Kalacakti.¹³ To begin with the Kashmiri children ran together and made a spectacle of us, saying: "Just look at such men, a man with no beard and with a yellowish coloured body". Then we asked for lodging with an elderly householder and stayed there some days. One day when we had gone to beg alms in the middle of the town, we met an old brahman, who looked at the palm of my hand and without saying anything went into his house. Then he offered me a silver incense-bowl filled with a bunch of flowers, and making a salutation, he took hold of the end of my robe and pronounced many words of good augur: "You are one who have accumulated throughout many lives good stocks (of merit), and possessing good karma you will be familiar with many scriptures in this present life of yours. You will benefit many living beings and later you will obtain perfect buddhahood". The name of that brahman was Śraddhākaravarman.¹⁴

10. **miniature chötens**: what is involved is the making of small cakes usually of clay, shaped something like a small stupa, and known as *tsa-tsa*. For a detailed description of them see Giuseppe Tucci, *Indo-Tibetica*, vol. I, p. 53 ff. The ashes of someone deceased can be moulded with clay in order to make a number, often the sacred number of 108, of such little reliquaries, which are then usually placed inside a full-scale chöten. Rin-chen bzang-po proposes to do something similar with the woman's hair, treating it as a relic, which is thereby sanctified to her greater merit. Concerning the term *sung-bshed*, see the textual note.
11. Like pieces of hair and finger-nails the tongue is also prized as a relic, but to protrude the tongue is also a respectful sign of greeting to a superior. Text B reads: 'showing her tongue she made the dumb sign meaning "If this is cut off, I shall have nothing"'. Text C reads: 'showing her tongue and holding it with her hand, she made a sign meaning "Cut this off and it makes no difference"'. See textual note.
12. Text C inserts a sentence here: 'Then they went on to a town named Kalacakti'. See following note.
13. For *Ka-la-cag-ti* B reads *Ka-la-wa-ri*, while C refers to *Kha-che na-ger gyi Ka-la-pa-ta* = Kalapata in the land of Kashmir. For *na-ger*, presumably Sanskrit *nagara* 'town', used in the meaning of a land, specifically India, see following note.
14. Up to this point Text A (76³), B (167²) and C (250³) have contained the same materials, except for the first chapter of the prophesy and a section missing in chapter 2 as observed in notes 2 and 4. From now on divergences occur with B & C omitting, or reordering as the case may be, small blocks of material. At this point neither gives the name of the Brahman Śraddhākaravarman (Dad-byed go-cha), and omitting any reference to the meeting with the Pandita Gunamitra and reducing the whole account of Rin-chen bzang-po's mastery of 'swift-footedness' to a single phrase, they pass on to his arrival at the town of Tamalasanti. However, these greatly abbreviated versions are not identical in detail, B being by far the shorter.
- B: Then having received (*mkhyen-nas*) the instructions in swift-footedness (*rkang-mgyogs*) known as 'Wish-Granting Gem' (*yiid-bzhin nor-bu*), he came to the town of Tamalasanti.
- C: Then he received (*gzigs-ro*) the instructions in swift-footedness (*rkang-mgyogs kyi gdam-pa*) known as 'Wish-Granting Gem'. Then since the land of India (*Na-ger*) is so vast and the stars touch down on the horizon, he felt a need to be with men, and so he came to the city of Tamalasanti.

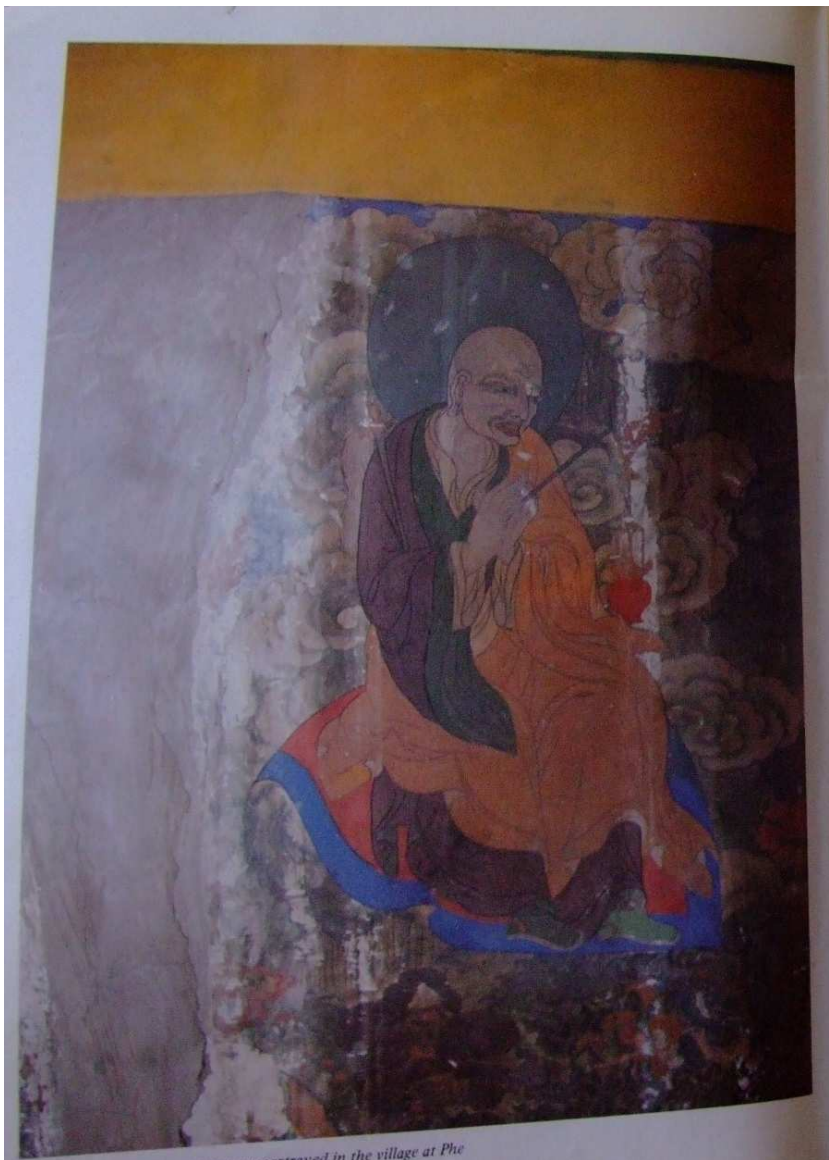
Meeting the Pandita Gunamitra, an exceptional scholar who is skilled in the five branches of learning and who was seated explaining religious doctrine to some five hundred youngsters, he made him a present, offering the silver incense-bowl which the brahman had given him previously, filling it (again) with flowers. He made a salutation and asked for instruction, and in the course of seven months he became skilled in translation and grammar. (Also) he paid his respects to the Kashmiri scholar Dharmasānta with whom he studied and translated the Vajradhātu liturgy together with the mandala. He studied and translated many such works. He composed a *sarnasātra*, a treatise about words. Then he heard of a greatly renowned pandita who was indefectible in the five branches of learning and who lived in the town of Tamalasanti six days journey to the east. He said farewell to his former lama, and on the way as he travelled he met a yogin who was fast-moving like the shadow of a hawk in flight. Knowing that he possessed a karmic connection with this swift-footed person, he bowed down taking the yogin's feet on his head and besought him saying: "I am a man from far distant and cannot travel on. As an offering I have nothing except the oddments pertaining to a mendicant's remnants, so I beg you in your great compassion to be attentive to me and bestow upon me the instructions in swift-footedness." "As for giving these instructions to you who come from afar, swift-footedness is a dākinī teaching, and it is not given without a consecration and a ceremony with offerings", he said. So he followed as this yogin's disciple, and in the town of Bhindhara having begged the items needed for the ceremony, he obtained the whole set of things and made his request. "Now it shall be given", the yogin said, and he performed the consecration and the ceremony, and as an offering he tied a cotton band around the Translator's neck. (For his part) he offered body, speech and mind to the lama, and having obtained that skill in swift-footedness known as 'Wish-Granting Gem', he arrived at the town of Tamalasanti.

6. In the town of Tamalasanti he met the great Pandita Śraddhākaravarman, whom he begged for religious instruction and having been accepted he studied many coercive rites (*sādhana*) and teachings relating to the Yoga-Tantras. He studied and translated a commentary on the *Cakrasamvara Tantra*, the tantric work entitled *Bhagavadabhisamaya* and many other texts of the class of Secret Mantras and coercive rites. From the scholar Buddhāñi he learned the 'Fulfillment of Yoga' and many doctrines and studied very hard.¹⁵

Then in accordance with what had been agreed previously concerning the countries he was to visit, he decided to return home but that night in a dream someone said: "There is a Tibetan who has acquired many precious gems from an ocean-isle, but there is one precious wish-granting gem [p. 105] which he has left behind and that is in the hand of the Lord Nāropa". When he awoke he asked the Pandita Śraddhākaravarman about the matter, and he replied: "If it is so, then you must go to the Lord Nāropa. He knows many cycles of the *Mahāmudra*, the doctrines which bring buddhahood in a single life and a single body." Then since it was his lama's command and moreover one's lama's command is the basis of perfection, and also on account of the auspicious dream, he considered that he should go, and so he went to the north to the retreat-house of

The Tibetan sentence requires careful interpretation: *der na ger gyi sa cha mgor yangs pas shar ma rnam kyang su gshi la babs te mi dang myon du 'dod pa tar-byang ngo*. *Na-ger* is clearly used for 'India' in the the *sNyan-dzogs Pundarikā'i phreng-ba* (Collected Biographical Material 39, lines 3-4). "He subdued with his command local divinities, and taking five youths (reading *kye'u* for *kyi'u*), he went to the vast-land of India (*na ger yul 'khor chen por gzhags*). From precious materials he made an Avalokitesvara image (White Lotus Holder) and together with books in their thousands he brought it back on an ox-cart". *Ngor yangs pas* must be read '*khor yangs pas*'. As for the stars touching the horizon (literally the earth), for a Tibetan used to high land all around, it is a strange experience at night to see the moon and stars touching ground-level.

15. There is no reference to Buddhāñi in Texts B & C, but simply 'other paññitas' with similar wording.



VI. One of the sixteen Arhats as portrayed in the village at Phe

"Just as the spittle (= web) of a spider is fixed to its own body,
So one attached to his own little world is caught up in the net of the Evil One.
Whoever wants bliss and salvation, goes to the northern lands of Kashmir,
Obtaining joy in translating into Tibetan the oceans of holy scripture,
Which spread like a flood over India from east to west."

Having made this recitation, she disappeared. When he awoke his whole body was drenched with sweat; his mind was swimming and he felt sad at heart as he went back to his home. He thought to himself: "If I fail to go to Kashmir and India as the **dakini** has foretold, both religion and my own life will suffer, but even if I go, I do not know the lay-out of the land, my parents will be anxious, and I shall heap up misfortune for myself". As he sat thus turning his thoughts, his mother looked at her son's face and saw how dark it was. "Son, are you ill or else why are you so dark-looking?", she asked. He told his parents in detail the story of the **dakini's** previous phophecy. Then his parents and brethren took counsel together and his father said: "If we do not let him go, both religion and his own life will suffer, so we advise that he should go, although our hearts will be in anguish, if he goes; but he should go to Kashmir and not to eastern India, returning here from Kashmir". He arranged as guide-companion Brother⁷ bKra-shis rtsé-mo, [p. 103] and in my eighteenth year in the Pig Year (975 A.D.) we set out from the village. We took some 600 cowry shells⁸ and many small presents, and carrying different things cooked by my mother and food-supplies, we set out in old worn clothes. We were joined as third by a valley-man (*Mon-pa*) from Kulu who knew the way, and my mother accompanied us until midday. We travelled from Khunu to Lahul (*Gar-zha*), begging as we went. Then in the space of a month and three days we reached a village named Karika, and our companion from Kulu was tired of walking and did not want to go on. So the two of us, master and attendant, went on our way. After a journey of three days we came to a great bridge named Mahāsangala, where there was an ill-disposed toll-keeper and a small community of three houses.⁹ We gave them fifty cowry-shells and slept the night there rather anxiously. The next day very early we crossed the bridge and travelled on. We got two-thirds of the way up a pass, when this lay-brother was seized by a terrible illness and came close to dying, while I myself, despairing and physically exhausted fell asleep. Just at that time **three hundred deadly robbers were advancing and coming together**, and the **dakini** of my **previous dream** appeared and said: "Son, get up! As for this sick man, at yesterday's bridge there is a yakṣini who dislikes men of religion and she **intends harm**. I have turned her away and the disease is quickly over. Now robbers are coming here. Go by a side path and pray fervently to the Blessed Ones!" He arose at once and taking the sick man by the hand and reciting prayers they advanced about forty paces and then looked back. Although the robbers holding weapons had reached the place they had left, by the grace of the Blessed Ones and that **dakini** those two, master and attendant, remained unseen and went straight on their way. So the sick man was cured and they were freed from the terror of the robbers. Thus with minds at rest and breathing sighs of relief they crossed that high pass in happy and joyful spirits and went on their way.

For some three days they had no food, and as they came down from the forest where they had been, they met an elderly woman and her daughter who were each carrying a load of rice. Stretching out their bowls they made begging gestures, and the women gave them four or five handfuls of rice. They cooked the rice and ate it and were satisfied. Discussing a return gift, (the Translator) reflected on the matter and the elderly lady and

7. Text B reads *phu-ho* instead of *a-po*. The term 'brother' here refers to a fellow religious layman. From this point where *rang-ra'*, 'our' or 'my', is used, the account seems to go into the 1st person. The use of honorific forms which still appear, and which should not be used in the first person, would be the editor's responsibility.

8. Used as a form of currency.

9. *mi-barun-pa*, 'ill-disposed', is missing in Texts B & C. The expression *grong-gsum-pa*, seemingly describing the toll-keeper, may seem odd. It occurs also in C, but in B appears as: *lam srang ba grong srached gsum*, meaning the keeper and his two companions, three in all. We have kept to Text A, understanding the matter thus: the toll-collector is the chief man of this small community of three houses; for *grong-bdun-pa* 'seven-house village', see the opening sentence of Ch. 5, p. 88 below. Fifty cowries is a great deal to have given them. Text B makes it five hundred.

their lineages being of the gShen line of gYu-sgra, were Ri-pa-shi-er-ba, Kyu-wang-pa and Ro-pas-pas. Three sons including the Junior Translator **Legs-pa'i shes-rab** were born to the **Magistrate gYu-thog-sgra**, and their lineages being of the younger gYu-sgra, were Zar-vang-pa, Shon-khar-pa, Ma-yang-pa and Tsa-hang-gis.

3. As for the place where he was born, it was at Rad-nis⁵ of Kyu-wang, the place established by his ancestor gYu-sgra sTong-btsan. His father's name was the Very Reverend the Young Lord and his mother was named Kun-bzang Shes-rab bstan-ma of the Cog-ro family. She had four children, the eldest being Shes-rab dbang-phyug, the middle boy being Rin-chen dbang-phyug, the youngest boy Yon-tan dbang-phyug, and a daughter named Kun-sring Shes-rab mtsho-mo. The middle boy Rin-chen dbang-phyug was the Lama Translator. The eldest Shes-rab dbang-phyug assumed the life of a householder. The youngest Yon-tan dbang-phyug took religious vows and stayed as a young man in religious practices. The girl became a nun, learned tantric doctrines and gained perfection. She was known as the **Yogini Light of the Doctrine**.

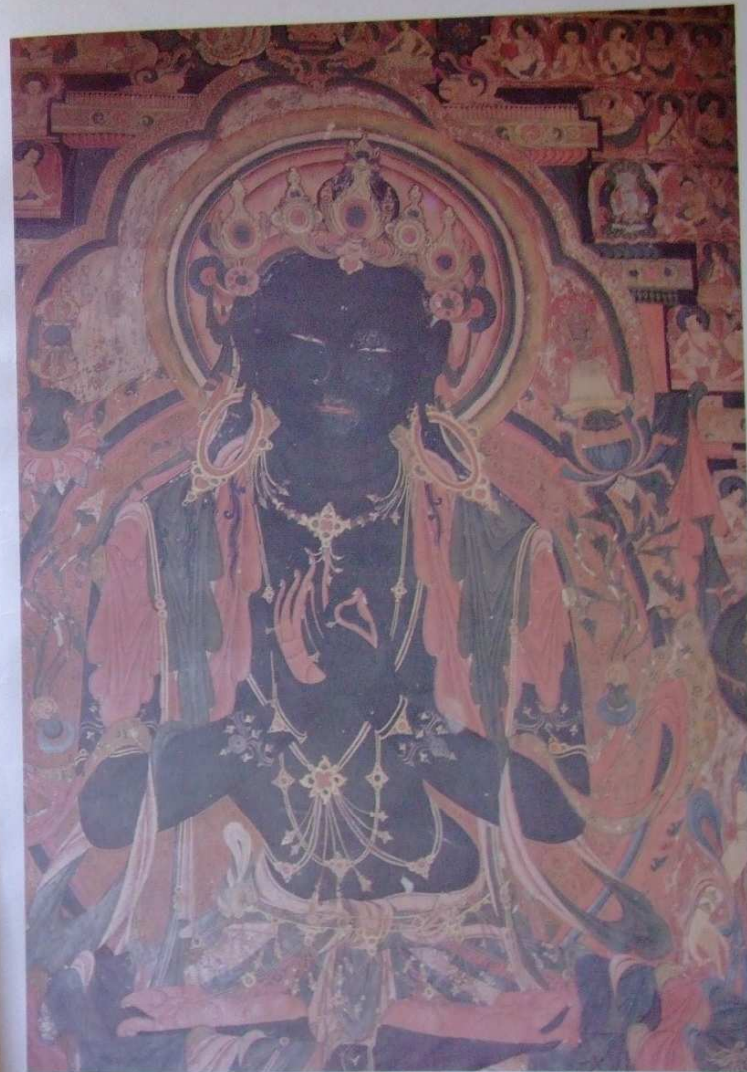
When the Bodhisattva Translator entered his mother's womb, a sun was shining all the time over her right shoulder and a moon over her left shoulder, while above her head was a golden garuḍa with turquoise-coloured beak and claws, which made various pleasing cries [p.102] and flew and fluttered this way and that. He remained there till the tenth day of the ninth month; her body was blissful and the signs were auspicious without there being any anguish or sickness. Then when the time came for her to **conceive**, she dreamed that the **golden bird sank into the top of her head**, and coming out from her **vagina**, made a threefold circumambulation and then went up to heaven, while a shower of flowers descended. Furthermore the people who were around dreamed all kinds of harmless things. On the 10th day of the last month of summer in the Horse Year⁶ when his mother was weeding in the oblong field at Kyu-wang, she felt slightly unwell and she went to the top of the field, where a peacock actually descended on her right shoulder, a cuckoo on her left, and a parrot on the top of her head.

The father said: "Where do such birds come from?", and as he said this, they disappeared into the mother. Then the boy was born without her feeling any suffering; he was bluish in colour with a bird's face and bird's eyes and in the palm of his right hand there was the pattern of a wheel. When he was two years old he used to recite A Ā Ī Ī (the opening letters of the Sanskrit alphabet), writing them on the ground, and then he would join his palms together and sit there making a beseeching gesture. His father said: "There is a karmic connection in this", and dressing him in yellow robes, he had him made a lay disciple. Such are the succession of events concerning the birth of the Bodhisattva.

4. At the age of **thirteen** he took religious vows before his **Teacher Legs-pa bzang-po** and he was named Rin-chen bzang-po. From this teacher he learned the **Three Hundred Verses** (viz. the *Trisatakārikā* by Śākyaprabhā) together with the commentary (viz. the *Prabhāvatī* by the same author) and absorbed its meaning in a moment.

As for the way in which he learned the art of translating and so on, he had just reached the age of seventeen, and he was receiving some small hospitality from the wife of a paṇḍita who had come from Uddiyāna. In the place where the food had been served a good-looking Indian book had been left, and looking at its exterior form, the translator thought to himself: "Inside this Indian book there reposes such extraordinary learning, but I do not know the Indian language". When he was lying asleep in the shade of a tree below the village, there appeared to him in a dream a woman of reddish complexion adorned with a jewelled diadem, bracelets, silk streamers and so on, holding in her right hand a small drum and in her left a whole bunch of flowers. Approaching him she said:

5. Spelt Rad-ni in Text A, we have accepted Rad-nis as in B & C and in a *bsTan-gyur* colophon of the text *Muktasāgara* as translated by Rin-chen bzang-po. See Tucci, *op.cit.*, p. 56. He suggests here too that this birth-place of our Translator may be identified as a village in a gorge NE of Shipki in Bashahr. It may be so. Kyu-wang also occurs spelt as sKyu-wang.
6. This is 958 A.D. Working backwards in time according to the Sixty Year Cycle which was not introduced until 1027, this would be an Earth Horse Year.



V. Mural of Vajrapāṇi in the sTon-pa ūa-khang at Phugtal monastery

strange indeed if an immediate disciple had made such a mistake. It is not unlikely that in its present form even A, the earliest version, is a reworked version of whatever remained of an earlier account by dPal-ye-shes, which had been neglected and was then later reconstituted in its present less adequate form. The later part of the story which treats of Rin-chen bzang-po's relations with the great Atiśa does Rin-chen bzang-po himself little credit, and is scarcely the work of a devoted disciple. We have, however, already drawn attention in vol I of our work (p. 71) to the neglect which Rin-chen bzang-po and his great works suffered within two centuries or so of his life-time. This neglect is likewise reflected in the paucity of materials concerning the history of all the religious sites traditionally accountable to his times.

Rin-chen bzang-po was not only renowned as a translator and as a great founder of monasteries and temples, but also as one who composed religious chants for use in Tibetan ceremonial. Although there is no mention of this in the actual biography, this tradition was certainly known in Sa-skyapa circles, as is proved by the story extracted from the Sa-skyapa history of the Guardian Divinity *Gur-mgon*, which we have translated as a short appendix to our translation of the bibliography itself. This same story also occurs in the early 17th century Commentary of Kun-dga' bSod-nams to the Sa-skyapa Pandita's 'Treatise on Music' (*Rol-mo'i bS Tun-bcos*), as edited by Ricardo Canzio and soon to be published.

The Tibetan text of the biography which is printed here is an edited edition based on the MSS available to us and subsequently type-set in Nepal. References in the textual notes are to the folios as numbered throughout the *Collected Biographical Material about Lo-chen Rin-chen bzang-po*, of which the full reference has been given above. The notes to the Translation which are meant to be of help to any reader who does not necessarily read Tibetan, occasionally refer those who do read Tibetan to the textual notes. Although no specific reference is given to these, they can always be found by anyone who is reading the Tibetan text together with the English, since they relate directly (page and line being given) to the Tibetan text.

The principle followed in re-editing these MSS has been to produce a generally orthographically correct Tibetan text while reserving the dialectical peculiarities of what is clearly a piece of western Tibetan writing. Thus the use of words such as *stel-ba* for 'to reach' and *skyod-pa* as a polite term for 'to go' or 'to come' should not surprise the Tibetan reader. We refer in the textual notes to the continual confusion of instrumental (-s) and connecting or genitive (-7) particles and these have been rectified. Very often the instrumental particle is missing altogether where one would require it in correct orthography, but it has been added only when the sense might suffer by its absence.

Having completed the present work of editing and translating I have come upon another short biography of Rin-chen bzang-po, composed in 1976 by the dKa'-chen Blo-bzang bzod-pa of Tiktse Monastery (Ladakh), and included in a small volume entitled *Historical Materials concerning the bKra-sis-lhun-po and Rin-chen bzang-po traditions from the Monastery of Kyi in Lahoul-Spiti (Himalchal Pradesh)*, published by Lama rDo-rje tshé-brtan, Delhi, March 1978. It is interesting for its description of Nyar-ma Monastery, as it once was, suggesting the existence of some ancient records still kept at Tiktse. However its attribution of the founding of Alchi to Rin-chen bzang-po is presumably based upon present-day local popular belief. The author of this recent work shows no knowledge of the ancient Alchi inscriptions which clearly name as the founders of the two oldest Alchi temples the monks sKal-ldan shes-rab and Tshul-khrims-'od. See Inscriptions no. 1 (p. 123ff.) and no. 6 (p. 135f.).

THE SAVING CORD OF THE CRYSTAL ROSARY [Tibetan Text pp. 101-111 below]

I bow before this excellent man, the Great Translator!¹

I have written briefly this biography in order to recall the gracious favour of this holy lama as well as for arousing the first sprouts of faith and for making known what he taught. In writing this short biography of this bodhisattva I have set down the matter in eleven chapters:²

1. how prophesy was made concerning this great man,
2. what was his lineage,
3. where he was born,
4. where he took religious vows,
5. where he learned the skill of translating and so on,
6. from which lamas and sages he sought instruction,
7. how he translated the scriptures,
8. how he founded communities and temples,
9. how he honoured twenty-one smaller sites,
10. where he accomplished exceptional attainments,
11. whence he departed to higher spheres.

1. The prophesy of the Sage (Śākyamuni) is announced in many sūtras and tantras thus: 'In seven times five hundred years from my nirvāṇa there will appear a monk with a bird-like face and he will spread my teachings'.

2. The ancestral home of this lama was Hrugs-wer of Kha-tse in Gu-ge. His clan was the gShen line of gYu-sgra in Kha-tse.³ His lineage is among the six holy successions, and since it is the line of the holy Nyi-ma Hrugs, it is named Hrugs-wer. It is also said that his maternal uncle was known as Klu-zor because of association with a **water-spirit (Klu)**. There were thirteen ancestral branches and of these his ancestor gYu-sgra sTong-btsan had two sons, of whom the elder one lived as a householder although he had taken religious vows. He was known as the Very Reverend the Young Lord (*dBang-phyug*). The younger one was known as the **Great Magistrate gYu-thog-sgra**.⁴ Four children including the Great Translator were born to the Very Reverend the Young Lord, and

1. The opening verses of praise are missing in Text A, and our first available folio begins with the words: 'in the manner of the sun, the moon and a lamp', presumably referring to the manner in which the Great Translator enlightened the world. Text C, the closest throughout to A, reads from the beginning: 'Salutation to Ratnagurubhadra (a Sanskrit translation of Lama Good Gem -) the Lama Translator Rin-chen bzang-po, the good gem who makes clear the Sage's (= Śākyamuni's) Doctrine. Respectful salutation to that Lama!'

2. Text B omits chapter headings, and C reduces them to ten by omitting the first one. The expression 'gShen line' suggests pre-Buddhist priestly associations, as the gShen were probably sacrificial priests. See the Introduction to my *Nine Ways of Bon*, p. 15 ff. Also the term *wer* in Hrugs-wer is certainly a Bon-po term, for there is a special class of their divinities known as *wer-ma*. It can have been nothing unusual for such priestly families to become converted to Buddhism during the ninth and tenth centuries. Who the ancestor gYu-sgra sTong-btsan is, one does not know, except that he was Rin-chen bzang-po's grand-father, so the line does not go back very far.

3. We have translated *gung-blon* 'inner minister' as magistrate, and the title could easily refer to a local chief man. The term *blon-po* is still used of such hereditary leaders in quite small places in Ladakh, e.g. in Alchi. Likewise the title of the elder brother, which appears pompous in English, need not be taken in an exaggerated sense in Tibetan. The listing of the 'lineages' (*mī-bgyad*) of these two brothers, three for the elder and four for the younger, can only refer to places in which the two families settled. Professor Tucci identifies some of them in the Indian territories bordering on old western Tibet (Gu-ge in particular). The whole passage from 'There were thirteen ancestral branches (*pho-ngo*)' to the end of Chapter 2 is missing in B & C. But see note 27.



74. This thangka in the British Museum collection, to which Mr Wladimir Zwalf has kindly drawn our attention, must be identified as one of the set of the 18 Arhats (properly 16, to which he and Hwa-shang are added), namely as Dharmataḷa (alias Dharmatrāta, Tibetan Chos-'phel or Chos-skyong). Concerning him, see Tucci, *Tibetan Painted Scrolls* (Rome 1949), pp. 560-61, and *Dagyab*, *Tibetan Religious Art* (Wiesbaden 1977), pp. 112-3. There may be some connection between this 'travelling scholar' accompanied by a tiger, and the incident in the biography of Rin-chen bzang-po, where he too meets a tiger on his Indian travels. A small image of Śākyamuni (whose incarnation Rin-chen bzang-po is said to be) appears just before him. It is probably Atiṣa in the top left hand corner, and certainly the Translator Marpa just to the left and Nga-ri Tulku (mNga'-ris sprul-sku) to the right. The two kings of the quarters are those of the north and the west.
(British Museum painting ref. 1956.12.8.02, reproduced with acknowledgement to the Trustees)

PART III

BIOGRAPHY OF RIN-CHEN BZANG-PO

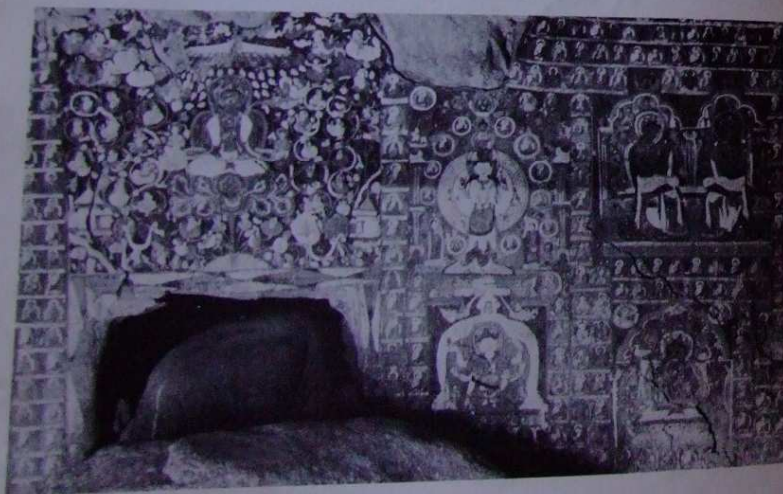
INTRODUCTION

Work on this short biography has been greatly helped by the appearance in Delhi in 1977 of a Tibetan volume entitled *Collected Biographical Material about Lo-chen Rin-chen bzang-po and his subsequent re-embodiments*, a reproduction of a collection of manuscripts from the library of dKyil Monastery in Spiti, as published by Rdo-rje-tshe-brtan at the Laxmi Printing Works, Lal Kuan, Delhi. We also have a microfilm of a medium-length version of the biography which we were able to microfilm at Likir Monastery in Ladakh in the winter of 1974. This corresponds to the third work included in the *Collected Biographical Material*, namely the biography purporting to be written by dPal-ye-shes of Khyi-thang in Gu-ge, who was one of Rin-chen bzang-po's immediate disciples. This has a claim to be the earliest available account and it is this version which is given below in our translation. A later amended version of this same biography occurs as item no: 6 in the *Collected Biographical Material*, but one rapidly gains the impression that whoever was responsible for this re-editing of dPal-ye-shes' account, has simply omitted obscure words which he did not understand and has also reworded phrases which he could not comprehend. Examples are given in our notes to the translation. It appears too that he was working from a variant text where the materials had been ordered differently and even sometimes omitted altogether. Yet another version, no: 5 in the *Collected Biographical Material*, is reprinted as an extract from a religious history preserved at the Monastery of E-vam Chos-Idan, and we note that the ordering of the subject-matter here corresponds closely with the re-edited version, upon which it was presumably based. We refer to these three versions in our notes as A (dPal-ye-shes' account = no: 3 of the *Collected Biographical Material*), B (as extracted from a religious history at E-vam Chos-Idan = no: 5) and C (the re-edited version of A = no: 6). Our microfilm version from Likir proves to be a very carefully made copy of A, reproducing the mistakes of A and thus providing us with only very occasional variations, which are of little or no help for an understanding of difficult passages. We refer very occasionally in the textual notes to this work as A².

All these versions are 'medium length' biographies. Our text refers to the existence of 'short' and 'long' versions also, but these we have not seen. The colophon of A informs us that 'the teachings which Rin-chen bzang-po asked from scholars and paḍḍitas, the treasures of religion, the treasures of wealth, the treasures of wood, these and other detailed treasures are made clear in the long biography'. We would therefore expect it to consist largely of lists of the kind which already occur to some extent in our 'medium-length' version, and it may not add much to the little which appears to be known about the actual life of the Great Translator. Disappointingly little is told of his travels in Kashmir and the rest of India, although the start of the first journey is described circumstantially enough, as though being told in the Translator's own words (see note 7 to the translation). One is surprised that an immediate disciple should know so little about his Teacher's life, especially when it comes to the odd tradition of Rin-chen bzang-po having founded three monasteries, all remote from one another, in the course of a single day, events which the writer appears to regard as miraculous. In note 21 we have suggested a likely solution of this problem, namely that the word *gSum* in the text has been taken in its meaning of 'three' instead of its original reference to *gSum-mda* (Sumda) Monastery in Zangskar. It would be

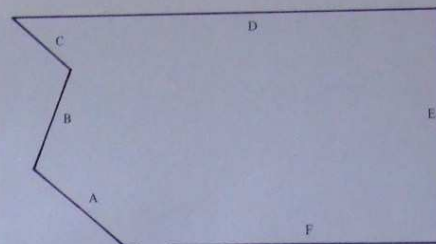


72. Mural of Śākyamuni Buddha in Cave No 2 at Saspol.



73. Part of Wall B (centre right) in Cave No 3 at Saspol

divinities. As there are six walls in this cave it would be helpful to describe them by means of a plan.



On the wall A there are miniatures of a thousand Buddhas with ten murals representing the Eight Bodhisattvas, one of standing Vajrapāṇi and one of a yogin.

- 73 In the centre of the wall B is depicted the Sukhāvati paradise (*bDe-ba-can*), the abode of Amitābha. To the left of Amitābha's paradise are two murals. The one above represents Avalokiteśvara and Mañjuśrī seated on lions with a miniature of Amitābha above them. The mural below them represents two forms of Avalokiteśvara.

To the right of Amitābha's paradise are four murals. They represent Eleven-Headed Avalokiteśvara, Uṣṇisavijayā, two Bodhisattvas, and a fierce form of Vajrapāṇi.

On the wall C are two murals. One is of seated Vajrapāṇi in his tranquil appearance and one of standing Vajrapāṇi in his fierce appearance.

In the centre of the wall D is a beautiful mural of Śākyamuni. On either side of Śākyamuni are six murals in rows of three. In the centre of the top row to the left is a mural of Atiśa. Below him is a mural of Lama *sTon-pa bsam-gtan bsod-nams* flanked by two monks, *Ye-shes grags-pa* and *Chos-kyi-skyabs*. Two murals to the right represent tantric divinities, and two to the left show forms of the goddess Vajravārahī (*rDo-rje phag-mo*). To the right of the central murals are six tantric divinities. In the top row from left to right are Samvara, Guhyasamāja, and Hevajra. In the centre of the lower row is Vajrabhairava. Two other murals are partly defaced and difficult to identify.

- 70 On the wall E are three maṇḍalas of Vairocana's cycle, one mural of Atiśa, and one of standing Maitreya.

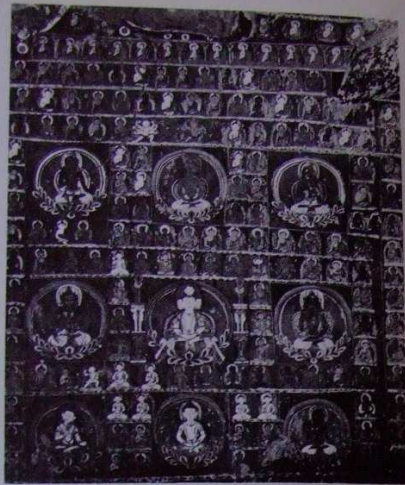
The top row of four murals on wall F represents from left to right: Mañjuśrī, Avalokiteśvara, a fierce form of Vajrapāṇi and Mahākāla. Below them are three murals, one of Mahāsuvarṇa Vaiśravaṇa (*rNam-sras gser-chen*) and two of Mahākāla. Next to the entrance is yet another mural of Mahākāla.

Cave Nos. 4 & 5

These two caves are practically destroyed. As the whole hillside, made of moraine formation, is gradually sliding down, all the caves will eventually disappear. These two caves are completely open and the murals which still survive are in very bad condition. On the back wall of Cave No. 4 is a mural of a preaching Buddha and two maṇḍalas. On the left wall are four maṇḍalas. The rest of this cave has slid down the hillside. Cave No. 5 is totally destroyed. One can hardly recognize traces of murals on the back wall which still stands.



69. Mural of Eleven-Headed Avalokiteśvara in Cave No 1 at Saspol.



70. Maṇḍala of Four-Headed Vairocana in Cave No 3 at Saspol.



71. View of old Saspol fort, with the caves to the left.

Hemis Shugpa

Hemis Shugpa, named after juniper trees which grow there, is situated in a narrow valley lying along the ancient track which leads from Basgo to sTing-mo-sgang. It can easily be reached from the main Leh-Srinagar road. Taking a track towards the north along a narrow gorge which leaves the main road at the fifteenth kilometres below Saspol, one can reach the village in two and half hours. There are four temples in the village taken care of by four *dGe-lugs-pa* monks from Likir and one *Brug-pa* monk from Hemis. In the temple of Avalokiteśvara there is a small room some two metres square which local tradition attributes to Rin-chen bzang-po. Inside the room are murals of Mahākāla and Eleven-Headed Avalokiteśvara. They are well executed and appear to be old. The temples contain murals and images of recent times and represent the usual sets of divinities, Śākyamuni, Avalokiteśvara, Maitreya, Tsong-kha-pa, Padmasabhava and protective divinities.

To reach the caves one first takes the main track that leads to sTing-mo-sgang. On reaching the second chöten there is a small track which forks to the right. It leads to the caves along mountain ridges. The whole distance from the village to the cave takes about forty-five minutes. The caves occupy a magnificent position, from which one has a splendid view of the Indus Valley. Some thirty feet lower down one has yet another fine view of sTing-mo-sgang. The cave is walled from the outside; and inside it is divided into two levels and small sections which serve for cooking and sleeping. The upper part of the cave is turned into a place of worship. Inside there are two stucco images, one of Nāropa some eighty centimetres high, and a small one of Padmasambhava. On the wall are hung about ten *thang-kas* of different age and quality. Below the cave are two chöten and a juniper tree which is believed to be inhabited by a serpent-deity (*klu*).

Saspol

This group of caves, visible from Saspol, is situated above the village. Higher up on the very top of the hill are ruins of an old fort with some walls still standing, below which there is a temple with the central image of Avalokiteśvara. The walls of this temple have murals of Śākyamuni, several Arhats, Padmasambhava and protective divinities. The caves are in a hill-side near the temple. I shall describe them one by one beginning with the nearest to the temple.

Cave No. 1

This cave is approximately three metres square. In the centre of the back wall is a grotesque looking mural of Śākyamuni. On closer examination it is quite evident that it has been repainted. An unskilled artist has attempted to repaint the original mural of which some traces are still left. On either side of Śākyamuni there are rows of miniatures representing divinities, lamas and lay people. On the right wall are miniatures of a thousand Buddhas with three larger murals of Śākyamuni, Mañjuśrī and Vijayā. In the centre of the left wall is a maṇḍala of Vairocana. To the left of the maṇḍala is a mural of a standing Avalokiteśvara, and to the right murals of Akshobhya, Avalokiteśvara and Vajradhara. On the entrance wall are miniatures of a thousand Buddhas and two larger murals, one of Padmasambhava and one of Maitreya.

Cave No. 2

There are no paintings on the entrance wall which was recently built to protect the cave from further decay. On the left wall are two murals, one of Śākyamuni and one of Eleven-Headed Avalokiteśvara. The right wall is not painted except for a vertical row of five murals next to the back wall. These represent the Five Buddhas. In the centre of the back wall is an elegant mural of Śākyamuni flanked by two Bodhisattvas. To Śākyamuni's right is a mural of a preaching Buddha, and to his left one of Tsong-kha-pa.

Cave No. 3

This is the largest and the most interesting of all the caves at Saspol. It is approximately sixteen square metres in size. The murals are in good condition and represent a variety of

Phokar Dzong (*Pho-dkar rdzong*)

63 Phokar Dzong can be reached from the village of Shargola. It is situated in a wide part of the valley and is surrounded by mountain peaks. There are no houses here apart from two temples, both built recently. The caves are not far from the temples in the mountain-side. The largest complex of several caves connected by small passages contains two chöten, a small stone image of a preaching Buddha and a foot-print of Padmasambhava impressed on the ceiling in one of the caves.

Wakha

64 This small cave-temple is picturesquely situated on a crag above the village. It is reached by a steep flight of steps. Outside the temple is a small courtyard of about six metres square. Inside the temple are the block-prints of the Tibetan Canon and a wooden cupboard with images. Here the central image is that of Avalokiteśvara, one and a half metres high. To his left is an image of Śākyamuni, and to the right yet another image of Avalokiteśvara. Then there are two images of Tsong-kha-pa. This cave-temple is said to have been founded by someone referred to as *A-khu Drung-pa* ('Uncle Cleric').

Lamayuru

This monastery has been already described in Vol. I. As for the cave, it is inside the 65 'Du-khang to the right of the entrance. It is very small and contains images of Tilopa, Nāropa and Mi-la ras-pa. According to a legend, Nāropa meditated in this cave during his life. The whole valley below was a great lake, which Nāropa is said to have dried before founding the monastery.

Go-tshang-pa Cave at Hemis

The *rGod-tshang sgrub-sde* (Hermitage of Go-tshang-pa) comprises one cave, a small temple nearby and some living quarters for monks from the monastery of Hemis. It is situated at the top of a gorge behind the monastery at a distance of forty minutes walk.

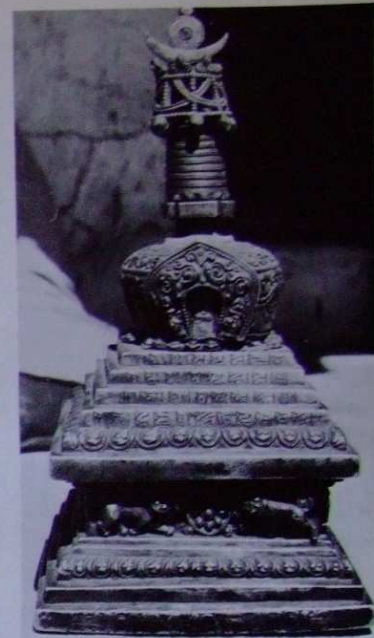
Inside the cave are five images arranged in one row in a wooden cupboard, named by the monk-in-charge as (left to right): *rGod-tshang mgon-po rdo-rje*, *Yad-mgon-pa*, *sNe-rid-pa*, *sPyil-kar* and *U-rgyan-pa*. To the right is a beautiful mural depicting the hunting story from the life of Mi-la ras-pa. The entrance wall has murals of Mahākāla and Remati, a female deity. The 66-67 temple near the cave contains several beautiful *thang-kas* and images.

Nye-mo

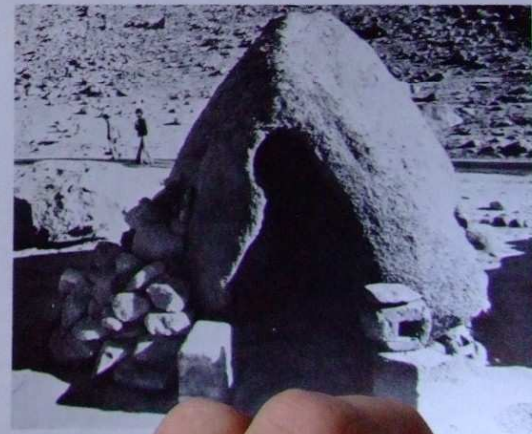
On the right side of the main road from Leh to Srinagar, thirteen kilometres before 68 reaching Nye-mo, there is a boulder with a cavity resembling the shape of a human body. According to a local legend, Padmasambhava while travelling through Ladakh was pursued at one time by a demon. He clung to the boulder and it gave way to his body thus providing protection. Among Tibetan speakers Padmasambhava is known as Guru Rin-po-che (Precious Master). It is interesting to note here that ever since a number of Sikh lorry drivers began to come to Ladakh the whole site has taken on a totally different interpretation. Hearing the Ladakhi people speaking of Guru (Rin-po-che), the Sikhs came to believe that the site was associated with Guru Nanak, the founder of the Sikh religion. Thus they have now built a small temple over the boulder and whenever they pass by, they stop to pray.



66. Image of Viṣṇu and Lakṣmī (clearly of direct Indian provenance) in a temple near rGod-tshang-pa's cave at Hemis.



67. A bronze chöten in the same temple near Hemis monastery.



68. Padmasambhava's

Phokar Dzong (*Pho-dkar rdzong*)

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Go-tshang-pa Cave at Hemis

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Nye-mo

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68. Padmasambhava's cave near Nye-mo.

CAVE TEMPLES

The majority of Buddhist caves in Ladakh and Zangskar are associated with certain Buddhist yogins who are believed by popular tradition to have meditated in them at certain times. The tradition of meditating in remote or secluded places belongs to the earliest period of Buddhist practice and later when monastic life became the norm such solitary meditation continued to be a special discipline, either self-imposed or imposed by one's religious master.¹ In Tibet the practice was taken up and developed especially by the followers of the 'Old Order' (*rNying-ma-pa*) and by the Ka-gyü-pa (*bKa'-bgyud-pa*) Order, whose founders had direct connections with the later Mahāsiddhas or Great Tantric Masters of Buddhist India.

The most famous of these Mahāsiddhas in Tibetan tradition is the Great Yogin Magician Padmasambhava who is said to have come to Tibet in the latter part of the 8th century and having quelled the demons who obstructed the spread of the new religion, proceeded to the building of temples and generally establishing Buddhism in Tibet.² Such is his fame that there is scarcely a single route leading from India to Tibet, whether direct as in Western Tibet, or through Nepal, which is not marked by the presence of caves in which he is supposed to have meditated, or at least by his footprints or marks left by other parts of his body. Padmasambhava is the mighty 'Second Buddha', that is to say, second to Śākyamuni, the great Indian Buddha, so far as his followers in Tibet are concerned, primarily the *rNying-ma-pa*.

The most famous of meditating yogins in Tibet is *Mi-la ras-pa* (1040-1123) who despite the sufferings inflicted deliberately upon him by his master during his training, proved to be Marpa's most accomplished pupil and the one through whom the tradition of the 'Transmitted Word' (*bKa'-bgyud-pa*) was passed. Marpa himself certainly practised meditation in solitary style while undergoing training in eastern India under his master Nāropa, but on returning to Tibet he established himself as a regular house-holder, and while his religious practices continued unabated, the local tradition of his having meditated at Tonde is rather incongruous.³ We have referred above to the incongruities of Nāropa operating in Kashmir and Ladakh (see p. 35). A Ka-gyü-pa lama who certainly travelled extensively in western Tibet is rGod-tshang-pa of Lho-brag (1189-1258)⁴ and he is supposed to have meditated in a cave near Hemis known as the rGod-tshang Hermitage (*rGod-tshang sgrub-sde*). He is famous in Tibet for his extraordinary powers of meditation and practice of austerities.

Spituk (*dPe-thub*)

There are two caves sheltered by white-walled buildings on the left bank of the Indus across from the monastery of Spituk. They are locally known as *Brag-khung Kha-ba-chen* (Snowy Hole in the Crags). The walls of one cave are completely covered with soot. The only recognisable part of the murals is a corner of a maṇḍala on the back wall. The second cave is also covered with soot. But it is easier to recognize the murals. Here one can see three maṇḍalas. The details are not clear apart from some decorative motifs and several miniatures of divinities belonging to the maṇḍalas.

1. Concerning Buddhist Cave-Monasteries in India see S. Dutt, *Buddhist Monks and Monasteries of India*, London 1962, pp. 138-55, and especially Debala Mitra, *Buddhist Monuments*, Calcutta 1971, pp. 149-188.
2. See Snellgrove and Richardson, *A Cultural History of Tibet*, pp. 95-9. A recent article by F.A. Bischoff, 'Padmasambhava, est-il un personnage historique?' in *Proceedings of the Csoma de Kőrös Memorial Symposium*, Budapest 1978, pp. 27-33, urges Padmasambhava's historicity. One of the hagiographies of Padmasambhava (*Padma-thang-yig*) was translated into French almost fifty years ago by Gustave-Charles Toussaint with the title of *Le Diet de Padma* (Bibliothèque de l'Institut des hautes études chinoises, vol. III, Paris 1933). An English translation of the French has appeared recently, apparently without reference to the original Tibetan.
3. Concerning Marpa and Nāropa see Snellgrove and Richardson, *op. cit.*, pp. 118-9 and 134-5. Excerpts from Marpa's biography are available in French translation, for which see Jacques Bacot, *La vie de Marpa le Traducteur*, Paris 1937. For Nāropa's biography see H.V. Guenther, *The Life and Teachings of Nāropa*, London 1963.
4. See Giuseppe Tucci, *Travels of Tibetan Pilgrims in the Swat Valley*, Calcutta 1940, pp. 15-26.



64. General view of Wakha. The cave temple can be seen in the cliff-face just above the village.



65. Images of Tillopa and Nāropa in Nāropa's cave at Lamayuru.

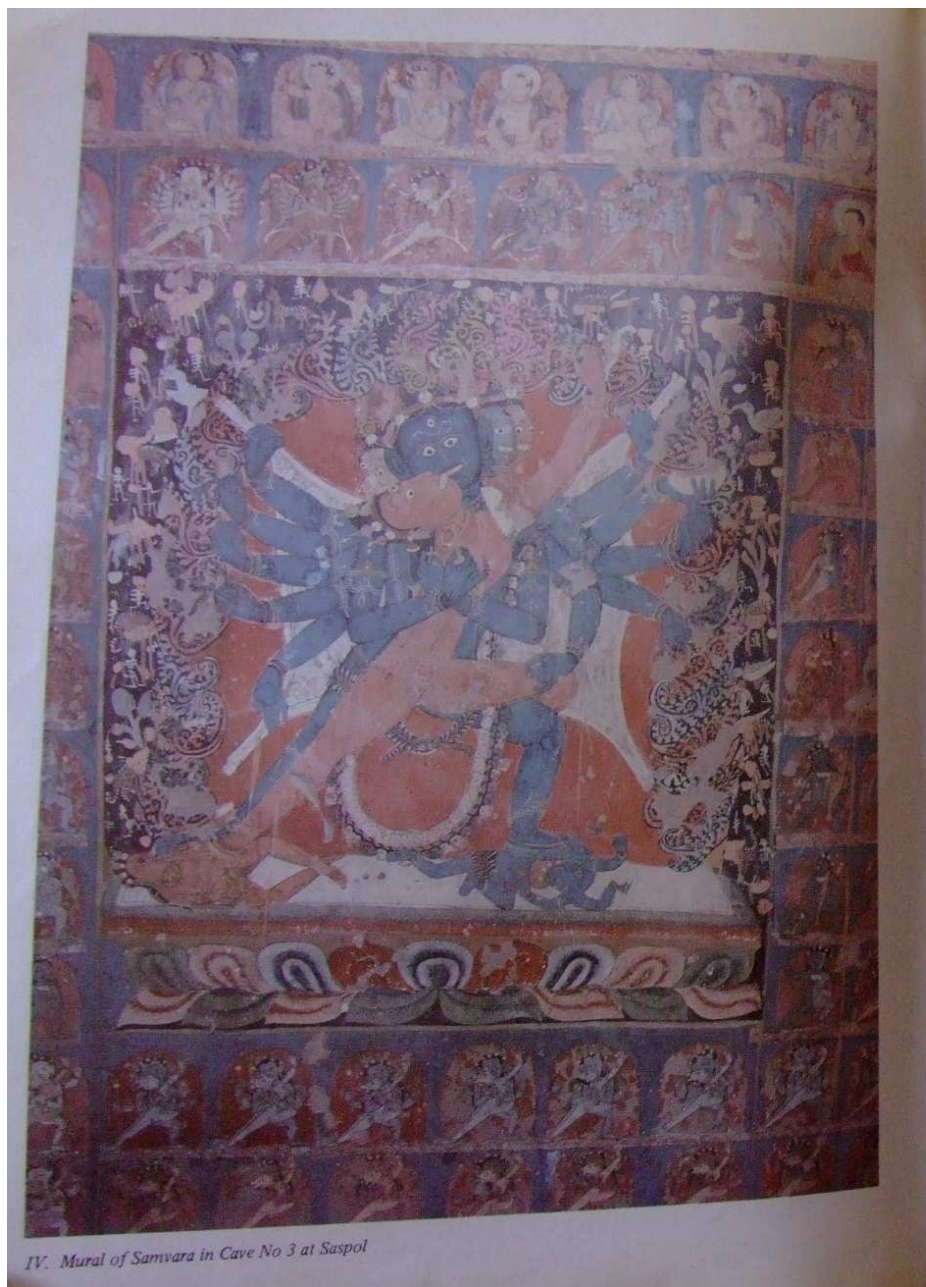
murals of Śākyamuni, Avalokiteśvara, Mañjuśrī and Padmasambhava. On the southern side of Padum there is a large boulder with an old rock-carving of the Five Buddhas.

Village temples of interest

Apart from the religious buildings described in this book there are a number of village temples which deserve to be visited. Some of them preserve old images in wood and stucco, and occasionally beautiful murals. The villages which are in the valley where it widens west of Karsha will require a special study. In almost every temple of these villages one can find something old, be it an interesting image in stucco or a part of relatively old mural. In some of these temples one finds inscriptions buried behind book-racks or overhung with *thang-kas*.

PART II

CAVE TEMPLES OF LADAKH



IV. Mural of Samvara in Cave No 3 at Saspol



62. View of Padum from above. Compare Ill. 5.



63. Phokar Dzong. The caves containing relics are in the mountain side to the left of the photograph; the temple in the foreground is new.



60. A goddess holding two fishes, representing one of the eight auspicious signs as painted around the chitras at Talaru.



61. View of Talaru monastery.



62. View from Tager La on the way to Sarda



63. Monks of Karbu performing their liturgy in the Assembly Hall

	colour	faces	hands
East: Yamāntaka	blue	six	six right: hook, sword, arrow left: noose, bell, bow
South: Prajñāntaka	yellow	four	eight right: noose, vajra, sword, arrow left: hook, vajra-bell, spear, bow
West: Padmāntaka	red	four	eight two hands: vajra-fetters right: vajra, sword, arrow left: bell, noose, bow
North: Vighnāntaka	blue	four	eight two hands: vajra-bell right: sword, arrow, hook left: noose, bow, bell
North-east: Trailokyavijaya	blue	four	eight two hands: vajra & bell at the heart right: sword, hook, arrow left: hatchet, noose, bow
South-east: Vajrajvālinārka	black	four	eight right: vajra, sword, arrow, wheel left: bell, noose, bow, <i>khaṭvāṅga</i>
South-west: Herukavajra	blue	four	eight two hands: hide right: five tipped vajra, arrow, skull left: lotus bud, bow, <i>khaṭvāṅga</i> with bell & banner
North-west: Paramāśva	green	four	eight right: raised (<i>uttīṣṭha</i>), three fingers stretched out like banners (<i>tripatāka</i>), sword, arrow left: lotus spear, club, bow
Above: Uṣṇīṣacakraṭvartin	yellow	four	eight right: wheel, hook, sword, arrow left: bell, noose, rosary, bow
Below: Sumbharāja	black	four	eight right: vajra, hook, sword, arrow left: bell, noose, spear, bow

The eight goddesses are placed in the corners, two in each corner, one to the right and one to the left:

Right	Left
Puṣpā, Dhūpā, Dīpā, Gandhā	Vajrarūpā, Vajraśabda, Vajresyā, Vajrasparśā

The next group of eight divinities is distributed to the cardinal and intermediate quarters.

	colour	vehicle	symbols
East: Indra	yellow	elephant (<i>atrāvata</i>)	vajra, 'jar' (<i>stana</i>)
South: Yama	black	buffalo	club, spear
West: Varuṇa	white	<i>makara</i>	snake-noose, conch shell
North: Kubera	yellow	man	hook, mace
North-east: Iśāna	white	bull	trident, skull
South-east: Agni	red	goat	ladle, vessel
South-west: Nairṛti	blue	corpse	sword, shield
North-west: Vāyu	blue	deer	wind-bag (<i>vātaputa</i>)

Beyond the above group of eight there is a large number of divinities. This group includes the main Hindu gods and their *śaktis*, the Planets and the Lunar Mansions (*nakṣatra*), the *Nāgas*, *Asuras*, and *Yakshas*. (cf. Vol I, p.38).

The remaining parts of the right and left walls, and the entrance wall have been repainted. Above the entrance door is a mural of Śākyamuni flanked by his two disciples. To the right of the door is a small maṇḍala and to the left a mural of Padmasambhava. On the right wall one can see murals of one maṇḍala and two lamas. The ceiling, partly damaged, has floral designs which date back to the time when this temple was built. 59

On either side of the Assembly-Hall is a small temple, some two and a half metres square. One contains an image of Avalokiteśvara, and the other of Maitreya. Both images are made in stucco and are some four metres high. On the floors of these two temples are stored several wooden and stucco images. Most of them are old and very elegant. The monk in charge informed me that he collected them from an old temple outside the complex when its roof fell in several years ago. 20

Above the temples there is an old chöten with badly damaged murals, and further above are ruins of a fort.

Tsilatse (*rTsi-lhag-rtse*)

This small complex has one temple with an image of Eleven-Headed Avalokiteśvara and a large stupa which is inside the building adjacent to the temple. The four sides of the stupa have beautiful murals of eight goddesses known as *mChod-pa lha-mo brgyad*. Each goddess holds in her hands one of the eight auspicious symbols (*bKra-shis-rtags-brgyad*). These are: 61

1. Precious umbrella (*rin-chen gdugs*) — protection from evil.
2. Golden fish (*gser-gyi nya*) — deliverance from suffering.
3. Vase of great treasures (*gter-chen-po bum-pa*) — containing spiritual treasures.
4. Excellent lotus flower (*padma bzang-po*) — purity.
5. White conch-shell horn (*dung-dkar g-yas- 'khyil*) — proclaiming Buddhist teaching.
6. Knot of abundance (*dpal-gyi beu*) — prosperity.
7. Excellent banner (*mchog-gi rgyal-mshan*) — victory.
8. Golden wheel (*gser-gyi 'khor-lo*) — order and morality.

Zangla

The descendants of the royal family live in two houses in the centre of the village. The father, Sonam Tendrup Namgyal, styled the king of Zangla, lives in one house, and his son Nyima Sonam in the other. The old fort, situated on a hill-top to the south, remains uninhabited as a complete ruin. A small chapel which still survives inside it contains a miscellaneous collection of images and *thang-kas*. 9

An empty and unattended temple in the village has murals of Śākyamuni, Avalokiteśvara, the 16 Arhats, Vajradhara, and Mañjuśrī. Another temple which is at the northern end of the village is taken care of by a Buddhist nun. The murals in this temple are well done, and along the back wall are standing several old images in stucco.

Padum (*dPal-'dum* or *dPal-gtum*)

The population of the capital amounts to about six hundred. Half of the people are Buddhist and half are Moslem. Padum is the only place in Zangskar where there is a mosque and the Moslem religion has an appreciable following. The small mosque, built over one hundred years ago, belongs to the Sunnis who form the majority of the Moslem population. 62

Above the inhabited area there are three temples. One is empty and the interior walls are newly replastered and ready for redecoration. The second one contains three chöten and a small statue in stucco. The third temple has been recently repainted. Here we have well done

West: Amitābha	red	peacock	four: red black white yellow	eight right: <i>vajra</i> , arrow, sword, hook. left: lotus, bow, noose, bell.
		4 Vajrasattvas:	Vajradharma Vajratikṣṇa Vajrahetu Vajrabhāṣa	
North: Amoghasiddhi	green	<i>garuḍa</i>	four: green yellow red white	eight right: sword, <i>vajra</i> , arrow, hook. left: lotus, bow, noose, bell.
		4 Vajrasattvas:	Vajrakarma Vajrarakṣa Vajrayakṣa Vajrasandhi	

Locanā, Māmakī, Paṇḍurā, and Tārā, the four Buddha-Goddesses, are placed in the intermediate quarters having the colour and appearances of their corresponding Buddhas. The four Guardians of the portals, Vajrāṅkuśa, Vajrapāśa, Vajrasphota, and Vajrāveśa (= Vajraghaṅṭa), red-white, yellow, red, and green in colours, stand in the portals of the first circle.

The next group consists of forty-eight divinities. To the east are the Twelve *Bhūmis* (stages towards buddhahood envisaged as goddesses.) They have two hands. In their right hands they hold *vajras* and in the left their appropriate symbols.

	colour	holding
East: Adhimuktīcaryā	red	red lotus
Pramuditā	red	wish-granting jewel (<i>cintāmani</i>)
Vimalā	white	white lotus
Prabhākārī	red	solar disc on lotus
Arçīṣmatī	emerald	blue lotus
Sadurjayā	yellow	emerald
Abhimukhī	golden	book on lotus
Durāṅgamā	blue	crossed <i>vajra</i> on lotus
Acalā	autumn colours	lotus marked with red five-tipped <i>vajra</i>
Sādhumatī	white	lotus marked with sword
Dharmameghā	golden	<i>prajñāpāramitā</i> book
Samāntaprabhā	like the sun	Buddha image on lotus

To the south are Twelve *Pāramitās* (Perfections). They have two hands, in the right hands they hold wish-granting jewels and in the left ones their appropriate symbols.

South: Ratnapāramitā	red	lunar disc on lotus
Dānapāramitā	white-red	barley-ear
Śīlapāramitā	white	bunch of flowers
Kṣāntipāramitā	yellow	white lotus
Vīryapāramitā	emerald	blue lotus
Dhyānapāramitā	blue	white lotus
Prajñāpāramitā	golden	<i>prajñāpāramitā</i> -book on lotus
Upāyapāramitā	green	<i>vajra</i> on lotus
Prāṇidhānapāramitā	blue	sword on lotus
Balāpāramitā	red	<i>prajñāpāramitā</i> -book
Jñānapāramitā	white	branch of <i>bodhi</i> -tree
Vajrakarmapāramitā	variegated	crossed <i>vajra</i> on lotus

To the West are the Twelve *Vasītās* (Powers). In their right hands they hold lotuses and with their left ones they display their appropriate symbols.

West: Ayurvaśitā	white-red	image of Amitāyus on lotus
Cittavaśitā	white	red five-tipped <i>vajra</i>
Paṛīkāravaśitā	yellow	wish-granting banner
Karmavaśitā	green	crossed <i>vajra</i>
Upapattivaśitā	variegated	<i>jāti</i> creeper
Rddhivaśitā	blue	solar & lunar discs on lotus
Adhimuktivaśitā	white	bunch of millet blossom
Prāṇidhānavaśitā	yellow	blue lotus
Jñānavaśitā	white-blue	sword on blue lotus
Dharmavaśitā	white	vase of fortune (<i>bhadrāghaṭā</i>) on lotus
Tathātavaśitā	white	white lotus with the right hand & bunch of jewels with the left.
Buddhabodhiprabhāvaśitā	golden	five-tipped <i>vajra</i> on lotus with the right hand & with the left wheel on top of wish-granting banner.

To the north are the Twelve *Dhāraṇīs* (Spells). They hold crossed *vajras* in their right hands and in the left ones their appropriate symbols.

North: Sumatī	golden	bunch of corn
Ratnoikā	red	wish-granting banner
Uṣṇīṣavijayā	white	vase made of moon-stone and jewels
Mārī	red-white	needle & thread
Paṛṇaśabarī	green	peacock's feather
Jāṅgulī	white	bunch of poisonous flowers
Anantamukhī	green	vase of undecaying treasures
Cundā	white	vessel fastened with rosary
Prajñāvardhanī	white	sword on blue lotus
Sarvakarmāvaraṇaviśodhanī	green	white lotus marked with three-tipped <i>vajra</i>
Aksayaññānakaṛaṇḍā	red	basket with jewels
Sarvabuddhadharmakoṣavatī	golden	jewel casket

In the portals of this circle are the Four *Pratisamvits* (Accomplishments).

East: Dharmapratīsamvit	white-red	<i>vajra</i> -hook & noose
South: Arthapratīsamvit	emerald	jewel-noose
West: Virūṭtipratīsamvit	red	fetter with lotuses
North: Pratibhānapratīsamvit	green	bell marked with three-tipped <i>vajra</i>

In the intermediate quarters of the same circle are: Lāsya, Māla, Gītā, Nṛtyā.

The next circle comprises a set of the Sixteen Bodhisattvas of the Good Age, the Ten Wrathful divinities, and eight goddesses. The Sixteen Bodhisattvas are placed in the cardinal directions, the Wrathful divinities in the portals, and the eight goddesses in the corners.

East: Samantabhadra	South: Gaganagañja
Akṣayamati	Ratnapāṇi
Kṣatagarbha	Sāgarāmātī
Ākāśagarbha	Vajragarbha
West: Avalokiteśvara	North: Amitaprabha
Mahāsthāmaprāpta	Pratibhānakūṭa
Candraprabha	Sarvasōkatamonirghātamātī
Jāliniprabha	Sarvanivaraṇaviskambhin

West: Amitābha	red	peacock	four: red black white yellow	eight right: <i>vajra</i> , arrow, sword, hook. left: lotus, bow, noose, bell.
		4 Vajrasattvas:	Vajradharma Vajratikṣṇa Vajrabhetu Vajrabhāṣa	
North: Amoghasiddhi	green	<i>garuḍa</i>	four: green yellow red white	eight right: sword, <i>vajra</i> , arrow, hook. left: lotus, bow, noose, bell.
		4 Vajrasattvas:	Vajrakarma Vajarakṣa Vajrayakṣa Vajrasandhi	

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	colour	holding
East: Adhimuktīcaryā	red	red lotus
Pramuditā	red	wish-granting jewel (<i>cintāmani</i>)
Vimalā	white	white lotus
Prabhākārī	red	solar disc on lotus
Arçīṣmatī	emerald	blue lotus
Sadurjayā	yellow	emerald
Abhimukhī	golden	book on lotus
Duraṅgamā	blue	crossed <i>vajra</i> on lotus
Acalā	autumn colours	lotus marked with red five-tipped <i>vajra</i>
Sādhumatī	white	lotus marked with sword
Dharmameghā	golden	<i>prajñāpāramitā</i> book
Samantaprabhā	like the sun	Buddha image on lotus

To the south are Twelve *Pāramitās* (Perfections). They have two hands, in the right hands they hold wish-granting jewels and in the left ones their appropriate symbols.

South: Ratnapāramitā	red	lunar disc on lotus
Dānapāramitā	white-red	barley-ear
Śīlapāramitā	white	bunch of flowers
Kṣāntipāramitā	yellow	white lotus
Vīryapāramitā	emerald	blue lotus
Dhyānapāramitā	blue	white lotus
Prajñāpāramitā	golden	<i>prajñāpāramitā</i> -book on lotus
Upāyapāramitā	green	<i>vajra</i> on lotus
Prāñidhānapāramitā	blue	sword on lotus
Balāpāramitā	red	<i>prajñāpāramitā</i> -book
Jñānapāramitā	white	branch of <i>bodhi</i> -tree
Vajrakarmapāramitā	variegated	crossed <i>vajra</i> on lotus

To the West are the Twelve *Vasītās* (Powers). In their right hands they hold lotuses and with their left ones they display their appropriate symbols.

West: Ayurvaśitā	white-red	image of Amitāyus on lotus
Cittavaśitā	white	red five-tipped <i>vajra</i>
Parīṣkāraśaśitā	yellow	wish-granting banner
Karmavaśitā	green	crossed <i>vajra</i>
Upapattivaśitā	variegated	<i>jāti</i> creeper
Rddhivaśitā	blue	solar & lunar discs on lotus
Adhimuktivaśitā	white	bunch of millet blossom
Prāñidhānavaśitā	yellow	blue lotus
Jñānavaśitā	white-blue	sword on blue lotus
Dharmavaśitā	white	vase of fortune (<i>bhadraghaṭa</i>) on lotus
Tathatvaśitā	white	white lotus with the right hand & bunch of jewels with the left.
Buddhabodhiprabhāvaśitā	golden	five-tipped <i>vajra</i> on lotus with the right hand & with the left wheel on top of wish-granting banner.

To the north are the Twelve *Dhāraṇīs* (Spells). They hold crossed *vajras* in their right hands and in the left ones their appropriate symbols.

North: Sumatī	golden	bunch of corn
Ratnolā	red	wish-granting banner
Uṣṇiṣvijayā	white	vase made of moon-stone and jewels
Māri	red-white	needle & thread
Parnaśabari	green	peacock's feather
Jāṅguli	white	bunch of poisonous flowers
Anantamukhī	green	vase of undecaying treasures
Cundā	white	vessel fastened with rosary
Prajñāvardhani	white	sword on blue lotus
Sarvakarmāvarapaviśodhani	green	white lotus marked with three-tipped <i>vajra</i>
Aksayajñānakaraṇḍā	red	basket with jewels
Sarvabuddhādharmakoṣavati	golden	jewel casket

In the portals of this circle are the Four *Pratisamvits* (Accomplishments).

East: Dharmapratīsamvit	white-red	<i>vajra</i> -hook & noose
South: Arthapratīsamvit	emerald	jewel-noose
West: Virūtipratīsamvit	red	fetter with lotuses
North: Pratibhānapratīsamvit	green	bell marked with three-tipped <i>vajra</i>

In the intermediate quarters of the same circle are: Lāsya, Mālā, Gītā, Nṛtyā.

The next circle comprises a set of the Sixteen Bodhisattvas of the Good Age, the Ten Wrathful divinities, and eight goddesses. The Sixteen Bodhisattvas are placed in the cardinal directions, the Wrathful divinities in the portals, and the eight goddesses in the corners.

East: Samantabhadra		South: Gaganagañja
Akṣayamati		Ratnapāñi
Kṣitigarbha		Sāgarāmātī
Ākāśagarbha		Vajragarbha
West: Avalokiteśvara		North: Amitaprabha
Mahāsthāmaprāpta		Pratibhānakūṭa
Candraprabha		Sarvaśokāmonirghātamātī
Jāliniprabha		Sarvanīvaranaviṣkambhin

central image. On the wall to the left of the central image are statues of Ratnasambhava on his horse-throne and Akshobhya on his elephant-throne below him. Similarly on the right wall are Amitābha on a peacock-throne and Amoghasiddhi on a *garuḍa*-throne below. These four Buddhas are also surrounded by a set of attendant goddesses. After examining this splendid composition one's attention is drawn to several beautiful images placed on the floor beneath the image of Vairocana. These wooden and stucco images represent Mañjuśrī, Padmapāni, Śākyamuni, and the god of wealth, Jambhala.

The back wall has miniatures of a Thousand Buddhas with an inscription below them on the right side, and a mural of Śākyamuni surrounded by devotees with the Tree of Enlightenment on the left. On the sections of the right and left walls adjoining the back wall are also preserved original murals. On the right are three rows of Buddha miniatures and a small mural of Vairocana. 58 On the left is a large Dharmadhātu maṇḍala of Vagīśvara Mañjuśrī. The central divinity is Mañjuḥṣa (= Mañjuśrī). He has four faces and eight arms. The four faces are yellow, blue, red, and white in colour. With the principal hands he is making the gesture of turning the wheel of Doctrine (*dharmacakrapravartana*). With his right hands he holds sword, arrow, and *vajra*, and with his left ones *prajñāpāramitā*-book, bow, and *vajra*-bell. The Eight *Uṣṇiṣas* (see p. 31) seated on lions form the first circle round the central divinity. They are yellow in colour, with one face and two hands. With their right hands they hold wheels and their left hands rest on the seats. Their names and positions are as follows:³⁴

<i>East:</i> Mahoṣṇiṣa	<i>South-east:</i> Uḍgata Uṣṇiṣa
<i>South:</i> Sitātapatra Uṣṇiṣa	<i>South-west:</i> Mahodgata Uṣṇiṣa
<i>West:</i> Tejorāsi Uṣṇiṣa	<i>North-west:</i> Ojas Uṣṇiṣa
<i>North:</i> Vijaya Uṣṇiṣa	<i>North-east:</i> Vikirīṇa Uṣṇiṣa

The four Buddhas seated on their appropriate vehicles are to the cardinal points. Each of them is surrounded by four Vajrasattvas, (cf Vol I, p.35):

	<i>colour</i>	<i>vehicle</i>	<i>faces</i>	<i>hands</i>
<i>East:</i> Akshobhya	blue	elephant	four: blue white yellow red	eight right: sword, <i>vajra</i> , arrow, hook left: threatening gesture (<i>tarjanī</i>), bell, bow, noose.
		4 Vajrasattvas:	Vajrasattva Vajrarāja Vajrarāga Vajrasādhu	
<i>South:</i> Ratnasambhava	yellow	horse	four: yellow black white red	eight right: <i>vajra</i> , sword, arrow, hook. left: wish-granting banner, <i>vajra</i> -bell, noose, bow.
		4 Vajrasattvas:	Vajjiratna Vajrasūrya Vajraketu Vajrahāsa	

34. The description of this maṇḍala given below is taken from Mahāpandita Abhayākara Gupta's *Niṣpannayogavallī*, edited by Benoytosh Bhattacharya in *Gaekwad's Oriental Series*, No 109, Baroda 1972, pp 54-64 of the Sanskrit text. The corresponding Tibetan text is in T.T. Vol 80, No 3962, pp. 141-3-8 to 145-2-2. Compare the set on p. 31 above.



58. Centre of the Dharmadhātu maṇḍala of Vagīśvara Mañjuśrī, Sumda.



59. The Ka-gyū-pa Lama, Ngag-po-pa, a later mural in the Assembly Hall at Sumda.



54. Śākyamuni, the main image in a temple at Tagrimo.



55. Protector of the northern quarter (Las-mgon), mural in a temple at Tagrimo.



56. The central image of Four-Headed Vairocana in the Assembly Hall at Sumda



57. Crowned dwarf and two of the four lions supporting Vairocana's throne, Sumda.



52. Image of attendant Bodhisattva at the side of the main image, temple at Sani. See also Ill. 21.



60 53. Bas-relief in stucco, and niches with images, on the back wall of the second temple at Sani.

Sākyamuni is enthroned in a kind of inner sanctum. This is surmounted by the *garuḍa* bird and *makara* motifs and four Bodhisattvas stand on either side. To either side of the entrance to this sanctum, there are rows of other images, namely Four-Armed Avalokiteśvara and the Buddhas of Past, Present and Future to the left, and Eleven-Headed Avalokiteśvara and then Padmasambhava with his two wife-goddesses to the right. The side walls of the temple are painted with the Sixteen Arhats, eight on either side. The entrance wall has paintings of the great tantric divinities, Samvara, Hevajra, Kālacakra, Mañjuvajra, and also the Zhabs-drung Ngag-dbang rnam-rgyal and in the corner next to him the Arhat Hva-shang. The latter is balanced by yet another Arhat in the opposite corner, making their full number in this temple up to eighteen. 52

The Kanika Chöten stands in an inner courtyard at the back of the main temple. The smaller of the two temples which has its door locked and sealed, contains an image of Nāropa and one of Vajradhara. It is believed that it was built on the site where Nāropa sat in meditation in front of the Kanika Chöten. The second temple, which is quite neglected, contains uniquely decorated walls and a very interesting collection of images set in niches. These represent 53 Sākyamuni, several lamas, and different manifestations of Padmasambhava. The stucco of the walls is shaped into landscapes, floral designs, chöten, buildings, divinities, and groups of devotees. The combination of this bas-relief painted in well chosen colours and the neatly distributed niches with images produce a coherent and highly aesthetic effect.

Outside the whole complex on the northern side one can see a group of rock-carvings of which that of Maitreya is the largest and most impressive.

Tagrimo (*sTag-ri-mo*) and Pipiting (*Pi-pi-ting*)

Tagrimo occupies a small hill-top to the west of Padum. When I visited it I found just one elderly monk sitting under a tree, telling his beads. The rest of the monks had gone to Leh to attend the Kālacakra ceremony presided over by the Dalai Lama. The main temple, which the monk showed me with enthusiasm, contains murals and images of popular figures such as Sākyamuni, Avalokiteśvara, Vajrapāni, and Padmasambhava. Of all the murals the more interesting are the ones on the right wall. Here one sees a large mural of Zhabs-drung Ngag-dbang rnam-rgyal surrounded by other lamas belonging to the 'Brug-pa tradition. A small gZim-chung 54-55 contains images and *thang-kas* of Marpa and Mi-la ras-pa.

Pipiting is a small village to the east-north of Padum. A large chöten and a complex of houses, which occupy a hill-top overlooking the present village, are possibly the site of the old foundation mentioned in the 'Chronicles of Zangskar.' A well maintained temple which stands near the large chöten, houses elegant images of Eleven-Headed Avalokiteśvara, Padmasambhava, and Maitreya. The right wall has murals of Amitāyus, Sākyamuni with the Sixteen Arhats, and of Bhaishajyaguru. The left wall shows Vajrabhairava, Padmasambhava in his eight manifestations, and Tsong-kha-pa. On the entrance wall are recently executed murals of the Four Great Kings of the cardinal directions. Below the village of Pipiting are the ruins of an old fort of Ubtu (*Ub-sti*).

Sumda (*sSum-mda*)

The foundation of this monastery which now comprises three temples and living quarters for the monk in charge undoubtedly dates back to the period of the Great Translator Rin-chen bzang-po (see p. 83). The Assembly Hall and the two smaller temples of Maitreya and Avalokiteśvara preserve some of the best works of art. The central image of Vairocana in the Assembly-Hall is more richly decorated than the corresponding one in the Alchi 'Du-khang. The whole design is conceived as a bouquet of flowers. At the base is a vase supporting four lions 56 with an image of a crowned dwarf in the centre. Above them is the central image of Four-headed Vairocana. On either side of Vairocana and his lion throne are two rows of goddesses set 57 among floral designs. These are the *mChod-pa'i lha-mo*, namely goddesses who present objects of worship to higher deities. A *garuḍa* bird with two *makaras* issuing from his mouth surmounts the



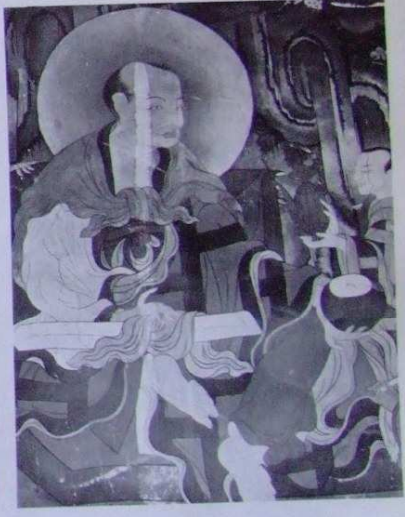
47. Bardan monastery on its cliff-summit.



48. Images of Marpa and Mi-la ras-pa in the Assembly Hall at Bardan.



49. Za-byed mkha'-gro, an image of Vajrapāṇi used in homa sacrifices.



50 and 51. Murals at Sani of two Arhats



45. Image of Lama Norbu, Dzongkhul.



46. Image of Lama Karma, disciple of bZhad-pa rdo-rje, Dzongkhul.

nearby village of Ating, and was educated at Dzongkhul monastery where he spent most of his life. He also travelled extensively in the Himalayan regions and in India.

The second cave which is above the monastery contains a statue of Nāropa and one of Vajradhara. On the wall opposite the entrance are murals of Mi-la ras-pa, Amitabha, and Avalokiteśvara. A small niche on the right wall containing a statue of Vajradhara has two identical murals of Nāropa. The remaining walls have murals of divinities and lamas. On the whole the murals in this cave are of greater artistic value than the *thang-kas* of the two temples in the main monastery.

Bardan (*Bar-gdan*)

Perched on the top of a crag overlooking the Lingti river, the Bardan monastery appears like a small fortress. It was founded by *bDe-ba rgya-mtsho* in the 17th century. Parts of the buildings are in a dilapidated state and require immediate repair if they are to survive. The assembly hall with the murals which probably date to the foundation of the monastery has badly cracked walls. 47

Like the monasteries of Dzongkhul and Tagrimo, Bardan is associated with the monastery of Stakna in Ladakh. Ngag-dbang don-yod rdo-rje, the present incarnation of the Stakna Incarnation (*sPrul-sku*), acts as the incumbent. Bardan has some forty monks while Dzongkhul and Tagrimo have fifteen and twenty respectively.

At the far end of the inner courtyard is the *mGon-khang*. The walls of this temple are so completely blackened by a thick layer of soot that the murals are quite unidentifiable. Especially noticeable are a fine image of Samvara clasping his female partner and a collection of masks and weapons such as swords, knives, and spears.

The high facade of the Assembly Hall dominates the inner courtyard. It is pleasingly painted and appears to have remained untouched for the last three hundred years and more. The left wall shows a central painting of the fierce divinity *Ka-gya* with Marpa above and lamas of the *Brug-pa* succession to either side. On the right wall are four *maṇḍalas*, of Vajradhara, Samvara, Amitāyus and Akshobhya. On the wall to the right as one enters there is a fine painting of Vajrasattva near the corner. Just inside the door there is an inscription (to be published later) with rather worn royal and religious miniature figures above, referring to the foundation of the temple. Above near the top of the door is the usual Four-Armed Mahākāla.

There are a large number of presiding images set in high cases against the facing wall. In the central position are the Buddhas of Past, Present and Future, namely Dipaṅkara, Śākyamuni and Maitreya. To their left are large images of Vajradhara and the Zhabs-drung Ngag-dbang rNam-rgyal and to their right Padmasambhava and Avalokiteśvara. In front of these larger images there are a number of smaller ones. The one on the far left is especially interesting in being a small statue of Vajrapāni as used for *homa*-sacrifices. Known as *Za-byed mkha'-gro*, it is placed over the sacrificial fire and the items of sacrifice are placed into its mouth, thus falling through into the flames. There are also images of Nāropa, Marpa and Mi-la ras-pa, and of Mañjuśrī and Maitreya as well as three small chōtens. 48

Sani

Unlike all other monastic foundations in Zangskar which occupy hilltops or mountain sides, Sani monastery is built on flat land by the main road leading from Kargil to Padum. The whole complex is surrounded by walls on all sides and consists basically of one large square building standing in the centre of the walled enclosure with two little temples and the famous Kanika Chōten at the back of it. Parts of the walls in the main temple are damaged. The murals which are preserved in reasonably good condition are very elegant. The main image, a crowned 50-51



41. An image of dGe-legs ye-she grags-pa, the founder, at Rangdum monastery.



42. Mural in the gZim-chung at Rangdum illustrating defenders of the land of Shambhala, represented by a mandala of nine segments.



43. General view of Dzongkhul monastery.



44. Image of Lama Ngag-dbang Tshe-ring, Dzongkhul

Rangdum (Rang-Idum)

This impressive monastic establishment housing some forty monks was founded by **41**
Bto-bzang dge-legs Ye-she grags-pa of *mNga'-ris-tshang* during the reign of King Tshe-wang Namgyal (ruled 1753-82). The large assembly-hall, to which access is gained from the main courtyard, houses a number of statues distributed along the back and the right walls. On the left side of the lama's seat are statues of Sitātapatrā (*gDugs-dkar*), Amitābha, Vairocana, and the founder of the monastery dGe-legs ye-she grags-pa. On the right side are those of Avalokiteśvara, Kālacakra, and Hayagrīva. The statues of Vajrapāni, Vajrabhairava, and Maitreya, stand along the right wall. The left wall is occupied by the Tibetan Canon and the right one has a fine mural of Śākyamuni. The entrance wall has murals of the protective divinities. A small passage in the back wall gives access to a room containing a large statue of Śākyamuni about three metres high and a smaller one of Tsong-kha-pa. Above the Assembly Hall there is a simple temple with a few miscellaneous images.

The private quarters (*gZim-chung*) of the head lama are reached from the second courtyard. Here on the outside wall of the inner veranda are murals of the Four Kings of the cardinal directions, the old man of long life, and the Four Brothers (*mThun-po spun-bzhi*), elephant, monkey, hare, and bird. Inside the *gZim-chung* the left wall is the most interesting one. Here one can see a mural depicting the mythical land of *Shambhala* with its armies in pursuit of enemy forces. Those who are interested in the more everyday aspects of monastic life should visit the large kitchen containing a collection of copper pots of various sizes. **42**

Dzongkhul (rDzong-khul)

The origin of this monastic foundation is associated with two caves about ten minutes walk apart which according to the local tradition were used for meditation by the famous Indian yogin Nāropa. On approaching by way of a steep gorge from the village of Ating, one reaches first **43** the cave round which is built the actual monastery, while the second cave is up a steep slope further to the west. The lower of the two temples built below the first cave is the assembly-hall. It is about seven metres square, and its walls are covered with *thang-kas*. To the left of the window are *thang-kas* of Akshobhya and of Samvara clasping his female partner. To the right are Padmasambhava and Mahākāla. Other *thang-kas* adorning the walls include those of Mi-la ras-pa, the Zhab-drung Ngag-dbang rNam-rgyal, Vajradhara and the 84 Siddhas, and the Kings of the Four quarters. In the alcove of the back wall there stands a life-size statue of Eleven-headed Avalokiteśvara covered with colourful pieces of cloth. A door on the left wall leads to a room in which are stored wooden block-prints and other equipment for printing Tibetan books and prayer flags.

The second temple which is just above the assembly-hall, contains several *thang-kas* of Mi-la ras-pa, one of Marpa, and one of Vajradhara. Several beautiful images can be seen in a decorated cupboard standing against the left wall. A row of four images in the alcove of the back wall are of great interest. From left to right they are: bZhad-pa rdo-rje, Lama Karma, Kun-dga' **45** chos-legs, and Lama Nor-bu. All these images are about 70 cm in size and are well executed. Their faces are very much alive and full of expression. In the head lama's room (*gZim-chung*) to one side are small images of the whole 'Brug-pa Ka-gyü succession of teachers arranged in a large case.

To gain access to Nāropa's cave one has to climb a ladder which stands in the alcove. The walls of the cave are blackened with smoke. The murals which are hardly visible, appear to be the oldest in the monastery. On the floor near the ingress there lies a stone with Nāropa's footprint. Images placed in a cupboard with glass-front represent Śākyamuni, Akshobhya, **44** Ngag-dbang tshe-ring, Guru Rin-po-che, and Nāropa. The expression of Ngag-dbang tshe-ring, as though he were in deep thought, gives the impression of a living person. He was born in the



41. An image of dGe-legs ye-she-s grags-pa, the founder, at Rangdum monastery.



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42

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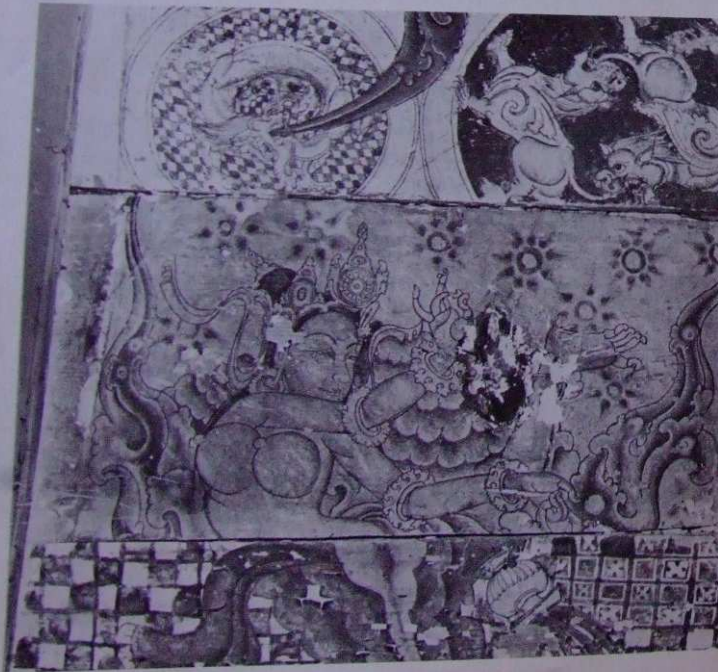
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39 and 40. Paintings of goddesses and decorative motifs in the sTon-pa lha-khang at Phugtal.



dous view of a large cave hewn in a mountain side with a closely built complex of white monastic houses adhering to the rocks below it. The temples contain a number of beautiful murals and images. The Kanjur *lha-khang* and *sTon-pa lha-khang* (= Temple of the Teacher, viz. Śākyamuni) are the most interesting ones. The first one is crowded with racks containing block-prints. The walls of this temple, wherever visible, have beautifully executed murals of Mañjuśrī, Śākyamuni, and Tsong-kha-pa. The second temple is even more interesting. Here one can distinguish three different periods of murals. The oldest ones representing attendant goddesses and floral designs are on the ceiling and their beauty is simply breath-taking. In their style and expression they resemble the ceiling decorations at Tabo and probably date from the same period. These designs are manifestly of Indian and Kashmiri inspiration. The central image of Śākyamuni, completely reconstructed a few years ago when the original one fell to pieces, is rather ugly and is in marked contrast with the original decorative construction that surrounds it. Above his head is the usual *garuḍa* bird with two *makaras* (sea-creatures) and floral designs descending on either side, thus forming an elongated aureole supported at the base by two lions. This kind of decoration in stucco is typical of the early period and good examples can also be seen at Alchi and Sumda. The second set of murals which probably dates back to the 16th century are on the back wall and the parts of the left and right walls adjacent to it. On the back wall there are two identical and very elegant murals of Tsong-kha-pa, one on either side of the central image of Śākyamuni. The miniatures of Buddhas and lamas that surround them deserve special attention for their delicate and skillful execution. On the right wall is a mural of Bhaishajyaguru, the Buddha of Medicine. On the left wall is a mural of Vajrapāṇi, wearing a diadem, and flanked by two attendants. He holds his hands in a preaching posture with the *vajra* and the bell resting on lotuses positioned at the level of his shoulders.

39-40

A third set of murals was executed in recent years. On the right wall are murals of Guhyasamāja (*gSang-ba 'dus-pa*) clasping his female partner, and Four-Armed Avalokiteśvara. On the left wall are murals of Green Tārā and Śākyamuni. On the entrance wall are two murals of the White Guardian (*mGon-dkar*).

Three other temples in this complex also preserve old images but they are less impressive. The *mGon-khang* situated above the Kanjur temple has statues of the protective divinities belonging to the *dGe-lugs-pa* order and a collection of old weapons such as spears and sabres. On the right side of the cave is the Assembly Hall. It contains a collection of block-prints, several old *thang-kas*, and murals of Śākyamuni and Tsong-kha-pa. From the Assembly Hall one gains access to a small temple containing an image of Maitreya. His statue of about two metres high is flanked by two attendants.

Muni

This little monastery belonging to the *dGe-lugs-pa* order and housing a small community of well disciplined monks is situated above the northern side of the village. The two temples which I was shown have been recently redecorated. The assembly-hall contains several statues distributed against the back wall. The biggest one is about two and a half metres high and represents Maitreya, flanked by smaller images, two of Śākyamuni, two of Tsong-kha-pa, and two of Avalokiteśvara. The right wall has a larger mural of Śākyamuni with Buddha miniatures on either side. The murals of Yamāntaka and of *dGe-lugs-pa* lamas occupy the left wall. To the left of the entrance are murals of Śrīdevī and Shugs-Idan in his three aspects. The second temple, a *mGon-khang*, contains murals and images of the protective divinities.

On the edge of the village there is a solitary temple of Maitreya. It contains several simply executed statues and images of Tsong-kha-pa, Padmasambhava, Śākyamuni, Avalokiteśvara, and protective divinities. In the fields below this temple and near the house on the southern side of the fields there are several ancient rock-carvings.



36. View of Tonde as one approaches from Padum. The monastery is high up on the mountain side to the centre of the photo.

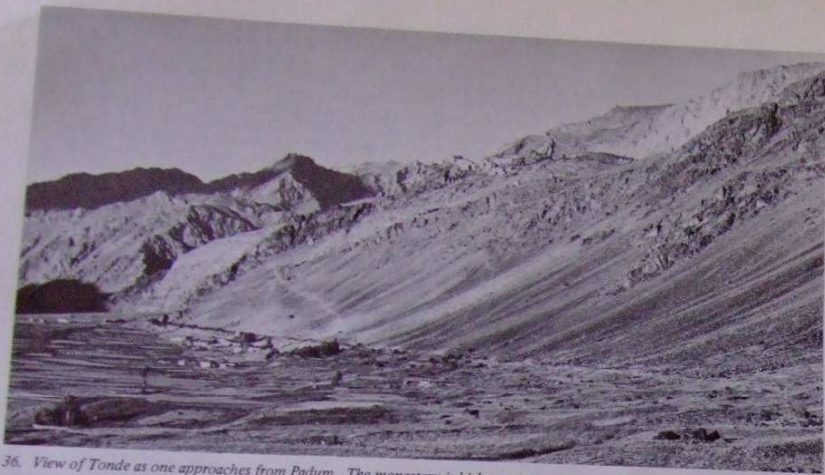


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37. View of Phugtal monastery clinging to the rocks beneath its enormous cave.



38. Mural of Prajñāpāramitā in the Tshogs-khang at Tonde.



36. View of Tonde as one approaches from Padum. The monastery is high up on the mountain side to the centre of the photo.



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37. View of Phugtal monastery clinging to the rocks beneath its enormous cave.



38. Mural of Prajñāpāramitā in the Tshogs-khang at Tonde.

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entrance wall has been damaged and has no murals. Against the right wall is a large statue of Maitreya some four metres in height and a smaller one of Avalokiteśvara some two metres high. The murals on the left and the back walls are of great interest. They are executed with exquisite skill and artistic taste. There is no doubt of their being one of the best specimens of art in Zangskar. They represent five different Buddha manifestations and Prajñāpāramitā.

Immediately above the Labrang, there is a small and narrow temple with paintings representing Tsong-kha-pa and Padmasambhava. It is rather neglected and the walls are blackened with soot. Not far away and farther below there is yet another little temple. This one is called the Translator's Temple (*Lotsaba'i lha-khang*). It contains just one statue which the monks believe to be that of Rin-chen bzang-po.

Maitreya's temple, situated at the lower end and to the west of the whole monastic establishment, contains paintings of recent date. An image of Maitreya painted on the back wall is done in a simple unskilled style. In front of the mural of Maitreya stands a statue of Avalokiteśvara. Part of the right wall has murals representing Tsong-kha-pa, Padmasambhava, Dharmarāja, and the rest is inset with carved stones of the kind so frequently seen on mani-walls. The left wall has an image of Śākyamuni Buddha. By the door there are murals of the Four Kings of the quarters. Incised into the rocks just above the temple are several ancient reliefs, including one of Maitreya. Thus this is certainly an ancient site and the name of 'Maitreya's Place' (*Byams-pa-gling*) which now applies to the whole later monastery which has risen on the cliffs above, may be derived from this older temple.

Other religious buildings and the ruins of a fort are on a hill-top to the west of the main monastery from which they are separated by a deep gorge. The fort was probably destroyed during the invasions which took place in the 18th century. Just on the edge and below the ruins of the fort is an old chöten which contains beautifully executed murals representing the Five Buddhas with Akshobhya painted on the ceiling. The architecture and the style of paintings in this chöten are practically identical with the chötens which one finds in Alchi *Chos-khor*. A little further to the west of it there are ruins of an old temple which collapsed only a few years ago. The monk who lives in the adjacent building to the temple of Avalokiteśvara has preserved several beautiful *thang-kas* which he recovered from the ruins of this temple when the whole roof fell in.

A separate temple dedicated to Eleven-Headed Avalokiteśvara stands on the hillside below the old fort together with a few houses and chötens. This would appear to be the earlier site of Karsha. The temple is remarkable for its well preserved murals, as usual mainly of favoured divinities, but also including miniatures of monks and layfolk, doubtless a royal scene, and scenes with houses and horses. These scenes are all low down inside the entrance wall, and as usual are the least well preserved. On the wall above these are the protecting divinities Mahākāla, four-armed and six-armed, Hayagrīva and the Canopy-God (*Gur-lha*). The central image of Eleven-Headed Avalokiteśvara stands in a large niche in the facing wall. On the walls of the niche are impressive murals of Mañjuśrī to the left and Vajrapāni to the right, both with attendant goddesses. On the facing wall in the corner to the left of the niche there are paintings of two lamas, who appear to be Rin-chen bzang-po and the Zangskar Translator 'Phag-pa shes-rab below him. Underneath is the inscription to which reference has been made above (p. 41). On the left wall of the temple are murals of Akshobhya and one of Vairocana's maṇḍalas with Jambhala and Vijayā between them. On the right wall are two maṇḍalas, one perhaps of Kālacakra, certainly one of Vajrabhairava with a painting of Hevajra in between. On the facing wall in the corner to the right of the niche there is a fine painting of Śākyamuni in the earth-witness posture. All in all, this is certainly one of the finest surviving temples in Zangskar.

Tonde (*sTon-sde*)

This monastery occupies a hill-top at the extreme end of the Padum Valley. The last part of the footpath leading to the main buildings runs beside a mani-wall with several ruined chötens and some tumbled-down walls nearby which might have been the side of a temple in the

past. The monastic buildings are well maintained and the whole site includes a small enclosure with trees, which gives the place an atmosphere of serenity and calm. The temples are built around the main courtyard. The New Assembly-Hall (*'du-khang so-ma*) is approached by a wide ascending set of steps. On the outside of its entrance wall, which is sheltered by a roofed veranda, are murals of the Four Great Kings (*mahārāja*) of the cardinal directions. The walls inside the temple are newly painted. The largest mural on the left wall is that of Śākyamuni flanked by his two disciples. On the opposite wall is a mural of Tsong-kha-pa. Two statues, one of Avalokiteśvara and one of Vajrabhairava, stand in an alcove opening out from the back wall.

On leaving the New Assembly-Hall one bears to the right to reach the Kanjur *lha-khang*. Along the wall opposite the entrance of this are wooden racks with block-prints of the Tibetan Canon and a statue of the Lord Śākyamuni (*Jo-bo*) placed to the centre. Several interesting but rather new *thang-kas* grace the other walls. The window gives a magnificent view onto the valley below.

To the right of the courtyard is a temple called the Temple of Fasting (*Nyung-gnas lha-khang*). The most interesting thing in it is a beautiful statue of Eleven-Headed Avalokiteśvara standing in the centre of the back wall with racks containing block-prints on either side. At the opposite end of the courtyard from the *Nyung-gnas lha-khang* there is a complex of three temples. The first one is called the *Tshogs-khang*.³³ This is undoubtedly the most interesting temple in the monastery. The inscription to the right of the entrance is badly damaged and thus it is practically impossible to reconstruct the text. At the head of the monks' seats and against the back wall is a group of statues, of which the largest is Śākyamuni Buddha in the earth-witness posture. He is flanked by a statue of Tsong-kha-pa, a small chöten, and a statue of Lama *Thams-cad mkhyen-po*. The murals on the right and left walls are well executed and would appear to be the oldest in all the temples here. On the left wall are two larger murals, one of Atiśa and one of Amitābha, surrounded by smaller murals of monks and lamas. A part of this wall which has been repainted recently has a mural of Tsong-kha-pa. The murals on the right wall which is partly damaged represent Green Tārā and Prajñāpāramitā. These murals are especially noticeable for their elegance and artistic beauty.

To the left on entering the *Tshogs-khang* there is a door leading into a small temple of Maitreya. His statue which is about two and a half metres high is enthroned to the centre of the temple. The remaining space is taken up by books and *thang-kas* somewhat disorderly distributed. Among odd items hanging from the ceiling is a helmet with the insignia of the British Horse Artillery.

On the right side of the back wall of the *Tshogs-khang* there is yet another door. This one gives access to the *mGon-khang*, where a number of statues are stored along the walls. The more interesting ones are those of Dharmarāja, Vajrabhairava with his female partner, Amitābha, Atiśa, and Lokeśvara. To the right of the entrance is a mural of Mahākāla executed in *gsar-bri* technique, that is to say drawn in gold (yellow) lines on a black background.

The seventh temple is situated below the main monastic complex on the north-western side of the hill. It is called *'Dzom-skyid lha-khang*. It has been recently painted and the murals represent the usual set of divinities and lamas belonging to the *dGe-lugs-pa* order. Not very far from this temple one can visit a cave which betrays no signs of recent habitation and which some of the monks believe was the place where Marpa stayed during his alleged journey through Zangskar.

Phugtal

Phugtal is perhaps the most picturesquely situated monastery in the whole of Zangskar. Approaching it from the west, one comes round a cliff and is suddenly confronted with a stupen-

³³ This may be taken as another term for 'assembly-hall', but it refers specifically to the assembly of religious offerings, known as *tshogs* (= assembly or collection).



32. Mural of a preaching Buddha at Karsha portrayed as Nāgarāja. Note the snake coils behind his shoulders climbing up to the snake head-dress.



33. Mural at Karsha of Amitābha flanked by two Bodhisattvas in his paradise of Sukhāvati.



34. Mural of Maitreya in the Lower Assembly Hall at Karsha. The style is late Tibetan showing marked Chinese influence. It comes next to the scene shown in Ill. 22.



35. One of the goddesses attendant on the main image of Eleven-Headed Avalokiteśvara in the temple named after him at Karsha.

DESCRIPTION OF INDIVIDUAL SITES

Karsha

Karsha, written in Tibetan *dKar-cha* or *dKar-sha* is the largest *dGe-lugs-pa* monastery in Zangskar. It houses some eighty monks. The main monastic buildings are situated on a steep cliff-side overlooking the Padum Valley. Painted in white and well maintained they presented a very impressive sight. The monastic life centres around the main courtyard which is near the top of the whole complex and reached by a narrow zigzag path. There are two assembly-halls which are situated on two sides of the courtyard. The main Assembly-Hall (*'du-khang*) with a flight of steps leading up to it, is on the western side and the second one called the 'Lower Assembly-Hall' (*'du-khang 'og-ma*) is on the eastern side.

The Assembly-Hall, now newly redecorated, was destroyed by fire which broke out in the monastery a few years ago; apart from the damage done to buildings, the whole library was burnt. The new paintings, of which the more interesting ones are those of Śākyamuni Buddha, Tsong-kha-pa and rDo-rje Shugs-ldan, are well executed, although the colours are rather gaudy.

The *mGon-khang*, the temple of the guardian divinities, situated next to the Assembly-Hall and newly painted in a similar style, contains a number of murals and free-standing images. To the left of the entrance there are murals representing Vijayā (*rNam-rgyal-ma*), Four-Armed Mahākāla (*mGon-po phyag-bzhi-pa*), Vajrapāṇi (*Phyag-rdor*) and Hayagrīva (*rTa-mgrin*). The left wall has murals of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. Against the back wall are several images and chötens, some of them beautifully executed and not very recent. A wooden statue of Tsong-kha-pa deserves special attention for its delicacy of expression.

In a niche on the right wall is a group of divinities with their faces covered with pieces of cloth. They represent Śrīdevī (*dPal-ldan lha-mo*), Six-Armed Mahākāla (*mGon-po Phyag-drug-pa*), Dharmarāja (*Chos-rgyal*), Vajrabhairava (*rDo-rje 'jigs-byed*), White Guardian (*mGon-dkar*), all of whom are protective divinities of the *dGe-lugs-pa* order. Also represented are Vaiśravana and Dhṛtarāṣṭra, two of the Four Great Kings (*māhārāja*). To the right of the entrance are murals of Vajrapāṇi, Dharmarāja embracing his female partner and the Six-Armed Mahākāla.

The Lower Assembly-Hall is on the same level with the courtyard and it is much bigger than the main Assembly-Hall. To the left of the entrance is an elegant statue of Maitreya. Almost the whole of the left wall is occupied by racks with the Tibetan Canon and a collection of images representing a crowned Śākyamuni (*Jo-bo*), Amitābha, Vijayā, Tārā. The murals on the wall opposite the entrance depict the scenes from the life of Śākyamuni Buddha, and these are executed in the later Tibetan style which was permeated with Chinese influence especially in the matter of landscape and domestic details. On the other hand the murals on the right wall representing Avalokiteśvara, Tārā, and Mañjuśrī, are done in purely Tibetan style.

Behind the above described temple, there are two other smaller temples. The first one is called the Kanjur (*bKa'-gyur lha-khang*) and contains accordingly the Tibetan Canon. The walls of this temple have murals representing Tsong-kha-pa, Tārā, Mañjuśrī, some protective divinities, and miniatures of a thousand Buddhas. The second temple contains three statues, Tsong-kha-pa and his two disciples, mKhas-grub and rGyal-tshab.

A large temple some fifteen metres square called the Labrang (*bla-brang*) is situated half-way down the hill. It is practically empty, has no windows except for a sky-light and the door seems to be locked permanently. Access to it can be gained by a ladder from the roof. The



31. Mural of Four-Headed Vairocana in the Labrang at Karsha

There are two other early foundations in Zangskar which are not associated with the activities of Rin-chen bzang-po or the Translator of Zangskar. These are Dzongkhul and Tonde. The first one is associated with the Indian yogin Nāropa and the second one with his Tibetan successor Marpa, but in neither place do we have any iconographic evidence relating to their times.

With the arrival of the *dGe-lugs-pa* monks in Ladakh and Zangskar in the 15th centuries a number of the old monastic foundations were taken over by them and redecorated in due course in a new artistic style developed in Tibet, (see Vol. I, p.105ff). Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho gives a short history of the *dGe-lugs-pa* monasteries and their abbots in the *Faigūrya ser-po*. About the monasteries in Zangskar he gives us this information:

As for *dKar-sha Byams-pa-gling* and *Phug-tal*, the two places in Zangskar, in the first instant they were founded by the Zangskar Translator 'Phags-pa Shes-rab. The teacher *mDo-rin* expanded them and *Shes-rab bzang-po* of *sTod* converted them to the religious order of 'Jam-mgon Lama (= Tsong-kha-pa). The succession of teachers (at Karsha is as follows.) *Slob-dpon btan-pa*, *Chos-rje rab-byams-pa*, *Drung-pa Sangs-rin*, *Sangs-rgyas blo-gros*, *Don-grub-dpal*, *Svasti (sba-ti) blo rnam*, *Drung Sangs-rgyas-rgyan*, *Zangs-mkhar Grags-rgyan*, and at the present time *Blo-bzang rdo-rje* of *Zangs-mkhar*. The tantric school (followed) is that of *rGyud-sTod*.

The monastic affiliation is the same as the one above (= the monks go for their education to *Se-ra*, *'Bras-spungas*, *dGa-lān*, and to the *mNga'-ris* College). The monks number two hundred. (The succession of teachers at) *Phug-tal: rJe-drung dPal-lān Shes-rab*, *'Jam-dbyangs don-grub*, *Drung Rab-brian*, *Drung Tshé-brian*, *Drung Kun-dpa*, and *Drung bKra-rgyam* — the Ladakhis, and *Zangs-mkhar Grags-rgyan*. At the present time there is an acting lama. The tantric school (followed) is that of *rGyud-sTod*. As for the monastic affiliation, (the monks) go to *Se-ra*, *'Bras-spungas*, and *dGa-lān*. The monks number eighty seven.

As for *Mar-pa-gling* or nowadays *sTong-sde Legs-bshad-gling*, it is said to have been built previously by Reverend Marpa. *Sākya-bzang* of *sTong-sde* expanded it. Lama *rGyal-mtshan-pa klu-sgrub dPal-bzang-po* converted it to the religious order of *Tsong-kha-pa*. (The succession of teachers:) *Slob-dpon blo-legs-pa*, *Slob-dpon Shes-'byung*, *Blo-gyal 'byung-gnas*, and at the present time *dPal-lān bzang-po*, a native of *sTong-sde*. The tantric school is that of *rGyud-sTod*. The monastic affiliation is the same as above. The monks number fifty. As for the *Zangs-mkhar* monastery, it was founded by *Drung mDo-rin*.³¹

Shes-rab bzang-po of *sTod*, a native of Mar-yul, who brought over to the *dGe-lugs-pa* order the monasteries of Karsha and Phugtal, was a disciple of Tsong-kha-pa. He propagated the *dGe-lugs-pa* cause not only in Zangskar but also in Ladakh. There were several learned men belonging to the *dGe-lugs-pa* order who were active in Ladakh and Zangskar in the 15th century.

31. *Faigūrya-ser-po*, edited by Dr Lokesh Chandra, New Delhi 1960, Part 2, p.226: zangs mkhar du dkar sha byams pa gling dang phug tal gnyin ni / dang por zangs mkhar lo tsā ba 'phags pa shes rab kyiis btah / slob dpon mdo rin gya dar bar mdrad / stod shes rab bzang po 'jam mgon bla ma' chos lugs su btsags / gdan rabs slob dpon btan pa / chos rje rab 'byams pa / drung pa sangs rin / sangs rgyas blo gros / don grub dpal / shas ti blo rnam / drung sangs rgyas ryan / zangs mkhar grags ryan / da lta zangs mkhar blo bzang rdo rje / sangs grax (loe gra) rgyud stod lugs / grva (gra) ryan gong 'dra / grva (gra) pa nyin begsa skon / phug tal rje drung dpal lān shes rab / 'jam dbyangs don grub / drung rab brian / drung tshé brian / drung kun dpa' / drung bkra rgyam nam pa la dvags / zangs mkhar grags ryan / da lta bla tsab re / sangs grva (gra) rgyud stod lugs / grva (gra) ryan ser 'bras dpa gsum 'gro / grva (gra) pa gya bñān skor / mgar pa gling ngam da lta stong sde legs bshad gling ni / mgon rje mar pas grags shing stong sde shakya bzang gis dar bar byat / bla ma rgyal mtshar pa klu sgrub dpal btan po / 'jam mgon bla ma' chos lugs bzang rching slob dpon blo legs pa / slob dpon shes 'byung / blo gyal 'byung gnas / da lta stong sde pa dpal lān bzang po / drung mdo rin pas btah // rgyan gong 'dra / grva (gra) pa lega bco skor / zangs mkhar chos sde ni / drung mdo rin pas btah // This footnote Petech has kindly noted that this edition of the text (quoted here for easy reference) is often abbreviated. Thus the name given here as *Drung mDo-rin* appears on the original xylograph as *Drung-pa mDo-sde-rin-chen*. He was a pupil of *sTod Shes-rab-bzang-po* who introduced the *dGe-lugs-pa* school in Western Tibet. An odd abbreviation (or is it just a mistake?) is *Phug-tal* for *Phug-tal ni*. The 'Zangskar Monastery' is *dKar-rgyas* (identification thanks to Professor Petech).

By the second half of the same century this order was firmly established in these two countries. The religious zeal and missionary effort inspired by Tsong-kha-pa received the full support of the royal families.

In Zangskar, beside the three monasteries mentioned above, the *dGe-lugs-pa* order took possession of two other major monasteries, namely Muni and Linghed (*Lings-nyed*). At the present time, all these monasteries are well maintained and have well organized communities.

In the 17th century when hostility developed between the kings of Ladakh and the government of Central Tibet on account of wars between Tibet and Bhutan in which the kings of Ladakh took the side of the Bhutanese, another religious order gained considerable strength in Ladakh and in Zangskar (Vol. I, pp.86-87). This was the '*Brug-pa* branch of the *Ka-gyū-pa* order. The dispute between Bhutan and Tibet was in effect a dispute between the religious orders, of the *dGe-lugs-pa* and '*Brug-pa Ka-gyū-pa*. The kings of Ladakh, seeing a continuous increase of the *dGe-lugs-pa* order and its political power, took the side of the '*Brug-pa* order with the intention of thus weakening the political influence of Central Tibet on their country. Prior to this policy, which greatly helped the '*Brug-pa* order in Ladakh and in Zangskar, the interests of the '*Brug-pa* monks in Western Tibet had been promoted by the Lha-rtsé-ba Ngag-dbang-bzang-po (1546-1615) the first *Yongs-'dzin* (spiritual tutor) of the monastery bDen-chen chos-'khor in Central Tibet.³² It was he who inspired sTag-tshang ras-pa Ngag-dbang rgya-mtsho (1574-1651) to propagate the teachings of the '*Brug-pa* order.

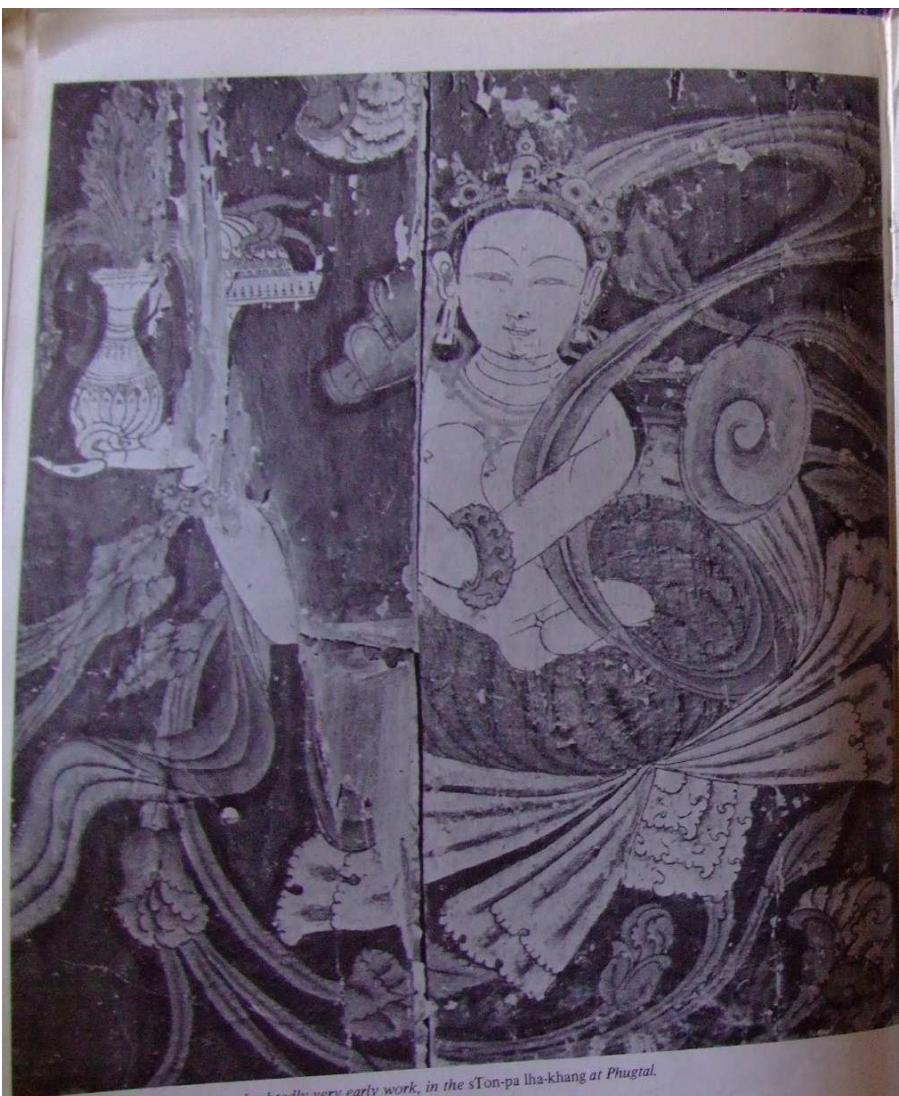
At the beginning of the 17th century, bDe-ba rgya-mtsho who built the Bardan monastery in 1618, was one of the most active of the '*Brug-pa* lamas in Zangskar. The Dzongkhul monastery became a seat of several renowned lamas of whom Ngag-dbang tshé-ring (1657-1732) is best known to us. The '*Brug-pa* order also built the monastery of Tagrimo and took possession of Sani, Zangla and Sumda.

The dating of artistic works such as images and murals can be conveniently divided into four different periods. The oldest remains in Zangskar of the Buddhist religion (expressed in art) are the rock reliefs mentioned above (p. 9). Considered in relationship with other rock-reliefs in Ladakh (Vol. I, p.7), and in the Suru Valley, and taken within the whole historical context, they probably belong to the 8th - 10th centuries. The second period in which a number of works of art was produced, coincides with the activities of Rin-chen bzang-po and his immediate successors. Besides translating Buddhist texts, Rin-chen bzang-po took great initiative in bringing Kashmiri and Indian artists whom he employed in decorating the new religious buildings. The images and murals executed at that time have every indication of having been done in the artistic style which prevailed in India and Kashmir. We have already mentioned above all the places in Zangskar which belong to that period.

A third period of artistic style appeared in the 15th century and lasted to the 20th century. This style was introduced into Ladakh from Tibet, where an indigenous Tibetan style had been gradually developing from the 14th century onwards. Thus with the arrival of the *dGe-lugs-pa* and '*Brug-pa* orders in Zangskar a new impetus was given to build and to redecorate the old temples in this specifically Tibetan style. Several temples at Karsha and at Phugtal are very fine specimens of artistic achievement of that period.

A fourth period relates to modern times. Here we have a number of temples which are painted with varying success depending on the abilities of the artist, in styles which are mainly a continuation of the previous period.

32. Petech 1977, p.35.



30. Paintings on the ceiling, undoubtedly very early work, in the sTon-pa lha-khang at Phugal.

Buddhism in the land at a very early time. However, we do not possess any firm historical evidence that the above four foundations existed as monastic establishments before the extensive propagation of Buddhist religion initiated by the kings of Gu-ge in the 10th century.

Rin-chen bzang-po is said to have built one hundred and eight temples. There are several monasteries in Zangskar which on the basis of iconography may be dated with some certainty to his period. Once again we have no written sources to confirm the iconographic evidence. The inscription at the monastery of Sumda, written probably at the end of the 17th century, claims that it was built by Rin-chen bzang-po.²⁸ The first part of the inscription which mentions his name reads as follows:

A thousand salutations to the Victorious One Mi-pham dbang-po who is foremost in the maturing and saving of living beings, shining gloriously in the Ka-gyü Doctrine of the Lord of the World (*Lokeśvara*), the White (Lord) of Compassion.

In the first place the sight of the stupa encourages faith, and at the sight of the good qualities faith is born. At the time of the previous period of faith, the Tibetan Translator Rin-chen bzang-po founded about one hundred and eight temples and this is the set of Five Buddhas with the Lord Vairocana in the centre which he consecrated in one day. He ensured that all beings might supplicate it and caused grace (to emanate from it) with the arising of faith. Salutation to this noble and excellent place which is capable of drawing down from the highest heaven all that is seen and heard there.²⁹

The central image and a part of the murals in the assembly-hall ('*du-khang*) at Sumda, one chöten still standing above it, and several images executed in wood and clay still preserved in their original state indicate beyond any doubt that Sumda was built at the time of the religious and artistic activities inspired by Rin-chen bzang-po. The iconography and the whole lay out of the Assembly Hall is practically identical with the assembly-hall in Alchi. Two wooden statues which are stored in one of the side temples at Sumda, totally executed in Indian style, would suggest an even earlier date.³⁰

There are other places in Zangskar where artistic and iconographic remains indicate early foundations. Thus if one compares the ceiling in the *sTon-pa lha-khang* at Phugal with that of Tabo in Spiti, one even has the impression that the same craftsmen were at work in both places. At Karsha there is an old temple dedicated to Eleven-Headed Avalokitesvara just below the ruins of the ancient fort and thus quite separate from the present *dGe-lugs-pa* Monastery (known as Maitreya's Place, see below p. 48). An inscription in this old temple, which certainly belongs to the earlier Ka-dam-pa period, pays tribute to favours received from the ruler rGyal-btsan Chos-grags-Idé and his wife 'Dzoms-pa rGyal-mo and names a certain Nyi-ma rgyal-mtshan as founder. One may also note that Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho, the regent of the 5th Dalai Lama, in his work *Vaidurya ser-po* (written in 1698) attributes to the Zangskar Translator 'Phag-pa Shes-rab foundations at Phugal and Karsha. No contradiction need be involved here, for as at Alchi separate temples would have had separate founders.

28. Note a possible translation of the relevant passage in his Biography p. 91, note 21.
 29. This extract is taken from a copy of the inscription in the '*du-khang* at Sumda, made during my visit. Mi-pham-dbang-po played an important part in negotiating peace between the Tibetans and the Ladakhis towards the end of the 17th century (see vol. I, p. 87). The inscription is very ill written and I have corrected as necessary the following passage:
 'ig (for 'igs) rten dbang phyug thugs rje dkar gyi/bka'-bryud bstan-pa (dkar rgyud stan pa) yongs kyi dpal du shar / 'gro rnam smin 'gzol lam la gong mdzad pa'i rgyal ba mi pham dbang por phyag 'tshai stong / dang po lo rgyus mthong ba dad pa 'dren (dren) yon tan mthong ba dad pa skyes / dad pa skal pa ngar gyi dus su bod kyi lo tsa ba rin chen bzang pos lha khang bgya (rgya) dang bgyad (rgya) tsam (tsa) bñiens pa la / rxi ma gcig la rah gnas (nas) grub yin pa'i gso (riso) dus rnam (namo) par snang mdzad / rgyal ba rigs (rig) lnga 'di yin / sems can thams cad (cad) kyas (kyi) amon lam btsh (stsh) pa tsam grub / dad pa skyes pa byin rlab 'jug / mthong (thong) thoos thams (tham) cad 'og min nas su 'dren (dren) nux pa'i gnas chen khyad par can 'di la gus-pas (dus) phyag 'tshai lo /
 30. It is clear from the inscription No 7 at Alchi that Sumda was already a religious centre before Alchi monastery was built. For the full text of the inscription see below pp. 138-9 and 148.

28 'Phags-pa shes-rab became the most renowned. 'Phags-pa shes-rab was not active at the same time as Rin-chen bzang-po. He belongs to the later generation of translators and religious teachers who continued and completed the work initiated by Rin-chen bzang-po and the kings of Gu-ge. His dates cannot be fixed exactly but he was more or less contemporary with Mi-la ras-pa (1040-1123). When he left his native land and arrived in Gu-ge with the intention of becoming Rin-chen bzang-po's disciple, he learned that the Great Translator was no longer alive, Rin-chen bzang-po having died in 1055. Instead he studied with Rin-chen bzang-po's immediate pupil the Junior Translator (*Lo-chung*) Legs-pa'i shes-rab and his assistant An-ston Grags-rin.²⁶ He studied with them the *Sarvatathāgatatattvasaṅgraha*, the *Śrī Paramādī-Tantra*, and the Tantras of the *Carya* class. Together with the rMa Translator and mTha'-bzhi, the latter's nephew, he received from Kha-che dgon-pa-pa the initiation to the Samvara cycle. He also studied and worked with several Indian and Kashmiri teachers such as Kumārasrī, Jñānasrī, Tejodeva, Parahita, Mahākaruṇa and others with whom he made a number of translations of Buddhist texts.²⁷ He invited to Central Tibet gZhon-nu bum-pa (*Kumārakalāśa*) who expounded to him and several others the *Vajraśikhara-Tantra*. Together with gZhon-nu bum-pa he made a new translation of this tantra on the basis of an already existing one and the Sanskrit manuscript brought by gZhon-nu bum-pa. The first translation was made by the Indian Karmavajra and by gZhon-nu tshul-khrims from Zangskar: thus we have here yet another learned man from Zangskar of whom we know little apart from his name.

On several occasions 'Phags-pa shes-rab gave an exposition of the *Vajraśikhara-Tantra* at Lhasa, attracting a number of scholars who came to listen to him and acquire knowledge of this newly propagated tantric cycle. His reputation as a translator and teacher gained him a considerable following. Four of his colleagues, namely gNyal-pa nyi-ma shes-rab, Mar-pa rig-yes, gNyan-ston tshul-'bar, and sPyang-tshan-pa seng-ge rgyal-mtshan, who were closely associated with him, were called the Four Sons of Zangskar (*Zangs-skar bu-bzhi*).

When the king of Gu-ge, rTse-lde, son of 'Od-lde, summoned a religious council (*chos-khor*) in 1076 A.D. the Zangskar Translator seems to have played a leading role among all the assembled scholars. Each scholar expounded the part of Buddhist doctrine in which he was an expert. The Zangskar Translator had an excellent knowledge of the *Anuttara* and *Yoga* Tantras, especially of the latter. The second half of the eleventh century was in fact the period of an extensive propagation of different tantric cycles: it was also the time when Mi-la ras-pa and Dam-pa sangs-rgyas were teaching the practice of meditation (*sgrub-bryud*).

During his life-time, the Zangskar Translator travelled to Nepal and to Kashmir where he spent a certain amount of time working with Indian and Kashmiri scholars. He also spent a part of his time in Nga-ri (Western Tibet). However most of his activities as a translator and teacher were in Central Tibet. 'Phags-pa shes-rab was still alive in 1114. We learn that when one of his last disciples Chos-kyi-grags-pa (nicknamed Nying-phag-pa) came to Central Tibet from Purang in 1108 as a boy of fourteen to study, he found the Zangskar Translator building the Bo-dong monastery; he remained with him as a student for six years.

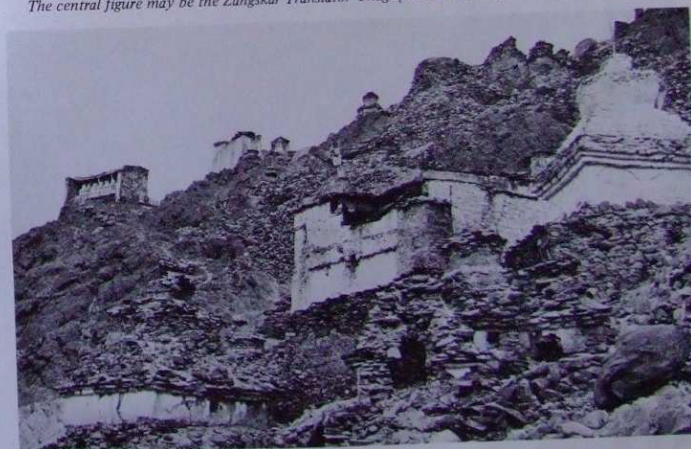
From the limited amount of information available about the Zangskar Translator it would appear that he played an important role in establishing the Buddhist religion in Tibet. Most of his activities took place in Central Tibet. He was however also active in his homeland, for as we will see presently, two of the early monasteries in Zangskar are attributed to him by later tradition.

The 'Chronicles of Zangskar' may suggest that the religious foundation of Sani with the Kanika Chöten, Pipiting, and Byams-gling (presumably Karsha *Byams-pa-gling*, see page 48 below) are the earliest religious establishments in Zangskar even before the Tibetan occupation (10th century onwards). The old rock-reliefs at Sani, Tonde, Karsha and Muni indicate the existence of

26. For these and other references concerning 'Phags-pa Shes-rab see *The Blue Annals*, pp 70, 232, 354-5, 407, 1009; *Bu-ston*, Part II, pp 218-19; Jean Naudou, *Les Bouddhistes Kashmiriens au Moyen Age*, Paris 1968, Chapter VI.
27. Twenty four works translated by 'Phags-pa Shes-rab are included in the Tibetan Canon of the Peking Edition. The translation of the *Vajraśikhara Tantra* which he made with Kumārakalāśa is not included in the Canon but the one made by Karmavajra and Tshul-khrims.



28. Mural of lamas, the only such one in the temple of Eleven-Headed Avalokiteśvara at Karsha. An inscription just below purports to be a record of the temple, but does not help identification. The central figure may be the Zangskar Translator 'Phags-pa shes-rab, the founder of Karsha.



29. The temple of Eleven-Headed Avalokiteśvara at Karsha.



24. Mañjuśrī, another ancient wooden image at Sumda.



25. Modern stucco image of Nāropa in one of the Dzongkhul caves.



26. Modern image of Vajrabhairava with his female partner at Tonde monastery.



27. Six-armed Mahākāla, mural in the sTon-pa lha-khang at Phugtal.

Other major defenders with high status as powerful divinities are Mahākāla, already attested as a favourite protector of Buddhist monasteries in India long before Buddhism reached Tibet, Hayagrīva, the 'Horse-Neck' god, Śrīdevī (*dPal-ldan lha-mo*) and the fierce Dharmarāja (*Dam-can Chos-rgyal*). These are all effectively *dam-can* meaning 'possessed of the vow' which they have been forced to take in defence of the Buddhist religion.

9. Lesser Defenders and minor divinities

While a distinction must be made clearly between the great defenders of Buddha rank and the many lesser divinities, there are some which might equally well be placed in either category, since the variations are gradual. Thus the Four Great Kings of the Quarters, especially Vaiśrāvāṇa (*rNam-thos-sras*), king of the south, who is often represented in temples dedicated to guardian divinities (*mGon-khang*) in his own right, may have equal claim to rank with such a divinity as Śrīdevī. The set of four is regularly seen portrayed in the temple-porches:

East: Dhṛtarāstra²² (*Yul'khor-brung*), white in colour and playing a *viṇā*.
 South: Virūdhaka (*Phags-skye-bo*), blue in colour, holding a sword and a lotus.
 West: Virūpākṣa (*Mig-mi-bzang*), red in colour, holding a noose and a *vajra*.
 North: Vaiśrāvāṇa (*rNam-thos-sras*), golden in colour, holding a jewel-banner and a mongoose.

The Planets (*Graha*) may certainly be regarded as minor:
 Śukra²³ (*Pa-wa-sangs*), red, seated on a lotus and holding a vessel with ambrosia.
 Bṛhaspati (*Phur-bu*), golden, seated on a lotus and holding a bow and arrow.
 Soma (*Zla-ba*), red, seated on a goose and holding a moon on a lotus and a lotus stalk.
 Budha (*Lha-pa*), golden, seated on a lotus and holding a garland and a vessel shaped like a bird.
 Aṅgāraka (*Mig-dmar*), red, seated on a goat and holding a dagger and a human head.
 Rāhu (*sGra-gean*), dark red, his upper body has a human form and lower that of a snake; he holds sun and moon.
 Āditya (*Nyi-ma*), red, seated on a chariot and holding the sun on a lotus and a lotus-stalk.
 Śanaīścara (*sPen-pa*), black, seated on a tortoise and holding a club while making threatening gesture.

Of local divinities, the *sa-bdag*, literally 'Lords of the soil' who usually occupy high-places such as mountain-tops, summits of passes and particular crags, and the *Klu* or water-spirits, who play an important part in Tibetan life, as may be illustrated from the biographies of lamas who help to keep them in suitable subjection.²⁴ Many other categories are known, whether deriving from Indian or later Tibetan sources, but they seldom play any part in liturgies except to find themselves driven forth ritually before the ceremony begins and even more seldom are they produced iconographically. *Pe-kar*, *rDo-rje Legs-pa* and *Shugs-ldan*²⁵ are among the few of whom images and paintings may be seen.

SURVEY OF MONASTIC FOUNDATIONS

As already mentioned above (pp. 11, 13), Zangskar took an active part in sponsoring and propagating the Buddhist religion during the period of the Great Translator Rin-chen bzang-po and the subsequent centuries. It produced several learned men of whom the Zangskar Translator

22. The description of the Four Great Kings is taken from their maṇḍala as described in the *DGPTS Tantra* and in Vajravarma's commentary, I, T. Vol 76, No 3453, pp 159-3-1 ff. Their maṇḍala is presided over by Vajrapāṇi: dark green in colour, holding a five-tipped vajra and a bell.
 23. The description of the Planets is also taken from Vajravarma's commentary, pp 162-4-7 ff. Their maṇḍala is also presided over by Vajrapāṇi having the appearance of Trailokyaśākyā.
 24. For examples see D.L.S. *Four Lamas of Dolpo*, Vol 1, pp 192-6, 198, 200, 208, 211-2, 219-21.
 25. For descriptions see *Oracles and Demons of Tibet*, pp 94 ff.



22. Part of a fairly late mural at Karsha illustrating an enthroned Avalokiteśvara and the scene of Śākyamuni's final nirvāṇa. To the right of the recumbent Buddha is the funerary kiln (gdung-khang) in which the body is cremated, of a totally Tibetan style. Just above is the vase in which the relics are to be preserved, and below is a row of mourning monks, one of whom is receiving Buddha's begging bowl for the last time



23. An unusual stucco image in the mGon-khang at Tonde. Instead of being inset within the head-dress of Lokēśvara as is normally the case, the small surmounting image of the Buddha Amitābha is shaped so as to compose the whole pointed head-dress. Although we would hesitate to give an early date to the image, the face is remarkably Indian in its features and the whole effect is more Śiva-like than Buddha-like. A suitable identification is Lokēśvara (=Avalokiteśvara as 'Lord of the World').

7. Lamas who are recognized as Buddhas

The Tibetan term Lama (correct spelling: *bla-ma*) translates Sanskrit *guru*, meaning 'religious master'. The cult of such 'religious masters' assumes significant proportions in late Indian Buddhism with the cult of the Eighty-Four Mahāsiddhas or Great Tantric Masters, several of whom are the authors of commentaries on the tantras referred to in the above paragraph. Some of them have special significance for Tibetan Buddhists because of the part which they played in the conversion of Tibet. Foremost of these is Padmasambhava, the 'Lotus-born', more commonly known by Tibetans as *Guru Rin-po-che*, the 'Precious Guru', who is believed to have played a major part in quelling the antagonistic local demons of Tibet in the 8th century and so making it possible for the new religion to take root. He certainly belongs to the category of the Eighty-Four Mahāsiddhas; it might be possible to identify him with Saroruha, who is specifically listed as one of them. Of special importance to the Tibetan Ka-gyü-pa (*bKa'-bryud-pa*) Order are Tilopa and his pupil Nāropa, whose Tibetan pupil Marpa transmitted in turn their teachings to Mi-la ras-pa and so to their whole order, known as the Transmitted Word (*bKa'-bryud-pa*). A persistent tradition in western Tibet locates Nāropa's hermitage near Srinagar and he is said to have founded Lamayuru Monastery and to have meditated in various places in Zangskar (see below p. 76). This tradition appears already in Rin-chen bzang-po's biography (below p. 90) but it is difficult to relate this account to biographical material concerning Nāropa and Marpa which clearly locate Nāropa's hermitage of Phullahari in Tirhut (modern Bihar).

Apart from the Eighty-Four Mahāsiddhas the Tibetans also make a cult of earlier Indian masters such as Nāgārjuna and Āryadeva, Aśvaghosa, Asaṅga, Vasubandhu, Dharmakīrti and especially Atiśa who spent his last years in Tibet where he died in 1054. Famous Tibetan lamas were believed retrospectively to have reincarnated previously in India as such renowned Buddhist teachers.

Especially renowned amongst such Tibetan lamas is Tsong-kha-pa (1357-1419) who holds a position in *dGe-lugs-pa* (Yellow Hat) altars entirely analogous to the position of Padmasambhava for the older Tibetan orders, namely the Sa-kya-pa and the Ka-gyü-pa as well as the rNying-ma-pa (the old order proper). (These orders are often referred to in popular books on Tibet as the 'Red Hats' as though there were only one order as distinct from the 'Yellow Hats'.) Images of Tsong-kha-pa, flanked by his two chief disciples, rGyal-tshab Dharma Rin-chen and mKhas-grub-rje, and referred to collectively by Tibetans as *Yab-Sras-gSum*, 'Father and (spiritual) Sons all three', often hold the main place in the sanctuaries of *dGe-lugs-pa* temples, where only such a primary Buddha image as that of Śākyamuni may be permitted to remove them to second place. Padmasambhava holds a similar position in rNying-ma-pa temples, where he is usually flanked by his two goddess-consorts.

The *Brug-pa* Ka-gyü-pas, who are strong in Ladakh (Vol I, pp. 120-32) and Zangskar, also have their own favourite lamas, foremost of whom is the Zhab-drung Ngag-dbang rNam-rgyal who unified Bhutan (*Brug-yul*) in the 17th century and confirmed its independence of central Tibet and the Dalai Lamas.

8. Major Defenders of the Doctrine

Under this heading we include those fearsome divinities who are accorded effectively the rank of Bodhisattvas and even of Buddhas through their identification with other tranquil forms, whether of Buddhas or of Lamas. Thus Vajrabhairava (*rDo-rje 'jigs-byed*) deriving presumably from the Hindu divinity Bhairava (the 'Terrible') is said to be a fierce manifestation of Mañjuśrī, of whom Tsong-kha-pa is regarded as a special incarnation. Thus Vajrabhairava is the chief tutelary divinity of the *dGe-lugs-pa* Order, and his image holds an important place in their temples and presides for instance at Spitik Monastery (Vol I, p. 109).

For the rNying-ma-pas the 'Tiger-God' (*sTag-lha*) and the Lion-Headed Goddess (*Seng-ge gdong-ma*) have special importance and in so far as they are regarded as emanations of Padmasambhava, they also have at least by implication Buddha-rank. In this respect too one may draw attention to his eight specific manifestations.²¹

21. Concerning these see D.L.S. *Buddhist Himalaya*, pp. 228 and 295, as well as the illustration on Plate 36 there.

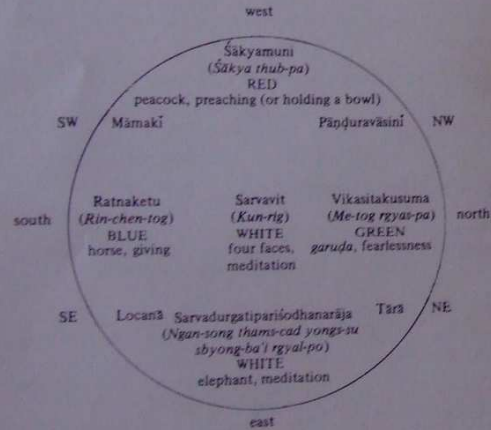
Yet another set of Buddhas closely associated with Śākyamuni is represented by the Buddhas of Medicine, of which Bhaiṣajyaguru (*sMan-gyi-bla*) is the chief, and very often represented on murals alone. Iconographically he is identical with Śākyamuni when shown as Akshobhya (viz. blue in colour and making the earth-witness gesture) with the addition of the myrobalan plant in his right hand. The names of the others are:

Sanskrit	Tibetan
Suparikirtita Nāmaśrī	mTshan-legs yongs-grags-dpal
Svaraghoṣa Rāja	sGra-dbyangs rgyal-po
Suvarṇabhadrā Vimalaratna Prabhāsa	gSer-bzang dri-med rin-chen snang
Aśokottamaśrī	Mya-ngan-med mchog-dpal
Dharmakīrti Śāgaraghoṣa	Chos-sgrags rgya-mtsho'i dbyangs
Abhijñārāja	mNgon-mkhyen rgyal-po
Ratnaśikhin	Rin-chen gtsug-tor-can
Śākyamuni	Śākya thub-pa

Under the present general heading we may also note the set of Thirty-five Confessional Buddhas¹⁷ (*ltung-bshags sangs-rgyas*) of whom it is superfluous to list here all the names, and note once again the set of a Thousand Buddhas, relating both to the idea of the timelessness and infinity of Buddhahood as well as to a specific miracle attributed to Śākyamuni at the town of Śrāvastī where he demonstrated his absolute transcendence by manifesting a thousand images of himself.

3. The Five Cosmic Buddhas

These have been listed and described in Vol I, pp.10-14 together with the Four Goddesses who were early added to the set. However, we should also note here a variation of the set of Five to which we made reference on p.34, and draw the reader's attention to the fact that in different cycles the set of the Five may be given different names and its iconography modified accordingly.



17. For iconographic representations of this and other sets see *Mystic Art of Ancient Tibet*, p. 113 ff.
 18. This maṇḍala described briefly in the first version of the *DGFS Tantra* (T.T., vol V, Nr 116, 56a-56b) is referred to as the basic maṇḍala of the *Tantra (ras-ba'i dkyil-'khor)*. A very detailed description of this maṇḍala is given in Vajrapāṇi's commentary, T.T., vol 76, Nr 3453, pp. 124-1-8 ff.

4. The celestial Bodhisattvas

Whereas Maitreya could be suitably listed above as a quasi-historical figure (for as such he is clearly envisaged), the other great Bodhisattvas may be regarded as a later invention of the *Mahāyāna* which made available to the Buddhist devotion and aspiration a number of divine beings comparable to the great gods of Hinduism. The most popular of these divine beings is Avalokiteśvara (*sPyan-ras-gzigs*), the 'Lord of Compassion', also known as Lokēśvara, 'Lord of the World', a title which he holds in common with Hindu Śiva. He is the patron divinity of Tibet and as such is believed (by later tradition) to have been bodily present in the royal person of *Srong-btsan sgam-po*, the first of Tibet's great religious kings (died c.650 A.D.); as well as in the reincarnating line of Dalai Lamas ever since the 5th of the series won by force of arms (1642) both political and religious supremacy in the country. Iconographically Avalokiteśvara appears in a number of different forms, of which the most common are the Four-Armed form (*Phyag-bzhi-pa*), the Eleven-Headed (*bCu-gcig-zhal*) and the Eleven-Headed form together with a Thousand Arms and a Thousand Eyes (*Phyag-stong sPyan-stong*).¹⁹ Avalokiteśvara is a later form of Padmapāṇi (Lotus-in-Hand) who in early *Mahāyāna* tradition pairs with Vajrapāṇi (Vajra-in-Hand) as attendants of Śākyamuni. Vajrapāṇi is one of the most interesting of the Buddhist divinities, as the steady increase in his importance from that of personal guardian to that of a divine emanation of supreme buddhahood can be so well illustrated iconographically.²⁰ His significance changes in fact with the significance of the *vajra* or thunderbolt in the history of Buddhism. Regarded at first as a powerful weapon in the hand of a guardian attendant, it comes to symbolize the effective power of buddhahood itself with the result that the last phase of Indian Buddhism is named after it as the *Vajrayāna*, the *Way* or the *Vehicle of the vajra*, and so the one who wields the *vajra* inevitably grows in importance.

Vajrapāṇi is also the leader of the set of Sixteen Great Bodhisattvas as listed in Vol I (p.35). This set, which belongs to the group of Yoga Tantras centring on Vairocana, is described as emerging out of supreme buddhahood in the first chapter of the fundamental *Yoga Tantra* known as the 'Compendium of the Essence of all Buddhas' (*Sarva-tathāgata-tattva-saṃgraha*). Throughout the following chapters they appear again and again in various maṇḍalas with some variations in individual names and they also appear in feminine guise. This explains the existence of the maṇḍalas with such feminine sets as noted in the *Sum-tsek Temple* at Alchi (Vol. I, p.61).

The other major Bodhisattva, Mañjuśrī, the Lord of Wisdom, has already been discussed²⁴ in Vol I (see pages 14, 53 & 64 in particular). His origin is more obscure but as his alternative name Mañjuḥṣa (*Jam-dpal-dbyangs*) meaning 'Gentle Voice' suggests, he appears on the scene in early *Mahāyāna* sūtras as the mouth-piece of the Buddha.

5. Goddesses of Buddha rank

Of these the most important are the Goddess 'Perfection of Wisdom' (*Prajñāpāramitā*) and the 'Saviouress' (*Tārā*), already referred to in Vol I (p.14) and sufficiently illustrated. A special form of Tārā, who has many manifestations, is the 'Goddess of the White Parasol', *Uṣṇisattāpatrā*, (*gDugs-dkar*) with her elaborate head-dress and her thousand arms.

The four goddesses, Locaṇā, Māmakī, Pāṇḍuravāsīnī and Tārā, are manifestly all of Buddha rank because of their close association with the set of the Five Buddhas, but only Tārā seems to have an important cult of her own. Tārā has two major manifestations as white and as green, white being a universal colour, while green identifies her as the partner of Amoghasiddhi, the Buddha of the north (in this respect please see Vol. I, Plate XV and our comment on p.56).

6. Great tantric divinities of Buddha rank

The great tantric divinities of Buddha rank appear canonically in the *Anuttara-Tantras* and as such they are the latest important additions to the Buddhist pantheon. They represent a fierce and grotesque form of buddhahood, which is achieved by association with them through a ritualized process of the deliberate transcending of good and evil, of all that is attractive and all that is abominable. These great tantric divinities are primarily Kālacakra (*Dus-kyi-'khor-lo*), Guhyasamāja (*gŚang-ba 'dus-pa*), Samvara (*bDe-mchog*), Hevajra (*Kye-rdo-rje*) and Heruka. Probably of Tibetan origin is the fierce divinity Ka-gya' or Ka-gya-kha (*bKa-'bryad-kha*, literally 'Eight-Word-Mouth'), whose cult is fostered mainly by the *rNying-ma-pa* and *bKa-'bryud-pa* orders.

19. For other forms of Avalokiteśvara (168 in all) see *Indian Buddhist Iconography*, pp 394-431.

20. The change can be followed through the index-references of Śārapati in *The Image of the Buddha*. See especially pp.37, 66, 180, 188, 345, 365 and 425, as well as the references given in our Vol I.

and which they translated to form the first part of their canon, when this finally took shape in the 13th century. The second main part consists of the great *Mahāyāna sūtras*, mentioned just above, and the third part of those *tantras* which had received a form of canonical status already in Indian Buddhism. These last are easily identified by the large number of commentaries written concerning them by Indian Buddhist scholars, who are often at pains to interpret the ritualistic extravagances (some might even regard them as obscurities) in a satisfactorily Buddhist philosophical sense.¹⁵ These commentaries, like those on the *sūtras*, were translated into Tibetan in order to form a second supplementary part of the Tibetan Canon, known as the Tenjur (*bsTan-gyur*) or 'Translation of Treatises', as distinct from the Kanjur (*bKa'-gyur*) or 'Translation of the (Buddha-) Word'.

As well as all these works subsequently regarded as canonical, many liturgical texts were translated from Sanskrit into Tibetan for use in the monastic ceremonies which the Tibetans, at least in the early stages, modelled closely upon those which were followed in Indian, and Nepalese Buddhist establishments. Nor must one ignore the likelihood of other influences from the ancient city-states (especially Khotan) of Central Asia, which from the 7th to the 9th century were subject to Tibetan control. Tibetan religious music and chant, as well as Tibetan iconography and painting, seem to owe much in that earlier period to such contacts in Central Asia, where Persian influences from the west met with Chinese influences from the east. From the 10th century onwards the vast importation of all forms of Buddhist culture from the Indian side (referred to by Tibetan historians as the Second Spreading of the Doctrine in Tibet) tend to submerge much of the earlier Central Asian influences, but some of these certainly remain active up to this day.

The liturgical texts, in so far as they are concerned with the invocation and honouring of particular sets of divinities, are important for iconographic purposes, for as is only to be expected, temple-walls are usually painted with the divinities most frequently invoked, and the sanctuary of the temple invariably contains images of the Buddha-images most favoured by any particular religious order. We have already illustrated this point in our descriptions of temples in Volume I, especially for example of the Alchi *Du-khang*. Now many of the Praises (Sanskrit: *stotra*) on which such liturgies are based, are to be found in the Tenjur, but apart from these there are many more in circulation devoted to lesser deities, who have no canonical standing, being treated as formerly heretical, but now converted forcibly to the Buddha's Doctrine, which they are pressed to serve as defenders. This process of converting extraneous deities to forced service must have begun very early in the history of Buddhism, for it is witnessed by the presence of those pre-Buddhist Indian divinities, the yakshas and yakshinis who adorn the stone railings of some of the earliest known stūpas. While it may thus be misleading to treat this tendency as typical of the *Mahāyāna*, it was nonetheless inevitable that the number of such 'converted' divinities should continue to increase throughout the history of Buddhism in India, even the great Hindu gods such as Vishṇu (Tibetan: *'khyab-'jug*) and Mahādevī or Kālī (Tibetan: *dPal-ldan lHa-mo*) being treated in this manner, not to mention the companies of lesser ones, guardians of the ten directions, celestial bodies and the rest. In their turn the Tibetans added to the number from their own stock of local divinities, and the way in which this was done is well illustrated by the stories of Rin-chen bzang-po's coercive activities as recounted in the appendix to his biography (see below p. 93). It is easily appreciated that the Tibetan pantheon which finally evolved proves to be a complex one.

For the purpose of our present study we may consider them under the following categories:

1. The Buddha Śākyamuni and his disciples.
2. Buddha emanations closely related with the Buddha Śākyamuni.
3. The Five Cosmic Buddhas (*Pañcatathāgata*).
4. The celestial Bodhisattvas.
5. Goddesses of Buddha rank.
6. The great tantric divinities of Buddha rank.
7. Lamas who are recognized as Buddhas.
8. Major Defenders of the Doctrine.
9. Lesser Defenders and minor divinities generally.

15. See D.L. Snellgrove, *Hevajra Tantra*, London 1957 and many reprints, vol. 1, p. 19 ff.

1. The Buddha Śākyamuni and his disciples

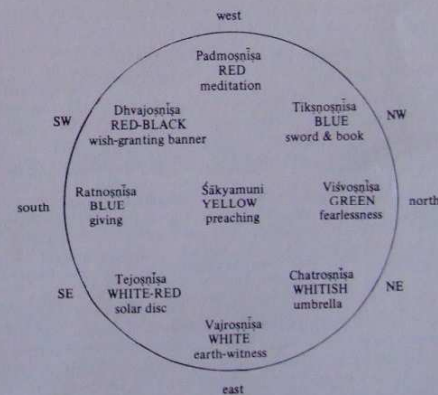
The early Buddhist traditions in India, extending well into the Mahāyāna stage, centred directly on Śākyamuni as a quasi-historical person, and these traditions have been preserved in Tibet despite later developments. Thus Śākyamuni is frequently portrayed in different postures and against different backgrounds relating to the main events of his life. The more popular of the stories of his previous births (*Jātaka*) are also depicted. Very popular too in Tibet is the set of sixteen or eighteen Arhats, literally 'Worthy Ones', representing those of his more famous disciples who experienced the bliss of *nirvāna*. This set is a conventionalized one seemingly of Central Asian or Chinese origin and it bears no relationship with the earlier quasi-historical account of the 500 Arhats who were supposedly available for the famous meeting at Rājagriha immediately after Śākyamuni's decease. Also often associated with Śākyamuni iconographically are his two leading disciples Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana, while in the scene of his final *nirvāna* his favourite disciple Ananda is seen taking a leading place.

2. Buddha emanations closely associated with Śākyamuni

Early Buddhism frequently records a tradition of certain Buddhas having preceded Śākyamuni, sometimes seven in all, sometimes twenty-four, and later conceived of as a thousand or indeed infinite in number. Connected with this tradition is the early belief in the Future Buddha, the Bodhisattva (Buddha-to-be) Maitreya. In the *Mahāyāna* this notion of the timelessness (or 'eternity') of self-manifesting buddhahood is represented by the so-called 'Buddhas of the Three Times' (*Dus-gsum Sangs-rgyas*), where Dipaṅkara (*Mar-me-mdzad*) represents the Past, Śākyamuni the Present and Maitreya (*Byams-pa*) the Future.

The Bodhisattva Maitreya as Future Buddha became the centre of a very special cult and we have already drawn attention in Volume I to the prevalence of this in Ladakh, where so many temples have been dedicated to him.

We may also associate with Śākyamuni the set of the Eight *Uṣṇīṣas*¹⁶ as represented in one of the maṇḍalas of the *Durgatipariśodhana Tantra*, where they appear as his emanations to the eight points of the compass. Such a set would appear to represent an early stage of the *Mahāyāna*, where no feminine partners are involved as in the case of the later set of Five Buddhas.



16. The *uṣṇīṣa* refers to the top-knot or 'wisdom-bump' on a Buddha's head. For more on the subject see Snellgrove, *The Image of the Buddha*, pp. 54 and 76. All the *Uṣṇīṣa* divinities here are seated on lunar discs resting on lotuses. This mandala is described in the second version of the *Durgatipariśodhana Tantra*. The Tibetan translation is in T.T., vol. V, Nr 117, 107b ff. Compare the set below, p. 32.



21. A crowned Śākyamuni (referred to in Tibetan as Jo-bo, 'The Lord') which is the central image in the main temple at Santi. The trellis-like back of the throne is supported by the vehicles of the Five Buddhas, of which dwarfs and horses can be seen in the photograph.

heavily and then to snow. We halted for a while amongst the rocks, hoping that it would pass, but it was getting worse and worse all the time. The old man decided to spend the night in a small abandoned shelter. I protested, arguing that I was not prepared to stay in such a place and that it was far too wet to dry my clothes. I told him that if I stayed, I might well die of cold. Thus I asked for his horse, so that I could ride on faster, while he might stay if he wanted to. He agreed to this plan and so we changed horses, but when I was mounting he came up to me, took my hand and felt it for a moment. Then he said 'You won't die, we can all stay here', and he took the horse away again. This time the boy came to my rescue. He began to cry, and the old man, somewhat baffled and angry, agreed to continue the journey. We reached the village very late that evening. *Meme-la* must have been worried about me, for when we reached the first house he told me to go and stay with the *amchi*, the local doctor. By the next morning I had recovered from what I thought was the final trial on my way out of Zangskar.

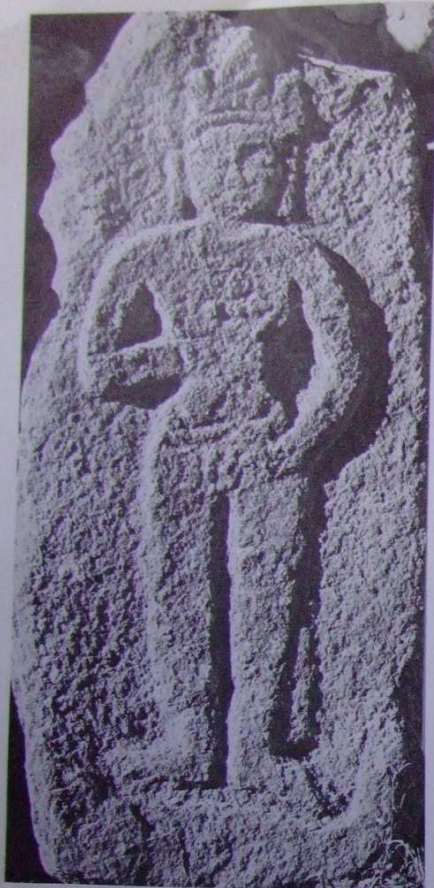
I went to see the man in charge of the road-works to inquire about the possibility of getting a lift to Kargil with one of their three-ton trucks. He said that there were two trucks going to Kargil that morning and that I would certainly get a seat. The truck arrived soon before noon, carrying a group of Europeans who were climbing peaks around the Penzi La. The group had practically bought the trucks and there was no argument or power the man in charge could use to persuade one of the drivers to give me a seat. All they offered to me was a place in the back. I had no choice but to accept it. We left Tashi Thonde in the afternoon. It was cold and misty and it rained sporadically. Several times the trucks were bogged down in the mud on the road and on two occasions drove into nearby streams. Instead of one day it took us two days to reach Kargil. The journey on the back of the truck was not at all comfortable, as I was continually thrown about as the truck drove over stones and holes. We reached Kargil at midnight. I was quite exhausted but glad to have returned safely from the expedition. Three days later I was in Changspa with my friend Yeshes Sonam and good food once more.

The following year, in September and October, I made another journey to Ladakh and Zangskar to complete some of the work unfinished in the summer of 1976, but it was a routine visit, less adventurous and much shorter.

THE TIBETAN BUDDHIST PANTHEON

Tibetan Buddhism, like later Indian Buddhism of which it is such a close copy, is often described by westerners as *tantric*. While this epithet is certainly an apt one so far as a large part of Tibetan religion is concerned, it can be misleading in that it takes no account of those other important aspects of Buddhism, which predate Indian Buddhist tantric developments (approximately 7th century A.D. onwards) and which still form an essential part of Tibetan Buddhism.¹⁴ From the 7th century A.D. onwards and with renewed zeal from the 10th century on to the 13th the Tibetans were busy importing from India all they could find of living Buddhist traditions, literary, liturgical and iconographic, and it is important to emphasize that the incorporation of tantric literature and rites as an acceptable form of Buddhism even for celibate Indian monks certainly did not cause the disappearance of the earlier *Mahāyāna* tradition as represented by the Perfection of Wisdom (*Prajñāpāramitā*) literature, by the great *Mahāyāna Sūtras* and by the ever increasing commentarial and exegetical literature on these fundamental texts. Nor did this tantric incorporation destroy the whole tradition of monastic Buddhism, which continued to base itself upon ancient *Vinaya* (monastic discipline) texts, which may be traced to very early sources parallel with the *Vinaya* of the *Theravādin* School. The Tibetans happened upon the *Vinaya* of the *Mūla-Sarvāstivādin* School, which was still in use in monasteries of northern India

14. The incorporation of tantric traditions into Buddhism was clearly a gradual process, of which it is impossible to date the beginnings with any confidence. However the earliest Indian Buddhist commentaries, composed in Sanskrit and now available in the Tibetan Tenjur in Tibetan translation, seem to have been written from the 7th century onwards, thus suggesting that from then on they have gained a certain acceptability in scholarly and monastic circles.



19. Another pre-Tibetan rock-carving in the fields of Muni village. The figure appears to be holding with the right hand a crossed-*vajra* (*viśvava vajra*) level with the heart, thus plausibly identifiable as *Viśvapāni*. The figure is approximately one metre high.



20. One of several damaged wooden images, 70-80 cm high, of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, which now are standing around inside the three temples at *Sunda*, and which undoubtedly date from about 1000 A.D. when this monastery was founded. They represent a purely Indian Kashmiri style, remarkably similar to early wood carvings in Nepal. This particular one, of which the missing robe is indicated by its lower edge, is an unidentifiable Bodhisattva.

fault. He told me that the first child died a month ago in the same way, even when I was not there. I was sad but there was nothing to be done.

In all the commotion I forgot all about the horse and was getting ready to resume the journey alone, but the father of my host did not forget his promise. He asked me to wait a while, went into the next house and came out with an old man and a boy, almost a child. He told me that they were going to Tashi Thonde and had one extra horse that I could have. We all agreed that I would pay 50 rupees for the horse and that we would reach Tashi Thonde in two days. The old man and the boy had very good horses, swift, well fed and eager to run. My horse was rather old and slow by nature. The old man put on my horse a large sack of *tsampa*, covered it with a rag and told me that now I could mount it. There I was, sitting with my cameras and rucksack on a sack of flour with a horse little bigger than a pony. After two hours of slow travel, the old man, whom I addressed as *meme-la* (grandfather), decided to stop and have some refreshment. We entered a house where one of his nephews prepared us some good Tibetan tea. From the conversation, kept at a low tone, I deduced that the old man was unsatisfied with the price for the horse and was determined to delay the journey by a day or two, hoping that I would compensate him for the extra days. He observed that he had all the time in the world. One hour later I was again invited to dismount from the horse and have a smoke. I excused myself by saying that my horse was so slow that it would be better if I carried on as they with swift horses would easily catch up with me. He agreed and off I went. I got myself a handsome stick and got the horse into a gallop. On my way I met people going in the opposite direction, and through them I passed the message to the old man that we would meet as agreed at the place where we intended to stay for the night. I kept up a good pace for there was very little left of the day and the halting place was still far away. By eight in the evening, when it was getting dark, I began to wonder about the wisdom of my decision. I knew that the place was not too far away, but it was getting too dark to recognise. Peering into the dusk, I began to think forlornly that I might have to stay in the open, and as the *Penzi La* was only some two hours distant, I knew that the night would be very cold. Then happily I noticed a thick tongue of smoke rising high in the sky and immediately made towards it. It proved to be the very place I was looking for, and approaching it, I found a shelter for shepherds and a stone-built enclosure for cattle. Coming closer, I saw two girls milking *dzo-mos*. Attempts at conversation were unavailing. They looked at me, giggled and disappeared fast, like marmots, in a small aperture in one of the shelters. Soon afterwards a woman came out whom I addressed as *ama-la* (mother) hoping that maybe she would talk to me. She looked at me, laughed, and said 'I am not *ama*, I am unmarried,' and she invited me inside. We made a fire and while I boiled water for tea she went to finish milking her share of the *dzo-mos*. I unloaded the horse let it loose on the pasture, and brought my pack inside the shelter. When she had finished milking the *dzo-mos*, we made some good tea and mixed *tsampa* in it together with butter and sugar. When we had finished this repast, my kind hostess (her name was Wangmo) took a drum lying by the fire, struck it rhythmically and began to sing. When she had finished the first song, I urged her to continue. It was truly delightful to hear such spontaneous singing which went so well with the atmosphere of the shelter illuminated by the burning fire with the darkness and the howling wind outside. After a few songs the other two girls crawled in and joined her in singing, passing the drum from one to the other as though competing who could strike it best. Once in a while they paused, agreed what to sing next, and then continued. It was wonderful to listen to their singing, unpretentious and genuine, flowing naturally from their hearts. The melody and the circumstances made a strong impression on me, as I thus experienced their living culture so intimately.

Next morning the chief problem was to find the horse. I wandered among the rocks looking for the wretched animal for two hours, and finally found it hidden between two large boulders. We had some tea; then I loaded the horse, bid my hosts farewell, and set out for the *Penzi La* which I reached just after noon. I made some tea, ate some *tsampa* and began to climb the pass. As I took a steep track, the sack of *tsampa* fell off the horse and rolled a long way down the mountain side. I struggled to get it back on to the horse to the sound of exploding gunpowder, blasting the rocks above me, for work on the new road to Padum was then in full progress. Finally, I reached the top of the pass, quite exhausted, pulling the horse after me. Just below the pass I met my two companions. The old man was furious with me for abandoning them, but soon calmed down and we continued together towards Tashi Thonde. Suddenly it began to rain quite

and copying the inscriptions. I was delighted to spend a day in tranquillity in this very beautiful monastery. Late in the afternoon I returned to my little house in Ja. At the end of the evening meal which I shared with the whole family, an old woman came into the house, undressed herself to the waist and made a long discourse about the pains in her chest. At the end she asked me for medicine. What to do? All I had was a set of antibiotics, dispirins and some diarrhoea pills. I explained as well as I could that I could not help her and why. She would not believe me and left the house in great anger; next morning she even returned to ask me whether I had changed my mind. I was as polite as I could be and after an uneasy conversation I left the place accompanied by a young man who was helping me with my packs. I realised in retrospect that I might well have given her some hope if only with two dispirin tablets. In the afternoon we reached Itchar, a beautiful village on the right bank of the Lingti river. The young man left me and went back to his village. At Itchar I found an idle monk who offered to come with me to Muni where I obtained accommodation with his relatives. The monastery was practically abandoned, as all the monks had gone to Leh to see the Dalai Lama. That night I slept on the roof in a thick layer of hay with the monk and three other men. As I had a slight headache I decided to take a dispirin. One of the men noticed me taking medicine and as can be imagined I was in trouble again. He told me about the pains in his left leg. Rheumatism, I thought to myself. This time I had no intention of getting into a troublesome situation, so I gave him a dispirin and said that it might or might not help him. He thought for a while and said perhaps it would be better for him to rub the pill directly into his thigh instead of swallowing it as I did. I agreed rather helplessly and he started rubbing it in, a process which took him some time. Next morning he woke up quite happy telling me that he had a very good night without any pains.

Next day I visited the Bardan monastery, where I had a pleasant talk with a young monk who showed me the temples. I then drank some tea with him, gave him all my rice and other food, and left for Padum. Here I stayed for two days with the local veterinarian, visiting the mosque, the temples and the nearby monastery of Tagrimo and the village of Pipiting. Then I made a one-day visit to the monastery of Tonde where I passed me time with three elderly monks who were unable to go to Leh. Having returned to Padum I made preparations to return to Kargil. As horses were not available I decided to walk by myself; apart from my sleeping bag and cameras, I carried some tea, a lump of butter, salt and a small bag of tsampa. Being quite well exercised by then, I expected to reach Rangdum in two days. Setting out early in the morning, I visited Sani monastery on the way, where I had some tea with an old deaf man, and resumed my march. It was a cloudy and cold day; in the fields people were collecting late crops of barley and peas. I passed the village of Phe and as I was approaching the small village of Manda, heavy rain fell, soaking me in no time. From the nearby field a young man approached me and asked me what I was doing in Zangskar. Indeed I began to wonder myself what I was doing amidst this wilderness of stones, scanty cultivated fields and scattered herds of animals. He kindly offered me hospitality in his house, so we went there, and he offered me accommodation on a veranda beside the domestic temple (*lha-khang*). In the evening we sat around the kitchen fire drinking a lot of chang. His wife, one of the most beautiful women I have seen in Zangskar, was busying herself preparing something to eat. She boiled some water and then threw into it several handfuls of tsampa and stirred it for a while with a stick, thus producing one of the most tasteless concoctions I have ever had. (Three days later I had the same food with the monks at Rangdum but it tasted rather better, as it contained no lumps of gluey and uncooked flour and so was quite soothing on the stomach.) However, I was grateful for what I received. My host and his father advised me strongly that I should not travel alone and that I should take a horse, promising that they would see to the matter in the morning. The next day when I came down to the kitchen I found my host lamenting over his little son whom I had seen the night before running about the house half naked, while his wife was sitting silent, staring at me with her large black eyes. The child was continually falling into a coma and they were afraid that he might die. He shook him in his hands, shouted in an effort to wake him up and finally taking a book from the chapel, put it on the child's head and started invoking Buddhist divinities, especially the Buddha of Medicine, Bhaishajya Guru. When he finished his invocations he turned to me and said 'All this came on us because of you. Leave my house immediately!' I attempted to talk to him but did not succeed in convincing him that it had nothing to do with me. Fortunately his father came into the house and made signs to me to come out. When we were in the courtyard he assured me that it was not my



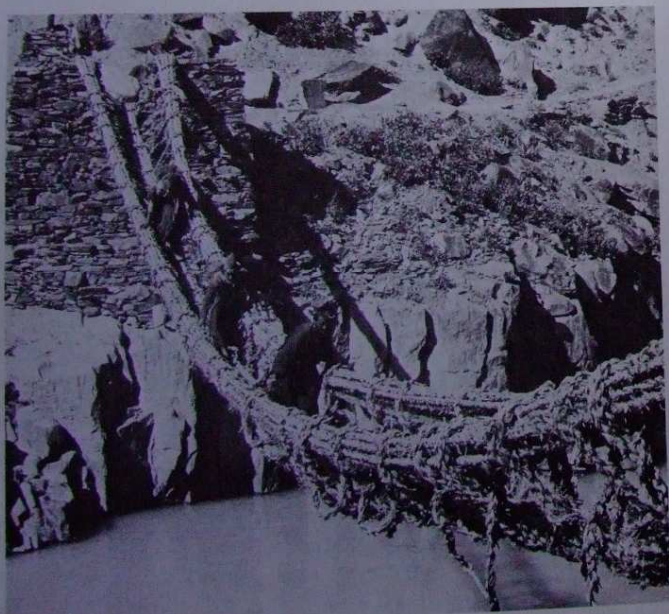
17. The village of Teta as approached from the south.



18. The entrance chöten and front of Sani monastery. The Kanika Chöten, not seen in the photograph, is in a courtyard to the rear.



15. Monks of Muni monastery.



16. The bridge at Ja, made of plaited willow, one of five such bridges which cross the Lingti river.

On returning from Zangla to Padum we met yet another army group which had come from Kuru, led this time by Major Vijay Gaikwad. They were on a similar mission as the other group, and intended to return to their base at Kuru by taking the track leading south along the Lingti river up to Kargya and then across the mountains to Ladakh. Two days later I parted company with Ralph and Capt. Kambargimath who both went back to Kargil the same way as we had come. I was somewhat sad to see them go for both of them helped me so much in different ways. Then Major Gaikwad offered his help and invited me to join him. Setting out for Kargya we encountered considerable difficulty in finding porters to take our loads to Muni, our first stop, but thanks to the Major's initiative and persuasion we finally collected a sufficient number of men and set out in the early afternoon, walking along the track that runs south on the left bank of the Lingti river. First we passed the village of Chila on the right bank, a cluster of houses with a small grove. Then we came to the impressively situated monastery of Bardan. There were no monks present as a good number of them had gone to Leh to see the Dalai Lama, while the rest were performing liturgies in the nearby village of Bibca.

At Muni we decided to have a good meal and bought a goat. While the soldiers were busy pitching the tents, making the fire and slaughtering the animal, I went to visit the monastery. The handful of monks who were left behind were delighted to see me, giving me good Tibetan tea. 15
 tsampa and butter. They showed me with great enthusiasm their newly painted temples, and I made arrangements with them for staying on my return from Kargya. On my way back to the tents a black mastiff rushed from among the houses and bit my leg badly. As I have seen people die in Ladakh of rabies my inevitable thought was: 'Have I got it now?' The affair was certainly worrying; I walked down to the river, washed the wound as well as I could and decided to hope for the best. That evening the meal was splendid. We drank, I especially, a lot of chang provided by the hospitable villagers. Next day we walked all the way to a small village of Surle where we found accommodation in a private house. On the way the soldiers amused themselves shooting pigeons, of which there are masses to the south of Padum. A Tibetan might observe that it was no wonder I was bitten by a dog, having associated myself with the killing of living beings. The mountain scenery was breath-taking. The Lingti river flows in a very deep and narrow gorge with villages high above, strewn upon small and at times larger flat elevations among the mountain ridges. The deep blue sky and the colour of rocks in the full sunshine produced a most remarkable atmosphere of beauty and tranquillity.

Next day we crossed a rope bridge above Surle and visited the village of Ja and then Phugtal, one of the most impressive monasteries in Zangskar. In the late afternoon we crossed another rope 16
 bridge near the monastery and walked towards the village of Teta, which is the largest south of 17
 Padum. The cultivated fields spread widely below, to the south and north of the village. There was no local temple to visit there though a new one was being built. In fact we were offered accommodation inside it as it was not yet painted or consecrated. From Teta we reached Kargya by three in the afternoon. This was our last halt together in Zangskar, as the Major and his soldiers intended to continue across the mountains towards the east, reaching Kuru within two days, while I planned to go back to Padum and then to Kargil. We had an abundant farewell dinner with a number of toasts in remembrance of our past days together and a future reunion. As a parting present Major Gaikwad gave me several cans of green peas and potatoes and, what I appreciated most, two bottles of rum. He also arranged a horse for me to take to Teta. Next morning I waved them off a little sad and at the same time anxious to get on with my own travelling and work. The man with the horse was waiting for me outside the house. When I brought my packs the first thing he asked me was how much I would pay him. I simply answered saying that he agreed with the Major to take me to Teta at the government price of 12 rupees. He smiled and said 'well, the Major is not here, it will be double.' As I wasn't prepared to argue with him I said 'Come on, let's go, we'll sort it out when we get there.' On arrival in Teta I gave him 12 rupees, shook his hand and thanked him for his help. He tried to argue but finally we agreed that a can of green peas would be a fair compromise.

The new village temple was crowded with men drinking chang, and I was invited to join them. After some rest I resumed my journey towards the village of Ja where I stayed the night in a small but clean house. The following morning I revisited the monastery of Phugtal. I spent the whole time there with the few monks who were left, visiting the temples, describing them, photographing

weather was good and this made walking pleasant. The Suru river, swollen and violent for the greater part of the year, descending from the Penzi La passes at this point below the monastery of Rangdum through a wide and flat valley of moraine formation. The flatter places provide pastures. As we walked we came upon large herds of goats and horses, a frequent sight in Zangskar. All along our walk we were watched by marmots sitting behind the rocks or peeping at us from their holes. Our *amchi* was busy collecting all kinds of flowers and medicinal herbs, of which there was plenty all along our track. By the end of the day he had amassed two sacks of them and expected me to produce an extra horse to carry them. Indeed he was so busy that he did not even find time to help with the cooking. Our horseman, called Salim, a good-hearted Moslem, soon realised the situation, and without saying anything, took charge of our meals.

At Rangdum monastery we were received very hospitably and the monks gave us tea and tsampa. We visited the temples and then proceeded towards the village of Tashi Thonde, hoping to find accommodation for the night. The village temple and the quarters for the local monk were occupied by the Public Works Department for storage and living accommodation. The local people did not like their temple being thus occupied but accepted the situation. We were received kindly by the man in charge of the road works, and after a meal with him we slept in a tent pitched behind the building. The next morning before I got up Ralph was already busy talking to different people, sounding out the situation. He made contact with a group of Indian soldiers led by Captain Kambargimath, who had been sent to Zangskar to make an exploratory visit. Captain Kambargimath, a kind and cultured man, invited us to join him, offering us every assistance he could give. Thinking of the inefficient help we had received from our Ladakhi companion, we accepted his invitation with alacrity. Thus by noon we reached the Penzi La, travelling by an army truck. The horses carrying the supplies joined us in the early afternoon. We had a good hot meal prepared by the soldiers, then we roamed about the impressive glacier sweeping down the side of the pass towards Zangskar, admiring the different kinds of flowers. We circumambulated a lonely chöten and descended a little way down the Zangskar valley. Late in the afternoon the tents were pitched, and while the soldiers were preparing our meal, we sat by the fire, sipped Indian army rum and, as usual in such circumstances, talked. Two days later we reached the village of Dungere. On the way we visited the temples in every village through which we passed. At Dungere we camped for two days. From there we made 14 two expeditions on horses, one to the monastery of Karsha and one to Dzongkhul. Next we crossed the bridge and proceeded towards Padum, passing through the Sani monastery. The distance from Dungere to Padum involved less than four hours travel. As we approached Padum from afar, it appeared to us an attractive town perched on a mountainside. But as we came closer, we realised that the greater part of the hill was covered with big boulders which looked like houses and that only the base and the eastern side of the hill were inhabited. The army camped in the fields while Ralph and I found accommodation in a private house. Next day the 'king' of Padum, descendent of the old royal family, went to the army group and complained about the damage they were doing to his fields, demanding compensation. A good dinner and polite conversation, however, soon removed all his anxieties.

In Padum there are a few stores where one can buy some basic articles such as rice, sugar, butter and biscuits. During the summer the government brings enough supplies on horses and ponies to last through the winter, and then one often meets caravans of horses carrying sacks of rice to Padum. There is a small radio station to make contact with the outside world, one policeman to keep order, and a *tasildar*, representative of the Jammu and Kashmir Government who is directly responsible to the Deputy Commissioner in Leh. We had a letter of recommendation from Mr. Rahman so we went to pay him a visit. He read the letter, looked at us and said: 'Mr. Rahman's appointment ends in two weeks; I don't think he has much power here any longer.' He rendered us some little help but by no means as much as we had reason to hope.

From Padum we made a two-day journey to Zangla. While there we were guests of the 'king' himself, staying in his house and enjoying very good hospitality. The old palace is practically in ruins and the royal family lives in two large houses in the village. The 'king' and his son are nowadays involved in politics quite seriously. On our way back to Padum we visited the monastery on Tonde which occupies a splendid position overlooking the whole of Padum Valley.



14. General view of Karsha monastery.

the stone-built shelters and gave it to them as a present. At first the shepherds refused to accept it, but after hesitation they took it and in return prepared us some tea and allowed us to dry by the fire which they kept burning. On leaving we even managed to convince one of them to help with carrying our packs for a good part of the afternoon. About an hour before reaching the top he decided to return to his companions, so we compensated him for his help, took a short rest, and resumed our climbing. By six o'clock we reached the pass and Rigzin made sure that a part of the second loaf of bread was given to the divinities residing there. Then the sun began to set very rapidly and the view all around us was magnificent. We sat around the summit-cairn (*lha-thos*) for a while, admiring the splendid play of light on the snow-covered peaks. Down below we could single out the spacious green valley of Alchi, the monastery of Likir and the Basgo fort. Having rested we started to descend towards Sumda, which lay somewhere down below along the twisting gorge. The descent was easy and swift. The sun disappeared completely and we walked in almost total darkness, hearing occasionally the piercing screams of mountain birds (*ri-bya*). As it was rather warm in the gorge which we followed, we were pleasantly aware of a strong fragrance of mountain flowers and herbs. By half past eight we reached the monastery where we found one monk and one layman seated round the kitchen fire cooking their evening meal. Exhausted after a long day's walk, at the same time we were pleased with our achievement. After a meal of rice and Tibetan tea we slept on the veranda in the main courtyard of the monastery. The next two days passed in regaining strength and visiting the temples. The *Brug-pa* monk in charge of the monastery was kind to us but did not miss any opportunity to extract as much money as he could. Sumda was the only place where I had to pay for photographing. I resented this and protested violently but there was nothing to be done. I paid him handsomely for our stay and for meals and made generous offerings in the temple, but for him this was never enough. Two days later we parted on friendly terms, but we remained displeased with his craving nature. There were, however, worse experiences ahead of us. The journey from the Sumda monastery and the few houses below it, called together Sumda Chung (Little), to the next village called Sumda Chen (Great), took us one day of very pleasant walking with beautiful mountain scenery all around. Sumda Chen had little to offer in the way of monastic establishments. We found a small temple, well maintained, with one monk in charge, most hospitable and kind. Having stayed the night in one of the houses we decided to proceed to Chiling. As we were tired, we thought of hiring horses. These were produced very promptly but the price asked dissuaded us from taking them. The usual price for a horse per day is 25 rupees (government-rate horses cost 12 rupees per day) but we were asked to pay 120. We enquired about such exorbitant and unreasonable prices and were told that a few weeks before a Japanese group had travelled through the village and that they had paid what they were asked, 120 rupees per horse. If they could pay, you should be able to also, was the argument. Well we preferred to walk rather than yield to their line of thought. Before we reached Chiling we came upon a group of shepherds from that village. They were on high pastures watching their goats, *dzo* and *dzo-mo*, milking them and making butter. They saw us from afar and before we reached them they had prepared everything to receive us. They spread a rug outside their tent and invited us to partake generously of their curds, *tsampa* and butter. Now our main intention in visiting Chiling was to see the craftsmen working in copper and silver, but as we sat enjoying their hospitality, a teacher arrived on his way from Chiling to his home in Likir and told us that the whole village was practically empty. Most of the men were with their goats and *dzo* in the mountains and several good craftsmen were working in different villages in Ladakh. After some deliberation we decided to go back to Sumda and then to Alchi. We stayed the night at the monastery and the next day at five in the morning we set out for Alchi once again and so over the Tagpa La. The ascent on the Sumda side is gentler and shorter, and so it took only some four hours to reach the pass. Thus by three in the afternoon we were back in Alchi. My light boots were falling to pieces and during the last hours of walking I could feel every little stone under my feet. Ralph tried to apply some special glue but it did not last very long. At the entry to Alchi we parted company with our helpful and friendly companion Rigzin and hastened to Sonam's house to find some comfort and food. As we approached his house we saw crowds of people in the garden and on the roof. We made our way, looking enquiringly at what was going on, and soon discovered that Sonam's brother had died and the funeral was to take place that very day at five o'clock. We had no choice but to join all the others as they sat drinking *chang*, waiting for the monks to finish the liturgy which they were performing in the temple at the top of the house. By the time the funeral procession started a number of men sat with their eyes bright like candles and their cheeks red as cherries. When the

liturgy was finished the body was removed from the room where it lay folded like an embryo placed upon a stretcher and covered with colourful pieces of cloth. The monks, playing flutes, led the way followed by Sonam and his father immediately behind it, raising loud and sincere cries of mourning. Then followed the rest of us carrying sticks of incense or logs of wood for the cremation. Then procession circumbulated the *Chos-khor* enclosure and then approached the *ro-khang* (a funerary kiln) where the body was to be cremated. It was placed inside this and the monks performed a short liturgy, while we all left the place except for three men who stayed behind to burn the corpse. We then returned to the house, which suddenly became silent and empty, and sat late into the night carrying on sympathetic conversation with our host.

Two days later we returned to Leh with the intention of making preparations for the expedition to Zangskar. That year the summer was a particularly bad one. It rained much and the main road from Leh to Srinagar was badly damaged at certain points by landslides produced by such abundant rainfalls. We learned from the Tourist Officer that several expeditions from Europe had got stranded in Zangskar and even on one occasion an army helicopter had to rescue a woman who fell from a horse and broke her ribs. The prospects were not too encouraging, but we were determined to pursue our plans. The Deputy Commissioner gave us permission to buy food supplies in the Government store at special rates, and offered us a large tent which would require two horses to carry it. We decided not to take it, hoping to sleep in villages or in the open air if necessary. The major difficulty was to find a reliable companion and informant. As the Dalai Lama was coming to Ladakh at the end of August to perform *Kālacakra* ceremonies and to give his blessing, all my knowledgeable and helpful friends seemed to be involved in making the necessary arrangements for the event. Thus I had great difficulty in finding anyone to accompany us. Finally someone whom I did not know, an *amchi* (local medical practitioner) from Hemis Shukpa, offered to come for twenty days only. Since he appeared a quite knowledgeable and able man, we accepted his company. On August 8th we all took the bus to Kargil, but here the general opinion prevailed that there was no chance of getting into Zangskar for several days. It was raining and the road to Panikar in the Suru Valley was blocked. After making final arrangements for the journey, bargaining over the price of the jeep for Panikar and dissuading our Ladakhi companion from buying four gallons of kerosene, I went to visit the cave temples of Wakha and Phokar Dzong. Then on the 12th August, thanks to the help of Mr. Kakpuri, we managed to get a jeep to take us to Panikar. We left in the early afternoon and arrived at Panikar at about six in the evening. The jeep, being an old vehicle and having to carry six people with plenty of luggage, broke down twice en route. As we drove to Panikar we travelled along the river which sweeps with great force through deep gorges, amongst big boulders and across flat land. We passed several villages with mosques well maintained and at times with their blue domes picturesquely situated above them. Most of the Valley apart from the inhabited areas and cultivated land is covered with ravines and boulders of different sizes. The village of Sanku, the largest and most prosperous, presents a fine view on one's approach.

At Panikar we found accommodation with a Kashmiri man who was supervising the road-works between Kargil and Panikar. The evening was spent on negotiating for horses, which we managed to obtain at a very reasonable price. The man was to turn up with the horses early the next day but the morning passed and the sun was soon high in the sky. We sat outside the house drinking tea and admiring the beautiful peaks of Nun Kun when finally the horses arrived. All of us had a picnic lunch and we then began the journey towards Rangdum. Two horses carried packs and supplies and we all walked. Ralph and I walked at a gentle pace, but our Ladakhi companion and the horseman managed to walk even slower, so that within two hours we had lost sight of them. As it was rather a hot afternoon I drank very cold water from a stream, a disastrous thing to do. For the next two or three days I suffered from severe stomach pains, and never again did I drink cold mountain water when so overheated myself. We always made tea when in need of a drink. When it became dark, we halted for the night, finding a cosy place amongst the rocks. Collecting pieces of wood and dung we cooked rice and dal for our evening meal, and then slept in the open air. Next day we easily reached the monastery of Rangdum by five in the afternoon. Some forty-five minutes before reaching it we passed the first Buddhist village of Zhuldo. In a nearby house a monk from the Rangdum monastery was performing a liturgy. A little further on we met a large wedding procession. On that day the



11. The gorge leading down from Sumda monastery (seen in the centre of the photograph) to the Sumdachu, which in turn flows due east into the Zangskar river. The steep gorge leading up towards the right of the photograph takes one on one's way up to the Tagpa La and thence down to Alchi.



12. The upper torso of a stucco image of Avalokiteśvara at Sumda.



13. A copper tea pot decorated with delicate silver work as made at Chiling.

situation became even more serious, he went to sTag-tshang ras-pa, chief lama of the 'Brug-pa order in Hemis, to ask for pardon. He received kind treatment but Zangskar was annexed to Ladakh. Zangskar was given to Senge Namgyal's third son bDe-mchog rNam-rgyal. This newly established dynasty lasted until the Dogra conquest of 1842. However, it does not mean that Zangskar lost its freedom altogether. After the death of the Ladakhi king bDe-ldan rNam-rgyal who was an unpopular and incompetent ruler, Zangskar had become effectively in 1752 an independent kingdom once more.

During the reign of King Senge Namgyal and his immediate successors, sTag-tshang ras-pa (1574-1651) of Hemis gained considerable political influence. It was he who acted as a mediator in negotiations with Gu-ge, Purig, and Zangskar. In 1618 a renowned lama from Central Tibet arrived in Gu-ge. This was the first Pan-chen Lama Blo-bzang chos-kyi-rgyal-mtshan, who was installed ceremoniously as abbot at Toling. His visit to Gu-ge promoted the *dGe-lugs-pa* (Yellow Hat) cause throughout the whole area, and in Zangskar, where there seems to have been a group of excellent scholars at the time, he gained quite a following. While Senge Namgyal was alive, relations between the *dGe-lugs-pa* and the 'Brug-pa orders remained relatively good, but during the following reigns their relationship became rather strained. King bDe-ldan rNam-rgyal (reigned 1642-69) supported the 'Brug-pa regime in Bhutan in its struggle against the 5th Dalai Lama (Vol I, p.87). The outcome of this dispute was disastrous both for Ladakh and for Zangskar. War broke out between Central Tibet and Ladakh in 1681-83 and in this Zangskar was fully involved. The Mongol troops who acted on behalf of the Dalai Lama invaded Ladakh, and the *dGe-lugs-pa* monks in Zangskar took sides with the Mongol forces who arrived in Zangskar. General chaos occurred as a result. Indrabodhi who was responsible for the defence of Gu-ge asked for help in Kulu. The reinforcements from Kulu arrived in Zangskar and looted the country. In such a general disorder the king of Zangskar and the monks of Karsha monastery made a joint effort and expelled the looting troops who had come from Kulu. Later the Mongol forces withdrew from Zangskar attempting unsuccessfully on their way to occupy Phugtal monastery. This war between Ladakh and Central Tibet had catastrophic consequences for the whole of the Western Himalayas. Ladakh asked for military help from the Moghul rulers of Kashmir and as a result the Central Tibetan forces were compelled to withdraw, but from that time onwards the interference of the Moghul rulers in the internal affairs of Ladakh continually increased.

During the political and military struggles of the 18th and the 19th centuries Zangskar shared the fate of Ladakh. In 1822 Kulu invaded Spiti and then collaborating with Kunuwar and Lahul it attacked Zangskar. The whole country was plundered and the royal palace at Padum was destroyed. Three years later Ratan Sher Khan of Padar, a small state west of Padum, destroyed the villages from Ating to Padum. Yet another blow came from Mandi and Wardam whose forces plundered the whole of Zangskar again. The final destructive blow and loss of independence came from the Hindu rulers of Jammu. In 1834 Zorawar Singh invaded Ladakh. On his way back from Leh, he passed through the Suru Valley and Zangskar, where he imposed a taxation agreement according to which every household was obliged to pay three and a half rupees. From 1842 onwards Zangskar together with Ladakh became a part of the state of Jammu and Kashmir.

A JOURNEY THROUGH ZANGSKAR (1976)

Having recovered from the toils of Ladakhi life and the severe winter of 1974-75, with the first volume of our book well under way, we decided that it was necessary to make a further visit to Ladakh. As David Snellgrove was involved in various activities which compelled him to stay in Europe, it fell to my lot to make this second journey. The intention this time was to revisit some sites in Central Ladakh and to make an exploratory visit into Zangskar. At the end of June 1976 I travelled via Delhi to Srinagar where I was joined by our friend from Washington D.C., Colonel Ralph Redford, now retired from the Army and Diplomatic Service. A few days were passed in Srinagar calling upon friends and visiting the Minister of Ladakhi Affairs, Sonam Norbu.

The journey from Srinagar to Leh was made by bus. On the way we halted for one night at Kargil where I made contact with the tourist officer, Mr. Kagguri and the information officer Mr. Munshi, both very sympathetic and helpful. On arrival in Leh we found excellent accommodation in a good house, now named Snow View Hotel, belonging to Dr. Yeshe Sonam of Changspa. Apart from having a comfortable room to ourselves, we enjoyed excellent food prepared by Dr. Sonam's wife whom I used to address as *ama-la* (mother). Once again several days passed (time counts for little in this part of the world) in visiting our friends from the previous visit and making plans for our work. Deputy Commissioner Mr. Mahmud-ur-Rahman offered his help once again. After some deliberation we decided to visit first the monastery of Sumda and the village of Chiling known for its copper and silver products, and then as a second journey to make a plunge via Kargil into the heart of Zangskar.

We were advised that the best way of going to Sumda was to start from Alchi. At Alchi we had our good friend Sonam Dorje to help us with all arrangements. Being rather eager to get on with my work, I pressed Sonam to set out for Sumda Monastery as soon as possible. Several days passed in deciding which route to take. From Alchi one can follow a good track up the left bank of the Indus river, then up the Zangskar river which joins the Indus opposite the village of Nye-mo. Next one ascends along the Sumda-chu to the monastery at Sumda. Between Chiling and Sumda there is a well beaten mountain track, very picturesque and easy for those who are accustomed to travelling in mountains. This journey can take three to four days. Another possibility was to take a shorter but more difficult track over the Tagpa La. This journey can be made easily within two days, and with considerable effort and determination in one long day. We opted for the shorter route. As we were getting ready, Sonam informed us that we would have to wait a few days until they celebrated the village feast of whitewashing all the temples in Alchi *Chos-khor*. So we roamed about the village and the beautiful temples of the *Chos-khor* enclosure, re-photographing some of the murals and the inscriptions and visiting the caves at Saspol. The day came; the temples were whitewashed and the men who had done it felt happy for they had done a meritorious act. At the end of the day all the villagers gathered in the *Chos-khor* enclosure to celebrate the occasion. The local musicians, seated under an apricot tree, played folk music while we all sat on rugs and carpets spread along boards serving as tables, helping ourselves generously to chang which overflowed from large copper containers and to all kinds of breads and tsampa. Sonam as Lonpo of Alchi presided over the whole gathering.

When the celebration was well advanced into the night, Sonam suddenly received an urgent message about the serious illness of his younger brother. He politely excused himself from coming with us to Sumda the next morning and started making his own arrangements for going to see his brother in Leh. Ralph and I, confronted with further delays, deliberated what to do next. As we sat on the roof of the house under the starry sky, contemplating different possibilities, a young man arrived and offered to come with us to Sumda the very next morning. He was Tashi Rigzin, an employee of the Public Works Department, who had been sent from Leh to inspect the ground for building a new school in Sumda. The next morning we set out for Sumda at 6 a.m. The air was chilly and windy and the sky was rather overcast with grey clouds. We intended to reach Sumda that same day, 22nd July. We passed the hamlet of Sharong and entered a deep gorge leading to the pass which lay somewhere far ahead of us. On our way we met groups of local people taking their goats to pasture on the high mountains. By early afternoon we were about half way to the pass. A short but very heavy shower poured on us and within minutes we were soaked. Half an hour later we reached a cluster of low, stone-built shelters for shepherds from Alchi. Sonam had told us to introduce ourselves and call upon his name, assuring us that we would receive a warm welcome. In this we were disappointed. In the first instance we received not only unwelcome looks, but the shepherds even refused to let us in or to sell us any of their milk, curds or butter. We later discovered the reason for their unfriendly attitude. There is a general belief in Alchi that the local divinity (*sa-bdag*) residing on the pass which we intended to cross, should not be disturbed before the snows disappear on it. It is from this pass and the surrounding peaks that the main water supplies for irrigation and drinking flow through the fields of Alchi. The shepherds knew that there was still some snow left. We were quite discouraged, but had no intention of changing our plans. As a gesture of goodwill, or perhaps rather as an effort to placate them, I took a loaf of bread which had been made for our journey by Sonam's wife, went inside



9. View of the village and fields of Zangla as seen from its ancient fort, now a ruin and once the seat of the local royal family. We are looking north down the Zangskar river which eventually joins the Indus at Nye-mo.



10. Bringing in the harvest at Padum.

a small temple at Karsha, some remains at Sani and Phugtall all date back to his times. The Transalator of Zangskar, Phags-pa shes-rab,¹¹ of whom we know very little, was also active during the same period. It may be that the kings of Zangskar were eclipsed by the more prominent and more influential rulers of Gu-ge who received full credit for all that was done during this period.

In the 15th century Sultan Zain-ul-Abidin (1420-70) supervised personally a military expedition against Tibet. He plundered the whole land as far as Gu-ge. How much Zangskar suffered from this invasion is not known. In 1532 Mirza Haidar,¹² one of the most able men of Sultan Said Khan invaded Ladakh as part of a 'holy war' against the infidels. First he attacked Nubra where he met strong resistance. Besieging the chief fort in the country, he defeated utterly the defending forces. From Nubra he proceeded to Ladakh where he seems to have encountered no resistance. In Zangskar at that time the king was Tshang-rgyal-po. Mirza Haidar entered Zangskar with some three thousand soldiers and occupied the fort at Padum. Tshang-rgyal-po sought refuge in *Lha'i lung-pa* (place unknown). He sent a messenger named Chos-grub to Mirza Haidar to negotiate terms of surrender. In 1533 Mirza Haidar again organized a military expedition which he led into Tibet with the intention of destroying the temple of Lhasa. On account of severe weather and shortage of provisions he never reached his destination. He had to retreat and in 1534 he returned to Ladakh where he was well received by the king of Upper Ladakh who offered him the castle at Shey (Vol I, p. 85). In the following year he plundered the western districts including Purig, Suru Valley, and Zangskar. From his memoirs we learn that he went to Zangskar where he stayed for some time waiting for the harvest so that it could be divided between his soldiers and the people of Zangskar. His favourite companion Ha-zi came to Padum in the winter and met with resistance. Fighting took place between his forces and those of King Tshang-rgyal-po. The fort at Padum was destroyed, parts of the country were plundered, and the king taken prisoner. Drung-pa Rab-bstan of Phugtall monastery ransomed the king by offering Ha-zi some treasures. Ha-zi withdrew to Kartse in the Suru Valley taking with him a number of hostages. In 1536 Mirza Haidar left Ladakh for Badakhshan. But it was not the end of his raids on this country. In 1545 he invaded the Western Himalayas from Kashmir and is said to have reduced several districts to submission. His last invasion took place in 1548 when he succeeded in adding both Baltistan and Ladakh to Kashmir. When he died in 1551, the districts in the Western Himalayas regained their independence. During the reign of King Tshang-rgyal-po Zangskar was raided on two more occasions by the people of Hor. As for the internal situation and distribution of power, Zangskar appears to have been divided among the members of the royal family who controlled particular parts of the country with the king of Padum exercising at least a nominal authority over the whole. The petty rulers calling themselves kings, such as the rulers of Tonde and Teta who were contemporary with Tshang-rgyal-po, can have had little military power.

With the rise of the second dynasty in Ladakh, that of the Namgyal kings, the history of Zangskar entered a new phase. As the power of the Namgyal rulers increased, the independence of Zangskar was inevitably limited. First came the invasion of Tashi Namgyal and then that of Tshewang Namgyal (ruled c. 1575-95) who subdued the neighbouring districts. After his death all the vassal rulers rebelled against the power of Ladakh. Jamyang Namgyal met with strong resistance not only in Purig but also in Zangskar. The young prince brTson-grus rgyal-mtshan,¹³ son of bKra-shis dpal-lde, king of Zangla, offered firm resistance to the king of Ladakh, who attacked and subdued the principality. The king of Ladakh admired the bravery of the young prince and sparing his life allowed him to leave for Central Tibet where he became one of the more prominent disciples of the first Pan-chen Lama. Then Ladakh suffered attacks from Ali Mir in 1591 (Vol I, p. 80) who occupied the country and placed the king in confinement. It was Senge Namgyal who re-established the independence of his country, and during his reign Zangskar was annexed to Ladakh. As already mentioned above, the contemporary king in Zangskar of Senge Namgyal was Dzoki rgyal-po who took as wife the elder sister of Senge Namgyal. Dzoki rgyal-po and his wife rGyal-'dzom quarrelled with each other, as a result of which an armed force arrived from Ladakh and occupied the monastery of Bardan and the king of Zangskar fled to a southern border region (*Mon-yul*). Later as the

11. For a short account of his life see below pp.

12. For his adventures in Ladakh and Zangskar see *Tarikh-i-Rashidi*, pp. 403-23, and pp. 459-64.

13. Petech 1977, p. 39.



7. Image of Maitreya in deep bas-relief at Kartse in the Suru Valley, approximate height 10 metres.



8. An image of Maitreya at Sani. The stone, now sunk up to the knees in the ground, is about 2 metres high. To the bottom right is a mani stone clearly inscribed over and over again OM MANI PADME HUM. The image itself would certainly appear to pre-date the Tibetan occupation.

Whether Kashmir in fact exercised any political and military control over Zangskar during this period cannot be asserted with certainty, but its cultural and religious influence was certainly felt. When Kashmir finally fell to a Moslem dynasty in 1337 A.D., its Buddhist influence on Zangskar, as on Ladakh, decreased rapidly. Zangskar, unlike Baltistan and Purig, was never converted to Islam. The Moslem rulers of Kashmir and later the Moghul emperors in Delhi attempted continually to penetrate as far as they could into the Western Himalayas. Thus by the 15-16th centuries Baltistan and Purig were converted but Zangskar being isolated behind difficult mountain ranges has remained a Buddhist country up to the present day. Throughout all these later centuries it has retained close cultural and religious contacts with Ladakh, Gu-ge and Central Tibet. Its political status also depended upon the strengths and weaknesses of such neighbours, especially Ladakh, of which it became effectively a dependency from the 17th century onwards.

We have already referred to the origin of the various kingdoms of Western Tibet in Vol I (pp. 5 and 81-2), mentioning the discord between the 'Chronicles of Ladakh'⁷ and other available accounts. Thus according to the 'Chronicles of Central Tibet',⁸ the eldest son took Ladakh, the middle one took Purang, and the youngest took Zhang-zhung. gZhon-nu-dpal⁹ (1392-1481) says that the eldest son ruled Mar-yul, the middle one Purang, and the youngest one Zhang-zhung which formed part of Gu-ge. 'The Chronicles of the Kings of Zangla' in Zangskar trace the royal lineage to the youngest son lDe-gtsug-mgon, thus following the version given in the 'Chronicles of Ladakh'. Further argument for this version comes from the later historical sources in which we find no evidence about the existence of the kingdom of Purang which seems to have been always a dependency of Gu-ge. It seems, however, that Zangskar existed more or less as an independent kingdom, until the 17th century when it was annexed to Ladakh by King Senge Namgyal (ruled 1616-42).

We encounter further difficulties when we attempt to trace the first royal lineage of the kings of Zangskar. The 'Chronicles of the Kings of Zangla' place lDe-gtsug-mgon at the head of the lineage. The next named king Senge-lde who divided the kingdom between his two sons, thus initiating two separate royal lineages, one at Padum and one at Zangla, lived at a considerably later period. The intermediate names between lDe-gtsug-mgon, the founder of the dynasty, and Senge-lde are missing. From the 'Chronicles of Zangskar' we learn that the father of Senge-lde (the actual text reads *Senge-ldor*) was someone called Śākya-thub who was invited from Spiti. In the biography of Ngag-dbang-tshe-ring¹⁰ (1657-1732) of Dzongkhul monastery in Zangskar, we read that Lha-chen Śākya-thub came from Spiti and took Padum. He built a fort on the northern side and resided as king of both the south and the north. His son was Senge-lde. Senge-lde's son was Tshe-ring dpal-lde and his son was another Senge-lde, also known as *Dzoki rgyal-po* (= Yogi-King), the contemporary of King Senge Namgyal of Ladakh.

According to the 'Chronicles of Zangskar', Senge-lde had three sons of whom the eldest (whose name is not given) received *Ka-skra-bar* (= Kashtawar), the second son Blo-bzang-lde the southern part of the kingdom, and the third son Khri-nam-lde the region to the north, *Tsha-zar*, Zangla, and the land down to the brook of *Me-ltse*. The most prominent personality in the Chronicles is King Tshang-rgyal-po, the grandson of Senge-lde. We further learn from the same Chronicles that during his time *Mig-za-dhar* (= Mirza Haidar) invaded the country from Yarkand. Here once again we are dealing with the second royal lineage. Both in the Chronicles of Zangskar and of Zangla the first lineage is missing. The names of the kings from lDe-gtsug-mgon to Śākya-thub, a period of some four to five centuries, were unknown to the composers of the Chronicles. The 'Chronicles of the Kings of Zangla' provide us with almost a complete list of names of the second lineage, and the 'Chronicles of Zangskar' list a few names only of the second lineage of the kings of Padum. As for the earlier period, as little is known about Zangskar as about Ladakh itself and indeed of all Western Tibet before the 15th century (Vol I, pp. 81-2). Zangskar certainly played its part in the propagation of Buddhism as associated with the great name of Rin-chen bzang-po, and there are several monastic foundations dating back to that period. The monastery of Sumda,

7. Francke 1926, p. 35.

8. *rGyal-rabs gsal-ba'i me-long*, p. 197. See also *Indo-Tibetica*, vol II, pp. 17-21.

9. *The Blue Annals*, p. 37.

10. *Ngag-dbang-tshe-ring*, folio 5a-b. (Full title: *dPal-ldan bla-ma dam-pa 'khrul-zhig rin-po-che Ngag-dbang-tshe-ring gi rnam-thar kun-tu bzang-po'i zlog-sgar yid kyi boud-len*).



6. A group of women at Surlie village. To the top left is a monk who accompanied us part of our journey.

HISTORICAL SURVEY

Very little is known about the history of Zangskar. From the materials available to us we learn something about some periods of its history but no overall picture is discernable. Unlike the 'Chronicles of Ladakh', the 'Chronicles of Zangskar'¹ are very short and contain only very general information, namely an account of the origins of the country, its dependency upon Kashmir in pre-Tibetan times, its occupation by the Tibetans, and finally some information, at times incoherent and difficult to interpret, concerning several royal persons. The 'Chronicles of the Kings of Zangla',² apart from giving us a list of the royal lineage of this small principality, provide us with no other useful information. Several inscriptions that are available to us contain rather scanty historical data. Despite these limitations, however, it is possible to give some general impression of the sequence of the historical events in Zangskar, using the above mentioned materials and the information available from the neighbouring countries. From Tibetan sources such as the chronicles of Ladakh and Central Tibet, from Bu-ston, Padma dkar-po and other historians, we can draw a certain amount of information about Zangskar. Other important sources of information relevant to Zangskar come from the histories of Kashmir and the Mongols of Central Asia.

It is fairly certain that during the military expansion of the Tibetans in the 7th century A.D., the Western Himalayas were overrun by their forces. They occupied not only parts of Central Asia and Zhang-zhung but also the lands farther west, probably as far as the Zoji La.³ They doubtless established military posts at different points, but at that early period their culture can have made no real impact on the indigenous population. Prior to this first Tibetan invasion and for several centuries afterwards the cultural inspiration came almost entirely from the west, namely from Kashmir. It seems likely that the Dards, a people of Indo-European stock who had penetrated the Western Himalayas, were affected by Buddhist religion.⁴ The rock carvings at Dras of Maitreya, 7 Avalokiteśvara, a lotus and a horseman, the impressive statue of Maitreya at Mulbek, and some rock-carvings at Changspa near Leh,⁵ all of which may be dated at some time between the 7th and 10th centuries, clearly witness to the existence of Buddhist religion in the area before it was finally 8 taken over by the Tibetans. To those already mentioned in our first volume we may now add several more. Two of them are in the Suru Valley, one of Maitreya at Kartse (*dKar-rtse*) almost identical to the one at Mulbek, and one of Padmapāni Avalokiteśvara at Byama Khumbu, a small place some ten kilometres short of Sanku. In Zangskar we find similar rock-carvings in several places. Thus near the Sani monastery we find a group of rock-carvings, of which the most impressive is that of Maitreya. Other old rock-reliefs are found at Padum, Muni, Tonde and Karsha. The Kanika stūpa at Sani, which is attributed by popular tradition to the famous Kushāna emperor Kanishka, provides less certain evidence. The inscription at Sani Monastery which refers to it, is a late compilation of quotations from various literary sources such as *Vinaya* texts, tantric excerpts and the hagiographies of Padmasambhava, Nārōpa and other Buddhist yogins.⁶ It is thus insinuated that this stūpa at Sani is in fact the famous Kanishka stūpa of Kashmir, the existence of which is well attested in more reliable accounts, and such an exaggerated claim, concocted of such disparate sources, suggests at once a later fiction. However, the site may well be an old one and it is noteworthy that even at the late date when this inscription was written, the cultural and religious bonds which existed between Zangskar and Kashmir in the past had not been forgotten. The 'Chronicles of Zangskar' firmly state that before the arrival of the Tibetans the country was subject to Kashmir.

1. Edited and translated by A.H. Francke in his *Antiquities of Indian Tibet*, vol II, pp 152-60.

2. *Ibid* pp 163-65.

3. Petech 1977, pp. 6-13; Petech 1939, pp. 97-105.

4. See our Volume I, p. 60.

5. For their illustrations see Vol I, pp. 7, 113.

6. For the text of this inscription see Gergan 1976, p. 225 ff.

Without crossing the bridge at Dungring one may follow the track along the left bank of the Doda, thus reaching the monastery of Karsha, the largest in Zangskar. Before reaching the monastery one passes through several small villages with their temples well maintained and containing interesting murals.

The monastery of Karsha is impressively situated on a mountain-side overlooking the Padum Valley. To the west on another mountain-side, separated by a deep gorge from that on which the monastery stands, there are ruins of an ancient castle, several old chöten and ruined temples dating back to the period of Rin-chen bzang-po. One such temple called *bCu-gcig-zhal* (Eleven Faced) and so named after the Eleven-Headed Avalokiteśvara still survives intact.

From Karsha there is a track following the left bank of the Zangskar river all the way to the monastery of Lingshed (*gling-snyed*) and then continuing to Wanla and Lamayuru over the Senge La. Zangla, the second capital of Zangskar, situated on the right bank of the Zangskar River can be reached by crossing a suspension bridge below the village of Rinam. From Zangla there is another track leading to Lingshed, but it is a rather difficult one.

Crossing the bridge at Dungring, one turns southwards, following the road which leads to Padum. On the way one passes through Sani monastery with its Kanika chöten. Outside the monastery on the northern side there is a group of rock reliefs of which the largest is that of Maitreya. The famous Kanika chöten stands in the inner courtyard of monastery. Padum, the capital of Zangskar, is some two hours walking distance from Sani across a wide flat valley which is really the centre of Zangskar. From afar it looks like a picturesque mountain town of medieval Europe. However, on approaching it, one realises that the greater part of the hill is covered with large boulders and only the north-eastern side and the base are inhabited. In the past, the hill was dominated by the royal palace of which only ruins now remain. On the side of the Lingti river is a rock carving of the Five Buddhas.

Below Padum on the left bank of the Lingti river there is the village of Pipiting with the monastery above on a hill-top. The village of Ubti with ruins of an ancient fort is still further down the river. To the west of Padum is the monastery of Tagrimo. On the eastern side there is a suspension bridge, and crossing it one follows a track to the monastery of Tonde which is on a high hill at the extreme eastern end of the Padum Valley. The distance can be covered on foot within three and a half hours. From Tonde the track continues to Zangla, some five hours away.

To the south of Padum, two hours distant and on the left bank of the Lingti, there is the monastery of Bardan beautifully perched on a crag overlooking the river. Half-way between Padum and Bardan on the opposite bank of the river is the village of Chila. Its main attraction is a small grove, a rare sight in Zangskar. Travelling further south of Bardan one comes to the village of Muni. It has a well maintained monastery and in the fields there are several scattered ancient rock-carvings. The distance from Muni to Kargya, the most southerly situated village, can be covered easily within two days. On the way there are several attractive villages, Surle and Teta (*sTe-sta*) on the left bank, and Itchar (*gYi-char*) and Ja (*bCa'-ba*) on the right one. Teta, seat of an aristocratic family in the past, is the largest village south of Padum. From Kargya one mountain track leads towards the Bara Lacha and another one leads in an easterly direction towards Ladakh.

The monastery of Phugtal is situated picturesquely at the mouth of a large cave above the right bank of the Tsarap. It can be reached by crossing the suspension bridge which is at the junction of the two branches of the Lingti by the village of Pu-ne or by crossing the bridge at Ja. Along both banks of the Tsarap there are tracks leading to the monastery, near which there is a suspension bridge connecting them. Of the two tracks that follow the Lingti the one along the left bank is safer and more frequented. In all there are five major suspension bridges crossing the Lingti: at Padum, above Reru, at Itchar, Ja and Pu-ne.

The monastery of Sumda (*gSum-mda'*) attributed to Rin-chen bzang-po and the village of Chiling known for its copper and silver products are in the north-eastern part of the country. It is rather difficult to reach them from the central part of Zangskar. The easiest access is from Achi over the Tagpa (*sTag-pa*) La or by taking a track along the left bank up the Indus and Zangskar rivers.



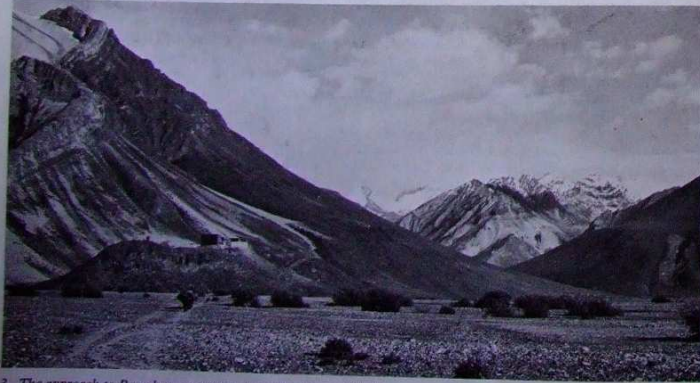
4. The Kanika Chöten at Sani.



5. General view of Padum, capital of Zangskar.



2. An early rock relief at *Bya-ma Khumbu* near the village of *Sanku*. It represents *Padmapāñi Avalokiteśvara* flanked by two goddesses, and must have been executed prior to the Tibetan occupation of Western Tibet. Note especially the costumes of the lay devotees to the right and left of the main image.



3. The approach to *Rangdum* monastery from the village of *Zhuldo*.

Balti origin and language, the entire population being Moslem. A number of villages have neatly built mosques which are picturesquely situated on hill-tops. In the past the valley was undoubtedly a Buddhist land and there are surviving rock-carvings which bear witness to the previous existence of the *Suru* River. It has the usual small shops in which one can procure simple provisions.

The journey from *Kargil* as far as *Panikar* village can be easily made by jeep or by public transport. At *Panikar* one usually obtains horses for further travel into *Zangskar*. *Zangskar* abounds in horses but since tourists have appeared, one may be disconcerted by demands for excessive daily rates. Leaving *Panikar* on foot or on horseback, one ascends the *Suru* river, while to the south there unfolds the beautiful mountain scenery of the snow-covered *Nun Kun*. The distance from *Panikar* to *Rangdum* monastery and then on to *Tashi Thonde*, where accommodation is available, can be covered with ease within two days. On the way there are several villages of which the largest is *Parakshik*. The people to the south of *Sanku* are polite and hospitable but rather unaccustomed to foreigners. It may be possible to halt at night time in one of the villages but more often one has to stay in the open finding a suitable sleeping place amongst the rocks. Along the river there are patches of grass with herds of goats and horses wandering freely in search of food. In the summer one finds a great variety of flowers and herbs and a considerable number of marmots.

Zhuldo (*Zhul-mdo*) is the first Buddhist village on the way. It is just a small hamlet with *chöten* round about. The features of the people and their way of dress also change, for here they speak a *Ladakhi* dialect and wear long *Ladakhi* gowns. *Rangdum* monastery, which is only 45 minutes walk away, is pleasingly situated on a rocky hill in the middle of the valley which widens considerably at this point. The monastery, built during the reign of King *Tshe-wang Namgyal* (Vol I, p.85), belongs to the *dGe-lugs-pa* (Yellow Hat) order. A further walk of 45 minutes along the valley brings one to the village of *Tashi Thonde*, on the edge of which there is a small temple, repainted rather recently, and living accommodation for the monk in charge. From *Tashi Thonde* to the *Penzi La* the road is even and so not too strenuous for walking. This part of the journey can be comfortably made within six hours, but the scenery is rather monotonous, a wide and barren valley with the *Suru* river and its small tributaries meandering here and there.

From the top of the *Penzi La* one has the first glimpse of *Zangskar*, a wide stony gorge glittering with small streams and covered with clumps of willows. To the west of the pass one admires a glacier of which the white tongue descends to the bottom of the gorge. Near the top of the pass there are two small lakes and a solitary *chöten*.

From the *Penzi La* to the village of *Abring*, a distance of some six to eight hours walking, there are a few upland pastures, but otherwise just deep ravines, bare rocks and boulders. From *Abring* to *Padum* there are several small villages within a short walking distance of one another. Most of them have a little temple looked after by the villagers themselves. Of these the interesting ones are of *Himilung*, *Phe* and *Dungring*. Patches of cultivated fields round the villages are watered by small streams descending from the mountain sides and in the summer the green fields of barley, buckwheat and peas appear as small oases in the vast mountainous wastes.

At *Dungring* one crosses from the left to the right bank of the *Doda* river and until 1977 that was the only bridge traversable by animals. All the other main crossings in *Zangskar* are narrow suspension bridges made of pleated willow reeds, which are quite impassable for animals. When we were in *Zangskar* the old bridge at *Dungring* was in process of being replaced by a new bridge made of steel and suitable for jeeps.

Before continuing to *Padum*, which is within three hours walking distance, one should make a detour to visit *Dzongkhul* monastery, situated in the gorge of a tributary of the *Doda* river which descends opposite the village of *Phe*. The monastery looks like a swallow's nest clinging to the mountain side. On the way up one passes through several hamlets and high above on the mountain-side one sees the small monastery of *Tsilatse* holding a commanding view over the whole valley.



1. Glacier towards the western side of the Penzi La.

GEOGRAPHICAL FACTORS

Zangskar, an area of some three thousand square miles and with a mean elevation of thirteen thousand feet, comprises the country lying along the two main branches of the Zangskar river. The first one, the Doda, called in Tibetan *dPon-rtse-chu*, has its source at the base of the glacier which descends towards Zangskar near the mountain-pass known as Penzi La (Tibetan correct spelling: *dPon-rtse-la*) and then flows along the main valley leading towards Padum, taking a general direction south-east. On its way it receives a number of tributaries descending to it from the side valleys and glaciers. On both sides of the Doda river valley there are high mountain ridges which remain covered with snow for the greater period of the year. The valley itself, mainly of moraine and rock formation, is cut across by a number of ravines which in the spring turn into violent rivers. Despite the rather wild terrain and severe winters it is along this valley that the majority of villages are situated.

The head-waters of the second branch, the Lingti river (Tibetan *Lung-nag*), rise to the north of the Himalayan Range near the Bara Lacha. It has two principal branches known as Kargya-chu and Tsarap-chu, which unite below the village of Pu-ne. From that point onwards until its confluence with the Doda river, it is known as the Lingti. It flows along a narrow and precipitous gorge with spectacular mountain scenery the whole way, descending in a north-westerly direction towards the Padum Valley. The Doda and Lingti rivers unite four kilometers below the village of Ubti. From their confluence the Zangskar river takes a north-easterly course and at the eastern extremity of the Padum Valley it turns gradually to the north and again towards the north-west, passing below the village of Zangla and then turning to the east-north to join the Indus river opposite the village of Nye-mo.

Most of the villages are distributed along the valley of the Zangskar river and its two main branches, the main inhabited areas being the valleys of the Doda and Lingti rivers and the Padum Valley. The greater part of the country is made up of high mountains.

To the north Zangskar is bounded by Ladakh. To the west and north-west are Kashtawar and Purig. To the south it borders on Lahul, where the boundary is formed by the Great Himalayan Range itself. To the east it is bounded by Rupshu.

Access to Zangskar is difficult from all sides. Communication with the neighbouring Himalayan areas is maintained across mountain passes and by the tracks which follow the river-gorges. The easiest approach leads from Kargil through the Suru Valley and over the Penzi La. Thus it is along this track that the Jammu and Kashmir Government has decided to build a road to Padum, thus connecting Zangskar with the main road from Srinagar into Ladakh.

In 1977 the Public Works Department was completing the first stretch of a road from Kargil to Padum, the first road ever built into Zangskar. In the past all trade was by means of animal transport.¹

Taking this route from Kargil to Padum one travels south along the Suru river, which flowing down from the mountain peaks to the north of the Penzi La, passes through Kargil to join the Shingo river five kilometres beyond. The attractive Suru Valley is inhabited by people of

1. We may add that by 1980, when this book finally goes into print, this road is practically complete. It is in the form of a rough track, boulder strewn part of the way, and suitable only for lorries and jeeps, preferably not travelling singly. David Snellgrove made a short visit into Zangskar by this route in 1979, thus not requiring horses before reaching Dúngring. Few visitors are now likely to do the first part of the journey, as described here, on foot or on horseback. Once arrived in the heart of Zangskar, at Padum or Karsha, there is however no other means of transport available.

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and Zangskar which have not been described elsewhere by us. Part III consists of the translation of Rin-chen bzang-po's biography together with an edition of the Tibetan text, done entirely by David Snellgrove. Finally Part IV contains temple and rock inscriptions at Alchi. This detailed work of copying editing and translating excerpts from the inscriptions was done by Philip Denwood.

The method of transcribing Tibetan names and terms is the same as in our Volume I. Names of divinities and Buddhist terms are given in Sanskrit with the Tibetan equivalents inserted in brackets whenever suitable. Local place names are written phonetically with the proper Tibetan spelling inserted in brackets.

We would like to thank the School of Oriental and African Studies in the University of London and the British Academy for their further financial support which enabled us to make two more visits to Ladakh and Zangskar, and to prepare the materials for publication. Personally I would like to express my appreciation for the help which I received in Ladakh from Mr. Mahmud-ur-Rahman of the Indian Administrative Service who made every effort to facilitate my work and travel during my visit in 1976. Special appreciation is due to Bya-mdzes, the wife of Mr. Akbar Ladakhi, who helped me with preparations for the expedition into Zangskar. While travelling in Zangskar I received friendly help from the Indian army officers, Capt. Kambargimath and Major Gaikwad of Baroda. Nor do I forget the assistance of Mr. Kakpuri, the tourist officer at Kargil, and Mr. Munshi, the information officer also of Kargil, who accompanied me on my visit to the Suru Valley in 1977. Sonam Dorje of Alchi and Yeshe Sonam of Changspa have always been very good hosts. Tashi Rigzen of Sakti made an excellent companion during my journey to Sumda. Special thanks and appreciation are due to Ralph Redford who accompanied me on my journey to Sumda and then to Zangskar. Without his friendly advice and help I would have endured quite a number of extra difficulties resulting from my inexperience in travelling. Finally I would like to thank Mrs. Frank Woods and Miss Deborah Manderson for typing the first two parts of this volume.

Tadeusz Skorupski
Institute of Tibetan Studies
Tring, 20th June, 1979.

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ZANGSKAR

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FOREWORD

Zangskar, variously written in Tibetan as *Zangs-dkar* ('white copper'), *Zangs-mkhar* ('copper palace'), *bZang-dkar* ('beautiful & white'), or even *Zangs-skar* ('copper star') is one of the least known Buddhist kingdoms of the Western Himalayas, remaining for centuries hidden behind high and inaccessible mountains. Situated in a remote and difficult area, far from major trade routes, it did not attract the western travellers and explorers of the 17th and 18th centuries who visited the Western Himalayas (Vol I, p. xiii). Most of the foreigners who went to Ladakh travelled either along the main route from Srinagar to Leh or from the south over the Bara Lacha. Zangskar, however, had the honour of being visited by Alexander Csoma de Kőrös, the pioneer of Tibetan studies in the West, and it was there that he did most of his research on the Tibetan language and religion. It was in 1822 that Csoma reached Leh after a long overland journey from Europe. Realising that there was no possibility of proceeding to Yarkand and further north in search of the origin of the Hungarians (it was for this reason that he had set out on his journey), he decided to return to Kashmir. On his way he met at Dras an Englishman George Moorcroft. This encounter had a decisive influence on Csoma's life. Moorcroft interested him in the study of Tibetan and so eventually a formal agreement was made that Csoma, in return for his subsistence, should learn Tibetan and write a grammar and dictionary for the British Government in Calcutta. In June 1823 Csoma arrived in Zangla where he stayed for some 16 months. During that period he acquired a working knowledge of Tibetan, compiled the larger part of his dictionary of some 40,000 entries, copied out the *Mahāvīyutpatti* (Sanskrit-Tibetan dictionary), and made a list of Buddhist divinities and an analysis of the Tibetan Canon. On his next visit to Zangskar he lived at Phugtal and Teta from August 1825 to November 1826. In Zangla and at Phugtal monastery there are stone slabs commemorating his visits to those places. His grammar and dictionary of Tibetan language were published in 1834. Apart from these two published works he wrote a number of papers on various subjects such as philosophy, religion, geography and medicine. In 1842 Csoma resumed his journey in search of the origin of the Hungarian race but his life was suddenly brought to an end by an attack of malaria. His work was continued by another Hungarian, H.A. Jaschke, whose dictionary, first published in 1881, remains a standard one still.¹

The present materials on Zangskar and the cave-temples of Ladakh and Zangskar included in this volume have been collected by myself during two visits made to Ladakh and Zangskar in 1976-77. A considerable amount of research work, reading inscriptions and biographies, checking references and reading the final draft before publication were done jointly with Professor David Snellgrove. I acknowledge too the help received from Professor Luciano Petech's latest most admirable work, *The Kingdom of Ladakh c. 950-1842 A.D.*, published in Rome in 1977.

The present volume is divided into four parts. Part I includes the historical and iconographic materials on Zangskar. Part II is dedicated to a special study of the cave temples of Ladakh

1. See Theodore Duka, *Life and Work of Alexander de Kőrös*, Mañjuśrī Printing House, New Delhi, 1972, and the article by Walter Simon, 'Tibetan Lexicography and Etymological Research', *Transactions of the Philological Society*, London 1964. We hope to prepare later a separate volume about western travellers who have visited Ladakh and Zangskar in earlier times. Present-day travellers, rapidly increasing in number over the last few years, with rare exceptions add little to our limited stock of knowledge. Notable exceptions are Dieter Schuh of Bonn (see the Bibliography) and Dr Eva Dargyay and Ge-she Lobsang Dargyay of Munich, who have spent the whole summer of 1979 in Zangskar, collecting valuable materials.

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THE CULTURAL HERITAGE OF
LADAKH

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AND THE CAVE TEMPLES OF LADAKH

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WITH PART IV ON THE INSCRIPTIONS AT ALCHI BY PHILIP DENWOOD



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